

Southern Grampians Shire

Tourism Strategic Plan 2010-2015

Adopted June 2010

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**In association with Southern Grampians Shire Council
& Tourism Industry**

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I. Executive Summary

In 2009, Southern Grampians Shire Council (SGSC) commenced a review of tourism activities undertaken by SGSC in association with the tourism industry, to assess new opportunities and challenges for tourism, and to develop a five-year strategic plan. The planning process was facilitated by Insight Communications.

The aim of this document is to guide SGSC's resourcing of tourism marketing and development activities, inform the work portfolios of staff, and to communicate Council's tourism priorities to tourism operators and the broader community.

Tourism Industry Overview

The tourism industry in Southern Grampians Shire (SGS) makes a substantial contribution to the local economy by bringing new dollars into the shire which are spent on a wide range of services, from the retail sector to accommodation, restaurants and attractions. This income further supports industry sectors that rely on business from tourism operators such as tradesmen, builders, accountants, lawyers, etc. In 2007, the economic impact from *direct* expenditure by visitors to the shire was estimated at \$48.6 million per annum.¹ The flow-on economic benefits (or indirect expenditure) would make this figure significantly higher.

The shires' tourism industry is characterised by a large number of small businesses. Ninety-one percent of the shire's 432 tourism-related businesses have under 20 employees, including 42% of which are non-employing businesses, and a further 25% which employ under five people.²

The Plan

All actions included in this plan are aligned with the SGS Council Plan and relevant plans produced by other units within Council.

Many of the actions call upon SGSC to provide a leadership role for their implementation. The predominance of micro tourism businesses (under 5 employees) in the shire, and owner-operated business that do not have employees, inherently restricts the capacity of business owners to invest their time and money on co-operative industry initiatives.

A key challenge for the tourism industry is the fact that their markets are located outside the shire - in Victoria, interstate and overseas. As it is impossible for small

¹ Tourism Research Australia, Tourism Profiles for Local Government Areas in Regional Australia: Southern Grampians Shire, as at June 2007. Calculations use a very conservative estimate for international visitor expenditure which has been based on domestic expenditure due to the absence of more accurate data. However, international visitors are known to spend considerably more than domestic visitors.

² Ibid.

business to bear the cost of targeting potential visitors individually, it is critical that co-operative marketing is undertaken to bring visitors to the shire.

That said, however, it is anticipated that through this plan's implementation, the tourism industry will become more confident, skilled and resourced to enable them to play a more active role in the leadership of the industry. In particular, it is expected that this would include greater involvement in developing, funding and implementing marketing and industry development programs.

Goals

The goals of the SGS Tourism Strategic Plan are:

- To increase visitation and visitor yield to Southern Grampians Shire.
- To increase the quality of visitor experiences in the Southern Grampians Shire.

Tourism Markets

The major markets which will assist SGSC to achieve its tourism goals are:

Target Markets	Purpose of Visit	Origin
a. Socially Aware (<i>young couples, young families, older couples</i>)	Holiday Touring (TFL)	Melbourne Regional Vic South Australia
b. Visible Achiever (<i>young couples, older couples</i>)		
c. Traditional Family Life (<i>older couples</i>)		
d. Young Optimists (<i>singles, couples, groups</i>) - <i>Dunkeld only</i>	Holiday	Melbourne
e. International	Holiday	Europe, German, New Zealand, South Asia
f. Business (<i>conferences, events, corporate</i>)	Business	Melbourne, Regional Vic, South-east of South Australia
g. Secondary Schools (<i>visitation related to recreational events, eg. sports championships</i>)	Education	Western district
h. International Tertiary Students (<i>visitation related to practical component of degree courses, eg. environmental science</i>)	Education & Holiday	Various, especially China
i. Visiting Friends & Relatives (VFR)	VFR	various
j. Group travel market (<i>usually senior coach groups</i>)	Holiday	Melbourne, Regional Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales
k. Cycling and walking markets (<i>organised groups, families and friends groups</i>)	Holiday	Melbourne, Regional Victoria

Key Directions of the Tourism Strategic Plan include:

- Provide information and facilitation in order to encourage new investments in tourism infrastructure, particularly accommodation and hospitality businesses.
- Work with tourism businesses and education providers to further improve the “visitor experience” in the shire through training, development and monitoring of the sector.
- Continue to implement an extensive high quality marketing program that attracts intrastate, interstate and international visitors to the shire.
- Continue to invest in partnerships with Tourism Victoria, Grampians Tourism Inc. and other regional tourism organisations and alliances that link the shire into well-established tourism marketing programs and tourist routes.
- Ensure that tourism marketing strategies reflect the diverse appeal of the shire with a focus on the gateway to the Grampians, a wide range of events, Kanawinka Geopark, food and wine, art and music, and unique accommodation.
- Improve the drawing power of the shire by conducting a stronger calendar of events and festivals. Establish another iconic, signature event.
- Work with Sharp Airlines, as the primary air passenger carrier in the Grampians region, to develop packages for conference and holiday markets, and to increase flight routes.
- Work closely with each town in the shire that attracts visitors, to develop its tourism appeal and enhance the range and quality of services and amenities. Also refine each town’s brand positioning under the umbrella regional brand.
- Continue to grow the conference sector by providing information and supports that encourage conference organisers to select the shire as the base for their event.
- Continue to provide a professional and well-trained visitor information service to generate increased length of stay and expenditure by visitors to the shire.
- Protect and enhance the essential features of the shire that attract tourists, particularly its heritage and natural environments. Encourage the tourism industry to adopt environmentally sustainable business practices to reduce the industry’s carbon footprint and resource consumption.
- Assist the tourism industry to prepare for disruption to business as a result of emergency events such as bushfire.
- Provide a mechanism for SGSC to consult directly with the shire’s tourism industry and to communicate effectively about tourism initiatives.
- Ensure that the implementation of the tourism plan is closely monitored and its results measured where possible.

2. Introduction

In 2009, Southern Grampians Shire Council (SGSC) commissioned Insight Communications to undertake a review of tourism activities undertaken by SGSC in association with the tourism industry, to assess new opportunities and challenges for tourism, and to develop a five-year strategic plan.

The aim of the document is to guide SGSC's resourcing of tourism marketing and development activities, inform the work portfolios of staff, and to communicate Council's tourism priorities to tourism operators and the broader community.

2.1 Recent Achievements

Over the last five years, there have been a significant number of achievements in the development of the shire's tourism industry. These include:

- The merger of the Economic Development and Tourism Unit of SGSC into the newly created Shire Futures Directorate in July 2009. The functions of the Economic Development and Tourism Unit now align with the areas of Planning, Civic Art and Sustainability.
- The establishment of a new regional tourism organisation, Grampians Tourism Incorporated (GTI) in September 2008. Southern Grampians Shire (SGS) is one of five participating municipal councils that provide funds to support GTI.
- A significant level of hard work was invested to bring SGS into the Grampians product offering, which is reaping rewards with the inclusion of SGS product in all major marketing campaigns and promotional initiatives, and SGSC represented on the board of GTI.
- Development of a new shire tourism website, www.visitsoutherngrampians.com.au, which will complement the Grampians regional website.
- Improvements to the quality and quantity of marketing collateral, in particular the Official Visitors Guide, a suite of Small Town brochures, and accommodation maps for Hamilton and Dunkeld.
- Increased quality of food / wine experiences in various townships
- "Welcome mat" is clearly out for visitors in each town - township entries have mostly improved
- Better visitor facilities at natural attractions, such as lookouts and signage
- Further development and improvement of events for local communities and visitors
- Increased support for the business events sector
- Upgrade of Visitor Information Centres, in particular the refurbishment of Hamilton's centre.

- Establishment of accommodation industry groups in Dunkeld and Hamilton
- Increased opportunities for industry training
- Maturing relationships with other stakeholders in the Grampians region, evidenced by operator familiarisation tours, establishment of a food group network, to name a few.

2.2 Southern Grampians Shire's Vision and Objectives

The Southern Grampians Shire's Vision is to be Australia's Most Liveable Provincial Community.

Our objectives include:

- Provide the people of the Southern Grampians Shire with the highest standards of good governance.
- Plan for and foster economic growth and prosperity.
- Ensure a wide range of quality services are available to our community.
- Help communities in our Shire feel strong and safe.
- Pursue environmental sustainability in our Shire.

Each of the strategies in the SGS Tourism Strategic Plan 2010-2015 supports the achievement of one or more of these objectives.

2.3 Project Goals

The goals of the Tourism Strategic Plan are:

- To increase visitation and visitor yield to Southern Grampians Shire.
- To increase the quality of visitor experiences in the Southern Grampians Shire.

2.4 Outcomes of the Project

Following are the key elements required for inclusion in the SGS Tourism Strategic Plan 2010-2015.

1. Alignment of SGSC's tourism strategies with the SGS Council Plan and the tourism plans developed by Tourism Victoria, Grampians Tourism and GSTR.
2. Evaluation of current activities through a desk top audit and representational industry interviews.
3. A strategic plan with measurable and appropriate budget for the next 5 years.
4. Consideration of the following areas within the plan:
 - a. Marketing

- b. Communication internally to industry and externally to stakeholders
- c. Industry Structure to support regional structure
- d. Industry Development
- e. Product Development and Tourism Infrastructure
- f. Visitor Services inc VIC's and Volunteers Programs (VICs and Peshurst Volcanoes Discovery Trail)
- g. Events Strategy inc Major Event attraction and development, Conference Facilities and Conference attraction
- h. Tourism Ambassadors Program
- i. Tourism Partnerships

2.5 Project Methodology

Following are the steps taken to develop the Tourism Strategic Plan.

1. Meetings were held with staff from the SGSC Tourism Unit to identify current challenges and opportunities for the development of the tourism industry.
2. A review of existing strategies, plans and visitor data was conducted.
3. Consultations were held with stakeholders including:
 - Chris White, Tourism Victoria
 - Chris Burchett, CEO, Grampians Tourism Inc.
 - Paula Rathgeber, Chairman, GSTR
 - Gaby Robinson, Executive Officer, GSTR
4. Discussions were also held with a selection of event organisers and tourism business managers (total 8).
5. An Industry Workshop was held in November 2009 attended by:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. John Fraser, Dunkeld Tourism Association b. Alan Brumley, Cavendish Tourism Association c. Elisabeth Brittain, Coleraine Tourism Association d. Gary Starr, Peshurst Volcanoes Discovery Centre e. Cr Bruach Colliton, SGTAB* f. Maree Willis, SGTAB* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. Jill Gardner, SGTAB* h. Gary and Tanya Traynor, Lake Hamilton Caravan Park i. John Headley, Darriwill Farm j. Hugh Koch, SGSC k. Mary McArthur, SGSC l. Sardie Edgar, SGSC
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8. A draft Review Report of key, issues, opportunities, analysis of visitor trends was developed.

* Southern Grampians Tourism Advisory Board

9. Meetings with the SGSC Tourism Unit were held to refine the report.
10. A draft Tourism Plan was produced identifying actions, priorities, and budgets.
11. The document was circulated to industry stakeholders to provide feedback.
12. The final draft of the Tourism Plan was prepared, with SGSC undertaking any further internal consultation required.

2.6 The Prioritising Process

Following is the process that was used to determine the priorities identified in the action tables in sections 7 to 17.

Step 1

Each action was rated for its “Importance” and “Feasibility” as per below:

Importance: <i>“Capacity to support the achievement of the Strategy’s Objectives”</i>	Score	Feasibility <i>“How realistic is it that we can undertake this initiative, considering cost, time, likelihood of success, etc?”</i>	Score
High Very important to implement	3	High Highly feasible	3
Medium Moderately important to implement	2	Medium Moderately feasible	2
Low Low importance to implement	1	Low Low feasibility	1

For each action, the combined score out of 6 was then averaged to a score out of 3 which relates to either a High, Medium or Low rating.

Step 2

Each action was then allocated a rating out of the following:

Resourcing
Resources available to implement
Medium level of resources required, budget implications yet to be identified
External resources yet to be secured

3. Strategic Planning Context

Document	Key Findings / Comments related to the SGS Tourism Strategic Plan	Possible Implications for the SGS Tourism Strategic Plan
VICTORIA		
<p>Tourism Victoria Business Plan 2008-2011</p>	<p>Key actions include (amongst others):</p> <p>Product Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Work with Parks Victoria to implement the Nature-based Tourism Strategy. ii. Product advice to government on infrastructure requirements that support event and touring route development in Regional Victoria. iii. Identify investment priorities that meet the needs of emerging international markets, including 4 and 5 star accommodation in regional Victoria, backpacker accommodation, adventure based activities, nature-based tourism, etc. iv. Develop new Tourism Investment Guidelines, including sustainability criteria for tourism investors. v. Develop an Investment Prospectus for local councils in regional Victoria that advocates the significance of tourism-related economic development projects. vi. Design and release guidelines for environmentally sustainable nature-based tourism infrastructure. <p>Regional Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vii. Implement Regional Marketing Program - to be rolled out through Regional Campaign Committees. viii. Provide funding to key strategic marketing alliances to promote touring routes with a specific focus on attracting priority international markets. <p>Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ix. Continue to provide funding support for the Country Victoria Events Program. x. Work with the Regional Victoria Conference Group to develop business events in regional Victoria. <p>Skill Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> xi. In conjunction with the Office of Small Business, develop a framework for small tourism businesses that draws from a number of existing programs / services. Also develop a range of specialised programs that meet the needs of particular industry sectors. xii. Continue to operate the Tourism Excellence Program. <p>Tourism On-line</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> xiii. Increase exposure of tourism industry through partners' websites and multiple channels. xiv. Improve opportunities for visitors to book products online via linking private operator bookings systems to visitvictoria.com website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These actions to be considered in the development of recommendations for the relevant sections in the plan. • SGS will benefit from some of these initiatives through the alliance with regional campaign committee, Grampians Tourism Inc., Great Southern Touring Route Inc., and the Regional Victoria Conference Group.

Document	Key Findings / Comments related to the SGS Tourism Strategic Plan	Possible Implications for the SGS Tourism Strategic Plan
<p>Victoria's Nature-based Tourism Strategy 2008-2012 by Parks Victoria, Tourism Victoria, Dept Sustainability & Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategy identifies 5 key nature-based tourism destinations in Victoria - Great Ocean Road, Phillip Island, Grampians, Gippsland and Victoria's High Country. • Projects related to these areas will be rolled out according to these phases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 - Great Ocean Road, Grampians - recognised as having the 'greatest immediate potential to trigger increased visitation and increase tourism yield for provincial Victoria'. • Phase 2 - Phillip Island, Gippsland • Phase 3 - Victoria's High Country • The strategy aims to increase the yield from visitation rather than create large increases in visitor numbers. • Key nature-based products in the Grampians are recognised as bush walking, rock climbing, horse riding and wildlife viewing, with the potential of further developing mountain biking. • Proposed projects that could relate to SGS include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Nature-based tourism accommodation (private investment) and day walks activity hub ii. Mountain bike tracks linked to demountable bike barn accommodation iii. A Wild Grampians Walk with demountable accommodation, and supported by tour operators. • The strategy also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outlines a range of initiatives to encourage investment in nature-based tourism in Victoria. ○ Proposes to increase the use of sustainable practices by the nature-based tourism sector and produce design guidelines for infrastructure development. ○ Proposes to support regional campaigns that focus on nature-based tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All SGS-related projects in the strategy focus on the Grampians National Park as the region's primary nature-based tourism drawcard. • The Grampians has been identified for Phase 1 roll out of projects, which may impact on the implementation of Dunkeld-related product development initiatives. However a number of the Tourism Victoria projects are unfunded as yet. • The proposed projects to be considered in product development recommendations. • Increased marketing profile of townships in the south of the Grampians National Park will result from the Wild Grampians Walk (otherwise referred to in this document as the Grampians Long Distance Trail).
<p>Tourism Victoria Regional Tourism Action Plan, 2009-2012</p>	<p>The major opportunities for tourism development in the Grampians are identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance engagement of the tourism industry through Grampians Tourism Inc., and increase industry participation in and ownership of major marketing campaigns. • Tourism Victoria will work with State Government agencies, Local Government, investors and industry to facilitate the following priority projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism infrastructure and investment product, including high quality boutique and environmentally sensitive accommodation, to support the proposed Grampians Long Distance Trail. • Nature-based and adventure tourism infrastructure and investment product including walking and bicycle trails. • The report also identifies a range of initiatives to encourage tourism investment in regional Victoria. • Enhance the region's involvement in the Great Southern Touring Route Inc. international marketing program. • Leverage the positioning achieved by the refreshed <i>Space to Breathe</i> campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGSC to participate in relevant initiatives through Grampians Tourism Inc. • There are a range of marketing and product development initiatives that could have a positive impact on Dunkeld and other townships near the Grampians National Park, to be considered in this plan.

Document	Key Findings / Comments related to the SGS Tourism Strategic Plan	Possible Implications for the SGS Tourism Strategic Plan
Tourism Victoria's Marketing & Development Plan 2010-2011 - GRAMPIANS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This plan is a summary of Grampians region-related information included in the documents mentioned previously, plus a detailed list of marketing initiatives that Tourism Victoria will support via Grampians Tourism Inc. A particular opportunity for SGS noted in the plan is: "Pursuing opportunities with Sharp Airlines re: the marketing of Melbourne to Hamilton services. We are keen to initiate a campaign that packages flights, hire car and Grampians experiences (such as the Royal Mail Hotel, etc.)" (\$5,000 allocation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per previous strategies above. Note Sharp Airlines opportunity in the Marketing section.
Victorian Tourism Infrastructure Development Strategy by Tourism Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority projects that may relate to SGS include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grampians Villages Project - enhance the Grampians National Park experience through consistency in urban design of Halls Gap and Dunkeld, reflecting the National Park theme. Grampians Cabin-Assisted Overnight Walks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considerations for inclusion in product development recommendations.
Environmentally Sustainable Tourism Strategic Plan 2009-2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan addresses the key challenges of implementing environmentally sustainable tourism practices in Victoria's tourism industry. It promotes the use of 'Grow Me The Money' and 'CarbonDown' programs. It notes the growing consumer demand for sustainable practices, and their potential to improve business performance. It notes the importance of the tourism industry preparing for climate change, including the potential for increased drought, flooding and bushfires; and the potential for the reduced beauty of destination, gardens, etc. due to a lack of water. It outlines a series of strategies for the tourism industry to adopt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a series of opportunities for the SGS tourism industry to implement more sustainable tourism practices and prepare for disruption to their business from extreme climate events.
REGION		
Grampians Tourism Business Plan 2009/10	<p>The core directions of the plan are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement marketing activities including campaigns, online marketing, public relations, international trade links, domestic trade marketing and marketing collateral, in partnership with TV, LG and industry that deliver increased visitation and yield into the region. Increase industry participation in marketing initiatives. Increase the commercial outcomes from regional events. Undertake market research to understand visitor trends and requirements. Assist regional tourism operators to deliver superior service. Work with operators who participate in the major distribution system. Support the development of major investment projects already identified. Undertake a range of activities to encourage the industry to adopt more environmentally sustainable business practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGSC to participate in Grampians Tourism Inc. as a member of the board, and involve the SGS tourism industry in relevant initiatives.

