



Committee for
GIPPSLAND



**Regional
Development**
Australia
GIPPSLAND



GIPPSLAND FREIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE MASTER PLAN





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Committee for Gippsland and the Regional Development Australia Gippsland Committee acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country and recognise their continuing connection to the land, water, air and sky, culture and community. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

We acknowledge the region for the Gippsland Freight Infrastructure Master Plan is on traditional lands, including those lands of the Gunaikurnai, Bunurong, Wurundjeri, and Taungurung nations as well as other Traditional Owner Groups in Victoria who are not formally recognised.



On behalf of the Committee for Gippsland and the Regional Development Australia Gippsland Committee we are pleased to be able to present the Gippsland Freight Infrastructure Master Plan (GFIMP) 2023 - 2028.

Our region is in the midst of a once-in-a century transformation. As we embrace Gippsland's Clean Energy Future as well as new export markets and sustainable development, a large determinant of the success in our ability to make these transitions will be the cohesiveness and efficiency of Gippsland's freight task.

The GFIMP offers a clear way forward, identifying critical infrastructure and initiatives, regulatory reforms, improved access to skills, training, and job opportunities across rail, roads, and ports to meet the changing demands of the freight industry and all industries it supports.

By conducting a comprehensive engagement with business and industry, regional leaders and the community, this document seeks to highlight the many strengths of our region and identify the opportunities for investment in freight infrastructure and key initiatives to drive considered and intermodal freight priorities forward.

Gippsland is taking a lead role in the clean energy future for Victoria and, indeed, the whole country. The GFIMP will lay the foundations to ensure we can meet the needs of existing and new industries across land, sea and air transport networks. We have unparalleled natural resources, a solid base of infrastructure and network connections, a skilled workforce with a proud history of supplying agriculture, dairy, food and fibre, extractive resources, and manufacturing, which all depend on the broader freight task.

This document aims to provide an essential strategic toolkit when working collaboratively with governments, industry and the community to help deliver critical freight infrastructure we all depend on.

Rochelle Wrigglesworth
Committee for Gippsland Chair

Michelle Dowsett
RDA Gippsland Chair

About Committee for Gippsland

The Committee for Gippsland (C4G) is a positive and influential voice for Gippsland, helping to create a thriving and sustainable future for our region.

As Gippsland's lead industry voice to government, C4G advocates for business and industry views to collaborate on regional priorities. This collaboration brings broader benefit to our regional communities.

C4G's membership is diverse and includes well established industries such as energy, agriculture, health and educational sectors, as well as professional services, tourism and an array of small to medium businesses.

About RDA Gippsland

The Regional Development Australia Gippsland Committee (RDA Gippsland) is a volunteer group of business and community leaders which support economic development outcomes in the region.

RDA Gippsland identifies and advocates for regional priorities and projects that leverage Gippsland's strengths and brings investment to the region and creates local jobs.

RDA Gippsland draws upon the data, knowledge, experience and opinions of regional alliances, partnerships and networks to support regional strategic planning through the Gippsland Regional Plan Leadership Group.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Purpose

The Gippsland Freight Infrastructure Master Plan (GFIMP) 2023 - 2028 intends to set out the infrastructure and actions necessary to enable more efficient movement of the wider Gippsland freight task. It identifies current and emerging freight issues and opportunities as well as barriers to growth and emerging markets.

This includes identifying and prioritising investments in critical infrastructure, regulatory reforms, improved access to skills training and job opportunities, and planning to ensure the communities in Gippsland can accommodate the future freight task.

The 2023 GFIMP includes a review, and subsequently replaces the previous GFIMP developed in 2013.

An Industry-led and Collaborative Approach

The development of GFIMP included extensive engagement with industry who provided feedback on the issues, challenges and opportunities to improve freight infrastructure and conditions within Gippsland.

In addition, various state, local and other government agencies provided input relating to an economic development, policy and implementation perspective. Industry and government feedback were utilised to validate the themes and subsequent priorities that emerged from the development of the GFIMP.

The Master Plan Priorities

GFIMP identifies a total of 34 priorities developed with industry feedback, including 30 infrastructure type projects and four supporting initiatives and strategies. These include a range of road, rail, sea and air freight opportunities across the six Local Government Areas (LGAs) which form the Gippsland region.

The ten highest priorities from GFIMP and the four supporting initiatives are outlined below:

Industry's Highest Priorities

- Traralgon Bypass
- Warragul-Drouin Arterial Road Network
- Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Bypass (Stage 2)
- Sale Alternate Truck Route
- Princes Highway (West of Longwarry) – Major Upgrades and Reinstate 100+km/h speed limit
- Princes Highway Sale to Bairnsdale Duplication
- Princes Highway (East of Bairnsdale) – Major Upgrades
- South Gippsland Highway – Major Upgrades
- Additional Turnouts and Sidings on the Gippsland Railway Line
- Third International Airport

Supporting Initiatives

- Developing the Freight Industry and Workforce
- Improved Partnerships between Freight Industry and Government
- Local Road Funding and Investment including First and Last Mile
- Review Road Safety Barrier Guidance with Industry Input



1. FREIGHT IN GIPPSLAND

1.1. FREIGHT IN GIPPSLAND

The Economic Importance

The economic importance of the freight industry in Gippsland should not be understated. Annually, Gippsland's Gross Regional Product (GRP) is worth more than \$18 billion. The maintenance, continued expansion and improvement of our freight network is imperative to leveraging this GRP and an emerging clean energy sector. It is therefore critical that freight infrastructure investment decisions be appropriately planned with an eye on the future.

Generators of Freight in Gippsland

Historically, the main generators of freight movements in Gippsland have been the dairy, livestock, horticulture, quarrying and forestry industries.

As we look towards the future, we see the continued growth in the well established extractive and energy industries. There is also major potential in the clean energy sector as well as the diversification of our capabilities with waste recovery, renewable energy and niche manufacturing.

The Key Challenge

While the region 'punches above its weight' in terms of economic output, it has been historically challenged by an over emphasis on two major road arterials that are perpetually playing catch-up, as well as an inadequate Gippsland rail freight network.

These existing networks are the lifeblood of supply chains and have served the region well. There must be renewed focus on ongoing performance of the existing networks and alternate enhanced freight options.

In this regard, while a robust and efficient arterial network is critical to support the economic activity of the region, the vital importance of 'first and last mile' (including local bridges) in maintaining this activity must also be recognised.

INDUSTRY AND FREIGHT IN GIPPSLAND – FAST FACTS



41,500

km² of Gippsland
land area (approximately)



290,987

estimated Gippsland's resident
population as of 2020



127,781

estimated employed
persons in Gippsland as of 2020



97%

of Victoria's natural gas and 85% of the
state's electricity is from Gippsland



28.6%

of Victoria's dairy produce is from
Gippsland farms as well as 23.4% of the
state's beef and 19% of its vegetables
are produced in Gippsland



16 m

trees will be planted in Gippsland to shore
up timber supply and support the region's
well established forestry industry

1.2. FREIGHT TRANSPORT NETWORKS

Gippsland Freight Transport Networks and Infrastructure

Freight transport networks within Gippsland include a range of land, sea and air transport infrastructure.

The bulk of freight is transported within the road network, in particular on the Principal Freight Network (both road and rail) and other state arterial roads. The most significant route of these is the Princes Highway national highway route (the 'A1') which connects Melbourne to Sydney via Gippsland.

There are alternative freight and transport routes to the A1, such as the C245 from North-Eastern Melbourne through the Yarra Valley into Gippsland. This arterial road, for example has the potential to be an additional freight route with investment made towards upgrades, passing lanes and safety works.

