



ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

Horsham Rural City Council priority
capital works projects for government
and private sector investment







Welcome to Horsham Rural City

A vibrant, inclusive community to live, work, play and invest.

Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) is pleased to present this investment prospectus.

We welcome the opportunity to partner with the public sector and private industry to help achieve our vision for a vibrant, inclusive community.

Horsham Rural City Council, working with our community seek to develop the municipality through strong leadership, vision, good governance, responsive services and quality infrastructure, whilst enhancing our economy, our liveability and natural environment.

This prospectus highlights a range of projects, from 'shovel ready' through to those in early stages of planning. These projects represent Council's long-term planning in action, recognising what Horsham Rural City needs now and into the future.

Help us change 'what is' into 'what could be'.

Acknowledgement of Country

Horsham Rural City Council acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk people.

We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community.

We pay our respects to the Elders, both past and present, and commit to working together in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect for the benefit of the broader community and future generations.

Photo left Chris O'Connell, cover photo Ayesha Sedgman

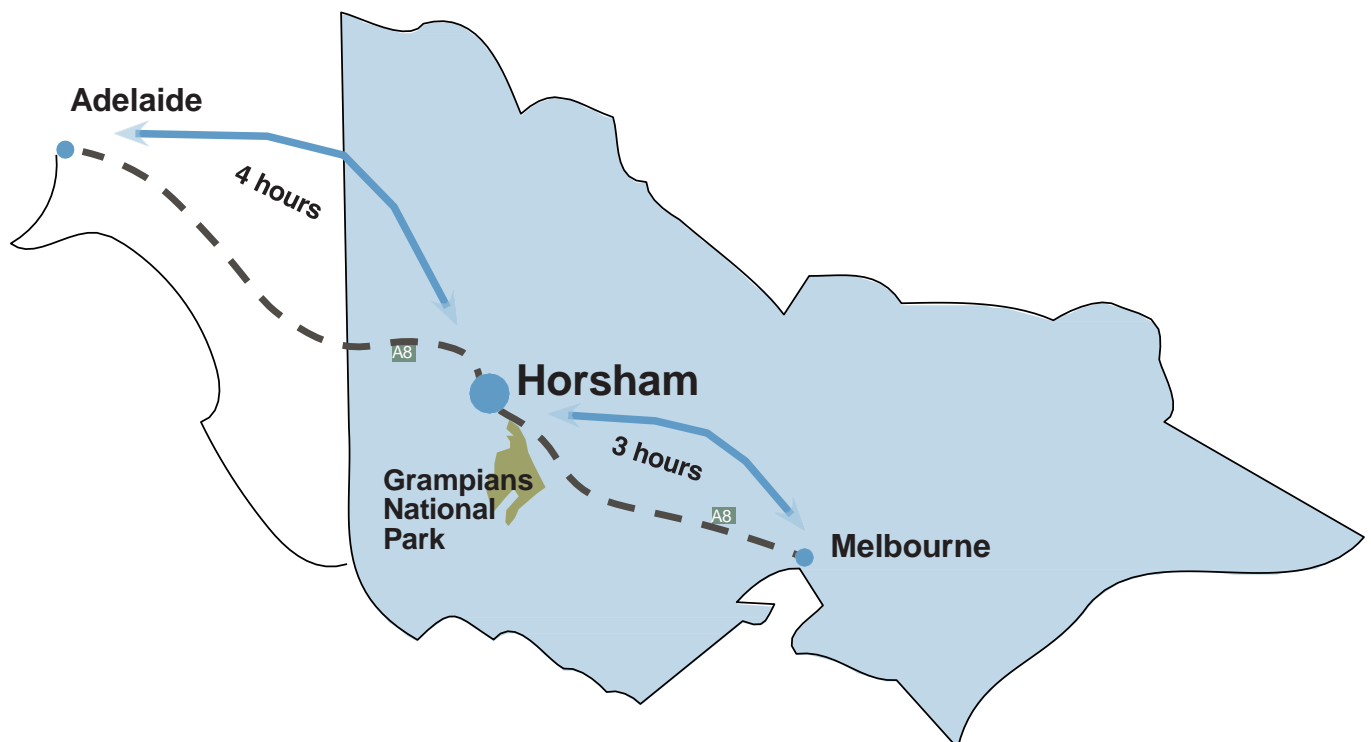


Who are we?

Horsham Rural City is a vibrant, diverse community situated approximately 300 kilometres north-west of Melbourne and north-west of the Grampians National Park, in the heart of the Wimmera region of Victoria. Horsham Rural City Council has a population of 20,429 (2021) and covers an area of 4,267 square kilometres. Almost three-quarters of residents live in the urban area of Horsham.

Horsham is the major provider of retail, community and government services in

the Wimmera, with dryland and broadacre agriculture being our major industry. The Grains Innovation Park, a nationally acclaimed agricultural research centre, is based in Horsham. There are a range of quality educational and health care facilities including secondary colleges, a university and an agricultural college. We also have a diverse array of natural assets including recreational lakes, wetlands, the Wimmera River, Mount Arapiles, Wartook Valley and the Grampians National Park is nearby.





Our vision

We want to make Horsham Rural City a vibrant, inclusive community to live, work, play and invest.

We aim to do this by developing responsive services and quality infrastructure that enhance our economy, livability and natural environment.

Horsham is the heart of the Wimmera and supports the region's economy and communities. A strong and vibrant regional

city will support a strong and vibrant Wimmera region. The success of the City is linked to its rich history, strong community and resilient economy.

The major projects outlined in this strategy focus on improvements which support livability and economic resilience. Each project will promote the attraction and retention of population and investment preserving the City's critical role for Horsham and the Wimmera region.

Key project themes

Future Horsham

Activating our natural assets

Making connections

Active Horsham

Supporting industry

Making Places

Visit Horsham

Future Horsham

Objective

To improve the amenity of the Central Activity District and the diversity of land uses to strengthen the existing business environment, attract more visitors and accommodate greater housing, hospitality, open space and events.

The City to River Masterplan (2019) provides a vision for the centre of Horsham as a thriving commercial, cultural, civic and recreation hub that will continue to evolve over time to meet the needs of the community, support and grow business activity and visitors to the region. The Central Activity District will be better connected to highly accessible and quality open spaces, will incorporate substantially more shade and active transport opportunities and will accommodate more housing.



Central Activity District Revitalisation

Improving streetscapes and pedestrian/ cycling connections in central Horsham with attractive linkages to the riverfront precinct. Establish a series of meeting places in the Central Activity District (CAD), which link with other key public spaces including the Town Hall, May Park and the riverfront

Benefit

Will provide an attractive, modern Central Activity District with facilities and public amenities that encourage people to visit, shop, attend events, stay longer and enjoy central Horsham

Master Plan

CAD Revitalisation Streetscape Plan completed August 2022

Project Value

To be determined following detailed design

Key Projects

1. **O'Callaghans Parade arrival corridor**
Status – Schematic Design
2. **Town Square**
Status – Planning
3. **Children's Park**
Status - Planning



Horsham Urban Shade

Project to enhance Horsham streetscapes with increase from 11 percent to 40 percent tree canopy cover by 2040. This project involves the planting and ongoing maintenance of 5000 trees

Status

Progressive implementation

Project Value

\$2 million

Benefit

Increasing the shade cover in Horsham will help to cool our streetscapes and open spaces, offering protection from the sun as tree canopy reflects, rather than absorbs the heat of the sun. An increased canopy cover will reduce energy usage in Horsham and also provide health benefits for the community with greater connection to nature through the increased presence of trees, now and for future generations



Government Facilities Renewal

At present there are a range of ageing, non-compliant buildings that support the operations of government agencies co-located within the Central Activity District. These include the municipal offices, State Government Departments, GWM Water, Horsham Police Station and the Horsham Magistrates Court. Council and project partners seek funding from State Government to investigate a new Gov Hub for Horsham, along the lines of the Ballarat Gov Hub

Benefit

A regional Government Hub will secure long term economic and service provision benefits to the Wimmera region; increase the quality of public service provision; support the attraction and retention of professional staff, and provide cost efficiencies for all agencies

Status

Investigation

Project Value

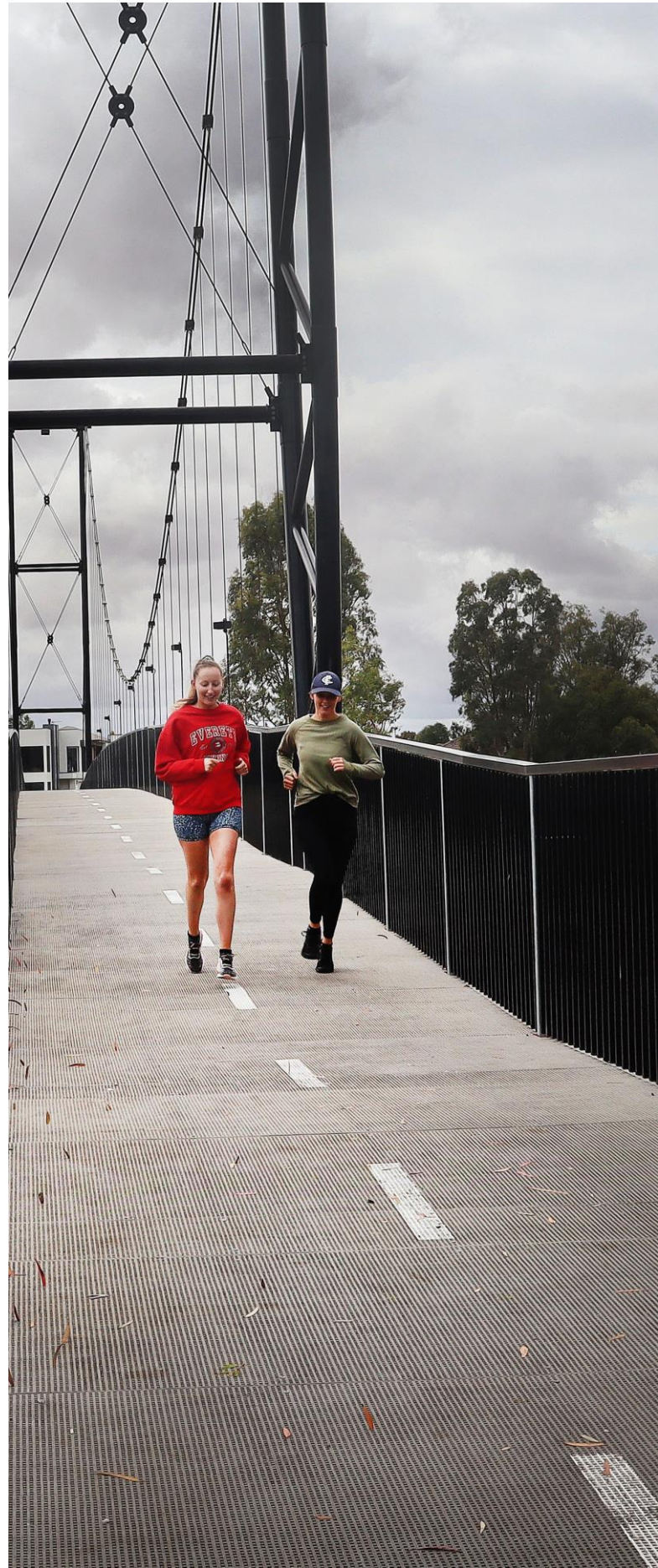
To be determined following detailed design



Activating our natural assets

Objective

To activate, connect and add value to the Riverfront Precinct to establish an iconic community, recreation and tourist destination.



