



Annual Report

*November
2024*



Table of Contents

01 Combined Economic Profile

02 Message from the Chair

03 Our Board Members and team

05 Committees for Cities & Regions Overview

06 Overview of C4EM

08 Our Projects

10 Highlights from the Year

15 Our Members

17 Our Business Partners



The Committee for Echuca Moama acknowledges the traditional custodians and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their cultures, and to Elders past, present and emerging.

Combined Economic Profile

Campaspe Shire & Murray River Council LGA



POPULATION

51,625 people



WORKFORCE

21,024 jobs



OUTPUT

\$8.144 billion

Data from Remplan (Murray River Council) and Remplan (Campaspe Shire Council)

Message from the Chair Dr Catherine Lees

As the incoming Board Chair of C4EM, I am proud to reflect on a year marked by introspection, consolidation, and a renewed commitment to strengthening our relationships with members and local councils. This year has seen a purposeful focus on securing financial stability to ensure C4EM begins 2025 on solid ground, ready to address the evolving needs of our Echuca Moama community. Our focus on introspection and consolidation began following the departure of our CEO, Chris Janson early this year. This has seen us work towards a more streamlined and effective organisation, ensuring that we have the right structures and strategies in place to support our purpose and a clear focus on addressing the issues that matter most to our community.

A key part of this effort has been reconnecting with our members, fostering open communication and listening to their needs, priorities, and aspirations for our community. Through engagement events such as the Business Breakfast series, and key collaborative projects, we have reinforced our commitment to being a responsive, member-driven organisation.

This year also marked a period of financial recovery and stability for C4EM. Through careful budgeting, increased community support, and strategic resource allocation, we have successfully strengthened our financial foundation. This recovery not only allows us to continue our current projects but also positions us to take on new initiatives with confidence and resilience in 2025. Our renewed financial health is a testament to the dedication and prudent management of both our board and our supporters.

This year, we also saw the formation of our first two working groups that have already started to make a difference. The Workforce Education and Training Working Group has been formed to address workforce challenges, identifying training opportunities, and enhancing pathways for local employment. Additionally, the Tourism Working Group has formed following the cessation of Echuca Moama Tourism to provide local stakeholders with a forum to continue to promote Echuca Moama as a premier destination, driving initiatives that showcase our unique offerings and boost our local economy.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the dedication of our volunteer Board of Directors. I would like to acknowledge and extend my gratitude to Dean Oberin (previous Chair) for his leadership, support and guidance. I also extend a heartfelt thanks to each of our board members for their steadfast dedication, unwavering support and additional hours of work that was so generously given to keep our organisation strong. Special thanks to Scott Spedding (Deputy Chair) and Tim Ford (Treasurer) for their outstanding and notable contributions.

With the momentum we have built, C4EM is well-positioned to drive positive change in the coming year. Thank you all for your trust, commitment, and support for our shared vision for Echuca Moama.

I'm pleased to present C4EM's 2023-2024 Annual Report for members.

Sincerely,

Dr Catherine Lees (MAICD)



Our Board Members



Catherine Lees - Chair
On the Board since 2021



Scott Spedding - Deputy Chair
On the Board since 2022



Tim Ford - Treasurer
On the board since 2022



Dean Oberin - Board Member
On the Board since 2011



Oliver Boyd - Board Member
On the Board since 2016



Anne Marie Cairns - Board Member
On the Board since 2022



Belinda Byford
On the Board Since 2023



Grace Angel, Board Member
On the Board since 2023

For more information about our Team and Board Members, visit our website [here](#)

Honorary Board Members



Geoff Kelly
Honorary Board Member



Bob Smith
Honorary Board Member



Peter Marks (dec)
Honorary Board Member



Tod Collins
Honorary Board Member

Our Team



Natalie Durrant
Administration
Assistant (Media)

Natalie grew up on a rural property in north-east Victoria and, apart from three years at Deakin University in Geelong, has lived regionally her whole life.

She spent almost twenty years working as a journalist and sub-editor for McPherson Media's Riverine Herald and Shepparton News. Since then, she has worked as an electoral officer for Member for Murray Plains Peter Walsh, writes fiction and helps her husband run their merino enterprise at Bunnaloo.

Since starting her role in August 2022, Natalie has been working on bringing our stories and project updates to our members and community and also supporting to run events.



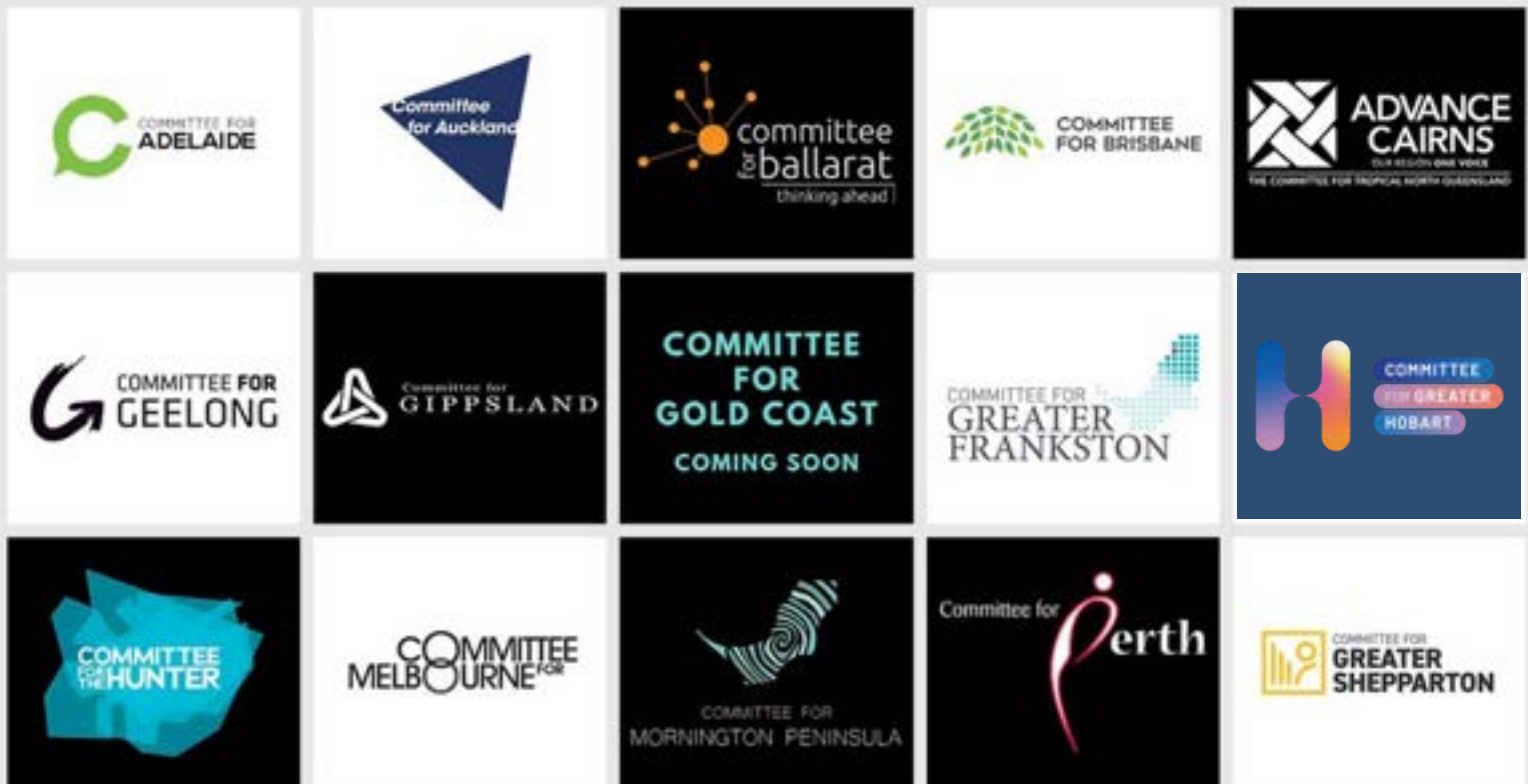
Committees for Cities & Regions Overview

C4EM is a membership-based, incorporated Association that operates under the purpose and rules of its constitution. The organisation comprises a Board of members, made up of the various categories of membership, and includes both elected and appointed members.

C4EM is part of a larger family called Committees for Cities and Regions. This family is an influential network of independent, like-minded organisations each operating within their particular city or regional area to enhance their economic, social, cultural and environmental development. Building on the rising strength of Australia and New Zealand's cities and regions, we work together to advance issues of significance around population growth, economic development and social cohesion.

Through the individual membership profiles of the network partners, Committees for Cities & Regions is financially underpinned by almost 700 of the most significant corporate brands in Australasia. Individually, each organisation brings leaders from business and industry sectors together with community and government organisations, to identify and analyse local issues and work strategically to promote the development of their city or region as an exciting and dynamic place to live and work.

By adopting a strategic, long-term focus, our organisations maintain a non-partisan position, transcending short-term political cycles and therefore enabling us to think and act locally, nationally and internationally as advocates for the sustainable, responsible and dynamic development of our cities and regions.





OUR PURPOSE

To collaborate with all stakeholders to inspire innovative and visionary thinking that facilitates community well-being and growth.

OUR VISION

A well-connected, adaptable voice advocating for investment and development in cultural, social and economic well-being to support a prosperous, vibrant, diverse and inclusive region

Our Pillars

Pillar 1: 'Echuca Moama' one community

- Echuca & Moama = Echuca Moama
- State border irrelevant in description & marketing
- Echuca Moama a significant regional centre



Pillar 2: Support & plan for sustainable population growth

- Greater population growth = stronger local economy
- Quality infrastructure & liveability attracts new residents
- The need to embrace & cater for a more culturally diverse population

Pillar 3: Develop new & unique offerings

- Embrace our rich & unique heritage and indigenous cultural experiences – Strong connection to water & land
- Grow & highlight our unique natural environment experiences to attract a broad range of investment & event opportunities
- Grow our Food & Fibre tourism experience – Paddock to plate, local product, niche food processing



Pillar 4: Strengthen food & fibre related industries

- Echuca Moama = An integral part of Australia's Food Bowl
- A leader in innovation, research & development
- Secure affordable water

Pillar 5: Workforce & leadership development

- Developing a skilled workforce to address labour shortages mainly in; Hospitality, Health, Food & Fibre, and Trades
- Developing a local education hub offering TAFE & University options inclusive of innovation, research & business development to address skills shortage industries
- Promote & create pathway opportunities for our future young people & leaders



Our Projects



CCTV CAMERAS

Committee for Echuca Moama is continuing to push its Echuca Moama Safe Towns Project which involves installing a Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) Camera network through Echuca's central business district.

[Read More](#)



COMMUNITY CONNECTOR

A film project between C4EM and Echuca Regional Health was launched in October. The project was the culmination of a 12-month program called Community Connector, led by ERH's relocation and wellbeing project manager Lauren Byrne.

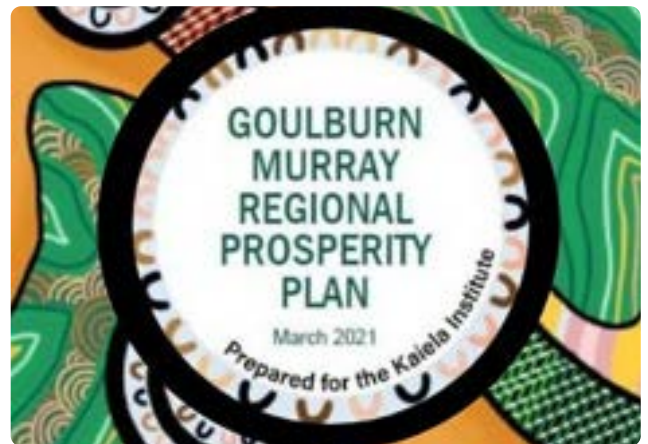
[Read More](#)



FOOD & FIBRE GROUP

The Food and Fibre group started through a round table discussion in 29th April 2021. This event was supported by a Regional Development Australia Committee \$2,000 grant.

[Read More](#)



GOULBURN MURRAY REGIONAL PROSPERITY PLAN

The Plan was launched on the 15th July 2021 and has a vision to build a thriving First Nations economy that will generate new income, opportunities and shared prosperity for the benefit of everyone in the region.

[Read More](#)

Our Projects



BRIDGE ART PROJECT

Echuca Moama has a strong arts community, however the region lacks an art gallery to do justice to the array of talent in the district. The Bridge Art Project Committee is committed to changing that with the establishment of a breath-taking, ground-breaking arts precinct in Moama.

[Read More](#)



GOULBURN MURRAY RESILIENCE TASKFORCE

The Goulburn Murray Resilience Taskforce acts as the custodians of this strategy, the region's shared vision and voice and was established in May 2021. We translate the Strategy's vision into action.

[Read More](#)



PETER MARKS SCHOLARSHIP

C4EM is committed to supporting and growing our future leaders by providing the financial assistance to cover the enrolment costs, \$6,600, for completing the Fairley Leadership Program beginning in March each year.

[Read More](#)



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable Housing is such an important topic on the agenda for our communities and all over Australia. Covid has played a large role with the migration of people coming to regional communities, highlighting the need for conversations to discuss our infrastructure and support services into the future.

[Read More](#)

Highlights from the Year

WORKING GROUPS

C4EM was excited to launch two working groups this year.

Tourism

Following the closure of Echuca Moama and District Tourism Association (EMDTA) in June, the association voted to hand over its digital assets to Committee for Echuca Moama.

These assets included the social media accounts, intellectual property and website.

C4EM was selected as the custodians of the assets due to its similar structure, being not-for-profit and membership based.

A working group was formed, with C4EM Treasurer Tim Ford taking on chair of the group.

Meetings to date have discussed the best way forward, including marketing, branding and structural governance.

'Tourism in Echuca Moama is a driving force behind the region's economy and C4EM is privileged to support district business operators through this transition,' Mr Ford said.

'C4EM was established to support and advocate for the growth and development of the Echuca Moama region, and we are perfectly situated to develop a shared approach to tourism in our region, working collaboratively with our councils and other key stakeholders.'

Workforce, Training, Education and Leadership

C4EM launched its Workforce, Training and Education Working Group in September.

The purpose of the working group is to address the key challenges and harness opportunities related to workforce development, education, training and leadership to support the Echuca Moama community.

The group's focus will be on:

- Identify skills gaps
- Collaborate with stakeholders
- Develop training programs
- Attract and retain talent
- Support economic growth
- Promote lifelong learning

The working group is made up of a cross-section of representatives from education institutions and experts in their field across the Echuca Moama community.



Highlights from the Year

Community Connector

The Community Connector program was instigated by Echuca Regional Health, who appointed Lauren Byrne for a 12-month position as Project Manager Relocation and Wellbeing in 2023.

In collaboration with Committee for Echuca Moama, the program was aimed at investigating some of the hurdles to attracting and retaining staff in businesses across Echuca Moama.

This included:

- Identifying challenges, such as professional development opportunities, accommodation limitations, lack of diversity for social groups, the shortage of quality applicants for jobs.
- Identifying areas for improvement.
- Identifying current initiatives, such as flexible working arrangements, incentives to move to Echuca Moama, professional development opportunities, community activities.
- Identifying unique offerings. This included Echuca Moama's geography, business and infrastructure, community and lifestyle, and economy.
- Creating strategies to attract and retain staff. Some of these included promotion of the region, concierge service, web portal, housing strategy, trades and services information, cultural and social events, and a careers expo.

