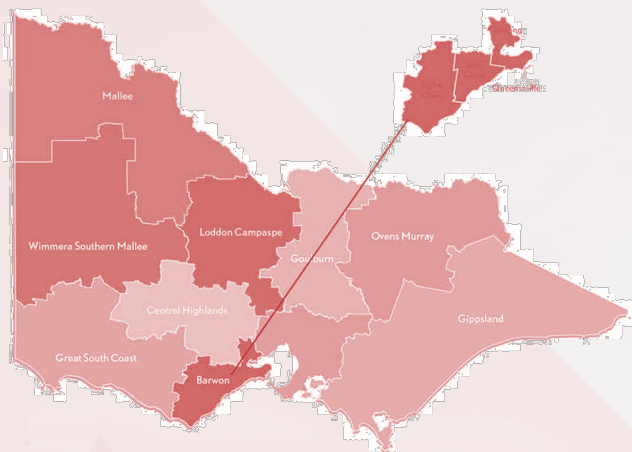


# REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS BARWON



From the famous Great Ocean Road coastline to the Otway forests, from rich farmland to the streets of Victoria's biggest regional city, Geelong, our region spans spectacular and diverse landscapes.

We have a dynamic economy, with a strong manufacturing and processing sector, and great potential for growth in the professional services, tourism, international education, healthcare, information and communication technologies and agribusiness sectors.

Our region includes:

- Four municipalities - City of Greater Geelong, Borough of Queenscliffe, Colac Otway Shire, Surf Coast Shire
- A Gross Regional Product of \$13.1 billion
- A population of 281,600

More than 8% of people speak a language other than English at home. The Barwon culture is vibrant and reflects the wonderful cultural diversity of communities across the region, and our shared spirit of inclusiveness.

We proudly acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land, the Wadawurrung People, and pay respects to their Elders past, present and future, for they hold the memories, the tradition and the culture of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## The **outcomes** we are striving to achieve

Our region is striving to achieve the following long term social and economic outcomes for the individuals, families and communities who live in and visit the Barwon region. The roadmap overleaf outlines the challenges we face in achieving these outcomes, the actions we are taking and what success looks like for our region.



## Our Outcomes Roadmap



### **Transport Connectivity**

An integrated, accessible and progressive transport network



### **Liveability**

Vibrant, liveable cities and towns



### **Climate Change**

Protected environments and prepared, resilient communities



### **Business & Innovation**

A flourishing culture of entrepreneurship, innovation and growth



### **Equity & Wellbeing**

Supported, fair and nurturing Barwon communities



### **Education**

Strong education futures for our young people



### **Tourism**

A thriving and sustainable Barwon tourism economy

This roadmap reflects the views of the Barwon Regional Partnership. The roadmap is a living document that will be updated regularly by the Regional Partnership.



*What success looks like for Barwon*

*Some key challenges we are facing*

*How our partnership is responding*



*The actions and key projects we are focussing on*

**Transport Connectivity**



An integrated, accessible and progressive transport network

A truly **integrated, accessible, progressive and sustainable** public and private **transport network**. A transport system that **caters for different users** and their different needs across **residents, visitors** to the region and **industry**, facilitating the **supply chain**, achieving strong **value for money**, enabling **social inclusion and supporting Barwon's local industries**.

We are facing **increasing pressure on our transport system**, with overcrowded services that don't match demand and growth for our region, particularly the vital transport connection to Melbourne. People are relying heavily on **individual transport**, creating **growing congestion**. We also have local freight, commuter and international visitor traffic using the same infrastructure, leading to **unsafe driving practices** and **tragic road fatalities**.

Our region's focus is addressing **train service numbers and frequency** to keep up with population growth, achieving **faster journey times**, improve **timeliness** and **better integration** across the transport network. We are also supporting efforts to meet the transport needs of the 22% of our region experiencing **place-based disadvantage**, and make strong progress 'towards zero' deaths on our roads.

