



SOUTHERN
GRAMPIANS
SHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PLAN

OUR COMMUNITY

ECONOMY

Southern Grampians
Gross Regional Product
(2020) **\$1.015 billion**



Unemployment rate **3.7%**
(June 2021)

Hamilton Regional
Livestock Exchange is
in the top 10 for head
throughput in Australia
with over **1 million** sheep
sold per year, equalling **6%**

Southern Grampians Shire
produces **15%** of Australia's
wool production

20.1% of employed persons
work in Agriculture



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

20.9% reported being
obese, compared to the
State average of 18.8%



57.3% of people in
Southern Grampians Shire
do not meet physical
activity guidelines

Family violence incidents per
100,000 of population was **1907.4**,
significantly higher than the
State rate of 1399.1



OUR PEOPLE

Median age: **46**
Population: **16,134**



31.3% population aged
over 60, compared to State
average of 21%

The lands of **3** aboriginal
nations, Eastern Maar,
Gunditjmara, and Barenji
Gadjin people



Median weekly household income
\$1,043, **36% less** than the State median
weekly household income of \$1,419



Only **36%** of school students
completed Year 12 compared to the
State average of 54.4%

GETTING ABOUT

23% have **3** or more cars compared
to State average of 16.8%



Number of daily
passenger rail services: **0**

Daily bus services to Ballarat: **2**

0.3% of residents travel to work
by public transport compared to
State average 11.1%



Only **54%** of students went
beyond Year 10

21.2% of households do not have an
internet connection, compared to the
State average of 13%

Only **13.4%** of residents have completed
a Bachelor or higher degree, compared
to the State average of 24.3%

* Data sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics and various other Victorian Government Departments

INTRODUCTION FROM THE MAYOR

Southern Grampians Shire is a great place to live and work. However, continued hard work and collaboration between Council and the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments is needed to maintain our status as one of Victoria's most liveable regional areas and to overcome significant service gaps which are creating disadvantages in our community.

Southern Grampians Shire is blessed with natural assets including majestic volcanic geology, the iconic Grampians National Park, internationally significant wetlands, lakes, rivers and breathtakingly beautiful rolling plains that are the heart of Victoria's renowned Western District. The region offers a unique balance between rural living, small towns or our urban city Hamilton, all offering access to employment, through a broad range of industries that include agriculture, mining, manufacturing, tourism and retail. The region produces 15% of Australia's wool clip.

Council works hard to ensure our community is supported with services and opportunities that fulfill their aspirations. In recent years, we have invested significantly in community infrastructure, but like all smaller municipalities, the community's needs stretch beyond Council's resourcing or, in areas such as transport, the needs are not within local government remit.

Our Shire has urgent needs and service gaps that are creating significant disadvantage in our community. We cannot address these alone and need the support of the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments, who both have a crucial role to play in ensuring the people of the Southern Grampians have access to jobs, health care, sport and leisure facilities and transport links which provide connectivity for work, education, health and prevent social marginalisation.

Southern Grampians Shire Council's 2021 Community Investment Plan lays out our community's immediate priorities.

Southern Grampians is one of the most car dependent communities in Victoria. With no passenger rail, and only two daily bus services that connect with Ballarat, Southern Grampians is significantly underserved when compared to other similar regional cities in Victoria. This creates significant disadvantage for our community, particularly for people who need to access Ballarat or Melbourne, for health, education or employment. In addition, the lack of adequate daily bus services to Warrnambool is a major barrier to youth enrolling in TAFE courses, as practical training is delivered from the Warrnambool campus.

Council and our community is seeking a commitment to additional daily bus services that connect Hamilton with Ballarat and Warrnambool.

The Maroona to Portland rail line is a vital freight link for business, however, with the condition of this line having deteriorated to a 40kmh speed limit and capacity limited to a 19-ton axle load, it is not a viable freight option for businesses. This is increasing the number of trucks on our roads, compounded by the development of the mineral sands industry in the Wimmera seeking Port of Portland access.

Council and our business community are calling for the upgrade of the Maroona to the Port of Portland Rail line to an 80kmh speed limit and 23 tone axle load.

The Western Victorian Volcanic Plain is the third largest volcanic plain in the world, covering approximately 22,000 square kilometres. Our 'Volcanic Trail' masterplan builds on the significant cultural and environmental values of seven volcanic sites within the Southern Grampians Shire. This will

be a game-changing visitor economy project that will recognise cultural meaning for the indigenous, respect the place, value-add to the visitor experience and strengthen the local economy.

Our Council Plan details our objective to support and promote a healthy community. To achieve this, Council has an ambitious vision to complete our network of shared pedestrian and cycle pathways across the Shire to activate the community and provide an opportunity to enjoy our wondrous natural assets. Not only is this important for physical health of our residents and supporting their mental health in a post COVID world, the initiative also increases the viability of tourist towns in our region.

Council's Community Investment Plan outlines these projects, as well as a number of others across a range of environments, which are all important to our region's economic prosperity, cultural heritage or health and wellbeing.

Council, on behalf of our community, has a strong desire to continue to deliver vital services and infrastructure in partnership with the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments. We share an unwavering commitment to building a better community and we look forward to cementing that relationship in 2022.



