Alpine Shire Council
Myrtleford Resilience Plan

October 2019

projectura
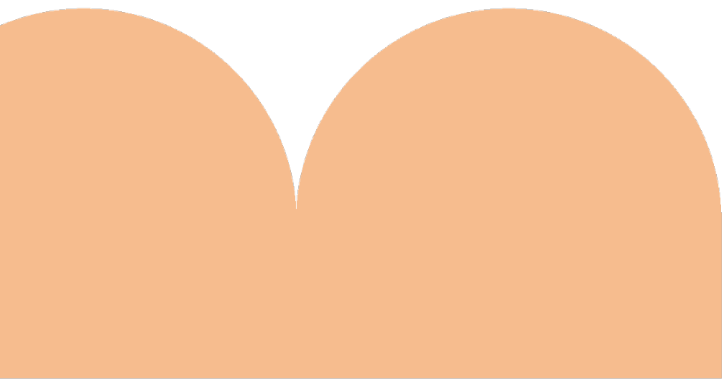
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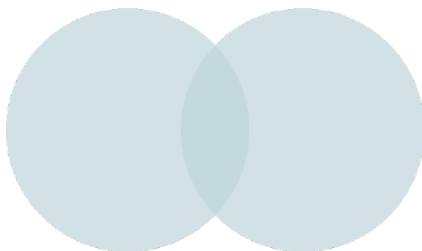
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Purpose

The Myrtleford Resilience Plan aims is to enhance the resilience of Myrtleford's community. The plan seeks to create or enhance the conditions for economic growth, building a resilient, diversified and sustainable community.

Alpine Shire Council led this project with funding from Regional Development Victoria. Projectura were engaged by Alpine Shire Council to work with the community to prepare the Plan.

The Plan aims to develop community capacity and resilience, build on key strengths of the community and environment to identify alternative industry, employment pathways and opportunities, identify skills development opportunities, and relieve the dependence of employment from existing big industry.

The problem

All towns and communities face challenges and changes that interrupt their planned progress. Change presents as major shifts at environmental, economic, and societal levels. Resilience is about a community's capacity to positively respond to change. Myrtleford has experienced several economic and natural disaster shocks over the past 40 years, including closure of the tobacco industry, recent production halts at major employer, bushfires, flooding and Council amalgamations.

The impact

The impact of these shocks can be seen through several indicators. Population growth has stalled, there are a number of retail vacancies in the town centre, the town is measured as relatively disadvantaged compared to the state, and the town's unemployment is high compared to the broader Alpine Shire.

The vision

The Myrtleford Resilience Plan ("The Plan") is designed to diversify the reliance on current industry and build the economic and social sustainability of Myrtleford.

Residents were clear that they want to be part of a community that embraces change, where people can thrive in work, life and play. This will be achieved by concentrating on the four resilience focus areas providing the framework for the Plan: land use and planning, accessing education and training, identity and experience and business and industry.

Strengths

While Myrtleford has faced shocks in the past, there is a strong sense of community, a cultural identity, well supported community facilities and services and an innovative industry profile. All of which creates a dynamic community that can respond to change.

Developing the Plan

In the first stage of the Plan development, Projectura partnered with the project team and community to create a shared understanding of the local environment, and a draft an outline of where the Plan will focus and why. The outputs from this stage were the Situational Analysis and Summary Situational Analysis.

In the second stage of the Plan development, Projectura worked with the project team and community to explore the main areas of concern, analyse opportunities, develop actionable projects, and to listen to feedback on the draft plan.

Community input

The Plan is uniquely tailored to Myrtleford's needs as it was developed by the Myrtleford community. Over 180 Myrtleford residents and visitors contributed to the development of the Plan. The engagement aimed to: Gather a broad and deep understanding of Myrtleford's local environment; Refine resilience focus areas, and the strengths and challenges the community is facing; Analyse opportunities and develop actionable projects; and Test and receive feedback on The Plan.

Residents, visitors, community groups, service providers, and businesses provided input through a diverse range of community engagement activities. This included phone and face-to face interviews, pop up stalls, youth pop ups, community workshops and an online survey.

The Plan

This Plan documents the projects prioritised by the community during engagement activities. These projects align with the resilience focus areas and are categorised by time frame.

Quick wins	Medium term	Long term
1. Town storytelling	4. Transport	10. Tobacco Kiln Trail
2. Walk Myrtleford	5. Build a business program	11. Splash Park
3. Local training	6. Embracing Myrtleford's food culture	12. Active in Myrtleford
	7. Spaces for art, study and start-ups	13. Lake Buffalo activation
	8. Signage	
	9. RV Friendly Town	

Governance

Council will embed the projects into broader Council planning and take a partnership and leadership role in implementing, reviewing and evaluating the Plan with the Committee. For the implementation of the Plan to be successful, clear governance and executive oversight is required. Alpine Shire Council will remain responsible for governing the Myrtleford Resilience Plan. All sectors of the community have input into its implementation. The community, Council, local businesses, service providers, and community group will need to join forces in various capacities to deliver projects. Stakeholders will be brought together on a project-by-project delivery basis.

Measuring success

Measures will be reviewed annually to determine the status of progress. This will be provided to Council to assist in community planning, budget development and community needs assessment.

The Plan

Project summary

The Plan aims is to enhance the resilience of Myrtleford's community. The project seeks to create or enhance the conditions for economic growth, building a resilient, diversified and sustainable community.

The Plan includes the development and implementation of an Action Plan.

Projectura have been engaged by Alpine Shire Council to work with the community to prepare the Plan.

The Plan aims to:
- develop community capacity and resilience,
- build on key strengths of the community and environment to identify alternative industry, employment pathways and opportunities,
- identify skills development opportunities, and
- relieve the dependence of employment from existing big industry.

Rationale

The tobacco industry was once a large source of employment for Myrtleford. The end of the tobacco industry for Myrtleford had a devastating effect on whole of community. It is clear after recent temporary closure of a business employing local community members the people and business community of Myrtleford are somewhat reliant on a pocket of large business employers. Any permanent closure of big business attached to Myrtleford, would be disastrous for the community.

Myrtleford has a strong working-class resident base built on a rich Italian heritage, agriculture and secondary services supporting the greater Alpine population. It is crucial for Myrtleford to have a clear direction for next stage of community and economic development to build resilience into the future and mitigate current workforce issues.

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Project initiation

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Myrtleford Resilience Plan + Action Plan

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Embed in planning + Implement

What is resilience?

Understanding resilience

All towns and communities face challenges and changes that interrupt the planned progress. Change presents as major shifts at environmental, economic, and societal levels. Resilience is about a community's capacity to positively respond to change.

100 Resilient Cities defines resilience as "the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses and systems within a city to survive, adapt and grow no matter what kind of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience". *100resilientcities.org*

Resilient towns:

- Use past experiences to inform future decisions.

- Recognise alternative ways to use resources.

- Develop well-conceived, constructed and managed systems.

- Have spare capacity, purposefully created to accommodate disruption.

- Are willing and able to adopt alternative strategies in response to changing circumstances.

- Prioritise broad consultation to create a sense of shared ownership in decision-making.

- Bring together a range of distinct systems and institutions.

Strategic landscape

Local

Alpine Shire Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan is the key strategic document for Council and defines how Council will deliver high quality projects and services to the community, while prioritising health and wellbeing of the community.

Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) is a concise statement of the key strategic planning, land use and development objectives for the municipality with related strategies and actions. The *Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Act (s.26)* requires the MPHWP to be consistent with the Municipal Strategic Statement prepared under *s.12A* of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Alpine Planning Scheme provides a holistic policy basis for strategic decision making in the Shire, including State, Regional and Local policies. Both the MSS and MFP refer to Clause 21 of the Scheme for strategic guidance for Myrtleford.

Myrtleford Framework Plan (MFP) provided clarity on specific township issues and opportunities by bringing together information contained in Shire wide strategy documents. Released in 2010, key areas of consideration include planning and land use, infrastructure, character and open space, recreation and activity. The Plan identified issues around each of these areas, followed by recommendations.

Regional

Hume Regional Growth Plan provides broad direction for regional land use and development for the municipalities of Alpine, Benalla, Greater Shepparton, Indigo, Mansfield, Moira, Murrindindi, Strathbogie, Towong, Wangaratta and Wodonga. Focus areas include regional economy, environment and heritage, regional infrastructure, delivering regional growth and future plans for key towns over the next 20-30 years.

Ovens Murray Regional Priorities were published in 2017 through Ovens Murray Regional Partnership, one of nine Partnerships across Victoria. The Partnership's priorities were education and skills, transport, digital innovation and inclusion, economic growth, climate change and renewable energy, local amenity and infrastructure, and health and wellbeing.

Central Hume Primary Care Partnership (PCP) Strategic Plan 2018-2020 identified four priorities: prevention of chronic disease through healthy eating and active living, prevention of family violence and healthy relationships, addressing determinants of health, and effective and sustainable partnerships. The Central Hume PCP represents health and human service organisations across the Alpine, Benalla, Mansfield and Wangaratta areas.

State

Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015-2019 uses an evidence-based approach to improve health and wellbeing by engaging communities and strengthening systems for health protection, health promotion and preventative healthcare. Key priorities include healthier eating and active living; tobacco-free living; reducing harmful alcohol and drug use; improving mental health; preventing violence and injury; improving sexual and reproductive health. The plan also identifies platforms to deliver health benefits, which include healthy and sustainable environments, place-based approaches and people-centred approaches.

Preparing this plan

Stage 1

In the first stage of the Plan development, Projectura partnered with the project team and community to create a shared understanding of the local environment, and a draft an outline of where the Plan will focus and why. The outputs from this stage were the Situational Analysis and Summary Situational Analysis.
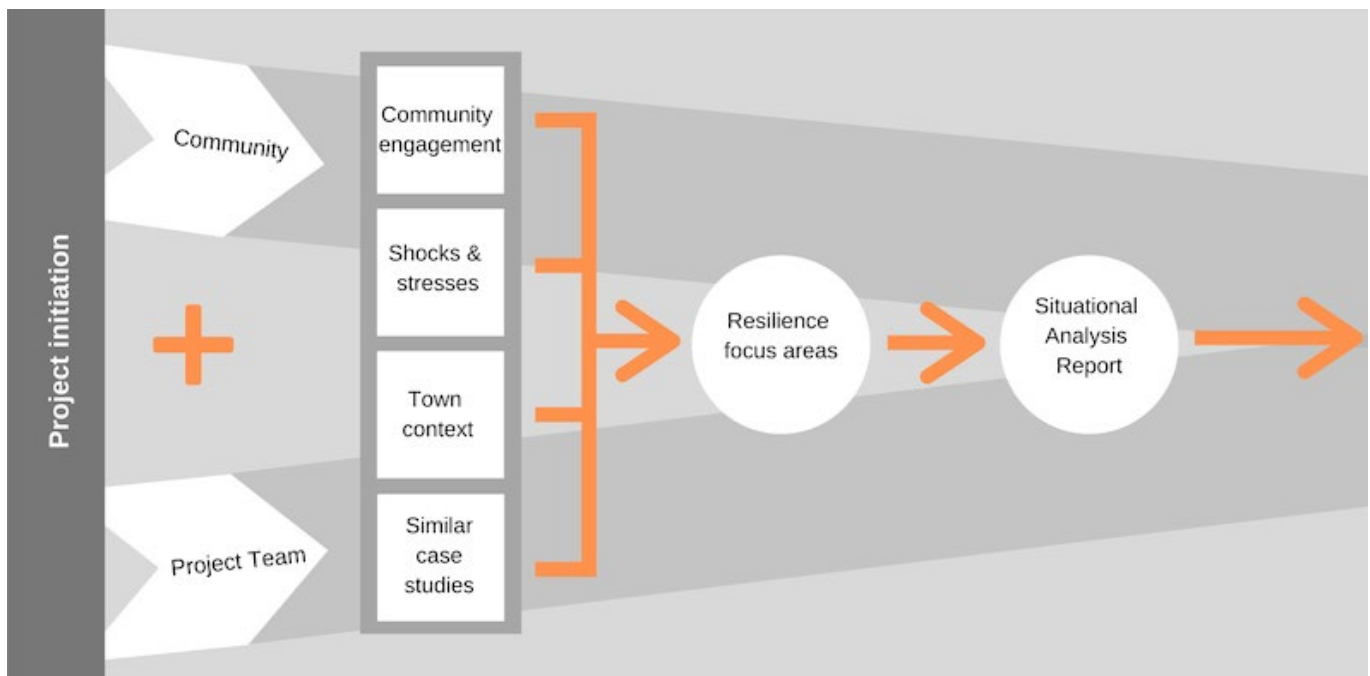

Figure 1.   Stage 1 approach

Stage 2

In the second stage of the Plan development, Projectura worked with the project team and community to explore the main areas of concern, analyse opportunities, and develop actionable projects.
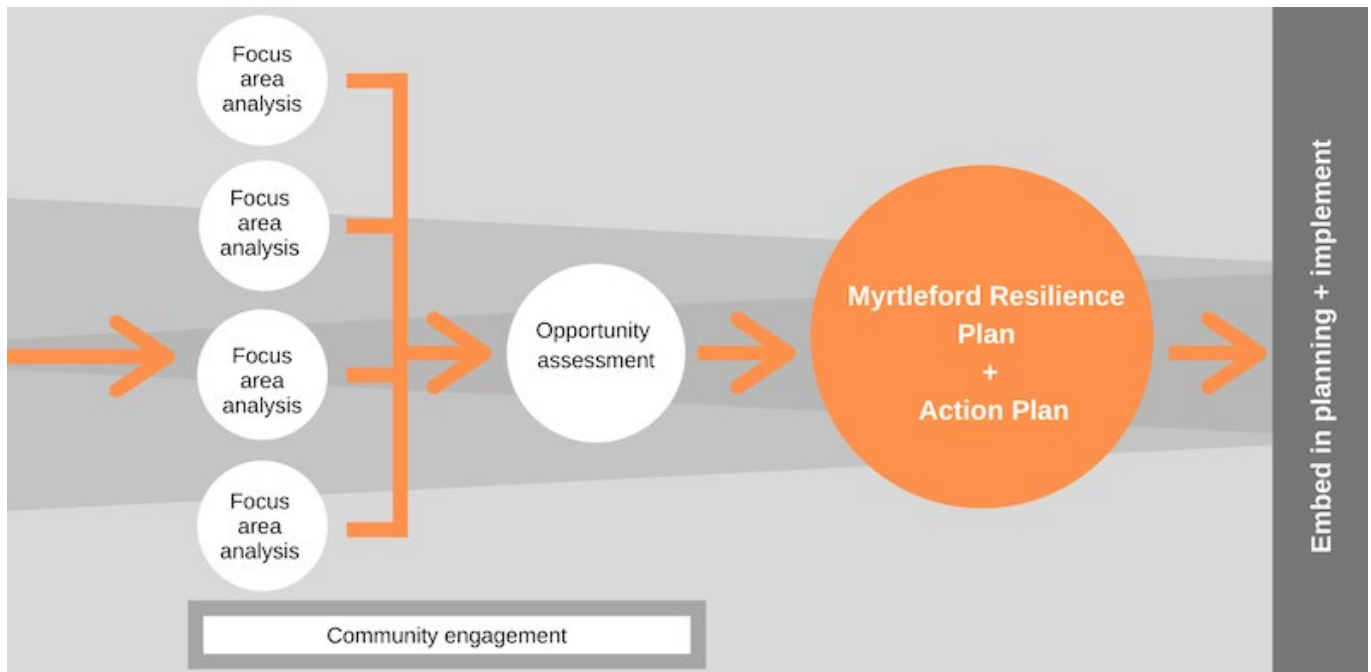

Figure 2.   Stage 2 approach

Community engagement

A plan for everyone

Over 195 Myrtleford residents and visitors contributed to the development of the Plan. The engagement aimed to:

- Gather a broad and deep understanding of Myrtleford's local environment.
- Refine resilience focus areas, and the strengths and challenges the community is facing.
- Analyse opportunities and develop actionable projects.
- Test and receive feedback on The Plan.

Further community engagement will take place to allow the community to review The Plan and provide feedback.

Table 1.   Community engagement outline

Method	Date	Summary	Participation
Stage 1			
Telephone interviews.	1 – 15 Mar 2019.	Telephone interviews with community leaders from business, health, education and the community.	18 interviews. 8 business, 4 community, 3 health/education, 3 other.
Cundy Park Skate Pop Up: Hard copy survey.	9 Mar 2019.	Face to face survey with visitors to the Cundy Park Skate Competition during the Myrtleford Festival.	26 young people completed the survey.
Street pop up.	9 Mar 2019.	Open street stall during the Myrtleford Festival.	35 residents (estimated). 2 Facilitators.
Stage 2			
Community workshops (2).	30 Apr 2019. (3.30pm and 6pm)	Two community workshops to review situational analysis and identify opportunities and projects.	22 participants.
Council staff interviews.	16 Apr 2019.	Interviews with Council staff to gain information on previous and past projects in Myrtleford.	5 officers.
Online survey	29 Apr – 18 May 2019	The survey was available online through Council's website.	77 responses.
Draft drop-in session	14 Oct 2019	A drop-in session to 'unpack' the Draft and allow everyone an opportunity to provide feedback.	15 participants

Myrtleford is a tight knit, friendly town with strong community spirit.

Myrtleford is situated in a beautiful geographic region among rivers, lakes and mountains.

There is a rich Italian heritage in the Myrtleford community.

There is a lack of farming diversity in the town, which presents a challenge of land use.

Transport is a major challenge for Myrtleford residents.

Finding employment in the town is an ongoing concern.

Tourism is an opportunity for Myrtleford due to its proximity to natural assets, its rich heritage and the popularity of food tourism.

