

Murrindindi Shire Council Plan 2025-2029





Acknowledgement of Country

Murrindindi Shire Council is proud to acknowledge the Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the land we now call Murrindindi Shire.

We pay our respects to First Nations leaders and Elders, past, present and emerging, who are the keepers of history, traditions, knowledge and culture of this land.

We commit to working in collaboration with Traditional Owners of this land in a spirit of reconciliation and partnership.

Contents

1.	Message from the Mayor and Councillors	5
2.	Executive Summary	6
3.	A Ward Perspective	8
4.	Our Shared Values	14
5.	The Community We Serve	16
6.	The 2035 Community Vision	18
7.	What Matters Most – Our Priorities	20
8.	Turning Vision into Action	22
9.	Understanding Our Context	40
10.	Keeping you in the Loop	42
11.	About Council – Our People and Purpose	44

Murrindindi Shire 2035 Community Vision

Together, we are a vibrant rural community where everyone feels welcome and valued, young people see a future, every person is supported and empowered, and diversity is genuinely embraced. Our heritage and landscapes are celebrated, and our economy is thriving. We cherish all that makes this Shire unique.

Murrindindi is the destination of choice – to live, to visit, and to enjoy.

1. Message from the Mayor and Councillors

It is with great pride and optimism that we present the Murrindindi Shire Council Plan for 2025-2029 – a roadmap shaped by our community for those who live, work, and invest in our beautiful Shire.

Our Shire is rich in natural beauty, community spirit and opportunity. We have a proud tradition of resilience, and a shared desire to build a future where everyone can thrive. This plan reflects our shared aspirations and sets a clear direction for the future we are building together.

At the heart of this plan is a commitment to inclusion. It follows one of the most comprehensive community engagement programs Council has ever undertaken. We listened closely to your hopes, your frustrations, and practical ideas for building a stronger future. We believe that every voice matters and every person belongs. Whether you live in our vibrant townships, rural communities, or you're newly arrived, this plan ensures that your needs, ideas, and experiences are valued. And we are working to create spaces and services that are accessible, welcoming, and responsive to the diverse people who call Murrindindi Shire home.

You told us that Council must be a steady hand and a trusted voice. That means staying focused on what matters most, using our resources wisely, and making the tough decisions needed to ensure long-term sustainability. This plan also champions opportunity. From education and employment to health and wellbeing, we are unlocking pathways that empower individuals and strengthen our collective resilience. Growth, when planned well, is part of the solution. By unlocking new housing, welcoming new residents, and attracting local jobs, we can grow our rate base and rebalance

our ageing population. That's why this Plan also focuses on enabling housing, skills and partnerships that support a more prosperous and sustainable future.

Above all, this is a plan driven by vision. It is a bold and forward-thinking blueprint that balances growth with sustainability; tradition with progress. We are embracing new technologies, enhancing our natural environment, and nurturing the unique character of our Shire. Our vision is for a connected, confident, and compassionate community – one that leads with purpose and plans with care.

We are committed to living within our means. That may include consolidating or repurposing under-used buildings, deferring some projects, and having honest conversations with our community about service expectations. These choices won't always be easy, but they are necessary to secure our long-term future.

We want to thank every community member and every staff member who contributed to this plan. Your insights and passion have shaped a document that is not only strategic but deeply personal. Your Councillors are deeply committed people dedicated to your service. Each brings a wealth of life experience and a diversity of expertise. Together, we are laying the foundation for a future that reflects our values and meets our ambitions.

Let us move forward with courage, clarity, and care – knowing that when we work together, we are assured that Murrindindi is the destination of choice – to live, to visit, and to enjoy.

2. Executive Summary

This Council Plan is Murrindindi Shire Council's key strategic document. It sets the direction for the next four years, outlining the priorities, goals and strategies that will guide our decisions, services and investments. Developed with extensive community input, it translates shared aspirations into a practical roadmap for action.

It shows how we will work toward our Community Vision for 2035, and how we'll measure progress along the way.

Many voices have shaped this Council Plan. We listened carefully to what the community told us matters most

- Housing that meets real local needs, especially for workers, young people and older residents who want to stay in their communities
- Pathways to jobs, skills and education, so people can live, work and build their future in the Shire
- Growth that protects what's special, respecting the rural charm and character of our towns and landscapes
- Safe, reliable roads and responsive services, with infrastructure that is well-maintained, accessible, and resilient to climate-related risks
- Support for volunteers, community groups and events that bring people together
- Clear, timely communication and accountable leadership, where Council explains its decisions, manages resources wisely, and leads with integrity and care.

These messages have shaped every part of this Plan. They define the priorities we'll focus on, the outcomes we'll be accountable for, and the areas where we'll advocate strongly to ensure other levels of government also deliver community outcomes beyond the control or authority of Council.

The Plan is structured around three Strategic Directions:

- 1. A Thriving and Prosperous Shire** – with sustainable growth, strong local jobs, and a healthy natural environment
- 2. Healthy, Inclusive and Resilient Communities** – where everyone feels welcome, supported, and connected
- 3. Trusted Leadership and Sustainable Services** – with sound governance, responsible finances, and practical solutions

Each Strategic Direction includes clear goals, long-term strategies, and measurable progress indicators. Together, they provide a shared framework for achieving the future our community has imagined, and a foundation for the choices and trade-offs we'll need to make along the way.

This Plan belongs to everyone who lives in, works in, visits, or contributes to Murrindindi Shire. It is a tool for shaping change together – grounded in local reality, driven by community priorities, and built to deliver what matters most. Each year, Council will adopt an Annual Priority Action Plan to set out the specific actions we'll take to deliver on these long-term goals.



A Thriving and Prosperous Shire

Goal 1

Sustainable population growth and land use planning

Goal 2

Economic development, local jobs and skills

Goal 3

Healthy natural environment and climate-resilient future



Healthy, inclusive, and resilient communities

Goal 4

Health, wellbeing and active living

Goal 5

Community resilience and disaster preparedness

Goal 6

Social connection and inclusion



Trusted Leadership and Sustainable Services

Goal 7

Sustainable infrastructure and financial management

Goal 8

Efficient and responsive services

Goal 9

Transparent governance and meaningful engagement

3. A Ward Perspective

Each Councillor brings a unique local lens to the Council Plan, shaped by their conversations with residents, businesses and community groups. In the reflections that follow, Councillors from each Ward share what they’ve heard and what matters most in their communities.

