

MILDURA FUTURE READY

Funding and Advocacy Strategy

Discussion Summary



Mildura Rural City Council

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Mildura Future Ready Funding and Advocacy

Summary

Project Overview

The 'Mildura Future Ready' (MFR) Funding and Advocacy Strategy is aimed at delivering a package of major projects to people living in north west Victoria and to capitalise on the strategic work, already undertaken by Mildura Rural City Council (Council).

Council has contributed significant financial and staffing resources to date, in the development of associated Master Plans, Business Cases and Investment Prospectuses, for the Mildura Future Ready initiative.

Collectively, these investments will create significant social, economic and environmental impacts for the region, that in isolation, each project is unable to achieve, in the short term.

REMPPLAN and business case economic modelling indicates that a total investment of \$88m towards MFR would deliver a total output of \$411m. This includes all direct, industrial, flow on and consumption effects, including an estimated 1,099 jobs on full completion. According to the respective business cases, a further 800 jobs would be established over the long term. These figures exclude outputs and associated benefits from the Passenger Rail project.

This funding strategy has evolved over many years and clearly articulates what our community needs and is the blueprint for bringing these to fruition.

Reason for MFR Funding Strategy

- Individual project advocacy polarise community, a collective approach helps galvanise the community with one voice.
- Individual 'Shovel ready' projects will remain stagnant for long periods of time, with State and Federal government's forcing individual projects to compete against another in competitive funding rounds Australia wide, with maximum funding limits of \$10m, requiring \$1:\$1 matched funding contributions, which is unaffordable for Council.
- Timing is right to influence and advocate to both sides of government in the lead up to their election cycles (Victoria 24 Nov 2018) and Federal (House of Representatives by 2 November 2019, noting this could be earlier).

Issues to be addressed

Mildura, as with other regional centres, is experiencing a prolonged period of economic transition. Traditionally strong industries of horticulture, agriculture and manufacturing are undergoing a significant adjustment period, contributing to high levels of economic and social disadvantage and poor levels of regional growth, relative to the Victorian average.

Our region must work quickly to diversify our local economy, to develop a strong and sustainable resilience to the peaks and troughs of the region's primary industries, if we are to maintain our substantial \$2.7b contribution to Australia's annual GDP.

Without further significant investment to stimulate job diversity, employment growth and population attraction, our region may begin to stagnate or decline, impacting not only the north west region, but Victoria and Australia's economic wellbeing.

As a unique tri state regional city, our current tourism and transport industries have considerable opportunities and advantages to capitalise on investment, in both regional

tourism and the effective and efficient transportation of produce for local, national, or international export markets.

Additionally, Mildura remains the largest regional centre in Victoria without a passenger train service, adversely affecting the community's capacity to interact effectively with existing public transport services to metropolitan centres and negatively impacting our region's identity, as an uninspiring tourist destination.

What is the problem?

- A range of poor social indicators compared to state wide averages and ongoing dependency on support (Mildura is the third most socio economically disadvantaged area in Victoria).
- Lack of large scale and sustained government investment in Mildura's current social infrastructure, to support community adaptation to change, social capital and to drive future economic growth, within our regionally isolated population.
- Region is not adapting to changes in its traditional employment sectors of agriculture and horticulture. Suitable employment and training opportunities are not emerging fast enough in non-traditional industries, to maintain the region's future jobs, or population growth.
- Political landscape eg. Regional Development Victoria - an indication of government investment in recent times, has seen \$112 million of Victoria's regional jobs and infrastructure fund, invested in two regional centres, Ballarat and Geelong, while \$46 million was shared amongst 14 Coalition seats. **Source Weekly Times*
- Single project responses are not working in isolation and are unable to deliver the range of benefits needed to address the identified problems (outlined in Attachment A Investment Logic Map) to make significant community change.
- Lack of investment occurring in tourism product and infrastructure to entice visitation.
- Our traditional reliance on the horticulture and viticulture industries limits the level of economic diversity for a regional centre. The reliance on high security water and potential for future drought periods remain significant risks for this sector.

Drivers of the Problem

1. Poor long term rates of population and economic growth, coupled with high levels of unemployment, inhibiting Mildura's regional potential to maintain its \$2.7b contribution to Australia's Gross Regional Product (GRP).
2. Entrenched and significant disadvantage in a range of social indicators, creating widespread community dependency and negatively affecting employment, participation and engagement.
3. A decline in Mildura's visitor numbers, tourist infrastructure and project offerings, contributing to our perception as an uninspiring destination.
4. Lack of access, equity and choice to affordable and accessible transport options for the most isolated Local Government Area (LGA) in Victoria.

The indicators of these inherent problems can be seen in the following trend data:

Low Income levels

The average median household income is \$1,064, considerably lower than the Victorian average of \$1,419. Recent Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) census data indicates 27 per cent of households make do with less than \$650 gross weekly income; almost nine per cent more than the Australian average.

