

BASS COAST

Community Vision
2045



Acknowledgement of Country

Bass Coast Shire Council acknowledges the Bunurong as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and Lore.

Bass Coast Shire Council celebrates the opportunity to embrace and empower the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island Communities in their diversity.

Bass Coast Shire Council will create opportunities for future recognition and respectful partnerships that will honour the Traditional Owners and Custodians, and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Purpose of this document

This document outlines the Bass Coast Community Vision 2045 and reflects the process undertaken to develop this refreshed Community Vision.

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Diversity and Inclusion

Bass Coast Shire Council celebrates the diversity of our communities. We acknowledge and respect the skills, insights and life experiences of all community members irrespective of gender, ethnicity, ability, religious belief, sexuality or age.

Child Safe Statement

Bass Coast Shire Council is committed to child safety and wellbeing, actively working to prevent abuse by identifying and addressing risks early. This work is underpinned by Council's Child Safe Statement, which guides our commitment to ensuring the safety, inclusion and wellbeing of every child.

Gender Impact Assessment

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was undertaken in developing the Community Vision, ensuring it reflects fairness, inclusivity and the diverse needs of our community.

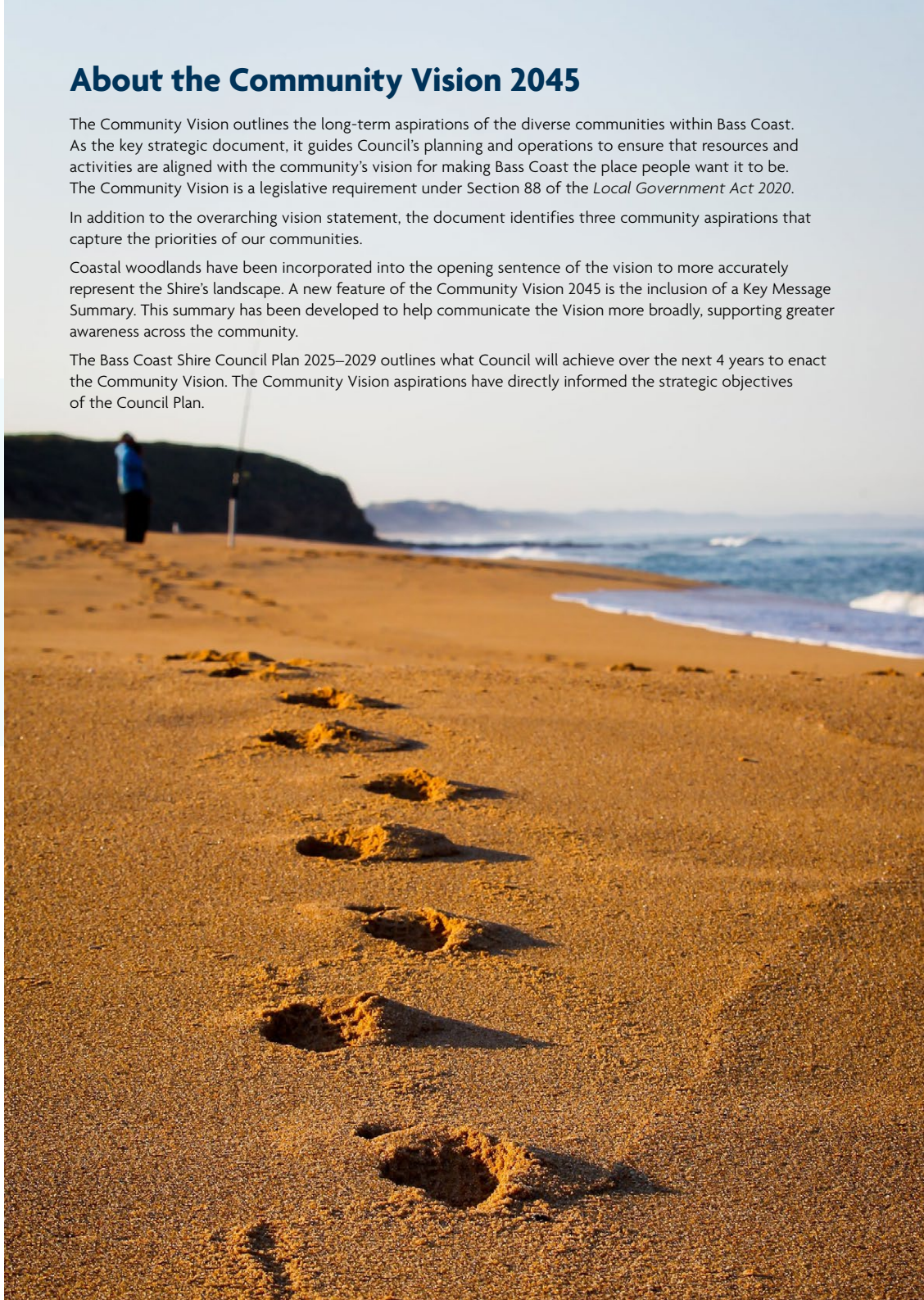
About the Community Vision 2045

The Community Vision outlines the long-term aspirations of the diverse communities within Bass Coast. As the key strategic document, it guides Council's planning and operations to ensure that resources and activities are aligned with the community's vision for making Bass Coast the place people want it to be. The Community Vision is a legislative requirement under Section 88 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

In addition to the overarching vision statement, the document identifies three community aspirations that capture the priorities of our communities.

Coastal woodlands have been incorporated into the opening sentence of the vision to more accurately represent the Shire's landscape. A new feature of the Community Vision 2045 is the inclusion of a Key Message Summary. This summary has been developed to help communicate the Vision more broadly, supporting greater awareness across the community.

The Bass Coast Shire Council Plan 2025–2029 outlines what Council will achieve over the next 4 years to enact the Community Vision. The Community Vision aspirations have directly informed the strategic objectives of the Council Plan.



Mayor and Councillors Message

The Bass Coast Community Vision 2045 is the voice of our community. It captures the ideas, priorities and aspirations that you shared with us through extensive engagement, and brings them together as a shared blueprint for our future.

This Vision reflects the passion and commitment of our community. From townships and coastal villages to rural communities, your contributions have helped shape a vision that reflects who we are, what we value, and the future we want to build together.

As your elected Councillors, we are proud to steward this Vision on your behalf. It will guide our decision-making, planning and investment over the years ahead. More importantly, it ensures that the direction of Council remains firmly rooted in the values and ambitions of the people of Bass Coast.

Together, with this Vision as our guide, we will bring to life a future where Bass Coast remains naturally beautiful, thriving, and vibrant a place we are proud to call home.



About Bass Coast

Bass Coast Shire is located on the traditional lands of the Bunurong people. A predominantly coastal municipality, Bass Coast boasts a stunning and diverse natural environment from rugged coastlines and iconic beaches to rich farmland and bushland.

With a collection of over 30 vibrant townships and rural communities, each with its own unique identity and history, Bass Coast offers a mix of coastal and country living. Just 130 kilometres south-east of Melbourne, it is one of the fastest growing regional areas in Victoria. Bordered by Bass Strait to the south and neighbouring Cardinia and South Gippsland shires, Bass Coast is both accessible and deeply connected to its natural surrounds.

Home to over 43,000 permanent residents, the population increases significantly during holiday periods. Visitors are drawn by major events, coastal escapes, outdoor adventure, and cultural experiences, from surfing and cycling to local markets, the arts, wine and food, and nature-based tourism. Bass Coast offers a blend of rural, residential and holiday living, set against a backdrop of beaches, rolling hills, and wide-open skies.

