The outcomes we are striving to achieve

Our region is striving to achieve the following long term social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes for individuals, families and communities who live in and visit the WSM. The roadmap overleaf outlines the challenges we face in achieving these outcomes, the actions we are taking and what success looks like for our region.

Pillar 1: Integrated Regional Planning

- Economic Diversification
  A vibrant economy with a thriving, innovative agriculture industry and emerging tourism opportunities

- Telecommunications
  High quality, reliable digital connectivity and services

- Connectivity – Public Transport & Roads
  Safe, accessible and connected roads and rail

- Strong Local Government
  Sustainable, connected and change-ready local government

- Energy
  Affordable, sustainable and renewable energy

- Rural & Remote Funding
  Focussed funding that drives infrastructure investment and business growth into rural areas

- Early Years
  Equity of access to early years education and care

- Family Violence
  WSM Families are safe and supported

- Workforce
  A high performing, valued and empowered workforce

- Health & Education
  Quality health and education for all

- Youth Disadvantage
  Young people in WSM reach their full their potential

This roadmap reflects the views of the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership. The roadmap is a living document that will be updated regularly by the Regional Partnership.
## Connectivity – Public

### Rail
An adoption of agricultural technologies and innovation across the grain industry, supported by training, research and development opportunities. We have a vibrant tourism industry across the region, supported by a coordinated partnership model with industry and government.

### Roads
Safe, accessible and connected roads and rail meet the demands of urban, regional and rural Victoria. Our region is connected by safe and accessible rail and roads, supporting economic and social outcomes, community health, diversification of industry and reduced travel time within the WSM & to major service centres.

## Telecommunications

### High quality, reliable digital connectivity and services
Digital innovation and connectivity across the region is achieved, with 95% of our region accessing reliable, high speed internet connection, supported by high quality telecommunications services. Our digital capability is in-line with other parts of urban, regional and rural Victoria.

## Energy

### Affordable, sustainable and renewable energy
Energy is no longer a limiting factor for economic development in the region, with an affordable, environmentally sustainable energy supply. Training services, communities and regional coordination supports the industry and there are fewer barriers to establishing and delivering innovative renewable projects.

## Strong Local Government

### Sustainable, connected and change-ready local government
The five WSM local governments take a coordinated approach to planning and service delivery and work collaboratively with communities to deliver tailored services. Long term, structural changes have resulted in more effective and sustainable local government operations.

## Economic diversification

### A vibrant economy with a thriving, innovative agriculture industry and emerging tourism opportunities
Agriculture is the dominant land use in our region, but we lack the networks and supports to drive innovation. This is important, particularly as our region deals with the effects of a drying climate, which in turn impacts our industry’s economic viability. Poor tourism infrastructure in the north and west of the region is limiting opportunities and investment.

## Telecommunications

### Households internet access rates are low, due to inequity in digital infrastructure, service quality & cost.
Lack of competition between carriers creates potential for market failure & poor service, making our region less productive & businesses less competitive and sustainable. It also impacts our ability to respond to emergencies.

## Connectivity – Public

### Transport & Roads
Our priority is to see the return of passenger rail services to Horsham. This ambitious but important work will result in improved connectivity across and into the region. We’re also focused on making sure our roads meet the demands of freight and domestic use and are safe to travel on.

## Energy

### Energy is no longer a limiting factor for economic development in the region, with an affordable, environmentally sustainable energy supply.
Our region has high renewable energy resources of wind, solar, biomass and land, but growth of the sector is limited by grid capacity, regulation and poorly integrated development. The region is missing out on important economic opportunities, and our community has limited access to affordable energy.

## Energy

### Some key challenges we are facing
We are working on a plan designed to deliver digital innovation and connectivity across the region. We are also working to better understand and map where our mobile blackspots are, with a view to target these areas and place coverage, access and connectivity where it needs to be.

## The actions and key projects we are focussing on
- Projects like AgTIDE and the Victorian Networked Grains Centre of Excellence (VNGCE), encourage innovation in agricultural technology
- Projects to stimulate tourism, like the Tourism Collaboration Project and the 10 Year Grampians Regional Cycling Infrastructure Strategy
- Making vital upgrades to roads and rail
- Prioritising the return of passenger rail to Western Victoria by 2023, with improved alignment of coach timetables, funding of new and upgraded services
- Increasing road repair and maintenance budgets and duplication of the Western Highway to the South Australian border
### What success looks like for Wimmera Southern Mallee

**Rural & Remote Funding**
- Focussed funding that drives infrastructure investment & business growth into rural areas

**Early Years**
- Equity of access to early years education and care

**Family Violence**
- WSM Families are safe and supported

**Workforce**
- A high performing, valued and empowered workforce

**Health & Education**
- Quality health and education for all

**Youth Disadvantage**
- Young people in WSM reach their full potential

### Some key challenges we are facing

**Rural & Remote Funding**
- Our region has successfully addressed infrastructure decline, with well supported pathways for innovation and funding for agricultural industries & businesses. This support and investment is evidenced by strong economic and population growth for our region.

