

Colac Otway Economic Development Framework 2026-2036

Final Report

Prepared by Urban Enterprise for Colac Otway Shire Council

August 2026

Acknowledgment of Country

The Colac Otway Shire proudly acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples as the traditional custodians of the Colac Otway Region. We acknowledge that the Colac Otway Shire is located and conducts business upon lands of the Gulidjan and Gadubanud people.

We pay our respects to their Ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging. We recognise and respect their unique cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to their traditional lands, which continue to be important to them today and into the future..

Report Acknowledgments:

The Colac Otway Economic Development Framework 2026-2036 was prepared by Urban Enterprise in collaboration with Colac Otway Shire Council. The report was authored by Jonathan Rochwerger (Urban Enterprise).

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Our Economic Development Framework

Colac Otway is a region built for opportunity.

With strengths in food and fibre, manufacturing, tourism, liveability and distinctive communities, Colac Otway has strong foundations for investment, business growth, workforce attraction and long-term prosperity.

The Colac Otway Economic Development Framework 2026-2036 (Framework) provides Council's long-term direction for supporting investment, business growth, workforce attraction and thriving communities across the Shire over the next decade.

Preparing the Framework

This Framework has been shaped by research, economic analysis and engagement with businesses, industry, community members, government agencies and strategic partners. It combines local knowledge with evidence-based analysis to identify the priorities and actions that will strengthen Colac Otway's economy over the next decade.

The Framework reflects a shared ambition for a more competitive, liveable and resilient regional economy.

Our Approach

Economic development is about creating the conditions that allow businesses, industries and communities to prosper.

Prosperity is driven by private investment, local businesses, a skilled workforce, vibrant communities and the infrastructure and services that support growth. Council cannot create prosperity alone, but it can create confidence, remove barriers, support partnerships and advocate for the investment needed to enable growth.

The Framework takes a place-based approach, recognising the different strengths and opportunities across the Shire. It focuses on areas where Council can have the greatest influence, while working with partners to achieve broader economic outcomes.

How Prosperity is Created

Sustainable prosperity is created when regional strengths, Council direction and private sector confidence work together to support investment, jobs and community wellbeing.



Council's Role in Delivering Economic Development

Council plays an important multi-faceted role in supporting and achieving economic development outcomes.

- **Lead:** Provide strategic direction and champion economic opportunities.
- **Advocate:** Seek investment in infrastructure, housing, transport, services and projects that support growth.
- **Partner:** Work with businesses, industry, Traditional Owners, government, education providers and community organisations.
- **Facilitate:** Reduce barriers, connect opportunities and support investment and business growth.
- **Promote:** Showcase Colac Otway as a great place to invest, work, live and visit\



Economic Development Vision

Colac Otway will be one of Victoria's most investment-ready regional municipalities - a place where businesses grow with confidence, industries remain competitive, visitors stay longer, people choose to live and work, and communities prosper.

Framework Outcomes

By 2036, Colac Otway will be recognised as:

- ✓ A region that is open for investment and business growth.
- ✓ A leading food, fibre and manufacturing economy.
- ✓ A destination where people choose to live, work and visit.
- ✓ A municipality with vibrant communities and great places.
- ✓ A Council known for leadership, advocacy and collaboration.

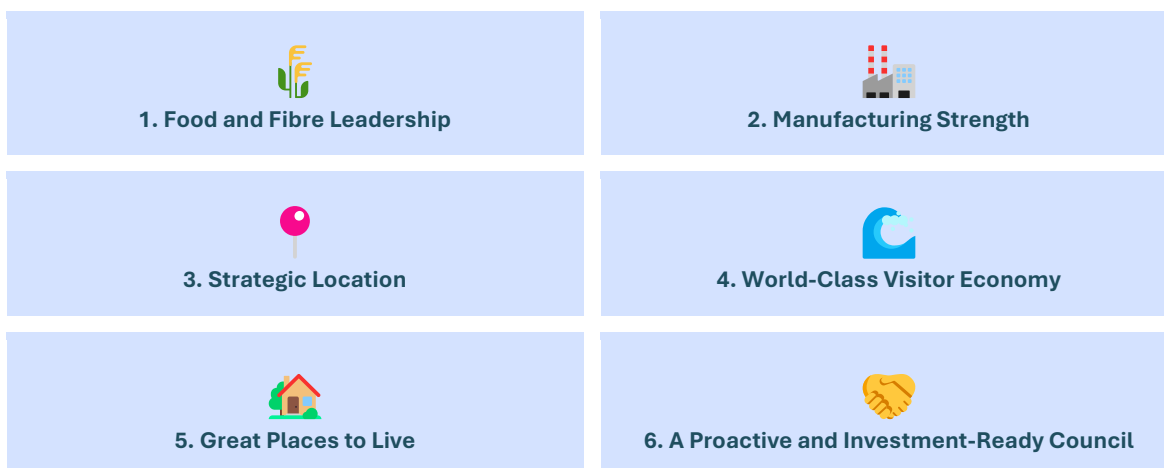
Our Competitive Advantages

Colac Otway has a diverse regional economy, combining food and fibre, manufacturing, tourism, services, lifestyle attractions and strong community assets.

Combining strong food and fibre industries, advanced manufacturing, internationally recognised visitor destinations and highly liveable communities, the Shire offers a unique mix of economic opportunity and lifestyle advantages.

Strategically located between Melbourne, Geelong and south-west Victoria, Colac Otway is well positioned to support business growth, investment, workforce attraction and long-term prosperity.

These strengths are reflected in six competitive advantages that position the Shire for future growth.



1. Food and Fibre Leadership

- Food and fibre are foundation industries in Colac Otway, supporting jobs, exports, investment and supply chains across the municipality.
- Significant dairy, beef, forestry, timber and food production strengths create opportunities for innovation, value-adding, sustainable production and stronger links to domestic and export markets.

2. Manufacturing Strength

- Manufacturing is one of Colac Otway's major economic strengths, contributing to employment, exports and local business activity.
- Supported by food and fibre industries, established supply chains and available industrial capability, the sector has opportunities to grow through advanced manufacturing, food processing, technology adoption and innovation.

3. Strategic Location

- Located between Melbourne, Geelong and south-west Victoria, Colac Otway is connected by the Princes Highway and Melbourne-Adelaide rail corridor, supporting freight, supply chains and market access.
- Proximity to the Port of Melbourne, GeelongPort and Avalon Airport strengthens connections to domestic and international markets.

4. World-Class Visitor Economy

- Home to the Great Ocean Road, Apollo Bay, the Otways, Birregurra and Lake Colac, Colac Otway offers nature-based, agritourism, food, cultural, recreation and event experiences.
- Future growth opportunities include accommodation investment, longer visitor stays, events, creative and cultural experiences, and stronger links between coastal, rural and township destinations.

5. Great Places to Live

- Colac Otway offers natural beauty, quality schools, healthcare, recreation, arts and culture, community facilities and strong lifestyle appeal.
- Housing, services and liveability are critical to attracting workers, supporting businesses and enabling people to live, work, raise a family and invest locally.

6. A Proactive and Investment-Ready Council

- Council has an important role in supporting investment readiness by coordinating opportunities, reducing barriers and advocating for infrastructure, housing, workforce and services.
- Strong partnerships with industry, government and community stakeholders will help strengthen business confidence and support long-term economic growth.

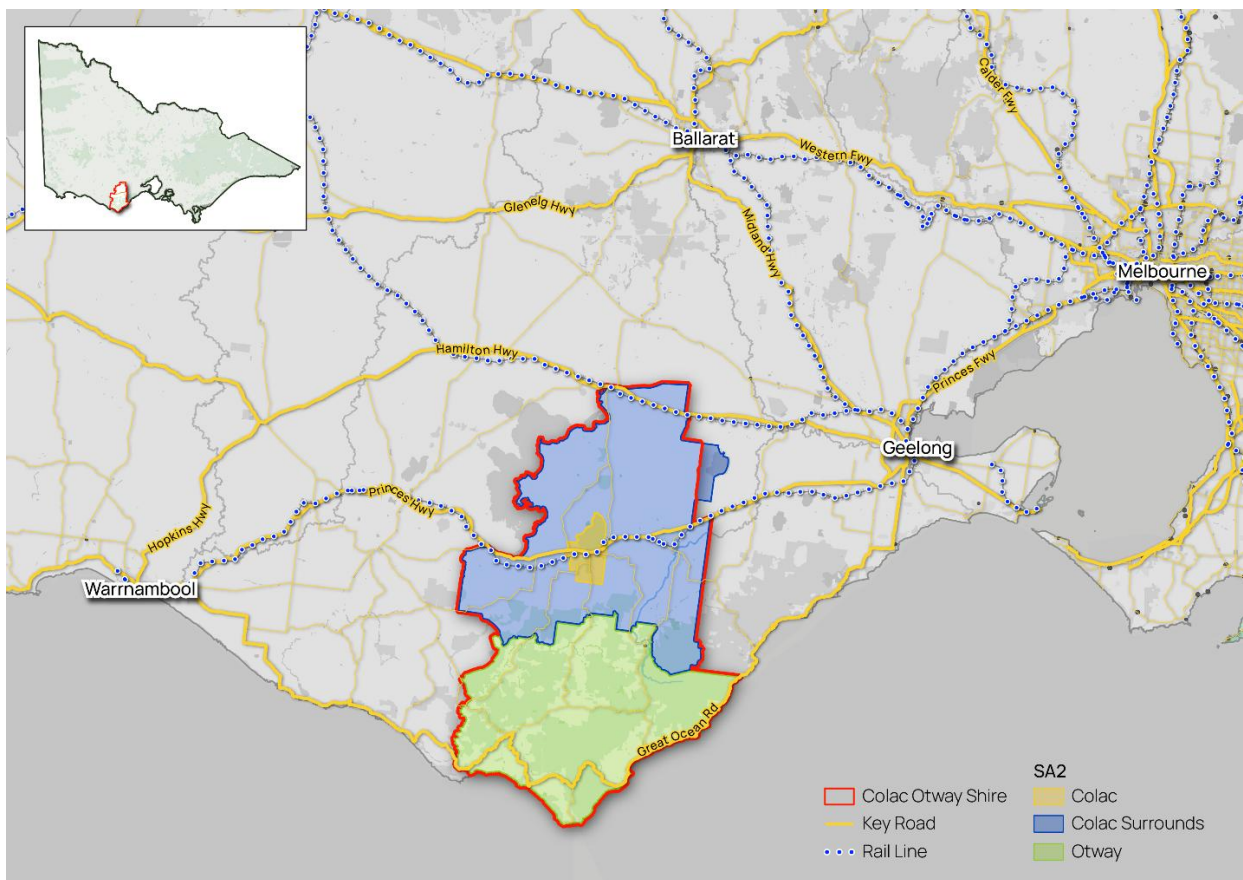
About the Shire

Strategically Located and Well-Connected

Colac Otway Shire is a key area in South-Western Victoria, positioned between the regional cities of Geelong, Ballarat and Warrnambool and located less than two-hours' drive west of Melbourne. The Shire has a diverse geography, with a mix of coastal areas, as well as forested and rural hinterland, which contributes to primary industry and tourism (amongst other industries). It is also supported by the key service and population centre of Colac, together with a network of smaller rural and coastal townships that provide amenity and support residents, workers and visitors.

