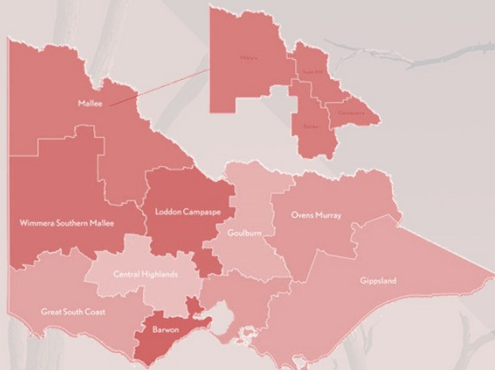


# REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS MALLEE



Bordering the Murray River, our region extends to the edge of the outback in far north-western Victoria.

Agriculture – broadacre cropping and irrigation– drives the Mallee’s economy, with the area surrounding Mildura, Robinvale and Swan Hill, Victoria’s most productive horticultural region.

Our region is a culturally diverse area, with strong indigenous heritage and a large Aboriginal population, and a growing number of skilled migrants.

The Murray River runs along the northern border of the region and provides us with access to irrigation water. It also lures tourists and people seeking a lifestyle change.

Our region includes:

- Four municipalities - Buloke Shire, Gannawarra Shire, Mildura Rural City, Swan Hill Rural City
- A Gross Regional Product of \$4.1 billion
- A population of 89,500
- 17% of jobs in the agricultural, forestry and fishing industry

We proudly acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land and pay respects to their Elders past, present and future, for they hold the memories, the tradition and the culture of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The **outcomes** we are striving to achieve

Our region is striving to achieve the following long term economic and social outcomes for the individuals, families and communities who live in and visit our region. 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.



## Our Outcomes Roadmap



**Increased growth in the agriculture and food manufacturing sectors**



**A more diverse economy**



**A skilled workforce meeting current and future industry needs**



**Connected communities with equitable access to services**



**Resilient small Mallee townships and settlements**



**Health and wellbeing for all**

This roadmap reflects the views of the Mallee Regional Partnership. The roadmap is a living document that will be updated regularly by the Regional Partnership.



