

# Submission form: Victoria’s draft 30-year infrastructure strategy

## Your details

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<b>Organisation (if applicable):</b>	Gippsland Regional Partnership (Regional Development Victoria)
<b>Position (if applicable):</b>	Gippsland Regional Partnership Coordinator
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## About you

Please tell us which best describes you:

- Victorian resident
- Victorian business owner/operator
- Industry professional
- Community organisation representative
- Local government representative
- State government representative
- Researcher
- Other (please specify): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

## Your focus areas

Select the topics or regions you are providing feedback on (select all that apply):

Topics	Regions
<input type="checkbox"/> Across sectors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional Victoria
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circular economy	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban growth areas
<input type="checkbox"/> Cities	<input type="checkbox"/> Melbourne
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate change	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community infrastructure	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Freight	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure for Victoria's First Peoples	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transport	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water	

## Your feedback

Add as many sections as you need to provide all your feedback in this submission.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Housing
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Build more social housing
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	1
1. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
2. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership believes that government-owned land is not always the most suitable location for social housing, particularly in regional areas or towns experiencing high levels of unemployment. The Partnership advocates for planning approaches that prioritise the development of social housing in areas with better access to employment opportunities, public transport, and essential services.
3. Share any supporting evidence or examples	<a href="https://msd.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/2876008/Project-3000-Producing-Social-and-Affordable-Housing-on-Government-Land.pdf">https://msd.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/2876008/Project-3000-Producing-Social-and-Affordable-Housing-on-Government-Land.pdf</a>
4. Include proposed changes and improvements	Gippsland Regional Partnership recommends engaging with local communities and councils to review existing government-owned land and to collaboratively plan for social housing developments that support families and align with the needs of the proposed areas.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Education
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Plan and deliver expanded and new schools
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	3
5. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
6. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership is concerned about the high number of small schools in the region, noting that this dispersal of resources may limit opportunities to invest in building new schools and expanding existing facilities.
7. Share any supporting evidence or examples	<a href="https://www.education.gov.au/recurrent-funding-schools/resources/independent-review-regional-rural-and-remote-education-final-report">https://www.education.gov.au/recurrent-funding-schools/resources/independent-review-regional-rural-and-remote-education-final-report</a>

8. Include proposed changes and improvements	Gippsland Regional Partnership recommends a new comprehensive review of small schools in the region, including an assessment of the long-term costs to communities of maintaining them, compared to the potential benefits of expanding nearby schools with larger student populations. While there were recommendations made in the Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education, it is important to note that this report was completed in 2018 and the impacts of COVID, a large State Government deficit, state-wide teacher shortage and a cost-of-living crisis are now major issues to be considered.
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<b>Topic/area:</b>	Education
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Expand TAFE in Melbourne's growth areas and some large regional centres
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	4
9. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
10. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership strongly supports the expansion of TAFE, particularly in regional communities undergoing significant economic transition. The Partnership recognises that the region depends heavily on trade skills to sustain both current and emerging industries. In light of the planned power station closures, the Partnership advocates for increased investment in innovative industries and the development of skills that will support the region's future economic landscape.
11. Share any supporting evidence or examples	<a href="https://djsir.vic.gov.au/news-and-articles/work-begins-on-clean-energy-centre-at-tafe-gippsland2#:~:text=The%20state's%20transition%20to%20clean,help%20to%20meet%20the%20demand">https://djsir.vic.gov.au/news-and-articles/work-begins-on-clean-energy-centre-at-tafe-gippsland2#:~:text=The%20state's%20transition%20to%20clean,help%20to%20meet%20the%20demand</a>
12. Include proposed changes and improvements	Gippsland Regional Partnership recommends the expansion of Gippsland TAFE to foster innovation and advance the development of trade skills, supporting the region's transition away from traditional coal and gas power sector employment.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Housing
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Rezone locations near existing infrastructure for more home choices.
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	7
13. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

