

FOCUS AREA: CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Priority Action

CONTINUE TO INVEST IN MAJOR HIGHWAYS TO IMPROVE SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY



WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

The region is a nationally important and internationally respected producer of food and horticultural goods and other products such as mineral sands. Product is exported from the region to domestic and international markets using the region's road and rail network.

The Sturt Highway is a nationally recognised key freight route, with the Mallee and Silver City Highways recognised as important cross border road connections.

The Murray Valley Highway follows the Murray River, connecting the west of the state to the centre, and major national and interstate highways to processing plants and freight distribution centres.

Each of the highways is strategic in enabling effective freight movement. However, insufficient passing lanes and rest stops and poorly designed intersections negatively impact safety, travel time and local road access.

The Murray Valley Highway is also the key tourism corridor for the region, with increasing levels of visitation including international visitors.

Each highway is an important regional corridor that supports economic growth, tourism and population growth.

PROJECT BENEFITS

The project will better connect key freight centres in Victoria with domestic and export markets, expand the regional economy, improve safety and promote tourism development.

The project will:

- Reduce conflicts between freight/buses/caravans and cars to improve access, safety and travel time along priority east-west highway corridors, the Loddon Valley Highway and onto local roads.
- Provide efficient freight movements to processing facilities and improve safety for increasing tourist and passenger traffic.

RECENT ACTIVITY

Consultation and existing reports e.g. RAMROC identified priorities for upgrading, such as more passing lanes and the provision of rest stops (in NSW and Victoria) including road alignments at Euston roundabout and the 90-degree intersection in Balranald.

NEXT STEPS

Support the preparation of highway corridor strategies that include:

-  Murray Valley Highway
-  Sturt Highway
-  Loddon Valley Highway
-  Mallee Highway
-  Sunraysia Highway

The Central Murray Regional Transport Forum is an initiative of:



FOCUS AREA: CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Priority Action

BETTER AND SAFER VISITOR ACCESS TO TOURISM ICONS AND EXPERIENCES



WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

Poor access to the region's well-known tourism experiences, including the Murray River and Lake Mungo, presents barriers to visitation and access to other regional tourism assets and negatively affects the local economy.

Tourism is a valuable contributor with an estimated total annual value of \$670 million to the region based on recreational, nature-based, cultural, eco and agri-tourism and heritage attractions.

Mildura Rural City Council is largest in terms of share of regional tourism value, followed by Murray River Council with 21.4% and Swan Hill Rural City Council 15.3%. This also reflects the level of investment and depth of infrastructure and services available at each of these locations.

Travel to the region has increased with domestic and international visitors coming to the region to visit the iconic Murray River and nearby lakes and forests. National parks, including Lake Mungo, attract an estimated 30,000 visitors per annum.

Lake Tyrell has recently become a major drawcard for visitors from China and a Silo Art Trail is being developed following the innovative decoration of unused grain silos.

A broader understanding of emerging tourism needs and tourist routes for upgrading is required.

PROJECT BENEFITS

The project will provide a strategy to identify and prioritise visitor access and contribute to the growth and diversity of the regional economy.

The project will:

- Improve access for tourists to key regional destinations and experiences.
- Attract funding to seal Arumpo and Marma Box Creek roads and improve access to Mungo National Park.
- Assist in the development of the Murray Valley Highway into an iconic, nationally recognised tourism route.
- Provide an evidence base for funding applications.

RECENT ACTIVITY

Wentworth Shire has completed an Arumpo Road improvement study to address access issues into Mungo National Park.

NEXT STEPS

ADVOCACY:

-  Attract funding to enable road upgrades.
-  Assess and prioritise access routes to key tourism assets and identify infrastructure gaps.
-  Partner with regional tourism boards and organisations to develop a 'Murray River Road' iconic route based on the Murray Valley Highway.

