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MANSFIELD SHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2020-25

MANSFIELD SHIRE COUNCIL | JUNE 2020



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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1. INTRODUCTION	2
1.1. OVERVIEW	2
1.2. PROCESS	2
1.3. COUNCIL ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	2
2. CONTEXT OF MANSFIELD SHIRE	3
2.1. INTRODUCTION	3
2.2. LOCATIONAL CONTEXT	3
2.3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT	5
2.4. DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT	6
2.5. ECONOMIC CONTEXT	7
2.6. TOURISM CONTEXT	8
3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS	9
3.1. INTRODUCTION	9
3.2. MACROECONOMIC CONTEXT	9
3.3. INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY CONSIDERATIONS	10
3.4. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES	11
4. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK	12
4.1. INTRODUCTION	12
4.2. FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW	12
4.3. STRENGTHEN AND DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY	14
4.4. ENHANCE THE VISITOR ECONOMY	17
4.5. DRIVE GROWTH IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC LAND ENHANCEMENT	18
4.6. BEST PRACTICE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	19
5. ACTION PLAN	20
5.1. INTRODUCTION	20
APPENDICES	26
APPENDIX A SURVEY RESULTS	26

FIGURES

F1. MANSFIELD SHIRE LOCATIONAL CONTEXT	4
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TABLES

T1. DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT OF MANSFIELD SHIRE	6
T2. ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT OF MANSFIELD SHIRE	7
T3. KEY TOURISM FIGURES AND TRENDS	8
T4. ISSUES, NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES SUMMARY	11
T5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FRAMEWORK	12
T6. BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP TO ANY LOCAL OR INDUSTRY NETWORKS/ASSOCIATIONS?	26

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

Mansfield Shire Council has prepared an Economic Development Strategy to guide the growth and resilience of the local economy over the five year period between 2020-25.

Mansfield Shire Council's role in economic development includes business engagement and support, business and investment attraction, strategic land use planning, promoting liveability initiatives and undertaking advocacy efforts.

The Economic Development Strategy has been developed in conjunction with Mansfield Shire community and industry.

MANSFIELD SHIRE POPULATION AND ECONOMY

Mansfield Shire had an estimated resident population of 8,979 in 2018, and is expected to grow by 1.1% per annum to reach 10,966 in 2036.

This growth has been and will continue to be driven by the lifestyle and tree-change residential market who often have had a long-standing connection with the Shire, often through education or as a holiday leisure destination. This is reflected in a high migration rate, with 19% of residents in the Shire in 2016 having lived elsewhere in 2011.

There are 3059 Jobs in Mansfield Shire (2016) and a 78% job containment rate for Mansfield Shire working residents.

The profile of the Mansfield Shire economy highlights that there are a number of industries that are driving employment in the local economy. These include:

- Primary and Trade Industries – Agriculture and Construction;
- Population-Driven – Retail, Hospitality and Real Estate;
- Knowledge & Public Sector – Health and Education; and
- Tourism – Accommodation, Hospitality, Arts and Culture.

Tourism is a key driver for the Mansfield Shire economy, and is largely influenced by the nature-based product of the Shire, High Country landscapes and a wide range of other nature-based activities.

Tourism is also a key driver of resident attraction, as tourism in Mansfield Shire has exposed large numbers of people to the lifestyle attributes of the Shire and has been a major influencer for many tree-change residents.

Mansfield Shire, including Mt Buller, attracts over 1.8 million visitors per annum, with a direct expenditure of \$182 million from visitors per annum.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

There are a range of overarching strategic considerations for the Mansfield Shire Economic Development Strategy. These have been identified through consultation with community and industry and through analysis of the existing economic profile of Mansfield Shire. These include:

- Diversify the economy so that it is not as reliant on tourism and residential population growth to drive jobs and wealth;
- Greater support and services to build resilience of existing businesses and residents;
- Improved communication between Council and businesses and residents;
- Improved township presentation, amenity and infrastructure;
- Investment in infrastructure and planning to ensure sustainable growth can occur;
- Greater focus on environmental sustainability to reflect community values and the economic benefits associated with this;
- Maintain and protect natural assets which are critical for the tourism and lifestyle sectors;
- Increased transport connectivity to support access to work and education; and
- Improved digital connectivity to support business performance and access.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

VISION

Mansfield Shire will leverage its economic strengths in tourism, retail, education, construction and agriculture to build a diverse and resilient economy that supports a prosperous Shire and maintains high standards of amenity and liveability.

FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW

The strategic framework has been prepared in response to the issues, opportunities and strategic considerations identified through the preparation of this strategy. This includes the themes and objectives identified below.

A detailed action plan has been developed to guide the implementation of the Economic Development Strategy, which can be found in Section 5 of the report.

Theme	Objective
Strengthen And Diversify The Economy	<u>Objective 1:</u> Diversify the Mansfield economy through targeted enhancement of potential growth sectors.
	<u>Objective 2:</u> Build a sustainable resident base through targeted workforce and resident attraction.
	<u>Objective 3:</u> Support development of business and community resilience to unforeseen events.
Enhance The Visitor Economy	<u>Objective 4:</u> Strengthen and diversify the visitor economy
Drive Growth In Infrastructure And Public Land Enhancement	<u>Objective 5:</u> Invest in infrastructure, planning and amenity improvements to support economic growth.
Best Practice Economic Development	<u>Objective 6:</u> Deliver best practice economic development to meet industry development needs.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. OVERVIEW

Mansfield Shire Council has prepared an Economic Development Strategy to guide the growth and resilience of the local economy over the five year period between 2020-25.

1.2. PROCESS

The Strategy has been developed in partnership with local businesses, community members and Council staff to ensure the development of a robust and actionable strategy.

The Strategy draws on the following primary and secondary research:

- Mansfield Economic Profile (2018);
- Business and Industry Workshops with attendance from over 30 local business and industry members and community members;
- Local Business Survey (39 responses);
- Community Survey (424 responses); and
- Council and Councillor consultation.

A detailed Action Plan has been developed to allow implementation by Council in partnership with relevant stakeholders.

1.3. COUNCIL ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

At a high-level, the purpose of economic development at a local government level is:

"To build up the economic capacity of a local area to improve its economic future and the quality of life for all. It is a process by which public, business and non-government sector partners work collectively to create better conditions for economic growth and employment generation"¹

This is supported by the Local Government Act 1989, which highlights the following two objectives in relationship to economic development:

- To promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district; and
- To promote appropriate business and employment opportunities.

Mansfield Shire will continue to undertake the following activities:

- Promotion of the Shire as a place to live, work, play and invest;
- Leadership, advocacy and focus on priority opportunities;
- Developing relationships and leveraging opportunities with Federal, State and other Local Governments;
- Monitoring the investment environment and being adaptive and responsive to change;
- Strategic land use planning to direct future growth;
- The provision of infrastructure both 'hard' (e.g. industrial land, roads and bridges, public buildings) and 'soft' (e.g. websites, online business register) both directly and indirectly through partnerships or by advocating for others to provide this infrastructure; and
- Facilitating orderly development of urban areas for residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and other land use activities including schools, hospitals and other public institutions.

¹ Local Economic Development, The World Bank 2006

2. CONTEXT OF MANSFIELD SHIRE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This section provides a high-level overview of the Mansfield Shire context. This includes an overview of locational and strategic context as well as the demographic, economic and tourism profile of the Shire.

2.2. LOCATIONAL CONTEXT

Mansfield Shire is located in North East Victoria, approximately two and a half hours drive from Melbourne (182 km). The Maroondah Highway provides the key access route from Melbourne and Western Victoria, with the Midland Highway providing access via the North of the Shire.

Mansfield is a rural lifestyle Shire, with resident and non-resident ratepayers drawn to the Shire by the rural amenity, alpine landscape and natural assets. Mansfield is the key township which supports a significant amount of the economic activity in the Shire, with a vibrant town centre and outlying commercial and industrial areas.

Outlying communities such as Bonnie Doon, Merrijig, Goughs Bay, Sawmill Settlement and Jamieson provide a secondary role, with many of these settlements popular as visitor destinations.

Other outlying communities include Tolmie, Merton, Maindample, Peppin Point, Howqua/Macs Cove, Barjarg, Kevington/Gaffney's Creek, and Woods Point.

Mount Buller and Mount Stirling Alpine Resorts are located in proximity to Mansfield Shire, and are key economic drivers for the Shire. For statistical purposes however, they are not considered to be part of Mansfield Shire. Lake Eildon and Alpine National Park are other key assets that are key drivers of visitation to Mansfield Shire.

F1. MANSFIELD SHIRE LOCAL CONTEXT



Source: Urban Enterprise, 2020.

2.3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Mansfield Shire forms one of twelve local government areas of the Hume RDA region, and one of six local government areas in the High Country Tourism Region, promoted by Tourism North East.

Numerous strategies and policies have been developed at a local level (i.e. Mansfield Shire) and a regional level (i.e. Hume RDA Region) designed to facilitate economic growth. This includes objectives and priorities that focus on:

- Supporting a more diverse regional economy by leveraging opportunities from growth sectors, particularly health and education;
- Attracting employment opportunities;
- Managing and enhancing key regional assets (such as Mount Buller and Lake Eildon);
- Developing and enhancing the visitor economy;
- Increasing the liveability and prosperity of the region as a means to improve resident attraction and leverage population increases to grow the economy;
- Directing future growth and development to settlements that have the capacity to support it, including major towns like Mansfield and outlying towns like Merrigig and Bonnie Doon; and
- Mitigating and planning for future impacts of climate change.

The Economic Development Strategy draws on the **Mansfield Shire Economic Profile** which was prepared in 2018, and builds on the previous **2013-2017 Mansfield Economic Development Strategy**.

The previous Economic Development Strategy was developed to reflect local economic conditions and aspirations of the Shire. The strategy had a number of useful actions and directions, however the delivery method, timeframes and performance measures were lacking and made it difficult to track progression of actions in the strategy.

Many of these conditions remain relevant and important to the local industry and community. These have been reflected through the consultation process that has informed the development of the existing Strategy. A detailed Action Plan has been developed for the updated Strategy (2020-25) to guide implementation of key actions and to monitor progress.

Other key strategic plans currently underway that will have an impact on economic development in Mansfield Shire include:

- **The Mansfield Planning Strategy (underway)**. Will provide high-level strategic direction for spatial planning over the next 15 – 20 years; and
- **The Lake Eildon Masterplan 2019**. Stage 1 is an economic impact assessment of the current tourism visitation and recreational value of Lake Eildon. Stage 2 provides a masterplan for the region and a number of priority projects to activate Lake Eildon and drive greater economic value from Lake Eildon and surrounding villages.






2.4. DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

Mansfield Shire had an estimated resident population of 8,979 in 2018. The Shire has experienced an average historic growth of 2% per annum between 2001 and 2016, and is expected to grow by 1.1% per annum to reach 10,966 in 2036.

This growth has been and will continue to be driven by the lifestyle and tree-change residential market who often have had a long-standing connection with the Shire, often through education or as a holiday leisure destination. This is reflected in a high migration rate, with 19% of residents in the Shire in 2016 having lived elsewhere in 2011.

The Shire has an ageing population, which is largely due to the combined attraction of retiree lifestyle residents to the Shire and general ageing of the population.

T1. DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT OF MANSFIELD SHIRE

Indicator	Key statistics	Description
 <p>Population</p>	<p>8979 Estimated Resident Population (2018)</p> <p>+1,400 residents (2006-16)</p> <p>+ 1,987 residents by 2036 (estimated)</p>	<p>Between 2006 and 2016, Mansfield Shire experienced an increase in 1,400 additional residents.</p> <p>The population peaks at 23,000 during weekends in January, including transients and residents.</p>
 <p>Age profile</p>	<p>Median age 48 Mansfield Shire compared to 43 Regional Victoria (2016)</p>	<p>Mansfield Shire has an ageing population, with 41% of residents in Mansfield Shire over the age of 55 in 2016.</p>
 <p>Internet Connection</p>	<p>73% dwellings with internet connection (2016)</p>	<p>27% of dwellings in the Shire still remain without connection to the internet. This has been identified in survey responses as a key barrier for many residents.</p>
 <p>Migration</p>	<p>19% of residents in 2016 lived elsewhere in 2011</p>	<p>There continues to be strong migration to Mansfield Shire, with majority of new residents to the Shire originating from within Melbourne.</p> <p>Of the new residents, 647 are in the workforce (2016).</p>
 <p>Education Attainment</p>	<p>+22% growth in non-school education (2006-16)</p>	<p>There has been growth in all post-secondary qualifications, with the exception of Advanced Diplomas. This highlights that the Shire is becoming increasingly more qualified.</p>







Source: Mansfield Shire Economic Profile, 2018.

2.5. ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The profile of the Mansfield Shire economy highlights that there are a number of industries that are driving employment in the local economy. The Shire's economy is driven by the following four key areas:

- **Primary and Trade Industries** – Agriculture and Construction;
- **Population-Driven** – Retail, Hospitality and Real Estate;
- **Knowledge & Public Sector** – Health and Education; and
- **Tourism** – Accommodation, Hospitality, Arts and Culture.

