Economic Sustainability Strategy
Final Report

Prepared for Latrobe City Council by MWH Australia
June 2011
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Foreword

We are pleased to present this Economic Sustainability Strategy for Latrobe City. The document describes the framework by which Latrobe City Council will work with our community to cultivate sustainable economic development in Latrobe City and contribute to the delivery of the liveable, vibrant and enterprising region described in the Latrobe 2026 community vision.

Latrobe City is recognised as one of Victoria’s four major regional centres, along with Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong. With a Gross Regional Product (GRP) of approximately $4 billion and annual business turnover estimated at $10.3 billion, the City makes a significant contribution to the Victorian economy. Employment growth in Latrobe City is strong, and in recent years this growth has exceeded that in the other three major regional centres.¹

The Economic Sustainability Strategy is a blueprint for how Council will work with our community, industry, small business and government partners to drive economic growth and achieve outcomes including:

- Consolidating and expanding our position as a major regional city within Victoria and the centre point of Gippsland’s economy
- Continued job creation and reduced unemployment rate
- Growth in gross regional product
- Smooth transition to a low carbon economy

Latrobe City is operating in a rapidly changing economic landscape. Population growth, technology advances, the ageing workforce, globalisation and a future low carbon economy present both challenges and opportunities for Latrobe City. Our history of industrial enterprise, successful adaptation and innovation means we are extremely well positioned to embrace change and harness new opportunities to further diversify and strengthen our economy. Latrobe City Council will take a lead role in preparing our community to prosper from these changes, in particular the transition to a low carbon future.

Latrobe City Council’s role is to facilitate private and public sector investment and to help create an attractive investment “climate”. We will do this by:

Creating an enabling business environment:

Our actions in this area will make it easy for businesses to invest, adapt and grow.

Latrobe City Council intends to be at the forefront of delivery of planning permit assessments and visionary strategic land use planning. We will lead and support regional planning and delivery of initiatives to prepare our community for a low carbon future.

Using its connections with other levels of Government, Latrobe City Council will advocate for policy settings that support investment and secure long-term economic prosperity. We will facilitate improvements in infrastructure to support business activity

and community wellbeing and contribute to enhancement of the urban environment to foster sustainable population growth and skills retention.

**Building the Latrobe City investment brand:**
The Latrobe City investment brand will provide a solid foundation upon which Latrobe City Council and the business community can promote our City to investors and effectively engage with private and public sector decision makers.

Latrobe City Council will seek to better understand the enablers and barriers to investment and target promotional activities and strategies to build our city’s reputation as an investment location of choice.

**Driving strategic business development:**
We will be uncompromising in our pursuit of iconic projects that create substantial employment opportunities for Latrobe City and the surrounding region.

Opportunities for investment and growth that bring new capital into the local economy, align with the strengths of Latrobe City, complement existing industries and serve to diversify the economy will be proactively identified and aggressively pursued. Prospects that will be targeted include:

- **Food processing:** Gippsland is increasingly becoming the food bowl for Victoria. Latrobe City Council will maximise opportunities for food processing investment within the municipality with an aim of attracting the next large project within this sector.
- **Power generation:** Latrobe City will harness its competitive strengths in power generation and heavy engineering in order to build on, and further enhance our reputation as Victoria’s energy heartland with a particular focus on new technologies and sustainable uses for our vast brown coal resource.
- **Education and Training:** We will partner with the education sector to promote Latrobe City as the location of choice for both Australian and international students within regional Victoria.
- **Shared Services:** Latrobe City will mobilise its skilled workforce and infrastructure capacity to be a key shared services hub within Australia.

Harnessing our local and international business networks, we will assist new and existing businesses to expand and invest in Latrobe City by providing information and data to support decision-making, brokering partnerships and building business capacity.

This document outlines the key economic sustainability strategies and actions planned for the 2011-2015 period. We believe this Economic Sustainability Strategy will foster robust business growth, sustained local employment opportunities and ongoing job security for the Latrobe City community.

Latrobe City is open for business.

The Mayor and Councillors of Latrobe City
Economic Sustainability Strategy 2011-2015

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Introduction

Latrobe City is home to approximately 75,300 people, largely residing in the four major population centres of Churchill, Moe-Newborough, Morwell and Traralgon. Over the last five years, the population in Latrobe City and the broader Gippsland region has grown steadily and Latrobe City has become a significant service centre for the Gippsland region, particularly in provision of retail, entertainment, education and health services.

Latrobe City is recognised as one of Victoria’s four major regional centres, along with Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong. Employment growth in Latrobe City is strong, exceeding growth in the other three regional centres.

There has been significant investment in Latrobe City in recent years with major developments including:

- Australian Paper pulp mill upgrade
- International Power 2030 Project
- Latrobe Community Health Centre headquarters
- Gippsland Water factory

A significant amount of capital investment is in the planning pipeline as demonstrated by the following projects:

- National Foods $55 million expansion
- Mahindra $22 million investment for an approximate 75% share in ownership of GippsAero
- TRUenergy Combined Cycle Gas Turbine (CCGT) Power Station (capital cost unknown)
- HRL Clean Coal Power Station $750 million

The broader Gippsland region is rich in natural resources, including forests, fertile land for agriculture, water, natural gas and brown coal. Historically, brown coal electricity generation has been the backbone of the local economy but the economy has diversified to include a range of industries including forestry and paper, manufacturing, agribusiness, retail, hospitality, aviation, health and education. Latrobe City is now home to Australia’s largest yoghurt manufacturing facility, the largest pulp and paper manufacturer in Australia, the only regional “Group of Eight” university in Victoria and the only manufacturer of passenger aircraft in Australia.

Latrobe City offers new investors: a skilled labour force, strong road and rail transport links, access to abundant natural resources, established electricity transmission and generation infrastructure, locally based educational institutions and affordable land prices.
A number of current and emerging factors are likely to have significant impact on the economy of Latrobe City into the future. These challenges and opportunities include:

- Existing and anticipated Victorian and Australian government policy and legislation to combat climate change
- The value of the Latrobe City coal resource and emerging technologies that may enable sustainable use
- Changing workforce demographics, in particular an ageing workforce
- Globalisation and the growing profile of the Latrobe region domestically and internationally
- The emergence of government policies aimed at supporting community development and economic growth in regional areas
- An increasingly mobile society enabling easy access to Latrobe City from Melbourne metropolitan area and beyond
- Forecast population growth in Victoria

In light of these factors, Latrobe City Council has undertaken a review of its Economic Sustainability Strategy. This document describes the key elements of the revised strategy, which will apply from 2011-2015.

The Strategy is intended to:

- Provide a framework to direct Latrobe City Council economic development activities
- Guide the work of Council so that work can be prioritised to focus on those activities that best position Latrobe City to prosper in a changing economic environment
- Identify emerging challenges and opportunities and corresponding actions to assist business to grow and invest

The Strategy aims to identify actions that will consolidate Latrobe City’s position as a major regional city and service centre for the Gippsland region and drive economic growth at a pace exceeding that of other regional centres as measured by:

- Job creation
- Growth in gross regional product
- Reduction in unemployment rates
Latrobe City Council’s Economic Sustainability Objectives

The community vision for the Latrobe Valley, Latrobe 2026, describes the preferred future for Latrobe Valley. In 2026, the Latrobe Valley will be a liveable and vibrant region, sustainable and enterprising with collaborative and inclusive leadership. One of the primary priorities identified by the community in the vision is diversification and expansion of local industry to ensure continued growth of the local workforce.

Latrobe City Council has developed the Latrobe City Council Plan 2011-2015, which describes the strategic direction needed to achieve the 2026 vision. The Plan includes the following economic sustainability objectives:

- Facilitate investment attraction of new firms to contribute to economic diversification, employment creation and meeting the challenges of a carbon constrained economy
- Develop and implement economic development actions to encourage business retention and growth
- Promote and support the development of existing and new infrastructure to enhance the social and economic well-being of the municipality
- Ensure well planned infrastructure that enhances the marketability of the municipality to industries, residents and investors
- Utilise economic modelling to demonstrate the possible impact of economic development strategies
- Conduct focussed feasibility studies to determine potential major public infrastructure with significant economic benefits
- Support the skill development requirements of local industry
- Strengthen the economic sustainability of the region by actively encouraging partnerships with other local governments, industry and community agencies
- Promote and support the development of the tourism and events sector
- Develop, collate and publish a range of economic indicators annually

Latrobe City Council recognises the growing community concern about climate change and it supports international and Australian policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The likely future constraints on carbon-based emissions that will arise from these policies have significant implications for the ongoing sustainability, vitality and well-being of the Latrobe City community. In 2010, Latrobe City Council developed a policy entitled Positioning Latrobe City for a Low Carbon Emissions Future. The policy identifies the expected implications of Government mitigation policies on the City and proposes transition arrangements to enable Latrobe City to optimise its transition and continue to prosper under future Government greenhouse gas schemes.
Both the Latrobe City Council Plan and the Positioning Latrobe City for a Low Carbon Emission Future include actions to update the Economic Development Strategy to reflect the challenges and opportunities that will arise in the 2011-2015 period, including the imperative to effectively manage the transition to a low carbon economy.

Figure 1 shows the relationship between the Economic Sustainability Strategy and the other Latrobe City Council strategies, policies and plans that influence economic development activities undertaken by council. The Economic Sustainability Strategy 2011-2015 incorporates the initiatives identified in the policy for a low carbon future and these other relevant strategies and describes how the economic development objectives outlined in the Latrobe City Council Plan will be achieved.

An underlying principle of the revised Economic Sustainability Strategy is that the economic development activities undertaken by Latrobe City Council are intended to complement, rather than duplicate, services provided by other Government agencies and private sector accountants, consultants, solicitors, financiers and training providers.
Rather than setting and implementing economic and marketing plans for each sector (a task better suited to those operating within each sector), Latrobe City Council believes it can add the most value to Economic Sustainability by:

- Advocating in the interests of the business and broader community
- Facilitating capacity building, networking opportunities and partnerships in the business community
- Providing information, data, modelling and advisory services to support investment efforts
- Exhibiting strong leadership and supporting regional partnerships to ensure coordinated regional plans are in place
- Ensuring that Latrobe City Council’s services related to economic development are delivered efficiently
- Promoting Latrobe City and pursuing investment opportunities
- Supporting job creation and economic diversification in key employment zones
- Proactively identifying and aggressively pursuing new investment opportunities
2011-2015 Economic Sustainability Strategy

Latrobe City Council’s Economic Sustainability Strategy aims to identify actions that will consolidate Latrobe City’s position as a major regional city and service centre for the Gippsland region and drive economic growth by:

- Facilitating sustainable economic development in Latrobe City
- Diversifying the economic base
- Capturing opportunities arising from a low carbon economy
- Delivering growth in employment opportunities and job security for the Latrobe City community

Latrobe City Council’s existing economic development program has supported the strong economic growth enjoyed by Latrobe City in recent years. The previous economic development strategy included many initiatives that have contributed to economic growth and it is intended that these activities will continue. While Latrobe City Council will keep doing what we are doing well, we intend to augment our existing program with targeted measures aimed at accelerating investment and generating the momentum needed to respond to the rapidly changing economic environment in which we operate.

To achieve sustainable economic development, Latrobe City Council plans to focus on three equally important and inter-dependent groups of activities (Figure 2):

- Providing strategic business development services for new and existing businesses
- Building the Latrobe City investment brand
- Creating an enabling business environment that fosters business activity and supports further investment

Figure 2: Achieving Sustainable Economic Development
Strategic business development activities aim to enhance growth in employment by retaining existing businesses in Latrobe City and maximising opportunities for expansion and new investment. Harnessing our local and international business networks, Latrobe City Council will assist new and existing businesses to expand and invest in Latrobe City by providing information and data to support decision-making, brokering partnerships and building business capacity.

The focus of Latrobe City Council's business development activities is twofold:

- Providing assistance to existing Latrobe City businesses to maintain their competitiveness and to expand or diversify their operations in Latrobe City
- Identifying and aggressively pursuing new investment by businesses currently operating outside the municipality

Latrobe City Council will build a strong, progressive and recognised Latrobe City investment brand that emphasises the liveability of the City. Our investment brand will provide a foundation upon which Latrobe City Council and the business community can promote Latrobe City to investors and effectively engage with private and public sector decision makers to achieve long term economic development outcomes. Latrobe City Council will seek to better understand the barriers and enablers to investment and target promotional activities and strategies to build our city’s reputation as an investment location of choice.

Latrobe City Council will also play a key role in providing an enabling business environment that allows new investors and existing industries to readily establish, operate and expand their businesses. Our actions in this area will make it easy for businesses to invest, adapt and grow.

Latrobe City Council intends to be at the forefront of delivery of statutory planning assessments and visionary strategic land use planning. We will lead and support regional planning and delivery of initiatives to prepare our community for a low carbon future.

Using its connections with other levels of Government, Latrobe City Council will advocate for policy settings that support investment and secure long-term economic prosperity. We will facilitate improvements in infrastructure to support business activity and community wellbeing and contribute to enhancement of the urban environment to foster sustainable population growth and skills retention.

The following sections describe the strategies that Latrobe City Council plans to employ in each of these three areas to contribute to robust and sustainable economic development in Latrobe City.
Strategic Business Development

Latrobe City Council’s strategic business development services aim to support existing businesses to grow and increase their competitiveness and to attract new businesses and industries to Latrobe City.

![Figure 3: Strategic Business Development](image)

Latrobe City’s business development services will be targeted to ensure that available resources are directed toward the business development opportunities that provide the greatest benefit to the community and build on the unique strengths and competitive advantages of the region. In line with Council’s Economic Development Assistance Policy (2008), priority is given to initiatives based on:

- Direct and indirect employment
- Expansion potential
- Diversification of the local economy
- Likely impact on the profile and liveability of Latrobe City
- Strategic linkages with other industries
- Extent of new investment
- Impact on existing businesses or suppliers within Latrobe City

**Retention and growth of existing businesses**

Over 4,500 businesses operate in Latrobe City and up to 20% of these have indicated an intention to expand their operations in the 2011-2015 period.\(^2\) Assisting these existing businesses to maintain their competitiveness and to grow or diversify their operations is a key plank of Latrobe City’s Economic Sustainability Strategy.

Latrobe City Council will maintain relationships and connections with the business community to ensure that it has an in depth understanding of the issues and trends facing companies operating in the municipality and to identify gaps in provision of services.

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\(^2\) Industry and Investment Survey, 2010
needed by business. Latrobe City Council will continue to develop its database of Latrobe City businesses and the Industry and Investment Survey will also continue to be conducted bi-annually to provide up to date information on the priorities of businesses in Latrobe City. Results of the survey will be analysed to identify key trends and Latrobe City Council will communicate findings to the business community.

Working in partnership with the private sector and other levels of government, Latrobe City Council will keep the business community apprised of emerging developments in the operating environment including:

- Developments in the Government policy setting, including issues such as the emerging carbon emissions regulations, and implications for business
- Australian and Victorian Government funding and initiatives of relevance to Latrobe City businesses
- Conferences and networking events of potential interest to the business community
- Economic activity in Latrobe City, including industry expansions and new investment projects
- Economic development data and services offered by public and private sector agencies and by Latrobe City Council

To ensure effective two way communication and widespread coverage, a variety of communication strategies will be employed including continued production of the Business Connect newsletter and frequent updates of the Latrobe City internet economic development pages.

Our plans include a heightened focus on developing communication channels to improve our reach to small and medium business enterprises:

- Strengthening of informal communication networks
- Maintaining lines of communication with law firms, accountants and others who provide services to the business community and can act as a conduit for communication

Latrobe City Council will continue to support regional industry networking, partnership and knowledge sharing events. These events are highly valued by stakeholders and provide a further opportunity for two-way communication between business and Latrobe City on issues of relevance to specific industry sectors. The forums also provide an opportunity for networking and the development of partnerships between industry sector organisations. Additionally, networking events provide an opportunity for cost-effective delivery of knowledge and skills development programs targeted to the interests of the industry group.

Through informal and formal communication networks with business, Latrobe City Council will continue to work with industry to identify skill gaps and training needs not being met by others. Latrobe City Council will work in partnership with the business community to coordinate the development and delivery of high quality training programs that are targeted to the identified needs of businesses.
Latrobe City Council will continue to promote and advocate for local industry sectors in the broader community, maintaining representation on advocacy and governance bodies such as the National Timber Council’s Taskforce, Timber Towns, the Powerworks Board and others as appropriate.

Latrobe City Council will act as a broker between industry, regulators, other private and public sector agencies, skills providers and educators to assist businesses to plan for growth and to implement their identified growth strategies. We will continue to offer services to project proponents to progress investment proposals including:

- Provision of statistical data
- Advice on the local business environment including relevant networks
- Provision of development site information and assistance in identifying suitable sites
- Advice about Victorian and Commonwealth Government industry assistance
- Assistance with the co-ordination of Latrobe City Council and other agency regulatory permits and approval processes

Latrobe City Council compiles statistical data for Latrobe City and can make this information available to businesses to support investment decision making. In addition, economic modelling capability is available to assess the economic impact of potential public and private sector projects. Output from this model can be utilised to demonstrate the possible net benefits of economic development strategies and individual projects to government decision makers, media and other audiences. Latrobe City Council will utilise modelling as required to support its advocacy efforts and business investment decision making.

The ratio of exports outside Latrobe City is relatively low in proportion to regional product (see Appendix 1) and an opportunity exists for increased exports to wider Gippsland and international markets. In the 2011-2015 period, Latrobe City Council will intensify efforts to expand domestic and international markets for local products by:

- Working in partnership with the Department of Business and Innovation (DBI) and the Department of Community Development (DPCD) to introduce business to trade and investment opportunities
- Exploring opportunities to leverage off the international relations program (e.g. the sister city initiative)
- Developing the Gippsland Logistics Precinct, which will allow efficient and cost effective movement of freight to and from the Gippsland region

Latrobe City is the educational centre for Gippsland, offering some of the finest educational facilities in regional Australia. Due to a strong relationship between education providers and industry, Latrobe City has been a leader in vocational education and industry training for many years. The city is home to the only regional “Group of Eight” university in Victoria, Monash Gippsland, which provides tertiary education to local and international students. An opportunity exists to collaborate with Monash University and other education providers to grow the education sector’s share of the international education market, building on Latrobe City Council’s existing international relations program. Latrobe City intends to build partnerships with the education sector to explore
and capture international education opportunities of mutual benefit in the 2011-2015 period and to position Latrobe City as the location of choice for international students within regional Victoria.

The tourism sector is in a unique position to enhance economic activity in Latrobe City. Increased tourism and events add custom for aligned businesses including those in the retail and hospitality industry. The sector also plays a role in increasing the profile of Latrobe City as a preferred location for investment.

Latrobe City Council will continue to have a direct and substantive role in promoting and supporting the development of the tourism and events sector in Latrobe City through support of the Latrobe City Business Tourism Association, promotion of the City to prospective visitors and attracting and supporting events.

We will also continue to collaborate with Destination Gippsland to promote regional tourism and to identify and facilitate tourism industry development programs.

Implementation of the recommendations of the Tourism Product Audit and Latrobe Visitor Information Centre Review will be a priority in the 2011-2015 period. These studies have shown that while Latrobe City is not a primary leisure tourism destination, it has a strong economic base, international investment partners, experience in events and a ready conference market upon which to develop its tourism and events sector. Latrobe City will deliver the adopted recommendations to:

- Position Latrobe City as the events and conferencing centre for broader Gippsland.
- Promote a cohesive effort by the three major centres to secure funding and events of mutual benefit

Latrobe City Council recognises the benefits of local procurement to the Latrobe City economy and as a consequence purchasing decisions typically consider local content of goods and services as one of a number of selection criteria. Latrobe City Council’s procurement policies are designed to ensure that purchasing of goods and services is efficient and is in line with probity principles, necessitating inclusion in tender processes of suppliers outside of Latrobe City. Latrobe City Council will provide opportunities for local businesses, along with external providers, to tender for provision of goods and services and to demonstrate the competitiveness of local products and services.

Latrobe City Council will also promote opportunities for local procurement within the Latrobe City business community and for major projects in the broader region by:

- Coordination of the Gippsland Major Projects Summit
- Introducing suppliers to industry operators or project developers by direct referrals and industry networking events
- Continued support and utilisation of the Industry Capability Network
Pursuing new investment

Attracting new businesses and industries to Latrobe City is the second key business development activity in Latrobe City’s economic development program. Effectively targeting new industries and opportunities will help to diversify the economy and will generate ongoing employment opportunities in Latrobe City.

Latrobe City Council will continue its work to attract international investment by:

- Facilitating visits to Gippsland by potential investors
- Coordinating overseas trade delegations
- Supporting key business organisations including; Economic Development Australia; VECCI Regional Business Council; Destination Gippsland Ltd; and the Gippsland Business Awards
- Delivering presentations to conferences and target industry groups
- Maintaining positive relationships with Victorian and Australian Governments

In addition, opportunities for new investment that bring new capital into the local economy, align with the strengths of Latrobe City, complement existing industries and serve to diversify the economy will be proactively identified and aggressively pursued during the 2011-2015 period. Opportunities that will be targeted are:

- **International investment**: building on the international relations program and sustained international market interest in Latrobe City to attract international investment
- **Low emissions and renewable energy technologies**: securing Victoria’s next major power development in Latrobe City. Latrobe City will harness its competitive strengths in power generation and heavy engineering in order to build on, and further enhance our reputation as Victoria’s energy heartland
- **Food processing facilities**: attracting large scale value-add food manufacturing processors utilising local and imported product. Gippsland is increasingly becoming the food bowl for Victoria. Latrobe City Council will maximise opportunities for food processing investment within the municipality with an aim of attracting development of the next large project within this sector
- **Shared services**: harnessing the strengths of Latrobe City to attract call centres and business services seeking affordable, accessible and well serviced central office locations. Latrobe City will mobilise its skilled workforce and infrastructure capacity to be a key shared services hub within Australia
- **Alternative coal use**: promoting the development of coal derivative technologies including fertiliser production, coal to oil and coal to gas technologies
- **Soil carbon programs**: building regional capacity for production of carbon offsets through forestry, bio-char and/or soil carbon management for sale into local and international markets along with development of aligned services (e.g. brokerage agencies) located in Latrobe City’s commercial hub
- **Business tourism and events**: furthering investment in facilities to support the growth of the business tourism market including an 1000+ seat conference centre and accommodation facilities, undertaking cost/benefit studies into opportunities
identified in the Latrobe City Tourism Audit including an energy innovation conference resort, a major driver training complex and a motor sport activity centre

- **Aviation industries**: attracting aviation related businesses including aerospace industries, adventure tourism firms, aviation training facilities and related service providers to establish or expand their operations on the expanding Latrobe Regional Airport site
- **Road and rail industries**: securing freight industry investment, utilising the rail network and Gippsland Logistics Precinct, to provide freight services to local industry
- **Advanced manufacturing facilities**: attracting technology industries including robotics, computer technologies and control systems manufacture
- **Employment Zones**: developing the Lurgi Plant, Gippsland Logistics Precinct and Latrobe Regional Airport as concentrated employment zones (see the box below for further details)

As part of shaping Latrobe City’s low carbon future, we will advance Latrobe City as a centre of knowledge and research in low carbon technologies including carbon capture and storage (CCS), clean coal and soil carbon sequestration. In 2011-2015, our focus will be on expediting delivery of the initiatives identified in our policy *Positioning Latrobe City for a Low Carbon Emissions Future*:

- Lobbying Government to establish low emissions coal research projects in Latrobe City
- Supporting proponents to access funding to establish low emissions and alternative coal research projects in Latrobe City
- Promoting carbon capture and storage projects (such as the CCS project and CO2CRC initiatives) in the broader community
- Supporting the proposal for establishment of the Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Technologies in Gippsland
- Working with Clean Coal Victoria, Brown Coal Innovation Australia and other coal technology agencies to identify and pursue investment opportunities in brown coal
- Working with Monash University and the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) to investigate opportunities for soil carbon research and pilot programs in Latrobe City and/or Gippsland region
# Latrobe City Employment Zones

With an emphasis on job creation, industry diversification and the ability to offer opportunities to prospective investors, Latrobe City has three areas of significant commercial importance:

- Former gas and fuel Lurgi plant
- Gippsland Logistics Precinct
- Latrobe Regional Airport

The three areas mentioned are referred to as Employment Zones, and are of significant interest in terms of future prosperity and growth for the municipality.