Cr Bruach Colliton
Mayor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL LAND OWNERS

Southern Grampians Shire Council acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation.

We acknowledge the Gunditjmara, Tjap Wurrung and Bunganditj people, the traditional custodians of the lands where we live and work.

We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders past, present and emerging. Southern Grampians Shire Council is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

VOLCANIC TRAIL MASTERPLAN

Challenge

The Western Victorian Volcanic Plain is the third largest volcanic plain in the world, covering approximately 22,000 square kilometres. It extends from Melbourne through to Mt Gambier and south-eastern South Australia, holding not only an environmental and geological significance but is vital for First Nations, tourism experiences and economic opportunities necessitating a collaborative approach.

Southern Grampians Shire is home to several culturally and environmentally significant volcanic sites along the plain, forming the "Volcanic Trail". The region features approximately 100 extinct volcanoes, dotted with lakes, rivers and wetlands. Some of the wetlands are Ramsar listed and are of international importance, and many of the regions parks and reserves are listed as protected areas by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The region includes the traditional lands of four Aboriginal nations – Boandik, Jardwadjali, Djab Wurrung and Dhauwurd Wurrung (Gunditjmara). Aboriginal people have occupied the area for many thousands of years, and continue to have a close association with the land for its cultural, environmental and spiritual value.

The 'Volcanic Trail' is comprised of seven sites - Wannon Falls, Nigretta Falls, Byaduk Caves, Harman's Valley Lookout, Wallacedale Tumuli, Mount Napier and Mount Rouse.

Currently these sites are developed and maintained to varying degrees across multiple government authorities and are not linked in any way through branding, interpretive themes or a consistent approach to infrastructure.

Solution

To recognise cultural meaning for the local indigenous community as well as the wider public, appropriate signage, interpretation and visitor experiences are required at facilities to better respect the place, value-add to the experience and strengthen the visitor economy. This project intimately connects to and expands upon the world heritage experience of nearby Budj Bim and the Grampians National Park.

Council recently developed the Volcanic Trail Masterplan which sets out the strategic direction for development of these assets over the next 10 years. The masterplan places high importance on preserving and promoting both the natural environment and Indigenous heritage of the region, with an approach that is sustainable, respectful and inclusive.

Proposals cover both infrastructure and heritage interpretation. Infrastructure proposals range from the upgrades of existing walking trails, through to the development of entirely new campsites and picnic grounds. An interpretive framework is also provided for each site, covering major themes and supporting content for heritage interpretation.

If implemented in full, the masterplan has the potential to achieve the dual benefits of attracting increased tourism to the region, as well as improving the recreational opportunities available to local residents, through the creation of high quality and meaningful visitor experiences. Importantly, the project will support reconciliation through first nations cultural heritage interpretation.



THE ASK

\$9.25m to fund detailed design and construction of works at the listed priority sites.

- + Nigretta Falls \$2.6m
- + Wannon Falls \$2.7m
- + Harman's Valley \$0.15m
- + Mount Rouse \$2.1m
- + Byaduk Caves \$1.7m (although under Parks Victoria's management - seen as priority due to current state of the site).

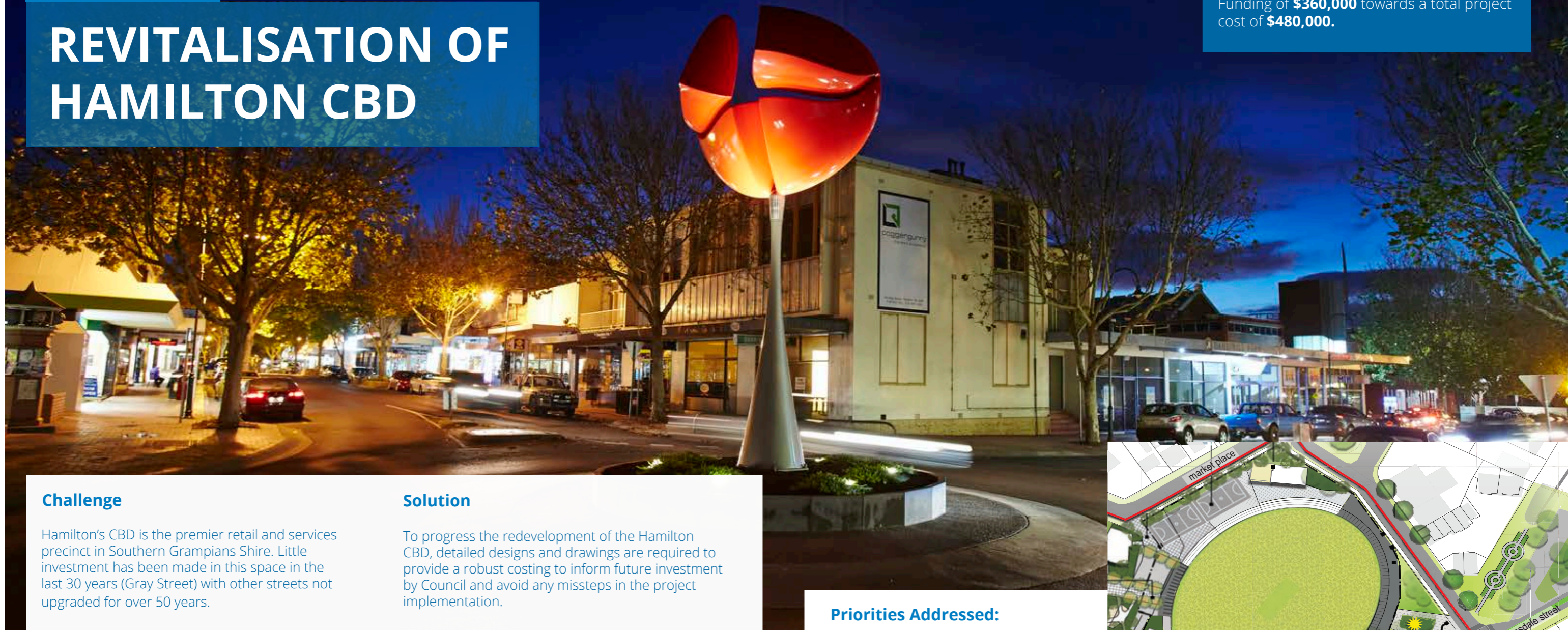
Priorities Addressed:

- ✓ Environment
- ✓ Economic Growth
- ✓ First Nations
- ✓ COVID Recovery
- ✓ Jobs
- ✓ Community Activation

REVITALISATION OF HAMILTON CBD

THE ASK

Funding of **\$360,000** towards a total project cost of **\$480,000**.



Challenge

Hamilton's CBD is the premier retail and services precinct in Southern Grampians Shire. Little investment has been made in this space in the last 30 years (Gray Street) with other streets not upgraded for over 50 years.

Solution

To progress the redevelopment of the Hamilton CBD, detailed designs and drawings are required to provide a robust costing to inform future investment by Council and avoid any missteps in the project implementation.

Southern Grampians Shire Council endorsed the Hamilton CBD Activation Masterplan in May 2020. The focus of the concept designs is Melville Oval, Lonsdale Street and Gray Street, as well as other connecting streets and laneways. The designs explore options to improve walking and cycling, introduce more public art and signage, better public spaces and parking, and improved trees and landscaping.

With work on Melville Oval and Cox Street now underway, it is timely to undertake detailed design of Hamilton CBD key streets and laneways to finalise costings and project delivery to enhance visitor experience, amenity and access for the aged and disabled.

The documentation should include:

- + Detailed feature survey and onsite measurements, geotechnical investigations, hydrological investigations, location of underground services and any sampling and testing required to develop suitable plans, designs and drawings.
- + Detailed engineering design of the project, including detailed geometric design, pavement design, street scape design, parking design and street light design.
- + Detailed design of underground stormwater drainage and shared path in the project area.
- + Detailed design of traffic control devices, signage and line marking.
- + Detailed design of roadside furniture, roadside environment and public open spaces.

Priorities Addressed:

- ✓ Environment
- ✓ Economic Growth/Jobs
- ✓ First Nations
- ✓ COVID Recovery
- ✓ Community Activation



MULTIUSE TRAILS

Challenge

Recent audits have found an estimated 42km of missing links in footpaths and shared user pathways (cyclist and pedestrians) across Southern Grampians Shire in the urban areas of Hamilton, Coleraine, Balmoral, Cavendish, Dunkeld, Glenthompson, Tarrington and Peshurst.

These pathways are a key contributor towards continued connectedness to both services and people, and are critical to community health and wellbeing which is particularly important for rural communities. The missing links, also identified in rural reserves, have been identified specifically in the Southern Grampians 2041 - Community Vision Framework and in strategic plans such as the Hamilton CBD Masterplan, Hamilton Lake Masterplan, Recreation and Leisure Strategic plan and small town structure plans.

Solution

Construction of these missing shared user pathways is necessary to provide connections for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the Southern Grampians Shire townships. In addition to the 42 km of urban connections, 65km of rural reserves and walking trails are proposed to improve to connectivity and access across the Shire.

These missing links will boost recreation opportunities for our community, support health and wellbeing, as well as ensuring access to central activity centres, schools, hospitals and education as priority locations. The paths will also provide access to our internationally renowned natural environment, linking our small towns, National Parks, volcanic sites, and Ramsar listed wetlands, providing an exceptional visitor experience and economic benefit for the region.

Highlights of this package include:

- + Completion of the Hamilton to Coleraine rail trail.
- + Trails to improve access to Volcanic Plains Masterplan sites.
- + Series of connecting pathways in Hamilton to create walkway loops linking key natural environment sites for recreation and exercise.
- + Trails to connect the township of Dunkeld with the Grampians Peak Trail and Dunkeld Arboretum.
- + Pathways to connect the townships of Coleraine, Glenthompson, Cavendish, Balmoral, Tarrington, Branxholme and Peshurst with key recreational and community assets.

THE ASK

A **\$5.2m** package to develop approximately 137 km of shared user pathways across the Southern Grampians Shire. This project can be staged.



Priorities Addressed:

- ✓ Community Activation
- ✓ Visitor Economy
- ✓ Maintain and Renew Infrastructure
- ✓ Health and Wellbeing



WEST GRAMPIANS WATER PIPELINE

Challenge

Ongoing dry conditions and lack of a secure water supply has significantly impacted primary producers in the Western Grampians for the last three decades.

