

# Latrobe Valley and Gippsland Transition Plan

## Discussion Paper

### Purpose and background

In March 2022, the Latrobe Valley Authority (LVA) was asked by the Victorian Government to lead the development of a transition plan for the Latrobe Valley.

Since then, the LVA has been listening to individuals, community groups, peak organisations, employers, industry groups, unions, Traditional Owners, professional bodies, education and training providers and local government to hear and understand the views of Gippslanders on what is important to them.

Many parts of Gippsland are experiencing significant economic and social transition. A lot of the changes are interconnected.

Key stakeholders have consistently voiced the need for a cohesive and united approach; one that recognises the distinct strengths and characteristics of communities across Gippsland. As a place-based organisation, the LVA have a deep appreciation of the need to encourage collaboration and partnerships across the region.

The Latrobe Valley and Gippsland Transition Plan is being developed in the knowledge that a core focus of the work will be supporting those communities most directly affected by transition. In order to be successful it will require the support and engagement of people right across the region.

Feedback from consultation and engagement, along with insights from the transition work that has occurred across the region over the past few years has informed this Discussion Paper.

It seeks feedback on key aspects of a Latrobe Valley and Gippsland Transition Plan, including:

- the vision for the region in 2035
- guiding principles that underpin the approach to transition
- goals that prioritise areas for action.

### Project partners

A Project Control Group has been established to provide strategic direction and authorisation for the transition plan.

A Whole of Victorian Government Reference Group will provide advice and input from departments and agencies with a specific interest in Gippsland's transition. It will also support alignment and identify opportunities for action in the region.

The Project Control Group is supported by an Implementation Working Group. The Implementation Working Group provides local expertise and advice on actions and assists with coordination and engagement with stakeholders to support development of the transition plan.

Membership of the Implementation Working Group consists of representatives from Traditional Owners, a range of sectors such as business and industry, community services and health, education and employment, as well as non-government organisations, unions and local governments.

The members of the Implementation Working Group are listed on the [LVA website](#).

## **Our approach**

### **Ministerial roundtable**

The engagement process commenced with a roundtable event hosted by the Minister for Regional development, The Hon Harriet Shing MP, at the Morwell Innovation Centre on 8 September 2022.

The Implementation Working Group was largely formed from roundtable attendees.

### **Research and evidence gathering**

The Plan draws on evidence from an evaluation of existing published literature, reviews and reports, including a large selection of plans and strategies developed in the region over recent years. Many of these reports set out opportunities to create jobs or priorities to support economic diversification, attract investment, address climate change and unlock investment.

### **Community engagement**

Supported by the Implementation Working Group, the LVA has met with Aboriginal groups, women's groups, school groups, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, environmental groups, peak industry bodies, education and training providers, peak healthcare and community bodies and power stations.

Engagement includes face-to-face meetings, interviews, surveys and focus groups. The LVA has also drawn insights through participation and engagement at community events and forums for tourism, energy, young people, and transport.

What we have heard through this engagement process has informed the vision, guiding principles and goals of the transition plan.

Engagement will continue during throughout the development of the transition plan and into the delivery phase.

## **Overview of the transition plan**

The transition plan will set out a high-level vision for 2035. A key focus will be to highlight future opportunities and the areas of focus required to achieve these. It will also contain guiding principles and goals.

Supporting the transition plan will be an action plan. The action plan will outline activities across government, industry and community sectors that will contribute to achieving the vision and goals of the transition plan.

The action plan will provide a means of tracking progress. The action plan initially covers the period from 2023 -2028. It will be reviewed and updated in line with significant events or new actions.

### **Vision for Latrobe Valley and Gippsland in 2035**

Our vision for Latrobe Valley and Gippsland in 2035 is hopeful and bright. It includes:

- education and training options that link to future employment
- appealing, meaningful local jobs and career and employment pathways
- a thriving economy
- a healthy, attractive and sustainable natural environment
- safe, welcoming and vibrant communities
- a lifestyle that attracts new residents to the region and encourages existing residents to stay

- clear roles and responsibilities across governments, industry, education and community
- acknowledgment of our proud history and bright future in vital industries.

**Discussion question**

*What do you like about the vision for Gippsland in 2035?*

*What would you change?*

*Is there anything missing?*

## Guiding Principles

To achieve the long-term vision and goals outlined in this Plan, there are several principles that have guided its development and will continue to guide the transition process. These principles can be seen as the values that will underpin our collective approach. They are consistent with the idea that a healthy economy, a clean environment and a fair society can and should co-exist. The process for achieving the vision should be inclusive and equitable, sustainably developed and improve the environment, health, wellbeing, and human rights of the community.