Lack of Jobs Growth

The employment projections to November 2020, forecast an overall jobs growth of 4.4 per cent in total jobs in Victoria North West region, half that of the Victorian average of 8.8 per cent.

High Unemployment

The current Unemployment rate (March quarter 2017) is 6.54 per cent, with 1,657 people looking for work. Significantly higher than the Victorian rate of 5.8 per cent and Australian average 5.7 per cent.

Low Population Growth

The current population of 53,878, has grown by an average of just 1.1 per cent per annum since the previous 2011 Census. Future population growth predictions averaging 0.65 per cent per annum, with an expected population to reach 59,400 by 2031.

Major Transitions Occurring in Traditional Industries

The employment in agriculture, forestry and fishing has reduced by 35 per cent between 2001 and 2011. Retail trade, health care and social assistance are now the two most dominant sectors, employing some 5,358 people.

What is Mildura Future Ready?

Council determined that to address these problems there must be large scale investment in infrastructure that drives jobs growth, direct and indirect economic returns and social connections. This has seen the culmination of a three key projects and one core advocacy project. The development of the projects that sit behind the Mildura Future Ready strategy include:

The Mildura Future Ready strategic response will establish:

1. a Motorsport and Community precinct, featuring a business model to sustain training and employment opportunities;
2. a Regional Sporting Precinct, to increase participation and opportunities for attraction of significant recreational events;
3. the second stage of the Mildura Riverfront Development, to increase tourism yield, brand and private investment;
4. an Advocacy Plan to return an affordable and accessible Mildura Passenger Train Service, linking Mildura to Victoria's existing rail network and increasing visitation to the region.

Associated master plans, business cases and investment prospectuses for individual major project initiatives are now combined and make up the MFR solution.

The investments contained in the advocacy and funding strategy will create immediate and significant social and economic impacts for the region, that in isolation each project is unable to achieve in the short to medium term. When fully implemented MFR will deliver over 1000 jobs and an estimated economic impact of \$400 million in total investment to the region.

Why should the Government invest here?

Investment in larger population centres and regions that have significant future growth, are strong funding considerations for both State and Federal government. Given the projected growth forecasts below to 2031, it is readily seen that Mildura is lagging behind other Victorian regional centres, in achieving its potential for future jobs, population and economic growth.

Region	Population	Growth Rate	Total GRP	Per Worker	Unemployment Rate
Ballarat	136,900	1.85%	\$5.531B	\$142,662	4.5%
Greater Bendigo	144,600	1.75%	\$5.856B	\$155,513	4.5%
Victoria	7,733,300	1.70%	\$274.4B	\$154,596	5.8%
Greater Geelong	296,400	1.60%	\$11.41B	\$145,275	6.3%
Greater Shepparton	73,700	0.90%	\$3.769B	\$152,001	6.3%
Mildura	59,400	0.65%	\$3.221B	\$152,406	6.4%
Wentworth					

Source: Department of Planning and Community Development - Victoria in Future Population and Household Projections 2011- 2031, Source: GRP REMPLAN Economy - Regional Development Australia website, Source: Small Area Labour Markets LGA's March 2017 Quarter.

Gross Regional Product (GRP) is the market value of all final goods and services produced by all firms in an economy. Despite Mildura's lack of annual average growth rate prediction of 0.65 per cent and current unemployment rate of 6.4 per cent, the region is performing well in comparison to other regional centres.

Previous State Funding

During the last 12 months the Victorian government's recent investments have included Ballarat (\$154m), Bendigo (\$7.2m) and Geelong (\$33.9m). The recent 2017-18 Victorian Budget announcements in May 2017 and spending decisions since, reflect the State Government funding priorities, to manage regional centres with high population growth, particularly in Ballarat (\$649m) and Geelong (\$44m).

Mildura received funding for

\$111,000 Underbool Primary School modernisation, upgrade existing school facilities (Underbool).

A share of Support and Safety Hubs funding, with launch sites including Barwon, Inner Gippsland and the Mallee.

Calder Highway wide centreline trial, between Ouyen and Mildura.

Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements and funding for two staff.

Source: *Getting on with the job - Rural and Regional Budget Information Paper – Victorian Budget 2017/18*

Federal Spending

The Mildura LGA has been relatively successful in recent times, attracting some Federal funding in round three of the former National Stronger Regions Fund. Mildura received \$10m in 2015 towards funding for the Mildura Airport Runway Overlay and \$0.723m towards the Mildura Recreation Reserve Redevelopment projects.

The current Building Better Regions Fund Round One was aimed directly at regional communities, however the maximum available funding remains at \$10m per round, on a matched funding basis. Council submitted a \$300,000 project for round one funding, which was successful for the forestage lift.

In summary, the level of investment by government into the Mildura economy for jobs and infrastructure projects has been considerably low when compared to other regional centres.

Together with a lack of strategic approach to jobs and investment it has seen a decline in our level of social and wellbeing across a number of fronts. Clearly if there is not a turnaround in this direction, Mildura will not be 'ready for the future'. Large scale investment targeting jobs and investment is crucial for the region if it is going to be sustainable into the future and become a viable regional centre.

Strategic approach

Marketing campaign

Single consistent message from Council

Joint multi media campaign

- Press, Radio and TV campaign
- Social Media campaign
- Community sessions
- Special Interest Groups

Political lobbying

- Clear, concise, speaking with one voice
- Community ownership
- Address the political landscape

Strategic Partnerships

- Community
- State Government
- Federal Government
- Community Stakeholders

Major Project Deliverable Outcomes

Once implemented, Mildura Future Ready will create economic stimulus through ongoing jobs that diversify business, tourism and investment opportunities in the Mildura region.

- ✓ Attract, host and support regional, national and international events, conventions and concerts
- ✓ Regional hub for motorsports, basketball, volleyball and cricket
- ✓ Attract and host major state and national level sports competitions, showcase matches and carnivals
- ✓ Tourism gateway that showcases our environmental and cultural assets including the river, Indigenous heritage and social diversity
- ✓ Transport interchange connecting NSW, VIC and SA through rail, air and bus transport

Further information: Attachment A - Investment Logic Map outlines the rationale in further detail.

Major Project Benefits

The development of a scoping study will further identify the integration of major project options and benefits (using an Investment Logic Mapping approach), together with an analysis of appropriate staging and ranking options, in order to achieve the desired benefits for:

- ✓ Improved employment, health and wellbeing outcomes
- ✓ Attract and retain population growth
- ✓ A resilient and growing tourism and transport sector
- ✓ A more active, engaged and connected community
- ✓ Connection and affordable access to the rest of Victoria and beyond
- ✓ Affordable recreational opportunities
- ✓ Increased capacity and demand for residential investment
- ✓ Diversified economy
- ✓ Viable job opportunities
- ✓ Increased awareness of Mildura as a major regional hub for tourism, events and transport connections

Further information can be obtained from the project benefits outlined in individual Business Cases.

What is the funding model?

	State	Federal	Council	Other	Total
Mildura Riverfront Redevelopment - Stage 2	\$13m	\$13m	\$3.5m	-	\$29.5m
Mildura Motorsports and Community Precinct	\$6.5m	\$6.5m	\$2m	\$6.5m	\$21.5m
Mildura South Regional Sporting Precinct	\$15.25m	\$15.25m	\$4.6m	\$1.4m	\$36.5m
Mildura Passenger Rail Service	-	-	\$0.5m	-	\$0.5m
Total	\$34.75m	\$34.75m	\$10.6m	\$7.9m	\$88m
Noting the State and Federal funding allocations are only nominal at this stage and requires funding modelling linked to a more detailed funding plan, and is dependent on funding streams. Therefore the amounts are likely to change depending on the funding strategy. A \$10.6m contribution from Mildura Rural City Council (including up to \$0.5m for advocacy) would be required to support the strategy.					

What are the expected timelines?

Subject to government funding availability and Council capacity and internal contributions approval, project stages may be delivered over five to ten years 2018-2028. A funding model is hoped to be developed over the next three to five years.

What is the estimated return on investment?

Project	Investment cost	Direct jobs (construction)	Indirect jobs (flow on)	Economic Impact (direct)	Economic Impact (flow on)
Mildura Riverfront Development – Stage 2	\$29.5m	63	110	\$66.5m	Tourism \$69.5m ² , Social value \$7.2m ² , Property Values \$1.5m ²
Mildura Motorsports and Community Precinct	\$21.5m	49	76	\$45.719m	
		885 ¹ direct	487 ¹ indirect	\$223.36m ¹	\$499.73m ¹
Mildura South Regional Sporting Precinct	\$36.445M	102 (includes 10 operational)	127 jobs	\$76.207M	TBA (awaiting Final Economic Assessment)
Mildura Passenger Rail Service	\$0.5m	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
Total	\$88m	1,099³ jobs	800³ jobs	\$411.786m³	\$577.93m³

¹ Impact Modelling
30 years

² Impact Modelling
10 years

³ Based on Full
Implementation

Sources: REMPLAN Economic Modelling; Project Business Cases

Financial analysis of the Mildura Future Ready strategy has been undertaken by the Financial Services Branch. In doing this, it has been assumed that Council will take out new loan borrowings of \$10.6m, however this may be less depending on available Council funds. This analysis included servicing of borrowings, and the ongoing operational and asset renewal costs associated with the proposed projects. This analysis suggests that Council will have the ability to service these additional costs from existing own source revenue, without requiring an additional increase in rates for the purposes of these projects, due to:

- Reinstatement of Victorian grants commission indexation;
- Expiration of a number of existing Council loans;
- Allocations within the strategic resource plan for future superannuation calls and land acquisitions.

Therefore the MFR funding strategy is based on assumptions around financial support from all three levels of government, as well as private contributions. Council's portion of the funding mix is \$10.6 million which will be made up of a combination of cash reserves and borrowings. Where loan funds are required, the servicing of any debt will be met from within current financial resources. If funded as per the funding model there will be no additional impost on ratepayers.

A summary of key economic, social and job impacts include:

Mildura Riverfront Development – Stage 2

Construction \$29.5m, indirect economic impact \$37m (construction and operations) 63 jobs direct, 110 jobs indirect.

Following impact based on 10 year period: Tourism \$69.5m, Social value \$7.2m, Property Values \$1.5m.

Source: Mildura Riverfront Precinct Redevelopment Stage 2 - Business Case 2017 pgs.44 & 57

Mildura Motorsports and Community Precinct

When fully implemented direct first round impacts \$223.36m, jobs 885 flow on impacts \$499.73m, Jobs 487.

First round impacts represent the direct impact of a change or 'shock' to the economy. In this instance, it represents the impacts associated with the direct expenditure from tourists or construction as a result of the new motor sport precinct

Flow on impact represent the second, third and further 'rounds' of spending resulting from the initial change in the economy. For instance, tourism spend in local retailers will mean additional income for local shop owners who in turn, will spend some of the additional funds on local goods and services.

Note: Impacts were modelled over 30 years, which is the modelling period for building based infrastructure accepted by Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF), on the basis that it represents the typical 'life' of a building asset before major redevelopment or upgrade may be required.

Source: Full Business Case for the Mildura Motorsports and Community Precinct pgs. 47-49

Mildura South Regional Sporting Precinct

Total Outputs \$76.207m (construction total outputs) and 229 jobs (including 10 operational)

Source: REMPLAN Economic Modelling based on \$36.445m Investment.

Mildura Passenger Rail Service

Cost Benefit Analysis completed by North West Rail Alliance – no specific details on economic benefits in terms of jobs and economic returns.

Further information: Additional benefits outlined in supporting Business Cases.

Current supporting documentation includes:

- Mildura Riverfront Redevelopment Stage 2 - Business Case Review (January 2017) and Investment Prospectus
- Business Case for the Mildura Motorsports and Community Precinct Feb 2017
- Mildura South Regional Sporting Precinct Development and Business Plan Draft July 2017

Advocacy Project

- Cost Benefit Analysis - Passenger Rail North West Rail Alliance (Feasibility requires review and update).

Financial Requirements

- Formulate a strategic financial funding plan, endorsed by Council.
- Infrastructure revenue strategy, with potential rate capping exemption.

- Endorse operational financial strategy to facilitate potential towards a potential \$10-\$15m contribution over 10 years.
- Confirm in writing all stakeholder contributions.

Planning Requirements

- Land Use and Approvals.

Summary of Completed Actions

- Highlighted the key social indicators and issues within the Mildura Local Government Area;
- Examined the current evidence, factors, influencers and drivers affecting our community;
- Identified Mildura's potential for future economic, population and jobs growth, as an important Victorian regional centre;
- Prepared an Advocacy and Funding Strategy document as an approach to strategically address our future liveability as a community;
- Undertaken presentations to Council and key regional stakeholders;
- Completed full business cases for the Mildura Motorsports and Community Precinct.
- Completed 90 per cent of the Mildura South Regional Sporting Precinct to be endorsed by Council in September.
- Completion of the initial Business Case for stage 2 of the Mildura Riverfront, revised version currently underway.
- Advocacy plan for the Return of Passenger Rail currently underway, including the commissioning of a feasibility study.

Future Actions

- Endorse MFR as Council's Advocacy and Funding Strategy
- Establish a project delivery team to agree on timelines, roles and responsibilities, resourcing, actions and meeting schedules;
- Further develop Advocacy Plan to gain support from key investors, stakeholders, community user groups, local Parliament representatives;
- Commence a strong political advocacy campaign and approach to government, in line with seeking formalised pre-election commitments from both major political parties, in lead up to state and federal elections.
- Continue to develop funding proposals for government funding.

Project Delivery Team

- Continue to refine the MFR business case
- Formulate project delivery strategy within agreed framework
- Liaise with Project Consultants and Control Groups
- Brief external stakeholders of our approach.

