

Executive Summary

This document showcases the key projects for the future prosperity of the Baw Baw Shire.

We recognise that Council is limited in the resources it can devote to substantial projects. For the Shire to achieve its full potential, it is imperative that Council advocates for delivering outcomes in partnership with other levels of government, the private sector, the not-for-profit sector, and the broader community.

Investment to fully fund these key projects will provide benefits to both the communities in which they are located and the surrounding areas, while also providing significant flow-on effects throughout Victoria.

Baw Baw Shire is designated as a growth area, and is one of the State's fastest growing municipalities. Without the introduction of appropriate infrastructure to support the population increases, the Shire will be unable to fully support and facilitate growth.

As we have seen from the outer metropolitan growth areas, rapid population growth increases the demand for residential land, community services and infrastructure. As a predominantly rural shire, the way growth is presently occurring is unsustainable without greater employment and infrastructure.

While our community is accepting of population growth, it has made it clear that it is important to retain the 'rural character' of the Shire and that all future settlements should be developed so that they are sustainable.

To this end, Council has identified priority projects for the Shire that will generate economic activity, employment growth, improved productivity and community benefit.

This document is your invitation to join us in preserving, maintaining and developing our assets, while taking advantage of the many opportunities offered by this dynamic region.

By working together, we hope that in five, ten, twenty years, Baw Baw continues to be the vibrant, beautiful, economically viable region it has always been.





THE KEY PROJECTS

TYPE	PROJECT	COUNCIL WORKING TOGETHER WITH	STATUS
Regional	West Gippsland Art Centre Redevelopment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Federal Government• State Government• Community	Shovel Ready
Council	Co-location of Kindergartens on Primary School sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State Government• Kindergarten Cluster Managers	Planning
Regional	West Gippsland Healthcare Group – West Gippsland Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State Government• West Gippsland Health Care• Committee for Gippsland	Planning
Regional / Transformational	First/Last Kilometer – Routes to Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Federal Government• State Government• VicRoads• Committee for Gippsland	Shovel Ready and Planning
Transformational	Visitor Economy and Touring Routes – Sealing South Face Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State Government• VicRoads• Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort Management Board	Business Case
Regional	Moe River Levy (North Canal Road)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State Government• West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority	Planning

PROJECT CATEGORIES

Council Projects are those that Council will be leading that benefit the Baw Baw Shire community directly.

Regional Projects include approaches to problems, challenges and opportunities that are impacting the Baw Baw Shire and the region more widely.

Transformational Projects address regionally and nationally significant problems, challenges and opportunities, which generate environmental, economic and community benefits.

About Baw Baw Shire



Baw Baw Shire is the largest peri-urban municipality in Australia and is home to many diverse and successful industries. Located approximately 100 kilometres east of the Melbourne CBD, the Shire's western gateway is about an hour's drive from Melbourne and is connected by quality road freeway networks and express rail services.

The outward growth of Melbourne has Baw Baw Shire positioned within commuting distance of the expanding metropolitan area, attracting new residents looking to take advantage of the availability of affordable housing while experiencing a rural town lifestyle.

Set in a beautiful location bordered by Mt Baw Baw and the Strzelecki Ranges, Baw Baw Shire is biologically diverse and rich in agricultural and natural resources, and is one of Australia's premier locations for food production.

Covering 4,000 square kilometers, Baw Baw Shire includes the townships of Longwarry to the west and Trafalgar to the east with Rawson and Walhalla in the north and Poowong East in the south. The regional centre is Warragul with growth towns along the main transport corridor including Longwarry, Drouin, Yarragon and Trafalgar.

THE PERI-URBAN IMPACT

3,081
residents increased
the Shire's
population to 42,864
between the 2006
and 2011 Census.

2.21%
was the estimated
average annual
population growth
rate experienced by
the Shire in 2015.

45,945
residents were
estimated to be
living in the Shire in
2014.

2026
is when the Shire's
population is expected to
reach 60,452, having grown
at a rate of 2.3% annually in
the previous decade, and
with a projected increase
of 1.7% annually to 71,683
residents in 2036.



