

Greater Shepparton Movement and Place Strategy

Vision and Objectives



Overview

Following the end of the gold rush in the early 1860s, miners sought agricultural work in Greater Shepparton, which by then had developed a reputation as a fertile district with ample water supply. Successful grazing and agricultural practices led to increasing development of secondary industries, including fruit preservation, manufacturing, construction, and education and health services.

The City of Shepparton is now the fourth largest regional urban centre in Victoria and a nationally significant regional hub for employment, retail, health, education, court services, agricultural production and food manufacturing and packing serving over 230,000 people from Victoria and New South Wales. With a diverse mix of employment and social opportunities, Greater Shepparton's population expected to continue growing by over 16 percent to 73,700 by 2031.

While this growth provides the momentum for positive changes across the city, managing the growth and providing timely infrastructure responses will be critical to ensure that growth does not negatively impact the safety, health and well-being of the community.

Greater Shepparton City Council is preparing a Movement and Place Strategy (MAPS) which will inform transport and land use decisions over the next 20 years and beyond. The MAPS will serve as a blueprint to ensure that Greater Shepparton continues to evolve as a healthy, vibrant, prosperous and liveable city where residents, businesses and visitors can travel safely and efficiently using various modes of transport.

This report provides the long-term vision and objectives of the MAPS based on community and stakeholder feedback and analysis of data and trends related to transport in Shepparton. The vision is embodied by three themes:

1. Vibrant centres and liveable neighbourhoods

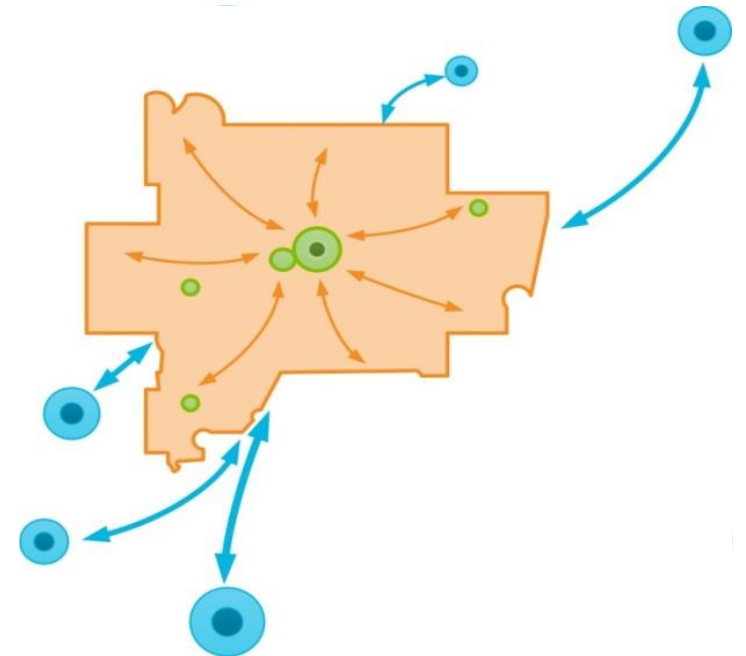
- This theme focusses on movement *within* and *around* the neighbourhoods and centres of Greater Shepparton.

2. Sustainable local connections

- This theme explores movement and transport *between* Greater Shepparton's neighbourhoods and destinations.

3. Effective broader connections

- This theme addresses Greater Shepparton's transport connections with the wider region and State.



Vision and priorities

Greater Shepparton in 2050 is a place recognised for its high quality of life and sense of place. Underpinning this is the ease with which residents and visitors can move around the city and the wider region. It is an active municipality, with many short trips made by walking, cycling, and public transport. Movement of goods and services continues to play a strong role in Greater Shepparton's economy, however freight moves more efficiently and its impact on the CBD and local neighbourhoods is minimal. A bypass and an intermodal freight hub provide efficient transport of products to and from distant markets. Connectivity beyond the region is stronger, with improvements to passenger and freight rail services making it easy and convenient to get to and from Melbourne and other cities by train.

