



BAW BAW SHIRE COUNCIL

Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy.

**A PROSPEROUS AND RESILIENT ECONOMY.
2026-2030**



Acknowledgement of **Traditional Custodians**

**Baw Baw Shire Council wishes to acknowledge the
Traditional Custodians on the lands on which we come
together to live, work, play and be a community.**

**We pay respect to the way they have cared for the lands
and the waters, and we thank them for sharing their
enduring culture and customs with us.**



Baw Baw

SHIRE ATTRACTIONS.

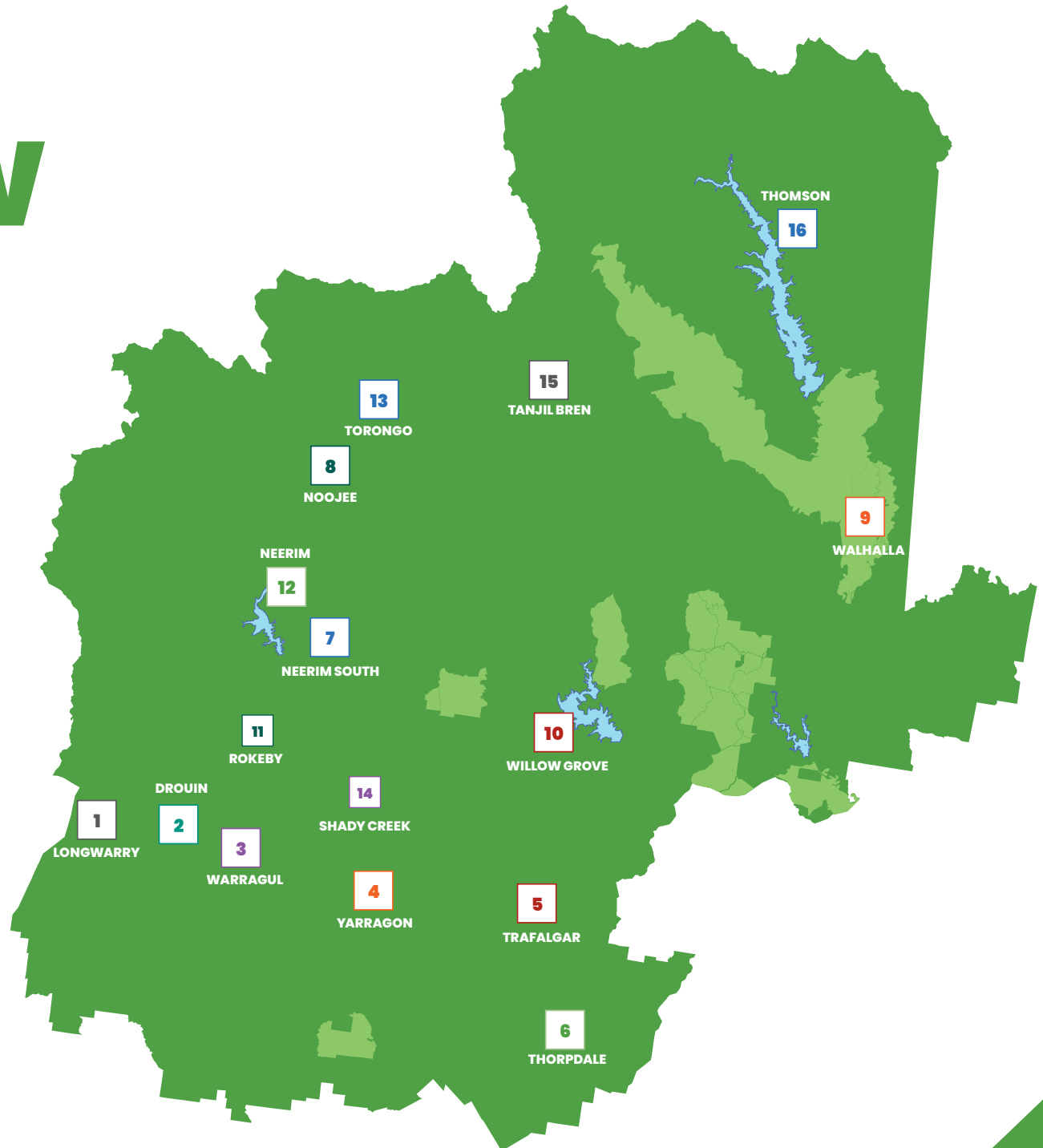


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COMMUNITY VISION.

Our vision for Baw Baw Shire for the next 20 years and beyond is for every individual, every household and every community throughout the region. It has been created by our community for our community. It is the future we want to work towards together.

Strategic objectives.....

We aspire for.....

Delivered by.....

Creating.....

A Sustainable Shire.

Sustainable towns and villages that continue to benefit from our beautiful rural and natural environment.



Balancing natural and built environments that protect nature; contribute to a cleaner, healthier environment; and ensures liveable, productive and inspiring landscapes.



