



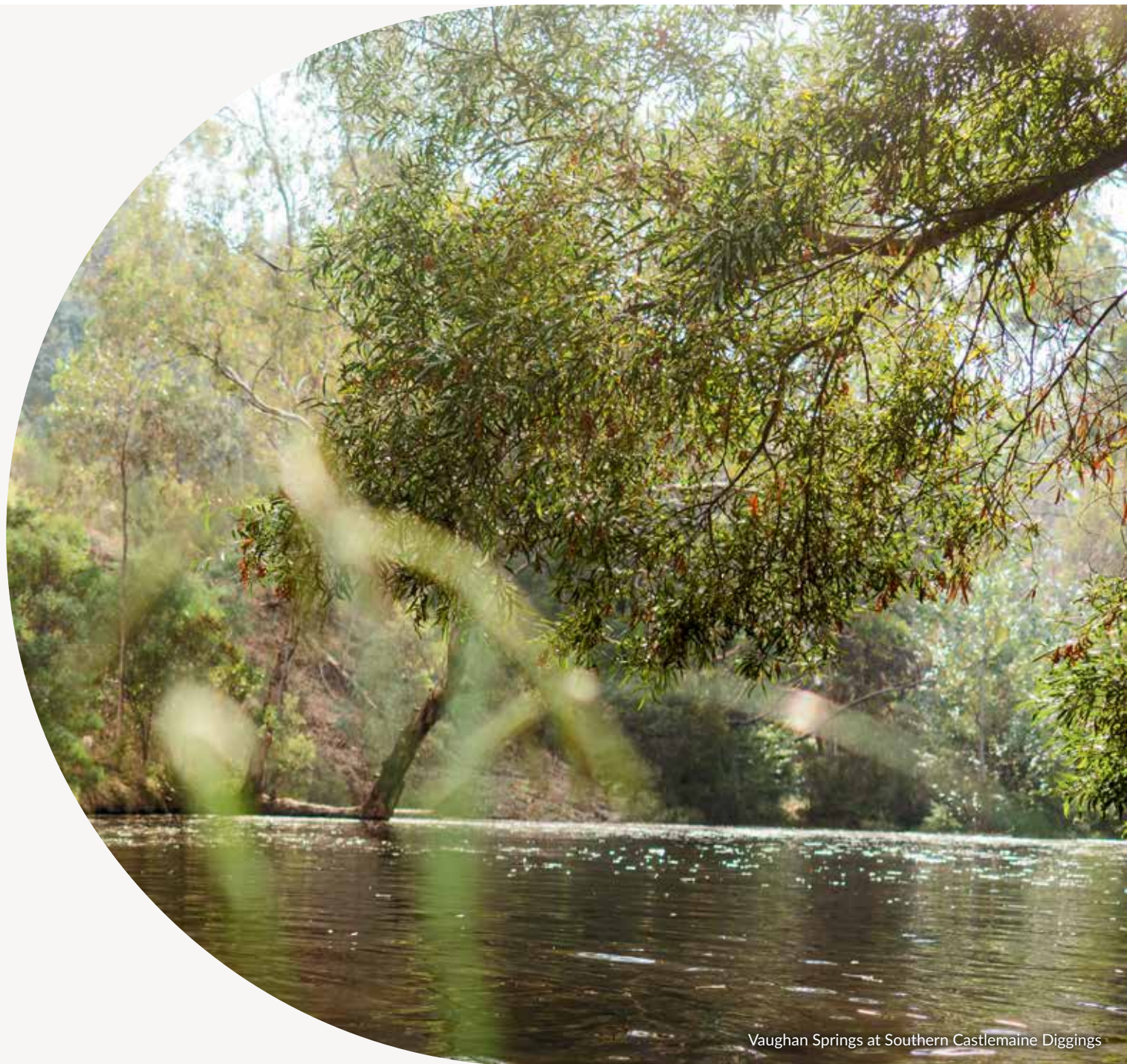
Bendigo Region

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - DMP 2024

Acknowledgement of Country

The Bendigo Region is home to the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Barapa Barapa peoples. We pay our respects to Elders past and present who have cared for this Country for over 60,000 years.

