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C113**MUNICIPAL OVERVIEW**

This Municipal Strategic Statement provides a vision and clear strategic directions for land use and development in East Gippsland Shire, in a way which helps achieve economic, social and environmental goals.

East Gippsland Shire is located in the far eastern corner of Victoria, between 280 and 550 kilometres from Melbourne. It covers 21,051 square kilometres and is the second largest municipality in the State. The Shire adjoins five other municipalities: Alpine, Towong and Wellington Shires in Victoria; and Bombala and Bega Valley Shires in New South Wales.

The main towns are Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance, Orbost, Paynesville, Metung, Omeo and Mallacoota. Bairnsdale has the largest population and is also the regional retail and service centre. There are approximately 10 smaller towns and a large number of rural settlements or localities generally centred on community and sporting facilities.

East Gippsland Shire is renowned for its remarkable diversity and the beauty of its natural environment. It has the largest navigable lakes system in Australia. Extensive and undisturbed natural areas include coasts and forests; national parks (including marine parks); and wilderness areas.

But the Shire is more than a checklist of natural wonders. It is home to a range of industries including agriculture, horticulture, fishing, timber production, mining and exploration. It has a vibrant tourism industry that offers potential for significant expansion.

And it has a human and cultural history. The area was originally inhabited by the Gunaikurnai people and Swan Reach was a significant meeting point for the five clans of the Kurnai. Europeans have been living and working in the area since the 1830s leaving the region a number of important heritage buildings and a more recent history to protect.

Today, there are more than 43,000 people living and working in the region.

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C113**Key Issues and Influences**

The following issues and influences are identified as relevant to planning for the Shire. They have been ordered under State Planning Policy Framework headings.

Settlement

- The impact of expanding settlements on preservation of landscape amenity.

Environmental and Landscape Values

- Managing the biodiversity and natural assets of the region in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Environmental Risk

- Managing fire and fire risk.
- Effects of climate change, in particular, the issue of sea level rise, storm surges and coastal erosion.

Natural Resource Management

- Water quality of lakes and rivers, especially excessive nutrient levels.
- The threat of European carp to the Gippsland lakes and tributary rivers.
- Control of environmental weeds and pest animals, on both private and public land.
- Inappropriate subdivision of rural land.
- Land degradation and tree decline in some rural areas.

Economic Development

- Slow economic growth.
- High unemployment rate, especially for young people.
- A narrow economic base.
- The need to extend the range and quality of tourism facilities.
- Lack of investment.

Infrastructure

- Relatively low educational achievement, partly as a result of difficulty of accessing tertiary education.
- Maintenance and extension of community services, cultural and recreation facilities.

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Vision

The community's long-term vision "*Unlocking the Future – Long Term Community Vision 2030*" identifies the following vision for East Gippsland:

"East Gippsland Shire Council will work with the community to ensure a sustainable future through liveable and productive communities supported by a healthy environment".

This vision is supported with the four principles:

Liveability

Strong and vibrant communities create healthy, productive and fulfilling places to live.

Sustainability

Proactive leadership and strategic partnerships protect and enhance our quality environment.

Productivity

Investment and visitation develop a sustainable and prosperous economy.

Governance

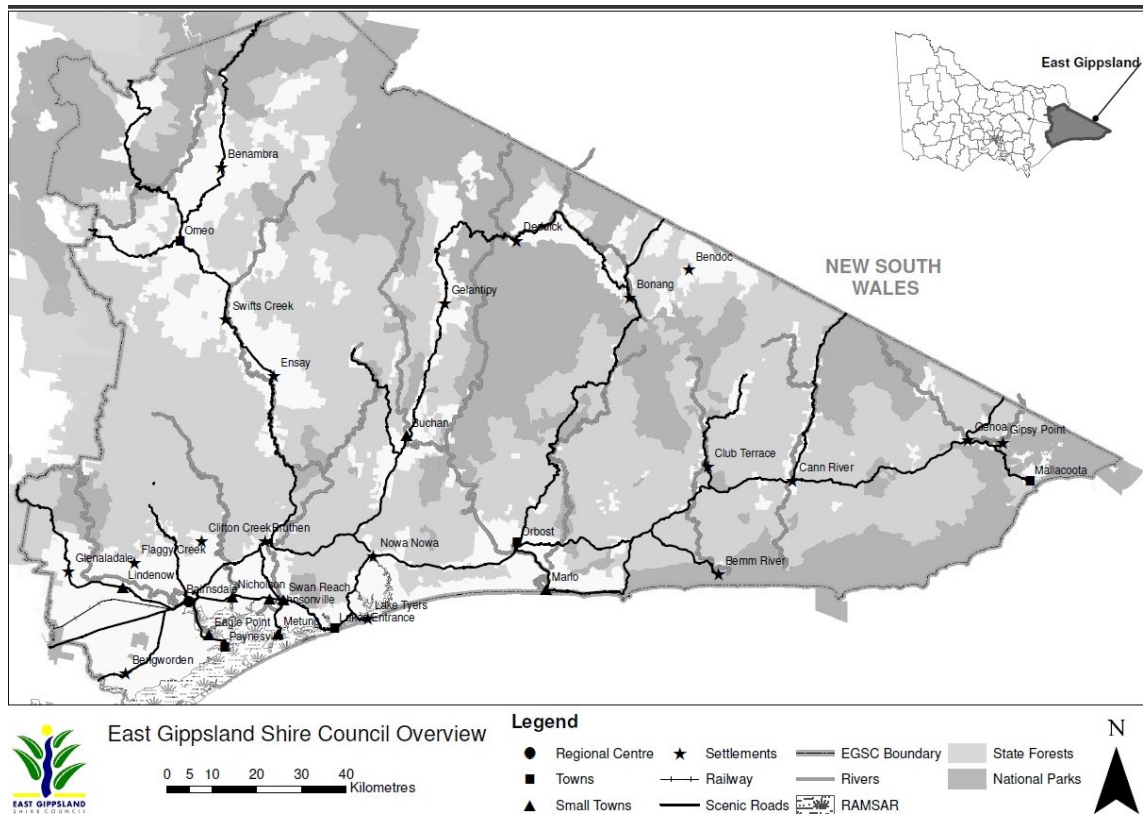
Strong leadership and prudent management of democratic and legislative requirements deliver good governance outcomes.

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Strategic Framework Plan

Map 1. Overview



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Strategic Direction

Key Land Use Themes

The key land use themes are consistent with those in the State Planning Policy Framework, these are:

Theme 1	Clause 21.03	Settlement
Theme 2	Clause 21.04	Environmental and Landscape Values
Theme 3	Clause 21.05	Environmental Risks
Theme 4	Clause 21.06	Natural Resource Management
Theme 5	Clause 21.07	Built Environment and Heritage
Theme 6	Clause 21.08	Housing
Theme 7	Clause 21.09	Economic Development
Theme 8	Clause 21.10	Transport
Theme 9	Clause 21.11	Infrastructure