

**2022/23**  
**Pre-Budget Submission**





### **One Gippsland Members**

Bass Coast Shire Council

Baw Baw Shire Council

Destination Gippsland

East Gippsland Shire Council

Federation University

Food and Fibre Gippsland

Latrobe City Council

South Gippsland Shire Council

TAFE Gippsland

Wellington Shire

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## About Gippsland and One Gippsland

Gippsland is a geographically, socially and economically diverse region. At approximately 41,000 square km, it is the largest region in Victoria. Home to over 270,000 people<sup>1</sup> and 6 Local Governments, the region annually produces \$14 billion in Gross Regional Product (GRP).

One Gippsland is a peak regional advocacy body representing this diverse region. We aim to connect the dots between government, business and community, while also collectively working together to champion the interests of our region and our people.

It is our mission to create a thriving and dynamic region that harnesses the social, environmental and economic capabilities and assets. Gippsland has remarkable diversity so that we can offer our community opportunities for a great lifestyle and access to services at all stages of life.

### Snapshot

Despite the many benefits of living and working in Gippsland there have been a range of challenges. A recent report produced by SGS Economics shows that Gippsland has undergone a series of economic shocks that have impacted the economic output of the region. Between 2015 and 2020 the combined effect of the COVID-19 restrictions, bushfires, dairy crisis, drought and hazelwood closure have had the following impacts:

- Direct output loss of **\$3.28 billion**;
- Combined direct and indirect output loss of **\$6.86 billion**;
- A total of **10,213** job losses (direct and indirect); and
- Gross Regional Product decrease of **\$2.66 billion**.

The closure of the native timber industry is expected to negatively impact direct output by \$548 million and will further shrink Gross Regional Product by \$431 million in the next 10 years.

Despite these challenges, Gippsland has great growth aspirations including:

1. Being Australia's **most liveable region by 2040**;
2. **Raising the Digital Inclusion Index Score** to be in parity with Melbourne;
3. Attracting an additional **75,000 residents by 2040**; and
4. Increasing the annual **Gross Regional Product to \$23.2 Billion** by 2040.

<sup>1</sup> [quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/205?opendocument](https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/205?opendocument)



One Gippsland is a peak regional advocacy body representing this diverse region.

Our mission is to create a thriving and dynamic region.



## Executive Summary

This pre-budget submission intends to guide government investment into the Gippsland region by setting out a range of projects and strategies that will not only improve the liveability within the region, but also the economic output and the creation of more jobs.

After enduring substantial economic challenges throughout recent years, including drought, bushfires, floods, major industry closures and the restrictions of businesses due to the COVID-19 pandemic, economic investment to aid recovery is crucial.

The pre-budget submission is split into two key parts:

## Section 1. Regional Priorities and Projects

One Gippsland has identified four priority investment areas that will enable a kick-start to the economic recovery of the region. These are:

1. **Freight Fast-track: Network investment, planning and road safety;**
2. **Tourism Recovery: tracks and trails and events;**
3. **Digital Connectivity: mobile and broadband networks; and**
4. **Job Creation: building the economy and skilling our youth.**

## Section 2. Local investment Projects

One Gippsland has also identified local projects that will work to increase the liveability and connectivity of our regional cities and local towns - these have been identified by the each of the six local government's in Gippsland:

- Bass Coast Shire Council;
- Baw Baw Shire Council;
- East Gippsland Shire Council;
- Latrobe City Council;
- South Gippsland Shire Council; and
- Wellington Shire Council.



One Gippsland has identified **four priority investment areas** to kick-start the region's economic recovery.



# Section 01

# ONE GIPPSLAND REGIONAL PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS





## Freight Fast Track: Network Investment, Planning and Road Safety'

The future economic success of Gippsland's, Victoria's and indeed Australia's industries are dependent on strengthening supply chains between regions, urban centres, distribution points as well as air and seaports.

Our increasingly interwoven domestic and international markets require better freight connections to drive reliability and cost-competitiveness for our growing industries.

Today, Australia's freight volume:

- Moves **163 tonnes of freight for every person** throughout the national network;<sup>2</sup>
- Is expected to **grow by over 35 per cent** between 2018 and 2040;
- Will reach a freight task of **1000 billion tonnes annually**, and
- Increase movement through **urban areas by nearly 60 per cent by 2040** without government action.<sup>3</sup>

In Victoria the freight task means that Melbourne alone requires approximately 15,000 tonnes of food to be delivered every day.<sup>4</sup> Regional Victoria and particularly Gippsland are key to this supply. Ensuring Victoria's regions can meet this demand relies on our current road network. Of the 23,000 kilometres of arterial roads and freeways in Victoria, 19,000 are in the regions.

### The Opportunity – Supporting Gippsland Freight Requirements

Gippsland's produce requires a freight network that can provide efficient access to **Port of Melbourne, Port of Hastings, Geelong and Melbourne Airport**. Gippsland's Food and Fibre producers have a goal of increasing their annual output but to achieve this, they must remain competitive when dealing in both domestic and international export markets.

Gippsland Food and Fibre:

- Has an annual gross value of **\$7 billion**;<sup>5</sup>
- Currently **exports \$1.3 billion** every year;<sup>6</sup>
- Has a goal to increase their gross value to **\$23.2 billion by 2040**;
- The region accounts for **4 per cent of total employment in Victoria** and 13 per cent of all people employed in the Victorian agriculture, forestry and fishing sector.<sup>7</sup>

2 Sheridan, JI, Carey, R. and Candy, S. (2016) Melbourne's Foodprint: What does it take to feed a city?

3 Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) data

4 Sheridan, JI, Carey, R. and Candy, S. (2016) Melbourne's Foodprint: What does it take to feed a city?

5 [investgippsland.com.au/industries/agri-food/](http://investgippsland.com.au/industries/agri-food/)

6 Aither, 'Gippsland Regional Profile: an analysis of regional strengths and challenges March 2019'

7 [awe.gov.au/abares/research-topics/aboutmyregion/vic-latrobe#employment](http://awe.gov.au/abares/research-topics/aboutmyregion/vic-latrobe#employment)



Investment is now required to support this key industry growth by moving more goods to market as efficiently as possible. **Investment must also include electric vehicle charging infrastructure when upgrading current freight routes and planning future freight routes.**

## Challenges – The Impact of Growth

The movement of materials and produce through the region requires new investment to deal with the following challenges:

- 1. GROWING POPULATION:** Local Government Areas of Bass Coast and Baw Baw Shires are two of the state's fastest growing municipalities expected to grow by almost 30 per cent by 2036,<sup>8</sup> and 55 per cent by 2041<sup>9</sup> respectively;
- 2. SERVICING MELBOURNE'S BIG BUILD:** Gippsland is supplying materials for the state's infrastructure build. The region is expected to supply 24 million tonnes of extractive sand per annum by 2050 requiring almost 4000 truck movements per day (currently it is 600 truck movements per day); and
- 3. FOOD AND FIBRE GROWTH:** There is a target of 5 per cent growth per annum for food and fibre growth in the Gippsland region,<sup>10</sup> which if achieved will also grow the freight task and the truck movements adding to the extractive movements.

Without intervention, the impact of these three growth areas means congestion and losses in efficiency and liveability are inevitable – planning and investment must start today to keep pace with these challenges.

## Strategic Alignment

Improvements in Gippsland's freight networks have been identified as a strategic priority in the following documents:

- **GIPPSLAND REGIONAL PLAN** called for support towards road, rail and port improvements across Gippsland and beyond, particularly to markets and employment; and
- **INFRASTRUCTURE VICTORIA'S DRAFT 30-YEAR INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY** found that:
  - Reliable, cost-effective freight networks are needed to support growth across Gippsland's agriculture, fishing, forestry, manufacturing, mining and energy industries;
  - Growing freight task and increasing size of heavy vehicles is increasing pressure on the region's road infrastructure, including the local road network; and
  - The freight network inefficiencies are constraining the growth potential of Gippsland producers.

The ability to meet the growing needs of our population, industry and supporting Melbourne's Big Build will require planning and investment into the freight network. The following projects have been identified to begin this task.

The movement of materials and produce through the region requires new investment.



<sup>8</sup> [forecastid.com.au/bass-coast/population-summary](https://forecastid.com.au/bass-coast/population-summary)

<sup>9</sup> [forecastid.com.au/baw-baw](https://forecastid.com.au/baw-baw)

<sup>10</sup> [assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/au/pdf/2019/accelerating-growth-gippsland-food-fibre-industry.pdf](https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/au/pdf/2019/accelerating-growth-gippsland-food-fibre-industry.pdf)





## Regional Priority Projects - Shovel Ready



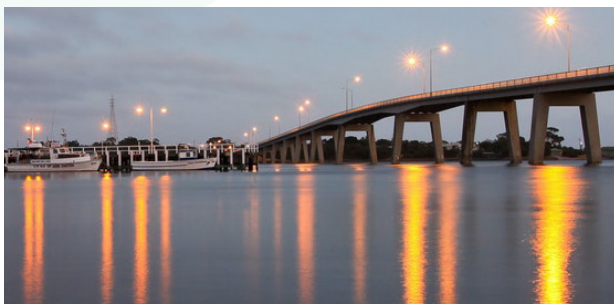
### San Remo Road Infrastructure Improvements - \$23 million

Road transport infrastructure improvements are required in the San Remo township at the Back Beach Road intersection. These works will address the lack of capacity during key peak periods that significantly impact on visitor experience and business operations.

It will also address the inadequate access along the corridor which leads to unsatisfactory travel delays for visitors and residents.

The current design of Phillip Island Road cannot cope with the congestion during the busy periods and growing traffic demand has led to a high number of crashes. Works will include the following:

- Construction of traffic signals at Phillip Island Road and Back Beach Road - Marine Parade intersection;
- Intersection improvements to the nearby Phillip Island Road and Bergin Grove intersection;
- Place-making infrastructure improvements along the San Remo foreshore;
- Stability improvement works on the Western Port Bay embankment to protect the transport corridor of Phillip Island;
- Active transport improvements by linking existing facilities to the San Remo Commercial Precinct and the San Remo foreshore; and
- Public transport improvements with the introduction of new bus stop facilities.



### Sale Alternate Truck Route - \$100 million

This alternate route provides a faster and more economic route for vehicles travelling between Melbourne and East Gippsland, as it is the shorter route, and avoids traffic delays and intersections through Sale. The bypass provides access for both local and interstate traffic including agriculture, dairy, timber, vegetable production, resources, manufacturing, light industry and tourism.

The bypass however cannot account for large heavy vehicles such as b-doubles and Over Size Over Mass (OSOM) vehicles. This is due to the alternative route having two load limited bridges which can only support vehicles up to the size of a semi-trailer. The alternative route does not presently meet minimum road design requirements for modern high productivity vehicles. Works will include the following:

- Upgrades to the interconnecting roads of Myrtlebank Road, Myrtlebank-Fulham Road and Sale-Heyfield Road.



### Kilcunda Pedestrian and Intersection Safety Improvements - \$7.52 million

The Bass Highway, between Anderson and Leongatha, traverses Bass Coast and South Gippsland Shires. It connects two of Gippsland's six regional centres - Wonthaggi and Leongatha. Funding is required to address road safety and connectivity through the provision of an improved crossing facility and parking is also required. Works will include the following:

1. Installation of pedestrian operated traffic signals on the Bass Highway at Kilcunda between Peppermint Road and Carew Street;
2. Installation of a pedestrian refuge island at the Bass Coast Rail Trail crossing point on Bass Highway, west of Kilcunda Ridge Road;
3. Intersection improvements including dedicated turning lanes at Carew Street, Peppermint Road and Holiday Retreat Entry;
4. Formalisation of the existing service road and improved parking facilities in front of the general store, motel and hotel; and
5. Installation of new bus stop facilities on Bass Highway near the proposed pedestrian operated signals.





## Gippsland Logistics Precinct: Stage 2 and 3 - \$19 million

This precinct will facilitate long-term infrastructure development, create job opportunities at the site and create a new centre for freight that will act as a catalyst for the attraction of new industries to the region. It will also contribute to maximise efficiency and assist in reducing freight and transport costs.

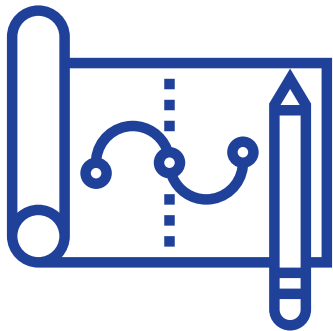
The Victorian State Government provided a grant of \$5 million in 2018 to assist in the site activation (Stage 1) – enabling serviced industrial land and connections to road and rail are due to be delivered by 2022. Works will include the following:

### Stage 2 (\$11.5 million):

- Internal road and utility infrastructure and flood mitigation earthworks.

### Stage 3 (\$7.5 million)

- Gippsland Intermodal Freight Terminal;
- New Signalling;
- Upgrade of the rail siding.



## Regional Priority Projects – Planning Stage



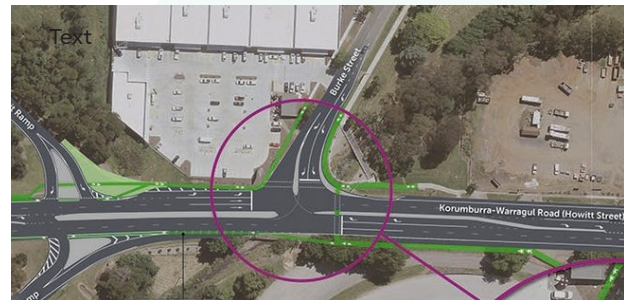
### Warragul and Drouin Bypass - \$3 million

It is expected that the development of the proposed Warragul and Drouin Bypass will address the historical road network challenges that see major arterial roads and agricultural routes run through the centre of both Warragul and Drouin's CBD area.

These challenges result in traffic congestion at peak times, inefficient agricultural routes, and limited private commercial investment in town centres, with many retail premises being vacant and prime commercial land remaining undeveloped.

The bypass would better connect the Gippsland region to intra/interstate and international markets. It will also cater for the efficient transport of goods from Gippsland's \$2.2 billion agriculture industry from north and north-eastern areas of Baw Baw Shire to key hubs across the region.

- Funding required for a business case to identify solutions to reduce congestion through the townships of Drouin and Warragul, including heavy vehicle routes, improved freight connectivity and to identify the social and economic benefits.



### South Gippsland Highway Realignment – Korumburra - Coal Creek Bends - \$3 million

The South Gippsland Highway is the main arterial road through Gippsland's south. It connects Gippsland's major agriculture and food production industry to domestic and international markets and connects tourists to the illustrious attractions of the region such as the Wilsons Promontory National Park.

This project involves a road realignment to remove a series of bends on the South Gippsland Highway south of Korumburra to reduce congestion, improve critical safety issues, decrease freight transport costs and improve freight efficiency routes.

- Funding required for planning and design of intersection improvement, road widening, sections of road realignment, signage and delineation improvements and construction of a service lane and vehicle rest stop.





## **Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Alternate Route Stage 2 - \$1 million**

Leongatha is one of South Gippsland's major industrial, government, medical, retail and service centres that currently contributes \$1.2 billion to the regional economy.

This hub has had significant traffic congestion and safety issues caused by the South Gippsland Highway cutting through the centre of the town. Stage 1 was completed in 2016 and has diverted heavy vehicle traffic out of the main centre of town.

- Funding required for planning and design to complete the main town centre bypass and reduce congestion by improving freight and visitor movements, while also resolving vehicle safety and accessibility issues.



## **Strzelecki Highway – Crightons Hill Realignment - \$500,000**

The Strzelecki Highway connects South Gippsland Shire with the Latrobe Valley and this section of the highway connects Leongatha, the Shire's largest town, with Mirboo North, the third largest town. It is part of a critical link to the Latrobe Valley for industry and residents accessing Government and Health Services.

South Gippsland and Bass Coast coastal areas are very popular with residents of the Latrobe Valley and are a major market for tourism businesses across the district.

The section at Crightons Hill is steep and particularly tight with a number of fatal accidents occurring on this section of road. To reduce accidents, some road widening has been undertaken, wire rope barriers installed, and speed restrictions introduced but these are only temporary treatments.

- Funding required for planning and design for a realignment of the Strzelecki Highway at a location known as Crightons Hill, Leongatha North.

## **South Gippsland Highway – Grassy Spur Alignment - \$2 million**

The South Gippsland Highway is the main arterial route through South Gippsland Shire and part of the Sydney to Melbourne Touring Route. Works on this section of road about 15 years ago removed some bends but others remain.

These routes are electronically sign posted and speed restricted. With improvements to the highway at other locations, this area will become the most difficult section of the highway and limit further economic expansion.

This section of road is a key connector to the southern districts of South Gippsland Shire including Wilsons Promontory National Park, Corner Inlet, and towns such as Foster and Toora.

Dairy tankers service this area heavily and the town of Foster is the regional commercial centre which includes a Hospital, Secondary College and Government Agencies.

- Funding required for planning and design for the realignment of the South Gippsland Highway between the towns of Stony Creek and Foster at an area known as Grassy Spur.

## **Duplication of the Mitchell River Bridge - \$1 million**

The Mitchell River Bridge is the principal access across the Mitchell River in Bairnsdale. This bridge is ageing and will require extensive work in the future to ensure continued safety for road users.

The bridge is unsuited for the current volumes of traffic and acts as a significant bottleneck during peak tourism seasons, slowing freight times and increasing driver frustration.

Duplication would alleviate heavy congestion during peak tourist times and also during times of natural disaster or emergencies.

- Funding required for planning and design for the duplication and solutions to cope with current traffic volumes.

## Tourism Recovery: Tracks and Trails and Events

It is time that Gippsland's rich landscape, culture and history are amplified to set our region on a path to economic recovery. In fact it has been said that Gippsland's natural beauty, outstanding experiences and life changing moments have inspired the world to visit – in a post pandemic world the world just needs an invitation. Prior to COVID-19 this invitation was worth \$1.1 billion to the regional economy every year. It is the position of One Gippsland that the economy of tourism must go beyond traditional boundaries. Now is the time to enable local Indigenous groups to determine and appropriately yield benefit from their arts, culture and environment, while ensuring more sustainable cultural benefits and create a valuable employment base.

### Challenges – The Economic Impacts of Disaster and Crisis

Although tourism in the Gippsland region was negatively impacted by bushfires and floods, the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions caused dire impacts on the sector with major events and tourism attractions having to shut down. Due to the heavy reliance on Melbourne, interstate and international tourism that has been restricted during the pandemic, the Gippsland region saw a huge drop in visitation. The impact of these events have been:

- A **24% decline in visitation rates to 5.5 million per year** (7.2 million in 2019);
- The \$275 million per annum international market has significantly **decreased to almost zero**; and
- An almost **30% decline in employment** to just over 10,000 jobs (15,500 in 2019).

This year saw a number of flagship **major events cancelled** in the region. They include:

- Moto GP – \$30 million;
- Australian Table Tennis Championship Latrobe – \$4 million;
- Australian Surf Life Saving Championship – \$2 million; and
- 50 community/regional events cancelled.

### The Opportunity and Invitation

Gippsland has a diverse range of quality built and natural assets suitable for activation and events. The impact of lockdown and closed borders is expected to deliver an appetite for adventure both domestically and internationally.

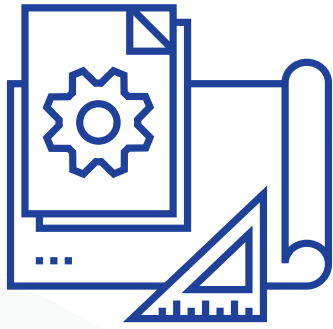
One Gippsland understands there will be fierce competition for the visitation dollar but is optimistic that with strategic planning and investment, the sector can recover and as such, has set the following goals:

- To achieve **9 million visitor nights**; and
- **To increase visitor expenditure to \$1.3 billion** by 2024.



It is time that our region's rich landscape, culture and history are amplified to set our region on a path to economic recovery.





## Regional Priority Projects

The following projects have been identified as **regional priority projects** to meet the opportunities and challenges for growth as outlined above.



### Gippsland Events Strategy - \$5 million

To enable the tourism sector's road to recovery, an invitation to visit should be set through the **Gippsland Events Strategy** that will require an investment of \$5 million to acquire events to fill the calendar and utilise venues over the next three years.

This strategy, that would have a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) estimated at 60, requires funding for resources to achieve a critical mass of strategically acquired events over the next three years.



### Gippsland Lakes Aquatic Trail – \$12 million (public investment) \$6 million (private investment)

The Gippsland Lakes is inland from the 90-mile beach. The trails will combine a mix of walking, riding and paddling with cultural experiences in partnership with the Gunai Kurnai people on their country.

#### Works include:

1. Kalimna-Nyerimilang trail and footbridge;
2. Sperm Whale Head trails;
3. Red Bluff Trail Link;
4. Bunga Arm Trails;
5. Kayak launch facilities;
6. Feasibility study for overnight nodes of Kalimna-Nyerimilang trail and Sperm Whale Head trail;
7. Overnight nodes at Rotamah trail;
8. Overnight nodes at Nyerimilang trail;
9. Latrobe River trails upgrade;
10. Latrobe River jetties / boat launches;
11. Cameron Arm campsite upgrade;
12. GLAT Gateway at Forestec;
13. Signage & wayfinding gap analysis; and
14. Pre-trip information gap analysis & collateral.



### Bass Coast Dinosaur Trail - \$20 million

The Bass Coast is one of the few places on earth where polar dinosaur fossils can be found. This leading tourism experience will entice local, interstate, national and international visitors and encourage extended visitation within the region.

The Trail will educate residents and visitors about the embedded value and diversity found within fossils and pre-historic fauna in the region.

#### Works include:

1. Traverse 40kms from San Remo to Inverloch, featuring six creative art sites that link polar dinosaur fossils;
2. Museum/cultural centre to be developed in Inverloch; and
3. Sound and light installation (alongside museum/cultural centre) linking science, Aboriginal cultural history and the environment.



### Gippsland Odyssey Trail - \$37 million

The \$53 million Gippsland 'Odyssey' Trail project is to be recognised nationally and internationally as a must do long distance multi-use trail showcasing the best of Gippsland while activating towns and communities.

It will do so by linking all the existing rail trail corridors throughout Gippsland and taking advantage of the diverse landscape, our iconic lakes and beaches, lush valleys and ranges.

Whilst predominantly off road, the trail will also make use of roads less travelled and at times the rail network to link visitors from North to South and West to East, making the whole of Gippsland accessible by bike and funnelling visitors into villages and towns along its route.

#### Works include:

- Completing 6 individual Rail Trail sections to create 700 kms of high quality trails. High priority sections are:
  - East Gippsland Discovery Trail/leg to Lakes Entrance: \$3 million;
  - Bass Coast Rail Trail/Inverloch to Wonthaggi: \$7 million;
  - Rokeby-Noojee Trail extension: \$6 million.



## Phillip Island Nature Parks Masterplan Penguin Parade Viewing and Summerlands Peninsula Trails - \$28 million

This project would upgrade the iconic Penguin Parade viewing standards and boardwalks, and create an 18 kilometre network of immersive trails and viewing platforms, linking the Penguin Parade to the Nobbies.

### Works include:

**Part 1: Penguin Parade Upgrades:** works to the ageing infrastructure at the Penguin Parade to ensure it remains the leading paid ecotourism attraction in Victoria and upgrades to infrastructure to ensure it is no longer at risk of non-compliance.

**Part 2: Summerland Peninsula Trails Master Plan:** the creation of 18 kilometres of world class, accessible trails including bridges, lookouts and road crossings, linking the iconic Penguin Parade to the Nobbies through some of the most spectacular views and landscapes in Victoria.



These projects  
have been identified  
as regional priority  
projects to meet  
the opportunities  
and challenges  
for growth.





## Digital Connectivity: Mobile and Broadband Networks

In 2019, a **Gippsland Digital Plan** was developed to articulate the region's current gaps in digital infrastructure and where future demands may lie.

The development of the plan was a collaborative process that sought the views of the regional leaders, the business sector, community groups and local government. Market experts were also engaged and existing strategies and technical papers were reviewed to formulate the plan.

### Gippsland's Shortfall in numbers:

The findings of the consultation revealed the key regional digital connectivity issues:

- **Place-based Mobile Blackspots:** 496 registered mobile blackspots throughout the region;
- **Place-based Fixed Line Broadband:** 72% of the regions cities and towns identified an "intermediate" supply shortfall in access to fixed line broadband;
- **Tourism Fixed Line Broadband:** 68% of key tourism locations identified a "major" supply shortfall and 32% have an "intermediate" supply in access to fixed line broadband;
- **Tourism Mobile:** 12% of key tourism locations identified had "major" supply shortfall and 24% had an "intermediate" supply shortfall for mobile coverage;
- **Agriculture Fixed line Broadband:** 100% have a "major" supply shortfall in fixed access broadband services for business users across the five key primary production regions;
- **Agriculture LP-WAN:** 60% have an "intermediate" supply shortfall for LP-WAN IoT supported services were identified across the five key primary production regions;
- **Freight Mobile:** Two class A roads and two key class B roads had "major" supply shortfalls mobile coverage; and
- **Road Mobile:** all 113 C classified roads within the region had "major" supply shortfalls in mobile coverage.

Further to the lack of access to this integral enabling infrastructure, this plan further revealed that **digital skills shortages are a persistent issue across Gippsland**, both in terms of basic digital literacy as well as specialist technical skills to support business growth and competitiveness across the region.



# Regionally Specific Digital Challenges:

## MOBILE BLACKSPOTS/MOBILE NETWORK OPERATOR (MNO) MOBILE COVERAGE MAPS

The region's city and towns (as well as significant road and rail routes within Gippsland) are categorised as having good mobile coverage according to publicly available mobile network operator (MNO) coverage maps.

However, consistent community feedback and anecdotal evidence suggests that coverage quality is significantly less than what is stipulated in these maps. **Investment in improving the accuracy of MNO maps and the obligation of reasonable standards of service** being delivered to lowly populated areas should be a priority.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Telecommunications must be recognised as an essential service and providers should be required to meet service continuity standards. This is required to prevent significant, prolonged and widespread outages during natural disasters.

Connectivity capabilities in rural areas within Gippsland are unsatisfactory, prohibiting the attractiveness of these areas to tourists and also creating unsafe emergency situations. This was extremely evident during the Black Summer Fires. With natural disasters prone to occurring in the Gippsland region, it is vital that infrastructure **have at least 48 hours of auxiliary back-up power to avoid outages during this time.**

During the Black Summer fires, Council officers were reminded that telecommunication is a commercial service, not an essential service, and as a result the necessary preparatory measures such as prepositioning of generators was not undertaken. This issue needs to be considered in the context of the use of digital communication by emergency services as a primary means to get information to communities about the fires.

**Telecommunications need to be regarded as an essential service** and providers need to put in place arrangements to ensure resilience to certain standards.

## FIXED LINE BROADBAND:

Fixed line broadband has two key issues in Gippsland:

**Access:** This disparity outlined above between connectivity in metropolitan and regional areas is **also present between regional hubs and the smaller rural and remote towns** that surround them. As users move from higher density regional town centres to more remote areas, there is not only a reduction in the availability and quality of digital coverage, but also in the number of network providers who offer services.

**Affordability:** The Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII) also shows that **affordability remains a key challenge and has almost certainly been exacerbated by**

**the COVID-19 economic slowdown.** The ADII shows that the proportion of household income spent on internet access by those living in the lowest household income quintile has increased every year since 2014 and underpinning this is a widening gap in affordability between Q5 low-income and Q1 high-income households. **Three of the six LGAs in the Gippsland Region are Q4 low-income.**

## BUSINESS SUPPORT

One Gippsland notes that the NBN Business Fibre Zones program (that includes the towns of Morwell, Cowes, Sale and Wonthaggi) seeks to address the availability and affordability of adequate business-grade services across all NBN technology types. **It is recommended that this program is expanded to include all major regional centres in Gippsland.**

## TOURISM

In 2019, Gippsland visitor expenditure reached \$1.3 billion and had 3,000 small tourism businesses employing over 13,000 people. This is a key industry for Gippsland, and fostering its continued growth is essential for building the region's economy.

Tourism in Gippsland has also been identified as having low digital connections. Some of the locations that were identified as having major shortfalls in supply are internationally acclaimed attractions such as the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix and Phillip Island Penguin Parade.

It is important that mobile roaming is available in remote locations for international visitors as currently this is not the case. Likewise, **poor in-carriage reception is experienced on trains operating east of Traralgon**, both in peak and non-peak times. Free passenger Wi-Fi on public transport would add to the liveability and visitor satisfaction within Gippsland.

## FOOD AND FIBRE

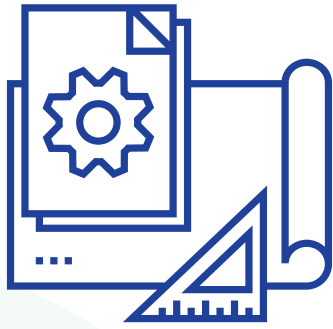
An analysis of digital intensity requirements reveals that food and fibre will rely heavily on digital services over the next 3-5 years to be able to retain competitiveness in the Australian and international market.<sup>11</sup> Of the 5 key primary production regions in Gippsland analysed:

- **100% have a major supply shortfall** in fixed access broadband services for business users; and
- **60% have an intermediate** supply shortfall for LP-WAN IoT supported services.

For these reasons, One Gippsland is calling for Gippsland to be prioritised in the next rounds of the *Mobile Blackspot Program*, the *Regional Connectivity Program* and the *Connecting Victoria Program*.

<sup>11</sup> McKinsey Digital – Digital Australia: Seizing the opportunity from the Fourth Industrial Revolution; OECD – A taxonomy of digital intensive sectors





## Regional Recommendations

### Victorian Government:

- Prioritise Gippsland for upgrades and new infrastructure via the *Connecting Victoria Program*, and
- Enhancements for mobile services on V/Line trains east of Traralgon to Bairnsdale.

### Federal Government:

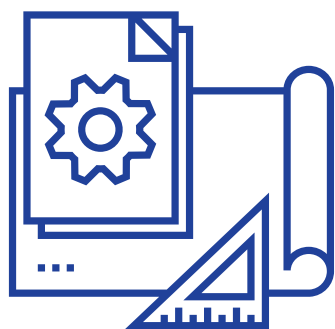
- Prioritise Gippsland for upgrades and new infrastructure via Round 6 of the *Mobile Blackspot Program*, Round 2 of the *Regional Connectivity Program* and the *NBN Co-investment Development Fund*;
- Improve accuracy of MNO maps and obligate MNOs to provide reasonable standards of service to lowly populated areas;
- Expand the *Business Fibre Zone Program* to include all major regional centres in Gippsland;
- Telecommunications be recognised as an essential service and performance and reliability standards that appropriately reflect the circumstances of the infrastructure; and
- Telecommunications providers work in partnership with remote communities to establish arrangements for the basic maintenance of infrastructure in the event that it is isolated in an emergency (e.g. refuelling of generators).



## Job Creation: Building the Economy and Skilling our Youth

Gippsland's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic must be about job creation and driving industry activity. It is now more important than ever to leverage the potential of sound investment in projects that will deliver these outcomes.

The Gippsland region is renowned for its diversity and creating new business and employment opportunities in the region. It has a strong industry-training sector and the capabilities to produce job opportunities across a range of sectors and professions.



### Regional Priority Projects

Manufacturing and skills development are both prominent sectors within the Gippsland region and a fundamental driver of its economy. One Gippsland have identified three projects that are ready to go and seek government funding to implement.



#### Earn While You Learn Program - \$450,000

**Federation University** are driving this initiative that will connect students with local employers in the region (both private and public sector) and create a pipeline of skills to meet the future needs of the health, energy, food and fibre and tourism sectors.

Unlike other placement programs that enable students to find placements in any location (quite often major capital cities - Melbourne), this initiative will have a *Gippsland First focus*. The initiative will seek to match students with the needs of local employers increasing the likelihood of ensuring that skills stay in the region and workforce participation rates for Gippsland grows.

#### Skills and Employment Challenges in Gippsland

- **Unemployment rate:** in Gippsland it is 6.1%,<sup>12</sup> compared to the state (Victorian) rate of 4.8%<sup>13</sup> as at September 2021;

<sup>12</sup> [lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/EmploymentRegion/VIC/Gippsland/UnemploymentRateTimeSeries](https://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/EmploymentRegion/VIC/Gippsland/UnemploymentRateTimeSeries)

<sup>13</sup> [lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/LFR\\_SAFOUR/LFR\\_UnemploymentRate](https://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/LFR_SAFOUR/LFR_UnemploymentRate)



- **Labour force participation:** in Gippsland it is 52.4% compared to 65.0% for Victoria;
- **Year 12 completion rate:** in Gippsland it is 35% compared to the state average of 79%; and
- **The Bachelor degree attainment:** in Gippsland it is 12% which is half the Victorian average of 24.3%.

#### The Project

Federation University will appoint program resources for a one-year period that will join the dots between the university, students and local organisations and manage placements and triage issues associated with entering the workforce for the first time.

The funding will also allow for an in-depth academic evaluation process at the conclusion of the initiative. There are three key elements the program will seek to achieve:

- **Local leadership:** One Gippsland (peak regional development body) and Federation University, local government, peak bodies and local employers will collaborate to implement initiatives;
- **Local solutions:** address participation and attainment rates through agreed connections to workforce and skill shortages; and

■ **Locals first:** ensuring that students are given every opportunity to connect to and drive the economic and social future of Gippsland long-term by increasing the likelihood of students becoming full-time employees on completion of their degree.





## Malting Facility - \$3 million

In a bid to further embed the reputation of Gippsland as the home of first class producers of food and beverages, **Food and Fibre Gippsland** is championing the establishment of a malting facility in the Gippsland region.

Gippsland's craft brewers and distillers play an important role in driving our region's image on the national and international stages, with many emphasising their link to their locality through their products and ingredients. This facility would build off the growth of Australia's craft beer sector that continues to develop in popularity at an **average industry growth rate between 2015 – 2020 of 6.2%** (IbisWorld research).

### Challenges and Opportunities

Despite the growing demand and availability of product, there is **no locally-available malt** – the major ingredient in their production.

This lack of availability is despite the Gippsland region producing grain of suitable quality. A Gippsland-based malting facility could overcome this challenge.

Over the past three years, a comprehensive demand study has been undertaken alongside stakeholders from industry, government, community and the education/research sector to demonstrate a viable business case for a regional collective malting facility to be established.

**Sailors Grave Brewing, an internationally renowned craft brewery in East Gippsland, have been successful in gaining state and federal funding to establish a new commercial brewery, and have offered a portion of the site to be used to house the malting facility.**

### The Project:

The proposed plant will be supplied by a world-leading German malthouse builder. A comprehensive business case places the facility's **return on invested capital (ROIC) at a favourable 8.27%**, and with Sailors Grave's supporting architecture and other attractions onsite, the facility will become a major economic contributor to existing Gippsland breweries / distilleries and the visitor economy alike.

The facility will be run as a social enterprise, with a strong community reinvestment model that provides:

- **Funding to local enterprise;**
- **Regenerative farming research;**
- **Waterway protection; and**
- **Traditional Owner business advancement.**

A test batching facility is on order, but the full commercial-scale facility requires additional funding in order to realise its establishment.



## Advanced Vegetable Processing (AVP) Facility - \$75 million

The establishment of an Advanced Vegetable Processing facility (AVP) in Gippsland has the **potential to process 64,000 tons of regional produce that is currently lost** from the supply chain to wastage.

### Challenges and Opportunities

In Australia, agriculture produce wastage is responsible for:

- 25% of agricultural water use;
- 5% of Australia's overall greenhouse gas emissions; and
- An annual cost to the economy of \$20 billion.

To overcome these unsustainable practices, **Food and Fibre Gippsland** has partnered with leading researchers, industry players, government agencies and the community to methodically test the feasibility of an AVP in the region.

The AVP facility would:

- Create a new industry;
- Provide growers with an additional income stream; and
- Incentivise waste minimisation.

Industries that are involved include Gippsland's largest growers alongside the CSIRO, Melbourne University, Monash University, Swinburne University, Horticulture Innovation Australia and Sampano.

### The Project

Food and Fibre Gippsland have worked with supply chain leaders to understand the AVP's potential impact for Gippsland, and have built local and international investor interest.

Converting vegetables into ingredients, juices and fine chemicals requires advanced manufacturing and engineering capability and determinations have been made by working with technologists and food processing experts.

Australian manufacturers of nutraceuticals and supplements import **\$1.1b worth of overseas ingredients per annum**. Replacing 50 imported ingredients with local ingredients processed through an AVP would drive:

- 400 direct local jobs
- \$33m in wages and salaries, and
- \$85m in ingredient sales.

Work was undertaken to demonstrate the financial viability of the facility based on the CSIRO's proposed facility build and size. With a CAPEX bill of \$75m, the modelled facility would process **64kt of produce; create up to 95 direct and 80 indirect jobs; and pay itself off within 5 years.**

## Freight – Summary of Regional Priority Projects



### SHOVEL READY

Project	LGA	Cost
San Remo Road Infrastructure Improvements	Bass Coast Shire Council	\$23 million
Sale Alternate Truck Route	Wellington Shire Council	\$100 million
Kilcunda Pedestrian and Intersection Safety Improvements	Bass Coast Shire Council	\$7.52 million
Gippsland Logistics Precinct – Stage 2 and 3	Latrobe City Council	\$19 million



### PLANNING READY

Project	LGA	Cost
Warragul and Drouin Bypass	Baw Baw Shire Council	\$3 million
South Gippsland Highway Realignment – Coal Creek Bends	South Gippsland Shire Council	\$3 million
Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Alternate Route Stage 2	South Gippsland Shire Council	\$1 million
Strzelecki Highway – Crightons Hill Realignment	South Gippsland Shire Council	\$500,00
South Gippsland Highway – Grassy Spur Alignment	South Gippsland Shire Council	\$2 million
Duplication of the Mitchell River Bridge	East Gippsland Shire Council	\$1 million

## Tourism – Summary of Regional Priority Projects



### SHOVEL READY

Project	LGA	Cost
Gippsland Events Strategy	All One Gippsland LGAs	\$5 million
Gippsland Lakes Aquatic Trail	East Gippsland Shire Council	\$12 million (pubic) \$6 million (private)
Bass Coast Dinosaur Trail	Bass Coast Shire Council	\$20 million
Gippsland Odyssey Trail	All One Gippsland LGAs excluding Latrobe City	\$37 million
Phillip Island Nature Parks Masterplan Penguin Parade Viewing and Summerlands Peninsula Trails	Bass Coast	\$28 million



## Digital Connectivity – Summary of Recommendations

ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
<b>Fixed Line Broadband</b>	Prioritise Gippsland for upgrades and infrastructure via <i>Connecting Victoria Program</i>
	Prioritise Gippsland for the NBN <i>Co-Investment Development Fund</i>
<b>Mobile Black Spots</b>	Prioritise Gippsland in the rollout of Round 6 of the <i>Mobile Black Spot Program</i>
	Prioritise Gippsland in the rollout of Round 2 of the <i>Regional Connectivity Program</i>
	Prioritise Gippsland for upgrades and infrastructure via <i>Connecting Victoria Program</i>
	Improve accuracy of MNO maps and obligate MNOs to provide reasonable standards of service to lowly populated areas.
	Telecommunications be recognised as an essential service and performance and reliability standards that appropriately reflect the circumstances of the infrastructure.
	Telecommunications providers work in partnership with remote communities to establish arrangements for the basic maintenance of infrastructure in the event that it is isolated in an emergency (e.g. refuelling of generators).
<b>Business-Grade NBN</b>	Expand the <i>Business Fibre Zone Program</i> to include all major regional centres in Gippsland.
<b>Improve Connectivity For Tourism and Primary Production</b>	Prioritise Gippsland in the rollout of Round 6 <i>Mobile Black Spot Program</i> , Round 2 of the <i>Regional Connectivity Program</i> and via the <i>Connecting Victoria Program</i> .
<b>Mobile Connectivity: Rail</b>	Enhancements for mobile services on V/Line trains east of Traralgon to Bairnsdale.

## Job Creation – Summary of Regional Priorities



### SHOVEL READY

Project	Project Lead	Cost
Earn As You Learn Program	Federation University	\$450,000
Malting Facility	Food and Fibre Gippsland	\$3 million
Advanced Vegetable Processing (AVP) Facility	Food and Fibre Gippsland	\$75 million

# Section 02

# LOCAL INVESTMENT PROJECTS

*The following projects are not regional priority projects of One Gippsland but are key projects in the region, that at a local level, will increase economic activity and liveability*





## BASS COAST SHIRE

Bass Coast is located about 130 kilometres south-east of Melbourne and is predominantly a coastal municipality with a unique coastline complemented by a beautiful hinterland.

Bass Coast is one of the few Victorian municipalities whose two major industries are tourism and agriculture. Cattle and dairy farming are the area's agricultural backbone, with boutique farming such as venison and vineyards fast emerging.

Bass Coast Shire has one of the highest growth rates in Victoria and 29% of the resident population is over the age of 60. During peak holiday periods, Bass Coast's population exceeds 70,000. The Shire is visited by 35% of Melbourne's international visitors each year.

### **Wonthaggi Opportunity Unlocked** - \$126 million

The Wonthaggi Opportunity Unlocked plan seeks to build on recent government investment to unlock opportunity and play its full part in regional and State recovery and growth. Unlocking Wonthaggi's full potential as a Victorian regional centre and the heart of southern Gippsland aligns with the objectives of key State and Federal planning strategies relating to regional regeneration, urban decentralisation, population growth and investment attraction.

#### Works:

- The Wonthaggi Activity Centre;
- Wonthaggi North East Development: create 450 hectares of residential land and 61 hectares of employment land in Wonthaggi - two large roundabouts will be required on the Bass Highway;
- Regional Sports Hub;
- Bass Coast Aquatics & Leisure Centre; and
- Development of community facilities on the former Wonthaggi Secondary College site.

### **Cowes to Rhyll Trail** - \$800,000

Partnering with Phillip Island Nature Parks, this will see the completion of the off-road Cowes to Rhyll link between Oswin Roberts Reserve and the Rhyll Township, connecting existing popular walking trails.

Rhyll is a popular spot for visitors and also the current location for passengers to disembark from cruise ships visiting Phillip Island. The Cowes to Rhyll Trail enables people to discover the world-renowned wetlands on the north shore of Phillip Island that are only accessible via walking or riding. The mangroves and mudflats of Rhyll Inlet are a significant site for the wading birds that fly thousands of kilometres to feed during the summer

months. The Rhyll to Cowes Trail also connects with the existing 43km trail from Cowes to Wonthaggi.

#### Works:

- Construction of trail.

### **Inverloch to Wonthaggi Trail** - \$5.5 million

The construction of a 14km shared pathway linking Wonthaggi to Inverloch, will complete a tourism trail that stretches from Cowes to Inverloch. The Inverloch to Wonthaggi Trail project delivers vital infrastructure connecting two of Bass Coast's key residential and commercial towns. The trail connects to a much greater off-road shared pathway link extending from Inverloch to Cowes, providing new active recreation and commuter links for the community and key tourism infrastructure.

While the Inverloch and Wonthaggi communities lie only 13.3km apart, they are not currently linked other than by road. Limited public transport is available and the only safe means of travel between them is by car. The completion of the trail from Inverloch to Cowes will provide access to rugged cliffs, beaches, dinosaur footprints, the Bunurong Coastal Park, Kilcunda Haven coupled with accommodation in the villages of Cowes, San Remo, Kilcunda, Wonthaggi and Inverloch.

#### Works:

- Construction of 14km trail.

## BAW BAW SHIRE

Baw Baw Shire includes rich horticultural, dairying and forestry areas and is a major exurban growth area for the south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne, the focus of which is on Drouin and Warragul.

Primary industry is a major employer and industry sector within Baw Baw and includes dairy and beef cattle, pome fruits (apples), vegetables, potatoes, cool climate grapes, maize, soft fruits (berries and currants), fresh flowers, seedlings and plants, hydroponic tomatoes and timber. There is also a significant and growing value-adding sector taking advantage of the primary produce grown in the area. Organic production is also increasing significantly.

### **Baw Baw Culture and Connection Precinct (Stage 1 Library and Learning)** - \$20 million

Baw Baw Culture and Connection Precinct (Stage 1 Library and Learning) is a transformative project that aspires to build on existing spaces surrounding the West Gippsland Arts Centre and Civic Park by integrating

new civic and community facilities. This state-of-the-art facility will provide a meaningful space in the heart of Warragul, Baw Baw's largest town centre, and service our growing community for generations to come.

The \$30 million multi-level hub will feature a new community library with reading/study zones, a gallery and cultural space, community meeting rooms, co-working spaces, café, rooftop terrace – all with accessible amenities, underground car parking and pedestrian connections to surrounds. The Baw Baw Civic Precinct Stage 1 is an inter-generational legacy project that aspires to build on existing spaces and infrastructure surrounding the West Gippsland Arts Centre and Civic Park by integrating new civic and community spaces, improving open spaces and maximising opportunities for community connectedness.

The \$30 million multi-level precinct will feature a new community library with reading/study zones, a gallery and cultural space, community meeting rooms, co-working spaces, café, rooftop terrace – all with accessible amenities, underground car parking and pedestrian connections to surrounds.

**Baw Baw Shire Council has pledged \$10 million for the \$30 million project** – the largest investment in a single project in Council's history. Baw Baw Shire Council is now seeking funding support of \$10 million from State Government plus \$10 million from Federal Government to deliver this vital and significant community facility.

- Funding required for detailed design and construction of new library and learning centre.



### **Sealing of South Face Road – Tourist Route to Mt Baw Baw** – \$26+ million

South Face Road is an unsealed road that currently provides for secondary access to Mt Baw Baw from the southeast side of the mountain. South Face Road is approximately 25km in length, and whilst unsealed, provides a safer alignment with less gradient than the current primary access.

The primary sealed access to Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort is via Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road. The Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road is steep, narrow and exceptionally windy. This road has been subject to landslips, leading to the road being closed to locals and

tourists for a period of up to six months. The purpose of the project is to improve access, safety, resilience of the road network, as well as the visitor experience to Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort.

#### **Works:**

- Upgrading and sealing South Face Road.

### **Tracks and Trails – Rokeby to Noojee Trail Extension** – \$5+ million

The Rokeby to Noojee Rail Trail extension will see the development of a signature, high quality trail experience centred around nature and culture. This project will include the extension of the trail to one of Baw Baw Shire's key tourism destinations, Noojee.

Extending the trail a further 10km would create a link to the historic town. On a broader scale, this project will also provide the opportunity to achieve the outcomes of the Gippsland Odyssey Trail. Packaging the existing main rail trails and multi-use trails in Gippsland as the Gippsland Odyssey Trail, and undertaking strategic connections between the various existing elements, will over time provide a strong offering that can be undertaken or packaged into sections, or sold as a multi-day trail.

This project is a key priority identified in the Destination Gippsland, Destination Management Plan and Gippsland Tracks and Trails Strategy.

#### **Works:**

- Extension of existing trail to Noojee.



## **EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE**

*East Gippsland Shire covers the second largest area in Victoria. The Shire includes an extensive coastline, a major lakes and river system, rugged high country, extensive national parks and state forests. About 75% of the Shire is public land held as National and State reserves. The commercial centre is Bairnsdale, a three-hour drive from Melbourne.*

*The shire's economy is based on tourism, agriculture, horticulture, forestry and fishing.*

*The main industries include oil and gas extraction and agriculture. Population is centred around the Gippsland*



Lakes area. Together with the Buchan Caves, these are a great attraction to visitors and retirees.

## **Omeo Mountain Bike Paths Stage 2 - \$3.7 million**

This project will ensure the Omeo MTB trail network becomes a destination level mountain biking MTB facility attracting the visitor numbers to generate the full expected economic outcomes for the town and district. This project will also ensure the trail complex will meet the requirements of Mountain Bike Australia (MTBA) and be classified as a nationally significant trail complex.

Completion of this project will result in a suite of varied trail experiences offering a genuine point of difference that will attract visitors with a wide variety of rider skill levels. This project not only delivers a purpose-built MTB complex, but creates the opportunity to transform Omeo into East Gippsland's high-country adventure hub.

### **Works:**

- Building of 67 kilometres of world class (MTB) trails, which combined with 55 kilometres of trails from Stage 1 (construction currently out for tender) will deliver a nationally significant mountain biking drawcard located in Omeo.

## **Great Alpine Road Upgrade - \$2 million**

The Great Alpine Road from Bruthen to Omeo is notorious for being dangerous and difficult to drive on due to sharp bends and some steep sections.

This project would improve safety, ease of travel, and connectivity. The Great Alpine Road is the main route for residents, tourists and freight transport to access the towns in the Tambo Valley.

In addition, many road users use the road to travel over the Great Dividing Range or access the snowfields of Mt Hotham, Falls Creek, and Dinner Plain. With the reopening of the Stockman mine, ore will be transported south along the Great Alpine Road, further increasing the pressure on the road.

### **Works:**

- Narrow road shoulders will be widened;
- Dangerous bends will be removed; and
- Guard rail and rub rail will be installed.

## **Buchan Recreation Reserve Upgrade - \$7.5 million**

The Buchan Recreation Reserve comprises community sporting facilities that do not meet industry standards and are regularly inundated by floods. The reserve is

the designated place of refuge for the Buchan and district community during natural disasters, however the pavilion does not adequately cater for the community or emergency services.

The project will deliver a community hub with integrated sporting, social and emergency response capabilities that will build community resilience.

### **Works:**

- New community pavilion (future proofed against flood damage) will include first aid room, more storage, new kitchen, amenities to cater for large gatherings;
- Change rooms and amenities will be consolidated into the one building adjacent to the fields of play, and will contain cubiced showers (currently open showers);
- External store to have capacity for storage of large quantities of food, emergency back-up equipment (ie. generators);
- Maintenance equipment shed will have provision for safe storage of emergency fuel supplies; and
- Sealed car park that will better accommodate firefighting trucks and other emergency vehicles, and/or as a hardstand to erect temporary facilities to support the reserve as an emergency response venue.

## **Redevelopment of the Progress Jetty Area - Paynesville - \$3.3 million**

Rebalancing vehicle and pedestrian movements is pivotal to the Foreshore Masterplan, with pedestrian priority access from the esplanade to the foreshore and east-west movement along the foreshore being at the forefront of the design.

An upgraded meandering east-west path through the site connects to Raymond Island Ferry precinct to the east and Sunset Cove to the west.

Proposed upgrades include new pedestrian crossing areas to increase safety, large playground, new picnic areas, upgrade to the Community Craft Centre, new realignment of Sunset Drive to add additional green space.

- Funding required for concept design of redevelopment.





## Benambra-Corryong Road Alignment and Sealing - \$24 million

The Benambra-Corryong Road is 110 kilometres long, with 65 kilometres of this being unsealed. This road links the Upper Murray, North East Victoria, and East Gippsland areas. This road is heavily used by local residents travelling between the towns, as well as tourists accessing the area.

The road is also of major importance to the farming community to move stock and feed supplies between East Gippsland and North East Victoria. Keen anglers also use the Benambra-Corryong Rd to access the lower sections of the Dartmouth dam.

- Funding required for sealing 65 kilometres section of the Benambra-Corryong Road with also the possibility of alignment improvements.



## Marlo Road Upgrade - \$7 million

Marlo is a popular tourist destination and is situated on the main route to Cape Conran camping and coastal park. Marlo Road is an ageing and narrow 16km long single-lane dual carriageway with no overtaking lanes. It is adjacent to the Snowy River with farmland and some scattered residences on the other side for most of the length of the road.

Close to Marlo a bridge crosses the Brodribb River at the site of extensive wetlands. Three accidents resulting in serious injuries have occurred on this road in recent years.

This project will improve safety through the provision of wider road edges, designated overtaking lanes, and bridge widening.

### Works:

- Widening and upgrading Marlo Road;
- Construction of a shared user path; and
- Widening the Brodribb River bridge.

## LATROBE CITY

Latrobe City is located 135 kilometres east of Melbourne. It is the principal service centre for the Gippsland region and includes the regional headquarters for significant government and private organisations, and education centres.

The Latrobe Valley generates 85% of Victoria's electricity, from its large reserves of brown coal.

Other major industries include timber processing, and the manufacturing of paper products as well as the provision of services to the Gippsland region. Latrobe has a young population, with 45% of residents aged under 35 – of these 28% are under 10.



## Moe Revitalisation Project, Stage 3 - \$7.56 million

Stage 3 of the Moe Revitalisation Project (MRP) includes the redevelopment of Moore Street, between George Street and Albert Street, along with the construction of a commuter car park at the eastern end of George Street. This stage is the third and final phase of the MRP. It will tie directly into Stage 2 which is currently funded by a Community Infrastructure Loan Scheme (CILS) to Council and will be delivered by September 2023.

The total employment from the project is expected to reach 93, and the increase in regional income generated by the project is estimated at \$7,334 million. The project is also expected to generate significant social and community benefits.

### Works:

- Redevelopment of Moore Street between George and Albert Street; and
- Construction of a commuter car park at the eastern end of George Street.



## Latrobe Regional Airport – feasibility study for new runway - \$60,000

The Airport Development Strategy promotes “the development and expansion of the Latrobe Regional Airport (LRA) as a regionally significant airport providing a hub for aviation services and employment thereby adding economic and social benefit to the region, whilst maintaining options for future transport services.” Studies have found that there are technical limitations of the existing infrastructure relative to the likely aircraft types that would feasibly operate at LRA to provide RPT services.

It has been concluded that in its current condition, the current LRA runway 03R/21L and the associated infrastructure are not suitable for the chosen aircraft to operate within the remit of the current legislation.

- Funding required for a feasibility study.



## Traralgon Recreation Reserve Flood Recovery - \$10.37 million

As a result of the significant floods in Traralgon and surrounds in June 2021, the Traralgon Football and Netball Club pavilion and many other buildings within the Traralgon Recreation Reserve were impacted and require demolition and re-construction. This project

constructs a new pavilion, above flood levels and incorporates facilities for many user groups who also have been displaced as a result of the floods. This will future proof the reserve for user group activities.

**Works:**

- Construction of new pavilion.

## SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE

South Gippsland is an important beef production and dairying area. Other activities include horticulture, forestry, fishing, boutique food and wine, retail trade, manufacturing and tourism.

The western coast of the shire is also a popular holiday and retirement area. A major physical feature in South Gippsland is Wilsons Promontory. The main industries include agriculture and dairy product manufacturing.

### **Korumburra Streetscape Development – 2.5 million**

This project aims to improve the town's visual appeal and functionality along Commercial Street. Other components outside of below works include development of the Korumburra Supermarket and the Korumburra Community Hub.

Once complete, the project will play an important role in attracting new residents, businesses and visitors to Korumburra.

**Works:**

- Narrowing the street from four lanes to two;
- Widening of footpaths;
- Additional pedestrian crossings; and
- Railway station upgrade.



### **Wilsons Prom Revitalisation – \$8 million**

Wilsons Promontory National Park sits at the southernmost tip of the Australian mainland. With its unspoiled natural surrounds, it is a key tourist destination in Gippsland.

The Wilsons Prom Revitalisation project seeks to achieve this by delivering a superior visitor experience while reducing the environmental impacts associated with traditional visitation.

The **Victorian Government has already invested \$21 million towards this project**, however, an additional funding amount of \$8 million is required for Parks Victoria's masterplan for the site to be fully realised.

**Works:**

- Creation of a new visitor precinct in the Northern 'Prom', including an information centre, tourism hub for licensed tourism operators and volunteer meeting space;
- Construction of 20 new CANOPY – Eco Sleeper Pods which are new environmentally sustainable pop-up roofed accommodation;
- Establishment of a congestion free park offering a 'park and ride' service during peak season;
- Creation of an all-accessible wildlife track, encouraging visitor dispersal and connection with nature with a lower impact on the environment; and
- Creation of 'The Prom Sanctuary', a premier 50,000-hectare biodiversity sanctuary that will be the nation's largest and safest reserve for threatened species protection.



## WELLINGTON SHIRE

Wellington is a large shire that includes a strong agricultural base and important secondary and tertiary industries, notably in the largest centre, Sale.

Wellington is home to a major prison, the Longford gas plant, an RAAF base and the Ninety Mile Beach. The main industries include oil and gas extraction and agriculture.

### **North Sale Wetland and Biodiversity Reserve – \$1.08 million**

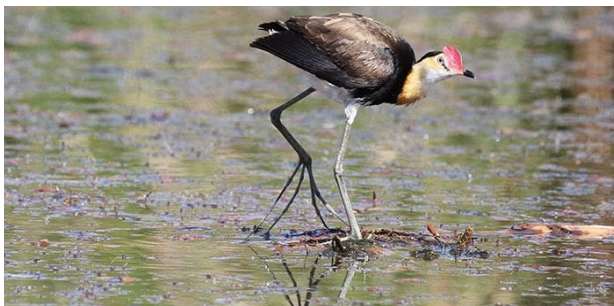
The North Sale Wetland and Biodiversity Reserve project underpins the development of approximately 500 residential allotments in the North Sale Growth Area.



The project will construct a storm water treatment wetland and passive open space, enhancing urban biodiversity within the existing North Sale Retarding basin site.

**Works:**

- Landscaping;
- Use of Indigenous native plants; and
- Walking paths and picnic areas.



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 **Aqua Energy Modernisation**  
- \$8.7 million

The project will result in all Aqua Energy's indoor facility areas and features at one single level. Improvements to the pool design and depth profile results in increased access and opportunity to program a broad range of activities and greater utilisation of the space. Modelling has indicated that the \$12.9 million project will create 60 jobs. 28 of these are directly related to the project, a further 21 from supply-chain and 11 a result of consumption. Extensive consultation has been undertaken and the concept design, quantity surveyor estimate, and funding strategy have been adopted by Council. The detailed design development is underway.

**Works:**

- Universal access throughout ramp access to 25m pool;
- Renewed 25m pool;
- Plant and structure improvements;
- New change rooms;
- New 24-hour gym;
- New indoor zero depth water play zone; and
- New swim office.

## Local Investment Summary by LGA

### BASS COAST SHIRE

Project	LGA	Cost
Wonthaggi Opportunity Unlocked	Bass Coast Shire Council	\$126 million
Cowes to Rhyll Trail	Bass Coast Shire Council	\$800,000
Inverloch to Wonthaggi Trail	Bass Coast Shire Council	\$5.5 million

### BAW BAW SHIRE

Project	LGA	Cost
Baw Baw Civic Precinct Masterplan Stage 1 (library and learning)	Baw Baw Shire Council	\$20 million
Sealing of South Face Road – Tourist Route to Mt Baw Baw	Baw Baw Shire Council	\$26+ million
Tracks and Trails – Rokeby to Noojee Trail Extension	Baw Baw Shire Council	\$5+ million

### EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Project	LGA	Cost
Omeo Mountain Bike Paths – Stage 2	East Gippsland Shire Council	\$3.7 million
Great Alpine Road Upgrade	East Gippsland Shire Council	\$2 million
Buchan Recreation Reserve Upgrade	East Gippsland Shire Council	\$7.5 million
Redevelopment of the Progress Jetty Area – Paynesville	East Gippsland Shire Council	\$3.3 million
Benambra–Corryong Road Alignment and Sealing	East Gippsland Shire Council	\$24 million
Marlo Road Upgrade	East Gippsland Shire Council	\$7 million

### LATROBE CITY

Project	LGA	Cost
Moe Revitalisation Project – Stage 3	Latrobe City Council	\$7.56 million
Latrobe Regional Airport – feasibility study for new runway	Latrobe City Council	\$60,000
Traralgon Recreation Reserve Flood Recovery	Latrobe City Council	\$10.37 million



## SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Project	LGA	Cost
Korumburra Streetscape Development	South Gippsland Shire Council	\$2.5 million
Wilsons Prom Revitalisation	South Gippsland Shire Council	\$8 million

## WELLINGTON SHIRE

Project	LGA	Cost
North Sale Wetland and Biodiversity Reserve	Wellington Shire Council	\$1.08 million
Aqua Energy Modernisation	Wellington Shire Council	\$8.7 million

# One Gippsland Board Biographies

## Local Government members



### Cr Kellie O'Callaghan

**Mayor, Latrobe City Council  
(Chair of One Gippsland)**

Kellie was first elected to Latrobe City Council in 2008 and is currently serving her third term as Mayor. Kellie is recognised for her strong leadership in health, community services and governance.

Kellie is a well-respected and authentic community leader with a passion for health, wellbeing and community-led development. In 2016, she led the development of the Latrobe Strength-Led Transition, a community co-designed approach structural and economic change leading up to the Hazelwood Power Station closure, which resulted in significant State and Federal Government investment and enhanced partnerships in the region. Kellie served for many years as the Chair of a Regional Health Service Board and has served on a range of State boards and committees. She has well established networks across a broad range of industries and is a champion for creating pathways to new opportunities for the Gippsland region.

Outside of her Council role, Kellie applies her significant experience as a board, strategy and governance advisor and facilitator to assist organisations and individuals to harness the great depth of opportunities that exists when you develop trusted, connected and genuinely engaged relationships with stakeholders and networks. Kellie gets straight to the heart of real and practical ways individuals, organisations and communities can overcome challenges, develop robust governance and engagement approaches whilst embedding strength-led co-design into their planning, service delivery, improvement and innovation programs.



### Steven Piasente

**CEO, Latrobe City Council**

Steven has over 27 years of experience working for local communities. Having held the majority of senior management roles in local government and having worked in the Gippsland Region for all of that time.

Steven has held a diverse range of roles including Infrastructure Director, Community and Economic Development Director and Corporate Services Director.

Steven led the development of significant major infrastructure investments in the community including the new Gippsland Regional Aquatic Centre and Latrobe Creative Precinct. In addition to this he has led major policy initiatives and improved service delivery.

Steven's formal qualifications are in Engineering. He also has qualifications in Business Administration and is passionate about developing the leadership capabilities of his teams. Steven has successfully managed a small retail business for over seven years.

Steven has a passion for local government and making a difference for local communities, in particular contributing to making Latrobe City a great place to live, work and visit.



### Cr Ian Bye

**Mayor, Wellington Shire Council  
(One Gippsland Deputy Chair)**

Ian has his roots firmly planted in the Wellington Shire, being born and raised in Sale, as well as choosing to raise his family there. With two beautiful teenage daughters, Ian and his wife Rachael have been married for over 20 years.

Having been an accountant for 31 years, Ian knows how important small businesses are to the community. A dedicated family man, Ian loves spending time on the water fishing, or towing the kids around and enjoying sports with his family.

As a Councillor, Ian is committed to working hard with local businesses and industries to ensure the future growth of the Wellington economy. Ian is an avid volunteer and can be regularly found assisting local clubs, organisations and committees and has always given back to the community.





## David Morcom

CEO, Wellington Shire Council

David grew up in the Gippsland region, before joining the Westpac Bank as an Economics Graduate in 1988, based in Hobart. He spent 12 years in the Finance and Banking sector, including seven of those years working for Westpac's affiliate and subsidiary operations in countries throughout the Pacific region.

In 2000 David moved to local Government, after being appointed General Manager for Break O'Day Council in Tasmania. He spent 3 years in this role, followed by 3 years as General Manager Corporate Services, Mildura Rural City Council. He then spent 5 and a half years as CEO for the Barossa Council in South Australia, where he was also a member of RDA Barossa.

David returned to the Gippsland region after being appointed CEO of Wellington Shire Council in January 2012. As well as holding a degree in Economics, he holds post graduate qualifications in Management and is a Fellow of the Governor's Leadership Foundation in South Australia.



## Cr Michael Whelan

Mayor, Bass Coast Shire Council

Cr Whelan is a second term Councillor committed to making Bass Coast a better place to live and to make a difference for his grandchildren on the big issues that confront us, such as climate change. He is an active musician who convened the Bass Coast Acoustic Music Club and the Bass Coast Pickers band. He takes a strong interest in arts and culture and seeks proper recognition of indigenous culture and inclusion.

Cr Whelan has strong community engagement experience and sees a stronger role for community in Council activities. Together with Mary, he ran a small business for 15 years, in government relations and marketing a medical product invented by Mary.

He was a CFA officer for nearly 20 years in operational, research and technical roles before being seconded to the Department of Justice coordinating multi-agency projects. Cr Whelan also worked as a Ministerial Adviser in the Cain Government and as an executive in the Kennett Government.



## Ali Wastie

CEO, Bass Coast Shire Council

With degrees in Arts, Education and holding a Masters of Diplomacy and Trade, Ali has held executive positions within the Victorian Public Service and Local Government. She is also an accomplished Board Director across the not-for-profit, community, tourism and health sectors. She is an accredited executive coach, mediator and alumnus of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

An authentic leader and outstanding communicator, Ali has achieved great outcomes for the boards, communities and organisations she has served. Ali is passionate about developing high performing teams and creating a workplace culture that is innovative, empowered, strategic, trusting and fun.

Before joining Bass Coast Shire Council, Ali's prior roles within the Local Government sector include Director City Communities at Melbourne City Council and Director of Social and Economic Development at Yarra Ranges Council.



## Cr Michael Leaney

**Mayor, Baw Baw Shire Council**

Cr Michael Leaney was first elected to Baw Baw Shire Council in 2016 representing the East Ward, and was re-elected in 2020. Cr Leaney is currently serving as Mayor of Baw Baw Shire Council after being elected to this role in November 2021.

Michael formally trained in tourism and hospitality management in the 1980s and has been a long term advocate for this sector for over three decades. In 1998, he built one of Gippsland's best known boutique hotels and has been the hands-on owner/operators ever since. Michael started Gippsland's wider involvement with the international travel trade in the early 2000s and continues to promote his hotel and the region internationally.

Being based in the most remote town of the shire, he is actively involved in the many small communities and encouraging their ongoing viability. He is passionate about advocating for all of the shire's communities, whether they be large towns along Baw Baw's growth corridor or the unique and remote areas. Michael has been on the frontline of natural disasters fighting fires and battling flood and then working on recovery. He has experienced the challenges of COVID firsthand with restrictions forcing his business to close during lockdowns.

As a community leader, he has always pushed for better results and outcomes for all communities no matter how small or diverse. Michael is one of five LGBTIQ+ Mayors in Victoria and lives with his partner Russell. They both love Tilly, their Golden Retriever, and enjoy boating, trains, travel and building model trainsets when time allows.



## Mr Mark Dupe

**CEO, Baw Baw Shire Council**

Mark Dupe is the Chief Executive Officer of Baw Baw Shire Council. Mark joined Council in September 2017 as the Director Corporate and Community Services and was appointed to the Chief Executive Officer position in May 2020.

Before Mark commenced at Baw Baw Shire Council, he held positions of General Manager Corporate Services at the National Heart Foundation, Director Corporate Development at Knox City Council and Group Manager Corporate Services at Bayside City Council.

Mark Dupe holds a Bachelor of Economics, an MBA and postgraduate IT qualifications. Mark is also a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a CPA.



## Cr Mark Reeves

**Mayor, East Gippsland Shire Council**

Mark is a Principal in the Department Of Education and Training Victoria. He has worked in both government and private education in Victoria, NSW and WA. He and his family came to East Gippsland in 1995 to Marshmead, Mallacoota. He has studied at Melbourne University, La Trobe Bundoora and in North Wales UK. He is a Churchill Fellow.

Mark enjoys surfing, Italian motorcycles and riding them on our amazing roads, his beautiful house and the estuary of the Snowy River at Marlo, where he lives.

Mark values access and equity to the benefits of our shire, region, state and country for all, especially those in more remote communities and our Koorie, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities and peoples.

East Gippsland represents the best of all worlds. Mountains, sea, rivers, lakes are natural resources that provide opportunities for all in so many ways.

Mark is supported in everything he does by his wife, Alice. He has adult children who enjoy professional careers. They were educated in government schools in Omeo, Marlo and Orbost, and identify as true East Gippsland people.





## Anthony Basford

CEO, East Gippsland Shire Council

Anthony joined East Gippsland Shire as CEO in November 2018. He has more than 20 years' experience in rural and regional, interface and metropolitan Council's in Victoria and NSW. He has also spent time in the not-for-profit and education sectors in Australia and overseas.

Anthony has a passion for working in local government and with people to achieve the best possible outcomes for communities.

Anthony loves bushwalking, live music and historic cars. He has a Bachelor of Education (Secondary) and a Master of Social Science (Policy and Human Services).



## Cr Mohya Davies

Mayor, South Gippsland Shire Council

Mohya Davies is a Gippy Girl born and bred. She is a local business and farm owner, and has lived - and raised a large family in Foster for over 40 years.

Mohya was first elected to Council in 2008 where she served two terms on Council and two years as Deputy Mayor. In 2021 Mohya was again elected to Council and appointed Mayor.

Mohya has a background in Early Childhood Education, with 30 years' experience in this field. She also has a history of strong community involvement, including 30 years as a board member of the South Gippsland Hospital and participates on a variety of business networks.



## Kerry Ellis

CEO, South Gippsland Shire Council

Kerry Ellis is a passionate public sector leader with over 20 years' experience. She is energised by working with communities in a context of rapid change. Kerry's main professional love is building high performing, ethical and agile organisations, with positive values based leadership that can work in partnership to deliver great outcomes with the community.

Prior to this role, Kerry held the position of Director Corporate Services at Victoria's Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission. She has also held positions as Director Corporate Performance with the City of Greater Bendigo, and Manager Governance and Innovation at Knox City Council.

She has previously worked for the City of Melbourne and Bayside City Council. Kerry holds a Bachelor of Arts, a Master of Commerce and a Graduate Diploma of Public Policy and Management. She completed the LGPro emerging leaders program in 2005, and the Executive Leadership Program in 2016.

# One Gippsland Board Biographies

## Industry Sector Members



### Ms Leigh Kennedy

**Head of Gippsland Campus,  
Federation University**

Leigh grew up in Traralgon, Gippsland completing secondary school at Traralgon High School. Following her completion of secondary education, she then moved to Melbourne to complete a Bachelor of Commerce Economics (Hons) from Monash University before starting work with Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu.

As an executive with nearly 20 years of international leadership experience, spanning five continents, she is acknowledged for her proficiency in Strategy, Research and Planning in banking, consulting, communications, research and analytics.

Leigh has previously worked with consulting firm, Accenture (2000–2006), and a British bank called Standard Chartered Bank (2006–2014). In 2011, Leigh was awarded an Executive MBA (Distinction) from the CASS Business School, City University London.

In March 2019, Leigh joined Federation University from Regional Development Victoria, where she served as the Gippsland Regional Director for approximately four years.

As Head of Campus, Gippsland, Leigh is responsible for facilitating the integration and engagement of the campus in the wider university operations and in the local, regional context. She represents the university locally and engages collaboratively with local community, industry and government leaders to advance the engagement strategy for the Gippsland campus and to optimise the campus' development and contribution to the region.



### Mr Barry Rogers

**Chair, Foods & Fibre Gippsland**

Barry Rogers is the Chair of Food & Fibre Gippsland Inc (F&FG), contributing many years of Board, industry, and community experience in Gippsland.

Food & Fibre Gippsland Inc. was formed in 2019, a result of the amalgamation of Agribusiness Gippsland and the East Gippsland Food Cluster which created a united, collaborative powerhouse. Their mission is to lead capacity building, innovation and knowledge sharing for the greater good of the sector across the whole of Gippsland. F&FG members, industry partners and stakeholders are at the core of everything they do.

Barry volunteers in other ways too – supporting young people and the environment; as chair of the Latrobe Youth Space Inc, Baw Baw Communities that Care and Rotary District 9820 Youth Exchange Program committee. He is a board member of the Baw Baw Latrobe Local Learning and Employment Network, member of the Warragul Regional College Council and of West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority's Community Engagement Network subcommittee.

He's been a part of the Gippsland Community Leadership Program for over 25 years; alumnus, board member/ chair, executive director, and program manager. espousing the theme "Growing Gippsland's Leaders".

He is a leadership developer, trainer, and coach at business consultancy Aerium Pty Ltd. As an accredited 5 Behaviours of Cohesive Teams and NLP (Neuro Linguistics Programming) facilitator and everythingDiSC practitioner, he works to support community members, board directors, and senior managers grow and hone their leadership skills.

Barry is a lifelong Gippslandian. His family all grew up in West Gippsland and love the chance to return home when they can.



### Ms Nicola Pero

**CEO, Food & Fibre Gippsland**

Nicola brings globally developed leadership and Board experience across multiple sectors including food and fibre, visitor economy, strategic events and venue development, regional development and education.

Nicola was a previous CEO at Lardner Park and the current CEO of Food & Fibre Gippsland. She has been a Board Director with Destination Gippsland for several years, Governor-in-Council Appointee to Federation University Australia Council, previous Board Director with Agribusiness Gippsland and then Food & Fibre Gippsland.

Nicola is part of community based Women in Gippsland and has been on a number of regional project reference groups for education and community purposes, and is passionate about our region's current and future growth, sustainability and prosperity, and social equity.



### Mr Grant Radford

CEO, TAFE Gippsland

Grant Radford has been in the CEO role at TAFE Gippsland since March 2018, being formally appointed to the role in Aug 2018.

Grant comes to the role of Chief Executive Officer with TAFE Gippsland having held senior executive management roles in the Commonwealth and Victorian government and the TAFE sector.

He previously held the role of Chief Operating Officer at Chisholm Institute for 10 years directly prior to commencing at TAFE Gippsland and spent 12 years in the public sector including roles with the Department of Defence, Department of Education and Training and Department of Treasury and Finance.



### Mr Nick Murray

Chair, Destination Gippsland

Nick has extensive Board experience with for-profit, not-for-profit, and member-based entities, and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Nick is an experienced Chief Executive Officer with a demonstrated history of achievement in the maritime industry. Skilled in Government, Dredging, Risk Assessment, Occupational Health, and Safety Management Systems. A strong business development professional, he graduated from Australian Institute of Company Directors.

With a passion for regional development and successive executive level roles including Gippsland Ports, Nick brings a wealth of corporate experience to the board.



### Mr Terry Robinson

CEO, Destination Gippsland

Terry is the Chief Executive Officer of Destination Gippsland, the Regional Tourism Board for Gippsland.

He inspires, influences and leads positive tourism outcomes through partnerships across the region.

Terry is keen to help Gippsland communities to generate benefits from building a strong visitor-based economy and recover from the impacts of bushfires and Covid-19.



### Further Information

Susan Chandler | Secretariat Services, One Gippsland

E | policy@collectiveposition.com P | 0418 990 338

Victoria Lobby Register No: 38421146190

Federal Lobby Register No: 18169904232





**2022/23 Pre-Budget Submission**