Cr Damien Gallagher
Councillor for
Red Gate Ward
Mayor of Murrindindi
Shire Council



Our community has set a bold and inspiring vision for Murrindindi: A Shire where no one is left behind, where people are connected and supported, and where opportunity is shared by all. I’m proud to lead a Council that respects this vision and is committed to advocating for the investment and services our community deserves.

We know there are challenges. Financial pressures, limited revenue tools, and the need for more equitable access to government funding are real. But we’re tackling these challenges with determination. Council is focused on building on its strong reputation for delivering services efficiently and cost-effectively, while continuing to achieve real outcomes for our community.

As Mayor, I believe in leading with purpose, listening deeply, and acting on what we hear. I’m passionate about engaging with residents, businesses and visitors to shape meaningful change. I also care deeply about ensuring young people feel empowered to shape the future, and I want to see them supported to be their best and lead conversations about what comes next.

Through this Council Plan, we are setting a clear course for a more inclusive, resilient and forward-thinking Murrindindi - and we’re doing it together.

Cr Anita Carr
Councillor for Eildon Ward
Deputy Mayor of Murrindindi
Shire Council



I’ve heard from our community that people want to feel connected – through walking trails, reliable roads, local events and good communication with Council.

I’m passionate about making it easier for people to enjoy and move between our towns, whether that’s creating safer walking links, promoting local tourism, or supporting community groups to bring life to our townships.

Something that is very important to all councillors is that we want to make sure our young people can see a future here. That means more local job opportunities and strong advocacy for expanded access to education, skills and training without leaving the Shire.

We have committed to being an approachable, inclusive and truly representative team of councillors and I look forward to championing this in our community. I have confidence in Council staff to foster clear and consistent planning processes and good communication with all community members, while continually improving how we work and engage.

This Council Plan is a chance to focus on what matters – looking after what we have, supporting our volunteers, and making Murrindindi a place people are proud to call home.

“The Council Plan is our roadmap to building a more vibrant, welcoming and connected Murrindindi.”

Cr Jodi Adams

Cr Jodi Adams

Councillor for Kinglake Ward

Connection is at the heart of everything I stand for. It's what brings people together, builds resilience, and creates a true sense of belonging. Through our Council Plan conversations, I've heard just how important that sense of connection is across our towns and communities, and I'm committed to making sure it's reflected in the work we do.

As a Councillor, I'm passionate about ensuring Murrindindi Shire is a place where everyone feels valued, supported and included no matter their age, background or stage in life. That means advocating for better access to health and support services, tackling food insecurity, enhancing spaces for art, music and sport, and creating more opportunities for young people to thrive.

I also want to celebrate and protect what makes our region special, the unique character of our towns, the strength of our volunteers and community groups, and the role of local businesses in helping our Shire grow.

This Council Plan is our roadmap to building a more vibrant, welcoming and connected Murrindindi and I'm proud to help bring that vision to life.



Cr Paul Hildebrand

Councillor for Koriella Ward

Through our Council Plan engagement, I've heard loud and clear how important it is that we continue to support the local spaces that bring people together. Our community halls, hubs and reserves are more than just facilities, they bring people together, support shared experiences, and play a vital role in strengthening social cohesion and helping communities respond in times of need.

Our community has also told us that we need to create more pathways for young people to build their future here, with local jobs, training, and support to stay and thrive in Murrindindi. I believe we can support sensible population growth while preserving the character and charm that make our towns and landscapes so special.

I'm focused on ensuring Council remains in a sound financial position so we can continue to provide the services, infrastructure and support our community needs. That also means maintaining strong governance practices that build trust and support good decision making.

Preparedness is key, as an organisation and a community. We must continue to invest in our ability to respond to emergencies and external shocks, and I'm committed to helping Murrindindi remain ready, resilient and future-focused.



Cr Sandice McAulay

Councillor for Cathedral Ward

My fellow Councillors and I are deeply passionate about the future of our beautiful Shire. I want to see Murrindindi thrive: financially, socially and environmentally. Through the Council Plan process, it's been encouraging to see strong community support for goals that focus on sustainable growth, local economic development, and building climate resilience.

This Plan reflects what we've heard: that our community wants to work alongside Council to shape a prosperous and well-prepared future. Together, we must continue to advocate for our region, ensuring our voice is heard by other levels of government and supported through the right investment and policy decisions.

I'm also committed to strengthening our resilience in the face of climate-related risks and emergencies. That's why I support practical, community-led initiatives like the LEAPing Into Resilience emergency preparedness program, and a strong local response through clear and measurable climate action policies.

By planning smart, acting sustainably, and working together, we can ensure Murrindindi's people, places and economy are ready for the future and supported to thrive.



“It's been encouraging to see strong community support for goals that focus on sustainable growth, local economic development, and building climate resilience.”

Cr Sandice McAulay

“As a Councillor, I want to make sure that all parts of our Shire feel heard and supported, especially our smaller towns and rural communities.”

Cr Eric Lording

Cr Eric Lording
Councillor for King Parrot Ward

Through the Council Plan engagement and ongoing conversations with residents, I’ve heard loud and clear what matters to our communities: better roads, more local input, and practical support for the groups and facilities that bring people together.



Whether it’s sealing roads to reduce dust, improving the maintenance of local sports grounds, or supporting community groups like Rotary to find a home, I’m committed to getting the basics right. I’ve also heard the need for clearer and more efficient planning processes, and I’ll continue to advocate for improvements in this space.

As a Councillor, I want to make sure that all parts of our Shire feel heard and supported, especially our smaller towns and rural communities. This Council Plan is a step toward delivering the practical outcomes people are asking for, and I’ll keep working hard to represent the voices of King Parrot Ward and the broader Murrindindi community.

“Through this Council Plan process, we’ve had valuable conversations about how we can deliver the services people rely on while managing our limited resources responsibly.”

Cr Sue Carpenter

Cr Sue Carpenter
Councillor for Cheviot Ward

One of the most important things we can do as Councillors is to listen and engage meaningfully with our communities. Through this Council Plan process, we’ve had valuable conversations about how we can deliver the services people rely on while managing our limited resources responsibly.



I’m committed to advocating for Murrindindi Shire to receive its fair share of government funding so we can support sustainable growth, invest in infrastructure, and meet the needs of our changing population. It’s equally important that we plan carefully to preserve the rural character of our towns while addressing critical issues like the shortage of housing for essential workers.

I also believe in supporting lifelong learning and want to see more opportunities for people to access training, further education and skilled employment locally, without needing to leave their community to do so.

This Council Plan reflects those goals, and I look forward to continuing this work in partnership with our community.

4. Our shared values

Our values express what we stand for as leaders and representatives of Murrindindi Shire. They guide how we work, how we lead, and how we make decisions to best serve our community.

Together, these values form the foundation of Council's culture, leadership, and our commitment to working with and for our community.



Compassion

We act with empathy, kindness and care, ensuring our decisions and actions prioritise the well-being of our community. We are committed to fairness, inclusion and equity, treating every member of our community with dignity and respect. We focus on creating opportunities for all to thrive.



Authenticity

We lead with honesty, integrity and sincerity, staying true to our values in all that we do. By fostering trust and transparency in our relationships and decision-making, we build credibility and remain accountable to our commitments.



Resilience

We remain adaptable, innovative and forward-thinking, demonstrating courage and determination in overcoming challenges and seizing opportunities. With creativity and perseverance, we work to build a strong and sustainable future for our community.



Excellence

We strive for the highest standards in everything we do, guided by strategic leadership and a commitment to delivering meaningful outcomes. Through collaboration, teamwork and reliability, we build strong relationships and ensure that our efforts achieve the best possible results for our community.



5. The Community We Serve

Total population

15,603 estimated

If 100 people represented everyone working in Murrindindi Shire, here's what that group would look like:



If 100 people represented everyone in Murrindindi, here's what that group would look like:



6. The 2035 Community Vision

Our Community Vision describes the long-term hopes, dreams and aspirations of the people of Murrindindi Shire. It is a shared statement of intent that belongs to both Council and the community – and it can only be realised through strong partnership, collaboration and shared action. Following a detailed consultation process, we are proud to present our revised 2035 Community Vision:



Murrindindi Shire 2035 Community Vision

Together, we are a vibrant rural community where everyone feels welcome and valued, young people see a future, every person is supported and empowered, and diversity is genuinely embraced. Our heritage and landscapes are celebrated, and our economy is thriving. We cherish all that makes this Shire unique.

Murrindindi is the destination of choice – to live, to visit, and to enjoy.

How the 2035 Community Vision was created

As part of Stage Two engagement for this Council Plan, we invited community members and stakeholders to review the 2021 Community Vision. The feedback was consistent and clear: while the original Vision had good intentions, it felt too long, too broad, and not quite like “us.”

People called for a Vision that was inspiring but grounded, something that spoke plainly, connected emotionally, and reflected the everyday realities and hopes of life in Murrindindi.

We listened.

The revised Vision is simpler, more meaningful, and more closely aligned with how our community sees itself and its future. It celebrates our strengths, acknowledges our challenges, and offers a shared direction for where we want to go, together.

What We Heard – Feedback on the previous Community Vision

These reflections helped shape a new 2035 Community Vision that feels grounded, hopeful, and uniquely Murrindindi. It’s not just a statement, it’s a commitment to building a future that honours our people, place and potential.

“

The (previous) Vision sounds good, but it can feel too ambitious or removed from daily life. A simpler, clearer message focused on our challenges and opportunities would feel more genuine and build trust.”

“The (previous) Vision feels too broad, making it hard to connect with.”

“This is what makes our region special – the landscapes, the wildlife, the peaceful towns.”

“

Can the Vision focus on things Council can realistically achieve? That way, it stays clear, achievable, and makes a real difference in our lives.”

“Young people need more than activities, they need pathways to jobs, education, and meaningful roles in the community.”

“

Protecting our environment isn’t just about big initiatives, it should also include supporting local farming and making our towns beautiful.”

“Volunteers are the backbone of local events – help us with facilities and funding, and we’ll do the rest.”

“Tourism is a strength, but visitors should respect our environment and our way of life.”

“Inclusion means more than words – we want to see how our voices, especially young and vulnerable people, are shaping decisions.”

“We’re not against growth – we just want it done in a way that fits with our local character and doesn’t overwhelm us.”

7. What Matters Most – Our Priorities

The Council Plan sets out the key priorities that matter most to our community. It is built from what we heard through engagement with residents, businesses, and stakeholders, then refined using evidence, data, and strategic analysis.

This Plan connects the unique identity of Murrindindi Shire with the practical realities of delivering services, managing resources, and planning for our future. By aligning community aspirations with internal governance, the Council Plan ensures that our work remains focused, transparent, and accountable.

Strategic Direction and Goals

Through the Council Plan engagement process, we identified three Strategic Directions, each representing a theme that matters deeply to our community. These directions help organise our goals, actions, and investments within a structured and clear framework.

Each Strategic Direction includes three Goals that set out our focus over the next four years and guide how we will work to play our part in achieving the Community Vision.

These Strategic Directions and Goals form the foundation for everything we do, from annual action planning and budgeting to measuring performance and reporting progress. They provide a clear roadmap toward a future shaped by the values, needs, and aspirations of our community.

Our Strategic Directions and Goals



Strategic Direction: A Thriving and Prosperous Shire

Goal 1

Sustainable population growth and land use planning

Goal 2

Economic development, local jobs and skills

Goal 3

Healthy natural environment and climate resilient future



Strategic Direction: Healthy, Inclusive and Resilient Communities

Goal 4

Health, wellbeing and active living

Goal 5

Community resilience and disaster preparedness

Goal 6

Social connection and inclusion



Strategic Direction: Trusted Leadership and Sustainable Services

Goal 7

Sustainable infrastructure and financial management

Goal 8

Efficient and responsive services

Goal 9

Transparent governance and authentic engagement

8. Turning Vision into Action



A thriving and prosperous shire

What you said:

“Let’s focus on improving what we’ve got. Keeping our infrastructure in good shape means our towns stay strong.”

“We need real jobs that aren’t just for the weekend. Support farming, tourism, small business and new industries like tech – something for young people to stay for.”

“We love the small towns for what they are. Not everything needs to grow, just make sure the big towns have what they need.”

“Give people ways to study, work and build a future here – don’t make them move away to succeed.”

“Talking about climate is important, and at the same time, we need to remember that some communities are still facing challenges with basic infrastructure.”

“The town needs more housing that workers can actually afford. Otherwise, there’s no one to run the cafés or health services.”

“Protect the bush, don’t just clear it. People come here because it’s beautiful – we’ve got to keep it that way.”

“Young people need more than activities – they need pathways to jobs, education, and meaningful roles in the community.”

“We’ve got to plan for floods and storms too – not just fire. The climate’s changing and we need to get ahead of it.”



Strategic Direction: A thriving and prosperous shire

Goals	Our Strategy		How we measure progress
Goal 1: Sustainable population growth and land use planning Shape growth to enhance access to services and infrastructure, protect rural character, and support well-connected, liveable towns.		We will:	
	1.1	Facilitate well-designed, sustainable development through responsive and efficient land use planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Average number of days taken to decide planning applications (LGPRF indicator)
	1.2	Support housing diversity and affordability through strategic partnerships and advocacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of structure plans developed, reviewed or implemented
	1.3	Align growth planning with infrastructure, transport and service capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number and value of planning applications approved
	1.4	Ensure town structure plans and planning policies reflect local character and future needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grant funding received to support planning and growth infrastructure
	1.5	Collaborate with Traditional Owners to plan for culturally and environmentally respectful growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentage of planning approvals aligned with adopted township character guidelines
	1.6	Use data, evidence and design-led thinking To guide long-term planning decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of public or community transport advocacy initiatives undertaken
	1.7	Create the conditions that encourage young people to stay or return, helping to balance our ageing population and strengthen the future of our communities.	
	1.8	Advocate for improved public and community transport options across townships to enhance mobility and equity of access.	



Goals	Our Strategy		How we measure progress
Goal 2: Economic development, local jobs and skills Support a diverse and resilient local economy through sustainable industries, small business, tourism and lifelong learning.		We will:	
	2.1	Promote Murrindindi as a great place to live, work, visit and invest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of business and tourism support programs delivered
	2.2	Support small business success through clear regulation, local networks and access to services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Value of Grants and Sponsorships provided to support local events
	2.3	Strengthen the visitor economy through destination development, local events, nature and culture-based tourism, in partnership with Tourism North East.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor numbers and spend• Businesses supported through the Business Concierge
	2.4	Champion lifelong learning, workforce development and pathways to employment through partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engagement with regional economic partnerships and training initiatives
	2.5	Advocate for investment in infrastructure and digital connectivity that supports economic growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activating Lake Eildon Master Plan implementation
	2.6	Enable land use and zoning that supports commercial, industrial and agricultural innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding secured for economic diversification in forestry-affected communities
	2.7	Continue supporting economic transition in forestry-affected communities, including job pathways, innovation and regional resilience.	



Strategic Direction: A thriving and prosperous shire

Goals	Our Strategy		How we measure progress
Goal 3: Healthy natural environment and climate-resilient future Care for our natural landscapes in ways that protect their beauty, biodiversity, cultural heritage and amenity, while enabling recreation, tourism and local livelihoods, reducing emissions, and building resilience to a changing climate.		We will:	
	3.1	Embed climate adaptation and resilience in land use planning and infrastructure delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council carbon footprint CO₂ Participation in sustainability programs
	3.2	Support local efforts to reduce emissions and transition to cleaner energy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in Clean Up Australia events
	3.3	Partner to manage, improve and care for waterways, forests, and, biodiversity, natural and cultural heritage across public and private land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress on implementing the Climate Action Plan Progress on implementing the Waste Management Strategy
	3.4	Encourage nature-based recreation, tourism and learning that supports landscape protection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of Integrated Forestry and Carbon Sequestration project
	3.5	Support the community's transition to a circular economy by delivering mandated kerbside bin reforms, promoting zero-waste living, and achieving State Government targets for landfill diversion and resource recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of trees planted Reduction in landfill tonnes per capita and kerbside collection contamination rate
	3.6	Partner with other agencies to help manage the impacts of drought by supporting water security, land management and farming resilience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active participation in the Taungurung Local Government Forum
	3.7	Work with Traditional Owners to recognise cultural landscapes and care for Country.	



Relevant Plans Strategic Documents		
Goal 1 Murrindindi Planning Scheme Urban Design Framework and Neighbourhood Character Guidelines Townships Structure Plans and Development Plans Housing and Settlement Strategy Kinglake Memorial Reserve Master Plan Infrastructure Development Contribution Scheme	Goal 2 Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan Great Victorian Rail Trail Strategic Development Plan Key Worker Housing Strategy Shaping Murrindindi's Future Regional Context Analysis Report Tourism and Events Strategy Activating Lake Eildon Master Plan Goulburn Murray Local Jobs Plan Business Concierge Kit	Goal 3 Environment Policy Climate Change Policy Climate Change Action Plan: Towards 2035 Roadside Weed and Pest Animal Plan Rural Roadside Management Plan Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy Domestic Wastewater Management Plan



Healthy, inclusive and resilient communities

What you said:

“

Young people, older people, new people – everyone needs a way to feel like they belong”

“Diversity should be celebrated and supported through real opportunities for everyone to take part.”

“

Sport clubs bring people together across all ages, fostering connections, encouraging active lifestyles, and creating family-friendly environments. To continue thriving, they need better facilities and more support from volunteers to keep building strong, inclusive communities.”

“We need more local food growing, healthy eating programs, and ways to stay active without having to pay for a gym.”

“

Stronger infrastructure and improved local warning systems will help us stay resilient as floods and power cuts become more frequent.”

“Sport gets most of the attention – but arts and culture deserve the same level of support.”

“

These aren't just hobbies – they're about connection, wellbeing and keeping young people engaged.”



Strategic Direction: Healthy, inclusive and resilient communities

Goals	Our Strategy		How we measure progress
Goal 4: Health, wellbeing and active living Promote physical and mental wellbeing through great public spaces, recreation, healthy food, and a strong local culture of volunteering and care.		We will:	
	4.1	Support access to local health and wellbeing services through partnerships and advocacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitation at aquatic facilities
	4.2	Promote healthy lifestyles through sport, recreation, active transport and open space planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health promotion initiatives delivered with partners
	4.3	Partner with local sports clubs and community organisations to harness their volunteer strengths, knowledge and commitment, empowering them to maintain and improve facilities, lead initiatives and access funding beyond Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Progress towards the Murrindindi Health, Disability and Aged Care Service Design project outcomes
	4.4	Support community-led place-making, by enabling residents and local groups to enhance open spaces, streetscapes and civic pride through small-scale beautification and activation projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of volunteers, community groups or clubs supported through Council programs, funding or facilities
	4.5	Provide practical support to community volunteers, clubs and organisations to deliver local services, programs and wellbeing outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Awards and Volunteer Appreciation events• Number of Council-supported arts and cultural events and projects delivered



Goals	Our Strategy		How we measure progress
Goal 4: Health, wellbeing and active living Promote physical and mental wellbeing through great public spaces, recreation, healthy food, and a strong local culture of volunteering and care.		We will:	
	4.6	Recognise and strengthen the vital role of volunteers in community life by coordinating support, celebrating contributions and creating conditions where volunteering can thrive across generations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitation at aquatic facilities• Health promotion initiatives delivered with partners
	4.7	Deliver early years programs including Maternal Child Health, Parent Early Education Partnership (PEEP) and facilitated Playgroups and PEEP to enable best start for young families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Progress towards the Murrindindi Health, Disability and Aged Care Service Design project outcomes
	4.8	Increase participation in arts, music and cultural activities by supporting local talent, and seeking opportunities to plan and attract external funding for creative programs and community spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of volunteers, community groups or clubs supported through Council programs, funding or facilities• Community Awards and Volunteer Appreciation events• Number of Council-supported arts and cultural events and projects delivered



Strategic Direction: Healthy, inclusive and resilient communities

Goals	Our Strategy		How we measure progress
Goal 5: Community resilience and disaster preparedness Support community and business to prepare for, withstand and recover from adversity such as drought, pandemic, fire and flood.		We will:	
	5.1	Collaborate with emergency services, agencies, Traditional Owners and communities to build shared preparedness and local resilience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of MEMPC (Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee) meetings convened and progress achievedProgress on recovery programs from recent emergenciesInclusion of resilience and risk in Council asset and infrastructure planningAccess to emergency relief centres that meet community needs
	5.2	Seek to improve disaster resilience and recovery by advocating for better and stronger critical infrastructure, services and funding in partnership with other levels of government.	
	5.3	Work with community partners and service providers to strengthen telecommunications and infrastructure resilience to disaster and climate risks.	
	5.4	Support local relief and advocate for the needs of our community during and following emergencies.	
	5.5	Strengthen Council planning and asset management by embedding resilience, heritage and climate risk considerations into all key plans, assets and land use decisions.	
	5.6	Promote awareness and education on emergency preparedness across households, businesses and community groups.	



Goals	Our Strategy		How we measure progress
Goal 6: Social connection and inclusion Foster a welcoming and inclusive community where everyone feels safe, respected and able to participate fully, regardless of background, age, identity or ability.		We will:	
	6.1	Support accessible, inclusive community spaces, services and events that bring people together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivery of actions in Council's Fair Access in Sport PolicyNumber of Council assets and facilities audited or upgraded for disability accessNumber of Council-supported arts and cultural events and projects deliveredYouth representation in Council planning or advisory processesCouncil's participation in the Taungurung Local Government ForumParticipation in inclusive International and National Days/Weeks as per the annual calendar
	6.2	Seek to improve disaster resilience and Promote creative expression, arts and cultural events that reflect local identity, connect people and celebrate diversity.	
	6.3	Engage with young people to shape local decisions and support youth leadership.	
	6.4	Promote reconciliation, cultural recognition and partnerships with Traditional Owners.	
	6.5	Celebrate diversity through civic events, programs and communications that reflect our whole community.	
	6.6	Champion access and inclusion through planning, infrastructure, service design and regulation.	
	6.7	Empower communities to deliver their Community Plans and achieve agreed priority outcomes.	



Relevant Plans Strategic Documents

Goal 4

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
Recreation and Open Space Strategy
Arts and Culture Policy
Community Plans
Various local Community Plans
Fair Access in Sport Policy
Domestic Animal Management Plan

Goal 5

Flood Recovery Plan
Municipal Emergency Management Plan
Municipal Fire Management Plan
Various local LEAPING into Resilience Plans

Goal 6

Gender Equality Action Plan
Reconciliation Action Plan
Arts and Culture Policy
Community Engagement Policy
Library Strategy and Action Plan



Trusted Leadership and Sustainable Services

What you said:

“

We want to be part of the conversation, not just hear about the decision after it's made.”

“Fix the roads properly – not just patch-ups. Do it once, do it well.”

“

Some services are great; others are hard to access – it shouldn't depend on where you live or who you know.”

“Not everyone's online, and not everyone likes going to meetings. We need different ways to stay involved. When there are options, it's easier for everyone to join in and have their say.”

“There's lots of duplication – maybe some services could be shared or simplified if that means better quality and sustainability overall.”

“

Just keep us in the loop - let us know what's happening, what's changing, and why. Don't assume we already understand or agree. Clear communication helps us feel included and builds trust.”

“Working with Council should be simple and helpful. Information should be clear, forms easy to fill out, and staff friendly and respectful.”

“Council has to make decisions based on the bigger picture, considering all the information and needs across the community. While it's not possible to keep everything, being upfront about what's most important and explaining why changes are needed helps everyone understand the reasoning and trust the process.”



Strategic Direction: Trusted Leadership and Sustainable Services

Goals	Our Strategy		How we measure progress
Goal 7: Sustainable infrastructure and financial management Make responsible, evidence-based decisions about infrastructure and finances – balancing current and future needs and having honest conversations with the community about the tough choices needed to stay sustainable.		We will:	
	7.1	Make responsible, evidence-based decisions about infrastructure and finances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in the asset renewal gap
	7.2	Maintain and renew assets in a way that balances current needs with long-term sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VAGO financial sustainability indicators within the low-risk range
	7.3	Retire or repurpose underutilised assets and explore opportunities to consolidate facilities where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of underutilised or ageing assets rationalised or repurposed
	7.4	Collaborate with the community on tough choices about services and infrastructure priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital works completion in line with the budget and set timelines
	7.5	Advocate to state and federal governments for fairer funding models that reflect the challenges faced by rural councils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of long-term asset and financial plans in line with legislation
	7.6	Seek sustainable funding through partnerships, grants and external investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of external funding allocated to assets identified as high risk of failure
	7.7	Strengthen Council's approach to asset planning, risk management and long-term financial strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with the Road Management Plan service levels
	7.8	Explore and pursue new revenue streams through appropriate commercial opportunities to help reduce the financial burden on ratepayers and support long-term sustainability.	



Goals	Our Strategy		How we measure progress
Goal 8: Efficient and responsive services Deliver accessible, reliable and efficient services that respond to community needs and are continually improved through feedback and innovation.		We will:	
	8.1	Deliver valued services that are accessible, cost-effective and responsive to community expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community satisfaction with Council services
	8.2	Use community feedback and performance data to improve service delivery and responsiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit cost of core services – on par or below sector benchmarking
	8.3	Embrace technology and process improvements to streamline interactions with our citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens request response timelines as per our charter
	8.4	Ensure services are aligned with Council's strategic priorities, legislative obligations and available resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and value of service improvements or efficiencies implemented
	8.5	Apply equity and transparency when allocating service levels across the shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uptake of digital service options and self-service tools
	8.6	Benchmark our performance and costs to drive continuous improvement, increase productivity, and deliver savings through smarter systems, automation and service redesign.	
	8.7	Foster a safe, inclusive and high-performing workforce by promoting staff wellbeing, advancing gender equity, and strengthening internal capability and leadership.	



Strategic Direction: Trusted Leadership and Sustainable Services

Goals	Our Strategy		How we measure progress
Goal 9: Transparent governance and authentic engagement Build trust through clear communication, inclusive engagement, strong advocacy and fair, consistent decision-making.		We will:	
	9.1	Communicate clearly and openly about decisions, services and priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community satisfaction with Council decisions and engagement
	9.2	Support local communication channels, such as community newsletters, to help spread timely, relevant information across the shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance compliance and integrity performance
	9.3	Strengthen democratic participation and understanding of Council's role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community satisfaction with Council Communication
	9.4	Progress our advocacy priorities with our community - delivering strong, evidence-based campaigns and reporting back on outcomes to ensure transparency and alignment with community expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number, breadth and participation rate of community engagement activities
	9.5	Ensure Councillors and staff model integrity, fairness and responsiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of advocacy initiatives undertaken and outcomes achieved
	9.6	Continuously improve our approach to governance, compliance and reporting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Freedom of Information Requests processed
	9.7	Proactively engage and consult with groups who are less likely to engage with decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adherence to the Customer Service Charter
	9.8	Provide timely responses and 'close the loop' on feedback to resident requests.	



Relevant Plans Strategic Documents		
Goal 7 Asset Plan Infrastructure Design Manual Long-Term Financial Plan and Annual Budgets Revenue and Rates Plan Road Management Plan Workforce Management Strategy Efficiency Reviews	Goal 8 Customer Service Charter Annual Council Plan Priority Action Plan Service Plans Service Review and Improvement Program	Goal 9 Community Engagement Policy Communications Policy Public Transparency Policy Governance Rules Freedom of Information (FOI) Framework Gender Equality Action Plan

Our economy is valued at \$1.8 billion annually, with major contributions from construction, agriculture, and our dynamic visitor economy.

9. Understanding Our Context

Overview

Murrindindi Shire is located on the traditional lands of the Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woiwurrung peoples, who have cared for this Country for thousands of years. Their deep and continuing connection to the land, waterways, stories and community is a vital part of our Shire's identity. Today, Murrindindi is a place of rich natural beauty, resilient communities and emerging opportunity. Just 90 minutes northeast of Melbourne, the Shire spans 3,879 square kilometres and includes townships like Alexandra, Yea, Eildon, Kinglake and Marysville, alongside 42 localities – each with its own strengths, stories and sense of place. This rich and enduring cultural and geographic heritage continues to shape who we are and where we're headed.

Our Shire is known for its forested hills, national parks, rivers and trails, and for attractions like the Great Victorian Rail Trail, Lake Eildon, and access to Victoria's snowfields. These natural assets not only shapes our identity – they support livelihoods, tourism, agriculture, and construction. They also carry risk and responsibility, especially as we face more frequent climate-related emergencies.

Home to over 15,000 residents, our population is growing steadily, with notable increases in both working-age adults and

residents aged 65 and over. This demographic shift affects housing demand, workforce supply, infrastructure needs and health service delivery. Growth, if well-managed, is an opportunity to renew, rebalance and reinvest.

Our economy is valued at \$1.8 billion annually, with major contributions from construction, agriculture, and our dynamic visitor economy. Around 1.2 million visitors come each year to enjoy nature-based experiences, snowfield access and community events. There is scope to grow local employment and lift visitor spending while maintaining the values residents hold dear.

Our residents appreciate the simple things: clean air, space to move, friendly towns, and being part of a connected community. At the same time, we face challenges shared by many rural areas: limited public transport, service gaps, digital black spots, and financial pressures on Council. These realities make it more important than ever that we plan carefully, make the most of our resources, and advocate with one voice.

This Council Plan reflects those local truths. It builds on what's strong, responds to what's needed, and sets a path to ensure Murrindindi Shire remains a place people are proud to call home.

Challenges and Opportunities

As part of developing this Council Plan, we considered the opportunities, strengths and challenges across Murrindindi Shire, drawing on the insights of our community and Council's own analysis. A high-level SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) assessment informed our planning and helped ensure the strategies in this Plan are both grounded in our lived experience, responsive to current conditions, and preparing for the future.

The analysis confirmed what makes Murrindindi Shire special: our natural assets, strong local identity, and civic pride. It also highlighted the complexity of delivering services across a large rural shire with a small and dispersed population.

Most importantly, it reaffirmed our shared priorities: preparing for growth, investing in climate and disaster resilience, building a strong local economy, and supporting connected and inclusive communities.

