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Restore Mt Buller and Mt Stirling resorts as a premier Australian mountain biking destination, attracting more visitation and yield from cycle tourism. This will be achieved by delivering a world-class and seamless ride experience across all disciplines for all abilities and levels of experience. The trail networks will offer premium trails supported by outstanding tourism services.

BACKGROUND

Mt Buller Mt Stirling green season tourism pillars are hike, bike and nature-based tourism. Mt Buller and Mt Stirling contribute directly to North East Victoria's visitor economy which in 2017 generated \$711m, 3,638 jobs and 3.1m visitations. These activities also provide many health and wellbeing benefits. This masterplan specifically relates to bike tourism and components of road cycling, mountain biking (MTB) and gravel bikes.

Road cycling has had consistency of numbers whereas over recent years, visitation related to mountain biking and trail utilisation has declined at Mt Buller and Mt Stirling. Trail counter data shows that in 2014/2015 there was 60,000 passes. This has steadily declined to 25,000 visitors during 2019/2020 season.

As mountain biking is the key activity and visitation driver in the green season, Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Resort Management have identified the need for an updated bike master plan. The objective is to create a clear plan to improve the visitor experience and achieve at least 75,000 visitors over the green season upon completion.

The North East Victoria Cycling Optimisation Master Plan (2018) indicates that the domestic cycling market is substantial and provides opportunities to grow cycle tourism. This region has a competitive advantage in the cycling market, that Mt Buller and Mt Stirling can take advantage of. The master plan is complimentary to the overall Mt Buller Mt Stirling Master Plan 2020 and will be used as an internal planning document to support capital expenditure on identified projects, assist in generating funding, and stimulation of private investment.

The master plan reviews existing plans and looks at a biking in respect to:

- Increase visitors numbers;
- Enhance core experience;
- Create new products and services to increase the capacity of the business community;
- Broaden the overall appeal of the resort as a destination;
- Drive ongoing visitation and economic growth for businesses during summer;
- Increase revenue for summer stakeholders.
- Providing broader and more inclusive participation

INTRODUCTION

The master plan identifies a range of priority projects that offer the greatest growth opportunities for Mt Buller and Mt Stirling. Projects range from trail network refurbishment, trail network expansion, supporting infrastructure, and destination enhancements.

The master plan has been developed in conjunction with a broad range of industry, community and government stakeholders. This document summarises the key findings of that body of work, providing a focus for cycling tourism efforts, and identifies which projects are highest priority. This will reverse the recent decline and ensure the continual growth of biking.

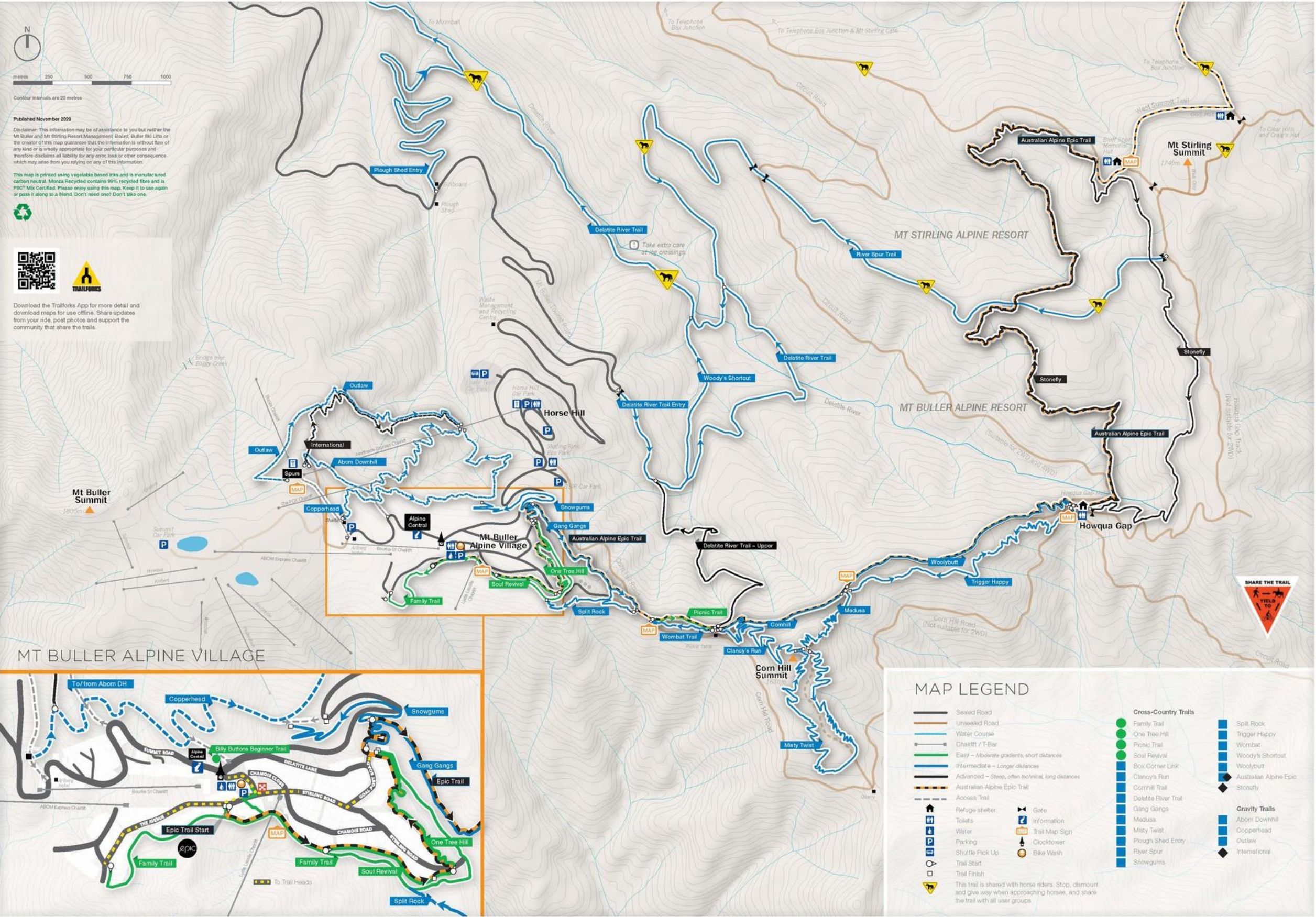
Mt Buller was the premium mountain bike destination in North East Victoria when visitation peaked at 60,000 visitors annually. Investments over 20 years have created the existing cross-country network, lifted downhill trails and Australia’s only International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) accredited EPIC trail. Once complete, the master plan provides direction to increase the current visitation from 25,000 to 75,000 visitors annually.

