



# *Economic Development Strategy 2014-2019*





The Shire of Campaspe Economic Development Strategy 2014–2019 was funded through a partnership with the Victorian State Government and the Shire of Campaspe. AEC Group Pty Ltd was engaged to develop the Economic Development Strategy.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Extensive research and consultation has been undertaken in developing the direction and content of the *Shire of Campaspe Economic Development Strategy (the Strategy)*. The Strategy will guide and direct Council's role in implementing immediate economic development priorities and day-to-day tasks to assist in promoting the Shire, attracting investment and supporting business and industry growth.

The Shire of Campaspe is a vibrant rural community in northern Victoria comprising many townships such as Echuca, Kyabram, Rochester, Lockington, Gunbower, Rushworth, Stanhope, Girgarre, Toolleen and Tongala. The Shire is located at the heart of one of the richest and most diverse agriculture and food processing regions in Victoria. The Shire is best known for its history, natural assets and relationship with Australia's iconic Murray River, which winds along the northern boundary of the Shire. The unique mix of great weather, culture, food and wine, natural assets and events attracts increasing numbers of visitors and residents each year. The Shire of Campaspe is recognised as a thriving community, with many opportunities for growth and prosperity.

## Fast Facts

### The Shire of Campaspe:

- ▶ Has a growing labour force and low unemployment rate, reflecting a healthy economy.
- ▶ Has a growing economy (represented by growth in estimated Gross Regional Product) driven by growth industry value add for the sectors of agriculture, forestry, fishing, manufacturing; health and social assistance sectors.
- ▶ Has a growing number of tourism visitors due mainly to the growth of the domestic visitor market to the region.
- ▶ A shifting population for the Shire (some areas of the Shire have experienced population growth whilst others have declined over a five year period).

Table ES.1: Campaspe Key Socio-Economic Indicators

| Key Statistics   | Period      | Indicator | 5-Year Change |
|--|-------------|-----------|---------------|
| Population (no.)   | 2013        | 36,919    | - 0.3%        |
| Labour force (no.)   | Dec-13      | 20,376    | 14.6%         |
| Unemployment rate (%)  | Dec-13      | 4.6%      | 0.4%          |
| Gross Regional Product (\$'M)  | 2012-13     | \$1,930.3 | 5.6%          |
| <b>Top 3 Sectors by Industry Value Add</b>   |             |           |               |
| Agriculture, forestry & fishing (\$'M)   | 2012-13     | \$327.5   | 4.2%          |
| Manufacturing (\$'M)   | 2012-13     | \$202.5   | 2.9%          |
| Health care & social assistance (\$'M)   | 2012-13     | \$170.0   | 30.3%         |
| <b>Top 3 Sectors by Employment (PoUR)</b>  |             |           |               |
| Manufacturing  | 2011        | 2,315     | - 4.7%        |
| Agriculture, forestry and fishing  | 2011        | 2,061     | - 20.3%       |
| Health care and social assistance  | 2011        | 1,933     | 21.0%         |
| <b>Building and Property</b>   |             |           |               |
| Residential Building Approvals (\$M/approval)  | YE Mar 2014 | \$33.787  | - 7.0%        |
| Non-Residential Building Approvals (\$M/approval)  | YE Mar 2014 | \$23.482  | - 5.2%        |
| <b>Tourism</b>   |             |           |               |
| Domestic day visitors ('000)   | YE Dec 2013 | 587       | 5.2%          |
| Domestic overnight visitors ('000)   | YE Dec 2013 | 456       | - 0.9%        |
| International visitors ('000)  | YE Dec 2013 | 10        | 2.3%          |
| Note: PoUR stands for Place of Usual Residence and denotes only residents who usually reside in Campaspe when counted in the 2011 census. Source: AEC (2014), ABS (2014a), ABS (2014b), TRA (2014) |             |           |               |



## Strategic Assets and Competitiveness

**A range of strategic assets supports the Shire of Campaspe economy:**

- Agricultural land
- Manufacturing and processing
- Modernised irrigation system
- Natural river beauty
- Climate
- Port of Echuca/Echuca Wharf
- Tourism and event program
- Significant indigenous history and culture
- Quality of life

**The Shire of Campaspe possesses a number of competitive strengths including:**

- A strong and diverse agriculture sector
- A significant and complementary food manufacturing sector that has attracted global food companies
- Established supply chain and access to export markets for the agricultural and food manufacturing sector
- Available land to support industry growth and economic development
- A strong representation of professional businesses and services
- Access to a wide variety of resources, road, rail and utilities infrastructure
- An engaged and proactive business community
- Diversity of accommodation, events, tourism assets and experiences

The Shire of Campaspe also has a sought-after lifestyle, good amenity and strong representation of services that make it an attractive place to live, work, visit and play.

## Challenges for Growth

The Shire has a critical mass and population that has allowed it to attract a good representation of services and professionals to the Shire. However, growth of the region is firmly hinged on continuing to attract population, skilled workers and further investment. Businesses in the Shire face many challenges including cost competitiveness, ability to attract and retain skilled workers, and ability to connect with metropolitan and export markets.

Rising costs of utilities (electricity and gas), as well as intense competition from overseas will continue to affect Australian business across the board. The Australian food manufacturing sector (and businesses in the Shire of Campaspe) will also continue to experience significant pressures as bottom lines are affected by competition from overseas markets and rising input costs.

Many of the challenges for business are beyond the control of Council, business and industry. In delivering the Economic Development Strategy it will be important that Council focuses on activities and initiatives that it can influence.

Council recognises that achieving greater levels of economic growth, prosperity and community wellbeing will require a targeted and coordinated approach to achieving economic development outcomes.

## > Vision

The Shire of Campaspe vision is:

‘A vibrant place to live, grow and visit, with a thriving, diverse and healthy lifestyle.’

**Campaspe Council Plan 2013-2017**

**Council Plan 2013-2017** vision is founded on three pillars:

- > **Thriving:** We have great opportunity, with prosperous businesses and happy communities.
- > **Diverse:** Our varied communities and environments make Campaspe a place for all kinds of people.
- > **Healthy:** We are active, connected and well and care for our natural urban and rural surroundings.

**This vision will be achieved by:**

- Growing our economy
- Being proactive, responsive and open for business
- Being a great place to live, work and invest.

## > Purpose

The Economic Development Strategy 2014 – 2019 aims to sustain the Shire's economic future by:

- > Improving business and investor confidence
- > Diversifying the economy
- > Improving productivity
- > Creating jobs and increasing investment
- > Increasing capacity to attract and develop a skilled workforce
- > Strengthening trade linkages with regional, metro and export markets
- > Improving connectivity
- > Improving awareness and promotion of the Shire.



## Economic Development Framework

To achieve the vision the Shire of Campaspe Council will play a lead role in five key strategic initiatives for economic development. These are:

**Figure ES.1: Strategic initiatives for economic development**



## Achieving on-ground action

Each of the **strategic initiatives** has an associated implementation plan (provided as a separate supporting document for internal use by Council). Council will have many roles to play in delivering these overarching strategic initiatives: facilitator, advocate, partner, leader.

Industry also has a critical and important role to play in economic development. The mechanism by which industry will play this role has been built into the Campaspe Economic Development Strategy through the nominated industry initiatives.

Four industry initiatives have been identified with seven associated priority projects. These industry initiatives and associated priority projects have been selected based on competitive assessment of the area and in consultation with industry.

The role of the Shire of Campaspe will be to interact with industry in the delivery of the identified industry priority projects for each industry initiative. Each priority project will interlink with and leverage one or more of the five strategic initiatives.

## Council's input is critical but it is not the only stakeholder...

**The Shire of Campaspe has a very clear role in economic development including:**

- To assist existing business and new enterprise through the provision of information, assistance, referral and support.
- To act as an advocate for new business development.
- To improve communication links, knowledge sharing and create partnerships by facilitating forums, business networks and discussion.
- To ensure appropriate infrastructure is available to facilitate economic development for business and industry.
- To work in partnership with government and non-government organisations to progress economic development opportunities or respond to key threats to the local economy.
- To provide a high standard of customer service and strong customer service image to assist business expansion and attract business investment.

Note: Council spends approximately \$15 million annually with local businesses. Council's Procurement Policy states the following principle in support of local business:

Local Sourcing Opportunities – means recognising that Council is a major purchaser of goods and services within the municipality and demonstrating awareness that its procurement policies and practices have the potential to influence the local economy.

Council will give preference to local suppliers where all things are considered equal, give opportunities to local suppliers where they have the capacity and capability to do so, and allocate a local content weighting of 10% in all tender evaluation criteria.



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Overview

The Shire of Campaspe is a vibrant regional community in northern Victoria. The Shire is located 180 kilometres north of Melbourne on the Victoria-New South Wales border. The Shire of Campaspe is bounded by the Murray River – one of Australia's most iconic river assets and is located at the heart of one of the richest and most diverse agriculture and food processing regions in Victoria.

The unique mix of climate, culture, food and wine, natural assets and range of events held in the region attract increasing numbers of visitors each year. The Shire of Campaspe is recognised as a thriving community, with many opportunities for growth and prosperity.

## 1.2 Purpose of Strategy

To ensure the Shire of Campaspe reaches its potential, there is a need for Council to have a clear Economic Development Strategy and Framework to assist in decision making and encourage economic growth. The previous review of economic development for the Shire was undertaken in 2004, highlighting a need to reposition economic directions for the future.

**The Economic Development Strategy 2014 – 2019 aims to sustain the Shire's economic future by:**

- Improving business and investor confidence
- Diversifying the economy
- Improving productivity

- Creating jobs and increasing investment
- Increasing capacity to attract and develop a skilled workforce
- Strengthening trade linkages with regional, metro and export markets
- Improving connectivity
- Improving awareness and promotion of the Shire.

## 1.3 Research and Consultation

Extensive research and consultation has been undertaken in developing the direction and content of the Economic Development Strategy. This has included economic research and analysis, review of literature and policy documents and extensive business and industry stakeholder engagement through a variety of methods: workshops, focus groups, telephone and one-on-one interviews (refer to Figure 1.1). Consultation feedback along with desktop analysis and review informed the identification of key issues and opportunities which informed the development of strategy actions.

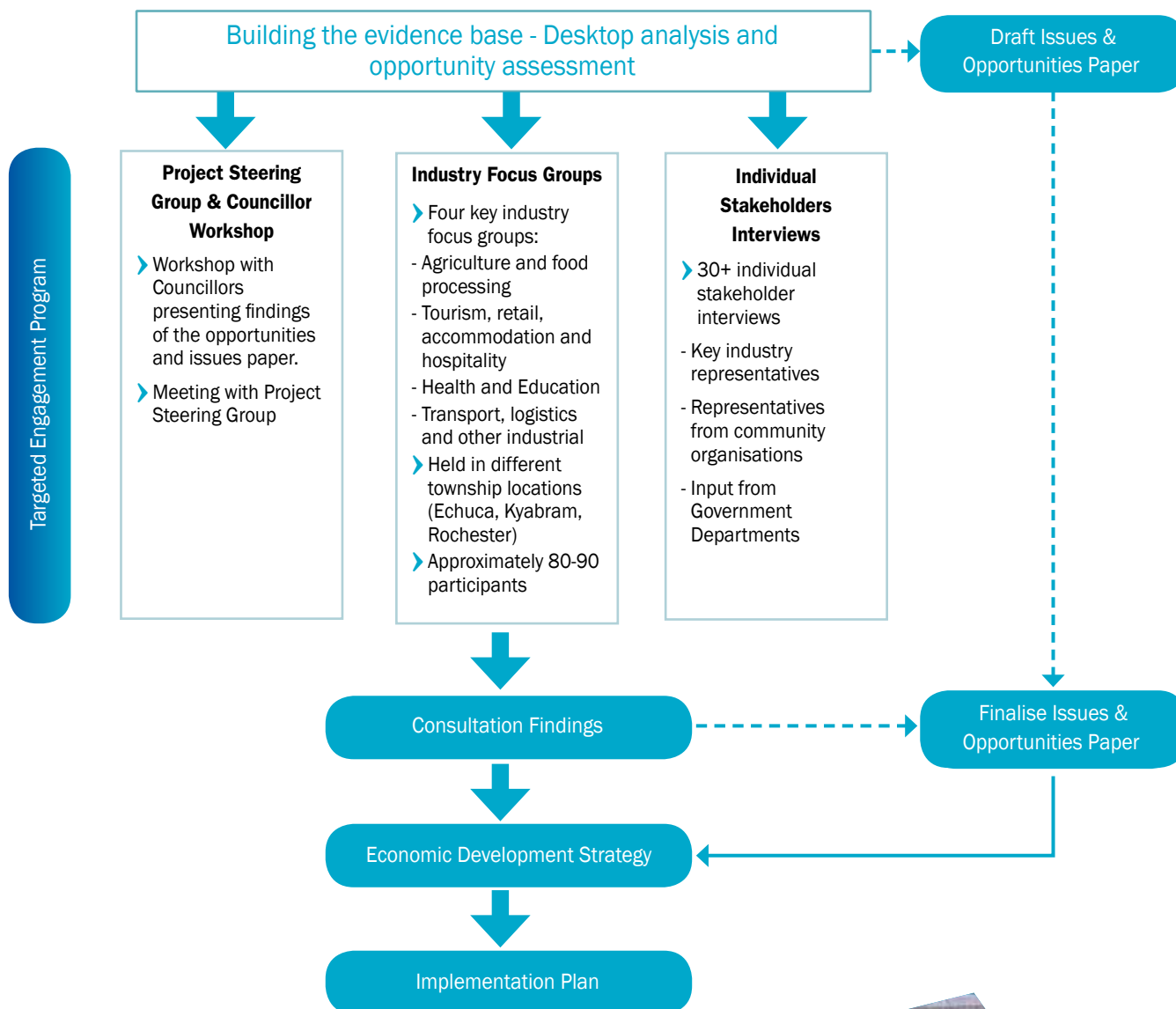
**Technical documents developed to support the strategy include:**

- *Economic Development Strategy - Issues and Opportunities Paper*
- *Economic Development Strategy - Consultation Summary*

The data and information contained within the Strategy has been prepared based on the most accurate and reliable information available.



Figure 1.1: Consultation and Engagement Process



## 2. REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The Shire of Campaspe was established in 1994 through the amalgamation of the City of Echuca, Shire of Deakin, Shire of Rochester, Shire of Waranga, Town of Kyabram and part of the Shire of Rodney. Today the Shire is comprised of five service centres: Echuca, Kyabram, Rochester, Rushworth and Tongala and is populated by a number of townships including Gunbower, Lockington, Strathallan, Stanhope and Girgarre. The Shire had an estimated population of almost 37,000 residents in 2013.

The local government area covers an area of 4,526 square kilometres and is accessible by road and rail networks. The regional economy is founded on a strong agriculture sector supported by the manufacturing sector which is the highest employer in the Shire. Recent economic growth has been driven primarily by growth in the health care and social assistance, professional and scientific services and construction sectors. Tourism is an important sector for the Shire and leverages the amenity of the region.

**Figure 2.1: Shire of Campaspe**



## Cross border relationships and the Echuca Moama community

The township of Echuca is the main employment and population centre of the Shire of Campaspe and is situated on the Victorian side of the Murray River. Directly across the river is the New South Wales township of Moama (located in the Murray Shire of NSW). Moama is a bustling community that has a symbiotic relationship with Echuca, where both townships have a high level of mutual benefit and interdependency between economic, tourism and community activities. It is not uncommon for residents to live in Moama and work/shop in Echuca (or vice versa). Echuca Moama is considered by locals to be 'one community'.

Like other 'twin-towns' located along the Victoria and New South Wales border, the resident population, business community and respective Local Government Authorities face many challenges. Particularly around the disparity in jurisdictional policy and regulation between townships and the misalignment of funding bodies and general restrictions for accessing/using funds for delivery of services and development of infrastructure in border communities.

For the delivery of a successful economic development strategy it will be important the Shire of Campaspe continues to work with the Murray Shire (NSW) to overcome these challenges for the greater benefit and prosperity of the Echuca Moama community.

## 2.1 Strategic Assets

The region's strategic assets demonstrate the unique capacity of the local economy and provide a platform for growth and attraction of investment. Key strategic assets for the Shire of Campaspe include:

- **Agricultural Land:** The Shire of Campaspe is located at the heart of Victoria's most productive agricultural region and boasts an abundance of fertile agricultural lands suitable for a range of production activities.
- **Manufacturing and Processing:** The region leverages its availability of industrial land, access to water, transport connections and proximity to primary product to attract and retain key food processing business including major dairy (Fonterra, Murray Goulburn), and vegetable processing firms (SPC Ardmona, Kagome, Heinz, Simplot). Manufacturing is the largest employer in the region.

- **Modernised Irrigation System:** Major investments in irrigation modernisation across the region are anticipated to boost productivity of the agriculture sector over the next decade. Productivity gains will be achieved through improved levels of service, greater flexibility for irrigators and increased efficiency.
- **Natural river beauty:** The river system is vibrant and ecologically diverse creating a beautiful natural setting for the Shire and its communities. The Murray River, Campaspe River and the adjoining Goulburn River are water assets that contribute significantly to the sustainability of the region.
- **Climate:** The area has a warmer and drier climate compared to elsewhere in Victoria. Milder climate conditions have contributed to the agricultural productivity of the region. The warmer climate is a drawcard for visitors and residents.
- **Port of Echuca/Echuca Wharf:** The historical Port of Echuca and Echuca Wharf area is a key attraction and is the location of the Port of Echuca Discovery Centre. The Port is the location of boutique retail, cafes and restaurants and is a key historical asset that showcases the natural beauty of the iconic Murray River.
- **Tourism and Event Program:** The area hosts over 140 events of all shapes and sizes. The diversity of the annual events program (including sporting, music, heritage and cultural events) has created a traditional yet contemporary feel to the community that makes it unique. The region has become a popular tourism destination and attracts increasing visitor numbers each year.
- **Quality of life:** The area has a high quality of life and relaxed lifestyle, which is an attractor for new residents, employees and tourists alike.





## 2.2 Key Statistics

The following table highlights key statistics for the Shire of Campaspe:

**Table 2.1: Campaspe Key Socio-Economic Indicators**

| Key Statistics   | Period      | Indicator | 5-Year Change |
|--|-------------|-----------|---------------|
| Population (no.)   | 2013        | 36,919    | - 0.3%        |
| Labour Force (no.)   | Dec-13      | 20,376    | 14.6%         |
| Unemployment Rate (%)  | Dec-13      | 4.6%      | 0.4%          |
| Gross Regional Product (\$'M)  | 2012-13     | \$1,930.3 | 5.6%          |
| <b>Top 3 Sectors by Industry Value Add</b>   |             |           |               |
| Agriculture, forestry & fishing (\$'M)   | 2012-13     | \$327.5   | 4.2%          |
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| <b>Tourism</b>   |             |           |               |
| Domestic Day Visitors ('000)   | YE Dec 2013 | 587       | 5.2%          |
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| International Visitors ('000)  | YE Dec 2013 | 10        | 2.3%          |
| Note: PoUR stands for Place of Usual Residence and denotes only residents who usually reside in Campaspe when counted in the 2011 census. Source: AEC (2014), ABS (2014a), ABS (2014b), TRA (2014) |             |           |               |

**Key socio-economic and demographic characteristics for the Shire of Campaspe include:**

- ▶ The Shire's **population declined slightly** compared to five years ago (- 0.3%) to a resident population of 36,919 persons in 2013.

- ▶ The Shire's **labour force has expanded** by 14.6% in five years, to reach in excess of 20,000 persons in the December quarter of 2013. This is in comparison to a 10.9% and 9.5% expansion in the respective labour forces of the wider Loddon-Mallee region and state, over the same time period. Strong labour force growth in the Shire has been matched by equally strong employment growth (14.1%) over the same time period, outpacing growth reported in the wider Loddon-Mallee region, state and nation.
- ▶ In line with strong labour force and employment growth, the Shire enjoys a relatively **low unemployment rate** of 4.6%, compared to 5.9% in the wider Loddon-Mallee region and 5.8% at the state level.
- ▶ Following a gradual **recovery in economic growth** since 2008-2009, the Shire recorded an estimated Gross Regional Product (GRP) of \$1.9 billion in 2012-2013. This is a 5.6% expansion on 2007-2008 levels and has been primarily driven by the health care and social assistance, professional and scientific services and construction sectors.
- ▶ In 2012-13, the **agriculture, forestry and fishing sector remained the leading sector** in the region, representing almost **20% of local Gross Value-Add** (or \$327.5 million) and has expanded by 4.2% in its contribution to total local Gross Value-Add since 2007-08. Manufacturing has been a traditionally strong sector in the Shire and remains as such in 2012-13 representing 12.0% of total Gross Value-Add (or \$202.5 million). The manufacturing sector has expanded by 2.9% in its contribution to total local Gross Value-Add since 2007-08.
- ▶ While the agriculture, forestry & fishing and manufacturing sectors still account for the highest employment of local residents (employing 28.1% of the local residents in 2011), their contribution to local employment has declined as a proportion of total employment since 2006 as other sectors expanded faster. This is due to **diversification of the economy**, which has seen **growth of the health care and social assistance sector** (expanded by 21.0% in its relative contribution to local employment since 2006).
- ▶ Domestic day and international **visitation to the Shire has steadily increased** over the five years to December 2013. In the year end December 2013 the Shire attracted over one million visitors, with the highest proportion of these being domestic day visitors. The domestic day market has driven visitation growth to the Shire over the last five years. Domestic overnight visitors are also an important visitor group to the Shire's tourism sector.

Tourism is not recognised as a separate industry sector for statistical purposes by Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Rather, estimates of its value and contribution are an amalgam of a range of other sectors such as retail, accommodation, cafés & restaurants, and cultural & recreational services. The Tourism industry is estimated to represent 3.8% of value-add to the economy of Campaspe and employs 5.9% of the workforce (REMPPLAN, 2014).

