



Greater Shepparton COVID 19 Pandemic – Community Recovery Plan

March 2021



Document Version Control		
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V1	November 2020	First draft
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TRADITIONAL OWNERS

We, Greater Shepparton City Council, acknowledge the Yorta Yorta Peoples of the land which now comprises Greater Shepparton, we pay our respect to their tribal elders, we celebrate their continuing culture and we acknowledge the memory of their ancestors.

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BACKGROUND

In January 2020 COVID-19, a respiratory disease which allegedly had its origins in Wuhan City China entered Victoria via an inbound traveller. By March 2020, via a number of sources, COVID-19 had established itself across every state and territory of the country impacting all aspects of the way in which we lived our lives.

As a Health emergency and in line with Municipal Emergency Management arrangements, working closely with State arrangements and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Greater Shepparton City Council established a Municipal Emergency Management Planning Sub Committee – COVID-19 which met from 13 March 2020 until 19 June 2020 and activated its previously approved Municipal Pandemic Plan.

Central to the activation of this plan was the establishment of a Pandemic Working Group and appointment of a Pandemic Coordinator to coordinate the activities of the working group. The working group met daily to receive and interpret information from DHHS before either directly or in partnership with local agencies, implementing actions as required. Council's Executive Team also commenced daily briefings in March which were informed by the working group and were aimed at providing a prompt response and resource to requests as they were received.

This approach is consistent with Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan in meeting its obligations under Section 20 (1) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986 and Emergency Management Act 2013*;

- Manage arrangements for the utilisation and implementation of municipal resources in response to emergencies
- Assist the affected community to recover following an emergency

By the end of March and with the pandemic now a worldwide emergency, Council had in place well established protocols for receiving and acting on Pandemic directions from State and Federal governments who had by now declared a State of Emergency and then in Victoria a subsequent State of Disaster.

These arrangements enabled Council to engage effectively with both government and importantly local health services, social support agencies, business, industry and education to localise the response to this pandemic. Just as important, the Greater Shepparton Community was involved in every aspect of the response to COVID-19 and continues to both contribute and benefit from these collective efforts.

Greater Shepparton experienced two separate positive COVID-19 outbreaks which, as a community needed to respond. In both instances, the source of the virus was from travel to and from metropolitan Melbourne. For both, the response by lead agency DHHS and Goulburn Valley Health (GV Health) was swift and effective. Supported by Council, other agencies, community groups and residents, each outbreak was contained and subsequently eliminated the virus from the municipality. As at the end of February 2021, Greater Shepparton had 53 positive COVID-19 cases attributed to the municipality and unfortunately one death from the virus.

From a health response perspective, the lessons learned to this time are all important as we await the development, approval, production, distribution and implementation of a COVID-19 vaccine program. Until the vaccine has taken effect in the community, future success in relation to identifying and containing outbreaks will continue to rely on a community wide approach and while Goulburn Valley Health and Council may play lead roles, without the commitment of everyone in our community, the risk and consequences of an outbreak remains high.

The impact on the Greater Shepparton community from a social and economic perspective has been significant. Food security, housing affordability, unemployment have been significant issues for residents while the impact on local retail, tourism and hospitality sectors have been most impacted from an economic perspective. These areas have been a keen focus for Council and agencies through the response and relief phases of this Pandemic and will be the focus of our Recovery.

While the development of this Recovery Plan is an important step in re-establishing Greater Shepparton on a COVID-19 normal setting, Council acknowledges that without a vaccine, the threat of the virus remains. There remains a risk that outbreaks will require adjustments to the level of restrictions. Council and the Greater Shepparton community remains ready to respond should that scenario present itself.

PURPOSE OF THE GREATER SHEPPARTON COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN

Planning for recovery has been underway since the Pandemic started as is good practice in emergency management. Now at a point where the emergency response phase of the Pandemic is easing and relief needs are also reducing, the importance of recovery now takes on increasing importance.

Council invited a wide range of agencies, representative of many community groups across the greater municipality to become part of the Municipal Recovery Committee and subsequent working groups. The representation is important to ensure that all views are considered as part of the development of the plan.

The broad objectives of the Greater Shepparton COVID-19 Recovery Plan are based on the principles of disaster recovery;

1. Social Recovery - where support is provided to those who have been disadvantaged by the pandemic in ways such as employment, safe and secure accommodation, food security and wellbeing.
2. Economic Recovery - where support is provided not only to those businesses who have been adversely affected by restrictions but also to those who have identified new growth opportunities in a new economy.
3. Environmental Recovery - where the opportunity to take advantage of many of the benefits observed during COVID-19 by retaining behaviours that can assist in addressing the declared climate emergency locally.
4. Built/Infrastructure Recovery - where Greater Shepparton looks to take advantage of economic stimulus funding provided by government as part of restarting the economy.

The main objective of this Recovery Plan is to re-establish Greater Shepparton, its residents, businesses and communities in what will undoubtedly be a new normal for many, one that is redefined by the legacies of COVID-19.

GREATER SHEPPARTON RESPONSE

Like any emergency, a Pandemic has an immediate and disruptive impact on the way in which a community functions.

Unlike other emergencies however, the COVID-19 Pandemic has proven itself to be unique and one that Greater Shepparton has not experienced in recent times. Its longevity and wide spread impact has caused a local, regional, state, national and international response that has in many ways shut down many of the social and economic activities that we take for granted.

The combined response to the COVID-19 Pandemic has been well considered with Public Health naturally given the highest priority. Based on direction given from the Federal and in particular the Victorian Governments, the local response can be summarised as follows;

- Council's Emergency Management Coordination Group established a Pandemic Working Group to coordinate a municipal response.
- Appointment of a Pandemic Coordinator.
- Greater Shepparton's Pandemic Plan is activated as is the Pandemic plan of GV Health.
- Working closely with the Victorian Government on State directions, information was received, considered and acted upon by Council in close partnership with a wide range of health and community stakeholders.
- Implementation and communication of those directions. Posters in public places, social media posts and direct communication with key agencies and stakeholders.
- Enabling activities with the community to assist where necessary. Again, most of this work was focussed on transitioning from business as usual to a COVID-19 restriction setting. For example, receipt and distribution of face masks and contactless thermometers.
- Council established itself as the local support contact for State Government and plays an important role in implementing and in some cases distributing support to community groups and individuals.
- Established a regular contact program with over 40 social agencies to monitor and respond to needs as they were identified.
- Responsibility for the local implementation of the State Governments Community Activation and Social Isolation initiative (CASI).

Case Response

There was no greater measure of preparedness than when Greater Shepparton was challenged with two separate COVID-19 cluster outbreaks. The response, immediate and effective with a positive outcome. Through the work of DHHS and Goulburn Valley Health's testing and tracing team, positive cases were quickly traced, tracked and suppressed with no significant spread. In broad terms, this is how this was achieved;

- Notification and direction from DHHS and Goulburn Valley Health.
- Scaling up of Goulburn Valley Health's testing and tracing team capability which focussed on positive cases as they presented.
- Council supported logistical support in establishing multiple testing stations for large scale public testing.
- Broad communication and promotion of the need for testing and isolation following.
- Establishment of Motel quarantine to support management of positive cases and close contacts. Support for this initiative extended to include provision of food under CASI.
- Cleaning and sanitising of the city fixtures and fittings.
- Support Goulburn Valley Health with support with Pathology transport and identifying deep clean contractors for specific sites.
- Pop up communication hubs/van to target public health messaging to key communities at risk of missing broader public messaging.



Social Response

Lockdown restrictions created a fundamental shift in the way families and the community more broadly functioned. The large scale pause in employment in a number of key sectors in the economy saw household incomes reduce. Schools pivoted to remote learning and many workforces also moved staff to a working from home setting. The support services that underpin many families were forced to significantly change their service delivery model and in some instances this placed strain on the service and challenges for clients who needed to access these services.

The response from Council and agencies across the municipality included:

- Distribution of public health information provided by the Victorian Government to a wide range of settings including business centres, local parks, and sporting fields.
- Translated materials for Greater Shepparton's multi-cultural community in partnership with the Ethnic Council of Shepparton.
- Youth focussed health message communications in partnership with Goulburn Valley Health and Word and Mouth.
- Support in establishing CovidSafe plans for agencies.
- Further distribution of masks to agencies and vulnerable community groups.
- Creation of the 'Check and Connect' initiative by Primary Care Connect to support isolated and vulnerable members of the community.
- Increased support including deployment of volunteers to agencies such as Food Share.
- Formation of the 'Greater Shepparton Response' bringing together partners to assist in information sharing aimed at connecting those disadvantaged by the Pandemic with those able to help.
- Formation of 'Food Link' by Greater Shepparton Foundation to support both families and local businesses.
- Establishment of a hotel quarantine setting to support positive case and close contact accommodation. Support for this initiative and home quarantine through the CASI program was implemented and remains in place.
- Online health and wellbeing activities and support



Food Link
delivered 9100
meals between
April and
December 2020

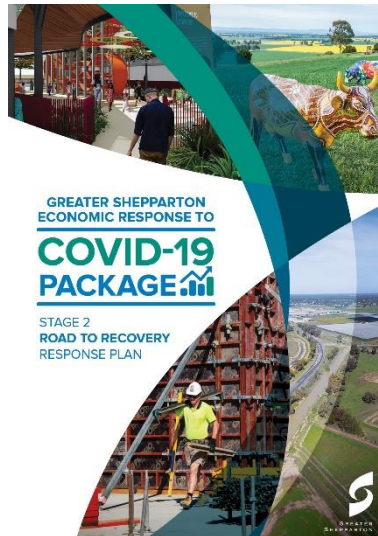
Funds Raised
\$100,000

- Distribution of care packs to residents of aged care facilities and in home.
- The community responded to isolation by taking to local shared paths which was a highlight and something worth retaining into the future.

Economic Response

The lockdowns commencing in March and again in July had a significant impact on the local economy. While a number of sectors including agriculture and major industry were impacted to a lesser extent and construction was stimulated by the home builder initiative, normal trading for a wide range of service and retail categories was significantly impacted and placed great demands on businesses to devise alternative means by which to trade.

Many responded positively while others relied on significant State and Federal Government support such as Jobseeker and JobKeeper as well as other grant initiatives such as quick response grants and payroll tax relief were all aimed at direct cash injections or fee waiving to enable businesses to ‘hibernate’ through this difficult time.



Council’s local response sought to compliment these supports with its own initiatives;

- Council’s first Economic Response Package – Stage 1, was introduced on 31 March 2020 to provide immediate relief, initiating a suite of 21 targeted measures valued at \$1.5 million. The Package offered direct funding relief through quick response grants to provide support to strengthen on-going resilience and capacity within the community.
- The Stage 2 Economic Response Package was introduced in June 2020 with a \$2m provision focused on business and economy, our community, our visitor economy and events. It included continuing advocacy to State and Federal governments to fund major initiatives designed to stimulate our economy and speed up the recovery process.
- The Victorian Government’s \$500K economic support package to Council for use supporting hospitality businesses.
- Support to businesses in the development of CovidSafe plans and distribution of contactless thermometers.
- Greater Shepparton was successful in obtaining funding from the State Government under the Working for Victoria initiative which provided employment for those impacted by COVID-19 and looking for work. Jobs were diverse with many outdoor positions available.

Victoria initiative which provided employment for those impacted by COVID-19 and looking for work. Jobs were diverse with many outdoor positions available.

Environmental Response

One of the positives to come from the period of COVID-19 restrictions has been the impact on the environment.

While there were isolated increases in rubbish dumping, this was short term and addressed by Council and land managers.

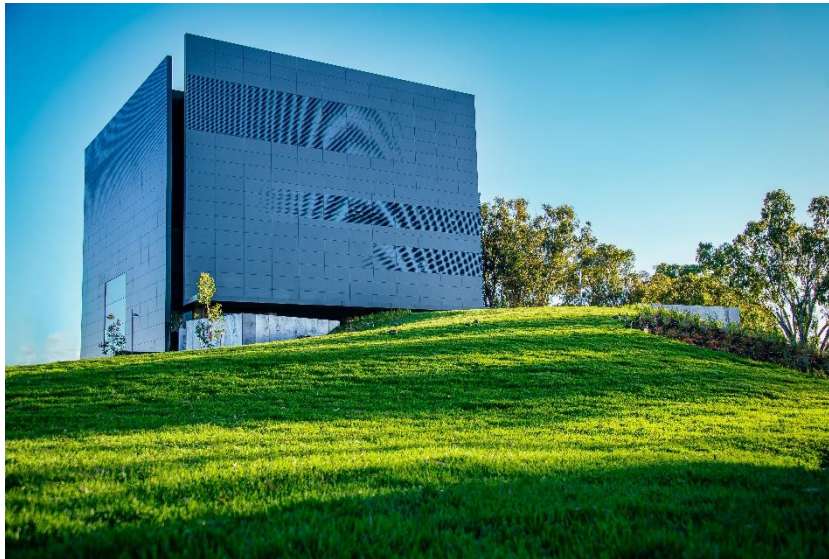
The overwhelming observation however was that as industrial and consumption based activity across the region and indeed across the world slowed, the environment came to life. Waterways became healthier, air born pollution cleared and importantly emissions reduced.

