

Merri River revegetation and new pathways

We are seeking

\$1.4 million begin revitalising the open space along the south of the Merri River. Improving access and revegetating this popular natural feature will impact positively on the health and wellbeing of Warrnambool residents and on the ecological health of the river.

The Merri River is one of Warrnambool's best natural assets. Nearly one-third of Warrnambool's population lives within a 10-minute walk of the river. Future residential development will see the number of people living in close proximity to the river increase.

The river has a significant impact on the liveability of Warrnambool, providing a corridor for leisure, social meeting places, events, recreation, a place for reflection, and nature.

Seven parklands between Manuka Drive Reserve and St James Park on the south side of the Merri River present an important opportunity for improving access to the Merri River. With development occurring to the north, the precinct can provide an important connection between new and established communities north and south of the river, and to the Russell's Creek shared trail.

This project proposal – to kick-start the transformation of the South of Merri River Open Space Precinct - includes improvements in around the Woodend Road Reserve and completion of the Russells Creek trail to its confluence with the Merri River.

This stage will see new paths connecting wetlands and parks with the river and to new and existing infrastructure including picnic tables, an all-abilities kayak launch and fishing jetties. A new shared pedestrian/cycling footbridge spanning 35m will cross the Merri River and connect north and south residential areas. Residents will be able to more easily walk or cycle from the more northerly residential developments to Warrnambool's CBD, health services, primary and secondary schools and shops.

This project compels Warrnambool on its journey to achieving sustainability goals described in the community plan, Warrnambool 2040.

"Destinations across the city are easily accessible by active or public transport. Warrnambool is a great place to walk and cycle, with a compact, attractive and safe built environment. The road network safely accommodates all users and footpaths and shared paths along all waterways and the coast, provide off road options for active transport users." – **Warrnambool 2040.**



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