

CONNECTING REGIONAL VICTORIA

VICTORIA'S REGIONAL NETWORK
DEVELOPMENT PLAN



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER AND THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Victoria is growing faster than any other state. Our regions are home to about one-quarter of Victoria's population and play a vital role in our prosperity.


We're pleased to present Connecting Regional Victoria, Victoria's first Regional Network Development Plan. It is a statewide plan for regional public transport developed following an extensive conversation with people, businesses, local councils and community organisations from across regional Victoria.

We have taken the bright ideas and valuable insights of thousands of people from regional Victoria to lay out a plan to improve public transport services and connections.

The aim of the Regional Network Development Plan is to move away from ad hoc decisions and deliver a better coordinated and integrated public transport network, where train, bus and coach services work together to get people where they need to go.

The plan trials a number of new approaches, such as using school buses outside of school times to meet other local travel needs, increasing services to regional Victoria in the peak, carrying bicycles on buses and operating new services that cater for seasonal demand at busy times of the year.

We know that public transport is important to our regional communities because we both grew up relying on it to access education, recreation, jobs and services.



Thank you to all Victorians who contributed to the plan's development. This plan reflects their commitment to better connect their communities and regions. We also thank the Regional Transport Advisory Group members, who provided an invaluable link between government and regional communities.

We look forward to an ongoing discussion with communities across regional Victoria as we work to improve these important services. Planning for reliable, accessible and safe public transport services will help Victoria's regions continue to thrive, while protecting the liveability of our marvellous regional towns and cities.

The Hon. Daniel Andrews MP
Premier of Victoria

The Hon. Jacinta Allan MP
Minister for Public Transport
Minister for Major Projects

01

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Regional Network Development Plan guides the short, medium and long term priorities needed to modernise the network with more track, more trains, better facilities, and more services.

It sets out a medium to long term plan to deliver a modern commuter-style service for the growth areas of Geelong, Bendigo, Ballarat, Seymour and Traralgon, and service improvements to outer regional areas. It outlines a pathway to deliver:

- a commuter-style service with a minimum 20 minute train frequency in the peak
- a 40 minute off-peak frequency of services to Melbourne
- five services, five days a week to the outer regional train lines of Warrnambool, Bairnsdale, Albury-Wodonga, Echuca, Swan Hill and Shepparton.

WHAT WE HEARD

For the first time, regional communities have been consulted on the current and future public transport needs of their region. Across regional Victoria, people told us they want more reliable and more frequent train services. They want better connected coaches and buses that arrive and leave more frequently to the places they want to go. They want innovative solutions to transport, tailored to the specific needs of their communities. They want a modern regional transport network that gets them where they need to go.

The Victorian Government has heard regional Victorians. The result is a plan that balances passenger, freight and business travel needs with each region's current circumstances and aspirations for the future.

LINKING TO VICTORIA'S REGIONAL STATEMENT

The Victorian Government has released Victoria's Regional Statement, which highlights the government's commitment to rural and regional communities. The statement outlines actions and investments focused on creating jobs, unlocking new investment and ensuring a brighter future for families and communities. Improving regional transport is a core focus of Victoria's Regional Statement. We want to make sure that transport services match the changing travel needs of regional centres and towns. We want to reduce travel times for freight and businesses, and make it easier for visitors to get to regional Victoria. The Regional Network Development Plan supports Victoria's Regional Statement by identifying actions to improve the public transport network.

CONNECTING REGIONAL VICTORIA

The Regional Network Development Plan's purpose is to deliver better connections to regional centres, better connections between centres and Melbourne and make it easier for people to move around regional Victoria using public transport.

The plan responds to changing regional travel needs and sets priorities for regional public transport services, infrastructure and investment.

The plan aims to:

- deliver a better public transport network across regional Victoria, with new connections, more trains, better stations and improved bus and coach services
- develop tailored public transport priorities and actions for each region that respond to changing local travel needs and support local infrastructure and services plans

- improve the experience of public transport passengers by setting a minimum level and quality of service
- support the trial of innovative and more flexible transport services, and make better use of existing assets and infrastructure
- guide future planning for and investment in the freight and passenger rail network, with a focus on encouraging economic development and job creation
- support the growing regional tourism industry
- give communities across Victoria a say in planning for future public transport services in their region.

The new plan for public transport services in regional Victoria will ensure that, together with the road network, people have access to a well functioning and complete transport network.

REGIONAL NETWORK DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

1. REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT PRIORITIES

- Barwon South West regional priorities
- Gippsland regional priorities
- Grampians regional priorities
- Hume regional priorities
- Loddon Mallee regional priorities

2. KEY PRINCIPLES

- Passenger-first approach
- Safe, efficient and reliable trips
- Supporting social and economic inclusion through good local transport
- Growing the regional transport network to meet demand
- Connecting communities with opportunities for people to get to work, socialise and access services
- Integrated regional public transport network
- Efficient use of existing transport assets and resources

3. STRATEGIC NETWORK WIDE PRIORITIES

Building a better public transport network

- More trains
- Better station facilities
- Better bus and coach services
- Balancing future freight and passenger rail network
- Simplified public transport fares and tickets

Putting passengers first

- Better passenger information
- Better facilities and experiences
- Making transport accessible

Developing local transport solutions

- Improving local transport
- Making new connections
- Encouraging active transport
- Supporting tourism





(i) Way out and City Map  



GRAMPIANS

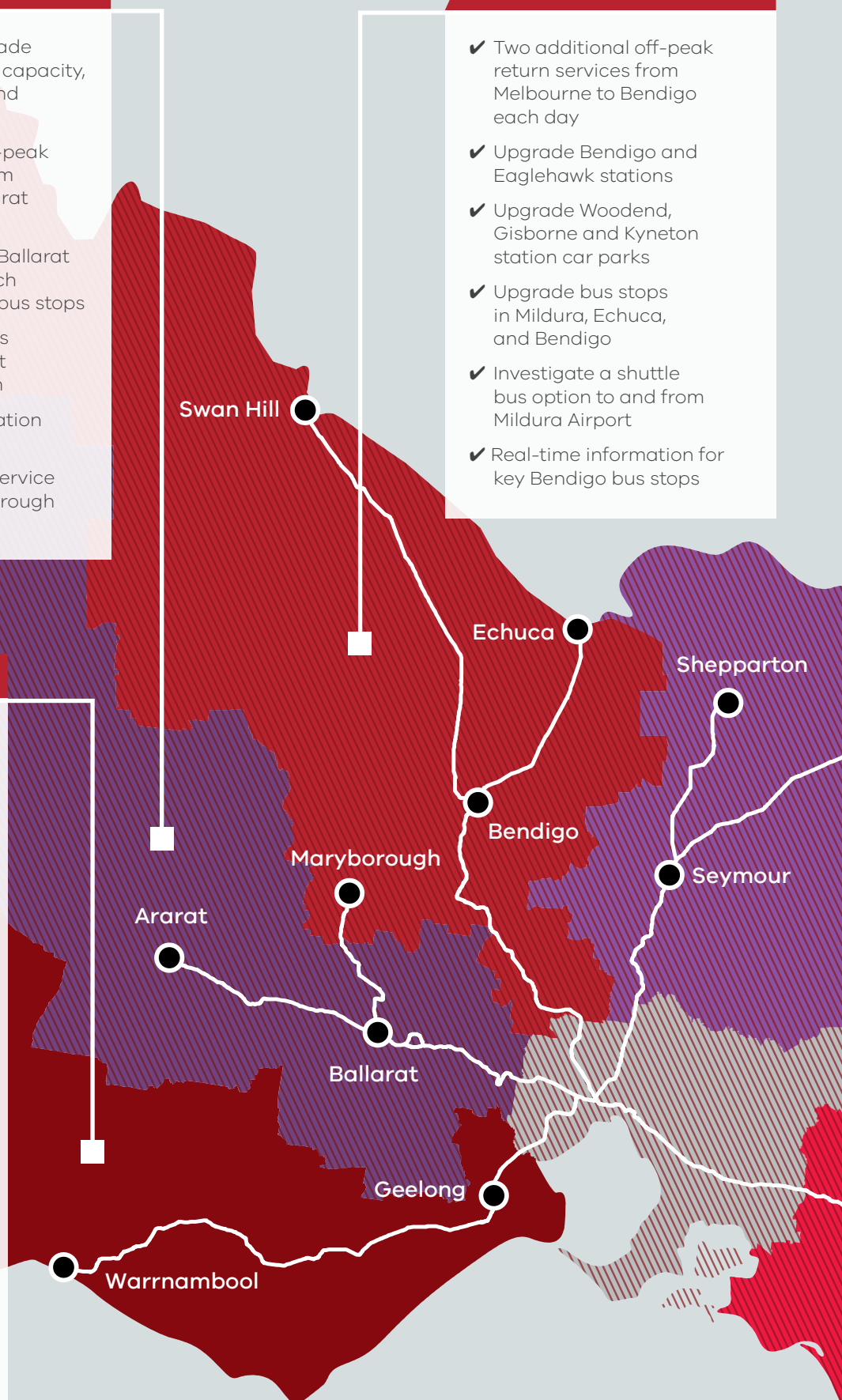
- ✓ Ballarat Line Upgrade project to improve capacity, duplicate tracks and upgrade stations
- ✓ Two additional off-peak return services from Melbourne to Ballarat each day
- ✓ Improvements for Ballarat and Horsham coach interchanges and bus stops
- ✓ 200 extra car parks to meet demand at Wendouree station
- ✓ Upgrade Ballan station waiting area
- ✓ Additional return service Ballarat to Maryborough on weekdays

LODDON MALLEE

- ✓ Two additional off-peak return services from Melbourne to Bendigo each day
- ✓ Upgrade Bendigo and Eaglehawk stations
- ✓ Upgrade Woodend, Gisborne and Kyneton station car parks
- ✓ Upgrade bus stops in Mildura, Echuca, and Bendigo
- ✓ Investigate a shuttle bus option to and from Mildura Airport
- ✓ Real-time information for key Bendigo bus stops

