



Disability Action Plan

2018-2022





About Baw Baw Shire

Baw Baw Shire is approximately 100 kilometres east of Melbourne in the heart of West Gippsland.

Our towns and villages are beautiful, compact settlements surrounded by green, productive landscapes. Our urban areas are compact settlements of unique character, with higher density development that respects the value of surrounding landscapes.

Significant emphasis is placed on 'village life', being known and knowing others in our community. There are opportunities for social interaction in our neighbourhoods, on the streets where we live, in the shopping areas, in community places and spaces, in recreation and cultural groups or on the sports field.

Strong volunteer and mentoring programs value and recognise volunteers and the contribution they make.

Baw Baw Shire is growing quickly, with the population forecast to grow to 67,700 residents by 2031, representing a growth of over two percent per annum. With an estimated residential population of around 50,300 people, this will mean over 17,400 additional people living in the municipality by 2031.

The health and wellbeing of the community is improved through access to good food, arts and entertainment and opportunities for an active lifestyle. There is access to a range of beautiful and useful parks and gardens, cycling and walking tracks and sporting facilities where people come to meet, socialise and play.

The community is served by a range of locally based education, health and community facilities, together with industry and innovation centres that provide an integration and collaboration.

Baw Baw Shire Council is committed to promoting access and inclusion for people with a disability.

Council has made progress in many areas in ensuring our services and programs are equitably available to all within our diverse community.

What is a Disability Action Plan?

A Disability Action Plan (DAP) is a strategic document that enables organisations to implement actions to address access and inclusion issues for people with disabilities. The Victorian Government, under Section 38 of the Disability Act (2006), states that a Disability Action Plan (DAP) should be developed to:

- Reduce barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities;
- Reduce barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment;
- Promote inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability; and
- Achieve tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.

Victorian State Disability Plan 2017-2020

Absolutely everyone is the state disability plan 2017–2020 for the whole of the Victorian Government. The state government is committing to a range of actions for achieving greater inclusion, in partnership with the community.

The plan tackles the negative attitudes and barriers that more than one million Victorians with a disability deal with on a daily basis. It sets out priorities and actions for achieving inclusion under four key pillars:

- Inclusive communities
- Health, housing and wellbeing
- Fairness and safety
- Contributing lives

The plan focuses on key areas to drive change such as adopting a universal design approach, changing attitudes, increasing access to affordable housing, public transport, schools and jobs. They are also ensuring that people with a disability are able to make the most of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) through a series of actions. These include working with communities to identify and address barriers to participation.

Council Plan 2017–2021

The Council Plan represents a four year road map for the Council, and describes the key services and priorities that Council will focus on between 2017 and 2021.

In developing the Council Plan, Council has considered:

- Council's long term planning, including Long Term Infrastructure and Financial Plans.
- Community and Councillor planning workshops held to identify the key issues Council needs to consider in developing the Council Plan.
- Responses made to a community survey on what the community values and wants for the future.
- Emerging issues, challenges and opportunities facing the community, the shire and the region.
- Community needs and aspirations for the future as expressed in the Baw Baw 2050 community vision.
- Council's role, and organisation capacity and capability over the next four years.

