

One Gippsland Policy Document

2020





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About Gippsland

Gippsland is Victoria's largest region, located in the south east of the state.

The region has a population of almost 287,000, growing at the state average of 4 per cent per year. Gippsland is home to a diverse community including Aboriginal communities, people from the United Kingdom, Europe, Asia, Africa and South America. In contrast to the Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong regions, where the population is centred in regional cities, Gippsland's population is spread more evenly among several substantial and important regional centres.

Gippsland has a diversified economy, with a strong tourism industry welcoming almost nine million visitors to the region annually, a robust food and fibre sector and manufacturing and construction industries. Gippsland's energy sector produces 97 per cent of Victoria's natural gas, 14 per cent of Australia's oil and generates the majority of Victoria's electricity supply.

While Gippsland does face challenges, its advantages provide the foundation for the area to become Australia's most liveable region by 2040. Gippsland aspires to offer a vibrant place to live and work, with quality and easily accessible education, health, community facilities and services, in an area surrounded by natural attractions, and a community respectful of its people and its land. This will be underpinned by a strong economy, connected nationally and internationally, whose clean and green products and innovative ideas are delivered to a global marketplace.

About One Gippsland

One Gippsland is the peak regional advocacy body representing the Gippsland region. We aim to connect the dots between government, business and community, while collectively working together to champion the interests of our region and our people.

It is our mission to create a thriving and dynamic region that harnesses our social, environmental and economic capabilities so that we can offer residents opportunities for great lifestyles, prosperity and access to services at all stages of life.

One Gippsland members collaborate on a range of initiatives and activities to achieve our vision through strong and unified advocacy to State and Commonwealth governments and agencies.

What we do:

- **United voice:** Be the combined voice for Gippsland communities to address regional issues;
- **Advocacy:** Advocate for State and Commonwealth Government policies and programs that support economic prosperity through innovation, facilitation and education;
- **Go-to peak body:** Develop positive relationships and encourage open dialogue with the State and Commonwealth governments;



- **Investment:** Create the opportunities for the State and Commonwealth governments and the private sector to invest in Gippsland to support economic prosperity, social capital and access to services; and
- **Environmental stewardship:** Take a leading role in advocating for environmental stewardship and sustainable use of natural resources.

Our team comprises of Gippsland's leaders in local government, industry and education, who work collaboratively to secure funding and policy results for the region.

Gippsland - A Strong Region in Recovery

This Budget Submission sets out the rationale for investment in our region by highlighting the economic challenges endured, while demonstrating how investment in connectivity, health, education and liveability enablers will create more jobs. It also focuses on leveraging our region's vast natural endowments to help kick-start the region's economic recovery.

Like much of Australia, and indeed the world, Gippsland is currently undergoing unprecedented challenges, including long-term drought, the 2020 bushfire season and the COVID-19 pandemic.

A recent report produced by SGS Economics shows that Gippsland has undergone a series of economic shocks that have impacted the economic output of the region. Between 2015 and 2020 the combined effect of the COVID-19 restrictions, bushfires, dairy crisis, drought and the Hazelwood closure have had the following impact:

- Direct output loss of **\$3.28 billion**;
- Combined direct and indirect output loss was **\$6.86 billion**;
- A total of **10,213 job losses** (direct and indirect); and
- Gross Regional Product shrunk by **\$2.66 billion**.

The closure of the native timber industry closure is expected to negatively impact direct output by **\$548 million** and further shrink Gross Regional Product by **\$431 million** in the next 10 years.

Gippsland also faces growing competition for products and investment in the increasingly globalised world economy. Competition comes from larger scale, denser urban centres that outperform Gippsland because of their geographic concentration of people, capital and resources, knowledge institutions and service delivery. In order to meet this challenge, the Gippsland region needs to enhance its connectedness to both Australia and the world, not only digitally, but through all modes of transport, including land, sea and air.

Gippsland must also recognise and address the fact that its diverse geography results in variable digital coverage across the region and challenges the resilience of transport and digital networks in times of natural disaster.



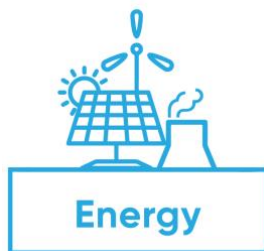
Despite these challenges, Gippsland has great growth aspirations with target increased growth across these important areas:

- Australia's **most liveable region**;
- Attracting **75,000** new residents;
- Increasing **Gross Regional Product to \$23.2 billion**;
- Increasing **renewable energy** use by 40 per cent by 2040;
- **One-hour commuter rail**: Melbourne to Warragul; and
- Raising **Year 12 attainment** to regional Victorian average (current 75 per cent).

This document outlines a clear path forward by investing in enablers to build on the regions natural endowments.

The Path Forward - Focusing on Our Natural Endowments

Gippsland's existing economic prosperity and amenity has, and will continue to be, based on its wide-ranging natural assets. The region's environment encompasses rich biodiversity, spanning alpine regions, lakes and water catchments, coastal parks, wetlands, forests and reserves providing habitat to some of Australia's most iconic creatures, along with rich agricultural lands and mineral and energy resources. These natural assets underpin the region's economy from food, fibre and forestry, to energy and tourism.



Energy

Gippsland has been an Australian leader in making the transition to cleaner, less greenhouse intensive energy – through its natural assets – skilled workforce and established energy infrastructure.

As Victoria and Australia progress to a cleaner energy future, less carbon-intensive gas is likely to remain in use for some time as a transitional energy source. As Gippsland has 97 per cent of Victoria's natural gas, the region is well positioned to supply the State's energy needs during this transition period.

Gippsland's existing energy infrastructure provides a significant regional advantage. The region is home to an efficient and well-maintained, high capacity, high voltage transmission and switch yard network transmitting energy to Melbourne, the national electricity grid, and Tasmania. As Australia transitions away from greenhouse intensive fossil fuel generation, this established transmission network will enable significant volumes of locally generated renewable energy to be delivered to key markets.

The potential source of this new, cleaner energy lies in the region's good solar conditions and high quality on and off-shore wind conditions, which can build on the region's three existing wind farms. Community investment in solar photovoltaic projects, and trials in community energy, are also contributing to Gippsland's energy mix evolution and improving users' power supply resilience, affordability and reliability.

Waste to energy presents another potential opportunity for Gippsland, with an environmental risk/benefit analysis and risks to be undertaken.

Gippsland is also leading the way in the investigation of the commercialisation of carbon capture, storage and utilisation technology. CarbonNet's Gippsland project can contribute to the reduction of Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions and help establish new energy sources such as hydrogen. Gippsland also has promising off-shore carbon capture storage sites which can lessen the greenhouse gas emission impact.

Food and Fibre



While the food and fibre sector remains the backbone of Gippsland's economy, the sector is facing significant pressure.

The region's dairy, meat, horticulture, fish and forestry sectors contribute almost half of Gippsland's \$16 billion Gross Regional Product however, factors such as climate change and government policy to end native timber harvesting by 2030 demand either adaption or extinction of industries.

While these challenges must be managed, there are still strong opportunities for the food and fibre sector through anticipated increases in global demand.

Gippsland is already renowned for its food's clean, green and nutritious qualities and can do more to take its high value products to domestic and international markets. In addition to enhanced marketing and promotional efforts, maximising digital connectivity, innovative manufacturing and improved logistics and access to airports and ports can all help boost Gippsland's access to these markets.

Tourism



Gippsland's tourism attractions range from surf to snow – with its coast, lakes, parks and ski fields – to globally renowned events such as the MotoGP and Penguin Parade. The region also offers visitors something for the palate, with gourmet foods and wines, and something for the soul, through Traditional Owner cultural heritage.