River-edge cafe and function centre

The 2019 City to River Master Plan identifies the potential for a riverfront café and function centre

A pop-up café site was completed at the end of Firebrace street in 2023

The development of a riverfront café/function centre is strongly supported by Council and our community

Benefit

The facility will support Horsham's café culture, tourism growth, and provide an attractive function venue for Horsham and the wider Wimmera region

Status

Investment ready for a project at a key location on the Wimmera Riverfront

Council welcomes expressions of interest

Project Value

\$3million+



Making connections

Objective

To better integrate and improve connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles in urban areas of Horsham; leading to positive transport outcomes across the wider region.

Horsham lies at a junction point of three regional highways including the Western Highway (A8). Over 6,000 vehicles per day travel through the city, including heavy vehicles.



Alternative truck route

Detailed route alignment planning to take trucks traveling through Horsham on the Western Highway, Wimmera Highway and Henty Highway out of Horsham's Central Activity District. A feasibility study is being undertaken to investigate possible alternative truck routes using the existing arterial road network around Horsham

Status

Planning

Project Value

\$250,000

Council commitment

\$100,000

Benefit

Safety and amenity benefits within the Horsham urban area for residents and businesses, providing safer access to the retail/entertainment precinct

Freight efficiency for heavy vehicles currently negotiating multiple traffic lights through central Horsham



Western Highway Duplication

The Western Highway is the major road link between Melbourne and Adelaide. Farming, grain production, manufacturing services, regional tourism, and access to specialist medical services and education rely heavily on this highway

More than 6,000 vehicles per day travel the Western highway west of Ballarat, including 1500 trucks

Duplication of the highway west of Ararat is a high priority of Council

Benefit

Over the 10 years to August 2022 there were 163 crashes on the Western Highway between Ballarat and Stawell. The duplication of the Western Highway will vastly improve safety for people in Victoria's west, and those that travel through our region

Status

Planning
(part of Victoria's Big Build)

Project Value

To be funded by State and Federal Governments



Passenger rail to Horsham

Horsham currently connects to passenger rail services in Ararat and Ballarat via daily bus services. This does not support fair and accessible public transport for the Wimmera region

Horsham Rural City Council is seeking updated cost estimates for the provision of shuttle train services to replace buses and run on standard gauge track between Horsham and Ararat. The new passenger train service will ultimately connect the towns of Horsham, Murtoa and Stawell with Ararat to Melbourne broad gauge V/Line services

Status

Planning

Benefit

Our community has consistently told us that the return of passenger rail is the highest priority for public transport in the Wimmera region

A passenger rail service will provide fair and equitable access to specialist health services in Ballarat and Melbourne. We are seeking what is already available in other regional and rural parts of Victoria

Project Value

To be determined



Upgrade of key freight routes

Horsham is an agriculture and grain producing hub. As a result, many large trucks, B Doubles and other specialised heavy vehicles travel on key freight routes identified in Council's local road network.

Planned upgrades to key link roads are identified in Council's capital expenditure budget each year

Leveraged funding from State and Federal Governments is a critical funding component

Benefit

Heavily used local link roads upgraded 6m wide seals means B Double trucks can pass each other without moving on to gravel shoulders. This improves safety for all road users and reduces maintenance costs for vehicles and roads

Status

Shovel ready

Project Value

\$2.5million per year



Active Horsham

Objective

To adopt a strategic approach to developing sporting infrastructure that meets contemporary standards, promotes participation, accommodates regional events, makes efficient use of public land and integrates with urban and river areas.