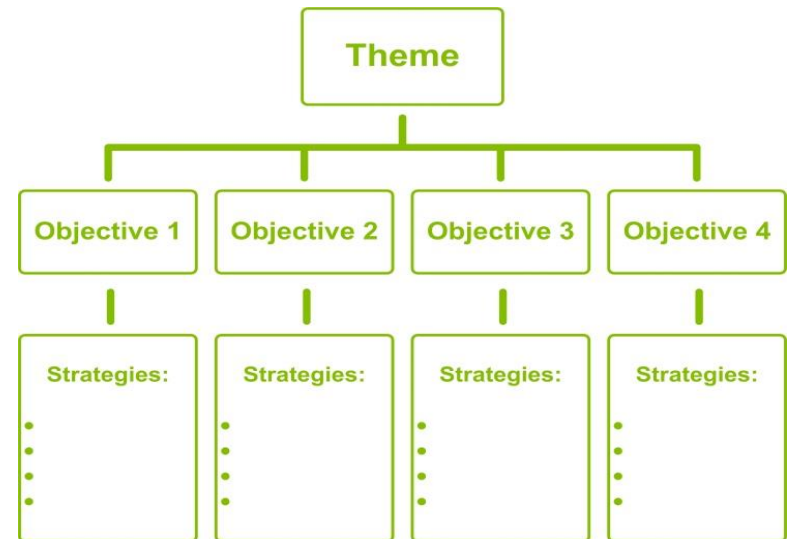
A number of guiding principles underpin this vision for Greater Shepparton, including:

- **Health** – Encouraging more active travel
- **Safety** – Ensuring residents and visitors can get around safely by all modes of transport
- **Environment** – Minimising the impacts of transport on the environment
- **Society** – Designing attractive public places which encourage social interaction

- **Economy** – Improving access to jobs, businesses and industry while reducing freight related neighbourhood safety and amenity impacts
- **Equity** – Supporting the needs of the widest possible range of users with varying travel requirements, incomes and mobility levels.

Addressing these priorities in the MAPS will enable people to make healthier, more efficient and economical choices in the way they travel.

The vision is presented under three Themes. Each of these are supported by multiple objectives and strategies which are detailed in this report.



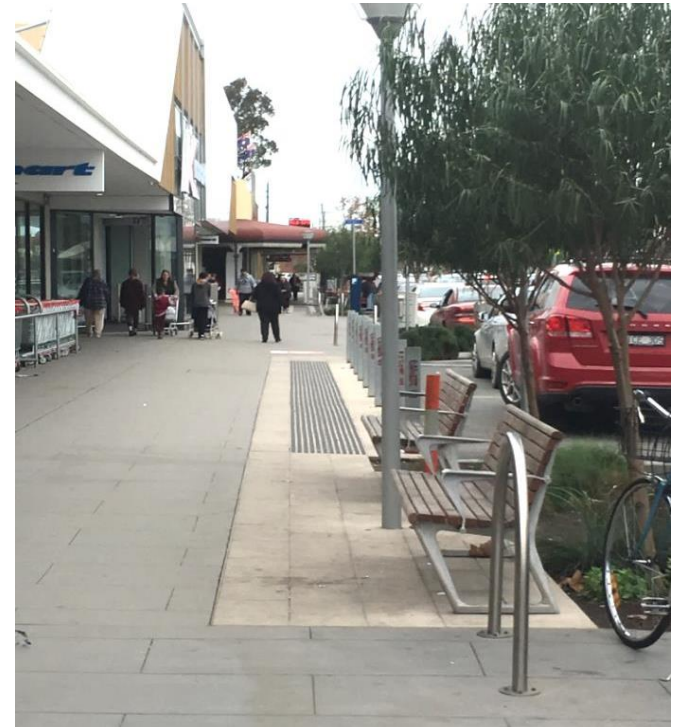
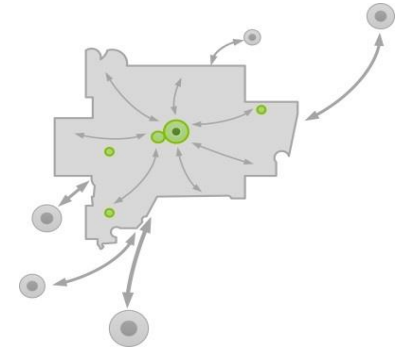
Theme 1: Vibrant Centres and Liveable Neighbourhoods

Objective 1: Support development patterns which encourage sustainable transport and shorter trips.

