

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Mossvale Park Management Plan 2024 to 2029



South Gippsland
Shire Council

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Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Bunurong and Gunaikurnai people as the Traditional Custodians of South Gippsland and pay respect to their Elders, past, present, and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture, and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.



eucalyptus, (genus Eucalyptus)

Executive Summary

The Mossvale Park Management Plan 2024 to 2029 will guide the development of this significant Park for the next five years.

A series of objectives and actions have been compiled to ensure that the Park remains beloved by its supporters and community.

The continued hard work of the Friends of Mossvale Park Committee is complemented by the efforts of South Gippsland Shire Council to continue to present Mossvale Park as the premier Park in the Shire.

Introduction

The Mossvale Park Management Plan 2024 to 2029 has been developed by South Gippsland Shire Council with the help of the Friends of Mossvale Park. It is a referral document that controls and directs the future maintenance, development and management of Mossvale Park.

The Plan provides a base of information and contains recommendations that will enable South Gippsland Shire Council and the Friends of Mossvale Park to efficiently and effectively manage Mossvale Park. The Plan is expected to be used to educate the community, source potential funding, identify opportunities, and guide the general maintenance and development of the Park.



The objectives of this Plan are to:

- Secure the future of Mossvale Park by providing clear direction for the Friends of Mossvale Park and South Gippsland Shire Council to manage the future maintenance and development of Mossvale Park.
- Document and map existing site assets and resources, identify potential opportunities and constraints, and develop future management recommendations.
- Reflect the significant, historical, recreation and amenity value placed on Mossvale Park by the Friends of Mossvale Park, South Gippsland Shire Council and the broader South Gippsland community.

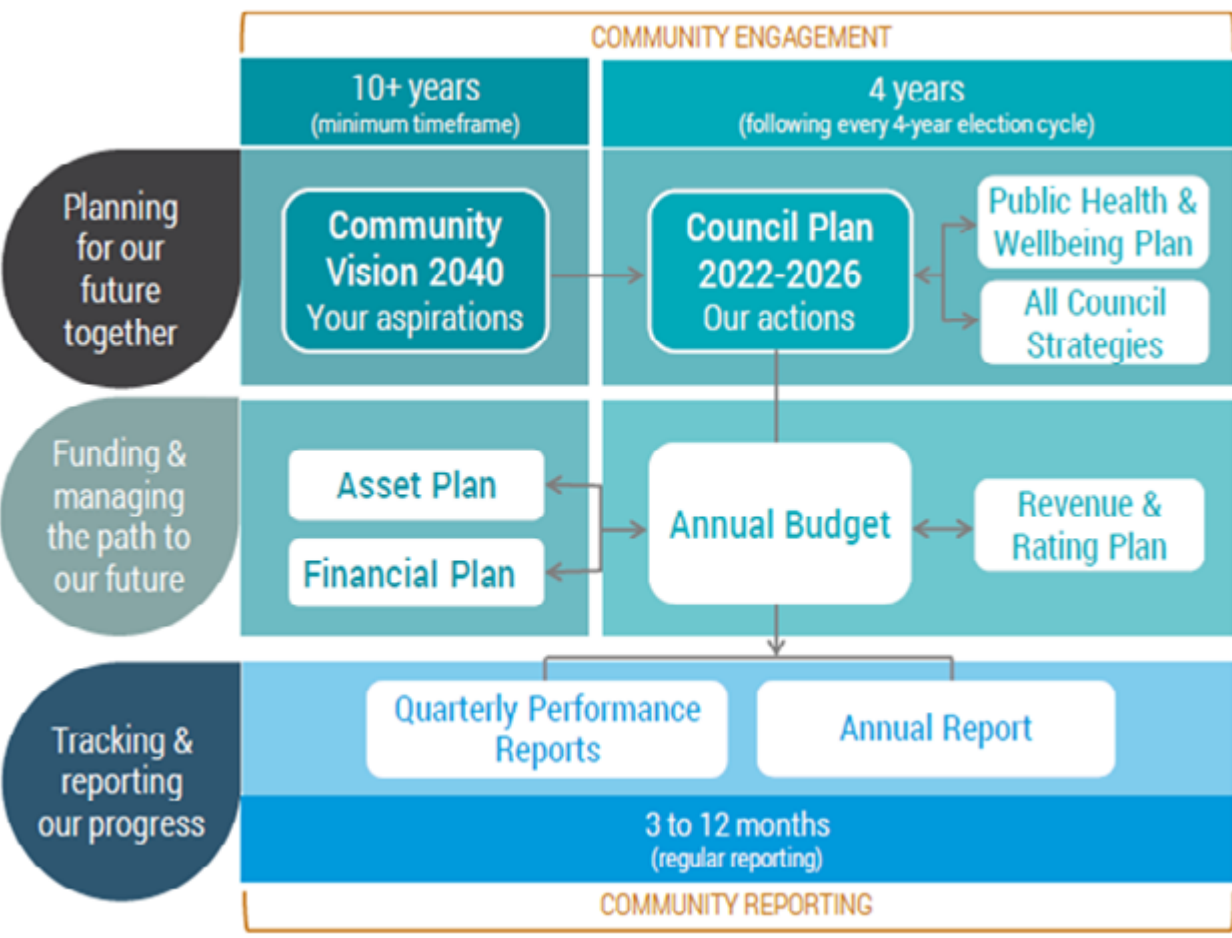
- Provide a reference document for those managing and maintaining the Park, and for those with a vested interest in Mossvale Park.
- Identify who is responsible for various areas of management within the Park.
- Identify challenges facing all aspects of managing Mossvale Park.
- Provide a benchmark against which delivery and performance can be measured.

