

Together Castlemaine

Our Community. Our Future.
2015 - 2018

Please note this document is currently being professionally designed.
The final version will be available on Council's website in early 2016.

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“We acknowledge the Dja Dja Wurrung as the traditional owners of the lands and waters of the Mount Alexander Shire. We also recognise all other indigenous people of the Shire and acknowledge the vital role that the traditional owners, the local Jaara people, played as custodians of the region”.

About Us

Castlemaine is a highly engaged and active community, with strengths in arts, culture and sustainability. Known for our gold rush history and strong agricultural sector, today manufacturing, retail, tourism and health are some of our key industries. Our landscape includes sites of national cultural and environmental significance.

Located within commuting distance of Melbourne, Ballarat and Bendigo, we are the largest town in Mount Alexander Shire with the greater Castlemaine area home to more than 50% of our population.

About the Local Community Planning Project

Together Castlemaine has been developed under the Victorian State Government funded ‘Local Community Planning Project’.

The project was created to enable nine communities across the Mount Alexander Shire to articulate their values and aspirations, and the needs and opportunities for the future of their town.

It involved a broad cross section of each community as well as community leaders and interest groups to ensure that priorities identified are owned and validated by all.

About Together Castlemaine

Together Castlemaine presents six shared community visions developed to assist our community to address the challenges, and embrace the opportunities, that are important to us. These visions are:

“We celebrate and value our history and culture”

“We provide the opportunity to embrace healthy lifestyles, feel safe and to have access to healthcare facilities and services”

“We provide quality education facilities and programs with a diverse range of business and employment opportunities”

“We encourage an open and accessible town that supports and values its community”

“We value and protect our natural environment, now and into the future”

“We live in an environment that meets current and future community and housing needs in a sustainable way”

For those of us who live, work, study and play in Castlemaine, these visions define what we want to be by building on our strengths and assets and the commitment we all share to our town.

Each vision was developed with extensive community engagement undertaken by Mount Alexander Shire Council’s Community Planning Team and Councillors.

Consultations commenced in 2013 with a survey and several community events and listening posts. A Community Planning Focus Group was also established to review the outcomes from the community consultations and to establish priorities for continued consultation.

In 2014, three community ‘Think Tank’ events were held to provide the opportunity for key stakeholders to constructively contribute to the aspirations of the plan. Over 200 people participated in these events.

There are six themes framing the future directions of each vision (Table 1). These are broad directions only, and should be considered collectively as they are intended as a set of sign posts to continue our journey to achieve the *Together Castlemaine* visions.

Through annual Castlemaine Conversations we will develop goals and actions for each ‘future direction’ that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely (SMART). They will allow us to track our

progress and the appropriateness of the future directions so we keep moving towards our long-term visions.

Together Castlemaine presents a different community planning approach for Castlemaine when compared with other townships across the shire due to the size, scale and diversity of its population.

Castlemaine is home to a number of organisations and groups who have contributed input to this plan utilising their knowledge and experience in representing the needs of the wider community.

In moving toward the achievement of these visions, it is proposed that partner organisations will utilise an approach known as “Collective Impact”. This is an innovative approach to collaboration work across government, business, philanthropy, non-profit organisations and the community that seeks to achieve significant and lasting social change.

The Collective Impact approach is premised on the belief that no single policy, government department, organisation or program can address the increasingly complex social issues we face as a society. The approach calls for multiple organisations or groups from different sectors to abandon their own agenda in favour of a common agenda, shared measurement and alignment of effort.

The Collective Impact approach identifies five elements:

1. A [common agenda](#) for change including a shared understanding of the issues.
2. Use of [shared measurement](#) for alignment and accountability.
3. A set of [mutually reinforcing activities](#) that recognize the strengths of each participant organization or group.
4. Open and [continuous communication](#) to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.
5. A [backbone organisation\(s\)](#) with personnel and specific set of skills to serve the entire initiative and coordinate participating organisations and agencies.

The success of *Together Castlemaine* relies on the collective commitment and collaboration of the following groups and organisations to lead and deliver the six identified themes:

Valued, Inclusive & Diverse	Healthy, Safe & Active	Educated & Prosperous	Connected & Mobile	In Balance with Nature	Living Sustainably
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum • Dja Dja Wurrung Corporation • Castlemaine State Festival • Nalderun Upper Loddon • Mount Alexander Shire Council • Connect Central Castlemaine • Buda Historic Home and Garden • Victorian Goldfields Railway • Castlemaine Historical Society • Castlemaine Continuing Education • Castlemaine Community House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria Police • State Emergency Service (SES) • Country Fire Authority (CFA) • Mount Alexander Shire Council • Castlemaine District Community Health • Castlemaine Health • Windarrang • Salvation Army 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goldfield Local Learning & Employment Network • Castlemaine Secondary College • Mount Alexander Shire Council • Castlemaine Community House • Business Mount Alexander • Bendigo TAFE • Castlemaine Continuing Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iLoddonMallee • VicRoads • Mount Alexander Shire Council • Castlemaine Community House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landcare • Mt Alexander Sustainability Group • Mount Alexander Shire Council • Connecting Country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mount Alexander Sustainability Group • Hub Foundation • Mount Alexander Shire Council • Castlemaine Historical Society

Table 1: *Together Castlemaine’s* six themes and key stakeholders

Together Castlemaine will be a whole of community plan, and many community stakeholders will need to come together to contribute to its success. It will rely on the collective commitment of individuals, service providers, community groups and our business leaders.

We are

Valued, Inclusive & Diverse

"We celebrate and value our history and culture"

We are a caring and inclusive community that embraces our diversity in culture and interests. Our town is known for its vibrant festivals and artistic talent and is supported by many organisations and an active community, young and old.

We have a rich cultural history that we continue to acknowledge and celebrate yet we understand that our future brings with it some challenges. With our population getting older, our young people moving away and our households getting smaller, we need to ensure that we have the services and facilities to meet these changes.

By continuing to create and provide inclusive engagement opportunities and ensuring that services and facilities for all ages are available and promoted, we will build a stronger sense of belonging and be a destination for others to live and work.

To become a valued, inclusive and diverse community we will work together to achieve our vision for the future.

	Future Directions	Key Stakeholders	Council's Role
A.1	Create a network to coordinate and support our events and celebrations	Local performing and visual arts community and organisations, whole of community	Facilitator Provider
A.2	Acknowledge and share our local history and culture	Local indigenous organisations, local education and training providers, local heritage and history groups, whole of community	Advocate Facilitator
A.3	Encourage more opportunities for young people to participate in and contribute to our community	Local education and training providers, local business and retail associations, local community organisations, whole of community	Provider Facilitator
A.4	Provide more opportunities to be involved in the arts	Local performing and visual arts community and organisations, music groups, local education and training providers	Advocate Facilitator
A.5	Support the development of facilities and services for young people and the elderly	State Government, local health providers and social support organisations, local aged care providers, local education and training providers	Advocate Provider
A.6	Promote our town as 'family friendly' and a destination to live, work and visit	Local tourism industry and associations, real estate agencies, whole of community	Advocate Facilitator
A.7	Promote the local volunteer opportunities available across the Shire	Community groups and organisations, whole of community	Advocate Facilitator

Table 2: *Valued, Inclusive & Diverse* - Future directions and key stakeholders

By achieving our future directions we will be a community that:

- Creates opportunities for people of all ages to participate in local events and activities
- Celebrates its cultural past and present
- Provides the facilities and services that meets the needs of all
- Becomes a destination for others to live, work and visit

We are

Healthy, Safe & Active

“We provide the opportunity to embrace healthy lifestyles, feel safe and to have access to healthcare facilities and services”

We are the Shire's centre for essential health and emergency services, with some of the major organisations based in our town.

We have major recreation facilities and open spaces that provide passive and active sporting opportunities and these spaces need to be safer and more accessible for all.

In collaboration with other key stakeholders, we will continue to play an integral role in advocating for removal of barriers to improved access and inclusion within our community and, as a result, create a better understanding of the needs of others. By strengthening the partnerships between key social support services we will become more responsible for our health and wellbeing and care for others.

To become a healthy, safe and active community we will work together to achieve our vision for the future.