Upgrade Horsham City Oval

The upgrade of facilities at Horsham's premier sporting precinct has commenced following the completion of the Precinct Plan in 2021

Stage One includes the following components:

1. New netball facilities including a second netball court and compliant netball pavilion
\$3million – fully funded
To be completed 2024
2. Outdoor events stage to provide for large scale, regional events
\$3million – fully funded
To be completed 2024
3. New multi-purpose community pavilion and AFL compliant change rooms, food kiosk, ticket boxes and landscaping of main precinct entrance
\$9.6million – requires funding

Benefit

The redevelopment of City Oval to a regional standard will enable regional AFL and cricket sporting events and other non-sporting events to be hosted. Upgrades will support growth in male and female sports including football, cricket and netball

Status

Tender documentation complete
Shovel ready

Project Value

\$9.6million

Council Commitment

\$9.6million



Regional Sports Stadium – Dimboola Road

Development of a regional level indoor/outdoor sports precinct to be used for a range of sports, including netball, basketball, volleyball and hockey

Benefit

Create a modern, compliant, accessible sporting precinct to support increased participation in a range of sports and to attract regional and state level sporting events

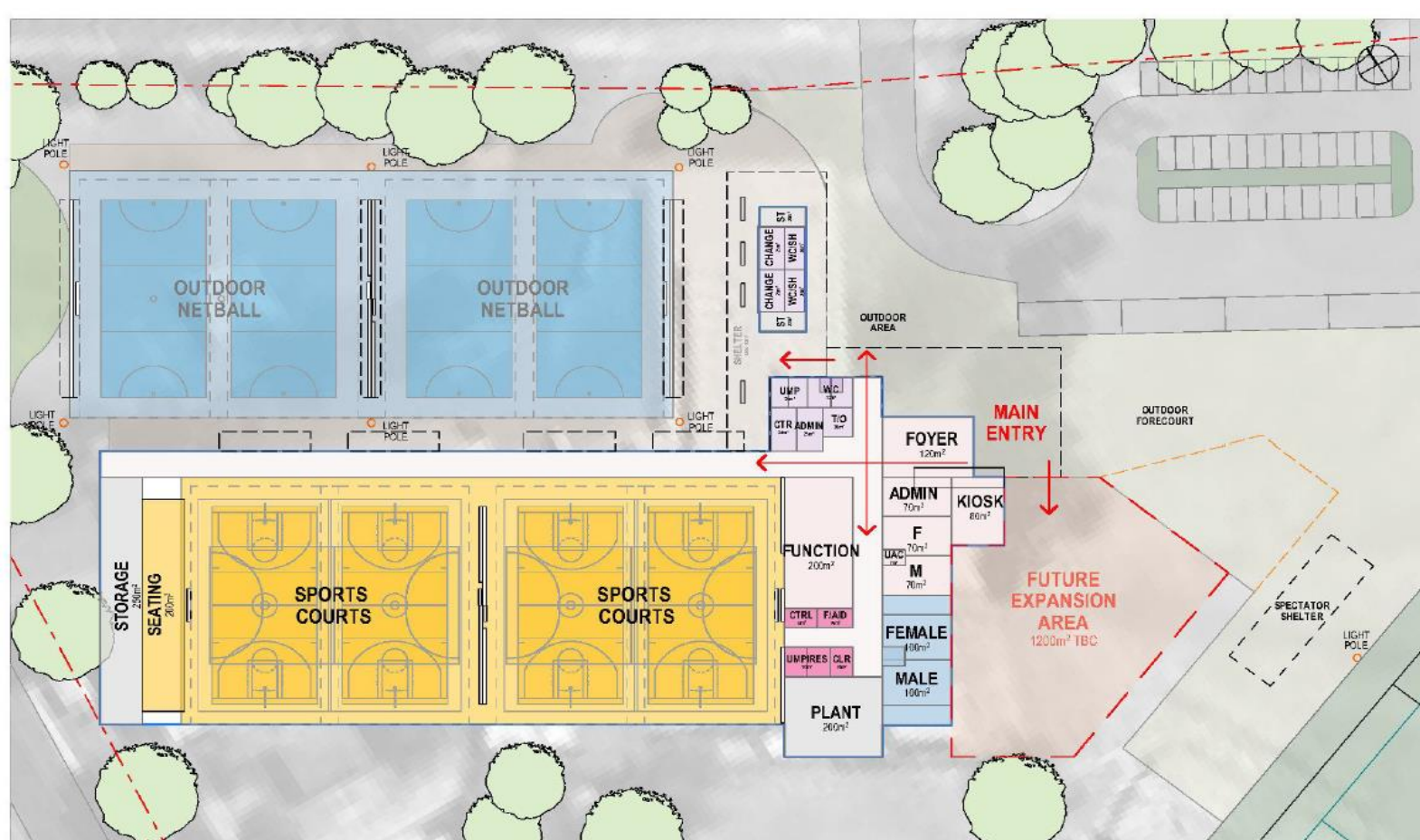
Status

Feasibility Study complete
Design stage

Project Value

\$36.6million

Preliminary site plan (Feasibility Study 2023)



Horsham Aquatic Centre

Progression of the Aquatic Centre Masterplan to ensure the continued development of Horsham's regional indoor/outdoor aquatic facility

The next stage of the Masterplan to be delivered:

Hydrotherapy Pool

To construct a public access hydrotherapy pool with associated equipment for rehabilitation and exercise programs

Benefit

A publically accessible hydrotherapy pool will provide important health and well-being outcomes for all ages, with hydrotherapy used in pain relief and treatments for a range of illnesses and conditions

Status

Schematic design and tender documentation

Project Value

\$1.4million



Supporting industry

Objective

To build on Horsham's strong economic base, whilst diversifying the economy through facilitating investment and business attraction in existing and emerging industry sectors



Expansion of the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal (WIFT)

Construction of 2 x 200 m pad extensions to increase the capacity of the WIFT hardstand area, extensions to rail and road capacity on-site, weighbridge, security upgrades, lighting, internal roads, and drainage

Benefit

Increased through-put. The WIFT is currently constrained during peak periods which results in reduced efficiency

Status

Shovel ready

Project Value

> \$8 million



Industrial Estate Development

The Horsham region has emerging agricultural innovation, education and technology opportunities. Affordable and available industrial land is the key to leveraging a strong agricultural base and significant freight and logistics terminal to grow our regional economy.

Benefit

Increased economic output for the Wimmera region.

Horsham has three sites ready for industrial development:

1. WAL HUB

75 hectare, three stage multi-lot subdivision that has been zoned to support and align with the Wimmera Intermodal Terminal at Dooen.

Status

Investment ready

Project Value

\$8million

2. Enterprise Estate

This estate is located 2.5km south-west of the city centre with 50 hectares of land zoned Industrial 1

Status

Investment ready

Project Value

\$5.3million

Council commitment \$1.2million

3. Burnt Creek

The Burnt Creek estate plans to become one of the greenest industrial estates in Victoria and has 182 hectares of Council owned land zoned Industrial 1 available for development

Status

Investment ready

Project Value

\$2.4million



Rail freight to Portland

The Maroona to Portland rail line is 172kms long and connects the western half of Victoria to the national rail grid and the Port of Portland. The line links Portland to Ararat and is essential for the efficient rail transport of industry exports from the Wimmera region to Portland and overseas markets. This is particularly needed to meet the future demand for mineral sands exports

The condition of the current line has deteriorated to a point where speed is limited to 40km/hr

The rail line needs to be upgraded to achieve a minimum 80km speed limit at 23 TAL (in line with the rest of the Australian Rail Track Corporation network)

Benefit

- Efficient and safe transportation of regional produce to the Port of Portland
- Remove heavy truck movement from regional roads
- Reduce carbon impact of road freight emissions
- Reduce truck damage to regional highways

Status

Business case

Project Value

\$206million



Making Places

Objective

To support our diverse community by developing an environment that aims to cater to the shifting needs of our residents. Our projects support 'place-making' that encourage people to connect and develop our municipality as a great place to live.