	<input type="checkbox"/> In part
14. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership strongly supports this recommendation and urges the Victorian State Government to develop and implement consistent planning provisions statewide to enable its delivery. The Partnership highlights the limited housing options in regional areas, which can hinder access to public transport and, in turn, employment opportunities. By encouraging the development of compact communities near railway stations, regions can benefit from improved accessibility for health professionals, support for seasonal workers, and reduced road congestion. The Partnership is concerned that current planning efforts appear to focus solely on Melbourne, Geelong, Ballarat, and Bendigo, overlooking the potential for similar development in Gippsland and other regional areas.
15. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
16. Include proposed changes and improvements	Gippsland Regional Partnership supports the development of compact living spaces near railway stations in larger towns across Gippsland, including provisions for short-term accommodation for government employees. Consideration must also be given to infrastructure funding, as current Development Contribution Plans (DCPs) across Victoria vary significantly and are absent in several Councils. The Partnership recommends that the State Government simplify and streamline the process by introducing a unified framework that provides clarity for investors and helps address the cost disparities between regional and metropolitan development. The Partnership also acknowledges the current State Government Activity Centre Pilot Program and strongly encourages the inclusion of a regional Council to ensure the program reflects the unique and complex conditions of regional development.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Transport
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Run faster bus services, more often, in Victoria's largest cities
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	9
17. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
18. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership believes that enhancing bus services will significantly improve access to essential services and employment opportunities across the region. Rapidly growing areas such as Baw Baw and the Latrobe Valley are already experiencing increasing congestion and would benefit from improved public transport options. The Partnership is concerned that Victoria's Draft 30-Year Infrastructure Plan identifies only Melbourne, Geelong, Ballarat, and

	Bendigo as priority cities or regions, overlooking the pressing infrastructure needs of Gippsland.
19. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
20. Include proposed changes and improvements	Gippsland Regional Partnership supports a significant enhancement of public transport options across the region to improve access to education, training, and workforce participation. Particular consideration should be given to regional communities with limited connectivity to the existing rail network.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Transport
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Extend metropolitan trains and run more services in Melbourne's West.
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	11
21. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
22. Tell us why	In regard to extending train services, Gippsland Regional Partnership advises that greater consideration should be given to growth in the eastern corridor beyond Melbourne, particularly in light of travel delays along the Monash Freeway and the prevalence of extended 80 km/h zones between Pakenham and Trafalgar.
23. Share any supporting evidence or examples	<a href="https://www.theaustralian.com.au/inquirer/population-blow-torch-the-two-fastest-growing-places-on-the-continent/news-story/4a6ac88af5cc33a6092545862326ff32">https://www.theaustralian.com.au/inquirer/population-blow-torch-the-two-fastest-growing-places-on-the-continent/news-story/4a6ac88af5cc33a6092545862326ff32</a>
24. Include proposed changes and improvements	Gippsland Regional Partnership advocates for an increase in express train services between Melbourne and Traralgon to support the significant number of commuters travelling to the Latrobe Valley for work, including essential specialists serving Latrobe Regional Hospital. Additionally, the rapid population growth in the Warragul and Drouin area is contributing to rising congestion. Increasing train services between Warragul and Pakenham would help alleviate this pressure and improve regional connectivity.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Transport
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Run more bus and coach services in Regional Victoria.
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	12

25. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
26. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership strongly supports the expansion of bus and coach services across regional Victoria. In many smaller and rural towns within Gippsland, residents depend on employment opportunities in nearby larger centres. However, limited transport options—primarily restricted to private vehicles and infrequent bus services—contribute to social isolation and reduce access to employment, creating significant disadvantage.
27. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
28. Include proposed changes and improvements	Expand existing bus services

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Transport
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Make off-peak public transport cheaper and simplify regional fare zones
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	13
29. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
30. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership strongly supports initiatives to reduce the cost of off-peak transport and to simplify regional fare zones. The Partnership notes that the current lack of affordable off-peak transport options in the region limits access to both employment and recreational opportunities.
31. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
32. Include proposed changes and improvements	Increased options for off-peak time.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Transport / Health
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Build safe cycling networks in Melbourne and regional cities
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	15

33. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
34. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership strongly supports the development of safe cycling networks in both Melbourne and regional cities. The Partnership sees this as an opportunity to promote healthier lifestyles for Gippslanders while enhancing access to safe, sustainable, and accessible transport options.
35. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
36. Include proposed changes and improvements	Support local council planning and funding to implement.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Transport
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Make rail freight competitive, reliable and efficient
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	41
37. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
38. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership strongly support making rail freight competitive, reliable and efficient, but also seek to optimise the freight network investing to move more product to market from regions.
39. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
40. Include proposed changes and improvements	Upgrade Gippsland Rail network to improve efficiency and encourage economic growth.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Transport
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Encourage off-peak freight delivery in urban areas
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	42
41. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part



42. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership recommends that consideration is given to regions when improving freight delivery. Gippsland Regional Partnership urges Infrastructure Victoria to include specific mention of the two three-kilometre stretches between Tynong Road North and Gumbuya World entrance and between Hope Street and Abeckett Road which have been reduced from 100 km/h to 80 km/h. Reduced speed limits cause delays for freight transporters and added complexity to driver shift arrangements. Any impediment to Gippsland's east/west transport spine significantly disadvantages the region and restricts its economic capacity.
43. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
44. Include proposed changes and improvements	Alter intersections along the two three-kilometre stretches between Tynong Road North and Gumbuya World entrance and between Hope Street and Abeckett Road so that speed limits can be increased back up to 100km/hr.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Health
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Invest in maintenance, upgrades and expansions of community health facilities
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	17
45. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
46. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership recognises that residents living outside major towns in Gippsland face limited access to health services. Additionally, those in larger towns are experiencing extended hospital wait times and increasing difficulty accessing general practitioners when needed.
47. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
48. Include proposed changes and improvements	Expansion to current services to support population growth.  New Warragul/ Drouin Hospital.  Improved access to online medical support – such as the Virtual Care.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Health
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<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Build more residential alcohol and other drug treatment facilities
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	18
49. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In part
50. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership believes that access to appropriate support services for individuals affected by drug and alcohol issues in the region is limited. There is an identified gap in family support and rehabilitation services, which impacts the ability of patients admitted to Latrobe Regional Hospital's Emergency Department and Flynn Unit to receive the comprehensive care necessary for effective recovery.
51. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
52. Include proposed changes and improvements	Gippsland Regional Partnership recommends the establishment of services such as residential rehabilitation and ongoing community-based support for individuals affected by drug and alcohol use. However, the Partnership emphasises that not all government-owned land is suitable for such facilities. Community consultation and careful consideration of access to related support services are essential in determining appropriate locations.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Health
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Invest in Digital Healthcare
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	19
53. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
54. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership recommends improving access to services such as Virtual Care and increasing the number of trials in the Gippsland region that support remote patient monitoring. These innovations are essential for enhancing healthcare accessibility and outcomes across the region.
55. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
56. Include proposed changes and improvements	Education to support access and community mindset. Improved infrastructure to ensure a stable connection to the internet. Financial support for those needing support setting up digital access.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Health / Housing
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Better use prisons and invest more in facilities and transition housing
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	21
57. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
58. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership recommends a review of current support systems for individuals exiting Fulham Prison, with a focus on addressing the high rates of reoffending, homelessness, and drug, alcohol, and health-related challenges in the region. The Partnership believes that comprehensive support and treatment in areas such as mental health, domestic and family violence, substance use, as well as improved literacy and trade skills, should be prioritised for all prisoners prior to their release.
59. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
60. Include proposed changes and improvements	Gippsland Regional Partnership recommends that prisoners be required to complete rehabilitation, counselling, and education programs as part of their reintegration process. The Partnership also advocates for the expansion of services such as residential rehabilitation and community-based supervision and support for individuals upon release. Consideration must be given to appropriate housing options, as not all government-owned land is suitable for these purposes. Community consultation and careful planning to ensure access to essential support services are critical to the success of these initiatives.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Infrastructure for Victoria's First Peoples
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Invest in secure homes for Aboriginal Victorians
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	22
61. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
62. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership believes that increased funding for Aboriginal housing providers to deliver tenancy support is essential. Strengthening these services will help improve housing outcomes for

	Indigenous people, foster a greater sense of safety and security, and work towards reducing discrimination in the private rental market.
63. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
64. Include proposed changes and improvements	Increased funding is needed to fund Aboriginal housing providers to deliver tenancy support.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Water
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Advance integrated water management and use more recycled water
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	25
65. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
66. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership emphasises the need for a clear and transparent approach to future water usage planning, including the implications for drinking water, agriculture, household, and community needs. It is essential to understand how these plans will affect irrigation areas and the role the desalination plant will play in supporting water availability and future employment opportunities. The Partnership strongly supports initiatives aimed at exceeding the current government commitment to return 26% of water to Gippsland rivers, recognising the importance of sustainable water management for the region's long-term environmental and economic health.
67. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
68. Include proposed changes and improvements	<p>Increased education and information</p> <p>Increased funding to support initiatives</p>

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Climate Change
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Better prepare infrastructure for climate change
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	27
69. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part

70. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership strongly supports the development of a comprehensive plan to better prepare infrastructure for the impacts of climate change. The Partnership recommends increased support to build regional resilience, highlighting the critical need for forward planning to manage supply interruptions during emergencies. Such preparedness is especially vital for rural and regional communities.
71. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
72. Include proposed changes and improvements	Energy Adaptation Plan

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Climate Change
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Use new flood maps to revise planning schemes
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	28
73. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
74. Tell us why	<p>Gippsland Regional Partnership supports the integration of updated flood mapping into planning scheme revisions. Parts of Gippsland are already experiencing the impacts of flood damage, coastal erosion, and rising sea levels. These events are affecting residential areas, businesses, and agricultural operations, contributing to increased costs and growing challenges with insurance coverage.</p> <p>For coastal areas across Gippsland this is a complex and highly charged topic. The government has now determined that planning must account for a 0.8m sea level rise by 2100. Property owners need to be informed with transparent and up to date mapping.</p> <p>Policy around floods needs to be expanded to address climate induced seas level rise, flood surges, etc.</p>
75. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Loch Sport Flood Planning - <a href="https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-02-17/coastal-living-floodplain-lochsport-sea-level-rises-construction/104909120">https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-02-17/coastal-living-floodplain-lochsport-sea-level-rises-construction/104909120</a>
76. Include proposed changes and improvements	Gippsland Regional Partnership strongly support an update of flood information that can support future planning and adaptation of current high-risk areas.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Climate Change
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Coordinate faster delivery of key energy infrastructure

<b>Recommendation number:</b>	29
77. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
78. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership strongly supports the accelerated delivery of key energy infrastructure, recognising its critical impact on the Latrobe Valley's communities, employment, and businesses. The Partnership acknowledges that community sentiment toward change can be cautious and emphasises the importance of visible progress through infrastructure and project delivery to build public confidence in the energy sector, support job creation, and foster community growth.
79. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
80. Include proposed changes and improvements	Gippsland Regional Partnership recommends fast-tracking the delivery of key energy infrastructure while embedding education and innovation opportunities through Federation University, TAFE, and secondary schools. Given the region's strong historical reliance on traditional energy sources such as coal and gas, communities will require targeted support and education to navigate the energy transition. Additionally, ongoing education and engagement are essential for other communities across Gippsland to better understand the impacts and opportunities associated with offshore wind projects.
<b>Topic/area:</b>	Climate Change
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Invest in home, neighbourhood and big batteries for more energy storage
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	31
81. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
82. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership supports investment in home, neighbourhood, and large-scale battery storage solutions to strengthen energy reliability. Stable energy supply is essential for the resilience of both communities and businesses across the region.
83. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
84. Include proposed changes and improvements	Gippsland Regional Partnership sees strong potential for trialling Virtual Power Plants in selected areas of the region. Demonstrating the direct benefits of these initiatives can play a key role in shifting

	community perceptions around the energy transition and encouraging broader participation in innovative energy solutions.
<b>Topic/area:</b>	Climate Change
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Improve environmental assessments and site selection for energy projects
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	30
85. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
86. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership strongly support the recommendation to improve environmental assessment and site selection for energy projects due to direct impact to Latrobe Valley and East Gippsland with the gas and power station transitions.
87. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
88. Include proposed changes and improvements	Gippsland Regional Partnership recommend that the site selection to include multifactorial considerations – environment, community, history and heritage, traditional owners, tourism and visitor economy, highest value use of land.

<b>Topic/area:</b>	Climate Change
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Determine long duration energy storage needs
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	32
89. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
90. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership supports the need to identify and plan for long-duration energy storage requirements. Given the significant impact of the energy transition on the Latrobe Valley, it is essential that strong support is provided to retain and grow innovation and technology related to energy generation and storage within the region. This will be critical to fostering local employment and driving future innovation opportunities.
91. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.

92. Include proposed changes and improvements	Efficient policy or investment options
<b>Topic/area:</b>	Climate Change
<b>Recommendation name:</b>	Develop regional energy plans, guide transition from fossil gas and maintain reliable gas supply
<b>Recommendation number:</b>	33
93. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
94. Tell us why	Gippsland Regional Partnership advise that it is important not to consider regional energy plans in isolation. Regional energy plans should be considered as part of broader regional development plans that include an understanding of existing industry and residential use, industry development, regional economic assets etc. For greatest efficiency, energy plans should seek to reuse existing infrastructure assets.
95. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
96. Include proposed changes and improvements	

## More feedback (optional)

Tell us about infrastructure challenges, gaps or opportunities not covered by the draft strategy. This can include things you think we should add to an existing recommendation, or suggestions for a new recommendation.