## 2.3 Influencing Factors

A broad spectrum of factors influence the Shire of Campaspe's economy and its potential for future economic growth. While some of these factors are internal over which the local government area has control, many are not. Each of these factors has been considered in identifying challenges for business and industry and developing practical strategies to promote economic growth.

**Table 2.2: Macro-economic Trends and Influencing Factors for Consideration**

| Key Trend   | Implications for Campaspe Shire  |
|---|--|
| <b>The world is changing:</b> Global economic growth is now being increasingly attributed to the rise of Asian economies (particularly China, India and many South-East Asian states). Substantial growth in household incomes and rural-urban shift patterns is creating strong demand for goods and services (particularly agricultural outputs).   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strong longer term demand for Campaspe's key agricultural crops</li> <li>➤ Potential for new niche crop and value-added product markets</li> <li>➤ Potential new sources of investment capital</li> <li>➤ Potential for increased tourism</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Exchange rate:</b> Variable currency puts pressure on a variety of sectors and affects (depending on the industry) the global competitiveness of goods and services. This is true particularly where the Australian dollar is high in comparison to our overseas competitors, which are lower cost based on the value of the Australian dollar (affecting tourism and trade exposed price takers such as agriculture).   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Changing international competitiveness of the Shire's agricultural and manufacturing exports</li> <li>➤ Changing demand for tourist visitation from both domestic and international sources</li> <li>➤ Where the dollar reflects longer term trend levels, this would provide a significant boost to the Shire's trade exposed sectors</li> </ul> |
| <b>Climate change:</b> The world's climate is becoming increasingly variable, with extreme weather events more common and a level of uncertainty around longer term temperature and weather trends.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increased risk for agricultural production and associated value-adding processes of local produce</li> <li>➤ Change in longer term rainfall and temperature conditions</li> <li>➤ Increased risk of extreme weather events</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Ageing population:</b> Australia's population is ageing, primarily as a result of increased life expectancy. People are also working longer. The population aged 75 or more years is expected to rise by 4 million from 2012 to 2060, increasing from about 6.4% to 14.4% of the population (Productivity Commission 2013).<br><br>The ageing population will mean significant additional spending on health and aged care, while creating significant market niches servicing an older demographic. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Additional need and market for aged and health care and re-skilling older workers</li> <li>➤ Older persons to form a much larger proportion of the demographic and labour force</li> <li>➤ Increasing propensity for consumption of health care and associated allied services.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Digital economy:</b> The internet is transforming many aspects of business operations and consumer behaviour. This shift driven by increased mobility, competition and new business models will continue to be a major factor influencing business level success and regional prosperity.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increased opportunity for local businesses to expand through online business models</li> <li>➤ Potential for greater access to services (health care, professional, financial) through online delivery</li> <li>➤ Increased competition from businesses servicing the region remotely</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Food security:</b> With the world's population forecast to reach 8 billion by 2030, diversions of food to non-food uses such as biofuels, food security is becoming an increasing concern and a key driver of agricultural production and investment.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strong longer term demand for new and existing agricultural crops</li> <li>➤ Potential new sources of investment capital in agriculture</li> </ul>  |
| <b>More productive &amp; intensive farming:</b> The last twenty years has seen a shift towards more intensive farming. This trend is reflected in both a structural shift to enterprises using more intensive production systems (such as poultry, grapes, cotton and nurseries) and the adoption of more intensive production techniques (increased use of feed, chemicals and irrigation) (PC, 2005).   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Availability of water and the modernised irrigation network makes Campaspe competitive in the market place</li> <li>➤ Potential for highly productive agricultural practices (eg. greenhouse, hydroponics and other protected growing activities)</li> </ul>  |

## 3. THE REGION'S COMPETITIVE EDGE

The following section considers the competitive position of the Shire of Campaspe and the broader region and will form the basis of the Campaspe Economic Development Strategy and key initiatives to promote growth and prosperity for the region.

### 3.1 Competitive Strengths

The Shire of Campaspe has a number of strengths and natural assets that provide a competitive advantage and series of opportunities for economic development. Key strengths identified through desktop analysis and a detailed consultation and engagement process include:

#### 3.1.1 Economic

- **Strong and diverse agriculture sector** including dryland grazing and cropping through to significant irrigation farming leveraging the Goulburn Murray Irrigation Network.
- **Significant and complementary food manufacturing activities**, which have attracted a number of large and medium sized national and international food manufacturers such as Murray Goulburn, Nestle, SPC Ardmona, Kagome, Fonterra and Heinz.
- Existing **gourmet food and wine** presence with growth potential.
- **Established supply chain and access to export markets** for the agricultural and food manufacturing sector. The diversity of the supply chain base includes a large transport and logistics industry in addition to a large base of supportive professional, scientific and technical skills (eg. engineering, agri-science and business services, lawyers, accountants, etc.).
- A **diversity of accommodation, events, tourism assets and experiences**, making the region an attractive place to visit.
- An **engaged and proactive business community** that was described by stakeholders as having longer term vision and being open to innovation in order to respond to changing market conditions and consumer needs.
- **Available land** for a wide range of employment and investment activities (both productive agriculture lands and land for commercial and industrial activities).
- **Access to a wide variety of resources and utilities** that are attractive to industry eg. water resources, natural gas, energy. Campaspe is one of the few areas in the Loddon Mallee Region that has access to **natural gas** for industrial use (the other being Mildura). This is a competitive advantage for the region and likely to be an attractive locational factor for business considering investment in the area. Having available **water for irrigation** was also identified as a key strength for agricultural industries.

- A strong **representation of professional businesses and services**.

#### 3.1.2 Social/Community:

- **Strong presence of health, aged care and disability services** available across the Shire.
- Presence of a **range of services and high levels of amenity** that make the region a unique place to live. Many stakeholders also commented the range of services and amenity makes it a good place to live for a variety of age demographics (eg. family friendly through to the older generation).
- The Shire has a **rich early settler and agricultural history**, as well as **significant indigenous cultural heritage**.
- A **welcoming community** that interacts with and encourages participation of visitors and residents in social, cultural and economic activities of the region.

#### 3.1.3 Environment

- A unique **climate** (warmer and drier than other areas of Victoria and a milder winter) that provides **optimum growing conditions and encourages/supports tourism visitation**.
- Availability of **water** supply (river systems) and irrigation networks.
- The unique and diverse **environment and sustainability** of the region.
- **Internationally recognised** Gunbower wetlands (Ramsar listed)

These competitive advantages make the Shire of Campaspe an attractive location to live, visit and invest, and form a solid base to leverage economic development over the coming years.

## 3.2 Challenges and Limitations

Whilst the Shire of Campaspe has many strengths and competitive advantages there is also a range of challenges and limitations which need to be considered for a fully comprehensive economic development program. These are summarised in the table below.

| Challenge  | Description  |
|--|--|
| <b>Economic:</b>                                 |  |
| Access to and affordability of water resources   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Access to and affordability of water supply for irrigation is critical for agriculture producers.</li> <li>➤ The changing structure in which water for irrigation is traded and the rising cost of water has been an area of major concern for farmers.</li> <li>➤ There is a need for more education around the irrigation and water trading scheme within the rural community.</li> </ul>   |
| Increasing energy, water and other utility Costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Rising costs of energy, water and other utilities is impacting businesses across Australia.</li> </ul>  |
| Availability and high cost of skilled labour     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Accessing skilled labour at an affordable cost is a key issue for regional areas.</li> <li>➤ Industries like agriculture compete directly for skilled labour with sectors like mining, which have a higher ability to pay.</li> <li>➤ All industries engaged in stakeholder consultation expressed issues around obtaining skilled labour (and the ability to keep them over the longer term).</li> <li>➤ The food manufacturing sector also highlighted that the cost of skilled labour is also an issue for sustainability and profitability of manufacturing businesses in the region.</li> </ul>  |
| Access to training and career pathways           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Vocational Education and Training and Tertiary level training are currently not able to be easily accessed within the Shire. Discussions with some education providers and employers indicated that whilst there are some good initiatives being delivered (in particular relating to the health sector and schools) an array of tertiary training opportunities is not available (particularly for key sectors such as engineering, manufacturing and business types of sectors). Examples of existing training programs being offered include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health organisations, such as Echuca Regional Health, have existing training programs for staff in place.</li> <li>- School education partnerships eg. Kyabram College P-12 fellowship with Melbourne University as a location for pre-service teachers, partnership with Quantum and University of Melbourne for delivery of the engineering cadet program (for school students), St Joseph's College also has existing partnerships with Echuca Regional Health and Melbourne University.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Increasing access to career pathways and training, particularly in industries where skills are in demand (industry-skill matching) is widely viewed as critical for industry growth and development and also a potential strategy for retaining youth within the region.</li> <li>➤ Business courses/training for upskilling of existing business owners/managers in the Shire is an area of demand (particularly for small business). Improved access to courses/business mentoring advice would contribute to improved business management skills and increased efficiency, profitability and overall competitiveness of business in the Shire.</li> </ul> |
| Access to finance                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Access to finance is a key barrier for business and a constraining factor for growth, although it will likely be available for strong investment opportunities.</li> <li>➤ Access to federal and state funding is also a key area of issue for government services sectors such as the health care and social assistance sector and education and training.</li> </ul>  |
| Research and development (R&D)                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ R&amp;D has been identified as critical for improving competitiveness of sectors like agriculture and food processing.</li> <li>➤ Budgetary constraints in all levels of government are currently constraining investment in R&amp;D across many sectors.</li> </ul> <p>There is a need for more targeted R&amp;D and stronger linkages with regional business and industry to ensure that Campaspe businesses benefit from R&amp;D investment.</p>   |