The development of Lake Buffalo to promote tourism, support businesses and enhance the lifestyle of Myrtleford is well supported by community.

Access to education and training is seen as important to retaining young people in Myrtleford.

The journey so far

Located on the Ovens River, 240kms north-east of Melbourne and 260 kms south-west of Canberra, Myrtleford is situated in the Hume Region and is bordered within an hour of Wangaratta, Benalla, Albury/Wodonga, Beechworth and Bright.

Myrtleford is the largest town within Alpine Shire. Home to 12,639 people the Shire contributed $0.58 billion to the Gross Regional Product. 1,237 local businesses offered 5,326 local jobs. The largest industry is accommodation and food services (NIEIR 2018, ABS ERP 2017).

Proximity to Wangaratta and the snow fields offers residents the best of both worlds; close to services, retail and the natural environment, providing people with a variety of opportunities for employment.

The Alpine Shire has evolved to become an aspirational destination to live, work and play. A mecca for outdoor adventure with all the comforts that come with being a tourism destination. Residents choose to live here without personal compromise making Alpine Shire the ultimate lifestyle destination.

Victoria's mountainous North-Eastern region has been the home of Pangerang, Minjambuta, Duduroa, and Jaitmathang people for tens of thousands of years.

Europeans began settling in the North-East from 1824. Hume and Hovell had explored the area prior, searching for new grazing lands. Sheep and cattle farming became the area's main industry. In the 1850s, gold was discovered in Beechworth and in the Ovens Valley. The local population temporarily boomed, including thousands of Chinese migrants.

Chinese miners and European settler established industries after the gold rush, including tobacco farming. In the 1920s, Italians began migrating to the North-East, marking the beginning of Myrtleford's Italian culture and involvement in tobacco cultivation. Between 1947 and 1971, the Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre received over 300,000 non-British European migrants, making the North-East one of Australia's biggest migration hubs.

Today, Myrtleford's Italian heritage remains strong. LaFiera Italian Festival is held annually and Club Savoy, initially created as a meeting group for Italian women, has become a strong community organisation and meeting place. According to the 2016 Australian census, 20.3% of residents listed their heritage as Italian, with 8.7% of Myrtleford resident who speak Italian at home.

The completion of the Alpine Better Places Project in Myrtleford recently has refurbished Myrtle Street and Jubilee Park, making Myrtleford more attractive to visitors. 2019 saw the Myrtleford Library refurbished with funding from the Victorian Government's Living Libraries Infrastructure Program.

Myrtleford tobacco industry timeline

1870's	Tobacco first cultivated in Myrtleford district.
1895	32 growers in Myrtleford district.
1917	Modern kiln curing (at regulated temperature) first used in district.
1920's	Italian migrants first involved in tobacco cultivation.
1932	Tobacco acreage expands to 11,000 acres (4,500 hectares).
1933	90% of tobacco crops destroyed in February frosts.
1933-38	Tobacco grower numbers fall from 1,317 to 165 due to climatic conditions.
1936	Commonwealth Local Leaf Content Scheme introduced; manufacturers must use 7.5% local leaf.
1948	Area planted to tobacco across Victoria has fallen to 1/12th of 1932 cropped area.
1950	Victorian Tobacco Research Station established at Ovens.
1950's	Production, employment and prices grow steadily.
1950 – 1979	Major influx of Italian, Spanish, and Yugoslav migrants to labour and share-farm tobacco farms.
1960	Commonwealth Local Leaf Content Scheme requires manufacturers to use 28.5% local leaf.
1960-62	Overproduction results in 2,000t of unsold tobacco leaf.

1962	Of 1,025 Victorian tobacco growers 793 are Italian-born (Census 1961).
1965	Tobacco Industry Stabilisation Plan introduced.
1970's	The Golden Years of Tobacco, (mechanisation, improved pest/disease control, marketing, and stable prices).
1977	C'wealth Local Leaf Content Scheme requires manufacturers to use 57% local leaf.
Early 1990's	A third of Victorian growers took a voluntary buy.
1994	Government begins cutback to tobacco research. Ovens Research Station commences alternative crop research.
1996	Victorian Tobacco Leaf Industry Deregulation Act sets protective import tariffs to zero.
1996	69 growers take government exit grants.
1996	Angie Rigoni Tobacco Sales Centre relocates to Braybrook.
Early 2000's	Increased diversion of leaf into the illicit tobacco trade.
2003	Tobacco Cooperative Victoria threshing plant is operational and under contract to manufacturers.
2006	143 remaining licensed tobacco growers vote to accept a Federal Government buy out.

Strengths

Ovens River and beautiful natural assets

Myrtleford is located on the Ovens River, along the Great Alpine Road between Wangaratta and Bright in beautiful north-east Victoria.

The district is popular for cycling, with breathtaking views and fresh air.

Myrtleford is close to Mount Buffalo National Park. People camping on Mount Buffalo are likely to spend money in on food and camping gear.

Lake Buffalo is located 20 minutes' drive from Myrtleford, is beautiful and enjoyable for fishing, water skiing and recreation.

Built assets

Residents spoke highly of the broad range of community facilities they can access which support community groups, sporting endeavours, recreation and celebrations.

Community groups have access to spaces including the Neighbourhood Centre and rooms at Myrtleford P12. Availability of spaces like these are key to community groups maintaining low running costs, and inclusive participation.

Myrtleford is an attractive destination along the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, a conduit between Wangaratta to Bright. The 5.6km Ovens River walking/cycling trail starts in the township.

The business centre, Myrtle Street and Jubilee Park were upgraded in 2018 under the Alpine Better Places Project program. Retail and hospitality business owners reported that business improved following the upgrade.

The Myrtleford Library has been completely refurbished in the last twelve months with funding from the Victorian State Government's Living Libraries Infrastructure Program.

Sense of community

Myrtleford's locals love their community. During engagement sessions, 'community' was the number one response to the question 'what do you love about Myrtleford?'.

A sense of community is fostered through community events, festivals and celebrations including the Farmers Market, Myrtleford Festival and La Fiera.

Myrtleford business owners support one another rather than thinking in terms of competition. A culture of support between businesses is conducive to business growth and community resilience.

Myrtleford's community organisations are strong, connected and well supported by local businesses.

The New University of the Third Age (U3A) has proven popular, with approximately 130 members. By connecting retired people in Myrtleford, U3A is bolstering Myrtleford's community; providing preventative health outcomes and skills sharing.

All three of Myrtleford's schools place value on school community as well as the broader Myrtleford community.

Service centre

Myrtleford is a service centre for the Alpine region, with larger stores including Coles and Target Country attracting people from across Alpine Shire.

Myrtleford is well positioned between tourist centres in Alpine Shire. Some visitors described using Myrtleford as a 'base' to explore the wider area.

Cultural identity

The legacy of the tobacco industry is reflected through the town's strong Italian ancestry and culture.

Visitors to the area can see tobacco kilns prominently from the Great Alpine Road as they drive towards Myrtleford.

Club Savoy is an active community organisation of 2500 members.

La Fiera brings the community together over six days to celebrate Myrtleford's Italian heritage through art, sport, music, culture and food. In 2019, La Fiera is running a Young Ambassador Scheme to develop community leadership skills in you people aged 16-30 years.

The Myrtleford Festival is one of Victoria's oldest rural community festivals, celebrating its 59th year in 2019. The Festival brings the community together, strengthening ties and boosting the economy.

Industry innovation

Hops is a growing industry in the area, with Rostrevor Hops Gardens employing approximately 170 staff. A $35 million expansion is currently underway at Buffalo River creating an additional 20 full time and 130 casual jobs in the area.

Cellar door and farm gate businesses are being established in Myrtleford and surrounds. These businesses are adding diversity to Myrtleford's appeal.

Gapstead Wines received funding through the Wine Growth Fund to develop a digitally responsive and multilingual website and engagement app, helping to boost the region's profile and grow its export markets.

Challenges

Myrtleford, like all towns, has experienced major shocks disrupting the planned course of the town. These are game changers, and the community continues to experience the impacts from these shocks.

Shocks, whilst often painful, are opportunities for people and communities to think differently about practices and solutions towards their future. Acknowledging the lessons these shocks have shown, we will take steps to sow the seeds of future economic prosperity, facilitating a local community and economy to build resilience. The acute shocks identified for Myrtleford are listed below.

Closure of the tobacco industry.

Recent production halts at major employer.

Bushfires 2009.

Flooding 1974, 1993, 1998, 2010 and 2016.

1994 Council amalgamations.

Reliance on single industry.

Myrtleford's Carter Holt Harvey site employs 170 people FTE (207 people). Approximately 70% of those employees live in Myrtleford.

Small farming crop identification.

Tobacco was grown on small farms, with an average size of 20 hectares. Grapes, hops, vegetables, and grasses have become replacement crops; however, none are as profitable as tobacco.

Relative disadvantage.

Across Australia, 83 percent of towns and suburbs are more socio-economically advantaged than Myrtleford.

