Preamble

The Bass Coast 2030 is a major strategic document for Bass Coast Shire Council. It was adopted by Council in 2008. It outlines Council’s vision for how it wishes to be seen in 2030.

It includes a number of aspirational statements of what Bass Coast will look and feel like by 2030. A number of these statements will rely on the provision of infrastructure if they are to be achieved. The statements include:

- A celebration of natural assets – By protecting and maintaining our natural assets as well as putting in place infrastructure and services, our tourism industry thrives.

- A window on the history of Victoria – Our rich history is preserved and protected. Our built environment has been developed sensitively to acknowledge the significance of Bass Coast’s heritage.

- A village in a technological world – We have plenty of eco-friendly transport alternatives to choose from, reducing our reliance on cars and increasing access to social activities, services and jobs. Safe walking and riding paths, community based transport and public transport including both buses and trains connect key destinations across and beyond the Shire.

The Council Plan 2013-2017 is the strategic document that provides the direction to enable Council’s vision to be achieved.

The plan outlines the Council objectives and sets the direction for the next four years. This plan has taken into account the many challenges facing our community during this time, including population growth, new infrastructure for future needs, and the increase in population during peak tourist seasons. It also outlines how Council will meet the priorities identified in the key strategic objectives through community engagement, consultation processes and community surveys established by Council.

The economic, environmental, social and cultural wellbeing for Bass Coast’s citizens and the liveability of the Bass Coast Shire is underpinned by its physical infrastructure assets. Recognising this, the Council Plan includes a Key Strategic Objective regarding Sustainable Development and Growth.

This objective is underpinned by a number of strategies including:

“Provide infrastructure and facilities that are well managed, environmentally sustainable and are suitable for the community’s need.”

“Improve access networks and pathways for our community.”
Communities have various needs and expectations such as land for settlement, protection of the environment, economic wellbeing, various social needs, and the proper management of resources and infrastructure. Planning aims to meet these by addressing aspects of the economic, environmental and social wellbeing affected by land use and development.

Council endeavours to integrate the range of policies relevant to the issues to be determined, and balance conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development for present and future generations.

Under the current Bass Coast Council Planning Scheme, there are a number of key objectives each new development needs to achieve prior to it being approved. These objectives are around social, environmental and liveability of an area.

The objectives and strategies are set out under five themes:

- Settlement
- Land Uses
- Environment
- Landscape and Built Form
- Infrastructure

The objectives and strategies that are most relevant to any potential road and drainage upgrade project are:

**Cl 21.07-2 Environment - Catchment Management**

**Objective 1** – To improve water quality and availability

**Strategy 1.1** – Encourage the incorporation of water sensitive urban design principles into future and where practical, existing urban subdivisions, in accordance with Council’s Stormwater Management Policy.

**Objective 3** - To protect waterways, wetlands and floodplain areas of environmental significance, protect life, health, safety and community wellbeing from flood hazard and to minimize the impact of flooding on the community

**Strategy 3.3** - Encourage the use of “constructed wetlands” or other similar systems, as a means of storing floodwater, improving water quality and adding to natural habitats.

**Cl 21.07-3 Environmental Hazards – Flooding and Salinity**

**Objective 3** - To restrict and control development on land prone to flooding and salinity

**Strategy 3.1** - Ensure that the areas prone to flooding are planned and managed in a way which reduces the vulnerability of users to flooding and prevents inappropriate works and developments.

**Cl 21.08-4 Landscape Architecture**

**Objective 1** – To increase vegetation across the Municipality

**Strategy 1.1** - Increase landscaping in public areas.

**Strategy 1.3** - Encourage the use of local native plants in landscaping.

**Objective 2** – To ensure that development creates and maintains a high quality landscape setting
Strategy 2.2 - Consider landscape architecture as an integral part of an overall concept for development and provide opportunities to enhance landscape features of the area.

CI 21.09 Infrastructure

Objective 2 – To have an effective and efficient road network throughout the municipality

Strategy 2.1 – Require full street construction and drainage for all new subdivisions in urban areas.