## Former Gas and Fuel Lurgi Plant site at Morwell

In 2001, Latrobe City Council resolved that it would “purchase for a nominal amount the decontaminated former Gas and Fuel Lurgi Plant site at Morwell”. The purpose of this resolution was to retain the land in public ownership and, in the future, develop a heavy industry park on the site to facilitate the attraction of industry to the site and therefore increase economic development in the municipality.

Demolition and remediation works on the Lurgi Site were completed on behalf of the Victorian Government in 2006. Since that time Council officers have worked at length with the Victorian Government Property Group to secure the land to be used as a Heavy Industry Park.

A master plan for the site was produced by Council Officers and consultants and adopted by Council in 2006. The master plan ensured that the land would sufficiently accommodate existing industry whilst allowing for future growth, with the opportunity to accommodate firms on Industrial 2 Zoned land (IND2Z).

## Gippsland Logistics Precinct

Latrobe City Council has had a significant long term interest and involvement in facilitating an open access intermodal freight terminal to meet the needs of our region. The development of the Gippsland Logistics Precinct will establish a centre for the efficient and cost effective movement of freight to and from the Gippsland region.

A key strategic action of Council’s is to “Promote and support the development of existing and new industry, and infrastructure to enhance the social and economic well-being of the Valley”. The development of the Gippsland Logistics Precinct is a key priority under this action.

## Latrobe Regional Airport

Latrobe Regional Airport is wholly owned by Latrobe City Council on behalf of the residents and ratepayers of Latrobe City. The Airport is a key economic and community facility providing significant employment opportunities, vital business and community services and valuable recreation and tourism facilities.

Recent development and expansion has created new development opportunities for aviation related businesses. Exciting employment and growth opportunities exist at the Latrobe Regional Airport, and one particular firm, GippsAero has plans for significant expansion on the site.

The purpose of the Latrobe Regional Airport Master Plan is to facilitate the appropriate development of the Latrobe Regional Airport and surrounds over the next 20 years, which in turn, will increase employment, output and investment out of, and into the Latrobe Regional Airport.
Building the Latrobe City Investment Brand

Business stakeholders consulted during development of this strategy identified the profile of Latrobe City in the broader community as an obstacle to investment and growth. Stakeholders report that the current perception of Latrobe City makes it difficult to attract and retain staff, students, investors and customers to the region. Participants identified enhancing the image of Latrobe City as a high priority issue pivotal to future economic development.

Latrobe City’s profile in the broader community is the foundation upon which partnerships with investors, industry, government and research institutions to progress economic development initiatives are developed. As well as impacting on external perceptions of Latrobe City, the image of the region can also affect the views and optimism of those already working and residing in Latrobe City.

Latrobe City Council currently works to promote the municipality to potential investors, visitors and other stakeholders by:

- Promoting “success stories”
- Running road-shows for Government officers to improve understanding and familiarity with Latrobe City
- Contributing and harnessing benefits from regional advertising campaigns, such as the Regional Cities campaign
- Producing targeted promotional campaigns for national and international investment markets and presentations to relevant conferences, expos and industry groups
- Producing and distributing marketing materials that promote Latrobe City as an attractive place to live, visit and work
- Showcasing Latrobe City at investment forums and conferences

The consensus view of the business stakeholders, along with anecdotal evidence collected over many years, suggests that there is an opportunity to develop a
comprehensive, targeted and co-ordinated approach to further build the image of Latrobe City.

In 2011-2015, Latrobe City Council plans to work in partnership with the business community to understand if and how the perception of our region affects resident attraction, visitation and investment decisions and to develop targeted programs to enhance the profile of Latrobe City in the broader community.

The proposed approach involves:

- Commissioning market research to better understand the internal and external perceptions of Latrobe City and to identify opportunities and barriers to investment
- Analysing research findings and identifying targeted programs to further develop Latrobe City’s community profile, building on the municipality’s history of innovation and industry

The Latrobe City Marketing and Communications Strategy 2005-2008 will be reviewed during the 2011-2015 period. While the Marketing and Communications Strategy primarily concerns itself with the Latrobe City Council brand (as opposed to the branding of the broader Latrobe City municipality) there is an opportunity to review the scope of the Strategy to include development of programs for promotion of the municipality.
Creating an enabling business environment

Latrobe City Council plays a key role in creating, or assisting others to create, a business environment that is attractive to existing and new business owners and investors.

Discussions with industry stakeholders have identified the following elements of the business environment as important to sustain business investment and growth:

- Strong leadership and a clear direction
- An attractive policy setting
- Efficient and rigorous planning processes
- Access to skilled labour
- High quality infrastructure and services
- Well managed natural resources
- A liveable city

![Diagram of Various Economic Development Layers]

- Strong leadership and a clear direction
- An attractive policy setting
- Innovative and efficient urban planning
- Access to skilled labour
- Development of high quality infrastructure and services
- Sustainable use of natural resources
- A liveable city

Figure 5: Creating an Enabling Business Environment

**Strong leadership and a clear direction**

Latrobe City Council intends to take a lead role in consolidating Latrobe City’s position as a major regional centre and in preparing the community to prosper under a low carbon future. In addition to demonstrating strong, proactive leadership ourselves we will seek-out opportunities to cultivate community leadership and innovation in the Latrobe City business community.

Where regional approaches are required, for example in promotion of agri-business and tourism or in preparation for a low carbon emissions future, Latrobe City Council will continue to work in partnership with the Gippsland Local Government Network (GLGN) and with sector specific regional associations to develop effective regional plans, to organise a collective voice to government and to promote industry sectors.
Latrobe City Council will work to foster the development of new leaders and entrepreneurs by continuing to support the Gippsland Business Awards, the Latrobe City Business Tourism Association and its People’s Choice Awards along with local business peak bodies.

Additionally, our plans for 2011-2015 include:

- Expansion of our program of local business networking events
- Increased focus on facilitating local business and individual participation in Victorian and Australian Government leadership development initiatives
- Working in partnership with the local business community to develop leaders and entrepreneurs.

Latrobe City Council will work to prepare Latrobe City and the broader Gippsland region for a low carbon emissions future by implementing the initiatives identified in its policy *Positioning Latrobe City for a Low Carbon Emissions Future* including:

- Forming a Latrobe City Low Carbon Emissions Future Transition Committee to oversee the implementation of the Low Carbon Emissions Future policy
- Maintaining its alliance with other coal industry Councils and working with this group to undertake Social Impact Analysis to identify the likely impacts of a carbon price on Latrobe City
- Supporting the Victorian Government’s plans for a socio-economic study into impacts of power station shutdowns and investigating opportunities to link socio-economic work with Coal Alliance work described above
- Seeking Government support for “Carbon Assist” positions to assist businesses to manage the transition to a low carbon economy and for local Council positions to assist in regional planning for the transition
- Implementing communication strategies to maintain investor confidence during the transition period
- Facilitating community participation in the Climate Communities scheme to increase understanding of climate change and encourage energy efficiency and emissions reduction initiatives in the community
- Advocating for formulation of proactive plans to manage impacts and put in place contingency measures as indicated by Social Impact Analysis studies

It is recognised that many of the low carbon transition actions require regional cooperation and coordination. In 2011-2015, Latrobe City will lead the formation of a GLGN carbon transition sub-committee to develop a Gippsland Low Carbon Economy Transition Plan, as recommended in the Gippsland Regional Plan, and will advocate for the formation of a regional governance structure for delivery of Australian Government funding and programs related to the transition (potentially utilising existing Regional Development Committees).
An attractive policy setting

Over 2011-2015, Latrobe City Council will work to ensure that the municipality’s interests are considered effectively in formulation of government policies and strategies. Latrobe City Council will foster and strengthen existing relationships with the Victorian and Australian Governments and will engage with them to understand policy direction and to lobby for continued support for regional development and a smooth transition to a low carbon emissions future.

In order to influence policy effectively, it is important that communication with other levels of Government is targeted, consistent and co-ordinated. Latrobe City Council will work to strengthen its relationships and communication networks with Victorian and Australian Government ministers and senior departmental officers. We plan to:

- Identify existing communication pathways to Victorian and Australian governments and any gaps in communication arrangements
- Coordinate the lines of communication between existing and planned advisory committees (e.g. Latrobe City Low Carbon Emissions Future Transition Committee, the Gippsland Regional Plan Low Carbon Transition Sub-committee and the Regional Managers Forum) where appropriate to ensure that communication and advice is coordinated and consistent

Using these communication channels, we plan to provide input to Victorian and Australian Governments as early as possible in policy setting processes to ensure that the impacts of initiatives on the community are well considered. Over the 2011-2015 period, Victorian and Australian Governments will continue to develop and potentially implement their Carbon mitigation policies and Latrobe City Council’s focus will be on:

- Engaging all levels of Government in pro-active dialogue regarding the impact of a carbon price on the Latrobe City community and economy
- Providing regular briefings on Latrobe City’s transition policy and specific transition needs for the relevant Victorian and Australian Government Ministers as well as Shadow Ministers

Latrobe City Council will advocate for local representation on stakeholder committees advising Victorian and Australian Governments and guiding the growth and development of the region (e.g. proposed Australian Climate Change Action Fund Committee, Victorian Government’s Leadership Forum, Regional Development committees and Local Government advisory panels).

Latrobe City will lobby for increased expansion of Victorian and Australian Government offices in Latrobe City and will work with these agencies to seek to have local suppliers provided with the opportunity to tender for provision of goods and services used by these local offices.
Innovative and Efficient Urban Planning

Latrobe City Council’s strategic land use planning and statutory permitting functions play a key role in ensuring that development is properly considered and contributes to the long term urban character and liveability of Latrobe City.

Latrobe City Council will conduct innovative urban planning and employ efficient processes that support the long term aspirations of the growing community and assist efforts to build the profile of Latrobe City in the broader community. In 2011-2015, we plan to continually improve the planning process by working with developers to deliver high quality urban design and development that contributes to the character and liveability of Latrobe City.