- Advocating for increased rail services between Geelong and Melbourne, Geelong/Colac/Warrnambool and establish the public transport connection to Torquay/Surf Coast
- Supporting the further development of transport infrastructure and services
- Advocating for establishment and enhancement of public transport connections to Avalon airport

**Liveability**



Vibrant, liveable cities and towns

Strong growth in **population, tourism and commerce** across the region, supported by **outstanding public amenities, services, attractions and a stable visitor economy**. People want to live, work, visit and bring their business to the Barwon region.

Key cities in our region are challenged by **issues of public safety and poor public amenity**, in part owed to **ageing infrastructure**. If we don't address these issues, **people will not want to live, work or visit our region** and it will have significant impacts on our **economic growth**.

We are supporting work on a **long term, coordinated approach** to improve **employment, affordable housing, public amenity and accessibility** in our city and towns, ensuring that infrastructure **keeps pace with growth**. We recognise the role that **smaller town centres** play in **servicing local residents and attracting visitors** to all corners of the Barwon region.

- Advocating to revitalise central Geelong to thrive and be recognised locally and globally
- Supporting urban design and infrastructure planning in key regional centres such as Torquay and Colac
- Supporting the creation of digitally enabled Smart Cities and Towns and improving digital coverage in rural communities

**Climate change**



Protected environments and prepared, resilient communities

Climate change and rising sea levels are **better understood** and evidence-based **adaptation** and mitigation actions are in place to **reduce environmental, economic, social and health impacts**. Climate change policy positively **influences and shapes** our visitor economy, liveability and agriculture industries.

We have a **gap in our understanding** about how **climate change** will impact our region now and in future. To date, there has been a **poor allocation of resources** and a short term approach to **mitigating and adapting** to the effects of climate change. We also have a lack of understanding of the **economic, social and environmental impacts** of changing climate<sup>1</sup>.

We are supporting investment in a more **efficient allocation and management of resources** to help the **region adapt to the impacts of climate change**. Our region is seeking to achieve more clarity on **longer term goals** and how they match **short term circumstances** on climate impacts. We will also work with communities to take **evidenced based, local action**.

- Advocating for investment in vital coastal infrastructure to adapt to rising sea levels
- Advocating to protect our high value natural assets and maintain the region's biodiversity
- Supporting advanced new technologies and innovation in the generation and application of renewable energy and energy storage

**Business & Innovation**



A flourishing culture of entrepreneurship innovation and growth

Barwon is known for **innovation, entrepreneurship and lifestyle**, attracting **decentralised service sectors** and supports **enterprises** to **scale up and flourish**. This expansion of Barwon's reputation for business innovation is underpinned by **collaboration across sectors**, helping the region achieve it's **full economic potential**.

The level of **innovation and change** across our local industries is not keeping pace with the opportunities available in today's digital and global economy. To **safeguard the future competitiveness** of our local industries, more needs to happen to encourage collaboration, innovation and problem solving across traditional industry boundaries. We risk missing a opportunity to establish the region as a **start-up ecosystem**.

Our region is working to raise awareness of the **entrepreneurial opportunities and high yielding agriculture opportunities** in the Barwon region. We want to support and grow an ecosystem for **agricultural start-ups and scale-ups**. This involves looking at the **enablers** to support businesses to grow, like **policy and infrastructure. And getting more private sector investment**, particularly to diversify Barwon **tourism and accommodation products**.

- Support efforts to leverage Barwon's regional competitive advantages to grow industry and jobs, through supporting industry accelerators like *Project Runway*
- Advocate to address enabling infrastructure barriers to existing and future investment opportunities such as improved digital, energy and water infrastructure
- Support the development of a Barwon Region Skills profile focussing on innovation and productivity to better understand the needs of Barwon's industries





*What success looks like for Barwon*

*Some key challenges we are facing*

*How our partnership is responding*



*The actions and key projects we are focussing on*

**Equity & Wellbeing**



Supported, fair and nurturing Barwon communities

All people in the Barwon region have the **resources available to reach their full potential** regardless of their background, circumstance or ability, with supports available to **break cycles of disadvantage**. This will be evident in **educational engagement and achievement rates** and reductions in **crime and family violence rates**.