EXISTING PLANS

Reference material used in development of the master plan:

- NE Vic Cycling optimization Masterplan (2019)
- Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-2028
- Hume Region significant tracks and trails strategy 2014-2023
- Signage Strategy (2014)
- Mt Buller & Mt Stirling Experiences & Product Development Plan (2018)
- Stirling 2030 (2018)
- World Trail Mt Buller & Mt Stirling Resort Mountain Bike Park (2006)
- World Trail schematic Plans for Delatite River Trail new alignment and ABOM extension (2020)
- Mt Buller Mt Stirling Ground Truthing Report (2020)
- Mt Buller Mt Stirling Mountain Bike Trail Economic Analysis (2020)
- Mt Buller Mt Stirling Master Plan 2011

EXISTING TRAIL NETWORK



| EXISTING TRAIL NETWORK | DIFFICULTY | TRAIL LENGTH | DESCENT | CLIMB |
|------------------------|------------|--------------|---------|-------|
| Family trail | green | 3km | 20 m | 10 m |
| One tree hill | green | 686 m | 18 m | 26 m |
| Picnic trail | green | 487 m | 4 m | 24 m |
| Soul Revival | green | 436 m | 4 m | 8 m |
| Abom | blue | 1,843 m | 251 m | 1 m |
| Box corner link | blue | 690 m | 27 m | 17 m |
| Clancy's run | blue | 1,448 m | 149 m | 36 m |
| Copperhead | blue | 2,320 m | 260 m | 15 m |
| Cornhill | blue | 947 m | 11 m | 57 m |
| Delatite river trail | blue | 12 km | 992 m | 153 m |
| Gang gangs | blue | 1,311 m | 113 m | 38 m |
| Medusa | blue | 682 m | 10 m | 73 m |
| Misty Twisty | blue | 3,009 m | 144 m | 145 m |
| Outlaw | blue | 1,917 m | 260 m | 14 m |
| Plough shed entry | blue | 3,159 m | 273 m | 94 m |
| River spur trail | blue | 6 km | 539 m | 54 m |
| Snowgums | blue | 938 m | 73 m | 28 m |
| Split rock | blue | 882 m | 14 m | 94 m |
| Woolybutt extension | | | | |

| EXISTING TRAIL NETWORK | DIFFICULTY | TRAIL LENGTH | DESCENT | CLIMB |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------|---------|---------|
| Trigger happy | blue | 32,174 m | 50 m | 229 m |
| Wombat | blue | 432 m | 24 m | 7 m |
| Woody's shortcut | blue | 1,220 m | 150 m | 0 m |
| Woolybutt | blue | 1,705 m | 189 m | 19 m |
| Baldy Loop | black | 2,988 m | 102 m | 105 m |
| Bluff spur trail | black | 3,530 m | 319 m | 10 m |
| Carters road | black | 2,912 m | 42 m | 104 m |
| Epic Trail – shared | black | 45 km | 2,093 m | 1,654 m |
| Fork Creek trail – shared | black | 1,095 m | 53 m | 11 m |
| International | black | 1,836 m | 260 m | 2 m |
| Razorback trail – shared | black | 2,992 m | 130 m | 126 m |
| Stirling trail – shared | black | 2,777 m | 178 m | 126 m |
| Stonefly | black | 10 km | 505 m | 504 m |
| Upper Baldy trail – shared | black | 2,079 m | 176 m | 25 m |
| West Summit trail - shared | black | 728 m | 28 m | 40 m |

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The following strategic objectives for the mountain bike masterplan respond to the key strategic considerations identified through preparation of the report.

Objective A

Increase cycling visitors to Mt Buller and Mt Stirling.

Objective B

Deliver cycling product, infrastructure, experiences, and services to meet cycling market needs.

Objective C

Increase the length of stay and yield from cycle visitors.

Objective D

Address gaps in cycle infrastructure and build on the existing cycle infrastructure network.

Objective E

Secure private sector investment to meet the needs of cycle visitors.

Objective F

Grow the regions visitor economy through cycle tourism.

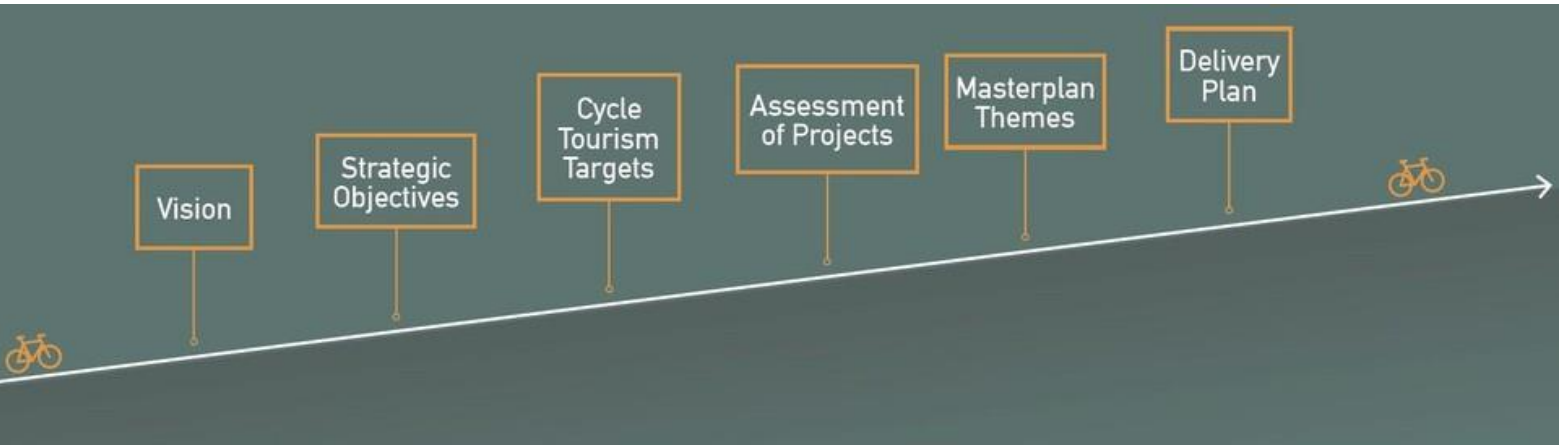
Objective G

Encourage broader and more inclusive participation.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mt Buller Mt Stirling provides a diverse biking experience for a variety of abilities, and supports road cycling, mountain biking and gravel riding.

It's widely acknowledged that bike tourism has become competitive within Australia. Various areas are heavily investing in quality trails and infrastructure based on the target market. Derby in Tasmania is a recent example.



There is a need for a continuous program of bike tourism improvements to keep the market constantly interested in the Mt Buller Mt Stirling Bike Park.

The bike master plan incorporates an ongoing program of works, with a 10-year program of sustainable trail and supporting improvements to keep the market interested.

