



Community Vision 2031

Council Plan 2021-2025



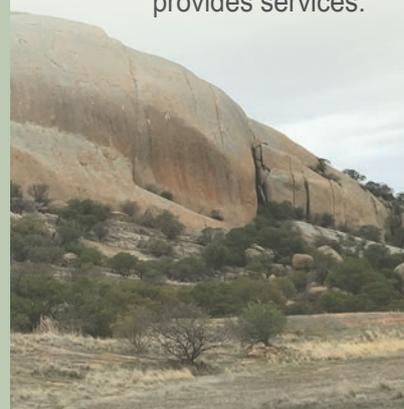
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## Acknowledgement of Country

Loddon Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land comprising the Loddon Shire Council area. Council would like to pay respect to their Elders both past and present.

We also recognise the many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members across the Shire who make up the vibrant communities to which our organisation provides services.



# Mayor's Message

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Council acknowledges its responsibility in making the Loddon Shire a great place to live, work, thrive and visit.

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It is my honour to be serving as Mayor of Loddon Shire as we work with our community and partners towards the aspirations detailed in the Community Vision. Our commitment to the community's vision is documented in the Council Plan. The Community Vision 2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 have been developed with feedback and collaboration from the community and will shape the future direction of our Shire.

To develop these critical documents we established The Loddon Project which engaged the community across two phases. During the first phase, a broad cross-section of the community shared what they think is crucial and the direction Council should pursue across the next ten years. The community has identified factors within Council's remit as well as actions and issues that are the responsibility of State and Federal Government and other organisations.

The Loddon Project saw a Community Reference Group formed that participated in deliberations to refine our vision for the future and the Council Plan. We are grateful for the time and effort provided by members of the Community Reference Group and look forward to working with them in the future.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to The Loddon Project. Your involvement in the development of the community vision was crucial in developing a blueprint for Loddon Shire's future. The Council Plan builds on the Community Vision and articulates the Council's goals across the Council term. The Council Plan is closely linked to other plans and strategies to ensure an integrated approach to Council's operations. The Council Plan is achievable, goal focussed, progressive and sustainable.

We acknowledge the responsibility we have in ensuring the Loddon Shire is a place where its residents can work, live and play while forging ahead and keeping abreast of the times. This Community Vision and Council Plan puts us in good stead to advocate for additional Federal and State Government investment in our community to build on the goals we have highlighted, including population growth, infrastructure, sustainability, the environment, and youth.

**Cr Neil Beattie**  
**Mayor**

# Our Shire

The Loddon Shire is a municipality located within the Victorian food bowl. The Shire is 200km north of Melbourne and is within proximity to the major town centres of Bendigo, Kerang and Echuca, making it the perfect location to live or visit. Covering 6,696 km<sup>2</sup>, the Shire has a population of 7,473 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Estimated Resident Population 2020).

The municipality is a 'community of communities', comprising many small towns dispersed throughout the Shire including the towns of Bridgewater, Inglewood, Wedderburn, Korong Vale, Dingee, Mitiamo, Serpentine, Newbridge, Tarnagulla, Laanecoorie, Eddington, Boort, Pyramid Hill and other surrounding towns and communities. These townships are diverse but connected by our Council, which strengthens them as a whole.

Loddon Shire residents enjoy the relaxed lifestyle of the area without compromising on infrastructure or access to health services, education and facilities. New residents elect to make a tree change from

metropolitan areas to the Loddon Shire due to its appeal as a lifestyle destination and attractive location to grow a business or launch a new career.

Agricultural industries are the bread and butter of the Loddon Shire with dairy, horticulture, viticulture, cropping, lamb and intensive poultry and piggeries making up the main income streams. As well as its agricultural base, major employers within the Loddon Shire include Laucke Flour Mills, Hazeldene's Chicken Farms, Boundary Bend Olives, Water Wheel Vineyards, Southern Riverlands Poultry, ASQ Allstone Quarries, health services in Boort and Inglewood, P-12 colleges in Boort, East Loddon, and Wedderburn, and a P-10 college in Pyramid Hill. The Loddon Shire also boasts wineries, and historical and natural attractions, which help bolster its visitor numbers.

Bridge across the Loddon River, Bridgewater on Loddon



# Our community

The Loddon Shire is a community of communities. Our identity is drawn from our people and their strength. Our character is borne of the land and how it nourishes our community and provides for the economic, social, and recreational pursuits of our community.





6,692 square kilometres

85 communities



1,011 local businesses



3,138 local jobs

\$826 median weekly income



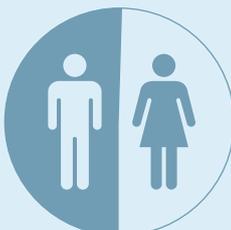
Ranked 72 out of 79 Councils in Victoria on socio-economic indexes for areas (SEIFA) Index

As an overview our community consists of:

Population ERP (2020): 7,473



51% Male  
49% Female



24.6% of population under 25 years



Median age 51

30.4% of population between 22-54 years



44.9% population over 55 years



7.3% of people have a disability

1.6% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

8.1% of people are born overseas

**Largest industries include:**

- Agriculture
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Manufacturing
- Retail Trade
- Education and Training

# Strengths and challenges

## Strengths

### Natural environment

The Shire is characterised by magnificent rural landscapes, parks, waterways, wetlands, and reserves set in a Mediterranean climate. Our natural environment supports our local industries, in particular agribusiness and tourism. Highlights of our natural environment include state and national parks, rivers and waterways. Eco tourism has been identified through community engagement as an important opportunity the area could capitalise on to grow its local offer.

