



**MOOGJI ABORIGINAL COUNCIL EAST GIPPSLAND INC.**

## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2028**

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### Acknowledgements

Moogji Aboriginal Council would like to acknowledge their members, Community, Board of Directors and staff who participated in the development of the 2024-2028. strategic plan.

### Terminology

In this strategic plan the terms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are used in relation to specific policy and program names. The terms Koorie and Koori in general refer to Aboriginal people from the south-eastern part of Australia. The terms Aboriginal, First People and First Nations are used more broadly. In this plan this range of terms used embrace all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## **MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR**

Moogji Aboriginal Council East Gippsland is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO), serving the Aboriginal Community living in Far East Gippsland.

Our origins are steeped in our community's desire to celebrate the past and secure the future for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Far East Gippsland.

Initially set up as the Snowy River Cooperative in the 1970s, providing home help for the Elderly and people with challenging health conditions, crisis housing, food assistance and access to health services, the organisation became the Moogji Aboriginal Council in 1989.

Today Moogji provides a range of health and wellbeing, community support and environmental and cultural works programs and continues to explore and seek opportunities to meet the emerging needs and aspirations of community members.

For several years Moogji has embarked on a journey to ensure it operates effectively and provides evidenced based and best practice programs and services. We have achieved a great deal in terms of building our health service and youth programs, building our economic development capability, strengthening governance, and changing the way we work to embrace new systems and processes to ensure we are able to deliver the best care we can for our clients, patients and community members more broadly.

In recent years we have faced many challenges including COVID 19, bushfires and floods – all of which have had a significant impact on our Community and our organisation.

We are proud of how we rose to the challenges and found new ways to work and support our community through outreach and on-line support as well as service and program delivery.

During the time of the last Strategic Plan we were also able to:

- Increase our asset base through:
  - Being successful in our application to have the title of the Stanley Street property transferred from Government to Moogji under the State Government's Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program (ACIP) First Mortgage Removal. Moogji now owns the property in our own right
  - Purchasing a 40-acre property on Bonang Road ("the Block") to accommodate our environmental and cultural works program as well as giving us the opportunity to deliver other programs and services and facilitate cultural and community connection on the site in line with our community's aspirations
- Secure funding for significant renovations for the Health Service and the original building on Stanley Street
- Secure funding to develop the Bonang Road Property to support our environmental and cultural works program, build cultural spaces for community gatherings and revegetate a significant proportion of the land
- Expand the programs we offer to enable our youth to achieve their life goals and leadership skills

- Continue to develop our medical services and position ourselves to become a stand-alone, accredited, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
- Continue the conversation on exploring the feasibility of social enterprises
- Host and celebrate NAIDOC events and continue to plan for more of these.
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Recently both our CEO, Tammy Bundle and Chairperson, Nick Martin resigned from Moogji. Most of what has been achieved over the last few years owes a lot to their hard work and leadership. We thank them for their determination and effort over such a challenging time and for the strong position we are in since emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic.

So where to from here?

We continue to have a focus on continually improving how to engage with and support our community and delivering quality services, programs, events and activities that meet community needs and aspirations.

We are embarking on a five year strategic plan so our longer term aspirations are captured and kept on our radar. We will review progress at the end of 2026 and update the plan at that stage.

Community and cultural connection and strengthening will be an important pillar of the next part of Moogji's journey with our Bonang Road property placing us in a sound position to identify and develop facilities to support community to connect and strengthen culture, continue to expand our businesses/ social enterprises, develop employment and training opportunities for community members and provide much needed support and programs to improve physical, spiritual and emotional wellbeing.

We have done the groundwork to ensure we can operate as a stand alone medical clinic with our own GP, providing more allied health services and improved access to dental health services. While Orbost Regional Health will remain an important partner providing emergency care and other services we want our community to know and be confident that their general health and wellbeing issues can be primarily addressed in a culturally safe and inclusive Practice which is owned and controlled by the Aboriginal Community of East Gippsland.

Given the challenges in the labour market and the geographical location of Moogji, it is important that Moogji invests in providing employment opportunities and pathways for community members, especially our young people, both within Moogji and with our partner organisations. We know we need to be innovative, flexible and offer meaningful roles that build skills and capabilities and provide career paths.

We also want to make sure our community benefits from the growing economic development opportunities in our region. Our environmental and cultural works program located in the Bonang Road property is expected to grow with our crew playing an important role in delivering on the wide range of contracts we have with government and other organisations. Growth in this area of Moogji's operations will generate much needed revenue for our organisation, develop the skills of our staff and provide training and employment paths for members of our community.