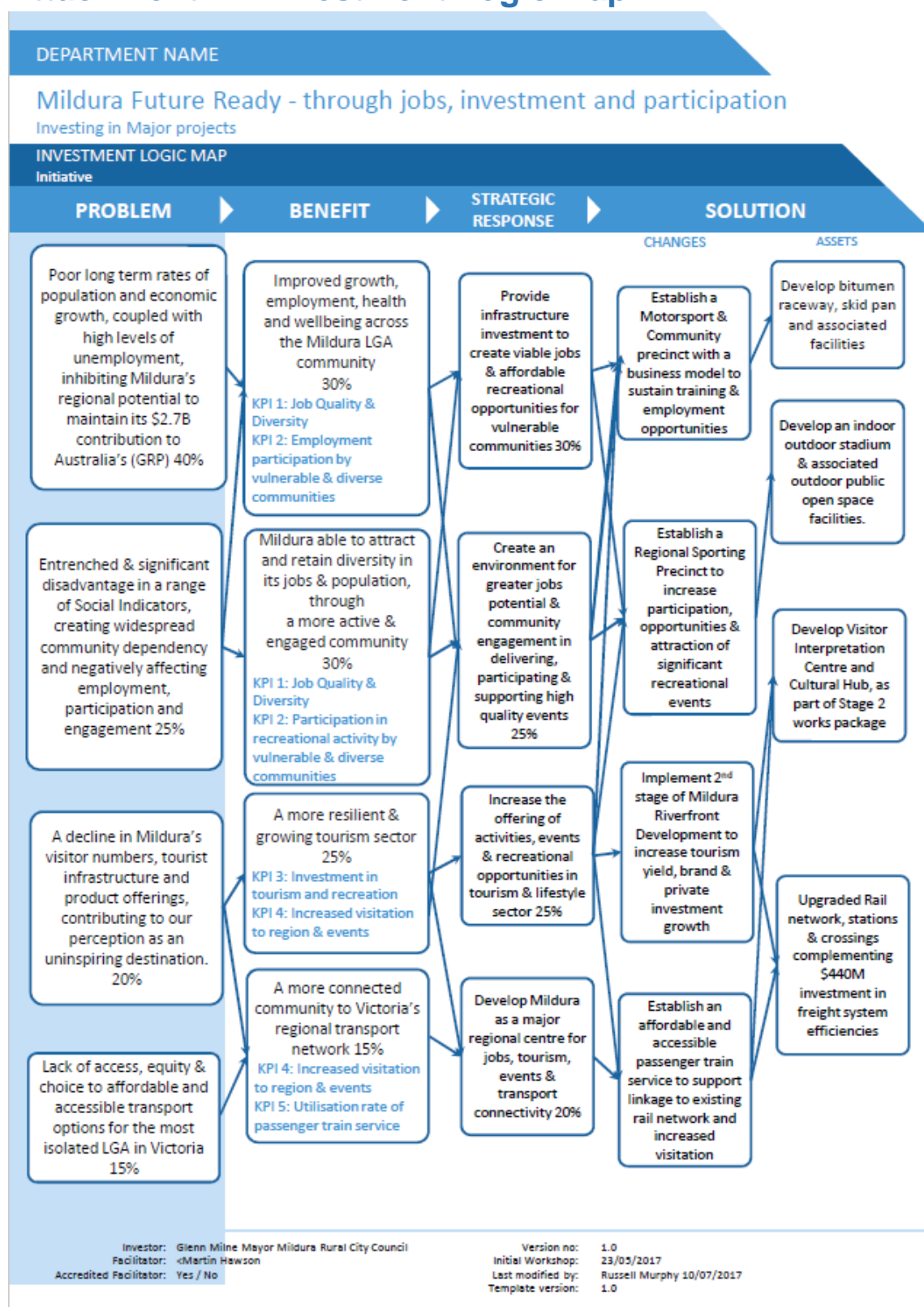
Community Consultation

- Develop a comprehensive community consultation and communications strategy
- Develop benefit proposition and fact sheet briefs for different audiences, i.e. community, council, media, local parliamentary members and funding providers;
- Develop online and multimedia visual presentations.

Subject to the above decisions

- Understand and agree on the role each Councillor would need to take to effectively implement the Advocacy approach;
- Commence a strong political advocacy campaign, in line with seeking formalised pre-election commitments from all political parties, in lead up to state and federal elections.

Attachment A - Investment Logic Map



MILDURA FUTURE READY



4x

Major Projects



\$88m

Initial Investment



1000

New jobs



\$400m

Economic Output



Improved health
and wellbeing

Mildura Future Ready

Reviving our social and economic wellbeing through major infrastructure investment

Mildura Future Ready is a plan to secure investment in major infrastructure projects that will diversify our region's economy and enhance community wellbeing.

This initiative brings together four key projects, presenting them with equal priority for funding and implementation. Together, these projects have the collective capacity to transform our region and future proof it for years to come.

Under the Mildura Future Ready banner, we will activate public support and lobby state and federal governments to invest \$88 million in our region.

Why do we need Mildura Future Ready?