The Mossvale Park Management Plan 2024 to 2029 has been prepared by South Gippsland Shire Council in consultation with the Friends of Mossvale Park group.

How This Plan Relates to Other Documents

South Gippsland Shire Council’s Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework guides Council in identifying community needs and aspirations over the long-term through the [Community Vision](#) and Long Term Financial Plan; the medium-term through the [Council Plan](#), Workforce Plan and Revenue and Rating Plan; and short-term through department plans and Budget.

South Gippsland Shire Council holds itself accountable through the Organisational and Financial Performance Reports, and the Annual Report.



History of Mossvale Park

Mossvale Park was part of the great Gippsland Forest, selected by a Mr Bernard Farrell in 1878 from the Victorian Land Board. Largely untouched, the area that includes the Park was sold to Francis Moss in 1888, a successful nurseryman from Buninyong near Ballarat.

Moss set about clearing the land for a nursery and farming. He named the property Moss Vale. Mr Bruce, the first Nursery Manager, was succeeded by William Gould in 1898 and it is he and his son George, who planted surplus nursery stock next to the river in the area that was known as the Picnic Grounds. Many public, school and family groups enjoyed an outing in the beautiful space.

After Francis Moss died, the farm was leased and the public was infrequently allowed on the property by invitation. The farm was sold to the Edey family in 1931 and then the Hayes family in the 1940s. The Edey's reinstated allowing the public to use the picnic grounds that had been abandoned after Moss died.

It was Mr Hayes, with the support of the Australian Natives Association, that suggested that this popular area should be purchased by the Shires of Mirboo North and Woorayl. They jointly acquired 10 acres, which was declared a public reserve in 1946.

The first Committee of Management was appointed in the same year. In the 1950s, the first public facilities were established, with the Soundshell being built in 1980 to support the very popular annual 'Music for the People' concerts, which were first held in 1969.

The Committee of Management have had regular tree plantings over the decades to enhance the wonderful ambiance of the Park, which is defined by the original 1890s era nursery plantings. The South Gippsland Shire Council – an amalgamated entity which included the Shires of Woorayl and Mirboo North – and the Committee of Management, which has become the Friends of Mossvale Park, continue to work at preservation and enhancement of the historic arboretum.

Site Analysis

Mossvale Park is 10 acres of park land nestled in a horseshoe-shape created by the Tarwin River West Branch. It is accessible via Mossvale Park Road, just off the Strzelecki Highway, near Berry's Creek.

The topology of the Park is relatively flat and low lying, and its proximity and circumvention by the Tarwin River makes some areas prone to flooding and inundation.

Mossvale Park includes over 400 mapped plants, over 260 different species and named varieties, and a collection of significant, beautiful and widely appreciated trees as well as community infrastructure and assets including public BBQs, Forrester Lodge, Dowling Playground, W&G Pavilion and the Mossvale Park Soundshell. These assets make the Park a popular place for picnics and events.

Significant Trees

There are three National Trust-registered trees in Mossvale Park, planted in the late 1800s by the Moss Vale Nursery Managers:



Platanus orientalis
(Oriental Plane)



Platanus x acerifolia
(London Plane).



Quercus castaneifolia
(Chestnut-Leaved Oak).

Infrastructure at Mossvale Park

South Gippsland Shire Council maintains and manages many important community assets and infrastructure throughout the Park, such as:

- Forrester Lodge.
- Public BBQs.
- Picnic tables and bench seating.
- Dowling Playground.
- W&G Gould Pavilion.
- Soundshell.
- Public Toilets.
- Car Park.
- Paths.
- Lighting.
- Signage.
- Irrigation.

Management of Mossvale Park

The following section outlines the key actions required to successfully manage Mossvale Park to a high standard. The actions recognise and respond to the issues facing the Park, now and into the future.

South Gippsland's Community Vision 2040 Statement is:

South Gippsland: celebrating our First Peoples, diverse populations, culture, heritage, environment, agriculture and industries. We support and empower positive change through education and action.

We sustainably adapt to protect and enhance our unique natural environment, towns and villages through community-led planning and initiatives.

We're an inclusive community, a place where people come to visit and want to stay.

The management of Mossvale Park can help us to work towards achieving this vision, by working towards the four key concepts outlined in this Plan:

- Manage and maintain a resilient landscape.
- Create a garden that inspires.
- Recognise and celebrate our cultural and social heritage.
- Engaging the community in the gardens.

South Gippsland Shire Council staff and the Friends of Mossvale Park have worked together to develop key indicators and actions that align with each of these key concepts.

Friends of Mossvale Park

The Friends of Mossvale Park group was established in 2024. The group provides an active role in supporting South Gippsland Shire Council with the promotion and engagement of the community in the Park.

The objectives of the Friends of Mossvale Park group are:

- To foster health and wellbeing through working with the community to develop an understanding of the beautiful environment of Mossvale Park.
- To work in partnership with South Gippsland Shire Council's Open Space and Environment team with planning, garden maintenance, education and upkeep activities, grant funding for activities and programs, and more.
- To foster and generate public interest in Mossvale Park.
- To advocate for the continued development of Mossvale Park.
- To increase the presence and profile of the Friends of Mossvale Park.

The Friends of Mossvale Park group will work in partnership with South Gippsland Shire Council towards achieving the below objectives and outcomes.

South Gippsland Shire Council Roles and Responsibilities

Maintenance

South Gippsland Shire Council's Open Space and Environment team provide oversight and management of Mossvale Park. This involves maintenance work and the engagement of other teams within South Gippsland Shire Council, contractors and volunteers (such as the Friends of Mossvale Park group) to undertake works, activities and programs.

Communications and Promotion

Any public promotions or communications need to be approved through South Gippsland Shire Council's Communications and Engagement team. This includes, for example:

- Signage.
- Social media on Council-managed platforms.
- Media releases and publications.
- Online publication on Council-managed website/s.
- Posters, flyers and other promotional materials.
- Video and digital communications.

Community Engagement

South Gippsland Shire Council will work in partnership with the Friends of Mossvale Park group to engage with the community.



Review of the Mossvale Park Management Plan

This Management Plan covers a period of four years. During this time, the Plan will be reviewed, revised and updated to ensure that the actions agreed upon continue to meet the expectations of South Gippsland Shire Council, the community, and the Friends of Mossvale Park group. This will include:

- Revise and update the Management Plan.
- Operate according to the objectives and outcomes agreed to in this Management Plan.
- Monitor the operation of the Management Plan.
- Revise and improve the Management Plan where necessary.



Objectives



Objective One – Manage and Maintain a Safe, Sustainable and Resilient Landscape

Outcomes

- Effective management of the living collections at a high horticultural standard.
- Successful management of the trees from a conservation, succession, heritage and public safety perspective.
- Management and maintenance of the landscape amenity of the gardens.
- Gardens that are sustainably managed.
- Workplace safety in the gardens is of paramount importance.
- Assets and infrastructure are well maintained.



Outcome 1.1: Effective management of the living collections at a high horticultural standard.

Outcome Number	Description
1.1.1	Determine plant species within each collection and assess the suitability against the design intent.
1.1.2	Develop and implement Living Collections Maintenance Plans.
1.1.3	Implement and maintain Living Collections Record Management System.
1.1.4	Undertake regular audits of the collections.
1.1.5	Determine plant species within each collection and assess the suitability against the design intent.

Outcome 1.2: Successful management of the trees from a conservation, succession, heritage and public safety perspective.

Outcome Number	Description
1.2.1	Undertake regular audits of the trees within Mossvale Park.
1.2.2	Develop and implement a Maintenance Plan for the significant trees within Mossvale Park.

Outcome 1.3: Management and maintenance of the landscape and amenity of the gardens.

Outcome Number	Description
1.3.1	Continue to deliver a high level of horticulture in line with current best practices.
1.3.2	Manage the collections within Mossvale Park in accordance with the Living Collections Maintenance Plans.
1.3.3	Manage and maintain all turf areas within Mossvale Park.
1.3.4	Undertake regular audits of Mossvale Park.

Outcome 1.4: Gardens that are sustainably managed.

Outcome Number	Description
1.4.1	Regular audit and carry out maintenance of irrigation system.
1.4.2	Investigate the viability of alternative energy methods to power the facilities within Mossvale Park.
1.4.3	Investigate the viability of recycling facilities within Mossvale Park.
1.4.4	Develop and implement an education program around recycling options for visitors to Mossvale Park.

Outcome 1.5: Workplace safety in the gardens is of paramount importance.

Outcome Number	Description
1.5.1	Ensure staff, contractors and volunteers adhere to Safe Work Practices.
1.5.2	Implement sustainable horticultural practices that minimise, if not exclude, the use of chemicals.
1.5.3	Annually review and update Safe Work Practices ensuring that they are in line with current best practices.

Outcome 1.6: Assets and infrastructure are well maintained.

Outcome Number	Description
1.6.1	Undertake regular inspections and carry out required maintenance on assets within Mossvale Park.
1.6.2	Carry out regular inspections of the play equipment in the Park and carry out subsequent maintenance.
1.6.3	Regularly audit the collections to ensure staff are adhering to the Living Collections Maintenance Plan.
1.6.4	Undertake regular audits of the trees within Mossvale Park.

Objective Two – Create a Park that Inspires

Outcomes

- Mossvale Park is recognised as a living classroom.
- Accurate and relevant information about the flora in the Park is provided.
- Living collections that highlight the principles of sustainability and resilience.
- Any new developments encourage greater community exploration and understanding of Mossvale Park.



Outcome 2.1: Mossvale Park is recognised as a living classroom.

Outcome Number	Description
2.1.1	Liaise with local education providers to incorporate Mossvale Park into session planning for students.
2.1.2	Partner with external agencies / organisations to deliver education programs in Mossvale Park.

Outcome 2.2: Accurate and relevant information about the flora in the Park is provided.

Outcome Number	Description
2.2.1	Implement and maintain an online list of living records.
2.2.2	Develop and implement an Interpretation and Education Plan for Mossvale Park.
2.2.3	Develop and implement a range of interpretive signs.

Outcome 2.3: Living collections that highlight the principles of sustainability and resilience.

Outcome Number	Description
2.3.1	New collections are designed with consideration to climate change.
2.3.2	Develop and implement the Living Collections Maintenance Plans.
2.3.3	Demonstrate sound horticultural practice that minimise, if not exclude, the use of chemicals to manage weeds.
2.3.4	Implement sustainable horticultural practices that encourage strong and healthy plant growth without the overuse of chemicals.

Outcome 2.4: Any new developments encourage greater community exploration and understanding of Mossvale Park.

Outcome Number	Description
2.4.1	Construction of infrastructure that supports increased visitation to the gardens.
2.4.2	New garden beds to be constructed with existing path network considered.
2.4.3	Develop and implement an Interpretation and Education Plan for the living collections and significant trees.
2.4.4	Future collections are focussed on the local flora within South Gippsland and the greater Gippsland area.

Objective Three – Recognise and Celebrate our Cultural and Social Heritage

Outcomes

- First Nations connection to the land is recognised and celebrated.
- Past botanists and their contribution to Mossvale Park is recognised.
- Significant flora from within South Gippsland and the broader Gippsland area is developed and maintained.



Outcome 3.1: First Nations connection to the land is recognised and celebrated.

Outcome Number	Description
3.1.1	Establish relationships to understand the First Nations connection to the site and surrounds.
3.1.2	In partnership with First Nations groups and organisations, work towards developing and delivering or hosting an event/s that celebrate the First Nations connection to the site.
3.1.3	In partnership with First Nations groups and organisations, work towards developing and implementing an Interpretation and Education Plan and resources that recognise and celebrate the First Nations connection with the site and surrounds.

Outcome 3.2: Past botanists and their contribution to Mossvale Park is recognised.

Outcome Number	Description
3.2.1	Develop and implement an Interpretation and Education Plan.

Outcome 3.3: Significant flora from within South Gippsland Shire and the broader Gippsland area is developed and maintained.

Outcome Number	Description
3.3.1	Maintain website including the online collection and reference list.
3.3.2	Planting programs and activities to support a living collection of significant local flora.

Objective Four – Engaging the Community in the Gardens

Outcomes

- An active online presence for Mossvale Park.
- The Friends of Mossvale Park are supported to engage with the community.
- Promote Mossvale Park as a destination for events and activities that are enjoyed by a wide range of people.



Outcome 4.1: An active online presence for Mossvale Park.

Outcome Number	Description
4.1.1	Continue to invest in and maintain the Mossvale Park website and online identity.

Outcome 4.2: The Friends of Mossvale Park are supported to engage with the community.

Outcome Number	Description
4.2.1	Continuous engagement and involvement between South Gippsland Shire Council and the Friends of Mossvale Park group, including staff representation on the Committee.
4.2.2	South Gippsland Shire Council supports the Friends of Mossvale Park to attend community events, seminars, networks etc.
4.2.3	The Friends of Mossvale Park group provide and maintain current information on the Park and group through their online website and any information / notice boards.

Outcome 4.3: Promote Mossvale Park as a destination for events and activities that are enjoyed by a wide range of people.

Outcome Number	Description
4.3.1	Work with 'Visit South Gippsland' to promote Mossvale Park.
4.3.2	Continue to support, promote and deliver a range of events in Mossvale Park.

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

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