The Central Murray Regional Transport Forum is an initiative of:



FOCUS AREA: CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Priority Action

DEVELOP TRACKS AND TRAILS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND GROW TOURISM



WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

The Central Murray region has high levels of obesity and poor health associated with low levels of physical activity and time spent outdoors.

Using active transport will help people improve their health and wellbeing. Active transport becomes a more attractive option with better walking and bike paths connected to bus networks, along with improved signage, lighting and amenity.

Tourism contributes over \$670 million to the regional economy each year through recreational, nature-based, cultural, eco and agri-tourism and heritage attractions.

Travel to the region has increased with domestic and international visitors coming to the region to visit the iconic Murray River and nearby lakes and forests. National parks, including Lake Mungo, attract an estimated 30,000 visitors per annum. Tourists require high quality facilities, well signposted and connected tracks and trails, and accessible public transport.

Priority walking and recreational bike networks that require investment include:

- Murray River Adventure Trail
- Kerang Koondrook Rail Trail
- Koondrook to Cohuna Forest Trail
- Koondrook to Torrumbarry Trail and
- Swan Hill to Lake Boga Active Trail.

PROJECT BENEFITS

The project will:

- Develop active transport options for tracks and trails and recreational cycling networks.
- Stimulate and diversify the local economy by attracting tourists.
- Improve community health and wellbeing.
- Attract investment to grow track and trail networks in the region.


RECENT ACTIVITY

The Murray Region Destination Management Plan 2018 supports investment in walking and cycling trails to stimulate and diversify growth in nature-based tourism.

Tracks and trails are also supported in council plans and strategies, including the Mildura Tracks and Trails Strategy, Swan Hill Active Transport Strategy and the Gannawarra Shire Strategic Tourism Plan.

NEXT STEPS

ADVOCACY:

-  Engage with Murray Regional Tourism and Destination Riverina Murray NSW.
-  Support funding applications to develop and implement a strategic tracks and trails delivery program across the region which incorporates the Murray River Adventure Trail, key council walking/cycling plans and public transport.

The Central Murray Regional Transport Forum is an initiative of:



FOCUS AREA: CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Priority Action

STANDARDISE CROSS BORDER REGULATIONS TO IMPROVE FREIGHT EFFICIENCY



WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

Inconsistencies in cross border regulations are causing delays in freight movement, and the economic impact is being felt by industry, the broader community and local government.

Different truck weight allowances and configurations of High Productivity Freight Vehicles (HPFVs) apply within Victoria and New South Wales, restricting the efficiency of freight movement across the border.

Industry groups have also raised concerns about different driver licence fees and conditions that apply each side of the border.

PROJECT BENEFITS

Working with the Cross Border Commissioner and Central Murray Region Transport Forum this project will:

- Engage respective Victorian, NSW and Australian Government agencies.
- Highlight inconsistencies in regulation that restrict freight movement between Victoria and New South Wales.
- Promote leadership and collaboration across the region to resolve these issues.
- Recommend ways to improve the safety and efficiency of freight movement between states.

RECENT ACTIVITY

Victoria's first Cross Border Commissioner Luke Wilson started in the new role in October 2018.

NEXT STEPS

ADVOCACY:



Build a relationship with the Cross Border Commissioner and engage with relevant agencies to address the regulatory differences between states, and improve the efficiency of freight movement across the border.

The Central Murray Regional Transport Forum is an initiative of:



2 STATES
7 COUNCILS
1 REGION

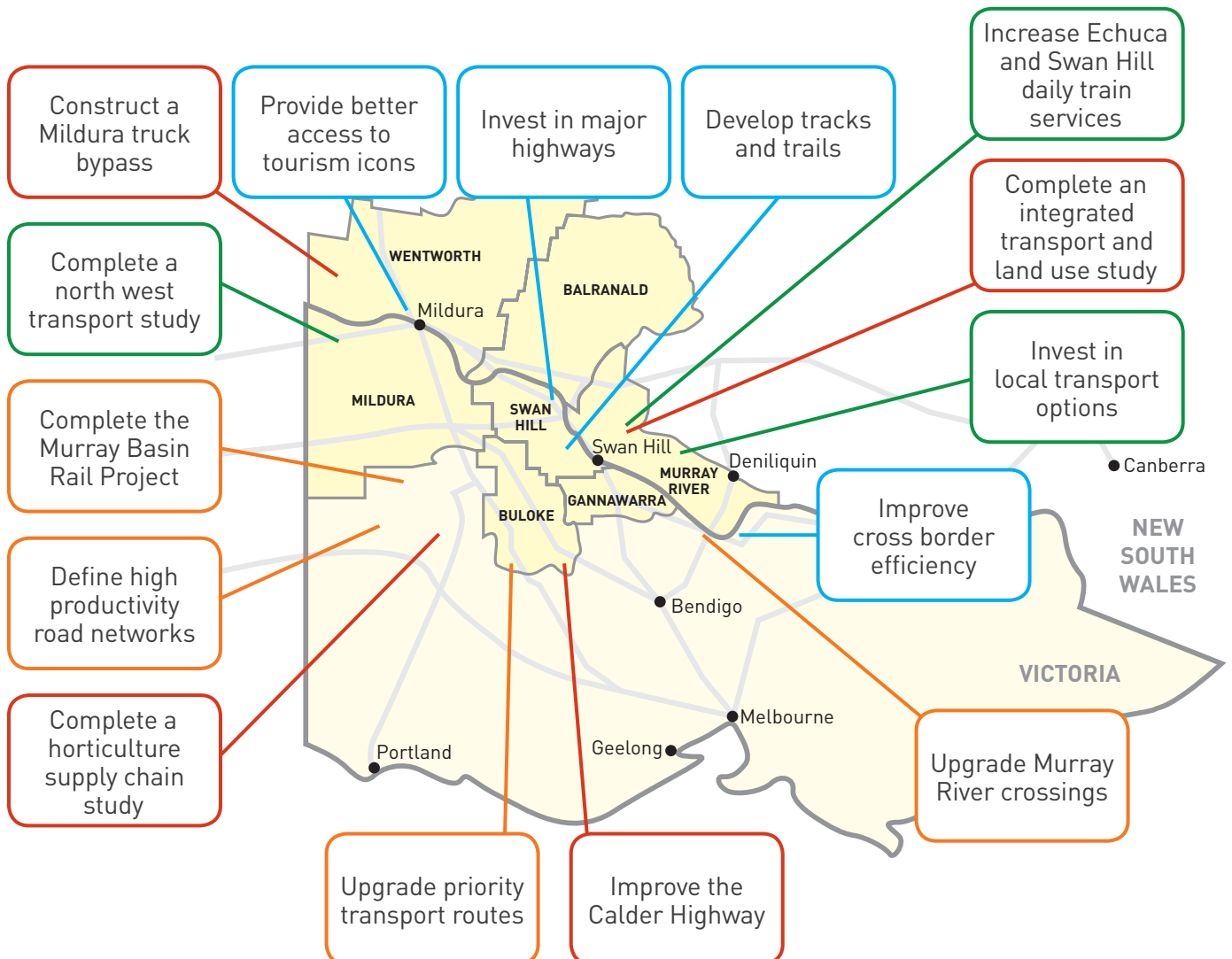
THE CENTRAL MURRAY REGIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM

THE CENTRAL MURRAY REGIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM

The Central Murray Regional Transport Forum (CMRTF) was established in 2010 to identify transport needs and challenges of the Sunraysia/Mallee region and advocate for improvement to the region's transport network.

Comprising councillors and senior staff from the shires of Balranald, Buloke, Gannawarra, Murray River and Wentworth, and the rural cities of Swan Hill and Mildura; the CMRTF has developed a Strategy to clarify the region's transport infrastructure needs and better position the region for the next stages of economic growth and social development.

PRIORITY ACTIONS:



The Central Murray Regional Transport Forum is an initiative of:

