

# Bendigo Region

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024

ENRICHING PEOPLE AND PLACE THROUGH TOURISM

LOCAL AREA ACTION PLAN  
Central Goldfields Shire Council



# Acknowledgement of Country

## Central Goldfields Shire Council

Central Goldfields Shire Council acknowledges and extends appreciation for the Dja Dja Wurrung People, the Traditional Owners of the land that we are on.

We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung People.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

This version of the Local Area Action Plan for Central Goldfields Shire Council was updated on 29 July 2024.

Front Cover Image: Bull and Mouth Hotel, Maryborough

## Bendigo Regional Tourism (BRT)

The Bendigo region is home to the *Dja Dja Wurrung* and *Taungurang* peoples, we pay our respects to Elders past and present who have cared for this country for over 60,000 years.

The wider community respectfully acknowledges and appreciates their close and ongoing connection to the land and waters within the region which holds the memories, tradition, culture and hopes of their peoples.



'Welcome Stranger' animation still, featuring 'Bunjil' (Eagle) artwork by Daikota Nelson



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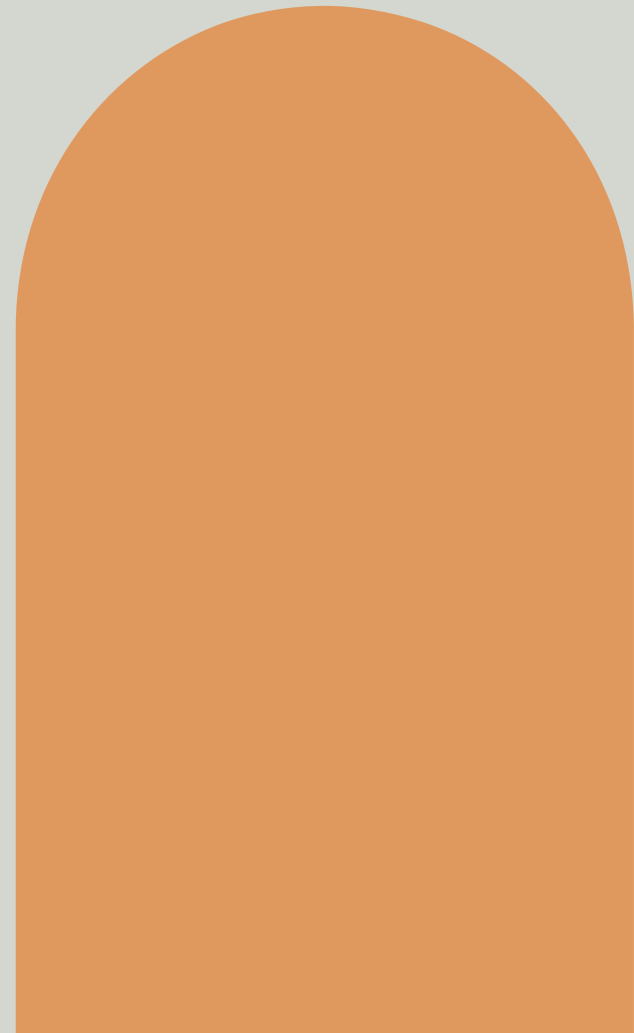
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The Old Flour Mill, Talbot

# 01

## Introduction.

Understanding the purpose of this Local Area Action Plan and Central Goldfields Shire Council's role in delivering tourism outcomes for the Bendigo Region.



# Purpose of this Plan

This Plan outlines the Local Actions for Central Goldfields Shire Council (CGSC) to support the Bendigo Region tourism vision and aspirations.

This Local Area Action Plan (LAAP) has been developed to act as a bridge between the regional tourism priorities outlined in the 2024 Bendigo Region Destination Management Plan (Bendigo Region DMP) and local planning policy and resourcing.

Informed by comprehensive listening and desktop research (see Acknowledgements, page 48), this LAAP acknowledges the local state of play for tourism, and identifies considerations for the CGSC to support the achievement of the regional vision and aspirations for tourism.



## DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Bendigo Region DMP is a Strategic Framework and Action Plan that outlines the tourism priorities for the Bendigo Region, to be activated by *Bendigo Regional Tourism* in partnership with Local Government, and other Local, Regional and State Partners.



### LODDON SHIRE LOCAL AREA ACTION PLAN

### MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE LOCAL AREA ACTION PLAN

### CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE LOCAL AREA ACTION PLAN

### CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO LOCAL AREA ACTION PLAN



# Connecting the Dots

The Bendigo Region DMP and LAAPs connect the dots between stakeholder priorities at a local, regional, state and national level to optimise resources, improve outcomes, reduce and mitigate risk, and to unite stakeholders in the delivery of positive outcomes for tourism.

This LAAP recognises the many strategies, projects and initiatives that already exist or are in progress at Council, and seeks to champion and amplify the tourism connection and outcomes of identified initiatives.

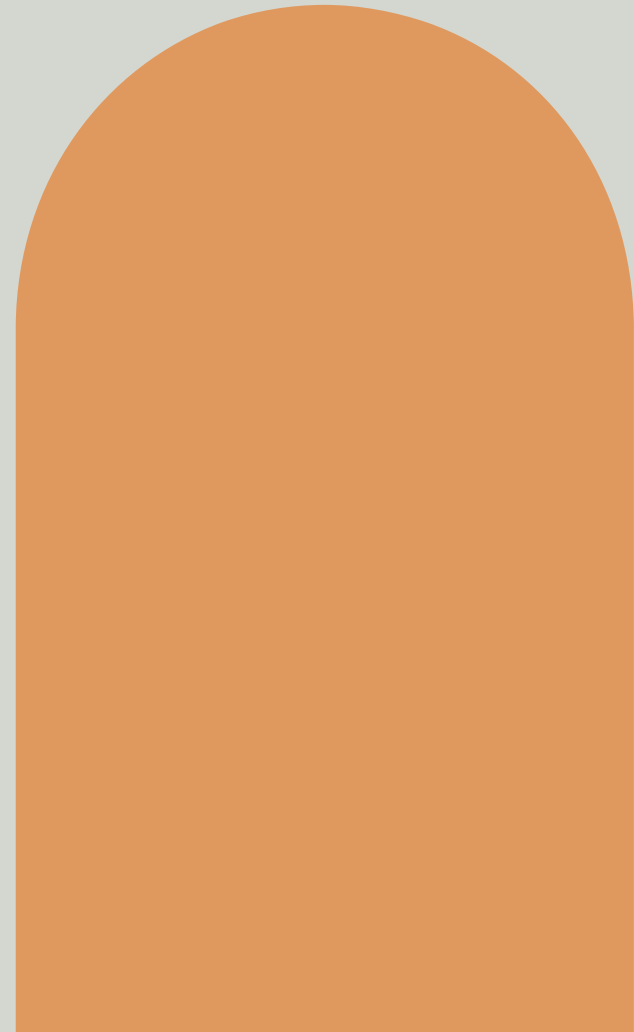
This page specifically highlights the key strategic documents that align with the priorities in this LAAP.

REGIONAL & STATE	Experience Victoria 2033	Released in June 2023, the State Government's strategic plan for tourism, with the ambition of driving, enabling and guiding investment in high-quality products and experiences across five product priorities (Wellness, Arts & Culture, First Peoples, Food & Drink and Nature). The intention for this Plan is to connect the dots to coordinate a cohesive approach to tourism in the Bendigo Region through collaborative supply side initiatives. Specifically, this Plan aligns with the State's vision for tourism, and clearly outlines the alignment between the State's product priorities (see Section 4).
	Bendigo Region Destination Management Plan 2024	This Strategy is governed by Bendigo Regional Tourism, and provides the current vision and framework for destination management of the Bendigo Region. This LAAP directly aligns with the overarching vision, aspirations, and actions within this Strategy.
COUNCIL	Central Goldfields Shire Council 2030 Community Vision	CGSC has developed a community vision to guide the development of their Long-Term Strategic Plan. The Vision for Regional Tourism, as outlined in the BRDMP2024, and echoed in this LAAP, intentionally aligns with this 2030 Community Vision.
	Central Goldfields Shire Council Plan (2021-25)	The priorities in this Plan have considered, and seek to align with the strategic priorities outlined in their Annual Plan: Objective 1: Our Community's Wellbeing Objective 2: Our Growing Economy Objective 3: Our Spaces and Places
	Central Goldfields Shire Tourism & Events Strategy 2020-2025	The priorities in this LAAP have considered, and seek to align with the strategic themes outlined in the Tourism & Events Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme 1: Shift the Narrative around the Shire's Identity and Perception</li> <li>• Theme 2: Improve Visitor Experience, Product and Activation</li> <li>• Theme 3: Enhance and reinterpret the Gold Story</li> <li>• Theme 4: Support and leverage the Emerging Arts &amp; Culture Sector</li> <li>• Theme 5: Revitalise Assets, Infrastructure &amp; Accommodation</li> <li>• Theme 6: Develop and Enhance Events &amp; Festivals</li> <li>• Theme 7: Provide Contemporary Approach to Marketing and Visitor Services</li> </ul>
	Additional Central Goldfields Shire Strategic Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority Projects Plan 2023 (Refreshed)</li> <li>• Economic Development Strategy 2020 - 2025</li> <li>• Integrated Transport Strategy 2020 - 2030</li> <li>• Walking and Cycling Strategy 2017-2036</li> <li>• Climate Action Plan 2022-2030</li> <li>• Central Goldfields Art Gallery Strategic Plan</li> <li>• Volunteer Strategy 2021-2026</li> </ul>



# Tourism in Context.

Understanding the landscape in which tourism currently operates in the Central Goldfields Shire region.



# Tourism in Central Goldfields Shire Council

Located in the heart of the Victorian Goldfields, 2-hours north west of Melbourne, the Central Goldfields Shire region is nestled between the two major service centres of Bendigo and Ballarat.

Central Goldfields Shire's rich history began with Traditional Owners and has been enriched by migration during Victoria's gold rush era. And, as such, the Shire is located strategically in the centre of the Central Victorian Goldfields and the bid for World Heritage Listing of the Victorian Goldfields.

Maryborough, the major township in the heart of the CGSC region, has well-preserved heritage architecture, reminiscent of the bustling gold rush days, captures the imagination of visitors exploring the town's streetscapes and historic buildings.

Whilst Maryborough is central to the Central Goldfields visitor experience, travellers will also disperse throughout the region to the smaller townships of Dunolly and Talbot to explore the remnants of gold mining activities, architecture and museums, attracting many gold prospecting enthusiasts.

The Central Goldfields Art Gallery located in Maryborough, showcases an impressive array of contemporary and traditional artworks, drawing art enthusiasts to admire pieces by local and renowned Australian artists within the charming buildings of a former fire station.

The Gallery will soon be home to a Dja Dja Wurrung Indigenous Interpretive Garden, due for completion in 2024 (see more about this Project on Page 10).

Visitors can immerse in the Dja Dja Wurrung history and story, at the newly created interpretive experience at the recently redeveloped Maryborough Visitor information Centre, in the Maryborough Railway Station (see more about this Project on Page 12).

Beyond its historical allure, nature lovers find solace in the region's scenic beauty, with parks, gardens, and reserves providing opportunities for leisurely strolls, picnics, and birdwatching.

Moreover, the vibrant local community hosts a calendar of events and festivals, such as the Maryborough Highland Gathering, Maryborough Rotary Art Show, and Maryborough Energy Breakthrough, showcasing the region's culture, arts, and community spirit throughout the year.