| Challenge  | Description  |
|--|--|
| Cross border impacts   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The Echuca Moama community sits across the VIC-NSW border. This creates a number of issues across many sectors (particularly transport) due to a misalignment of State laws and regulations.</li> <li>▶ Echuca Moama is a service hub that services the population of both sides of the border. This means that as a service centre Echuca Moama is impacted by the misalignment of funding bodies (at the State level) which restricts the capacity of Echuca (or Moama) to obtain and spend funding within Echuca Moama and broader community.</li> <li>▶ There is a need to gain recognition as a combined Echuca Moama base from both a community, visitation and broader legislative perspective.</li> </ul> |
| Dependency of smaller towns on large employers and associated risk and uncertainty | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The smaller townships, such as Rochester, have a substantial dependency on a small number of employers that provide a large number of jobs. This dependency is of concern for township stakeholders – should one large employer chose to relocate, this would result in significant economic and community impacts. Smaller communities are looking for longer term commitment from employers and a clear plan for the future to reduce uncertainty.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Social/Community:</b>   |  |
| Low & variable population growth & difficulties retaining youth                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Population has remained relatively steady over the past five years (with some areas declining). This is likely due to the Shire having difficulties in retaining its young adults, which is common to all rural/regional areas.</li> <li>▶ Improving retention of youth and increasing population growth will be important for the economic growth and prosperity of the region.</li> </ul>   |
| Access to equitable services   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Due to the rural nature of the Campaspe community offering equitable access to health, education, cultural, recreational and other community services is a challenge (particularly in the smaller townships).</li> </ul>  |
| Availability of housing  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Rental supply in Echuca Moama is limited.</li> <li>▶ Some of the other townships also commented that whilst affordability is not an issue, the availability of existing built housing (particularly for rent) can be an issue particularly in attracting new staff to the area.</li> </ul>  |
| Prevalence of health and wellbeing Issues  | <p>Key issues raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Levels of obesity, diabetes and other 'lifestyle' related illness</li> <li>▶ Drug use issues (particularly in youth)</li> <li>▶ Mental health issues</li> <li>▶ Indigenous health issues</li> <li>▶ There are also other social issues in the community such as low levels of educational attainment and youth issues (eg. drug and alcohol).</li> </ul>   |
| Community infrastructure   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ A need for arts and culture activities (particularly to increase youth engagement)</li> <li>▶ A need for improved recreational infrastructure, public access and linkages (footpaths, walking tracks) along the river.</li> <li>▶ Continue to support provision of sporting facilities<sup>1</sup> (to assist in increasing youth engagement).</li> </ul>   |
| An ageing population   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ A general concern that the population is ageing and whilst it is an opportunity for pockets of the Shire to continue to grow and develop as a retirement hub, some stakeholders raised the concern that growth of other population cohorts may be overlooked and risk Echuca Moama becoming an 'aged population centre'. This poses a risk to the vitality of the social fabric of the Shire.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Environmental:</b>  |  |
| Environmental issues   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Management of, and impacts to, the river flow and eco-system of the Murray Darling.</li> </ul>  |
| Climate change and variability   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Climate variability and associated natural hazards (eg. drought, flood and bushfires) present a risk for the community.</li> <li>▶ Implications of climate change upon the community and industry.</li> </ul>   |

<sup>1</sup> The community generally recognises provision of sporting facilities as being a key strength for the region and would like to see continued support for sporting infrastructure provision (viewed as being important for youth engagement).

| Challenge   | Description   |
|---|---|
| <b>General:</b>                                     |   |
| Improved transport infrastructure and services      | <p>Public transport services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Access to public transport and connectivity in and between towns of the Shire and with major connections outside the Shire (eg. Bendigo and Melbourne) were identified to be poor (access and linkages, frequency of service and inadequate times of service to meet community and worker needs). Having a good public transport system is important for socio-economic prosperity and growth as well as increasing overall connectivity within the community.</li> </ul> <p>Transport Infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Improved transport infrastructure and services to meet future needs eg. Population growth and demographic change; industry desire for bigger, heavier and more efficient freight vehicles.</li> <li>➤ A need for a new Echuca Moama Bridge.</li> <li>➤ Better longer term plan for linkages with state transport links.</li> </ul>   |
| Telecommunications                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The region has a need for high speed broadband (NBN) and improved telecommunications (mobile coverage).</li> <li>➤ Roll-out of the NBN in regional communities is critical for businesses to remain competitive including the agriculture sector which is experiencing increasing computerisation and automation.</li> </ul>   |
| Limited economic development and marketing capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ As a regional Council area there exists a number of constraints around resourcing (funding and human resources) to deliver marketing campaigns to attract new visitors, businesses and residents to the region.</li> <li>➤ Concerns were also raised about whether there would be sufficient budget and resources allocated to deliver the day to day activities required for the economic development program.</li> </ul>   |
| Planning and development issues                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Some stakeholders raised concerns about putting in place a plan for growth to ensure that growth is effectively managed to ensure that the community retains its natural charm and integrity.</li> <li>➤ Urban encroachment has resulted in some existing and likely future land use conflicts particularly between residential and agricultural/industry lands.</li> <li>➤ Enhanced proactivity is required in some areas of Council, particularly the engineering area, and concerns about various engineering issues (eg. suitability and planning for stormwater infrastructure in commercial areas).</li> <li>➤ 'Red Tape' is often a constraint or 'stopping block' for investment and business expansion (eg. EPA, Council, other government authorities). Some stakeholders indicated that the approvals process is perceived to be slow whilst others commented that this was a strength area. Conflicting views are likely to be reflective of a need for greater communication and improvement of coordination, particularly between economic development, planning, engineering and other areas of Council.</li> </ul> |

These key regional limitations need to be considered in the development and implementation of the *Campaspe Economic Development Strategy*. While not all of these can be instantly remedied, it is important to consider the relevant effect of these challenges and how they may be mitigated in the implementation plans for each of the development initiatives.



### 3.3 Competitive Assessment

The following table provides a summary of the region's competitive strengths and limiting factors, using a five forces assessment framework (NCC, 2010).

**Table 3.2: Overarching Competitive Assessment of the Shire of Campaspe**

| Consideration                     | Competitive Edge   | Limiting Factors  |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Factor conditions                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abundance of natural assets ranging from agricultural production lands through to wetlands and the iconic Murray River.</li> <li>Solid specialisation of labour across agriculture and food processing and support sectors for these industries.</li> <li>Strong presence of tourism infrastructure assets (eg. Port of Echuca)</li> <li>Modernised irrigation network a key asset for agriculture production and increased productivity.</li> <li>Murray River a key asset for agriculture, tourism and lifestyle amenity.</li> <li>Lower levels of unemployment (compared to region and state levels) indicating a healthy labour market and availability of employment opportunities.</li> <li>Available land for industrial/commercial development however significant investment required to service this land for use.</li> <li>Access to natural gas for residential, commercial and industrial use (Campaspe and Mildura are the only communities in the Loddon-Mallee Region with access to natural gas).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Variable population growth.</li> <li>Lower levels of school and post-school educational attainment compared to the broader region and Victoria.</li> <li>Higher average age due to difficulties attracting and retaining youth due to limited post-school education and employment opportunities.</li> <li>Skills shortages across a range of skill areas.</li> <li>Government and private sector investment to realise currently available industrial land. Investment will be dependent on the timing and nature of market demand.</li> <li>Potential risks associated with climate change.</li> </ul> |
| Strategy and rivalry              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing capability in value-adding and vertical integration activity particularly between agriculture and food processing businesses. Opportunities to do more in this space.</li> <li>Modernisation of irrigation network and adoption of innovative production technologies will provide opportunities for increased productivity and diversification of agriculture production.</li> <li>Shire has a range of tourism assets and differentiating visitor experiences that attracts a diverse visitor market.</li> <li>Ability to leverage services and capability of larger surrounding regional centres (eg. Shepparton and Bendigo).</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Campaspe population centres do not have the critical mass to attract larger scale services and tertiary education facilities as do the broader regional centres of Bendigo and Shepparton.</li> <li>Telecommunications and internet connectivity (NBN) need to be improved for business and industry to be competitive. There is a risk of the community and various businesses being disadvantaged if telecommunications are not improved in the future.</li> <li>Global competition has potential to impact agriculture and manufacturing sector activities.</li> </ul>                                |
| Demand conditions                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population growth (at global, national and regional level) and enhanced agricultural production will drive demand locally for goods and services (agriculture and food products).</li> <li>Campaspe Shire offers unique regional tourism experiences attracting high numbers of visitors resulting in high demand for tourism experiences, accommodation and food services.</li> <li>An ageing population will increase demand for health and aged care services.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relatively low population growth rates can constrain new economic activity over the long-term.</li> </ul>  |
| Supporting and related industries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary sectors of agriculture and food processing are serviced by long-established value-chains.</li> <li>Tourism sector well supported by a diversity of tourism, accommodation and food services, retail and other services that are located in the region.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some high-end services<sup>2</sup> are not provided within the Shire of Campaspe and are serviced by service providers in the broader region (eg. Bendigo, Shepparton).</li> </ul>   |
| Innovation                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to regional tertiary and VET training facilities (located at Bendigo and Shepparton)</li> <li>Collaborative and engaged local/regional stakeholders.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited access to tertiary and VET training within Campaspe Shire boundaries.</li> <li>Adoption of technologies by industry currently not occurring across the board. A need for more education around innovation and adoption of technologies for agriculture businesses.</li> </ul>  |

<sup>2</sup> Includes high-end business, professional and scientific services and tertiary education services.

## 3.4 Opportunities for Growth

The Shire of Campaspe has many strengths and unique assets that give the Shire a competitive edge as a unique regional Australian community to live, work, visit and play. Harnessing these competitive strengths and strategic assets will be important for achieving real economic growth and investment in the Shire. Engagement with the broader industry and business community found that whilst the Shire has its challenges, the Shire also has an abundance of opportunities. The Shire also has a proactive and engaged business community that is seeking to be involved in future initiatives to support economic growth.

A full list of opportunities for growth has been identified (refer to Table 3.3) through the desktop research and consultation process. In developing the economic development framework for the Shire a prioritisation process has been undertaken to identify key opportunities to be progressed based on the expected outcomes, available resources and complexity of implementation. More detail about each opportunity is provided in Appendix A.

**Table 3.3: Summary of Industry Opportunities (Full List)**

| Industry                        | Opportunity  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Agriculture and food processing | Adoption of innovation and irrigation technologies   |
|                                 | Protected farming  |
|                                 | Intensive livestock farming  |
|                                 | Continued support for dairy production and manufacturing   |
|                                 | Support existing and attract other specialised food manufacturing businesses   |
|                                 | Agriculture and food labour skills development   |
| Tourism, retail and hospitality | Community education & agri-food tourism  |
|                                 | Destination branding   |
|                                 | Diversification of tourism product   |
|                                 | Marketing and promotion  |
|                                 | Support for events   |
| Health and education            | Strengthen retail and hospitality experience   |
|                                 | Hospitals and allied health  |
|                                 | Aged care/residential and disability services  |
|                                 | Preventative health & wellness   |
| Transport & logistics           | Post-school education  |
|                                 | Strategic planning and alignment with regional and state freight network initiatives   |
|                                 | Build on existing transport infrastructure to ensure that increases in capacity meet the future needs of local industry and broader region (outside of Campaspe) |
|                                 | Improved public transport and connectivity   |
|                                 | Improvement of local road infrastructure to support truck access to employment precincts   |
| Other                           | Alternative energy production & recycling activities   |
|                                 | General utilities provision  |
|                                 | Professional services  |

The Economic Development Framework for the Shire of Campaspe is outlined in detail in the following Chapters.