While maintaining robust and transparent processes is a priority, Latrobe City Council also recognises that efficient processing of planning applications and Planning Scheme Amendments can be a significant benefit and attraction for developers and investors. Latrobe City Council will continue to investigate and implement opportunities for continuous improvement in statutory assessment processes.

The complexity of planning legislation and the necessary involvement of other regulatory agencies can make it difficult for users to navigate planning processes. To address this issue, Latrobe City Council plans to progress the following initiatives in the 2011-2015 period:

- Working with users and stakeholders of the planning system to progressively increase understanding of the planning process
- Identifying significant and major development initiatives and applying a cross division, comprehensive planning approach to ensure the response to these applications is coordinated
- Maintaining constructive relationships with external stakeholders and regulators to ensure planning processes are as efficient as possible
- Continually improving its planning processes while ensuring ongoing compliance with legislation

To achieve this Latrobe City Council plans to:

- Conduct developer forums and community engagement processes that ensure that the needs of users and stakeholders are understood
- Explore new and innovative methods of planning assessment (e.g. online planning application submission and assessment)
- Collect statistics to report on performance and identify opportunities to further improve planning processes

Limited land availability in Latrobe City and the Gippsland region has been identified as a key constraint to industrial and residential development. In addition, existing industrial sites...
are experiencing encroachment of residential areas, which may lead to future additional constraints to operation of the facility\(^3\).

Strategic planning priorities for 2011-2015, aimed at resolving land availability constraints and balancing industrial, commercial residential, environmental, community and recreational needs include:

- Development, implementation and periodic review of township structure plans
- Development, implementation and periodic review of Main Town Activity Centre Plans
- Development and implementation of an Industrial Land Strategy
- Development of precinct based development plans for a variety of land use activity (residential, commercial, industrial etc.)
- Development and implementation of policies relating to the future use of rural land
- Development and implementation of recreation and open space strategies
- Maintenance and updating of Planning Scheme controls relating to environmental features within the municipality (environmental significance, flood, wildfire etc)
- Review of future natural resource management

In relation to the management of coal resources in particular, Latrobe City Council will work closely with DPI, through Clean Coal Victoria, to ensure that any future development of the currently unallocated coal resource is undertaken with due consideration of social, environmental and economic factors and with consideration of the implications of future carbon pricing on the optimal use of natural resources.

Latrobe City Council intends to provide input to the development of the Gippsland Integrated Land Use Plan to provide direction and priorities for addressing population growth while enabling sustainable development of agricultural, industrial, commercial, residential and coal related land uses in the Gippsland region. Latrobe City Council will seek to ensure that interested stakeholders, including industry and business representatives, are consulted in this planning process.

### Access to skilled labour

The changing business environment arising from new investment and factors such as the transition to a low carbon economy will necessitate the development of skills in new areas. Industry, education and training sectors acknowledge that this is best done in a planned and co-ordinated way to ensure that education and training programs are developed which adequately meet the future skills needs of the region and Victoria generally. Targeted education and training will increase Latrobe City’s competitive advantage, workforce participation and productivity.

Latrobe City Council will contribute in the Skills Victoria *Skilling the Valley* initiative, which aims to identify future industry and employment opportunities and develop new skills in the Latrobe Valley.

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\(^3\) Latrobe Regional Airport Master plan, 2009
Over the 2011-2015 period, Latrobe City will support and provide input to the Skilling the Valley actions, which include:

- **Strong Foundations for Gippsland**: A coordinated high profile effort aimed at ensuring that every citizen of the region has the opportunity to develop the abilities to participate in the modern economy by having the necessary foundation level skills. This will involve a coordinated action by local training and education providers to promote and provide foundation level life, numeracy, literacy and language skills training and support into Gippsland. This will improve the employability of the participants and also their ability to gain maximum benefit from the tertiary education opportunities being delivered.

- **State of the Valley Report**: A benchmark report will be commissioned that will provide a ‘snapshot’ of the Gippsland region. This report will contribute to the development of the Latrobe Valley Industry and Employment Roadmap. The report will include a range of economic, demographic and educational indicators, as well as an inventory of descriptors of other government led activities and or programs taking place in the region.

- **Preparing for the Future**: A scoping exercise will be completed to ascertain availability and access to possible avenues of skills and training opportunities to up-skill cohorts of workers impacted by a transition to a low carbon economy, either through scholarship programs or local delivery of training.

- **Worker Engagement**: A survey of workers employed in industries most likely to be impacted by transition to a low carbon economy will be commissioned. It will determine their age, gender, and qualification level, last engagement with formal education, career intentions and career interests. This information will inform the development of a transitional workforce development strategy which effectively leverages the VTG and ensures that workers who are likely to be affected are engaged in the process of planning for their future.

- **Skilling the Valley Project Officers**: The Skilling the Valley initiative is to be supported locally by the creation of four new positions to be established in stakeholder organisations to help deliver coordinated outcomes of the initiative. One of these positions, which will focus on establishing a network of Economic Development Officers across the region to engage with community and drive long term planning, will be based at the Latrobe City Council offices.

The Industry and Investment Survey, conducted by Latrobe City Council every second year, provides valuable information on the skills requirements of local business and Council plans to continue to collect and analyse this information to identify skills gaps and tailor training and capacity building programs accordingly.

**Development of high quality infrastructure and services**

High quality roads, freight and public transport systems, water, electricity networks, natural gas infrastructure, and telecommunications facilities are vital to enable businesses to operate effectively and to attract new investment. Using its connections with other levels of Government, Latrobe City Council will continue to advocate for access to funding and priority infrastructure development in Latrobe City.
Infrastructure programs that are currently underway will continue to be progressed over the 2011-2015 period. These programs include:

- Morwell Logistics Precinct
- Churchill Town Centre plan
- Moe Activity Centre Plan and the Moe Railway Precinct Revitalisation project
- Development of the Traralgon Activity Centre plan and the Traralgon Station Precinct Master Plan

Latrobe City Council will also continue to progress the Gippsland Logistics Precinct development, a 64 hectare site three kilometres east of the Morwell CBD, adjacent to the existing Gippsland Intermodal Freight Terminal (GIFT), which will support local business expansion by providing a central facility for the efficient and cost effective movement of rail freight to and from the Gippsland region. Latrobe City Council has led the feasibility study and development of the indicative business case and has identified funding sources to support development of the precinct. Council has endorsed the next stage of the project where Expressions of Interest will be called for operation of the terminal and site development.

Latrobe City will lobby for early National Broadband Network (NBN) roll-out in Gippsland and will look for opportunities for its businesses to reap early benefits from the NBN system. It will look at opportunities to pilot projects that use high-speed broadband to improve regional services and lifestyles (e.g. provision of Latrobe City health services to remote areas in Gippsland).

In addition to these initiatives, in 2011-2015 our infrastructure plans include:

- **Energy Innovation Centre/Conference Centre Feasibility Assessment:** As noted earlier, growth in business tourism, particularly conferencing, has been identified by the Tourism Product Audit as a significant opportunity for Latrobe City. To support the development of this market, Latrobe City will explore the opportunity identified in the Gippsland Regional Plan for a 1000 seat conference facility to be located in the municipality
- **Lobbying for improving transport links:** Improved rail services and road linkages will facilitate access to Latrobe City by populations from the outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne, increasing opportunities for students and workers to travel into Latrobe City on a daily basis
- **Lobbying for improved freight links:** The Gippsland Regional Plan identifies freight upgrades through the Gippsland Gateways initiative as a priority area and Latrobe City plans to work with the GLGN to secure Government support for this important initiative. Latrobe City will also lobby for continued effective access to Melbourne’s ports to enable expansion of export markets
- **Employment Zone Development:** Developing the required infrastructure to enable development of the Lurgi Plant, Gippsland Logistics Precinct and Latrobe Regional Airport employment zones
- **Implementation of the Latrobe Regional Airport Master plan:** The Latrobe Regional Airport Master Plan (2009) describes a plan for development of this vital community asset over the next 20 years, in a manner that is compatible with the environment and the local community and which caters for future changes in the aviation industry
Sustainable use of natural resources

Latrobe City Council is committed to managing and protecting its natural environment to meet the Latrobe 2026 objective “to ensure a lasting legacy for future generations.”

The Gippsland region is rich in many natural resources. Managing these resources for the long term benefit of the region and the community will optimise social, environmental and economic outcomes.

Emerging Victorian and Australian Government carbon and energy policies will provide opportunities to harness local resources to achieve long term sustainability outcomes. For example, the Australian Government Carbon Farmers initiative will create opportunities for the generation of carbon credits through forestry and agricultural projects (e.g. soil bio-sequestration or biomass production) for sale into domestic and international global carbon markets. Latrobe City Council will support the agribusiness sector to access markets under this initiative.

Given the diversity of land use across Gippsland, a collaborative approach across local governments in the region will be required to capture opportunities arising from carbon policies (e.g. carbon sequestration and biomass production) and the existing Gippsland Local Government Network (GLGN) provides a mechanism to progress new initiatives at a regional level in association with other Councils. While the operational component of many of these opportunities will be located in neighbouring Councils, there is a potential role for supporting services such as administration, aggregation, research and education programs to be located in Latrobe City.

The Gippsland Regional Plan (GRP) has identified an opportunity for establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Technologies (CEST) in the region and Latrobe City Council supports this proposal. The Centre will work to ensure that the region’s current reliance on its extensive natural resources (timber, biodiversity, water, agriculture and fishing) can continue, enabling Gippsland to adjust to an economy in transition in a time of climate change. The Centre will be a collaboration between Monash Gippsland, Gippsland regional stakeholders, TAFE and councils with the involvement of Monash Clayton, the Monash Sustainability Institute. The Centre will also utilise a broad range of expertise from other research organisations and CSIRO. The Centre will focus on education, research and industry integration to assist the transition to new technologies now and well into the future. The Centre will bring regional innovation, diversification of skills, research and development capability and commercial enterprise and will greatly assist businesses to capture opportunities that arise in a carbon constrained world.

The Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy has found that the Gippsland Region is one of the few areas in Victoria where the available water resources have not been fully allocated. In addition, it is anticipated that while climate change will lead to reduced rainfall in the region, relative to other districts, Gippsland will retain superior rainfall. This

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available water could be used to support additional development and agricultural activity in the region; with Gippsland increasingly becoming the food bowl of Victoria. Latrobe City Council will work closely with the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Catchment Management Authority to ensure that allocation of water supplies balances the needs of both the local and the broader Victorian communities.

Latrobe City Council will build its partnerships with the Victorian Government to further advance the research agenda in environmental and natural resource management and to lobby for a larger Victorian Government presence in the region through regional offices particularly for the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and/or the Department of Primary Industries (DPI).

The significant natural assets and biodiversity of the Gippsland region present tourism opportunities and the Latrobe City economy, utilising a hub and spoke model, can benefit from these regional strengths. Latrobe City Council will continue to work with Destination Gippsland and Tourism Victoria to progress regional tourism initiatives as described in the Strategic Business Development section of this strategy.

The Latrobe City economy is heavily dependent on revenue and employment from coal fired electricity generation and associated industries, with over 20% of Gross Regional Product being derived from this industry. While Latrobe City supports the balanced use of the coal resource, it will maintain a strategic focus on transitioning to an economy that is not overly reliant on one coal end use.

A Liveable City

The availability of services within Latrobe City, and the municipality’s proximity to Melbourne are key factors in attracting people to live and work in the region. The City offers high quality health care and educational opportunities, affordable housing and a wide range of recreational, cultural and sporting facilities.

The municipality has an active cultural community, with a calendar of events and festivals throughout the year aimed at both residents of Latrobe City and tourists from other areas. This cultural program is supported by a growing restaurant and entertainment sector.

Along with maintaining and continually improving the built and natural environments, the services and cultural experiences in Latrobe City will provide long term economic benefits as more people choose to work, live and visit the area.

Latrobe City Council will lead the community to identify, evaluate and prioritise initiatives that contribute to a liveable and vibrant community by:

- Conducting innovative urban planning with foresight to differentiate the region from outer suburban areas of Melbourne, ensuring this aspect is considered in development of the Gippsland Integrated Land Use Plan
- Seeking to attract new cultural experiences and events to Latrobe City

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5 Economic Importance of Latrobe Coal & Electricity Industry, Compelling Economics 2008
• Supporting local sporting clubs to access grant funding for improvement of sporting facilities
• Advocating for health, education and transport infrastructure that improves the liveability of the City
Measuring progress and reviewing the strategy

The Economic Sustainability Division of Council formulates a four year rolling business plan each year, which will incorporate the identified Economic Development strategic themes and will detail specific actions, priorities and resourcing to deliver the Strategy.

It is expected that the strategy can be implemented within the current Economic Sustainability Division structure (Figure 6) and staffing levels. However, Latrobe City Council will review progress in implementing strategy and will adapt resourcing and delivery models as needed to ensure that the strategy is delivered effectively.

Progress on implementation of the strategy will be monitored and reported to Council on an annual basis and published on the Latrobe City website. The implementation report will include data on the number of:

- Responses to business enquiries
- Media releases produced
- Contacts developed
- Delegations organised

Latrobe City Council will develop, collate and publish economic development indicators, which measure Latrobe City’s economic progress over the 2011-15 period. These indicators cannot be used directly to assess the success of implementation of this Economic Sustainability Strategy, as there are many factors outside the control of Latrobe City Council that impact on economic development. However, the data will enable Latrobe City Council to identify opportunities and issues and to adapt or supplement the Strategy accordingly.

An annual assessment of economic development performance in Latrobe City relative to the other major regional centres will be undertaken, with focus on:

- Gross Regional Product
- Employment rates/job growth
• Unemployment rates
• Mean taxable income
• Population growth

In addition, performance against the following indicators will be monitored:

• Visitation statistics
• Business Confidence
• Planned investment
• New business registrations by sector
• Value of planning approvals (commercial, industrial and residential)
• Value of building construction
• Value of property sales and median prices
• Population forecasts

The Economic Sustainability Strategy will be reviewed annually and the list of strategy actions (see Appendix 4) will be revised and supplemented accordingly. A full review of the strategy will be undertaken in 2015 in preparation for the next four year planning period.
Acknowledgements

Latrobe City Council would like to acknowledge the following business, industry and community stakeholders who participated in workshops to identify economic development issues and opportunities. The candid and constructive input of these organisations to the strategy review process has enabled Latrobe City Council to formulate a targeted strategy that it believes will meet the needs of the business community and lead to long term sustained economic growth.

Advance Morwell  Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development  Loy Yang Power
Agribusiness Gippsland  Destination Gippsland  MBD Energy
ASIC  Environmental Clean Technologies  Regional Development Victoria
Auschar  Exergen  Telstra Call Centre
Australian Paper  Gippsland Regional Waste Management Group  TRU Energy
Baw Baw Latrobe Local Learning and Employment  HRL  VECCI
Branstrans  Ignite Energy  Viatek Sage IT Services
Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE  Latrobe Business Tourism Association  Victorian Farmers Federation
Committee for Moe  Latrobe Community Health Services  Richards Harvesting & Haulage
Department of Human Services, Housing Call Centre
Appendix 1: Profile of the Latrobe City Economy

Latrobe City is located approximately 1.5 hours drive east of Melbourne, in the Gippsland region of south-eastern Victoria. The City is home to approximately 75,300 people, largely residing in the four major population centres of Churchill, Moe-Newborough, Morwell and Traralgon. In the last decade, the population has grown steadily and it is anticipated that this growth will continue at a rate of approximately 0.92% per annum over the 20 year period from 2011-2031.

Latrobe City is one of Victoria’s strongest regional economies with a Gross Regional Product (GRP) of approximately $4 billion and a total estimated annual business turnover of $10.3 billion. Latrobe City’s Gross Regional Product (GRP) represents 1.8% of Victoria’s Gross State Product.

Latrobe City is home to over 4,500 businesses, of which the vast majority (94%) are small businesses employing less than 20 staff. Approximately 5.5% of businesses are medium size, employing between 20 and 200 staff, while large businesses with more than 200 staff comprise less than 1% of the total.

The main industry sectors, in terms of output, are manufacturing (approximately $3 billion), electricity, gas and water supply (approximately $1.7 billion) and construction (approximately $1.4 billion). These are followed by property and business services and the retail trade (Figure 7).

Value added is highest for the electricity, gas and water supply sectors, followed by manufacturing and construction (Figure 8).

Retail, health and community services and manufacturing sectors provide the highest employment in Latrobe City followed by manufacturing, education and construction (Figure 9).

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7 ABS Census Data, Businesses by Industry Division by Statistical Local Area by Employment Size Ranges, June 2009

8 Value added is defined as the difference between the sale price of a product and the cost of the purchased material and services used to produce the product.
Figure 7: Latrobe City Industry Sector Output
Figure 8: Latrobe City Industry Sector Value Added

Value added is the difference between the total sales revenue of the sector and the total cost of non-labour inputs.
Figure 9: Latrobe City Industry Employment

The Gippsland region is rich in natural resources, including forests, fertile land for agriculture, water and natural gas reserves. The Latrobe Valley hosts one of the world’s largest deposits of lignite (brown coal).

The Latrobe City economy is heavily dependent on revenue and employment from coal fired electricity generation and associated industries, with over 20% of Gross Regional Product being derived from these industries. Although brown coal electricity generation has historically been the backbone of the local economy, in recent years the economy has diversified to include a range of industries. Latrobe City is home to Australia’s largest yoghurt manufacturing facility, the largest pulp and paper manufacturer in Australia, and the only manufacturer of passenger aircraft in Australia.

10 Economic Importance of Latrobe Coal & Electricity Industry, Compelling Economics, 2008
A significant amount of capital investment is planned or underway within Latrobe City as demonstrated by the following projects:

- National Foods $55 million expansion
- Mahindra $22 million investment for an approximate 75% share in ownership of GippsAero
- TRUenergy Combined Cycle Gas Turbine (CCGT) Power Station (capital cost unknown)
- HRL Clean Coal Power Station $750 million

Most Latrobe City businesses report sales (69% of sales dollars) into the municipality, with some exports the broader Gippsland region (17%). Sales beyond Gippsland account for 14% of sales with exports to overseas markets accounting for less than 1% of sales. This suggests that much of the locally produced goods and services remain in Latrobe City and indicates that an opportunity exists for increased exports to wider Gippsland, national and international markets.

Recent Economic Achievements

The focus of the previous Economic Development Strategy (2004-2008) was facilitating investment in six target sectors:

- Energy
- Forestry, Timber and Paper
- Food and Agribusiness
- Advanced Manufacturing and Aviation
- Services, Tourism and Events
- New and Emerging industries

Latrobe City Council’s activities over the 2004-2008 period have focused on facilitating investment in these key areas by:

- Providing high quality data services and facilitating partnerships within the business community
- Working towards improvements in liveability, community capacity building and governance
- Transforming the built and natural environment

Latrobe City has worked to build and maintain constructive partnerships with other levels of Government and to enhance industry connectivity by co-ordinating and hosting industry forums. Latrobe City continues to advocate on behalf of their community for policy settings that foster investment and job creation.

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11 Latrobe City Council Employment and Industry Survey Report, 2010
Key achievements over the 2004-2008 period include:

**Retention and expansion of National Foods**
In 2010, National Foods announced the closure of the firm's outer Sydney facility, with much of the production from the site moving to Morwell. The Morwell facility is currently undergoing a $55 million upgrade, which will increase production from 60,000 to 86,000 tonnes of product per year.

**Purchase of Gippsland Aeronautics (creation of GippsAero)**
Mahindra has invested US $22 million to acquire a major stake of GippsAero. GippsAero has commenced the recruitment of new employees and is investing in new systems and infrastructure. Currently employing 104 people, the firm aims to double this number in coming years.

**B.M.C growth**
Based in Morwell, B.M.C's High Voltage, Electrical and Instrumentation department provides a complete portfolio of asset management, installation and maintenance services for clients with high and low voltage assets in diverse industry sectors including:

- Power generation, transmission and distribution
- Mining
- Light and heavy industrial manufacturing
- Pulp and paper
- Water and sewerage utilities
- Petrochemical production.

B.M.C has grown steadily over the past 3-4 years, after securing many local and national contracts. The employee numbers have risen from 90 to 170 over this period.

**Kiel Industries**
Kiel Industries is a niche manufacturer and supplier of over 500 products including moulded plastic bins, crates, manhole covers, spa baths, calf feeders, slimline water tanks and Triton orange and white road barriers. The company also manufacture plastic pallets in different sizes and styles.

Since relocating from South Gippsland to Latrobe City, the firm has experienced significant growth. Employees now total 22, up from 15 over the past 3 years.

A number of major projects have been completed in recent years including:

**Australian Paper pulp mill upgrade**
Australian Paper completed the mill's $340 million upgrade in December 2008, with the redeveloped facility featuring an elemental, chlorine-free bleaching plant that delivers world-class environmental performance. Australian Paper's Maryvale operation generates approximately $500 million each year in economic activity for the region.
International Power 2030 Project
Finalised in 2009, this project involved a range of initiatives retrofitting low emission technologies at Hazelwood. The total cost of the project was $370 million.

Latrobe Community Health Centre headquarters
Officially opened in October 2010, the new $21 million Latrobe Community Health Service Morwell Centre is the largest, most modern community health service ever to be built in Victoria. The new building includes specialist facilities for clinical, consulting and dental services.

Thiess John Holland – manufacture of concrete panels for Eastlink
Completed in 2008, Thiess John Holland utilised the DiFabrizio facility on Tramway Road, Morwell to manufacture concrete panels for the Eastlink project. The project employed 100 people, was finished on budget and ahead of schedule.

Gippsland Water Factory
The $209 million Gippsland Water Factory will treat up to 35 million litres of domestic and industrial wastewater each day. It will provide approximately eight million litres of high-quality recycled water for use by local industry, saving three billion litres of potable water a year. During construction, 300 locals were employed and the factory has increased industry investment and jobs in the region.

While unemployment in Latrobe City is higher than in other regional centres, modelling utilising ABS Labour Force data shows that in the period 2006-2010, total employment rose steadily in Latrobe City. Total Employment, as expressed as Annualised Growth Rate, grew at a greater rate in Latrobe City compared to other major regional centres (Table 1).

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<thead>
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<th>Local Government Area</th>
<th>Total Employment – Annualised Growth Rate</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Bendigo</td>
<td>3.43%</td>
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<td>Geelong</td>
<td>-0.55%</td>
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Average wage and salaries in Latrobe City have also grown in recent years. In the 2007/08 year Latrobe City average wages were slightly higher than for Victoria as a whole (Table 2).