The program culminated in the creation of a promotional video produce by Radiant Media, which was launched at Moama Bowling Club on October 10, 2024.

Businesses who would like to use the video to promote Echuca Moama to prospective employees can access it [here](#) or via the QR code.



ERH people and culture director Angela Hussey, relocation and wellbeing project manager Lauren Byrne, film stars Derek Green, Div Mallya, Elise Mulcahy, Marie-Claire Skate, Lawrence Lozano and Josephine Lozano, ERH chief executive Robyn Lindsay and C4EM board chair Cath Lees.

Peter Marks Scholarship recipient

A passion for helping people saw Macey Phegan named this year's Peter Marks Scholarship recipient.

The Moama resident took on this year's Fairley Leadership Program as the winner of Committee for Echuca Moama's (C4EM) Peter Marks Scholarship.

Macey is relatively new to Echuca Moama, but has a regional background, having grown up in Wagga. She studied a Bachelor of Applied Science and Masters of Occupational Therapy. Macey works in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and is a generalist OT.

'I am honoured to have been chosen for the Peter Marks Scholarship and would like to thank C4EM for the opportunity.'

The Peter Marks Scholarship honours the memory of Peter Marks, a long-time C4EM board member and recognised community leader. C4EM is committed to supporting and growing our future leaders.



Highlights from the Year

EVENTS

Breakfast series

This year C4EM have hosted three popular breakfast sessions, focused on bringing business and community members issues that are relevant and thought-provoking.

Maureen Kyne: The HR and IR Landscape in 2024

Maureen Kyne, an industrial relations expert, HR strategist, speaker, coach and facilitator, spoke about the changes to legislation and regulation impacting regional Australian businesses.

“The most significant industrial relations changes in more than a decade are here,” Maureen said. “Employees have more entitlements and rights, expect more flexibility and have a new attitude to work in the post-covid era.

“This can be daunting and stressful for business leaders to address, but not if you have the systems and policies in place.”

Topics included:

- Right to disconnect
- Criminal consequence of Wage Theft
- Respect@Work Legislation
- Victoria's Workplace Manslaughter Laws
- New union rights from Closing the Loopholes Act



Cybersecurity: From and attacker's perspective



Getting into the mind of a cyber attacker was all part of the process at C4EM's Cybersecurity breakfast.

Advance Computing's Bill Cashmore outlined the fundamentals of cybersecurity and how to stay safe from cyber theft which is now more lucrative than the global drug trade! Growing on average 15 per cent a year, it is estimated that cybertheft will cost \$10.5 trillion by next year.

Highlights from the Year

Michael Worth: Management versus Leadership – Are they different?

Michael Worth, Director at Learning People & Culture, gave an interactive session about management versus leadership, leadership styles, situational leadership, and what Jack Black and the School of Rock can teach you about leading your people. The breakfast gave participants the first chance to sign up for a 10-day leadership course with Michael, which was launched on November 14 & 15.



Meet the candidates

Committee for Echuca Moama hosted candidate forums for the Murray River Council and Campaspe Shire Council local government elections.

Residents had the chance to hear from their councillor candidates and ask questions.

C4EM board chair Dr Cath Lees said it was a great opportunity for ratepayers to hear the policies of the representatives.

“The forum was a chance for residents of both councils to learn more about the candidates and what they see as the big issues across the shire,” she said.



Michael Worth – Leadership Course

Committee for Echuca Moama was excited to offer a 10-day leadership course in Echuca!

Generously sponsored by Echuca Workers, Moama Bowling Club, M&S Accounting and Oberin Hospitality, it enabled C4EM to offer the 20 spots at a discounted rate.

‘This was a fantastic opportunity for local business to take part in a course which would otherwise be impossible for small enterprise to access,’ C4EM treasurer Tim Ford said.

