



ESSENTIAL ECONOMICS

Greater Shepparton City Council Economic Development Strategy 2009-2012

Prepared for

Greater Shepparton City Council

By

Essential Economics Pty Ltd

May 2009

Authorship

Report stage	Author	Date	Review	Date
Draft 1 report	John Noronha and John Henshall	25.02.09	Matthew Lee	27.02.09
Draft 2 report	John Henshall	04.03.09	John Noronha	04.03.09
Draft 3 report	John Noronha	17.03.09	John Henshall	10.04.09
Final draft report	John Henshall	14.04.09	John Noronha	16.04.09
Final report	John Noronha	22.04.09	John Henshall	18.05.09

Disclaimer

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material and the integrity of the analysis presented herein, although Essential Economics Pty Ltd accepts no liability for any actions taken on the basis of the contents of this report.

Contact details

For further details please contact:

Essential Economics Pty Ltd
96 Pelham Street
Carlton
Victoria 3053
Australia
PH 61 3 9347 5255
FAX 61 3 9347 5355
EMAIL mail@essentialeconomics.com
WEB www.essentialeconomics.com

ABN 38 894 627 397

Job Code: **08115**

Contents

Executive Summary	i
Introduction.....	1
1 Economic Profile	3
1.1 Location	3
1.2 Population	7
1.3 Socio-Economic and Demographic Features	9
1.4 Economic Base	12
1.5 Key Industry Sectors	14
1.6 Labour Market	20
1.7 Property Market	22
1.8 Conclusion	24
2 Review of ‘Purpose’ and ‘Objectives’ in EDS 2007	26
2.1 ‘Purpose’ Underpinning the EDS 2007	26
2.2 ‘Objectives’ Underpinning the EDS 2007	26
2.3 Conclusion	27
3 Review of Relevant Policies and Strategies	28
3.1 Review of Relevant Policies and Strategies in EDS 2007	28
3.2 Review of Policies and Strategies Relevant to 2009-2012 EDS	29
3.3 Conclusion	37
4 Comments from Consultations.....	38
4.1 Achieving Leadership in Economic Development	38
4.2 Building a Diversified Economy	39
4.3 Considering Risks Associated with Potential Industry Loss and the Need to Diversify	40
4.4 Promoting Shepparton’s Special Attributes.....	40
4.5 Reinforcing Educational Opportunities.....	42
4.6 Addressing Labour Force Skill Shortages	42
4.7 Developing the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre.....	43
4.8 Implementing the Food Bowl Modernisation Project	43
4.9 Improving Passenger and Freight Rail Services to/from Greater Shepparton	44
4.10 Improving the Amenity of the Goulburn River Environs.....	44
4.11 Promoting Shepparton to Government as a ‘Regional Centre’	45
4.12 Fostering Growth in Small Towns	45
4.13 Keeping Young People in the Region	46
4.14 Promoting Lifestyle Aspects	46
4.15 Conclusion	47
5 Issues and Opportunities	48
5.1 Issues and Opportunities Summary.....	48
5.2 Conclusion	49
6 Framework for Greater Shepparton Economic Development Strategy, 2009-2012	50
6.1 Vision	50
6.2 Objectives	50
6.3 Actions	51
6.4 Monitoring and Review	52
6.5 Conclusion	52

7	Work Plan for Council's Economic Development Unit 2009-2012.....	53
7.1	Action Plan 1: Providing Leadership in Pursuing Economic Development	54
7.2	Action Plan 2: Dealing with Opportunities Associated with Population Growth.....	57
7.3	Action Plan 3: Retaining/Growing Existing Businesses/Jobs and Encouraging New Businesses/Jobs	61
7.4	Action Plan 4: Diversifying the Economic Base	65
7.5	Action Plan 5: Identifying New Business Opportunities.....	68
7.6	Action Plan 6: Addressing the Skills Shortage	71
7.7	Action Plan 7: Promoting Improved Passenger and Freight Rail Services to and from Greater Shepparton...	74
7.8	Action Plan 8: Supporting the Shepparton CBD.....	76
7.9	Action Plan 9: Promoting Greater Shepparton	78
7.10	Action Plan 10: Supporting the Small Towns	80
7.11	Action Plan 11: Retaining Young People in Greater Shepparton	82
7.12	Action Plan 12: Ensuring the Development of the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre.....	84
7.13	Estimated Financial Resources Required for EDU Work Plan, 2009-2012	87
7.14	Top 5 Priorities for Council Action, 2009-2012	88
7.15	Conclusion	88
8	Performance Monitoring.....	89
8.1	Performance Indicators	89
8.2	Performance Indicators for Council's EDU.....	92
8.3	Conclusion	92

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

1. The Greater Shepparton City Council commissioned Essential Economics Pty Ltd to prepare the Greater Shepparton Economic Development Strategy 2009-2012 (EDS). This new strategy includes a review of the Strategy prepared in 2007 and incorporates additional information from published sources and consultations, and provides an action plan for the implementation of the strategy by Council's Economic Development Unit (EDU).

Economic Profile

2. In 2009, Greater Shepparton has a resident population totalling 61,610 persons, and this is forecast to reach 71,610 persons by 2026. The projected growth in population between 2009 and 2031 of +10,000 persons will have important economic development implications for the municipality, including the need to provide a significant number of new residential dwellings and supporting infrastructure and services, and a requirement for more job creation.
3. The resident labour force in Greater Shepparton totals an estimated 30,225 persons and this figure includes 1,825 unemployed persons or 6.0% of the labour force. By comparison, regional Victoria has an unemployment rate of 4.7%.
4. It will be important to ensure an increase in the numbers of jobs locally available to the Greater Shepparton resident labour force. The number of jobs available to residents will need to increase by +795 jobs by 2011 and by a further +1,570 jobs by 2016. Thus, between 2009 and 2016, a total of +2,365 new jobs would be required to meet the growth in the number of new labour force entrants in Greater Shepparton. These estimates assume that the existing number of unemployed persons (1,825) remains the same.
5. In terms of economic base, Greater Shepparton has a higher share of manufacturing jobs compared with regional Victoria (13.3% compared with 10.8%) and a higher share of jobs in service industries (70.2% compared with 66.5%). These statistics reflect the importance of food processing and associated industry in Greater Shepparton, as well as the city's role as a service centre to north-central Victoria.
6. EDS 2009-2012 will need to address opportunities to sustain existing industries and to attract new activities which help to diversify the economy, and with special emphasis on attracting new and expanded levels of investment and jobs. Attention will also need to focus on ongoing structural adjustment, particularly in irrigated agricultural activities through the Food Bowl Modernisation Project, and also restructuring in manufacturing.
7. A further consideration will be the extent to which the global financial crisis may have an adverse impact on the level of economic activity in Greater Shepparton or on the economic outlook of markets in which Greater Shepparton is involved. In these circumstances it would be prudent for the EDU to ensure that existing levels of economic activity and employment in Greater Shepparton are at least maintained over the period of the next plan, 2009 to 2012, and expanded where possible.

Policies and Strategies

8. In terms of policies and strategies of relevance to the economic development of Greater Shepparton, the earlier-prepared EDS 2007 identifies many worthy outcomes in these documents, especially with reference to Greater Shepparton 2030 and the Council Plan, with emphasis on supporting the agriculture sector, strengthening the Shepparton CBD, providing industrial land, ensuring a skilled workforce, introducing improved levels of training, and supporting small towns.
9. Since 2007, a number of new policies and strategies have been developed and are in various stages of implementation. Continuing policy support is in evidence in regard to enhancing regional skills, improving the CBD, continuing the *Shepparton Show Me* marketing program, supporting new and expanded businesses, attracting skilled migrants, developing the transport and logistics industry, and further developing the harness racing industry.

Consultations

10. A review of viewpoints gleaned from the consultation process shows many topics of relevance to the ongoing economic development of Greater Shepparton. These range from ensuring good leadership and keeping young people in the region, to building a diversified economy and promoting the special attributes of Greater Shepparton as a place to live, invest and work.
11. Topics raised during the consultation phase included:
 - Achieving leadership in Economic Development
 - Building a diversified economy
 - Considering risks associated with potential industry loss and the need to diversify the economy
 - Promoting Shepparton's special attributes
 - Reinforcing educational opportunities
 - Addressing labour forces skill shortages
 - Developing the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre (GVFLC)
 - Implementing the Food Bowl Modernisation Project
 - Promoting an improvement in passenger and freight rail services to/from Greater Shepparton
 - Improving the Amenity of the Goulburn river environs
 - Promoting Shepparton to government as a 'Regional Centre'
 - Fostering growth in small towns
 - Keeping young people in the region
 - Promoting lifestyle aspects

Vision

12. *“Greater Shepparton will be a prosperous, innovative and dynamic place where the strengths of the local and regional economy and the skills and application of the resident population will be promoted as key attributes in fostering innovation, attracting investments, developing labour skills, growing existing businesses, and creating new businesses and new jobs.*

This will be a place where the achievement of best practice in the sustainable development of the agricultural, manufacturing, transport and logistics industries will be world-class, and where the community is renowned for its ‘can do’ spirit in achieving positive economic and social outcomes for the benefit of all in Greater Shepparton”

Objectives

13. Objectives to guide the achievement of the strategy are as follows:
- 1 To provide leadership in identifying and implementing economic development opportunities
 - 2 To identify and address the implications for economic development arising from population growth
 - 3 To identify opportunities to retain and grow existing businesses and jobs, and to encourage new businesses and jobs
 - 4 To diversify the economic base
 - 5 To identify opportunities for new and expanded levels of business development
 - 6 To ensure that a sufficient supply of skilled labour is available to support economic growth and industry development
 - 7 To promote improved passenger and freight rail services to/from Greater Shepparton
 - 8 To support the role and viability of the Shepparton CBD as the premier centre serving the region
 - 9 To promote Greater Shepparton as a place to live, work and invest
 - 10 To support the viability of small towns and their communities
 - 11 To keep young people living in Greater Shepparton
 - 12 To ensure the development of the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre.

Actions

14. Actions which will support the successful achievement of the Vision and the Objectives are identified as follows:
- Rationale - why the objective and the actions are important
 - Actions - description of the recommended actions

- Implementation - who initiates the action and who implements the action
- Cost - estimated annual cost to Council's EDU budget
- Priority - High, Medium, Low

EDU's Work Plan 2009-2012

15. The actions and the underlying responsibilities for implementation and the estimates of likely cost and timing are presented in the **Work Plan for Council's EDU 2009-2012**.

The actions have been selected on the basis of the following principles:

- Actions support the Vision and Objectives
- Implementation of the Actions can commence immediately
- Outcomes can be achieved efficiently in terms of recommended role and budget for the EDU
- The EDU has the principal role in initiating Actions, with roles identified for other stakeholders
- Actions are in areas identified through consultation as priorities for economic development

16. The top five priorities for Council action, through the work of the EDU, are as follows:

- (1) To ensure the development of the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre
- (2) To identify opportunities to retain and grow existing businesses and jobs, and to encourage the creation of new businesses and jobs.
- (3) To diversify the economic base
- (4) To promote improved passenger and freight rail services to/from Greater Shepparton
- (5) To promote Greater Shepparton as a place to live, work and invest.

Monitoring

17. The success of the EDS will be determined largely by the implementation of the Work Plan and by the implementation of the individual Actions. Key performance indicators have been developed for each Action in order to monitor both implementation and emerging economic outcomes.
18. The performance indicators identified for each Action are intended to assist in assessing the effectiveness of the implementation and outcomes of the EDS. Each of the indicators is easily measurable, with targets identified by which to monitor progress over a specified time period.
19. It will be necessary for the EDU to prepare performance standards by which the implementation of the EDS by EDU/Council can be measured over the course of the period 2009-2012. The internal 'performance indicators' would be expected to take into account factors such as the following:
- Structure of the EDU and its relationship to other departments in Council
 - Existing and planned staffing levels in the EDU

- Existing roles, responsibilities and work programs in the EDU
- Priorities that EDU and Council identify for the EDU work program
- Specific measures to be applied for measurement of implementation of specific components of the EDS

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Greater Shepparton City Council commissioned Essential Economics Pty Ltd to prepare the **Greater Shepparton Economic Development Strategy 2009-2012** (EDS).

This new strategy includes a review of the Strategy prepared in 2007 and incorporates additional information from published sources and consultations, and provides an action plan for the implementation of the strategy by Council's Economic Development Unit (EDU).

Objectives

As described in the Study Brief (p1), the EDS is intended to *"increase the Council's capacity to identify and pursue economic development initiatives"*. The focus is on *"identifying opportunities to promote investment and employment growth within a constantly changing domestic and international economic and environmental landscape"*.

Thus, the EDS objectives can be clearly stated as follows:

- To identify opportunities to promote investment and employment retention and growth, and
- To increase Council's capacity to pursue these investment and employment opportunities.

Overall, the focus for the EDS is placed on providing a work program for Council's EDU to implement in the period 2009 to 2012.

Outcomes

The Brief (p2) lists several outcomes for the project:

1. Review the vision and charter contained in the 2007 EDS
2. Provide an economic profile of the municipality
3. Develop strategic economic development objectives, program areas and outcomes for Council
4. Determine key priorities for the EDU for 2009-2012
5. Develop an annual work plan for the EDU for 2009-2012, including actions and resource allocations.

Approach

The following approach has been adopted in preparing the EDS 2009:

- Field visit to Greater Shepparton
- Briefing with Council's Manager Economic Development
- Review of existing relevant strategies and reports

- Consultation program, including meetings with groups and individuals
- Compilation of relevant data, including ABS 2006 Census data and information from other sources
- Consideration of key issues identified in the Brief (p1) and during the project
- Preparation of the Economic Development Strategy, including vision, objectives and actions
- Prioritising of actions for Council's EDU and preparation of a work plan for the EDU
- Identifying key performance indicators to measure implementation of the strategy

Acknowledgements

The consultant acknowledges with appreciation the valuable contributions of individuals, businesses, institutions and others in the Greater Shepparton community, and the assistance provided by Council's Ms Alicia Keogh, Manager Economic Development and her colleagues. Any errors or omissions are the responsibility of the consultant.

1 ECONOMIC PROFILE

This Chapter provides an overview of the Greater Shepparton economy and the factors which influence economic development. Information is provided in relation to the following:

- Location characteristics
- Population growth and trends
- Socio-economic and demographic features of residents
- Industry and business structure
- Key economic activities
- Labour market and employment provision
- Property market features and trends

Where relevant, information is presented and assessed for the City of Greater Shepparton and, separately, for urban Shepparton and the several small towns. Data comparisons are also provided with regional Victoria where relevant.

1.1 Location

General location

The City of Greater Shepparton is located in the Goulburn Valley in north central Victoria, approximately 180 km north of metropolitan Melbourne and 72 km south-east of Echuca on the Murray River. Figure 1.1 shows this regional context.

Greater Shepparton is well-located in terms of accessibility to metropolitan Melbourne and major regional centres, having regard for the Goulburn Valley Highway and the Midland Highway in particular, each of which passes through Shepparton.

Surrounding municipalities comprise Moira Shire to the north, Strathbogie Shire to the south, Campaspe Shire to the west and Benalla Rural City to the east. Figure 1.2 shows the municipal boundaries and the Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) which comprise Greater Shepparton.

Main centres in the wider region include Bendigo, Echuca and Benalla.

Urban Areas and Small Townships

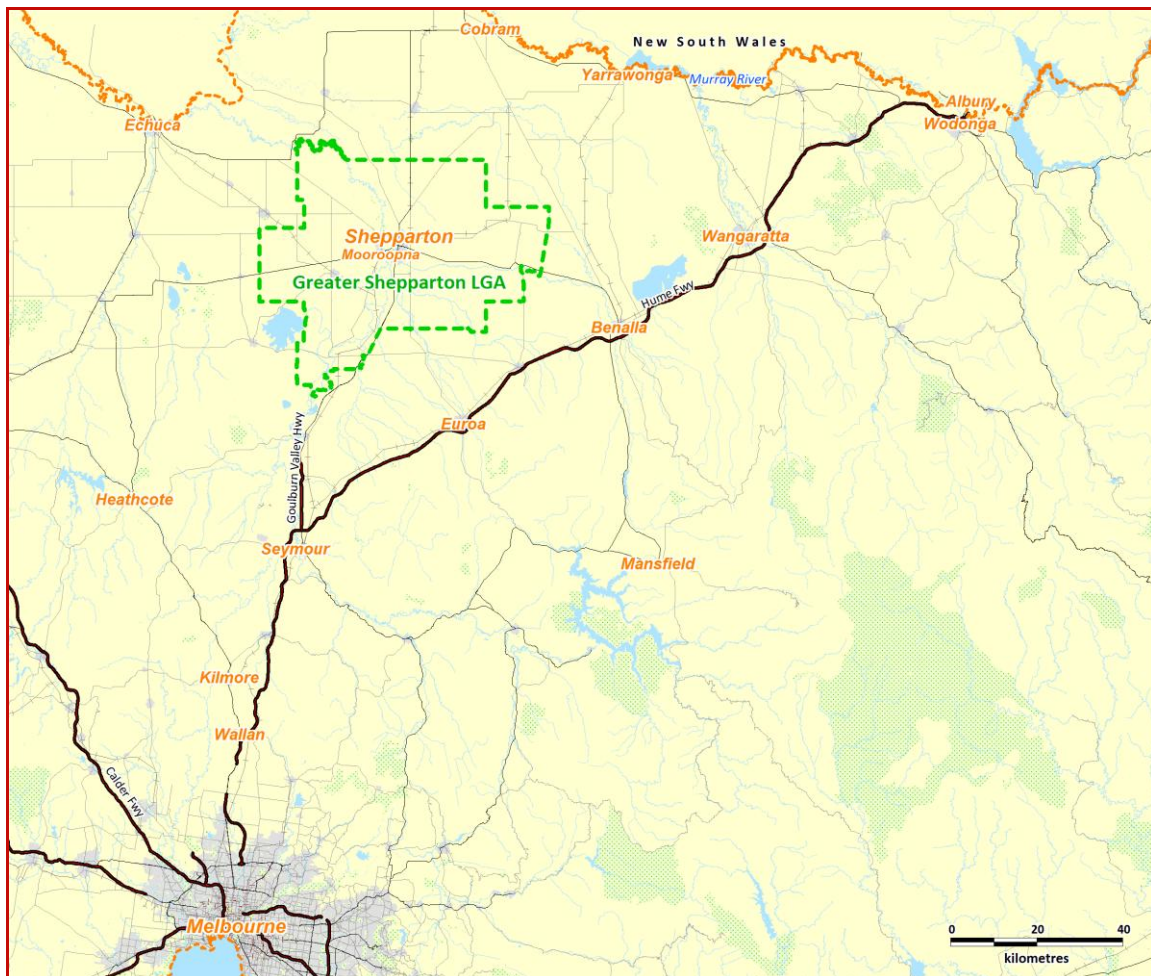
Greater Shepparton comprises the following urban areas and main townships, as shown in Figure 1.3:

- Shepparton
- Mooroopna
- Tatura
- Murchison
- Merrigum

- Tallygaroopna
- Dookie
- Undera
- Toolamba

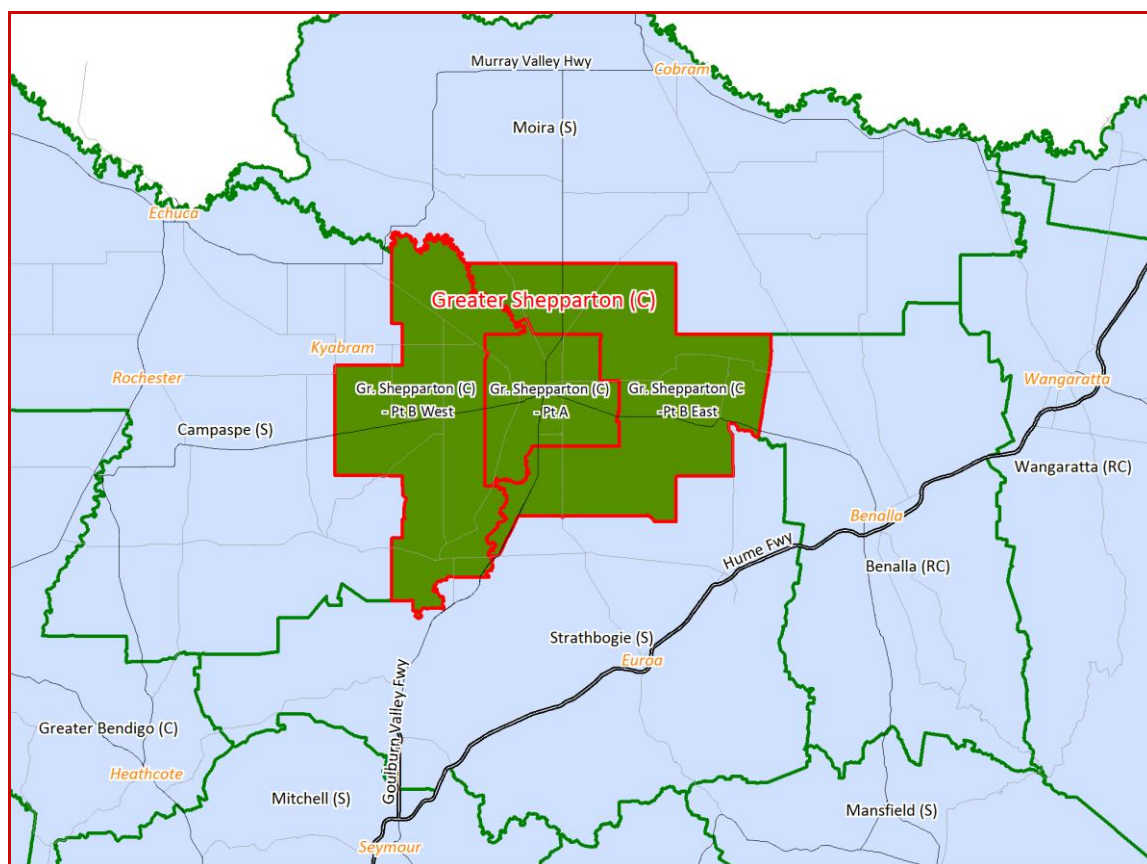
In addition to these localities, a number of small rural settlements in the municipality include Coomboona, Katandra, Congupna, Orrvale, Kialla and Nalinga.

