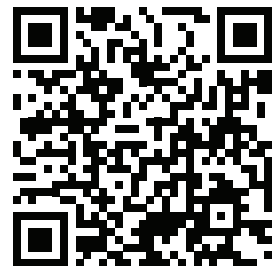


Baw Baw Culture and Connection Precinct

A civic space for all in the heart of Baw Baw Shire



Join the community campaign asking for State and Federal support to build the Baw Baw Culture and Connection Precinct



Baw Baw Culture and Connection Precinct



What is it?

Baw Baw Culture & Connection Precinct will be an ambitious, future-oriented community centre for the people of Baw Baw Shire and beyond.

Earmarked for construction on existing underutilised land surrounding the West Gippsland Arts Centre and Civic Park, the first stage of this multi stage project, will encompass a new state-of-the-art library and multi-use civic building set amongst open spaces and landscapes for, gathering, learning and leisure.

Council is currently working with the project reference group and stakeholders to explore how the precinct will be used and integrate with the Art Centre.

Current ideas include :

- café
- gallery/exhibition space
- maker's spaces
- co-working and collaborative spaces
- meeting rooms
- gaming and video conferencing
- visitor information
- opportunities for commercial, community and cultural partnerships.

The project offers an opportunity to meaningfully engage and partner with local Aboriginal people and businesses.

Why do we need it?

Rapid population growth

Between 2016 and 2021 Baw Baw Shire welcomed over 8,000 new residents and our population continues to grow rapidly. Forecast id. modeling predicts the population for Baw Baw Shire will grow by 49.78% to 84,766 by 2041.¹

With our booming population there is a lack of municipal spaces that provide our community a place to learn, connect and engage in cultural activities.

High demand for library programs

During 2021-2022 Myli increased its active library memberships by 12% to 26,155 active members across West Gippsland.²

Results from the Public Libraries Victoria Census reported that participation in Myli library programs for entertainment and social connection was 9% above the statewide average.

The current Warragul Library is housed in a small aging building, limiting the services and programs it can offer. The building design is not well suited to meet accessibility needs for people with disabilities and is non-compliant with current Australian accessibility standards.

This project will provide a dynamic new fit-for-purpose library with spaces for our growing, multicultural community to access a greater physical and digital collection and participate in a more diverse array of programs and literacy activities .

Lack of spaces to foster creative industries

Baw Baw Shire does not have a dedicated municipal gallery and lacks accessible spaces to foster visual arts participation in the community.

The project aligns with objectives and actions outlined in the Victorian Government's Creative State Strategy 2025: " to secure creative jobs; improve equitable access to creative experiences and careers; and enhance the benefits of creative endeavour and engagement."

Breaking down barriers to participation.

The precinct offers opportunities to design and provide a modern civic space and services that improves equality by considering the mobility, sensory, cognitive and cultural needs of all users now and into the future.

How will it benefit Baw Baw?

This project will create a hub of connection, creativity, knowledge and innovation.

Libraries and civic spaces are responsible for a host of far reaching benefits for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

Literacy

Modern digitally connected libraries like the proposed project foster literacy of all kinds at all stages of life through free access to early years, adult, digital, cultural and artistic literacy programs.

Literacy is a critical factor in economic and social participation, removing barriers to education and employment.

By providing equitable access to vast collections of books, films, music, exhibitions, digital tools and more, municipal cultural institutions nurture artistic and entrepreneurial endeavours of all kinds.

Wellbeing

Free and accessible civic spaces like libraries and galleries support mental health by reducing social isolation and connecting communities and providing outlets for creative expression, building self esteem and fostering understanding.

Sustainability

The architecturally innovative space will be highly efficient; addressing the needs of our changing environment.

Designed to reach Green Star Level 5 accreditation the internationally recognised standard for healthy, resilient, positive buildings and places, the project will meet the highest environmental and social benchmarks; addressing climate action, resource efficiency, and health and wellbeing.

The construction will prioritise local and sustainable materials including renewable Victorian grown, owned and produced MASSLAM timber columns and beams rather than resource intensive steel.

The building will be powered by 100% renewable energy and be 30% more efficient than similar buildings.

Job Creation & Economic Impact

Libraries build productive and engaged communities and generate \$4.30 in benefit for every dollar invested³

Modeling shows that the construction of the project would create 150 new jobs and have an economic output of \$62 million.⁴ The ongoing operation and maintenance of the precinct will provide new employment for workers from the creative industries, hospitality, technology and education sectors.

The precinct will attract tourism and increase visitation by providing an ideal venue for new exhibitions and events. e.g. Writers Festivals, speakers and conventions.

Future Ready

This Baw Baw Culture & Connection Precinct offers an opportunity to embrace a project which exemplifies the Baw Baw Community Vision for a sustainable, healthy and thriving community.

Let's build a visionary civic space for current generations that will inspire and service future generations.

1. Population and household forecasts, 2021 to 2041, prepared by .id (informed decisions), December 2021.

2. MYLI - My Community Library, Annual Report 2021-2022

3. LIBRARIES WORK! The socio-economic value of public libraries to Victorian, Debra Rosenfeldt and Robyn Ellard State Library Victoria, 2018

4. REMPLAN



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of Country throughout Baw Baw Shire; the Gunaikurnai, Bunurong, and Kurnai Nations and recognise their ongoing connection to this land, water and culture.

We pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people their ancestors, Elders, past, present and acknowledge their rich contribution to society and culture and their ongoing role in caring for Country.

We acknowledge that First Peoples self-determination is a human right as enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Baw Baw Culture and Connection Precinct will be place where everyone is welcome and diversity is celebrated.

“It doesn’t have to be educational. It doesn’t matter who you are or what you were doing. Young or old. Rich or homeless. It doesn’t matter. You just go there. These ‘palaces for the people’ are civic sites where everyone is welcome.”

Public Library
Ali Smith

