

**WONTHAGGI**  **OPPORTUNITY. UNLOCKED.**





Wonthaggi is a town striving to be more, for its people young and old, for the region and for Victoria.

The community respects its past, but wants Wonthaggi to be more than its mining heritage, more than a service centre, more activated and more attractive to future residents and visitors.

It wants to enable people to discover more of the hidden value and unsung treasures that the town and local region holds.

It wants to be more recognised for its progressive economic, environmental, cultural and social initiatives.

It is a community ready to break the mould again and re-imagine its future.

**Most of all this vital regional centre wants to build on recent investment to unlock opportunity and play its full part in our State's recovery and growth.**



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Contact: Ali Wastie  
Chief Executive Officer  
Bass Coast Shire  
Tel: (03) 5671 2209

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## Spirit of Renewal.

Wonthaggi was first conceived by the Victorian Government in 1910 as a 'model town', developed to house workers who would dig black coal to feed the ever hungry furnaces of the state's steam engines.

But when the last of 17 million tons was exhumed in 1968, most thought the town would also die.

No State Mine, no Wonthaggi. But the community forged on, fuelled by spirit and hope in the absence of certainty.

A resident doctor even said that it was the shock needed to jolt the town back into life - *and that people started to 'paint their houses' again.*

They discovered within their community a determination to re-invent and regenerate.

Wonthaggi today retains that powerful 'underdog' spirit, driven by creative energy and determination, often succeeding against the odds and thriving on a deep sense of unity.

This communal pride in Wonthaggi is shared throughout - from deeply connected sports and arts communities to businesses small and large.

**A town that is continually discovering new capacity but which remains, at its heart, a village.**







## Building the New Model.

The Victorian Government's investment in Wonthaggi has recently seen important public projects completed, including a major hospital expansion and the opening of the new secondary school.

In May 2020, Bass Coast Shire Council was also successful in achieving Commonwealth funding to establish a new Regional University Centre in the Town, providing unprecedented opportunity for tertiary education and vocational training, retaining young people by encouraging further study directly leading to employment in the town and region.

Together with job creating ventures and major retail investments, these initiatives are helping the town resume its place as the heart of Bass Coast Southern Gippsland.

Wonthaggi was acknowledged in *Plan Melbourne* as one of seven Victorian Regional Centres able to forge greater economic and social links with Melbourne.

In May 2020, leading property research agency PRD ranked the Bass Coast Shire in the top 10 most resilient LGAs in eastern Australia.

It noted a low unemployment rate of just 3.7 per cent in the December 2019 quarter and rated the region as 'quite affordable' with 44% home ownership and a very low rental vacancy rate

The **Wonthaggi North East precinct** development plan created in conjunction with the Victorian Planning Authority is providing the structure for sustainable housing growth, guiding investment in construction of homes for 12,000 new residents, community amenities and an expanded business and industry precinct over the next 30 to 50 years.

**With urban emigration to Victorian regions anticipated to rise in the post-pandemic phase, Wonthaggi is primed for positive change that will support new jobs and attract continued investment in the town and region.**





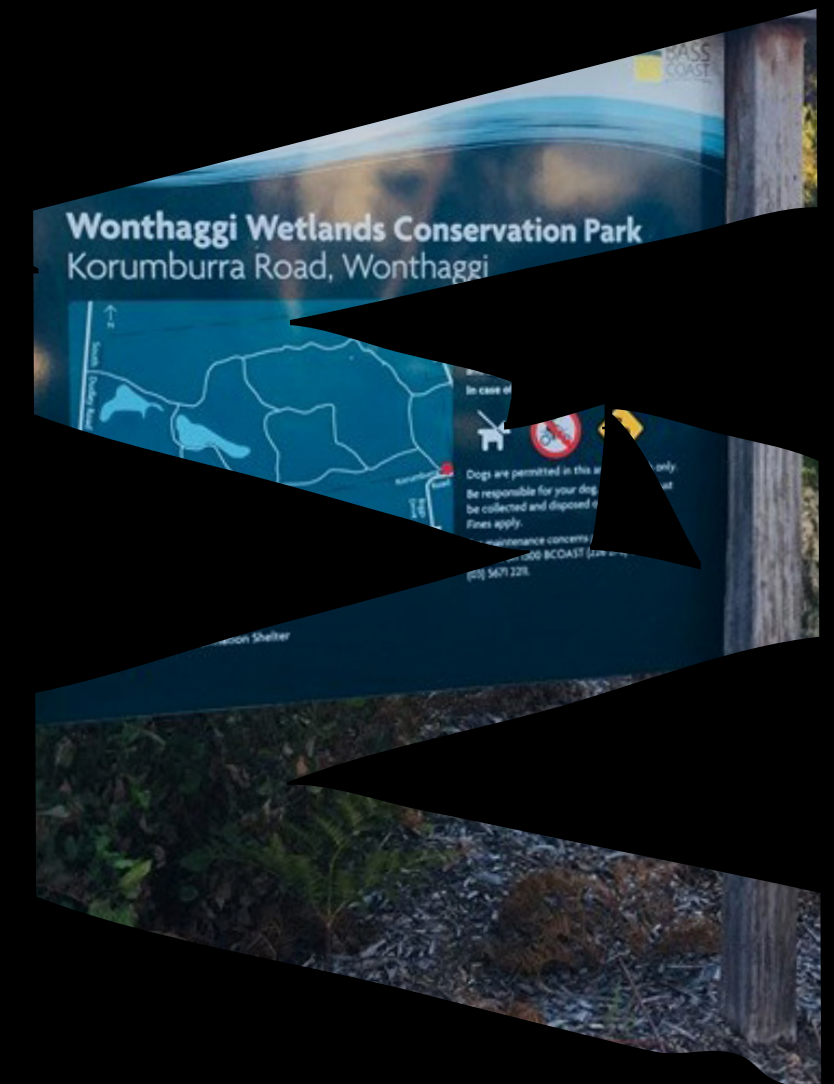
## Energy. Unlocked.