The region is also home to the award-winning cultural venue Berninneit at the heart of Phillip Island in Cowes, and The Union Theatre in Wonthaggi, a venue deeply connected to the area's rich history of coal mining and social change. These facilities reflect a strong community commitment to creativity, storytelling and cultural connection.

Bass Coast continues to grow as a place where people come to live, work, invest and visit attracted by its lifestyle, natural beauty, strong community spirit, and future-focused approach.

Population in 2025 **43,557**
Projected Population by 2036 **47,408**

Median age **51**
Grown by since 2016 **10093**

Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander **1.1%**

Born overseas **15.1%**

Speak a language other than English at home **5.1%**

People working in Bass Coast **13,337**

Number of local businesses **3,658**

2 Cultural Venues
Over **250,000** visitors

Gross regional product:
$2.472 billion

Amount of Tourists per year:
3.25 million

Land area:
864 square km

Land use:

Primary Production	87%
Parkland	5%
Residential	6%
Other	1%

Community Vision 2045

From its flowing hills to its coastal woodlands and wild unspoiled coastlines, the Bass Coast is a source of celebration for all who live in and visit the region.

Our townships are vibrant, rich with culture and full of life, each with its own distinct character. Drawing on our creativity, innovation and resilience we've created a thriving and diverse economy that supports sustainable agriculture and industry.

We live proudly on Bunurong Country, and build on learnings from our First Peoples and their knowledge. We coexist in harmony with our environment and are prepared for future challenges and changes.

We are the people of the Bass Coast. Experience our cultures and history, and contribute to our story.



About the Engagement Process

The Bass Coast Community Vision 2041 was created through a deliberative engagement process by a representative Community Panel of residents in 2021. In developing that vision, the Community Panel considered broad topics and long-term issues, such as access and equity, growth and housing, and climate change to determine our community's economic, social, cultural and environmental priorities for the future.

Across 2024-2025, Council undertook the 'Towards a Better Bass Coast' project to inform the development of Council's new key strategic documents for 2025-2029 and beyond. As part of this project, Council completed community engagement to inform the review and refresh of the Community Vision to consider whether it still reflects the aspirations for the future of our diverse communities.

The development of the Community Vision 2045 included three stages of community engagement:

Stage 1: Broad Community Engagement July - August 2024

Council invited all community members across the Shire to share their insights and check that the Community Vision still reflects the priorities for the future of Bass Coast. Council facilitated in-person and online activities for community members to share their wants, needs and priorities for the next 4 years. Details of this engagement have been captured in the Engagement Summary Report.

Stage 2: Community Panel November 2024 - May 2025

Council engaged external consultant, Mosaic Lab, to undertake a deliberative engagement process. A 45-member Community Panel was recruited by random selection to mirror the demographics of the Bass Coast community. The Community Panel worked together through a deliberative engagement process and made recommendations to Council to inform the development of its key strategic plans. Mosaic Lab was engaged as an independent body to manage the Panel and to facilitate the sessions to support the development of independent recommendations. A copy of the Community Panel Report can be found here.

Stage 3: Community consultation on draft Community Vision August – September 2025

Council invited all community members across the Shire to share their feedback on the draft Community Vision 2045.

Results from the previous community engagement reflected that the wording of the Community Vision continues to reflect the priorities of the shire. Feedback indicated the addition of acknowledging the coastal woodlands in the Vision resonated well with community members.

Details of the feedback received is available here: www.engage.basscoast.vic.gov.au/strategic-plans-final-review

Community Vision 2045 Aspirations

Through the engagement process the communities of Bass Coast have confirmed the following aspirations that are reflected in the Community Vision:

Naturally Beautiful

Together we build resilience and protect and enhance our natural environment.

Thriving Places

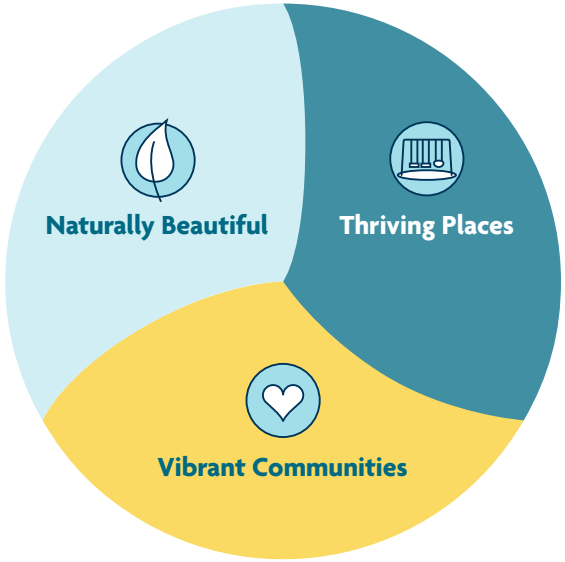
Facilities and infrastructure meet current and future needs. Growth is sustainable and well planned. Our economy, agriculture, tourism and industries are resilient. Unique character is preserved.

Vibrant Communities

Communities are healthy, inclusive, safe and socially connected. Communities celebrate opportunity, recreation, diversity, heritage and reconciliation.

Community Vision 2045 Key Message Summary

A key message summary of the Community Vision 2045 has been developed to enhance the visibility of the Vision and to promote the priorities where it is not practical to use the full Vision statement.





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BASS COAST

Council Plan
2025–2029





Acknowledgement of Country

Bass Coast Shire Council acknowledges the Bunurong as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and Lore.

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Purpose of this document

This document outlines the Bass Coast Council Plan 2025–2029 and reflects the process undertaken to develop this updated Council Plan.

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Gender Impact Assessment

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was undertaken in developing the Council Plan 2025–2029, ensuring it reflects fairness, inclusivity and the diverse needs of our community.

About the Council Plan

The Council Plan 2025–2029 (the Plan) is the key strategic plan guiding Council's decision making and activity. It outlines the priorities of Council for the next 4 years in working towards the Community Vision 2045. The Plan is a legislative requirement under Section 90 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The Plan also helps Council track its performance, be accountable, and transparent by identifying how the progress of priorities will be measured and reported.

The Plan reflects the unique features of Bass Coast and the challenges we face. It is the result of extensive community engagement representative of people who live, work, study, and visit Bass Coast. Through this engagement we heard from diverse voices from our communities and these helped shape the long-term direction and key components of this Plan.

As such, this Plan considers the needs of all people who access and experience places within Bass Coast.



Mayor and Councillors Message

As your representatives, Council are united in our commitment to deliver on the aspirations of our community through the Council Plan 2025–2029. This Plan reflects not just our shared vision as Councillors, but the voices of the people of Bass Coast who helped shape it.

Bass Coast is a truly special place naturally beautiful, vibrant and welcoming. From our rolling hills and rugged coastlines to our thriving townships and cultural destinations, it is no wonder that Bass Coast is one of Victoria's most desirable places to live, work and visit. Protecting this unique environment while creating opportunities for our community to thrive is at the heart of this Plan.

We know that our communities want to see investment in the things that matter safe and well-maintained roads and footpaths, thriving parks and open spaces, vibrant cultural and recreational facilities, and planning that respects the unique character of each township. At the same time, we must remain financially responsible, ensuring that every dollar spent delivers value and that our Council remains sustainable well into the future.

The actions outlined in this Plan are both aspirational and practical. Over the next four years we will:

- Protect and enhance our natural environment through initiatives like the Circular Economy Framework, Integrated Water Management Strategy, and Urban Forest Strategy.
- Deliver well-planned townships that balance growth with preserving local character.
- Provide fit-for-purpose assets and facilities, from open spaces and playgrounds to marine structures and community hubs.
- Strengthen community wellbeing through accessible services, inclusive programs, and support for young people to live, learn, and connect locally.
- Drive sustainable economic growth by supporting local businesses, producers, and Eco Tourism.

Together, we will make these priorities a reality while staying true to our responsibility to manage resources carefully. This means seeking alternative revenue streams, maximising partnerships, and advocating strongly to other levels of government to secure the funding our community deserves.

This Plan represents the strength of a united Council, working collectively with and for our community.

We thank everyone who contributed their ideas and aspirations during the engagement process. With your guidance, we are confident this Plan will deliver a Bass Coast that is naturally beautiful, thriving, vibrant, and well-led.



CEO Message



Chief Executive Officer, Greg Box

Looking ahead to the next 4 years, I am confident in our collective capacity to meet the ambitious objectives of the Council Plan 2025–2029. Earlier this year, it was an honour to collaborate with our deliberative community panel, who prioritised the community's key concerns and guided the allocation of Council resources and activities.

This plan is designed to reflect both the aspirations of our residents and those of the new Council. More than a strategic roadmap, it represents our commitment to establishing a creative, sustainable, vibrant, and inclusive Bass Coast. We remain committed to fostering community engagement, promoting environmental stewardship, and pursuing innovative approaches to address the evolving requirements of our residents.

We consistently heard the community's desire to maximise the value of existing community assets first before developing new ones that will benefit the Bass Coast community for generations. We are also dedicated to enhancing our natural environment, supporting healthy and connected communities, and promoting effective, visionary leadership. Through collaboration and by leveraging our collective strengths, we aim to build a future where every community member has the opportunity to flourish.

Environmental sustainability and the protection of our 'Naturally Beautiful' environment remains key to our success. We are committed to preserving our beaches, bushland, and wildlife habitats, recognising their integral role in the identity and wellbeing of Bass Coast residents. By supporting innovative solutions whether it's renewable energy initiatives, improved public spaces, or enhanced access to local services we seek to strengthen our community's resilience and adaptability.

We look forward to partnering with our community as we work towards realising this vision. Together, through shared purpose and dedication, we create the conditions needed for Bass Coast to thrive now and in the future. With this plan as our guide, we reaffirm our promise to protect what makes Bass Coast special while ensuring prosperity and inclusivity for everyone who calls it home.

Overview of Council Plan

Strategic Objective	Naturally Beautiful	Thriving Places	Vibrant Communities	Visionary Leadership
Aspirations What we want to achieve long term	Together we build resilience and protect and enhance our natural environment.	Facilities and infrastructure meet current and future needs. Growth is sustainable and well-planned. Our economy, agriculture, tourism and industries are resilient. Unique character is preserved.	Communities are healthy, inclusive, safe and socially connected. Communities celebrate opportunity, recreation, diversity, heritage and reconciliation.	Our communities flourish through leadership that is open and responsible, ensuring decisions serve the communities best interests, and comply with legislative obligations.
Priorities What we will focus on for the next 4 years	• Enhancing biodiversity and natural asset protection • Increasing energy, disaster and climate resilience • Optimising water management • Strengthening waste management • Supporting circular economy	• Delivering well-planned townships • Enhancing Eco Tourism • Facilitating sustainable development • Providing fit for purpose assets and facilities • Supporting local industry, business and agriculture	• Advocate to increase in affordable housing and access to local services • Celebrating culture and history • Promoting healthy, active, safe and inclusive communities • Strengthening community connection and resilience • Support young people to live, learn, play and connect locally • Walking alongside our First Nations communities on the path to reconciliation	• Driving innovation • Effective communication and engagement • Maximising alternative revenue • Optimising partnerships • Strong advocacy
Lead Strategies How we will deliver these objectives	• Climate Change Action Plan	• Asset Strategy • Economic Development Framework • Integrated Transport Strategy • Municipal Planning Strategy	• Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan (Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan)	• Long Term Financial Plan
Services Services to deliver these objectives	• Resource recovery and waste management • Sustainability	• Asset Management • Design and delivery • Economic development • Planning and Building	• Arts, Culture and Heritage • Customer and Visitor Experience • Healthy, safe and connected communities	• Finance, Systems and Human Resources • Governance and Leadership
Operating Principle	**In all that we do, Council is committed to being:** **Responsive Efficient Transparent Future-focused**			

About the role of Local Government

There are 3 tiers of government in Australia:

- Local (also known as council)
- State or Territory
- Federal (also called Commonwealth)

Each tier of government has an important role. They have different powers and responsibilities and work together to govern and provide services to the community.

The role of Council is to provide good governance for the benefit of current and future communities. Council provides a range of services and manages community assets that people use every day. Council's role is outlined in the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Council undertakes a range of roles and functions to serve local communities. It is important for Council to work together with other levels of government, industry partners and communities to achieve the best outcomes.

Council makes decisions not just about today but for the future, set strategies to make a difference for the long term, balance competing demands and consider the best use of public funds.

There are many challenges facing Bass Coast that Council does not have direct control over. This includes areas under State and Federal Government jurisdiction, such as major transport infrastructure, public transport and arterial roads. However, Council actively works to influence and facilitate service and infrastructure provision.

The roles Council performs are listed below.

Provider

Deliver services, programs, infrastructure and support to individuals and groups.

Facilitator

Facilitate outcomes for communities through building partnerships, changing regulations, promoting opportunities, raising awareness, sharing information and building the capacity of community members and organisations.

Advocator

Raise awareness and show leadership for the interests of local communities to other decision makers, including advocating to State and Federal Governments for funding and delivery of services and infrastructure.

Regulator

Prioritise safety and regulate compliance of activities through local laws and legislation.

Planner

Use evidence, including community views to plan for current and future community needs and priorities.



About Bass Coast

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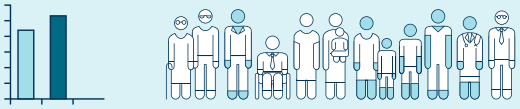
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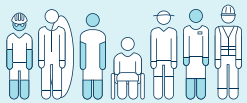
Bass Coast – Fast Facts

Population



Population in 2025 **43,557**

Projected Population by 2036 **47,408**



Median age **51**

Diversity and inclusion



Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander **1.1%**



Born overseas **15.1%**



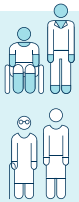
Speak a language other than English at home **5.1%**

Top 5 non-English languages:

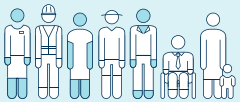
Italian:	0.7%
Greek:	0.4%
German:	0.3%
Spanish:	0.3%
Mandarin:	0.3%

People in need of assistance due to a disability **7.1%**

People providing unpaid care to a person with a disability, long-term illness or old age (persons aged 15+) **14.6%**



Jobs



People working in Bass Coast **13,337**



Number of local businesses **3,657**

Number of employed residents **18,717**



Unemployment rate **3.8%**



Top business industries:

Health care and social assistance:	17.3%
Retail:	12.6%
Construction:	12.4%

Education

Bachelor or higher degree	17.8%
Diploma or advanced diploma	10%
Vocational qualification	23.1%
No qualification	38.5%



Housing tenure

Fully owned	44.6%
Mortgage	27.3%
Renting	19.5%

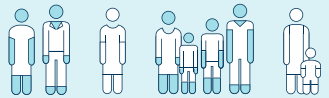


Households

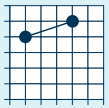
Households in 2021: **18,107**



Couples without children:	31.3%
People living alone:	29.5%
Couples with children:	19.5%
One parent families:	8.8%



Economy



Gross regional product: **$2.472 billion**



Output: **$4.843 billion**



Regional exports: **$1.406 billion**



Amount of Tourists per year: **3.25 million**

Land

Land area: **864 square km**

Population density: **50** persons per square km

Land use:

Primary Production	87%
Parkland	5%
Residential	6%
Other	1%





Number of playgrounds: **71**

Parks and reserves maintained by Council: **645 hectares**

Electoral Structure

Bass Coast Shire is divided into 3 wards, with each of the wards represented by 3 councillors.

The 9 councillors are the elected representatives of all residents and ratepayers across the Shire and work together with the communities of Bass Coast to set the strategic direction for the municipality.

Island Ward

Western Port Ward

Bunurong Ward

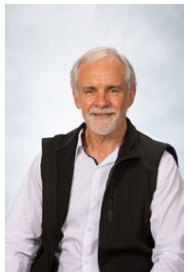


Bass Coast Councillors

Island Ward



Cr Ron Bauer



Cr Tim O'Brien



Cr Tracey Bell

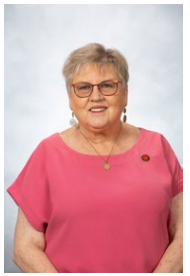
Western Port Ward



Cr Rochelle Halstead



Cr Jon Temby



Cr Jan Thompson

Bunurong Ward



Cr Brett Tessari



Cr Meg Edwards



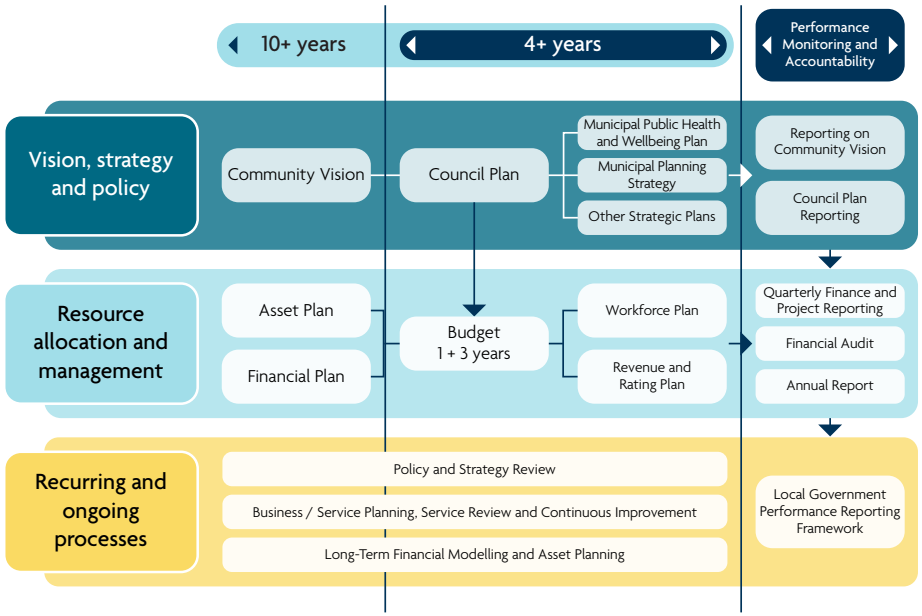
Cr Mat Morgan

About the development of the Council Plan

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework guides Council's planning in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. It outlines how the Community Vision will be delivered through the Council Plan, the Annual Budget and other key Council plans and strategies. It also includes how reporting is undertaken to ensure accountability and transparency on Council's progress towards achieving the aspirations set in the Community Vision.

Bass Coast Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework



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How Council engaged

Across 2024-2025, Council undertook the 'Towards a Better Bass Coast' project to inform the development of Council's new key strategic documents for 2025-2029 and beyond. As part of this project, Council completed extensive community engagement to inform the strategic direction and development of the Council Plan 2025–2029.

The engagement process consisted of 3 key stages which occurred over a 15-month period:

Stage 1: Broad Community Engagement (July–August 2024)

Council used a variety of activities and channels online and in-person to promote the engagement opportunity, which included:

- 10 pop-up engagement events held across multiple locations across the 3 wards
- Targeted emails to community groups
- Coastell newsletter
- Newspaper advertising
- Organic social media posts
- Media releases
- Paid social media advertising

This engagement focused on gathering feedback from the communities on what their wants, needs and priorities are for the next 4 years. Feedback was gathered through an online survey hosted on our Engage Bass Coast platform, written submissions and in-person at all of our pop-up events across the Shire.

The key questions asked and collated responses of this engagement were:

- ***What is one thing you love most about Bass Coast?***

1. The natural environment

- ***What aspect(s) of Bass Coast do you feel are most important to protect and preserve?***

1. The natural environment

- ***What services should the Council consider prioritising?***

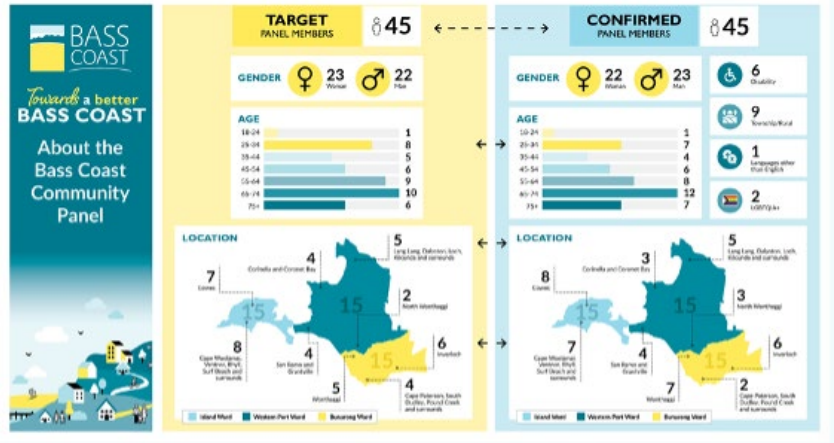
1. Roads and footpaths
2. Playgrounds and open spaces
3. Supporting local business
4. Waste and recycling
5. Environment and climate change

Further details about the broader community engagement process and findings are available here: Community Consultation | Towards a Better Bass Coast | Engage Bass Coast



Stage 2: Community Panel (November 2024–May 2025)

Council engaged external consultant, Mosaic Lab, to undertake a deliberative engagement process. A 45-member Community Panel was recruited by random selection to mirror the demographics of the Bass Coast communities. The image below displays what the targets were for the Panel recruitment, and the final Panel representation.



The remit posed to the Community Panel was: What are your priorities for ensuring Bass Coast is not just preserved but enhanced for both its current and future community?

Through a series of 4 workshops, the Panel deliberated on the remit and key challenges presented by Council and developed recommendations to help shape the Plan.

The prioritised recommendation areas of the Community Panel were:

1. Natural environment and sustainable development
2. Environmental protection
3. Attraction and retention of youth
4. Council communication an engagement
5. Housing and accessible services
6. Generate non-rate payer additional revenue
7. Recognising Bunurong culture and promoting arts and culture
8. Parking and associated traffic infrastructure
9. Utilising existing assets
10. Events and community initiatives
11. Eco Tourism

Further details on the deliberative engagement process and the full Panel recommendations are available in the Community Panel Process Report. Mapping of these recommendations to the priorities included in this Plan, and the Community Panel Process report are available here: Community Panel | Towards a Better Bass Coast | Engage Bass Coast

Stage 3: Draft Council Plan Consultation (August–September 2025)

The insights and feedback provided through the broad community engagement and the Panel informed the strategic objectives and priorities of the Plan to ensure the Plan reflects the diverse needs and aspirations of our communities. All recommendations from the Panel have been incorporated into this Plan.

