

GREATER SHEPPARTON

YOUTH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

2012 - 2015



YOUNG PEOPLE MATTER!

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Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We the Greater Shepparton City Council acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land which now comprises Greater Shepparton. We pay respect to their tribal elders, we celebrate their continuing culture and we acknowledge the memory of their ancestors.

Message from the Mayor

Young people are a vital component of the Greater Shepparton community; they have the capacity to inspire and the ability to be influential community members. Young people are tomorrow's community leaders, workers, parents and custodians of our environment. However, they are not just our future – young people are important in the present. Greater Shepparton City Council continues to recognise the significant role that young people play in the community and as such I am pleased to present the *Greater Shepparton Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2012 – 2015*.

The strategy and associated action plan will provide Council with a strategic framework to guide Council's role within the youth sector into the future. It will inform how we will work in partnership with the youth sector, young people and their families to ensure that young people are provided with every opportunity to actively participate in their community including those with diverse social, economic or cultural backgrounds.

This is the first Youth Strategy and Action Plan of its kind for Greater Shepparton City Council and has been developed through extensive consultation. Young people, education settings, youth services and other community service providers have provided many valuable ideas for the future direction of Council's role to support young people.

Greater Shepparton City Council looks forward to implementing the Youth Strategy in partnership with young people, the youth sector and the wider community. These partnerships are essential to guide and support the delivery of many of these positive initiatives.

I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to the people who have actively contributed to the development of the *Greater Shepparton Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2012 – 2015*.

Together we will work towards a community where young people are active citizens who are happy, healthy and thriving.



Cr Michael Polan

Mayor, Greater Shepparton City Council



GREATER SHEPPARTON YOUTH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN



Executive Summary

Greater Shepparton City Council recognises the significant contribution that young people make to our local community through their vibrancy, passion, innovation and enthusiasm. The 2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census data indicated that Greater Shepparton is home to 60,449 residents, with 26.3% of the Greater Shepparton population are aged between 5 and 24 years. (Refer Appendix 1).

The development of the Greater Shepparton Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2012 - 2015 demonstrates Council's ongoing commitment to young people and informs the role of Council in supporting our young people and the youth sector. The Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2012 - 2015 is the first of its kind for Greater Shepparton City Council. The Strategy builds on the work previously undertaken and will strengthen partnerships between Council, young people and the youth sector. The role of Council is very distinct from that of other services providers within the youth sector many of whom focus on specific issues and needs of young people e.g. family relationships, employment, mental health and justice. These services are vital for the development and wellbeing of our young people and Council seeks to strengthen valuable partnerships with these services.

The Strategy was developed through extensive consultation with young people, youth sector providers, education settings and internal Council departments. The suggestions raised have been pivotal in informing the key directions of the strategy.

Vision

Greater Shepparton City Council value young people within its community and will work in partnership to create opportunities to develop young people who are vibrant, passionate and fully engaged.

Greater Shepparton City Council will work in partnership with the youth sector to develop collaborative approaches, responsive and coordinated services for the ultimate benefit of all young people.

Key Directions and Action Plan

The Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2012 – 2015 creates opportunities to establish and strengthen strategic partnerships with young people, youth sector organisations and education settings to achieve the outcomes highlighted within the Action Plan. Five strategic directions have been created from consultations to frame the directions Council will undertake to support young people and the youth sector into the future.

They are:

1. Sector Coordination, Support, Advocacy and Facilitation
2. Engagement and Partnerships
3. Celebrate Youth Culture
4. Building Capacity
5. Safer Places and Spaces

The Action Plan 2012 – 2015 outlines key actions Council will achieve to ensure the implementation of the actions articulated in the Youth Strategy. The Action Plan has defined priorities for achievement, the review and evaluation of these actions will inform the development of new priorities in the following years. Some actions will continue for the life of the plan although they may be adapted as a result of evaluation and review.

GREATER SHEPPARTON YOUTH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Introduction

Greater Shepparton City Council recognises the significant contribution that young people make to our local community. Young people are vibrant, passionate, innovative and enthusiastic about the communities in which they live. It is the responsibility of the community to support young people and provide them with every opportunity to succeed. Young people are not just our future – they are important in the present.

The Greater Shepparton Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2012 – 2015 acknowledges and values our young people as active members of the community and recognise the integral part they play in the ongoing development of the community. The strategy provides Council with a strategic framework to guide our work with young people and youth sector organisations.

The Greater Shepparton Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2012 - 2015 is targeted to young people aged 10 to 25 years. Although 10 and 11 year olds do not fit into the established definition of youth, they have been considered within the scope of the Strategy as they make their transition from a child to young person. 18 to 25 year olds are also an important age group to include due to education and employment transitions. The strategy is inclusive of all young people acknowledging and valuing their diversity: socio economic status, sex, gender, sexuality, ability and cultural background.



GREATER SHEPPARTON YOUTH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Developing the Strategy

It is essential that Council highlight our commitment to young people by developing a Youth Strategy and Action Plan. Council has maintained a strong ongoing commitment to young people in the municipality as evidenced through the provision of a range of opportunities for young people and funded partnerships with the sector. These are discussed in more detail throughout the strategy document.

In 2010 Council created funding for a Community Youth Development Officer to ensure that Council maintained a strong presence in the youth space. This role was designated as a strategic sector leadership and planning position as opposed to a direct service delivery function.

The Youth Strategy and Action Plan is based on providing supporting to the youth sector, engage and build partnerships, celebrate, build the capacity and build safer communities for young people.

Process

Council undertook a range of activities to engage young people and the youth sector regarding the development of the Strategy conducting consultations with young people, youth sector and Council staff. Young people spoke about how they would like to be recognised in the community, while the youth sector identified how Council could integrate and add value to the sector for the benefit of young people. Council staff also contributed ideas to how we could strengthen our support to young people and the sector. This Strategy has been built on the ideas and visions of young people and youth sector leaders.

In addition to the range of community consultations, a review of the demographic profile of Greater Shepparton and Victoria has also helped to provide context to the Strategy. The Strategy aligns with a number of current Council policies and strategies and reflects current state and federal policies. These strategic links have been provided as an Appendix to this report (Appendix 3).



Consultations

Young people

Council in partnership with youth organisation, Word and Mouth undertook a number of consultations with young people in August 2011 to ensure that the views and opinions of young people were reflected in the strategy. Over 50 young people from four local secondary colleges were consulted at a local Youth Leadership Day. Consultations included conducting workshops with students from local secondary colleges on key elements of the Strategy. Young people shared their ideas on how Council can support, celebrate, engage, develop and partner with young people and the youth sector. They identified a range of opportunities and innovative ideas throughout the process. Council has also recently completed focus group consultations with over 180 young people regarding safety within our CBD. The outcomes of this consultation have also informed the development of the strategy.

Youth Sector

An extensive youth sector engagement project was undertaken to connect with over 36 key service providers and education settings. The engagement process targeted executive officers, directors, managers, principals and deputy principals to establish a strategic direction for the strategy.

Consultations methods of one-on-one interviews and surveys with youth service providers provided an opportunity to explore the individual perspectives of key stakeholders about the role of Council in the youth space and gained some perspectives about how Council and the sector could strengthen partnership moving forward for the ultimate benefit for our young people. The ideas generated were summarised and presented to the youth sector at the first of two Youth Sector Forums. The forums provided an opportunity for the sector to clarify comments and further explore ideas. The forums also gave opportunity as a youth sector collective to determine key priorities for the strategy. This consultation process was well received by the sector who welcomed the opportunity to have input into the direction of Council. A full list of the youth service organisations and educational settings that participated in the consultations can be found in the acknowledgements section of the Strategy.

Council Staff

A range of Council staff across 8 Council branches were consulted during the development of the Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2012 – 2015. This provided an opportunity to gain an understanding of how Council is currently engaging, working with and supporting young people and the youth sector but also highlighted opportunities for further growth and development. Staff also provided direction and advice into how these ideas could be implemented within Council.

Refer to Appendix 2 for a detailed summary of consultation data.

Draft

Following the development of the draft strategy, further consultation was undertaken. The Strategy was available for public viewing and feedback for a four week period. During this time the strategy was forwarded to the youth sector who assisted in its development and a sector forum was held to collectively discuss and consider the draft document. Council consulted with over 350 young people via a number of mechanisms (feedback exercise to identify priorities, survey and focus groups) about the draft strategy.

GREATER SHEPPARTON YOUTH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN



Role of Council

Greater Shepparton City Council is in a unique position to facilitate youth sector planning and coordination within the municipality. This is achieved through adopting strong partnerships within the youth sector and building local community capacity to effectively plan and respond to youth sector issues. This systematic approach ensures that the local youth sector is working toward shared goals to meet the needs of young people.

More specifically Greater Shepparton City Council has a role within the local youth space of strategic leadership, coordination and facilitation which has been widely supported by the sector.

Over the past two years, Council has reinforced and strengthened its commitment to community development and engagement with all sectors of the community. The Strategy is underpinned by a Community Development Framework with a focus on developing local area partnerships. In early 2011, Council employed a Community Youth Development Officer to act as an internal liaison for the youth sector and a conduit to the youth of the community. Youth connectedness to the local government sector is an important aspect to foster in any community.

Through a holistic perspective Council continues to engage with this section of the community through work experience programs, major events and promotion, recreation and parks, arts and culture, leisure facilities and economic development.

Activities conducted with young people are typically in partnership with youth organisations. This unified partnership approach provides greater opportunities for a dynamic and comprehensive youth engagement. A recent example of this collaboration is the Youth Safety Consultation that was conducted in 2011 which resulted in over 180 young people from 12 education settings providing valuable views and opinions regarding safety in the Maude Street Mall, Shepparton.

Strategic Links

The Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2012 – 2015 is aligned to Council's purpose to build a strong, active, confident and resilient communities in order to improve liveability and community life. At a local level, the policy context for the Council is outlined in its Council Plan. This is summarised in Greater Shepparton's vision statement and further articulated in its strategic objectives specifically the theme of Community Life. This strategic objective aims to enhance social connectedness, physical and mental health and wellbeing, education and participatory opportunities and a greater range of community services.

Council's Municipal Public Health Plan adopts contemporary thinking about health and wellbeing to shape a broader municipal approach to strengthening communities and supporting residents to achieve and sustain a high standard of health and wellbeing. The plan focuses on social inclusion and community participation recognising that a sense of belonging is an important contributor to personal and community health and wellbeing outcomes.

The Community Plan's Policy recognises that within municipalities there are usually a number of locations / townships around which communities develop all with their own local characteristics and hence different priorities and needs. Through the development of community plans for locations and townships in the municipality communities are empowered to develop a vision and position on issues which can input into Council and other service providers decision making processes.

Please refer to Appendix 3 for a detailed overview of the Council, Local Community, State and Federal government policies that have informed the development of strategy and associated action plan.

Sector Coordination, Support, Advocacy and Facilitation

A key responsibility of local government is leadership within the community. Across local government areas, many Councils are reviewing their traditional role of supporting young people in the community through service delivery to focus on strategic direction and facilitation. Greater Shepparton City Council recognises the key local government role of strategic coordination and facilitation and this role has been identified and supported by the youth sector throughout the consultations.

Sector leaders expressed commitment to a partnership approach and expressed a willingness to work more closely with Council. Council will continue to strengthen current partnerships and develop new partnerships with local service providers through sector coordination, support and facilitation. Collaborative approaches will ultimately lead to greater outcomes for young people.

Engagement and Partnerships

Council has recently reinforced and strengthened its commitment to community development and engagement with all sectors including young people, through the endorsement of Council's Community Development Framework. Council will continue to engage with young people on issues of importance to them, build relations and awareness with young people in partnership with a range of organisations and the community.

Valuing Young People / Celebrating Youth Culture

Council have the opportunity to lead the development of an inclusive community that values and encourages the contribution of young people. Council will lead this through promoting opportunities for young people to be acknowledged and celebrated for the positive roles that they play in the community.

Build Capacity

Council have the opportunity to build the capacity of young people to reach their full potential through innovative mechanisms that will increase young people's skills, capacity and understanding.

Safer Places and Spaces

Council work with the community to build a safe, vibrant and connected CBD for our young people through developing mechanisms and initiatives that increase perceptions of safety, improve built infrastructure and explore activities that build connections with the young community.

GREATER SHEPPARTON YOUTH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN



The Strategy

Vision

Greater Shepparton City Council value young people within its community and will work in partnership to create opportunities to develop young people who are vibrant, passionate and fully engaged.

Greater Shepparton City Council will work in partnership with the youth sector to develop collaborative approaches, responsive and coordinated services for the ultimate benefit of all young people.

Key Directions and Action Plan

Five strategic directions have been created to frame the actions that Council will undertake to support young people and the youth service sector into the future. They are:

1. Sector Coordination, Support, Advocacy and Facilitation
2. Engagement and Partnerships
3. Celebrate Youth Culture
4. Building Capacity
5. Safer Places and Spaces

The Action Plan 2012 – 2015 outlines key actions Council will achieve to ensure the implementation of the five key directions. The Action Plan has defined priority directions for achievement in the next 12 months. The review and evaluation of these actions will inform the development of the actions in following years. Some actions will continue for the life of the plan, although they may be adapted as a result of evaluation and review.

Implementation of the Youth Strategy and Action Plan

Implementation and review of the actions listed within the strategy and action plan will remain the responsibility of Council's Community Youth Development Officer who will work in partnership with internal and external stakeholders. For each initiative included in the action plan the lead Council Branch/Officer is identified in bold.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Greater Shepparton Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2012 – 2015 relies on evidence based, partnership approach to achieving its strategic direction and priorities. It is essential that the implementation of the plan be monitored and reviewed regularly. The results from this monitoring and review will ensure that collectively, as a sector, we are producing the required outcomes.

The following evaluation and review methods will be undertaken to ensure the Strategy is effectively implemented and reviewed to ensure its relevance for young people.

1. Annual Review Forum with young people, youth service organisations and internal Council branches to review current actions, identify changing issues and needs and plan for future and upcoming directions and actions.
2. An annual report provided to Council outlining achievements and the status of the implementation of actions.

Budget Implications

The Action Plan is set within the Council context of financial constraints and staff capacity. Any actions requiring additional funding will be considered through the annual budget process. Grant opportunities will also be sought by Council Officers through government and non government funding bodies to implement actions requiring additional funding.

The Greater Shepparton Youth Sector Leadership Group may collectively investigate external funding opportunities to develop and expand programs and projects that will ultimately benefit young people within our community.



Key Strategic Directions: Action Plan 2012 - 2015

Key Direction 1: Sector Coordination, Support, Advocacy and Facilitation

Council is in a unique position to facilitate the development of youth sector partnerships; acknowledging that collaborative approaches will ultimately lead to greater outcomes for our community.

Key Direction 2: Engagement and Partnerships

Council is committed to engaging young people on issues of importance to them. Participation in community life is essential to building a vibrant young community.

Key Direction 3: Celebrate Youth Culture

Council will promote the development of an inclusive community that values and encourages the contribution of our young people.

Key Direction 4: Building Capacity

Council will create opportunities to build the capacity of young people to reach their full potential through experience, employment, leadership development and entrepreneurship.

Key Direction 5: Safer Places and Spaces

Council will work with the community to build a safe, vibrant and connected CBD for our young people through developing mechanisms and initiatives that increase perceptions of safety, improve built infrastructure and explore activities that build connections with the young community.

Action Plan

The Action Plan identifies in **bold** print the lead Council Branch / Officer who will coordinate the delivery of each action identified.

The 'youth sector' refers to organisations, agencies and education settings who work with and support young people, listed as acknowledgements in the strategy. The 'youth sector' has been listed as potential partners for many of the projects in the Action Plan, with individual agency partners to be determined collectively as the actions progress.

Key Direction 1: Sector Coordination, Support, Advocacy and Facilitation:

Council is in a unique position to facilitate the development of youth sector partnerships; acknowledging that collaborative approaches will ultimately lead to greater outcomes for our community.

Action	Measurement	Partnerships	Resource Capacity	Timeframes
Establishment of a Greater Shepparton Youth Sector Leadership Group that meet quarterly to discuss and advise on priority issues, gathering local intelligence, emerging trends, stronger partnerships, coordinated approaches and advocacy.	Establishment of a Greater Shepparton Youth Sector Leadership Group including executive representation from youth sector agencies including education settings. Formed terms of reference established with schedule meeting calendar.	Greater Shepparton City Council Senior Youth Sector leaders Education setting leaders	Council's Community Youth Development Officer.	December 2012
Priority issues and strategic objectives to be determined by the Greater Shepparton Youth Sector Leadership Group and could include (but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short term issue based working groups as determined necessary by the Leadership Group - Identification and development of mechanisms for sharing information and data across the sector - Advocacy for local responses to incoming Commonwealth and State policies - Coordination of timely media responses to current issues highlighted within the media - Investigation and definition of parameters for a proposal of a youth hub that is reflective of the views of the sector. Discuss the feasibility of a youth hub in the region (activity based, co-located services, internet based), potential funding sources and arrangements - Discussion regarding priority issues that were identified in youth sector consultations such as drug and alcohol, safety, family relationships, educational outcomes and retention, employment, transport and health and wellbeing. 				

Key Direction 2: Engagement and Partnerships:

Council is committed to engaging young people on issues of importance to them. Participation in community life is essential to building a vibrant young community.

Action	Measurement	Partnerships	Resources Capacity	Timeframes
Ensure young people are represented, consulted and considered in Council Strategic documents including; Council Plan, Community Plans and other Strategic Plans such as the CBD Strategy, Sustainability and Environment Strategy and structure planning.	Young people are consulted (via a range of mechanisms) for the Council Plan, all major community plans and strategic plans.	Greater Shepparton City Council Word and Mouth Young people	Council's Community Youth Development Officer All Council Branches	July 2013
Utilise existing youth networks to create connectivity and relationships across the sector.	Attendance at at least 10 existing network meetings per year.	Greater Shepparton City Council RYAN (Regional Youth Affairs Network) NOYS (Network of Youth Services) GVHIT (Goulburn Valley Hume Interagency Team) Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) Youth Sector	Council's Community Youth Development Officer	2012 - Ongoing
Partner with organisations to encourage inclusive and accessible consultations and activities for all members of our community.	Resources including templates and checklists are developed to assist organisations to integrate inclusive and accessible practice.	Greater Shepparton City Council Youth Sector	Council's Community Youth Development Officer Access and Inclusion Officer	December 2014

Action	Measurement	Partnerships	Resources Capacity	Timeframes
Actively promote young people's use of broader community facilities, and attendance at community activities and events.	Detailed plan established for one promotional initiative per identified setting (Eg Goulburn Valley Regional Library, Riverlinks, Shepparton Art Museum, Community Houses).	Greater Shepparton City Council	Council's Community Youth Development Officer Cultural Development Officer Goulburn Valley Regional Library Riverlinks Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) Community Houses	December 2013
Explore future partnership opportunities to develop youth participation and engagement models.	Established youth engagement and participation models on key relevant Council needs.	Greater Shepparton City Council Word and Mouth Youth Organisations Education Settings	Council's Community Youth Development Officer	July 2015
Establish a 'Growing Local Democracy' Program to focus on key local issues, increasing diversity in local democracy, active civic participation and women's leadership.	Delivery of the Growing Local Democracy Project to at least two local education settings.	Greater Shepparton City Council Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee Word and Mouth	Council's Community Youth Development Officer Word and Mouth	July 2014

Key Direction 3: Celebrate Youth Culture:

Council will promote the development of an inclusive community that values and encourages the contribution of our young people.