Objective 4 – To create a shared path network between and within towns

Objective 4.2 – To facilitate the expansion of the bicycle network in accordance with Bass Coast Shire Bicycle Strategy, including a combined bicycle and pedestrian path around Phillip Island.

In order to achieve these strategic objectives and principles, Council has a number of existing strategies, plans and policies to manage our resources effectively, whilst providing and improving infrastructure within the Shire. They include the Urban Roads and Drainage Improvement Policy.

Current Status

Bass Coast Shire Council manages an extensive range of physical infrastructure assets which include – but are not limited to – roads, pathways and stormwater drains.

Prior to the implementation of the Town Planning Act (circa 1970), Council’s had no way of requiring developers to consider the social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of a community as part of proposed development. This meant there were a large number of residential areas throughout Victoria which do not meet the most basic of requirements under current planning legislation.

This has left a legacy that all ratepayers both current and future are left to resolve. In order to address this legacy, Bass Coast Shire adopted the Urban Streets Improvement Policy in 1996.

Across Bass Coast Shire, there are a significant number of urban areas and a significant portion of the road network which is unconstructed together with inadequate stormwater drainage. This portion of the road network comprises of over 125 kilometres of unmade roads within urban areas. The unmade urban road network does not provide for a safe, effective and sustainable road network that performs to the needs and the expectations of the community.

Further to this, community expectation on the level of infrastructure within urban areas is increasing. This is reflected in the considerable number of requests from residents and ratepayers to upgrade road and drainage infrastructure within urban areas, alleviate issues with dust, loss of material, mud, poor road surface and address inadequate stormwater drainage and poor stormwater quality.

In addition to this, the unmade roads and insufficient drainage across the Shire's urban areas results in considerable maintenance costs to Council's ratepayers to ensure that the unmade road network is maintained in accordance with Council's requirements under the Road Management Act 2004 and the Road Services Asset Management Plan 2014.
To upgrade the extensive length of unmade roads and insufficient drainage within urban areas across the Shire would cost in the order of $135 million in today’s dollars. Subsequently, Council alone does not have the necessary resources to meet all the infrastructure demands and will seek to increase the level of funds available through other means such as grant applications, and the use of beneficiary contribution principles.

This policy sets out the principles and framework for how Council will deliver on community expectations for improved road, pathways and stormwater drainage infrastructure by prioritising the urban areas of the Shire to be considered for inclusion into Council’s capital works program for infrastructure upgrades.

Policy Objectives

The objectives of Urban Roads and Drainage Improvement Policy are to:

- Establish Council’s commitment to improve the liveability and township character of both the built environment and the natural environment for residents and ratepayers within the Shire’s urban areas.
- Improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of the community through the upgrade of urban infrastructure.
- Establish Council’s commitment to providing its community with infrastructure that continuously meets its needs.
- Ensure that the development of urban road and drainage infrastructure upgrade projects is funded in a financially sustainable manner, which is fair and equitable for all ratepayers, both current and future, within the Shire.
- Define the principles and framework for the development of urban road and drainage infrastructure upgrade projects.
- Outline the elements of urban road and drainage infrastructure to be funded by Council.

Policy Statement

Bass Coast Shire Council is committed to the long-term management of its infrastructure, which includes road, pathway and stormwater drainage infrastructure within its municipality.

Accordingly, Council has developed an ongoing program which prioritises all currently unserviced urban areas within the Shire. Council is committed to offering the opportunity for road and drainage improvements in these areas as part of a long term ongoing program. Currently the road and drainage improvement program considers those projects to be considered over the next 10 years. The number of projects included in this 10 year program is dependent on the level of Councils financial commitment and the approximate value of each designated project area. The remaining areas will be reconsidered at the nominated frequency for review.

The upgrade of road, pathway and stormwater drainage infrastructure within urban areas across the municipality shall be funded in a fair and equitable manner for all current and future ratepayers within the Shire. Therefore, where it can be demonstrated that properties will receive special benefit from any potential road and drainage improvements, Council may pursue the implementation of a special rate or charge.
Furthermore, the development of this infrastructure shall be consistent with a standard of infrastructure that would be expected within an urban area, to meet the objectives of the Bass Coast Shire Council Plan and Bass Coast Shire Planning Scheme.