Figure 1.1: City of Greater Shepparton Regional Context



Source: produced by Essential Economics with MapInfo and Street Pro

Figure 1.2: City of Greater Shepparton Municipal Boundaries and Statistical Local Area Boundaries



Source: produced by Essential Economics with MapInfo and Street Pro

1.2 Population

Estimated Resident Population

The resident population of Greater Shepparton in 2009 is estimated to be in the order of 61,610 persons; this estimate is based on forecasts prepared by the DPCD and published in *Victoria in Future, 2008* (VIF 2008).

In the period 2001 to 2009, population numbers in Greater Shepparton increased by a net +3,460 persons, representing an average annual increase of 0.7% pa. By comparison, regional Victoria experienced an average growth rate of +0.9% pa, metropolitan Melbourne +1.6% pa, and Victoria +1.4% pa. Much of the population growth has occurred in just the last few years, particularly since 2005.

Table 1.1 shows the trend in Greater Shepparton's population growth in the period since 2001.

Over the next 20 to 25 years, the growth rate for Greater Shepparton is expected to further increase compared with the past decade or so, and this is discussed later.

Table 1.1: Estimated Resident Population, Selected Locations, 2001-2007

	2001	2005	2006	2007 Provisional	2009 Estimated	Change 2001-2006	Change 2006-2009	Change 2001-2009
Greater Shepparton	58,150	58,680	59,200	59,970	61,610	+1,050 +0.36% pa	+2,410 +1.33% pa	+3,460 +0.72% pa
Regional Victoria	1,333,100	1,368,450	1,383,940	1,399,130	1,433,160	+66,030 +0.75% pa	+49,220 +1.17% pa	+100,060 +0.91% pa
Metropolitan Melbourne	3,471,630	3,682,070	3,744,370	3,806,090	3,947,730	+334,460 +1.52% pa	+203,360 +1.78% pa	+476,100 +1.62% pa
Victoria	4,804,730	5,050,520	5,128,310	5,205,220	5,380,890	+400,490 +1.31% pa	+252,580 +1.62% pa	576,160 +1.43% pa

Source: ABS *Census of Population and Housing 2006*; ABS *Regional Population Growth, Australia Cat. No. 3218.0*; DPCD *Victoria in Future 2008*

Note: Figures rounded

Urban and Township Populations

Population data for Shepparton's urban areas and townships is shown in Table 1.2 for the year 2007; this is the most recent year for which official data are available at the local level. While official estimates at this local level are not available for 2009, the proportionate distribution of total population by locality within the municipality is not likely to have changed significantly over the two years since the above-mentioned 2007 ERP estimates were calculated.

As indicated in the Table, in 2007 'Urban Shepparton' comprised two parts: Shepparton township (32,220 persons) and the Mooroopna township (7,550 persons); combined, this urban area had an estimated resident population of 39,770 persons in 2007 (ABS provisional estimates).

Population growth in urban Shepparton in recent years has been significant: between 2001 and 2007, the urban area expanded by approximately 670 persons pa and at an average rate of +1.8% pa. This contrasts with an average increase of 525 persons pa or 1.6% pa between 1991 and 2001, and an average of just 215 persons pa or 0.7% pa between 1981 and 1991. The recent trend for an expansion in population numbers reflects the popularity of urban Shepparton-Mooroopna as a place to live, and this is also partially due to the movement of population from rural areas into the main urban centres in the municipality (and this is a trend across most if not all regions in Victoria).

Table 1.2: Estimated Resident Population, Urban Areas, Selected Townships and Rural Areas, 2007

Locality	No. Residents, 2007 (provisional estimates)
<u>Main Urban Areas</u>	
Shepparton	32,220
Mooroopna	7,550
<i>Sub-Total Shepparton-Mooroopna</i>	<i>39,770</i>
<u>Small Towns</u>	
Tatura	3,680
Murchison	780
Undera	635
Merrigum	470
Katandra	460
Dookie	310
Tallygaroopna	300
Toolamba	300
<i>Sub-Total Small Towns</i>	<i>6,935</i>
<i>Sub-Total Rural Areas / Hamlets</i>	<i>13,265</i>
TOTAL	59,970

Source: ABS provisional estimates for 2007. Figures rounded.

Tatura is the next largest township with a population of 3,680 persons in 2007, while the remaining smaller townships have populations under 1,000 persons and include Murchison (780), Undera (635), Merrigum (470), Katandra (460), Dookie (310) and Tallygaroopna and Toolamba (each 300). Approximately 13,270 persons live in smaller hamlets and in the surrounding rural areas in the balance of the municipality.

The ongoing role and function of each of the small townships and their relationship with the urban centre is taken into account in the development of the EDS.

Forecast Population

By 2026, Greater Shepparton is projected to have a total resident population of approximately 71,610 persons. This represents a net increase of +10,000 persons over the period 2009 to 2026, and represents an average increase of +0.9 % pa. Population projections for Greater Shepparton are shown in Table 1.3 on the following page.

By comparison, over the period 2008 to 2031 regional Victoria's population is expected to increase at an average annual growth rate of +1.1%, while for Melbourne the growth rate is forecast at 1.4% pa and for Victoria 1.3% pa.

When the VIF 2008 forecasts to 2026 are extrapolated to 2031, the Greater Shepparton projection (73,780 residents) is marginally lower (by approximately 6%) than the projection earlier prepared for Council by id consultants (79,060 residents by 2031), noting that the id forecast is based on 2001 Census data.

Table 1.3: Population Projections for Greater Shepparton, 2009 to 2026

	2009	2011	2016	2021	2026	Growth 2009-2026	Av. Annual Growth Rate 2009-2026
Greater Shepparton	61,610	63,210	66,370	69,140	71,610	+10,000	+0.84%

Source: Department of Planning and Community Development, *Victoria in Future 2008*; Essential Economics

The projected growth in Greater Shepparton's resident population between 2009 and 2026 (+10,000 persons, representing a 16% increase on the 2009 population level) will have important economic development implications for the municipality, including the need to provide a significant number of new residential dwellings and a requirement for more job creation, as well as expanding and improving the provision of infrastructure (from roads and open space to schools and hospitals) to cater for this larger population. These issues are addressed later in this Economic Development Strategy.

For the period of the EDU's work plan 2009-2012, Greater Shepparton's resident population is forecast to increase by 2,220 persons.

1.3 Socio-Economic and Demographic Features

Key findings in relation to demographic and socio-economic indicators are summarised below.

Income

Greater Shepparton residents have incomes which are higher than the regional Victoria average, but lower than State incomes overall. For example, the median annual individual income for Greater Shepparton residents is \$22,215 and this is 7% above regional Victorian median (\$20,805), but 6% below the State median (\$23,750). When median annual household income is considered, the Greater Shepparton household figure is \$46,200 pa, which is 8% higher than regional Victoria median (\$42,755 pa), but 9% below the State median (\$53,270 pa). Data relating to income levels is shown in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4: Median Income Levels, Greater Shepparton, 2006

	Gr. Shepparton (C) - Pt. A	Gr. Shepparton (C) - Pt. B East	Gr. Shepparton (C) - Pt. B West	Gr. Shepparton (C) LGA	Regional Victoria	Victoria
Median individual income per annum	\$22,265	\$24,665	\$20,910	\$22,215	\$20,805	\$23,750
Median household income per annum	\$45,310	\$55,635	\$45,625	\$46,200	\$42,755	\$53,270

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2006; Essential Economics

From an economic development perspective, income levels are an important indicator as they provide a spending base within the municipality which creates demand for retail and other goods and services, and which, in turn, leads to new and expanded levels of employment.

Income also reflects the composition and performance of the local economy and the extent to which regional income is derived from high-value economic sectors.

Education

Greater Shepparton residents have a very similar level of education compared to their regional counterparts, but a lower level of education (as measured by residents holding degree or above qualifications) compared to State averages. For example, of those holding post-school qualifications 27% have attained degree and above qualifications (the same as for regional Victoria), but this is significantly lower than the state average (43%). Post-school education data is provided in Table 1.5.

Greater Shepparton residents have a much stronger representation in terms of Certificate education (52%, which is similar to regional Victoria), compared to the State average of 37%.

This post-school education data reflects industry structure and employment opportunities of many regional areas, which tend to have a stronger focus on blue collar activities (eg, agriculture, manufacturing, transport and logistics) compared with other locations, particularly metropolitan Melbourne areas, which have a stronger focus on white collar activities (eg, finance, insurance, professions, etc).

In the context of this EDS it is important to recognise the role played by Shepparton as a regional centre, as well as the diverse skills base in the municipality, and to target strategies which support investment, training and job opportunities across a wide range of sectors.

Table 1.5: Education Levels - Post School, Greater Shepparton, 2006

Qualification	Greater Shepparton	Regional Victoria	Victoria
Postgraduate Degree	3%	3%	7%
Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate	4%	4%	5%
Bachelor Degree	21%	21%	31%
Advanced Diploma and Diploma	16%	17%	18%
Certificate	52%	51%	37%
Level of education inadequately described	3%	3%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: 2006 ABS Census of Population and Housing, Essential Economics

Occupation

Greater Shepparton's occupational structure in 2006, as shown in Table 1.6 on the following page, highlights a diverse labour force base, and one which is broadly similar to that found in regional Victoria overall. The key difference is the relatively high proportion of Greater Shepparton residents who are employed as labourers and machinery operators and drivers (22% compared with 20% for regional Victoria and 16% for Victoria), and this largely reflects Shepparton's industry base in manufacturing and in transport and logistics.

Also, approximately 32% of the Greater Shepparton resident labour force is occupied as managers and professionals (this compares to 32% for regional Victoria and 34% for the State) and a further 22% are occupied as sales and clerical workers (22% for regional Victoria and 25% for the State). In addition, approximately 14% of Greater Shepparton's resident workers are occupied as technicians and trades workers, while a further 8% are occupied as community and personal service workers, and these ratios are similar to State averages but slightly below averages for regional Victoria.

Table 1.6: Resident Labour Force Occupations, Greater Shepparton, 2006

Occupations	Greater	Shepparton	Regional Victoria	Victoria
	No.	%	%	%
Managers	4,142	16.2%	16.3%	13.5%
Professionals	3,970	15.6%	15.6%	20.8%
Technicians & trades workers	3,486	13.7%	15.4%	14.0%
Community & personal service workers	2,065	8.1%	9.0%	8.4%
Clerical & administrative workers	3,028	11.9%	11.8%	14.8%
Sales workers	2,707	10.6%	9.8%	10.1%
Machinery operators & drivers	1,854	7.3%	7.1%	6.5%
Labourers	3,780	14.8%	13.1%	9.9%
Inadequately stated/ not stated	476	1.9%	1.7%	2.0%
Total	25,508	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2006; Essential Economics

Place of Birth

Greater Shepparton has a similar proportion of Australian-born residents (83%) compared with regional Victoria, but a considerably higher proportion compared with Victoria overall (69%). However, of significance is the relatively high proportion of Shepparton residents from non-English speaking countries. The numbers include people coming to live in Greater Shepparton as skilled migrants and seasonal workers; a share of the migrants are also refugees. Place of birth data is included in Table 1.7.

As an example of the migrant influence, 1.8% of Greater Shepparton residents originate from Turkey, Iraq and Albania, and this compares with only 0.1% for regional Victoria and 0.5% for Victoria.

When developing strategies as part of the EDS it will be important to recognise the need to provide language training and other support services to new migrants; this will assist them in fully participating in the workforce and in the community.

Table 1.7: Residents' Place of Birth, Greater Shepparton, 2006

Place of Birth	Greater Shepparton (C) No.	Greater Shepparton (C) %	Regional Victoria %	Victoria %
Australia	47,350	82.9%	84.2%	69.6%
Italy	1,090	1.9%	0.7%	1.7%
England	800	1.4%	2.9%	3.3%
New Zealand	530	0.9%	0.9%	1.3%
Albania	360	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Turkey	350	0.6%	0.1%	0.3%
Iraq	340	0.6%	0.0%	0.2%
Netherlands	230	0.4%	0.6%	0.5%
India	230	0.4%	0.2%	1.1%
Greece	210	0.4%	0.2%	1.1%
Scotland	180	0.3%	0.5%	0.6%
Philippines	160	0.3%	0.2%	0.6%
Other	5,260	9.2%	9.5%	19.8%
Total	57,090	100%	100%	100%

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2006 (figures rounded)

1.4 Economic Base

The underlying economic base in Greater Shepparton is reflected in Census data showing employment patterns by key industries, as summarised below.

In terms of the conventional description of key industry sectors, the Tertiary Sector (ie, services) provides 71% of the jobs provided in Greater Shepparton, followed by the Secondary Sector (ie, manufacturing and construction) with 19% of jobs, and the Primary Sector (ie, farming and mining) with 10%. As noted below, this pattern is broadly similar to the regional Victoria distribution of jobs by main sectors.

Table 1.8 on the following page provides a listing of industry sectors in Greater Shepparton and the share of jobs in each; the data is sourced from the ABS Population Census 2006, Journey-to-Work series (ie, jobs actually located in Greater Shepparton). The main sectors in employment terms are as follows (figures rounded, with regional Victoria shares shown in brackets):

- Retail 3,490 jobs, or 14% (Regional Victoria: 12%)
- Manufacturing 3,340 jobs, or 13% (11%)
- Health care 3,260 jobs, or 13% (11%)
- Agriculture etc 2,420 jobs, or 10% (9%)
- Education/Training 1,935 jobs, or 8% (8%)
- Accommodation and food services 1,220 jobs or 5% (6%)
- Public administration 1,080 jobs, or 4% (5%)

These individual sectors account for 67% of all jobs in Greater Shepparton, and this compares with 62% of all jobs in regional Victoria.

When the employment patterns are examined according to geographic area, as defined by Statistical Local Area (SLA), it is evident that the vast majority of Tertiary or service sector jobs (89%) and Secondary

sector jobs in manufacturing and construction (81%) are located in urban Shepparton (ie, Greater Shepparton SLA, Part A). The majority of Primary sector jobs (63%) are located in the mainly rural SLAs of Greater Shepparton Pt B, East and West.

This overview of industry structure confirms the important role of Greater Shepparton as a regional centre for retail, health, education and community services, and also emphasises the ongoing importance of activities associated with agriculture, manufacturing, construction and transport and logistics to the local economy. Specific sectors are described in Section 1.5.

Table 1.8: Key Sectors and Jobs, Greater Shepparton, 2006

Industry sector	No.	Share	Regional Victoria Share
Primary Sector			
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	2,418	9.6%	8.7%
Mining	21	0.1%	0.5%
Sub-Total	2,439	9.7%	9.2%
Secondary Sector			
Manufacturing	3,339	13.3%	10.8%
Construction	1,538	6.1%	12.4%
Sub-Total	4,877	19.4%	23.2%
Tertiary Sector			
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	629	2.5%	1.3%
Wholesale trade	1,042	4.1%	3.1%
Retail trade	3,487	13.9%	11.7%
Accommodation and food services	1,222	4.9%	6.0%
Transport, postal and warehousing	1,039	4.1%	4.1%
Information, media and telecommunications	356	1.4%	1.6%
Financial and insurance services	602	2.4%	1.8%
Rental, hiring and real estate services	252	1.0%	1.0%
Professional, scientific and technical services	984	3.9%	3.6%
Administrative and support services	621	2.5%	3.4%
Public administration and safety	1,077	4.3%	5.3%
Education and training	1,935	7.7%	7.6%
Health care and social assistance	3,257	12.9%	11.2%
Arts and recreation services	183	0.7%	1.2%
Other services	996	4.0%	3.6%
Sub-Total	17,682	70.2%	66.5%
Inadequately described / Not stated	175	0.7%	1.2%
Total	25,173	100.0%	100.0%

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing – Journey to Work, 2006

1.5 Key Industry Sectors

Agriculture

Greater Shepparton's agriculture, forestry and fishing sector provides 2,480 jobs and accounts for approximately 10% of all jobs in the municipality. Most of these jobs (62%) are located in the non-urban parts of Greater Shepparton, as to be expected.

The latest available data for agricultural production in Greater Shepparton relates to the ABS Agricultural Census 2001 (noting that data from the 2006 ABS Agricultural Census is not yet available), and a summary is provided below.

In 2001, the value of Greater Shepparton's agricultural production was estimated to be \$410 million pa and comprised the following components:

- horticulture production approximately \$170 million,
- dairy production \$140 million,
- livestock \$60 million,
- cropping \$15 million, and
- other agricultural activities \$25 million.

In 2008 dollar terms, the agricultural production in 2001 would be equivalent to \$500 million. This 2008 figure is only provided as a broad indication of possible value of the sector, as the actual figure in 2008 will be influenced by the extent to which ongoing drought conditions and other variables have affected agricultural output.

The agricultural sector is vitally important in providing business and employment opportunities in other sectors in Greater Shepparton. This includes providing horticultural produce for major food processing companies located in the municipality, with major examples being SPC Ardmona, Campbells Soups and Unilever. The agricultural sector also creates significant demand for the transport and logistics sector through the storage and distribution of dairy and other processed goods, and for the manufacturing sector through processing and packaging activities. The Agricultural sector also supports a range of other services to farming, such as machinery manufacturing and repairs, fencing, and financial services.

Manufacturing

Greater Shepparton's manufacturing sector provides 3,340 jobs or 13.3% of all jobs in the municipality.

As Table 1.9 on the following page shows, more than one-half of all of Greater Shepparton's manufacturing jobs (1,755 jobs or 53%) are associated with food manufacturing. This highlights the important relationship between the sector and the region's agricultural activities.

Other manufacturing activities are widespread, with fabricated metal manufacturing (330 jobs or 10%) the next most important manufacturing activity, followed by primary metal and metal product manufacturing (140 jobs or 4%), and machinery and equipment manufacturing (120 jobs or 4%).

The importance of manufacturing in Greater Shepparton (13.3% of all jobs) relative to regional Victoria (10.8%) is also evident. Expressed another way, Greater Shepparton has approximately 56 manufacturing jobs per 1,000 population compared with regional Victoria's 47 jobs per 1,000 population, and this ratio is approximately 20% greater for Greater Shepparton on a per capita basis.

Transport and Logistics

The transport, postal and warehousing sector in Greater Shepparton provides 1,040 jobs or 4.1% of all jobs in the municipality. Table 1.10, also on the following page, provides a summary of jobs in the transport sector at the 2006 Population and Housing Census.

The importance of road transport is significant as this sub-sector provides almost three-quarters of all jobs in the Transport and Logistics sector (760 jobs or 73%). Other sub-sectors of interest include postal and courier pick-up and delivery services (105 jobs or 10%), and transport support services (75 jobs or 7%). Only 3% of all transport and logistics jobs in Greater Shepparton are in the rail, water and air transport sub-sectors.

Table 1.9: Jobs in Manufacturing Activities, Greater Shepparton, 2006

Manufacturing Sub- sector	No. Jobs	% Jobs
Food Product Manufacturing	1,755	52.6%
Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	30	0.9%
Textile, Leather, Clothing and Footwear Manufacturing	76	2.3%
Wood Product Manufacturing	115	3.4%
Pulp, Paper and Converted Paper Product Manufacturing	60	1.8%
Printing (including the Reproduction of Recorded Media)	78	2.3%
Petroleum and Coal Product Manufacturing	6	0.2%
Basic Chemical and Chemical Product Manufacturing	95	2.8%
Polymer Product and Rubber Product Manufacturing	96	2.9%
Non-Metallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	107	3.2%
Primary Metal and Metal Product Manufacturing	139	4.2%
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	332	9.9%
Transport Equipment Manufacturing	74	2.2%
Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing	122	3.7%
Furniture and Other Manufacturing	72	2.2%
Manufacturing – undefined	182	5.5%
Total	3,339	100.0%

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2006

Table 1.10: Jobs in Transport and Logistics Activities, Greater Shepparton, 2006

Transport and Logistics Sub-Sector	No. Jobs	% Jobs
Road Transport	759	73.1%
Rail Transport	27	2.6%
Water Transport	3	0.3%
Air and Space Transport	3	0.3%
Other Transport	6	0.6%
Postal and Courier Pick-up and Delivery Services	105	10.1%
Transport Support Services	73	7.0%
Warehousing and Storage Services	49	4.7%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing – undefined	14	1.3%
Total	1,039	100.0%

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2006

Of particular importance to the long-term development of the Transport and Logistics sector will be the construction of the GVFLC, to be located just outside Mooroopna. The GVFLC will provide a direct link to the Port of Melbourne and will provide an integrated logistical opportunity for industry in the wider Greater Shepparton region to access global markets. Potential opportunities include:

- Rail freight handling - operation of the container terminal, container storage
- Outbound warehousing and distribution - for produce awaiting shipment
- Inbound distribution - distribution to retailers and businesses
- Freight related businesses - packaging, container servicing, pallets
- Services - such as truck maintenance, petrol, tyres, container cleaning

Retail

Greater Shepparton's retail sector provides 3,490 jobs and this is equivalent to 13.9% of all jobs in Greater Shepparton.

As Table 1.11 on the following page indicates, approximately 8 in 10 retail jobs in Greater Shepparton are related to food and store-based retailing (2,880 jobs or 82% of retail jobs). Motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts retailing is also a significant employment contributor (350 jobs or 10% of jobs in the sub-sector).

Greater Shepparton's retail activity generally occurs in the following locations:

- Shepparton CBD;
- Marketplace shopping centre in Benalla Road;
- shops in Mooroopna;
- small neighbourhood retail centres located in suburban parts of urban Shepparton; and
- shops in the small townships.

The CBD is Shepparton's main retail centre and it serves the municipality and the wider region, with a total catchment population of approximately 170,000 persons.

The *Shepparton Show Me – Economic Baseline Analysis* (Essential Economics, 2007) shows that Shepparton's CBD contains approximately 102,000m² of retail floorspace; this comprises food merchandise 22,000m², non-food merchandise 72,000m² (including 18,000m² of bulky goods), and other retail services 8,000m². This information is shown in Table 1.12 on the following page, noting that the information only applies to the shopfront retailing sector (and excludes the likes of motor vehicle and boat sales).

The CBD has a range of national brand retailers and major anchors including Kmart and Target discount department stores (DDS), Harris Scarfe mini-DDS, three supermarkets and a range of hardware and other bulky merchandise retailers. A Coles supermarket of approximately 3,200m² is located in Vaughan Street in the south of the CBD, directly adjacent to a Kmart DDS of 7,500m²; in combination, these retailers form

Table 1.11: Jobs in Retail Activities, Greater Shepparton, 2006

Retail Sub-Sector	No. Jobs	% Jobs
Shopfront Retailing		
Food Retailing	1,067	30.6%
Other Store-Based Retailing	1,811	51.9%
<i>Sub-Total, Shopfront</i>	<i>2,878</i>	<i>82.5%</i>
Other Retailing		
Motor Vehicle and Motor Vehicle Parts Retailing	349	10.0%
Fuel retailing	101	2.9%
Non-Store Retailing and Retail Commission-Based Buying and/or Selling	10	0.3%
Retail Trade – undefined	149	4.3%
Total	3,487	100.0%

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2006

Table 1.12 Retail Floorspace by Category and CBD Zone, Shepparton CBD, 2007

	CBD Core	CBD North-East	CBD North-West	CBD South	CBD Total
Total Floorspace					
Food Retail	-	1,130m ²	570m ²	9,240m ²	10,940m ²
Food Catering	360m ²	1,760m ²	4,700m ²	4,310m ²	11,130m ²
Total Food	360m²	2,890m²	5,270m²	13,550m²	22,070m²
Apparel	5,970m ²	4,715m ²	3,680m ²	4,650m ²	19,015m ²
Homewares	1,980m ²	6,010m ²	1,630m ²	6,360m ²	15,980m ²
Bulky Merchandise	-	4,420m ²	720m ²	12,230m ²	17,370m ²
General Merchandise	1,490m ²	3,120m ²	6,365m ²	8,510m ²	19,485m ²
Total Non Food Merchandise	9,440m²	18,265m²	12,395m²	31,750m²	71,850m²
Services	460m ²	2,250m ²	2,450m ²	2,550m ²	7,710m ²
Total Retail	10,260m²	23,405m²	20,115m²	47,850m²	101,630m²
Share of Floorspace					
Food Retail	-	5%	3%	19%	11%
Food Catering	4%	8%	20%	9%	11%
Total Food	4%	13%	22%	28%	22%
Apparel	58%	24%	22%	10%	19%
Homewares	19%	22%	8%	13%	16%
General Merchandise	-	17%	4%	26%	17%
Leisure	15%	15%	30%	18%	19%
Total Non Food Merchandise	92%	79%	64%	66%	71%
Services	4%	8%	14%	5%	8%
Total Retail by Zone	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Share for Total CBD	10.1%	23.0%	19.8%	47.1%	100.0%

Source: Essential Economics Pty Ltd

a key activity generator for the Shepparton CBD. An expansion of retailing is planned in Vaughan Street, involving an additional 2,800m² in retail floorspace associated with the Coles/Kmart complex, and this \$7 million project will generate an additional 80 or so jobs once it is operational, according to information provided by Council.

A recently-developed ALDI store of approximately 1,300m² is located to the south-west on Wyndham Street and is now also a key destination in the CBD, and a Ritchies IGA store of approximately 2,000m² is also present in the CBD.

A Target DDS is located in High Street at the end of an internal arcade which incorporates a food court and other specialties which links through to the Maude Street Mall. The Target is a major anchor tenant for the Mall and surrounding areas, and complements the strong apparel offer present in the CBD core. A Harris Scarfe store is located at the northern end of the Mall. The Mall is also notable for the number of 'national' brand specialty retailers, including a strong representation of national chain fashion stores.

The fringe areas of the CBD are home to a range of bulky goods merchandise and other larger format traders, such as Retravisson and Barbeques Galore.

The *Shepparton Show Me* analysis indicates that total available retail expenditure by trade area residents (which includes residents in surrounding municipalities) is forecast to expand from its 2006 level of \$1,600 million in 2006, to approximately \$2,180 million in 2021, as a result of growth in population and real growth in per capita spending. The Shepparton CBD was estimated to have total retail turnover of approximately \$415 million in 2006. As a result of population expansion and retail spending growth across the trade area over the coming years, potential for an additional 23,000m² of retail floorspace would be generated in Shepparton CBD by 2021. This figure, showing expansion potential equivalent to around 23% of existing retail floorspace in the CBD, is provided as an order-of-magnitude to the supportable growth in Shepparton's CBD retail sector over the next 12 to 15 years or so.

Education, Training, Health Care and Social Assistance

Greater Shepparton's education, training, health care and social assistance sectors provides 5,190 jobs and this is equivalent to approximately 21% of all jobs located in the municipality. The education sector provides a total of 1,935 jobs or approximately 8% of all jobs in Greater Shepparton, while the health sector provides a further 3,260 jobs or 13% (rounded figures). Details are shown in Table 1.13 on the following page.

In addition to many public and private primary and secondary schools, Greater Shepparton is the location for campuses of La Trobe University, the University of Melbourne, the Australian Catholic University, Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE and the National Centre for Dairy Education. The University of Melbourne's School of Rural Health, incorporating The Centre for Excellence in Rural Sexual Health is also located in Greater Shepparton.

The municipality has a number of private and public hospital facilities including Shepparton Regional Hospital, Shepparton Private Hospital and Tatura Hospital and Nursing Home.

Table 1.13: Jobs in Education, Training, Health Care and Social Assistance Activities, Greater Shepparton, 2006

Sub-sector	No. Jobs	% Jobs
Preschool and School Education	1,394	26.8%
Tertiary Education	347	6.7%
Adult, Community and Other Education	155	3.0%
Education and Training – undefined	39	0.8%
<i>Sub-Total, Education</i>	<i>1,935</i>	<i>37.3%</i>
Hospitals	1,220	23.5%
Medical and Other Health Care Services	676	13.0%
Residential Care Services	544	10.5%
Social Assistance Services	747	14.4%
Health Care and Social Assistance – undefined	70	1.3%
<i>Sub-Total, Health</i>	<i>3,257</i>	<i>62.7%</i>
Total	5,192	100.0%

Source: 2006 ABS Census of Population and Housing.

Construction

Greater Shepparton's construction sector provides 1,540 jobs and this is equivalent to 6% of all jobs in the municipality.

Building activity and investment levels have increased considerably in Greater Shepparton in recent years, particularly with respect to the construction of domestic dwellings, the number of which have more than doubled, annually, from approximately 370 new dwelling approvals in 2001 to 780 new dwelling approvals in 2007.

Across all building categories, investment in new buildings has increase from approximately \$73 million in 2001 to \$131 million in 2007. Property market analysis is provided in Section 1.7.

Strong population growth in future years will ensure on-going demand for additional domestic dwellings with at least an additional 11,000 dwellings projected to required between 2009 and 2031 (according to household projections included in DSE *Victoria in Future 2004*; these projections will be updated as part of the final release of the *Victoria in Future 2008* population projections).

As Greater Shepparton's population expands, building investment is also likely to remain strong for supporting commercial facilities (retail, office and industrial floorspace etc) and community infrastructure (schools, medical facilities etc).

Additionally, major projects, such as the development of the GVFLC the duplication of the Goulburn Valley Highway, and the Food Bowl Modernisation Project will support the further development of the construction sector.

1.6 Labour Market

Resident Labour Force

The City of Greater Shepparton had a resident labour force totalling 30,225 persons in December 2008, according to data published by Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and summarised in Table 1.14.

This total figure comprises 28,400 employed persons and 1,825 unemployed persons (rounded figures).

Table 1.14: Labour Force Statistics, Greater Shepparton, December 2008

Location	Employed Persons	Unemployed Persons	Total Labour Force	Unemployment Rate
Gr. Shepparton (C) - Pt A	21,515	1,600	23,115	6.9%
Gr. Shepparton (C) - Pt B East	2,385	45	2,430	1.9%
Gr. Shepparton (C) - Pt B West	4,500	180	4,680	3.8%
Greater Shepparton	28,400	1,825	30,225	6.0%
Regional Victoria	689,500	34,200	723,700	4.7%
Victoria	2,639,300	122,100	2,761,400	4.4%

Source: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Small Area Labour Markets, December 2008, Table 3

Unemployment

The unemployment rate in Greater Shepparton at December 2008 was 6.0%, which was higher than for regional Victoria (4.8%), metropolitan Melbourne (4.3%) and Victoria (4.5%).

Of the three SLAs which comprise the municipality, urban Shepparton (Pt A - SLA) has the highest unemployment rate at 6.9% (Pt B - East is 1.9% and Part B - West is 3.8%).

Urban Shepparton (Pt A - SLA), as the principal settlement in the municipality, accounts for 76% of the resident labour force and 88% of unemployed persons. This situation in urban Shepparton is likely to be explained by the characteristics of unemployed persons: they typically need to have access to low cost rental housing and proximity to supporting facilities and services (eg, CentreLink), and they possibly have a preference to stay locally with family (eg, unemployed youth staying at home).

Overall, the relatively high unemployment rate in Shepparton highlights the importance of the EDS in developing strategies which facilitate a greater level of investment and business establishment, job creation and skills development, particularly in view of strong population growth and associated labour market growth which is anticipated for the municipality in the future.

Job / Labour Force Ratio

Jobs information, sourced from ABS Journey-to-Work data in the Population Census 2006, shows that 25,170 jobs are located in Greater Shepparton for a resident labour force of 27,160 persons in 2006. This represents a job provision ratio of 0.93 jobs for every resident in the workforce, or a 'deficit' of 1,980 jobs. In effect, this means that some resident jobseekers must find employment in other locations, principally the surrounding municipalities of Campaspe, Moira, Strathbogie and Benalla.

Note that this ratio is used only as a guide to local employment requirements; it recognises that some residents will travel to work outside the municipality, while some non-residents will travel into the municipality for work.

One long-term objective of the EDS, therefore, could be to increase the job provision ratio to at least 1 job for every resident in the labour force.

Forecast Growth in Resident Labour Force

In the period 2009 to 2012, Greater Shepparton is expected to continue to experience growth in population and in resident labour force numbers. Thus, it will be important to ensure an increase in the numbers of jobs locally available to the Greater Shepparton resident labour force over this period (and beyond).

In 2009, using the forecast population figure from Table 1.3 and the estimated size of the resident labour force in Table 1.14 (ie, DEEWR data), the crude LFPR is calculated at 49.7%. If this rate continues to apply in 2009 to 2016, then the number of jobs available to Greater Shepparton residents will need to increase by +795 jobs by 2011 and by a further +1,570 jobs by 2016. Thus, between 2009 and 2016, a total of +2,365 new jobs would be required to meet the growth in the number of new labour force entrants in Greater Shepparton. Calculations underpinning this estimate are shown in Table 1.15.

The estimate of new jobs required in Greater Shepparton assumes a continuation in the municipality's existing number of unemployed persons (1,825 persons as of December 2008). If a reduction in unemployment is also to be achieved, then the number of new jobs required in Greater Shepparton (or located within commutable distances) would need to exceed the numbers of new jobs indicated in Table 1.15.

Table 1.15: Broad Estimate of New Jobs Required in Greater Shepparton, 2008 to 2016

	2008	2009	2011	2016	Increase in Labour Force to 2016
Population ⁽¹⁾	60,820	61,610	63,210	66,370	-
Labour Force	30,225 ⁽³⁾	30,620 ⁽⁴⁾	31,415 ⁽⁴⁾	32,985 ⁽⁴⁾	-
Crude Labour Force Participation Rate (%)	49.7%	49.7%	49.7%	49.7%	-
Increase in Labour Force (No.)	-	+395	+795	+1,570	+2,760
Unemployment	1,825 or 6.1%	not estimated	not estimated	not estimated	-

Source: Essential Economics based on VIF 2008 (population) and DEWR (labour force) and ABS (2006 LFPR situation)

Notes: (1) refer Table 1.3; (2) 2006 Census; (3) DEEWR Small Area Labour Markets, December 2008; (4) based on LFPR of 49.7% as in 2008

Note that these figures are calculated by applying a crude labour force participation rate for the population as a whole. More accurate projections would apply the official participation rate, which is measured as the proportion of the population aged 15-64 yrs who are at work or seeking work. A calculation on this basis would require population projections by age, but these projections are not yet available on a local government basis.

The EDU's work plan 2009 to 2012, which is prepared as part of this project, will cover a period during which 1,200 new jobs will be required in Greater Shepparton based on an extrapolation of data in Table 1.15; this estimate does not include allowance for a reduction in the existing number of 1,825 unemployed residents.

1.7 Property Market

Investment

Building investment in Greater Shepparton has increased steadily on an annual basis from approximately \$73 million in 2001 to \$131 million in 2007, according to data provided by the Building Control Commission of Victoria. Over the past decade building investment has averaged approximately \$100 million pa, but was well in excess of this level in 2006 and 2007. The number of new buildings approved has increased from approximately 420 in 2001 to approximately 870 in 2007, or virtually double.

Approximately 70% of all new building approvals are for domestic dwellings, although other sectors (particularly commercial and public buildings) have experienced faster growth in the value of new approvals over the period 2001 to 2007.

Data relating to the value of building investment is shown in Table 1.16.

Table 1.16: Number of New Buildings Approvals and Value of Building Work, Greater Shepparton, 2001-2007

Commercial			Domestic		Hospital		Industrial		Public Building		Residential		Retail		Total	
No.	Value		No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value
2001	20	\$4.72m	367	\$53.80m	3	\$3.09m	18	\$3.14m	6	\$3.40m	2	\$1.35m	2	\$3.62m	418	\$73.12m
2002	26	\$5.75m	464	\$76.12m	1	\$0.11m	14	\$1.36m	12	\$4.02m	7	\$12.83m	2	\$3.30m	526	\$103.49m
2003	44	\$5.36m	372	\$67.33m	6	\$9.5m	18	\$1.80m	7	\$1.25m	3	\$0.91m	6	\$1.56m	456	\$87.76m
2004	34	\$6.83m	345	\$70.13m	1	\$0.20m	25	\$2.84m	8	\$2.40m	2	\$0.22m	5	\$0.93m	420	\$83.56m
2005	39	\$9.30m	411	\$81.01m	3	\$0.35m	41	\$3.75m	16	\$6.82m	2	\$0.60m	5	\$3.69m	517	\$105.52m
2006	91	\$20.58m	520	\$88.56m	4	\$5.80m	23	\$6.46m	14	\$5.99m	0	\$0m	11	\$3.12m	663	\$130.51m
2007	59	\$10.71m	776	\$90.67m	2	\$5.93m	8	\$2.56m	17	\$12.33m	3	\$2.26m	7	\$6.49m	872	\$130.93m

Source: Building Control Commission of Victoria - Pulse database.

Residential

Sales of residential property (comprising houses, units and vacant land) in Greater Shepparton have fluctuated over the period 2000 to 2007. For example, over this period house sales were lowest in 2000 with 823 sales, and this contrasts with just over 1,000 house sales in each of 2001, 2002 and 2004. Other residential property sales also fluctuated over this period, as shown in Table 1.17.

To a large extent, the number of residential sales fluctuate according to the stock of available dwellings (houses and units) and the extent to which new serviced residential land is brought onto the local market. Similar fluctuations (in proportionate terms) in residential property sales are evident at the regional Victoria level, as shown in Table 1.17. These figures are taken from DSE, *A Guide to Property Prices* (annual).

Interestingly, Greater Shepparton's residential property sales (in terms of market share) reflect the same patterns as at the regional Victoria level.

As shown in Table 1.18, median property sales prices in Greater Shepparton largely mirror the median sale prices for regional Victoria. In 2007, for example, the median house price in Greater Shepparton was

\$230,000 and this compares closely with regional Victoria's median of \$232,000. Similar patterns, with some variations, apply to the median prices for units and vacant residential land.

Over the period 2000 to 2007, residential property prices in regional Victoria have increased, on average, at a slightly faster rate than for Greater Shepparton, as shown in the Table.

Table 1.17: Residential Sales, Greater Shepparton and Regional Victoria, 2000-2007

Year	Greater Shepparton (No. Sales)			Regional Victoria (No. Sales)		
	House	Units	Vacant land	House	Units	Vacant land
2000	823	167	250	27,403	3,355	8,202
2001	1,032	192	385	31,869	4,402	13,705
2002	1,067	159	439	32,260	4,257	15,291
2003	995	151	412	31,107	3,908	14,171
2004	1,002	176	410	27,105	3,940	10,390
2005	933	149	357	26,972	3,853	8,933
2006	952	134	388	25,717	3,664	8,573
2007	914	130	287	28,333	4,126	8,343
Average 2000-07	965	157	366	28,846	3,938	10,951
Per Cent of Total Sales (approx)	65%	10%	25%	66%	9%	25%

Source: DSE, A Guide to Property Values (2007).

