



**GREATER SHEPPARTON
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
RESPONSE TO**

**COVID-19
PACKAGE** 

**STAGE 3
SUPPORT
RESPONSE PLAN**



Since the start of the pandemic the Greater Shepparton City Council has acted quickly to support our community and businesses to lessen the burden of the significant social and economic consequences of COVID-19.

Council initiated a suite of measures through the introduction of Greater Shepparton Economic Response to COVID-19 Packages. Stage 1 Package, worth \$1.5 million, was launched in March 2020 and Stage 2 Package, worth \$2 million, followed in June 2020.

The Stage 1 Package included 21 targeted initiatives and aimed to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the health and wellbeing of Greater Shepparton residents, our vulnerable community, and provided immediate and ongoing support to our local businesses experiencing devastating levels of disruption and uncertainty.

The Stage 2 Package included 29 measures and focused on business and economy, our community, our visitor economy and events and advocacy.

The impact of the pandemic is immense and we truly understand business and members of our community are still doing it tough. As a Council, we are committed to supporting our community on the road to recovery.

Council will now deliver a Stage 3 Economic and Social Response Package valued in excess of \$600,000 to continue supporting recovery and reactivation in Greater Shepparton during 2021/2022. Stage 3 has 22 initiatives and focuses on business and economy, our community and our visitor economy. We will also continue to advocate to State and Federal governments to fund major initiatives designed to stimulate our community and the economy and speed up the recovery process.

Stage 3 will complement State and Federal support programs and will leverage from the initiatives undertaken in Stage 1 and 2 and continue to strengthen the ongoing resilience and capacity within the community, as well as enabling Council to be more agile in its planning, processing and delivery of services.



Business and Economy

1. Greater Shepparton business and services recovery, promotional and activation campaigns “Greater Shepparton Stronger Than Ever Together” to increase local and regional spend and assist with financial recovery for Greater Shepparton businesses. Campaign focus will include sectors that have been significantly impacted during the pandemic such as retail, health and fitness, entertainment and personal services.
2. A 50% reduction on fees for Class Two and Three food businesses, beauty and accommodation premises registration. The fee reduction excludes supermarkets and large food manufacturers.
3. Continue to work with State and Federal Governments on leveraging significant COVID-19 stimulus funding opportunities to increase job creation and economic and visitation activity in the region, through projects such as the extension to the Recreational Shared Path network to include The Flats and a connection to the Australian Botanic Gardens over the Broken River via a bridge, Maude St Mall redevelopment as well as the redevelopment of the Shepparton Sports and Events Centre project and development of the GV Trails project.
4. Continue to provide the COVID-19 Quick Response Deep Clean Grant program to support local businesses impacted by being an exposure site. This grant has been developed to complement the Victorian Government’s COVIDSafe Deep Cleaning Rebate.
5. Development of a Shopfront Improvement Grant program to assist with the ongoing activation and revitalisation of the Shepparton CBD and the commercial areas of main streets within small towns.
6. Ongoing roll out of COVID-19 Business Support Officer program to assist and educate local business and industry on COVID-19 safe business practises.
7. Reduction in rent of 15% for Commercial Lease Agreements of Council properties and facilities from 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.
8. Continuation of economic development business support focusing on navigation of government grants, adapting services to digital products and resilience mentoring.
9. Businesses are able to enter into a payment arrangement or apply for financial hardship consideration regarding rates.






Community

10. Increased financial contribution of \$20,000 to Shepparton Food Share to continue their relief work supporting those in our community needing to isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19.
11. Reduction in rent of 50% for Community Lease Agreements of Council properties and facilities from 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.
12. All community asset committee run facilities to be reimbursed for 50% of utility costs from 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022
13. All ground hire and building fees for Council managed outdoor sports facilities reduced by 50% (excluding light charges) from 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.
14. Provide foundation Shepparton Sports Stadium user groups indoor court hire at off peak rates from 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.
15. Development of a COVID-19 Quick Response Community and Social Response and Recovery Grant Program. This is for community organisations to support relief and recovery activities i.e. COVID-19 safe training, volunteer reimbursement and activities that allow groups to reconnect with grants up to \$500 available with a total funding pool of \$20,000.
16. Provide ongoing community support initiatives to assist in social recovery including youth development, promotion and education, COVID-19 Safe Volunteer Managers training for external volunteer organisations, Case Management for essential relief items and supporting various essential support initiatives.
17. Residents are able to enter into a payment arrangement or apply for financial hardship consideration regarding rates.





Visitor Economy

18. Visitor Economy Innovation and Experience Grant Program Round 3 for visitor economy businesses including the accommodation sector, transport operators, event suppliers and contractors, tour companies, attractions, wellness tourism, farm gate experiences, retail who have a direct link to local produce, hospitality and food production. A total funding pool of \$35,000 available.
19. Supporting implementation of the new destination brand project including relevant future visitation campaigns to assist with positioning the region and COVID-19 recovery.
20. Development of COVID-19 Events Industry Capacity Building Program Stage 2 to enable event organisers to implement and adapt to the COVID-19 event environment i.e. Covid-19 Safe event planning, marketing and risk management.
21. Support the Greater Shepparton 'Unites in Voice' online concert developed by the community to acknowledge the Greater Shepparton community efforts during the pandemic.



Advocacy

22. Continue to advocate to the State and Federal Governments on stimulus opportunities to allow local Councils to provide targeted infrastructure projects and services support initiatives for residents and businesses.





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