Please provide evidence for your suggestions. This can include data, specific examples, cost benefit analyses, surveys, or program evaluations. Also, explain how your suggestions align with the objectives of our draft strategy (see page 11 of the draft strategy).

Suggestions for new recommendations should point towards infrastructure opportunities that can deliver long-term benefits for Victorians. They should also be areas where the Victorian Government has a leading role.

### Workforce Attraction and Retention

The Gippsland Regional Partnership highlights ongoing challenges in attracting and retaining a skilled workforce, particularly within the healthcare sector. To address these issues, a stronger focus on digital health innovations and the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) is essential. Leveraging the experience of the senior workforce in preventative health measures can also help alleviate pressure on the broader healthcare system.



Mental health and social isolation remain significant concerns and must be addressed through a combination of healthcare investment and community-based support systems. Additionally, infrastructure such as housing, schools, and transport must be improved to attract professionals to the region.

Retaining and engaging young people is a priority. Education and skills development programs, such as RMIT's Earn and Learn initiative, provide valuable opportunities to align industry needs with education pathways. Emerging industries—particularly in IT, digital services, and transport—offer the potential to retain local talent and attract new residents.

Greater utilisation of the mature-aged workforce and investment in early childhood education are also crucial. Migrant attraction and integration must be supported with better post-migration services and public advocacy to address misconceptions around employment and housing competition.

There will be predicted high jobs growth with renewables and energy transition and as such the demands on workforce attraction and retention and infrastructure to support this in Gippsland will be critical. For example:

- The Clean Energy Centre at TAFE Gippsland [Gippsland TAFE article](#).
- Offshore Wind [Offshore Wind](#).
- Renewable Gas [Gas-substitution-roadmap](#)

### **Infrastructure and Connectivity**

To support workforce and population growth, towns with existing infrastructure should be prioritised for development, with reduced regulatory barriers for developers. Persistent telecommunications black spots across Gippsland continue to hinder emergency response and connectivity, requiring urgent resolution.

Investments in IT, digital infrastructure, and transport systems are critical to attracting skilled workers and fostering innovation. A regional airport would significantly enhance tourism and workforce mobility. Comparisons with successful models like Wellcamp Airport in Toowoomba highlight the potential benefits, including links to export markets for Gippsland's agricultural produce.

- Regional Airport - [Wellcamp Airport Growth](#)
- Digital Infrastructure - [Telecommunications Review](#)

### **Housing and Community Development**

Housing shortages remain a barrier to workforce growth, with some seasonal workers commuting long distances, impacting safety and wellbeing. Innovative solutions such as tiny houses, new building materials (e.g., industrial hemp and 3D printing), and support for affordable housing in smaller towns with existing services should be pursued.

Council strategies must balance township expansion with the preservation of agricultural land. A forward-thinking approach to planning is essential to sustain both housing and agricultural productivity.

Housing - [Gippsland Workforce Housing](#)

### **Agriculture and the Circular Economy**

Gippsland's agricultural sector faces increasing challenges due to climate change, shifting global trade dynamics, and the risk of biosecurity threats. The Partnership supports diversifying export markets and adding value to primary products locally rather than exporting raw goods. This includes stronger domestic market utilisation and investment incentives to support sustainable farming practices.

Opportunities exist to link agriculture with renewable energy solutions, including decentralised energy systems, battery technology, and local manufacturing hubs. Developing Gippsland as a circular economy leader aligns with these goals and supports the broader clean energy transition.

### **Climate Resilience and Disaster Preparedness**

The Partnership strongly advocates for comprehensive disaster preparedness and recovery strategies. This includes improved pre-disaster training, expanded support for emergency volunteers, and community-led climate change engagement. Issues such as coastal erosion, increasing insurance costs, and the need for preventative measures require urgent attention. Leadership from First Nations communities in the protection of Sea and Country should be supported and embedded into climate and conservation planning.

### **Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Inclusion**

There is significant potential to position Gippsland as a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship, leveraging assets such as geothermal energy, advanced manufacturing with recyclable materials, and nature-based tourism. However, concerns remain about cultural and systemic barriers to innovation adoption within the region.

Investments in aged care infrastructure are needed to meet the demands of a growing older population. Broader social challenges—including racism, family violence, women’s health, homelessness, and access to healthcare—must be addressed. Support is also required to combat toxic masculinity and its impact on young men, ensuring a healthier and more inclusive future for all communities.