Producers rely on rainfall-runoff into catchment dams or groundwater bores for their water needs.

From the late 1990s to 2009 the region's agricultural industry experienced devastating drought impacts, followed by three significant rainfall events in 2010 and 2011 that substantially improved water resources. In the five years that followed, the West Grampians region recorded 30% below the mean rainfall average, the lowest rainfall and inflow on record.

The impact of this is evidenced through stock production across the West Grampians region with sheep and lamb rates declining across the region by 30%, or 1.5 million, head since the year 2000. Stocking rates rose following the return to good rainfall in 2010/11 and the promise of raised market prices, however they have fallen since 2013/14 in response to the dry seasons.

A further run of dry years threatens the commercial viability of the West Grampians agricultural industry and the regional economy it underpins. Making up over 40% of the workforce, the agricultural sector is the economic backbone of the region.

Solution

Southern Grampians Shire is partnering with West Wimmera and local farmers to establish a dependable water resource for farmers to plan for a more diversified rural economy. The communities of the West Grampians Region agree that a rural water pipeline, providing access to water 24 hours a day, seven days a week, is essential for the long-term viability of the region. This would provide secure water to around 380,000 hectares of productive agricultural land - approximately 700 rural enterprises. Additionally, this pipeline will create greater levels of regional resilience, reducing environmental pressure on stressed catchments, enhance fire-fighting capacity and provide value adding opportunities that will spread across state borders and benefit the national agricultural industry and the nation that it supports.

This infrastructure project will link a series of what are currently low-security, stand-alone water supply systems for separate townships with the more extensive Wimmera Mallee Pipeline system.

The opportunity this provides to the agricultural industry alone has the potential to generate an additional \$284m (in present value) economic benefit over 25 years.

Added to the agricultural benefit, this stimulus will boost the regional amenity and attract visitors, as well as security for water-based events which give an injection of much needed tourism dollars. The investment is expected to create 81 long-term jobs (directly resulting from the project with many hundreds more in-directly supported in the process) in the West Grampians and support new investors who will have greater confidence to intensify, expand or diversify into higher value crops such as horticulture.

THE ASK

State and Commonwealth Governments to contribute a combined **\$67m** towards the **\$99.3m** West Grampians Rural Water Pipeline to secure water to our region and enable us to prosper.

Priorities Addressed:

-  **Economic Growth**
-  **Jobs**
-  **Community Activation**
-  **Environment**



 West Grampians Rural Water Pipeline project area. Not to scale.

PENSHURST SEWER PROJECT

Priorities Addressed:

- ✓ Environment
- ✓ Economic Growth
- ✓ Community Activation
- ✓ Jobs

Challenge

The township of Peshurst in the Southern Grampians Shire Council region of south-west Victoria is the most densely populated unsewered town within the municipality, and is situated on a sensitive groundwater setting near an extinct volcano. The town is located on the busy Great Southern Touring Route which connects Great Ocean Road with Dunkeld. Despite this strategic location, the town has experienced little tourism investment due to the lack of a sewer scheme for cost effective effluent treatment on often small lots. This is reflected in limited tourist accommodation and retail investment generally.

A Council audit of Peshurst's septic systems found 93% (approximately 190 systems) were not performing satisfactorily and did not adhere to current public health and environmental standards. In addition, around 95% of owners did not maintain their systems, leading to a high risk of contamination of the groundwater and local water bodies. A natural spring of significance to the region's Traditional Owners, the Eastern Maar, is also experiencing elevated nutrients which could risk triggering a future blue green algae outbreak.

Both Council and the community of Peshurst are keen for the township to grow and develop.

Peshurst's current approach to domestic wastewater management limits residential and economic growth as the lot sizes within the town already provide insufficient land area to effectively treat and dispose of effluent via onsite systems. In addition, a reticulated sewerage system is also not suitable for the Peshurst area given the prohibitive costs of installation and distance from established systems in Hamilton.

Solution

Sewer the Peshurst township via 12 cluster sewerage precincts and treated recycled water, irrigated via subsurface irrigation. To test the effectiveness and suitability of the Peshurst Recycled Water Scheme, a pilot project is proposed where two precincts are to be chosen to develop a proof of concept and adaptive pathways approach to wastewater management.