The Shire is well-connected to major markets via a combination of road and rail transport networks, including the Princes Highway and Great Ocean Road. This offers efficient access to Melbourne and Geelong – as well as its domestic and international transport and freight networks – supporting trade, visitor flows, resident and commuter access.

Figure 1. Colac Otway Shire Locational Context



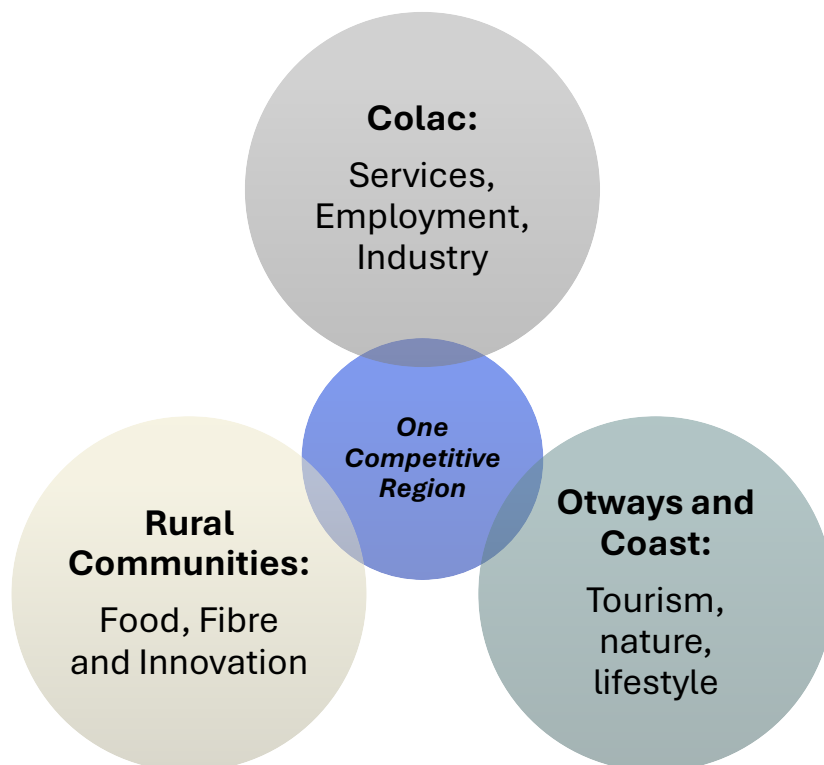
Source: Urban Enterprise, 2026

Understanding Our Region

Three Distinct Places, One Competitive Region

Colac Otway's strength comes from its diverse and unique places – **Colac, Rural Communities, Otways and Coast** – which combines a strong regional centre with productive rural industry and internationally recognised tourism destinations. Together, they create a diverse, resilient and connected economy that supports jobs, investment and liveability across the municipality.

While each area has distinct strengths, they are closely connected to form one competitive region that supports investment, jobs, liveability and long-term prosperity across Colac Otway.



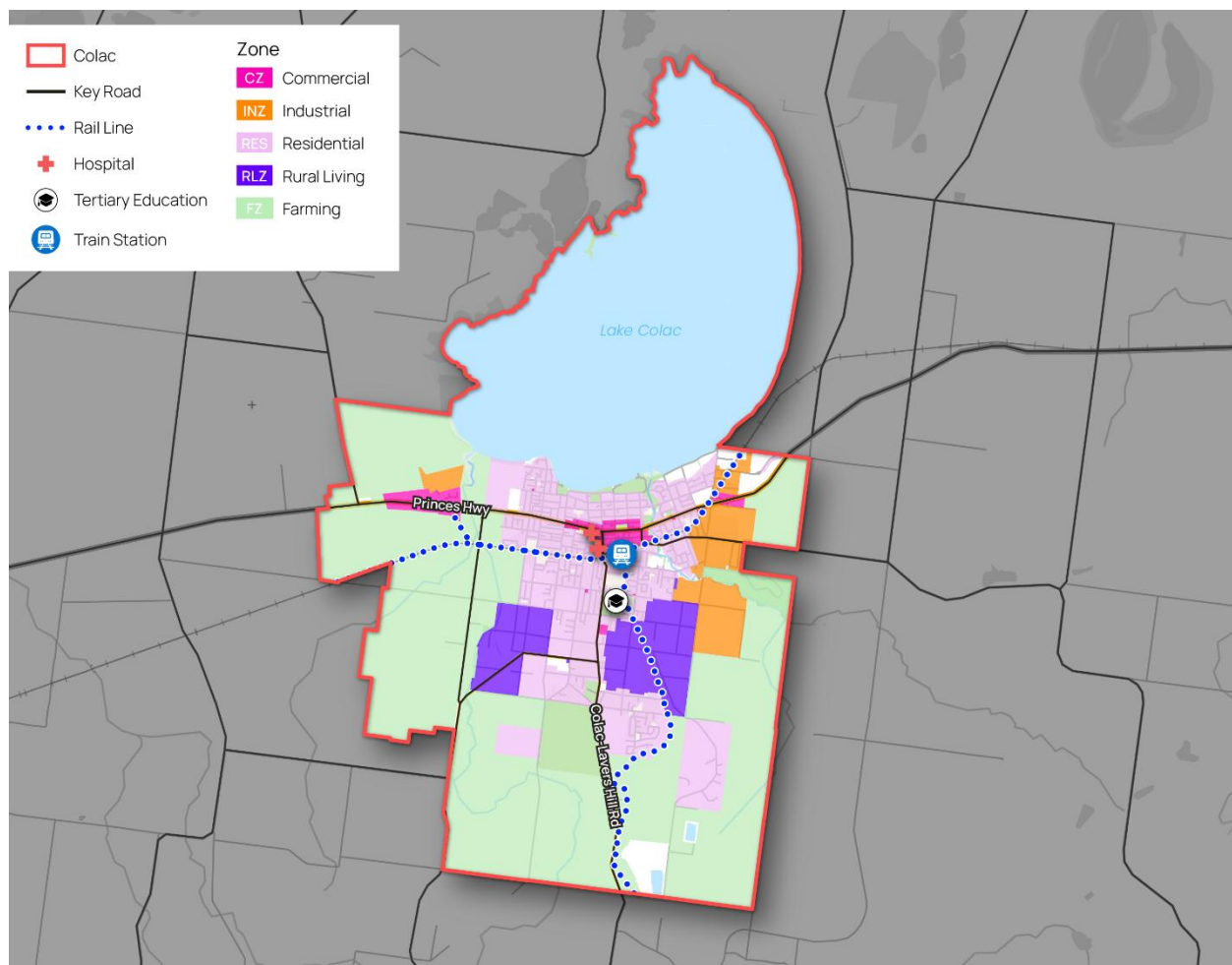
Colac: Services, Employment, Industry

Colac is the municipality's primary population centre and economic hub. Strategically located on the Princes Highway and Melbourne-Adelaide rail corridor, it provides industry, employment, education, healthcare, retail and professional services for the wider region.

The town is home to major manufacturing, food processing and agricultural industries, supported by industrial land, transport connections and key institutions such as Colac Area Health and South West TAFE. Lake Colac and its foreshore also contribute to the town's liveability and visitor appeal.

Economic Role: Colac provides the workforce, services, infrastructure and investment base that supports growth across the Shire.

Figure 2. Colac



Source: Urban Enterprise, 2026

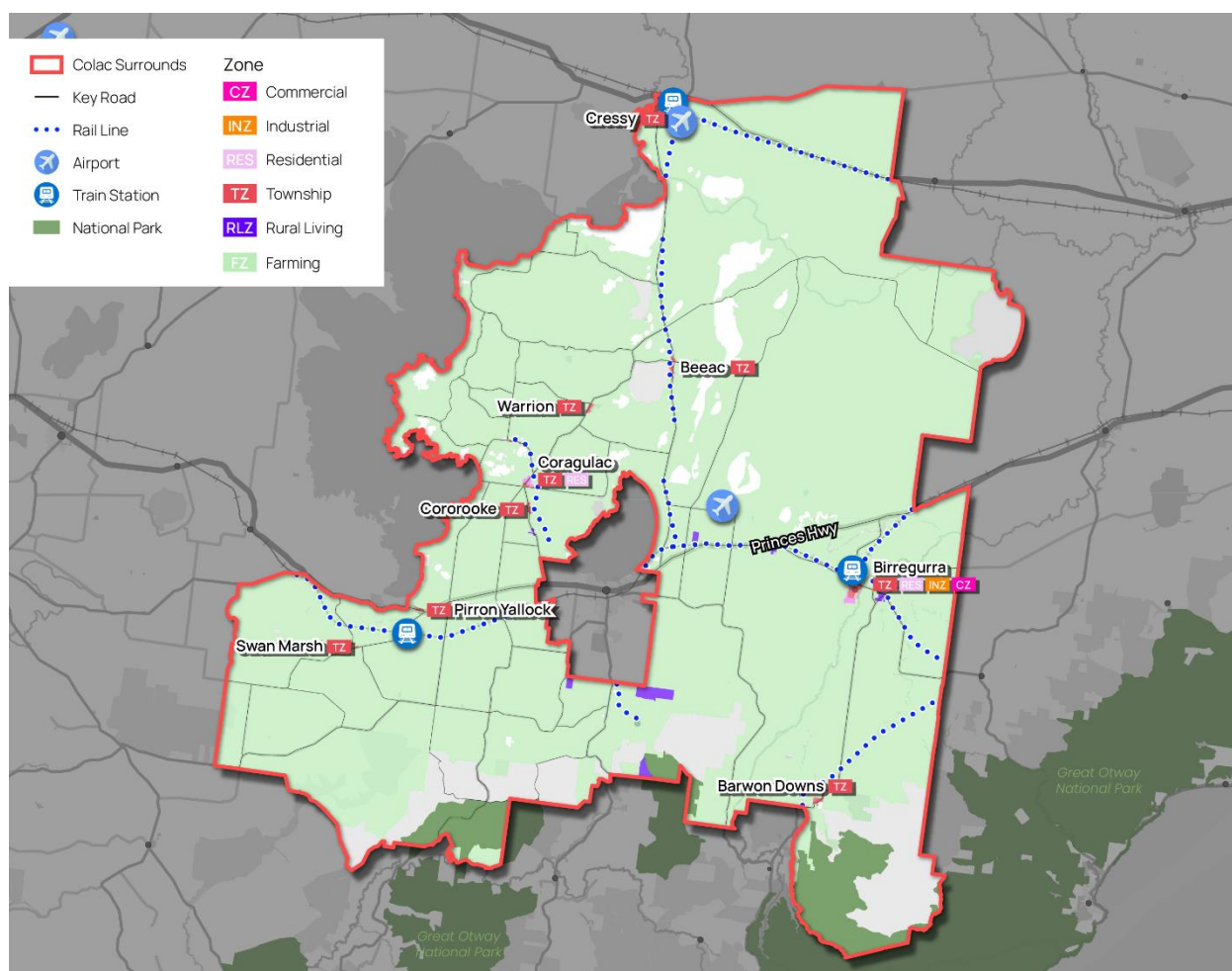
Rural Communities: Food, Fibre and Innovation

The municipality's rural communities and townships form the foundation of one of Victoria's productive agricultural regions. Areas including Birregurra, Beeac, Cressy and surrounding localities support dairy, beef, cropping, forestry and food production industries that contribute significantly to employment, exports and economic activity.

These communities also support innovation, agribusiness, farmgate tourism, small businesses and lifestyle opportunities that help diversify the local economy and strengthen community resilience.

Economic Role: Rural communities underpin food and fibre production, export growth, value-adding opportunities and long-term economic resilience.

Figure 3. Rural Communities



Source: Urban Enterprise, 2026

Otways and Coast: Tourism, nature, lifestyle

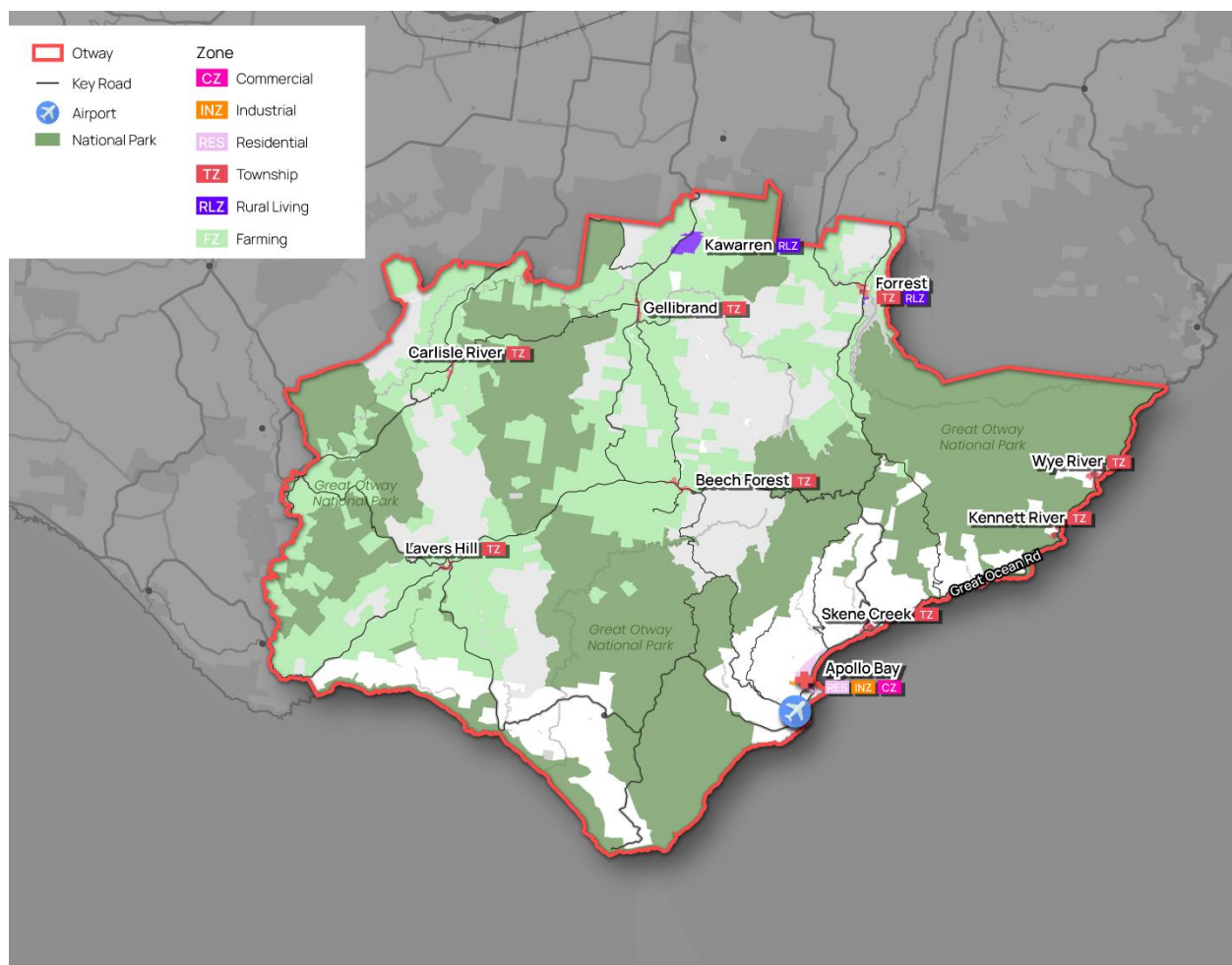
The Otways and coast are home to some of Australia's most recognised tourism destinations, including Apollo Bay, the Great Ocean Road, Great Otway National Park, Forrest and surrounding communities.

This area supports a strong visitor economy through tourism, events, hospitality, accommodation, recreation and nature-based experiences. It also offers significant lifestyle appeal, attracting residents, businesses and investment drawn to the region's natural environment and quality of life.

Apollo Bay serves as the primary service centre for the coast, supporting residents, businesses and visitors while providing an important base for future tourism and population growth.

Economic Role: The Otways and coast strengthen Colac Otway's visitor economy, regional identity, lifestyle appeal and investment opportunities.

Figure 4. Otways and Coast



Source: Urban Enterprise, 2026

Our People, Workforce and Economy

The Framework is informed by economic, demographic, workforce, housing and visitor economy data. These trends highlight the opportunities and challenges that will shape Colac Otway's economic future.

People, Workforce and Opportunity

Colac Otway's future prosperity will be shaped by its ability to attract and retain people, grow its workforce and provide housing and services that support economic growth.

Home to more than 22,000 residents, the municipality continues to experience demand for housing, workforce and community infrastructure. Planning identifies capacity for approximately 3,700 additional dwellings by 2051 to support future population growth and housing demand.

Like many regional areas, Colac Otway faces workforce shortages and an ageing population. Attracting skilled workers, families, young professionals and business owners will be critical to supporting industry growth, essential services and future investment.

Considerations:

- Workforce availability affects business growth and investment.
- Housing supply affects worker attraction and retention.
- Liveability influences whether people choose to live and work locally.

Population and Workforce Profile¹

Population Growth



Current Population (2025)

22,209

Colac Otway Shire



Forecast Population (2036)

+1,698 residents (0.7% p.a.)

Colac Otway Shire

Regional Victoria +1.2% p.a.

12,558

(57%)

Colac

5,670

(26%)

Colac Surrounds

3,974

(18%)

Otway

+1,228

Colac

+8

Colac Surrounds

+494

Otway

Socio-Economic



Unemployment Rate (Dec 2025)

1.5%

Colac Otway Shire



SEIFA Score (2021)

973

Colac Otway Shire

The 60th least disadvantaged LGA
out of 79 Victorian LGAs



Median Age (2021)

45

Colac Otway Shire

Regional Victoria 43

2.4%

Colac

1.3%

Colac
Surrounds

1.8%

Otway

939

Colac

1027

Colac
Surrounds

1004

Otway

42

Colac

45

Colac
Surrounds

52

Otway

Housing



Housing Target

+3,700

Additional dwellings by
2051



Median House Price (2024)

\$463,000 Colac (Suburb)

\$900,000 Apollo Bay (Suburb)

\$499,500

Colac Otway Shire

\$572,000 Regional Victoria

¹ All data is sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics and Victoria in Future

A Diverse and Resilient Economy

Colac Otway benefits from one of Victoria's most diverse regional economies.

Food and fibre, manufacturing, health, tourism, retail, construction and professional services all contribute to local employment, investment and economic activity.

This diversity supports economic resilience, creates employment opportunities and provides a strong foundation for future growth.

