



Greater Bendigo - where people thrive

Discussion Paper Summary

Prepared by the Greater Bendigo Economic
Development Strategy Steering Committee

About:

The 'Greater Bendigo – where people thrive' Discussion Paper 2019 is designed to promote debate and discussion in order to assist us to craft an Economic Development Strategy. The Strategy's overall purpose is to improve the living standards of all members of our community. It is being developed by the Greater Bendigo Economic Development Steering Committee with a long-term perspective of building better more sustainable jobs, while improving our health, well-being, education and the environment.

Vision: Shape an inclusive, sustainable community where people thrive

The ambition for Greater Bendigo is to build the most productive knowledge-led economy in regional Australia. At the Strategy's heart is an undertaking that we will endeavour to ensure that everyone living in Greater Bendigo will have the opportunity to thrive and participate in a great and liveable community. To realise this ambition, we need a people-centric approach to the Strategy and its implementation. Growth needs to be not only sustainable but inclusive, that is, it is shared by all.



Model: Inclusive, Sustainable Growth

The Strategy's inclusive, sustainable growth model has been built through an economic, social and environmental context, advocating for a people focused, collective impact and outcome-based approach.

Inclusive, sustainable growth combines Gross Domestic Product with social and environmental progress.

This model recognises a future where everyone living in Greater Bendigo will have the opportunity to develop to their full potential. A future where:

- Children, despite a lack of parental wealth, status and power, are not prevented from achieving their full education and employment potential
- Adults have the opportunity to reach their full employment potential and are not defined by where they live or their access to health and housing services, training, skills development and networks

The Discussion Paper responds to global forces and their local and regional impacts, including:

- Climate change
- The rise of Asia
- Rapid urbanisation
- Demographic and social change
- Digital disruption and innovation
- Education and employability
- The changing nature of work



The Strategy aims to uplift Greater Bendigo performance to levels equivalent to state and national averages in the following key indicators:

- **Year 12 or equivalent educational attainment rate**
- **Per capita gross regional product**
- **Reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to deliver a net zero carbon city by 2036 or earlier**

Strategic framework:

To achieve the key indicators, the Strategy will be structured around the following four strategic directions (right):



“Greater Bendigo is a great place to live and many of our amenities are the envy of much larger communities. We are a liveable region that enjoys a strong sense of identity and connectedness. Businesses are investing and our residents are proud of where they live.”

“Nearly 2,000 additional people call Greater Bendigo home every year. We have a strong base and by empowering all our people to thrive will ensure we reach our full potential.”

The Greater Bendigo Economic Strategy Steering Committee

Strategic directions:

Growing from within

- Pioneer a circular economy model for how the City and region operates;
- Build on our collective investments in major health facilities and initiatives to reduce the high levels of chronic poor health and wellbeing;
- Implement broader data access and use it to drive major employment, agricultural investment and support policy development and decision making;
- Deliver programs for Small to Medium enterprises to support growth, upskilling in innovation, financial literacy, digital capacity, people, skills development and exports.

Investing in all our people

- Comprehensively reduce education and workplace barriers;
- Develop and implement a pilot program for a co-ordinated (zero to 25 years) education approach;
- Support students to stay in school longer;
- Create local education, training and employment pathways for school-leavers and unskilled workers;
- Develop further social support programs to aid workplace participation;
- Eliminate gender inequity to drive productivity;
- Significantly increase university student numbers;
- Develop a jobs and economic growth corridor from Clarkefield to Echuca/Moama.

Attracting investment

- Develop an agreed regional infrastructure program to leverage funding;
- Further develop a City/Region Deal to position Bendigo and the region for investment;
- Implement the adopted Greater Bendigo Industrial Land Development Strategy;
- Establish a robust ecosystem that drives and nurtures knowledge and innovation;
- Deliver a digital health research facility;
- Further develop the city centre into a major regional employment cluster through further investment and leveraging off our institutional anchors;
- Determine feasibility and route options for upgrading road links or building roads for a western connector;
- Unlock potential super-fast fibre assets in Bendigo and broader region that deliver faster digital speeds and further implement the LoWaRAN sensor network.

Seeing the bigger picture

- Develop, implement and deliver bold climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives and reduce our environmental footprint;
- Promote self-sufficiency in energy use;
- Deliver a long-term water security plan for the region;
- Build on existing initiatives to embark on an export program that engages with the world.

Reaching our full potential:

The following table outlines two contrasting scenarios. The first is an approach that relies on the continuation of practices over the last 25 years. The second offers a systematic, collaborative and planned approach to transformative change. By leveraging the region's strengths and our national and global connections, Bendigo can reach its full potential and serve future generations well.

Help shape Greater Bendigo's future:

The Discussion Paper will be released to the community for feedback on Friday July 26, 2019 and be open for public consultation until the close of business Monday August 26, 2019. Download the full version of this paper at www.bendigo.vic.gov.au

For submissions on the Discussion Paper or to be kept informed about this project contact the Regional Sustainable Development Unit on (03) 5434 6000 or rsdenquiries@bendigo.vic.gov.au

	Business as usual	Transform
Business/Work	Skill shortages limit business growth and investment	Skills and education are closely aligned with current and future needs of business and industry
	Lack of industrial land makes it difficult to attract new industries and businesses	Industrial land is readily available for businesses looking to open or expand
	New businesses are attracted to other locations with more available skilled labour and land	Opportunities in the region are harnessed and delivered and Bendigo is viewed as an enviable location to do business
	Greater Bendigo is not seen as a destination which fosters entrepreneurship and innovation	Greater Bendigo has an entrepreneurial focus, retains businesses and is an attractive location for new start-ups
	The city centre loses businesses and visitors	Targeted investment, creatives, residential and commercial growth builds a more vibrant city centre
	Youth unemployment remains elevated	Greater employment opportunities for youth and long term unemployed
Liveability	Climate change adaptation is not realised and opportunities are missed to create a circular economy where leakage of local expenditure and benefits are enjoyed by other regions	Creating a circular economy captures more local expenditure and can create new industries that are designed to combat climate change
	Inequity grows, health and wellbeing declines, disadvantage becomes entrenched and liveability declines	Economic success is more evenly and fairly distributed
	Rising energy costs impact on those least able to afford it	Moving to renewable sources of energy reduces energy prices in the long term
	Rural communities are not able to capitalise on their assets	Rural communities capitalise on their strengths and attract new jobs and residents
	Poorer health outcomes lead to increased disadvantage	Improved health outcomes of residents lead to reduced costs, and a more liveable community
	Resources not targeted into infrastructure investment which will have the greatest benefit to residents and businesses	Investment in key infrastructure projects drives employment, incomes and sustained population growth
	Rising costs to government to support unemployed and disadvantaged communities	Alternative investment streams are identified and realised
Study	Year 12 completion rate remains comparatively low	Educational attainment levels increase
	Youth leave Greater Bendigo for education and training and better employment prospects	Youth are attracted by jobs, lifestyle, services and opportunities offered in Greater Bendigo. Training and higher education places are substantially boosted and linked to the needs of the economy