



TIMBER  
TOWNS  
VICTORIA



STRATEGIC PLAN

2025 - 2027

FROM FOREST TO FUTURE:

**Advancing Timber Towns**

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## A REVISED STRATEGIC PLAN

**This is a revised strategic plan for Timber Towns Victoria, covering the period 2025 – 2027.**

TTV remains committed to its mission to promote the benefits of wood and its uses, from a carbon, land-use option, local processing, business opportunities and employment perspective, especially for Victoria’s rural and regional municipalities.

The opportunities extend beyond traditional applications for fibre and include biofuels and other forms of bioenergy and the future use of cellulosic fibre to manufacture a wide range of organic substitute products.

The revision to this strategy has occurred because of the decision of the Victorian Government to close access to the State’s native forests for commercial harvesting, a decision which has altered the strategic direction of TTV and many of its member councils.

View the previous strategic plan for reference by scanning the QR code or visiting <https://qrco.de/TTVSP2022>.



An audit of action against and implementation of the previous strategic plan has been completed.



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## OPERATIONALISING THIS PLAN

**Recognising the many calls upon its available resources, the TTV Executive will commit annually – and otherwise as required by circumstances – to specific action priorities for the coming year.**



## SITUATION & CONTEXT

**T**imber, derived from forestry activities and the wood products industry, is important to many Victorian communities and municipalities.

The integrated and sustainable industry provides ongoing employment and business opportunities, supplying building, communication papers, timber and paper packaging and other industrial products into Australian and international markets. The industry's activities provide a net carbon benefit.<sup>1</sup>

The closure of access to Victoria's native forests for commercial harvesting from the end of 2024 has significant consequences for TTV and its member councils. Some municipalities will cease to have any primary forestry activities and many will experience changes, including reduced employment and business opportunities.

Plantation forestry continues in Victoria and the significant majority of downstream processing in the State is supplied by plantations, including for exports.

Plantation expansion is an industry priority for several shires, ensuring land-use considerations remain at the forefront of public policy at a municipal, state and national level.

While the changes are challenging, they also present opportunities, especially those related to plantation expansion, to downstream processing and ultimately to related employment and business opportunities.

As TTV outlined in 2023, while it regrets the decision to close access to Victoria's native forests, it recognises there is a collective need for Victoria to, in summary:

1

Embrace plantation forestry, including farm forestry and agro-forestry initiatives

2

Protect access to plantations and private farm forestry, and provide legislative and regulatory support for them

3

Diversify economic activities and support transitions to a more plantation focussed industry

<sup>1</sup> XIMENES, 2023, 'Forests, Plantations, Wood Products & Australia's Carbon Balance', FWPA, Melbourne, available at: <https://fwpa.com.au/report/forests-plantations-wood-products-australias-carbon-balance/#:~:text=The%20positive%20role%20of%20sustainably%20managed%20forests%20in,be%20stored%20for%20many%20decades%20in%20wood%20products>

4

Invest in infrastructure, wood processing capability and investigate new opportunities for wood supply

5

Address land management, fire, and other natural hazards, risks and emergencies, including those arising from a changing climate and declining investment in public land management activities, including National Parks <sup>2</sup>

6

Monitor and as appropriate, act to protect native flora and fauna during harvest processes

7

Monitor and report on the reduction of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emitted to the atmosphere, as a result of plantation forestry activities

These needs drive this revised strategic plan.

<sup>2</sup> TTV, 2023, 'The Cessation of Native Forest Harvesting in Victoria – Position Paper' September 2023, available at <https://timbertownsvictoria.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2023-TTV-Position-Paper.pdf>



## MISSION

**T**imber Towns Victoria (TTV) is the local government voice on forestry and wood products related matters and their impact on local communities and local government infrastructure.



## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

**T**TV is focused on sustainable plantation forestry operations as a driver of economic and social wellbeing in our communities, towns and Council areas, while actively supporting communities, towns and regions involved in transition from native forest activities.



## KEY OBJECTIVES OF THIS STRATEGIC PLAN

The key objectives for this Strategic Plan are for TTV to:

**1**

Support and assist councils to sustainably manage the impact of issues related to forestry and wood products in their communities, including those related to closure of access to native forests and a growing and enhanced role for plantation forestry, including farm forestry and agro-forestry

**2**

Support sustainable economic development via an enhanced role for plantation forestry and an expansion and evolution of wood products manufacturing in our municipalities, including as part of the transition from native forestry

**3**

Deliver leadership and advocacy for the interests of local government and their communities, particularly related to local government infrastructure (eg. roads and bridges), employment and business opportunities



## KEY STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

This strategic plan identifies the following key strategies to deliver TTV's objectives:

- A. Robust and Active Government Relations
- B. Focus on Transport, Infrastructure and Sustainable Economic Development
- C. Supportive Land Use Management and Planning Scheme
- D. Effective TTV Communications
- E. Facilitative TTV Member Services

The graphic on the following page demonstrates the relationship between the key strategies and TTV's objectives.

Each of the key strategies is detailed on the following pages, with integrated and supportive actions specified for each.

4

Provide a forum for local government to share information and address forestry and wood products industry related issues

5

Be a sought after, credible and respected stakeholder on issues related to a sustainable forestry and wood products industry, representing local government in working with the community, all levels of governments and the forestry and wood products industry

# TTV OBJECTIVES

Support and assist councils to sustainably manage the impact of issues related to forestry and wood products in their communities

## TIMBER TOWNS VICTORIA KEY STRATEGIES

		←
<b>A</b>	<b>Robust and active Government relations</b>	
<b>B</b>	<b>Focus on Transport, Infrastructure &amp; Wood Processing</b>	B2 Evidence Based Infrastructure Planning B4 Update TIRES Report
<b>C</b>	<b>Supportive Land Use Management and Planning Scheme</b>	C1 Statutory Obligation Guidance C2 Provide Planning Guidance
<b>D</b>	<b>Effective Timber Towns Victoria Communications</b>	
<b>E</b>	<b>Facilitative Timber Towns Victoria Member Services</b>	E5 Assist with Grant Funding



Support sustainable economic development via an enhanced role for plantation forestry

Deliver leadership and advocacy for the interests of local government and their communities, particularly related to local government infrastructure

Provide a forum for local government to share information and address forestry and wood products industry related issues

Be a sought after, credible and respected stakeholder on issues related to a sustainable forestry and wood products industry

## ACTION MATRIX

A1 Relationships with Policy Makers  
A3 Represented Broadly

A1 Relationships with Policy Makers  
A2 Engaged in Policy

B1 Lead Road and Bridge Infrastructure

B2 Evidence Based Infrastructure Planning

B6 Expanded Wood Processing Activities

B5 Engaged on Infrastructure

B4 Update TIRES Report

B3 Trusted Data Source

C2 Provide Planning Guidance

C6 Community Safety & Emergency

C4 Support Adaption of Planning Schemes

C3 Lead Plantation Policy Input

C3 Lead Plantation Policy Input

D1 Engage with Media  
D2/3 Provide Updated Website & Social Media

D5 Participate in External Forums

D4 Lead External Representation

E1 Conduct Forums & Other Events

E2 Encourage Government Engagement

E3 Encourage Expanded Membership

# KEY STRATEGIES AND INTEGRATED ACTIONS

## A. Robust and Active Government Relations:

**1. Establish and maintain constructive relationships across all levels of government, representatives and relevant agencies**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Communicating with non-member Councils in Victoria via the TTV Annual Report and otherwise as appropriate
- Participating in the NTCA
- Engaging directly with relevant Victorian Ministerial offices
- Meeting with Victorian government departments engaged in land use planning, decisions and management and involved in addressing industry matters
- Engage with government on TIRES report, identifying infrastructure and transport needs
- Meeting (at the Council level) with relevant members of Parliament
- Widely distributing the TTV Annual Report and any submissions and position papers it produces

**2. Keep abreast of changes to policies and strategies in relation to the forestry and wood products sector and make submissions where appropriate**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Meeting regularly (as TTV) and share information from local and regional forestry and wood products businesses (within the limits of confidentiality)
- Maintaining direct contact with Victorian (eg. VFPA) and national (eg. AFPA, AFCA, CFMEU Manufacturing Division, FWPA) industry bodies and associations
- Engaging with indigenous landowners engaged in forestry and wood products industry activities (eg. Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation)
- Determining on a case-by-case basis, the topics on which it will make submissions

**3. Seek representation for TTV on Government review panels / committees where forestry and wood products are the focus**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Maintaining contact with relevant agencies (see A1 and A2) to ensure it has access to all relevant panels/committees
- Advocating for TTV to be represented on behalf of Councils



## B. Focus on Transport, Infrastructure and Sustainable Economic Development:

1. **Seek funding commitments from the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments to maintain and upgrade local roads and bridge infrastructure**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Maintaining the TIRES Report (see B4)
- Identify new infrastructure requirements
- Drawing attention to road and bridge infrastructure originally established for native forest activities that require long-term maintenance planning and funding
- Identifying existing fire breaks and access roads requiring preservation, including those used for recreational purposes, that are at risk of not being maintained due to the cessation of native forest harvesting and inadequate levels of investment

2. **Facilitate information and advice to members on freight, road science and other transport related knowledge sectors, for sustainable road management and capital works planning**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Collating and sharing information obtained by member Councils, other levels of Government and from industry (see A1, A2)

3. **Work with Department of Planning & Transport (DPT) and Regional Development Victoria (RDV) and other Departments and State Government agencies to access adequate local data to assist with their budget modelling**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Assisting DPT and RDV to develop specific and general data requests
- Connect DPT and RDV with member Councils, where needed



#### 4. Review the Timber Industry Road Evaluation Study (TIRES) Report 2023 - 2027

##### TTV will achieve this by:

- Seeking funding support from DTP and RDV and others, including industry, to maintain a comprehensive and continuous approach to road evaluation arising from Council involvement with the forestry and wood products industries
- Undertaking a mid-term review (2025) of the Timber Industry Road Evaluation Study (TIRES) Report 2022 - 2027
- Launching the updated TIRES Report at the Victorian Parliament

#### 5. Keep abreast of new regional infrastructure plans and provide feedback as required

##### TTV will achieve this by:

- Requesting specific advice from Government Departments about infrastructure planning processes, sharing them with Councils and engaging directly as appropriate, including supporting specific Council approaches where that is appropriate

#### 6. Understand and support opportunities for expanded and new wood processing activities to be undertaken in regional areas

##### TTV will achieve this by:

- Collating and sharing information obtained by member Councils, other levels of Government and from industry (see A1, A2)
- Evaluating and supporting sustainable development proposals providing business opportunities and employment outcomes, especially where linked to carbon positive wood products manufacturing



## C. Supportive Land Use Management and Planning Scheme:

1. Monitor timber related statutory obligations and government policies related to forestry and wood products industries on public and private land, especially related to plantation forestry, including the application of plantation carbon rules and recognition of carbon stored in wood products

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Leveraging and sharing member Council information on land use, regulation and related topics (eg. water, native vegetation clearing and so on)
- Engaging with industry, science-focussed research and Government on the storage of carbon in plantations and in wood products, post-harvest

2. Provide information and advice to members on planning requirements for plantation development and sustainable land use practices, including as they relate to plantation management and harvesting

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Maintaining government and industry connections and relationships to ensure information is accurate and timely (see A1, A2)
- Sharing information from member Councils with the most recent experiences of addressing plantation developments and other, related sustainable land use practices, including 'right to harvest' arrangements for plantation owners and the role and arrangements for post-harvest replanting
- Gathering and sharing information on the opportunities from carbon storage in plantations and, post-harvest, in wood products
- Accessing from industry and other stakeholders any guidance on processes and requirements related to planning and implementation activities

3. Provide timely and well-informed input into the development of government policies related to the forestry and wood products industry, in particular increasing opportunities for plantation forestry

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Staying abreast of opportunities to provide input and make submissions
- Determining what policy considerations provide opportunities for input
- Undertaking targeted and focussed research to develop submissions and other input

**4. Work with member Councils to assist in the adaptation of planning schemes and land use management that reflects their desired relationship with the forestry and wood products industry, including community engagement with native forests and the role of farm forestry and agro-forestry in the sequestration of carbon**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Sharing experiences, processes and outcomes from other Councils
- Engaging in planning scheme discussions at TTV meetings, with an emphasis on plantation forestry activities
- Considering the community interface with native forests, post harvesting, including accessing firewood and other non-commercial community needs
- Gathering and sharing information on supportive planning schemes to encourage the sustainable adoption of farm forestry and agro-forestry, including their role in the sequestration of carbon

**5. Assist in the adoption of Municipal Strategic Statements that identify the importance of forestry to the local economy**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Sharing examples of appropriate statements identifying the benefits of a sustainable forestry and wood products industry and its role in sustaining economic activity, providing business opportunities and employment and meeting a wide range of social and community needs
- Supporting the adoption of Wood Encouragement Policies by member councils and others

**6. Ensure community safety and emergency needs, including those related to fire management are shared across land users on a reasonable basis**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Developing and sharing with communities, industry and Government, the various roles played by land-owners and users in fire and other emergency management and recovery activities (eg. Forest Industry Brigades and initiatives like the Green Triangle Fire Alliance)
- Supporting development of increased recognition and government co-funding for industry and community fire and emergency management activities, potentially based on a scaled model recognising the extent of land owned or controlled by the Crown that is generally unmanaged

## D. Effective TTV Communications:

### 1. Increase awareness of TTV through print media and social media platforms

#### TTV will achieve this by:

- Distributing submissions, position papers and other TTV materials to news media outlets in Victoria, especially regional Victoria
- Sharing TTV content with social media platforms, including those operated by member Councils
- Inviting media outlets to engage with/interview TTV representatives acting on behalf of TTV

### 2. Ensure the TTV website provides relevant, up-to-date and accessible information

#### TTV will achieve this by:

- Maintaining the TTV website

### 3. Maintain an active social media presence

#### TTV will achieve this by:

- Maintaining TTV's social media presence on Facebook
- Considering expanding TTV's social media assets to encompass Instagram, Tik Tok and other platforms
- Linking TTV socials with the TTV website and vice versa



#### **4. Maintain TTV representation on appropriate external committees and groups**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Participating in forestry and wood products industry bodies and forums, including but not limited to:
  - Gippsland Regional Forest Industry Hub
  - Green Triangle Forest Industries Hub
  - FWCA
- Maintaining active membership of the NTCA

#### **5. Consider representation at forestry forums and events**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Monitoring upcoming forums and events and sharing with members Councils
- Attending appropriate forums and events
- Reporting relevant matters to TTV members and publicly via the TTV website and socials

## E. Facilitative TTV Member Services:

- 1. Deliver forums and other events for all Victorian councils to increase their knowledge and understanding of freight, transport, infrastructure and the impact of the forestry and wood products sector**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Conducting ongoing TTV meetings
- Considering conduct of an annual TTV member information forum or series of forums on topics determined relevant by TTV members

- 2. Encourage TTV members to remain active participants and provide opportunities for them for relevant and timely information to engage with state government and industry policy development**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Monitoring upcoming forums and events and sharing with members Councils
- Assisting member Councils to develop independent positions (as and where required)
- Supporting member Councils to make contact with relevant Ministers and Departments to assist enhanced engagement

- 3. Encourage non-member councils to join TTV where the forest and wood products industry influences and impacts are significant to local government infrastructure, their community and local economy**

**TTV will achieve this by:**

- Providing relevant non-member Councils with TTV annual reports and other materials
- Inviting non-member Councils to participate in TTV forums and events on a fee-for-service basis (see E1)
- Linking non-member Councils to TTV website and socials (see D2, D3)
- Assisting non-member Councils to engage with forestry and wood products industry bodies, relevant Ministers and State Government departments on a fee-for-service basis (see C4, C6, D4, D5)

#### **4. Conduct a member satisfaction and service survey**

##### **TTV will achieve this by:**

- Developing, distributing and collating an annual member satisfaction and service survey
- Reporting the outcomes of the survey and considering amendments to TTV's operations and services

#### **5. Assist Member Councils with funding opportunities**

##### **TTV will achieve this by:**

- Maintaining an understanding of relevant available grants
- Sharing details of grants
- Supporting member Councils to prepare and submit grant applications.

# APPENDIX

## - PRIOR STRATEGIC PLAN - 2022-2025

### MISSION

Timber Towns Victoria (TTV) is the local government voice on timber related matters and their impact on local communities and local government infrastructure.

### KEY OBJECTIVES

- To deliver leadership and advocacy for the interests of local government and their communities, particularly road and bridge infrastructure.
- To provide a forum for local government to share information and to address timber related issues
- To be a credible and respected stakeholder on timber issues, representing local government in working with the community, all levels of governments and the timber industry.
- To support and assist councils managing the impact of timber related issues
- To support sustainable communities and local government infrastructure.

### KEY STRATEGIES

#### Government Relations:

1. Establish and maintain constructive relationships across all levels of government representatives and relevant agencies.
2. Keep abreast of changes to policies and strategies in relation to the forestry and timber sector and make submissions where appropriate.
3. Seek representation for TTV to be appointed to any Government review panels / committees where timber is the focus.

#### Transport and Infrastructure:

4. Seek funding commitments from the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments to maintain and upgrade local roads and bridge infrastructure.
5. Facilitate information and advice to members on freight, road science and other transport related knowledge sectors, for sustainable road management and capital works planning.
6. Work with Department of Transport (DoT) and Regional Development Victoria (RDV) on the need for local data to assist with their budget modelling.
7. Review Timber Industry Road Evaluation Study (TIRES) Report 2022 - 2027.
8. Keep abreast of new regional infrastructure plans and provide feedback as required.

#### Land Use Management and Planning Scheme:

9. Monitor timber related statutory obligations and government policies related to forestry on public and private land.
10. Provide information and advice to members on planning requirements for plantation development and sustainable land use practices.
11. Promote and encourage councils in the sharing of skills and knowledge on the implementation of the Code of Practice for Forestry.
12. Provide timely and well-informed input into the development of government policies related to the forestry industry.

13. Work with member Councils to assist in the adaptation of planning schemes and land use management that reflects their desired relationship with the forestry industry.
14. Assist in the adoption of a Municipal Strategic Statement that identifies the importance of forestry to the local economy.
15. Work with government departments and Councils to progress initiatives and resolve issues.

#### TTV Communications:

16. Increase awareness of TTV through print media and social media platforms.
17. Ensure the TTV website provides relevant accessible information.
18. Maintain an active social media presence.
19. Maintain TTV representation on appropriate external committees and groups.
20. Consider representation at forestry forums and events.

#### TTV Membership and Services:

21. Deliver forums and other events for all Victorian councils to increase their knowledge and understanding of freight, transport, infrastructure and the impact of the forestry sector.
22. Encourage TTV members to remain active participants and provide opportunities for them for relevant and timely information and to engage with state government and industry.

23. Encourage non-member councils to join TTV where the forest and wood products industry influences and impacts are significant to local government infrastructure, their community and local economy.
24. Develop a satisfaction survey for members.
25. Assist Member Councils with funding opportunities.