

Toolamba & District Community Plan May, 2011



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About the Toolamba District



Location

Toolamba is a town in the Goulburn Valley region of Victoria, Australia. The town and district is located in the Greater Shepparton City Council local government area, 181 kilometres north of Melbourne.

Transport

Major transport routes that link to Toolamba through the Goulburn Valley region include the Goulburn Valley Highway and the Midland Highway. Passenger rail and coach services are provided from Melbourne to Shepparton.

Climate

The district has a warm climate with hot summers but cold winters. The hottest summer month is January, when the average temperature reaches 31.7C. In winter, the weather becomes coldest in July when the minimum averages 3.2C and the maximum gets to 13.2C.

The rainfall in the district is usually fairly sparse. The area generally does not receive high rainfalls throughout the year. Even the wettest month, November, averages only 53.2mm. The weather is driest at the beginning of autumn with the rainfall averaging 17.2mm.

The Birth of Toolamba district.

The Toolamba district was inhabited by aboriginal groups prior to European settlement.

In 1844 Toolamba or “Innes Station” was part of the “Wanalta Run” in North Central Victoria with David Norman Innes as the first licensee. He selected 87,801 acres on which he ran 6,000 sheep. Innes also selected “Waranga” which covered 51,840 acres and “Wanalta” selection of 61,817 acres.

Henry & Patrick Stevenson took over Toolamba and Wanalta selections in 1846. The license for these selections was later transferred to Patrick Stevenson in 1860.

In 1857 the Winter brothers arrived in the Goulburn Valley, and by 1863 they had control of 323,000 acres of prime grazing land in the Toolamba district.

The Lands Acts of 1862 & 1865 allowed for the purchase of 160 acre lots at £1 per acre under certificate, provided that £1 was spent on improvements on each lot which allowed the breakup of the selections.

Waranga was created as a Road District in June 1863 and Toolamba became part of that district in February 1865. The Shire of Waranga was created to take over the Road District in November 1865.

The original Township of Toolamba was established along the Murchison – Mooroopna Road in what is now Old Toolamba. A Post Office was opened here on 1st January 1873.

The district had a railway station located on the Goulburn Valley railway line that was opened in 1880, but was closed to traffic in 1987. The rail line has a junction at Toolamba which links to the line to Echuca.



*Prime grazing
land*

Brief Facts

At the 2006 census, Toolamba and the surrounding area had a population of 873. 2006 ABS census figures indicate that it is a youthful community. The median age of people living in the Toolamba ABS region was 34, three years younger than the figure for Australia as a whole.

| Age groups | Number |
|-------------------|--------|
| 0 – 4 years | 62 |
| 5 – 14 years | 165 |
| 15 – 24 years | 111 |
| 25 – 54 years | 395 |
| 55 – 64 years | 96 |
| 65 years and over | 44 |

Children under 15 are noticeably over-represented in the Toolamba community, comprising 26% of the population, compared to 19.8% for Australia as a whole. The 15 to 24 year old age group is slightly under-represented, and the 24 to 54 year group slightly over represented. The 54 to 64 year group mirrors the national average. The over 65 year old group however lies well below the

national average, comprising just 5% of the community, compared to 13.3% of the Australian population as a whole, suggesting that many people choose to retire elsewhere.

There were 233 families in Toolamba in 2006 comprising 134 families with children, 73 couples without children and 26 one-parent families. The median family weekly income was \$1,163, which was slightly below the national average. Individual income, however, for those over the age of 15 was 10% above the national average. The discrepancy is accounted for by the above-average number of children in the area.

The labour force in 2006 was 466 comprising 291 employed full time, 163 employed part time or other and 12 unemployed. The occupations of the district comprises managers (105), labourers (93), technicians and trade workers (59), clerical and administrative workers (56), professionals (52), sales workers (37), machinery operators and drivers (24), and community and personal services (23).



All the facts

Managers (23.1%) and labourers (20.5%) were substantially over represented compared to the national averages (13.2% and 10.5% respectively), while professionals and clerical and administrative workers were noticeably under-represented. Other groups lay close to the national average.

The unemployment rate at the time of the 2006 census, at 2.6%, was well below the national average at that time of 5.2%.

Community organisations

The Toolamba district is supported by a variety of community based organisations and committees such as Lions, Cricket Club, Fishing Club, CFA and recreation reserve. Toolamba has a Primary School and Kindergarten in temporary facilities and plans for a new School are underway.

Business

Toolamba is primarily an agricultural district with activities such as fruit and vegetable growing, dairy cattle farming, cropping, wool growing, cattle and sheep grazing. Water for irrigation is sourced from Lake Eildon and the Goulburn weir. Many local residents work in nearby towns such as Tatura, Mooroopna and Shepparton. Currently the town has a general store and a hotel.




*Community
focused*

Our Values and Principle

The Toolamba and District Community Plan applies to the residents who connect to our community. We believe the principles and values of Toolamba and district are reflected in our community plan, they include:

- Toolamba is a healthy community and is a living democracy.
- In order to achieve results, Toolamba and district includes people working together to address issues that matter to them.
- Results will be achieved by the Toolamba and district community working in partnership and cooperatively with any organisation external to our community who can contribute to improving our quality of life.
- In developing and implementing our actions, the Toolamba and District community plan will at all times respect the views and appreciate the effort of every resident.
- Our aim is to develop our community through creative thinking and actions that benefit the Toolamba district
- Our community plan seeks to coordinate the Toolamba district to identify, promote and enhance the distinctive character of the Toolamba district and to seek solutions that suit our community.



The most important aspects of Toolamba are our residents and our quality of life

The Community Process

Little town, big heart

The Greater Shepparton City Council has established a community planning program to ensure that local communities can develop their locally owned community plan that identifies the key issues for their community.

This local planning process has enabled the Toolamba district to undertake a public process to identify its priorities in order to work cooperatively with Council and other government agencies or private enterprise to develop initiatives from the plan. This partnership and cooperative arrangement relies on a steering committee to manage the implementation of the community plan and working groups that are established for each project or initiative.

The community plan is a process that supports existing groups in their efforts and endeavours to develop initiatives to provide broader benefit to the whole community.

The Toolamba and district community planning process has already involved:

- Questionnaires distributed in the towns and district.
- Consultation at Toolamba Twilight Festival.
- Coffee morning outside Wren's General Store.
- Youth Burgers & Music Night at Irwin Memorial Garden.
- A phone tree in the rural district.
- Meetings with representatives of groups including the Lions Club, Primary School, Cricket Club, Kindergarten, CFA and Recreation Reserve.
- Letter drops.
- A town walk with children from year 6 at Toolamba Primary School.

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Get Involved



*A sense of
community*

These consultations have resulted in approximately 170 suggestions, involved all of the Toolamba community groups and organisations and culminated with a community meeting to vote on priorities on the 17th February 2011.

Local community planning is a future planning process that addresses the following questions collectively during project development and discussion:

- ***Where are we now?***
- ***Where are we going?***
- ***Where do we want to be?***
- ***How do we get there?***

With the outstanding response from the Toolamba and district community, and the number of residents who volunteered to support implementation, there is an expectation that the hopes, ideals and needs of Toolamba and district will be addressed and our community will be a better place to live. Consequently the continued efforts of the steering committee to encourage the community to become engaged and involved in the community planning process and implementation is paramount to the success of community planning in the Toolamba district.

Why do residents love living in the Toolamba district?

There is a real community spirit in Toolamba that provides a great basis for community life. Residents are neighbourly. Interaction occurs across the community through the school, the Lions Club, the Recreation Committee, sporting clubs, the CFA and through informal contact. People are interested in what is happening.

The inclusion of young people is important to the Toolamba community.

The community spirit is the basis of community life in the Toolamba district. The interest in community life creates a positive culture that given the opportunity, the community can achieve its aspirations.

Many factors contribute to making the community a great place to live:

- The residents know and care for each other.
- The rural small town atmosphere of the district.
- The nearby bush and river environment.
- The relaxed lifestyle and friendly nature of the people.
- The fishing and recreation activities in the community.
- The general atmosphere is quiet and friendly.
- The close-knit community comes together in times of need.
- The proximity of Shepparton with its extensive services.



*A great place to
live*

Administering the Community Plan



We have a simple process

The Toolamba and District Community Plan Steering Group have a primary function of supporting the implementation of the community plan by:

- Coordinating the efforts of the community.
- Maximising access to resources and funding.
- Involving community groups and residents to contribute in the initiatives and priorities.

Improving coordination and developing well organised and planned projects within the Toolamba community will increase the chances to involve other levels of government or the private sector.

The steering group will ensure that on commencement of each initiative from the community plan, residents and groups will be invited to participate. In order to undertake various projects or initiatives, the steering group will form working groups (or sub committees), often with existing groups as the lead, to develop more detailed plans to implement projects. This step will provide an opportunity for interested local residents or groups to become involved.

Once the working groups have undertaken the detailed planning and presented them to the steering group, the steering group will ratify the plan and proposed actions and support each working group in their implementation process.

Although the process will be supported in many instances with resources from the Greater Shepparton City Council, Council are not the only resource available as there will often be other organisations willing to provide assistance and financial support. Identifying which organisations can assist and the level of support that may be available will be part of the role of the working groups when undertaking the detailed planning and implementation.

While the community plan will generally be reviewed every two years, annual action plans will be undertaken to focus the attention on key initiatives. The annual action plan will allow the Toolamba community to identify and assess the capacity, opportunities and resources available to achieve outcomes.

Residents or groups are encouraged to contact the Toolamba and District Community Steering Group Chairperson to find out more.

- Chairperson: Kate Wallace contact phone number:
0401 2485 02

Other current members of the Steering Group are:

- Vincent White (Secretary)
- Judy Cross
- Keith Bryant
- Tony Battersby
- Lynda Pouge
- Cameron McGregor
- Geoff Maynard
- Ross Luscombe

Greater Shepparton City Council representative:

- Anna Janson, Acting Principal Strategic Planner – Communities
 - Michelle Patterson, Acting Strategic Planner-Communities
- Greater Shepparton City Council contact phone number: (03) 5832 9823



Community participation

The Community Plan Priorities



Planning for the future

The key topics

The Toolamba and District Community Plan is divided into the following topic areas:

1. Events and Activities
2. Community Wellbeing
3. Recreation, Sport and Leisure
4. Environment
5. Infrastructure
6. Economic Development
7. Other

The following pages (15-22) identify the key initiatives and priorities under the community vote conducted on the 17th February 2011.

The ability to have some fun

Having fun and undertaking some local activities to provide the Toolamba community with the ability to increase social interaction and community spirit. It is a way of engaging new residents and visitors.

The key initiatives in order of preference from community voting are:

- I. Providing a range of activities for the community has been identified as the most important initiative in this topic area. The use of the community centre was considered appropriate for a range of events and activities that includes discos, dances, gym, martial arts, cards, movie nights, New Years eve party, live music or karaoke. Included in this initiative is consideration of activities for young people. There may be many other options.
- II. The history and heritage of Toolamba is considered important. An initiative involves the development and support for heritage and history activities of the Toolamba district, including plaques and historical events.
- III. The revival of the Pumpkin Festival in Toolamba. It was considered a real opportunity to build on a successful event that has had a previous association with Toolamba.
- IV. Regular 'meet and greet newcomer' nights.



*Fun
activities*

Community Wellbeing

A healthy community

The Toolamba community believes that the ingredients of a happy life are not just a matter of personal choice. They are also determined by the social conditions in which people live, socialise and exercise. These are contributors to creating a higher quality of life. The need to belong and to balance life is important.

In Toolamba, wellbeing comes from being connected and engaged, from being involved in a web of relationships and interests. These give meaning to what we do. Building personal relationships through socialising, to feel belonging in the place we live and to support activities in our community are important for improved community health.

The key initiatives in order of preference from voting are:

- I. Increasing social interaction within Toolamba is considered the most important initiative in this topic. Consequently the support for the development of community space or private enterprise venture for a coffee shop where locals can meet regularly and informally is paramount.
- II. Public transport connection improvements between Shepparton and other towns by bus or train including transport connections to Melbourne are important to address isolation issues.
- III. The development of outdoor fitness equipment near the oval at the recreation reserve (similar to that as seen in Shepparton) will encourage fitness and activity.
- IV. Retain a Kindergarten facility with the Primary School.



Healthy & happy

A physically active community

Toolamba has special interests in recreation, sport and leisure and culture. Participation in recreational, leisure and sporting activities or the opportunity to develop or utilise creative or artistic potential is considered important. Participation to the fullest extent possible of persons in non-mainstream sporting activities at all levels is encouraged and promoted. Of particular interest are including persons with a disability or young people to have access to participating in sporting and recreational activities.

The right to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport is particularly relevant to the Toolamba community.

The key initiatives in order of preference from voting are:

- i. The redevelopment of the recreation reserve and the community centre was a significant priority. These facilities would provide opportunity for an increased range of sporting, recreational, leisure and cultural activities. In order to achieve this priority, the recreation reserve and community centre will require a master plan in order to support funding for subsequent implementation and development of facilities and the continuous upgrading of the community centre, sporting rooms and recreation reserve.
- ii. Support for the development of walking / bicycle tracks between Toolamba / Old Toolamba; Toolamba and Murchison; Toolamba and Mooroopna / Shepparton; and Toolamba / Tatura were considered important for connections and recreational activity.
- iii. A key initiative was the planning and installation of a skate park at the recreation reserve.



Keep active


Environment

Our environment is our responsibility

Looking after the environment is the right thing to do. It is critical to our success in a rural area with proximity to the riverine areas of the Goulburn River, including the trees and other vegetation to manage and improve the natural environment. We will work closely with government, communities, regulators and other industry members to seek solutions together.

The key initiatives in order of preference from voting are:

- i. The management of the forest and Goulburn River environs within the Toolamba community involves the enhancement of local fishing, tree planting and riverine environments. This requires increased maintenance and grading of tracks and the control of weeds and noxious infestations.
- ii. The balance to utilise the Daunts Bend forest area with better management that allows use by the public is considered important. The community envisages improved caravan / camping facilities and walking / cycling tracks by improving the maps, signage and paths infrastructure.
- iii. The improvement of direct links between the Toolamba and Old Toolamba townships by improved walking tracks to connect the townships to the river environs is considered important for local recreation.



*Look after
your
environment*

Building community to meet future growth

Given the projected urban growth anticipated in the Toolamba district and the implications of the Goulburn Valley Highway - Shepparton Bypass, it is essential that effective forward planning of key community infrastructure projects is undertaken. Some of the community infrastructure project planning will require relevant needs assessments, feasibility studies, business plans, and facility concept plans for specific community infrastructure projects. This will involve preparation of capital funding models for the delivery of community infrastructure within specified project budgets, including the identification and submission of external funding applications.

The Toolamba community considers that engagement with key internal and external stakeholders through appropriate consultation strategies are relevant for the delivery of specific community infrastructure. This will involve partnership with a range of stakeholders and governments / agencies. Important to the Toolamba community is the relationship with the school, VicRoads (Goulburn Valley Highway - Shepparton Bypass) and developers of residential land in Toolamba. The preparation of key strategic infrastructure underpinning the provision of appropriate land allocations to meet future community infrastructure requirements, such as community purpose sites and public open space is critical.



Projected urban growth



The steps forward

The key initiatives in order of preference from voting are:

- I. The upgrading and redevelopment of the railway reserve within the Toolamba township including rebuilding the former Toolamba station with café facilities.
- II. The development of new public toilet facilities within Toolamba.
- III. The requirement for natural gas extensions to Toolamba.
- IV. The improvement of the kerb and channel / guttering in the Toolamba township.
- V. The development of a children's playground for the 0-5 age group.

Economic services to support local growth

Our local economic development ideals are based on the views of our local stakeholders and residents to identify priorities and major projects. It is our blueprint for action with the goal to place our community on the front foot. The initiatives are developed for our geographic area and directly relates to our issues.

This section of our community plan identifies future actions and projects to be undertaken that are important to be completed for the benefit of our community and not just a list of things that need to be done.

The Toolamba community will attempt to resolve issues and deal with the initiatives sensitively.

The key initiatives in order of preference from voting are:

- I. Identifying the type of support to ensure the retention of a local general store and other businesses in Toolamba.
- II. Considering the impact of the new Goulburn Valley Highway - Shepparton Bypass being located just to the west of Toolamba.
- III. Identifying the process to attract a post office or post office facility.
- IV. Supporting the development of residential housing in Toolamba.
- V. Preparing a feasibility study to support the establishment of a caravan park within Toolamba (possibly with the caravan / camping facilities identified in Environment).



Support local growth

Other Significant Matters

Matters that are important

The Toolamba community recognises that there are many aspects to community life – all of which are important. The following represent current issues within the Toolamba community

The key initiatives in order of preference from voting are:

- I. Support for the redevelopment of a new CFA facility and accommodation in Toolamba.
- II. Support for the continuous improvement of the cemetery at Old Toolamba.

Young People suggested:

- I. Mr Whippy
- II. TV reception
- III. McDonalds / service station on Goulburn Valley Highway - Shepparton Bypass
- IV. Skate park
- V. Public transport
- VI. Zebra crossing near school
- VII. Nesting boxes in Daunts Bend Forest
- VIII. More bike paths
- IX. Events such as live music and movie nights



*Ongoing
improvement*

Administration and processes

The steering committee retains the right to establish procedures that will manage community affairs when implementing the community plan. These procedures will be developed to ensure transparency and democratic processes. In addition, the implementation will adhere to the adopted Greater Shepparton City Council Community Planning Policy.

Alterations to the Community Plan

Since the Community Plan has been established through a public process, any alteration to the Community Plan needs to be undertaken through a public process. The Steering Group therefore reserves the right to establish the procedures associated with any proposed change in order to retain the community plan as a vibrant, flexible and dynamic document.

Review of the Community Plan

The community plan will be reviewed approximately every two to three years through a public process to be determined by the steering group.

Annual Action Plans

The steering group will establish an annual action plan of priorities each year in order for the community to be clear on the priorities to be undertaken during that period.

Dispute Resolution

In the event of any dispute, all parties concerned should meet, discuss and resolve the matter as soon as possible. If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute, they must hold a meeting in the presence of a person nominated through the Greater Shepparton City Council.



*Administer the
plan*