BARWON SOUTH WEST

- ✓ Additional off-peak return service from Melbourne to Geelong each day
- ✓ A train every 40 minutes to Warrnambool from 7 am to 7 pm on weekends
- ✓ Additional return service between Melbourne and Warrnambool every Sunday
- ✓ Regional bus service improvements for the Bellarine Peninsula
- ✓ Upgrade bus stops and coach interchanges in Geelong, Hamilton, Warrnambool and Portland
- ✓ Improvements to Marshall and North Shore stations
- ✓ Additional car parks at Lara and Marshall stations
- ✓ Planning for track duplication between South Geelong and Warrnambool and investigation into new services to Armstrong Creek
- ✓ A fourth return service between Geelong and Warrnambool on weekdays



GETTING IT DONE

2016-2017 STATE BUDGET INITIATIVES

HUME

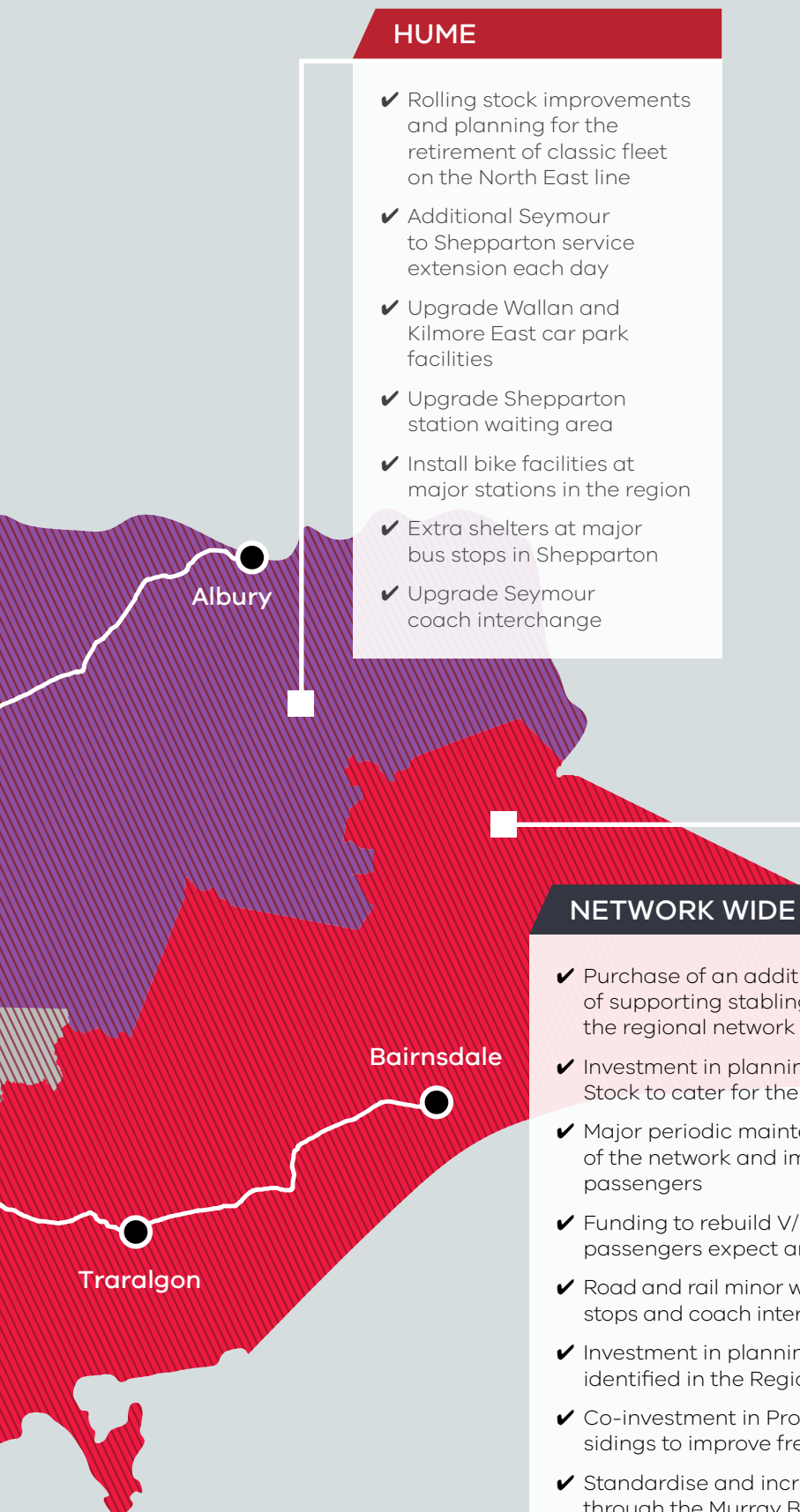
- ✓ Rolling stock improvements and planning for the retirement of classic fleet on the North East line
- ✓ Additional Seymour to Shepparton service extension each day
- ✓ Upgrade Wallan and Kilmore East car park facilities
- ✓ Upgrade Shepparton station waiting area
- ✓ Install bike facilities at major stations in the region
- ✓ Extra shelters at major bus stops in Shepparton
- ✓ Upgrade Seymour coach interchange

GIPPSLAND

- ✓ Two additional return off-peak services from Melbourne to Traralgon each day
- ✓ Regional bus service improvements for the Latrobe Valley, including bus shelters
- ✓ Upgrade coach interchanges in Wonthaggi, Leongatha, Anderson, and Koo Wee Rup
- ✓ Upgrade bus stop signage in Bairnsdale and Sale
- ✓ Upgrade stations on the Gippsland line and investigate increased car park capacity to meet demand at Morwell, Moe and Traralgon stations
- ✓ Planning work for upgrades on the Gippsland Line

NETWORK WIDE IMPROVEMENTS

- ✓ Purchase of an additional 27 VLocity carriages and delivery of supporting stabling infrastructure to boost capacity on the regional network
- ✓ Investment in planning for Next Generation Regional Rolling Stock to cater for the future needs of regional Victoria
- ✓ Major periodic maintenance to guard against deterioration of the network and improve service reliability for regional passengers
- ✓ Funding to rebuild V/Line capacity and deliver the services passengers expect and deserve
- ✓ Road and rail minor works fund to improve train stations, bus stops and coach interchanges across regional Victoria
- ✓ Investment in planning for the next phase of works identified in the Regional Network Development Plan
- ✓ Co-investment in Project Regeneration to upgrade rail sidings to improve freight efficiency
- ✓ Standardise and increase axle loading of rail freight lines through the Murray Basin Rail Project to reduce freight costs



02

RESPONDING TO CHANGE IN REGIONAL VICTORIA

As the population, industries and local economies of regional Victoria change, the transport system must keep up with changing regional travel needs.

A GROWING AND CHANGING REGIONAL POPULATION

After a period of strong investment in regional communities, more people are choosing to remain in or move to regional centres.

Increasingly, Victoria's regional cities are offering jobs, education, health and other services that were previously only available in Melbourne. Combined with lifestyle advantages and lower housing prices, these opportunities are attracting more people to regional Victoria.

Our regional cities and many towns are thriving, with growing populations and transforming economies. But the growth is uneven. It is forecast that 40 per cent of all regional population growth to 2031 will be in the cities of Greater Geelong, Bendigo and Ballarat. At the same time, some smaller towns are maintaining stable populations while others are declining.

Good public transport services within our regional cities will be vital to supporting and managing regional growth. Strong transport connections between smaller towns and large centres will be a key factor in maintaining these towns as great places to live and popular places to visit.

MEETING DIVERSE TRANSPORT NEEDS

Better transport connections and options are needed to support changing travel patterns for trips to work, travel outside of normal business hours, accessible and local trips to support an ageing population and to support the shift to jobs in service-based industries.

More people are travelling between regional towns and cities for work. Across regional Victoria, a growing number of people are travelling outside traditional business hours. For example, young people need public transport in the evenings and weekends to access work, study and social opportunities. Providing these connections is critical to retaining young people in regional areas.

In places with ageing populations, reliable and accessible public and local transport will be vital to help older Victorians remain independent, mobile and active in their local communities.