In line with Council's Road Services Asset Management Plan 2014, community levels of service were developed to reflect community outcomes that residents and visitors to Bass Coast Shire. The following key principles that form the basis of this policy have been developed to address these community outcomes. They are aligned in accordance with the table in Section 2.8 or the Road Services Asset Management Plan 2014, and are as follows:

**Accessibility**

1. Council is committed to provide road, road related and pathway infrastructure within urban areas across the Shire that continues to meet the community needs both current and in future.

2. Council is committed to improve road safety both within a designated project area and its associated local and arterial road intersections.

3. The initiation stage of a road and drainage improvement project will include the development of a local area traffic management study for the designated project area.

4. The development of road and drainage improvement projects, will consider whole of life cycle costs for all types of infrastructure in balance with service standards and construction costs.

**Connectivity**

5. Council is committed to providing safe paths and tracks that will provide separation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. They will where possible provide linkages to open space and offer the community the opportunity an alternative safe mode of transport.

6. Council may resolve to reduce or omit the level of pathway infrastructure included in an urban road and drainage improvement project where:
   - there is limited connectivity to existing pathway networks from the designated project area; or
   - it will result in a substantial loss or reduction of existing significant road side native vegetation; or
   - physical site constraints do not adequately allow for the inclusion of a safe and effective pathway.

**Drainage Control**

7. Council is committed to ensure stormwater is managed effectively in all urban areas across the Shire.

8. The upgrade of urban areas across the Shire will include the provision for all properties to have access to an appropriate stormwater connection point and where appropriate, ensure that surface water is controlled effectively.

9. The initiation stage of urban road and drainage improvement projects will include the development of a drainage strategy for the designated project area. The strategy will also include an action plan which clearly identifies any works required to be carried out on drainage outfalls.
10. Urban road and drainage improvement projects shall include stormwater quality treatment systems, as per the drainage strategy for the designated project area and where:

- the risk to the receiving waterway as per Council’s Stormwater Management Plan is considered high; or
- external funding is available for the inclusion of stormwater quality treatment systems.

When considering the implementation of stormwater quality treatment systems, the overall life cycle costs including ongoing maintenance costs are to be considered.

**Amenity**

11. Council is committed to improving the overall streetscape and amenity of the designated project area.

12. Urban road and drainage improvement projects will be developed in order to minimise the existing net impact on the natural environment.

13. The planning stage of road and drainage improvement projects will include the development of landscape and/or urban design plans for the designated project area.

14. Council may resolve to adopt a higher level of proposed infrastructure, which may include the extent of landscaping, urban design elements, or other such components - over and above the level determined by the Road Hierarchy Classification or Council’s standards - where it is warranted.

**Community Health**

15. Urban road and drainage improvement projects will endeavour to improve the overall safety to all road users within the designated project area.

16. In developing an urban road and drainage improvement projects the needs of all road users will be considered.

**Program**

17. The upgrade of urban areas across the Shire - with unmade roads and insufficient drainage - is prioritised in accordance with the prescribed Urban Road and Drainage Improvement Priority List, which accompanies this policy.

The Urban Road and Drainage Improvement Priority List sets out the designated project areas which form Council’s Road and Drainage Improvement Program.

18. Council will consider reprioritising an urban road and drainage infrastructure improvement project for a specific designated project area defined in the Urban Road and Drainage Improvement Priority List, but does not form part of the Road and Drainage Improvement Program.

Council will consider projects outside of the program only if 70% or more of property owners included within that project area would support a project, which would be funded through ‘user pays’ principles in accordance with Council’s Special Rates and Charges Policy.