Parts of our region experiences some of the highest rates of **unemployment** across the State<sup>2</sup>, with high levels of **income inequality**<sup>3</sup>, **poor access to affordable housing, poor educational retention and attainment**<sup>4</sup>, **family violence**<sup>5</sup> and **disadvantage**<sup>6</sup> for young people. We lack **coordinated investment** and an **integrated approach** to tackling these issues.

Our region is working toward **targeted, evidence-based responses** to address the different needs in our region, looking at ways to become more **integrated** and establishing a **shared vision** across the service system. We are also focused on investment, and mapping how we can **utilise available resources to better support** disadvantaged and marginalised members of the Barwon community.

- Devise a local public and social housing model responding to the demands of the region
- Construct the Northern ARC Health and Wellbeing Hub in Corio
- Establish an Education First Youth Foyer in Geelong
- Advocate to extend the leaving age for Out-of-Home Care from 18 to 21 years
- Improve digital literacy and capability of the Barwon community to improve social inclusion and access to services

**Education**



Stronger education futures for young people

Young people across the region are **supported by a strong safety net**, from their first educational milestone to their last, with services and programs designed to **support their educational aspirations** and **increase engagement and achievement rates** particularly in our disadvantaged communities.

We are seeing **significant barriers in achieving educational results**, with children from disadvantaged backgrounds **twice as likely to miss out** on achieving their **first educational milestone**<sup>7</sup> and significant numbers of vulnerable young people in Barwon becoming **disengaged from school and not completing Year 12**<sup>8</sup>. This has large scale ramifications for these young people and their futures, continuing the **cycle of disadvantage** and jeopardising our **region's workforce and economic viability**.

Our region is exploring initiatives that will **raise educational aspirations, engagement** and achievement rates of school aged children and young people. We want to maximise the opportunity for young people to access **meaningful, sustainable future focussed work** and ensure successful post school transitions for all young people by **addressing factors which create barriers and entrench disadvantage**. Strengthening **connections between education and industry** will be central to the work of the region.

- Advocate to enhance digital connectivity and access to cloud based learning resources in our schools
- Support improvement in the learning and development of vulnerable children in the early years by establishing partnerships to address disadvantage
- Advocate for the expansion of the *Geelong Project* to more government secondary schools to address student wellbeing, homelessness and disengagement
- Support the development of School and Family Community Hubs in Colac and Whittington based on the Doveton model
- Advocate for 'education bridging initiatives' at key transition points, and improve data collection and monitoring for vulnerable children

**Tourism**



A sustainable tourism economy

**The Great Ocean Road** is the gateway to a **highly acclaimed, connected visitor experience**, with strong and **sustainable visitor levels** year round. There is a strong **diversity of tourism product and accommodation offerings**, dispersing visitor activities across the region and **increasing the length of visitor stays**.

**Concentrated visitation** to ecologically sensitive areas, particularly on Barwon's coast is **threatening** the future of our **visitor economy. Concentrated seasonal visits** impact the environment, create crowding and a **poor visitor experience**<sup>9</sup>. We lack a consolidated approach to **broadening the visitor experience** across the region, across all seasons.

Our region is working to **protect and enhance** the region's key **nature-based and Aboriginal cultural heritage** tourism assets, establishing coordinated management arrangements of the Great Ocean Road to manage visitor impacts. We're also committed to supporting a **high quality feeder road network** to enable dispersal of visitors and lower the concentration of vehicles on the Great Ocean Road.

- Actively contribute to the development and management reforms of the Great Ocean Road
- Support and facilitate transformative visitor economy projects like the Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre and the implementation of the *Shipwreck Coast Master Plan Stage 2*
- Advocate to improve digital coverage to support tourism, transport and emergency services

**References**

- 1 Victorian Auditor-General's *Office Protecting Victoria's Coastal Assets* (2018)
- 2 ABS Data (2016)
- 3 Northern ARC Business Case, City of Greater Geelong (2017)
- 4 ABS (2016)

- 5 Crime Statistics Agency Victoria (2017)
- 6 SEIFA Index (2011)
- 7 Educational Opportunity in Australia 2015, Mitchell Institute (national data)
- 8 ABS Census Data (2016)
- 9 Master Plan for the Great Ocean Road Visitor Economy (2015)