

FUTURE OF ORBOST & DISTRICT PROJECT

MEDIA RELEASE – March 2024

Future of Orbost Project welcomes new members to Governance Group

Four new community members will join other community members to strengthen community decision-making and strategy development on the Future of Orbost Project Governance Group.

The appointments are a result of an independent and open 'Expression of Interest' process undertaken by local strategic advisory and facilitation business, C4 Impact.

Garry Squires, secretary of the Orbost and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which is the delivery partner for the project said, "we look forward to welcoming additional community members willing to share their diverse range of skills and experience and support this important work going forward".

The four new community members of the Future of Orbost Governance Group are Jason Griebenow, Maurice Hayes, Stephen Angus, and Tabatha Cole. They join existing community members Heather Macalister, Liz Mitchell, Peter Van den Oever and Stan Weatherall who, alongside their skills and experience, support important continuity for the project's governance.

Other members of the Governance Group are Garry Squires (Secretary of Orbost and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry) and Prue McTaggart (Economic Development Manager, East Gippsland Shire Council). They are supported by non-decision-making members, Dr Chloe Ward (Director, Industry and Community Strategy, Victorian Forestry Transition Program, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action), Jeff Svigos (Senior Project Manager, Forestry Transition Program, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action) and Professor Bruce Wilson (Smart Specialisation Advisor, RMIT).

Mr Squires also added that there are many ways for the community and businesses to be involved in the Future of Orbost Project. "We welcome members of the Orbost and District to put forward ideas, and to become actively involved in working groups".

The Future of Orbost project is a response to the impacts of the end of native timber harvesting in Victoria's state forests, and the need to transition the local economy. The purpose of the project is to build on to Orbost and District's existing strengths and leverage new innovation and diversification opportunities for supporting positive economic, social, and environmental outcomes.

The Future of Orbost Project is receiving support through the Victorian Government's Forestry Transition Program's Community Stream through to September 2025. The program includes other streams to support businesses and impacted workers. More information on the program is available at: <https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/forestry/forestry-transition-program>.

The Orbost and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry has an agreement with the Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) to deliver the Future of Orbost project. To get in contact with the project team, email: project@orbostregion.com.au.

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For more information contact:

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