The inclusion of an urban road and drainage infrastructure improvement project into the program shall not have an impact on the approved program and shall only be included as an additional project to the program through Council resolution.
Community Engagement

19. Council will undertake extensive community engagement with property owners and other identified stakeholders in the development of urban road and drainage infrastructure improvement projects, in accordance with Council’s Community Engagement Policy.

The *Urban Road and Drainage Improvement Project Plan* outlines the various phases included as part of any potential road and drainage improvement project.

The *Urban Road and Drainage Improvement Project Process* sets out the steps to be undertaken in the development of a potential road and drainage upgrade within a designated project area.

Additional community engagement is also legislated as part of the formal legislative process outlined in Section 163 of the Local Government Act 1989.

Funding

20. The funding mechanism for delivering urban road and drainage improvement projects shall be adopted through Council resolution. Sources of funding may include, but not be limited to the following:

- A direct Council contribution including various infrastructure elements as outlined below.
- External grants, funding or contributions.
- A special rate or charge in accordance with Section 163 of the Local Government Act 1989.
- A combination of all of the above.

For all road and drainage improvement projects, the calculation of Council’s contribution is based on various factors specific to each designated project area. These factors consider existing and potential external traffic volumes, Council owned land etc. Council’s contribution will also consider the following:

Accessibility

Where proposed road pavements are in excess of 5.4 metres wide or any road side public parking is to be included, these additional costs are to be borne by Council.

Connectivity

All road and drainage improvement projects are to include the provision of a 1.5 metre wide concrete footpath and/or connection to existing bus stops and facilities.

The project may also include the provision of bicycle paths nominated in Council’s Bicycle Strategy.

Costs associated with the provision of pathways are to be shared between property owners within the designated project area and Council.

Drainage Control

Where the road and drainage improvement project is to include the provision of main drains or outfall drains conveying external catchments, public land drainage, and retardation structures for external catchments, these costs are to be borne by Council.
Urban Roads and Drainage Improvement Policy

Where the provision of water sensitive urban design treatment elements and gross pollutant traps to achieve protection of receiving waters are included as part of a road and drainage improvement project, these costs are to be borne by Council.

Amenity

Where landscaping is over and above the provision of Council’s standard street planting requirements; one street tree per property, this is to be included within a road and drainage improvement project, these additional costs are to be borne by Council.

Community Health

When there are additional improvements to intersections of local and arterial roads including traffic control required to be included as part of a road and drainage improvement project, these additional costs are to be borne by Council.

The use of the special rate or charge provisions of the Local Government Act 1989 is the subject of a further “Special Rates and Charges Policy”

Additional Documents

The following documents accompany this policy:

- Urban Road and Drainage Improvement Priority List
- Road and Drainage Improvement Program
- Urban Road and Drainage Improvement Project Plan Timelines
- Urban Road and Drainage Improvement Project – Initiation Stage Process
- Urban Road and Drainage Improvement Project – Planning Stage Process

Reference to Other Documents

The following documents support this policy:

- Road Management Act 2004
- Local Government Act 1989
- Special Rates and Charges Ministerial Guidelines 2004
- Bass Coast Shire Council – Council Plan 2013 – 2017
- Bass Coast Shire Council – Planning Scheme
- Bass Coast Shire Council – Asset Management Policy
- Bass Coast Shire Council – Road Services Asset Management Plan 2014
- Bass Coast Shire Council – Drainage Services Asset Management Plan 2015
- Bass Coast Shire Council – Community Engagement Policy
- Bass Coast Shire Council – Special Rates and Charges Policy (to be prepared)
- Bass Coast Shire Council – Debt Management Policy
- Infrastructure Design Manual
Review Process

The policy will be reviewed by Council within three years of it coming into operation. The prescribed Urban Road and Drainage Improvement Priority List, which accompanies the policy, will be reviewed within 3 years of the policy coming into operation in line with the Road Services Asset Management Plan.

Accountability Process

Accountability for the effective administration of the Urban Roads and Drainage Improvement Policy rests with Council’s General Manager Infrastructure.

Approval

Adopted by Council at its meeting held on Wednesday, 20 May 2015.
Signed by the Mayor, Cr Kimberley Brown

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