During the final consultation stage Council sought feedback from the broader community on the draft Council Plan 2025–2029. This confirmed that the draft plan resonated with community members and identified the desire to amplify Council's support for agriculture. As a result, the priorities in the Thriving Places Strategic Objective have been updated. Details of the feedback received is available here: www.engage.basscoast.vic.gov.au/strategic-plans-final-review

About the Community Vision

The Community Vision describes the aspirations for the long-term future of Bass Coast. It shapes the strategic direction and priorities of the Plan.

Background

Bass Coast Community Vision 2041 was created in 2021 through a deliberative engagement process by a representative Community Panel of residents. The Community Panel considered key long-term issues to shape future economic, social, cultural, and environmental priorities.

Review and Refresh

As part of the 'Towards a Better Bass Coast' project in 2024-2025, community engagement was conducted to review and refresh the Community Vision, ensuring it still reflects the aspirations of Bass Coast's diverse communities. This engagement confirmed that the Vision continues to reflect the priorities of the communities of Bass Coast.

Coastal woodlands have been incorporated into the opening sentence of the vision to more accurately represent the Shire's landscape.

To improve visibility of the Vision, a key message summary has been created for use where the full statement is impractical.

Community Vision 2045

From its flowing hills to its coastal woodlands and wild unspoiled coastlines, the Bass Coast is a source of celebration for all who live in and visit the region.

Our townships are vibrant, rich with culture and full of life, each with its own distinct character. Drawing on our creativity, innovation and resilience we've created a thriving and diverse economy that supports sustainable agriculture and industry.

We live proudly on Bunurong Country, and build on learnings from our First Peoples and their knowledge. We coexist in harmony with our environment, and are prepared for future challenges and changes.

We are the people of the Bass Coast. Experience our cultures and history, and contribute to our story.

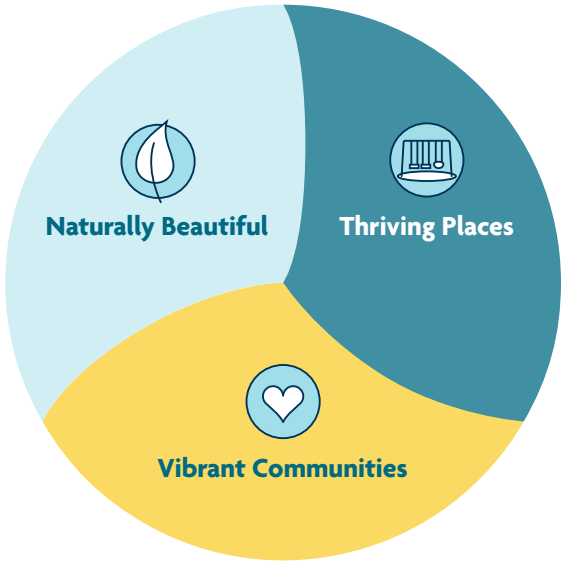
Community Vision 2045 Aspirations

The community aspirations summarise what the communities of Bass Coast want for the municipality over the next 20 years. These aspirations have been developed through the engagement process and guided the development of this Plan.

Naturally Beautiful	Together we build resilience and protect and enhance our natural environment.
Thriving Places	Facilities and infrastructure meet current and future needs. Growth is sustainable and well planned. Our economy, agriculture, tourism and industries are resilient. Unique character is preserved.
Vibrant Communities	Communities are healthy, inclusive, safe and socially connected. Communities celebrate opportunity, recreation, diversity, heritage and reconciliation.

Community Vision 2045 Key Message Summary

A key message summary of the Community Vision 2045 has been developed to enhance the visibility of the Vision and to promote the priorities where it is not practical to use the full Vision statement.



About the next 4 years

Council's Strategic Objectives

The Plan is presented under 4 Strategic Objectives and detail the priorities, strategies and services that Council will deliver to achieve these outcomes.

The 4 strategic objectives are aligned to the Community Vision and describe the future Council is working towards. All the activities completed by Council, including those in this Plan, contribute to one or more of these strategic objectives.

Key actions to deliver these priorities will be outlined in Council's Annual Action Plan each financial year.

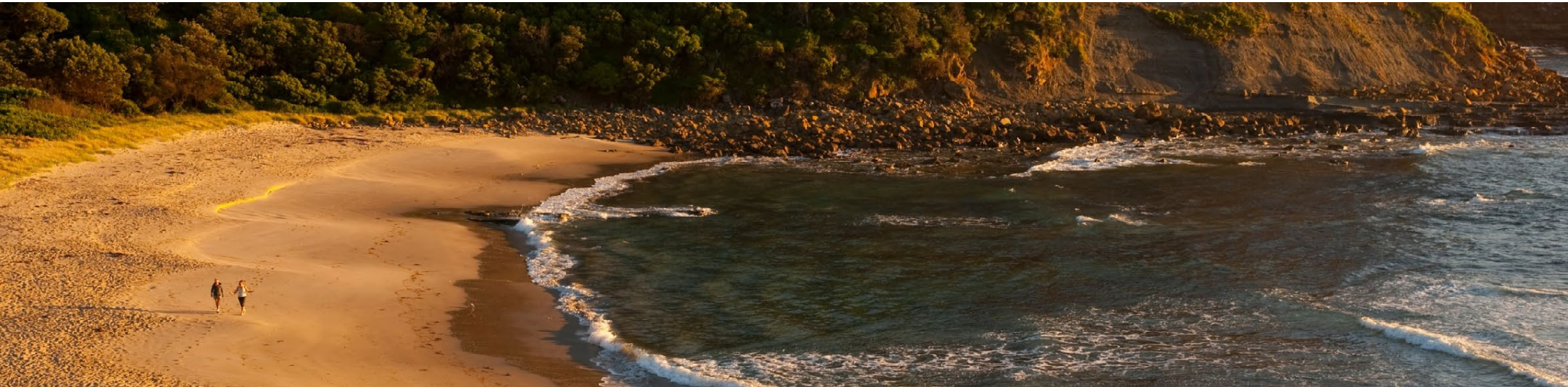
The included indicators provide clear targets across the 4 strategic objectives in this Plan and are used to measure progress.

Naturally Beautiful	Together we build resilience and protect and enhance our natural environment.
Thriving Places	Facilities and infrastructure meet current and future needs. Growth is sustainable and well planned. Our economy, agriculture, tourism and industries are resilient. Unique character is preserved.
Vibrant Communities	Communities are healthy, inclusive, safe and socially connected. Communities celebrate opportunity, recreation, diversity, heritage and reconciliation.
Visionary Leadership	Our communities flourish through leadership that is open and responsible, ensuring decisions serve the communities best interests, and comply with legislative obligations.

Operating Principle

Bass Coast Shire Council is committed to delivering good governance for the benefit and well-being of the local communities and future generations. This involves partnering with the communities to address current needs and be prepared for future challenges. In all that we do, Council is committed to being:

• **Responsive**	Actively engaging with the community, listening with intent, and addressing needs promptly and appropriately.
• **Efficient**	Maximising the impact of our resources by reducing waste and providing high-quality, cost-effective services.
• **Transparent**	Operating with openness, inclusivity, and accountability in all decision-making processes.
• **Future-focused**	Identifying challenges and opportunities, showing strong leadership to foster resilience, support climate adaptation, and make decisions that benefit both current and future generations.



Naturally Beautiful

Aspirations

What we want to achieve long term

Together we build resilience and protect and enhance our natural environment.

Priorities

What we will focus on for the next 4 years

- Enhancing biodiversity and natural asset protection
- Increasing energy, disaster and climate resilience
- Optimising water management
- Strengthening waste management
- Supporting circular economy

Strategies

How we will deliver these objectives

Lead Strategy

- Climate Change Action Plan

Key Supporting Strategies and Plans

- Circular Economy Framework
- Integrated Water Management Plan Strategy Document
- Natural Environment Strategy
- Urban Forest Strategy
- Waste Management Strategy

Services

Services to deliver these objectives

Resource recovery and waste management	Kerbside bin collection, manage active and closed landfills, operate Transfer Stations, waste education.
Sustainability	**Environmental Partnerships** Support environmental partnership relationships and oversee management agreements and projects. **Environmental Policy and Strategy** Manage environmental strategies and plans. **Environmental Program Delivery** Manage foreshore and bushland reserves, urban forestry and sustainability programs.



Thriving Places

Aspirations

What we want to achieve long term

Facilities and infrastructure meet current and future needs. Growth is sustainable and well-planned. Our economy, agriculture, tourism and industries are resilient. Unique character is preserved

Priorities

What we will focus on for the next 4 years

- Delivering well-planned townships
- Enhancing Eco Tourism
- Facilitating sustainable development
- Providing fit for purpose assets and facilities
- Supporting local industry, business and agriculture

Strategies

How we will deliver these objectives

Lead Strategies

- Asset Strategy
- Economic Development Framework
- Integrated Transport Strategy
- Municipal Planning Strategy

Key Supporting Strategies and Plans

- Asset Class Plans
- Bass Coast Planning Scheme
- Economic development partnership plans
- Housing and Neighbourhood Character Strategy
- Industrial Land Strategy
- Phillip Island Recreation Master Plan
- Playspace Strategy
- Property Strategy
- Road Management Plan
- Urban Roads and Drainage Improvement Policy
- Wonthaggi North East Precinct Structure Plan

Services

Services to deliver these objectives

Asset Management	**Buildings, Plant and Operations** Maintain Council owned facilities, public amenities and equipment. **Open Space** Maintain fit for purpose open spaces, tracks and trails, playgrounds, wetlands and public amenities. Deliver tree planting program. **Property** Oversee Council managed land, including leases and licensing, and purchasing and sales. **Roads and Drainage** Maintain fit for purpose local roads, footpaths and drainage systems. **Structures** Maintain fit for purpose marine structures, bridges, boardwalks, major culverts, retaining walls jetties and public artwork.
Design and delivery	**Construction, Civil Design and Assets** Deliver, manage and maintain fit for purpose community infrastructure and assets. **Major Projects** Master planning and advocacy for transformative projects.
Economic development	Drive sustainable economic growth by delivering strategic marketing and brand development, supporting local business, and enhancing the region through visitor experience and event development.
Planning and Building	**Building and Statutory Planning** Administer and enforce building requirements and regulations. Assess planning permits and other applications, provide land use advice. **Growth Area Planning** Assess planning permits. Collect and manage developer contributions. Monitor and prioritise the delivery of infrastructure. **Development Services** Facilitate quality and functional infrastructure, Ensure development compliance.



Vibrant Communities

Aspirations

What we want to achieve long term

Communities are healthy, inclusive, safe and socially connected.
Communities celebrate opportunity, recreation, diversity, heritage and reconciliation.

Priorities

What we will focus on for the next 4 years

- Advocate to increase in affordable housing and access to local services
- Celebrating culture and history
- Promoting healthy, active, safe and inclusive communities
- Strengthening community connection and resilience
- Support young people to live, learn, play and connect locally
- Walking alongside our First Nations communities on the path to reconciliation

Strategies

How we will deliver these objectives

Lead Strategy

- Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan (Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan)

Key Supporting Strategies and Plans

- Active Bass Coast Plan
- Affordable Housing Strategy
- Arts and Culture Strategy
- Disability Action Plan
- Domestic Animal Management Plan
- Municipal Emergency Management Plan

Services

Services to deliver these objectives

Arts, Culture and Heritage	Deliver vibrant cultural experiences including activating cultural facilities and supporting creative community projects.
Customer and Visitor Experience	Deliver high quality customer service that is welcoming and inclusive.
Healthy, safe and connected communities	**Community Safety and Resilience** Administer local laws, domestic animal management, school crossings, parking enforcement, boat ramp operations, environmental health and other regulatory compliance. Lead emergency management response and community safety initiatives. **Community Wellbeing** Supports people at every stage of life to build inclusive and connected communities. Promote inclusion, accessibility, and safe, welcoming spaces for all. Manage contracted service of maternal and child health, youth services and libraries. Coordinate kindergarten enrolment services and deliver immunisation and community grants. **Recreation and Leisure** Planning, maintenance and service delivery of recreation facilities, sporting grounds, leisure facilities, projects, programs and strategies. **Transport and Movement** Transport planning, traffic and road safety, Electric Vehicle (EV) charging, road and drainage upgrade projects.



Visionary Leadership

Aspirations

What we want to achieve long term

Our communities flourish through leadership that is open and responsible, ensuring decisions serve the communities best interests, and comply with legislative obligations.

Priorities

What we will focus on for the next 4 years

- Driving innovation
- Effective communication and engagement
- Maximising alternative revenue
- Optimising partnerships
- Strong advocacy

Strategies

How we will deliver these objectives

Lead Strategy

- Long Term Financial Plan

Key Supporting Strategies and Plans

- Advocacy Strategy
- Annual Budget and Strategic Resource Plan
- Communication and Engagement Strategy
- Gender Equality Action Plan
- Investment Policies
- Organisational Development Strategy
- Procurement Policy
- Revenue and Rating Plan

Services

Services to deliver these objectives

Finance, Systems and Human Resources (HR)	Manage financial operations, business systems, and strategic procurement. Deliver HR functions including recruitment, workforce planning, employee relations, health, safety and wellbeing and development.
Governance and Leadership	**Governance** Deliver good governance and leadership for Council, including Councillors, Council meetings, management, compliance, Audit and Risk Committee, insurance, risk management and corporate information. **Communication and Engagement** Provide relevant and accessible information, engage authentically with the community, and advocate for its needs. **Corporate Planning and Reporting** Provide strategic planning and performance reporting to support organisational goals and compliance.

Current strategies, plans and policies referenced are available here: Plans, Policies & Strategies | Bass Coast Shire



How progress will be measured and reported

The indicators listed under each strategic objective are used to track progress towards achieving the Community Vision. Every Council service, strategy, and initiative contributes to this Vision and supports the strategic objectives, with progress monitored through these indicators.

Monitoring community outcomes and reporting on these indicators helps ensure governance that is responsive, effective, and transparent. This approach reinforces Council's commitment to actions that support the long-term aspirations of the Bass Coast communities.

We recognise that Council's work generates positive outcomes beyond these indicators, that also all contribute to the Community Vision.

Changes in the indicators may result from a combination of Council actions, contributions from other stakeholders, and external environmental factors. While not all changes can be directly linked to one party, tracking and sharing these outcomes:

- keeps stakeholders informed of community progress
- supports evidence-based decision-making and planning
- encourages collaboration towards achieving the Community Vision.

Council will provide regular updates on the progress towards delivering the Plan through the Quarterly Performance Reports and Annual Report which are shared on Council's website. Council will report annually on these indicators within the Annual Report.

Naturally Beautiful

Strategic Indicators

Indicator of success	Baseline 24/25	Target	Data source
% of kerbside material diverted from landfill	72.17%	Maintain or increase	Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF)
Increase number of trees within shire townships	1810 trees planted	Council plant 1500 trees	Internal data
Community satisfaction of waste management	65	Maintain or increase	Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS)
% of Council electricity use from renewable sources	100%	100%	Internal data
Increase native vegetation across the Shire	NA	Council and partners plant 360,000 native plants in the rural landscape	Internal data
Community satisfaction of environmental sustainability	Baseline TBD 2025-26	Maintain or increase	CSS

Thriving Places

Strategic Indicators

Indicator of success	Baseline 24/25	Target	Data source
% of planning applications decided within required timeframes	76.75%	Maintain or increase	LGPRF
% of Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT	58.82%	Maintain or increase	LGPRF
Community satisfaction of sealed roads	52	Maintain or increase	CSS
% of Council's Capital Works Program completed	80%	80%	Internal data
Renewal Funding Ratio	121%	85-115%	Internal data
Community satisfaction of recreational facilities	Baseline TBD 2025-26	Maintain or increase	CSS
Annual total number of visits to leisure centres	171,496	Maintain or increase	Internal data
Community satisfaction of the appearance of public areas	Baseline TBD 2025-26	Maintain or increase	CSS
Community satisfaction of tourism development	Baseline TBD 2025-26	Maintain or increase	CSS
Number of business permit applications supported through Council's Business Concierge Program	124	Maintain or increase	Internal data

Vibrant Communities

Strategic Indicators

Indicator of success	Baseline 24/25	Target	Data source
Bass Coast Reconciliation Network (BCRN) Annual Impact Report is developed	NA	Finalised	BCRN Annual Impact Report
Youth Services contract KPIs met or exceeded	NA	≥ 85 % of KPIs met or exceeded each year (with 100 % compliance required on any critical or legislated KPIs e.g. Child Safe Standards)	Internal data
Participation in libraries services- borrowing, membership and library visits	445,113	Maintain or increase	LGPRF
Community satisfaction with art centres and libraries	Baseline TBD 2025-26	Maintain or increase	CSS
Community satisfaction with community and cultural activities	Baseline TBD 2025-26	Maintain or increase	CSS

Visionary Leadership

Strategic Indicators

Indicator of success	Baseline 24/25	Target	Data source
Community satisfaction with our consultation and engagement	51	Maintain or increase	CSS
Views on Engage Bass Coast website	94,707	Maintain or increase	Internal data
Responsive customer service	NA	≥70% resolution at first contact via customer service	Internal data
Community satisfaction with Customer service	66	Maintain or increase	CSS
Enable simpler and more efficient interactions with Council	18.99%	Increase annually % of digital interactions	Internal data
% of total income from sources other than rates	28%	Maintain or increase	Internal data
Community satisfaction with Overall Council direction	47	Maintain or increase	CSS
Community satisfaction with Value for money	46	Maintain or increase	CSS
Community satisfaction with Council decisions	50	Maintain or increase	CSS
Community satisfaction with overall Council performance	56	Maintain or increase	CSS
Community satisfaction with lobbying on behalf of community	Baseline TBD 2025-26	Maintain or increase	CSS
Community satisfaction with informing community	Baseline TBD 2025-26	Maintain or increase	CSS

Current strategies, plans and policies referenced are available here: Plans, Policies & Strategies | Bass Coast Shire

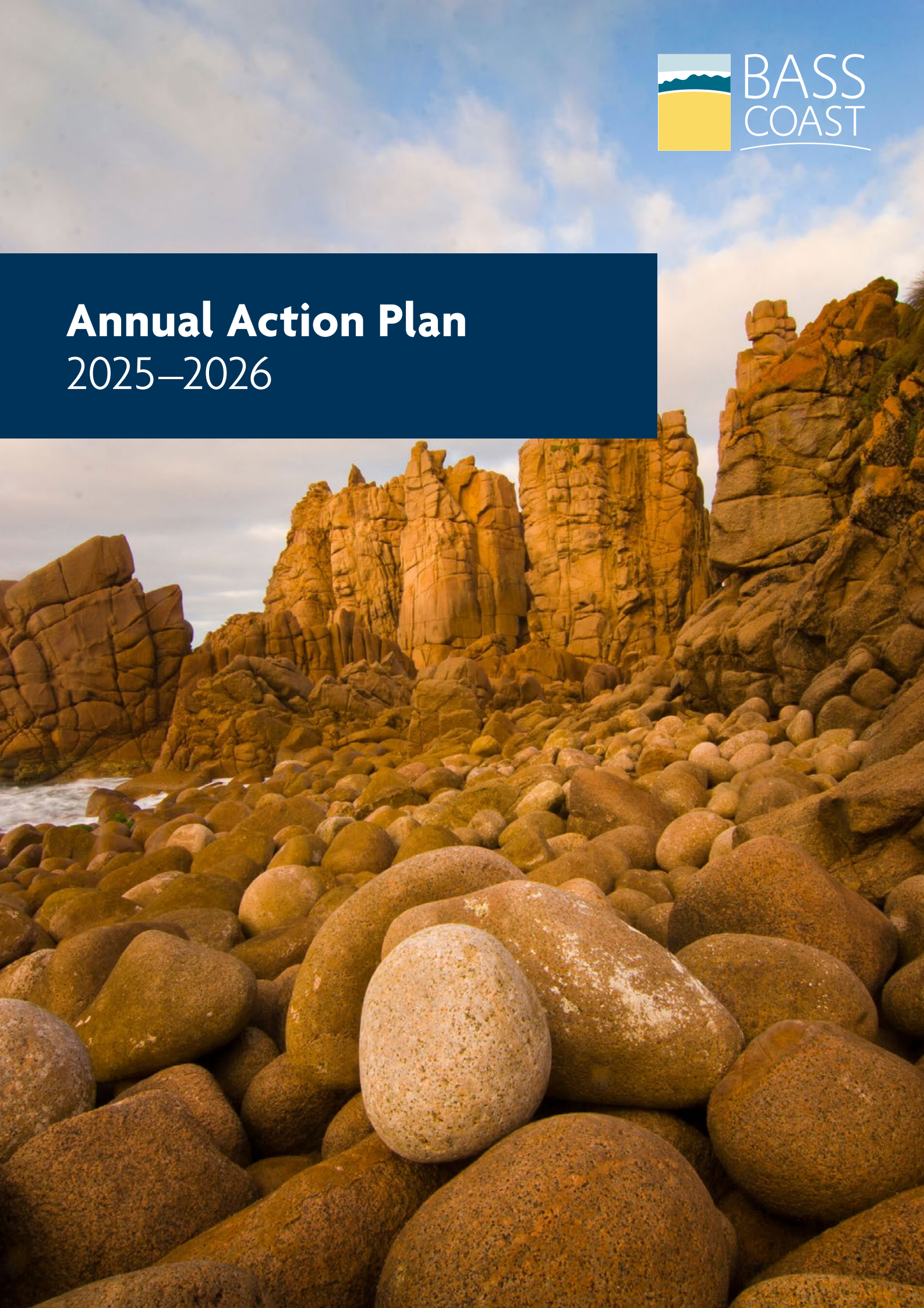


BASS COAST

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BassCoastShire basscoastshire

BASS COAST

Annual Action Plan
2025–2026





Acknowledgement of Country

Bass Coast Shire Council acknowledges the Bunurong as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and Lore.

Bass Coast Shire Council celebrates the opportunity to embrace and empower the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island Communities in their diversity.

Bass Coast Shire Council will create opportunities for future recognition and respectful partnerships that will honour the Traditional Owners and Custodians, and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Definitions for this plan

Finalise: Develop and present final draft to Council for consideration, or complete delivery of a project.

Review: Assess and update including developing recommendations for further action.

Implement: To deliver actions of the plan, strategy or project.

Prepare: Complete the final version of a plan, application, framework or a business case.

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Diversity and Inclusion

Bass Coast Shire Council celebrates the diversity of our communities. We acknowledge and respect the skills, insights and life experiences of all community members irrespective of gender, ethnicity, ability, religious belief, sexuality or age.

