



# Tongala Place Based Plan

With consultation from the Tongala and district community





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# Executive Summary



## Introduction

The Tongala Place Based Plan is a community-led plan designed to strengthen the sense of identity, reflect the community's ambition, and develop clear objectives to guide Tongala's future.





# Developing the Plan

Campaspe Shire Council engaged Projectura in March 2022 to prepare the Tongala Place Based Plan. Council established the Place Based Plan Governance Committee to work alongside Projectura to guide the development of the Plan. The community-led development of the Tongala Place Based Plan occurred between March 2022 and March 2023.

The Plan has been developed with the Tongala and district community to ensure that it is relevant, sensitive to local aspirations and priorities, and achievable.

## Stage 1

Initiate the project and gather information through a community review.

## Stage 2

Establish a shared understanding of the local environment.  
The output from this stage was the issues and opportunities paper.

## Stage 3

Over 580 people (or 15.4% of the Tongala district population) contributed to the Plan's development during June 2022. The purpose of the engagement was to ensure that the community's desires framed the vision, objectives, and action plan. The community contributed their thoughts and opinions through various methods, including virtually, on paper, and in conversation.

## Stage 4

The community deliberated over the broad engagement findings and provided a refined direction for the Plan. Projectura drafted the Plan and worked with the community to test and refine it.

## Stage 5

Projectura collated and responded to feedback from the community and prepared the final Tongala Place Based Plan.





## Strengths

Sense of community  
Community connections  
Local people and spirit  
Location  
Sports and recreation

## Challenges

Facility closure  
Jobs and employment  
Ageing infrastructure  
Housing supply, diversity, resilience, and affordability  
Youth disengagement  
Limited public transport

## The Vision

In 2032, Tongala district is:  
A modern and progressive rural community  
Defined by productive business and agricultural land  
Unified by its strong and inclusive community spirit  
Thriving because of our diverse people and businesses  
A place of excellence



# Objectives

Residents want to retain the town's friendliness, strengthen the excellent sporting facilities and improve the local economy. From these insights, clear objectives were developed to define the community's ambition and to guide decision-making and actions to support its implementation.

The following objectives build the framework for achieving the Tongala vision and developing and prioritising projects and activities.

Objective	Aspirations
1. Our diverse community	<p>In 2032, the people of Tongala district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Welcome everybody</li> <li>▪ Embrace and celebrate diversity</li> <li>▪ Feel safe, respected, and comfortable</li> <li>▪ Engage in bettering our resident's wellbeing</li> <li>▪ Plan for all ages, abilities, and cohorts</li> <li>▪ Are dynamic and vibrant</li> <li>▪ Love their friends and family</li> </ul>
2. Places for living	<p>In 2032, the places of Tongala district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Are well planned, utilised and maintained</li> <li>▪ Cater to the interests and needs of our people</li> <li>▪ Are safe, inclusive, and accessible</li> <li>▪ Reflect the community's character and lifestyle</li> <li>▪ Attractive and enjoyable</li> <li>▪ Promote active living and community connectivity</li> </ul>
3. Economy, activation, and growth	<p>In 2032, the economy of Tongala district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Is sustainable with prosperous tourism and business sector</li> <li>▪ Showcases a diversity of business and industry with a focus on agriculture and manufacturing</li> <li>▪ Provides ample employment opportunities</li> <li>▪ Meets the needs of the community and visitors</li> <li>▪ Has opportunities available for everybody</li> <li>▪ Is supported by a vibrant town centre</li> </ul>

# Projects - Quick Wins

## Quick wins

Within six months.

1	<b>Promote Tongala</b> Establish a township promotional working group (lead community group to be identified through consultation). Focus on consolidating promotional platforms and build on the existing Tongala brand. The working group will continue to update the website and expand to showcase all Tongala district's offerings across various promotional channels.
2	<b>Community leader gathering</b> Establish six-monthly gatherings of community and business leaders, Council and other government agencies, and stakeholders to discuss opportunities to advance and achieve the Tongala vision.
3	<b>More events and activities, particularly multicultural events</b> Continue to deliver a dynamic and vibrant events calendar that aims to bring residents together, welcome and learn about the culture of new residents, have more for young people to do, and attract visitors to the district.
4	<b>Improve council maintenance on facilities and infrastructure</b> Council to provide a level of maintenance for community facilities that aligns with community expectations.
5	<b>A local dog park</b> Establish a fenced free-run dog park in a central location in the Tongala township.
6	<b>Weekend retail trade</b> Create an atmosphere for weekend trading in Tongala township. Encourage businesses to open for weekend trade, promote the town's cultural assets, nurture weekend events, and deliver campaigns to attract people to town during the weekend.



# Projects - Medium Term

Medium term	
Six months to three years.	
7	<b>Youth mentoring and leadership</b> Development and delivery of a youth mentorship and leadership program focused on partnering local businesses with people aged 12 to 25 years to provide real-life skills, partnerships and local opportunities.
8	<b>Indigenous recognition</b> Acknowledge the traditional owners of the Tongala district through inclusion, education, connection and signage.
9	<b>A club for everyone</b> The community will seek opportunities to form groups that unify people with common interests, foster diversity and advocate for inclusion.
10	<b>Tongala Township Facility Plan (TTFP)</b> Council will work with the Tongala Facility Plan Committee to plan for the long-term future of Tongala's facilities and infrastructure to support the ambitions outlined in the Tongala Place Based Plan.  Community facility priorities include determining the future use of all existing facilities, retaining Tongala Pool; constructing a district play space, a splash park, and mountain/BMX bike trails; extending the skate park; and upgrades at the Tongala ovals.
11	<b>Improve mobility, inclusion and access in all public areas</b> Conduct a pedestrian and mobility planning exercise to identify accessibility improvements in Tongala township and implement improvements as per the Plan.
12	<b>Masterplan</b> To support the township achieve its vision and objectives, a Master Plan of Tongala town centre will be developed to bring together the elements of the CBD.
13	<b>Deliver training and upskilling courses</b> Deliver subsidised training opportunities in Tongala. Partner with local employers and education organisations and encourage young people to attend/participate.
14	<b>Boosting business</b> Encourage property owners to improve their property facades. Encourage property owners to offer their buildings rent free or low-cost to artists, creative projects, start-up businesses and community initiatives. Pop-up shops will be installed in vacant shop fronts on Mangan Street to revitalise and bring the main street to life.

# Projects - Long Term

Long term Four to ten years.	
15	<b>Utilise the Nestle site</b> Work with the property owner to encourage a determination of the future use of the Nestle factory. Encourage the consideration of a new industry or facility redevelopment for another use.
16	<b>Facilities for visitors</b> Plan and install facilities in Tongala township to improve RV friendliness and encourage and support tourists and visitors. Improvements include better campgrounds, RV-accommodating spaces, a dedicated site for free camping, dump points for RVs, and public toilets.
17	<b>Places for young people</b> The community will work together to identify an existing space for a youth hub that supports young people aged 12 to 25 years. Extracurricular activities and programs will be delivered from this space.
18	<b>Housing for all</b> Improve housing supply, diversity, quality, and affordability within Tongala. Priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify suitable available land for housing within the Tongala township, and work with landowners to prepare and release available housing land to market.</li> <li>Encourage short-term rental operators to make their properties available for long-term rental.</li> <li>Build affordable, quality key worker housing.</li> <li>Continue to ensure that facilities and infrastructure supports the developments.</li> </ul>
19	<b>Transport</b> Advocate to improve public and community transport for Tongala residents. Improvements include bus routes between Tongala and Echuca, service times for young people, community transport for vulnerable residents, and better secondary school bus services.

## Governance and Evaluation

The Tongala Place Based Plan Governance Committee will oversee the implementation of the Plan.

The Plan will be reviewed annually to determine the status of progress. This will be provided to Council to assist in community planning, budget development and community needs assessment.

A formal review and evaluation of the Plan will be undertaken every four years, in line with the Council term.



# 1. Introduction





# Project Overview

The Tongala Place Based Plan is a community-led plan designed to strengthen the sense of place, reflect the community's ambition, and develop clear objectives to guide Tongala's future.