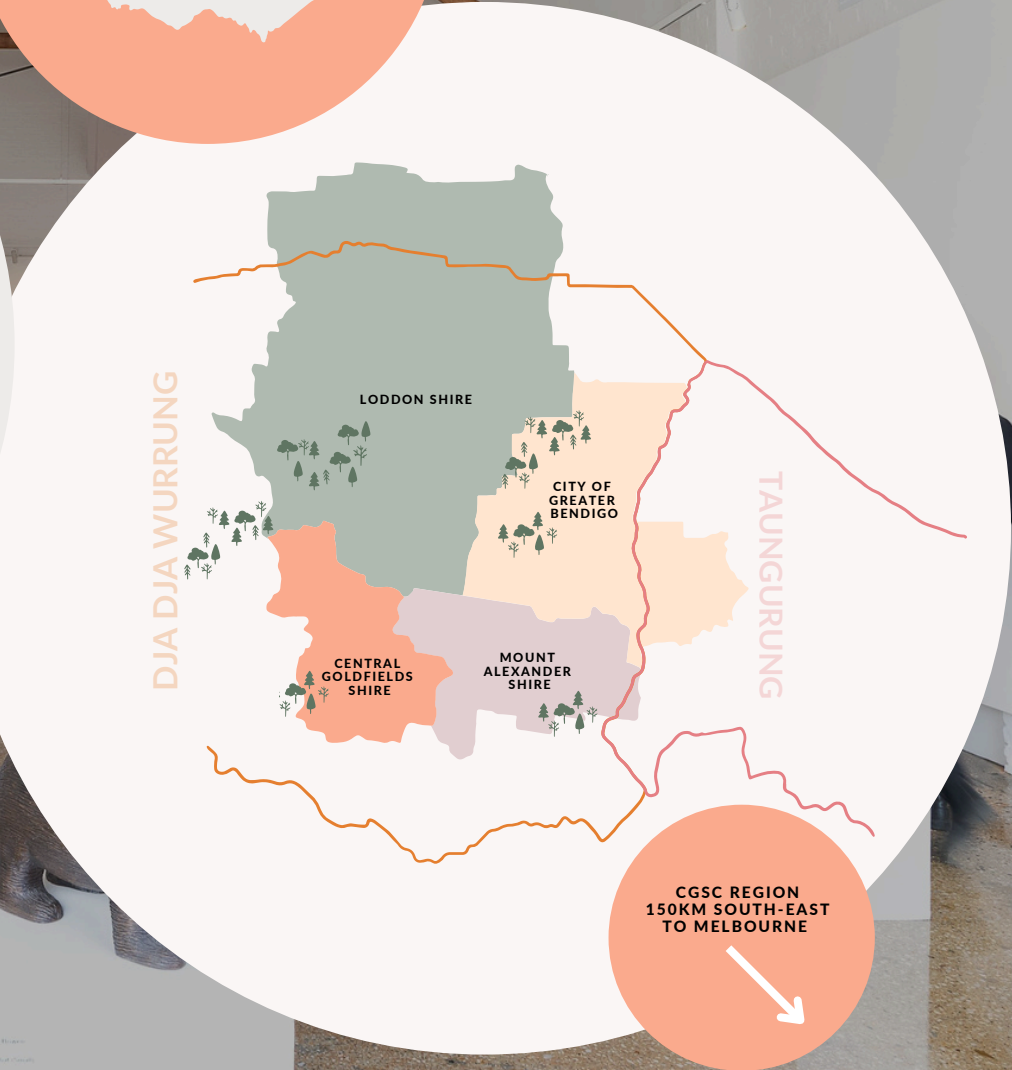
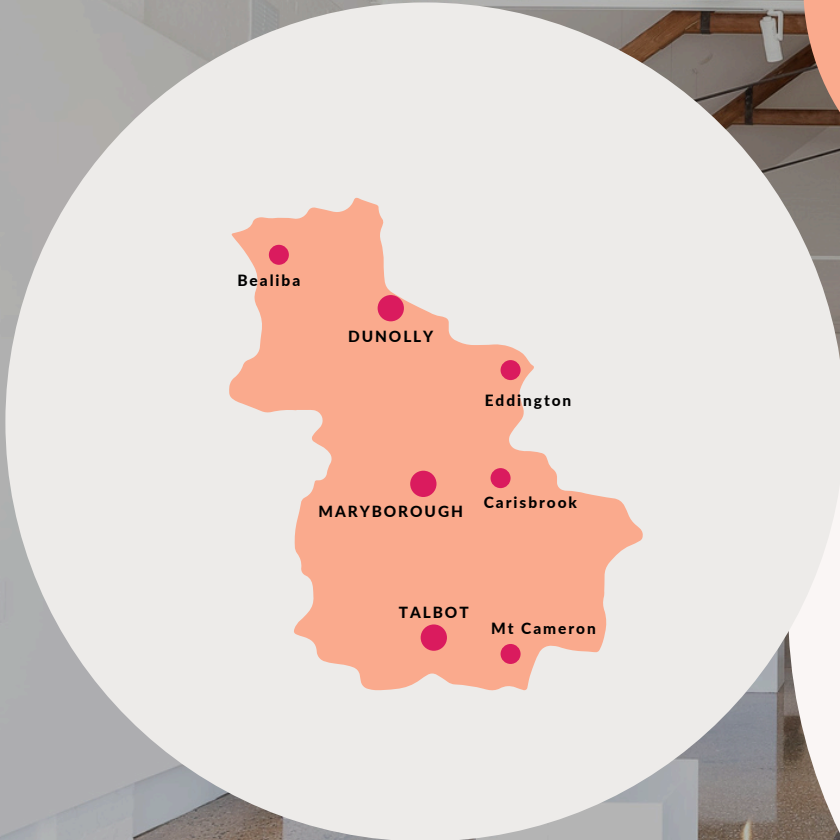
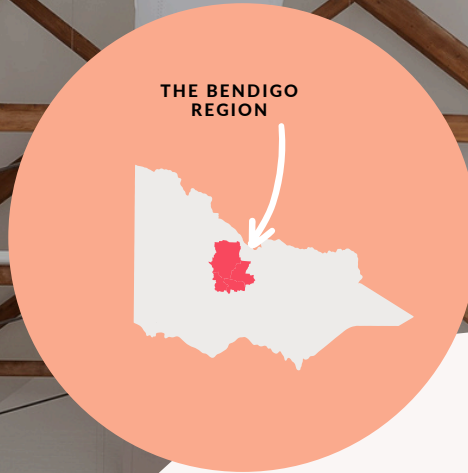
“[I love our] undiscovered areas, quiet pace, local markets, wineries, and antique shops.”

AMHERST RESIDENT, VISIONING SURVEY, NOVEMBER 2023

Bull & Mouth Hotel, Maryborough



# CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE COUNCIL REGION / MAP



## CASE STUDY

# Central Goldfields Art Gallery

## REVITALISATION

### ARTS & CULTURE / HISTORY & HERITAGE

The original historic Maryborough Fire Station (1861) has been transformed into an outstanding contemporary gallery showcasing leading architectural practice, and providing an arts facility of international quality.

Locals and visitors alike are welcomed to experience this historic building with its free program of fascinating exhibitions and engaging arts activities.

Gallery Revitalisation was identified by the Central Goldfields Shire as a priority project in line with key strategic objectives for economic and tourism development. Council's priority projects reflect the community's priorities, which were identified through consultation for the development of the Community Vision 2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025.

The project included:

- Replacing a previously dark and unwelcoming entrance with a bright welcoming space that interfaces beautifully with the street and external precinct.

- Inspiring architectural treatments of the interior including three key exhibition spaces.
- Upgraded environmental, collection storage and other facilities enabling the Gallery to operate on a regional basis and meet industry requirements for artwork loans and touring exhibition.
- A flexible space for community and artist workshops.

The transformed Gallery reopened to the public in March 2023.

A further stage of the project (outlined as a Priority Project in this Plan) is the delivery of an Indigenous Interpretive Garden designed in partnership with Traditional Owners the Dja Dja Wurrung.

Due for completion in mid-2024, the garden will reflect First Nations cultural stories, building local community pride and sharing knowledge with visitors and community.



Central Goldfields Art Gallery, Maryborough



Central Goldfields Art Gallery, Maryborough

#### **INVESTMENT / \$2.729M**

#### **PROJECT PARTNERS /**

- Regional Development Victoria, DJAARA (Garden component)

#### **FUNDING PARTNERS /**

- Regional Development Victoria, Creative Victoria, Central Goldfields Shire

#### **TOURISM IMPACT /**

- In its first six months since reopening, the Gallery recorded 3,783 visitors - a 360% increase compared to 2019-2020 levels prior to the revitalisation project.
- Within its first six months a touring exhibition from the National Gallery of Australia and a range of other loans were secured from major public galleries, complementing exhibitions of works by locally and internationally recognised artists.
- Community response has been extremely positive, across a wide range of ages, abilities, arts and non-arts backgrounds. Interest and participation in education and public programs has seen a 45% increase.
- The Gallery continues to attract strong local and regional media coverage and has significantly increased its profile as a destination for arts and cultural tourism, contributing to shifts in perceptions of the town and Shire.

#### **AWARDS /**

- 2023 finalist in the Architeam Architecture Awards
- 2023 Highly Commended in the Large Project of the Year category of the 2023 Victorian Museums and Galleries Awards, the only regional arts facility selected as a category finalist. (pgav.org.au).
- 2023 The project's builder Colbrico (t/as Searle Bros Building Contractors) won the Award for Excellence in Construction of Commercial Buildings Under \$3M - from the Master Builders Victoria 2023.

## CASE STUDY

# Maryborough Railway Station

## REACTIVATION

### HISTORY & HERITAGE / ARTS & CULTURE / FIRST PEOPLES

The Maryborough Railway Station is steeped in history and mythology, making it a fascinating destination for everyone from history buffs to ghost hunters.

After the alluvial gold rush, Maryborough was transformed into a manufacturing centre, and quickly became an essential transportation hub for the region, connecting multiple railway lines. The grand red brick building still intact today features 25 rooms and a clock tower, and is said to have the longest platform in country Victoria.

At its peak, the Station was bustling with intense activity, servicing up to thirteen passenger trains a day but changing economic conditions and the loss of significant local industries saw the Station fall into disrepair. Since restoration, the Station has supported limited passenger rail services, and until recently many of the grand and impressive spaces remained seriously under utilised.

Identified as a Priority Project for the Shire and with the support of State Government funding, Central Goldfields Council has commenced a multi-stage process of reactivating the station as a drawcard for visitors, the community, business and creativity.

Work that has been completed so far includes:

- Relocating the Central Goldfields Visitor Centre featuring visitor information, retail and interpretation to the heart of the Station, adjacent to the beautifully renovated café.
- Researching and developing state of the art interpretation and immersive experiences focussing on the story of the Central Victorian gold rush and its impact on the people, culture and country of this region, Victoria and beyond.
- Developed in partnership with the Traditional Owners of the region the Dja Dja Wurrung, "The Welcome Stranger" digital animation in the Visitor Centre relates the iconic story of the discovery of the largest alluvial gold nugget ever found. The story is set alongside the impact that the goldrush had on the Traditional Owners and their Country. This highly engaging visitor experience shares much of the lesser known history while extending a message of hope as the people of the Central Goldfields work together with the Dja Dja Wurrung to heal country.
- Other significant developments at the Station include the Co-Working Space and the Creative Space and Courtyard located at the north eastern end of the Station and the elegant and spacious café has also attracted private investment and boosted visitor numbers.

Funding is being sought for the next stage of the project (which is highlighted in the Priority Projects in this Plan), which will focus on activation of the creative space and courtyard.

Promoting and celebrating the rich culture and creativity of today's goldfields community, the creative space and courtyard will support an array of indoor and outdoor visual and performing arts experiences and participation.



**INVESTMENT /**

\$2.557M spent to date, including \$257,500 by Council and \$2.3 million State funding.

**PROJECT PARTNERS /**

Regional Development Victoria, DJAARA (Welcome Stranger digital animation and interpretation within the Visitor Centre), Committee for Maryborough.

**FUNDING PARTNERS /**

Regional Development Victoria, Central Goldfields Shire

**TOURISM IMPACT /**

- The reimaged and recreated Visitor Centre has had a transformational impact and has met with overwhelmingly positive responses.
- Visitor numbers increased by 150% in the first 3 months of reopening in September 2023, and the Centre has already received recognition as an outstanding example of interpretation within the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid.

# Local Tourism Potential

This synopsis outlines the local issues and opportunities relating to tourism in the CGSC region as part of the stakeholder engagement process which informed the Bendigo Region DMP.

## Tourism as an Economic Driver for the region

As outlined in CGSC's Economic Development Strategy & Tourism & Events Strategy (ref. page 6) and validated throughout the listening for this project, the Council see tourism as an emerging economic driver for the region. This is further supported by the 2030 Community Vision, highlighting the desire for an inspiring, thriving and prosperous community, with a focus on growing the economy.

Central Goldfields' proximity to Bendigo and Ballarat is of strategic importance, given the growth of these regional cities, and there are long-term opportunities there for Central Goldfields to benefit in terms of visitor attraction, and partnering on the current World Heritage Bid is a major one.

Building a robust cluster of premium/paid visitor offerings that align with the Shire's experience strengths, and activating under-utilised heritage assets, which enable visitors to have meaningful connected experiences will be required to grow the sector.

While there are examples of emerging entrepreneurialism in the region, there are opportunities to grow and strengthen these more broadly.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Continue to invest in, and advocate for, the development of visitor experiences that highlight the region's competitive strengths (History/Heritage, Art/Culture) with a particular emphasis on experiences that align with the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid.
- Activating under-utilised Council Assets which align with visitor experience strengths to deliver meaningful visitor experiences.
- Working with stakeholders to improve education and training pathways, identify skill gaps, and invest in local people to support a 'Job Ready' labour force for the tourism sector.
- Inspiring an entrepreneurial culture across the region.
- Continuing to develop accessible, welcoming and vibrant town centres.
- Advocating for the development of new, or redeveloped, appropriate accommodation alternatives will also go a long way to attracting increased overnight stays in the region.
- Working collaboratively with BRT and State Government to build business capability, and secure investment for supply side optimisation to meet growing demand is a key opportunity.

## From Transactional to Transformative Experiences

As traveller motivations evolve with a new inclusive, sustainable and accessible mindset (see page 18 for details) it will be essential to review and support the realignment of experiences across the region.

Due to the emerging nature of tourism in the Council region, CGSC is perfectly poised to position the benchmark for visitor experiences to deliver transformative outcomes for visitors.

## OPPORTUNITY

- Support industry with the education, knowledge and inspiration to evolve their current experiences, and to develop new experiences that share ways for visitors to connect authentically with people and place. This is a key opportunity to ensure the region is well placed to appeal to future travellers motivations.

## Tourism Resources

Whilst Council has a dedicated Tourism & Events Strategy and a desire for a thriving visitor economy, there is currently limited availability of resources (human and budget) to explore the full tourism potential.

The local industry has increasingly high expectations for Council to initiate and drive tourism outcomes for their community. With limited resources, this is becoming a major challenge.

There is a perception that Councils are not achieving the outcomes that industry and community are seeking. In addition, there are some that feel a lack of recognition for the outcomes that they are currently achieving.

### OPPORTUNITY

- Understanding and focussing on tourism activity that creates the biggest impact.
- Aligning current investment in tourism activity with the regional vision and aspirations will ensure that any investment made at a local level, will be amplified at a regional level resulting in greater impact.
- Communicating the impact of tourism activity, and the full value of tourism with local stakeholders will support a positive narrative about the sector, resulting in improved local sentiment and social license for reinvestment.

## Local Tourism Industry Leadership

To date, Council - despite limited resources - has been the driving force for tourism in the region; The Shire is demonstrating leadership through investment in assets, visitor servicing, advocacy and policy.

While there are a number of industry and community stakeholders who share aspirations and a vision for future development, there is no local tourism organisation that works toward positive outcomes for tourism at a local level, to advocate and implement activities, to deliver outcomes and to support a growing and vibrant tourism industry.

### OPPORTUNITY

- Advocating for local tourism businesses to work collaboratively under a shared purpose, to coordinate energy, and deliver meaningful outcomes is a key opportunity for Council.
- Continuing to provide strong and dynamic local leadership for the local area remains an important and critical commitment for Council, and communicating Council outcomes for tourism regularly will help build positive community sentiment.
- Connecting the dots between local stakeholder aspirations, and public policy to embed a more holistic understanding of the role tourism plays in delivering benefits to the local community beyond economic outcomes.



Gardens, Talbot



Grand Duke Mine, Timor

## Local Business Sustainability

Local tourism stakeholders are working with incredibly complex and interconnected issues relating to the cost of living, housing availability for locals and workers, ongoing workforce challenges, and budget limitations across the board.

These challenges present a huge threat to business sustainability, and the delivery of tourism outcomes at a local level, all which impact the delivery of the visitor promise.

### OPPORTUNITY

- Ensure the industry remains connected with each other, and with Council, and are informed and have opportunities to optimise their practices through professional development programs.

## Maintaining, Protecting & Activating Natural, Cultural & Built Sites

There is a consistent challenge across the CGSC region, and a commitment from Council through their Climate Action Plan to advocate for the maintenance, protection and activation of heritage attractions, buildings & facades, parks, reserves, rail trails, and Aboriginal cultural heritage and sites.

Travelling consciously and sustainably is increasingly becoming an embedded mindset, with over one-third of visitors expecting businesses to have one or more sustainable practices, which they are willing to pay more for those experiences that are more sustainable.

### OPPORTUNITY

- Enabling visitors to connect more meaningfully with the people, culture and place (less extractive), is a key opportunity for the CGSC region, and will require the evolution of businesses and visitor experiences towards becoming sustainable.
- Communicating responsible visitor behaviours through marketing and visitor servicing initiatives will embed the sustainable travel narrative, particularly around impacts of waste management and environmental care.
- Connect the dots between the Council Climate Action Plans and tourism potential.



## Community Priorities & Social Needs

The community of Central Goldfields faces a range of complex social issues including, housing affordability and availability, homelessness, inability to access adequate social services, the impact of domestic and family violence and an underfunded social services sector. These local complexities impact the visitor experience, repeat visitation and positive word of mouth.

Caring for an aging population, and the challenge of retaining/attracting youth are also longer-term chronic social issues for the CGSC region.

Council are already committed to addressing these issues within the scope of their responsibilities, through advocacy and strategic community development outcomes.

*\*CGSC Tourism & Events Strategy 2020-2025*

### OPPORTUNITY

- Scoping tourism projects and actions to support the outcomes of community development from Council Action Plans will ensure tourism activity is intentionally aligned with enabling positive outcomes for the social fabric of the community.
- Connecting non-traditional businesses (Social Enterprises) to engage with the visitor economy, through experience development, will support a diversified income base that will enable them to continue to deliver social impact outcomes for the community.

## Local Brand Identity & Awareness

Recent Council projects and initiatives and local businesses are working towards amplifying the assets and strengths of CGS and this is starting to build a positive identity and awareness of the region. It is set, however, against a background of historical over-representation of negative media narratives and some sections of the community which present challenges for perceptions of positive visitor experience.

There are strong aspirations for the unique stories of local people and place to be further amplified strategically. CGSC plays a vital role in delivering destination marketing for the local area, albeit with minimal resourcing.

### OPPORTUNITY

- Rebuild local confidence and pride from within, by enhancing community communications around good news stories.
- Work in collaboration with regional partners to uncover a brand that represents the DNA of the region, and sub-regions within, to provide CGSC with an accurate brand platform to propel forward through its demand-driving activities and tourism activations.
- Embed the Brand through education and engagement with industry and community.
- A commitment to regular brand marketing storytelling to build brand awareness.

## Volunteer Crisis

There are many tourism experiences and events within the region that are organised and run by not-for-profit volunteer organisations.

Increasingly, the complexities and skills required to organise and host events has increased substantially over the past decade, which has increased stress and fatigue across volunteer committees.

Further, committee member succession planning has also been challenging, which has left some committees trying to achieve more with less, adding to the stress and fatigue.

### OPPORTUNITY

- As per the deliverables outlined in the Volunteering Strategy & Action Plan, proactively build relationships with volunteer committees, ensuring they know how the various functions of Council can support their endeavours.
- Seek/advocate for opportunities to support the professional growth and skills development of committees (eg. governance, strategy, compliance etc).



1

Playing in the Attic, Talbot

# Future Traveller Motivations & Needs

Understanding the continually evolving traveller expectations and motivations is essential to determine where future opportunities exist for tourism in the CGSC region.

## Meaningful Travel

As humanity tackles one of the most complex eras of our time, the value and privilege of travel have never felt greater, and this shift is having a dramatic impact on the way people understand and seek travel experiences.

Future travellers will be prioritising what's important to them, valuing deeper experiences that leave a positive impact, rather than simply transactional travel. They will continue to travel to spend time with loved ones or explore new places, but will also actively seek wellness moments that have lasting effects.

They're not committed to a destination but are seeking meaningful connection, the opportunity to slow right down to learn about themselves, and others. They want to connect.

Building experiences that support visitors to connect meaningfully with the people and place will be key to capturing those travelling with this intention.

## Sustainable Travel

Aligning with this demand for meaningful travel is the desire for consumers to seek out purpose-led brands, and sustainable travel options as society's collective conscience grows around social inclusion, and environmental conservation.

Sustainability is now an embedded mindset for travellers as the pandemic has sharpened society's awareness of tourism's impact on communities and the environment.

In time, travellers will become more aware, and align destination and experience choices with their changing perspectives and will journey to destinations where they can have a positive impact on communities.

Destinations and tourism operators will have to adjust their experience design and marketing messaging to support the increasing cohort of people actively seeking sustainable tourism experiences.

## Accessible for All

For as long as humans have travelled, accessibility challenges have existed. It's important to remember that accessible travel is not a market, it's a mindset.

Understanding and meeting the needs of all travellers is an important enabler to ensure the destination is open, accessible and inclusive to all.

People with all abilities and across all travelling parties are planning trips, each of them with a unique set of challenges and barriers they may require access support with along their journey.

Melbourne, the Region's and CGSC's key source market, is an incredibly diverse and multicultural city.

Understanding the cultural and language needs of this market will be essential to attract and convert more demand.

Building a welcoming, accessible and inclusive destination can be addressed through planning, infrastructure development, experience design, business operations, marketing communications, visitor servicing and visitor collateral.

# Tourism Governance

The tourism landscape is a web of interconnected and interdependent relationships and stakeholders, which are all impacted, or benefit directly from tourism related activity.

Acknowledging and understanding each stakeholder's purpose, their vision for place and their role in delivering tourism outcomes enables a united, efficient and effective approach to destination stewardship.

## Local Government's Role in Tourism

Local Government plays a pivotal role in tourism activity at a local level, with councils actively involved in managing tourism assets and experiences, promoting tourism and providing visitor services, investing in infrastructure and services, and managing the impacts of tourism.

As outlined in the table to the right, CGSC is a key stakeholder in delivering tourism outcomes, however, their role across each delivery differs depending on the remit and authority for each deliverable.

CGSC invest significantly in tourism, whether it is through the redevelopment of the Maryborough Railway Station, facilitating and resourcing the ongoing provision of visitor services, owning and managing the Central Goldfields Art Gallery, investing in public infrastructure and services, executing brand storytelling to drive demand, and advocating for positive tourism outcomes for their community.

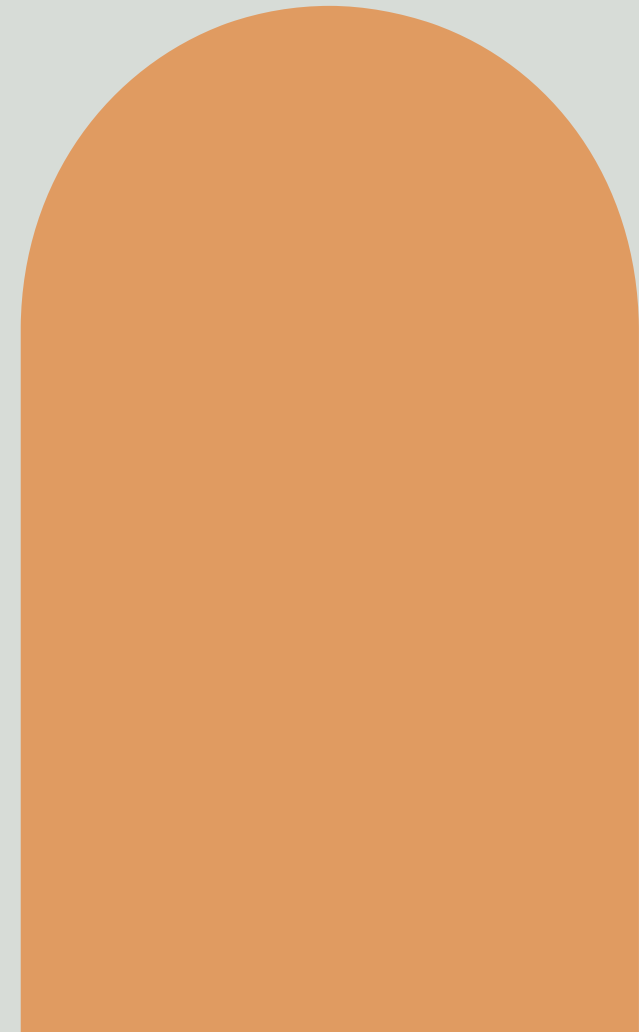
Working in close partnership with BRT as the peak body for tourism in the Bendigo Region to deliver tourism outcomes will ensure CGSC investment in tourism activity is maximised and amplified.

	POLICY	FUNDING	DESTINATION MARKETING	ADVOCACY	DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT	VISITOR SERVICING	WORKFORCE	INVESTMENT	VISITOR EXPERIENCE & EVENTS
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry & Regions	✓	✓					✓	✓	
Visit Victoria	✓		✓		✓				
Regional Development Victoria	✓						✓		
Bendigo Regional Tourism	✓		✓	✓	✓				
Local Government	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Traditional Owners	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓
Industry Associations (Local and State)			✓	✓	✓				
Private Enterprise		✓				✓		✓	✓



# Current State.

Determining a baseline for the current value of tourism and the profile of those visiting the Central Goldfields Shire Council region.



# The Value of Tourism

Tourism remains an important economic lever for the region.

The relationship between tourism and supporting community aspirations and wellbeing is understood broadly, and opportunities remain for tourism to enhance outcomes for the environment in a more purposeful way.

## Economy & Visitation

In 2019, the CGSC region yielded \$38 million in visitor expenditure, which was generated through 273,000 visitors, consisting of 93,000 overnight visitors (ave. 2 night stay) and 178,000 day trip visitors.

The average spend per day trip visitor was \$99, with overnight visitors yielding an average of \$221.

The majority of visitors to the region are reportedly from intrastate, with a very small portion from interstate origins.

Visitors to the region are typically over the age of 55, and are on holiday, or are in the region visiting friends and relatives.

In 2019, there were 135 tourism businesses, with over half non-employed micro businesses.

*Note. Post-pandemic data, and Jobs Data at a Local Government level is not available for analysis at the time of publishing this LAAP.*



**TOTAL VISITOR EXPENDITURE**  
\$38m 2019

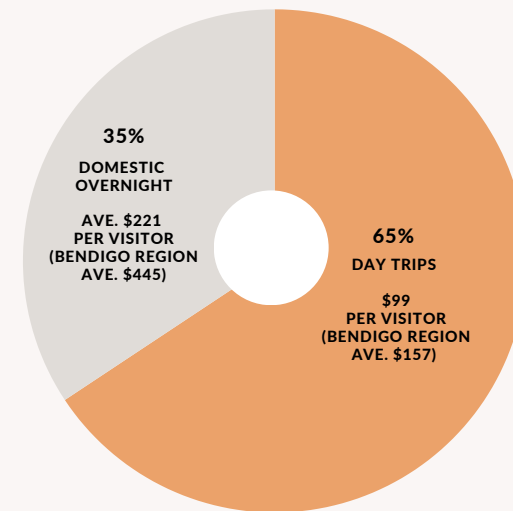


**BUSINESSES**  
135 Traditional Tourism Businesses



**JOBS**  
Nil Jobs data available.

## VISITATION



### REFERENCE

- All local data and insights on this page are referenced from Tourism Research Australia - Local Government Area Profiles 2019 (4 year rolling average from 2016-2019).
- Regional Yield Average data available from 'Victorian Tourism Statistics YE September 2023' data supplied by the Tourism and Events Research Unit, DJSIR, February 2024.
- Traditional Tourism Businesses as per ABS Specifications

8.7 / 10

How confident do you feel that tourism contributes to your region's community?\*

5.6 / 10

How confident are you in the future of tourism in your region?\*

\*n=9 (note, very weak representation)

\*Where a score of 9-10 was very high confidence, 6-8 was high confidence, 5 is neutral confidence, 3-4 is low confidence, and 1-2 is very low confidence.

## Community

Collectively, community and industry across the region expressed a shared vision for vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive communities. They envisioned their region to have strong community bonds, welcoming atmospheres, and diverse opportunities for people of all ages.

They aspired to create a balance between economic development with environmental responsibility, preserving First Nation's and post settlement cultural heritage while embracing modernity.

As part of the development of the Bendigo Region DMP a Tourism Visioning Survey was developed to build an understanding of the issues and opportunities for tourism in the Region. On average, Visioning Survey\* respondents from the CGSC expressed a high confidence rating of 8.7/10 regarding tourism's contribution to the community. This indicates a widespread belief among respondents that tourism plays a significant role in enhancing their communities.

However, the average confidence rating for the future of tourism, is much lower at 5.6/10. This suggests that while people currently acknowledge the positive impact of tourism on their communities, they have uncertainties about its future potential for the CGSC region.

There is a strong desire for community to be more involved in tourism, and for those delivering tourism outcomes to consider how they communicate this impact more broadly.

## Industry

There is an aspiration for thriving local businesses, increased employment options, and more accessible services in the CGSC region.

However, as already outlined, tourism businesses are facing a long list of issues that threaten their long-term sustainability, and are also suffering from post-COVID fatigue.

Further, it is understood there is a level of business owner apathy, and potential resistance to change and development, which may be due to the highly stressful and complex business operating environment.

Council's recent and ongoing investment in tourism infrastructure (Maryborough Railway Station), experiences (Central Goldfields Art Gallery) and services at the Maryborough Visitor Information Centre, creates a sense of opportunity for tourism in the region.

Having a strong, confident and competitive business environment is critical for the region to deliver on the visitor promise, and there are many opportunities outlined in this Plan to nurture and support businesses to enable this.

## Environment

There is a strong desire from locals to preserve natural resources, implement sustainable practices, and protect the unique landscapes of the region.

Numerous local and regional strategic plans are currently being activated to address climate change, and/or to protect/preserve/restore the local environment through project-level initiatives.

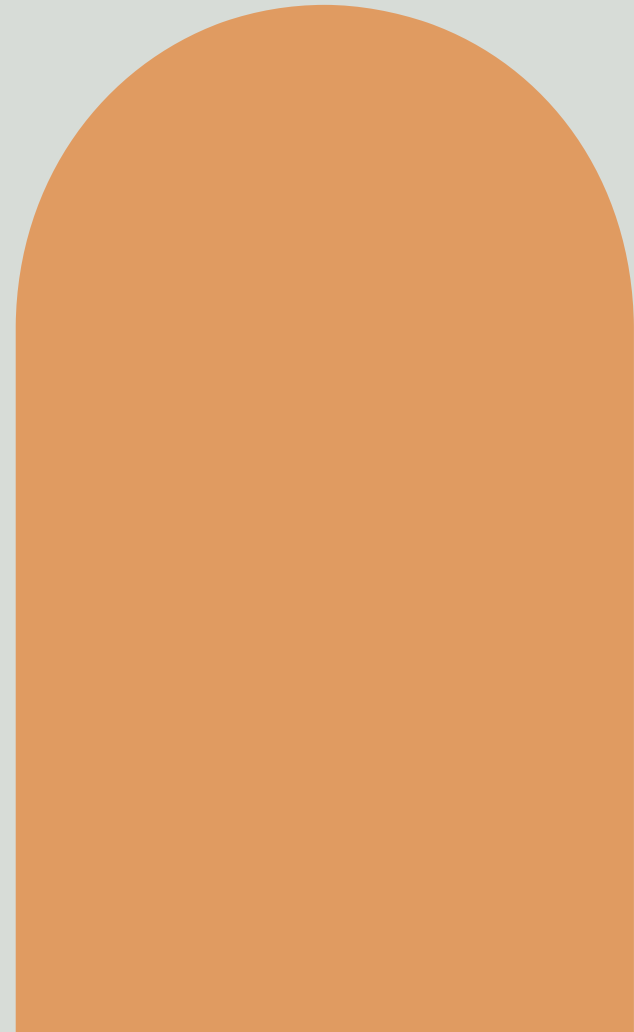
The environmental well-being of the greater Region is a key aspiration and critical opportunity to seek ways to connect visitors with positive impact initiatives across the region.

Understanding tourism's role in being able to deliver positive environmental outcomes for the region is a key focus for this Plan. The development of strong partnerships with environmental custodians will help to enable positive outcomes.



# Local Area Strategy.

This section highlights the Regional Vision and aspirations for tourism, alongside Council's experience strengths, and specific opportunities across strategic priorities consistent with the Bendigo Region DMP.



A UNITED REGIONAL VISION FOR TOURISM

# Enriching People and Place through Tourism



1.

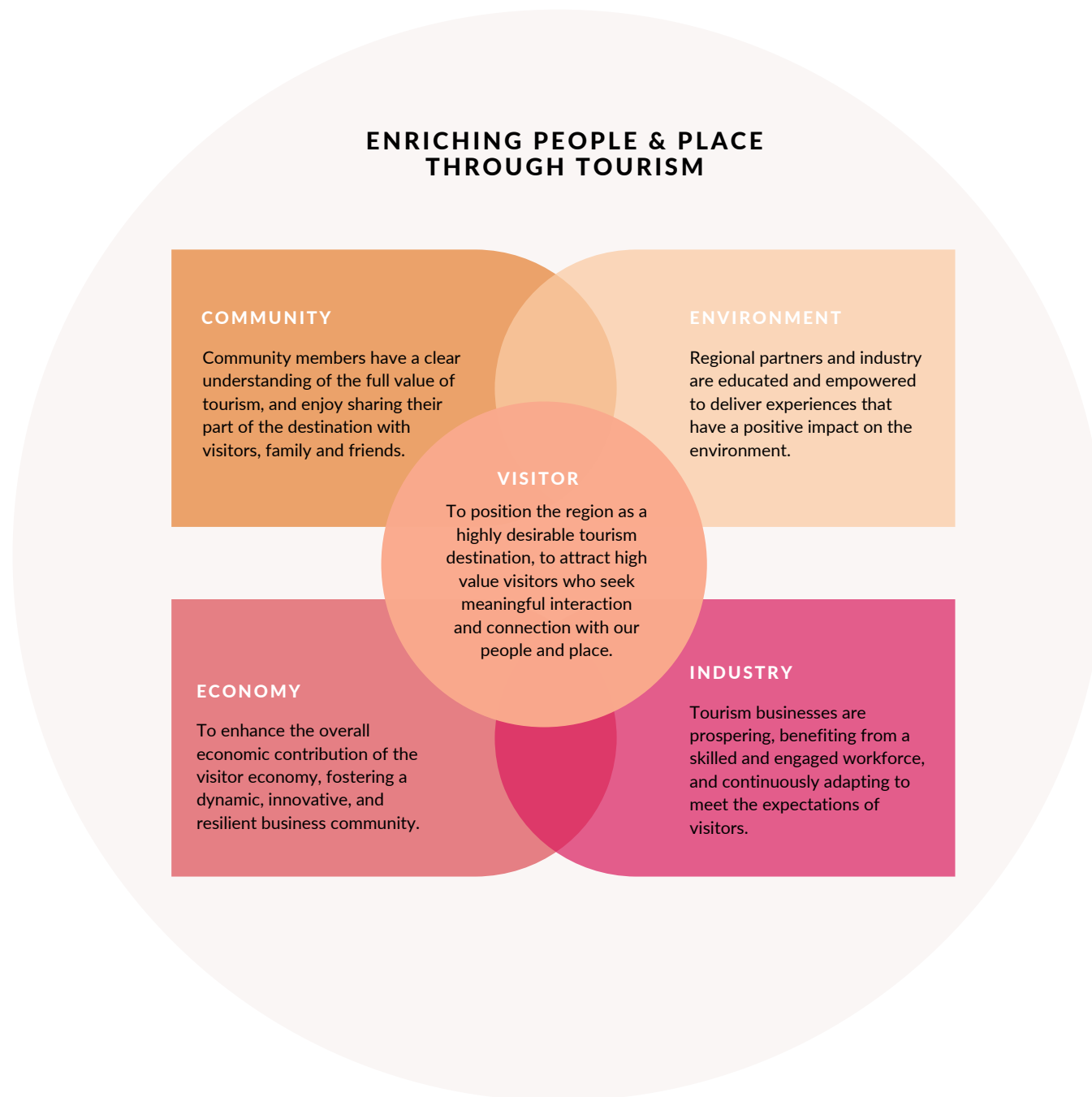
Bealiba Railway Station, Bealiba



# What Success Looks Like

Aspirations to achieve the Region's vision of **Enriching People and Place through Tourism** have been identified across five wellbeings to guide the success measures of this Plan.

Aligning local tourism opportunities with the vision and aspirations outlined in the Bendigo Region DMP will ensure local efforts are amplified regionally, and support the achievement of both regional and local aspirations.



# Visitor Experience Profile

For CGSC to achieve its tourism potential, they will partner with Bendigo Regional Tourism, State Government, private enterprise and local communities to continue to grow and deliver quality visitor experiences inline with the Council region's strengths.

Following is a snapshot of the key visitor experiences across the 6 key experience pillars of the Region.

Images top to bottom:  
 2024 Maryborough Highland Gathering, Princes Park Amherst Winery, Amherst Corridor Gallery Tea Cosy Designs, Talbot 'Bunjil' (Eagle) artwork by Daikota Nelson Cycling near Paddy's Ranges, Maryborough Goldfields Reservoir Parkrun



## HISTORY & HERITAGE

### PRIMARY

- Maryborough Railway Station & Welcome Stranger story
- Maryborough Highland Gathering
- Victoria's Goldfield Villages - buildings, towns precincts
- Museums, inc Talbot Arts and Communication Museum, and Dunolly Museum



## FOOD & DRINK

### SECONDARY

- Talbot Farmers Market
- Pyrenees Wine Region (neighbour)
- Farm gates & providores
- Welcoming hospitality across towns and villages through their hotels, cafes, restaurants and bakeries.



## ARTS & CULTURE

### EMERGING

- Central Goldfields Art Gallery
- Local artists & creatives via boutique galleries, museums, specialty stores, open gardens.
- Makers and Collectors Market
- Words in Winter Festival



## FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE

### EMERGING

- DJAARA storytelling at Maryborough Railway Station & Central Goldfields Art Gallery
- Aboriginal Shelter Tree, Talbot
- Bull Gully Aboriginal Rock Wells
- DJAARA Park - Paddys Ranges State Park



## NATURE, OUTDOORS & ADVENTURE

### EMERGING

- State & regional parks, inc Paddy's Ranges State Park
- Cycling, hiking and walking trails
- Birdwatching, golf, gold prospecting
- Fishing, swimming, canoeing, water skiing, and paddle boarding at reservoirs and waterways such as Tullaroop, Ciarn Curran, Laanecoorie, Bealiba Reservoir, and Lake Victoria.
- Energy Breakthrough



## WELLNESS

### EMERGING

- Personal self-expression and connection via artists and creatives classes and workshops.
- Connect with nature and self through walking, cycling, and non-motorised water-sports.

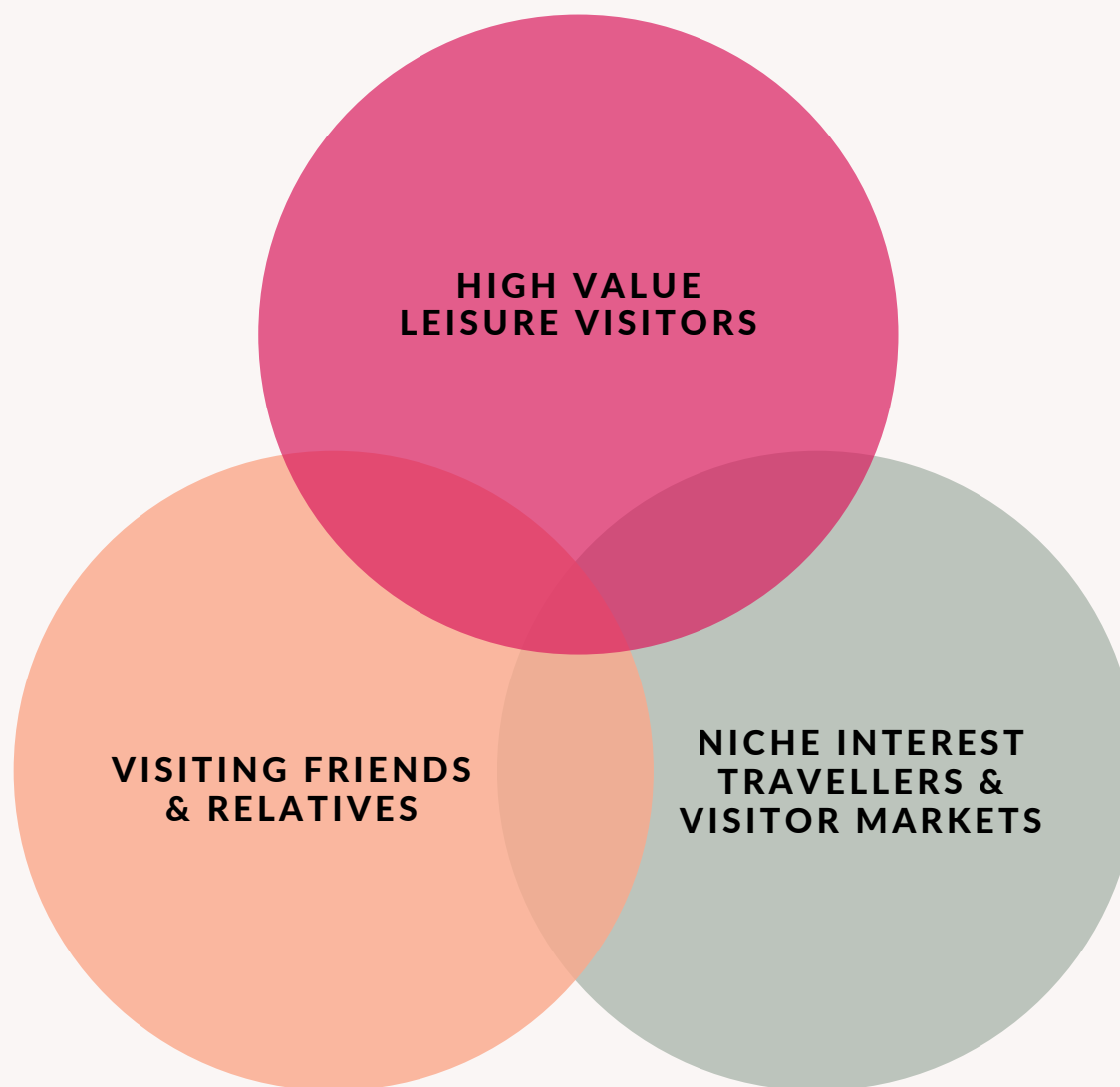
# Visitor Markets

From leisure visitors seeking immersion in our shared history, creative culture and delectable produce, and the constant flow of visiting family and friends, to a growing reputation as a business hub for local, regional and state entities, the Region has consistently attracted a diversified visitor base.

Understanding the needs and motivations of the Region's aligned visitor personas and markets is essential to ensure marketing and experience development investment is optimised.

For Council, a laser focus on attracting a larger base of leisure visitors, along with a targeted approach to optimise VFR engagement and honing in on specific niche interest travellers and markets that align with experience strengths.

*See Priority 2.3 Visitor Market Activation for local considerations on how to best approach these markets.*



# Strategic Pillars & Priorities

Three strategic pillars form the basis of the Bendigo Region DMP and LAAPs, and inform Strategic Priorities that shape the opportunities for the Region and local area over the coming 3-5 years.



## PILLAR ONE

Transformational  
& Sustainable  
Visitor Experiences

## PILLAR TWO

Meaningful & Impactful  
Destination Storytelling

## PILLAR THREE

Cohesive & Dynamic  
Destination Stewardship

# STRATEGIC PILLARS & PRIORITIES / DETAILED

## Glossary

TERM	DESCRIPTION
<b>Priority</b>	Focus area for the destination to realise its vision and aspirations.
<b>Key Outcome</b>	The intended qualitative objective for each Priority.
<b>Local Considerations</b>	Thought starters, ideas and insights to guide the activation of the Priority.
<b>Role</b>	<p>The role for CGSC in activating the Priority Area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provider - Council is a leading provider of services to achieve this priority.</li> <li>• Facilitator - Council facilitates, partners and plans with others to achieve this priority.</li> <li>• Statutory Authority - Council is responsible for legislative requirements.</li> <li>• Advocate - Council advocates on behalf of/with their community to achieve this priority.</li> </ul>
<b>Partners</b>	Other Stakeholder(s) who will support to activate the Priority area.
<b>Timeline</b>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Short Term - 12-18 months</p> <p>Medium Term - 18-24 months</p> <p>Long Term - 24+ months</p>

## Sustainable Development Goals

Building a sustainable and resilient visitor economy is the primary purpose of this Plan.

Understanding and aligning this Plan's outcome with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) reminds the region of the opportunity it has to have a positive impact on global challenges to help it remain accountable to its vision.



## Regional Partners Glossary

- Accreditation Providers** - Those organisations that provide accreditation for the local businesses
- BRT** - Bendigo Regional Tourism
- Community** - People who live and work within the Bendigo Region
- DJSIR** - Victorian State Government Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
- EOs** - Event Organisers
- Industry** - All Local Businesses
- LVIC** - LaunchVIC
- Neighbouring LGAs / LGAs** - Refers to BRT's constituent LGAs of City of Greater Bendigo, Central Goldfields Shire Council, Loddon Shire Council, and Mount Alexander Shire Council.
- LTAs** - Local Tourism Associations
- Neighbours** - Regional Tourism Boards, or Visitor Economy Partnerships which neighbour the Bendigo Tourism Region.
- RDA** - Regional Development Australia
- RDV** - Regional Development Victoria
- RTBs/VEPs** - Victorian Regional Tourism Boards / Visitor Economy Partnerships
- SCV** - Startup Central Victoria
- Traditional Owners** - Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and Taungurung Land and Water Council
- TRA** - Tourism Research Australia
- UNESCO** - UNESCO Creative City & Region of Gastronomy Officer.
- VGWHB** - Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid
- VTIC** - Victorian Tourism Industry Council
- VV** - Visit Victoria

# PILLAR ONE / Transformative & Sustainable Visitor Experiences

Enabling more impactful visitor experiences that drive sustainable visitor demand connecting visitors with our local people and place.

Growing the quality and quantity of visitor experiences in the CGSC region, is the foundation of this Pillar.

For the region to achieve sustainable demand from visitors, it must focus on developing more transformative visitor experiences that go beyond a transaction, and help connect visitors to the unique stories, people, culture and places of the CGSC region.

Progressing priority visitor experience projects, such as placemaking, visitor and events infrastructure, as well as accommodation and key attractions through investment attraction and grant funding advocacy will help ensure demand is met with appropriate supply.

Events are integral to the region's visitor experience and considerations that support the ongoing sustainability and quality of both major and community events are outlined.

Supporting operators to build business resilience and financial sustainability, while fostering an entrepreneurial spirit and applying a positive impact mindset will help the CGSC region's visitor experiences remain relevant and top of mind with future travellers.

Transport, access, accommodation and workforce considerations across the Shire impact the visitor experience delivery, but they are not unique to CGSC alone. A proactive and collaborative regional approach will help address identified challenges within the region.

## Priorities

- 1.1 Transformational Visitor Experiences
- 1.2 Support for Local Priority Projects
- 1.3 Events Development
- 1.4 Business Sustainability & Resilience
- 1.5 Positive Impact Visitor Experiences & Events
- 1.6 Quality Accommodation
- 1.7 Visitor Movements
- 1.8 Workforce Development
- 1.9 Regional Placemaking

## Supporting Information

- Experience Development Framework
- Local Priority Projects

## Sustainable Development Goals Alignment



“When people visit any part of our region I’d like them to leave feeling enriched, like they’ve had a meaningful and connected experience.”

STAKEHOLDER, VISIONING SURVEY, NOVEMBER 2023



# PILLAR ONE / PRIORITIES

#	Priority	Key Outcomes	Local Considerations	LGA Role	Partners	Timeline
1.1	<b>Transformational Visitor Experiences</b>	The Bendigo Region has a growing diversity of visitor experiences that deliver meaningful, lasting connection and understanding of people and place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for new and existing businesses in the region to go beyond the transaction and leave a lasting impact on visitors, altering their perspective, understanding, or even delivering personal growth.</li> <li>Refer to the <i>Experience Development Framework</i> (ref. page 35) for priorities across 6 pillars.</li> <li>Accessible, inclusive and sustainable/positive impact experiences are a priority</li> <li>Focus is on both new and existing businesses</li> <li>Inspire an entrepreneurial culture across the region</li> <li>Connect with grant funding opportunities</li> <li>Support the progression of experiences onto the <i>Local Priority Projects</i> (ref. page 36) list if they are seeking external funding.</li> <li>Create opportunities for intra-regional networking, collaboration and partnerships between new and existing tourism businesses.</li> <li>Connect local businesses into BRT industry capability building activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faciliator</li> <li>Provider</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case by case basis</li> <li>Refer '<i>Experience Development Framework</i>' (Page 35) for local considerations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
1.2	<b>Support for Local Priority Projects</b>	Major visitor experience projects seeking government funding or private investment are progressed through advocacy and collaborative support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council to maintain the <i>Local Priority Projects</i> list of major visitor experience projects, seeking government funding or private investment (current list on page 36), and connect and advocate for their support where relevant.</li> <li>To make the list, projects need to align to the Region's vision and aspirations, the <i>Experience Development Framework</i> local considerations already be in progress, have a solid business case and operating model, have local investment commitments secured and have completed cultural heritage management plans.</li> <li>Local council placemaking projects that activate accessible, welcoming and vibrant town centres and communities are often well aligned projects for consideration the list.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provider</li> <li>Faciliator</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case by case basis.</li> <li>Refer '<i>Local Priority Projects</i>' (Page 36)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Annual Update</li> </ul>
1.3	<b>Events Development</b>	<p>Significant, participatory sporting and cultural events are driving demand year-round, with focus on mid-week, longer stays and regional dispersal.</p> <p>Local and community events are bringing the destination experience strengths to life, connecting visitors to destination values, and stories of people and place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Developing and Enhancing Events and Festivals' is a key outcome outlined in Theme 6 in the CGSC Tourism and Events Strategy 2020-2025.</li> <li>Activation of identified and new initiatives that grow, deliver and promote the region's events, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support local event committees to build capacity across all areas of events management and event experience delivery.</li> <li>Activate initiatives to support new and existing tourism events aligned to the <i>Experience Development Framework</i>.</li> <li>Partnerships and collaborations to attract new events into the region, including sports, niche interest and cultural events.</li> <li>Collaborate and partner with BRT and neighbouring LGA's on initiatives that address local event challenges, such as event resourcing, event workforce and event capability building.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Advocate for the development of experiences that attract visitors who are attending major events in neighbouring councils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provider</li> <li>Faciliator</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BRT</li> <li>LTAs</li> <li>Industry</li> <li>Community</li> <li>EOs</li> <li>Traditional Owners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short-MediumTerm</li> </ul>



# PILLAR ONE / PRIORITIES

#	Priority	Key Outcomes	Local Considerations	LGA Role	Partners	Timeline
1.4	<b>Business Sustainability &amp; Resilience</b>	Resilient, financially sustainable, entrepreneurial, innovative, inclusive and values-led tourism businesses, and volunteer committees operate in the destination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify key industry capability training required annually for businesses and volunteer committees across the Shire (refer per Bendigo Region DMP 2024), and advocate to BRT to include in their annual program of events, workshops, training and mentoring programs.</li> <li>Identify, connect and refer local businesses and volunteer committees including start ups, creatives, makers, producers, artists, First Peoples into opportunities being delivered at a BRT and wider State level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provider</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BRT</li> <li>VTIC</li> <li>LVic</li> <li>SSCV</li> <li>VV</li> <li>Neighbours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short - Medium Term</li> </ul>
1.5	<b>Positive-Impact Visitor Experiences &amp; Events</b>	<p>A positive impact mindset is embedded across all businesses and event organisers.</p> <p>Immersive visitor experiences are delivering a positive impact to local environment and community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage tourism businesses and event committees to engage with the national <i>Sustainable Tourism Toolkit</i> through local industry engagement programs and industry communication.</li> <li>Encourage the tourism businesses and events to measure their sustainability credentials (scorecards/certification/resources or other programs) and to communicate their sustainability credentials through their own communication mediums.</li> <li>Identify and elevate the story of local sustainability initiatives of tourism businesses and community through local industry engagement programs &amp; industry communication to inspire action.</li> <li>Connect local businesses into BRT sustainability industry capability building activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate</li> <li>Facilitate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BRT</li> <li>Accreditation Providers</li> <li>VV</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short-Medium Term</li> </ul>
1.6	<b>Quality Accommodation</b>	<p>The Bendigo Region has a diversity of accommodation that is underpinned by strong private investment.</p> <p>Regional accommodation drives regional demand by meeting the needs and expectations of visitors markets, and supports longer stays.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for relevant local accommodation development opportunities to be included in the regional <i>Accommodation Investment Prospectus</i> to advocate for and attract investment into activation of new accommodation.</li> <li>Advocate for the development of experiential Accommodation, such as farmstays and off grid eco accommodation and glamping as aligned to the region <i>Experience Development Framework</i>.</li> <li>Take a targeted approach to advocate for improved quality of existing motel accommodation stock and venue upgrades, including connection to relevant grants.</li> <li>Facilitate partnerships and collaboration with relevant land managers/land custodians to remove any negative impacts of free or bush camping.</li> <li>Leverage and advocate for regional opportunities or challenges of the caravan and camping sector.</li> <li>Identify and elevate any local accommodation policy issues impacting local accommodation supply, such as the Short Stay accommodation tax, for advocacy by BRT.</li> <li>Advocate for universal design, inclusivity, accessibility and sustainability on all local accommodation projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BRT</li> <li>LGAs</li> <li>Parks Victoria</li> <li>Traditional Owners</li> <li>Land Owners &amp; Managers</li> <li>Private Investors</li> <li>Accommodation Owners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short-Medium Term</li> </ul>

## PILLAR ONE / PRIORITIES

#	Priority	Key Outcomes	Local Considerations	LGA Role	Partners	Timeline
1.7	Visitor Movements	Improve the ability for visitors to get to, around and across the region, including more climate friendly and non-car options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage and align all actions of this Priority Area to the Council's Integrated Transport Strategy 2020 - 2030 &amp; Walking and Cycling Strategy 2017-2036, with focus on local issues including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VLine train service frequency improved (Maryborough)</li> <li>Progression of the cycle/walking trail network via Priority Projects</li> <li>Advocate for the identified transport issues and opportunities as they arise to support increased visitor dispersal for visitors not travelling by car (eg arriving via VLine).</li> <li>Elevate local access issues requiring regional advocacy via RDV and BRT.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Maintain up-to-date lists of key access and transport Priority Projects in partnership with LGA's (refer Priority 1.2).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provider</li> <li>Facilitator</li> <li>Statutory Authority</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BRT</li> <li>RDV</li> <li>Neighbouring LGAs</li> <li>VLine &amp; other public Transport Operators</li> <li>Trail Community Organisations</li> <li>Industry</li> <li>Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
1.8	Workforce Development	Improve workforce alignment, availability and retention to support the region's experiences deliver on the visitor promise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through the Activation of Theme 2 'Invest in People and Place' in CGSC's Economic Development Strategy, build local skills and job readiness for tourism and hospitality.</li> <li>Elevate local workforce challenges to BRT for regional level advocacy, collaboration, partnerships and initiatives that improve education and training pathways, workforce and housing availability and build capability of local labour force.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BRT</li> <li>Workforce Australia</li> <li>RDA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
1.9	Placemaking	Advocacy and collaborative partnerships to activate accessible, welcoming and vibrant town centres and communities across the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place-based destination planning happens at a local council level, however opportunities exist for regional placemaking initiatives that not only improve the lives of local communities, but also of visitors to the region.</li> <li>Elevate local placemaking projects and initiatives that could be activated at a regional level that support local visitor economy placemaking initiatives such as wayfinding, visitor infrastructure, regional tracks and trails network.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate</li> <li>Partner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RDV</li> <li>Neighbouring LGAs</li> <li>Industry</li> <li>Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>

# EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Below outlines the experience development aspirations and potential for CGSC's visitor experiences and events.

Refer to page 6 for Council Plans which align to relevant pillars of this Framework.

	ARTS & CULTURE	FIRST PEOPLES	HISTORY & HERITAGE	FOOD & DRINK	NATURE, OUTDOOR & ADVENTURE	WELLNESS
<b>Regional Aspiration</b>	Continue to deliver, grow and connect visitors with the Region's vibrant, contemporary, creative, diverse, inclusive and accessible arts experiences.	Grow opportunities for locals and visitors to connect with and learn from First People's culture, heritage and stories of place, including healing country initiatives, and to support the First People Economy.	Develop opportunities for engaging and immersive Victorian Goldfields visitor experiences, and for visitors to engage in contemporary experiences across rejuvenated heritage places and spaces.	Elevate the food and drink offering in the Region to align with the objectives of the Region of Gastronomy designation, including sustainable, accessible, positive impact (regenerative), food, drink, agritourism and farmgate experiences.	Enable visitors to connect easily, meaningfully and respectfully with the Region's natural landscapes and ecosystems through recreational activities and visitor experiences.	Grow the opportunities for the development of experiences that support wellness travel.
<b>Local Experience Development Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heritage spaces, buildings and retail precincts activations - connect local makers, creatives and artists.</li> <li>Night Time economy - live music and performing arts venues.</li> <li>More public art by local artists and creatives, sharing local place stories.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support DJAARA aspirations - eg new cultural/contemporary arts experiences, tours, events, to express Culture on Country.</li> <li>Embed DJAARA values and knowledge into place-based projects.</li> <li>Cultural heritage site protection, care, interpretation and infrastructure support.</li> <li>DJAARA language/dual naming.</li> <li>Local First People-led businesses and creatives to connected with relevant visitor experience initiatives, projects and funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local placemaking initiatives aligned to Victorian Goldfields Sustainable Tourism Heritage Masterplan.</li> <li>Contemporary and immersive interpretation at history attractions,</li> <li>Town precinct and heritage building rejuvenation, that supports new and contemporary experiences, including Arts &amp; Culture, First Peoples, Food &amp; Drink</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Region of Gastronomy education around values and how to activate in their own food &amp; drink experiences</li> <li>7-day a week trading advocacy.</li> <li>Hospitality staff attraction, retention and housing.</li> <li>Local food supplier &lt;-&gt; local hospitality connections.</li> <li>Regenerative food &amp; drink experiences - Local Provenance, Low Food Miles, Circular Economy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking &amp; cycling trail placemaking, interp &amp; connectivity</li> <li>Water sport infrastructure</li> <li>Low impact, nature-based accommodation eg Glamping.</li> <li>Recreational activities - hire &amp; tours, inc Gold Prospecting.</li> <li>Climate change resilient nature-based visitor infrastructure.</li> <li>DJAARA Parks - visitor infrastructure and interpretation.</li> <li>Fit for purpose bush &amp; RV camping infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support/advocate for the development of experiences that support wellness travel.</li> <li>Consideration of wellness experiences as part of Local Priority Projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Events Consideration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support &amp; connect local Artists &amp; Creatives into relevant events.</li> <li>Central Goldfields Art Gallery Exhibitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DJAARA event partnerships</li> <li>First People led event supplier partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heritage buildings &amp; precincts activated through events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local food, drink and grower event supplier partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parks and waterways infrastructure that supports events - sporting, recreation, business, leisure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellness elements considered as part of new/existing event support.</li> </ul>

# Local Priority Projects

Central Goldfields Shire Council has already invested significantly in tourism, with the staged development of numerous projects that, if activated to completion, will contribute to the sustainable growth of tourism locally, and regionally.

PRIORITY PROJECT	DETAILS	STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT	STAKEHOLDERS	LGA Role	STATUS
<b>Maryborough Central Activity District ( MCAD)</b>	Significant public sector investment is revitalising key civic anchor sites around Central Maryborough. It will see the activation of a more vibrant, connected and inclusive community and visitor precincts. The project will see better walkable connections between retail, cultural, hospitality and tourism experiences, share more local interpretation and storytelling of place, and undertake placemaking that supports Victoria's Goldfields proposed World Heritage designation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor Interpretation &amp; Storytelling</li> <li>• History &amp; Heritage</li> <li>• Place-based Storytelling</li> </ul>	CGSC State & Federal Government	Deliver	<b>Seeking Funding</b> Stage 1: \$400,000
<b>Maryborough Town Hall</b>	The project is to undertake a masterplan to guide the revitalisation of Maryborough Town Hall, to bring one of Maryborough's most cherished and historically significant buildings back into use for the community, establish modern performance facilities, and along with the Art Gallery and Railway Station, create a major civic precinct for Central Victoria, which fully supports and complements the World Heritage application for the Victorian Goldfields.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events Infrastructure</li> <li>• Arts &amp; Culture</li> <li>• History &amp; Heritage</li> <li>• Place-based Storytelling</li> </ul>	CGSC State & Federal Government	Deliver	<b>Seeking Funding</b> Masterplan Development: \$400,000
<b>Maryborough Station Reactivation - Stage 4</b>	The Maryborough Railway Station is being revitalised as a key visitor hub and visitor experience for the region through a multi-staged, multi-year project. Stage 3 recently launched featuring a Visitor Centre with key interpretation around story of gold and DJAARA cultural heritage and story. Stage 4 is seeking funding to activate the creative space and courtyard as an arts and creative hub for visitors and the local community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events Infrastructure</li> <li>• Arts and Culture</li> <li>• History and Heritage</li> <li>• First Peoples</li> <li>• Place-based Storytelling</li> </ul>	CGSC State & Federal Government	Deliver	<b>Seeking Funding</b> Stage 4: \$3M
<b>Princes Park Heritage Precinct, Upgrade, Maryborough</b>	Princess Park is a key public recreational space in Maryborough, and event space for the region. This Project will see events infrastructure updates, including the Grandstand that support a range of events including the Shire's flagship event "Energy Breakthrough".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enabling Visitor Infrastructure</li> <li>• Events Infrastructure</li> </ul>	CGSC State & Federal Government	Deliver	<b>Seeking Funding</b> \$6M
<b>Indigenous Interpretive Garden - Central Goldfields Art Gallery</b>	The Indigenous Interpretive Garden located at the Central Goldfields Art Gallery will be a new visitor experience, celebrating unique past and present DJAARA stories, learning, understanding, healing, and reconciliation. The Garden is being designed collaboratively with Dja Dja Wurrung community representatives and artists, and has been funded by State and Federal Governments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Peoples</li> <li>• Arts and Culture</li> <li>• History and Heritage</li> <li>• Nature, Outdoors &amp; Adventure</li> </ul>	CGSC DJAARA State & Federal Government	Deliver	<b>Delivery Stage</b>

## PILLAR TWO /

# Meaningful & Impactful Destination Storytelling

Sharing our region's special stories of place and its creative people will help to attract visitors who will support and protect the environment, culture and way of life.

The Bendigo Region, and each of the local area subregions within, already has a strong sense of identity. Creating and conveying a united story with impact is an aspiration for all.

Supporting BRT to develop a whole of region brand, which highlights a local piece for each LGA is a major opportunity, which can then be activated through coordinated marketing and storytelling activity.

To remain accountable to the vision and targets outlined in this Plan, all destination marketing activity, including that which is undertaken by LGAs, must operate within a strategic framework that remains agile and adapts to real-time visitor sentiment behaviour and motivational data and insights.

Understanding the local visitor experience strengths, and amplifying efforts to engage aligned visitor markets will help to elevate the LGAs sub-regional competitive advantages.

This approach will help to soften the peaks and troughs throughout the year, and help design a more sustainable operating landscape for industry.

Resourcing an always-on approach to destination storytelling with a focus on highlighting local experience strengths, dispersal, and multi-night stays within the LGA boundaries will be required to increase brand awareness of the local visitor experience. This can be achieved through engaging visual and written stories, and providing a platform for user storytelling and influencing. This strategy, activated through a considered digital marketing commitment will also quickly build trust and social license with the industry and community.

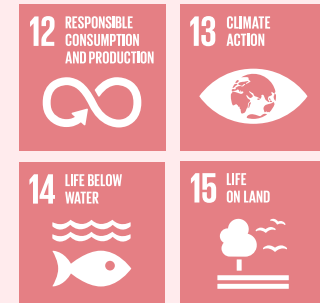
Unlocking marketing opportunities through working in partnership with brand and marketing stakeholders will provide unique ways to communicate with visitors markets, and for visitors to engage with the local story.

Reviewing and refining Council's approach to supporting and welcoming visitors across their travel journey is an important opportunity for consideration, with the aim of optimising resources and ensuring strategies are aligned with future visitor needs.

## Priorities

- 2.1 Destination Brand Evolution
- 2.2 Marketing Strategic Management
- 2.3 Visitor Market Activation Funding Strategy
- 2.4 Destination Storytelling
- 2.5 Strategic Brand & Marketing Partnerships
- 2.6 Visitor Servicing

## Sustainable Development Goals Alignment



## PILLAR TWO / PRIORITIES

#	Priority	Key Outcomes	Local Considerations	LGA Role	Partners	Timeline
2.1	Destination Brand Evolution	The Region has a united, clear and unique brand story that reflects our DNA and positions our Region as a visitor destination to attract national and global visitors who are aligned with our shared vision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in collaboration with Regional Partners to develop a Regional Brand (including a Subregional brand), and to embed the Brand through education and engagement with industry and community.</li> <li>• Use the Sub-regional brand as an accurate narrative to propel forward through demand driving activities and tourism activations.</li> <li>• Support BRT to undertake a Content Audit, and advocate for the development of a library of content that aligns with the Regional brand.</li> <li>• Investigate opportunities to activate the Brand locally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitator</li> <li>• Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BRT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short Term</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>
2.2	Marketing Strategy	Regional destination marketing is managed and executed strategically to ensure brand and marketing investment is optimised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply a strategic approach to destination marketing at a local level, and align with regional marketing strategy.</li> <li>• Determine <i>Marketing Objectives</i> and <i>Annual Action Plan</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Commit to delivering consistent and regular brand marketing storytelling (ref. Priority 2.5).</li> <li>◦ Prioritise positive visitor behaviour, increased visitor dispersal and storytelling engagement as key measures of marketing success.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Review, measure and reset Annual Action Plan annually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitator</li> <li>• Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BRT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short Term</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>
2.3	Visitor Market Activation	Partnerships and collaborations with relevant stakeholders are activating opportunities to attract High Value visitors to the Region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leisure Visitors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Activate via Destination Storytelling (Priority 2.4) and Strategic Marketing Partnerships (Priority 2.5).</li> <li>◦ Consider strategic partnerships and content creation to drive visitation from niche market travellers who undertake recreational activities across the region including gold prospecting, water sports, cycling and bird watching.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Visiting Friends &amp; Relatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Develop a local engagement activation plan to drive increased stay/repeat overnight trips from the VFR market (including Students as locals).</li> <li>◦ Connect the dots: Investigate synergies and opportunities between real estate, population strategy and tourism.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Business Travellers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Support BRT to activate a Business Events reference group by connecting local business event operators and venues into the Group.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Understand the local capacity to attract increased participatory and spectator events.</li> <li>◦ Liaise with Event Organisers (eg. Energy Breakthrough held in this Council region) to build pre- and post-event itineraries relevant to the event personas.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Work with BRT to coordinate a strategic approach to understanding the capacity and potential to attract school groups to the region, and council area.</li> <li>◦ Connect BRT with local businesses who currently offer unique and interesting learning opportunities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitator</li> <li>• Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BRT</li> <li>• VV</li> <li>• Niche Interest Communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>

## PILLAR TWO / PRIORITIES

#	Priority	Key Outcomes	Local Considerations	LGA Role	Partners	Timeline
2.4	<b>Destination Storytelling</b>	The regional brand is activated through appropriate and effective storytelling activities via paid, earned and owned media and is attracting high value visitors to the Region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a <i>Local Brand Storytelling Framework</i> to outline the strategic linkages between the traveller journey, local experience themes and stories, visitor experiences, night time economy proposition, and ideal visitor behaviours, dispersal and seasonality. Use this framework to plan and execute storytelling across all relevant platforms at a local level.</li> <li>• Curate, create and amplify content that aligns with the Brand Storytelling Framework including itineraries to be published on the local tourism website and via LGA owned tourism social media channels.</li> <li>• Attract responsible visitors who respect and care for the region's environment and communities by amplifying positive visitor behaviours</li> <li>• Work with BRT to optimise the current Destination website, and supply inspiring and engaging content for publishing.</li> <li>• Activate a strategic and efficient approach to social media to connect and engage with communities and to inspire travel.</li> <li>• Proactively source images and videos from third parties for use in brand marketing activities. Opportunity to purchase content from content creators (local/influencers) if and as required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provider</li> <li>• Facilitator</li> <li>• Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BRT</li> <li>• Content Creators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>
2.5	<b>Strategic Brand &amp; Marketing Partnerships</b>	The Region is working in collaboration with key regional marketing partners to leverage/amplify opportunities to drive demand for the Region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase visibility and ensure brand position alignment of the LGA region across Visit Victoria's marketing, PR, travel trade, and experience development activations. Specifically to work collaboratively to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Ensure alignment with strategic planning visitor persona/markets.</li> <li>◦ Amplify regional stories across VV social media platforms</li> <li>◦ Increase uptake of ATDW across the industry to grow the quality and quantity of regional experiences on visitvictoria.com.au</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Work in close collaboration with VIC Parks to promote desired visitor behaviours within the region's Parks, and amplify appropriate messaging through storytelling activation.</li> <li>• Work in close collaboration with BRT and other local organisations to align resources to create efficiencies across storytelling, campaign investment, and the creation of rich content (Articles, Photos, Videos).</li> <li>• Remain connected with UNESCO Creative City &amp; Region of Gastronomy and Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid project managers to identify opportunities to leverage credentials and resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provider</li> <li>• Facilitator</li> <li>• Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VV</li> <li>• LGAs</li> <li>• Industry</li> <li>• UNESCO</li> <li>• VGWHB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>

## PILLAR TWO / PRIORITIES

#	Priority	Key Outcomes	Local Considerations	LGA Role	Partners	Timeline
2.6	Visitor Servicing	<p>Visitors to the Region are supported with accurate, inspirational and accessible information they need to plan, book and experience the Region across relevant touchpoints along their travel journey.</p> <p>Visitors know how to be respectful of our communities and the environment when exploring our Region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maryborough Railway Station is the region's Accredited Visitor Information Centre, which is fully funded (physical, human, and budget resourcing) by CGSC, and is the local hub for visitor servicing initiatives and activities.</li> <li>• Work in collaboratively with partnering LGAs to activate the 'Goldfields Gateways' project.</li> <li>• In partnership with BRT and neighbouring Councils develop a <i>Regional Visitor Servicing Strategy</i> to identify regional collaborative visitor servicing projects that support the outcomes of this priority area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provider</li> <li>• Facilitator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BRT</li> <li>• Goldfield's Gateway Partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short Term</li> </ul>



# PILLAR THREE /

## Cohesive & Dynamic Destination Stewardship

Strong strategic leadership, genuine collaboration and unity between Regional partners will achieve the destination’s vision for tourism.

The Bendigo Region DMP, and this aligned Local Area Action Plan is governed by a regional vision for tourism which will be achieved through agreed priorities for action, and has purposefully been designed to be agile, to remain a relevant framework throughout the entirety of its lifespan and beyond.

*Plan Governance Principles* and a *Plan Management Framework* exist to ensure DMP custodians remain accountable to the strategic priorities within this Plan.

Understanding and communicating the value of tourism at a local, granular level, is essential to build the awareness and recognition of tourism related investment at a local level.

Further, working with local stakeholders to determine a local vision and aspirations for tourism, and involving and engaging local community in tourism decision making will help to build the social license for Council to continue to invest.

Building genuine partnerships with key regional partners, and fostering respectful relationships with all stakeholders will be essential to embed trusting relationships, and build momentum for the sector.

A dedicated and ongoing focus on finding and applying for additional funding will be required outside current funding streams to activate the opportunities in this LAAP.

Advocating for local issues and opportunities will help to enable outcomes for the local area, including new infrastructure which benefits locals and visitors alike.

To activate the Priority Projects requires significant tourism investment, therefore, working collaboratively with Regional Partners to advocate for increased tourism investment remains a major strategic priority.

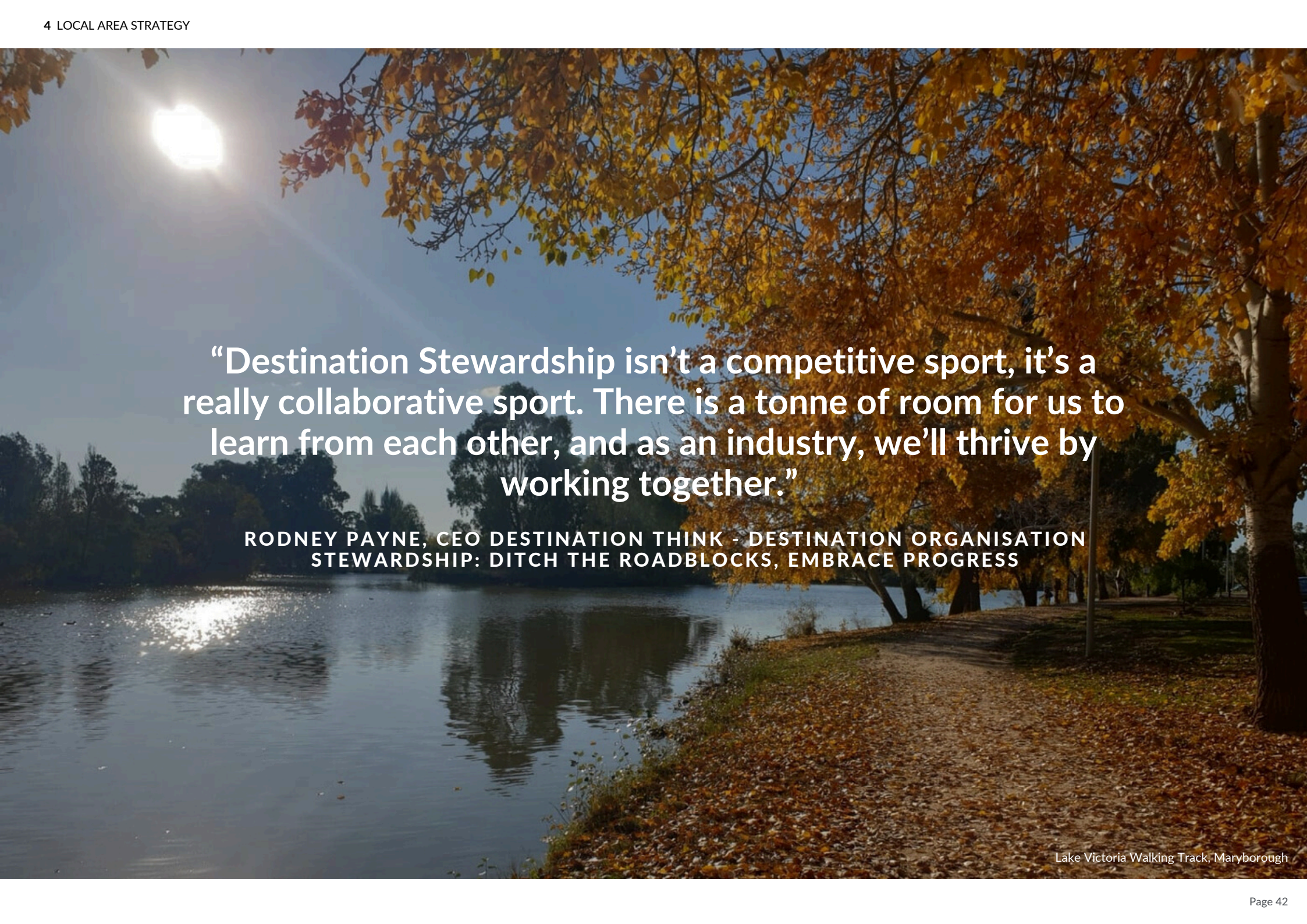
A consistent and agile approach to emergency, crisis and climate action response is required to support the destination’s resilience and ability to meet the demands moving forward, and recover quickly from future crisis.

### Priorities

- 3.1 Plan Governance
- 3.2 Tourism Impact Measurement Strategy
- 3.3 Regional Partnerships & Relationships
- 3.4 Funding Strategy
- 3.5 Destination Advocacy
- 3.6 Plan Engagement & Communication
- 3.7 Tourism Investment Advocacy
- 3.8 Emergency, Disaster & Climate Action Preparedness

### Sustainable Development Goals Alignment





**“Destination Stewardship isn’t a competitive sport, it’s a really collaborative sport. There is a tonne of room for us to learn from each other, and as an industry, we’ll thrive by working together.”**

**RODNEY PAYNE, CEO DESTINATION THINK - DESTINATION ORGANISATION STEWARDSHIP: DITCH THE ROADBLOCKS, EMBRACE PROGRESS**

## PILLAR THREE / PRIORITIES

#	Priority	Key Outcomes	Local Considerations	LGA Role	Partners	Timeline
3.1	Plan Governance	The Bendigo Region DMP and correlated LAAPs remains agile, relevant and up to date, responding to changing market conditions, and continues to prioritise, deliver, and report on the positive tourism outcomes for the Region's communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work in partnership with BRT to govern the Bendigo Region DMP and the achievement of the regional tourism vision and aspirations, and uphold the Plan Governance Principles (refer to the Bendigo Region DMP) throughout the VEP transition period and beyond.</li> <li>Consider the resourcing required at a LGA level to support the activation of the Bendigo Region DMP, and the actions within this LAAP.</li> <li>Communicate the value of tourism by share progress updates of the DMP, and local success metrics with local stakeholders.</li> <li>Connect the dots: Align the Bendigo Region DMP with local Tourism Strategy / Economic Development Strategy and other local activation plans.</li> <li>Ensure LGA 'Priority Projects' highlighted in the DMP remain up to date (via BRT).</li> <li>Develop a local vision and aspirations for tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BRT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
3.2	Tourism Impact Measurement Strategy	Invest in strategic, relevant and dynamic curation of insights and indicators that measure the full value of tourism for the Bendigo Region, for the purpose of attracting investment into the sector and to enable an agile response to destination planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work in partnership with BRT to identify opportunities to build a robust measurement strategy to effectively measure the full value of tourism.</li> <li>Connect BRT with local organisations and businesses who may be able to provide data and insights to use in the DMP Measurement Framework</li> <li>Use relevant indicators that align with those identified in the Bendigo Region DMP, and measure success at a local level (via the Measurement Framework on page 46), on a regular basis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TRA</li> <li>BRT</li> <li>Industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short Term (planning and investigation)</li> <li>Medium-Long Term (Activation)</li> </ul>
3.3	Regional Partnerships & Relationships	Educate and lead an informed, confident and dynamic group of tourism professionals in the Region to grow a united approach to destination stewardship across the Bendigo Region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for local businesses and community engaged in the visitor economy to connect, collaborate and network regularly to share ideas, learn and progress local business and community led projects and initiatives aligned to the region's vision.</li> <li>Establish strong relationships with all Regional tourism partners through meaningful liaison, sharing of information, co-design of solutions, and tourism leadership opportunities, and celebrate everyone's successes.</li> <li>Identify regional collaboration opportunities across Strategic Pillars in this Plan, to create efficiencies in resourcing and budgets, and to unite efforts to create a greater impact.</li> <li>Connect with relevant stakeholders to work through how tourism can contribute to local environmental programs and projects.</li> <li>Enhance local community connection and engagement to involve the community in tourism-related decision-making, insights, knowledge sharing and updates on current threats and how they impact tourism (eg. Homelessness, Housing).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provider</li> <li>Facilitator</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BRT</li> <li>Industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>

## PILLAR THREE / PRIORITIES

#	Priority	Key Outcomes	Local Considerations	LGA Role	Partners	Timeline
3.4	<b>Funding Strategy</b>	A strategic approach to targeting and applying for relevant grants funding to activate the Projects within the Bendigo Region DMP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider the opportunity for cooperative investment in priorities and outcomes delivered by BRT that have a direct impact locally.</li> <li>Develop a local grant strategy to proactively coordinate the attainment of funds outside of council budgets for tourism related projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DJSIR</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
3.5	<b>Destination Advocacy</b>	A proactive and united approach to investigating and understanding local and regional issues to advocate to industry, regional, state and federal entities on issues impacting the delivery of the Bendigo Region DMP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide regular updates to BRT on the issues and challenges for tourism at a local level (which is enabled by a strong listening/feedback mechanism between LGA and the community and industry stakeholders).</li> <li>Continue to advocate for the progression of the Priority Projects identified in this LAAP.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGAs</li> <li>RTBs/VEPs</li> <li>VTIC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
3.6	<b>Plan Engagement &amp; Communication</b>	To build awareness of BRT, the purpose of the Bendigo Region DMP, and a strong understanding of the value of tourism with Industry & Community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In collaboration with BRT, develop quarterly key messaging to deliver via relevant council comms with community in regard to the value of tourism regionally and locally, to strengthen the understanding of the value of tourism across the community.</li> <li>Rebuild local confidence and pride from within, by enhancing community communications around tourism 'good news' stories.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGAs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
3.7	<b>Tourism Investment Advocacy</b>	To support the attraction of increased Public and Private investment in tourism across the Bendigo Region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work in collaboration with BRT to develop and activate a <i>Accommodation Investment Prospectus</i> (as per Priority 1.6).</li> <li>Connect industry with investment opportunities via BRT and directly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGAs</li> <li>RDV</li> <li>DJSIR</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
3.8	<b>Emergency, Disaster &amp; Climate Action Preparedness</b>	BRT has a clear remit and responsibilities with regard to regional Emergency, Disaster and Climate Action Preparedness and Action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with BRT to determine BRT's outlining specific role across communications, particularly across Destination Storytelling platforms, and media/PR.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator</li> <li>Advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGAs</li> <li>DJSIR</li> <li>VV</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short Term (initial review)</li> <li>Ongoing (Annual review)</li> </ul>

# Activation Framework

This Activation Framework provides the structure for Council to respond to tourism opportunities with agility, whilst remaining aligned with the Pillars and Priorities outlined in the Bendigo Region DMP.

Throughout each Strategic Pillar are *Local Considerations*, which have been formed as a result of a considered listening process in the development of the Bendigo DMP.

It's recommended these considerations are viewed as potential opportunities for exploration, with the possibility of some considerations to be scoped as potential projects for the future.

On this page, and the following, an Activation Framework has been developed to help guide the activation of the considerations within this Plan.

It is recommended that an ongoing local area listening mechanism continues to feed into this Framework (as per Priority 3.1 Plan Governance) to support the LGA to become aware of new problems and opportunities, which feed into the Framework.