### History

The Shire has rich Aboriginal and Goldfields history, and is home to over 1,000 significant Aboriginal landmarks including Aboriginal cultural places, Aboriginal historical places, burials, artefact scatters, earth features, low density artefact distributions, object collections, quarries, rock art, scarred trees, shell middens and stone features.

150 years ago the Loddon Shire was also a thriving part of the 'Golden Triangle' which saw gold prospecting play a critical role in the development of the area. Gold prospecting is still popular today and the legacy of the period can be seen in historic landmarks, buildings, huts and houses which reinforce images of Australia's pioneering gold rush days.

### Rural lifestyle

Loddon Shire affords residents and visitors a sanctuary away from the hustle and bustle. The peace and quiet, accessible links to nature and wide open spaces provide a backdrop to a more relaxed way of life. With its proximity to other major centres, the affordability of housing is a major drawcard for the area.

### Community

Loddon Shire Council is a 'community of communities'. Whilst each has its own unique identity, what is consistent across the Shire area is the connection afforded through community groups and organisations that support social connection and active and passive recreation.

### Proximity

Loddon Shire is a two hour drive from Melbourne. The area has three major highway networks which support freight and transport. The proximity to major centres such as Bendigo and Echuca presents a key opportunity for population attraction, particularly with the move to remote working which has been accelerated by COVID-19.

East Loddon P-12 College, Dingee





Bridge across the Loddon River, Bridgewater on Loddon

## Challenges

### Population

The Loddon Shire has a stable population and comparatively older population than the statewide average. Community feedback has indicated that population growth is a critical element of developing the local service system and a more robust local economy.

### Internet and mobile phone coverage

More reliable internet and phone coverage would also allow the area to capitalise on the move to more remote working arrangements.

### Drought and climate change

Water security is critical to the ongoing prosperity of the area. In addition to the importance of water for the environment, agriculture, farming and agribusiness are critical components of the local economy and depend on secure supply of this crucial natural resource and asset. Climate variability also impacts on the likelihood of extreme weather events and increases the need for strong emergency management and natural disaster planning.

### COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all aspects of our lives. The impacts have been felt by our residents

and business community as they adapt to the social distancing measures and new ways of conducting ourselves. While helping to keep us safe, these measures have also increased isolation, negatively impacted the retail trade and restricted tourists from visiting our area.

### Access to services

Access to state and federally funded services is a continuing challenge for our area. The free marketisation and individualisation of funding models for services such as childcare and aged care services has increased the need for a critical mass of users to make services financially viable. Population growth will be critical to the establishment and ongoing viability of these services.

### Infrastructure

The maintenance and development of community infrastructure is an important component of Council's role. This role also has a significant impact on the financial sustainability of the organisation when considered alongside the impact of rate capping and availability of funding opportunities from other levels of government.



# Councillors

The Council area is divided into five wards. There is one Councillor for each ward. Councillors have responsibility for setting the strategic direction for the municipality, policy development, identifying service standards and monitoring performance across the organisation.