## Place Based Planning

In response to the changing Tongala community, Place Based Planning was used to plan for the community by directly engaging with community members and focusing on the nuances and character of the district.

Place Based Planning is an approach to guiding community development and planning. It's a way to shape the future by concentrating on the look and feel of places, their form, and their character, instead of conventional land use.

A Place Based Plan is developed through a process of making places better. It involves looking at, listening to, and engaging with community members who live, work and play in a particular location (from a street to an entire town) to understand their needs and aspirations.

Working in partnership, the Council and community identify physical and social assets unique to a locality and capitalise on these to create distinctive and sustainable places.

## Aim

The aim of this project was to engage with a broad cross-section of the community to develop and finalise the Tongala Place Based Plan.

## Methodology and Schedule



## Governance

Campaspe Shire Council engaged Projectura in March 2022 to prepare the Tongala Place Based Plan. A Place Based Plan Governance Committee was established to work alongside Council's project team and Projectura to guide the development of the Tongala Place Based Plan.



# Community Engagement

## Participation

Over 580 people from Tongala participated in the Place Based Plan broad engagement from 1 June to 30 June 2022.

**Table 1. Participation summary**

Total participation	Population (2021)		% of population engaged
586	Tongala township	1,973	29.7
	Tongala district	3,807	15.4

The community contributed their thoughts and opinions through various methods, including virtually, on paper, and in conversation.

Number of people who attended pop-up sessions: 135

Number of survey responses: 446

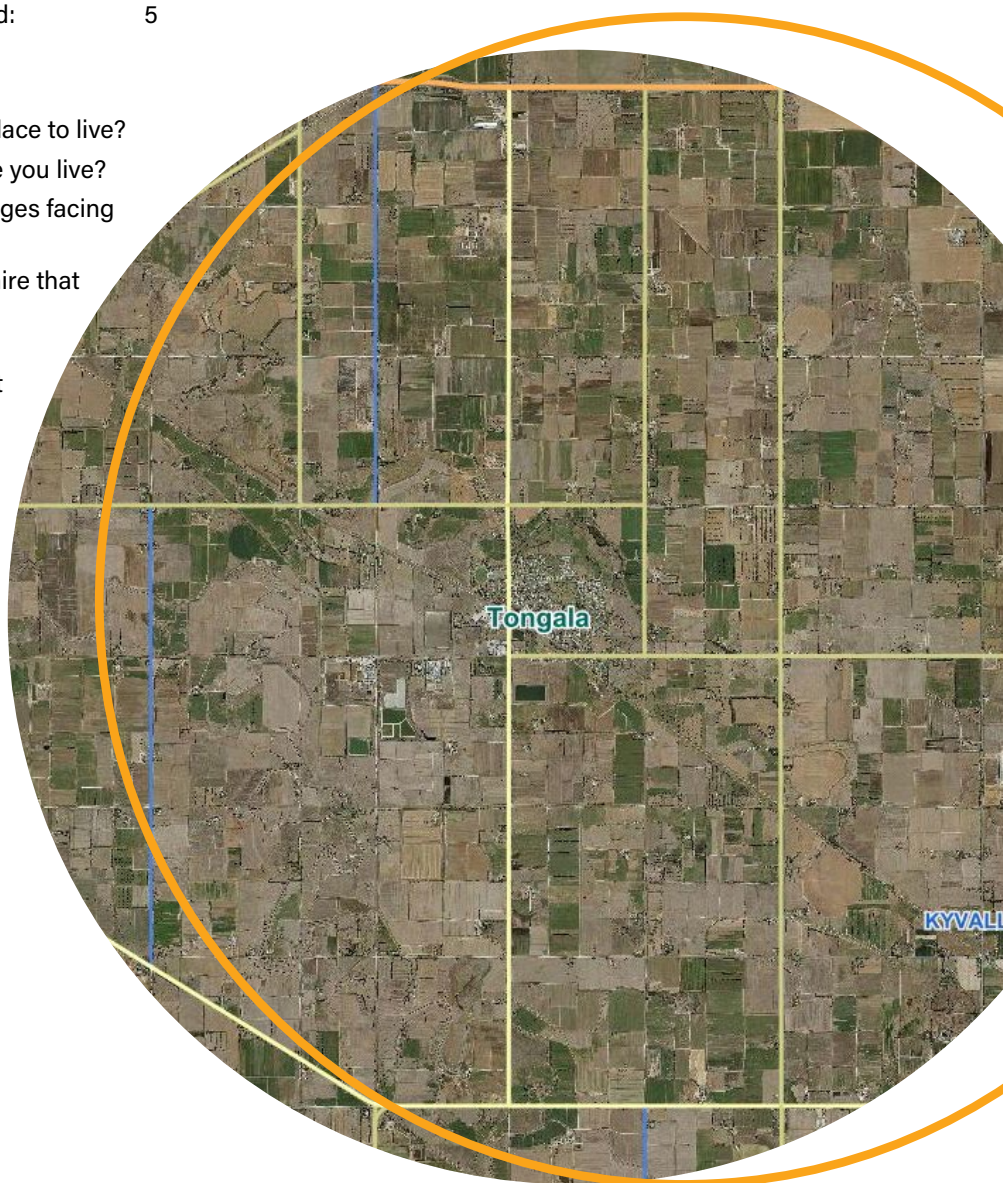
Number of telephone interviews completed: 5

## What we asked

1. What makes your community a great place to live?
2. What is the one best thing about where you live?
3. What do you think are the main challenges facing your community?
4. What have you seen in another area/shire that would work well in your community?
5. What is one thing you would like to see achieved in your community in the next ten years?
6. What services or projects do you think Council should be prioritising or lobbying other levels of government?

## Findings

The findings from the engagement are interspersed in this document. Further details can be found in **Appendix 2**, and full details are in the Engagement Report.







## 2. About Tongala District



# Community

## Location

Tongala is in North Central Victoria Goulburn Valley region, within the Campaspe Shire Council local government area. Situated between Kyabram and Echuca, Tongala is centrally located between the regional centres of Shepparton and Echuca.

Tongala has a population of 3,807, a land area of 476km<sup>2</sup>.

## Local Aboriginal history

Tongala is rested on Yorta Yorta land. The name 'Tongala' is derived from the word 'Dungala', the local Aboriginal word for Murray River. Famous Aboriginal football and subsequent community leader Sir Doug Nicholls started his football career at Tongala.

The community recognises the significant Aboriginal history in the area and is keen on its acknowledgment. Residents aspire for the town to make efforts to embrace and celebrate Tongala's Aboriginal history.

## Lifestyle

Tongala is only a two hour drive from Melbourne and near Kyabram and Echuca. Access to essentials such as doctors, chemist, primary health services, and primary schooling are available in Tongala. Extended services, including health services and secondary education, are available in surrounding localities.

Renowned for its terrific climate, Tongala is known to have more sunny days than Queensland. Tongala's climate is relatively stable, with an average maximum yearly temperature of 21.7 degrees (Elders). The average annual rainfall is 444.6 millimetres.

In recent times, the township has seen significant growth, with new families relocating to live in Tongala.

## Landscape Identity

Tongala has an average elevation of 101 meters and is bordered to the north by the Goulburn and Murray Rivers. Renowned for its rurality, the area is distinguished by its links to dairy, mixed farming, and agriculture. Despite the closure of the Nestle factory, the agricultural industry brings employment diversity and opportunities to residents and forms a part of its landscape identity.

## Built Identity

Tongala features an expanse of pastoral land with a distribution of agricultural industries. The Tongala township is situated away from major highways, offering its residents a quiet lifestyle.

Tongala has a mix of infrastructure and services that support the community, including two centrally located primary schools, two childcare centres, the aged care centre, the post office, and a selection of shops. The water tower was designed by Sir John Monash.

Residents highly value the community's infrastructure in the area. The Tongala district is well represented in all forms of sport, at both adult and junior levels, and has a rich history in sports such as AFL, netball, cricket, and tennis. A range of sports and aquatic facilities support sporting clubs and walking tracks throughout the township that support recreational activity. Places that support community groups include Tongala's Men's Shed, Tongala Shire Hall, and Tongala Library.

Tongala has three churches; St James' Anglican Church, Uniting Church (recently closed), St Patrick's Catholic Church and Embrace Church Tongala.





### Community Activity

Tongala has a strong community spirit, and residents are community oriented. Despite a recent decrease in volunteerism, Australian Bureau of Statistic Census data shows that the Tongala district still has higher volunteering levels than Campaspe and Victoria.

The Tongala district boasts a variety of community groups, including the RSL and Lions Club, the world's first Men's Shed, Aged Care Auxiliaries, Tongala Community Activities Centre, and the Tongala Development Group. A vast volunteer base organises many of the sporting and community functions that happen in the Tongala district. Tongala's vibrant Town Square was opened to mark the 50th anniversary of its Lions Club.

The community has active football, netball, tennis, bowling, swimming, and cricket clubs.

### Arts, Culture, and Events

Tongala has developed strong art and cultural scene and is renowned for its Hay Bale Trail and its mark on the Campaspe Art Trail and Northern Victoria Regional Driving Map. The township displays over fifty murals, mostly located along the main street, depicting the history of Tongala and local flora and fauna. The township is known as the 'Mural Capital of Campaspe'.

The community takes pride in expressing its identity and community spirit. The National Armoured Corps Avenue of Honour and National Cavalry Memorial pay tribute to those who served in the Vietnam War, along with an Australian Light Horse Memorial.

A range of events have been developed and flourish in Tongala, such as the annual Christmas Carols, Tongala Eats and Beats, the Tongala Community Garage Sale, the Tongala Beersheba Car and Bike Show, the Tongala Street Art Classes, and the Tongala Football Netball Club Fun Run.

Recently, the community has embraced the painting of hay bales as a whole-of-town interactive installation event. Beginning with the single illustration of children's characters Bluey and Bingo in 2020, locals and tourists alike have enjoyed the expansion to regular themed events. The Tongala Development Group manages these events.

### Employment and Business

Tongala is home to some of the most rapidly expanding businesses within Campaspe Shire. Backbone industries in the Tongala district include HW Greenham & Sons, SLTEC Fertilizers, CopRice and McColl's Transport.

Nestle had a strong presence in the township until its closure in 2019. Recent announcements confirm the Nestle site has been sold, currently seeking a tenant. The Nestle closure has impacted the demographic and economic structure of the Tongala district. The growth of other businesses will alleviate these effects.

Business expansions at HW Greenham & Sons have seen changes to the demographics of Tongala. Workers from Korea, the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, and the Philippines have settled in the township due to the employment opportunities created.

Even with manufacturing and food production, Tongala is an irrigation district devoted to dairying, beef cattle, sheep, and cereal crops. However, water management is still a vital issue for the farming community.

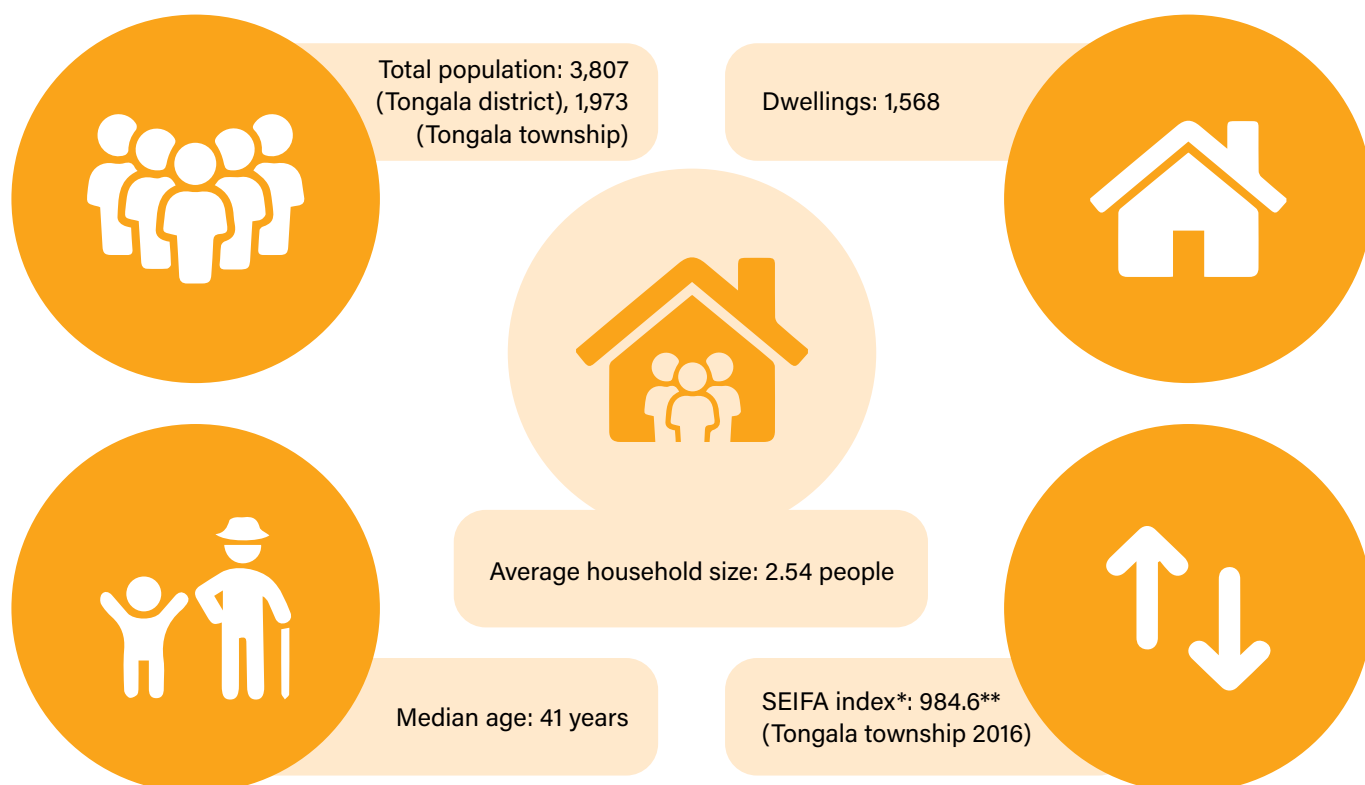
Agriculture, followed by manufacturing, is the highest employment industry in Tongala.

People are also employed in the district at the residential aged care, child care, primary schools, and Council depot.

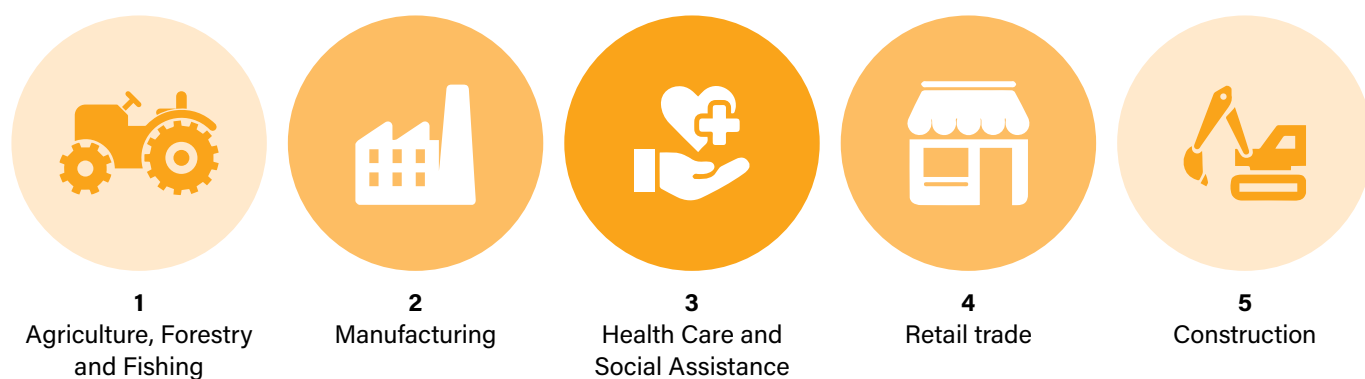
### Services Within the Township

Residents of Tongala are well serviced thanks to small local businesses. These include the chemist, petrol station, mechanics, supermarket, post office, community bank, café and bakery, caravan park, pub, two primary schools, childcare and kindergarten centres, the aged care facility, a community house and primary healthcare facility managed by Kyabram Health. Campaspe Shire Council facilities include a Customer Service Centre and a library. Council's Roads Depot is in the Tongala township, with over fifty Council staff employed there.