## 4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

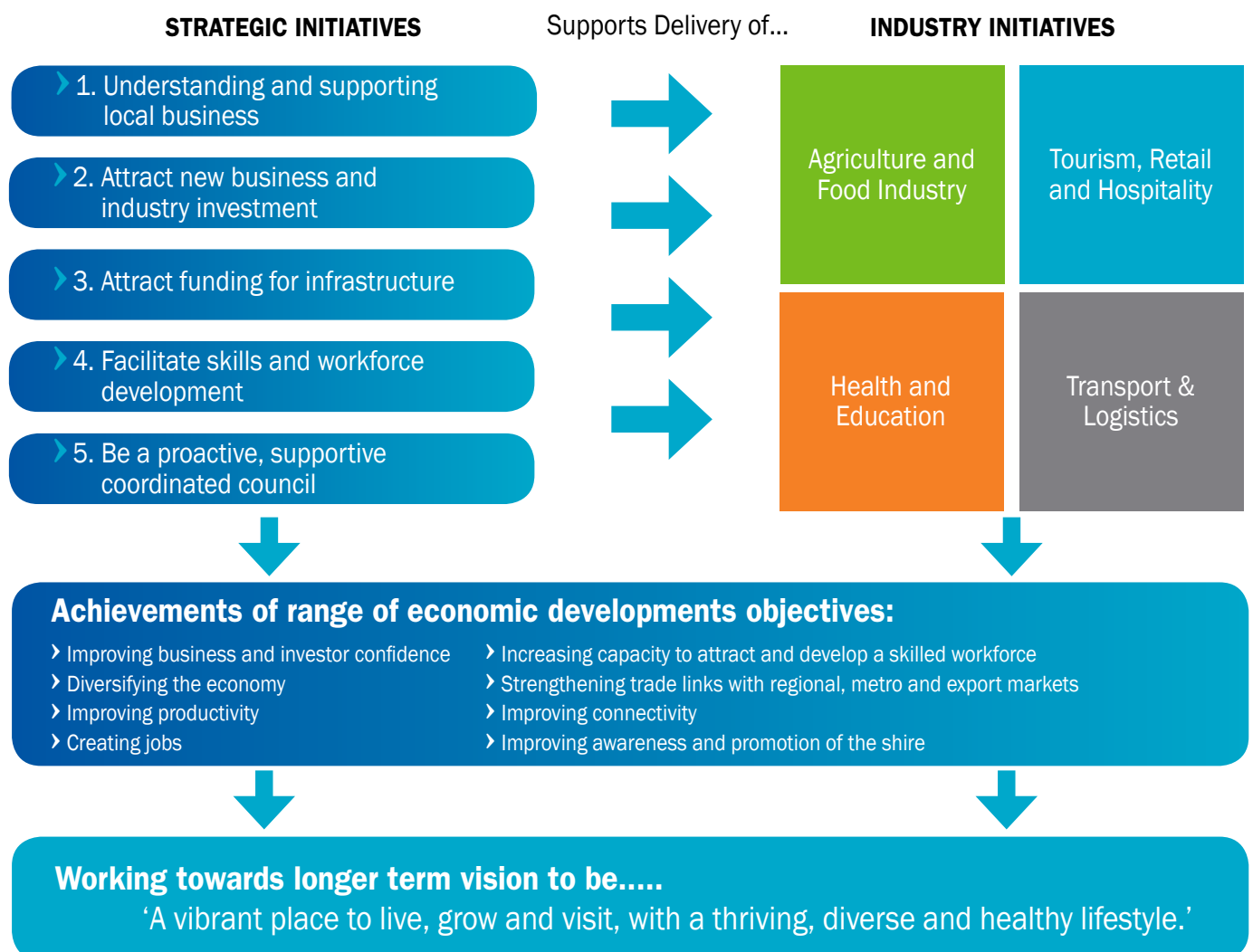
The Shire of Campaspe Economic Development Framework outlines the structure and requirements for delivering economic development outcomes to the Shire of Campaspe and includes four key components:

- **Vision:** Clear statement, taken from the Campaspe Council Plan 2013-2017 (2012), to set the future vision for the region.
- **Strategic initiatives:** The day-to-day actions of all economic development stakeholders to chip away and ensure an environment conducive to investment and industry/business growth is created locally. These are the core economic development activities to be undertaken across the Shire.

- **Industry initiatives:** The key industry initiatives that have been identified to drive industry growth and diversification. Industry initiatives have been developed from desktop research and consultation and engagement.
- **Outcomes:** Success of the strategy will be measured by monitoring the outcomes of each initiative. Success is not about measuring the process, which is important, but also the material change delivered on-ground.

A schematic diagram of how all of these Strategy elements fit together is shown in Figure 4.1 with the detail of each element described in the following chapters.

**Figure 4.1: Components of the Shire of Campaspe Economic Development Strategy**



## 4.1 Vision

The Shire of Campaspe vision is:  
'A vibrant place to live, grow and visit, with a thriving, diverse and healthy lifestyle.'

**Campaspe Council Plan 2013-2017**

The *Campaspe Shire Council Plan 2013-2017* vision is founded on three pillars:

- > **Thriving:** We have great opportunity, with prosperous business and happy communities.
- > **Diverse:** Our varied communities and environments make Campaspe a place for all kinds of people.

- > **Healthy:** We are active, connected and well and care for our natural urban and rural surroundings.

This strategy adopts the above Campaspe Council Plan Vision for future economic development objectives and will be achieved by:

Growing our economy.

By being proactive, responsive and open for business.

Being a great place to live, work and invest.

Refer to Appendix B for further words used by residents and local stakeholders to describe the Shire's vision throughout the community consultation process.

## 4.2 Strategic Initiatives

To achieve the vision the Shire of Campaspe Council needs to play a lead role in five key strategic initiatives for economic development. These are:

**Figure 4.2: Strategic Initiatives for Economic Development**



These five strategic initiatives form the basis of the Campaspe Economic Development Strategy and will guide Council's day-to-day activities for achieving economic development outcomes for the Shire. The goal, rationale and activities associated with each strategic initiative are outlined in the following sections.

## 4.3 Strategic Initiative 1: Understanding and Supporting Local Business

➤ **Goal:** Engage proactively with local businesses and support them to grow and prosper. Work together to understand their needs and overcome their challenges.

### Rationale:

Assisting existing business to grow in the Shire of Campaspe will increase local employment, increase productivity and increase skills and allow for existing business capabilities to be built upon and leveraged to deliver more value-adding opportunities in the Shire.

The Shire of Campaspe has many businesses of various shapes and sizes, representing many different industries. Consultation with business highlighted that the Shire's business community is proactive and engaged and seeking to grow and prosper. By understanding and supporting local business, Council has the ability to provide the tools to assist local business in achieving their business goals.

### Key Activities:

#### Proactively engaging with local business...

The foundation of understanding and supporting local business is building strong and lasting relationships between stakeholders – Council, businesses, industry representatives and economic development organisations. This will be important for growing business, growing and diversifying the economy, and promoting greater levels of industry collaboration and innovation. By understanding the challenges that businesses face, Council has the ability to take a greater role in assisting business in overcoming these challenges and supporting business growth and investment. This supporting role could be as simple as providing and exchanging information, and connecting business with the right people to assist them with their development goals.

#### Encouraging business to grow and prosper...

Encouragement of business growth starts with a 'can do' attitude to business growth and investment. Encouraging existing business to continue to grow and invest in the Shire is about making the investment process as simple and as streamlined as possible and providing business assistance where it is most needed. This can be achieved by engaging in a number of simple activities which could include:

- Hosting events and seminars to provide professional development opportunities to assist communication and networking and promote opportunities for partnership and greater levels of innovation.
- Assisting local business to access state and commonwealth funding programs.
- Providing a single 'go to' person in Council for all business and economic development needs.
- Facilitating introductions and providing the point of connection/information transfer for industry developments.

## 4.4 Strategic Initiative 2: Attract New Business and Industry Investment

➤ **Goal:** Attract new business and industry investment through the development and implementation of a targeted investment attraction campaign.

### Rationale:

New business is an important source of investment. New business creates new employment opportunities, diversifies the economy and increases productivity of the economy. New investment also has the potential to strengthen business confidence within an area.

Consultation revealed the Shire of Campaspe has many opportunities to attract new investment. By delivering a proactive business and industry investment attraction program there is potential to strengthen the Shire's image as 'open for business'. This can be achieved by actively seeking and engaging new investors, and being 'investment ready' to capitalise on opportunities as they arise. The Shire of Campaspe has a skilled labour pool, available land, an established supply chain and has the added bonus of being a thriving regional hub that offers a high quality of life. Attracting new business investment will be about marketing these competitive features and letting potential investors know that Campaspe is a place where investment happens and where Council is committed to the longer term growth and economic prosperity of the Shire.

### Key Activities:

#### Develop tools to attract business investment

Being 'investment ready' is not just about having the land and infrastructure ready to go but also about having all the necessary tools available to assist investors in deciding on Campaspe as their preferred investment location. This is about making finding information as easy as possible – from searching the Council website, to making the first enquiry – investors need to feel that they have someone they can talk to and are getting a high standard of customer service. Having marketing and investment attraction materials on hand is essential to providing a professional image and sound basis for promoting the Shire as an attractive investment location. A great place to do business.

#### Create a welcoming and responsive investment environment for new business

Interested in investing in the Shire of Campaspe? This is the first and critical step to attracting new business investment. The next critical step is keeping this interest and translating it into real 'on-ground' investment. Turning investment interest to investment on-ground is the most challenging part of attracting investment. But investment hurdles can be overcome with a number of simple and easy steps of engagement that can be undertaken by Council to facilitate the process by:

- Providing a single point of contact for investors to assist them through the process.
- Showing potential investors available sites and providing information on the strengths of the area they are looking to invest in.
- Introducing them to local business and contacts that are relevant to their business.
- Having a coordinated and streamlined internal Council investment process.

#### Send a clear message that Campaspe is open for business

Having a positive image builds business confidence which in turn assists in attracting investment. Promoting the Shire and sending a clear message that Campaspe is 'open for business' is an important piece of the investment attraction process. This is about getting the message out at local, regional, state and federal levels and ensuring that everyone knows that the Shire of Campaspe has something to offer investors and has a Council that is proactive and responsive to investor needs.



## 4.5 Strategic Initiative 3: Attract Funding for Infrastructure

- **Goal:** Identify infrastructure funding priorities and proactively advocate for funding and investment to support infrastructure development for the future.

### Rationale:

The Shire of Campaspe services a local government population of over 37,000 and a much broader service population of over 60,000 people. The Shire also attracts large volumes of visitors to Echuca Moama for major events and tourism each year. Having excellent transport infrastructure, ICT (broadband and mobile coverage), utilities, tourism and community infrastructure is vital for attracting and retaining local and global business and their employees to the Shire of Campaspe.

Consultation found existing businesses are demanding greater levels of investment for major infrastructure projects. Issues like building a second Echuca Moama Bridge, accessing the NBN, improving road and rail infrastructure to support greater freight movements and ensuring that utility infrastructure meets the needs of the growing community are just a few of the issues raised by stakeholders. Whilst many of these issues are currently being addressed it is important that Council continues to monitor infrastructure needs and advocate to attract funding for infrastructure developments to ensure the Shire of Campaspe keeps pace with the changing global business environment and continues to be an attractive place to live and invest.

## Key Activities:

### Attract, facilitate, advocate

One of Council's key roles is to advocate for and attract investment for infrastructure projects. This can be achieved by:

- Monitoring infrastructure needs and identifying priority projects to be pursued.
- Developing the evidence base, business case and funding submissions for major infrastructure investment.
- Engaging with state and federal ministers to lobby for funding support to assist in delivering infrastructure that supports economic development and growth in the region.
- Fostering opportunities for joint infrastructure projects with government and non-government partners in alignment with existing regional strategies and investment priorities (eg, Regional Growth Plans, Regional Strategic Plans, RDA Investment Prospectus and having input into and informing new state and regional strategies, priorities and decision making (eg, Northern Victoria Food Strategy, Railing Ahead, Loddon Campaspe Integrated Regional Transport Strategy).