Future Directions	Key Stakeholders	Council's Role
B.1 Create a network to coordinate and promote the mental health support services available	Local health providers and social support organisations, mental health and disability services, wellbeing centres	Advocate Facilitator
B.2 Encourage businesses, facilities and events to be more accessible to people with disabilities	Business and retail associations, event organisers, local community organisations, whole of community	Advocate Regulator
B.3 Increase community education about the needs of the vulnerable and socially isolated	Local health providers and social support organisations, local community organisations	Advocate Facilitator
B.4 Support the development of facilities and services for recreational activities	Federal Government, State Government, sporting groups, local health/fitness centres, local community organisations	Advocate Provider
B.5 Encourage more conversations to address the need for a safer community	Local emergency services, local community organisations, whole of community	Advocate Facilitator
B.6 Promote the information and support available in emergency prevention, preparedness, response and recovery	Federal Government, State Government, local emergency services, whole of community	Advocate Facilitate Regulate

Table 3: Healthy, Safe & Active - Future directions and key stakeholders

By achieving our future directions we will be a community that:

- Understands and provides for the needs of others
- Encourages a healthier, more active lifestyle
- Provides access to quality healthcare services and facilities
- Creates a sense of safety and resilience

We are

Educated & Prosperous

“We provide quality education facilities and programs with a diverse range of business and employment opportunities”

We are a central location for businesses that provide a wide range of products and services that makes us unique and viable.

We have a culturally vibrant town centre that attracts new professional opportunities and encourages new and existing businesses to grow. Our rich history, buildings, gardens and events have made our town one of the most popular tourist destinations in the region.

Through stronger links between our education providers, local community groups and organisations and businesses we will create a more innovative, sustainable and resilient economy by building capacity through training and education. To retain existing local employment options and attract new opportunities, particularly for young people and families, we need to continue to develop effective and sustainable partnerships between community, local business and government.

To become an educated and prosperous community we will work together to achieve our vision for the future.

	Future Directions	Key Stakeholders	Council Role
C.1	Develop improved links between local businesses and education providers	Local education and training providers, local businesses, local employment agencies	Advocate Facilitator
C.2	Promote training opportunities available to young people and those returning to work	Federal Government, State Government, local education and training providers, local employment agencies	Advocate Facilitator
C.3	Support the development of training facilities and services	Federal Government, State Government, local education and training providers	Advocate Provider
C.4	Promote networks and services that support new and existing businesses	State Government, local business and tourism associations, local education and training providers	Advocate Facilitator
C.5	Attract and maintain a diverse range of local and small businesses	State Government, local businesses and tourism operators, local community organisations	Advocate Facilitate
C.6	Promote the local economy through a 'buy local' campaign	State Government, local businesses, local community organisations, whole of community	Advocate Facilitate
C.7	Promote the education and training opportunities provided by local community groups and organisations	Local community groups and organisations, whole of community	Advocate Facilitate

Table 4: Educated & Prosperous - Future directions and key stakeholders

By achieving our future directions we will be a community that:

- Provides the opportunity to gain the skills and knowledge that will support our local businesses
- Encourages improved linkages between our education and business sectors
- Invests and supports young people
- Promotes and supports our local businesses

We are

Connected & Mobile

“We encourage an open and accessible town that supports and values its community”

We are located in a main corridor to Melbourne with close proximity to two major regional centres, Ballarat and Bendigo.

We have a direct public transport route to Melbourne which makes us an attractive town for commuters. Acknowledging the large number of people leaving our town each day for work, we need to actively create opportunities for the community to better connect when they are here.

Encouraging stronger connections between community organisations to promote their services, facilities and volunteer opportunities will build a well-connected community with valued and involved residents.

Providing physical connections across our town, through bus and bike networks in particular, will help us become a more connected and active community. Our virtual connection to the world is dependent on reliable high-speed internet.

To become a connected and mobile community we will work together to achieve our vision for the future.

	Future Directions	Key Stakeholders	Council Role
D.1	Improve the connections between different community sectors and agencies	Local community organisations, volunteer support services and organisations	Advocate Facilitator
D.2	Provide a welcoming environment for new residents to Castlemaine and an understanding of local history	Local community organisations, local heritage and history groups, whole of community	Advocate Provider
D.3	Promote the facilities, services and networking opportunities available to the community	Local community organisations, whole of community, volunteer support services and organisations	Provider Facilitator
D.4	Provide a more coordinated and sustainable approach to supporting our volunteers	State Government, volunteer support services and organisations	Advocate Facilitator
D.5	Support the development of shared path networks to encourage walking and cycling	State Government, local health providers, local community organisations, whole of community	Advocate Provider
D.6	Encourage an increase and improvement in public transport options	State Government, local transport providers, whole of community	Advocate Facilitator
D.7	Improve the internet services available in Castlemaine	Federal Government, State Government, communication providers	Advocate Facilitator

Table 5: Connected & Mobile - Future directions and key stakeholders

By achieving our future directions we will become a community that:

- Works better together to provide information, facilities and services for our community
- Provides and supports various transport options
- Has access to reliable high-speed internet

We are

In Balance with Nature

“We value and protect our natural environment, now and into the future”

We are surrounded by waterways and diverse habitats and our landscape tells the story of our indigenous and goldmining past.