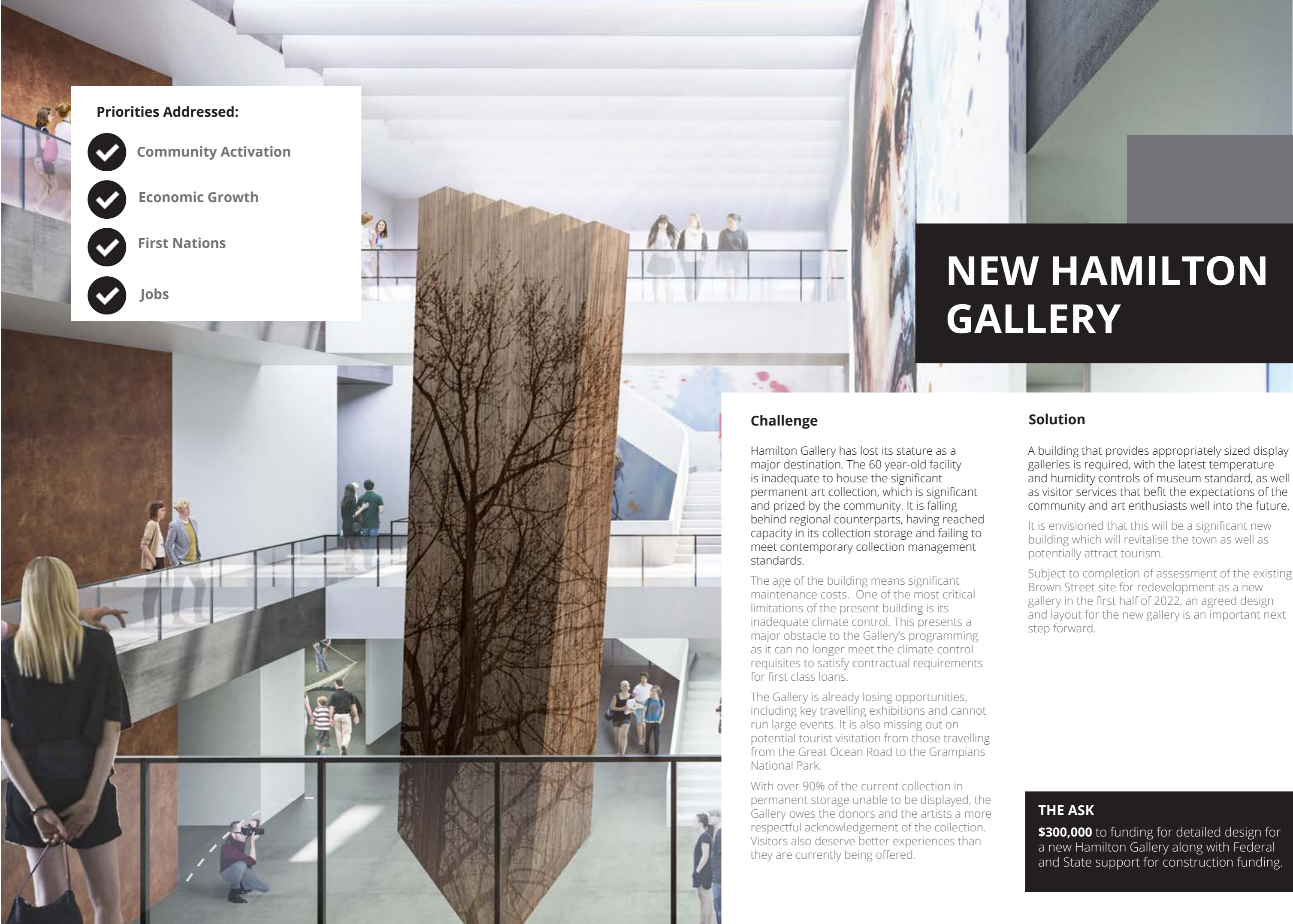
The Peshurst Recycled Water Scheme is a neighbourhood-scale solution that divides 270 properties across Peshurst into 12 precincts based on topography and the nature of the land use. For each precinct, existing onsite systems would be decommissioned, and separate gravity all-waste sewers would be installed. These sewers would direct raw sewage from properties to a local precinct water recycling system, which would conduct primary treatment of wastewater, then disposal through evapotranspiration "pods". These natural pod systems provide further treatment in the soil and allow water to be taken up by plants and evaporated. They also allow water to be stored within the pods during cooler, wetter periods.

Recycled water can be stored for public irrigation of open spaces when necessary, such as during warmer months. This open space irrigation would occur underground, via sub-surface drippers.



THE ASK

\$2.1m for the Peshurst Recycled Water Scheme pilot project.



- Priorities Addressed:**
- ✓ Community Activation
 - ✓ Economic Growth
 - ✓ First Nations
 - ✓ Jobs

NEW HAMILTON GALLERY

Challenge

Hamilton Gallery has lost its stature as a major destination. The 60 year-old facility is inadequate to house the significant permanent art collection, which is significant and prized by the community. It is falling behind regional counterparts, having reached capacity in its collection storage and failing to meet contemporary collection management standards.

The age of the building means significant maintenance costs. One of the most critical limitations of the present building is its inadequate climate control. This presents a major obstacle to the Gallery's programming as it can no longer meet the climate control requisites to satisfy contractual requirements for first class loans.

The Gallery is already losing opportunities, including key travelling exhibitions and cannot run large events. It is also missing out on potential tourist visitation from those travelling from the Great Ocean Road to the Grampians National Park.

With over 90% of the current collection in permanent storage unable to be displayed, the Gallery owes the donors and the artists a more respectful acknowledgement of the collection. Visitors also deserve better experiences than they are currently being offered.

Solution

A building that provides appropriately sized display galleries is required, with the latest temperature and humidity controls of museum standard, as well as visitor services that befit the expectations of the community and art enthusiasts well into the future.

It is envisioned that this will be a significant new building which will revitalise the town as well as potentially attract tourism.