Council has the opportunity to provide strong leadership in the bid to attract greater levels of investment in enabling infrastructure for the future of the Shire.



## 4.6 Strategic Initiative 4: Facilitate Skills and Workforce Development

➤ **Goal:** Attract skilled workers in key industries where there is an identified skills gap. Facilitate skills and employment opportunities through development of partnerships with school and post-school education providers.

### Rationale:

Increasing the population of skilled workers will support productivity growth, business growth and raise the level of socio-economic wellbeing. Having access to a skilled workforce is important for business – both existing business and potential business investors. Consultation highlighted that sourcing and retaining skilled workers was a challenging area across a wide variety of industries and occupations, with many businesses indicating that finding suitable workers was the primary obstacle for their business growth.

Consultation also highlighted a lack of training opportunities was a key issue, particularly for retaining youth within the Shire post-school.

In responding to the needs of business, industry and the community, greater skilling and workforce development can be achieved by supporting and assisting development of the local population, and attracting skilled workers to the region by promoting the region as an attractive place to live and work.

Of all the economic development areas this is one of the most important. However, it is also one of the most difficult areas for Council to actively participate in as it is largely reliant upon industry, training providers and the individuals themselves in achieving outcomes. However, Council does have a role to play in supporting and assisting these stakeholder groups through partnership and acting as a facilitator.

### Key Activities:

#### **Support and assist workforce development**

By working with industry to identify areas of need and skills 'gaps', Council has the ability to partner with training and other key partner organisations to determine local training opportunities to assist with workforce development to support economic growth.

#### **Attract skilled workers to the Shire**

Similar to investment attraction, the Council can play a role in promoting the Shire as a great place to live, work and invest. This can be best achieved by identifying key skill areas and occupational types to be targeted with the assistance of industry (eg. health care workers) and then engaging in promotional activities outside of the Shire aimed at attracting workers to relocate to the Shire to live and work.

The Shire can also play a role in assisting employers with the integration of new employees into the local community through introductions to schools, childcare agencies, real estate agents and groups such as the Campaspe Young Professionals Network, Murray Business Network (MBN) and the like.

#### **Highlight post-school training opportunities and career pathways**

Working with schools to highlight post-school training opportunities and career pathways within the Shire to assist in increasing the numbers of youth retained in the Shire and the educational attainment level. Council's role would be as a communication conduit and facilitator ensuring ongoing dialogue between the region's youth, training providers and industries of the Shire.

## 4.7 Strategic Initiative 5: Be a Proactive, Supportive and Coordinated Council

► **Goal:** To be a proactive and supportive Council that is viewed positively by business, industry and the broader community as a 'can do' Council. This will be reflected by general business community perception of Council and the level of investment by business in the Shire. This will be reflected internally by the responsiveness of Council staff, inter-departmental communication and the ability of Council departments to deliver services in a coordinated and efficient manner. This Strategic Initiative is dependent upon strong leadership and a 'solution-oriented' response by Councillors and Council staff.

### Rationale:

Building a stronger business environment will assist economic growth. Council has a clear role as a leader and advocate for business to support major infrastructure projects, overcome restrictive policy and legislation and/or work with business and industry proactively to form partnerships that will assist in achieving positive investment outcomes for the Shire.

A united and coordinated approach from Council will assist in achieving economic development outcomes. Consultation found that whilst Council does many things well, there was a need for a more coordinated and cohesive approach to achieving economic development outcomes. This means all staff, whether from planning, engineering, economic development or other areas of Council, have a role to play in supporting economic development outcomes in the Shire of Campaspe economy. This extends from delivering a high quality service through to staff having a solution oriented 'can do' attitude that reassures both new and existing business that the Shire of Campaspe is the place to do business and why would they ever consider anywhere else.

### Key Activities:

The Shire of Campaspe has full control over what type of Council it wants to be and with just a few improvements in service delivery and internal coordination of economic development outcomes, the Shire has the ability to make significant changes to business and community perception and the overall effectiveness of service delivery in the economic development space.





## 5. INDUSTRY INITIATIVES

Industry has a critical and important role to play in economic development. The mechanism by which industry will play this role has been built into the Campaspe Economic Development Strategy through the nominated industry initiatives. Industry involvement and participation in the implementation of the initiatives is critical to their success.

Four industry initiatives have been identified with seven associated priority projects. These industry initiatives and associated priority projects have been selected based on competitive assessment of the area and in consultation with industry.

**A full list of industry opportunities have been identified in Appendix A, with priority projects selected from these based on their:**

- > Capacity to generate:
  - Employment
  - Economic growth
  - Enhanced regional branding and awareness
  - Local/regional business/community confidence
  - Beneficial and flow on social outcomes.
- > Complexity of implementation.
- > Likelihood of being realised without intervention (those that are likely to be realised without intervention should be supported but should probably not receive significant investment of limited funds).







## 5.1 Agriculture and Food Processing

Agriculture is the Shire of Campaspe's leading sector by value, representing one fifth of the regional economy. The Shire of Campaspe has a strong food processing sector that leverages proximity to raw agricultural product and transport connections with domestic and international export markets. Availability of water and industrial land has attracted national and international food manufacturing chains – the sector represents over two thirds of the manufacturing sector and is a major employer. Together these sectors represent almost a third of the economy and are an important sector for the Shire of Campaspe.

To support economic growth of the Shire it will be important to support these sectors to grow and diversify. As a rich agricultural region with established global manufacturing businesses and supply chain, the Shire has many opportunities for growth.

Two priority projects to be delivered by the agriculture and food processing initiative have been identified as:

### ➤ **Priority Project 1: Encourage Increased Investment in Agricultural Production**

➤ **Goal:** Increase agricultural production activity by encouraging increased investment in and engagement of farmers in high productivity farming activities (both that of livestock and of cropping activities).

### Rationale:

The Shire has an existing capability in livestock farming and cropping. There is an abundance of highly productive agricultural lands, optimum growing conditions and it can leverage the modernised Goulburn Murray irrigation network to engage in more productive agriculture activities. Efficient, highly productive dairy operations will be critical to the future economic viability of the region. Farmers should be supported and encouraged to make the on-farm improvements required to get the gains from modernised irrigation and improved water use practices.

Attracting increased levels of farming investment, including greater diversification into less traditional intensive farming practices and protected cropping activities, will provide opportunities to diversify local product, increase production, increase productivity and provide jobs.

Intensive livestock and protected cropping operations have been key areas of innovation for the farming sector in recent times, leveraging sustainable technologies to deliver greater environmental and cost efficiency outcomes in agriculture production. Investment in these types of enterprises in appropriate locations will ultimately contribute to the overall 'food and farm' brand for the Shire.

### Outcomes:

- Increased production of high quality produce
- Increased employment
- Increased branding and awareness as a 'food and farm' focused Shire
- Greater adoption of sustainability technologies.

### ➤ **Priority Project 2: Support Existing and Attract Specialised Food Manufacturing Businesses**

➤ **Goal:** Build reputation as a food processing hub by diversifying the types of food products manufactured in the area and attracting investment from specialised and gourmet food manufacturers of various sizes (from small boutique manufacturers through to gourmet global brands).

### Rationale:

The Shire has an existing capability in food manufacturing and has attracted a large global food manufacturing base. The existing supply chains and food manufacturing capability combined with the tourism brand of Echuca Moama provides many opportunities for expansion and attraction of large and small specialised food manufacturing businesses. Consultation highlighted that there is scope to grow the food manufacturing sector, particularly in the boutique, specialised and gourmet food space.

### Outcomes:

- Increased value-adding of local agriculture product
- Increased employment
- Increased branding and awareness as a 'food and farm' focused Shire
- Flow on benefits to tourism, hospitality and local community.

## 5.2 Tourism

The Shire of Campaspe has a diversity of tourism experiences and events that attract increasing numbers of visitors each year. The Shire currently hosts over 140 events with many of these being repeat events that are gaining increasing recognition, with key examples being the Winter Blues Festival, Riverboats Music Festival, the Southern 80 Ski Race and many others. Socially, the tourism assets and services provided by the sector, have been fundamental to attracting visitors to the region but have also proven to be a key attractor for residents, contributing to the overall amenity and liveability of the region.

Two priority projects to be delivered by the tourism sector have been identified as:

### > **Priority Project 1: Diversification of Tourism Product**

> **Goal:** Diversify the Shire's tourism product offering and strengthen linkages with existing tourism attractions and activities.

### Rationale:

Growth of the Shire's tourism market is dependent upon attracting new visitors and evolving tourism product to meet the changing needs of target markets. In order to achieve this there is a need to fill the identified tourism infrastructure gaps and areas for tourism investment for diversification of product. The Shire and broader region has a number of active tourism groups and business organisations including Echuca Moama and District Tourism Association (EMDTA) and the Murray Region Tourism Board. Significant research has already been undertaken in identifying product gaps.

The success of this industry initiative will be dependent upon key stakeholder groups taking a coordinated approach to diversifying tourism product. This will include identifying priority products to be pursued, gathering the evidence base to support funding submissions, as well as lobbying to attract investment.

### Outcomes:

- > Diversification of tourism product
- > Increased employment
- > Increased tourism visitation and visitor spend
- > Increased branding and awareness
- > Flow on benefits to retail, hospitality, accommodation and local community.

### > **Priority Project 2: Strong Destination Brand Marketing**

> **Goal:** Support the Echuca Moama destination brand through proactive and innovative marketing and promotion.

### Rationale:

Marketing is a critical component of tourism and essential for the sustained growth of tourism in Echuca Moama and more broadly in the Shire of Campaspe. Echuca Moama and District Tourism Association (EMDTA) has made significant investment in repositioning and redesigning the Echuca Moama brand, however, this is just the start of what is required to revitalise the destination brand to attract new and emerging markets to the Shire. It needs to link to the Regional Strategic Marketing Plan and reposition to a more vibrant and active brand position. The purpose of this priority project will be to support an innovative marketing and promotion campaign that will leverage existing Murray Brand activities and attract increasing numbers of visitors and events.

### Outcomes:

- > A strong and recognised tourism brand
- > Increased visitation and visitor spend
- > Increased employment
- > Flow on benefits to retail, hospitality, accommodation and local community.

## 5.3 Health and Education

Health care and social assistance and education sectors represent a fifth of employment in the Shire and are important sectors that contribute significantly to the health, wellbeing and level of prosperity enjoyed by residents of the Shire. The Shire has a mix of public and private schools, regional health centres and district hospitals as well as a variety of allied health and residential aged care services.

Council has a role to play in encouraging improved educational outcomes. The creation of a Shire wide Workforce Development Plan will assist with this goal and help to facilitate linkages between education providers, industry and the community.

This has been referred to earlier under Strategic Initiative 4: Facilitate skills and workforce development. Council acknowledges that education policy and funding rests with state and federal governments and its ability to influence this is limited.