The wider community respectfully acknowledges and appreciates their close and ongoing connection to the land and waters within the region which holds the memories, tradition, culture and hopes of their peoples.



Vaughan Springs at Southern Castlemaine Diggings



OUR UNITED VISION FOR TOURISM

Enriching People and Place through Tourism

Purpose of the DMP

The ambition of the DMP is to ensure tourism delivers lasting positive outcomes for the community and environment within the Bendigo Region, and helps to enable a sustainable and resilient visitor economy into the future.

The DMP connects the dots between stakeholder priorities at a local, regional, state and national level to optimise resources, improve outcomes, reduce and mitigate risk, and to unite stakeholders in the delivery of positive outcomes for tourism.

For a complete list of strategic references for the DMP, refer to Acknowledgements, Page 91 of the Bendigo Region DMP 2024 (full version).

The DMP is governed by a vision for tourism which will be achieved through agreed priorities for action, and has purposefully been designed to be agile, to remain a relevant framework throughout the entirety of its lifespan and beyond.

The DMP should be approached as a comprehensive strategic analysis and action plan of the opportunity for the Bendigo Region and as a future-facing framework to achieve the balance and prosperity our community seeks.

Glossary

BRT – Bendigo Regional Tourism

BT – Bendigo Tourism Inc.

COGB – City of Greater Bendigo

CGSC – Central Goldfields Shire Council

DJSIR – Victorian State Government Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions

DJAARA – Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation

DMP – This Destination Management Plan

GRP – Gross Regional Product

GVA – Gross Value Added

LGA – Local Government Authority

LSC – Loddon Shire Council

MASC – Mount Alexander Shire Council

RDV – Regional Development Victoria

RTB – Regional Tourism Board

TRA – Tourism Research Australia

The Region – The Bendigo Region

TLaWC – Taungurung Land and Water Council

UNESCO – United Nations Education, Scientific & Cultural Organisation

VEP – Visitor Economy Partnerships

VFR – Visiting Friends and Relatives

VGWHB – Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid

VTIC – Victorian Tourism Industry Council

VV – Visit Victoria

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE FOR THE REGION

Aspirations to achieve the Region’s vision of **Enriching People and Place through Tourism** have been identified across five wellbeing areas to guide the success measures of this Plan.

COMMUNITY

Community members have a clear understanding of the full value of tourism, and enjoy sharing their part of the destination with visitors, family and friends.

ENVIRONMENT

Regional Partners and industry are educated and empowered to deliver experiences that have a positive impact on the environment.

VISITOR

To position the region as a highly desirable tourism destination, to attract high value visitors who seek meaningful interaction and connection with our people, culture and place.

ECONOMY

To enhance the overall economic contribution of the visitor economy, fostering a dynamic, innovative, and resilient business community.

INDUSTRY

Tourism businesses are prospering, benefiting from a skilled and engaged workforce, and continuously adapting to meet the expectations of visitors.



Theatre Royal – Castlemaine

Understanding the Region

To develop a vision for tourism in the Bendigo Region and a genuine place-based plan to underpin the vision, a united understanding and definition of 'place' must first be determined.

First Peoples' Country

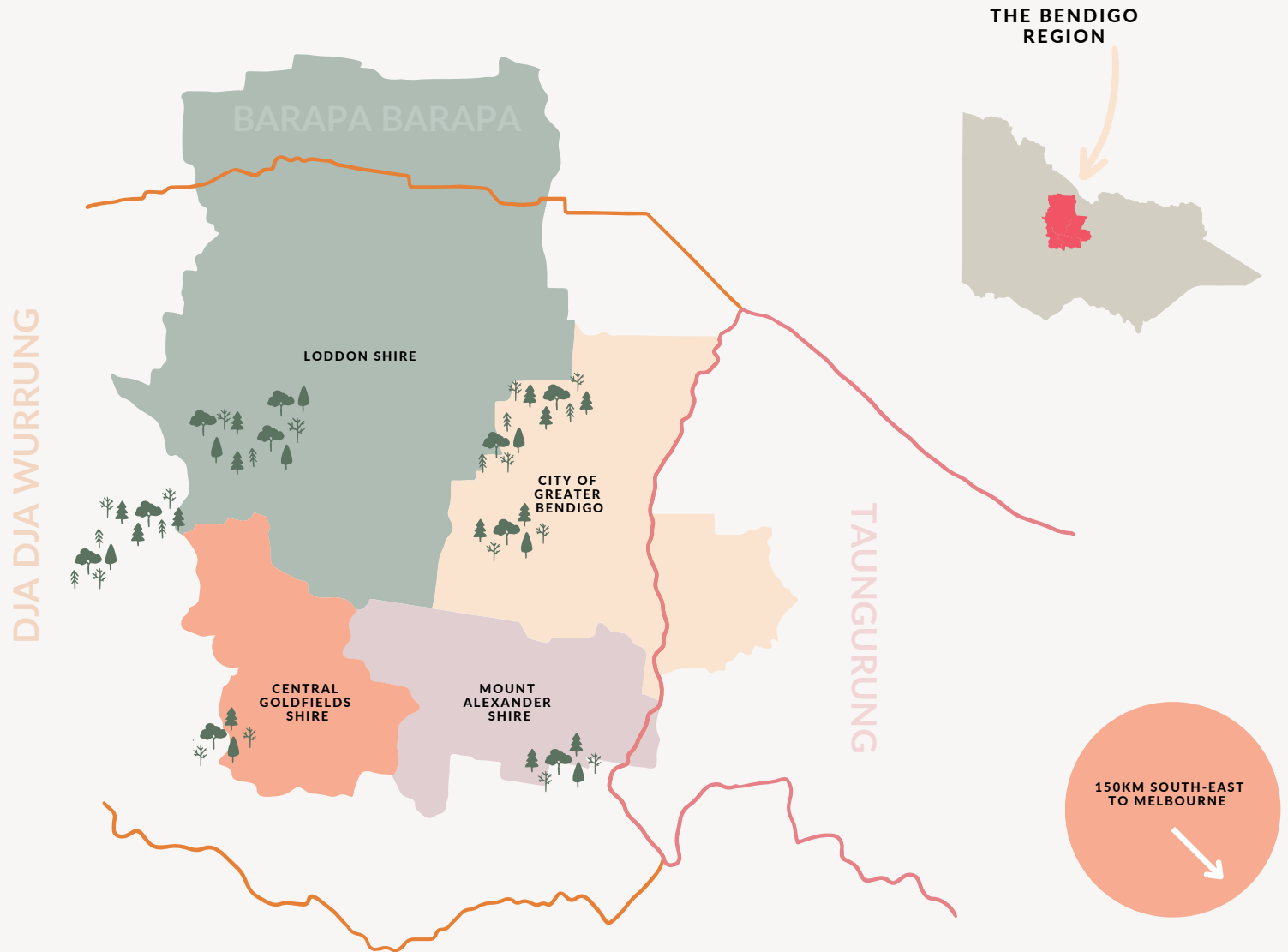
The Bendigo Region is on Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Barapa Barapa Country; a rich cultural landscape that is woven with dreaming stories, law, totemic relationships, songs, ceremonies and ancestral spirits, which give it life and hold significant value.

The Natural Landscape

The landscape of the Bendigo region is a complex tapestry woven from various layers, each contributing to its distinctive character.

Communities

From the Traditional Owners and First People's residents to long-standing locals to newer arrivals and migrants, the Region has a vibrant community of creative and passionate residents.



Regional Competitive Advantage

Visitors have long enjoyed the opportunity to immerse in our world-class, inspiring art and cultural experiences; sample our quality food and wine experiences, and enjoy our ancient landscapes.

The Region will leverage its strong reputation built on its competitive strengths, and continue to evolve its offering (within these strengths) to remain a highly desirable travel destination into the future.



ARTS & CULTURE



FIRST PEOPLES



HISTORY & HERITAGE



FOOD & DRINK



NATURE, OUTDOORS & ADVENTURES

The Value of Tourism



GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT
\$459m in 2021/2022
(4.7% of Regional GRP)



JOBS
5,600 Direct Jobs in 2021/2022
6.9% of Regional Jobs

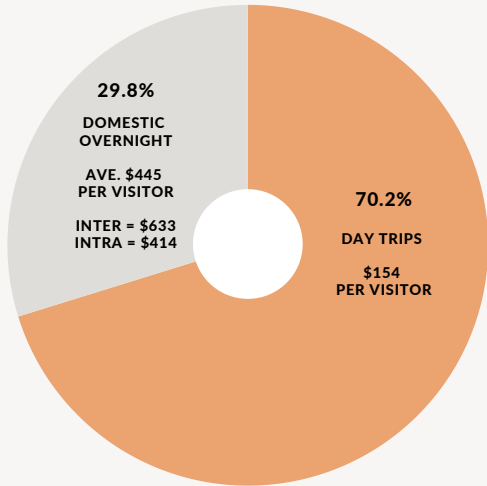


BUSINESSES
1,875 Traditional Tourism Businesses*
As at June 2022, 7.1% increase from June 2021

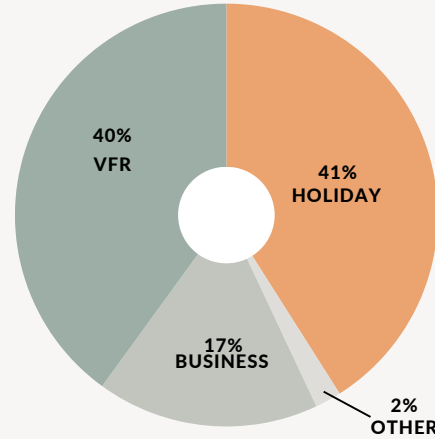
*Traditional Tourism Businesses as per ABS Specifications

REGIONAL SNAPSHOT: VISITATION

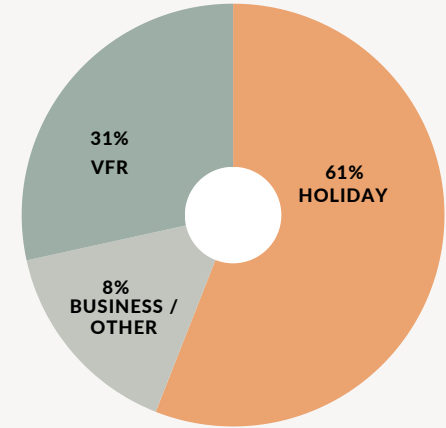
VISITOR BREAKDOWN



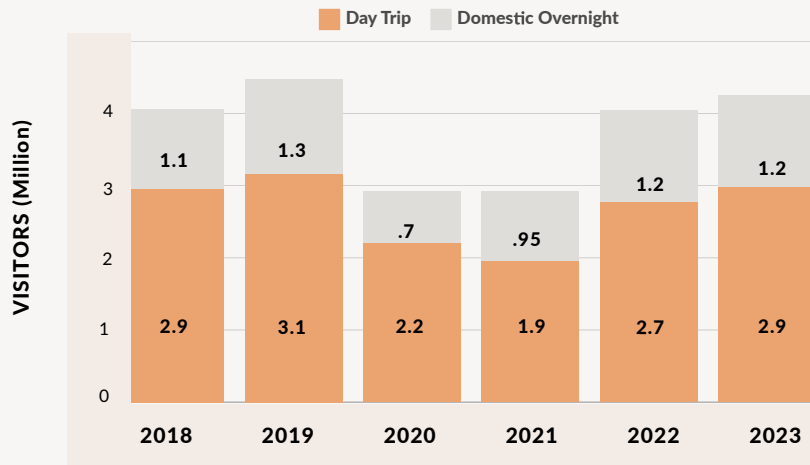
TRAVEL PURPOSE / OVERNIGHT VISITORS



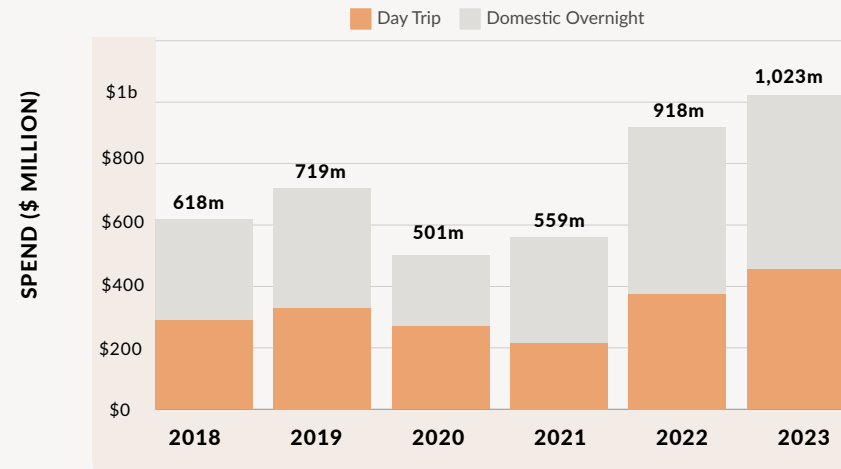
TRAVEL PURPOSE / DAY TRIP



TOTAL VISITORS



EXPENDITURE PER VISITOR TYPE



REFERENCES

- 2019 International Visitor Expenditure, Visitors and Nights data available from 'Victorian Tourism Statistics YE June 2023' data supplied by the Tourism and Events Research Unit, DJSIR, September 2023.
- Travel Purpose data extracted from Tourism Research Australia's Domestic NVS data insights for YE June 2023. Day Trips by Australian Residents, and Overnight Trips by Australian Residents > <https://www.tra.gov.au/en/domestic/domestic-tourismtrends>

DMP 2024 OVERVIEW

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Vision</p> | <p>Enriching People and Place through Tourism</p> | | | | |
| <p>Aspirations. What success looks like.</p> | <p>COMMUNITY</p> <p>Community members have a clear understanding of the full value of tourism, and enjoy sharing their part of the destination with visitors, family and friends.</p> | <p>ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Regional Partners and industry are educated and empowered to deliver experiences that have a positive impact on the environment.</p> | <p>VISITOR</p> <p>To position the Region as a highly desirable destination, to attract high value visitors who seek meaningful interaction and connection with our people, culture and place.</p> | <p>ECONOMY</p> <p>To enhance the overall economic contribution of the visitor economy, fostering a dynamic, innovative, and resilient business community.</p> | <p>INDUSTRY</p> <p>Tourism businesses are prospering, benefiting from a skilled and engaged workforce, and continuously adapting to meet the expectations of visitors.</p> |
| <p>Guiding Principles</p> | <p>We honour our heritage We practice meaningful reconciliation We celebrate our collective creativity We bring locals & visitors together We respect & protect our environment</p> | | | | |
| <p>Regional Competitive Advantage</p> | <p>Arts & Culture. First Peoples. History & Heritage. Food & Drink. Nature Outdoors & Adventure.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Visitor Markets</p> | <p>High Value Leisure Visitors. Visiting Friends & Relatives. Business, Sport, Education and Student Visitor Markets.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Strategic Pillars (3)</p> | <p>1. Transformative & Sustainable Visitor Experiences</p> | <p>2. Meaningful & Impactful Destination Storytelling</p> | <p>3. Cohesive & Dynamic Destination Stewardship</p> | | |
| <p>Priorities (22)</p> | <p>1.1 Transformational Visitor Experiences (Across 6 Focus Areas) 1.2 Regional Priority Projects Support (Across 4 LGA Areas) 1.3 Regional Events Development 1.4 Business Capability & Excellence, Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Diversification 1.5 Positive-Impact Visitor Experiences & Events 1.6 Quality Accommodation 1.7 Visitor Movements 1.8 Workforce Development 1.9 Regional Placemaking</p> | <p>2.1 Destination Brand Evolution 2.2 Marketing Strategic Management 2.3 Visitor Market Activation 2.4 Destination Storytelling 2.5 Strategic Brand & Marketing Partnerships 2.6 Visitor Servicing</p> | <p>3.1 Plan Governance 3.2 Tourism Impact Measurement Strategy 3.3 Regional Relationships Strategy 3.4 DMP Project Funding Strategy 3.5 Destination Advocacy 3.6 DMP Engagement & Communication Plan 3.7 Tourism Investment Advocacy 3.8 Emergency Preparedness</p> | | |
| <p>Plan Governance Principles</p> | <p>Stewardship Mindset. Strong and Respectful Relationships. Accountability over Responsibility. Ongoing Listening. Understanding our Impact & Celebrating Success. Continuous Improvement</p> | | | | |

Guiding Principles



WE CELEBRATE OUR COLLECTIVE CREATIVITY

- We understand our Region's UNESCO credentials offer a global platform to strengthen the Region's creative ingenuity, highlight the Region's talented producers and makers, and drive positive change for the community and environment.
- We will amplify the message and intent of the designation by sharing stories of community creativity and diversity, environmental sustainability, and cultural creativity and knowledge.
- We will advocate for the development of meaningful and values led experiences that support the objectives of the designation – including those that are sustainable, inclusive, and that offer a lasting positive impact for the community, culture and the environment.



WE PRACTICE MEANINGFUL RECONCILIATION

- We will respect self determination and support DJAARA and TLaWC aspirations to develop visitor experiences and connect visitors with their Caring for Country initiatives.
- We will ensure place-based branding highlights and amplifies the way in which Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples see and respect Country.
- We will support DJAARA and TLaWC by sharing stories, place names and acknowledgement in a meaningful and respectful way to build awareness and respect.



WE HONOUR OUR HERITAGE

- We will seek to understand, articulate and share the interconnected relationship between our living and past histories and perspectives, and recognise the importance of our history in our regional DNA.
- We will advocate for local area infrastructure advocacy/ delivery that supports the activation of the Victorian Goldfields Sustainable Tourism Heritage Masterplan.
- We will support the development of immersive and values-led experiences that share stories of the Region's history, heritage and landscapes.



WE BRING LOCALS & VISITORS TOGETHER

- We encourage industry to consider opportunities on how to connect visitors with local people.
- We amplify opportunities for visitors to engage authentically with locals, through event design and storytelling.



WE RESPECT & PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

- We promote positive visitor behaviours through our storytelling, marketing and visitor servicing.
- We share our Cultural understanding of significant sites through storytelling.
- We encourage visitors to engage with our local environment respectfully.
- We encourage our industry to help visitors connect with the local environment through immersive experiences.

Strategic Pillars & Priorities

Strategic leadership and direction, collaboration, connection and regional cohesiveness were identified consistently as having the ‘greatest impact on the future of tourism in the region’.



Regional Priority Projects (Strategic)