A sustainable region where we value our rural and natural environment.

A Healthy Community.

Healthy and well people, living in safe, connected communities and healthy environments.



Being an inclusive, caring, safe and supportive community, that promotes wellbeing and belonging.



A healthy region we are proud to call home.

A Thriving Community.

Thriving, diverse and resilient communities.



Valuing our heritage, promoting and supporting local, and investing in our future.



A thriving region to visit, live, learn, work and discover.

INTRODUCTION.

Baw Baw Shire is one of Victoria's fastest growing regions, experiencing unprecedented population growth driven by its enviable lifestyle, natural beauty, and proximity to Melbourne. As more people choose to call the region home, strategic planning is required to ensure economic growth does not come at the expense of the Shire's unique character and values.

This strategy responds to the Shire's opportunities, challenges and critical enablers including rapid urban development, changing industry dynamics, infrastructure needs, land availability, and evolving visitor expectations. It aims to strengthen existing economic sectors while encouraging and attracting innovation and entrepreneurship.

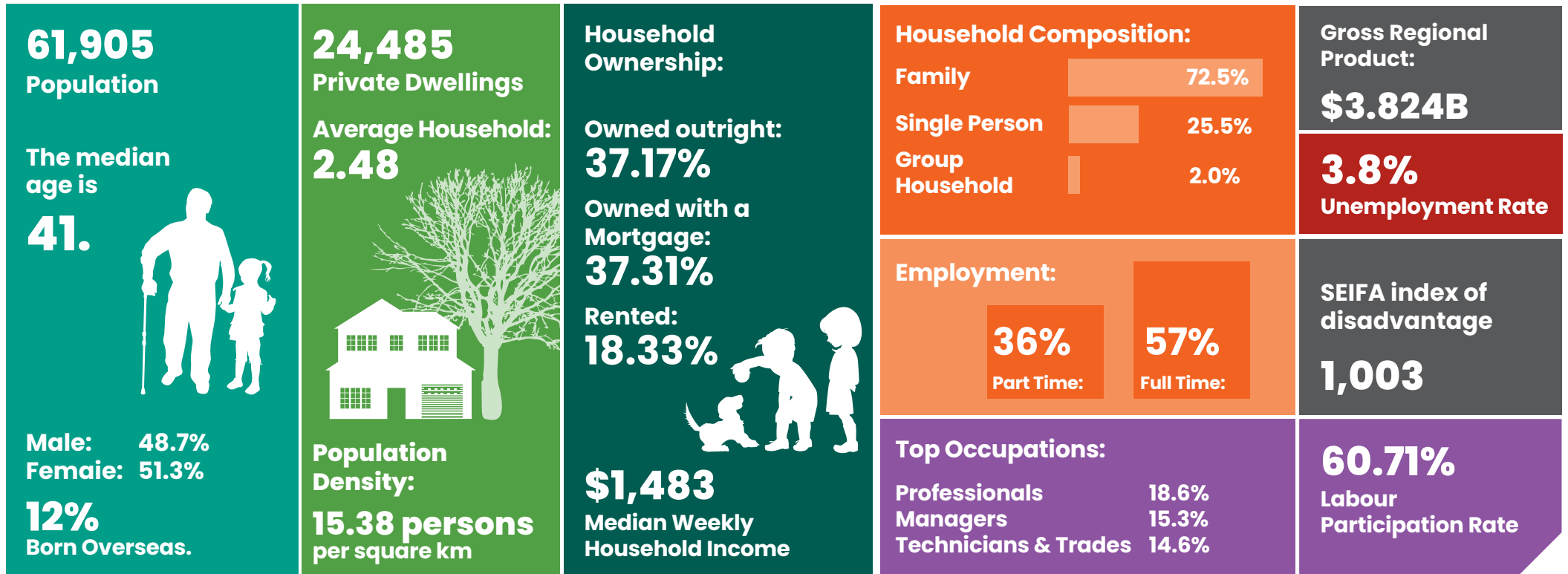
Guided by the principle that growth must contribute positively to the region's identity, and that development must complement rather than compete with the Shire's rural charm and small-town warmth, the strategy aims to future proof the local economy by promoting economic and environmental resilience.

With a targeted approach we can leverage and capitalise on local strengths to support existing industries including food and fibre and tourism, while also attracting new industries such as advanced manufacturing, health and wellbeing and emerging technologies, to create a diverse range of local employment opportunities and value add for the local economy.

This Strategy outlines key priorities and actions to ensure that Baw Baw Shire empowers small businesses to establish and grow, retains and attracts large businesses and becomes an attractive location to new industries. The collaborative approach across sectors, communities, industries and all levels of government will create opportunities, foster shared prosperity and a robust, forward-looking economy that reflects local strengths and responds to local needs.



Baw Baw Shire on a Page.



This Strategy has been informed by data and insights from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, REMPLAN, .id, Tourism Research Australia and CommBank iQ.