**Early Years**
- Families across our region enjoy equity of access to early years education and care, establishing ourselves as a leader in delivering early years services in rural and remote areas.

**Family Violence**
- People experiencing family violence receive the place-based, integrated and client-centred support they need, in the right place at the right time. Prevention and early intervention is reducing the prevalence and incidence of family violence.

**Workforce**
- WSM offers diverse and supported employment options with opportunities for career progression. We attract, train, retain and reward some of Victoria’s best talent.

**Health & Education**
- Our region has flexible and well resourced health and education hubs, which use service systems, technology and coordination to reflect local needs and deliver quality health and education outcomes to our communities.

**Youth Disadvantage**
- WSM children and young people are confident, optimistic, healthy and resilient. They are safe, supported, given pathways to stay engaged in education and training and able to reach their potential regardless of background, place or circumstances.

### How our partnership is responding

**Rural & Remote Funding**
- We are seeking to increase funding that will address infrastructure decline and support agricultural industries and businesses, with a focus on improving productivity and efficiency of supply chains. These are imperative for sustainability and growth of rural areas because they address workforce issues and provide pathways for innovation.

**Early Years**
- We are exploring how best to achieve equity of access to early years education in our region in a way that meets the specific needs of our communities and we're also supporting investment in projects that will build teacher and carer capability and help local providers deliver the best services possible.

**Family Violence**
- In parallel to the State’s investment in addressing family violence, our region is focused on how we can improve our service delivery models increasing access and quality of service for family violence victims. A connected and integrated service system is key. We are also tackling how services can reach the most remote areas of our region.

**Workforce**
- We are working toward a planned, strategic approach across the region to overcome skills shortages which is cross sector and inclusive of business and industry needs. We are working to identify ways to ensure funded positions in health and education are filled, and looking at other key sectors of our local economy requiring a skills uplift.

**Health & Education**
- We're looking at ways to improve and expand health and education service design and delivery across the WSM. Focusing on models of integrated planning and service coordination through fit for purpose regional assets and infrastructure that reduce costs, provide a wider range of services in more targeted and efficient ways.

**Youth Disadvantage**
- We are working to raise community awareness of complex youth disadvantage and homelessness issues, and support our region's most vulnerable. We are supporting programs and services designed to provide pathways toward safe, healthy living and engagement with education and employment opportunities. Early intervention is central to our efforts.

### The actions and key projects we are focusing on

- **Rural & Remote Funding**
  - Advocate for rural focused funding streams that will empower communities to implement priority projects.
  - Create an Agricultural Innovation Fund to support infrastructure and capabilities for agricultural industries & businesses.

- **Early Years**
  - Trail innovative ways to deliver early years services in rural and remote areas.
  - Undertake a three-year Early Years Trial across six trial sites in the region that covers 18 communities.
  - Seek subsidised traineeships in Cert 3 & Diploma Early Childhood Education courses as a pathway to fill skills gaps.
  - Pooling of part-funded allied health positions and coordinating position across the region.

- **Family Violence**
  - Improving access to services including: increasing local access to crisis accommodation, counselling and perpetrator intervention models in partnership with Police and family violence service providers.
  - Establishing a Regional Support & Safety Hub (‘Orange Door’), with delivery methods tailored to local needs and services located in the WSM.

- **Workforce**
  - Working to increase employment in health roles through the Allied Health Cross Sector Collaboration with DET & DHHS
  - Advocating for a Workforce Retention, Attraction and Development Coordinator to work collaboratively across community and industry to overcome skills shortages
  - Exploring flexible secondment and traineeship models that drive local employment

- **Health & Education**
  - Delivery of the Warraknabeal Education Precinct which will deliver holistic education, community and social services
  - Delivery of the Wimmera Health Care Group Master Plan which will expand health service delivery capability across the region
  - Expansion of Tele-Health Programs as a mechanism to provide increased access to specialist services

- **Youth Disadvantage**
  - Supporting the development of projects to better understand the barriers, issues and access to services for teenage parents.
  - Investing in new projects that address youth disadvantage, including housing solutions for youth homelessness.
  - Supporting innovation in the Out of Home Care space and advocating for a Professional Foster Care Network

### Outcomes Roadmap (current as of 15 May 2019)

- **Regional Partnerships Wimmera Southern Mallee**
  - Current as of 29 Oct 2018
  - Exploring flexible secondment and traineeship models that drive local employment