- We are the third most socio disadvantaged local government area in Victoria.¹
- Lack of jobs growth – forecast jobs growth for North West Victoria to November 2020 is 4.4 per cent, half the Victorian average of 8.8 per cent.²
- Low population growth – Mildura's population increased just 0.2 per cent to 53,878 in the past 12 months. It's expected to increase by just 0.65 per annum.³
- High unemployment – Mildura's unemployment rate is 6.54 per cent, significantly higher than both the Victorian (5.8 per cent) and national (5.7 per cent) averages. This translates to 1657 people unemployed in our region.⁴
- Our economy lacks diversity, which limits our capacity to generate new job opportunities. Employment in traditional industries - agriculture, forestry and fishing - fell 35 per cent between 2001 and 2011. Retail, health care and social assistance are the most dominant sectors.⁵
- We are missing out on large-scale, sustained investment from state and federal governments to other major regional centres.
- Although strategically located between three capital cities, residents are isolated, with limited public transport connections to the rest of Victoria.
- Lack of investment in tourism product and infrastructure to entice visitation.

Source: 1.ABS Local Government Area (LGA) Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage, 2011, 2.Department of Employment Projected Employment Growth North West Victoria – Nov 2015-Nov 2020, 3.Victoria in Future 2016 Population and household projections to 2051 (DEWLP) 4.Small Area Labour Markets Australia March Quarter 2017, 5.ABS Census of Population and Housing - Industry of Employment (2001-2016) Mildura-Wentworth





Outcomes of Mildura Future Ready

- Once implemented, Mildura Future Ready will create economic stimulus through ongoing jobs that diversify business, tourism and investment opportunities in the Mildura region.
- Attract, host and support regional, national and international events, conventions and concerts.
- Regional hub for motorsports, basketball, volleyball and cricket.
- Attract and host major state and national level sports competitions, showcase matches and carnivals.
- Tourism gateway that showcases our environmental and cultural assets including the river, Indigenous heritage and social diversity.
- Transport interchange connecting NSW, VIC and SA through rail, air and bus transport.

Benefits of Mildura Future Ready

- Improved employment, health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Attract and retain population growth.
- A resilient and growing tourism and transport sector.
- A more active, engaged and connected community.
- Connection and affordable access to the rest of Victoria and beyond.
- Affordable recreational opportunities.
- Increased capacity and demand for residential investment.
- Diversified economy.
- Viable job opportunities.
- Increased awareness of Mildura as a major regional hub for tourism, events and transport connections.

Mildura Future Ready Projects



Mildura South Regional Sporting Precinct

Development of an indoor and outdoor sporting complex in one of Mildura's residential growth areas has long been a priority for the Mildura community. The proposed precinct would provide a home base for local sport and recreation clubs and bolster our chances to host major sports, entertainment and conferencing events. Plans include a 3000-seat capacity entertainment centre, six-court indoor stadium, squash courts, change rooms, café and alfresco area, AFL-standard oval and second multipurpose sports field.

Mildura Motorsports & Community Precinct

Capitalising on Mildura's robust motorsports sector, this project will see a major, multipurpose motorsports precinct established at Koorlong. Bringing together the region's key motor sports clubs and facilities, the 547 hectare precinct would include a sealed 3km road circuit (with potential for expansion), a skid pan, pits and control tower, office facilities, maintenance/wash-down shed, food/beverage facilities, parking and camping site.

Mildura Riverfront Redevelopment – Stage 2

This exciting proposal would further enhance Mildura's position on the iconic Murray River and make it Victoria's most significant inland river city. With facilities for locals and visitors alike, the plan builds on the recently completed Stage 1 works which connected Mildura's CBD to the riverfront. Stage 2 includes the release of public and privately owned land for community, commercial and residential developments, a tourism centre with visitor information services, café and cultural centre, transport interchange and landscaping developments.

Return of Passenger Rail Services

Passenger rail services have not been available in Mildura since 1993 and we are the only major regional Victorian centre without a passenger train. The proposed service would run between Mildura and Melbourne, via Maryborough and Ballarat with a travel time of less than seven hours. A train service would reduce the impacts of isolation in our community, particularly for low income earners, the elderly, young people without a licence and people with a disability. It would also provide another way for tourists to visit the district.



MILDURA FUTURE READY



PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Location

Corner Sixteenth Street and
Deakin Avenue

Features

- Six-court indoor stadium (with provision for future additional court development)
- Squash courts
- Sports administration hub
- Change rooms
- Function rooms
- Café and alfresco area
- 3000 seat entertainment centre
- Premier AFL-standard outdoor sporting field
- Second outdoor multipurpose sports field

Benefits

- Economic benefits of \$76m during construction
- 229 jobs (10 operational)

Cost

\$36.5m

Mildura South Regional Sporting Precinct

The Mildura South Regional Sporting Precinct will, for the first time, provide a home for the 19 indoor sporting user groups in the district, who generate the equivalent of an estimated 200,000 venue visitations each year. The business case for this facility shows it will generate more than 200 jobs and provide a venue for major events including concerts and regional and national sporting events, making the economic case for this project very strong. It will also accommodate the need for community open space in the Mildura South area, which is one of the district's main growth corridors. This initiative is part of the Mildura Future Ready strategy.

