

Western Highway Action Committee

Vision and Priorities 2026

WHAC



Our Vision

The WHAC's vision for the Western Highway is that over the short to medium term it will:

- Have a reduced accident/fatality rate.
 - Provide an efficient route for freight transport throughout the corridor, increasing productivity.
 - Provide communities throughout the corridor with a safe, effective and accessible connection.
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WHAC's long-term shared aspiration is to achieve a fully duplicated, freeway-standard Western Highway from Melbourne to the South Australian border to allow for a 100-110 km/h speed limit.

This vision reinforces the Committee's readiness to support ongoing planning, detailed design and staged investment to progressively deliver a consistent, high-performing interstate corridor.





Our Advocacy Asks



Deliver a Continuous, High-Standard Western Highway.

- 1 Buangor to Ararat Duplication *
- 2 Ararat to Stawell Duplication, Great Western Bypass *
- 3 Woodmans Hill to Leigh Creek & Brewery Tap Road Intersection Upgrade *
- 4 Duplication to SA Border
- 5 New and Extended Overtaking Lanes between Stawell and SA border



Strengthen Connections and Support Regional Towns.

- 6 Beaufort Bypass *
- 7 Upgrades between Melton and the Western Ring Road (M80)
- 8 Bacchus Marsh Eastern Link Road Connections *
- 9 Gisborne Road Interchange Upgrade
- 10 Ararat Bypass
- 11 Horsham/Pimpinio Bypass
- 12 Nhill Bypass
- 13 Outer Metropolitan Ring (OMR) Road
- + Multi-Modal Freight and Passenger Rail Improvements



Ensure a Resilient and Reliable, Future Ready Corridor.

- + Improved Maintenance Program *
- + Detour Routes
- + Bridge Upgrades
- + Wildlife Management
- + Digital Navigation



Provide a Safe and Accessible Western Highway for All Users.

- + Truck/Rest Area Projects
- + Local Intersection/Access Safety Upgrades
- + Township Safety Improvements
- 14 Pink Lake Parking Improvements
- 15 Highway Realignment & Hillside Road Railway Bridge Upgrade
- 16 Stawell Urban Design Framework
- 17 Active Transport Connections in PSP Growth Areas

* Denotes the Western Highway Action Committees highest priority projects

+ Denotes corridor wide and not shown on plan

Legend

Advocacy Asks

- Future Duplication
- Future Town Bypass
- . - . - Outer Metro Ring Road

Western Highway (Existing)

- Single Carriageway
- == Duplicated

Advocacy Priorities for the Western Highway

These projects represent the Western Highway Action Committee's highest investment priorities, identified through detailed analysis and engagement with member councils and stakeholders.

They address the most urgent safety, capacity and connectivity challenges along the corridor.

Highest Priority Projects	Advocacy Ask
Duplication between Buangor and Ararat	Duplicate the 12.5 km section between Buangor and Ararat to provide two lanes in each direction to freeway standards, new bridges and a grade-separated interchange at Hillside Road. This is the next critical section required to extend completed duplication works westward.
Construction of the Beaufort Bypass	Construction of an approximately 11-kilometre dual carriageway freeway standard section of the Western Highway to the north of Beaufort, connecting duplicated sections on either side of the township and replacing the existing two-lane alignment through the town centre.
Western Highway Upgrade between Melton and the Western Ring Road (M80)	Increased capacity, urbanisation and upgraded interchanges on the Western Highway including Bulmans, Ferris, Leakes, Hopkins, and Christies Roads and a new interchange at Mt Cottrell Road.
Construction of Bacchus Marsh Eastern Link Road connections to Western Fwy	Construction of a new north-south arterial link east of Bacchus Marsh to connect Geelong-Bacchus Marsh Road and surrounding growth areas directly to the Western Freeway via new or upgraded freeway access.
Upgrade between Woodmans Hill to Leigh Creek & Brewery Tap Rd Intersection Safety Upgrade	Upgrade approximately 5.2 km of highway between Woodmans Hill and Leigh Creek to a consistent freeway standard, removing remaining 80 km/h zones. The project includes upgrade of the Brewery Tap Road intersection to address known safety risks.
Duplication between Ararat and Stawell, and Great Western Bypass	Deliver full duplication between Ararat and Stawell, including a bypass north of Great Western and associated intersection upgrades.
Maintenance Program	Commit to an improved long-term maintenance program to strengthen pavement condition, improve drainage and enhance year-round network reliability.

Contact

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