This is a town with a strong history of renewal. Once defined by coal, Wonthaggi has become a beacon of innovation – from Australia’s biggest desalination plant, capable of supplying more than a third of Melbourne’s water, to wind and solar projects directly supporting community needs and town amenities.

Renewal might also be discovered deep in the past - the ‘Dinosaur Coast’, between San Remo, Wonthaggi and Inverloch, has untapped potential for the creation of new and unique visitor market attractions.

Wonthaggi has high aspirations for transformation, including key plans to re-invent the activity centre and bring new life to its heart by day and night – placemaking strategies that will create ‘a village within a town’ and a focus of cultural activity enhancing attraction, value and experience for locals, visitors and businesses.

**Wonthaggi is ready to ‘paint the houses’ again.**







## Opportunity. Unlocked.

In partnership with Governments and business, Bass Coast Shire Council seeks to invest in Wonthaggi's underlying community spirit and regional capacity to seize opportunities to fuel growth, enrich community and benefit generations to come.

Most importantly, at a time when key focus is upon nurturing continued wellbeing and prosperity, Wonthaggi is brimming with social capital, an active and progressive Council and community energy that will drive the town and region forward.

Wonthaggi's status as the region's centre, with strong links to popular nearby coastal locations including Inverloch, Cape Paterson and San Remo provide the perfect foundation for future growth and investment.

**Together, we can unlock greater value for the region and Victoria.**



# BASS COAST PROFILE

**130km** south east of Melbourne.

Bounded by Western Port in the north and west, Cardinia Shire in the north east, South Gippsland Shire in the east and Bass Strait to the south.

Current population **33,000** people, which grows to over **80,000** in peak visitor periods.

Permanent population is expected to increase by **37% by 2035**



**Bass Coast has the fastest growing economy in regional Victoria.**

Since 2007 the Bass Coast economy has grown by **45.6%**

Roads and city connections are constantly improving with new roads and initiatives such as Eastlink **facilitating investment and growth in Bass Coast**





# WONTHAGGI PROFILE

**6km** inland from the coast in the West and South Gippsland region of Victoria

100 kilometres from Dandenong and a 90-minute drive from Melbourne CBD

Current population **7,000** people.