Action	Measurement	Partnerships	Resources Capacity	Timeframes
Investigate potential opportunities to promote an innovative and contemporary visual display of youth culture within the community through community art.	Identified youth art projects priorities and applications for relevant funds.	Greater Shepparton City Council Word and Mouth Shepparton Art Museum Riverlinks Kaiaia Gallery	Council's Community Youth Development Officer Greater Shepparton City Council Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) Riverlinks	December 2015
Develop a strong regional media strategy (supported by media partners) in partnership with the Greater Shepparton Youth Sector Leadership Group to showcase current projects, celebrations and competitions.	80% of youth events and activities covered by the media.	Greater Shepparton City Council Greater Shepparton Youth Sector Leadership Group Council's Youth Development Officer Communications Department Youth Sector Local media	Council's Community Youth Development Officer Greater Shepparton City Council	December 2013
Promote coordinated regional approaches for the acknowledgement and celebration of young people in National Youth Week.	A range of activities will be available across the community that represent and appeal to wide representative groups of young people.	Greater Shepparton City Council Greater Shepparton Youth Sector Leadership Group Young People	Council's Community Youth Development Officer Word and Mouth Youth Sector organisations	April 2013
Support the sector to celebrate the contribution that young people make to our community.	Increase the number of celebratory events by 10% per annum. In-kind support provided by Council.	Greater Shepparton City Council Youth Sector	Council's Community Youth Development Officer	December 2013

Key Direction 4: Building Capacity

Greater Shepparton will create opportunities to build the capacity of young people to reach their full potential through experience, employment, leadership development and entrepreneurship.

Action	Measurement	Partnerships	Resources Capacity	Timeframes
<p>Develop contemporary and innovative models of experience, employment and entrepreneurship that aim to build the capacity of young people.</p> <p>These initiatives could include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Human Resources to expand current work experience model to introduce a phased work experience program to include year 10, year 11 and year 12 students.• Engagement of alternate education settings in tailored work experience programs.• Human Resources developing and implementing a graduate program for young people.• Continued promotion of local government career opportunities through attendance and promotion at career events.• Human Resources to offer traineeship opportunities for young people across Council	<p>Development of policies and processes to aid the implementation of these initiatives.</p>	<p>Greater Shepparton City Council Business Centre Local education providers Goulbourn Murray Local Learning and Employment Network (GMLEN) Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>People and Performance Council's Community Youth Development Officer Investment Attraction</p>	<p>December 2015</p>

Action	Measurement	Partnerships	Resources Capacity	Timeframes
departments. • Investigate social enterprise models to enhance and connect young people with training and employment opportunities.				
Support opportunities for young people to participate in volunteering coordinated by Council.	Promote and celebrate young people volunteering through Council's Volunteer Awards. Purpose fit volunteering opportunities available within Council for 10 young people.	Greater Shepparton City Council	Council's Community Youth Development Officer Council's Community Development Officer	June 2013



Key Direction 5: Safer Places and Spaces

Council will work with the community to build a safe, vibrant and connected CBD for our young people through developing mechanisms and initiatives that increase perceptions of safety, improve built infrastructure and explore activities that build connections with the young community.

Action	Measurement	Partnerships	Resources Capacity	Timeframes
Install CCTV cameras in the CBD in agreed locations as identified through consultations.	Through statistics provided by Victoria Police, decrease of reported incidents within the CBD.	Greater Shepparton City Council Victoria Police Chamber of Commerce Shepparton Show Me Greater Shepparton Youth Sector Leadership Group Young People	Council's Community Safety Officer Council's Youth Development Officer Investment Attraction Branch	June 2013
Advocate for increased police presence in the CBD particularly at key times.	CEO to meet with Victoria Police to discuss frequency of presence in the CBD.	Greater Shepparton City Council Victoria Police	Greater Shepparton City Council Council's Youth Development Officer Council's Community Safety Officer	December 2012
Investigate alternate models that provide Mall Management support.	Report presented to Council identifying potential models.	Greater Shepparton City Council Chamber of Commerce Victoria Police	Investment Attraction Council's Youth Development Officer	June 2015
Distribute the Youth Safety Consultation Report, endorsed by Council in September 2011 to local businesses in the CBD to highlight views of young people regarding safety in the Mall.	Consultation Report distributed to all CBD businesses.	Greater Shepparton City Council	Council's Youth Development Officer	December 2012
Young people to contribute ideas regarding current Maude Street Mall design and Vaughan Street redevelopment project.	At least 1 interactive consultation session conducted with young people regarding their ideas for both projects.	Greater Shepparton City Council Young people	Council's Community Youth Development Officer Investment Attraction Planning	June 2015

Action	Measurement	Partnerships	Resources Capacity	Timeframes
			Recreation and Parks	
Investigate the feasibility of including a 'Big Screen' as part of the Mall redevelopment plan.	Completion of a feasibility study.	Greater Shepparton City Council Chamber of Commerce Shepparton Show Me	Investment Attraction Council's Youth Development Officer	June 2014
Encourage traders to extend current opening hours and new restaurants to open in the Mall to create a sense of security by bringing people into the area.	Deliver against the CBD Strategy 2008. Consistent trading hours within the CBD.	Greater Shepparton City Council Council's Youth Development Officer Communications Department Victoria Police Chamber of Commerce Shepparton Show Me	Investment Attraction Council's Youth Development Officer Community Safety Officer	December 2014
Liaise with local youth service organisations, education settings and internal Council departments to investigate the delivery of activities for young people in the Maude Street Mall.	Develop a 12 month entertainment plan for the Mall committing to 6 events per year in the Mall.	Greater Shepparton City Council Word and Mouth Youth Sector Chamber of Commerce Shepparton Show Me Victoria Police	Investment Attraction Branch Council's Community Youth Development Officer	July 2013
Conduct a feasibility study that would consider budget and risk implications for an organisation to conduct a youth nightclub on a regular basis.	Feasibility study presented to Council.	Greater Shepparton City Council Word and Mouth Youth Sector Victoria Police	Council's Community Youth Development Officer	June 2013
Initiate discussion with the Greater Shepparton Youth Sector Leadership Group regarding initiatives such as youth workers being available in the CBD at key times.	Identification of a model that is supported by all relevant partners. Investigate external funding opportunities to support project.	Greater Shepparton City Council Greater Shepparton Youth Sector Leadership Group Young people Victoria Police	Council's Youth Development Officer	June 2013

Acknowledgements

Young People:

Sincere thanks to all the young people who contributed to the development of the strategy and action plan. A special thank you must go to the young people from Mooroopna Secondary College and Word and Mouth Voltage Committee for facilitating workshops with their peers.

Youth Service Organisations:

Greater Shepparton City Council would like to thank the following youth sector organisations for your contribution in developing this strategy.

Academy of Sport, Health and Education (ASHE)
Australian Government – Department of Human Services
Berry Street Victoria
The Bridge
Centrelink
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)
Department of Human Services (DHS)
Department of Human Services – Youth Justice
Fairley Foundation
Familycare
Ganbina
Goulburn Ovens TAFE
Goulburn Murray Local Learning and Employment Network (GMLLEN)
Goulburn Valley Grammar
Goulburn Valley Health
Jacaranda
La Trobe University
McAuley Champagnat Program (MCP)
McGuire College
Melbourne University
Mental Illness Fellowship
Mission Australia
Mooroopna Secondary College
Notre Dame College
Primary Care Connect
Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative
Salvation Army
Shepparton Access
Shepparton ACE College
Shepparton High School
Skills Victoria (DEECD)
The Smith Family
Uniting Care Cutting Edge
Valley Sport
Victoria Police
Wanganui Secondary College
Word and Mouth

Additional Acknowledgements: Speed Shop Photography for the provision of images.

Appendix 1 - Our Community of Young People

2011 ABS Census data indicates that Greater Shepparton is home to 60,449 residents. This area comprises the main regional centre of Shepparton and also includes Mooroopna, Tatura, Congupna, Dookie, Katandra, Merrigum, Murchison, Tallygaroopna, Toolamba, Undera and surrounding rural areas.

At the time of writing the youth strategy, only initial data was available from the 2011 Census, with a limited breakdown of the youth population. Therefore a combination of 2011 Census data, 2006 ABS Census and forecasting data has been utilised in forming this appendix of the strategy.

According to the 2006 ABS Census, 17.9% (10 021) of our population were young people between the ages of 12 and 25 years, a slight decrease from the 2001 Census where 18% of our population were young people.

Initial 2011 Census data highlights the population of young people between the ages of 5 and 24 years.

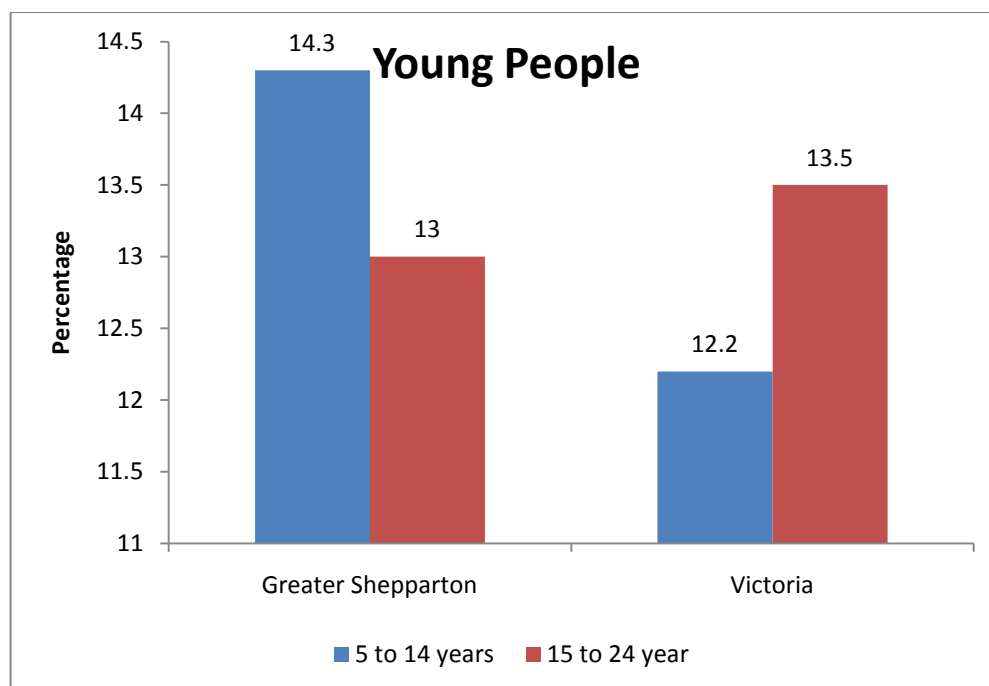


Table: Young people 5 – 24 across Greater Shepparton and Victoria.
Source: ABS Census 2011

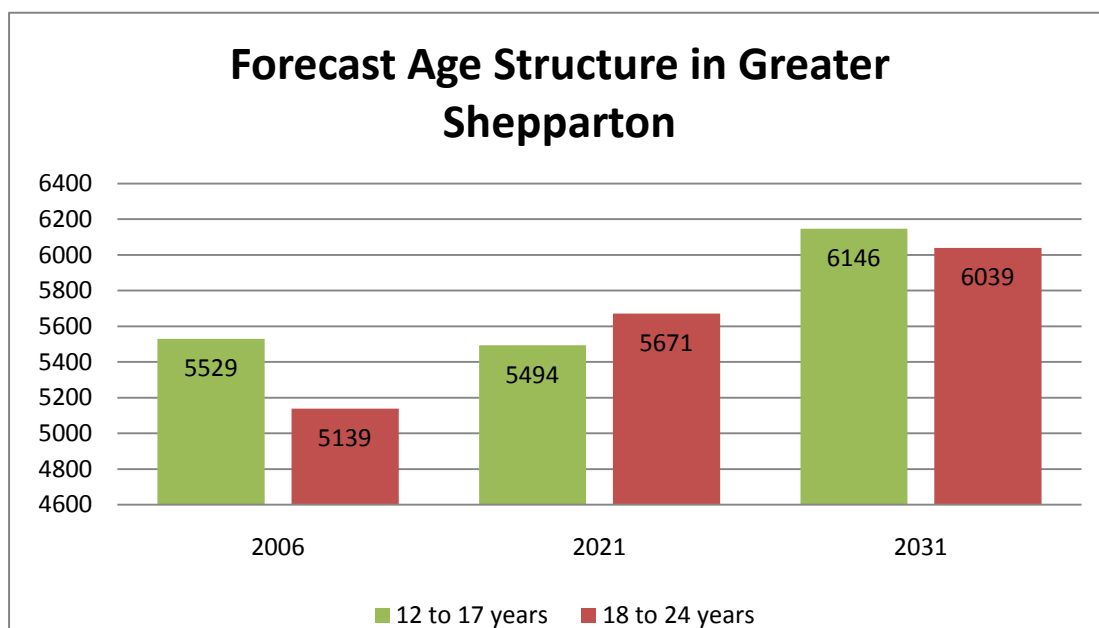


Table: Forecast population across Greater Shepparton
Source: ABS Forecasting

Diversity

Greater Shepparton is among the most culturally diverse municipalities in regional Victoria. The region has the largest Aboriginal population outside metropolitan Melbourne with an estimated 3.4% of residents having Indigenous heritage. The region boasts a strong history of Aboriginal advocacy and leadership locally, nationally and internationally. Greater Shepparton also has a proud history of migration with high populations originating from United Kingdom, New Zealand, Albania, Turkey, India, Greece, Italy, Netherlands and Philippines and more recently, Iraqi, Afghani, Sudanese and Congolese. The 2011 Census has revealed that 14% of the total population identified as being born in a country other than Australia, with 11% of these in countries where English is not their first language.

Greater Shepparton is proud of its diverse community and the initiatives defined within the Action Plan are inclusive of all young people regardless of cultural background, socio-economic status, sexuality or abilities. In order to ensure that activities are inclusive of young people from all backgrounds, Council will work with a range of internal departments and external youth organisations to ensure representation is balanced.

Challenges for the Region

A number of particular challenges were highlighted throughout consultations that are essential when considering the future of the regions young people.

Employment

Youth unemployment rates in regional areas are significantly higher than metropolitan areas. The teenage full time youth unemployment rate in North East Victoria is 33.3%, compared with Victoria (27.8%) and Australia (24%). This has increased from 18.8% in 2008 and 32.4% in 2009.

School retention rates

Only 55% of Greater Shepparton residents aged 25 to 34 years old have completed Year 12 or the equivalent, compared with 73% across Victoria.

The 2011 Census data has identified that 22.8% of 20 – 24 year olds have completed Year 10 or less compared with 12.0% across Victoria.

Youth Disengagement

Within Greater Shepparton 7.9% of 15 – 19 year olds are not in paid employment or enrolled in education compared with 6.9% across the state. 17.4% of 20 – 24 year olds are also disengaged from education in Greater Shepparton compared with 15.4% across Victoria.

Migration / Regional Pressures

Greater Shepparton and many rural and regional municipalities face the complicating factor of young people leaving their communities for tertiary study or employment in larger regional centres or metropolitan cities. Challenges and demands of retaining young people in regional and rural communities is a considering factor for Greater Shepparton. The following table represents the migration rates for Greater Shepparton.

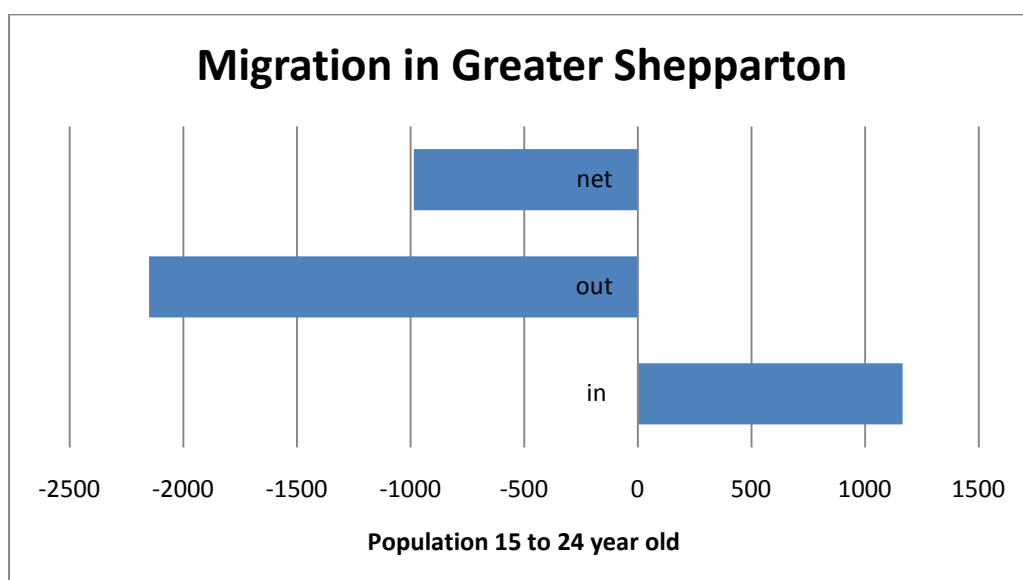


Table: Young people migrating in and out of Greater Shepparton

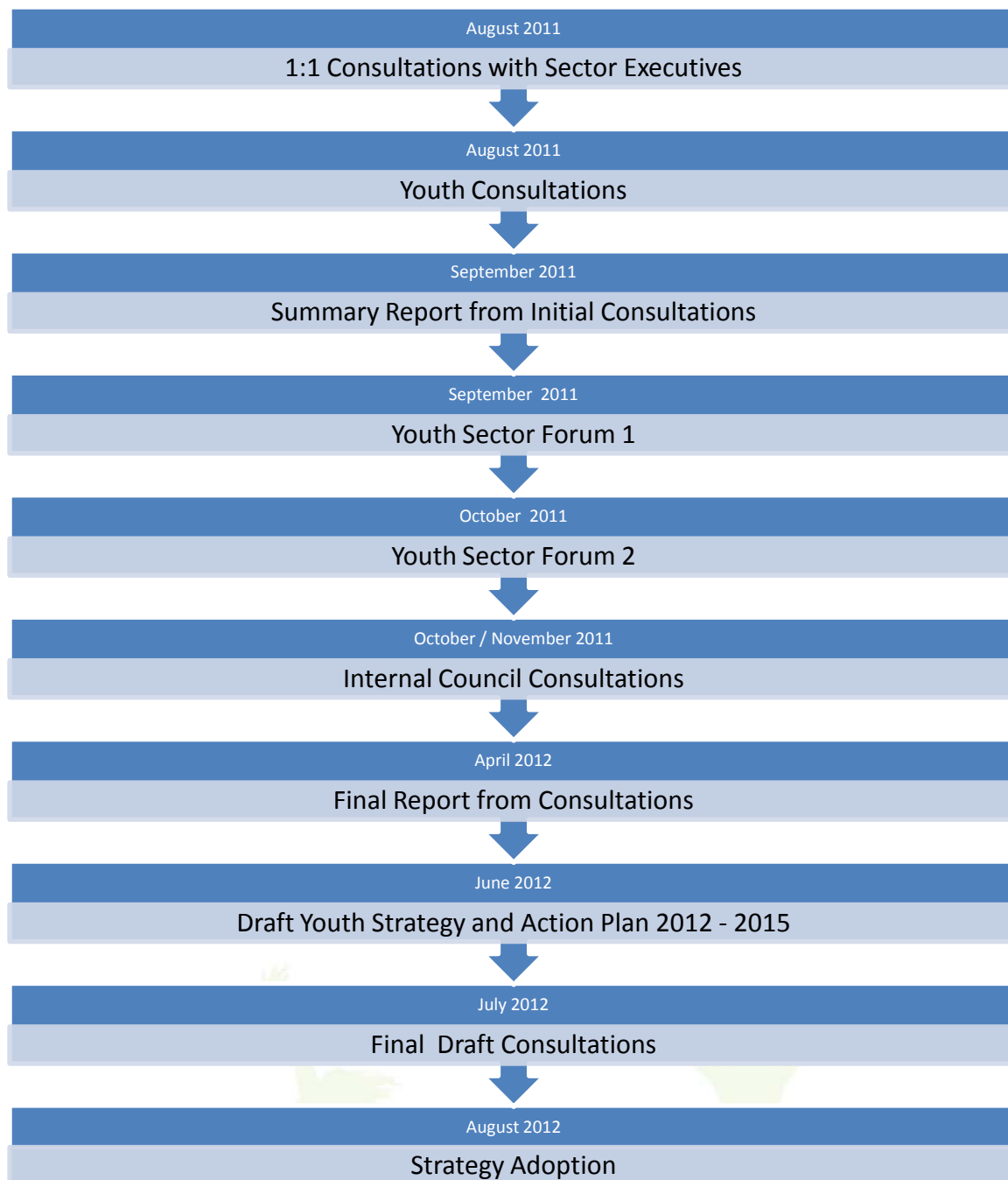
Source: ABS Census 2006

Transport

As young people grow they seek a greater level of participation in the activities of life including part time employment, sports or competitions, apprenticeships, TAFE study and social activities. Public transport within the City of Greater Shepparton is limited and many young people face a series of issues due to poor access to transport, amenities and activities. This lack of access restricts educational, employment and social opportunities.

Appendix 2 - Consultation Summary

Consultation Timelines



Strengths in Greater Shepparton

Throughout the consultations it was widely acknowledged that there are a number of strengths and achievements which Council, the youth sector and the wider community should be proud of. This list does not represent all of the assets of the sector.

Families and Friends

Consultations with young people highlighted the crucial role that family and friends play in the lives of young people. Family and friends were often identified as significant support structures for young people as they move through adolescence and into their adult years. Within the context of the Strategy it is important to highlight the significant role that family and friends play in the lives of the young people in our community.

Sporting Culture

It is well recognised that Greater Shepparton is proud of its sporting culture. Many young people have strong links to a range of sporting clubs providing them with a connection to their community. Involvement in sport promotes community connection and greater wellbeing. Council recognises the importance of sport and will continue to promote a sporting culture within broader the community.

Word and Mouth

Greater Shepparton City Council in partnership with the Fairley Foundation supported the development of an independent youth led, youth driven organisation within the local community named 'Word and Mouth'. Word and Mouth was originally formed in 2002 working within Council with the support of the State Government Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), previously known as DVC. In 2009 Word and Mouth separated from Council becoming an independent youth led and driven organisation. Word and Mouth is an organisation aimed at engaging young people from diverse background in governance and volunteer positions and ensuring high level youth participation and leadership development in Greater Shepparton. Word and Mouth has a strong emphasis on promotion of cultural harmony and understanding through youth activities.

Council continues to have a strong partnership with Word and Mouth. Whilst the two organisations work independently there are complementary strategies Council and Word and Mouth leverage off one another. Both organisations are committed to supporting young people within the community, ultimately leading to better outcomes for young people.

Headspace

Headspace centres are funded by the Australian Government (through the Department of Health and Ageing) under the *Youth Mental Health Initiative*. Headspace centres aim to promote improved health and mental health outcomes for young people in Australia by providing high quality early intervention services that aim to reduce the burden of disease in young people aged 12 – 25 years caused by mental health disorders and related substance use.

There are currently 40 Headspace centres open nationally and Headspace has received additional funding to expand up to 90 centres over the next five years. In October 2011

Shepparton was announced as a successful location for the new round of Headspace funding.

The establishment of Headspace in Shepparton will add significant resources to the delivery of mental health services locally, utilising a youth specific and youth friendly model.

Business planning regarding the establishment of the Headspace centre is currently being undertaken. It is anticipated that the Shepparton Headspace centre will be operational by January 2013.

Youth Safety Consultation Report 2011

Greater Shepparton City Council, in partnership with Word and Mouth, led a consultation with young people to explore safety issues in the Maude Street Mall from a young person's perspective. In 2011, the previous Mayor, Council staff and Word and Mouth consulted with young people from across the community including students from mainstream secondary colleges, tertiary institutions and alternate education settings, totalling over 180 young people from 12 education settings. Young people identified their perceptions of unsafe places within the CBD, provided some potential reasons these places were considered unsafe and some creative and innovative ideas to address these safety concerns. These ideas were collated and form the Youth Safety Consultation Report 2011 which was presented to Council for endorsement in September 2011. The Report included key themes of increased security presence, infrastructure improvements and activities. Identified actions were prioritised depending on the level of interest shown by the young people. These themes have been valuable in informing the development of the Greater Shepparton Youth Strategy and Action Plan. This Report is also a valuable tool to inform the whole community about potential youth initiatives to address these issues and support the future development of regional partnerships between service providers and agencies to implement the initiatives.



Opportunities in Greater Shepparton

Young People and the Arts

The region has increased its involvement in the arts in recent years, and which creates great opportunities to engage young people. The Arts aspects of the region were frequently identified as an important opportunity for the region to further develop which would include benefits to young people. Self expression in art is a contemporary vehicle for the development of creative intelligence and identity, not only of an individual but of a community.

Cultural Diversity

Greater Shepparton is rich in diversity, with a long history of immigration. During consultation young people and the youth services sector highlighted the importance of celebrating diversity in young people as an opportunity for the region. Cross cultural understanding within young people can ultimately lead to a future of broader community acceptance of diversity.