Good urban design can positively influence how people get around and help distinguish Shepparton as a desirable place. The 5Ds commonly influence sustainable travel patterns – destinations, distance, design, density and diversity – and underpin the strategies below.

Strategies:

- Plan public transport routes to service key destinations such as hospitals, schools, and shops.
- Design pedestrian, cycling and public transport facilities to be safe, easy to navigate, convenient and attractive to a broad range of people, including children and seniors.
- Implement slower traffic speeds and safer pedestrian crossings in and around activity centres, schools and residential areas.
- Provide a diverse mix of jobs, housing, shops and services within easy walking distance to public transport routes and in areas with high quality walking and cycling routes to enable more people to reduce their need to travel long distances.
- Design car parks that are easy to access and feel safe.
- Design buildings to enable occupants to be able to see what is happening outside so that people who are walking or cycling feel safer (more 'eyes on the street').
- Encourage higher density in residential and employment areas to make it easier to walk, cycle and use public transport.



Theme 1: Vibrant Centres and Liveable Neighbourhoods

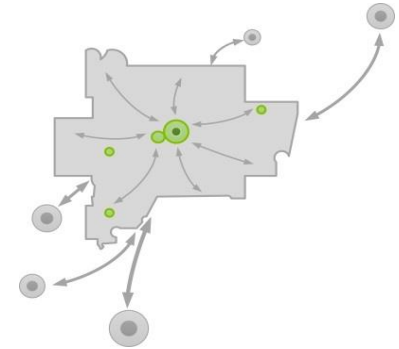
Objective 2: Encourage more walking and cycling.

Greater Shepparton City Council has made some infrastructure investments to provide more walking and cycling connections within the municipality. There are a variety of paths and routes with flat topography and amenities such as public toilets, wayfinding and drinking fountains.

As many residents commute less than 10km, there is a good opportunity to further improve the walking and cycling network in Greater Shepparton. Increasing the number of walking and cycling trips can help improve physical and mental health. Providing adequate end-of-trip facilities such as bike racks, showers and change rooms will further enhance the level of comfort and desirability of cycling. Designing pedestrian friendly activity centres through wider footpaths and safer crossings can encourage people to walk more.

Strategies:

- Design local roads to prioritise pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- Prioritise pedestrians in centres, around schools and public transport routes.
- Provide unobstructed footpaths and safer crossings which are accessible for everyone including people who use a mobility aid.
- Provide more end-of-trip facilities for cyclists, including ample bike parking in activity centres.
- Reduce conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians on shared paths.
- Support educational programs to encourage safer cycling and safer driving around cyclists.
- Improve data collection and monitoring for measuring cycling.
- Encourage the creative use of lanes and local roads to promote walking and social interaction.



Theme 1: Vibrant Centres and Liveable Neighbourhoods

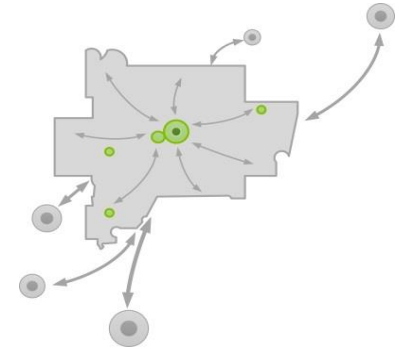
Objective 3: Control traffic speed and volume on local roads so that neighbourhoods are more liveable and businesses are more viable.