The National Road Network currently operates along the Princes Highway between Melbourne, Traralgon and Sale where it terminates. These road networks are supported by and connect to a range of other freight infrastructure including sea, air and rail.

Table 1.1 outlines the key freight routes and nodes within Gippsland.

Mode of Freight	Description of Key Freight Routes and / or Nodes
Road	Principal Freight Network (PFN) - Road Primary and Secondary State Arterial Roads Local Freight Routes, including First and Last Mile Freight roads connecting freight generators with the wider arterial road networks
Rail	Principal Freight Network (PFN) - Rail Gippsland Railway Line, connecting Melbourne to Bairnsdale
Ports and Airports	A range of supporting ports and airports which provide a range of functions including connections to specialised freight and industry within Gippsland.

Table 1.1 Key Freight Routes and Nodes within Gippsland

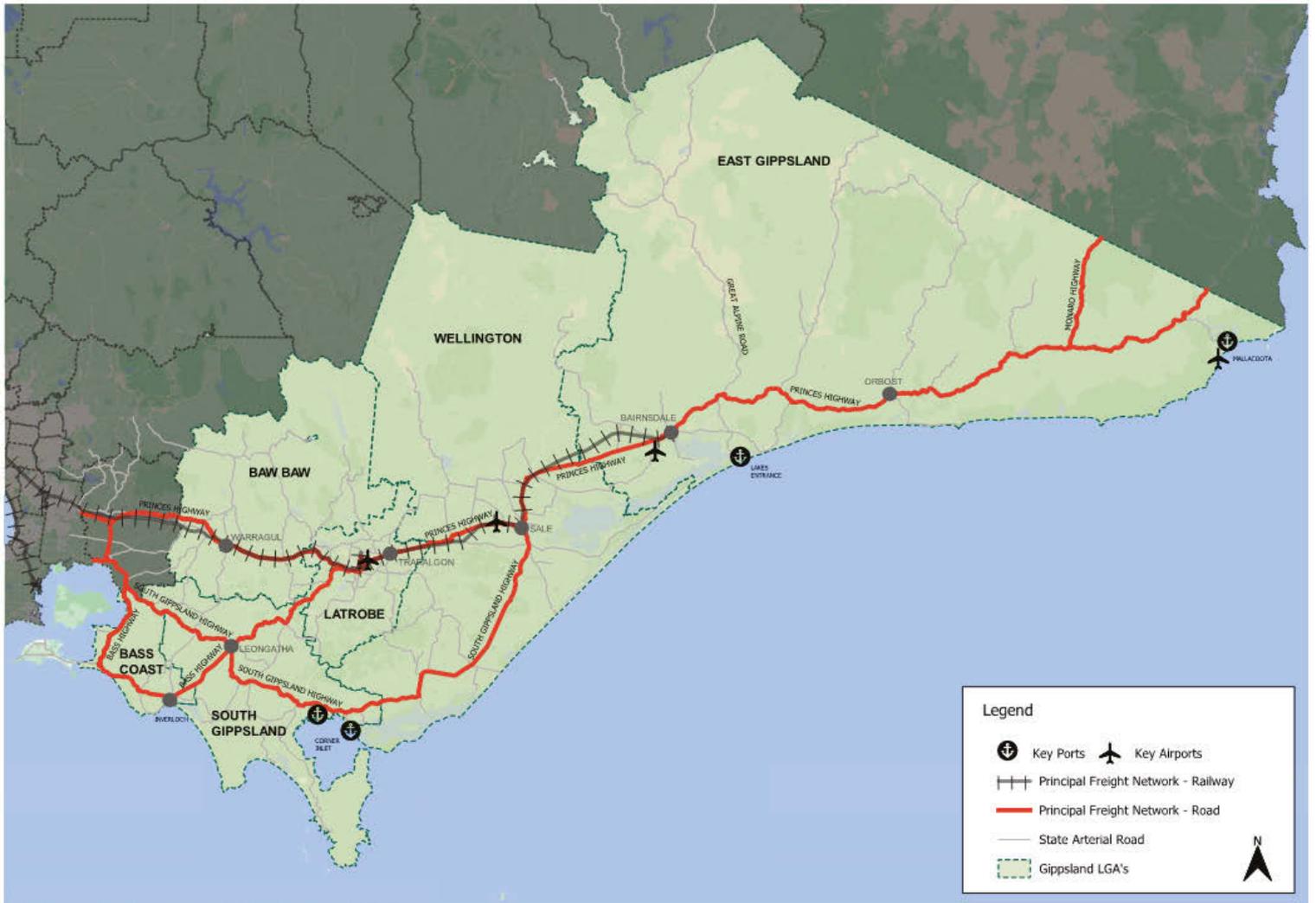


Figure 1.1 Gippsland's key freight transport networks and infrastructure

2. THE NEED FOR A MASTER PLAN

2.1. BACKGROUND

Purpose of this Master Plan

The purpose of the Gippsland Freight Infrastructure Master Plan (GFIMP) is to:

- understand and consider pressures on the existing transport network,
- enhance the functionality of existing freight infrastructure in line with State policies,
- consider urban expansion and congestion (particularly in Melbourne's outer south east), and a changing demographic mix, and
- design an appropriately planned and operated transport network that is vertically integrated and able to satisfy a diverse array of internal and external movements.

Changing Nature of Freight and Industry within Gippsland

Gippsland continues as one of the most reliable sources of power, agricultural, resources and manufacturing regions in Australia. As we enter an era of significant change and in order to make our clean energy transformation, it is essential the region's freight infrastructure is of a high standard.

Not only does GFIMP aim to ensure that freight in and out of Gippsland remains competitive and relevant to the above industries using traditional methods such as road, it must enable the continued development of resurgent rail and more specific opportunities using both sea and air.

An Industry-led and Collaborative Approach

In aiming to achieve these outcomes a collaborative approach was developed and undertaken with a range of industry and key government stakeholders to guide and communicate this integrated and co-ordinated GFIMP.

The resulting actions seek to deliver a range of benefits, including: reduced operating costs for business, a stronger regional economic base, increased safety on the region's transport network, resilient freight networks, enhanced desirability of Gippsland as a lifestyle and investment destination; and improved local and regional amenity.

PREVIOUS GIPPSLAND FREIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE MASTER PLAN

The 2013 Gippsland Freight Infrastructure Master Plan (GFIMP) was prepared by the Committee for Gippsland and Regional Development Australia Gippsland Committee in response to the growing challenges faced by the freight industry at the time.

The GFIMP included a range of infrastructure projects, supporting initiatives and recommendations to incorporate additional freight routes within principal networks.



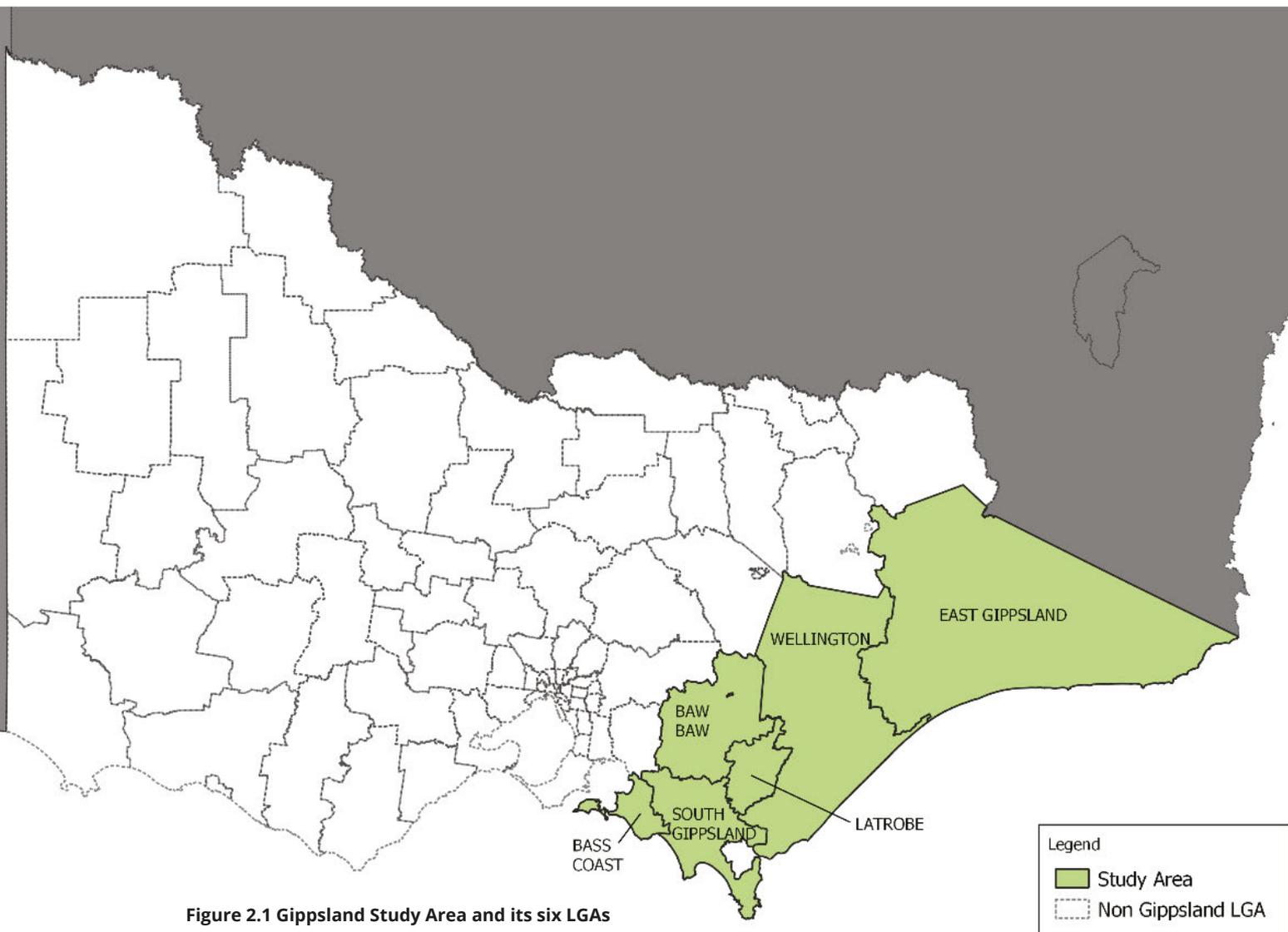
Similarly, a number of projects are no longer relevant, given the evolving freight tasks and changes to industry more broadly.

There is a need for this current edition of the GFIMP to remain flexible and be updated frequently to ensure priorities remain reflective of current conditions. It also needs to mitigate against any uncertainty that exists, in particular in the context of climate change and longer-term impacts of the pandemic as well as international supply chain issues.

2.2. THE MASTER PLAN STUDY AREA

The Gippsland Freight Infrastructure Master Plan (GFIMP) covers the six LGAs. However it is important to note, Gippsland freight extends across the state and indeed into neighboring states.

The vast majority of projects and infrastructure identified are relevant to the Gippsland region, while more general initiatives are Gippsland-specific, to be led by federal, state and local government agencies which have responsibility for industry and transport related tasks within the region.



2.3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The GFIMP has been informed by a wide range of existing strategic documents, plans and information.

A summarised list of the documents reviewed from a statewide and regional level, including key objective or description of each, is presented in Table 2.1.

Document, Strategy or Plan	Description
Movement and Place in Victoria, Department of Transport	The Movement and Place Framework takes a future-focused and multi-modal approach to network planning. It provides a consistent approach to assessing the performance of the road and transport network, identifying project requirements and assessing project solutions.
Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030, Department of Transport	The Victorian Road Safety Strategy aims to halve road deaths and reduce serious injuries by 2030 and set a path to eliminating road deaths by 2050.
Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2051, Infrastructure Victoria	The Infrastructure Victoria's Victorian Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2051 builds on the work of the first cross-sectoral infrastructure strategy delivered in 2016, and presents a vision for a thriving, inclusive and sustainable Victoria over the next 30 years.
Victorian Infrastructure Plan 2021, Department of Premier and Cabinet	The Victorian Infrastructure Plan 2021 responds to Infrastructure Victoria's updated 30-year Infrastructure Strategy released in August 2021. The Plan lays out the Government's infrastructure priorities and responds to each of Infrastructure Victoria's 94 recommendations in Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2051.
Delivering the Goods, Creating Victorian Jobs, Victorian Freight Plan, DEDJTR (2018)	The Plan sets out the short, medium and long term priorities to support the Victorian freight and logistics system. The Plan considers the growth and changes to the broader environment while embracing new opportunities in the future.
Plan Melbourne 2017-2050	Plan Melbourne will guide the growth of Melbourne for the next 35 years. It sets the strategy for supporting jobs, housing and transport, while building on Melbourne's legacy of distinctiveness, liveability and sustainability.
Gippsland Regional Plan 2020 – 2025, Regional Development Victoria	The Gippsland Regional Plan is a long-term strategic plan for improving the economic, social, cultural, and environmental outcomes for the Gippsland region and community within.
Gippsland Regional Economic Development Strategy, Regional Development Victoria	The Gippsland Regional Economic Development Strategy lays out the medium-to long term strategic directions for driving economic growth and development across the Gippsland region.
Clean Energy Vision and Prospectus, Regional Development Australia Gippsland and Committee for Gippsland	The document focuses on driving investment and new sources of employment for the region through any energy technology that is consistent with net zero emissions. The prospectus defines 'clean energy' as investments and practices that can contribute to net zero carbon emissions by 2050 in Victoria and Australia.
Gippsland Rail Needs Study Update (Draft), Latrobe City Council	The study aims to assess the current rail services within Gippsland and seeks alignment with present and future demands considering development of the region in context with Melbourne, building upon the 2016 study.

Table 2.1 State and Regional Strategic Documents Reviewed

A range of other local and regional strategic documents were identified and reviewed as part of the project, with a list provided below:

- Extractive Industries in South Gippsland: Supply Chain Study (DEDJTR, 2018)
- Draft East Gippsland Shire Freight and Logistics Strategy (East Gippsland Shire, 2016)
- East Gippsland Shire Economic Development Strategy 2022-2023 (Draft)
- Latrobe City Council Economic Development Strategy 2016-2020
- Wellington Economic Development Strategy 2016-2022
- Baw Baw Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy 2022-2025
- South Gippsland Economic Development Strategy 2021-2031
- Bass Coast Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021
- Gippsland Electorate Transport Infrastructure (South East Australian Transport Strategy – SEATS)
- Baw Baw Shire Outlines Roadmap for Key Infrastructure Projects
- Gippsland Regional Economic Development Strategy (RES, 2022)

GFIMP will be critical to realising Gippsland's Clean Energy Future.

The Committee for Gippsland (C4G) in partnership with Regional Development Australia (RDA) Gippsland Committee has recently launched the Gippsland's Clean Energy Future prospectus, which showcases Gippsland's natural advantages as a region for clean energy investment such as large-scale renewable projects.

