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Shaping South Gippsland
COMMUNITY VISION
2040



South Gippsland
Shire Council

Thank you

Our Community Panel

We acknowledge the commitment, creativity and hard work of the 29 panel members who volunteered to be part of the Community Panel. Panel members were randomly selected community members who nominated to help develop the South Gippsland *Community Vision 2040*. Panel members worked together respectfully to create the Vision over three days, and brought their integrity, enthusiasm and passion for South Gippsland to the process, to create a Vision they can be proud of.

Our Community

We acknowledge the contributions of the many community members who participated in the development of the *Community Vision*. The community shared their views and aspirations on their vision for South Gippsland in a range of engagement activities. From attending a pop-up, filling in a survey, or discussing the Vision with your community groups, family or friends, to providing feedback on the draft Vision, we thank you for your important input into the development of the Vision.

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.



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Message from our Mayor

Welcome to South Gippsland's first long-term *Community Vision*. This has taken months of engagement and deliberation to pull together, but it has all been worth it. Now we have a document that has been driven by our community and expresses their aspirations and priorities for our Shire over the next 20 years.

It has been an absolute honour to be part of this process, especially in the role of Mayor. I have thoroughly enjoyed being not only involved in it, but having a behind-the-scenes look at the effort that goes into work like this.



Cr Mohya Davies (Mayor)

I find myself writing this with a new sense of awe for the South Gippsland community who have thrown themselves into this process and created a Vision that is truly representative of us all. We are a strong community, a diverse community, a unique community and we are a vocal community. We stand up for what we believe in and are heavily focused on the impact that decisions from today make on our tomorrow. It is a privilege to be part of a community like this.

The Council staff and consultants have also done a fabulous job providing opportunities for collaboration and involvement in this important process. Without them setting up these touch points, we wouldn't have seen broad involvement from every group in our community. I would like to make special mention to the Community Panel, who took all the snippets of feedback received through the community consultation period and created five values. It is not easy work and it isn't always easy to agree. However, what you have achieved is a set of values that are the undercurrent of the feedback and in doing so, allowed for the creation of community priorities that will help us bring each value to life.

Thanks to this document, we have an exciting 20 years ahead for South Gippsland. We can become a better community through these actions, but we all play a part. Read through this document and think about how you can instil these values in your everyday life or what you can do to help us achieve these priorities.

I leave you with this quote from Margaret J. Wheatley that I think is extremely pertinent for this document: "There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about."

This is the guiding force for our *Community Vision 2040*.

Councillor Mohya Davies
Mayor

Map of South Gippsland



Introduction

What is a Community Vision?

A *Community Vision* is an important document that describes the community's aspirations for the future of the municipality, and helps to guide decision making. Development of a Vision asks the community to imagine an inclusive, prosperous and vibrant future, as well as mapping out the aspirations and priorities that will help to get there.

Why do we need a Community Vision?

A *Community Vision* helps councils to understand their community's key priorities, and helps to make sure that the community priorities represent the wider Shire community. It is a legislative requirement of the *Local Government Act 2020* that every Council in Victoria develops a *Community Vision* for at least the next ten years.

What is a Community Vision used for?

A *Community Vision* helps to guide key activities over the next ten years and beyond. Community Visions are developed by the community and inform the work of Council, inspire community partners, and advocate to State and Federal Governments for change. The *Community Vision* will help to inform the Council Plan 2022-2026, Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Plan, and the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

How is a Community Vision formed?

Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, a Vision must be developed using *deliberative* engagement practices. *Deliberation* means careful consideration or discussion in order to come to a decision. In the development of the South Gippsland 2040 Community Vision, community members were randomly selected from across the Shire to form a Community Panel, which deliberated on feedback from the community to form the *Draft Community Vision*.

Preface from the Community Panel

We as the Panel present this *Community Vision* as a map for the future, providing guidelines to build a stronger community.

This document is our contribution to the community we belong to. We want the community to feel optimistic, hopeful, inspired and empowered when they read this document.