Subject to completion of assessment of the existing Brown Street site for redevelopment as a new gallery in the first half of 2022, an agreed design and layout for the new gallery is an important next step forward.

THE ASK
\$300,000 to funding for detailed design for a new Hamilton Gallery along with Federal and State support for construction funding.

Council
Depot Shed

Glass house

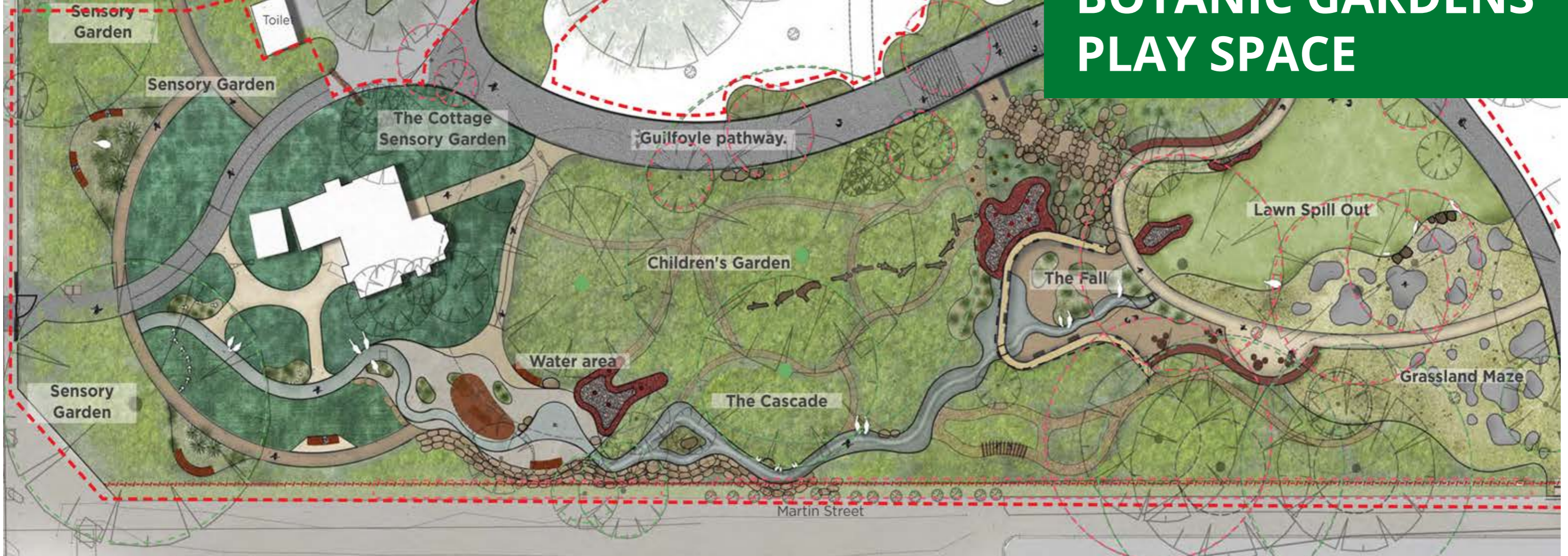
Hamilton Botanic Gardens
sloped lawns

Existing playground, to be
demolished and removed

THE ASK

Funding of **\$1.5m** to implement the detailed design.

HAMILTON BOTANIC GARDENS PLAY SPACE



Challenge

The Hamilton Botanic Gardens Masterplan proposes a new, nature-based children's play space on the site of the former Australian animal enclosure in the Hamilton Botanic Gardens.

This area of the gardens has remained fenced and inaccessible to the community for decades, since the practice of keeping animals in the Gardens ceased.

Solution

A new, nature-based children's play space is proposed on the slope of the hill on the site of the former animal enclosure. The design of this space focuses on the provision of intergenerational nature based, non-equipment plan with the central feature being a large water play area and rock cascade. A large, decorative paved area at the centre of the space will feature water jets and clambering rocks with water channelling towards the rock cascade.

The water features paved area will also double as an event / outdoor classroom space with an over-ride

switch allowing the water to be switched off during these events. When water is unavailable the rock cascade will act as a climbing play elements. Picnic facilities including a shelter and BBQ, seats and a drinking fountain will service the play space and sensory garden.

The design is ready for final consultation with the community and adoption by Council.

Priorities Addressed:

-  **Community Activation**
-  **Economic Growth**
-  **Mental Health**

HAMILTON DIGITAL HUB

Challenge

The residents of the Great South Coast region experience disadvantage in terms of attainment of digital skills and access to broadband internet, compared with other parts of Victoria. This lack of access and skill shortage can negatively impact on digital inclusion, create labour force barriers that hinder economic development and result in social disadvantage and feelings of isolation. Evidence of this can be seen in the region's low education attainment rates.

Challenges also exist locally in finding pathways for post-year 12 students to continue with their education. These issues, combined with the lack of modern digitally-enabled spaces in Hamilton, pose a range of problems in the region.

THE ASK

\$2.23m to fund construction of Digital Hub building.

Solution

Creation of a purpose-built digital hub that comprises a mix of rooms to hire, training rooms for education providers including Universities and South West TAFE, collaboration spaces for local businesses and mentoring spaces for Council staff to assist community groups and run programs.

