



Pre-Budget Submission 2022-23

Enabling a better balance for Victoria



PERIURBANGROUP
of Rural Councils



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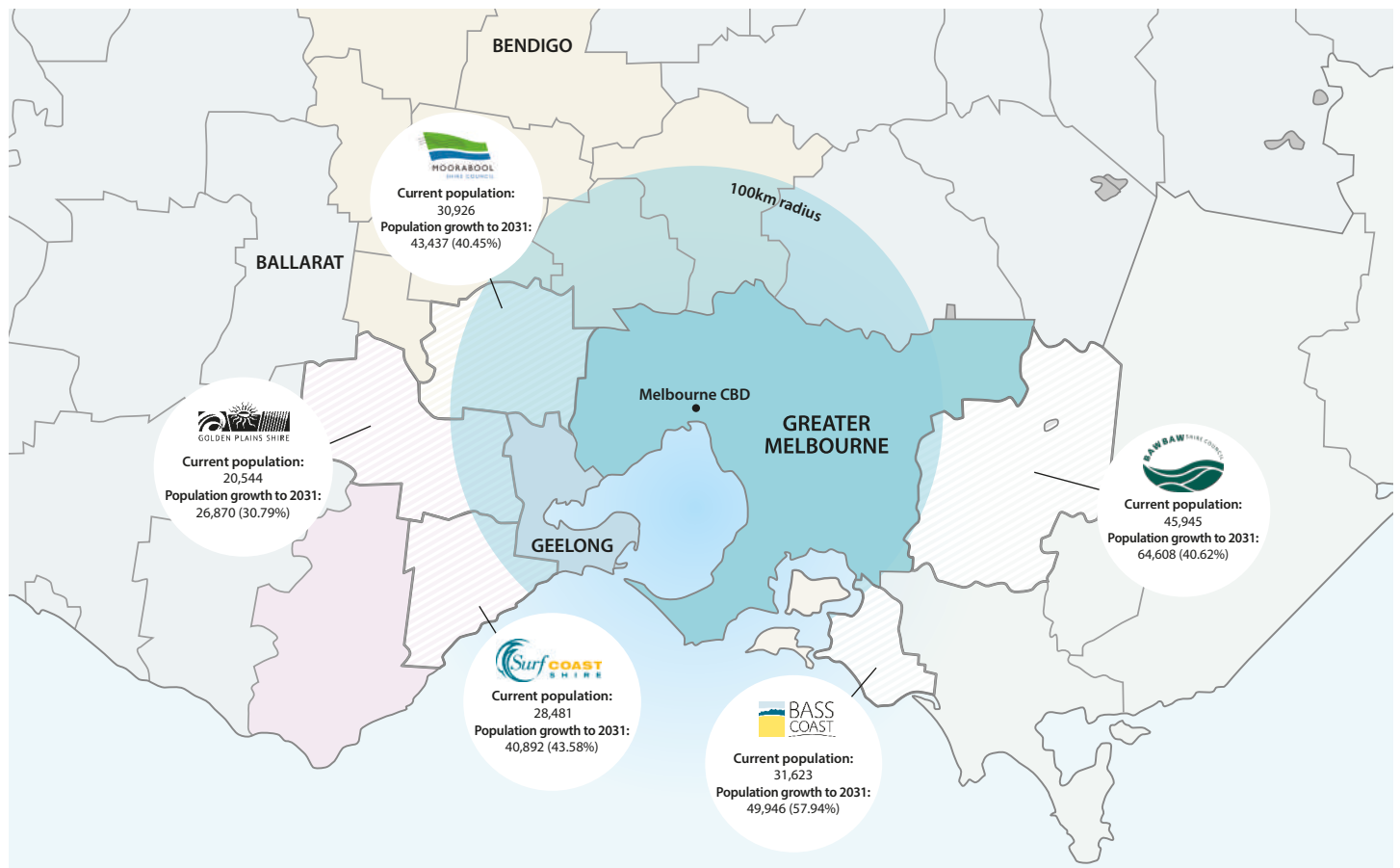


The Peri Urban Group of Rural Councils (PUGRC)

The Peri Urban Group of Rural Councils (PUGRC) represents those Victorian council shires that interface Metropolitan Melbourne and Victoria's largest regional cities.

The five member councils are:

- Bass Coast Shire Council;
- Baw Baw Shire Council;
- Golden Plains Shire Council;
- Moorabool Shire Council; and
- Surf Coast Shire Council.



The region has an impressive footprint:

- it covers an area of more than **11,000 square kilometres**;
- it has a population of more than **180,000 Victorians**;
- **38,000 of residents commute to employment** outside of the region;
- it generates more than **\$5.3 billion of Gross Regional Product** annually;
- **\$888 million in agriculture products** are produced per annum; and
- it supplies **41 per cent of Melbourne's food needs** - including 80 per cent of its vegetables.



PUGRC How we operate

PUGRC is the peak voice and lead advocate on Victorian peri urban issues, engaging with one voice to design strong future communities. We work together to secure important economic and social investment from both the Federal and State Government. In return the PUGRC region offers these governments and Victorians the opportunity for a better balance.



Innovate

Clearly identify and define projects and priorities that benefit the region and develop innovative solutions to manage them



Advise

Provide advice on issues, trends and other developments affecting our region that can inform and assist responses from all levels of government



Partner

Partner with governments on the development of policy, planning, strategies and investment decisions



Advocate

Advocate for appropriate government funding for infrastructure and services that the region needs to innovate and thrive



Collaborate

Align state stakeholders for peri urban development, policy and population growth



About PUGRC – A Better Balance

The Peri Urban areas of Victoria provide an opportunity to enable a better balance.

Our members can provide Victorians:

- A **better balance for their lifestyle**; and
- A **better balance for their business** pursuits.

The Peri Urban areas can also provide the State and Federal Government the opportunity to **better balance the pressures of population growth**.

Located on the doorstep of both metropolitan Melbourne and Victoria's largest regional cities, those seeking to escape congestion and rising housing prices are making the shift in droves. There are, however, high expectations from these new community members on having the right amenity and effective connectivity (both digital and transport). For PUGRC this **means a race to 'catch up'**.

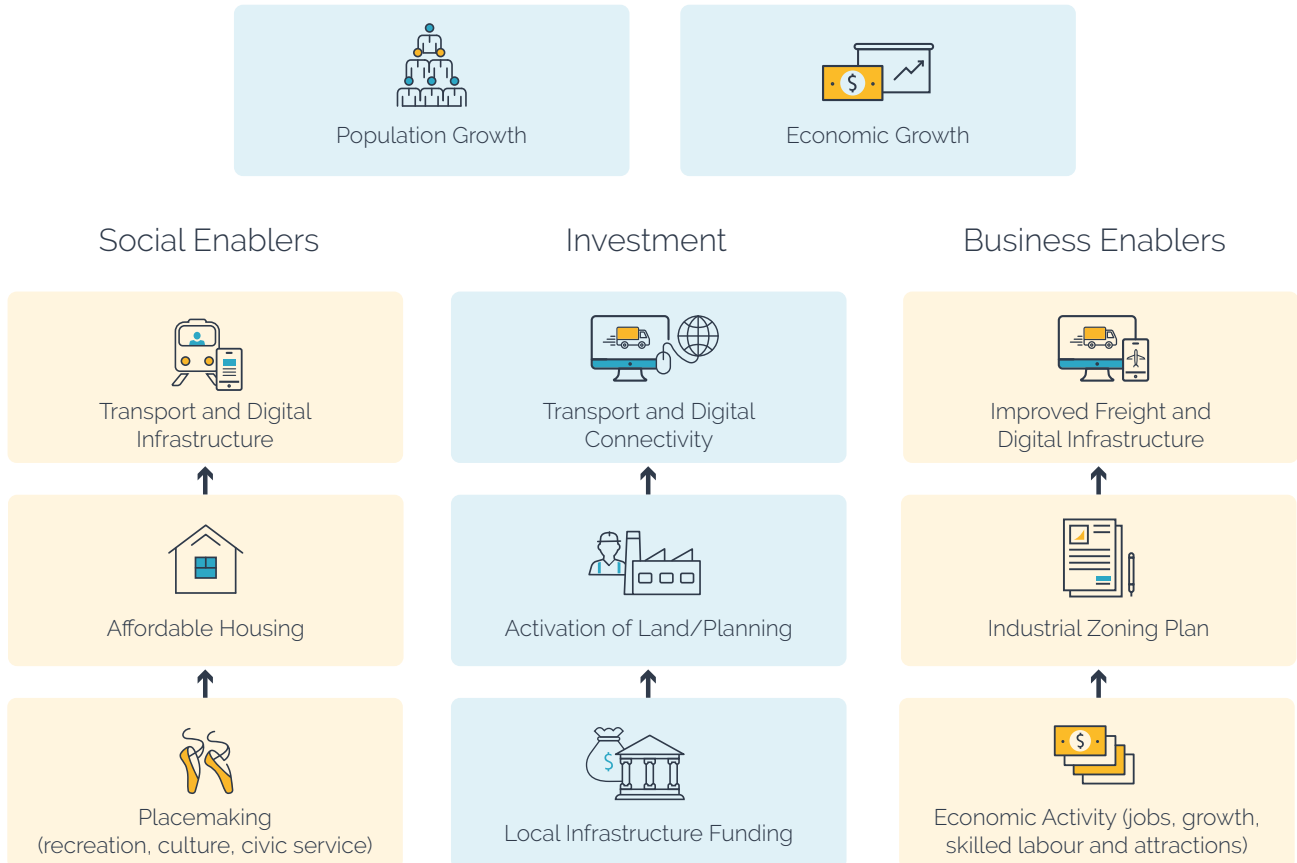
The region is also attracting a range of new industries ranging from energy production, agriculture, extractive mining, food processing and tourism. Again, the land exists to support this investment. **However, support to activate the land that will make it fit for purpose** is now required.

Investment Ready

The proximity of the peri-urban region to Melbourne and access to road and rail infrastructure reinforces the connectivity between these areas enabling access to jobs, markets, customers and tourists.

PUGRC

Enabling a better balance



An opportunity now exists to invest in the PUGRC's thriving local government areas to further develop highly liveable and affordable alternatives to metropolitan Melbourne.





Pre Budget Submission - Executive Summary

Victorian Governments from both sides of politics have anticipated and planned for a growing Victorian population, both in Melbourne and in the regions.

The PUGRC members have shared in that growth and anticipate this trend to continue – **expected to grow by more than 100,000 residents** by 2036.

PUGRC members are now in the position that interface councils found themselves a decade ago in regard to land supply, housing supply and infrastructure provision. Mistakes of the past must be addressed and a plan to support the growth of these areas, including an investment map, is now required.

Infrastructure Victoria's report supports this premise, *The Post-pandemic Commute*, states that outer suburbs, new growth areas, and the **peri-urban rural areas of Melbourne could experience faster population growth than they otherwise would, due to the pandemic driven population shift.**

The impact of COVID-19 and **technological developments to enable more people to work from home**, have increased the pace of migration to Victoria's regions – particularly those that are considered a commutable distance. Those seeking to escape the congestion of Melbourne and to raise families or gain more options for business pursuits are attracted to our areas.

The financial capacity of Local Governments to appropriately invest in the enabling infrastructure and services required to support the rate of growth needs to be better supported by the state and federal governments.

It is on this basis that the **following pre-budget submission** has been developed, with investment across four key areas that will ensure that a **better balance and better future for Victorians is achieved:**

1. **Placemaking:** civic and cultural infrastructure to develop liveable communities;
2. **Job Creating Tourism Assets:** development of tourism assets for a stronger post-COVID recovery;
3. **Digital Connectivity:** to support the work from home movement; and
4. **Transport Connectivity:** to allow inter and intra regional connectivity to allow regions to thrive.

"...expected to grow by more than 100,000 residents by 2036"



Placemaking

Creating functional places where people want to live and work has never been more important for Victoria.

The state's economy has historically benefited from strong population growth, however the impacts of this growth has in recent years caused crushing congestion. This has had negative impacts for both the residents of Melbourne and the State's bottomline.

Pre-COVID, Victoria had been growing by more than any other state or territory, at up to 150,000 per annum. It is expected that this growth will return as borders open – meaning that an extra 2.3 million additional dwellings are required in Victoria by 2056.

Capitalising on its proximity to Melbourne and on its close links to other regions and cities, the PUGRC region is currently and will continue to absorb this growth. Creating places where people can live and work with the enabling infrastructure must be planned for and managed by all levels of government.

Fast Facts

- PUGRC member regions are growing at an average of **1.96% per annum**;
- PUGRC member regions are expected to grow by **47.2%, or more than 100,000 people by 2036**; and
- The Centre for Population's Regional Internal Migration Estimates, reported that in the 12 months to March 2021, **43 per cent of those leaving Melbourne settled in regional Victoria**.

The financial capacity of Local Governments to appropriately invest in the infrastructure and services required to support the rate of growth requires better support by the state and federal governments.



Opportunities

The role of civic and cultural infrastructure

There is growing recognition of the role that social infrastructure, such as arts, culture and recreation, plays in enhancing the attractiveness of communities.

These amenities help shape the character of our communities and provide **balanced lifestyle** options that enable communities to express themselves and represent regional life on their own terms.

Population increases contribute to approximately half of gross regional product (GRP) growth. Amenities should be considered a significant driver of population and economic growth, and included as a competitive advantage.



Challenges

The pressure on the PUGRC councils to sustain a growing community, while simultaneously supporting the needs of both a young AND ageing population is difficult. This is due to councils having a historically **small rate base within a rate-capped environment**, leading to underinvestment in infrastructure.

For both the Federal and State government to meet their objectives of increasing migration to support a post-COVID recovery - without the corresponding congestion challenges - there is a genuine need for the Federal and State government to support local infrastructure projects. To enable a **better balance for Victoria**, it is important that projects that support a vibrant town centre and cultural and recreational facilities, are funded.

With rate capping being a restrictive factor to councils' ability to invest, PUGRC also recommends that **co-contribution ratios be decreased for various government funding programs** and that the merit of the overall project be considered for increased funding from government if the benefits of the investment to the community are significant.



Government Investment

This call for contribution to the cost of growth was supported by Infrastructure Victoria's 30 Year Strategy which recommends that the State Government should, "in the next five years, increase funding to support local government to plan and deliver libraries and aquatic recreation centres in Melbourne's seven growth area municipalities."

It further stated:

"Each municipality should receive up to \$200,000 for aquatic centre planning and \$100,000 for library planning. The Victorian Government should fund up to one third of the cost of new facilities, capped at \$20 million for aquatic centres and \$10 million for libraries, with councils to provide funding for the remaining capital costs and operational expenses."

The PUGRC member councils are in line for the next wave of high-level growth and as such this recommendation should apply to our communities. In the meantime we are calling on State and Federal governments to increase investment to current programs that support enabling infrastructure in our communities.

Recommendations

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

Growing Suburbs Fund:

- Increase the fund's value by 25%; and
- Provide continuous rounds of funding and commit to a minimum four-year cycle of funding.

Living Libraries Infrastructure Fund:

- Provide funding for four new rounds of investment;
- Lower ratios of co-contribution for council applications;
- Decrease the current detail required for submitting funding applications; and
- Decrease the co-contribution ratio of council for specific funding applications.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- That the Federal Government increase and provide continuous rounds of funding for the Building Better Regions Fund.

Job Creation – Tourism Assets

Visitation to regional areas for the purposes of recreation or tourism are a key pillar in many regional economies. The PUGRC is no different and an immediate challenge, while closures are still an issue for Australia, will be attracting people back to our communities for tourism and recreation purposes.

Member councils have outlined projects at the end of this document that will invigorate the tourism economy by attracting workers to the region and increasing visitation – including the all-important multi night visits.

Fast Facts

- In the year ending March 2021, the regional Victorian tourism industry lost \$7 billion in tourism expenditure and 32.6 million visitors, compared with \$2.7 billion and 14.1 million visitors in metropolitan Melbourne;
- Pre-pandemic the PUGRC region **hosted over six million tourists a year**;
- In 2017 tourism represented **31.4 percent of its GRP for the Bass Coast Shire and 28.6 percent of its GRP for the Surf Coast Shire**; and
- Between December 2018 and December 2019 Golden Plains Shire's Tourism Sector Output **increased from \$17.3 million to \$18.4 million**.

Opportunities

The PUGRC region is endowed with some of the most spectacular natural attractions in Australia. From surf to summit, the area attracts not only permanent residents, but a substantial holiday population and a growing number of tourists from Australia and from around the world. It is hoped that after the pandemic, international visitors will return to enjoy what these regions have to offer. **Tourism is one sector that can see quick positive economic impacts enacted by ready to go projects. Government investment will be key to these projects becoming a reality.**

Challenges

The impacts on industries such as tourism, retail, food and accommodation has been nothing short of devastating. The major short-to-medium term challenge for PUGRC businesses will be in the form of significantly reduced liquidity, reduced access to capital for investment, bankruptcy and general descent into recession.

To enable recovery of the tourism industry, the PUGRC believe there are three major factors:

- Supporting business recovery;
- Maintaining and improving visitor attraction offerings; and
- Attracting staff to the region.





Government Investment

The ability of industry to lead an economic recovery needs to be support by both the State and Federal governments. The tourism industry has been stripped of not only visitation but also the capital to reinvest and recover.

It is on this basis that the PUGRC asks that funding the programs outlined be increased and extended so that our local small businesses can plan a post COVID recovery with certainty.

Further, we recommend the state government agencies who support the nature based recreational assets in our communities that attract visitors and make our communities more liveable, be allocated additional funding to maintain and improve roads and parklands.

We know that investment into these agencies will also improve community safety aspects through mitigation of fires and alleviating dangerous roads.

Recommendations

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

That the State Government increases by 25% and provide continuous rounds of funding for the following programs:

- Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund;
- Regional Investment Tourism Fund; and
- Regional Events Fund.

That the State Government increase funding to Parks Victoria and Regional Roads Victoria.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

That the Federal Government increase and provide continuous rounds of funding for the Building Better Regions Fund.



Digital Connectivity

The rapid acceleration of e-commerce and e-service delivery provides a key platform to connect peri-urban region residents with work-from-home opportunities as well as providing a basis for creating a more equitable level of service delivery. It further opens the opportunity for industry to better connect to international trade, as well as providing a basis for creating a more equitable level of service delivery.

The cost of not having this infrastructure in place will create economic and social leaks, where businesses and communities seek more connected places to live and work.

Fast Facts

- **297 registered blackspots** in the PUGRC region;
- Region has a population of over **180,000 Victorians**, which almost doubles over holiday season increasing pressure of connectivity infrastructure; and
- Research conducted by the Regional Australia Institute found the number of Australians **working from home in a regional setting doubled between March 2020 and August 2020.**

Opportunities

With adequate levels of digital connectivity, industry and businesses will have the option to relocate premises from both metropolitan Melbourne and regional cities to the peri urban region to assist with creating **a better balance of growth** across Victoria.

Land prices in the peri urban regions have now become appealing to business, compared to regional cities and metropolitan Melbourne but unless digital connectivity is adequate for them to operate, this appeal will decrease.

Additionally during the pandemic, digital connectivity allowed people to keep medical appointments, have groceries and other goods delivered, brought children into virtual classrooms during periods of extended lockdown and kept families in touch.

Improved infrastructure and availability of hubs in town centres that offer free wifi to the community – as has been done with regional cities – would be extremely beneficial in supporting the both economic and service provision activities.

Challenges

Mobile blackspots are a commonly understood term in relation to digital issues, however, there is a now an emerging issue associated with grey spots. Due to the changes in technology, the existing infrastructure is not keeping pace with the end-user's technology. The systems are overloaded by data use and consistency of wi-fi is low in many areas. Previous infrastructure was not designed for smart phones utilising so much data and upgrading of this infrastructure must now occur. Not only must new digital connectivity infrastructure be a focus – but updating of dated infrastructure must also be a priority. **Rapid population growth has exacerbated the problem with much of the existing telecommunication's infrastructure being well under capacity.**





Emergency Management

Sufficient digital connectivity can be a matter of life and death. Bushfires have underscored the need for more resilient and accessible broadband and mobile telephone infrastructure to facilitate reliable communications during bushfires and other emergencies.

Telecommunications must be recognised as an essential service and providers must be required to meet service continuity standards that prevent significant, prolonged and widespread outages during natural disasters. Arrangements to strengthen infrastructure resilience need to respond to the specific context of the infrastructure e.g. the design life of battery backup needs to reflect the setting of the installation and the likelihood and duration of isolation.

With Victoria being prone to natural disasters, it is vital that infrastructure have at least 48 hours of auxiliary back-up power to avoid outages during this time. This issue needs to be considered in the context of the use of digital communication by emergency services as a primary means to get information to communities about the fires.



Government Investment

The PUGRC recommends more be done to increase the digital connectivity of our member councils, this requires:

- Getting more PUGRC residents and businesses access to business-grade broadband;
- Upgrading mobile coverage;
- Improving 4G mobile coverage; and
- Helping more places become 5G ready.

PUGRC asks that current funding programs be increased and extended so that bandwidth, speed and reliability may be on par with Melbourne and that the competitiveness of our businesses and the amenity of our residents be comparable to that enjoyed in the metropolitan area.

Recommendations

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

That the State Government:

- Provide four new rounds of funding for the Connecting Victoria Program; and
- Invest in digital hubs in our major town centres to offer free wi-fi as has been provided in regional cities.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

That an incoming Federal Government:

- Provide new rounds of funding for the Regional Connectivity Program and the Mobile Blackspot Program;
- Commit to NBN-business fibre zones in each of our town centres; and
- Reinstate the Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters (STAND) grant program.

Transport Connectivity: Better Rail, Roads and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

The PUGRC region needs significant support for both its rail and road network to enhance intra connectivity and inter connectivity between regional towns and to Melbourne.

Transport infrastructure and services in the outer suburbs tends to lag behind urban development and population growth. As new areas are developed, existing roads are unable to cope with increased traffic volumes, while bus and rail services often lack a sufficiently dense residential catchment to provide services that meet the transport needs of the expanding population.

There are therefore significant benefits and opportunities in upgrading the regional rail network that is used by peri urban regional commuters. Upgrading of stations, duplicating track, building passing loops, signalling upgrades and removing level crossings along the Ballarat, Geelong, Gippsland and Warrnambool lines would greatly benefit peri urban regions and commuters.

Fast Facts

- Residents in peri-urban areas **have access to approximately 50% less public transport options** available to inner Metropolitan residents.
- **93 per cent of the peri-urban population are reliant on motor vehicles** to get to work compared to **76 per cent of metropolitan residents**.
- From every kilometre of road the PUGRC councils manage \$1233.99 is received in VGC road grant funding. **Due to size and lack of rate base, they can only spend approximately \$11,000** on road infrastructure per kilometre. Interface councils receive \$1,497.98 per kilometre in funding.

Opportunities

Modernised rail infrastructure will allow and attract more people to choose the affordable relaxed lifestyle of a peri urban region while still maintaining links to metropolitan or regional city work opportunities.

Functional and safe roads in the peri urban region are critical to facilitate travel for both employment/social purposes and for industry to access freight networks that require access to and from local, national and international markets.

Given the limitations of public transport, the road network assumes a greater importance for residents of the PUGRC than for metropolitan Melbourne. Ongoing investment is vital to maintain strong connectivity across Victoria.



Challenges

A combination of road funding formulas, the extent of the local road network and a low-rate base continues to hamper the required construction and maintenance of roads in the PUGRC. It limits their funding of road infrastructure to approximately \$11,000 per kilometre. This contrasts to a typical Metro Council's capacity to spend almost \$46,000 per kilometre.



The fact that the funding formula does not take into account the size of the task nor the small rate base that hampers Councils' ability to fund roads, makes it very difficult for the PUGRC to meet the ever-increasing task and expectations of its growing population of local road infrastructure. As population and road use increase and freight vehicles become longer and heavier, there will be a growing deterioration in road safety and in the economic competitiveness and amenity of PUGRC as councils struggle to meet escalating costs.

Extractive Industries

Extractive resources are critical to build housing, roads, rail lines, hospitals, schools and other public infrastructure to accommodate and service ongoing population growth. Sand, clay, gravel and limestone are the key resources used in construction materials, and are critical in supplying the state's construction sector, including residential, commercial and civil sectors.

Resources required by Melbourne for construction are reliant on efficient and safe freight routes from both the Gippsland region and Moorabool Shire. Victoria's extractive mining industries and manufacturing sectors are dependent on strengthening supply chains between regions, urban centres, distribution points and air and seaports. Businesses rely on improvements to networks to remain competitive and to reach their full potential. The movement through urban areas will grow by nearly 60 per cent over 20 years to 2040 without government action.¹

- Moorabool and Bass Coast Shires are a leading producer of sand, gravel and clay, three of the four key resources used in construction and essential to the State's **\$23bn construction sector**;
- Predicted growth for extractive mineral mining for sand in parts of South West Gippsland is anticipated to increase heavy vehicle haulage by **4,000 truck movements per day on existing road networks**;
- The Gippsland region are significant contributors of **sand extractive products to Melbourne with demand expected to grow by over 35 per cent** between 2018 and 2040; and
- This growth will reach a freight task of **1000 billion tonnes annually**.

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

New technologies for automating and powering electric road vehicles come with great expectations, from making roads safer and less congested to cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Such innovations will also play a role in managing the impact of rapid population growth in Victoria. Increasing the uptake of electric vehicles in the PUGRC region will have a significant impact on reducing pollutant emissions due to public transport not being as accessible compared to metropolitan regions.



The peri urban region is the perfect location for electric vehicle charging infrastructure due to its proximity – within 100-150kms of metropolitan Melbourne and within similar distances from regional capital cities. It makes perfect sense that a focus on populating these 'half way points' with this infrastructure is formulated.

¹ [Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics \(BITRE\) data](#)

Governments on all levels have great enthusiasm in regard to electric vehicles to achieve targets of lowering emissions and therefore have a role to play in preparing Victoria so that the contribution of these emerging vehicle technologies to Victoria's society, economy and environment is managed effectively.

Streetscapes will need to change to accommodate automated and zero emissions vehicles that will assist in fostering inclusive communities and infrastructure such as charging stations are required.

Preparing Victoria for automated and zero emissions vehicles has funding implications for building and maintaining future road infrastructure but done properly, it can boost productivity. PUGRC members would welcome funding to assist in preparing their shires with electric vehicle charging infrastructure that will demonstrate their commitment to lowering emissions and provide their communities with the certainty of sufficient infrastructure to purchase electric vehicles.

Government Investment

PUGRC requests that funding for road programs be increased and extended to ensure that the connectivity of the PUGRC by rail and road will be enhanced.



Recommendations

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

1. That the State Government increase and provide continuous rounds of funding for the following programs:
 - Bridge Strengthening Program; and
 - Regional Roads Victoria Maintenance Program.
2. That the State Government open further rounds of the Destination Charging Across Victoria Program.
3. That the State Government develop a comprehensive public transport plan for the Peri Urban areas of Victoria.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

1. That an incoming Federal Government increase and provide continuous rounds of funding for the following programs:
 - Fixing Country Roads Program;
 - Roads to Recovery program; and
 - Road Safety program.
2. That an incoming Federal Government provide funding programs for electric vehicle infrastructure.



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CASE STUDIES FOR INVESTMENT

Local Projects

The following projects have been highlighted as key projects in our member councils' areas requiring investment. The projects feature as demonstration of what could be realised as a result of the requests for increased investment and new rounds of state and federal programs.





Bass Coast Shire

Bass Coast is one of Victoria's fastest growing rural municipalities with a unique combination of unspoiled coastline and picturesque hinterland, all less than two hours from Melbourne. The main centres in Bass Coast include Wonthaggi, Cowes, Inverloch, San Remo and Grantville which service the local population and more than 3.4 million visitors who arrive in Bass Coast each year. During peak holiday periods, population swells to more than 70,000.

WONTHAGGI OPPORTUNITY UNLOCKED – ROUNDABOUTS

Project: The 'Wonthaggi Opportunity Unlocked Project,' will provide the structure for construction of homes for 12,000 new residents, community amenities and an expanded business and industry precinct in the northeast. As part of this project, the construction of two large roundabouts on the Bass Highway are required in order to open up the only vacant, commercially zoned land. These roundabouts are required prior to Council securing sufficient developer contributions.

Total cost: \$9 million

Council funding allocated: \$1 million

Funding sought: \$8 million

Project status: Shovel ready

AQUATICS – PHILLIP ISLAND AND WONTHAGGI

Project: There are two suite of works to this project. They include:

- **Bass Coast Aquatic and Leisure Centre Wonthaggi:** The redevelopment of a new centrepiece for leisure activities for Wonthaggi and surrounding townships. The proposed redevelopment will feature a range of facilities and be capable of accommodating competitive swimming, leisure activities and major events. The project will generate 100 direct jobs during construction and provide 31 FTE jobs during operations. **Estimated cost of \$42 million.**
- **Phillip Island Aquatics and Leisure Centre:** The construction of a new district aquatic leisure centre at Phillip Island that has a range of facilities that cater for the island's tourist and visitor markets. The proposed centre will provide for future growth and meet the recreation standards expected of a top tourist town. The project will generate 112 direct jobs during construction and provide 25 FTE jobs during operations. **Estimated cost of \$46 million.**

Total cost: \$94.8 million

Council funding allocated: \$15.5 million

Funding sought: \$79.3 million

Project status: Shovel ready





Baw Baw Shire

Baw Baw Shire is approximately 100 kilometres east of Melbourne in the heart of West Gippsland. It has an area of 4,034 square kilometres. The northern half of the shire is heavily forested and lies in the Great Dividing Range and its foothills, including the Mt Baw Baw National Park, while the shire is bounded by the Strzelecki Range and its foothills to the south. The 'middle' part of the shire is one of Victoria's fastest growing communities, particularly in areas close to the Princes Highway and the Gippsland railway line.

BAW BAW CULTURE AND CONNECTION PRECINCT (STAGE 1 LIBRARY AND LEARNING CENTRE)

Project: Funding is required for Stage One of the Baw Baw Culture and Connection Precinct which includes a library, community hub, cultural space and plaza. With our population (currently 54,888) expected to almost double by 2040, creating opportunities for connection is a key priority for Baw Baw Shire.

The Baw Baw Culture and Connection Precinct will be the primary civic, arts and cultural precinct of West Gippsland. The project will integrate new spaces – library, cafe, gallery, co-working spaces, community meeting rooms, underground parking, reading/study zone, cultural space, rooftop terrace and pedestrian connection to surrounding facilities.

Total cost: \$30.93 million

Council funding allocated: \$10.93 million

Funding sought: \$20 million

Project status: Shovel ready





Golden Plains Shire

Situated between Geelong and Ballarat and within a stones' throw from Melbourne, Golden Plains is a vibrant and beautiful Shire populated with passionate residents and progressive businesses. Our sweeping landscapes, award-winning businesses and rugged bush landscapes combine with historic townships and growing communities to make for a wonderful place to live or visit.

TOWN CENTRE REVITALISATION – 3 TOWNS PROJECT

Project: Council is seeking **\$1.3 million** in funding to enable a streetscape improvement project to be completed with \$650,000 secured from Berrybank Wind Farm and a council commitment of 650,000 in 2022/23 and 2023/24 budget.

The project will perform streetscape improvements that will build on and enhance the outcomes of a series of other projects in the north of the Shire that will also be driving increased visitation to the region, including the Smythesdale Well Digital Hub, increased outdoor dining (as part of the Victorian Government's suite of outdoor dining grants and programs), the Three Trails Project and the Central Goldfields World Heritage bid.

Total cost: \$2.6 million

Council funding allocated: \$650,000 and further \$650,000 from Berrybank Wind Farm

Funding sought: \$1.3 million

Project status: Shovel ready

ROKEWOOD COMMUNITY HUB

Project: The development of the Rokewood Community Hub will require demolition of existing infrastructure and construction of a new multi-purpose community hub, change rooms and undercover viewing facilities that meets the AFL Victoria guidelines for a local facility. The final design has been assisted by community consultation/feedback that Council has undertaken in 2020 and 2021. The resulting infrastructure will include (but is not limited to):

- Multi-purpose Community and Social spaces
- Kitchen and bar facilities
- Public amenities (that are externally accessible at all times)
- Change, first aid and umpire rooms, meeting, strapping and storage rooms to comply with AFL Victoria guidelines
- Undercover outdoor and improved spectator viewing areas.

Total cost: \$4.8 million

Council funding allocated:

Funding sought: \$4.8 million

Project status: Shovel ready

SMALL TOWN SEWERAGE

Project: outside of Bannockburn, the towns of Inverleigh, Teesdale, Lethbridge and Meredith, all with one hour 15min of Melbourne, are unsewered. Meredith and Gheringhap are not sewerred, and Smythesdale's sewage network needs expanding, which means that residents and businesses rely on individual septic tank systems to manage their wastewater. Such systems present a risk to public health and the environment as they are susceptible to failure and can contaminate nearby properties, stormwater catchments and local waterways. The lack of a sewerage system is also a barrier to commercial and retail developments. Council is seeking feasibility funding that will investigate:

- septic tank maintenance costs for property owners and allowances for recycled water to be reused in public spaces and sporting grounds; and
- risk to public health and environmental contamination caused by failing septic tanks.

Total cost: \$250,000

Council funding allocated:

Funding sought: \$250,000

Project status: Funding for feasibility study required



Moorabool Shire

As one of six municipalities in the Central Highlands region, Moorabool Shire provides a welcome change of pace to the hustle and bustle of the city and is just 45km away from Melbourne. Situated at the eastern step of the region, it strikes the perfect balance between enchanting terrain and a vibrant community. This thriving agricultural region is abundant with a diverse range of produce and is one of the fastest growing areas in Victoria.

CIVIC PRECINCT AND ALTERNATIVE USE FOR EXISTING COUNCIL OFFICES

Project: Civic Precinct: Council owns an 11,500sqm site on the main street of Bacchus Marsh, which could be expanded to nearly 6 hectares. As an urban revitalisation and regeneration project, the redevelopment of the site to include Council offices (200 employees) as well as workers, visitors/customers to a range of additional social, cultural and commercial infrastructure and services.

Project: Alternative use of council offices: Over the past decade, the Department of Education and Training in Victoria has developed and implemented major co-location and integration projects. The majority of the infrastructure of the school is still on-site and has been significantly upgraded by Council over the last 10 years at a cost of approximately \$7 million. Potential uses of site include return to a state high school; Select entry high school for the western suburbs of Melbourne is developed on Site (1.6m people within 30 Mins with no traffic); Special School – Autism; or Extend Current Primary School which is at capacity.

Total cost: Offset with purchase of site

Council funding allocated:

Funding sought: Purchase of site

Project status: Scoping required

LIBRARY BALLAN

Project: The existing Ballan Library is too small to meet our community's needs, and this will be exacerbated as the area's population continues to grow. The library is just 37% of the size needed to meet current demand and service requirements and it does not meet accessibility standards. The building has no public internet access, significantly restricting its functionality as a modern library space. This project will encourage new community connections through a blend of a new contemporary library spaces, community meeting rooms, art exhibition space, MCH, external courtyard space. The estimated economic benefit of the project is \$14.5 million with 20 full time jobs created during construction.

Total cost: \$7 million

Council funding allocated: \$2 million

Funding sought: \$5 million

Project status: Shovel ready

REGIONAL LAWN BOWLS FACILITY

Project: The merger between the Bacchus Marsh Bowling Club and Avenue Bowling Club provides an opportunity for the clubs to come together in a modern purpose-built facility in the heart of a major new sports and recreation precinct. The clubs' existing facilities are outdated and not well equipped to cater for projected membership growth, particularly in social bowls activities. The project is ready to go to market for detailed design and tender documentation. The new facility will provide Social/Bowling Club facilities' bistro, commercial kitchen and bar, community function and meeting rooms, amenities to support the above facilities, 3 new bowling greens, all weather cover over two of the bowling greens, bowls club storage, maintenance facilities for bowling greens, outdoor decking/dining, and landscaping.

Total cost: \$8 million

Council funding allocated: \$5 million

Funding sought: \$3 million

Project status: Shovel ready

SEWER PROVISION WALLACE AND BUNGAREE

Project: Despite a history dating back to the 1880s, the townships of Bungaree and Wallace are still reliant on septic tanks that limit growth opportunities. Moorabool Shire Council has long advocated for the towns to be connected to the sewer network. Council is committed to working with Central Highlands Water and others so construction can begin in the next 4 to 5 years. In Bungaree and Wallace, it is predicted that the sewer project could allow for up to 3,500 new residents, who will live and spend locally. Moorabool Shire Council has agreed to provide \$1million towards this project. Council is asking State and Federal governments to look at the role they can play in ensuring these townships grow and prosper into the future.

Total cost: \$10 million

Council funding allocated: \$1 million

Funding sought: \$9 million

Project status: Shovel ready

PARWAN EMPLOYMENT PRECINCT (BACHUS MARSH)

Project: Moorabool Shire Council is working with the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) to prepare a Development Plan and a Development Plan Overlay to facilitate planning for 1,500 jobs at the Parwan Employment Precinct (Bacchus Marsh). The Parwan Employment Precinct holds significant economic and employment potential for Bacchus Marsh, with the ability to attract significant levels of new industrial and agribusiness investment and businesses that value-add and complement the Bacchus Marsh irrigation district.

To progress this project, the site needs to be connected to gas, water and electricity. Regional Development Victoria, Council and industry partners have provided funding support for the gas connection. This is due for completion mid-2022. The project will provide much-needed employment opportunities for local residents.

Total cost: \$250,000

Council funding allocated: \$20,000

Funding sought: \$230,000

Project status: Scoping required

INDOOR RECREATION CENTRE

Project: An Indoor Aquatic Centre will provide a much-needed recreation facility for our region. Unlike similar-sized towns in Victoria, Bacchus Marsh does not have an indoor aquatic facility. The existing outdoor pool was built in the 1930s and there is high demand for year-round pool facilities with 56% of surveyed pool users having to travel outside the Shire to participate in swimming activities. This project will upgrade the pool to a year-round multipurpose recreation centre, featuring aquatic, health, fitness, and leisure facilities to meet community and visitor needs. The project forms part of a new sport and recreation precinct, which also features an indoor sports stadium and regional bowls facility. Together these projects will generate more than \$100 million in local economic activity and generate more than 200 direct and indirect jobs during construction.

Total cost: \$45 million

Council funding allocated: \$15 million

Funding sought: \$30 million

Project status: Shovel ready





Surf Coast Shire

Victoria's Surf Coast with its spectacular coastline, scenic rainforests and magnificent beaches, is one of the tourist draw cards of Australia. The Surf Coast Shire is among the fastest growing regional municipalities in Victoria (av. 3.06% annually for past 15 years). The Shire was proclaimed on 9 March 1994. It covers an area of 1,560km².

TORQUAY CULTURAL FACILITY AND LIBRARY

Project: A state of the art four in one Cultural Facility in Torquay which includes a library, new Australian National Surfing Museum, Visitor Information Centre and Arts Facility. This new facility will replace ageing buildings which no longer meet the needs of the local community. Surf Coast Shire is a creative industries hot spot, yet we are undersupplied for arts and cultural facilities. The Cultural Facility and Library will deliver social benefits for locals, generate better visitation and provide a life for the overall Surf City Precinct. Stage One includes the new Library, ANSM, VIC and art spaces. Stage 2 will be delivered later and will include the purpose-built Theatre and Gallery.

Total cost: \$33 million (Stage 1)
Council funding allocated: \$8 million
Funding sought: \$25 million
Project status: Detailed design

TORQUAY TOWN CENTRE REVITALISATION

Project: The Torquay Centre Urban Design Framework provides a clear vision and identifies projects that will improve the Torquay town centre. These projects include traffic improvements, streetscapes, supporting infrastructure, parks and other public spaces. The town centre is the heart of a town which helped establish the Australian surf industry and is the start of the Great Ocean Road. Upgrades to the public spaces within the centre will boost local businesses and provide the focal point for entertainment and social activity for locals and visitors.

Total cost: \$12 million
Council funding allocated: \$775,000
Funding sought: \$11.225 million
Project status: Concept development





Bass Coast Shire

Bass Coast is one of Victoria's fastest growing rural municipalities with a unique combination of unspoiled coastline and picturesque hinterland, all less than two hours from Melbourne. The main centres in Bass Coast include Wonthaggi, Cowes, Inverloch, San Remo and Grantville which service the local population and more than 3.4 million visitors who arrive in Bass Coast each year. During peak holiday periods, population swells to more than 70,000.

BASS COAST DINOSAURS TRAIL

Project: The Bass Coast Dinosaurs Trail will be a unique and valuable tourism asset that celebrates and promotes the global significance of the region's prehistoric heritage. Bass Coast has the most diverse range of polar dinosaurs in the world and coal reserves in Kilcunda and Wonthaggi were formed from the forests these creatures inhabited. Stage One of this iconic experience will traverse 40km from San Remo to Inverloch, featuring six creative art sites that link polar dinosaur fossils, accessible by car, bike or foot. Future stages will include the Inverloch Museum Discovery Centre and Sound and Light Show in Wonthaggi. In October 2021, Council purchased the site for the Gondwana Garden Sound and Light experience at a cost of \$1.2 million.

Total cost: \$20 million

Council funding allocated: \$1.5 million

Funding sought: \$7 million (Stage 1)

Project status: Shovel ready

BASS COAST TRACKS AND TRAILS

Project: Tracks and trails play a critical role in the health and wellbeing of a community. They provide connection, recreation and exploration for the community and make a significant contribution to the visitor economy, providing links to key attractions and contributing to the shire's unique eco-tourism. Tracks prioritised for investment are:

- **Cowes to Rhyll:** Completion of the off-road Cowes to Rhyll link between Oswin Roberts Reserve and Rhyll Township, connecting popular walking trails. **Seeking government contribution of \$800,000 towards construction of path;**
- **Inverloch to Wonthaggi:** Construction of a 14km shared pathway linking Wonthaggi to Inverloch, completing a tourism trail that stretches from Cowes to Inverloch. **Seeking government contribution of \$5.5 million;**
- **Cowes to Penguin Parade:** Strategic planning required for creation of a shared pathway linking Cowes to the Phillip Island Nature Parks Penguin Parade, encouraging pedestrian and cycling activation. **Seeking government contribution of \$250,000 for planning.**
- **Signature Gippsland Trail: Bass Coast Rail Trail extension – Woolamai to Nyora:** Strategic planning required for a 24.3km link joining up with the Great South Rail Trail at Nyora, crating a super trail from Cowes to Welshpool. **Seeking government investment of \$800,000 for planning.**

Total cost: \$10+ million

Council funding allocated: \$4.7 million

Funding sought: \$7.35 million

Project status: Shovel ready



Baw Baw Shire

Baw Baw Shire is approximately 100 kilometres east of Melbourne in the heart of West Gippsland. It has an area of 4,034 square kilometres. The northern half of the shire is heavily forested and lies in the Great Dividing Range and its foothills, including the Mt Baw Baw National Park, while the shire is bounded by the Strzelecki Range and its foothills to the south. The 'middle' part of the shire is one of Victoria's fastest growing communities, particularly in areas close to the Princes Highway and the Gippsland railway line.

TRACKS AND TRAILS – ROKEBY TO NEERIM TRAIL EXTENSION

Project: The Rokeby to Noojee Rail Trail extension will see the development of a signature, high quality trail experience centred around nature and culture. The existing trail is one of the most scenic trails in Baw Baw Shire as it traverses natural bushland and provides scenic outlooks. It includes some prominent attractions such as the trestle bridge and links townships where tourism is already a key part of their local economy. This project will include the extension of the trail to one of Baw Baw Shire's key tourism destination, Noojee. Extending the trail a further 10km would create a link to the historic town. On a broader scale this project will also provide the opportunity to achieve the outcomes of the Gippsland Odyssey Trail. Packaging the existing main rail trails and multi-use trails in Gippsland as the Gippsland Odyssey Trail and undertaking strategic connections between the various existing elements will over time provide a strong offering that can be undertaken or packaged into sections or sold as a multi-day trail. This project is a key priority identified in the Destination Gippsland, Destination Management Plan and Gippsland Tracks and Trails Strategy.

Total cost: \$5+ million

Council funding allocated: \$1 million

Funding sought: \$4+ million

Project status: Planning

SEALING OF SOUTH FACE ROAD – TOURIST ROUTE TO MT BAW BAW

Project: Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort is Melbourne's closest downhill ski resort, approximately 180 kilometres east of Melbourne and only one hour from the heart of Gippsland. This all-season resort caters for snowboarders, skiers and those interested in snow play, and provides a vibrant green season, including bushwalking, downhill mountain biking and nature walks.

South Face Road is an unsealed road that currently provides secondary access to Mt Baw Baw from the southeast side of the mountain. South Face Road is approximately 25km in length, and whilst unsealed, provides a safer alignment with less gradient than the current primary access. The primary sealed access to Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort is via Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road. This road has been subject to landslips, leading to the road being closed to locals and tourists for a period of up to six months. The purpose of the project is to improve access, safety, resilience of the economy and surrounding tourist communities, as well as the visitor experience to Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort. The sealing of South Face Road is key to unlocking the economic viability and future of the resort and the surrounding alpine communities.

Total cost: \$26+ million

Council funding allocated: N/A. This road is managed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Funding sought: \$26 million

Project status: Shovel ready



Golden Plains Shire

Situated between Geelong and Ballarat and within a stones' throw from Melbourne, Golden Plains is a vibrant and beautiful Shire populated with passionate residents and progressive businesses. Our sweeping landscapes, award-winning businesses and rugged bush landscapes combine with historic townships and growing communities to make for a wonderful place to live or visit.

THREE TRAILS PROJECT

Project: The Three Trails Project involves the upgrade and improvement of the:

- Ballarat – Skipton Rail Trail;
- Rainbow Bird Trail; and
- Kuruc a Ruc Trail.

These trails, while currently separate, link at key locations and create a network that connects 15 towns and communities in the north of Golden Plains Shire and in to City of Ballarat. The trail network provides on-road, off-road and recreational opportunities for local residents and visitors. The Three Trails Project, as well as the individual trails, is identified in the Grampians Region Cycling and Trails Infrastructure Masterplan and is a key component of the Cycle West marketing campaign.

Total cost: \$2 million

Council funding allocated:

Funding sought: \$2 million

Project status: Shovel ready

BARWON RIVER PARKLANDS

Project: The Barwon River Parklands project aims to develop an internationally-recognised world class trail whilst simultaneously protecting environmental and cultural values, increasing access, amenity and community involvement and strengthen collaborative management across the G21 region, which includes Golden Plains and the Moorabool River. This Masterplan Business Case has now been completed. The Barwon River Parklands Project will highlight the different elements of the river, the people, the place, the culture and the environment. There will be all- access areas with well-made pathways through to rugged and advanced bushwalks for those that prefer a challenge.

Total cost: \$3.5 million

Council funding allocated:

Funding sought: \$3.5 million

Project status: Shovel ready





Moorabool Shire

As one of six municipalities in the Central Highlands region, Moorabool Shire provides a welcome change of pace to the hustle and bustle of the city and is just 45km away from Melbourne. Situated at the eastern step of the region, it strikes the perfect balance between enchanting terrain and a vibrant community. This thriving agricultural region is abundant with a diverse range of produce and is one of the fastest growing areas in Victoria.

BALD HILL SUMMIT TRAIL

Project: This project will see the installation of 1000+ steps travelling up Bald Hill. It will use the existing walking trail on Bald Hill to create a place for exercise, recreation, as well as art spaces. Council has been successful in securing grants for the initial phases of the 1000+ steps project with construction ready to commence on the actual step component and accessibility trail at the bottom of the hill. An opportunity exists to expand the project to construct a carpark and loop trail at the summit of Bald Hill to take advantage of the breathtaking 360-degree panoramic views at the site and to become a visitor attraction for Bacchus Marsh. The proposed uses for Bald Hill including cycle trails, walking trails, events, adventure park, picnics and food and beverage are estimated to generate 347,199 site visitors, including 195,088 visitors from outside of the residential catchment and 152,111 users from within the residential catchment.

Total cost: \$3.5 million

Council funding allocated: \$1.5 million

Funding sought: \$2 million

Project status: Shovel ready

AQUALINK CYCLING AND WALKING CORRIDOR - WEST

Project: Aqualink is a non-car-based transport option for the residents and visitors to Bacchus Marsh that will provide better access to the town's main attractions and services. Aqualink has been enabled by Southern Rural Water's recent upgrade and modernisation project. New underground piping and the removal of the channel provides an opportunity to build a proposed off-road walking and cycling access and linkages through Darley and Bacchus Marsh. It will also link to an upgraded shared path from Bacchus Marsh Train Station to Main Street. Aqualink will deliver five sections of a proposed 4.5 km path network connecting the Lerderderg River and Werribee River corridors:

Total cost: \$8 million

Council funding allocated: \$3 million

Funding sought: \$5 million

Project status: Shovel ready





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WALKING AND CYCLING CONNECTIONS PROJECT - TORQUAY

Project: The Torquay Walking and Cycling Connections Project comprises of five sections of shared pathways/ bicycle lanes totalling 5.3km that are committed to be delivered under the Torquay Jan Juc Developer Contribution Program. These paths will provide critical connections to the existing shared pathways and cycle lanes in Torquay and Jan Juc and will ensure we have a healthy and well-connected community with excellent access to major facilities and centres.

Total cost: \$1.49 million

Council funding allocated: \$785,000

Funding sought: \$705,000

Project status: Shovel ready



WINCHELSEA WALK, REST AND PLAY PROJECT - WINCHELSEA

Project: This will deliver the final stage of the 2km "Barwon River Loop Walk" connecting the four quadrants of Winchelsea together and improving the visitor experience at one of the region's key tourist stopping points. This will enhance the visitor experience and maximise spend at a tourist stopping point. Completing the final stage of the walk will deliver health benefits for locals by increasing physical activity opportunities and use of the Barwon River. Future works in many years ahead will include providing a second oval and a community pavilion next to Winchelsea's Eastern Reserve to cater for future population growth and provide health and recreation benefits.

Total cost: \$630,000

Council funding allocated: \$330,000

Funding sought: \$300,000

Project status: Shovel ready

SURF COAST TRAILS – ANGLESEA MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS AND BIKE PARK

Project: Development of 36 new and upgraded mountain bike trails with recognition of connections to other significant trail destinations in the region. This will transform Anglesea into a mecca for mountain bike riders of all ages and abilities. This has the ability to boost the local economy by increasing eco-tourism and deliver health and wellbeing benefits for the local community.

Total cost: \$3 million

Council funding allocated: \$500,000

Funding sought: \$2.5 million

Project status: Shovel ready



Bass Coast Shire

Bass Coast is one of Victoria's fastest growing rural municipalities with a unique combination of unspoiled coastline and picturesque hinterland, all less than two hours from Melbourne. The main centres in Bass Coast include Wonthaggi, Cowes, Inverloch, San Remo and Grantville which service the local population and more than 3.4 million visitors who arrive in Bass Coast each year. During peak holiday periods, population swells to more than 70,000.

ALTERNATIVE FREIGHT ROUTE STUDY – WONTHAGGI

Project: A detailed study is required for an alternative freight route that will eliminate current and potential bottlenecks and enhance the liveability of Wonthaggi by the creation of a bypass or more efficient and less disruptive route through the town centre. It will improve safety and increase productivity for transport companies and allow more efficient access to sand extraction sources and markets.

Total cost: \$500,000

Council funding allocated:

Funding Sought: \$500,000

Project Status: Planning

SAFER ROADS PACKAGE

Project: This package ties together a suite of works which will improve road and safety and provide enhanced liveability and connectivity between people and places. The projects include:

- **Kilcunda Pedestrian and intersection safety improvements:** pedestrian safety and parking improvements in Kilcunda has been identified as a key priority via Regional Road Victoria. These upgrades will address access across the highway between the beach/caravan park and the residential/business precinct. **Estimated cost is \$7.5 million;**
- **San Remo – Back Beach Road:** These upgrades are considered essential to address significant safety and equity of access issues onto Phillip Island Road. **Estimated cost is \$23 million;** and
- **Sealing Urban Roads:** The Shire has a legacy with over 120km of urban roads not built to acceptable modern standards worth in excess of \$250 million to upgrade. Council seeks a significant increase in Roads to Recovery Funding to address sealing roads across the Shire. **Estimated cost is \$5 million per annum over next four years.**

Total cost: \$50.5 million

Council funding allocated:

State Government Funding Sought: \$50.5 million

Project Status: Shovel ready





Baw Baw Shire

Baw Baw Shire is approximately 100 kilometres east of Melbourne in the heart of West Gippsland. It has an area of 4,034 square kilometres. The northern half of the shire is heavily forested and lies in the Great Dividing Range and its foothills, including the Mt Baw Baw National Park, while the shire is bounded by the Strzelecki Range and its foothills to the south. The 'middle' part of the shire is one of Victoria's fastest growing communities, particularly in areas close to the Princes Highway and the Gippsland railway line.

WARRAGUL AND DROUIN HEAVY VEHICLE BYPASS

Project: Over the next few years almost 20,000 new homes will be constructed in Warragul and Drouin leading to significant population growth and subsequent pressures on the existing arterial congestion. Additionally, the inadequate road network in the major townships has significantly impacted agricultural, commercial and industrial growth. It is expected that the development of the proposed arterial road will directly reduce congestion through the townships of Drouin and Warragul, while better connecting the Gippsland region to intra/interstate and international markets. Funding is required for a business case to identify solutions to reduce congestion through the townships of Drouin and Warragul, including heavy vehicle routes, improved freight connectivity and potential social and economic benefits.

Total cost: \$3 million

Council funding allocated: N/A. Regional Roads Victoria

Funding sought: \$3 million

Project status: Planning



Golden Plains Shire

Situated between Geelong and Ballarat and within a stones' throw from Melbourne, Golden Plains is a vibrant and beautiful Shire populated with passionate residents and progressive businesses. Our sweeping landscapes, award-winning businesses and rugged bush landscapes combine with historic townships and growing communities to make for a wonderful place to live or visit.

BUS SERVICE EXTENSION

Project: There is a limited bus network offering public transport from Golden Plains Shire to the neighbouring regional centres. In the north, the township of Smythesdale is home to more than 1,000 residents, most of which work and attend school in Ballarat. With the busy commercial and residential suburb of Delacombe just a 10 minute drive from Smythesdale, this growing area would be best served by an extension of Ballarat's public bus service to: Smythes Creek, Smythesdale and Scarsdale with the added benefit of connecting these residents to passenger rail from Ballarat. Council also supports improved VLine bus services between Ballarat and Hamilton, which services Linton and Smythesdale. Similarly, in the south of the Shire, the rapidly growing populations of Bannockburn, Inverleigh and Teesdale would benefit from a more frequent public bus service that would connect these towns to rail from Geelong to Melbourne, and eventually Geelong to Ballarat.

Total cost: Unknown

Council funding allocated: N/A

Funding sought: State government

Project status: N/A



Surf Coast Shire

Victoria's Surf Coast with its spectacular coastline, scenic rainforests and magnificent beaches, is one of the tourist draw cards of Australia. The Surf Coast Shire is among the fastest growing regional municipalities in Victoria (av. 3.06% annually for past 15 years). The Shire was proclaimed on 9 March 1994. It covers an area of 1,560km².

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS PROJECT

Project: Installation of four new electric vehicle charging stations in Anglesea, Aireys Inlet, Lorne and Winchelsea to facilitate electric vehicle connectivity and encourage uptake of electric vehicles across the region. In Surf Coast shire, transport is the second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in both our community and corporate emissions profiles. Increasing access and usage of electric vehicles will help reduce emission and address our current climate emergency.

Total cost: \$280,000

Council funding allocated: \$70,000

Funding sought: \$210,000

Project status: Shovel ready

IMPROVED PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROUTES – SURF COAST

There is a critical need to increase public transport to growing communities in Surf Coast Shire to support access to employment, education and services. A minimum of eight rail services that shuttle between Geelong and Colac via Winchelsea are needed. There are many growing communities between Geelong and Colac including Winchelsea and Moriac. Increasing services on this line will reduce our heavy dependency on cars and road travel which is rapidly becoming unsustainable.

Total cost: Unknown

Council funding allocated: N/A

Funding sought: State government

Project status: N/A



PUGRC Board Biographies



Cr Brett Tessari – Councillor, Bass Coast Shire Council

Cr Tessari is a third generation local who is very passionate about the Bass Coast community.

He lives with his wife, Leanne, and together have raised three children who have all grown up and been educated in the Shire. Cr Tessari is an active community member, having been President of the Wonthaggi Power Football Netball Club for five years. He is also a member of the Wonthaggi Relay For Life Committee, presiding as Master of Ceremonies for the event for the past two years.

He was involved in the Centenary of Wonthaggi, where he was also Master of Ceremonies the event at the State Coal Mine. Cr Tessari has worked across the Shire on Phillip Island, Inverloch and currently in Wonthaggi. As a Councillor for Bunurong, Cr Tessari intends to work hand-in-hand with the community on issues that concern us all.

He wants to get people passionate again about where we live and reinstall community pride in Bass Coast.



Ali Wastie, CEO – Bass Coast Shire Council

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

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

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



Cr Michael Leaney – Mayor, Baw Baw Shire Council

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

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

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



Mr Mark Dupe – CEO, Baw Baw Shire Council

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

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

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



Cr Gavin Gamble – Mayor, Golden Plains Shire Council

Cr Gamble has professional experience as a school teacher, brewer and now operates his own gardening business across Golden Plains Shire.

Cr Gamble is a member of the Australian Greens and is passionate about pursuing action to address climate change, protecting the Shire's unique biodiversity, responsible development and township enhancements, provision of greater transport and recreational options, and support for cultural and wellbeing initiatives.

In addition to Mayor, Cr Gamble is an Infrastructure and Development Portfolio Councillor and Council's representative on the Grampians Central West Waste and Resource Recovery Group, the G21 Environment Pillar and the Municipal Association of Victoria's Transport and Infrastructure Committee and Environment Committee.



Mr Eric Braslis – CEO, Golden Plains Council

Prior to taking on the role of CEO at Golden Plains Shire in December 2017, Eric had been the CEO at Gannawarra Shire Council since July 2015. Eric has previously held the positions of General Manager City Infrastructure and Director of Growth and Development at Ballarat City Council, General Manager of Planning and Development at Stonnington City Council and Director Planning and Environment and Director of Community Services at Hobsons Bay City Council. His qualifications include a Bachelor of Applied Arts, Urban and Regional Planning from Ryerson Polytechnic University in Toronto, Canada, a Masters of Business Administration from Deakin University, has completed the Australian Institute of Company Directors course, has completed the Executive Leadership program at Harvard University (Boston) and is a graduate of LGPro's XLP program. Eric is presently the Deputy Chair on the Board of PINARC Disability Services, G21 and a sitting member in the Victorian Building Authority (Building Appeals Board).



Cr Moira Berry – Councillor, Moorabool Shire Council

Cr Moira Berry is a First term Councillor at Moorabool Shire Council and has lived in Bacchus Marsh for 22 years. Prior to joining council Ms Berry worked for the State Bank of Victoria, she was a Public Servant at Centrelink and Sales and Management in media positions.

Ms Berry is a current board member of Bacchus Marsh Grammar and have been active for over 15 years, including Chairperson for several of them and a member of a local business group, Bizconnect Moorabool.

Ms Berry is the representative for Moorabool Shire Council on the Peri Urban Group of Rural Councils, Bacchus Marsh District Trails Advisory Committee, Moorabool Environment & Sustainability Advisory Committee and the Central Highlands Local Learning and Employment Network (CHLLEN).



Mr Derek Madden – CEO, Moorabool Shire Council

Derek Madden commenced as CEO of Moorabool Shire in October, 2018. Derek has over 17 years' experience in local government and was previously employed by Cardinia Shire Council as General Manager Corporate Services. Prior to this Derek has worked at Moreland City Council, City of Melbourne and Exon-Mobile. Prior to moving to Australia Derek worked in Ireland and the United Kingdom. He holds a Certificate in Digital Strategies for Business, Masters of Applied Science in Organisational Dynamics, an MBA from Victoria Graduate School of Business and a Bachelor of Business from the University of Limerick, Ireland



Cr Libby Stapleton – Mayor, Surf Coast Shire Council

Cr Libby Stapleton is an active member of the Surf Coast Shire community, having lived in Aireys Inlet for the past 18 years, raising a young family and integrating herself in the fabric of local life. Her professional training is in public relations, as well as outdoor education, bringing a strong mix of relevant skills to her role as Councillor. She runs her own communications business and enjoys engaging directly with local community in her roles as editor of NewsAngle and operator of the Aireys Inlet Market.

Cr Stapleton is passionate about the arts, volunteering for the Sound Doctor and Anglesea Performing Arts, and promoting local artists through her market networks. She loves to explore our coastal trails on foot and bike, considers herself a 'fair-weather' surfer, and is grateful to call the Surf Coast Shire home.



Ms Robyn Seymour – CEO, Surf Coast Shire Council

Robyn Seymour joined Surf Coast Shire Council as Chief Executive Officer in July 2021, moving into local government from a distinguished career in transport strategy planning and delivery.

Robyn was previously Deputy Secretary, Network Planning, with Victoria's Department of Transport, leading a team of more than 400 people. Her role included strong focus on determining future transport needs and delivery of Victorian Government strategies, including the Road Safety Strategy which aims to halve Victorian road deaths and progressively reduce serious injuries by 2030.

She was previously Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive of VicRoads after having started her career in the sector as a counsellor, working for eight years with individuals and families impacted by road trauma.

Robyn has a strong wish to return to working more closely with community, a key motivation in seeking the Surf Coast Shire Council role.





Further Information

Susan Chandler

Secretariat Services, One Gippsland

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Victoria Lobby Register No: 38421146190

Federal Lobby Register No: 18169904232



PERIURBANGROUP
of Rural Councils