The future of the region's tourism industry lies in the creation of memorable and high yield tourism experiences and major events to capitalise on the region's proximity to Melbourne, with the goal of increasing regional tourism numbers beyond the current nine million annual visitors.

This requires additional investment in:

- The overarching marketing and coordination of the regional tourism offering to promote the broader Gippsland experience;
- Tourism infrastructure and training to accommodate more overnight visits and tourist spending; and
- Improved transport links to attractions and experiences.

Two areas of potential growth which capitalise on the region's natural assets and competitive advantage, and which will generate employment are:

- Collaboration between tourist attractions and the food and fibre sector, which can lead to more memorable tourism experiences; and



- Assistance to Traditional Owners to give Gippsland's visitors a unique and memorable experience by sharing their arts, culture and environment in an appropriate manner, which will create cultural benefit.

The foundation of Gippsland's past and present prosperity are the keys to the region achieving its goal of becoming Australia's most liveable region . This will mean continued reliance on the region's relative water security, clean, green food and fibre products, unspoilt natural places, rich cultural and historical heritage, biodiversity, and great health and wellbeing.

Gippsland will continue to need to balance interdependence between its industries, its lifestyle and a healthy environment to grow its regional advantages. Some industries will need to transition and communities will have to adapt, and all will need to embrace both new technology and ancient wisdom to ensure the future.

The Path Forward – Investing in Our Enablers

Despite the myriad of challenges from drought, bushfires, power station closures, native timber transition, the COVID-19 pandemic and significant population growth in Baw Baw and Bass Coast Shire, Gippsland has the resources to diversify and build a new economy.

Gippsland can leverage its natural advantages and competitive points of difference to transition to a more diverse and agile, future workforce and industry mix.

The region must adapt to a new, low-carbon world of digitalisation, innovation and automation. This means that while relying on traditional strengths in food and fibre, tourism, and energy supply, it must also add health, and education to its economic pillars.

Harnessing innovation and automation, Gippsland can increase its expertise, meet its healthcare and social assistance needs, and deliver the required professional, scientific and technical services and education and training.

This will ensure Gippsland is well placed to leverage the knowledge economy and satisfy emerging work and lifestyle choices.



Connectivity – Road, Rail, Broadband and Mobile

Connecting Gippsland's dispersed towns and communities through first-rate digital and transport services is key to ensuring the region's future competitiveness and cohesiveness.

Increased internet bandwidth and speed through digital infrastructure investment will connect communities to each other and the world, enabling virtual work and widening employment pools by modifying business approaches to place-based work. Bolstered by the anticipated post-pandemic population shift from the city to the regions, high-quality digital infrastructure will empower Gippsland to promote the opportunity to work in a satisfying, highly paid job, while enjoying the amenity of a beautiful regional location.

Currently, knowledge-based businesses, including information technologies, finance and insurance, property, professional and technical services, education, administration and support services provide 22 per cent of Gippsland's economic output. The knowledge economy is an enabler of future prosperity and growth through research, investment, development and commercialisation.

Collaborations between local industries, research institutions and capital investment funds are the pathway to a successful future, facilitating advanced manufacturing using the innovative technologies of the future.



Emerging digital technologies such as Low Power Wide Area Network (LPWAN) are providing opportunities for Gippsland's industries and amenities. LPWAN has the potential to help farmers manage the water needed for their crops in a more environmentally friendly and efficient manner, calculate water temperatures in aquaculture settings and even assist in traffic flow in Gippsland's cities and towns.

Gippsland's economic future also requires efficient transport links, intermodal facilities and connections, and greater utilisation of improved regional airports and ports, as well as an airport in Melbourne's southeast with international freight facilities to service Gippsland's export products.

Faster and more efficient links to markets and source materials will attract investors to Gippsland's renewable and clean energy and high-end manufacturing sectors, as well as value-adding industries in the food and fibre sector.