Child Safe Statement

Bass Coast Shire Council is committed to child safety and wellbeing, actively working to prevent abuse by identifying and addressing risks early. This work is underpinned by Council's Child Safe Statement, which guides our commitment to ensuring the safety, inclusion and wellbeing of every child.

Gender Impact Assessment

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was undertaken in developing the 2025–2026 Annual Action Plan, ensuring it reflects fairness, inclusivity and the diverse needs of our community.

About the Annual Action Plan 2025–2026

Every 4 years Council develops a Council Plan. Informed by a range of community engagement activities, the Council Plan identifies the priorities for the term of Council in order to work towards achievement of the Community Vision 2045.

The Annual Action Plan 2025–2026 outlines what Council plans to achieve by 30 June 2026, to support the delivery of the Council Plan 2025–2029.

Council will report on the progress of the Annual Action Plan quarterly, while the Annual Report will provide an end of year overview of Council's performance including how it is tracking against the Council Plan Strategic Indicators.

The 4 Strategic Objectives of the Council Plan 2025–2029

Naturally Beautiful	Together we build resilience and protect and enhance our natural environment.
Thriving Places	Facilities and infrastructure meet current and future needs. Growth is sustainable and well planned. Our economy, agriculture, tourism and industries are resilient. Unique character is preserved.
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Visionary Leadership	Our communities flourish through leadership that is open and responsible, ensuring decisions serve the communities best interests, and comply with legislative obligations.

Operating Principle

Bass Coast Shire Council is committed to delivering good governance for the benefit and well-being of the local communities and future generations. This involves partnering with the communities to address current needs and be prepared for future challenges. In all that we do, Council is committed to being responsive, efficient, transparent and future focused.

About the role of Local Government

There are 3 tiers of government in Australia:

- Local (also known as council)
- State or Territory
- Federal (also called Commonwealth)

Each tier of government has an important role. They have different powers and responsibilities and work together to govern and provide services to the community.

The role of Council is to provide good governance for the benefit of current and future communities. Council provides a range of services and manages community assets that people use every day. Council's role is outlined in the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Council undertakes a range of roles and functions to serve local communities. It is important for Council to work together with other levels of government, industry partners and communities to achieve the best outcomes.

Council makes decisions not just about today but for the future, set strategies to make a difference for the long term, balance competing demands and consider the best use of public funds.

There are many challenges facing Bass Coast that Council does not have direct control over. This includes areas under State and Federal Government jurisdiction, such as major transport infrastructure, public transport and arterial roads. However, Council actively works to influence and facilitate service and infrastructure provision.

The roles Council performs are listed below.

Provider

Deliver services, programs, infrastructure and support to individuals and groups.

Facilitator

Facilitate outcomes for communities through building partnerships, changing regulations, promoting opportunities, raising awareness, sharing information and building the capacity of community members and organisations.

Advocator

Raise awareness and show leadership for the interests of local communities to other decision makers, including advocating to State and Federal Governments for funding and delivery of services and infrastructure.

Regulator

Prioritise safety and regulate compliance of activities through local laws and legislation.

Planner

Use evidence, including community views to plan for current and future community needs and priorities.



Strategic Objective: Naturally Beautiful

Together we build resilience and protect and enhance our natural environment.

Action	Aligned Priority	Lead Department
Deliver the Wonthaggi closed landfill capping project.	- Strengthening waste management - Supporting circular economy	Sustainable Environment
Undertake a mid-term review of the Bass Coast Climate Change Action Plan 2020-2030.	- Enhancing biodiversity and natural asset protection - Increasing energy, disaster and climate resilience - Optimising water management	Sustainable Environment
Deliver a series of Living Lightly workshops promoting practical tips for a more affordable and sustainable lifestyle.	- Enhancing biodiversity and natural asset protection - Optimising water management	Sustainable Environment
Deliver a Clean Energy Retrofit to a minimum of one community facility.	- Increasing energy, disaster and climate resilience	Sustainable Environment
Advocate for the protection of the Western Port Woodlands.	- Enhancing biodiversity and natural asset protection	Governance and Communications



Strategic Objective: Thriving Places

Facilities and infrastructure meet current and future needs. Growth is sustainable and well planned. Our economy, agriculture, tourism and industries are resilient. Unique character is preserved.

Action	Aligned Priority	Lead Department
Adopt the Road Management Plan review.	- Providing fit for purpose assets and facilities	Infrastructure Delivery
Adopt the Asset Plan 2025–2035.	- Providing fit for purpose assets and facilities	Infrastructure Delivery
Prepare a Functional Layout Plan for the Phillip Island Recreation Reserve.	- Providing fit for purpose assets and facilities	Major Projects and Property
Continue delivery of the Cowes Streetscape Project works including Thompson Ave North and The Esplanade.	- Providing fit for purpose assets and facilities - Supporting local industry, business and agriculture	Major Projects and Property
Commence detailed design for the Bass Coast Aquatic and Leisure Centre (Wonthaggi).	- Providing fit for purpose assets and facilities	Major Projects and Property
Prepare and submit Bass Coast's application for Eco Destination Certification through Ecotourism Australia.	- Enhancing Eco Tourism	Economic Development
Commence a review of the Bass Coast Planning Scheme.	- Delivering well-planned townships	Strategy & Growth
Finalise construction of the Wonthaggi to Inverloch Shared Path.	- Delivering well-planned townships - Facilitating sustainable development	Infrastructure Delivery
Commence preparing the partnership framework, land use framework and business case for the former Wonthaggi School Site.	- Delivering well-planned townships - Facilitating sustainable development - Providing fit for purpose assets and facilities	Major Projects and Property



Strategic Objective: Vibrant Communities

Communities are healthy, inclusive, safe and socially connected. Communities celebrate opportunity, recreation, diversity, heritage and reconciliation.

Action	Aligned Priority	Lead Department
Adopt and commence implementation of the Healthy, Safe and Resilient Bass Coast Plan 2025 - 2029.	- Promoting healthy, active, safe and inclusive communities - Strengthening community connection and resilience - Support young people to live, learn, play and connect locally	Community Wellbeing & Culture
Commence implementation of the Public Art Strategy.	- Celebrating culture and history	Community Wellbeing & Culture
Co-design and endorse a First Nations Framework.	- Walking alongside our First Nations communities on the path to reconciliation	Community Wellbeing & Culture
Identify and strengthen strategic partnerships with housing and service providers and support those partnerships when delivering Council services.	- Advocate to increase in affordable housing and access to local services	Community Wellbeing & Culture



Strategic Objective: Visionary Leadership

Our communities flourish through leadership that is open and responsible, ensuring decisions serve the communities best interests, and comply with legislative obligations.

Action	Aligned Priority	Lead Department
Adopt the refreshed Community Vision.	- Driving innovation	Governance and Communications
Adopt the Council Plan 2025–2029.	- Driving innovation	Governance and Communications
Adopt the Long Term Financial Plan 2025–2035.	- Maximising alternative revenue	Financial Services
Adopt the Workforce Plan 2025-2029.	- Driving innovation	People and Culture
Review of Council's rating strategy and differential rates.	- Maximising alternative revenue	Financial Services
Enhancing the customer experience by improving engagement channels.	- Effective communication and engagement	Customer & Digital Experience
Continue to advocate and optimise strategic partnerships to improve community outcomes.	- Strong advocacy - Optimising partnerships	Governance and Communications
Commence the review of the Communications and Engagement Strategy.	- Effective communication and engagement	Governance and Communications
Commence the review of the Advocacy Strategy.	- Strong advocacy	Governance and Communications





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