



City of  
Mount Gambier



# Partnership Priorities and Advocacy 2021 - 2022

# INTRODUCTION

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The City of Mount Gambier aims to continue to strengthen its partnerships with local, state and federal governments to advocate for community issues and concerns and work together to provide improved services for the city and the Limestone Coast region.

The initiatives identified within this document will help to facilitate the growth and prosperity of the local community, the region and South Australia. The advocacy and partnership opportunities are categorised under the four elements of the City of Mount Gambier Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024, and include:

- Local transport and housing,
- Education,
- Health services and emergency support,
- Internet connectivity,
- Road, rail and freight infrastructure,
- Forestry and water,
- Sustainability, environment, waste and the circular economy,
- Tourism and major events,
- Workforce attraction and retention,
- Arts and creative industry, and
- Regional collaboration.

These areas form the base for the current and future work of Council, with objectives to maximise funding and advocacy opportunities as they arise to deliver sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits for the community.

Mount Gambier has a strong history of implementing innovative major projects which continue to set standards for regional South Australia. From the award winning Riddoch Arts and Cultural Centre, the nationally recognised Mount Gambier Library, to the construction of Council's largest ever infrastructure project the \$57.3million Wulanda Recreation and Convention Centre, these projects demonstrate Mount Gambier's dedication to successful outcomes for both its community and for regional South Australia.

We look forward to working in partnership with all levels of government to deliver on these important shared outcomes for the benefit of our community and for South Australia as a whole.

*The City of Mount Gambier recognises the Boandik people as the traditional owners and custodians of this local government area.*

*We respect their spiritual relationship with the land and recognise the deep feelings of attachment Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with this land.*

*The City of Mount Gambier is committed to working together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the process of reconciliation.*

# OUR COMMITMENT AND VISION

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Mount Gambier (population: 27,433 (ABS ERP, 2020)) is the economic hub for the Limestone Coast region with the annual economy in the order of \$6.8billion (RAI [In]Sight), more than twice that of Whyalla (population: 21,506 (ABS ERP, 2020)) and 25 per cent higher than Warrnambool, Victoria (population: 35,533 (ABS ERP, 2020)). Mount Gambier has more than 2,065 businesses with 12,732 residents employed in the year ending June 2020. Mount Gambier is the regional centre of South East South Australia and Western Victoria with a role, function and responsibility for driving the development agenda in this corner of Australia.

Mount Gambier is built on the strength of its people, a clean natural environment and the diversity of its industries. Council strives to create vibrancy, promote our identity and build on our reputation as a place to live, work, visit and invest. To provide a future for our people, we require additional economic growth and employment as well as recreational and educational opportunities.

The richness and diversity of:

- Our People
- Our Location
- Our Economy; and
- Our Climate, Natural Resources, Art, Culture and Heritage

makes Mount Gambier the thriving successful place that people are proud to call home.

These elements will contribute towards the future growth and development of the city and form the goals of the Council's Strategic Plan 2020 - 2024. These areas provide the strategic base from which Council's priorities are built, and provide opportunities outlined in this Partnership Priorities and Advocacy document to partner with all levels of government.

These goals bring together four key themes that affect our people – whether they live, work, study or visit the City of Mount Gambier. We seek to grow our city and the communities of which it is comprised and the capabilities of our people and their connection to each other and to the city are key.





# OUR PEOPLE

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## Local Transport

Mount Gambier has maintained a fixed route public bus transport system for more than 60 years with the current service in place for 30 years. It has been largely unaltered during this time.

The current public bus service is funded by the State Government and is provided by a third party. It does not service many key residential areas and vital community services such as the Mount Gambier Hospital, the medical centre on Pinehall Avenue, aged care facilities and Foodbank.

Importantly, the service does not provide transport to the soon to be completed Wulanda Recreation and Convention Centre and does not link to key CBD and residential areas.

When compared with other similar sized regional communities in Australia, Mount Gambier's current public transport service is sub-standard. According

to Bus SA's 2018 Election Platform, *Moving People 2025* regional spend per capita was approximately \$200 per head in Victoria/New South Wales, \$120 per head in Western Australia; and under \$20 per head in South Australia.

Partnering with the City of Mount Gambier to upgrade the provision of transport services is an important lever to activate Mount Gambier's natural and built assets, link its health, recreation, and community services and will be a key economic driver for the future of a modern and connected city.

### Advocacy

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**Equity of spending on bus services and implementation of new routes.**



## Housing

Potential economic growth is increasingly compromised by access to housing.

In the context of an expanding property market and an evident regionalisation, we are exploring implementation models with the private and non-government sectors to facilitate access to housing for incoming residents to work and invest in the community.

A key step to ensure affordable housing is upgrading the existing housing stock to increase the supply of affordable housing provided, as well as determining the viability of including affordable homes as a requirement as part of new housing estates and developments.

This would help ensure people on low incomes are not priced out of the market or put at risk and would facilitate workforce planning with adequate housing supply.

### Partnership priority

**Working in partnership to address housing accessibility in Mount Gambier.**

## Library

A 10 year State Government funding agreement expired at the end of 2021 financial year. The agreement secured funding for public libraries through a material grant and an operational grant each year. The Local Government Association has been negotiating with the State Government to secure a new agreement that has not yet been reached.

The SA Government has agreed to keep the funding (\$20.7million for the state) the same, with no indexing which in turn means a decrease in funding. The City of Mount Gambier requests a five year indexation of the funding to ensure support for the purchase of library resources, as well as the delivery of programs, events and other library services for our community.

### Funding support

**Funding commitment as agreed to be indexed to CPI for the next five years.**



## Primary Health Care and Preventative Health Services

Mount Gambier is the major service centre for the Limestone Coast and services an area of almost 65,000 people across the South East of South Australia and Western Victoria. The Limestone Coast has a variety of health services and options available and the local health network plays a critical role in ensuring affordable access to associated specialist services and allied health.

The City of Mount Gambier is committed to the wellbeing of its community and acknowledges that quality health care is an essential service for this to be realised. To fulfill Council's vision to be 'an inclusive city where people lead fulfilling lives' requires health services to meet individual needs, irrespective of their location.

Council is committed to partnering with health services to advocate for appropriate care in our region. We support community health by delivering immunisations and we work with the mental health team through our Environmental Health Officers.

There are currently gaps in health services in the region, including but not limited to - private hospital provision, day surgery options, palliative care, drug and alcohol rehabilitation services and mental health support.

Ongoing facilitation and advocacy for the development of health services in Mount Gambier is important to meet community needs but is also a pillar to drive the economy into the future.

### Advocacy

**Development of State Government provided health services and support for a Federal Government 'Head to Health' hub in Mount Gambier to ensure appropriate health care in our region.**

## Suicide Prevention and Aftercare Options

Research indicates that suicide remains a high risk to any person who has attempted suicide for a period of at least three months after the attempt (Life In Mind, 2021). When people present at Accident and Emergency after an attempt they are very often checked over, discharged and perhaps given a referral for counselling. Waiting lists for counselling, if the person can afford the gap fees, are often up to three months and beyond, leaving them in a high-risk status.

In Adelaide there are two services, The Way Back – a Beyond Blue program and the Suicide Prevention Support Service both delivered through Anglicare SA. The Suicide Prevention Support Service is limited to the Fleurieu Peninsula and the Adelaide Hills.

South Australia lost 234 lives to suicide in 2020. According to Lifeline Australia 65,000 people attempt to take their life each year. This is strong evidence of why there must be an after-attempt support service available to every South Australian.

The City of Mount Gambier advocates strongly for services which address both prevention and care of its community in times of need.

### Advocacy

**Expansion of regional services which address both suicide prevention and aftercare for the community.**



## Emergency Support

As one of the busiest Metropolitan Fire Service stations in South Australia, Mount Gambier pursues an adapted solution to ensure the safety of the community through the provision of appropriate response vehicles. The 2019/2020 Metropolitan Fire Service performance report shows the Mount Gambier station attended 439 incidents, responding to 230 more incidents than Mount Barker crews and 149 more than Seaford.

The State Government announced eight new heavy urban pump rescue appliances for South Australia with a reduced plan for Mount Gambier of a second hand vehicle despite trucks used by local crews being 20 years old currently – five years beyond the ideal age limit. In this context and combined with a commitment to all emergency support, an appropriate replacement regime with an adapted response requires attention.

### Funding support

**Ensure sustainable capital funding for appropriate asset maintenance and a replacement regime for regional emergency support.**

## Tertiary and Vocational Education

Support for the presence of tertiary education providers is important to the economic growth of Mount Gambier which experiences lower levels of school and post-school attainment compared with South Australia as a whole. In terms of post-secondary attainment, the region has a significantly lower proportion of the adult population with Bachelor degrees or higher (10.9 per cent, compared with 22.4 per cent for South Australia as a whole).

Based on the 2011 Census, 32.2 per cent of the population aged 15-64 in the Limestone Coast had attained Year 12, compared to 54.2 per cent for South Australia. The city also rates poorly in terms of innovation and start-up businesses, with a lower level of business start-ups than many other regional cities.

The Mount Gambier and District Tertiary Health Education Grants have supported residents from Mount Gambier and the surrounding district who need to leave the region to undertake university studies in health skill areas required within our community.