Greater Shepparton is a major hub for the movement of goods and people due to its role as a regional centre for employment, services, businesses and industry. This causes convergence of freight and other vehicular traffic through Mooroopna-Shepparton and mixing of local and tourist traffic with heavy vehicles.

This can negatively impact local area safety and amenity, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, which in turn affects the well-being of residents and businesses. Designing non-truck routes to discourage rat-running and fast speeds, while enabling good access for business deliveries and pedestrians, can help reduce impacts from freight.

Strategies:

- Use a diverse range of natural and built traffic calming measures to discourage rat-running and speeding in local centres.
- Rethink streets as public spaces for people (e.g. shared zones, public plazas, outdoor seating, expanded outdoor eating, temporary events, etc.).
- Enable efficient delivery of goods to commercial and retail areas by means that do not adversely impact safety and neighbourhood amenity.
- Direct freight movements away from CBDs and residential areas to well-managed designated freight corridors.



Source: SED, 2014

Theme 1: Vibrant Centres and Liveable Neighbourhoods

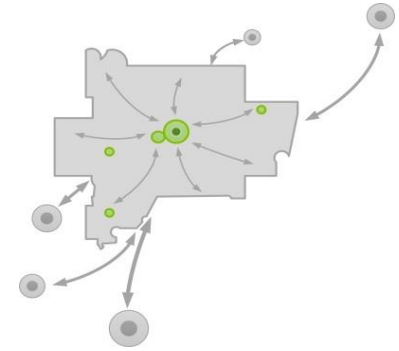
Objective 4: Optimise parking management in centres.

As long as driving is the prevailing method of transport in Greater Shepparton significant space will be required for parking. Currently there is a perception of inadequate convenient parking for some residents and visitors, particularly in the CBD.

Off-street car parks need to be improved through design upgrades and better wayfinding. This should be complemented by optimised on-street parking pricing mechanisms and time limits. This will ensure people can access Greater Shepparton's important commercial, retail and service districts while reducing the impact of parking on amenity, liveability and safety.

Strategies:

- Develop strategies that reduce parking demand, potentially including strategic variable pricing mechanisms.
- Using good urban design principles, establish well located, well designed car parking – including off-street and multi-deck – that enhances the streetscape and local amenity.
- Ensure adequate number of spaces are provided for persons with a disability.
- Make it easier to find off-street parking through wayfinding and information.
- Provide loading zones to make local deliveries more efficient.
- Design spaces for parking to be adaptable to changing demands.
- Reallocate on-street parking to off-street parking where this would support safety, pedestrian and cycling environments, sense of place and mixed use of the streetscape.
- Design parking to incentivise car pooling, low-carbon vehicles and reduced car use.
- Continue to encourage walking to reduce the existing perception that it is always necessary to park directly outside the destination.



Theme 2: Sustainable Local Connections

Objective 1: Make cycling safe, comfortable and convenient for a broad range of ages and abilities.

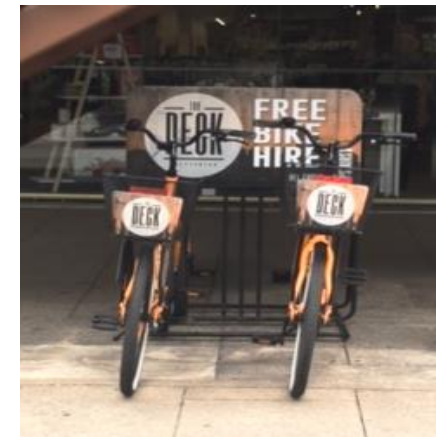
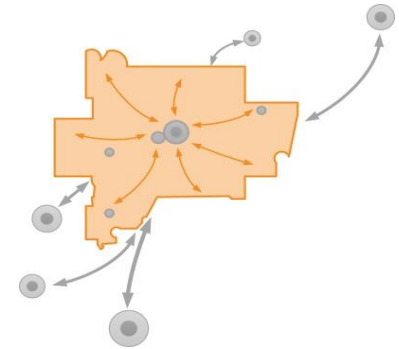
Cycling is one of the most environmentally sustainable, healthy and cost-effective forms of transport . There is growing support for cycling as a legitimate form of transport due to the wide-ranging benefits, such as:

- Cycling for transport is a great way to incorporate incidental physical activity as part of daily travel.
- Cycling is one of the most energy efficient forms of transport that produces virtually no pollution.
- Transport is one of the largest household expenditure items in Australia. Compared to the costs associated with operating a car which is around 74 cents per km (RACQ, 2016), cycling only costs around 2 cents per km assuming the same travel patterns.

Due to the flat terrain and pleasant climate in Greater Shepparton, there is great potential for connecting and linking places with an exceptional cycle network suitable to all riders including recreational and younger cyclists. To make cycling a viable option for more people, riders need to feel safer through prioritisation and/or separation from other road users, particularly in heavily congested or higher-speed areas. A great cycle network which caters to different skill levels should connect residents to, from and between key places and destinations without any gaps or challenging areas.

Strategies:

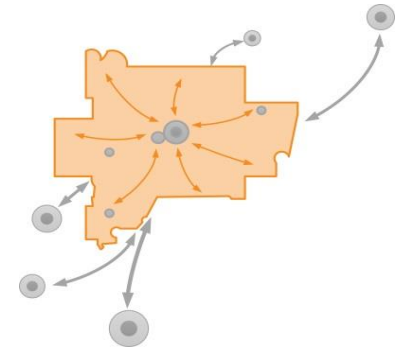
- Build low-stress cycling routes that provide direct and convenient access to important destinations such as food outlets, schools, arts and sports precincts, social venues etc.
- Eliminate gaps in the cycling network and provide safer intersection crossings.
- Implement cycling infrastructure with road projects where possible.
- Separate bike paths from fast moving traffic where possible.
- Prioritise cyclists on roads in more congested areas with bike lanes.
- Encourage employers to provide end-of-trip facilities such as showers, change rooms and bike parking.



Theme 2: Sustainable Local Connections

Objective 2: Support an inclusive bus system that is more frequent, reliable, accessible and easy to use.

Currently local bus services are limited in frequency, operating hours and reach. Efficient bus services that can run more directly and frequently to major destinations will help support the goal of lower dependency on car travel. Higher frequency bus routes could be further supported by additional services (along fixed routes or in response to demand) that cover the more lightly travelled areas of Greater Shepparton, ensuring that all residents have access to basic transport regardless of their ability to drive.



Strategies:

- Increase the frequency and operating hours of the main bus routes in Shepparton to make public transport a more viable transport mode.
- Streamline the structure of the bus network to enable more service on key corridors.
- Add/realign bus routes to efficiently serve key destinations across the city and in townships.
- Implement demand responsive or community shuttle-type services to areas of less consistent travel demand.
- Improve the branding and visibility of the bus system through creative advertising and imagery.



Theme 2: Sustainable Local Connections

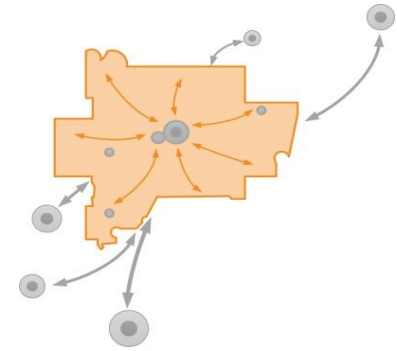
Objective 3: Work towards eliminating fatalities and injuries from road crashes.

Greater Shepparton City Council has a strong focus on road safety. There are a number of road safety specific initiatives in Greater Shepparton including the 'Cool Heads' Road Safety Program, 'Dob in a Hoon' Program as well as the implementation of specific speed zoning. 'Cool Heads' focuses on informing young drivers of the consequences of road crashes and how to be a safe driver. 'Dob in a Hoon' encourages residents to report drivers who take part in dangerous driving activities.

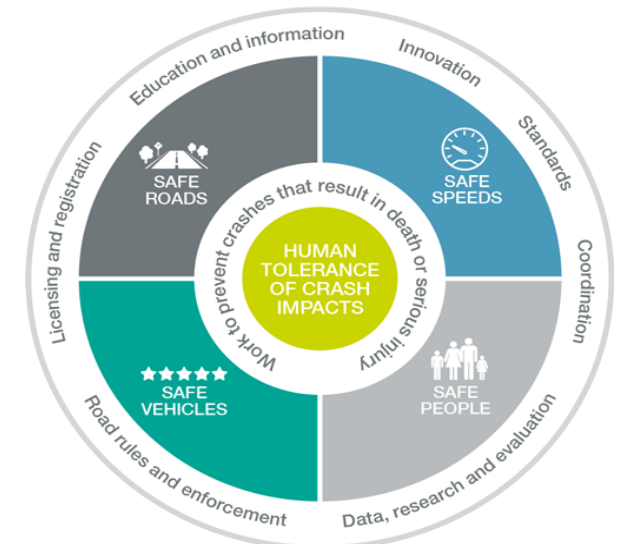
Despite these efforts, Greater Shepparton has several stretches of road which experience a high frequency of crashes. As most serious injuries and fatalities resulting from road crashes are preventable, more engineering solutions as well as educational programs are needed to eliminate road crashes.

Strategies:

- Design roads to match the desired function.
- Apply the 'Safe System' approach to road safety projects.
- Prioritise road safety improvements in areas with the highest risk of serious crashes.
- Make roads safer for vulnerable users including pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and motorcyclists.
- Expand road safety education and communication initiatives.
- Promote lower speeds in areas of high pedestrian and cyclist activity, including around schools.



Safe Systems Approach

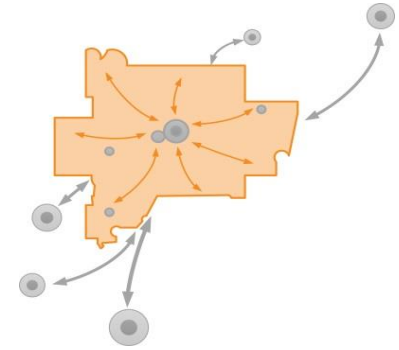


Source: roadsafety.gov.au

Theme 2: Sustainable Local Connections

Objective 4: Reduce the impact of freight on local amenity.

Greater Shepparton's largest industries include agriculture, construction and manufacturing, all of which require efficient and effective freight to, from and within Greater Shepparton. Projected volumes of heavy vehicles in Greater Shepparton suggest significant growth and pressure on the local road network. This could be incompatible with the land uses which have evolved as the residential community has expanded.



Opportunities to reduce the amenity impact of freight require heavy vehicles to be diverted from the city centre and residential areas as much as possible. Ways to achieve this may include constructing bypasses, improving east-west routes and enabling more rail freight.

Strategies:

- Identify routes that are suitable for high productivity vehicles (including B-triples) so that there is a clear strategy for managing large-truck movements.
- Deliver traffic calming measures on freight impacted local roads while also, where possible, removing non-safety-related impediments from the strategic B-double routes.
- Implement the Goulburn Valley Highway Shepparton Bypass, a much needed second river crossing, to reduce the number of trucks in the city centre and local neighbourhoods.
- Continue to support the development of GV Link by providing efficient transport corridors to the site and encouraging the freight industry to locate there.
- Improve east-west routes to support a new bypass if industry continues to be primarily located in the east and north east.
- Support increases to rail freight where viable.



Theme 3: Effective Broader Connections

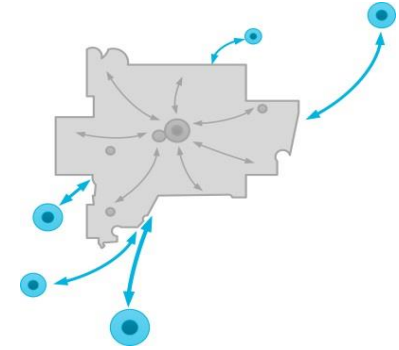
Objective 1: Support regional public transport improvements to provide effective timetables.