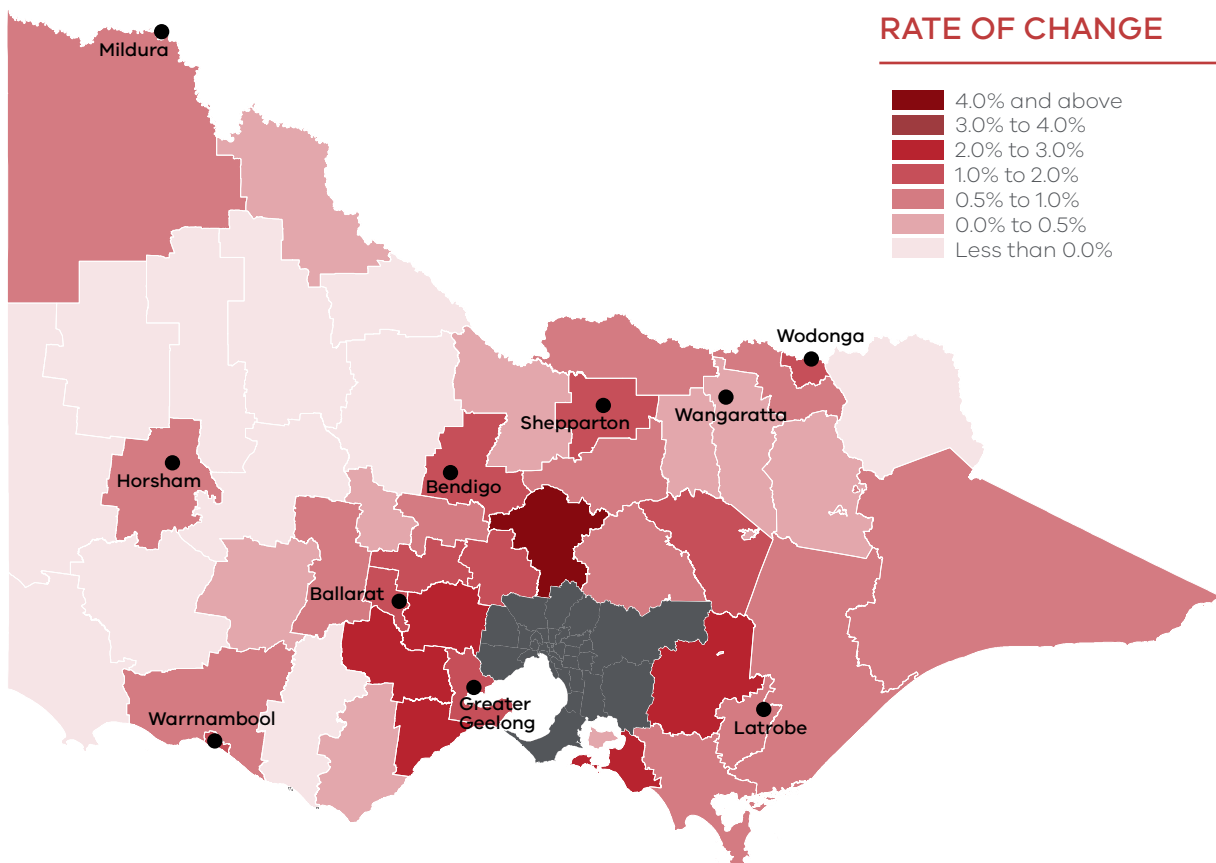
Closer to Melbourne, many rapidly growing outer suburbs are serviced by V/Line, and demand for these services is increasing.

Changes are occurring in key industries in regional Victoria, with a shift underway towards more service-based industries such as retail, healthcare and professional, scientific and technical services. This means our transport system will need to cater for more local public transport trips to employment hubs and retail centres.

REGIONAL VICTORIA – FUTURE POPULATION

This map shows the projected population growth for regional Victoria's local government areas, between 2011-2031.

These projections are based on the Victorian Government's *Victoria in Future 2015* report.



03

LISTENING TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Across regional Victoria, people have said they want to use public transport services more, but they need them to be more reliable and frequent.

Through our regional public transport consultation program in 2015, thousands of people from across the regions told us what they wanted from public transport services, including:

- comfortable and clean trains, buses, stations and bus shelters
- on-board services such as mobile access, power points and work tables
- adequate car parking, lighting and toilet facilities at stations
- better quality food and drinks and more secure storage for luggage on long distance services
- consistent ticketing across regional Victoria
- up-to-date information about services
- better promotion of public transport in regional Victoria
- helpful journey planning information such as how to connect to services.

Communities told us they wanted a bigger focus on improving public transport within and between regions. Across all regions, people consistently said 'it's not all about getting to Melbourne'.

With an ageing population in regional Victoria, many people emphasised the importance of providing universal access to the public transport system and encouraging independence among older people and people who are socially disadvantaged or living with a disability.

People want access in and out of smaller towns and remote communities, and suggested non-traditional, smaller and more flexible services could be used to meet these needs. Many regional communities suggested using school buses in their area during the day to run local bus services to shopping centres, medical services, education precincts and train stations.

In some regional communities such as popular tourist destinations or those with seasonal workforces, travel needs can change depending on the time of year. These communities want public transport services with the flexibility to match seasonal travel demand.

Freight and its relationship with public transport was also a topic of discussion across Victoria, particularly in the north of the state where regional businesses rely heavily on the rail and road freight network to get their goods to market. In these areas, communities and businesses want reliable and efficient freight connections to markets and export gateways, without compromising passenger services and public transport connectivity.

To read more about the community and stakeholder consultation, see the Conversation Report at ptv.vic.gov.au

REGIONAL TRANSPORT ADVISORY GROUP

Formed in June 2015, the Regional Transport Advisory Group (RTAG) provided a link between regional communities and the Victorian Government. Working closely with Public Transport Victoria, the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, V/Line and its operators, RTAG provided local feedback, on-the-ground information and ideas about regional public transport.

The group was co-chaired by Jaclyn Symes, Member for Northern Victoria and Richard Elkington, Gippsland Regional Development Committee Chair. Other RTAG members (and their positions at the time of their appointment) were:

- Jo Bourke, Executive Director, Wimmera Development Association
- Bruce Anson, CEO, Warrnambool City Council
- Janet Dore, CEO, Transport Accident Commission
- Trevor Budge, Manager of Strategy, City of Greater Bendigo
- Patience Harrington, Chief Executive, City of Wodonga
- David McKenzie, Chair, Committee for Greater Shepparton
- Judy Verlin AM, Chair, Committee for Ballarat.

The Minister for Public Transport will continue to consult with and seek advice from leaders in regional Victorian communities, including the Regional Partnerships, regarding local transport issues.



CONVERSATIONS IN NUMBERS



1,400
ATTENDEES

MORE
THAN

1 5 0 0 0

TOTAL

PIECES OF
FEEDBACK



04

OUR REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK

New investment is transforming and modernising Victoria's regional network at a time when increased demand is putting pressure on the network.

OUR REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK

Across regional Victoria, train services are delivered on 1,747 km of rail track, while over 41 million bus and coach kilometres are travelled each year.

The regional rail network provides the backbone of the regional transport system, with the coach network connecting journeys throughout the state and providing critical links between communities.

Just as the number of people using public transport will increase over the coming years so will the amount of freight on the regional network. Careful management is required on rail lines that carry passenger and freight trains to avoid delays and ensure safety and efficiency.

TOWN BUSES PROVIDE LOCAL SERVICES

The map on pages 20-21 shows the current regional public transport network. It includes regional V/Line trains and coaches as well as local town bus routes. Demand on the network continues to increase. Patronage on V/Line services increased 50 per cent over the eight years to 2014, while regional town bus networks in 2014 carried approximately 3 million more passengers compared to 2006.

ONGOING TRANSFORMATION

Victoria's regional public transport network has been transformed through major investments such as Regional Fast Rail and Regional Rail Link. Regional Fast Rail revolutionised travel between Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Traralgon and Melbourne in the mid-2000s. This landmark initiative accelerated regional growth and provided direct access to jobs once inaccessible to people in regional cities.

Regional Rail Link separated metropolitan and regional services through Melbourne's west, giving Geelong, Bendigo and Ballarat trains their own dedicated tracks from Sunshine to Southern Cross Station.

Melbourne Metro is the next exciting chapter in the Victorian rail network's story. This project will include twin nine kilometre tunnels and five new underground stations at Arden, Parkville, CBD North, CBD South and Domain. Melbourne Metro will make it easier to travel from Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong and Traralgon to major hospitals and universities in Parkville and to destinations around St Kilda Road.

The upgrade of the Cranbourne-Pakenham corridor is another metropolitan project that will boost regional service reliability. These works will improve reliability for Gippsland passengers by removing the potential for conflict and service disruption at some of Melbourne's busiest level crossings.

Funding has been committed to enable planning to commence for infrastructure upgrades between Upfield and Somerton. Future works will enhance services for Wallan and Seymour and provide additional capacity.

The Ballarat Line Upgrade will duplicate sections of track and upgrade stations to improve services and address growing passenger demand. This is one of a number of major projects transforming our regional rail network.

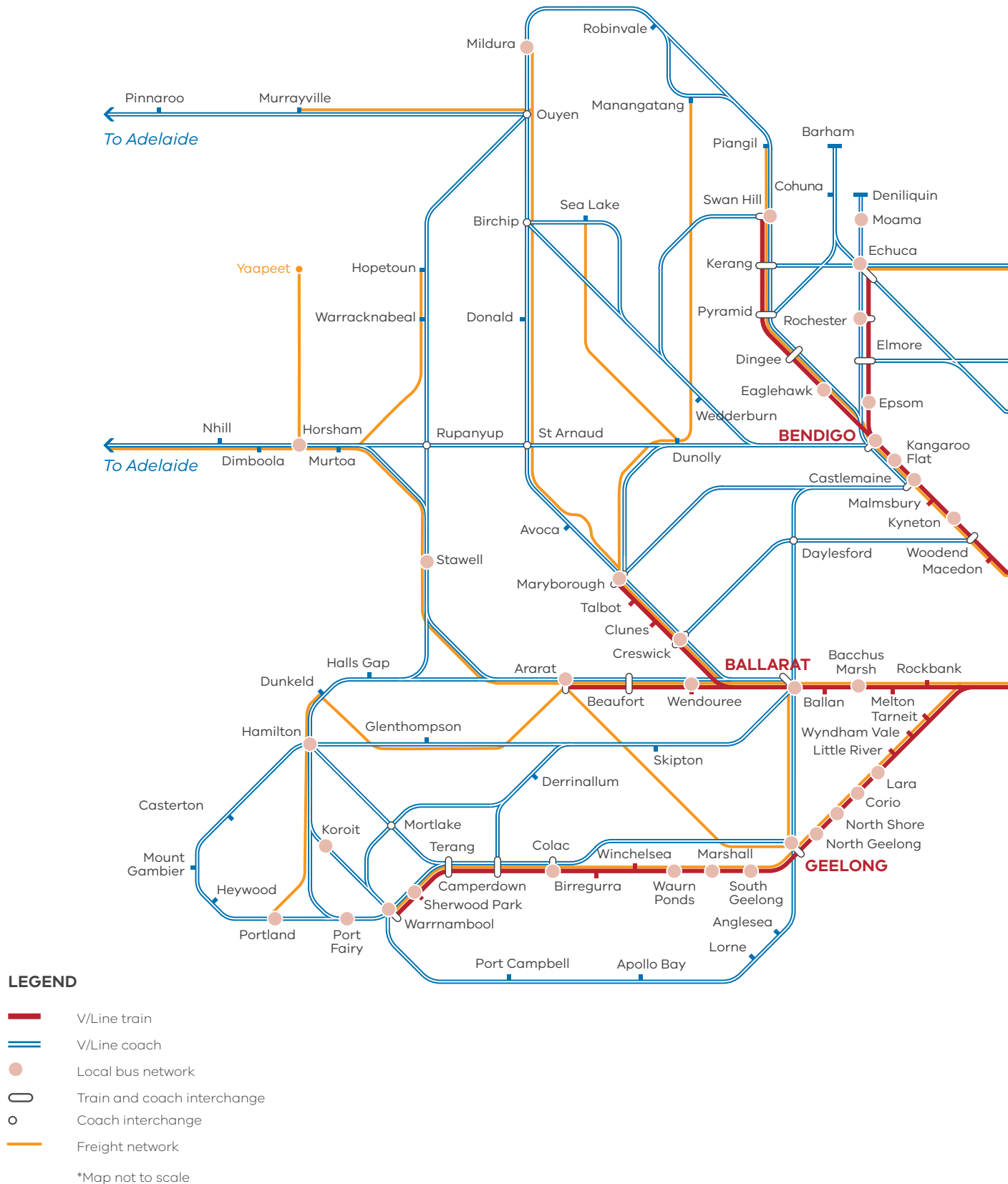
ADDRESSING CONSTRAINTS ON THE EXISTING RAIL NETWORK