Over the next decade it is estimated \$40 billion will be invested into Gippsland as the transition to a clean economy gains traction. To realise this once-in-a-century transformation, we need to have clear oversight to laying the foundations to enable this to happen.

The Gippsland Freight Infrastructure Master Plan offers a clear roadmap for these foundations via bolstering Gippsland's enabling infrastructure. Our region will need to be proactive in improving our infrastructure to make way for large scale renewable projects as the proposed development of the offshore windfarm sector is likely to place increased pressure on major arterials.

The C4G and RDA Gippsland, through the Clean Energy Future prospectus advocate for assigning the network and port master planning roles to an expert planning body, working in collaboration with Australian Energy Market Operator, VicGrid, Ports Victoria, Infrastructure Victoria, clean energy project developers, communities and stakeholders.

Other key objectives and recommendations from the Clean Energy Prospectus, which will need to be considered for the future freight and transport network infrastructure across Gippsland, include:

- Increase the use of electric vehicles (EVs) in the region by: including Gippsland as one of the regional centres that receive charging infrastructure investment through the Future Fuels Fund,
- Supporting take-up of EVs for passenger and light commercial use, including public transport,
- Develop a hydrogen industry which includes a demonstration of hydrogen-fuelled passenger trains and buses for V/Line services,
- Promote distributed energy uptake for Gippsland to become a hydrogen vehicle and fuel cell assembly and manufacturing centre.





3. INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

3.1. ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

To inform the updated 2023 Gippsland Freight Infrastructure Master Plan (GFIMP), a variety of stakeholder engagement activities were undertaken with Gippsland local councils, state government agencies, significant freight industry generators and carriers.

Activities included a range of targeted discussions, surveys and workshops to help establish and inform the updated GFIMP priorities.

3.2. WHO DID WE HEAR FROM?

An overview of the industries, agencies and other partners who contributed to the development of this GFIMP is presented in Figure 3.2.

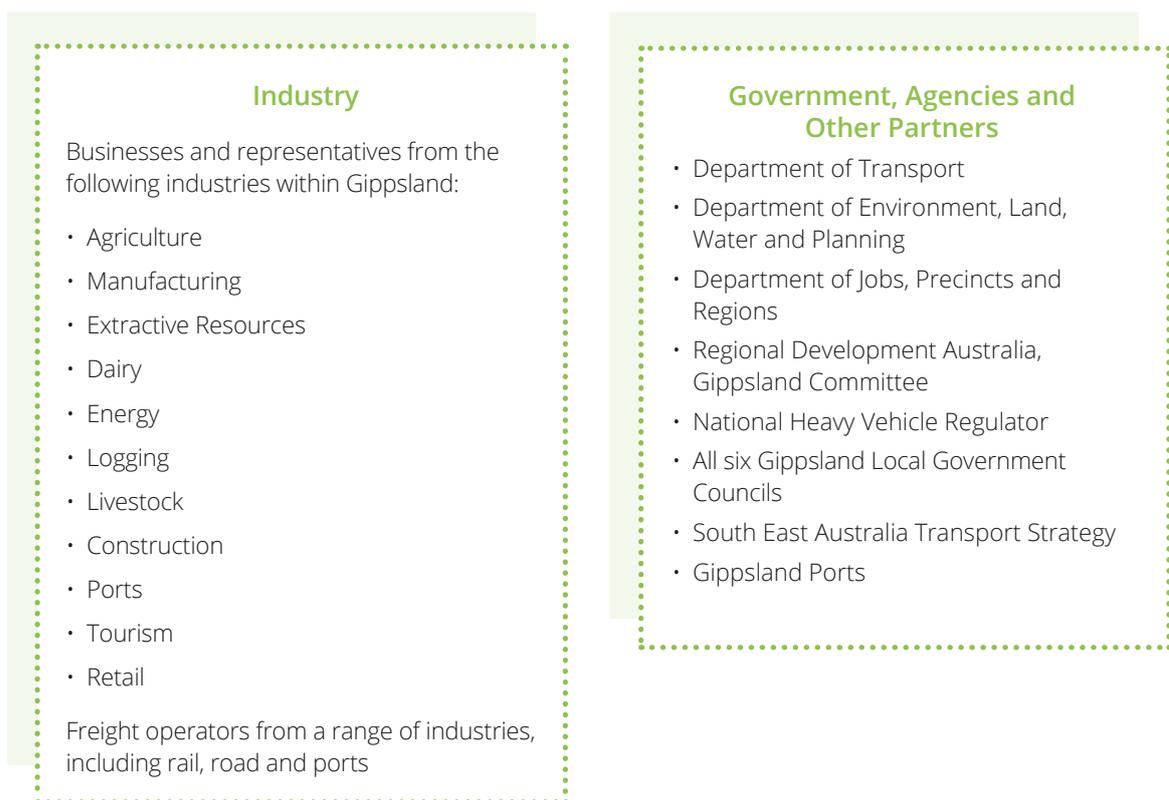


Figure 3.2 Industry, Government and Other Stakeholders

CASE STUDY: TOWNSHIP CONGESTION AND HEAVY VEHICLE ALTERNATE ROUTES ARE CRITICAL

R.Pelz Haulage, a family owned business in Orbost, provides freight services for forestry and mulch products, along with freezer transportation. It's fleet consists of 17 B-double trucks and the team transport approximately 220,000T per annum.

One of their major freight routes is the Princes Highway between Melbourne and Eden.

At present, due to bridge load limits, they must travel through Sale on the route between Eden and Melbourne rather than using the alternate route to the north-west. This adds another 25 minutes to the average one-way trip; which in turn creates an increase in wages and running costs.

Based on the estimated number of weekly trips (44 per week through Sale) and the difference in travel times, the alternate route would have the potential to save Pelz Haulage in the order of \$190,000 per annum in operating costs alone.

An alternate route around Sale would also reduce the number of heavy vehicle trips experienced through the heart of the township, thus supporting a thriving local community and economy.



3.3. FEEDBACK FROM INDUSTRY: KEY THEMES, ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Table 3.1 outlines the key themes, issues and opportunities established through the various activities and discussions with industry.

Theme	What were the key issues and / or ideas raised?
Road Maintenance	Road maintenance was the number one issue raised by industry. While recognised by industry that maintenance is a fact-of-life for freight, key feedback raised included the poor condition and quality of both the local and arterial road networks, seemingly endless nature of repairs and traffic management, and responsiveness to outstanding road condition issues.
'First and Last Mile' Freight	Equally as important to industry, we heard from operators that First and Last Mile freight is both an issue and major opportunity within Gippsland. Key feedback included the quality, and load, length and width of carrying limits on local road networks limiting the efficient transfer of goods from industry to the market. It was highlighted in multiple instances also that larger load carrying abilities will ultimately reduce the number of trucks on the road network, thus reducing associated maintenance, amenity and safety concerns.
Resourcing in the Freight Industry	An emerging issue highlighted by industry post Covid-19 is that many drivers have left the industry and there is major difficulty in attracting appropriately skilled resources to service the ever-growing demands for freight. This has led in some instances to business closures. Opportunities and ideas highlighted included the emergence of autonomous vehicles (AVs), improving the image of truck drivers and freight more broadly, as well as investing in training and attracting apprentices.
Route Resilience	Key feedback highlighted from industry was that natural disasters can significantly impact freight access routes when roads are closed. Closures can often run from days to many months depending on damage to underlying infrastructure. Alternate routes are not always practical or available, particularly in more remote locations. This leads to major supply chain impacts and overall productivity when industry cannot transport its freight.
The impacts from and on Freight Travelling Through Townships	It was highlighted, the majority of key freight routes operate through townships, where freight is delayed through normal congestion that occurs in these locations. Anecdotally, safety and amenity are also major community concerns that arise with the presence of freight operating through local built-up communities.
Balancing the Needs of Road Users while Prioritising Safety	A common theme from industry was the effect that the design of road safety barriers have operator safety in some situations. Overall, it is recognised that safety barriers save lives and are a critical part of providing a safe road environment for all road users, especially in rural and high-speed environments. Specific feedback included the lack of effective width of shoulders in key locations, lack of continuity, integration with road design, and impacts on wildlife.
Supporting Role of Rail, Air and Sea	Industry highlighted that while 'road is king' for industry and freight in Gippsland, there is a critical supporting role for rail, air and sea to be had in providing an integrated freight network in enhancing productivity. Of importance to this topic, the role of ports and road connections will be vital in the emergence of the renewable energy sector.