Each year, a limited number of grants are offered, building our regional capacity to generate an increased presence of skilled and trained health professionals. The grants deliver a unique community-led response to local essential skill shortages within the health sector but the widening of support for tertiary and vocational education funding for the region is essential to continue to build the economy through innovation and skills.

The City of Mount Gambier supports all programs and the tertiary education sector which connect with local industry and actively seeks to partner with government to obtain funding initiatives to facilitate the sustainability of the regional workforce.

### Advocacy

**Ongoing commitment to existing tertiary offering and increased support for tertiary and vocational education funding for the region.**



# OUR LOCATION

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## Crater Lakes Activation

The Crater Lakes precinct is a unique natural asset in the City of Mount Gambier. In 2021 Council and SA Water finalised co-dedication of the Blue Lake and are working collaboratively to ensure the provision of water supply and services, and to develop the potential in maximising one of South Australia's iconic natural assets. A Crater Lakes Activation Plan will be developed to work with the community to explore options and deliver actions to enable Council to capitalise on the Crater Lakes precinct.

Various established trails are used for different activities and events in alignment with the City of Mount Gambier's ongoing commitment to promote the area for outdoor recreational activity for locals and visitors to the city. The City of Mount Gambier is exploring trail design and scoping works to assess the existing trail network to further develop trails in the area.

Council is also actively pursuing the opportunity with public and private partners to explore the development of a range of accommodation options and experiences to take advantage of the Blue Lake and Crater Lakes precinct.

### Partnership opportunity

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**Investment opportunities to be developed in alignment with the Crater Lakes Activation Plan.  
Indicative cost \$2million.**





## Native Vegetation

Environmental restoration of the Crater Lakes precinct in partnership with the Limestone Coast Landscape Board.

This will include integrated land management with economic development, tourism and the creation of a liveable city where people respect nature. The collaboration aligns with the United Nations *Decade on Ecosystem Restoration*. A significant opportunity exists to maximise the City of Mount Gambier's current resourcing as well as to develop a network of urban volunteers to help eradicate weeds, revegetate native plants and support the restoration of missing wildlife species to the Crater Lakes.



### Partnership opportunity

**Funding support in partnership with the Limestone Coast Landscape Board.**

## CBD Activation

In the context of the Wulanda Recreation and Convention Centre build, previous work to complete the Railway Lands and current discussion on future use of the old Railway Station building and platform, combined with events in the Cave Garden and Riddoch Arts and Cultural Centre, there are multiple opportunities to activate the CBD.

### Outdoor Dining

To promote social interaction by slowing speeds, increasing connectivity and economic spend, projects to create a better outdoor dining space along Commercial Street East, between Penola Road/Bay Road and Ferrers Street/Mitchell Street enabling local traders to improve vibrancy, pedestrian movement and economic activity within the city centre are being explored.

This re-capture of public space will include widening the footpath, and adding more bike parking and greenery, without blocking the traffic lane — in front of businesses. This activates a new public space open to anyone to enjoy and maintained by the shop owner. Activation levers to create thriving public spaces help bring together neighbours, create more breathing room and support local businesses.

### Funding support

**Indicative funding support - \$100,000.**

## Signage

To increase visitation and awareness of sites in Mount Gambier, a signage strategy and implementation plan has been developed.

This improved wayfinding will upgrade existing signs to meet international standards and connect the city's built and natural assets to maximise their benefits for Mount Gambier.

The Blue Lake and Crater Lakes precinct as well as the Umpherston Sinkhole present the opportunity to significantly enhance visitor experiences to be creative, accessible, informative and dynamic in a context of rapidly changing technologies.