The development of the Block will also enable us to provide our community with much needed spaces – inside and outside – to connect and strengthen culture.

As an organisation we are also committed to exploring ways to improve our own financial sustainability. We are in a fortunate position that through the hard work of our previous CEO, Tammy Bundle and many of our staff, we are not only financially stable, we are also able to make further strategic investments in our health service operations as well as new social enterprises that will provide independent sources of revenue for us as well as more employment and training opportunities for our community members.

As a small organisation, in a small and remote community, we know we cannot do this on our own. Our partners – both Aboriginal organisations, government agencies and private businesses – are important to us and together we will continue to work to ensure the system as a whole is more culturally competent and culturally safe. In particular, we are working hard with Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association (LEAHA) and Lake Tyers Health and Children Services (LTHCS) to increase our capacity to collectively attract funding for services and programs specifically to meet the needs and aspirations of the Aboriginal communities located in East Gippsland.

Given our cultural knowledge, skills, expertise, passion, connections and commitment to our vision and purpose we will not only be a genuine place for all community members but also an organisation that can really bring about positive change for individuals, families and our community.

**Megan Solomon**  
**Chairperson, Moogji Board of Directors**

## **VISION**

The Aboriginal Community in Far East Gippsland is physically, spiritually, emotionally and economically healthy, vibrant, strong, proud and culturally connected.

## **PURPOSE**

At Moogji we support community members through their life journeys to achieve the best health and wellbeing outcomes possible, strengthen cultural and community connections and reach employment and economic development goals.

We do this through the provision of quality services and programs in a culturally safe environment, facilitating employment and training opportunities, supporting strong community leadership and advocating for community needs and aspirations.

## **VALUES**

**We believe in:**

- Listening to, and advocating for community
- Community control
- Cultural integrity
- Inclusiveness
- Being responsive and always improving
- Wellbeing not welfare
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Trust and respect
- Accountability

## **WHAT WE DO**

Our organisation provides services in East Gippsland specifically in and around Orbost, Cann River and surrounding districts including;

- Medical Services
- Medical Transport
- Visiting Specialists and Outreach Services/ referrals
- Alcohol and Other Drug Support Services
- Counselling/ SEWB
- Youth Program
- Nursery and Bushbank
- Cultural Walk
- FoodPATH and Community Garden Program
- Community Events
- Employment Opportunities
- Health Promotion
- Health and Wellbeing Activities
- Referral to other agencies

Prior to the global COVID pandemic Moogji began looking for a new property to accommodate its environmental works program. The program was being run from a leased property in Orbost which, as the program grew, had become too small for it to run effectively and efficiently. At the same time the owners of the property were seeking to reclaim use of the sheds and land for their own purposes. After serious consideration of available options within a reasonable distance of Moogji's Stanley Street property we were successful in purchasing a 40acre property on Bonang Road with an existing house, shed and an established commercial hot house.

The new property incorporates the nursery business and facilities to accommodate machinery and equipment. A cultural walk has been developed to provide a space where Community can come and connect with the land and Culture. There are longer term plans to include areas to sit, reflect and heal from the recent fire events, COVID and other troubles that people have had to deal with throughout their life journeys. A range of native plants will be planted out and seeds will be collected to re-establish areas that have been damaged through fires. The nursery will be open to all members of the Community allowing them to come and learn about native plants which will also be available for purchase. The aim of the nursery is to provide employment and training opportunities and provide participants with opportunities to gain knowledge of how to take care of country and the environment. An area of the cultural walk will be devoted to teaching people about our ancestors and supporting Elders to share their knowledge and wisdom through storytelling. It will be a welcoming place where schools and other interest groups can come and engage with the Aboriginal Community.

## **OUR STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT**

### **The Aboriginal population in East Gippsland/ Our Community**

(note "our community" may extend beyond the ABS definitions of East Gippsland)

Moogji is located in Orbost a small, remote community in East Gippsland where employment and economic development opportunities as well as affordable housing are limited.

It is estimated that around 352 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders live in the catchment area of Moogji including in the towns of Marlo, Cann River, Club Terrace, Mallacoota, Newmerella representing 4.9% of the total population in the region.<sup>1</sup>

### **Culturally appropriate and safe health services in the region**

Overall, there are few health services available in the region. In Far East Gippsland there is only Moogji and Orbost Regional Health. Other outreach services are provided by other larger providers based in either Lakes Entrance or Bairnsdale. Whilst services of other providers may be culturally competent, access to services is limited.

Moogji will continue to play an important role in providing a culturally safe health services as well as contributing to building the cultural competency of other services in the region ensuring community members can confidently access the services they need from a range of providers.

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<sup>1</sup> East Gippsland Shire population forecasts indicated that in 2023:

Orbost Area: Total population = 4107 including 283 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people  
Mallacoota–Cann River: Total population = 1627 including 16 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people  
Bruthen – Buchan. Total population = 1522 including 53 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people

### **Changes to funding models**

The funding formula for core health funding is continually changing which impacts all Aboriginal Health Services across Australia including Moogji. Changes in health policy and funding models require Moogji to be flexible and agile in the way it manages its health service. Ongoing funding needed to guarantee quality service delivery is never certain. It is a critical time for Moogji to build its capacity for generating revenue outside of core funding including optimising Medicare revenue and exploring new business opportunities.

### **Our community members face complex and multiple health challenges**

A significant proportion of Moogji clients have diagnosed chronic illnesses including:

- Asthma & other chronic lung diseases
- Depression / anxiety/ mental health
- High blood pressure and heart disease
- Diabetes

Managing chronic illness well, especially as clients/ patients age is a continuing priority for us.

The incidence of poor mental health and social and emotional well-being for all people in our region has been exacerbated by the COVID19 pandemic and the bushfires of the last few years. With targeted funding available from both State and Commonwealth governments, we are putting in place supports and programs to specifically support our community to deal with the challenges they have had and continue to face.

We also recognise that we have a role in ensuring that our community members are well supported as they age. We have a growing number of Elders in our community and we need keep focused on ensuring they are well supported through Aged Care packages and support services.

### **Shifting investment from clinical intervention to prevention, early intervention and health and wellbeing (non-acute care)**

Moogji is continuing to focus our efforts on health promotion, prevention and early intervention to help reduce the onset of illness later in life and the need for a system of care based on responding to crises. Promoting the benefits of positive life choices, health lifestyles and helping patients/clients reduce or stop risky behaviours such as smoking and poor eating are important. Activities that are inclusive of connection to culture and country (which help build SEWB and contribute to better health outcomes) will be integrated across Moogji programs and services.

### **Housing Shortages**

Access to suitable and affordable housing is challenging across the region. While Moogji is not a housing provider, we recognise that we need to be part of the solution to the acute housing shortages in our region that our impacting our Community in and address these issues in collaboration with relevant agencies and organisations.



**Need to build our capabilities**

As a small service providing holistic care to meet all the needs of our patients/clients can be challenging. We need to ensure we work collaboratively and in partnership with other services in the region to ensure patients and clients can access the care and support they need.

An important priority for Moogji in this strategic planning period is strengthening our relationship with LEAHA and LTHCS and building our collective capacity through our newly formed G3 – Gippsland Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Alliance to attract funding and deliver programs and services needed by the Aboriginal communities of East Gippsland and reduce our reliance on outreach services from GEGAC and mainstream providers.

We are also focused on reducing our reliance on government funding and building our capability to source revenue not tied to government funded programs. In particular we are committed to building our capabilities in medical practice management and business development which we see as key sources of revenue in the next five years and beyond.

## STRATEGIC FOCUS 2024-2028

- Focus Area 1: **Community and Culture:** Our Community is engaged, connected and culturally strong
- Focus Area 2: **Health:** We deliver high quality GP and allied health services
- Focus Area 3: **Family, Youth and Children:** Our families, youth and children are supported to achieve their goals
- Focus Area 4: **Employment and economic development:** We provide our community with real employment pathways as we grow our own economic independence
- Focus Area 5: **Sustainability:** Moogji is a sustainable and thriving organisation

**Strategic Focus 1: Community and Culture:** Our Community is engaged, connected and culturally strong

Goals	Actions
1. Connection to community and country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold six community lunches a year on the block and other appropriate locations</li> <li>• Hold 4 Cultural activities per year to share stories, knowledge and provide opportunities for Community to be involved</li> </ul>
2. Celebrate culture and identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to host, recognise and celebrate significant dates and events – NAIDOC, Reconciliation Week, Sorry Day etc.</li> </ul>
3. Support self-Determination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement processes to enable community members to have a say and drive Moogji directions and priorities</li> </ul>
4. Build Facilities on the Block for program, service delivery and culturally safe activities and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the block to support community member aspirations for social connection, cultural strengthening, learning and healthy living. Some ideas Moogji will explore with community include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community garden</li> <li>• Chickens</li> <li>• Cultural Track</li> <li>• Gathering facility/ies e.g. Art spaces, performing spaces</li> <li>• BBQ areas</li> <li>• Training and education space</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5. Build cultural knowledge and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a program to enable school students to visit Moogji, increase their community and cultural knowledge and participate in cultural experiences</li> <li>• Investigate cultural activities and experiences with and for the Community</li> <li>• Work with Traditional Owners/ Custodians to ensure cultural heritage matters/ issues in the region are addressed in line with Moogji's cultural values</li> </ul>

**Strategic Focus 2: Health:** We deliver high quality GP and allied health services

1. A stand-alone medical centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recruit/ engage a GP</li></ul>
2. Extend our allied health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Advocate for and seek funding to ensure the allied health needs of the community are addressed</li></ul>

**Strategic Focus Area 3: Family, Youth and Children:** Our families, youth and children are supported to achieve their goals

Goals	Actions
1. Develop and implement coordinated family and community support services in collaboration with LEAHA and LTHCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the strategic directions as well as program development and delivery in regards to CYFS (Children’s Youth &amp; Families Services) of the G3 - Gippsland Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Alliance</li> <li>• Establish groups and opportunities which recognise the diversity in our Community</li> </ul>
2. Support and care for our Elders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish an Elders Group and an annual calender of events</li> <li>• Collaborate with LEAHA and LTHCS to host combined Elders activities</li> <li>• In collaboration with LTHCS and LEAHA Investigate options for aged care (respite and permanent care) for our Elders in East Gippsland</li> </ul>
3. Nurture our babies, toddlers and children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate our Community’s child care needs</li> <li>• Develop and implement a Mums and Bubs Group</li> <li>• Provide parenting support and activities</li> <li>• Continue to provide Children’s activities – holiday programs, after school activities, homework program</li> </ul>
4. Support Community wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support community members to access NDIS and Aged Care packages</li> <li>• Develop programs that promote positive health including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pamper days</li> <li>○ Healing activities &amp; workshops</li> <li>○ Art therapy / courses</li> <li>○ Health promotion activities</li> <li>○ Wellbeing programs and activities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

5. Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support the development of youth leadership skills through camps, courses, work experience etc</li><li>• Explore work experience opportunities and support for Youth</li><li>• Deliver youth wellbeing and healthy lifestyle programs</li></ul>
6. Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participate in and support advocacy efforts of relevant agencies and organisations to address the shortage of suitable and affordable housing for community members</li></ul>

**Strategic Focus Area 4: Employment and economic development**

Goals	Actions
<p>1. Increase employment opportunities and pathways for Aboriginal people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify opportunities for traineeships, work experience and school apprenticeships across the organisation</li> <li>• Provide and explore training and learning opportunities relating to “Caring for Country”, “Cultural Tourism”, Health, Business Development</li> <li>• Develop community support services that provide employment and volunteer opportunities</li> <li>• Explore the feasibility of developing further social enterprises with at least one established by 2026</li> </ul>
<p>2. Economic Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the Environmental and Cultural Works Program by increasing contracts with existing customers and new customers</li> <li>• Grow the nursery business (Bush Tucker, Native herbs, plants for wholesale and retail sale)</li> <li>• Explore additional business opportunities in <del>and other things in</del> Orbst and surrounding areas</li> <li>• Leverage opportunities at a local, regional, state and national level to obtain support for increasing Moogji’s business and social enterprise capabilities</li> </ul>

**Strategic Focus Area 5: Sustainability:** A Sustainable and Thriving Organisation

Goals	Actions
<p>1. An inclusive work environment that enables our people to grow and succeed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation structure fit for purpose</li> <li>• Recruitment strategy including creation of traineeships and other entry level positions</li> <li>• Support G3 efforts in delivering staff training and development around:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Leadership</li> <li>○ Program/ project management</li> <li>○ Practice management</li> <li>○ IT systems</li> <li>○ Communities of practice</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Remuneration appropriate for roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Development program for all staff to build individual skills and organisational capability</li> </ul>
<p>2. Organisational systems and processes that improve program and service efficiency, effectiveness and compliance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the clinic is able to deliver consistent high quality services to the Community</li> <li>• Maintain and implement relevant data management systems to ensure quality and safe care for patients and clients</li> <li>• Explore new program and service opportunities and ensure Moogji is able to comply with associated accreditation and standards</li> </ul>
<p>3. Optimisation of revenue to increase Moogji's financial and economic independence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generate Medicare income</li> <li>• Investigate potential investments/ business opportunities</li> </ul>
<p>4. Mutually beneficial partnerships and collaborations established/ nurtured</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurture Moogji's relationship with Gippsland Primary Health Network and Orbost Regional Health for the delivery of appropriate services</li> <li>• Strengthen and formalize relationships with economic development and employment partners – DEECA, Parks Vic, CMA, Landcare, GLAWAC</li> <li>• Participate as an equal partner in the G3 – Gippsland Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Alliance to optimize funding for shared</li> </ul>



	programs delivered to East Gippsland Aboriginal communities
5. Place/ Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the renovations to the Stanley Street property</li> <li>• Continue to explore options for the development of the Block to include facilities and amenities that meet the needs and aspirations of the Community</li> </ul>
6. Good Governance and sound leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue focus on Governance training and building skills</li> <li>• Build opportunities for Youth &amp; Elders to contribute to Moogji's governance by establishing an Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Leadership training program for Staff</li> </ul>
7. Minimize Moogji's environmental footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate ways to minimise Moogji's carbon footprint</li> </ul>

## OUTCOMES BY 2028

Our plan is to work towards the achievement of the following:

	By the end of 2024 (short term)	By the end of 2026 (medium term)	By the end of 2028 (long term)
Community and Culture	<p>Regular community lunches held</p> <p>Implementation of cultural activities calendar</p> <p>Celebration of significant dates and events</p> <p><b>Inclusive conversations with community that support self-determination</b></p> <p>Community garden, cultural walk</p> <p><b>Extension of the</b> outdoor / cultural spaces on the Block</p>	<p>Education and awareness program in place for school students</p> <p>Consult with Community and co-design cultural activities and experiences for Community</p> <p>Explore opportunities to develop Moogji's cultural values through guidance from Traditional Owners/ Custodians.</p>	<p>Funding for multi-purpose facility secured</p> <p>Cultural tourism experiences being offered on the block</p>
Health Services	AGPAL Accreditation	<p>GP recruited</p> <p>Allied Health Services expanded</p>	<b>Improved access to culturally safe dental services</b>

<p>Family Youth and Children</p>	<p>Community Groups established in accordance with community needs and aspirations</p> <p>Combined Elders activities (part of G3)</p> <p>Mums and Bubs program established</p> <p>Children's activities – holiday, after school and home work programs in place</p> <p>Wellbeing and positive health programs delivered</p> <p>Involvement in local advocacy campaigns to increase affordable housing for community members and families</p>	<p>Extension of FYC services in collaboration with LTHCS and LEAHA (G3)</p> <p>Programs/ services and/or partnerships to ensure Elder community members can access respite and permanent care</p> <p>Parenting Support program</p> <p>Feasibility study of need for early years services completed</p> <p>Program/ services and/or partnerships to assist community members to access NDIS and Aged Care packages</p> <p>Leadership programs and opportunities available to youth</p> <p>Work experience and traineeship programs for Community members within Moogji</p>	
<p>Employment and Economic Development</p>	<p>Increase in the return on investment of nursery and cultural works programs</p>	<p>Expansion of nursery and cultural works programs</p> <p>Employment pathways within Moogji established and supported</p>	<p>At least one additional social enterprise developed at Moogji</p> <p>Collaboration to expand employment pathways for</p>

		Additional business/ investment opportunity identified and established	community members with other organisations
Sustainability	<p>Completion of renovations to the medical centre</p> <p>G3 Alliance established</p> <p>All Board members have completed Governance training</p>	<p>Medicare revenue stream established</p> <p>Organisational structure review completed</p> <p>Effective and efficient data management systems implemented</p> <p>Key partnerships established, reviewed and renewed</p> <p>Governance processes and systems reviewed and updated</p> <p>Processes in place to provide Elders and Youth with input to the Board</p> <p>Programs in place to reduce Moogji's carbon footprint</p>	<p>G3 Alliance recognized as a critical player in influencing regional Aboriginal health strategy and program delivery</p> <p>Moogji has significantly reduced its carbon footprint and delivered savings</p> <p>Moogji is recognized for its achievements in becoming an environmentally sustainable, friendly and efficient organisation</p> <p>Revenue from Medicare billing optimized</p> <p>Cultural and environmental works program financially viable and returning profit to Moogji</p>