
TOWONG SHIRE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2022-26



Urban Enterprise
For Towong Shire Council

April 2022



The Towong Shire Destination Management Plan was prepared by Urban Enterprise in collaboration with Towong Shire Council.

Authors of this report are:

- Mike Ruzzene, Director
- Agathy Patsouris, Senior Consultant
- Alana Grollo, Consultant

ACRONYMS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
DMP	Destination Management Plan
EDS	Economic Development Strategy
IVS	International Visitor Survey
LGA	Local Government Area
PA	Per Annum
NVS	National Visitor Survey
TNE	Tourism North East
TRA	Tourism Research Australia

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Daytrip Visitor	Those who travel for a round trip distance of at least 50 kilometres, are away from home for at least 4 hours, and who do not spend a night away from home as part of their travel. Same day travel as part of overnight travel is excluded.
International Visitor	A person is defined as an international visitor to Australia if they are currently a resident overseas, have been in Australia for less than one year and are aged 15 years or over.
Overnight Visitor	People aged 15 years and over who undertake an overnight trip of one night or more and at least 40 kilometres away from home are referred to as overnight visitors. Only those trips where the respondent is away from home for less than 12 months are in scope of the NVS.
High Country	The High Country is a defined tourism region in Victoria's north-east, which includes seven shires – Alpine, Benalla, Indigo, Mansfield, Murrindindi, Towong and Wangaratta – and the three major alpine resorts of Falls Creek, Mt Buller and Mt Hotham. The region is represented by a regional tourism board (Tourism North East).



CONTENTS

4 **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

12 **INTRODUCTION**

15 **INFORMING THE DMP**

21 **WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL DESTINATION**

24 **VISITOR ECONOMY**

28 **PRODUCT, EXPERIENCE AND EVENTS**

39 **BRANDING AND MARKETING**

49 **DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK**

71 **PRIORITY INVESTMENT PROJECTS**

78 **ACTION PLAN**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

Towong Shire has untapped potential as a High Country visitor destination. The visitor economy has opportunity to become a key economic driver that supports a prosperous local tourism industry.

The Towong Shire Destination Management Plan 2022-2026 (DMP or Plan) is a key strategic document for Towong Shire Council (Council) to guide development and growth of the visitor economy over the next five years.

Prepared in collaboration with Urban Enterprise, the Plan is designed to provide strategic direction for **growth of the visitor economy by increasing the number of visitors to the Shire, extending the length of stay and increasing visitor spend**. This includes clear objectives and an action plan for Council to help implement the Plan, focusing on the visitor economy opportunities for key destinations and assets across the municipality.

This Plan is informed by independent research and analysis, as well as consultation with industry representatives, community groups, businesses, Council and Government stakeholders.

TOWONG SHIRE

Towong Shire is a rural municipality located in Victoria's north-east, bordering NSW to the north and east and Albury-Wodonga to the west.

It is the largest municipality in the Hume Region (6,675 square kilometres), as well as the least populated (6,102 residents), making it one of the least densely populated areas in Victoria. This presents numerous challenges for Council, including service delivery, asset management and community and industry engagement.

The area is primarily known for agriculture, with a vast amount of productive farmland that comprises around 30% of total land in the Shire. This is the primary driver of Towong's economy and employment, as well as its community identity.

The Shire offers unique nature and water-based assets, which contribute to Towong's rural amenity and lifestyle offer for visitors. The immersive landscape of Towong Shire including its mountainous terrain and nature-based assets are a key strength that can be harnessed.

There are various visitor destinations and communities dispersed across the Shire. Key townships include Tallangatta (administrative centre) to the west and Corryong (service centre) to the east, with other significant towns including Mitta Mitta and Eskdale in the south-west, as well as Bellbridge and Bethanga in the north-west.

REGIONAL CONTEXT AND LEVERAGING THE HIGH COUNTRY BRAND

Towong is located on the border of Victoria and New South Wales, in Victoria's High Country tourism region. The High Country is a strong regional tourism brand, well-known for nature, the outdoors, snow and local produce.

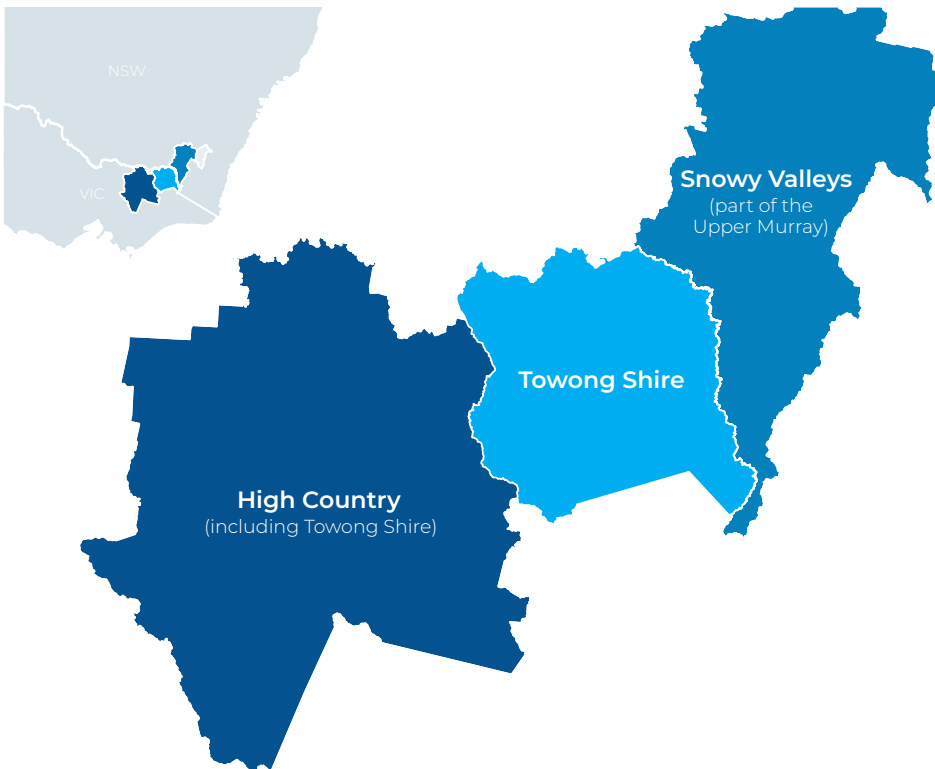
Tourism North East is the regional tourism board responsible for promoting the High Country region, which includes seven local government areas across the State's north-east alpine region. Towong Shire is a paid member of Tourism North East.

The High Country promotes a range of product pillars, including Cycle Tourism, Snow, Food and Drinks, Nature-based experiences and Arts and Cultural Heritage. Towong Shire is well-aligned to the High Country product offering, particularly in terms of the Shire's emerging potential for high quality nature-based and cycle tourism experiences.

There is opportunity to strengthen the Shire's alignment to the High Country through activation of nature-based assets, investment in cycling, and increased investment in contemporary and high quality food and drink, and arts and cultural heritage experiences.

Developing products, experiences and infrastructure that are well-aligned to the High Country brand, and meet quality expectations of the existing High Country visitor, will be key to growing awareness of Towong Shire through High Country promotion. Enhanced involvement in the regional tourism board structure will provide a range of benefits to Council and local industry can benefit through general marketing activities, targeted marketing campaigns and inclusion in touring itineraries.

In addition to leveraging Tourism North East activities, it's critical that Towong Shire leverages the existing regional visitor market travelling to the surrounding region and surrounding population base. This accounts for over 9 million regional visitors and 260,000 residents in surrounding regional cities of Albury-Wodonga, Wagga Wagga, Shepparton and Wangaratta





VISITOR ECONOMY OVERVIEW

The Towong Shire's visitor economy is in its infancy, attracting 195,000 visitors annually who spend \$23.9 million. This accounts for 6% of High Country visitation and 4% of visitor spend.

Visitors predominately travel to visit friends and relatives, or for holiday purposes. The majority of holiday visitors can be considered to be habitual visitors, who tend to visit Towong Shire consistently and tend to camp or caravan, preferring to self-cater and spending minimally in the local economy.

As a border municipality, the Shire receives a large proportion of visitation from NSW (37%) as well as Victoria (54%).

PRODUCT STRENGTHS AND GAPS

Towong Shire is characterised by its rolling hills and mountains, and a feeling of immersion in nature. The Shire's natural assets and amenity, and the activities they support, are Towong's key strength.

National Parks and water-based assets have been identified as primary strengths for the Shire. Hero nature-based assets include the Alpine National Park, Burrowa-Pine National Park, Mount Granya State Park, Mt Lawson State Park and Mount Mittamatite Regional Park. Hero water-based assets include Lake Hume, Lake Dartmouth, the Mitta Mitta River and Murray River.

The Shire has secondary and emerging strengths in cycling, touring and sports and recreation. These experiences require further investment and activation to become hero experiences, however are well-aligned to the Shire and High Country's primary strength of nature-based tourism.

There are a range of product and experience gaps and opportunities, including accommodation, food, ferments and farmgate, events, and arts culture and heritage experiences. Targeted and ongoing investment is required to meet the standards of the contemporary visitor market and attract target markets.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

A number of key considerations for the Towong Shire visitor economy have emerged through the Destination Management Planning process.

These have been summarised below.



Product and Experience

- Hero product to drive awareness
- Investment in supporting tourism experiences, including accommodation and food and beverage
- Investment in cycling and in particular mountain biking
- Activating and leveraging natural assets



Markets

- Reduced access to source markets due to location
- Opportunity to grow the family market



Marketing and Branding

- Lack of clear and cohesive brands
- Leveraging the High Country brand
- Lack of cohesive governance and strong leadership
- Lack of quality and motivational digital content and information
- Enhancing business digital presence
- Need for improved signage



Infrastructure and Amenity

- Town amenity and activation
- Lack of water and sewerage to support investment
- Need for digital infrastructure improvements
- Limited land for development
- Investment in events infrastructure to improve utilisation
- Leveraging the Corryong Airport
- Improved transport infrastructure



Resourcing and Collaboration

- Fragmented tourism governance
- Constrained Council resourcing and implementation
- Leveraging Tourism North East resources and capacity
- Industry collaboration and communication
- Attracting skilled and unskilled labour force
- Investment attraction and facilitation

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

VISION



Towong Shire is the leading High Country destination to escape to and immerse in nature and the outdoors. The nature-based experiences are complemented by quality food, drink and accommodation experiences.



OBJECTIVES

Establishes hero products and experiences to drive visitation and increase awareness.

Encourages visitor dispersal across the Shire to tourism nodes.

Create critical product mass through focused investment at key visitor nodes.

Strengthen alignment to High Country brand pillars.

Support investment in contemporary visitor products and experiences.

Establish a clear and cohesive brand identity that resonates with the market.

Improve the visitor journey by creating clear touring routes and quality visitor infrastructure, supported by clear visitor information.

Support growth of a diverse and visitor-ready tourism industry.

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Key performance targets have been identified for Towong Shire to track performance of the visitor economy over the life of this Plan.

1. Double visitation to Towong Shire from 195,000 to 400,000 by 2026.

2. Grow daytrip yield per visitor from \$62 to \$91 by 2026, in line with Tourism North East's visitor profile. This is a growth of approximately 47%.

3. Grow overnight yield per visitor by \$100 per trip, from \$287 per night to \$387. This is a growth of approximately 30%.



STRATEGIC INVESTMENT THEMES AND TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECTS

Key themes to guide future investment have been identified, in response to strategic considerations and the Shire's objectives for tourism development.

Transformative Projects aligned to each theme have been shown below. These are projects that will deliver the greatest economic benefit for the Shire, and will support the positioning of the Shire as a leading High Country destination to immerse in and experience nature.

Additional project opportunities have been identified in Section 8 Strategic Framework.



THEME 1. ACCOMMODATION

Delivery of quality, contemporary and diverse accommodation stock to attract target markets and increase overnight stays and visitor yield.



THEME 2. FOOD, BEVERAGE AND FARMGATE

Investment in motivational and contemporary food and drink experiences to meet visitor expectations and leverage the region's high quality agricultural produce.



THEME 3. NATURE AND WATER

Activate, harness and showcase key natural and waterway assets through investment and improved utilisation.



THEME 4. RIDE

Invest in a range of trails infrastructure and formalise existing trails to position Towong as one of High Country's hero cycling destinations.

TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECTS

- **Holiday Park Reinvestment Program**
- **Cudgewa Valley Wilderness Retreat**
- **Small Scale Accommodation Interventions**
- **Old Tallangatta Butter Factory Revitalisation**
- **Bellbridge Boathouse**
- **Corryong Distillery**
- **Visitor Experience Enhancement Plan for Burrowa-Pine Mountain National Park and Mount Granya State Park**
- **Murray River Multi-Day Canoe Trail**
- **Corryong Golf Course Redevelopment**
- **Lake Hume Masterplan**
- **Mitta Mitta Destination Mountain Bike Park**
- **High Country Rail Trail Improvement and Extension**
- **Mt Elliot Gravity and Adventure Park**
- **Tallangatta Gravity Mountain Bike Park**



THEME 5. **INFRASTRUCTURE, AMENITY AND ACTIVATION**

Deliver high quality visitor infrastructure, services and amenity to improve the visitor experience and perception of Towong as a tourism destination.



THEME 6. **BRANDING, MARKETING AND AWARENESS**

Delivery of a cohesive and consistent brand through marketing, collateral and events to promote increased awareness.



THEME 7. **INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND COLLABORATION**

Support continued development and enhancement of industry in Towong's sub regions and strengthen collaboration across industry.

TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECTS

- Township Enhancement Program
- Bellbridge Village Masterplan
- Mitta Mitta Activation Plan
- Tallangatta Foreshore Stage 1 Destination Playground, Cafe and Trail
- Branding and Digital Strategy
- Content and Imagery Database
- Touring Itineraries
- Half Yearly Tourism Industry Information and Networking Forums
- Business Attraction and Investment Facilitation Strategy



INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

Towong Shire Council has untapped potential as a tourism destination, with a wealth of nature-based assets, including rivers, lakes, mountains and valleys, and picturesque towns.

Located in Victoria's north-east, the municipality comprises an area of approximately 6,600 square kilometres and about 6,000 residents.

Towong's economy is led by a rich agricultural sector, tourism and timber production and processing. Approximately two-thirds of businesses located in the Shire are in the agriculture and forestry industries. This industry was significantly impacted by the Black Summer bushfires in 2019/20.

Towong Shire Council has engaged Urban Enterprise to develop a Destination Management Plan (DMP) to guide future tourism development. This Plan has been delivered concurrently with Council's Economic Development Strategy, to ensure there is a shared vision for development of the Shire's visitor economy and broader economy.

The DMP will leverage the region's assets to boost tourism numbers and extend the length of stay. The Plan will:

- Identify key tourism themes.
- Identify tourism industry product gaps and opportunities.
- Identify and provide direction for key priority projects.
- Be informed by economic research and analysis.
- Identify current tourism trends.
- Provide strategic direction for the delivery of key event opportunities for the region.
- Provide visitor market data related to visitor length of stay, market demographics, motivators, and visitor economic impacts.
- Provide economic impact (including value add) of visitors to the Shire.

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Destination Management Planning is based on the holistic consideration of a region's tourism industry, and the tourism industry's position in the regional economy. Destination Management Plans reflect the attributes of each destination, providing a blueprint for future investment in tourism including new experiences and attractions, and infrastructure requirements to support visitor growth.

The DMP for Towong Shire will follow the Guide to Best Practice in Destination Management, as developed by the Australian Regional Tourism Network (ARTN).

COVID-19 Impacts

Whilst COVID-19 has resulted in decreased visitation (-5%) and expenditure (-10%) within Towong Shire, tourism is in its infancy and as such the impacts have been limited.

Daytrip visitation (+2%) and expenditure (+2%) saw an increase, due to cross-border travel restrictions likely stimulating increased regional travel.

PROCESS

The following process was undertaken to inform the development of the Destination Management Plan.



Research, Discovery and Assessment

- Reviewed 20+ documents
- Research into target markets (TRA, Tourism North East)
- Site visits to key towns and attractions
- Product audits inventorying top attractions, supporting products, events and infrastructure



Engagement

- Industry and community workshops (x4)
- Industry and community survey
- Council workshops (X3)
- Consultation with state government agencies and private operators



Issues and Opportunities

- Identification of issues and opportunities based on assessment, engagement, site visits and product audits



Strategy

- Development of strategic framework, including vision, objectives and identification of priority projects



TOWONG SHIRE

Towong Shire is a rural municipality located in north-east Victoria, on the border of New South Wales.

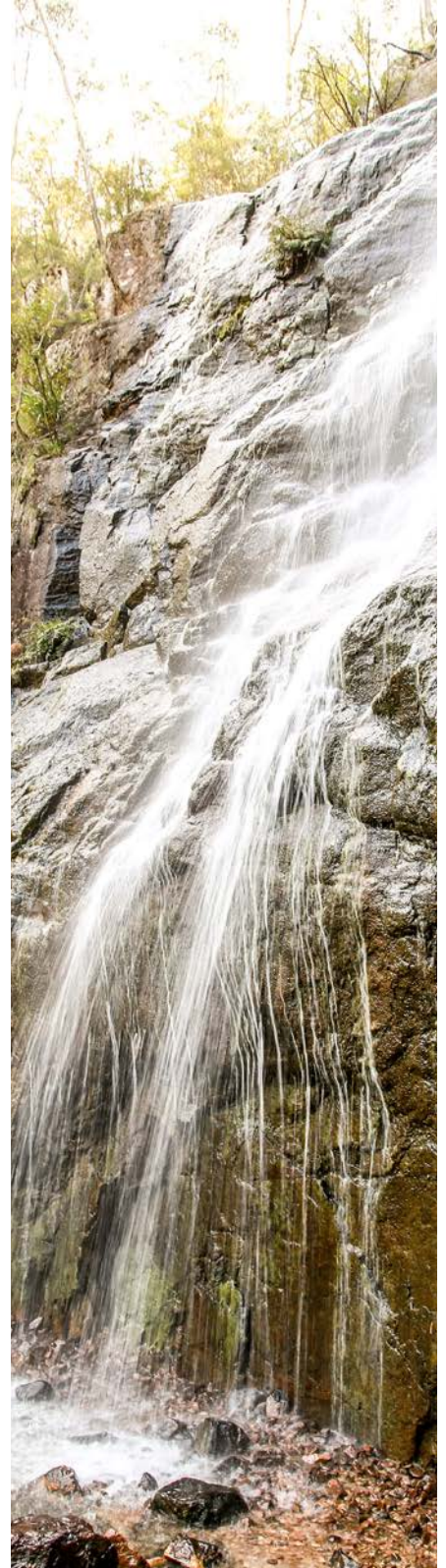
The Shire borders NSW to the north and east and Albury-Wodonga to the west. The Shire is located approximately 200 km north-east from Melbourne (at its nearest point), while the closest regional city – Albury-Wodonga – is approximately 15 km from the western-most point of the Shire.

It is the largest municipality in the Hume Region (6,675 square kilometres), as well as the least populated (6,102 residents), making it one of the least densely populated areas in Victoria.