### Funding support

**Funding of implementation of signage strategy. Indicative cost \$400,000.**



## Smart Cities

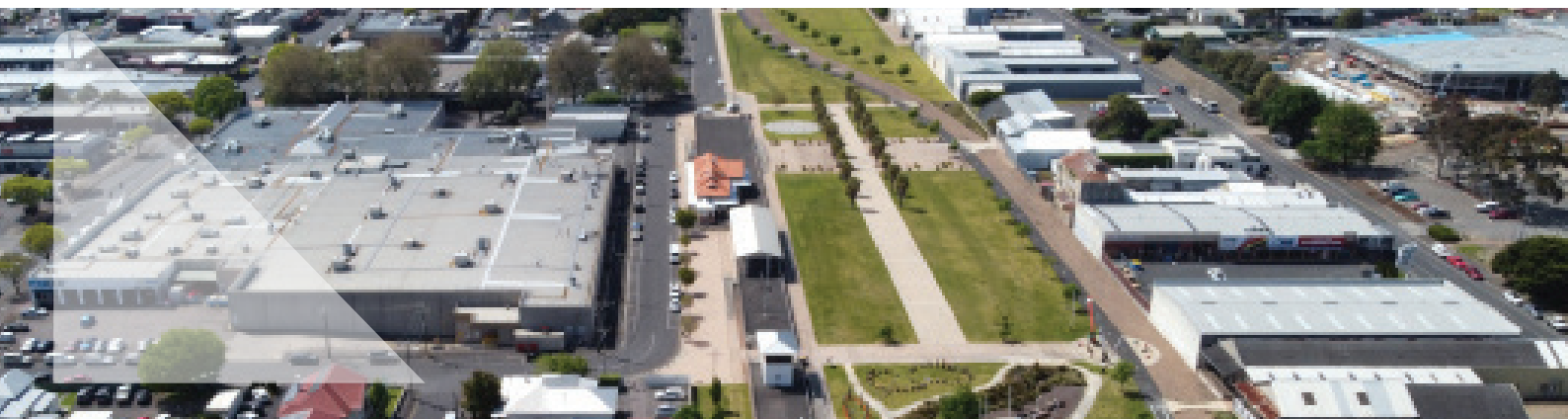
Mount Gambier continues to provide clean, healthy living conditions and aspires to achieve this with digital infrastructure to improve operational efficiency, share information and provide a better quality of service and well-being.

GigCity is available to businesses at key innovation precincts and co-working spaces located in Mount Gambier. GigCity is limited to business customers within designated precincts but provides the opportunity to promote Mount Gambier to innovative new businesses and for the city to promote infrastructure solutions to ensure future focused planning and implementation.

Funding support for digital solutions to assist Mount Gambier to take its current community amenities including benches, bins, lighting, devices, and the use of data to be more interactive and efficient is an ongoing focus.

### Subsidy support

**Funding support for digital solutions to enable Mount Gambier to lead the region to be connected, efficient and sustainable.**





## Road, Rail and Freight Infrastructure

Australia's ongoing investment in infrastructure to enable a world-class supply chain requires evaluation of the reinvigoration of rail in the Limestone Coast and South West Victoria as an opportunity to future proof the connection to this vital new supply chain.

The City of Mount Gambier supports Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast with the CSIRO commissioned work to map the region's freight task and model the economic benefits of rail with infrastructure and intermodal connections. This will not impact the Rail Trail in the CBD.

The study examined commodities and tested forestry and wood products, dairy, grains, pulses, livestock (beef and sheep), wool and horticulture. Mount Gambier to Heywood was identified as the most attractive option with an estimated \$15.6 million in savings for regional producers per year.

### Partnership opportunity

**Advocacy for ongoing consideration of study. Estimated reinstatement cost of rail line \$120-\$150million.**





With an estimated reinstatement cost of between \$120-\$150million, based on a reinstatement cost of similar rail lines in Victoria, the ROI without considered avoided costs would be 7.7 years to 9.6 years. The diversion of 254,413 tonnes of freight from the road network to rail would also incur additional savings such as a reduction in both road maintenance and road crash costs. It is estimated these savings would be \$1.7million annually. This reduces the ROI to 6.9 years to 8.6 years.

In addition the opportunity exists to remove rail easement/encumbrances from the title of land previously gifted to City of Mount Gambier between Wehl Street and Bay Road and the 14 acres of rail land backing onto Hastings Cunningham Reserve. This would present an opportunity for the City of Mount Gambier to develop plans to activate the area following feedback from current Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy work.

### Activation opportunity

**Consideration to the removal of outdated rail encumbrances from land titles gifted to the City of Mount Gambier.**

The City of Mount Gambier is a community which relies on adequate road infrastructure. A commitment to fix numerous roads in the City of Mount Gambier area where bad wear and potholes are an increasing concern is urged from government partners.

### Funding support

**Funding commitment of \$2-4million.**

## Regional Collaboration

### Regionalisation

Regionalisation of government services to regional areas are important activators to strengthen South Australia's economy. Advocating for more region-based government services is important to the South East and important to the City of Mount Gambier.

### Cross-Border Commissioner

Mount Gambier encompasses one of Australia's most significant cross border communities. The impacts of COVID-19 have highlighted how connected Mount Gambier is to its Victorian communities and has shone a spotlight on the worth of a Cross-Border Commissioner.

The Cross-Border Commissioner would be an advocate for cross-border communities, businesses and organisations. The Cross-Border Commissioner

would work closely with local, state, and federal governments to identify, analyse and resolve issues.

When one community needs to comply with two sets of rules or policy, this can cause confusion, make day-to-day activities more difficult, and can restrict access to work opportunities, investment, and facilities. The City of Mount Gambier advocates for the implementation of a Cross-Border Commissioner to facilitate opportunities between South Australia and Victoria.

### Collaboration

**Funding support for Cross-Border Commissioner - approx. \$2million over four years.**

## Forestry

The Green Triangle forest and timber sector is the backbone of South Australia's regional economy, employing more than 18,000 people and injecting \$3billion into the state economy annually.

However, it is facing one of the biggest challenges of its 145-year history; the forestry plantation estate is in decline.

This loss of estate will reach 30,000 hectares in 2021, stripping timber with a value of approximately \$460million from the local economy. This once productive plantation estate is being transferred to general agriculture at a time when the nation is experiencing a critical lumber shortage for housing construction.

Despite investor interest in plantations and global and domestic demand for wood products, which is anticipated to quadruple by 2050, the Green Triangle estate is shrinking at approximately 5,000 hectares a year, resulting in significant loss of carbon sequestration value.

The loss of plantation estate is a critical policy issue that requires urgent government resolution to protect South Australian jobs in forestry, timber and construction industries. The Green Triangle Forestry Industry Hub in partnership with National Institute Forest Products Innovation (NIFPI) is building a comprehensive scientific evidence base to support

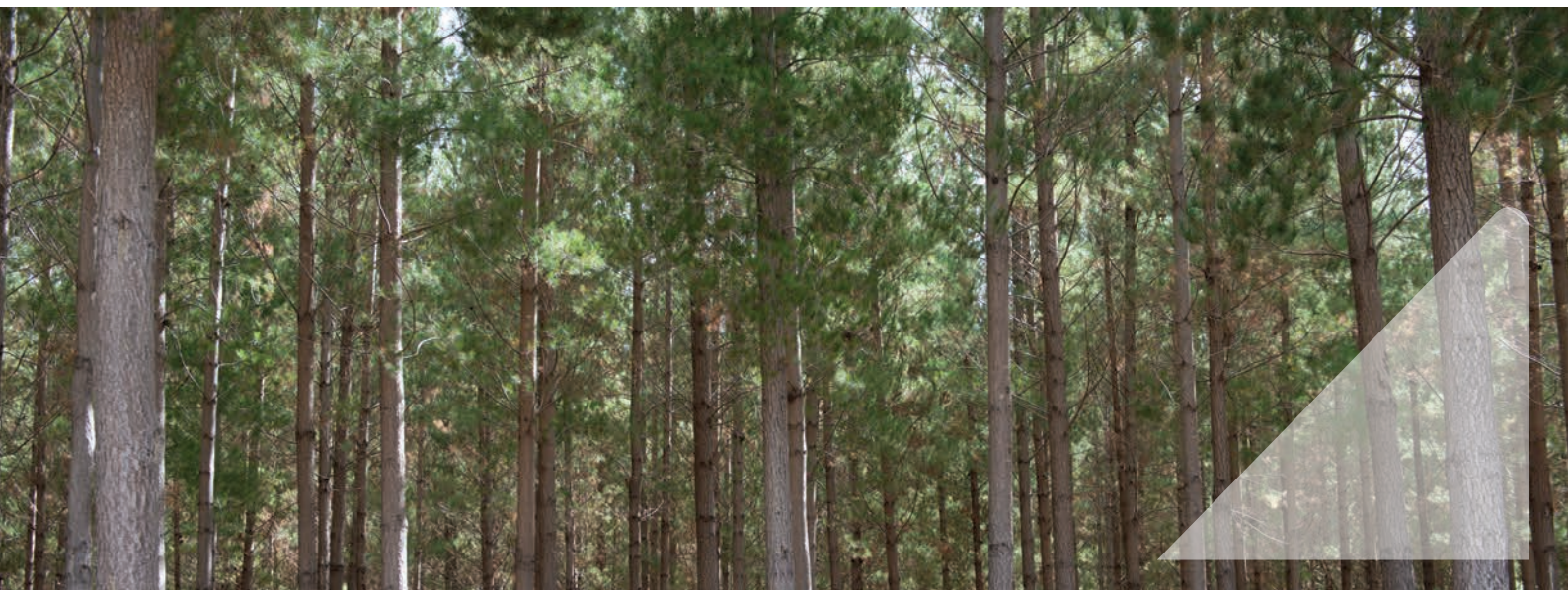
government to deliver sustainable policy solutions to ensure the sector is no longer disproportionately impacted by water reductions.

Early findings have indicated that plantation tree water use is far less than previously assumed, providing an opportunity for both primary industries and environmental gain at the 2023 Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan (LLCWAP) review.

The City of Mount Gambier provides support for the industry to seek government support to arrest the forest decline and stop the ongoing impacts of the LLCWAP. The sector seeks an open and independent review of the existing plan in the short term, working proactively with all primary industries to deliver a plan that can achieve sector demands while protecting the finite resource.

### Policy resolution

**Government resolution to adjust policy settings to address the loss of plantation estate to protect South Australian jobs in forestry, timber and construction industries.**





## Water

Various sectors are undertaking water research to provide government with a detailed evidence base to support the 2023 LLCWAP review. This research will support initiatives to ensure sustainability, including:

- Introduction of a water allocation plan based on current science.
- Introduction of a moratorium to stop the decline in estate which has reached 30,000 hectares. This is more land lost than in the 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires. That land could be replanted.
- Support industry to invest in new plantation.

This comprehensive research will update and refine key assumptions in the current water allocation plan while exploring new concepts which impact water use decisions.

The key themes of investigating regional groundwater issues to assist future water management of the lower Limestone Coast include:

- Reviewing groundwater management boundaries,
- Measuring sandstone and limestone unconfined aquifer porosity groundwater recharge case studies under forestry,
- Regional groundwater recharge,
- Understanding if the deemed rates for plantation water use reflect reality,
- Examining the direct impact plantation forests on wetlands using plantation growth as an indicator, and
- Clay impedance layer mapping/modelling.

This work adds to research undertaken by NIFPI to optimise the management of plantation, water and environmental assets by filling gaps in knowledge regarding plantation water use and groundwater recharge in plantations.



### Research support

**Government support for the research and review to introduce a new Water Allocation Policy.**



# OUR ECONOMY

A diverse economy provides opportunities for resilience and sustainability. Mount Gambier has a population of 27,433 (ABS 2020), services a regional population of 65,000 and is the second largest city in South Australia.

## Waste and Circular Economy

### Regional Materials Recovery Facility

A Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) that accepts commingled recycling – the materials from the household recycling bin. The facility then sorts these recyclables into a series of commodity streams ready for sale to various recycling markets. The Limestone Coast Local Government Association Regional Waste Management Steering Committee was successful in securing funding from the Local Government Association of SA research fund to undertake a study in partnership with UniSA into the risks and feasibility of a regional MRF.

In alignment with Green Industries SA and the ongoing evolution of the circular economy, the City of Mount Gambier is seeking funding to unlock the potential to develop infrastructure to process and create new products from waste, new technologies, and commercialisation.

The City of Mount Gambier is exploring opportunities and addressing the challenges in managing resources and waste more sustainably which requires a holistic understanding of relevant issues to conserve resources, reduce pollution and carbon emissions while maintaining human wellbeing within a supportive economy.

### Funding support

**Funding support based on MRFs operating in South Australia and operated by local government. Indicative cost - \$5million.**



### Circular Economy Trial Projects

In 2020/2021 Council operations diverted more than 6,500 tonnes away from landfill – to organics, recycling and re-use and demonstrate the City of Mount Gambier's ongoing commitment to playing an active role in the evolution of the circular economy.

The ReUse Market has been particularly popular with the community and provides both an avenue to dispose of many household items for free, as well as reducing waste to landfill.



Council is currently undertaking a trial utilising broken glass from the kerbside recycling process. This involves removing contamination, then crushing the glass for use in construction projects.

Council has supported local plastic recycling projects through the collection of materials. Plastic lids and bread tags are collected at the Civic Centre. The bread tags go to Transmutation in Robe. The lids go to the Precious Plastic program at Tenison Woods College. These materials are recycled into new products in our region. Additionally, Council has supported a local recycling start up 'Ecoplas'. This company recycles plastics such as milk bottles and wheelie bins, and turns them into park benches,

stakes, fencing materials etc. Council has provided space at the Waste Transfer Station for Ecoplas to test the business concept.

### **Advocacy and support**

**Support through policy and regional funding opportunities for Council to ensure the city is active in moving from waste to commodity and commercialisation.**

## **Tourism and Major Events**

### **The Home of Jazz**

Mount Gambier is looking for opportunities to affirm its position as a unique destination. The Wulanda Recreation and Convention Centre opening in 2022 will support major event attraction such as conferences, conventions and national, state and regional sporting events and the visitor economy will be a driver into the future for the city.

Mount Gambier is home to a significant number of region-based musicians. The James Morrison Academy combined with Generations in Jazz is an attractor for students and musicians and places an international spotlight on Mount Gambier for music lovers all over the world.

To maximise these opportunities the City of Mount Gambier has been collaborating to develop new events. Seeking support from state and federal partners, new initiatives will complement existing experiences, build capacity across a range of venues and continue to establish Mount Gambier inertantly as an important music and event hub and Australia's 'Home of Jazz'.