T2. ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT OF MANSFIELD SHIRE

Indicator	Key statistics	Description
 <p>Employment in Mansfield Shire</p>	<p>3,059 Jobs in Mansfield Shire (2016)</p> <p>78% job containment rate for Mansfield Shire working residents in 2016</p>	<p>12% of the Shire's jobs in 2016 were attributed to accommodation and food services, however this sector experienced a 15% decrease between 2011-16, which is likely due to labour shortages and seasonality of work.</p> <p>The highest number of jobs in Mansfield Shire in 2016 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail trade (422 jobs) • Accommodation and Food Services (358 jobs) • Education and training (342 jobs) • Agriculture, forestry and fishing (342 jobs)
 <p>Unemployment</p>	<p>Low unemployment rate of 3.22% (2016/17)</p>	<p>There is very low unemployment in Mansfield Shire (3.22 in 2016/17 compared to 5.68 in Regional Victoria), which highlights the labour shortage experienced across the Shire.</p>
 <p>Businesses</p>	<p>1,224 businesses in Mansfield Shire in 2016</p> <p>90% of businesses employed 0-5 employees</p>	<p>There were 1,224 businesses in Mansfield Shire in 2016, with the majority of these businesses being small businesses. 62% of businesses in the Shire were non-employing and 27% employed only 1-4 employees.</p>
 <p>Output</p>	<p>\$440 million in industry output in 2016</p>	<p>Top 3 industry sectors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing (\$120 M output = 26.8%) • Construction (\$89 M output = 19.8%) • Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services (\$51 M output = 11.4%) <p>Although 14% of jobs are attributed to retail trade, this sector only accounts for 1% of the Shire's economic output.</p>
 <p>Dwelling Growth</p>	<p>\$380,000 median house price in 2018</p> <p>+1,275 dwellings projected in Mansfield Shire by 2036</p>	<p>There has been 70% growth in median house prices over the period between 2009-18, causing the median house price in Mansfield Shire to rise above the average for Regional Victoria.</p> <p>Almost all new building investment in Mansfield Shire has been in residential buildings.</p>
 <p>Agriculture</p>	<p>\$69 million in agricultural production</p> <p>9% growth in production between 2010/11-2015/16</p>	<p>Agricultural production in Mansfield Shire was worth \$69 million in 2015/16. This reflects growth of 9% growth per annum over the period between 2010/11-2015/16, with 86% growth in vegetable production in the same period.</p>

Source: Mansfield Shire Economic Profile, 2018.

2.6. TOURISM CONTEXT






Tourism is a key driver for the Mansfield Shire economy, and is largely influenced by the nature-based product of the Shire, High Country landscapes and a wide range of other nature-based activities. Key natural assets include Mount Buller/Mount Stirling, Lake Eildon, Alpine National Park, and rivers (including Delatite River, Howqua River, Big River, Jamieson River and Goulburn River).

Mansfield Shire received 1.8 million visitors in 2016/17, comprised of 1.2 million visitors to the Shire and 661,000 visitors to Mount Buller/Mount Stirling.

Mansfield Shire forms part of the High Country tourism region, along with the local government areas of Alpine, Wangaratta, Indigo, Benalla and Towong. The High Country is a popular nature-based, food and wine and cycling destination. Mansfield Shire is also a popular cycling destination, with the Great Victorian Rail Trail ending in the Shire (Australia's second longest rail trail), as well as mountain biking at Mount Buller and many popular road cycling loops.

Tourism is also a key driver of resident attraction, as tourism in Mansfield Shire has exposed large numbers of people to the lifestyle attributes of the Shire and has been a major influencer for many tree-change residents.

T3. KEY TOURISM FIGURES AND TRENDS

Indicator	Key statistics	Description
 <p>Natural assets</p>	<p>Key natural assets include Mount Buller and Mount Stirling, Lake Eildon and Alpine National Park</p>	<p>Mount Buller is the largest, most accessible Alpine Resort in Victoria, less than 3 hours' drive from Melbourne.</p> <p>Lake Eildon is the largest inland lake in Victoria and has areas of high amenity and scenery that make it attractive to visitors. The Lake and its tributaries, including the Delatite River and Howqua River, are popular camping and fishing locations.</p> <p>Alpine National park is the State's largest national park that protects Victoria's highest mountains and varied alpine environments, and is a popular location for outdoor activities including fishing, hunting, hiking and camping.</p>
 <p>Visitors</p>	<p>1.2 Million visitors to Mansfield Shire in 2016/17 (excl. Mt Buller)</p>	<p>Mansfield Shire attracts 1.2 million visitors per annum. This visitation drives a substantial part of the economy and leads to flow on benefits for other industry and supports liveability in the Shire</p>
 <p>Mt Buller Visitors</p>	<p>661,000 visitors to Mt Buller/Mt Stirling in 2016/17</p>	<p>Mt Buller/Mt Stirling is a key driver of visitation to the region. Mansfield township leverages significant benefit from visitors passing through to Mt Buller and acts a service centre for the mountain.</p>
 <p>Visitor Expenditure</p>	<p>\$182 million in direct visitor expenditure in Mansfield Shire in 2016/17</p>	<p>The direct expenditure from tourism in Mansfield Shire is \$182 million. With flow on benefits the tourism industry is valued at almost \$400 million to the local economy.</p>
 <p>Economic Value of Lake Eildon</p>	<p>\$486.1 m total output 2,548 total jobs</p> <p>Value of tourism and recreation at Lake Eildon (2018)</p>	<p>The total economic impact of tourism and recreation within the Lake Eildon Region is estimated at \$486 million in output and 2,548 jobs in the Hume Region. This accounts for Lake Eildon Region visitor expenditure (tourists, holiday home owners and houseboat owners) within Mansfield and Murrindindi Shires.</p> <p>The economic impact of tourism and recreation in the Lake Eildon Region for the Mansfield Shire side of Lake Eildon is \$274 million in output and 1,421 jobs.</p>

Source: Mansfield Shire Economic Profile, 2018

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The following section highlights key considerations for economic development in Mansfield Shire. This includes an overview of the macro-economic context in Victoria, considerations from industry and community consultation, and an overview of key issues, needs and opportunities for economic development.

3.2. MACROECONOMIC CONTEXT

Victoria continues to lead the nation in terms of relative economic growth, which considers a range of indicators such as participation rate in employment, unemployment rate, population growth, construction activity and consumer spending. Combined, these indicators can provide a general overview of how the State's economy is performing relative to historical rates.

Whilst the economic data released for the December Quarter indicates that economic conditions in Victoria remain favourable, this does not consider more recent events that have impacted the state's economy, including widespread bushfires across Australia's east coast and the outbreak and global pandemic of Coronavirus.

As a result of current conditions, economic forecasts have been revised, with the Department of Treasury currently expecting that GDP growth in Australia will contract around 0.2 percentage points across the December 2019 and March 2020 quarters². Most of this negative impact is anticipated to occur in the March quarter, before reconstruction and recovery activity progresses and other spending supports growth from the June 2020 quarter onwards.