MOUNTAIN BIKING

A strategic approach to make mountain biking appealing and accessible, particularly for beginners, is critical for the future development of the sport. This includes consideration of:

- Easy mountain bike trails;
- Skills parks;
- Mountain bike training and skills sessions;
- Accessible mountain bike parks from town;
- Suitable accommodation and food and beverage outlets.

Stakeholders have highlighted the need for more green mountain bike trails to appeal to a wider audience. Mt Buller Mt Stirling is currently underrepresented in the average market share of females and beginners. This is supported by research conducted and documented in the NEVCO Masterplan.

The bike master plan identifies and prioritises a range of mountain bike projects which will engage and inspire return visitation.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

ROAD CYCLING

Road cycling at Mt Buller is appealing to cyclists who enjoy challenging climbs and descents. The strategic assessment of road cycling tourism considers current limitations and areas for improvement, particularly:

- Easy sealed bike trails;
- Rider safety;
- Accessible bike trails.

Investing in safer, lower stress and better-connected riding trails can make cycling a more appealing and inclusive activity.

Previous reports have highlighted the opportunity for a rail trail style connection to provide regional benefits as part of the Mansfield to Mt Buller cobbles trail.

The sealing of Mt Stirling road to Telephone Box Junction is a further opportunity to increase the destinations appeal of road cycling. The next project step is undertaking a business case.

GRAVEL BIKING

A strategic approach to improving gravel biking at Mt Buller and Mt Stirling is by making the experience more appealing, accessible and safe with signage, marketing and events.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Level of investment in cycle product and infrastructure such as mountain bike trails, road cycling infrastructure, and dedicated cycling trail extensions and enhancements;
 - Growth in cycle visitation to Mt Buller and Mt Stirling;
 - Level of private sector investment;
 - Growth in visitor expenditure on food and beverage;
 - Growth in accommodation bookings and length of stay;
 - Visitor expenditure per person.
 - Inclusive and sustainable design principles, where appropriate.
-

WORKING GROUP

The Mt Buller Mt Stirling mountain bike working group was selected to provide a balance of rider backgrounds, skillsets and perspective. This facilitates successfully project implementation and delivery.

2020 working group members are:

- Andrew Wood – Project Manager
- Ben Annear – Events Coordinator
- David McCoombe – Environment Officer/Director Mt Stirling Ski Patrol
- Louise Perrin – Environmental Services/Mt Stirling Operations Manager
- Matt Elliott – Sales and Development Manager
- Eddie Wilson –Tourism North East

The working group consulted with community and stakeholders to ensure that lessons learned, new ideas, and potential improvements are captured in the bike master plan.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

The aim of consultation is to give the broader community an opportunity to contribute their views on options and priorities to improve the bike experience.

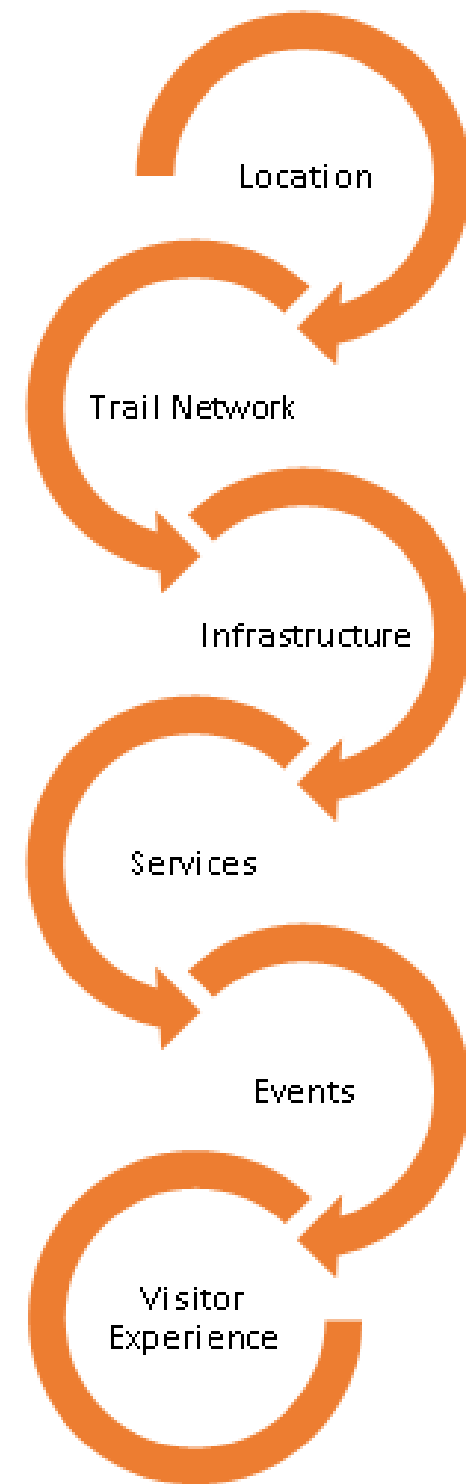
Stakeholders identification in improving the bike experience:

- food and beverage operators
- accommodation providers
- event coordinators
- businesses
- trail developers
- Shire representatives
- local government
- tourism specialists

Stakeholder consultation key findings:

- 'must have' infrastructure upgrades to deliver
- prioritisation of new trails
- new trails are inclusive to all riders
- potential growth markets

IMPROVING BIKE BULLER EXPERIENCE



Five key elements need to be considered to improve the Bike Buller visitor experience.



LOCATION

Mt Buller village is permanent and surrounded by the Mt Buller Bike Park. Connections between the village square and the bike park is an area for improvement in particular signage, routes and trail head markers.

The philosophy behind the village's location and connection to the trail network is to ensure easier trails are closer to the village with easy access and harder trails further afield. Better and low-stress connections between trails can improve the experience of cyclists and encourage a greater diversity of people to participate.

A combination of painted markers, trail head and signs are used but can be enhanced to improve the visitor experience, particularly for beginner riders.

LOCATION – MIRIMBAH

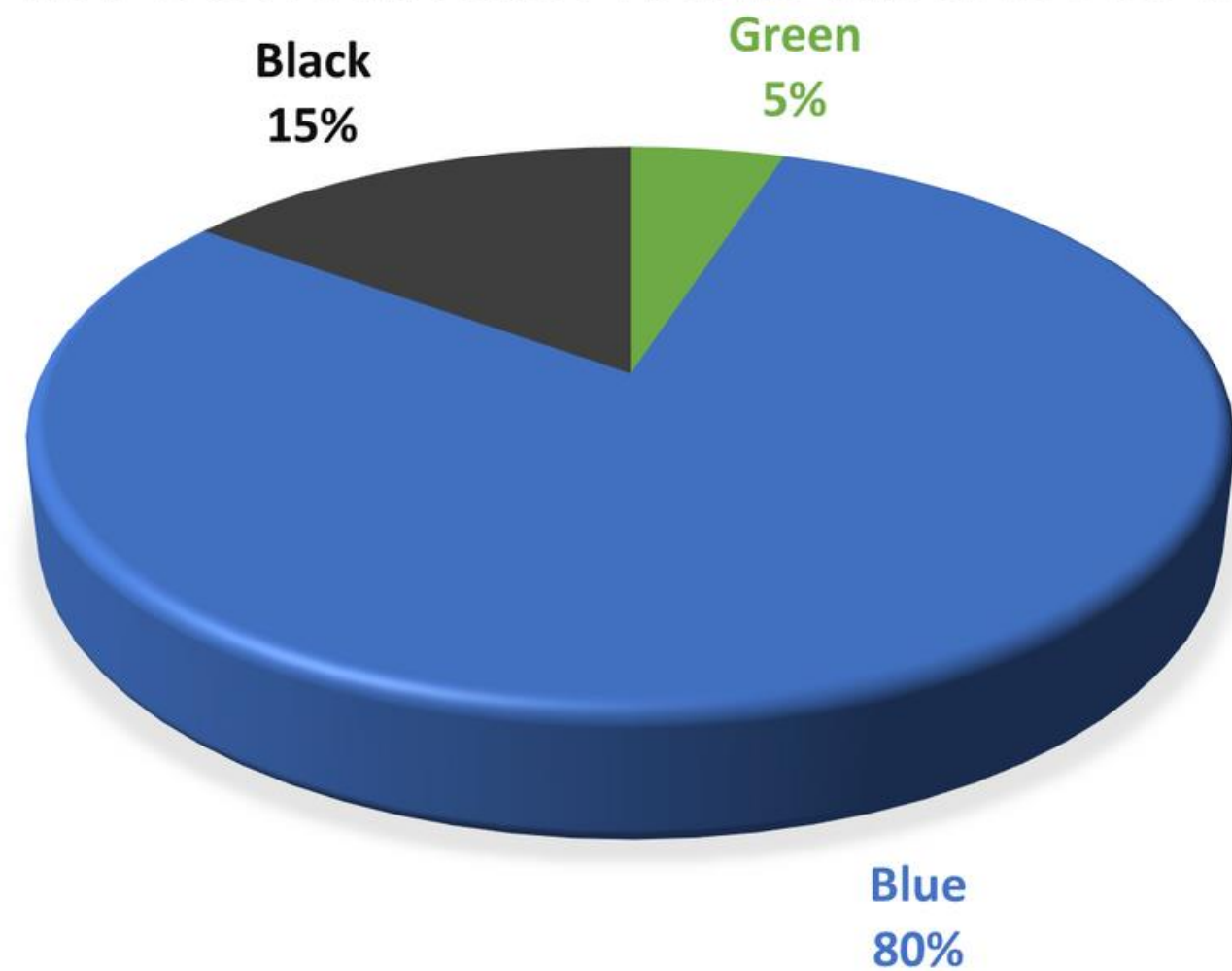
Mirimbah is the gateway for road cycling to Mt Buller or gravel bikes to Mt Stirling. This is a potential growth area as its location is the geographical link between Mt Buller and Mt Stirling.

Mirimbah also has potential for beginner mountain bike riders due to its flat open terrain.



TRAIL NETWORK

MT BULLER BIKE PARK TRAILS 2020



The previous master plan outlined enhancements to the trails and products were required to respond to the current and future market needs, at that time.

With regards to the trail network the areas for improvements are:

- Trail network has not been upgraded since installed;
- Limited family and introductory green trails with alpine views;
- Updated gravity or 'flow' trails to complement the existing trail network.
- Inclusive design that increases access to a broader user base.

The North East Victoria Cycling Optimisation Master Plan (2018) recommends continuous investment in bike trails improvement due to the increased competition.

Premium mountain biking destinations need progressive trail developments to entice return visitation. This directly correlates to an improved visitor experience. Mt Buller and Mt Stirling have various opportunities for trail development including but not limited to:

- revitalising existing trails
- new flow trail
- new introductory trails
- new cross-country trail section (removing fire trail use and safety issues)
- Inclusive and sustainability design features.

World Trail defines a premium bike destination to have a balance of 15% green, 70% blue, and 15% black trails to cater for the largest market share. Currently Mt Buller and Mt Stirling do not have the optimal mix of trails. The landscape influences the trail design capabilities in creating a balance between ratings. This is a key factor relating to investment strategies for new trail developments to rectify any network deficiencies.

TRAIL EXPANSION

The proportion of trail type and difficulty is a key factor used to prioritise trail upgrades. Mt Buller and Mt Stirling currently have a lack of green trails to entice introductory riders to the destination.

Billy Buttons was a new, green, introductory mountain bike trail constructed adjacent to the Village Square in 2019. The trail utilised existing natural contours to provide a 250m loop trail.

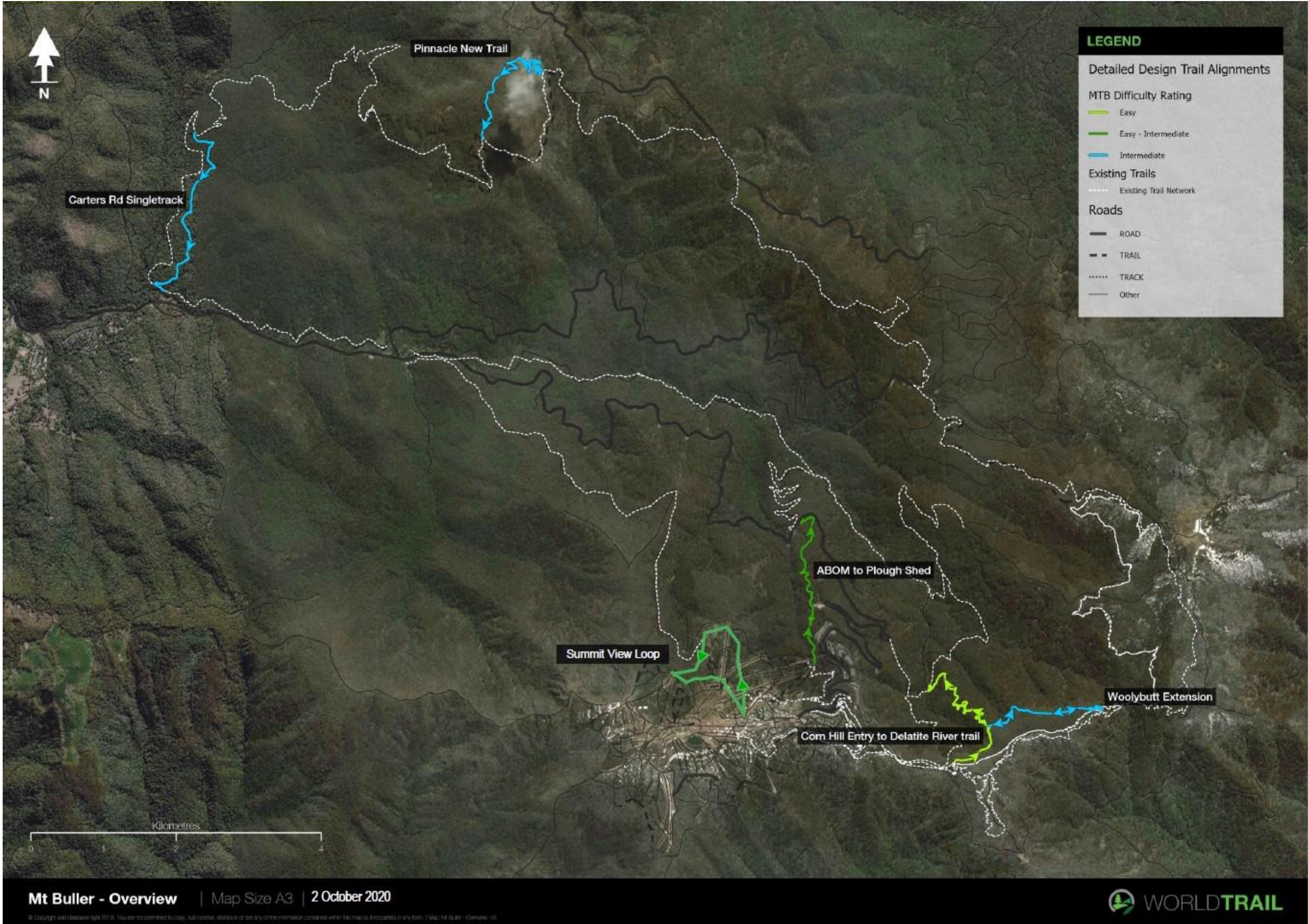
Other trails previously outlined for construction, pending development approvals and funding in priority order based on economic analysis and stakeholder feedback, are:

- Blind Creek Falls multiple alignments (gravity trail extension from Abom trail to Plough Shed)
- Corn Hill entry to Delatite River trail
- Woolybutt Extension
- Summit View loop
- Pinnacle new trail
- Carters Road single track
- Corn Hill Beginner loop
- Home Trail + Snowgum extension to Tirol???
- Family trail link to village & Billy Buttons???
- Family trail to Picnic Table then Delatite River???



TRAIL EXPANSION

Map 1: Overview map of proposed new trails.



TRAIL NETWORK ROAD AND GRAVEL

ROAD CYCLING

Previous reports have highlighted the opportunity for a rail trail style connection to provide regional benefits as part of the Mansfield to Mt Buller cobbles trail. The North East Victoria Cycling Optimisation Master Plan (2018) identifies road cycling as a major competitive advantage, likely linked to the region's geography and typology. Mt Buller and Mt Stirling's natural features and climate can therefore become a drawcard for tourists.

The sealing of Mt Stirling road to Telephone Box Junction is a further opportunity to increase the destinations appeal of road cycling. The next project step is undertaking a business case.

The North East Victoria Cycling Optimisation Master Plan (2018) finds that 39% of road cyclists identify sealing roads and road shoulders as the most appealing future service offered.

The appeal of cycling in the region is difficult to replicate in other parts of Australia but investment in infrastructure is vital.

GRAVEL BIKING

A strategic approach to improving gravel biking at Mt Buller and Mt Stirling is by making the experience more appealing, accessible and safe with signage, marketing, and events.

TRAIL NETWORK &
ENHANCEMENTS

Utilising natural features, alpine views, creeks and rivers, flora and fauna, and the temperate climate should be leveraged in future enhancements where possible. Planning routes through attractive locations can enhance the cycling experience.

Geography and soil profile changes with altitude and location across Mt Buller and Mt Stirling. This needs consideration when designing new trails. As evident along the Delatite River Trail with basalt rocky outcrops at elevations above 1500m compared to higher clay content around 1000m elevation.

FUTURE-PROOFING NEW TRAILS

The current mountain bike market at Mt Buller and Mt Stirling predominantly consists of enduro bikes that have the ability to complete gravity trails, with the remainder of bikes either down-hill or eBikes. The percentage of eBikes using trails has increased and is forecast to continue as distributors are selling an increasing percentage of eBikes.

Large eBikes don't influence priority when refurbishing existing or building new trails. Although eBikes do need to be considered in trail design and development as riders will go further, ascend easier and utilise trails over a broader area particularly Mt Stirling and Corn Hill. Larger diameter wheels, braking, cornering, and climbing of eBikes needs to be considered to future-proof new trails and refurbishments at Mt Buller.

The trail network could be designed to better promote eBike usage in line with IMBA conventions. Considering eBikes during design improves trail inclusiveness and open them up to a broader use base.

User experience can be enhanced over a longer term when trails are maintained and allow a smoother, more comfortable ride.

INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

The development of supportive infrastructure will add to the visitor’s experience and will entice return visitation or increased lengths of stay. Based on stakeholder consolation and feedback the potential upgrades have been prioritised as follows:

- Iconic trailhead / instagram worthy
- Skills park
- Bike tool / repair station
- Bike racks
- Water bottle fill points Bike
- wash down station
- Community shelter
- Key signage / maps
- Bike access ramps
- eBike charging station
- Air bag

POINT OF DIFFERENCE PEAK TO CREEK

Mt Buller and Mt Stirling have similar geography to Whistler in Canada where riders can enjoy over 1000m vertical descent from the trail head to the base. This descent is unlike anything else on offer within Australia and can be leveraged to create a point of difference for Mt Buller and Mt Stirling.

The goal in assessing new trail installations is being able to link to the existing Delatite River Trail, creating multiple alignments and variations for riders to combine. This ‘Peak to Creek’ with over 1000m vertical descent will create the next iconic trail addition to the destination and will be able to be progressively improved with continual planned trail installations. The aim is to use Mt Buller and Mt Stirling's competitive advantages and add greater value to the cycling experience.

DESTINATION AND EVENTS

Cycling events have been identified by the North East Victoria Cycling Optimisation Master Plan (2018) as a key driver of significant economic outcomes to the region. The village and supporting destination appeal will complement new developments and increase return visitation and increased length of stay. The destination appeal makes Mt Buller and Mt Stirling a unique location for mountain bike events as well as to people accompanying mountain bikers to enhance overall visitor experience.

Events delivered to date and seasonal calendar:

- Summer trail opening festivities
 - Victorian Down Hill Series (VDHS)
 - Bike Buller Festival
 - Victorian Enduro Series
 - Mind Body Bike
 - XC Rounds
- Highline Slopestyle
 - Buller Blow Out
 - Dirt Crit
 - Delatite Dash
 - National DH

| Event Name | Timing | | | | | | | Participation | Category |
|-------------------------------|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------------|--------------|
| | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | | |
| Rolling opening MTB Trails | | | | | | | | 50 | MTB |
| Dirt crits | | | | | | | | 50 | MTB |
| Victorian downhill series | | | | | | | | 300 | MTB |
| Mind, body, bike | | | | | | | | 85 | MTB |
| Bike Buller festival | | | | | | | | 700 | MTB |
| Subaru Mansfield tour | | | | | | | | 285 | Road cycling |
| Delatite dash | | | | | | | | 50 | MTB |
| Easter at altitude | | | | | | | | 2000 | MTB |
| Summer season closing weekend | | | | | | | | 100 | MTB |

DESTINATION AND EVENTS

School groups are another growth opportunity identified during stakeholder consultation and feedback. Interschool events have been held at similar destinations. Mt Buller has experience with Winter interschools events. To facilitate large school groups trail head improvements and connectivity to the village is advantageous. Inviting school groups to use the bike trails can also attract and encourage a new generation of riders to Mt Buller, Mt Stirling, and the region. This forms part of the strategic approach to making cycling appealing and accessible to a broad range of new entrants who can enjoy the activity over their lifetime.

A proposed new event includes a multiday North East experience occurring across Mt Buller, Mt Stirling, Bright, and Falls Creek. This showcase event will be focused on attracting interstate and international riders to Victoria's premier mountain bike locations.

The supplementary upgrades that need to be incorporated into the destination appeal, is the use of a chairlift for uplifts. The utilisation of a chairlift is iconic and unique, with limited use in Australia. This previously occurred on North Side Express. Safety regulation changes has made North Side Express inoperable for mountain bike uplifts unless bike holders are fitted but is cost prohibitive. Reinstating use of lifts at Mt Buller is a huge opportunity to increase visitation however, it needs to be financially viable and safe to be a feasible option. Retrofitting bike holders to lifts, new lift installations, or surface mounted attachments (Tbars) need to be further investigated to determine if they are viable projects.

These initiatives in conjunction with trail development and upgrades can increase the attractiveness of cycling tourism and encourage more cyclists to ride more often.

Cycling events have been identified by the North East Victoria Cycling Optimisation Master Plan (2018) as important for growing brand awareness and attracting new market segments. There is an opportunity to attract visitors during the shoulder seasons, to spread the concentration of visitors more evenly throughout the year.



DESTINATION SERVICES

Green season accommodation and food and beverage providers are dependent on tourism. A positive visitor experience is linked to the number and variety of accommodation and F&B providers operating such as Stirling Cafe. Positioning Mt Buller Village as a bike hub offering a range of services supporting cyclists (e.g. bike hire, accommodation, food and beverage) can increase the appeal of Mt Buller as a cycling destination. Access to services can be particularly important for a broad range of users (e.g. novice, families, older cyclists, less abled riders). Upgrades to signage to guide cyclists to businesses can also be beneficial.

Resort Management aims to increase both visitor numbers and length of stay, as they contribute to the financial viability of commercial operators. As well as giving an incentive to more providers to open. Increased visitation can also encourage development of new business opportunities (e.g. tours, retail).

DESTINATION SERVICES - MIRIMBAH

Mirimbah is currently underutilised for green season tourism. It is situated in a connecting location between Mt Buller, Mt Stirling, and Mirimbah Park. Proposed trail alignments terminating at Mirimbah and more access to designated camping areas can increase visitor numbers at Mirimbah. This will provide more opportunities and footfall for a Mirimbah store food and beverage operator.

It has been highlighted that a specific Mirimbah master plan may be required to address tourism effectively at Mirimbah park.

ROAD CYCLING

In addition to mountain biking, Mt Buller is known for road cycling with personal challenges and events such as the 7 Peaks Alpine Ascent Challenge and Mansfield – Mt Buller Road Race. The Mt Buller Road is a 16.8km uphill climb from Mirimbah, with an elevation gain of 985m and gradients up to 13%. It is promoted as an individual challenge for cyclists after the snow season (i.e. during green season) and has a timing record set by the elite, Mansfield local cyclist, Simon Gerrans. Various software apps, such as Strava, allow cyclists to record their fastest times and there is an interactive sign at the village encouraging a photograph upon completion with their recorded time.

Mansfield Mt Buller Cycling Club run regular road riding and races in and around Mansfield and contribute to organising the Mansfield Tour in March each year.

The unsealed road between Mirimbah and Telephone Box Junction is becoming more popular with gravel bikes; a hybrid road bike that is suited to unsealed roads. Currently no events to cater for gravel bikes at Mt Buller and Mt Stirling and is an opportunity in the future. Existing bike infrastructure can be utilised by these riders such as bike repair tool stands, water bottle fill points, and signage.

Constructing the Mansfield to Mt Buller Cobbles Trail will improve rider safety, visitor experience, and appeal to a wider visitation market. This has not been delivered due to financial and planning constraints but if completed, this would cater to all road, gravel, and leisure trail riders strengthening the region as a biking destination. It will contribute to creating and reinforcing a cycling culture within the region.

