



# The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan



*A plan crafted by the people of the Great South Coast to create the future we want for our region.*

# Introduction

The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan is the culmination of more than eighteen months of research and consultation. More than two hundred people across a variety of business, industry and community sectors have joined with local, state and federal government representatives to create this practical strategy for the long term sustainable growth of the Great South Coast.

The plan addresses the challenges and opportunities that the region will face in the areas of economic development, connectivity, environment, health and wellbeing, land use and liveability and presents new ways of working together to achieve a shared vision for the future.

Implementation of the plan will support economic development essential to jobs and prosperity across the Great South Coast. It will shape the places where people live, allow us to create healthy sustainable communities, address disadvantage and protect and enhance our natural and historic environment. Strategic actions included in the plan will attract people to live, work, invest and learn in the Great South Coast.

The Commonwealth and State governments have recently committed to this new way of planning for regional investment. New regional structures have been established and new partnerships are being forged to deliver better coordination, smarter focus on physical and social infrastructure needs and a clearer articulation of actions needed to achieve sustainable, productive outcomes.

The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan is a living document that will evolve in response to emerging challenges and opportunities. It will be an important tool in meeting the challenges facing our region, facilitating regional co-operation and increasing community participation. It will empower the people of our region to be proactive, build capacity and make things happen.

*“From agriculture to tourism to sustainable energy, the Great South Coast region is endowed with an enviable range of strengths. This plan will play a critical role in identifying ways in which the region can build on those strengths to secure a prosperous and sustainable future. The Barwon South West Regional Development Australia Committee is proud to have been involved in its development and look forward to working with the region on the plan’s implementation.”*

BRUCE ANSON  
CHAIR, BARWON SOUTH WEST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
AUSTRALIA COMMITTEE

*“The integrated regional planning process is a highly valuable one. It provides a significant opportunity to develop better local strategies and initiatives with the decision makers from many sectors who actually play a part in determining the Great South Coast community’s health and wellbeing outcomes.”*

CHRIS FAULKNER  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,  
BARWON SOUTH WEST REGION

*“The Committee for Portland is grateful for the opportunity to be actively involved in the development of the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan.”*

ANITA RANK  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COMMITTEE FOR PORTLAND

*“The Port of Portland endorses the need for a regional strategic plan and applauds the efforts by the 6 councils to come together to develop a comprehensive plan to address the opportunities and challenges facing our region.”*

SCOTT PATERSON  
CEO, PORT OF PORTLAND

# Contents

<i>The plan at a glance</i>	4
<i>The Great South Coast today</i>	6
<i>Our aspirations</i>	12
<i>Emerging challenges</i>	16
<b><i>Strategy 1 - Position for economic growth</i></b>	<b>18</b>
<b><i>Strategy 2 - Improve our connections</i></b>	<b>28</b>
<b><i>Strategy 3 - Sustain our natural assets</i></b>	<b>36</b>
<b><i>Strategy 4 - Strengthen our communities</i></b>	<b>44</b>
<b><i>Strategy 5 - Increase regional collaboration</i></b>	<b>52</b>
<i>Appendices</i>	
<i>Evidence and consultation</i>	60
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	62



# About this Plan

*A new way of working together for a stronger, more prosperous, equitable, sustainable and liveable Great South Coast.*

## WHAT IS A STRATEGIC REGIONAL PLAN?

The Great South Coast Strategic Regional Plan explores the challenges and opportunities the region will face as it grows over the next decade and beyond. It identifies the economic, environmental and social issues that are predicted to impact upon our way of life, and presents a regionally agreed position on how we should respond to them. The plan looks beyond the terms of current local, State and federal governments and beyond municipal borders to find an agreed framework to plan for the future of the region.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Population growth, changing and emerging industries, environmental impacts and population health status issues are set to create some serious challenges for our region. The aim of this plan is to ensure that these issues are recognised by local, State and federal stakeholders, and also to ensure that new ways of collaboration can be established to support actions that address the strategic goals it presents. By working together across municipalities, industries, governments and interest areas, we can move purposefully towards an agreed future.

## HOW WAS THE PLAN DEVELOPED?

The Plan began with a collaboration agreement between the Victorian Government and the municipalities of Glenelg, Southern Grampians, Warrnambool, Moyne, Corangamite and Colac Otway.

A Project Control Group was formed that included representatives from all six municipalities, a number of state government departments and the Regional

Development Australia Committee. Work then started on gathering information from as many authorities as possible in order to form an accurate picture of the region today. Existing strategies and plans were considered and gaps in the available information were identified. This work was undertaken over eighteen months by a specially commissioned project team and was funded by the six councils of the Great South Coast and Regional Development Victoria.

The evidence and reports produced by the plan's project team informed a Discussion Paper that was released in May 2010. It marked the first time the long term future of the Great South Coast had been considered from a regional perspective.

Before and after its release, consultation was sought from people across various fields of expertise including business, industry, education, health, environment, education and community. The opinion and advice gained from that consultation, roundtable discussions with business and community leaders and input from the Regional Management Forum has significantly influenced the content of this final plan. The result is a plan for the future of our region, by the people of our region.

## HOW WILL THE PLAN LEAD TO ACTION?

An agreed framework will help us to prioritise the things we need, to achieve the future we want. This clearer picture of our priorities will help us secure local, State and federal government resources and funding for their implementation. It will also help encourage cooperation between all levels of government and the region's businesses and community groups, as we move towards our agreed vision for the future of the region.



## THE GREAT SOUTH COAST REGION TODAY

## OUR ASPIRATIONS

## KEY CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

### The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan

#### STRATEGY ONE:

##### Position for economic growth



##### Strategic Goals

**AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY & FISHING**  
issues & actions

**MANUFACTURING**  
issues & actions

**NEW & RENEWABLE ENERGY**  
issues & actions

**TOURISM**  
issues & actions

#### STRATEGY TWO:

##### Improve our connections



##### Strategic Goals

**TRANSPORT**  
issues & actions

**POWER & TELECOMMUNICATIONS**  
issues & actions

**SOCIAL NETWORKS & INFRASTRUCTURE**  
issues & actions

#### STRATEGY THREE:

##### Sustain our natural assets



##### Strategic Goals

**NATURAL RESOURCES**  
issues & actions

**CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS**  
issues & actions

**SETTLEMENTS & LAND USE**  
issues & actions

#### STRATEGY FOUR:

##### Strengthen our communities



##### Strategic Goals

**SKILLS, JOBS & EDUCATION**  
issues & actions

**HEALTH & WELLBEING**  
issues & actions

**HEALTHY LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES**  
issues & actions

#### STRATEGY FIVE:

##### Increase collaboration



##### Strategic Goals

**GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES**  
issues & actions

**PROJECT PRIORITISATION**  
issues & actions

**MEASURING OUR RESULTS**  
issues & actions

## PROJECTS IDENTIFIED LOCALLY AND PRIORITISED REGIONALLY

## PROJECTS RESOURCED THROUGH LOCAL, REGIONAL, STATE AND FEDERAL COLLABORATION

## PROJECTS DELIVERED - REGIONAL VISION FOR THE FUTURE REALISED

# The Great South Coast today

*Rich agricultural land, iconic national parks, bountiful waterways, dense forests, spectacular coastline, historic towns and friendly communities - the Great South Coast has a natural advantage.*

## OUR ENVIRONMENT

The Great South Coast Region is located in the southwest of Victoria. The region extends from Colac and Apollo Bay in the east, to the South Australian Border in the west.

With a rugged coastline and a northern boundary aligned to the Great Dividing Range, the region is one of diverse and vulnerable landscapes, including the Ramsar listed wetlands of the Corangamite area, the Grampians and the Otway Ranges, the western volcanic plains and the Glenelg river system.

Our environment also includes iconic destinations and experiences such as the Great Ocean Road, Port Campbell National Park (featuring the Twelve Apostles and Loch Ard Gorge), the Great South West Walk, Grampians National Park, the Kanawinka Geotrail, Lake Condah wetlands and unique Indigenous culture systems.

Compared to the rest of Victoria, the region has a strong soil, freshwater and marine resource base, which is the basis of our robust agriculture, forestry and fishing industries. One of Australia's best deep water ports is located in Portland.

These environmental assets are important components of the economic and liveability strengths of the region and they are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and population growth. The region's biodiversity, in particular, is extremely vulnerable due to the highly modified and fragmented nature of our landscape.

## OUR ECONOMY

Thanks in part to our relatively secure water supply, we have a robust and innovative agricultural base which generates about \$2 billion in gross revenue a year and employs more than twenty percent of our workforce.

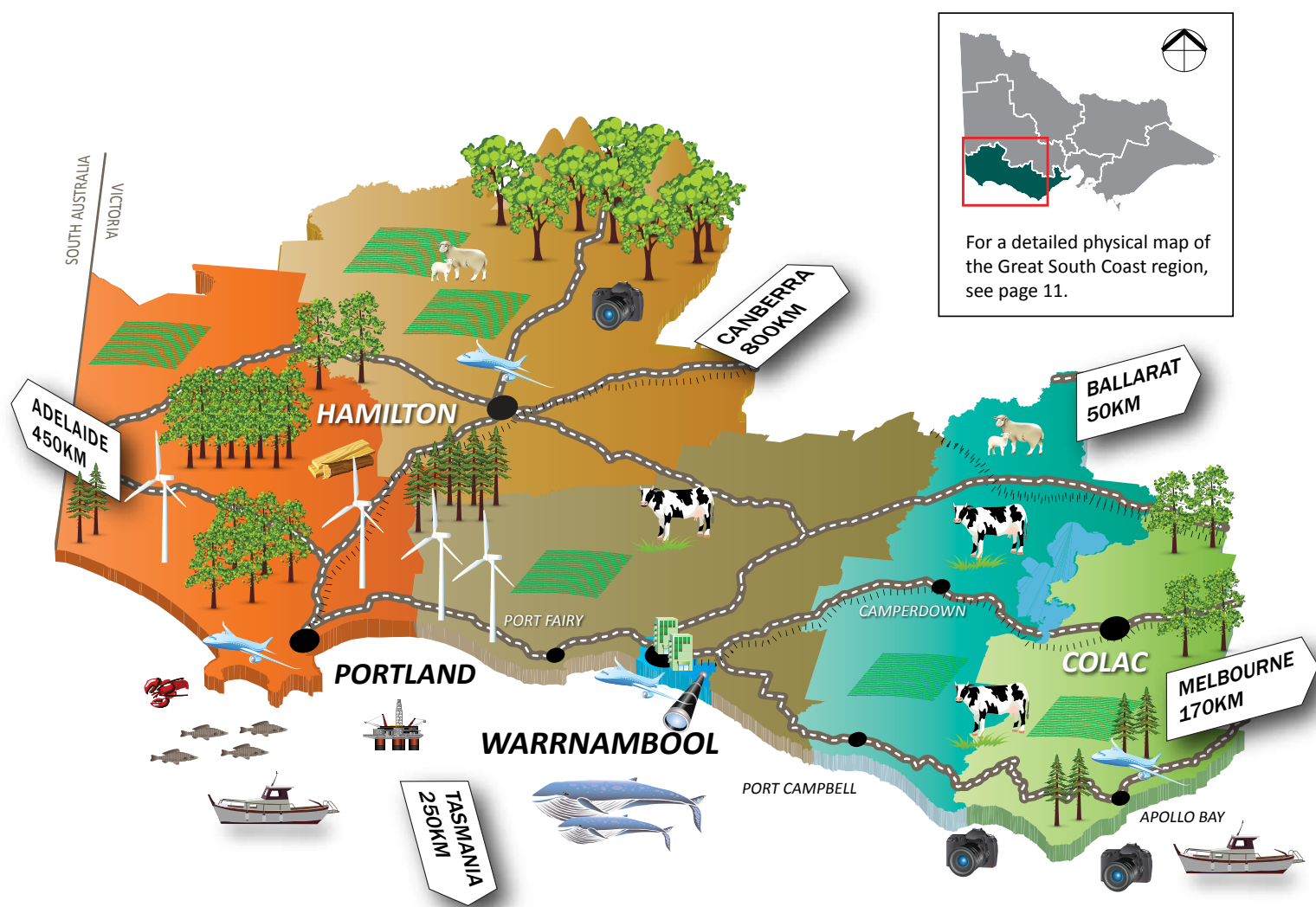
The Great South Coast is Australia's most productive milk region, providing a quarter of the nation's milk.

Our manufacturing sector generates \$4 billion a year, a quarter of which is derived from dairy products. Value adding to primary products occurs via milk food processing in Warrnambool, Allansford, Koroit, Colac, Cobden and Simpson, meat processing in Warrnambool and Colac, and timber processing in Portland and Colac.

Other significant manufacturing sector activities include aluminium production near Portland, mineral sands processing near Hamilton, and wind turbine systems fabrication and assembly in Portland.

Forestry is an increasingly important sector with nearly twenty percent of the nation's forestry plantations in, or near, the Great South Coast. Over the next few years, harvesting of 180,000 hectares of blue gum plantation will see the Port of Portland become Australia's largest hardwood chip handling port.

Four million tonnes of grain, wood chips, livestock, aluminium ingots and mineral sands per year move through our gateway port facility at Portland. Ninety-two percent of the region's wool, eighty-two percent of its grains, seventy-seven percent of its skim milk powder, forty-five percent of its beef and thirty-five percent of its lamb are exported to overseas markets.

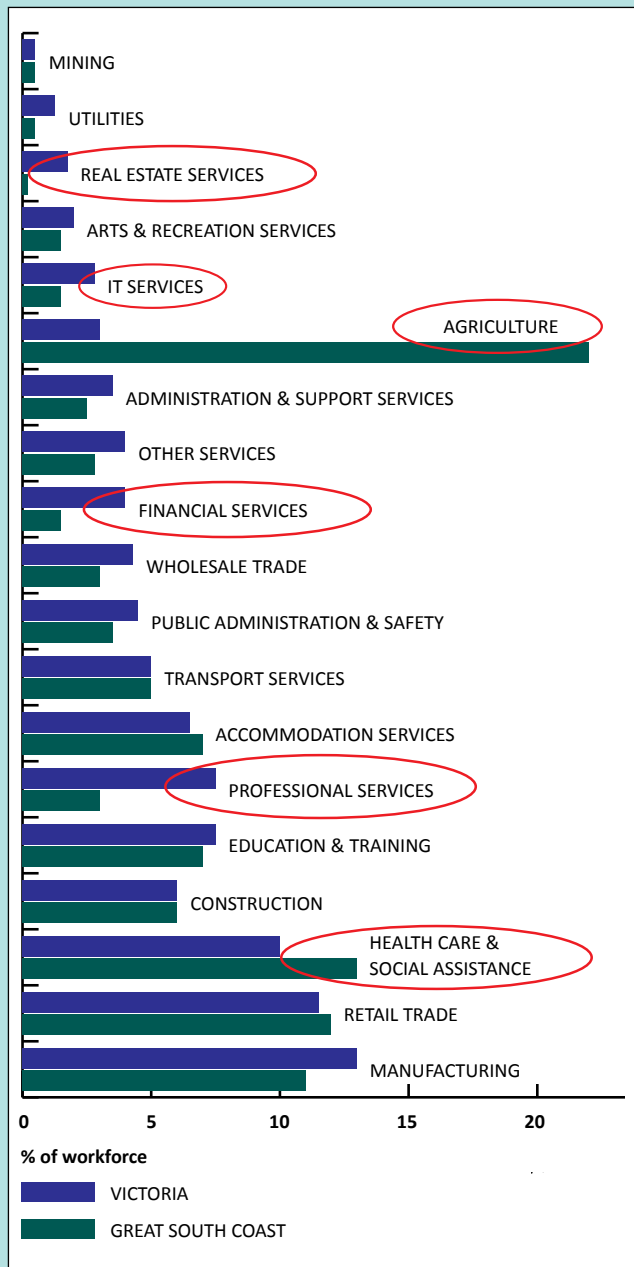


## Population distribution in 2008

Location	Statistical local area	Male	Female	Total	% of LGA	% of GSC region
Southern Grampians	Hamilton SLA	4,622	4,988	9610	55%	8%
	Wannon SLA	1,169	1,197	2366	14%	2%
	S. Grampians Bal SLA	2,814	2,661	5475	31%	4%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8,605</b>	<b>8,846</b>	<b>17451</b>		<b>14%</b>
Glenelg	Heywood SLA	3,356	3,067	6423	31%	5%
	North SLA	1,687	1,700	3387	16%	3%
	Portland SLA	5,563	5,498	11061	53%	9%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10,606</b>	<b>10,265</b>	<b>20871</b>		<b>17%</b>
Warrnambool	<b>Total</b>	<b>15,914</b>	<b>16,798</b>	<b>32712</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>26%</b>
Corangamite	North SLA	4,722	4,732	9454	55%	7%
	South SLA	3,972	3,844	7816	45%	6%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8,694</b>	<b>8,576</b>	<b>17270</b>		<b>14%</b>
Moyne	North-East SLA	1,252	1,245	2497	15%	2%
	North-West SLA	1,454	1,442	2896	18%	2%
	South SLA	5,517	5,495	11012	67%	9%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8,223</b>	<b>8,182</b>	<b>16405</b>		<b>13%</b>
Colac-Otway	Colac SLA	5,584	5,850	11434	53%	9%
	North SLA	3,315	3,065	6380	30%	5%
	South SLA	1,921	1,713	3634	17%	3%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10,820</b>	<b>10,628</b>	<b>21448</b>		<b>17%</b>
<b>Great South Coast region total</b>		<b>62,862</b>	<b>63,295</b>	<b>126,157</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: 30 June 2008 revised Estimated Resident population (released Aug 2009), Australian Bureau of Statistics

## INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT (LAST FIVE YEARS)



Compared to the Victorian average, the Great South Coast has significantly different proportions of the workforce in agriculture, IT services, real estate services, financial services, professional services and health care services.

Transition to a low carbon economy will open new “green” employment markets and will drive re-skilling across a range of contemporary businesses and industries. The demands on the education and training sector will be unprecedented.

All sectors will have to commit to new recruitment techniques, more creative job design and other retention strategies.

A significant road and rail transport sector feeds the port and will employ more of our workforce as anticipated traffic to the port increases.

Our retail and construction sectors currently contribute more than \$1 billion a year to the economy. In 2008, 93 major investment and development projects were identified, equating to \$8.7 billion of investment, with an estimated total impact of \$16.53 billion.

Our health and community services and education sectors are our third and fifth biggest employers respectively, currently employing more than twenty percent of our workforce.

The Great South Coast is now rolling out new and renewable energy investments, based on proven wind, oil and natural gas resources. Trialling of wave and geothermal energy generation is also underway.

Almost half of all international overnight visits to regional Victoria are in the Great Ocean Road region. Nature based tourism currently employs five percent of our workforce and generates four percent of our total output, however we are implementing a number of strategies to capture a higher economic yield through development of new products and experiences.

## OUR WORKFORCE

Providing the necessary workforce for our current and emerging industries will be one of our greatest challenges. The ageing of the population and exodus of the baby boomers from the workforce will result in an overall decrease in workforce participation and increased competition for labour and skills. This situation will not be helped by the loss of young adults from our region and the lower than average Year 12 and tertiary education retention rates.

Labour demands from unprecedented growth and the emergence of new industry will need to be met by investing in workforce development infrastructure such as trade training centres and providing relevant tertiary education and lifelong learning opportunities for people from our region and beyond.



## OUR PEOPLE

In 2010 more than 125,000 people live in the Great South Coast. More than 33,000 live in Warrnambool and more than fifty percent of the populations of Southern Grampians, Glenelg and Colac Otway Shires live in Hamilton, Portland and Colac respectively.

Our region has fourteen percent more disabled community members compared to the State average. We also have a higher percentage of Aboriginal community members, the vast majority of whom are under 40 years of age.

However, with the exception of Warrnambool, our population is older than that of metropolitan Melbourne, rural Victoria and the State as a whole. Nearly half of our population is over 45 years of age and that proportion is set to rise dramatically.

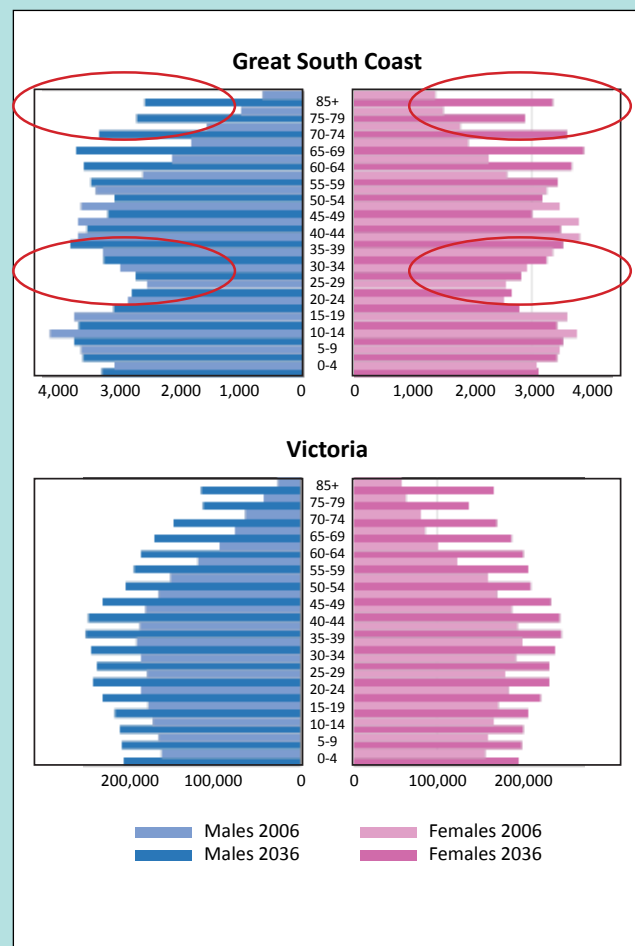
The Great South Coast has a number of areas with a high level of socio economic disadvantage, characterised by lower levels of income, lower educational attainment, high levels of unemployment, unskilled occupations and dwellings without motor vehicles. Post-secondary qualification rates across our region are well below the Victorian average.

Residents of the Great South Coast report that they feel generally well, but this is being offset by rising levels of preventable chronic illness, above average risky behaviours and the ongoing impacts of social disadvantage and inequity.

The changing balance between the working population and those who need support (for example the very young or the elderly) is expected to impact significantly on health and community service models in the medium term, particularly for older people with complex and chronic conditions and those living in small towns and settlements.

The future workforce for our growing economy will contain people and families who have migrated to the area in response to skills shortages. Strong, well connected and inclusive social networks will continue to be essential features of our communities.

## THE AGE AND GENDER OF OUR POPULATION



The longer term demographic projections show that the Great South Coast will have a significantly higher proportion of elderly people and a significantly lower proportion of younger people than the Victorian average.

The historically unprecedented projected increase in aged and frail aged people will have a powerful impact on families, communities and on health and community services.

At the same time, the low number of young people will have significant implications for workforce provision for the growing and emerging industries of the Great South Coast.

Over the last 10 years, there has been significant population change across the Great South Coast region. Warrnambool experienced notable growth, while other areas have remained stable or declined.

Between 1996 and 2006, the percentage of people under 19 years of age increased slightly in Warrnambool, while all other LGAs recorded negative growth to the number of people in the same age bracket.

More than eighty-five percent of the region's population growth over the past ten years has occurred in Warrnambool.

## OUR CITIES AND TOWNS

### WARRNAMBOOL

Warrnambool is the largest centre within the Great South Coast region with an estimated population of approximately 33,000 in 2009. Warrnambool City is projected to accommodate approximately 50% of the Great South Coast region's resident population growth over the next 10-15 years. High demand for new residential lots, estimates prepared by the City and latest DPCD 2009 estimates indicate that previous forecasts could be an underestimation.

This growth reflects the city's high level of service provision, employment options, good access by road and rail to Melbourne and its coastal location which is often favoured by people moving from intra-State areas. The city has capacity for outward growth, however there are significant infill opportunities including the potential for medium density housing to provide a diversity of housing options. These factors indicate that Warrnambool should continue to be the primary (but not sole) focus of resident growth in the region for the next 10 years.

Journey to work data from 2006 and recent anecdotal evidence suggests that townships near Warrnambool – Allansford, Koroit, Port Fairy, and even more distant townships such as Port Campbell and Terang - are increasingly housing people working in Warrnambool. These townships are to be supported as a way of increasing the growth potential of Warrnambool as an employment centre, providing alternative lifestyle and housing options for the area and reducing the need for further outward expansion of Warrnambool into sensitive or agricultural areas.

As a result, Warrnambool's 'Area of interrelationship' with its hinterland is quite extensive. The Moyne/Warrnambool Rural Housing and Settlement Strategy explores actual future growth potential of many of these smaller townships.

### COLAC

Colac is a major inland town and a key agricultural, industrial, commercial and service centre with a population of 12,000.

Population projections for Colac suggest a moderate growth rate over the next 15 year period. There are designated growth areas around the town, and few constraints to future expansion.

Colac has substantial potential to accommodate more residents and is experiencing pressure for rural living properties in particular at present. Its location in proximity to Geelong, Melbourne and Ballarat, mean that it is well placed to be a growth centre for the region.

The growth of tourism around the Great Ocean Road, Apollo Bay and the Otways, along with the availability of lifestyle choices in small bush townships and coastal villages, and the thriving agricultural sector, indicate continued growth potential.

Colac's 'area of interrelationship' is with the nearby rural lifestyle townships of Birregurra and Beeac and the Otway bush towns of Forrest, Beech Forest and Gellibrand.

### PORTLAND

Portland operates as a major gateway to the region by road from the west, and by sea for produce of the region.

Portland has a moderate projected growth and a highly significant industrial and port related employment base that suffers from workforce shortages at times.

Population growth in the town is required to support the industrial growth. The town could accommodate substantial further development, although detailed study is required to determine the exact locations and any physical constraints.

Portland supports a strong recreation/tourism industry with growth and diversification potential, and combined with continued port related industrial growth and its coastal location, this indicates that moderate growth will be readily achievable. Release of more land could assist in increasing housing affordability which is considered to constrain population increase at present.

Heywood is considered to be within the Portland's 'area of interrelationship', as it is closely linked through industrial activity and the rail line, and each could house workers in the other town due to their relative proximity. Both towns will benefit from the proposed rail extension to Mt Gambier.

### HAMILTON

Hamilton is the other major inland town of the region, possessing an extensive range of health, education and other services and facilities, good road access, a freight rail connection and an airport, that could potentially form a base to support a much larger population.

Initial outcomes of a detailed study to identify the capacity of land available for expansion, indicate substantial capacity in undeveloped zoned land for standard residential, low density residential and industrial development and also via infill.

The town is forecast to grow in resident population by only a small proportion over the next 15 years (reflecting low growth in previous years). However there are significant opportunities to capitalise on the quality lifestyle and future economic growth in the area to exceed these forecasts. This will require a number of actions to support and generate this growth over the next 10-15 years.

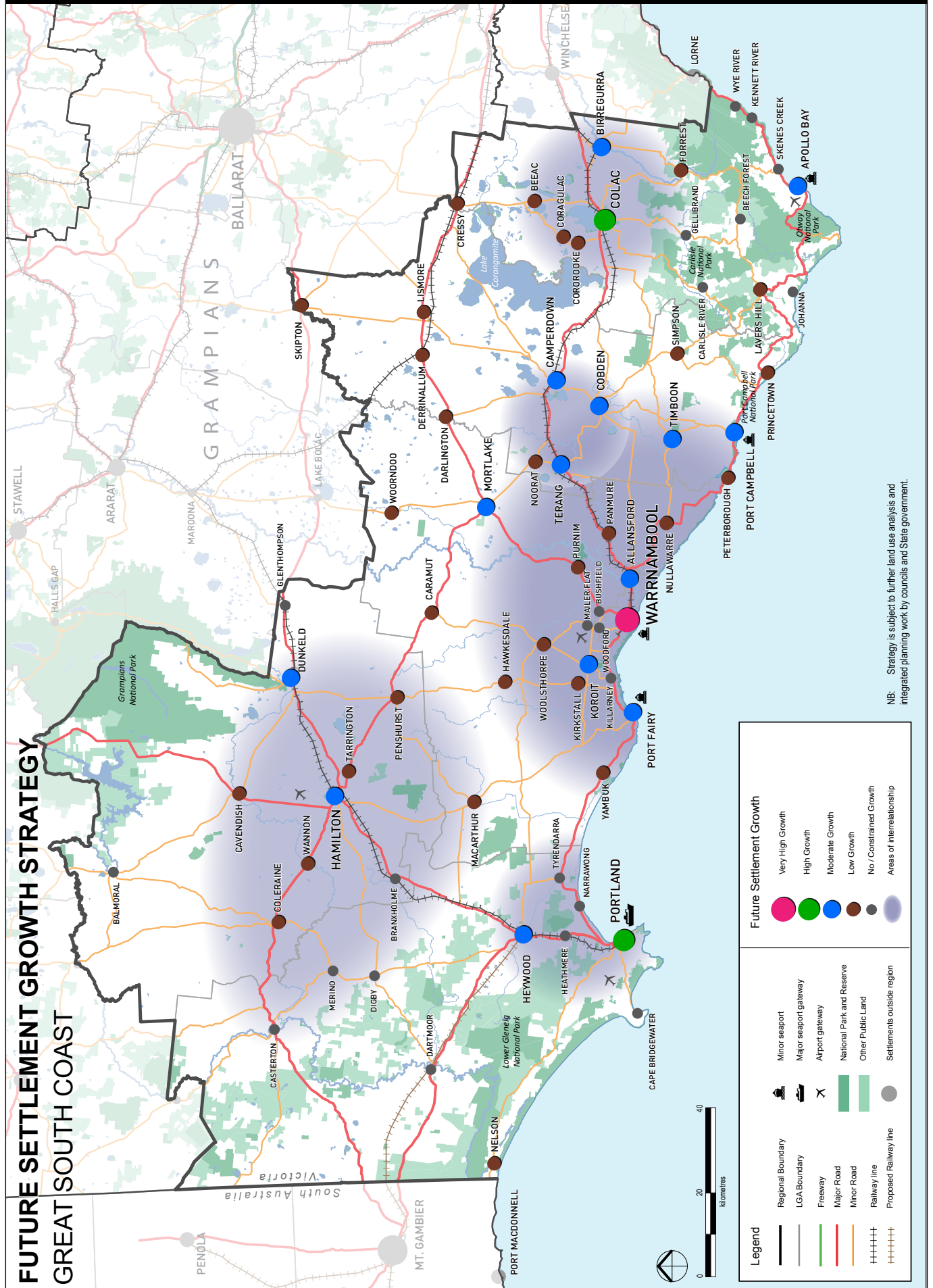
Hamilton's 'area of interrelationship' is extensive but relatively weak at present, as limited numbers of people commute to Hamilton for employment because the town has the ability to accommodate much of its future growth within its boundaries. However Dunkeld and Penshurst are emerging as future tourism and lifestyle choice locations that could serve in part as a dormitory settlement for Hamilton's workforce. Similarly Coleraine, Wannon and Cavendish fall within the area estimated to be within Hamilton's future 'area of interrelationship' as they are within easy driving distance for commuters. Coleraine has recently obtained funding for a significant upgrade to its hospital, and as it is sewered, could accommodate further growth.

### CAPACITY FOR GROWTH

In order to determine a strategy for the region in population growth, it is necessary to focus on settlements, and in particular determine which settlements will be able to physically accommodate and attract new residents, as well as retaining existing residents. In general settlements can be assessed utilising a range of factors to identify their relative capacity for future resident growth: population trend analysis for the SLA; adequate residential land supply; industrial land supply; passenger and freight rail connections; other transport connections; reticulated water and sewerage; natural gas availability; employment base; known economic growth; potential for new employment bases; availability of community, health, education services and other infrastructure; location relative to Melbourne, the coast and other growth centres.

All these elements have been assessed in determining the population growth strategy for settlements in the region.

This map shows the relative proposed future growth of the region's settlements. It is based on current growth trends, known growth constraints and opportunities, and the intent for each as a result of the implementation of this Plan. The 'areas of inter relationship' show smaller settlements the future role and growth of which is closely linked, by locational, economic and social factors, to the larger centre.



# Our aspirations

*Over the next 10-15 years, we will create a thriving, multifaceted and resilient economy, while valuing and protecting our natural resources and environment. Our people will be healthy, well educated and have great lifestyle choices.*

## **A THRIVING, DIVERSE AND RESILIENT AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY**

We will build upon the considerable sectors that exist today to become Australia's most productive, innovative and sustainable agriculture, forestry and wild catch fishing region. Our produce will be in demand in a range of markets and will be transported quickly and cost-effectively. We will have a strong and skilled workforce available to the sector and state of the art transport infrastructure. Land use and climate change impacts are managed to enable sustainable growth of the industry, while also protecting the region's biodiversity and liveability.

## **INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED FOR NATURE BASED TOURISM EXPERIENCES**

We will develop our significant nature based tourism assets and experiences to become Victoria's number one tourist destination, renowned not only for the sustainable management of our environmental assets, but also for our focus on Indigenous culture and heritage tourism. We will increase the number and lengths of tourist visits and will more broadly disperse the growing tourism yield throughout the region.

## **VICTORIAN CENTRE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY**

The Great South Coast will become a major generator of alternative energy, through innovative and pragmatic development of its wind, gas, wave and geothermal energy sources. We encourage innovation by offering tertiary courses specialising in renewable energy technologies and by investing in energy infrastructure.

## **A MAGNET FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO STUDY, WORK AND LIVE**

We will achieve industry growth and community strength by attracting more young people to our region to study. The region will offer tertiary and technical courses in our existing and emerging industry technologies, together with employment opportunities and a range of attractive and affordable living options. Telecommunications and transport alternatives will make the region more accessible than ever before.

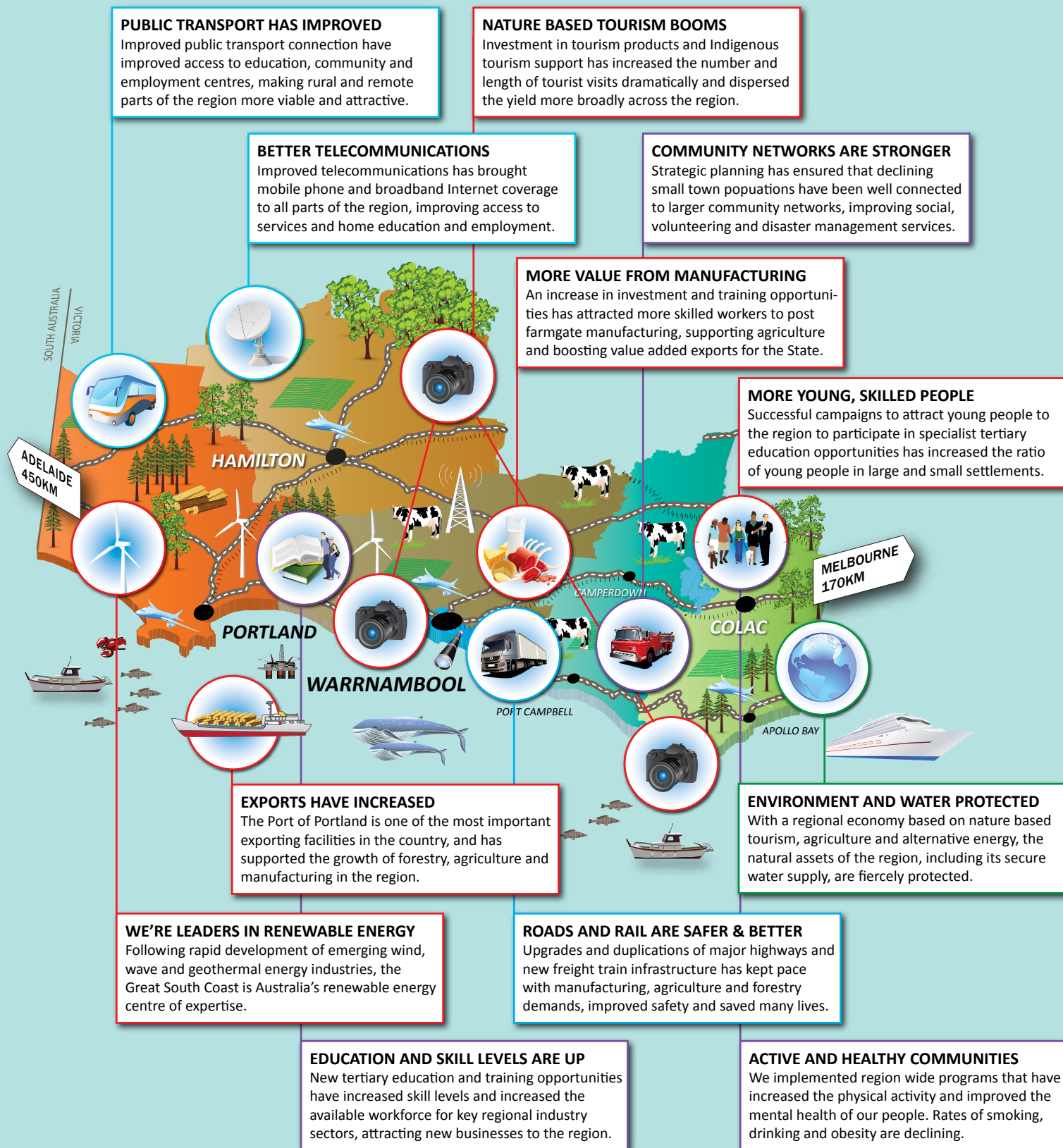
## **A FAMILY-FRIENDLY REGION WITH EQUITABLE, ATTRACTIVE AND AFFORDABLE LIFESTYLES**

We will strengthen our communities by ensuring that growing industry land needs do not lessen the availability of attractive and affordable residential living options, in close proximity to employment centres. Arts and technology networks will be strengthened. We will take measures to reduce the pockets of disadvantage that currently exist in the region, and ensure that future growth planning minimises the creation of any more.

## **WE ARE WELL CONNECTED**

We will improve public transport, telecommunications and social networks to support living in smaller rural settlements, particularly for our growing elderly population. Region wide broadband Internet access will improve the competitive position of our businesses and industries and increase lifelong learning opportunities. Our road, rail and airport infrastructure will be upgraded to facilitate the anticipated growth in the





agriculture, forestry, manufacturing industries and attract further investment, and will also improve safety conditions for our residents and visitors. Our community networks will have boosted volunteerism and created strong disaster management teams right across the region and liveability will be enhanced by our accessible parks and trails networks.

