

17 September 2020

DAYLESFORD MACEDON RAIL TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY EXPANDED

Daylesford Macedon Rail Trail (DMRT) Feasibility Study will be expanded to include the Daylesford Spa Country Rail (DSCR) 'Crossing the Divide' project.

The Daylesford Macedon Rail Trail builds on the regions wellness brand and offers visitors the opportunity to walk, ride, unwind and explore our region.

The 'Crossing the Divide' project proposes an extension to the existing vintage train service between Daylesford and Bullarto. The project will examine the feasibility of extending the service to Trentham and the development of tourist products such as walking and cycling trails and the introduction on a new 'Spa Country Sleeper' train service. The route identified for both the DMRT and DSCR projects incorporate the same rail corridor between Daylesford and Trentham.

Evan King, Hepburn Shire Council CEO, said combining the feasibility study for these projects maximises Council investment and resources, significantly reduces the cost of having to do a separate study into the railway extension and has the support of Regional Development Victoria.

Council has previously adopted both projects as 'Priority Projects for Hepburn Shire'.

"Completing this planning would greatly assist in identifying and sourcing possible government funding streams to support delivery of these key regional projects," said Mr King.

Steve Fiume, Vice President DSCR, said, "The opportunity that DSCR's 'Crossing the Divide' project will bring not only to Daylesford and Trentham but the wider region is exciting.

"We are thrilled to be collaborating with Council on this project and believe that an extension of the railway in conjunction with the Rail Trail will be of great benefit to the

communities along the line, not just economic but by providing additional transport options for residents.”

Officers progressing the feasibility project and intend to appoint the successful contractor this month, and subject to COVID-19 restrictions the project will commence shortly after.

Council will continue to provide regular updates to the community as these important projects progress, said Mr King.

More information on these projects can be found:

<https://www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Hepburn-Shire-Priority-Projects-2020-2021-Daylesford-to-Hanging-Rock-Rail-Trail-Planning.pdf>

<https://www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Hepburn-Shire-Priority-Projects-2020-2021-Crossing-the-Divide-Spa-Country-Railway-Planning.pdf>

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