



Committee for Greater Shepparton

Strategic Plan

2017 - 2019

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Table of Contents

Strategic Plan 2017 – 2019	1
1. Our Vision.....	2
2. Executive Summary.....	2
3. Strategic Pillars.....	3
3.1 Productive	3
3.2 Connected	7
3.3 Creative	10
3.4 Inclusive	12
4. Committee Activities.....	15
4.1 Advocacy	15
4.2 Thought Leadership	15
4.3 Region Promotion	15
4.4 Economic Development	15
4.5 Facilitation.....	15
4.6 Influence	15
5. Committee Structure and Financial sustainability.....	16
5.1 Board & Staff.....	16
5.2 Membership.....	17
6. SWOT Analysis.....	18
7. Committee for Greater Shepparton Priority Matrix	19
8. Potential Projects.....	19
8.1 Shepparton 2030 Strategic Plan.....	19
8.2 Committee for Greater Shepparton annual public lecture.....	19

1. Our Vision

To be the Australian centre for dairy and horticulture, exporting reliable premium quality fresh and value added produce via innovative practices and a world class irrigation system. As a major business centre, Greater Shepparton will be connected to the world through modern infrastructure and supported by a thriving and educated community that celebrates its rich culture and diversity.

2. Executive Summary

The Committee for Greater Shepparton was established in 2013. Based on the successful Committee for model, and taking direction from the early development and successes of the Committee for Geelong, the C4GS has a solid membership base, a strong record of achievement and a good profile in the region.

The four strategic pillars remain relevant, and the issues faced and key actions required can be identified and organised under these pillars.

3. Strategic Pillars

3.1 Productive

3.1.1 Water

The focus of the water policy strategy will continue to be the Murray Darling Basin plan, as the removal of more water from the consumptive pool in the GMID threatens the viability of the major economic drivers of the region.



Key Actions

Supporting the GMID Water Leadership forum.

Strong advocacy to the MDBA and Federal government in relation to MDB plan roll out.

Continued involvement with GMW to support efforts for the satisfactory completion of the Connections project.

Target Outcome:

- No more removal of water from the GMID consumptive pool beyond the initial targets of 2750 GL target of the MBDP. Achievement of the full 650 GL offsets for the southern connected basin.

3.1.2 Fruit Industry

Support for the fruit industry will be via lobbying as industry specific issues come up (i.e. backpacker tax), and working with stakeholders such as Horticulture Innovation Australia, DEDJTR, Apple and Pear Australia and SPC.



Key Actions

Support and advocate for efforts to fast track Apple export protocols to China.

Work with GSCC Economic Development to link Australian Fruit businesses and Asian customers, leveraging on established links with China of other central Victorian regions.

Support SPC through initiatives such as advocacy of government procurement policy.

Target Outcome:

- Apple export protocols to China
- A formalised central Victorian link to China, with offices and staff in China to provide services to exporters.
- A government procurement policy for the purchase of Victorian goods

3.1.3 Horticulture transition

C4GS has been involved in efforts to attract new horticulture businesses to the region, especially vegetable producers.

Key Actions

Continue promoting, working with council, the Goulburn Valley as a new centre for vegetable production, encouraging the move from constrained peri-urban regions around Melbourne. Further promotion and presence at the National Horticultural Convention.

Work with Institutions such as University of Melbourne and DEDJTR to develop benchmarking studies as to the potential for crops and varieties in the GV.

Target Outcome

- The establishment of vegetable growing business in the Goulburn Valley, moving from peri-urban areas such as Werribee

3.1.4 Dairy

The dairy industry has strong long term fundamentals assuming affordable irrigation water is available. The price shock of 2016 will continue to affect the industry, and the recovery of the sector will depend on global commodity prices and the manufacturer's ability to export branded products.

Key Actions

Work with Murray Dairy and dairy manufacturing companies to improve the viability of the industry. Advocate to government on behalf of the GMID dairy industry for policies which support resilience and growth.



3.1.5 Investment attraction / Economic Development

Economic Development is a focus of Greater Shepparton City Council, and as investment attraction logically leads into involvement with the planning department, there needs to be a strong link of two departments in one organisation. However, the economic development department in council can benefit from stronger links to the Greater Shepparton business community, through their knowledge experience and networks. Economic development is also not just investment attraction but expansion of business.

The region can benefit with greater links to Asia, for tourism and export of produce. Toowoomba's economic development entity, Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise 'TSBE' has been very successful in link their region with Asia and providing an entrepreneurial approach to economic development.

Key Actions

Invite the manager of economic development at council to present at a C4GS member function.

Facilitate an economic development forum with members and the economic development at council.

Investigate the TSBE model and assess whether it or facets of it could benefit Greater Shepparton and surrounding regions.

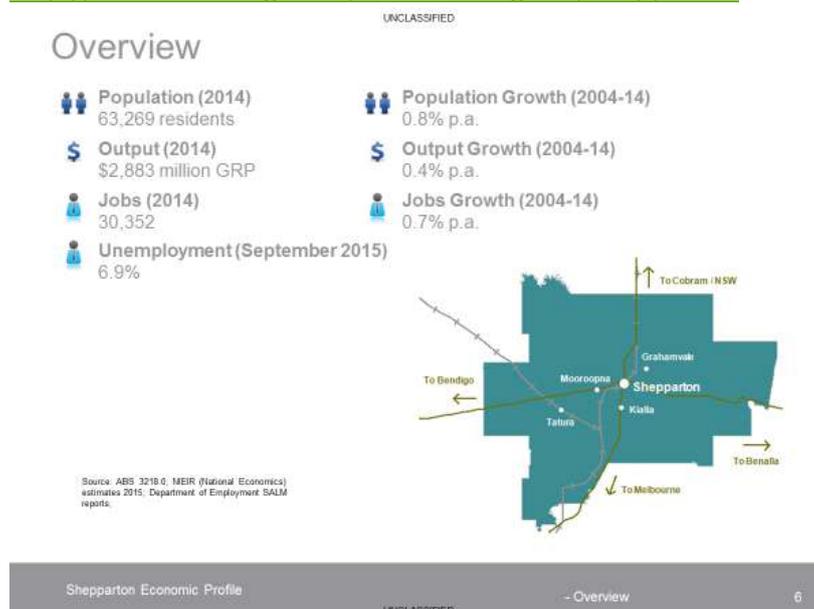
Facilitate one on one meetings with willing member businesses (and eventually non-members) and economic development department to explore what assistance is available to grow the business.

Investigate a C4GS member delegation to Asia to investigate export and tourism.

Target Outcome:

- Positive trends in GRP output and jobs growth for the 3-year period strategic plan, measured by the RDV Shepparton City Regional profile report:

<http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/victorian-regions/shepparton>



3.2 Connected

3.2.1 Rail

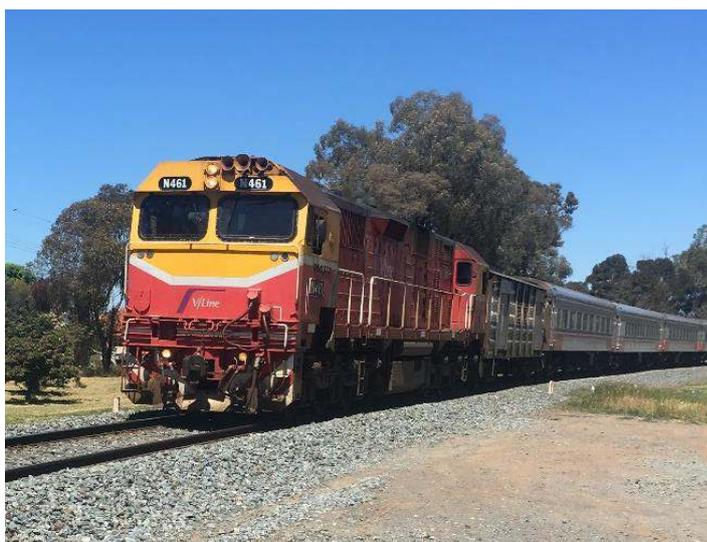
The passenger rail service between Shepparton and Melbourne has been identified as a major source of dissatisfaction among residents, and improvements would greatly increase liveability in the area. Freight rail is of a lower priority, with the inland freight rail corridor seemingly having been decided as going along the existing Albury route. There are proposals for improved and extended freight rail corridors along the Shepparton – Tocumwal line.

Key Actions

Instigate a major lobbying campaign to compel the state government to improve the passenger rail service between Shepparton and Melbourne. Improvements to satisfy community demand would involve 6 then 8 well scheduled return services per day, at trip lengths of around 2 hours each way.

Target Outcome:

- Commitment to funding track and signalling upgrades to achieve 6 well timed return services From Shepparton to Melbourne



3.2.2 Road

The GV Highway Shepparton bypass is the major road issue being advocated for by C4GS. There are other road issues in the region that will improve traffic flow, and leverage the bypass project.

Key Actions

Continue to advocate for the Shepparton bypass project to state and federal government.

Target Outcome

- Commitment of \$20 million for initial works on stage 1 of the bypass project to bring it to shovel ready stage



3.2.3 Air

The Shepparton airport will need to be relocated at some point in the future. The lack of a regular passenger service to Canberra and Sydney has been cited as a barrier to de-centralisation of a government department to this region. A longer-term ambition is the potential for air freight of perishable agricultural produce to Asia.

Key Actions

Investigate current initiatives around airport relocation and passenger services. Investigate Wellcamp airport in Toowoomba and viability of something similar in northern Victoria.

3.2.4 Digital

Parts of Greater Shepparton are connected to the National Broadband network.

Key Actions

Investigate level of digital connectivity in Greater Shepparton.

3.2.5 Decision Makers

Shepparton has benefited greatly in recent times by having strong relationships with key decision makers in state government. Links have been made with Federal government but the opportunity to do more in this space exists. When relevant issues arise C4GS needs to have access to members and staff who could influence the outcomes. C4GS needs to be networked and respected on all sides of the political spectrum as changes in government occur.

Key Actions

Continue to develop relationships with state government and opposition members, making sure new chairs, staff and board members have an opportunity to meet key people, providing a system of continuity for the Committee.

Renew a focus on the Federal Government and Canberra, with a possible Greater Shepparton showcase in Canberra.

Link with Victorian Federal government senators, inviting them to visit Shepparton and understand issues of the region.



3.3 Creative

3.3.1 Creative Community Policy

C4GS has undertaken a community consultation about creativity in the region. The consultation report is in draft form.

Key actions

Finalise the community consultation report, with additions of consultations with engineers, builders and designers. Present to council and encourage the development of a Creative Community policy.

Target Outcome:

- Development of a Greater Shepparton City Council Creative Cities Policy

3.3.2 Performing Arts

Performing arts is strong in the region, with music and theatrical performances adding to the vibrancy for the region. Barriers to further activity in theatre have been identified as technical capacity. There is also a significant gap in creative performing arts opportunities for youth.

Key Actions

Link University of Melbourne and Shepparton theatre and music groups to lift capacity in the region.

Partner with relevant organisations to offer opportunities for performing arts among youth, and use music events to engage with youth.



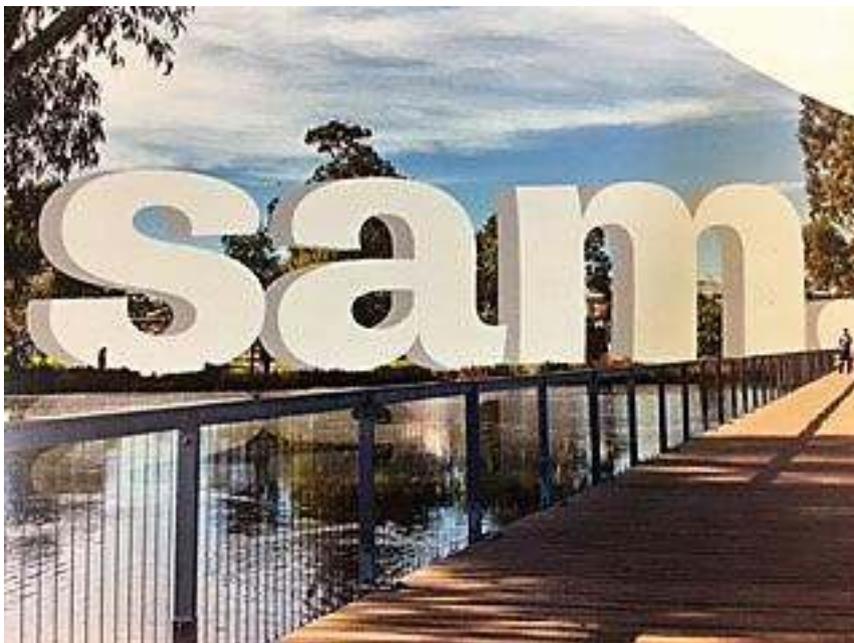
3.3.3 Shepparton Art Museum

The Shepparton Art Museum will go through a design selection process in 2017, with construction due to begin later in the year. The project needs advocacy to gain more community support, and all efforts must be made to ensure the facility and initial exhibitions are successful.

Key Actions

Continue the advocacy effort for the project, publicising the architectural competition shortlist and eventual winner, and helping create a sense of momentum and excitement around the building.

Work with the project board, SAM foundation and other stakeholders to assist, where possible, the smooth running of the project.



3.3.4 Building & Landscape Design

The history of Shepparton in terms of attractive design and buildings has been varied. In recent times buildings with a strong sense of design have been constructed in the city, and the Shepparton Art Museum is going through an architectural design competition. Landscape design is also an issue which is current with concepts being considered for the Maude St Mall and CBD, and the Eastbank Lake project.

Key Actions

Support the development of good design in buildings and landscapes in the Shepparton region.

3.4 Inclusive

3.4.1 Education

The Committee has worked well with the Lighthouse Project, aiming to get the organisation onto to a more sustainable funding model. The Committee has worked with tertiary providers Latrobe, University of Melbourne and GO Tafe on initiatives to improve tertiary offering in the Shepparton region.

Key Actions

Work with the University of Melbourne on a more integrated engagement with the Goulburn Valley.

Support Latrobe, particularly its Agribusiness degree initiative.

Continue to work with Lighthouse Project, advocating for funding to ensure the project's sustainability.

Develop a partnership with the Better Together Alliance, with the aim of better linking secondary education and industry, in conjunction with Lighthouse.

Investigate the concept of a Shepparton senior secondary school – in a similar vein to the successful experience of Bendigo.



Target outcome

- Achieve sustainable funding model for Lighthouse Project to continue its work toward improving education outcomes for youth
- 50% increase in young people in work or study



3.4.2 Health

Goulburn Valley Health is the largest employer in the Goulburn Valley, and a critical service provider in the region. Funding was announced in 2016 for stage 1 of the GV Health re-development. Stage 2 of the project is not yet funded and incorporates mental health facilities.

Key Actions

Monitor the progress of the stage 1 project, working with the GV Health board to work through any issues.

Continue to lobby for stage 2 of the project.

Target Outcome

- Commitment of funding for stage 2 of the GV Health re-development

3.4.3 Indigenous

The Committee has developed good relationships and partnerships with indigenous organisations in the region, leading to the Committee's support and signing of the Algobanyah employment accord. Currently there are several projects proposed by indigenous organisations, including the Rumbalara project to set up a cultural tourism project at the Kids town site, and the Munarra project – a centre for excellence at the northern sports precinct.

Efforts have been made to engage with the next generation of indigenous leadership.

Key Actions

Continue developing relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous leaders.

Support indigenous cultural and sporting events.

3.4.4 Newly Arrived

Shepparton has a large population of recently arrived migrants and refugees, predominately the most recent arrivals are from Africa and the Middle East.

Key Actions

Offer support to organisations such as the Ethnic Council and Africa House to ensure recently arrived can engage with the greater community.

3.4.5 Philanthropy

C4GS hosted a very successful philanthropic summit in 2014, which was a very successful event and resulted in some very fruitful relationships.

Key Actions

Host another philanthropic summit, reviewing the successes of the inaugural 2014 event, and exploring opportunities for future collaboration.

4. Committee Activities

4.1 Advocacy

The Committee provides strong advocacy on issues of relevance for the region, and can voice this advocacy on several media platforms in a constructive way.

4.2 Thought Leadership

The Committee is a voice for a positive future, exploring ideas and engaging with think tanks, research organisations and experts to continue to explore the issues of the region and develop the future vision.

4.3 Region Promotion

The Melbourne Business School evaluation of Greater Shepparton identified a region with an image crisis. The Committee continues to work on improving the region's image from the fundamentals to the messaging.

4.4 Economic Development

As outlined in the economic development / investment attraction (3.1.5) The Committee works with Greater Shepparton City Council to offer the business experience and entrepreneurial instincts of the membership to help attract investment. In addition, the Committee facilitates the collaboration between existing businesses and council to expand the economic activity in the region.

4.5 Facilitation

The Committee puts people and groups together. Having an overarching knowledge of the business and cultural activities in the region, the Committee is a point of contact for new entrants, facilitator of groups and potential independent mediator in situation of conflict.

4.6 Influence

Committee board members and staff can hold roles where there is an opportunity to influence the debate and outcomes in relation to key issues.

5. Committee Structure and Financial sustainability

5.1 Board & Staff

The Melbourne Business School evaluation of the Committee found that one of the risks to the organisation was that the leadership personal capabilities of the then current CEO and Chair was central to much of the success. It was outlined that relationships and networks be a Committee asset, not just a, office bearer asset. It is also important to identify early future leaders, and therefore up and coming C4GS board and staff personnel.

The Committee board is currently 7 members; the chair and 6 ordinary members. The staff of 2 consist of a CEO and an Executive Assistant.