The Role of Local Government in Economic Development.

Economic health contributes to the overall health and wellbeing of the community, not only with regards to the provision of work and financial security, but also with social connectedness and liveability. Local Government plays an integral role in developing conditions that foster economic growth and development. Collaboration with industry, local businesses, State and Federal Government, and the community is essential when creating these conditions.

Local Government supports stimulation and strengthening of a vibrant and prosperous economy through key activities:

Advocacy:

Promotion of regional interests to all levels of government.

Facilitation:

Provision of information to businesses and facilitating communication with all levels of government.

Investment Attraction:

Creating an environment that generates investment interest.

Investigation:

Ensuring due diligence is undertaken and that decisions are driven by data.

Planning:

Undertaking long-term planning to align growth with the vision for the region.

Service Provision:

Provision of services and activities that support economic development.



Key Partnerships.

Our key partners include:

- Agriculture Victoria
- Business Victoria
- Committee for Gippsland
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
- Destination Gippsland
- Federation University
- Food & Fibre Gippsland
- Lardner Park
- Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort
- One Gippsland
- Peri-Urban Councils Victoria
- Regional Development Victoria
- South East Melbourne Manufacturers Alliance
- TAFE Gippsland





What Sets Us Apart.

Opportunities

- Brand identification and development
- Tourism routes between unique and diverse small towns
- Rail trails
- Hero destinations
- A developing fine dining market
- Farm Gate
- Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid
- Population and diversity growth
- Strong community engagement
- Further and Tertiary education providers
- Location along the M1 corridor (Gateway to Gippsland)
- Partnerships and regional collaborations

Challenges

- Infrastructure strain from rapid growth
- Local road infrastructure
- Land use pressures (conflicting uses between agriculture and residential)
- Visitor activities and attractions
- Accommodation
- Public transport
- No Visitor Information Centre
- No large-scale retail resulting in significant escape spend by residents
- Revenue constraints (rate caps)
- Volunteer fatigue
- Residents travelling outside the LGA for work
- Poor digital connectivity in rural areas

Strengths

- Strategic location—proximity to Melbourne and major markets
- Rapid population growth
- Quality agricultural land
- Above average rainfall
- Growing economic diversity
- Rail access
- Strong agricultural and construction sectors
- Affordability and lifestyle appeal
- Rich cultural history
- Natural assets (environment)

Threats

- Unprecedented growth
- Low-cost imports
- Strain on public amenities
- Climate change and severe weather occurrences (storm, flood, drought)
- Urban expectations in a rural area (service expectation gap)
- State and Federal policy shifts
- Funding delivery challenges
- Dependence on agriculture and construction sectors resulting in a less resilient economy

STRATEGY PURPOSE.

The objective of this Strategy is to drive sustainable, inclusive growth across the region by building on economic strengths and unlocking new opportunities.

As one of Victoria's fastest-growing peri-urban regions, Baw Baw Shire is uniquely positioned to leverage its proximity to Melbourne, its strong agricultural base, and its expanding townships to foster a diverse, vibrant and resilient economy.

This strategy aims to support local business growth, attract new investment and create local jobs, while enhancing the Shire's liveability and preserving its natural and rural character. It provides a framework for strategic planning and decision-making that balances the needs of the community, local businesses and the environment, ensuring economic growth and prosperity that benefits the entire community.



Key Priorities.

1. Diversify and Strengthen the Local Economy

Enable economic growth by supporting innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment across a diverse range of industries, with a focus on local business success and future-ready sectors.

2. Develop Regional Workforce and Skills Capacity

Strengthen local employment by equipping the workforce with future-focused skills, support career pathways for all age groups, and attract talent to meet industry needs.

3. Plan for Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure

Align economic growth with infrastructure and land-use planning that supports sustainable, peri-urban liveability.

4. Strengthen the Visitor Economy and Tourism Infrastructure

Develop a vibrant, year-round visitor economy that leverages Baw Baw Shire's unique assets, experiences, and natural beauty.

5. Champion Sustainability and Economic Resilience

Future-proof the economy against environmental risks and global shocks through sustainable practices and activities that improve resilience.





Baw Baw Shire.

Baw Baw Shire, Victoria's largest peri-urban Council, is located along a strategic growth corridor that stretches along the Princes Freeway taking in seven towns from Longwarry in the west to Trafalgar in the east and includes the Shire's growth centres- Drouin and Warragul.

Urban and residential growth is concentrated in townships, especially Warragul and Drouin, the fastest growing urban area in Australia (between 2015 – 2025). Retail is also concentrated around these towns, with Warragul having the most significant retail offerings in the Shire.

Located just an hour from Melbourne, Baw Baw Shire spans 4,025 square kilometres of diverse rural and semi urban landscapes. The region is characterised by a rich tapestry of rolling hills, fertile farmlands, dense native forests and alpine ranges. It is an agricultural powerhouse with a prosperous agricultural region, high-quality production capabilities and a rapidly expanding manufacturing and innovation sector.

Land use in the Shire is largely rural, with agriculture playing a significant role—particularly dairy farming, beef cattle, and horticulture. The Shire also contains extensive state forests and national parks, which support biodiversity, recreation and tourism.



61,905
Population of
Shire.

17,216
Population of
Drouin.

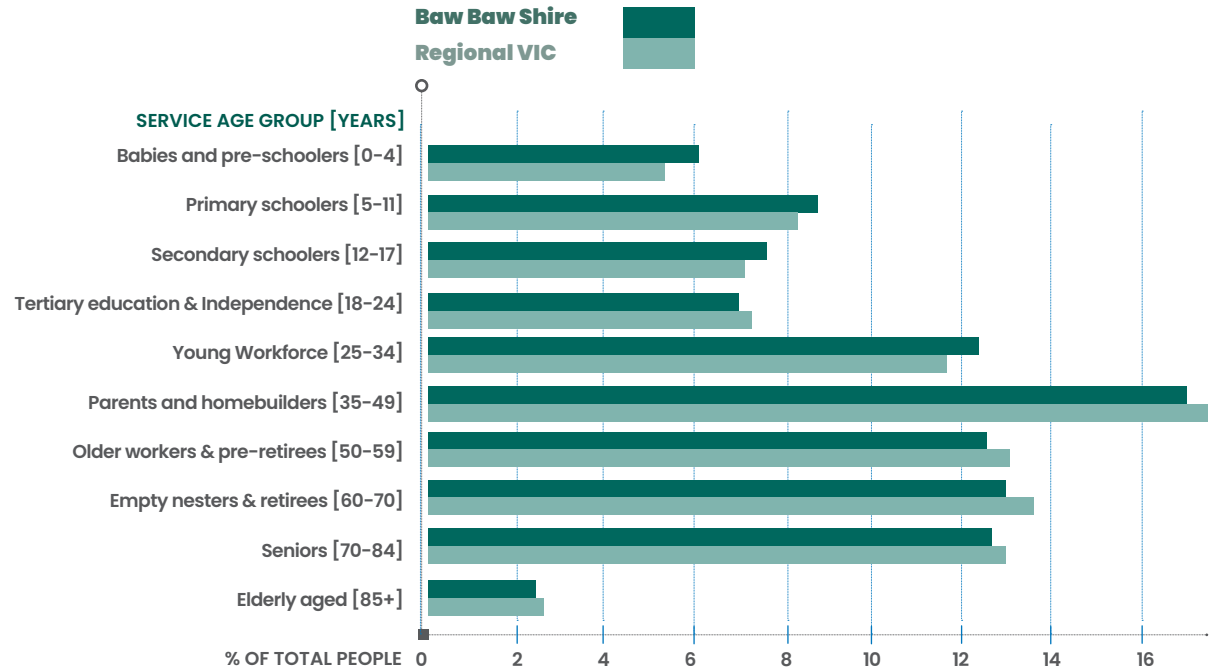
21,475
Population of
Warragul.



Population.

In 2024 the estimated population of the **Shire was 61,905**. Strong population growth was experienced since the 2016 census with **18.8% growth (9,137 people)**. This represents an average growth rate of 3.51% per year. The largest changes in age groups were people aged 70-84 years (increase of 1,923) followed by people aged 25-34 years (increase of 1,861).

Baw Baw Shire has a higher proportion of younger people (under 18), and a lower proportion of older people (60 years+) compared to Regional Victoria.



18.8%
growth since
2016.

MEDIAN: Age

Baw Baw Shire	41
Gippsland	46
Regional Victoria	43
Victoria	38

28%
of families were
couples with
child(ren)

10%
of families had
one-parent

1,230
increase in couples
without children

The largest growth in household type between 2016 – 2021 was couples without children, with an increase of **1,230 households**.



Education.

Forty-three per cent of the population have completed Year 12 or equivalent. A higher proportion of people left school at an early level (Year 10 or less) and a lower proportion of people completed Year 12 or equivalent compared to the Regional Victorian averages.

Twenty-five per cent of people have a vocational qualification and 16% have a university qualification (Bachelor or Higher).

43%

**of the population
completed Year 12
or equivalent.**

25%

**of people have a
vocational qualification.**

16%

**of people have a
university qualification
(Bachelor or Higher)**

The qualification levels required for major employment industries in Gippsland are thought to influence the higher-than-average number of people that have certificates as their highest level of attainment.



Employment.

Participation in the workforce is higher in the Shire than for Gippsland, and slightly lower than for Victoria.

MEDIAN WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD : Income

Baw Baw Shire	\$1,495
Gippsland	\$1,260
Victoria	\$1,759

	In the labour force	Not in the labour force	Employment status not stated	People who reported being in the labour force	
				Employed full-time	Employed part-time
Baw Baw Shire	59.3%	35.0%	5.8%	54.4%	34.4%
Gippsland	53.5%	39.4%	7.1%	51.6%	35.8%
Victoria	62.4%	32.2%	5.3%	56.2%	32.3%

Employment cont.

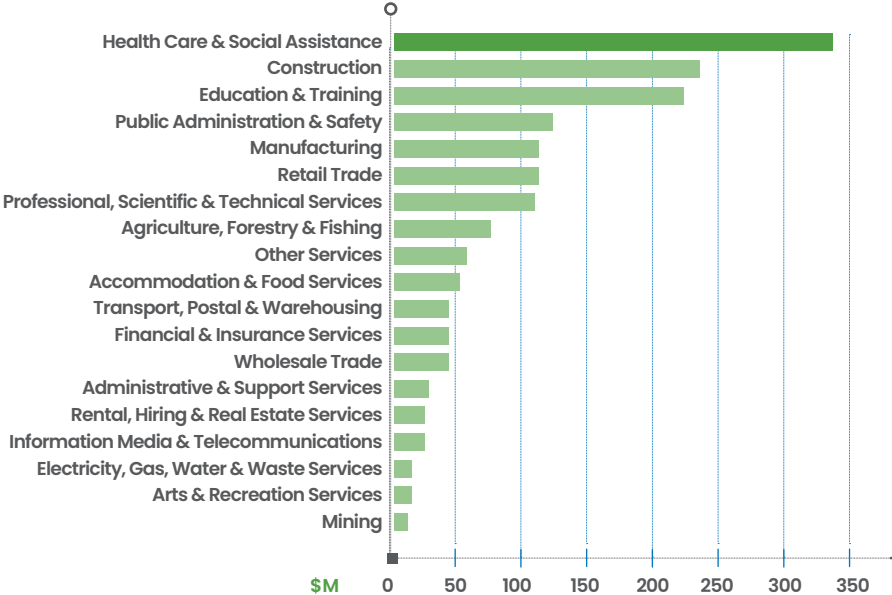
TOP 5 INDUSTRIES : Salary

Health Care & Social Assistance	\$335.917M	20.0%
Construction	\$232.397M	13.8%
Education & Training	\$220.993M	13.2%
Public Administration & Safety	\$122.266M	7.3%
Manufacturing	\$110.755M	6.6%

Healthcare & Social Assistance, Construction, Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing and Education & Training employ

51% of workers in the Shire

WAGES & SALARIES



EMPLOYMENT





Employment Trends.

As the population of Baw Baw Shire has grown, so too has the labour force and participation. In the last five years, there was a **22.9% growth** in labour force participation, a **5,346 increase** in employed persons and a decrease in the unemployment rate from 5.5% in 2016 to **3.8% in 2021**, which is below the regional Victorian average (4.1%).

WORKERS IN BAW BAW



Industries with greatest employment increases [2016 - 2021]





Economy.

Key industries that contribute to economic activity in terms of regional exports, employment, value-added and local expenditure on goods and services (backward linkages) include:



As of June 2025, the Gross Regional Product for the Shire was **\$3,823.799M** and the total Regional Exports **\$2,180.365M**

TOP 5 INDUSTRIES Gross Revenue [Total Sales]

Construction	\$1,522.699M	19.6%
Manufacturing	\$1,142.124M	14.7%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	\$1,119.305M	14.4%
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	\$767.914M	9.9%
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$575.078M	7.4%

Value-added data is the marginal economic value that is added by each industry sector. It can be calculated by subtracting local expenditure and expenditure on regional imports from the output generated by an industry sector.

The total value-added estimate for Baw Baw Shire is **\$3,491.018M**.

TOP 5 INDUSTRIES

Value-added

Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	\$584.118M	16.7%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	\$513.216M	14.7%
Construction	\$426.513M	12.2%
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$398.834M	11.4%
Education & Training	\$250.768M	7.2%





Visitor Economy.

In the 2024 calendar year, Baw Baw Shire welcomed **964,000 domestic visitors**, a **4% annual growth since 2020**. Visitors to the region make a significant contribution to the local economy both through direct transactions e.g. tourism experiences, hospitality, accommodation and through indirect transactions e.g. transport costs and groceries.

Accommodation and Food Services attract 36.7% of visitor spend followed by Retail Trade (13.1%) and Transport, Postal and Warehousing (10.9%)

964,000
domestic visitors
in 2024.

4%
annual growth
since 2020.

Domestic Visitors to Baw Baw Shire – 2024			
	Visitors	Expenditure (\$)	\$ (visit type)
Day Visitor	631,000	\$83M	\$132 (per visit)
Overnight Visitor	333,000	\$83M	\$134 (per night)
Total	964,000	\$166M	-

The average spend varies amongst the different visitor markets. Domestic visitors who travel for a holiday spend most, followed by those travelling to attend a specific leisure or sporting event or festival, compared to those travelling to visit friends and relatives.

2.7%
of Gross Revenue

5.2%
of jobs are from
Tourism

3.3%
of Wages and
Salaries



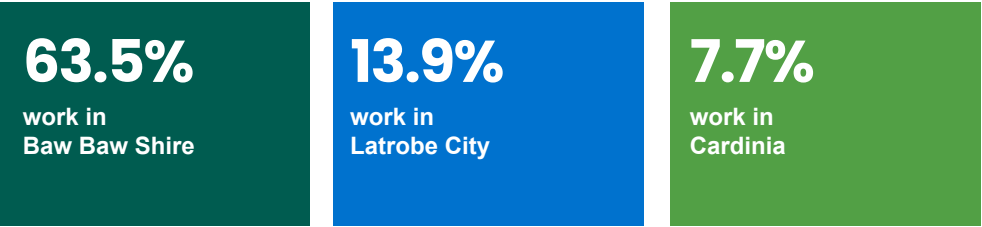


Local Drivers.

Baw Baw Shire’s population is projected to reach **93,737 by 2046**. This will continue to drive growing demand for a wide variety of services that support the community.

Currently, 63.5% of Baw Baw residents work in Baw Baw Shire. To support local economic activity and retention it is important to create a Shire where residents are able to ‘live, work and play’. To achieve this, a diversity of employment opportunities and amenities including retail, hospitality and recreation, are needed so that residents can earn and spend locally.

BAW BAW RESIDENTS



The lack of services, particularly the diversity of retail shops and the location of main shopping centres being primarily in Drouin and Warragul, has resulted in significant resident spend leakage. Improved infrastructure and services are required to minimise spend and workplace leakage.

Resident Spend YE June 2025	
Baw Baw Shire	\$519.5M
Online	\$205.0M
Moe (Latrobe City)	\$54.7M
Pakenham (Cardinia)	\$30.5M





Local Drivers cont.

As of June 2025 there were **6,425 businesses registered** within the Shire.

The below table provides a summary of the industries in Baw Baw Shire and the employee size.

	Non-Employing	1- 4 Employees	5-19 Employees	20-199 Employees	200+ Employees
Construction	698	420	95	11	0
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1,028	192	55	7	3
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	252	165	32	8	0
Retail Trade	112	131	47	11	0
Other Services	158	139	45	3	0
Accommodation and Food Services	63	62	67	9	0
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	190	101	24	3	0
Manufacturing	103	71	34	11	0
Health Care and Social Assistance	178	65	35	12	0
Wholesale Trade	86	48	31	4	0
Administrative and Support Services	128	55	15	7	3
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	444	54	17	3	0
Financial and Insurance Services	92	34	13	0	0
Education and Training	35	20	5	0	3
Arts and Recreation Services	38	10	5	0	0



KEY PRIORITIES.



1.

Diversify and Strengthen the Local Economy

Enable economic growth by supporting innovation, entrepreneurship and investment across a diverse range of industries, with a focus on local business success and future-ready sectors.

A. Increase support for local business

- Provide mentoring, grants and workshops for small enterprises, with a focus on digital capability and growth.
- Support businesses to establish and grow in Baw Baw Shire via the free Business Concierge and Better Approvals Services.
- Support businesses to identify and apply for grants through provision of the free Baw Baw Grant Guru Service.
- Advocate for funding to support start-up businesses in Baw Baw Shire.
- Support diversification of markets by providing local businesses with opportunities to learn more about global export and foster introductions to global export support services.

B. Business and Investment Attraction

- Showcase Baw Baw Shire's economic strengths and promote opportunities in growth sectors including agri-food, advanced manufacturing, construction and health services.
- Identify and promote growth industry sectors such as food manufacturing, health services and new energy, aligned with regional strengths.
- Partner with regional stakeholders to advocate for the region and attract investment for delivery of infrastructure-ready development sites.

C. Introduce agricultural focused business support

- Introduce an agribusiness support role.
- Support development of professional networks for agribusinesses that foster innovation, future planning and business resilience.
- Promote agribusiness value-adding initiatives that allow local producers to move up the value chain through local processing, branding, and distribution.
- Support adoption of resilience programs including drought preparedness, regenerative agriculture and low-carbon farming practices.

D. Support manufacturing growth opportunities

- Work with regional partners to support the expansion of manufacturing precincts along the M1 corridor, utilising Baw Baw Shire's location as the 'Gateway to Gippsland'.
- Advocate for, and support efforts to attract, investment in the proposed Longwarry Logistics and Employment Hub to diversify local employment opportunities.

2.

Develop Regional Workforce and Skills Capacity

Strengthen local employment by equipping the workforce with future-focused skills, supporting career pathways for all age groups and attracting talent to meet industry needs.