Rather than repeating that full analysis here, we've focused on responding to it, through the goals, strategies and actions outlined in this Plan. Together, they provide a practical pathway to deliver what matters most to our community over the next four years.

This Council Plan reflects those local truths. It builds on what's strong, responds to what's needed, and sets a path to ensure Murrindindi Shire remains a place people are proud to call home.

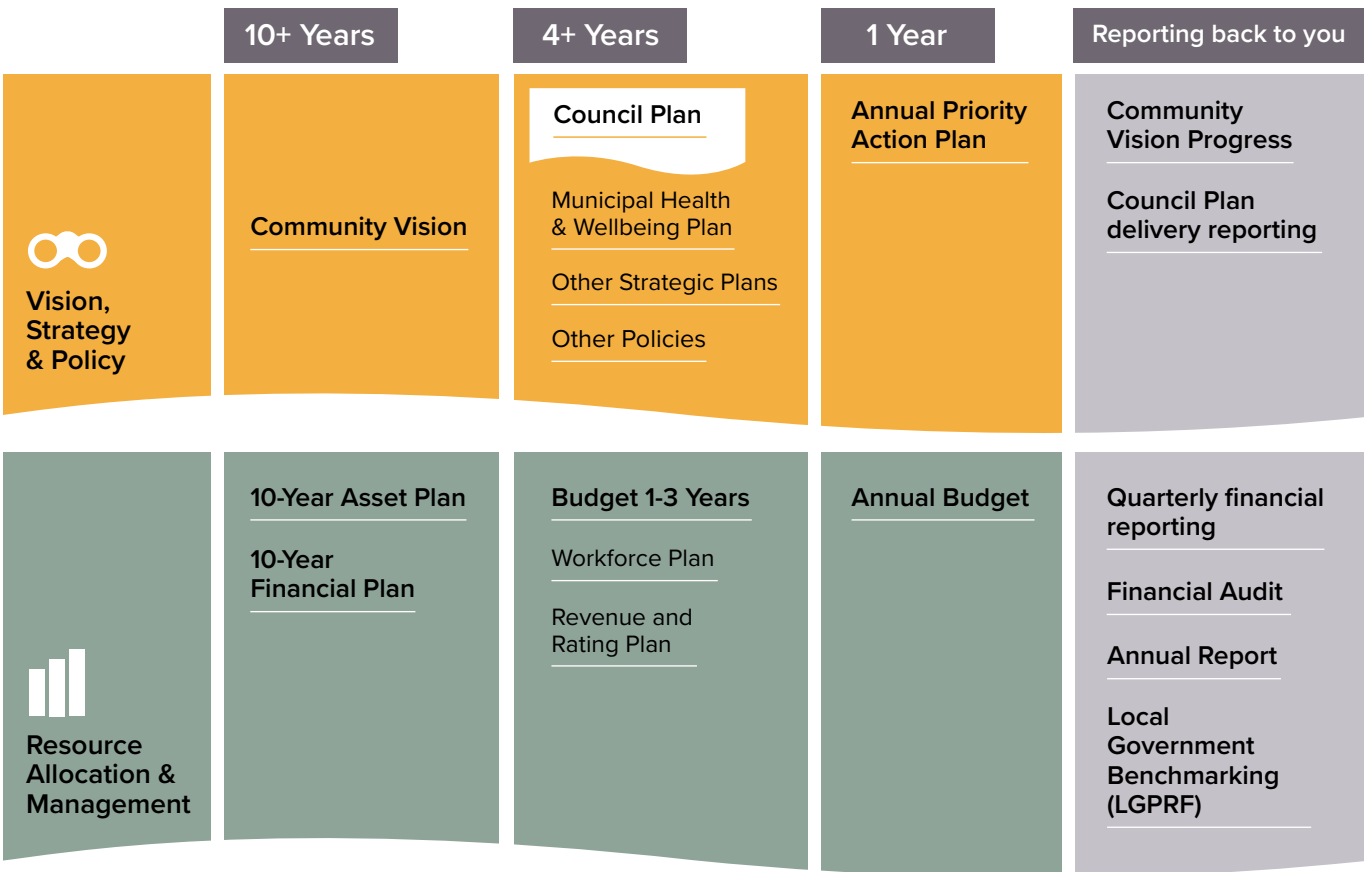
10. Keeping you in the Loop

We will provide annual updates about our progress measures to keep our community informed on how about how we are tracking towards the goals in this Council Plan.

Each year, the Mayor will present a Council Plan Progress Report as part of our Annual Report, outlining our achievements, challenges, and progress towards the Strategic Directions and success measures.

We'll also publish the Key Performance Indicators and report on the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF), both in the Annual Report and online through the *Know Your Council* website.

Integrated Planning Framework



Integrated Planning – Connecting the Dots

Our planning and reporting processes are guided by the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, which ensures that everything we do links back to the Community Vision and that Council remains focused on what matters most to our community.

Here's how the pieces fit together:

- **Community Vision:** a long-term aspiration created by the community that describes what we want Murrindindi Shire to be like in 2035 – not where we are today, but the future we're working toward. It reflects our shared hopes, values and priorities, and provides long-term direction for Council and the community.
- **Council Plan:** sets out the Strategic Directions and Goals Council will focus on over the next four years, in order to move us closer to the Community Vision.
- **Annual Priority Action Plan:** a separate document developed each year. It lists the specific actions Council will take to implement the strategies in this Plan.
- **Annual Budget:** allocates funding to support these actions, while remaining financially sustainable and responsive to community needs.
- **Annual Report:** details our performance across the year in delivering the Council Plan, Annual Priority Action Plan and the Annual Budget.

These are supported by:

- A 10-Year Financial Plan
- A 10-Year Asset Plan
- A Revenue and Rating Plan
- A Workforce Plan

Together, these Plans provide a clear line of sight – from community aspirations to daily action. They ensure that Council's decisions, priorities and resources are coordinated and purposeful, and that progress is measured and reported transparently.

