

EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Transport Plan 2012

Submission to the Inquiry into the investment of Commonwealth and State funds in public passenger transport infrastructure and services

**To The Secretary
Senate Standing Committee
on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600**



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East Gippsland - 2008

Demographics

East Gippsland Shire is located in south-east Victoria with a population of approximately 41,500 people. It is the second largest Shire in Victoria, covering 21,000 square kilometres.

Population by Region - 2006

Bairnsdale and district	25,192
Orbost and district	8,564
South West district	3,391
Rest of Shire	2,674
East Gippsland	41,361

ABS Census Data 2006

There are approximately 1,500 Indigenous Australians living in East Gippsland.

The population of the Shire is increasing at an annual average rate of 1%, with growth concentrated in the coastal towns and in Bairnsdale.

Over 50 per cent of East Gippsland residents are aged over 40 years, with 24 per cent aged over 60 years. This reflects the region's popularity for lifestyle and retirement.

East Gippsland is characterised by diverse and dispersed communities, with over 40 identifiable townships and localities, often separated by large distances.

The main commercial centre is Bairnsdale, while Orbost serves as a district centre for the far east of the Shire.

East Gippsland's tourist centre is Lakes Entrance although Omeo and the townships of the Great Alpine Road are also popular tourist destinations.



Bairnsdale

The region's major economic activities are primary industries, tourism, and manufacturing, often based on processing local products such as vegetables. Most jobs are focused in the primary industries (agriculture/timber and seafood).

In recent years, growth in employment has been in forestry/fishing, retail and the health and community sectors.

Car ownership

Car ownership in the Shire is very high with more than half the total number of households having more than one car.

This also probably reflects the long distances between towns and the lack of public transport across the Shire.

Household Car Ownership - 2006

0 vehicles	6.6%
1 vehicle	35.7%
2 or more vehicles	53.6%
Not stated	4.0%

ABS Census Data 2006

Distances between towns

The long distances between towns is a major issue in the provision of public transport. The cost of providing transport becomes a significant problem, especially when implementing regular and frequent services.

Distances between towns

Mallacoota - Bairnsdale	240km
Cann River - Bairnsdale	170km
Orbost - Bairnsdale	100km
Lakes Entrance - Bairnsdale	40km
Omeo - Bairnsdale	125km

Even distances between local townships and major towns create similar issues.

Buchan - Lakes Entrance	65km
Bruthen - Bairnsdale	25km

RACV Trip Planner

Cost of private travel

If the total cost of car ownership is considered, including wear and tear and depreciation, the cost of travelling by private car is significant, perhaps ten times the cost of travelling by public transport.

Cost of car travel

Distance km	Running Cost cents per/km	Cost \$
50	56.5	\$28.25
100	56.5	\$56.50
200	56.5	\$113.00

All costs based on 2008 RACV car operating costs

Assuming a small 1.8 litre vehicle costing 56.5cents/km to run
If a medium 2.4 litre vehicle was used it would increase the cost to about 75cents/km to run

If a large 3.5 litre vehicle was used it would further increase the cost to about 80cents/km to run

Assuming people only consider the cost of petrol when making a choice of mode it is still a relatively large cost when compared to public transport fares. The cost is likely to increase significantly with the potential increase in the cost of petrol, up to \$2.00 in the near future.

Cost of car travel - petrol cost only

Distance km	Cost of Fuel \$	Cost \$
50	\$1.50	\$6.00
50	\$2.00	\$8.00
100	\$1.50	\$12.00
100	\$2.00	\$16.00
200	\$1.50	\$24.00
200	\$2.00	\$32.00

Therefore, the provision of public transport becomes more important, particularly for lower income families.

Cost of taxi travel

If people do not have a car and public transport is not available, the cost of using taxis is excessive, because of the long distances involved. Even those with subsidised travel through the Multi-Purpose Taxi Program can not afford to travel often.

Cost of taxi (sedan) travel

One way fare from Bairnsdale			
Destination	Cost	Destination	Cost
Paynesville	\$35	Orbost	\$160
Bruthen	\$50	Omeo	\$210
Metung	\$55	Cann River	\$285
Lakes Entrance	\$65	Mallacoota	\$400

Centralisation of services

The dependency on the private car for most travel needs, the distances between towns and the high cost of travel are further exacerbated by the centralisation of services, medical facilities and education establishments, especially post-secondary education, into the major centres and particularly Bairnsdale.

For the elderly, who do not want to drive long distances, and for the young, who do not have cars, this is very onerous and could be addressed by the provision of better public transport services.

Greenhouse emissions

Greenhouse emissions from vehicles varies between 1.8 tonnes of CO₂ per annum for a small car to 3.8 tonnes of CO₂ per annum for a large car.

If a reasonable level of public transport could be provided and people encouraged to leave their car at home there could be a significant reduction in CO₂ emissions. Assuming an 'average' car generates about 3.0 tonnes of CO₂ each year and, say, 500 cars could be used less often, the level of CO₂ emissions could be reduced by 1,000 -1,200 tonnes per annum.

Transport challenges

East Gippsland Shire is facing a series of diverse and complex challenges associated with the geography and demography of a large rural and remote area, where the majority of communities have little or no public transport.

Transport is seen to be the critical issue in enabling connectivity and participation within and between communities, access to regional service centres and in increasing liveability in the Shire. Therefore, the availability and accessibility of transport needs to be given a high priority.

This strategy attempts to establish a balanced transport system in which public transport is seen as a viable alternative to private car travel.

It also recognises that transport planning in rural and remote areas needs to transfer the emphasis from social community transport services to public transport services available to the whole community.

Finally, the strategy addresses the legislative and regulatory framework which sees rural and remote communities disadvantaged in comparison to

East Gippsland Transport Strategy - 2012

Vision

Our vision for transport in East Gippsland is to provide affordable access between all major towns in the shire and access within and to the major towns from adjacent townships for all members of the community.

Therefore, East Gippsland Shire Council will adopt the following strategic statements when considering transport initiatives.

Rail services

Advocate for additional rail services between Bairnsdale and Traralgon to increase opportunities to travel to the Latrobe Valley and Melbourne, particularly to access work, education and specialist medical services.

If it is not possible to provide additional rail services because of infrastructure constraints, the additional services should be provided by coach services

Coach services

Support weekday coach services between the major towns in the Shire, which provide:

- employees the opportunity to commute to work by public transport
- the community the opportunity to travel for morning, afternoon or all day activities, such as medical appointments, shopping and personal business

Support the inclusion of regular weekend services in every amended or new coach timetable.

Recognise the need for additional services to meet

Bus services

Encourage the State Government to implement town services in each of the major towns in the Shire.

Extend existing town services into new and developing residential and commercial areas.

Support service frequencies, depending upon the size of the town, of at least a three hourly service, including commuter services.

Support weekday services preferably every day but at a minimum on three days per week.

Support the inclusion of regular weekend services in every amended or new coach timetable.



V/Line Coach services

School bus services

Recognise that school buses are a valuable transport resource for most towns, which could be better utilised in meeting community needs, particularly if:

- the school bus network was integrated into the public transport network, especially where there are no other transport services
- post-secondary students have the same status as other eligible students
- the general public can access school buses as fare paying passengers, where there are no other form of transport.

Community transport

Ensure that, where passenger numbers do not justify public transport services, alternative or community transport services are available to link communities to their nearest major town.

Ensure that community transport is regulated, to the same standards as other public transport services, to ensure the safety of passengers.

Taxis

Encourage taxi operators to ensure taxis are available throughout the Shire all day and every day, with Wheelchair Accessible Taxis in each of the major towns.

Support increased Government subsidies for Wheelchair Accessible Taxis comparable with those available in Melbourne.

Support a Multi-Purpose Taxi program, which allows residents in rural and remote areas to travel where and when required without financial penalty.

Request that the State Government recognise the difficulties of operating taxi services in rural and remote areas and amend legislation and regulations to encourage operators to expand services.

Complementary services

Facilitate the complementary use of the various transport modes to maximise the use of existing transport infrastructure and minimise the cost of service delivery.

Affordability of transport

Advocate for the cost of transport being both equitable and affordable for the whole community.

Medical transport

Ensure door-to-door medical transport services are available for residents, by supporting Red Cross and the Melbourne Medical Transport programs.

Ferries

Continue to operate the Raymond Island Ferry, meeting the needs of both the Raymond Island community and tourists.

Vehicle availability

Encourage operators to develop fleets which include a comprehensive range of vehicles so that the appropriate resources are available throughout the Shire.

Transport infrastructure

Develop public transport interchanges in major towns which facilitate the transfer between rail, where appropriate, buses and taxis.

Develop park and ride facilities which accommodate the use of private vehicles for access to public transport services.

Provide bus shelters and associated facilities which encourage people to use public transport.

New development infrastructure

Ensure that all new developments consider transport implications, including access for buses and provision of bus stops.



Low Floor Bus on Bairnsdale Town Service

Accessibility

Work co-operatively with the State Government to ensure that all transport vehicles and all transport infrastructure is consistent with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Transport information

Ensure that the community is aware of all transport services available and that the information is both available in printed and electric formats.

Encourage the State Government to make timetables available at all transport terminals and all bus stops.

Transport regulations

Continue to encourage the State Government to recognise the diversity and complexity of transport in rural and remote areas and to enact legislation and regulations specifically for rural and remote areas.