With a declared climate emergency, this insight was exciting for what a lower emissions future could in part deliver for our future. On a more fundamental level, active transport and a reduction in vehicle use for commute to work as well as a reconnection with home grown produce will all be significant in creating a sustainable future for our region.



Built Response

Unlike many other types of emergency such as fire and flood, the COVID-19 Pandemic has created challenges around delivery more than damage to the built environment.



Major projects across Greater Shepparton such as SAM, Greater Shepparton College and the redevelopment of Goulburn Valley Health were all able to continue albeit with some need for adjustment of workforce management and supply chains. In broad terms, delivery timeframes were not impacted by the periodic shutdown of other sections of the economy.

The forced shutdown or reduced operations of many Council facilities such as AQUAMOVES, Playgrounds, Libraries, Sports Stadium and Sports Fields as well as services such as Riverlinks, Saleyards etc has allowed for maintenance, renewal and major upgrade of equipment, fixtures and fittings that may otherwise have been unable to occur.

More broadly, businesses invested where possible to support pivoting of service delivery and in other instances, investment was bought forward to

take advantage of the shutdown. These were amongst some of the success stories of COVID19.

As we move into recovery, there is strong indication that Government will use large scale infrastructure investment to kick start the economy. Council remains well positioned to take up some of these opportunities should they present.

IMPACT ON GREATER SHEPPARTON



There are a number of impacts of COVID-19 and ongoing restrictions that are of concern. These are particularly evident in the Social and Economic areas as listed below. At this early stage it is difficult to quantify many of these impacts as data is often difficult to gather and in some instances not something typically recorded in ways that can be compared.

While many impacts were seen as negative, this was not the case in all instances. Many adapted quickly and benefitted by the difficult environment through innovation. Similarly, there are now opportunities that can be taken up through our recovery which can benefit our region in the future.

Social

The impact of COVID-19 on individuals, families and the broader community has varied greatly. Major determinants of the impact of COVID19 on individuals and families include the pre-existing level of vulnerability prior to the pandemic's onset, the degree to which lockdown restrictions impacted employment, schooling of children etc and most importantly the support networks people had available to them. The following is a summary of these determinants;

- Community gathering limits significantly impacted the opportunity for people to get together. This impacted events of all sizes from arts to sport and of greatest impact, the ability for families to come together to celebrate special occasions such as birthdays, weddings, funerals and other milestones.
- Job security through lockdown had a major impact on an individuals and families financial position through this time. Further description on employment impacts is detailed in the economic impact section of this plan.
- Housing affordability has been impacted by the rise in people looking to relocate to the regions. This has impacted both rental and house values making it difficult for some to find safe and affordable accommodation. It is not known whether there will be a readjustment in these settings as restrictions are eased.
- Food security became an issue where grocery price increases placed pressure on household budgets. The ongoing challenge of food security for some families remains and is focus of a number of support agencies.
- Mental health and wellbeing was also challenged as people's liberties were compromised. Greater Shepparton managed better than metropolitan Melbourne with its natural assets remaining available to residents. Many took advantage of the natural environment, shared pathways and open space the municipality has to offer and managed through.
- Access to services was largely maintained albeit by different means during periods of restriction. Awareness and the ability to adapt did vary with some transport options compromised.
- Capacity of some services to cater to the growing needs of the community was also challenged. FoodShare scaled up its distribution with the help of many new volunteers while many face to face food support agencies closed for periods of time unable to adapt.

Economic

COVID-19 restrictions impacted our economy in many ways. Some sectors have prospered by nimbly adapting to the changing restrictions while others like agriculture have fortunately seen favourable weather conditions and commodity prices over this time making for a positive time.

There were and are however a number of key sectors in the local economy that were significantly impacted with government intervention assisting in some areas and not in others. The following highlights a number of the areas of concern for which future attention needs to be paid;

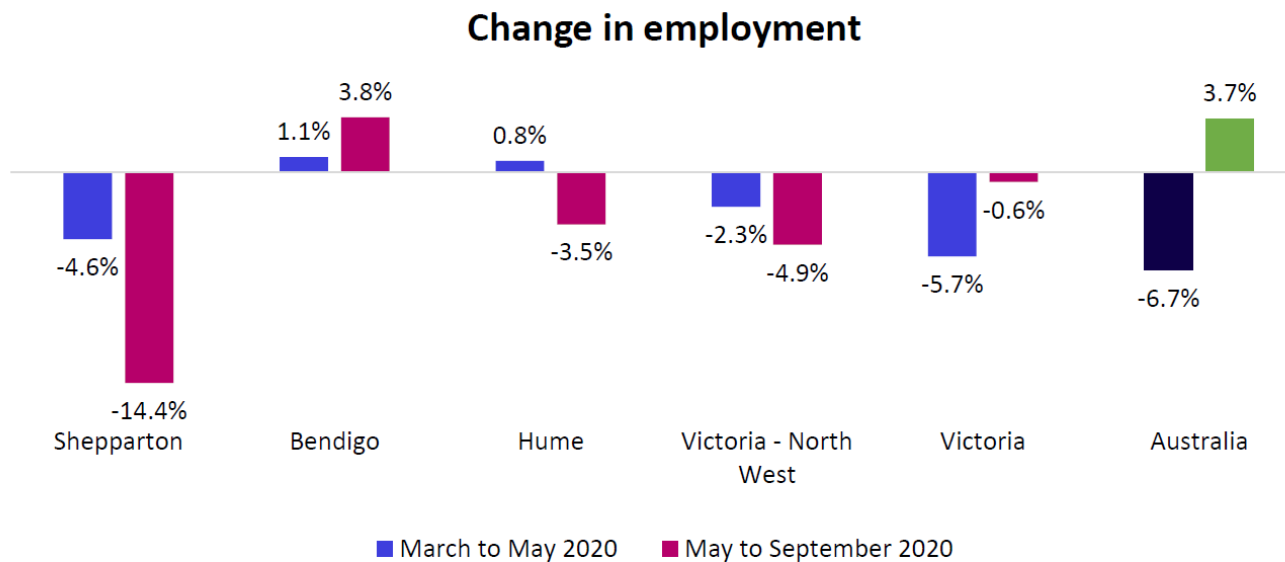
- **Employment**

One of the most significant impacts of COVID-19 witnessed since its onset in March has been on local and regional employment. Key indicators including overall employment, percentage unemployment and workforce participation have all been negatively impacted as can be seen from the graphs below; *Source: ABS, Labour Force Survey, detailed, original data, September 2020*



Employment data

Shepparton has seen large falls in employment compared with regions nearby...