With demand for passenger and freight services increasing, addressing constraints on the rail network will be important in delivering a coordinated public transport network.

Current constraints that restrict the development of improved timetables and services include:

- single track and manual train signalling systems that limit the number of trains that can operate and prevent trains from running in both directions at the same time
- unprotected level crossings and farm crossings that limit the number and speed of trains
- freight and passenger services using the same lines, which creates timetable challenges
- metropolitan and regional services using the same tracks, which creates timetabling challenges and the potential for train delays, leading to overcrowding and unreliability.

REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK





05

REGIONAL NETWORK DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Regional Network Development Plan outlines the projects needed now and into the future to modernise the network with more track, more trains and more services.

The plan responds to changing regional travel needs and reflects the contributions, views and ideas of people, businesses and organisations across regional Victoria.

GUIDING INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Regional Network Development Plan moves away from ad hoc service improvements towards a more coordinated and integrated regional public transport network where train, coach and bus services work together to get people where they need to go.

The plan sets short, medium and long term actions to progressively improve and modernise Victoria's regional public transport network.

The plan establishes principles for developing the best public transport network for a particular location.

The principles recognise that population growth, economic opportunities and social factors vary over time and that the shape of the future public transport network within a region needs the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances.

CREATING AN INTEGRATED TRANSPORT SYSTEM

Transport policy and planning in Victoria is guided by the Victorian Government's overarching objectives to support economic development and social inclusion, and to coordinate land use and transport planning.

While it focuses on the public transport network, the Regional Network Development Plan recognises that this is just one part of an integrated transport system that needs to move people and goods around the state.

There is a need to coordinate regional services with the metropolitan rail network given the significant growth in outer metropolitan Melbourne.

The plan reflects a broader integrated approach to planning to support Victoria's growth and development. This broader approach brings together thinking about all forms of transport so they collectively contribute to ensuring Victoria is well connected and a thriving place to live and do business.

SETTING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Regional Network Development Plan sets out three strategic, network-wide priorities for regional public transport:

- **Building a better public transport network**
- **Putting passengers first**
- **Developing local transport solutions**

This plan will be regularly reviewed and monitored to reflect emerging trends and community needs, and investment by government.

DIFFERENT SERVICES FOR DIFFERENT NEEDS

Regional Victoria's public transport network comprises several modes: rail, long distance coach, and school and town buses. Together these modes enable passengers to access services, education, recreation and employment. They share infrastructure that moves both people and freight.

In planning regional Victoria's public transport network, the Government recognises that coaches and buses are an integral part of a coordinated public transport network and that low demand services, particularly local services, could be better provided by other modes such as taxis.

We recognise that for an effective, integrated system we may need to use some network corridors primarily for freight, develop alternative corridors for passenger trains or manage the way passenger trains and freight move on the same corridor.

Our aim is to provide a clearly defined regional public transport network, with different types of services that are tailored to meet the specific needs of local communities.





STRATEGIC PRIORITY

BUILDING A BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK

Regional Victorians want more reliable and more frequent public transport services.

They want better connected coaches and buses that arrive and leave more frequently to the places they want to go.

More tracks, more trains and more services will help address some of the barriers to encouraging more public transport use.

Better infrastructure and service planning can improve travel times, reliability of services and connections, while simplified ticketing will make the network easier to access.

This priority is not just about efficiently operating our public transport network. It is also about making sure we respond to changes in regional Victoria to take people from where they live to where they want to go.

WHAT WE HEARD

"Consistent lighting is needed for passengers to disembark."

– Swan Hill workshop participant

"We need suitable train times to attend meetings in Melbourne."

– Shepparton workshop participant

"More trains should go through to Waurin Ponds, there's so many new houses going in there!"

– Geelong workshop participant

"There's not many places in the Sunraysia area where you can buy a myki."

– Mildura workshop participant

"There's no overnight secure parking available at or near the station for out-of-towners."

– Benalla workshop participant

"Capture the wider benefits in rail upgrade business cases, like freight."

– Bairnsdale workshop participant

MORE TRAINS

Increasing the number of train services was raised often in our community conversations.

To run more services, we need more trains. The Victorian Government is already buying more VLocity carriages, upgrading older trains, and will soon procure the next generation of regional trains.

We will continually assess where we can add more services as we receive more trains and new infrastructure.

This includes a mixture of stopping all-stations and limited express trains to get people where they need to go as quickly as possible.

We will also develop standard specifications for public transport trains and buses to make sure they consistently include the modern features passengers expect.

SHORT TERM UP TO 5 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 5 TO 10 YEARS

LONG TERM 10+ YEARS

Build new train stabling at key locations on the network		
Procure and roll out 21 VLocity carriages with an additional order of 27 to follow		
Procure and roll out next generation of regional trains		
	Progressively retire older trains including H-cars and N-cars	
Develop and implement a standard specification for new public transport vehicles		
Modernise older trains to improve reliability and comfort	Refurbish older VLocity trains for improved passenger comfort and reliability	Complete VLocity refurbishment program
Work towards a minimum 20 minute peak frequency, 40 minute interpeak frequency across the commuter rail network		
Ongoing program to add more train services across the regional network and increase frequency of train services		



NEW TRACK FOR REGIONAL VICTORIANS

Regional commuters have more reliable train services following the completion of the \$3.65 billion Regional Rail Link project. Regional Rail Link expanded Victoria's rail network, with 90km of new track and dedicated regional lines for Geelong, Bendigo and Ballarat trains from West Werribee Junction to Deer Park, and along the existing rail corridor from Sunshine to Southern Cross Station. The project removed bottlenecks that cause train delays by untangling regional and metropolitan train services as they travel through Melbourne's west into the heart of the city. The Regional Rail Link has provided capacity for additional services during each morning and evening peak period, allowing more Victorians to get where they need to go.

BETTER STATION FACILITIES

SHORT TERM UP TO 5 YEARS	MEDIUM TERM 5 TO 10 YEARS	LONG TERM 10+ YEARS
Develop and commence a station amenity improvement program	Continue to implement station amenity improvement program to improve passenger safety and amenity	
Review car parking needs at regional stations	Continue to add car parking as necessary	
Add extra car parking at priority stations following the review		
Extend station platforms to allow for longer trains as necessary		
Develop interchange standards for different station and interchange types	Upgrade interchanges to meet new standards	
Improve interchanges at major transport hubs	Identify opportunities to work with local councils on mixed use developments around major transport hubs	
Upgrade stations and interchanges to provide improved safety and passenger amenity features		
Develop a strategic plan for the metropolitan and regional rail interface		

Our community conversations highlighted the importance of providing station facilities that meet the needs of local communities. We have developed standards for different station types – from large regional cities to small towns. Thousands of new passengers are using our regional stations each year. Developing station standards will mean passengers can expect consistent facilities at stations and interchanges across the network.

Where we have heritage stations, these will be preserved and enhanced to form gateways to regional centres.

Options for improving security and facilities at regional stations and interchanges will be investigated. This may involve improvements to lighting and CCTV systems, intercom buttons on platforms, and waiting room or toilet upgrades. We will also review car parking needs at regional stations including secure overnight car parking at certain long distance regional stations.

Station platforms will be extended to allow for longer trains as necessary. In the short term, this will allow longer trains to operate on commuter corridors and potentially nine car trains in the medium term on some routes.

BETTER BUS AND COACH SERVICES

Our community conversations highlighted that travelling between and within regional cities and towns was just as important to people as getting to and from Melbourne.

A 'hub and spoke' network of bus and coach services is important for creating better connections between cities and towns, as well as improving connections across the state. A hub and spoke network allows passengers to move across their local areas by using multiple coordinated services.

The Victorian Government will undertake a network review of regional town bus services to improve bus services on key routes, including links to regional cities.

We will identify opportunities to increase services using our existing infrastructure and assets. For example, some coach services could run directly to train stations on Melbourne's metropolitan fringe rather than into the CBD, to reduce travel time.

We will also develop a procurement strategy to meet demand for buses.

In addition to upgrading train stations, we will develop standards for different types of bus stops. This will mean passengers can expect consistent facilities at stops, stations and interchanges across the network.

SHORT TERM UP TO 5 YEARS

Trial express coach services to connect with existing train services

Improve key east-west coach connections between regions, such as Benalla-Shepparton-Bendigo

Increase coach services on key routes including links to regional cities

Network review of regional town bus services including potential for new routes

Upgrade stops to provide improved safety and passenger amenity features

MEDIUM TERM 5 TO 10 YEARS

Establish standardised interchanges for transfers between coaches and trains on the metropolitan network (pending outcomes from the trial)

Review east-west coach upgrades and identify other connections for improvement

Continue to add frequency and capacity on the coach network

Improve town bus services and add new routes following the review

LONG TERM 10+ YEARS

SIMPLE FARE SOLUTIONS

Many people told us that Victoria's regional fare system can be confusing, and there are some anomalies in how fares are calculated that lead to inequities.

We also heard that people are often frustrated with the ticketing system, with some places using myki and others using paper ticket systems. People want to travel across regional Victoria on different services without having to purchase new tickets for each leg of the journey. People said that a system like myki would make ticketing easier and travel by public transport more convenient.

We will undertake a review of regional public transport fares and prepare a new fares and ticketing manual. Achieving greater simplicity will be a key aim of the review.

We will expand the number of regional retail outlets with myki and assess locations to further roll out myki in regional Victoria.

SHORT TERM UP TO 5 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 5 TO 10 YEARS

LONG TERM 10+ YEARS

Expand the number of retail outlets with myki		
Assess opportunities to further roll out myki in regional Victoria		
Review existing fare structure when updating the fares and ticketing manual	Implement improved regional ticketing	Review ticketing system to reflect new technologies

SUPPORTING FREIGHT AND JOBS

While the focus of this Regional Network Development Plan is to support development of the public transport network, parts of the rail network that carry passengers also have an important freight task.

As regional Victoria's population grows and the demand for travel increases, more passenger and freight trains will be operating on the regional rail network. Investment in more productive infrastructure and freight services encourages economic growth and job creation.

Separating tracks for freight and passenger trains can sometimes provide benefits, although this is not always feasible.

We are delivering the Murray Basin Rail Project, which will benefit farmers, grain exporters and local businesses by standardising and increasing axle loads on the region's freight rail lines.

This project will improve reliability of rail freight and increase competition between ports resulting in lower supply chain costs.

The government is continuing to upgrade the state's infrastructure, to ensure grain and cereal crops in northern Victoria get to port more efficiently through a contribution to GrainCorp's Project Regeneration. The project is upgrading train loading infrastructure and sidings at grain sites in Victoria.

We are committed to improving infrastructure for users of the rail freight system. The state has an extensive and important network of regional freight terminals which includes Deniliquin, Dooen, Mildura, Tocumwal, Warrnambool, and Wodonga.

We will continue to maintain and upgrade rail infrastructure across regional Victoria including track, signalling and level crossings to ensure our rail network can meet the needs of both freight and public transport users.

SHORT TERM UP TO 5 YEARS	MEDIUM TERM 5 TO 10 YEARS	LONG TERM 10+ YEARS
Deliver the Murray Basin Rail Project to standardise the rail line and increase axle loads	Standardise and increase axle loads on other priority freight rail lines	
Continue implementation of safety programs at road and pedestrian level crossings		
Continue the maintenance, upgrade and modernisation of rail infrastructure, including track, signalling and level crossings		
Work with industry and local government in the Green Triangle to improve supply chains to the Port of Portland for timber and other commodities		
Work to remove regulatory anomalies for cross-border rail freight between Victoria, SA and NSW		
Capture opportunities in regional Victoria to connect new industries in adjoining precincts to transport corridors and terminals		



STRATEGIC PRIORITY PUTTING PASSENGERS FIRST

We must provide a high-quality experience for passengers using the regional public transport network, getting people where they need to go more easily and reliably.

We will improve the experience for passengers using our regional public transport network by setting a minimum level and quality of service that people should expect when travelling. We want to encourage more people to use public transport by removing barriers to accessing public transport services, giving people better travel information and providing a better experience from the start to the end of people's journeys.

WHAT WE HEARD

"Wi-fi on buses and trains "

– Traralgon workshop participant

"USB powerpoints and Wi-fi to make the commute to uni more productive"

– Geelong workshop participant

"I enjoy looking out the window but it's often too dirty"

– Benalla workshop participant

"I'd like real-time information for bus, coach and train on the phone app"

– Warragul workshop participant

"Not enough fresh healthy food and local produce on the train"

– Warrnambool workshop participant

BETTER PASSENGER INFORMATION

We know that providing information to passengers along their journey is important. Passenger information points, real-time information and public announcements are all critical in keeping people well informed. All of these elements will be improved as part of the Regional Network Development Plan.

Working with local councils, we will develop and roll out improvements to local signage to make sure links to public transport and nearby local centres are clear and easy to understand.

We will provide tailored information for regional passengers to improve their understanding about how to use the network. Information will also be provided in other languages to help visitors move around.

SHORT TERM UP TO 5 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 5 TO 10 YEARS

LONG TERM 10+ YEARS

Develop options and trial statewide real-time tracking of trains, coaches and buses

Roll out fixed infrastructure with real-time information following the trial

Better on-board dynamic passenger information on buses and coaches

Develop online applications for real-time tracking

Utilise new mobile technology to deliver information to passengers when and where they need it

Improve directional signage at Southern Cross Station

Work with local councils to develop directional signage strategies for cities and towns then start roll out in key locations

Continue the roll out of improved directional signage across all regional networks

Provide information in other languages for tourists and temporary visitors

Develop targeted transport information campaigns for local areas

Review transport information campaigns and update

MORE COMFORTABLE SERVICES

Comfortable and enjoyable journeys are not only important to current public transport users; they are also crucial to encouraging more people to use public transport.

Providing better device connectivity for passengers will help them work, study or stay in contact with friends and family more easily during their trips. The Victorian Government is addressing mobile coverage blackspots on regional commuter trains and will look to extend this further over time.

Cleaning regimes and the location of cleaning infrastructure will be reviewed as part of this plan, with the aim of adding more train cleaning facilities across the network.

We will review and improve catering and food services to source fresh local produce and provide healthier food on-board trains and in vending machines at major stations.

We will investigate operating premium class coaches for some destinations, and consider USB power points and tray tables as part of new train specifications.

SHORT TERM UP TO 5 YEARS

Review cleaning regimes and implement improvements

Investigate locations for train cleaning facilities

Investigate options to improve mobile data connectivity on regional public transport. Start delivery in partnership with the Commonwealth and mobile carriers to improve mobile coverage on key public transport corridors

Update new train specifications to include improved on-board technology for passengers for example USB power points and tray tables on new trains where appropriate

Feasibility study for a premium class on coaches

Review on-board catering to meet passenger expectations

Provide food and drink vending machines at stations

MEDIUM TERM 5 TO 10 YEARS

Ongoing reviews of cleaning regimes

Build new train maintenance and cleaning facilities

Work with mobile carriers to implement solutions to improve mobile connectivity on public transport

If supported and feasible roll out a premium class on coaches, with priority for longer distance routes over three hours

Improve on-board train catering to source fresh local produce

Consider building food and beverage outlets when upgrading major stations

LONG TERM 10+ YEARS

If feasible continue roll out of a premium class on coaches for coach trips between two and three hours

MAKING PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESSIBLE

Travelling independently is important to older people and mobility-impaired Victorians. Equally important is providing access to public transport for families using prams. Being able to use buses, coaches and trains opens up opportunities for people to move about and participate fully in community life. As many regional Victorians told us, access to public transport services will become increasingly important in places with ageing populations.

Full accessibility across the regional public transport network means upgrading stations, bus stops and coach interchanges, as well as the vehicles that provide public transport.

In the short term, we will upgrade bus and coach stops to ensure they are fully accessible. We will continue to roll out a regional train station accessibility program with major interchanges given priority initially.

SHORT TERM UP TO 5 YEARS

Upgrade bus and coach stops with disability compliant access

MEDIUM TERM 5 TO 10 YEARS

Continue the roll out of accessible buses and coaches and enable mobility-impaired passengers to use the in-built lift on coaches

LONG TERM 10+ YEARS

Continue to implement a regional rail station accessibility program

Work with the Public Transport Access Committee on accessibility issues in regional Victoria



REAL-TIME TRAVEL INFORMATION FOR REGIONAL VICTORIA

More regional passengers now have access to timely commuter travel updates thanks to the roll out of real-time information at stations. Electronic displays, public address announcement messages and customer information points were installed in 2016 at 10 stations on the Bendigo line as well as 33 V/Line stations on the Geelong, Ballarat and Gippsland lines. The initiative gives passengers automated, accurate and timely information about train times, service changes and platform alterations. The new displays also help customers with hearing and visual impairments, with the improved audio and visual information making it easier to access real-time train information.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY DEVELOPING LOCAL TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS

Regional Victorians want more reliable and more frequent public transport services for their communities, but each solution must take into consideration the individual needs of our unique regional communities.

The Regional Network Development Plan reflects the importance of considering the unique characteristics of different parts of regional Victoria when planning and delivering public transport services.

WHAT WE HEARD

"We need to encourage people to cycle and ride in developing suburbs"
– Bendigo workshop participant

"Pedestrian and bike paths that connect to public transport"

– Geelong workshop participant

"I have about 50 itinerant workers and it's hard for them to get around if they don't have a car. There's a bus service that runs down the highway but that's 3km away. The farms on the highway find it easier to get workers because they can use the bus"

– Red Cliffs farmer interview

"Very limited transport exists for the elderly and those with no car or licence. This affects travellers to Daylesford or Woodend from Tylden, Trentham, Lyonsville, Bullarto and Musk"

– Castlemaine workshop participant

"It's hard to travel cross-country, like from Shepparton to Wangaratta"

– Wodonga workshop participant

"There's a real lack of connections between smaller towns and Bairnsdale"

– Bairnsdale workshop participant

"Tourism opportunities need more focus, like the Grampians Peak Trail"

– Ararat workshop participant



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

Local transport connects people to local places and services in their own communities. It can include neighbourhood buses, community transport, taxis and hire cars. Local transport is a key part of an integrated transport network.

Across regional Victoria, people want local transport that is appropriate to their area and that is planned and delivered in partnership with communities. We will set up Local Transport Forums to bring together transport providers, stakeholders and local communities.

When it comes to local transport, people told us very clearly that they want a stronger voice. To provide this voice, the Victorian Government will form partnerships with local councils and community organisations to ensure the needs of local people are identified and included when planning local transport.

Regional Victorians have great ideas for improving public transport services. We are keen to explore these ideas and we will trial innovative transport services or extend existing trials such as:

- use of school buses outside of school times
- flexible routes operated by buses, taxis or hire cars
- community transport provided through partnerships with local government and community organisations
- dedicated non-emergency medical transport services to connect rural people to health facilities.

SHORT TERM UP TO 5 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 5 TO 10 YEARS

LONG TERM 10+ YEARS

Establish Local Transport Forums across Victoria	Ongoing engagement through local transport forums	
Trial innovative local public transport services	Implement innovative and flexible transport options in areas where buses are not suitable	
Integrate information about non-PTV services into PTV journey information		



INNOVATIVE SERVICES CONNECT WESTERN VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES

Warrnambool, Koroit and Port Fairy residents are using innovative community transport services to get to medical appointments, shopping and community activities. ConnectU uses donated cars and volunteer drivers to provide a tailored, low cost transport service for locals who can't catch public transport or taxis. Using local partnerships, the door-to-door service has provided over 7800 trips and assisted more than 230 people since the trial began in August 2012, with the majority of passengers aged over 70. The government provided \$50,000 to extend the trial until June 2016.

NEW CONNECTIONS

As regional Victoria grows we need to connect people to more places, more often.

For a growing number of people, travelling to and from places like Ballarat, Bendigo or Seymour for work, education and other vital services is as important as travelling to and from Melbourne.

We will continue to work to join up the public transport network, helping regional Victorians connect with metropolitan buses, trains and trams to key destinations.

We will also improve counter-peak travel options using coaches/buses until necessary upgrades are made to rail infrastructure.

The Regional Network Development Plan recognises that we will need to link people to places that may never have been connected to public transport before. We will trial new bus services to cater for seasonal demand for example on the Bellarine Peninsula over summer and in the Sunraysia region during the fruit picking season.

We will review bus networks and extend existing town bus services into new residential areas and surrounding settlements.

SHORT TERM UP TO 5 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 5 TO 10 YEARS

LONG TERM 10+ YEARS

Develop and implement bus services that cater for seasonal demand (summer school holidays or fruit-picking season) – trial sites on the Bellarine Peninsula and in Sunraysia

Consider future sites for seasonal demand bus services, such as coastal holiday areas in Gippsland

Review bus networks to make sure they contain appropriate local transport routes

Extend existing town bus services and add new services into new residential areas and employment centres

Improve transport to special events with more buses, trains and coaches services

Use of coaches/buses to provide counter-peak travel where rail capacity is not available

Provide more passing loops and dual track sections to allow trains to operate on the commuter rail network in both directions during the peaks

Develop a strategic plan for the metropolitan and regional rail interface

WALKING AND CYCLING

Walking and cycling – active transport – is critical to an integrated transport network and to healthier communities.

The Victorian Government will work with local councils on precinct planning to make sure active transport is prioritised through good pathways and signs to direct people to public transport services and local attractions.

We will also investigate design options to enable more bikes to be carried on regional trains.

Bike cages and bike racks will be provided at regional stations and bus terminals to encourage more cycling.

SHORT TERM UP TO 5 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 5 TO 10 YEARS

LONG TERM 10+ YEARS

Work with local councils on precinct planning to integrate walking and cycling networks with public transport infrastructure and good signage

Continue to build bike cages at larger regional stations and coach terminals, and provide bike hoops at smaller stations

Investigate opportunities for integrated cycle centres within major regional stations, including lockers, shower facilities, and bike repair retailers

Establish Active Transport Victoria to develop and promote cycling and walking initiatives

Active Transport Victoria to roll out cycling and walking initiatives

Investigate the feasibility of bike share programs for selected regional locations

Investigate design options that enable more bikes to be carried on regional trains



TRIAL ENABLES PEOPLE TO BIKE AND BUS

Passengers in parts of regional Victoria can now ride their bike to their local bus stop and take it with them on their journey. Bike racks have been fitted to the front of buses operating from Strathfieldsaye to Bendigo and the Cowes to Wonthaggi service as part of a year long trial that started in March 2016. The Bus Association, VicRoads and PTV are working together on the trial, which aims to alleviate congestion on local roads and provide an environmentally friendly transport option for Victorians.

TRANSPORT FOR TOURISM

Tourism presents exciting opportunities for local regions to promote public transport as a way of visiting popular destinations for weekend getaways and family holidays as well as accessing rail trails and attending regional events. To support this, we will trial the carriage of bicycles on buses to boost local economies and attract new visitors.

We will work with Visit Victoria, regional councils and tourism agencies to promote walking and cycling tourism across Victoria using the regional public transport network. We will examine the potential to increase train frequencies on long distance routes to support tourism, especially on weekends.

SHORT TERM UP TO 5 YEARS	MEDIUM TERM 5 TO 10 YEARS	LONG TERM 10+ YEARS
Work with Visit Victoria to provide integrated public transport information for tourists and visitors to regional Victoria		
Investigate increasing train frequencies on long distance routes to support tourism, especially on weekends	Add extra services on long distance routes	
Run a trial of bicycles on bus services in the High Country and Grampians Peak Trail tourism areas, and on urban buses in Bendigo	Review trial outcomes and roll out to other tourism areas	
Consider partnerships with local councils and tourism groups to provide public transport information		
Investigate options for providing dedicated services for special events in regional Victoria to support tourism		

