

21.01 INTRODUCTION

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21.01-1 Wangaratta snapshot

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The Rural City of Wangaratta is located at the confluence of the Ovens and King Rivers in North East Victoria, 235 kilometres from Melbourne on the national highway route. The Rural City of Wangaratta covers an area of 3,764 square kilometres. It is bound by Mansfield Shire to the south, Alpine Shire to the east, Indigo Shire to the north east, Moira Shire to the north-west and Benalla Rural City to the west.

The Rural City's population has exceeded 27,000 and is projected to reach over 30,000 by 2031. Wangaratta is the municipality's largest urban centre, housing approximately 62% of the population. The municipality has a surrounding network of satellite townships and settlements that offer housing diversity and services to rural communities. This network includes the townships of Glenrowan, Oxley, Milawa and Moyhu, along with the smaller settlements of Everton, Tarrawingee, Peechelba, Springhurst, Whitfield, Whorouly and Eldorado.

The Hume transport corridor (Hume Freeway and Melbourne-Sydney rail link) is the nation's most important road and rail link. Wangaratta's location on the Hume transport corridor, combined with regional airport facilities, provides great opportunities for economic growth and tourism across the municipality.

The fertile river valleys of the Ovens and King Rivers and the foothills of the Great Dividing Range are defining features of the municipality. The Alpine National Park and Warby-Ovens National Park, along with extensive public land reserves, preserve the valuable natural environment and provide a scenic backdrop to touring routes and residential development.

The regional economy is exceptionally diverse. Wangaratta is home to major manufacturing, transport and distribution activities and is the regional headquarters for several state government agencies. The agricultural land surrounding Wangaratta is highly successful in producing gourmet food and world-class wines. Combined with the production of beef, dairy, lamb, wool, crops and timber, the municipality has a diverse and prominent role in national agriculture.

Wangaratta is a hub for recreational, commercial, educational, tourism and health facilities, including regional private and public hospitals and allied health services. The city is well served by preschool, primary, secondary and tertiary education options including the Wangaratta District Special School, Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE and a campus of Charles Sturt University.

The municipality is a major source of labour that services industry and business across the Hume Region.

The Wangaratta Festival of Jazz and Blues is an annual highlight amidst a diverse calendar of events. Wangaratta Rural City's urban and rural heritage is protected and celebrated. The township of Glenrowan captures the legend of Australia's most well-known bushranger, Ned Kelly, whilst Eldorado has sites of national heritage significance from the gold rush era.

21.01-2 Key influences and issues

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Key land use and planning influences relate to:

- Managing residential growth in existing areas and growth areas.
- Strengthening commercial development in designated locations.
- Protecting and enhancing the natural environment, particularly biodiversity, significant landscapes and the Ovens and King River systems.
- Managing environmental risks including flooding and bushfire.
- Protecting heritage assets.

- Maintaining and encouraging viable agricultural industries.
- Protecting agricultural areas from inappropriate fragmentation.
- Facilitating economic growth and tourism.
- Upgrading the transport network to better deal with regional freight.
- Providing services to a dispersed population sustainably

These are addressed under the following strategic themes:

- Settlement
- Environmental and landscape values
- Environmental risks
- Natural resource management
- Built form and heritage
- Housing
- Economic development
- Transport
- Infrastructure
- Local areas

21.01-3 Vision

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Council's vision is to be the 'ultimate in liveability'. The five objectives to achieve this are:

Health: The community has access to the services and facilities needed to keep people healthy. It is easy to move around and be active, get medical attention and join in social, cultural and recreational activities with friends and family.

Growth: The economy and community are growing because there are growth opportunities and potential. There are quality offerings for existing and new businesses. The region continues to attract visitors, investors and new residents.

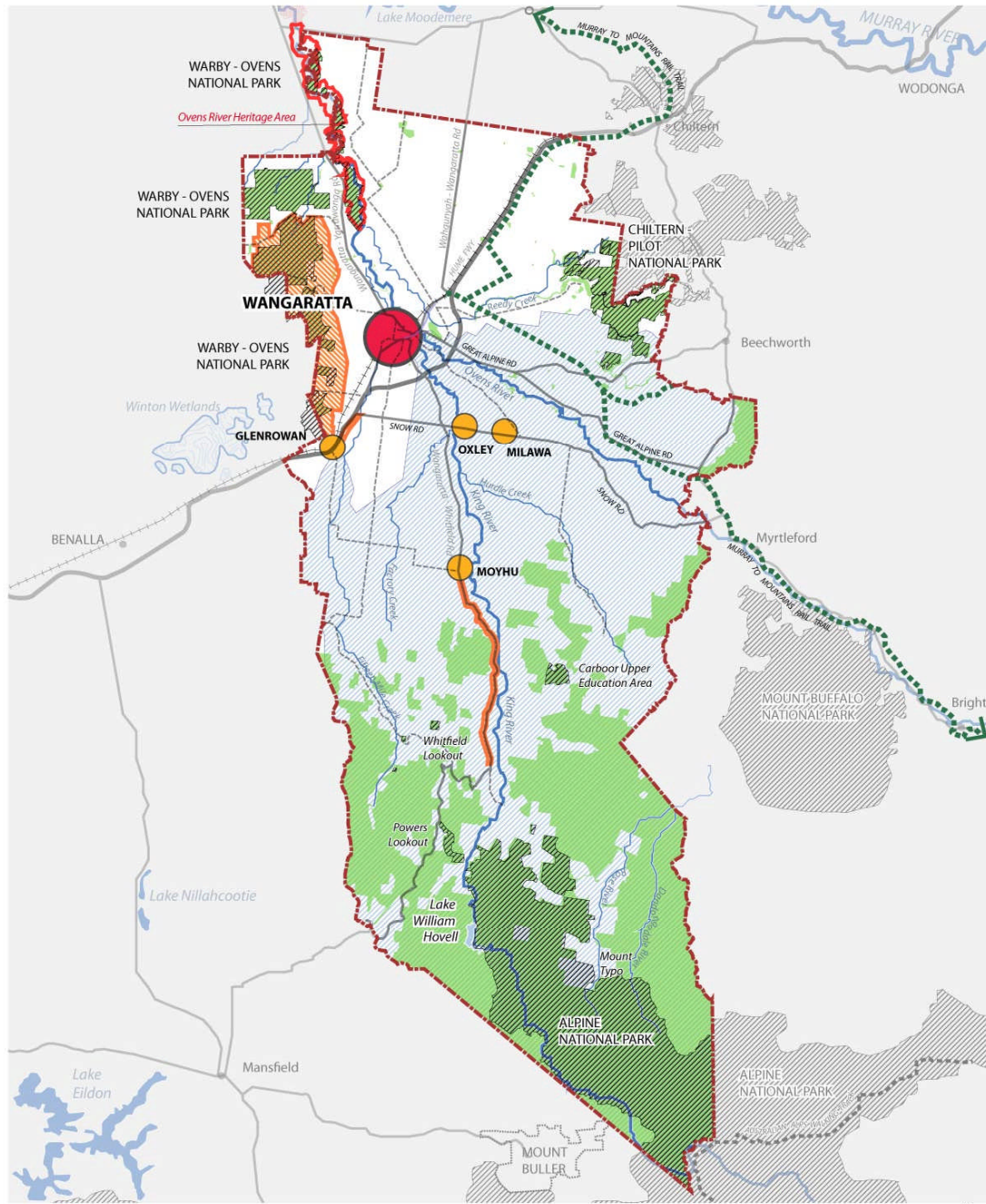
Connections: The community has developed to allow easy connections and interactions. Land use planning and transport is integrated, effective communications are in place, and a wide range of community facilities provide opportunity for activity and involvement in the community.

Creativity: The community has opportunities to embrace the arts, to attend vibrant and exciting events, and to experience a community that is creative and evolving.

Sustainability: To ensure long term viability and capacity to deliver quality services and infrastructure, decisions will be made that meet the changing and complex challenges that face the municipality.

21.01-4 Strategic Framework

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LEGEND

Municipal Boundary	Public Conservation (PCRZ) National Parks	Ovens River Heritage Area	Murray to Mountains Rail Trail	Free way
Rail Corridor	Significant Landscapes (SLO)	Wangaratta Regional City	Townships	Main Road
Rivers & Creeks	Special Water Supply Catchment			Secondary Road

FIGURE 1 : 21.02 - 1 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PLAN - ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES