



# POLICY

**Policy Name**                      **TOURISM POLICY**

**Department**                      Council

**Responsible Position**              Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator

**Policy Approved**                      Ordinary Council Meeting (28/07/2004)

**Next Revision Due**

**Supporting Internal  
Operating Procedure**

## REVISIONS

<i>Document</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Authorised By</i>	<i>Approved</i>

## 1 POLICY OBJECTIVES

East Gippsland Shire's vision for tourism is:

***“That The Tourism Industry, through sustainable growth, will remain a major contributor to East Gippsland’s economy.”***

***“That East Gippsland, through judicious development, management and marketing, becomes an increasingly sought after destination for intrastate, interstate and international visitors.”***

***“That The Tourism Industry, through education and interaction, is recognised by the Community, Industry and Government as having a real economic, social, environmental and cultural benefit to East Gippsland.”***

This policy provides guidance in the way in which the East Gippsland Shire Council will:

1. directly support and develop the tourism sector; and
2. work with other stakeholders in achieving East Gippsland Shire's vision for tourism.

## 2 BACKGROUND

“Tourism is a service-based industry comprising a number of tangible and intangible components. The tangible elements include transport, foods and beverages, tours, souvenirs and accommodation, while the intangible elements involve education, culture, and adventure or simply escape and relaxation. Tourism in Victoria caters for travellers from Melbourne, regional Victoria, interstate and overseas.”

[http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/education/tourism\\_parks/da3.htm](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/education/tourism_parks/da3.htm)

The tourism industry in East Gippsland is interconnected with all industries and it is also a significant contributor towards the economic well being of the region. It is therefore critical that the industry not only maintains its market share, but also grows and matures, allowing it to become a leader in regional tourism.

To help achieve this growth, all stakeholders must be clear about the role they play and how they integrate their functions and services with other players. It is critical that East Gippsland work smarter with our limited resources to maintain growth and the benefits derived from tourism. The tourism industry in East Gippsland needs to continually re-examine the short, medium and long-term strategies so as to adapt to the inevitable change in the internal and external environments.

The tourism industry in East Gippsland need to recognise that they are in competition with other destinations and industries for the disposable income of consumers. In an ever more competitive environment it is essential that the best use of scarce resources in maintained.

East Gippsland Shire has been conscious of community concerns about Councils role, and through a consultative process, has developed this Tourism Policy to clearly identify the role that Council will play in the provision of services and the way we will work in partnership with other stakeholders.

### **3 POLICY STATEMENT**

**The following policy statements are those where the East Gippsland Shire Council will act as the lead agency by taking direct responsibility for the function.**

#### **1. Visitor Information Services**

- a. Council will ensure accredited Visitor Information Centre services are provided at key locations throughout the municipality and at other centres to ensure adequate services are available.
- b. Council will establish and maintain appropriate information to encourage visitors to increase length of stay.
- c. Council will develop and maintain a website that:
  - 1) provides information for potential visitors to East Gippsland; and
  - 2) provides a booking service on a fee for service basis.
- d. Council will facilitate tourist and business orientated questionnaires as a means of assessing customer satisfaction with the products and services on offer.
- e. Visitor Information Centres and the staff employed to manage these facilities, together with promotional activities coordinated by this team will, be identified and marketed in a way which delivers the best outcomes for the tourism industry.

#### **2. Tourism Industry Development**

- a. Council will encourage the appropriate expansion of existing tourism industry and seek to attract new investment into East Gippsland.
- b. Council will lobby State and Federal Government departments to ensure East Gippsland is receiving its fair and appropriate allocation of available funds for industry development.
- c. Council will act as auspice agency, where appropriate, for successful grant applications.
- d. Council will ensure that other industries are not adversely affected by the tourism industry and encourage industries to work together.
- e. Council will work in partnership with an industry led marketing board.

### **3. Planning**

- a. In the formulation of its planning policies and development of Urban Design Frameworks, Council will be mindful of the effects on and needs of the tourism industry.
- b. Council will, in reviewing its planning strategies and other forward planning documents, take into consideration policies on tourism and other leisure activities.
- c. In the preparation of By-Laws and regulations, Council will have regard to their impact on tourism and the balanced development of the municipality.
- d. Council will encourage the development and investment of appropriate high quality tourism products that build upon the regions natural attractions and outdoor experiences.
- e. Council will plan for future tourism developments and precincts and understand that each location is unique and the region offers a diverse array of planning opportunities.
- f. When considering tourism developments, Council will consider the social, economic, cultural and environmental impact of the proposal within the region.

### **4. Infrastructure and amenities**

- a. In the development of its capital works program, Council will allocate appropriate budgets to facilities that will support and encourage visitors to appropriate areas within its boundaries, for example, toilet blocks, launching ramps, marinas, directional and interpretative signage, walkways etc.
- b. Council will seek financial support from other agencies whenever possible for the provision of tourist facilities.
- c. Council will encourage a high standard of landscaping within tourism precincts and commercial centres.
- d. Council will, where possible, support the establishment of regional parks and the enhancement of specific natural features, conserve areas of outstanding beauty and recognise items of heritage significance.
- e. Council will develop and maintain a tourism signage strategy for East Gippsland that takes into account the needs of visitors to the area.
- f. Council will work with partners to provide high quality signage through the implementation of the signage strategy.

## **5. Tourism Information**

- a. Council will develop a database of tourism operators within the Shire to be used in industry development, business skills development, and investment and marketing opportunities.
- b. Council will be a one-stop shop for tourism and associated economic information in East Gippsland and maintain records on tourism visitation trends, perceptions, satisfaction etc.
- c. Council will maintain a website for the tourism industry that provides appropriate information that will support industry development.
- d. Council will maintain an up to date photographic library.

**The following policy statements are those where the East Gippsland Shire will work in partnership with other stakeholders.**

## **6. Tourism Advisory Board**

- a. Council will oversee the establishment of a Tourism Advisory Board for East Gippsland. Council is firmly of the view that an independent advisory board is an important element in ensuring the long-term support from, and participation by the tourism industry and their partners. Such a body will lead to a more sustainable industry, accountable decision-making, better industry participation and long-term social and economic benefits to the region.
- b. The Tourism Advisory Board will consist of:
  1. Two Councillors, appointed by Council;
  2. Two industry representatives, appointed by Business and Tourism Peak Body;
  3. One representative from Parks Victoria;
  4. One representative from The Department of Sustainability & Environment;
  5. One representative from the Regional Tourism Campaign Committee;
  6. Two Industry representatives appointed by the Board; and
  7. Additional representatives may be co-opted by the Board for a limited period to provide advice on specific issues.
- c. Representatives will have a staggered two-year term in office immediately following Council elections.
- d. The Advisory Board will:
  1. Meet at least quarterly;
  2. Report to Council on the outcomes of meetings and any and all matters effecting tourism within East Gippsland;
  3. Provide recommendations to Council and other stakeholders; and
  4. Oversee the development of an integrated long-term tourism strategy and yearly action plans that takes into consideration the responsibilities and functions of the key stakeholders in the region.

## **7. Tourism Business Development**

- a. Council will assist businesses to develop their operations, enabling them to maximise the economic benefits of tourism to their business and the region. This will be achieved through partnership, where Council facilitate and coordinate programs that serve to increase the professionalism, skills and knowledge of the tourism industry.
- b. Council will provide opportunities for tourism operators to increase their understanding of the industry, so they are aware of opportunities to participate in activities that benefit their business.
- c. Council will encourage networking amongst the operators within the Shire as a method of expanding product knowledge.

## **8. Tourism Victoria**

“Tourism Victoria is the State Government authority responsible for developing and marketing Victoria as a premium tourist destination for Australian and international travellers. Tourism Victoria’s role is to raise awareness of, and visitation to, Victoria from within Australia and around the world through strategies and campaigns. In partnership with Victoria’s tourism industry, Tourism Victoria is fulfilling its mission to “maximise employment and the long term benefits of tourism to Victoria by developing and marketing the State as a competitive tourism destination”

*Victoria Tourism Industry, Strategic Plan 2002 -2006*

- a. Council will work with Tourism Victoria to market East Gippsland as a tourist destination.
- b. Council will work cooperatively with the Event Development Unit of Tourism Victoria to develop the events industry in East Gippsland.
- c. Council will encourage local operators to be part of the State Governments product region campaigns
- d. Council will work with the industry development unit to enable the tourism industry in East Gippsland to access business development opportunities.

## **9. Regional Tourism Campaign Committee**

“The role of the Campaign Committee is to:

- promote the region;
- promote sustainable tourism in the region;
- be informed about market trends and issues;
- work within the frame work of Tourism Victoria’s Strategic Plan and Regional Marketing Cooperative Plan, and
- work cooperatively with local and regional tourism associations and the Local Councils to promote the region.”

*East Gippsland Tourism Campaign Committee*

Council will support the Campaign Committee to market the region through the provision of the following.

- 1) Access to available up to date tourism statistics.

- 2) Access to services and staff resources where appropriate on a fee for service basis.
- 3) A staff member to participate on the committee.

#### **10. Country Victoria Tourism Association**

“CVTC aims to provide leadership, communication and marketing services to develop a professional and sustainable regional tourism industry in Victoria.”

[www.cvtc.com.au](http://www.cvtc.com.au)

Council will:

- a. Support CVTC so that their role of supporting regional tourism in Victoria is enhanced.
- b. Work with CVTC to provide leadership, communication and marketing services to East Gippsland.

#### **11. Local Business Associations, Tourism Associations and Chambers of Commerce**

*The roles of these associations and groups are to act as facilitators and advocates on behalf of their members, focusing their efforts on servicing visitor and other customers. They provide communication between their members and represent businesses to Government.*

Council will:

- a. Provide guidance and support for integrated local tourism association plans across the region.
- b. Encourage liaison between groups and organisations to maximise exposure to events in the area.
- c. Promote product packaging as a means of retaining visitors in the area for a longer period.
- d. Coordinate a Peak Body forum of local business and tourism associations on a quarterly basis.

## 12. Public Land and Water Managers

*These include, but are not limited to: The Department of Sustainability and Environment; Parks Victoria; East Gippsland Coastal Board and Gippsland Ports*

“Victoria's vision for natural resource management seeks to ensure the health of our land, water and vegetation are improved, long term productivity is enhanced and regional communities are resilient and prosperous.”

*Department of Sustainability and Environment*

‘Parks Victoria exist to:

- Conserve, protect and enhance environmental and cultural assets
- Responsibly meet the needs of our customers for quality information, services, and experiences
- Provide excellence and innovation in park management

Contribute to the social and economic well being of Victorians “

*www.parkweb.vic.gov.au*

- a. Council will work strategically with land and water managers to ensure that outcomes are of benefit to all.
- b. Council will work cooperatively to ensure that infrastructure, investment and activities managed by the above organisations meets the needs of the regional tourism industry.
- c. Council is committed to working with other government agencies to leverage off the regions natural features.

## 13. Regional Marketing Organisations

*The roles of regional marketing organisations vary depending on the activity they are involved in. Generally the role is to:*

- *promote the region, destination or attraction as a place to visit; and*
- *work cooperatively with industry, local and regional tourism associations and the Councils*

- a. Council will work with industry on appropriate regional marketing organisations, such as:

- 1) Great Alpine Road Marketing and Coordination Committees
- 2) Gippsland Food and Wine Tourism Network
- 3) Creative Gippsland.
- 4) Sydney Melbourne Coastal Drive

- b. Where appropriate, Council will be a financial member of these organisations and provide in kind support to these organisations where it maximises the outcomes for East Gippsland.