<p><b>Our people are at the heart of the transition process</b></p>	<p>Workers, families and communities are at the centre of the transition process. To ensure our communities benefit and there are positive long term outcomes for Gippsland, we should be able to see ourselves and future generations in the Plan.</p> <p>The transition process must involve listening to and respecting local knowledge and everyday expertise.</p>
<p><b>Equity and inclusion – a just transition that shares the benefits, leaves no-one behind and creates opportunities for participation and decent work</b></p>	<p>Transition should improve the region’s economy, environment and liveability without negatively impacting those most vulnerable to change.</p> <p>Policies must be inclusive of those in our community who have historically had limited access or support to equitably participate in education and training, employment and the economy.</p> <p>While ensuring that no one gets left behind, we need to encourage entrepreneurship and creativity. A successful transition will see people, business and communities thrive.</p> <p>Crucially, we can improve outcomes for those already experiencing barriers to employment, education or social participation.</p>
<p><b>A sustainably developed future that enhances the environment, health, wellbeing and human rights of the community</b></p>	<p>Ensuring a balance between environmental, social and economic priorities including genuine and ongoing consultation with the region’s Traditional Owners, landowners and communities affected by development and infrastructure.</p>
<p><b>Build on identified strengths and advantages</b></p>	<p>Understanding and leveraging the region’s competitive advantages (social, economic and environmental) through innovation and collaboration is critical to achieving Gippsland’s future prosperity.</p> <p>This requires a focus on areas of identified regional strength that will provide long-term quality jobs as local, national and global markets change and diversify.</p>
<p><b>An evidence-informed approach</b></p>	<p>Applying a best-practice approach to transition, the Plan complements existing plans and strategies developed by the region and by government to support economic and community development and adaptive capacity. The Plan will be subject to monitoring, evaluation and iterative refinement and will be updated as circumstances change.</p>
<p><b>A coordinated approach across government, industry, education and communities</b></p>	<p>To achieve the vision for our region set out in the Plan, genuine partnerships and shared leadership between governments, industry, private sector, unions, civil society groups and our communities are essential.</p>

**Discussion questions**

*What do you like about the guiding principles for transition?*

*What would you change?*

*Is there anything missing?*

## Goals

Our community identified the following goals for the region during the process of developing the Plan:

### Education and Training

#### *1. Access to relevant study and training opportunities*

- Affordable, accessible education to allow young people to study locally and enable existing workers to retrain and upskill close to home.
- Attraction of quality teachers and educators with specific skills and experience to deliver good quality, specialised training opportunities in growth sectors within the region.

#### *2. Young people aspire to study and work in the region*

- Raise awareness of the opportunities for young people to secure meaningful employment in Gippsland through strong partnerships between primary and secondary schools, local learning and employment networks, career practitioners, educators, industry and government.
- Positive employment pathways and attractive career and educational opportunities.
- Access to pathways that support Aboriginal school leavers to understand and support their future economic security.
- An attractive learning and social environment provided by local tertiary institutions that is easily accessible by public transport.

### Employment

#### *1. High quality, valued jobs and employment pathways in industries with a long-term future*

- A coordinated workforce development approach involving employers, unions, education/training sector and government.
- Balance the decline in transitioning industries (ensuring continued power supply certainty) with the rate of growth in new and emerging sectors, ensuring that workers are upskilled or reskilled at the appropriate time.
- Build digital capability in the existing and emerging workforce so they have the skills to participate in the transition to a digital economy.

#### *2. Grow, develop and retain a skilled workforce to meet the future needs of the region*

- Attract, train and retain a workforce that has the right skills for future focused job requirements through adopting a local-first employment approach incorporating training and education.

#### *3. Increased workforce participation through accessible employment pathways and inclusive employment practices*

- A coordinated approach involving community, industry and government to remove barriers to employment and to increase participation in the labour force.
- Increase understanding of and aspiration to a variety of job options among younger people.

#### 4. *Support for transitioning workers in traditional industries*

- Empower transitioning workers to move to a future they value through a range of support services including career and financial planning, training and reskilling, and health and wellbeing.
- Industry and Government work with transitioning workers, unions and communities to ensure transition support services are fit for purpose for workers and their families.
- A coordinated approach from government and industry to identify and support job creation opportunities in new and existing industries, while ensuring workers are supported to develop the skills needed to meet these opportunities.

### **The Economy**

#### 1. *A thriving economy focused on identified areas of strength*

- The potential for future growth in existing and emerging industries of specialisation is identified particularly in food and fibre, renewable energy, health and community services, tourism and advanced manufacturing.
- Gippsland's economy is diverse and broad based, however this needs to be enhanced in towns and communities where a single business is vital for employment and economic activity.
- Coordinated action across research and innovation; education, training and skills; policy and regulation; and both public and private investment can maximise opportunities and develop strengths and competitive advantages.

#### 2. *Local supply chains and local procurement*

- Support for local supply chains to maximise opportunities for existing and emerging businesses and alleviate pressure on businesses particularly affected by industry closures.
- Growth of Aboriginal business through government procurement and collaborative partnerships with the private sector.