The area is primarily known for agriculture, with a vast amount of productive farmland that comprises around 30% of total land in the Shire. This is the primary driver of Towong's economy, employment as well as its community identity.

The Shire also offers unique water-based assets, including Lake Hume, the Murray River, Mitta Mitta River, Dartmouth Dam, as well as nature-based attractions such as Burrowa-Pine Mountain National Park and Mount Granya State Park. These products contribute to Towong's amenity and rural lifestyle offer for visitors and residents.

Towong Shire is located within Victoria's High Country, one of Victoria's leading tourism regions. The High Country is promoted by Tourism North East, the state recognised and funded regional tourism board responsible for promoting the region and driving visitor economy growth.



INFORMING THE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

A range of documents across all levels of Government and local industry have been reviewed to inform the strategic direction of this Destination Management Plan.

The table below provides an overview of the documents reviewed.

State Government Documents

- Victorian Government Visitor Economy Reform Plan
- Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy 2016
- Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Landscapes Strategy

Regional Documents

- Victoria's High Country Destination Management Plan 2013-2023
- Ride High Country Annual Marketing Plan 2020-21
- Tourism North East, Three Year Strategy
- Hume Regional Growth Plan
- The Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities 2010-2020

Shire-Wide Documents

- Towong Shire Economic Recovery Action Plan
- Towong Municipal Recovery Plan 2019 – 2020
- Towong Healthy Communities Plan 2018 – 2021

Local Documents

- Upper Murray 2030 Vision Plan
- Our Bellbridge Strategy
- Our Valley Our Future (Mitta Valley) 2013-2016
- 'Tallangatta Tomorrow' Masterplan
- Walwa And District (CRC) Strategic Plan

Key Strategic Planning and Policy Direction

A range of key themes emerged through the analysis of strategic documents.

State Government strategic directions include:

- Leveraging the market opportunity provided by nature-based tourism.
- Delivering high quality supply of tourism products, experiences and infrastructure that meet market expectations.
- Building visitation demand through marketing and events to build awareness.
- Industry strengthening, including building available workforce and capacity.

Tourism North East provide strategic direction at the regional level, to drive tourism growth in the region and develop Victoria's High Country into a leading visitor destination. Tourism North East aims to guide development of the visitor economy through a unified focus on investment and promotion of the region's product pillars.

Whilst Tourism North East provides direction at a regional level, there is a lack of strategic focus at a local level for the Towong visitor economy. The Shire has lacked an overarching strategic tourism plan to provide a holistic and unified approach to tourism development.

The Destination Management Plan will establish a clear direction and focus for Council investment and resourcing, whilst ensuring alignment with regional opportunities and priorities, as well as the needs of the local tourism industry.

Key local themes and directions include:

- Leveraging visitation from NSW border catchment and a growing Albury-Wodonga.
- Diversifying the agricultural sector to support tourism growth through farmgate experiences.
- Encouraging touring to leverage regional visitation and grow Towong Shire awareness.
- Improve infrastructure and amenity in townships.
- Recovering from the impacts of COVID-19 and bushfires, and building industry and community resilience for future shocks.

GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCING

The following table outlines the current tourism structures responsible for delivering tourism in relation to Towong Shire.

There are a number of local and regional tourism organisations that support the visitor economy. This has implications for the delivery of a strong and cohesive tourism industry and the need for strong communication and clear roles and responsibilities.

Council Role and Resources

Towong Shire Council has limited resources for tourism development, due to the Shire's small operating budget.

There are 3.2 FTE staff roles spread across tourism and economic development within Towong Shire Council. Of these, 1 FTE is dedicated to an Agriculture Officer, 1 FTE to a Visitor Information Centre (VIC) officer, and 1.4 FTE is dedicated to tourism and economic development.

The roles and responsibilities of the 1.4 FTE staff include:

- Grant application and funding
- Business development and engagement
- Events facilitation and in-kind support
- Visitor servicing
- Collaboration with regional tourism organisations for promotion
- Investment attraction and facilitation
- Project management

Additionally, the VIC officer is responsible for visitor services, including digital and physical visitor information services within visitor information centres.

State-Level	
	Primary tourism and events company for the State Government, involved in research, advocacy and domestic and international marketing.
Visit Victoria	Visit Victoria is a key partner in promotion and strategic planning for the tourism sector. Council should maintain a strong relationship to ensure alignment with Visit Victoria marketing initiatives.
Regional Development Victoria	Continue to work with RDV to access potential funding opportunities. This strategy will be an important reference for strategic alignment with state government.
DELWP	DELWP manages a number of public forest reserves that include important nature-based tourism products.
Parks Victoria	Parks Victoria manages a number of key state parks and reserves and a strong relationship is important for development and promotion of nature-based tourism.
Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW)	GMW manages the water in Lake Hume, Lake Dartmouth and the Murray River and also owns and operates a number of infrastructure assets.
Regional-Level	
Tourism North East (TNE)	Tourism North East is a State Government recognised and funded Regional Tourism Board. TNE collaborates with government and industry partners to undertake planning, marketing, product development, industry development, infrastructure and advocacy.
Local-Level	
Towong Shire Council	Towong Shire provides a range of tourism services including overseeing aspects of visitor information services, digital media and communication, emergency management, marketing, industry development and investment.
Upper Murray Inc	A membership based organisation that works to promote and encourage tourism in the Upper Murray region. Established through the Upper Murray 2030 Plan, the group aims to increase visitation through investment and marketing, and producing collateral.
Mitta Valley Inc.	A membership based organisation offering workshops, grant funding support, networking and branding and digital marketing to enhance economic and community development.
Peninsular Network	n.p.
Parklands Albury Wodonga	Committee of Management responsible for management of the High Country Rail Trail.
Tallangatta Rail Trail Advisory Group (TAG)	One of three community groups working with Parklands Albury-Wodonga to develop the High Country Rail Trail. TAG is responsible for the development and management of the Sandy Creek to Old Tallangatta section of the Rail Trail.
Community Recovery Committees (CRCS)	Following the impacts of the 2019/20 bushfires, 11 Community Recovery Committees were formed with assistance from Council. Each CRC focuses on supporting and facilitating the recovery process for the towns within Towong Shire.

A REGIONAL APPROACH

Leveraging the High Country Brand

Towong is located on the border of Victoria and New South Wales, in Victoria's High Country region. The High Country is a strong regional tourism brand, well-known for nature, the outdoors, snow and local produce.

Tourism North East is the regional tourism board responsible for promoting the High Country region, which includes seven local government areas across the States north east alpine region. Towong Shire is a paid member Council of Tourism North East.

Involvement in the regional tourism board structure provides a number of benefits for member councils, including marketing, industry capacity building, and funding advocacy. Further to this, local industry can benefit through general marketing activities, targeted marketing campaigns and inclusion in touring itineraries.

The High Country promotes regional tourism under the five pillars depicted to the right.

Towong Shire is well-aligned to the High Country product offering, particularly in terms of their emerging potential for high quality nature-based and cycle tourism experiences. There is opportunity to strengthen the Shire's alignment to the High Country through increased investment in contemporary and high quality food and drink and arts and cultural heritage experiences.

Developing products, experiences and infrastructure that are well-aligned to the High Country brand, and meet quality expectations of the existing High Country visitor, will be key to growing awareness of Towong Shire through High Country promotion.

Towong Shire current alignment with High Country Brand Pillars



Leveraging Existing Regional Visitors

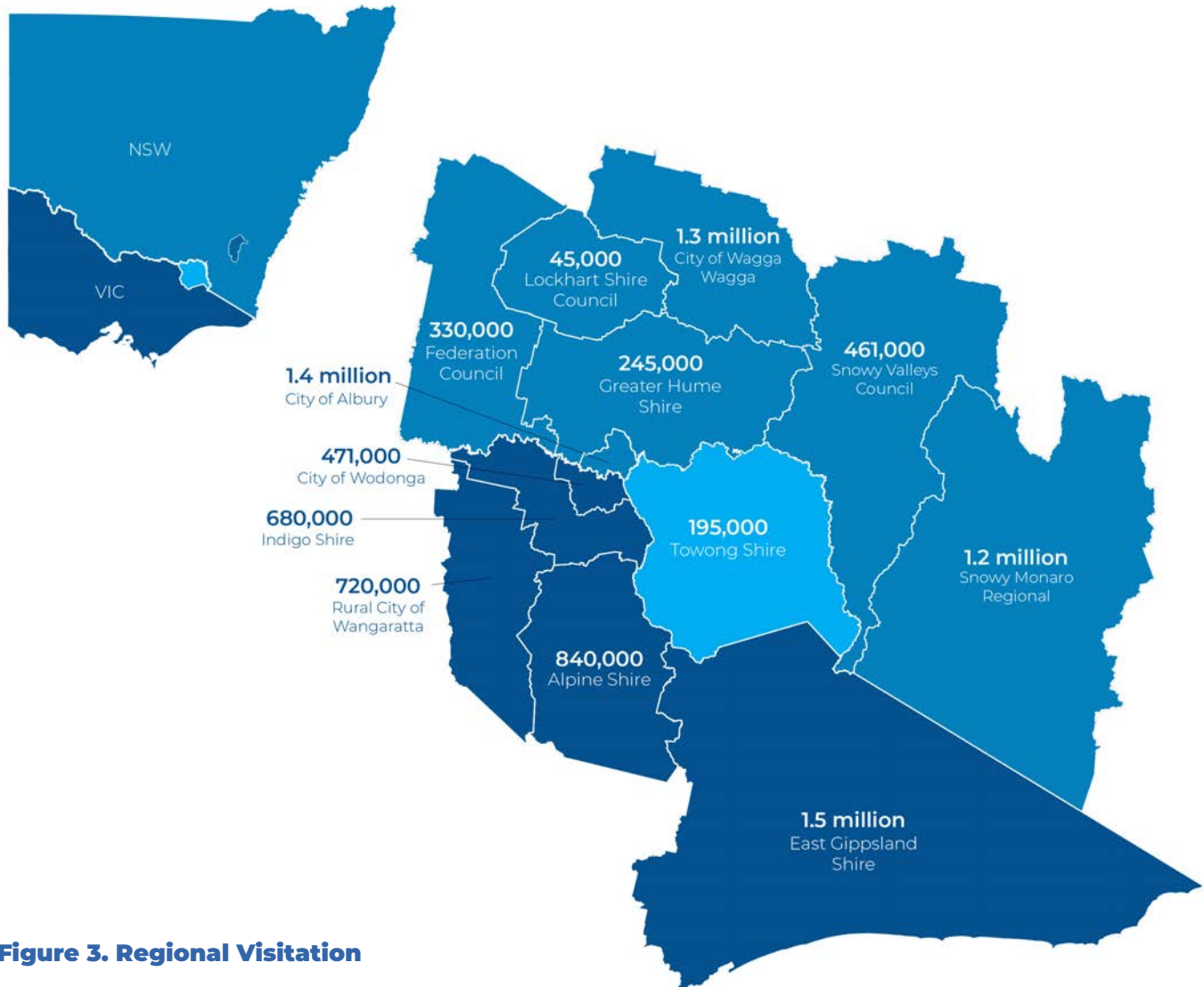


Figure 3. Regional Visitation

Key to growing the visitor economy for Towong will be to leverage the regional visitor markets that are already travelling to surrounding municipalities. This accounts for over 9 million visitors.

Competing in the metropolitan Melbourne market is challenging for Towong, as there are a range of intervening opportunities for similar product closer to Melbourne such as Murrindindi Shire, Mansfield Shire and Baw Baw Shire. These destinations have access to rivers, lakes, boating, fishing, camping and walking.

With ongoing interstate and international travel restrictions, there is major opportunity for Towong Shire to leverage its potential as a High Country destination and attract growth in domestic visitation.

As surrounding High Country destinations such as Bright, Beechworth and Mount Beauty become increasingly busy, there is opportunity for Towong to position itself as a new and undiscovered nature-based destination.

Additionally, there are approximately 260,000 residents in surrounding regional cities that provide a visitor base for the Shire. This includes Albury-Wodonga, Wagga Wagga, Shepparton and Wangaratta.

Attracting residents from surrounding population centres will also be crucial to attracting visitation, and provide an important market for the Shire.

THE REGION

Understanding the geography of Towong Shire and how the visitor experience's Towong, is critical to understanding the unique opportunities and challenges for each local area.

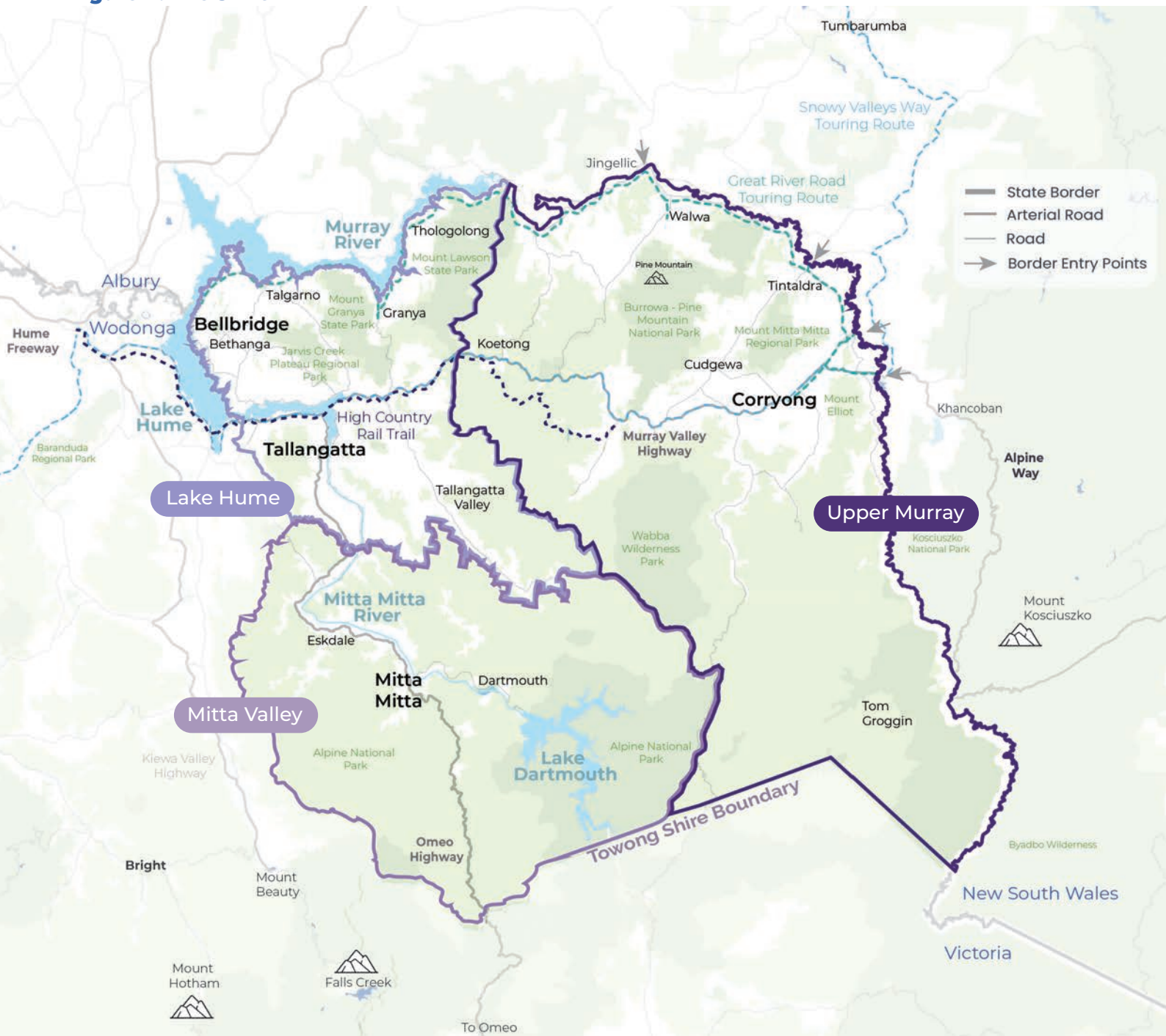
As such, three distinct sub-regions have been developed for the Shire to inform the strategic direction of the Destination Management Plan. These are aligned to existing regions (Upper Murray and Mitta Valley) and reinforce the existing visitor nodes and travel patterns (Tallangatta and Bellbridge/Bethanga, unified by Lake Hume).

The Shire is referred to via the following sub regions, including:

- Lake Hume region (Key townships of Tallangatta, Bellbridge, Bethanga and Granya).
- Mitta Valley (Key townships of Eskdale, Mitta Mitta and Dartmouth).
- Upper Murray (Key townships of Corryong, Walwa and Tintaldra).

These sub-regions, as well as key townships and assets, are illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4. The Shire



LOCAL INSIGHTS

Significant stakeholder, industry and community engagement was undertaken to inform the development of the Destination Management Plan.

This included in-region workshops and a survey to community and industry.

Community/Industry

- Workshops in Corryong, Bethanga, Tallangatta and Mitta Mitta
- Community/Industry Survey

Community Groups/Recovery Committees

- Upper Murray Inc
- Upper Murray CRC
- Mitta Valley Inc.
- Beringama Peninsula Community Network
- Tallangatta Community Recovery Committee

Government Agencies

- DELWP
- North East Water
- Goulburn Murray Water
- Tourism North East

Industry

- Dallas Hurst (Old Tallangatta Butter Factory)
- Leigh Hollands (Mitta Mountain Bike Park and HCRT Masterplan)
- Man from Snowy River Bush Festival and Tourist Association
- Us&Us (Upper Murray Brand Strategy)

Key findings and insights from local stakeholder engagement are summarised below.

Product and Experience Considerations

- Need for cycling investment
- Need for delivery of hero products, including High Country Rail Trail, Great River Road, Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mt Elliot, which will support private sector in complementary products
- Lack of access to local produce and farmgate, and challenge to encourage local use of local produce
- Limited attractions to grow awareness and visitation
- Need for activation of nature-based and recreation assets
- Lack of quality accommodation and food and dining

Infrastructure and Amenity Considerations

- Poor internet connectivity – need for reliable internet and improved internet speeds
- Need for township activation and amenity improvements
- Need for improved access to waterways
- Water and sewerage for key towns, particularly Mitta Mitta and Bethanga
- Lack of housing stock and reduction in affordable housing options

Soft Issues

- Need to support growth in new businesses and attract new businesses
- Poor youth engagement – lack of uptake for apprenticeship and program opportunities
- Bushfires impact building in next 12-18 months due to insurance costs
- Lack of childcare and maternal health impacts available workforce
- Lack of skilled staff – chefs, front of house
- Labour force shortages – difficulty attracting skilled and unskilled staff due to lack of available and affordable accommodation, transport etc.

WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL DESTINATION?



Asset

Base assets - natural assets, towns, connections [road/trail]



Product

Activation of the asset - food and beverage experiences, accommodation, walks etc.



Experience

Guided tours, itineraries, iconic/hero products, digital experience.

KEYS TO DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

Successful destination management is a holistic process that ensures tourism adds value to the economy, social fabric and ecology of our communities. It is achieved through strong leadership with consideration of:

- **Place** – defining the destination in the eye of the visitor and communities of interest and understanding the visitor journey to and within the region.
- **People** – cohesive governance and strong leadership, engaged industry and qualified and experienced labour force.
- **Product** – motivating products, quality infrastructure and experiences on offer that draw visitors and provide to visitor needs.

The Towong Shire Destination Management Plan has been prepared with best practice destination management planning. The following is a discussion relating to the attributes of successful destination management and how this relates to Towong Shire.

PRODUCT AND EXPERIENCE

To be considered a destination, a region requires a strong foundation of products and experiences that will attract visitors.

The destination development framework has been presented below, which includes developing base assets into products, and enhancing products to become experiences. This project will focus on building products and experiences.

At present, tourism is in its infancy in Towong Shire. The Shire currently has the base assets which provide the supporting infrastructure, but requires the products that will help to activate the assets.

Experiences are how you take a product to the next level, including tours, itineraries, brands and digital experiences. When products are 'visitor ready', this is when they become an experience.

Importantly, the framework highlights that towns are a base asset and rarely motivate visitation. Visitors don't normally choose a destination for a town unless it has a mix of all the compelling experiences, infrastructure and amenity (ie Bright), or the nearby products and experiences are so compelling that they visit the town. This highlights the importance of developing and marketing hero attractions.

However people will choose not to visit a destination if a town doesn't provide base amenity, quality food and beverage experiences, and infrastructure.

UNDERSTANDING THE VISITOR JOURNEY

Key to creating a successful visitor destination is understanding the contemporary visitor journey and how this impacts on product and experience development and marketing.

Below are the steps that form the visitor journey.

What is important?	How information is received/ shared?
--------------------	--------------------------------------

1. Dreaming Seed is Planted

Captivating Imagery	Travel blogs
Advertising and marketing	Ads – TV, Radio Facebook, Instagram
	Friends/relatives

2. Planning Pre-booking Research

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)	Travel blogs for information
Optimise listings on Google Maps	Destination websites
	Friends/relatives

3. Booking Call to Action

Easy to navigate website,	Booking sites
Links to booking sites	Accommodation (e.g. Airbnb, Booking.com, Stayz)
SEO	Experiences (e.g. Red Balloon)

4. Experiencing During Visit

Products and experiences to meet visitor needs	Google Maps
Accommodation	Visitor Guides
Visitor infrastructure and amenity	Regional Maps
In-region visitor information	Businesses
	Locals
	Brochures
	Social Media
	VICs

5. Sharing During/Post Visit

Telecomms for visitors to share photos / experiences	Social media – Facebook and Instagram
	Word of Mouth to friends and relatives
	Travel blogs

1. Visitors are motivated to visit a destination when the seed is planted through marketing, inspiring imagery or word of mouth. Research indicates that 1 in 3 leisure travellers do not have a specific destination in mind when they first think about going on a trip. This provides an opportunity to inspire visitors to Towong Shire.
2. The majority of research in the pre-booking phase occurs through online media and information, requiring high quality, engaging, informative and easy to navigate websites. Towong Shire requires a clear and cohesive online presence to translate interest to visitation.
3. If the visitor is satisfied with their pre-booking research, they are called to action to book. The conversion to a booking requires enough information available remotely to influence the visitor's desire to book.
4. During the experiencing stage, it is critical that the region delivers a first class experience aligned to contemporary visitor expectations. This includes high quality nature-based experiences, quality accommodation, contemporary dining and produce with a high level of service, and modern and well-maintained visitor infrastructure and amenity. This will ensure visitors are satisfied with their experience and encourages positive word of mouth marketing and repeat visitation. In this stage, it is also important to have information that supports the visitors understanding of the region, by reinforcing products and experiences through signage, gateway treatments to demarcate the region, and visitor guides and maps.
5. Sharing of experiences occurs in the final stage, through social media and online reviews and recommendations. Visitors are more likely to share photos online if the experiences and infrastructure are impressive.

LEVERAGING HERO PRODUCTS

Case studies of other remote Australian destinations have been assessed to understand how they have succeeded to increase visitation. This includes the Wimmera Mallee and Wentworth Shire. These are examples of remote destinations with limited products and experiences that were able to capitalise on their hero attractions.

Key findings from these case studies include:

- Large investment into product development to create high quality and contemporary visitor experiences.
- Focus marketing activities on hero attractions rather than the towns or shires.

- Utilise hero products as the main marketing tools for the whole region, including the neighbouring shires.
- Photo-worthy products create social media sharing and influence.
- Marketing on popular lifestyle and travel platforms, such as The Urban List.

These findings highlight the importance of continual product development and enhancement, as well as importance of regional collaboration to cross-promote hero attractions and build a regional experience for visitors.

Wentworth Shire - Mungo National Park

Hero Imagery and Posts on Popular Sites e.g. The Urban List



Wimmera Mallee - Silo Art Trail

Contemporary Brand/Website and AR App as a Marketing Tool & Visitor Experience



VISITOR MARKET

TOWONG SHIRE DOMESTIC VISITOR ECONOMY

The Towong Shire visitor economy is in its infancy, with the Shire seeing 195,000 annual visitors who spend \$29.3 million.

Visitation to Towong Shire accounts for 6% of visitation to the High Country and only 4% of the overall spend within the High Country.

The majority of visitors are day trippers (61%).

Visitor spend is predominately driven by overnight visitors (75%).

Average visitor spend in Towong Shire is significantly lower than High Country. Daytrip visitors to Towong Shire spend \$62, compared to High Country day trip visitors (\$91). Overnight visitors are higher yielding (\$287), however spend almost half the amount of High Country overnight visitors (\$473).

Visitor spend patterns can be attributed to a low supply of compelling paid products and experiences to drive visitor spend in the Shire, and accommodation to drive yield and length of stay.

Spend on petrol accounts for the majority of visitor expenditure in Towong Shire for both daytrip (53%) and overnight visitors (24%). Dining makes up a small portion of daytrip (18%) and overnight (18%) visitor expenditure, reflecting the lack of quality dining supply.



195,000
Visitors



\$29.3 M
Spend

119,100

Daytrip
(61%)

76,000

Overnight
(39%)

\$7.4 M

Daytrip
(25%)

\$21.9 M

Overnight
(75%)

AVERAGE SPEND PER VISITOR



Daytrip

\$62

Towong Shire

\$91

High Country



Overnight

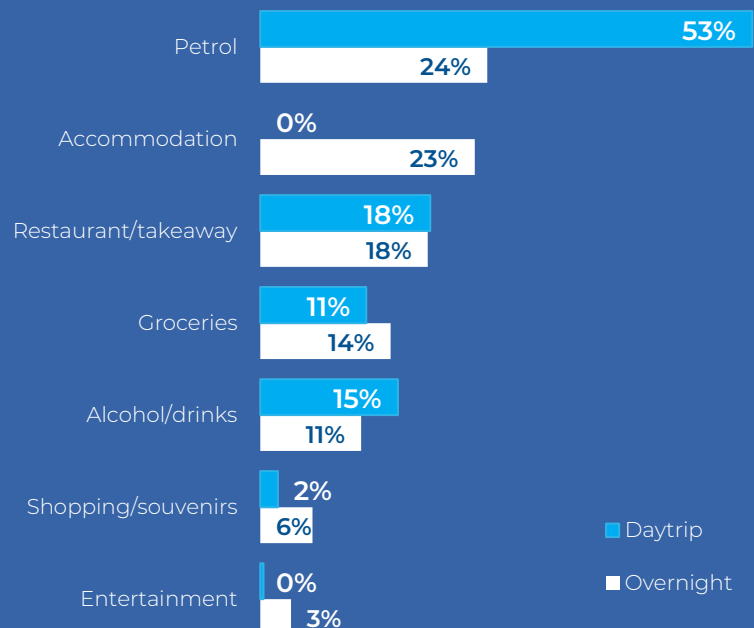
\$287

Towong Shire

\$473

High Country

AVERAGE SPEND BY CATEGORY



TOWONG SHIRE DOMESTIC VISITOR PROFILE

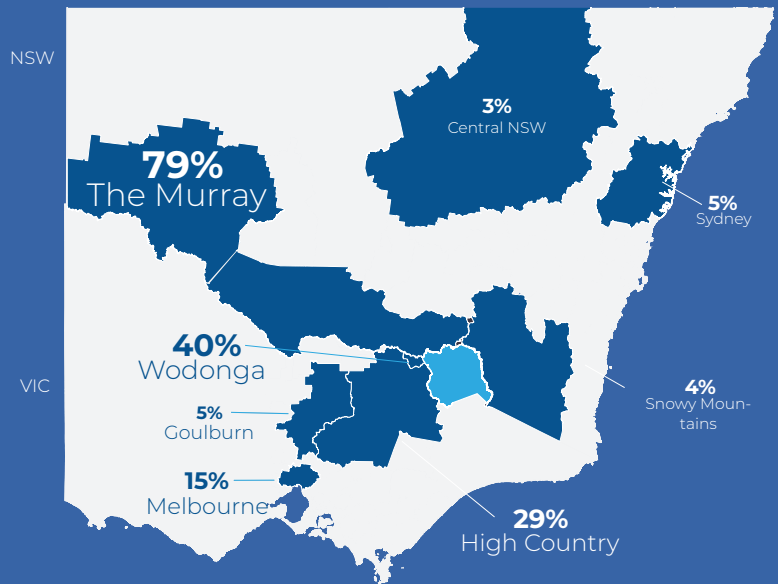
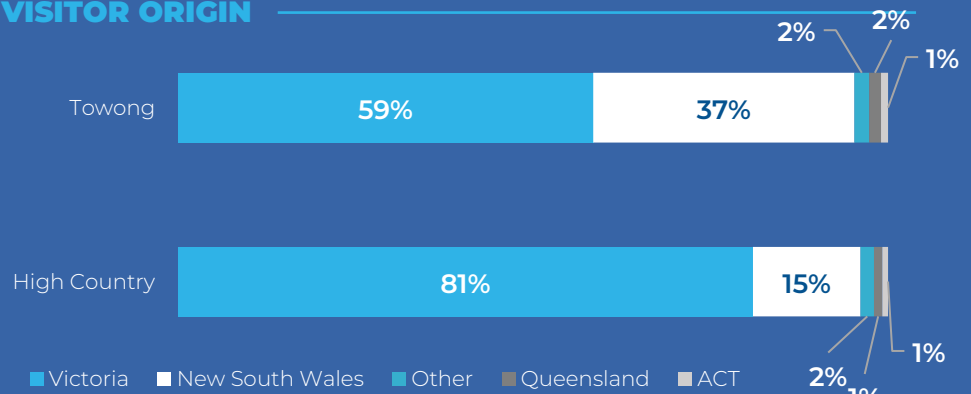
The majority of visitors to Towong Shire are from Victoria (58%), followed by New South Wales (37%).

Visitor origins from across Victoria and New South Wales are predominately from regional areas, particularly regions bordering the Shire such as Wodonga, the High Country and The Murray (including Albury). This reinforces the need to focus marketing on regional markets, as well as the continued need to collaborate with cross-border Councils and tourism agencies to drive visitation.

The main motivation for visitors to travel to Towong Shire is for holidays (48%) and visiting friends and family (31%). This provides an opportunity to grow yield from these markets.

Towong Shire experiences similar visitor seasonality patterns to the High Country, however winter visitation to the High Country (29%) is higher than Towong Shire (22%). This reflects the strong visitation that the snow season attracts to Alpine Resorts and High Country towns and villages. There is opportunity to explore how Towong can leverage this regional strength.

VISITOR ORIGIN



MAIN MOTIVATION FOR VISIT



48%
Holiday

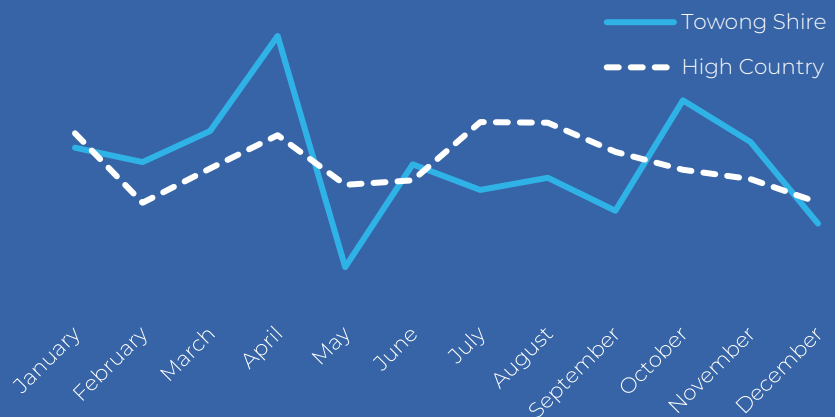


31%
Visiting Friends
and Family



12%
Business

SEASONALITY



Towong Shire has an older age profile compared to the High Country, with the majority of visitors aged 55 years and over (44%). Improved branding and digital presence, as well as investment in products and experiences, will assist in attracting younger demographics.

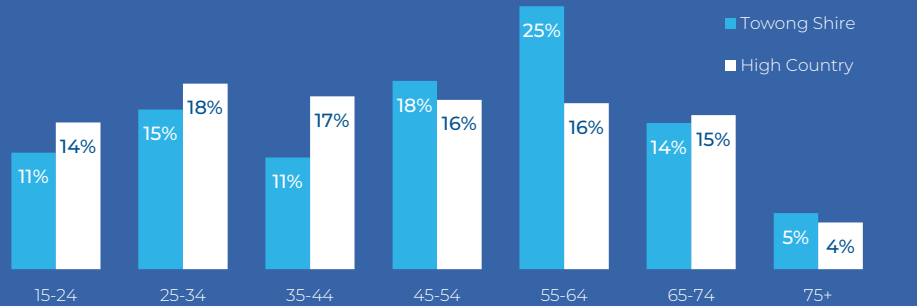
Visitors travel as a couple (32%), friend or family group (24%) or alone (18%). The low visitation by family or friend groups highlights the need to deliver compelling products and experiences to attract the family market.

A small proportion of visitors stay in commercial accommodation (15%) demonstrates the limited supply of compelling commercial accommodation offerings. Camping is a key experience in Towong Shire, with 24% of visitors staying at commercial (24%) and non commercial campgrounds (24%).

Low engagement in activities reinforces a lack of compelling products and experiences available to the visitor market. Dining out in Towong Shire is more than 20% lower than the High Country average, which demonstrates the need for investment in food experiences.

The visitor activity profile highlights the importance of nature-based assets, with activities undertaken including sightseeing (25%), bushwalking (18%) and visiting national parks/state parks (12%). High engagement in fishing (14%) in comparison to High Country (4%) highlights the strength of fishing in the Shire.

AGE PROFILE



OVERNIGHT VISITOR TRAVEL GROUP



32%
Couple



24%
Friends and Family



18%
Alone

ACCOMMODATION



30%

Friends/Relatives Property



24%

Caravan/Camping (non commercial)



24%

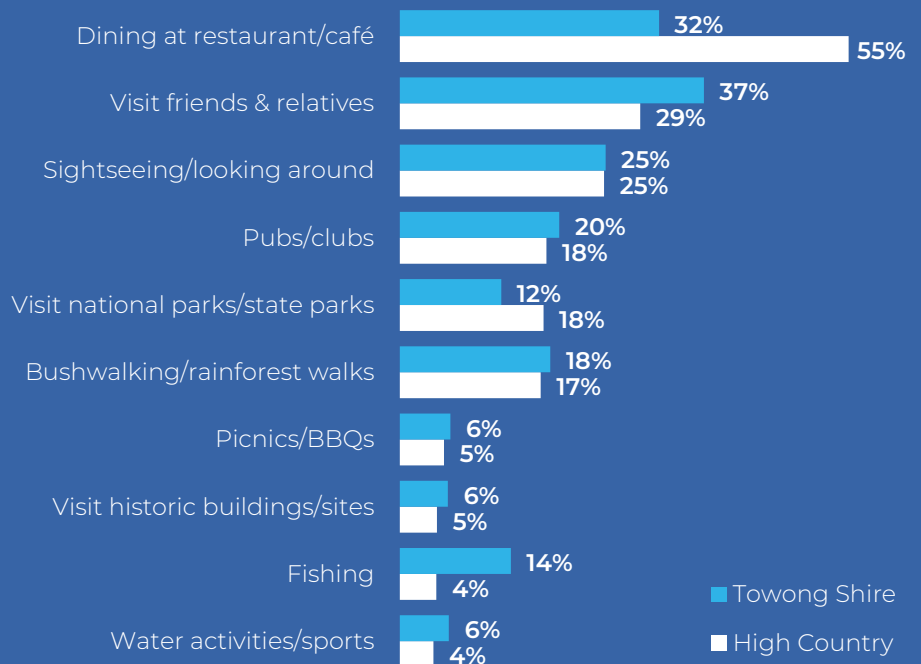
Caravan Park/ Commercial Campground



15%

Hotel/Motel/Motor Inn

ACTIVITIES











TARGET MARKETS

A range of research has been reviewed to determine the target visitor markets for Towong Shire. This includes Tourism Research Australia visitor origin data, Tourism North East market segmentation research, Tourism North East target markets and Visit Victoria target market [Lifestyle Leader].

Understanding psychographic market segments allows the Shire to deliver products and experiences aligned to contemporary visitor expectations.

A major market opportunity for the Shire is delivering cycle and walk experiences that meet demand from target segments. The terrain, natural amenity and nature-based assets of the Shire provide the base assets to attract these markets, with investment in infrastructure, experiences and promotion needed to further attract the market.

Understanding geographic markets helps to direct and prioritise marketing efforts to deliver targeted campaigns. The surrounding region, including Albury-Wodonga, the Riverina Murray and the High Country regions, are considered to be the primary geographic market for the Shire to target, based on current visitor origin profiles and distance from metropolitan areas.

Market	Segment	Overview
Psychographic Markets		
	Habitual [existing]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixed travel patterns and difficult to influence Low yield, like to self cater Tend to caravan / camp Limited engagement with paid experiences
	Lifestyle Leader [target]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher discretionary income Progressive, open to trying new things High yield visitors
Geographic Markets		
	Primary Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Albury-Wodonga Riverina Murray High Country
	Secondary Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melbourne Sydney Canberra
Product-Based Markets		
	Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road Cycling Mountain Biking Rail Trail Cycling Gravel Cycling <p>High levels of market cross-over across cycle market segments.</p> <p>Significant interest in a variety of other outdoor activities, such as walking, hiking, canoeing, swimming.</p>
	Walk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destination Explorers Committed Hikers <p>Like to explore new destinations but want a controlled experience – well-formed paths, directional signage, short 1-3 hour walks etc.</p> <p>Seek immersion in nature and getting away from crowds. Inclined to visit less well-known destinations.</p>
	Dining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible Foodie Occasional Indulgence Vegemite and Toast <p>Tend to plan days around activities whilst factoring in food, and prefer to dine out for all meals of the day.</p> <p>Content with casual bakery and pub meals. Will seek out one ‘fancier’ meal such as restaurant or winery.</p> <p>Like to self cater and won’t spend on food. Food is not important to their travel experience or satisfaction. Lower yielding visitor.</p>
	Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptable Adventurer <p>Flexible with accommodation but need quality expectations to be met. Seek accommodation in nature-based locations within proximity to towns. Will pay between \$200-300 a night.</p>

PRODUCT, EXPERIENCE AND EVENTS

This section draws on a range of research and information sources. This includes existing inventories and desktop research of products, events and experiences, physical visitor information, site visits, and consultation findings.