### Key Statistics



### Top industries of employment\*\*\*:



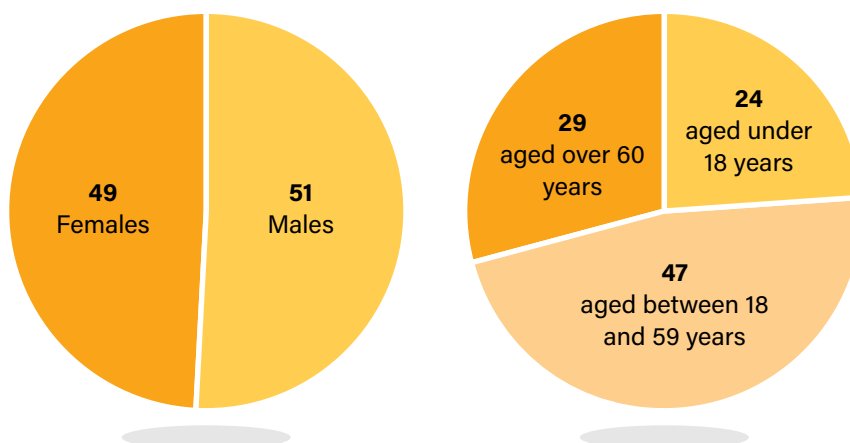
\* The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage in terms of people's access to material and social resources and their ability to participate in society.

\*\* Tongala in the 36th percentile of the index, meaning 64% of Australia's suburbs are more socio-economically advantaged. Tongala's SEIFA score is higher than nearby Rochester (938.4), Echuca (968.6) and broader Campaspe Shire (967). Nearby towns with a SEIFA score higher than Tongala include Echuca West (991.7) and Moama (1,011.5).

\*\*\* Using ANZIC codes.

# People

If Tongala district consisted of 100 people, there would be:



24 with an individual income less than \$400 per week  
6 earned an individual income of more than \$2,000 per week

3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people  
8 born overseas  
4 speaking languages other than English at home

59 are in the labour force. Of these:  
56 working full time  
39 working part time  
4 unemployed and looking for work  
18 who volunteer

35 completed year 12  
58 did not complete year 12

24 living by themselves  
69 living in families

6 have a disability  
13 care for someone with a disability

70 did unpaid domestic work  
24 did no unpaid domestic work  
29 provided unpaid care to children

67 who drove to work  
6 who walked to work  
11 worked at home

38 fully owned their home  
36 were purchasing their home  
18 were renting

92 live in a separate house  
4 live in medium and high density housing  
4 live in caravans or cabins

19 have no internet at home



Note: Not all participants responded to every question

Source: Profile.id. Economy.id. ABS Census 2021 and 2016.

# History

The district grew considerably after the first World War when many returning soldiers settled in the area under the Soldier Settlement Scheme.

- 1841** Edward M. Curr named Tongala.
- 1882** Tongala township, initially on the Goulburn River, moved to where Tongala stands today.
- 1888** A railway line and train station opened in the Tongala township, consolidating the site as a township.
- 1893** Parts of the Shire of Echuca and Waranga Shire formed part of the Shire of Deakin and the Tongala town.
- 1905** The Waranga Basin reservoir on the Goulburn River was completed, and land for irrigation districts were purchased.
- 1909** St. Patricks Catholic Church opened.
- 1910** Kyvalley Tennis Club was founded.
- 1912** Tongala township was gazetted as a town. Tongala Irrigation District and State Rivers and Water Supply Commission were created.
- 1913** St James Anglican Church opened.
- 1914** Tongala water tower was designed by Sir John Monash, and constructed.
- 1916** Tongala described by Victorian Municipal Gazetteer as an agricultural town.
- 1920** After the First World War, further irrigation channels were established, and soldiers took up farming around Tongala.
- 1925** The Tongala Bush Nursing Memorial Hospital opened to commemorate fallen soldiers in the First World War.
- 1926** A post office and postmaster's quarters were built. Kyvalley Hall established and managed by Trustees. Today is managed by the volunteer Kyvalley Progress Association Inc.
- 1940** Decision made to establish Tongala Fire Brigade as part of the North Eastern Fire District from 1941.
- 1946** Regional schools consolidated in Tongala.
- 1953** The redeveloped Tongala swimming pool is officially opened.
- 1970** Nestle acquires butter and cheese factory, the Northern Dairy Co. and plant for evaporated milk.
- 1971** New offices were built for the Shire of Deakin in Tongala.
- 1974** Lions Club Milk and Honey Festival held.
- 1978** First Tongala Tent Town, Victoria's biggest art and craft festival.
- 1980** The swimming pool complex at Kyvalley Primary School was officially opened by Dr L. Shears, Director of Education. The land was later purchased by the former Shire of Deakin and bestowed to the community to operate.
- 1982** Burn the Dunny Festival held (received worldwide publicity).
- 1982** Tongala Community Leisure Centre opened at the Recreation Reserve.
- 83/84** Tongala Football Club wins the senior Goulburn Valley League premiership.
- 1987** Centenary of the Kyvalley Primary School.





# History

- 1987** Toolamba to Echuca railway celebration. Station removed and replaced with a replica.
- 1993** HW Greenham & Sons Pty Ltd plant established.
- 1993** Shire of Deakin Centenary celebration.
- 1993** Golden Cow Dairy Education Centre opened (created as a Shire of Deakin memorial).
- 1993** Major flood in the region.
- 1994** Under statewide amalgamations, the Shire of Deakin became part of the Shire of Campaspe.
- 1998** First Men's Shed was established as 'The Dick McGowan Men's Shed' at the Tongala Aged Care Complex.
- 2001** Town murals opened.
- 2001** Classics on the Goulburn with Victorian Symphony Orchestra held (2001 and 2002).
- 2003** Australian Light Horse Memorial was unveiled by Maurice Watson.
- 2004** National Armoured Corps Avenue of Honour was unveiled by the Governor General of Australia Major General Michael Jeffrey ACC.
- 2011** National Cavalry Memorial Vietnam 1965-1972 opened.
- 2014** Golden Cow Dairy Education Centre closes down.
- 2018** Tongala Beersheba Car and Bike Show established.
- 2019** Nestle announces intention to close Tongala factory.
- 2020** Tongala Hay Bale Trail events start.
- 2021** Tongala Eats and Beats established.
- 2022** Uniting Church of Tongala closes.
- 2022** Tongala Town Square was created to mark the 50th anniversary of Tongala Lion's Club.



# Strengths

The Tongala district has many strengths, including:

### Sense of Community

People in the Tongala district are community-minded, friendly, and supportive. Local shops are enjoyed by the community and used as regular meeting places. There is a sense of safety and family in the town. Multiple clubs and groups support shared interests, including sports, history, and the arts.

### Community Connections

There are strong friendships and relationships within the community and a sense of familiarity for many community members. Many people have lifelong ties to the area.

### Local People and Spirit

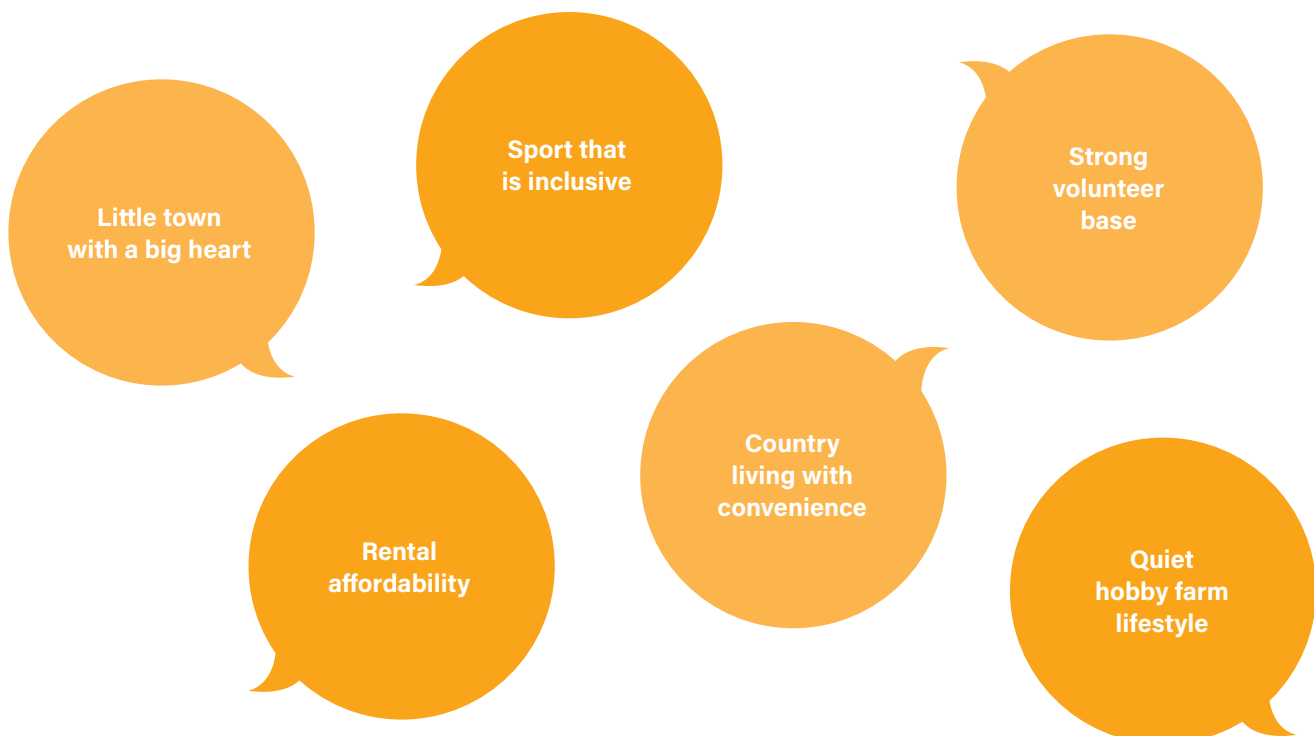
Residents are determined and engaged with the community's activity. Volunteerism in the town has supported the sustainability of organised clubs, facilities, events, and activation.

### Location

Tongala offers residents a peaceful and quiet place far from major highways but centrally located between major regional centres and services. Tongala's township offers necessities for its residents and visitors. The district's location gives people an authentic rural atmosphere that supports a relaxed lifestyle.

### Sports and Recreation

The community attaches pride to its strong sporting culture with a diversity of sporting clubs available to its residents. Volunteer groups actively support the sports clubs. Tongala district has multi-use facilities to support its sports and recreational values, including walking tracks for casual enjoyment.





# Challenges

The community identified several local challenges so that, through this Plan, we can positively respond to change.

## Facility Closure

People in the Tongala district community are concerned about the risk of reduced community assets, particularly the community pool. Some residents reported that pool usage in recent years has lessened, but there is a high concern that the closure of the community pool will impact the community.

## Jobs and Employment

Residents are generally concerned about labour shortages in the community and the effects this might have on the community. With the closure of the Nestle factory, there is a risk of a decrease in job availabilities in manufacturing. With nearly half of the community working in agriculture and manufacturing, there is worry about the diversity of career options available.

## Ageing Infrastructure

There is an identified need for infrastructure to keep up with the pace of growth of the Tongala area. Residents are concerned about the current and future conditions of the Tongala stadium, public toilet facilities along the main street in Tongala, and general community assets. There is also concern that heritage overlays on buildings within the Tongala township prevent necessary infrastructure upgrades from occurring. The community are concerned about the conditions of current infrastructure when compared to facilities in other localities in the shire.

## Housing Supply, Diversity, Resilience, and Affordability

With the community's aspiration to support community growth, there is a concern that the housing supply and affordability will not keep up. With widespread property value increases, rental availability is becoming limited, and using shop fronts in Tongala township for residential means may hinder business growth. The Tongala community have identified a need for a greater land supply for housing developments to support current residents and workers of major industries in the local area.

## Youth Engagement

Decreased youth engagement, activity in the community, and a lack of activities targeted to young people were a concern. With a decrease in the interest in participating in sporting clubs and volunteering, residents are worried about the impacts of the succession of community clubs.

## Limited Public Transport

The Tongala community are concerned about the impact of limited public transport on connectedness to surrounding towns.



# Opportunities

## Housing

Improving availability and affordability of housing will make it easier for people to move to, and live in, the Tongala district. Tongala district is home to many family households (68.8%). 73.5% of dwellings are fully owned or mortgaged, and many residents live in caravans and cabins (3.8%) compared to the state average (0.9%). Further work is required to identify options for dedicating residential zones to affordable housing options.

## Boosting Jobs and Employment

Nearly half of the community is employed in agriculture (22%) and manufacturing (15.7%). There is a growing migrant workforce in Tongala. Concerns over the closure of the Nestle site were high, and some residents expressed concern about a lack of training and upskilling opportunities in the local area.

## Revitalising the Economy

Attract a new industry, such as manufacturing to diversify the economy to combat the decline in dairy farm operations. Residents would like to see the Nestle site redeveloped, and unoccupied shop fronts in Tongala's Mangan Street revitalised.

Opportunities and incentives for businesses to occupy empty shops in Mangan Street were a strong priority for the community. Opportunities could include temporary shop pop-ups and short-term leases. The development of a shopping precinct would require further consultation to determine the community's and visitors' business needs. The street development could boost the community's social wellbeing and strengthen the economy through tourism.

## Addressing Ageing Infrastructure for Sports and Recreation

The community values its sports and recreation opportunities. Many people expressed desire to redevelop the Tongala pool. The development of a Township Facility Plan will further investigate community expectations, various infrastructure conditions and operational costs to meet industry standards.

The sporting culture in the Tongala district is strong, and the maintenance of its facilities is a high priority. Opportunities for the recreation reserve upgrades include a grandstand, oval lighting and change rooms for women.

Works are underway to complete remedial works at the Tongala Tennis Clubrooms. The first stage (design) has been completed, with the second stage (construction) to be completed by June 2023.

## A Vision for Tongala's Township Master Plan

Open spaces provide the community with social, health, wellbeing, environmental and economic benefits. The community's feedback concentrated on redeveloping existing open spaces to accommodate all ages, abilities and needs. Ideas included developing a free-run dog park, a sensory and nature playground, a sculpture/public art park, and building facilities at playgrounds, such as toilets, shelter, and seating. Connecting existing spaces with combined walking and cycling tracks was also a popular opportunity presented by the community. To support the township to achieve the vision objectives, a Township Master Plan will be developed to bring together the elements of the CBD.

## Continuously Improving and Planning

Regular communication and collaboration between the Council and community groups to explore opportunities could be beneficial.

## Population Demographics

There is strong community support to retain its young people. The closest secondary schools are in Kyabram, followed by Echuca and Rochester. Reliable transport to nearby secondary schools and vocational education sites could be beneficial.

Aged-based activities and programs could benefit younger cohorts. These could be mentorship programs, community-run events or, as one respondent suggested, a Youth Action Group.

## Developing Unique Experiences

Tongala has the opportunity to reinforce its position in the local and regional tourism market by evolving its assets and activities to brand Tongala as a unique experience. This will boost economic and social outcomes for the community and support the vision of the town.