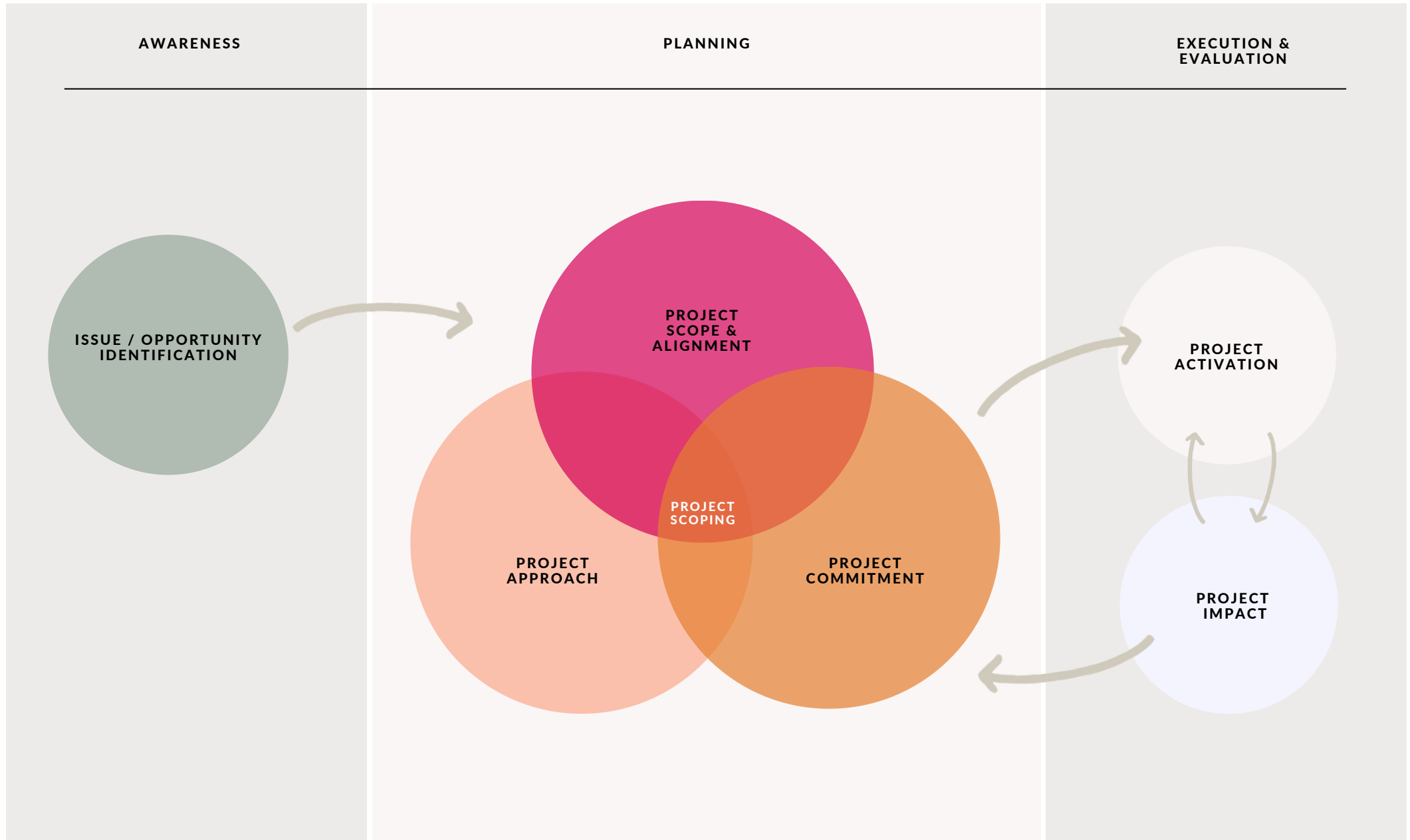
## Activation Framework Key

STAGE	STEP	DESCRIPTION
AWARENESS	Problem / Opportunity Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulate the issue/opportunity (ref. Cynifin Framework - Simple, Complicated, Complex or Chaotic)</li> <li>Articulate LGA role in addressing the issue/opportunity</li> <li>Determine whether to proceed into Project Scoping Framework</li> </ul>
PLANNING	Project Scope & Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulate the scope of the project</li> <li>Does this project pass the <i>positive impact assessment criteria</i>?* <b>If yes, proceed with remaining steps. If no, do not proceed. Rethink the Scope.</b></li> <li>Define the project success measures and alignment with DMP Measurement Framework</li> <li>Determine exit strategy &amp; timelines if project success measures are not met.</li> </ul>
	Project Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who are the project partners, and what is their required level of involvement?</li> <li>How does this project align with Partner priorities?</li> <li>What are the resources (internal and external) required for this project (budget/time)?</li> <li>Risk Assessment for Project</li> </ul>
	Project Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulate the best approach for this Project (ref. Cynifin framework action method)</li> <li>Define the process for engagement/activation</li> </ul>
EXECUTION & EVALUATION	Project Activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activate the project as per the Scope and Approach</li> </ul>
	Project Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report at intervals identified in the Project Scope</li> <li>If Project is achieving the intended impact, continue the activation.</li> <li>If Project is not achieving the intended impact, the project goes back into the Planning Stage for realignment/scoping</li> </ul>

### \*Positive Impact Assessment Criteria

- The intention of the project must align with the Bendigo Region DMP vision
- Outcomes for the project must contribute positively to at least 3 of the 5 aspirations in the DMP
- Outcomes for the project must not contribute negatively to any aspirations

# ACTIVATION FRAMEWORK



# Measuring Success

This Measurement Framework outlines current and valid local benchmarks for CGSC and identifies targets that align with and support the Regional Aspirations as outlined in the Bendigo Region DMP.

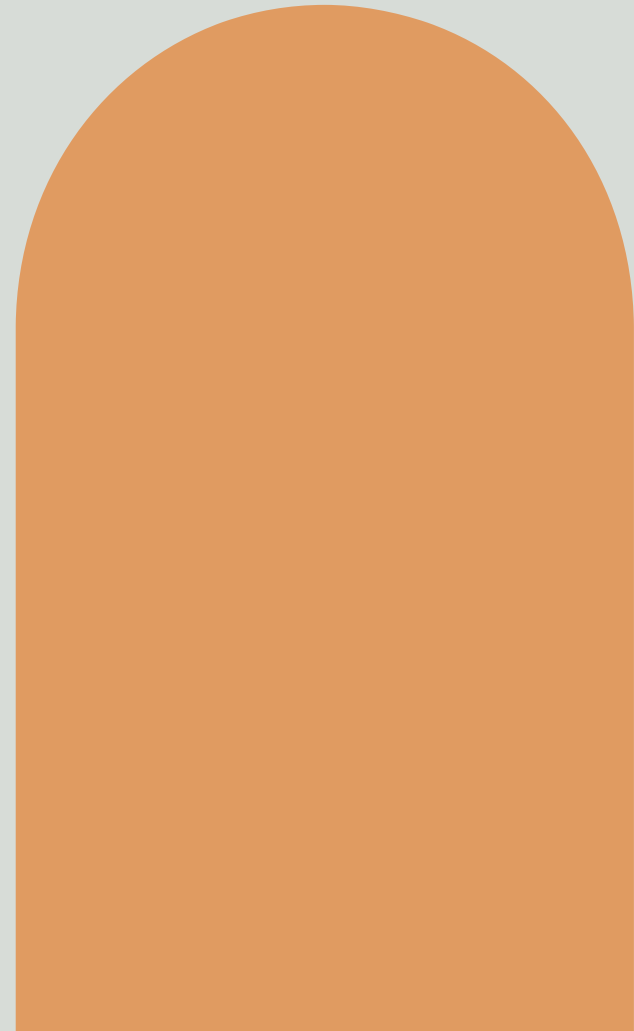
Priority 3.2 outlines considerations for optimising this Framework iteratively, ensuring that benchmarks for relevant indicators are identified, and then tracked over time to provide insights into the value of tourism at a local level. This also supports the targets at a regional level.

	COMMUNITY	ENVIRONMENT	VISITOR	ECONOMY	INDUSTRY
ASPIRATION	Community members have a clear understanding of the full value of tourism, and enjoy sharing their part of the destination with visitors, family and friends.	Regional partners and industry are educated and empowered to deliver experiences that have a positive impact on the environment.	To position the region as a highly desirable tourism destination, to attract high value visitors who seek meaningful interaction and connection with our people and place.	To enhance the overall economic contribution of the visitor economy, fostering a dynamic, innovative, and resilient business community.	Tourism businesses are prospering, benefiting from a skilled and engaged workforce, and continuously adapting to meet the expectations of visitors.
LOCAL BENCHMARK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8.7/10 - CGSC residents average confidence rating for <i>contribution of tourism to the community</i></li> <li>5.6/10 - CGSC residents average confidence rating for the <i>future of tourism</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Source Bendigo Region Visioning Survey (October 2023, n=182)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No current benchmark</li> <li>Consider Priority 1.5 in the Action Plan to build benchmark.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No current benchmark of Visitors sentiment of the CGSC region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$38m expenditure (2019)</li> <li>Day Trip Visitor Yield = \$99pp (2019)</li> <li>Domestic Overnight Visitor Yield = \$221 (2019)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No current benchmark for Industry Sentiment of the CGSC region.</li> <li>135 businesses (2019)</li> </ul>
INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Net Promoter Score +45.4 (resident)</li> <li>Positive Community Sentiment Measures</li> <li>First Peoples relationship building, partnerships &amp; initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Destination Marketing activity shares positive visitor behaviours.</li> <li>Support positive Impact initiatives of local environmental groups.</li> <li>Industry pursuing sustainable tourism initiatives and accreditations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Net Promoter Score 50+ (non-resident travellers)</li> <li>Positive Visitor Sentiment Measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visitor Yield</li> <li>Tourism Expenditure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive Industry Sentiment &amp; Future Outlook for Tourism.</li> <li>Stability and/or growth in Jobs and # Business.</li> </ul>
LOCAL TARGETS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Net Promoter Score of 60+ annually by 2030 (YoY growth prior).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater engagement by Industry in increasing sustainability measuring (scorecards/certification or other programs).</li> <li>50% of tourism businesses &amp; events have a Positive Impact Visitor Experience (also includes collaborative partnerships) by 2030.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Net Promoter Score is over 70+ annually by 2030 (YoY growth prior).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grow Tourism Expenditure to 49.4m in 2030 (30% growth from 2019).</li> <li>Grow Day Trip Visitor Yield to \$118 by 2030 (20% growth from 2019).</li> <li>Grow Domestic Overnight Visitor Yield to \$287 by 2030 (30% growth from 2019).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over 80% of Tourism Businesses are confident about the Future Outlook for Tourism.</li> <li>Grow number of businesses in Tourism to 162 by 2030 (20% growth from 2019).</li> </ul>



# Acknowledgements.

This Plan has been prepared through considered engagement with tourism stakeholders across community, industry, business and government.





# Plan Development Process

The Bendigo Region DMP and this LAAP for Central Goldfields Shire Council has been prepared through considered engagement and consultation with tourism stakeholders across community, industry, business and government.

From October 2023, the Bendigo Region DMP Project Working Group, consisting of representatives from BRT's constituent Councils embarked on a 6-month project, engaging with over 380 community and industry members across multiple forms of listening.

Please see the Bendigo Region DMP Acknowledgements for detail regarding the Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation, which has informed the development of this LAAP.

## DESKTOP ANALYSIS

- Review of over 80 state, regional, local, industry and sector strategies, plans and reports.

## INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS & MEETINGS

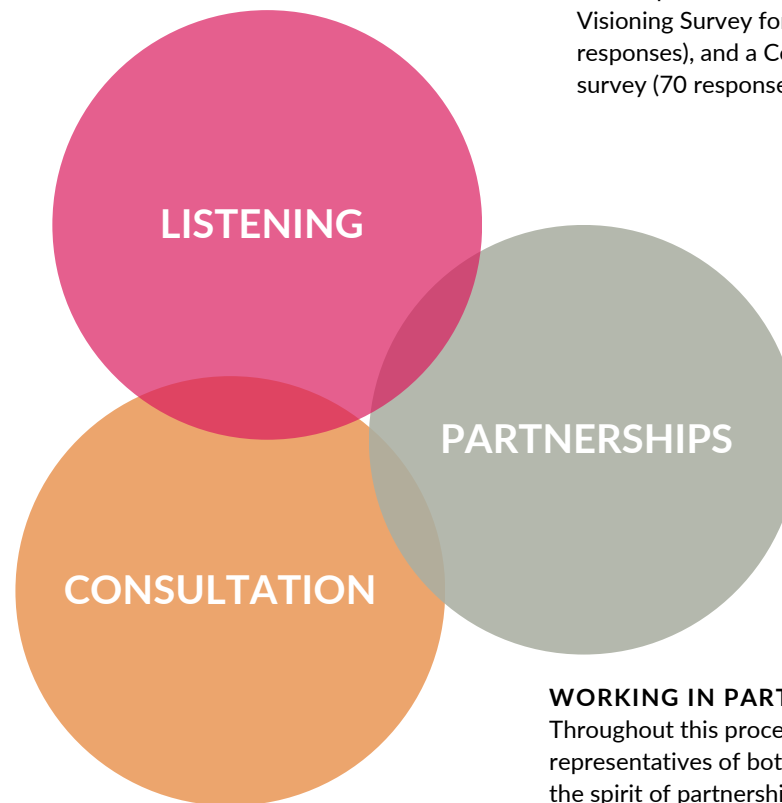
- 19 Individual In-depth Interviews

## STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS

- 10 industry and community workshops
- 100+ attendees (inclusive of community and industry members).

## COMMUNITY & INDUSTRY SURVEY

- 252 responses through 2 online surveys, a Visioning Survey for all stakeholders (182 responses), and a Community & Tourism Group survey (70 responses) (November 2023).



## PROJECT CONSULTATION

- Regional Issues & Opportunities Paper Developed and Reviewed by Stakeholders.
- Draft DMP - Stakeholder Consultation (Community, Regional, State Stakeholders).

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Throughout this process, BRT have engaged with representatives of both DJAARA and TLaWC in the spirit of partnership, growth and continued learning, and we thank them for their commitment to growing the cultural vibrance of our region through sustainable, ethical tourism practises.



**Our vision is to enable tourism for a better future.**

We're committed to demonstrating how tourism can be a force for good, and help to enable communities and the special places they love thrive for generations to come.

[tourismcollective.com.au](https://tourismcollective.com.au)

This Destination Management Plan has been developed by The Tourism Collective ([tourismcollective.com.au](https://tourismcollective.com.au)) on behalf of Bendigo Regional Tourism in close consultation with Central Goldfields Shire Council and their community, industry, government and environment custodians.

The content within this Plan is based on comprehensive research and engagement with the destination's community and industry stakeholders (see Acknowledgements). Data and insights were collated from October 2023-February 2024 to develop the recommendations outlined in this Report. Neither The Tourism Collective or Bendigo Regional Tourism takes responsibility in any way whatsoever to any person or organisation (other than that for which this report has been prepared) in respect of the information set out in this report, including any errors or omissions therein.

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This Local Area Action Plan has been developed by Bendigo Regional Tourism, in partnership with the Victorian State Government, and the Central Goldfields Shire Council.

