

# Water's role in Economic Opportunities

Regional cities and towns are attractive places to work and invest, offering secure and diverse economic opportunities. Regional business, industry and agriculture underpin the success of rural communities where people want to work and live.

## Place-makers and Economic Opportunities

Many professions contribute to the creation of Economic Opportunities through their role in place-making. People with roles in strategy and planning, urban design, engineering and environment, community development, and others, all help make our regional cities and towns great places to live, work and invest. They plan and manage systems that ensure water is available for industry and agriculture. They facilitate thriving economies by developing and maintaining attractive precincts for businesses and their customers. They create and maintain beautiful environments for tourism and recreation.



Strategy & Planning



Urban Design



Engineering & Environment



Community Development

### How does water support Economic Opportunities?

#### Water is a critical resource that supports life and livelihoods.

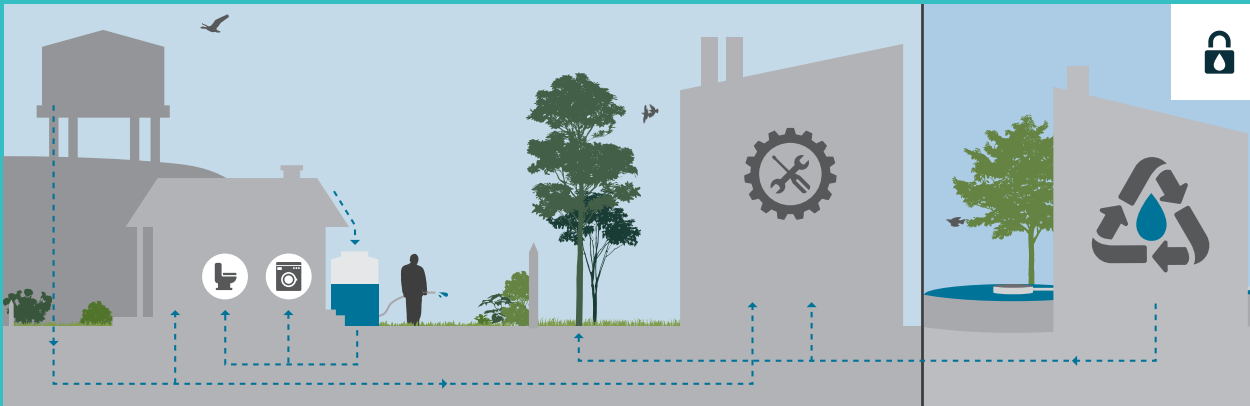
Reliable water of an appropriate quality is a vital input for regional economies. It supports businesses that provide diverse employment opportunities and sustains cool, green places that attract locals and visitors. It also sustains sport and recreation activities that contribute to community cohesion and support local businesses. A more integrated approach to urban planning and water planning has also led to the creation of new roles (e.g. water sensitive urban design professionals), new business opportunities (e.g. small-scale water recycling technologies and services), and new education and training needs. Healthy and attractive landscapes and waterways underpin tourism and recreation that bring economic activity and investment to our regions.

Place-makers work with each other and the community to support the economic opportunities water enables in our regional cities and towns. Bringing together the different skills and disciplines allows us to leverage our collective resources, skills and knowledge to deliver appropriate and cost-effective infrastructure and services for regional communities.

These pages articulate the connection between water and economic opportunities, and your role as a place-maker in collaborative and integrated planning to deliver this outcome.

# How can I contribute to creating Economic Opportunities?

This could be achieved by doing things like:



**Planners, engineers and community development professionals identify place-based opportunities for fit-for-purpose water supply**

Helps achieve Council Plan / Sustainable Water Strategy



**Urban designers, strategic planners and engineers bring the natural and built environment together to create more desirable and inviting commercial precincts**

Helps achieve Council Plan, Council Health and Wellbeing Plan



**Environment and Community Development Professionals manage water quality and quantity in rivers and lakes to keep them fit for communities and visitors to enjoy.**

Helps achieve Council Plan, Council Health and Wellbeing Plan, Regional Catchment Strategy

# Economic Opportunity: Case Studies

## Recycling wastewater to support industry in Geelong



The Northern Water Plant receives sewerage from Geelong's northern suburbs and wastewater from the refinery and produces recycled water for use in the oil refinery. The initiative was a collaboration between Barwon Water and the Geelong Refinery. During this time, Barwon Water were facing significant investment in infrastructure due to population growth in northern Geelong and the Geelong Refinery needed a sustainable, cost effective source of water for their business.

The project has successfully:

- Eliminated the need for 5% of Geelong's drinking water to be used in the refinery
- Saved Barwon Water \$17.5m in avoided capital costs on the downstream sewerage system
- Deferred investment in new water sources
- Addressed the refinery's water and wastewater management needs.

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**“We decided if we worked together, we might get a better outcome than if we continued working in our silos.”**

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**Peter Morgan**  
Manager Asset Planning, Barwon Water

“The collaboration between the Geelong Refinery and Barwon Water was the key to this project. We decided if we worked together, we might get a better outcome than if we continued working in our silos.

The plant has enabled us to save significant capital costs and to take off some of the sewage load where we had a bottleneck downstream. It also reduces the volume of water discharged into Bass Strait from our downstream water reclamation plant, reduces the consumption of the drinking water supply and provides a drought resilient source of water for the refinery.”



## Protecting livestock and the bottom line in Hamilton

In 2016, the Hamilton Livestock Exchange installed four 230,000 litre tanks to collect water from a new roof covering their sheep yards. The Exchange processes around one million sheep annually and the main drivers for covering the sheep yards were to improve animal welfare and operational health and safety for staff and visitors. Water was included at the start of the project because of the need to find a secure alternative to bore water for the truck wash.

Truck drivers had raised concerns about bore water rusting their trucks, so the Exchange switched to town water, but this was costing them between \$60K to \$70K a year. The tanks enabled them to switch their truck wash from town to tank water, facilitating significant savings on water bills. Water collected from the truck wash is also used to irrigate adjacent paddocks.

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**“We estimate we will be able to run the truck wash for 10 months a year using tank water. It's saving us a lot of money.”**

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**Chris Dahlenburg**  
Manager, Hamilton Livestock Exchange

“We talked to the council, the state government and all the sale yard user groups—the truckies, the agents and the vendors. It took a year or more of planning and talking to everyone before anything got done.

The roof harvesting system was all thought out at the start. We estimate we will be able to run the truck wash for 10 months a year using tank water. It's saving us a lot of money and means money collected from the user pays truck wash can go back into council coffers to help fund further infrastructure projects such as sealing the gravel roads in front of the ramps, which get very dusty in summer and muddy in winter.”



Hamilton Sales Yard image provided by Central Steel Build



# Why Integrated Planning?

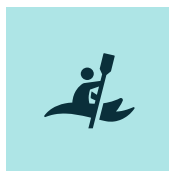
An integrated approach to water planning and management can provide multiple benefits to communities beyond water supply, sewage and drainage services, such as:



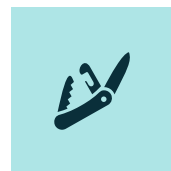
Green and cool streetscapes



Healthy waterways and habitat



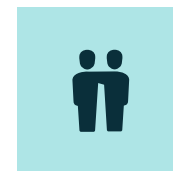
Water for sport and recreation



Multipurpose assets



Supply security



Engaging places for community connection

In order to realise those benefits of an integrated approach to water planning and management in an efficient and cost-effective way, we need to bring all our place-makers together. Even though they may not see themselves as associated with water, professionals in strategy and planning, urban design, engineering and environment and community development can all help achieve these broader benefits in the local context through early planning, collaborative decision-making and considering the whole system.

This document highlights the benefits of working beyond operational and organisational silos so that all place-makers contribute to Economic Opportunities through the way water is managed. Economic Opportunities is one outcome from a list of five – the others are Healthy Communities, Vibrant Centres, Healthy Environments, Climate Resilience – that all characterise the best of regional Victoria.



Want to know more?

Visit [clearwater.asn.au](https://clearwater.asn.au) for more resources on how you can help your region thrive.

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## Program Partners:



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