Considerations:

- A diverse economy supports jobs and business growth.
- Local industry strengths create opportunities for investment and value-adding.
- Business growth depends on workforce, infrastructure, land supply and services.

Industry Profile¹

Colac Otway Shire



\$4.9B

Economic Output

1. Manufacturing **\$1.46B** (30%)
2. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing **\$723M** (15%)
3. Construction **\$647M** (13%)



11,902

Local Jobs

1. Manufacturing **1,783** (16%)
2. Healthcare & Social Assistance **1,546** (14%)
3. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing **1,334** (12%)



2,486

Registered Businesses

1. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing **720** (29%)
2. Construction **413** (29%)
3. Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services **216** (9%)

Colac Sub-Region



Output
\$3.5B (71%)²

1. Manufacturing **\$1.32B**
2. Construction **\$421M**
3. Healthcare & Social Assistance **\$249M**



Local Jobs
7,943 (72%)

1. Manufacturing **1,589**
2. Healthcare & Social Assistance **1,387**
3. Retail Trade **864**



Businesses
992 (40%)

1. Construction **191**
2. Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services **115**
3. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing **110**

Colac Surrounds Sub-Region



Output
\$822M (17%)

1. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing **\$470M**
2. Manufacturing **\$96M**
3. Construction **\$93M**



Local Jobs
1,562 (14%)

1. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing **865**
2. Construction **151**
3. Manufacturing **126**



Businesses
982 (39%)

1. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing **512**
2. Construction **129**
3. Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services **66**

Otway Sub-Region



Output
\$599M (12%)

1. Construction **\$132M**
2. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing **\$103M**
3. Accommodation & Food Services **\$90M**



Local Jobs
1,577 (14%)

1. Accommodation & Food Services **376**
2. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing **204**
3. Construction **197**



Businesses
516 (21%)

1. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing **103**
2. Construction **97**
3. Accommodation & Food Services **94**

¹ All data reflects 2024 figures and is sourced from REMPLAN Economy ID

² Percentages indicate the proportional contribution to the Shire's total output, jobs or business count

A Visitor Economy with Growth Potential

Tourism is one of Colac Otway's defining economic strengths, supporting local businesses, jobs and investment across the municipality.

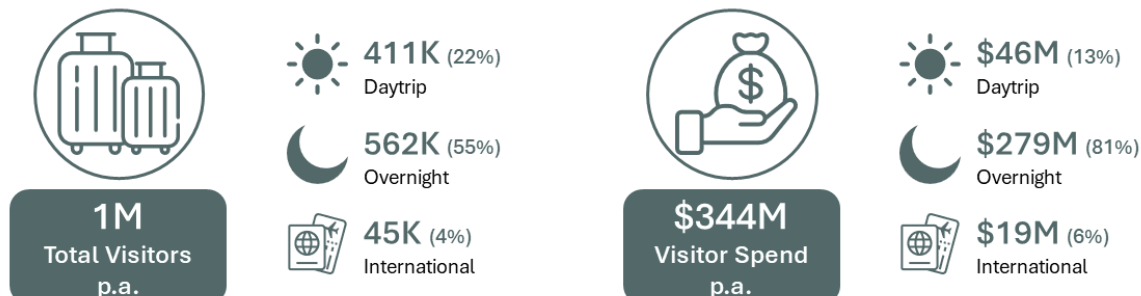
The Shire welcomes more than one million visitors annually and generates approximately \$344 million in visitor expenditure. The Great Ocean Road, Apollo Bay, the Otways, Birregurra and Lake Colac provide a strong foundation for visitor economy growth.

Future opportunities:

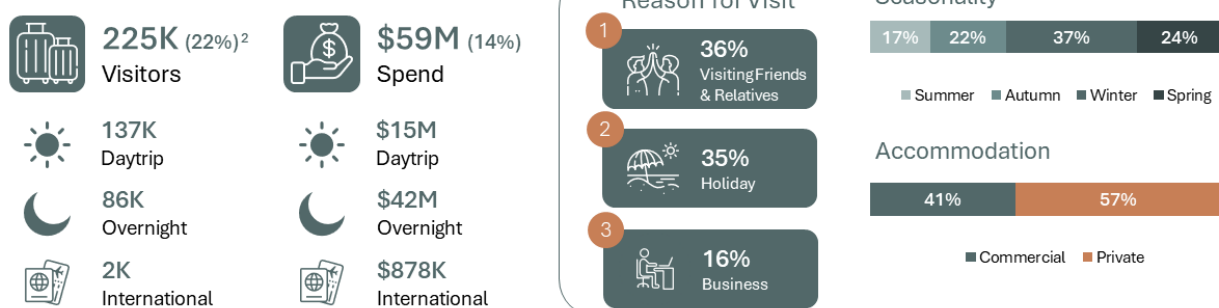
- Nature-based tourism.
- Agritourism and food tourism.
- Arts and cultural experiences.
- Events and festivals.
- Accommodation investment.
- Longer visitor stays and stronger connections between Colac, Rural Communities, Otways and Coast.

Visitor Economy Profile ¹

Colac Otway Shire



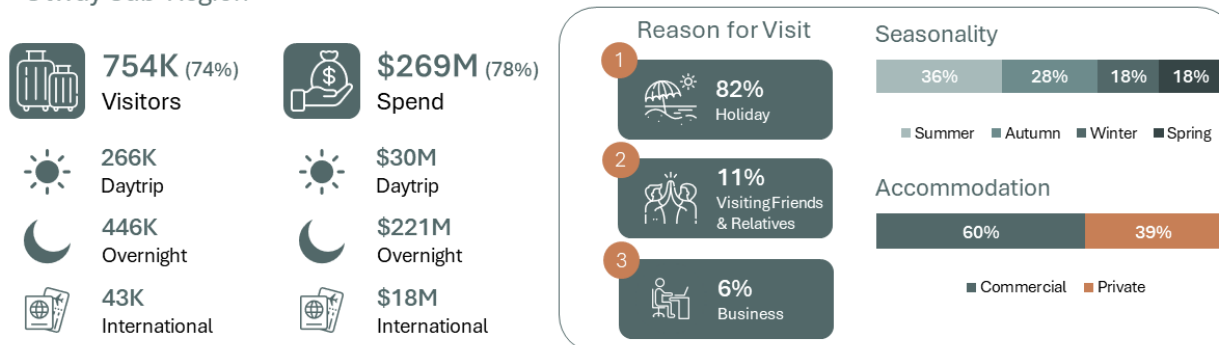
Colac Sub-Region



Colac Surrounds Sub-Region



Otway Sub-Region

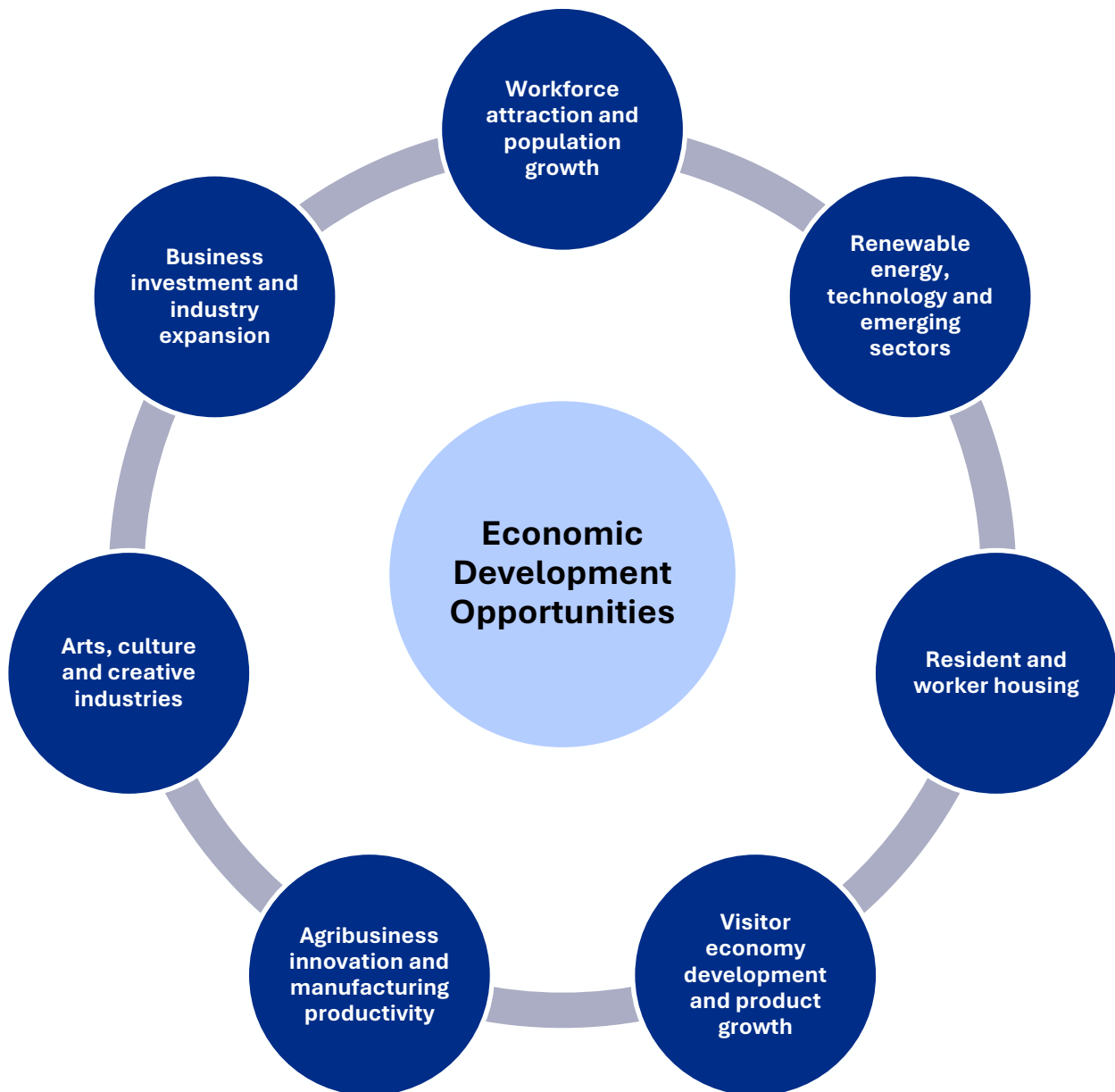


¹ All data reflects the annual average from 2022-2024 and is sourced from Tourism Research Australia

² All percentages for sub-regional figures indicate proportion of total visitation to the Shire

Key Economic Development Opportunities

The population, workforce, economic and visitor economy profile highlights emerging economic development opportunities for the next decade that informs the Framework and future Council delivery actions.



Stakeholder Insights

The Framework has been informed by engagement with businesses, industry, government agencies, community representatives and regional stakeholders.

Stakeholders consistently identified the following themes and aspirations to support the economy:

- Develop and grow existing businesses
- Attract investment in new and emerging industries
- Tackle housing and workforce challenges.
- Develop a more sustainable and high-value visitor economy.
- Liveability and place activation opportunities.
- Promote skills, education and employment pathways.
- Provide infrastructure and services to meet needs of residents, workers and visitors.
- Support growth across Colac, rural communities and the coast.
- Stronger advocacy

These themes directly informed the six strategic priorities and associated actions within this Framework.

Strategic Alignment

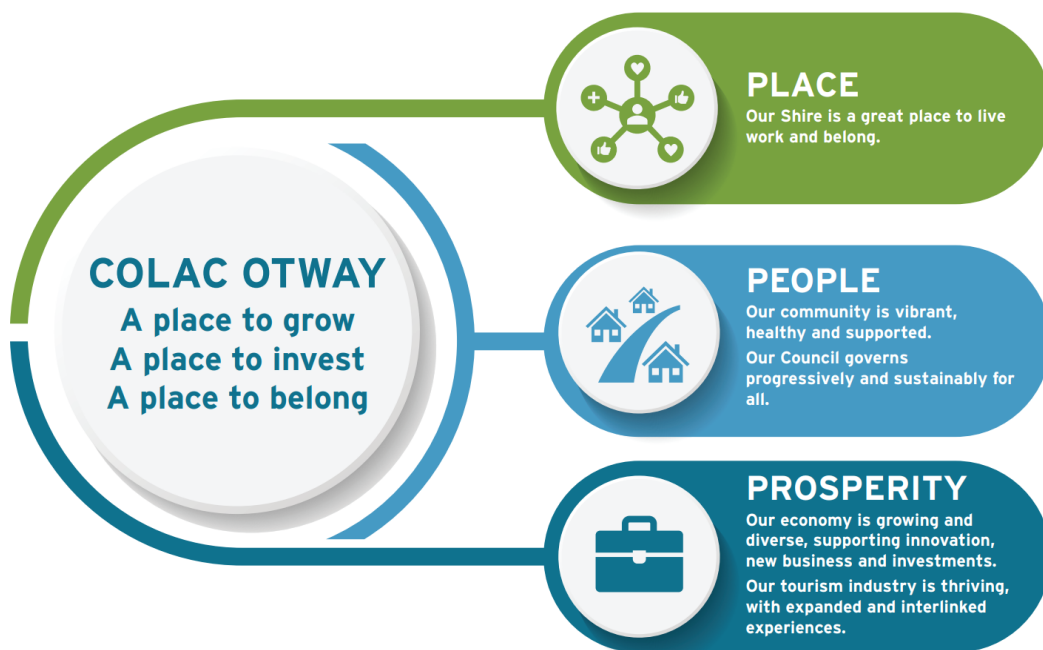
The Framework directions and actions are influenced by local, as well as broader regional, state and national policies, ensuring alignment of outcomes and objectives across levels of government.

The Framework supports the Colac Otway Shire Council Plan 2025–2029 and contributes to Council's vision:

"Colac Otway is a thriving regional hub where residents prosper, businesses find opportunity and visitors stay longer."

The Council vision is guided by the following strategic objectives regarding *place, people and prosperity*, which encompasses the key elements of the economy. These objectives are supported and underpinned by this framework.

Figure 5. Colac Otway Shire Council Plan – Strategic Objectives



Source: Colac Otway Shire Council, Council Plan 2025

This alignment helps ensure Council's economic development efforts respond to local priorities while supporting broader government objectives.

Strategic Framework

Achieving success will require a coordinated approach that builds on Colac Otway's strengths, responds to economic challenges and focuses Council effort where it can have the greatest impact.

Framework Overview

Economic Development Vision
Colac Otway will be one of Victoria's most investment-ready regional municipalities - a place where businesses grow with confidence, industries remain competitive, visitors stay longer, people choose to live and work, and communities prosper.



Lead Strategic Priority 1: Invest with Confidence		
Goal 1: Investment Ready Locations	Goal 2: Investment Attraction and Development	Goal 3: Strengthen Skills Development and Training Pathways



SUPPORTING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Priority 2: Grow Competitive Industries	Priority 3: A Thriving Visitor Economy	Priority 4: Great Places and Community Prosperity	Priority 5: Business Growth and Engagement	Priority 6: Leadership, Advocacy and Partnerships
Goal 4: Advanced and Innovative Food and Fibre Goal 5: Increase Local Value Capture Goal 6: Competitive and Resilient Industries	Goal 7: Higher Value Visitor Economy Goal 8: Sustainable Destination Development	Goal 9: Attract and Retain People and Workforce Goal 10: Great Places to Live, Work and Visit	Goal 11: Strong Business Engagement and Networks	Goal 12: Coordinated Economic Leadership Goal 13: Advocate and Promote Colac Otway's Economic Role and Identity

The Framework, which is designed to achieve an aspirational vision for the Shire, is centred on a lead strategic priority and enabled by five supporting priorities. Together, they provide a roadmap for strengthening the Shire's competitiveness, attracting investment, developing local businesses and creating vibrant communities.

Economic Development Vision

Colac Otway will be one of Victoria's most investment-ready regional municipalities - a place where businesses grow with confidence, industries remain competitive, visitors stay longer, people choose to live and work, and communities prosper.

Strategic Priorities

Lead Strategic Priority

This is the core driver of the Framework that creates the conditions for growth and capacity for development. This focuses on economic enablers that facilitate economic activity and/or removes local and regional barriers to growth – ultimately influencing demand, output, jobs and investment.

The lead strategic priority prioritises decision-making and resource allocation for Council and key partners, based on the ability to impact and transform the economy.



Lead Strategic Priority 1: Invest with Confidence

Create the conditions for investment, business growth and job creation through investment-ready land, enabling infrastructure, workforce development and coordinated economic leadership.

Goal 1: Investment Ready Locations.

Businesses need the right land, infrastructure and support to invest and grow. Council will work to reduce barriers and make it easier for investment to happen.

Goal 2: Investment Attraction and Development

New investment creates jobs, supports local businesses and strengthens the economy. Council will promote opportunities that build on Colac Otway's strengths and support long-term growth.

Goal 3: Strengthen Skills Development and Training Pathways

Businesses need access to skilled workers. Council will support initiatives that help people gain skills, access training and find local employment opportunities.

Supporting Strategic Priorities

The supporting strategic priorities build on the lead priority to support and sustain growth across key components of the economy.



Supporting Strategic Priority 2: Grow Competitive Industries

Food and fibre production, manufacturing and value-added processing are major contributors to employment, exports and economic activity across Colac Otway. Building on these strengths will help local businesses remain competitive, increase productivity and create new opportunities for investment and job creation.

Goal 4: Advanced and Innovative Food and Fibre

Food and fibre industries are a major part of the local economy. Supporting innovation, technology adoption and value-adding opportunities will help maintain competitiveness and drive future growth.

Goal 5: Increase Local Value Capture

Keeping more processing, manufacturing and business activity in the region creates local jobs and strengthens the economy.

Goal 6: Competitive and Resilient Industries.

Industries need to respond to changing markets, technology and consumer demand. Supporting innovation and collaboration will help businesses adapt and thrive.



Supporting Strategic Priority 3: A Thriving Visitor Economy

Grow a higher-value and sustainable visitor economy that increases visitor spending, supports local businesses and protects the natural assets that make Colac Otway unique. Focusing on these existing strengths, as well as emerging opportunities across arts, culture, heritage and creative product will strengthen local identity, appeal to new visitor markets and broaden the range of visitor experiences.

Goal 7: Higher Value Visitor Economy.

Attracting visitors who stay longer, spend more and explore more of the municipality helps support local businesses, jobs and investment across the Shire.

Goal 8: Sustainable Destination Development.

The natural and cultural assets that attract visitors are part of what makes Colac Otway special. Growth in the visitor economy should protect and enhance these assets for future generations.



Supporting Strategic Priority 4. Great Places and Community Prosperity

Create vibrant places where people want to live, work, visit and invest, supported by housing, community infrastructure, arts, culture, creative industries and quality public spaces.

Goal 9: Attract and Retain People and Workforce

A growing population and skilled workforce are essential to supporting local businesses, services and communities. Housing, employment opportunities, education, community infrastructure and lifestyle all contribute to making Colac Otway an attractive place to live and work.

Goal 10: Great Places to Live, Work and Visit.

Attractive and well-connected communities support both economic and social outcomes. Housing, schools, healthcare, community infrastructure, recreation, arts, culture, creative industries and activated public spaces contribute to liveability, worker attraction, visitation and local business growth. These assets play an important role in making Colac Otway a desirable place to live, work, visit and invest.



Supporting Strategic Priority 5. Business Growth and Engagement

Support businesses to start, grow, innovate and succeed through strong engagement, responsive support and a business-friendly operating environment.

Goal 11: Strong Business Engagement and Networks

Businesses are at the heart of the local economy. Council will work closely with businesses and industry groups to understand their needs and support growth opportunities.



Supporting Strategic Priority 6. Leadership, Advocacy and Partnerships

Provide strategic leadership and foster partnerships that help secure investment, infrastructure and economic opportunities for the municipality.

Goal 12: Coordinated Economic Leadership

Achieving long-term economic outcomes requires collaboration. Council will work with partners to align efforts and support shared priorities.

Goal 13: Advocate and Promote Colac Otway's Economic Role and Identity

Council will continue to advocate for investment, infrastructure and opportunities that support the region, while promoting Colac Otway as a great place to live, work, visit and invest.

Delivering the Framework

The Economic Development Framework establishes Council's long-term direction for economic prosperity across Colac Otway.

While the Framework sets the strategic priorities and goals, delivery will occur through future implementation plans, annual business planning processes, Council advocacy priorities and partnerships with industry, government and the community.

Implementation will require coordinated action across all levels of government, businesses, industry organisations, education providers, Traditional Owners, community groups and regional partners.

Shared Responsibility

Council will play an important leadership role in implementing the Framework. However many outcomes will rely on collaboration with businesses, industry, Traditional Owners, community organisations, education providers and all levels of government.

Success will depend on a shared commitment to investment, partnership and long-term economic growth.

Delivery Roadmap

Implementation will be guided by a separate action plan and sequenced over time based on resources, funding opportunities and project readiness.

Stage	Commencement Timeframe
Short-term	Within 2 years
Medium-term	Between 2–4 years
Long-term	Over 4 years
Ongoing	Continuous Delivery

Measuring Success

Progress indicators are provided for each strategic priority to monitor performance and outcomes, to be assessed at regular intervals over the life of the Framework.

These measures will help ensure the Framework remains focused on delivering tangible outcomes for businesses, residents and the broader community.

Resourcing

The action plan will be subject to Council's annual budget and resource allocation processes.

Some actions may be delivered within existing resources, while others will require Council budget consideration, external funding, advocacy or partnership investment.

This approach ensures the Framework remains ambitious while recognising Council's financial capacity and the need to prioritise actions over time.

Reporting and Review

Progress will be reported to Council and the community on a regular basis.

- Progress against strategic priorities.
- Delivery of action plan initiatives.
- Key economic indicators.
- Advocacy and funding outcomes.
- Emerging opportunities and challenges.

Regular reporting will support transparency, accountability and continuous improvement over the life of the Framework.

Looking Ahead

Colac Otway is a region of opportunity.

With strong industries, outstanding natural assets, vibrant communities and a strategic location, the municipality is well positioned for future growth.

This Framework provides a clear direction for attracting investment, supporting business growth, creating jobs and strengthening communities while maintaining the qualities that make Colac Otway a great place to live, work, visit and invest.

By building on its strengths, embracing new opportunities and working together, Colac Otway can strengthen its economy, grow its communities and create lasting prosperity for future generations.

Colac Otway is open for opportunity to Invest, Grow, Visit, Live and Prosper

Colac Otway Shire is

OPEN FOR OPPORTUNITY

INVEST	GROW	VISIT	LIVE	PROSPER
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Action Plan



Lead Strategic Priority 1: Invest with Confidence

Investment and job creation depend on the right conditions. This priority focuses on creating investment-ready locations, supporting workforce growth and advocating for the infrastructure needed to unlock future opportunities.

Initiative	What it Means	Delivery Role	Location Impact	Goals	Partners
Ongoing					
1.1 Strategic Infrastructure Planning and Advocacy Pipeline	Identify, prioritise and advocate for infrastructure that unlocks investment, business growth, housing and employment opportunities, including transport, utilities, industrial servicing, digital connectivity, township servicing and enabling infrastructure such as wastewater solutions for growth-constrained communities.	Advocacy / Leadership	Shire-wide	G1, G2	State Government (DTP, DJSIR, DEECA), Regional Development Victoria (RDV), Barwon Water, Powercor, NBN Co, Invest Victoria, G21, Barwon Regional Partnership, Neighbouring Councils, Major Infrastructure Providers
1.2 Investment Facilitation and Business Concierge	Provide coordinated support to investors, developers and businesses through a business concierge approach, helping them navigate Council processes, access information and progress investment opportunities.	Leadership	Shire-wide	G1, G2	Invest Victoria, RDV, Developers, Private Investors, Industry Organisations, Chamber of Commerce
1.3 Workforce Skills and Industry Training Pathways	Strengthen partnerships with education providers, industry and employers to support workforce development, skills attraction, local training pathways and future workforce needs.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G3	South West TAFE, LLEN, Schools, Major Employers, Jobs Victoria, Victorian Skills Authority, Deakin University
1.4 Housing and Workforce Advocacy Program	Advocate for housing, workforce accommodation, essential services and enabling infrastructure that support population growth, workforce attraction and business investment.	Advocacy	Shire-wide	G1, G3	State Government, Homes Victoria, RDV, Community Housing Providers, Major Employers, Health Services, Education Providers
Short Term					
1.5 Investment Attraction and Prospectus Program	Promote Colac Otway's investment opportunities through investment prospectuses, project promotion, targeted engagement and partnerships that attract investment, support business growth and showcase strategic opportunities.	Leadership	Shire-wide	G2	Invest Victoria, RDV, G21, Barwon Regional Partnership, Private Investors, Developers

Initiative	What it Means	Delivery Role	Location Impact	Goals	Partners
1.6 Investment Ready Land and Development Opportunities Register	Maintain an up-to-date register of industrial, commercial, tourism, housing and strategic development opportunities to support investment attraction and business growth.	Planning	Shire-wide	G1	Developers, Landowners, Real Estate Agents, Invest Victoria, Council Planning Team
1.7 Investment Ready Planning and Approvals Initiative	Improve Council processes, internal referrals, coordination and customer experience to reduce barriers and provide clearer, more efficient pathways for investment and development.	Leadership / Collaboration	Shire-wide	G1, G2	Council Departments
Medium Term					
1.8 Strategic Property and Council Land Review	Review Council-owned land and assets to identify opportunities that support economic development, housing, investment, tourism, community infrastructure and place activation outcomes.	Planning/ Leadership	Shire-wide	G1	RDV, Developers, Government Land Agencies, Community Stakeholders
Medium to Long Term					
1.9 Colac Industrial and Employment Lands Activation Program	Support planning, servicing, advocacy and investment attraction initiatives that unlock industrial and employment land opportunities, including the Colac East Industrial Precinct.	Advocacy / Leadership	Colac	G1, G2	RDV, Invest Victoria, State Government, Barwon Water, Powercor, Developers, Landowners, Major Employers

Progress Indicators

- ✓ Infrastructure funding secured
- ✓ Quantity of serviced employment land
- ✓ Private investment and development enquiries
- ✓ Participants attending training and education courses/programs
- ✓ Workforce participation



Supporting Strategic Priority 2: Grow Competitive Industries

Build on Colac Otway's strengths in food and fibre, manufacturing and value-added production to support jobs, investment, innovation and business growth.

Initiative	What it Means	Delivery Role	Location Impact	Goals	Partners
Ongoing					
2.1 Major Employer and Industry Partnerships	Establish and maintain strong relationships with major employers, industry leaders and key sectors to better understand opportunities, challenges, workforce needs and investment priorities across the municipality.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G4, G5, G6	Food and Fibre Businesses, Agriculture Victoria, Regional Development Victoria, Industry Associations, Research Institutions
2.2 Food and Fibre Leadership Program	Support the growth, competitiveness and profile of Colac Otway's food and fibre industries through industry collaboration, advocacy, promotion and strategic partnerships.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G4, G5	Major Employers, Industry Leaders, Business Networks, RDV, Chambers of Commerce
2.3 Industry Resilience, Sustainability and Adaptation Program	Support businesses and industries to improve productivity, resource efficiency and resilience in response to economic change, workforce challenges, technology adoption, climate impacts and changing market conditions.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G6	Universities, TAFE, Research Organisations, RDV, Innovation Networks, Industry Partners
Medium Term					
2.4 Innovation, Technology and Emerging Industries Program	Support innovation, technology adoption, research partnerships and emerging industry opportunities that improve productivity, strengthen competitiveness and diversify the local economy.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G4, G6	Manufacturers, Processors, Producers, Industry Associations, Major Employers
2.5 Supply Chain and Local Value Capture Initiative	Support opportunities to retain more economic value within the region by strengthening local supply chains, increasing local procurement and encouraging value-added production and processing.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G5	Global Victoria, Austrade, RDV, Industry Associations, Exporters
2.6 Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency Opportunities	Promote initiatives that improve resource efficiency, reduce waste and identify opportunities to reuse materials and by-products to support sustainable business growth.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G6	Manufacturers, Processors, Producers, Industry Associations, Major Employers

Initiative	What it Means	Delivery Role	Location Impact	Goals	Partners
2.7 Export, Trade and Market Readiness Support	Support businesses to access new markets, strengthen export capability and connect with trade, investment and business development opportunities.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G5, G6	Agriculture Victoria, Sustainability Victoria, Industry Groups, Research Organisations, Major Employers
Medium to Long Term					
2.8 Colac East Industrial Precinct Advocacy and Activation	Advocate for and support the infrastructure, planning and investment needed to unlock the Colac East Industrial Precinct as a key location for future industry, employment and business growth.	Advocacy / Leadership	Colac	G5	State Government, RDV, Invest Victoria, Barwon Water, Powercor, Landowners, Developers
2.9 Industrial Precinct Clustering and Co-location Opportunities	Support opportunities for complementary industries to locate near each other, improving supply chain integration, investment attraction and business collaboration.	Leadership/ Collaboration	Colac	G5	Industry, Developers, Landowners, RDV, Invest Victoria

Progress Indicators

- ✓ Output and export value for manufacturing and agriculture
- ✓ Investment inquiries for manufacturing and agribusiness
- ✓ Industrial land uptake



Supporting Strategic Priority 3. A Thriving Visitor Economy

Enhance the visitor experience and create new tourism opportunities across the municipality, building on regional strengths as well as emerging opportunities across arts, culture, heritage and creative experiences that strengthen local identity.

Initiative	What it Means	Delivery Role	Location Impact	Goals	Partners
Ongoing					
3.1 Visitor Economy Product Development Program	Support the development of new and enhanced tourism products, experiences and destination offerings that encourage visitation, increase visitor spending and strengthen Colac Otway's visitor economy.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G7	Tourism Operators, GORRT, Visit Victoria, GORCAPA, tourism Industry Associations, Local Businesses
3.2 Destination Marketing and Promotion Program	Promote Colac Otway's visitor experiences through destination marketing, partnerships and campaigns that increase visitation, support dispersal and strengthen the municipality's tourism profile.	Collaboration / Leadership	Shire-wide	G7	GORRT, Visit Victoria, Tourism Operators, Local Businesses, Neighbouring Councils
3.3 Visitor Economy Dispersal Initiative	Encourage visitors to explore more of the municipality by strengthening connections between Colac, rural communities, the Otways and the coast, helping distribute the economic benefits of tourism more broadly across the Shire.	Collaboration	Colac / Rural / Otways & Coast	G7	GORRT, Visit Vic, Tourism Operators, Local Businesses, Community Groups, Neighbouring Councils
3.4 Events Attraction and Development Program	Support the attraction, development and growth of events and festivals that increase visitation, encourage overnight stays, activate communities and strengthen Colac Otway's reputation as a year-round destination.	Leadership / Collaboration	Shire-Wide	G7	Event Organisers, GORRT, Visit Victoria, Sporting Bodies, Community Organisations, Tourism Operators
3.5 Nature-Based and Trail Tourism Development	Support investment in trails, outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism experiences that build on Colac Otway's natural assets and encourage visitation across the municipality.	Collaboration / Advocacy	Otways & Coast / Rural	G7, G8	GORCAPA, DEECA, Parks Victoria, Trail User Groups, Tourism Operators
3.6 Sustainable Destination Management Partnerships	Work with tourism, environmental and government partners to balance visitor growth with environmental stewardship, community wellbeing and the long-term sustainability of key destinations.	Collaboration / Advocacy	Otways & Coast / Shire-wide	G8	GORCAPA, DEECA, GORRT, Parks Victoria, Traditional Owners, Tourism Operators

Initiative	What it Means	Delivery Role	Location Impact	Goals	Partners
Medium Term					
3.7 Accommodation Investment Initiative	Encourage investment in new and upgraded visitor accommodation that supports overnight visitation, responds to market demand and strengthens the visitor economy across the municipality.	Advocacy / Leadership	Shire-wide	G7	Developers, Investors, Accommodation Operators, Invest Victoria, RDV
3.8 Agritourism and Food Tourism Development	Support opportunities that connect visitors with Colac Otway's food, fibre, farming and producer experiences through agritourism, farm-gate experiences, destination dining and local produce initiatives.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G7	Producers, Agribusinesses, Tourism Operators, GORRT, Agriculture Victoria
3.9 Creative and Cultural Tourism Development	Support arts, culture, heritage and creative experiences that strengthen local identity, enhance the visitor experience and create new tourism opportunities across the municipality.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G7, G8	Creative Victoria, Arts Organisations, Local Creatives, Heritage Groups, Tourism Operators
3.10 Visitor Infrastructure and Wayfinding Advocacy	Advocate for investment in visitor infrastructure, facilities, signage and wayfinding that improve accessibility, visitor experience and destination connectivity.	Advocacy	Shire-wide	G8	State Government, GORRT, GORCAPA, DEECA, Tourism Operators, Infrastructure Providers

Progress Indicators

- ✓ Economic contribution of tourism to output and jobs
- ✓ Visitation and visitor spend
- ✓ Average length of visitor stays
- ✓ Number of tourism events in the Shire



Supporting Strategic Priority 4. Great Places and Community Prosperity

Create vibrant places where people want to live, work, visit and invest, supported by housing, community infrastructure, arts, culture, recreation, creative industries and quality public spaces.

Initiative	What it Means	Delivery Role	Location Impact	Goals	Partners
Ongoing					
4.1 Housing Advocacy and Facilitation	Advocate for and support housing initiatives that increase housing supply, improve housing choice and enable population and workforce growth across the municipality.	Advocacy / Collaboration	Shire-wide	G9	State Government, Homes Victoria, Community Housing Providers, Developers, RDV, Major Employers
4.2 Workforce Attraction and Community Connection Initiatives	Support programs and partnerships that attract new workers and residents to Colac Otway while helping people and families connect with local communities, services, employment opportunities and lifestyle offerings.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G9	Major Employers, South West TAFE, LLEN, Community Organisations, Health Services, Business Networks
4.3 Education, Skills and Local Pathways Partnerships	Work with schools, training providers, industry and regional partners to strengthen education outcomes, career pathways, local employment opportunities and workforce readiness.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G9	Schools, South West TAFE, LLEN, Universities, Industry, Employers, Jobs Victoria
4.4 Liveability and Community Infrastructure Program	Advocate for and support infrastructure, facilities and services, including health, education, childcare, recreation and community infrastructure, that improve quality of life, strengthen communities and support population growth, workforce attraction and economic development.	Collaboration / Advocacy	Shire-wide	G10	State Government, RDV, Health Services, Community Organisations, Infrastructure Providers
4.5 Community and Township Activation Program	Support initiatives that activate town centres, neighbourhoods and community spaces through events, placemaking, local projects and community-led activities that encourage visitation, participation and economic activity.	Leadership / Collaboration	Colac / Townships	G10	Community Groups, Township Associations, Chambers of Commerce, Traders Associations, Event Organisers

Initiative	What it Means	Delivery Role	Location Impact	Goals	Partners
4.6 Lake Colac and Open Space Activation	Support initiatives that enhance the use, accessibility and activation of Lake Colac and surrounding open spaces for recreation, community use, events, tourism and liveability outcomes.	Collaboration / Advocacy	Colac	G10	Community Groups, Event Organisers, Recreation Clubs, State Government, Tourism Operators
4.7 Recreation and Public Realm Improvements	Advocate for and support improvements to recreation facilities, streetscapes, public spaces, trails and community infrastructure that contribute to attractive, connected and vibrant places.	Collaboration / Advocacy	Shire-wide	G10	State Government, Sport and Recreation Victoria, Community Groups, Recreation Clubs, Infrastructure Providers
4.8 Arts, Culture and Community Activation	Support arts, culture, creative projects, public art and community activation initiatives that strengthen local identity, encourage participation and contribute to vibrant and welcoming places.	Leadership / Collaboration	Shire-wide	G10	Creative Victoria, Arts Organisations, Local Artists, Community Groups, Event Organisers, GORCAPA
Medium to Long Term					
4.9 Colac Civic, Health and Community Precinct Planning	Support planning and future development opportunities within the Civic, Health and Community Precinct to strengthen Colac's role as the municipality's regional service, employment and community hub.	Leadership	Colac	G10	Health Services, State Government, Developers, RDV, Education Providers, Community Stakeholders

Progress Indicators

- ✓ Housing supply and capacity
- ✓ Local business spend
- ✓ Community satisfaction with Council services
- ✓ Population growth rates



Supporting Strategic Priority 5. Business Growth and Engagement

Support businesses to start, grow, innovate and succeed through strong engagement, responsive support, better internal coordination and a business-friendly operating environment.

Initiative	What it Means	Delivery Role	Location Impact	Goals	Partners
Ongoing					
5.1 Business Engagement, Intelligence and Support Program	Maintain regular engagement with businesses across the municipality to understand opportunities, challenges, workforce needs, investment intentions and emerging issues, while connecting businesses with information, programs, funding opportunities and support services.	Leadership	Shire-wide	G11	Businesses, Major Employers, Colac & District Chamber of Commerce, Industry Associations, Business Victoria, RDV
5.2 Business Concierge and Referral Service	Provide a central point of contact for businesses seeking support, information or assistance, helping navigate Council processes and connecting businesses with relevant internal teams, government agencies and support services.	Leadership	Shire-wide	G11	Business Victoria, Small Business Victoria, RDV, Invest Victoria, Council Departments, Industry Organisations
5.3 Business Friendly Council Initiative	Continue to improve Council processes, responsiveness and coordination to make it easier for businesses to invest, operate and grow in Colac Otway through a customer-focused and solutions-oriented approach.	Leadership / Collaboration	Shire-wide	G11	Small Business Victoria, Business Victoria, Local Businesses, Industry Representatives
5.4 Chamber, Industry and Business Network Partnerships	Work collaboratively with Chambers of Commerce, industry groups and business networks to strengthen business connections, identify opportunities and support local economic development outcomes.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G11	Colac & District Chamber of Commerce, Apollo Bay and District Community Bank, Industry Groups, Regional Business Networks, Major Employers
5.5 Business Capability and Resilience Support	Support initiatives that strengthen business capability, workforce development, digital adoption, innovation and resilience to help local businesses start, grow and adapt to changing economic conditions.	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G11	Business Victoria, Small Business Victoria, RDV, South West TAFE, Industry Associations, Major Employers

Initiative	What it Means	Delivery Role	Location Impact	Goals	Partners
Medium Term					
5.6 Local Procurement and Supply Opportunities	Support opportunities that strengthen local supply chains, increase awareness of procurement opportunities and encourage local businesses to participate in Council, government and private sector procurement processes.	Collaboration / Leadership	Shire-wide	G11	Local Businesses, Procurement Networks, State Government, Major Employers, Industry Associations, Council Procurement Team

Progress Indicators

- ✓ Number and frequency of business engagements
- ✓ Enquiries for new businesses
- ✓ Approvals for business expansion
- ✓ Business network membership numbers
- ✓ Business satisfaction with Council
- ✓ Planning permit decision-making timelines



Supporting Strategic Priority 6. Leadership, Advocacy and Partnerships

Provide strategic leadership, build partnerships and advocate for the infrastructure, investment, funding and policy support needed to strengthen Colac Otway's economy.

