



Pyrenees
Shire Council

Draft Council Plan

Shaping the Pyrenees 2021-2025

Happy

Connected

Healthy

Sustainable

Welcoming

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"I love the people in my community."

(Age 58, postcode 3352)





Acknowledgement of Country

Pyrenees Shire is part of the traditional lands of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar and Wotjobaluk tribes. We pay our respects to the customs, traditions and stewardship of the land by the Elders past and present and emerging leaders, and the people of these tribes.

"I hope for vibrant,
connected, safe towns."

(Age 33, postcode 3384)



About this document

The purpose of this Council Plan is to guide Council decision making over the four years from 2021 to 2025. The Council Plan does not address all the things that Council works on, rather it reflects the major challenges facing Council and Community, priorities and initiatives that will help us continue improving our region.

The Plan outlines how Council will work toward implementing the 10-year Community Vision. The process of developing the community vision started with a postcard questionnaire that was mailed out to all households in the Pyrenees Shire. The postcard asked residents three questions:

- What are your hopes for the Pyrenees Shire for 2031?
- What do you love about your community?
- What would you change about your community?

Responses were received from 129 people in a number of age brackets and from places right across the Shire. Some of their responses are shown throughout this plan.

A Community Panel of 25 community representatives was formed through an expression of interest process. The Community Panel's task was to develop a community vision, to describe what the Pyrenees region will be like as a place to live, play, work and visit in the future. A wide range of economic, social, demographic, environmental, information was presented to the group to inform thinking. The Panel worked together to write the Community Vision report starting from a blank page. Everything in the report has at least 80% consensus.

"I hope we are a vibrant, cohesive and caring community. I hope we can work together to have thriving towns with lots of people with community spirit, who are willing to cooperate with each other, volunteer and make our shire even more welcoming."

(Age 63, postcode 3347)

The Council made the following promises to the Community Panel:

- Publish the unedited recommendations of the deliberative process.
- Undertake a rigorous decision-making process to adopt the recommended community vision to the fullest extent possible.
- Ensure that the priorities identified by the Community are incorporated into the Council Plan and Financial Plan to the fullest extent possible.
- Where recommendations are not implemented in full, Council will report back to the community and explain the reasoning for decisions made.

The Community Panel's words have directly informed the Council Plan and are presented in full in the Vision and in each of the sections of the Council Plan.



"I love how everyone gets together and rallies for other people in the community. We all stick together."

(Age 17, postcode 3352)

"I hope for more engagement for youth. A youth space."

(Age 15, Postcode 3373)

"I hope that the Beaufort Primary School will be developed into a centre for the arts – visual, film, music, guest artists, workshops, performance – all things cultural – adjacent oval to become a bush garden."

(Age 85, postcode 3373)

"I would change better public transport."

(Age 69, postcode 3467)



About our Shire

The Pyrenees Shire area sits across traditional ownership areas of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar and Wotjobaluk Aboriginal peoples. Spanning between the regional centres of Ballarat and Ararat. We are a Shire of 29 communities, each with their own heritage, character and rural charm. Our towns and settlements are diverse and distinct, abundant with unique sense of place. Just over 50% of our population live within one of our 9 main towns or localities, with the remainder of the population living in rural locations. Our geographically dispersed population means that smaller townships and settlements are important hubs for community activities and social interaction. Our community markets, events, and local sports clubs are well-loved and supported.

Our Shire is home to a wealth of Aboriginal and European heritage. We host a range of Aboriginal and colonial heritage features of state significance – from pre-settlement, to goldrush and pastoral heritage. Our heritage features provide opportunities for tourism and help to define the cultural identity of the municipality.

"I love how friendly and welcoming everyone is! Everyone always has time for a chat and is willing to help each other out. Sharing produce between neighbours."

(Age 32, postcode 3373)

Our rural Shire supports agriculture (including grazing and cereal cropping), forestry, viticulture. In addition we have an abundance of natural resources, windfarms and renewable energy. Our diverse rural and natural landscapes, and dramatic views of Pyrenees Ranges, are enhanced by the central Victorian light and seasonal changes in colour. Our Shire is home to an abundance of craftspeople, designers, artists and makers as well as artisanal food and beverage producers. Our natural environments and cultural resources provide great opportunities for tourism.

The region is home to substantial levels of socioeconomic disadvantage, characterised by low levels of education attainment and low household incomes. The Pyrenees Shire Local Government Area (LGA) is ranked in the 34th percentile of most disadvantaged LGAs in Victoria. However, we also have higher than average rates of home ownership, and indicators that show high rates of social and mental wellbeing.

While we have a relatively small population, Pyrenees Shire Council is custodian of an extensive range of community assets that it provides to facilitate delivery of services to the community. For road assets, it has responsibility for 2,048km of roads varying from sealed roads to access tracks and fire-tracks, 291 bridges and major culverts; 45km of kerb and channel and 18km of footpaths.

The landscape of the Pyrenees Shire varies from the very steep hill areas of the Mt. Cole, and Pyrenees Ranges to the undulating flat open terrain around the Natta Yallock, Stoneleigh areas. The climate varies between the north and the south of the region. North of the Pyrenees Ranges there is a warmer, drier climate. South of the Pyrenees Ranges is a cooler, wetter climate.

Our localities





Population

Pyrenees

7,472



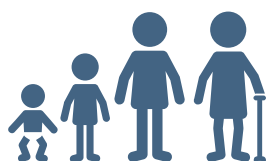
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people's

Pyrenees

1.9%

Victoria

0.8%



Median age

Pyrenees

51

Victoria

42

Population over 60 years

Pyrenees

35.9%

Victoria

21%



Level of highest educational attainment

Pyrenees

Bachelor degree or above

9.5%

Victoria

Bachelor degree or above

24.3%

Year 9 or below

12.9%

Year 9 or below

8.9%



Households with no internet access at home

Pyrenees

24.5%

Victoria

13.6%



Households where a non-English language is spoken at home

Pyrenees

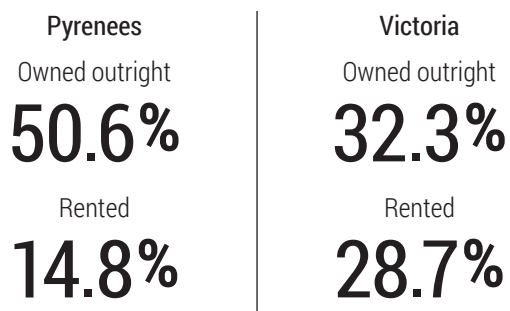
3.6%

Victoria

27.8%



Housing tenure



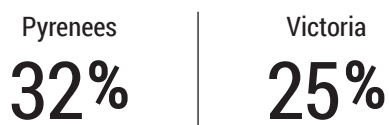
Couple families with both parents not working



Individuals over 15 who volunteered with an organisation in the last 12 months



Single person households



Median weekly household income



Adult population with a very high satisfaction with life (9–10 out of 10)