We have a strong connection to our natural environment and understand the need to balance the growth of our town with the protection and care of our native flora and fauna.

By encouraging key stakeholders to promote a better understanding of sustainable living and climate change adaptation, we will become a more resilient community that fosters sustainable development.

To become a community in balance with nature we will work together to achieve our vision for the future.

	Future Directions	Stakeholders	Council's Role
E.1	Encourage community conversations about adaptation to and mitigation of climate change	State Government, local environment groups and organisations, whole of community	Advocate Facilitator
E.2	Promote the balance between the needs of the growing population and the environment	State Government, local environment groups and organisations	Advocate Facilitator
E.3	Maintain and enhance the environmental health of our region	State Government, local environment groups and organisations, whole of community	Advocate Facilitator
E.4	Encourage the community to enjoy the great outdoors more	Local environment groups and organisations, local community groups, whole of community	Advocate Facilitator
E.5	Develop plans and strategies to protect the natural environment	State Government, local environment groups and organisations	Provider Regulator

Table 6: Balance with Nature - Future directions and key stakeholders

By achieving our future directions we will become a community that:

- Respects our natural environment and its preservation for the future
- Understands the impact of climate change
- Provides and promotes more nature-based activities

We are

Living Sustainably

“We live in an environment that meets current and future community and housing needs in a sustainable way”

We are known as a sustainable community by our use of renewable energy and focus on environmental sustainability.

We have a built environment that is appreciated for its architectural and heritage value. It also provides us with a sense of identity and pride and makes an important contribution to the character of our town.

Encouraging a collaborative approach to good planning will ensure the creation of liveable neighbourhoods and the provision of a mix of relevant housing options. Planning for the future will need to acknowledge the need to address the challenges of climate change by securing energy and water supplies and reducing greenhouse gas emissions which will ultimately improve the health of our community.

To become a community that lives sustainability we will work together to achieve our vision for the future.

	Future Directions	Key Stakeholders	Council's Role
F.1	Encourage community conversations about the future development of our town	State Government, whole of community	Advocate Facilitator
F.2	Promote and support sustainability programs, initiatives, services and activities	Federal Government, State Government, local sustainability groups and associations, whole of community	Advocate Facilitator
F.3	Encourage the development of liveable and affordable housing for all	State Government, local housing associations	Advocate Provider
F.4	Maintain and value our historic buildings, features and streetscapes	State Government, historic and heritage associations, local businesses, business and retail associations, whole of community	Advocate Regulate Provider
F.5	Encourage good local planning to limit the effects of urban sprawl	State Government	Advocate Regulator

Table 7: Living Sustainably - Future directions and key stakeholders

By achieving our future directions we will become a community that:

- Addresses our future housing needs
- Respects and protects the historic features of our town
- Understands the importance of planning with sustainable principles

Continuing the Conversation

The success of *Together Castlemaine* relies on the collective commitment of the whole community from individuals, service providers, community groups and businesses.

As highlighted, an approach known as Collective Impact will be proposed as a framework for collaboration and alignment of effort. Whilst this plan goes some way toward the development of a “common agenda”, more work is needed on establishing the “shared measurement” and other components of the framework.

Initially, a series of ‘Castlemaine Conversations’ will establish a forum for setting SMART goals and actions of each ‘future direction’ through continuous communication that will track our work and its effectiveness whilst providing opportunities to reassess or realign as required. This forum will involve all the key organisations with a major role in leading and supporting our town and will be facilitated by Council.

Annual statements will also be produced to share our achievements with the wider community. This statement will be facilitated by Council and be widely available.

Together Castlemaine is an adaptive plan that recognises that as a community we are already greatly contributing to a shared vision. We acknowledge many committed people and organisations have played a crucial role in developing *Together Castlemaine* and that there are many partners and contributors who will develop their own strategies to support different areas of this plan.

By continuing to work together toward these shared goals, we will ensure that Castlemaine is prepared for the future.