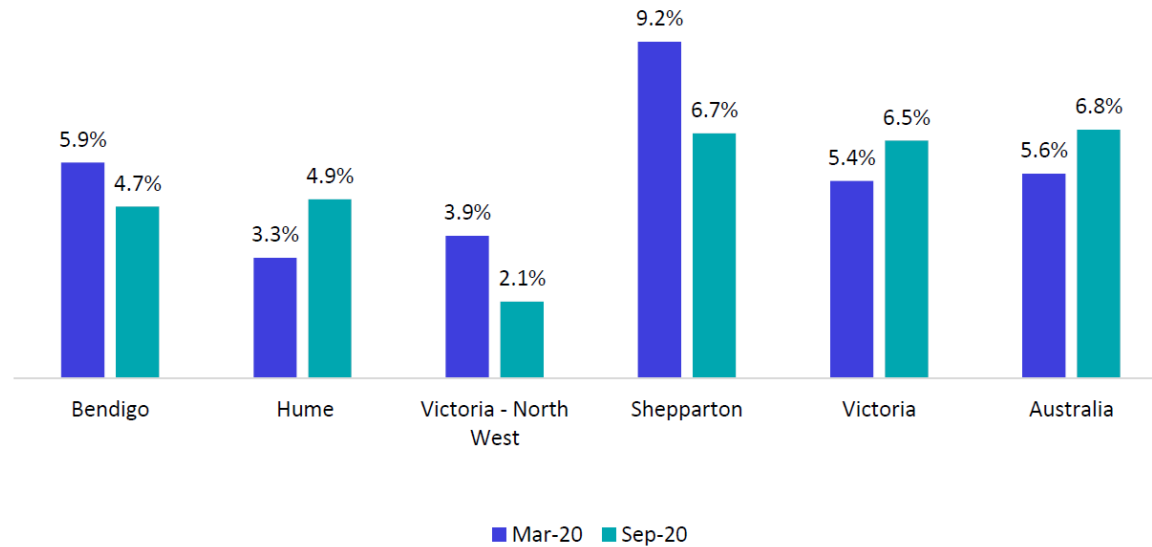


Employment fell by 12,100 in Shepparton from March 2020 to September 2020

Unemployment data

...and has the highest unemployment rate in the region...

Unemployment rate, March and September 2020



Source: ABS, Labour Force Survey, detailed, original data, September 2020

Workforce participation

...and the lowest participation rate in Victoria

Participation rate, March and September 2020



The participation rate fell by 13.5 pts in Shepparton between March 2020 and September 2020

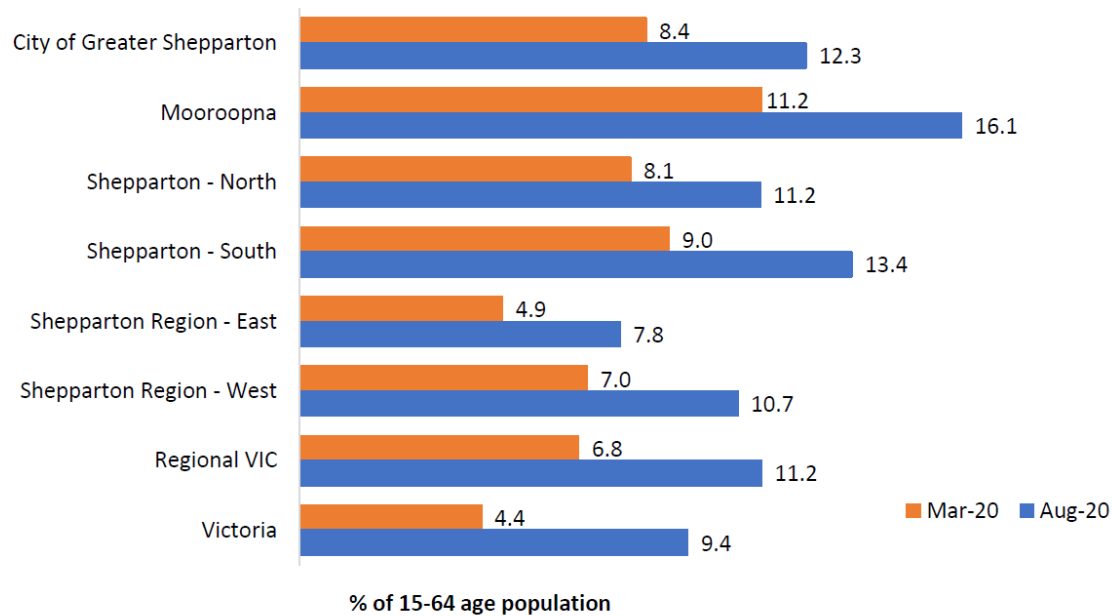
Source: ABS, Labour Force Survey, detailed, original data, September 2020

National Skills Commission, November 2020

A major contributor to these changes in employment include the impact that Covid restrictions have had on local industries notably Accommodation and food services, Retail, the Arts and Recreation. Also a consideration, is the impact of the Federal governments JobSeeker Covid supplement and waiving of mutual obligation requirements in Victoria during the second wave lockdown for those seeking employment. This is supported by the graphic below and could explain the reduction in workforce participation previously referred to.

Number of Jobseeker and Youth allowance recipients.

And there has been a substantial increase in the number of jobseeker and youth allowance recipients in the area

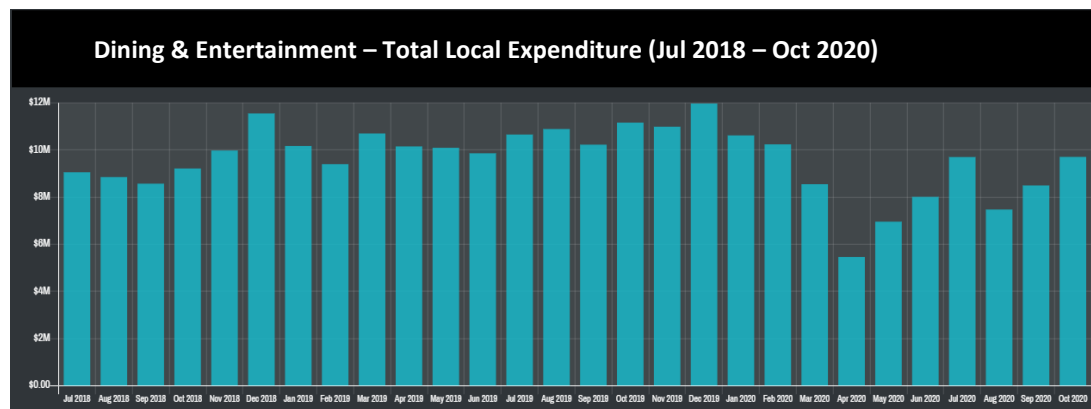
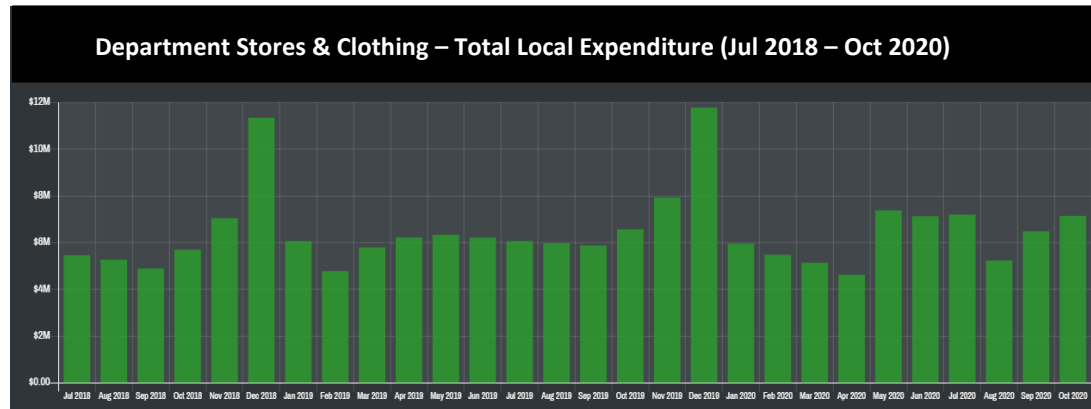