Two priority projects to be delivered by the health and education sector initiative have been identified as:

### ➤ **Priority Project 1: Grow capacity of the Shire's primary health care services**

➤ **Goal:** To grow the capacity of the Shire's primary health care services, particularly hospital and allied health services, by attracting private investment, highly skilled professionals and providing the framework for skills development.

## Rationale:

The Shire of Campaspe has an established health care sector providing a wide range of primary health care services to Echuca Moama, Rochester, Kyabram, Tongala and other communities in the Shire. Significant investment in hospital and associated infrastructure has continued to raise the standard of health service provision in the region. Continuing to attract investment for primary health service provision and allied care services will be important for raising the standard socio-economic wellbeing, social amenity and overall attractiveness of the Shire as a place to live and work. Regional health services face many challenges. Resource constraints, attracting and retaining skilled workers are just some of the issues facing regional health providers.

To ensure ongoing population growth and regional prosperity it will be important that the Shire continues to grow its primary health care services. This can be achieved by attracting investment (public and private sector), attracting skilled workers, and working in partnership with district health providers (eg. ERH, REDHS) and training providers to develop the local workforce.

## Outcomes:

- Increased employment
- Increased private health business investment
- Better health service provision
- Improved health outcomes and quality of life.

### ➤ **Priority Project 2: Increase regional aged care, residential and disability service delivery through increased industry collaboration and attraction of private sector investment**

➤ **Goal:** Become a leader in regional aged care, residential and disability service delivery through increased private sector investment in provision of residential infrastructure and services.

## Rationale:

The Shire of Campaspe has a strength in delivery of regional aged care, residential and disability services. Consultation highlighted that there was scope to build on this strength and grow capacity and capability in this area. This could be achieved through attracting private sector investment. Facilitating greater levels of partnership and collaboration between existing providers would also offer opportunities to diversify product offering, particularly in the home-care packages space. This priority project will assist the health care sector stakeholders in increasing capability in aged care, residential and disability service delivery across the Shire.

## Outcomes:

- Increased employment
- Increased private health business investment
- Better health service provision
- Improved health outcomes and quality of life.





## 5.4 Transport and Logistics

The Shire of Campaspe has a large manufacturing sector and agriculture sector. These sectors create a high demand for transport and logistics (and associated supply chain) services. As a result, the Shire has a sophisticated supply chain that is essential for supporting the growth and development of agriculture and manufacturing sectors in the Shire of Campaspe.

To support this sector a single priority project has been identified as:

### > 5.4.1 Priority Project 1: Support Growth of the Freight and Logistics Supply Chain

> **Goal:** Support growth of freight and logistics supply chain by advocating to address industry issues, attracting major infrastructure investment and facilitating greater levels of regional industry collaboration.

## Rationale:

Transport and logistics play an important and enabling role in the growth and development of the Shire of Campaspe's leading sectors – agriculture and manufacturing. Ensuring the ongoing investment of these sectors will be important for supporting growth of the economy. This can be achieved by supporting existing business, attracting new business and also providing a coordinated approach to freight infrastructure investment. The industry also faces a number of regulatory constraints, particularly those created from misalignment of state freight industry regulatory requirements. The transport and logistics sector has an opportunity to overcome these issues by working together in a coordinated manner.

## Outcomes:

- > Increased investment
- > Improved efficiency
- > Increased employment
- > Improved connectivity with freight routes
- > Flow-on benefits to local industries with higher freight volumes (eg. agriculture and food manufacturing).





## 6. MEASURING OUTCOMES

The ultimate goals of the Economic Development Strategy are to create more jobs, attract investment and improve productivity of the economy. Whilst these goals are valid and meaningful they are also factors around which Council has little control.

With this in mind, the success of the Economic Development Strategy will be measured in two ways:

- Measuring Council's activities through the implementation plan.
- Tracking the economy by monitoring key statistics that measure changes to jobs, investment and economic diversity.

Individual KPIs set out in the implementation plan for each strategic initiative (refer to Implementation Plan document).

Table 6.1 identifies some macroeconomic indicators for tracking the economy. These measures provide a close indication of the desired outcomes of the strategy.

**Table 6.1: Outcome Measurements**

| Outcome                                       | Measure                                 | Target   | Current Benchmark  | Source Agency                             | Frequency of Measurement |
|---|---|----------|--|---|--------------------------|
| Creating Jobs                                 | Employment count                        | Increase | 19,431 employed persons December Q 2013                                    | Department of Employment Australia (SALM) | Quarterly                |
| Economic diversity                            | Economic diversity index                | Increase | 2012-13 Index = 0.51   | AEC Group                                 | Annual                   |
| Attracting and Developing a skilled workforce | Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) | Increase | 2011 Index = 935 (ranking of 188 in Australia, ranking of 10 in Victoria)  | ABS (SEIFA)                               | Five Yearly              |
| Stronger population growth                    | Population growth                       | Increase | -0.3% Five year change (36,919 persons)                                    | ABS (Cat. No. 3218.0)                     | Annual                   |
| Improved productivity                         | GRP Value                               | Increase | \$1,930.3 million 2012-13  | AEC Group                                 | Annual                   |
|   | \$ Value-add per employee               | Increase | \$118,600 per employee 2012-13   | AEC Group                                 | Annual                   |
| Improving business and investor confidence    | No. businesses                          | Increase | 4,264, No. Businesses in 2012  | ABS (Cat. No. 8165.0)                     | Annual                   |
|   | Non-residential Building Approvals      | Increase | \$79.3 million (value of approvals 2012-13)                                | ABS (Cat. No. 8731.0)                     | Quarterly                |
|   | Residential Building Approvals          | Increase | ➤ 93 (no. approvals 2012-13)<br>➤ \$31.9 million (value approvals 2012-13) | ABS (Cat. No. 8731.0)                     | Quarterly                |
| Improved awareness                            | No. Overnight Visitors (Echuca Moama)   | Increase | ➤ 687,000 Visitors<br>➤ 1,989,000 Visitor Nights in YE March 2014          | TRA                                       | Quarterly                |

Source: AEC

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## APPENDIX A: INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Potential opportunities for the Shire of Campaspe identified through desktop analysis and a detailed consultation and engagement process are outlined in the table below.

**Table A.1: Potential Economic Development Opportunities, Campaspe LGA**

| Potential Opportunity   | Description  | Addressed in ED Framework   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Agriculture and Food Processing</b>                          |  |   |
| <b>Adoption of innovation and irrigation technologies</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Irrigation industries include dairy, horticulture and mixed farming for agricultural lands located along the Goulburn-Murray River Network.</li> <li>➤ With the introduction of new water policy and irrigation infrastructure it will be important that agricultural lands with access to the irrigation network leverage this infrastructure efficiently and effectively through re-structure and adoption of new technologies and business practice to maximise production and returns.</li> <li>➤ On-farm modernisation will enable farmers to deliver more efficient irrigation management. Support and education will likely be required to assist farmers to transition to higher levels of technology use and adoption of innovative practice. Some farms may transition from irrigated to mixed use agriculture uses.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Partially addressed in agriculture and food processing strategic initiative 1.</li> <li>➤ Strong likelihood of occurring without intervention due to initiatives being delivered by Goulburn Murray Water and others.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Protected farming</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Protected farming activities (including sophisticated greenhouse production) to increase sustainability through use of water saving and growing technologies.</li> <li>➤ Establishment of relationships with major retailers (eg. Woolworths and Coles) and buyers in high-value export markets will be required to ensure appropriate contracts are in place to support investment.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Addressed in agriculture and food processing strategic initiative 1.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Intensive livestock farming</b>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Intensive livestock industries includes pigs, poultry, feedlots for beef and sheep. Campaspe already undertakes many of these activities.</li> <li>➤ There are opportunities to establish additional and expand existing intensive livestock activities for cattle feedlots, piggeries, poultry farms and other intensive industries. This would need to occur in a sustainable manner consistent with regional planning objectives and environmental protection guidelines.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Addressed in agriculture and food processing strategic initiative 1.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Continued support for dairy production and manufacturing</b> | <p>Support local dairy industry including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Promotion of dairy farming activity and adoption of technologies to increase production and efficiency.</li> <li>➤ Increased diversification of processed activities and high quality branded products such as yoghurts, cheeses and ice-cream and specialty dairy products.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Partially addressed agriculture and food processing strategic initiative 1 and initiative 2.</li> <li>➤ Strategic initiatives 1, 2 and 4 will also assist with supporting the various challenges of the sector.</li> </ul>       |



| Potential Opportunity   | Description   | Addressed in ED Framework  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Agriculture and Food Processing</b>  |   |  |
| <b>Support existing and attract other specialised food manufacturing businesses</b> | <p>Support expansion of existing specialised food manufacturing business and attract new businesses that can leverage locational factors such as proximity to raw product, transport and supply chain networks, linkages with local tourism and gourmet food industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Attract specialised and gourmet prepared food manufacturing such as gourmet sauces, dressings and packaged meals</li><li>➤ Continue to support existing fruit and vegetable manufacturing businesses</li><li>➤ Support for cereal, pasta and health food manufacturing</li><li>➤ Attraction of a diversity of niche product manufacturers (not just large business but SME's too)</li><li>➤ Grow wine and cider manufacturing industry (strengthen linkages with tourism sector)</li><li>➤ Establish linkages with export markets.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Directly addressed by agriculture and food processing initiative 2.</li></ul>                |
| <b>Agriculture and food labour skills development</b>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Encourage industry to leverage existing school agriculture programs in the Shire (currently offered at Moama Grammar and Echuca College) to develop stronger linkages between industry and post-school employment opportunities in the sector</li><li>➤ Industry to establish partnerships with post-school education providers (eg. universities, TAFE, other RTOs) to discuss regional labour requirements and training opportunities</li><li>➤ Opportunities for greater levels of R&amp;D that is relevant to local industry (eg. pig, dairy, cropping, others).</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Addressed by strategic initiative 4: Labour force and skills development.</li></ul>          |
| <b>Community education &amp; agri-food tourism</b>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Opportunities for educational farm-gate tourism activity (linkages with local tourism industry)</li><li>➤ Opportunities for educational activities/displays at existing tourism assets to increase awareness in the broader community about the local agriculture food processing sector</li><li>➤ Food trail for visitors, highlighting the high quality and broad nature of local production.</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Potential to be addressed by tourism, retail and hospitality industry initiatives.</li></ul> |

| Potential Opportunity                     | Description   | Addressed in ED Framework   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Tourism, Retail and Hospitality</b>    |   |   |
| <b>Destination branding</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening of the Echuca Moama and broader Murray Regional Tourism Brands and integration across all aspects of the current and future tourism sector activities.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism, retail and hospitality industry initiative 2</li> </ul>                                 |
| <b>Diversification of tourism product</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased diversification of tourism product and linkage with existing tourism attractions and activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arts and culture tourism and events (eg. Rochester Mural Festival)</li> <li>- Indigenous tourism product</li> <li>- Adventure tourism product</li> <li>- Nature and eco-tourism</li> <li>- Farm and agri-tourism</li> <li>- Gourmet food and wine tourism activities</li> <li>- Educational opportunities in the above activity areas.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Utilisation of existing infrastructure (eg. Port) and diversifying product offering around this infrastructure and providing a node of linkage with broader tourism products and activities</li> <li>Provision of high-end tourism accommodation and services.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism, retail and hospitality industry initiative 1</li> </ul>                                 |
| <b>Marketing and promotion</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen linkages between and marketing of tourism products</li> <li>Increase understanding of visitor markets and package products for key target markets</li> <li>Target 'high-yielding' tourism markets</li> <li>Work with broader regional cities to strengthen tourism interregional linkages and overall marketing and promotion (eg. linkages with Bendigo)</li> <li>Alignment of event calendar with destination marketing strategy.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism, retail and hospitality industry initiative 2</li> </ul>                                 |
| <b>Support for events</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support high profile events (such as the Winter Blues Festival) and develop capacity to attract new events</li> <li>Invest in event locations and infrastructure to support all year round events (opportunities to pursue small to medium private events such as car club visits, small conferences and weddings)</li> <li>Develop packages to leverage events and promote extended stay tourism (the 'stay another day' concept<sup>3</sup>)</li> <li>Attract greater levels of sponsorship for events</li> <li>Increase communication with businesses about coming events to create an 'events culture'</li> <li>Opportunities to raise professionalism of event management through provision of a dedicated event support role<sup>4</sup>.</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressed as a sub-component of tourism, retail and hospitality industry initiative 1</li> </ul> |

<sup>3</sup> Echuca Moama Tourism is currently fulfilling some of this function however, there is potentially scope to improve packaging from a 'whole of shire' and beyond perspective.