### 3. Tongala District Ambition





## Vision

In 2032, Tongala district is:

A modern and progressive rural community

Defined by productive business and agricultural land

Unified by its strong and inclusive community spirit

Thriving because of our diverse people and businesses

A place of excellence

## Objectives

Residents want to retain the town's friendliness, consolidate the excellent sporting facilities, and improve the local economy. From these insights, clear objectives were developed to define the community's ambition and to guide decision-making and actions to support its implementation.

The following objectives build the framework for achieving the Tongala vision and developing and prioritising projects and activities.

- 1. Our diverse community**
- 2. Places for living**
- 3. Economy, activation, and growth**



# 1. Our Diverse Community

## Aspirations

In 2032, the people of Tongala district:

- Welcome everybody
- Embrace and celebrate diversity
- Feel safe, respected, and comfortable
- Engage in bettering our resident's wellbeing
- Plan for all ages, abilities, and cohorts
- Are dynamic and vibrant
- Love their friends and family

## Priorities

### More Events and Activations

Tongala is well-known by residents as being vibrant and active, with a lively calendar of events. More community activities offer an excellent opportunity to increase local and visitor engagement. The Tongala community will work together to deliver regular events and activities that promote social connection, inclusion, and entertainment.

### Promoting Tongala

The community will consolidate its promotions on various platforms that showcase events and activations, contributing to a Tongala brand. Further advancement of the Tongala community website will increase exposure outside the area. The community will continue to update the website and expand to showcase all Tongala offers across various promotional channels.

### A Club for Everyone

The community will seek opportunities to form community groups that unify people with common interests, foster diversity and advocate for inclusion. Prioritised groups include a Youth Action Group and groups that reflect the community's diversity, such as a multicultural group. The community will actively promote existing clubs to encourage participation.

### Tongala-Council Meetings

Continued collaboration between community members and Council is essential to build rapport and trust. The community will work with Campaspe Shire Council to establish a channel for regular communication and opportunities for community members to partake in town planning activities.

### Funding Workshops with Council

Community groups will gather community leaders and stakeholders (including Council) twice yearly to discuss opportunities to seek funding and stimulate activity in the community.



## 2. Places For Living

### Aspirations

In 2032, the places of Tongala district:

- Are well planned, utilised and maintained
- Cater to the interests and needs of our people
- Are safe, inclusive, and accessible
- Reflect the community's character and lifestyle
- Attractive and enjoyable
- Promote active living and community connectivity

### Priorities

#### Tongala Township Facility Plan

In partnership with the Tongala Township Facility Plan Committee, Council will plan for the future of Tongala's assets that support the objectives outlined in the Tongala Place Based Plan. The Committee will review operational costs and current conditions of facilities to plan to retain the community's most sustainable assets.

The Plan will prioritise multi-use facilities, ensure facilities are inclusive and accessible, and increase community participation in sports, recreation and community life.

Community facility priorities include determining the future use of all existing facilities, retaining Tongala Pool; constructing a district play space, a splash park, and mountain/BMX bike trails; extending the skate park; and upgrades at Tongala ovals.

#### Multi-use Sports Facilities

Continuous monitoring and reporting of the condition of facilities is key to supporting Tongala's sporting culture. The community will monitor and maintain existing amenities and facilities so that everybody can access various sporting and recreation opportunities.

#### Expand Sport and Recreation Opportunities

The sporting culture in Tongala is valued and having more options will increase community participation. The community will seek opportunities to expand the current sporting and recreation opportunities for the community that are inclusive and accessible for all.

#### District Play Space

A project to upgrade the playgrounds at Potts Village Green and Lions Park and Tongala skatepark presents an opportunity for universal recreation for the community. This will include consideration for facilities like shelter, seating, toilets, and BBQ areas. Plans could include connecting existing parks and reserves with a network of cycling-walking trails and the development of a sensory of nature park and walk. Connecting places could extend between towns in the district to encourage cycle tourism.

#### A Local Dog Park

Establish a fenced free-run dog park in a central location within Tongala township.



## 3. Economy, Activation, and Growth

### Aspirations

In 2032, the economy of Tongala district:

- Is sustainable with prosperous tourism and business sector
- Showcases a diversity of business and industry with a focus on agriculture and manufacturing
- Provides ample employment opportunities
- Meets the needs of the community and visitors
- Has opportunities available for everybody
- Is supported by a vibrant town centre

### Priorities

#### Weekend Retail Trade

The Tongala community will support local businesses to open for weekend trade to encourage tourism and economic growth.

#### Boosting Business

The community will encourage property owners to offer their buildings rent free or low-cost to artists, creative projects, start-up businesses and community initiatives. Pop-up shops will be installed in vacant shop fronts on Mangan Street. Business activation in Mangan Street will increase attention to Tongala's arts and historical attractions.

#### Future Use of Nestle Site

Work with the property owner to encourage a determination of the future use of the Nestle factory. The old factory could be redeveloped for another relevant agricultural or manufacturing industry, or a new use could be imagined. Alternatively, the infrastructure could be used for multiple purposes, depending on community needs and interest from industry.

#### Facilities for Visitors

Improvements to campgrounds will encourage and support a higher number of tourists and visitors that will pass through the district. Facilities to improve or introduce include RV-accommodating spaces, a dedicated site for free camping, dump points for RVs, and public toilets.

#### Transport

Increasing the services available to young people will help to retain a substantial youth population. The community will aspire to secure reliable services to assist young people in attending secondary school and other education sites not within the Tongala township or district.

#### Housing for all

Housing across Tongala is limited, and housing prices have risen significantly. Campaspe Shire Council will work with the Tongala community and relevant stakeholders to identify areas of the district to improve residential development that is affordable and accessible. The residential zone expansion will coincide with the district's economic growth and reduce housing inequalities.

## Action Plan - Quick Wins

The following projects and activities were prioritised by the community to achieve their vision.

Project name	Objective	Partners	Resourcing	
EFFORT - E (Low effort) EE (Mid effort) EEE (High effort)				
COST - \$ (Under \$999), \$\$ (\$1,000-9,999), \$\$\$ (\$10,000-49,999), \$\$\$\$ (\$50,000-499,999), \$\$\$\$\$ (\$500,0001 +)				
<b>Quick wins</b> - Actions to be achieved in under six months.				
A quick win is an improvement that is visible, has immediate benefit, and can be delivered in the short term. The quick win needs to be something stakeholders agree to and works towards the combined vision for the community.				
1	<b>Promote Tongala</b> Establish a promotional arm of the Tongala Development Group. Consolidate promotional platforms and build on the existing Tongala brand. The community will continue to update the website and expand to showcase all Tongala offers across various promotional channels.	1. Our diverse community	To be Identified	E\$
2	<b>Community leader gathering</b> Establish six-monthly gatherings of community and business leaders, Council and other government agencies, and stakeholders to discuss opportunities to advance and achieve the Tongala vision.	1. Our diverse community	To be Identified	E\$
3	<b>More events and activities, particularly multicultural events</b> Continue to deliver a dynamic and vibrant events calendar that aims to bring residents together, welcome and learn about the culture of new residents, give more for young people to do, and attract visitors to the district.	1. Our diverse community	To be Identified	EEE\$
4	<b>Improve Council maintenance on facilities and infrastructure</b> Council to conduct levels of service activities to align community desires with maintenance service levels.	2. Places for living	To be Identified	EE\$\$\$
5	<b>A local dog park</b> Establish a fenced free-run dog park in a central location in the Tongala township.	2. Places for living	To be Identified	EE\$\$\$\$
6	<b>Weekend retail trade</b> Create an atmosphere for weekend trading in Tongala township. Encourage businesses to open for weekend trade, promote the town's cultural assets, nurture weekend events, and deliver campaigns to attract people to town during the weekend.	3. Economy, activation, and growth	To be Identified	EEEE\$

