

**Latrobe***City*

# Transition Latrobe

## 2021-2025

Latrobe City Advocacy Plan for Transition



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# Mayor's Message

As our traditional industries are closing down, the Latrobe City community has adopted, learned, grown and adjusted to many changes that have come and are yet to come. This community has proven its resilience by embracing the new and looks into the future with hope, strength and pride.

We have much to be proud of.

Throughout generations we have built engineering expertise and work force capability that is second to none. Our energy transmission infrastructure is solid and can provide the foundation for new industries that create jobs. The region has land that is affordable, fit for purpose and available for industry to establish in Latrobe City. We have strong skills development and education capabilities that can skill people to find jobs in the new economy and equip our young people with sought-after 21st century skills that are high in demand in the market place.

And we can build on our strengths.

This is an opportunity for our Regional City to reinvent itself. For us to see our City in the new light with new opportunities.

This Advocacy Plan builds on the 10-year vision Latrobe 2031 – Our Community Vision that the Latrobe community has created and supported. This Plan is also aligned with our Councillors' vision for our City for the next four years through the Council Plan 2021-2025.

This Plan builds on the premise that we cannot do this alone. We have and will continue to partner closely with the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments, our partners and our community on the journey of transforming our Regional City.

We thank the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments for their assistance to date. However, the job is not yet done.

This transition journey will be a long one and our intention is to continue to work hand in hand and in good faith with the Government at all levels to unlock the economic potential of our Regional City and to deliver a myriad of positive outcomes for our transitioning community.

**Mayor**

**Latrobe City Council**





## Latrobe City is transforming.

The impacts from the Hazelwood Power Station and Mine closures in 2017 continue to be deeply felt in the community. Recently, Energy Australia announced the closure of the Yallourn Power Station and Mine in 2028. With the anticipated future closure of Loy Yang A Power Station and associated Mine by 2048, our region and its economic and social trajectory continue to be profoundly impacted. Simultaneously, our native forest logging, as elsewhere in Victoria, will be banned by 2030.

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments made a notable and immediate contribution to Latrobe City through a comprehensive package of funded initiatives after the closure of the Hazelwood Power Station and associated Mine in 2017. These measures included the creation of the Latrobe Valley Economic Growth Zone and Latrobe Valley Authority (LVA) and associated funding of \$266 million.

There have been further major infrastructure investments including Latrobe Regional Hospital Stage 3, coupled with funding support for major social capital projects such as Latrobe Creative Precinct, Gippsland High-Tech Precinct, Latrobe Health Innovation Zone and Gippsland Regional Aquatics Centre.

In the Victorian State Budget 2021-22, the Victorian Government provided a significant \$10 million investment to support Latrobe City's food manufacturing capacity that will deliver a notable boost to our region's employment with up to 1700 jobs once fully operational, assist in the diversification of our economic base and build our economic resilience through enabling further investment in our food and fibre sector.





## About Latrobe City and its Transition

**For decades, Latrobe City as one of Victoria's major Regional Cities has been the epicentre of power generation in Victoria. The region's brown coal has been utilised for the provision of affordable electricity for the majority of Victoria (currently contributing in excess of 70 per cent of Victoria's energy requirements). Originally by the State Electricity Commission of Victoria and subsequently by private mine operators via our large coal mines at Traralgon (AGL Loy Yang A and Alinta Loy Yang B), and Newborough (Yallourn) and now closed Morwell (Hazelwood).**

The Latrobe Valley has been in transition for many years, following the Hazelwood Power Station and Mine closures in 2017, and the subsequent significant investment in the region by the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments. With the Yallourn Power Station and Mine closing in 2028 and further power station closures anticipated in the next 20-25 years, our region will continue to evolve as part of its ongoing economic transformation and seek investment in industries that contribute to its economy and COVID-19 recovery.

Major Government recreational and liveability investment post-Hazelwood has been welcomed by Latrobe City, and as the transition continues, there is renewed focus on job creation and economic transformation that creates the foundation for the profound structural change that is required. Therefore, more needs to be done to advance a stable and prosperous future for this region, and to realise Latrobe City's full potential as a Regional City.

At the core of this transformation is a strong need to drive the region's employment and economic diversification, given that Latrobe City has borne, and is expected to continue to bear, a significant economic cost of the structural change currently occurring in the Australia's energy sector.