<sup>4</sup> Currently being addressed: Campaspe Shire Council has introduced a Council Event Support Officer (from July 2014).

| Potential Opportunity                                | Description  | Addressed in ED Framework   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Tourism, Retail and Hospitality</b>               |  |   |
| <b>Strengthen retail and hospitality experience</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Diversification of boutique retail experience (Echuca)</li> <li>➤ Establishment of 'anchors' in other towns to encourage travellers to stop and experience local retail and hospitality</li> <li>➤ Continued support for local gourmet food experiences (eg. restaurants, cafes)</li> <li>➤ Increased communication of events and major community/tourism activities to promote extended trading in the business community for hospitality and retail business.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Likely to occur without intervention if successful attempts are made for completion of strategic initiatives.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Health</b>  |  |   |
| <b>Hospitals and allied health</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Attract and grow capacity of visiting specialists to increase access to high quality hospital care</li> <li>➤ Attraction and retention of General Practitioners (GPs) and other health professionals</li> <li>➤ Attract greater levels of allied health services by promoting the region as an attractive location to work in health</li> <li>➤ Establish clinical education hub (REDHS currently has the facility but would need to partner with an RTO/TAFE to deliver the program). Establishment of a clinical education hub would also benefit from further partnering with a local secondary college</li> <li>➤ Leader in indigenous health.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Health and education industry initiative 1.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Aged care/residential and disability services</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increase provision of and quality of aged care to meet the needs of the ageing population</li> <li>➤ Increased choice of 'in-home' care packages to meet consumer needs for care and support extended stay of residents, elderly or disabled, within their own home (funding will be delivered from July 2014 under Consumer Directed Care (CDC) programs. Programs can be delivered by private providers). Greater collaboration between Primary Care Service Providers could benefit the increase in offering of packages</li> <li>➤ Increased provision of housing for ageing population (Rochester, Kyabram, Echuca Moama).</li> </ul>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Health and education industry initiative 2.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Preventative health &amp; wellness</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increased preventative health and wellbeing extended through early childhood services and other community organisations and activities</li> <li>➤ Increased community education and promotion of health and wellbeing and available services in the community<sup>5</sup></li> <li>➤ Greater linkages of professional health services with recreational and preventative health services</li> <li>➤ Greater emphasis in community planning on health, sports and recreation, and arts and culture to increase social inclusion and overall engagement and wellbeing of the community</li> <li>➤ Greater extension of youth services.</li> </ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Will be addressed through delivery of other Council plans and initiatives.</li> </ul>                                    |

<sup>5</sup> Through delivery of the Campaspe Primary Care Partnership Integrated Health Promotion Plan 2013-2017 and the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017.

| Potential Opportunity  | Description  | Addressed in ED Framework  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Health</b>  |  |  |
| <b>Post-school education</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased accessibility to training opportunities (eg. Vocational Education and Training (VET) and University level education). This could include consideration of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishment of partnerships and collaborations with educational institutions and employers (skills matching and training specifically in those areas)</li> <li>- Provision of an education access point (facility where students can meet to connect externally with virtual classrooms)</li> <li>- Attraction of youth and training organisations such as Smith Family, others</li> <li>- Attraction of R&amp;D or extension educational opportunities to the region (eg. agriculture research)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressed in strategic initiative 4: Workforce and skills development.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Transport &amp; Logistics</b>   |  |  |
| <b>Strategic planning and alignment with regional and state freight network initiatives</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities to strategically plan for and align Council road maintenance and land development activities (eg. location of future industrial/commercial lands) with broader planned future State freight regional networks programs/agendas</li> <li>Ongoing engagement with local industry and identification of freight network infrastructure priorities and communication of these priorities with regional (Regional Transport Networks Forum) and State government representatives (VicRoads) to identify key infrastructure initiatives to be pursued</li> <li>Advocate for funding for prioritised freight infrastructure projects</li> <li>Council to develop a Freight and Logistics Strategy (including protecting freight corridor lands) and Strategic Transport Priority Investment List to guide investment, advocacy, regional connectivity and longer term prosperity for the Shire. (This would ultimately identify what infrastructure is required, where and when it should be delivered, prioritisation, cost and lobbying for funding to support development)</li> <li>Investigate longer term rail freight access opportunities (access to rail at Echuca Moama).</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressed in strategic initiative 3: Infrastructure investment.</li> </ul>        |
| <b>Growth of supply chain to support local industry and broader region (outside of Campaspe)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council to establish ongoing communications with transport and logistics industry to understand needs of industry and also to communicate key State initiatives, funded projects and timelines for infrastructure delivery (including access for Higher Productivity Vehicles (HPVs) (greater mass and road limits) to assist businesses in planning and investing for the future</li> <li>Ensure new investors understand strategic linkages of employment lands and where these sit within the current and planning future freight network</li> <li>Industry and Councils to work with the new National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) to identify cross border regulatory barriers and misalignment and work towards achieving greater synergy of cross border regulation to increase efficiency of freight movement</li> <li>Opportunities for freight and logistics industry to form a regional cooperative to engage in activities to promote cost-reduction and increasing efficiencies. Examples include collective buying of parts for vehicles (to reduce cost) or coordination of truck movements to reduce 'empty miles'</li> <li>Collaboration with national Freight industry body and other relevant organisations to identify training priorities for the sector and engage with RTOs to get Transport and Logistics training priorities on the agenda.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transport and logistics industry initiative 1.</li> </ul>                         |





| Potential Opportunity   | Description   | Addressed in ED Framework  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Transport &amp; Logistics</b>  |   |  |
| <b>Improved public transport and connectivity</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities to increase connectivity between communities within the Shire and with broader regional destination nodes (eg. Bendigo, Shepparton) by increasing provision of public transport services</li> <li>Advocate for greater frequency of passenger train services to Bendigo for commuters (work and students) and for additional services to connect to Echuca on key weekends on the events calendar ('tourist trains').</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressed in strategic initiative 3: Infrastructure investment.</li> </ul>              |
| <b>Improvement of local road infrastructure to support truck access to employment precincts</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of strategic locations for improvement/upgrade of truck access (to take B-doubles, A-doubles<sup>6</sup> and other HPVs) to assist key employment nodes. This should focus on existing and future employment precincts within the Shire eg. Denmark Road</li> <li>Integration of identified precincts for road improvement into the Shire's road maintenance and infrastructure plan and communication of planned activities with key stakeholder businesses.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressed in strategic initiative 3: Infrastructure investment.</li> </ul>              |
| <b>Other</b>  |   |  |
| <b>Alternative energy production &amp; recycling activities</b>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support (through flexible planning response) and attract investment and adoption of technology for alternative energy production (for local use) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biogas and 'waste-to-energy' conversion processes</li> <li>Solar energy</li> </ul> </li> <li>Waste and recycling activities (to accommodate waste from the Shire and the broader region)</li> <li>Opportunities for other chemical and product manufacturing from conversion processes eg. high grade fertilizer production from 'waste-to-energy' conversion processes</li> <li>Establish linkages of any alternative energy production with 'eco-tourism' and community education.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not addressed.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>General utilities provision</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop strategies for improving utilities provision and cost to industry eg. investigate longer term solutions for provision of energy, water and waste services to the Shire and industry eg. work with industry to overcome issues such as provision of larger pipe access points for gas access (strategies could consider advocacy for funding, public private partnerships, others).</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressed in strategic initiative 3: Infrastructure investment.</li> </ul>              |
| <b>Professional services</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to attract a variety of professional, scientific and technical services to service the local population and industry needs.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will be addressed in strategic initiative 2: Business investment attraction.</li> </ul> |

<sup>6</sup> Basic multiple combination with two semitrailers linked by a converter dolly between the two trailers. Recent modifications to this combination type have made the combination safer, more efficient and is becoming an increasingly popular option for high tonnage transporters.

## APPENDIX B: VISION

Words and themes used by residents and local stakeholders to describe the Shire's vision throughout the community consultation process include:

- > Diverse
- > Resilient
- > Prosperous
- > Growing
- > Vibrant
- > Proactive
- > Productive
- > Skilled
- > Engaged
- > Climate
- > Convenience
- > Enjoyable
- > Relaxed
- > Welcoming
- > Accepting
- > Educated
- > Potential
- > Multicultural
- > Balanced lifestyle
- > Socially connected
- > High level of wellbeing
- > Self-sufficiency
- > Modern
- > Opportunity
- > Competitive
- > Food bowl
- > Regionally connected
- > Value-adding
- > Technology and knowledge economy
- > Passionate about agriculture
- > Innovation
- > Collaboration
- > Leading edge
- > Inclusive
- > Leaders
- > Contemporary

**Participants also identified the following key strengths and characteristics of their own townships:**

**Echuca Moama:**

- > 'One Town'
- > Tourism
- > A destination
- > Service centre
- > Liveability

**Rochester:**

- > Friendly
- > Peaceful
- > Supportive
- > Affordable
- > Sporting infrastructure

**Kyabram:**

- > Hidden gem
- > Affordable





“Improving the lives of  
people in our community.”





## SHIRE OF CAMPASPE

Corner Hare & Heygarth Streets, Echuca  
PO Box 35 Echuca VIC 3564

**Telephone:** 03 5481 2200  
1300 666 535

**Facsimile:** (03) 5481 2290

**Email:** [shire@campaspe.vic.gov.au](mailto:shire@campaspe.vic.gov.au)

**Web:** [www.campaspe.vic.gov.au](http://www.campaspe.vic.gov.au)