REGIONAL GROWTH

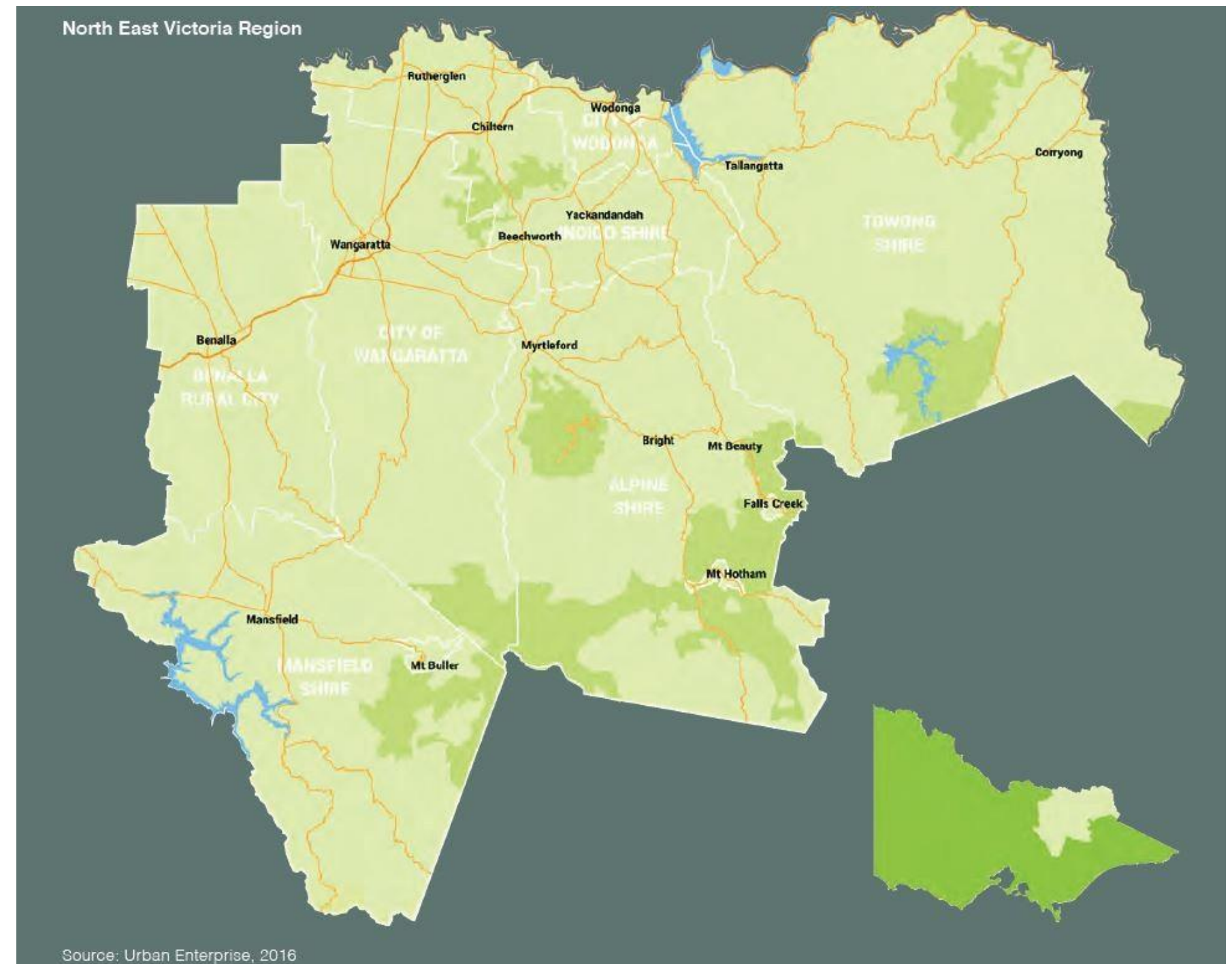
MANSFIELD – MT BULLER – MT STIRLING

The North East Victoria Cycling Optimisation Master Plan (2018) has identified projects which will increase road safety for cyclists riding to Mt Buller and Mt Buller bike park improvements as high priority projects. This Mt Buller Mt Stirling bike masterplan provides a step towards the next stage of works to attract the necessary investment.

Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Resort Management will foster positive relationships with the Mansfield Shire Council and work together to improve the region as a premiere destination. Creating variety in the region will improve visitor satisfaction and increase the visitor's length of stay and expenditure.

Mansfield's rail trail is suitable for riders of all abilities and this concept is mirrored for the Mansfield to Mt Buller Cobbles trail. A designated bike path would improve the regions draw for road and introductory riders, adding to the regions appeal.

Additionally, Rifle Butts Mountain Bike Park in Mansfield is not included in the Ride High Country campaign. With investment in signage, trails, and facilities, Rifle Butts would be a welcome addition to the Ride High Country network. The benefits of multiple biking destinations in a region have recently been observed at Lake Mountain and Buxton or Bright and Falls Creek.



INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Mt Buller Mt Stirling investment strategy is the key to prioritising projects, infrastructure, events, and staging development opportunities dependant upon an agreed set of criteria. This will ensure that expenditure and grant funding is utilised responsibly and creates the most value possible.

Mt Buller Bike Park enhancements that cover trails, infrastructure, and complementary products or experiences will be assessed upon the following criteria:

- Target market
- Network deficiencies
- Capital investment
- Operational costs
- Resourcing

The most important factor when judging the attractiveness of a mountain bike destination is the quality of trails (62%), source Blue Dirt 2020 rider survey. Mt Buller and Mt Stirling have a limited number and quality of green mountain bike trails. People who use these trails are considered a target market. Network deficiencies need to be leveraged when assessing new projects to improve green trails at Mt Buller and Mt Stirling, facilitating more first-time riders, beginners, and families to the destination.

Market research provided by Blue Dirt shows female and beginner riders are underrepresented at Mt Buller and Mt Stirling.



Trail investments will reinforce Mt Buller and Mt Stirling as a premiere regional cycling destination. Collaboration with stakeholders, councils, and government will be essential to developing the destination. Resort Management will facilitate the development of complementary products and experiences, that align with the Mt Buller Bike Park criteria.

INVESTMENT STRATEGY

FUNDING AND REVENUE

Operational, maintenance, planning, and construction upgrade costs need to be understood to effectively manage the ongoing costs of the Mt Buller Bike Park.

Urban Enterprise Economic Analysis (2020) shows the economic potential from trail refurbishments, upgrades, new trails for the Mt Buller Bike Park. Funding needs to be secured to undertake these highlighted works. Presently grant funding is the main funding source for these developments.

It's challenging and competitive to secure funding for planning, infrastructure and construction of new trails. The RMB next step is to develop a long-term revenue model to ensure that the ongoing maintenance and operating budget is funded for successful asset maintenance.

The RMB currently covers the operation and maintenance budget but this may not be feasible in the long term. Future operations and maintenance revenue may be directly supported by raising funds through event charges, fundraising, merchandise, trail usage, or indirect funds through venues or operator charges.

INVESTMENT STRATEGY - ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The Mt Buller Mt Stirling Mountain Bike Trail Economic Analysis assessed the impacts of trail refurbishments and enhancements. This data was created by assessing the visitor market, project cost-benefit analysis, economic impact assessment, operational considerations, and strategic considerations of each of the projects.

A combination of refurbishments and trail expansions have been assessed for both visitations and economic effect, source Urban Enterprise Economic Analysis (2020). The number of new visitors is expected to be above 50,000 within the first year and continue to increase over a 5 year trajectory. The corresponding return on investment will result in a benefit cost ratio of 7.4, and a net return on investment of \$32.2 million.

