



BALLARAT: THE FUTURE OF MOVING PEOPLE AND GOODS BY RAIL

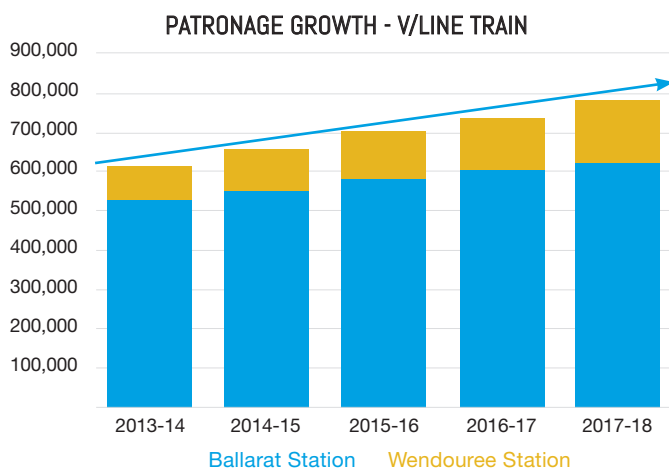
The Ballarat Rail Network Discussion Paper focusses on integration between different transport modes as well as inform investment and advocacy.

The Ballarat Integrated Transport Plan (BITP) aims to increase the efficiency, attractiveness and mode share of rail for a more liveable and sustainable Ballarat. The ideas outlined in this discussion paper are a starting point to prompt discussion on the future of the train network relating to Ballarat – got other ideas or a different vision for the future? Join the discussion and view the background paper at <http://mysay.ballarat.vic.gov.au>

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Ballarat is a growing city. The Ballarat Strategy notes that Ballarat will have 160,000 residents by 2040. Over the past 4 years, rail patronage has grown significantly faster than the population:

- Ballarat Station patronage grew by an average of 4.3% p.a.
- Wendouree Station patronage has grown by an average of 15.4% p.a.



Population and employment growth in Ballarat is increasing pressure on existing infrastructure. The growth also provides an opportunity to increase service frequency, as patronage increases justify additional services. Capacity constraints reduce the ability to provide trains at regular intervals, particularly in the evening peak.

The Ballarat Integrated Transport Plan will include actions the City of Ballarat can take to improve the transport systems it owns and manages including footpaths, bicycle infrastructure and local roads. It will also highlight actions Council should take to advocate for improvements to the parts of the transport system the State Government owns and manages including major roads, freeways, highways, bus and train services.

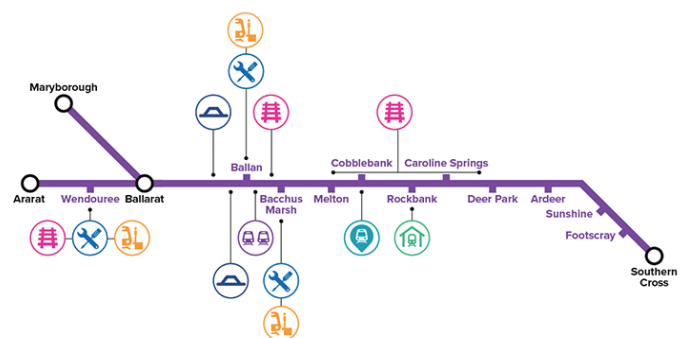
KEY ISSUES

The current heavy rail network faces a number of challenges including

- Lack of network capacity (single track sections)
- Poor reliability and punctuality
- Low service frequency
- Long & variable travel times
- Inadequate connections with other modes including freight
- Poor land use integration
- Lack of rail connections to other regional areas
- Connections to urban areas of Ballarat

CURRENT PROJECTS

There has been a series of almost constant improvement projects on the Ballarat Line since the 2001 Regional Fast Rail program. Rail Projects Victoria is currently constructing the Ballarat Line Upgrade. This will enable increased frequency and reliability of services on the line.



The Freight-Passenger Rail Separation Project is an expansion of the Murray Basin Rail Project which seeks to separate freight and passenger rail services through Ballarat. Although this investment is welcome, further planning and major investment is required to ensure future rail capacity proactively caters for future services including extension of passenger services to Dunolly and Stawell.