- A. Partner with local schools, TAFEs, universities and industry**
 - Promote co-design and delivery of vocational training in priority areas such as aged care, trades, agriculture, tech and hospitality.
- B. Support local careers and pathways programs**
 - Promote opportunities for school students, school leavers and career changers to learn about local career opportunities and undertake training to meet local needs.
- C. Support migrant and diverse workforce integration**
 - Support adoption of programs that help new residents integrate and contribute to the economy and community.
- D. Support Indigenous Economic Development and resilience**
 - Foster inclusive economic growth by enabling the success and sustainability of Indigenous-owned businesses through targeted initiatives and partnerships.
 - Work in partnership with Indigenous representative bodies including the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Gunaikurnai Land and Aboriginal Waters Corporation, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and Kurnai Nations, to provide an inclusive, culturally sensitive service to promote Indigenous enterprises.

3.

Plan for Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure

Align economic growth with infrastructure and land-use planning that supports sustainable, peri-urban liveability.

A. Ensure land availability for industrial and commercial development

- Proactively rezone to enable infrastructure investment, particularly in relation to industrial and commercial zones.
- Support the Warragul and Drouin Growth Precinct to provide opportunities for significant residential and commercial development.

B. Develop a Rural Towns Economic Activation Plan

- Support vibrancy and economic diversification and resiliency in smaller communities through development of tailored plans.

C. Advocate for improved transport infrastructure

- Advocate for improved and expanded transport, freight access and active transport links.
- Advocate for improved public transport to increase accessibility across the Shire.

D. Reduce barriers to businesses

- Identify and advocate for key infrastructure priorities to ensure a competitive and attractive environment for industry.
- Streamline planning approval processes, business licensing, permits and registrations to incentivise businesses establishing and expanding in Baw Baw Shire.

4.

Strengthen the Visitor Economy and Tourism Infrastructure

Develop a vibrant, year-round visitor economy that leverages Baw Baw Shire's unique assets, experiences and natural beauty.

A. Develop signature visitor experiences

- Identify, develop and promote unique experiences such as food & wine trails, rail trails, cycling routes and 'foodie' experiences celebrating local producers and produce.
- Support eco and sustainable tourism activities by leveraging environmental assets such as Mount Baw Baw, National and State Forests, Reserves and local conservation areas.
- Support and advocate for Walhalla's inclusion in the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid.
- Work collaboratively with Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort to create opportunities for visitors throughout the year.
- Develop a Baw Baw Shire Tourism Strategy to ensure a strategic approach to tourism that responds to visitor expectations and forecasts and supports a consistently positive visitor experience.

B. Upgrade tourism infrastructure

- Identify and advocate for tourism infrastructure upgrades, including wayfinding signage, parking, public toilets and mobile connectivity in key tourism zones.
- Support the investment in, and development of, more diverse accommodation offerings to cater to increasing visitor numbers.

C. Brand strengthening and Regional collaboration

- Strengthen the West Gippsland brand through marketing utilising storytelling, digital media, visitor guides and partnerships to attract visitors.
- Work with Destination Gippsland to develop destination marketing campaigns that promote longer stays and increased spend in the region.
- Promote regional and industry collaboration through a coordinated events calendar and visitor servicing network.

D. Prioritise events that have economic impact and improve liveability

- Invest in signature major events that drive tourism and support local businesses such as food & wine festivals, sporting events, business events and indigenous cultural experiences.
- Support community-led events that contribute to the Shire's liveability and vibrancy.
- Develop a Baw Baw Shire Events Strategy to ensure a strategic approach to events that supports a diverse range of activities for the community and visitors.

5.

Champion Sustainability and Economic Resilience.

Future-proof the economy against environmental risks and global shocks through sustainable practices and activities that improve resilience.

- A. Develop a Local Climate Risk & Economic Resilience Framework**
 - Work with industry and specialist stakeholders to identify and address impacts on the local economy and develop risk management strategies for sectors vulnerable to interruptions, including climate change, extreme weather events and global shocks.
- B. Support the development of circular economy businesses**
 - Work with industry and specialist stakeholders in promoting opportunities for businesses to increase reuse, repair, composting and recycling initiatives.
- C. Encourage agriculture resilience programs to protect supply chains and local jobs**
 - Support adoption of programs that protect food supply chain industries.
- D. Incentivise renewable energy adoption**
 - Support increased adoption of renewable energy in commercial and industrial precincts through planning and partnership incentives.



Implementation and Measuring Success.

The Key Priorities will be implemented over the duration of the Strategy. Detailed annual targets will be set for the Key Priorities and reported on at the end of each year to ensure transparency of activities and outcomes.

The initiatives will be measured against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that utilise Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound (SMART) metrics of success.

Implementation of this strategy will be staged and prioritised to align with available Council resources. Where additional funding is required, Council will seek external funding and partnership opportunities as they arise.