### **Partnership and funding**

**Funding support for new events to embed Mount Gambier as Australia's Home of Jazz - \$800,000.**

### **Tourism Development**

A cross-government approach to development of access to Mount Gambier's natural attractions. This would include scoping, master planning and the facilitation of approvals to consider infrastructure development and marketing.



## Workforce Attraction and Retention

Regional business growth is significantly impacted by a lack of staff. Many businesses are not taking advantage of contract offers as they cannot complete projects within suitable timeframes due to staffing shortages. Lack of rental accommodation and transport options create issues for job seekers and regional businesses.

The migration of people from the cities to the regions has exacerbated an already tight housing market forcing rental and sale prices up and vacancies down to near zero – a significant barrier to job seekers wishing to come to the region.

Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast is delivering the Regional Work SA project in partnership with the State Government, connecting job seekers to employment opportunities across our region.

The City of Mount Gambier advocates for affordable housing measures combined with adequate transport options to meet the needs of a modern city and support for business to access planning services adapted for regional South Australia.





# OUR CLIMATE, NATURAL RESOURCES, ART, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

## Open Space Strategy and Implementation

### Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategy

The City of Mount Gambier is home to an abundance of parks, reserves and sporting facilities that people of all ages and abilities can enjoy. Council knows recreation and open spaces are important to our community, whether it's for sporting activities, exercise, socialising with family and friends or walking the dog.

To continue to provide quality, well-planned spaces and guide the future direction of open spaces and facilities in Mount Gambier, Council has embarked on the development of a Sport, Recreation and Open Spaces Strategy.

The City of Mount Gambier has invested in extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation sessions in collaboration with specialist consultants insideEdge and OuterSpace to capture the community's current and aspirational use for the open spaces in the city. From this strategic work a solid foundation for funding future infrastructure will be informed by community input and endorsement.

### Blue Lake Sports Park

Blue Lake Sports Park is a multi-user site which hosts a variety of sporting codes. Planning and development shows already that the site serves an important role for the community, providing many key facilities and regional sporting assets.

Importantly, engagement activity has highlighted many limitations attached to the location of the site, acknowledging a lack of transport access, pedestrian connectivity and its isolation in connection to commercial/tourism/cultural precincts in our city.

A number of opportunities have presented to better rationalise the use of the space and will be explored in more detail through the master planning process. Informal arrangements are in place which provide

space integral to a range of additional sporting and recreational activity which includes large events such as horse trials, regional sporting competitions and events, use by schools and significant levels of dog training and socialisation.

The Sport, Recreation and Open Spaces Strategy will provide an overarching strategic view for the City of Mount Gambier to ensure that the investment in the Blue Lake Sports Park Masterplan benefits from the depth of input through the process. The City of Mount Gambier support proposals which best reflect the community's voice and involvement.

### Planning and partnership opportunities

**Funding support for fitting and adapted spaces in Mount Gambier based on the Sport Recreation and Open Space Strategy in order to maximise community benefits through sport and recreation. Estimated cost \$20million.**



# Railway Lands

## The Old Mount Gambier Railway Station Building

The City of Mount Gambier is inviting expressions of interest for the commercial occupancy of the old Mount Gambier Railway Station building. A landmark site, the historic building presents a unique opportunity to extend on the success of the award-winning Mount Gambier Railway Lands redevelopment, further fulfilling community aspirations for this intergenerationally significant inner-city location.

The Railway Lands has successfully hosted a range of significant events and attractions including Blue Lake Carols, food and wine events, live music concerts, outdoor cinema and large-scale community fundraising events.

A range of boutique traders now front the precinct including a craft brewery, bakery and antiques store, embracing and enhancing the commercial potential of the area.

The ideal occupant will:

- Further the Railway Lands precinct as a premier destination in Mount Gambier through the provision of high quality, regionally connected products and/or services,
- Propose a concept which considers and further

diversifies the existing offering within inner-city Mount Gambier,

- Build additional vibrancy within the precinct with a particular focus on a high degree of ongoing activation of both the station building and the surrounding platform area,
- Embrace the heritage character of the building and considerable community sentiment attached to the site, and
- Demonstrate capacity to deliver the concept to the standards expected of a landmark tenancy through prior experience or execution of similar projects.

The addition of Wulanda Recreation and Convention Centre, a premier new \$57million regional multi-functional indoor sporting and cultural facility located only 150 metres to the south, positions the Railway Station building as a direct connector between this facility and the CBD.

Other opportunities to continue to maximise the success of the Railway Lands and extension to the Rail Trail include working with neighbouring councils to extend the Mount Gambier to Penola section of rail trail to link with the soon to be constructed Penola to Naracoorte trail.