The Federal and State Governments are implementing measures to stimulate economic growth domestically, such as the pending Federal Government stimulus package announcement and interest rate cuts. However, the forecast remains that Australia is heading for a recession in the first half of the year.

Since these events have unfolded, there have been a number of responses and outcomes, including:

- In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the OECD lowered its global GDP growth forecast for 2020 by 0.5%³, while noting that circumstances remain highly uncertain.
- The Reserve Bank of Australia has cut interest rates in March by 0.5%⁴.
- Across Australia, business confidence and consumer sentiment is low⁵. The Westpac-Melbourne Institute Index of Consumer Sentiment has hit a five year low, falling 3.8% to 91.9 in March⁶.
- There has been a decline in the oil market and consumer demand⁷, with the global oil demand forecast cut by 1.1 mb/d.

The impacts of bushfires and Coronavirus are also likely to affect various industries in Mansfield Shire, primarily as a result of lower household consumption and tourism, as well as effects on the agriculture and forestry sectors⁸. There is likely to be a significant reduction investment in both commercial and residential property as a result of decreased business confidence and falling consumer sentiment.

² Opening Statement by Dr Steven Kennedy, Secretary, Department of the Treasury, March 2020

³ Economic Update, Department of Treasury and Finance, March 2020.

⁴ Reserve Bank of Australia, 03 Mar 2020.

⁵ Consumer Sentiment, Westpac Economics, March 2020.

⁶ Consumer Sentiment, Westpac Economics, March 2020.

⁷ Oil Market Report, IEA, March 2020.

⁸ Opening Statement by Dr Steven Kennedy, Secretary, Department of the Treasury, March 2020.

3.3. INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY CONSIDERATIONS

Consultation was undertaken with industry and community members to provide input into preparation of the Economic Development Strategy.

A range of issues and opportunities were identified, with are outlined in the key workshop and survey outcomes.

3.3.1. WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

Workshops with industry and community members highlighted resounding support and need for investment in the following areas:

- Greater focus on environmental sustainability;
- Greater support and services to build resilience of existing businesses and residents;
- Improved communication between Council and businesses and residents;
- Improved township presentation, amenity and infrastructure;
- Investment in infrastructure and infrastructure planning;
- Investment in community facilities (e.g. swimming pool);
- Maintenance and protection of natural assets;
- Diversification of the economy;
- Increased transport connectivity;
- Improved digital connectivity;
- Improved strategic land-use planning; and
- Removal of barriers to development associated with planning.

3.3.2. SURVEY OUTCOMES

The survey results highlighted overwhelming sentiment from community and business members that Council's role in economic development should mainly be to prioritise investment in infrastructure that supports economic growth and supporting existing businesses to support their growth and sustainability.

Key opportunities for economic development through tourism were identified by survey respondents, with priority areas include farmgate, local produce and cellar doors, water-based recreation activities, and fine dining.

Further detail on survey responses can be found in Appendix A Survey Results.

3.4. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Below is a summary of issues, needs and opportunities relating to economic development in Mansfield Shire.

These considerations draw on the Shire’s existing economic profile, background research, consultation with community, industry and council/councillors, as well as the results of the community and business surveys administered by Council.

T4. ISSUES, NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES SUMMARY

Issues/Barriers	Needs	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little investment in public infrastructure and amenity to support population and dwelling growth • Lack of irrigation to support growth in the agriculture sector • Lack of access to medical services (GP’s) and need to expand Mansfield District Hospital • Lack of appropriately zoned land for development (industrial, commercial and residential) • Online shopping affecting retail trade • Limited Council resources • Limited capacity and unreliability of telecommunications • Lack of infrastructure to support tourism and residential growth • Lack of transport connectivity • Lack of direction and strategic tourism development– relying on organic growth of the industry • Limited agri-tourism development • Low membership to Local or Industry Networks/Associations (only 29% of businesses surveyed are currently members) • Workforce retention and attraction issues due to lack of affordable accommodation • Instability for residents not having permanent work due to seasonality of industries • Lack of workforce training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support labour force growth, particularly young to mid-life families • Need to provide more commercial and industrial zoned land for development • Promote development of sustainable and affordable housing • Improve the health of retail sector by supporting businesses to diversify their offering to provide online stores/services • Increase cultural diversity of the Shire • Investment in infrastructure, including telecommunications, sewerage, roads, and trails • Improve connectivity throughout Mansfield and between towns • Focus on health and education sector • Develop a strong vision and values for the Shire’s economy • Build industry sectors that are not reliant on tourism (i.e. not part-time and seasonal.) • Small towns enhancement and strategic planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage positive local climate agricultural forecast • Focus on complementary tourism products to decrease seasonality, such as adventure tourism and agri-tourism • Investment in green energy to provide security for power and to promote sustainable outcomes for the Shire • Opportunity to grow the number of small-scale and niche boutique industrial businesses • Investment in transport sector, both public transport and freight • Development of strong aged-care industry, which will provide significant jobs as well as service the ageing population • Expansion of education industry and associated services • Leverage investment in assets and experiences that showcase the history and heritage of the Shire • Create collaboration between complementary tourism offerings and providers

4. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This section provides the strategic framework for the Economic Development Strategy and discusses the key focus areas to be addressed in the Strategy.

Strategic considerations presented in this section are informed by the research and analysis from the 2018 Economic Profile as well as extensive consultation that was undertaken with the community, businesses, Council and government stakeholders.

4.2. FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW

Vision: *Mansfield Shire will leverage its economic strengths in tourism, retail, education, construction and agriculture to build a diverse and resilient economy that supports a prosperous Shire and maintains high standards of amenity and liveability.*

Framework

T5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

Theme	Objective	Strategies
Strengthen And Diversify The Economy	<u>Objective 1:</u> Diversify the Mansfield economy through targeted enhancement of potential growth sectors.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote the various competitive advantages of Mansfield Shire as a place of business and investment. 2. Improve rural property owners and business knowledge of agri-tourism and horticulture opportunities in Mansfield Shire. 3. Advocate for investment in education, and improvement of education and training pathways. 4. Advocate for investment in health care (including aged care) to increase liveability of the Shire. 5. Improve transport and logistics services in Mansfield Shire.
	<u>Objective 2:</u> Build a sustainable resident base through targeted workforce and resident attraction.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Support the attraction of younger aged cohort to Mansfield Shire.
	<u>Objective 3:</u> Ensure business and community resilience to unforeseen events.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Encourage and support sustainable practice for business and community. 8. Build resilience of local businesses and communities through inclusive planning.
Enhance The Visitor Economy	<u>Objective 4:</u> Strengthen and diversify the visitor economy.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Support and attract investment in new and existing tourism products and experiences. 10. Provide support to the tourism industry through leadership and improved strategic partnerships.
Drive Growth In Infrastructure And Public Land Enhancement	<u>Objective 5:</u> Invest in infrastructure, planning and amenity improvements to support economic growth.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Support delivery and implementation of the Mansfield Planning Strategy. 12. Advocate, support and deliver key infrastructure projects that will facilitate economic growth.
Best Practice Economic Development	<u>Objective 6:</u> Deliver best practice economic development to meet industry development needs.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Actively facilitate business enquires and investment opportunities. 14. Support the Shire's business community. 15. Strengthen strategic partnerships and encourage regional collaboration.