As with the rest of the country, Latrobe City has been further challenged by the diverse and profound impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Our economy has been significantly impacted, with 50 per cent of the businesses in Latrobe City adversely impacted, particularly accommodation and hospitality, arts and recreation services, retail trade, and small private health and social services.

Council believes that major infrastructure investment that creates jobs continues to be critical to future-proof our economy, drive our economic and social step change and unlock this region's potential as a strong, progressive and thriving Regional City.

In December 2020 Council endorsed the Latrobe City Investment Roadmap. This document provides direction for Latrobe City's economic aspirations and demonstrates that Gippsland's Regional City is investment ready, with a focus on Industry Led Skills and Training, Advanced Manufacturing, Regional and Rural Health and a Circular Economy.

## Latrobe City's Advocacy

The Council Plan 2021-2025 provides a broad direction for Latrobe City's advocacy, and supported by the Community Vision 2021-2030, forms a united vision for Latrobe City's future aspirations that are at the heart of economic prosperity, liveability and social wellbeing of this transitioning community and its effort to cement the recognition of Latrobe City as a strong Regional City.

Through building on the platform of the Community Vision, Council is committed to building in this Plan and its collaboration with the Government decision-makers and leaders a strong aspect of community voice.

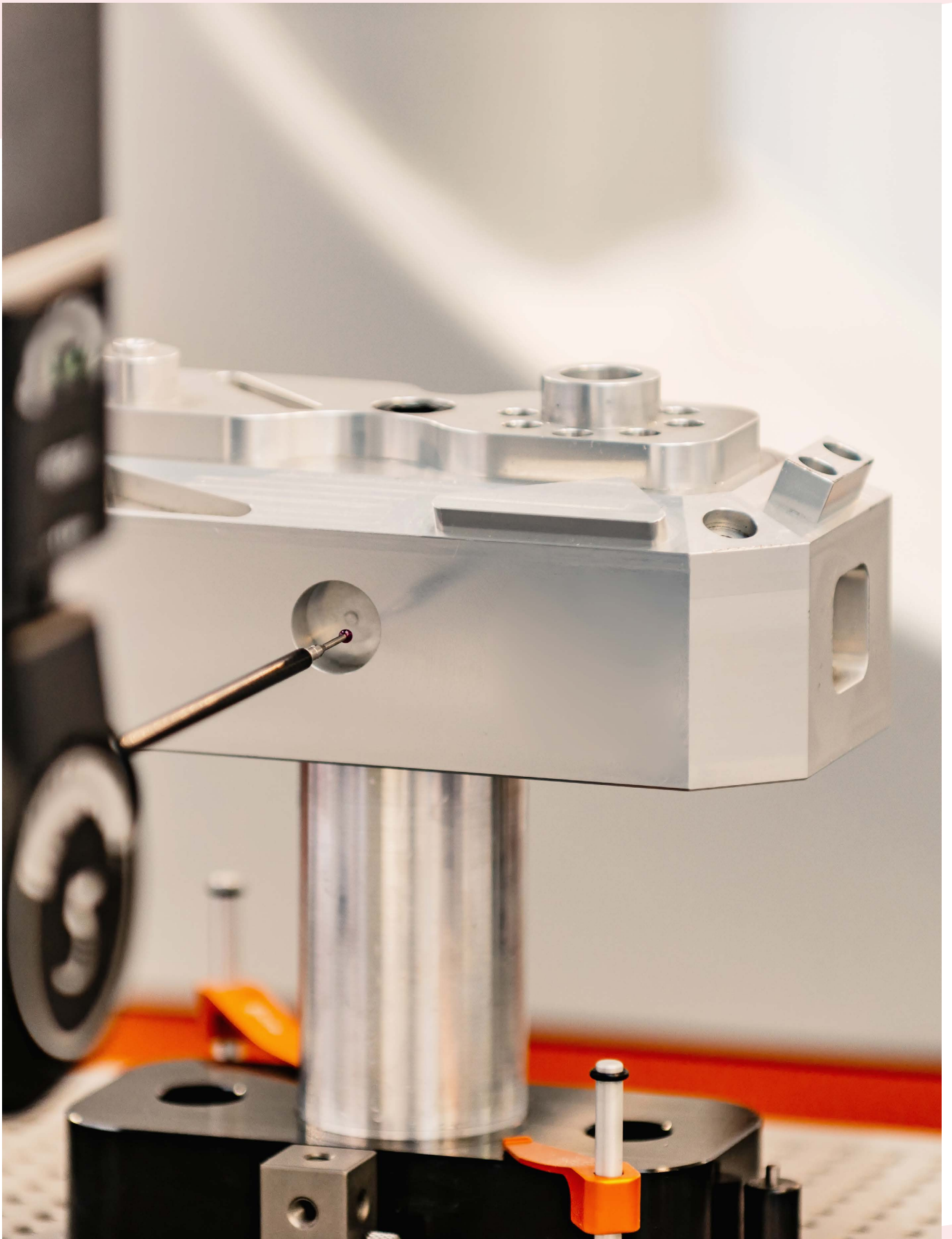
### OUR COMMUNITY VISION

In 2031 Latrobe City will be known for being **smart, creative, healthy, sustainable and connected**. It will be the most liveable regional city and at the forefront of innovation.

Working together we are a diverse, connected and resilient community, supporting the equitable diversification of our economic base and transition towards a low emissions future.

We are known as a community that is equitable, liveable and sustainable, with a continued focus on healthy lifestyles supported by high quality recreational and cultural facilities and a natural environment that is nurtured and respected.







## Why Advocacy?

The Latrobe City Council conducts high level advocacy and government relationship building activity on behalf of the community with the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments. Latrobe City's advocacy is primarily conducted by the Mayor and the CEO, supported by Councillors.

The purpose of Latrobe City's advocacy is to build the profile of Latrobe City with the Government policy makers and to partner with the Government in the delivery of positive outcomes for the Latrobe community that supports the region's economic and social transformation and reflect the community's aspirations, desires and needs.

These outcomes could include the provision of investment assistance for our major projects or changes to policy to benefit our region and our community, and ultimately to build a strong prosperous future for Latrobe City.

Ultimately, advocacy is instrumental in supporting Council in its role to improve the overall quality of life for people in Latrobe City.

## Forms of Advocacy

Council's advocacy is informed by strategic approaches that define an appropriate course of action in any given situation in order to maximise the potential for the desired change.

## Council conducts advocacy in the following ways:

### *Submissions to State and Federal Government Consultations and Parliamentary Inquiries*

Council prepares submissions and position statements to inquiries or consultations that are being conducted by the Government and its Departments or the Parliament through its various Committees, as well as other regulatory bodies. These submissions are considered as part of the Government decision-making process as comments and recommendations from external parties.

### *Submissions to the State and Federal Budgets processes*

Council prepares its submissions to the yearly State and Federal Budget processes that incorporate identified Government investment opportunities for Latrobe City, and infrastructure or other projects that are a priority for Council. These submissions are supported by a meeting program that provides an opportunity to present the project ideas directly to the policy makers.

### *Direct and proactive advocacy through meeting programs and/or direct correspondence with the local Members of Parliament, State and Federal Ministers and other policy-makers*

Council responds directly to relevant issues as they emerge and delivers its position to decision-makers directly through formal correspondence and conversations. This could be both positive or negative i.e. Council could respond to Government policy or investment decisions that affect positively or negatively the Latrobe community.





## Latrobe City Transition Task Force

Latrobe City Council has recently formed the Latrobe City Transition Task Force as a governance framework for bi-partisan support from all levels of Government and the Opposition to collaborate in good faith to inform priority investments into the region, primarily to stimulate and diversify the economy and to create jobs.

Led and convened by Latrobe City Council, the Task Force brings together State and Federal Government and Opposition decision-makers to form the Task Force core membership. This Group is supported by the Government, Industry and Business Reference Group that provides advice to the Task Force.

### *Representation of priority issues to the local Members of Parliament, Ministers or the Opposition representatives*

Council makes representations to policy makers in a bi-partisan fashion on issues that have significant relevance to the Latrobe economy and community. This takes a form of profile-raising activity and is conducted, for instance, as regular Delegations to Canberra, the State Government engagement programs, and specific campaigns ahead of State and Federal elections.

### *Public awareness and media activity*

Council communicates its activities and positions via media and social media. These strategic communications activities are strategically aligned with advocacy approaches where this is possible. The purpose is to raise awareness amongst policy makers of the Council's and its community's position on matters of importance and to inform the public.

### *Policy statements*

Council develops policy statements to form a strong position on an issue of importance and provide a platform for consistency. These can be stand-alone statements, or broader policies or strategies.

### *Policy platforms and networks*

Council can establish or be part of groupings of peers, stakeholders and/or policy makers to advocate jointly on policy positions and topical issues. This allows for a strengthened voice and hence more influence in the decision-making circles. Currently these include e.g. One Gippsland, Regional Capitals of Victoria, Regional Capitals of Australia and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) to name a few.

## Advocacy Principles

Latrobe City's advocacy principles are aligned with the core values of the organisation:

- **Accountability:**
  - We develop goals in advocacy to reflect and align with our Council Plan and Community Vision, and to be of benefit to our community
  - We demonstrate leadership, and are proactive and responsive in our advocacy
- **Collaboration:**
  - We are connected to our community and conduct advocacy that is informed by the community voice
  - We foster collaboration and partner with the Government and all our stakeholders in good faith to bring about positive outcomes for our community
- **Innovation:**
  - We adopt innovative, strategic and fit for purpose approaches to our advocacy
  - We are adaptive and find solutions in response to change
- **Trust:**
  - We build trusting relationships with our community, the Government and all our stakeholders
  - We act in the best interest of our community at all times





# Latrobe City's Advocacy Platform

Latrobe City's advocacy platform for transition is closely aligned with the themes that arise from the Community Vision and the Council Plan.

Our specific advocacy projects that fall under these broad themes are cyclically reviewed and adjusted based on Council's and community's priorities and opportunities that emerge.

## SMART

### *New jobs & industry*

### *Skills & education*

Latrobe City has a highly skilled workforce, access to education and training and we are invested in growing the capacity of our community, supporting innovation and invention. We are focused on creating opportunities and exploring health innovation, digital industries, alternative energy and value-added advanced technology and manufacturing. We support diversification of our industrial base and the development of opportunities for highly skilled employment into the future.

## SUSTAINABLE

### *Liveability*

### *Sustainable industries*

### *Environment*

Our City has natural features and liveable areas that are easy to access and our beautiful environment is our heart and pride. We have provided a healthy environment for our community and for future generations while supporting meaningful employment and lifelong opportunities.

## CREATIVE

### *Arts & creative industries*

We have a vibrant and diverse community where there are various opportunities for arts, culture and tourism. Our City has a range of arts and creative opportunities for community to engage in creative expression and develop social connectedness. We are invested in the exceptional presentation of our City through public works across our interconnected townships and enhancement of our distinctive landscape features.

## CONNECTED

### *Connected towns & communities*

### *Local & regional transport connections*

A Regional City which recognises the connectedness between our goals and towns and efficiently utilises the assets that we have for the benefit of our whole community while protecting the environment.

## HEALTHY

### *Health, wellbeing & safety*

### *Equality*

Our communities' health, wellbeing and safety is assured with abundant green spaces and by focusing on accessibility and inclusivity. We have focused on preventative measures to promote positive health outcomes for all generations through supporting active lifestyles and education. We continue our focus on closing the gap so all of our community can overcome barriers and achieve improved health outcomes.

# What do we advocate for?

## SMART

*New jobs & industry*

*Skills & education*

We advocate for:

- Investment in emerging new industries (such as new clean energy industries, hydrogen, circular economy, automotive technologies, carbon innovation, advanced manufacturing and defence) that have the potential to generate new jobs and create job security into the future.
- Support for the recovery of our tourism, events and recreation sectors and related jobs.
- The removal of funding and regulatory barriers to building the capacity and availability of enabling infrastructure and utility services to support industrial, commercial and residential growth in Latrobe City.
- The rehabilitation and re-purposing of redundant mine areas that supports a sustainable and prosperous Latrobe City.
- The skills development of our work force that matches the immediate and future industry needs
- Support for innovation and research capacity of our region.