Background

Sunraysia has 19 indoor sporting groups, however for the past 20 years their growth has been hamstrung by a shortage of indoor sporting facilities. This issue has also prevented Sunraysia from capitalising on the demand for regional venues to host state and national indoor sporting events and the resulting social and economic benefits.

A regional hub for sports

The Mildura South Regional Sporting Precinct will be set on a highly visible and accessible parcel of land on the corner of Sixteenth Street and Deakin Avenue. It will provide a training and competition venue for indoor sports including volleyball, basketball, table tennis, squash, badminton and netball. The two outdoor sports fields will be able to host local football and cricket, with the premier sporting field able to host pre-season AFL matches, and Big Bash cricket among a host of other national-calibre events. Establishment of the outdoor fields will also address the overuse of Mildura Recreation Reserve.

The project has captured the attention and support of Richmond Football Club, which has indicated such a development would not only enable the club to play pre-season AFL matches in Mildura, but it's the type of concept governments should invest in as it's seen the changes such investment can make to a community's wellbeing.

The venue will also have the flexibility to host major indoor events with a 3000-seat capacity for conventions, performances and other functions.

Importantly, this project will deliver economic and social outcomes by providing jobs, increased social and sporting opportunities for residents, and a stimulus for tourism and population growth, boosting Sunraysia's hospitality, accommodation, retail and service sectors. The economic impact during construction alone is expected to be more than \$76 million.

The precinct is expected to return operating surpluses of between \$100,000 and \$150,000 annually.

Funding opportunities

Up to \$25 million in Victorian and Federal Government funding is available for projects of this type.





MILDURA FUTURE READY



PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Location

Block H - 547 hectares at Koorlong, 15km south of Mildura

Features

- A sealed 3km road circuit (with potential for expansion)
- A multi-use skid pan measuring 100m x 45m
- Pits and a control tower
- Office facilities
- Maintenance/wash-down shed
- Food/beverage facilities
- Parking area
- Camping site

Benefits

- 86 jobs during Stage 1 (approx. four years)
- Economic benefits of more than \$5 million during Stage 1
- Economic benefits of \$722m
- 885 new jobs
- Diversification of economy

Cost

Stage 1 \$21.8m

Total (4 stages) \$80.2m

Mildura Motorsports & Community Precinct

The Mildura Motorsports and Community Precinct aims to bring together the key motor sports functions across the Mildura region to one home, leveraging our rich and diverse history of motor sports to develop what promises to be the most exciting motor sport project in the country. This forms part of the Mildura Future Ready strategy.

Background

Extensive research identified motor sports play a key role in the social and economic development of the Mildura region, injecting \$21.4 million per annum in economic benefits.

In 2011, a North-West Victorian Motor Sports Feasibility Study (the Feasibility Study) was conducted to facilitate the development of motor sports across the region and recommended:

- The co-location of nine of Mildura's current motor sports clubs (currently located at six different sites) into one to three sites in the coming years; and
- The addition of a bitumen raceway and skidpan.

The Feasibility Study also projected greater benefits of \$61.7 million per annum for Mildura if the actions of the study were implemented.

Boost for motor sport and the broader community

The Mildura Motorsports and Community Precinct is designed to host a diverse range of events, including regional, state and national motor sport events, and car and bike club days. It would also host driver/rider education days and private testing by race teams and manufacturers. Proven demand for venues for these types of activities would ensure use of the venue year-round.

This would serve as a major economic driver for the region, given the majority of facility users would be visitors to the district, providing additional business for accommodation, retail, hospitality and service sectors. It would also generate additional business for the region's engineering and mechanical sectors due to the need for maintenance and repairs for vehicles.

This in turn would not only generate growth and employment in these sectors, but help diversify Sunraysia's economy, providing additional support to traditional sectors, such as horticulture, as well as provide education opportunities.

What's next?

For this project to be realised, a public/private partnership will be required. Council is seeking support from potential investors, clubs, individuals, private businesses and companies who might be interested in working in partnership with us to help realise stage one of the motorsports precinct and the broader development in the coming years.

For more information, or to download a copy of the investment prospectus, please visit www.mildura.vic.gov.au, or contact Council on 03 5018 8100.



MILDURA FUTURE READY



PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Location

Nine hectares of publicly and privately owned land adjacent to the railway line between Madden Avenue and Walnut Avenue, Mildura.

