



GREATER
SHEPPARTON

Together
we're making
a Greater
Shepparton!

Council Plan



2013 - 2017

Acknowledgements

Greater Shepparton City Council would like to thank all the people who contributed to the development of this plan.

- The residents, community group representatives and members of the business community who participated in workshops
- Cross sector partners for their ongoing collaborative support, networking and effort
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About the Council Plan

The Greater Shepparton Council Plan 2013-2017 (the Plan) is the key document that drives the strategic direction of Council for the next four years and beyond, and is a requirement under the *Local Government Act 1989*. The themes outlined in the Council Plan are the vehicle for achieving our desired future. The themes have been identified following extensive consultation with the Greater Shepparton community.

A Council Plan is developed every four years and updated annually. The 2013–2017 Council Plan has been created following the election of the Council in November 2012.

The plan is developed collaboratively with the community, Councillors and Council staff and reflects our community's needs, aspirations and expectations. The Council Plan is the connection point between the Greater Shepparton's community vision for the future and Council's planning processes. Through this plan, Council demonstrates the activities we will undertake to meet our contribution to the achievement of the collective vision.

The Council Plan describes what Council stands for, our objectives, the main activities we will complete over the four year electoral term and how these activities are going to be resourced. Importantly, it also outlines how our performance will be measured and reported through the Annual Report and other performance reports.

The Council Plan details how collectively we will achieve a Greater Future for Greater Shepparton.

This Council Plan reflects the integration of health and wellbeing matters at the strategic level to strengthen Council's commitment to building a healthier community.



Understanding our Community

Greater Shepparton is a vibrant, diverse community located approximately two hours north of Melbourne in the Goulburn Valley – the heart of regional Victoria.

Our Competitive Advantage

Two hours north east of Melbourne and only an hour from Bendigo, Greater Shepparton's central location is a major advantage and has seen our urban centre emerge as the retail, industry and services hub for central Victoria. Located at the intersection of the Midland and Goulburn Valley Highways Greater Shepparton provides easy access to Adelaide, Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne.

Along with our location, Greater Shepparton's critical mass of population and significant infrastructure provides the base of many key competitive advantages:

- An established manufacturing sector, with multinational companies such as SPC Ardmona, Tatura Milk, Campbell's and Unilever calling Greater Shepparton home
- Extensive road transport industry with Shepparton often being referred to as the transport hub of regional Victoria
- Thriving food production industry where 25% of the total value of Victoria's agricultural production occurs in Greater Shepparton which contributes \$900 million in production annually and \$1.53 billion in exports
- Affordable residential and commercial real estate
- Access to a high standard of telecommunications and IT infrastructure
- Excellent health, leisure and arts facilities
- Excellent range of health services
- Education facilities that encourage career advancement, trade qualifications and meet ongoing cultural demand
- Recognition as regional Victoria's sporting capital, hosting many regional, state, national and international major sporting events.

The mild climate and high level of activity coupled with a diverse culture makes Greater Shepparton an exciting place to be.



Our Location

Greater Shepparton is the fifth largest regional centre in Victoria extending over 2,421 kilometres.

The city's population is almost evenly split between the main urban centres of Shepparton, Mooroopna and Tatura (53%) and with the remaining 47% of the population residing in the surrounding rural areas, including the smaller townships of Murchison, Dookie, Merrigum, Congupna, Toolamba, Undera, Katandra and Tallygaroopna. This split reflects the wide range of lifestyle choices available across the municipality,

from small urban blocks close to high quality amenities, through to large working orchards and farms.

The Goulburn River forms the backbone and lifeblood of the region, winding its way through beautiful countryside, native forests and fertile farmlands, bringing life to the rich agricultural landscape which has made the area renowned as Australia's Food Bowl. This vibrant and dynamic region is the heart and soul of Australia's fruit and dairy processing.

Our People

As a growing regional centre with a vibrant cultural mix, the Greater Shepparton community comprises almost 61,740 residents living within 60+ localities.

Greater Shepparton enjoys a young demographic with growing families, with 2011 census data showing the proportion of couples with children nearly 3% above the regional Victorian average, at 29.7%.

The overall population is forecast to grow from 63,000 in 2013 to nearly 80,000 by 2031. Our community understands that an expanding population will increase demand for services and infrastructure — particularly those that provide for our health and wellbeing. The challenge for all levels of government is to provide essential services and infrastructure in a timely manner. At the same time we need to be creative and broaden the economy by attracting investment and generating jobs in sectors that complement our lifestyle and environment.

Socially we connect through friendships, gatherings, events and celebrations. Local strengths include high levels of citizen participation, embracing a strong volunteering ethos, participation in community events the arts and organised sport, with a high level of community ownership and pride. Greater Shepparton hosts an abundance of community leaders, where the community is committed to seeking local solutions to local issues. Like most Victorian regions, people in Greater Shepparton are highly engaged in their community, with nearly one in five involved in volunteer work.

The community are also active in engaging with their local issues, responding well to local government community consultations such as the Council Plan process, and participating in large numbers in local politics, with 26 candidates at the last election.

Celebrating Diversity

Our point of difference and strength is the diversity of our people. We come from different places around the world bringing with us many languages, faiths and cultures. We live together in harmony, respecting the past and each other's identity. It's our diversity that brings Greater Shepparton to life.

Our community is culturally rich with a large proportion of the population born overseas (13.1%), with many residents immigrating from India, Afghanistan, Sudan, Italy, Iraq, Turkey, New Zealand and the Philippines. Italian, Arabic, Persian/Dari, Turkish, Albanian, Punjabi, Greek, Macedonian, Mandarin and Filipino/Tagalog are the most commonly spoken languages other than English.

Greater Shepparton also has a significant Aboriginal population with a strong history of Indigenous advocacy and leadership both nationally and internationally. The city's Indigenous population is the largest in regional Victoria, with an estimated 3.5% of residents having Indigenous heritage.

Approximately 5.4% of the city's population has been identified as requiring assistance with self-care, body movements or communication. Greater Shepparton City Council is committed to providing access to services, programs and facilities for people with a disability.



Liveability

Greater Shepparton is a vibrant and progressive community that offers the best of both provincial and metropolitan lifestyles. With its central location being a major strength, Greater Shepparton is the ideal regional location in which to live, work, invest and visit.

The municipality boasts affordable real estate; business opportunities and diversified farming practices and residents enjoy a wide range of entertainment and leisure options, including many coffee shops and restaurants.

Scenic open places, shared pathways and our meandering river system add to the beauty and surrounds, to encourage social connection and improved lifestyle behaviours.

Food malls, with an abundance of cafés and restaurants provide plenty of choice for residents and visitors. Greater Shepparton's history of migration has evolved our large selection of local cuisine, whether it's Turkish, Japanese, Indian, Thai, Lebanese, Chinese, Italian or a bistro meal, you can find it all in Shepparton's Central Business District (CBD) and the surrounding townships.

Local wineries and ample farm-gate suppliers provide an added gourmet touch to celebrate and promote the region's repertoire.

Greater Shepparton is a retail hotspot for regional Victoria, constantly attracting new brands, and there is an abundance of events and leisure activities available to the community.

Culturally Alive

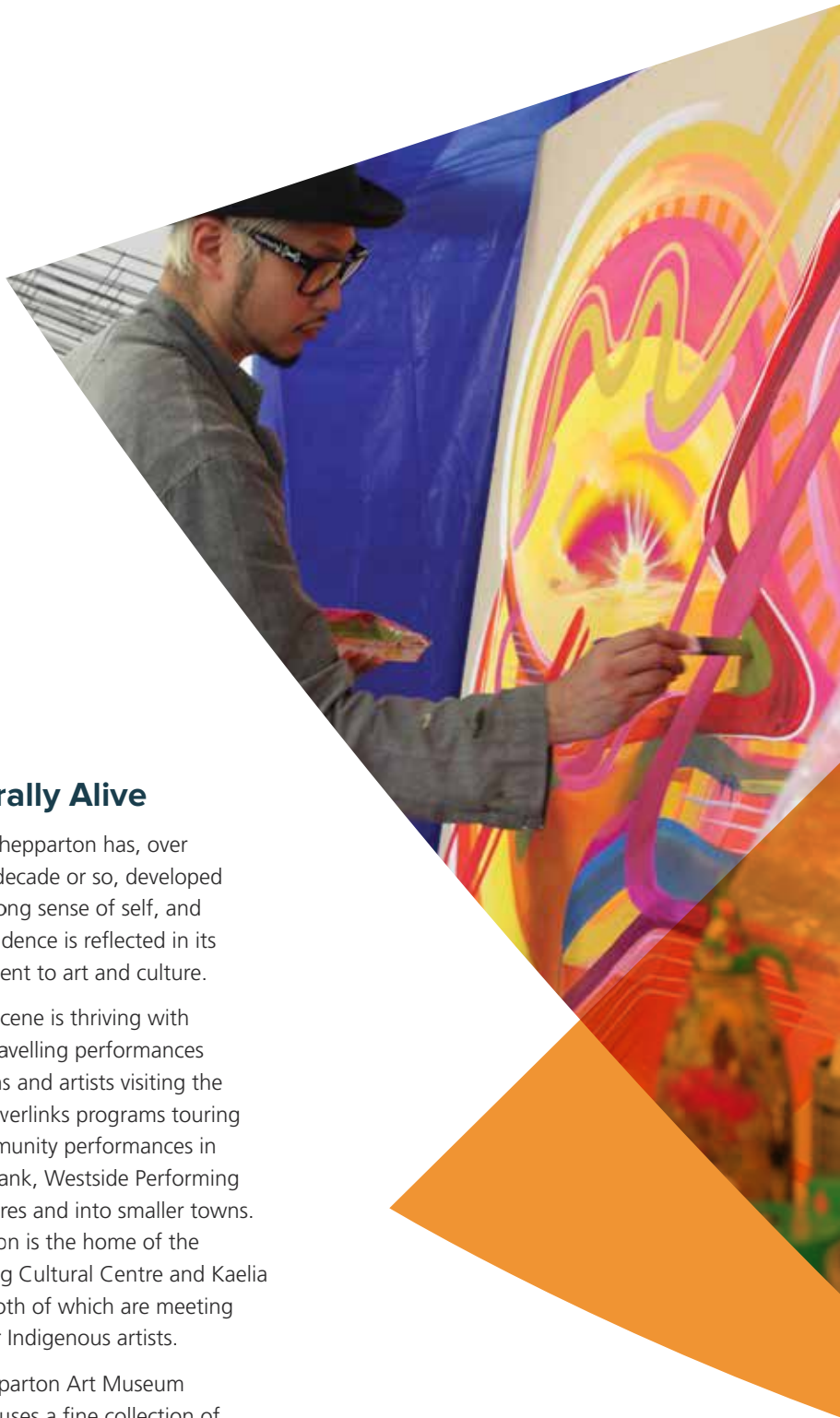
Greater Shepparton has, over the past decade or so, developed a very strong sense of self, and that confidence is reflected in its commitment to art and culture.

The arts scene is thriving with regular travelling performances exhibitions and artists visiting the region. Riverlinks programs touring and community performances in the Eastbank, Westside Performing Arts Centres and into smaller towns. Shepparton is the home of the Bangerang Cultural Centre and Kaelia Gallery both of which are meeting places for Indigenous artists.

The Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) houses a fine collection of colonial and contemporary paintings plus one of Australia's leading ceramics collections and regularly hosts significant and acclaimed exhibitions such as the recent Sam Jinks and Golden Age exhibitions. In 2012, SAM was awarded Best Small Museum in Victoria, and recently reopened following a major redevelopment.

Greater Shepparton's Moooving Art and flying bird sculptures brighten streets and major buildings.

The SheppARTon Festival has gained recognition as a smorgasbord of cultural and artistic experiences with people coming from far and wide to indulge in the many activities on offer throughout the Festival.



Our Economy

The region has a strong and well developed economy, based primarily on irrigated agriculture, food processing, retail and road transport. The Goulburn Valley is responsible for about 25% of Victoria's agricultural production and is often referred to as the "Food Bowl of Australia".

Local entrepreneurs and small businesses are the backbone of our communities equating to 32.2% of the business sector. We will continue to support them to prosper and grow, thus retaining local knowledge, building skills and employment in the region.

Tourism and events represents another important sector for Greater Shepparton. In 2012 it is estimated that 920,000 people visited and contributed to the economy of the municipality.

In terms of employment, people within Greater Shepparton are primarily employed in the following sectors:

- Health Care and Social Assistance (3,775 people or 14.2%)
- Retail Trade (3,381 people or 12.7%)
- Manufacturing (3,311 people or 12.4%)

In combination these three industries employed 10,467 people in total or 39.3% of the employed resident population.

The unemployment rate for Greater Shepparton is above the state average and is currently at 8.4%.

Education

Greater Shepparton is home to a number of educational facilities including 14 day care facilities, 13 kindergartens, 26 primary schools, six secondary colleges (including Catholic and Grammar schools) and three tertiary institutions. Several smaller country schools are located just outside of Shepparton (five to 15 minutes' drive). In addition to excellent public schools, private and catholic education is also available.

Compared to regional Victoria, there is a lower proportion of people holding formal qualifications (Bachelor or higher degree; Advanced Diploma or Diploma; or Vocational qualifications), and a higher proportion of people with no formal qualifications residing in Greater Shepparton. Overall, 35.4% of the Greater Shepparton population aged 15 and over hold educational qualifications, while 52.5% of the local population have no formal qualifications.

Overall, 40.6% of the population left school at Year 10 or below, while 32.9% have gone on to complete Year 12 or equivalent, compared with 39.0% and 35.6% respectively for regional Victoria.

Health

The *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* requires Councils to prepare a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan within 12 months of each general election of the Council.

Greater Shepparton City Council under the *Local Government Act* partners with community and agencies undertaking public health initiatives in an effort to prevent disease, illness, injury, disability and premature death. The Greater Shepparton Health Status Report was developed in 2012, which details a thorough examination of local demographics, health and wellbeing indicators, health trends, identification of future needs and considerations of what makes greater Shepparton unique.

The Status Report will guide future health and wellbeing planning and has considered individual's access to the social determinants of health:

Key strength areas were identified as:

- High participation in immunisation programs
- Celebration of our cultural diversity to encourage social inclusion opportunities and civic participation
- Majority of residents work within own Municipality.

Key challenges recommended as a focus area in collaboration were identified as:

- Minimise alcohol and drug use
- Improve streetscape appeal to encourage physical activity and community access
- Consider healthy eating alternatives and remain mindful of obesity rates and related illnesses or chronic disease
- Advocate for sustainable employment opportunities to encourage education advancement and future employment choices.

Local challenges are linked to interventions identified in the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2001-2015 produced by the Department of Health in September 2011.

Council in partnership with the Greater Shepparton Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee will develop a detailed 12 month Local Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Action Plan. The Action Plan will detail initiatives that are both measurable and achievable while considering local evidence, health gaps and future needs to maximise health outcomes. The Action Plan will identify a Lead Agency and partnering organisations responsible for the delivery of each objective. An annual review of the Action Plan and regular reporting will monitor achievement and maintain commitment to delivery of the initiatives.

The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to guide strategic direction for health and wellbeing matters for greater Shepparton in partnership, support the delivery of projects and initiatives to encourage health prevention strategies and identify emerging health and wellbeing issues.

The Committee's membership comprises key local health related professionals including; Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Family Care, Goulburn Valley Health, Goulburn Valley Medicare Local, Goulburn Valley Primary Care Partnership, Primary Care Connect, Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative, University of Melbourne, and the Centre for Excellence in Rural Sexual Health.

This Council Plan provides the strategic direction for Council's integrated approach including public health and wellbeing matters.

Greater Shepparton has access to quality health and medical facilities which offer a comprehensive range of services. These include two hospitals, retirement accommodation and nursing facilities.

The city offers specialist and diagnostic services, oncology, family counselling and youth services to meet increasing demand.

Shepparton is home to the University of Melbourne's Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences and the Shepparton Medical Clinic. The Clinical School provides clinical rotations and education for the final three years of the Doctor of Medicine degree.

Environment

Greater Shepparton City Council strongly supports the location of a large scale solar power plan in Shepparton and has undertaken extensive research and analysis to establish capacity to host such a facility. The Greater Shepparton region has a demonstrated affinity with the advancement of solar energy and is committed to providing developers with the assistance required to identify a preferred site.

The Resource Recovery Precinct accommodates a range of commercial businesses that locally process liquid and solid wastes, converting them to valuable recycled products. At the 2010 Virgin Blue Business Awards the Precinct won *Best Specific Environmental Initiative* at the United Nations Association of Australia World Environment Day Awards.

Environmental sustainability is important to the Greater Shepparton community as demonstrated by a number of initiatives such as RiverConnect, the Crouching Emu Revegetation Project, Dookie Biolinks Project and the creation of the Goulburn Broken Greenhouse Alliance.



Your Council

Our Community Vision

Greater Shepparton, Greater Future, a thriving economy in the foodbowl of Victoria with excellent lifestyles, innovative agriculture, a diverse community and abundant opportunities.

Our Values

- Promote **Leadership**, by setting an example that encourages others to strive for positive community outcomes.
- Act with **Integrity**, honesty, responsibility, transparency and accountability.
- Treat all people with **Respect**, showing consideration to and appreciation of others including their cultural backgrounds and beliefs and always seek to understand different points of view.
- Committed to being **Innovative**, by seeking continuous improvement through the application of new ideas.
- Strive to work in an environment that fosters **Teamwork**, through understanding we all represent and make decisions on behalf of the community of the Greater Shepparton.

Our Organisation

Greater Shepparton City Council is governed by seven elected Councillors, and operates in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989*. As a local government authority, Greater Shepparton City Council exercises a wide range of government functions and powers for the “peace, order and good government” of our municipal district.

Greater Shepparton City Council is one of the largest regional Councils within Victoria and strives to achieve our community's vision of a “Greater Shepparton”.

As a local government authority we protect and strengthen Greater Shepparton's economic prosperity and the health, wellbeing and safety of our residents. We endeavour to plan and build a connected regional community which is safe, easy to navigate and provides a healthy and prosperous lifestyle, now and into the future.

We are committed to making a difference in our community and creating a Greater Shepparton that provides access to world class educational and employment opportunities and health and wellbeing facilities.

The purpose of the Greater Shepparton City Council is to deliver services, implement strategic

initiatives and develop policies and plans. These three functions have a direct interface with the community. The fourth function, service support, refers to internal services that support the operations of the organisation.

The Role of the Greater Shepparton City Council



Your Councillors

With a new Council, comes the opportunity to plan ahead and redefine the Council's direction and plans to achieve this direction.

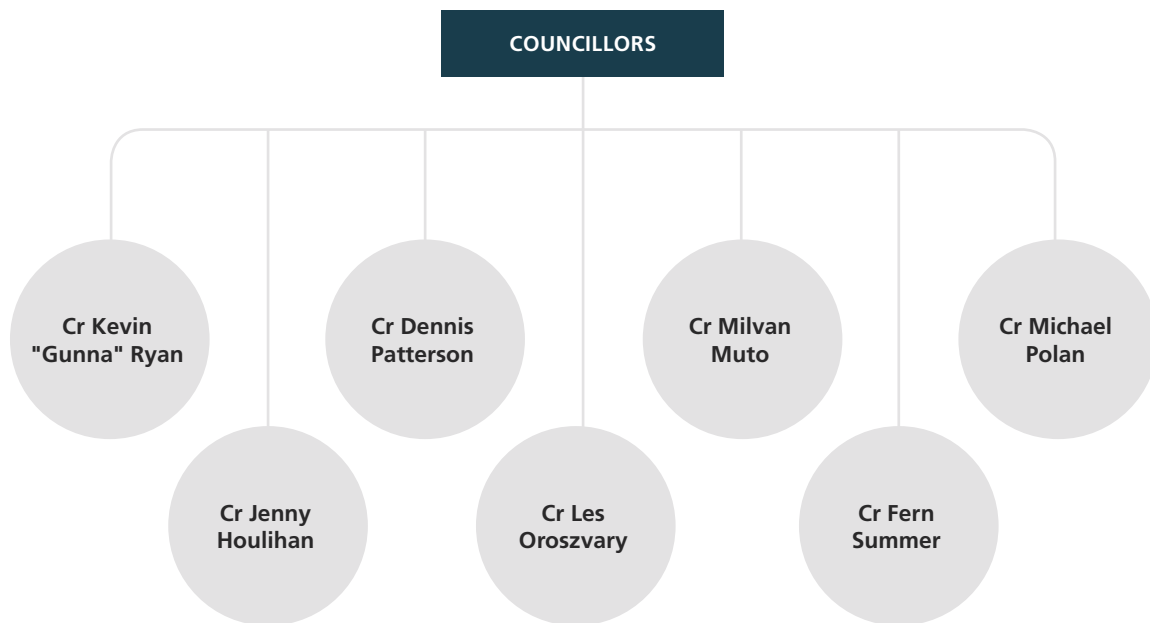
Council operates under the *Local Government Act 1989* and is elected to provide leadership and good governance for the municipality and the local community.

Council has a number of roles including:

- Taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision making
- Providing leadership by establishing the strategic direction and monitoring achievements
- Advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and governments
- Fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

Councillors take part in formulating, adopting and reviewing the Council Plan, Strategic Resource Plan and Annual Budget and also make informed decisions on Council policies and funding requirements.





Planning for the Community

Greater Shepparton City Council prides itself on its integrated and rigorous approach to planning, implementation and performance reporting.

An integrated approach to planning aims to achieve a whole-of-community approach and sustainable community outcomes. Planning is fundamental to the operations of any Council. It informs Council decision making and functions, with the ultimate goal of working towards meeting the needs, aspirations and expectations of the community.

Planning

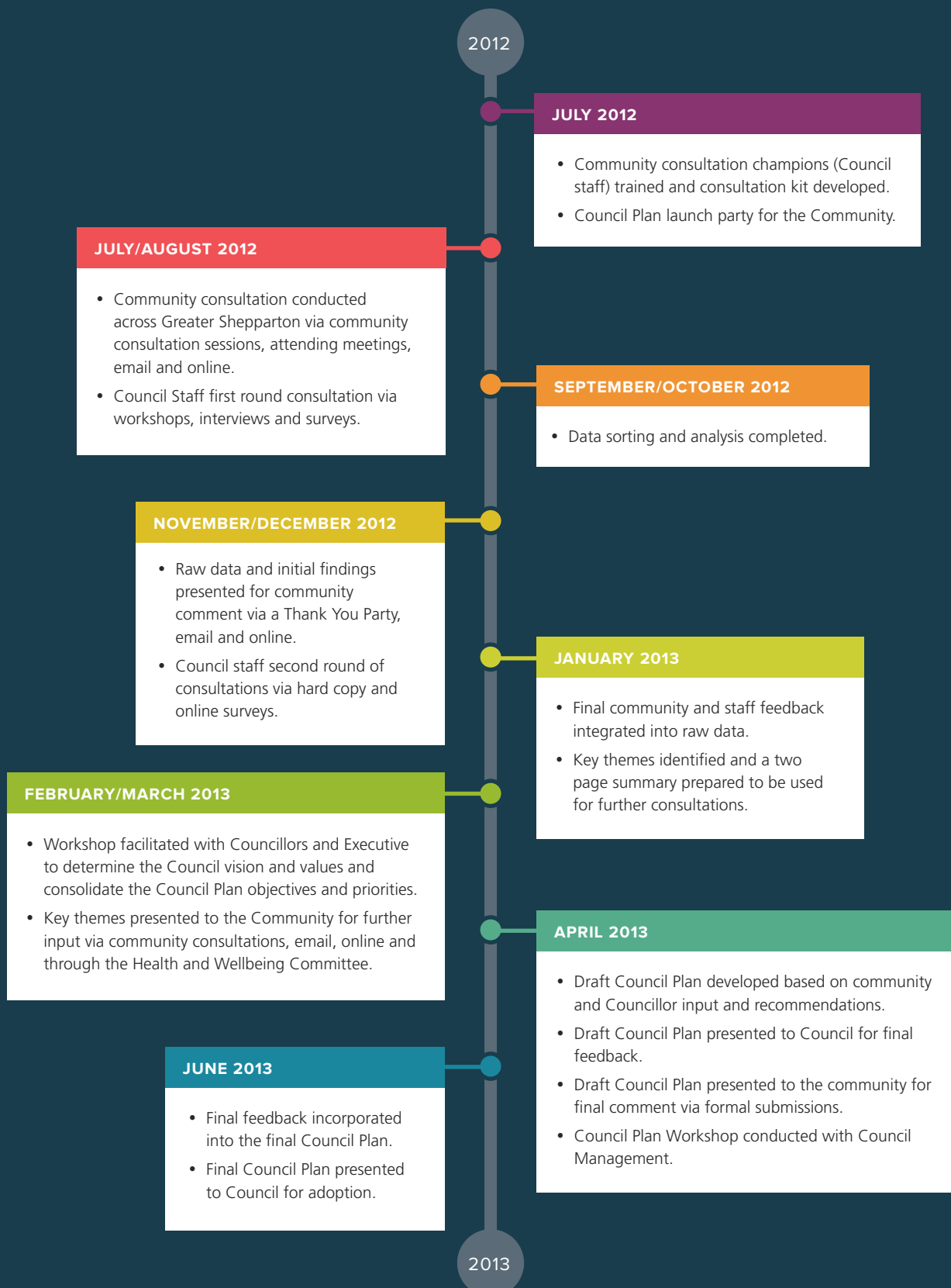
Planning is undertaken annually by Greater Shepparton City Council to review the Council Plan, develop department business plans and prepare individual work plans. This ensures strong alignment between the organisation's strategic direction and the activities carried out within individual departments.

This Council Plan is just one of a series of strategic and corporate plans that comprise Greater Shepparton's planning framework. The Council Plan concentrates on the strategic, rather than the operational level of Council business. The Council Plan is about setting the scene. A comprehensive planning process is undertaken in the development of the four year Council Plan. Key to this is the seeking of input from our community. In the development of the 2013-2017 Council Plan the following planning process was undertaken.

Council Planning Process



2013-14 Council Plan Planning Process



Review and Reporting

The Council Planning process has been well supported by the people of Greater Shepparton. To ensure that this is a living plan that adapts to constant change, the process now needs to be undertaken on a rolling basis.

The Council Plan will be updated each year through annual business and servicing planning which will build on success and address areas that need to be strengthened.

Just like in the planning phase, consultation with the community is critical in reviewing the direction and actions of Greater Shepparton City Council.

The community is actively engaged in the annual review of services delivered by Council. This occurs via interviews, focus groups and surveying. As part of a continuous improvement approach to planning and delivery, feedback from the review process is used to inform and enhance the on-going delivery of programs and Council operations.

Annual Review Process



Your Council Plan Creating Our Future

The Community Plan is Greater Shepparton City Council's commitment to the achievement of the Greater Shepparton community's vision.

The 2013 – 2017 Council Plan defines the aspirations the community hold for the future of the region by exploring aspects residents most valued and those they would most like to change about life in Greater Shepparton.

The Council Plan details the objectives and strategies, opportunities and challenges for our community moving forward. It details of a range of strategies and actions that will be undertaken in shaping the future for our city, including the environment, our lifestyles, our culture, our social opportunities and our economy. It further serves as a way in which to measure Councillor and organisational performance.

Key to the success of the 2013 – 2017 Council Plan is that it is owned by the Greater Shepparton community. While it guides Council decision making, it is not a Council Plan. Rather, the Greater Shepparton City Council has accepted responsibility for adopting the plan, working with other community stakeholders, overseeing its implementation and reporting back to the community on progress.

Thus fundamental to the development of the plan is that of consulting the wider community for ideas about the future direction. In this light, we at Greater Shepparton City Council strategically sought to consult with the community for its ideas and voice as we moved towards action planning for the coming four years.

In this way we were able to encourage engagement and ownership of the objectives and required action points, not only by council employees themselves but by the community at large.

Greater Shepparton City Council is committed to effective community engagement and recognises the importance of community input in developing and delivering better services.

Hence, Council set about undertaking a major community consultation process to collect ideas to help shape the development of the 2013 – 2017 Council Plan. The process was inclusive, transparent, consultative, empowering and therefore successful in gaining feedback and insights from the Greater Shepparton community.

A range of engagement methods were utilised to maximise the number of community members participating in the consultation process. These included:

- Two months of initial community consultations during July and August 2012
- Over 100 staff attended 180 consultations sessions within Greater Shepparton (public meetings, sporting events, shopping centres, events/activities, presentations to community, cultural and business groups)
- Staff were made clearly visible at all events wearing green coloured Council Plan branded t-shirts
- Hard copies of Surveys were available throughout the municipality.
- Council Plan survey was made available online
- Have your say via online conversations encouraged via social media

This strategy resulted in over 2,400 surveys received and 10,000 residents consulted in seeking input into the Council Plan. Council won a National Award with Accessible Communication as a result of this project.

Following the collation of the initial data key themes were identified and further consultation was undertaken to confirm the themes in what matters most to our community.

What our community told us ...

What do you like most about where you live?

- 19% Rural / small town lifestyle (quiet, safe, clean)
- 18% People, community, friendliness
- 14% Natural environment, parks and open space
- 11% Activities and facilities (including cultural and sports)

If you could change one thing, what would it be?

- 13% Infrastructure (roads and public transport)
- 13% Facilities (toilets, paths)
- 9% Improved physical appearance
- 9% Access and quality of shops and services

What would make Greater Shepparton an even better place?

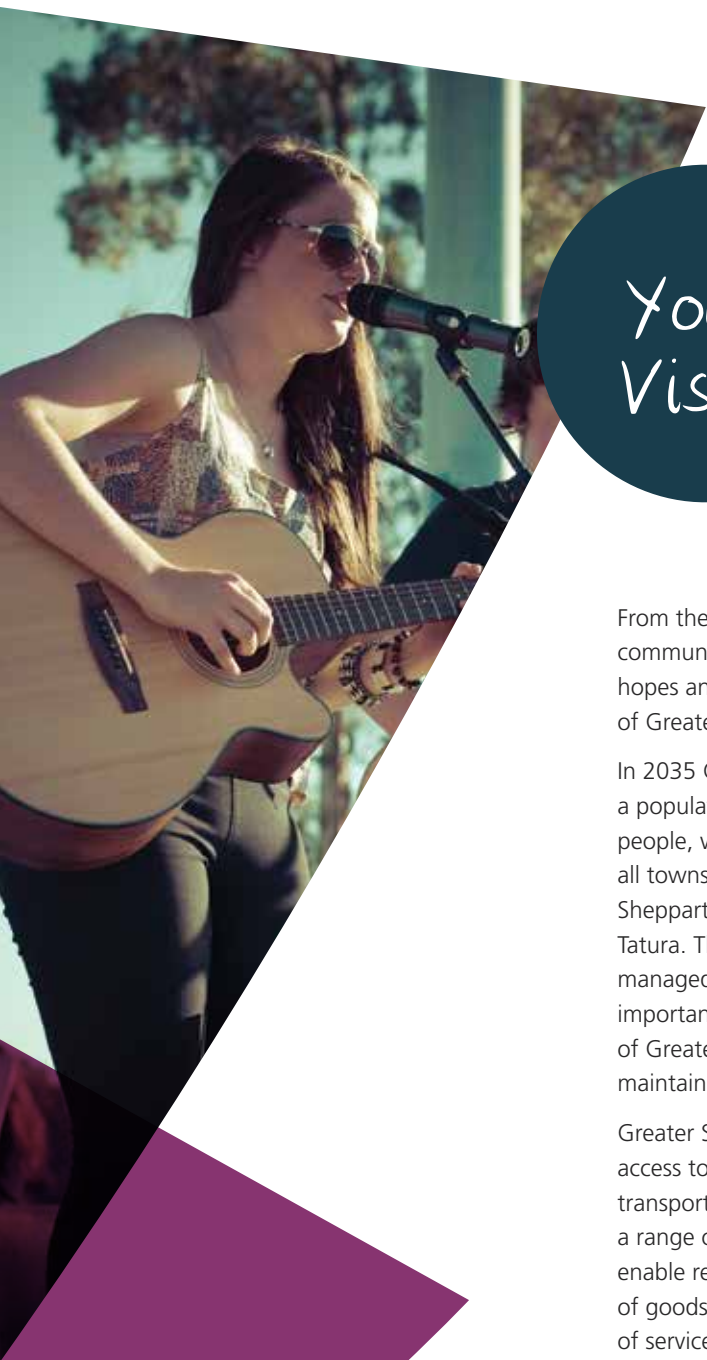
- 18% Facilities
- 10% Activities and events
- 9% Reduce violence and improve safety
- 9% Improved infrastructure

What do you think Council's priorities should be over the next 4 years?

- 20% Council including forward planning
- 12% Infrastructure
- 10% Services
- 8% Improved physical appearance

Is there anything you would like to tell us?

- 52% No response
- 21% Idea/request
- 9% Complaint regarding Council governance
- 8% General comment



Your Vision

From the consultations the community has clearly described the hopes and aspirations for the future of Greater Shepparton.

In 2035 Greater Shepparton will have a population of approximately 85,000 people, with growth occurring in all towns, however mostly within Shepparton and Mooroopna and Tatura. The growth needs to be managed in such a way that the important lifestyle advantages of Greater Shepparton will be maintained and enhanced.

Greater Shepparton has the required access to services particularly transport, medical, education and a range of shopping options which enable residents to source a range of goods and services. The quality of service delivery needs to be both maintained and enhanced.

Our communities and neighbourhoods are known for their pride, friendliness, their willingness to help out, their acceptance of those from other cultures and their community spirit. These are safe environments for families and individuals alike. Our smaller communities have maintained their quiet, safe environment, one that creates a more relaxed lifestyle that appeals to many residents.

Greater Shepparton has excellent parks and gardens, with open space that can be enjoyed by all. As a community we are living in harmony with our natural environment and have ensured during the growth that is occurring that this natural environment including our rivers, have been protected and that we have adequate open space.

Our community has expressed a desire to focus on renewable energy including pursuing the initiative of Greater Shepparton becoming the first solar city, and how we can achieve a reduction in water use.

Both large infrastructure, such as the completion of the new courthouse, GV Highway Shepparton Bypass and the GV Health upgrade need to continue to be committed to as does our investment in smaller infrastructure projects to ensure that our city is well maintained.

The community is very vocal about improving passenger rail service which improves our connectivity to Melbourne, as well as improving local transport connections for our regional communities.

Improvements in our current retail mix, revitalizing the CBD and rejuvenating the Maude Street Mall in Shepparton will provide a critical link to enhancing the local economy.

While support for our manufacturing and agricultural industries needs to continue there is an opportunity to diversify our primary industries for the region. Attraction of new and complementary investors is a must, as is creating new employment opportunities. Our multicultural community could hold the key to the creation of new industries and business ventures.

The changing face of our community is a challenge which provides considerable opportunities in diversifying our services and facilities and opens up a world of new experiences.

A continued challenge is the provision of activities for our youth. The likes of Aquamoves and KidsTown have been embraced by our community; however activities that engage, entertain and challenge our young people need to be continually explored and developed. Critical to this will be the involvement of our youth in identifying ideas and opportunities.

Many of our youth and other members of our community value the many sporting opportunities provided across the Goulburn Valley. There is strong community support for the future development of the Shepparton Sports Precinct, with this initiative having the potential to significantly contribute to the local economy via the continued attraction of international, state and regional events.

Investing in education is a must in providing opportunities for our community. We need to strive for excellence in education across all levels of the sector. This can be achieved through partnerships and innovative educational and training models at a tertiary, secondary or primary school level.

Not only do we need to invest in technology such as the National Broadband Network, we need to understand its capacity and capability in providing new opportunities. Whether it's industry, education, health or engagement and communication, technology may hold the key to diversifying our services in meeting our needs. Potentially, investment in IT services could position Greater Shepparton as a leading hub for high-tech innovation and development within regional Victoria.

Our community is strongly advocating for a reduction in Council "red tape" which is a frustration in meeting needs. Processes need to be more streamlined and responsive in supporting members of our community to achieve their aspirations.

Our people want to live in a community that is both liveable and sustainable, with a continued focus on healthy lifestyles supported by high quality recreational, educational and cultural facilities and a natural environment that is nurtured and respected.

Our community is passionate about contributing to the future of Greater Shepparton in creating a vibrant progressive regional city.

As a community, we need to determine those things that are important, what we want to retain from our past, and areas for improvement. Most importantly, we need to debate what we want to see in the future, be prepared to make the hard decisions, and then agree how we will go about making change.

In some areas we will need to make incremental change, while in others we need to make substantial improvements through the implementation of innovative programs and technologies. To manage these changes we will need to identify the major risks, develop relevant indicators and targets, ensure transparency, honesty and openness, and clearly define the actions and responsibilities of everyone involved.

The 2013 – 2017 Council Plan enables us to prioritize objectives and actions in working towards the vision of a Greater Shepparton.



Council Plan Goals

Based on the outcomes of the community consultations, Council has identified five strategic goals to describe what we are working towards in achieving the community's vision of a Greater Shepparton – Greater Future.

The Council Plan goals explicitly align with the Municipal Public Health Planning Framework (Department of Health Services, 2001) embedding the environmental dimensions of health; built, social, economic and natural environments. This Council Plan will address the legislative requirements for a Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan as specified in the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.

No one individual or organisation has the capacity to deliver all the aspirations contained within this plan. Achieving our aspirations will require a solid commitment in cross-sector partnerships between the local community, business and government.

Our collective efforts will focus on realistic and sustainable approaches to implement clear Council Plan Strategies. To realise a sustainable and successful future for the region, it is vital that all levels of government work together. This will require continuing community engagement and consultation through cross-sector partnerships, policy co-ordination and the development of solid strategies and actions to maximise achievement.

Our strategic goals



1. Active and Engaged Community (Social)

We will improve liveability through social and recreational opportunities, a range of inclusive community services and activities, and valuing our diversity.



2. Enhancing the Environment (Natural)

We will continue to value our heritage, open spaces and natural environments, maintaining and enhancing them, and enabling greater access for people to connect with our environment.



3. Economic Prosperity (Economic)

We will promote economic growth through working with existing businesses and industries, encouraging new business development and diversification, attracting and supporting education within our city, and strengthening the agricultural industry.



4. Quality Infrastructure (Built)

We will provide and maintain urban and rural infrastructure to support the development and liveability of our communities.



5. High Performing Organisation (Leadership and Governance)

We will deliver council services to the community efficiently, and provide leadership and governance that is future thinking, transparent and accountable.

Council Plan

Priorities and Actions

Council has identified five key goals to be achieved via a range of activities over the next four years.

A range of corporate objectives and strategies have been identified that will ensure that Council is successful in achieving these goals. These strategies will guide the development of departmental business plans and individual work plans, which will outline particular actions to achieve the strategies. A report on the progress of strategies will be presented to Council on a quarterly basis. Council will develop partnerships and strengthen relationships to ensure that projects and plans for the environment, social health and economic prosperity reflect the needs of the community.

To ensure that these activities are completed effectively, measures of success have been developed for each.

1. Active and Engaged Communities

(Social)



1.1

Continue to enhance community capacity building

Aim

We will work with all our communities to assist them to create opportunities whereby the community can develop, implement and sustain actions which allow them to exert greater control over their physical, social, economic and cultural environments.

Strategies

- Develop and implement neighbourhood planning within our communities.
- Continue to work with our communities to implement their community plans.
- Review, amend, implement and monitor Council's community consultation and engagement strategy.
- Develop effective partnerships with agencies to deliver improved community wellbeing (all age cohorts) outcomes.
- Ensure our 10 year capital works program is linked to the community and neighbourhood plans.

1.2

Develop and implement a strategy for improving education opportunities for all ages

Aim

We will work with all levels of education within Greater Shepparton to develop strategies that will enable council to support the further attainment of skills within our community through a comprehensive, easily accessible system of further education for the benefit of the people and the community.

Strategies

- Develop an Education Strategy that includes the principles of lifelong learning.
- Review and amend (if required) Council's Higher Education Strategy with the aim to improve the aspirational goals of students to gain further skills by attending higher education.
- In association with education providers and industry/business develop opportunities to assist with the attainment and retention of skills to support industry and business development in Greater Shepparton.

1.3

Ensure liveability options are always considered in our decision making activities

Aim

Council will work with the community in partnership and collaboration, to enable the provision of infrastructure that reflects the needs of the community.

Council acknowledges that a diversity of lifestyle choices, improved accessibility, safety and affordability need to be considered and adopted to reflect liveability in Greater Shepparton.

Strategies

- Develop partnerships with Federal and State governments, statutory agencies, not for profits and private business to leverage growth within Greater Shepparton.
- Develop, deliver and implement community safety initiatives with the State Government, Police, State agencies and the community, including but not limited to CCTV.
- Review and continue to implement the Greater Shepparton City Council Safer City Strategy.
- Renew and implement the Universal Access and Inclusion Plan.
- Continue to review and implement the Positive Ageing Strategy objectives.
- Continue to support the ongoing planning and resourcing of Emergency Management.
- Continue to implement the Early Years Plan objectives.
- Develop, adopt and implement the Greater Shepparton City Council Municipal Health and Wellbeing Action Plan.



1.4

Provide sustainable community services to our community

Aim

Council is committed to ensuring that the services provided to our communities reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.

Strategies

- Review the provision of library services, including potential partnerships and infrastructure requirements.
- Establish a service map that provides information on the services that are available to our community ensuring it is demographic specific data.
- Continue to lobby, advocate and prioritise the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens and advocate on their behalf.
- Monitor and appropriately support the provision of quality services within the municipality.
- Continue to implement the Domestic Animal Management Plan.

1.5

Embrace and strengthen cultural harmony and diversity

Aim

That council respects and acknowledges the diversity of the Greater Shepparton Community and encourages opportunities for all cultures to share and celebrate their values in the community.

Strategies

- Continue to engage and partner with our aboriginal community to support improved opportunities and outcomes in employment and health.
- Ensure council's activities and events support and enhance cultural harmony and inclusiveness.
- Continue to monitor, review annually and implement the Greater Shepparton City Council Cultural Diversity and inclusion Strategy.
- Recognise and take advantage of opportunities to celebrate our diversity.

1.6

Value arts, culture and heritage as an integral part of our dynamic community

Aim

We recognise that a vibrant and broad ranging arts and culture program is important in making the municipality a dynamic and appealing place to live, work, play and visit, builds social capital and contributes to education and economic development opportunities.

We will encourage and deliver a diverse range of artistic, cultural and heritage activities that are accessible to as many people as possible across the municipality.

Strategies

- Continue to support and promote arts initiatives.
- Ensure that Shepparton Art Museum (SAM), Riverlinks and Westside Performing Arts continue to deliver quality and diverse activities and events aimed at increasing public participation.
- Renew and implement the Arts and Culture strategy (which includes public art).
- Continue to undertake the Greater Shepparton City Council Heritage Study by implementing Stage 3 - gap study.
- Establish the Shepparton Art Museum Foundation.
- Continue the feasibility investigations for a new location for the Shepparton Art Museum (SAM).

2. Enhancing the Environment (Natural)



2.1

Ensure the environment is a major priority in planning for the future

Aim

Council will facilitate decision making to carry out development with due consideration given to the natural environmental, social, political, economic factors and provide a governance framework that will achieve sustainable outcomes.

Strategies

- Ensure that development applications provide sustainable management plans which incorporate sustainable building design concepts, water use and stormwater management plans.
- Ensure that development applications take into account the importance of agricultural land to the Greater Shepparton community and its economy.
- Advocate for and lobby governments to improve community access and safety within the Lower Goulburn National Park.
- Advocate, lobby and work in partnership the state government to minimize the fire risk to our community on state government controlled land.
- Work with Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Goulburn-Murray Water, University of Melbourne and other municipalities to ensure the use of irrigation water is both innovative and maximised.
- Finalise, adopt and commence implementation of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy.
- Investigate the opportunities that are available to Council to enable Council to support renewable energy options.
- Investigate the opportunities that will enable council to support the growth of solar usage within the city.
- Review, adopt and commence implementation of the Waste Management Strategy.
- Review and implement the Greater Shepparton City Council Roadside Management Plan.
- Continue to implement the Sustainable Purchasing Policy.
- Continue to reduce Council's Greenhouse Emissions.

3. Economic Prosperity

(Economic)





3.1

Maximise opportunities to ensure Greater Shepparton leads Victoria, retaining and attracting education and industry

Aim

Council will actively participate in the economic growth of Greater Shepparton including development of human capital, critical infrastructure, regional competitiveness, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, health, safety, literacy and other initiatives.

Strategies

- Develop and implement a strategy which identifies resources needed to attract new business and industry to Greater Shepparton as well as retaining our existing businesses and industry.
- Ensure sufficient industrial land which offers a range of options for new industry establishment is available throughout Greater Shepparton.
- Undertake research of industry to understand and highlight their needs and opportunities to ensure that Council has considered all options for industry attraction and retention.
- Develop and implement a strategy for attracting renewable energy based industries to Greater Shepparton.
- Develop and implement a marketing strategy for industry attraction including the council owned GVLink.
- Continue to seek out businesses to establish at GVLink.
- Develop and implement a strategy promoting Shepparton as the regional capital.

3.2

Ensure retail strategies deliver appropriate outcomes for the community

Aim

Council is committed to provide assistance to the retail sector with an ultimate goal of identifying how the businesses intend to offer their products or services to consumers and how to attract optimal consumer interest.

Strategies

- Revise, adopt and commence implementation of the CBD strategy.
- Develop, adopt and commence implementation of a Retail Strategy.
- Maximise the opportunities within the CBD that present themselves with the redevelopment of Vaughan Street.
- Continue to support and revitalise Shepparton Show Me.
- Implement installation of new parking and wayfinding signage in the Shepparton CBD and progressively across Greater Shepparton's towns.
- Develop, adopt and implement a CBD Parking Strategy.

3.3

Make Greater Shepparton the regional sporting capital of Victoria and a leading sporting destination

Aim

Through ongoing development of high quality sporting infrastructure throughout Greater Shepparton and facilitating the conduct of regional, intrastate, interstate and national sporting events we will become the sporting capital of Victoria.

Strategies

- Pursue opportunities for Greater Shepparton to be the location for major sporting events.
- Build partnerships with state bodies to enable Greater Shepparton to be Victoria's leading location for major events.
- Continue the development of the Shepparton North sporting precinct.
- Continue to implement masterplans that have been prepared for recreation reserves and sports facilities.
- Review, adopt and implement the Tourism and Major Events Strategy to enable the breadth and quality of major events and tourism experiences to grow.
- Complete the Shepparton Showgrounds redevelopment.
- Develop plans and prepare a feasibility study for the redevelopment of the Shepparton Sports stadium.
- Continue to develop Aquamoves and environs (including the carpark) as a regional aquatic and water park facility.

4. Quality Infrastructure (Built)





4.1

Ensure the community has access to high quality facilities

Aim

Council will continue to provide for the development and maintenance of high quality facilities to enhance the opportunities for community participation in a broad range of activities at both a passive and active level.

Strategies

- Complete the Victoria Park Lake redevelopment project.
- Work with the community to continue the development of the Australian Botanic Gardens Shepparton.
- Review and adopt the Tatura Park Master Plan and develop an integrated sporting facilities master plan with the Howley Complex.

4.2

Ensure the community has access to appropriate transportation infrastructure

Aim

Council, through understanding the need for appropriate transportation infrastructure is key to the health and wellbeing of the community, will continue to advocate for and strive to deliver the appropriate level of service across Greater Shepparton.

Strategies

- Develop a long term plan for the Shepparton aerodrome which includes provision for its possible relocation.
- Advocate for the delivery of improved passenger rail services to the Greater Shepparton including “fast rail” services.
- Advocate for the return of rail freight as an option for regional freight businesses.
- Adopt and commence implementation of the Greater Shepparton Cycling Strategy 2013-2017.
- Advocate the Federal and State Governments for a commitment for funding to enable the commencement of the Shepparton Bypass for the Goulburn Valley Highway.
- Lobby and advocate to other levels of government for funding for major infrastructure projects.
- Continue to develop plans for and commence implementation of streetscapes and town entrances.
- Advocate and lobby for funding to enable commencement of the Maude Street bus interchange project.
- In collaboration with the community, lobby and advocate for the continued development of the railway station precinct with priority linkage to the CBD.

4.3

Encourage sustainable municipal growth and development

Aim

Greater Shepparton City Council, as one of Australia's fastest growing inland regional cities, recognises that it is important to manage growth in a structured and sustainable manner.

In consultation with the Victorian Government and community stakeholders, we will continue to develop a planning framework that ensures our growth and development does not compromise our enviable lifestyle.

Strategies

- Review Council's Municipal Strategic Statement.
- Ensure Developer Control Plans minimise Council's requirement for expenditure within developments.
- Continue to develop structure plans for our growth corridors.

5. High Performing Organisation

(Leadership and Governance)



5.1

Develop and implement best practice communication strategies

Aim

Council will provide open and transparent internal and external communication through the print, verbal and electronic media, to meet the need of the organisation and the community ensuring at all times value for money and continuous improvement approach.

Strategies

- Develop, adopt and implement Council's marketing and communication strategies.
- Review, adopt and implement Council's community engagement strategy.
- Implement a "citizen first" commitment to the delivery of our services.
- Increase the use of social media to enhance community engagement and discussion.

5.2

Develop stronger relationships between Council and State and Federal Governments, local government sector and non-government partnerships to enhance our position

Aim

Council will work with State and Federal governments to develop a range of collaborative programs and initiatives for the benefit of the Greater Shepparton community.

Through partnership development, Council will endeavour to provide the ongoing improvement in the level of service delivery to the community.

Council recognises the opportunities available through sector wide collaboration to maximise the improvement opportunities for our community. Equally the opportunities for partnerships with the non-government sector provide a level of opportunity which will be explored to ensure our community receives the best possible services

Strategies

- Work with Strathbogie and Moira Shires to improve service delivery to our respective communities via the Goulburn Valley Regional Collaborative Alliance.
- Proactively lobby politicians and the Local Government Sector for support in the delivery of services to our community.
- Seek opportunities for partnerships with the non-government sector to support Greater Shepparton in the delivery of services to our community.
- Develop, adopt and implement a service planning model for the services that council provides for the community.
- Continue to advocate for improved levels of support from Federal and State Government.

5.3

Ensure strong internal systems and processes to ensure best practice delivery of services for the community

Aim

Greater Shepparton City Council will provide value for money services, best practice internal systems and processes and an organisational continuous improvement culture to maximise council performance in delivering service to meet the needs of the community.

Strategies

- Complete the implementation of the Transition Management Plan.
- Develop and review annually Council's long term financial plan (10 year).
- Develop and adopt a comprehensive Strategic Resource Plan which contains strategic direction for the management of the resources for Council.
- Complete a Workforce Development Plan which will enable GSCC to become an employer of choice.
- Develop and adopt best practice project management principles including asset investment guidelines which will guide Council investment in existing and new assets.
- Commence implementation of the 2013 Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) Management Strategy.
- Implement the objectives of the 2013 Purchasing Improvement Plan.
- Implement the approved recommendations from the Greater Shepparton 2013 Rating Review.

References

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National Visitor Survey, Tourism Research Australia

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