The first two days of the course were November 14 & 15, with subsequent days running over the next four months.

‘Leadership is a skill you need to learn,’ Michael said. ‘When you’re a junior your only job is to be good at your job. When you become a leader, you are suddenly responsible for the people in your charge.’

Michael’s passion for leadership and people management has driven his career from engineering to manufacturing, human resources to mergers and acquisitions, and now Leading People & Culture consulting and executive coaching.



Highlights from the Year

Membership Information Night

C4EM hosted an information evening onboard the PS Hero, which was attended by almost 70 people keen to learn more about C4EM.

Board chair Cath Lees said joining C4EM had been a fantastic way to better understand our community and advocate for change. 'The thing which strikes me most about C4EM is that there is no other organisation providing advocacy, thought leadership or long-term vision for the growth and prosperity of Echuca Moama,' she said. 'Broad-based, representative bodies like C4EM will always have greater power and influence (at all levels of government) than any individual, single interest group or entrepreneur in Echuca Moama.'



Our Members

Executive Members



BYFORD

To be an industry-leader, in the fabrication of stainless steel and aluminium products, we create innovative solutions for the transport of bitumen, chemical, dairy, fuel and wine industries. To do so, we work closely with operators to design, fabricate and repair tankers and service some of Australia's leading names in the dairy, wine, and chemicals industries. We constantly strive to set the industry benchmark in innovation, quality, productivity, service and have a workforce that is motivated, skilled, flexible, and happy.



MOAMA BOWLING CLUB

At Moama Bowling Club, we're so much more than our bricks and mortar. Beneath our brand as a world-class sporting, dining and entertainment venue, we're about community. And there's no greater way to build strong communities than through working in partnership with others. It's how we create opportunities right across our region for connection and belonging. Because when people are connected and feel a sense of belonging in their work, family life and community, they're happier, healthier and more resilient individuals.



RICH RIVER GOLF CLUB

Near the banks of the scenic Murray River, Rich River Golf Club is your gateway to refined and relaxed living. Enjoy stunning views of the golf course while you dine in the newly renovated club house. Boasting an abundance of sporting facilities, including two championship golf courses, 17-bay driving range, Golf Simulator, four A-grade croquet greens, three tift-dwarf bowling greens and 6 synthetic tennis courts plus new 9 hole mini golf course, Rich River is a great place to relax or play during your time away.

Our Members

Corporate Members



ACE RADIO



AMERICAN HOTEL



BENDIGO TAFE



COOLABAH TURF



E.B. MAWSONS & SONS



ECHUCA REGIONAL HEALTH



FOODMACH



KAGOME



UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

Business Members



ACM



ADVANCE COMPUTING




CHARLES. L KING



COMMONWEALTH BANK



ECHUCA WORKERS



GO TRAFFIC



HAWKSWOOD HOMES



HIP POCKET WORKWEAR



NULLARBOR TIMBER



NBN



RIVERINE HERALD



THE SPLENDID WORD



ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE ECHUCA



TELSTRA



UNIQUE SAFETY SERVICES

Community



CCLLEN

Our Business Partners



J2 Creative



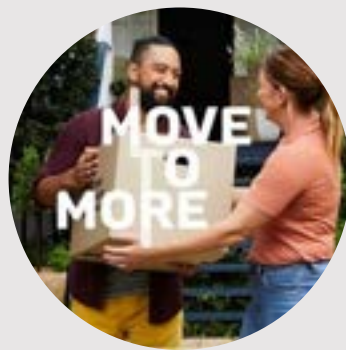
Public Sector Contracts



Maureen Kyne & Associates



Fairley Leadership Program



Move to More



Invest Loddon Mallee



RDA Murray



RDA Loddon Mallee



Regional Development Victoria



Business Victoria



Victorian Chamber of Commerce



Committee for Echuca Moama
PO Box 1119, Echuca VIC 3564
info@c4em.com.au