Transport planning

Advocate that the State Government develop an Integrated Transport Planning Framework that recognises sustainability, integration and partnerships as the foundations of successful transport planning.

Community involvement

Encourage the State Government to address identified transport issues at a local level, working collaboratively with communities and service providers to develop innovative ways to address transport challenges.

Shire responsibilities

East Gippsland Shire will:

- continue to represent it's community in advocating for:
 - * increased investment in public transport in East Gippsland
 - * recognition of the transport issues facing local communities
 - * changes to legislation and regulations which benefit rural and remote areas.
- work co-operatively with State and Commonwealth Governments, transport operators and the community to improve transport services and infrastructure meeting the needs of local communities.
- provide transport services and infrastructure that are the responsibility of local government.

East Gippsland Regional Transport Strategy - 2012

Existing rail services

There are currently three trains each day of the week, including weekends, between Bairnsdale and Melbourne which also provide services to Sale and Traralgon.

These existing services between Bairnsdale and Melbourne, Traralgon and Sale limit the opportunities to travel, limit the choice of time and limit the time available in Melbourne, Traralgon and Sale to undertake business, enjoy shopping or attend medical appointments.

The linked trip tables illustrate the service times and the time available at the destination. For a service to be satisfactory, there should be a range of times throughout the day and a range of time at the destination.

Improved services

This strategy for improving rail service is based on the assumption that weekday services which provide improved access to work, education, shopping and medical facilities need to be given the highest priority.

Weekend trips are assumed to be 'second order' priorities and to be developed when weekday services have been improved.

Proposed rail services

Bairnsdale - Melbourne rail services

Bairnsdale	Melbourne	Time	Melbourne	Bairnsdale
6.20am	9.54am	3 ¹ / ₂ hrs	1.25pm	5.06pm
6.20am	9.54am	5 ¹ / ₄ hrs	3.20pm	6.50pm
6.20am	9.54am	8 ³ / ₄ hrs	6.25pm	10.02pm
9.30am	1.00pm	2 ¹ / ₄ hrs	3.20pm	6.50pm
9.30am	1.00pm	5 ¹ / ₂ hrs	6.25pm	10.02pm
12.40pm	4.26pm	2 hrs	6.25pm	10.02pm

Proposed new services

There would appear to be a need for a mid-morning service to Melbourne and a mid-afternoon service from Melbourne to extend travel opportunities. The latter would be of higher priority.

These can be provided by services currently starting or terminating at Traralgon:

- the 9.30am service continuing as the 11.15am to Melbourne
- the 5.30pm being the continuation of the 3.20pm from Melbourne.

The proposed rail services improve options for travel between Bairnsdale and Traralgon and Sale, but still do not provide for work and tertiary education trips needing to arrive in Traralgon or Sale about 9.00am.

If required, these services will need to be provided by a bus service. The commuter bus service to Sale would be seen as a higher priority than that to Traralgon.

Bairnsdale - Traralgon rail services

Bairnsdale	Traralgon	Time	Traralgon	Bairnsdale
6.20am	7.47am	2 ¹ / ₄ hrs	10.00am	11.30am
6.20am	7.47am	7 ³ / ₄ hrs	3.37pm	5.06pm
6.20am	7.47am	9 ³ / ₄ hrs	5.30pm	6.50pm
6.20am	7.47am	13 hrs	8.33pm	10.02pm
9.30am	1.00pm	2 ¹ / ₂ hrs	3.37pm	5.06pm
9.30am	1.00pm	4 ¹ / ₂ hrs	5.30pm	6.50pm
12.40pm	2.07pm	1 ¹ / ₂ hrs	3.37pm	5.06pm
12.40pm	2.07pm	3 ¹ / ₂ hrs	5.30pm	6.50pm
12.40pm	2.07pm	6 ¹ / ₂ hrs	8.33pm	10.02pm
5.45pm	7.11pm	1 ¹ / ₂ hr	8.33pm	10.02pm

Proposed new services

Bairnsdale - Sale rail services

Bairnsdale	Sale	Time	Sale	Bairnsdale
6.20am	7.10am	3 ¹ / ₂ hrs	10.36am	11.30am
6.20am	7.10am	9 hrs	4.13pm	5.06pm
6.20am	7.10am	11 hrs	6.00pm	6.50pm
6.20am	7.10am	14 ¹ / ₄ hrs	9.09pm	10.02pm
9.30am	10.15am	6 hrs	4.13pm	5.06pm
9.30am	10.15am	7 ³ / ₄ hrs	6.00pm	6.50pm
9.30am	10.15am	11 hrs	9.09pm	10.02pm
12.40pm	1.30pm	2 ³ / ₄ hrs	4.13pm	5.06pm
12.40pm	1.30pm	4 ¹ / ₂ hrs	6.00pm	6.50pm
12.40pm	1.30pm	8 hrs	9.09pm	10.02pm

Proposed new services

Proposed bus services

To provide specifically timed commuter services between Bairnsdale and Traralgon and Sale, bus services would need to leave Bairnsdale at 7.45am for Traralgon and 8.15am for Sale.

The proposed rail service provides the return trip from Traralgon but a return bus service would be required from Sale leaving about 5.15pm.

Priorities for Implementation

The previous strategies have detailed a range of initiatives which are required to improve transport in East Gippsland Shire. The following tables summarise and prioritise the initia-

Priority One

Regional	Introduce additional rail services between Bairnsdale and Traralgon, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a service to Melbourne mid-morning, providing access to Sale, Traralgon and Melbourne • a services from Melbourne late afternoon leaving Traralgon after 5.00pm.
Regional	Ensure that the strategy is consistent with other regional transport strategies, particularly Wellington Shire and its demand for additional rail services to Traralgon and Melbourne.
Regional	Provide a bus service between Bairnsdale, Sale and Traralgon giving commuters the opportunity to travel to Sale and Traralgon for work and education.
Bairnsdale	Extend the town bus services in Bairnsdale to Eastwood.
Bairnsdale	Extend the town bus services in Bairnsdale to include services for commuting to and from work in the morning and evening.
Bairnsdale	Introduce an early morning service from Bairnsdale to Lakes Entrance to accommodate commuter trips for work and education.
Paynesville	Introduce a new morning service from Paynesville to Bairnsdale to accommodate commuter trips.
Lakes Entrance	Review and restructure the off peak Lakes Transit Services.
Lakes Entrance	Extend the current town services to include Lake Bunga, Lake Tyres Beach and Lake Tyers Trust.
Lakes Entrance	Extend the current special services to include Forestech.
Lakes Entrance	Extend the Lake Transit timetable to include services for travel to and from work.
Orbost/ Far East Gippsland	Provide services between Orbost, lakes entrance and Bairnsdale to accommodate work trips.
Orbost/ Far East Gippsland	Promote and facilitate the use of school buses to increase access for residents living in remote towns to Orbost, Cann River and Mallacoota.
Metung	Introduce a daily bus service between Metung and Bairnsdale, including services to accommodate commuting to and from work.
Alpine	Re-organise the timetable for services between Omeo and Bairnsdale to accommodate commuter trips.
Alpine	Promote and facilitate the use of school buses to increase access for residents living in remote towns, particularly between Benambra and Omeo.
Lakes Entrance/ Paynesville	Co-ordinate Bairnsdale-Paynesville and Bairnsdale-Lakes Entrance service to provide a Lakes Tourist Service.

Priorities for Implementation

Priority Two

Regional	Review the need for additional weekend services between Bairnsdale and Traralgon when the weekday services have been shown to be successful.
Bairnsdale	Extend town bus services in Bairnsdale to Saturdays.
Bairnsdale	Support shopper bus services between adjacent towns and Bairnsdale, for example Lindenow and Bengworden.
Paynesville	Implement a town service to link Paynesville, Newlands Arm and Eagle Point.
Lakes Entrance	Consider the need for Lakes Transit services at weekends, particularly over the summer period.
Metung	Advocate a weekend service from Metung to Bairnsdale.
Metung	Extend the proposed two days per week service from Metung to Lakes Entrance to a daily service.
Metung	Extend the hours of service Between Metung and Lakes Entrance to accommodate commuting to and from work.
Orbost/ Far East Gippsland	Introduce an Orbost town bus service, including services between Orbost and adjacent towns.
Orbost/ Far East Gippsland	Provide a limited mid-morning and mid-afternoon service between Orbost and Bairnsdale to increase the number of opportunities for residents to access both Bairnsdale and Lakes Entrance.
Alpine	Monitor current Bairnsdale-Bright summer service and proposed Omeo-Mount Hotham winter service and continue if successful.

Priority Three

Bairnsdale	Increase the secure parking availability at Bairnsdale Station.
Bairnsdale	Develop a town interchange in Bairnsdale close to the retail area for improved access for visitors to the town centre.
Bairnsdale	Co-ordinate the sharing of community transport vehicles in Bairnsdale.
Paynesville	Consider the need for a Paynesville town service at weekends, particularly over the summer period.
Lakes Entrance	Investigate the demand for a summer bus service to Lake Bunga and Lake Tyers Beach.
Metung	Support the re-introduction of a local taxi service in Metung.
Orbost/ Far East Gippsland	Consider the need for services at weekends, particularly over the summer period from Orbost to the coastal towns.
Orbost/ Far East Gippsland	Extend the Orbost to Bairnsdale services to Cann River at least one day per fortnight.
Shire	Upgrade bus stops to DDA standards and provide bus shelters where appropriate.