A needs analysis has been completed and a location for the facility has been identified in-principle within the Hamilton CBD.

Council has been actively engaging with Department Jobs Precincts and Regions, South West TAFE, Deakin University and UniSA and will consolidate this feedback with additional information from Hamilton Regional Business Association and likely local business interests. Feedback suggests a significant number of businesses believe a Digital Hub will help them be more innovative, grow and reduce costs.



Priorities Addressed:



Community Activation



Mental Health



Youth



Educational Attainment



Jobs



Economic Development



ENHANCED REGIONAL BUS SERVICES

Challenge

Regional bus links from Hamilton to key regional centres such as Ballarat, Mt Gambier and Warrnambool are weak. The level of service is inconsistent with the needs of a regional town the size of Hamilton (around 9,000 residents) especially one without a passenger rail service, and with its ageing population and strong education sector.

There are only two return services daily from Hamilton to Ballarat. The service to Warrnambool is even more limited. Access to Ballarat is critical for residents to effectively access employment, social connectedness, and essential medical appointments. Access to Warrnambool is critical for hundreds of South West TAFE students who rely on being in Warrnambool for workshop/technical training. Currently there is no service that allows residents to complete a days work or study with return to the region in the same day. Warrnambool and Ballarat are key locations for medical services not available in Hamilton along with other support services. Public transport access into Coleraine is also severely limited and would be addressed with an improved coach service.

Solution

Strengthened regional bus links on the Ballarat-Hamilton-Mt Gambier route is required, and further investigation by DoT on the level of service between Hamilton and Warrnambool is warranted.

Ballarat is the most significant nearby regional city (>100,000 pop) for Hamilton. A 2017 business case identified the need for expanded regional coach services from Hamilton as an immediate priority.

THE ASK

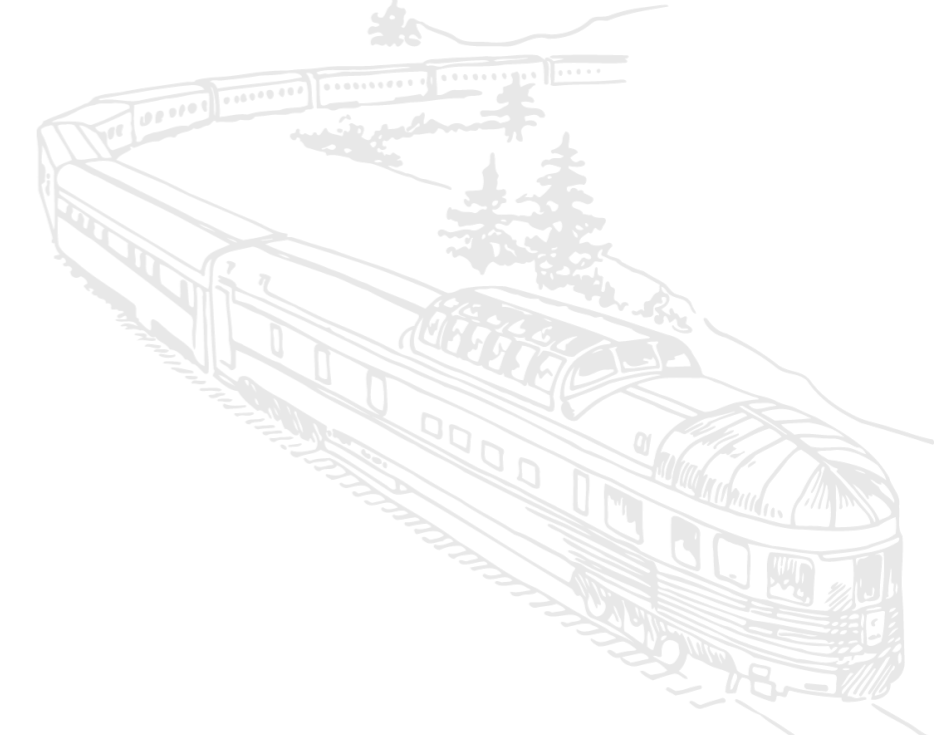
1. Minimum two additional services 7 days per week on the Ballarat-Hamilton-Mt Gambier route.
2. An additional week day service to Warrnambool from Casterton/Coleraine through Hamilton. This would arrive in Warrnambool before 8:30am and depart at 4:30pm back to Hamilton.



Priorities Addressed:

- ✓ Community Activation
- ✓ Economic Growth
- ✓ Environment
- ✓ Mental Health
- ✓ Jobs

RE-INTRODUCTION OF PASSENGER RAIL TO HAMILTON



Challenge

Lack of a convenient and dedicated rail service into Hamilton, linked with Ballarat via Ararat is disadvantaging residents and visitors of Southern Grampians Shire. Many comparable towns such as Swan Hill, Benalla and Yarrowonga have access to passenger rail in Victoria to travel to larger regional cities which the Southern Grampians currently lacks.

Underlying reasons for recommending return of rail services to Horsham and Hamilton are that:

- + It responds to many of the identified needs.
- + It provides better inter-city connections.
- + It is strongly supported by the region's communities.
- + It provides equity with other cities and towns throughout Victoria.