Understanding key terms

Throughout this Council Plan, we've used consistent terminology to help clarify how each part fits together:

- **Strategic Direction** – a broad theme that brings together community priorities and Council responsibilities to guide investment, service delivery and policy focus.
- **Goal** – a clear objective that describes what we want to achieve within each Strategic Direction over the four-year life of the Council Plan.
- **Our Strategy** – the key approaches and strategic intentions Council will pursue over four years to help achieve each goal. These statements summarise what we aim to do and how we will approach it, guiding decisions, investments, partnerships and programs.
- **How We Measure Progress** – indicators that track progress toward each Goal and show how well we're performing over time. They provide a shared way to monitor change, guide improvement and stay accountable to our community.
- **Priority Actions** – the deliverable actions identified each year to implement the Strategies in this Plan. These are set out in a separate Annual Priority Action Plan and reported on through Council's Annual Report.

11. About Council – Our People and Purpose

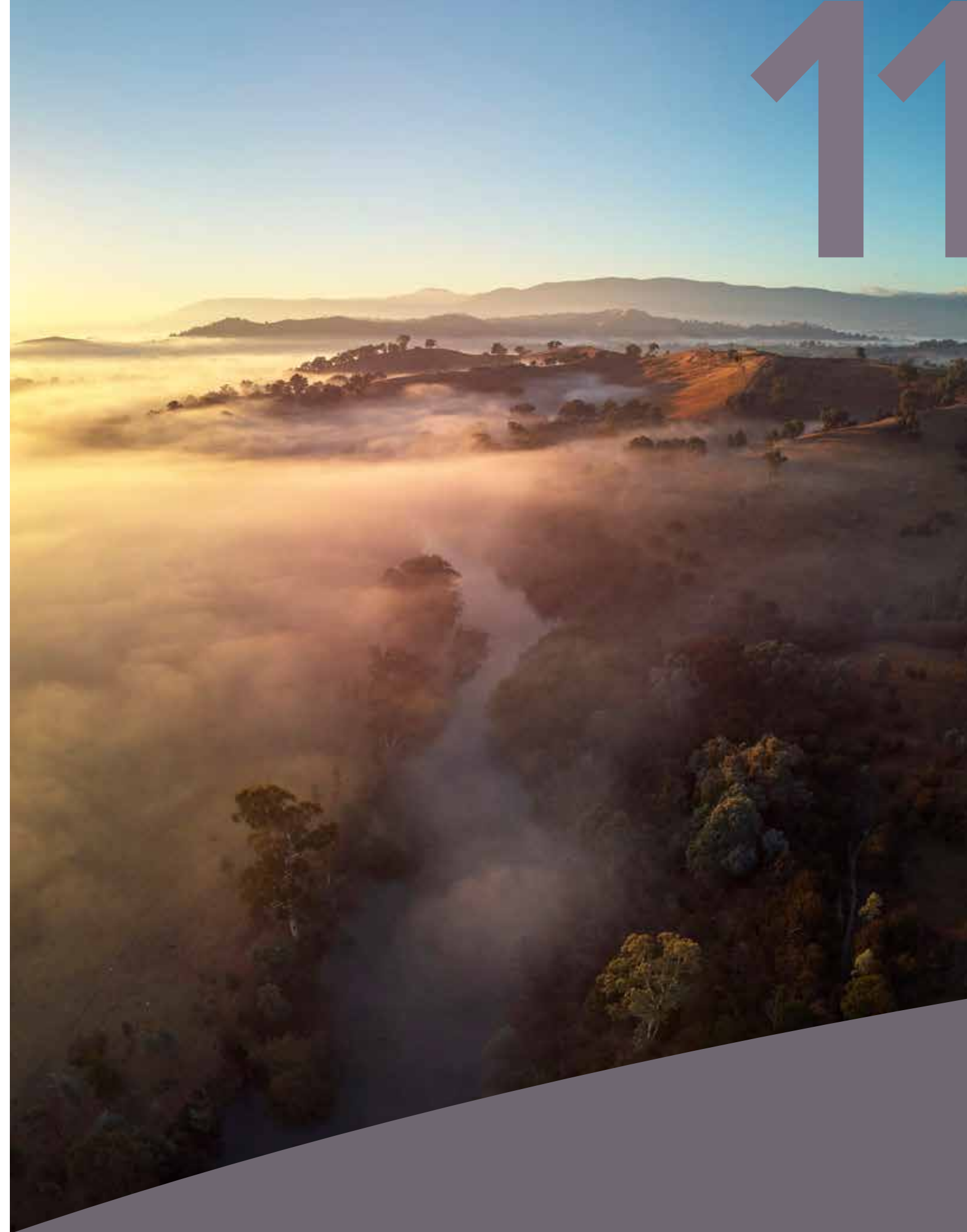
Our Organisation

At the heart of Murrindindi Shire Council is a team of dedicated professionals committed to serving our community with integrity, care, and excellence. Every staff member, whether working behind the scenes or on the front line, plays a role in delivering services that improve daily life and support our shared future.

Council is a public organisation accountable to the community we serve and guided by legislation, public sector values and high standards of transparency. Our work is grounded in a commitment to ethical and effective service delivery, underpinned by our organisational values that guide the way we work - with each other, with Councillors, and most importantly, with our community.

<https://www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Council/Who-We-Are>

At the heart of Murrindindi Shire Council is a team of dedicated professionals committed to serving our community with integrity, care, and excellence.



Our Services

Murrindindi Shire Council delivers a wide range of essential services that support the everyday needs and long-term wellbeing of our residents, ratepayers, businesses and visitors.

Our work touches all aspects of community life – from supporting families to maintaining roads, from enabling local events to protecting our natural environment.

Some of the key services we provide include:

- Road and infrastructure maintenance
- Recycling and Resource Recovery
- Emergency management
- Libraries and community learning
- Youth, aged and disability support services
- Economic development and tourism support
- Planning and building services
- Environmental sustainability initiatives
- Community development and grants
- Immunisation
- Maternal and Child Health
- Local laws and animal management

Together, these services contribute to the liveability, resilience and vibrancy of Murrindindi Shire, helping to bring our Community Vision to life, now and into the future.

<https://www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Council/What-We-Do>

Our work touches all aspects of community life – from supporting families to maintaining roads, from enabling local events to protecting our natural environment.



Murrindindi Shire Council

28 Perkins Street

Alexandra Victoria 3714

(03) 5772 0333

customer@murrindindi.vic.gov.au



murrindindi.vic.gov.au