DIRECTION FOR FUTURE POPULATION GROWTH IN BAW BAW

Baw Baw Shire's Strategic Growth Corridor stretches along the Princes Freeway taking in seven towns from Longwarry in the west to Trafalgar in the east, including the Shire's growth centres in Drouin and Warragul.

From 2011-2036, it is expected that the population growth will be dispersed throughout the Shire with:

- **77.96%** of all new residents being located in Warragul and Drouin, due to experience the highest growth;
- **12.69%** of new residents being located in the next nine largest settlements, which will experience moderate growth; and,
- **9.35%** of new residents being located in the smaller settlements and rural areas throughout the rest of the Shire.

It is expected Baw Baw Shire will have 71,683 residents by 2036, having grown at a rate of 1.7% annually over the previous decade.

Rapid population growth increases the demand for residential land, community services and infrastructure.

A predominantly rural shire, the rate at which growth is presently occurring is unsustainable in the medium to long term.

Residential growth cannot continue without the timely provision of sustainable employment and infrastructure, in particular:

- Roads and public transport, telecommunications and energy;
- Health, education, leisure, commercial and community services.

LOOKING FORWARD

As with other peri-urban councils, Baw Baw Shire is working to find an appropriate balance between managed settlements (growth) and protecting and enhancing rural economic activities and the Shire's natural resources, biological diversity and quality landscapes.

Baw Baw Shire's challenge (and opportunity) is to manage the growth, protect and increase the agricultural pursuits that have underpinned the local economy and create local employment for its growing community. To do this Council requires assistance with the provision of infrastructure and community services.

Challenges and Opportunities of Rapid Growth

The rapid pace of projected growth presents a significant opportunity for the provision of housing, employment, community services and infrastructure that can meet the needs of a growing population while retaining the desired rural character. Without these, Baw Baw Shire is at risk of becoming a growth dormitory suburb to Melbourne – a place where commuting workers sleep. With a growing population, comes increasing demand on community infrastructure and services, and for Baw Baw Shire, the following areas will be put under significant pressure.

EMPLOYMENT

Jobs creation, diversifying and developing new skills, and increasing demand for labour within and neighbouring the Shire, is vital to our economic prosperity and to ensuring residents can both live and work in the municipality. In addition, with projected population increases the demand for transport to employment nodes will continue to rise.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Rail services on the Warragul corridor were substantially increased in 2006 and the railway station now has the Gippsland region's highest passenger loadings.

Additionally, our ageing population and increasing concentration of regional level community services in Warragul and Drouin will see greater demand for public transport connections, including bus and rail services to Melbourne and between these growth centres and the smaller towns. The lack of public

transport in these areas, and more specifically connecting bus services to new residential subdivisions in Drouin and Warragul to the rail corridor, is of immediate concern.

ROADS

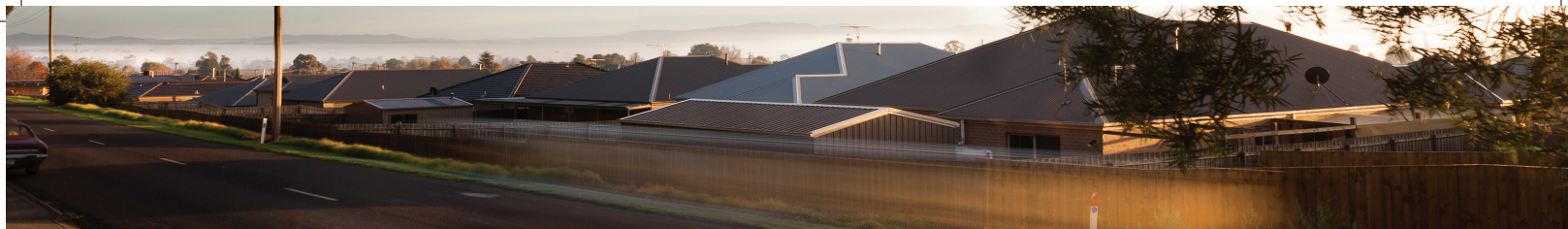
Expansion of local industrial and business employment will bring a greater flow of heavy traffic moving through the region to access the Latrobe Valley and the Port of Melbourne. Upgrades to existing collector and tertiary level roads can be anticipated, particularly in the major growth centres of Warragul and Drouin.

