

FOCUS AREA: REGIONAL GROWTH

Priority Action

INCREASE THE FREQUENCY OF DAILY RETURN SWAN HILL AND ECHUCA PASSENGER TRAIN SERVICES TO FIVE SERVICES PER DAY, FIVE DAYS PER WEEK



WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

Passenger train services from Swan Hill and Echuca to Bendigo and Melbourne are limited and do not meet the needs of the catchment population who wish to utilise a more frequent, faster service.

Access to reliable and more frequent rail services is a cross border issue with NSW communities typically using services in Victorian regional centres, such as Bendigo and Melbourne, which are closer than similar services in NSW.

A frequent and reliable public transport service to access employment, health and social activities for these communities is vital.

A targeted project assessment is required to understand the extent and cost of infrastructure upgrades to deliver Regional Network Development Plan targets.

PROJECT BENEFITS

Investment in capacity improvements on the Swan Hill and Echuca rail lines will increase economic and tourist activity and meet community expectations.

The project will improve community access (including small communities and disadvantaged) to health, education and employment services as well as access to business and recreational opportunities.

Improvements will complement and build on investment and upgrades on the Bendigo-Melbourne line, the Bendigo Metro project and the Bendigo-Echuca line.

The project will provide opportunity for regional communities within Victoria and Southern NSW to access reliable, timely and convenient rail services in Swan Hill and Echuca.

RECENT ACTIVITY

The Regional Network Development Plan states that the longer-term government aim is to deliver five services per day, five days per week, on all outer regional train lines.

In 2017, the North West Passenger Rail Group undertook a survey of residents in Swan Hill, Gannawarra and Campaspe Shires to determine the needs of rural communities and preferences in using the train services.

NEXT STEPS

ADVOCACY:



Engage with key decision makers to increase passenger train services to five services per day, five days per week. Encourage investment in the rail network including infrastructure upgrades to enable increased services including signalling, crossing loops, and additional train fleets.

The Central Murray Regional Transport Forum is an initiative of:



FOCUS AREA: REGIONAL GROWTH

Priority Action

COMPLETE A NORTH WEST PASSENGER TRANSPORT STUDY TO IMPROVE SERVICES



WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

Mildura is the most populated regional city in Victoria without a passenger rail service.

The region has limited access to cost effective and convenient transport options for small communities and disadvantaged community members to access health, education, employment, business and recreation opportunities.

A regional future Passenger Transport Study is required for north west Victoria to understand future community transport needs.

PROJECT BENEFITS

The North West Passenger Transport Study will provide a transport needs assessment and evidence base to support service improvements.

The study will review social and economic drivers and assess transport options including passenger rail, air and road.

Recommendations from the study will lead to improved public transport services in the north west that meet current and emerging passenger needs and connections.

The study will be a strategic, independently produced document which will provide an evidence base to support the future transport needs of the community, including passenger rail, and social and economic drivers.

The study will assist in decision making and provide justification for funding of a more detailed business case.

RECENT ACTIVITY

A consultant was appointed in January 2019 to complete stage one of the North West Passenger Transport Study (pre-scoping).

The project will be led by Mildura Rural City Council, with funding support and input from the Buloke, Yarriambiack, West Wimmera, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Southern Grampians, Central Goldfields and Northern Grampians Shire councils.

The stage one report is underway, with the stage two component (Preparation of a Regional Transport Study) due for completion by May 2020.

This project is listed as a priority in the recently completed, 'Mildura Future Ready' regional advocacy and funding strategy.

The Victorian Government committed to extend passenger services along the Mildura line to Dunolly as part of the Freight Rail Separation Project.

NEXT STEPS

ADVOCACY:



Complete the stage one report and support funding applications to progress the report's recommendations.

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Priority Action

PROMOTE AND INVEST IN LOCAL TRANSPORT OPTIONS



WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

Regional communities have limited access to services, and planning is needed to better connect public transport, community and health services.

Regional populations are declining, which is affecting the sustainability and liveability of local economies.

In regional areas, public transport services focus on long distance coach travel and fail to provide shorter service connections for smaller rural communities.

Improved frequency and timing of public transport connections are needed to enhance the Swan-Hill and Echuca train services, and create better bus connections for townships along the Mildura, Swan Hill, Echuca, Ballarat, Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney transport routes.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- Improved community access to transport services that meet the health and social needs of regional communities.
- Improved coordination of public, active and community transport, including flexible and private transport options.