PRODUCT PROFILE OVERVIEW

Primary Strength

Water-Based



Nature-Based



Emerging Strength

Cycling



Sports and Recreation



Touring



Cap/Opportunity

Accommodation



Food, Ferments and Farmgate



Arts, Culture and Heritage



Events



Towong Shire is characterised by its rolling hills and mountains, and a feeling of immersion in nature. The Shire's natural assets and amenity, and the activities they allow, are Towong's key strength.

National Parks are a key strength within the region, with hero assets including the Alpine National Park, Burrowa-Pine National Park, Mount Granya State Park, Mt Lawson State Park and Mount Mittamatite Regional Park.

Water-based products were also identified as primary strengths for the region, these products include Lake Hume, Lake Dartmouth, the Mitta Mitta River and Murray River.

The Shire has secondary and emerging strengths in cycling, touring and sports and recreation. These experiences require further investment and activation to become hero experiences, however are well-aligned to the Shire and High Country's primary strength of natural assets.

There are a range of product and experience gaps and opportunities, including accommodation, food, ferments and farmgate, events, and arts culture and heritage experiences. Targeted and ongoing investment is required to meet the standards of the contemporary visitor market and attract target markets.

PRODUCT AUDIT

Nature-Based

A key primary strength of the Towong Shire is its natural environment, with a number of national, state and regional parks located within the shire.

These parks and reserves support a wide range of outdoor activities, such as sightseeing, bushwalking, hiking, cycling, four-wheel drive touring, camping, swimming and fishing. Additionally, native flora and fauna are abundant across the Shire and attract visitation.

Other popular nature based destinations including Mt Lawson State Park, Mt Mittamatite and Mt Elliott.

Nature-based assets are a hero experience of the Shire and provide an opportunity to grow awareness of Towong Shire, increase visitation and build a brand.

Improved activation of nature-based assets is required, through trail and signage infrastructure, architecturally designed lookouts and amenity improvements.

Leveraging these nature-based assets through marketing, promotion and improved visitor information is required.

Key assets include:

Alpine National Park, a popular destination located on the southern and eastern peripheries of the Shire. The park is popular for camping, four wheel driving and hiking, however has poor access from the Shire's townships.

Burrowa-Pine Mountain National Park, offering a diverse range of flora and fauna, with peaks of Pine Mountain and Mount Burrowa (1,300 m). Key walks include the Bluff Creek Nature trail, a four kilometre return trail, and The Lookouts walking trail, a six kilometre return trail.

Mount Granya State Park, reaching a summit of 950 metres, provides impressive views of the surrounding valleys and natural assets and a number of walking trails, including to the Summit and Granya Falls.



Water-Based

Major water based assets within the Towong Shire include Lake Hume, Lake Dartmouth, Mitta Mitta River and the Murray River.

These water-bodies provide a range of experiences such as boating, water sports, fishing and camping on the foreshore. In particular, the Upper Murray lakes and rivers are popular destinations for trout fishing.

There is an opportunity to improve access to and activation of Lake Hume, through development of additional boat ramps at high water locations, piers and jetties, and provision of equipment for visitors.

KEY ASSETS

Lake Hume, a popular recreation asset, is accessible via boat ramps at the Berringa Reserve (Bethanga), Bellbird Reserve (Bellbridge) and Talangatta Foreshore Reserve, however access is limited at low water storage levels. Lake Hume is stocked annually with a variety of fish.

Lake Dartmouth, popular for boating, water sports, fishing and bird watching, is accessible by one boat ramp located south of the Dam wall. Houseboating and water skiing are not permitted, with all boats and recreational crafts required to keep at least 700 metres from the Dam wall.

Murray River, a hub for water-based activities such as house boating, fishing, water-skiing, wake boarding and other recreational water-based activities. Additionally, the foreshore of the Murray River is a popular destination for campers.

Mitta Mitta River, a popular fishing destination attracting kayaking and white water rafting in the summer months, where high water releases from the Dartmouth Dam generate a fast flowing river, ideal for white water rafting.

The **Nariel River** is also a popular destination for fishing and camping.



Cycling

The varying terrain within Towong Shire provides a range of opportunities for development of road cycling, gravel cycling, and mountain bike riding.

Cycling is a key product pillar of the High Country, with Tourism North East delivering “Ride High Country”, one of the most successful regional tourism campaigns. This provides a major opportunity for Council to invest in cycling and leverage regional marketing, investment and collaboration opportunities.

Council has also identified creating and delivering new cycling product, where feasible, as a priority within the Towong Council Plan 2017-2021.

A mountain biking strategy has been developed concurrently, which aims to prioritise investment in mountain biking across the region and position the Shire as a new, premium destination.

KEY ASSETS

High Country Rail Trail, one of the Shire’s premier attractions, extends from Wodonga to Shelley, taking in views of Lake Hume along the way. Extension of the rail trail to Corryong is a priority, which will provide a highly scenic rail trail experience, connect Tallangatta and Corryong, and facilitate activation and investment along the trail length.

Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park is scoped to be the Shire’s premier mountain biking destination for the Shire. Funding has been secured for stage 1 of the investment, which will deliver 29kms of trail.

Mount Elliot is also a popular destination for downhill mountain biking, which has developed informally over time. There is strong community support for development of a formal mountain bike park.

The Shire has a range of informal but well-regarded **road cycling** loops which have opportunity to be further promoted.

Additionally, the Shire features a range of informal **gravel cycling** loops, including the Jervis Creek Plateau gravel loop, Lake Hume Views gravel ride, and the Eskdale to Dartmouth Dam gravel ride.



Touring

The diverse terrain of the Towong Shire has become an attractive destination for touring visitors. The National and State Parks within the region create a range of trail types for four-wheel drivers to explore.

Additionally, the highways and roads throughout Towong provide scenic touring routes for travellers to explore the region.

The promotion and activation of touring routes, through development of touring routes and investment attraction along the routes, will assist to leverage regional visitation and drive yield.

KEY ASSETS

The Great River Road, a premier asset of the Upper Murray, follows the Murray River across the 155km between the Snowy Mountains and Lake Hume. Lookouts along the way showcase the vast region with views of Murray River, Pine Mountain and the surrounding national parks.

Snowy Valleys Way. From Gundagai to Beechworth, the Snowy Valleys Way touring route links Tallangatta and Corryong to the surrounding region via the **Murray Valley Highway**.

Sports and Recreation

There are a range of community sports and recreation clubs and facilities located within Towong Shire, including golf, horse riding, netball, tennis, cricket, bowls, paragliding and hang gliding.

The equine sector is culturally significant for the Shire, with a strong High Country cattleman history. The Shire continues to attract visitors for recreational horse riding.

Focus should be prioritised towards better utilising existing sports and recreation facilities, and targeted investment in facility upgrades that will allow the Shire to attract state, national or international standard events.

KEY ASSETS

The Shire has a range of **racecourses and showgrounds** which are well utilised by the equine sector as well as for events. Key facilities include The Historic Towong Racecourse, the set location for the 1983 film *Phar Lap*, and the Tallangatta and Corryong showgrounds.

Mt Elliot, a DELWP owned site which is used for **hang-gliding** and **paragliding**. The site provides some of the highest quality flying, and is regularly the location of the Corryong Cup and Victorian open.

The Shire is home to a range of community **golf courses**, including Corryong Golf Club, Walwa-Jingellic Golf Club and Tallangatta Valley Golf Club.



Foods, Fermets and Farmgates

The current food and dining offerings across the region are limited, with only a small selection of high quality dining establishments.

There is a lack of diversity in food experiences across the Shire. Current operators of note all provide a similar pub/hotel style offering, with a small number of country bakeries, cafes and takeaway restaurants.

Key gaps include:

- Wineries, breweries and distilleries
- Quality restaurants
- Quality cafes
- Artisanal bakeries
- Farmgate, paddock to plate, provedore and 'pick your own' experiences

Investment in high quality food, drink and dining experiences will assist in attracting the Lifestyle Leader market and to extracting greater yield from visitors.

Arts, Culture and Heritage

There are a limited range of arts, culture and heritage products and experiences. There is opportunity to build this offering to attract a diverse range of markets, add depth and richness to the visitor experience, and activate towns.

KEY ASSETS

The Man From Snowy River.

The Museum and the Man From Snowy River Bush Festival are key assets that build on The Man from Snowy River theme, an iconic Australian poem, and later film. The Man from Snowy River was a stockman who lived in a hut near Tom Groggin, and is a key heritage attraction of the Upper Murray.

Indigenous Culture. There are a range of significant Aboriginal sites across the Shire. Whilst there is no formal Traditional Owner groups in the Shire, Council should continue to explore connections with Traditional Owners.

Davis Cottage. A historic cottage located in Corryong, with a gallery space for local artists to hire and display their work.

Other heritage attractions, such as The Spirit of Wymah, a cable ferry used to cross the Murray River built in 1946, Lord's Hut and a range of historic trestle bridges.





KEY PRODUCT AND EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES



There are a range of product development opportunities for Towong Shire, which will assist in driving visitation growth from target markets, increasing visitor expenditure and meeting the needs of the visitor market.

Key opportunities include:

- Activate natural assets through walking trail infrastructure, iconic lookouts, wayfinding signage, campsite upgrades and enhanced promotion.
- Lake Hume activation through commercial investment, improved waterway access, and lakeside infrastructure and amenity.
- Activation of rivers with vibrant waterfront precincts that include boating and fishing infrastructure, amenities, swimming access, and potential commercial operators.
- Extend the High Country Rail Trail to Corryong to provide an iconic trail and connect Tallangatta and Corryong.
- Formalise and promote a range of gravel and road cycling loops.
- Invest in mountain biking through continued investment in the Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, and other key mountain biking opportunities.
- Promote touring routes and attract investment along the routes.
- Improve utilisation of sports and recreation facilities, and deliver targeted upgrades to attract new spectator events.
- Develop public art programs to activate town centres and showcase local creators and markers.
- High quality food and beverage experiences, including quality restaurants, cafes, bakeries.
- Utilisation and promotion of local produce through farmgate, paddock to plate, provedore and 'pick your own' experiences.

Accommodation

Towong Shire has a small accommodation stock of 75 properties. Table 7 provides a summary of the Shire's accommodation profile.

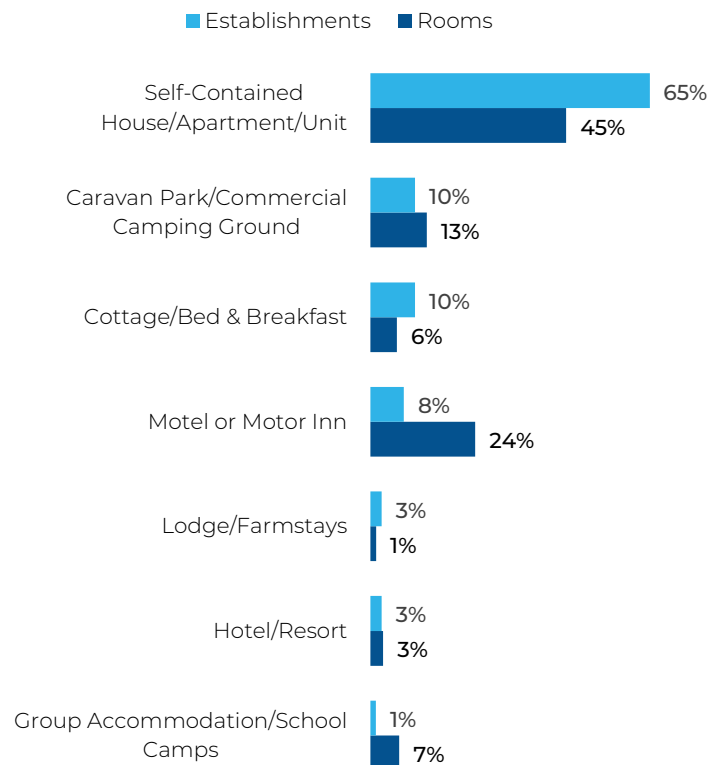
Self-contained houses, apartments or units account for the majority of establishments (65%) and rooms (45%) in the Shire.

Caravan parks/commercial camping grounds account for 13% of rooms, with a large proportion of rooms also provided by motels and motor inns (24%). The majority of these accommodation types are outdated and do not meet contemporary visitor expectations or preferences.

In addition, there is an abundance of free camping and caravan sites in the numerous National, State and Regional Parks across the Shire, as well as along the banks of the Murray River and Lake Hume.

An assessment of Trip Advisor and Google accommodation ratings and reviews indicates the Shire's accommodation stock is of low to moderate quality, with few upscale or luxury offerings. The average room rate is between \$100 and \$200 a night, including for self-contained houses, which reinforces the outdated and midscale accommodation profile.

Accommodation Supply



KEY ACCOMMODATION OPPORTUNITIES



High quality accommodation helps to brand the region, attract visitation from new markets, convert daytrip visitors to overnight, and extend length of stay and yield from existing markets.

Accommodation that leverages, integrates with and showcases the nature-based assets and strengths of the region should be explored.

Key accommodation opportunities include:

- Experiential accommodation, such as eco-cabins, tiny homes and glamping.
- Nature and wellness retreats.
- Small-scale boutique hotels and resorts.
- Investment in high quality tourist park accommodation.
- Reinvestment in existing accommodation stock, particularly caravan parks, motels and motor inns, and outdated self-contained accommodation establishments.
- High quality farmstay accommodation.

Events

Towong Shire has a small annual tourism events profile, demonstrated in the table below.

The events profile is dominated by small-scale events attracting low visitor numbers, largely volunteer and community run. This limits the ability of these events to be scaled-up to attract visitors, as they rely heavily on volunteers and sponsorships.

Tourism events were assigned to the following categories to gain an understanding of the spread of events across the typologies:

- **Markets** – Community markets and farmers markets.
- **Lifestyle** – Events for families and local residents.
- **Arts, Music and Cultural** - Art and cultural festivals, music festivals and concerts and exhibitions.
- **Sport and Recreation** – Participatory and spectator events.
- **Gardens and Agriculture** – Open gardens and agricultural shows.

The largest proportion of events are sport and recreation events, including participatory and spectator events, such as rodeos, boat races and fishing.

Type	Number	%
Sport and Recreation	16	59%
Lifestyle and Family	4	15%
Markets	3	11%
Arts, Music and Culture	2	7%
Gardens and Agriculture	2	7%
Total Events in Towong Shire	27	

KEY TOURISM EVENTS

- Sports and Recreation Events:
 - Hang Gliding and Paragliding, including the Flow Corryong Paragliding Open and The Corryong Cup Hang Gliding Competition.
 - Fishing competitions are popular and attract competitors from across Australia. This includes Dartmouth Cup Fishing Classic, Dartmouth Women’s Fishing Classic; Cudgewa Fishing Classic and the Dart Dam Trout Trolling Tournament.
- Lifestyle and Family Events, such as The Man From Snow River Bush Festival and Tallangatta Show n Shine n Swap Meet.
- Markets, including Peninsula Seasonal Market and Upper Murray Farmers Market.
- Arts, Music and Culture events such as Bush Poetry and Acoustic Music and The Nariel Creek Folk Festival.
- Gardens and Agriculture events such as Tallangatta Expo and Garden Get About.

There is limited diversity in the Shire’s events profile.

There is a major gap in events that can attract the Lifestyle Leader and are aligned to contemporary visitor interests and expectations.

There is a need for development of new events such as arts and culture events, major music events and food and farmgate produce events. These are events that that can grow brand awareness and visitor yield, and can reposition Towong Shire within the High Country.



Proposed Events

Two potentially major events for the Towong Shire have received funding from the Federal Government, including:

- Upper Murray Victorian Open Road Series Stage, regional road cycling event that will run over two days.
- Mitta Valley Gravel Grinder a recurring event, with an estimated 400 participants. A cycling events company has been contracted to deliver the event for the first three years.

Venues

Upper Murray Events Centre, located in Corryong, is the Shire's key event venue. The Centre is well-suited to sporting events and mid-scale community and business events, however is not well suited to some types of indoor tourism events such as larger theatre or performance based events.

The Shire has a range of small events and function facilities, particularly for private social events. Many of these are outdated and require reinvestment to meet market expectations.

There is an opportunity to increase the wedding and social events markets through investment in new venues and reinvestment in existing venues.

Important to attracting social events will be delivering experiential events facilities that leverage natural views and amenity and provide a unique, high quality experience that will attract markets to the Shire. An example of this is the Wool Press Granya, a converted shearing shed provides a rustic backdrop for events.

Critical to growing the events sector will be to increase the supply of accommodation to support increased visitation.

EVENTS GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES



- Music events, particularly outdoor events that can embrace the natural outlook.
- Events that showcase artisanal local produce.
- Arts and culture events showcasing local creators and makers.
- Open garden events and 'pick your own' events.
- Indoor events venues.
- High quality wedding and social event venues capitalising on the natural assets.

BRANDING AND MARKETING

BRANDING

Towong Shire has a fragmented brand, with a range of brands and brandmarks utilised in parts of the Shire. These create confusion in the market and can impact consumer awareness of the Shire.

There are four brands utilised across the Shire in various locations, which have a range of applications detailed in the table adjacent.

The use of multiple brands is ineffective in creating cut through in the market place, and results in the already limited community and Council resources being inefficiently utilised.

A streamlined approach to branding across the Shire is required to deliver a unified approach for tourism development. Tourism North East is currently undertaking a project to develop a brand framework for the Shire and its destinations, which will address the existing fragmented brand.



Towns Promoted			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dartmouth Eskdale Mitta Mitta 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bellbridge Bethanga Dartmouth Eskdale Granya Mitta Mitta Tallangatta Old Tallangatta 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire-wide, used on tourism signage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bellbridge Bethanga Corryong Colac Colac Cudgewa Granya Jingellic Koetong Khancoban Nariel Valley Shelley Tintaldra Tooma Towong Walwa
Physical Collateral			
✗	✗	✓	✓
Website			
✓	✓	✗	✓
Signage			
✓	✗	✓	✓

MARKETING

There are a range of associations that participate in the marketing of Towong Shire. Each of these deliver marketing activities to varying degrees of consistency and quality.

Visit Victoria

Corryong is the only township from the Towong Shire that is promoted on the Visit Victoria website.

Corryong is promoted being an “adventure lover’s paradise”, with the township being a popular destination for rock climbing, rafting, horse riding, bushwalks, four wheeled driving, cycling and fishing.

Other key assets across the Shire currently listed on the Visit Victoria website include:

- Indi Bridge Reserve, Towong Upper
- The Potted Cumquat, Tallangatta
- Riverview Lodge, Towong
- Tallangatta Triangles Park, Tallangatta

Development of unique hero products and experiences will be critical to Towong Shire leveraging Visit Victoria’s marketing reach.