**Cr Dan Straub**

Terrick Ward



**Cr Wendy Murphy**

Inglewood Ward



**Cr Linda Jungwirth**

Tarnagulla Ward



**Cr Neil Beattie**

Boort Ward



**Cr Gavan Holt**

Wedderburn Ward



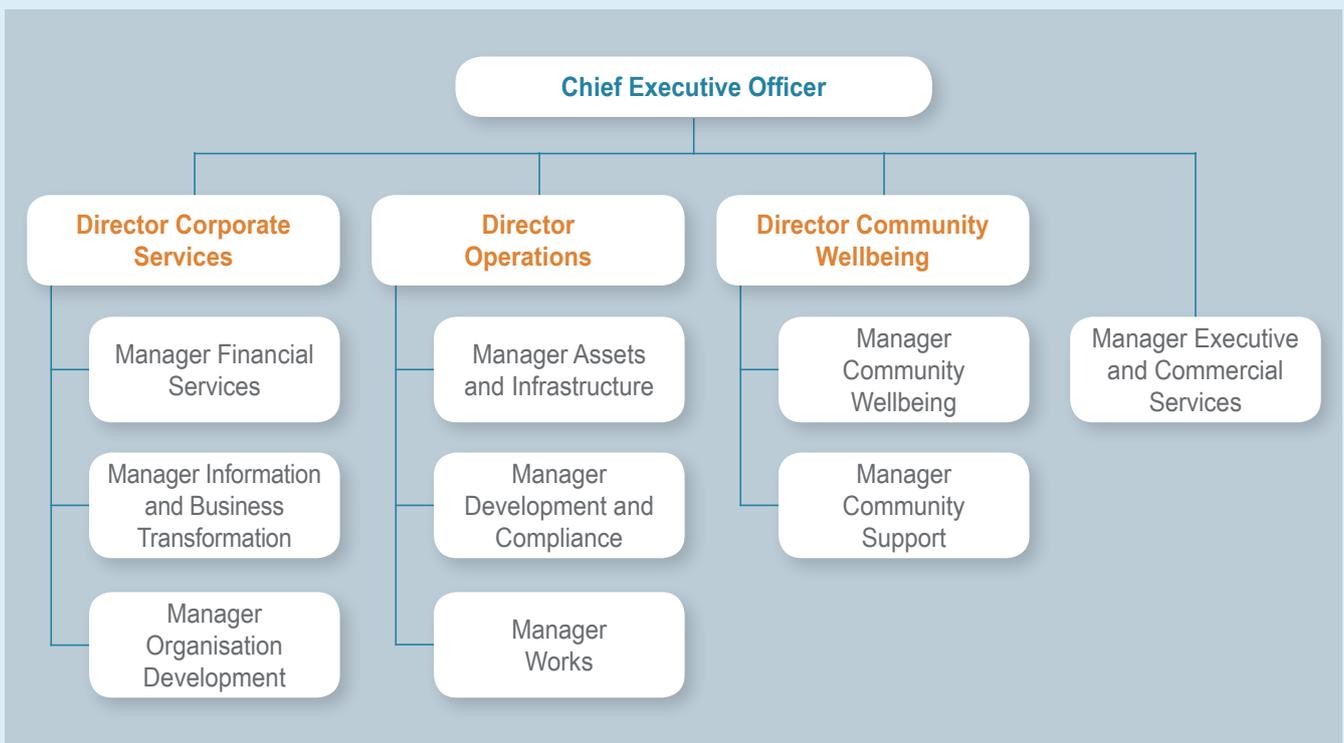


Council Offices, Wedderburn

## Our Council

Council is the governing body that appoints a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO is responsible for the day-to-day management of operations according to the Council Plan's strategic directions.

The Chief Executive Officer is supported by the Director Community Wellbeing, Director Corporate Services and Director Operations. Council operations are delivered across nine management areas.



# About the Community Vision 2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires that a Community Vision and Council Plan be prepared and adopted by 31 October in the year following a general election. In these documents, Council must address the strategic planning principles outlined in the Act.

The Community Vision 2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 reflect the Council's commitment to listen to the community's vision for the future and deliver a progressive and future-focussed plan that will see the Shire continue to grow and prosper.

## Integrated planning and reporting

The diagram below depicts the planning and accountability framework that applies to local government in Victoria. The timing of each component of the planning framework is critical to the successful achievement of the Council Plan.

Time horizon	Planning		Reporting
Long term (10 years)	<b>Community Vision</b> ✓ needs	<b>Financial Plan</b> ✓ assumptions ✓ resources ✓ financial statements	
		<b>Asset Plan</b> ✓ maintenance ✓ renewal	
Medium term (4 years)	<b>Council Plan</b> ✓ direction ✓ objectives ✓ strategies ✓ indicators ✓ initiatives	<b>Workforce Plan</b> ✓ structure ✓ staffing	
		<b>Rating Plan</b> ✓ principles ✓ structure	
Short term (1 year)	<b>Annual Plan</b> ✓ annual actions	<b>Budget</b> ✓ services ✓ infrastructure ✓ initiatives ✓ rates ✓ financial statements	<b>Quarterly Budget Report</b> ✓ financial statements
			<b>Annual Report</b> ✓ report of operations ✓ performance statement ✓ financial statements



# The Loddon Project

Mural on supermarket wall, Wedderburn

## Purpose of the project

Council delivered a major community engagement project named The Loddon Project to develop our Community Vision and Council Plan, which are integral documents in our strategic planning framework.

The Loddon Project was designed to develop the strategic direction for the future and included:

- review of the Community Engagement Policy
- development of the 10-year Community Vision
- development of the four-year Council Plan.

## Key documents

The Community Engagement Policy provides guidance to Council on all community engagement activities. It sets the expectation for community participation in Council decision-making.

The Community Vision plays a vital role in setting the long-term strategic direction of Council. It has a 10-year outlook and informs the Council of the community's aspirations.

The Council Plan outlines what Council will do across the next four years to progress achievement of the Community Vision.

## The engagement process

### What we did

Loddon Shire Council has undertaken a multifaceted engagement approach that used various methods to promote participation and hear the community's voice.

Phase One was a broad engagement for the development of the Community Vision and Council Plan. The engagement activities included an online survey, phone calls to community groups, online worksheet, ward webinars and a forum with senior staff. We asked three core questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?

Phase Two consolidated the findings from the broad engagement and provided more details for the Council Plan. The engagement activities included distributing reply paid postcards, ward webinars, a further survey and community pop-ups.

Council formed a Community Reference Group (CRG) to explore the four themes through deliberative engagement. The CRG identified nine key areas that would contribute to achieving the community's vision for the future. The key areas are population, services, communication, community, infrastructure, environment, tourism, economy and young people. The CRG undertook deliberations and developed vision statements for each area that expressing the community's aspirations for the future.

### Who took part?

One hundred eighty-seven participants took part in the first phase of engagement. Phase 2 saw a further 160 people participate in engagement activities where they considered the themes that emerged from the phase one engagement.

### What you told us

The four significant areas of interest that were identified in Phase 1 of the engagement included:

- Strong sense of community that is intrinsically linked to the identity of the Shire.
- Drive for greater prosperity through attraction of industry, business and population.
- Natural environment that supports tourism, outdoor activities, agriculture, and a way of life.
- Equity of access to infrastructure, services, and retail to support quality of life.

Participants who completed postcard submissions and attended ward webinars during Phase 2 of the engagement told us the following areas were essential:

- Aged care and the provision of services were closely connected to the quality of life the community wants to experience.
- The attraction of industry and business support.
- Safety and emergency services (community) and the cleaning up of bushland and roadsides (environment) linked to fire prevention.
- Tourism and events featured across the community.
- Maintenance and renewal of local infrastructure, particularly streetscapes, parks and footpaths.

The community is concerned about issues such as water security, workforce participation and aged care. They acknowledge the strength of the Loddon Shire community members' willingness to participate in the success of their communities, but are concerned about volunteer fatigue.

Consolidated findings to the main findings from the broad community engagement showed four resounding themes:

- A sustainable built and natural environment.
- A growing and vibrant community.
- A diverse and expanding economy.
- A supported and accessible community.

The engagement process identified the following areas of priority:

#### Community

Support of community events and community groups, local facilities and roads. Community engagement was also identified as an important priority.

#### Economy

Supporting local business, tourism, marketing and promotions and planning and events.

#### Natural environment

Walking and cycling tracks, parks and gardens, tree planting and signage and environmental protection and preservation including weed management.

#### Services and infrastructure

Roads, improving internet and phone services and water and sewerage. Participants also identified childcare and health services as key services that are needed.

# Community Vision 2031

Creating a community where everyone is welcome and has the opportunity to live, work and thrive.

In order to do this, by 2031:



## A sustainable built and natural environment

**Infrastructure** We will have infrastructure that supports our social and economic needs and embraces environmental sustainability.

**Environment** We will preserve our unique natural environment, places and spaces. We will embrace renewables, alternatives, and new technologies that reduce our footprint and promote sustainability.

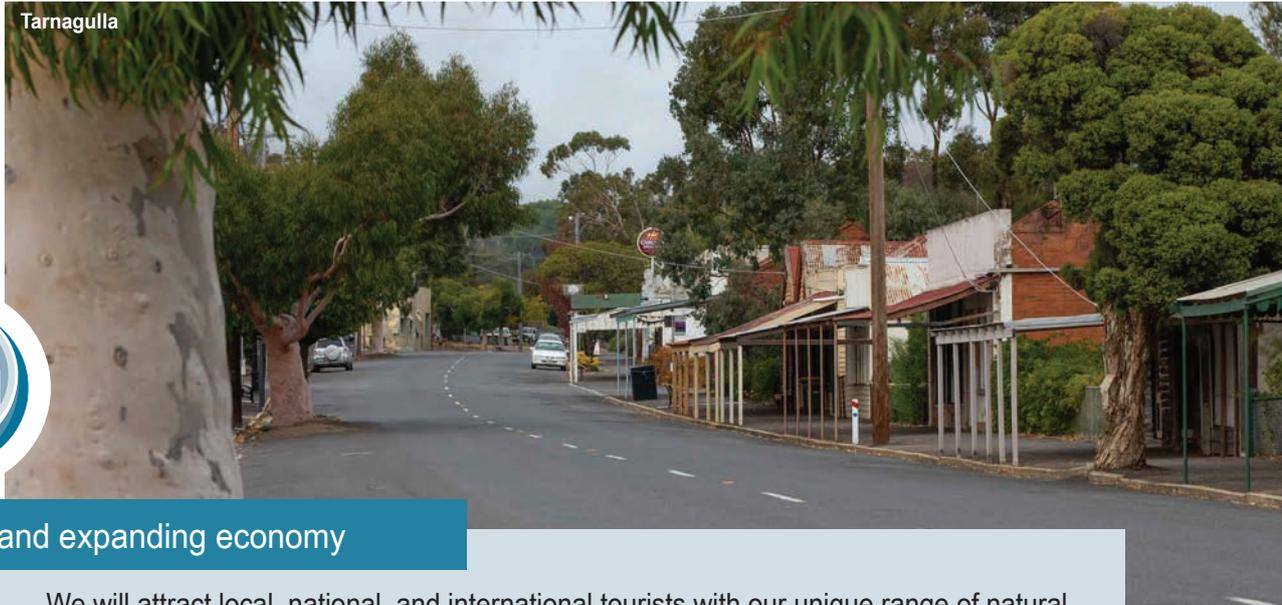


## A growing and vibrant community

**Population** We will increase our population and attract new people by promoting our lifestyle. Our growing, connected, and inclusive population will support the growth of our economy and services to meet our current and future needs.

**Community** We will be a welcoming, connected, inclusive and growing community that is strong, supportive and actively involved.

**Youth** Our youth will be supported to access education, job and recreation opportunities and services in our area. Their voice will be valued and heard, through meaningful participation in our Shire.