Source: Department of Social Services – Jobseeker and Youth Allowance recipients – monthly profile data via data.gov.au2020

National Skills Commission, November 2020

- **Hospitality & Retail**

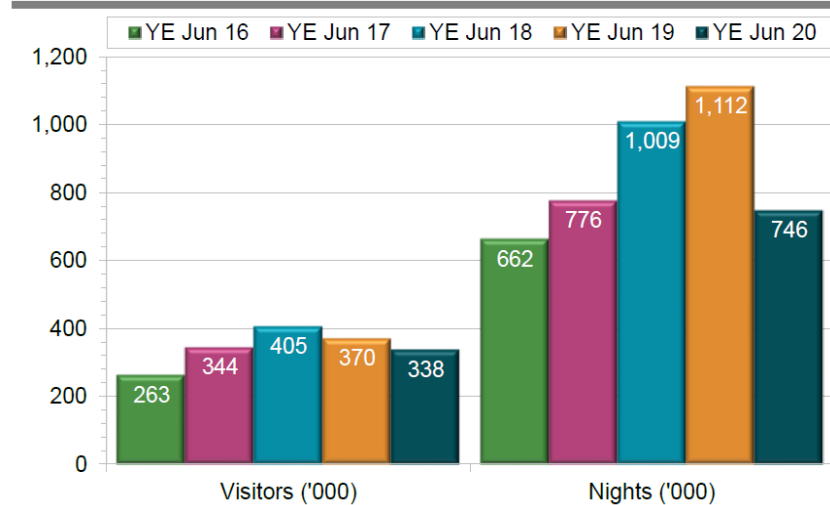
One of the sectors to experience the greatest impact as restrictions were imposed as part of stage 3 and 4 lockdown were on hospitality and retail. These two sectors rely on local trade to prosper year round and such a prolonged period where the community was limited in terms of its movement had a major impact.



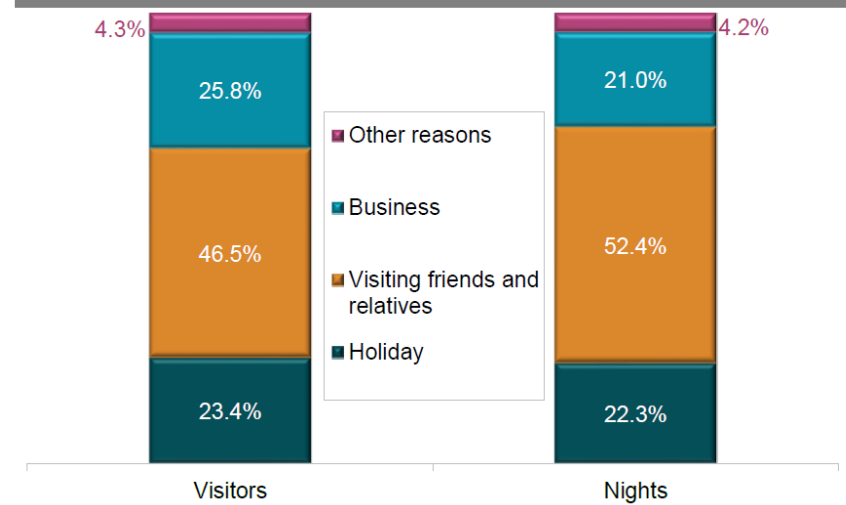
- **Tourism**

The restriction on travel across the state from Regional Victoria to metropolitan Melbourne also had a major impact on tourism including accommodation. While the family and friends visitation market was restricted, the cancellation of a large number of events also significantly reduced visitation. The downstream effect of reduced visitation further impacted retail and hospitality.

Visitors and nights



Purpose of visit to Shepparton



- **Housing**

The hard lockdown in metropolitan Melbourne combined with the Federal Governments Homebuilder program has seen a significant rise in interest and sales in both existing housing stock and pressure on land release and development for new builds. This will be a short to medium term challenge as market forces re-establish.



Median house
price in
Shepparton
increased by 24.1%
as compared to
Sep 2019.

- **Industry**

With restrictions not having as great an impact on the ability for industry to continue, many in this sector were able to operate relatively well. A number of local industries scaled up to meet growing demand while other were extended by the regions agriculture production.

- **Agriculture**

As previously mentioned, the favourable seasonal conditions have benefitted agriculture and horticulture from a food production perspective. While this positive news has extended to broad acre cropping and dairy through their ability to maintain a workforce capable of getting produce to markets through the year, the current threat to the horticulture sector and lack of seasonal workers is of great concern.

LESSONS LEARNED

The importance of learning lessons from the Pandemic to this time is best explained in the understanding that we may yet need to respond again to a positive case cluster in our region. If this were to occur, the need to balance a quick and effective response to manage the outbreak against the need to support the recovering community and economic sector will be difficult.

Greater Shepparton has highlighted the important role local government plays in an emergency response for the established close connections it has with its community. The Victorian Government and its departments notably DHHS, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions and Department of Justice have all worked closely with and relied upon the systems Greater Shepparton and its community has had in place.

Long term emergencies present many challenges not least of which frustration and fatigue, both of which are risks identified further on in this plan. From our experiences to this time though, the lessons learned are summarised below;

- Maintaining a state of readiness with internal working groups and network connections with health and community services is important.
- Preparation is key, teamwork essential, inter-agency co-operation critical. Many existing initiatives such as the Check and Connect, motel quarantine, CASI and others remain in place.
- Communication is very important especially to vulnerable persons or non-English speaking groups. The communication hubs were and remain an adaptive tools for future use on a small and large scale.
- Compliance with directions – wearing of masks prevented spread during the second outbreak
- Deployment of a workforce to meet the short term needs of the Pandemic whether that be disinfecting of public amenities, establishing testing sites or managing restrictions in public spaces.
- Focus on key areas of responsibility – for council that is to support DHHS and Goulburn Valley Health with any future health response and at the same time, focus on relief and ongoing recovery with other departments of government.



CURRENT SETTINGS and RISKS

COVID-19 has and continues to present a unique set of challenges to more conventional emergencies such as flood, fire and storm where the event passes relatively quickly and recovery can become the strong focus of energies.

As we await not only the development of a vaccine but its approval, mass production, distribution and most important expected positive effect, we must remain vigilant to the likelihood of the virus representing in our community. Despite the best efforts of all involved, positive cases remain a likely reality and containment of any new cases will be critical to avoid a repeat of lockdown experienced in the first and second waves.

The practices and procedures as provided and supported by DHHS and used by Goulburn Valley Health, Council, agencies and the community to this time have been retained with any lessons learned considered as part of continual improvement. Should an outbreak occur, the Greater Shepparton region remains ready to respond in a positive way so as to minimise any unnecessary negative impact.

In the absence of any positive cases in the region, the challenge remains to establish a CovidSafe normal setting and encourage communities and business to operate safely within these settings.

The action plan set out below not only highlights the current initiatives identified and being worked on by the respective working groups that support recovery across Greater Shepparton but also looks ahead to activities that can support longer term recovery.

Risks

1. Time taken to secure and see rollout of a Vaccine
2. Effectiveness of a vaccine over time
3. An outbreak of positive case(s) in the short to medium term
4. Ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on key areas of concern;
 - a. Mental Health
 - b. Affordable housing
 - c. Job creation
 - d. Community recovery – events, Arts, Sport etc
 - e. Economic recovery

ACTION PLAN

Social

Key Agencies

Shepparton Family and Financial Services	Foodshare	Lighthouse	Rumbalara
Ethnic Council	Uniting Care	Beyond Housing	Salvo Care
The Bridge Youth Services	Shepparton Interfaith Network	Murray PHN	Greater Shepparton Foundation
Rumbalara Elders Care	Marion House / Vincent Care	Mooroopna Life Church	Headspace
South Shepparton Community House	Tatura Community House	North Shepparton Community and Learning Centre	Murchison Neighbourhood House
Mooroopna Education and Activity Centre	Family Care	Primary Care Connect	OzChild
GV Pregnancy and Family Support	GV Worker Support During COVID	Shepparton Access	Lifestyle Communities Shepparton
Centrelink	Calvary	Shepparton Villages	Rumbalara Elders Care
Mercy Health	Intereach	University of Melbourne	Kaiela Arts

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Funding source if required.	Lead	Partnering agencies
Encourage young people to have a voice (Particularly in the areas of Employment, Economic Development,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support the Kindness Campaign ➤ Promotion of Working For Victoria (in particular Council positions) through Schools and Youth Organisations 	Current to June 2021	Some supported as part of current	Greater Shepparton City Council	Greater Shepparton City Council – Youth, The Bridge

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Funding source if required.	Lead	Partnering agencies
Transport, Education and Community Wellbeing).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work in partnership with the Economic Working Group (summer employment opportunities through job employment organisations) ➤ Continue partnerships with schools ➤ Shepparton Statement – An Environmental message from the Youth of Greater Shepparton – Climate Change Communications Officer to engage and facilitate discussions with local Youth 		<p>operating budgets.</p> <p>Community Activation and Social Isolation funding</p> <p>Working For Victoria funding</p>		<p>Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project</p> <p>Greater Shepparton City Council - Environment</p>
Increased Community Connectedness through Events and Celebrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Word and Mouth Live Series – showcasing local talent (over a 3 week period) ➤ Provide assistance to existing communities groups in their journey to back ‘business as usual’ ➤ Continue partnerships/programs with schools (including ‘engage’ and ‘Music, Sport and Art’) ➤ Support community connectedness in small towns (within the COVID-19 restrictions) and in particular, initiatives that support older people 	Current to June 2021	Some supported as part of current operating budgets.	<p>Greater Shepparton City Council</p> <p>Head Space</p>	<p>Greater Shepparton City Council – Youth</p> <p>Greater Shepparton City Council – Active Living</p> <p>Tatura Community House</p>

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Funding source if required.	Lead	Partnering agencies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investigate opportunities to support Christmas carols ➤ Support CALD communities in religious/community events ➤ Investigate further the roll out of the Victorian Government Sports Grant Program (vouchers up to \$200 available for disadvantaged young people) and any links with the existing Sporting Chance Program 		Victorian Government Sports Voucher program		<p>Mooroopna Education and Activity Centre</p> <p>Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project</p> <p>Ethnic Council</p>
Advocate for additional services, funding and access to Mental Health providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support mental health providers to tap into existing groups (e.g.: Men's Sheds) ➤ Investigate available outreach services ➤ Support the promotion of the AgBiz small business owner support program ➤ Investigate the Health & Wellbeing Lifestyle Expo to be held in 2021 		Advocacy	Primary Care Connect	<p>Greater Shepparton City Council</p> <p>Family Care</p>
Advocate for Government allowances to be sufficient to allow people to live with a level of dignity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understanding Government direction on the future of the JobKeeper program ➤ Support advocacy regarding a rise in the JobKeeper allowance 		Advocacy	FamilyCare	Goulburn Valley Primary Care Partnership

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Funding source if required.	Lead	Partnering agencies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promotion of State Government grants aimed at reducing energy costs and increasing the health and wellbeing of vulnerable residents 				Greater Shepparton City Council Greater Shepparton City Council – Community Wellbeing
Support organisations in their Christmas Hamper programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continued support for the Basket of Joy Program ➤ Offer assistance to FamilyCare for their Christmas Giving Tree Program 		Some supported as part of current operating budgets.	Greater Shepparton City Council	Greater Shepparton Foundation FamilyCare Greater Shepparton City Council

Economic

Key Agencies

GSCC (Greater Shepparton City Council)	GGSBWG (Growing Greater Shepparton Business Working Group)	SCCI (Shepparton Chamber of Commerce and Industry)	GSF (Greater Shepparton Foundation)
ED (Economic Development)	GROW (Grow Greater Shepparton)	Tourism Greater Shepparton (TGS)	GMLLEN (Goulburn Murray Local Learning & Employment Network)
CE (Communications and Engagement)	C4GS (Committee for Greater Shepparton)	ABA (Ag Biz Assist)	