Gippsland's established transport corridors already provide a significant competitive advantage, creating linkages between towns and communities which facilitate the sharing of services, employment pools and supply chains, while connecting the region to markets and services in Melbourne, Canberra, regional NSW and Sydney.

Gippsland's integrated regional and transport planning framework is future ready, focused on liveability, environmental management, tourism and trade. It must also take account of industry and community needs and encourage shared services models that extend beyond traditional municipal boundaries.

Planning for Gippsland's major road corridors, including the Princes, Bass and South Gippsland highways, must:

- Anticipate heavier and more frequent freight volumes carrying clean and green premium fresh produce;
- Identify and eliminate current and potential bottlenecks and blackspots;
- Improve safety;
- Relieve pressure on the region's secondary roads; and
- Enhance the liveability of towns by the creation of bypasses or more efficient and less disruptive routes through them.

Finally, future planning and development in towns and the region's growth areas, such as Baw Baw and Bass Coast, needs to adapt to the changing work and lifestyles of Gippsland's changing population. It must ensure both the amenity and services to attract and keep new residents, as well as the digital infrastructure to support the new economy of the fourth industrial revolution.



Highly Educated and Skilled People, Life-Long Learners

Education, from early years through lifelong learning, is an essential building block to achieve Gippsland's vision as Australia's most liveable region.

While Gippsland's participation and completion rates in both secondary and tertiary education have improved in the past decade, they remain below state averages and require further action and encouragement to continue progress to enhance trade skills and complete tertiary degrees. Work undertaken to identify the barriers and create pathways to increasing levels of education must continue.

Further, at a time when traditional industries in energy and forestry are transitioning, there will be a need for reskilling many in the current workforce who will be affected by the changes.

As the knowledge economy expands and the demand for continuing upskilling increases, the local provision of education at the tertiary and continuous education level will be essential to attract and retain Gippsland's population. The creation of regional education hubs, the enhancement of digital communication and the collaboration between industry and education organisations to provide skills, training programs and industry placements to meet the needs of current and emerging industries, are critical components.

Gippsland will rely on a range of high-quality education and training facilities, including Federation University's Gippsland campus in Churchill, TAFE Gippsland's multi-campus vocational education and training institute, regional university centres at Bairnsdale, Sale and Wonthaggi, and a network of Registered Training Organisations. In particular, nimble education services will be required to meet the needs of current and emerging industries such as renewable and clean energy, food and fibre, health and advanced manufacturing, mine rehabilitation and supply chain logistics.



A Healthy, Happy Inclusive Community

A healthy, happy inclusive community is a prerequisite to Gippsland's goal of becoming Australia's most liveable region. This requires not only physical, social, community and digital infrastructure, but a vibrant, diverse and optimistic population which is confident of its community values, welcoming to new ideas and newcomers, as well as embracing of traditional wisdom.

As Melburnians seek alternatives to the capital city's congestion and frustrations, Gippsland can be an attractive region for young professionals and families and multicultural communities seeking alternate country lifestyles, lower density living, more affordable housing and reduced commuting time.



In seeking to position itself as the “tree change” destination of choice and drive population growth, Gippsland should undertake a comparative analysis of its own strengths and weaknesses against Victoria’s other regional areas. The region should continue to embrace cultural and social diversity, as well as ensuring that housing stock, health, education and community assets are appropriate and can accommodate future population growth and needs.

Gippsland’s future population will work longer and live longer, and increase the demand for health services, therefore creating further demand for health-related employment and capability.

In particular, as Gippsland’s population changes and grows, so will the demands on the region’s health system – in terms of chronic, lifestyle, addiction, mental health and ageing- related illnesses. The health and community services systems will need to develop and shift to a regional model that strengthens community-based delivery of preventive, early intervention and positive ageing initiatives, to ensure the ongoing health and wellbeing of the community.

This means that more locals should be able to access core health care services without having to travel outside Gippsland. It will require better universal access to health services, attracting and retaining specialists in rural and remote areas, growing hospital and community service capacity and infrastructure and better utilisation of telehealth services.

Gippsland also needs to identify and address any drivers of social exclusion, such as age, health, disability, economics, education or lack of community facilities and employment opportunities. Expanding existing community connection initiatives such as neighbourhood houses, community kitchens, men’s sheds, youth groups and multicultural/multifaith networks to enhance community inclusiveness and prevent isolation across the age, culture and diversity spectrum will be a priority.

In addition, the creation of safe places and programs for Aboriginal communities to practice their culture, improve their health outcomes, education and employment participation will be critical to closing the gap to disadvantage, along with the education of non-Aboriginal people and businesses to be more culturally aware.

Member Biographies

Cr Brett Tessari – Mayor, Bass Coast Shire Council (Chair of One Gippsland)

Brett Tessari is a third generation local who is very passionate about the Bass Coast community and where we live. Brett is an active community member, having been President of the Wonthaggi Power Football Netball Club for five years and a member of the Wonthaggi Relay For Life Committee, presiding as Master of Ceremonies for the event for the past two years.

Brett has worked across the Shire on Phillip Island, Inverloch and currently in Wonthaggi. Brett wants to get people passionate again about where we live and reinstall community pride in Bass Coast.



Ms Ali Wastie, CEO – Bass Coast Shire Council

With degrees in Arts, Education and holding a Masters of Diplomacy and Trade, Ali has held executive positions within the Victorian Public Service and Local Government. She is also an accomplished Board Director across the not-for-profit, community, tourism and health sectors. She is an accredited executive coach, mediator and alumnus of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Before joining Bass Coast Shire Council, Ali's prior roles within the Local Government sector include Director City Communities at Melbourne City Council and Director of Social and Economic Development at Yarra Ranges Council.



Cr Danny Goss – Mayor Baw Baw Shire Council

Cr Goss was elected as a Councillor for Baw Baw Shire in October 2016, and also served as Deputy Mayor for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 terms, before being elected as Mayor in November 2019, for the 2019-20 term.

Cr Goss first worked in education as a teacher until 1978 and after that as a self-employed small businessman in a variety of operations. After going back to University and completing his Accounting qualifications Danny was admitted as a CPA in 1992. Following this, he has owned and operated his Accounting Practice in Morwell since 1995. He primarily advises small businesses on taxation and business success. He is also a Specialist Self-Managed Superannuation Specialist.

Danny has been an active participant on Council's Audit Committee for the duration of his Council term, and passionately advocates for greater transparency and sound financial management.



Mr Mark Dupe, CEO – Baw Baw Shire Council

Mark joined Baw Baw Shire Council in September 2017 as the Director Corporate and Community Services and was appointed to the Chief Executive Officer position in May 2020.

Before Mark commenced at Baw Baw Shire Council, he held positions of General Manager Corporate Services at the National Heart Foundation, Director Corporate Development at Knox City Council and Group Manager Corporate Services at Bayside City Council.



Cr Mendy Urie – Mayor, East Gippsland Shire Council

Originally training as a nurse and midwife, Mendy Urie returned to study as a mature age student, graduating from Swinburne University with an MBA and Masters Strategic Foresight in 2015 and from Groupwork Institute with an Advanced Diploma in Group Facilitation in 2020.

Since 2012 Mendy has served for seven years on the Board of Bairnsdale Regional Health and also served for seven years on the Committee of Management of Bairnsdale Recycling Enterprise Inc ('The Tip Shop').



With a keen interest in helping groups do great work together, Mendy is excited about contributing her skills and energy through Council to help build an East Gippsland which is future-focused, with strong, inclusive, creative communities and which takes the science of climate change into account when planning for the future.