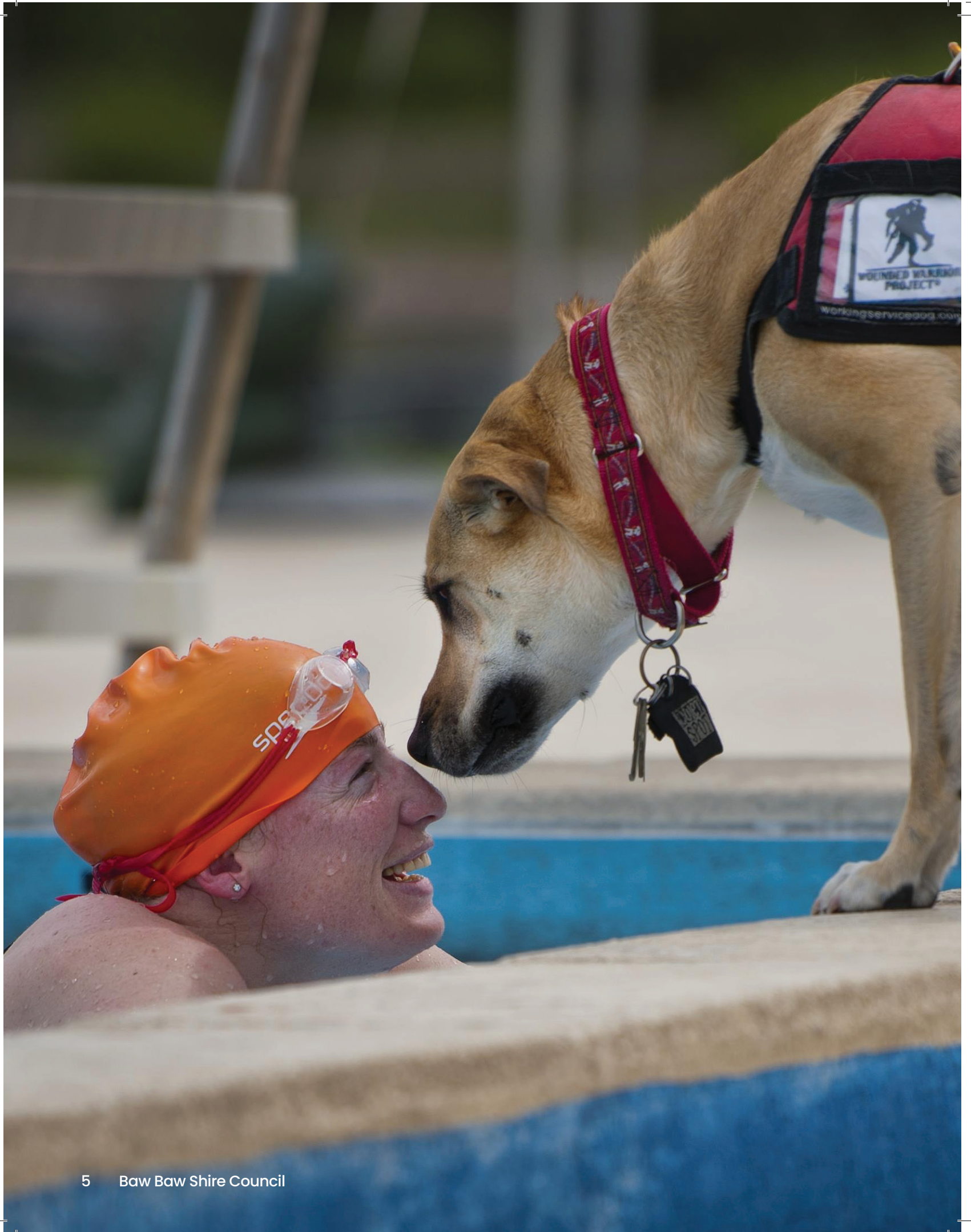
The four objectives of the Council Plan, which together will drive Council's planning, major projects and service delivery over the four years 2017 -2021, are:

1. Vibrant communities.
2. Thriving economy.
3. Safe and sustainable environments.
4. Organisational excellence.

Under each of these, Council has identified the services it will deliver and a number of four-year strategies to achieve the objectives and the outcomes that council is wanting to achieve.

There are some specific strategies in the Plan that relate directly to people living with a disability:

- Transition aged and disability support services in line with Federal policy direction and funding.
- Build a vibrant community of arts, culture and events.
- Enhancing how Council works with the community to improve social inclusion, access and equity.
- Improve the condition, safety and accessibility of the shire's footpaths and trails.
- Effectively plan and manage car parking demands across the Shire.





Values and behaviours

Through its vision, mission and values Council commits to working towards the best possible outcomes for the Baw Baw community.

Our vision

Happy, healthy people sharing prosperity and knowledge from living sustainably and in harmony with our rural identity, thriving villages, productive and inspiring landscapes.

Our mission

Leaders in delivering quality, innovative and community focused services today that make a difference for tomorrow.

Core values

Community focused

Accessible, responsive (we're here to help), can do attitude, communicative, empathetic.

Integrity

Equitable, honest, ethical, transparent.

Respect

Listening, compassionate, open minded, understanding, patient.

Pride

Caring, enthusiastic, inspiring, accountable.

Innovation

Creative, bold, challenging, flexible.

Collaboration

Partnering, building productive relationships, inclusive.



The Disability Action Plan

This Disability Action Plan is a strategic framework that will be implemented over the four-year period between 2018 and 2022. It aims to address the structural, attitudinal and cultural barriers people with a disability experience when participating in community life. It aims to eliminate discrimination for people with a disability who use services, facilities and infrastructure provided by the Council, or are current or prospective employees of Council.

The Disability Action Plan consists of four key goals that have been closely aligned to fit under the four Council objectives:

Vibrant communities

Goal: To promote community participation and inclusion of people with a disability.

- 1.1 Create community awareness through activities and events for International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD) and Social Inclusion Week (SIW).
- 1.2 Ensure equitable access is provided at all Council venues, events and celebrations.
- 1.3 Promote opportunities for people with a disability to participate in recreation, arts and community programs.
- 1.4 Promote to the community accessible features and facilities available including accessible toilets, playgrounds, Changing Places facilities, assistive technology and accessible parking spaces.
- 1.5 Provide up to date information on the National Disability Insurance Scheme to community members.

Thriving economy

Goal: To improve access to transport, goods and services for people with a disability.

- 2.1 Educate businesses on the benefits of being inclusive through the Good Access is Good Business program.
- 2.2 Support local business to become inclusive and promote the benefits of employing people with a disability.
- 2.3 Liaise with Public Transport Victoria (PTV) to increase transport options.
- 2.4 Continue to improve pedestrian access, including continuous accessible paths of travel linking transport options to business areas.



Safe and sustainable environment

Goal: To ensure consistent approaches in design and implementation of policy and infrastructure.

- 3.1 Implement a consistent approach to Footpath Trading Policy, including compliance.
- 3.2 Continue upgrades of Accessible Parking to achieve compliance.
- 3.3 Continue upgrades of footpaths to provide accessible path of travel to provide connections.
- 3.4 Ensure the principles of Universal Design are considered in new facility design by Council.

Organisational excellence

Goal: To embed the principles of access and inclusion across Council.

- 4.1 Increase organisational awareness of the legal and human rights of people with a disability by providing disability awareness training to all staff.
- 4.2 Improve volunteer and employment opportunities available for people with a disability, and to provide information on the Australian Employment Assistance Fund.
- 4.3 Ensure new Council buildings and facilities achieve above and beyond minimum standards and best practice for accessibility.
- 4.4 Ensure Council meetings, websites and documents are accessible to all.

Disability Discrimination Act

The Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) was developed to protect everyone in Australia from discrimination based on disability.

Under the DDA, 'disability' is defined in broad terms to offer protection to everyone with a disability. It encompasses the following:

- Physical disabilities;
- Intellectual disabilities;
- Psychiatric disabilities;
- Neurological disabilities;
- Sensory disabilities
- Learning disabilities;
- Physical disfigurement; and
- The presence in the body of disease-causing organisms.

The DDA definition also includes:

- People who currently have a disability;
- People who had a disability in the past;
- People who may have a disability in the future;
- People who are believed to have a disability; and
- People who have assistance for a disability.

Under the DDA, Baw Baw Shire Council has an obligation to:

- Ensure that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community;
- Promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that people with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community; and
- Where possible, eliminate discrimination against persons based on disability in the areas of employment, education, access to premises, provision of goods, facilities, services, accommodation, clubs associations, sport and buying land.



Disability Advisory Committee

Council operates advisory committees in various areas of Council business. These are formally established with Terms of reference. Objectives are set in the terms of reference of the committee and Council engages with the community members to seek their input and advice on relevant matters.

The Disability Advisory Committee was initially established in 1999 and brings together people and organisations with broad and diverse knowledge and experience of disability related issues, providing the Council with strategic advice on disability related issues that can be responded to at a Council level.

This Disability Action Plan has been developed with the contribution and assistance of the Disability Advisory Committee members.

Review and evaluation

This plan will be subject to an annual review and reporting process. A report for Council will be produced annually.

This plan is subject to changes on an annual basis due to changing circumstances including policy, legislation and resources available.

A diverse range of stakeholders will be engaged in the review and evaluation process including members of the Disability Advisory Committee. Status updates and achievements of the plan will be documented and case studies shared with the community.

The plan will also be lodged with the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Acknowledgments

Baw Baw Shire Council thank the Disability Advisory Committee including respective Councillors and organisational and community members for their contribution to the development of the Disability Action Plan, and representation on the Committee and its activities.

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