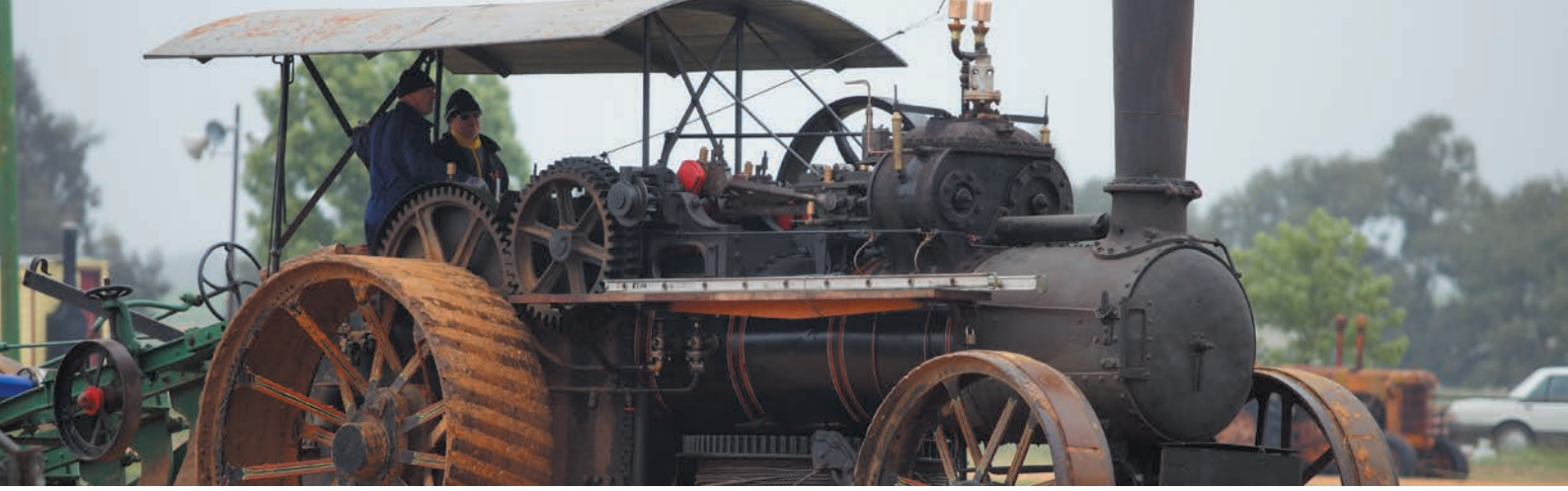
Sources include Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census data; REMPLAN Economy Profile and Community Profile; and Grampians Primary Care Partnership Pyrenees Health and Wellbeing Snapshot Feb 2021.



The Council Plan

Enabling Principles			
Motivate and inspire community involvement		Provide transparency and accountability	Use resources efficiently and effectively

Priorities to Achieve the Vision			
People		Place	
Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety Support a vibrant community arts, culture and heritage environment Improve accessibility and inclusivity Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection Improve social outcomes		Sustain and enhance unique character of our communities Support community sustainability Enhance liveability of our communities Promote responsible development	
Environment		Economy	
Lead and promote environmental sustainability Foster a climate change resilient community Encourage community care of biodiversity and natural values Improve waste management to reduce landfill and reduce harm to the environment		Support our local businesses and help to strengthen key industries Invest in road infrastructure to improve connectivity for commerce and community Advocate for and invest in assets and infrastructure to support industry sustainability	



Enabling Principles

Our community panel said

In 2031, The Pyrenees Shire Council have...

Motivated and inspired community engagement and involvement, by:

- Utilise active community groups and encourage new and under-represented groups to participate in driving actions (e.g. environmental, arts, health, youth)
- Identify and encourage community involvement in the creation, prioritisation, delivery and ownership of unified action plans
- Ensuring wide representation of community diversity in gender, age, culture and occupation (for example, nominate a Youth Councillor to target this under-represented part of the community)
- Encourage input and feedback from a wide section of the community by providing opportunities to engage both in person and online in council activities / meetings
- Engagement of small and large businesses through effective support and communication
- Expert advice and resources are provided to educate and assist community groups in developing action plans that better meet the vision objectives, and support community groups in framing local actions within the vision
- Annually convene a Community Consultative Group to review and oversee the implementation of the Community Vision
- Key environmental impacts (i.e. biodiversity, people, liveability) are considered and addressed during creation of action plans.

"I hope for everyone to get a say."

(Age 13, postcode 3468)

Providing transparency and accountability, through:

- Regular updates on current projects including detailed information (e.g. delivery timelines)
- Information used to inform council decisions including research and what effective community consultation took place as part of the decision-making process
- Clearly describe concrete goals and actions to deliver community vision
- Accessible updates via a broad range of communication channels to reach groups and individuals within our community (e.g. website, email, e-newsletters, paper newsletters, notice boards)
- Ongoing engagement with community in the creation, prioritisation, delivery and ownership of unified action plans.

"I would change, have more programs and activities to engage young people, to enable community members to come together to celebrate our town."

(Age 41, postcode 3352)



Council's Plan – Enabling Principles

a Motivate and inspire community involvement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Embed community participation in project management framework 2 Work with our communities to understand and realise their aspirations 3 Encourage wide representation of community in Council decision-making being diverse in terms of gender, age, culture and occupation 4 Providing a range of opportunities for community participation, including online, in-person, and through different media 5 Annually report to a community consultative group to review the implementation of the Community Vision
b Provide transparency and accountability
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6 Reflect community consultation and research findings in decision-making 7 Have goals that are clear and measurable 8 Provide relevant, timely, and accessible updates via a broad range of communication channels to reach groups and individuals within our community (e.g. website, email, e-newsletters, paper newsletters, notice boards) 9 Continue to foster a culture of accountability and transparency
c Use resources efficiently and effectively
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10 Continue to build the capability and capacity of Council employees to deliver the Council Plan 11 Promote financially responsible decisions 12 Monitor staff wellbeing and satisfaction



Priority 1 – People

Our community panel said

By 2031 in Pyrenees Shire:

The health and wellbeing of our communities is paramount.

- All Pyrenees Shire communities have facilities and services that encourage & support community connectedness, and intergenerational connections; including investing in creative arts, activities and events.
- We're prepared for emergencies like pandemics.
- Our history is preserved, acknowledged and recorded.
- We have access to an extensive quality community / health service & facilities for all ages.
- Communities are empowered to embed social & cultural diversity in all decision making.
- Communities have facilities and activities that support exercise for physical & mental health for all ages.

"I hope in 2030 and beyond the communities of the Pyrenees will recognise that its people are its greatest asset. We will embrace change, welcome new ideas, and be ethical environmental stewards for the next generation."

(Age 59, postcode 3478)

"I hope for stronger mental health, safer women, educated children."

(Age 50, postcode 3467)

Council's Plan – People

a	Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety	<i>Council's role</i>
1	Have appropriate and up-to-date emergency management plans	<i>Facilitate</i>
2	Support communities in times of emergencies and in post-emergency recovery	<i>Support</i>
b	Support a vibrant community arts, culture and heritage environment	<i>Council's role</i>
3	Develop a Creative Community Strategy	<i>Facilitate</i>
4	Implement the Reconciliation Plan and Reconciliation Advisory Committee	<i>Facilitate</i>
5	Support our community groups, including historical societies, preserve and understand our region's history	<i>Support</i>
6	Support community events	<i>Support</i>
c	Improve accessibility and inclusivity	<i>Council's role</i>
7	Facilitate connectivity and increase accessibility through appropriate infrastructure	<i>Advocate</i>
8	Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy	<i>Pending funding</i>
9	Develop an Accessibility Strategy	<i>Pending funding</i>
10	Progress towards improved gender equity	<i>Facilitate</i>
d	Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection	<i>Council's role</i>
11	Have a Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan	<i>Deliver</i>
12	Assist community with access to appropriate aged-care and early-years services	<i>Partner / Deliver</i>
13	Work with partners to support young people to be active in our community	<i>Support</i>
14	Support communities to have access to high-quality assets, facilities and programs to promote passive and active recreation	<i>Support</i>
15	Advocate for appropriate access to medical and allied health services	<i>Advocate</i>
e	Improve social outcomes	<i>Council's role</i>
16	Support community programs targeted at access to healthy food	<i>Support</i>
17	Deliver and support activities aimed at increasing community connections and reducing social isolation	<i>Deliver</i>
18	Support learning through provision of knowledge services including contemporary library services	<i>Support</i>



Priority 2 – Place

Our community panel said

By 2031 in Pyrenees Shire:

Communities are thriving. Growth is underpinned by universal connectivity, access to technology, advanced services and sustainable education facilities.

We've evolved through building opportunities that continue to encourage development while retaining the "country charm" and businesses that make the Pyrenees Shire unique.

Our residential and farmland is used productively and sustainably by embracing innovation and change. We provide opportunity through a balanced use of our land while meeting the contemporary needs of our community. We pride ourselves by growing our townships and settlements, whilst retaining the economic potential of our agricultural land.

"I love that it is growing and changing
- the great things about having
an established rural community are
being built on and developed."

(Age 44, postcode 3373)

"I hope for pyrenees to become one
of the premier food bowls of the
state, to create more family tourism
and to create a great environment
for young families to live in."

(Age 28, postcode 3477)



Council's Plan – Place

a	Sustain and enhance unique character of our communities	Council's role
1	Implement and develop strategic planning projects such as further progression of Pyrenees Futures or the Rural Review	Deliver
2	Identify priorities and seek support to identify, preserve and protect heritage assets	Facilitate
3	Maintain a planning scheme that accommodates community values and guides sustainable development	Deliver
b	Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities	Council's role
4	Manage impacts of large-scale infrastructure projects (such as Beaufort Bypass) on communities	Deliver, Advocate & Support
5	Actively invite and encourage investment that supports employment	Advocate & Support
6	Provide services for towns (eg toilets parks, playgrounds, sports facilities, town entrance signs etc.)	Deliver
7	Maintain our streetscapes and public gathering spaces and improve and enhance where funding permits*	Deliver
8	Provide and maintain appropriate infrastructure to ensure a high level of amenity, accessibility and safety*	Deliver
9	Work with our communities to understand and realise their aspirations	Facilitate
c	Promote responsible development	Council's role
10	Adopt and apply principles around sustainable growth and development within townships	Deliver

* Within current resourcing, Council has budgeted for maintaining existing level of service in these areas. However, where additional funding or grants are obtained, Council will seek to also improve, enhance and beautify public spaces further.



Priority 3 – Environment

Our community panel said

By 2031 in Pyrenees Shire:

Pyrenees Shire has taken action on climate change and reduced negative impacts across the Shire.

The Pyrenees Shire has an abundance of conserved natural resources which are highly valued and protected by the local community and visitors.

The community, including Indigenous groups, are actively engaged with environmental initiatives through innovative programs (e.g. bushfires plans/management) and services (e.g. recycling).

Environmental sustainability, such as water availability, underpins growth considerations.

Advocating for environmental preservation to be considered foremost in the context of future extractive activities, such as mining.

There is a biodiversity regenerative program for nature reserves.

"I would change, plant a lot more trees because too many are being cut down to make room for houses. And the native animals need a home."

(Age 7, postcode 3373)

"I love the people and the environments and the native wildlife."

(Age 45, postcode 3371)



Council's Plan – Environment

a	Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation	Council's role
1	Continue to implement actions from the Climate Change response and Mitigation Action Plan	Deliver
2	Apply environmentally responsible design and construction principles	Deliver
3	Continue to increase the energy efficiency of all Council owned facilities	Advocate
b	Foster a climate change resilient community	Council's role
4	Support environmentally responsible technology innovation initiatives	Advocate
5	Ensure urban design and placemaking incorporates climate sensitive principles	Deliver
6	Cooperate regionally to implement initiatives identified within the Grampians Region Climate Adaptation Strategy	Partner
c	Encourage community care of biodiversity and natural values	Council's role
7	Encourage ownership and leadership over natural public open space, including participation / lead by First Nations peoples, youth, industry etc	Facilitate
8	Support community-led biodiversity projects	Support
9	Ensure that the implementation of Roadside Management Strategy considers and enhances biodiversity regeneration	Deliver
d	Improve waste management to reduce landfill and reduce harm to the environment	Council's role
10	Support a regional waste management community education campaign	Support
11	Strengthen partnerships with regional and state agencies to develop innovation in services and technology	Partner
12	Work with local partners to encourage practical waste and recycling opportunities	Support
13	Provide quality and efficient waste management and recycling services for our residents	Deliver



Priority 4 – Economy

Our community panel said

By 2031 in Pyrenees Shire:

The Shire has supported significant economic development that is based on the following principles:

- Supporting 'Healthy towns' by developing new and existing infrastructure (e.g. NBN, shop fronts) in the business precincts, to encourage the relocation or start-up of businesses.
- Supporting 'Healthy regions' by encouraging growth in regional business (i.e. agri-business, tourism, etc.) through access to services (i.e. power)
- Ensuring economic planning and business development considers the climate with a push towards carbon-neutrality across the shire.
 - Bio-diversity
 - Minimising the use of non-renewable resources
 - Climate variability (droughts, rain events/flooding)
- Drawing on the geographical and location advantages enjoyed by the Shire.

"I hope for pyrenees to be a dynamic self-sufficient area with a huge tourism appeal."

(Age 59, postcode 3373)

"I would change trucks in the town centre. More resources in the creative sector assisting to build on place identity and point of difference with the community."