#### 3. *Driving collaborative innovation*

- Established partnerships between research institutions, industry and government to foster industry innovation and create potential for generating new jobs and economic growth.
- Improved digital connectivity to enable businesses and industry in sectors of strength to digitise, making them more attractive for investment and professional talent.

### **Liveability**

#### 1. *Sufficient housing to improve social outcomes and accommodate a growing workforce*

- Increased housing availability, affordability and diversity to attract and retain workers and address workforce shortages across a range of sectors including tourism, education, construction and healthcare.
- Access to affordable, safe and stable housing to reduce homelessness, improve health and well-being and enable people to connect in their community.
- A coordinated approach from state and local governments to unlock further land for residential growth, attract commercial housing developers and address out of sequence and infrastructure costs.

- Repurposing of the athlete's accommodation to be built for the Commonwealth Games in 2026 for a positive legacy following the Games.

## *2. A healthy and attractive natural environment*

- Industries, businesses and communities operate in sustainable and less environmentally impactful ways to help protect our region's flora and fauna and improve the health and wellbeing of our community by restoring landscapes and reducing pollution of our water, air and soil.
- Established partnerships between Aboriginal communities, industry and government to support Aboriginal land management, Caring for Country and improved economic outcomes for Aboriginal people through cultural tourism and the native and bushfood sector.

## *3. An inclusive and safe built environment that is appreciated by and caters to the needs of the community*

- Attractive, easily accessible and safe public spaces for community gathering that strengthen community connection and build community pride.
- Rehabilitated mine sites providing safe and sustainable recreation, tourism, industry, parkland and housing and employment opportunities.
- Minimal impacts and maximum benefits for local communities relating to transmission line network development, including early and meaningful engagement with communities and Traditional Owners.
- Long term investments in the built and natural environment that improve climate change resilience and adaption, and provide sporting, cultural, recreation and tourism opportunities.

## *4. Empowered and thriving communities that are diverse and socially cohesive*

- Diverse community leadership leading to opportunities for all sections of communities to connect through accessible social and community activities.
- Welcoming communities for new migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and new families that celebrate diversity and provide adequate safe and culturally responsive social supports.
- Accessible social and community activities catering to aged, First Nations, people living with disabilities, gender diverse families, young and LGBTIQ+ people.

## *5. Accessible and inclusive services for health and wellbeing*

- Training and accreditation pathways for healthcare practitioners to meet Gippsland's growing workforce need.
- Person-centred approaches to build better health and wellbeing outcomes for all individuals to feel accepted, safe, affirmed and celebrated.

## *6. Integrated transport for access to jobs, education and services*

- Reliable, sustainable and affordable integrated, inter-modal transport networks that facilitate connection and improve health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Safe public transport services that cater to the diverse needs of communities, including building confidence and capability in accessing public transport.
- Improved rail services and passenger transport to attract workers, enable commuting for work and study, provide reliable access to services and boost tourism.

- Improved interconnection between Gippsland's cities and towns for supporting growth and investment opportunities.

*7. Reliable digital connectivity to enable businesses and the community to access the full benefits of digital innovation and inclusion*

- Access to fast and reliable internet services to support businesses, emergency services, education and liveability.
- High-capacity digital connectivity, inclusion and literacy leading to increased opportunities for flexible working and study, to attract and retain people in Gippsland.

**Coordination, collaboration and shared leadership**

*1. Clear roles and responsibilities across governments, industry, education and community*

- Collective action along with clarity and coordination regarding roles and responsibilities is required to achieve the long-term vision for Gippsland.
- Industry, the education sector, all levels of government and communities all have roles to play in the transition process.

Industry sectors:

- ✓ Promote strong climate targets, employment targets and a just transition process.
- ✓ Align their private investments to future growth.
- ✓ Invest and mobilise capital to support transition.
- ✓ Can work with education to:
  - understand areas of opportunity and growth in Gippsland and reposition the region's education institutions as centres for excellence.
  - provide students with training and work experience that allows them to understand the full range of opportunities within an industry.
- ✓ Can jointly advocate for the region to government for policies, regulation and investment that will foster a thriving economy focused on identified areas of strength.

Education:

- ✓ Can work with industry and government:
  - to support young people to participate in education.
  - identify innovative ways to educate and inspire young people about the career possibilities and pathways available to them in Gippsland.

Governments:

- ✓ Can work with communities to support them to achieve their own priorities and aspirations.
- ✓ Can provide support for coordination, implementation and facilitation processes.
- ✓ Can provide funding.
- ✓ Can affect policy, regulation and legislation.

Communities:

- ✓ Are at the heart of the transition process and must be active participants in social dialogue.
- ✓ Can be advocates and champions of their own communities through actively promoting the strengths of our region and an enduring belief in our capacity to transition.

**Discussion questions**

*What do you like about the goals?*

*What would you change?*

*Is there anything missing?*