Performance measures

The implementation of the EDS should be regularly monitored and evaluated. High-level targets are provided under each theme and are in-line with historical growth rates (where applicable). Each target proposes an indicator to monitor in order to track progress at choice intervals.

Learnings also need to be captured to improve future delivery and decision making. The Strategy will be monitored by Council's Economic Development Unit (EDU). The team will work with key stakeholders to undertake an annual review to ensure that the Strategy remains relevant and responsive.

An annual progress report on the strategy's implementation should be considered. Additional information sources that will be used to track progress, include:

- Participant feedback in business and community workshops;
- Business / traders Associations and group meetings;
- The release of ABS Census of Population and Housing; and
- Australian Business Register data.

4.3. STRENGTHEN AND DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY

OBJECTIVE 1 Diversify the Mansfield economy through targeted enhancement of potential growth sectors

The Mansfield economy is heavily reliant on tourism and population growth. In order to create further sustainability in the economy, there needs to be a strengthening of industry that is unrelated to these two key drivers, with a focus on sectors that complement destination strengths and liveability outcomes. This includes the following sectors across the Shire: Healthcare (including aged-care and allied health), Education, Agriculture (including horticulture and agritourism), and small-scale industry (including boutique manufacturing and transport/logistics).

Limited capacity of the Mansfield District Hospital, lack of GP's and limited aged-care services and facilities has placed a strain on the healthcare sector and has negative impacts on the liveability of the Shire, particularly for older residents. There is opportunity to grow this sector, which will improve liveability and community services, as well as provide a greater number of stable employment opportunities for younger aged cohorts.

Mansfield Shire has a unique strength in education, with off-site Year 9 Campus's for Lauriston Girls School (Howqua Campus) and Geelong Grammar (Timbertop Campus) located in the Shire, as well as specialist education services provided by Mansfield Statewide Autism Services (MASS). Mansfield Secondary College and Mansfield Steiner School are the only secondary schools in the region, and it has been highlighted through consultation that limited education options has been a barrier for younger families moving to Mansfield Shire.

There is particular opportunity to grow the post-secondary education sector in the Shire's areas of competitive advantage, including outdoor education, environment, agriculture and hospitality. Mansfield Adult Continuing Education (MACE) was the only registered training organisation in Mansfield Shire providing post-secondary education, however MACE does not currently deliver any accredited training courses.

Small-scale and niche manufacturing businesses are an emerging strength in Mansfield Shire. There is opportunity for Council to promote investment opportunities in this sector, as well as a need to reduce investment barriers associated with inadequate and inappropriate land use zoning.

Key focus areas

- Horticulture and agri-tourism.
- Service industrial (boutique manufacturing / microbusinesses).
- Education Sector.
- Aged-care sector.
- Health and wellbeing.
- Transport and logistics.

Strategies

- **Promote the various competitive advantages of Mansfield Shire as a place of business and investment.**
- **Improve rural property owners and business knowledge of agri-tourism and horticulture opportunities in Mansfield Shire.**
- **Advocate for investment in education, and improvement of education and training pathways.**
- **Advocate for investment in health care (including aged care) to increase liveability of the Shire.**
- **Improve transport and logistics services in Mansfield Shire.**

Performance Measures

- **Target:** 10% increase in jobs in Healthcare & Social Assistance and Education & Training sectors by 2025.
Monitor: Every 4 years using ABS Census Industry of Employment data.
- **Target:** 10% increase in agri-tourism businesses by 2025.
Monitor: Every 4 years using Council Monitor.
- **Target:** Increase in the proportion of residents attaining tertiary education qualifications (e.g. certificate level, bachelor, post-graduate degree) by 2025.
Monitor: Every 4 years using Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing.

OBJECTIVE 2 Build a sustainable resident base through targeted workforce and resident attraction

Whilst there has been consistent population growth in Mansfield Shire, data highlights that much of this growth is attributed to the migration of retiree lifestyle residents from Melbourne who are attracted to Mansfield as a tree-change destination.

This growth supports the construction and service sectors in Mansfield Shire, but has placed pressure on public health care services. This however provides a significant opportunity to expand healthcare service provision in the Shire, and attract employment in health and aged-care services. Attracting investment in healthcare, including GP's, allied health professionals, will provide crucial services to improve liveability of the Shire for older residents as well as providing jobs for younger aged cohorts.

Attracting a younger demographic to live in Mansfield is critical to ensure the economic sustainability of the Shire. There is particular need to attract a young workforce, particularly in year-round service sectors, including health, aged-care and education.

There has been significant growth in the median house price in Mansfield (6.2% growth per annum 2009-18), which can be largely attributed to the lifestyle and tree-change residential market attracted to Mansfield Shire. This can price younger cohorts and young families out of the housing market in Mansfield. Crucial to the attraction of younger families to the Shire will be the development of affordable housing models that still retain the rural amenity that makes Mansfield Shire an attractive place to live.

Key Focus Areas

- Attracting young and midlife families to live in Mansfield.
- Attracting growth in young workforce in year-round service sectors (e.g. health, aged-care, education).
- Affordable housing to support growth in young families.

Strategies

- **Support the attraction of younger aged cohort to Mansfield Shire.**

Performance Measures

- **Target:** 5% of new housing developed is considered "affordable".
Monitor: Every 4 years using Council building approvals data.
- **Target:** 10% increase in young families (-40 years old) residing in Mansfield Shire by 2025.
Monitor: Every 4 years using ABS Census data.

OBJECTIVE 3 Support development of business and community resilience to unforeseen events

Businesses and community members need to be resilient in order to maintain viability through unplanned events. This issue came to prominence following the recent bushfires.

Mansfield Shire businesses and communities are highly susceptible to climate change and weather related events. Drought, bushfire and reduced snowfall will continue to impact on the business base and community livelihood.

Council will encourage and facilitate the implementation of sustainable practices for community and businesses to improve resilience. This includes environmental, social and economic sustainability.

There is opportunity for Mansfield Shire to become a leader in environmental sustainability and grow this as an area of competitive advantage. This will assist in continuing to attract progressive and environmentally conscious residents and businesses.

Key Focus Areas:

- Resilience training for businesses.
- Adapting agri-business to suit climate change.
- Inclusive planning to build community resilience.
- Build community empowerment through ownership of local initiatives.
- Supporting private sector investment in renewable energy (solar, hydro, wind).
- Mansfield Shire Council to investigate green energy programs for Council and community.
- Encourage businesses to 'Go Green'.
- Explore the delivery of a community energy program.

Strategies:

- **Encourage and support sustainable practice for business and community.**
- **Build resilience of local businesses and communities through inclusive planning.**

Performance Measures

- **Target:** Delivery of at least one sustainable energy project in Mansfield Shire by 2025.

4.4. ENHANCE THE VISITOR ECONOMY

OBJECTIVE 4 Strengthen and diversify the visitor economy

The tourism industry in Mansfield Shire is a major driver of the economy, and supports a large proportion of jobs within other industries, such as retail, agriculture, arts and recreation services and real estate (for holiday home owners).

The visitor economy in Mansfield Shire is largely dependent on nature based tourism, which is generally low yield and weather dependant. The attraction of investment in tourism product, experiences and accommodation which strengthen the diversity of product and appeal to broader markets is needed to improve long term sustainability of the industry. This includes the development of high quality product that will further attract the North East region's Lifestyle Leader market, such as investment in agri-tourism experiences, foods wine and ferments, boutique and experiential accommodation, as well as investment in high quality infrastructure at nature-based assets (such as lookouts, boat ramps and walking tracks).

Mansfield Shire has experienced consistent growth in the tourism industry due to mainly organic growth, which has been driven by visitor demand, and business owners desire to live and work in the region. There is significant opportunity and need for Council to drive and attract investment in tourism product and experiences in the Shire.

The longevity of the tourism industry will rely on the attraction of investment in products that attract higher yielding visitors, encourage overnight stays, generate additional yield from nature-based assets, and provide a year-round tourism offering that is not weather-dependant. Further to this, it is necessary to increase the efficiency of resource allocation by strengthening strategic partnerships across the Shire and with other stakeholders.

Driving investment in a diverse tourism offering will also help to increase off-peak visitation, which may alleviate pressure on key travel routes and visitor services in Mansfield township over peak weekends.

Key Focus Areas

- Improving coordination and collaboration between tourism industry.
- Enhance relationships with key partners (Mount Buller and Tourism North East).
- Encourage tourism development in rural areas including agri-tourism.
- Deliver investment in infrastructure to support key nature-based assets and to improve access to these assets.
- Proactively attract investment in the accommodation sector, including enhancement of existing accommodation facilities.
- Advocate for enhanced investment into Lake Eildon.
- Attract further investment in food, wine and ferments tourism.
- Investigate opportunities for business events.
- Undertake a review of the current Visitor Servicing model and implement the findings.

Strategies:

- **Support and attract investment in new and existing tourism products and experiences.**
- **Provide support to the tourism industry through leadership and improved strategic partnerships.**

Performance Measures

- **Target:** 20% growth in overnight visitors by 2025.
Monitor: Tourism Research Australia data, combined with PAVE methodology.

4.5. DRIVE GROWTH IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC LAND ENHANCEMENT

OBJECTIVE 5 Invest in infrastructure, planning and amenity improvements to support economic growth

The environment, landscape and amenity of Mansfield Shire is a key driver for tourism and resident attraction. It is critical that this is protected, improved and maintained in order to support key drivers for the economy. Council will continue to ensure the designation of appropriately zoned land to support rural living, agriculture and land for environmental purposes.

Digital infrastructure is a key barrier for a significant proportion of residents in the Shire. 27% of dwellings remain without internet connection, and anecdotally a large number of residents have poor internet connection. 62% of home-based business survey respondents indicated that their business would be greatly benefited by high-speed internet service. Council will continue to advocate for improvements to digital infrastructure to support businesses and residents.

There are a range of barriers that have been identified that need to be mitigated to improve the investment environment in Mansfield. This includes a lack of appropriately zoned land for development, lack of reticulated water and sewer from most of the Shire's outlying settlements, and limited capacity of existing water and sewer networks. These require substantial public sector funding and investment.

Key Focus Areas:

- Maintaining rural landscapes for agriculture and amenity.
- Maintaining amenity and liveability of Mansfield township.
- Improving township structure and public realm enhancements for outlying settlements.
- Improve telecommunications and digital infrastructure.
- Advocate for improved transport linkages within Mansfield Shire and to key transport linkage towns outside the Shire to increase access to higher education, healthcare and jobs (including Benalla and Wangaratta).
- Expansion of sewer and water capacity in key settlements, including Goughs Bay.
- Delivery of Mansfield Shire Planning Strategy to support industrial and commercial land development, and increased dispersal of residential settlement.
- Productive and efficient planning approvals.

Strategies:

- **Ensure appropriate land supply to support key industry sectors and residential expansion, through delivery and implementation of the Mansfield Planning Strategy.**
- **Advocate, support and deliver key infrastructure projects that will facilitate economic growth.**

Performance Measures

1. **Target:** Delivery of 15 years land supply to support residential, industrial and commercial growth by 2025.
2. **Target:** Delivery of at least one major supporting infrastructure project by 2025.

4.6. BEST PRACTICE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVE 6 Deliver best practice economic development to meet industry needs

Council will implement best practice economic development principles and improve co-ordination and communication amongst industry and community.

As 90% of businesses in Mansfield are small business (0-4 employees), it is critical that Council provides services that will support the development of a vibrant and resilient small/micro business community. These support services can include regular engagement to understand the needs of the business community, training, mentoring and networking, improved processes within Council to facilitate investment and business development opportunities, as well as strengthening regional and state partnerships to improve local economic outcomes.

Council will provide business support through regular and meaningful engagement with businesses. This will be enabled by developing and maintaining an up to date business database to support regular contact with the business base. Council should consider the use of a CRM which would assist Council with efficient, targeted and effective engagement to specific sectors. This would be particularly useful for a resource restricted Council such as Mansfield Shire, with a population of under 10,000.

Business incentive and grant schemes can provide critical funding support for businesses to invest in growth through an increase in staff and resources, investing in plant and equipment or research and development. Although Mansfield Shire Council may not have the resources to implement a formal business grant or incentive scheme, Council could be more suited to promoting Government grants, schemes and incentives that are available for small to medium enterprises and assist with the application process.

Co-working spaces provide the critical support infrastructure and services often required for small businesses in their infancy to grow and mature, as well as providing spaces for home-based businesses to undertake business meetings. Demand for co-working spaces is becoming increasingly popular amongst professional and financial service industries, and development of co-working facilities may assist in attracting new younger aged residents to Mansfield Shire.

Key Focus Areas:

- Implement a dynamic and up-to-date business database system.
- Support and advocacy for local or industry networks/associations.
- Training, mentorship & networking.
- Support and promote the Mansfield Business and District Association, Mansfield Producers, and Mansfield Winemakers.
- Co-working facilities to support professional services.

