

Mayor Message



*South Gippsland
Shire Council*

Hello South Gippsland,

With Christmas almost here and a New Year just around the corner, it feels like a good time to reflect on some of this year's many achievements and consider our ambitions for the year ahead.

A Year in Review

It has been a big year for Council. In February, we undertook a major community engagement process to help shape our new Council, receiving more than 1,100 pieces of feedback, which played an important role in developing our four-year plan for South Gippsland.

We successfully delivered a \$34 million capital works program. This included major projects such as the Korumburra and Fish Creek Streetscape Revitalisations, the new Meeniyan Hub, redevelopment of the Leongatha and Korumburra railway precincts, and a range of important road upgrades across the Shire.

In addition, we achieved strong advocacy outcomes, including securing a \$4.7 million grant in partnership with Wellington Shire Council to help our region prepare for what's to come with offshore wind development.

A lot has been achieved, however there is still more work to do, particularly with a state election approaching.

Council will continue to advocate to ensure South Gippsland receives the support it needs.

Our advocacy priorities — our "Christmas list" for our local area for the year ahead — include increased rural road funding, disaster recovery infrastructure funding, improved telecommunications and transport, support for community groups, coastal resilience, support for local industry, upgrades to community facilities, improved access to mental health services, and investment in early years infrastructure. It is an ambitious list, but one we are committed to progressing in 2026.

Council will continue to call on the State and Federal governments to deliver services and infrastructure improvements for South Gippsland, to make our communities safer, more liveable and help to make our region a great place to live, work and enjoy. We can't deliver services and infrastructure that are the responsibility of other levels of government, but we



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will continue to make sure that our local need is known and promoted through Council's active advocacy.

Reflection

The importance of community has been particularly clear considering last week's tragic terror attack. Like many, I have been deeply saddened by what has happened. On behalf of Council, I again extend our heartfelt sympathy to the victims, their families, the Jewish community, and the Bondi community.

Moments like this remind us how important it is that Australia remains a place where everyone is safe and respected, regardless of their religion, background, or beliefs. South Gippsland is our home, and kindness and inclusion are values we all must share.

Merry Christmas

It may feel difficult to move from condolences to well-wishes, but the messages are closely connected. This Christmas and into the new year, I encourage everyone to hold loved ones close, show compassion to others, and consider how each of us can support our community.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mayor Nathan Hersey