Stormwater infrastructure

Myrtleford has ageing stormwater infrastructure that may impact on further residential development and development at the catchment area of Happy Valley and Ovens River.

Ageing population.

Myrtleford has a median age of 50 years, and a high proportion of people who live by themselves, fully own their home, have a disability, and volunteer. Also, relatively low income levels.

Low education.

Residents have relatively low education levels, with higher levels of no qualification, low rates of Year 12 completion, and the highest level of schooling is comparatively low.

No recent population growth.

In the five years to 2006, Myrtleford's population grew by 13 percent. Since 2006, coinciding with the cessation of the tobacco industry, the population has plateaued.

Proximity to tourism towns.

Residents believe that Myrtleford's proximity to Bright and Beechworth means visitors are less inclined to stop.

Public transport.

Myrtleford has limited public transport, restricting resident's ability to access to work, education and training.

Myrtleford's capacity

Our people

Unless otherwise stated, the data listed in this section has been sourced from the ABS Census 2016 data.

Myrtleford has a population of 3,193 people. Of this, the gender mix is 51.6% females and 48.4% males.

The median age of Myrtleford's population is 50 years. In 2016, Myrtleford's age composition consisted of:

- 21.0% people under 19 years (Alpine: 21.2%; Victoria: 24.3%);

- 51.6% people aged between 20 and 64 years (Alpine: 54.4%; Victoria: 60.2%); and

- 27.4% people over 65 years (Alpine: 24.4%; Victoria: 15.6%).

The largest age group was 55 to 59 years, making up 8.3% of Myrtleford's population. The percentage of over 65s in both Myrtleford and Alpine Shire is significantly higher than Victoria as a whole. Regional Victoria's over 65 population is 20.4%. Further, 5.0% percent of Myrtleford's population is aged over 85 years.

16.0% of Myrtleford's' population was born overseas (Alpine: 13.7%; Victoria: 28.3%). In Myrtleford, the most common countries for people born overseas are Italy (5.7%), United Kingdom (2.9%) and New Zealand (1.6%). Myrtleford's percentage of community members born in Italy is much higher than both Alpine Shire (2.3%) and Victoria (1.2%).

Myrtleford residents have varied qualifications, including:

- 9.4% completed Bachelor or Higher Degree (Alpine: 15.4%; Victoria 24.3%);

- 6.8% completed Advanced Diploma or Diploma (Alpine Shire: 9.5%; Victoria: 9.2%);

- 22.4% have a vocational qualification (Alpine 22.4%; Victoria 16.9%); and

- 48.6% have no qualification (Alpine: 39.7; Victoria: 39.6%).

The highest level of schooling for Myrtleford residents is:

- 9.3% Year 8 or below (Alpine 6.3%; Victoria 5.6%);

- 9.0% Year 9 or equivalent (Alpine 7.3%; Victoria 5.8%);

- 20.6% Year 10 or equivalent (Alpine 19.8%; Victoria 13.2%);

- 17.9% Year 11 or equivalent (Alpine 16.7%; Victoria 11.6%);

- 30.4% Year 12 or equivalent (Alpine 38.1%; Victoria 54.4%); and

- 1.0% did not go to school (Alpine 0.4%; Victoria 1.1%).

Current education institution attendance is:

- 1.2% attend pre-school (Alpine 1.3%; Victoria 1.6%);

- 7.4% attend primary school (Alpine 7.4%; Victoria 7.9%);

- 5.9% attend secondary school (Alpine 5.8%; Victoria 6.1%);

- 1.4% attend TAFE (Alpine 1.4%; Victoria1.7%);

- 1.3% attend university (Alpine 1.3%; Victoria 5.5); and

- 74.4% don't attend an educational institution (Alpine 72.7%; Victoria 69.1%).

A large number of Myrtleford residents' people **did not complete year 12** (57.8%) compared to the Alpine Shire (51.8%), and Victoria (36.2%).

There were 1,351 people who reported being in the **labour force** in the week before Census night in Myrtleford (State Suburbs). ABS Census 2016 data shows that:

- 53.9% work full time (Alpine: 52.6%; Victoria: 57%).

- 38.7% work part time (Alpine: 41.4%; Victoria: 34.6%).

- 5.2% unemployed (Alpine: 3.8%; Victoria: 6.6%),

In Alpine Shire, 88.1% of people **live and work in the area**; 11.9% work in the area but live outside.

66.8% of employed persons drove to work (Alpine: 59.1% Victoria: 61.8%).

Myrtleford population forms 830 families. The **family composition** consists of:

- 33.5% couple family with children;

- 48.0% couple family with no children;

- 16.1% one parent families; and

- 2.0% other family.

Myrtleford has a high proportion of people **living by themselves** (Myrtleford: 33.4%; Alpine: 30.9%; Victoria: 24.7%).

12.6% of Myrtleford's population speak a **language** other than English at home; most of these speak Italian at home (8.7%, Alpine: 3.6%; Victoria 1.9%). Other languages spoken at home include Filipino/Tagalog (0.5%), Croatian (0.4%) and German (0.3%). 80.6% of Myrtleford's population speak only English at home.

Ancestry is primarily English (37.3% compared to Alpine: 40.1%; Victoria 29.9%), followed by Australia (34.8%, Alpine: 37.1%; Victoria 27.9%), and Italian (20.3%, Alpine: 9.6%; Victoria 6.0%).

8.4% of Myrtleford's population **needed daily assistance due to a severe or profound disability** (Alpine: 5.3%; Victoria: 5.1%). This increased with age, with:

- 25.4% people aged 80 to 84 years need assistance (Alpine: 18.5%; Victoria: 27.5%); and

- 59.2% people aged 84 and over need assistance (Alpine: 41.2%; Victoria: 47%).

According to the Crimes Statistics Agency, the number of **criminal offences** in Alpine Shire increased between 2017-2018. This spike follows a decrease in crime between the years 2014-2017.

Economic capital

Myrtleford has a higher rate of home ownership compared to the shire and state. 68.8% of residents own or mortgage a house or other dwelling (Alpine: 66.5%; Victoria: 64.2%). Of these 42.8% people fully own their home (Alpine: 40.2%; Victoria: 30.7%), and 26% people mortgage their home (Alpine: 26.3% Victoria: 33.5%).

Myrtleford has a lower concentration of private renters (22.5%) compared to Victoria (27.5%), indicating a more settled area with mature families and empty-nesters. Myrtleford has a higher percentage of people renting social housing (2.7%) than Alpine Shire broadly (1.4%) and is similar to Victoria (2.8%).

The weekly rental payments for Myrtleford's renters are:

- 16.8% pay between $1 and $149;
- 20.5% pay $150 to $199;
- 28.1% pay $200 to $249;
- 22.2% pay $250 to $299;
- 9.7% pay $300 to $399;
- 0% pay $400 or more; and
- 2.7% not stated.

Myrtleford's current population (2016) is 3,193 people. Since 2001 when the population was 2,823 people, the population growth has increased 13.1%. Most of that increase occurred between 2001 and 2006 (11.9%), and since 2006 growth has plateaued significantly (1.1% increase since 2006).

The Victoria in Future 2019 Population and Household Projections (DELWP) shows that Myrtleford is expected to increase to 4,843 people in 2036.

People living in Myrtleford have relatively low incomes when compared on all measures to Alpine Shire and Victorian medians:

- Median total personal income (weekly) $506 (Alpine $569; Victoria $644).
- Median total family income (weekly) $1,220 (Alpine $1,322; Victoria $1,715).
- Median total household income (weekly) $902 (Alpine $1,002; Victoria $1,419).

32% of people living in Myrtleford have an individual income less than $400 per week.

Agriculture and timber production are the primary economic drivers of the community and these are supported by a growing tourism industry. A range of supportive businesses including light industrial, transport, service and retail contribute to the economic diversity of industry as well as the overall prosperity of the township.

The most recent ABS data available on the number of businesses is from 30 June 2018. At that time, in Myrtleford there were:

- 350 non-employing businesses;
- 129 businesses with 1-4 employees;
- 65 businesses with 5-19 employees; and
- 8 businesses with 20 or more employees.

Employment diversity is demonstrated by the industries people work in, including manufacturing, supermarket and grocery stores, hospitals and health, cafes and restaurants, aged care, and timber resawing and dressing.

Community capital

In 2016, Myrtleford's SEIFA index score was 935.8. This places Myrtleford in the 17th percentile of the index, meaning 83% of Australia's suburbs are more socio-economically advantaged. Myrtleford's SEIFA score compares poorly with nearby Bright (1007.6), broader Alpine Shire (994), Victoria (1010) and Australia (1001.9).

The Australian Bureau of Statistics monitors levels of engagement in employment and education. Engagement statistics complement employment figures, providing a more comprehensive overview of population activity. Myrtleford's percentage of fully engaged residents is similar to Alpine Shire and Victoria in the 15-24 years, 25-54 years, and 55-64 years age groups. However, Myrtleford's percentage of fully engaged residents aged 65 and over (1.9%) is significantly lower than both Alpine Shire (5.3%) and Victoria (5.1%). Explanations may include relatively earlier retirement in Myrtleford. Disengaged residents may present an opportunity for increasing participation in community volunteering.