Tourism North East (TNE)

Tourism North East promotes the region through the High Country brand.

Towong Shire has limited representation through High Country marketing promotions, due to the lack of hero tourism product aligned to the regions, as well as poor provision of tourism infrastructure.

There is opportunity to further leverage Tourism North East through investment in experiences that can be promoted through their highly successful, region-wide marketing campaigns, each of which align with their product pillars:

- **Ride High Country** – promoting cycling tourism
- **Feast High Country** – promoting food, wine and craft beer tourism
- **Walk High Country** – promoting walking and nature-based tourism

Corryong and Tallangatta are the key towns advertised on the High Country website.

Key assets in Tallangatta that are promoted on the website include Lake Hume, High Country Rail Trail and The Tallangatta Triangles.

Key assets in Corryong that are promoted on the website include the Corryong Show and the Great River Road. As well as these, accommodation and cycling routes are also listed for Tallangatta, Corryong and some other towns in Towong Shire.

TNE is currently promoting “Upper Murray in Motion”, a five day journey across the Upper Murray region. The website provides a detailed itinerary which lists 22 activities and stops, which includes places to stay, activities and where to eat. The locations listed on the itinerary extend across the Upper Murray and are not limited to Tallangatta and Corryong. The promotion of the Upper Murray through this journey is helpful in promoting the region and its key assets.

Towong Shire Council

Towong Shire Council has some involvement in marketing activities to promote the Shire. Council lacks an Instagram account or destination website to promote the whole Shire. Council operates and manages both the Upper Murray and Valleys, Lakes and Vistas websites.

Digital Visitor Information Services

Towong Shire Council operates the two destination websites that promote regions within Towong Shire; Valleys, Lakes and Vistas and Upper Murray websites.

The Valleys, Lakes and Vistas website is outdated and low quality, with static content and a lack of motivational content. Furthermore, the brand has no social media presence, such as a Facebook or Instagram account.

Council also supports the Visit Upper Murray website. This website is of a higher quality and has more connection to the region when compared to the Valleys, Lakes and Vistas website. The multiple websites are confusing for the consumers. The two websites appear to be misaligned and are not complimentary in the promotion of the region.

The streamlining of these websites, and the development of clear promotion will enhance the consumers experience when planning their journey through Towong Shire.

Physical Collateral and Signage

Towong Shire Council engages in the production of some collateral, including brochures and maps. Council also supports other associations in the production of collateral.

Whilst Council collaborated with the Upper Murray community to deliver an Upper Murray regional guide, Towong Shire lacks an official visitor guide and regional touring maps that promote destinations across the entire Shire.

In addition, Council provides signage at key visitor destinations, and infrastructure locations such as lookouts. Signage at these locations is of varying qualities, and in some instances signage is outdated and obsolete.

Valleys, Lakes and Vistas Collateral



Source: Towong Tourism, 2021.

Towong Tourism Signage



Source: Visit Victoria, 2021.

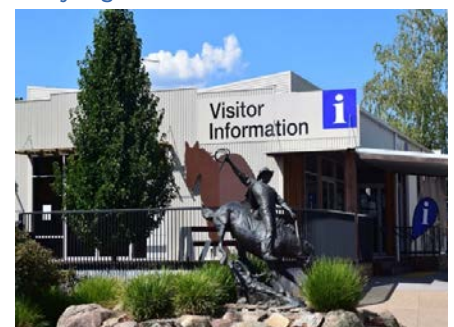
Visitor Information Centres

There is currently one staffed visitor information centre (VIC), the Corryong Visitor Information Centre, as well as two satellite centres.

The two satellite VICs are located in Eskdale and Tallangatta. These centres are not staffed, however they contain brochures and maps pertaining to the surrounding region.

The visitor information centres in Towong Shire have seen a decrease in visitors in recent years, due to the increasing preference for digital information sources. This highlights the need for Towong Shire to strengthen its digital presence.

Corryong Visitor Information Centre



Source: Visit Upper Murray, 2021.

Local Tourism Activities

Mitta Valley Marketing

- Mitta Valley logo/brand
- Instagram
- Local website for Mitta Valley

Mitta Valley Inc. owns and operates the Mitta Valley website. There are also a number of social media accounts that promote and market the sub region, which are run by the community..

The website promotes the key townships of Eskdale, Mitta Mitta and Dartmouth. Activities, events, accommodation and dining are also promoted on the website.

The Instagram account is predominately focused towards community events and updates.

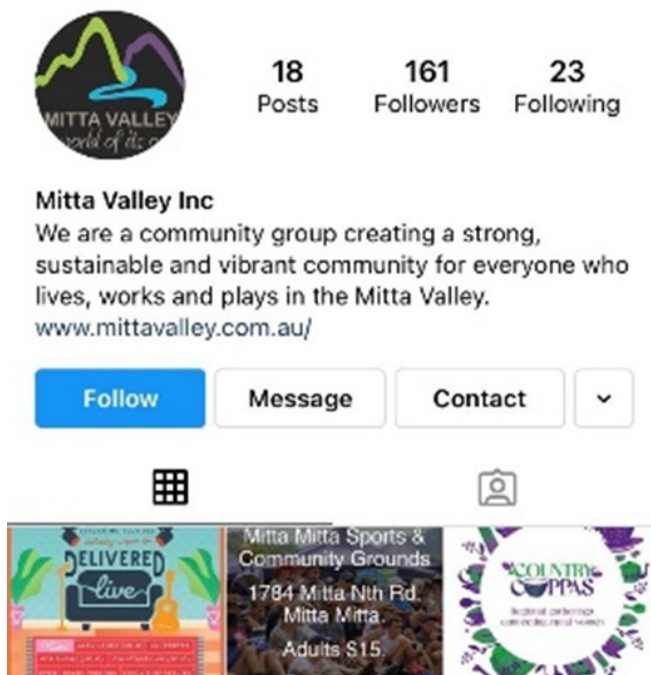
Upper Murray Marketing

- Brochures etc.
- Branding
- Instagram
- Website

Whilst Council operate the Upper Murray website, they have an agreement with Upper Murray Inc. the website meets their needs and showcases businesses that buy into their programs.

The website and Instagram account are of a high quality and are regularly updated. There is opportunity to improve the hierarchy of content on the website and deliver more motivational hero imagery to attract further visitation.

Mitta Valley Inc. Instagram



Upper Murray Website



KEY CONSIDERATIONS

PRODUCTS AND EXPERIENCE

Hero Product to Drive Awareness

Towong Shire lacks hero products to drive visitor demand and consumer awareness.

Hero products are required for promotion through Tourism North East and to gain cut through in the market when competing with a number of more developed destinations across Victoria and New South Wales.

Key existing assets with potential to be elevated to hero product status include nature-based assets, lakes and waterways, and cycling routes and products.

Investment in Supporting Tourism Experiences

There is low supply, diversity and quality of accommodation and food and beverage establishments to meet basic visitor expectations.

This limits the type of visitors Towong Shire can target, and impacts on visitor yield.

Mountain Biking Investment

Towong Shire has a natural competitive advantage in supporting mountain biking.

Key attributes include:

- An abundance of public land held within State forests.
- Quality nature based values and emerging tourism industry.
- Significant change in elevation within forest reserves and on private land which can support gravity trails.
- Part of the High Country Region with Cycling as a key pillar and opportunity to leverage off marketing and existing mountain bike product.

There are some barriers to supporting mountain biking development within Towong Shire. These include:

- Lack of resources to support trail maintenance
- Small population to draw on to support mountain biking
- Distance from market

Activating and Leveraging Natural Assets

Towong Shire has a wealth of nature-based assets that have been untapped.

These assets lack easy or clear access, have low activation, limited amenity and infrastructure, and poor promotion.

Key assets with potential to be activated include Lakes Hume, Dartmouth and Banimboola, the Murray and Mitta Mitta Rivers, Burrowa-Pina National Park, Mount Granya and Mount Lawson State Parks and Jervis Creek and Mount Mitta Mitta Regional Parks.

Barriers to activating natural assets include limited resources and financial capacity of land managers (Parks Victoria, Goulburn-Murray Water and Council) to invest in and maintain infrastructure.

Therefore it is necessary to prioritise investment to destinations that provide the most unique experiences and are in closest proximity to townships that will leverage economic benefit.

Importantly, ensuring investment is followed by high quality imagery, videos and promotion to maximise the economic benefit to the local community.

MARKETS

Access to Source Markets

Isolation from population centres and surrounding visitor destinations impacts the Shire's access to visitor markets.

This is particularly a barrier for remote locations such as Corryong and other Upper Murray towns, which are at least an hour and a half drive from major centres.

COVID-19 travel restrictions and border closures has seen significant impacts for the Shire due to historically receiving a large proportion of visitation from NSW.

Growing the Family Market

The family market has significant growth potential for Towong Shire. Attracting the family market has been instrumental in the growth of visitor destinations such as Bright.

The Shire has the right base assets to attract families, including a range of outdoor activities, access to waterways for boating, swimming, fishing and water sports, cycling and a range of caravan parks.

Further activation of these assets, as well as investment in food and drink and accommodation to meet visitor expectations, will be important to driving this market.



BRANDING AND MARKETING

Lack of Clear and Cohesive Brands

There is a lack of clarity regarding the Towong Shire brand both across the Shire and for the consumer.

The Shire's brand is fragmented, with the Upper Murray brand created through the Upper Murray Masterplan process, and the Valleys Lakes and Vistas brand established as a result of lack of promotion for the remaining townships.

These brand identities are disconnected from place and the visitor struggles to understand the destination.

Cohesive Governance and Strong Leadership

A cohesive tourism governance structure, with clear roles and responsibilities for product development and marketing, will ensure a destination prospers.

The region has a complex assortment of Local Tourism Organisations (LTA's) that each operate independently and lack a unified approach.

This creates confusion for the visitor, with a range of websites with varied branding and communications.

There is a need for improved tourism governance within the region, which will translate to a clearer brand and message to the consumer.

Leveraging the High Country Brand

Given that townships within Towong Shire have a strong alignment with the High Country, working with this organisation will strengthen the shires presence in the marketplace.

Lack of Quality Digital Content and Information

Multiple tourism websites managed and supported by an under-resourced Council has an impact on content quality, consistency and relevance.

There is limited pre-planning information available online for visitors, nor is there highly motivational imagery, touring itineraries or calls to action that will inspire visitors to book a trip.

Products and experiences showcased on both websites have lengthy, descriptive copy that is overwhelming and not aligned to how the 21st century consumer preference to consume information; that is, in small, bite-sized pieces.

The Shire needs image and video creation for key tourism assets, development of touring itineraries, improved copy and enhanced hierarchy of content displayed online.

Business Digital Presence

The majority of tourism business operators have a poor business digital presence, with a lack of information online or poor quality and unsophisticated digital information.

This includes many operators who are not online, information online is not informative or inspiring, or does not create a call to action (i.e. lead to a booking site).

This is a result of time-poor small business operators, operators who do not see tourism as their core business, or a lack of digital skills and capability. Upskilling programs and support for digital presence enhancement is required.

Signage

The Shire's directional and tourism signage is outdated. There is a range of obsolete signage, dated, confusing, as well as poor directional signage.

There is a need for a signage strategy and implementation to support a clear visitor experience.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITY

Land for Development

All townships (excluding Bethanga) have limited supply of zoned residential and employment land, which limits the potential of the region to undertake any significant population growth or business investment.

Investment in Infrastructure to Improve Utilisation

There is opportunity to reinvest in public assets and infrastructure to support increased utilisation for a variety of events.

This includes Tallangatta and Corryong showgrounds, and the Upper Murray Events Centre. Investigation of industry needs for these sites will be important to activating them.

Leveraging the Corryong Airport

The Corryong Airport has opportunity for further utilisation.

There may be opportunity for fly-in events, luxury chartered flights, and guided private tour experiences.

Transport Infrastructure

The road infrastructure across the region is poor, which affects connectivity to/from Albury-Wodonga for visitors and tourism workforce. Enhancement is required to improve visitor access.

Town Amenity and Activation

There is a lack of township amenity and streetscaping to create activated, vibrant, attractive and engaging towns for visitors.

There is also a lack of diversity in town centre businesses, particularly in the retail and dining offerings for visitors.

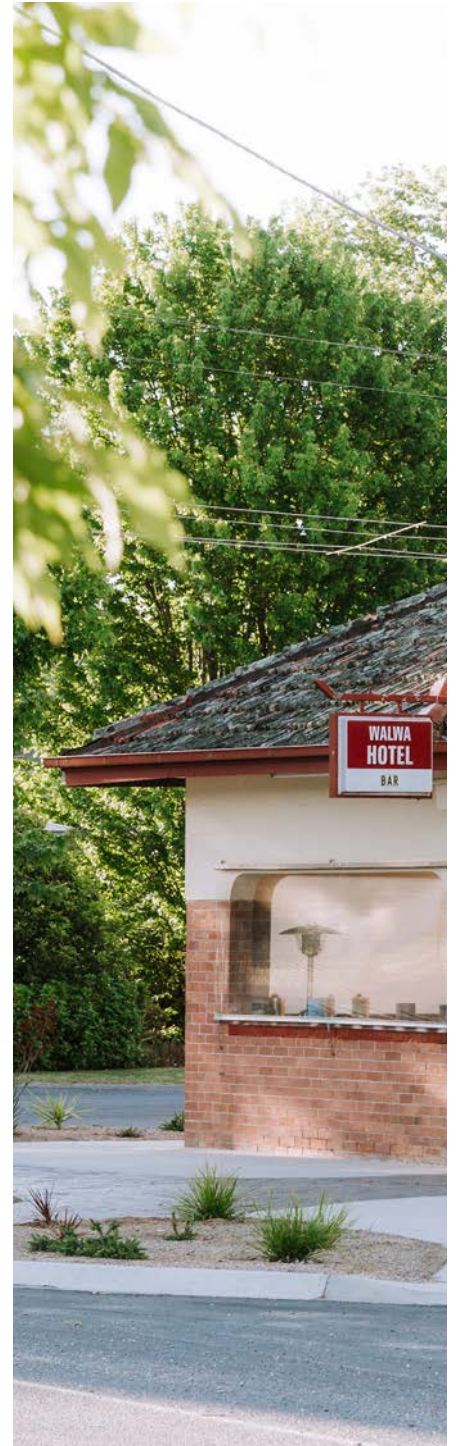
Lack of Water and Sewerage to Support Investment

There is a lack of development infrastructure (water and sewerage) in Bethanga, Talgarno, Granya and Mitta Mitta, which is a constraint to commercial tourism development.

Whilst this is addressed in further detail in the Towong Shire Economic Development Strategy, it is a major barrier to commercial tourism investment.

Enhanced Digital Infrastructure

There is a need for improved telecommunications infrastructure. There are a significant number of black spots across the Shire, which impact the visitor experience, access to visitor information, and impact business operations and investment.





RESOURCING AND COLLABORATION

Fragmented Tourism Governance

The Towong Shire has a fragmented approach to governance of tourism. The fragmentation is in part due to the overlap of local and regional tourism structures, which leads to a lack of clarity in defining the Towong brand.

It is critical that the tourism governance is simplified and streamlined to improve the quality and consistency of the approach. This will enhance clarity and increase the visitor markets understanding of the region.

Council Resourcing and Implementation

Council faces significant challenges to achieving economic development outcomes, including:

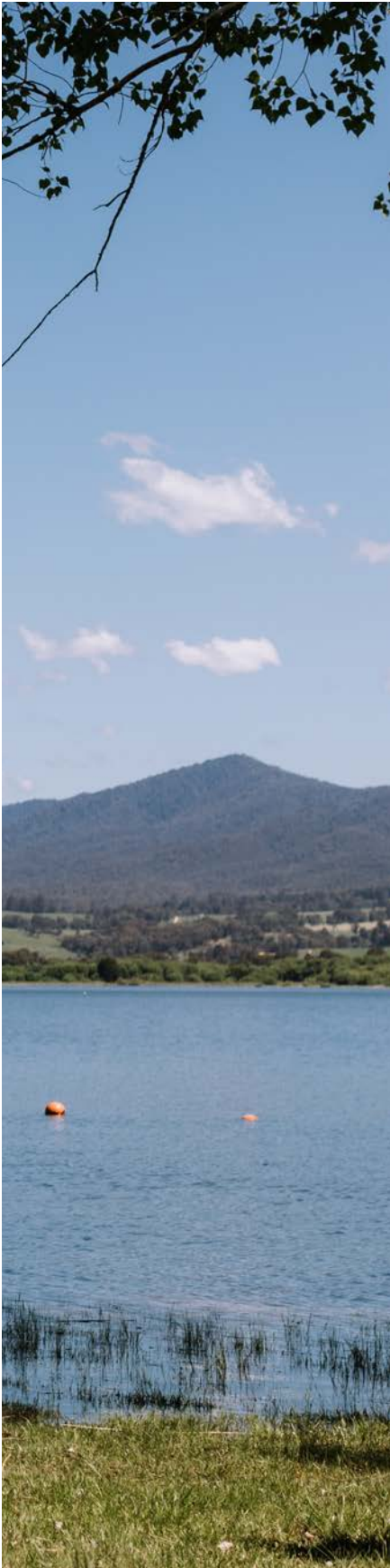
- Limited resources, with 1.4 FTE dedicated to economic development and tourism, and 1 FTE dedicated to the VIC.
- The geography of the Shire, with the business base dispersed across several townships, many of which are relatively isolated from Council offices.

This creates inefficiencies in tourism development and investment facilitation, with resources spread thinly across a large area, making it difficult to engage with and support many businesses. This subsequently limits the activities and projects that Council can undertake or support.

Leveraging Tourism North East Resources

As Towong Shire Council has limited resources for tourism delivery, Council should continue to utilise and buy-into Tourism North East's training resources, industry support services, usual marketing activities, and marketing campaigns.

This includes utilisation of Tourism North East's Industry Development Program to assist in business development and upskilling.



Cross-Border Collaboration

New South Wales is an important source visitor market for the Upper Murray sub-region.

In addition, the New South Wales side of the border, some of which is included in the Upper Murray Local Tourism Association's region, provides a significant amount of the product and experience offering for visitors.

As such, it is integral that the Upper Murray sub-region continues to work closely with local industry, Council and State Government in New South Wales to develop product and undertake marketing and promotion.

Industry Collaboration and Communication

The Shire's disperse geography results in disconnected communities and industries lacking overarching guidance and direction. This is exacerbated by communities having unique interests and challenges, and working independently rather than collaboratively.

There is a lack of formal local industry representation, which impacts collaboration, support and networking across the business community and with Council.

Improved and formalised opportunities for business networking and Council communication should be explored to address these needs.

Attracting Skilled and Unskilled Labour

Towong Shire businesses have difficulty attracting both a skilled and unskilled tourism workforce due to lack of available and affordable housing, as well as distance from Albury-Wodonga.

Similar to many parts of regional Victoria, the Shire struggles to attract skilled staff, in particular chefs and front of house staff. This is a barrier to growing the visitor economy.

Investment Attraction

The small population and business base means there is difficult attracting substantial tourism investment from the local community.

Limited entrepreneurship or appreciation for the benefits of tourism to the local community can result in difficulties advancing tourism opportunities or attracting funding applications when grants are available through Council.

There is a need for Council to explore opportunities to attract external capital, particularly from regional High Country or Albury-Wodonga investors.

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

The following section outlines the strategic framework to guide development of the Towong Shire visitor economy.

This includes a vision for tourism in the Shire, strategic objectives, and seven key themes to guide public and private sector investment.



DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

VISION



Towong Shire is the leading High Country destination to escape to and immerse in nature and the outdoors. The nature-based experiences are complemented by quality food, drink and accommodation experiences.



OBJECTIVES

Establishes hero products and experiences to drive visitation and increase awareness.

Encourages visitor dispersal across the Shire to tourism nodes.

Create critical product mass through focused investment at key visitor nodes.

Strengthen alignment to High Country brand pillars.

Support investment in contemporary visitor products and experiences.

Establish a clear and cohesive brand identity that resonates with the market.

Improve the visitor journey by creating clear touring routes and quality visitor infrastructure, supported by clear visitor information.

Support growth of a diverse and visitor-ready tourism industry.

PROJECT PRIORITISATION AND PROCESS

The DMP objectives have been used to assess and prioritise project ideas that have emerged throughout the course of the project.

Transformative Projects

Projects that meet the greatest number of objectives have been classed as Transformative projects.

Transformative projects must be hero products that align to High Country brand to maximise Tourism North East marketing activities and broad reach.

Other Project Opportunities

These are smaller projects that align well to objectives and may have both regional and local impacts. These are projects may also have major constraints that impact on the short term deliverability.

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Key performance targets have been identified for Towong Shire to track performance of the visitor economy over the life of this Plan.

- 1. Double visitation to Towong Shire from 195,000 to 400,000 by 2026.**
- 2. Grow daytrip yield per visitor from \$62 to \$91 by 2026, in line with Tourism North East's visitor profile. This is a growth of approximately 47%.**
- 3. Grow overnight yield per visitor by \$100 per trip, from \$287 per night to \$387. This will be a growth of approximately 30%.**



STRATEGIC THEMES

A range of strategic themes for tourism investment have emerged through development of the Plan. These provide direction for tourism investment and prioritise key visitor economy needs.



THEME 1. ACCOMMODATION

Delivery of quality, contemporary and diverse accommodation stock to attract target markets and increase overnight stays and visitor yield.



THEME 2. FOOD, BEVERAGE AND FARMGATE

Investment in motivational and contemporary food and drink experiences to meet visitor expectations and leverage the region's high quality agricultural produce.



THEME 3. NATURE AND WATER

Activate, harness and showcase key natural and waterway assets through investment and improved utilisation.



THEME 4. RIDE

Invest in a range of trails infrastructure and formalise existing trails to position Towong as one of High Country's hero cycling destinations.



THEME 5. INFRASTRUCTURE, AMENITY AND ACTIVATION

Deliver high quality visitor infrastructure, services and amenity to improve the visitor experience and perception of Towong as a tourism destination.



THEME 6. BRANDING, MARKETING AND AWARENESS

Delivery of a cohesive and consistent brand through marketing, collateral and events to promote increased awareness.



THEME 7. INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND COLLABORATION

Support continued development and enhancement of industry in Towong's sub regions and strengthen collaboration across industry.



THEME 1

ACCOMMODATION

Delivery of quality, contemporary and diverse accommodation stock to attract target markets and increase overnight stays and visitor yield.

Rationale

- Low quality, outdated accommodation stock.
- Lack of commercial accommodation including hotel and resort accommodation, branded accommodation, experiential accommodation.
- Need for reinvestment in caravan parks to meet market expectations.
- Need for an increase in guest rooms across accommodation typologies to meet future demand and grow the visitor economy.

AREAS OF FOCUS

- 🎯 **Leverages remote location and endless views.**
- 🎯 **Retreat, wellness style accommodation that attracts Lifestyle Leader market.**
- 🎯 **Glamping and eco-cabins.**
- 🎯 **Improved holiday-rental offerings.**
- 🎯 **Reinvestment in caravan parks.**
- 🎯 **Waterfront accommodation developments.**

**Transformative Project:
Holiday Park Reinvestment Program**

**Location: Tallangatta, Mitta Mitta, Walwa,
Colac Colac, Dartmouth**

Reinvestment in holiday parks across Towong Shire is needed to elevate the parks to the quality standards expected by the contemporary visitor market.

Delivery of integrated holiday parks with quality facilities and a range of accommodation options, including quality cabins, will be critical to attracting and growing the family market.

Whilst these caravan parks are a mixture of private and public assets, there is potential to undertake a collaborative approach with support from Council.

Precedent: RACV Cobram



**Transformative Project:
Cudgewa Valley Wilderness Retreat**

Location: Cudgewa

There is opportunity to develop an iconic wilderness retreat in the Cudgewa Valley, located in the picturesque valley between Mount Mittamatite and Burrowa-Pine National Park.

An accommodation facility in this location should consider siting principles that leverage natural views and provide a remote and isolated setting. An example of this is Paperbark Camp in NSW.

Delivery of high quality, nature-based accommodation in this location would support visitation to and expenditure in Corryong and surrounding Upper Murray towns.

**Transformative Project:
Small Scale Accommodation Interventions**

Location: Shire-wide, Tallangatta, Jervis Creek

There is opportunity to deliver a range of small scale accommodation interventions that will provide new high quality, contemporary accommodation offerings. Investments should consider leveraging natural assets and vantage points to deliver unique accommodation experiences, whilst also in proximity to nearby towns to ensure economic benefit can be maximised.

OTHER PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES



- **Tallangatta Eco-cabins.** Investment in eco-cabins above Tallangatta, on the southside of Tallangatta overlooking Lake Hume. This could be delivered alongside the Tallangatta Gravity Mountain Bike Park.
- **Jervis Creek Eco-cabins.** Development of luxury cabins on the isolated hills of Jervis Creek, behind Old Tallangatta, leveraging views of Lake Hume.
- **Upper Murray Wilderness Fishing Lodge.** Deliver the Upper Murray Wilderness Fishing Lodge at Tom Groggin, identified in the Upper Murray Masterplan 2030.
- **Murray River Glamping.** Deliver glamping experiences along the Murray River, nearby to key towns of Granya and Walwa.
- **Lake Hume Lakeside Resort.** There is potential to develop a Lakeside Resort at Bellbridge. There is potential for this to be located north of Bellbridge along the banks of Lake Hume, isolated from the residential areas however in proximity to the new foreshore commercial precinct.
- **Corryong Hotel Motel Revitalisation.** This business provides a strategic opportunity for upgrade due to its location and impressive aspect overlooking the mountain range. There is opportunity to reinvest in the offering to provide high quality hotel accommodation that will attract new markets.





THEME 2 **FOOD, DRINK AND FARMGATE**

Investment in motivational and contemporary food and drink experiences to meet visitor expectations and leverage the region's high quality agricultural produce.

Rationale

- Low supply of food and beverage product and contemporary food and drink offer.
- Lack of diversity in food and beverage offering.
- Potential for farmgate and agri-tourism offering.

AREAS OF FOCUS



Farmgate and provedore experiences.



Showcasing local produce within existing businesses.



Creating destination food experiences.

**Transformative Project:
Bellbridge Boathouse**

Location: Bellbridge

The delivery of a high quality bistro restaurant on the banks of Lake Hume provides an opportunity for lakeside activation and delivery of a destination food experience.

This establishment would attract daytrip visitors from Albury-Wodonga, the surrounding region and locals alike. This would be a unique experience for the region.

Precedent: The Boathouse, Daylesford



**Transformative Project:
Corryong Distillery**

Location: Corryong

Delivery of a high quality distillery in Corryong would provide a destination food experience that leverages the natural aspect and attracts touring visitors.

There is opportunity for this to be colocated with the Corryong golf course, particularly if redeveloped. This would also support social events.

Precedent: Wild Brumby Thredbo Valley Distillery



**Transformative Project:
Old Tallangatta Butter Factory Revitalisation**

Location: Old Tallangatta

Reinvigorate the Old Tallangatta Butter Factory with a series of short and long-term activations.

In the short term, use of the site for bump-in, pop-up events, including galleries, music events, markets, food events and private social events such as weddings, will create private sector intrigue around the site and its potential future uses.

In the long-term, attraction of a private business to undertake the headlease or attraction of a consortium of businesses, will allow the site to be used as a unique and iconic food venue. There is opportunity to utilise local dairy to develop an ice creamery or cheese factory, showcasing local produce and playing on the history of the site as a butter factory.

Precedent: Milawa Cheese Factory



OTHER PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES



- **Shipping Container Investment.** Council to fund investment in shipping containers to support new food and beverage operators in the interim. This could be utilised for destinations such as Bethanga and Mitta Mitta which are currently hindered by a lack of sewerage to allow commercial investment. Wodonga Station Precinct provides a good example of what could be achieved.
- **Peak-period Mobile Food Van.** There is opportunity for investment in mobile food vans to service events and peak periods, including servicing visitors at campgrounds.
- **Farmgate Prospectus.** There is a need to facilitate and encourage investment from local farmers and producers in farmgate experiences. There is an opportunity to develop a high level prospectus that will showcase the benefits of diversification through delivery of a farmgate experience, including improved access to and awareness of local produce, and increased visitor spend by providing additional visitor experiences that are aligned to consumer preferences and demand.





THEME 3 NATURE AND WATER

Activate, harness and showcase key natural and waterway assets through investment and improved utilisation.

Rationale

- Nature-based assets have the potential to become the key drivers for visitation.
- Nature-based assets in the Shire strongly align to the High Country brand and can leverage TNE's brand and marketing efforts.
- Water is a major driver of visitation, particularly in summer, for destinations across Victoria.
- Investment in nature-based assets will become the hero products of the Shire.

AREAS OF FOCUS



Activating nature-based assets through investment in infrastructure and improved access.



Boost awareness through marketing and development of iconic lookouts that promote user generated content.



Activating and utilising waterways through increased waterfront development, improved boating and fishing access, and equipment hire.

**Transformative Project:
Corryong Golf Course Redevelopment**

Location: Corryong

The Corryong Golf Course has an impressive aspect and has potential to be a high quality asset.

Redevelopment of the Golf Course into a leading golf destination in Victoria through accommodation, a hub building and potential incorporation of a distillery to attract visitation.

Precedent: Murray Downs



**Transformative Project:
Murray River Multi-Day Canoe Trail**

Location: Towong to Bellbridge

Delivery of a multi-day canoe trail experience will deliver a unique experience of Australia's longest river. The trail will stop at key townships to encourage private operators to deliver accommodation and dining experiences that will encourage visitor spend.

This will provide opportunities for private tour operators, as well as shuttle services.

Precedent: Glenelg River Canoe Trail



**Transformative Project:
Lake Hume Masterplan**

Location: Lake Hume

Prepare a masterplan to enhance and activate Lake Hume. This includes investigation of infrastructure needs at key locations to improve access and activation, such as boat ramps, piers, floating pontoons, swimming holes, and private sector activation opportunities such as on-water dining, accommodation, and floating water parks.

This will take into consideration water levels, regulations, and infrastructure requirements and constraints.

Precedent: Lake Eildon Masterplan



**Transformative Project:
Visitor Experience Enhancement Plan for
Burrowa-Pine Mountain National Park and
Mount Granya State Park**

**Location: Burrowa-Pine Mountain National
Park and Mount Granya State Park**

These parks have the opportunity to develop as hero nature-based assets for the Shire, due to the quality and amenity of their natural environments as well as the proximity to neighbouring towns, which provides opportunity to leverage yield from visitors.

Investment should prioritise trail, lookout and signage infrastructure to deliver a Summit Trail, Falls Lookout and elevated Summit Lookout. These investments will provide a photo-worthy opportunity, promoting the sharing of user-generated content and increasing brand awareness.

OTHER PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES



- **Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park Hub.** Support the Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park through development of an Equipment Hire, Café and Social Enterprise Hub.
- **Fishing Product Development Action Plan.** Develop a plan that seeks to promote the opportunities for increased fishing, considering infrastructure, access points, jetties, moorings, fishing events, trout and salmon farm opportunities.
- **Mount Mitta Mitta Summit Walking Trail.**
- **Mount Lawson Activation.** Formalise and promote trails at Mount Lawson, and promote indigenous heritage sites.
- **Parks Victoria Information Upgrade.** Parks Victoria to upgrade the digital information available for Towong Shire parks to enable improved visitor awareness and access to the parks.
- **Lake Banimboola Masterplan.** Develop a precinct masterplan to establish the Lake as a visitor destination, including consideration of new public infrastructure, access, trails, and water-based activities.
- **Murray River Activation Project.** Identify and prioritise investment opportunities across the Murray River to improve utilisation of the Shire's iconic asset.
- **Mitta Mitta Riverfront Precinct Masterplan.** Development of a masterplan for the Mitta Mitta Riverfront Precinct to address peak period capacity issues and disperse visitors through additional river access points.
- **Equine Trails Enhancement.** Work with DELWP to develop bush riding horse trails where suited, and ensure existing trails (e.g. HCRT) are equine friendly where appropriate.










THEME 4 **RIDE**

Invest in a range of trails infrastructure and formalise existing trails to position Towong as one of High Country's hero cycling destinations.

Rationale

- Lack of formalised mountain bike trails
- Nature based assets well aligned to support mountain biking and gravel cycling
- Opportunity to align with Ride High Country campaign
- Opportunity to leverage from the High Country Rail Trail as a key asset
- Opportunity to formalise road and gravel cycling loops with limited investment

AREAS OF FOCUS

-  **Destination mountain biking.**
-  **Regional mountain biking.**
-  **Gravel cycling.**
-  **Rail trail extension and business activation.**
-  **Events that boost awareness of the Shire.**

Transformative Project:
Mitta Mitta Destination Mountain Bike Park

Location: Mitta Mitta

Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park already has funding for stage 1 which will deliver 29kms of trail. A further stage, which will double the trails to 60kms, will establish Mitta Mitta as a key mountain bike destination in the High Country. There is further opportunity to explore trail links to Dartmouth, leading to a network of mtn bike trails that reinforces Mitta Mitta-Dartmouth as a leading destination in Towong.

Transformative Project:
High Country Rail Trail Improvement and Extension

Location: Shelley to Corryong

Delivery of the High Country Rail Trail extension from Shelley to Corryong will provide an important connection between Tallangatta and Corryong, and will deliver an iconic asset for the Shire.

Transformative Project:
Mt Elliot Gravity and Adventure Park

Location: Corryong

Mt Elliot is suited to gravity fed flow trails with impressive and steep vertical of 550 metres. The establishment of a gravity park at Mt Elliot would complement and support the hang-gliding launch site. The site will become suitable for shuttle buses to support both hang gliders and mountain bikers.

Transformative Project:
Tallangatta Gravity Mountain Bike Park

Location: Tallangatta, site adjacent to Tallangatta Lookout

Tallangatta has opportunity to establish both a private gravity mountain bike park, targeted at downhill, slopestyle and jumps market. This would position this mountain bike park separately from Mitta Mitta and Mt Elliot. The location is suited to downhill events and has an open amphitheatre geography that makes it unique. Further cross-country trails may be established in the DELWP Forrest adjoining the site, which would be suited to a broader market.

OTHER PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES



- **Support Development of Cycling Events.** Support delivery and promotion of the inaugural Upper Murray Road Race Victorian Road Cycling Series and Mitta Valley Gravel Unravel events. Consider opportunities for unique activations and food, beverage and event business operator engagement to deliver pre, during and post event experiences to enhance visitor satisfaction.
- **Gravel and Cycle Loops.** Formalisation of a range of gravel and road cycle loops, with development of digital itineraries, signage and promotion.
- **Mountain Bike Trail Investment.** Investment in a range of mountain bike trails, including Shelly to Beetomba single track cross country section of the High Country Rail Trail, Mt Granya, Tallangatta to Mitta Mitta Epic Trail (75+kms), Mitta Mitta to Omeo Multi Day Wilderness Trail (150+kms), and Mt Lawson South side trail development.





THEME 5



INFRASTRUCTURE, AMENITY AND ACTIVATION

Deliver high quality visitor infrastructure, services and amenity to improve the visitor experience and perception of Towong as a tourism destination.

Rationale

- Poor visitor amenity and attractiveness of key towns.
- Difficulty for visitors to understand how to 'experience' Towong.
- Need for strategic planning and masterplanning to support future investment in the Shire.

AREAS OF FOCUS



Attractive towns and villages.



Base infrastructure to support a satisfactory visitor experience.



Improved access and connectivity.

**Transformative Project:
Township Enhancement Program**

Location: Bellbridge, Corryong, Mitta Mitta, Eskdale, Tallangatta

Identify opportunities to enhance and activate the town centres of community and service hubs in Towong. This will help support population attraction by improving amenity for visitors and residents, focusing on:

- Streetscaping improvements and general beautification activities
- Public art installations
- Open spaces and plantings
- Pedestrianising key precincts

This program should consider the key townships in each sub-region, including Bellbridge, Corryong, Mitta Mitta, Eskdale and Tallangatta.

Note: This project is also included in the Towong Shire EDS (refer Theme 1)

**Transformative Project:
Bellbridge Village Masterplan**

Location: Bellbridge

Masterplanning for Bellbridge was identified as a key priority to help commercialise and activate the township, leveraging its potential dual role to become a commuter town and visitor destination.

This includes the establishment of a commercial foreshore precinct, delivering a gateway intervention to signify entry into Towong Shire, attracting new businesses and creating amenity for residents and visitors.

Note: This project is also included in the Towong Shire EDS (refer Theme 1)

**Transformative Project:
Mitta Mitta Activation Plan**

Location: Mitta Mitta

Investment in the Mitta Mitta destination mountain bike park will provide flow on business opportunities and create demand for products and experiences to service visitor needs.

Delivery of an Activation Plan that supports the growth of Mitta Mitta is essential to meeting future demand. This should include:

- Commercial precinct planning
- Business attraction
- Investment in a sewer mine solution
- Accommodation investment
- Magorra Caravan Park redevelopment

**Transformative Project:
Tallangatta Foreshore Stage 1
Destination Playground, Cafe and Trail**

Location: Tallangatta

Towong Shire Council has embarked on a masterplan for the Tallangatta Foreshore overlooking Lake Hume. The precinct already has a tourist park, parkland and boat launching facilities, however there is potential to activate this part of town further.

The masterplan identifies the opportunity for the following:

- Destination playground
- Café overlooking Lake Hume
- Expansion of the existing splash park
- Trail network



OTHER PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES



- **Digital Infrastructure Strategy.** Deliver and implement the Digital Infrastructure Strategy, to ensure residents have sufficient mobile and internet connectivity.
- **Seal the Lake Road.** This will create a Lake Road Touring Loop and encourage visitor dispersal between Bellbridge and Tallangatta.
- **Corryong Airport Commercialisation.** Explore commercialisation of the Corryong Airport to attract new tourism experiences from high yield visitors.
- **Benambra-Corryong Road Sealing Feasibility Study.** Investigate the feasibility of sealing the Benambra-Corryong Road to encourage touring from Gippsland to the Upper Murray.
- **Tintaldra Foreshore Masterplan.** Develop a foreshore masterplan to enhance Tintaldra foreshore and town centre, including swimming holes, boat ramp, and riverfront infrastructure.
- **Strategic Infrastructure Advocacy.** Prioritise strategic infrastructure requirements and advocate for funding to support rural industry growth (e.g. energy production, transport infrastructure).
- **Tallangatta Showgrounds Precinct Activation Strategy.** Prepare a strategy that will identify infrastructure and amenity upgrades required to promote activation of the site, improve amenity and increase utilisation of the precinct. This should consider the needs of the equine industry through engagement with the sector.
- **Man From Snowy River Australian Music Festival.** There is opportunity to use the strength of the existing Man From Snowy River brand to develop a new Australian Music Festival. Council should aim to attract a private events operator to deliver the event in Corryong, considering the potential to broaden market appeal with a contemporary artist line up.
- **Pick Your Own Produce Event.** Develop a 'Pick your own' produce event, which allows visitors to experience Towong Shire's smaller scale farms and pick local produce. This could be a horticulture event.
- **Physical Collateral Review and Refresh.** Review and update the existing physical collateral in the marketplace to align to the newly developed brand strategy and to provide high quality visitor information.
- **Signage Strategy.** Develop and deliver a signage strategy that considers new signage with a cohesive brand approach, clear connection to place, improved hierarchy of signage, and removal of outdated and obsolete signage.
- **Omeo Highway Masterplan.** Prepare a masterplan for development of the Omeo Highway as a touring route linking Towong Shire with East Gippsland. The touring route should feature lookouts, large-scale artwork, tourists' facilities, interpretive signage, and be supported by a comprehensive marketing and promotional campaign.
- **Upper Murray Cross-Border Tourism Plan.** In conjunction with Snowy Valleys Council and local industry, develop a tourism plan for the development of the Upper Murray, with consideration to product development, marketing, and product packaging.
- **Concept Plan and Feasibility Study for Tallangatta's Notable Town Status.** Undertake a feasibility study and concept plan for the establishment of a cultural/museum complex and additional activations in Tallangatta, showcasing the history of the town that moved.
- **Dartmouth Masterplan.** Delivery of a Masterplan for revitalisation and activation of Dartmouth, including a splash park and play space, commercial activation of Dartmouth township and opportunities for further utilisation and activation of the Dartmouth Dam.



THEME 6








BRANDING, MARKETING AND AWARENESS

Support continued development and enhancement of industry in Towong's sub regions and strengthen collaboration across industry.

Rationale

- Lack of unified brand.
- Inability to leverage Tourism North East marketing with unclear positioning.
- Unclear brand to the consumer and lack of brand connection to place.

AREAS OF FOCUS

-  **Clarify brand(s) in the eye of the consumer.**
-  **Create engaging and motivating content.**
-  **Leverage Tourism North East marketing activities.**
-  **Promote touring loops to leverage regional visitation.**
-  **Deliver events aligned to Towong's unique positioning.**

Transformative Project: Branding and Digital Strategy

Location: Shire-wide

Build on the brand framework project currently being delivered by Tourism North East to deliver a consistent branding approach aligned to market understanding of the Shire.

A digital strategy is required to review the range of websites, social media accounts and physical collateral produced by the range of players. A Council-wide approach to digital and physical collateral should be undertaken to ensure consistency in quality.

Transformative Project: Content and Imagery Database

Location: Shire-wide

Delivery of a high quality imagery, video and content database is required to improve digital promotion and marketing activities.

The database should include nature-based assets, townships, public assets, and private businesses.

High quality imagery and content will encourage greater promotion from Tourism North East and allow the Shire to have greater promotion in marketing campaigns.

Transformative Project: Touring Itineraries

Location: Shire-wide

Following the development of a high quality website(s), develop a range of interactive touring itineraries to promote exploration of the Shire and dispersal across the broader region. These should include activities, attractions and dining along the route to allow visitors to plan their trip and encourage greater spend.

Key routes for promotion include the Snowy Valleys Way, Great River Road, and Melbourne-Kosciusko, as well as the new Lake touring route (to be formed following road sealing).

These should be able to be downloaded in PDF format for use in-region.

OTHER PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES



- **Man From Snowy River Australian Music Festival.** There is opportunity to use the strength of the existing Man From Snowy River brand to develop a new Australian Music Festival. Council should aim to attract a private events operator to deliver the event in Corryong, considering the potential to broaden market appeal with a contemporary artist line up.
- **Pick Your Own Produce Event.** Develop a 'Pick your own' produce event, which allows visitors to experience Towong Shire's smaller scale farms and pick local produce. This could be a horticulture event.
- **Physical Collateral Review and Refresh.** Review and update the existing physical collateral in the marketplace to align to the newly developed brand strategy and to provide high quality visitor information.
- **Signage Strategy.** Develop and deliver a signage strategy that considers new signage with a cohesive brand approach, clear connection to place, improved hierarchy of signage, and removal of outdated and obsolete signage.
- **Omeo Highway Masterplan.** Prepare a masterplan for development of the Omeo Highway as a touring route linking Towong Shire with East Gippsland. The touring route should feature lookouts, large-scale artwork, tourists' facilities, interpretive signage, and be supported by a comprehensive marketing and promotional campaign.
- **Upper Murray Cross-Border Tourism Plan.** In conjunction with Snowy Valleys Council and local industry, develop a tourism plan for the development of the Upper Murray, with consideration to product development, marketing, and product packaging.



THEME 7



INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND COLLABORATION

Support continued development and enhancement of industry in Towong’s sub regions and strengthen collaboration across industry.

Rationale

- Towong needs healthy businesses to drive tourism in the region.
- Disjointed community groups each working towards own agenda.
- Poor communication amongst operators in other parts of the Shire.
- Inability to share knowledge, experiences and keep up to date with Council and industry activities.

AREAS OF FOCUS

-  **Engage industry and enhance collaboration.**
-  **Demonstrate the value and potential value of tourism to the local economy.**
-  **Encourage and support entrepreneurship.**

**Transformative Project:
Half Yearly Tourism Industry Information and
Networking Forums**

**Location: Lake Hume, Mitta Valley and Upper
Murray sub-regions**

There is opportunity for a half-yearly information and networking event that connects businesses, provides them an update on Council activities, and allows industry to share their activities.

The delivery of this forum across the three sub-regions will provide a networking opportunity for locals, allow them to connect with other operators and enhance local relationships, and identify opportunities for partnership and collaboration between private operators, as well as private operators and Council. This will also assist in familiarising local tourism operators with other offerings across the Shire and enable them to become local advocates.

Ideally, the forums should include at least one representative from each local tourism association or community group to ensure all views are represented and all activities are reported on. There is opportunity for this to be held as an online forum to facilitate access from remote communities.

**Transformative Project:
Business Attraction and Investment
Facilitation Strategy**

Location: Shire-wide

Develop a Business Attraction Strategy which identifies relevant tourism investment opportunities to grow visitor demand and elevate the Shire's product offering.

This should include high quality accommodation and food and beverage operators, particularly operators that can deliver unique experiences that can be leveraged as hero assets. Council should consider the opportunity to identify specific sites that can be de-risked to encourage private sector investment.

This should include business attraction and activation activities, which promotes the Shire's advantages and incentivises business investment.

OTHER PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES



- **Encourage sign up to Tourism North East's Industry Development Program.**

Council should consider identifying specific businesses to utilise the program to build tourism operator capacity and capabilities.

- **Better Approvals Process (in progress).**

Progress the 'Better Approvals' process undertaken by Council, in collaboration with government and industry, to streamline planning permit applications, help businesses overcome regulatory barriers and support business. *Note: This project is also included in the Towong Shire EDS (refer Theme 4).*

- **Product and Experience Packaging.**

Investigate product and experience packaging opportunities and engage with key businesses to deliver.

- **Workforce Attraction Strategy.**

Prepare a Workforce Attraction Strategy – in collaboration with industry – to identify and address labour shortages as well as programs to upskill the labour force to meet industry needs (and increase local employment). *Note: This project is also included in the Towong Shire EDS (refer Theme 1).*

PRIORITY INVESTMENT PROJECTS

Five transformative projects have been identified as short-term priorities for development of the Shire's visitor economy.

These have been determined based on their alignment to target markets and potential to facilitate destination growth.



PRIORITY INVESTMENT PROJECT BELLBRIDGE BOATHOUSE

Bellbridge is a residential settlement on Lake Hume, only 18 minutes' drive from Albury. The village of Bellbridge has potential for growth, leveraging from its proximity to Albury Wodonga and being located on the deepest part of Lake Hume, it has water views all year round.

There is opportunity for Bellbridge to attract a boathouse/waterfront commercial food premises on the Lake Hume foreshore. A commercial food premises with moorings for visitors arriving by boat would create a destination that would service the boating market and also residents from Albury Wodonga.

A range of concept options could be suited to the location, including a café, restaurant or brewery. A site can be leased by Goulburn Murray Water for commercial use, leaving it to an expression of interest process to allow the private sector to develop concepts for consideration.

Project Cost \$3 Million (Private and Public Sector Investment)

Actions

1. Identify appropriate site/s on the Bellbridge Lakefront with Goulburn Murray Water that can support a commercial food/beverage destination.
2. Identify any public sector infrastructure that is required to enable the project.
3. Develop objectives in conjunction with Goulburn Murray Water for the establishment of a food/beverage destination.
4. Goulburn Murray Water to release an Expression of Interest for sites agreed.
5. Council and Tourism North East to assist the expression of interest process by promoting the opportunity to prospective investors.
6. Review and appoint a preferred EOI for the site.
7. Undertake a facilitative planning process to support the applicant.
8. Seek funding for any public sector infrastructure that will enable the project, such as moorings, parking, access, services.

Precedents

Nagambie Brewery



Spoons Swan Hill



Boardwalk Infrastructure and Moorings, Nagambie



PRIORITY INVESTMENT PROJECT MITTA MITTA ACTIVATION PLAN

Mitta Mitta is primed to be the next destination mountain bike mecca in Victoria's High Country. Stage 1 of the Mitta Mountain Bike Park is underway delivering around 35 kilometres of trails, with further stages to bring the total network to over 70 kilometres.

A beautiful village on the intersection of the Mitta Mitta River and Snowy Creek, the township of Mitta Mitta is a hidden gem with significant potential as a tourism village.

The mountain bike park will drive demand for services in town, including the need for shuttle services, accommodation, food, beverage, bike hire and tour guides. There is a need to undertake a plan which responds to the opportunity presented by the mountain bike park investment in order to capture economic benefit from future visitor markets.

The Mitta Mitta Activation Plan will include the following elements:

- Market assessment for visitor accommodation.
- Township plan to identify opportunities for future growth.
- Activation plan including consideration of future events to drive visitation and retail spaces.
- Township amenity improvements.
- Further trail activation.
- Private sector investment opportunities.
- Need for infrastructure to support investment (e.g: sewer, power water).
- Any future land use planning needed to support growth.
- Connection with Dartmouth.

Project Cost \$40,000 (Activation Plan)

Actions

1. Seek funding public sector funding to support the activation plan.
2. Undertake a tender process to appoint a consultant to prepare the plan in conjunction with Council and the community.

Precedent

Derby, Tasmania

Derby, a former tin mining town in Northern Tasmania has become a mecca for mountain biking. Over a ten-year period, the town has attracted millions of dollars in funding for trails to establish itself as one of the leading mountain bike destinations in Australia.

The town has attracted targeted investment in visitor accommodation, food and beverage vendors and bike related services. In order for Mitta Mitta to be successful as a mountain bike destination it needs the complementary products and experiences.



PRIORITY INVESTMENT PROJECT

MOUNT ELLIOT GRAVITY AND ADVENTURE PARK

The Corryong Mt Elliott Gravity Park has strong community support and was previously identified as an opportunity in the Upper Murray Vision 2030 Plan as an opportunity and is acknowledged in the Municipality Recovery Plan.

Mt Elliott is home to a hang-gliding launch pad and has a steep vertical drop of 600 metres also suited to gravity mountain biking, as well as development of an adventure playground.

Mt Elliott is well suited to the establishment of a shuttled gravity park. The shuttle services can support both hang gliding and mountain biking.

Principles for Mt Elliott Gravity and Adventure Park include:

- Support multiple gravity related recreation pursuits.
- Establish a range of gravity and flow trails for a variety of markets.
- Use the steep vertical of Mt Elliott to support downhill mountain biking.
- Create linkages with Corryong.
- Encourage youth engagement in mountain biking.
- Encourage active recreation in Corryong's township.

Project Cost \$4 million

Actions

1. Undertake a feasibility study and masterplan for establishment of the Mt Elliott Gravity Park. This should include consideration of other gravity related activities such as hang gliding.
2. Establish a community and stakeholder advisory group to oversee the project delivery. This includes linkage with the Upper Murray township and community, delivery, maintenance and management longer term.
3. Seek funding for delivery of the mountain bike park.
4. Undertake required planning studies to support the planning approval.

Precedent

Skyline Gravity Park, Rotorua



PRIORITY INVESTMENT PROJECT

CUDGEWA VALLEY WILDERNESS RETREAT

The Cudgewa Valley sits between two of the more impressive nature based reserves in Towong – Burrowa Pine National Park and Mitta Mitta State Park. The reserves rise 1000 metres above sea level and provide stunning views of the alpine region. The flora, fauna and geology of both parks are unique and inspiring rock formations create awe inspiring scenery.

There are walks in both parks that are underutilised and there is opportunity to increase the level of visitation to both parks.

The establishment of a wilderness retreat in the beautiful Cudgewa Valley would take in the views of Burrowa Pine National Park and Mitta Mitta National Park.

The wilderness retreat would be a private sector led opportunity, which would be delivered on private land or potentially a leasehold of Parks Victoria land if deemed appropriate.

Project Cost \$5-\$7 Million (Private Sector Investment)

Actions

1. Undertake a site assessment to identify potential locations suited to a wilderness retreat, either on private land or public land.
2. Undertake a market assessment and feasibility study to support the proposal.
3. Identify any public sector investment needed to support the investment, such as services and infrastructure.

Precedent

Paperbark Camp, NSW

Paperbark Camp, in Jervis Bay NSW, offers a safari style glamping experience within an integrated precinct. This accommodation leverages the natural environment to create isolated and luxurious accommodation experiences, whilst an onsite restaurants and hub building provides visitor amenity and services.

Incorporation of an onsite restaurant also allows Paperbark Camp to host private functions and small scale events.



PRIORITY INVESTMENT PROJECT

TALLANGATTA FORESHORE STAGE 1

DESTINATION PLAYGROUND, CAFE AND TRAIL

Towong Shire Council has embarked on a masterplan for the Tallangatta Foreshore overlooking Lake Hume. The precinct already has a tourist park, parkland and boat launching facilities, however there is potential to activate this part of town further.

The masterplan identifies the opportunity for a destination playground, which can be further supported by a café overlooking Lake Hume. There have been many examples of destination playgrounds creating new destinations in regional areas of Australia. The expansion of the existing splash park may also be considered to provide water-based play area for children and youth when the Lake has receded. A trail network should also be considered to complement the reserve and activate the space.



Project Cost \$5 Million (Public Sector Investment)

Actions

1. Prepare a business case for investment in the playground, café and trails as part of stage 1 delivery of the masterplan.
2. Seek funding for implementation of stage 1.
3. Undertake detailed design and planning for implementation.

Precedents

Rockhampton Foreshore Playground



Bright Splashpark



PRIORITY INVESTMENT PROJECT

MURRAY RIVER MULTI-DAY CANOE TRAIL

Delivery of a multi-day canoe trail experience will deliver a unique experience of Australia’s longest river. The trail will stop at key townships to encourage private operators to deliver accommodation and dining experiences that will encourage visitor spend.

This will provide opportunities for private tour operators, as well as shuttle services.

The Glenelg River Canoe Trail is the only other experience in Victoria that offers a multi-day canoe experience.

Investment in launching areas, caravan and camping and signage is needed to support the development of the trail.

A feasibility study of the trail opportunity is needed. If well developed this could be established as a unique hero product of the Towong.

An example of the itinerary for the Upper Murray Canoe Trail is:

- Towong – Tintaldra
- Tintaldra – Neils Reserve
- Neils Reserve – Walwa/Jingellic
- Walwa/Jingellic -Burrowye Reserve
- Burrowye Reserve – Granya
- Granya – Bellbridge

Project Cost \$40,000 (Feasibility Study)

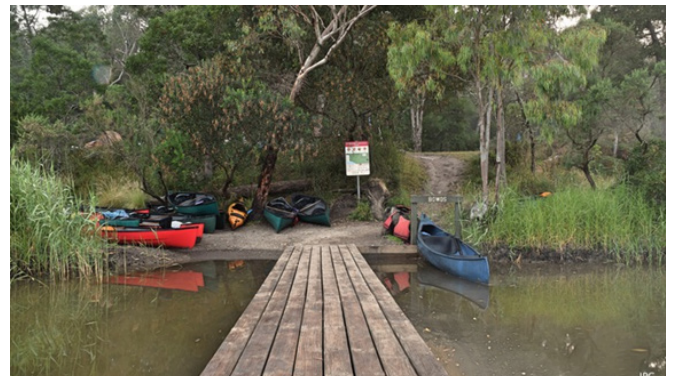
Actions

1. Seek Government funding support for a feasibility study.
2. Undertake a feasibility study to establish the nightly stopover points targeted to appropriate distances each day. This needs to consider the towns and villages along the length of the Murray River. The feasibility study will consider infrastructure and accommodation requirements to support the trail.

Precedent:

Glenelg River Canoe Trail

Stretching from Dartmoor to Nelson, the Glenelg River Canoe Trail meanders through the lower reaches of the Glenelg River. The trail is 75 kilometres in length and includes camp grounds along the length of the river. It is one of the very few established multi day canoe trails in Victoria.



ACTION PLAN

An Action Plan is required to support the implementation of the DMP, as it provides a pathway to deliver the projects and opportunities identified in the Strategic Framework.

The Action Plan highlights the actions to be undertaken by Council to advocate for and deliver public sector projects, as well as to facilitate private sector opportunities through planning and development.

The following Action Plan provides a guide for the delivery of the project opportunities identified in the Destination Management Plan over the next five years. It includes relevant actions, responsible stakeholders, and indicative timeframes categorised as follows:

- Short term (1 year);
- Medium term (2-3 years);
- Long term (3-5+ years); and
- Ongoing.

The Action Plan also details the relevant location for each project, which can range from a location-specific, sub-regional to a Shire wide opportunity.

The DMP will be implemented over time in partnership between Council (led by the Economic Development and Tourism team within the Community and Planning directorate), as well as government agencies, local business and industry representatives, private investors and the community.

The DMP will be reviewed every five years to ensure it continues to align to industry needs, market demand and opportunities, and is aligned to Council priorities.





Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame	
Holiday Park Reinvestment Program	Tallangatta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a detailed assessment of the upgrades required to enhance the infrastructure, amenity and accommodation offerings at holiday parks across the Shire. 	Lead Council	Short term	
	Mitta Mitta				
	Walwa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop masterplans and feasibility studies for the Council-managed Holiday Parks. 	Partner Private Sector		
	Colac Colac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council to consider incentives that can be provided to the privately owned businesses to encourage upgrades. 			
	Dartmouth				
Cudgewa Valley Wilderness Retreat	Cudgewa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a site assessment to identify potential locations suited to a wilderness retreat, either on private land or public land. 	Lead Private Sector	Medium term	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a market assessment and feasibility study to support the proposal. 	Partner Council		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify any public sector investment needed to support the investment, such as services and infrastructure. 			
Small Scale Accommodation Interventions:	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential locations that provide a strategic opportunity for investment considering vantage points, secluded wilderness locations but reasonable proximity to nearest towns. 	Lead Private Sector	Short term	
	Tallangatta				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Off-grid Tiny Home Program Tallangatta Eco-cabins Jervis Creek Eco-cabins 	Jervis Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and undertake an information session for land owners and businesses wishing to consider on farm or visitor eco accommodation. Provide information relating to planning regulations and processes, case studies, costs and potential demand using data from TNE (Accommodation market research). Consider sites that can be incorporated in the Lake Hume Activation Plan. 		Partner Council
		Upper Murray Wilderness Fishing Lodge	Upper Murray Subregion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the land owner to prepare concept designs to promote the opportunities. Promote the concept images to potential private investors. Engage with RDV TNE to assist with promotion of the opportunity.



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Murray River Glamping	Upper Murray Subregion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an audit of Crown land or Council owned sites for potential development of glamping, taking into consideration zoning, flood overlays, access to services and wastewater considerations. Promote the sites to private investors, including those with interest in developing nature-based experiences such as the Murray River Multi-day Canoe Trail. 	<p>Lead Private Sector</p> <p>Partner Council</p>	Short term
Lake Hume Lakeside Resort	Bellbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an assessment of potential sites for development of a Resort at Bellbridge, considering views over Lake Hume, proximity to the new foreshore commercial precinct however seclusion from the residential population. Promote the sites to private investors and facilitate development. Incorporate this into the Lake Hume Activation Plan. 	<p>Lead Private Sector</p> <p>Partner Council</p>	Long term
Corryong Hotel Motel Revitalisation	Corryong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the private sector to develop a feasibility study for reinvestment including developing an understanding of market demand and ROI. 	<p>Lead Private Sector</p> <p>Partner Council</p>	Short term



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Corryong Distillery	Corryong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key sites for development of a distillery in Corryong, including exploration of co-location with the Corryong golf course. The sites should be in proximity to town but leverage the natural aspect and provide immersion in the landscape. Prepare concept designs in collaboration with private operators Undertake a prospectus for the development of a high quality distillery in Corryong. Promote the opportunity to prospective investors. 	Lead Private Sector Partner Council	Medium term
Bellbridge Boathouse	Bellbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify appropriate site/s on the Bellbridge Lakefront with Goulburn Murray Water that can support a commercial food/beverage destination. Identify any public sector infrastructure that is required to enable the project. Develop objectives in conjunction with Goulburn Murray Water for the establishment of a food/beverage destination. Goulburn Murray Water to release an Expression of Interest for sites agreed. Council and Tourism North East to assist the expression of interest process by promoting the opportunity to prospective investors. Review and appoint a preferred EOI for the site. Undertake a facilitative planning process to support the applicant. Seek funding for any public sector infrastructure that will enable the project, such as moorings, parking, access, services. 	Lead Private Sector Partner Council	Short term
Old Tallangatta Butter Factory Revitalisation	Old Tallangatta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an assessment of the site to identify infrastructure requirements to support bump-in, pop-up events. Promote use of the site in the short-term to the private sector for bump-in, pop-up events, including galleries, music events, markets, food events and private social events such as weddings. Undertake a feasibility to determine the best options for the long-term use of the site. 	Lead Private Sector Partner Council	Short term



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Shipping Container Investment	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with existing private operators and potential new investors to identify interest in establishing a food and beverage business in a location such as Bethanga and Mitta Mitta which are currently hindered by a lack of sewerage. Council to seek funding for investment in shipping containers to support new food and beverage operators in the interim. Deliver the shipping containers in key strategic locations with high visitor numbers, such as the Lake Hume foreshore. 	Lead Council Partner Council	Short term
Peak-period Mobile Food Van	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the opportunity to prospective food and beverage businesses. Identify potential locations for peak-period use, such as National Parks and lakes. 	Lead Private Sector Partner Council	Short term
Farmgate Prospectus	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a high level prospectus that will showcase the benefits of diversification through delivery of a farmgate experience. Promote the prospectus to key business operators. 	Lead Council Partner Council	Short term



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Corryong Golf Course Redevelopment	Corryong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a masterplan for the Golf Course with consideration of the quality required to become a leading golf destination in Victoria, considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation A central hub building High quality facilities Potential incorporation of a distillery or other unique dining or beverage experience Undertake an EOI process for redevelopment of the golf course. 	<p>Lead Private Sector</p> <p>Partner Council</p>	Medium term
Murray River Multi-Day Canoe Trail	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek Government funding support for a feasibility study. Undertake a feasibility study to establish the nightly stopover points targeted to appropriate distances each day. This needs to consider the towns and villages along the length of the Murray River. The feasibility study will consider infrastructure and accommodation requirements to support the trail. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner Private Operators</p>	Short term
Lake Hume Masterplan	<p>Lake Hume Subregion</p> <p>Tallangatta Subregion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a masterplan to enhance and activate Lake Hume, considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure needs at key locations to improve access and activation, such as boat ramps, piers, floating pontoons, swimming holes Private sector activation opportunities such as on-water dining, accommodation, and floating water parks Regulatory constraints 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner GMW</p> <p>State Water</p> <p>MDBA</p> <p>Neighbouring LGAs</p>	Short term
Visitor Experience Enhancement Plan at Burrowa-Pine Mountain National Park and Mount Granya State Park	<p>Burrowa-Pine Mountain National Park</p> <p>Mount Granya State Park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with Parks Victoria, develop visitor experience enhancement plans for the activation of Burrowa-Pine Mountain National Park and Mount Granya State Park. The plans should include development of Summit Trail, Falls Lookout and a new elevated Summit Lookout. Consideration should be given to infrastructure required for the activation of the park, including trail, lookout and signage infrastructure. 	<p>Lead Parks Victoria</p> <p>Partner Council</p>	Short term
Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park Hub	Mitta Mitta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake discussions with DELWP regarding use or potential purchase of the old Depot site in Mitta Mitta. Support the Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park through development of an Equipment Hire, Café and Social Enterprise Hub. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner DEWLP</p> <p>Industry</p>	Short term



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Fishing Product Development Action Plan	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an audit and gap analysis of existing infrastructure for increased fishing, considering infrastructure, access points, jetties, moorings, fishing events, trout and salmon farm opportunities. Develop an action plan for prioritised investment in infrastructure at strategic locations. Ensure inclusion of fishing information on the destinations websites. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner DEWLP Parks Victoria GMW</p>	Medium term
Mount Mitta Mitta Summit Walking Trail	Mount Mitta Mitta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a feasibility study for the delivery of a summit walking trail to Mount Mitta Mitta. 	<p>Lead Parks Victoria</p> <p>Partner Council</p>	Long term
Mount Lawson Activation	Mount Lawson State Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Traditional Owners to identify Indigenous cultural heritage sites and potential interpretation and activation of the sites. Work with Parks Victoria to formalise and promote trails at Mount Lawson. 	<p>Lead Parks Victoria</p> <p>Partner Council</p>	Medium term
Parks Victoria Information Upgrade	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Parks Victoria to upgrade the digital information available for Towong Shire parks to enable improved visitor awareness and access to the parks. 	<p>Lead Parks Victoria</p> <p>Partner Council</p>	Short term



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Murray River Activation Project	Upper Murray Subregion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify investment opportunities along the Murray River, including infrastructure, product and experiences. Prioritise investment opportunities and promote to investors. 	Lead Council	Short term
	Lake Hume Subregion		Partner DEWLP Parks Victoria GMW	
Mitta Mitta Riverfront Precinct Masterplan	Mitta Mitta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a masterplan for the Mitta Mitta Riverfront Precinct which considers pedestrian and vehicle flows, river access sites and other planning considerations to address peak period capacity issues. 	Lead Council Partner Crown Land Managers	Short term
Equine Trails Enhancement	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with DELWP to undertake an assessment of existing parks to identify opportunities for new and enhanced bush riding horse trails. Review existing trails (e.g. HCRT) to ensure they are equine friendly where appropriate, and ensure promotion of these trails. 	Lead Council Partner DEWLP Upper Murray Horseman's Association	Medium term
Lake Banimboola Masterplan	Dartmouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a precinct masterplan to establish the Lake as a visitor destination, including consideration of new public infrastructure, access, trails, and water-based activities. Work with GMW and the local community to identify site needs. 	Lead Council Partner GMW Community	Short term



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Mitta Mitta Destination Mountain Bike Park	Mitta Mitta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support delivery of Stage 1 of the Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park. Prepare a business case to advocate for funding for Stage 2 of the Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner Mitta Valley Inc</p>	Short term
High Country Rail Trail Improvement and Extension	Shelley to Corryong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek funding to deliver the High Country Rail Trail extension from Shelley to Corryong. Seek funding for upgrades to existing HCRT. 	<p>Lead Council</p>	Medium term
Mt Elliot Gravity and Adventure Park	Corryong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a feasibility study and masterplan for establishment of the Mt Elliot Gravity Park. This should include consideration of other gravity related activities such as hang gliding. Establish a community and stakeholder advisory group to oversee the project delivery. This includes linkage with the Upper Murray township and community, delivery, maintenance and management longer term. Seek funding for delivery of the mountain bike park. Undertake required planning studies to support the planning approval. 	<p>Lead Council</p>	Short term
Tallangatta Gravity Mountain Bike Park	Tallangatta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a masterplan, in conjunction with the private land owner/operator, for the development of a gravity mountain bike park in Tallangatta. Work with DELWP to identify the opportunity for the establishment of cross-country trails in the DELWP State Forest adjoining the site. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner Private Sector</p> <p>DEWLP</p>	Long term
Support Development of Cycling Events	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support delivery and promotion of the inaugural Upper Murray Road Race Victorian Road Cycling Series and Mitta Valley Gravel Unravel events. Engage with private operators Consider opportunities for unique activations and food, beverage and event business operator engagement to deliver pre, during and post event experiences to enhance visitor satisfaction. 	<p>Lead Council</p>	Short term
Gravel and Cycle Loops	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an audit of existing gravel and road cycle loops that could be formalised, including any infrastructure upgrades required. Develop a range of routes, including route names, and develop digital itineraries, signage and promotion. 	<p>Lead Council</p>	Short term
Mountain Bike Trail Investment	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver Council's mountain bike strategy. 	<p>Lead Council</p>	Ongoing

THEME 5 INFRASTRUCTURE, AMENITY AND ACTIVATION



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Township Enhancement Program	Bellbridge Corryong Mitta Mitta Eskdale Tallangatta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to enhance and activate the town centres of community and service hubs in Towong (including Bellbridge, Corryong, Mitta Mitta, Eskdale and Tallangatta). This will help support population attraction by focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streetscaping improvements and general beautification activities Public art installations Open spaces and plantings Pedestrianising key precincts 	Lead Council	Ongoing
Bellbridge Village Masterplan	Bellbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a masterplan for a new village centre in Bellbridge to allow for commercial activation of the town. 	Lead Council	Short term
Mitta Mitta Activation Plan	Mitta Mitta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek funding public sector funding to support the activation plan. Undertake a tender process to appoint a consultant to prepare the plan in conjunction with Council and the community. 	Lead Council Partner North East Water	Short term
Tallangatta Foreshore Stage 1 Destination Playground, Cafe and Trail	Tallangatta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a business case for investment in the playground, café and trails as part of stage 1 delivery of the masterplan. Seek funding for implementation of stage 1. Undertake detailed design and planning for implementation. 	Lead Council	Short term
Digital Infrastructure Strategy (in progress)	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver and implement the Digital Infrastructure Strategy, to ensure residents and businesses to have sufficient mobile and internet connectivity. 	Lead Council	Short term
Seal the Lake Road	Tallangatta to Bellbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a scoping study to identify the length of road sealing and cost required to Seal the Lake Road. Undertake road sealing and seek funding where required. Promote the Lake Road Touring Loop to encourage visitor dispersal between Bellbridge and Tallangatta. Incorporate this project into the Activating Lake Hume Masterplan. 	Lead Council	Short term

THEME 5 INFRASTRUCTURE, AMENITY AND ACTIVATION



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Benambra-Corryong Road Sealing Feasibility Study	Corryong to Benambra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a feasibility study to identify the need and demand for sealing of the sealing the Benambra-Corryong Road to facilitate touring from Gippsland to the Upper Murray. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner Regional Roads Victoria</p>	Medium term
Tintaldra Foreshore Masterplan	Tintaldra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a foreshore masterplan to enhance Tintaldra foreshore and town centre, including swimming holes, boat ramp, and riverfront infrastructure. As required, work with State Government agencies to implement the masterplan. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner DELWP Parks Victoria GMW</p>	Medium term
Infrastructure Advocacy	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and prioritise strategic infrastructure requirements to support rural industry growth (e.g. energy production, transport infrastructure, etc.) and advocate for funding from relevant government agencies/private investors. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner Victorian/ Federal Government</p>	Medium term
Tallangatta Showgrounds Precinct Activation Strategy	Tallangatta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake engagement with existing user groups of the site (including the equine industry) to ensure stakeholder needs and vision for the site are captured. Prepare a precinct activation strategy that will identify infrastructure and amenity upgrades required to promote activation of the site, improve amenity and increase utilisation of the precinct. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner Equine Sector</p>	Short term
Concept Plan and Feasibility Study for Tallangatta's Notable Town Status	Tallangatta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a comprehensive community engagement process that will identify tourism product opportunities that align with celebrating Tallangatta's unique 1950s heritage. Undertake a feasibility study for the cultural / museum complex. Develop architectural concept plans for the proposed cultural/museum complex. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner Tallangatta Heritage Group Community</p>	Short to medium term
Dartmouth Masterplan	Dartmouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of a Masterplan for revitalisation and activation of Dartmouth, including a splash park and play space, commercial activation of Dartmouth township and opportunities for further utilisation and activation of the Dartmouth Dam. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner DEWLP Parks Victoria GMW</p>	Medium term



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Branding and Digital Strategy	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and implement the findings of the brand framework project being undertaken. Employ a digital agency to undertake a detailed digital strategy that considers the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamline and upgrade Council's websites Ensure greater promotion through Tourism North East 	Lead Council Partner Digital Agency	Short term
Content and Imagery Database	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage a creative agency to create a high quality imagery, video and content database. Provide tourism operators with access to the database for use in marketing collateral. Undertake a digital content and imagery review and update annually. 	Lead Council Partner Creative Agency	Short term
Touring Itineraries	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ a creative agency to develop a range of interactive touring itineraries to promote exploration. 	Lead Council Partner Creative Agency	Short term
Man From Snowy River Australian Music Festival	Corryong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake discussions with potential private events operators to investigate the opportunity to deliver the event in Corryong. Work with a private events operator to develop the concept for the event. 	Lead Council Partner Private Event Operator	Long term
'Pick Your Own' Produce Event	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify producers, such as fruit, horticulture and other produce-based businesses, that could participate in an open farm or pick your own produce event. Explore opportunity to work with Surrounding LGA's or Tourism North East to develop the event. 	Lead Council Partner Industry	Short term
Physical Collateral Review and Refresh	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a database of 'visitor ready' products and experiences, nature-based assets and other visitor infrastructure. Engage a creative agency to review and update the existing physical collateral in the marketplace to align to the newly developed brand strategy, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official Visitor Guide Regional touring maps Distribute the guide to VICs, key businesses and attractions. 	Lead Council	Short term

THEME 6 BRANDING, MARKETING AND AWARENESS



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Signage Strategy	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an audit of the existing signage to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dilapidated or incorrect signage to be removed and replaced Locations for additional brown tourist signage Removal of cluttered signage, particularly at town entry locations Locations for improved directional signage Need to deliver streamlined branded signage Implement the signage strategy. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner Regional Roads Victoria</p>	Short term
Omeo Highway Masterplan	Upper Murray Subregion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a masterplan for development of the Omeo Highway as a touring route linking Towong Shire with East Gippsland, including consideration of feature lookouts, large-scale artwork, tourists' facilities, interpretive signage. Develop a digital touring route to be featured on the Shire's website to promote use of the route. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner East Gippsland Shire Council</p> <p>Regional Roads Victoria</p>	Medium term
Upper Murray Cross-Border Tourism Plan	Upper Murray Subregion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with Snowy Valleys Council and local industry, develop a tourism plan for the development of the Upper Murray, with consideration to product development, marketing, and product packaging. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner Snowy Valleys Council</p>	Short term

THEME 7 INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND COLLABORATION



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Half Yearly Tourism Industry Information and Networking Forums	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to enhance and activate the town centres of community and service hubs in Towong (including Bellbridge, Corryong, Mitta Mitta, Eskdale and Tallangatta). This will help support population attraction by focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streetscaping improvements and general beautification activities Public art installations Open spaces and plantings Pedestrianising key precincts 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner Local Tourism Associations</p>	Ongoing
Business Attraction and Investment Facilitation Strategy	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Business Attraction Strategy which identifies relevant tourism investment opportunities to grow visitor demand and elevate the Shire's product offering. This should include the development of a high level document that demonstrates the private sector investment opportunities and showcases sites that have been de-risked to encourage private sector investment. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner Industry</p>	Short term
Encourage sign up to Tourism North East's Industry Development Program	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify operators that should be targeted to sign up to the program, considering businesses which align strongly to Tourism North East's product pillars. 	<p>Lead Council</p> <p>Partner Industry</p>	Short term
Better Approvals Process (in progress)	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress the 'Better Approvals' process undertaken by Council, in collaboration with government and industry, to streamline planning permit applications, help businesses overcome regulatory barriers and support business investment. 	<p>Lead Council</p>	Short term and ongoing

THEME 7
**INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND
 COLLABORATION**



Project	Location	Action	Stakeholder/s	Time frame
Product and Experience Packaging	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Liaise with surrounding Councils to identify opportunities for product packaging. · Develop product packages and promote on newly formed website. 	Lead Council Partner Albury City Council Wodonga City Council Snowy Valleys Council Upper Murray Inc	Short term
Workforce Attraction Strategy	Shire-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Undertake a targeted employment attraction strategy for the tourism sector, focusing on the specific needs of businesses. This will involve collaboration with industry to understand labour gaps/needs, as well as opportunities to attract and service workers to the Shire. · This may be undertaken a regional or sub regional level with involvement from TNE and other industry bodies. 	Lead Council Partner Industry	Short term