Features

- Tourism centre including visitor information services, cultural centre and café
- Land opened up for townhouses and medium and high density housing developments
- Transport interchange for rail, bus and air connections
- Landscaping and development of riverfront public spaces
- Connections with existing riverfront precinct and infrastructure

Timeline

Construction estimated 1 July 2018 – 30 June 2021

Cost

\$29.51m

Mildura Riverfront Redevelopment – Stage 2

The Mildura Riverfront Precinct Redevelopment – Mildura's most exciting public works project – aims to establish Mildura as Victoria's most significant inland river city. The two-staged redevelopment will create a tourism gateway that showcases our environmental and cultural assets including the Murray River, Indigenous heritage and social diversity. Stage 2 forms part of the Mildura Future Ready strategy

Background

Stage 1 of the redevelopment was successfully completed in July 2017 after securing a combined total of \$19.2 million in Local, State and Commonwealth Government funding. This stage connected Mildura's CBD to the riverfront through the completion of the Langtree Connection and delivered enhancements to the broader parklands and open spaces. Most importantly, it provided further activation opportunities to attract future private sector investment.

Stage 2

The proposed Stage 2 of the redevelopment will capitalise on Stage 1 with a focus on Mildura's \$210 million tourism spend, by investing in key infrastructure to showcase Mildura's assets including the river and its rich Indigenous cultural heritage. It aims to revitalise the CBD through retail, tourism, accommodation and residential land releases, and to improve community wellbeing through increased employment opportunities in the hospitality and tourism sectors.

Benefits

- An expanded and diverse economic base through establishment of the Mildura Riverfront Precinct as an iconic tourist attraction
- Reduced reliance on employment in traditional industries of horticulture, agriculture and manufacturing
- Viable job opportunities in the hospitality and tourism sectors
- A resilient and growing tourism and transport sector
- Attract and retain population growth
- A more active, engaged and connected community
- Affordable recreational opportunities
- Increased capacity and demand for residential investment

What's next?

Mildura Rural City Council is currently undertaking advocacy and seeking a partnership with State and Commonwealth Governments to progress the proposed Stage 2 of the redevelopment.





MILDURA FUTURE READY



PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Likely route

- Mildura to Melbourne via Maryborough and Ballarat

Travel time

- Less than seven hours to remain a viable/convenient option to other forms of road transport

Reasons supporting return of passenger rail

- Equity - only large population centre without a passenger train
- Large disadvantaged population who may not be able to drive or afford to fly
- Large elderly population
- Inadequate existing public passenger services between Mildura and Melbourne
- Strong and consistent demand from the community
- Price of air tickets
- Distance from specialist medical services
- Distance from tertiary institutions

Funding options

Based on recent rail funding packages, the Commonwealth Government will be a key funding source. Examples include:

- The majority of the \$4 billion for the regional rail project in Melbourne's west
- Co-contributing to the \$1.6 billion regional rail package in the 2016 Budget
- Committing \$30 million to the Melbourne Airport rail feasibility study

State and Government co-operation is also a proven option, with the \$440 million for the Murray Basin Rail project a prime example.

Return of Passenger Rail Services

The return of a passenger rail service between Mildura and Melbourne would significantly reduce the impacts of Sunraysia's isolation, particularly for low income earners, the elderly, young people without a licence and people with a disability. It would also provide another way for tourists to visit the district. Collectively these benefits would improve the social, health and economic wellbeing of our population and stimulate Sunraysia's economy through jobs and population growth. This project is part of the Mildura Future Ready strategy.

Background

There has been strong and growing support for the return of Mildura's passenger rail service since it was withdrawn in September 1993. This has included the formation of lobby groups, both locally and regionally, as well as a recent petition that attracted 8500 signatures. Mildura is the only large Victorian population centre without passenger train access.

Mildura Rural City Council's role

Council's role in returning Mildura's passenger rail service would largely be to lobby government and advocate for the project on behalf of the community. A first step could be to commence a feasibility study to analyse Sunraysia's social, health and economic needs and how a passenger rail service would address them.

The study would also examine the infrastructure needed and associated costs and would need to show that it would be affordable, deliver reasonable travel times between Mildura and Melbourne (less than seven hours), and would serve all towns within the municipality through links to improved coach services.

Factors to be taken into account include the fact that safety measures could need to be upgraded at 145 level crossings, and that the new service would need to run on Standard Gauge rail line to be compatible with the impending New Generation Regional Train.

Studies by rail experts have also shown that in order for a project of this size and scale to be returned, there needs to be a united approach from communities and Councils along the rail line. As the largest Council area among these municipalities, Mildura could lead this united advocacy approach. This could include municipalities such as Buloke, Northern Grampians, Central Goldfields, and possibly Swan Hill and Wentworth.

What's next?

Investigate the establishment of a feasibility study for the return of Mildura's passenger rail service. Lobby State and Commonwealth Governments to fund the project.