Table 1.18: Residential Property Prices, Greater Shepparton and Regional Victoria, 2000-2007

	Greater Shepparton			Regional Victoria		
	House	Units	Vacant land	House	Units	Vacant land
2000	\$120,000	\$102,000	\$43,000	\$105,000	\$96,000	\$39,500
2001	\$137,000	\$105,000	\$51,500	\$121,000	\$103,500	\$44,000
2002	\$155,000	\$139,875	\$60,000	\$145,000	\$125,000	\$52,500
2003	\$171,000	\$159,750	\$75,000	\$174,000	\$155,000	\$65,000
2004	\$196,000	\$172,000	\$90,000	\$193,500	\$175,000	\$75,000
2005	\$208,000	\$170,000	\$95,000	\$210,000	\$190,000	\$85,000
2006	\$236,500	\$189,000	\$100,000	\$222,000	\$192,500	\$92,000
2007	\$230,000	\$180,000	\$100,000	\$232,000	\$199,000	\$100,000
Change 2000-07	\$110,000	\$78,000	\$57,000	\$127,000	\$103,000	\$60,500
AAGR 2000-07	9.7%	8.5%	12.8%	12.0%	11.0%	14.2%

Source: DSE, A Guide to Property Values, 2007

Planning Permit Activity

A review of DPCD data relating to planning permit activity shows that on an annual basis - and by comparison with regional Victoria - Greater Shepparton has a relatively high ratio of decisions made to permit applications lodged. For example, in 2006/7 Greater Shepparton's ratio of decisions to permit applications lodged was 74% and this compared with 71% for all Councils in regional Victoria. In the previous reporting year, 2005/6, Greater Shepparton achieved an 89% decision rate, compared to 72% for all Councils in regional Victoria. Planning permit activity data is shown in Table 1.19 (note: data for regional Victoria in 2007/8 is not fully compatible for comparison).

Between 2004 and 2007, the proportion of Greater Shepparton permit applications referred to VCAT ranged from 3% to 5%, which is generally lower compared with VCAT referrals from regional Victoria's Councils overall.

Table 1.19: Planning Permit Activity, Greater Shepparton, 2004/5 to 2007/8

	2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Greater Shepparton	Regional Victoria	Greater Shepparton	Regional Victoria	Greater Shepparton	Regional Victoria	Greater Shepparton	Regional Victoria
No. of permit applications lodged	604	19,989	446	18,550	550	18,298	526	17,705
No. of decisions of applications lodged	423	14,416	396	13,359	405	11,876	470	Na
% of decisions of applications lodged	70%	72%	89%	72%	74%	71%	89%	Na
No. of permits lodged at VCAT	25	770	22	766	17	716	15	696
Applications referred to VCAT as % of total applications	4%	4%	5%	6%	3%	6%	3%	4%

Source: Department of Planning and Community Development - Planning Permit Activity in Victoria 2006-07.

Note: na: not available (non-compatible data)

The data shows that Greater Shepparton has a relatively good record of processing planning permit applications by comparison with the regional Victoria situation, and this relates to the level of Council decisions on permits and the share of permits that are referred to VCAT.

1.8 Conclusion

1. The projected growth in Greater Shepparton's resident population between 2009 and 2026 (+10,000 persons, representing an average annual increase of 0.9%). This growth will have important economic development implications for the municipality, including the need to provide a significant number of new residential dwellings and a requirement for more job creation, as well as expanding and improving the provision of infrastructure and services.
2. Residents of Greater Shepparton have a socio-economic and demographic profile similar to that of regional Victoria, although these indicators (such as income and education levels) tend to be below the metropolitan Melbourne average. For example, median family income in Greater Shepparton (\$1,063 in 2006) is approximately 15% below the metropolitan Melbourne median (\$1,242), while unemployment (6.0% at December Qtr, 2008) is higher than the metropolitan Melbourne figure (4.3%).

3. Greater Shepparton's economic base indicates the municipality has a higher share of manufacturing jobs compared with regional Victoria (13.3% compared with 10.8%) and a higher share of jobs in service industries (70.2% compared with 66.5%). These statistics reflect the importance of food processing and associated industry in Greater Shepparton, as well as the city's role as a service centre to north-central Victoria.
4. The resident labour force in Greater Shepparton totals 31,120 persons and this figure includes 1,790 unemployed persons or 5.7% of the labour force. By comparison, regional Victoria has an unemployment rate of 4.8%.
5. In the period 2009 to 2012, Greater Shepparton is expected to continue to experience growth in population and in resident labour force numbers. Thus, it will be important to ensure an increase in the numbers of jobs locally available to the Greater Shepparton resident labour force over this period (and beyond). The number of jobs available to residents will need to increase by +795 jobs by 2011 and by a further +1,570 jobs by 2016. Thus, between 2009 and 2016, a total of +2,365 new jobs would be required to meet the growth in the number of new labour force entrants in Greater Shepparton. These estimates assume that the existing number of unemployed persons (1,825) remains the same.
6. EDS 2009-2012 will need to address opportunities to assist existing industries to adapt to new market and global conditions and assist businesses with structural adjustment where possible. It will also be important to attract new activities which help to diversify the economy, and with special emphasis on attracting new and expanded levels of investment and jobs.
7. A further consideration will be the extent to which the global financial crisis may have an adverse impact on the level of economic activity in Greater Shepparton or on the economic outlook of markets in which Greater Shepparton is involved. In these circumstances it would be prudent for the EDU to ensure that existing levels of economic activity and employment in Greater Shepparton are at least maintained over the period of the next plan, 2009 to 2012, and expanded where possible.

2 REVIEW OF 'PURPOSE' AND 'OBJECTIVES' IN EDS 2007

The Greater Shepparton Economic Development Strategy 2007 presented an *Economic Development Department Charter* (EDS 2007, Section 2.3, p10). The 'Purpose' and 'Objectives' of the charter are reviewed in this Chapter, as required in the Brief (p2) for the preparation of the EDS 2009-2012.

2.1 'Purpose' Underpinning the EDS 2007

The Purpose in the EDS 2007 is stated as follows:

"To encourage and assist investment, whilst working to develop employment and business opportunities for the established and emerging economic sectors within the City of Greater Shepparton" (EDS 2007, p10)

Comment: The *Purpose* is expressed in sufficiently broad terms to provide what would typically be described as a 'Vision' for the EDU to pursue. Words contained in the 'Purpose' which provide a focus for the EDU's role include the following:

- Investment
- Employment
- Business Opportunities
- Established and Emerging Economic Sectors

Additional words that could be added to the 'Purpose' and thereby further assist in defining the EDU's Vision would include the following:

- Infrastructure and Services
- Workforce Skills
- Entrepreneurship

The Vision identified in this EDS 2009-2012 (see Chapter 6) highlights these areas of importance in achieving sustainable economic development in Greater Shepparton.

2.2 'Objectives' Underpinning the EDS 2007

The Objectives in the EDS 2007 (p10) are as follows:

- *"To protect existing assets (employment, business and industry);*
- *To develop and build upon regional competitive advantages;*
- *To promote and support sustainable employment creation in the region;*
- *To coordinate the provision of appropriate land supply and infrastructure to support, facilitate and sustain development;*

- *To coordinate and encourage the provision of, or access to, appropriate education and training opportunities;*
- *To promote the region for investment, development, expansion and diversification;*
- *To identify opportunities for funding and support for local economic and community development initiatives, needs and priorities;*
- *To improve management skills and professionalism of small and emerging businesses”.*

Comment: The *Objectives* highlight important areas to guide the activities of the EDU, and these include protecting economic assets such as businesses and industry, supporting sustainable employment, coordinating land supply and infrastructure, and improving management skills.

These *Objectives* appear to embrace all of the important areas for EDU activity. However, it would be of value to see the subsequent listing of *‘Recommended Strategies’* (EDU 2007, Chapter 7) and *‘Strategy Action Plan’* (Chapter 8) linked with these *‘Objectives’* – this would ensure that *‘Actions’* are identified which support and implement the underlying *‘Objectives’*.

2.3 Conclusion

The new EDS 2009-2012 provides a *‘Vision’* and *‘Objectives’* to guide the implementation of the Strategy, and these components will reflect the *‘Purpose’* and *‘Objectives’* presented in the earlier EDS 2007, where appropriate.

The EDS 2009-2012 also indicates the direct linkage between the *‘Vision’* and *‘Objectives’* with the *‘Actions’* presented in the Strategy, thus showing how the Strategy will be implemented.

3 REVIEW OF RELEVANT POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

This Chapter provides a review of the following documents:

- Policies and strategies that were summarised in the EDS 2007 and which remain relevant.
- Policies and strategies which have been published since the EDS 2007 was prepared.

3.1 Review of Relevant Policies and Strategies in EDS 2007

1 Policies and Strategies Reviewed in EDS 2007

The following policies and strategies were reviewed as part of the preparation of the Greater Shepparton EDS 2007:

- Greater Shepparton 2030 Strategy
- Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) (December 2005)
- Irrigation Futures of the Goulburn Broken Catchment, Outputs and Recommendations from Stage 2 Community Engagement
- Goulburn Murray Regional Migration Strategy (2005-2007)
- Greater Shepparton Community Forum: Report of First Meeting (June 2005)
- Greater Shepparton Community Action Plan- Community Visions for Shepparton (October 2005)
- FAST Family Follow-up, Executive Summary (November 2004)
- Strategy for Tertiary Education in Shepparton (February 2005)
- Tatura Park Events Centre: Best Value Review (2004-2005)
- Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre – Overview
- Dookie and District Community Plan
- Greater Shepparton Business Survey
- COGS Tourism Directions Strategy
- Next Generation Food Strategy
- VFLC Freight Forward Infrastructure Report
- Victorians. Bright Ideas. Brilliant Future
- Stronger Regions, A Stronger Australia
- Regional Business – A Plan For Action
- Moving Forward – Provincial Victoria

2 Main Conclusions for EDS 2007

EDS 2007 identified the following main implications of these strategies for economic development in Greater Shepparton:

- Promote economic growth and industry diversity, with a particular focus on supporting and strengthening the agricultural sector.
- Strengthen the role of Shepparton CBD as a regional centre for retail, commerce and entertainment by supporting new commercial activities in the centre.
- Continue to grow Greater Shepparton's industry base through ensuring an ongoing 15-year supply of industrial land and by encouraging diversity of activities to reflect changing market conditions.
- Ensure sufficient level of infrastructure is available in the municipality (eg road, rail, air, telecommunications) to support economic growth.
- Identify and address skills shortages in order to support business viability and growth.
- Address high levels of unemployment for particular sections of the community (eg indigenous, non-English speaking, long-term unemployed).
- Improve skills and training opportunities in the municipality, particularly with regard to ensuring more tertiary education places and supporting infrastructure (eg student accommodation) are located in Shepparton.
- Develop the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre to improve regional competitiveness and provide new business growth opportunities.
- Develop specific strategies for Greater Shepparton's townships in order to support their long-term economic development.

3.2 Review of Policies and Strategies Relevant to 2009-2012 EDS

1 Policies and Strategies Reviewed for EDS 2009-2012

Since the preparation of Greater Shepparton EDS 2007, a number of additional strategies have been completed. The following policies and strategies have been reviewed as part of the preparation of Greater Shepparton EDS 2009:

- Shepparton CBD Strategy (Planisphere, 2008)
- Regional Skills Shortage Survey Report - Goulburn Murray Region (Department of Victorian Communities, 2006)
- Shepparton Show Me - Assessment of Economic Benefits (Essential Economics, 2008)
- Greater Shepparton Business Expansion and Retention Program (Greater Shepparton City Council, 2008)
- Global Skills for Provincial Victoria - Business Plan 2007-2010
- Labour Force and Training Strategic Plan - Transport and Distribution Industry Support Unit (Greater Shepparton City Council, 2008)
- Goulburn Valley Harness Racing Business Plan 2007-2012 (Regional Development Company, 2007)

- Greater Shepparton Council Plan and Strategic Resource Plan 2006-2010 (Greater Shepparton City Council, revised in 2007)

A summary of relevant findings from each study is provided below.

2 Shepparton CBD Strategy (Planisphere, 2008)

The main objectives of the Shepparton CBD Strategy (Project Bulletin No.1) are to:

- Develop a clear vision for the CBD's future.
- Provide a framework for the future use and development of land within the Shepparton CBD and provide a clear direction to investors in relation to preferred locations for investment.
- Provide ideas for the improvement of streetscapes and public spaces so they are active, functional, appealing and safe.
- Develop guidelines about the height, form and design of buildings.
- Provide the Council with a plan for the better management of traffic, car parking, public transport and pedestrian and cyclist movement.
- Recommend ways to implement the Shepparton CBD Strategy as part of Council's Planning Scheme.
- Ensure the continual involvement of the community in the development of the Strategy.

The Strategy's Executive Summary (p3) identifies the following key priorities for Shepparton's CBD as follows:

- Developing and promoting Shepparton as a leader in sustainability through building design, transport modes, resource management, its natural riverine environment and strong community.
- Consolidating the CBD as the principal retail centre in the region and creating an active, vibrant and safe CBD.
- Supporting a robust economy and local employment through appropriate land use mix and activities in the CBD.
- Creating residential opportunities and expanding housing choice in the CBD.
- Supporting development of the tertiary precinct and attracting students to live and study in Shepparton CBD.
- Defining a forward-looking image for the Shepparton CBD, taking into consideration its strong indigenous and post-settlement migrant history, riverine location and local agricultural industry.
- Improving the design, function and safety of key sites and precincts in the CBD, including the Vaughan Street precinct, Maude Street Mall, Stewart Street and Shepparton Plaza.
- Creating a pedestrian and cycling-friendly environment.
- Improving movement and access by reducing traffic in the CBD, improving public transport services, and improving cycling links and facilities.
- Improving access to, and provision of, car parking in the CBD.
- Improving access to, and an awareness of, the riverine area on the periphery of the CBD.

3 Regional Skills Shortage Survey Report – Goulburn Murray Region (Department of Victorian Communities, 2006)

The main aims of the project (Regional Skills Shortage Survey Summary p4) are to:

- Provide information on the nature and extent of recruitment difficulties at a regional level.
- Identify skills in demand and labour supply issues.
- Identify occupations that employers may be experiencing difficulties in filling.
- Provide consistent and reliable data.

The key findings with respect to the Goulburn Region (based on 312 employer surveys) are summarised as follows:

- In the 12 months prior to the survey, 10% of all vacancies were unfilled, with the highest proportions of unfilled vacancies being in agriculture, forestry and fishing (17%), health and community services (13%) and property and business services (12%).
- Approximately four candidates applied for every vacancy, but only one applicant rated as suitable for each position. The main reasons for unsuitability were lack of experience (52%) and lack of technical skills (26%).
- At the time of the survey 36% of employers expected employment growth in their business, and 60% of these expected to recruit in the next 12 months.

Occupations which were most difficult to fill were as follows:

- Labourers and transport workers: farm hands, truck drivers, freight and furniture handlers, general labourers, factory workers, cleaners, plant operators, and meat and fish process workers.
- Trades: cabinetmakers, plumbers, motor mechanics, structural steel and welding tradespersons, farm overseers, carpentry and joinery tradespersons, metal fitters and machinists, roof slaters and tilers.
- Clerical, sales and service workers: child-care workers, general clerks, insurance agents, disability support workers.
- Professionals: vocational education teachers and general practitioners.

When retention was considered:

- 21% of employers reported difficulties in retaining staff.
- 47% of employers had offered higher remuneration or better conditions in order to retain staff.
- Higher pay was the most common method of improved remuneration offered (36%).

4 Shepparton Show Me – Assessment of Economic Benefits (Essential Economics, 2008)

This report provides an indicative assessment of the economic benefits of the Shepparton Show Me marketing program. Key findings of the study are outlined in the Executive Summary (p5-7) and include the following:

- As an initial and very broad measure of the economic contribution of Shepparton Show Me, the impact of the marketing program on survey respondents' likelihood of shopping in Shepparton has been considered relative to current sales turnover. The estimated net effect of the Shepparton Show Me promotion is a 5% increase in retail sales and this is equivalent to a contribution of some \$31 million in additional sales, annually.
- Over the life of the program, an estimated \$4.6m has been invested in achieving the objectives of Shepparton Show Me. Based on the annual sales of \$31 million broadly attributable to the program, and an annual investment of around \$500,000, this represents an annual return of around \$60 of additional sales per dollar invested in the program. This is a very positive outcome.

The report also identifies a range of performance criteria which will assist in assessing the ongoing performance of marketing activities undertaken by Shepparton Show Me, and assist to more clearly identify the economic benefits associated with the marketing program in the future.

The Shepparton Show Me Marketing Plan 2007/08 provides updated strategies and new performance indicators aimed at building on the success of the program to date.

5 Greater Shepparton Business Expansion and Retention Program (Greater Shepparton City Council, 2008)

The Greater Shepparton City Council undertook a business survey in January 2008 as part of a Business Expansion and Retention Program. The aims of the survey were as follows:

- To formulate an up-to-date profile of the local economy
- To identify strengths and potential growth areas for local businesses
- To assist local business with solving problems and exploring new opportunities
- To create employment opportunities in the region

Key themes throughout the survey were as follows:

- Need to improve tourism in the region
- Need to simplify the planning process
- Need to address an industrial land shortage
- Need to encourage locals to shop locally
- Need to improve community safety
- Need to ensure the Goulburn Valley Highway upgrade and GVFLC are implemented.

Specific responses of relevance to the EDS include the following:

- 81% of businesses envisage employing the same number or more employees in one year.
- 58% of businesses indicated they see their business increasing in the next two years.
- 48% of businesses have experienced problems recruiting employees.
- 46% of businesses would consider employing a skilled migrant.
- 39% of businesses are considering expanding within the next two years.
- 25% of businesses nominated public parking as one of the local services that hinders their ability to run their business efficiently.
- The drought is the factor that will have the biggest impact on business profits during the next two years.

Note that since this project was undertaken the global financial crisis and subsequent downturn in the Australian economy is likely to have dampened some of these positive sentiments, but the underlying positive attitude is noted.

6 Global Skills for Provincial Victoria – Business Plan 2007-2010

The Global Skills for Provincial Victoria business plan was developed by the Goulburn Murray Skilled Migration Co-ordinator on behalf of the Goulburn Murray Regional Global Skills for Provincial Victoria campaign. This is auspiced by Greater Shepparton on behalf of Campaspe, Moira and Greater Shepparton, and fits within the State Government's Global Skills for Victoria strategy. The purpose of the Plan is to address skills shortages in the region by developing actions which attract a greater number of skilled migrants to the region to fill vacant positions. Strategic objectives of the GSPV Business Plan include the following:

- Assist regional economies in meeting their skills needs.
- Work closely with regional employers and communities to develop and implement services to attract migrants to the region.
- Link migrants with local employers and professional communities.
- Provide locally-developed solutions to assist newly-arrived migrants into employment, which may include local workplace orientation, mentoring, and access to local employer and professional networks.
- Coordinate with the broader marketing and post-arrival services delivered under the Global Skills for Victoria Strategy to maximise benefits to regional communities.

A specific role for Greater Shepparton is identified in the Strategic Objectives of Lead Partner Agencies section:

“To encourage and assist investment while working to develop employment and business opportunities for the established and emerging economic sectors within the City of Greater Shepparton”.

7 Labour Force and Training Strategic Plan - Transport and Distribution Industry Support Unit (Greater Shepparton City Council, 2008).

This Strategic Plan has been developed with the aim of addressing skills shortages in the transport and logistics industry. Ensuring sufficient labour and skills in this industry is particularly important for Shepparton in view of the strength of this sector in the municipality, and in the light of the ongoing development of the GVFLC.

The objectives of the Plan are outlined in the Executive Summary (p iv):

- Develop at least four employment projects linked to the requirements of industry.
- Facilitate the employment of 35 jobseekers into the transport and logistics sector.
- Provide industry with accessible information on existing employment and training programs.
- Introduce industry to a pool of jobseekers who they may not have previously considered for employment.
- Develop a marketing strategy to promote the transport sector as a worthy career choice.
- Promote to the broader community the career and work opportunities emerging with the development of the new transport and logistics hub.

The Executive Summary also identifies a number of programs which will assist in meeting the Plan's objectives (p iv to vi). These programs include the following:

- In conjunction with TDT Victoria, offer a Cadetship in logistics which targets VCE graduates.
- Develop a vocational training curriculum that allows students to carry out Certificate 2 or Certificate 3 studies while sitting their VCE.
- Utilise the Access Program which targets those currently unemployed and introduce them to the industry. Provide training to suitable candidates.
- Develop a transport operators program.
- Target non-traditional labour networks such as Rural Skills Connect, Women in Trades, Gambina etc to seek out candidates who previously may not have considered a career in the transport industry. Provide training to suitable candidates.

8 Goulburn Valley Harness Racing Business Plan 2007-2012 - Regional Development Company

Harness Racing is a significant industry for Greater Shepparton and the Goulburn Valley Region. The industry has an estimated annual economic value of \$70 million pa and generates employment for 3,000 persons (direct and indirect).

The Business Plan has been developed to support and expand the industry, and the desired outcomes (p7) are identified as follows:

- Increased attendance.
- Increased economic benefits.
- Increased numbers of people involved in the industry as participants and spectators.

- Targeted education to attract and retain young people.
- Increased awareness of the industry, particularly at a local level.
- Improved racing stock.
- Improved breeding stock.
- Increased distributions of prize money.
- Significantly improved facilities.
- More young people to become a part of the industry.
- Recognition of harness industry as a primary industry.

Seven strategic directions have been developed (p10) to achieve the desired outcomes of the Plan, and these are summarised as follows:

- Develop a united and cohesive Goulburn Valley Harness industry through building enduring relationships with breeders, trainers, owners, administrators, clubs and allied professionals.
- Increase the profitability, profile and sustainability of the industry by developing mutually beneficial strategic partnerships and alliances.
- Develop quality facilities to feed future needs and encourage increased participation.
- Grow the regional industry through sound and sustainable business operations.
- Identify, develop and implement education initiatives to address industry risks, and to encourage young people's participation in the industry.
- Showcase the industry to increase awareness and participation.
- Drive positive policy change by effectively representing the Goulburn Valley harness racing industry.

The Goulburn Valley Harness Racing Action Plan 2007/08 has been developed by Council as a starting point to implement these strategies.

9 Greater Shepparton Council Plan and Strategic Resource Plan 2006-2010 (revised 2007)

The purpose of the Council Plan as described in the message from the Mayor (p5) is as follows:

"The Council Plan is an evolving document drawn from the Greater Shepparton 2030 Strategic Plan. It indicates the pathways to be taken as we work towards achieving the objectives which will enhance the lives of all citizens across Greater Shepparton. The Key Strategic Objectives, which provide a balanced framework for the Council Plan, are Settlement and Housing, Community Life, Environment, Economic Development, Infrastructure, and Council Organisation and Management"

With respect to Economic Development the Plan outlines Council's goal is to:

"Promote economic growth, business development and diversification, with a focus on strengthening the agricultural industry" (p28)

Specific strategies are listed as follows (p28-32):

Central Business District

- Review and enhance parking options in the CBD.
- Review parking requirements in outer CBD areas.

Sustainable Economic Development

- Develop an Economic Development Strategy which clearly articulates prioritised economic development strategies.
- Assist business development across Greater Shepparton.

Industry

- Identify partners for development and operation of the GVFLC.
- Encourage businesses and families to establish in Greater Shepparton.
- Work with Government agencies and industry to overcome skills shortages through participation in the Regional Migration Incentive Fund.

Tourism

- Undertake an economic impact analysis on the contributions that sport and 'sport tourism' make to the Greater Shepparton economy.
- Increase the number and length of visits to Greater Shepparton through promotion, education, networking and publications.
- Produce the Greater Shepparton Conference and Events Planner.
- Produce the Greater Shepparton Official Visitors Guide.
- Implement the recommendations of *"Establishing a Tourism Direction for Greater Shepparton"* report.
- Promote Greater Shepparton as a Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events destination.
- Maintain and grow the Greater Shepparton events stock and the economic contribution of these events to the Greater Shepparton economy.
- Support the development of the annual Shepparton Festival as a major annual community celebration of free, accessible community entertainment.

The implementation of many strategies or supporting actions identified in the Council Plan is now underway or in some cases completed.

3.3 Conclusion

In terms of policies and strategies of relevance to the economic development of Greater Shepparton, the EDS 2007 identifies many worthy outcomes in these documents, with emphasis on supporting the agriculture sector, strengthening the Shepparton CBD, providing industrial land, ensuring a skilled workforce, introducing improved levels of training, and providing support to small towns.

Since 2007, a number of new policies and strategies have been developed and are in various stages of implementation. Continuing policy support is in evidence in regard to enhancing regional skills, improving the CBD, continuing the *Shepparton Show Me* marketing program, supporting new and expanded businesses, attracting skilled migrants, developing the transport and logistics industry, and further developing the harness racing industry.

The Council Plan and Strategic Resource Plan sums up the overall approach to economic development in Greater Shepparton in terms of promoting economic growth, business development and diversification, and with attention focused on encouraging further developments in agriculture, industry, tourism and the achievement of sustainable economic development.

With the advent of the global financial crisis, evidence exists of a slow-down in economic activity in Australia, and this is also reflected in the increasing number of job losses. In these circumstances, which may reach maximum impact in 12 months or so and which would be expected to endure for a time after that, it would be prudent for the Council Plan to seek to achieve stability and sustainability in the local economy and in investment and employment levels in existing businesses. Specifically, adverse pressures may be expected in manufacturing and related activities in Greater Shepparton, and such outcomes may require a focus on promoting appropriate skills and training programs.

4 COMMENTS FROM CONSULTATIONS

This Chapter provides a summary of comments from participants in the consultation process, and which included the following meetings:

- Local industry and business forum
- Utility, developer and agency forum
- Health, Education and Community Services forum
- Councillors' forum
- Council officers' forum
- Meetings with individuals

These comments, together with the consultant's assessments from the economic profile and the review of policies and strategies, contribute to the Issues and Opportunities identified later in Chapter 4.

Each of the forums comprised, on average, approximately six to eight persons and this allowed many opportunities for participants to raise topics and put forward their views on a wide range of issues and opportunities. Each of the forums was led by the consultant as facilitator, with issues being raised by the participants rather than prompted by the facilitator. In this manner, those matters of importance to the participants were highlighted without undue influence from the consultant.

Note that the following comments are taken from the consultation phase of this project, and do **not** represent viewpoints or recommendations from the consultant.

4.1 Achieving Leadership in Economic Development

'Leadership' in fostering economic development was one of the main topics raised in the forums and in individual meetings.

Council was identified as having a leadership role in terms of promoting economic development, providing an advocacy role on behalf of the interests of the municipality, dealing with issues (eg, potential loss of a major firm), and providing the link between the provision of physical infrastructure and the promotion and encouragement of business and employment growth. Of special importance, according to comments from the consultation program, is the role of Council in lobbying the State and Commonwealth Governments for funding and other forms of support for infrastructure, business growth, training and the like.

"Getting the right people" on Council was a common call, with many participants highlighting the need to ensure that local 'champions' are encouraged to contribute towards achieving economic and employment growth in Greater Shepparton.

Others were of the view that *"we need to get more people on Council with business experience"* so as to ensure that good decisions are made in regard to Shepparton's ongoing development, especially from the viewpoint of encouraging new and expanded business and employment opportunities.

In addition to Council, other interests in terms of 'leadership' were also identified and these range from the Shepparton Chamber of Commerce to Goulburn Valley Business, Rural and Industry Network (GV BRaIN, and with existing or potential leadership contributions also coming from the locally-represented universities and from other stakeholders, such as the Australian Industry Group.

Some see the Chamber of Commerce more as a group representing small businesses rather than all-encompassing of local business interests. However, this role is expected to change in the near-term with a new committee which is taking a proactive role in regard to local business issues and also aiming to become more inclusive in its involvement with other organisations.

GV BRaIN is a relatively new organisation in the region, and is viewed mainly as an organisation for networking (and very successful at that). Some believe that GV BRaIN can take on a wider advisory role or act as a 'sounding board' to Council and the business community in regard to development and marketing opportunities, and in identifying issues to address in terms of promoting local and regional economic development.

The potential of having an advisory committee that sits 'outside' Council and provides guidance on issues of relevant to economic and business development was also flagged in discussions. This suggestion generally reflects the view that economic development in Greater Shepparton needs to be pursued by a broader set of interests other than just Council, having regard for the extensive and complex set of factors which influence the extent of economic development and jobs that an area like Greater Shepparton can attract and retain. Examples were provided where a grouping of local economic and community development interests, outside of the local Council, provides useful input to Council meetings in regard to new and expanding opportunities for development, service delivery and the like.

Also in this regard, some observers see an opportunity for greater 'regional' leadership, especially having regard for the importance of agriculture and water resources in this part of north central Victoria. For example, this could involve the municipalities of Greater Shepparton, Moira and Strathbogie on these types of resource-related topics.

Leadership at the small town level is also of importance: much of this is achieved through township committees, but some observe that "*committees in the small towns are worn out*" (presumably because many issues at the local level need to be addressed by residents who are time-poor in view of farming, business, family and other commitments), and they now seek a more proactive role from Council in helping to strengthen the economic and social base of these small communities.

4.2 Building a Diversified Economy

The economy of the Greater Shepparton area and surrounding region has experienced its share of ups and downs over the years, particularly in terms of structural change in the farming sector and issues surrounding ongoing drought conditions.

However, a widespread view is that the local economy has been able to adapt reasonably well to these conditions over time, with much of the explanation for economic durability and sustainability to be found in the diversified nature of the area's industry base. Today, the municipality has an economic base that reflects activities in the farm sector, in manufacturing (especially food processing) and in allied activities in transport and logistics, as well as a significant tertiary sector that ensures the delivery of a wide range of personal, business, professional and community services.

These observations are supported by the conclusions in regard to the Greater Shepparton economic profile, as described in Chapter 1.

The diversification of the local economy is being further pursued through the education sector, with the role of tertiary institutions in particular, as well as growth in retail and business services, assisting in broadening the economic base.

This aspect of achieving and maintaining a diversified economic base is important when considering the likely implications that would flow from the loss from the municipality of, say, a leading manufacturer and the consequent loss of hundreds of local jobs.

Opportunities to expand the range of business and other activities, thus helping to further diversify the economy, were identified in the course of the consultations, and examples involve the tertiary education sector, agricultural research, restaurant and fine dining development (observed to be lacking in a city of this size and with its iconic 'food bowl' reputation), and tourism - these and related aspects are identified later in this Strategy.

4.3 Considering Risks Associated with Potential Industry Loss and the Need to Diversify

The question was posed by one person contacted during the consultation period: *"What if we lose a major industry from the region, such as SPC?"* This situation was almost a reality in Greater Shepparton a couple of years ago when a major operator was faced with the potential relocation its Melbourne –based operation off-shore. Fortunately, locally-based management were able to convince the off-shore head office that the operation should relocate to Tatura.

Nevertheless, the potential exists for such a scenario to arise again (especially in terms of a decline in global economic conditions and in business prosperity), and the local community should be prepared for such an outcome. One positive step highlighted in the consultations was to work towards further diversification of the Greater Shepparton economy so that the potential loss of a business (or businesses) and jobs can hopefully be counter-balanced by growth in other parts of the local and regional economy.

In this context of seeking to diversify the industrial structure of the Greater Shepparton economy, one workshop participant observed that *"I'm not sure that we make it easy for companies to locate here; we need more flexibility and faster delivery in town planning matters"*. Also, the need to be proactive is important; especially in a competitive environment for investment where the proactive approach of other Councils is noted (Albury and Campaspe were mentioned as good examples of proactive Councils).

4.4 Promoting Shepparton's Special Attributes

All participants in the consultations highlight the special attributes they identify with Greater Shepparton as an attractive place to live, work and enjoy the lifestyle. These attributes are summarised as follows:

- A central location in terms of Greater Shepparton's position in north-central Victoria, and well-placed to serve parts of the Riverina region in southern NSW.
- An attractive climate, with mean temperatures in summer of between 27^o C and 29^o C (in Melbourne, the mean is 24^o C to 26^o C); daily average of 7.4 hours of sunshine (Melbourne has 6.0 hours); annual average number of 110 clear days (Melbourne has 49 clear days); and an annual average of 109 cloudy days (Melbourne has 179 cloudy days).
- Proximity to Melbourne (2 hours' driving time) but far enough away that Greater Shepparton has its own identity; it's not a commuter town.
- A strong and diversified economy, with representation of rural, manufacturing and service sectors.

- An excellent range of facilities and services for the community, from shopping and health care, to recreation and sport.
- A skilled and dedicated labour force, with a strong work ethic and little friction in terms of industrial relations issues.
- A high degree of entrepreneurial ability, involving people who are *“resilient, flexible and adaptable”*.
- A *“can-do”* approach in the local community; Shepparton is *“self propelling”*, and there’s *“a collective will to achieve things”* with a *“a brilliant future”*.
- Strong levels of local investment, especially as Greater Shepparton doesn’t expect much investment from governments due its ‘safe seat’ situation in State and federal politics.
- Representation of three universities: Australian Catholic University, Latrobe University and the University of Melbourne, as well as GO TAFE, and a reputation for high retention rates at secondary school level.
- A multi-cultural flavour in the community, reflecting many years’ of immigration from abroad by people seeking a new life and new opportunities, especially in farming.
- An attractive retail offer in the Shepparton CBD – and *“if by chance it’s not here, we usually go to Bendigo or Melbourne”*. The CBD is now attracting more national brand retailers.
- Many annual events to attract locals and visitors, alike - from motor car shows and music to indigenous ceramics, and from bowls to badminton.

While numerous positive attributes characterise Greater Shepparton, participants also recognise that in some areas more work needs to be undertaken to keep the place flourishing. For example,

- Multi-culturalism is not celebrated here, despite the strong influence and positive contributions to the community by immigrants from abroad.
- Shepparton has turned its back on the Goulburn River, yet it is a significant riverine resource and has considerable potential as a location for recreation and leisure activities.
- Despite the impressive listing of positive attributes and a *‘can do’* attitude, mention was made in several forums that *“there’s a view that Shepparton is not open for business”*. This comment was also linked with a view that Council’s approach to town planning needs to be more proactive and with decision-making delivered in a timely manner, thus helping to facilitate appropriate developments of value to business and the community.
- Few examples of restaurants and fine-dining exist in Shepparton, despite the region’s branding as Victoria’s Food Bowl.
- In terms of tourism, Shepparton may not have a lot of local features (for example, no heritage buildings), but it is located within a short drive of the Murray River and the wineries in NE Victoria and around Heathcote and Nagambie, and this accessibility should be promoted.

4.5 Reinforcing Educational Opportunities

Secondary schools in Greater Shepparton are said to have high retention rates, which is a positive outcome for the education sector. However, many students wanting to go on to tertiary education have to leave home and go to Bendigo or other destinations where a more extensive range of tertiary courses is available.

Nevertheless, Greater Shepparton is well-represented by three universities (Australian Catholic University, Latrobe University and the University of Melbourne), and by GO TAFE. A concern is that a withdrawal of any courses would diminish locally-based opportunities for a tertiary education.

Of particular interest is the new Latrobe campus and the forthcoming redevelopment of GO TAFE and the new and expanded courses which GO TAFE provides in Greater Shepparton.

Participants in the forums noted the important relationship between the education sector and the continuing education and up-skilling of the local labour force. They also observe that the education sector is an expanding one, and that this is an important part of the infrastructure serving the Greater Shepparton community and all other sectors in the economy.

They also see an important link in matching university research capabilities in the municipality with the requirements of business and industry. The Food Bowl Modernisation Project will be very significant in this respect, especially in the relationship between research and activities in farming, water resources and other productive activities in the region. This linking of research capabilities can also include the locally-based research function of the Department of Primary Industry.

4.6 Addressing Labour Force Skill Shortages

Although Greater Shepparton is well-provided for in terms of secondary education and has GO TAFE and a representation of universities, a shortage of skills is evident from comments provided by participants in all of the forums.

The shortage in work place skills is an issue as this situation only serves to constrain economic sustainability and limit individual and community development.

Skills shortages are noted in agriculture and in associated processing industries, and these gaps are typically in the trades and the professions, including senior management, and also in such areas as aged care professionals.

This topic has been the subject of examination in recent years (refer Section 3.2); it is unlikely the situation has improved in more recent times in view of continuing growth and development. With the current slow-down in the regional, national and international economies, it is possible that current demand for workers in skilled trades and professions in Greater Shepparton may have reduced, but at this point in time no evidence exists to confirm this outcome.

Based on comments from the forums, it appears that most skilled workers in Greater Shepparton are '*home-grown*' in the sense that employers train their workforce and provide the necessary skills, either through training courses or on-the-job training. A number of employers have cadetships in place, while others have apprenticeship schemes.

However, it is also necessary to continue to attract skilled workers - from trades to professions - from outside Greater Shepparton, and in this regard the promotion of Greater Shepparton's many positive

attributes is important (as outlined above) as a means of attracting new residents with appropriate workforce skills.

One of these attributes is the relaxed and healthy lifestyle that is on offer, and this encompasses many factors, ranging from excellent health and education facilities to safe and secure neighbourhoods, sports facilities, retail and other services, and, of course, the weather.

4.7 Developing the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre

The GVFLC is planned for a site south of Mooroopna. The land has been purchased by Council, and potential investors are in discussion with Council. Development is anticipated to be underway in two or three years, and sufficient land will be available to meet user requirements over the next 20 years.

The freight facility will be important as it will provide for the integration of road and rail transport in Greater Shepparton and thus support the municipality's production and transport links with the Port of Melbourne and with other cities and regions. The importance of the transport sector to the Greater Shepparton economy has already been noted in terms of its support to the local manufacturing sector and to local employment (Section 2.5 and table 2.10).

The GVFLC should also be instrumental in attracting transport and related firms and jobs to Greater Shepparton, thus building on the locality's reputation as an important transport node which is well-located to serve the Hume Freeway and other interstate highway routes linking state capitals.

Development of the GVFLC would also benefit from the introduction of improved rail freight services serving Greater Shepparton.

4.8 Implementing the Food Bowl Modernisation Project

Greater Shepparton is identified as the 'food bowl' which supplies a wide range of primary produce to local and regional consumers and to markets located much further afield.

The State Government's Food Bowl Modernisation Project is aimed at achieving, among other objectives, the rationalisation of the irrigated farm sector. The EDU will therefore need to address this significant challenge. The project involves an investment of \$2 billion in terms of private and public investment in upgrading the water supply infrastructure of the irrigated parts of the region. As the area of irrigated land is likely to decrease, structural change in the region's agriculture sector is a certainty.

Upgrading of water infrastructure would be expected to contribute to expanded activity levels in the agriculture sector as farmers gain more confidence associated with water security and improved farm productivity.

In this context, agriculture is important in the Greater Shepparton region, especially irrigated agriculture. However, diversity in agricultural pursuits means different challenges for different groups – *"we don't have an effective, centralised interest group for the agriculture sector"*.

Another consideration is that the Food Bowl Modernisation Project will be likely to increase the level of demand for skilled trades and senior management in the agriculture sector. However, such expansion in skilled persons and senior management has been difficult to achieve in the Goulburn Valley as the industry is described as not being 'sexy'.

A further consideration is that the Food Bowl Modernisation Project would be expected to benefit significantly from improved freight and passenger rail services serving Greater Shepparton.

4.9 Improving Passenger and Freight Rail Services to/from Greater Shepparton

An important task will be to promote an improvement in the level of rail service provided for passenger and freight movements into and from Greater Shepparton. As with many services, an improvement in the number of services and efficiency in service provision can lead to an expanded level of use and thus contribute to additional benefits for the economy and for the wider community.

As an example, relative to Greater Shepparton, both Bendigo and Ballarat enjoy high levels of passenger rail service to/from Melbourne, and this is an important feature in the economic development of these two regional cities. While recognising that these two cities also have much higher populations than Shepparton, it is also the case that the introduction of improved rail services has contributed to population growth in both Bendigo and Ballarat as new residents adopt a commuter lifestyle with the benefits of living in a provincial city and working in Melbourne. Relative to Greater Shepparton, Traralgon also enjoys a high level of rail service to/from Melbourne.

In this respect, note from the V/Line timetables (www.vline.com.au) that each weekday:

- Bendigo has 17 passenger rail services to Melbourne, and 27 services from Melbourne to Bendigo
- Ballarat has 16 passenger rail services and two coaches to Melbourne, and 25 rail services and 1 coach from Melbourne to Ballarat.
- Traralgon has 18 passenger rail services and 1 coach service to Melbourne, and 17 rail services and 2 coaches from Melbourne to Traralgon.
- In some cases, an additional rail service operates on Fridays.
- In contrast to the above, Shepparton has 2 passenger rail services and 3 coaches to Melbourne, and 3 rail services and 2 coaches from Melbourne to Shepparton.

Overall, improved passenger rail services between Greater Shepparton and Melbourne would be expected to provide an alternative to motor vehicle usage and thus significantly enhance the mode share won from road. This outcome would have positive implications for a reduction in environmental, community and household costs, and would support government policy initiatives to promote public transport.

4.10 Improving the Amenity of the Goulburn River Environs

The Goulburn River winds its way around the eastern edge of Mooroopna and the western edge of urban Shepparton as it continues on its journey north-west to join the Murray River near Echuca.

Although a number of parks have been developed along the eastern banks of the Goulburn River as it passes by Shepparton (including Jaycee Park, Princess Park, Stuart Park and Watters Reserve), these areas remain relatively undeveloped. Few amenities are provided along the riverbanks (such as BBQs or play areas), and public access to the river and environs is not optimal. Indeed, in the words of one workshop participant, *“the river is grossly under-utilised; we have turned our back on the river”*.

Most workshop participants agree that this is the case, and they highlight that the river should be regarded as a major natural asset for Greater Shepparton. With sensitive planning and design, these riverine features have significant potential for careful development that presents the river as an asset for

the community. Access to the river can be enhanced, and appropriate facilities and amenities provided for enjoyment, according to workshop participants.

4.11 Promoting Shepparton to Government as a ‘Regional Centre’

It is fair to say that a degree of antipathy exists among sections of the Greater Shepparton community in that they feel *“Shepparton is not on the State Government’s radar as a regional centre”*, as noted at one workshop. This is principally due to the fact that Greater Shepparton does not form part of the State Government’s Transit Cities program. As a result, the general view is that Greater Shepparton misses out on investment programs (such as passenger rail, activity centre development etc) that are directed to regional centres including Bendigo, Ballarat, Geelong and the Latrobe Valley. These centres are regarded as attracting *“all the attention”* in terms of State government investment, and Shepparton should be considered as a regional centre and worthy of similar support.

Examples of inequity in the distribution of regional investment funds were provided at the workshops (such as funding for railway infrastructure and services linking Shepparton with Melbourne) and the notation that Shepparton’s rail service to/from Melbourne is *“simply terrible”*.

Others were more practical in seeing an opportunity for State Government to provide support to Greater Shepparton in *“making things happen”* rather than just relying on funding handouts.

Another participant emphasised that *“the strengths of our community are borne out of adversity”*, indicating that a lack of government assistance may be a good outcome in building local resilience. Yet another participant observed Greater Shepparton’s *“self-propelling”* nature in business and other matters, and its *“can-do”* approach to business development.

And as described by one participant, *“Greater Shepparton needs to position itself as a key regional city serving this part of north-central Victoria.”* This appears to be a more constructive and proactive approach for the benefit of the Greater Shepparton community and stands in contrast to the alternative of having a reliance on government funding, alone.

4.12 Fostering Growth in Small Towns

A general feeling exists, as expressed in the workshops, that Council should *“do more”* for the small towns located around the municipality.

Participants in the workshops see communities in these small towns as important to the ongoing role and viability of the towns, while also acknowledging that it can be difficult to maintain facilities and services to such small settlements. For example, most people living in the small towns shop regularly in the Shepparton CBD, with only local convenience or ‘top-up’ shopping undertaking in their local towns (but with a sense of loyalty to these local businesses). Maintaining schools in the townships can also be a difficulty.

In some cases, small towns are observed to have a particular identity, such as Tatura with its industry and Dookie with its long-established agricultural college. The small towns also provide an alternative place for residential location, noting that housing in smaller townships is very affordable. Moreover, choice in the residential market is in evidence.

The idea of living in a small community is also appealing: as one workshop participant says, *“Living as part of a small community is appealing”*, and this attitude relates closely to the ‘tree change’ aspects that are now observable in many small towns around the nation.

Others see a need to plan for the towns in terms of identifying supportable activities and in marketing the towns as places to live. But having a plan for the small towns is one thing; implementing the plan is another. This is seen as especially important as local communities seek ownership of their destiny, wherever possible. If there's a plan for the township, then it needs to be implemented with community support.

4.13 Keeping Young People in the Region

Greater Shepparton is said to have high retention rates for secondary school students, but many of them have to leave Shepparton for tertiary education.

Although a number of universities are represented in Shepparton (University of Melbourne, Latrobe), they have a more limited range of courses compared with Bendigo. In a positive vein, evidently the universities are seeking to expand their local offer, and this should help to retain more resident students in Greater Shepparton. But others observe that universities in Victoria tend to be "*Melbourne-centric*" in their locations and focus.

The importance of GO TAFE in the context of further education is highlighted in the consultations.

Another way to retain young people, as suggested in the consultations, is for businesses to provide more apprenticeships in trades and other sectors. The availability of apprenticeships in Greater Shepparton appears to be limited and *ad hoc* at present, according to those at the workshops, and this is an area deserving of investigation with a view to generating higher numbers of locally-based apprenticeships.

Growth in locally-based employment opportunities is also critically important in keeping young people living locally. The retail sector is important in this respect, especially as retail is regarded as one of the main sectors which provide job opportunities to young people.

Other ways to keep young people living locally and not adding to the drain of youth to Melbourne (or elsewhere) is to ensure an appropriate and attractive range of amenities, facilities and services are readily available. These could range from sports facilities and skateboard parks to places where young people can gather and socialise. In this context, one participant noted that "*we need to offer more than just a job; we need to offer lifestyle as well*".

4.14 Promoting Lifestyle Aspects

Lifestyle aspects were highlighted during the workshops as important factors to promote when seeking to attract new residents to live in Greater Shepparton, and in attracting new and expanding businesses to locate here.

These lifestyle aspects are regarded as numerous: they range from a comfortable year-round climate, to sports and entertainment venues and excellent schools and health facilities and services, and from housing affordability and choice to the low cost of living.

For many, it's the sense of community that attracts them to stay in Greater Shepparton: "*Why live in Shepparton? It's the people, the community. It's about relationships*".

These and other features are regarded as strong points in promoting Greater Shepparton as a popular place to live, work, invest and play.

While positive attributes are many, some also took the advantage of identifying opportunities for improvement in regard to lifestyle matters. For example, one participant states that "*Shepparton is the*

‘food bowl’ and we have a diverse cultural and ethnic mix but this is not reflected in the number and range of restaurants and cafes in town”.

Others see an opportunity to improve public access to the Goulburn River and to enhance the riverine environment of this locality, noting that it is a strong natural feature in the municipality (see Section 5.8).

4.15 Conclusion

As this review of viewpoints gleaned from the consultation shows, many topics are highlighted as being of relevance to the ongoing economic development of Greater Shepparton. These range from ensuring good leadership and keeping young people in the region, to building a diversified economy and promoting the special attributes of Greater Shepparton as a place to live, invest and work.

All of the topics raised in this Chapter can be dealt with as issues to address or as opportunities to build upon as part of the work program for Council’s EDU in the years ahead. The next Chapter presents the framework within which the Greater Shepparton EDS 2009-2012 will be structured and implemented.

5 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This Chapter provides a summary of the key issues and opportunities arising from the background research and consultation program. Issues and opportunities are presented under key strategic headings which are adopted in formulating strategies and supporting actions later in this document.

5.1 Issues and Opportunities Summary

Table 5.1 outlines main issues and opportunities of relevance to EDS 2009-2012.

Table 5.1: Issues and Opportunities, Greater Shepparton EDS 200-2012

Strategic Area	Issues	Opportunities
1 Leadership	How can 'leadership' in the broad sense (ie, beyond, but including, local government) for the promotion and achievement of economic development and community well-being be achieved in Greater Shepparton?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater engagement of industry, local business, education establishments, agencies, Chamber of commerce etc in economic development issues Stronger relationships with Federal and State Governments Stronger regional co-operation and strategic linkages
2 Managing population growth	What are the opportunities for Greater Shepparton arising from on-going population growth in terms of the supply of dwellings and the provision of all forms of urban infrastructure and services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop land servicing/ infrastructure sector Develop housing construction sector Attract more skilled migrants Create more jobs
3 Retaining existing businesses/jobs and expanding employment/business base	How can Greater Shepparton main existing jobs and also generate new jobs in a timely manner?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Greater Shepparton as a place for business investment Develop a more efficient planning/regulatory environment to stimulate investment Attract Government departments/agencies to locate in Shepparton
4 Diversifying economic base	How can Greater Shepparton achieve a more diversified economic base?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and develop specific strategies to target growth sectors Promote Greater Shepparton's business attributes to potential new investors/businesses
5 Identifying new business opportunities	What resources are required to effectively pursue opportunities for new and expanded businesses in Greater Shepparton?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage opportunities arising from population expansion (retail, business services, education) and specific projects (Food Bowl Modernisation Project, GVFLC)
6 Addressing skills shortages	How do we address the critical shortage of skilled workers in Greater Shepparton?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved school-to-work and university-to-work opportunities Attraction of skilled migrants to fill targeted vacancies Improved local training programs and linkages with employers

Strategic Area	Issues	Opportunities
7 Improved passenger and freight rail services for Greater Shepparton	How can passenger and freight rail services be improved for Greater Shepparton?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant economic benefits for local industry and for specific projects (Food Bowl Modernisation Project, GVFLC) and for improved passenger services
8 Shepparton CBD development	What are the priorities for CBD attention that would benefit from the involvement of the EDU?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing development of Shepparton 'Show Me' program Better linkages between CBD and surrounding areas Benefits arising from implementation of Shepparton CBD Strategy
9 Marketing and promotion	What is the most effective way to promote the special features of Greater Shepparton as a place to live, work and invest?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of the successful Shepparton 'Show Me' marketing campaign New targeted marketing initiatives aimed at business and investment attraction Regional marketing through RCV and other regional organisations Closer links with Tourism Department
10 Small towns development	What can be done to ensure the viability of small towns in Greater Shepparton?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement township marketing plans Develop business support groups in each township Attract Government initiatives aimed at supporting small towns (eg Moving Forward initiatives)
11 Retention of young people	How can Greater Shepparton retain a higher share of young people as residents, and thus gain from their contributions to the local and regional economy and to the community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved / expanded tertiary education and training facilities Strengthened linkages between industry and school / university students Greater diversity of jobs available locally Continue to enhance the positive attributes of Greater Shepparton as a place to live and work Strengthen the image of careers in agriculture and manufacturing
12 Developing the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre	How can the development of GVFLC be achieved to provide greatest economic benefit to Council, industry and the community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New employment opportunities More efficient access to markets Improved efficiency for logistics industry and growers Economic multipliers for the regional economy

5.2 Conclusion

The issues and opportunities identified through the research and consultation process have been grouped under a number of strategic headings for which detailed actions plans are developed in the following chapters.

6 FRAMEWORK FOR GREATER SHEPPARTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, 2009- 2012

This Chapter presents the framework for the Greater Shepparton Economic Development Strategy 2009-2012.

The strategy comprises the following elements:

- **Vision** - this expresses the underlying aspirations of the strategy.
- **Objectives** - these guide the achievement of the strategy.
- **Actions** - these underpin the successful achievement of the vision and the individual objectives.
- **Monitoring and review** – these tasks are essential in ensuring the vision and objectives are achieved.

A feature of the strategy is that the actions are primarily focused on what Council (and particularly the Economic Development Unit) can promote and achieve over the planning period, noting also that actions will require input (to varying extents) from other parts of Council, as well as from stakeholders in the Greater Shepparton community and even wider afield.

A further feature, as specified in Council's Study Brief, is that the recommended strategies and accompanying actions are focused on:

- identifying opportunities to promote investment and employment growth, and
- increasing Council's ability to pursue these opportunities.

6.1 Vision

"Greater Shepparton will be a prosperous, innovative and dynamic place where the strengths of the local and regional economy and the skills and application of the resident population will be promoted as key attributes in fostering innovation ,attracting investments, developing labour skills, growing existing businesses, and creating new businesses and new jobs.

This will be a place where the achievement of best practice in the sustainable development of the agricultural, manufacturing, transport and logistics industries will be world-class, and where the community is renowned for its 'can do' spirit in achieving positive economic and social outcomes for the benefit of all in Greater Shepparton"

6.2 Objectives

- 1 To provide leadership in identifying and implementing economic development opportunities
- 2 To identify and address the opportunities for economic development arising from population growth

- 3 To identify opportunities to retain and grow existing businesses and jobs, and to encourage new businesses and jobs
- 4 To diversify the economic base
- 5 To identify opportunities for new and expanded levels of business development
- 6 To address the skills shortage
- 7 To promote improved passenger and freight rail services for Greater Shepparton
- 8 To support the role and viability of the Shepparton CBD as the premier centre serving the region
- 9 To promote Greater Shepparton as a place to live, work and invest
- 10 To support the viability of small towns and their communities
- 11 To keep young people living in Greater Shepparton
- 12 To ensure the development of the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre.

6.3 Actions

A number of Actions underpin each of the twelve Objectives, and the specific actions relating to each of these objectives are presented in the following Chapter 7 under the heading of **Action Plans**.

The following information is provided in regard to each Objective and the associated Actions Plans:

- Rationale - why the objective and the actions are important
- Actions - description of the recommended actions
- Implementation - who initiates the action and who implements the action
- Cost - estimated annual cost to Council's EDU budget
- Priority - High, Medium, Low

These actions, and the underlying responsibilities for implementation and the estimates of likely cost and timing, are presented in the following Chapter as a **Work Plan for Council's EDU 2009-2012**.

The actions have been selected on the basis of the following principles:

- Actions support the vision and objectives
- Implementation of the actions can commence immediately
- Outcomes can be achieved efficiently in terms of recommended role and budget for the EDU
- The EDU has the principal role in initiating actions, with roles identified for other stakeholders
- Actions are in areas identified through consultation as priorities for economic development

Where appropriate, cross-links between actions are identified.

6.4 Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and review of the EDS is a very important task and this should be undertaken on a regular basis, usually every 12 months.

Monitoring of the implementation of the EDS involves a system of measuring progress to date, and these measures are provided in Chapter 6.

Once the monitoring task is undertaken (say) each 12 months, it will be necessary to review the EDS and introduce new or modified objectives and actions that will assist in meeting the underlying Vision for Greater Shepparton's economic progress.

6.5 Conclusion

Implementation of this framework for the EDS will contribute to the success of Council's EDU in implementing the numerous actions aimed at enhancing the Greater Shepparton economy, including growth in businesses and employment, improved levels of infrastructure and service provision, and improvements in the living, working and social outcomes for local residents.

7 WORK PLAN FOR COUNCIL'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNIT 2009-2012

This Chapter provides a Work Program for Council's Economic Development Unit (EDU) for the period 2009 to 2012. The focus for the work program is the **Action Plan** which sets out the following:

- Objective
- Rationale underpinning the Objective
- Issue to address
- Actions to implement
- Implementation - who initiates the action / who implements the action
- Cost - estimated annual cost to Council
- Timing/Priority
 - High: immediate action and certainly within 12 months
 - Medium: action within 12-24 months
 - Low: action not required within 24 months or later
- Monitoring and Review

On the following pages -

Each of twelve **objectives** is described, with the above information provided for each objective and the associated **actions**.

The Chapter also identifies **priorities for action** over the three-year work plan, an **estimate of costs to Council** over this period, and **key performance indicators** for adoption in the monitoring and review process. Links with initiatives contained in the State Government's *"Moving Forward: Update - The Next Two Years to 2008 and 2010"* (2008) are provided, where relevant.

7.1 Action Plan 1: Providing Leadership in Pursuing Economic Development

Objective

To provide leadership in identifying and implementing economic development opportunities.

Rationale

Council is identified as the entity responsible for guiding and promoting economic development in the municipality. However, the economic development field is both broad in coverage and complex in detail, and for these reasons the input of other organisations (such as GV BRaIN, the Chamber of Commerce, the universities, enterprises and individuals, and other stakeholders) should be available to further assist the elected representatives in their deliberations on these significant matters associated with economic development.

Issue

How can 'leadership' in the broad sense (ie, beyond, but including, local government) for the promotion and achievement of economic development and community well-being be achieved in Greater Shepparton?

Table 7.1: Actions relating to Providing Leadership in Pursuing Economic Development

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
1.1	Develop a leadership model which draws together the skills and experience of Council, the business community, government agencies and other stakeholders in a way that optimises Greater Shepparton's economic development potential in a sustainable manner.	EDU to initiate discussion of the leadership model, with the model to be further developed and explored at a workshop(s) hosted by Council and with the support of local business and community interests and with State Government input from a regional development perspective. For example, the outcome of these discussions/workshops might lead to the development of an 'Economic Development Leadership Board' or 'Committee for Greater Shepparton', or a more informal leadership / advisory structure. GV BRaIN, the Chamber of Commerce and the Universities would be valuable contributors to these discussions, as well as local business and industry leaders. EDU should promote businesses and other relevant interests in Greater Shepparton to participate in the Chamber of Commerce and in GV BRaIN.	EDU input to be funded as part of its on-going role. Additional cost of workshop(s) and specialist management consultant input (in co-ordinator/facilitator role) to be funded by Council and possibly with matching funds from State Government. Allow \$50,000.	High
1.2	Pursue strong working relationships with business and industry groups - including the Shepparton Chamber of Commerce, Shepparton Show Me, GV BRaIN, Tourism Greater Shepparton – to provide a consistent approach to business and industry development.	EDU to introduce forums/events for business and industry groups to meet and share viewpoints and outlooks for economic and business development in Greater Shepparton.	EDU to be funded as part of its on-going role, with a budget provided for hosting special forums/events. Allow \$10,000 pa.	High
1.3	Foster strong relationships with State and Federal Governments to ensure co-ordination and support for economic development initiatives at the local level in Greater Shepparton.	EDU as part of its regular role in Council. Develop and maintain strong relationships with relevant departments in State and Federal Governments and with associated agencies. Continue strong role as advocate for Greater Shepparton in dealings with State and Federal Governments in areas such as promoting the Food Bowl Alignment (Shepparton) for the Inland Rail Corridor.	EDU to be funded as part of its on-going role, plus a budget to allow for increased level of representations to Melbourne and Canberra. Allow \$15,000 pa.	High
1.4	Encourage regional co-operation between Greater Shepparton and neighbouring Councils (particularly those in the Hume Region as well as Campaspe) in order to achieve region-wide economic development outcomes. Continue to support the initiatives of Regional Cities Victoria on behalf of regional centres.	EDU to co-ordinate a meeting between the EDUs and planners from each Council to discuss issues of regional importance and to identify opportunities that may be developed for joint consideration and action by these Councils. Of particular importance to regional economic development will be the implementation of investment strategies included in the Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities, and continued involvement of Greater Shepparton in the Hume Economic Development Network.	EDU to be funded as part of its on-going role.	Medium

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
1.5	Ensure the objectives and associated actions contained in this Economic Development Strategy 2009-2012 are reflected in the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme (Municipal Strategic Statement) in order to provide guidance in the economic development of the municipality and in generating positive benefits for the wider community.	EDU to identify ways in which the Unit can contribute to this task, including ways in which the Unit can combine efforts with Council's planning department to ensure the Planning Scheme reflects the thrust of the EDS. EDU to input to the next review of the MSS.	EDU to be funded as part of its on-going role.	Medium

Action Plan #1 Cross-link with Other Action Plans

All Action Plans

Links with 'Moving Forward Update'

- *Build business leadership skills* (p37)

7.2 Action Plan 2: Dealing with Opportunities Associated with Population Growth

Objective

To identify and address the opportunities for economic development arising from population growth.

Rationale

Growth in Greater Shepparton's resident population between 2009 and 2026 is projected to total +10,000 persons, representing a 16% increase on the 2009 population level of 61,610 persons. By 2026, Greater Shepparton is projected to have a resident population of 71,610 persons. This growth will have important economic development implications for the municipality, including the need to provide a significant number of new residential dwellings and a requirement for more job creation, as well as expanding and improving the provision of infrastructure and services.

Managing population growth and capturing economic and business development opportunities associated with such growth will require careful management of resources in Greater Shepparton, ranging from planning for appropriate levels and types of residential and commercial development, to the provision of health and education infrastructure and services, and the adoption of efficient town planning and development processes.

Issue

What are the opportunities for Greater Shepparton arising from on-going population growth in terms of the supply of dwellings and the provision of all forms of urban infrastructure and services?

Table 7.2: Actions relating to Dealing with Opportunities Associated with Population Growth

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
2.1	<p>Monitor population growth trends in Greater Shepparton on an annual basis (refer to annually published ABS Estimated Residential Population [ERP] data) and identify trends in terms of origin of new residents (local / regional / other States / abroad).</p> <p>Information on origins of new residents can be gathered from surveys of (or an annual workshop with) real estate agents (based on the source of their real estate enquiries) and/or from a survey that Council can prepare and administer to new residents. . Population Census data is also of value but is only available every five years, and a lag of possibly 18 months may be encountered in receiving detailed data on population migration patterns at the municipal level.</p>	Council's EDU to monitor population trends and to monitor the interests and needs of new residents through a (recommended) survey form to be included in Council's "new residents' kit". This survey should also be distributed through local real estate agents who are dealing with new residents establishing in Greater Shepparton.	On-going budget to cover this task, but with reference to costs where the 'welcome pack' is used in other municipalities (eg, City of Ballarat).	High
2.2	<p>With population growth trends identified (Action 2.1), measure the trends in dwelling construction (by type and location) and the provision of land, urban infrastructure and services in the municipality. Ascertain the extent to which Greater Shepparton is accommodating expanding population numbers, and identify any bottlenecks (eg, lack of appropriate housing) that may be addressed by the private sector (eg, provision of a range of accommodation types) and by Council (eg, fast-track planning processes).</p>	Council's EDU to initiate these assessments with input from Council's urban planning department and engineering department.	On-going budget to cover this task.	High

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
2.3	<p>Attract in-migrants to live in Greater Shepparton, thus making available their skills in relevant industries, especially in agriculture, food processing, packaging, transport and health, while also adding to population numbers and thereby providing a market for local goods and services.</p> <p>Actions such as the on-going marketing of Greater Shepparton's attractions and liveability will be important, as will participation in the Regional Migration Incentive Fund, and support for initiatives such as Global Skills for Provincial Victoria and the work of Regional Cities Victoria in advocating for regional centres (including Shepparton) as alternative locations to accommodate future population expansion (that would otherwise settle in metropolitan Melbourne).</p>	EDU to ensure Council's continuing support to Regional Cities Victoria (RCV) in RCV's advocacy for increased State and Federal Government support in attracting and settling new residents in regional Victoria. EDU to continue to support and participate in regional initiatives aimed at increasing skilled migration to regional centres.	On-going budget for liaison costs with Canberra, plus allowance for deputation to meet with Minister in Canberra, possibly as part of RCV delegations (allow \$15,000).	Medium
2.4	Encourage an expansion in the number of locally-based jobs (+1,070 jobs required 2009-2012, assuming unemployment numbers remain at 2008 level) in order to meet the needs of increasing resident labour force numbers arising from population growth, especially the in-migration of workers.	EDU to monitor employment demand and supply trends. Prepare annual estimates of numbers of jobs required in the municipality to meet resident labour demand, and identify requirements of particular industries based in the municipality.	On-going budget covers costs of employment monitoring task. Costs associated with Employment Generation initiatives are included under Action Plan 3.	High

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
2.5	Ensure that an adequate supply serviced residential land is available over the period of the plan to accommodate forecast population growth (+2,220 persons) and to accommodate the forecast increase in dwellings (+1,250 dwellings). Note that this increase in dwelling numbers allows for a marginal decline in dwelling occupancy rates to approximately 2.4 persons per dwelling.	EDU, in association with Council's Planning department, to monitor land and dwelling demand in order to ensure an adequate supply of zoned and serviced residential land and dwellings, with land and dwellings to be provided by the private sector.	On-going budget covers costs for EDU and Planning department	High

Action Plan #2 Cross-link with Other Action Plans

Action Plan #3, maintain existing businesses/jobs and create new businesses/jobs

Links with 'Moving Forward Update'

- *Plan for growth in provincial Victoria (p14)*

7.3 Action Plan 3: Retaining/Growing Existing Businesses/Jobs and Encouraging New Businesses/Jobs

Objective

To identify opportunities to retain and grow existing businesses and jobs, and to encourage the creation of new businesses and jobs.

Rationale

In today's economic climate characterised by declining sales and profits and by increasing numbers of business closures and unemployment numbers, it will be very important to ensure that existing numbers of businesses and jobs in Greater Shepparton are maintained.

In addition, continuing population growth will result in growth in resident labour force numbers, and hence a requirement for more jobs to be generated in Greater Shepparton.

The number of jobs available to residents will need to increase by +1,070 jobs between 2009 and 2012 in order to meet the growth in the number of new labour force entrants in Greater Shepparton. These estimates assume that the existing number of unemployed persons (1,790) continues.

With these combined trends for an economic slowdown and for further growth in the numbers of people wanting to enter the labour force (as population growth continues and as young people become of working age), it will be important for Greater Shepparton to retain existing levels of economic activity, as well as fostering further economic and employment growth where this can be achieved.

Issue

How can Greater Shepparton maintain existing jobs and generate new jobs in a timely manner?

Table 7.3: Actions relating to Retaining/Growing Existing Business/Jobs and Encouraging New Businesses/Jobs

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
3.1	Encourage business and industry development by promoting Greater Shepparton's special attributes as a location for investment and business activity (refer this strategy for listing of attributes).	EDU to appoint consultants and to initiate Council-funded preparation by marketing consultants of promotional material for marketing of business and industry opportunities in Greater Shepparton.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget. New budget to be prepared for marketing consultancy and associated promotional efforts: say \$50,000 pa for consultancy. Plus budget for printing of material and other promotional media costs (to be determined, based on recommendations from marketing consultants).	High
3.2	Encourage further development of the services sector, with attention to enhancing opportunities in areas including retailing, property and business services, education and health.	EDU to ensure the promotional program in Task 3.1 contains emphasis on business and employment growth in the service sector, as well as manufacturing and transport sectors.	(Covered in 3.1)	High
3.3	Reduce regulatory red tape and improve Council processes so as to create a business-friendly environment and facilitate greater investment in the municipality.	EDU to work closely with Planning Department to ensure enquiries and development proposals are efficiently dealt with and fast-tracked where necessary.	On-going budget for Council's EDU and Planning Department to cover this task.	High
3.4	Provide ongoing specific support for major employment generating projects such as the GVFLC and the Food Bowl Modernisation Project.	EDU to provide assistance in the planning and development for these and other major projects (in conjunction with other departments and stakeholders), particularly with regard to investment attraction and advocacy.	On-going budget to cover this task	High
3.5	Recognise the importance of existing firms to the ongoing economic development of Greater Shepparton, including opportunities for investment, enterprise and employment.	EDU as part of its on-going role. EDU to develop a specific 'Business Retention and Growth' program which focuses on support to existing businesses and support to potential investors and businesses which may seek a location in Greater Shepparton. This support can include provision of up-to-date information on the availability of infrastructure and services, availability of sites for development, assisting with town planning issues, providing business contacts, and providing essential information on market growth.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget.	High
3.6	Encourage State Government to locate public sector departments and agencies in Greater Shepparton as a means of adding to the local/regional job supply.	EDU and Council to lobby appropriate State Government departments (eg, RDV) for greater public sector presence in Greater Shepparton.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget.	High

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
3.7	Encourage improvement in the management skills and professionalism of small and emerging businesses in order to enhance productivity among local businesses.	EDU to work with training providers and other appropriate agencies (including the Business Centre) to deliver management and skills upgrading programs to businesses in Greater Shepparton.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget. Cost of programs to be funded by relevant agencies and/or by fees paid by participants.	High

Action Plan #3 Cross-link with Other Action Plans

Action Plan #4, diversify the economic base

Action Plan #5, identify opportunities for new business investment

Action Plan #6, address the skills shortage

Action Plan #7, support Shepparton CBD

Action Plan #10, retain young people in Greater Shepparton

Links with 'Moving Forward Update'

- *Promote provincial Victoria to the world (p21)*
- *Expand the new investment partnerships (p22)*
- *Develop community enterprises in small towns (p17)*
- *Capitalise on opportunities in Victoria's Food Bowl (p23)*
- *Enhance Victoria's food industry's sustainability (p25)*
- *Develop Victoria's biofuels industry (p25)*
- *Develop Victoria's agri-business sector (p26)*
- *Advance the equine industry (p28)*

- *Boost tourism products and industry development (p29)*
- *Help Victoria's wine industry grow (p30)*

7.4 Action Plan 4: Diversifying the Economic Base

Objective

To diversify the economic base.

Rationale

Achieving a diversified economy is important for a number of reasons. For a regional centre like Greater Shepparton it means a spread of employment opportunities are available for the labour force, thus providing an incentive for workers (and their families) to stay locally and not to move to larger centres where job diversity may be perceived to be more attractive.

A diverse economy also means the city is not reliant upon just one or two key industries - such a situation can be perilous where one or other or both industries suffer a downturn and shed labour, leading ultimately to plant closures, with detrimental flow-on effects for other businesses and their workforce.

Examples exist where reliance on a particular industry or individual firm (which subsequently closes or relocates away from the city or town) has resulted in a crisis situation for the surrounding community. This outcome is avoided where a city or town has a diversified industrial base; thus, shocks in one sector need not affect the viability of another sector.

Issue

How can Greater Shepparton achieve a more diversified economic base?

Table 7.4: Actions relating to Diversifying the Economic Base

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
4.1	<p>Identify potential business growth sectors for which strategies can be developed to attract investment and generate new employment opportunities. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> new opportunities in retail and business services and in education and health will be identified in view of Greater Shepparton's strong on-going population growth; development of the GVFLC will provide significant opportunities for the transport and logistics sector and contribute further support to existing and new manufacturing activities in the region; tourism is relatively under-developed but appears to have growth potential, especially where linked into the wider surrounding region (Murray River and Goulburn River regions and the North-East) supported by significant State population growth over the coming years; regional tourism will be promoted and expanded with the move towards preparing and implementing a joint Regional Tourism Strategy involving Greater Shepparton and the Strathbogie, Mitchell and Murrindindi Shires. 	<p>EDU (in consultation with industry representatives) to identify growth sectors in Greater Shepparton for encouragement during the next two years.</p> <p>As a longer-term project, EDU to commission a detailed "Industry Opportunities" consultancy, identifying industry development opportunities for Greater Shepparton's private and public sector businesses/institutions over the next 10 years.</p>	<p>On-going budget to cover this task (or say \$50,000 to \$75,000 for specialist study – see Action 4.2 below).</p>	High
4.2	<p>Develop strategies to target growth sectors in industry and commerce (both public and private sectors) in Greater Shepparton</p>	<p>EDU to undertake consultation with industry representatives and other stakeholders in the local economy in order to develop strategies in consultation with other Council departments. Alternatively, the "Industry Opportunities" study could incorporate strategy development as part of its brief.</p>	<p>On-going budget to cover this task (or say \$50,000 for specialist study – this would be the total consultancy cost, including growth sectors and the strategy for development).</p>	Medium
4.3	<p>Highlight Greater Shepparton's business attributes to specific target sectors / investors as part of general marketing and promotions strategy</p>	Refer to Action 3.1	Refer to Action 3.1	Refer to Action 3.1

Action Plan #4 Cross-link with Other Action Plans

Action Plan #3, retaining businesses/jobs; generating new businesses/jobs

Action Plan #5, identify opportunities for new business investment

Action Plan #6, address the skills shortage

Action Plan #10, retain young people in Greater Shepparton

Links with 'Moving Forward Update'

- *Promote provincial Victoria to the world (p21)*
- *Expand the new investment partnerships (p22)*
- *Develop community enterprises in small towns (p17)*
- *Capitalise on opportunities in Victoria's Food Bowl (p23)*
- *Enhance Victoria's food industry's sustainability (p25)*
- *Develop Victoria's biofuels industry (p25)*
- *Develop Victoria's agri-business sector (p26)*
- *Advance the equine industry (p28)*
- *Boost tourism products and industry development (p29)*
- *Help Victoria's wine industry grow (p30)*

7.5 Action Plan 5: Identifying New Business Opportunities

Objective

To identify opportunities for new and expanded levels of business development.

Rationale

The conventional role for an EDU is to identify opportunities for new and expanding businesses, accompanied by new levels of investment, enterprise and employment.

In the Greater Shepparton context this means identifying business opportunities in such diverse areas as agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, professional services, transport and the like.

In particular, business opportunities associated with the \$2 billion Food Bowl Modernisation Project and the GVFLC will need to be identified if maximum leverage is to be achieved from the investments associated with these major projects. In each case, business opportunities in these industries in Greater Shepparton would benefit from existing and potential linkages with agricultural, processing and packaging industries (in the case of the Food Bowl project) and with existing freight, transport and logistics firms (in the case of the GVFLC).

Other areas for investigation include research associated with the universities and with the Department of Primary Industries (which has a research centre in the region).

In addition, on-going business opportunities can be expected to be identified for activities associated with Greater Shepparton's role as the regional centre serving this part of north central Victoria. These opportunities will include, for example, professional services, business services, community services, and so on. Importantly, growth opportunities in existing and new businesses will be driven largely by population growth in Greater Shepparton and the surrounding region, noting that by 2031 the resident population is projected to have increased by a further 20,420 persons.

Issue

What resources are required to effectively pursue opportunities for new and expanded businesses in Greater Shepparton?

Table 7.5: Actions relating to Identifying New Business Opportunities

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
5.1	Identify employment requirements by sector (eg retail, health, education, business services) associated with anticipated population growth. Highlight business opportunities arising in relevant sectors.	EDU to commission consultant to provide 10-year forecast of requirements for retail, commercial and community facilities and to generate employment forecasts for Greater Shepparton.	\$35,000 (see Action 5.2)	Medium
5.2	Examine specific direct and indirect (multiplier) business opportunities arising from the Food Bowl Modernisation Project and the GVFLC, and highlight these opportunities to relevant industry stakeholders.	EDU to commission consultant to provide an industry and business opportunities assessment regarding the Food Bowl and GVFLC projects.	\$35,000 (included as part of consultancy project at Action 5.1).	Medium

Action Plan #5 Cross-link with Other Action Plans

Action Plan#2, dealing with the implications of population growth

Action Plan #3, generating more jobs

Action Plan #4, diversifying the industry base

Links with 'Moving Forward Update'

- *Promote provincial Victoria to the world (p21)*
- *Expand the new investment partnerships (p22)*
- *Develop community enterprises in small towns (p17)*
- *Capitalise on opportunities in Victoria's Food Bowl (p23)*
- *Enhance Victoria's food industry's sustainability (p25)*
- *Develop Victoria's biofuels industry (p25)*

- *Develop Victoria's agri-business sector (p26)*
- *Advance the equine industry (p28)*
- *Boost tourism products and industry development (p29)*
- *Help Victoria's wine industry grow (p30)*

7.6 Action Plan 6: Addressing the Skills Shortage

Objective

To ensure that a sufficient supply of skilled labour is available to support future economic growth and industry development.

Rationale

The skills shortage is in evidence in Greater Shepparton and across most sectors – from farming and trades to professional services and senior management. Support to educational opportunities in Greater Shepparton, especially in the tertiary field, is important, as well as efforts to retain young people in the local tertiary institutes and in the local labour force rather than seeing them move to (perceived) better educational and/or employment opportunities in other regional centres or in Melbourne.

The Regional Skills Shortage Survey Report (2006), the Global Skills for Provincial Victoria report (2007), and the Labour Force and Training Strategic Plan for Transport and Distribution Industry (2008) provide insights into ways to address skills shortages, including action by regional employers and communities in attracting migrants to a region. The main findings of these publications are described in Section 3.2.

Issue

How do we address the critical shortage of skilled workers in Greater Shepparton?

Table 7.6: Actions relating to Addressing the Skills Shortage

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
6.1	Facilitate school-to-work and university-to work links through liaison between secondary schools, university and GO TAFE providers and industry. This will include providing students /school leavers with information on employment and training opportunities and skills requirements, and with a focus on opportunities in Greater Shepparton.	EDU to arrange annual workshop with education providers, local learning and employment networks, Centrelink, and industry representatives in order to identify skills shortages and ongoing requirements, and to assist in developing more efficient pathways to employment.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget.	Medium
6.2	Council to undertake annual business skills shortage survey (using information from the Business Directory database and contacts from the recent Business Expansion and Retention survey) to monitor skills gaps and ongoing requirements. The results of this survey will assist industry, employment, education and training providers with their ongoing strategy development.	EDU to develop and distribute survey and collate data.	Survey preparation and data analysis from on-going EDU budget. Allow \$10,000 pa for printing, mail out etc.	Medium
6.3	Support and assist in initiatives associated with attracting skilled migrants to live in Greater Shepparton, thus making available their skills to businesses and industries seeking skilled labour. Ensure migrant skills are linked with skills needs of industry. (refer to Action Plan 2.3).	refer to Action Plan 2.3	refer to Action Plan 2.3	refer to Action Plan 2.3
6.4	Support and assist in developing specific industry initiatives (such as the Labour Force and Training Strategic Plan for the Transport and Distribution industry, and the Goulburn Valley Harness Racing Business Plan) aimed at providing better local training and skills outcomes.	EDU to participate as required in the development of industry strategic plans.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget.	Medium

Action Plan #6 Cross-link with Other Action Plans

Action Plan#2, dealing with the implications of population growth

Action Plan #3, generating more jobs

Action Plan #5, identify opportunities for new business investment

Action Plan #10, retain young people in Greater Shepparton

Links with 'Moving Forward Update'

- *Enhance Make Your Career Happen in Provincial Victoria* (p33)
- *Develop a Rural Skills Cadetship scheme* (p35)
- *Create workforce development strategies* (p35)
- *Strengthen professional networks* (p36)
- *Build business leadership skills* (p37)
- *Extend Provincial Economic Partnerships Program traineeships* (p38)

7.7 Action Plan 7: Promoting Improved Passenger and Freight Rail Services to and from Greater Shepparton

Objective

To promote improved passenger and freight rail services to and from Greater Shepparton.

Rationale

An improvement in rail services can contribute in a significant manner to regional population growth, as evidenced with the upgrade to passenger rail services between Melbourne and Bendigo, Ballarat and Traralgon. Other benefits include a reduction in urban growth pressures in metropolitan Melbourne as people choose to live in Greater Shepparton where lifestyle choices are numerous, and a reduction in motor vehicle trips to/from Melbourne and other destinations served by rail.

Similarly, environmental and economic benefits are to be achieved where an increased volume of freight can be carried by rail instead of road between Greater Shepparton and other destinations served by rail.

Issue

How can an improvement in the provision of rail and freight services to/from Greater Shepparton be achieved so that this initiative contributes to economic development in the municipality?

Table 7.7: Actions relating to Promoting Improved passenger and freight rail services to and from Greater Shepparton

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
7.1	The Greater Shepparton City Council, together with the supporters of the GVFLC, the Food Bowl Modernisation Project and the Chamber of Commerce, will prepare a demand analysis which identifies the strategic and economic importance of improving the level of passenger and freight rail services to/from Greater Shepparton. This plan will highlight the economic, environmental and community benefits that can be expected to flow from an expansion in rail services.	EDU to develop a campaign to promote the economic and other merits of expanding the level of rail service to/from Greater Bendigo.	EDU costs included in annual EDU budget, plus allowance for a demand analysis (\$50,000) to be prepared by an appropriate consultant	High
7.2	Greater Shepparton Council lobby the State Government V/Line for Shepparton to trial a <i>Velocity</i> train service	EDU to prepare briefing document for Council use in lobbying State Government and V/Line.	EDU costs included in annual EDU budget	High
7.3	Greater Shepparton Council to request V/Line to undertake an audit of existing track and services to determine upgrade requirements	EDU to prepare briefing document for Council use in lobbying State Government and V/Line to undertake rail infrastructure audit.	EDU costs included in annual EDU budget	High
7.4	Greater Shepparton Council to prepare a response to ARTC Melbourne to Brisbane Inland rail Stage 1 findings	EDU, on Council's behalf, to prepare letter of response to ARTC.	EDU costs included in annual EDU budget	High

Action Plan #7 Cross-link with Other Action Plans

Action Plan #3, retaining existing businesses /encouraging new businesses

Action Plan #4, diversifying the economic base

Action Plan #5, identifying new business opportunities

Links with 'Moving Forward Update'

n/a

7.8 Action Plan 8: Supporting the Shepparton CBD

Objective

To support the role and viability of the Shepparton CBD as the premier centre serving the region

Rationale

Shepparton's Central Business District (CBD) is the premier centre serving this part of north central Victoria. The CBD provides higher-order facilities and services in a range of fields - retail, professional services, business services, community facilities, recreational and leisure facilities, entertainment, civic offices, and so on.

The recently-completed *Shepparton CBD Strategy* (Planisphere, 2008) provides Council with a number of objectives to achieve in relation to the use and development of land, streetscape improvements, traffic management and so on. Among the priorities in the CBD Strategy is the need to consolidate the CBD as the principal centre in the region and to support the local economy and employment through an appropriate mix of activities.

A further opportunity, as identified in the consultations for the EDS 2009-2012 (refer Section 4.9), is to enhance the amenity and public accessibility of the Goulburn River and environs which are located in close proximity to the western boundary of the CBD.

Issue

What are the priorities for CBD attention that would benefit from the involvement of the EDU?