### Funding support

**Commit funds to build Mount Gambier to Penola section of rail trail to link with the soon to be constructed Penola to Naracoorte section.  
Funding commitment \$3-5million.**





# Sustainability and Environment

## Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

The State Government is investing up to \$13.4million to leverage approximately \$25million of private investment in the statewide public electric vehicle charging network. The government sought registrations of interest from property owners and tenants interested in hosting electric vehicle chargers that are part of the statewide public network.

Following the registration of interest Council was contacted by Linga Network, who deploy charging infrastructure in regional Australia. Council nominated sites for Linga's fast (up to 22kW AC) electric vehicle charging stations for consideration in a grant application to the State Government program.

## Energy Efficiency

Since 2014/2015 the City of Mount Gambier has allocated an annual amount of \$50,000 for energy efficiency and renewable energy measures. Since that time the funds have been used for the following projects:

- Solar system installed on the Library,
- LED lights fitted throughout the council areas of the Civic Centre, Visitor Information Centre and the Library,
- HVAC audit undertaken to assess the efficiency of Council's heating and cooling systems, and
- Solar systems installed at the former Aquatic Centre, Depot, Waste Transfer Station and Carinya Gardens Cemetery and Crematorium.

Council's current solar systems have generated more than 830 MWh of electricity which is the equivalent of power to 125 South Australian homes for an entire year. Opportunities for incorporating hybrid and electric vehicles into the fleet are being actively explored as renewal opportunities arise, and consideration is included in the tender specifications for new vehicles.

### Policy and subsidy support

**The City of Mount Gambier continues to seek funding support to benefit the community in upgrading infrastructure and systems.**



## Arts and Creative Industry

As a regional city, Mount Gambier has a strong focus on the local arts and culture scene as an avenue to inspire civic pride and emphasise the positive impact arts and culture has on community well-being. The Country Arts SA strategic plan and priorities are intricately aligned with the arts and cultural aspirations of the City of Mount Gambier.

Supporting the modernisation of the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre as proposed will complement the Library and Riddoch Art Gallery offering that currently exists within the civic and cultural precinct of the Mount Gambier CBD and demonstrates Council's commitment to strengthening arts as the multi-faceted industry that it is and add value to the further growth of cultural capital.

### Advocacy and partnerships

Support for the upgrade of the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre and Civic Centre complex.

### The Riddoch Arts and Cultural Centre

The Riddoch Art Gallery is the largest regional gallery in South Australia. It was first opened in the Mount Gambier Institute in 1887. The gallery employs professional staff, maintains international art museum standard conditions and is the only State Government funded regional gallery. It provides gallery space for local artists and community groups and hosts both state and national touring exhibitions.

The Riddoch's collection of more than 1,500 items includes important paintings and prints that depict the people and history of the Limestone Coast, a significant collection of Aboriginal art from Utopia and a large collection of 20th Century Australian art.

The Riddoch is an important community asset and a significant economic activator. Developing national and international exhibitions and events to benefit from the Riddoch's unique CBD location is a key focus for the City of Mount Gambier.







## Mount Gambier Fringe

The Mount Gambier Fringe Festival is a cultural event that embraces acceptance and diversity. It provides the opportunity for all artists to participate, shine and be bold, and for the community to experience art that thrills, challenges and provokes curiosity. The Mount Gambier Fringe is in its fourth year and has grown to be SA's largest regional arts festival.

The City of Mount Gambier drives the Mount Gambier Fringe and continues to support the evolution of the event to the level it started to develop pre-COVID.

### Funding support

**Funding support through creative funding streams to enable this activator event to continue to develop. Indicative cost - \$100,000.**

## Generations in Jazz

Generations Jazz is the largest school jazz competition in Australia culminating with 8,000 people as part of a major concert. The initial component of Generations in Jazz was the James Morrison Jazz Scholarship, first held in 1989, and enhanced by the personal support and endorsement of world-renowned musician, James Morrison AM. After a short period of time it was realised there was a greater opportunity for the event's development by incorporating a national stage band competition as part of the weekend of activities.

Support from all levels of government and the City of Mount Gambier, who remain ongoing major sponsors, has enabled the event to grow demonstrated through the number of schools participating over many years, and with wider representation from all states. As of 2019 two schools from New Zealand have also joined the Generations in Jazz competition. This event contributes to the status of Mount Gambier as Australia's Home of Jazz and provides a showcase for the City of Mount Gambier to the world.

## Partnership opportunities

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**If you are interested in partnering with Council to assist in delivering any of the initiatives outlined in this document, we would love to hear from you. Please get in touch with us via phone or email.**



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