Creating Safer Places and Spaces

Providing a safe and secure environment for all young people is essential to enhance their development, wellbeing and social connection. There are many issues prevalent for young people regarding safety in our community including bullying, cyber bullying, anti social behaviour, violence and social connectedness. Council in partnership with other organisations has the potential to develop mechanisms and initiatives that increase perceptions of safety.



Appendix 3 - Planning and Research – Strategic Links

Council

Greater Shepparton Youth Strategy and Action Plan aligns with a number of current Council policy and strategies. The following stated strategies are not specific to young people but are inclusive of all members of the community.

Greater Shepparton Council Plan 2009 – 2013

It is a statutory requirement of the Local Government Act 1989 that all Councils develop a Council Plan. This plan outlines the strategic objectives and directions over the life of an elected Council. The current Council Plan reflects directly through this strategy through two strategic objectives.

- Community Life - Greater Shepparton City Council will enhance social connectedness, physical and mental health and well being, education and participatory opportunities in order to improve liveability and a greater range of community services.
- Economic Development – Greater Shepparton City Council will promote economic growth, business development and diversification with a focus on strengthening the agricultural industry

Greater Shepparton Community Development Framework

The Community Development Framework was adopted by Council in 2010. This framework outlines Council's commitment to implement a community development approach to empower and strengthening communities, encourage cooperative practices and celebrate and embrace diversity of our community

Community Engagement Strategy

The Community Engagement Strategy recognises the importance of community input in developing and delivering better Council services. The strategy enhances the involvement of community, community based organisations and local business in Council's decision making processes so that decisions will be more likely to reflect community issues and interest and ensure well thought through solutions.

Greater Shepparton Public Health Plan 2009 - 2013

The Public Health Plan identifies existing and emerging priority areas of public health that Greater Shepparton needs to address and provides a range of responding strategies along with actions required to achieve them. Two sections of the Municipal Health Plan are particularly relevant to the Youth Strategy and Action Plan.

Engaged and Socially Inclusive Communities

- Participation in Community Activities
- Participation in Decision Making

Victoria Local Government Women's Charter

The Local Government Women's Charter was endorsed by Council in 2010. The Charter promotes women's participation in decision making in the community and democratic governance. The principles include Gender Equity, Diversity and Active Citizenship. The Women's Charter Local Government Action Plan includes an initiative regarding the establishment of a 'Growing Local Democracy' program between Councillors, Council staff and education settings that aims to focus on key local issues, increasing diversity in local democracy, active civic participation and women's leadership. Council has a Greater Shepparton Local Government Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee to provide advice on issues relating to the Women's Charter and to oversee the implementation of associated Action Plan.

Safer City Strategy 2011 – 2014

The Safer City Strategy aims to work in partnership with the community, government and business stakeholders to create a safer community through proactive, holistic and sustainable prevention of crime. There are a number of specific initiatives identified to address safety issues associated with young people including supporting positive program and events that engage young people, encouraging partnerships between youth service providers and developing a youth agency network.

Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2012 - 2015

The Culture Diversity and Inclusion Strategy aims to acknowledge the contribution that the CALD community make to our region and to create opportunities for their contributions to be heard, to be acknowledged and celebrated by Council and the wider community. The Youth Strategy and Action Plan is inclusive of all young people including those from a culturally and linguistically diverse background.

CBD Strategy 2008

The Shepparton CBD Strategy was developed to direct the expected future growth and guide future land use, built form, access and public spaces in the Shepparton CBD. The Strategy sets out the vision that will continue to make the city a popular place to live, work and visit. Some of the priorities include consolidating the CBD as the principal retail centre in the region and creating an active, vibrant and safe CBD and improving the design, function and safety of key sites and precincts within the CBD including the Maude Street Mall, Stewart Street and Vaughan Street precincts.

Youth Safety Consultation Report 2011

In 2011 consultations with young people identified perceptions of unsafe places within the CBD, provided some potential reasons these places were considered unsafe and some creative and innovative ideas to address safety concerns. These ideas were collated and formed a Youth Safety Consultation Report which was presented to Council for endorsement in September 2011. The Report included key themes and identified prioritised actions depending on the level of interest shown by the young people. These themes have been valuable in informing the development of the Greater Shepparton Youth Strategy and Action Plan. This Report is also a valuable tool to inform the whole community and support the future development of regional partnerships between service providers and agencies to implement the initiatives

Local

Fairley Report 'Young People Building Our Community: Young Shepparton 2002 – 2020'

This report was prepared by Fairley Foundation in association with Greater Shepparton City Council and Goulburn Murray Local Learning and Employment Network (GMLLEN) in 2002 to provide a framework with a set of goals and strategies to how Greater Shepparton can invest in its young people for the future. Six key goals were identified

- Building a youth friendly city
- Building the capacity of schools
- Building the Greater Shepparton knowledge economy
- Building young peoples capacity to lead the community conversation
- Building cultural and artistic excellence to the same level as sporting excellence.

State Government Research and policies

Youth Statement: Engage, Involve, Create 2012

The Victorian Government launched their Youth Statement, Engage, Involve, Create in April 2012. This is the first statement of the State Government's vision for young people and the sector that supports them since the development of Future Directions policy in 2006.

The aims of the youth statement are:

- Engage – young people are engaged in education and training, further education and training pathways, employment.
- Involve – young people are involved in decision making, activities and programs and their communities
- Create – young people can create change, enterprise and culture.

The priorities include:

- Getting young people involved - Supporting the full and active participation and engagement of young people to ensure social, community and economic participation.
- Services that better meet the needs of young people – Creating better outcomes by allowing young people to access services that are youth focussed, integrated and provided in a timely way.
- Create new ideas and partnerships – Families and young people, government, business, community and philanthropic organisations all working in partnership to deliver a range of outcomes for young people.

Federal Government Research and policies

National Strategy for Young Australians - 2010

The National Strategy for Young Australians highlights the vision that all young people can and should grow up safe, healthy, happy and resilient. The National Strategy highlights eight priority areas: health and wellbeing, education, families, communities, online, work, early intervention and safety. The aims are:

- Equipping young Australians to shape their own futures through education

- Supporting young Australians within their families
- Empowering young Australians to take part and be active in their communities
- Equipping young Australians with the skills and personal networks they need to gain and be successful in employment
- Enabling young Australians to participate confidentially and safely online
- Strengthening early intervention with young Australians to help prevent any problems getting worse and to help young people to get their lives back on track.