RECENT ACTIVITY

A Mallee Local Transport Forum (MLTF) was established in 2017.

The MLTF has prepared a Mallee Local Transport Options Paper (2017) which outlines the community, public and private transport services available across the Mallee region.

NEXT STEPS

ADVOCACY:



Invest in the Mallee Local Transport project to promote and support existing public and community transport services.



Engage with regional transport groups including the Mallee Local Transport Forum and promote ongoing funding for sustainable community transport programs.

The Central Murray Regional Transport Forum is an initiative of:



2 STATES
7 COUNCILS
1 REGION

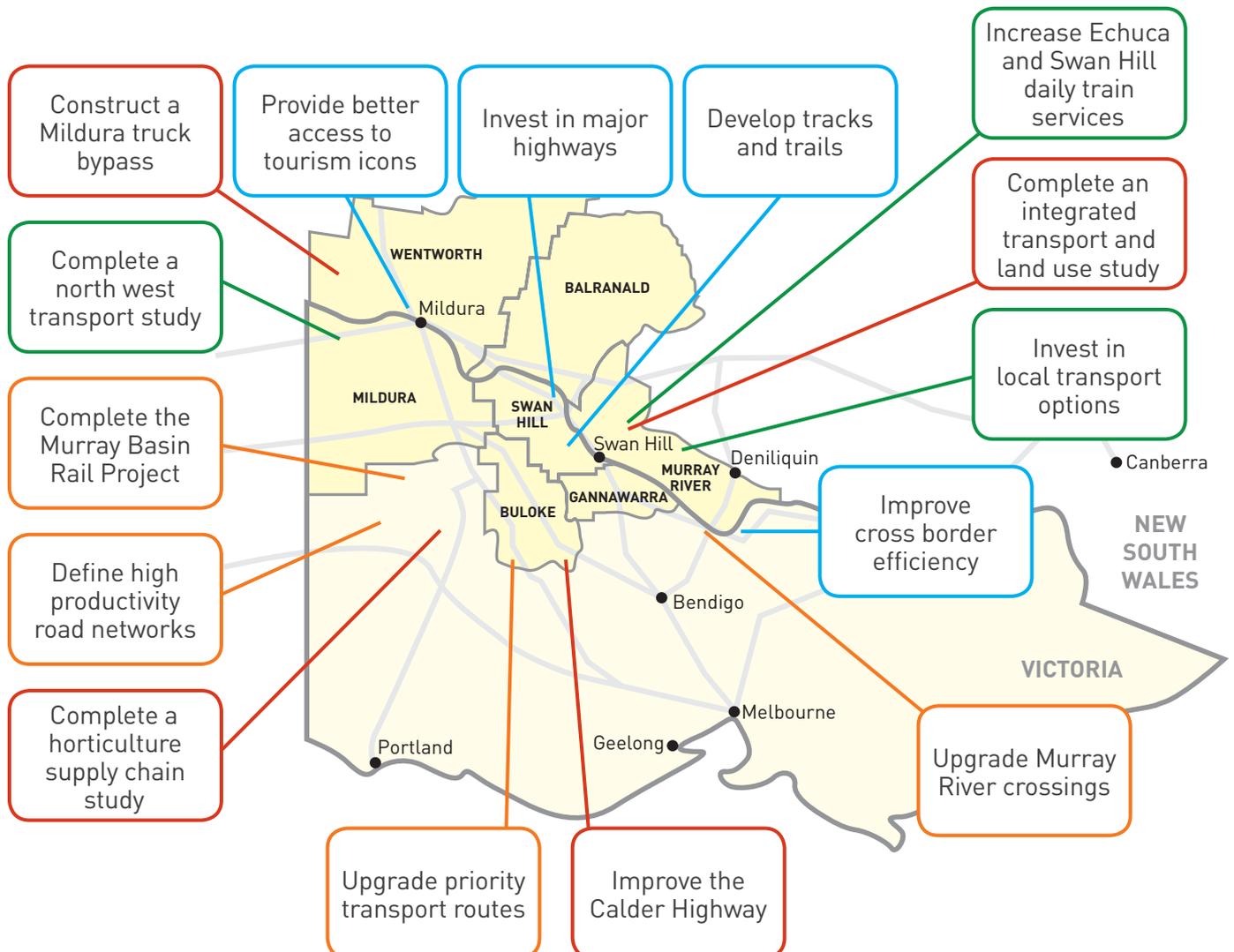
THE CENTRAL MURRAY REGIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM

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:

