



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is the Mornington Chamber of Commerce (MCOC)?**

MCOC is a not-for-profit traders association that represents Mornington businesses along Main Street. It is run by a volunteer committee of fellow local business owners who meet regularly throughout the year (usually monthly) and an Annual General Meeting. The volunteer committee gives their time, skills, and experience to make a contribution to the success of all Main Street traders. MCOC is also supported by one full time staff member in the role of Marketing Manager. Business owners are invited to join the volunteer committee at any time to add their support.

### **What are the main aims of MCOC?**

MCOC aims to:

- market and promote Mornington as a shopping destination and attract visitors to the area via all forms of media (print, radio, online)
- manage the Main Street market, Victoria's longest running street market
- initiate, coordinate and manage local events and activities that contribute to the wellbeing and engagement of the community
- represent and advocate on behalf of local businesses and traders in discussions with local government and other relevant stakeholders (such as local tourism board, other chambers of commerce, peak organisations)
- support and promote the efforts of precinct traders
- promote a unique sense of community in Mornington.

### **Is MCOC affiliated with Mornington Peninsula Shire (MPS)?**

No. MCOC is a separate entity that operates under its own Rules and Regulations (reportable to Consumer Affairs) and is not affiliated with Mornington Peninsula Shire. Having said that, MCOC works in collaboration with MPS staff across a range of departments to leverage any cross-promotion opportunities; makes application on behalf of traders for Community Events funding where available; sources required permits; and looks to MPS for sponsorship opportunities to broaden its reach and impact.



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### **Where does MCOC get its funding?**

MCOC receives its funding via two separate revenue streams being:

1. Wednesday Main Street Market stallholder fees (which fluctuates dependent upon the number of stallholders throughout the year)
2. Special Charge Scheme (SCS) Promotional Fund

### **What is the revenue from the Wednesday market used for?**

1. Christmas decorations/activities
2. School holiday entertainment
3. Advertising
4. Rent and associated outgoings
5. Wednesday market administration

### **What is the SCS Promotional Fund?**

It is a rate or charge of money that is collected by the MPS on behalf of MCOC from property and/or business owners within a specified geographical area. The fund is all about the benefit to the town, rather than being about the benefit to the individual. The SCS Promotional Fund has been in place since 2010 and is now renewed every 7 years (next renewal is scheduled for 2027 which is anticipated to take MCOC 6-12 months to complete). Whilst there is opportunity for individually targeted business promotions, the SCS Promotional Fund is designed for collective advertising for the town as a whole.

### **How is the SCS Promotional Fund collected?**

The SCS is a debt attached to a property and is collected as part of the rates process. MCOC is required to send specific documents to MPS to be able to receive the promotional funds. MPS acts as the banker and issues money from the fund to MCOC on a quarterly basis. MPS does NOT retain any of the promotional funds it collects.

### **What is the history of the SCS Promotional Fund?**

After engagement with local businesses, the SCS Promotional Fund was renewed in 2019 for 7 years, at which time the MCOC voted to reduce fund fees by 25%. When Covid arrived in 2020, MCOC voted to reduce fund fees by 50% for 12 months. Fees are subject to annual CPI increases.



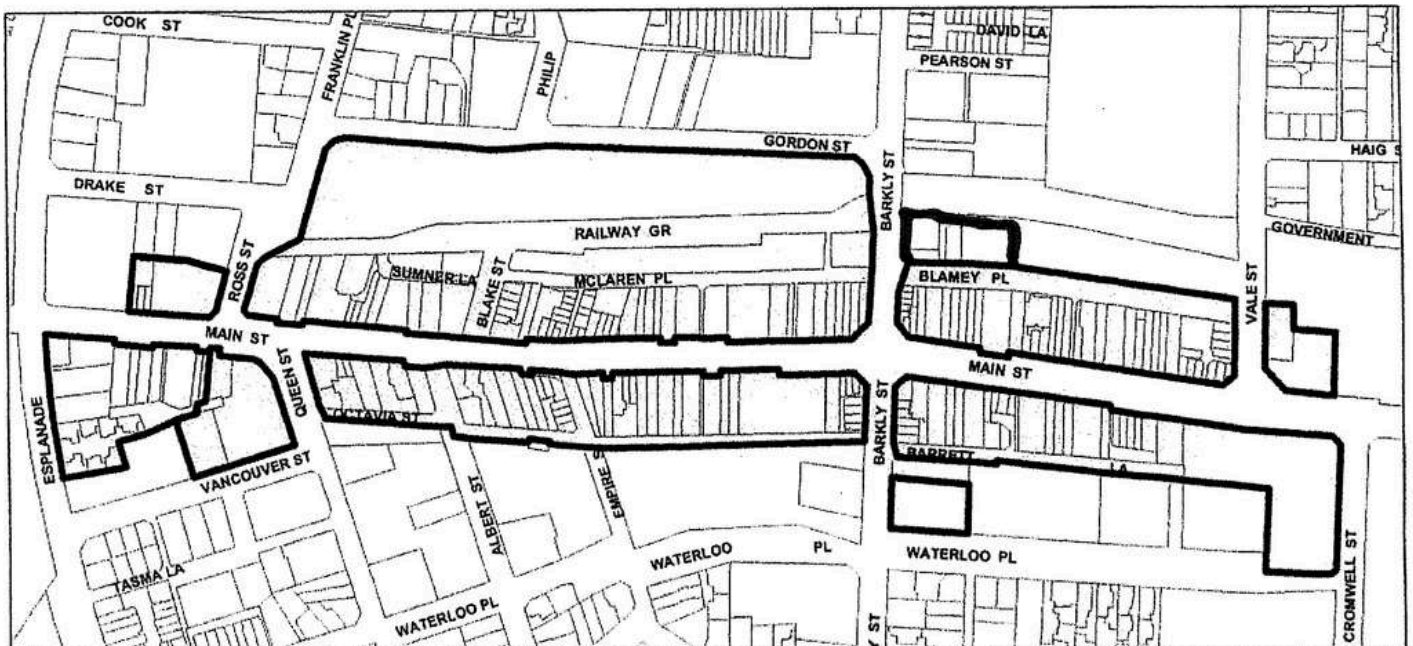


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### What does the SCS Promotional Fund cost?

<b>Tier 1:</b>	Main Street frontage - street level	<b>\$330 per annum</b>
<b>Tier 2:</b>	Main Street frontage - above/below street level or set back Side Street frontage - street level (including arcade)	<b>\$235 per annum</b> <b>\$235 per annum</b>
<b>Tier 3:</b>	Rear of Main Street - street level (includes Barkly Square) Side Street frontage - above/below street level or set back	<b>\$190 per annum</b> <b>\$190 per annum</b>
<b>Tier 4:</b>	Rear of Main Street - above/below street level or set back	<b>\$140 per annum</b>
<b>Tier 5:</b>	Enclosed corporate shopping centres	<b>\$1100 per annum</b>

### What is the geographic area of the SCS Promotional Fund?







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### **Who is responsible for paying the SCS charge?**

Some landlords choose to pay the SCS charge themselves as part of their rates as the property owner. Some landlords forward this charge to their tenants, either directly or via their property agent. Some agents may show this as a separate charge or may bundle it as part of your rent. This is something each tenant can/should discuss with their respective agent or landlord. Regardless as to whether it is the landlord or the tenant who pays the charge, the business owner is eligible to make use of the opportunities generated via MCOC's use of the funds.

### **What are the benefits to businesses of the SCS Promotional Fund?**

Shopping strips or small commercial precincts like Mornington usually operate informally with little or no coordination of promotions; with limited time/resources to pursue shared issues related to street cleaning, waste removal, parking or streetscape upgrades. In comparison, all the big 'hard top' shopping centres operate under body corporates and have full-time centre management teams to generate promotions, advertising and events.

Individual tenants within such centres also pay a marketing fee on top of their rental payments. The SCS Promotional Fund allows smaller, more unique outdoor shopping strips like Main Street to 'act big' whilst being small, and to employ a marketing manager to act on behalf of the precinct (similar to the shopping centres but on a smaller budget).

There are at least 70 strip shopping centres in Victoria operating under Promotional Levies and Special Charge Schemes similar to the one in Mornington. MCOC believes that a co-ordinated, ongoing marketing and promotions program will enable the precinct to further develop its role and function within the Mornington community, strengthening its position in the marketplace and facilitating business development.

Many businesses are active through MCOC; however, there are some businesses who do little to take advantage of the SCS Promotional Fund. MCOC encourages all businesses to make the most of the opportunities available to them via the use of the funds.



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### How does MCOC use the SCS Promotional Funds?

- Advertising of events across all medium (print, electronic, radio)
- Concierge/point of contact for the general public
- Promotional activities (Biggest Morning Tea, Seniors Week, school holidays)
- Mornington Winter Music Festival - Kings Birthday weekend and Christmas activities (supported by MPS grant funding)
- Development of The Connection podcast series with Easy Music 3MP specifically designed to promote the stories/profiles of local traders
- Payment and management of a dedicated website - [www.mainstreetmornington.com.au](http://www.mainstreetmornington.com.au)
- Management of social media pages (facebook and instagram) @mainstreetmornington
- Development of a dedicated e-newsletter to a database of approx 1000 subscribers
- Trader business database for regular e-news communications with MCOC or MPS event/promotion information
- Being a voice for local businesses, advocating on behalf of members
- Provision of regular free networking events and workshops for members
- Network with other chambers of commerce (Sorrento, Mt Eliza, Hastings) and the peak body, Main Street Australia
- Network with Mornington Peninsula Regional Tourism Board
- Street maintenance
- Directional parking signage
- Advertising boards
- Liaison with MPS Economic Development team
- Annual General Meeting
- Promotion of trader activities via social media and website
- Development/creation of merchandise (Mornington reusable shopping bags)

MCOC trusts this answers regarding the Special Charge Scheme Promotional Fund. Should you have any further queries, or would like to discuss how you can maximise the opportunities offered to you by MCOC, please contact Alex Levy on [info@mainstreetmornington.com.au](mailto:info@mainstreetmornington.com.au)