

# ADVANCING BAW BAW



## Advocacy Priorities 2023

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## Tier One

These are Council's most pressing Advocacy Priorities. They are large, long-term projects and areas of community need that align with the Baw Baw Shire Council Plan 2021-2025 and reflect the Community Vision for a sustainable, healthy and thriving future.

We will take a strategic, evidence based approach to communicating these needs to all levels of Government to show the need for change and investment in Baw Baw.

### Council will:

- Provide annual updates to the community on the progress of these priorities.
- Ensure these priorities are a key focus of discussions with Local, Regional, State and Federal influencers.
- Encourage community to join in advocacy through the introduction of Community Action Groups via online and community-based networks.
- Use these priorities to form the basis of submissions to State and Federal Budgets.
- Develop a range of advocacy materials for each campaign including media campaigns, communications plans, website content, economic impact studies, videography, concept drawings, promotional materials, social media assets and other supporting documents.



A diverse, connected community



## Baw Baw Culture and Connection Precinct

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

The Baw Baw Culture and Connection Precinct will provide versatile shared facilities including future-ready library, dedicated maker's spaces, co-working spaces, café, meeting rooms, video conferencing facilities and exhibition spaces. The precinct will provide a space for our growing multicultural community, and an opportunity to create a hub of culture and connection in partnership with Baw Baw Shire's First Peoples.

The precinct will be designed as a Green Star rated development, built to meet the highest environmental benchmarks addressing climate action, resource efficiency, and health and wellbeing.



A liveable, productive region



## Drouin & Warragul Arterial Road Network Planning

Modeling predicts that the population of Baw Baw Shire will grow to 84,766 by 2041\* and our 100-year-old network requires planning to keep pace with the projected volume of local residential and industrial traffic.

An improved network which addresses arterial congestion will make our roads safer for the community and unlock commercial and industrial opportunities for our region and beyond.

Council is actively advocating to State Government to allocate funding to Regional Roads Victoria to undertake transport network planning needed to address challenges with new and fit-for-purpose arterial transport routes in and around Drouin and Warragul.

\*Source: REMPLAN Forecast

# Advocacy Priorities 2023



Healthy and well people



Future ready infrastructure



Financial Security



## New Hospital and Increased Health Services and Support

Council is in a unique position to have a positive influence on the health and well-being of our community.

Council can support health and wellbeing by looking at innovative ways to boost investment and development in health and support services.

We're asking the Victorian Government to address critical gaps in health services here in our community including:

- Building the new West Gippsland Hospital,
- Increasing access to allied health services
- Providing increased mental health services, especially youth and family services
- Fostering innovation in the local healthcare sector

## Longwarry Logistic and Employment Hub

Council will continue to champion opportunities to form strategic partnerships with government and industry to create an employment and logistics hub in Longwarry.

Positioned at the 'Gateway to Gippsland', close to the planned Longwarry Sale Yards, the proposed Longwarry site boasts prime highway access and ideal proximity to Melbourne and regional Victoria.

The hub will consolidate efficient transport links, attract long term business investment and provide future employment opportunities essential for the greater Gippsland region as we transition out of forestry and coal.

## Securing Resources for Ongoing Growth

Working with all levels of government and relevant authorities to ensure there is adequate funding and support for high-growth communities over the next 15-20 years.

In order to provide needed infrastructure and services to our community, Council will be assertive in advocating for adequate government resourcing and actively pursue funding opportunities.

We will work with State Government agencies and authorities to communicate the growing service and infrastructure needs of our community and identify prudent ways for our operations to remain financially sustainable for future generations.

Council will hold key agencies to account over the provision and maintenance of non-council infrastructure community facilities and services such as drainage and roads.

# Advocacy Priorities 2023



## Tier Two

Council's next eight advocacy priorities generally focus on medium to large sized projects and areas of community need which will make a significant impact on the safety, livability and sustainability of Baw Baw as a place to live and work.

These priorities are likely to be delivered over varying time frames based on their strategic alignment with Regional, State and Federal plans.

### Council will:

- Provide annual community updates on the progress of these priorities.
- Ensure that they are referenced in any relevant submissions or position papers.
- Ensure these priorities are mentioned in discussions with Local, Regional, State and Federal key influencers.
- Develop a two-page advocacy flyer and website content for each project.
- Be aware and proactive and act as appropriate when potential opportunities arise.

## Education Investment

Making sure our families have access to high quality education which addresses the diverse learning needs of all members of our community.

With the State Government's Free Kinder initiative commencing in 2023, Council will advocate to ensure this program can be accessed and delivered within our shire.

We will continue to advocate for investment in state-of-the-art education facilities including tertiary and TAFE offerings, primary, secondary and specialist schools.

## Erica Mountain Bike Hub

Gateway to Walhalla and Mountain Rivers region, Erica is home to Gippsland's premier cross-country mountain bike trails. The proposed Mountain Bike Hub will see the creation of a regional trails hub at Erica building upon the parks strong mountain biking experience. The project will attract vital tourism from Gippsland and Melbourne and promote positive, social, mental and physical activity.

## Industry Transition

Securing opportunities and working with industry partners to support workers affected by major industry closures, natural disasters, climate change and the pandemic.

## Innovation in the Visitor Economy

The economic impact of the visitor economy in Baw Baw is broad and far-reaching. Projects including the Gippsland Regional Events Fund and Visitor Information Services are essential to drive tourism. Investing in innovation in tourism and securing support for marquee events will stimulate visitation and improve the experiences and products on offer in our region.

## Leveraging Commonwealth Games

The Victorian Government is investing \$2.6 billion into the 2026 Commonwealth Games to fund regional hubs, tourism, support events, and facilities.

With some events set to be held in Latrobe City, Baw Baw is positioned to leverage this opportunity to attract funding to support local businesses. Council will pursue grants and programs to assist local businesses to up-skill and prepare their workforce for the influx of visitors and spending the games present.

## Sealing South Face Road

This project will see the sealing of South Face Road, Mt Baw Baw to create a dynamic, safe, and connected tourist route through Gippsland. This improvement will increase visitation and better connect Mt Baw Baw to the surrounding regions, encouraging private investment.

## Securing Utilities

The rapid growth of Baw Baw Shire places significant pressure on the provision of essential utility services such as water, sewerage and telecommunications for residents and businesses. Ensuring water security for our growing residential and business population is essential.

Guaranteeing viable commercial access to utilities will improve Baw Baw Shire's attractiveness as a place to do business, stimulating local job creation.

## Trafalgar Library

A new static library in Trafalgar will create an inclusive community space for residents to not only browse and borrow from a larger collection but also experience a wider variety of programs not currently available through the mobile library.

# Advocacy Priorities 2023



## Tier Three

Council's Tier Three priorities are focused on supporting projects and initiatives endorsed by Council in strategic documents and policies, such as the Long Term Infrastructure Plan, Environmental Sustainability Strategy, Economic Development Strategy and Municipal Early Years Plan.

Advocacy for these priorities requires an agile approach by council; pivoting to take advantage of opportunities to bring forward projects as they arise and as community needs change.

### Council will:

- Ensure that they are referenced in any relevant submissions or position papers.
- Ensure these priorities are mentioned in discussions with Local, Regional, State and Federal key influencers.
- Be aware and proactive in relation to any potential opportunities and act to expedite these projects as appropriate.

## Environmental Sustainability

The Local Government Act 2020, legislates Councils' obligation to address environmental sustainability as one of its overarching governance principles. Council will be seeking opportunities to collaborate with stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of key strategies from Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022-2030. Examples include:

- Developing Council Carbon Emissions Reduction Plan
- Identifying opportunities to introduce Environmentally Sustainable Development principles into new developments
- Identifying significant trees for strengthened protection via the Planning Scheme and Local Law
- Working with the Victorian Government in planning the Container Deposit Scheme in Baw Baw Shire
- Reviewing Council's capability to actively manage risks to infrastructure, services and operations posed by extreme weather events

## Economic Development

Council will look for ways to further support the implementation of strategic initiatives outlined in Council's Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy 2022-2025 including:

- Strengthening and leveraging key regional partnerships with State and Federal Governments, The Peri Urban Group of Rural Councils, Destination Gippsland, One Gippsland, Food & Fibre Gippsland, Start Up Gippsland, Committee for Gippsland, Lardner Park and Alpine Resorts Victoria.
- Establishing a Work from Home Hub
- Seeking opportunities to collaborate with social enterprises, Aboriginal businesses and start-up incubators.

## Long Term Infrastructure Plan

The overarching objective of the LTIP is to provide the Baw Baw community with the right infrastructure, at the right time, in the right places, and in a way that represents best value for money and a sustainable use of resources.

Council will continue to seek funding and grants to build new infrastructure and upgrade existing assets to make our towns safer, healthier and more inclusive including:

- Road reconstruction and re-sealing
- Renewal of sports facilities and playing surface
- Refurbishing council owned buildings
- Renewal of playground and skate parks
- Accessible car parking improvements

## Municipal Early Years

Council has an important role in leading local policies, developing and delivering programs and providing infrastructure that can influence the health, education and wellbeing of its younger population.

In order to meet the needs of the youngest in our community Council will continue to advocate for projects that align with the five priority areas outlined in its Municipal Early Years Plan 2019-2023:

- Health and development
- Supports and services for families in a rapidly growing area
- Children's learning
- Community safety and accessibility
- Connection and inclusion