| REGIONAL PRIORITY PROJECT | STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT | KEY OUTCOMES | PRELIMINARY PROJECT SCOPE | PARTNERS |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Regional Leaders Partnership Framework | Priority 3.3 | <p>The Bendigo Region's tourism ecosystem is strong, connected, and dynamic.</p> <p>Stakeholders are working in respectful partnership to deliver meaningful and aligned outcomes, to achieve the Regional Tourism Vision and Aspirations</p> <p>All partners feel valued, respected, heard and have a positive sentiment for the relationships within the ecosystem.</p> | <p>To develop a Regional Partnerships Framework which outlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of values and guidelines that underpin the stakeholder relationships across the ecosystem • Each Stakeholder vision and mission, and key targets • Agreed mechanisms for communication and engagement • Agreed engagement framework for the scoping and activation of tourism opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Owners • LGAs • Industry • DJSIR • VV |
| Data & Insights | Priority 1.6, 3.1 and 3.2 | <p>Accurately measure and report on the vision, aspirations of the DMP.</p> <p>Industry, community and potential investors (Government/Private) understand the full value of tourism in the Bendigo Region.</p> <p>Develop regional visitor personas that provide the strategic focus for marketing investment and experience design.</p> <p>Optimise efforts to grow overnight stays across the Region</p> | <p>To develop a dynamic, and valid digital dashboard/mechanism that draws in insights and indicators that support the measurement of the DMP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with data and insight partners and industry to determine what data is available to measure tourism success (ref. DMP Measurement Framework) • Ensure the dashboard includes local measures (to measure the Local Targets in the LAAPs Measurement Framework) <p>Invest in primary research that helps to determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Profiles for the region (as per visitor markets outlined in this DMP). Particularly behavioural and psychographic tendencies) • The latent demand from key market segments, to inform marketing and experience development priorities. <p>Undertake an audit and analysis of short stay accommodation trends to identify impediments to growth, future thinking and opportunities across the region.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DJSIR - Research & Insights Team • Industry • LGAs • Traditional Owners |

REGIONAL PRIORITY PROJECTS (STRATEGIC) / CONTINUED

| REGIONAL PRIORITY PROJECT | STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT | KEY OUTCOMES | PRELIMINARY PROJECT SCOPE | PARTNERS |
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| Experience Development Mentoring Programs | Priority 1.4 | <p>To build the depth and breadth of visitor experiences that align with the region's experience strengths and emerging potential, that appeal to future traveller motivations.</p> <p>Deepen the connection visitor experiences have with people, culture and place (less transactional).</p> <p>Support economic diversification, creating more opportunities for non-traditional tourism businesses to explore new sources of income.</p> <p>Support existing tourism businesses to attract new markets (incl. Inbound) to build resilience in the tourism sector.</p> <p>Build sustainable experience clusters throughout the region, to grow dispersal and overnight yield.</p> | <p>Experience Development Mentoring Programs focus on building the depth and breath of quality and aligned visitor experiences in the region.</p> <p>Programs will be developed and facilitated to support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established Businesses - focus on reviewing and optimising current experience for alignment with Experience Strengths and visitor motivations, and diversifying into different markets (eg. inbound, niche and visitor markets as identified in Priority 2.3) New Businesses - eligible businesses and entrepreneurs who haven't got a visitor experience, but looking to diversify (eg. Social Enterprise, Agriculture) Positive Impact - focus on developing experiences that enable visitors to actively 'give back' to community/culture/environment through the visitor experience. <p>Program learning facilitation must be accessible to all businesses across the Bendigo Region.</p> <p>Program methodology to include opportunity for small group co-design of solutions, build partnerships, and encourage cooperative/collaborative outcomes.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DJSIR VV Launch VIC LGAs Industry Traditional Owners |
| Destination Brand Strategy & Brand Asset Development | Priority 2.1 | <p>To understand deeply and clearly articulate the stories of people, culture and place that constitute the Bendigo Region to guide strategic destination brand and marketing activities (as outlined in Pillar 2).</p> <p>Access to a suite of brand assets that accurately represent the stories of people, culture and place, are developed and used across destination marketing activations to increase appeal for the Bendigo Region as a travel destination among key markets.</p> <p>All Regional Partners and stakeholders are engaged brand custodians, and confidently share local stories through all tourism marketing activations.</p> | <p>Develop a brand strategy that reflects the DNA of people, culture and place within the Bendigo Region.</p> <p><i>Considerations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a thorough and considered listening with all regional stakeholders and partners Reconcile all perspectives, stories and layers that make up the DNA of the Region Deliverables include positioning, essence, personality for the region, and the sub-regions within (LGA regions). <p>Develop a suite of visual and written assets that share the story of the regional brand, inclusive of a visual identity (for the region, and sub-regions) and library of images and video content.</p> <p>Develop and execute a <i>brand implementation strategy</i> to ensure all Regional Partners and stakeholders are clear on their role supporting and amplifying the brand.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VV LGAs Traditional Owners Industry Community |