Myrtleford has a relatively high level of volunteerism. 24.7% of Myrtleford's population volunteers (Alpine: 30.5%; Victoria: 19.2%).

Myrtleford has access to services and generally supports the Upper Ovens Valley communities with regard to access to goods and services. Myrtleford services the surrounding rural communities including Happy Valley, Buffalo River and Mudgegonga.

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The primary commercial and retail area is located centrally adjacent to the Great Alpine Road and is abutted by residential area. An industrial area is located at the towns' west edge and another larger industrial area is located on the northern edge along Yackandandah Road.

The health and aged care services support the local as well as Shire wide ageing population. The relative flat topography, central location, pedestrian access and clean air make Myrtleford an ideal location for expanding aged care services and lifestyle choices.

Myrtleford has a taxi service and limited public transport.

Infrastructure and planning

Myrtleford is prone to **flooding**, with floodwater spilling from the Ovens River to the northern part of the floodplain around Selzers Lane at Ovens. Significant flooding occurred in 1974, 1993, 1998, 2010 and 2016. Myrtleford has undergone **flood mitigation** measures to prevent future flooding.

In 2006, 135 tobacco farmers in the Myrtleford area agreed to British American Tobacco's compensation package, terminating the farmer's growing contracts, and effectively **ending Australia's tobacco industry**. Tobacco farming has affected local soils and the localised **land contamination** and small farming lot size must be taken into consideration when planning for land uses and industries.

Myrtleford has potential for **increasing agricultural crops** in the area surrounding the township. The Alpine Shire Council Rural Land Strategy shows the hops industry presents opportunities,along with other industries that bring together tourism and agriculture. There is a lot that can be made of the transition to horticulture and the associated potential for farm gate sales and associated wineries and micro breweries, some for which could locate in town, given that there is considerable demand for this experience in Bright.

Alpine Shire is experiencing a shift in population composition resulting in the dispersal of the resident populous into villages surrounding major townships. The **development** is evident around Bright into the villages of Porepunkah and Wandiligong. For Myrtleford, the development is occurring along the Buffalo River Road changing the role of the town from a gateway village to an affordable lifestyle community.

Alpine Shire acknowledged pressure over subdivisions and dwellings in the 2015 Council Rural Land Strategy. Potential for **land supply** exists around the Ovens River. Currently, much of the land adjoining the river near Myrtleford is underutilized; however, the land is flood prone and not suitable for development. Additionally, there are few public access points to the river..

There are 1,559 **dwellings** in Myrtleford

Alpine Shire Council's **Land Development Strategy** will address the future planning and expansion of Myrtleford (for residential, commercial and industrial land uses).

Australia is divided into five classes of **remoteness** on the basis of a measure of relative access to services. The remoteness structure ranges from: Major Cities of Australia, Inner Regional Australia, Outer Regional Australia, Remote Australia, and Very Remote Australia. Myrtleford is classified as Inner Regional Australia, contrasting to other key towns within Alpine Shire which are classified as Outer Regional Australia.

Myrtleford's resources

Natural resources

Located on the Ovens River flood plain, Myrtleford is rich in natural resources.

The town is characterised by the broad open Ovens Valley which is accentuated by the magnificent views to nearby Mount Buffalo and the forested hills rising to the immediate north and east. The open valley floor supports agriculture with rural living and limited agriculture occurring on the lower slopes of the surrounding hills.

The township primarily runs east – west along the valley floor with some residential areas prone to flooding from the Ovens River and Happy Valley Creek.

Mount Buffalo is located close to town, and nearby Lake Buffalo is a popular spot for fishing, picnicking and watersports.

The Ovens River is the main waterway flowing through Myrtleford. Happy Valley Creek, Barwidgee Creek, Ben Lund Gully and Nil Gully skirt the township.

Employers

In 2018, ABS data stated there were 8 businesses with 20 or more employees in Myrtleford. Research and consultation indicate Myrtleford's largest employers are Carter Holt Harvey, Alpine Health, HVP plantations, Greenfreight, Rostrevor Hop Gardens, Coles, Marian College and Myrtleford P-12.

The ABS releases figures concerning whether people travel for work, however, this data looks at local government areas, not individual towns. In 2016, 88.1% of Alpine Shire residents lived and worked in the area. 11.9% of residents living in Alpine Shire travelled to another local government area for work, with Wangaratta the most popular destination at 4.8%.

Community-minded businesses offer Myrtleford opportunities for economic resilience. For example, the Australian Pumpkin Seed Company has developed a social enterprise business to improve the future of regional community farming and food security in the community. Social enterprises are described as 'identifying a social problem and creating a business to work towards fixing that problem in the community or wider world'.

Community resources

Myrtleford has a strong sense of community, along with well-established community groups. Most famously, the Myrtleford Savoy Ladies Group was established in 1983 to alleviate the sense of social isolation felt by many wives of tobacco farmers. Today, the network is still strong, and the facilities of Club Savoy are used most days by community interest groups and activities.

Other community groups include Myrtleford Men's Shed, Myrtleford Scout Group and the now popular U3A, providing educational, recreational and social programs to retired and semi-retired Myrtleford residents.

Alpine sports are popular with Myrtleford residents given the close proximity to the Mount Buffalo, Mount Hotham, Falls Creek and Dinner Plain snow fields.

Myrtleford is an attractive stop along the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail. Recent Federal Government funding was announced to extend the trail from Bright to Harrietville with a long term vision to further extend into an epic trail atop Mount Hotham and Falls Creek.

Myrtleford is well placed to benefit from Tourism North East's strategic direction to be recognised as the State's premier bike destination.

Myrtleford locals come together in several key public spaces. The Myrtleford Piazza provides a space for people to congregate and is a central event venue for the town. Upon completion, the refurbished Myrtleford Library will include two meeting rooms, along with casual meeting spaces both outdoor and indoors. Myrtleford's cafés, restaurants and pubs play a key role for community relationship building, especially Club Savoy who host a range of other community organisations and events. For young people, the skatepark is an important gathering place.

Organisations like U3A and health outreach programs, rely on accessible, affordable and flexible spaces. Myrtleford has function spaces, however, would benefit from having more spaces with better facilities and flexibility.

The town hosts a mix of large, medium and small events. Myrtleford enjoys three major festivals annually: The Myrtleford Festival, LaFiera Italian Festival and the Myrtleford Show. It is estimated events attract attendance of over 20,000 people each year.

Held over the March Labour Day long weekend, Myrtleford Festival has run since 1961 and is one of Victoria's longest running community festivals. The program includes the Festival Ball (coordinated by Myrtleford Lions Club), Market and Parade.

La Fiera is Myrtleford's annual Italian festival, celebrating art, music, sport, culture and food. In 2019, the festival is spread over six days, and will include pop-up glamping options for visitors. For the first time, the festival includes the Young Ambassador Scheme, developing community leadership skills in young people.

Education: primary/secondary

Three primary and secondary schools service Myrtleford: St Mary's Primary School (Catholic), Marian College (secondary, Catholic) and Myrtleford P-12 College (government). Myrtleford students also attend schools in nearby towns such as Bright, Beechworth, Wangaratta and Albury. For example, some Myrtleford students attend The Scots School in Albury, travelling daily with Falls Creek Coaches.

According to data from the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority website My School, in 2018, St Mary's Primary School had a total enrolment of 153, with 17 teaching staff (12.1 FTE). St Mary's Primary School has an ICSEA (Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage) value of 1003, which is just above the average ICSEA value 1000.

Marian College is Myrtleford's secondary Catholic school, located adjacent to St Mary's. In 2018, Marian College's total enrolment was 177, with 22 teaching staff (18.4 FTE). VCE and VET subjects are available from Year 10, and VCE, VCAL and VET in Years 11 and 12. Marian College teaches Italian and has a biennial Italian Immersion program for students from Years 9 to 11. Marian College had an ICSEA value of 1022, indicating relative socio-educational disadvantage.

In 2018, Myrtleford P-12 College had a total enrolment of 345, with 37 teaching staff (31.7 FTE) according to the My School website. Commencing in 2009 with the merger of Myrtleford Primary School and Myrtleford Secondary College, Myrtleford P-12 College grew rapidly between 2013 and 2017, with enrolments increasing from 216 to 322. VCE, VCAL and VET programs are offered. Myrtleford P-12 has a higher proportion of students who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (4%) than both St Mary's (1%) and Marian College (1%). Myrtleford P-12 had an ICSEA value of 973, indicating relative socio-educational disadvantage.

All three of Myrtleford's schools emphasise community value, both within each school's community and in the broader Myrtleford community. Myrtleford's schools present both strengths and opportunities in building community resilience and civic minded future generations.

Education: tertiary

School leavers have limited options for further study in Myrtleford, with higher education opportunities available nearby in Albury, Wodonga and Wangaratta.

Local pathways

Alpine Institute offers courses to Alpine Health staff and individuals seeking training within the health and community service sectors. In 2019, Alpine Institute offered five certificate courses in Health Administration. First aid and CPR courses are offered throughout the year.

Myrtleford Neighbourhood Community Centre offers training in computing, customer service, and marketing. In 2019, Wodonga TAFE announced a partnership with Myrtleford Neighbourhood Centre, offering support and advice to local businesses, employers and industry groups.

Regional pathways

Wodonga TAFE offers certificates, diplomas, advanced diplomas, traineeships, apprenticeships and short courses in diverse streams, including agriculture, building design, education, hospitality, tourism and transport.

LaTrobe University, Albury-Wodonga Campus offers degree programs in law, business, health sciences, IT and engineering and social sciences. The campus specialises in research across freshwater ecology, resource management and ageing in regional communities.

Charles Sturt University, Albury campus offers degree programs in animal and veterinary sciences, business, environmental science, sports sciences, education and IT.

The Centre, Wangaratta is a community college focusing on adult education and service provision. Study areas include aged and community care, education and workplace training, agriculture and horticulture.

Riverina Institute of TAFE has multiple campuses. Albury campus offers certificates, diplomas and advanced diplomas in business management, beauty therapy, leadership and management, hairdressing and visual arts.

TAFE NSW's **National Environment Centre** is located in Thurgoona and specialises in civil construction, natural resource management, spatial information (GIS), and organic farming.

GOTAFE (Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE) has six campuses. GOTAFE Wangaratta offers courses in animal science, agriculture, horticulture and viticulture. GOTAFE Benalla teaches health, plumbing, building and outdoor recreation subjects.

Albury Wodonga's Community College offers courses in community services, education support, early childhood education and care, aged care and disability work. The College, established in the 1970's, is community owned and managed.

Vision

Myrtleford is an adaptive community that embraces change where people can thrive in work, life and play.

Overview of all resilience focus areas

The key directions provide the strategic framework for decision making and priority. They act as a guideline for prioritising actions and ensuring projects meet the needs of the community now and into the future.

Land use and planning

LU+P
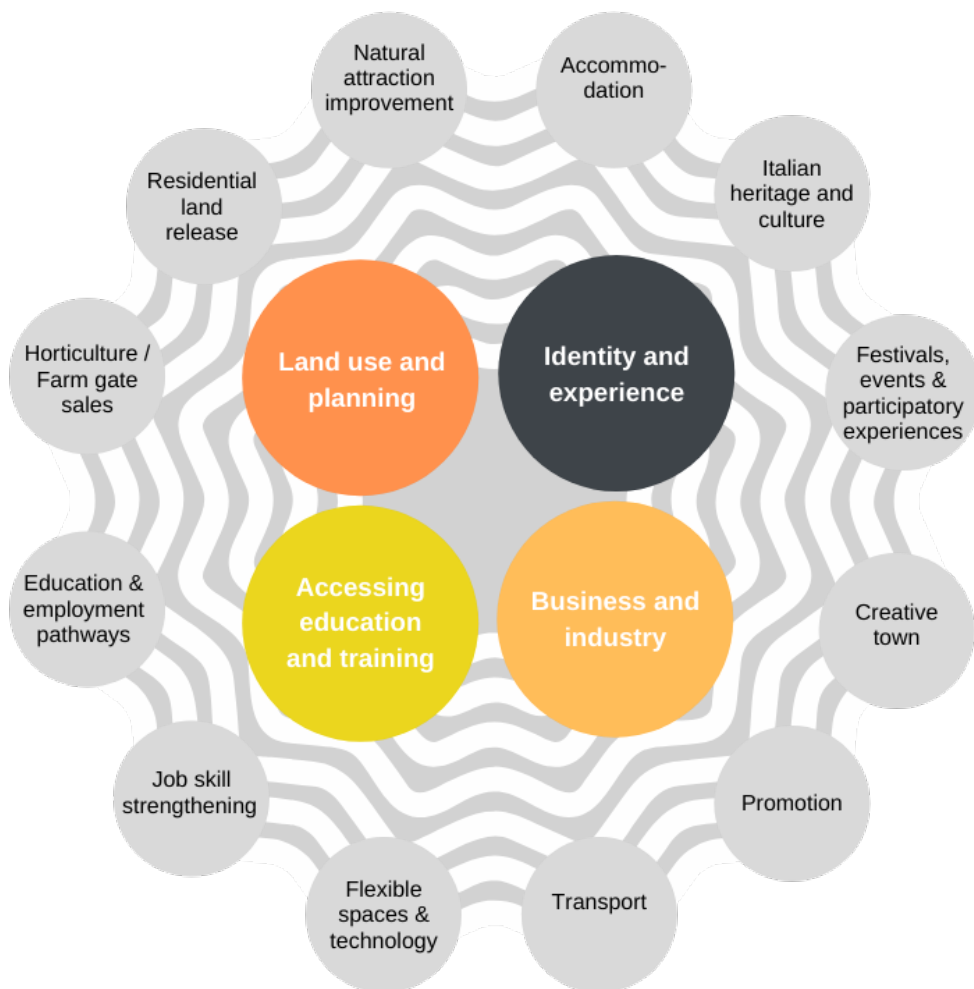
Over many years there has been extensive research, planning, and trialing to find an alternative to tobacco. To date no industry has been identified providing similar benefits of the lucrative tobacco industry.

The small size of ex-tobacco farms presents two opportunities. They can be consolidated into larger farms which are more viable for certain crops. Alternately, smaller farms can begin growing specialist 'foodie' type crops, and where possible, operating as farm gate tourist attractions.

Land use and planning also relates to accommodation. Increasing holiday stay accommodation in town may push up rental prices, as demonstrated in other Alpine Shire townships.

Myrtleford provides opportunities for people to connect to the natural assets of the region. Cycling, walking, fishing and recreation are key reasons for people to visit and play. The Ovens River, Happy Valley Creek and Lake Buffalo are maintained, and investment occurs to ensure suitable and continued use.

Objective

- Connect people to nature and surrounds.
- Leverage off natural assets to create a nature tourism experience.
- Identify infrastructure needs to support recreation uses.

Accessing education and training

E+T
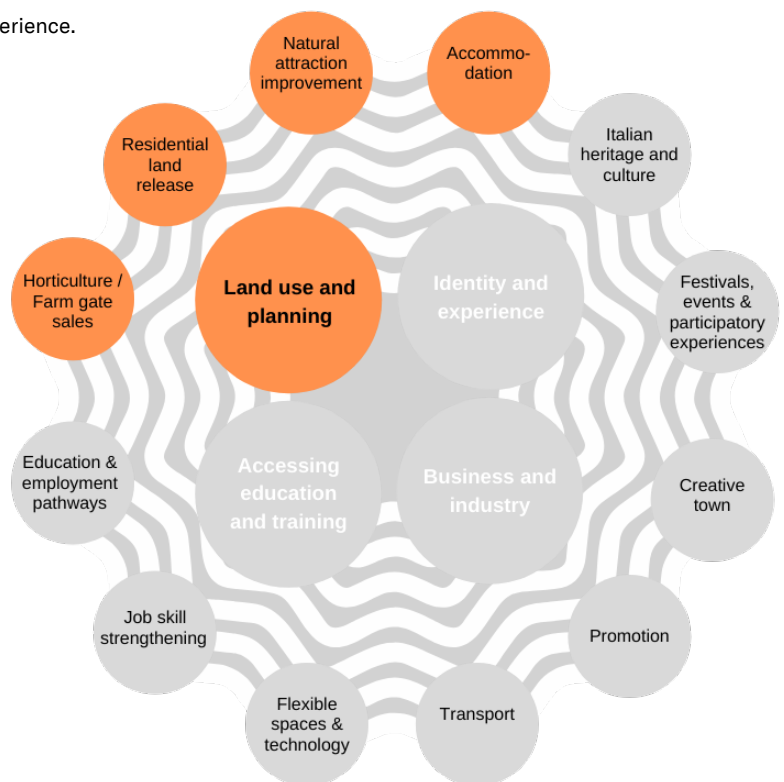
Many of Myrtleford's young people are keen to stay in the town, and value Myrtleford's strong community, but feel they have poor local education and job prospects.

Education options in Myrtleford can be improved by continuing to foster institutional relationships and developing spaces in support of online study.

Improving transport to education centres including Albury, Wodonga and Wangaratta is key to increasing educational outcomes. It also allows young people to consider remaining in Myrtleford while studying and working in the broader region.

Objective

- Building the capacity of community groups to grow and prosper.
- Diversifying use of current buildings to improve community connection.
- Provide young people with opportunities to participate in education and employment.
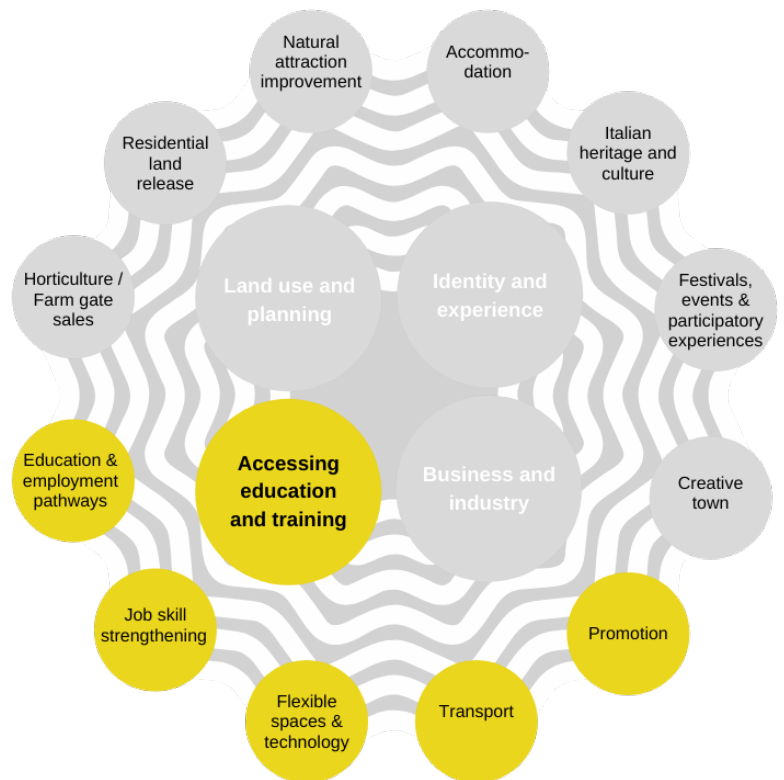
Identity and experience

I+E

Myrtleford has a strong culture built on Aboriginal, Chinese, and Italian heritage. Residents shared a desire to strengthen Myrtleford's identity and tourism industry. Ideas include improving Lake Buffalo (facilities upgrade, potential for camping, festivals), improving Ovens River for swimming and leisure, increasing cellar doors and breweries and improving road cycling. People see potential for Myrtleford to develop as a creative/artistic town and/or a foodie-type destination with specialty foods and increased fine dining.

Upgrades aimed at increasing visitation need to be supported by signage drawing attention to Myrtleford as a destination. In terms of circulating information, there's potential in technologies, for example, interactive 'what's on' screens in the main street.

Myrtleford is proud of its Italian culture and celebrates the heritage through festivals, events, community groups and businesses by incorporating it into their identity.

Objective

- Create a tourism experience around local culture.
- Celebrate local culture and the skills the community can offer.
- Events and activities that bring the community together.
- Explore the potential of local farms, food trails and farm stays.

Business and industry

B+I
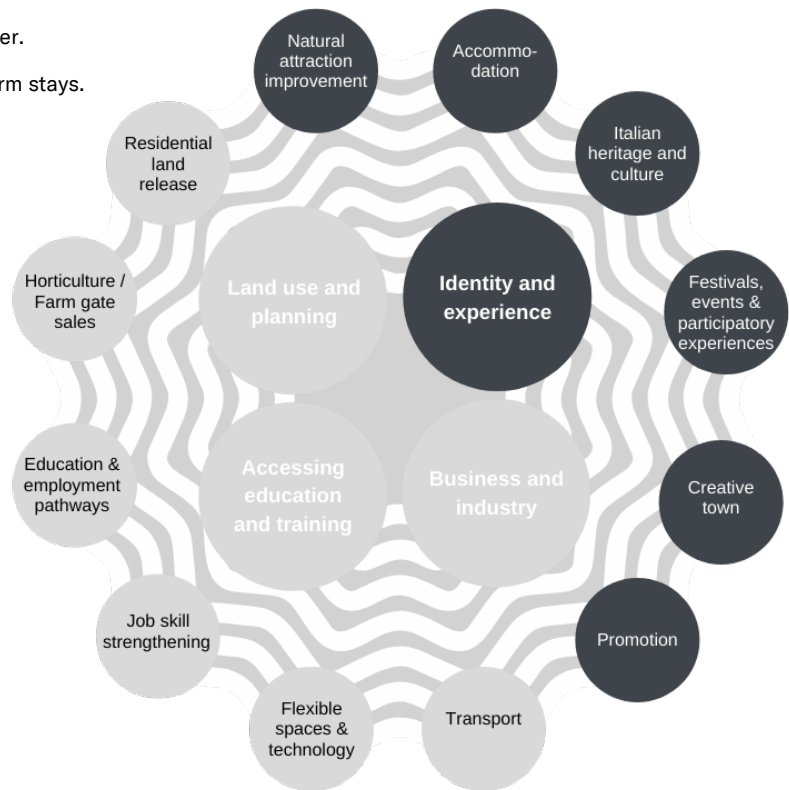
Myrtleford's economy is heavily reliant on a few major employers. The effects of recent production halts and the historical loss of the tobacco industry remains front of mind. A renewed focus on diversifying industry, business and employment is paramount.

Businesses are supported to try new opportunities and provide a culture of encouraging new ideas and attracting businesses opportunities to town.

Fostering community-wide innovation and creativity and making it easier to start a business in Myrtleford will support new businesses, population attraction, and employment.

Objective

- Train locals and support new business development.
- Celebrate local business successes.
- Retain and attract diverse businesses and industry
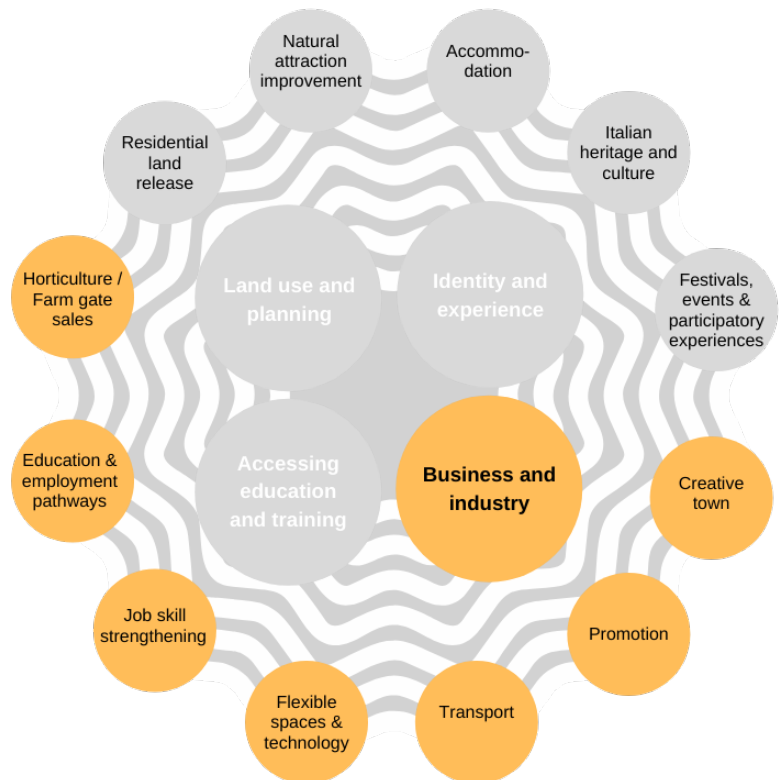
Summary

QUICK WINS		
	1	**Town storytelling**
	2	**Walk Myrtleford**
	3	**Local training**

MEDIUM TERM		
	4	**Transport**
	5	**Build a business program**
	6	**Embracing Myrtleford's food culture**
	7	**Spaces for art, study and start-ups**
	8	**Signage**
	9	**RV Friendly Town**

LONG TERM		
	10	**Tobacco Kiln Trail**
	11	**Splash Park**
	12	**Active in Myrtleford**
	13	**Lake Buffalo activation**

Quick wins

A quick win is an improvement that is visible, has immediate benefit, and can be delivered in the short term. The quick win needs to be something stakeholders agree to and works towards the combined vision for the community.

LU+P   I+E   B+I

1. Town storytelling

Description

Regular marketing and promotion to promote positive stories about Myrtleford, the community, food production and businesses.

Objective

To share good new stories about Myrtleford, the people and the businesses.

How

- Showcase new/emerging business and industries of Myrtleford in publications and online.

- Engage with pre-existing brands such as *Bright and Surrounds* and *Tourism North East* to use their platforms to promote Myrtleford.

- Promote the stories of local food producers to position Myrtleford as an area for food tourism.

Partners

Alpine Shire Council, Tourism North East, local eateries and businesses.

LU+P   I+E   B+I

2. Walk Myrtleford

Description

Provide guided or self-guided walking tours around Myrtleford to educate and entertain visitors with the town's history including Italian migration, Aboriginal heritage, Chinese migration, the tobacco and hop growing industries.

Objective

To provide a cultural and historical experience for locals and visitors of Myrtleford and to celebrate the history of the town.

How

- Identify local hot spots (eg mosaic trail), historical sites and significant cultural places.

- Develop a self-guided walking tour brochure.

- Develop Alpine Ambassador program through Visitor Information Centre.

- Promotion of walking tours through a mini event and launch.

Partners

Myrtleford Heritage Society, Myrtleford Visitor Information Centre, Alpine Shire Council, Alpine Active Group.

E+T B+I

3. Local training

Description

Developing opportunities for education and training in a local setting particularly for young people seeking employment or training in Myrtleford.

Objective

To provide the community with local education and training opportunities.

How

- Work with Wodonga TAFE and Myrtleford Neighbourhood House to establish accredited courses in Myrtleford supporting further education for school leavers.

- Partner with Myrtleford P-12 to understand ongoing education and training needs.

Partners

Wodonga TAFE, Myrtleford Neighbourhood House, Alpine Institute, and Myrtleford P-12.

Medium term

These actions mobilise the community and develop confidence to invest further in the community. Partnerships with key organisations, government and community groups will be required to deliver these projects.

(LU+P) **(E+T)** **(B+I)**

4. Transport

Description

Establish community connections to enable young people and those with limited transport options access to education and training.

Objective

To facilitate education and training for residents of Myrtleford.

How

- Investigate shared transport options for students attending education and training in other towns.

- Work with education providers to quantify the transport need of Myrtleford residents who are accessing education & training.

- Provide a mechanism through a local organisation where people can register their interest for shared transport options.

Partners

Department of Transport (Vic), Wodonga TAFE, GOTAFE, Myrtleford Neighbourhood House and Myrtleford P-12.

(E+T) **(B+I)**

5. Build a business program

Description

Encourage new and innovative industry to Myrtleford through a building business program that can help industries and people to develop their skills and learn how to operate a business.

Objective

To build the capacity of our entrepreneurial minded residents, and business owners and operators to establish and maintain thriving businesses.

How

- Alpine Shire Council and Wodonga TAFE to work together to establish an entrepreneur's (become your own boss) program.

- Develop a business program that consist of a series of workshops, guest speakers and training.

- Mentoring programs for business to business owners.

- Host Small Business Victoria mentors and workshops.

- Myrtleford Neighbourhood House to establish training program for small businesses (marketing, social media, bookkeeping, business planning) with support from Alpine Shire Council.

- Retail merchandising workshop for existing businesses.

Partners

Alpine Shire Council, Wodonga TAFE and Myrtleford Neighbourhood House.

I+E E+T

6. Embracing Myrtleford's food culture

Description

Develop a Myrtleford food and drink experience which highlights the local offer and builds on Myrtleford's unique Italian heritage.

Objective

To celebrate and showcase Myrtleford's food culture, local produce and Italian heritage.

How

- Promotion of farmers market and the local produce Myrtleford has to offer to the region.
- Identification of site for cooking classes or demonstrations.
- Investigate opportunity for pop up shop/stall for produce or start-ups.
- Explore opportunities for introducing food trails, farm gate and farm stays.
- La Fiera Youth Ambassador Program.

Partners

Chamber of Commerce, Myrtleford Farmers Market, businesses and eateries, Alpine Health, Alpine Shire Council.

E+T B+I

7. Spaces for art, study and start-ups

Description

Work with current facility managers to improve the accessibility of spaces for small businesses, artists and students.

Objective

To attract small business owners, artists and students by improving connections with small business owners and creating networks.

How

- Diversify use of spaces that can support local artists and shows (i.e. Memorial Hall).
- Partner with local library to promote facilities, services and spaces for students and businesses.
- Open day at Myrtleford Neighbourhood House to showcase services and spaces available.
- Investigate opportunity for discounted spaces for start up businesses.
- Identify gaps or opportunities for spaces that can support emerging businesses, artists and students.

Partners

Alpine Shire Council, Myrtleford Neighbourhood House, Chamber of Commerce, Myrtleford Gallery, and relevant committees and facility managers.

LU+P B+I

8. Signage

Description

Use signage to promote key local destinations to people travelling through to increase the number of visitors stopping in Myrtleford.

Objective

To provide wayfinding and information for residents, visitors and people passing through Myrtleford.

How

- Engage relevant stakeholders (Vic Roads, Alpine Shire Council) to look at signage opportunities.
- Identify places of interest that will encourage visitors to spend time in Myrtleford.
- Develop signage to create connections to key places.

Partners

Myrtleford Heritage Society, Myrtleford Information Centre and Alpine Shire Council.

LU+P I+E

9. RV Friendly Town

Description

Council investigates making Myrtleford an RV friendly town by improving accessibility for recreation vehicles and caravans.

Objective

To place Myrtleford in a good position to attract visitors and provide amenities for short stays or people passing through.

How

- Promote the two existing dump points in Myrtleford at Adern's Caravan Park and Myrtleford Holiday Park.
- Using the CMCA "RV Friendly Town" guidelines, Council investigates and plans implementation of the criteria requirements to make Myrtleford a RV Friendly Town.

Partners

Alpine Shire Council, Showgrounds Committee, Caravan and Motorhome Association.

Long term

These actions provide opportunities for investment and lead to real change, long lasting impact and community strengthening. Partnerships with key organisations, government and community groups will be required.

LU+P I+E B+I

10. Tobacco Kiln Trail

Description

Develop a creative trail in the Ovens Valley by activating the old tobacco kilns with mural artwork or signage with historical story telling of the kilns and tobacco industry. The art will reflect the history and provide a story telling avenue.

Objective

To build on the identity of Myrtleford, the history of the tobacco industry and to create a point of difference for the township.

How

- Establish expression of interest of property owners of kilns who would want to participate in the trail.
- Identify Tobacco Kilns appropriate for signage and artwork.
- Establish project plan and funding opportunities.
- Develop signage or brief for artists.
- Install signage and/or artwork.

Partners

Alpine Shire Council, Chamber of Commerce, Property owners, local art groups and Regional Development Victoria.

LU+P I+E

11. Splash Park

Description

To build on the streetscape development and encourage people to stop in town, develop a splash park at central location in Myrtleford for residents and visitors to enjoy.

Objective

To create a place for residents to connect and socialise and to attract visitors to the town.

How

- Consultation with the community stakeholders on the best location for splash park.
- Council and the community to work together on the best options for a splash park.
- Develop a splash park plan that meets the community's needs and within Councils resources.
- Seek funding for splash park development.
- Install splash park.

Partners

Alpine Shire Council, community and funding bodies.

(LU+P) (I+E)

12. Active in Myrtleford

Description

Creating active tourism in Myrtleford through investment in mountain bike trails, walking tracks and cycling infrastructure.

Objective

To build on active tourism activities already present in the region and ensure the appropriate infrastructure is available to increase participation and attract events.

How

- Identify and construct mountain bike trails within and around Myrtleford (ie. Reform Hill).

- Construct mountain bike trails linking Beechworth to Bright through Myrtleford. Develop a trail system suitable for mountain bikes for people to tour on MTB trails between Beechworth, Yackandandah and Bright.

- Continue to build on the rail trail network and identify opportunities for cycling linkages to other townships.

Partners

Alpine Shire Council, DELWP, Parks Victoria, HVP, relevant land managers, Active Alpine Group, and Tourism North East.

(LU+P) (I+E)

13. Lake Buffalo activation

Description

Promotion and activation of Lake Buffalo to encourage tourism to the area and offer reasons for visitors to stay and explore the region. Identifying infrastructure investment that supports usage and encourages participation and business opportunities.

Objective

To encourage visitation and stays in Myrtleford and provide the community with a well-maintained recreation space with a variety of activities to participate in.

How

- Partner with Goulburn Murray Water to identify appropriate infrastructure and services required as per their Land and On-Water Management Plan for Lake Buffalo.

- Promote Lake Buffalo as a destination.

- Identify gaps and opportunities for activation at Lake Buffalo such as potential for low impact camping sites, walking tracks, fishing events and activities.

Partners

Alpine Shire Council, Goulburn Murray Water, North East Catchment Management Authority, Lake Buffalo Water Management Committee, Myrtleford Angling Club, Myrtleford Boat Club and DELWP.

Administration

The Plan is uniquely tailored to Myrtleford's needs as it was developed by the Myrtleford community. Residents were clear that they want to be part of a community that adapts and grows with change, where people can thrive in work, life and play.

This Plan documents the projects prioritised by the community during engagement activities. These projects align with the resilience focus areas: land use and planning, accessing education and training, identity and experience and business and industry. Projects are categorised by time frame for completion being either a quick win or medium to long term.

Governance

For the implementation of the Plan to be successful, clear governance and executive oversight is required. Alpine Shire Council will remain responsible for governing the Myrtleford Resilience Plan.

All sectors of the community have input into its implementation. The community, Council, local businesses, service providers, and community group will need to join forces in various capacities to deliver projects. Stakeholder will be brought together on a project-by-project delivery basis.

Measuring success

Measures will be reviewed annually to determine the status of progress. This will be provided to Council to assist in community planning, budget development and community needs assessment.

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