Permanent population is expected to increase by **33% by 2035**

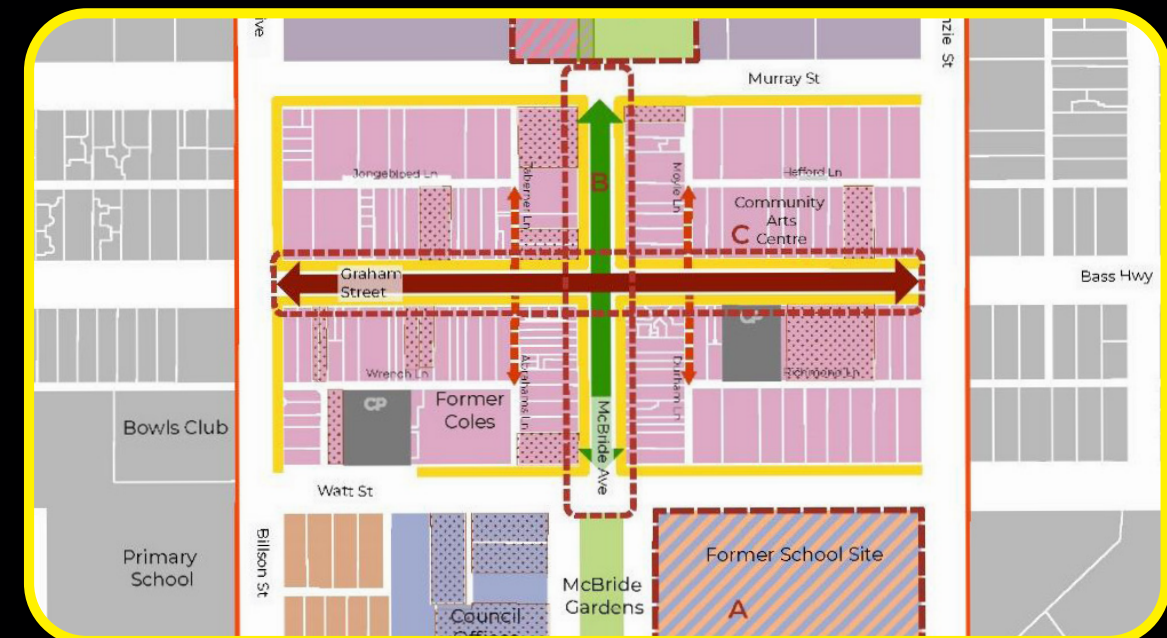


**1 of 7 Victorian Regional Centres** able to forge greater economic and social links with Melbourne.

(PLAN MELBOURNE)

**31.8%** of Bass Coast Regional Economic Output

**37%** of Bass Coast jobs





# WONTHAGGI REGIONAL CENTRE. UNLOCKED.

## Planning Alignment

Unlocking Wonthaggi's full potential as a Victorian regional centre and the heart of southern Gippsland aligns with the objectives of key State and Federal planning strategies relating to regional regeneration, urban decentralisation, population growth and investment attraction.

Key policies and strategies supporting partnered investment by all tiers of Government in Wonthaggi include:

- Plan Melbourne (State Government)
- Gippsland Regional Growth Plan (State Government)
- Victoria's Regional Statement (State Government)
- Gippsland Regional Plan 2015 - 2020 (Federal Government)
- Bass Coast Shire Council Plan 2017 - 2021

Bass Coast Shire was included as one of six peri-urban regions included in the Victorian Government's Growing Suburbs Fund in June 2020.

**Plan Melbourne** identifies Wonthaggi as a town with high potential for growth as a regional centre.

It is Victorian Government policy to stimulate employment and growth in regional cities, and support planning for growing towns in peri-urban areas.

The **Gippsland Regional Growth Plan** recognises that population growth will not occur evenly across Gippsland, with most of the region's growth focused on Traralgon, Bairnsdale, Wonthaggi, Warragul and Drouin.

*'These locations are serviced by existing utilities, education, health, and community infrastructure.*

*Continued growth and investment in these locations will help generate a critical mass of population, which in turn will drive demand for business and employment.*

*Greater housing diversity, cultural and recreational opportunities in these centres will be an important attractor for population growth and retention.'*

# WONTHAGGI - KEY OBJECTIVES

Bass Coast Shire Council seeks to partner with the Victorian Government to unlock the town's major potential as a regional centre and maximise benefit to community, region and State.

Invest in the town's key assets, attributes and offerings - social, cultural, economic

Elevate Wonthaggi's recognition in external markets and inspire the decision to visit, live and work in the town

Support new community and cultural initiatives that promote civic pride, health, happiness, and well-being

Placemaking - invest in and inspire enhancement of Wonthaggi's community assets and public spaces

Fully realise Wonthaggi's potential for future development and investment as the regional centre

Promote and inspire business confidence in an inviting and collaborative investment environment

Create a unified platform for the promotion of business and economic activity

Unlock capacity by supporting the efforts and activity of community and business organisations