Table 7.8: Actions relating to Supporting the Shepparton CBD

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
8.1	Continue to provide support for the 'Shepparton Show Me' program including marketing plan and monitoring of performance.	EDU to continue existing role with regard to 'Shepparton Show Me' program	Funded by business levy.	High
8.2	Ensure the Shepparton CBD Strategy recommendations are implemented regarding mix of future activities, locations for development and other issues relating to the development of the Activity Centre.	EDU (in conjunction with other departments) to assist in the implementation of the Shepparton CBD Strategy. In this regard, the EDU will have a specific role to play in providing advice to potential developers/investors/businesses and an ongoing role with existing and future traders. EDU and Planning Department to assist in identifying potential sites in CBD for development/redevelopment. EDU / Council to lobby State Government with regard to securing funding for place managers to assist with implementing Shepparton's CBD Strategy, noting that this funding is currently limited to regional centres involved in the Transit Cities Program.	EDU / Planning Department role funded by on-going budget.	Medium
8.3	Assist Council departments (as appropriate) in the planning for better linkages between the Goulburn River and environs and CBD, and including reference to the RiverConnect project.	EDU to participate in discussions with other departments regarding improving these linkages. EDU to identify and publicise the economic benefits that can be expected to be generated through improvements to the riverine environment and associated with improved levels of amenity in the Shepparton CBD.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget.	Medium

Action Plan #8 Cross-link with Other Action Plans

Action Plan#1, dealing with the implications of population growth

Action Plan #2, generating more jobs

Action Plan #5, identify opportunities for new business investment

Action Plan #9, promoting Greater Shepparton

Links with 'Moving Forward Update'

- Expand the Buy Locally program (p16)

7.9 Action Plan 9: Promoting Greater Shepparton

Objective

To promote Greater Shepparton as a place to live, work and invest.

Rationale

Regional development is competitive. Communities, large and small, have to compete to attract new investments, business opportunities, labour and skills. In this regard, Greater Shepparton is no different from other regional centres and, as a result, every effort must be made to promote the special attributes that Greater Shepparton has to offer in attracting prospective investors, businesses and workers to the municipality.

Many of these attributes are identified in Section 4.4 of this strategy, and these range from an attractive climate and a diversified economy, to excellent community infrastructure and services and the positive 'can do' attitude of local people in getting things done. Lifestyle aspects in Greater Shepparton are also very important, and should be strongly promoted; a number of these features are listed above in Section 4.14. The promotion of Greater Shepparton as a regional centre should also be strongly supported, as highlighted in Section 4.10.

One of the initiatives mentioned in the consultations was the suggested introduction of a "*Shepparton Show Me – Industrial*" promotional program, based on the very popular and successful "*Shepparton Show Me - Retail*" program. Such a marketing effort would highlight the special attributes attached to an industrial location in Greater Shepparton, and the advantages for businesses which choose to locate in the municipality.

Issue

What is the most effective way to promote the special features of Greater Shepparton as a place to live, invest and run a business?

Table 7.9: Actions relating to Promoting Greater Shepparton

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
9.1	Continue with Shepparton Show Me Program (refer to Action 8.1)	refer to Action 8.1	refer to Action 8.1	refer to Action 8.1
9.2	Promote Greater Shepparton's special attributes as a location for investment and business activity including targeting specific industry sectors (refer to Action 2.1).	refer to Action 3.1.	refer to Action 3.1.	refer to Action 3.1.
9.3	Continue to support marketing/advocacy initiatives undertaken by Regional Cities Victoria regarding population and investment attraction.	EDU to continue existing role.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget.	High
9.4	Prepare specific promotional programs for significant industries in Greater Shepparton (eg, Logistics industry, Food Bowl activities) in order to encourage investment and new/expanding business and to attract skilled workers, and as a form of 'corporate promotion' for Greater Shepparton generally as a place to live, work and invest.	refer to Action 3.1.	refer to Action 3.1.	refer to Action 3.1.

Action Plan #9 Cross-link with Other Action Plans

All Action Plans

Links with 'Moving Forward Update'

- *Promote Provincial Victoria to the world (p21)*

7.10 Action Plan 10: Supporting the Small Towns

Objective

To support the viability of small towns and their communities.

Rationale

The small towns in Greater Shepparton account for around 5,500 residents or just under 10% of the municipality's population. The towns are important for the sense of community they provide to these residents and the other 14,000 residents or 24% of the municipality who live in the surrounding rural areas and in numerous small hamlets. With the global trend towards centralisation of many urban functions (from shopping and banking services, to education and health facilities), the role of small towns is continually under pressure, and for many small towns the outlook is for a further loss in their role as service provider to their local communities.

However, it is also the case that many small towns have a viable and continuing role to play, and for this reason it is important to support these townships. The potential to provide for housing choice (in terms of dwelling type and cost) is an example of diversifying the role of small towns.

Issue

What can be done to ensure the viability of small towns in Greater Shepparton?

Table 7.10: Actions relating to Supporting the Small Towns

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
10.1	Support the implementation of the Township Marketing Plans for Murchison, Dookie, Mooroopna and Tatura.	EDU to provide ongoing facilitation in the implementation of the plans, particularly with regard to supporting local business and in investment attraction.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget.	Medium
10.2	Support State, Federal Government and RCV initiatives aimed at attracting investment, migration and specialist skills to regional centres and rural areas.	EDU to advocate to State and Federal Government with regard to securing investment, migration and specialist skills to the townships.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget.	Medium
10.3	Support small towns in the development of local businesses and local business support groups	EDU to engage with community leaders and the wider business community in each township to identify opportunities to develop local businesses, including local business groups which can assist existing and new businesses, including home-based businesses.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget.	Medium

Action Plan #10 Cross-link with Other Action Plans

Action Plan #2, dealing with the implications of population growth

Action Plan #3, generating more jobs

Action Plan #5, identify opportunities for new business investment

Action Plan #9, promoting Greater Shepparton

Links with 'Moving Forward Update'

- *Develop community enterprises in small towns (p17)*
- *Build stronger small towns (p41)*

7.11 Action Plan 11: Retaining Young People in Greater Shepparton

Objective

To keep young people living in Greater Shepparton.

Rationale

Young people are important to a community – they provide generational succession and help to maintain the momentum in providing for the well-being of the wider community through their contributions of labour force skills, the requirements they generate for goods and services (ie, support to what is termed ‘effective demand’ and contributions to GDP), and their support to social and other networks at the local and regional levels.

However, regional localities such as Greater Shepparton are in danger of losing an increasing number of their young people to much larger regional centres or to Melbourne where tertiary education and job prospects are considered to be greater than at home. This has been the trend in cities and towns around regional Victoria for generations. In more recent years, prospects for education and jobs are now improving in most regional centres, including Greater Shepparton, and to some extent this is helping to retain young people locally. However, universal competition for labour, mentioned above, is also at work in attracting young people and their skills to the larger centres.

Greater Shepparton therefore needs to retain a higher proportion of its youth, where possible, so that the social and economic outcomes for the Greater Shepparton community are optimised.

Issue

How can Greater Shepparton retain a higher share of young people as residents, and thus gain from their contributions to the local and regional economy and to the community?

Table 7.11: Actions relating to Retaining Young People in Greater Shepparton

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
11.1	Advocate for further tertiary education and training facilities (and expanded courses) to be located in Greater Shepparton in order to assist in providing locally-based career development opportunities for young people.	EDU to assist other departments with submissions to Education Department and other agencies.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget.	High
11.2	Facilitate school-to-work and university-to-work links with industry and businesses so as to more effectively match young people with available employment and training opportunities in Greater Shepparton (refer to Action 6.1).	refer to Action 6.1	refer to Action 6.1	refer to Action 6.1
11.3	Identify potential job growth sectors which will assist in diversifying Greater Shepparton's industry base and generate new employment opportunities for young people (refer to Action 4.1).	refer to Actions 4.1 and 4.2	refer to Actions 4.1 and 4.2	refer to Actions 4.1 and 4.2

Action Plan #11 Cross-link with Other Action Plans

Action Plan #3, generating more jobs

Action Plan # 4, diversifying the industry base

Action Plan #5, identify opportunities for new business investment

Action Plan #6, address the skills shortage

Links with 'Moving Forward Update'

- *Enhance Make Your Career Happen in Provincial Victoria* (p33)
- *Develop a Rural Skills Cadetship program* (p35)

7.12 Action Plan 12: Ensuring the Development of the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre

Objective

To ensure the development of the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre.

Rationale

The Goulburn Valley Freight Logistics Centre (GVFLC) concept has been in existence for approximately 10 years. The GVFLC has the potential to provide numerous and major benefits for industry and the wider community. The GVFLC will provide a modern and efficient freight logistics solution for the Food Bowl region and is the Greater Shepparton City Council's highest priority economic development project. The GVFLC will involve the creation of complementary freight and storage services, combined with a road-rail terminal, on a 331ha site at 250 Toolamba Road, Mooroopna. The site adjoins the Melbourne to Tocumwal rail line and the future Shepparton bypass of the Goulburn Valley Highway. The Federal Government has committed \$3 million towards the first development stage while the State Government has committed \$2 million. Benefits include:

- Improved efficiency of the freight logistics task for industry and growers
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions and road trauma
- An increase in rail share over road, that will overcome congestion issues in Melbourne
- Direct rail access to the Port of Melbourne
- Assistance for business and industry to access global market opportunities.
- Promotion of urban renewal
- An increase in economic growth and prosperity
- New employment opportunities

A range of businesses such as transport and logistics companies, food processors, food producers, manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers will be interested in the project for:

- Rail freight handling – operation of the container terminal, container storage

- Outbound warehousing and distribution – for produce awaiting shipment
- Inbound distribution – distribution to retailers and businesses
- Freight related businesses – packaging, container servicing, pallets
- Services such as truck maintenance, petrol, tyres, container cleaning

Issue

How can the development of the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre best be achieved to provide the greatest benefit to Council, industry and the community?

Table 7.12: Actions relating to Ensuring the Development of the GVFLC

Action No.	Action	Implementation	Estimated Annual Cost to Council	Priority
12.1	The Greater Shepparton City Council will prepare a marketing plan which identifies the strategic and economic importance of the GVFLC, highlighting the economic and other benefits that can be expected to flow to Greater Shepparton and to others with an involvement in this major development.	Appoint a marketing consultancy to prepare marketing collateral	\$70,000	High
12.2	Liaise with industry stakeholders to promote the benefits of the GVFLC and to ensure investment in the project.	Arrange regular briefings with key industry stakeholders to ensure information is communicated effectively.	EDU role to be funded by on-going budget	High

Action Plan #12 Cross-link with Other Action Plans

Action Plan #3, generating more jobs

Action Plan #5, identify opportunities for new business investment

Action Plan #7, improve passenger and freight rail services

Links with 'Moving Forward Update'

n/a

7.13 Estimated Financial Resources Required for EDU Work Plan, 2009-2012

The financial resources for the EDU work plan have two components:

- 1 **Financial resources allocated to EDU** - and to Council where other departments are involved (eg Planning)
- 2 **Financial resources required for implementing particular actions**, such as a marketing program for the Logistics industry, for Food Bowl project, where consultants and a marketing budget will be required, and costed separately from Council's EDU budget

Indicative estimates of budget requirements (additional to current EDU funding) are provided in Table 7.13. These estimates are based on high (year 1), medium (year 2) and low (year 3 or beyond) priorities identified in the Action Plans.

Table 7.13: Indicative Estimates of Budget Required for Greater Shepparton Economic Development Strategy (all values expressed in constant 2009 dollars)

Action Plan	Year 1 Costs High Priority	Year 2 Costs Medium Priority	Year 3 (or later) Low Priority
1 Providing Leadership in Pursuing Economic Development	\$50,000 - specialist management consultant \$10,000 – special events / forums \$15,000 – representations to State and Federal departments	Nil	Nil
2 Dealing with the Opportunities Associated with Population Growth	(\$15,000 – representations to State and Federal departments – included in Action 1)	Nil	Nil
3 Retaining/Growing Existing Business/Jobs and Encouraging Creation of New Businesses/Jobs	\$50,000 – marketing consultancy	Nil	Nil
4 Diversifying the Economic Base	\$50,000 – industry opportunities consultancy	Nil	Nil
5 Identifying New Business Opportunities	Nil	\$35,000 – retail, commercial and community requirement forecasts consultancy	Nil
6 Addressing the Skills Shortage	\$10,000 associated with distribution of annual business survey	\$10,000 associated with distribution of annual business survey	\$10,000 associated with distribution of annual business survey
7 Promoting improved passenger and freight rail services to/from Greater Shepparton	\$50,000 for demand analysis	Nil	Nil
8 Supporting the Shepparton CBD	Nil (assuming continuation of Business Levy)	Nil (assuming continuation of Business Levy)	Nil (assuming continuation of Business Levy)
9 Promoting Greater Shepparton	Costs included in actions 3 and 8	Costs included in actions 3 and 8	Costs included in actions 3 and 8
10 Supporting the Small Towns	Nil	Nil	Nil
11 Retaining Young People in Greater Shepparton	Costs included in actions 4 and 6	Costs included in actions 4 and 6	Costs included in actions 4 and 6
12 Ensuring the Development of the GVFLC	\$70,000	Nil	Nil
TOTAL COST (INDICATIVE ONLY)	\$305,000	\$45,000	\$10,000

Source: Essential Economics Pty Ltd

The budget estimates in this Table are in addition to the on-going EDU expenses for staff and operating costs

7.14 Top 5 Priorities for Council Action, 2009-2012

The top five priorities for the EDU to pursue in this work plan over the period 2009-2012 are as follows:

- 1 To ensure the development of the Goulburn Valley Freight and Logistics Centre
- 2 To identify opportunities to retain and grow existing businesses and jobs, and encourage the creation of new businesses and jobs.
- 3 To diversify the economic base
- 4 To promote improved passenger and rail freight services to and from Greater Shepparton
- 5 To promote Greater Shepparton as a place to live, work and invest.

7.15 Conclusion

This Work Plan for Council's EDU sets out a number of Actions that the EDU should undertake over the four years 2009 to 2012. The Actions reflect issues and priorities identified in the consultation for this Work Plan, and are also based on an appreciation of the Greater Shepparton economy and its outlook for development, as highlighted in the economic profile and the assessment of future directions.

Monitoring of the EDU's performance in implementing this work plan is provided in the following Chapter.

8 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The success or otherwise of the EDS will be determined to a large extent by the implementation of the Work Plan and, in particular, the implementation of the Action Plans. In order to monitor both implementation and emerging economic outcomes, key performance indicators have been developed for each Action Plan.

Performance monitoring of the EDU in implementing the EDS will also be an important task, and this is highlighted later in this Chapter.

8.1 Performance Indicators

A number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been developed so as to ensure the effective implementation of the EDS. The KPIs will assist in monitoring the ongoing effectiveness of the Strategy. Table 8.1 identifies measures, targets, timeframes and data sources for KPIs for each Action Plan.

Table 8.1: Key Performance Indicators, Greater Shepparton EDS, 2009-2012

Strategy Area	Measure	Target	Timeframe	Data Sources
Action Plan 1				
Providing Leadership in Pursuing Economic Development				
Leadership model	Develop an effective leadership model	Leadership structure / model to be functioning within 12 months	In place within 12 months	Council
Action Plan 2				
Dealing with the Opportunities Associated with Population Growth				
Skilled in-migration	Increase in inward migration, especially skilled persons	Local information sourced from 'Welcome Package' responses of new residents, including indication of their skill levels	Annual	'Welcome Package'
		In-migration exceeds level for the previous 5-year period in proportional terms, as indicated in ABS Population Census and data from Department of Immigration	Every 5 years	ABS Census data (every 5 years)
Jobs creation	(see Action Plan 3)	See Action Plan 3		

Strategy Area	Measure	Target	Timeframe	Data Sources
Action Plan 3 Retaining/Growing Existing Businesses/Jobs and Encouraging Creation of New Businesses/Jobs				
Employment	Increase in number of employed persons	Increase in employed persons annually (at least 1,070 new jobs required 2009-2012)	Annual	DEWR Small Area Labour Markets data (every quarter) and ABS Population Census (every 5 yrs)
Employment	Improved job self-sufficiency	Increase in Greater Shepparton's job provision ratio (ie, ratio of Jobs in Greater Shepparton to Resident Labour Force in Greater Shepparton)	Annual	ABS Journey to Work data (every 5 years)
Unemployment rate	Reduce unemployment rate	Reduce unemployment levels similar to rates for regional Victoria	Annual	DEWR Small Area Labour Markets
Planning	Increase in efficiency of planning decision-making (particularly with regard to proposed major residential and commercial developments)	Improve ratio of decisions made to applications received	Annual	DPCD data (annual)
Action Plan 4 Diversifying the Economic Base				
Economy structure	Diversification of economic base	Increase in the number and proportion of Greater Shepparton jobs in non-traditional/target sectors	Every 5 years	ABS Census data
Action Plan 5 Identifying New Business Opportunities				
Businesses growth	Increase in the number of businesses located in Greater Shepparton	Annual increase in business numbers	Annual	ABS Business Register (annual) and Council business ratepayer records
Action Plan 6 Addressing the Skills Shortage				
Skills development	Reduction in number of Greater Shepparton businesses reporting skills shortages	Reduction in number of reported skills shortages on an annual basis. Increase in number of individuals in locally-based Training and associated programs	Annual	Council Skills Shortage Survey (annual). Numbers of participants in local training/skills courses
Action Plan 7 Promoting improved passenger/ freight rail services to/from Shepparton				
Rail links	Achieve support from relevant parties (Commonwealth, State and local governments) for improved rail services to/from Shepparton	Agreement on need for improved rail services	Immediate	Reports on demand analysis and on audit of rail infrastructure conditions

Strategy Area	Measure	Target	Timeframe	Data Sources
Action Plan 8 Supporting the Shepparton CBD				
CBD development	Increase in retail and commercial floorspace and mix of CBD activities, incl. community facilities	Increase retail and commercial floorspace and mix of activities in line with (or faster than) population growth and demographic change	Annual	Council planning data. Annual floorspace surveys of CBD activities
Action Plan 9 Promoting Greater Shepparton				
Marketing and promotion	Increase in in-migration, investment and visitation to Greater Shepparton	Annual increase in each category	Annual	Value of investment as recorded by Building Commission (annual). Performance of 'Shepparton Show Me' Program (annual) In-migration (ABS Census data every 5 years) and recommended 'Welcome Package' information (Council, annual) Visitation numbers based on Tourism Victoria data (annual), plus Visitor Information Centre data (annual)
Action Plan 10 Supporting the Small Towns				
Small Towns	Increase (or at least stabilisation) in population numbers and business activities	Meets or exceeds population forecasts for small towns Annual increase in business numbers	Annual	Population growth based on Council data (id forecasting data) Business growth in ABS Business Register – annual Council records on new business establishment
Action Plan 11 Retaining Young People in Greater Shepparton				
Young people	Increased numbers in tertiary education and training	Increase in number of facilities / student places and courses located in Greater Shepparton	Annual	Data from Universities / GO TAFE and other institutions
Action Plan 12 Ensuring the Development of the GVFLC				
Development of facility	Investment /activity	Annual increase in the number of businesses locating to the facility and value of investment	Annual	Data from Planning Department

Source: Essential Economics

8.2 Performance Indicators for Council's EDU

It will be necessary for the EDU to prepare performance indicators by which the Unit and Council can measure the implementation of the EDS 2009-2012 by Council.

It is expected that the internal 'performance indicators' will take into account such factors as the following:

- Structure of the EDU and its relationship to other departments in Council
- Existing and planned staffing levels in the EDU
- Existing roles, responsibilities and work programs in the EDU
- Priorities that EDU and Council identify for the EDU work program
- Specific measures to be applied for measurement of implementation of specific components of the EDS 2009-2012

The consultant has not prepared performance indicators for the EDU as this task requires a detailed appreciation of the existing structure and performance of the EDU, including roles, numbers of staff and size of annual budgets, all within the context of the wider Council role, staffing and budgets.

However, agreement on the type and extent of performance standards by which to measure the implementation of the EDS by the EDU and Council (as recommended by the consultant in Section 7.1) will be an important task for the EDU to finalise as part of its work program for the period 2009-2012.

8.3 Conclusion

A number of performance indicators are identified for each Action, with these indicators intended to assist in assessing the effectiveness of the implementation and outcomes of the EDS. Each of the indicators is easily measurable, with targets set to monitor progress over a specified time period.

In addition, it will be necessary for the EDU to prepare performance standards by which the implementation of the EDS by EDU/Council can be measured over the course of the period 2009-2012.