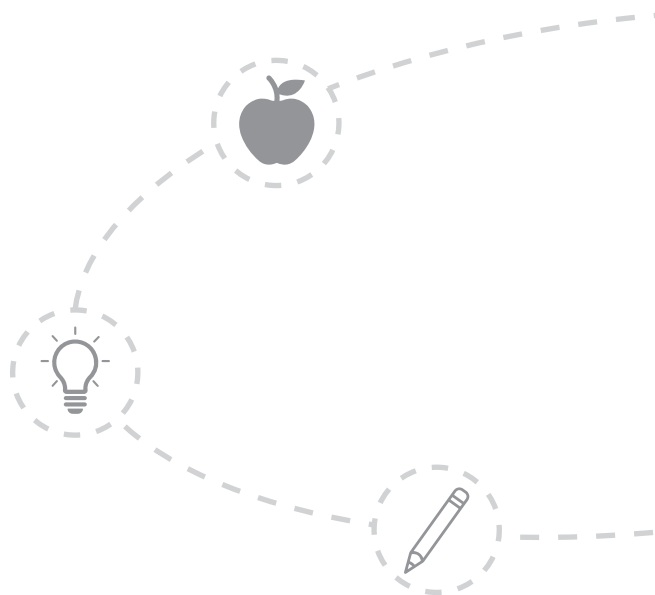
## HEALTHY

*Health, wellbeing & safety*

*Equality*

We advocate for:

- Positive health, wellbeing and safety outcomes for our community.
- The whole of government response to equity issues in our community including prevention and early intervention programs.
- Foster a positive cultural and health related behavioural change in Latrobe City with our partners and other levels of government.



## CREATIVE

*Arts & creative industries*

We advocate for:

- Support for the recovery of the arts and creative industries in Latrobe City.







## SUSTAINABLE

*Liveability*

*Sustainable industries*

*Environment*

We advocate for:

- The provision of sustainable infrastructure and community services.
- An equitable transition to a new energy future through leadership in clean energy, recycling and resource management.
- Water security to provide industry and the community with long term certainty.
- Positive outcomes for our environment



## CONNECTED

*Connected towns and communities*

*Local and regional transport connections*

We advocate for:

- Connectivity with investment in shared pathways between towns to connect Latrobe City communities.
- Improved transport services including passenger and rail freight connections, and local and regional bus services.
- Investment in well maintained and improved road infrastructure.
- Support for the activation of the Latrobe Regional Airport to facilitate freight, niche passenger services, flight training and emergency services.



# Delivering Latrobe City's Advocacy Platform

**Within the Latrobe City's broad advocacy platform context outlined in this Plan, clearly defined and articulated advocacy priorities and projects will guide Latrobe City's advocacy activities to ensure that advocacy remains relevant, targeted and timely.**

The different advocacy priorities have varying degrees of urgency and require varying approaches depending on the outcomes sought.

The outcomes that Council looks for through its advocacy might be a new service or service improvement policy changes, legislative and regulatory issues or investment.

In addition to the 'standing advocacy issues' such as limited transport connectivity that continues to negatively impact on our community, there might be acute time-sensitive matters that emerge that require an immediate response such as emergency situations. Additionally, Council proactively and systematically identifies projects that it wants to present to the Government, either for funding or other support.

The below table outlines high level milestones for Latrobe City's advocacy over the life of the Plan. This forms a guide only as timelines and actions might change subject to changes in policy environment, unexpected circumstances or by Council resolution.

Individualised strategies and approaches apply to each of the advocacy priorities. These will be developed and delivered parallel to the key milestones.







**TABLE 1: LATROBE CITY ADVOCACY PLAN DELIVERY – KEY MILESTONES**

• <b>February</b>	Latrobe City's Priority Projects reviewed
• <b>March</b>	Latrobe City Canberra Delegation
• <b>April</b>	State Government Engagement Program
• <b>May</b>	Latrobe City's Priority Projects reviewed
• <b>May</b>	Government 22/23 Budget Analysis
• <b>August</b>	Latrobe City's Priority Projects reviewed
• <b>October</b>	Latrobe City Government Budget Submissions endorsed and lodged
• <b>October</b>	Latrobe City Government Budget Submissions Engagement Program
• <b>November</b>	Latrobe City's Priority Projects reviewed
• <b>November</b>	Latrobe City Mayoral election