Initiative	What it Means	Delivery Role	Location Impact	Goals	Partners
Ongoing					
6.1 Economic Development Implementation Program	Coordinate the implementation, monitoring and continuous improvement of the Economic Development Framework, ensuring actions are aligned across Council, resources are prioritised effectively and progress is monitored over time.	Leadership	Shire-wide	G12	Council Departments
6.2 Regional Advocacy Program	Advocate for infrastructure, housing, workforce, services, funding and policy outcomes that support economic development, community sustainability and long-term prosperity across Colac Otway.	Advocacy	Shire-wide	G12, G13	State Government, Federal Government, RDV, G21, Barwon Regional Partnership, Regional Development Australia, Neighbouring Councils
6.3 Strategic Partnership Development	Build and strengthen partnerships with government agencies, industry organisations, Traditional Owners, education providers, neighbouring municipalities and regional stakeholders to achieve shared economic development outcomes	Collaboration	Shire-wide	G12	Traditional Owners, Government Agencies, G21, Barwon Regional Partnership, GORRT, Education Providers, Industry Groups
6.4 Funding Attraction and Grant Readiness Program	Identify funding opportunities, strengthen project readiness and coordinate funding submissions that help attract external investment into priority projects and initiatives.	Advocacy / Leadership	Shire-wide	G12	State Government, Federal Government, RDV, Funding Agencies, Strategic Partners, Community Organisations
6.5 Strategic Project Development and Investment Readiness Program	Develop priority projects, business cases, feasibility studies and investment-ready opportunities that strengthen Council's ability to attract funding, investment and partnership support.	Leadership / Advocacy	Shire-wide	G12, G13	RDV, Invest Victoria, State Government, Industry Partners, Consultants, Private Investors, Strategic Stakeholders
6.6 Economic Development Scorecard	Monitor and report on Framework implementation through key economic indicators, progress measures and outcome reporting to support transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.	Leadership	Shire-wide	G12	Australian Bureau of Statistics, RDV, Economy and Creative Industries Team

Initiative	What it Means	Delivery Role	Location Impact	Goals	Partners
6.7 Promote Colac Otway as a Place to Invest, Work, Live and Visit	Strengthen awareness of Colac Otway's opportunities, strengths and competitive advantages through coordinated place promotion, investment attraction, workforce attraction and destination marketing activities.	Leadership / Collaboration	Shire-wide	G13	Invest Victoria, RDV, GORRT, Visit Victoria, G21, Barwon Regional Partnership, Local Businesses and Industry

Progress Indicators

- ✓ Engagements with Government and regional partners
- ✓ Public investment and infrastructure funding
- ✓ Private investment and development enquiries
- ✓ Marketing and advocacy activities

Appendices

Appendix A: Framework Preparation

The framework was prepared through a strategic, collaborative and evidence-based process.

Figure 6. Framework Preparation Process

1	Analyse Conduct a comprehensive economic, workforce, industry and visitor economy assessment, including industry trends, employment data and investment potential. Review current federal and state policy and existing strategic work to ensure alignment and avoid duplication.
2	Engage Design and deliver a robust stakeholder and community engagement process.
3	Strategise Develop a strategy with short- and long-term actions that are realistic, achievable and aligned with Council’s capacity and broader strategic frameworks.
4	Activate Identify pilot initiatives, funding sources and partnership opportunities for Council and key stakeholders.
5	Evaluate Establish a framework for monitoring progress and framework outcomes.

This provides a mix of qualitative and quantitative data to help identify realistic and priority framework actions, as well as a framework to monitor progress and framework outcomes.

Appendix B: Stakeholder Contributions

Stakeholder Engagement Summary

The following stakeholders were engaged through a combination of workshops, interviews and online surveys as part of the framework development process.

Table 1. Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Stakeholder Group	Representatives
Council	Council Officers Councillors
Industry and Government	Health - Colac Area Health Foundation - Barwon Health Education, Research & Employment - South West TAFE Government Agencies - Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority (GORCAPA) - Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism (GORRT) - Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action of Victoria (DEECA)
Community and Business	Colac Community Apollo Bay Community Forrest Community

Stakeholder Engagement Insights

Stakeholders identified the following aspirational objectives and outcomes to be achieved through the Economic Development Framework, to meet the needs of local and regional partners.

- **Foster business establishment, growth and development** through Council support for small enterprises and large organisations, ensuring there are sufficient services and retail offerings to address service gaps and reduce expenditure leakage to surrounding urban centres.
- **Attract and enable investment** through proactive investment attraction, activation of industrial and commercial land and obtain funding for enabling infrastructure.
- **Support population attraction and retention** by increasing opportunities to live and work locally across Colac as well as smaller rural and coastal communities.
- **Improve accommodation supply and quality**, including worker housing to help meet industry needs, as well as commercial visitor accommodation to support the visitor economy and encourage overnight stays.
- **Enhance liveability, wellbeing and social outcomes** through provision of services, housing, community facilities, as well as improving public places and spaces to encourage utilisation and spend in key precincts.
- **Develop a high-value and more sustainable visitor economy** that attract new visitors, encourages visitor spend (through product development) and disperses visitors across the Shire, whilst balancing conservation of key environmental assets.
- **Strengthen education, skills and workforce pathways** to provide employment opportunities for residents and meet industry needs, particularly for key sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and health.

Appendix C: Strategy and Policy Alignment

The framework is also influenced by a suite of other local, regional and government documents, ensuring strategic alignment with broader priorities and policies. This includes various themes that impact economic development, including *community, environmental sustainability, infrastructure, housing* and the *visitor economy*.

Table 2. Supporting Strategic Documents

Document	Themes
Colac Otway Shire Documents	
Council Plan 2025-2029	Community, Governance, Economy, Visitor Economy
Community Vision 2050	Community
Creative Colac Otway Arts and Culture Strategy 2018-2022	Arts and Culture, Community Infrastructure
Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033	Environment
Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2033	Environment, Climate Action and Resilience
Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2026	Community, Social Cohesion and Inclusion
Asset Plan 2025-2035	Infrastructure
Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35	Financial Management
Social Housing Plan 2021-2024	Housing
Advocacy Priorities 2026	Advocacy, Infrastructure
Regional Documents	
Barwon Regional Economic Development Strategy 2022	Economic Development
Visitor Economy Plan for the Great Ocean Road Region: 2024-2035 Destination Management Plan	Visitor Economy
Apollo Bay Destination Action Plan 2018-2020	Visitor Economy
Colac Destination Action Plan 2020-2025	Visitor Economy
Victorian Government Documents	
Plan for Victoria 2025	Strategic Planning, Housing, Infrastructure
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions Strategic Plan 2023-2027 (2025 Update)	Economic Development, Productivity
Victoria's Housing Statement 2024-2034	Housing
Great Ocean Road Strategic Framework Plan 2024	Visitor Economy, Sustainable Tourism
Experience Victoria 2033	Visitor Economy
Victoria's Economic Growth Statement 2024	Economic Development, Productivity
Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2025-2055	Infrastructure, Climate Change, Productivity, Housing
Strong, Innovative, Sustainable: A New Strategy for Agriculture in Victoria 2020	Agriculture, Industry Development

Source: Various, compiled by Urban Enterprise, 2026

Appendix D: Strategic Regional Partnerships

The Shire's location also provides access to regional partnerships, fostering collaborative investment and economic opportunities to benefit the region. This includes the **Barwon Regional Partnership** and **G21 Geelong Regional Alliance**, which provides planning, investment and advocacy support for the region and member Councils – ensuring member Councils can jointly benefit through a regional and collaborative approach to economic growth and development.

Figure 7. Barwon Regional Partnership and G21 Geelong Regional Alliance



Source: Regional Development Victoria and G21 Geelong Region Alliance, 2026

The Shire is also a member of **Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism**, which is a world-renowned tourism destination that works collaboratively to grow the visitor economy in the region through partnerships in advocacy, regional and destination marketing, visitor management, product and industry development.

Figure 8. Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism



Source: Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism, 2026

Appendix E: Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Table 3. Acronyms

Acronym	Expanded
CZ	Commercial Zone
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action of Victoria
FZ	Farming Zone
GORCAPA	Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority (GORCAPA)
GORRT	Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism
INZ	Industrial Zone
LGA	Local Government Area
LLEN	Local Learning and Employment Network
RDA	Regional Development Australia
RES	Residential Zone
RLZ	Rural Living Zone
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Index for Areas
TRA	Tourism Research Australia
TZ	Township Zone

Table 4. Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Employment	Employment data represents the number of people employed by businesses/organisations in each of the industry sectors in a defined region. Employment data presented in this report is destination of work data. That is, no inference is made as to where people in a defined region reside. This employment represents full-time equivalent jobs, based on a 38-hour work week.
Output	Output is defined as the gross revenue generated by businesses and organisations within a specific region and industry sector. Also referred to as total sales or total income, this metric represents the value of goods and services produced, inclusive of the costs of inputs
Regional Exports	Represents the value of goods and services exported outside of the defined region that have been generated by businesses / organisations in each of the industry sectors within the region.
Socio-Economic Index for Areas	Developed by the ABS, this measures the relative level of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage for a defined area. The index score is based on a weighted combination of census variables that reflect disadvantage (e.g. income, education, employment, etc.), which is then standardised around the national average score of 1,000. Therefore, a score above 1,000 indicates a lower level of disadvantage relative to the national average, while a score below 1,000 indicates a higher level of disadvantage relative to the national average.
Commercial Zone	Commercial zones support businesses, retail, and employment while accommodating some residential use where appropriate
Rural Living Zone	The Rural Living Zone has been used to provide for residential uses in a rural environment.
Industrial Zone	Allows for specific industrial uses to be undertaken on-site, and manages where industry can locate and how it interfaces with other land uses.
Farming Zone	Land in the Farming Zone is primarily intended for farming and agricultural activities, including sustainable land management practices.
Township Zone	A planning zone used for small, established towns and rural areas to accommodate a mix of residential, commercial, and service/light industrial uses.
Residential Zone	Designated area for residential development and housing, with specific zones determining the housing density, type and height allowed.



+61 3 9482 3888
www.urbanenterprise.com.au
Level 1 302-304 Barkly St, Brunswick VIC 3056