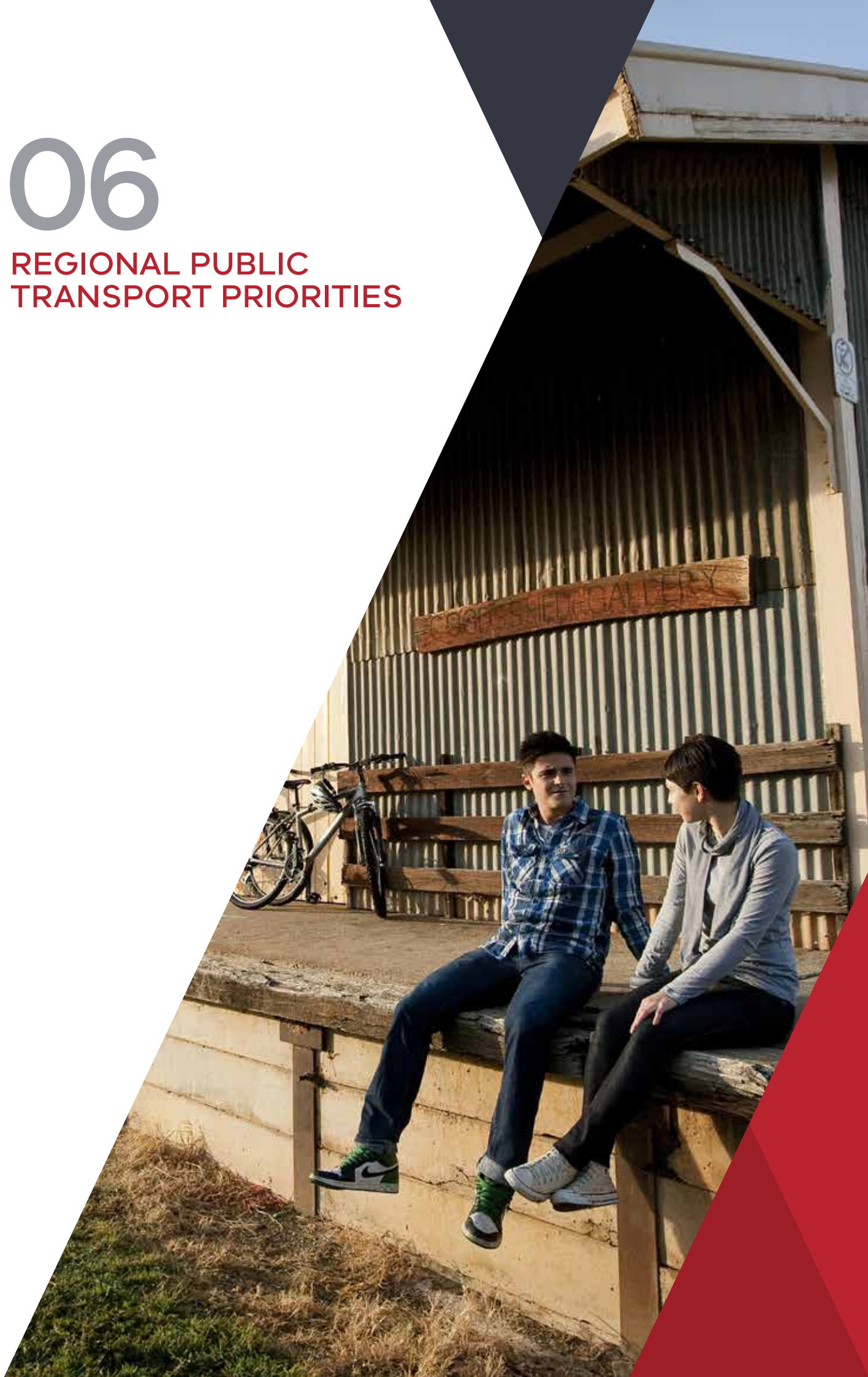


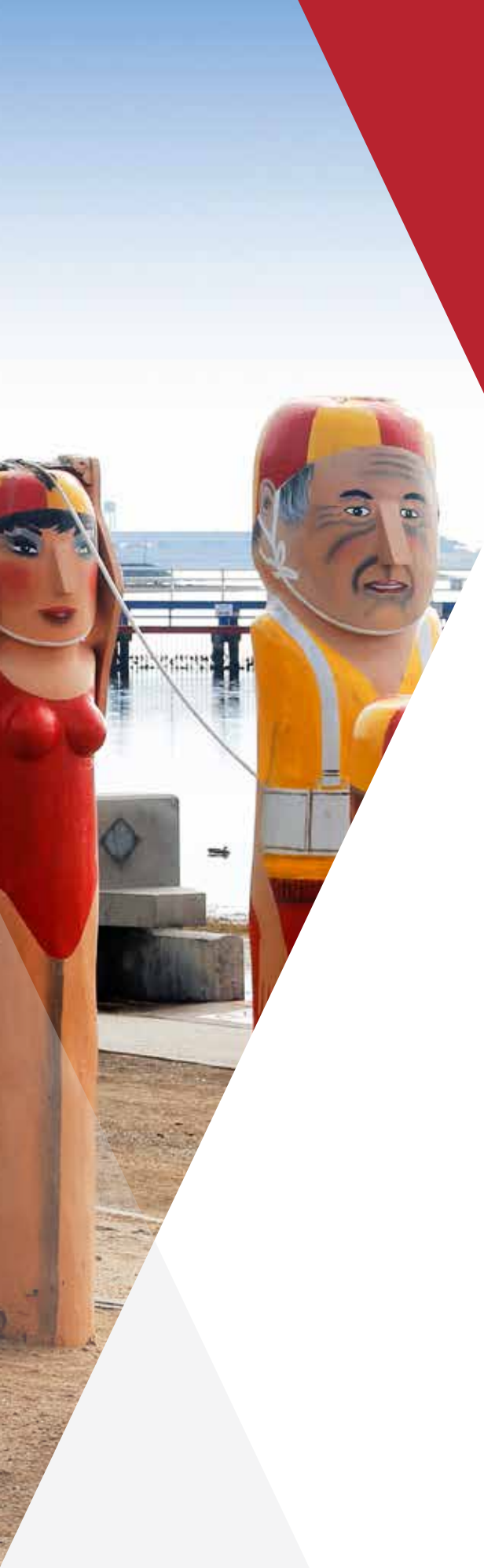
SPECIAL TRAINS JUST THE TICKET FOR FESTIVAL GOERS

Many Melburnians left the car at home and took advantage of special train services to Groovin the Moo festival in Bendigo in 2015. V/Line introduced five additional trains to the sold-out festival in May 2015 as part of the Government's commitment to linking regional communities and supporting special events. Two additional services left Melbourne in the morning and three extra trains departed from Bendigo that night to take festival goers home again.

06

REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT PRIORITIES





BARWON SOUTH WEST



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Population: 387,100
(ABS census data 2011)

Projected population in 2031: 467,670
(Victoria in Future 2015)
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Train service between Melbourne and Warrnambool (via Geelong). 10 minute peak and 20 minute interpeak average frequency between Melbourne and South Geelong.
-
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Coach service: Geelong, Warrnambool, Colac and Portland.
- 

Town bus service: Greater Geelong, Torquay, Colac, Warrnambool, Hamilton, and Portland.
-
- 

Nearly 300 people attended workshops in Portland, Geelong, Warrnambool, Hamilton, Colac and Torquay.
-

WHAT COMMUNITIES TOLD US

Frequency

- Increased frequency of train services to Warrnambool
- More frequent train services on weekends
- More frequent town bus services timetabling
- Improving train timetables
- Extending bus operating hours

Services/connectivity

- Improved local bus routes, particularly where there have been changes, so the elderly can access medical appointments, shops and other services
- More inter-city bus services
- Coverage between the coastal towns (Anglesea etc.) to transport and shopping hubs such as Warrnambool
- Greater and more frequent connections between regional cities and towns
- Additional services should be provided on a seasonal basis (to support tourism) and for special events
- Better connections between buses

Communications

- Better information about timetables, ticketing and communications about changes and disruptions

Public transport experience

- Areas for improvement on train included toilet facilities, food and drink quality, outdated carriages, mobile coverage, and storage and security of luggage

- Station security concerns, parking, general maintenance and toilet facilities
- Shortage of adequate bus shelters

GETTING STARTED

The following are initiatives funded in the 2016-17 State Budget:

More train services

- Additional off-peak return services from Melbourne to Geelong each day
- A train every 40 minutes to Warrnambool from 7 am to 7 pm on weekends
- A third return service to/from Melbourne to Warrnambool every Sunday
- A fourth return service Geelong to Warrnambool on weekdays

Better bus services

- Regional bus service improvements for the Bellarine Peninsula
- Upgrade bus and coach interchanges in Geelong, Hamilton, Warrnambool and Portland

Station upgrades

- Additional seating on platform 2/3 at Geelong station
- 50 extra car parks and extended platform shelters at Marshall station
- Additional shelter and lighting at North Shore station
- Car park improvements at Lara station

Improving reliability, punctuality and frequency

- Plan for duplication from South Geelong to Warrnambool
- Planning work to determine public transport solutions for the Armstrong Creek growth corridor to improve access and connections to new residential areas

Rolling stock improvements

- Revamp classic fleet to upgrade air conditioning


FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Extra passing loops, track and signalling upgrades on the Warrnambool line to allow for more passenger services and more freight
- Duplication of the rail track from South Geelong to Warrnambool
- Build a second platform at South Geelong, Marshall and Warrnambool stations
- Upgrade Warrnambool station and car park
- Improve safety at regional level crossings
- Retire classic fleet and procure replacement stock
- Investigate opportunities for local transport in Barwon South West to provide more travel options for residents
- Review and upgrade stations and facilities in Barwon South West in line with changing community needs
- Plan for and implement bus service improvements across Barwon South West as demand for services change




GIPPSLAND







Population: 259,816
(ABS census data 2011)




Projected population in 2031: 333,210
(Victoria in Future 2015)



Train between Melbourne and Bairnsdale (via Traralgon)



Coaches service: Traralgon, Moe-Newborough, Morwell, Warragul, Sale, Bairnsdale, Drouin, Wonthaggi, Lakes Entrance, Maffra, Leongatha, Churchill and Yarram. All of these locations also have a town bus service, except for Leongatha and Yarram.



234 people attended workshops held in Warragul, Sale, Bairnsdale, Traralgon, Wonthaggi, and Leongatha

WHAT COMMUNITIES TOLD US

Reliability and capacity

- Better reliability on the train service to Melbourne
- Improving the journey time to Melbourne

Frequency

- More frequent train and bus services, particularly in the counter-peak direction
- More train and bus services in major regional centres
- More frequent services between Traralgon, Sale and Bairnsdale

Timetabling

- Longer operating hours – services that start earlier and finish later

Connectivity/services

- Improving connections between Gippsland towns, including between South Gippsland and the Latrobe Valley
- Improving integration of services – trains, buses and taxis
- More frequent bus services between regional centres and smaller towns

Ticketing

- Simpler ticketing

Public transport experience

- Better facilities, including improvements to bus stop shelters and signage
- Better car park facilities

GETTING STARTED

The following are initiatives funded in the 2016-17 State Budget:

More train services

- Two additional return off-peak services from Melbourne to Traralgon each day

Better bus services

- Regional bus service improvements for the Latrobe Valley
- Upgrade coach interchanges in Wonthaggi, Leongatha, Anderson, and Koo Wee Rup
- Upgrade bus stop signage in Bairnsdale and Sale

Rolling stock improvements

- Revamp classic fleet to upgrade air conditioning

Station upgrades

- Investigate and increase car park capacity and station amenity to meet demand at Morwell, Moe and Traralgon stations

Improving reliability, punctuality and frequency

Remove nine level crossings and upgrading signalling on the Caulfield to Dandenong corridor.

Planning work for upgrades on the Gippsland line to enable more train services and improve reliability. This includes planning for:

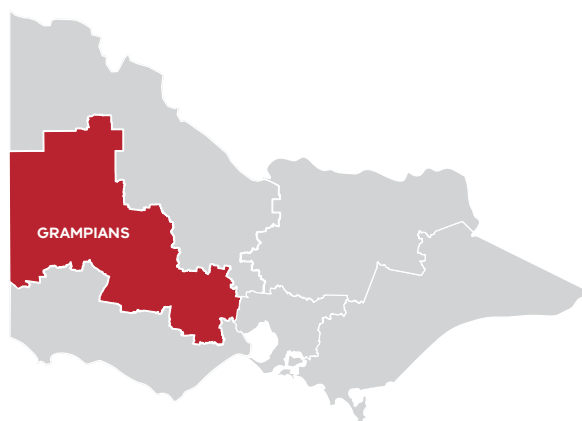
- Passing loops between Moe and Traralgon, Traralgon and Sale, and Sale and Bairnsdale
- Duplicate the single track section between Bunyip and Longwarry
- Replace the Avon River Bridge at Stratford

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Extra passing loops and extra track to facilitate more trains
- Upgrade track to allow for higher speeds of up to 160 km/h
- Build train stabling at Sale to facilitate additional services
- Upgrade signalling to allow more trains through to Sale
- Improve safety at regional level crossings
- Retire classic fleet and procure replacement stock
- Investigate opportunities for local transport in Gippsland to provide additional travel options for residents
- Review and upgrade stations and facilities in Gippsland in line with changing community needs
- Plan for and implement bus service improvements across Gippsland as demand for services change



GRAMPIANS



Population: 224,430

(ABS census data 2011)



Projected population in 2031: 300,012

(Victoria in Future 2015)



The Overland operates Melbourne-
Geelong-Ararat-Horsham to Adelaide



Coach and town bus service:
Ballarat, Horsham, Bacchus
Marsh, Maryborough, Ararat,
and Stawell



Nearly 300 people attended
workshops in Ballarat,
Bacchus Marsh, Maryborough,
Ararat, and Horsham

WHAT COMMUNITIES TOLD US

Frequency

- More frequent train services on the Ballarat line
- More train services to Maryborough and Ararat to boost tourism, jobs and economic development

Reliability

- More frequent services particularly in the counter-peak direction
- Improve reliability on the Ballarat line

Connectivity/services

- Provide more bus services between rural and regional towns
- More bus services between Maryborough, Bendigo and Ballarat
- Improve connections between bus, coach and train services
- Open up rail lines in the region

Public transport experience

- Better facilities, including improvements to bus stop shelter and signage

Timetabling

- Longer operating hours – public transport that starts earlier and finishes later

GETTING STARTED

The following are initiatives funded in the 2016-17 State Budget:

More train services

- Two additional off-peak return services from Melbourne to Ballarat each day
- The Ballarat Line Upgrade project will also enable two extra trains to operate during the morning and afternoon peak periods and a train every 40 minutes in the off-peak
- Maryborough train extension every weekday following consultation with the community

Better bus services

- Regional bus service improvements for Ballarat
- Improve Ballarat and Horsham coach interchanges and bus stops

Station upgrades

- 200 extra car parks to meet demand at Wendouree station
- Upgrade Ballan station waiting area to improve facilities for waiting passengers
- Build second platforms at Bacchus Marsh and Ballan stations, including car park upgrades and provision of a pedestrian link between platforms

Improving reliability, punctuality and frequency

The Ballarat Line Upgrade project will deliver major upgrades to the Ballarat rail corridor – adding capacity for passengers and improving the reliability of existing services.