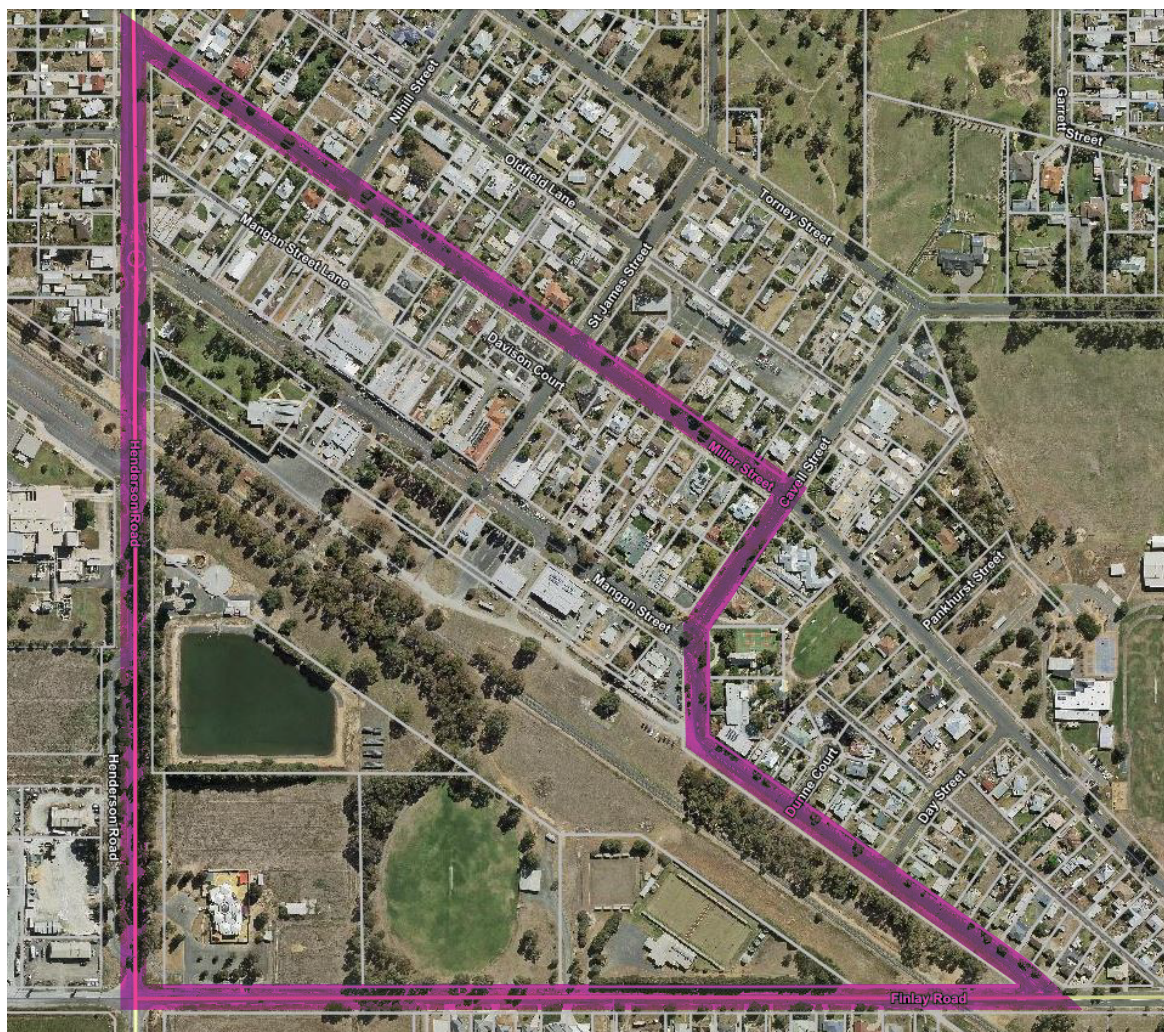


## Action Plan - Medium Term

Project name		Objective	Partners	Resourcing
EFFORT - E (Low effort) EE (Mid effort) EEE (High effort)				
COST - \$ (Under \$999), \$\$ (\$1,000-9,999), \$\$\$ (\$10,000-49,999), \$\$\$\$ (\$50,000-499,999), \$\$\$\$\$ (\$500,0001 +)				
<b>Medium term</b> - Actions to be achieved in six months to three years. These actions mobilise the community and develop the confidence to invest further in the community. Partnerships with key organisations, government and community groups will be required to deliver these projects.				
7	<b>Youth mentoring and leadership</b> Development and delivery of a youth mentorship and leadership program focused on partnering local businesses with people aged 12 to 25 years to provide real-life skills, partnerships and local opportunities.	1. Our diverse community	To be Identified	EE\$\$
8	<b>Indigenous recognition</b> Acknowledge the traditional owners of Tongala through inclusion, education, connection and signage.	1. Our diverse community	To be Identified	EEEE\$\$\$
9	<b>A club for everyone</b> The community will seek opportunities to form groups that unify people with common interests, foster diversity and advocate for inclusion.	1. Our diverse community	To be Identified	E\$
10	<b>Tongala Township Facility Plan (TTFP)</b> Council will work with the Tongala Facility Plan Committee to plan for the long-term future of Tongala's facilities and infrastructure to support the ambitions outlined in the Tongala Place Based Plan.  Community facility priorities include determining the future use of all existing facilities, retaining Tongala Pool; constructing a district play space, a splash park, and mountain/BMX bike trails; extending the skate park; and upgrades at Tongala ovals.	2. Places for living	To be Identified	EEEE\$\$\$\$
11	<b>Improve mobility and access in all public areas</b> Conduct a pedestrian and mobility planning exercise to identify accessibility improvements in Tongala township, and implement improvements as per the Plan.	2. Places for living	To be Identified	EEEE\$\$\$\$

# Action Plan - Medium Term

Project name	Objective	Partners	Resourcing
EFFORT - E (Low effort) EE (Mid effort) EEE (High effort)			
COST - \$ (Under \$999), \$\$ (\$1,000-9,999), \$\$\$ (\$10,000-49,999), \$\$\$\$ (\$50,000-499,999), \$\$\$\$\$ (\$500,0001 +)			
<b>Long term</b> - Actions to be achieved in four to ten years.			
These actions provide opportunities for investment and lead to real change, long lasting impact and community strengthening. Partnerships with key organisations, government and community groups will be required.			
12	<b>Township Master Plan</b> To support the township achieve its vision and objectives, a Master Plan of Tongala town centre will be developed to bring together the elements of the CBD. This includes war memorials, open spaces, streetscape, public amenities, monuments, infrastructure, technology and tourism attractions current and future. This is to support and promote Tongala's point of difference.	2. Places for living	To be Identified
			EE\$\$\$\$





## Action Plan - Medium (cnt)

Project name	Objective	Partners	Resourcing
13 <b>Deliver training and upskilling courses</b> Deliver subsidised training opportunities in Tongala. Partner with local employers and education organisations and encourage young people to attend/participate.	3. Economy, activation, and growth	To be Identified	E\$\$\$
14 <b>Boosting business</b> Support property owners to improve their property facades. Encourage property owners to offer their buildings rent free or low-cost to artists, creative projects, start-up businesses and community initiatives. Pop-up shops will be installed in vacant shop fronts on Mangan Street to revitalise and bring the main street to life.	3. Economy, activation, and growth	To be Identified	EE\$\$\$\$



## Action Plan - Long Term

Project name		Objective	Partners	Resourcing
15	<b>Utilise the Nestle site</b> Work with the property owner to encourage a determination of the future use of the Nestle factory. Encourage the consideration of a new industry or facility redevelopment for another use.	3. Economy, activation, and growth	To be Identified	EEE\$
16	<b>Facilities for visitors</b> Plan and install facilities in Tongala township to improve RV friendliness and encourage and support tourists and visitors.	3. Economy, activation, and growth	To be Identified	EE\$\$\$\$
17	<b>Places for young people</b> The community will work together to identify an existing space for a youth hub that supports young people aged 12 to 25 years. Extracurricular activities and programs will be delivered from this space.	2. Places for living	To be Identified	EE\$\$\$\$
18	<b>Housing for all</b> Improve housing supply, diversity, quality, and affordability within Tongala. Priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify suitable available land for housing within the Tongala township, and work with land owners to prepare and release available housing land to market.</li> <li>Encourage short-term rental operators to make their properties available for long-term rental.</li> <li>Build affordable, quality key worker housing.</li> <li>Continue to ensure that facilities and infrastructure supports the developments.</li> </ul>	3. Economy, activation, and growth	To be Identified	EEEE\$\$\$\$
19	<b>Transport</b> Advocate for further funding towards public and community transport for Tongala residents. Funding priorities include bus route expansion, particularly between Tongala and Echuca, service times suitable for young people, community transport for vulnerable residents, and accessible secondary school bus services.	3. Economy, activation, and growth	To be Identified	EEEE\$



# Implementation

This Plan will be implemented and continuously evaluated by the community.