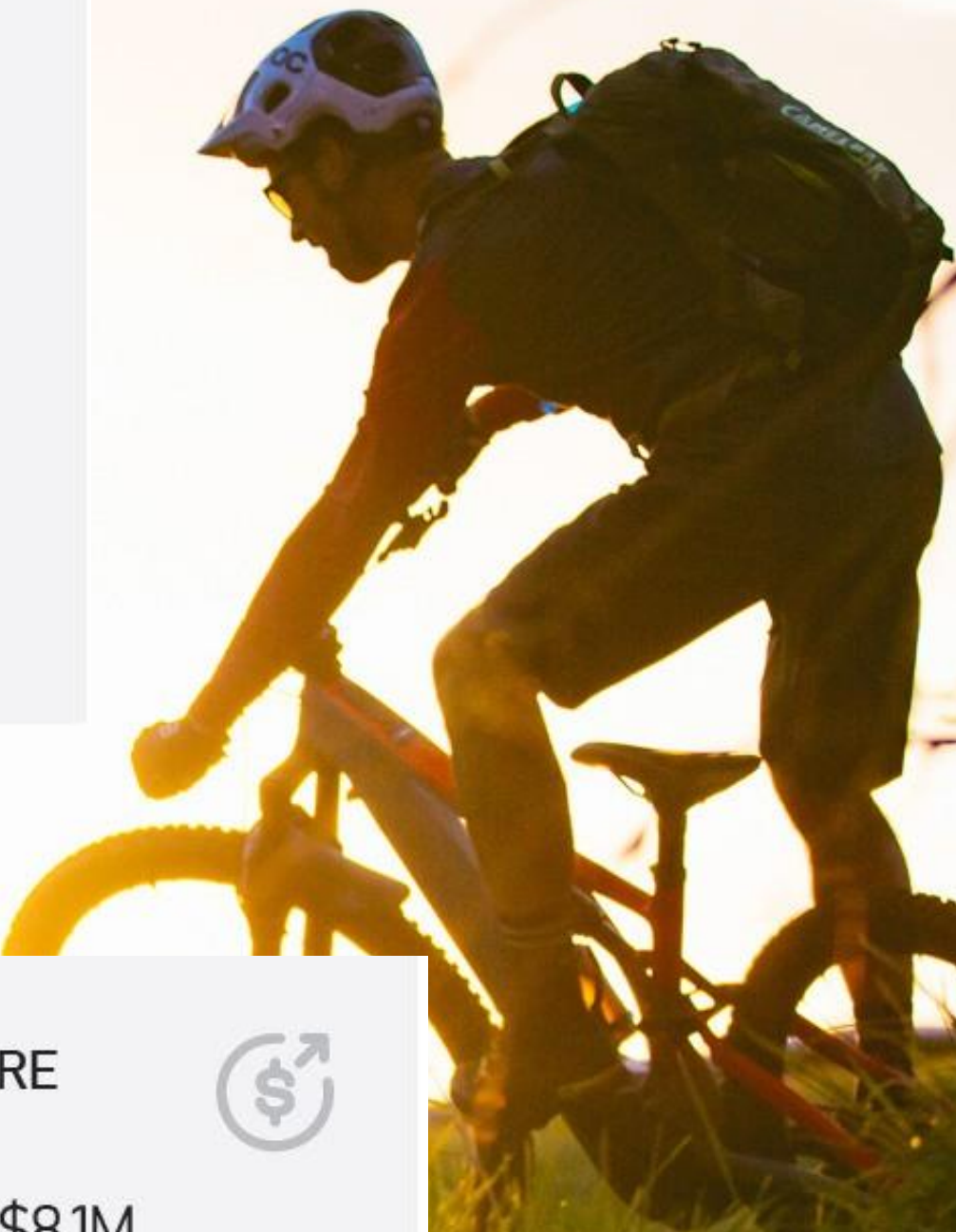
RETURN ON INVESTMENT

\$32.2M

Net Project Value

7.4

Benefit Cost Ratio



ASSESSMENT OF PROJECTS

MT BULLER MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Category: Mountain Biking
Trail Refurbishment: \$2 Million
Projected new visitation from initiative: 14,282
Ongoing economic impact: \$9.9 Million (Output) + 52 Jobs

NEXT STEPS

Secure funding to implement the next stage of works for Mt Buller and Mt Stirling, followed by trail expansion works incorporating immediate development of a flowtrail from Abom DH to the Plough Shed (Blind Creek Falls).

DESCRIPTION

Until recently, Mt Buller was the clear leader in mountain bike parks within Australia. It had the most kilometres of single track in Australia, the only IMBA EPIC ride and an extensive downhill network.

There is growing competition from Derby in Tasmania and Cairns in Queensland for the title of Australia's premium mountain bike park, with both locations attracting significant funding and quality trail development. A range of improvements to Mt Buller's mountain bike park have been identified by stakeholders associated with Mt Buller.

These include:

- New Iconic Flow Trail: Blind Creek Falls between Abom and the Plough Shed – A new flow trail that would link the northside trail network to the Delatite Trail. This could be the next Flowtown or Hero trail.
- Improved Connectivity Flow Trail: Delatite Upper linking the village to the Delatite River Trail removing the difficult fire trail section with a purpose built single trail access.
- EPIC Improvements including removal of Corn Hill Climb and dangerous downhill section and replacement of final EPIC climb from Telephone Box Junction. Also included is the removal of Pinnacle climb with single track, and removal of Plain Creek descent with single track.
- Another blue, downhill trail next to Abom and International. This would provide a new contemporary downhill/gravity trail with A and B routes suitable for a wider market.
- Separate Klingsporn trail to bike riders.
- Update signage and improve access points.

ASSESSMENT OF PROJECTS

MANSFIELD TO MT BULLER COBBLES

Category: Designated bike path

Project investment: \$2.9 Million

Projected new visitation from initiative: 12,571

Ongoing economic impact: \$8.7 Million (Output) + 46 Jobs

DESCRIPTION

Delivery of a signature ride for Victoria's High Country that will be unique in Australia. The scenic ride would link Mansfield to Merrijig, and would provide Australia's own version of the Tour of Flanders. Cyclist safety is also of great concern and significantly impacts participation.

This route would provide an alternative to the Mt Buller road which many cyclists deem as unsafe due to the 100km speed limit and lack of road shoulders. The distance of the route would be 27 kilometres, with an additional 32 kilometres to the top of Mt Buller.

NEXT STEPS

Undertake a business case for the project.



| IMPLEMENTATION PLAN | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| TRAIL | ACTION PLAN | COST ESTIMATE | TRAIL LENGTH |
| Existing trail refurbishment | refurbishment | \$2,200,000 | 70 km |
| Blind creek falls | construction | \$975,000 | 2.9 km |
| Delatite upper | construction | \$190,000 | 2.3 km |
| Woolybutt extension | construction | \$295,000 | 3.1 km |
| Carters road single track | planning and construction | \$275,000 | 3.2 km |
| Pinnacle single track | planning and construction | \$275,000 | 3.4 km |
| INFRASTRUCTURE | ACTION PLAN | COST ESTIMATE | LOCATION |
| Water fountain | funding | \$5,000 | village square |
| Skills park | funding and construction | \$25,000 | family trail |
| Bike tool / repair station | funding | \$5,000 | village square |
| Key signage | funding and construction | \$30,000 | trail network |
| Bike access ramp | planning and construction | \$20,000 | village trail |



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