This Vision belongs to the community. To see this Vision statement become a reality, Council will need to work alongside community partners, businesses and other levels of government and make sure decisions are made with reference to this *Community Vision*.

It is important to us that the community supports the Vision. We want to see it made available on different platforms in simple language so everyone can access and understand it. We don't want this document to become a time capsule. We want a community-led review of the Vision each Council term to make sure activities align with the *Community Vision*, ensuring future strategies and plans make reference to it in all their activities.

This Vision has been driven and created by the community for the community.

We want to be actively involved in the decisions of Council and encourage Council to continue to be involved with the community at this level of engagement in future projects.

South Gippsland Community Vision 2040

Our Vision Statement

“South Gippsland: sustainably adapting to protect and enhance our unique natural environment, towns and villages through community-led planning and initiatives.

We celebrate our diverse people, culture, environment, heritage, agriculture and industries while empowering positive change through education and action.

We’re a leading destination, a place where people come to visit and want to stay.”

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Our Vision Priorities

The following five Priorities have been developed by the Panel and represent what our community members most value about our community. Underneath each Priority is a set of community outcomes for 2040 that will help us to bring about each Priority. These respond to the community priorities that arose during wider community consultation in this project.

- Sustainability and Climate Change
- Enhanced Natural Environment and Cultural Heritage
- Shaping our Future
- A Destination to Live, Visit and Enjoy
- Healthy, Connected and Engaged Community

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Sustainability and Climate Change

"South Gippsland leads by example in sustainability, by implementing and promoting actions to mitigate climate change through environmentally considerate policies. We will educate and inform our community about sustainability practices."

Below are the 2040 Community Outcomes for this Priority. They have been developed from the community priorities that arose during wider community consultation in this project.

2040 Community Outcomes

- 1.1 Our community is resilient and ready to face future environmental challenges.
- 1.2 Our farmland is the food bowl of Victoria; our high-quality produce is sustainably grown and creates food security.
- 1.3 Our agricultural industries use regenerative land management practices to promote the long-term viability of our land.
- 1.4 Our natural resources are used sustainably with a long-term timeframe in mind.
- 1.5 Our industries are innovative, diverse and sustainable, and bring clear benefits to our community.
- 1.6 Our community has reduced its carbon footprint through a range of practices including clean energy choices and sustainable technology infrastructure.
- 1.7 Our economy seeks out opportunities to reduce and divert waste.
- 1.8 Our community is prepared for bushfire and extreme weather events, and we have well-constructed defensible homes and community fire refuges.

Enhanced Natural Environment and Cultural Heritage

"South Gippsland respects, protects and enhances our unique natural assets and cultural heritage, which are integral considerations to all our planning. We encourage our community to engage in outdoor lifestyles and activities."

Below are the 2040 Community Outcomes for this Priority. They have been developed from the community priorities that arose during wider community consultation in this project.

2040 Community Outcomes

- 2.1 Our care for our natural environment and waterways encourages generational connections to the natural world around us.
- 2.2 Our Indigenous heritage is proudly embraced throughout the Shire in the story of South Gippsland.
- 2.3 Our native bushland is protected and strengthened through initiatives such as rate relief for bush areas, covenants and a Shire-wide approach to revegetation.
- 2.4 Our community is educated and informed about weed and pest management.
- 2.5 Our coastal landscapes are sustainably developed and protected from pet impacts and foot-traffic.
- 2.6 Our wildlife connectivity is encouraged through extensive tree canopies and habitat corridors.
- 2.7 Our historic buildings and features are enhanced and protected, adding to our unique character.

Shaping our Future

"South Gippsland has flexible, practical and sustainable planning that includes and supports all elements of our community and environment. Our infrastructure, facilities and services are viable and well-planned, supporting our wellbeing."

Below are the 2040 Community Outcomes for this Priority. They have been developed from the community priorities that arose during wider community consultation in this project.

2040 Community Outcomes

- 3.1** Our population and housing growth is sustainable, well-planned and is supported by appropriate infrastructure.
- 3.2** Our unique lifestyle is maintained through planning schemes that promote sensitive developments and allotment of spaces for affordable housing.
- 3.3** Our open spaces, multi-purpose 'hubs' and creative spaces encourage our community to congregate and connect.
- 3.4** Our economic development makes the most of existing and local resources.
- 3.5** Our well-planned and connected walking and cycling tracks and convenient public transport options get us where we need to go.
- 3.6** Our roads are safe and well-maintained and have appropriate speed limits to minimise injury to our people and wildlife.
- 3.7** Our decision making is transparent and we welcome participation, collaboration and consultation in decisions that affect the community.

A Destination to Live, Visit and Enjoy

"South Gippsland is a diverse, productive and connected region for all with a welcoming and proud community. We actively promote our lifestyle and the wonder of our natural environment. Life here is full of experiences, opportunities and adventures."

Below are the 2040 Community Outcomes for this Priority. They have been developed from the community priorities that arose during wider community consultation in this project.

2040 Community Outcomes

- 4.1 Our public spaces, facilities and amenities are multipurpose and support community connection.
- 4.2 Our small businesses are thriving, add to the uniqueness of our towns and adapt to changing conditions.
- 4.3 Our diverse local economy and industry is strong, with jobs for youth, connected to education pathways locally and a reason for young people to want to stay.
- 4.4 Our education opportunities attract and retain skills in our community.
- 4.5 Our vibrant arts scene welcomes, connects and inspires.
- 4.6 Our community is digitally connected through reliable internet and mobile phone coverage, and is supported to access technology.
- 4.7 Our ecotourism is sought after and encourages an appreciation of our natural features.
- 4.8 Our town centres are vibrant and lively places that are friendly, inclusive, clean and safe.

A Healthy, Connected and Engaged Community





"South Gippsland enriches the lives of all community members through cultural events, sport and recreation. Active lifestyles are encouraged and promoted with programs, services and facilities that are accessible for everyone. Our communities are alert and informed, with a strong volunteering culture. We proactively support each other and we value neighbourhood awareness. Everyone is given a place at the table."

Below are the 2040 Community Outcomes for this Priority. They have been developed from the community priorities that arose during wider community consultation in this project.

2040 Community Outcomes

- 5.1** Our access to physical and mental health services is equitable for all.
- 5.2** Our community has equal access to healthy lifestyle opportunities and health prevention initiatives.
- 5.3** Our community shows care and respect towards every member, listening and looking out for one another.
- 5.4** Our community has a strong sense of unity and cooperation, and there are social supports in place for our vulnerable.
- 5.5** Our community embraces diversity and is welcoming of newcomers.
- 5.6** Our neighbourhoods offer affordable housing options and we advocate for housing access for all.
- 5.7** Our community is engaged, informed and there are opportunities for all.
- 5.8** Our volunteers are supported and applauded, with succession planning to ensure the longevity of our community groups.
- 5.9** Our activities promote a sense of belonging and fun, and we have plenty to do for all people regardless of age and ability.

Vision Roadmap

 PLAN	Sep - Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project preparation
	Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invites sent to households and promotion of Community Panel opportunity
 ENGAGE	Dec - Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community have their say: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online survey 6x pop-ups 2x school pop-ups 3x Council-led discussions
	Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community online workshop All feedback compiled Community Panel selection and meetings Panel develop draft Vision
 DEVELOP	Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vision document prepared for community feedback Develop options for the community to have their say
 REFINE	Apr-May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council endorse draft Vision Community invited to have their say
	May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Panel meet to consider community feedback on draft Vision
 FINALISE	Jun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council adoption of Community Vision

Community Engagement

Between December 2021 and May 2022, South Gippsland Shire Council engaged with community members across the Shire about what they would like South Gippsland to look, feel and be like in 2040.

The project, *Shaping South Gippsland*, asked community members to share their priorities and aspirations for South Gippsland, and what the biggest opportunities and concerns were for the future. It asked how we could be happy and healthy in 2040, and how we could better prepare for future economic, environmental and social challenges.

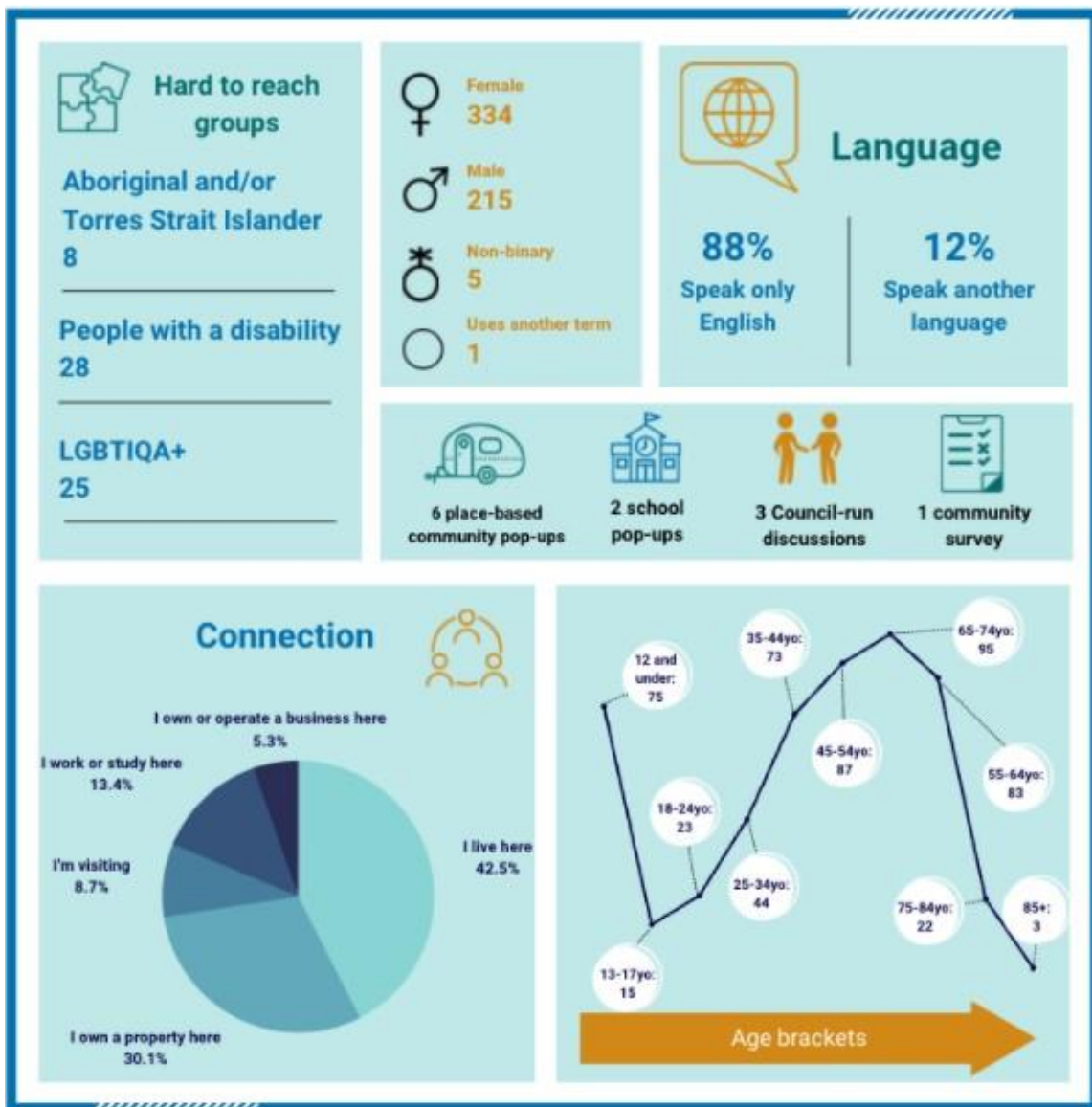
From December to February, 928 community members contributed 2,939 comments and ideas to the project through a variety of engagement activities.

Six community pop-ups, two school pop-ups, and three Council-led discussions were held at locations across the Shire, along with a community survey and an online community discussion. The feedback collected at these activities has informed the work of the Community Panel in developing the *Draft Community Vision*.

After the Community Panel developed the *Draft Community Vision*, it was released to the community for feedback. This process gave the community an opportunity to reflect on the *Draft Community Vision* during April and May 2022.

Note: The community engagement process and the results will be available in the final version of the Community Vision.

Who We Heard From

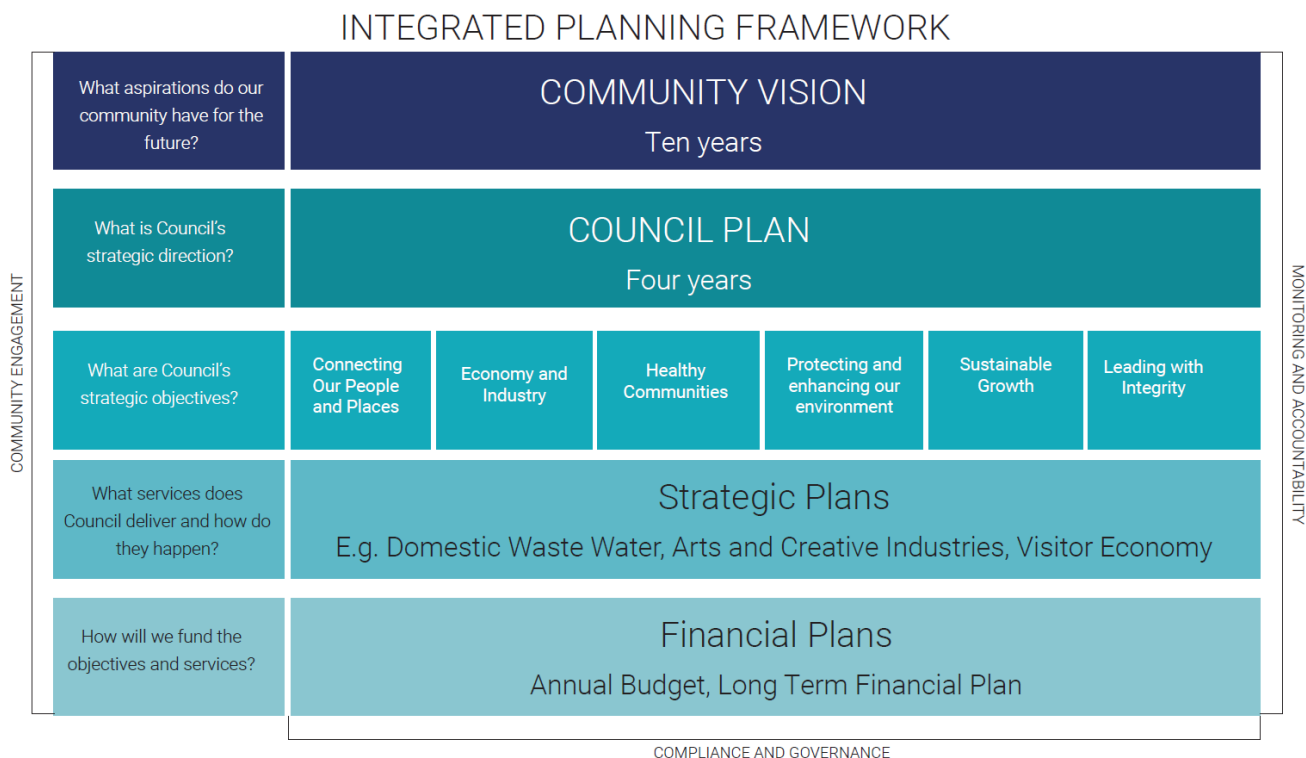


Community engagement in infographic conducted from December 2021 to February 2022.

Quotes from our Community

 <p>"A vibrant inclusive bustling community with improved infrastructure, employment, business, educational and tourism opportunities."</p>	 <p>"A warm welcoming community that puts the environment and its members first."</p>	 <p>"A thriving shire, that can embrace diversity in both people and business."</p>
 <p>"Community spirit, convenient access to most facilities, vibrant and thriving agricultural industry."</p>	 <p>"That there continues to be groups of people who hold decision makers accountable."</p>	 <p>"That the huge body of volunteers continue with their good work in all facets of the community."</p>
 <p>"To seize the opportunities in a transition to a zero carbon economy."</p>	 <p>"To provide abundant affordable housing throughout the Shire for those that want/need to stay."</p>	 <p>"Invest in great schools so that we are educated and strive for healthy lifestyles."</p>
 <p>"The advantage of growth, but manage it."</p>	 <p>"Development of schools, especially accessing disability schools."</p>	 <p>"Finding a balance between development and rural life."</p>
 <p>"A rural shire with a strong and versatile economy."</p>	 <p>"Plenty of job opportunities and activities for our youth."</p>	 <p>"Green and well-protected landscapes."</p>

How the Vision fits with our Other Plans



The *Community Vision 2040* will become a key part of the Council's Planning Framework. It will be used to inform future plans and strategies and will guide the work of the Council. It gives Council a clear understanding of what the community values, and what the community's long-term vision and priorities are for South Gippsland.

The Vision will inform the development of the Council Plan, Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, Long Term Financial Plan, and Asset Plan. By ensuring alignment and consistency between these strategic documents, Council can work effectively towards achieving the community's vision.

The Vision will be shared with community partners, industry and business stakeholders, and other government agencies, enabling them to align their work and programs to the needs and aspirations of the South Gippsland community.

Closing Panel Remarks

This Vision has been driven and created by the community for the community and should be a benchmark for all.

The Panel considered background information and broader community views alongside the different opinions on the Panel, which actively guided outcomes.

We want to see Council and the community working together in a strong partnership to achieve this Vision and for this Vision to be in all aspects of Council's work, to drive greater satisfaction in the community.

We want to be actively involved in the decisions of Council and encourage Council to continue to be involved with the community at this level of engagement with future panels made up of new people.

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Conclusion

Our Commitment

The *Community Vision 2040* captures the future aspirations of our whole community. Council is committed to shaping South Gippsland by working in partnership with the community, businesses, groups, service providers, industries and other levels of government to bring this shared Vision to life.

Council will advocate to State and Federal Governments to secure essential funding for projects and influence decision-making to support our community. An important part of a strong community is involving them in decisions that affect and interest them. Council will continue to be inclusive to incorporate different views, experiences and expertise.

The Vision will be reviewed with the Council Plan in its four-year cycle to ensure it continues to reflect our community. We will ask our Councillors how they would like to engage the community as part of that review to continuously improve our Shire, together.

Monitoring Progress

Achievement of our *Community Vision* will be incorporated into actions within the Council Plan and other strategic documents integrated into this process. Implementation of the Council's responsibilities and commitments from the Council Plan will be reported on a quarterly and annual basis through our Quarterly Performance Report and Annual Report. The work Council undertakes, planning for the future and decision-making will be guided by the community's aspirations articulated through the Vision.

Reporting Responsibilities

Council has many statutory responsibilities and powers that drive the way it functions and makes decisions. Council will be transparent with accountable leadership to guide the implementation of these responsibilities and build community confidence.

In the years ahead, Council will be placing a greater emphasis on integrated strategic planning for greater alignment with the Vision. Moving towards 2040, Council will innovate and be responsive to community needs, including being adaptive in how we engage and interact with the community.

Our Invitation

This Vision was created by you, from your valuable feedback, and shaped by a community representative panel. Its achievement sits with many levels of government, and everyone who is located within, or works with our community. We invite you to have conversations with us, and each other, as we deliver the goals from this document. We invite you to use this Vision in your own plans, applications for funding, or advocacy for our Shire. We invite you to join the journey to 2040.

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