What we'll do	How we'll do it	Provide	Partner	Promote	How we'll measure it
Diversify and Strengthen the Local Economy					
Increase support for local business	Provide the Business Support Service, Better Approval Meetings, Business Workshops, Grant Guru, and the Business in Baw Baw Newsletter.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of businesses engaging with the Business Support Service. Number of businesses attending workshops.
Business and Investment Attraction	Develop an investment prospectus for Baw Baw Shire. Promote investment in the development of commercial and industrial sites.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of people/businesses receiving the newsletter. Number of searches and registrations on Grant Guru.
Introduce agricultural focused business support	Develop an agribusiness database and work with partners to deliver networking, innovation and upskilling activities.	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of businesses in Baw Baw Shire. Industry diversification trends in Baw Baw Shire.
Support manufacturing growth opportunities	Advocate for large scale investment in manufacturing by both government and private investors.	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spread of businesses with diverse employee size and skills in Baw Baw Shire.



Implementation and Measuring Success.

What we'll do	How we'll do it	Provide	Partner	Promote	How we'll measure it
Develop Regional Workforce and Skills Capacity					
Partner with local schools, TAFEs, universities and industry	Participate in regional bodies to support co-development of education programs that meet the needs of the region.		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of new initiatives that identify regional needs and development of responsive programs.
Support local careers and pathways programs	Participate in activities promoting employment programs in the region. Facilitate the Baw Baw Jobs Expo.	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance by employers and job seekers at the Baw Baw Employment Expo. Collaboration with culturally appropriate programs supporting migrant workers.
Support migrant and diverse workforce integration	Support educational activities with workplaces.		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration with identified Traditional Custodians to support culturally appropriate programs supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.
Support Indigenous Economic Development and resilience	Participate in programs promoting business development and economic resilience activities		✓	✓	

Implementation and Measuring Success.

What we'll do	How we'll do it	Provide	Partner	Promote	How we'll measure it
Plan for Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure					
Ensure land availability for industrial and commercial development	Work with the Planning Department to ensure long term planning that creates commercial and industrial zones to support economic growth		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial and commercial land use and availability. • Adoption of the Business Friendly Councils Program. • Development and implementation of a Rural Towns Economic Activation Plan. • Improved experiences and streamlined processes for businesses.
Develop a Rural Towns Economic Activation Plan	Develop and implement a Rural Towns Economic Activation Plan.	✓			
Advocate for improved transport infrastructure	Work with the Advocacy Department to advocate for improved transport infrastructure.		✓		
Reduce barriers to businesses	Work with relevant Shire departments to develop a streamlined platform to better support business applications.	✓	✓		

Implementation and Measuring Success.

What we'll do	How we'll do it	Provide	Partner	Promote	How we'll measure it
Strengthen the Visitor Economy and Tourism Infrastructure					
Develop signature visitor experiences	Develop a Tourism Strategy	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of annual visitors to Baw Baw Shire • Development of a Tourism Strategy
Upgrade tourism infrastructure and barriers	<p>Provide skill development opportunities to businesses to increase service delivery and awareness of visitor trends and expectations, as well as industry supports.</p> <p>Advocate for tourism-related infrastructure upgrades.</p>	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of visitor economy training opportunities provided • Number/reach of marketing activities • Development of an Events Strategy
Brand Strengthening and Regional Collaboration	<p>Work with Destination Gippsland to promote the West Gippsland brand for visitors.</p> <p>Publish visitor guides celebrating the region and promoting lengthened stays.</p>	✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of events supported annually • Number of visitors as a result of supported events.
Prioritise events that have economic impact and improve liveability	Develop an Events Strategy that supports a diverse, annual events calendar with high impact events.	✓			

Implementation and Measuring Success.

What we'll do	How we'll do it	Provide	Partner	Promote	How we'll measure it
Champion Sustainability and Economic Resilience					
Develop a Local Climate Risk & Economic Resilience Framework	Work with relevant Shire Departments and partners to develop a Local Climate Risk and Economic Resilience Framework.	✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a Climate Risk and Economic Resilience Framework
Support the development of circular economy businesses	Work with relevant Shire Departments and partners to support businesses to adopt reuse, composting, and recycling initiatives.	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of businesses participating in Council referred circular economy initiatives. • Number of businesses participating in Council referred agriculture resilience initiatives.
Encourage agriculture resilience programs to protect supply chains and local jobs	Work with relevant Shire Departments and partners to support the delivery of agriculture resilience activities.	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of businesses participating in Council referred renewable energy initiatives.
Incentivise renewable energy adoption	Work with relevant Shire Departments and partners to support businesses to adopt renewable energy activities.		✓	✓	

CONCLUSION.

The Strategy outlines key priorities and actions over the next four years to support a balanced and inclusive approach to growth. By supporting local businesses, establishing an environment that prioritises job creation, improves infrastructure, promotes environmental and financial sustainability and enhances our cultural offerings, we aim to foster a resilient economy that benefits all residents.

Through collaboration, innovation, and a dedication to our community's well-being, we can ensure a thriving future for our region.