REGIONAL PRIORITY PROJECTS (STRATEGIC) / CONTINUED

| REGIONAL PRIORITY PROJECT | STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT | KEY OUTCOMES | PRELIMINARY PROJECT SCOPE | PARTNERS |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Industry Capability Development Program | Priority 1.4 & 1.5 | Tourism businesses and volunteer committees are sustainable, resilient and prosperous enterprises that deliver experiences and events which align with the Region's competitive strengths, and with traveller's evolving motivations. | To deliver an annual, scaled, program of learning for the tourism industry focussing on the development of sustainable and resilient businesses. Key Focus Areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability / Positive Impact Experiences • Accessibility • Digital / AI • Workforce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DJSIR • VV • LGAs • Industry • VTIC |
| Regional Events Framework | Priority 1.3 | <p>Major, participatory sporting and business events are driving demand year-round, with focus on mid-week, longer stays and regional dispersal.</p> <p>Local and community events are bringing the destination experience strengths to life, connecting visitors to destination values, and stories of people and place.</p> | <p>Develop a <i>Regional Events Framework</i> to outline BRT's role in supporting the development of sustainable tourism and business events across the Region.</p> <p><i>Considerations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Audit and analyse the issues and opportunities regarding tourism and business events across the region, and where BRT can directly influence/support the sustainable growth of events across the region. ◦ Articulate the strategic commitment and approach to tourism and business events from each LGA, Traditional Owners, and other regional / local parties ◦ Identify potential scalable solutions for key issues regarding tourism events (eg. Volunteer fatigue/recruitment/skills development/succession planning, regional professional event staff pool) ◦ Dispersal strategies for major tourism events, to drive overnight stays ◦ Support the progression of Regional Priority Projects which support Regional Events (Event Infrastructure, Accommodation) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGAs • Traditional Owners • Industry |
| Visitor Servicing Strategy | Priority 2.6 | <p>Visitors to the Region are supported with accurate, inspirational and accessible information they need to plan, book and experience the Region across relevant touchpoints along their travel journey.</p> <p>Visitors know how to be respectful of our communities and the environment when exploring our region.</p> | <p>Develop a <i>Regional Visitor Servicing Strategy</i> based on best practice visitor servicing delivery, considering strategies relating to Pre-Travel Information, Visitor Welcome, Engagement, Learning & Connection, and Dispersal).</p> <p><i>Considerations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Explore efficiencies and potential for consistent overarching branding for local guides (including print OVGs etc); Signage strategies aligned with Victorian Goldfields destination marketing; ensure WHB is included in partners ◦ Consider the role of volunteers in the scope of Visitor Servicing, and how to optimise volunteerism through the provision of visitor servicing into the future. ◦ The strategy must have a robust measurement mechanism to track visitor behaviour and movement to inform an agile approach to visitor servicing. ◦ Inclusive and accessible visitor servicing activities considered that support visitors of cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD communities) ◦ VTIC are reviewing the VIC Accreditation Guidelines so new Strategy to align to any updates or recommendations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGAs • VTIC • DJSIR • VV • VGWHB |

Acknowledgements

The development of this Plan has been led by Bendigo Regional Tourism, and enabled by a Project Working Group including representatives from the Board's constituent Councils along with a representative from the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry & Regions (DJSIR) and key partners: DJAARA and the Taungurung Land and Waters Council.

For a full list of collaborators and consultations, see 'Stakeholder Engagement & Consultation' in the full version of the 2024 DMP.

Working In Partnership

Throughout this process, BRT have engaged with representatives of both DJAARA and TLaWC in the spirit of partnership, growth and continued learning, and we thank them for their commitment to growing the cultural vibrancy of our region through sustainable, ethical tourism practises.





Balgownie Estate - Glamping

This Plan has been developed by Bendigo Regional Tourism, in partnership with the Victorian State Government, and the City of Greater Bendigo, Loddon Shire Council, Central Goldfields Shire Council and Mount Alexander Shire Council.