**OPPORTUNITY. UNLOCKED.**



**WONTHAGGI - INNOVATION & INVESTMENT**

**LIFE. UNLOCKED.**



**BASS COAST RAIL TRAIL**





**NATURE. UNLOCKED.**



**WONTHAGGI WETLANDS CONSERVATION PARK**

**TIME. UNLOCKED.**



**BASS COAST DINOSAUR TRAIL**





**CREATIVITY. UNLOCKED.**



**WONTHAGGI - PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS**

**SECRETS. UNLOCKED.**



**STATE COAL MINE**





**EDUCATION. UNLOCKED.**



**WONTHAGGI - NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL & REGIONAL UNIVERSITY CENTRE**

**THE BASS COAST. UNLOCKED.**



**YALLOCK-BULLUK MARINE & COASTAL PARK**



**ENERGY. UNLOCKED.**



**WONTHAGGI - RENEWABLE ENERGY**

**PEOPLE POWER. UNLOCKED.**



**WE ARE WONTHAGGI**  
**FAMILIES & SPORT - MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

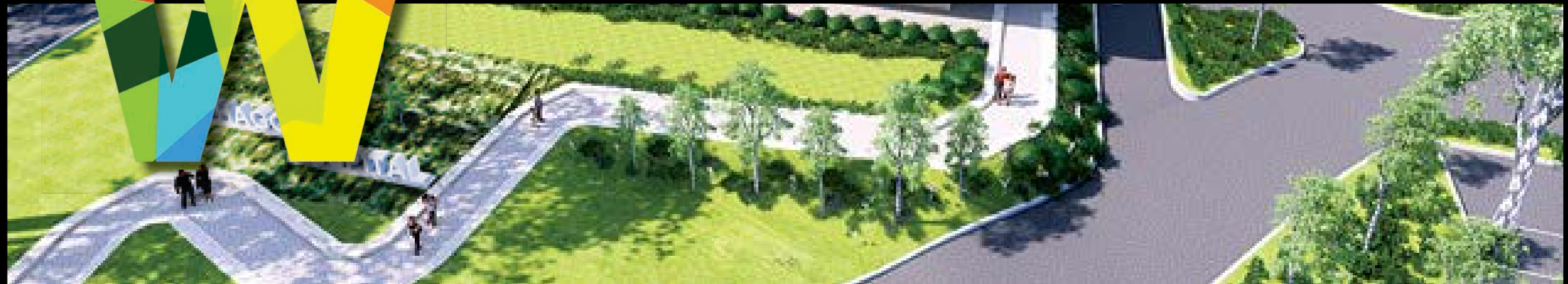
**CONNECTED COMMUNITY**



## RECENT INVESTMENT



# W OPPORTUNITY. UNLOCKED.



## Yallock-Bulluk Marine and Coastal Park





# WONTHAGGI INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT



## WONTHAGGI HOSPITAL EXPANSION

The Victorian Government is funding the \$115 million redevelopment and expansion of Wonthaggi Hospital.

The centrepiece of the project will be a bigger and better emergency department to treat thousands more patients when they need world-class care the most.

Once complete, Wonthaggi Hospital will have the capacity to treat an extra 26,000 emergency patients each year, meeting future demand for the growing Bass Coast Shire.

The major redevelopment will pave the way for 18 extra emergency treatment spaces, three new operating theatres, a procedure room and a 32-bed inpatient ward.

Construction will be complete by 2023 and the project is expected to create up to 345 jobs.



## WONTHAGGI SECONDARY COLLEGE & SPORT STADIUM

The new \$32.7 million Wonthaggi Secondary College, opened in January 2020, is an ultra-modern senior campus for Year 10-12 students, which includes a new sports stadium for locals.

The Victorian Government provided \$31 million for the new campus, with Bass Coast Shire Council contributing \$1.7 million towards the costs of the new shared stadium

Students and teachers benefit from new outdoor learning areas, a central plaza, library, and specialist facilities for visual arts, graphics, materials technology and science.

The multi-sport stadium, which includes three competition-grade basketball courts, is shared with the community.



# WONTHAGGI CURRENT INVESTMENT



## BASS COAST UNIVERSITY CENTRE

The funding of a Regional University Centre in Wonthaggi by the Federal Government was announced in late May 2020, following a successful competitive application by Bass Coast Shire Council and Bass Coast University Centre.

Regional University Centres provide study spaces, academic support, video conferencing and other support for students studying via distance at partner universities.

The new centre will enable students in Wonthaggi and the Bass Coast to gain a tertiary qualification without leaving their community and support networks.



## YALLOCK - BULLUK MARINE & COASTAL PARK

As part of the \$105.6 million commitment to 'Victoria's Great Outdoors' initiative, the Victorian Government is creating the Yallock-Bulluk Marine and Coastal Park.

It will combine existing parks and reserves along 40kms of coast between San Remo and Inverloch to better protect natural and cultural values, improve access, and enhance recreational opportunities. This will include extending and upgrading the George Bass Coastal Walk.

Planning commenced in 2019 and engagement processes are currently underway with the final Access & Infrastructure Plan due in early 2021.



# PLANNING FOR GROWTH



# WONTHAGGI OPPORTUNITY. UNLOCKED.

## VITAL REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Bass Coast Shire Council has invested in critical planning for Wonthaggi's growth and renewal as a key Victorian regional centre and is seeking to partner with State and Federal Governments to unlock opportunity and bring these plans to life.

Key current projects are crucial to delivering improved liveability, invigoration of the town's heart, developing residential and business capacity and igniting new visitor economy growth.

These projects build upon significant recent investments by State Government in education and health infrastructure to unlock Wonthaggi's full potential as a regional capital for Southern Gippsland.

Implementation of these plans will represent a vital investment in Wonthaggi's future that rapidly builds capacity for the Town to play its full role in Victoria's economic recovery and growth.





# WONTHAGGI THE HEART. UNLOCKED.

## WONTHAGGI ACTIVITY CENTRE PLAN

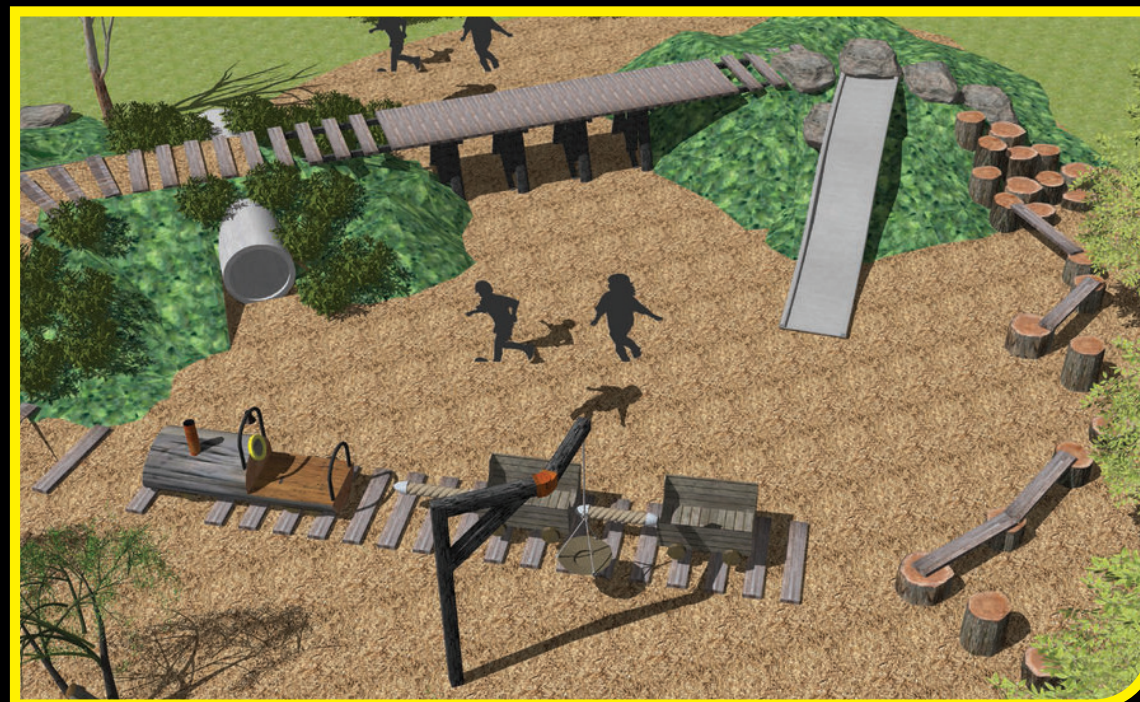
The Wonthaggi Activity Centre Plan (WACP) was completed in June 2019 and provides strategic guidance for the continued development of Wonthaggi as a Regional Centre for the next 20 years.

The WACP provides design guidance for four key strategic sites/public spaces, which have been identified for future key capital projects.

The following sites have been identified as having an important role in further activating the Wonthaggi Activity Centre:

1. Apex Park
2. McBride Avenue
3. Graham Street
4. Disused Secondary school site (previous site of the Wonthaggi Secondary College McBride Campus).

Ultimately, the Wonthaggi Activity Centre Plan aims to enhance the quality and the character of the Wonthaggi Activity Centre to reinforce its status as a Regional Centre. This process involves building on previous strategies developed for the centre, with a view of enhancing the liveability and quality of life of current and future communities of Wonthaggi.





# WONTHAGGI THE HEART. UNLOCKED.

The revitalisation of the heart of Wonthaggi, as envisaged in the Activity Centre Plan is a vital step to improving the Town's attraction to residents, visitors and future business operators and investors.

There is clear potential, as identified in the WACP, for improved infrastructure, access and support a diversity of community uses that will create new activation of the Town's 'heart'.

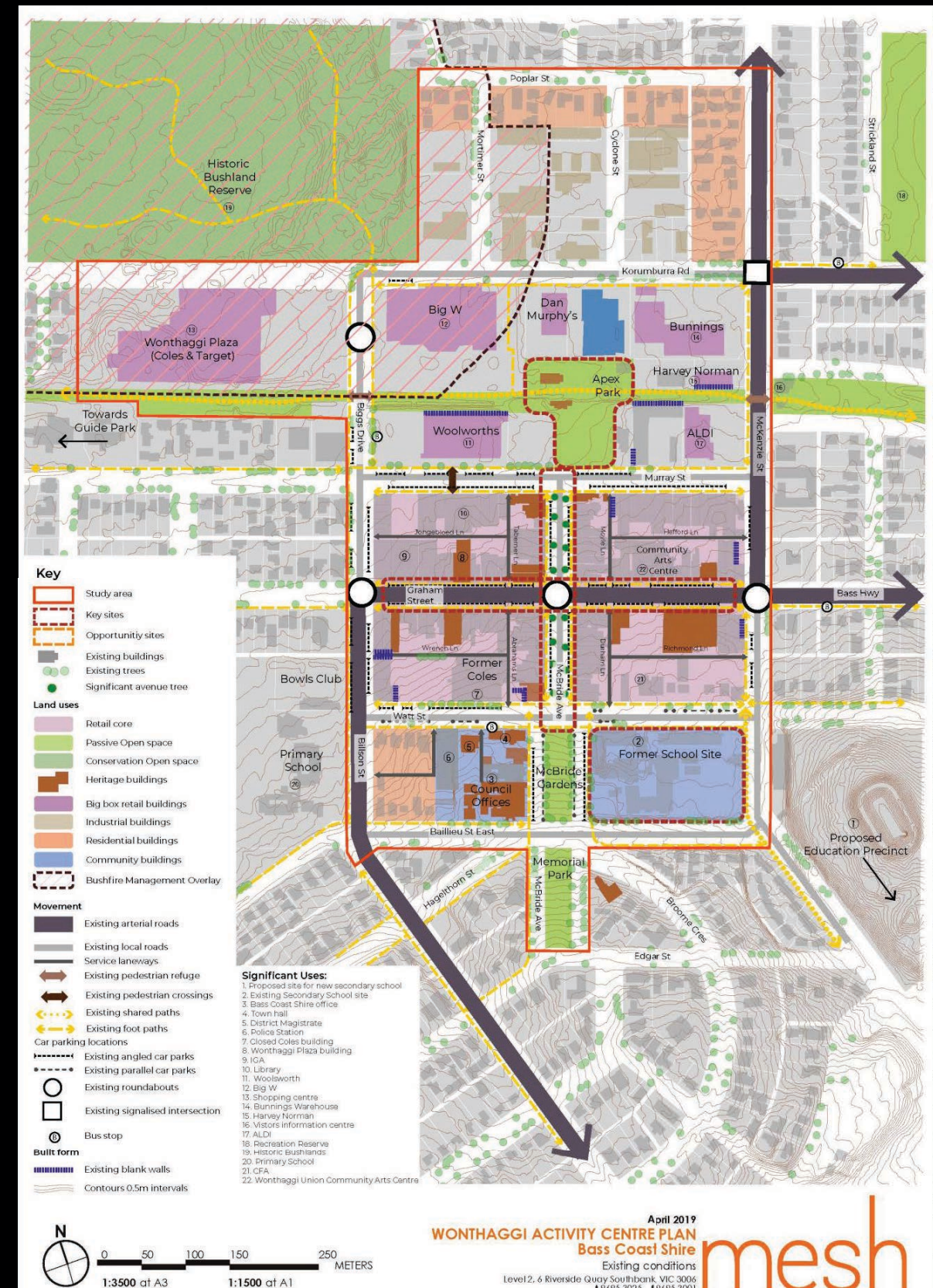
In particular, McBride Avenue, which forms a spine for the town centre and runs from the Wonthaggi Memorial Gardens to Apex Park with its historic sites (and direct access to the Bass Coast Rail Trail), has enormous potential for regeneration and activation.

The scope of potential use is large, but includes:

- Community and events performance stage and spaces
- Al fresco dining
- Permanent and 'pop-up' public art installations
- Festivals and markets
- New historic installations

Bass Coast Shire Council has commenced implementation of some elements of the Activity Centre Plan, including the \$80,000 new playground construction project in Apex Park.

Further investment of approximately \$2.3 million is required to bring the Wonthaggi Activity Centre Plan vision fully to life.





# WONTHAGGI THE HEART. UNLOCKED.





## BASS COAST AQUATICS & LEISURE CENTRE

The existing 40 year old aquatics facility is ageing, outdated and does not meet the functional demands of a Regional Aquatic and Leisure facility.

It is restricted in its ability to provide the community with programs to improve their health and wellbeing.

Redevelopment of the Bass Coast Aquatics Centre is a vital project to improving community enjoyment and liveability in the town and region.

It is not just a swimming pool. This is an essential facility that provides for the safety, enjoyment and health of the community and visitors.

Comparatively, it is currently one of the worst equipped aquatic centres in regional Victoria and regional Australia.

In a coastal location with long, hot summer seasons and few safe swimming beaches in immediate proximity, this is a critical to enabling recreational access and programs that will enhance liveability in the town, particularly for families.

Bass Shire Coast Council has committed significant funds to the design and development of the new Centre and is seeking the support of State and Federal Governments to deliver this vital regional asset in Wonthaggi.





## REGIONAL SPORTS HUB

**Sport is a major source of community activity, health and connection in Wonthaggi.**

Investment in the Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve will ensure the Bass Coast's growing population has access to the high quality community sporting facilities required in a Regional Sporting Hub.

It is also the only precinct in the region capable of attracting and hosting large scale sporting events.

The Reserve is home to multiple sports serving people of all ages including:

- Australian Rules Football and Netball (Wonthaggi Power Football and Netball Club)
- Cricket (Wonthaggi Miners Cricket Club, Glen Alvie Cricket Club and Wonthaggi Cricket Club)
- Soccer (Wonthaggi United Soccer Club)
- Tennis (Wonthaggi Tennis Club)
- Croquet (Wonthaggi Croquet Club)

**Bass Coast Shire Council has recently invested \$1.6 million in the Tennis Court Redevelopment and Multi-Sport project, delivering a regional standard tennis facility, new cricket nets and futsal pitch.**

**It has also allocated funds and is seeking to partner with Governments to deliver the full Recreation Reserve Master Plan, which includes:**

- New soccer field lighting and change rooms
- Completion of female friendly facilities for AFL
- Tennis Pavilion Redevelopment
- Dedicated Netball Change Rooms
- Croquet Club Pavilion Redevelopment



# WONTHAGGI RESIDENTIAL CAPACITY. UNLOCKED.

## NORTH-EAST PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT

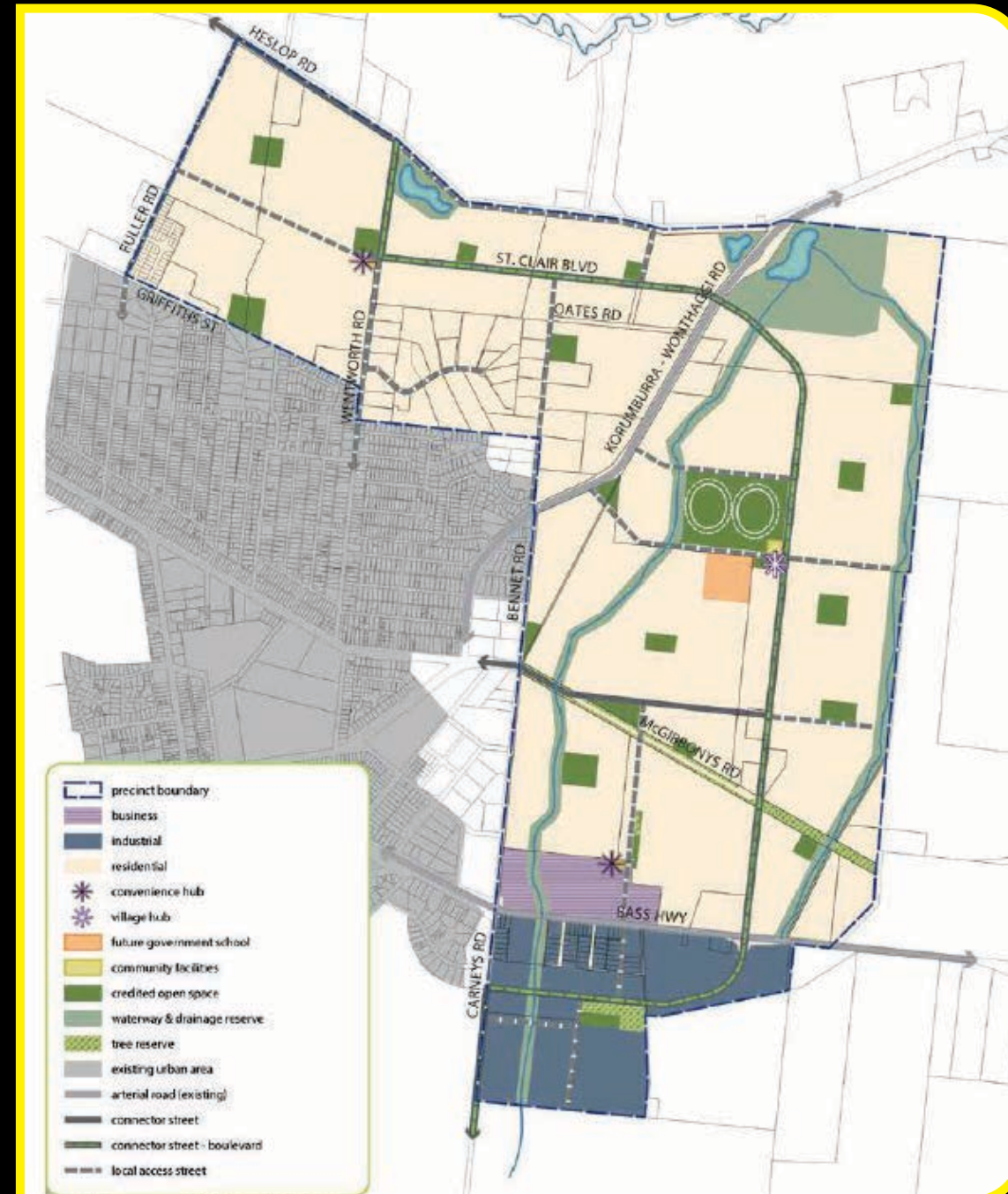
Council, in partnership with the Victorian Planning Authority has prepared a Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) and Developer Contributions Plan (DCP) for the Wonthaggi North-East Growth Area.

Approximately 4,400 residential lots and 70 hectares of Commercial and Industrial land are planned for this area. This land makes a significant contribution to Bass Coast in terms of maintaining a minimum 15 years of residential land supply and increasing vacant lots in Wonthaggi.

Wonthaggi is the major growth front for Bass Coast. If the Wonthaggi North-East PSP is delayed due to infrastructure costs making development prohibitive, then greater pressure will be placed on our small coastal settlements, and the role of Wonthaggi as a regional centre will be diminished.

The costs within the DCP will provide certainty for the developers in terms of required infrastructure, whilst also delivering the certainty for the new communities in terms of community buildings and open spaces for the additional 8,000 - 9,000 residents.

These costs have been verified with key project partners including West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, VicRoads and the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA).





# WONTHAGGI TOURISM ASSETS. UNLOCKED.

## DINOSAURS TRAIL

The proposed Bass Coast Dinosaurs Trail will be a unique and valuable tourism asset that celebrates and promotes the global significance of the region's pre-historic heritage.

The area was once home to the most diverse range of polar dinosaurs in the world and the Wonthaggi coal reserves were formed from the forests these creatures inhabited.

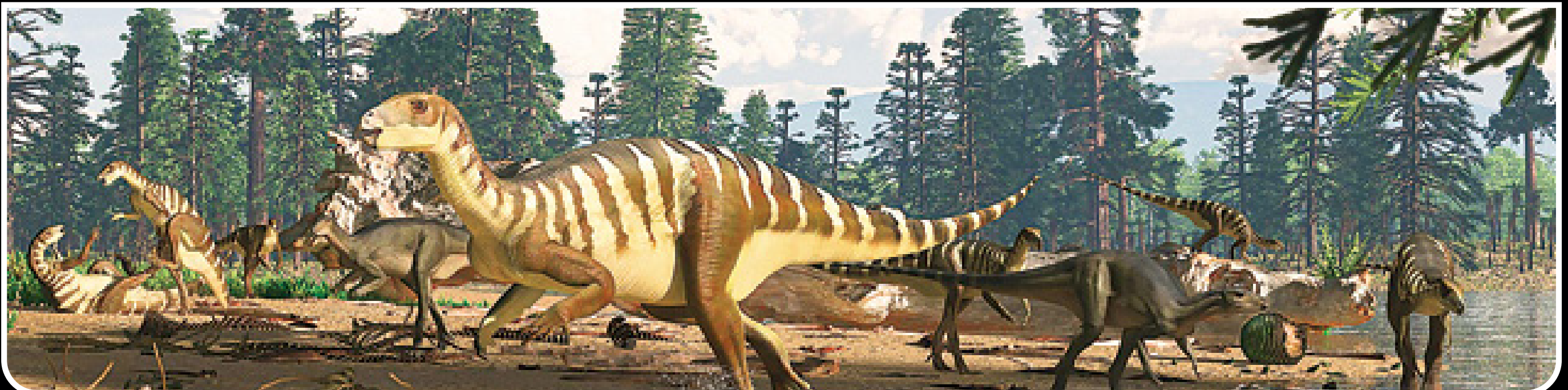
The Bass Coast dinosaurs have been reported in media worldwide and featured as one of the five episodes in the BBC *Walking with Dinosaurs* documentary series.

The Bass Coast Dinosaurs Trail builds upon the groundbreaking work and passion of local community, traditional owners and paleontologists over 40 years.

It visibly expresses the sense of wonder, learning and stories in concert with the country that shapes them.

The trail will include:

- Seven significant artworks located from San Remo to Inverloch, creating a sensory and interactive experience.
- Complemented by extensive interpretive way finding signage reflecting the science and values of traditional owners, enhanced by connection to a coordinated online platform.
- Investigate an indoor presentation space to enable local specimens to be displayed and enjoyed in a controlled environment.
- A 'dig' festival steered by community and held every two years, bringing an ever changing community celebration of music and art linked to the coastal environment.
- The total funding for the project is expected to be over \$5.4m with the initial Master plan and design phase being close to \$250,000.



# WONTHAGGI REGIONAL ARTS CAPITAL

## HEART OF THE ARTS

Wonthaggi's well established arts organisations and a passionate performing and visual arts community creates unlimited potential for the Town as the regional arts capital of Southern Gippsland.

Key facilities including one of regional Victoria's best theatres, the Wonthaggi Union Community Arts Centre, ArtSpace Gallery and The Good Shed provide a strong foundation for the continued growth of programs and events. There is significant opportunity to enhance and promote the visibility of this activity through new initiatives in the Town Centre, particularly those that stimulate broad community and visitor interaction.

Temporary and permanent public art installations and trails, regular outdoor festivals, performances, exhibitions and events, increased arts mentoring and learning opportunities are all key features of Wonthaggi's role as a regional arts capital.

## NEW INITIATIVES

- Regular open space performances by groups and schools in the town centre - creation of a dedicated performing arts and concert space or mini-amphitheatre 'shell' in town centre
- A curated public art and sculpture trail in prominent town centre locations
- Creation of a "Camp Creative" style event in summer months offering opportunity to participate in a broad range of arts, crafts and artisan skills education programs for all ages over multiple days. The offering would include performing arts and related disciplines.
- Outdoor visual art and sculpture competitions
- Showcasing regional Indigenous arts
- A full year Wonthaggi artist-in-residence program in collaboration with Creative Gippsland and local schools







**DISCOVER**  
**OUR SECRET**