Document	Key Findings / Comments related to the SGS Tourism Strategic Plan	Possible Implications for the SGS Tourism Strategic Plan
Other Regional Plans	<p>Other regional plans that impact on tourism development in SGS include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grampians Cycling Tourism Report 2007 Great South Coast Trails Strategy 2008 Grampians National Park Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considerations for inclusion in product development recommendations.
Great Southern Touring Route Inc. Marketing Action Plan 2009/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan outlines the international marketing strategies for key GSTR markets. The most relevant to the Grampians region include UK, Europe, North America and New Zealand. One position as Director of the Board is allocated to the Grampians region, which is currently filled by the CEO of GTI. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides the forum for international marketing of the SGS. SGSC to consider continuing as an active participant of GSTR.

SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Southern Grampians Shire Council Plan 2009-2013	<p>Strategies noted in the plan which relate to tourism include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that tourism marketing strategies reflect the diverse tourist appeal of the Shire with a focus on drawcard events, gateway to the Grampians, the Kanawinka Geopark and the well established Great Southern Touring Route. Enact policies and providing information and facilitation which are aimed at encouraging new investments in tourism infrastructure, particularly accommodation and hospitality businesses. Review the Shire's tourism events program to create stronger drawcard events; assess the opportunity for an iconic event. Assess the feasibility of commercial convention facilities in the Shire. Use the Southern Grampians Planning Schemes and the Shire's Open Space Management Plans to protect the Shire's tourism features, particularly its heritage and natural environments. Work with tourism businesses and education providers to further improve the tourism experience in the Shire through employee training and development and creating a broader level of awareness of, and support for, the tourism industry in our communities. Investigating hospitality, tourism and leisure opportunities in the Lake Hamilton precinct. Continuing to assess opportunities for regionally significant recreation and leisure facilities and services. <p>There are a number of other strategies in the plan of which the tourism industry will be a beneficiary, related to infrastructure, skill development, arts / culture, recreation, community planning, environmental management, and support facilities for workers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan to be consistent with these key directions.
Other Southern Grampian Shire Council Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following SGSC plans were consulted as part of section 7, Product Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Management Plan for Wannan Falls and Nigretta Falls Scenic Reserves, 2005 ii. Small Towns Urban Design Frameworks iii. Leisure Services Strategic Plan, 2006 iv. Lake Hamilton Management Plan, 2006 v. Hamilton Showgrounds Master Plan, 2007 vi. Hamilton Airport Business Plan, 2005 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant findings have been reflected in the recommendations related to product development.

4. Visitation Overview

Southern Grampians Shire / Western Grampians sub-region

Domestic Visitation

Research prepared by Tourism Research Australia³ indicates that there were an average of 120,000 domestic overnight visitors per annum to SGS between 2005 and 2007. This equates to 91% of all overnight visitation to SGS.

Further research compiled by Tourism Victoria⁴ indicates that in the Western Grampians sub-region (includes SGS, Horsham Rural City and West Wimmera municipalities), domestic overnight visitation over the last 10 years has declined from 360,000 visitors in 2000 to 306,000 visitors in 2009. This is consistent with the regional Victorian average. However, the sub-region experienced a 9% increase in domestic visitation in 2009 compared to 2008, compared to a decline of 10% across regional Victoria.

Also, the number of visitor nights decreased over the last 10 years in the sub-region by 10%, which is similar to the regional Victorian average.

NB. It should be noted that domestic overnight visitation to SGS forms only 42% of activity in the Western Grampians sub-region so these trends do not necessarily accurately report activity in SGS. For a more specific indication of SGS trends, see the Visitation to Visitor Information Centres information below.

Research prepared by Tourism Research Australia also found that visitors in SGS stay an average of 2.4 nights, compared to a state average of 3.1 nights. The average spend per trip of a domestic overnight visitor is \$237, compared to the state average of \$397.⁵

These findings indicate that there are opportunities to increase the length of stay and spend of visitors through improvements to products and experiences, and by encouraging them to undertake a range of activities through various promotional initiatives.

There were also around 156,000 day trip visitors (domestic and international) per annum to the shire between 2005 and 2007.

International Visitation

Research prepared by Tourism Research Australia⁶ indicates that SGS attracted an average of 11,000 international visitors per annum between 2005 and 2007. This formed approximately 9% of all overnight visitation to the shire.

³ Tourism Research Australia, Tourism Profiles for Local Government Areas in Regional Australia: Southern Grampians Shire, year ending June 2007.

⁴ Tourism Victoria, Domestic Visitation to Sub-regions, year ending March 2000-2009

⁵ Tourism Research Australia, year ending June 2007

⁶ Tourism Victoria, International Visitation to Sub-regions, year ending March 2000-2009

Further research compiled by Tourism Victoria⁷ indicates that in the Western Grampians sub-region, international overnight visitation over the last 10 years peaked in 2001 at nearly 21,000 visitors, followed by a rapid decline the following year to nearly 10,000 visitors (due to international events such as the September 11 bombings). Visitation has been recovering ever since, reaching 16,000 visitors in 2009.

Visitation to the sub-region rose by 16% in 2009 compared to 2008, which is a very healthy annual increase. This compares favourably to the state average of 0.7% growth and the regional Victorian average of a 2.2% decline.

International visitation to SGS forms approximately 83% of visitation to the sub-region, so these trends were likely to be very prevalent in the shire.⁸

Visitors are primarily from the United Kingdom and Germany.

Day trippers

The research also identifies that the shire has a significant number of day trippers, approximately 156,000 per annum. Expenditure from the day trip market equated to an estimated \$18 million in 2007, compared to \$28 million for domestic overnight visitation. This indicates that it is a substantial contributor to tourism activity in the shire.

Visitation to Visitor Information Centres

VICs provide another source of monitoring domestic and international visitor trends in the shire. Over the last five years, visitation to the centres has been very stable (varying by a maximum of 1,500 people over that period), with the Hamilton centre consistently attracting around 38,000 visitors per annum and Coleraine attracting around 7,500 visitors. The Dunkeld centre experienced growth in the last four years, increasing from 18,615 visitors to nearly 21,000 in 2009⁹.

These are healthy results given that visitation to information centres across regional Victoria has declined in the last decade due to increased usage of the internet.

Grampians Region

The Grampians region comprises the Western Grampians, Central Highlands and Wimmera tourism regions, plus the Pyrenees Shire.

Research from Tourism Research Australia¹⁰ has identified visitation trends in the Grampians region to be as follows:

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Calculated by working out the 3 year visitation average to March 2009 for the sub-region and identifying the percentage that relates to SGS with 11,000 visitors per annum.

⁹ Research collated by Data Insights, year ending June 2009

¹⁰ Tourism Research Australia, National and International Visitor Surveys, year ending June 2005 to year ending June 2009, compiled by Data Insights

Domestic Visitation

- Domestic overnight travel to the Grampians region in 2009 compared to 2008 increased by 1% to 628,000 visitors.
- Visitor nights decreased by 0.7% to nearly 1.5 million.
- From 2005 to 2009, both visitors and nights in the region experienced an average annual decline of 3.8% (similar to the Regional Victorian average decline of 3.6%) and a decline of 9.0% respectively (compared to a Regional Victorian average decline of 2.9%).

International Visitation

- International overnight travel to the Grampians region decreased by 19% to 35,100 visitors in 2009 compared to 2008.
- From 2005 to 2009, visitors to the region experienced an average annual decline of 11% (compared to the Regional Victorian average increase of 1.2%).

Great Southern Touring Route

The Great Southern Touring Route (GSTR) is a self-drive loop departing Melbourne which takes in the Great Ocean Road, the Grampians and the Ballarat Goldfields. It is primarily marketed to international visitors via the travel trade.

Its offshoot, the Melbourne-Adelaide Touring Route, provides alternative drives to / from Adelaide via the coastal route (Portland, Mt Gambier and the Coorong) or inland via Hamilton and the Coonawarra. This latter route is of particular benefit to SGS.

While there are no visitation figures for the Melbourne-Adelaide Touring Route, a discussion with Paul Victory, Business Development Manager of Travel Link¹¹, the promoter of the Route, indicates that the level of inclusion of the Route in international wholesale programs within key markets has risen from almost nothing 6 years ago, to 95% inclusion. 50% of these programs feature the inland route (via Hamilton, Coonawarra). As the contents of wholesale programs are market-driven, this reflects a considerable growth in interest by visitors. Key markets include North America, Central Europe, and the United Kingdom.

There is also a small shift towards the inclusion of itineraries that focus solely on the Grampians and the Coonawarra, without the Great Ocean Road, which is a change from previous years.

¹¹ Discussion held with Insight Communications, March 2010.

5. Target Markets

Target Markets	Purpose of Visit	Origin
a. Socially Aware (<i>young couples, young families, older couples</i>)	Holiday Touring (TFL)	Melbourne Regional Vic South Australia
b. Visible Achiever (<i>young couples, older couples</i>)		
c. Traditional Family Life (<i>older couples</i>)		
d. Young Optimists (<i>singles, couples, groups</i>) - <i>Dunkeld only</i>	Holiday	Melbourne
e. International	Holiday	Europe, German, New Zealand, South Asia
f. Business (<i>conferences, events, corporate</i>)	Business	Melbourne, Regional Vic, South- east of South Australia
g. Secondary Schools (<i>visitation related to recreational events, eg. sports championships</i>)	Education	Western district
h. International Tertiary Students (<i>visitation related to practical component of degree courses, eg. environmental science</i>)	Education & Holiday	Various, especially China
i. Visiting Friends & Relatives (VFR)	VFR	various
j. Group travel market (<i>usually senior coach groups</i>)	Holiday	Melbourne, Regional Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales
k. Cycling and walking markets (<i>organised groups, families and friends groups</i>)	Holiday	Melbourne, Regional Victoria

6. Destination Overview

SGS is characterised by a number of key destinations that provide a range of different experiences and hence attract a variety of markets. The marketing program outlined in the Tourism Plan includes actions to further develop the target markets for each destination listed below. The Tourism Priority rating for each town is to be used to guide the prioritising of SGS resources for product development and promotions.

Destination	Tourism Priority	Target Markets	Purpose of Visit	Origin
I. Hamilton	I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socially Aware (young couples, young families, older couples) 	Holiday Touring (TFL)	Melbourne Regional Vic South Australia
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visible Achiever (young couples, older couples) 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Family Life (older couples) 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International 	Holiday	Europe, German, New Zealand, South Asia
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business (conferences, corporate) 	- as noted	Melbourne, Regional Vic, South-east of South Australia
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary schools (<i>visitation related to existing schools, eg. regional school events</i>) 	Education	Western district
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International students 	Education & Holiday	Various, especially China
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visiting Friends & Relatives 	- as noted	various
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special interest Events (eg. antiques, agriculture, music) 	- as noted	Victoria South Australia

- Hamilton visitor information centre (VIC) figures - approximately 38,000 per annum
- Hamilton is becoming a more sophisticated culture and heritage destination (with an agricultural community focus), providing appealing cultural events, galleries and museums, fine food and local produce, beautiful botanic gardens and quality shopping.
- Day trippers make a significant contribution to tourism activity in the town, and are attracted by facilities such as the Hamilton Botanic Gardens, Hamilton Indoor Leisure and Aquatic Centre, Hamilton Regional Art Gallery and Lake Hamilton.
- There are several gaps in the town's product range to complete its potential positioning, including quality boutique accommodation, wineries with cellar doors, and access to the historic homesteads in the region.
- Some existing infrastructure such as the shopping precinct and botanic gardens should be enhanced. There is a challenge in preserving the town boundary of Hamilton rather than allowing the township to spread out further.
- Visitor growth in recent years has been underpinned by the business conference sector. There is also an increase in the Visiting Friends and Relatives market (who tend to stay with friends / relatives rather than book independent accommodation), and visitors from South Australia.

2. Dunkeld	I	• Socially Aware (young couples, young families, older couples)	Holiday Touring (TFL)	Melbourne South Australia
		• Visible Achiever (young couples, older couples)		
		• Traditional Family Life (older couples)		
		• Young Optimist (young couples)		
		• International	Holiday	Europe, Germany, New Zealand, South Asia
		• Business (conferences, corporate)	Business	Melbourne Adelaide
		• School groups	Education	Melbourne, Adelaide, Regional Victoria

- Dunkeld VIC figures - approximately 20,000 per annum
- Dunkeld has gone from strength to strength in the last decade taking ownership of its position as the southern gateway to the Grampians National Park, with some spectacular accommodation and high quality food (from casual café to fine dining). Attracting the higher yield visitor has been driven by the Royal Mail Hotel, both for international and domestic marketing activities.
- Marketing partners such as GSTR and TV have indicated that Dunkeld is the most significant destination within SGS for international marketing, primarily featuring the Royal Mail Hotel and Grampians National Park.
- There is the potential to further develop Dunkeld as a national park 'green' town (as is also planned for Halls Gap) which involves encouraging the development of new accommodation to be environmentally sustainable, and improvements to building facades, streetscaping and signage in the town centre to be more in keeping with a 'national park' character.
- The proposed Grampians long-distance walk should have a significant impact on the town, especially the proposal to develop a high-yield 2-3 day walk starting / finishing at Dunkeld. The town could position itself to cater predominantly to the higher end SA / VA / TFL outdoor adventurers (family or couples).
- With 'Young Optimists' identified as the region's primary target market for future visitation, it is expected that Dunkeld's facilities and marketing would increasingly need to cater to this market.
- Dunkeld has been identified as one of the state's towns which are most vulnerable to bushfires. This indicates the importance of the tourism industry taking appropriate steps to prepare their business for such an event.

Destination	Tourism Priority	Target Markets	Purpose of Visit	Origin
3. Balmoral	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially Aware (young couples, young families, older couples) 	Holiday Touring (TFL)	Melbourne Regional Vic South Australia
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Family Life (older couples) 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting Friends and Relatives 	Holiday	Melbourne Regional Vic South Australia
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special interest - golfers, angling clubs 	<i>various</i>	<i>various</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been very little visitation to Balmoral in recent years due to the drying up of Rocklands Reservoir. • The return of Balmoral's tourist trade is likely to be tied to the reinvigoration of the Reservoir and visitation to Black Range State Park. The former is still uncertain given unconfirmed water allocations (lack of rain) and the latter depends on the upgrade of facilities by Parks Victoria before it can be more vigorously promoted. 				
4. Cavendish	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially Aware (young couples, young families, older couples) 	Holiday Touring (TFL)	Melbourne Regional Vic South Australia
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Family Life (older couples) 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting Friends & Relatives 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cavendish has been developed as a rural village with some delightful low-key pastoral heritage and 'red gum country' experiences for visitors, as well as visits to historic gardens. • As a base for visits to some of the western-side attractions of Grampians National Park and the introduction of additional outdoor adventure activities and a few further supports, the town could be further developed as a short-break destination. • The town is likely to significantly benefit from the development of a Grampians ring road which should encourage visitation to the western side of the Grampians National Park. 				

Destination	Tourism Priority	Target Markets	Purpose of Visit	Origin
5. Coleraine (including Wannon)	2	• Socially Aware (young couples, young families, older couples)	Holiday Touring (TFL)	Melbourne Regional Vic South Australia
		• Visible Achiever (young couples, older couples)		
		• Traditional Family Life (older couples, groups)		
		• School groups	Education	Regional Victoria
		• Visiting Friends & Relatives	VFR	various
		• 4WD Clubs	Special interest	Victoria South Australia
		• Cycling Groups	Special interest	Victoria South Australia
		• Events	Special interest	Victoria South Australia

- Coleraine VIC visitation - approximately 7,500 visitors per annum
- Coleraine has a small selection of heritage and nature-based experiences, and quality food, which has created a day trip / short-break destination. This will be further enhanced by the development of the Rail Trail between Wannon Falls and Coleraine (walking, cycling, nature trail) which is currently underway. The town also benefits substantially from passing traffic on the highway.
- Tourism activity tends to be based around events, the Visiting Friends and Relatives market, and the group coach market (including schools).

Destination	Tourism Priority	Target Markets	Purpose of Visit	Origin
6. Peshurst	2	• Socially Aware (young couples, young families, older couples)	Holiday Touring (TFL) Holiday	Melbourne Regional Vic South Australia
		• Visible Achiever (young couples, older couples)		
		• Traditional Family Life (older couples)		
		• International	Holiday	Europe, German, New Zealand, South Asia
		• School Groups	Study	Regional Vic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volcanoes Discovery Centre visitation - approximately 1,800 people per year, with growth in the organised groups sector (seniors, schools, interest-specific recreation markets). • There has recently been a growth in B&Bs in Peshurst (now 3), as well as self-contained accommodation, opening up a new overnight market. • Peshurst's profile is likely to increase markedly with the conferring of national Geopark status to the volcanic plains of south-west Victoria / south-east South Australia. With Peshurst as the home of the Volcanoes Discovery Centre, it may be more frequented by tour groups and special interest tourists. • The teahouse and antique store, hotel and gallery in the township (as well as one nearby) will continue to support daytrip visitation. 				
7. Glenthompson	3	• Socially Aware (young couples, young families, older couples)	Holiday Touring (TFL)	Melbourne Regional Vic South Australia
		• Visible Achiever (young couples, older couples)		
		• Traditional Family Life (older couples)		
		• School Groups	Education	Regional Vic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While there is little tourism visitation and infrastructure in the town at present (some day visitation), Glenthompson is one of the locations set to benefit from a Grampians ring road. Visitors touring around the southern end of the Grampians are more likely to stop in the township, and it may have a role in servicing visitors to the Grampians long distance walk, particularly those entering / existing at the proposed Lynchs Track entry point. 				

Destination	Tourism Priority	Target Markets	Purpose of Visit	Origin
8. Tarrington	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially Aware (young couples, young families, older couples) 	Holiday Touring (TFL)	Melbourne Regional Vic South Australia
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible Achiever (young couples, older couples) 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Family Life (older couples) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a township with a strong German heritage. It has an excellent café which encompasses a general store, 4 self-contained B&B's all 10 km from Hamilton, and a dedicated cycling track to Hamilton. • Visitation to the township has increased substantially in recent years, although it is still at a very modest level. 				

Recommendation

As the target markets for each town can include some differences and the level of development and preparedness for tourism is variable between towns, it is recommended that a 'destination' approach be taken to their further development and marketing. While there should continue to be overarching campaigns selling SGS and the Grampians, there should also be opportunities to promote each town as a distinct entity with its own 'personality' (which may occur under the umbrella of a regional campaign). This 'individualised' approach is particularly important for product development where the needs of each town are quite different, and it provides an opportunity to work closely with each town's community who are responsible for some of its key tourism products. *(included in Product Development Actions in the next section)*

7. Product Development

This section of the plan has been heavily informed by the Grampians Tourism Region Product Audit and Plan, 2008¹², as well as other consultations.

7.1 Assessment of Key Product Potentials

Following are the major tourism product potentials in SGS (in various stages of development) and a brief assessment of their capacity to meet market requirements and the level to which they have been developed to fulfil their tourism potential (not in priority order). Further development of these products should be relegated high priority in the Tourism Plan.

Product	Relevant Market Segment/s	Comments
a. Grampians National Park (southern end)	All domestic and international target markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fantastic, iconic asset for Victoria • Parks Victoria has not spent any money on infrastructure in the southern end of the park for 30 years. Many sites are underdeveloped such as Buandik and the Goat Track. The existing three walks near Dunkeld have no interpretation and are poorly signed. There is a lack of opportunities to access the park. This will change if the Grampians long-distance walk proceeds.
b. Pastoral & Aboriginal heritage Including - earliest Indigenous peoples; homesteads, historic buildings and walks; history of the Henty family, German heritage of early settlers;	SA, VA, TFL holiday markets Daytrippers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant stories about Australia's Aboriginal and European heritage to be told, yet there is very little opportunity for visitors to engage with or learn about this heritage and current country lifestyles. • Gaps include accommodation in homesteads, access to homestead gardens, quality interpretation and viewing of Aboriginal artefacts and history, and linkages with wine and food experiences. Some key cultural attractions also

¹² Project Delivery Pty Ltd & Insight Communications, draft Grampians Tourism Region Product Infrastructure Audit and Development Plan, 2008, for Grampians Marketing Inc.

Hamilton Art Gallery, Hamilton Botanic Gardens, Open Gardens Scheme, Ansett Museum and Pastoral Museum (Hamilton), Antique Fair (Hamilton).		<i>require enhancement.</i>
Product	Relevant Market Segment/s	Comments
c. Art and music Including Hamilton Art Gallery, gardens and galleries monthly openings in Dunkeld, Promenade of Sacred Music festival.	SA, VA, TFL holiday markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>While there are a few high quality art and music experiences in the shire, this product is still an emerging strength with many opportunities for more art and music events and activities. There is also an opportunity to link art with volcanic sites by establishing a trail that takes in the sites painted by prominent artists such as Von Guerard.</i>
d. Food and wine Including restaurants, Henty Wine Region, farmgate sales	SA, VA, TFL holiday markets International markets Daytrippers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Age Good Food Guide has consistently recognised the Royal Mail Hotel (Dunkeld - 2 hats), The Roxburgh and Darriwill Farm Café Restaurant (Hamilton).</i> • <i>Henty Wine Region produces some very worthy wines but does not have strong recognition as a wine tourism destination - few cellar door outlets and no onsite dining.</i> • <i>Many restaurants and cafes use local produce but do not communicate this as a feature to patrons.</i> • <i>Additional restaurants servicing all types of food experiences are required. In particular, there is demand for a greater cultural variety.</i> • <i>Lack of restaurants open on public holidays and Sundays, even when large events are being conducted in the town.</i> • <i>A low level of farmgate sales.</i>

Product	Relevant Market Segment/s	Comments
e. Specialty retail in Hamilton	SA, VA, TFL holiday markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A diverse range of specialty shops has developed in Hamilton in recent years. SGS Council has already recognised the need to upgrade Hamilton’s retail precinct to better meet the needs of residents and visitors.</i> • <i>Shop opening hours are very limited on weekends. Visitors require a 7-day/week shopping experience with opportunities to purchase non-essential items such as artwork, gifts, antiques, clothing, homewares. However, local residents are often out of town on weekends and for some businesses there may not be enough tourists to make opening a viable option.</i> • <i>It would also be a great advantage if the shopping environment was distinctive / authentic to Hamilton, ie. reflected local character and lifestyle, and was designed to appeal to residents as well as the SA / VA markets.</i> • <i>It would benefit from CBD revitalisation planning.</i>
f. Accommodation in Hamilton and Dunkeld	All domestic and international target markets (business and holiday traveller)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hamilton has quality accommodation for the TFL touring, family (caravan parks) and low-to-mid-range business markets.</i> • <i>However, there is very little accommodation to cater for the SA / VA families and couples, and upmarket business travellers. Motels generally require upgrades to better meet market needs.</i> • <i>Dunkeld has quality upmarket accommodation for couples and adult / family groups.</i>

Product	Relevant Market Segment/s	Comments
g. Black Range State Park	Schools Recreation groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While visitation to the park is significantly lower than for Grampians National Park, it is a significant natural site in the shire. • Visited predominantly by school and recreation groups to explore its Aboriginal cultural sites, flora and fauna. • Infrastructure in the park has been allowed to deteriorate over the last few decades (Parks Victoria-managed). • It has the potential to appeal to a wide range of visitor markets if roads and walking tracks are improved, and interpretation installed.
h. Kanawinka Geopark	Special interest - academics (international and domestic) Some interest from mainstream target markets Visiting Friends & Relatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of the sites require interpretive materials and other visitor amenities. • Volcanoes Discovery Centre is doing an excellent job providing educational services to schools and providing tours to organised groups.
i. Events	Niche markets, mostly domestic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very important drawcard to the shire • Variable in strengths and challenges.

7.2 Domestic Market Expectations

Following is a summary of domestic target markets' responses in terms of their fears, frustrations and desires towards visiting the shire. This informs our understanding of what must be addressed through product development, branding of the shire and promotional activities.

Market Segment	Fears	Frustrations	Desires
Socially Aware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of confidence that the shire can deliver what they want in terms of the types and quality of experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to find the product to meet their expectations, eg. suitable type and quality of accommodation outside of Dunkeld (couples, families), as well as allied services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High quality services (dining, accommodation, shopping); Opportunities to learn about a beautiful natural environment.
Visible Achiever	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This segment trusts that Dunkeld (Royal Mail Hotel, Grampians National Park, Dunkeld Races) will deliver on expectations and has the capacity to provide 'status' benefits. However, there is a lack of confidence that other parts of the shire are 'worth' a visit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of confidence that there is enough to do to entertain them. Lack of access to historic homesteads is a frustration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be perceived by others as having visited a highly desirable destination / product (status benefits).
Traditional Family Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncertainty about the quality of roads in Grampians National Park for caravans and cars. Unsure whether the region offers a good enough experience in terms of food, wine and accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of motels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe to drive Compact region in terms of destinations that are close together with lots to do
Young Optimist	<i>Relevant to Dunkeld only. Little visitation at present</i>	?	?

Key Findings

- It is critical to establish enough product for a short-break experience in various townships to increase the *perception* that SGS is a desirable destination, and to be able to deliver on that promise.
- Where sufficient quality product is already available, ‘bundle’ products together to offer a short-break experience when promoting the townships (eg. Coleraine, Hamilton, Tarrington).
- Undertake other product developments to strengthen the quality of short-break experiences, eg. improve facilities at natural sites, develop opportunities to visit homesteads and find out about pastoral heritage, upgrade accommodation in areas such as Hamilton.

7.3 Findings from Other Consultation

- There is a lack of product suitable for inclusion in the Great Southern Touring Route program. In particular, there is an opportunity to develop accommodation for the group market travelling along the Melbourne-Adelaide Touring Route (3.5-4 star, able to accommodate 45 people twin-share in the one venue). Adventure tourism operators offering unusual activities are also highly sought-after by the travel trade promoting the GSTR.
- In accordance with recent changes to the Victorian Planning Provisions, land that was once zoned Rural has been converted to either Farm Zone or Rural Activity Zone. Most of the land in the shire that was zoned Rural has been rezoned Farming rather than Rural Activity. The Farm Zone only permits very small scale tourism developments such as a B&B or restaurant, or up to 6 self-contained dwellings. The Rural Activity Zone provides opportunities for medium to large scale tourism enterprises, which is consistent with the scale of more successful nature-based tourism accommodation in Australia. This can limit options to develop larger tourism businesses in rural areas.
- The proposed Carbon Emissions Trading Scheme, with its potential impact on the viability of farming, also has the capacity to affect farm tourism businesses and events staged by the farming community.
- There is significant potential to further develop Hamilton Art Gallery for tourism (and local) markets.

7.4 Actions

Following is an updated excerpt from the draft Grampians Tourism Region Product and Infrastructure Audit and Development Plan, 2008, which relates to SGS. Additional strategies have also been added that were identified during the consultations for this plan.

Grampians Regional Recommendations which also relate extensively to SGS are listed in Appendix 2. (SGSC is not a lead agency for these strategies, although their extensive input will be required for the strategies' implementation - except in the instance of Strategy 6, the development of Farm Tourism, where councils are required to be lead agencies.)

See Section 2.6 for an explanation of the *Prioritising Process* used in the action tables below.

Abbreviations for Action Tables

DSE = Department of Sustainability and Environment

FOTBG = Friends of the Botanic Gardens

GTI = Grampians Tourism Inc.

HMAA = Hotel Motel & Accommodation Association of Australia

NGSC = Northern Grampians Shire Council

PV = Parks Victoria

RDV = Regional Development Victoria

SGSC = Southern Grampians Shire Council

TBC = To Be Confirmed

TV = Tourism Victoria

A. HAMILTON						
ACCOMMODATION						
Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
SA / VA / TFL / VFR couples	1. There are many historic homesteads in the Grampians region which are potential product strengths. However none of the properties are accessible to tourists.	a. Liaise with relevant owners of historic homesteads to identify if there is interest / capacity to establish a high quality B&B.	SGSC	Ongoing	N/A	Med
SA & VA families/ TFL couples/ Internat./ Business/ VFR	2. Hamilton has a very strong and growing business tourism market (expanded conferencing facilities are being developed at several locations). There is a comparatively low level of supply of 4-star self-contained accommodation to meet the requirements of the business market. There is also a lack of self-contained accommodation properties that can accommodate a coach load of visitors (important for the international market). 3. The newest motel in Hamilton is 25 years old. Most of the motels require refurbishment / restyling to bring them in line with current consumer expectations. 4. Due to a revision of AAA Tourism ratings, there is now only one 4-star motel in Hamilton. There is an opportunity for several motels to upgrade to 4-star facilities.	b. Prepare a preliminary feasibility assessment for a 30+ room accommodation property with limited self-contained facilities. Circulate results to potential, interested investors.	TV SGSC	2011 start	\$8,000	High
		c. Approach owners and managers of relevant motels to encourage a redevelopment of appearance and facilities.	SGSC GTI	Ongoing	N/A	High
		d. Prepare a 'resources pack' to assist motel/unit operators with property redevelopments including information on market trends and suggestions for property improvements. Incorporate the requirements of AAA Tourism's rating system.	SGSC GTI TV	2011 start	\$500	Med
		e. Work with the HMAA to identify professional development activities.	SGSC GTI HMAA	Ongoing	N/A	Med

ATTRactions & Activities						
Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
Nature-based						
All markets	5. Improve recreational facilities at Lake Hamilton.	f. Install board walks and landscaping at Lake Hamilton (see Lake Hamilton Master Plan).	SGSC, Vic Urban	Stage I 2010	\$500,000	High
	6. There are plans to extend the cycling tracks in and around Hamilton (eg. Grangeburn Urban Wetland, Coleraine-Cavendish Rail Trail). However, there is no bike hire available in Hamilton. • <i>Cycle tourism opportunities - See Regional Recommendations, Point 4.</i>	g. Liaise with local sports stores to ascertain interest in providing a bike hire service. Otherwise, develop a preliminary feasibility assessment of the business concept and promote the findings within the region. • <i>See Regional Recommendations, Point (d)</i>	SGSC HRBA	2011	\$1,000	Med
Culture & Heritage						
All markets	7. There is a lack of opportunities to explore the historic homesteads in the region, and their rich pastoral heritage.	h. Expand upon the existing Open Gardens and Homesteads Program as identified by Continuum Now Pty Ltd in a report titled, "Development of a Signature Event for Southern Grampians Shire" (January 2010).	SGSC TV Heritage Vic RDV	2010 start	N/A	Med
	8. Hamilton Art Gallery has significant potential to be further developed to attract visitors.	i. Actions to enhance Hamilton Art Gallery include: ▪ Undertake extensive planning for the refurbishment of the exterior and interior of the Gallery to improve the façade and quality of internal fit-out. (Proposal for planning work currently before SGS Council, \$120,000.) This planning process should also identify opportunities to extend the size of the gallery to enable a greater proportion of the collection to be exhibited at the one time, in addition	SGSC Hamilton Art Gallery	2010 start	TBC	High

		<p>to touring exhibitions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve the standard of display facilities. ▪ Attain funding to implement the gallery refurbishment concept plans. ▪ Identify funding to develop the art gallery location and surrounding land / buildings as an arts precinct. 				
	9. Continue to develop Hamilton Botanic Gardens as a major cultural asset of the town.	j. Continue with the shire-funded maintenance program for the Hamilton Botanic Gardens. Update the Botanic Gardens Strategy to guide the further development of the range and quality of plantings, interpretation and visitor facilities.	SGSC FOTBG	Ongoing	\$20,000	High
	10. Hamilton has a series of heritage buildings but little information on their history is available to the public.	k. Develop a self-guided walking tour of Hamilton's historic buildings, including interpretation signage (Hamilton History Walk).	SGSC, National Trust, Hamilton History Centre	2011 start	\$45,000	High
	11. Many volunteer-run tourism attractions are suffering from a shrinking volunteer base.	l. Work with relevant tourism attractions to identify avenues to increase their volunteer base.	Various organisations, SGSC	Ongoing	N/A	Med
	12. The history of local Indigenous communities is currently not available to Hamilton visitors. An Aboriginal Keeping Place managed by the local community contains artefacts and historical items of important cultural value.	m. Liaise with the local Aboriginal community to identify if there is interest in communicating some of their stories to visitors and displaying artefacts for visitors to view.	Local indigenous community members, SGSC, RDV, Hamilton History Centre	2011 start	TBC	Med

Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
	Children's Activities					
SA / VA families	13. There is a limited range of activities for children to do in Hamilton during both fine and inclement weather (apart from school holiday programs at the Hamilton Art Gallery, Hamilton Library and Hamilton Aquatic Centre). Most of the activities on offer are more suited to couples.	n. Prepare a preliminary feasibility assessment for a children's activity centre. Circulate results to potential, interested investors.	SGSC, RDV, GTI, TV, HRBA	2011 start	\$8,000	Med
		o. Enhance playground facilities in Hamilton Botanic Gardens and Lake Hamilton.	SGSV FOTBG	Ongoing	TBC	High
	Wine & Food					
All markets	14. With adequate provision of local produce food stores, good restaurants and cafes, there is a growing food and wine culture in Hamilton. However, awareness of local wines could be improved amongst visitor markets.	p. Wineries to promote their wines through local restaurants, cafes and retail outlets; and to maximise the opportunities that arise through food and wine events held in the shire.	SGSC Henty Wine Group Restaurants / cafes, TV	Ongoing	\$5,000	High
	Retail					
All markets	15. Shops are closed on weekends after 12pm Saturday, usually even during significant events when many tourists are in town. 16. The retail precinct in the Hamilton CBD is in need of revitalisation and upgrade.	q. Work with trader associations to organise the collective opening of shops on particular weekends to service tourist markets, eg. during significant events.	SGSC Local business / trader associations	Ongoing	N/A	High
		r. Prepare a Hamilton Retail Precinct Strategy to improve the appearance and usability of the retail area.	SGSC Local business / trader associations	2011	\$300,000	High

Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS						
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Point 2 above. <p>17. Opportunity to improve conferencing facilities in Hamilton for larger events.</p> <p>18. With growth expected in the conferencing sector (and new infrastructure being developed), there may be an opportunity for a tour operator to devise and conduct social programs. Also operate as a guided tour operator for general visitors to the area. It is notoriously difficult for this type of venture to be financially sustainable, so the operator would need to be confident of a high level of business from the conferencing sector.</p>	<p>s. Establish the Hamilton Conference and Exhibition Centre at the Hamilton Showgrounds.</p> <p>t. Approach existing coach companies to ascertain interest in conducting tours for this market. If this is unsuccessful, develop a feasibility assessment for a tour guiding business.</p>	<p>SGSC</p> <p>SGSC Coach companies RDV, GTI</p>	<p>2010</p> <p>2011</p>	<p>\$1.5 million</p> <p>\$2,000</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Low</p>
SUPPORT SERVICES						
All markets	19. Improve car and coach parking in the Hamilton CBD.	u. Undertake long-term planning for the expansion of car and coach parking in the Hamilton CBD. (Link with the CBD Structure Plan.)	SGSC RDV Vicroads HRBA	2010/11	N/A	High

B. DUNKELD						
ACCOMMODATION						
Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
SA & VA families/ Internat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm tourism experiences - see <i>Regional Recommendations, Point 6.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point (f)</i> 	SGSC, GTI	2011	\$500	Med
SA / VA / TFL / YO	<p>20. The existing community-operated caravan park requires refurbishment / a refresh of facilities.</p> <p>21. There is a lack of self-contained cabin accommodation in the town, which is likely to be further in demand with the construction of the Grampians long-distance walk. Cabins should be developed in the existing caravan park or a new caravan park developed to accommodate.</p> <p>22. While there are already 8 self-contained cottages / houses in Dunkeld, it is likely that the development of the Grampians long-distance walk will increase demand for 4-5 star cottages.</p>	<p>v. Develop a business plan for the caravan park to identify the improvements required, and to secure appropriate funding.</p> <p>w. Pending an increase in visitation as a result of the Grampians long distance walk, undertake a preliminary feasibility analysis for a new caravan park, and if it appears feasible, promote the opportunity within the wider Grampians region and to Melbourne.</p> <p>x. Pending development of the Grampians long-distance walk and rising demand for high quality, self-contained accommodation, encourage existing businesses to expand; or prepare a feasibility assessment to attract new investment. (NB. In recent times investors have been quick to respond to accommodation demand in Dunkeld.)</p>	<p>SGSC DSE Dunkeld Public Lands Committee</p> <p>SGSC PV RDV TV DTA / DPA</p> <p>SGSC PV RDV TV GTI DTA / DPA</p>	<p>2010 start</p> <p>Once long distance walk stage 3 complete</p> <p>As above</p>	<p>TBC</p> <p>\$8,000</p> <p>TBC</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>

Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
All markets	23. Future accommodation to be built in an eco-friendly style to protect / enhance the destination and cater to target markets' growing concerns about their impact on the environment. Also to support the perception of Dunkeld as an authentic nature-based destination.	y. Prepare sustainable building design guidelines to encourage and assist future developers to build using environmentally-friendly design principles. Consider provision of rates incentives to encourage appropriate design.	SGSC DPCD TV DTA / DPA	Ongoing	\$1,000	Med
ATTRACTIONS & ACTIVITIES						
All markets	24. There is a lack of a guided tour operator for walking and 4WD tours departing from Dunkeld.	z. Pending the establishment of the Grampians long distance walk, undertake a preliminary feasibility analysis for a new tour operation, and if it appears feasible, promote the opportunity within the wider Grampians region and to Melbourne.	SGSC PV TV GTI DTA / DPA	Once long distance walk stage 3 complete	\$8,000	Low
All markets	25. With 3 art galleries in and around Dunkeld, and the proposed conversion of Dunkeld railway station into an artists' studio / gallery, this would be an excellent complement to the range of experiences in Dunkeld.	aa. Support the operation and marketing of the arts and provision of art exhibition and retail spaces in Dunkeld.	SGSC Dept of Transport Arts Victoria	Ongoing	\$1,000	Med
All markets	26. There is one facility near Dunkeld that provides yoga classes and retreats, however there is a lack of other health and wellbeing services in the area. As proposed product development occurs, people interested in health and the outdoors will be increasingly attracted to Dunkeld and create demand for these services.	bb. Liaise with existing potential investors to encourage development of a day spa, massage services, etc. If no take-up, undertake a feasibility analysis for a well-being retreat and if results are positive, promote the findings to investors in the region and Melbourne.	SGSC GTI TV SPAAV DTA / DPA	2011 start	\$8,000	Med

Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
All markets	27. Walking and cycling trails in Dunkeld are fairly limited. 28. There is an opportunity to install facilities for mountain biking in / near the town. • Cycle tourism opportunities - See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point 4.</i>	cc. Improve walking infrastructure to and around Mt Sturgeon and Mt Abrupt (eg. signage, lookouts, interpretation, tracks)	PV, DTA, DPA SGSC, SRV	On-going	\$30,000	High
		dd. Install a trail that links Mt Sturgeon carpark to the town.	PV, DTA, DPA SGSC	2011 start	\$135,000 stage 1	High
		ee. Install a trail that links Dunkeld township with the proposed Grampians long-distance walk.	PV, DTA, DPA SGSC,	2012	TBC Stage 2	Med
		ff. Support the community's efforts to establish a walking and cycling trail around the town.	Community SGSC, land manager/owners	2012 start	TBC	Med
		gg. Dunkeld Pastoral Company are currently investigating the establishment of a mountain bike trail on private / crown land.	Dunkeld Pastoral Co. DSE	2011 start	N/A	Med
		• See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point (d)</i>	GTI, SGSC	2011	TBC	Med
TFL/ SA/ VA	29. Dunkeld Museum (volunteer managed, open 4 hours per week) has the potential to deliver a strong historical and cultural experience.	hh. Continue to support the Dunkeld Museum Committee of Management to deliver a strong historical and cultural experience.	Community Building Initiative DM CofM SGSC	Ongoing	N/A	Med
All markets	30. To increase the aesthetic appeal of the town's retail area and further position the town as the gateway to Grampians National Park, the facades of retail businesses could be designed to reflect a 'green' national park positioning, and buildings use environmentally friendly designs and materials.	ii. Develop design principles / style guidelines for building developments in Dunkeld's retail precinct.	SGSC DPCD TV	2011	\$3,000	High
		jj. Identify a series of incentives for shop owners and managers to improve shop facades to reflect these design style guidelines, eg. rate reductions.	Dunkeld Tourism Association DPA	2011	N/A	Med

Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
DINING & FOOD / BEVERAGES						
All markets	31. There is a range of self-contained accommodation in Dunkeld but little choice of food provisions to purchase.	kk. Investigate options to attract an investor to establish a grocery store.	SGSC, DTA, DPA	2010 start	N/A	Med
	32. There is nowhere to eat in Dunkeld after 5pm except the Royal Mail Hotel and a take-away.	ll. Investigate options to attract an investor to establish a restaurant / café that is open for dinner.	SGSC, DTA, DPA	2010 start	N/A	Med
SUPPORT SERVICES						
All markets	33. After product development for walking, mountain biking, etc. is undertaken, there is likely to be greater demand for outdoor activity and camping gear - purchase, hire and repair.	mm. Pending increased visitation for outdoor adventure activities, undertake a feasibility assessment to identify if a viable business can be established that provides these services (may be in association with an existing business).	DTA DPA SGSC	Ongoing	TBC	Low
	34. The layout of Dunkeld Visitor Information Centre requires improvement.	nn. Implement plans for the redevelopment of Dunkeld VIC.	SGSC DTA, DPA	2010	\$245,000	High

C. BALMORAL						
ACCOMMODATION						
Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
SA & VA families/ Internat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm tourism experiences - see <i>Regional Recommendations, Point 6</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point (f)</i> 	SGSC, GTI	2011	\$500	Med
ATTRACTIONS & ACTIVITIES						
All domestic markets	<p>35. Rocklands Reservoir - pending the reliable return of water, if there is demand for boating events on the lake, develop boating facilities. The reservoir may also be suitable for self guided or guided canoeing.</p> <p>36. Facilities at Black Range State Park have deteriorated in recent decades. An upgrade of facilities is important to service school groups that use the site, and to encourage further visitation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cycle tourism opportunities - See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point 4.</i> 	<p>oo. Rocklands Reservoir - pending demand by boating events, work with relevant natural resource management agencies to develop boating facilities.</p> <p>pp. Black Range State Park - Work with Parks Victoria to identify a program of restoration works, including: restore walking tracks and board walks; improve carpark and road access, interpretation of rock art sites, and directional trail markers; designate appropriate 4WD tracks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point (d)</i> 	<p>GWM Water, Horsham Rural City SGSC</p> <p>Friends of the Black Range PV</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2010 start</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>TBC</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Med</p>
DINING & FOOD / BEVERAGES						
SA / VA / TFL / golfers/ anglers	37. Balmoral has only one food / beverage option.	qq. Support efforts to ensure there is an ongoing co-operative facility that provides café, grocery, post office and newsagent services.	Balmoral Progress Association	Ongoing	N/A	Med

D. CAVENDISH						
Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
ACCOMMODATION						
SA & VA families/ Internat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm tourism experiences - see <i>Regional Recommendations, Point 6.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point (f)</i> 	SGSC, GTI	2011	\$500	Med
SA / VA / TFL couples	38. There are currently no upmarket historic B&Bs in Cavendish / Balmoral red gum country. If visitation to Cavendish or Balmoral increases, consider establishing a new, or upgrading an existing historic B&B, into a 4-star property. This would complement the rustic, pastoral heritage strength of the area and appeal to the SA/ VA couples market.	rr. Encourage take up of the opportunity by existing B&B owners for a 4-star B&B. Otherwise, undertake a preliminary feasibility assessment and if findings are positive, promote the opportunity within the Grampians region.	Cavendish Tourism Association SGSC	Ongoing	TBC	Low
ATTRACTIONS & ACTIVITIES						
All markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Grampians ring road - see <i>Regional Recommendations, Point 9.</i> Cycle tourism opportunities - See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point 4.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point (i).</i> See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point (d)</i> 	VicRoads, SGSC, GTI GTI, SGSC	2012 2011	TBC TBC	Med Med
TFL	39. Cavendish contains one of the only legal gem fossicking areas in Victoria.	ss. Promote this feature further and provide information in the town on appropriate sites, etc., eg. town story board.	SGSC CTA	2011	\$5,000	Med

E. COLERAINE (including Wannon)						
Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
ACCOMMODATION						
SA & VA families/ Internat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm tourism experiences - see Regional Recommendations, Point 6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Regional Recommendations, Point (f) 	SGSC, GTI	2011	\$500	Med
SA / VA families, VFR / 4WD	40. While there is a reasonable quantity of budget accommodation in Coleraine, there is an opportunity to provide 3½+ star self-contained accommodation that suits the family SA / VA markets, VFR and 4WD clubs.	tt. Undertake a preliminary feasibility analysis for self-contained accommodation (eg. cottage, house). If findings are positive, promote the opportunity within the local area and wider Grampians region.	CTA CDA SGSC TV	Ongoing	TBC	Low
ATTRACTIONS & ACTIVITIES						
SA / VA / TFL / VFR/ School Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a number of food production businesses in the shire that have the potential to provide visitor experiences, eg. Coleraine (chocolate production). See Shire-wide Actions, Point 66 below. <p>41. There is an opportunity to connect the Coleraine-Wannon leg of the Rail Trail that is to be developed for cyclists and walkers, with Hamilton. This will provide a potential new source of visitors and local residents to the trail ex-Hamilton.</p> <p>42. Facilities to support Rail Trail cyclists should be available from a retail outlet in Coleraine, eg. basic cycling gear, bike repair service, etc.</p> <p>43. The Eucalyptus Discovery Centre is in need of a revamp of its displays, and will require relocation due to the sale of the building.</p> <p>44. Various visitor facilities at Wannon Falls are in disrepair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Shire-wide Actions, Point (sss) below. <p>uu. Extend the Coleraine-Wannon leg of the Rail Trail to Hamilton.</p> <p>vv. Approach local retailers to identify interest in meeting the needs of the cycling market.</p> <p>ww. Investigate the potential to locate the displays from the Eucalyptus Discovery Centre at the Arboretum.</p> <p>xx. Implement the Management Plan at Wannon Falls which involves the installation / improvement of drainage, paths and platforms.</p>	<p>Wannon Reserve Committee, RDV, SGSC HRBA</p> <p>SGSC, CTA CDA, Comm. of Mngt, PV</p> <p>SGSC</p>	<p>2011</p> <p>2011 start</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2010</p>	<p>\$300,000</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>\$10,000</p> <p>\$80,000</p>	<p>Med</p> <p>Med</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p>

	45. Konoong Wootong Reservoir (8km from Coleraine) was decommissioned in mid-2008 providing opportunities to develop recreational activities including fishing (already well stocked), non-motorised boating, canoeing, etc. No camping is permitted.	yy. Liaise with Wannon Water to develop a recreational master plan for Konoong Wootong Reservoir. Examine the potential of providing outdoor adventure facilities for visitors, including canoe hire (seasonal) and camping.	SGSC, Wannon Water, RDV, CTA, CDA	2010	N/A	Med
F. PENSHURST						
Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
ACCOMMODATION						
SA & VA families/ Internat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm tourism experiences - see Regional Recommendations, Point 6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Regional Recommendations, Point (f) 	SGSC, GTI	2011	\$500	Med
ATTRACTIONS & ACTIVITIES						
All markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mt Rouse - see Regional Recommendations (Secondary Priorities), Point 11 Cycle tourism opportunities - See Regional Recommendations, Point 4. <p>46. Several design improvements to the Volcanoes Discovery Centre are required to better attract and cater for visitors.</p> <p>47. If visitation increases, there may also be an opportunity for a tour operator to be based at Peshurst or Hamilton to take guided tours of volcanic sites (minibus or 4WD).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Regional Recommendations, Point (s). See Regional Recommendations, Point (d) <p>zz. Undertake an upgrade of the Volcanoes Discovery Centre to address these issues.</p> <p>aaa. Pending increased visitation to Peshurst, undertake a preliminary feasibility analysis for a guided tour operation, and if it appears feasible, promote the opportunity within the local area and wider Grampians / Great Ocean Road regions.</p>	<p>SGSC, GTI</p> <p>SGSC, GTI</p> <p>SGSC, VDC</p> <p>Advance Peshurst SGSC</p>	<p>2011</p> <p>2011</p> <p>2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>\$25,000</p> <p>TBC</p> <p>\$184,000</p> <p>TBC</p>	<p>Med</p> <p>Med</p> <p>High</p> <p>Low</p>

G. GLENTHOMPSON						
ACCOMMODATION						
Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
SA & VA families/ Internat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm tourism experiences - see <i>Regional Recommendations, Point 6.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point (f)</i> 	SGSC, GTI	2011	\$500	Med
SA / VA / TFL couples	48. It is anticipated that over time there would be additional demand for self-contained and B&B accommodation to service visitors to the Grampians long distance walk.	bbb.Pending development of Grampians long distance walk.	SGSC	2011 start	TBC	Low
ATTRACTIONS & ACTIVITIES						
All markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grampians long-distance walk - see <i>Regional Recommendations, Point 3.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point (c).</i> 	PV, GTI	2011 start	N/A	N/A
All markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Grampians ring road - see <i>Regional Recommendations, Point 9.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point (i).</i> 	SGSC, GTI	2012	TBC	Med
All markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cycle tourism opportunities - See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point 4.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point (d)</i> 	SGSC, GTI	2011	TBC	Med
All markets	49. The lookout at Glenthompson requires additional infrastructure.	ccc. Develop a parking bay at the lookout.	Vicroads SGSC	2011 start	\$15,000	Med
DINING & FOOD / BEVERAGES						
SA / VA / TFL couples	50. Once the Grampians long distance walk is developed, a café for daytime and potentially evening meal services is likely to be required.	ddd.Pending development of Grampians long distance walk.	Glenthompson Progress Association SGSC	Ongoing	TBC	Low

H. TARRINGTON						
	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
ACCOMMODATION						
SA / VA / TFL couples	51. There are currently no upmarket historic B&Bs in Tarrington. If visitation to Tarrington increases, consider establishing a new, or upgrading an existing historic B&B, into a 4-star property. This would complement the rustic, pastoral heritage strength of the area and appeal to the SA/ VA couples market particularly being so close to Hamilton	eee. Encourage take up of the opportunity by existing B&B owners for a 4-star B&B. Otherwise, undertake a preliminary feasibility assessment and if findings are positive, promote the opportunity within the Grampians region.	Tarrington Progress Association SGSC	Ongoing	TBC	Med
SHIRE-WIDE ACTIONS						
Destination Development	52. In terms of product development for each town, allow for an individual focus on each town and surrounds, and the opportunity to explore the potential of each location and to identify where supports are required. Encourage or maintain community commitment to improving tourism facilities and experiences in their area.	fff. Develop Destination Plans for each key town in SGS in association with the community. Link with Community Action Plans.	SGSC businesses, event organisers, VIC volunteers, tourism and progress associations, clubs, etc.	2011 start	\$15,000	High
Planning	53. Significant Landscape Overlays are to be identified for the shire.	ggg. Investigate where these Significant Landscape Overlays should be located, and the impact they would have on future tourism developments.	SGSC	2010/2011	\$60,000	High
Signage	54. Town entry signage is looking tired for many towns. 55. A number of attractions and accommodation in the shire is poorly signed.	hhh. Upgrade town entry signage at all major towns in the shire. (Dunkeld completed) iii. As this type of signage is usually at the cost of tourism operators, survey operators to identify the obstacles to installing signage. Undertake relevant activities to address these challenges.	SGSC, local assoc. SGSC Vicroads HRBA	2011 start Ongoing	TBC \$6,000	High Med

	<p>56. Signage for the Mary McKillop Trail and Major Mitchell Trail is falling into very poor disrepair with no apparent maintenance program to rectify.</p> <p>57. Road signage to gardens involved in the open garden scheme is not always adequate.</p> <p>58. Improve signage for caravans at Dunkeld warning them about road conditions / access when travelling to Halls Gap.</p> <p>59. Improve signage from Dunkeld that provides adequate advanced information to people wanting to take the direct route to Halls Gap rather than travelling via Victoria Valley.</p>	<p>jjj. Support the efforts of other participating Councils to assess the value and determine future options for the Mary McKillop Trail and Major Mitchell Trail.</p> <p>kkk. Support the open gardens events (one week per year) by ensuring that roads to participating gardens are well signed. (Liaise with Vicroads.)</p> <p>lll. Work with Vicroads to develop appropriate advanced signage.</p>	<p>SGSC, GSC, LCT, Catholic Church</p> <p>SGSC Vicroads</p> <p>Vicroads</p> <p>As previous</p>	<p>2010/11</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2011</p> <p>As previous</p>	<p>\$6,000</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>\$2,000</p> <p>As previous</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Med</p> <p>High</p> <p>As previous</p>
Roads	60. There are complaints from visitors to tourism operators in the Cherrypool road area regarding the state of the road.	mmm. Improve surface of Cherrypool Road near Telangatuk Road (very poor in winter).	Vicroads	Ongoing	TBC	Med
Public Transport	<p>61. Hamilton Airport is the only airport in the Grampians region that conducts flights to major cities.</p> <p>62. Expand Sharp Airlines services to include flights between Hamilton and Adelaide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an opportunity to extend the Ararat passenger train service to Hamilton (and Portland) using proposed new infrastructure for a freight line to Portland. See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point 10</i>. 	<p>nnn. Support the upgrade of the airport so it can carry larger aircraft.</p> <p>ooo. Encourage Sharp Airlines to examine the feasibility of introducing Hamilton-Adelaide flights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby for the extension of the passenger train service from Ararat to Hamilton (and Portland). See <i>Regional Recommendations, Point (q)</i>. 	<p>SGSC Sharp Airlines As previous</p> <p>SGSC, V/line, GTI</p>	<p>2010/11</p> <p>As previous</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>\$3 million</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>Med</p>
Nature-based Sites	63. With the securing of national Geopark status for the Kanawinka region (from Colac to Mount Gambier), it is expected that volcanic tourism will increasingly provide benefits to the shire's tourism industry. It is important that further	ppp. Support product development related to the Kanawinka Geopark. Visitor amenities, infrastructure and interpretive signage is needed at sites to improve the visitor experience including:	SGSC Volcanoes Discovery Trail Committee			