Strategies:

- **Actively facilitate business enquires and investment opportunities.**
- **Support the Shire's business community.**
- **Strengthen strategic partnerships and encourage regional collaboration.**

Performance Measures

- **Target:** Delivery of 5 training or networking sessions per annum.

5. ACTION PLAN

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The Economic Development Strategy includes four key themes, strategies and an action plan to support the implementation of the Strategy over the next 5 years (2020 to 2025).

An indicative timeframe and relevant stakeholders are identified for each action. Timeframes are categorised as follows:

- Short term (1 year);
- Medium term (2 – 3 years);
- Long term (3 – 5 years); and
- Ongoing.

This Economic Development Strategy has been prepared in the context of the Shire's planning framework and broader regional priorities in the Hume region. The Strategy will be implemented over time in partnership with State and Federal agencies, local business and industry, Business and Trader associations and the community.

The following acronyms are used in the Action Plan:

- Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)
- Benalla Rural City (BRC)
- Department of Education and Training (DET)
- Economic Development Unit (EDU)
- Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW)
- Goulburn Valley Water (GVW)
- Mansfield Adult Continuing Education (MACE)
- Mansfield Autistic Statewide Services (MASS)
- Mansfield District Business Association (MDBA)
- Mansfield Shire Council (MSC)
- Planning Unit (PU)
- Public Transport Victoria (PTV)
- Regional Development Victoria (RDV)

THEME 1: STRENGTHEN AND DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY

OBJECTIVE 1 Diversify the Mansfield economy through targeted enhancement of potential growth sectors

Action		Lead & partners	Timeframe
STRATEGY 1 Promote the various competitive advantages of Mansfield Shire as a place of business and investment.			
ACTION 1.1	Improve information available on investment opportunities in Mansfield Shire through development of an investment attraction web page. This should include information on key sector opportunities in Mansfield Shire, investment prospectus material, and independent economic data.	MSC EDU	Short Term
STRATEGY 2 Improve rural property owners and business knowledge of agri-tourism and horticulture opportunities in Mansfield Shire.			
ACTION 2.1	Development of a diversification of farming seminar targeted to rural land owners, which promotes agri-tourism and horticultural opportunities. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of successful case studies in agri-tourism and horticulture - Specialist in climate adaptation to discuss medium and long-term impacts on agricultural production - Business strategy for rural enterprises. 	MSC EDU Agriculture Victoria	Medium Term
STRATEGY 3 Advocate for investment in education, and improvement of education and training pathways.			
ACTION 3.1	Model future primary and secondary education requirements of Mansfield Shire and ensure that primary and secondary education provision meets future needs and opportunities.	MSC EDU Mansfield High School Mansfield Steiner School DET	Medium Term
ACTION 3.2	Improve information available on Council website regarding education options and quality of education in the Shire.	MSC EDU	Short Term
ACTION 3.3	Undertake a post-secondary education development study which investigates current gaps in education provision and opportunities to provide education locally	MSC EDU	Short Term
ACTION 3.4	Investigate increased opportunity for post-secondary education, working with existing education providers MACE and other tertiary providers.	MSC EDU MACE DET	Medium Term
ACTION 3.5	Support development of Mansfield Autistic Statewide Services (MASS) 'Gamechanger' project to develop and expand with new school, training, recreational, residential and camp facilities.	MSC MASS	Medium Term
STRATEGY 4 Advocate for investment in health care (including aged care) to increase liveability of the Shire.			
ACTION 4.1	Advocate on behalf of the Mansfield District Hospital to grow and enhance the existing facilities to meet the needs of a growing community.	MSC Mansfield District Hospital	Short Term
ACTION 4.2	Explore opportunities to establish and expand aged care facilities in Mansfield to support the forecast increase in elderly residents.	Private Sector MSC	Medium Term
ACTION 4.3	Facilitate attraction of healthcare professionals into Mansfield Shire, including GP's and allied health professionals. This can be promoted through an investment prospectus.	MSC	Short Term

STRATEGY 5	Improve transport and logistics services in Mansfield Shire.		
ACTION 5.1	Undertake a gap analysis of existing transport services in Mansfield Shire to identify additional services required to support local business.	MSC PTV	Short Term

OBJECTIVE 2 Build a sustainable resident base through targeted workforce and resident attraction

		Lead & partners	Timeframe
STRATEGY 6	Support the attraction of younger aged cohort to Mansfield Shire.		
ACTION 6.1	Develop a resident attraction marketing strategy targeted towards the benefits of living in Mansfield Shire for younger families, including lifestyle attributes, education facilities and community services for families.	MSC EDU	Medium Term
ACTION 6.2	Ensure appropriate land and residential types to support the attraction of families to the area, through the Mansfield Planning Strategy	MSC PU	Medium Term

OBJECTIVE 3 Support development of business and community resilience to unforeseen events

		Lead & partners	Timeframe
STRATEGY 7	Encourage and support sustainable practice for business and community.		
ACTION 7.1	Support the delivery of a community-led renewable energy project in the Shire (e.g. small scale solar farm, waste to energy) and other green initiatives. The project should consider capacity building and social inclusion across the community and aim to reduce power costs.	MSC Mansfield Community	Medium Term
ACTION 7.2	Consider the establishment of a community sustainability group	MSC Mansfield Community	Medium Term
ACTION 7.3	Encourage and attract private sector interest and investment into small to medium renewable energy projects and green industries. Engage with the AEMO to understand potential limitations to the capacity of the existing system to store and distribute power.	MSC EDU	Medium Term
ACTION 7.4	Assist businesses to access funding for renewable energy installations through existing programs, such as the Better Building Finance program.	MSC EDU	Short Term
ACTION 7.5	Investigate opportunities to link into high power transition lines for future energy projects	Private sector providers MSC AEMO	Medium Term
STRATEGY 8	Build resilience of local businesses and communities through inclusive planning.		
ACTION 8.1	Develop Community Plans supporting the local economic aspirations of the outlying communities.	MSC Local Communities	Short Term
ACTION 8.2	Provide information packages for community and businesses regarding resilience to unplanned weather-related events.	MSC Local Communities Short Term	Short Term
ACTION 8.3	Provide training to local businesses to assist in the development of individual business plans.	MSC EDU Business Victoria	Short Term