Public transport requires sufficient demand to be sustainable, yet also requires convenient schedules to stimulate demand. Population growth and mode shift away from cars could provide the necessary catalyst to improve the public transport network. This includes improved timetabling to offer residents a more viable transport option for visits to Melbourne, Albury and other major centres and surrounding towns.

The keys to an effective regional public transport system include sufficient frequency of operation and suitable hours of service, applicable to both the V/Line train service to Melbourne and the V/Line bus services connecting Shepparton with other regional centres.

Strategies:

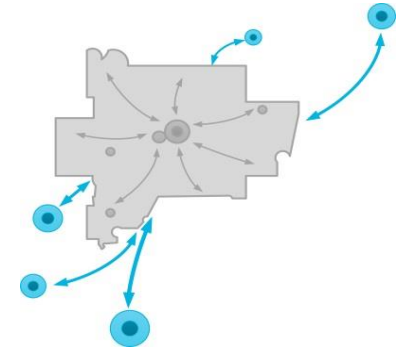
- Strongly advocate for additional passenger rail services timed to suit the needs of residents and visitors.
- Support additional services on V/Line bus corridors that show the strongest potential for consistent two-way travel demand.
- Advertise the availability of regional public transport to residents and potential visitors.
- Implement Railway Precinct Masterplan, which will improve the area around Shepparton Railway Station to provide a stronger connection between the region's primary transport hub and the main regional activity centre of Shepparton CBD.



Theme 3: Effective Broader Connections

Objective 2: Enhance freight capacity and efficiency by optimising heavy vehicle routes, rail networks and access to airports.

Greater Shepparton's largest industries rely on efficient and effective transport movement within, to and from the Greater Shepparton region. Strategies are needed to improve north-south and east-west truck flows, while ensuring that trucks do not go through local neighbourhoods when they do not need to. In addition, optimising the rail network will improve the competitiveness of Greater Shepparton's agriculture industries and the sustainability of the road based freight network.



Strategies:

- Protect and enhance key freight routes.
- Support the development and use of technological advancements which improve road freight efficiency and safety.
- Strongly advocate for opportunities to increase the mode share of rail for freight transport.
- Develop GV Link and investigate feasibility of a container terminal which would allow the freight industry to grow through providing opportunities for multiple industries to co-locate.
- Construct the Goulburn Valley Highway Shepparton Bypass, the proposed vehicle and heavy vehicle route bypass of the CBD.
- Continue to advocate for the Melbourne-Brisbane inland freight route via Shepparton.
- Identify strategically important freight transport corridors and links and reserve land to facilitate delivery of future infrastructure projects.
- Continue to advocate for improved air freight capacity through direct access to Tullamarine Airport by rail and for a Shepparton airport with freight capacity.

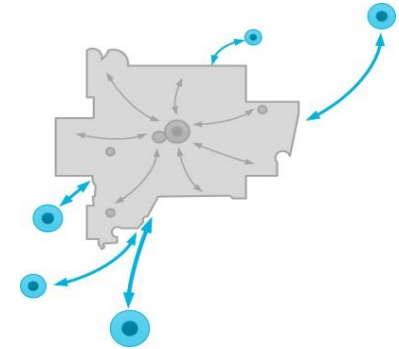


Theme 3: Effective Broader Connections

Objective 3: Optimise road network operations to manage congestion.

Trucks and private vehicles will continue to play an important role in the movement of people and goods in Greater Shepparton. As the number of people who live and visit Greater Shepparton grow, the number of cars on the roads will also increase.

Shepparton will need to continue to accommodate cars but also encourage more trips by sustainable modes to reduce congestion and free up road space for trucks, buses and essential car journeys.



Strategies:

- Work with VicRoads to ensure roads are designated appropriately for their function.
- Implement road improvements including new routes to improve freight flow and traffic on key arterial roads.
- Optimise signal timing on arterial roads designated for car and truck movement.



Source: Moslih (VicRoads), 2016