	Gaps & Opportunities	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget	Priority
Arts & Culture	64. Opportunity to introduce information about Von Guerard and the Hamilton Art Gallery at volcanic sites that the renowned artist painted.	qqq. Investigate the establishment of Von Guerard arts interpretation at volcanic sites painted by the artist, which links them to the Hamilton Art Gallery.	SGSC, Hamilton Art Gallery, Natural resource managers	2011 start	TBC	Med
	65. Given the success of the concept in the Dunkeld area, there is an opportunity to open more gardens and galleries / studios regularly throughout the shire (on other weekends).	rrr. Establish monthly gardens and galleries / studio openings in parts of the shire in addition to Dunkeld. (Involve shire arts staff and community action plans)	SGSC, Artists and landowners Local tourism / progress assoc.	Ongoing	\$2,000	Med
Food & Wine	66. There are a number of food production businesses in the shire that have the potential to provide visitor experiences, eg. Coleraine (chocolate production), Glenthompson (sheep dairy). These experiences could include a tour of facilities, observation of foods being prepared, interaction with the grower / manufacturer at set times, conducting cooking classes, etc.	sss. Liaise with food manufacturers / producers to identify their level of interest in providing a visitor experience. Appoint an appropriately skilled consultant to work with the businesses to identify opportunities and the relevant infrastructure, management processes and costs related to providing these services.	SGSC GTI Food Group	Ongoing	\$10,000	Med
	67. Opportunity to increase the range of locally produced foods.	ttt. Undertake research to explore opportunities to diversify the range of foods grown in the shire and to identify farmgate sale opportunities.	SGSC Dept Primary Industries Food producers	2011 start	\$5,000	High

7.5 Investment Environment Provided by SGSC

Overview

Investment in new or existing tourism businesses over the last four years has not been significant, with only three developers or business owners seeking to attain a building or planning permit from Southern Grampians Shire Council.

In 2007 the operations of the Planning Unit were reviewed and improvements were implemented to streamline the planning permit process for applicants.

SGSC's Planning Unit supports planning that is consistent with the

three-pronged principal of sustainability - protection of the environment in which we live, facilitation of economic activity, and conservation of the heritage and liveability values of the region.

The Planning Unit aims to foster a pragmatic attitude towards developments that enhance the defined values of the Southern Grampians Shire. The Planning Unit encourages all potential developers to communicate with Council at critical points in the planning and building process. (See Section 2.6 for an explanation of the Prioritising Process used in the action tables below).

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
68. New or expanding tourism business ventures when they approach Council should be referred for consultation to both the Planning and Business Development Units. Processes should be established to capture the two-way referral process so that the developer receives the complete service of SGSC.	MPS MEDT TM	N/A	Ongoing	High
69. Develop a package of information that assists new business operators with clear instructions about the planning process and what is involved.	MPS MEDT, TM	\$500	2010/2011	High
70. In the case of tourism businesses, it is essential that the Tourism Manager be involved in the pre-application and planning permit stage. Processes should be developed to facilitate this critical planning step.	MPS TM	N/A	2010/2011	High
71. Conduct a survey of developers when their dealings with Council are concluded to monitor levels of satisfaction and identify any issues.	MPS, MBS, TM	N/A	2010/2011	High

Abbreviations

BDO – Business Development Officer
CE – Co-ordinator events
CVS – Co-ordinator Visitor Services

MCA – Manager Civic Art
DSF – Director Shire Futures
LSC – Leisure Services Co-ordinator
MBS – Manager Building Services

MEDT – Manager Economic Development and Tourism
MPS – Manager Planning Systems
TBC = To Be Confirmed
TM –Tourism Manager

8. Marketing

8.1 Promotions

Overview

The main aims of the marketing activities undertaken by SGSC are to raise awareness about the shire, motivate visitation, and provide an adequate layer of information to assist visitors to move around the shire and find the services / attractions that appeal to them.

Activities within the last few years include:

Southern Grampians Shire

- Southern Grampians Shire consumer website, visitsoutherngrampians.com.au
- Hamilton and Southern Grampians Official Visitors Guide
- Southern Grampians Touring Map
- Town brochures (8)
- Television commercial shown in Regional Victoria & South Australia
- Media Kits
- Calendar of events and festivals
- Distribution of all marketing collateral
- Photographic library / maps / editorial
- Production of specific bid material to attract conferences & events
- Accommodation map

With Industry Partners

Intrastate (with Grampians Tourism Inc)

- Participation in GTI Committee and support for *Space to Breathe* Campaign
- Assist GMI/Tourism Victoria with Media Famils
- Industry familiarisation programme for Melbourne professional conference organisers and Business Events Victoria staff
- Southern Grampians event and festival marketing support through designated SGSC funding program and marquee program

Interstate (with Grampians Tourism Inc. & Tourism Victoria)

- Media Famils Interstate
- Support for the Kanawinka Geopark.
- Support for Tourism Victoria's "Space to Breathe" Program.
- Consumer Shows
- Support for Melbourne to Adelaide Touring Route

International (with Great Southern Touring Route & Tourism Victoria)

- SGSC to continue involvement in GSTR in order to participate in a targeted international marketing program.
- In conjunction with GTI, SGSC to consider returning as a Director of the GSTR board at some stage during the life of this plan.
- Media Fams in conjunction with T.V.
- Touring Map
- Product Manuals
- Web/Individual trade web site
- CD Rom
- Trade Shows and Missions
- Trade Training
- Sales Representative (Germany)
- Publicity and familiarisations
- Images
- Advertising
- Multi-lingual promotional flyers/maps/web
- Partnership Programs
- Distribution
- Trade Communications
- Market Research
- Merchandise
- Niche Marketing

Marketing Objectives

- a. Raise awareness amongst target markets of the attractions in SGS and motivate visitation (in association with Grampians Tourism Inc. and GSTR Inc).
- b. Build awareness of the key tourism destinations and experiences on offer.
- c. Facilitate the provision of visitor information that is easily available (ie. online) to attract general and niche market segments relevant to the shire's product strengths.

Opportunities and challenges include:

- Support Grampians Tourism Inc.'s campaign focus on Spring experiences (eg. wildflowers, events, open gardens / homesteads, etc.)
- Increase co-operative promotions with the Coonawarra so Melbourne / Adelaide visitors can pre-plan a trip to include both SGS and Coonawarra destinations.
- A 'Live, Work and Invest' campaign will be conducted by SGSC in early 2010 which will support and be supported by tourism promotional initiatives.
- There has been a reduction in the number of SGS tourism operators participating in the Great Southern Touring Route international marketing program over the last three years (ie. from five to two operators). This has the potential to impact upon the number of international visitors to the shire / region.
- Improve the quality of tourism product suitable for the international market (see section 7, Product Development).
- An increase in flights by Sharp Airlines to/from Hamilton has provided more opportunities to attract visitors through joint marketing initiatives.

- Improve the online presence of tourism experiences in SGS and increase use of the web to encourage tourism visitation to SGS.
- Lack of take-up of online technology by tourism operators (eg. 35/60 accommodation operators are online) to support the effective web presence of the shire's tourism product. (See section 9, *Industry Development*)
- Increase the promotional focus on key townships as destinations within SGS.
- Township brochures are considered to be an effective way for each town to promote themselves.
- Further promote Hamilton Art Gallery to tourism markets to increase awareness of the quality of works on exhibition.
- Increase the packaging of product in the shire to attract visitor markets (see section 9, *Industry Development*)
- Accommodation map is considered to be effective.
- Grow the cycle and walking tourism markets by providing maps of cycling and walking opportunities including appropriate roads and visitor experiences, especially in and around Hamilton, Coleraine and Cavendish. Potential market segments include both organised cycle and walking groups and family/friends groups.
- The cost of fuel is considered by some tourism operators to threaten destinations more than 1.5 hours' drive from Melbourne / Adelaide (key source markets).

Abbreviations for Action Tables (below)

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See Section 2.6 for an explanation of the Prioritising Process used in the action tables below.

Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
General Marketing				
72. Continue to implement previous marketing strategies (as outlined above) that have been evaluated as being successful.	TM	\$76,000	Ongoing	High
73. Encourage additional accommodation operators to participate in packages for distribution via consumer shows and other promotional initiatives (in association with GTI).	TM, CVS	N/A	Ongoing	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to participate in well-established marketing partnerships with Grampians Tourism Inc., Great Southern Touring Route Inc. and Tourism Victoria as a means to cost-effectively promote SGS product within Victoria, interstate and internationally. (See section 15, Tourism Partnerships). 	See section 15	See section 15	See section 15	See section 15
74. Support GTI's co-operative marketing campaigns, eg. Spring campaign.	TM	\$10,000	Ongoing	High
75. Increase co-operative promotions with Coonawarra product so Melbourne / Adelaide visitors can pre-plan a trip to include both SGS and Coonawarra destinations.	TM	TBC	2011	Med
Publicity				
76. Strengthen the focus on attaining publicity for products in the shire, including print and radio coverage for weekends away, reviews of restaurants and wineries, stories on heritage features and events; as well as destination or product features on television lifestyle shows (see below). <i>Include journalist familiarisation tours in the PR activities.</i>	CE, TM	\$15,000	2010/11	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with tourism operators to build their skills in how to approach and work with the media to attract publicity (eg. training - see Section 9, Industry Development). 	see Section 9	see Section 9	see Section 9	see Section 9
77. Interstate marketing activities by Tourism Victoria to include the heroing of regional personalities connected to key products through publicity and branding initiatives, which may feature Dunkeld.	TM	N/A	2010/11	Med

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
Destination Promotion through Bundling				
<p>78. Develop 'bundles' of product to promote short-break experiences at key destinations (ie. co-operatively market rather than package as a single purchase). Products to include dining, activities and accommodation for the SA/ VA /TFL segments (as appropriate) to address market perceptions about a lack of quality product (section 7.2, Market Expectations).</p> <p>Feature products in public relations activities to lift awareness about the availability of these experiences (including television programs such as Postcards, Getaway). Also include in SGS and GTI marketing collateral and website activities. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hamilton - The Roxburgh, Darriwill Farm Café Restaurant (both recommended in The Age Good Food Guide), SevenPalmer Street, Henty region wineries ○ Dunkeld - Royal Mail Hotel, Dunkeld Gourmet Pantry, Grampians National Park, Dunkeld Races, Mosaic of Arts Weekend ○ Coleraine - Black Horse Inn B&B, Glenelg Fine Chocolates and FW Fine Food Store (or Wannan River Holiday Park, cycling trails, National Hotel bistro). ○ Peshurst - Burn Brae Homestead B&B, Madigan's Tea Room, Volcanoes Discovery Centre 	TM	\$15,000	2010/11	High
Packaging				
79. Pursue opportunities with Sharp Airlines re: the marketing of Melbourne to Hamilton services, in association with Tourism Victoria and GTI. Develop packages that include flights, hire car and Grampians experiences (such as the Royal Mail Hotel, etc.).	TM, TV, GTI Sharp Airlines	TBC (\$5,000 from TV)	2010 start	Med
80. Facilitate the development of some key packages for independent travellers and the coach (organised group) market by bringing together relevant partners and working out the processes involved.	TM CVS Tourism operators	TBC	2010 start	Med
Web Promotions				
<p>81. In relation to the Southern Grampians website, www.visitsoutherngrampians.com.au:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate SGS website with the www.visitvictoria.com website and any new Grampians regional website. • Include layers of detail for each destination within SGS, including commercial and non- 	TM GTI, TV	\$10,000	2010 start	High

<p>commercial attractions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A user must be able to undertake a Google search of all destinations in the shire and have a web listing appear at the top of the page that directs them to detailed tourism information. Ensure that the website names for each destination are “optimised”. • Each destination to have its own web address within the umbrella site, eg. www.visitcoleraine.com.au, and webpages. In this way, a town / area can use this address to promote specific events, etc. and direct traffic to the relevant area of the umbrella site (making it easier for users to find the information they need). • Establish site links with www.visitvictoria.com and Australian Tourism Data Warehouse as appropriate. • Develop video vignettes of destinations for uploading on websites and YouTube. 				
82. Identify ways in which SGSC can encourage tourism operators to use digital technology to promote their businesses. There may be issues of people not being familiar with the technology at all. (Link with section 9, Industry Development).	TM CVS	\$500	Ongoing	High
Niche Marketing				
83. Hamilton Art Gallery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamilton Art Gallery to develop a Marketing Plan in association with the SGSC Tourism Unit to further attract tourism markets. • Further integrate the marketing of the Gallery with SGS marketing campaigns. 	TM MCA	TBC	2010 start	High
84. Schools - Package experiences for schools groups, including a tour of Gum San, Brambuk and the Volcanoes Discovery Centre, and promote with the Geography Teachers Association of Victoria and History Teachers Association of Victoria.	TM	TBC	2011 start	Med
85. Cycling & Walking - Develop maps of cycling and walking opportunities including appropriate roads and visitor experiences, especially in and around Hamilton, Dunkeld, Coleraine and Cavendish. Distribute these maps through visitor information centres and accommodation businesses.	TM CVS LSC	TBC	2011 start	Med
86. Food and Wine - Prepare a food and wine brochure / trail to increase awareness of the local produce available for sale.	TM CVS	\$2000	2010-11	High

8.2 Branding

Overview

“Naturally Rich” is currently the brand for Hamilton. This supports the identified pillars of Hamilton (SGSC initiative) namely that Hamilton is naturally rich in Community Spirit, Education and Health, Innovation/Creativity/Entrepreneurial Spirit, and Natural Assets.

“Space to Breathe” is the Grampians regional brand which relates to all other destinations in the shire.

There is an opportunity to clarify the brands of the other key tourism towns in the shire so that they all fit within a “Villages of Southern Grampians” concept, which falls under the regional “Space to Breathe” brand.

The township brands should all be consistent with the SGSC’s Vision for the shire, “Australia’s Most Liveable Provincial Community,” which should not be difficult to achieve.

Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
87. Identify the brands for other tourism townships in the shire, building on the work already undertaken for the development of township brochures. This could form a part of the Destination Plans action outlined in Section 7.4, Point 52, Action (fff) and be linked to the community action planning process.	TM	TBC	2011 start	Med
88. Ensure that the branding of townships is consistent with Council’s Vision (and brand) for the shire (as noted above).	TM	N/A	2011 start	Med
89. Develop a style guide (colours, words, images, etc.) for each town’s brand for use in the development of promotional activities.	TM	TBC	2011 start	Med

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See Section 2.6 for an explanation of the Prioritising Process used in the action tables above.

9. Industry Development

9.1 Skill Development

Overview

As the tourism industry and visitor behaviours and expectations are constantly changing, it is very important that businesses are kept informed about changes to the marketplace, new technologies and opportunities. Over the last three years, up to five industry-specific training sessions per annum have been offered to tourism operators by SGSC and Grampians Tourism Inc. including packaging, international marketing, event development, bushfire preparation and response, etc. Regular networking events have also been held.

Challenges and Opportunities

- While events training has been well-attended (up to 30 people per session), attendances at other sessions could be improved (with average participant numbers of around 10 people).
- It is estimated that a significant number of tourism operators in the shire do not attend any tourism-related training.
- Training sessions have not yet been provided in the region on topics such as improving the environmental sustainability of tourism businesses and how to effectively market 'green' credentials.
- A lack of take-up of online technology in SGS (eg. 35/60 accommodation operators are online) could be assisted through training or mentoring initiatives, and encouragement to participate in the SGS tourism website.
- At the tourism industry workshop, participants identified that there is a need to increase operators' knowledge about what's in the region so they can refer guests to various activities.
- Even though several packaging training sessions have been conducted in the shire in recent years, few tourism businesses have developed value-added packages.
- The shire's tourism industry needs leaders, innovators, people who are prepared to stand out in front of others and share their skills and experience, and who have the capacity to generate collective action by the industry that does not require Council to be a lead agency. There is an opportunity to offer a leadership program for tourism operators who have the potential to make a greater contribution to the development of the shire's tourism industry.

Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
90. Conduct an annual Tourism Audit to benchmark the performance of key businesses and assess the businesses against subsequent audits and state-wide results, and to inform the training needs of the tourism industry.	TM and CVS GTI	\$3000	2010 start	High
91. Conduct an annual program of tourism training workshops. These should be a maximum length of three hours, preferably held between 12.00-3.00pm. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See also Section 9.2 regarding training related to environmental sustainability, and Section 13 regarding training for the events sector. 	TM and CVS GTI	\$2000	2010	High
92. Organise a series of familiarisation visits for tourism operators around the shire and the wider Grampians region.	TM and CVS	\$1000	2010 start	High
93. Consider taking tourism operators on a familiarisation / education tour of other high quality tourism businesses outside the region. This could provide motivation for improvements to their business, knowledge for increased professionalism, and networking opportunities.	TM	\$1500	2010	Med
94. Conduct a mentoring program (one-on-one) with operators who participated in the Tourism Audit to improve the visitor experience.	TM GTI	TBC	2011 start	High
95. Continue to encourage tourism operators to have an online presence through participation in the Southern Grampians consumer website and www.visitvictoria.com .	MT GTI	\$3000	2010 start	High
96. Conduct two industry networking nights per year.	TM	\$1000	2011 start	Med
97. Conduct an Industry Leadership Development Program that focuses on creating leaders who are highly skilled in the tourism industry, as well as understand how to engage others and encourage collective action.	TM GTI	TBC	2011 start	Med

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9.2 Environmental Sustainability & Climate Change

Overview

The release of the Environmentally Sustainable Tourism Strategic Plan by Tourism Victoria in 2009 has set directions for Victoria's tourism industry which include:

- Reduce the tourism industry's carbon footprint.
- Meet growing consumer demand for sustainable practices.
- Improve business performance through sustainable tourism and market the Victorian tourism industry's environmental credentials.