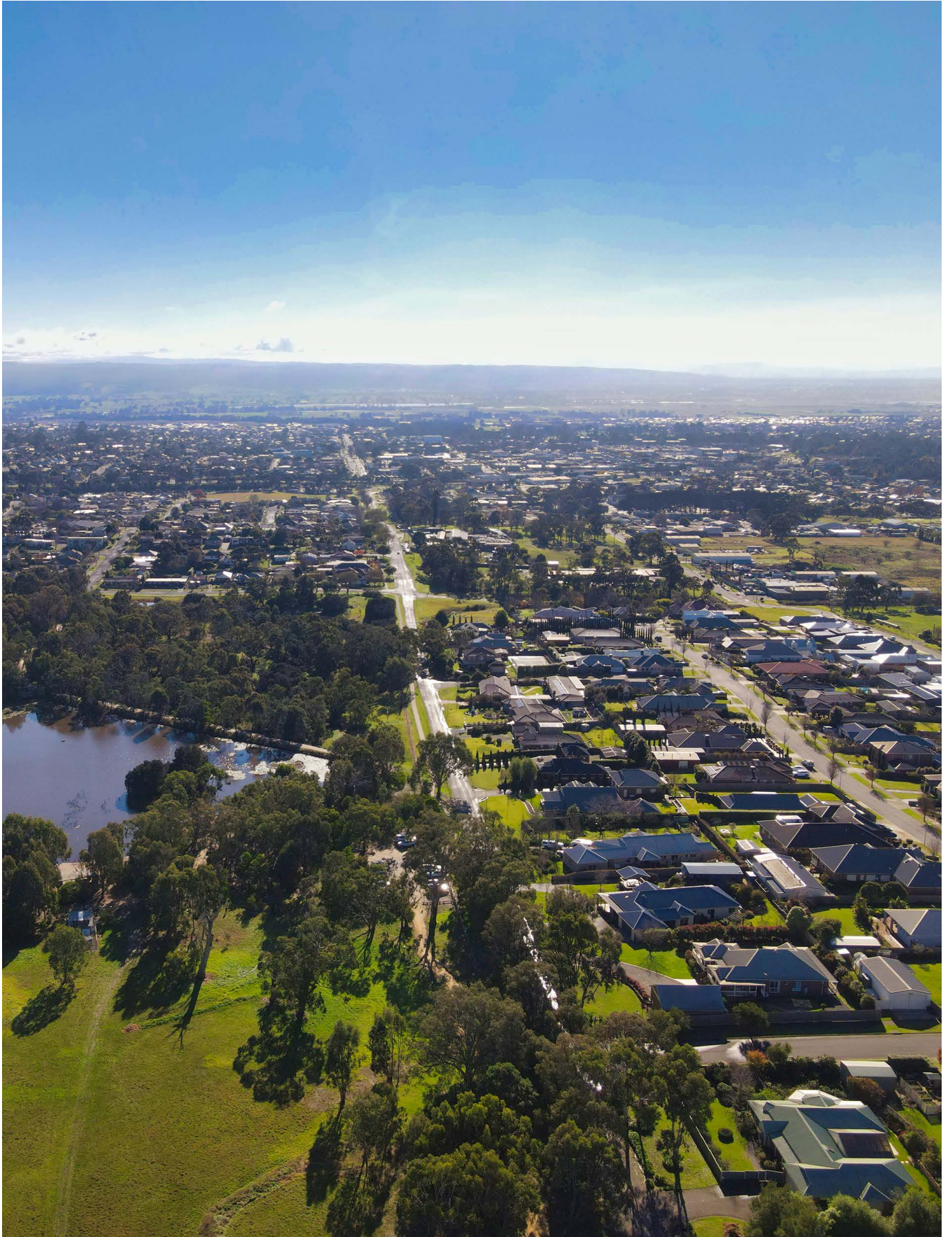
<sup>1</sup> 2022 is a double election year with both Victorian State and Federal Elections held. Latrobe City Council will develop and deliver specific election campaign strategies during this time.

Note: During the final delivery year (2025), Council Plan and Community Vision will be reviewed and adopted by October and Advocacy Plan by December. This may impact timelines for some advocacy activities.

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**Latrobe Regional Airport**  
*a new energy in aviation*









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