

# Rail Trails



## The Problem:

Major investments by the Victorian State Government in the Grampians Peaks Trail, Budj Bim, and Hamilton Gallery are transforming the Visitor Economy in the Southwest of Victoria. Our Shire's growing visitor numbers presents challenges and opportunities. Council is investing significantly in developing the breadth of visitor experience in the region, including our CBD Revitalisation Project and the development of a New Hamilton Gallery. Council's investment in visitor experience is translating to significant economic gain, with visitor expenditure January to March 2024 up by 14.9%, year on year.

Significant opportunity exists to further enhance visitor experience in the Shire. One of those opportunities is the development of the legacy of unused rail alignments and trails within the Shire to have an enviable network of walking and bike riding experiences, connecting, and providing economic opportunities for our small towns, as well unique visitor experiences.

## Priorities Addressed:



Visitor Economy



Community Health and Wellbeing

# Rail Trails



## The Solution:

Design and construction of these trails, in a staged approach, is a priority for Council. Council has funded and completed designs for gaps in the Hamilton-Coleraine rail trail. Council would also, now, like to progress with ground truthing and design of the Hamilton-Balmoral Rail Trail.

The construction of these missing shared user pathways will provide connections for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the Southern Grampians Shire townships. For visitors, it will provide an incredible way to experience our small towns and the Shires beautiful, unique and varied landscapes, including our volcanic plains, breath taking waterfalls, extraordinary redgums and the iconic Gariwerd (Grampians) National Park. Importantly, they will also provide an opportunity for community and visitors to connect with cultural heritage and truth telling.

## The Ask:



**Council is seeking financial support to complete the current infrastructure gaps in the Hamilton to Coleraine Rail Trail, which includes culverts/bridges, fencing and some path reconditioning. The estimated cost of these works is \$2.5m.**

**Council is also seeking financial support to ground truth, prepare a conceptual design, cost plan and business case to develop the Hamilton to Balmoral Rail Trail. The estimated cost of this is \$80,000**