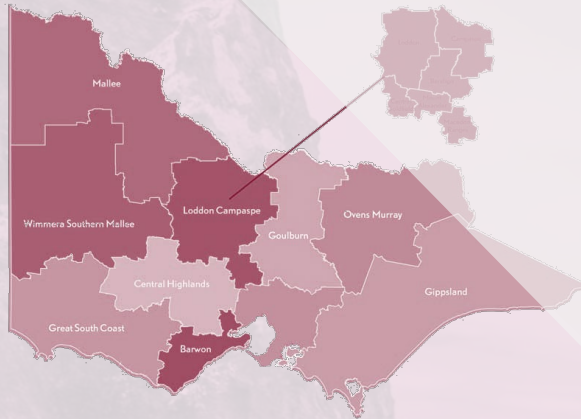


# REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS LODDON CAMPASPE



Our region in central Victoria covers an area with a diverse population and a buoyant economy based on agriculture, health, professional services, education and manufacturing. Bendigo, one of Victoria's largest and fastest growing regional cities, lies at the heart of the region and is a prosperous and vibrant hub of cultural and economic activity. This vibrancy is based on growing partnerships, deeper understanding and recognition of our Traditional Owners and appreciation of natural assets.

Our region includes:

- Six municipalities - Campaspe Shire, Central Goldfields Shire, City of Greater Bendigo, Loddon Shire, Macedon Ranges Shire, Mount Alexander Shire
- A Gross Regional Product of \$10.3 billion
- A population of 228,400
- More than 9% of people born overseas

## The **outcomes** we are striving to achieve

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



### A Growing Economy

A strong, diverse economy that enables people to actively contribute to their community



### Healthy Heart of Victoria

Active communities, healthy settings and productive lives at all stages



### Create the Best Start for Every Child

Families and communities that give children the best start in life



### Youth our Critical Asset

Safe, supported and engaged young people



### A Great Environment to Live

Our culture, heritage and environment is protected and enjoyed



### A Connected Region

All people in the Loddon Campaspe Region benefit from economic activity and access to services


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

*What success looks like for Loddon Campaspe*

*Some key challenges we are facing*

*How our partnership is responding*

*The actions and key projects we are focussing on*




**A Growing Economy**  
A strong, diverse economy that enables people to actively contribute to their community

Our region is an **inclusive corridor of economic activity**, characterised by diversity in food production, innovation in energy, advanced manufacturing and world-recognised research centres. Our thriving economy is supported by **strategic investment in the strengths of the region and growth in jobs**.

Employment **opportunities are unevenly spread** across our region, driven by **uncertainty** about future jobs, the need for increased investment in training and transport and **accessibility** issues. This has its biggest impact on small communities. Education facilities are unable to provide **specialist skills** and there is a lack of planned, **investment** in our skills and job markets.

Our region is working to make sure the economy is **growing, by identifying strategic projects in population growth, education, research, tourism, and export opportunities**.

We are supporting efforts to **bring additional jobs** to the region while **improving the opportunities to upskill our current workforce** to be ready for the **jobs of the future**.

- Development of the Regional Economic Growth Strategy – highlighting strategic opportunities
- Investment in the city of Bendigo, including the Gov Hub, Law Courts and Rejuvenation of the Bendigo TAFE Campus
- Analysis of the Food Industry Supply Chain and associated project opportunities for economic growth
- Development of a Loddon Campaspe Regional Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing Skills Road Map
- Preparation of a scoping study to test the need for a localised Capital Investment Fund
- Support for the Loddon Campaspe Renewable Energy Road Map



**Healthy Heart of Victoria**  
Active communities, healthy settings and productive lives at all stages

Our region is characterised by **active communities supported by an increase in healthy eating**.

People across demographics enjoy **healthy lifestyles** and this is demonstrated through a drop in the rate of **avoidable deaths** and a **rise in the rate of community wellness and mental health** outcomes.

Our region's population experiences numerous **serious health and wellbeing challenges**, including **mental health conditions, obesity, cancer and heart disease**. Our communities do not meet **dietary guidelines** for fruit and vegetable intake. At the same time, our region **lacks the infrastructure** and planning to provide **holistic service delivery** to address these issues.

We are working collaboratively to **build health and wellbeing to reduce rates of chronic illness** and rising cost of health services, building on the recent work of local governments and their partners in developing **contemporary health and wellbeing plans**. We are also advocating for investment in **upgrades to our infrastructure and programs** to encourage active lifestyles and healthy eating.

Investment in the *Healthy Heart of Victoria initiative*. This includes:

- Delivering a region wide *Active Living Census*,
- Investment in **infrastructure and programs** to support participation in physical activity and
- Recruitment of **Health Brokers** to influence better health through a system change approach.



**Create the Best Start for Every Child**  
Families and communities that give children the best start in life

Communities in our region **understand the importance of a child's early years**. Young families are supported and encouraged to focus on early **learning and literacy** so that their children reach their full potential. This is evidenced by **improvement in SEQA and AECD data** and **increased kindergarten participation** for vulnerable children.

The number of **developmentally vulnerable and at-risk children** is **increasing** in the region. More than 15% of parents in our region expressed concern about their **child's speech and language development** on school commencement (1). Research shows that **literacy skills** enable educational attainment, strong family relationships, better health choices and the **ability to gain employment**.

We need to **raise awareness** across our communities about the importance of early years in a child's development. This is why we are advocating for a **strategy** that supports the best **possible language and literacy development** for all children in their early years. The strategy will help us to understand how we can better deliver services and support families to **achieve positive early years outcomes**.

- Developing an Early Years Language and Literacy Strategy, before seeking further investment to create the best possible start for our children
- Supporting place based initiatives which aim to support our most vulnerable families and children, such as the **Heathcote Parents as Literacy Champions project, Go Goldfields** and **Loddon Shire Strong Families, Strong Children initiative**
- Investment in school upgrades, including upgrades to **Castlemaine Secondary College** and the **Echuca Specialist School**.



**Youth our Critical Asset**  
Safe, supported and engaged young people

**Young people** in our region are supported and are given every opportunity to thrive in our community. We **support their mental health** and provide **opportunities to learn and develop skills** that help them flourish. Young people feel **confident and empowered** to take on challenges and new opportunities.

Our young people are experiencing a **mental health crisis**, with **one in four** experiencing a mental health issue—we do not have the services they need to support them. This is contributing to **low year 12 completion rates** and **low rates of participation in Tertiary Education**. Our region has a **high Youth Unemployment** rates of **18.3%** (2). This impacts their ability to fully **participate in our community and workforce**.

We are partnering on initiatives that will **improve mental health services** and outcomes for young people in our region. Our focus targets prevention or early intervention actions for young people at risk. We are hosting workshops with young people from the region to inform initiatives.

We are focussed on **bringing education, employment and student needs closer together**.

- Attracting funding for the expansion of the Life4Life program as a response to youth mental illness across Loddon Campaspe's six LGAs
- Purchase of a Van to reach rural areas lacking in service provision, fitted out to support the work of two youth workers to engage with young people and address mental health issues.



**A Great Environment to Live**  
Our culture, heritage and environment is protected and enjoyed

Our region's culture, heritage and environment is **celebrated and valued**, demonstrated through **significant investment in its management**, growing **popularity with residents** and ability to **attract visitors** to our region.

We are experiencing a **long term decline** and **lack of investment** in our **local heritage and environment**. **Complex organisational arrangements** across parks, Traditional Owners, local government and community make management complex. **Maintenance of our cultural and natural features** are not funded, leading to their degradation.

A priority for the region is working with Traditional Owners to **streamline land management practices**. We're also advocating for investment to ensure the long term **water sustainability of our small towns**.

We have recognised the demand for nature based outdoor activities across the region is rising, with the interest in Tracks and Trails predominantly driven by tourism.

- Investing in a pilot of new land management partnership between Traditional Owners and the State – Walking Together initiative.
- Four significant Tracks and Trails have been identified for further investment. These include: the Murray River Adventure Trail; Daylesford to Hanging Rock Rail Trail; Goldfields Track upgrade and the Heathcote to Murchison Trail.



**A Connected Region**  
All people in the Loddon Campaspe Region benefit from economic Activity and access to services

Our people can access suitable transport and digital connectivity for their employment and educational needs. We have a rail service that binds the region together and our towns gain the economic and social benefits of digital connectivity. Digital technology is the foundation for innovation in employment, education and health.

Current rail services are limited, due to line and signalling upgrade requirements and the need for additional rolling stock. The supply and access to high speed internet throughout the region does not meet the current demand, this inhibits innovation and business attraction.

In consultation with the Loddon Campaspe Regional Transport Working Group, we have identified the top ten transport projects for this region to target our efforts and advocacy. We have established a Digital Working Group to inform the planning process and investments to make this region the premier region for digital connectivity.

- Advocacy for capital investments in rail that will translate into increased passenger rail services
- A Digital Plan for the region is currently being developed, this will inform targeted investment and projects.
- Investigating the opportunities and commercial viability to access high speed internet connections

1. *Victoria Child and Adolescent Monitoring System (VCAMS)*  
2. *ABS, Labour Force, December 2018*