Mr Anthony Basford, CEO – East Gippsland Shire Council

Anthony joined East Gippsland Shire as CEO in November 2018. He has more than 20 years' experience in rural and regional, interface and metropolitan Council's in Victoria and NSW.

He has also spent time in the not-for-profit and education sectors in Australia and overseas. Anthony has a passion for working in local government and with people to achieve the best possible outcomes for communities.



He has a Bachelor of Education (Secondary) and a Master of Social Science (Policy and Human Services).

Ms Leigh Kennedy, Head of Campus, Gippsland (Churchill) – Federation University

Leigh joined Federation University in March 2019 as Head of Campus, Gippsland. Prior to this, she served as Gippsland Regional Director at Regional Development Victoria. Leigh has worked with Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, consulting firm Accenture (2000-2006), and British bank Standard Chartered Bank (2006-2014).



As Head of Campus, Gippsland, Leigh is responsible for facilitating the integration and engagement of the campus in the wider university operations and in the local, regional context. She represents the university locally and engages collaboratively with local community, industry and government leaders to advance the engagement strategy for the Gippsland campus.

Mr Barry Rogers, Chair – Food & Fibre Gippsland

Barry Rogers is the Chair of Food & Fibre Gippsland Inc, contributing many years of Board, industry, and community experience in Gippsland.

Barry volunteers, supporting young people and the environment, as chair of the Latrobe Youth Space Inc., Baw Baw Communities that Care and Rotary District 9820 Youth Exchange Program committee. He is a board member of the Baw Baw Latrobe Local Learning and Employment Network, member of the Warragul Regional College Council and of West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority's Community Engagement Network subcommittee.



He has been a part of the *Gippsland Community Leadership Program* for more than 25 years through his involvement with the alumnus, board member/chair, executive director, and program manager, espousing the theme "Growing Gippsland's Leaders".

He is a leadership developer, trainer, and coach at business consultancy Aerium Pty Ltd. As an accredited *5 Behaviours of Cohesive Teams* and *NLP* (Neuro Linguistics Programming) facilitator and *everythingDiSC* practitioner, he works to support community members, board directors, and senior managers grow and hone their leadership skills.

Ms Nicola Pero, CEO – Food & Fibre Gippsland

Nicola brings globally developed leadership and Board experience across multiple sectors including food and fibre, visitor economy, strategic events and venue development, regional development, and education. Nicola was a previous CEO at Lardner Park and the current CEO of Food & Fibre Gippsland. She has been a Board Director with Destination Gippsland for several years, Governor-in-Council Appointee to Federation University Australia Council, previous Board Director with Agribusiness Gippsland and then Food & Fibre Gippsland.



Cr Sharon Gibson – Mayor, Latrobe City Council

Sharon Gibson is a West Ward Councillor and was first elected to Council in December 2008, October 2012, October 2016 and again in 2020. Cr Gibson served one term as Mayor and four terms as Deputy Mayor with three being consecutive. Cr Gibson has been elected for a second term as Mayor of Latrobe City Council



Sharon is a trained Grief Counsellor, ran a sexual abuse survivor support group and has worked extensively in the Counselling area, including the courts. She has been actively involved with Community and Business Associations. She has worked across the country in finance, computers, accounting and personal assistant sectors and has managed a ski lodge at one of the ski resorts.

Sharon sits on four State MAV Committees, including Emergency Management Transport, Environment and Professional Development Reference and has done for many years.

Mr Steven Piasente, CEO – Latrobe City Council

Steven has more than 27 years of experience working for local communities, having held the majority of senior management roles in local government and having worked in the Gippsland Region for all of that time.

Steven has held a diverse range of roles including Infrastructure Director, Community and Economic Development Director and Corporate Services Director.

Steven led the development of significant major infrastructure investments in the community including the new Gippsland Regional Aquatic Centre and Latrobe Creative Precinct. In addition to this, he has led major policy initiatives and improving service delivery.



Steven's formal qualifications are in Engineering. He also has qualifications in Business Administration. Steven has successfully managed a small retail business for over seven years.

Ms Kerryn Ellis, CEO – South Gippsland Shire Council

Kerryn Ellis is a passionate public sector leader with more than 20 years' experience.

Prior to this role, Kerryn held the position of Director Corporate Services at Victoria's Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission. She has also held positions as Director Corporate Performance with the City of Greater Bendigo, and Manager Governance and Innovation at Knox City Council.



She has previously worked for the City of Melbourne and Bayside City Council. Kerryn holds a Bachelor of Arts, a Master of Commerce and a Graduate Diploma of Public Policy and Management.

She completed the LGPro Emerging Leaders' Program in 2005, and the Executive Leadership Program in 2016.

Ms Julie Eisenbise, Chair Administrator – South Gippsland Shire Council

Julie is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has served as a Local Government Councillor and Mayor. Following the dismissal of South Gippsland Shire Council in June 2019, Julie was appointed by the Minister for Local Government as Chair of Administrators for South Gippsland Shire. She is currently a Victorian Grants Commissioner which enables her to have abroad view of Local Governments across the State. She has worked on a multitude of community advisory committees and several Boards.



Julie was the Executive Director of Global Business Development at RMIT University until 2013. She worked on collaborative projects with private, public and industry sectors, both locally and internationally.

Mr Grant Radford, CEO – TAFE Gippsland

Grant Radford has been in the CEO role at TAFE Gippsland since March 2018, being formally appointed to the role in Aug 2018.

Mr Radford comes to the role of Chief Executive Officer with TAFE Gippsland having held senior executive management roles in the Commonwealth and Victorian governments and the TAFE sector.



He previously held the role of Chief Operating Officer at Chisholm Institute for 10 years directly prior to commencing at TAFE Gippsland and spent 12 years in the public sector, including roles with the Department of Defence, Department of Education and Training and Department of Treasury and Finance.

Mr Des Powell AM, Chair – TAFE Gippsland

Desmond (Des) Powell AM has been on the TAFE Gippsland Board since July 2016 and Chair of the Board since July 2016.

Mr Powell brings a significant background in senior executive and leadership roles in the private and public sectors with experience in Transport and Logistics, Water, Land and Environment and Community and Social Services and Education.



He currently holds roles including being a sessional Commissioner of the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation, Director Barwon Water Corporation, Director Victorian Regional Channels Authority, and Director and Chair of TAFE Gippsland.

Cr Garry Stephens – Mayor, Wellington Shire Council

Garry was elected to Wellington Shire Council in 2016 and again in 2020 and is the current serving Mayor. He has an Associate Diploma in Business Management (Local Government) from RMIT and has worked at Drouin, Foster and Yarram, the latter as Chief Executive Officer of the former Alberton Shire.

Following council amalgamations in 1994, Garry operated an electrical and home living store before retiring in 2016. In 2006 Garry completed a Graduate Diploma of Business Management through Monash Gippsland, majoring in Human Resource Management.



Mr David Morcom, CEO- Wellington Shire Council

David grew up in the Gippsland region, before joining Westpac Bank as an Economics Graduate in 1988, based in Hobart. He spent 12 years in the Finance and Banking sector, including seven of those years working for Westpac's affiliate and subsidiary operations in countries throughout the Pacific region.

In 2000 David moved to local government, after being appointed General Manager for Break O'Day Council in Tasmania. He spent three years in this role, followed by three years as General Manager Corporate Services, Mildura Rural City Council. He then spent more than five years as CEO for the Barossa Council in South Australia, where he was also a member of RDA Barossa.



David returned to the Gippsland region after being appointed CEO of Wellington Shire Council in January 2012. As well as holding a degree in Economics, he holds post graduate qualifications in Management and is a Fellow of the Governor's Leadership Foundation in South Australia.

For More Information

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