

MITCHELL SHIRE COUNCIL.

Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021

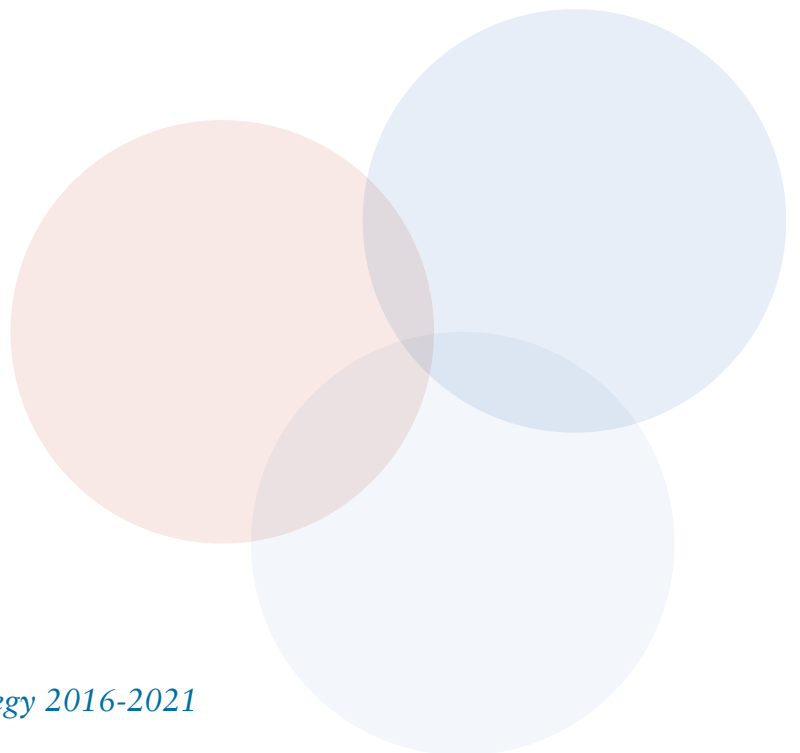


MITCHELL SHIRE COUNCIL



Acknowledgments.

We would like to acknowledge the contributions made by Mitchell Shire businesses and residents throughout 2015 and 2016 in attending consultation sessions and providing input through business and community surveys and feedback to the Economic Development Strategy.



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1. Introduction.

The Mitchell Shire Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021 provides the strategic direction for Mitchell Shire Council, together with its partners and the community, to strengthen, grow and build resilience in the local economy. It provides an economic development framework to support business growth, encourage investment and job creation and identifies the broad directions for the towns, lifestyle villages and rural land areas within the Mitchell Shire.

Mitchell Shire is strategically located to take advantage of Victoria's growing economy. The Shire is well serviced by high quality road and rail services such as the Hume Freeway and Melbourne-Sydney Railway. The Shire is well placed to welcome new residents and businesses as its southern boundary is located within the northern urban growth corridor and is just 40 kilometres north of the Melbourne CBD. To the north, the Shire's boundary extends beyond Seymour into northern Victoria and the Goulburn Valley food bowl.

Mitchell Shire covers an area of 2,864 square kilometres and incorporates the townships of Beveridge, Broadford, Heathcote Junction, Kilmore, Puckapunyal, Pyalong, Reedy Creek, Seymour, Tallarook, Tooborac, Wallan and Wandong.

Mitchell Shire is renowned for its landscape amenity, an enviable country lifestyle and a diversity of housing choice. It is a Shire with a long and diverse history, established

communities and a depth of culture and heritage. It is also a Shire that has a sound and sustainable local business base, great economic potential and opportunities for further growth and prosperity.

Mitchell Shire is a growing community. In 2015, the population of Mitchell Shire was 39,143. By 2036, the population is projected to grow by over 50,000 people with 89,214 residents calling Mitchell home. It is anticipated that most of this increase will occur in and around the southern townships of Wallan, Beveridge and Kilmore/Kilmore East.

Today, Mitchell Shire supports a total of 9,393 jobs and has a Gross Regional Product (GRP) of \$1.43 billion and an estimated total economic output of \$2.37 billion. The major industry contributors of total economic output are Manufacturing, Construction and Public administration and safety. Public administration and safety is the highest employing industry within the Shire (15.8%), followed by Health care and Social Assistance (12.3%) and Retail Trade (11.7%).

Mitchell Shire competes with peri-urban and growth area municipalities to Melbourne's north for resident and industry attraction. Whilst current investment is being funnelled into the growth areas of Hume and Whittlesea, Mitchell Shire will soon play an expanded role in accommodating population and industry growth.



2. Project Background.

This strategy draws on extensive research and consultation which is summarised and available in the Background Discussion Paper.

The aim of the Mitchell Shire Economic Development Strategy is to:

- > Grow Mitchell's economy, with a focus on job generation and sustainable economic growth
- > Build on Mitchell's competitive advantages
- > Promote upskilling and innovation and strengthen engagement, relationships and communication with businesses
- > Investigate the sub-regional economy variances in Mitchell Shire
- > Identify projects and initiatives that will lead to significant economic benefit for the region

The Economic Development Strategy provides a five-year plan for Council's Economic Development unit to strengthen Mitchell Shire's economy in conjunction with other private sector and public partners. It also provides stakeholders with an understanding of Mitchell's context, a focus on matters that are important to them and a commitment from Mitchell Shire Council as to how the strategy will be delivered.

This strategy is to be read in conjunction with the following;

- > Council's advocacy priorities
- > Structure plans
- > Urban Design Frameworks
- > Endorsed Council plans
- > Prospectus material

A summary brochure will be prepared and accompany this strategy.

2.1. Project Approach

The following methodology was undertaken in the formulation of this strategy.

- > Background information review
- > Economic profile and industry analysis
- > Economic Development benchmarking analysis
- > Mitchell Shire competitive analysis
- > Industry survey and creation of a business database
- > Community survey
- > Stakeholder consultation (Equine, Wallan, Broadford, Seymour and internal workshops + 12 one-on-one meetings with industry and stakeholders)
- > Discussion paper
- > Economic Development Strategy Framework
- > Strategy preparation and community feedback on draft strategy

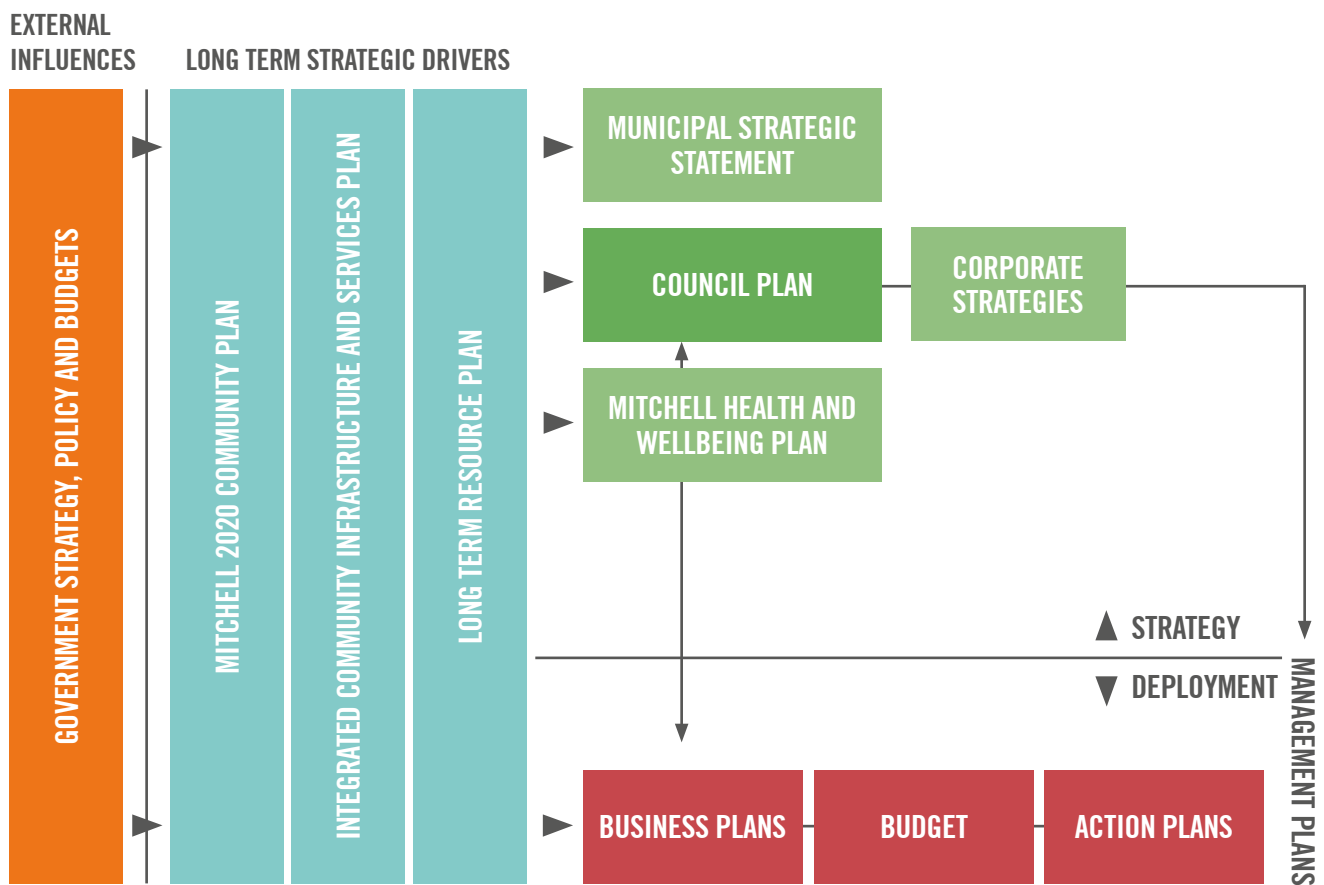
3. Alignment with Council Plan.

The Council Plan 2013-17 outlines Council’s ambition and priorities for the municipality. It articulates a vision where Mitchell utilises its natural advantages regarding its strategic location and well planned infrastructure to attract employment and investment.

A key strategic objective of the Council Plan is the development of a strong regional reputation and promoting local tourism and economic development opportunities. The Council Plan recognises the importance of strengthening and building resilience in the local economy, creating job opportunities and supporting projects and initiatives that underpin vital infrastructure improvements that contribute to positive outcomes for the Mitchell community.

The Economic Development Strategy aligns with the Council Plan as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Mitchell Shire Council Plan



4. Economy Context.

4.1. Local Context

Mitchell Shire has a Gross Regional Product (GRP) of \$1.43 billion and an estimated total economic output of \$2.37 billion. In 2011, there were a total of 9,484 jobs in Mitchell Shire. This number fell by 0.24% from 2011 to 2015, with 9,393 jobs identified in Mitchell Shire in 2015.

The major industry contributors of total economic output are manufacturing, construction and public administration and safety. Some of the key employers include Puckapunyal Army Barracks, hospitals in Seymour and Kilmore, Nexus Primary Health, primary and secondary schools, supermarkets, Mitchell Shire Council, Ralphs Meats and Nestle.

Public administration and safety is the highest employing industry within the Shire (15.8%), followed by health care and social assistance (12.3%) and retail trade (11.7%). These sectors are important for the existing economic activity in the Shire in terms of economic output, employment and value added to the local economy.

The agricultural sector provides a comparatively low level of employment given the size of Mitchell Shire. This is due to much of the rural land being constrained by factors including land topography and soil quality.

Niche industries that are not adequately included in census definitions are equine, tourism as well as a growing food, wine and craft beer sector. Anecdotally the equine industry is significant, with two racecourses (Kilmore and Seymour), many thoroughbred trainers and breeders, harness racing (Kilmore) and a strong recreational equine sector. Initial estimates suggest that the equine sector provides more than \$100 million in output in the region, significantly higher than the agriculture sector, which is estimated at around \$25 million.

Data from the Goulburn River Valley Tourism Destination Management Plan (2013) identifies that the tourism sector for Mitchell Shire attracts 560,000 people, provides a total output to the Shire of approximately \$97 million and supports 660 jobs.

Emerging industries in Mitchell Shire include healthcare, transport and construction, equine and food processing. Growth industries are education and training as well as accommodation and food services. Mitchell Shire Council has the opportunity to further attract these industries to the Shire and facilitate economic growth by accommodating their business needs and diversifying the economy.

4.2. Mitchell Shire Comparative Advantages

Mitchell Shire competes with peri-urban and growth area councils to Melbourne's north for resident and industry attraction.

Whilst currently most investment is being funnelled into the growth areas of Hume and Whittlesea, over time Mitchell Shire will play an expanded role in absorbing population and industry growth.

Surrounding peri-urban Councils such as Macedon Ranges and Murrindindi have larger concentrations of high amenity landscapes, forest and undulating topography that are less suited to cater for larger industry.

Mitchell Shire has a strong competitive advantage over its neighbouring peri-urban areas with respect to its ability to capture larger industry, with strong transport links, land availability and proximity to Melbourne's wholesale fruit and vegetable market and the Goulburn Valley.

4.3. Mitchell Shire's Competitive Strengths

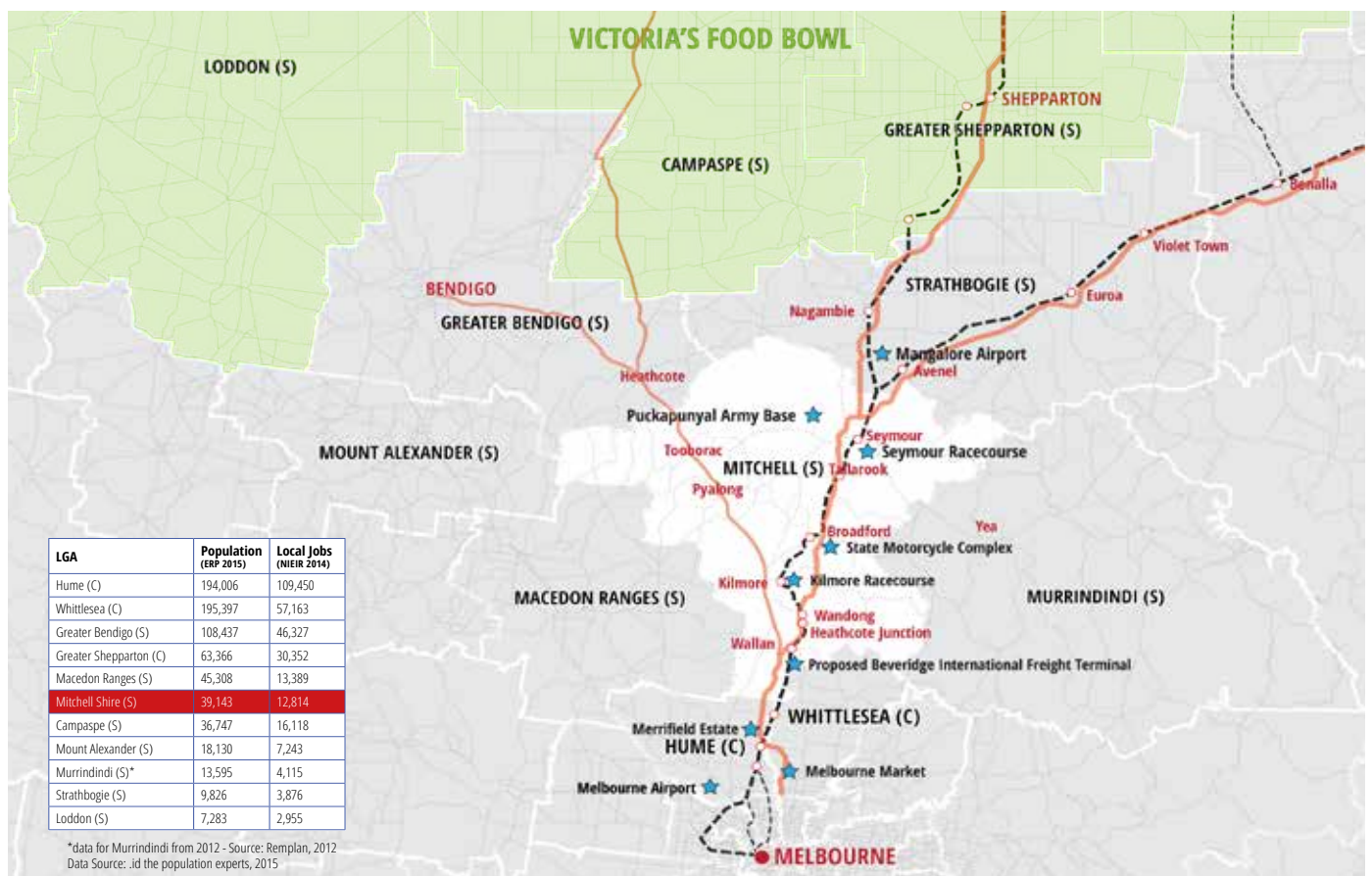
Mitchell Shire's competitive strengths for business and resident attraction include:

- > Proximity to transport infrastructure – Hume Freeway, Goulburn Valley Highway, Northern highway and rail corridor, Melbourne Airport and Port of Melbourne
- > Proximity to Melbourne which accommodates commutability
- > Proximity to the Melbourne wholesale fruit, vegetable and flower market
- > Proximity to Melbourne Airport
- > Strong population and housing growth in Mitchell South
- > Extensive population growth in the north of Melbourne
- > Land availability and affordability
- > Lifestyle –rural setting (Seymour) and lifestyle towns

- and villages (such as Kilmore, Broadford, Wandong, Heathcote Junction, Tallarook, Pyalong, Tooborac)
- > Natural environment – Goulburn River, Tallarook Ranges, Trawool Valley, Great Dividing Range
- > Well-serviced for social and community infrastructure (quality primary and secondary schools and hospitals, aged care)
- > Strong retail bases in Wallan, Kilmore and Seymour
- > Thoroughbred and recreational equine industry
- > Tourism strengths in Mitchell North
- > Sport and recreation assets
- > Mangalore Airport near Seymour
- > Proximity to Victoria's food bowl and north east areas

Figure 2 shows the regional economic context for Mitchell Shire and importantly its opportunity to leverage off its competitive strengths.

Figure 2. Regional Economic Context



5. Mitchell's Pathway to Economic Growth.

5.1. Our Vision

Mitchell Shire will build its economic capacity in order to improve its economic future and the quality of life for its residents. Mitchell Shire Council will work collaboratively with business, government and other organisations to create better conditions for jobs and business growth now and into the future.

5.2. Objectives

- > Strengthen engagement, relationships and communication with existing and new business
- > Provide increased focus and effort towards attracting, retaining and supporting industry that meets the needs and competitive strengths of Mitchell Shire
- > Improve the liveability of Mitchell Shire including a mix of health services, housing and social and physical infrastructure to attract residents and businesses
- > Facilitate and advocate for investment in strategic infrastructure that supports the economy and liveability of Mitchell Shire
- > Improve governance and systems within Council that support business
- > Advocate for the upskilling, training and job readiness of Mitchell Shire's residents

5.3. Future Directions

This strategy identifies the following broad directions for the towns, lifestyle villages and rural land areas within the Mitchell Shire. These can be summarised as follows:

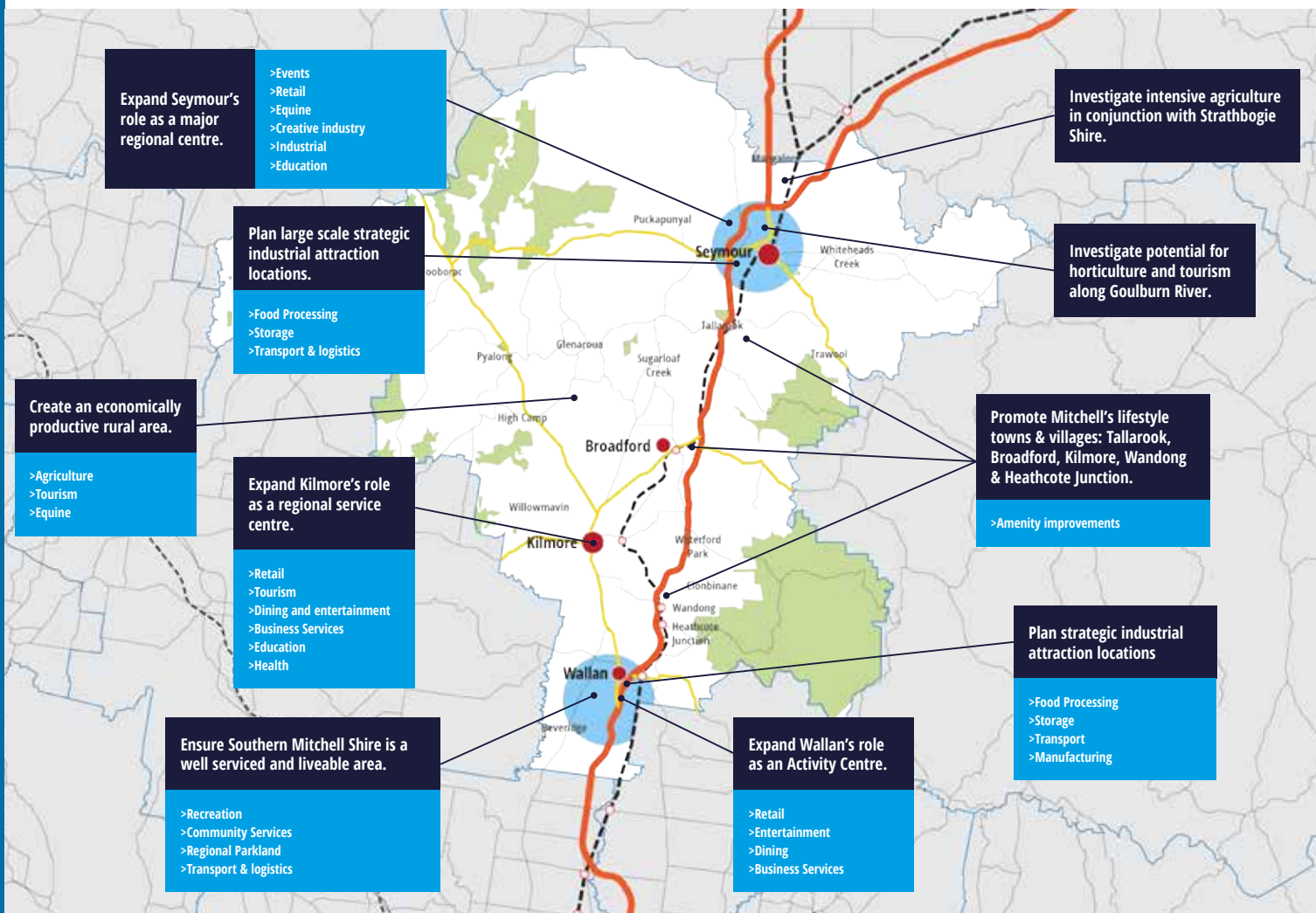
- > **Transform Seymour** into a thriving, major regional centre acknowledging that Seymour has the opportunity to become one of the Hume region's key service and industry towns

- > **Establish Wallan and Beveridge** as vibrant, well serviced and attractive growth areas ensuring that jobs and quality services are a key feature of Mitchell's growth area
- > **Expand and strengthen Kilmore** as a key service centre by leveraging education and health care provision to establish foundations for growth
- > **Promote Broadford** as a country town with a rural atmosphere and opportunities for lifestyle choice
- > **Promote and build on the smaller townships' attractive lifestyle opportunities** including Tooborac, Tallarook, Pyalong, Wandong / Heathcote Junction that build on the amenity landscapes of Mitchell Shire and create opportunities for niche and or localised economic activity
- > **Retain economically productive rural areas** focusing on providing a planning framework which supports various rural industry opportunities

In order to achieve and deliver on the directions identified above, Council commits to a:

- > **Contemporary and tailored approach to governance** by focusing on our communication, engagement and service processes to improve economic development outcomes for the Mitchell Shire

Figure 4. Economic Development Initiatives



6. Future Directions for Towns, Lifestyle Villages and Rural Areas

6.1. Transform Seymour into a Thriving, Major Regional Centre

6.1.1. Overview

Seymour is strategically located at the intersection of the Hume Freeway and Goulburn Valley Highway and has excellent rail, retail and community services.

Seymour is centrally located to areas of high amenity including the Goulburn River corridor, Tallarook and Strathbogie Ranges. The tourist towns of Nagambie and Avenel are also in close proximity.

Seymour is well placed to attract new residents to the area with a number of favourable factors such as strong transport links and services.

Mitchell Shire will make a concerted effort to attract industry and improve the liveability aspects of Seymour in order to make Seymour a more attractive place to live.

A recent survey of market perceptions of Seymour highlight that the lack of jobs and poor quality housing stock are a key barrier to attracting residents to Seymour.

Seymour is strategically located to attract large food processors, storage and transport companies. In addition, there is an opportunity to improve the town's tourism, food, retail and arts and cultural base.

6.1.2. Areas of Focus

- > Industry attraction:
- > Education
- > Health and aged care
- > Food processing, storage and transport
- > Retail
- > Tourism
- > Creative industry
- > Improving amenity and tourism uses
- > Providing jobs and housing to support resident attraction
- > Supporting the equine sector



6.1.3. Strategies and Actions

Resident Attraction

Residential growth is considered important to the growth and future development of Seymour.

Strategy 1: Promote Seymour as an attractive place to live through improved perceptions and infrastructure investment and upgrades.

Actions		Timeline
1.1	Ensure the preparation of the Seymour Structure Plan addresses the need to provide a more diverse and quality housing stock	2016/2017
1.2	Ensure the preparation of the Seymour Structure Plan delivers on identifying amenity, streetscape and infrastructure improvements	2016/2017
1.3	Develop a Seymour resident attraction portal (i.e. an accessible platform such as Facebook, Instagram, etc), highlighting the benefits and opportunities of living in Seymour including rail commute to work	2016/2017
1.4	Investigate opportunities to provide for pop up shops and multi-tenancy/micro-scale enterprises such as local produce markets	2016/2017
1.5	Council to commit to projects that continue to enhance Civic Pride	2017/2018
1.6	Deliver the Seymour levee bank	2019/2020

Tourism

There are a number of tourism opportunities that may be developed in Seymour. In addition to attracting visitors, these initiatives will also make Seymour a more attractive place to live.

Strategy 2: Investigate the potential to develop a Riverside Precinct along the Goulburn River

Actions	Timeline
2.1 Ensure the preparation of the Seymour Structure Plan delivers a staged proposal to make the Riverside Precinct a key destination for visitors and residents. This includes consideration of the following potential opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Leveraging off existing events > Commercial dining opportunities > Destination food and beverage: microbrewery/distillery > New and improved existing trail and path linkages > Accommodation > Function Centre 	2020/2021

Strategy 3: Promote tourism investment opportunities

Actions	Timeline
3.1 Encourage tourism investment opportunities, specifically including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > New holiday leisure tourist park > Destination dining, food and beverage offer > Eco-resort > Quality conference centre in the hinterland > Agri-tourism opportunities 	2019/2020

Strategy 4: Support existing events and develop new tourism events

Actions	Timeline
4.1 Continue to develop a calendar of events for Seymour. Events include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">> Fishing events> Food and beverage events> Agricultural events> Music events> Arts and Culture> Sporting events> Military, cultural and environmental heritage	2016/2017 Ongoing
4.2 Seek opportunities to better capitalise on existing events and integrate more directly with Seymour businesses and community	Ongoing
4.3 Support and advocate for businesses and community groups to seek external funding for events that bring visitors to Seymour	Ongoing

Strategy 5: Promote Seymour as a stopover to Melbourne

Actions	Timeline
5.1 Implement branding, and marketing initiatives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">> Improve wayfinding signage> Improve physical appearance of entrance off the Hume Freeway> Align targeted interstate marketing with Melbourne events program> Promote Seymour's natural and cultural heritage> Support initiatives such as establishing an electric vehicle charging facility in town	2017/2018

Strategy 6: Advocate for the Army Tank Museum

Actions	Timeline
6.1 Council to actively lobby for investment in a new Tank Museum at Puckapunyal	2018/2019

Strategy 7: Develop Arts and Culture product

Actions	Timeline
7.1 Encourage pop up shops within vacant retail tenancies	2016/2017 Ongoing
7.2 Establish a working group to investigate the establishment of an artist hub/incubator in Seymour	2017/2018
7.3 Develop a business plan and concept plan for the artist hub/incubator. This will identify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Key markets > Demand > Location > Typology and facility offer > Funding and resourcing 	2018/2019

Equine

Seymour is a hub for thoroughbred racing and training. There is an opportunity to further develop and support the thoroughbred and recreational equine industry in Seymour.

Strategy 8: Strengthen the Equestrian Hub of Seymour

Actions	Timeline
8.1 Undertake a branding, marketing and signage implementation strategy to delineate Seymour's equine precinct and promote it to the wider thoroughbred community and trainers in Victoria	2017/2018

Strategy 9: Grow the recreational equine sector

Actions	Timeline
9.1 Undertake a feasibility study and concept plan for the establishment of a regional equine and events centre in Seymour in proximity to the equine precinct. This will include an indoor arena and cross country course	2018/2019
9.2 Investigate the expansion of the Rural Living Zone in the equine precinct to accommodate medium to long term opportunity for medium sized trainers from Melbourne	2019/2020

Identification and Provision of Industrial Lots

There is a current gap in large purpose built industrial buildings in Seymour. The provision of attractive and useable industrial floor space such as warehouses, factories and distribution centres would help attract new businesses into Seymour.

Strategy 10: Improve the amenity and usability of existing industrial areas

Actions		Timeline
10.1	Develop a works program to improve amenity in Seymour's existing industrial areas	2017/2018
10.2	Encourage land owners of industrial land to develop smaller warehouse shells to support small service industrial growth	2020/2021

Strategy 11: Provide industrial super lots for large industry

Actions		Timeline
9.1	Undertake planning for the establishment of large super lots in proximity to the freeway to attract larger food processing, storage and transport businesses	2017/2018

Business Services Attraction

There is a shortfall in business services in Seymour. Further attraction of professional service industries is required in Seymour to cater to existing and new business needs.

Strategy 12: Attract and develop business and knowledge services in Seymour

Actions		Timeline
12.1	Establish a working group to determine the feasibility and viability of establishing a new commercial business hub in Seymour. This should provide a range of office and hot desk opportunities. This may be developed in conjunction with a potential community facility that may be identified in the emerging Structure Plan.	2016/2017

Education

There is an opportunity to grow the education and training sector in Seymour and encourage a relationship between finishing secondary and tertiary education and entering the workforce.

There is a major opportunity in Seymour to utilise the township's existing infrastructure, advantageous geographical location and proximity to environmentally significant areas and nature based assets for education purposes.

Strategy 13: Encourage a greater and improved presence in the education sector in Seymour

Actions		Timeline
13.1	Continue dialogue with secondary schools in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">> Investment and improvements to the Seymour Secondary College> Fostering pathways between secondary and tertiary education	Ongoing

Retirement Housing and Aged Care

A high proportion of Seymour's resident population is ageing, with this trend projected to continue over the next 15 years. There is an opportunity to grow the healthcare and social assistance industry and provide retirement housing and aged care to service the existing population.

Strategy 14: Seek investment in the retirement housing aged care sector

Actions		Timeline
14.1	Undertake discussions with aged care operators in the Hume Region to secure investment in this sector in Seymour in the medium term	2018/2019
14.2	Investigate opportunities through the preparation of the Structure Plan to support, encourage and promote additional housing diversity in Seymour	2018/2019

6.2. Establish Wallan and Beveridge as Vibrant, Well Serviced and Attractive Growth Areas

6.2.1. Overview

The Wallan and Beveridge corridor is one of the fastest growing areas in Victoria. The Metropolitan Planning Authority (MPA) is implementing a program of preparing structure plans for the area which will see this growth continue.

One of the key issues for economic development in the Mitchell growth area is ensuring liveability is maintained through the provision of recreation, community, entertainment, retail services and jobs.

The timely provision of infrastructure is also a key consideration for this area.

The Wallan Structure Plan provides a guiding document for Wallan's township growth. Initiatives in the structure plan will have a long term impact on the town's economy.

6.2.2. Areas of Focus

- > Ensure there is adequate supply of employment land to support industry attraction
- > Ensure there is adequate supply of office space to support attraction of service businesses and the knowledge sector
- > Ensure the Wallan township adequately provides art, cultural and recreational facilities for the growing population
- > Strengthen and diversify the retail and entertainment offer



6.2.3. Strategies and Actions

Commercial and Industrial Land Availability and Affordability

The land availability and affordability within Mitchell South makes it well placed to attract industries including transport, storage and distribution, service industrial, retail trade, construction and professional and advanced business services.

Strategy 15: Investigate the establishment of a Business Hub in Wallan.

Actions		Timeline
15.1	Establish a working group in Wallan to investigate the establishment of a business hub	2017/2018
15.2	Develop a business plan and concept plan for the business hub. This will identify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Key markets > Demand > Location > Typology and facility offer > Funding and resourcing 	2018/2019

Strategy 16: Identify location and undertake planning to support the establishment of large purpose built industrial estate which has the potential to act as a transport hub

Actions		Timeline
16.1	Work collaboratively with the Metropolitan Planning Authority to prepare the Wallan South Precinct Structure Plan for employment uses	2016/2017

Township Linkages

There is a need to create local pedestrian, bicycle, car and public transport linkages between Wallan, Wallan East and Beveridge. These links would provide a commutable environment and create transport linkages for residents.

Strategy 17: Establish improved cycle and trail linkages in Mitchell South between towns

Actions		Timeline
17.1	Ensure trail linkages are incorporated into Precinct Structure Plans (PSP) and Development Plans	Ongoing

Strategy 18: Review the commuter network to ensure appropriate public transport is provided to link Wallan with outlying settlements

Actions		Timeline
18.1	Hold discussions with Public Transport Victoria and local bus lines to determine the opportunity to improve transport links within and to Wallan, Beveridge and neighbouring towns such as Whittlesea	2019/2020
18.2	Advocate for the establishment of a train station in Beveridge	2020/2021
18.3	Advocate for improvements to transport infrastructure including the provision of on/off ramps at the Hume Freeway/Watson Street junction	2020/2021

Regional Park

Advocate for a regional park in Wallan that services the resident and visitor population. This is seen by residents as a key part of liveability in the growth areas.

Strategy 19: Advocate for a regional park

Actions		Timeline
19.1	Undertake a study to identify the size, location and establishment of a regional park near Wallan	2019/2020
19.2	Collaborate with Parks Victoria and the Merri Creek Management Committee regarding the process of establishing the park and responsibilities for ongoing management	2020/2021

Retail, Entertainment and Town Centre

Strategy 20: Promote the retail gaps in Wallan to landowners and prospective investors

Actions		Timeline
20.1	Advocate for the provision of retail floorspace that is currently underrepresented in Wallan	2017/2018

Strategy 21: Continue to develop Wallan and Beveridge's entertainment offer to create an attractive and vibrant location for residents

Actions		Timeline
21.1	Implement Wallan Town Centre Master plan and Urban Design Framework (UDF)	2017/2018 Ongoing
21.2	Implement revitalisation works and programs (e.g. unlocking Wallan's Economic Potential)	2017/2018 Ongoing

6.3. Expand and Strengthen Kilmore as a Key Service Centre

6.3.1. Overview

Kilmore is located in central Mitchell Shire along the Great Dividing Range. The township has the potential to strengthen its role as a key service centre and offer lifestyle residential choice by leveraging off its amenity and proximity to Melbourne.

Kilmore has the potential to develop as a regional service centre by leveraging from growth in retail, health services and education. Kilmore's well renowned education facilities and hospital provide a strong framework for attracting new residents and jobs to the region.

6.3.2. Areas of Focus

- > Revitalisation of Kilmore Town Centre
- > Improvement to township linkages
- > Attraction of business and knowledge sector to Kilmore
- > Leveraging from key assets such as the Kilmore Racecourse
- > Ensure there is adequate supply of commercial office space to support attraction of service business and the knowledge sector



6.3.3. Strategies and Actions

Retail Attraction

Kilmore is well placed to attract tree change residents by strengthening the township's identity as lifestyle towns and villages.

Strategy 22: Promote Kilmore as a lifestyle town

Actions		Timeline
22.1	Develop a targeted marketing program to improve the awareness of Kilmore as a lifestyle residential location	2019/2020

Strategy 25: Continue to improve Kilmore's retail, tourism and entertainment by creating an attractive and vibrant location for residents and visitors

Actions		Timeline
23.1	Establish a place making strategy for Kilmore drawing on planning to date. The strategy will identify opportunities for activation, branding, overseeing township improvements and liaising with the local communities	2017/2018
23.2	Undertake place making activities within Kilmore	2018/2019

Retail and Office Growth and Attraction

Kilmore has the opportunity to expand the retail offer targeted to the needs of residents and passing trade. Residential growth in the region will support a growing retail mix in these townships.

Kilmore has the potential to develop further as a regional service hub with a greater supply of business services.

The town has the opportunity to improve the quality of its town centre amenity and in particular target passing trade better through a quality dining and retail offer, similar to that of the towns along the Calder corridor: Woodend, Kyneton and Castlemaine.

Strategy 24: Support the growth of retail and employment opportunities in Kilmore

Actions		Timeline
24.1	Implement the Kilmore Structure Plan	2016/2017 Ongoing
24.2	Undertake a retail and employment assessment for Kilmore which identifies the residential catchment and retail opportunities which can be promoted for each township	2018/2019

Strategy 25: Revitalise the Kilmore town centre, notably along Sydney Street, to encourage an increase in commercial office and retail tenancies and encourage an increase in pedestrian activity

Actions		Timeline
25.1	Implement the actions from the Kilmore Revitalisation Plan and seek opportunity to maximise linkages from Sydney Street to Kilmore Creek	2018/2019
25.2	Identify clear guidelines that supports commercial tenancy of heritage buildings	2019/2020
25.3	Investigate the opportunity to establish a cultural and arts precinct within the town	2019/2020
25.4	Streetscape improvements along Sydney Street	2020/2021
25.5	Investigate opportunities and the need for accommodation to attract visitors and encourage overnight stays particularly as they relate to activities at the Kilmore racetrack	2020/2021

Strategy 26: Kilmore business improvement program

Actions		Timeline
26.1	Invite an expert in the operation and management of retail and food and beverage premises to meet with shop owners to share ideas of how to improve business performance and how to attract passing trade better	2017/2018

Township Linkages

There is an opportunity to more efficiently integrate the townships through the development of pedestrian and bicycle links, as well as redirecting local traffic networks.

Strategy 27: Explore opportunities for improved cycle and trail linkages between Broadford and Kilmore

Actions		Timeline
27.1	Undertake an assessment of potential pedestrian and bicycle route options between Broadford and Kilmore	2019/2020

Strategy 28: Leverage opportunities from the Heathcote to Wallan rail trail

Actions		Timeline
28.1	Undertake a study which explores the potential to leverage off the Heathcote to Wallan Rail Trail through complementary tourism uses (e.g. accommodation, and food and beverage). This should identify logical stopping points along the trail which can be promoted to the private sector for investment	2020/2021

Strategy 29: Investigate opportunities for improved connections between Kilmore East and Kilmore township

Actions		Timeline
28.1	Undertake an assessment of potential pedestrian and bicycle route options between Kilmore and Kilmore East, specifically providing a connection between the Kilmore town centre and the Kilmore train station.	2020/2021

Strategy 30: Review the commuter network and advocate for appropriate public transport to link Kilmore with outlying settlements and surrounding townships (e.g. Kilmore and Broadford)

Actions		Timeline
30.1	Advocate for an increase in the frequency of bus services from Kilmore town centre to Kilmore train station (Kilmore East)	2019/2020
30.2	Advocate for the long-term development of the Wallan-Kilmore bypass	Ongoing
30.3	Advocate for improved pedestrian linkages within the town	Ongoing

Business Hub

The provision of a business hub/incubator would service the high number for home-based and start-up businesses in the Kilmore region.

Strategy 31: Investigate opportunity for the establishment of a business hub in Kilmore

Actions		Timeline
31.1	Establish a working group in Kilmore to investigate the establishment of a business hub	2017/2018
31.2	Develop a business plan and concept plan for the business hub. This will identify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Key markets > Demand > Location > Typology and facility offer > Funding and resourcing 	2018/2019

6.4. Promote Broadford as a Country Town with a Rural Atmosphere

6.4.1. Overview

Broadford is located in the centre of Mitchell Shire and is the location of Council's civic centre. The town has the potential to strengthen as a lifestyle residential location leveraging off its country town feel and atmosphere.

6.4.2. Areas of Focus

- > Improvement to township linkages
- > Attraction of business and knowledge sector to Broadford
- > Leveraging from key assets such as the Broadford Motorcycle Complex
- > Ensure there is adequate supply of commercial and retail space to support attraction of service business and the knowledge sector



6.4.3. Strategies and Actions

Resident Attraction

Broadford is well placed to attract tree change residents by strengthening the township's identity as a lifestyle town.

Strategy 32: Promote Broadford as a lifestyle town

Actions		Timeline
32.1	Develop a targeted marketing program to improve the awareness of Broadford as a lifestyle residential location	2017/2018

Strategy 33: Continue to develop Broadford's retail and tourism offer to create an attractive and vibrant location for residents and visitors

Actions		Timeline
33.1	Establish a place making strategy for Broadford drawing on planning to date. The strategy will identify opportunities for activation, branding, overseeing township improvements and liaising with the local communities	2017/2018
33.2	Undertake place making activities within Broadford	2018/2019

Strategy 34: Broadford business improvement program

Actions		Timeline
34.1	Invite an expert in the operation and management of retail and food and beverage premises to meet with shop owners to share ideas of how to improve business performance and how to attract passing trade better.	2017/2018

Township Linkages

There is an opportunity to more efficiently integrate the townships through the development of pedestrian and bicycle links, as well as redirecting local traffic networks.

Strategy 35: Explore opportunities for improved cycle and trail linkages between Broadford and Kilmore.

Actions		Timeline
35.1	Undertake an assessment of potential pedestrian and bicycle route options between Broadford and Kilmore	2020/2021

Business Hub

The provision of a business hub/incubator would service the high number for home-based and start-up businesses in the Bradford region.

Strategy 36: Investigate feasibility for the establishment of a business hub in Bradford

Actions	Timeline
36.1 Establish a working group in Bradford to investigate the establishment of a business hub	2017/2018
36.2 Develop a business plan and concept plan for the business hub. This will identify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Key markets > Demand > Location > Typology and facility offer > Funding and resourcing 	2018/2019

Bradford Motorcycle Complex

The Bradford township can further leverage from the operations at the Bradford State Motorcycle Complex.

Strategy 37: Undertake initiatives to leverage from the Bradford Motorcycle Complex

Actions	Timeline
37.1 Implement a number of initiatives to leverage more trade from the Bradford Motorcycle Complex. Initiatives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Developing businesses to meet the motorcycle market needs > Establishing stronger links between local businesses and events and activities held at the complex > Development of self-contained group accommodation in town > Provision of visitor information at the Bradford Motorcycle Complex, promoting the region > Improving way finding signage > Targeted marketing of Bradford businesses in motorcycle media > Undertake joint feasibility planning with Council and SMCC regarding future industrial and employment land opportunities 	2016/2017 Ongoing

6.5. Promote and Build on the Smaller Townships' Attractive Lifestyle Opportunities for Niche and Localised Economic Activity

6.5.1. Overview

Tooborac, Tallarook, Pyalong, Wandong and Heathcote Junction are smaller settlements located within Mitchell Shire. These villages and settlements have the potential to strengthen as niche country villages offering lifestyle residential locations leveraging off their landscape amenity and boutique offerings.

6.5.2. Areas of Focus

- > Support and promote existing niche/boutique/home based industries
- > Attract new niche/boutique businesses such as food, wine, beer and arts/crafts
- > Maintain and support the rural lifestyle whilst offering local communities and visitors with quality produce and experiences



6.5.3. Strategies and Actions

Niche Businesses

Strategy 38: Continue to develop and promote existing and new niche and boutique businesses to create attractive and vibrant destinations and experiences for residents and visitors

Actions	Timeline	
38.1	Promote existing assets such as rail trails including the Great Victoria Rail Trail	Ongoing
38.2	Encourage increased tourism into the region by supporting road based, cycling and adventure based activities	2017/2018
38.3	Offer targeted support to home based and microbusinesses through training and marketing activities	2017/2018
38.4	Encourage intrastate travellers to visit the villages and settlements such as Tooborac, Pyalong and Tallarook and use them as stopping points	2017/2018
38.5	Foster and encourage arts, culture, food and beverage experiences and paddock to plate type activities including farmer's markets, cellar door, beer and wine tasting and events such as Boogie Nights, Glenaroua Art Fair, Oktober Fest, etc.	2017/2018 Ongoing
38.6	Deliver infrastructure such as the Heathcote to Wallan Rail Trail and expansions to existing rail trails such as the Great Victoria Rail Trail from Tallarook to Seymour	2020/2021

6.6. Retain Economically Productive Rural Areas

6.6.1. Overview

Mitchell Shire is a large regional Shire with an extensive amount of rural land. The economic output of the rural areas is quite low when benchmarked against other rural Councils due to limited rural tourism industry and limited high value agriculture such as horticulture and dairy.

Anecdotally the equine industry is one of the largest contributors to the rural economy, however further work is required to understand the scale of this sector.

There is opportunity to promote greater productivity and agricultural sustainably in the rural areas of Mitchell Shire.

6.6.2. Areas of Focus

- > Investigation of higher value sustainable agricultural uses such as horticulture, intensive agriculture
- > Rural residential uses in designated areas
- > Expansion of equine uses
- > Agri-tourism and nature based tourism



6.6.3. Strategies and Actions

Rural Activity Strategy

A review of rural land uses in Mitchell Shire would help understand existing agricultural uses and identify agriculturally productive areas in the Shire. A study is required to understand how to utilise Mitchell Shire's rural areas more productively including suitable locations for agriculture, equine and tourism

Strategy 39: Undertake a Rural Activity Strategy

Actions		Timeline
39.1	Undertake a rural activity strategy which looks at developing greater productivity in the rural areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Equine uses > Horticulture and intensive agriculture > Agri tourism and nature based tourism opportunities. > Parks based tourism > Value add industries such as farmers' markets, farm stays, forestry 	2017/2018

Goulburn River Horticultural Development

The Goulburn River flats are significantly productive areas and could be utilised for horticultural uses.

Strategy 40: Further utilise the Goulburn River flats for alternative uses

Actions		Timelines
40.1	Investigate opportunities for horticulture along the Goulburn River and promote these opportunities to land owners	2019/2020
40.2	Undertake an assessment of the horticultural uses that can be accommodated along the Goulburn River	2019/2020
40.3	Engage with landowners to discuss barriers and opportunities for horticulture in this area	2019/2020

Agri-Tourism

Developing agri-tourism in rural areas would provide a more economically productive use of land and will further diversify the tourism offer in Mitchell Shire. This also assists with 'off farm' income to support agricultural farming families.

Strategy 41: Promote rural tourism uses in Mitchell Shire

Actions	Timeline
41.1 Identify and promote nature based and agri tourism opportunities in Mitchell Shire including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">> Boutique value adding> Farm gate sales> Nature based accommodation and activities next to natural attractions/assets> Agri tourism opportunities such as farm stays and destination wineries	2019/2020

Regional Agriculture Focus and Brand – Goulburn Valley

There is opportunity to work closely with Greater Shepparton and other Councils in the Goulburn Valley to establish a Goulburn Valley regional agricultural group and brand.

This may provide Mitchell Shire producers with the opportunity to link with other larger operators in the broader region.

Strategy 42: Engage in Goulburn Valley Region Agricultural Initiatives

Actions	Timeline
42.1 Undertake discussions with Regional Development Victoria, as well as Greater Shepparton, Moira, Strathbogie and Campaspe Councils to identify a strategic regional approach to agricultural production, branding and water use.	2019/2020

Equine

Mitchell Shire has a strong equine presence. There are synergies that can be leveraged off, particularly with the Kilmore and Seymour Racecourses and the historical significance of thoroughbred breeding and training in the Shire and the broader region.

Mitchell Shire Council should continue to support the growth in the thoroughbred equine and recreational equine sectors within the region through supporting equine events and the potential growth in equine infrastructure.

Strategy 43: Undertake an equine strategy for Mitchell Shire

Actions	Timeline
<p>43.1 Seek funding for an equine strategy which investigates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Establishment of an equine reference group > Primary research program to quantify the size, strengths and economic value of the equine industry in Mitchell Shire > Establishment of an online portal for Mitchell Shire Equine Sector > The opportunity to establish an equine sales event in Mitchell Shire > The opportunity to establish an equine festival in Mitchell Shire > The feasibility to establish a new indoor equestrian centre in Mitchell Shire <p>Opportunities for equine uses complimentary to the Seymour and Kilmore racecourses</p>	<p>2018/2019</p>

6.7. A Contemporary and Tailored Approach to Economic Development

6.7.1. Overview

Economic Development Australia highlights the following as overarching delivery objectives for local economic development:

- > Objective 1: Supporting the existing business base
- > Objective 2: Attracting new businesses and jobs
- > Objective 3: Improving liveability

Focusing on delivering a tailored and contemporary approach to local economic development will assist Mitchell Shire grow existing businesses, attract new business and investment and foster further local employment.

Engaging with existing businesses, providing focused business support and improving Council processes will assist greatly in achieving the objectives of the strategy.

6.7.2. Areas of Focus

- > Engaging and supporting existing and new business
- > Information for businesses
- > Supporting small business
- > Attracting new investment and industry
- > Improvement of economic development governance



6.7.3. Strategies and Actions

Networking Events, Business Engagement and Information Provision

Increased effort is required to ensure stronger links between businesses and Council in order to ensure that businesses are supported and informed.

Mitchell Shire will continue to develop a quality business database in order to maintain effective relationships and communications with businesses and to promote and support the use of local businesses.

Mitchell Shire Council will facilitate networking events to engage with businesses as well as providing an avenue for other businesses in the Shire to communicate and build relationships.

Strategy 44: Continue to develop and maintain a business database

Actions	Timeline
44.1 Develop and maintain a business database which includes the following fields: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Business name > Address > Industry classification > Business size (estimated number of jobs) > History of Council contact with the business 	2016/2017 Ongoing
44.2 Investigate the use the business database to create an online business directory for community use	2016/2017
44.3 Establish existing and the establishment of new business networks and programs	2016/2017
44.4 Ensure that an economic development staff member has responsibility for maintaining the database	2016/2017

Strategy 45: Establish an annual program of targeted networking and educational events

Actions	Timeline
45.1 Use information from the business survey conducted around business availability to develop a program of networking events targeted at industry. This may include: > Seminars on topics of interest: NBN, social media, digital marketing > Localised networking opportunities across the key townships > Workshops with specific industry on topic	Ongoing
45.2 Continue to implement Council's current training initiatives including: > The Small Business Bus > Small business mentoring sessions > Business workshops	Ongoing
45.3 Host biannual economic development forums to strengthen understanding and engagement with key local industry representatives	2016/2017 Ongoing
45.4 Capitalise on the increased demand for trade qualified personnel by investigating the need to offer sustainable training for local trades (i.e. green plumbers)	2017/2018

Strategy 46: Utilise email, social media and a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System to communicate with businesses

Actions	Timeline
46.1 Develop a quarterly email newsletter to go to businesses on the business database, promoting Council projects, networking opportunities and grants programs.	2016/2017
46.2 Explore options for Customer Relationship Management Systems	2016/2017

Business Hubs

There are a high proportion of home based and start-up small businesses in Mitchell Shire that require resources that help support their operations. There is also a gap in office accommodation for business across the towns of Mitchell Shire. There is an opportunity to develop multiple business hubs in select townships in Mitchell Shire.

Strategy 47: Investigate opportunities for the establishment of business hubs in Mitchell Shire, specifically:

- > Creative industry incubator in Seymour (Similar to Castlemaine)
- > Knowledge and industry business hubs in Kilmore, Wallan and Seymour

Actions	Timeline
47.1 Establish working groups in Wallan, Seymour and Kilmore to investigate the opportunities to create business hubs.	2017/2018
47.2 Develop a business plan and concept plan for each of the business hubs. This will identify the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Key markets > Demand > Location > Typology and facility offer > Linkages with industry and education facilities > Funding and resourcing 	2017/2018

Planning Support

Mitchell Shire Council recognises that the statutory planning process can at times be a challenge for businesses as they attempt to navigate the process. As such, Council is mindful of the need to support and assist new and existing businesses in the Shire address potential barriers such as planning approvals and compliance matters.

Strategy 48: Improve awareness and understanding of planning processes for businesses

Actions	Timeline
48.1 Establish and foster a strong relationship between businesses and the Statutory Planning function to ensure the efficient and effective consideration and processing of business related planning applications.	2016/2017 Ongoing

Strategy 49: Promote a facilitative culture in Council with regard to planning and economic development

Actions	Timeline
49.1 Embed a philosophy and culture within the Statutory Planning function which recognises the importance and value of economic development in improving the liveability of Mitchell Shire	Ongoing
49.2 Establish a framework where staff receive relevant training and gain experience to assist in assessing planning applications which result in economic development outcomes so that the entire team is able to assess business related applications appropriately	Ongoing
49.3 Establish a priority project planning process for larger investments and larger business applications by utilising economic development staff to assist with the planning process	2016/2017
49.4 Establish a “business brokering” service whereby the Economic Development unit helps applicants navigate the statutory planning processes	2016/2017

Improve Partnerships with Neighbouring Councils

Mitchell Shire is uniquely positioned to work in partnership with neighbouring councils particularly metropolitan councils in Melbourne's northern growth corridor as well as rural shires in the north and central regions of Victoria.

There is opportunity for Mitchell Shire to partner with Hume City Council, the City of Whittlesea and also Strathbogie and Murrindindi Shires to provide business services and networking events to businesses. Hume City Council in particular has well developed programs which Mitchell Shire can leverage from.

Strategy 50: Strengthen relationships with surrounding Councils

Actions	Timeline
50.1 Engage with surrounding Council Economic Development teams on a quarterly basis	2016/2017 Ongoing
50.2 Develop a program of joint projects with surrounding Councils that can facilitate, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Employment node in Beveridge > Employment node, intensive agricultural area near Mangalore > Joint training programs for businesses > Develop of regional prospectus documents to support and aid business investment attraction to the region 	Ongoing

Continuity

A challenge for Mitchell Shire is maintaining continuity of local knowledge and as such it is important that relationships between businesses and Council are maintained. Processes should be implemented within Council that ensure the continuation of local business relationships when there are changes to staffing arrangements.

Strategy 51: Ensure that staff pass on adequate information and knowledge transfer occurs with change of staff

Actions	Timeline
51.1 Develop processes to assist with staff transition. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Clear guidance around economic development strategy and actions required > Maintenance of the business database with information on past contact with businesses > Clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of staff members 	2016/2017

Priority Investment Projects

It is critical that Council has agreement on investment projects that are important to attract industry and improve liveability of residents. This prioritised list of projects should be assessed against agreed criteria and promoted to funding agencies. This will ensure that when funding pools are announced, Council is ready to enter in grant processes.

Strategy 52: Ensure that Council has an updated list of priority projects and initiatives which it can advocate for

Actions	Timeline
<p>52.1 Establish a promotional document that identifies and quantifies Council's key investment priorities. Key economic development themes for consideration include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Major road infrastructure upgrades > Business hubs > Industrial precincts > Visitor economy > Rural activities (including equine) > Implementation of Urban Design Frameworks > Implementation of Town Centre and Structure Plans <p>These key themes and associated priority projects will be reviewed annually in line with Council's advocacy agenda.</p>	Ongoing

Investment Attraction

Mitchell Shire needs to direct resources to attracting new industries and businesses in order to grow the number of local jobs, increase and maintain job containment and improve the attractiveness of Mitchell Shire as a residential destination.

Strategy 53: Focus resources towards investment attraction as a priority for economic development

Actions		Timeline
53.1	Investigate options for attracting new large industry	2017/2018
53.2	Develop an industry attraction strategy for key opportunities in Mitchell Shire. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Prospectus material > List of industry targets > Meetings with industry groups > Targeted cold calls 	2018/2019
53.3	Undertake a Shire wide analysis of retail opportunities building on the work undertaken in each of the Structure Plans to prepare a retail prospectus for major retailer attraction	2018/2019
53.4	Investigate options for attracting new small businesses	2018/2019

Strategy 54: Ensure the planning framework and infrastructure supports industry attraction

Actions		Timeline
54.1	Implement the actions within Council's strategic planning strategies	Ongoing

Strengthen Business Services

Strengthen the business services sector within the growth area by encouraging existing businesses to use local supplier's business goods and services.

Facilitate the development of professional services in the growth areas to service the increasing proportion of home-based and start-up businesses.

Strategy 55: Establish a Mitchell Shire wide business network

Actions		Timeline
55.1	Host biannual economic development forums to strengthen understanding and engagement with key local industry representatives and to gauge interest in the establishment of a Mitchell Shire Chamber of Commerce	2016/2017 Ongoing

Research

It is critical that ongoing research is undertaken to track industry performance. This will assist in measuring the success of the Economic Development Strategy.

In addition to this, Council will undertake performance reporting of the Economic Development Unit in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework.

Strategy 56: Undertake Ongoing Research of Industry Performance

Actions		Timeline
56.1	Undertake an annual survey of industry, building on the survey completed for the Economic Development Strategy to measure industry performance and growth	2016/2017 Ongoing
56.2	Continue to subscribe to Remplan and ensure that Remplan economic data is made available across Council and business	Ongoing

Strategy 57: Implement annual performance reporting of local economic development in line with EDA performance measures paper

Actions		Timeline
57.1	Establish a reporting procedure to collect relevant measures to ensure compliance with reporting measures such as the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework.	Ongoing



BEVERIDGE, WALLAN, UPPER
ENTY, CLONBINANE, HEATHCO
UNCTION, WANDONG, BYLANDS
BES, KILMORE, KILMORE EAST
ERFORD PARK, SUNDAY CREE
RANDING, WILLOWMAVIN, HIG
MP, NULLA VALE, GLENAROUA
SUGARLOAF CREEK, HILDENE
AROOK, TRAWOOL, WHITEHEA
EEK, SEYMOUR, PUCKAPUNYA
GHLANDS, TARCOMBE, NORTH
HWOOD, TOOBORAC, GLENHU
HOPE EAST, MIA MIA, HEATHC
H BROADFORD, WALLAN UP

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