Solution

Six return daily train services to Ararat, four to Horsham and three to Hamilton is vital. These services would all connect at Ballarat with direct trains to/from Melbourne via Ballan. An upgraded train station at Hamilton, overnight stabling in Hamilton and Horsham along with standardisation of rail gauge between Ballarat to Ararat and other associated works is also required.

Detailed design is needed for conversion of existing track between Ballarat and Ararat from broad to standard gauge; new rolling stock, train station upgrades and associated works.

THE ASK

\$371m

The cost of proposals in the 2017 Feasibility Report has been estimated in a peer-reviewed process.

Stage 1 of the proposals (those for early implementation) - are costed at \$1.6m;

Stage 2, including new trains and standardisation of the Ballarat to Ararat railway and associated train stabling, maintenance and signalling, has an estimated capital cost of \$369m and an additional annual operating cost of \$6.1m.



Priorities Addressed:

- ✓ Community Activation
- ✓ Economic Growth
- ✓ Environment
- ✓ Mental Health
- ✓ Jobs

MAROONA TO PORTLAND RAIL LINE

Challenge

The Maroona to Portland rail line is 172km long and connects the western half of Victoria to the national grid and Port of Portland. The deep-sea Port of Portland is considered the best in Regional Victoria. The line links Portland to Ararat and is essential to the wider network.

The track is a timber sleepered line that has deteriorated in last nine years since Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) took the lease from Victorian State Government.

There are a range of general maintenance and renewal obligations contained in the lease including ensuring all capital works are integrated with the existing rail system and ensuring the rail line is also 'in a condition which enables ARTC to meet its obligations to its customers.' In 2008, ARTC said it would spend the money to upgrade the line. This hasn't occurred to date.

One specific obligation on the Maroona to Portland line is that it be maintained at all times to 19 TAL (tonnage axle load) and speed of 80 km/hr. The line is not currently rated more than 19 TAL and speed is now reduced to 40 km/hr. Neither the TAL or rated speed is consistent with the wider network, which is 23 TAL and 80km/hr or greater.

There is growing demand for mineral sands

to be brought from the Horsham and Wimmera area towards the Port of Portland. Road freight is currently the only viable option with the current ARTC level of service on the line.

Impact of current situation:

- + Communities impacted by 24 hr/day truck movements (B doubles or bigger).
- + Carbon impact via emissions.
- + Road infrastructure including pavements and bridges deteriorating. State and Federal Governments have spent \$40m since 2017 on roads maintenance in the Green Triangle, largely due to truck damage.
- + Financial impact on mineral sands, wheat, other products – on projects with extended life spans of up to and beyond 30 years.

Solution

Upgrade the Maroona to Portland line to retain 80km limit at 19 TAL (ie standard it should be at now via lease agreement).

Finalise business case and funding model for upgrading line to 23 TAL in line with rest of ARTC network as per Portland to Maroona line ARTC business case.

Upgrade loading and unloading infrastructure at Port of Portland and at key rail sites within Western Victoria.

Priorities Addressed:

- ✓ Economic Growth
- ✓ Jobs
- ✓ Environment

THE ASK

Funding of approximately **\$206m** would provide a track fully converted to meet modern standards and freight task for 23 TAL and 80km speed.

WESTERN DISTRICT HEALTH SERVICE HAMILTON BASE HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT



THE ASK

Council is seeking a commitment from the State Government to fund a **\$44m** redevelopment at Hamilton Base Hospital.

The redevelopment of the Hamilton Base Hospital (HBH) emergency, intensive care and radiology departments will ensure high quality clinical services are provided to the Southern Grampians Shire community for years to come.

Current and future patient numbers are expected to rise and the existing facilities are considered sub-optimal to meet the evolving clinical service demands.

WDHS is renowned as an innovative leader and for the delivery of service excellence - this is not considered sustainable with the current infrastructure.

Council is seeking a commitment from the State

Government to fund a \$44m redevelopment at HBH.

The existing area supporting these services occupies a floor area of 686m². The new building consists of a single story structure, located at Foster Street Hamilton and will increase the total footprint to 2,159m².

In recognition of their commitment to this project, the WDHS Board of Directors is contributing \$2m to the redevelopment.

This flagship local project will transform the services offered at WDHS and create a lasting legacy for the local community.

Priorities Addressed:

- ✓ Economic Growth
- ✓ Mental Health
- ✓ COVID Recovery
- ✓ Jobs



HAMILTON AND COLERAINE POLICE STATION UPGRADES

THE ASK

\$25m for a regional facility in Hamilton that will house Detectives, Highway Patrol and General Policing along with a courthouse and adequate detention facilities.



Hamilton and Coleraine Police Stations are no longer fit for purpose. Victoria Police are currently working with the Investment Management team to finalise a business case for ERC funding and Council strongly support this project.

Council is seeking State Government funding of **\$25m** for a regional facility in Hamilton that will house Detectives, Highway Patrol and General Policing along with a courthouse and adequate detention facilities.

While minor remedial works were undertaken in 2020, redevelopment or ideally replacement of both the Hamilton and Coleraine stations will support better policing for the region.

Priorities Addressed:

- ✓ Mental Health
- ✓ Jobs
- ✓ Community Safety



SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE COUNCIL

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