	What success looks like for Mallee	Some key challenges we are facing	How our partnership is responding	
<p><b>Increased growth in the agriculture and food production sectors</b></p>	<p>Over the next decade, the <b>value added</b> by Mallee agriculture and food manufacturing sectors is <b>doubled</b> from \$0.996 billion to \$2 billion. There is widespread uptake of new technology, reduced freight costs and increased horticultural innovation.</p>	<p>Opportunities exist to take advantage of new <b>free trade agreements</b> and <b>new technologies</b> to increase productivity on farms. There is a <b>lack of R&amp;D to support</b> industry growth. Primary produce is being exported out of the region <b>without being value added</b>. <b>Transport costs are high</b>. <b>Water security</b> is an issue for Irrigators.</p>	<p>We recognise that agriculture and food processing industries benefit from increased R&amp;D to drive innovation. We seek improved rail and road freight options and better digital connectivity to support uptake of new technologies. We're also focused on ensuring our region is ready to export more.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for funding for increased uptake of Agriculture Internet of Things (AgIoT)</li> <li>• Complete a freight study to define the region's priority freight routes to accommodate the expansion of horticulture in the Mallee</li> <li>• Establish the Mallee Regional Innovation Centre</li> <li>• Advocate for transport infrastructure priorities of the Central Murray Region</li> </ul>
<p><b>A more diverse economy</b></p>	<p>The Mallee economy is <b>more diverse</b>. Our region invests in opportunities outside primary production, leveraging our <b>rich natural resources</b> to deliver <b>economic benefit</b> for business and community through current and new industries. We are leading the <b>transition to renewable energy</b>.</p>	<p>About <b>20% of the Mallee's GRP</b> is derived from <b>agriculture</b><sup>1</sup>. <b>Diversity</b> gives an economy <b>resilience</b> to ride out droughts or down turns in commodity prices. The Mallee has opportunities to build on its <b>abundant natural resources</b>, promoting both <b>tourism</b> and <b>renewable energy</b> opportunities.</p>	<p>A key priority is understanding how to <b>adapt and diversify</b>. The large scale investment of around <b>\$3 billion in solar generation</b> in the region means <b>planning</b> for how we'll <b>transition our infrastructure to optimise this opportunity</b>. We are investing in <b>natural and cultural tourism assets</b>, marketing our <b>tourism brand</b>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the Mallee New Energy Transition Roadmap</li> <li>• Achieve funding for Mildura's Stage 2 Riverfront and Motorsports Precinct projects.</li> <li>• Deliver the Swan Hill Riverfront development</li> <li>• Deliver detailed planning for the Stage One of the Murray River Adventure trail and construction of the Koondrook connecting trails</li> <li>• Expand the Silo Art into the Mallee Regional Partnership area And advocate for dedicated dry-land resources for tourism in the Mallee</li> <li>• Deliver the Mallee Economic Statement and Investment Prospectus</li> </ul>
<p><b>A skilled workforce meeting current and future industry needs</b></p>	<p>In our region, <b>the skills of our workforce meets local demand</b>. Our attraction and retention of <b>skilled migrants</b>, our attention to <b>targeted training</b>, our solutions to <b>worker housing</b> and our collaborative approach to <b>workforce planning</b> ensures that our industries can continue to grow.</p>	<p>The 2017 <b>Mallee Skills Demand Profile</b> identified that up to 4400 new workers will be required in the Mallee in the next three years. The <b>course offerings</b> in our region do not always match <b>industry needs</b>. We have relatively <b>low educational attainment</b> and <b>demand for workers goes unfulfilled</b>. There is more to be done to improve our ability in tapping our own and Victoria's <b>migrant communities</b>.</p>	<p>We're working to <b>bring industry together with the education and training sector</b> to establish clear pathways to future job opportunities and make sure our education and training offerings are <b>positioned to meet those needs</b>. We're investing in opportunities that help <b>grow future leaders</b> in our region. We are addressing worker housing shortages and working with other organisations to encourage skilled workers to move to our region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for a Mildura Tech School, encouraging the region's students in the uptake of STEM</li> <li>• Advocate for the establishment of the SuniTAFE Smartfarm as a key skills provider for the horticultural industry</li> <li>• Identify effective mechanisms to attract skilled workers to the Mallee</li> <li>• Support funding renewal for the Community Leadership Programs.</li> <li>• Deliver the Robinvale Housing Strategy to address worker housing shortages</li> <li>• Support migrant settlement through <i>Food Next Door</i> and other projects.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Connected communities with equitable access to services</b></p>	<p>Our region is connected, <b>both physically and digitally</b> to enable access to services. We have found innovative solutions to service inequities which suit the unique challenges of the Mallee. Our <b>public infrastructure is modern and fit for purpose</b>.</p>	<p>Connectivity is poor; in many areas it is patchy or non-existent. In a region that is <b>vast in size</b> and with a population <b>distant from Melbourne</b>, digital and transport connectivity are of vital importance. Some infrastructure is dated and inadequate for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.</p>	<p>We're focused on ensuring our region receives <b>rail infrastructure upgrades</b> in line with the Regional Network Development Plan. We're also investing in projects to improve our region's <b>digital connectivity</b>. We are seeking <b>new or replacement public infrastructure</b> designed for our changing needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued advocacy for public transport service improvements for the North-West.</li> <li>• Achieve funding for the region's highest priority mobile phone blackspots.</li> <li>• Advocate for the delivery of the Swan Hill District Health facility upgrade</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resilient small Mallee townships &amp; settlements</b></p>	<p>The Mallee's smaller townships and settlements are <b>resilient</b>, and their communities are <b>empowered to take control of their futures</b>. We <b>retain the populations</b> of these communities and in some cases it <b>grows</b>. These communities have <b>pride</b> in where they live, and they have <b>access to the services and opportunities</b> they need.</p>	<p>The population of the rural parts of the Mallee is <b>stagnant or declining</b>. The provision of <b>services to low numbers of people over large distances is more expensive</b>. As an area's population falls there are <b>fewer resources</b> available to the community and a <b>lower rate base</b> for the local government authority.</p>	<p>We recognise the power of our <b>pragmatic and resourceful communities</b>, who will extract maximum value when their projects are supported. We are prioritising the establishment of a fund to <b>enable small communities</b> to apply for <b>funding for their local projects</b>. We are seeking <b>innovative solutions</b> to the provision of <b>services in more remote areas</b>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing the Small Towns Big Difference project, to support projects that maintain small town viability</li> <li>• Advocate for the implementation of the Rural Councils Victoria's Sustainability Reform Program recommendations.</li> <li>• Support transport options to provide access to services in small towns.</li> <li>• Develop the Robinvale Community Hub</li> <li>• Promote Mallee models of early years' education to support working parents</li> </ul>
<p><b>Health and wellbeing for all</b></p>	<p>Our community has <b>equitable access</b> to resources for health and wellbeing, which are <b>person centred, responsive, inclusive and meet the unique needs</b> of individuals and families. Our region is characterised by strong social connections, health and wellbeing, where <b>communities thrive</b>.</p>	<p>Our region has high levels of preventable health issues such as: high levels of <b>obesity, tobacco and alcohol usage</b> and other life style factors that impact on health. <b>Mental health, and drug dependency</b> issues require attention. Some segments of our community have higher rates of health issues. Social connectivity is constrained by geographic distance and socio-economic factors.</p>	<p>We're exploring new ways to <b>deliver</b> much needed <b>health services where access is challenging</b>. We're working with all health service providers, including indigenous health providers, to provide services that are culturally appropriate and self-determined. We are working with Local Government as well as Primary Care Partnerships to build stronger partnerships for prevention of health problems. We are seeking to increase attention on <b>preventable health</b> issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with multidisciplinary regional stakeholders to determine the best way to tackle a preventable health issue.</li> <li>• Support the Loddon Mallee Aboriginal Reference Group in refining their proposals for strengthening indigenous health services</li> <li>• Develop a business case for new models of primary health care</li> <li>• Convene regional stakeholders to determine how best to improve the uptake of e-Health.</li> <li>• Advocate for the remaining funding for the Mildura South Regional Sporting Precinct</li> </ul>