- Minimise resource use and the production of waste.
- Help the tourism industry to prepare for an increase in natural events brought on by climate change, such as wildfire.

Grampians Tourism Inc. in their Business Plan 2009/2010 has also identified strategies to encourage environmentally sustainable practices by the region's tourism industry.

Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
98. Promote awareness of carbon footprints to businesses through a toolkit to be produced by Tourism Victoria. Support the hosting of any industry briefings about the toolkit conducted by Tourism Victoria.	Tourism Vic, GTI, TM	\$500	2010-11	Med
99. Increase the take-up of environmentally friendly business practices through promotion of the 'Grow Me the Money' and 'CarbonDown' programs by Tourism Victoria.	Tourism Vic, GTI, TM	N/A	2010-11	Med
100. As part of positioning Dunkeld as a gateway to Grampians National Park and a 'green' town, encourage particular participation in the previous initiative, and investigate funding for a Village Well 'Green Streets' program.	SGSC, GTI, Dunkeld Progress Assoc, Dunkeld Tourism Assoc.	TBC	2011 start	Low
101. Actively promote businesses with endorsed environmental accreditation (or participation in the above programs), such as featuring them on Victorian and Southern Grampians websites.	Tourism Vic, GTI, TM	N/A	2010 start	High

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
<p>102. Assist the tourism industry to adapt to climate change, including preparation for disruption to business from emergency events such as wildfire, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dissemination of 'Crisis Essentials' and 'Open For Business: A comprehensive guide to crisis management for Tourism Business' prepared by Tourism Victoria. Supporting industry training sessions about preparing for disruption to business from emergency events such as bushfire, to be conducted by Tourism Victoria, CFA and other agencies. <p>This initiative is particularly important for Dunkeld which has been identified as one of Victoria's towns most vulnerable to bushfires.</p>	Tourism Vic, GTI, TM	N/A	2010-11	High
<p>103. Work with Grampians Tourism Inc. to implement the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider capacities for Green Globe 21 or similar program in the Grampians region. Develop a program for individual operator awareness and participation in a practical and accessible Sustainable Tourism Code of Conduct. Recognise excellent sustainable practice in the industry at the Regional Tourism Awards. 	GTI, TM	TBC TBC N/A	2011 start 2011 start 2010 start	Low Low Med

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10. Tourism Industry Structure

Overview

Local Tourism-Related Associations

The development of tourism is addressed at a local level by the following organisations:

- *Balmoral* - Balmoral and District Development Association
- *Branxholme* - Branxholme Progress Association
- *Byaduk and North Byaduk* - Byaduk and North Byaduk progress association
- *Cavendish* - Cavendish Townscape Association, Cavendish Tourism Association
- *Coleraine* - Coleraine Tourism Association, Coleraine and District Development Association
- *Dunkeld* - Dunkeld Tourism Association, Dunkeld Progress Association
- *Glenthompson* - Glenthompson and District Community Association
- *Hamilton* - Hamilton Regional Business Association
- *Penshurst* - Advance Penshurst
- *Tarrington* - Tarrington-Hochkirch Development Association

As identified, not all towns have a Local Tourism Association (LTA), however tourism-related activities may be undertaken by a town progress association or other group. There is an obvious lack of a tourism-related organisation in Hamilton where there is a considerable number of tourism operators.

Industry Sector Groups

There are two town-based tourism sector groups, Hamilton and Dunkeld Accommodation Providers Groups, who undertake initiatives to support this sector.

There are two regional tourism-sector groups which include membership by operators in SGS, including the Grampians Produce Group and the Caravan Park Group. The goal of these groups is to increase networking opportunities, provide a voice for lobbying, and to develop co-operative marketing activities.

Southern Grampians Tourism Advisory Board

The Southern Grampians Tourism Advisory Board (SGTAB) has been in operation for around ten years, with the charter of providing industry input into the activities of the SGS Tourism Unit. However, over that time, the roles and value of the advisory board have become unclear and there is a perception that the board mostly engages in a general sharing of tourism information rather than providing an advisory function.

While it may be appropriate to disband the SGTAB, there are still important roles that an industry group could play for the benefit of the shire's tourism industry. These include:

- With the establishment of Grampians Tourism Inc., a Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO), there is a need for a communication mechanism between the RTO and the SGS tourism industry. Attendance at meetings of an SGS tourism industry reference group by GTI would provide an opportunity for two-way communications.

- There is a perception from tourism operators who attended the Industry Workshop as part of the preparation of this report that there should be a formal mechanism by which the tourism industry can have input into the activities of the SGS Tourism Unit, or at least be able to air any concerns that may arise.
- A tourism reference group could be used as a sounding board for strategic directions undertaken by the SGSC Tourism Unit, including an annual review of the Tourism Plan.

Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
104. Disband the Southern Grampians Tourism Advisory Board.	TM MEDT	N/A	By Dec 2010	High
105. Establish a new Tourism Reference Group (TRG). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People to be appointed to the TRG according to their tourism, media or other relevant skill set; preference to be given to those who are active members of their local tourism industry; members must be able to provide strategic advice about the tourism industry from a broad perspective rather than only represent the interests of one area or industry sector; consideration to be given to geographic spread in the shire; an SGS Councillor (with an interest in tourism) to be included on the TRG. • Prepare a Terms of Reference for the TRG and a clear description of the roles of TRG members. The document should also articulate protocols in terms of responding to media inquiries about TRG activities; the time / attendance commitments of TRG members; and the term of membership. Also, devise a contract to be signed by TRG members indicating their commitment to the TRG's roles, responsibilities and protocols. • Identify a clear process for appointing TRG members and the number of members required. 	TM, CVS and MEDT	\$1,500	By Dec 2010	High

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The roles of the TRG should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategic input into the annual tourism plans and reviews prepared by the Tourism Unit. ○ Advocacy of the tourism industry ○ Active implementation of tourism initiatives ○ TRG meetings should occur approximately four times per year, and be attended by Grampians Tourism’s CEO (twice per year) and the SGSC Tourism Unit (all meetings). ○ Meetings should involve briefings and opportunities for questions / discussions. ○ Administrative support to be provided to the TRG by SGSC. ○ The TRG should be chaired by a tourism operator, possibly appointed for a maximum one year term to share the leadership. 				
<p>I06. In three-to-four years’ time, revise the TRG and identify if it is appropriate to create a stand-alone shire-wide industry group that is self-sufficient and plays a more active role in the tourism marketing and development of the shire.</p>	TM MEDT	N/A	2013	High
<p>I07. Encourage tourism operators to become members of their local tourism-related organisation to participate in tourism development activities at the local level. Conduct a promotional drive in association with these organisations to encourage this.</p>	TM	N/A	2011	Med
<p>I08. Investigate the feasibility of establishing a tourism-related committee / organisation in Hamilton. This could be a stand-alone organisation or a tourism sub-committee of Hamilton Retail & Business Association (HRBA), or other.</p>	TM HRBA	N/A	2010 start	Med

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11. Communications to Tourism Industry

Effective, regular communications between SGSC, GTI and the shire's tourism industry are critical to keep operators informed about regional marketing and development activities, and to identify industry issues before they become major problems.

Currently, information to tourism operators is disseminated by both SGSC and GTI. Communication tools include newsletters, emails and an industry website operated by GTI, www.grampianstourism.com.au.

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of Tourism Reference Group, see Section 10. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct regular networking nights, see Section 9.1. 				
109. Maintain an up-to-date database of tourism operators and other stakeholders who should receive industry communications.	CVS	N/A	2010 start	High
110. Continue to prepare and distribute quarterly newsletters to the SGS tourism industry.	TM	\$1000	2010 start	High
111. Prepare a monthly information update sheet that is emailed to tourism operators.	CVS	N/A	2010 start	Med

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12. Visitor Services

Overview

Visitor Information Centres (VICs) provide the opportunity to influence visitor itineraries, level of yield and extent of stay. They have the potential to drive significant dollars into the local economy and raise the possibility of return visitation. They are the conduit that connects the visitor with the shire's product and potential.

Being custodians of the shire's image, VIC staff have the real opportunity to motivate the visitor to stay longer, spend more and consider the destination for a return visit or an even more significant investment commitment.

SGSC manages VICs at Hamilton and Dunkeld, which have level two accreditation, and Coleraine which is not accredited. The Volcanoes Discovery Centre at Peshurst also distributes visitor information. The centre is managed by a sub-committee of Advance Peshurst Inc. with occasional support provided by SGSC.

The Hamilton VIC, originally established in 1977, has been recently refurbished and equipped with high quality facilities and display areas. The Dunkeld VIC will undergo a renewal of the entire visitor precinct in 2010. Coleraine VIC is considered to be very adequate for its purpose.

SGSC will also conduct a renovation of the Volcanoes Discovery Centre in 2010.

Key challenges for the sector include the aging of volunteers and the lack of younger people to take their place. There is often resistance from more senior volunteers to the use of computers which limits the use of digital technology to store and access visitor information. It also excludes the opportunity to use an online booking service at the VICs, for example, making bookings for visitors through a regional tourism website.

The aging of the volunteer base will also create a higher level of turnover of volunteers and increase demand for the training of new volunteers.

It has been identified that there is an opportunity to better equip the staff of shops and services frequented by visitors, such as petrol stations and take-away food venues, with information about the shire so they can respond to their inquiries.

Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
I 12. Maintain the accreditation status of Hamilton and Dunkeld VICs.	CVS	\$1000	Annually	High
I 13. To guide the operation of the VIC service, develop a “systems view” based on the Business Excellence Program.	CVS and TM	Annual budget	2010	High
I 14. Continue to maintain an up-to-date Operations Manual for each centre.	CVS	N/A	2010 start	High
I 15. Continue to use the Hamilton VIC as a location for training sessions and meetings.	CVS and TM	N/A	Ongoing	High
I 16. Continue to provide New Resident’s Kits as a service to the local community.	CVS	N/A	Ongoing	High
I 17. Undertake biennial visitor satisfaction surveys (eg. two-week blocks twice in a year every second year) through the VICs as an important research tool to monitor visitors’ perceptions and experiences of the shire.	CVS and TM	TBC	2011/2012	High
I 18. Continue a program of training new and existing VIC volunteers to provide outstanding customer service and recruit as required.	CVS	\$1500	Annually	High
I 19. Conduct local familiarisation tours for volunteers from each of the three VICs to tourism experiences within an 80km radius of the VIC.	CVS	\$1500	Annually	High
I 20. Establish the Tourism Ambassadors Program. There are two aspects of the program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Providing training to the staff of tourism businesses and other retailers who come in contact with visitor markets. The aim of the initiative is to equip staff with the knowledge to respond to visitors’ inquiries about the region. An Ambassador involved in the program would be expected to participate in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A training session at Hamilton VIC (to be conducted monthly with different participants). • A visit to their workplace conducted by the VIC Co-ordinator to provide guidance about stocking and maintaining visitor information at their outlet. • A familiarisation tour of tourism experiences in the shire. ii. Identify people who previously lived in Hamilton and now live elsewhere, who are well- 	CVS and TM	TBC	2011	Med

regarded within a key sphere of life (eg. politics, religion, community, business), to conduct a presentation at an appropriate function to colleagues about the assets of Hamilton. Link with the SGS <i>Live, Work and Invest</i> initiative				
I21. Develop “Value the Visitor” program to connect the visitor with the shire’s commercial opportunities. Participating businesses would be encouraged to provide value-added packages/offers designed to motivate increased visitation throughout the shire. Timing of the program could coincide with events, conferences and marketing campaigns.	TM, CVS, CE, BDO	\$2000	2011	Med
I22. Continue to update tourism business and events information on the SGS consumer website.	CVS and CE	N/A	Ongoing	High
I23. Continue to address the once-off funding requirements of the Volcanoes Discovery Centre and any other operational issues.	TM and CVS	\$2000	Ongoing	High
I24. Change the job title of the Visitor Information Centres Co-ordinator to better reflect the scope of the position, ie. <i>Co-ordinator Visitor Services</i> .		N/A	N/A	High

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13. Events

Overview

The Southern Grampians Shire (SGS) hosts nearly 100 significant events throughout the year, as well as an ongoing calendar of exhibitions at Hamilton Art Gallery and performances at the Hamilton Performing Arts Centre.

The Shire's major events include Sheepvention (attendances of up to 25,000); Dunkeld Races (attendances of 10,000-12,000); Rotary Club of Hamilton North Antique Fair (attendances of 2,500-3,000); and the Promenade of Sacred Music (attendances of around 2,000).

Objectives

The key objectives for tourism-related events are:

- To drive economic prosperity through increased tourism visitation and flow-on demand for goods and services.
- To reduce seasonal disparities in visitation to the shire, particularly during shoulder periods.
- To promote the shire's tourism brand.
- To utilise existing events infrastructure and provide income streams for their maintenance.
- To build the capacity of volunteer committees to stage events.
- To support event organisers in a facilitation role, rather than a 'hands on' co-ordinator's role.

The events sector in SGS is heavily reliant on voluntary committees, which are particularly vulnerable to workload burn-out and a lack of financial backing. There are very few commercially driven events in the shire. However, several community events have grown over time to become a larger tourist attraction.

As a result of the voluntary aspect of event management, events significantly support capacity-building within communities, as well as provide a wide range of social benefits to organisers and attendees.

Current SGSC Activities to Support Events

- Council acknowledges its responsibility to those that wish to run events in the region through the maintenance of streetscapes, waste management and other municipal responsibilities associated with the staging of events.
- Management of the Promenade of Sacred Music and Australia Day events.
- Calendar of events:
 - Maintenance and distribution of a biannual Calendar of Events, which lists major annual and special events within the Shire.

- Distribution to key Visitor Information Centres in the region; local accommodation, attractions and hospitality providers; trade shows; media launches and conferences.
- Inclusion of calendar information on various websites, including the SGS Council website.
- Spring Events TV Campaigns
- Monthly events calendar produced and promoted by Hamilton VIC.
- Major and Minor Events Assistance Programs which provide funding support.
- Provision of (in-kind) operational supports such as the Waste Wise Trailer, a marquee, BBQ trailer, etc.
- Conducting event organisers' workshops.
- Development of an iconic event.
- Use of Southern Grampians consumer website, www.visitsoutherngrampians.com.au, to promote events
- Additional support may be required from SGSC to attract funding from State and National event programs.
- Provide information resources to organisers on topics such as insurance coverage, talent contacts, funding sources and other information.
- Encourage usage of the new Hamilton Conference and Exhibition Centre plus other venues in the SGS.
- Investigate development of the Hamilton Lake site for an accommodation, conference / events facility.
- Opportunities to expand the events calendar, however obvious labour issues. It is important to balance communities' contributions to organising events with other community services and activities.
- Inherent accommodation limitations in small townships, however creative approaches, such as those used by Sheepvention, can help to overcome these.
- Improve and continue with Council's Events Assistance programs.
- Some assistance required by major events to address infrastructure issues that are imposing on the capacity for the events to grow.
- Council may be able to facilitate the establishment of partnerships to build on the tourism benefits from events where the organising committee are already at full capacity.

Key Challenges & Opportunities

- Heavy reliance on voluntary labour for the organising of events.
- Conservative approach to further development of events by organisers due to a reliance on volunteers and, at times, a lack of confidence in capacity.
- Tourism industry's misunderstanding of Council's role as a co-ordinator of events, rather than as a facilitator.

Actions

A review of SGSC's Events Assistance Programs resulted in the following recommendations.

Establish three categories of funding assistance for events:

(i) Minor Events Assistance Program

- The program reflects Council's recognition of the importance of community events and the contribution they make to the development of social capital in the community.
- Aim is to attract, develop and promote minor community events which have the potential to generate significant community benefits, but may not bring economic benefit into the SGS through an increase in visitor numbers. This funding program is to be used to help increase the capacity of event organisers to stage the event and promote it within the shire.
- Criteria should include the demonstration of the event's capacity to generate community benefits; level of innovation; and likelihood of the event becoming part of the annual events calendar. Event organisers must also demonstrate that they have the capacity for sound management, financial responsibility, effective promotion and publicity, and the ability to complete the project.
- Funds will only be made available to fund raising events when all policy criteria have been met. Applicants must be an incorporated body.

- Event funding can be used for:
 - Promotion and advertising of the event
 - Improved product development
 - Enhancing arts and cultural development

(ii) Major Events and Conferences Assistance Program

- The program reflects Council's recognition of the capacity of major events and conferences to generate increased visitation and length of stay, drive economic prosperity, increase the region's profile and promote the shire's brand attributes.
- Aim is to attract, develop and promote major new events and conferences, and to assist with the promotion of existing events and conferences. This program favours the funding of promotional activities to attract visitors from outside the shire.
- Criteria should include the demonstration of the event's capacity to attract audiences from outside the shire; provide an innovative program and have clear points of difference to other events in the shire; generate media exposure; and be sustainable, held regularly and expand. Event organisers must also demonstrate that they have

the capacity for sound management, financial responsibility, effective promotion and publicity, and the ability to complete the project.

- Once-off events will also be considered provided they demonstrate significant economic and promotional benefits.
- Eligibility to include an effective business plan; a commit to a post-event review with Council to identify improvements to subsequent events; applicants must be an incorporated body. Funds will only be made available to fund raising events when all policy criteria have been met.
- Event funding can be used for promotion and advertising of the event, as well as improved product development.

(iii) Special Events of Regional Significance Program

- The program reflects Council's recognition of the capacity of special events of regional significance to generate substantial economic and promotional benefits to SGS.
- Aim is to attract, develop and promote new and existing special events of regional significance. This program favours the funding of promotional activities to attract visitors from outside the shire.
- Criteria should include the demonstration of the event's capacity to attract audiences from outside the shire;

have clear points of difference to other events in Victoria; generate media exposure; and be self-funding. Event organisers must also demonstrate that they have the capacity for sound management, financial responsibility, effective promotion and publicity, and the ability to complete the project. Preference will be given to events that occur more than once and have the potential to generate an increasing level of economic benefit to the shire.

- Eligibility to include an effective business plan; commitment to a post-event review with Council to identify continuous improvement opportunities to subsequent events; must undertake an economic impact assessment of the event; applicants must be an incorporated body. Funds will only be made available to fund raising events when all policy criteria have been met.
- Event funding can be used for promotion and advertising of the event, as well as improved product development.

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
Events Assistance Programs				
125. Continue to support events as per current activities listed above, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event photography (\$2,000) Marquee erection (\$20,000) Events Bi-annual Calendar (\$6,000) 	CE TM	\$28,000	Ongoing	High
126. Continue to manage the Promenade of Sacred Music (\$70,000) and Australia Day Celebrations (\$9,000).	CE TM	\$79,000	Ongoing	High
127. Amend event policies and associated program guidelines, criteria and application forms to match the program descriptions above, noting a transitional period for events.	TM CE	N/A	July 2010	High
128. Develop a simple funding contract for the Special Events of Regional Significance Program to create a formal agreement with the recipient to fulfil funding requirements (eg. economic impact analysis, post-event briefing with Council).	TM CE	N/A	2010	High
129. In-kind operational supports for events provided by Council under the events assistance programs, including clean-up costs, are to be costed in dollar terms and noted as in-kind contributions in funding contracts or correspondence to grant recipients.	CE	N/A	Ongoing	Med
130. The following funding application procedures are to be implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor Events Assistance Program - 4 rounds to be conducted per year, maximum \$500. This can be reduced to 2 rounds over time. Allocations per round to be set by SGSC based on the seasonal demand of applications. Major Events & Conferences Assistance Program - 2 rounds to be conducted per year, maximum \$2,000. Allocations per round to be set by SGSC based on the seasonal demand of applications. Special Events of Regional Significance Program - Applications must be submitted at least 6 months prior to the staging of the event. For applications of \$2,000 and over. Applications to be made in close consultation with SGSC. There are no funding rounds for this program. 	CE TM CE TM CE TM	\$10,000 \$25,000 <i>Including Special Events of Regional Significance program</i>	Annual Annual	High High
131. Undertake briefings about the Events Assistance Programs to event organisers.	CE	N/A	June 2010	High
132. To minimise the imposition of new application timelines on community organisations, communicate directly with each potential applicant and support them to develop a suitable timeline for the preparation of their application (as required).	CE	N/A	June 2010	High

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
<p>133. Implement the following funding assessment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor Events Assistance Program - Assessment Panel to consist of the SGSC Events Co-ordinator, Tourism Manager, ED&T Manager and Shire Futures Director. No further approval required. • Major Events & Conferences Assistance Program - Assessment Panel to consist of the SGSC Events Co-ordinator, Tourism Manager, ED&T Manager, Shire Futures Director, and a Councillor (tourism portfolio). Decisions to be approved by the SGS Council. • Special Events of Regional Significance Program - Assessment Panel to be the same as previous. Decisions to be approved by the SGS Council. 	CE	N/A	July 2010	High
134. Develop a criteria assessment matrix (scorable) to form part of the funding assessment process.	CE	N/A	July 2010	High
135. Change the Event Co-ordinator's title to more accurately reflect the responsibilities of the position, ie. <i>Events Marketing and Development Officer</i> .	CE, TM, DSF	N/A	July 2010	High
Further Opportunities to Support Events				
<p>136. Build the skills and capacity of event organisers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop an Events & Conferences Planning Manual that outlines key actions and information related to organising an event, eg. insurance coverage, working with Council, resources available from Council, resources available from other community organisations free-of-charge or for hire, contacts for services required such as PA hire and catering, strategies to deal with accommodation shortages, etc. ○ Provide training to event organisers in the form of workshops to help attract funding (grants, sponsorship, etc.) and to build skills related to key duties of organising committees, including event packaging, writing business plans, risk management, environmental sustainability, etc. ○ Develop a database of contacts for talent that can be booked by event organisers, or provide a series of resources where such information can be found. 	CE	\$4,000	2010 start	High
	CE	\$3,000	2010 start	High
	CE	\$1,000	2010 start	Med

○ Provide an up-to-date list of media contacts to event organisers.	CE	N/A	2010 start	High
I37. Assist event organisers to identify State and Federal funding opportunities.	CE TM	N/A	Ongoing	High
I38. Facilitate partnerships with event organisers and tourism groups or others to help grow the tourism benefits of events (one-on-one support to event organisers).	CE	\$500	Ongoing	High
I39. Communicate the features and amenities of the new Hamilton Exhibition & Conference Centre to event organisers and other venues within the SGS.	CE	\$4,000	Ongoing	High
I40. Work with major events to address any major infrastructure issues imposing upon their capacity to grow / improve.	CE TM	N/A	Ongoing	High
I41. Through the Destination Planning process, identify new event opportunities and members of the community interested in organising a particular event. The consultation for this plan regularly identified that there are numerous opportunities for additional events to be held in the shire.	CE TM	N/A	2011	Med
I42. Work with locally-based contacts to attract key events to the shire that meet SGSC's events objectives.	CE TM	N/A	Ongoing	High
I43. Investigate, research and develop an iconic event for SGSC.	CE and TM	\$12,500	2010 start	High

Abbreviations for Action Tables

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See Section 2.6 for an explanation of the Prioritising Process used in the action tables above

14. Conferencing

Overview

Conferencing activity in SGS is typically constituted by the small meetings market (40-60 people), less frequently by small conferences of around 200 people, and occasionally attracting larger conferences of 300-500 people.

Professional Conference Organisers (PCOs) looking to place a conference in the Grampians region are generally attracted by the magnificent environment of Grampians National Park, and nature-based and adventure activities, including team-building.

The Hamilton Conference and Exhibition Centre is currently being developed at the Hamilton Showgrounds. It will involve construction of a new multi-purpose conference / functions building with exhibition space. This will facilitate the hosting of larger conferences which would otherwise not have been held in the shire, and enable other events to grow in size. It is anticipated that the new venue will also stimulate the development of accommodation facilities that will cater to the conference sector.

Support for the conference sector in the shire is provided by the SGSC Events Co-ordinator (0.3 of a full-time position) with strategic support from the Tourism Manager. Some services are provided through the visitor information centres (eg. information packs, accommodation referral service, etc).

Activities that attract and support the conference sector include:

- Encouraging local community organisations to bid for national, state or regional conference events
- Working with community organisations to support them in their development of bid proposals
- Production of Conference Kits to assist event organisers to bid for events, and to respond to inquiries from PCOs
- Preparation of Welcome Packs (via visitor information centres) to distribute to conference delegates
- Membership of Victorian Regional Conference Group and Grampians representative on the committee
- Attendance at Meeting Mart
- Hosting of site inspections for conference organisers.
- Familiarisation visits for PCOs
- Accommodation referral service through visitor information centres for conference delegates.
- Development of pre- and post-touring options and social programs.
- Promotion of conferencing support and facilities through the SGSC website.

- Provide funding support to the hosting of conferences in SGS through the Events Assistance programs.

Challenges for the sector include a lack of venues that can accommodate conference delegates in the one location, a lack of team-building activities, and the potential to improve the professionalism of some conference venues.

Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
144. Continue to implement the initiatives listed above, including support to community organisations to bid for conferences, preparation of conference kits, welcome packs, etc.	CE TM	\$4,000	Ongoing	High
145. Identify the economic impact of conferencing to SGS to assess whether there is a case to increase investment in attracting and supporting conferencing activity in the shire, in particular to increase staff resourcing and marketing campaigns.	CE TM MEDT	TBC	2011	Med
146. Conduct a marketing campaign to proactively attract conferences to SGS, primarily targeting large regional businesses and PCOs (if funding available). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with large businesses in the shire to attract national conferences and regional meetings to the shire. • Consider developing a website for the conference sector as a subset of the SGS consumer website. • Continue to implement promotional initiatives undertaken previously, eg. attendance at Meeting Mart, Conference Kits. • Communicate the features and amenities of the new Hamilton Conference and Exhibition Centre, and other venues within the SGS, to conference organisers 	CE TM	N/A \$1,000 \$12,000 N/A	Ongoing 2010 start 2010 start Ongoing	High High High High

Conference Marketing Objectives

- To increase the number of conferences in the shire and the number of delegates who attend conferences.
- To increase expenditure by conference delegates when visiting the shire.
- To encourage the return visitation of conference delegates when on holidays.
- To increase understanding of the needs and expectations of the conference sector by businesses servicing the sector.

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
I47. Conduct initiatives to encourage conference delegates to return to the shire when on holidays through the provision of good quality visitor information and incentives, eg. retail incentives program for delegates.	CE CVS	TBC	Ongoing	Med
I48. Conduct Industry Forums with the conference sector to increase the networking between venues, address any issues in the sector, and to identify suitable co-operative marketing activities.	CE TM CVS	\$500	2010	Med
I49. Work with relevant tourism operators to increase the provision of team-building activities in the shire.	CE TM CVS	N/A	Ongoing	Med
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a feasibility study for a 30+ room accommodation property with limited self-contained facilities and circulate results to potential, interested investors (<i>as per Section 7.4, Product Development Actions, Hamilton, point (2)</i>). 	See section 7.4	See section 7.4	See section 7.4	See section 7.4
I50. Facilitate the development of packages between Sharp Airlines and accommodation providers to be promoted through conference organisers.	CE TM	\$2,000	2011 start	High

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See Section 2.6 for an explanation of the Prioritising Process used in the action tables above

15. Tourism Partnerships

Overview

With potential tourism markets located throughout Victoria, interstate and internationally, marketing partnerships become critical as a means of pooling resources to conduct marketing campaigns that each partner could not afford to undertake in isolation.

Partnerships are often based on personal relationships. They are more effective and profitable when each partner considers their own interests as well as those of their partners in decision-making. Partnerships are also heavily reliant on the personalities of the staff involved. A healthy partnership can become vulnerable when a staff member leaves.

SGSC is a very active tourism partner in a range of partnership arrangements to enable it to reach its target markets and maximise the impact of its marketing spend. Key partnerships include:

Marketing

- Tourism Victoria - state-government initiatives
- Grampians Tourism Inc. - regional initiatives

- Great Southern Touring Route Inc. - international marketing alliance
- Melbourne-Adelaide Touring Route - international marketing alliance
- Limestone Coast Tourism - touring alliance
- Adjacent shires - touring and product development alliances
- Kanawinka Geopark - an alliance across **seven shires** that supports visitation to the Volcanoes Discovery Centre and other volcanic sites

Events

- Local Government Events Network
- Business Events Victoria

Economic Development

- Great South Coast Economic Development Group - regional opportunities for major trails and other investments

Visitor Services

- Visitor Information Centres Co-ordinators Networks - including networks for the Great Ocean Road region, Grampians region and a cross-border network.

Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
151. Continue to contribute resources to participate in Grampians Tourism Inc. and assist with the implementation of marketing and development activities. Continue to include representation of SGS on GTI by the SGS Tourism Manager to facilitate good communication between GTI and SGS tourism operators,	TM	\$33,000	Annual	High
152. Participation in Great Southern Touring Route Inc. continues to be important for SGS to participate in international marketing. Continue to contribute resources to participate in GSTR Inc. and assist with the implementation of marketing and development activities.	TM	\$12,000	Annual	High
153. The GSTR committee currently includes one member from the Grampians region who must communicate and co-ordinate involvement from SGSC, Northern Grampian Shire and Grampians Tourism Inc. When appropriate and in conjunction with GTI, consider returning this role to an SGSC staff member.	TM	N/A	As appropriate	Med
154. Continue to support the Kanawinka Geopark partnership.	TM	\$5,000	2010/2011	Med
155. Continue to participate in other existing tourism partnerships.	All	\$1,500	Ongoing	High
156. Explore the potential of Sister City relationships between Hamilton and Gaoyou in China, and Hamilton New Zealand, to generate tourism visitation to the shire, particularly through the education and technical tours sectors.	TM MEDT DSF	TBC	2010 start	Med

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See Section 2.6 for an explanation of the Prioritising Process used in the action tables above

16. Tourism in SGSC

Overview

Tourism is recognised by SGSC as a leader in attracting investment and residential growth to the shire. This is evidenced by the allocation of significant funding for staff and tourism programs to support the industry.

The implementation of tourism services through SGSC is primarily undertaken by the Tourism Unit which consists of a Tourism Manager, Events Co-ordinator and Visitor Information Services

Co-ordinator. The Unit forms part of the Economic Development Department which reports to the Director of Shire Futures.

In recent years, Council has established cross-council working teams to improve the integration of council services. An Integrated Planning and Design Team (IPDT) considers all major development issues, including tourism, recreation and commercial.

Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
I57. Tourism functions to continue to be based within the Economic Development and Tourism Unit that reports to the Director of Shire Futures.	SGSC	N/A	Ongoing	N/A
I58. Continue to work with Councillors to maintain their awareness of the role of tourism marketing and development in achieving the economic development and residential / business attraction goals of Council.	MEDT, CEO, DSF	N/A	Ongoing	High
I59. Ensure that the Tourism Unit's priorities for visitor amenities and facilities are considered in the preparation of work plans for the Infrastructure Unit. This may occur through the IPDT.	MEDT, TM, CVS	N/A	Ongoing	High

Also see section 7.5, *Investment Environment Provided by SGSC, for actions relating to the Council permit process for tourism developers.*

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17. Research & Evaluation

Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
Quantitative Research				
160. Continue to monitor visitation trends through VIC visitor statistics, research from Tourism Research Australia related to SGS (released approximately every 4 years), and research from Tourism Victoria in relation to the western sub-region of the Grampians (released annually).	TM CVS	N/A	Ongoing	High
Qualitative Research				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per Section 12, undertake biennial visitor satisfaction surveys (eg. two-week blocks twice in a year every second year) through the VICs as an important research tool to monitor visitors' perceptions and experiences of the shire. 	See Section 12	See Section 12	See Section 12	See Section 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per section 9.1, conduct an annual Tourism Audit to benchmark the performance of key businesses and assess the businesses against subsequent audits and state-wide results. 	See Section 9.1	See Section 9.1	See Section 9.1	See Section 9.1
Evaluation and Review of Tourism Strategic Plan				
161. Conduct an annual review of the initiatives implemented from the Tourism Strategic Plan to help inform the following year's action plan.	TM	N/A	March 2011	High
162. Utilise the Tourism Reference Group as a regular source of feedback on the success of tourism initiatives.	TM	N/A	Ongoing	High
163. <i>Product Development</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the number of initiatives implemented against those included in annual action plans. Consult the Tourism Audit and VIC survey results (above) to monitor visitor satisfaction with their experiences. As per section 7.5, conduct a survey of tourism developers when their dealings with Council are concluded to monitor levels of satisfaction. 	TM TM See section 7.5	N/A	Ongoing	High

Actions	Responsibility	Budget	Timeline	Priority
<i>164. Marketing</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a monitoring tool for each marketing activity implemented, eg. SGS website - monitor visitor hits; publicity - monitor value of publicity generated; GSTR program - monitor level of international visitors to the shire; town brochures - monitor response from participating businesses; packaging with Sharp Airlines - monitor bookings. 	TM	N/A	Ongoing	High
<i>165. Industry Development</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the number of participants in training programs. 	TM	N/A	Ongoing	High
<i>166. Tourism Industry Structure</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the success of the Tourism Reference Group (TRG) on an annual basis. 	TM	N/A	Ongoing	High
<i>167. Communications to Tourism Industry</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the effectiveness of SGSC communications to the industry through the TRG. 	TM	N/A	Ongoing	High
<i>168. Visitor Services</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per Qualitative Research actions. Monitor the number of participants in the Tourism Ambassadors Program and other training initiatives. 	CVS TM	N/A	Ongoing	High
<i>169. Events</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per section 13, involve events that receive funding through the Special Events of Regional Significance Program in a post-event review process. As per section 13, events that receive funding through the Special Events of Regional Significance Program to conduct an economic impact analysis. 	See Section 13	See Section 13	See Section 13	See Section 13
<i>170. Conferences</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a monitoring tool for each conference marketing activity implemented. As per section 14, conduct an economic impact assessment of the conferencing sector and use this as a benchmark to monitor future growth. 	CE, TM See Section 14	N/A See Section 14	Ongoing See Section 14	High See Section 14

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APPENDIX I Psychographic Profile of Domestic Target Markets

Source: Roy Morgan market segments in association with the Horizon Network, Tourism Victoria

Segment - Population Share	Visible Achiever	Traditional Family Life	Socially Aware	Young Optimist
Characteristics	Visible success stories. Seek recognition. Family life is important with high expectations for children Work for financial reward, job stimulation, power of the position Maintain traditional values about home, work and society	Retired middle Australia. Family focused lives. Cautious of new things. Passive income earnings.	Social issues orientated. Politically/community active. 35 - 49 yrs. Up market professionals. Wealth managers.	Young & progressive 18-24 years Experiential lifestyle Seek new & different things Trend setters
Holiday essentials	Quality/Value important	Budgeted holiday Security, safety Reliability	Flexibility	Fixed budget; Money to enjoy themselves at destination;
Holiday planning	Short term planning, avoid holiday periods, short breaks	Advanced planning Require detailed information on routes and accommodation	Enjoy planning process Use information & planning guides	Plan the basics; Need to know basic costs;
Holiday Experience	Educational, Unique experiences, active participation, food and wine. Child friendly	Increase knowledge Doing things haven't had a chance to do so far Relive the past. Interpretive	Explore and experience New and different Interpretative Indulgent/ boutique Eco/nature-based	New experiences; action.
Short Breaks	Wineries, Restaurants, Golf, Shopping		Melbourne <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • events • shopping 	Nightlife, social activities, beach/surfing; music/concerts, festivals, fun, adventure

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restaurants • theatre • art/culture and/or Regional indulgent retreats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • romantic B&B's • health & beauty • food & wine retreats • new age retreats 	activities, nature.
Holidays	Over seas travel Self drive. Short drive times. Child friendly experiences. Single destination. Educational	Scenic/nature/ historic touring routes by car multi regions or coach tours (group tours) with experts/ interpretation on themes of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nature/ wildlife • food wine trails • historical • fishing 	Fly-drive/ touring break Scenic/nature /historic touring with indulgent/ boutique detour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food & wine trails • health & beauty retreats • B&Bs 	Overseas travel. Self drive. Trips with friends.
Accommodation	Serviced apartments, heritage homes, boutique hotels	Hotels/ motels Caravans	Boutique 4-5 star hotels	Hotels, Backpackers;

APPENDIX 2: Grampians Region Product Audit & Development Plan - Regional Priorities

The following regional priorities are an excerpt from the draft Grampians Tourism Region Product and Infrastructure Audit & Development Plan (October 2008) and are relevant to the Product Development section of this plan.