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Funding source if required.	Lead	Partnering agencies
Providing support to local businesses through Marketing, Promotion and Communication	Stronger Than Ever Together campaign to support local businesses and celebrate success of working together	Ongoing	Victorian Government Outdoor dining and entertainment package	Greater Shepparton City Council - GGSBWG	Recovery working group
	Part A – businesses in need, push to support/patronize their businesses.	Ongoing	Victorian Government Outdoor dining and entertainment package	Greater Shepparton City Council - GGSBWG	Recovery working group

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Funding source if required.	Lead	Partnering agencies
	Part B – recognition of businesses who have thrived and adapted during the pandemic		Council operating budget - Communications		
	Customer retention/loyalty	Ongoing	Council operating budget.	Greater Shepparton City Council - GGSBWG	Recovery working group
	Focus/highlight on businesses and services in our regional/smaller towns – business and services reps from the small towns are being invited to be part of the group	Ongoing	Advocacy and Marketing	Greater Shepparton City Council - GGSBWG	Recovery working group
	Christmas – Promoting shopping and visitor experiences, encouraging workplaces to physically reconnect/celebrate via Christmas celebrations or alternatively purchase local gift packs and catering	Ongoing	Advocacy and Marketing	Greater Shepparton City Council - GGSBWG	Recovery working group
Direct business support through education and training	Assistance to complete Business CovidSafe Plans	Ongoing	Working for Victoria Recovery Officer Economic Development Team	Greater Shepparton City Council	Recovery working group

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Funding source if required.	Lead	Partnering agencies
	Staff training re CovidSafe practices including but not limited to; cleaning, distancing and spacing, washing hands and wearing face masks, contact tracing, checking of customer licenses, dealing with difficult/distressed customers	Ongoing	Economic Development Team	Greater Shepparton City Council	
	Coordination of mobile COVID-19 business information van/pop up	Ongoing	Community Activation and Social Isolation funding Council Marketing and Communication support	Greater Shepparton City Council	Recovery working group
	Distribution of thermometers	Ongoing	Working for Victoria Recovery Officer	Greater Shepparton City Council	Recovery working group
	Support of multicultural operated businesses	Ongoing	Working for Victoria Recovery Officer	Greater Shepparton City Council	
Enhancing Job Connection and Job Readiness for businesses	Review of employment situation in Greater Shepparton based on COVID-19 – which industries that have retrenched staff and available jobs	November launch of GTHH attraction &	Advocacy and combined working group resources	GROW C4GS	GSCC – ED & CE GSF GMLLEN GOTAFE La Trobe

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Funding source if required.	Lead	Partnering agencies
		retention project			Ethnic Council Others tbc
	Development and enhancement of job readiness strategies and opportunities	TBC	Advocacy and combined working group resources	GROW C4GS	GSCC – ED & CE GSF GMLLEN GOTAFE La Trobe Ethnic Council Others tbc
	Challenges with upcoming horticulture season and obtaining seasonal workforce	TBC	Advocacy and combined working group resources	GROW C4GS	GSCC – ED & CE GSF GMLLEN GOTAFE La Trobe Ethnic Council Others tbc
	Communication needed to get the word out about the incentives available to hire young people	TBC	Advocacy and combined working group resources	GROW C4GS	GSCC – ED & CE GSF GMLLEN GOTAFE La Trobe Ethnic Council Others tbc
	Attraction of new staff/employees to the region to fill available and technical positions	TBC	Advocacy and combined working group resources	GROW C4GS	GSCC – ED & CE GSF GMLLEN GOTAFE La Trobe Ethnic Council Others tbc
	Connect youth and others with opportunities to get into the workforce	TBC	Advocacy and combined working group resources	GROW C4GS	GSCC – ED & CE GSF GMLLEN GOTAFE La Trobe

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Funding source if required.	Lead	Partnering agencies
			Working for Victoria Program		Ethnic Council Others tbc
	Upskill of job seekers to fill available positions if needed	TBC	Advocacy and combined working group resources	GROW C4GS	GSCC – ED & CE GSF GMLLEN GOTAFE La Trobe Ethnic Council Others tbc
	Explore if there are limited gap year opportunities this year and if those returning from university for the summer holidays will have work to come home to	TBC	Advocacy and combined working group resources	GROW C4GS	GSCC – ED & CE GSF GMLLEN GOTAFE La Trobe Ethnic Council Others tbc
Providing business events	Outdoor Dining Grant	June 30 2021	GSCC via Victorian Government Outdoor Dining and Entertainment grant (\$500,000)	Greater Shepparton City Council	Greater Shepparton Outdoor Dining Working Group
	Visitor experience innovation grants round 2	Round 1 finished Round 2 November	GSCC - Total \$125,000 Round 2 \$65,000	Greater Shepparton City Council	TGS

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Funding source if required.	Lead	Partnering agencies
	Visitor economy action plan	June 2021	Advocacy and combined working group resources	Greater Shepparton City Council	TGS
	Business and Industry recovery support engagement	Nov/Dec	Advocacy and combined working group resources	Greater Shepparton City Council	RWG
	Business Expo	TBC Pending event guidelines	Advocacy and combined working group resources	Greater Shepparton City Council – GGSBG & ED	AgBiz Assist, SCCI others tbc
	Health and Wellbeing Expo	TBC pending event guidelines	Advocacy and combined working group resources	Greater Shepparton City Council – GGSBWG & ED	Working Group
	Event and Economic Stimulating Activations	TBC pending event guidelines	Advocacy and combined working group resources	Greater Shepparton City Council	Working Group
Future proofing businesses	Advocacy / Assisting with planning for next stage restrictions	Ongoing as relevant	Working for Victoria Recovery Officers	All	Working Group

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Funding source if required.	Lead	Partnering agencies
			Economic Development team Working group resources.		
	Use this group as a platform to develop relevant messages to be filtered through further industry areas	Ongoing as relevant	Advocacy and combined working group resources	All	Working Group
	Connect relevant and appropriate information with Suzanna Sheed MP Independent Member for Shepparton District and Damian Drum MP Federal Member for Nicholls	Ongoing as relevant	Advocacy	All	Working Group

Environment

Key Agencies

Goulburn Regional Partners	DELWP (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning)	GV Water	GVCE (GV Community Energy)
GSCC (Greater Shepparton City Council)	GB CMA (Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority)	Yorta Yorta Nations	Parks Victoria
Department of Education	Goulburn Broken	Greenhouse	Alliance
Goulburn Regional Partnerships Infrastructure Victoria	DHHS (Department of Health and Human Services)	GV Health	Murray Primary Health Network (PHN)
GMLN (Goulburn Murray Landcare Network)	Food Share	Agriculture Victoria	GVWRRG (Goulburn Valley Waste and Resource Recovery Group)
Recovery Working Group	Land Management Working Group (RC)	Low Carbon Circular Economy working group	General Practitioners and Pharmacies
Victorian and Federal Governments and Departments	Regional Health and Wellbeing working group		

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Budget	Lead	Partnering agencies
Creating integrated effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Municipal agencies determine appropriate framework to seek funding – eliminate competition and work together ➤ Investigate link with GMID Resilience process and resources 	June 2021	Advocacy and working within existing operational budgets.	GSCC	Goulburn Regional Partners
Addressing climate crisis through recovery - Energy	➤ Advocate for zero carbon recovery packages and investment	Ongoing	Advocacy	GSCC	DELWP GV Water GB CMA Recovery working group GVCE
	➤ Promote Environmental upgrade agreements	Ongoing	Advocacy	GSCC	GVCE
	➤ Develop and implement Zero Carbon Emissions Plan and Climate Emergency Action Plan	September 2021	Advocacy and working within existing operational budgets	GSCC	GVCE
	➤ Promote energy efficiency eg: state program to replace wood fired heating	Ongoing	Advocacy and working within existing operational budgets.	DELWP	GSCC GVCE GB CMA
Connection to Country through an integrated	➤ Meet on country to identify issues and objectives	End of February	Manage within current operational	GSCC	Yorta Yorta Nations

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Budget	Lead	Partnering agencies
approach to working with community			budgets and resources		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify and facilitate opportunities for Yorta Yorta to work on country, Caring for Country commencing with the Mooroopna Sandhills 	March 2020	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	GSCC	Yorta Yorta Nations Parks Victoria
Addressing climate crisis through recovery – Urban Design and Liveability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Design roads and towns for future transport options including walking, electric bikes, vehicles and buses ➤ Eg: new school and GV Health 	In line with the Public health and Well being plan	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	GSCC	Department of Education
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase green urban spaces providing increased shade and seating ➤ Identify vacant urban land for temporary green spaces 	Review of Urban Forest Strategy	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	GSCC	Goulburn Broken Greenhouse Alliance DELWP GV Water
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase options, access and affordability of public transport throughout the municipality 	Ongoing	Advocacy	GSCC	Goulburn Regional Partnerships Infrastructure Victoria
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase community connection to green spaces and the natural environment through interpretive signage and 	Ongoing	Advocacy. Manage within current operational	RiverConnect	GSCC

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Budget	Lead	Partnering agencies
	communication and access to education of environmental values		budgets and resources		
Addressing climate crisis through recovery - Promote the link between health, the outdoors and climate change	➤ Increase safe cycling options and promote active transport to work and school	Ongoing	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	GSCC	Parks Victoria
	➤ Encourage walking programs	Ongoing	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	GSCC	Parks Victoria
	➤ Promote Green Prescriptions program – nature as a source of recovery and health	Ongoing	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	GSCC	DHHS Parks Victoria DELWP GB CMA GV Health Murray Primary Health Network (PHN)
	➤ Promote and support Traditional Owners access to country for health and wellbeing outcomes	Ongoing	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	Yorta Yorta Nations	GSCC

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Budget	Lead	Partnering agencies
Addressing climate crisis through recovery - Biodiversity	➤ Advocate to increase biodiversity across the landscape with a focus on access to and uptake of carbon and native vegetation offset markets	Ongoing	Advocacy. Manage within current operational budgets and resources	GSCC	GB CMA DELWP GMLN GV Water
	➤ Investigate resilience of biodiversity within municipality	June 2022	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	DELWP GSCC	GB CMA GVCE GMLN
Food security	➤ Identify local opportunities for community to share or swap excess home grown produce to assist the vulnerable	Current to 2022	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	GSCC	Food Share
	➤ Maintain a relationship with Food Security program	Current	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	Goulburn Valley Primary Care Partnership	Regional Health and Wellbeing working group
Water – Support resilience in the agricultural and urban environment (through advocating for water security, conservation and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased water and financial literacy within irrigation communities ➤ Encourage innovative irrigation practices in agriculture and land management 	Ongoing	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	RDV – GMID Resilience Strategy	GSCC GB CMA DELWP Agriculture Victoria

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Budget	Lead	Partnering agencies
	➤ Promote water conservation for residential, business and industry	Ongoing	Advocacy and support GV Water initiatives	Goulburn Valley Water	GSCC
	➤ Provide drinking fountains in green spaces and walking routes	Ongoing	Manage within current operational budgets and resources and those of GV Water	Goulburn Valley Water	
	➤ Progress Integrated Water Management	Ongoing	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	GSCC	GV Water GB CMA Goulburn Regional Partners
Tackling Waste	➤ Develop waste initiatives to support vulnerable members of the community.	Ongoing	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	GSCC	GVWRRG Recovery Working Group
	➤ Progress illegal dumping issue through Land Managers Working Group	Ongoing	Align with existing campaign	GSCC	GVWRRG Land Management Working Group (RC)

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Budget	Lead	Partnering agencies
					Yorta Yorta
	➤ Investigate and develop circular economy	Ongoing	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	GSCC	Low Carbon Circular Economy working group Recovery working group
Vaccination Program	<p>DHHS Immunisation Unit have commenced planning for Mass Vaccination for when a COVID vaccine becomes available. Council has been consulted regarding Draft Standards for Pandemic Vaccination Clinics. The main considerations locally are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of appropriately sized venues, • Availability of clinical staff and additional Nurse Immuniser training, • Management of vaccine cold chain variations due to new vaccine developments, • Manage the priorities of those eligible for vaccination. <p>The DHHS Immunisation unit will provide direction on the service delivery model. It is anticipated the local government immunisation providers will have a role, it</p>	Ongoing	Manage within current operational budgets and resources	DHHS GV Health	GV Health

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Budget	Lead	Partnering agencies
	will be important to work closely with other local immunisation providers.				
	Murray Primary Health Network – administration of program	Ongoing	Nil	Murray (PHN)	General Practitioners and Pharmacies

Built/Infrastructure

Key opportunity	Action	Time frame	Budget	Lead	Partnering agencies
Take advantage of State and Federal Government stimulus packages targeting existing Council priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monitor funding opportunities ➤ Advocate to members of parliament ➤ Refine scope and confirm design and project costs in anticipation of funding applications 	Current to 2022	Monitor and apply for funding for and on behalf of projects that are included in Councils 10 year CapEx program	Greater Shepparton City Council	Victorian and Federal Governments and Departments

Thank you

Greater Shepparton would like to thank the community, local agencies, Victorian and Australian Governments for their combined efforts in responding to the Covid19 Pandemic.

The unprecedented nature of the pandemic has been matched only by this response for which we should all be very proud.

As we move into the Vaccine rollout phase of this emergency, it is important to remain vigilant and responsive to government directions should we experience a further outbreak.

For now though, well done and thank you.