## THE HEALTHY LIFESTYLE REGION

We will create healthier communities by providing spaces and places for healthy, active lifestyles and focussing on early life foundations for good health. We will have reduced smoking, alcohol, obesity and mental health issues in the community, and we will have improved the lives of people in disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of our community.

## FUTURE ROLES OF OUR CENTRES AND TOWNS

### WARRNAMBOOL

#### Major Regional Centre

Warrnambool's retail and commercial sector is the primary employer and is growing, and while the traditional manufacturing and wholesale trade base is stable, the health and community service and construction sectors are increasing. The city's professional services and administrative role is important and is supported by the recent location of state government agencies. Warrnambool plays a significant educational role in the region with the campus of Deakin University and South West TAFE attracting new residents from Melbourne, and several large public and private secondary schools. Warrnambool has two hospitals; South West Healthcare (Warrnambool Campus) and St. John of God Hospital. The former is a teaching hospital, and provides a full range of medical, surgical and community health services to the south-west region of Victoria. The hospital is currently undergoing major redevelopment and expansion. Warrnambool's role as the primary service centre in the region is entrenched, and will continue to increase in future.

### COLAC

#### Regional Gateway

Colac is the major service centre for growing coastal towns like Apollo Bay, and is less than an hour away from Geelong and Ballarat and in reasonable proximity to Melbourne.

With a wealth of natural resources, and little constraint on expansion, Colac is forecast to remain the region's second largest town after Warrnambool. Main industries include primary production, tourism, fishing, timber, food processing and manufacturing. Growth in public service, construction and retail business is anticipated to increase in the future.

### PORTLAND

#### Regional Gateway

Portland functions as the nationally significant seaport gateway to global markets for the region and beyond.

The predicted economic growth of the town is significant, primarily in its port related industrial base, but there is potential also in tourism and new energy servicing roles, and this growth needs to be supported by retention of the labour market and infrastructure improvements.

### HAMILTON

#### Regional Service Centre

Hamilton contains a strong retail centre and service sector, including significant employment related to the Western District Health Service, and significant tertiary and secondary education facilities that serve a wide catchment. It has a significant agricultural service role. Its role as a major agricultural, health, community, government office, retail and commercial services centre for the sub-region must be maintained and supported, and this will involve retaining and growing its services to meet the demands of the sub-region, not just that of its residents. Recent growth in the mining and wind farm industries will serve to increase resident population at least in the short-medium term, and generate service needs. There are opportunities to capitalise on the town's rail infrastructure to serve the agricultural and natural resource hinterland, and potential regional growth markets in education and eco-tourism that Hamilton is well placed to develop.

### MAJOR RURAL AND COASTAL CENTRES

Camperdown and Colac have strong agricultural service and manufacturing functions, with both undergoing growth through recent location of employment generating activities.

Smaller towns with milk food processing capacity such as Timboon, Simpson, Cobden, Koroit, and Allansford all have important agricultural value adding functions.

Apollo Bay, Port Fairy and Port Campbell have strong tourism growth and commercial fishing roles that support a range of businesses and industries in the surrounding areas. These specialist roles need to be maintained and supported for the economic health of the region.

#### DISTRICT CENTRES: RURAL DISTRICT CENTRE

- Diverse population base
- Retail and service centre for agricultural hinterland
- Rural industry base
- Good transport linkages
- Good access to medical and education services
- All essential utility services available

#### COASTAL DISTRICT CENTRE

- Diverse population base
- Strong tourism/ recreation function
- Large seasonal population variation, low proportions of permanent residents
- All essential utility services available
- Transport linkages seasonal
- Fishing industry base
- Specialist retail role

#### TOWNS: RURAL TOWN

- Retail and service centre for rural hinterland
- Mixed level of services and infrastructure available
- Reticulated water and sewer
- Transport connections good to poor
- Community hub function

#### COASTAL TOWN

- Strong tourism base, seasonal population variation
- Convenience retail and service centre
- Reticulated water and sewer
- Transport linkages generally limited
- Limited services and infrastructure available

#### VILLAGES: RURAL VILLAGE

- Retail and service centre for rural hinterland
- Limited services and infrastructure available
- Transport connections limited
- Community hub function

#### COASTAL/TOURISM VILLAGE

- Tourism function
- Retail and service centre for rural hinterland
- Limited services and infrastructure available
- Transport connections generally limited
- Community hub function

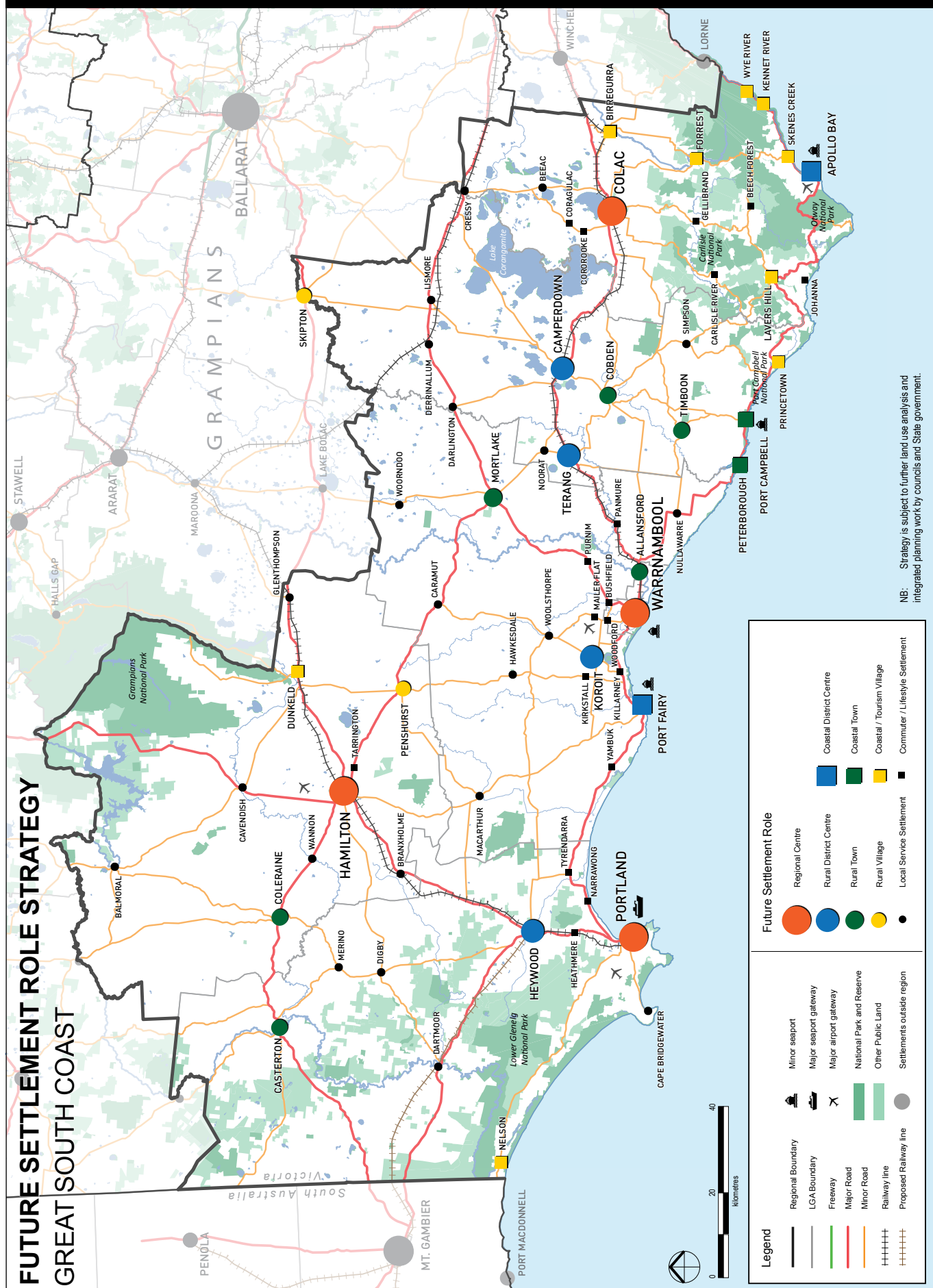
#### SMALL SETTLEMENTS: LOCAL SERVICE SETTLEMENT

- Retail and service centre for local rural hinterland
- Few services and infrastructure available

#### COMMUTER/LIFESTYLE SETTLEMENT

- Retail and service centre for local rural hinterland
- Often dormitory role for nearby larger settlement
- Often attractive landscape setting
- Few services and infrastructure available

This map identifies the proposed dominant role of each settlement in the region. It is aligned with the general categories contained in 'Ready for Tomorrow – Blueprint for Regional and Rural Victoria', refined to identify particular economic strengths and differences as a result of the primary economic drivers of each town. Further land use and integrated planning work by councils and State government will refine the intentions and implementation implications of these map designations.



# Emerging challenges

*Recognising our issues is an important step towards addressing them. Our challenges are significant, they are not insurmountable and may even lead to unexpected opportunities for our region.*

In 2010, nearly half of our population is over 45 years of age. By 2026, the proportion of our population over 65 years of age will have increased by a further seventy-four percent, and the proportion over 75 years will have increased by sixty-eight percent. We will also have proportionately less young people than we have now.

The dominant demographic trend in the region is an increase in the older population. The existing difficulty in attracting and retaining labour, coupled with the increasing support service demands of an older population are major challenges for the region with implications across a range of areas.

## **COASTAL DEVELOPMENT GROWTH PRESSURES**

Continued pressure for development along the coast for lifestyle choice and holiday destinations creates environmental and service delivery challenges. Peri-urban development between coastal settlements and development of old subdivisions will continue to generate policy challenges and can create long-term transport, health service and employment issues.

## **SMALL TOWN POPULATION DECLINE**

Many areas of the region are undergoing change as communities age and employment centres shift. Some settlements will continue to decline. Conversely, there will be major challenges involved in planning for the significant population growth of Warrnambool. The social and practical impacts of this will need to be managed. Encouraging new residents to an area to arrest decline, sometimes brings new challenges in accepting different cultural and social background and accommodating different expectations and needs.

## **LABOUR SHORTAGES**

The Great South Coast is already experiencing critical labour shortages (technicians, labourers, managers), across the transport, food processing and dairy sectors.

The disproportionate ageing of the rural population, exacerbated by the loss of rural youth and young adults to larger urban centres, combined with increased skill and labour competition between sectors, could be a significant constraint to the anticipated economic development of the Great South Coast.

The combined impact of the demographic trends will be a decrease in the traditional workforce pool. These impacts on the workforce pool are noticeable now and will become a significant challenge for workforce planners by 2016.

## **EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS**

According to the 2006 Census, less than one third of the eligible population had completed year 12 schooling, well below the Victorian average of 44%. Of those who completed year 12, only a quarter went to university, 10% went on to vocational education and training, 20% started apprenticeships and the remainder looked for or found employment.

While there is a slightly higher than average representation of managers, administrators and professionals in the Great South Coast, there are also significantly higher percentages of labourers and unskilled or semi-skilled workers. Skills gap analysis shows significant and growing gaps in Great South Coast industry and service sector needs.



## Population forecast – total population

Area	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2006-26 % increase
Southern Grampians	17,187	17,348	17,423	17,563	17,709	3%
Glenelg	20,525	21,081	21,405	21,670	21,961	7%
Warrnambool	31,501	33,321	35,223	37,267	39,229	25%
Corangamite	17,171	17,479	17,608	17,696	17,884	4%
Moyne	16,002	16,509	16,921	17,390	17,958	12%
Colac-Otway	21,030	21,616	22,113	22,613	23,116	10%
Great South Coast	123,416	127,354	130,693	134,199	137,857	12%
Regional Victoria	1,383,318	1,466,224	1,545,205	1,627,247	1,710,327	24%
Victoria	5,128,300	5,549,799	5,942,900	6,332,765	6,711,178	31%

Source: [www.dpcd.vic.gov.au](http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au)

## EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SERVICES

The rate of dependent elderly people in the Great South Coast will accelerate sharply from around 27% to 42% between 2011 and 2026.

Around half of the people of the Great South Coast live in the main population centres of Warrnambool, Hamilton, Portland and Colac. The balance live in towns and small rural communities across an area of 27,000 square kilometres. Ensuring that all communities and sub regional areas are well linked to quality services and infrastructure is a significant challenge that will require integrated transport systems, better communication networks and a high level of community engagement.

## DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS AND PLACES

Every municipality in the Great South Coast has pockets of the highest level of socio-economic disadvantage, characterised by lower incomes, education and skill levels, and higher levels of unemployment, family and health issues and unskilled occupations. More than 11,000 people, or 9% of the total Great South Coast population live in areas of highest disadvantage.

## CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

In 2010, many of the natural resources of the region are in a poor to moderate condition. The Great South Coast landscape is highly modified and fragmented, so regional biodiversity is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Sea level rise and predicted increases in extreme weather events like heat waves,

bushfire, severe storms, and coastal and riverine flooding will impact on our key industries, settlements and communities. Social tensions may arise in response to ineffective emergency responses and post event support. Disadvantaged groups with limited adaptive resources are likely to be disproportionately hurt by extreme weather and the long term impacts of climate change.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE FLUCTUATIONS

The rural and industrial sectors in the region are vulnerable to the variability of increasingly deregulated international markets over which there is no national, state or regional control. The global financial crisis is one example of this, however political and monetary policy of market nations are in constant change. If the region relies too heavily on one or few overseas markets for its produce (natural resources, agricultural or manufactured) it could be exposed to these vagaries with few options for alternative income, employment and related services.

## HEALTH & WELLBEING OUTCOMES

Smoking, unhealthy eating, alcohol consumption, and physical inactivity in the Great South Coast are all occurring at significantly higher rates than the Victorian average. As a consequence the region has high levels of obesity, diabetes, violent crime and family violence incidents. Latest trends indicate that these levels are rising, particularly in lower socio-economic groups. Increasing demands on health services will be exacerbated by the needs of our ageing population.



# Position the Great South Coast for economic growth

*Our healthy economy faces new challenges in securing skilled workers, affordable employment land and infrastructure efficiency to allow growing and emerging industries to compete in a global market.*

Our healthy economy includes industries of state and national importance, but it will face new challenges in the coming ten years to which it must adapt to secure its long term future. Our most important industry sectors are Agriculture (primarily dairy, wool and livestock) and Manufacturing (primarily food processing, aluminium production, mineral sands and wood chip processing), Forestry, Transport and Logistics, Retail, Education and Health and Community Services. While these are the current focal points, new industries such as renewable energy and nature based tourism are emerging that will provide a broader economic base.

## THE AGEING OF THE WORKFORCE

Great South Coast employment is projected to grow from 57,000 to 75,000 over the 20 year period 2006-2026. Two thirds (12,000) of the 18,000 rise in employment will be accounted for by the construction, health and community services, retail trade and transport and storage sectors. The only sector (of 17 sectors identified) to project a decline in jobs is agriculture, forestry and fishing. Thirty percent of the employment growth is forecast to occur in Warrnambool. All Great South Coast municipalities are predicting a 25-35% growth in jobs over the next 20 years.

Unemployment remains low, and below state-wide rates. This low pool of potential workers has comparatively low skill and education levels. Given the expectations of employment growth and new investment, urgent intervention strategies are needed to improve skill and education attainment levels to build and maintain our labour force.

## GROWING OUR WORKFORCE

Almost forty percent of our region's businesses currently report job vacancies and sixty-two percent of businesses expect to increase their workforce in the next three years as compared with the statewide average of thirty-five percent.

Recruitment is currently problematic with seventy-seven percent of businesses who have attempted to recruit in the past two years having experienced difficulty. Businesses have not adequately adjusted to the new workforce reality with employers still predominantly using traditional recruitment methods that are limited to seeking staff only from the local area. This approach, combined with increased demand from new industry to the region is creating competitive labour cost pressures and will ultimately be at the expense of traditional and established industries without an increase in the labour pool.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE CHALLENGES

The strength of export industries in the region exposes our economy to offshore influences such as fluctuations in international terms of trade, and trading competition. Strategic action is required to provide incentives to diversify and subsequently build resilience into the regional agricultural economy. In some parts of our region the reliance on agriculture constrains employment growth and increases the local impact of sudden downturns.

## CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTION

Although the region is comparatively water secure, intensification of land use will have an impact on the region's water resources. The predicted trends of diminishing surface water runoff associated with climate change combined with greater water demand will require more accountability in the way that water use is prioritised across competing sectors. Availability of ground water is a major concern. Any drying of the region will see grains production extend further to the south, reducing pastoral and forestry opportunities and impacting on coastal zone activities currently committed to milk production.

## COMPETING LAND USES

The region's relatively well watered coastal fringe is experiencing increased peri-urban development pressure at the same time as an intensification of agricultural land use. Continuing loss of high quality agricultural land to residential development acts to erode both agricultural production capacity and impede rural exports.

## INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

The deepwater Port of Portland and the road and rail infrastructure which serve it, are critical components of regional and state freight transport systems, providing regional producers with a gateway to global markets. Constraints to the growth of the Port need to be identified and managed to ensure that this vital transport function is maintained and grows to accommodate demand.

Expected industry growth is likely to create capacity challenges in the rail transport network. Many lines have been funded for upgrades that will improve the speed and efficiency of the network. Additional rail access and terminal improvements, and highway and arterial road improvements are urgently needed.

# Strategic goals

- 1.1 Meet the future labour and skill demands of current and emerging industries.
- 1.2 Diversify our economy to reduce our exposure to global trade fluctuations.
- 1.3 Invest in renewable energy development and position ourselves to become Australia's alternative energy centre.
- 1.4 Build the capacity of our agribusiness sector to become the Australian centre for agricultural/dairy research.
- 1.5 Improve the region's critical infrastructure systems (transport, telecommunications, power, water) and protect them against the impacts of climate change.
- 1.6 Build our leadership and entrepreneurial capacity, particularly in the small and home based business sectors.
- 1.7 Build the capacity of our major industry sectors to thrive in a carbon constrained economy.
- 1.8 Protect the long term future of our economy through sustainable management of our land and water resources.

## FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

- Invest in new nature based tourism products and experiences to diversify our economy and increase international tourism visits and yields.
- Invest in renewable energy knowledge and skills development.
- Invest in tertiary education retention and outcome improvement initiatives.



## Agriculture, forestry & fishing

*The cornerstone of the Great South Coast economy.*

The region is responsible for the highest levels of agricultural production in dairy, wool and meat in Victoria with Corangamite and Moyne Shires ranking second and third in the nation in terms of gross value of dairy production for local government areas.

Our dairy industry produces thirty-eight percent of the state's milk and a quarter of the national yield. It is our number one export earner.

Our dominant primary industry sector extends beyond dairy activity to include extensive beef and sheep grazing, broad acre cropping, forestry and wild catch fishing. The sector is highly export orientated with most of our wool, wheat and dairy products sold to overseas markets, along with nearly half of our beef and a third of our lamb.

Agriculture, forestry and fishing is currently the biggest employer in the Great South Coast, accounting for eighteen percent of our employment base (in comparison to the non-metropolitan Victorian average of nine and a half percent). Agriculture's total output is nearly \$2 billion (14%), which is second only to manufacturing at nearly \$4 billion (29%) - although it is important to note that 25% of the manufacturing sector's output is derived from dairy products.

### POST FARM-GATE

Agriculture and manufacturing account for approximately a third of all value adding occurring in the region. Agriculture accounts for the highest

value-added economic measure of eighteen percent (over \$1 billion), while manufacturing accounts for fifteen percent of total value-added at \$842 million. This demonstrates that agriculture and post farm gate processing is the cornerstone of our economy.

### FORESTRY

Forestry and timber processing are longstanding industries for the western part of Great South Coast. The timber harvest of around 955,000 tonnes for the Green Triangle region in 2008 is set to nearly quadruple to 3,695,000 tonnes in 2011, with this to be a sustainable harvest level. An estimated 1,000 new jobs will be created in the harvesting and haulage of this resource. This forecast has been boosted by the sale of Timbercorp's forestry assets for \$345 million. The sale included 92,000 hectares of plantations, 39,000 hectares of freehold land and 53,000 hectares of leasehold rights and business infrastructure. The associated forestry industry supports direct and indirect regional jobs.

The Victorian part of the Green Triangle region has some 197,554 hectares of hardwood blue gum and softwood pine. While the majority of timber processing is undertaken in South Australia, significant facilities are also located in Portland and Colac. The processed output generates approximately 5-6 million tonnes of freight which is then transported by road across the region for domestic consumption, predominantly in Melbourne and Adelaide. In addition approximately





1.2 million tonnes of pine wood chip is also exported annually to international markets via the Port of Portland.

## FISHING

The Region's fishing industry comprises four discreet fishing sectors namely recreational fishing, wild catch fishing, aquaculture and Indigenous fishing.

The Port of Portland is the hub of wild catch fishing in the region, providing permanent berthing facilities for approximately 50 commercial vessels and contributing more than forty percent of Victoria's catch value. The deep sea trawling fleet provides up to 7,000 tonnes of fresh fin fish to the Melbourne Fish Market each year. Portland is the largest rock lobster port in Victoria landing approximately \$4 million worth of product each year as well as \$1 million worth of king crab. Ninety percent of the rock lobster and king crab landed are exported live, primarily to Asian markets. Commercially harvested abalone supply lucrative multi-million dollar export markets. Apollo Bay, Port Fairy, Port Campbell and Warrnambool also have small commercial fishing industries.

## THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Dependence of the region's economy on agriculture and its vulnerability to offshore influences.
- Competition between agriculture and peri-urban and rural residential development.
- Trend of decreasing investment in agricultural research capacity.
- Capacity of the transport system to manage projected bulk freight volumes.
- Potential for significant increases in road freight volumes to impact on liveability and tourism values.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Identify and prioritise productive agricultural, horticultural and other rural land for regulatory protection through Victoria's planning system.
- Upgrade road and rail infrastructure to meet projected agricultural freight volume demands.
- Identify opportunities for import replacement and post farm gate value adding in the dairy, timber, fishing and meat industries.
- Identify future workforce requirements for the agricultural sector.
- Prioritise land use to maximise economic returns on water use.
- Develop incentives for farmers to participate in carbon markets, eco-markets and niche markets, including agri-based and nature based tourism.
- Build on the region's existing agricultural research capacity.
- Develop business and technical supports for new dairy entrants and existing farmers.
- Provide better transitional support for exiting farmers.
- Develop better linkages between agricultural/horticultural producers, manufacturers and the secondary/tertiary education sectors.





# Manufacturing

*Adding value to our primary industry assets.*

Manufacturing accounts for fifteen percent (\$842 million) of the total value added to the Great South Coast region, second only to Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing. The manufacturing industry employs eleven percent of the total workforce.

## FOOD PROCESSING

The manufacturing industry has a strong food processing sector supporting our primary agricultural sector. We also have a significant meat processing sector, with large processing and export plants based at Warrnambool and Colac.

The manufacturing industry is heavily reliant on the agricultural sector with milk and meat processing being dominant. While agricultural production is increasing this is a sustainable industry, however if milk, livestock and meat production stabilises - which could occur due to climate change and competition factors - we will need to develop other manufacturing assets.

Major dairy companies manufacturing product in the Great South Coast include Fonterra, Bulla Dairy Foods, National Foods, Murray Goulburn and Warrnambool Cheese & Butter factory. A number of other dairy companies have suppliers in the region. The estimated value of farm-gate production in the region in 2007/08 was more than \$760 million with milk and livestock sales being the dominant contributors.

South-west Victoria also has a significant meat and

livestock industry. More than 1000 people are directly employed at meat processing plants in the region.

## ALUMINIUM PRODUCTION

Portland Aluminium is a joint venture aluminium smelter operated by Alcoa. It is located just south of the city of Portland and produces approximately 356,000 tonnes of aluminium each year.

ALCOA is Victoria's largest exporter and most of the aluminium produced at Portland is exported to Asian markets. The smelter receives over 676,000 tonnes of alumina per year which is shipped to the smelter from Western Australia. Approximately two tonnes of alumina is required to produce one tonne of aluminium.

The smelter provides more the 640 direct jobs as well as a contractual workforce of about 200 and injects over \$100 million into our economy each year.

## MINERAL SANDS

The Western Region of Victoria has rich deposits of mineral sands predominantly rutile, ilmenite and zircon.

These mineral sands are mined outside of the Great South Coast region and then transported to the Iluka plant near Hamilton. Once processed the product is transported by road to the Port of Portland for export.

185,000 tonnes of mineral sands was processed at the



Iluka plant in 2007. Output is projected to increase to 665,000 tonnes post 2010.

Mining employment in the Great South Coast area is more than twice the average Victorian mining employment share. That said, the absolute mining share is very small, with agriculture clearly the dominant industry in the region. Mining accounts for five percent (\$274 million) of the value-added measure to the region economy.

Iluka Resources plans the sequential development of mining sites in Victoria and South Australia that are expected to provide ongoing processing and export activity until at least 2028. There is potential for the Hamilton plant to process sands brought from South Australia by sea. Rail movements of containerised export mineral sands from Portland to Melbourne were also established recently.

## NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSTRUCTION

Growth in the new and renewable energy sector presents an opportunity for development within the region's manufacturing industry to capitalise on demand for manufactured goods in the construction and operation of current and future energy projects.

## THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Lack of zoned employment lands (industrial and commercial) for future population needs.
- Impacts of a carbon pricing regime on key industry sectors including the small business sector.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Identify opportunities for import replacement and post farm gate value adding in the dairy, timber, horticulture, fishing and meat industries.
- Identify employment land (industrial and commercial) requirements for various population growth scenarios.
- Identify and assist industries which are particularly vulnerable to a future carbon pricing regime (ie the aluminium, mining, transport and dairy industries.)
- Investigate opportunities for industrial clustering associated with new energy power generation sites.
- Showcase and champion new industrial technologies being used in the region. ie cogeneration, distributed energy, bio-energy technologies.
- Educate and re-skill our workforce in preparation for new "green" manufacturing challenges and opportunities.







## New and Renewable Energy

*A major opportunity for the region and Victoria.*

The Great South Coast region has a recognised suite of renewable energy resources including wind, wave, gas and geothermal resources that will provide a source of future economic and employment growth. A significant amount of government and private investment has already occurred in the development of these resources. The integration into the national electricity grid of renewable energy including wind and other forms of intermittent generation sourced from the Great South Coast will make a significant contribution to State and Federal Government Renewable Energy Targets. The existing 550 KV Portland power line is currently functioning at 25% capacity and therefore provides significant access to the state/ national power grid for new generating entrants.

### WIND, WAVE, GEOTHERMAL

Glenelg and Moyne Shires are considered 'High Wind Resource' areas in the Victorian Wind Atlas, and Southern Grampians, Corangamite, Warrnambool and Colac Otway are all assessed as having 'Moderate Wind Resources' including pockets of higher wind areas. To date 84 wind turbines have been built with a combined output of 150MW and the construction of 584 turbines has been approved, which will generate additional output of 1032MW. Applications for approval are pending for a further 133 turbines that will contribute an estimated output of 400MW. More recent approvals have been inland, however the strongest wind resources are located along our sensitive coastal, Grampians and volcanic plain areas, valued for their landscape and environmental significance.

We also have a pilot project demonstrating small scale commercial distributed energy systems and pilot projects for wave and potentially significant geothermal energy development have recently been approved.

### GAS

Our region accesses extensive offshore gas resources from the Otway Basin, with exploration for more offshore sites recently approved, and has three onshore gas processing facilities. Moyne Shire looks to host three gas fired power plants with one currently under construction, one at advanced planning stage and one at early planning phase.

The gas power station currently under construction in Mortlake is a \$640 million investment. The 552 megaWatt (MW) gas fired power station is expected to be commissioned in early 2011 and will have the capacity to supply the equivalent of peak power to 250,000 houses. This, coupled with other gas power stations in planning will add significant capacity to Victoria's energy resource.

### BIOFUELS

Biofuel investment is proposed in the form of two wood pellet mills – one mill earmarked to be established at Heywood and another mill outside the region at Mount Gambier. These mills would produce 250,000 tonnes of densified biomass fuel pellets a year from plantation timber harvest residues which would be exported to Europe to serve the biofuel market. The pellets could be exported through the Port of Portland, utilising the rail line adjacent to the mill.





Colac Power Company has announced the development of a Biogas plant to be built in Colac. The cogeneration plant using natural gas and waste materials from the dairy and meat processing industries based in Colac will supply power to industry and back into the State power grid. It will also produce significant volumes of high grade compost material suitable for gardens.

## BARRIERS

There is considerable growth potential in this new area and the region is well positioned to accommodate much of this type of activity. The constraints to development will be any limitations or conflict with agricultural production, and the localised impacts on environmental and landscape values that need to be assessed and weighted against other objectives of the Regional Strategy.

Unreliable two phase power acts as a constraint for many dairy enterprises and for other business development. A distributed energy system is currently being developed and trialled at Demo Dairy near Terang.

Labour and skills shortages in key sectors have been identified as a significant constraint to the transition to a low carbon economy. The CSIRO report Growing the Green Collar Economy highlights the need to map knowledge and skills required to make the shift to a low carbon or 'environmentally friendly' economy.

## THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Complexity and time lines of large scale new energy approvals process.
- Rural land impacts of new energy installations.
- Power transmission system operating at 25% capacity; distribution operating at 90% capacity.
- Technical constraints to integrating intermittent power generations (wind) into the grid.
- Impact on local roads and arterial roads.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Reduce the barriers to large and small scale new energy investment. 
- Significantly increase the capacity of the region's power distribution network.
- Investigate the prospects of attracting commercial enterprise to establish wind turbine maintenance centres in the region.
- Identify and assist industries which are particularly vulnerable to a future carbon pricing regime (ie the aluminium, mining, transport and dairy industries).
- Include 'green' industry skills in tertiary, technical and secondary curricula.
- Protect and enhance our natural assets and support and promote their potential for the production of sustainable energy. 
- Identify the knowledge gaps and new job skills required to transition to a new carbon economy. 
- Develop a Renewable energy / Green Jobs Centre of Excellence in the region (with a research and skills development function)





## Tourism

*A broader and greater yield from Nature Based Tourism.*

The Great Ocean Road attracts more than half of all international overnight stays and more domestic tourism expenditure than any other region in Victoria. Despite this, our tourism industry currently employs only five percent of our workforce with the majority of this employment located in coastal areas and around national parks, and much of it seasonal in nature.

The Federal Government's report Informing the National Long-Term Tourism Strategy (the Jackson Report) states that tourism's importance to the Australian economy is widely under-estimated, particularly in relation to the small business sector in remote and regional communities. In the Great South Coast, tourism is currently ranked at seventh, ninth and twelfth in relation to regional employment, output and value-adding respectively. However, it has great potential to improve its contribution to our economy if fragmented approaches to planning can be replaced with a comprehensive strategy to increase yield by developing tourism products that will disperse and extend visits to our region.

### **NATURE BASED, INDIGENOUS AND HERITAGE TOURISM**

The region boasts a diverse range of nature based tourist attractions, the most notable being based on the world renowned, iconic destinations of the Great Ocean Road, Port Campbell National Park and the Grampians National Park. Other nature based experience opportunities include the Great Ocean Walk, the Great South West Walk, Discovery Coast and Portland Bay and the Great Southern Touring Route.

Dunkeld, Port Campbell and Apollo Bay are recognised as key nature based tourism centres. The western district volcanic plains and geotrails add to the suite of promotable natural system strengths of the region.

Historic towns and sites such as Warrnambool's Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village on the Shipwreck Coast present significant opportunities to broaden the region's heritage tourism portfolio. Port Fairy was judged the number one tourist destination in Victoria by Australian Traveller Magazine in 2009. The development of nature based and Indigenous products associated with the Nationally Heritage listed Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape (Lake Condah wetlands), Tower Hill and Gariwerd (the Grampians) are a high regional priority as there will be management and employment opportunities for Aboriginal communities.

### **BROADENING THE TOURISM EXPERIENCE AND TOURISM YIELD**

Factors which are limiting our ability to better develop and protect our nature based and Indigenous heritage tourism assets include: infrastructure development of State Marine Precincts as designated in the Draft Western Victoria Boating Coastal Action Plan; under valuing of our natural capital; the inability to incorporate nature based and Indigenous heritage tourism products into mainstream regional, national and international marketing systems; lack of medium to high capacity high quality accommodation options both in Apollo Bay and in proximity to the Twelve Apostles; and the lack of coordination within our tourism sector, across government departments and



between local government jurisdictions.

In addition there are a number of tourism attractions that are well known in the region that could be more widely publicised and linked with the broader tourism message, such as recreational fishing, aboriginal cultural heritage, volcanic landscapes, coastal walks, limestone caves, Timboon Harvest Trail, Otway Harvest Trail, Cape Otway Light Station, Otway Fly Tree Top Walk, surf board riding locations, and a range of markets and festivals. Related small business opportunities include accommodation, dining, local produce, local art and craft, boat charters and tour operators for example.

### DEVELOPING & PROTECTING ASSETS

The Victorian Government document *Securing Our Natural Future* identifies thirteen flagship areas with significant natural assets providing important environmental, social and economic values to Victoria. The Great South Coast region contains four of these flagship areas: the Western Volcanic Plains, the Greater Grampians and South West areas and the Otways flagship areas. The four flagship areas play an important role in our economy as tourism assets. Victoria's Nature-Based Tourism Strategy 2008-2012 states that a higher economic yield could be captured from these flagship sites, through development of appropriate and acceptable facilities that ensure a viable and environmentally sustainable industry.

### THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Significant barriers to private investment in nature based tourism.
- Undervaluing of our nature based tourism assets.
- Lack of high end tourism products and supporting infrastructure.
- Poorly coordinated tourism sector.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Increase multiple night stays by international visitors to the Twelve Apostles.
- Develop nature based tourism products including the Loch Ard interpretive centre, Lake Condah, Great Ocean Walk and the Grampians Wild Walk by 2020.
- Identify, develop and promote inland and private tourism products and associated connecting infrastructure.
- Better integrate nature based and Indigenous tourism products into state, national and international marketing structures.
- Support efforts to attract cruise ships to the Port of Portland as a base for day trips.
- Build the capacity of Aboriginal communities to manage natural assets and Indigenous heritage sites.
- Ensure tourism planning protects natural assets from disturbance and degradation.
- Collaborate with the G21 region to produce a Regional Tourism Opportunities Strategy.
- Develop nature based tourism assets in close consultation with Aboriginal communities.
- Build the capacity of Aboriginal communities to manage nature based tourism assets.
- Provide business coaching and peer group support in the small business community.
- Build tourist attractions in smaller towns by investing in arts, heritage and cultural events.







# Improve connections in the Great South Coast

*Strong physical, virtual, environmental and social connections are vital ingredients for a prosperous, equitable and sustainable region.*

Transport, power and telecommunications systems are critical components of the Great South Coast region's economy, liveability and social cohesiveness. Key drivers and impacts influencing contemporary transport, power and telecommunication standards in the region include the increasing population, increased participation in global markets (particularly in dairy, timber and mineral sands products), climate change impacts, e-health the transition to a low carbon economy and national productivity imperatives associated with an ageing population.

## **SUPPORTING GROWING AND EMERGING INDUSTRIES**

The presence of the deepwater port in Portland is critical to the economic health and growth of our region, handling major flows of grain, wool and timber, as well contributing as a key fishing port. This port, combined with the extent of food manufacturing, agricultural products, timber and servicing the domestic needs of the regional area, has developed a significant road transport industry.

Existing road and rail transport networks do not have the capacity to efficiently service the projected freight increases associated with the transport of produce.

The lack of high speed broadband limits our business and service sectors' ability to become more productive.

It is also a significant constraint in addressing disadvantage in rural and remote communities.

The electricity power distribution network has been identified as having a very high degree of vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Power brownouts and blackouts have significant economic and social impacts and present considerable risks to other critical infrastructure systems, as well as to the region's businesses, industry and communities.

## **PREPARING FOR AN OLDER POPULATION**

The Great South Coast population is expected to increase and include many more older people over the coming decades. The challenge will be to ensure that all our communities are well linked to quality services and infrastructure through integrated public transport systems. As more of our older population become unable to drive, good public transport, community networks and telecommunications will be required to avoid an increase in social isolation and economic hardship.

## **ATTRACTING AND RETAINING YOUNG PEOPLE**

Easy and economical access to major region centres and capital cities, fast broadband connections and good mobile phone coverage are critical components to attract and retain students and young people.



Nearly half the population of the Great South Coast is over the age of 45. We need to attract and retain young people to our region to fill critical labour force shortages and to maintain a demographically balanced community. A key success factor will be our capacity to provide young people with a modern, well balanced lifestyle and personal development opportunities.

## **STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY NETWORKS IN DECLINING SMALL TOWNS**

Our public transport system is constraining productivity and liveability by failing to adequately service the needs of smaller rural communities, particularly in the provision of access to health and education services and employment in larger regional centres.

The provision of public transport and access to services, education, employment and family and friendship networks is a critical component of liveability. There are significant social and economic costs associated with social exclusion and inequality. The Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission has concluded that the primary factor detracting from liveability in many regional areas is poor access to services and infrastructure particularly health, education, transport and information communication technology.

Key networks contributing to community strength are:

- Close personal networks including family, work, friends and neighbours provide the foundations for dealing with everyday life such as taking on new challenges, developing new skills and exploring new roles and experiences.
- Community networks such as sporting clubs, business, community and volunteer organisations give people valuable experience in how to assess issues, appreciate public initiative debates and take action.
- Governance networks including all levels of government and all other organisations that make decisions in, or about, communities. Strong and inclusive governance networks provide people with the capacity to identify and assess issues, enter into public initiative debates and take action to get things done, and
- Volunteerism, a strong indicator of community strength, has experienced a significant decline in many areas of the region including the CFA where lower membership is challenging the viability of brigades.

# **Strategic goals**

- 2.1 Upgrade road and rail infrastructure to maximise regional productivity and increase safety for residents and visitors.**
- 2.2 Ensure that our regional freight network:**
  - minimises our carbon footprint
  - strengthens our competitive advantage
  - enhances our liveability, and
  - acknowledges our tourism values.
- 2.3 Ensure that high speed broadband is available to everyone in the region.**
- 2.4 Increase the capacity and security of supply of our electricity distribution network.**
- 2.5 Strengthen our community leadership, governance, partnering and knowledge networks and volunteer organisations.**
- 2.6 Improve travel times between our regional centres, and Melbourne and Adelaide.**
- 2.7 Provide better access for rural communities and disadvantage groups to employment, recreation and education facilities.**
- 2.8 Identify and address the connectivity needs of rural communities where population is forecast to decline.**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**

- Implement the *Green Triangle Freight Action Plan* to facilitate growth of our major industries.
- Upgrade Princes Highway West.
- Prepare the region for the roll out of high speed broadband.
- Invest in connectivity solutions for our small towns communities.



# Transport

*Productivity, liveability and sustainability.*

## ROADS

Our east west highway connections are the Princes, Hamilton and Glenelg Highways with primary north south connections provided by the Henty and Hopkins Highways.

Nationally, transport directly accounts for about five percent of Gross Domestic Product and has an multiplier effect on other sectors. The continued strengthening of the region's economy is dependant on the ability to distribute an increasing volume of bulk produce in an efficient manner.

The Green Triangle Region Freight Action Plan and the Port of Portland Land Use Study predict a substantial increase in truck activity driven by peak hardwood timber flow and an increasing volume of mineral sands moving from the Iluka processing facility near Hamilton.

Transport movements are projected to double to more than 600 per day. The upgrade of Princes Highway West will be critical to addressing the productivity efficiency, tourism movement and safety issues that this increased traffic will present on our arterial roads and our local road networks.

A 2008 Auditor-General's Report: Maintaining the State's Regional Arterial Road Network, observed that road maintenance expenditure over the years has failed to keep pace with inflation, the expansion and ageing of the asset base, higher traffic levels, and raised expectations about maintaining the roadside environment. The Report states that a significant catch

up program is required to regain and sustain target levels of service particularly in relation to our projected freight increases.

The Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics maintains that small improvements in transport efficiencies translate to significant gains in productivity and Gross Domestic Product.

## PORT

The Port of Portland is a critical component of Victoria's freight transport system providing Victorian and South Australian producers with a gateway to global markets. The Port of Portland Land Use Plan provides for the increased future freight movements with the objective of increasing the efficiency and capacity of the port.

Research carried out for the State Government indicates that ports are particularly vulnerable to an increase in extreme storm events and incremental sea level rise. As a regional priority a detailed climate change risk assessment of the Port of Portland and associated transport feeders is required to further inform the implementation of the port upgrades, including enhancement of the transport connections into the port as outlined in the Green Triangle Freight Action Plan.

## AIR

Our airports are increasingly important for getting freight to market, tourists and workers to and from holiday destinations and work opportunities.



## RAIL

Passenger and rail freight services connect Warrnambool to Melbourne via Camperdown and Colac and Geelong. Freight rail systems link Portland to Geelong and Melbourne via Hamilton and to the north via Ararat. A freight rail service also links Warrnambool and Melbourne, however the rail freight intermodal terminal at Warrnambool requires improvements to lift operational capacity.

Bus interconnections span the region. A number of public transport innovations have been introduced to ease demand for services and improve community linkages, but overall demand is still unmet. Passenger services are limited. With predicted resident increases in and around Warrnambool, a strategy to encourage greater growth in Hamilton and increased growth in tertiary education in particular, these services need to be improved. The Victorian Transport Strategy identifies the possible redevelopment of Heywood to Mt Gambier railway line as short to medium term priority. Investments in regional rail infrastructure deliver a number of advantages over road investments.

## PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

The provision of public transport and access to services, education, employment and family and friendship networks is a critical component of liveability, particularly in regional areas. There are significant social and economic costs associated with social exclusion and inequality.

### THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Capacity of the transport system to manage projected bulk freight volumes.
- Potential for significant increases in road freight volumes to impact on liveability and tourism values.
- Princes Highway from Colac to Mount Gambier.
- Climate change risks to local ports.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Implement the actions outlined in the Green Triangle Region Freight Action Plan.
- Determine the projected freight volumes of bulk product associated with the timber, mining, dairy and meat/livestock industries.
- Undertake cost benefit analysis (including social and environmental externalities) to determine the most appropriate road/rail investment balance.
- Increase the frequency of the Warrnambool to Melbourne train service.
- Explore potential for the reintroduction of the Portland - Hamilton - Ararat passenger rail service.
- Upgrade Princes Highway West and local road networks across the region.
- Assess and address the needs of the fly-in/fly-out professional workforce associated with major projects and health service delivery.
- Identify climate change risks to local ports including Port Campbell, Warrnambool, Port Fairy and Apollo Bay.
- Develop and implement investment plans for ports and airports.
- Identify climate change risks to the local and commercial ports at Portland.
- Assess the impacts of carbon pricing on road, rail, air and sea freight network investment.
- Better integrate smaller rural communities into the public transport system.
- Strengthen and better coordinate the activities of community transport providers.







# Power & telecommunications

*Economic competitiveness and social cohesion.*

The Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission has concluded that the primary factor detracting from liveability in many regional areas is poor access to services and infrastructure particularly health, education, transport and information communication technology.

## INTERNET ACCESS

Our region is not adequately serviced by next generation high speed broadband. Even though overall levels of unmet demand in the Barwon South Western VGDR are lower than the average for non metropolitan Victoria, there is some spatial variation in the level of unmet demand throughout the region. Significant unmet demand still exists in the LGA s of Colac-Otway, Corangamite, Moyne and Southern Grampians.

Quality Next Generation Broadband is important in providing health and education services to regional communities and also in increasing their economic productivity. Modelling work shows that the significantly increased cost of providing Next Generation Broadband to regional areas of lower population density may be offset by productivity gains.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITIES

The potential for increased social disadvantage, particularly in rural communities with declining populations, has been identified as a critical issue. Upgrades in broadband services will reduce inequality by providing improved access to community services.

## POWER DISTRIBUTION

An important indicator of productivity is the functionality and efficiency of critical infrastructure systems. The electricity power distribution network has been identified as having a very high degree of vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Power brownouts and blackouts have significant economic and social impacts and present considerable risks to other critical infrastructure systems, as well as to the region's businesses, industry and communities. Climate change presents an increasing threat to other critical infrastructure particularly road and rail transport, seaports, storm water and sewerage infrastructure.

The existing 550KV power line to Portland provides an opportunity for Great South Coast wind energy facilities to contribute an additional 3000-4000MW of power to the national grid. The region is also in the early phases of developing its wave and geothermal resources.

The region will increasingly become a major contributor to the state's electricity supply. The predecessor to the Australian Energy Market Operator, VENCORP, stated that most of the Victoria's wind power generation will occur in western and south western Victoria. It is critical that electricity sourced from intermittent generators, particularly wind farms, is able to be efficiently incorporated into and distributed through the existing network. A number of potential technical constraints in the use of wind power need to be resolved to maximise the region's wind energy potential.





## BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY NEEDS

The electricity power distribution network has been identified as having a very high degree of vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Power brownouts, blackouts and fires have significant economic and social impacts and present considerable risks to other critical infrastructure systems, as well as to the region's businesses, industry, health services and communities.

### THE MAIN ISSUES:

- The region's power transmission system is operating at 25% capacity whereas the distribution system is operating at 90% capacity.
- Limited capacity and availability of broadband.
- Blackspots in our mobile phone network.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Identify and address the local and regional barriers to high speed broadband Internet roll out.
- Identify and address the opportunities and barriers to incorporating small scale energy generators into the state power grid.
- Identify and address the barriers to incorporating intermittent power generation (ie wind) into the state's power grid.
- Identify requirements for enhancement of e-health services.





## Social networks & infrastructure

*Critical and challenged.*

Friendship, good social relations and strong supportive networks improve health at home, at work and in the community. Belonging to a social network strong in communication and mutual obligation makes people feel cared for, loved, esteemed and valued. This has a powerful protective effect on health and wellbeing, reduces crime, improves education levels and ability to respond to and recover from disaster.

### COMMUNITY STRENGTH

Strong effective communities have excellent social connections, are valued by their residents and are resilient during challenging time and events.

Many communities in the Great South Coast are dealing with the combined effects of population change, economic transition and climate change impacts. Our rates of mental and physical health issues are increasing as a result.

New ways of engaging with people from disadvantaged backgrounds who may have low literacy rates and language barriers need to be developed. Around eight percent of the people and eighteen percent of the children in the Great South Coast are welfare dependant or low income families.

Despite this, people of the Great South Coast report a higher level of community connection than the Victorian and Rural Victorian averages. Corangamite and Moyne have highest proportion of respondents who feel like they are 'part of the community' and Colac Otway have the lowest - although it is still higher

than Melbourne and Victorian averages. We also have a significantly higher rate of citizen engagement in the Great South Coast.

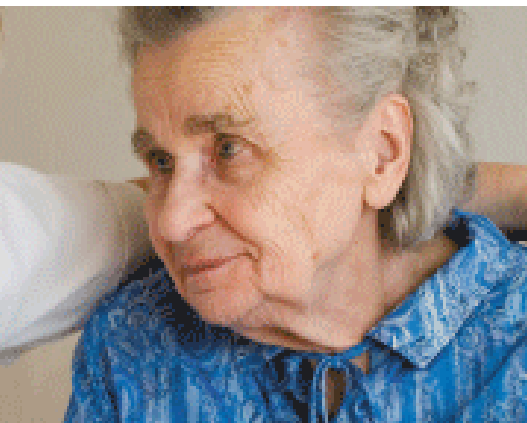
### ACCESS TO SERVICES

The Great South Coast offers high levels of health care, education and training, arts and cultural opportunities, sport and recreation facilities, but in order to access them you have to know about the service, understand its value and be able to solve any transport, educational and financial difficulties that make access difficult or impossible.

Rural and remote communities face particular challenges in accessing primary health care, which results in higher mortality and morbidity rates across most major disease areas.

Older, disabled and disadvantaged people face additional barriers when trying to access services. The rate of dependent older people in our communities has been increasing steadily over the past ten years and is predicted to rise by more than fifteen percent between 2011 and 2026. Over this period the ratio of retirees to the working age population will rise from 1:4 to 1:2. This will require a new approach to housing, transport and home support to enable more people to remain active in our community.

Demand for hospital services is expected to rise significantly over the next ten years as a result of population ageing, the rising levels of preventable chronic disease and disadvantage. The greatest increase



in resident demand for hospital services will come from older people that need them more often and for longer periods.

### COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

We should seek to include, protect and respect different values and cultures, not threaten them. Sport and recreation has contributed greatly to the building of social capital. Settings such as schools, libraries, halls, health and sports centres all fulfil an important role as a focus for social activities taking place in the local community. Only through collaborative and co-ordinated effort will development of community infrastructure flourish.

### VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer networks provide vital services across the region and act as important social connectors. Volunteer networks underpin emergency response systems and are the foundation of sporting and health support structures. With an ageing population and labour force pressures there will be a need to better support the existing networks and creatively consider opportunities tied to changes to traditional demographic catchments.

### THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Better access to services – education, training, employment, health, aged care and arts.
- Need to develop a stronger sense of place.
- Aboriginal reconciliation.
- The ageing of the volunteer sector.
- Gaps in public and community transport.
- Social connectedness.
- Region wide planning to strengthen community infrastructure.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Improve physical and social infrastructure in areas of high need and high growth.
- Build social and natural environment infrastructure to improve Aboriginal health and wellbeing status and outcomes.
- Use “place making” principles to improve social connections and liveability in both urban and rural settlements.
- Build rural communities sense of place through investment in community arts projects and local cultural events.
- Build a regional governance mechanism that strengthens social development.
- Develop a regional Social Development Plan that explores social infrastructure needs.
- Regional audit of community infrastructure including a gap analysis.
- Strengthen community connections to actively support new arrivals
- Improve access to tertiary education facilities for smaller regional communities.
- Improve collaboration between community, education, industry and government agencies.
- Enhance the quality and increase the use of community and sporting assets and open space areas in rural communities.
- Develop a transport access plan to reduce inequality, minimise carbon footprints and enhance community health and wellbeing.





# Sustain the natural assets of the Great South Coast

*Addressing environmental challenges including climate change, water security, land use and the health of our ecosystems.*

The Great South Coast region's terrestrial and aquatic systems underpin its economic and liveability strengths. The region possesses large tracts of undeveloped coastline, internationally recognised volcanic landscapes, significant areas of public land and national parks as well as large areas of productive agricultural land.

The Victorian State of the Environment Report identifies a significant level of degradation in the natural resources of the region. Once extensive ecosystems are now highly fragmented. A range of land use changes including raised bed and broad acre cropping, rock crushing and subsequent pasture improvements, increased use of pivot irrigation systems, bluegum farming and rural residential development have seen an acceleration of the loss of native vegetation on private land resulting in shrinking habitats for a range of threatened species.

The majority of the region's river basins are in poor to moderate condition. Algal blooms in the region's water ways are occurring more frequently. There are significant areas of dry land salinity and soil acidification and the native vegetation quality of the majority of the region is classified as low.

Due to the highly modified and fragmented nature of the landscape, the Great South Coast region's

biodiversity is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

## **FINDING A BALANCE**

The Land and Biodiversity Green Paper states that "two thirds of the critical services nature provides to humans are in decline..." Securing Our Natural Future (Land and Biodiversity White Paper) and Victoria's Future Farming Strategy distinguish the link between agricultural productivity and healthy ecosystems. Both policies articulate investment priorities which recognise the role of private land management in the protection and enhancement of land, water, biodiversity resources and the ecosystem services which they provide. Strategic intervention must ensure that the transition of rural landscapes is informed by an understanding of the landscapes broader environmental functions and that these functions are protected and enhanced through the region's investment priorities.

## **HOLDING OUR WATER**

The use and management of water is driven by water demands from the agricultural, industrial, environmental and urban / rural residential sectors. Water supply and sustainable water use has been the subject of comprehensive review and planning



processes carried out by the urban supply authorities in 2007 and by the Department of Sustainability and Environment through 2008 to 2010 which will culminate in the Western Region Sustainable Water Strategy later in 2010.

Studies associated with these reviews identify a range of risks to water resources in the region. Climate change and variability presents the most significant uncertainty about future water availability. It is likely that the next 50 years will be warmer and drier than the last fifty years. An increasingly variable climate characterised by higher average temperatures, subsequent increased evaporation rates, as well as reductions in overall rainfall and catchment runoff, will result in less water being available for surface storage, aquifer recharge and environmental flows.

## **RESIDENTIAL LAND USE PRESSURES**

Existing coastal land use is putting stress on coastal ecosystems and resources, constraining their ability to adapt to a highly dynamic environment. In particular existing development of low open sandy coastlines and areas adjacent to estuaries provide significant challenges to management and planning authorities. Future predicted urban and semi-rural growth along the coast will add to this pressure unless managed appropriately.

## **MANAGING CLIMATE CHANGE**

Low lying coastal and estuarine locations are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts including severe storms, temperature increases and sea level rise. Port Fairy, Portland, some parts of Warrnambool and a number of small low lying coastal settlements have infrastructure systems already vulnerable to flooding and storm events.

The Otway Ranges, the Grampians and other forested areas are particularly vulnerable to bush fires.

The need to plan for an ecologically sustainable future is universal and we need to adopt measures to ensure that our future development is sustainable.

# **Strategic goals**

- 3.1 Protect and enhance our environment as we build our liveability values and improve our economic productivity.**
- 3.2 Better integrate natural resource management into agricultural, rural residential and industrial activities.**
- 3.3 Manage our water reserves to provide for the long term needs of our agriculture, industry, residents and environment.**
- 3.4 Build the capacity of Aboriginal communities to manage natural assets and Indigenous heritage sites.**
- 3.5 Implement the actions outlined in "Towards Environmental Sustainability in the South West".**
- 3.6 Coordinate climate change initiatives across all sectors, consistent with state and national policy.**
- 3.7 Reduce community and industry consumption of non-renewable resources.**
- 3.8 Retain the nature, identity and heritage of our settlements.**
- 3.9 Support the growth of settlements in places where urban services and infrastructure are available.**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**

- Invest in measures to ensure our nature based tourism locations and experiences are environmentally sustainable.**
- Invest in town centre upgrades to create a sense of place for our communities.**
- Invest in the gathering and analysis of environmental data to quantify climate change impacts and assist in land use planning.**



# Natural Resources

*Valuable and vulnerable.*

## WATER

After thirteen years of significantly reduced rainfall across southeastern Australia, the Great South Coast region has emerged as possessing relative water security. Extensive strategic planning responses have established that urban water supply is secure through to 2055.

Water security is a key driver for capital investment and land use change in the region. Relative water security is tied to the reliability of surface water supplies sourced from the Otway Ranges, groundwater from the Dilwyn and Newer volcanic aquifers and rainfall.

Most of our larger urban centres have the capacity to supplement industry demand and open space irrigation needs with large volumes of reclaimed water.

Reduced rainfall has resulted in reductions in annual average stream flow of thirty percent along the coast with higher percentages of decline in the hinterland. Rainfall is essential for the recharge of aquifers holding underground water resources. Portland and Port Fairy are 100% dependant on deep groundwater reserves, Warrnambool is 15% dependant on the sustainability of shallow aquifers. Most agricultural activity near the coast relies on groundwater. Groundwater resources, particularly along the coast between Princetown and Portland are significant, but the lower levels of rainfall has resulted in reduced surface flows and much lower recharge rates for aquifers.

The Western Region Sustainable Water Strategy (draft for discussion purposes) March 2010 proposes a review of the urban and rural supply demand strategies to test the implications of new data on climate change and

drought. It also proposes to reassess water efficiency measures and comprehensively assess all supply and demand options available such as water trading from other systems and alternative water sources, including reclaimed water.

The strategic actions proposed for urban water supply are tied to very extensive work of the two urban water corporations Barwon Water and Wannon Water. The strategies look to develop the use of reclaimed water, to lower average household water consumption and to maintain supply security for growing urban and industrial demand.

Wannon Water supplies reclaimed water for primary production purposes near Camperdown, Timboon and Terang; to meet the operational requirements of mineral sands processing in Hamilton and to service a new gas fired power station near Mortlake. Wannon Water plans to similarly divert reclaimed water currently discharged to the ocean at Port Fairy for the proposed Orford power station. Much larger volumes of reclaimed waste water generated at Portland and Warrnambool are still discharged to sea.

## BIODIVERSITY

The Victorian State of the Environment Report identifies a significant level of degradation in the natural resources of the region. Once extensive ecosystems are now highly fragmented. A range of land use changes including raised bed and broad acre cropping, rock crushing and subsequent pasture improvements, increased use of pivot irrigation



systems, bluegum farming and rural residential development have seen an acceleration of the loss of native vegetation on private land resulting in shrinking habitats for a range of threatened species.

The majority of the region's river basins are in poor to moderate condition. Algal blooms in the region's water ways are occurring more frequently. There are significant areas of dry land salinity and soil acidification and the native vegetation quality of the majority of the region is classified as low.

The CSIRO's predicted annual warming of up to 1.4°C by 2030 is likely to lead to increasing vulnerability of local flora and fauna and possible increased invasion by weeds. Many region specific eucalyptus species will struggle with an annual average temperature increase of more than 1%. According to Professor Tim Flannery, roughly a quarter of eucalypt species have a tolerance band of 1°C average temperature and 44% have a tolerance of 2°C. Higher temperature increases may lead to a decline in species diversity.

### THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Undervaluing of the region's natural assets.
- Dependency of the economy on our natural capital.
- Poor coordination between agencies managing natural resources and natural assets.
- Continuing loss of habitat and fragmentation of natural landscapes and ecosystems.
- Continuing degradation of natural capital.
- Impact of population and development pressures on ecosystems and natural assets.
- Impact of climate change on ecosystems.
- Increasing water demands and poorly regulated groundwater reserves.
- Rate and scale of rural land use change.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Provide incentives for the development and implementation of water management technologies.
- Determine and plan for the future water demands of agriculture, industry, residents and the environment.
- Undertake economic analysis of key ecosystem services (coasts, estuaries, plains grasslands, woodlands) to prioritise natural asset investment.
- Develop water use accountability protocols and increase the water conservation and recycling activities of residents, businesses and industry sectors.
- Support Southern Rural Water's initiative "Southern Groundwater Futures"
- Diversify farm functions and income streams to include the management of ecosystem services and on farm carbon sequestration.
- Develop a framework for measuring, reporting and managing the sustainable use of natural resources.
- Continue the expansion of the State Observation Bore Network.
- Support rural communities to implement the BushTender and Landcare programs.
- Support and promote community and industry sustainability initiatives.







# Climate change impacts

*Unprecedented terrestrial, aquatic and human challenges.*

The Department of Sustainability and Environment has summarised the CSIRO data for the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment in South West Victoria as follows:

- Increased summer temperatures and heat waves increased summer temperatures and heat waves with an increase in average temperatures of 0.7°C to 4.3°C by 2070. An increase of 10-50% in the number of hot days (over 35°C) by 2030;
- Reduced number of frosts by 10-40% by 2030;
- A change in rainfall from +3% to -10% by 2030. Extreme heavy rainfall events may be more intense. Droughts are likely to become more frequent and longer in duration. Dry conditions that currently occur on average 1 in 10 years may increase to 1 in 5 years.
- Reduced runoff by 5% to 40% by 2030;
- Longer bush fire season and potentially more serious fires;
- Increased solar radiation due to decreased cloud cover;
- Increased extreme weather events, flooding and sea level rises;
- Increased coastal erosion and storm surges;
- Decreased air quality resulting from increased dust and bushfire;
- Reduced water quality, including drinking water supplies.

Areas in the Great South Coast at greatest risk from the effects of climate change are those experiencing rapid land use change.

Extremes of weather will impact the region as for all areas, and the region needs to be prepared for increased potential for emergency and disaster management.

Near the coast, higher rainfall is likely to increase the competition for land between timber, dairy, market gardening and residential uses. Wind and other energy industries will also be competing for land.

Further inland, lower rainfall and higher temperatures will increasingly shift agriculture away from grazing into cropping enterprises. Increases in land prices along

the coast may also force a shift of low socio-economic households to more affordable locations inland.

## SEA LEVEL RISE

By 2070, the CSIRO predicts that the sea level will rise by more than half a meter. Port Fairy, Portland, some parts of Warrnambool and a number of small low lying coastal settlements have infrastructure systems already vulnerable to flooding and storm events.

## MORE SEVERE STORMS

Severe storms and extreme winds are likely to increase, particularly in winter as a result of more intense low pressure systems. These events will have significant impacts on low lying coastal ecosystems particularly estuaries which are the nurseries for many commercially important fish species. Predicted changes to ocean water temperatures and ocean currents will also impact on the distribution of a number of commercially important fish species.

## CLIMATE CHANGE OPPORTUNITIES

As we will have a relatively high and secure rainfall along the coastal zone this part of the region will attract agricultural investment. Greater competition for access to secure rainfall will bring pressure upon traditional agricultural uses as well as pressure on some vulnerable coastal areas. Further inland some traditional agricultural land use will experience decline in rainfall volumes and decline in rainfall certainty leading to reduced productivity or need for adjustment in activity.





The increase in extreme winds may generate new opportunities for our emerging wind and wave energy industries, and changing rainfall patterns will influence the redistribution and relocation of food production to water secure regions of Victoria, such as ours. But regardless of our relative rainfall and energy production assets, we need to address issues of sustainable development, and minimise water and energy use on an individual and regional basis.

## BUSHFIRES

Increased bushfire incidents will impact heavily forested areas and townships. Settlements and infrastructure located in the Otway Ranges and in close proximity to forests are particularly vulnerable to wildfire. As the incidence and threat of wildfire increases, new development in these vulnerable areas needs to be curtailed or adequately protected and effective disaster management must become a priority.

## COMMUNITIES

Health impacts of climate change include the direct impacts of extreme events such as storms, floods, heatwaves and fires and the indirect effects of longer-term changes, such as drought, changes to the food and water supply. Heatwaves are likely to increase in frequency, intensity and duration and this may amplify the risk of heat-related health problems, especially in the very old, the very young and those with chronic lung problems such as asthma.

## THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Uncertainty around scope and scale of impacts.
- Ability to manage the rate of adaptive change.
- Risk analysis and risk information sharing.
- Managing community expectations.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Regularly map land use change to help monitor climate change impacts on rural land. 
- Monitor changing rainfall gradients and production zones associated with the timber, dairy, grain and broad acre grazing industries.
- Monitor and manage population movements associated with climate change impacts.
- Monitor climate change impacts on major tourism assets.
- Manage increasing land use competition between the agricultural/ horticultural and residential sectors to sustain biodiversity. 
- Identify climate change risks to critical infrastructure, settlements and ecosystems.
- Build climate change provisions into land use and settlement planning processes.
- Develop emergency response and recovery plans, particularly in vulnerable areas.
- Prepare communities in close proximity to state forests, low open coastlines and estuaries to manage climate change impacts. 
- Reduce the potential for harm from climate change impacts on our people, particularly disabled, aged and disadvantaged people.
- Identify and promote initiatives that build capacity to adapt to climate change impacts.



## Settlements & land use

*Managing our land, towns and populations.*

Settlements have differing strengths and functions that need to be supported or redirected as appropriate. The roles that will be promoted and developed in future need to be considered in conjunction with the population growth expected and desired.

Some inland locations are sparsely settled with good roads to serve agricultural needs, although public links are often limited. Access to health and community services, employment, education and retail and businesses services is limited in these locations. Future roles for towns will be as local community hubs and providers of local services.

For townships where resident growth is projected, the challenge for the future is directing growth to appropriate locations, and providing urban infrastructures and services to support the growth.

In townships where low levels or no growth is projected, the challenge is to find ways to maintain current populations, continue to provide services, utilise existing infrastructure, assist communities to adapt to changed circumstances, and identify opportunities for growth.

### COASTAL SETTLEMENTS

The sea change phenomenon is driving unprecedented coastal development pressures. All our coastal towns experience extremes of seasonal population fluctuation, which creates pressure on local services, roads and other urban infrastructure, and volunteer services.

Major coastal settlements include Warrnambool, Portland, Port Campbell, Apollo Bay and Port Fairy. Growth in each location is constrained to some extent

by environmental factors, such as the presence of protected land. Councils are addressing intensity of demand for growth by proposing innovative housing and settlement solutions that will accommodate growth.

Each of the major settlements will continue to act as a service and residential accommodation centre to growing tourism activities, as well as a location for continued 'sea change' and retiree populations.

Smaller coastal settlements will, to a limited degree, continue to meet the demands of holiday makers and residents but many are constrained by access and environmental factors, such as land slip and wildfire.

### GROWING INLAND TOWNS

Inland towns with residential land capacity and close proximity to larger towns providing employment and service opportunities are expected to gain modest growth by providing lifestyle and housing choices for those working in the larger towns.

Other towns have and can continue to consolidate as district service centres, as well as tourism and hospitality providers which will attract residents. In general however projected population growth levels in these locations is relatively low.

### DECLINING INLAND TOWNS

Over the next 10-20 years population decrease is expected in some small inland towns, such as Casterton. Relative distance from major cities, lack of rail transport and limited employment opportunities indicate that population decrease in these towns is difficult to





reverse, and maintenance of the current population levels is a more realistic goal. The gradual reduction in population may in the longer term lead to a reduction in some services. Better public transport options and innovative service delivery methods will be required to continue to meet the needs of residents who will be reliant on service providers in regional centres.

### PERI-URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Pressure for growth in coastal settlements leads to residential development outside urban centres and creation of peri-urban areas that can encroach into valuable agricultural land and significant landscapes. These 'spillages' need to be contained and minimised. The State Planning Policy Framework, and local planning policies, carefully applied, can reduce pressure on agricultural land and ensure urban development occurs where urban infrastructure and services are available.

### SUPPORTING GROWTH AND CHANGE

Substantial growth in Warrnambool and other centres will require attention to provision of health, community, education and transport services to support this growth. This will require continuing sound local and regional planning in cooperation with state and Commonwealth governments to fund and manage resources.

### THE MAIN ISSUES:

- There is relatively high growth projected for Warrnambool and decline in the rural hinterland.
- Intensification of development along the coast.
- Direct impact of climate change on settlements.
- Social tensions from climate change impacts.
- Competition for land between industry and rural residential living.
- Significant housing shortages in growing areas.
- Rate and scale of rural land use change.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Establish a coordinated regional data storage and analysis service to collect and manage spatial information across a range of land use and settlement themes (including coastal digital elevation data and mapping of rural land use change, land capability, climate change vulnerability, natural assets, open space, critical infrastructure and settlements).
- Undertake land capability mapping as the basis of designating township boundaries to manage growth.
- Identify and provide adequate environmental habitat corridors to sustain biodiversity and critical ecosystems in the face of population, industry and climate change pressures.
- Identify and provide employment land to accommodate population growth and growth in business and industry sectors as identified.
- Incorporate contemporary climate change data into building codes / standards and planning scheme provisions.
- Identify and minimise climate change risks to critical infrastructure.
- Estimate and plan for growth in urban and peri-urban locations according to population growth scenarios.
- Develop community emergency response and recovery plans, particularly in climate change vulnerable communities.





# Strengthen the communities of the Great South Coast

*Our people's access to transport, education, health services, housing and support networks will determine the strength of our future.*

Strong communities are places where people can feel safe and can achieve their full potential because they are well equipped to respond to challenges and change. Such communities have a reduced incidence of disadvantage because they offer access and opportunities for all members of the community and inspire confident, active, resilient and healthy lifestyles.

## LIVEABILITY

The Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission has concluded that the primary factor detracting from liveability and community strength in many regional areas is poor access to services and infrastructure - particularly health, education, transport and information communication technology. There are significant social and economic costs associated with social exclusion and inequality that need to be addressed.

Access to education, health services, and employment are existing challenges for most rural towns and settlements of the region. The regional Aboriginal community is also known to experience higher levels of disadvantage across a broad range of indicators, than the non-Aboriginal population.

State and national health strategies clearly identify the need to plan, design and create sustainable communities that encourage healthy living. They

emphasise the importance of environmental, social, economic and transportation considerations in creating healthy communities. This holistic approach helps to ensure that all major issues impacting on individuals and families are taken into account.

## PLANNING FOR REGIONAL PROSPERITY

The Great South Coast communities - individually and collectively - are undergoing substantial social and economic change due to the effects of population change, global competition and in some cases industry restructuring and rural adjustment.

State, Federal and Local Government stakeholders, together with our local businesses and residents have recognised the benefit of taking positive action in relation to economic development and employment growth, rather than sitting back or being reactive.

This will ensure that we are well placed to grow and develop in accordance with our own vision and values. It also offers an opportunity to better engage the 11,000 people (9%) across the population who are disadvantaged and seek out the opportunities for improved prosperity that can flow from a soundly crafted program of integrated economic and social development.



## STRONG VOLUNTEER NETWORKS

Volunteer networks provide vital services across the region and act as important social connectors. Volunteer networks underpin emergency response systems and are the foundation of sporting and health support structures. With an ageing population and labour force pressures there will be a need to better support the existing networks and creatively consider opportunities tied to changes to traditional demographic catchments.

## EDUCATION & TRAINING

The Bradley Review affirmed that the reach, quality and performance of the nation's higher education system is central to Australia's economic and social progress. The education and training sector therefore has a critical role in maintaining and enhancing the liveability, sustainability and productivity of the region.

Regional workforce analysis undertaken by Maunsell Australia (2007) and SED Consulting (2010) highlights regional skill and labour shortages across a range of industries and businesses. The Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI) recommends that business and education providers need to work together to reduce skill shortages and maximize productivity, while the Victorian Government's Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development prioritises the development of partnerships with the business sector as a means of improving vocational outcomes for students.

Improved integration of the education, training and employment sectors will lift the region's low rate of completion of year 12, will increase participation in tertiary and non compulsory qualifications and will develop the culture of lifelong learning linked to new and changing employment opportunities.

## OUR AGEING COMMUNITIES

The ageing population has significant implications for service delivery in the health and social infrastructure sectors. Inter-town public transport connections will become more imperative as will improved communications and mobile services. Strategies to attract a greater diversity of future residents, including retention of young people, is required to ensure a balanced community profile, workforce and adequate service provision.

# Strategic goals

- 4.1 Address the lower than average health and wellbeing status of our people.
- 4.2 Reduce inequality and maximise productivity by improving the capacity of our education and training sector.
- 4.3 Increase workforce participation rates across all ages and groups (particularly disadvantaged groups).
- 4.4 Provide opportunities for young people to participate in decision making processes.
- 4.5 Improve access to housing, employment, recreation and education facilities for rural communities and disadvantaged groups.
- 4.6 Provide a sustainable mix of affordable and attractive housing options.
- 4.7 Better integrate health and wellbeing planning and policy development across transport, education/training, business/industry and urban planning sectors.
- 4.8 Develop a culture of life long learning and productive retirement to assist in maintaining workforce productivity and building community resilience.
- 4.9 Create an accessible health and community services system that excels in preventative health measures and equity of service.
- 4.10 Develop an integrated Great South Coast Labour Market strategy that incorporates both industry and service sectors.

## FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

- Invest in measures to increase by 10% the number of young people undertaking and completing tertiary education courses, with a particular focus on young people from disadvantaged socio economic groups.



## Skills, jobs & education

*A smarter, more skilled community and workforce.*

The basic skills acquired in early childhood and school years, particularly literacy and numeracy, are the necessary foundation for developing higher order skills that contribute to a healthier and more productive community.

### GETTING THE BEST START

A strong emphasis of this Regional Plan is the building of human and social capital by improving the education, employment and health outcomes in the community. The early years lay the foundations for success or failure at school. Successful post school learning builds on this foundation. Children's physical health, cognitive and language development, emotional maturity, social development and communication skills are the building blocks for lifetime learning, safety and wellbeing.

### EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS

Only twenty-nine percent of the eligible Great South Coast population completed year 12 in 2006, well below the Victorian average of forty-four percent.

Less than half of the Great South Coast population has completed a post-secondary qualification, which is also below the Victorian average. By gender, our females are more likely to complete a bachelor or higher degree while our males were more likely to complete a certificate level qualification. Apprentices and trainees in the Great South Coast (20%) are double the rate of the Victorian average (10%).

We have significant educational resources in the region to provide a vital support to the economic and

social health of the region. Better access to quality educational options is a key to retention of youth in the region, opportunities for re-skilling of the workforce to supply the changing needs of industry, and would also attract more young people to the region. Despite its population of 12,000, there are no substantial post compulsory education or training assets in Colac and poor public transport access to services in other areas.

Workforce analysis by Access Economics shows that the Great South Coast employs proportionally less workers in the education and training sector than other regions and less than the overall Victorian share for this sector. There is therefore a strong argument for considerable emphasis on the growth of this sector in the region, both as an employer and as a provider of services.

### AN AGEING WORKFORCE

The ageing of the population and exodus of the baby boomers from the workforce will result in an overall decrease in workforce participation and increased competition for labour and skills. This situation will not be helped by the loss of young adults from the region and the lower than average Year 12 and tertiary education retention rates.

Regional workforce analysis undertaken by Maunsell Australia (2007) and SED Consulting (2010) highlights regional skill and labour shortages across a range of industries and businesses. The Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI) recommends that to reduce skill shortages and maximize productivity, business and education providers must work together.



## ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

Skill shortages are compounded by declining tertiary aspiration and attainment and low retention rates of our young people. Education and training is fundamental to both productivity and participation in the workforce.

Programs to improve Year 12 retention rates and movement to tertiary institutions are required. A broader range of educational options at tertiary level will provide for the diverse needs of the current population, while also serving to attract students from within and potentially outside Victoria. Specialties in educational training relevant to the region, such as renewable energy technologies, eco-tourism, hospitality and all forms of agriculture should be fully explored and encouraged.

## THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Raising the tertiary and vocational aspirations of young people in years 6 – 9.
- Strengthening regional liveability to attract and retain people and families.
- Inequality in access to education opportunities.
- Absence of an integrated labour market strategy for the region.
- Development of clearer pathways to careers in industry and service sectors.
- Sustaining a long term regional and local focus on getting the best start in life.
- Strengthening secondary and tertiary education and training programs.
- Attracting youth to live, learn and work in order to replace those leaving the region.
- Affordable housing and student accommodation.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Audit skill and knowledge requirements for strengthening and emerging industries.
- Provide more TAFE and university courses to support current and emerging industries.
- Develop an integrated regional workforce strategy to address the requirements of strengthening and emerging industries.
- Improve public, social and emergency housing choices for students.
- Improve access to on-line and institutional education alternatives, particularly for disadvantaged people.
- Address our low secondary education aspiration and retention rates.
- Improve the rates of tertiary education transition and completion.
- Create opportunities for re-engagement into education programs for all age groups.
- Develop a strategy to engage and retain young people in educational programs.
- Improve pathways between secondary and tertiary education, and employment.
- Improve coordination across primary, secondary and tertiary education sectors.
- Identify and address the barriers to early intervention in educational settings.







## Health & wellbeing

*Living longer, healthier and more active lives.*

*“How much you earn, your social position, your level of education or your capacity to be involved in activities that help connect you to others in your community are important factors in determining your health and wellbeing.” (Vic Health 2009)*

The overall health and wellbeing of our community is one of the cornerstones of a successful future. Healthy communities include healthy children, healthy families, healthy workers and healthy older people. Population health and wellbeing is however influenced by a range of factors.

Risky behaviours such as smoking, unhealthy eating, alcohol consumption, and physical inactivity are all occurring at significantly higher rates than the Victorian average and are also higher than the rural Victorian average. As a consequence, the region has high levels of obesity. Incidents of Violent crime and family violence are also well above Victorian trends in some areas.

These lifestyle behaviours increase the risk of developing preventable chronic diseases. In our region, preventable diseases include: diabetes and diabetes complications, dental conditions, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, dehydration and gastroenteritis, and congestive cardiac failure. These diseases occur at rates that are well above the Victorian average

Great South Coast life expectancy estimates show residents on average, have shorter lives and higher death rates than the Victorian average and the rural Victorian average. The highest causes of death for people living in the Great South Coast community are attributable to cancers, cardiovascular disease,

accidents and mental health issues and chronic respiratory diseases.

Our residents report that they feel generally healthy. However, these positive feelings of wellbeing are being offset by rising levels of preventable chronic illness, above average risky behaviours and the ongoing impacts of social disadvantage and inequity.

Economic development is creating opportunities for employment and skill development that will contribute significantly to our population health and wellbeing. However, the significant population health factors emerging, signal medium to long term risks to individual productivity, our community and our economy.

### PLACES AND SPACES FOR ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

Much good work is underway in our region to improve opportunities for an active lifestyle including regional trails and parks networks. School, workplace and community based settings are also being used innovatively in some areas to encourage healthy living. However, more work is needed in this area if the rising trends in preventable chronic illness are to be halted. Some of our major preventable health issues could be reduced by planning places where it is easier for people to be active and walk, cycle and use public transport every day. Settlement planning needs to have regard to the importance of encouraging use of modes of travel other than the private car.

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The goal of creating a healthy liveable community





requires a range of responses addressing social, economic and environmental conditions as well as supporting healthy behaviours.

Collaborative effort between organisations such as Primary care partnerships, divisions of general practice, transport connections, environmental groups, health service planning groups, employment and training networks, education and learning networks, disability networks, family service networks and community organisations is required to address health and wellbeing issues.

### BETTER ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE SERVICES

We have access to a good mix of education, training, health, aged care, and community services and most people can obtain the services they need locally. However there are at times service gaps that arise that need to be filled.

The ageing of the population is now beginning to impact on workforce availability and local service models, and, in turn, the future sustainability of parts of the system. These key issues need to be worked on now to ensure the community has access to sustainable service systems for the future

### THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Ageing population and health inequalities.
- Poor health status of aboriginal people and people with disabilities.
- Physical inactivity and unhealthy eating levels.
- High injury rates & preventable chronic illness levels.
- High rates of domestic violence.
- Sustainability of service systems.
- Fragmented service delivery models.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Develop an innovative health and wellbeing strategy.
- Provide places, spaces and settings to encourage healthy, active living (parks, urban spaces, regional trails, waterways, schools, workplaces, community infrastructure).
- Implement a whole of community initiative to halt rising trends in overweight and obesity.
- Improve mental health and wellbeing outcomes across the region.
- Introduce interventions to reduce risky behaviours associated with alcohol, drug and tobacco use.
- Build health leadership and partnership capacity in order to develop regional responses to state and national health reforms.
- Develop a regional strategy to address increasing workforce shortages in the health and community services sector.
- Improve access to health and community services.
- Develop sustainable service models and infrastructure.
- Partner with aboriginal communities to Close the Gap in life expectancy.
- Increase access to chronic disease prevention; detection and management; oral health; and positive healthy ageing, particularly for vulnerable groups of the population.





# Healthy liveable communities

*A fairer Great South Coast.*

Healthy liveable communities are places where people want to live. They have good local social infrastructure and services, economic and social activities, a diverse and sustainable natural environment, affordable housing and a sense of security where rights are protected and diversity is welcomed. They are communities where a culture of healthy living, learning and working is promoted and embraced.

Being in a healthy, liveable community helps encourage healthy behaviours and get more of us involved in physical activity. It can increase our feelings of safety and connection with nature and others so that we feel we belong. It boosts our self confidence and helps our families and communities to rise to challenges and deal with change.

The new residents that we need to attract to our region to fill labour shortages and improve the age balance in our communities, may also bring differing social values, cultural practices and lifestyle expectations. Adaptations and acceptance of differences will be required by both existing and new residents, and support systems need to be in place to ensure transitions are successful.

## ARTS & CULTURE

Arts can have a powerful positive impact on issues such as discrimination, homelessness and violence in the community. It can also have benefits for participants; increasing self-esteem, self-confidence and developing skills.

We have a strong arts and culture foundation from which to encourage greater diversification and

participation, but we employ a lower proportion of people in the arts and recreation sector than the average for regional Victoria. Continued support for community arts and greater involvement from all sectors of the community will assist in providing a wider range of recreational pursuits and community strengthening benefits.

## SPORT & RECREATION

Sport plays an important part in community development. Apart from the physical benefits it provides, regular exercise promotes a sense of wellbeing and creates social connections. Over the past five years public sector investments have been significant in establishing indoor heated swimming pools and fitness centres along with walking and cycling trails. Except for Lake Colac, passive and active outdoor recreation activity has not been as constrained by the dryer conditions as experienced elsewhere in the State.

## DISADVANTAGE

More than 11,000 people, or nine percent of our population live in areas of disadvantage. Every municipality has pockets of the highest level of socio-economic disadvantage, with lower incomes, education and skill levels, and higher levels of unemployment, family and health issues and unskilled occupations.

Demographic trends, combined with agricultural aggregation and specialisation will increase the number of rural communities with declining population and trends to disadvantage in those communities. Preventative investments should be considered for



those communities including alternative service delivery models for the future.

People who have particularly poor health include people from lower socioeconomic groups, those from refugee backgrounds and those with disabilities. Our Aboriginal community is also known to experience higher levels of disadvantage across a broad range of indicators, than our non-Aboriginal population. A Local Indigenous Network (LIN) is made up of Indigenous people who are working together to provide a voice for their South West community, identify local issues and priorities and plan for the future.

Many of our inequalities could be reduced through better access to education, and good living and working conditions. Local, regional and State programs are focussing on prevention, early intervention, recovery and ongoing social support. Key priorities are early years support for children and families most at risk, improving education and helping people into work, reducing health inequalities and promoting wellbeing, and strengthening neighbourhoods and local communities.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

An adequate rental market and a variety of housing options is a crucial component of community infrastructure. The current regional housing shortage will be exacerbated by the housing demands of workers involved with the construction of large scale infrastructure projects. Housing is a critical issue for disadvantaged groups such as the aged, tertiary students, young people, unemployed, and the Aboriginal community.

## THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Population changes and access to housing.
- Strengthening liveability.
- Disadvantaged populations and places.
- Response to and recovery from traumatic events.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Improve integrated regional planning, evaluation and research.
- Support the development of small businesses and build regional prosperity.
- Invest in initiatives to improve community strength in areas of disadvantage.
- Develop a liveability strategy to attract people to our towns and regional centres.
- Develop a Small Towns Investment Plan for rural communities with declining populations.
- Engage with Aboriginal Australians including Traditional Owner Groups in managing land, water and biodiversity.
- Develop programs to strengthen community resilience and preparedness for climate change impacts, particularly in vulnerable locations and population groups.
- Build community capacity through education programs, community networks and skills training.
- Develop an integrated regional transport access plan.
- Build rural communities sense of place through investment in community arts projects and local cultural events.
- Develop emergency response and recovery plans, particularly in locations that are vulnerable to climate change impacts.
- Conduct a Liveability audit and undertake an associated gap analysis.
- Establish a regional Housing Working Group.





# Increase collaboration in the Great South Coast

*Leadership, communication, strong alignment to agreed priorities  
and new, innovative ways of getting things done  
will take our plan from vision to reality.*

The ability to share and exchange information and ideas is increasingly important and will not only bring benefits to the region, but also to the individual organisations within it by reducing duplication, increasing efficiency and achieving faster outcomes of common goals.

Working as a regional team we can speak as one voice to State and Federal Governments and present them with a clear message about what we need to achieve for the future. We can use the plan's strategic goals to assist in forming partnerships with our businesses and industries to address issues and opportunities of mutual benefit or concern.

## **ESTABLISHING A GOVERNANCE MODEL**

This plan has been developed under the guidance of a Project Control Group that includes the most senior representation from each of our councils as well as influential members of State Government departments across a range of disciplines, and members of the Barwon South West Regional Development Australia Committee.

Upon completion of the plan, it is proposed that this group will form an interim implementation committee to guide the first stages of the implementation process, which will include a consultative process to establish an

appropriate governance model for the emerging Great South Coast Regional Alliance.

## **SECURING RESOURCES AND SUPPORT**

The Victorian Government has announced that it will work in partnership with local councils and regional stakeholders to support their leadership in planning for and managing the long-term future of their region and communities. The approach incorporates the implementation of Regional Strategic Plans across the state that will deliver priorities that have been identified as important by regional communities. It also provides for the inclusion of the Blueprint as the Government's long-term plan for regional Victoria within the State Planning Policy Framework.

The Blueprint is a \$631 million package that includes funding to implement regionally-identified projects, as well as funding to do additional planning work. Its initiatives include:

- a \$37.1 million Planning for Regional Growth Package to ensure well planned and managed future growth that supports a high quality regional way of life; and
- a \$21.8 million Local Government Partnership Package to support local councils in their key leadership role of guiding the growth and development of their regions.



We will explore opportunities to access this funding stream to establish structures, protocols and procedures for the implementation of our plan.

Further opportunities may be available through the recently released “A Fairer Victoria, Real support - Real gains” program which commits \$1.35 billion to address issues health, education, support and access issues right across the State. There are also a wide range of other Victorian and Australian Government strategies, programs and funding sources that can potentially support implementation of the plan.

## **ENGAGING THE RIGHT PEOPLE**

The power of the plan will only be fully realised if we continue to engage people from all business, government and community sectors to participate in its implementation.

Consultation activities for the development of the plan involved education and business leaders, senior representatives from the fields of transport, power, health, road and rail infrastructure, water supply and management, environment, housing, community, Aboriginal and young people.

This participation was based on good will and a desire to see the region succeed. Implementation of the plan will require a similar level of collaboration and commitment.

## **DEFINING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Part of the establishment process will be to define clear roles and responsibilities for the delivery of the plan from key stakeholders including local councils, project leaders, key regional organisations, government departments and existing regional networks such as the Regional Management Forum and Regional Development Australia.

## **MANAGING EXPECTATIONS**

Clear communication will be vital to convey our priorities and processes to our stakeholders across disparate organisations with diverse sub cultures.

A communications plan will form an integral part of the establishment process.

# **Strategic goals**

- 5.1 Develop a regional leadership and governance structure that improves our capacity to implement, monitor and evolve our Regional Strategic Plan.**
- 5.2 Secure resources to facilitate the identification, prioritisation and advocacy of actions that address the strategic goals of this plan.**
- 5.3 Build leadership and knowledge capacity by establishing reference groups with expertise, experience and influence in key areas of regional focus.**
- 5.4 Invest in resources to standardise, share and analyse spatial and demographic data.**
- 5.5 Develop strategic communications and marketing initiatives to support the implementation of this plan.**
- 5.6 Identify and address the barriers to cooperation between and within sectors and governments.**
- 5.7 Ensure that projects that deliver sustainability and equity outcomes are valued and supported.**
- 5.8 Build cooperative networks and relationships with neighbouring regions.**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**

- Invest in structures and processes that will assist the implementation of the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan.**
- Invest in initiatives to establish a Great South Coast Regional Alliance.**



## Governance & resources

*Getting ready to implement the plan.*

### STRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

A stakeholder workshop will be convened by the interim plan implementation committee to discuss governance and structure options for the establishment of the Great South Coast Regional Alliance to drive the implementation of the plan.

All of the people and organisations that participated in consultation activities during the development of the plan will be invited to participate in the workshop. The group will debate the merits of a number of structure and governance model alternatives, and consider practical constraints such as available human and financial resources before arriving at an agreed way forward.

The need for the establishment of leadership/reference groups to strengthen regional networks and facilitate the ongoing identification and prioritisation of regional projects will also be discussed.

In order to take advantage of the momentum for regional collaboration created by the development of the plan, the interim management group are determined that agreement for the governance and structure of the alliance is reached as soon as possible.

### FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The establishment of an alliance to drive the implementation of the plan is a critical next step and requires investment in a number of areas.

The plan identifies a number of regional initiatives for immediate action. Preparation for the implementation of projects that address these immediate actions are well underway, with many ready to go now.

Funding streams for our priority projects and immediate actions need to be urgently identified and secured. Even more importantly, we need to identify and secure funding streams to successfully establish an ongoing and sustainable regional alliance in the Great South Coast to drive the delivery of this plan.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A truly collaborative regional alliance will consist of disparate member organisations with a range of work cultures and alignments.

The alliance provides an opportunity for people to contribute to the future vision of the region from within, but also from outside the culture and commitments of their primary organisation. This can promote innovative thinking and actions from participants in addressing issues that not only affect their primary area of interest, but also affect the region as a whole. Effective communications need to be employed to ensure that people understand, appreciate and embrace the new opportunities a regional focus can bring in addressing issues that deliver mutual benefits to multiple stakeholders.



## WORKING WITH OTHER REGIONAL GROUPS

There are a number of regional groups operating in the Great South Coast. It is important that strong relationships are established with these groups.

Government groups such as the Regional Development Australia Committee and the Regional Management Forum operate in networks of influence that could accelerate support and funding for our priority projects.

In order to advance projects of mutual benefit, good working relationships should also be developed with neighbouring regional alliances particularly our sub-regional partners G21 Geelong Region Alliance to our east, the Grampians region to our north and the Limestone Coast region of South Australia to our west.

Other important regional groups exist across a range of interest areas including business and industry networks, environment and education alliances, community networks, statutory authorities and not-for-profit organisations. We should explore opportunities to collaborate and cooperate with these organisation to progress regional issues more successfully and avoid duplication and attribution issues.

## THE MAIN ISSUES:

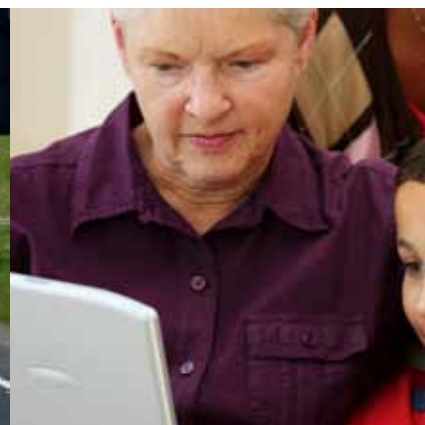
- Resources for implementation support.
- A practical and fair governance structure.
- Stakeholder roles and responsibilities.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Establish an interim plan implementation committee to progress the delivery of the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan.
- Conduct a Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan implementation workshop to establish fundamental structures, processes, roles and responsibilities.
- Identify funding opportunities for implementation initiatives in the Victorian Government's "Ready for Tomorrow" regional development strategy, "A Fairer Victoria 2010" social equity strategy and the upcoming environmental sustainability strategy.
- Establish the Great South Coast Regional Alliance.
- Develop a communications strategy for the Great South Coast Regional Alliance.
- Address regional participation issues including practical ways to convene regional meetings with minimal travel requirements.
- Develop cooperation and collaboration protocols with the G21 Geelong Region Alliance, the Regional Management Forum and Regional Development Australia.
- Support the development of a Regional Research and Information Centre.
- Improve integrated regional planning, evaluation and research.
- Promote senior management exchanges and secondments between local government and state government agencies.







# Prioritising the projects

*Addressing the strategic goals of the plan.*

## DEFINITION OF A REGIONAL PROJECT

A Great South Coast regional project can originate from any regional stakeholder and must:

- Deliver benefits to more than one municipality of the region;
- Require collaboration for implementation; and
- Address one or more of the strategic goals of the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan.

This framework will be particularly useful in advancing projects that are of importance to multiple stakeholders, but which no single stakeholder could hope to progress on their own.

## IDENTIFYING REGIONAL PROJECTS

A process will soon be established to facilitate the ongoing nomination of regional projects, by any regional stakeholder.

Initially, a list of projects will be compiled from stakeholder group recommendations. The projects will be prioritised against an agreed criteria in order to identify those for immediate advocacy and support.

It's important to note that the nomination and prioritisation of regional projects is an ongoing process that will change in response to emerging environmental factors (such as the Global Economic Crisis) and corresponding funding and support opportunities.

## PROJECT OWNERSHIP & ATTRIBUTION

Projects are auspiced and developed by individual organisations, such as councils, business networks, industry groups, community groups, universities and state government departments. Ownership of the project always remains with the auspicing agency, as does responsibility for its delivery.

The role of the plan implementation committee is to recognise and promote the projects as regional priorities by assessing them against the strategic goals presented in this plan and communicating their importance to other regional stakeholders. This will also encourage other regional stakeholders to support the projects as regional priorities - which will raise the profile of the region and its projects to local, state and national potential funding bodies.

## PRIORITISING THE PROJECTS

The plan implementation committee will be informed by a series of leadership/reference groups that will be established in fields of key regional focus. Membership of these groups, and how they will be formed, will be determined at the upcoming plan implementation workshop. The groups are likely to include representatives from councils and relevant state government departments, as well as business and community leaders with expertise, experience and influence in the field of the group's focus. This will build significant regional networking opportunities for





all participants and ensure the ongoing identification of regional issues and opportunities in their field of expertise.

These leadership/reference groups will also be responsible for assessing the projects in their area of interest and prioritising them according to:

- social, environmental and economic benefits,
- alignment with strategic goals of the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan,
- leadership and human resource availability; and
- likelihood of funding.

### MAXIMISING OPPORTUNITIES

The plan implementation committee will consider the nominated projects of all the leadership/reference groups and endorse projects with the highest strategic value and the greatest likelihood of funding for submission to a variety of resourcing and support avenues. They will collaborate with regional peak bodies and other stakeholders to secure funding and support for priority regional programs and projects. Integrating regional projects with the planning and budgetary processes of key stakeholders will require strong leadership, excellent communication and new levels of cooperation.

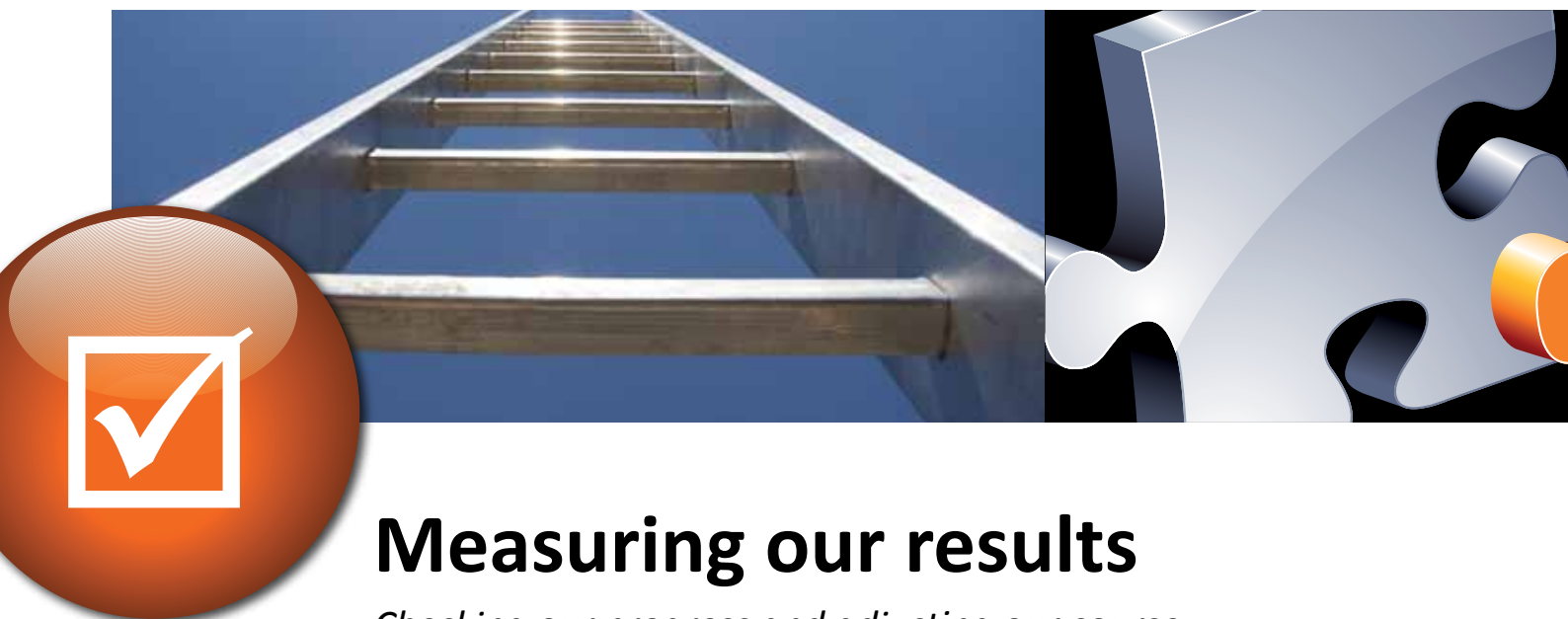
### THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Project identification and prioritisation processes.
- Stakeholder engagement and participation.
- Communications resources and strategies.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Secure resources to coordinate the establishment of leadership/reference groups.
- Establish leadership groups with expertise, experience and influence in key areas of regional focus.
- Develop principles to guide the initiation of projects that address the strategic goals of the Regional Strategic Plan.
- Define project prioritisation criteria and advocacy procedures.
- Develop guidelines for consistent and concise reporting and communications.
- Establish and communicate clear roles and responsibilities for all stakeholder groups.
- Explore how our leadership/reference groups will collaborate with the G21 pillar groups.
- Establish a regional road hierarchy that provides an evidence-based approach to major road and highway upgrades.
- Engage with existing community environment networks such as the South West Climate Change Forum.
- Explore opportunities to collaborate with the G21 Health & Wellbeing and Education & Training Pillars.
- Establish processes to identify issues and opportunities in conjunction with adjoining regions.





## Measuring our results

*Checking our progress and adjusting our course.*

### DATA AND ANALYSIS

We need to develop ways to determine if the projects we implement are successful in addressing the strategic goals of the plan. The first step in that process is to accurately assess where we are now.

Though the evidence that supports this plan is robust, it also reveals a number of gaps in the availability of up-to-date data in a number of key focus areas. A critical task for the plan implementation group will be to establish methods for regular and efficient provision of regional data and analysis. This will not only enable us to measure our outcomes against the strategic goals of the plan, but will also improve local area planning and decision making by all levels of government, business, community and service providers.

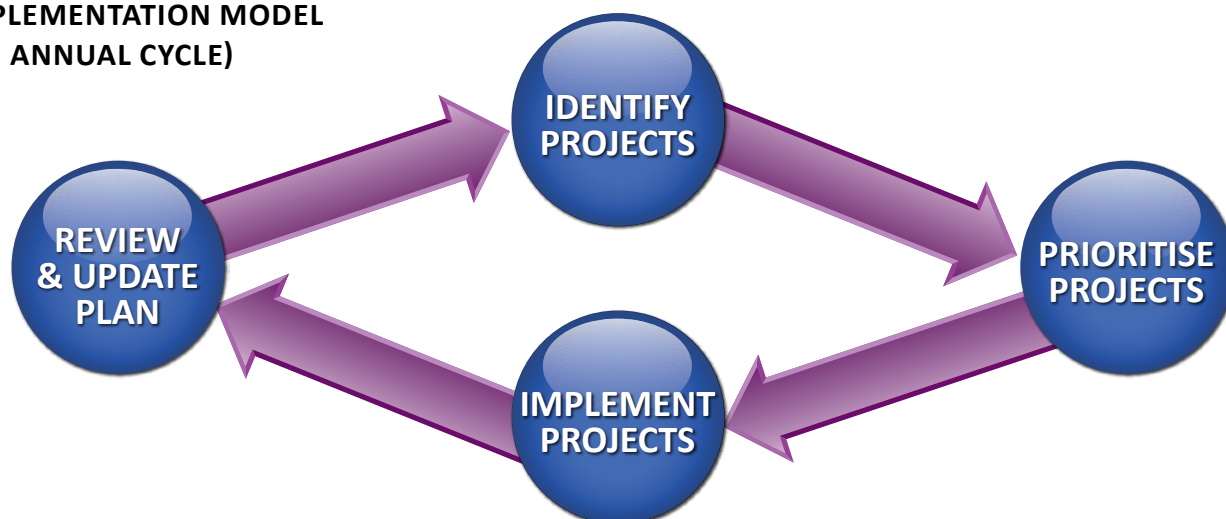
### AN EVOLVING PLAN

This plan is our best assessment of how our region is placed in 2010, and how issues that are now evident can be reasonably predicted to impact on its future. The strategic goals of the plan have been framed in the current political, business and social environment.

As the events of the past few years demonstrate, this context is prone to sudden and dramatic change. In recognition of this reality, this plan is not intended to be set in stone. Our intention is to review and refresh it in response to the changing political, financial and social environments in which it must operate.

Developing an economical and efficient way to do this will be a key task in our plan implementation process.

### IMPLEMENTATION MODEL (AN ANNUAL CYCLE)





## COMMUNICATIONS

To be successful, the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan will need to be endorsed, supported and implemented by all levels of government, as well as the industry, business and community organisations operating in the region. Once establishment resources are secured, a communications strategy will be developed to:

- Inform participants, Councillors, funding bodies, media and the community of regional issues and activities supported by the alliance;
- Engage people to participate in regional activities;
- Reward participation, support and achievement in regional planning and development; and
- Build the reach and influence of the Great South Coast regional alliance.

Effectiveness of the communications initiatives can be measured through stakeholder survey results, participation rates, website traffic and successful funding and advocacy campaigns.

## THE MAIN ISSUES:

- Reviewing and refreshing the strategic goals.
- Availability of up-to-date data and analysis.
- Communications strategies and resources.
- Stakeholder engagement and commitment.

## THINGS TO DO:

- Invest in resources to standardise, share and analyse spatial and demographic data to improve integrated regional planning, evaluation and research. 
- Identify opportunities for spatial distribution of population and economic development activity within the region, based on capacity and availability of appropriate infrastructure.
- Establish processes and procedures for the annual progress measurement of the strategic goals of the plan.
- Establish processes and procedures for the annual review of the strategic goals of the plan.
- Secure resources for consistent and concise reporting and communications.
- Secure resources for identification of funding opportunities for priority projects.
- Establish a coordinated regional data storage and analysis service to collect and manage spatial information across a range of land use and settlement themes (including coastal digital elevation data and mapping of rural land use change, land capability, climate change vulnerability, natural assets, open space, critical infrastructure and settlements). 
- Build opportunities for better regional planning, networking and partnering to improve efficiency and effectiveness in addressing our strategic goals. 



# Evidence and consultation

*The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan was developed following eighteen months of research and consultation.*

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Project Control Group is to develop a subregional Strategic Plan for the Great South Coast region being a regional positioning statement for the future.

The plan will be informed by analysis of economic, social and environmental performance, challenges and desired outcomes

The plan will highlight priority areas for coordinated support and action and will frame a ten year action folio having regard to a twenty year forward look at trends, potential risks and opportunity.

Development of the Plan shall involve the communities and key businesses of the region.

The Plan will be launched in August 2010.

## THE EVIDENCE BASE

The development of the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan has been informed by the Regional Development Australia strategic planning resources; the Provincial Victoria: Directions for the Next Decade Discussion Paper; The Great South Coast Health and Wellbeing Profile 2010; Barwon South West Regional Management Forum; stakeholder groups and the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan Control Group.

The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan is aligned with local, state and national strategies, policies and frameworks and these form a major component of the evidence base for the plan.

## THE REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

This plan is available for viewing and download from the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan website at [www.greatsouthcoast.com.au](http://www.greatsouthcoast.com.au). The site also hosts evidence and reference documents that informed the development of the plan including:

- Introduction to the Regional Strategic Planning Initiative
- The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan Discussion Paper
- The evidence base for each Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan focus area
- Full transcripts of all stakeholder submissions received in response to the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan Discussion Paper
- Links to key reference documents including "Ready for Tomorrow - a Blueprint for Regional and Rural Victoria" and "A Fairer Victoria: Real support - Real Gains"
- Links to key websites including:

COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL [www.colacotway.vic.gov.au](http://www.colacotway.vic.gov.au)

CORANGAMITE SHIRE COUNCIL [www.corangamite.vic.gov.au](http://www.corangamite.vic.gov.au)

GLENELG SHIRE COUNCIL [www.glenelg.vic.gov.au](http://www.glenelg.vic.gov.au)

MOYNE SHIRE COUNCIL [www.moyne.vic.gov.au](http://www.moyne.vic.gov.au)

SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE COUNCIL  
[www.sthgrampians.vic.gov.au](http://www.sthgrampians.vic.gov.au)

WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL [www.warrnambool.vic.gov.au](http://www.warrnambool.vic.gov.au)

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA [www.rda.gov.au](http://www.rda.gov.au)



## CONSULTATION PARTICIPANTS

The development of the plan included a range of consultation sessions and forums for Local Government and business and community leaders. We thank the following people for their participation and look forward to their continuing participation in the delivery of the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan.

Rob Small, CEO, Colac Otway Shire Council	Gilbert Wilson Mayor, Glenelg Shire Council	Grant Green Managing Director, Wannon Water
Richard Montgomery, Commerce Warrnambool	Stuart Burdack CEO, Glenelg Shire Council	Andrew Reaper Regional Director, Barwon South West Department of Justice
Peter Greig, Chairman, Corangamite CMA	Russell Worland Executive Officer, Great South Coast	Stephen Lucas Managing Director, Warrnambool Bus Lines
Matt Makin Mayor, Corangamite Shire Council	Judy Nichols Senior Project Manager, Great South Coast	Michael Neoh Mayor, Warrnambool City Council
Paul Younis CEO, Corangamite Shire Council	Ross Martin Senior Project Manager, Great South Coast	Graham McMahon General Manager, Warrnambool Standard
Adam Rogers Acting Area Manager, South West Country Fire Authority	Phil Lloyd Resources Manager, Gunns	Denis Naphthine MP Member for South-West Coast
Gregory Wood Associate Professor, Faculty of Business & Law, Deakin University	Hugh Macdonald Hamilton Regional Business Association	Hugh Delahunty MP Member for Lowan
John Hedditch Manager Public Health & Regional Planning, Department of Health	James Purcell Mayor, Moyne Shire Council	Gayle Tierney MP Member for Western Victoria
Chris Faulkner Regional Director, Barwon South-West Region, Department of Health	Brett Stonestreet CEO, Moyne Shire Council	Geoff Tindal RDA Liaison & Contract Management
Jonathon Drohan Community Relationship Manager Department of Primary Industries	Chris Logan Regional Stakeholder Advisor, Origin Energy	Regional Development Australia Committee members
Terry Lewis Community Relationship Manager - Glenelg, Hopkins, Wimmera, Department of Primary Industries	Claire Maries Policy Manager, Pacific Hydro	Bruce Anson
Larissa Scanlon Regional Officer, Department of Transport	Paul Thornton Manufacturing Manager, Portland Aluminium	Elaine Carbines
David Boyle Regional Executive Support Officer, Barwon South West, DPCD	Nick Rees Regional Asset Manager, Powercor	Libby Coker
Keith Jackson, Regional Director, Barwon South West, DPCD	Carol Reid CEO, Shipwreck Coast Tourism	Ed Coppe
Michael Fendley Senior Project Manager, DSE	John Krygger CEO, South West Healthcare	Peter Dorling
Lisa Bennetto Communications Consultant	Joe Piper CEO, South West Institute of TAFE	Geoff White
Mark Wootton Chair, Glenelg Hopkins CMA	Toni Jenkins Executive Officer, South West Local Learning and Employment Network	Sue Kilpatrick
Phil Perret Strategy & Investment Manager, Glenelg Hopkins CMA	Marcus Rentsch Mayor, Southern Grampians Shire Council	Michael Malouf
	Richard Perry CEO, Southern Grampians Shire Council	Tom Lindsey
	Leigh Newberry Project Manager, Suzlon Energy	Ruth Gstrein
	Colin Nuttall Project Manager, Macarthur Wind Farm, Suzlon Energy	Regional Development Victoria staff
	David Fary Statutory Planning Officer, Vic Roads	Justin Hanney
		Rob Jones
		Andrew Wear
		Serap Boz
		Emma Vagg
		Ian Seuren
		Jenni Coutts
		Lindsay Ferguson



# Acknowledgements

*The development of the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan was made possible through the significant contributions of many people and organisations.*

## THE PROJECT CONTROL GROUP

Responsibility for the development of a Regional Strategic Plan for the southwest was accepted by the six local government authorities of the region working with key State agency representatives and operating as a Project Control Group with membership as follows:

### Glenelg Shire Council

Stuart Burdack, Chief Executive Officer (Chair)

### Colac Otway Shire Council

Rob Small, Chief Executive Officer

### Corangamite Shire Council

Paul Younis, Chief Executive Officer

### Moyne Shire Council

Brett Stonestreet, Chief Executive Officer

### Southern Grampians Shire Council

Richard Perry, Chief Executive Officer

### Warrnambool City Council

Bruce Anson, Chief Executive Officer

### Regional Development Victoria

Andrew Wear, Regional Director Barwon South West

### Regional Development Victoria

Nadia Reid, Program Manager,  
Strategy and Regional Policy

### Department of Planning and Community Development

Keith Jackson, Regional Director Grampians - Barwon South West

### Department of Planning and Community Development

David Boyle, Regional Director Barwon South West

## Department of Health

John Hedditch, Manager Public Health & Regional Planning, Health & Aged Care Barwon South West

## Department of Sustainability and Environment

Michael Fendley, Senior Project Manager,  
Climate Change and Sustainability Services

## THE PROJECT TEAM

The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan Project Team, has over the last 18 months developed significant intellectual capital and evidence that underpins the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan, including:

- analysis and interpretation of state, federal and local government policy and plans;
- the development stakeholder relationships;
- stakeholder goodwill and confidence with the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan Team;
- analysis of and reference to a broad range of industry specific reports and papers;
- analysis of academic and technical papers across all sectors;
- summaries of stakeholder and industry consultations;
- summary of formal public submissions; and
- various background discussion papers.

In developing this capital and through active stakeholder engagement across the private and public sectors, the Project Team have provided a thorough and

in depth appreciation of the drivers shaping the region today and the interventions required to manage the region sustainably into the future.

The Project Team is:

**Executive Officer,  
Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan**

Russell Worland

**Senior Project Manager,  
Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan**

Ross Martin

**Senior Project Manager,  
Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan**

Judith Nichols

## REGIONAL FORUMS

Thank you to the members of the Barwon South West Regional Management Forum and Regional Development Australia Committee for their valuable advice and opinion for the development of this plan.

## SUBMISSION CONTRIBUTORS

The following people and organisations made written submissions in response to the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan Discussion Paper. These significant contributions helped to shape our final plan and are gratefully acknowledged.

Department of Health

Chris Faulkner, Regional Director, Barwon South West

Una Allender

Colac Otway Shire Council

Glenelg Shire Council

Southern Grampian Shire Council

Warrnambool City Council

Corangamite Shire Council

Moyne Shire Council

Deakin University

Sue Kilpatrick

Committee of Portland

Anita Rank, Executive Officer

Regional Management Forum

Barwon South West Regional Development Australia Committee

The Hon David Hawker MP, Member for Wannon

South West Local Learning and Employment Network

Toni Jenkins

South West RYAN (Regional Youth Affairs Network)

WestVic Dairy

Mike Weise

Regional Development Victoria

Lindsay Ferguson

GHCMA

Peter Butcher

Ted Phillips

Southern Rural Water

Port of Portland

Scott Paterson, CEO

Community South West

Allan Bassett

Simpson Farmers Market

Kate Tremble

Rebecca Rose

Department of Human Services

Jim Higgins, Regional Director, Barwon South West

Moyne Shire Council

Cathy Harbison, Community Support Services

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Bryan Timms

Community South West

Allan Bassett

Jeanette Pritchard

Western District Health Service

Jim Fletcher, Executive Officer

Department of Transport

Larissa Scanlon

Cr Bob Penny

Southern Grampians Shire Council

Hamilton Art Gallery

Danny McOwan

JT Stone

Peter Dryden

Tourism and Transport Forum

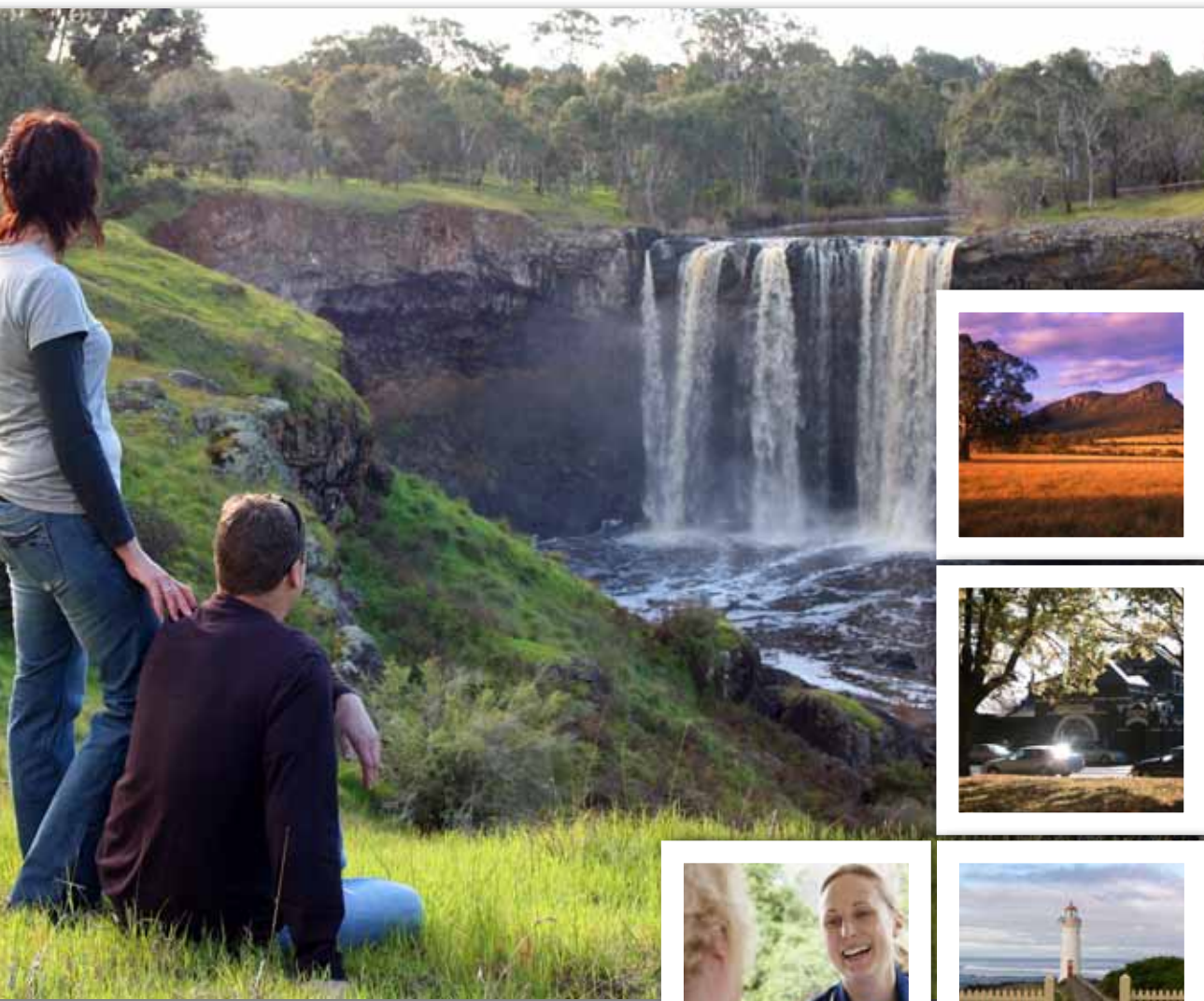
Stafford Hall

Parks Victoria

Dianne Smith, Tourism Partnerships Manager.

## THE FINAL DELIVERY

This Plan was written, edited and designed by Lisa Bennetto with invaluable assistance from the Project Control Group, the Project Team and Planisphere.



For more information:  
[www.greatsouthcoast.com.au](http://www.greatsouthcoast.com.au)