Key: GTI = Grampians Tourism; PV = Parks Victoria; DSE = Department of Sustainability & Environment; TV = Tourism Victoria; RDV = Regional Development Victoria

Target Markets - Socially Aware (young couples, young families, older couples) Visible Achiever (young couples, older couples) Traditional Family Life (older couples) Young Optimists (young couples) International backpackers International others (couples, family / friends groups, coach groups, etc.)				
Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Recommended Actions	Responsibility	Timeline
All markets	I. Develop a Wilderness Lodge. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation has indicated that a Wilderness Lodge would increase awareness and visitation to the region. It should be an iconic, internationally recognised accommodation complex (30+ rooms/cottages), built using sustainable design principles, which provides nature-based activities for couples and the family market. (If located in/near Halls Gap it would also meet the need for self-contained apartments with on-site management as there is very limited availability at present). It would appeal to younger and older couples, SA and VA families, international visitors, and small meetings / conferences / functions markets. It should be located so as to service walkers on the Grampians long-distance walk or similar key nature-based attractions. 	a. Undertake a feasibility assessment to examine the viability of establishing a wilderness lodge within / adjacent to Grampians National Park, and to identify potentially suitable land. Prepare an Investment Prospectus. Depending on results, call for Expressions of Interest widely across Australia. Also examine the potential to include a large outdoor adventure business as part of the concept (see <i>Point 2</i>).	GTI PV DSE Shires TV RDV	

Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Recommended Actions	Responsibility	Timeline (for completion)
All markets	<p>2. Establish a large outdoor adventure business to service visitors to Grampians National Park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is currently a lack of servicing of the general tourism market for outdoor adventure activities (hard adventure, soft adventure, wildlife tourism, ecotourism, etc.) in Grampians NP, including a gap in operators prepared to work with the international travel trade. • A large-sized tourism operator is needed to service the Grampians NP and adjacent areas with products tailored to the soft adventure / ecotourism / wildlife tourism requirements of leisure and corporate markets. This business may form a part of the Wilderness Lodge concept above. It may also involve activities taking place on private land to reduce the visitor impact on Grampians NP. 	<p>b. Pending outcome of Wilderness Lodge feasibility assessment.</p>	<p>GTI PV DSE Shires Tourism Industry TV RDV</p>	
All markets	<p>3. Develop a Grampians Long-distance Walk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity identified by Parks Victoria, and supported in the Victorian Nature-based Tourism Strategy. • Current Proposal - 148 km, going from south to north or vice versa - one way only, 14 days in full length - however expect that short day trips and 2-3 day walks will be most common. Possibly fees for entry to Walk, • Camping along walk - develop 10 hiker camps with shelters (12 x 2 person accommodation); could be operated by private or public sector. Each site to have toilets and a shelter. • Markings signage, interpretation to be installed throughout walk. • Loop walks proposed for Roses Gap, Dunkeld, Mt William and Lynchs Track. 2-3 day walks proposed at north and south of the Park (ex-Dunkeld - high-end experience), (ex-Roses Gap - school groups, etc.). • May develop feeder tracks to link Wartook, Pomonal, Mafeking, etc. with the walk. • Examine the potential to walk a section, then hire a mountain bike to 	<p>c. Feasibility Study for the Grampians walk is currently underway.</p>	<p>PV DSE TV GTI</p>	

	<p>ride back along a different track.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New potential service nodes/ towns, or growth of existing nodes adjacent to or within the Park to service / feeders to the Walk: Mount Zero, Roses Gap (currently only school camp present, could develop further services on private land), Ledcourt State Forest (could be developed as an accommodation node), Cassidy Gap(?), Halls Gap, Wartook, Pomonal, Mafeking (service Mt William day walk), Dunkeld • Product and services opportunities to support the Grampians walk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation, such as 5-star camping facilities. • Tour operators to support walkers (organise trip, luggage, accommodation, etc.) • Gear hire - camping, walking boots, clothing,, etc. locate at HG • Shuttle Service to transport walkers from finish of walk back to starting point, or link with Ararat train service. • Operator to support mountain bike / walking experiences for schools. 			
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Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Recommended Actions	Responsibility	Timeline
All markets	<p>4. Develop Cycle Tourism opportunities in the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle tourism is a growing trend and anecdotal evidence suggests there is growing demand for cycling tracks and facilities in the region from visitors and local residents. • Opportunities identified at the Cycle Tourism Workshop (see <i>Grampians Tourism Region: Identifying Cycling Opportunities Workshop Report, July 2008</i>): <p>(i) Epic Ride in the Grampians Region The International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) keeps a list of the "best of the best" mountain bike trails called the IMBA Epics. The website lists and describes the Epics. There are 40 Epics listed with 1 in Italy and the remainder in the USA. Epics are highly challenging rides with special characteristics. Mountain Bike Australia (MBTA) is seeking to establish an Epic in Australia in association with IMBA.</p> <p>(ii) Mountain Bike Facility in the Grampians Region This facility could be similar to that constructed at Forrest where a series of single tracks of varying difficulty have been constructed in a compact area near the town. A facility such as this can attract recreational users, special events and racing.</p> <p>(iii) Grampians Leisure & Off-Road Touring Trails The key efforts would be to both connect existing trails in the Region and those being developed, and to market them. This would require a coordinated effort with maps, websites, tour operators, hospitality and accommodation. Some trails should service the short-trip leisure cyclist (eg. young families) while others would be designed for those interested in multi-day off-road cycle touring.</p> <p>(iv) Mt William Downhill This project utilises the existing road to Mt William within Grampians National Park and involves a tour operator providing a service to take riders and bikes to the top of the mountain so that they are able to enjoy the descent.</p>	<p>d. Conduct a full-day, facilitated workshop with the RPP Project Development Committee to further explore, analyse and prioritise these project concepts.</p>	<p>GTI PV Bicycle Victoria VicRoads Shires Cycling clubs Dept of Transport RDV</p>	

	<p>(v) Cycle Touring Route This project utilises the existing roads around the Grampians National Park. It would involve the packaging of a Cycle Touring Route in a similar way to the Great Southern Touring Route for cars. The project would involve signage, maps, web sites and tour operators for those who want support.</p>			
	<p>5. Further develop regional Indigenous tourism experiences. Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site interpretation at sites of relevance to local Aboriginal cultures, • Guided and self-guided experiences, • Identify sites where public access is permitted. 	<p>e. Prepare a Development Plan for the enhancement of Indigenous tourism experiences in the region involving extensive consultation with relevant Aboriginal communities.</p>	<p>GTI Parks Victoria Indigenous communities x 4 Shires TV Friends Groups</p>	
<p>SA / VA families Internat.</p>	<p>6. Develop farm tourism experiences in the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity to develop farm tourism in the region in response to demand for farm experiences by international group markets and higher yielding domestic markets. Local farmers are also seeking to diversify their incomes as a result of declining farm yields. Experiences found on farms around St Arnaud, Stawell, Cavendish, Balmoral, etc. could be well-suited to meet market demands, including sheep, dairy, crop farming, as well as horse care and horse riding. These experiences could include demonstrations, hands-on activities, guided tours, farm accommodation, etc. There is the potential for a Tour Operator to work with farmers to develop a wide range of experiences to meet the needs of different international and domestic clients. The Tour Operator would then tailor-make a tour itinerary in response to a request by a particular client. International and domestic marketing could be undertaken by the Tour Operator on behalf of the farm tourism operators. 	<p>f. Conduct a workshop with the agricultural sector to identify interest in participation in farm tourism, and to identify key challenges and opportunities for farm tourism product. Prepare a Farm Tourism Development Plan to guide the growth of the sector.</p>	<p>Shires GTI Victorian Farmers Federation Host Farms Assoc. CRC Tourism Dept. Primary Industries Food & Wine Groups RDV</p>	

Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Recommended Actions	Responsibility	Timeline
All markets	<p>7. Develop an experience / attraction based on the super-enhancement of the natural environment as an iconic drawcard for the Grampians region.</p> <p>The Grampians requires an attraction that establishes a competitive point of difference from other nature-based destinations in Victoria. Currently, there is no experience available in the region that has high market appeal to domestic and international target markets and cannot be experienced elsewhere in the state. While the natural features of Grampians National Park are a drawcard for walkers, many segments within the target markets are not interested in walking. Development of an experience that is accessible and appealing to a wide range of age groups within the target markets would significantly support the region's tourism industry. The 'experience' should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be based on appreciation of the natural features of the Grampians mountain range. • Provide a short experience (eg. 30-60 minutes). • Create a competitive positioning for the region, ie. unique to Victoria, and be highly photogenic (provide hero shots for regional promotion). • Be a commercial attraction involving private sector funding that is marketed domestically and internationally. 	<p>g. Investigate suitable concepts for the attraction and undertake relevant feasibility assessments.</p>	<p>GTI PV TV Shires RDV</p>	
All markets	<p>8. Develop opportunities to increase the sustainability of the region's tourism industry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councils are to encourage new developments to be carbon neutral and efficient in use of natural resources - this is consistent with national policy, state tourism strategies, and growing consumer awareness of the impact of their activities on the environment. • Halls Gap and Dunkeld to be developed as 'national park', 'green' towns. 	<p>h. Investigate implementation of the internationally-benchmarked Green Globe program across the Grampians region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See actions related to Dunkeld. 	<p>GTI Shires DSE Green Globe PV Sustainability Victoria Local Tourism Associations RDV</p>	

Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Recommended Actions	Responsibility	Timeline
All markets	<p>9. Develop a Grampians Ring Road.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By developing and promoting a ring road concept, and improving signage and road surfacing to clearly outline the route, there is an opportunity to encourage visitors to travel to other parts of the Grampians National Park rather than just attractions near the Halls Gap / Dunkeld locations. A ring road has the potential to raise the profile of a range of access points to the Park, thus encouraging visitation to a wider range of sites, and opening up new experiences and business opportunities. • For example, in Buandik / Billywing Rd (western side of the park) - location of a large number of Aboriginal art sites, the site has potential for an Indigenous business to operate accommodation / tours (currently pine plantation, lease expires 2015, could be replanted back to native bush). • Ring road concept supports visitation to accommodation and other tourism businesses at townships adjacent to the park, eg. Dunkeld, Wartook, Ararat, Moyston. • Need to clarify objectives of the route - to be a touring route, ie. scenic? Or to facilitate easier access? • When selecting roads to include as part of the ring road, identify the potential linkages and benefits of the roads in terms of their capacity to service key attractions and sites. • The current proposal for the ring road involves a mix of sealed and unsealed roads. All sections would require sealing. • Identify how to best promote the route, eg. touring route on a brochure supported by signage to relevant roads and towns. • Identify the organisation/s responsible for the upgrade and maintenance of each road. 	<p>i. Appoint a project co-ordinator to manage the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a project brief outlining concept including various route options. • Secure Council commitment to maintaining the proposed route. 	<p>GTI PV VicRoads Shires Local Tourism Associations RDV</p>	

Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Recommended Actions	Responsibility	Timeline
All markets	<p>I0. Improve public transport services to and within the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train services between Melbourne and Ararat will provide an increasingly significant opportunity for the region as consumers increase their use of public transport in response to rising petrol costs, as well as a growing awareness of the environmental impacts of travel. • People could also travel to the region via The Overlander (Melbourne-Adelaide train service). A limited number of seats on The Overlander has recently been made available at V-line rates for alighting / disembarking at locations including Horsham and Stawell. • Bus services between Ararat and Halls Gap are limited (only 3 times per week). These should connect with the Melbourne-Ararat train services to transport visitors between the towns. • See also Ararat, Point 6, re: need for car hire service to be located at Ararat Station. • There is an opportunity for Greyhound coach services between Melbourne and Adelaide, travelling via Stawell and Horsham, to provide a public transport option to the region if people were permitted to alight at these towns and stay in the region. Currently, only point to point travel is permitted. • Bus services between Stawell - Halls Gap, and Horsham-Wartook-Halls Gap, should be established to connect with the Greyhound coach services (and as services for local residents). • Improve the strategic marketing and branding of the Warrnambool-Ararat-Halls Gap coach service to ensure that it successfully encourages visitors to the Great Ocean Road to also experience the Grampians, and continues to be a viable service. (Operates 3 days per week, operator - Des Trotter). • With the recent announcement by the State Government of funding to support the introduction of a freight rail service from Melbourne via Ararat and Hamilton to Portland, seek to expand the use of this infrastructure to accommodate a passenger rail service from Ararat to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> j. Investigate the challenges related to addressing these gaps / opportunities. k. Develop packages of train travel, accommodation and activities for Melbourne visitors to the Grampians region. Examine the potential to package Melbourne-Adelaide holidays via The Overlander train with passengers getting on / off at Ararat, Horsham or Stawell to stay in the region (currently a daily service of The Overlander operates). l. As part of the train package development, liaise with the coach operator to identify the capacity to increase services between Ararat and Halls Gap. m. See Ararat, Point (f) re: car hire service. n. Consult with Greyhound Buses to identify what they need to permit a hop on / hop off service. o. If this is permitted, liaise with local coach operators and undertake research to identify if there is sufficient demand to sustain connecting services between Greyhound services and Halls Gap. p. Work with the operator of the Warrnambool-Ararat-Halls Gap coach service to identify opportunities to improve the marketing and branding of the service. 	<p>GTI V/Line Dept .of Transport Dept. of Infrastructure Private coach operators Regional Development Boards Federal Govt Shires Transport Connections Program RDV</p>	

	<p>Hamilton / Portland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinstate the train service from Melbourne via Ararat to Stawell and Horsham. Some infrastructure is still in place from a previous service. 	<p>q. Lobby State Government to provide funding to investigate the feasibility of establishing a passenger rail service between Ararat and Portland using the rail freight infrastructure.</p> <p>r. Lobby the State Government to provide funding to extend the passenger rail service from Ararat via Stawell to Horsham.</p>		
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SECONDARY PRIORITIES

Other projects identified as of secondary, but still significant, importance to the region are:

Target Markets	Gaps & Opportunities	Recommended Actions	Responsibility	Timeline
All markets	<p>2. Support product development related to the Kanawinka Geopark.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volcanic precinct from Colac to Mount Gambier - recently attained international Geopark status (one of 52 in the world and only one in Australia) - UNESCO acknowledgement of its geological, scientific and educational world-significance. It is expected the Geopark will provide benefits to the regional tourism industry in terms of increased visitation to the southern parts of the region, with potential flow-ons to the northern section. Visitor amenities, infrastructure and interpretive signage is needed at sites to improve the visitor experience including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mt Eccles National Park - in recent years the infrastructure at the park has been allowed to deteriorate (Parks Victoria managed). This is a very popular facility for both international and domestic markets. Improvements required to signage, tracks, interpretation. Mt Napier - visitor facilities also deteriorated markedly in 	<p>s. Support Kanawinka Geopark Committee and Southern Grampians Shire to attain the funding and resources required to upgrade visitor facilities at these sites, and to facilitate the establishment of businesses required to service Geopark visitors.</p>		

	<p>recent years, including interpretation signage, tracks and directional signage (Parks Victoria managed).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wannon and Nigretta Falls - improve interpretation signage and walking tracks; install camping facilities at Wannon Falls. ○ Tumuli - develop a pullover facility for cars and coaches, viewing platform and interpretive signage. ○ Harman's Valley - replace deteriorated signage. ○ Byaduk Caves - improve interpretation and walking tracks. ○ Mt Rouse - improve directional signage; install a map and interpretation signage on the mount; redefine walking tracks (trail markers and surface renewal). ○ Penshurst Volcanoes Discovery Centre: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remodel displays to include Australian Geopark information ▪ Reconfigure building entrance to open from the front ▪ Develop a group education centre. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New business development opportunities include a guided 4WD and walking and tour operator. 			
	<p>3. Establish an iconic restaurant at a winery in the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See <i>Halls Gap, Point 13</i>. 			
All markets	<p>4. Improve internet and mobile telephone coverage in the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to the quality and availability of internet services is critical for the industry to progress - for the purpose of taking direct internet bookings, professional development of tourism operators, encouraging participation in internet marketing, etc. • Without efficient internet speeds, it is not possible to implement an online booking system which is critical to support bookings for adventure tour operators. • Mobile telephone coverage (esp. in Wartook area) is very poor and is a deterrent to group adventure tours being held in the region. Mobile telephone coverage is part of the risk management toolkit for tour operators, as well as assisting them to co-ordinate various aspects of the tour experience. Significant business has already been lost to the region 	<p>t. Investigate options with major telecommunications service providers and lobby for effective and timely improvements.</p>		

	as a result of poor infrastructure.			
All markets	<p>5. Improve directional signage in the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install additional sign at Ararat to direct people to Halls Gap and Grampians NP via Stawell. Currently traffic directed to Halls Gap via Pomonal. Create a circular drive - Ararat-Halls Gap-Stawell-Ararat to provide different perspectives of the Grampians. • Address the issue of poor road access for caravans and coaches via Wartook to Halls Gap. Nominated solutions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widening of 'Wartook' Road to allow caravans and coaches to use the road safely, thus encouraging business into Wartook. • Improve advanced warning signage. • Improve signage to Halls Gap from Dunkeld at turnoff from Victoria Valley Road (many people don't see turnoff to Halls Gap and travel the longer route via Victoria Valley). Also install warning signs for caravans about the road conditions ahead. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> u. Conduct a signage audit to rationalise existing signage and to identify where additional signage is required. v. Shires are to collaborate to develop and fund these signage improvements, in association with Vicroads. w. Survey local tourism industry to identify the level of support for more controversial concepts, eg. widening of Wartook Road. 		