The implementation of the planned bypass road for Drouin is likely to be needed in the immediate term, whilst the Warragul CBD bypass will be necessary in the medium term; and, some work to separate heavy traffic from local traffic is anticipated for Longwarry.

For every 1000 new homes built, there will an average of two new residents.



This equates to **20,000** residents over the next **10** years.



DRAINAGE

Several towns, such as Longwarry, Traralgon and Yarragon, are impacted by local groundwater issues. These areas will require investment in excess of Council's Capital Works programs and financial capacity, for implementing effective drainage solutions and river and stream drainage network maintenance, to protect the town centres and main connector roads.

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Council's Settlement Management Plan and a Community Infrastructure/Community Service Plan provide a planning framework for future services and infrastructure provision across Baw Baw Shire; such as childcare, kindergartens and schools. Three main challenges exist for the timely delivery of quality social infrastructure:

- Council is unable to recover the full costs on land and buildings infrastructure, with developer contribution levies only partially covering such costs.
- The State Government annual budget process and election cycles slow significant infrastructure items, in particular schools, public transport, and health services.
- Limited Council revenue is often the sole source for funding and delivering quality regional open space, leisure and sporting facilities.

AN AGEING POPULATION

Similar to much of regional Victoria, Gippsland's population is projected to age over the next 30 years. The proportion of people aged 65 or over is forecast to increase from 18 per cent to 30 per cent over this time, compared to 12 per cent of the population in 1996. This will have implications for health, social services, leisure and cultural services, as well as housing preferences, with 84 per cent of future household growth to be from households with one person or couples without children.

HEALTH SERVICES

Unprecedented growth in birth numbers at the West Gippsland Hospital over the past few years has seen increases from 870 births in 2009/10 to 974 births in 2014/15. The majority of the births in Warragul are to families within Baw Baw Shire and with only 592 kindergarten places available across the Shire we know that by 2016 Baw Baw will not have adequate places for the prescribed 15 hours of kindergarten for four year olds.

EDUCATION

Other than a recent redevelopment of an existing school in Yarragon, there has been no new schools built in the Baw Baw Shire for several decades. We need to improve access to and the availability of quality education in the region to attract and retain younger people who often leave the region for education and employment opportunities in Melbourne.

West Gippsland Regional Arts Centre Upgrade

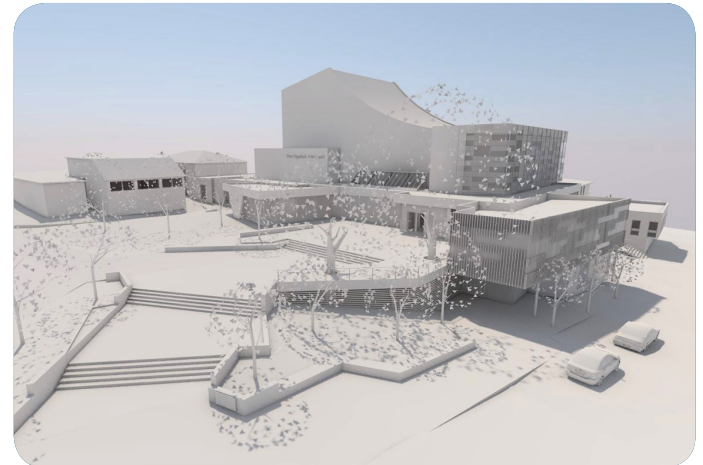
PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

The upgrade project will see the West Gippsland Regional Arts Centre:

- Seating capacity increase from 480 to 750.
- Improve audience circulation by creating a new access foyer to the south side of the auditorium and creating new foyers to access the rear stalls and balcony.
- Re-orient the overall Arts Centre to take advantage of the Civic Place, Warragul Park.
- Achieve a Universal Design with accessible wheelchair spaces, assisted access aisles and a passenger lift between levels.
- Re-orient the café space to engage Civic Park and be accessible from outside the Arts Centre and provide a place for active visitor engagement both within the venue and independently.
- Create new break-out meeting and function spaces to complement the capacity of the auditorium to host major conferences.
- Improve the technical facilities and backstage areas to enable the venue to host major productions.



The current entrance of the West Gippsland Regional Arts Centre,



A concept of the West Gippsland Regional Arts Centre Upgrade.

PROJECT STATUS

Master
Plan

Feasibility
Study

Design

Shovel
Ready

Funding

In Progress

Completed

Advocacy



BACKGROUND

The West Gippsland Regional Arts Centre (WGRAC) was officially opened on 19 July 1982 and at the time cost \$4.2M to build, with \$2.84M provided from the State Government and \$1.36M provided by Local Government and local fundraising.

Since opening the WGRAC has provided local audiences with access to performances by nationally and internationally recognised performers and companies, as well as providing a place to showcase and develop local talent.

CURRENT SITUATION

The WGRAC is one of Victoria's outstanding regional facilities and with the upgrade will be able to continue providing quality services and facilities to an expanding audience, achieving significant benefits for the region, both socially and economically.

The Schematic Design provides a strong vision for an immediate building upgrade, and also clearly identifies how additional facilities can be integrated into a well-designed precinct. Council has already begun and completed works on some of the project's upgrades including:

- Works to repair and upgrade the restroom facilities.
- Refurbishing the auditorium; removing the existing 492 seats and replacing them with 510 new, wider seats, installing new carpeting, painting, and temporarily lowering the existing orchestra pit.
- Redesigned and reconstructed the rear carpark and loading bay to improve safety and performance.

WHAT IS NEEDED?

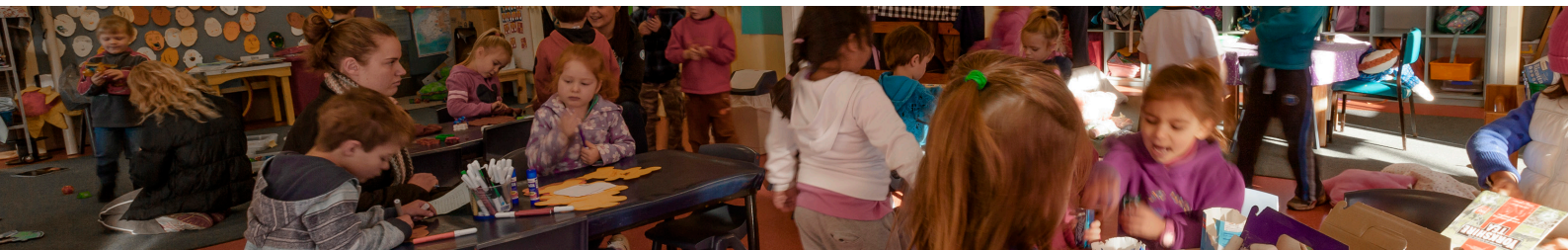
Working together, we can raise the funds to deliver the \$13.9M WGRAC Upgrade Project in a timely manner:

- State Government Victoria (RDV) have committed – \$4M
- Federal Government National Stronger Regions Fund – \$4.9M (application pending)
- Baw Baw Shire Council – \$5M including a fundraising campaign, along with underwriting any additional escalations.



COUNCIL PROJECT

Co-Location of Kindergartens on Primary School Sites



BACKGROUND

Baw Baw Shire is experiencing unprecedented growth throughout the Shire. During 2014/15 there were 974 babies born, and the parents of those babies will be looking for early years services across the Shire in the near future. Integral to this is the provision of 15 hours of kindergarten education per week per child.

There are 16 kindergarten facilities across the shire; 13 are overseen by cluster managers, three are privately operated.

Council provides a central enrolment service for the 13 cluster managed sites and is the landlord of seven of the facilities.

The capped capacity across all 13 kindergartens that participate in the central enrolment scheme is 592 children.

CURRENT SITUATION

Enrolments can be taken from a child's second birthday, which has provided data that assists in predicting future kindergarten enrolment numbers and growth patterns.

Projected figures demonstrate a shortage of kindergarten places in Warragul, Drouin and Trafalgar. These towns were also identified as having capacity issues in Baw Baw Shire Council's Municipal Early Years Infrastructure Plan (2010).

The State Government partnered with Baw Baw Shire Council to address the Warragul and Drouin capacity issues by expanding Warragul Community Kindergarten (Mouritz Street) and Drouin's Oak Street Kindergarten, providing an additional 65 kindergartens places in Baw Baw Shire in 2014. Even with these extensions operating at capped capacity, there are still too few kindergarten places available.

Construction work for the new \$1.02 million Integrated Children's Hub in Drouin has been completed. The facility now delivers an additional 44 kindergarten places for children in our community.



WHAT IS NEEDED?

Baw Baw Shire, the State Government and Kindergarten Cluster Managers must:

- Provide integrated early years services on primary school sites within the Shire, using the Yarragon Model.
- Assist the cluster managers to provide appropriate facilities for additional places commencing in 2017.
- Develop a governance structure to enable the co-location of kindergartens on primary school sites.



Above: The first co-located facility in Baw Baw Shire, the Yarragon Early Learning Centre and Primary School, was opened in April 2014.

FAST FACTS

- 974 births occurred at the West Gippsland Hospital in 2014/15, which is a 11% increase on the number of babies born just five years prior in 2009/10 (870 births).
- 2% is the increase in births between 2013/14 and 2014/15; from 960 births to 974 births.
- 40 – 70 additional kindergarten places are estimated to be required in Baw Baw Shire from 2015.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- Enrolments can be taken from a child's second birthday, which has provided data that assists in predicting future kindergarten enrolment numbers and growth patterns.
- Sufficient kindergarten places for children in the Baw Baw Shire.

PROJECT STATUS

Concept
Plan

Master
Plan

Feasibility
Study

Design

Shovel
Ready

In Progress

Completed

Advocacy

West Gippsland Hospital



The West Gippsland Hospital in Warragul is owned and managed by the West Gippsland Healthcare Group (WGHG). The hospital operates from an ageing facility that is in need of significant refurbishment or reconstruction on a greenfield site. Like the rest of Baw Baw Shire, the West Gippsland Hospital is experiencing the effects of an increase in demand for acute hospital services, reflecting the rapid population growth.

CURRENT SITUATION

The case for a new hospital in West Gippsland is ongoing; a feasibility study has already been undertaken and has recommended building a new hospital on the already purchased greenfield site. Baw Baw Shire Council, in partnership with the Committee for Gippsland (C4G) and the WGHG are currently seeking a comprehensive study be undertaken, to involve all the necessary steps leading up to and including the preparation of a Business Case using the Department of Treasury and Finance methodology.

WHAT IS NEEDED?

Baw Baw Shire Council needs the State Government's help to:

- Consider a new hospital at the greenfield side, following the completion of the West Gippsland Baw Baw Services Review.
- Undertake the Business Case for a new hospital for West Gippsland.

PROJECT STATUS

Concept
Plan

Master
Plan

Feasibility
Study

Service
Review

Business
Case

Shovel
Ready

In Progress

Completed

Advocacy



COMMUNITY BENEFIT

- Significantly increased bed numbers in High Dependency, Maternity, Renal Dialysis, and a dedicated Chemotherapy/Haematology area.
- Increased number of operating theatres.
- Direct access to ambulance bays and the Emergency Department.
- A multi-level designed facility that will be energy and material efficient.
- Improved navigation and way finding.
- Easy and accessible levels and pedestrian access, plus multi-level car park facilities.
- A new 60 bed High Care Residential Aged Care Facility.
- A dedicated Emergency Management Services helipad, with direct access to the Emergency Department.
- Policy, planning and investment certainty.
- Delivery of much needed employment growth throughout the project phases and subsequently.
- Improved access to quality services regionally to meet the needs of the growing and ageing population.

FAST FACTS

- 974 births occurred at the West Gippsland Hospital in 2014/15, which is an 11% increase on the number of babies born just five years prior in 2009/10 (870 births).
- 2% is the increase in births between 2013/14 and 2014/15; from 960 births to 974 births.
- 30% is the increase in the proportion of people aged 65 or over residing in the Shire over the next 30 years; evidencing a significant increase over time, from just 12% of the population in 1996 and 18% in 2015.

REGIONAL PROJECT

Improving Routes to Market



Image: The packing line at Flavorite Tomatoes

BACKGROUND

Baw Baw Shire is a highly productive agricultural area with considerable dairy, forestry and mining activities being undertaken. To improve efficiency, access and use of high productivity freight vehicles, outdated roads and bridges need to be upgraded.

Within Baw Baw Shire and across the Gippsland region there are significant detour and weight restrictions placed on roads and bridges, which create sub-optimal use of the existing network and restrict the production capacity of some dairy and other high yielding farms.

CURRENT SITUATION

The Gippsland Freight Strategy proposes 21 key priority actions and its main priority actions affecting provision of the road infrastructure within the Baw Baw Shire municipal boundaries are as follows:

- **Princes Highway Upgrade** - Progressively enhance the capacity and alignment of the Princes Highway between Melbourne and Sale including planning work on alternate truck routes for key towns along the Princes Highway, particularly Longwarry and Drouin.
- **Local Roads** - Improve key local road and bridge network to meet the needs of agriculture and

forestry industries in the future. There are currently 19 bridges identified as being in need of repair or replacement.

- **High Productivity Freight Vehicles (HPFV)** - Consider an extension of the HPFV network to Sale, subject to satisfactory outcomes of the current HPFV trials, duplication of Princes Highway between Traralgon and Sale, access control between Longwarry and Nar Nar Goon including the Sand Road interchange, and resolution of issues within metropolitan Melbourne.

PROJECT STATUS

Concept
Plan

Master
Plan

Feasibility
Study

Design

Shovel
Ready

In Progress

Completed

Advocacy



WHAT IS NEEDED?

Baw Baw Shire Council in partnership with the State and Federal Governments, the Gippsland Local Government Network (GLGN), Committee for Gippsland (C4G), and the Transport Industry need to:

- Undertake a detailed analysis of the current road hierarchy and bridge capacity across Baw Baw Shire and the greater Gippsland region to prioritise the upgrade of 'pinch-points' and antiquated infrastructure in the network.
- Work with industry to better understand and plan transport routes to improve overall cost effectiveness and efficiencies within the transport network.
- Seek funding from the State Government for rural councils to upgrade routes to market, including local roads and bridges, where there is a demonstrated productivity and/or community need.
- A total of \$7.2 million in funding is required to complete the necessary bridge works outlined in the Baw Baw Shire Council Long Term Infrastructure Plan 2015 - 2025. This plan also identifies \$62.4 million in road projects and a further \$1.7 million for culvert works.

OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

A co-operative approach with all levels of government and the transport industry, together with regular data collection and improved co-ordination of infrastructure and economic planning across the Gippsland region, will see an overall improvement in the transport network and provide Baw Baw Shire and Gippsland with a competitive advantage and reduced transport costs.

Developing a thorough understanding of the nature of freight will help to justify the relative importance of freight within other policy priorities. This should include studies from a logistics point of view that investigates the type of freight being moved, the route it takes, and the factors that generate demand for freight movement to ensure better planning outcomes.

Sealing South Face Road



Image courtesy of the Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort.

BACKGROUND

Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort is an iconic Victorian tourist destination located a two-and-a-half-hour car journey from Melbourne. It is the closest major snowfield to Melbourne, the Mornington Peninsula, Latrobe Valley and Gippsland. The Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort offers a year-round, family friendly, environmentally-sensitive, alpine experience.

Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort is one of Victoria's six alpine resorts, owned by the Crown and managed by the Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort Management Board (ARMB). Since the establishment of the Mt Baw Baw ARMB in 1998, investment in infrastructure, together with new visitor programs and marketing, has been undertaken with the goal of increasing utilisation of the resort on a year-round basis.

CURRENT SITUATION

The Mt Baw Baw Tourist Road is precarious and winding. It is a single lane asphalt road, with limited verges for passing oncoming traffic. It is also frequently used by logging trucks, thereby rendering it a high risk route for tourists and the general community.

South Face Road, while providing a more direct and less winding route via Moe, is a forestry road; it is uneven and not sealed and is therefore difficult for domestic and commercial vehicles to utilise and unstable for construction traffic. Buses generally will not use the road until it is sealed.

PROJECT STATUS

Concept
Plan

Master
Plan

Feasibility
Study

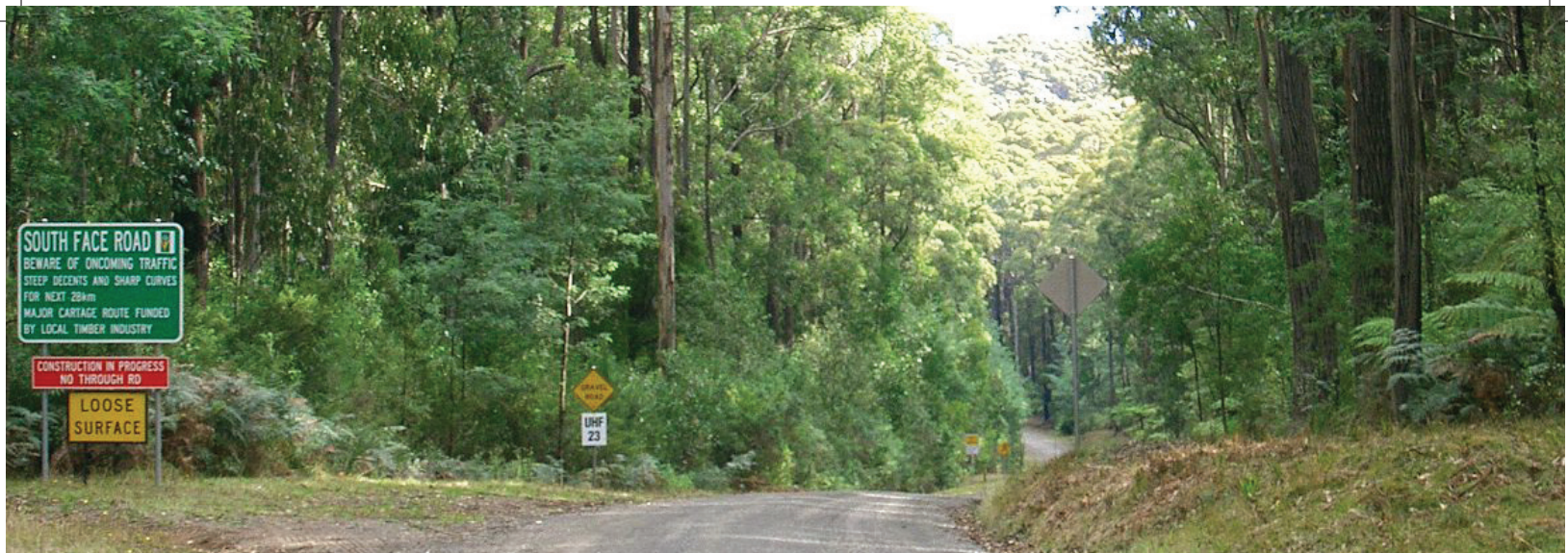
Design

Shovel
Ready

In Progress

Completed

Advocacy



WHAT IS NEEDED?

State Government investment to:

- Seal South Face Road, Mt Baw Baw at an approximate cost of \$6.6M to create a dynamic and connected tourist route through Gippsland.
- Connect the Mt Baw Baw village to the electricity grid to provide certainty of supply at an approximate cost of \$12.9M.

OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

- Creation of an iconic hinterland tourist driving route connecting the Latrobe Valley, Walhalla, Mt Baw Baw, Noojee, Neerim South and the Yarragon/Jindivick areas.
- Improve the financial viability of Mt Baw Baw through both reduced electricity costs and increased visitor yield.
- Improve road safety and visitor access to the resort through the Latrobe Valley and provide ease of access to the eastern suburb growth corridors.
- Increase the total annual visitation to Mt Baw Baw by approximately 20 per cent in the first three years after sealing.
- Increase private sector investment into Mt Baw Baw and the surrounding region.
- Increase regional tourism visitation and the regional economy.