

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2008-2013

PREPARED BY:

THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY



In association with

SHAW & ASSOCIATES CONSULTING

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Moirashire Economic Development Strategy 2008 - 2013

OUR VISION:

A Growing Shire

A growing, vibrant, sustainable and innovative municipality with a strong economic base to assist and encourage future development in appropriate areas.

Build on our competitive strengths	Foster business development, retention and attraction	Create and maintain the investment environment	Market Moira	Partnerships for success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the significant contribution of the agricultural sector to Moira Shire's economy • Develop cluster opportunities related to the food processing sector • Maximise retail expenditure in the Shire and minimise leakage • Develop renewable energy and water re-use projects to support industry sustainability and competitiveness • Develop opportunities in the health and community services sector • Develop tourism product and infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage a positive business culture within the Shire • Encourage business to business transactions within the Shire • Work with existing businesses to support expansion and retention • Import replacement and value adding • Support local businesses to become export ready and market to new domestic markets • Develop a prospectus and process for attracting new businesses • Target small and medium sized enterprises (SME's) in provincial cities for relocation • Identify key factors to retain local businesses and investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adequate serviced industrial land for current and future demands (as required) • Develop and implement a strategic approach for the best use of scarce water resources • Foster the attraction, creation and retention of critical skills for the Shire • Engage government in the planning for the new bridge between Yarrawonga and Mulwala • Address current limitations in telecommunication and power • Support the strengthening of eastwards freight connection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish "brand attributes" for Moira as a place to live, work, visit and invest • Develop suite of marketing tools • Generate regular good news stories for local and regional media • Continue Open for Business newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue networking with government agencies, businesses and business associations • Build on partnerships with local, state and federal government • Facilitate networking, support and mentoring across businesses

Executive Summary

This new Economic Development Strategy 2008-2013 has been developed for Moira Shire Council to guide economic development in the Shire.

It was developed with high levels of community input with over 220 people actively engaged in the extensive consultation process conducted throughout February-April 2008.

This Strategy acknowledges that the previous work of the Business Development Unit and Council, as well as key community and business groups, having substantially delivered the outcomes and actions outlined in the previous 2002 Economic Development Strategy. It also incorporates recently released ABS Census 2006 data.

The driving philosophy of this Economic Development Strategy is that viable, environmentally sustainable economic growth takes place through:

- the recognition, protection and promotion of the region's competitive advantage
- support of existing industries
- diversification of the economy
- identification and encouragement of new economic opportunities

The ultimate goal is to achieve lasting (sustainable) economic development across the shire with the enhancement of economic prosperity, employment, standard of living and quality of life.

The Moira Shire is one of the fastest growing shires in regional Victoria with a strong agricultural based, a thriving tourism industry, quality affordable housing and access to excellent education, sporting and recreation facilities. The driving sectors of Moira Shire's economy are:

- value added processing to meat and dairy products
- agriculture
- construction
- tourism
- property and business services
- wholesale and retail trade
- other food manufacturing
- transport and storage

The top five industry sectors for employment are agriculture, manufacturing, retail, health and community services, and tourism (including hospitality and accommodation). Those sectors undergoing the highest growth in employment numbers are construction, health and community services, retail trade, tourism, and transport and storage.

Infrastructure, and the availability of a labour force with appropriate skills, are critical to generating sustained economic activity. The strengthening of infrastructure and labour force capacity is a key area of focus for this Strategy.

The Economic Development Strategy has been designed to deliver support to one of Moira Council's Five Pillars: A Growing Shire. The vision is for a "growing, vibrant, sustainable and innovative municipality with a strong economic base to assist and encourage future development in appropriate areas."

This vision will be delivered through five key strategies:

1. Build on our competitive strengths
2. Foster business development, retention and attraction
3. Create and maintain the investment environment
4. Market Moira
5. Build partnerships for success

Each strategy outlines the rationale for its inclusion, key objectives, actions and partners for its implementation. Costings have been provided for priority actions.

The priority actions for each strategy are:

- Strategy 1: Implement key findings from the Rural Land Use Strategy
 Conduct Agricultural Diversification and Opportunities Forum (linked to Food Bowl Modernisation)
 Establish a Water Technologies business cluster
 Conduct Retail Audits in Cobram, Nathalia, Numurkah and Yarrawonga
 Develop a 5 year Tourism Strategy
- Strategy 2: Analysis and implementation of findings of Business Retention and Expansion Survey
 Continue Business Excellence awards
 Establish closer working relationships with key employers
- Strategy 3: Continue to advocate Council's position on water for agriculture, industry and future urban needs
 Feasibility study for industrial land development in Nathalia and Numurkah
 Implement Industrial Land Study recommendations
- Strategy 4: Develop tailored information and marketing materials, including prospectus, for business expansion and new industry enquiries
 Update Moira Business website, including new economic profile data
 Continue visiting journalist program (with Greater Shepparton and Campaspe Councils)
- Strategy 5: Continue working relationship with government agencies, businesses and business associations

In addition to this Strategy document, a separate Moira Shire Economic Profile has been compiled.

Introduction

The Moira Shire Council is committed to support the economic well being of businesses and communities within the Shire. The previous Economic Development Strategy (2002) has been substantially completed, and with the release of new ABS data, Moira Shire has initiated the preparation of a new Economic Development Strategy to support economic development within the shire over the next 5 years.

The Strategy will provide guidance to staff, business, investors and the community on growing the regional economy.

The Regional Development Company, in conjunction with Shaw & Associates, was engaged by Moira Shire Council to prepare the Economic Development Strategy and meet specific objectives:

- Develop a vision, identify the role and set priority actions for Council in economic development
- Identify opportunities to promote investment for existing businesses within the Shire, attract investment from outside the Shire and provide growth in employment
- Determine a program detailing actions and resources allocations to progress the strategy
- Provide a framework to monitor and report on the implementation of the strategy

The resulting Economic Development Strategy 2008-2013 is based on comprehensive analysis of previous reports, literature relating to economic development in regional areas, broad community consultation, and economic analysis.

Moira Shire Councillors have strongly endorsed the key guiding philosophy for economic development in the Shire: viable, environmentally sustainable economic growth will take place through:

- the recognition, protection and promotion of the region's competitive advantage
- support of existing industries
- diversification of the economy
- identification and encouragement of new economic opportunities

The Strategy has been divided into two documents an Economic Profile and the Strategy document. This report outlines the vision, the strategies and the action plans. It also describes how Councillors have established the priorities for this plan and for future decision making related to economic development.

A separate report has been provided for the Moira Economic Profile, which was developed to inform the overall strategies.

Councillors and key staff of the Moira Shire have been particularly involved in the development of each phase of the strategy, helping make sense of the extensive consultation information, developing a vision for economic development within the Shire, and providing clear directions about priorities.

The Regional Development Company (in conjunction with Shaw & Associates Consulting) would like to thank the CEO and Councillors of the Moira Shire for their support and guidance in the development of this Strategy.

We would particularly like to acknowledge the time and effort of Gary Van Driel, General Manager of Infrastructure and Environment, the Business Development Officer Michelle Moore and her team, and Merran Socha, Tourism Manager.

Developing the Strategy

The Moira Shire Economic Development Strategy was developed between December 2007 and May 2008. It involved a four stage approach:

Stage One: Literature review and data analysis

A comprehensive review of existing council plans, strategies, policies, projects and documents was undertaken (including documents relating to economic and business development, town planning, infrastructure planning, community planning, and tourism.)¹ Research material was also sourced from regional, state and national reports and strategies, as well as best practice examples from a number of Australian and overseas sources.

To the extent available, ABS 2006 Census data was used. REMPLAN, an economic analysis tool was used to determine the economic impacts and drivers of key sectors of the economy.

REMPAN is software that has been purchased by Moira Shire to assist with the analysis of the Shire's economy. REMPLAN uses ABS datasets and an input/output methodology to generate industry economic data estimates for defined geographic regions. The software also incorporates a regionally specific economic impact modelling feature which estimates the indirect or flow-on impacts from a direct change in the economy.

Stage Two: Regional capability and opportunity assessment

This stage involved extensive consultation process throughout February-April 2008 with over 220 people involved. Council staff identified key sectors and interviewees.

Four community public forums were conducted in each of the main towns; thirteen sectoral focus groups were conducted including meetings with the executives of each of the main town business and development bodies and their tourism organisations; a staff workshop and two councillor workshop were conducted; about thirty targeted interviews were undertaken with business leaders and each of the councillors were interviewed individually.

Four community forums

Yarrawonga, Cobram, Nathalia and Numurkah

Thirteen sectoral focus groups

Champions of Business and Young Entrepreneurs

Cobram Barooga Business and Tourism

Cobram Development Inc

Health (Moira Health Alliance Executive)

Industry and Manufacturing

Moira Tourism Board

Nathalia Economic Development Committee and Nathalia Business

Improvement Group

Numurkah Chamber of Commerce

¹ *Bibliography Appendix Two*

Numurkah Tourism
On Farm Businesses
Small Towns
Yarrawonga Chamber of Commerce
Yarrawonga Mulwala Tourism Inc

Two councillor workshops plus one-on-one interviews with all Councillors

Staff workshop

Representatives from planning, economic development, community development, infrastructure and environment

Approximately 30 key person interviews were held with business leaders and tourism sector operators.

Stage Three: Analysis of the Shire's tourism sector

This analysis was undertaken through a review of tourism and visitors studies, strategies and reports and a comprehensive economic analysis of the contribution of tourism to the Moira Shire economy. The analysis is entitled Estimated Size and Importance of the Tourism Sector to the Moira Economy (Appendix B to the Moira Shire Economic Profile).

Interviews conducted in Stage 2 with Moira Shire Tourism and local tourism organisations in Cobram, Numurkah and Yarrawonga were also used to inform this analysis. A meeting with key Tourism Victoria personnel was also held during this stage.

Stage Four: Preparation of the Economic Development Strategy

The strategy was developed using the economic analysis and extensive community consultation findings.

Context for Economic Development in Moira Shire

Five Pillars

Economic development is a key function of local governments as they actively pursue sustainable business development and growth opportunities to achieve long term economic prosperity for their regions.

Moira Shire has recognised that it has a clear role in economic development and that economic development and social development are inextricably linked. Council's Five Pillars approach shows the areas for focus for the overall development of the Shire:

1. **Liveable Shire:** a world class built environment that meets the needs of the Moira community providing open space, connecting pathways, encouraging innovative building and recognising and valuing our heritage
2. **Healthy Living:** a cohesive community interacting socially across the Shire respecting differences and united in the interests of the community
3. **Growing Shire:** a growing vibrant, sustainable and innovative municipality with a strong economic base to assist and encourage future development in appropriate areas
4. **Our Environment:** a community recognising the value of our natural environment and committing to environmental best practise
5. **Working Together:** Open, fair and honest council committed to strong and positive leadership through community connection and sound forward planning.

This Economic Development Strategy particularly addresses Council's vision for a growing Shire.

The Moira Shire Economy

In brief, Moira Shire is one of the fastest growing shires in regional Victoria with a strong agricultural base, a thriving tourism industry, quality affordable housing and access to excellent education, sporting and recreation facilities.

The population of Moira Shire is approximately 27,946 (ABS 2006) has grown, on average, 0.8% per annum since 2001. The growth rate has accelerated markedly after a decline in 2002. The four main centres of Yarrawonga, Cobram, Nathalia and Numurkah are growing at different rates:

Yarrawonga, with a population of 6,332 has increased by 20.4% since 2001 (an average annual growth of just over 4%) Cobram has a population of 5,511 with an average annual growth rate of 1.6%. Numurkah has increased by just over 1% per annum and has a population of 4,352 and Nathalia is steady with a population of 3,370.

DSE² estimates that the population growth in the Shire over the next 20 years will primarily come from net inward migration especially retirement migration focussed along the Murray River.

In 2006, the Moira Shire labour force was 11,960 people with an unemployment rate of 4.7% compared to the regional Victorian average of 5.6%.

The top five industry sectors for employment are:

1. Agriculture (2,288 jobs) which represents 23.5% of the total jobs
2. Manufacturing, primarily food processing (1,553 jobs) or 15.9% of total jobs
3. Retail trade (1,148 jobs) which is 14.5% of the total jobs
4. Health and community services (1,054 jobs) or 10.8% of the total jobs
5. Tourism: it has been estimated that tourism generates 594 direct jobs which is 6.1% of the total jobs

Education, construction and property and business services were each between 4-5% of the total jobs.

Changes in employment numbers between 2001 and 2006 are significant in agriculture (decreased by 312 jobs or 11.7%); construction (increase of 271 jobs or 50.1%); health and community services (increased by 265 jobs or 30.1%); and retail trade (increase of 13.2% or 175 jobs)

Moira Shire's Gross Regional Product is estimated at \$1,115.5 m³ which is equivalent to \$41,183 per capita.

The highest contributors to the economy⁴ are Meat and Dairy Manufacturing (\$747m), Agriculture (\$498m), Tourism (\$259m), Construction (\$178m) and Property and Business Services (\$140m).

Economic Drivers

From the data provided in the accompanying Moira Shire Economic Profile, it can be shown that agriculture is the key driving sector for the Shire's economy. It is number one industry sector in the Shire for regional value added and employment. It is ranked second for regional output and third for income.

² Victoria in Future Summary 2004 www.dse.vic.gov.au

³ Remplan 2007

⁴ *ibid*

Meat and dairy manufacturing is the highest sector for regional output and income, and is ranked second for regional value adding and third on employment. Tourism is ranked third for regional output and fifth for number of direct jobs.

Sectors that provide a driving force in the economy are referred to as “*propulsive sectors*”. They are sectors that are:

- relatively large in the region
- have strong linkages to other sectors (in terms of transacting business with other local businesses) and / or
- have high level of exports of their goods and services outside the Shire’s boundaries.

The propulsive sectors in the Moira Shire’s economy are:

- Processing of meat and dairy products
- Agriculture
- Construction
- Tourism
- Property and business services
- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade
- Other food manufacturing
- Transport and storage

These are the sectors of the economy which provide economic strength for Moira Shire. Of these sectors, those undergoing the greatest growth in employment numbers are construction, health and community services, retail trade, tourism and transport and storage.

Infrastructure, and the availability of a labour force with appropriate skills, is critical to generating sustained economic activity. The strengthening of infrastructure and labour force capabilities is also a key area of focus for Moira Shire in its economic development.

Challenges for the Moira Economy

The reliance of the key industry sectors of agriculture, processing and tourism on water presents some fundamental challenges to the Shire. Drought and changes to water security are having a significant impact on the economy.

Skills shortages are also being reported across several sectors including agriculture, health and community services, construction industry and manufacturing. Anecdotal comments throughout the consultation phase for this project pointed to shortages in boiler making, engineering, sheet metal workers, metal fabrication, stockmen, farm labourers, nursing and food handling.

Rapid growth in Yarrawonga has accompanying pressures on community services, housing and industrial land availability.

Industrial land provision across the four main centres was consistently highlighted as a challenge.

This Economic Development Strategy takes these challenges into account, as well as factors which will support and promote sustainable economic growth.

Opportunities for Economic Development

This section lists the opportunities in economic development for the Moira Shire that were identified during the consultation phase of the project. They have not been evaluated for this section of the report and are presented here as a trigger list of ideas.

These have been categorised under the following headings, but in some cases the opportunities clearly would span more than one of these categories.

- Sectoral
- Infrastructure
- Towns
- Government and administration
- Tourism

Sectoral Opportunities

The opportunities identified during the consultation relevant to specific industry sectors in the Moira Shire:

Agriculture

Value adding in agriculture

Vertically integrate fruit packing and juice bottling Cobram

Niche market for good fruit (not canning)

Broad acre dairying

Organic fruit and vegetables

Other organic food production

Develop a register of organic producers in the Shire

Farmer's Market

Aquaculture (Murray River and lakeside)

Recognise and promote value of farming to the Shire

Value add to dairy waste products (e.g. manure to energy)

Progress the water technology cluster

Renewable energy generation (manure dairy farmers, solar, waste food processors, cogeneration etc)

Burramine Vegetables - channel development of the Burrawae channel

Investigate potential for expansion to stonefruit

Manufacturing

- Develop manufacturing clusters
- Ensure water share and efficient use for manufacturing sector
- Use core skills of key manufacturers to develop new industries (e.g. Thales)
- Value add to meat processors waste products
- Recognise outstanding businesses (the untold stories e.g. Yarroweyah Engineering)
- Stainless steel industries

Retail

- Retail sector audit
- Identify gaps in retail sector in each town
- Shop local campaign
- Extended trading hours to suit residents and visitors

Construction

- Target Melbourne based tradespeople to relocate (especially young families looking for affordable housing)

Health and Community Services

- Support the health sector, particularly in allied health
- Target retirees with affordable housing
- Develop leadership in Health Services sector for representation to government
- Provide leadership in aged care sector for funding and development of services and facilities
- Investigate scope to provide medium term furnished accommodation for contractors, graduates

Other

- Recycle storm water
- Develop solar industries
- Develop sporting festivals
- Develop a coordinated strategy for seasonal and intermittent workers

Infrastructure Opportunities

The table below lists opportunities which have been identified during consultation that are relevant to the infrastructure of the Moira Shire.

- Yarrowonga -upgrade of bridge
- Power supply upgrade across the Shire
- Telecommunications upgrade for both mobile and internet
- Need industrial estates with investment ready lots
- Provide opportunities for skills acquisition for youth to keep them in the region (tap into Goulburn Murray LLEN)
- Provide education and training - tertiary (engineers, scientists, accountants), health sector (nurses, allied health), maintenance, tool makers, plumbing, carpentry, control systems
- Eastwards (lateral) rail links / road to Logic in Wodonga

More teenager recreation facilities like bowling, cinema, gyms, aquatic centres, water park, band venues
Improvements to airport and public transport
Rail depot at Strathmerton

Towns Opportunities

The table below lists opportunities which have been identified in the consultation process, relevant to specific towns in the Shire.

Cobram

Establish as service and manufacturing centre for northern Victoria and southern NSW
Link businesses together e.g. cool rooms, box manufacturers, transporters
Streetscape development
More hospitality/restaurants/coffee places
Markets in the streets
Improve signage
Develop Thompson's Beach
Business incubator
Further develop health and education facilities
Longer trading hours especially Sunday
Revamp Peaches N Cream festival
Develop more industrial land
Work closely with new migrant community members
Support feasibility study on Cobram Hospital expanding on site education for nurses, PCA's
Develop retirement housing based on lifestyle, golfing, pleasant river outlooks

Nathalia

Revitalise Nathalia Tourism Inc to make it viable
Build on Nathalia's sport events and festivals like Show us Ya Wheels
Arts talent showcase at Christmas using artists in town
Consolidate businesses in a new industrial estate freeing up main street land
Develop a cultural precinct
Develop strategies to promote and build on the footy club's success and profile in the in the area
Attract / train tradespeople using older retirees etc to train apprentices / mentor
Hospital development link with local tradespeople
Investigate education and training opportunities in TAFE, Arts to attract and retain families
New residential precinct developed to attract new residents
Highlight points of difference e.g. central location to Echuca, Cobram, Yarra, Shepparton
Supply natural gas to Nathalia
Tap into Bendigo Bank's community support fund for opportunities in Nathalia
Revitalise the Heritage Centre Barmah Forest Preservation League
Make more use of Barmah Forest for tourism

Numurkah

Communicate urban design framework to builders including more residential land near town centre
 Encourage greater community involvement by Murray Goulburn
 Jazz festival Swing into Spring?
 Needs industry ready land
 Promote points of difference such as the heritage of the small town, no franchises etc
 Satellite housing for Shepparton and Strathmerton
 Target retirees as an attractive area for retirement because of health, aged services skilled staff
 Develop youth club and oval
 Address infrastructure needs of Riverina Oilseeds re routing grain trucks off residential streets
 Numurkah Levy for tourism promotion of the town and encourage volunteers in tourism
 Plan for Numurkah to take advantage of the GV Highway bypass of Shepparton
 Prepare a succession plan for Numurkah Chamber of Commerce
 Run small events - Symphony on the Sands
 Determine Numurkah Visitor Information Centre business model

Yarrawonga

Creating / freeing up more shop fronts in Yarrawonga
 Festivals and entertainment
 Kid's cafe
 Beautification of street and town entrances
 Entertainment complex: bowling alley, cinema
 Develop town website with job vacancies
 Fund tourism and business development through rate levy
 Develop airport
 Longer retail trading hours
 Farmer's market
 Sporting Complex
 Industrial land

Other Towns

Strathmerton - empty factory site (ex Byford's) could do incubator for 3-4 businesses
 Wunghnu - include in peaches and cream festival
 Wunghnu - plan for being the first town on GV Highway after Melbourne when Shepparton is bypassed
 Wunghnu - promote new reasonably priced housing 20 mins to Shepparton
 Develop the web presence of small towns
 GV Freight Hub will make a real difference to Tocumwal onsite containers
 Develop a coordinated strategy for seasonal and intermittent workers

Government and Administration Opportunities

The table below lists opportunities which have been identified in consultation that are relevant to the **government sector and administration** of economic development in the Shire.

- Streamlined development application process
- Proactive marketing of shire
- Address cross border issues to enable funding of tourism cross border
- Merge similar organisations including Chambers and Tourism associations to maximise volunteer base
- Target "tree changers"
- Target the conversion from tourist to residents

Tourism Opportunities

The table below lists opportunities which have been identified in consultation that are relevant to the **tourism sector** in the Shire.

- Identify and promote other drawcards/icons for the Yarrawonga as well as Lake Mulwala (e.g. golf)
- Drawcard event needed for Yarrawonga
- Provide and generate more funds for tourism
- Develop better cooperation across tourism operators along the Central Murray region to facilitate better co-operative marketing for e.g. Caravan and Camping shows, golfing shows, a joint Melbourne Campaign
- Water theme park on foreshore of Lake Mulwala
- Target car clubs and fishing clubs
- Thompsons Beach development to give tourist access to river
- Guided tours around the Barmah Forest from Numurkah
- Target nature-based and foodie tourists with Barmah Forest trails, farm trails, food and wine etc
- Promotion of the river and lake to overcome negative perceptions caused by drought
- Develop a Golf event based on grey nomads or retirees
- Increase promotion at the State level for tourism
- Develop a more cohesive approach to tourism across the Shire
- Upgrade town entrances with for example better lighting and cleanliness
- Build more infrastructure for nature based tourism - eco toilets, tracks etc (lobby Parks Vic)

The Tourism sector has been estimated to provide 6.1% of jobs in the economy which ranks it as the fourth largest employing sector, and is the third largest sector by output, generating an estimated \$259.1 m in 2007.

In 2007, 420,000 visitors came to Moira Shire, representing 830,000 visitor nights. A further 336,000 visitors were recorded in the neighbouring Shires of Berrigan and Corowa, the vast majority of whom would have visited Barooga and Mulwala and travelled across the river to visit Moira Shire.

These visitors spend their money in the Shire and generate substantial economic activity. Equally importantly, these visitors will hopefully become “ambassadors” for the region, encouraging their friends and family to visit, and also in many cases being so taken by the region’s attributes that they choose to relocate to the region to live. This is certainly being seen in Yarrawonga’s rapid population growth in recent years.

In catering for visitors by providing tourism activities, sightseeing, entertainment, cafes, restaurants, clubs and all the other goods and services and infrastructure that tourism provides impetus for, the region becomes a more attractive place to live for the local residents, and attracts more people to relocate to the region. More economic activity is generated by this process.

Tourism therefore provides much more to a region than the direct economic impact. It gives a region a profile in distant markets, it provides a region with a distinctive “brand” and point of difference, it creates a virtuous cycle which enriches the lives and lifestyles of those that choose to live there, and taps into one of the growth sectors of the world.

Strategy One of this Economic Development Strategy (Building on our Competitive Strengths) recommends the development of a Tourism Strategy which will include marketing, leveraging from the Shire’s natural attractions, and product development.

Opportunities which were identified during the consultation phase need to be more thoroughly investigated as part of the Tourism Strategy. They include:

- Major destination based marketing for Yarrawonga and Cobram, coordinated with industry
- Further development (with industry) of golfing, recreation and resort packages
- Development of Thompson’s Beach for recreation and tourism
- Ongoing development of Foreshore Walking and Bike trails (along river length)
- Ongoing development of nature based tourism with supportive infrastructure (eco toilets, tracks)
- Development of farm stay packages
- Ongoing development of food related tourism, including farm gate trail, farmers market, showcasing local produce in cafes/restaurants

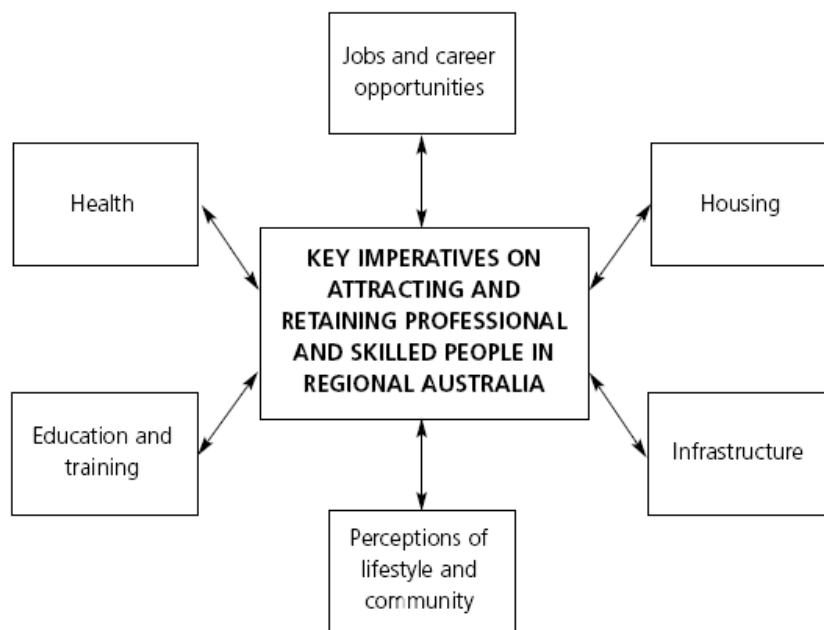
Challenges for the tourism industry which were raised during consultation include:

- Ongoing funding of major campaigns and initiatives, including industry ‘buy-in’
- Coordination of promotions and marketing campaigns with industry
- Measuring the impact and effectiveness of promotions
- Retail opening hours not suiting visitors
- Differential benefits and products between Murray River based locations in the Shire and more rural locations within the Shire (this also links with sourcing funding, and destination based promotions)

Also raised during the consultation was the investigation of a business and industry levy to contribute towards the branding, promotion and marketing of the individual destinations and Sun Country on the Murray.

Factors to Promote Regional Growth

Regional skills attraction and retention is closely linked to the health of the overall economy, and to the development and maintenance of key areas such as health, infrastructure and liveability. This strategy seeks to address those factors which support economic growth and development.



Council's Role in Economic Development

There are a number of areas in which local government can play a key in influencing decisions made by private and public sector investors:

- The provision of infrastructure both 'hard' (e.g. industrial land, roads, public buildings) and 'soft' (e.g. community services) both directly and indirectly (through partnerships / advocacy for others to provide)
- The provision of information and analysis to address perceived market failures
- Leadership and focus on priority opportunities
- Promotion of the Shire as a place to live, work, play and invest
- Developing relationships and leveraging opportunities with other shires and state and local governments
- Monitoring the investment environment and being adaptive and responsive to changes

Over the course of implementing this economic development strategy, council's roles will vary from being the manager/leader of a specific action or project; a critical partner; an advocate; a supporter: and a facilitator.

Council role	What it means	When it is likely to apply
Governance	Councillors provide strategic direction, overall budget approval and sign-off for strategies and policies	For the overall strategic direction of the Economic Development Strategy and its key components
Manager/Leader	Council manages, leads, delivers and communicates commitment, progress and outcomes	Where Council has the direct responsibility and capability to deliver the outcomes required. External funding may be required.
Critical partner	Council is an informed critical partner in the delivery of a project with mutual benefits for the partners	Where Council has a direct responsibility to deliver the outcomes, and a partnership enhances the ability to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes e.g. joint local government initiatives, private public partnerships.
Advocate	Council develops an informed position and influences others who have the responsibility to make decisions and act	Where Council does not have the resources or the direct responsibility to enact or make the decision. Council develops a position of the strategy/issue with a defined path forward and advocates to the responsible parties for changes to occur e.g. state and federal water policies with a direct impact on the Shire
Supporter	Where a project is initiated externally to council, council provides low level assistance to enable the project to be realised	Where others are responsible for the decisions, actions taken and outcomes, and the outcomes align with Council strategic direction, council might provide support by way of letter, in-kind support, additional resourcing
Facilitator	Council makes it easier and enables others to build their own capacity	Where Council develop the capacity of others (community, businesses, groups, government agencies) to find their own acceptable solutions. The responsibility for action and ownership of the outcomes lies with the other party

Vision, Strategies and Action Plan

Vision for Economic Development for Moira Shire

A Growing Shire

A growing vibrant, sustainable and innovative municipality with a strong economic base to assist and encourage future development in appropriate areas.

Councillors of Moira Shire described this vision as being characterised by:

Innovation
Vibrancy
Sustainable industries
Increased tourism revenue
Engaged community

Guiding Philosophy

Fundamental to achieving that vision for Moira Shire's economy is the desire to:

- recognise, protect and promote the Shire's competitive advantages;
- support existing industries and businesses;
- continue to diversify the economy; and
- identify and encourage new economic opportunities.

The ultimate goal is to achieve:

- lasting (sustainable) economic development across the Shire
- enhancement of economic prosperity and employment
- enhanced standard of living and quality of life

Key Strategies

To deliver the vision and the desired outcomes, the following strategic directions were endorsed:

Strategy One: Build on our competitive strengths

To maintain the significant contribution of the agricultural sector to Moira Shire's economy; Develop cluster opportunities related to the food processing sector; Maximise retail expenditure in the Shire and minimise leakage; Develop renewable energy and water re-use projects to support industry sustainability and competitiveness; Develop opportunities in the health and community services sector; Develop tourism product and infrastructure

Strategy Two: Foster business development, retention and attraction

Encourage a positive business culture within the Shire; Encourage business to business transactions within the Shire; Work with existing businesses to support expansion and retention; Import replacement and value adding; Support local businesses to become export ready and market to new domestic markets; Develop a prospectus and process for attracting new businesses; Target small and medium sized enterprises (SME's) in provincial cities for relocation; Identify key factors to retain local businesses and investment

Strategy Three: Create and maintain the investment environment

To ensure adequate serviced industrial land for current and future demands (as required); To develop and implement a strategic approach for the best use of scarce water resources; To foster the attraction, creation and retention of critical skills for the Shire; To engage government in the planning for the new bridge between Yarrawonga and Mulwala; Address current limitations in telecommunication and power; To support the strengthening of eastwards freight connection

Strategy Four: Market Moira

Establish "brand attributes" for Moira as a place to live, work, visit and invest; Develop suite of marketing tools; Generate regular good news stories for local and regional media; Continue Open for Business newsletter

Strategy Five: Build partnerships for success

Continue networking with government agencies, businesses and business associations; Build on partnerships with local, state and federal government; Facilitate networking, support and mentoring across businesses

Description

This section summarises the key strategic themes to develop the Shire's economy. These themes provide a framework for economic development by Council. Focus upon these strategic themes is designed to yield positive results in economic development over the long term. Organising economic development and tourism activities which fit within these themes will provide a focus for staff and for the allocation of funding.

The themes explicitly recognise that economic development ultimately occurs when investment is made into the local economy. Investment occurs for a range of factors, and it is the objective of the economic development function to identify, enhance and promote these factors so as to provide an attractive investment environment for prospective investors and communicate this effectively to the market.

1. Building on our competitive strengths

Moirá Shire has some key strengths in industry sectors and natural attributes which lend themselves to further development, innovation and investment. These include the propulsive sectors of the economy (agriculture, food processing, retail, construction, tourism) and the Murray River.

2. Fostering business development, retention and attraction

This strategy is primarily about facilitating new investment by existing businesses. Studies show that up to 80% of investment in a region is contributed by existing businesses. The secondary element of this strategy is to attract external investment and encouraging new investment by new businesses.

3. Creating and maintaining the investment environment

This is a fundamental prerequisite to economic growth. This strategic theme encompasses 'soft' and 'hard' infrastructure (the development of industrial land, and skills attraction, development and retention), servicing investor needs, developing a positive business investment culture, addressing market failure such as lack of information and ensuring government processes and regulations are efficient, effective and consistent with a positive investment environment.

4. Marketing Moira

Effectively marketing Moira Shire as a place to live, work, visit and invest is important to building current confidence in Moira as a place to do business, as well as attracting future investment.

5. Building partnerships for success

This strategy recognises that economic development relies on partnerships with local businesses and business organisations, other local government areas, and state and federal governments.

Each Strategy is detailed on the following pages with:

- A explanation about the Strategy and its rationale
- Priority actions
- Estimated budget for priority actions, with possible source of funds
- Objectives
- An action plan
- Council's role
- The identification of other organisations who may partner Council to deliver the actions and desired outcomes
- Timeframe for implementation (S = less than 12 months; M = 12 months to 3 years; O = ongoing)

Strategy One: Build on our competitive strengths

The purpose of this strategy is to build on the natural competitive advantages and leverage the drivers of the economy (i.e. agriculture, processing, tourism, retail, health and community services, and construction industries).

During the consultation phase, several opportunities were identified which directly related to the propulsive industry sectors. Investment in these sectors has a significant flow on effect to the Moira Shire economy. Additionally, innovations in industry were highlighted especially with regard to the use and reuse of water and the development of energy from alternative sources (including solar and biofuels).

This strategic theme also includes tourism, which is a key sector in Moira Shire, both in terms of its direct impact on the economy, and equally importantly its contribution to making the region an attractive place to live. This strategy addresses the organisation of tourism and need for a distinct Tourism Strategy. A summary of findings which will assist the development of the Tourism Strategy are described in Appendix One.

Priority actions for Strategy One:

Actions	Likely source of funds	Estimated costs
Implement recommendations from the Campaspe, Greater Shepparton and Moira Rural Land Use Strategy	Funded through Program 36, with the potential to leverage external funds for specific projects	Yet to be quantified
Conduct Agricultural Diversification and Opportunities Forum (linked to Food Bowl Modernisation)	Internal, with the potential to obtain partnership funding (e.g. other local governments, sponsors)	\$10,000
Establish Water Technologies Cluster	External funding	\$150,000
Conduct Retail Audits in Cobram, Nathalia, Numurkah and Yarrawonga	Potential for external government funding	\$100,000
Develop Tourism Strategy	Internal funding (to be agreed) Internal resources	\$25-30,000

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe ⁵
1.1 To maintain the significant contribution of the agricultural sector to Moira Shire's economy	1.1.1 Implement the recommendations of the Campaspe, Greater Shepparton and Moira Rural Land Use Strategy relating to planning to ensure that productive agricultural land is used as far as possible for agriculture	Manager / leader Critical partner	Campaspe Shire City of Greater Shepparton Agricultural sector DPI	S-M
	1.1.2 Continue to highlight impacts on agriculture from changes to water policy (develop Council Water Policy as per Strategy 3)	Advocate		O
	1.1.3 Develop stronger links between agriculture and tourism through product development: e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On farm stays • Farm gate trail project (continue) • Farmers Market Yarrawonga (feasibility study) 	Manager / leader Facilitator Manager / leader Manager / leader	Producers Moirra Tourism RDV/Victorian Farmers Market Association	S-O
	1.1.4 Conduct Agricultural Diversification and Opportunities Forum to identify opportunities linked with Food Bowl modernisation program, tourism and value adding (processing) sector	Manager / leader	DPI DAFF ABARE	S

⁵ S = less than 12 months
M = 12 months – 3 years
O = ongoing

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe ⁵
	1.1.5 Encourage positive relationships between Moira Shire, value adders (processors) and the agricultural sector (e.g. field days, farmers visits to processors)	Facilitator	Industry farmers	M
	1.1.6 Continue lead agency role in developing Water Technologies Cluster (involving irrigators, researchers, policy makers) to develop a range of water technology products and services	Manager / leader	Goulburn Murray Regional Water Cluster Members Technologies Industry Capability Network RDV	S
	1.1.7 Identify key projects arising from the Food Bowl Modernisation Project for location in Moira Shire and work to attract investment	Manager / leader	ICN RDV	S-M
	1.1.8 Promote and acknowledge the positive contribution of the agricultural sector to the Moira Shire economy	Manager / leader		O
	1.1.9 Develop database of farming enterprises (use Business Survey as base)	Manager / leader	DPI VFF Dairy Australia	S-M

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe ⁵
	1.1.10 Distribute key information about the value of the sector to farmers, and to town based businesses	Manager / leader		S
	1.1.11 Promote the value of the sector and its “propulsive” benefits to government agencies to develop appropriate policies to enhance regional competitiveness (e.g. best use of water, climate change, retention of good agricultural land) ** ⁶	Advocate		O
1.2 Develop cluster opportunities related to the food processing sector	1.2.1 Identify specific strengths for attracting these businesses such as commodity supply, Cobram steam factory, refrigerated transport and logistics and intermediate suppliers of goods and services	Manager / leader	Local industries	S-M
	1.2.2 Prepare a prospectus showcasing the Shire’s capabilities targeted at the food and beverage sector and key location factors **	Manager / leader		S-M
	1.2.3 Disseminate the prospectus online via the Council web site and other useful sites, and direct to targeted businesses including local food and beverage processors and major upstream commodity suppliers (such as ICM) **	Manager / leader		M

⁶ ** These items are closely linked to Strategy Four: Market Moira

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe ⁵
	1.2.4 Follow-up methodically on targets and enquiries (as outlined in 2.6.2)	Manager / leader		O
	1.2.5 Support as appropriate the Cobram initiative for a fruit handling, packing, juicing and bottling plant under one roof by providing key contacts in government, assisting to access funding for feasibility study, and assisting to implement recommendations from this study	Facilitator Supporter	RDV Developers	S
	1.2.8 Investigate clustering opportunities related to dairy processing (initially with existing dairy processors)	Manager / leader	Dairy processors Dairy Australia	S-M
	1.2.9 Develop positive working relationship with senior executives of all processors in the Shire through regular visits and meetings. Identify issues and opportunities to strengthen their local investment and work with them to implement opportunities	Manager / leader Supporter	Industry leaders	S

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe ⁵
1.3 Maximise retail expenditure in the Shire and minimise leakage	1.3.1 Conduct Retail Audit for each of the four main towns with regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of customers (local and visitors) and spending patterns • Service catchment • Gaps in the retail mix • Opening hours • Main street shop front availability and retail categories • New retail formats • Niche opportunities 	Manager / leader	RDV	S
	1.3.2 Present findings of Retail Audit to business organisations in each community and with them, develop detailed and implementable action plans (tie in findings of current Business Retention and Expansion Survey)	Manager / leader Facilitator	Retail sector Business organisations in each town	S-M
1.4 Develop renewable energy and water re-use projects to support industry sustainability and competitiveness	1.4.1 Establish Working Party of medium to large industries interested in investigating more water and energy efficient opportunities	Manager / leader	Thales Kraft AIG ICN Sustainability Victoria	S
	1.4.2 Investigate the opportunities to generate renewable energy for industrial and /or retail uses from within the Shire from sources such as solar or bio-waste or steam	Critical Partner	VECCI ICN Industry working party	S-M

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe ⁵
	1.4.3 Work with Australian Industry Group and Industry Capability Network to identify opportunities and like initiatives (e.g. Mt Alexander Shire Sustainability Group)	Critical Partner Supporter	Industry Working Party ICN AIG	S-M
	1.4.4 Facilitate field trips and seminars to educate and inform businesses of the opportunities in this area	Supporter	Industry Working Party	M-O
	1.4.5 Disseminate relevant information on government and private sector programs and initiatives in renewable energy	Manager / leader	Government agencies	O
	1.4.6 Work with NE Water and GV Water to identify possible Private Public Partnerships in water reuse and energy projects	Critical partner	Industry Working Party	S-M
1.5 Develop opportunities in the health and community services sector	1.5.1 Work with Moira Health Alliance, and private and public health and community services providers to identify investment needs and opportunities (especially in aged care, home based services, and attracting allied health professionals)	Critical Partner	Moira Health Alliance	S-M
	1.5.2 Develop information prospectus including demographic data targeted to attracting health service investment	Manager / leader		S-M

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe ⁵
	1.5.3 Work with Moira Health Alliance to further develop the nurse training facilities at Cobram (linked to Strategy Two skills development)	Supporter	Moira Health Alliance CSU La Trobe University RTO	S-M
1.6 Develop tourism product and infrastructure	1.6.1 Support the review of the management of tourism and economic development to strengthen the links between economic development and tourism	Governance Manager / leader	Moira Tourism	S
	1.6.2 Undertake the development of a Tourism Strategy to focus on product development, marketing and ongoing funding (see Appendix for related notes)	Manager / leader	Tourism Victoria Moira Tourism	S
	1.6.3 Link tourism to the Retail Audit (Strategy One) and prepare a report on the benefits of longer opening hours on weekends in tourist destinations and providing a number of options on how this could be implemented in Yarrawonga and Cobram in particular	Manager / leader	Retail and business organisations in Yarrawonga and Cobram Moira Tourism	M
	1.6.4 Facilitate sufficient discussion and consideration of the opening hours issue to ensure all stakeholders have input and a majority support the preferred option	Facilitator	Retail and business organisations in Yarrawonga and Cobram	M

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe ⁵
	1.6.5 Investigate successful business and tourism levies to support the development and promotion of both the business and tourism sectors (e.g. Shepparton Show Me, Swan Hill on the Murray)	Manager / leader	Retail and business organisations	S

Strategy Two: Foster business development, retention and attraction

This Strategy area addresses the most important aspect of encouraging new investment within the region (primary focus), and secondly attracting external investment. As the source of over 70% of investment in regions in Australia, local businesses represent a prime focus of an economic development strategy. It is the business owners who already have a stake in the region who are more likely to invest in their own region. Strategies which support and encourage these local businesses are therefore well targeted. Further information to support actions in this strategy will be provided when the current Business Retention and Expansion Survey is completed and collated.

Strategies in this area include:

- Identification and promotion of import replacement opportunities. For example, in the Moira Shire, the dairy cattle industry imports over 90% of its inputs, health services 43%, legal, accounting and business services 32% and accommodation, cafes and restaurants 44%.
- Encouragement of business to business transactions within the region
- Programs to make businesses export ready or be able to target new domestic markets
- Development of a positive business culture, leadership and networks (through the continuation of Business Awards and other business networking events across the Shire)
- Business breakfasts, workshop, seminars or coaching to increase business sustainability
- Expansion to existing businesses (e.g. Riverland Oilseeds, Thales, Kraft)
- Business capability register

Up to 30% of investment in a region comes from businesses coming into the region. These new businesses can bring added diversity to a region's industrial base, new "big business" perspectives and resources, major employment opportunities, demand for local suppliers and the injection of new skills and capabilities into the local economy.

The types of activities for this strategic theme include:

- Research to identify potential business relocations, opportunities, footloose businesses etc
- Development of an updatable prospectus for investment by outside firms in the Shire
- Promotion to outside businesses and business networks

Priority actions for Strategy Two:

Actions	Likely source of funds	Estimated costs
Analyse and implement the findings of Business Retention and Expansion Survey	Recurrent costs (staff) 50% offset through state government Provincial Economic Partnerships	\$10,000*
Continue Business Excellence Awards	Recurrent costs (staff)	
Establish working relationship with key employers regarding expansion and retention	Recurrent costs (staff)	

* It has been estimated that approximately \$10,000 will be required from internal resources to support these activities

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
2.1 Encourage a positive business culture within the Shire	2.1.1 Communication and networking – continue with and develop the current initiatives for interaction within the business community including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The newsletter • The Moira Small Towns Business and Marketing Group • Champions of Moira • Moira Young Entrepreneurs and Professionals • Town Chambers of Commerce • NEDC and Nathalia BIG • Regular media releases (monthly) 	Manager / leader Facilitator	As listed	O
	2.1.2 Publicise the goals and strategies from the Economic Development Strategy in the newsletter, business organisations and media	Manager / leader		S
	2.1.3 Involvement – encourage business people to serve on relevant committees and working parties to enhance their knowledge of economic development initiatives and to make the initiatives relevant to industry outcomes	Facilitator		S-O

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
	2.1.4 Celebrate the achievements of business and economic development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue Business Excellence Awards • Publicise new investment, new products, major contracts, employment and other business achievements 	Manager / leader Facilitator	Local business organisations in each community	O
2.2 Encourage business to business transactions within the Shire	2.2.1 Analyse Business Retention and Expansion Survey to highlight opportunities for increased business to business transactions	Manager / leader		S
	2.2.2 Identify key opportunities and conduct business information sessions in each key town to highlight the opportunities and introduce businesses to each other	Manager / leader Facilitator		S
	2.2.3 Regularly promote positive examples of business to business transactions in business newsletter	Manager / leader		S-O
2.3 Work with existing businesses to support expansion and retention	2.3.1 Use the business survey data to identify and work with business wanting to expand. Connect them with external resources as appropriate	Manager / leader	RDV ICN AIG	S-O

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
	2.3.2 Meet regularly with large employers (e.g. Kraft, Murray Goulburn, Thales, Riverland Oilseeds) to explore options for expansion and key factors for retention	Manager / leader		S-O
	2.3.3 Undertake industry / business expansion support role as appropriate	Facilitator Advocate	Industry and individual businesses	S-O
2.4 Import replacement and value adding	2.4.1 Conduct a study to identify import replacement and value-adding opportunities related to identified propulsive industry sectors	Manager / leader	Industry Capability Network (ICN)	M
	2.4.2 Identify major projects (greater than \$10m) which could qualify for the AusIndustry Enhanced Project Bylaw Scheme (EPBS) which focuses on import replacement and can yield significant savings to industry	Supporter	ICN	M
	2.4.3 Use Business Survey results to develop a business register identifying industrial supply capabilities and disseminate this online via the Council web site.	Manager / leader	ICN	M

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
2.5 Support local businesses to become export ready and market to new domestic markets	2.5.1 Encourage business uptake of programs to develop “export ready” businesses, such as RDV’s Promote to the Domestic Consumer and FIRST programs under the Provincial Victoria Growth Fund	Advocate	RDV	O
	2.5.2 Facilitate export seminars	Facilitator	RDV ICN	M
2.6 Develop a prospectus and process for attracting new businesses	2.6.1 Prepare a generic prospectus addressing key location factors and targeted at businesses seeking to relocate	Manager / leader	RDV	M

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
	2.6.2 Develop a methodical process for servicing enquiries from interested businesses which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration of the enquiry and assignment of a project officer to manage it • Validation of the enquiry • Convening confidential stakeholder and agency briefing • Follow up including seeking supplementary information • Regular follow-up contact; and • Logging of key information such as type of business, their needs, potential economic benefit, the reasons they did / did not choose to relocate to the Shire etc 	Manager / leader		S-O
2.7 Target small and medium sized enterprises (SME's) in provincial cities for relocation	2.7.1 Identify SME's in provincial cities that may be attracted by lower costs of location in satellite towns such as Numurkah and Nathalia	Manager / leader	Local business organisations	M
	2.7.2 Prepare an information pack highlighting key location factors	Manager / leader	Numurkah Chamber of Commerce NECD Nathalia BIG	M

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
2.8 Identify key factors to retain local businesses and investment	2.8.1 Prepare an ongoing database showing businesses that close and / or exit the Shire, including reasons for their doing so. Use this information to retain current businesses and overcome barriers to continued investment in the Shire	Manager / leader		S-O

Strategy Three: Create and maintain the investment environment

Rationale

Investment in a region can be either facilitated or impeded by:

- The quality and supply of key infrastructure
- Supply of relevant skills
- Regulatory and planning processes
- The local business and government culture
- The availability of relevant information
- Lifestyle factors

The top ten considerations for a business locating in regional Australia, in order of importance, are⁷:

- Lifestyle
- Family considerations: medical and educational services and employment prospects
- Labour force stability
- Access to good roads (transport costs were also identified by respondents but at a lower ranking)
- Proximity to markets
- Availability and retention of specialised skills
- Proximity to resources (raw materials, agricultural commodities)
- Availability of low cost finance
- Quality of local government, including local planning regulations
- Lower land costs

⁷ Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *What Regional Business Needs – Results of a Survey of Regionally-Based Firms, 2001*.

The same survey found that telecommunications were a critical factor in running a business in a regional location, including mobile coverage and telecommunications services. Access to air and rail transport services were not generally regarded as major issues, although clearly for some businesses this type of infrastructure can be critical.

Issues raised during the consultation pointed to the need to have investment ready industrial land in Yarrawonga, and Nathalia to meet demand; to rationalise industrial land development in Numurkah and to continue to encourage the provision of industrial land in Cobram as needs arise.

Water infrastructure is critical to support the considerable investment in irrigated agriculture in the region. Strategy One addresses council's ongoing role in the Water Technologies Cluster. This strategy addresses the ongoing leadership and advocacy role of council in regard to water security.

Skills development and retention is critical for Moira Shire to maintain current sectoral growth in key areas of manufacturing, construction, health services and retail. Skills development is also required as the shift continues in reducing agricultural full time on farm employment positions.

Priority actions for Strategy Three:

Actions	Likely source of funds	Estimated costs
Continue to advocate Council's position on water for agriculture, industry and future urban needs	Recurrent costs	
Feasibility study for industrial land development in Nathalia and Numurkah	Internal (not budgeted)	\$20,000
Implement Industrial Land Study recommendations	Capital budget Potential federal government, state government and private funding	To be quantified

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
3.1 To ensure adequate serviced industrial land for current and future demands (as required)	3.1.1 Implement findings of Industrial Land review for the four major towns of the Shire	Manager / leader Advocate	RDV	S
	3.1.2 Encourage private investment/or release of private industrial land in Yarrawonga	Advocate	Private land holders	S-M
	3.1.3 Conduct a feasibility study on developing industrial land in Nathalia based on committed local investment	Manager / leader	RDV	S
	3.1.4 Investigate green fields site for further industrial land expansion (or consolidation) in Numurkah	Manager / leader		M
	3.1.5 Encourage strategic re-design of existing Numurkah industrial land including access	Manager / leader		S
	3.1.6 Investigate the possibility of private-public partnerships to provide industrial land	Critical partner	Private sector developers	M
3.2 To develop and implement a strategic approach for the best use of scarce water resources	3.2.3 Continue Council's proactive leadership and advocacy role in regard to rural water issues with relevant water authorities and policy makers, and keep abreast of developments in water policy that impact on the Shire	Manager / leader Advocate	Neighbouring local governments Government agencies	S - O

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
	3.2.2 Facilitate access to information about water conservation measures that could be implemented by industry and increase use of recycled water	Critical partner Advocate	Water Authorities (Goulburn Murray Water, Goulburn Valley Water, North East Water)	S - O
	3.2.4 Continue implementation of the Water Technologies Cluster (see Strategy One)	Manager / leader	Goulburn Murray Regional Water Cluster Members Technologies Industry Capability Network RDV	S
3.3 To foster the attraction, creation and retention of critical skills for the Shire	3.3.1 Continue to be partner in the Rural Skills Connect Program	Critical partner	RDV Regional councils	O
	3.3.2 Work with Global Skills program to encourage skilled migration into the Shire to fill critical vacancies	Critical partner	RDV	O
	3.3.3 Promote findings of Business Expansion and Retention Survey regarding skills shortages, or need for training, apprentices	Manager / leader	Education providers (e.g. Wodonga TAFE)	S-M

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
	3.3.4 Continue to implement the Show Us Your Skills matching process	Manager / leader	RDV	O
	3.3.5 Announce and celebrate (in local Media) placements, skills development opportunities and "wins" **	Manager / leader		S-O
	3.3.6 Conduct annual business skills development forum with key speakers from the major industries	Manager / leader		S-O
	3.3.7 Strengthen links with Goulburn Murray Local Learning and Employment Network, local training providers (including GOTAFE and Wodonga TAFE) and major industries to bring training to the workplace	Critical partner	GM LLEN GO TAFE Wodonga TAFE Industry and businesses	S-O
	3.3.8 Create connections between businesses with like training/skills requirements so that a joint approach can be developed	Facilitator		M
	3.3.9 Encourage and support the development of nurse training and education in Cobram (linked to Strategy One)	Supporter	Moira Health Alliance	S

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
	3.3.10 Work with Moira Health Alliance to ascertain other skills development needs for the health sector and develop local training responses (like the Cobram nurse education) (see also Strategy One)	Supporter	Moira Health Alliance	S-M
3.4 To engage government in the planning for the new bridge between Yarrawonga and Mulwala	3.4.1 Meet with NSW and Victorian Road Authorities and ascertain priorities and timeframes for the planning and replacement of the Lake Mulwala bridge	Advocate	NSW RTA VicRoads Goulburn Murray Water	S
	3.4.2 Prepare a local action plan for progressing the new bridge with Corowa Shire and key users	Critical partner	Corowa Shire Key local industries (NSW & VIC)	M
3.5 Address current limitations in telecommunication and power	3.5.1 Work with business groups in major towns and small towns to identify areas in the Shire where internet connectivity is below standard. Contact Telstra to address these issues	Advocate	Business groups Affected businesses	S-M
	3.5.2 Facilitate access to up to date information and option on the availability and price of telecommunications for businesses	Advocate	Telecommunication providers	S-M
	3.5.3 Promote the use of the internet for business purposes (e.g. conduct workshops)	Advocate Facilitator		M

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
	3.5.4 Work with business groups in major towns and small towns to identify areas in the Shire where power outages / surges are affecting industrial locations across the Shire	Advocate	Affected businesses	S
	3.5.5 Contact the electricity provider/s and establish an agreed process and timeline to address these issues	Advocate	Electricity providers	S
3.6 To support the strengthening of eastwards freight connection	3.6.1 Undertake a study to determine the freight task and preferred movements (e.g. GV FLC or LOGIC)	Manager / leader	Industries with high freight requirements	S-M
	3.6.2 Use the above study to lobby for, and plan suitable road and rail corridors to meet current and future needs	Advocate		M

Strategy Four: Market Moira

To create optimism and build a positive business culture and pride, it is important to tell the good news stories. Marketing Moira is also about having a professional approach, appearance and response to investigate enquiries from outside the region.

Strategy One highlighted areas where a tailored prospectus would be valuable to attract investment (e.g. in the food processing sector and health and community sector).

Strategy Two emphasised the importance of local information and awareness raising to attract and retain investment and celebrate achievements. This Strategy also recommended the development of a generic prospectus addressing key location attributes.

This printed material will need to be combined with a strategic approach to marketing the Moira advantage and building the sense of business optimism.

Priority actions for Strategy Four:

Actions	Likely source of funds	Estimated costs
Develop tailored information and marketing materials, including prospectus, for business expansion and new industry enquiries	Internal (already budgeted)	\$15,000
Update Moira Business website , including new economic profile data	Internal (already budgeted)	\$5,000
Continue visiting journalist program (with Greater Shepparton and Campaspe Councils)	Recurrent	

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
4.1 Establish "brand attributes" for Moira as a place to live, work and invest	4.1.1 Use "top 10 considerations for business locating in regional Australia" ⁸ as a starting point to develop key marketing ideas / attributes for Moira Shire	Manager / leader		S-O
	4.1.2 Meet with residential land developers to identify complimentary ways of cross-promotion	Supporter	Land developers (e.g. Silverwoods)	S
	4.1.3 Continue to link in with State Wide Provincial Victoria marketing campaign with Greater Shepparton and Campaspe councils (including Visiting Journalist program)	Critical partner	RDV Greater Shepparton Campaspe	S - O
	4.1.4 Use marketing attributes and key data from economic profile to develop information sheets for prospectus	Manager / leader		S-O
4.2 Develop suite of marketing tools	4.2.1 Develop loose leaf information sheets (use Moira Shire template) (see 4.1.3)	Manager / leader		S-O

⁸ See introduction to Strategy Three

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
	4.2.2 Prepare case studies of local businesses across the “propulsive sectors” to demonstrate growth and retention	Manager / leader	RDV ICN	S-O
	4.2.3 Obtain quotes and endorsements from local based businesses about the benefits of conducting business in Moira Shire	Manager / leader		S-O
	4.2.4 Update website with new data to showcase business development in Moira (including endorsements and quotes)	Manager / leader		S-O
4.3 Generate regular good news stories for local and regional media	4.3.1 Develop standard protocol to seek business permission for positive stories following assistance or interaction with Moira Shire	Manager / leader	Local and regional news outlets	S-O
	4.3.2 Establish annual calendar of events and related media	Manager / leader	As above	S-O
	4.3.3 Publicise outcomes and findings of this Strategy, as well as the delivery of key outcomes	Manager / leader	As above	S
	4.3.4 Utilise all forms of media (print, online, radio, TV)	Manager / leader	As above	O

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
4.4 Continue Open for Business newsletter	4.4.1 Target stories in the publication to tell the good news about business, industry investment and retention	Manager / leader		○
	4.4.2 Continue newsletter production as a regular (and anticipated) publication	Manager / leader		○

Strategy Five: Build partnerships for success

This Economic Development Strategy cannot be delivered by Moira Shire Council alone. It is dependent of strong, mutually beneficial relationships with key businesses, business associations and organisations, neighbouring local government areas, government agencies and federal and state parliamentary representatives.

The consultation phase for this Strategy established that individuals within the Business Development Unit have good rapport and connection with local business organisations. There is a need to extend this positive relationship.

Additionally, a close relationship with relevant government agencies will allow for early information regarding funding opportunities, key government directions, the coordination of service delivery, and allow for the Moira Shire to advocate on behalf of its industry sectors regarding policy development.

Priority action for Strategy Five:

Actions	Likely source of funds	Estimated costs
Continue working relationship with government agencies, businesses and business associations	Recurrent	\$10,000

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
5.1 Continue networking with government agencies, businesses and business associations	5.1.1 Develop and maintain networks with businesses in the Shire and outside associations, government agencies and politicians so as to tap into opportunities for new business	Critical partner		O
	5.1.2 Convene a regular network meeting between government agencies involved with economic development and tourism in the Shire so as Co-operation with other local, State and Federal government agencies to coordinate regional service delivery	Critical partner		O
	5.1.3 Develop a calendar of speakers / meetings to allow for interaction between members of Business Moira and key external organisations	Manager / leader		S-O
5.2 Build on partnerships with local, state and federal government	5.2.1 Continue membership of Hume Region Economic Development Forum	Critical partner		O
	5.2.2 Set up regular meetings with state and federal government economic and tourism representatives	Manager / leader		O

Objective	Actions	Council Role	Other Organisations	Timeframe
5.3 Facilitate networking, support and mentoring across businesses (see also Strategy Two)	5.3.1 Continue to provide liaison and support to town business and tourism organisations	Critical partner		O
	5.3.2 Continue to interact positively with Champions of Business and Young Entrepreneurs and Professionals, enabling them to develop as stand alone organisations	Supporter		O
	5.3.3 Continue to liaise with small town marketing group	Critical partner		O

Implementing the Strategy and Action Plans

This Economic Development Strategy 2008-2015 is a guiding document to achieve:

- lasting (sustainable) economic development across the Shire
- enhancement of economic prosperity and employment
- enhanced standard of living and quality of life

This report details the strategies and actions that Moira Shire is to undertake over the next five years. With Council endorsement, the Business Development Unit within Council is responsible for the overall implementation of the Strategy and Action Plans and will report against progress and outcomes. Councillors are responsible for the overall strategic direction and allocation of resources to enable the strategy to be achieved.

Appendix

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