Tarnagulla



### A diverse and expanding economy

**Tourism** We will attract local, national, and international tourists with our unique range of natural, cultural, and historical attractions, including the rich history of First Nations people and pioneers. Our communities will be passionate ambassadors for our area.

**Economy** We will have a growing and sustainable economy that supports established and new businesses, has a skilled workforce and attracts business, industry, and people to our area.



Council Offices, Wedderburn



### A supported and accessible community

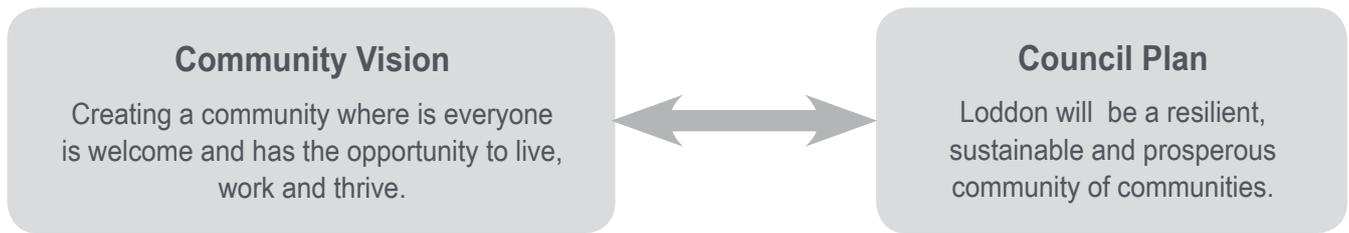
**Services** We will increase local services by working with our community and services providers to explore innovative ways to deliver existing and new services. We will seek out and adopt new technologies to increase and improve services and enable people to connect.

**Communication** We will embrace all forms of communication to reach all age groups, backgrounds, and abilities to increase the cohesiveness and connection in our community. Our communication will be supported by the latest and most reliable infrastructure.



# Link between Community Vision and Council Plan

There is a strong link between the Community Vision and the Council Plan. This reflects Council’s commitment to the community in focusing on the areas that are important to it in *Creating a community where everyone is welcome and has the opportunity to live, work and thrive.*



Community Vision		Council Plan
<p style="text-align: center; color: #4caf50;"><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <p>We will have infrastructure that supports our social and economic needs and embraces environmental sustainability.</p>	 <p><b>A sustainable built and natural environment</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center; color: #4caf50;"><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <p>We will implement financially and environmentally sustainable infrastructure that supports our social and economic needs.</p>
<p style="text-align: center; color: #4caf50;"><b>Environment</b></p> <p>We will preserve our unique natural environment, places and spaces. We will embrace renewables, alternatives, and new technologies that reduce our footprint and promote sustainability.</p>		<p style="text-align: center; color: #4caf50;"><b>Environment</b></p> <p>We will work with our partners to preserve and protect our local environment. We will support our community to respond to the impacts of climate change.</p>

Rusty the Redfin, Little Lake Boort, Boort



Community Vision		Council Plan
<p><b>Population</b></p> <p>We will increase our population and attract new people by promoting our lifestyle. Our growing, connected, and inclusive population supports the growth of our economy and services to meet our current and future needs.</p>	 <p><b>A growing and vibrant community</b></p>	<p><b>Population</b></p> <p>We will promote population growth to support a growing and diverse community.</p>
<p><b>Community</b></p> <p>We will be a welcoming, connected, inclusive and growing community that is resilient, supportive and actively involved.</p>		<p><b>Community</b></p> <p>We will support a connected and inclusive community that provides opportunities for current and new community members at all ages, abilities, and stages of their life.</p>
<p><b>Youth</b></p> <p>Our youth will be supported to access education, job and recreation opportunities and services in our area. Their voice is valued and heard, through meaningful participation in our Shire.</p>		<p><b>Youth</b></p> <p>We will support our youth to access pathways for education and employment and the ability to connect and actively engage with their community.</p>
<p><b>Tourism</b></p> <p>We will attract local, national, and international tourists with our unique range of natural, cultural, and historical attractions, including the rich history of our First Australians and pioneers. Our communities are encouraged to be passionate ambassadors for our area.</p>	 <p><b>A diverse and expanding economy</b></p>	<p><b>Tourism</b></p> <p>We will promote our unique tourism opportunities and support our local tourism industry to increase visitation to our area.</p>
<p><b>Economy</b></p> <p>We will have a growing and sustainable economy that supports established and new businesses, has a skilled workforce and attracts business, industry, and people to our area.</p>		<p><b>Economy</b></p> <p>We will support established businesses and seek to attract new businesses to grow our local economy.</p>
<p><b>Services</b></p> <p>We will increase local services by working with our community and services providers to explore innovative ways to deliver existing and new services. We will seek out and adopt new technologies to increase and improve services and enable people to connect.</p>	 <p><b>A supported and accessible community</b></p>	<p><b>Services</b></p> <p>We will deliver our core services and advocate for access to other services for our community that support the health, wellbeing and liveability of our community.</p>
<p><b>Communication</b></p> <p>We will embrace all forms of communication to reach all age groups, backgrounds, and abilities to increase the cohesiveness and connection in our community. Communication is supported by the latest and most reliable infrastructure.</p>		<p><b>Communication</b></p> <p>We will listen to our community about how they wish to communicate with us and implement effective communication methods to achieve this. We will provide our community with opportunities to engage with us.</p>



# Council Plan 2021-2025

Council's roles will vary for different strategies within the plan. Each is identified against the strategy so that it is clear.

Deliver	Collaborate	Facilitate	Advocate
Council will <b>deliver</b> initiatives and priorities in pursuit of our objectives.	Council will <b>partner with</b> stakeholders and community groups to pursue and deliver priorities that are aligned to our objectives.	Council will <b>assist others</b> to pursue and deliver their priorities that are aligned to our objectives.	Council will <b>communicate our community's interests</b> and priorities to government and other decision makers that are aligned with our objectives.

## 1. A sustainable built and natural environment



### Strategic objectives:

- 1.1 We will implement financially and environmentally sustainable infrastructure that supports our social and economic needs..
- 1.2 We will work with our partners to preserve and protect our local environment. We will support our community to respond to the impacts of climate change.

### 1.1 We will implement financially and environmentally sustainable infrastructure that supports our social and economic needs.



Strategy	Council's role
<b>1.1.1 Plan for future facilities and infrastructure that meet community need</b>	
Finalise asset management plans and long term strategies for Council assets We will do this by reviewing and implementing asset management plans across all asset classes to ensure they reflect the current environment.	Deliver
Embed long term planning into project management framework We will do this by reviewing our project management framework to incorporate all projects from concept through to post project evaluation, and incorporating all projects into the Financial Plan, which will include strategic projects identified by our communities.	Deliver

Strategy	Council's role
<p><b>Complete funded major infrastructure projects in the planning phase</b></p> <p>We will do this by delivering the Donaldson Park Community Hub, Pyramid Hill Community Centre (Stage 1), Pyramid Hill Streetscape Revitalisation Project, and Little Lake Boort Sporting Precinct Project.</p>	Deliver
<b>1.1.2 Our built and natural environments are accessible</b>	
<p><b>Ensure Council assets are accessible</b></p> <p>We will do this by reviewing and implementing actions from the Access and Inclusion Plan.</p>	Deliver
<b>1.1.3 Maintain sports and recreation and open public spaces to enable and promote access and participation</b>	
<p><b>Ensure community facility use is maximised</b></p> <p>We will do this by working with facility managers to identify new ways of expanding use of facilities, and by ensuring all facilities have master plans.</p>	Deliver Collaborate

1.2 We will work with our partners to preserve and protect our local environment. We will support our community to respond to the impacts of climate change.



Strategy	Council's role
<b>1.2.1 Plan for and build community capacity to mitigate, respond and adapt to climate change.</b>	
<p><b>Participate with regional groups to implement environmental priorities</b></p> <p>We will do this by implementing climate change actions in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and participate in the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance to identify and deliver environmental outcomes.</p>	Collaborate Advocate
<b>1.2.2 Work with our partners to support biodiversity and habitat in our area</b>	
<p><b>Participate with regional groups to maximise opportunities to support biodiversity and habitat</b></p> <p>We will do this by participating in the Integrated Water Management Forum and North Central Catchment Partnership Agreement.</p>	Collaborate Advocate
<b>1.2.3 Promote reduction of waste to landfill</b>	
<p><b>Deliver effective waste management</b></p> <p>We will do this by implementing Council's Waste Management Strategy and participating in the regional waste and recycling management group.</p>	Deliver Collaborate Facilitate Advocate
<b>1.2.4 Plan and prepare for adverse weather events</b>	
<p><b>Prepare for adverse weather events</b></p> <p>We will do this by participating in the Northern Victorian Integrated Emergency Management Planning Committee, and advocating for continuation of funding for the Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program.</p>	Deliver Collaborate Advocate
<p><b>Implement infrastructure to protect towns</b></p> <p>We will do this by completing delivery of flood mitigation works in Boort and Pyramid Hill, and seeking funding for flood mitigation works in Serpentine.</p>	Deliver

## 2. A growing and vibrant community



### Strategic objectives:

- 2.1 We will promote population growth to support a growing and diverse community.
- 2.2 We will support a connected and inclusive community that provides opportunities for current and new community members at all ages, abilities, and stages of their life.
- 2.3 We will support our youth to access pathways for education and employment and the ability to connect to their community.

### 2.1 We will promote population growth to support a growing and diverse community.



Strategy	Council's role
<b>2.1.1 Maximise opportunities to grow our population by taking advantage of all available development opportunities to expand the existing urban footprint</b>	
<b>Pursue development opportunities</b> We will do this by implementing the remaining actions from our Settlement Strategy and working with the community to lobby government for reticulated water and sewerage for Newbridge.	Deliver Advocate
<b>Promote our Shire as a great place to live</b> We will do this by partnering with the relevant groups to investigate opportunities to increase residential housing stock and developing a coordinated approach to marketing Loddon Shire as a great place to live.	Deliver Collaborate Facilitate

Inglewood Alive Festival, Inglewood



## 2.2 We will support a connected and inclusive community that provides opportunities for current and new community members at all ages, abilities, and stages of their life.



Strategy	Council's role
<b>2.2.1 Support community groups and volunteers</b>	
<p><b>Support community asset committees</b> We will do this by providing ongoing support to our Community Asset Committees who manage facilities on behalf of Council.</p>	Deliver Facilitate
<p><b>Support volunteers</b> We will do this by delivering the Re-engaging Volunteers in Rural Towns Project, and annually celebrating our volunteers and the contribution they make to their communities.</p>	Deliver Facilitate
<p><b>Support community groups</b> We will do this by supporting community planning groups, progress associations, tourism groups, and other groups within the shire by providing in kind and financial support through our policies and programs.</p>	Deliver Collaborate Facilitate
<b>2.2.2 Promote welcoming and safe communities</b>	
<p><b>Promote community safety</b> We will do this by participating in regional community safety committee opportunities and by reviewing the Child Safe Standards Framework.</p>	Deliver Collaborate
<p><b>Promote a welcoming and inclusive environment for all</b> We will do this by implementing a range of initiatives that embrace the diversity of our community.</p>	Deliver Collaborate Advocate

## 2.3 We will support our youth to access pathways for education and employment and the ability to connect to their community



Strategy	Council's role
<b>2.3.1 Support youth by working to improve local learning and employment pathways</b>	
<p><b>Improve local learning and employment pathway opportunities through strategic partnerships</b> We will do this by partnering with the North Central Local Learning and Employment Network and schools to provide work experience and identify pathways for young people in the Shire.</p>	Deliver Collaborate Facilitate Advocate
<p><b>Develop connections for our young people</b> We will do this by finalising the Strong Youth Strong Communities Program and working with funded agencies to provide youth services in the Shire.</p>	Deliver Collaborate Advocate

### 3. A diverse and expanding economy



**Strategic objectives:**

- 3.1 We will promote our unique tourism opportunities and support our local tourism industry to increase visitation to our area.
- 3.2 We will support established businesses and seek to attract new businesses to grow our local economy.

3.1 We will promote our unique tourism opportunities and support our local tourism industry to increase visitation to our area.



Strategy	Council's role
<b>3.1.1 Increase the volume and value of tourism visitation</b>	
<p><b>Leverage tourism opportunities</b>                      We will do this by supporting communities in their tourism activities, promoting local tourism businesses, and reviewing the current model for visitor information services.</p>	Deliver Collaborate
<p><b>Enhance Loddon's visitor accommodation through well-managed, well-appointed and competitive caravan parks</b>                      We will do this by implementing upgrades to Boort, Pyramid Hill, and Wedderburn caravan parks, and providing ongoing support to park operators.</p>	Deliver Collaborate
<p><b>Implement strategic plans related to tourism activities</b>                      We will do this by developing the Boort Scarred Trees Master Plan and pursuing opportunities to implement recommendations from the Skinners Flat Reservoir Master Plan.</p>	Deliver Collaborate Facilitate

Outdoor dining area, Boort





Proposed Community Centre, Pyramid Hill

### 3.2 We will support established businesses and seek to attract new businesses to grow our local economy.



Strategy	Council's role
<b>3.2.1 Provide support for economic development opportunities in the Shire</b>	
<p><b>Leverage partnership opportunities to promote and support the local economy</b>                      We will do this by collaborating with regional partners on broader economic opportunities and advocating for potable water for townships, environmental water, and the right to farm.</p>	Collaborate Advocate
<p><b>Maximise opportunities for economic growth</b>                      We will do this by implementing the Economic Development Strategy and developing and implementing an Industrial Land Strategy.</p>	Deliver Collaborate Facilitate
<p><b>Promote better mobile and digital connectivity</b>                      We will do this by working with regional partners to advocate for faster and more reliable mobile and digital connectivity across the region.</p>	Collaborate Advocate
<b>3.2.2 Increase the volume and value of the local economy</b>	
<p><b>Provide support to current and future local businesses</b>                      We will do this by providing information and programs that support local businesses, and having an in-house resource to support new, existing and expanding businesses.</p>	Deliver Facilitate



## 4. A supported and accessible community



### Strategic objectives:

- 4.1 We will deliver our services and advocate for access to other services for our community.
- 4.2 We will listen to our community about how they wish to communicate with us and implement effective communication methods to achieve this. We will provide our community with opportunities to engage with us.

### 4.1 We will deliver our core services and advocate for access to other services for our community.



Strategy		Council's role
<b>4.1.1</b>	<b>Ensure services are available for our community</b>	
	<p><b>Support and advocate for services that provide every child with the opportunities to have the best start in life</b></p> <p>We will do this by developing and implementing a Municipal Early Years Plan and Youth Plan, and advocating for options identified in the Childcare Feasibility Study.</p>	<p>Deliver</p> <p>Collaborate</p> <p>Advocate</p>
	<p><b>Support and advocate for activities that provide older residents with access to the services they need to age in place in Loddon</b></p> <p>We will do this by guiding the community through transition to the new Commonwealth Support in Home Aged Care Program, and promoting activities that encourage positive ageing.</p>	<p>Deliver</p> <p>Facilitate</p> <p>Advocate</p>
	<p><b>Advocate for high priority, significant services and projects to attract state and federal government funding</b></p> <p>We will do this by advocating with regional partners for increased road and rail funding, water and sewerage for our towns, and reliable mobile phone and digital connectivity across the Shire.</p>	<p>Collaborate</p> <p>Advocate</p>
<b>4.1.2</b>	<b>Review Council's internal services and processes to ensure we are operating efficiently</b>	
	<p><b>Review Council's processes</b></p> <p>We will do this by reviewing and implementing the Information Technology Strategy, Records Management Strategy, Digitisation Plan, and improving long term financial planning through annual review of the Financial Plan with up to date financial data.</p>	<p>Deliver</p>
	<p><b>Review Council's services</b></p> <p>We will do this by developing a Workforce Plan to understand current and future personnel needs, and undertaking services reviews for all internal services and community facing services to embed the cost of delivery in the Financial Plan.</p>	<p>Deliver</p> <p>Collaborate</p>

Strategy	Council's role
<b>4.1.3 Enhance the community's opportunity to maintain good health and wellbeing, including mental health</b>	
<p><b>Implement initiatives and advocate for services to support overall health and wellbeing to the community</b></p> <p>We will do this by delivering the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and working with agencies across the Shire that provide services and activities that support our community's health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Deliver</p> <p>Collaborate</p> <p>Advocate</p>
<p><b>Partner with agencies in the Shire to promote good health and wellbeing</b></p> <p>We will do this by participating in the Buloke Loddon Gannawarra Health and Wellbeing Network, the Healthy Heart of Victoria, and the Loddon Healthy Eating Active Living and Smoking Prevention Group and by facilitating the Loddon Healthy Minds Network.</p>	<p>Deliver</p> <p>Collaborate</p> <p>Facilitate</p>

**4.2 We will listen to our community about how they wish to communicate with us and implement effective communication methods to achieve this. We will provide our community with opportunities to engage with us.**



Strategy	Council's role
<b>4.2.1 We will increase the opportunity for residents to engage with Council about decisions that impact their community</b>	
<p><b>Provide informative media</b></p> <p>We will do this by having an active local and social media presence, and ensuring Council's website is easy to use and has up to date and relevant information.</p>	<p>Deliver</p>
<p><b>Review engagement activities to ensure continuous improvement</b></p> <p>We will do this by reviewing the Community Engagement Policy and Customer Service Strategy, by working with a Community Reference Group to understand the needs of the community around engagement, and exploring new ways of engaging with the community.</p>	<p>Deliver</p> <p>Collaborate</p>
<p><b>Engage with community groups</b></p> <p>We will do this by engaging with community groups on specific projects, when invited to meetings, and as representatives on the community asset committees.</p>	<p>Deliver</p>

# Policies, Plans and Strategies

There are many Council approved policies, plans and strategies that support the Council in delivering on the strategic objectives identified in the Council Plan, which include:

Activating Open Space Strategy 2019-2024
Aged Care Service System Assessment
Bendigo Region Destination Management Plan
Building Asset Management Plan
Business Continuity Framework
Childcare Feasibility Study
Climate Proofing Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy
Community Engagement Policy
Council Governance Rules
Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2021
Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2019-2024
Environmental Sustainability Strategy – Action Plan 2013-18
Information and Records Management Strategy
Loddon Aboriginal Community Partnership Plan 2019-2021

Loddon Healthy Minds Network Strategic Plan 2017-2022
Municipal Emergency Management Plan
Municipal Heatwave Plan
Municipal Pandemic Plan
Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan
Procurement Strategy
Rating Strategy
Road Management Plan
Roadside Management Plan
Settlement Strategy 2019-2034
Volunteer Strategy 2018-2022
Waste Management Strategy 2020-2030
Youth Strategy

## Strategic indicators

Sealed road requests
Renewable energy used in Council's operations
Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill
Value of planning permits processed
Value of building permits processed
Capital improved value of rateable residential properties
Capital improved value of commercial and industrial properties
Volunteer rates
Our workforce under 25 years
Number of overnight tourist visits
Gross regional product
Number of businesses

Residents employed
Internal service reviews completed
External service reviews completed
Children participating in maternal and child health service
Aboriginal children participating in maternal and child health service
Children participating in 4-week key age and stage visits
Population who are smokers
Adults who get adequate physical exercise
Responses to opportunities for engagement with Council



## Review and implementation

Accessible fishing pier, Bridgewater on Loddon

### Implementation which include but are not limited to

The Council Plan will be implemented through the Financial Plan, Asset Management Plans, and other key strategies. It will be resourced each year through the Annual Budget.

### Review

In addition to the development of the Community Vision 2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 which document the aspirations of the community and the strategies that Council will apply to deliver on these, Council has developed the Annual Plan 2021-2025 which identifies specific actions that will deliver on Council's commitment to the Community's Vision *Creating a community where everyone is welcome and has the opportunity to live, work and thrive.*

The Annual Plan will be reviewed at the end of each financial year to ensure completion of actions and to monitor any additional actions that may have arisen due to changing circumstances or funding opportunities. It will be reported through the Annual Report which incorporates the Report of Operations, Financial Statements and Performance Statements.

The Council Plan 2021-2025 will be reviewed at the end of the full term of the document to identify if the strategic indicators have been achieved.





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