The successful implementation and evaluation of this Plan relies on:

- Appropriate levels of resourcing
- Ongoing commitment from various stakeholders to work in partnership to advance Tongala's ambition.

## Governance

Council established the Place Based Plan Governance Committee to oversee the implementation of the Tongala Place Based Plan.

In line with the previous processes, Council will oversee an EOI process for all community members to self-nominate their interest

Evaluation of applications will be based on the following principles:

- They have strong community links
- Communication skills (online and verbal)
- Diversity of background
- Key interest in the projects identified in the Place Based Plan.

## Implementation

The Place Based Plan Governance Committee will develop an annual delivery plan. The annual delivery plan will set out the projects and activities for implementation, the timelines for the actions to be conducted and any budgetary considerations for these actions.

## Evaluation

The Tongala Place Based Plan will be reviewed annually to determine progress status. This will be provided to Council to assist in community planning, budget development and community needs assessment.

A formal review and evaluation of the Tongala Place Based Plan will be undertaken every four years, in line with the Council term.



# Appendix 1.

## Context

### State

The **Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023** uses an evidence-informed and coordinated approach to improve health and wellbeing by engaging communities and maximising opportunities for health protection, health promotion and preventative healthcare. Priorities with focus areas include tackling climate change and its impact on health; increasing healthy eating; increasing active living; and reducing tobacco-related harm. The Plan identifies three strategic actions for each of the four focus areas.

### Local

In the **Campaspe Shire Council Plan 2021-2025**, Council identifies community needs and local issues to be addressed over the four years of the elected Council. The Plan outlines five areas of focus including developing the local economy; ensuring critical places are fit-for-future use; working with communities; advocacy for long-term solutions; and partnering with service providers.

**Campaspe Tomorrow** is a strategic plan developed in direct response to community input. The community's ten-year vision is: 'Our places are vibrant and sustainable; our people are strong and supportive.' The vision will guide future strategic and operational plans. Six key priorities were developed including a sense of community; our places; activity for all; opportunity for all; healthy environments; and engaged and participative people.

**Campaspe's Environment Strategy 2018-2022** aims to protect the Shire's environment through delivery of programs and services to support a healthy and connected community. Conservation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, community engagement and partnerships, and Council's responsibilities were identified.

**Campaspe's Economic Development Strategy 2014-2019** guides Council's implementation of economic development priorities. The Strategy also informs day-to-day Council tasks aimed at promoting the Shire, attracting investment, and supporting business and industry growth.

Campaspe Shire plays an important role in facilitating the growth and development of children. The **Campaspe Shire Municipal Early Years Plan 2017-2021** involves four themes: 'the best possible start'; 'high quality, sustainable services and infrastructure'; 'support vulnerable children'; and 'family friendly places'.

The **Places of Assembly/Council Facilities** policy informs decisions on planning, provision, and management of places of assembly and community facilities across the shire. Seven principles are outlined to be applied for future planning. The policy also categorises facilities into a hierarchy based on capacity and level of amenity: 'local', 'township' and 'district'.

The **Road Management Plan** establishes a management system for the management and inspection of municipal roads and road related infrastructure, as well as identification and repair of defects. The key elements of the Plan include: a system of management; a public road register; powers and duties of road authorities; civil liability; protection against damage; and processes for inspection, maintenance, and repair.

**Campaspe Open Space Strategy 2022-2032** is a long-term planning document guiding Council decisions about use, development, and management of open spaces across the municipality. Recommendations are provided for each township.

Campaspe Shire Council adopted the **Active Transport Strategy 2019** to dramatically increase the number of people walking and cycling. The strategy also aims to make getting to school by walking or cycling more attractive, and to create walking and cycling towns, and connected and liveable developments.

**Campaspe's Access and Inclusion Strategy 2020-2026** to effect change for community members who face barriers and to increase healthy, inclusive living. This strategy broadened the scope of Communities of Priority to nine cohorts to respond to the changing nature of communities.

Produced in 2021, **Creative Campaspe** is a ten-year strategy with three priority areas: 'support the artistic and cultural endeavours of communities within Campaspe'; 'ongoing sustainable management of Council's arts and cultural assets'; and 'development of a public art management framework for Campaspe'.

The **Event Strategy 2019-2024** is a five-year plan to guide the Council's support for events. The strategy builds off the objectives set out in the Council Plan including: strong and engaged communities; resilient economy; healthy environment; balanced services and infrastructure; and responsible management.



# Appendix 2.

## Community Engagement Details

### Engagement

The engagement aimed to:

- Gather a broad and deep understanding of Tongala's local environment
- Develop a community vision and principles to guide decision making
- Analyse opportunities and develop actionable projects
- Test and receive feedback on the Plan

Over 600 people contributed to the future of the Tongala district by participating in a range of community engagement activities.

An initial workshop was held in April 2022 to identify issues and opportunities for the project. Broad community engagement activities followed over the month of June 2022. Then, during August and September 2022 two deliberative engagement workshops were held with community and Council representatives to test and refine the progress made on the Plan. The draft Tongala Place Based Plan was tested with the community, and 49 people participated in sessions and provided feedback to refine and finalise the Plan.

## Appendix 2. Community Engagement Details

The Engagement Report outlines the engagement participation and findings.

The table below outlines the community engagement activities.

Method	Date	Summary	Participation (Number of people)
Stage 2: Issues and opportunities			
Workshop	27 Apr 2022	Workshop to introduce the project and discuss issues and opportunities.	30
Stage 3: Broad engagement			
Survey	1-26 Jun 2022	Survey was available online through Council's website, via QR codes on flyers and posters, and in hard copy.	446
Primary school sessions	3 Jun 2022	Two 1.5 hour workshops with Grade 3 and 4 students. One workshop each with students from Tongala Primary School, and St Patrick's Catholic School.	37
Street pop up	3 and 4 Jun 2022	Two street pop ups. One in front of the IGA supermarket, on Mangan St Tongala on 3 June, and one outside the Tongala Post Office, Mangan St, Tongala on 4 June.	78
Pop up	4 Jun 2022	Pop up engagement with residents and visitors to the Tongala FNC v Congupna match at Tongala.	20
Telephone interviews	22 – 27 Jun 2022	Targeted phone interviews with industry leaders in the Tongala.	5
Deliberative engagement workshops	29 Aug 2022 and 5 Sep 2022	Two 3 hour workshops to deliberate on the community engagement findings, test them, and refine for inclusion in the Draft Place Based Plan.	49
Stage 4: Draft Tongala Place Based Plan			
Community feedback survey	13 February to 24 March 2023	Feedback survey circulated through out the community to gauge community sentiment on the plan.	15 surveys completed
	TBC	Public submissions following exhibition of the Draft Tongala Place Based Plan.	TBA
Promotion of Survey	3 March 2023	Pop up session promoting plan and survey at the IGA in Tongala area.	60
	18 March 2023	Pop up session promoting plan and survey at the Tongala square community day.	100
	March 2023	DL brochures with QR codes directing Tongala residents to the plan and survey distributed through Australia Post PO Boxes.	300 DL Brochures circulated
	Feb March 2023	Hard copy survey available at the Tongala Community House (TCAC) and the Campaspe Shire Council Service Centre.	N/A
	Feb- March 2023	Press release sent to Tongala Times. Multiple posts via council's Facebook and LinkedIn profiles. Promoted through Council's half page advertisement in the Riverine Herald.	N/A
	20 March 2023	Final community session facilitated to promote plan and engage community members to participate in the delivery of projects.	10
Tabled to Council	April – June 2023	Plan to be tabled to Council for formal review.	N/A