Table 3.1 Industry Engagement – Key Themes

CASE STUDY: SEA FREIGHT THE BIG WINNER WITH OFF-SHORE WIND FARMS

For more than 50 years, the Port of Corner Inlet within its natural embayment, the Barry Beach Marine Terminal (BBMT), has been the principal port facility serving the Bass Strait oil and gas industry.

Given the projected maritime freight volumes associated with offshore wind farms, the magnitude of construction cost savings, together with safety risk mitigation and operational efficiencies, renders BBMT as the optimal port terminal.

To accommodate the offshore wind farm construction phase and to become a general cargo hub, a modest level of channel deepening, to achieve a draft of 10 metres on the entrance to Corner Inlet and in the Barry Beach channel, is required. The Barry Beach channel has been dredged on a number of previous occasions, most recently in 2010.

The further development of BBMT as a renewable energy port and Victoria's first 'green' port will provide economic diversity for the Gippsland region. Gippslanders are first in line for the 760 jobs that are required over the three years of construction, including an estimated \$6.4 billion direct boost to Gippsland's economy.

In addition, these channel improvements would enable wider opportunities for bulk materials handling. Gippsland currently receives 30-40% of the 1,400,000T per annum of fertiliser that is shipped into Geelong; this upgraded infrastructure would enable direct shipment and handling into Gippsland's own regional port, delivering positive environmental outcomes, reducing both costs to producers and rail and road transport congestion through the increasingly busy Melbourne corridor.



4. THE MASTER PLAN

4.1. SETTING THE OBJECTIVES

A set of objectives was developed having regard to the feedback, themes and priorities identified by industry and other stakeholders.

Recommendations and actions from this Gippsland Freight Infrastructure Master Plan (GFIMP) were developed and subsequently reviewed against the objectives. The GFIMP objectives are presented in Table 4.1.

Objective	What does this look like?
1. Improve safety	Reducing fatal and serious injury crashes to zero within the surface transport network.
2. Freight efficiency	Reduced operating costs for business via greater payloads, time and fuel savings.
3. Route resilience	Improving the reliability of freight routes, including provision of sufficient alternate routes, for local industry and freight operators.
4. Improved amenity	Improvements for communities who live on freight routes by reducing exposure to environmental effects created by heavy vehicle traffic.

Table 4.1 GFIMP Objectives

CASE STUDY: LOAD LIMITS ON BRIDGES CREATE FREIGHT INEFFICIENCY

Dyers Transport has depots in Morwell, Sale and Bairnsdale, with a fleet of more than 200 trucks.

One of its major impediments to maintaining efficient transport in Gippsland is weight limits on bridges – in particular the restrictions this places on High Productivity Freight Vehicles (HPFV) carrying to their capacity.

Dyers currently moves in the order of 15 loads per day between Gippsland and Melbourne.

If the existing Victorian HPFV network was extended along the length of the Princes Highway through Gippsland, the company would immediately be able to lift the payload on their trucks by 11.5 tonnes.

This would allow Dyers to carry an additional 63,000 tonnes of general freight per year, equating to approximately \$1.95 million per annum in direct economic benefit while reducing the number of heavy vehicles on the transport network by in the order of three trucks per day.

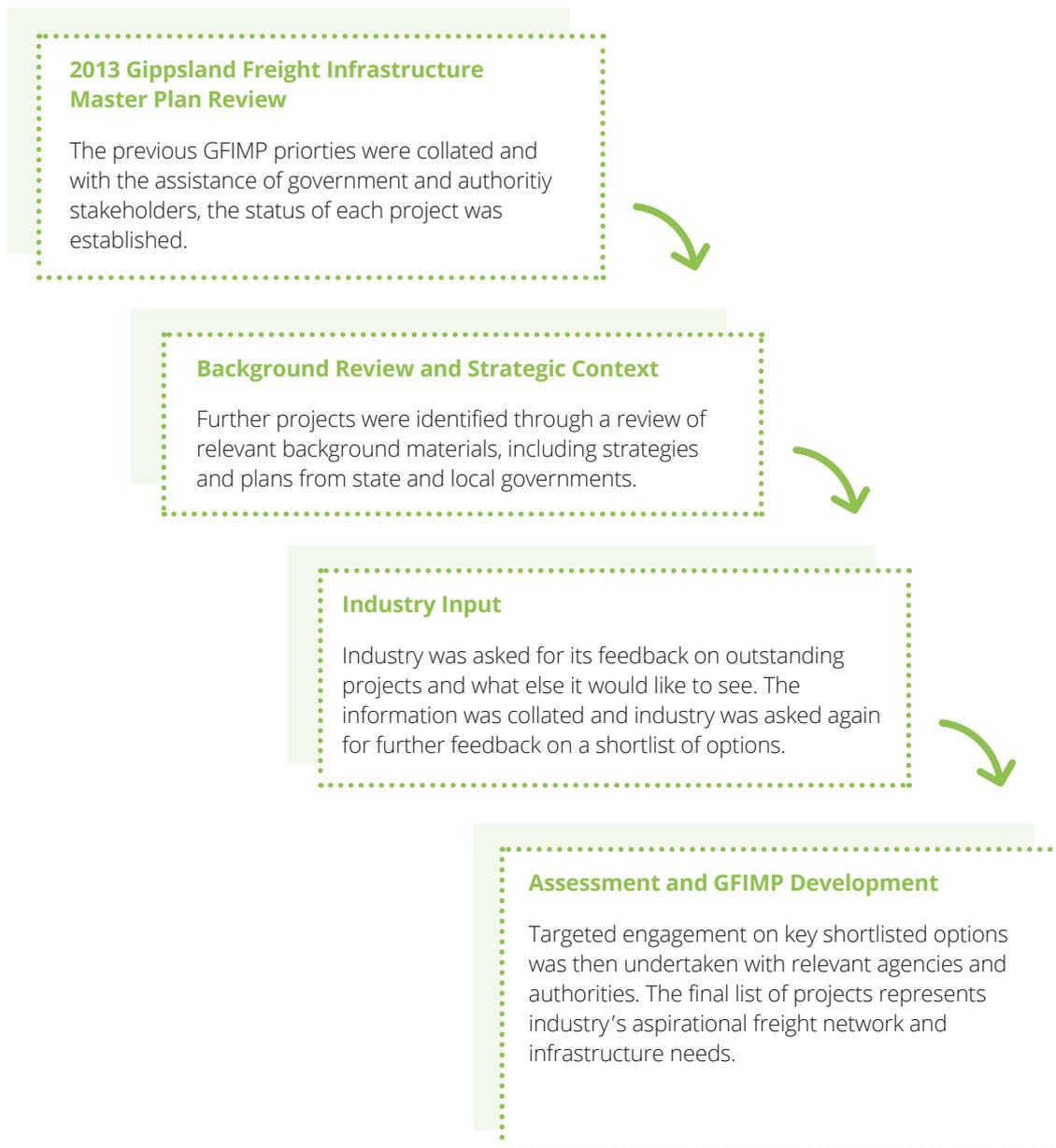


4.2. SELECTING AND REFINING PRIORITIES

GFIMP priorities were developed through a process of selecting and refining initiatives or projects. The process, which is shown in the diagram below (Figure 4.1), had regard for a variety of sources or information and engagement, as outlined in the previous sections of this report.