The Wesley

The historic Wesley centre was a much loved regional performing arts venue until is closed in 2017 due to non-compliance with fire safety standards

This project will redevelop, re-open and re-imagine The Wesley, providing a vibrant, modern, multi-purpose venue that meets all contemporary standards of safety, accessibility and inclusion

Benefit

- The re-opened Wesley facility will welcome at least 8,000 patrons annually
- Add an extra \$1.5million to the regional economy and boost annual visitor numbers by 2000+ people
- Enhances the livability, health and well-being of our community

Status

Detailed design complete.
Tender ready when funding is confirmed

Project Value

\$1.8million

Council and Community Commitment

\$500,000



Laharum Oval: New community Facility

Replacement of ageing community infrastructure at the Laharum sporting precinct to support local AFL football, cricket, tennis, school and general community use. New 350 sqm multi-purpose facility (AFL compliant) with solar panels

Status

Shovel ready

Project Value

\$900,000+

Benefit

- Enhances community social cohesion, supports a disadvantaged rural community increasingly impacted by bushfires and flood events
- Supports social inclusion for the growing Karen refugee community
- Encourages gender equity and female participation
- Strengthens community volunteering
- Incorporates universal design for greater accessibility
- Provides improved emergency management capability (response and recovery).



Horsham Railway Corridor

The revitalisation of this unattractive parcel of open space in central Horsham is a high priority of Council and our community

The project includes the following elements:

- Rehabilitation of previously contaminated land along the rail corridor
- Landscaping, recreation and open space improvements
- Construction of a new fully compliant and accessible underpass
- Provision of further public parking and access to the Silo Art project



Benefit

Improve perception of Horsham North.
Re-integration of Horsham North into the wider Horsham community through improved pedestrian and bicycle links

Status

Development of landscape plan currently underway including details of proposed underpass

Project Value

To be determined following detailed design

Visit Horsham

Objective

Our vision is to increase visitation, economic growth and sustainability through the provision of quality tourism products and event support, regional marketing and customer service to visitors, businesses and community. Horsham Rural City is a fantastic base for regional tourism and exploring the Wimmera Southern Mallee. Our region provides a wide tourism offering including arts and cultural experiences and nature based tourism that attracts intrastate, interstate and overseas visitors.



Wimmera River Discovery Trail

The Wimmera River Discovery Trail is a two-stage bike trail that follows the Wimmera River, travelling from Horsham to Lake Hindmarsh

Stage 1 – Dimboola to Lake Hindmarsh
(being delivered by Hindmarsh Council)

Stage 2 – Horsham to Dimboola (being delivered by Horsham Rural City Council)

Benefit

Increased visitation through provision of a safe, accessible and well maintained trail. Improved health and wellbeing through use of the trail for active recreation

Status

Planning

Concept and feasibility studies to identify route options and design of trail

Project Value

\$100,000 for feasibility study



Horsham Golf Club Resort

This project will create a true destination holiday park for Horsham located at the superb Horsham Golf Club

The concept plans for the Holiday Park include:

- 60-100 room hotel
- 15-25 high quality eco-cabins
- 50-70 powered camping and caravan/RV sites

Supporting family friendly recreation facilities to be provided including a high rope course, mini-pump track, swimming/splash pad facility, and mini-golf

Benefit

A new destination holiday park will offer the potential for new visitors to Horsham and for these visitors to stay longer using the holiday park as a base from which to explore the tourism offerings of the wider region

Status

Concept design

Project Value

\$45million





Want to learn more?

Speak to the following people

Sunil Bhalla

Chief Executive Officer

sunil.bhalla@hrcc.vic.gov.au | 03 5382 9777

Susan Surridge

Co-ordinator Advocacy

susan.surridge@hrcc.vic.gov.au | 03 5382 9777



HORSHAM
Rural City Council