

GREATER SHEPPARTON VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT ELECTION PRIORITIES 2022





Cover Image: White Night Shepparton, 2022. Installation: *Crepuscular Beam*, Paul Collison & Russell Goldsmith.
This page: White Night Shepparton, 2022. *Welcome to Country*, Wulumbarra Shepparton – Yorta Yorta Country



Mayor's Message



Greater Shepparton City Council is extremely grateful for the Victorian Government's ongoing support for the Greater Shepparton region, specifically in relation to the Maude Street Mall Redevelopment, new Shepparton Art Museum (SAM), the Greater Shepparton Secondary College, the Museum of Vehicle Evolution (MOVE), significant improvements to the Shepparton to Melbourne Rail Network and more recently the delivery of White Night.

This region has demonstrated that we have the capacity to deliver complex projects and each dollar spent here by the Victorian Government generates many more in economic activity not only across the Greater Shepparton region, but across the state more broadly. With the challenges of the last two years it is more important than ever that key priority projects within our region are funded. This will assist in the economic recovery of our region and enhance the prosperity of regional cities across Australia.

Your further support in the areas outlined within this document is imperative to the ongoing growth and prosperity of our region, and none more so than this community's highest priority – the Goulburn Valley Highway (Shepparton) Bypass, a game changer for this region in terms of liveability, efficient movement of freight, productivity, global competitiveness and safety. These priorities have been developed in collaboration with the Committee for Greater Shepparton and key stakeholders within the community who have an inherent interest in the success of this region.

Once again, thank you for your continued support for our region, and we look forward to working with you to progress these projects.

Cr Shane Sali
Mayor of Greater Shepparton



St Georges Road
FOOD FESTIVAL

WORLD ON A PLATE

Saturday 29 Jan

Cnr St Georges Road

9pm

Summary

This document includes seven infrastructure areas and three policy areas for Greater Shepparton. These projects will collectively contribute to strengthening economic and social activity and improved liveability for the region.

Infrastructure Projects

1. Bypassing Shepparton	9
2. Shepparton Sports and Events Centre	13
3. Goulburn Valley Health Redevelopment	17
4. Tech School	19
5. Investing in the Early Years	21
5.1 Integrated Children and Families Centres	22
5.2 Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce	23
6. Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence (MCRE)	25
7. Shepparton Foodshare	29

Policy Areas

8. Leaving No-one Behind	32
8.1 Material Disadvantage, Poverty and Welfare Conditionality	33
8.2 NDIS Regulatory System	35
9. Sustainability & Environment	37
9.1 Water Security	37
9.2 Climate Adaptation and Resilience	38
9.3 Renewable Energy Zones / Electricity Grid updates	40
9.4 Carbon Market	41
10. GROW: Growing Regional Opportunities for Work	42



Greater Shepparton is the 'Food Bowl of Australia', producing highly sought after quality fruit and vegetables that make their way onto dining room tables right across the globe. Iconic manufacturers call Greater Shepparton home including SPC, Bega, Campbell's Soup, Unilever, Pental Products, J Furphy and Sons and Rubicon. Our region is experiencing significant growth, this growth brings opportunity, however there are still challenges that need to be addressed.





Photos: courtesy of Shepparton News



1 BYPASSING SHEPPARTON

Stage 1 of the Goulburn Valley Highway (Shepparton) Bypass Ford and Wanganui Road Connector Road to Shepparton Alternative Route (SAR)

Investment Required

Delivery of Stage 1 of the Goulburn Valley Highway Shepparton bypass:

For the commonwealth and Victorian Governments to agree on the apportionment and allocation of funds to construct Stage 1 of the Goulburn Valley Highway (Shepparton) Bypass.



The Goulburn Valley Highway in and around Greater Shepparton can no longer safely and efficiently support existing traffic volumes, and future regional economic and community growth risks being impeded if these inadequacies are not addressed.

Current Situation






The Goulburn Valley Highway forms a vital link in the national highway system between Melbourne and Brisbane, and joins Melbourne and central Victoria with inland New South Wales and Queensland.

A significant number of major manufacturers, food processors, dairy operators and other freight-generating businesses are located in the Greater Shepparton region. Forecasts indicate that the regional freight task will expand at a faster rate than economic and population expansion.

- Victorian Government allocated \$10.2 million in the 2017/18 budget for an early works package and finalisation of a business case.
- Commonwealth Government has committed \$208 million in construction funding in the 2018/19 budget.

Proposed Solution

The solution to address the Goulburn Valley Highway's limitations is the construction of a western bypass for Shepparton that will help balance community and industry needs. The full 36km four-lane Bypass has been split into five stages in order to stagger construction funding to get the project underway.

-  Shepparton Bypass Stage 1
 -  Wanganui & Ford Roads
 -  Shepparton Alternate Route
 -  Shepparton Bypass future stages
-  Not to scale

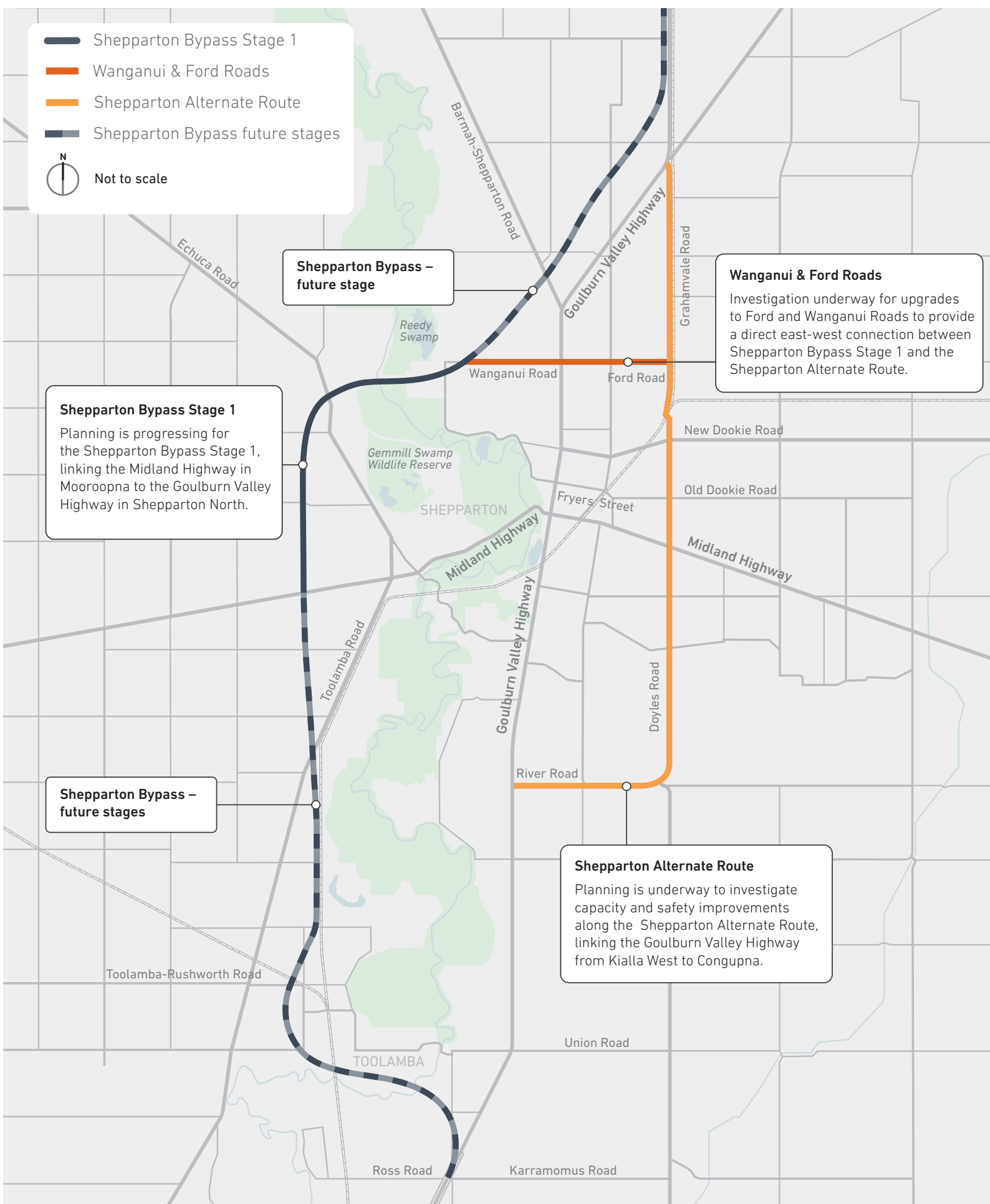
Shepparton Bypass – future stage

Wanganui & Ford Roads
 Investigation underway for upgrades to Ford and Wanganui Roads to provide a direct east-west connection between Shepparton Bypass Stage 1 and the Shepparton Alternate Route.

Shepparton Bypass Stage 1
 Planning is progressing for the Shepparton Bypass Stage 1, linking the Midland Highway in Moorroopna to the Goulburn Valley Highway in Shepparton North.

Shepparton Bypass – future stages

Shepparton Alternate Route
 Planning is underway to investigate capacity and safety improvements along the Shepparton Alternate Route, linking the Goulburn Valley Highway from Kialla West to Congupna.





1 BYPASSING SHEPPARTON (cont)

Once funded, Stage 1 will include the construction of a 10km section from the Midland Highway in Mooroopna, extending north along Excelsior Avenue and Cornish Road to Echuca Road, then east to Wanganui Road where it will re-join the Goulburn Valley Highway in Shepparton North.

Stage 1 will provide a second Goulburn River crossing, broadly aligning with Wanganui Road in Shepparton North. This will provide much needed relief for the only existing Goulburn River crossing option along the Midland Highway (the Causeway between Mooroopna and Shepparton). The causeway carries over 30,000 vehicles per day.

Projected Outcomes

The project will transform the region's freight capacity by:

- avoiding 16 sets of traffic lights
- remove heavy freight vehicles from the Mooroopna and Shepparton CBDs.
- creating cost savings and efficiencies for local and national heavy vehicle operators through reduced travel times and vehicle maintenance savings;
- increasing long-term road capacity for industry, and improving access to domestic and export markets;
- delivering critical certainty for industry development, and future planning and investment for businesses; and
- reducing operational risk to industry through the provision of a second heavy vehicle crossing of the Goulburn River.

The diversion of significant volumes of heavy vehicle movement from Shepparton's CBD will:

- improve safety for drivers and visitors, with road user conflicts significantly reduced;
- enhance the amenity of the Shepparton CBD through reduced noise and pollution; and
- act as a catalyst for the revitalisation of the Shepparton and Mooroopna CBDs through the delivery of Council-led infrastructure projects and corporate investment.

PETER JOHNSON

Chair,
Goulburn Valley Highway
Shepparton Bypass
Action Group



The project has been endorsed by Greater Shepparton City Council and the Committee for Greater Shepparton as a project of the highest priority.

The safety and amenity of Shepparton and its CBD and urban areas are being seriously and detrimentally affected by the numbers of vehicles, particularly trucks, which are forced to pass through the centre of the city to access other areas and exits. This is a problem that is growing exponentially as are the costs of the project and the commencement of the project works is becoming more and more critical.

“

The combined population of this catchment is in excess of 220,000. Basketball Victoria has nominated this project as one of their highest priorities for Victoria

”



2

SHEPPARTON SPORTS AND EVENTS CENTRE

Investment Required



- Commonwealth Government \$25 million
- Victorian Government \$20 million
- Greater Shepparton City Council \$15 million

Current Situation

The Shepparton Sports Stadium opened in 1972 and was extended in 1994. The facilities currently include:

- Four indoor courts
- Multi-purpose room
- Amenities
- Administration space

Whilst Council maintains the current Sports Stadium to a high standard with regular investment, the current four court configuration is constrained in terms of court availability for growing associations, spectator seating and multiuse capability. Increasingly, compliance with state sporting association regulation is also an issue. Once redeveloped, the Shepparton Sports and Events Centre will service the wider Goulburn and Murray Regions incorporating the six surrounding municipalities. The combined population of this catchment is in excess of 220,000. Basketball Victoria has nominated this project as one of their highest priorities for Victoria

Proposed Solution

It is proposed to create a regionally and nationally significant sporting, entertainment and events complex that caters for a multitude of users. The full redevelopment will include:

- Demolition of existing Shepparton Sports Stadium
- Construction of six basketball/netball/multi use national standard compliant courts including a show court with seating for up to 3,000.
- Inclusion of a sports house/administration space for the stadium and other sporting users.
- New change rooms with the capacity and flexibility to cater for males, female and gender fluid sporting players/teams and officials and elite competition.
- Family friendly and accessible (including 'changing place') change rooms for visitors with mobility and special needs.
- Entry, lobby, café, and reception.
- External works including access roads, landscaping, pedestrian footpaths and crossings, bicycle parking, bus drop-off and crossovers, and car parking.

Shepparton Sports and Events Centre: Construction of six new multi-use courts, 3000 seat retractable grandstand, development of new amenities, administration hub and external works. Detailed design is currently underway with completion due mid 2022.

SHEPPARTON SPORTS AND EVENTS CENTRE (cont)

Projected Outcomes

The Shepparton Sports and Events Centre project upon completion will enable Shepparton to host elite netball and basketball events and sporting competitions. It will also be able to cater for a variety of mass participation and state, national and international multi sports events, concerts and cultural events that will drive significant economic growth along with providing significant community initiatives and participation opportunities for the broader region.

Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games

We acknowledge the Victorian Government's commitment to securing the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games. This is a significant commitment to supporting growth and economic prosperity in regional Victoria and we applaud the government on their vision.

Sports available to be added to the current program that have been hosted at recent games could include, Basketball, Basketball 3v3, Judo or Wrestling. Additionally Netball preliminary rounds could be hosted noting our proximity to Bendigo who will host the Netball competition.

Economic Impacts

- Total Regional Benefit: \$68 million (Output)
- Total Local Jobs: 235 (Construction)
- A 12 year major event projection developed as part of the preliminary business case estimated around 334 major events have the potential to be hosted in a redeveloped Shepparton Sports and Events Centre.
- It is estimated that these events would see an additional 24,000 visitors and 76,000 bed nights generated annually.
- This would equate to approximately \$12.3M per year in visitor spending helping support 89 FTE jobs annually.



Greater Shepparton City Council is proud to have played a part in the early stages of development of the Commonwealth Games regional model and our community is eagerly awaiting further detail following the Premier's comments at the media launch that Shepparton will host sporting and cultural events as part of these games.



Investment into a redeveloped Shepparton Sports and Events Centre would enable the facility to host competition as part of the regional schedule which would be a significant economic and social boost for the broader region.



MICHAEL SCANDOLERA

Commonwealth Games medallist

The Shepparton region has an amazing quantity of sports history. We need to redevelop the Sports Stadium to bring it into line with the amazing new sports precinct that surrounds it. What a wonderful opportunity to attract many differing events to the Shepparton area if we can get the standard of the facility up to speed. We want to keep our area alive and like the surrounding precinct, to redevelop the Stadium would be the icing on the cake in attracting such a broad array of not just sporting but cultural and entertaining events.



JAKE KEOGH

General Manager – Facilities and Government Relations
Basketball Victoria

Basketball Victoria (BV) fully supports the Greater Shepparton City Council in their pursuit of a development to the Shepparton Sports and Events Centre. Basketball in Victoria has seen consistent strong growth and demand for a number of years and at a state-wide level our participation numbers represent around 3.8% of the population. The Shepparton area exceeds the State average and has seen strong growth over a number of years. As such, additional courts in the Shepparton area to cater for this growth is of the highest priority to Basketball Victoria.

Access to community sport is essential as communities recover from the pandemic. The most crucial factor in access to community sport is access to facilities. Adding additional facilities to Shepparton will give even more residents of all ages access to community sport.





GV Health services
primary catchment is
forecast to grow by

17.5%
from 2022 to 2036.



A total of

70%

of our primary catchment lives in
Greater Shepparton. A significant
number of patients also come
from our secondary catchment
– Strathbogie, Moira and
Campaspe Shires.



3

GV HEALTH REDEVELOPMENT

Investment Required

Allocation of Stage 2 funding.



Current Situation GV Health Stage 1

The Victorian Government has committed \$230 million to complete works aligned to components of the GV Health Masterplan. For GV Health to deliver the capacity and infrastructure works required to deliver services to the community in the Goulburn Valley, a significant investment is required beyond the delivery of Stage 1.

Proposed Solution Integrated Cancer Centre

GV Health has received \$26m to build an Integrated Cancer Centre (ICC) which would comprise an increase of 28 points of care and enhanced multidisciplinary treatment and planning spaces as well as office accommodation for staff and research.

Additional budget allocation is required to close the gap in funding to enable the ICC project to proceed and deliver best practice cancer care and treatment to people from across the Goulburn Valley.

Proposed Solution GV Health Stage 2

GV Health Stage 2 Masterplan has been developed detailing the scope and indicative costs to deliver the remaining works, however this has not been made available to the public. Stage 2 works consist of:

- Construction of an Integrated Cancer Centre for the Goulburn Valley.
- Increased acute and subacute inpatient capacity at GV Health's Shepparton site.
- Additional spaces for ambulatory care services for specialist clinics.
- Additional car parking and helipad.
- Clinical support and diagnostic services.



4 TECH SCHOOL



Investment Required

Allocation of sufficient funds to deliver the Tech School for Greater Shepparton.

Current Situation

Empowering for the Future

The Shepparton Tech School will be a facility where students think creatively, work together to solve problems, and are prepared for the future through advanced STEM education and skills required for the jobs of today and tomorrow. Located in the heart of Victoria's food bowl, the Shepparton Tech School will have a strong focus on Agriculture, Horticulture and Food technologies, empowering young people to solve the challenges of today and tomorrow through STEM. The Tech School will link secondary schools to industry to deliver innovative learning programs that challenge students to solve problems in a real-world context.



Our secondary school students deserve access to the latest technology and innovative learning programs as part of their studies that align with the industry and employment needs of our region.

Projected Outcomes

In Victoria, 10 Tech Schools are funded across the state as part of the Victorian Government's commitment to the Education State.

The mission of the Tech Schools is to use leading-edge technology, discovery and innovation to connect students and teachers to contemporary enterprise skills through collaborative learning programs focussed on local community and industry needs now and into the future. Tech School's innovative learning programs focus on using design thinking methodologies, allowing students to work on real world problems that are supported by our industry partners and integrated into their school curriculum.

A Tech School for Shepparton would be aligned to the industries predicted to experience strong economic and employment growth in the Goulburn Valley region.

Proposed Solution

We ask that the Victorian Government work with GOTAFE and La Trobe University to plan and fund the establishment of a Tech School on an identified parcel of land in the heart of the Shepparton CBD, during the next stage of the Education Plan. It is estimated that \$15 million is required to deliver the Tech School.

TRAVIS HEENEY

Chief Executive Officer,
GOTAFE



The Shepparton Tech School will deliver state-of-the-art, innovative STEM education programs, empowering the young people of the Goulburn Valley region to pursue career pathways aligned with the needs of our local industry.





5 INVESTING IN THE EARLY YEARS



Investment Required

Investment in the early years should be further strengthened, underpinned by the Shepparton Education Plan. The Plan sets out the Victorian Government’s priorities for early years services and their connection to the primary and secondary schooling system, with the aim of improving outcomes for local children.

Current Situation

It is well understood that high quality early childhood education and care delivers strong benefits for individual children and families, and far-reaching social and economic benefits. This effect is especially profound for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Research has demonstrated that every dollar spent in the early years is returned many times over to society in the form of increased engagement with education and employment, reduced interventions to address disadvantage, and reduced contact with the criminal justice system.

Proposed Solution

Greater Shepparton City Council supports the development and learning of all children in the municipality via its maternal and child health, and early childhood education and care services. Targeted services provide enhanced support to families and children experiencing vulnerability, including Enhanced Maternal and Child Health, Early Start Kindergarten, and Best Start.

SARA NOORI

Senior Manager
Settlement, Integration and Social Inclusion
UNITING

Most of our consumers and clients live in the South of Shepparton. Currently there is a gap in a sense that those clients do not have a walk-in or drop-in facility close to where they live as a community hub to access. With most still trying their best to learn driving and use public transport on their own. It would be fantastic if a centre similar to what we have in Mooroopna i.e. the Children’s and Families Centre is considered for them. We (our Settlement hub staff) would also be happy to co-locate at the facility to increase accessibility and availability of other services at a centre like such that aims to meet the needs of the families in the locality.

“
Targeted services provide enhanced support to families and children experiencing vulnerability, including Enhanced Maternal and Child Health, Early Start Kindergarten, and Best Start.”



5 INVESTING IN THE EARLY YEARS (cont)

5.1 Integrated Children and Families Centres



Investment Required
An opportunity exists to deliver an integrated children and families centre in the growing South Shepparton area.

Current Situation

The Mooroopna Children and Families Centre provides a strong model for further investment in integrated, community-centred early years services and state-of-the-art infrastructure in other Greater Shepparton communities facing high levels of vulnerability.

Proposed Solution

In a safe, inclusive environment, a South Shepparton integrated children and families centre will deliver maternal and child health, early childhood education and care, play therapy, paediatric services, playgroups and other services in an environment that supports a strong connection to primary education.

Greater Shepparton has a strong track record of inter-agency collaboration with governments at all levels, and not-for-profit and philanthropic agencies in planning and delivering early years services. These agencies share a common goal of supporting children’s learning and development, and setting up strong foundations for children’s future success in formal learning, and life.

5.2 Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce

Investment Required

Further investment will be critical to successfully completing the rollout of funded three year old kindergarten, and the increase from 15 to 30 hours of free kindergarten for children in the year before school by 2032. Allocation of sufficient funding to scholarships and financial incentives to enable educators to gain and upgrade their qualifications from relevant certificate level to Diploma level and beyond to Bachelor level degrees would be particularly beneficial.



Current Situation

High quality early years services are underpinned by a well-qualified and professionally-recognised workforce. The challenges of attracting and retaining such a workforce are well known, and driven by complex factors including remuneration, professional recognition, and education and training pathways, among others. Regional communities such as Greater Shepparton are recognised as facing additional challenges in these areas.

Proposed Solution

Greater Shepparton City Council acknowledges the long term commitment of the Victorian Government to building the early years workforce.





6

MUNARRA CENTRE FOR REGIONAL EXCELLENCE (MCRE)



Investment Required

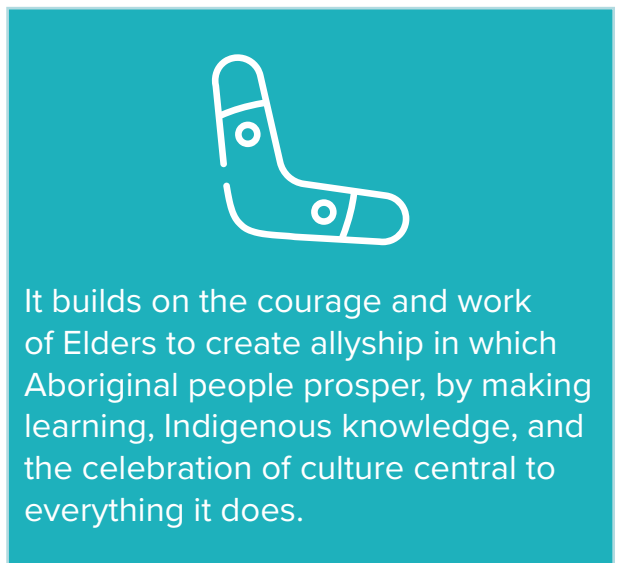
Commonwealth and Victorian Government to work together to fund Stage 2 to deliver Student Accommodation and the Regional Centre for Sporting Excellence, both of which will service and support the Goulburn Murray Region.

History

Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence (MCRE) was proposed by the Rumbalara Football Netball Club (RFNC) as a critical enabler towards building parity and prosperity amongst Yorta Yorta and other First Nations people through the pursuit of education, cultural affirmation and expression. This includes the longer-term goal of building Indigenous knowledge into the curriculum of western education platforms. A \$200,000 business case was funded in the 2017/18 Victorian Government budget, with a further \$23 million having been committed by the Victorian government and also a further \$5 million committed by the University of Melbourne for Stage 1 of the project. Munarra Limited was then established in 2020 as the legal entity and a Board was appointed to guide future business case development, funding acquisition, design and construction and operationalisation.

What will Munarra Limited be in 2024?

Munarra Limited (MCRE) is Aboriginal-led, inspirational and pioneering. It also directly reflects the goals of the Goulburn Murray Regional Prosperity Plan which is to deliver an additional \$150m GRP per annum by 2036 for the Goulburn Murray region.



It is to be a national pathways and university education campus in the Goulbourn Murray region that is by its design a hub of connection and transformation for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people from across Australia. With an interdisciplinary pedagogical focus on Sports Science, Allied health Services, Renewables, Agriculture, Cultural Identity and Entrepreneurship, it has been established as a 'business of aspiration and optimism' with an 'invincible spirit' as its guiding principle; It will partner with and/or house several complementary organisations, services, programs, social enterprises (that it will assist to incubate) as well as associated accommodation facilities.

6

MUNARRA CENTRE FOR REGIONAL EXCELLENCE (MCRE) (cont)



It will create a sense of place, community confidence, connectedness and equity across this country for not only current generations but also for those still to arrive.

The MCRE Campus as a self-sustaining entity, has an integrated operating philosophy with its key partners, which includes the proposed Shepparton Sports City redevelopment. Key partners include the RFNC, University of Melbourne, Kaiela Institute, First Peoples – State Relations Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Greater Shepparton City Council.

Current Situation

Director (CEO) of Munarra Limited was appointed in early October 2021. Subsequently Munarra corporate infrastructure build has begun: Through a tender process undertaken jointly by the Victorian Government and Munarra Limited the Principal Architect has been appointed (ARM Architecture), with a remit to undertake related

community and stakeholder engagement in the Goulburn Murray Region and deliver preliminary designs in late February 2022 for the campus (this includes upgrades to the RFNC which sits on the northern part of the new campus). This is alongside additional works being undertaken by the Council presently on the site. Following a review of the project, a bid process has been entered into by Munarra Limited and Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet with the Victorian Government for additional funds to meet contemporary capital costs and staffing costs, given the changes economically and socially in Australia more broadly since the onset of COVID. Munarra Limited (MCRE), RFNC and Uniting have agreed to apply in partnership for funding to establish accommodation infrastructure on campus on behalf of The Academy of Sports, Health and Education (<http://ashe.unimelb.edu.au/>) which is proposed to sit under Munarra Limited (MCRE).

Proposed Solution

Greater Shepparton City Council has agreed in principle to lease land for the development of the MCRE, incorporating ASHE, on a site designated in the Shepparton Sports Precinct Master Plan. The project still requires confirmation from some current and emerging partners to commit resources to next stage; and a commercial build strategy is underway by Munarra Limited itself to ensure self-sustainability.

Total Regional Benefit: \$102 million (Output)
Total Local Jobs: 355 (Construction)

Commonwealth and Victorian Governments to work together to fund the delivery of the proposed infrastructure plans for Munarra Limited (MCRE). This includes goals of providing elite level athlete accommodation, a health and wellbeing centre that will support Allied Health services delivery (and contribute to pedagogy undertakings) and The Goulburn Murray Indigenous Business Hub to support mentoring, incubating, and accelerating indigenous business ownership to contribute to Goulburn Murray Regional Prosperity Plan goals.

Note: An additional Investment business case is being prepared by Munarra Limited (and its partners) to deliver the development onsite of a Nationally Significant Regional Centre for Sporting Excellence to support ‘A Green and Gold Pathway to the Brisbane Olympics 2032’ and the Commonwealth Olympics 2026; and is designed to support participation by indigenous and regionally based athletes and officials; as well as assisting the transition of existing athletes to new careers in sport related roles, other industry or business sectors as they retire from full time training commitments. This could also be potentially extended to those exiting the Commonwealth armed forces and seeking to live in the Goulburn Murray Region.

“

The project still requires confirmation from some current and emerging partners to commit resources to next stage; and a commercial build strategy is underway by Munarra Limited itself to ensure self-sustainability.

.....”



TRAVIS MORGAN

Chairperson, Munarra Limited (MCRE)

The Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence (MCRE) is Aboriginal-led, inspirational, pioneering and a national first. It is a demonstration of the strong allyship between the Rumbalara Football Netball Club, The University of Melbourne, the Kaiela Institute and the Victorian Government. It shows what is possible when a joint commitment of delivering social, community and economic prosperity not just for the region but nationally is the principle that is adopted by all as an everyday focus.

While the Munarra campus is designed to be a hub of connection and transformation for indigenous and non-Indigenous people from across Australia, offering unique acceleration and aggregated pathways in education and sport, it is in fact much more than that. It's a safe place and space in which people from all corners of this nation can come together and like the stakeholders above, demonstrate their commitment and actively contribute to the prosperity of this nation on a daily basis.





7 SHEPPARTON FOODSHARE



Investment Required

Allocation of \$2.665 million for Shepparton Foodshare to construct its forever home.

Current Situation

Shepparton Foodshare was established in 2012 as a result of community need and it remains the only local food rescue agency. Foodshare's role as a food collection, warehousing, redistribution service also relieves businesses from dealing with the 100 agencies who formerly sought support via food/financial donations, streamlining processes for businesses who want to donate, and agencies who need food for people they support.

On average 350,000 kilograms of food is distributed annually to registered emergency relief agencies, schools, community meals programs and churches.



The people supported by these agencies includes individuals, children, homeless, people from our culturally and linguistically diverse community, including new arrivals and refugees.

- Estimated benefit to the community \$8.5 million
- Volunteers provide 75% of hours required to operate the service
- The equivalent of 2 FTE is employed/consulted to provide a safe and coordinated environment for volunteers, operations and to raise the necessary operational costs annually.

Shepparton Foodshare is an integral part of a state-wide network of food rescue agencies. Reciprocal food swaps and food sharing is conducted weekly to ensure a diverse supply of food.

To deliver this service, Foodshare partners with supermarkets, business and other food rescue agencies state-wide to provide nutritious food. Foodshare stores the food according to regulation guidelines to extend the shelf life of the donated/rescued food to then provide nutritious meals and prevent edible food entering the waste stream.

It operates under a model in which there is no fee for service, other than a small one-off agency registration fee. All food is provided to registered agencies on the agreement that they will provide it to those in necessitous circumstance for free. There is no potential to charge for this food as these people simply cannot pay for it.

Part of that support has included rent free business accommodation for warehousing and operations at the former SPC Ardmona site in Mooroopna, however Shepparton Foodshare was provided notice to vacate its current premises in Mooroopna by February 2022. After some negotiation however, and unless extenuating circumstances arise, a short-term extension was granted to February 2023 to allow for a new build to negate the cost and disruption that would be caused by a short-term move. With sufficient funding yet to be secured this date will not be achievable.

“
With food insecurity rising, and 100 welfare agencies relying on the service, the Shepparton Foodshare Board is resolute in its goal to secure the future of the service.
..... ”



7 SHEPPARTON FOODSHARE (cont)

The need for Foodshare's service is evident, the last annual statement reported distribution at 433,000 kilograms, a 14% increase on the previous year and their highest annual distribution to date. Our region has high rates of disadvantage, according to SEIFA, 39.5% compared with the state measure of 20%. In addition to this, food insecurity and disadvantage in Greater Shepparton continues to rise.

According to Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) 5.4% of people in our region have experienced food insecurity, this is higher than the state measure of 4.6%. Further, also contributing to food insecurity is our higher than state average rates of:

- Unemployment 6.9%
- Homelessness estimated at 5.7%
- People with income less than \$400pw 41.3%
- Low-income families with children 14.3%
- Households with mortgage stress 13.3%



Without appropriate and secure accommodation Foodshare simply would not be able to continue to provide food to the most vulnerable in our community and via the network of Foodshares that it supports across the Goulburn Valley and much of Victoria.



During the recent COVID-19 outbreak that saw one third of Greater Shepparton in isolation, this small, yet essential service that operates predominantly with volunteers, over a 10-day period processed 88,727 kilos of rescued and donated food and distributed a phenomenal 61,000 kilograms of food (the equivalent of around 122,000 meals) that was designated for local people in isolation.

Projected Outcomes

With no secure tenure, the Shepparton Foodshare Board had already identified its largest risk to its operations as accommodation security. It therefore commissioned a consultant to undertake an 'Accommodation Options Study'. The options within the study were considered by the board and the consensus is to proceed with the option to purpose build a warehouse. Land on which to build the warehouse has been donated to Shepparton Foodshare.



Long term – Up to \$2.665 million to be raised to realise the project and to purpose build a warehouse. Shepparton Foodshare to own its own facility negating the need to raise expensive annual lease costs, removing the risk of expensive relocation costs and lost days of service incurred when having to move, and providing security assisting with a self-sustainable future for the service.

Economic Impact

Since Shepparton Foodshare commenced, it is estimated that the benefit to the community is \$8.5 million. This is based on 3,400,000 kilograms of food, at an average value of \$2.50 per kilogram, being distributed to people in need. This impact is however not taking into account the 3 million kilograms of food saved from landfill, which further increases the services’ economic impact on our community.



A recent study completed revealed that for every dollar of input value invested in Foodshare in 2020, \$4.17 of social, economic, and environmental value is created (SRI).

Additional Social Impact

The social impact of Shepparton Foodshare also flows to the 30 volunteers whose combined work each week exceeds 150 hours. These volunteers benefit from and contribute to a sense of community resilience and connectedness, and have the opportunity to gain pre-employment and vocational skills.

Proposed Solution

High level project estimates and preliminary designs have been obtained. An allocation of approximately \$2,665,000 for Foodshare to construct its ‘forever home’ on land which has been generously donated, with the aspiration of residing in this new warehouse by July 2023.

SANDY ANDERSON
 Manager Life Op Shop
 Mooroopna



Food Share is a very important organisation for our local community.

With their help we can support a bigger range of people with food assistance. The need for this type of service has increased dramatically since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and now with the rising cost of living to families.



8

LEAVING NO-ONE BEHIND

An important opportunity to reframe the nature of the relationship between the State and the Commonwealth.

The four local not-for-profit organisations that comprise Shepparton Community Share cover a wide variety of human service delivery. Many of those services occur at the intersection of policy and funding responsibility between the State and the Commonwealth Governments. Different, or even competing priorities between the levels of government, can create frustration for service providers and confusion, or worse amongst service users, who are often the most vulnerable members of our community.



The election of a new Australian Government on 21 May 2022 provides an opportunity to revisit issues of potential policy tension and reset the relationship. There are several key areas in which such a reset could provide relief to people in Greater Shepparton.

8.1 Material Disadvantage, Poverty and Welfare Conditionality

Investment Required

A 10% increase in the social security budget.



Table 1 Estimated multiplier benefit of increase in JobSeeker rate:

Recipients of JobSeeker	Current basic rate per fortnight/Day	Rate on increase	New basic rate per fortnight / day	Benefit to local economy
2,883	\$643/\$46	10% (4.4 per day)	707 / \$51	\$4.8 million / year
		20% (\$9 per day)	772 / \$55	\$9.7 million / year

Current Situation



Greater Shepparton has a rate of poverty above state and national averages.

Greater Shepparton, compared to regional Victoria, has a greater proportion of its population in the lowest income quartile. Socio-economic disadvantage in our community leads to multiple related and complex issues, which inform the way Shepparton Community Share (SCS) agencies design and deliver services and respond to emerging needs.

8 LEAVING NO-ONE BEHIND (cont)

Many of the causes of poverty are structural, e.g: access to work and income, education, housing, health and services. Most people living below the poverty line in Australia rely on benefit payments for their income, so the level of benefit payments is particularly relevant, especially the JobSeeker payment. As at April 2022, 2883 people in Greater Shepparton were receiving JobSeeker.

During 2020, the coronavirus supplement of \$550 helped to lift many households out of poverty. JobSeeker and other benefit recipients reported being able to buy fresh food, eat three meals a day, and pay their bills for the first time. There is significant evidence that raising the rate of benefits has positive impacts on reducing poverty and inequalities. Any increase in income for benefit recipients also results in increased consumer spending, increased employment and boosts to the economy, particularly in regional areas. The resources tend to be spent locally on essential items. There is also evidence that better income for disadvantaged groups may lead to better outcomes on indicators as diverse as health and crime.

“

Regrettably, the cessation of the supplement and the increase of only \$50 per fortnight to the base rate of JobSeeker has seen the gains reversed. Forcing people to live below the poverty line is bad policy, socially and economically.

.....”

Proposed Solution

The ANU identifies that the population group with the most concerning increases in both poverty and financial stress are those persons heavily reliant upon working age social security payments. Poverty for this group increased from 30 per cent to 66 per cent between 1993 and 2017. The ANU report finds that increasing overall social security spending by up to 20% yields strong benefits in terms of reducing poverty and financial stress when targeted towards working age payments.

Encouragement and reward are more effective than compliance and punishment.

Welfare Conditionality is also a significant challenge. As a trial site for a variety of welfare reforms compliance rules for many benefit recipients have been tighter in Greater Shepparton than elsewhere in Australia over much of the last decade. Failure to complete mutual obligations can result in payments being reduced, suspended or cancelled. Conditionality settings were relaxed during the height of COVID-19 restrictions but have since returned. Sanctions do not assist recipients but increase their vulnerability. There is no safe, fair way to reduce, suspend or cancel a benefit payment, especially in families with dependent children.

8.2 NDIS Regulatory System

The NDIS is the biggest change in social services in more than 30 years and has helped many people with disability to access the support they need to engage and live with greater comfort and independence. There are many positives for regional families in being able to access the NDIS, offering individuals a model of user choice and control, simultaneously increasing social and economic participation leading to positive health outcomes and economic growth for communities. Like any major change, not all experiences have been positive. For example, the NDIS poses a particular set of challenges for participants and providers in regional communities, where markets are thin and consumer choice is a theoretical proposition.



Investment Required

Simplify and streamline Regulatory and Administrative processes.

Current Situation

The challenges associated with the roll out of the NDIS in regional communities have been recognised by key national bodies, prompting several major reviews to date. However, the extent of the supply gaps and access issues may not yet be fully known or adequately addressed.

The challenges include:

- Pricing
- Workforce availability and capability
- Geographical distance
- Offering consumer choice
- Complex nature of the scheme for participants
- Harsh and arbitrary reductions in plan funding
- New market entrants, with variable quality and motivations

Regional communities and service providers have been responding to these challenges, amidst a background of continual government reform and the pandemic response requirements. Locally, SCS has already undertaken a disability workforce development project funded by a Victorian Regional Readiness Fund – Supporting the NDIS Workforce and Service System (rural and regional) grant.

Proposed Solution

The Commonwealth Government itself has cited slower-than-expected uptake of the scheme as a reason for unspent funds, but the extra complexity and delay in regulatory and administrative processes is having a major impact on participants and providers. One specific frustration has been the delay in processing worker screening applications by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Steps that previously took a maximum of several days can now take weeks or months to complete. It is causing significant frustration and where alternate services are not available, the NDIS recipients are the ones missing out.

DAVID TENNANT
CEO, FamilyCare

We need to recommit to addressing the structural causes of disadvantage - tackle poverty, not the poor.





9 SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT

9.1 Water Security

Retain water in the GMID where \$2B in investment has occurred in the last decade and where agricultural investment is most efficient because it is closest to the water source.



Investment Required

- No further water recovery from the GMID
- Reduce environmental impact by minimising inter valley transfers
- Extend the timeframes for efficiency projects – as long as it takes to recover 605 GL
- Hold faith with regional communities and commit to the socio-economic neutrality test
- Focus recovery on off-farm efficiency projects, where investments and upgrades will help future-proof regions times in times of scarcity
- Carefully calibrate any future water recovery with implementation of constraints relaxation.

Current Situation

The world class GMID infrastructure system valued at over \$20B needs to ensure the efficient delivery of water to the food and fibre that feeds the nation, supports food security and provides domestic and international opportunities.

Water security is therefore paramount. The future of our food and fibre supply chain, health of our people and the prosperity of the national and Greater Shepparton economy are dependent on it.

In 2018–19, the gross value of agricultural production in the Greater Shepparton region was \$1.9 billion. Water availability is critical to the future of the Greater Shepparton municipality. Our region is connected within the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District (GMID) via a gravity network valued at over \$20 billion which has experienced a significant upgrade and rationalisation under the Irrigation Modernisation Project. Infrastructure continues to be a priority for the growth of our region however the immense value of water and its future availability to a region such as Greater Shepparton must not be underestimated as water can ultimately undermine our future and impact the life of various sectors/ industries within the municipality

In 2016, the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District (GMID) Water Leadership Group commissioned the development of an analysis that would delve into the socio-economic impacts experienced thus far (within the GMID) as a result of the implementation of the Murray Darling Basin Plan (MDBP). The report was developed by RMCG who highlighted the following impacts:

- The GMID would be \$4.4 billion worse off under the basin plan from 2012 to 2020, outweighing the \$3.15 billion the district had received in funding under the MDBP
- There has been \$550 million in lost production in the Goulburn and Murray Valleys of Victoria every year since 2012.
- An estimated 1,000 jobs have been lost
- Irrigators in the region are paying \$20 million more per year for temporary water
- Dairy in the region has declined by 20 percent

Proposed Solution

The Murray Darling Basin Plan has caused a significant change in the economic viability of agriculture for our region and if any more water were to be recovered the results could be devastating.



9.2 Climate Adaptation and Resilience

Investment Required



1. Victorian Government provide funding to support local government to decarbonise their operations including infrastructure.
2. Victorian Government provide resources and adequate funding to investigate the current flood mapping extent and methodology, implementation of policy and process to undertake statewide implementation.

Current Situation

Greater Shepparton City Council declared a Climate Emergency and adopted a 2030 Zero Emission Target in 2020. The Climate Emergency Action Plan and 2030 Net Zero Emission Plan were developed with significant consultation with the community. They both recognise and address the need for urgent action to mitigate and adapt to climate change. They also address the social, environmental and economic opportunities that are open to those that act early. The community outlined their concerns but also that they were

willing to take action now but that the action required was unclear and difficult to find from a trusted and reliable source. The community recognised the leadership role council has in helping to bridge the gap in this knowledge deficit. Council has a key role to play in this space by leading those changes and providing on ground examples with the financial support of the State Government.

The impacts of climate change are constantly being experienced by communities. Greater Shepparton has a significant risk of flooding due to topography. In a recent report by the Climate Council, Uninsurable Nation: Australia's most climate vulnerable places, the Federal seat of Nicholls was identified as the most-at risk. At this point in time, council's are individually applying their own flooding intelligence mapping according to resources. In regional areas, this is a disproportionate application of information that disadvantages many communities.

Solution

Greater Shepparton is seen as a reliable and trusted source of information by the community to lead the transition to a decarbonised future.

Greater Shepparton City Council has a strong relationship with the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority to undertaken modern flood studies that includes the impact by climate change. This work needs statewide standard methodologies to be coordinated by the State.



Projected outcomes

- Energy efficient and low carbon council public buildings, that provide cheaper utility bills enabling more council resources dedicated to providing services to the community.
- Provide pathway funding to Local Governments and industry to stimulate and support existing partnerships to find local solutions that address adaption of climate change to ensure future flood resilience.
- Work to inform updated planning schemes, community intelligence sharing, emergency management arrangement and mitigation.

Next steps

- Through existing State/Local Government regional partnerships, work together to identify key priorities for investment.
- Implementation of the Climate Emergency Action Plan and 2030 Net Zero Emission Plan.
- Victorian Government work with Catchment Management Authorities and Local Government to Identify climate change gaps in current flood data on a statewide basis and seek to update studies within priority areas.
- Provide pathway funding to Catchment Management Authorities as floodplain managers to undertake work.

GUY TIERNEY

Statutory Planning and Floodplain Manager, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority



The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority is the regional floodplain manager and works closely with Greater Shepparton City Council and other municipalities throughout the region. Climate change has exacerbated the risk of severe flooding. There is a need for increased resources to work together under a standardised methodology across the State that will enable knowledge sharing and intelligence gathering that will enable future flood resilience.



9.3 Renewable Energy Zones / Electricity Grid updates

Greater Shepparton City Council acknowledges the work undertaken to date to invest in the Renewable Energy Zones by Government and the work of AEMO through the Integrated System Plan (ISP) 2020 to plan for the electricity infrastructure of the future.

The increasingly rapid uptake of renewable energy, in particular both residential and commercial solar, means the timeframe for this work is at risk of being out of sync with what is needed for a smooth transition that imposes the least cost for the community. This demand will increase as society continues to electrify households, vehicles and industry.



Investment Required

The Goulburn Valley has an opportunity to benefit from a \$2 Billion investment related to renewable energy over the next decade. This can be achieved by bringing forward investment in:

- 1.1 Batteries to increase storage capacity
- 1.2 Line upgrades to increase network capacity
- 1.3 Synchronous condensers to ensure efficient and reliable operation of power grids

Current Situation

Local businesses regularly experience brown outs due to the constraints of the local grid. This impacts productivity and attractiveness for relocation and further investment in the area. The ability to export solar generation to the grid in the region has also been constrained by the capacity of the distribution network to accept increased community solar electricity generation, which has limited the location and size of systems installed locally and has lowered the amount of renewable energy in the system.

Projected outcomes

- A modern, flexible electricity grid able to accept and deploy large amounts of renewable energy throughout the grid as needed, cost effectively for customers
- Further investigation and support to assess and implement large scale solar on suitable lands
- Investigation and support initiatives for community batteries and solar banks around the region to provide robust and resilient local energy storage solutions

Proposed Solution

Next steps

- Continue to advocate to the Commonwealth Government and other state and territory counterparts to rapidly implement the Rewiring the Nation policy, including the development of the Rewiring the Nation Corporation, and the New Energy Apprenticeship Program and Skills program
- Regional areas require science based information to understand the emission output of alternative energy to fossil fuels (such as waste to energy) to enable informed decision making for business and Local Government.



9.4 Carbon Market



Investment Required

Government invest in supporting farmer's access to existing carbon markets, developing farm scale carbon inventories, provide greater transparency and action plans to enter the carbon market.

Development of materials to upskill farmers and landholders to understand the carbon market, develop a strong regulatory environment to protect farmers and landholders, and explore opportunities for co-benefits between agricultural and biodiversity outcomes within the carbon market.

Invest in strategic direction and increased regulatory and educational resources for better outcomes.

However, the carbon market is liable to disruption by non-certified players who are aiming to profiteer at the expense of those seeking to genuinely reduce emissions, and this has become evident particularly in the soil carbon and agricultural markets. Better regulation and monitoring will achieve a more reliable and trusted Carbon market.

Projected outcomes

Reputable think tanks such as the Carbon Market Institute estimate up to 480 MtCO₂-e can be abated by 2030, generate revenue from carbon projects of between \$10 and \$20 billion dollars and lead to between 10,000 and 20,000 direct and indirect jobs.

- Biodiversity outcomes will be greatly enhanced through revegetation of the landscape and healthier soils through regenerative farming practices that lead to soil carbon sequestration.
- Farmers financially resilient to impacts of climate change through value adding of on farm income.

Current Situation

As more local governments and businesses set ambitious zero emission targets, the demand for local carbon offsets increases. During 2021 the price of ACCU's went from \$16 to \$49 per tonne. This demand driven price increase provides opportunities for rural and regional Australia with the CSIRO estimating the carbon market could be worth \$40 billion to the land sector by 2050. Greater Shepparton is poised to capitalise on this growing market with discussions taking place between Victorian metropolitan councils who have a high demand for carbon offsets and regional councils to provide those offsets within the state.



10 GROW: GROWING REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORK



Investment Required

Funding from the Victorian Government has enabled GROW initiatives in the Latrobe Valley, Bendigo, Shepparton and Ballarat, and has matched local funding in the G21 region. The current funding concludes 30 June 2023.

The statewide network of GROW initiatives requires funding of \$1.5 million per region over five years + \$500k over five years for a Regional Coordinator role. This is a total of \$8 million from 2021 to 2026 to embed their positive impact in their local regions

The Growing Regional Opportunities for Work (GROW) Initiatives in Shepparton, the Latrobe Valley, Bendigo, Ballarat and Geelong amplify the positive impact of government projects and investment in the regions by changing how businesses approach procurement and inclusive employment

Further funding is required to ensure the GROW initiatives' positive momentum continues beyond June 2023 to secure lasting outcomes for communities of disadvantage.

Current Situation

According to the SEIFA Index of disadvantage Greater Shepparton ranks.

- 14th out of 79 Victorian Local Government Areas, and
- four areas in Greater Shepparton fall within the lowest 10th percentile in Australia (i.e. most disadvantaged).

Greater Shepparton has

- one of the highest youth unemployment rates in regional Victoria at 14.9%.
- the second highest total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Victoria at 2,186 people
- significantly higher proportion of residents born overseas (14.9%) than the average for regional Victoria



Proposed Solution

The Growing Regional Opportunities for Work (GROW) Initiatives are working with local regional businesses to create local jobs for people and communities with barriers to employment. GROW Shepparton is targeting five key areas of disadvantage:

- Young people (aged 15-24 years)
- People with a disability
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Refugees and migrant
- Long-term unemployed (unemployed for 12+ months)

The Grow initiatives focus on:

1. **Job creation through local social procurement.** GROW works with local businesses to create employment opportunities from GROW target communities through their buying power. Businesses sign on to the GROW compact and make commitments towards social procurement activities that create job opportunities for disadvantaged jobseekers.
2. **Driving local economic growth and the creation of local jobs.** GROW supports local businesses to review current expenditure and create opportunities for local procurement, buying locally to drive local economic growth and employment creation.
3. **Job creation through investment.** GROW, through identifying and catalysing assistance and investment in social enterprises and local businesses committed to the compact, assists in developing a GROW social procurement supply chain for infrastructure projects and routine spend.
4. **Creating long term sustainable work opportunities by linking jobs created with targeted jobs seekers.** GROW helps develop inclusive and supportive employers through the compact and then links the job opportunities those employers have with targeted jobseekers.
5. **Advocate and collaborate for region wide change.** The GROW network is a powerful force for creating local place-based change and driving equitable economic growth. Businesses collaborate and promote GROW across their networks, raising awareness and garnering support.
6. **Transparent and accountable reporting.** GROW has committed to measuring results, both good and bad and reporting those results. Each GROW initiative has their own report card and dashboards to track and measure against key outcomes. These allow GROW to learn, evolve and adapt the initiative to achieve the best outcomes.

10 GROW: GROWING REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORK (CONT)

The GROW initiatives have proven their potential to deliver significant and sustained change for business and for disadvantaged members of regional communities. However they are still in their start-up phase and further funding is required to lock-in and expand the changes to the entrenched conditions of disadvantage that have prevailed for decades.

Economic Impacts

More than \$5.875 billion of procurement data has been collected across major projects and key businesses, to support the identification of local and social procurement opportunities and track and monitor procurement outcomes. Of these funds roughly \$2.369 billion are reported as local spend within the GROW regions, with both Gippsland and G21 (the two longest running initiatives) reporting increases in local procurement over their years of operation - Gippsland reporting a 0.9% increase in average local spend across GROW signatories, and G21 reporting a 6.83% shift towards local spend since 2015 financial year.

GROW Shepparton has already delivered more than 583 employment outcomes across multiple target cohorts, and this momentum continues as the approach and practices embeds within existing and new businesses.

ANTHONY PUTT

Chief Operating Officer
Connect GV



GROW Greater Shepparton has provided ConnectGV the opportunity to be seen by and work with major local businesses, like Campbell's Soup, Pental, Coleman Rail and Bison Energy. Our success in obtaining such contracts has subsequently enabled us to offer more employment and education pathways for people with a disability. Our partnership with Greater Shepparton Secondary College was introduced by GROW and has led to a unique workplace training and employment program, with 10 students now proudly in our team. The awareness of our Social Enterprise has increased across the community thanks to GROW Greater Shepparton's advocacy and promotion of our programs.



EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Region: GROW Greater Shepparton

583

Total Outcomes

182

Full Time

37

Part Time

346

Contract / Casual

14

Apprentices..

4

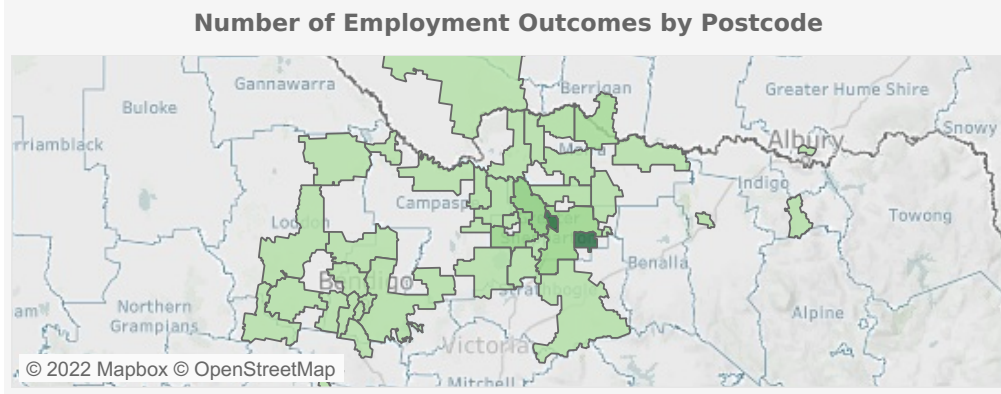
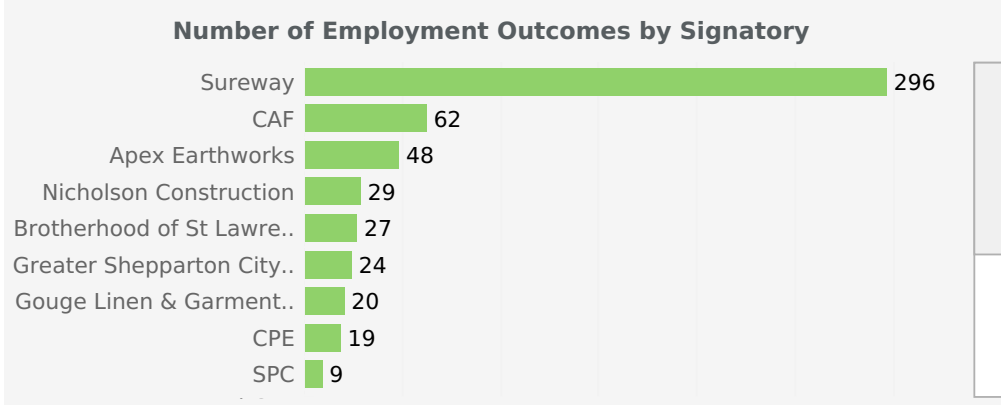
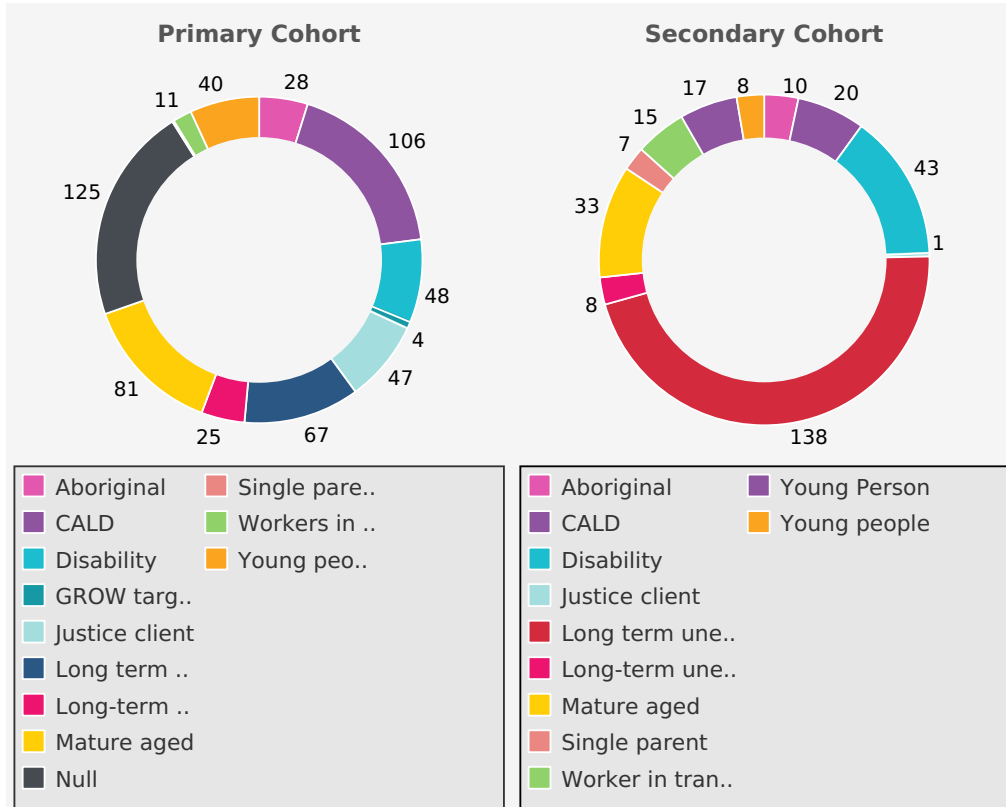
Traineeship

Internship

474

Retained

Role Type







CONTACT US

Peter Harriott

Chief Executive Officer

Greater Shepparton City Council

90 Welsford Street, Shepparton

Phone: (03) 5832 9850

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au

Web: www.greatershepparton.com.au



GREATER
SHEPPARTON