GFIMP contains a range of significant infrastructure projects and initiatives, with the focus on those projects which are also most critical and have the largest impact or benefit for industry. In this regard, there was a large number of smaller projects which did not make it as industry priorities into this GFIMP. In some instances, such as for improvements to maintenance or upgrades to local roads, these are addressed as strategic priorities or initiatives.

Figure 4.1 Selecting and Refining Priorities



4.3. THE MASTER PLAN

The GFIMP comprises a range of infrastructure upgrades and initiatives, including funding for further feasibility, planning and delivery. The following table sets out the priorities and supporting actions or initiatives which are required to support the freight task in Gippsland and industry objectives.

In this regard, there are a total of 30 infrastructure priorities with a further supporting four high-level initiatives.

Each of the priorities or initiatives have been placed into seven overarching categories based on their broad ability to meet each of the Master Plan objectives, as outlined in table 4.2.

		Safety	Resilience	Efficiency	Amenity
Category	What Does This Look Like?	Objectives Addressed			
Partnerships, Investment and Workforce Strategies	Supporting initiatives and strategies for the priority objectives and overall freight task within Gippsland	●	●	●	●
Township Congestion Projects	Bypasses, heavy vehicle routes, and congestion points	●	●	●	●
Arterial Road Major Works	Duplications and overpasses	●	●	●	
Arterial Road Upgrades	Treatments such as passing lanes, realignments, widened shoulders and safety works	●	●	●	
Rail Development and Opportunities	Development of rail freight infrastructure and opportunities		●	●	
Air Freight Opportunities	Opportunities for air freight and connections		●	●	
Sea and Port Freight Opportunities	Opportunities for sea freight, port development and connections		●	●	

Table 4.2 Priority Categories and Objectives Addressed

4.4. INDUSTRY'S HIGHEST FREIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

The ten 'highest' priorities identified in table 4.3, were developed having regard to their urgency and impact or in achieving the industry development GFIMP objectives.

These priorities also have consideration of what is most important in being delivered in order to support industry growth and the freight task for Gippsland, including new, emerging and existing industries.

For more detail on each priority, refer to the table under 4.7

Industry Highest Priorities	Category
Traralgon Bypass (1)	Township Congestion Projects
Warragul-Drouin Arterial Road Network (2)	
Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Bypass (Stage 2) (3)	
Sale Alternate Truck Route (4)	
Princes Highway (West of Longwarry) – Major Upgrades and Reinstate +100km/h Speed Limit (9)	Arterial Road Major Works
Princes Highway Sale to Bairnsdale Duplication (10)	
Princes Highway (East of Bairnsdale) – Major Upgrades (12)	Arterial Road Upgrades
South Gippsland Highway – Major Upgrades (13)	
Additional Turnouts and Sidings on the Gippsland Line (20)	Rail Development and Opportunities
Third International Airport (24)	Air Freight Opportunities

Table 4.3 Industry's Highest Freight Infrastructure Priorities



4.5. OTHER INDUSTRY PRIORITIES

A further 20 industry priorities have been established relating to various freight infrastructure across the different categories, as outlined in table 4.4 below.

Industry's Other Infrastructure Priorities	Category
Bairnsdale Southern Alternate Freight Route (5)	Township Congestion Projects
Wonthaggi Alternate Route (Loch-Wonthaggi Road to Bass Highway) (6)	
Stratford Roundabouts (7)	
Duplication of Mitchell River Bridge to Great Alpine Road at Bairnsdale (8)	
South Gippsland Highway duplication (11)	Arterial Road Major Works
Strzelecki Highway (14)	Arterial Road Upgrades
Hyland Highway (15)	
Warragul-Korumburra Freight Corridor (16)	
Phillip Island Road Corridor (17)	
Bass Highway (18)	
North-South Arterial Links - Great Alpine Road, Monaro Highway, Benambra-Corryong Road (19)	
Connecting to the Port Rail Shuttle Network (21)	Rail Development and Opportunities
Bairnsdale Intermodal Terminal (22)	
Morwell Intermodal Terminal and Maryvale (23)	
Bairnsdale Airport (25)	Air Freight Opportunities
West Sale Airport (26)	
Latrobe Regional Airport (27)	
Corner Inlet - Port Anthony/BBMT (28)	Sea and Port Freight Opportunities
Lakes Entrance (29)	
Port Welshpool (30)	

Table 4.4 Other Industry Freight Infrastructure Priorities

The location of all infrastructure and project (location-specific) priorities is shown in Figure 4.2 (see page over).

EXAMPLES OF FREIGHT-RELIANT INDUSTRY IN GIPPSLAND



Advanced Manufacturing

Gippsland has a proud history in agriculture, food production and energy generation. As technology improves, opportunities for advanced manufacturing within and external to these industries continue to grow. From Patties, OPAL/Australian Paper, Safetech and the health sector, through to Australian Sustainable Hardwoods, our Gippsland advanced manufacturing sector relies on effective freight routes to take Gippsland products to Melbourne and beyond.



Food and Horticulture

Gippsland is an ideal location for the continued development of the food and horticulture sectors. This growth will involve investment and collaboration across existing supply chains to identify market opportunities and overcome freight challenges to ensure Gippsland's clean, green and fresh produce can get from paddock to plate as efficiently as possible.



Beef and Dairy

Dairy and livestock are traditional strengths of the Gippsland region, with Gippsland providing 28.6 per cent of the state's dairy and 23 per cent of its beef. Demand for protein and Gippsland's renowned productivity coupled with industry innovation in specialised and high-value products will see growth in this sector and therefore additional freight opportunities.



Resources and Timber

As big build projects are on the horizon across Victoria, demand for sand, timber and alternative fibres is increasing. Gippsland has long been a producer of timber for construction and manufacturing and there are significant opportunities to bolster Victoria's supply chain with resources and fibres grown and found in Gippsland. The investment required for this growth is reflected within this document.



Master Plan Priorities

Partnerships, Investments and Workforce Strategies

- A. Local Road Funding / First and Last Mile Funding
- B. Better Partnership within Government
- C. Review Road Safety Barrier Guidance
- D. Developing the Industry Workforce

Township Congestion Projects

- 1. Traralgon Bypass
- 2. Warragul-Drouin Arterial Road Network
- 3. Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Bypass
- 4. Sale Alternate Truck Route
- 5. Bairnsdale Southern Alternate Freight Route
- 6. Wonthaggi Alternate Route (Loch-Wonthaggi)
- 7. Stratford Roundabouts
- 8. Duplication of Mitchell River Bridge to Great Alpine Road at Bairnsdale

Arterial Road Major Works

- 9. Restore Princes Hwy speeds to 100km/h+ west of Longwarry
- 10. Princes Hwy Sale-Bairnsdale duplication
- 11. South Gippsland Hwy duplication

Arterial Road Upgrades

- 12. Princes Highway East (of Bairnsdale)
- 13. South Gippsland Highway
- 14. Strzelecki Highway
- 15. Hyland Highway
- 16. Warragul-Korumburra Freight Corridor
- 17. Phillip Island Road Corridor
- 18. Bass Highway
- 19. North-South Arterial Links (Great Alpine Rd, Monaro Hwy, Benambra-Corryong Rd)

Rail, Sea & Air Developments and Opportunities

- 20. Additional Turnouts and Sidings (Gippsland Line)
- 21. Connecting to the Port Rail Shuttle Network
- 22. Bairnsdale Intermodal Terminal
- 23. Morwell Intermodal Terminal & Maryvale
- 24. Third International Airport
- 25. Bairnsdale Airport
- 26. West Sale Airport
- 27. Latrobe Regional Airport
- 28. Corner Inlet - Port Anthony/BBMT
- 29. Lakes Entrance
- 30. Port Welshpool

Legend



- Bypass / Congestion Projects
- Arterial Road Major Works and Upgrades
- Rail, Sea and Air Priorities

- Railway
- Principal Freight Network
- State Arterial Roads

- Existing Ports
- Gippsland LGAs



4.6. SUPPORTING INITIATIVES AND STRATEGIES

To support the industry priorities, a range of other supporting initiatives and strategies have been developed, which form part of the overall GFIMP.

These initiatives and strategies were developed based on industry feedback including targeted engagement and discussion with key stakeholders in industry and government. Each initiative will require further advocacy and investigation as part of the implementation of the Plan.

This investigation may include broader engagement by government agencies with industry to find the most appropriate solutions to the key issues being addressed.

The four high-level supporting initiatives and strategies are identified as part of the GFIMP and are all considered high priority for short-term implementation, outlined in Figure 4.3.



Figure 4.3 Supporting Initiatives and Strategies

4.7. IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Implementing the GFIMP will require a whole of government and industry approach to achieve the vision for freight infrastructure within Gippsland.

These tables have been separated into each of the seven high-level GFIMP categories, with more detailed descriptions of the project (and objectives, if relevant) being identified.

Reading the Plan and Tables

The following tables are to be read in conjunction with section 4.2 through to 4.6 of this report, including Figure 4.2 which outlines the GFIMP infrastructure priority locations within Gippsland.

ID	Project or Initiative	Description of Project and Objectives	Action	Status
Partnerships, Investment and Workforce Strategies				
A	Increased funding and investment for local roads in particular for the 'First and Last Mile'	Additional targeted and ongoing investment is required for First and Last Mile strategic freight access routes (owned and managed by Local Governments).	Ongoing advocacy for increased funding for First and Last Mile investment in the freight network.	Immediate and ongoing advocacy required
B	Better partnerships within government including focus on industry and freight in Gippsland	Facilitated and ongoing open discussions between industry and government on freight and transport issues affecting local industry.	Funding required and an appropriate industry body to manage.	Further investigation required
C	Review and update safety barrier guidance and standards with local Gippsland industry for the local Gippsland context	A clear message from industry is that roadside barriers cant think and more can be done to ensure future implementation of guard rail and other roadside barriers balances the need of safety and access. A review of relevant guidance including those published by the Department of Transport and Austroads considers the unique challenges faced by industry in Gippsland.	Funding required and commitment from relevant bodies (such as the Department for Transport) to review.	Immediate and ongoing advocacy required
D	Developing the industry workforce	Developing a trained, skilled, adequately resourced and safe workforce of drivers and industry workers for Gippsland. Funding to the appropriate industry body to develop, design and oversee a driver recruiting, training and retention strategy for Gippsland. This strategy should also include a review of critical driver infrastructure and amenities.	Funding to appropriate industry body to develop a further strategy.	Ongoing advocacy required

ID	Project or Initiative	Description of Project and Objectives	Action	Status
Township Congestion Projects (e.g. Bypasses, Heavy Vehicle Routes, Congestion Points)				
1	Traralgon Bypass	Traralgon is the largest city in Gippsland and has no city bypass. As freight volumes grow, it is becoming an increasing point of delay and the amenity impacts on the township are worsening.	A final approval on the route/alignment is being held up by proximity to the Loy Yang mine. Advocacy required to push for a decision on proximity of proposed route ASAP, or the route changed.	High priority – ongoing advocacy required
Township Congestion Projects (e.g. Bypasses, Heavy Vehicle Routes, Congestion Points) (Continued)				
2	Warragul-Drouin Arterial Road Network	Warragul and Drouin's -100 year-old State-managed arterial road network cannot cope with current congestion and growth. It's putting the brakes on business and industry and impacting liveability for residents. The solution is a new arterial road network that's better for local business and the community.	Advocacy for further funding for planning for the new arterial road network.	High priority - funding required for further planning
3	Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Bypass	As freight volumes grow, it is becoming an increasing point of delay and the amenity impacts on the township are worsening. Stage 1 of the Heavy Vehicle Alternate Route has been completed. Stage 2 has been planned and should be delivered as a priority.	Funding to appropriate industry body to develop a further strategy.	Ongoing advocacy required
4	Sale Alternate Truck Route	The long-term program of developing an enhanced freight alternative to traveling through central Sale is underway with funding for some infrastructure, however the remaining elements need to be planned and funded.	Continue to advocate for the upgrade of the route and funding required.	High priority - awaiting funding for planning and delivery
5	Bairnsdale Southern Alternate Freight Route	Heavy vehicle route through/around the south west side of Bairnsdale. This has been commenced and needs to be completed.	This is a major issue for local industry, freight providers and rail aspirations so therefore needs to be in planning for future works	Funding required for further planning and design
6	Wonthaggi Alternate Route (Loch-Wonthaggi Rd to Bass Hwy)	An alternate heavy vehicle route around Wonthaggi (Loch-Wonthaggi Road to Bass Highway) to improve congestion through the CBD needs funding for feasibility and planning.	Advocacy required to advance necessary planning. Part of the road upgrade could be delivered via developer contributions through the PSP process.	Funding required to advance planning
7	Stratford Roundabouts	These roundabouts are a major pain point for freight operators and industry. While a balance is required between safety and efficiency, there is clear feedback from industry that these roundabouts need to be reviewed for either modification or redesign.	Review the design of the roundabouts for improved freight outcomes.	Review existing roundabouts including engagement with industry

ID	Project or Initiative	Description of Project and Objectives	Action	Status
Township Congestion Projects (e.g. Bypasses, Heavy Vehicle Routes, Congestion Points) (Continued)				
8	Duplication of Mitchell River Bridge to Great Alpine Road at Bairnsdale	Duplication of single lane Princes Hwy bridge across Mitchell River and lanes through to the Great Alpine Rd - Princes Hwy split at roundabout	Complete options investigation and design for road duplications from Mitchell River Bridge (including) to Great Alpine roundabout.	Funding commitment to planning and design required
Arterial Road Major Works (e.g. Overpasses, Road Duplications)				
9	Restore Princes Highway speeds to 100km/h+ west of Longwarry	This requires overpasses and road upgrade works to ensure dangerous intersections are upgraded or removed.	Government commitment to upgrade all intersections that will start with developing a strategy to upgrade each intersection including planning, design and delivery.	High priority - funding and commitment required to begin planning, design and delivery.
10	Princes Highway Sale-Bairnsdale duplication	Continued extension of Princes Hwy duplication beyond Sale and to Bairnsdale	Priority must be to seek funding to do the feasibility and early concept work that will then feed into a long term plan for these works to happen	High priority - advocacy to enhance the project as a priority, seek planning funding.
11	South Gippsland Highway duplication	Ultimately a dual carriageway to be developed between Lang Lang and Leongatha to provide better access to the Ports of Melbourne and Hastings from food processing manufacturers in South Gippsland.	To support the emerging / booming extractive industries, the duplication should progress from west to east.	Advocacy for funding and a plan to progress the duplication in a south-east direction.
Arterial Road Upgrades (e.g. Continual Upgrades Including Passing Lanes, Realignment, Widening, Safety Improvements)				
12	Princes Highway East (of Bairnsdale) upgrades	Continued improvements needed to be made to Princes Highway east of Bairnsdale including but not limited to: road realignments, widening, passing lanes, tree clearing etc	Advocate to have this section of road within the National Freight Network and a planning piece for continual improvement to be prioritised and delivered with an annual rolling budget. Advocacy for a long-term political commitment to upgrading the only road in and out of eastern Victoria is needed.	High priority – ongoing advocacy and funding required to upgrade.
13	South Gippsland Highway	Industry along the South Gippsland Highway would benefit from additional overtaking lanes and realignment of heavily curved sections. Continued improvements needed to be made to South Gippsland Highway east of Bairnsdale - road realignments, widening, passing lanes, tree clearing etc	Needs committed long-term funding for continual upgrades to bring it to a higher standard.	High Priority - Ongoing advocacy and funding required to upgrade.

ID	Project or Initiative	Description of Project and Objectives	Action	Status
Arterial Road Upgrades (e.g. Continual Upgrades Including Passing Lanes, Realignments, Widening, Safety Improvements)				
14	Strzelecki Highway	The Strzelecki Highway is the principal connection between Gippsland's two main sub-regions of South Gippsland and the Latrobe Valley. Continued improvements needed to be made to Strzelecki Highway north east of Leongatha realignments, widening, passing lanes, tree clearing etc.	Needs committed long-term funding for continual upgrades to bring it to a higher standard.	Ongoing advocacy and funding required to upgrade.
15	Hyland Highway	This route is an important corridor for forestry and dairy products and provides access to Port Anthony. Continued improvements to road realignments, widening, passing lanes, tree clearing etc. would enable more efficient operation of forestry, dairy and other freight traffic.	Needs committed long-term funding for continual upgrades to bring it to a higher standard.	Ongoing advocacy and funding required to upgrade.
16	Warragul-Korumburra Freight Corridor	Planning required to formalise and improve the efficiency of freight via this corridor. It provides a linkage between north and south for many agricultural businesses and services and future extractive industry opportunities	Needs committed long term funding for continual upgrades to bring it to a higher standard.	Ongoing advocacy and funding required to upgrade.
17	Phillip Island Road Corridor	Further upgrades, including intersection and duplications required to manage the current major congestion issues being experienced.	Some works have been completed and funded however, needs further advocacy to fund further improvements to safety and access.	Advocacy for funding to plan and deliver further upgrades.
18	Bass Highway	Bass Highway (Anderson to Leongatha) is a single lane undivided highway with no overtaking lanes for more than 50km of the road. It connects Wonthaggi, Inverloch and Leongatha and services local agriculture, commercial and tourism industry and needs committed long term funding for continual upgrades to bring it to a higher standard, i.e. passing lanes, realignments, widen shoulders, safety works, etc.	Needs committed long term funding for continual upgrades to bring it to a higher standard.	Ongoing advocacy and funding required to upgrade.
19	North-South Arterial Links (Great Alpine Rd, Monaro Highway, Benambra-Corryong Road)	Continued upgrades (passing lanes, realignments, widened shoulders, safety works, etc.) are required on the established Monaro Highway freight route, the developing Great Alpine Road and undeveloped Benambra-Corryong Road. North-South freight linkages to and from East Gippsland for the timber, mining and quarrying industries remain one of the greatest economic opportunities. Significant works to straighten sections of the Great Alpine Road have been completed, more work is still needed.	Needs committed long-term funding for continual upgrades to bring it to a higher standard.	Ongoing advocacy and funding required to upgrade.
20	Additional turn outs and sidings (Gippsland Line)	This infrastructure is needed to manage the increased line (single gauge) demand that will support the above priorities.	Further funding and commitment to continual rail improvements are required on top of current Gippsland Line upgrade commitment	High priority – advocacy and funding required

ID	Project or Initiative	Description of Project and Objectives	Action	Status
Rail Development and Opportunities (continued)				
21	Connecting to the Port Rail Shuttle Network	Funding is needed for a feasibility study into a Gippsland line freight terminal (located to the east of Melbourne on the line) which can transfer from truck to rail for the passage through Melbourne to Port of Melbourne.	Advocacy and a long-term commitment to rail playing a freight role in Gippsland is required to bring about this game changing infrastructure	Advocacy and funding required
22	Bairnsdale Intermodal Terminal	Needs continued government and industry support to establish a viable rail freight service.	Greater incentive for generators to investigate the possibility of rail for their needs	Generators need to take the next step
23	Morwell Intermodal Terminal and Maryvale	Needs continued government and industry support to establish further services (e.g., Maryvale is currently running only one train per day).	Further investigative and feasibility work needs to be done to concentrate the rail resource that both facilities offer to one effort	Funding to develop a single shared plan
Air Freight Opportunities				
24	Third International Airport	Indirectly, the decentralisation of congestion through Melbourne and growth away from Melbourne alone makes this priority a logical one from a freight efficiency point of view. The Gippsland-centric opportunities in the food and manufacturing industries created via the air freight efficiencies would be remarkable	Advocate for funding to provide a landside business case, planning process and master plan	High Priority – Ongoing advocacy and funding required to upgrade.
25 26 27	Bairnsdale Airport West Sale Airport Latrobe Regional Airport	Upgrades and improvements to airports at Bairnsdale, West Sale and Latrobe Regional Airport to support specialised freight and industry.	Require some funding for more specific feasibility work into the reality of high value produce that could reach opportunity markets by air from these locations.	Funding required to progress initial feasibility work.
Sea and Port Freight Opportunities				
28	Corner Inlet - Port Anthony/BBMT	Supporting infrastructure, local Last Mile roads in addition to port infrastructure. The offshore wind farm industry creates great opportunity while being built for both services at/near the port and onshore construction transfers. Widening and deepening of the channel does improve ship size and therefore opportunity.	Planning for channel deepening/widening needs to occur, which will entail federal environment considerations – Gippsland Ports requires funding assistance to undertake.	Funding required to progress planning
29	Lakes Entrance	Currently critical to local fishing industry and must be maintained.	Ongoing funding commitment required to maintain access and improved port facilities	Advocacy and funding required
30	Port Welshpool	Currently used for stock transfer. Needs to be maintained.	Ongoing funding commitment required to maintain access and improved port facilities	Advocacy and funding required

4.8. MONITOR AND REVIEW

The actions of the Gippsland Freight Infrastructure Master Plan (GFIMP) will be the collective responsibility of all the relevant agency and industry partners. No single agency can fulfill the aspirations of this this plan and continued collaboration and cooperation will be required to bring its priorities to fruition.

It will be vital to ensure regular review and reporting on key outcomes, including monitoring for significant changes to local industry, policy and broader strategic context.

As an indication, the following (Table 4.5) outlines the appropriate short, medium and long term (and ongoing) monitor and review actions for the GFIMP.

Time Period	Action
Ongoing (including immediate)	Aligning with future strategies / plans, as well as existing policy / strategy updates.
Short (1 year, and ongoing annually)	Report on the outcomes of advocacy (implementing the actions) and project progress or outcomes.
Medium (1-5 years)	Monitor for significant changes to industry including emerging themes, industries, or challenges.
Long Term (in 5 years)	Review and refresh of GFIMP by no later than 2028.

Table 4.5 Monitor and Review Actions





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