View the Rail Network background paper and join the discussion at <http://mysay.ballarat.vic.gov.au>

OPPORTUNITIES

IMPROVE SERVICE SPEED

Rail infrastructure and rolling stock should be upgraded to support consistent rail services to and from Melbourne Southern Cross taking under **60 minutes** in each direction.

IMPROVE SERVICE FREQUENCY

The timetable currently has 20 weekday services. By 2020 there should be 28 services per weekday, growing to 36 services by 2025.

IMPROVE SERVICE RELIABILITY

In 2004 each train service took 82-103 minutes from Ballarat. In 2019 the variability has increased to 64-106 minutes. The variability in travel times has increased from 26% to 66% and reduces commuter confidence in the service.

The lack of double track around Ballarat causes every passenger train to wait at Ballarat Station for 2-20 minutes which slows the service.

To cater for growing demand dedicated double tracks from Sunshine to Wendouree should be constructed to fully separate V/Line from the future Metro network.

BETTER TRAIN STATIONS

Reinstating **Warrenheip Station** as a 'park and ride' station would free-up commuter parking in Ballarat CBD, improve rail access to Melbourne and prepare for interchange opportunities to FedUni and ultimately transport services to Geelong.

Ballarat Station master plan has been completed and significant improvements are underway to the north side. A Masterplan and major upgrades to the main station building and south side entry plaza are required, connecting directly to Mair Street, Camp St and wider CBD.

Wendouree Station master plan sets a future with a focus on urban renewal around the station and improving access. All stations in the region **MUST** be accessible for people with disabilities by 2022.

A station could be constructed near Eureka Stadium to enable regional visitors easier train access to the major events precinct.

RESTORE AND UPGRADE REGIONAL RAIL SERVICES

Ballarat is a key destination and service provider for western Victoria. Currently the heavy rail network caters for commuters from Ballarat into Melbourne, but not for commuters heading into Ballarat from Melbourne, Ararat and Geelong.

Upgraded infrastructure and revised timetabling would allow commuters traveling into Ballarat to catch the train, reducing the demand for parking and lowering greenhouse emissions.

Ballarat and Geelong are Victoria's largest regional cities. A 2014 State government study found 1,800 people per day would use a Ballarat-Geelong rail service rising to 2,500 per day by 2031. In the interim, coach services should be doubled to six daily services.

Passenger rail connections to Geelong, Bendigo, Donald and Stawell should all be considered to bolster regional economies.

GETTING FREIGHT ONTO RAIL

The planned Intermodal Freight Hub proposed for Ballarat West Employment Zone will help reduce heavy vehicle traffic by placing more freight on rail and improve access to ports in Melbourne, Geelong and Portland. The hub will make Ballarat part of the Metropolitan Freight Terminal Network, and see frequent freight shuttle services between Ballarat and the Port of Melbourne and reduce freight costs for businesses. Direct freight connections between BWEZ and the interstate freight network connects Ballarat to national markets.

INTRA-BALLARAT RAIL SERVICE

As Ballarat's geographic area grows, a shuttle service could serve additional stations in new and growth areas and urban renewal sites and future new suburbs.

FUTURE TRANSPORT & LAND USE PLANNING

The Ballarat Strategy sets the framework for managing Ballarat's future growth to 2040. New urban and renewal areas should be linked to the rail network.

FUTURE RAIL TECHNOLOGIES

Ballarat is home to global rail companies. Ballarat could work with industry, Federation University and Monash University's Institute of Railway Technology to support innovation, including the uptake of low emission technologies such as hydrogen.

HERITAGE RAIL AND TOURISM

There is significant potential to support heritage rail activities and grow heritage rail tourism options such as reopening Ballarat-Daylesford line or being the base for iconic tourist focussed Steam Rail services – based from Ballarat Station.

IMPROVE SERVICE REACH

Melbourne services currently terminate at Southern Cross Station. Some services could become Traralgon services to improve access to Richmond and Caulfield (Monash University).