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<tbody>
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<td>Latrobe City</td>
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<td>$42,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>$36,882</td>
<td>$38,421</td>
<td>$39,861</td>
<td>$41,260</td>
<td>$42,782</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Economic Assets

Latrobe City is the principal service centre for the Gippsland region. It offers high quality health facilities, including Latrobe Regional Hospital, Maryvale Private Hospital and Latrobe Community Health Services. It also offers access to education facilities, including Monash University, GippsTAFE, Apprenticeships Group Australia, the Gippsland Education Precinct and a wide range of private and public primary and secondary schools. Major shopping centres and a range of accommodation and entertainment venues are also present in Latrobe City.

Latrobe City has strong transport linkages with high quality infrastructure in place and planned, including:

- A four lane freeway link to Melbourne, with heavy load capacity and a planned upgrade to a four lane highway between Traralgon and Sale
- Frequent passenger rail services between Melbourne and Latrobe City
- Freight services that connect with the National Rail Network to Melbourne ports
- Latrobe Regional Airport, recognised as one of the best regional airport facilities in Australia. The airport is located adjacent to the Princes Freeway in Morwell and it is a 40 minute flight from Tullamarine and Essendon airports

Latrobe City offers investors access to abundant natural resources; including brown coal, water and natural gas provided via high pressure pipeline. Competitively priced, fully serviced industrial and commercial land is readily available.

Significant electricity transmission infrastructure connects the power generators in the Latrobe Valley to consumers in Melbourne and throughout Victoria, providing opportunities for location of new electricity generation facilities in the Latrobe Valley. The presence of electricity generation facilities also provides potential for large industry co-location with power generation to reduce costs and system losses.

Some important services available to businesses in Latrobe City include:

- High quality and wide ranging employment providers
- Professional legal, accounting, finance, insurance and business consulting services
- Dedicated Latrobe City Council departments managing municipal planning, infrastructure, economic development, building, health and local laws
- Regionally-based Victorian and Australian Government business assistance facilities
- Existing businesses servicing heavy industry
Industry Sectors

Profiles of the key sectors and issues and opportunities facing these key industries are described in the following paragraphs.

Coal and electricity generation

The Latrobe Valley (which includes Baw Baw Shire Council, Latrobe City Council and Wellington Shire Council) hosts one of the world’s largest deposits of lignite (brown coal). Coal was first mined for large scale electricity production in the 1920s and this has remained the major use of the resource. The brown coal electricity generators in the Latrobe Valley currently supply around 90% of Victoria’s electricity.

The high moisture content of brown coal makes it unsuitable, without further treatment, for bulk export and results in relatively high levels of greenhouse gas emissions per unit of electricity output. The introduction of a carbon price will affect the profitability of generators utilising traditional technologies but will also provide opportunities for research and development throughout the energy industry. In addition, alternative uses of brown coal (e.g. for production of oil products or fertilisers) are likely to become viable in the future.

Latrobe City Council supports the sustainable use of brown coal as an energy source and is working with generators, clean coal researchers and government agencies to develop clean coal pilot plants and research facilities.
Retail

Latrobe City is the retail centre for Gippsland and is home to Mid Valley, one of Victoria’s largest regional shopping centres, and Stockland Plaza. Latrobe City also boasts access to a wide range of national retailers and speciality shops.

The retail sector provides the highest employment of any sector in Latrobe City providing close to 4,000 jobs. The sector contributes $385 billion to the local economy annually.

Manufacturing

Latrobe City has a broad manufacturing base that has been established on the foundation of electricity generation. The industry has steadily expanded over the years and Latrobe City is now emerging as a centre for engineering fabrication and manufacture. Companies such as Safetech and Fishers have based their operations in Latrobe City and are supplying local, state, national and international markets. Latrobe City hosts a variety of engineering firms as well as design and manufacturing specialists.

Latrobe City is home to GippsAero, the manufacturer of the GA8 Airvan which is the only passenger aircraft manufactured in Australia. The eight seat aircraft has been sold into both domestic and international markets. The development and expansion of the Latrobe Regional Airport has created further opportunities for aviation related businesses to establish on allotments with taxiway access to the main runway, providing opportunities for aerospace industries, aviation adventure tourism, aviation training firms and related service providers to establish or expand their operations on the site.
Agriculture, dairy and food processing

The Latrobe Valley, with its temperate climate, reliable rainfall and rich fertile soils supports a vibrant agricultural industry.

Businesses within Latrobe City provide agribusiness services to the surrounding agricultural areas as well as those located within the municipal boundaries.

National Foods, one of Australia’s largest food and beverage groups specialising in milk, fresh dairy foods, juice, soy beverages and speciality cheeses has established a state of the art dairy processing plant in Latrobe City utilising the raw dairy products produced in Latrobe City and the surrounding Gippsland region.

The agribusiness sector has identified an opportunity for further investment in value-add food processing facilities in Latrobe City utilising local production and imported product in the off season.

Indications are that climate change will likely result in reduced rainfall in the region. However, relative to other districts, Gippsland is expected to retain superior rainfall. The contribution of above state-average rainfall could provide a competitive advantage for Gippsland and the potential for the region to become the food bowl of Victoria.

A price on carbon will open up markets for farmers in carbon management and sequestration schemes. For example, the Australian Government Carbon Farmers Initiative will create opportunities for the generation of carbon credits through forestry and agricultural projects for sale into domestic and international global carbon markets.

Opportunities for production of biomass crops and algae for electricity and fuels production will also arise once a price on carbon is introduced providing further markets for agricultural products.
Timber, forestry and paper production

Latrobe City’s unique and abundant natural resources support a productive timber and forestry industry providing softwood, value-added hardwood, and paper products sold to domestic and export markets.

Australian Paper is one of the largest integrated paper manufacturing facilities in the southern hemisphere. The long-established Maryvale complex, a continually expanding operation, leads in the manufacture of high performance packaging supplies and office paper.

A future price on carbon will open up markets for forestry projects to sequester carbon. As with agricultural schemes, forestry projects would be eligible under the Australian Government Carbon Farmers Initiative and other proposed schemes to generate carbon credits for sale into domestic and international global carbon markets.

Information technology and business services

Latrobe City is emerging as a leader in regional Victoria in the field of information communication technology. Combining traditional industries with new technologies, the industry has developed a highly skilled workforce and has built capacity to service the growing demands of expanding local industry and business. For example, Sage Technology provides innovative IT solutions to commercial and industrial businesses throughout Australia and internationally.

Latrobe City enjoys cost effective telecommunications and excellent infrastructure, including fibre optic cable and access to broadband services.

The shared business services sector in Latrobe City continues to grow in its own right, with increasing numbers of private and government call centres operating across the region.

Growth in this sector will be driven by expansion of existing Latrobe City businesses and new investment in the region. Improvements in technologies, including the rollout of the
National Broadband Network (NBN) will provide opportunities for new products and services.

**Education and training**

Latrobe City is the Educational Centre for Gippsland, offering some of the finest educational facilities in regional Australia. Due to a strong relationship between education providers and industry, Latrobe City has been a leader in vocational education and industry training for many years.

Major facilities for higher education and training located in Latrobe City include:

- **Monash University, Gippsland Campus**: The only regional “Group of Eight” university in Victoria, Monash Gippsland provides tertiary education to local and international students. Faculties include medicine, science, engineering, information technology, business, economics, nursing, humanities, education, art and design. Distance education facilities cater for local and international students
- **Gippsland Education Precinct**: Australia’s first fully integrated secondary, vocational and tertiary educational complex providing education pathways all on one campus
• GippsTAFE - Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE: Provides educational services to Gippsland, Victoria and overseas. GippsTafe delivers broad-based training programs on and off-site
• Apprenticeships Group Australia: Apprenticeships Group Australia, which has its headquarters in Latrobe City, is one of Australia’s largest leading providers of apprenticeships to industry
• i-Gain: Training specialists who offer quality learning and adult education

The changing business environment arising from new investment and factors such as the transition to a low carbon economy will necessitate the development of skills in new areas. There is an opportunity for the education and training sector to build on its relationship with industry to develop and deliver programs that meet the needs of Latrobe City and Victorian industry in the future.

Population growth in the south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne and in the Gippsland region along with potential for attraction of greater numbers of international students provide further opportunity for growth of this sector in Latrobe City.

Health

Latrobe City is a centre for provision of health services to the broader Gippsland region and, along with contributing to community wellbeing; the sector contributes to the economy of Latrobe City. Latrobe City offers high quality health facilities, including Latrobe Regional Hospital, Maryvale Private Hospital, Latrobe Community Health Services and numerous aligned medical providers. Growth in this sector will be driven by population growth in Latrobe City and the Gippsland region but may also arise from advances in technology (e.g. availability of the National Broadband Network (NBN) will provide opportunities for provision of medical services to remote communities).
Tourism and events

The tourism industry in Latrobe City is predominantly made up of small businesses, with a few medium sized businesses operating in the accommodation and conference sector. The tourism industry is estimated to inject $92.8 million per year into the local economy, providing approximately 891 jobs.\(^ {14} \)

The Latrobe City Tourism Product Audit has identified that Latrobe City is not a primary leisure tourism destination. However, Latrobe City has competitive strengths including a strong economic base, international investment partners, experience in events and a ready conference market upon which to develop its tourism and events sector.

The audit identifies events, business tourism and conferencing as market opportunities that would enhance the trade of existing retail, food and entertainment businesses.

\(^ {14} \) Latrobe City Tourism Product Audit
Government Policy Trends and their Impact on the Latrobe City Economy

Emerging Australian and Victorian Government strategies and policies related to carbon, energy and regional development will influence economic sustainability in Latrobe City over the period 2011-2015.

Recent policy announcements indicate an increasing recognition by state and federal governments of the importance of regional areas to future growth and prosperity in Victoria and Australia. The latest Victorian and Australian policies and strategies have typically emphasised:

- A preference for regional planning approaches
- Increased partnerships between state and local government (e.g. advisory committees to provide input on impact of government policies on local government areas)
- Increased funding to expedite infrastructure development, services and economic development in regional areas and a move toward regional governance structures to administer the programs
- Skills development
- Decentralisation of government offices into regional areas
- The Regional Development Australia (RDA) partnership between Australian, Victorian and local governments to support the growth and development of regions

The Australian Government has set targets to reduce the country’s greenhouse gas emissions by between 5 and 25% by 2020 (The target is to be agreed subject to global agreement on mitigation targets). To achieve Australia’s target, the Government plans to put in place a scheme to establish a price for carbon emissions. The design of the scheme to be adopted is not yet clear; however, the Government favours a market-based emissions trading scheme as the most cost effective way to reduce Australia’s greenhouse gas emissions.

The Australian Government is implementing a number of other greenhouse gas mitigation strategies:

- The Carbon Farmers Initiative will enable generation of carbon offsets and credits by farmers through forestry, revegetation and soil carbon sequestration schemes for sale into domestic and international markets
- Australia’s Renewable Energy Target (RET) requires electricity wholesalers to source a proportion of their electricity from renewable sources. The scheme will see 20% of Australia’s electricity generated from renewable sources by 2020
- The Clean Energy Initiative supports research, development and demonstration of carbon capture and storage, large scale solar and other renewable energy technologies
The Victorian Climate Change Act sets an emissions reduction target of 20\% by 2020 (based on 2000 levels) and amends the Environment Protection Act 1970 to enable the Environment Protection Authority Victoria to regulate greenhouse gases. Recent Victorian Government proposed policies and strategies to deliver emissions reduction targets have placed emphasis on:

- Innovation to capitalise on the new jobs and skills, new technologies and new markets that will arise under a future low carbon economy
- Providing transition support to regions, businesses and communities impacted by the introduction of a price on carbon
- Facilitating the uptake of low emissions energy technologies

Regardless of the final form of the Australian and Victorian Government carbon policies, there are a number of probable outcomes with potential impacts on the Latrobe City economy.

Coal fired electricity generation accounts for over half of Victoria’s total greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing emissions from brown coal fired electricity generation in the Latrobe Valley is therefore likely to be a key focus of the mitigation schemes under consideration. As a consequence, introduction of these schemes is likely to decrease the competitiveness of the brown coal fired generators located in the Latrobe Valley, leading to structural adjustment pressures on Latrobe City.

Australian and Victorian Governments have recognised the potential impacts on the Latrobe Valley and have committed resources to assisting in managing the transition to a low carbon economy. While introduction of mitigation schemes will present challenges, these schemes will also provide new opportunities for Latrobe City to establish carbon sequestration, renewable energy and other low emissions technology schemes and research programs in the City, and to provide services to similar schemes in the broader Gippsland region.
Appendix 2: How the Strategy was developed

The process used to develop the revised Economic Sustainability Strategy is shown in Figure 10. The approach was designed to enable input by stakeholders at an early stage of the process.

Stage A: Information Collection
- Review of relevant Australian Government, Victorian Government, regional and Latrobe City Council policies and strategies
- Stakeholder Consultation

Stage B: Strategy Formulation
- Formulation of Draft Strategy

Stage C: Strategy Review & Refinement
- Council review of Draft Strategy
- Community consultation
- Strategy refinement & finalisation (June 2011)

Stage D: Strategy Endorsement & Implementation
- Endorsement of Strategy by Council
- Strategy implementation

Figure 10: Strategy Review Process
During the Information Collection stage (Stage A), business stakeholders were invited to attend workshops, participate in a phone survey or provide written input on:

- Investment opportunities
- Infrastructure, services, skills and education needs to support economic development and community wellbeing
- Hurdles to economic growth and prosperity
- Opportunities for Council to support the community, business growth and investment in Latrobe City

Thirty-four organisational representatives participated in the consultation process.

In addition, during Stage A, relevant Australian and Victorian Government policies and the following Council and regional plans were reviewed and relevant economic development actions identified:

- Gippsland Regional Plan (2010)
- Tourism and Events Strategy Review (2009)
- Positioning Latrobe City for a Low Carbon Emissions Future (2010)
- Churchill Town Centre Plan (2007)
- Moe Activity Centre Plan (2007)
- Traralgon Activity Centre Plan background documents (2010)
- Destination Gippsland Regional Plan (2008)
- Gippsland Logistics Precinct Project Plan (2010)

In Stage B (Strategy Formulation), the draft 2011-2015 Economic Sustainability Strategy was developed in consultation with an advisory group comprising representatives from across Latrobe City Council operations.

In Stage C (Strategy Review and Refinement), the draft Economic Sustainability Strategy was reviewed with Council prior to further stakeholder and community consultation.

The Strategy was adopted by Council on 27th June, 2011 and will be progressively implemented over the 2011-2015 period.
Appendix 3: Opportunities and Challenges Identified by Stakeholders

A key input to the Economic Sustainability Strategy review was feedback from a stakeholder consultation process. The following organisations participated in this process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advance Morwell</td>
<td>Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development</td>
<td>Loy Yang Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agribusiness Gippsland</td>
<td>Destination Gippsland</td>
<td>MBD Energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIC</td>
<td>Environmental Clean Technologies</td>
<td>Regional Development Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auschar</td>
<td>Exergen</td>
<td>Telstra Call Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Paper</td>
<td>Gippsland Regional Waste Management Group</td>
<td>TRU Energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baw Baw Latrobe Local Learning and Employment</td>
<td>HRL</td>
<td>VECCI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branstrans</td>
<td>Ignite Energy</td>
<td>Viatek Sage IT Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE</td>
<td>Latrobe Business Tourism Association</td>
<td>Victorian Farmers Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee for Moe</td>
<td>Latrobe Community Health Services</td>
<td>Richards Harvesting &amp; Haulage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Human Services, Housing Call Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stakeholders identified a number of economic development opportunities and challenges during these discussions as summarised in Table 3.
### Table 3: Opportunities and Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Sectors</td>
<td>• Re-establish / upgrade freight terminal in Morwell</td>
<td>• Carbon and energy policy uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Potential for a direct link to Westernport/Hastings Port</td>
<td>• Need to transition to a low carbon economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Regular air transport services</td>
<td>• Potential closure of the power stations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Duplication of rail lines between Dandenong and Melbourne</td>
<td>• Population growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Conference and events facilities</td>
<td>• Availability of resources (land, water, energy, forests)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Improved waste disposal and recycling services and facilities</td>
<td>• Planning (and other regulatory) requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Availability of Victorian and Australian Government funding and support for</td>
<td>• Climate change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>regional areas and for low carbon transition</td>
<td>• Competitiveness of the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Value of the Australian dollar (impacts on tourism, import/export markets)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Perception of the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Availability of skilled workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ageing workforce</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Availability of co-ordinated public transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder Group</td>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Sectors (continued)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Difficulty to attract qualified people to the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Competing sectors and locations (mining boom attracting engineers elsewhere)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Future skills needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Competing land uses – encroachment of residential areas on farming and industrial areas, availability of land for development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Competition from other regional areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parochialism between towns/areas within the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Inflated energy sector wages putting upward pressure on wages in other businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• General resistance to change and lack of entrepreneurial skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Access to part time jobs and entertainment for students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Water availability and allocation is an issue for industry and agribusiness:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder Group</td>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Tourism and Events     | • Government investment in tourism infrastructure  
• Build Business tourism  
• Build tourism related to visiting friends and relations  
• Staging and managing more events  
• Support for Destination Gippsland and for regional recreational tourism initiatives  
• Update of 2007 Gippsland Sustainable Tourism project (maintenance of local level tourism industry information and performance data)  
• Review status of Gippsland events network  
• Identifying and bid for those key major events that best suit the region  
• Increase the benefit from these events by engaging the community in a wide range of associated activities, thus multiplying the benefits of the event  
• Enhancement of the Latrobe City tourism website www.visitlatrobevalley.com  
• Marketing and promotional capability arising from development of new IT technologies | • Poor growth prospects for regional tourism  
• A constraint to growing the events market is the lack of accommodation available during the week in Latrobe City due to the high level of demand for accommodation by the corporate and business sector. The effect of this is to constrain Latrobe City’s events hosting capacity to weekends and holidays.  
• An emerging issue is a trend towards events bidding. Events “owners” and/or their representatives are promoting their events to prospective venues for a fee. This is done on the basis that the event will bring benefits to the host location. The ability of event owners to credibly demonstrate the extent of that benefit is patchy. There is a risk of entering a bidding war on the basis of uncertain outcomes. Latrobe City Council Events officers are alert to this risk.  
• As per ‘All Sectors’ |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Education & Training, Research and Unions | • Opportunity to increase student numbers:  
• International students  
• Students from outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne  
• Monash University has an institution-to-institution arrangement with a Chinese University. Concept could be expanded (potential linkages to the sister city scheme)  
• TAFE sector has potential for significant growth, particularly if it can build services for industry  
• Opportunity to work closer with industry and other stakeholders to plan skills need and build brand  
• TTC – infrastructure for online teaching and learning could be expanded across curriculum  
• Industry/Latrobe City Council could increase support of apprenticeship programs  
• Continue to work with education institutions to provide job placements (e.g. kindergartens)  
• Advocate for a youth component in the Gippsland Business Awards  
• Latrobe City website upgrade | • As per ‘All Sectors’                                                                                                                                  |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Energy            | • Expansion of Latrobe City Council organised energy sector forums | • Gas network will be a constraint in future  
|                   |               | • Energy sector forums are valued by the sector  
|                   |               | • Seasonal nature of contractor workload  
|                   |               | • As per ‘All sectors’ |
| Agribusiness      | • Gippsland as food-bowl for Victoria  
|                   |               | • Additional food processing facilities  
|                   |               | • Tourism experience built around food industry  
|                   |               | • Urea production  
|                   |               | • Algae production (produces feedstock along with oil/energy)  
|                   |               | • Latrobe City as a service centre for agri-business in Gippsland  
|                   |               | • Climate change (relative small impact on rainfall compared to other areas)  
|                   |               | • Algae production still an emerging technology  
|                   |               | • As per ‘All sectors’ |
| Manufacturing & Technology | • Business mentoring  
|                   |               | • Prioritise Latrobe City Council activities to give greater priority to helping companies  
<p>|                   |               | • As per ‘All sectors’ |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forestry &amp; Paper</td>
<td>• Latrobe City Council working closer with advocacy bodies</td>
<td>• Limited recycling facilities (e.g. industrial plastics, some metals still going to landfill)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• As per ‘All Sectors’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Associations</td>
<td>• Need for one voice representing business associations in region</td>
<td>• Planning requirements seen as an obstacle to development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• As per ‘All Sectors’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>• Population growth - Innovative planning that differentiates Latrobe City from areas closer to Melbourne.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Victorian Government Regional Victoria campaign initiatives</td>
<td>• As per ‘All sectors’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prolonged effort at urban renewal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Waste to energy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: Economic Sustainability Actions

The boxes below contain the strategic corresponding to each of the key areas considered in the Economic Sustainability Strategy.

Planning details for specific actions including prioritisation, resourcing and timeframes will be considered and reported in the Annual Business Plan.

Actions for Retention and Growth of Existing Businesses

1. Connect with the business community and maintain relationships to keep abreast of business needs and gaps in provision of service:
   - Maintain comprehensive database of businesses operating in Latrobe City
   - Continue to develop productive relationships with local business representatives
   - Conduct the bi-annual industry and investment survey to provide up to date information to Latrobe City Council on business priorities and economic trends

2. Keep the business community appraised of emerging developments in the business operating environment so that they can effectively prepare and adapt to change:
   - Publish results of the bi-annual industry and investment survey
   - Publish the Business Connect newsletter quarterly
   - Maintain up-to-date information on the Latrobe City intranet site
   - Strengthen informal communication networks and establish lines of communication with business service firms who can act as a conduit for communication to small and medium business enterprises

3. Facilitate regional industry networking, partnership and knowledge sharing events to build business capacity and connectedness:
   - Continue existing forums with key industry sectors including the power industry, major food producers and the property development sector.
   - Investigate opportunities to expand the networking program to other industry groups

4. Support skills development in local industry:
   - Partner with business to identify skills gaps and co-ordinate development of training programs to fill these gaps
5. Promote and advocate for local industry sectors in the broader community, maintaining representation on:

- National Timber Council’s Taskforce
- Timber Towns
- Powerworks board
- Others as appropriate

6. Provide assistance to businesses to grow and expand:

- Assist businesses to plan for growth through referrals and support of development projects
- Offer up to date information and economic modelling services to support industry investment decisions including:
  - Land prices
  - Property availability
  - Economic benefits of projects including contribution to jobs growth and Gross Regional Product
- Assist proponents to identify suitable sites and provide site information
- Provide advice on Government industry assistance programs and funds
- Identify major projects and facilitate communication, regulatory permitting and approvals processes involving Council and other agencies

7. Intensify efforts to expand domestic and international markets for local goods and services by:

- Collaborating with the Department of Business and Innovation (DBI) and the Department of Community Development (DPCD) to introduce business to trade and investment opportunities
- Exploring opportunities to leverage off the international relations program (e.g. the sister city initiative)
- Progressing the development of the Gippsland Logistics Precinct, which will allow efficient and cost effective movement of freight to and from the Gippsland region