Key Actions

Engage with organisations such as Fairley Leadership and Shepparton Young Professionals to identify future leaders.

Further develop relationships between new board / staff and key decision makers.



5.2 Membership

Current membership of the Committee comprises 86: 22 Gold, 18 Silver 36 Bronze, & 10 Community. The Committee aims to grow its membership sustainably.

5.2.1 *Membership Engagement plan*

Visitation schedule to discuss issues relating to the region:

- Gold Members & Silver members will have a one on one meeting with the CEO in the February – April period of each year, and further meetings as requested and issue require.
- Bronze members will have phone call from the CEO in this period and a meeting with the Executive Assistant and / or CEO on request.

Members will be invited to events, and special events will be tailored to the different categories of members: a Gold member Parliament House dinner in 2017 & a Silver member function in Melbourne.

Members will be invited to member's functions throughout the year (at least every two months), and a list of these functions will be sent as a 'save the date' list, in January / February.

The newsletter will be sent each month, and special memos or statement from the CEO and / or Chair will be sent out as issue require them.

Key 'Committee contact' personnel will be identified in each member organisation, along with a 'back ups' should people leave the organisation.

Key Actions

Identify potential members and increase the base.

Hold a Shepparton expat function in Melbourne and develop an expat chapter of the Committee for Greater Shepparton.

6. SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Strong committed & influential member base
- Medium term financial sustainability
- Respected, influential and functional board
- Capable and functional executive (CEO & EA)
- Community credibility
- Links to government and government departments
- Conventional local media platform

Weaknesses

- Brand awareness in broader community (i.e. separate from council, chamber of commerce etc.)
- Broader media platform
- Social media platform
- Lack of Resources (2 staff)

Opportunities

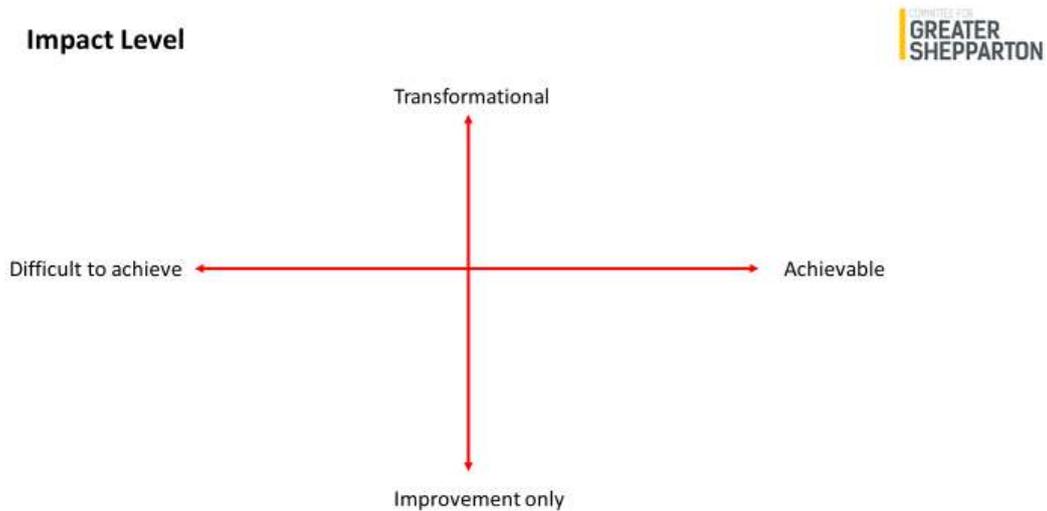
- Positive government policy outcomes.
- Investment attraction to the region
- A positive image for Greater Shepparton.
- Facilitation / broker for groups in and out of the region.
- Mediation in issues of public discourse.
- Progressive thinking and ideas

Threats

- Member disengagement
- Reduction of financial base
- Staff / board loss and loss of corporate knowledge
- Economic – environmental – political situations detrimental to Shepparton

7. Committee for Greater Shepparton Priority Matrix

Given C4GS needs to prioritise its activities, the matrix is a guide for where the Committee can best be involved.



8. Potential Projects

8.1 Shepparton 2030 Strategic Plan

Similar to recent projects of the Committee for Geelong (Winning from Second), Greater Sydney Commission (Towards our Greater Sydney 2056) and Committee for Melbourne (Melbourne 4.0) a strategic plan for Shepparton's future.

8.2 Committee for Greater Shepparton annual public lecture

To further promote new ideas and community engagement, C4GS will hold an annual free lecture, with whole community invited, on a subject relevant to our region.