(Age 36, postcode 3373)



Council's Plan – Economy

a	Support our local businesses and help to strengthen key industries	Council's role
1	Preserve and promote our built heritage and ecotourism opportunities and support tourism through promotion, marketing and sponsorship	<i>Advocate & Support</i>
2	Facilitate networks for industry knowledge-sharing and innovation across tourism, agriculture and commerce	<i>Facilitate</i>
3	Build relationships with investors to unlock opportunities for development and innovation and investment that supports employment	<i>Partner</i>
4	Promote and protect agricultural sustainability through land use planning and community education	<i>Deliver</i>
5	Collaborate with business associations to facilitate localised economic development	<i>Partner</i>
b	Invest in road infrastructure to improve connectivity for commerce and community	Council's role
6	Maintain and improve our roads and associated assets to ensure safe and efficient connectivity	<i>Deliver</i>
7	Identify infrastructure constraints and facilitate solutions, including investing in access for high-productivity vehicles to support the agricultural sector and access to markets	<i>Deliver</i>
c	Encourage and invest in assets and infrastructure for commerce and community	Council's role
8	Work with water authorities to facilitate opportunities for secure water sources for rural areas to support agriculture, viticulture and other economic opportunities	<i>Advocate</i>
9	Work with partners to advocate for improved telecommunications service outcomes	<i>Advocate & Support</i>
10	Establish relationships and advocate for commitment to continued investment and growth to improve access to water / sewer / internet access / phone connectivity / transport / housing / power upgrades etc.	<i>Advocate</i>
11	Develop a strategic plan for asset service improvement	<i>Deliver</i>
12	Utilise innovation for better outcomes in asset delivery	<i>Deliver</i>
13	Work with industry stakeholders to capitalise on renewable energy opportunities that will reduce consumption of fossil fuels, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide competitively priced energy to local industries and communities	<i>Partner</i>



How will we measure success?

Enabling Principles		
Measure		Target
1	Percent Council decisions made at meetings open to the public	Maintain to at least 90%
2	Community satisfaction with community consultation and engagement	Maintain to at least 55%
3	Online interactions	Increase by 10%
4	Expenses per head of municipal population	Maintain at average or below for small rural councils
5	Rates as a percentage of total revenue	Maintain five-year average or less
6	Number of direct interactions between Councillors and communities	Maintain to at least 10 per year
7	Annual percentage of staff turnover	Maintain below 15%
8	Unplanned leave	Monitor for excess use

1. People		
Measure		Target
1.1	Municipal Emergency Management Plan passes external audit	By Jun 2023
1.2	Visits to resource centres	Maintain or increase by 5% per year
1.3	Number of events advertised on Council's website	Maintain to at least 65 advertised per year
1.4	Participation in active ageing social support programs	Maintain at least 85 clients
1.5	Participation in maternal and Child Health Service	At least 90%
1.6	Community satisfaction with arts centres and libraries	At least 69%

2. Place

Measure	Target
2.1 Planning applications decided within required timeframes	At least 90%
2.2 Community satisfaction with appearance of public areas	Maintain to at least 70%
2.4 Number of townships with Framework Plans	At least 1 new plan developed every 12 months
2.5 Community satisfaction with recreational facilities	Maintain to at least 69%
2.6 Enforcement of Local Laws performance	Maintain to at least 62%

3. Environment

Measure	Target
3.1 Number of actions taken to reduce Council's carbon footprint	At least 3 significant actions identified annually
3.2 Community satisfaction with waste management and recycling	Maintain to at least 66%
3.3 Percent kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill	Maintain to at least 64%
3.4 Number of community-led biodiversity projects being implemented	At least 1 per year
3.5 Number of climate change or environmental projects involved in or supported	At least 5 significant projects per year
3.6 Number of street trees / biodiversity trees planted	At least 500 per year

4. Economy

Measure	Target
4.1 Kilometres of roads gazetted for high-productivity vehicle accessibility	At least an additional 50km of roads per year
4.2 Number of new dwellings in the municipality per year	Around 50 new dwellings per year
4.3 Rate of employment	Maintain at least 95% full employment levels
4.4 Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards	Maintain to at least 95%



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