8. Position Latrobe City as the location of choice for international students:

- Build partnerships with the education sector to explore and capture international education opportunities of mutual benefit in the 2011-2015 period
9. Play a substantive role in promoting and supporting the development of the tourism and events sector in Latrobe City:

- Support the Latrobe City Business Tourism Association to attract visitors to Latrobe City, expand its industry membership base and build industry capability and skills
- Support Destination Gippsland in promotion of the broader region
- Implement the recommendations of the Tourism Product Audit to further Latrobe City’s position as a centre of business and events tourism:
  - Position Latrobe City as the events and conferencing centre for broader Gippsland
  - Investigate opportunity for establishment of an iconic event for Latrobe City
  - Promote a cohesive effort by the three major centres to secure funding and events of mutual benefit

10. Promote opportunities for local procurement by Latrobe City Council and in the wider business community:

- Coordinate the Gippsland Major Projects Summit
- Connect industry operators with project developers
- Support the Industry Capability Network
- Ensure Latrobe City Council’s own procurement processes provide opportunities for local businesses to tender for provision of goods and services and to demonstrate the competitiveness of local products and services

**Actions for Pursuing New Investment**

1. Promote Latrobe City to domestic and international investors to increase international investment:

- Facilitate visits by potential investors
- Coordinate overseas trade delegations
- Support key business organisations including; Economic Development Australia; VECCI Regional Business Council; Destination Gippsland Ltd; and the Gippsland Business Awards
- Deliver presentations to conferences and target industry groups
- Maintain positive and effective relationships with Victorian and Australian Governments
2. Actively pursue the following investment opportunities:

- International investment: building on the international relations program and sustained international market interest in Latrobe City
- Power generation: securing Victoria’s next major power development in Latrobe City.
- Food processing facilities: attracting development of the next large project within this sector
- Shared services: harnessing the strengths of Latrobe City to attract call centres and business services seeking affordable, accessible and well serviced central office locations
- Alternative coal use: promoting the development of coal derivative technologies including fertiliser production, coal to oil and coal to gas technologies
- Soil carbon programs: building regional capacity for production of carbon offsets through forestry, bio-char and/or soil carbon management for sale into local and international markets along with development of aligned services (e.g. brokerage agencies) located in Latrobe City’s commercial hub
- Business tourism and events:
  - furthering investment in facilities to support the growth of the business tourism market including an 1000+ seat conference centre and accommodation facilities
  - undertaking cost/benefit studies into opportunities identified in the Latrobe City Tourism Audit including:
    - an energy innovation conference resort
    - a major driver training complex and a motor sport activity centre
- Aviation industries: attracting aviation related businesses including aerospace industries, adventure tourism firms, aviation training facilities and related service providers to establish or expand their operations on the expanding Latrobe Regional Airport site
- Road and rail industries: securing freight industry investment, utilising the rail network and Gippsland Logistics Precinct, to provide freight services to local industry
- Advanced manufacturing facilities: attracting technology industries including robotics, computer technologies and control systems manufacture
- Employment Zones: developing the Lurgi Plant, Gippsland Logistics Precinct and Latrobe Regional Airport as concentrated employment zones (see the box below for further details)
3. Position Latrobe City as a centre of knowledge and research in emerging technologies:

- Lobby Government to establish low emissions coal research projects in Latrobe City
- Support proponents to access funding to establish low emissions and alternative coal research projects in Latrobe City
- Promote carbon capture and storage projects (such as the CCS project and CO2CRC initiatives) in the broader community
- Support and progress the proposal for establishment of the Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Technologies in Gippsland
- Work with Clean Coal Victoria, Brown Coal Innovation Australia and other coal technology agencies to identify and pursue investment opportunities in brown coal
- Partner with Monash University and the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) to investigate opportunities for soil carbon research and pilot programs in Latrobe City and/or Gippsland region

**Actions for Building the Latrobe City Investment Brand**

1. Actively promote Latrobe City to potential visitors, investors and other stakeholders to improve their understanding and familiarity with Latrobe City:

   - Promote “success stories”
   - Expand the program of road-shows for Victorian and Australian Government officers
   - Harness benefits from regional advertising campaigns, such as the Regional Cities campaign
   - Produce targeted promotional campaigns for national and international investment markets and presentations to relevant conferences, expos and industry groups
   - Produce and distribute marketing materials that promote Latrobe City as an attractive place to live, visit and work
   - Showcase Latrobe City at investment forums and conferences

2. Work in partnership with the business community to understand if and how the perception of our region effects residential attraction, visitation and investment decisions and to develop targeted programs to enhance the profile of Latrobe City in the broader community, including:
• Commission market research to better understand the internal and external perceptions of Latrobe City and to identify opportunities and barriers to investment
• Analyse research findings and identify targeted programs to further develop Latrobe City’s community profile, building on the municipality’s history of innovation and industry

3. Consider whether the scope of the Latrobe City Marketing and Communications Strategy review should include the branding of the broader Latrobe City municipality (along with the Latrobe City Council brand)

Actions for Providing Strong Leadership and a Clear Direction

1. Work in partnership with the GLGN and with sector specific regional associations to develop and implement effective regional plans

2. Foster the development of new community leaders and entrepreneurs:
   • Expand the program of local business networking events
   • Facilitate local business and individual participation in Victorian and Australian Government leadership development initiatives
   • Partner with the local business community to develop leaders and entrepreneurs
   • Provide support to the Gippsland Business Awards
   • Support the Latrobe City Business Tourism Association and peak trade and industry bodies

3. Prepare Latrobe City for future carbon emissions regulation by implementing Latrobe City’s Low Carbon Emissions Future policy initiatives:
   • Form the Latrobe City Low Carbon Emissions Future Transition Committee to oversee the implementation of the Low Carbon Emissions Future policy
   • Maintain a close alliance with other coal industry Councils
   • Undertake Social Impact Analysis to identify the likely impacts of a carbon price on Latrobe City
   • Support the Victorian Government’s plans for a socio-economic study into impacts of power station shutdowns and investigating opportunities to link socio-economic work with the study described above
   • Lobby for Government support for "Carbon Assist" positions to assist businesses to manage the transition to a low carbon economy
   • Seek funding for local Council positions to assist in regional planning for the transition
   • Design and implement communication strategies to maintain investor confidence during the transition period
• Facilitate community participation in the Climate Communities scheme to increase understanding of climate change and encourage energy efficiency and emissions reduction initiatives in the community
• Lead a process to formulate proactive plans, in association with other agencies, to manage impacts and put in place contingency measures to address potential outcomes identified by Social Impact Analysis studies

4. Support the development of the Gippsland Low Carbon Economy Transition Plan and lead the formation of the Gippsland Regional Plan Low Carbon Transition Committee to develop and implement regional planning activities

**Actions for Advocating for an Attractive Policy Setting**

1. Seek to influence government policy at an early stage by:

   • Fostering strong relationships and effective lines of communication with Australian and Victorian Government ministers and departments
   • Identifying existing communication pathways to Victorian and Australian governments and any gaps in communication arrangements
   • Coordinating the lines of communication between existing and planned advisory committees including the Latrobe City Low Carbon Emissions Future Transition Committee, the Gippsland Regional Plan Low Carbon Transition Sub-committee and the Regional Managers Forum to ensure that communication and advice provided to Government is coordinated and consistent
   • Engaging all levels of Government in pro-active dialogue regarding the impact of a carbon price on the Latrobe City community and economy
   • Providing regular briefings to Victorian and Australian Government Ministers as well as Shadow Ministers on Latrobe City's low carbon transition policy and specific transition needs for the relevant

2. Ensure local representation on stakeholder committees to ensure Latrobe City needs are recognised and considered:

   • Victorian Government’s Leadership Forum
   • Regional Development committees
   • Local Government advisory panels
   • Climate change and carbon transition advisory committees as formed

3. Lobby for increased expansion of Victorian and Australian Government offices in Latrobe City and opportunities for local businesses to tender for provision of goods and services
Actions for Conducting Innovative and Efficient Urban Planning

1. Conduct innovative and efficient urban planning:
   
   - Work with developers to ensure high quality urban design and development
   - Work to improve users and stakeholders understanding of the planning process
   - Introduce a cross divisional comprehensive approach for significant and major development initiatives
   - Conduct forums with developers and the community to ensure the needs of planning process users and stakeholders are understood
   - Maintain constructive relationships with referral agencies and other stakeholders
   - Continually improve planning processes while ensuring ongoing compliance with legislation
   - Explore new and innovative methods of planning assessment (e.g. online planning application submission and assessment)
   - Collect statistics to report on performance and identify opportunities to further improve planning processes

2. Develop robust strategic plans to resolve land availability constraints and balance the needs of industrial, residential, environmental and recreational land users:
   
   - Develop, implement and periodically review township structure plans
   - Develop, implement and periodically review of Main Town Activity Centre Plans
   - Lobby the Victorian Government to make the Lurgi site available for industrial use
   - Develop and implement an Industrial Land Strategy
   - Develop precinct based development plans for a variety of land use activity (residential, commercial, industrial etc.)
   - Develop and implement policies relating to the future use of rural land
   - Develop and implement recreation and open space strategies
   - Update Planning Scheme controls relating to environmental features within the municipality (environmental significance, flood, wildfire etc)
   - Work with DPI, through Clean Coal Victoria, to ensure that any future development of the currently unallocated coal resource is undertaken with due consideration of social, environmental and financial factors and with consideration of the implications of future carbon pricing on the optimal use of natural resources.
   - Provide input to the development of the Gippsland Integrated Land Use Plan to provide direction and priorities for addressing population growth while enabling sustainable development of agricultural, industrial, commercial, residential and coal resources in the Gippsland region
Actions for Increasing Access to Skilled Labour

1. Support and provide input to the Skilling the Valley initiative

2. Conduct the bi-annual Industry and Investment Survey to identify business skills requirements and tailor training and capacity building programs to address these needs

Actions for Developing High Quality Infrastructure and Services

1. Progress strategic infrastructure development programs currently underway:
   - Churchill Town Centre plan
   - Moe Activity Centre Plan and the Moe Railway Precinct Revitalisation project
   - Development of the Traralgon Activity Centre plan and the Traralgon Station Precinct plan
   - Employment Zone Development (Gippsland Logistics Precinct, Lurgi site and implementation of the Latrobe Regional Airport master plan)
   - NBN system rollout
   - Energy Innovation Centre/Conference Facility Feasibility Assessment

2. Lobby for improved commuter transport links to increase opportunities for students and workers to travel into Latrobe City on a daily basis

3. Work with the GLGN to progress the Gippsland Gateways initiative and to improve freight links into Gippsland

Actions for Facilitating Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

1. Support implementation of the Gippsland Sustainable Water Strategy to ensure the allocation of water supplies balances the needs of both local and broader Victorian communities

2. Promote Gippsland as the food bowl of Victoria to support initiatives to attract food processing industries and increase markets for Gippsland produce

3. Advance the research agenda in environmental and natural resource management

4. Progress regional tourism initiatives with Destination Gippsland and Tourism Victoria to provide opportunities for Latrobe City businesses to benefit from passing trade
Actions for Contributing to a Liveable and Vibrant Community

1. Facilitate partnerships with the arts community, health sector and recreational clubs to identify, evaluate and progress projects and events that contribute to a liveable and vibrant community

2. Conduct innovative urban planning with foresight to differentiate the region from outer suburban areas of Melbourne, ensuring this aspect is considered in development of the Gippsland Integrated Land Use Plan