The works include:

- duplicating a 17-kilometre section of single track between Deer Park West and Melton
- duplicating 3-kilometres of track at Warrenheip
- building three passing loops at Bacchus Marsh, Ballan and near Bungaree to accommodate trains passing in opposite directions
- train stabling yard at Melton and Rowsley.

Rolling stock improvements

- Revamp classic fleet to upgrade air conditioning

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Build a train station at Toolern
- Investigate the need for extra stations near Ballarat
- Investigate opportunities for passenger trains to use the interstate line more frequently
- Improve safety at regional level crossings
- Retire classic fleet and procure replacement rolling stock
- Investigate opportunities for local transport in Grampians to provide additional travel options for residents
- Review and upgrade stations and facilities in Grampians in line with changing community needs
- Plan for and implement bus service improvements across Grampians as demand for services change



HUME



Population: 266, 471

(ABS census data 2011)

Projected population in 2031: 364,043

(Victoria in Future 2015)



Train service from Melbourne over the NSW border to Albury-Wodonga (300km) and a train service between Melbourne and Shepparton (via Seymour)



Coach and town bus service: Shepparton – Mooroopna, Wodonga, Wangaratta, Benalla, Wallan, Yarrawonga, Kilmore, Seymour and Cobram



Nearly 370 people attended workshops held in Shepparton, Seymour, Benalla, Wangaratta and Wodonga.

WHAT COMMUNITIES TOLD US

Reliability

- Greater reliability of services; improving the long journey time to Melbourne

Frequency

- More frequent train and coach services – suggestions to run shuttle services between Shepparton and Seymour and also Albury-Wodonga and Seymour to achieve greater frequency

Timetabling

- Longer operating hours – public transport that starts earlier and finishes later

Facilities

- Better toilets at stations and on trains, more car parking at stations
- Better trains with improved mobile connectivity
- Improved signage and lighting at stations and healthier food service on trains

GETTING STARTED

The following are initiatives funded in the 2016-17 State Budget:

More services

- Additional Seymour to Shepparton service extension each day to increase train frequencies on long distance routes and support tourism and weekend travel

- Investigate express shuttle coaches in the North East to connect with existing train services

Rolling stock improvements

- Revamp classic fleet and clean seats

North East Line improvements including:

- reconfiguration of rolling stock from three train sets of five carriages, to four train sets of four carriages to support improved maintenance program and enhance reliability
- refurbishments to the exterior and interior of trains to improve passenger comfort (e.g. deep cleans, new seat cushions, lighting and carpets)
- planning for a new rolling stock solution for the corridor.

Station upgrades

- Improve station car parks at Wallan and Kilmore East
- Upgrade Shepparton station waiting area to improve facilities for passengers
- Install bike parks at major stations in the Hume region to improve connections for train passengers using a bike
- Extra shelters at major bus stops in Shepparton
- Upgrade Seymour coach interchange to improve facilities for waiting passengers

Improved reliability, punctuality and frequency

- Commence planning for upgrades to the line between Upfield and Somerton to enable additional capacity to be provided on the Seymour line

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Extra passing loops, track, train stabling and signalling upgrades on the Shepparton line to allow for more train services and freight
- Improve travel times from Seymour to Melbourne by upgrading track and signalling to Seymour for speeds of up to 160 km/h
- Enable Seymour trains to bypass the busy Craigieburn line by connecting the Upfield and Craigieburn lines at Somerton
- Improve travel times and comfort by ensuring Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) maintains sections of the north-east line to Albury-Wodonga to appropriate standards following the completion of rehabilitation works by the ARTC
- Improve safety at regional level crossings
- Retire classic fleet and procure replacement stock
- Wallan service enhancements
- Investigate roll out of VLocity trains on the Shepparton Line
- Investigate opportunities for local transport in Hume to provide additional travel options for residents
- Review and upgrade stations and facilities in Hume in line with changing community needs
- Plan for and implement bus service improvements across Hume as demand for services change

BENDIGO

ES

LODDON MALLEE



Population: 309,349

(ABS census data 2011)



Projected population in 2031: 381,001

(Victoria in Future 2015)



Train services from Melbourne to Swan Hill and Echuca (via Bendigo)



Coach service: Bendigo, Castlemaine, Echuca, Gisborne, Kyabram, Kyneton, Mildura, Rochester and Swan Hill.



All of these towns have a bus service, excluding Kyabram.



Nearly 200 people attended workshops held in Swan Hill, Mildura, Castlemaine, Echuca and Bendigo

WHAT COMMUNITIES TOLD US

Connectivity/services

- Improve links and connections between rural towns and centres in the region
- Improve frequency and coverage of local bus services

Reliability and capacity

- Reliability of train services to Melbourne
- Additional train carriages to boost capacity
- Improving journey time to Melbourne

Frequency

- More services to connect towns
- Increased train services on the Swan Hill and Echuca lines

Timetabling

- More bus or train services to cater for demand in the counter-peak direction in the morning, and reverse in the evening (i.e. from Castlemaine into Bendigo)
- Greater span of services
- Linking trains and bus timetables

Public transport experience

- Improved stations including toilets, shelter, car parks
- More bus stop shelters
- Better access to buses and between platforms 1 & 2 at Bendigo station
- Better access for people with a disability on buses

GETTING STARTED

The following are initiatives funded in the 2016-17 State Budget:

More train services

- Two additional off-peak return services from Melbourne to Bendigo each day

Station upgrades

- Upgrade Bendigo and Eaglehawk stations to improve facilities, pedestrian movement, traffic flow and accessibility
- Upgrade Woodend station car park with lighting and additional car parks to meet demand
- Improve station car parks at Gisborne and Kyneton

Bus stop and coach improvements

- Real-time information for key Bendigo bus stops
- Upgrade bus stop signage and timetable information in Mildura and Echuca to improve amenities for waiting passengers
- Investigate a shuttle bus option to and from Mildura Airport

Improved reliability, punctuality and frequency

- Planning work to increase capacity on the Bendigo line to improve reliability and facilitate 20 minute frequency during peak and 40 minute frequency during the day and evenings

Rolling stock improvements

- Revamp classic fleet to upgrade air conditioning

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Deliver capacity improvements on the Bendigo line
- Upgrade tracks on the Bendigo line to allow for higher speeds of up to 160 km/h
- Extra passing loops, track and signalling upgrades on the Echuca and Swan Hill lines to allow for higher speeds, more trains and more freight
- Increase track capacity between Kyneton and Bendigo
- Implement recommendations for the Bendigo Metro Rail project
- Investigate extra stations in Central Victoria
- Improve safety at regional level crossings
- Retire classic fleet and procure replacement stock
- Investigate opportunities for local transport in Loddon Mallee to provide additional travel options for residents
- Review and upgrade stations and facilities in Loddon Mallee in line with changing community needs
- Plan for and implement bus service improvements across Loddon Mallee as demand for services change

07

NEXT STEPS

DELIVERING THE REGIONAL NETWORK DEVELOPMENT PLAN WILL TAKE STRONG PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION ACROSS ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Victoria's Regional Statement established nine new Regional Partnerships to direct local priorities straight into the heart of State Government decision making. They bring together representatives from local business, education, social services and community groups with the three tiers of government. The Regional Partnerships will have a critical role in supporting the delivery of the Regional Network Development Plan and providing local feedback.

The development of the Regional Network Development Plan has highlighted the importance of integrated long term planning and the strong interest that the community has in public transport. Local governments and communities will have a vital and significant voice in planning and delivering future regional transport.

We will also involve stakeholders and peak associations. We must work together to develop local transport solutions, and master plans in order for them to be effective.

TRANSPORT AGENCIES WORKING TOGETHER

All transport agencies will work together to deliver an integrated public transport system.

Key partners in planning Victoria's future regional transport will be transport and economic development agencies, including Public Transport Victoria, V/Line, VicRoads, the Taxi Services Commission and the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources. We will work together to build on Victoria's regional transport strengths and deliver improvements where they are needed most.

The plan will be refreshed every four years to reflect changes in demographics and travel demands, and to continue to reflect ongoing community conversations between regional Victorians and the State Government.

LOCAL TRANSPORT FORUMS

While the workshops and online forums to inform the development of this plan have ended, the conversations do not end here.

We will set up local transport forums to bring together transport providers, stakeholders and local communities to provide regional Victorians with the opportunity to have their say on their public transport needs.

Have your say any time on the PTV website – ptv.vic.gov.au or call **1800 800 007** between 6am and midnight, seven days a week.



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