THEME 2: ENHANCE THE VISITOR ECONOMY

OBJECTIVE 4 Strengthen and diversify the visitor economy

Actions		Lead & partners	Timeframe
STRATEGY 9 Support and attract investment in new and existing tourism products and experiences.			
ACTION 9.1	Prioritise past public and private sector investment opportunities identified through recent strategies and projects.	MSC EDU Tourism North East	Short Term
ACTION 9.2	Develop a product and accommodation investment prospectus that identifies the top 10 opportunities for tourism development in Mansfield Shire, including the top 5 private and top 5 public opportunities.	MSC EDU	Short Term
ACTION 9.3	Undertake an events strategy to improve targeted attraction of tourism and events businesses, as well as targeting of business and commercial events.	MSC EDU Tourism North East	Medium Term
ACTION 9.4	Undertake a Tracks and Trails Strategy and deliver identified priority trails to enhance connectivity and liveability of the Shire.	MSC EDU	Short Term
ACTION 9.5	Explore opportunities to enhance the Delatite Valley as a key visitor destination and gateway to Mount Buller including agritourism opportunities, improved trail linkages between Mansfield and Mt Buller and enhancement of Merrijig as a tourism village.	MSC Tourism Industry	Short Term
STRATEGY 10 Provide support to the tourism industry through leadership and improved strategic partnerships.			
ACTION 10.1	Investigate ways to improve effective tourism governance and visitor services in Mansfield Shire, including implementation of a review of the visitor servicing model.	MSC EDU	Short Term
ACTION 10.2	Continue to improve collaboration with key partners (including Murrindindi Shire, GMW and Mount Buller) to support key tourism assets of Lake Eildon, Mount Buller and Great Victorian Rail Trail.	MSC	Ongoing
ACTION 10.3	Continue to collaborate and enhance working relationship with Tourism North East.	MSC	Ongoing
ACTION 10.4	Continue to collaborate and partner with public land managers to work towards relevant tourism opportunities.	MSC DELWP Parks Victoria GMW	Ongoing

THEME 3: DRIVE GROWTH IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC LAND ENHANCEMENT

OBJECTIVE 5 Invest in infrastructure, planning and amenity improvements to support economic growth

Strategy and Actions		Lead & partners	Timeframe
STRATEGY 11 Support delivery and implementation of the Mansfield Planning Strategy.			
ACTION 11.1	<p>Ensure appropriate land supply to support key industry sectors and residential expansion, through delivery and implementation of the Mansfield Planning Strategy. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Industrial land for expansion of small-scale service industrial - Appropriately sited commercial and retail land - Zoned residential land to support various housing typologies 	MSC PU	Short Term
STRATEGY 12 Advocate, support and deliver key infrastructure projects that will facilitate economic growth.			
ACTION 12.1	Advocate for the delivery of the Mansfield-Goughs Bay sewerage pipeline to support residential development and facilitate investment in tourism in Goughs Bay.	MSC RDV GVW	Short Term
ACTION 12.2	Increase reticulated water and sewerage capacity in key townships with opportunity for growth, including Mansfield, Bonnie Doon and Merrijig.	MSC RDV GVW	Medium Term
ACTION 12.3	Advocate for improved telecommunications access in the Shire's known blackspots.	MSC	Short Term
ACTION 12.4	Advocate for improved public transport linkages between Mansfield Shire and key rural centres including Wangaratta and Benalla, as well as within Mansfield Shire..	MSC BRC PTV	Short Term
ACTION 12.5	Develop and implement structure plans for Bonnie Doon, Merrijig, Goughs Bay and Jamieson, following preparation of the Mansfield Planning Strategy.	MSC	Long Term

THEME 4: BEST PRACTICE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVE 6 Deliver best practice economic development to meet industry needs

Actions	Lead & partners	Timeframe
STRATEGY 13 Actively facilitate business enquires and investment opportunities.		
ACTION 13.1 Establish a clear process for facilitating business and investment enquires, to improve co-ordination between Council's economic development and planning units.	MSC EDU	Short Term
ACTION 13.2 Improve access to planning support services for business planning applications, and develop a clear hierarchy for engagement within Council.	MSC EDU	Short Term
STRATEGY 14 Support the Shire's business community.		
ACTION 14.1 Partner with relevant organisations (inc. Mansfield Business and District Association, Mansfield Producers, Mansfield Winemakers) to facilitate business training, mentorship and networking events/programs, focusing on areas that businesses wish to upskill in (e.g. marketing, financial management, business planning etc.).	MSC	Medium Term
ACTION 14.2 Investigate the opportunity for a co-working space in Mansfield township.	MSC	Medium Term
ACTION 14.3 Establish a CRM for business to increase efficiency of the Economic Development Unit's ability to engage and monitor business performance.	MSC	Medium Term
STRATEGY 15 Strengthen strategic partnerships and encourage regional collaboration.		
ACTION 15.1 Encourage quarterly meetings of Councillors and the MDBA to discuss aspirations and need for support from the Business Sector.	MSC	Medium Term
ACTION 15.2 Continue to actively build relationship with Small Business Victoria to provide best practice advice to businesses and continue to run workshops in partnership with Small Business Victoria.	MSC	Medium Term
ACTION 15.3 Develop solid partnerships with State Departments to ensure the best outcomes and opportunities for the Mansfield Shire.	MSC	Ongoing
ACTION 15.4 Taungurung Land and Waters Council development and implementation of a Reconciliation Action Plan to support economic participation and opportunity.	MSC	Medium Term
ACTION 15.5 Supporting public and private sector grant writing to State and Federal Government.	MSC EDU	Ongoing

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A SURVEY RESULTS

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Key results of the community survey include:

- Respondents shop for food and household items either always (38% or 15% respectively) or majority of the time (48% and 50% respectively).
- 91% of respondents believe events provide economic benefit to the Shire.
- Main barriers that prevented respondents from starting a business include planning and compliance barriers (22%) and lack of demand (19%).
- The key type of support that would assist respondents in starting a business was 'assistance overcoming planning and compliance barriers' (34%) and 'financial assistance such as grant opportunities' (27%).
- Respondents believe that Council's priority role in economic development should be 'investment in infrastructure that supports economic growth' and 'supporting existing businesses (growth/sustainability)'.

BUSINESS SURVEY

Key results of the business survey include:

- Of the respondents, 64% had a home-based business. Top reasons for businesses being home based included low costs (62%) and flexible working hours (57%). This indicates potential need for low-cost co-working spaces for these home-based business owners and operators.
- Respondents to the business survey indicated that high speed internet (62%) and high quality mobile connectivity (43%) were the main services/facilities that would benefit their businesses.
- 57 % of businesses surveyed do not employ staff.
- 31% of respondents indicated that there were no constraints to growing their business, whilst 27% of businesses identified local economic conditions as the key barrier to growing their business.
- 79% of businesses who don't use suppliers within Mansfield Shire attribute this to products being unavailable. The key gaps are specialised equipment and product that are quite industry specific.
- Of the businesses who specified their membership, only one was to Mansfield Business District Association. Most were to Australia-wide industry-specific organisations.
- Top 3 business development topics businesses would most like training or professional development in:
 - Marketing (35%)
 - Tax advice and Accounting (19%)
 - Social media and online tools (19%)

T6. BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP TO ANY LOCAL OR INDUSTRY NETWORKS/ASSOCIATIONS?

Is your business currently a member of any local or industry networks or associations?

