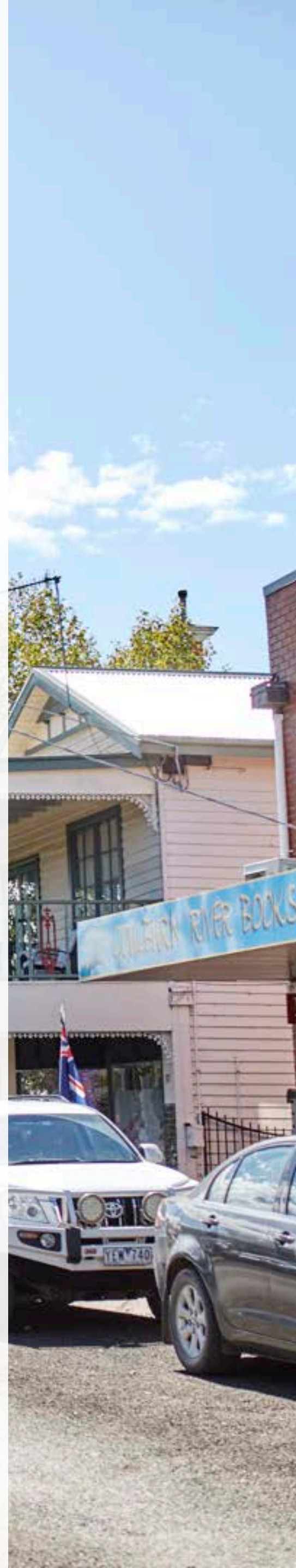




SHAPING  
MURRINDINDI'S  
FUTURE

# Tourism

**Primary Industry  
Entrepreneurial  
Discovery Process**





## Summary

A full day workshop in Tourism was held on Monday 26 February 2024 at the Marysville Community Centre. The workshop supported using the Quad-Helix model, with participants ranging in experience and expertise across industry, government, research, and community. The aim of this workshop was to define the asset further, and link potential opportunities that will create social and economic benefit within the community. A range of key assets were discussed, with the group unable to unanimously agree on any particular opportunity, however, the group has agreed that Tourism should progress to Stage 3 – Innovation Working Groups.

Tourism is driven by our natural assets, attracting varying levels of visitors throughout the year. The proposition is to further capitalise on prime locations, particularly Marysville, by extending visitor stays and increasing opportunities for investment in the local economy.



## Key Assets

The surrounding natural environment is regularly mentioned as a prime asset for the corridor. Marysville is a well-established tourism destination with links to Lake Mountain, Alexandra, and Lake Eildon. It is surrounded by a wealth of natural resources and offers a diverse range of outdoor activities.



## Strategic Competitive Advantage

The location and proximity to Melbourne is a key advantage, as well as already being an established tourist destination with high visitation. Work has already been done to assist the towns recovery since the 2009 Black Saturday fires, in particular the Marysville and Triangle Economic Development Strategy.

Lake Mountain is the closest alpine ski resort to Melbourne. Other key tourist attractions in the local area include Steavenson Falls, one of Victoria's highest waterfalls, Lady Talbot Drive, as a scenic drive through rainforest, Keppel Falls lookout and the Beeches. Marysville has an abundance of tourist accommodation options from small B&B's, cottages, a motel, hotel and conference centre. Other services and businesses include several cafes, bakery, take away shops, boutique shops, pub, ski hire and supermarket.



## Key Challenges

Challenges to tourism in the corridor include seasonal and extreme weather impacts on tourism, the high threat of fire in the summer, land access and lack of infrastructure to support longer stays in the region.

Availability of housing and accommodation for both visitors and staff. Finding suitable staff is also a big concern for majority of local businesses. Identity of the region needs some redefining- being part of Tourism North East, often associated with Yarra Valley, and part of the Goulburn Region for other activities.



## Workshop Discussion

Key discussions identified a number of various strengths, challenges and opportunities, with majority of the group identifying a need for a clearer vision for Tourism in Murrindindi Shire. The group agreed that more effective communication and connectivity is needed across all towns, to better unite businesses, community groups, information centres, and employees to work together and better support each other. There is an abundance of opportunity for activities that are so close to Melbourne, whether that relates to outdoor recreation, local food and wine destinations, or arts and culture.

Defining a clearer identity in the region will help with attracting specific targeted audiences and building better awareness of the things to do across the Shire. This could be achieved with a clear marketing strategy that focuses on 'one brand' uniting Murrindindi Shire and establishing a cooperative body (for example 'Tourism Business Network') group. This could also incorporate a yearly Events Calendar network - working in with community groups and businesses to align events throughout the year in a central easy to access location.

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## Projects

- Build, extend and maintain a variety of multi use tracks and trails – for walking, cycling, and horse riding. Connect and extend these tracks from Marysville through to Rubicon, Eildon and beyond to Yarck. Connecting the towns via trails and encourage visitors to explore other areas in the Shire and stay longer. Create more experiences for outdoor adventuring.
- Invest in hut and camping projects along the National Trail to encourage longer stay visitation and exploration of surrounding townships.
- Ride Marysville project will connect Marysville and Lake Mountain with up to 130km of international mountain bike tracks suitable to all levels and abilities. This will provide further opportunities for future track and trail maintenance, shuttle bus services, development of bike wash and pump stations, and bike gear sales and hire.
- Activating Eildon Master Plan – resort development, fraser park – under utilised
- Housing for both visitors and key workers
- Rubicon Historical area- Rubicon Historic and Haulage Line development – linking the line to Alex, Tours into Rubicon power station
- Extend and ensure tracks are accessible for camping and four wheel driving, and open up more options for RV camping.
- Non adventure based activities to attract other markets- breweries, day spa and combining art, culture and nature. Linking local farming producers with tourism to create a new experience.
- Develop Education Programs in Lake Mountain and create further opportunities for students to be involved in outdoor programs and camps, with the learnings written into curriculum.
- Develop and improve the streetscapes to become more appealing and encourage visitors to dine later and stay longer.



## **Policy and Regulations**

Future regulations and potential for commercial activity in what is currently state forest is currently under review through the Eminent Panel for Community Engagement. Participation in the process and seeking to maximise benefits to the Visitor Economy is crucial and the Panel's recommendations will help shape any initiatives coming out of the working groups.

## **Logistics**

It is important to understand the current marketing and promotion of the region, which includes Discover Dindi, Victorian High Country, Visit Victoria and Tourism Australia. It will also be important to work in with Tourism North East and Regional Development Victoria to gain insight into the bigger picture of Tourism.





## **Logistics**

Similar to other recent innovation workshops, there is opportunity for a community entity or organisation to link businesses together and combine experience and expertise. Decisions made by larger businesses, including opening hours or closures could have a ripple effect through other businesses in the community and there is benefit in sharing these decisions within a Business Network group. This group could provide support and advise to new businesses, work collaboratively to attract future funding for a variety of projects, help to develop and deliver these projects, and assist with recruiting and retaining skilled staff.

Further community consultation will be necessary in identifying the future needs for Tourism in the region.

Development of available land for a variety of housing, including hotels, Airbnb, and key worker accommodation is crucial to allow for expansion and growth of the region. This will out further pressure on public transport issues, child care services, and shortages of skilled and suitable staff.

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## **Promotion and Marketing**

An initial assessment of current Tourism marketing and promotion for the region is needed, and its effectiveness for encouraging visitation. The development of new programs will allow opportunity to grow the visitation numbers, increase national and international interest, encourage longer stays, and help promote the things Murrindindi Shire has to offer.

## **Conclusion**

This is a viable opportunity that could be realised in the short and longer term.