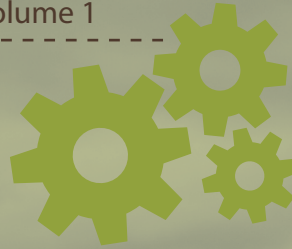
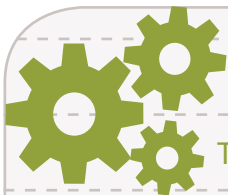


City of Albany

Trails Hub Strategy 2015 - 2025 volume 1





TRAILS HUB STRATEGY 2015 - 2025



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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND



1.1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy 2015 – 2025 has been developed to provide strategic guidance to assist the City to become one of Australia’s primary trails destination – a World Class Trail Tourism Hub (TTH) situated around a high quality trail systems, supported by a complete package of hospitality and visitor services.

The City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy 2015 – 2025 includes some broad objectives and a variety of integrated and interdependent trails initiatives which provide a framework to assist the planning of trails and trail related products within the City of Albany for the next 10 years.

The City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy aims to:

- Improve the quality, type and number of trails in iconic locations,
- Improve trails maintenance and upkeep through sustainable models of governance,
- Focus strategic investment and support in facilities and services to optimise access to and use of Albany’s trails, and
- Maximise the promotion of Albany’s unique trails and outdoor adventure experiences to a broad visitor market.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Albany is located on the shores of King George Sound, 400km south of Perth and is home to over 35,000 residents. As the administrative and service hub for the Great Southern region, Albany has experienced growth in both population and economic activity over the past decade and this is expected to continue.

Bounded by the Southern Ocean, the Stirling Ranges and the Great Southern hinterland, Albany sits among some of the world’s most beautiful and naturally protected waterways and natural spaces.

Albany is home to a wide range of trails and opportunities for locals and visitors to experience the unique outdoor features. A Trails Master Plan was prepared in 1999 which guided development of trails at that time, but more recently a number of new trails, projects and opportunities have led to a review and update of the Trails Master Plan into the City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy 2015 – 2025.

The Department of Sport and Recreation also recently developed a Strategy for World Class Trails Hubs in WA. The Strategy provided regional areas with guidance and a model for how to develop their town or destination as a world class trails hub. The timing is optimal for Albany to capitalise on these developments and to prepare a Trails Hub Strategy for Albany.



1.3 ACRONYMS

AMTBC.....	Albany Mountain Bike Club
ASW	Australia's South West (regional tourism organisation)
BTF	Bibbulmun Track Foundation
CoA	City of Albany
DoT	Department of Transport
DPaW	Department of Parks and Wildlife
DSR	Department of Sport and Recreation
DUP.....	Albany Dual Use Path
GS CORE.....	Great Southern Centre of Outdoor Recreation Excellence (proposed)
GSDC.....	Great Southern Development Commission
LGA	Local Government Authority
MBTF	Munda Biddi Trail Foundation
MTB.....	Mountain bike/mountain biking
NAC.....	National Anzac Centre
PCG	Project Control Group
R4R.....	Royalties for Regions
SCNRM.....	South Coast Natural Resource Management
TTH	Trail Tourism Hub

1.4 WHAT ARE TRAILS AND TRAIL HUBS?

TRAILS AND TRAIL USERS

Trails are areas that pass through or have a strong connection to the natural or cultural landscape. Trails are areas that provide an opportunity for the community to experience recreational, health & wellbeing, environmental, economic and/or cultural enrichment through the interaction with the environment.

This includes:

- Areas used for active and passive pursuits
- Land (e.g. walking, off road/rail trail cycling, mountain biking, equestrian) and aquatic (e.g. diving, snorkelling or paddling) trails
- Trails within urban and rural settings
- Defined (or formally recognised) and undefined (social) trails
- Areas used for motorised and non-motorised activities
- Areas managed on behalf of the community by local government and/or Department of Parks and Wildlife. In some situations, trails may also pass through areas of privately owned land¹.

In the context of this strategy 'trails' have included all **non-motorised** land trails such as walking, horse riding, off-road cycling, mountain biking and aquatic trails (such as kayak, diving and snorkelling trails).



BENEFITS OF TRAILS

Well planned, managed and promoted trails provide significant benefits to the broad community such as:

- ✓ opportunities for low-key unstructured passive recreation for locals and visitors
- ✓ opportunities for health gains and foster general well-being in the natural environment
- ✓ a valuable tourism attraction, especially when marketed well (eg Bibbulmen Track)
- ✓ opportunities to promote and supporting a conservation ethic amongst trail users
- ✓ a means of educating users about the features of an area (when combined with good interpretation)
- ✓ provide access for fire-fighting purposes
- ✓ support for the control and/or reduction of dieback

WHAT ARE TRAIL HUBS?

Trail Hubs incorporate more than just the hard infrastructure (built trails). A comprehensive trail offering that ensures the town or destination is highly recognised as a place that is synonymous with great outdoor trail experiences.

Trail Hubs can be defined as a population centre that offers a large range of high quality trails, trail user related services, facilities and businesses, strong branding, supportive management and governance.

Trail Hubs normally host several signed and mapped trails of varying types and classifications and/or a trail network of linked trails accessed via a trailhead. Essential facilities and visitor services are available within the vicinity and are typically provided by established independent businesses.

Volume 2 provides further definitions and classifications.

TRAIL HUBS IN WA

According to the World Class Trails Hub Strategy for WA²:

A trails hub is a town or destination which is widely known for its trails offering through the provision of high quality trails; strong branding; trail-user-related services; facilities and businesses; supportive governance and resourcing structure and maintenance regime.

A trails hub can achieve this status through the provision and promotion of either a critical mass of complementary mixed-use trails or single use trails, providing there is a range of types suited to a range of experience levels and user types and a suitable maintenance regime is in place.

The elements that constitute a world class trails hub, as defined by WA's World Class Trails Hub Strategy were used to analyse Albany's potential and vision as a trails hub throughout this document and are covered in detail in Volume 3.

1. Western Australian Trail Strategy 2009-2015, Department of Sport and Recreation

2. Evolve Solutions, 2012, World Class Trails Hub Strategy for WA, Department of Sport and Recreation



1.5 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR A TRAILS HUB STRATEGY

Over the past decade there has been a significant increase in the number of trails built throughout Australia. During this process of trail development, communities and local governments have started to realise the economic, health and social value of trails to the community.

Since the development of the City of Albany Trails Master Plan (1999) mountain biking has emerged as a growing recreational activity across Australia and at a local level. This increase in popularity is evident through the development and expansion of the trails tourism market. At a local level this increase in popularity is evident through the use and potential of the Munda Biddi Trail, the increase in bike club memberships and through observations and reports of increased mountain bike activity.

Noting the number of established walking and equestrian trails in Albany and the growing need and opportunity for mountain bike trails, the focus of this strategy was the review and assessment of existing trails (walking, mountain biking, aquatic and equestrian), recommendations for the development of new trails and activities and associated services to establish Albany as a world class Trail Tourism Hub (TTH).

The City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy 2015 – 2025 will be used by the City to:

- ✓ Adopt a long-term vision, objectives and actions to direct development of Albany as a world class Trails Tourism Hub (TTH)
- ✓ Guide future trail development within the City's boundaries
- ✓ Coordinate the management, maintenance and resource allocation for existing City of Albany trails
- ✓ Provide guidance for the coordination and governance of trails, with different trail land holders
- ✓ Coordinate and embed trails marketing and promotion within broader tourism plans, and
- ✓ Assist with securing future resources for future trail initiatives.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

The City of Albany identified the need to develop a City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy 2015 – 2025 to consist of:

- A clear vision, objectives and key priority areas with supporting strategies
- A review and audit of the existing trails network
- An assessment of Albany's status as a Trails Tourism Hub and development opportunities
- A prioritised list of suggested new trail types and locations
- A prioritised list of existing trails requiring upgrade and/or remedial works
- Guidelines to support the future development of trails and supportive trail infrastructure
- Marketing and promotional strategies to support Albany towards becoming a Trails Tourism Hub



The following outlines the key phases undertaken to prepare this comprehensive strategy:

Phase 1:

- ✓ Appointment of trails consultants Evolve to undertake a comprehensive review and provide a report and recommendations on Albany's position to become a World Class Trail Hub (TTH) situated around high quality trail systems, supported by a complete package of hospitality and visitor services
- ✓ Establishment of a project control group (PCG) to strategically oversee the development of the Strategy. The PCG consisted of representatives from:
 - City of Albany (Planning and Development, Works and Services, Reserves, Tourism, Recreation Services)
 - South Coast Natural Resource Management
 - Department of Parks and Wildlife
 - Albany Mountain Bike Club
 - Department of Water
 - Department of Sport and Recreation
 - Munda Biddi Trail Foundation
 - Albany Bushwalkers Group
 - Albany Natural Trailriders and other equestrian groups
 - Albany paddlers

Phase 2:

- ✓ Benchmarking and Literature Review including a review of previous reports, relevant City of Albany documents and state/national and world wide trail developments
- ✓ Confirmation of recognised trails, undertook site visits and initial audit of trails
- ✓ Completed Capacity audit of Albany as a Trails Tourist Hub
- ✓ Initial Market Research to determine demands for trails in Albany

Phase 3:

- ✓ Frame of Reference and Situational Analysis completed and presented
- ✓ Report on findings, Gap and Opportunity Analysis, including in-depth on site trail audits
- ✓ Development of Preliminary report, review and feedback from PCG

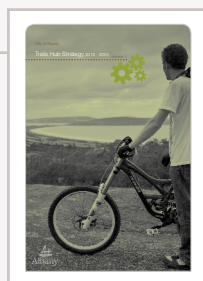
Phase 4:

- ✓ Final Albany World Class Trails Hub Report from Evolve
- ✓ Draft City of Albany Trails Hubs Strategy developed
- ✓ Extensive community consultation to confirm strategic directions and specific recommendations
- ✓ Draft City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy 2015 – 2025 accepted by Council and public comment period undertaken
- ✓ Review and amendment of Draft Strategy, based on Community Engagement Report and feedback
- ✓ Final City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy 2015 – 2025 adopted



1.7 REPORT STRUCTURE

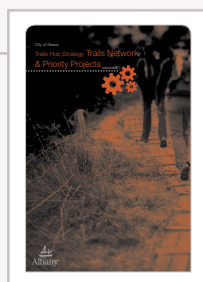
The report is presented in five separate but related volumes:



VOLUME 1

City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy 2015 – 2025

The main body of the strategy provides a background on tourism and trail trends, an assessment of Albany as a Trails Tourist Hub and the ways in which the City of Albany can help to create a World Class Trails Tourist Hub.



VOLUME 2

Trails Network and Priority Projects

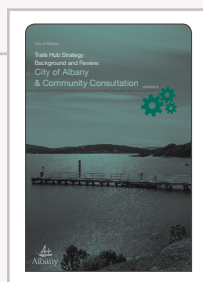
The Trails Network provides an overview of the key priority projects and precinct areas, which will be developed over the next 10 years. Volume 2 includes recommendations for each key trails project (City of Albany) and other land managers.



VOLUME 3

Background and Review: International/National/State

This Review summarises the International/National/State research finding from the Evolve World Class Trails Hub report and other key documents and reports assessed as part of the development of the strategy.



VOLUME 4

Background and Review: City of Albany and Community Consultation

This Review summarises the research findings for the City of Albany trails and regional findings; including audits and analysis of the local trail scene. It also includes a summary of the community consultation which guided development of the strategy.



VOLUME 5

City of Albany Trails Toolkit

The Toolkit includes templates and trail guidelines for use within the City of Albany.

An Executive Summary and Infographic are also available.

All documents are available at City of Albany website www.albany.wa.gov.au



2.1 NATIONAL/STATE TRAIL TOURISTS AND RECREATIONAL TRENDS

Trails are an important way that Australians recreate. Trails are increasingly demanded in Australia and around the world with the benefits being spread across three clear dimensions: health, environment and economy.

Table 1 highlights Western Australian's non-sport recreational activity through this list of the most popular outdoor recreational activities in Western Australia.

Activity	Participants 2010	2006 Change
Cycling (includes road, MTB, BMX)	255,100	28.10%
Bushwalking	65,100	2.50%
Surf Sports (would include surf lifesaving)	52,500	-5.20%
Fishing	40,400	18.30%
Canoeing / Kayaking	32,200	66.80%
Sailing	21,000	112.10%
SCUBA diving	18,800	49.20%
Motor Sports (may include trail bike riding, some 4WD)	18,400	-17.90%
Horse riding / equestrian activities / polocrosse (would include competitive)	14,500	-26.00%
Water Skiing / Power Boating	11,700	-7.10%
Orienteering	10,000	56.20%
Ice / Snow sports	8,700	-14.70%
Rock Climbing	8,200	134.30%
Rowing	5,900	-53.20%
Roller Sports	5,600	-56.90%

Table 1: Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey in WA (ERASS) 2010

Of significance in the table is the popularity of cycling, showing the largest participation base of non-sport recreational activities and growing at a rapid rate. Canoeing and kayaking are also growing rapidly, as are sailing and rock climbing. Bushwalking is also highly popular and growing, albeit at a slower rate. Albany has strengths and competitive advantage in all of these growth areas and could use this to its advantage in developing as a Trails Hub. It is noteworthy that horse-riding has declined in participation in this same time.



CYCLE TOURISM

Given the popularity, growth and proven economic outcomes associated with cycling as shown in Table 1, some further in-depth analysis of this segment is provided below.

Cycling is a growing sport in Australia. According to research sourced by the Munda Biddi Trail Foundation³, 'Australians are both buying more bicycles than previously and using them more. There has been a rapid increase in bicycle sales in Australia, with over 1.1 million sold in 2009, outnumbering new car sales for the tenth consecutive year. Significantly, approximately 70% of the bikes sold in Australia are mountain bikes.'

Cycle tourism has also experienced significant growth in a number of countries over the last 20 years and is now recognised as a niche tourism market segment. Cycle tourists generate significant economic benefits in host destinations as, unlike tourists travelling by car, they have to travel 'light' and thus are very reliant on local services. European cycle tourism was projected to increase in value to approximately A\$37.3 billion by 2020. Cycle tourism is growing in Australia too, with NSW hosting the greatest share of domestic and international cycle tourists in 2007 with 520,000 cycle tourists. The average international visitor to WA spent \$2,928 but international cycle tourists spent on average \$5,005⁴.

Research about cycle tourists in Australia undertaken by Lamont⁵ found that destinations were not perceived by cycle tourists as a primary source of satisfaction nor pleasure. According to Lamont 'Independent bicycle tourists' primary concern in selecting a destination was a region's capacity to support cycling. They are attracted to an area because of the presence and quality of cycling infrastructure (particularly roads, paths, and trails), endowed resources (appealing natural scenery), supporting industries and accessibility.'

Conversely, Lamont found that regions which are not attractive to general-interest tourists may indeed prove attractive for bicycle tourists if safe, scenic cycling routes are nearby. Based on this research, it therefore appears that for a destination to attract bicycle tourists both **cycling routes** and **appealing scenery** (both potential tourist attractions in their own right) must be present.

The cycle tourist is much more likely to undertake a range of other activities compared to non-cycle tourists, explaining why the cycle tourist's average spend is much higher than non-cycle tourists. Of particular interest is their tendency to eat at restaurants, go to licensed venues and go shopping; all activities which would benefit Albany's economy.

MOUNTAIN BIKE MARKET TRENDS

The mountain bike market is not a homogenous group but rather a collection of user types which display different characteristics and needs e.g. beginners, family groups, downhillers, tourers, trail enthusiasts, technical riders etc.

3. Murray Gomm, 2011, Cycle Tourism Literature Review: Community Development Program, Munda Biddi Trail Foundation

4. Fast Facts Year Ending June 2013, Tourism Western Australia, September 2013.

5. Lamont, MJ 2008, 'Wheels of change: a model of whole tourism systems for independent bicycle tourism', Proceedings of Re-creating tourism: New Zealand Tourism and Hospitality Research Conference, Christchurch, NZ



However some general characteristics on mountain bikers are provided below:

- ✓ They are generally professional with above average earning capacity
- ✓ The top end of the market has become more professional and continues to push the boundaries, demanding more and more technically difficult trails; however the family market demand downhill trails that are not extreme, just accessible and fun
- ✓ The family and the wider visitor market continue to demand a range of activities, not just mountain biking. (eg Whistler's strength as a resort is its wide range of visitor activities, entertainment, accommodation, meal experiences over a wide price point range). There has been growth in demand for mountain bike programs aimed at 5 to 8 year olds. The trend demonstrates the need to focus on a diversity of users with a range of offerings
- ✓ The 50 somethings (who were the first generation of downhill mountain bikers) are beginning to slow down and there has been a resurgence of road and cross-country mountain biking amongst this group
- ✓ MTB trail hub users tend to travel in groups, with an average of 3 people
- ✓ Apart from the very extreme riders or the very dedicated youth, most visitors also undertake other activities during their stay.

EXPERIENCE SEEKER

A key market segment that has been identified by Tourism Australia, not by age or physical features but by a combination of characteristics, is the 'Experience Seeker'. This segment is highly likely to undertake trails and outdoor activity, is more likely to stay longer, spend more and disperse to regional areas.

Experience Seekers are, by definition, looking for unique, involving and personal experiences from their holidays. Experience Seekers are long haul travellers who are less affected by the traditional barriers to travel of distance, time and cost. They are more informed, interested and curious about potential travel destinations. They constitute around 30 to 50% of all potential long haul outbound travellers from Australia's key source markets.

Research has shown that the Experience Seeker has a number of key 'wants' to satisfy their travel experience:

- ✓ Authentic personal experiences
- ✓ Social interactions
- ✓ Meeting and interacting with the locals
- ✓ Experiencing something different from their normal day-to-day life
- ✓ Understanding and learning about different lifestyles and cultures
- ✓ Participating in the lifestyle and experiencing it, rather than observing it
- ✓ Challenging themselves – physically, emotionally and/or mentally
- ✓ Visiting authentic destinations that are not necessarily part of the tourist route and
- ✓ Exposure to unique and compelling experiences.



These people are avid users of technology, in both private and business capacities and would expect brand communication and content to be available in many forms. This audience is also well-connected and likes to learn from and share information with their peers.

See Volume 3 – Background & Review for further information

OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

✓	Trails Tourism is a growth market with Experience Seekers being targeted by Tourism WA
✓	Cycle tourism is appealing due to the higher spend of cycle tourists and the younger demographic that it attracts
✓	A destination with attractive scenery and trails and services which meet the needs of a range of cycle tourists is well placed to capitalise on this lucrative market
✓	The optimal experience will be provided through adequate services and facilities and good trail design





2.2 NATURE OF TOURISM IN ALBANY

Analysis was undertaken into Albany's tourism industry. Some key findings include:

- Of the annual overnight visitations to the South West (including Albany) during YE 2012, 13.5% visited the City of Albany
- Albany is increasingly popular for interstate and international visitors
- 86% of international visitors to Albany were visiting for holiday and leisure
- Compared to the South West, more international travellers to Albany are older and travel as couples
- Albany is popular through peak season and shoulder months of March/April and Sept/Oct
- Seasonality doesn't appear to be as affected by school holidays and weather conditions
- Albany's low rate of occupancy (57.8%) reflects a possible oversupply of hotel rooms
- Albany has a large number of 2 and 3 star accommodation options

The initial analysis identified that Albany is a mature tourism destination, with a stagnant tourism industry. With an oversupply of accommodation and competitive threats from other destinations, Albany has the opportunity to attract new markets and support the rejuvenation of the City. Since the completion of the initial report, Albany has successfully hosted the November 2014 Anzac Centenary Commemoration event and 100th year Anzac Albany 2015 which generated significant national media coverage and increased destination awareness.

The National Anzac Centre and other visitor infrastructure recently created has also added to the overall visitor experience and is part of a rejuvenated approach to promoting Albany as a highly sought after visitor destination.

See Volumes 3 and Volume 4 for further information.

OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY	
✓	Albany has the potential to increase visitation by developing some iconic trail products to attract a new young demographic, provide them with a reason to choose Albany over competitor destinations and give them a reason to stay for an extended period
✓	Trails, trail events and the broader category of adventure tourism present great potential to differentiate Albany as a tourist destination given the untapped opportunities (coastal and wilderness) that exist
✓	Cycle tourism has the potential to attract visitors all year round, as cycle tourists prefer Spring, Winter and Autumn
✓	Albany holds all year round appeal with mild weather suitable for outdoor activities, in particular, mountain biking which is less seasonally affected than other sports
✓	Albany has ample room capacity to accommodate an increase in visitation



2.3 ALBANY TRAIL USER STATISTICS AND DEMAND

Analysis was undertaken to provide an insight into existing trail use in Albany. At present the best source of information was on trails on Department of Parks and Wildlife land, with limited user data available on the City of Albany trails.

Some key findings include:

- According to the 2008 Bibbulmun Track user survey "There are 167,206 walks on the track each year. If 5% of these uses occur in the Albany end of the Track that represents 8,360 walks or 23 people per day. Over 70% of Bibbulmun Track use is for day walks".
- There were approximately 10,000 Munda Biddi trail visits in 2010, between Perth and Nannup. With the trail now open between Nannup and Albany (completed April 2013) this figure significantly underestimates the total users on the Trail.
- Since the opening of the Albany to Denmark section of the Munda Biddi there has been good use of the trail in Albany by locals and visitors for day trips, given the shortage of alternative off-road cycling routes.

In order to understand more about trail use and demand in Albany this information was supported by a market research survey, undertaken through the Albany Visitor Centre. From the market survey (of 332 respondents):

- ✓ Walking was the most popular activity, in particular in iconic and unique natural locations
- ✓ Walking was primarily undertaken by tourists on DPaW managed land and the Mounts (COA land)
- There was a high usage around Albany of both the Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track
- Tourists visit coastal, iconic (well known) trails whereas locals are more likely to use lesser known trails such as Luke Pen
- Albany was considered by respondents to have enough trails overall but focus should be on maintaining or improving walking trails (through signage) and promoting them better through print and online tools
- There was a need for more mountain biking trails for beginner and intermediate levels
- There was demand for more kayaking trails, but no demand for additional horse trails from those surveyed
- For those who didn't undertake trails activity in Albany it was due to lack of information and/or time, rather than due lack of interest or energy
- Albany is already widely known for its unique natural beauty but not for its trails offering

OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY	
✓	Walking is the most popular activity and tourists visit coastal, iconic (well known) trails whereas locals are more likely to use lesser known trails
✓	Albany is considered to have enough walk trails overall but focus should be on maintaining or improving walking trails (through signage) and promoting them
✓	There is opportunity for more mountain biking trails for beginner and intermediate levels
✓	There is opportunity for kayaking trails , based on the market research
✓	Consider the collection of trails user data on annual or bi-annual basis to gauge usage and trends

See Volume 4 Background and Review Report for further information.



2.4 COMPETITION

Whilst not universally called trail hubs, there are many international examples of successful trail destinations and hubs. A review of international best practice trails, hubs, towns, products and brands was undertaken in order to see how Albany is presently positioned within the world-wide trails landscape. This analysis revealed significant growth in trails tourism around the world and in particular mountain bike trail hubs.

Adventure tourism (of which trails are part of) is a significant growth tourism segment and other destinations are increasingly capitalising on this. If Albany were to aim to become a world class trails hub, it would ultimately be aiming to compete with other internationally recognised trails hubs but in the immediate term short haul destinations are a greater competitive threat/opportunity.

COMPETITION WITH AUSTRALIA

The main destinations that Albany is competing with are predominately other South West destinations and short haul destinations such as Bali, Sydney, Tasmania and Melbourne. The aim would therefore be to attract a larger share of intrastate visitors but also increase Albany's share of interstate trail tourists.

Table 2 compares Albany against relevant trail and tourism destinations to identify relevant lessons for Albany in developing itself as a trails hub.

Level	Market Segment	Specific Competitor	Issue	Implications for Albany
International	International visitors	International Trails Destinations: Switzerland, Whistler, Fruita, New Zealand.	Unique world class landscape features. Concentrations and critical mass of trail.	Focus on unique natural attractions, including those in surrounding regions, to position itself at the international level and create a critical mass of trails. Link to food, wine and heritage.
International	Domestic	Thailand, Bali, Vietnam, New Zealand, Tasmania.	Short haul destinations offering cheap airfares and cheap accommodation are attractive alternatives for domestic visitors.	Focus on what makes Albany a different and attractive holiday destination: wilderness, coastal position, accessible, value for money; 'Nature's playground' Safe
Intrastate	Intrastate	Thailand, Bali, Vietnam, New Zealand, Tasmania.	Short haul destinations offering cheap airfares and cheap accommodation are attractive alternatives for domestic visitors.	Albany's favourable all-year-climate. Unique landscape characteristics, Existing tourism and hospitality services Recognition as a 'Natures playground' Focus on creating 3 days to 7 days of activity to attract visitors to stay. Family friendly and safe.
National	Interstate	Other Capital Cities, Other WA destinations.	Many trails and in particular mountain bike tourist destinations promoted around Australia now.	As above. Plus promote unique food and wine offering.

Table 2: Competitive Situation



COMPETITIVE WITHIN THE STATE

A South West Mountain Bike Master Plan has recently been developed and a Perth and Peel Mountain Bike Strategy is currently proposed. Other towns such as Margaret River, Collie, Pemberton, Dwellingup, Denmark, Busselton, Nannup, Jarrahdale and Mundaring are all working towards Trails hub status. Albany is competing with other WA regions to attract mountain bike tourists, which could present a threat to Albany's positioning but could also present opportunities for collaboration.

There is therefore a strong groundswell of effort being put into developing trails in WA and Albany needs to understand its competitive advantages in order to position itself as a strong contender within this increasingly competitive space.

Regional/Local Competitive Situation

Denmark is a well-established tourism destination with a range of activities, accommodation, attractions and amenities servicing the needs of the tourist. Denmark currently offers significant walking trails and it looking to build on its mountain biking trails offering through the proposed Wilderness Ocean Walk.

Mt Barker is not widely known for its trails offering although the recently completed Granite Skywalk, if appropriately marketed, will raise Mt Barker's profile as an outdoor recreation destination. The Stirling Ranges are an incredible asset to the region and could be harnessed to position the entire region as a wilderness destination.

The Fitzgerald River National Park with its international biosphere status is an important asset to the region which enhances the positioning of the Lower Great Southern in respect to outdoor pursuits.

OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

✓	Albany and the surrounding region can capitalise on its unique landscape features and 'Nature Playground' potential to become a world-class trails hub; by focusing development and management of trails in areas which feature unique, natural landscapes
✓	It is an established tourist destination and has the capacity and supporting infrastructure
✓	Some of the key gaps are in critical mass of mountain biking and aquatic trails in distinct, unique landscapes, trail connectivity and an overarching management, marketing and maintenance regime to coordinate the trails hub across land managers
✓	Focus on Albany's key strengths and opportunities to differentiate from the alternatives
✓	Work collaboratively within the Lower Great Southern sub-region of Albany, Denmark, Plantagenet and Jerramungup to create a significant iconic regional trail product
✓	A cluster of trail opportunities could help to leverage Albany's position as a central trail hub in the sub-region and attract international trail visitors

See Volume 4 – Background and Review Report for further information.



2.5 GREAT SOUTHERN CENTRE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION EXCELLENCE

The Department of Sport and Recreation, in conjunction with the Great Southern Development Commission has undertaken a feasibility study to consider the potential to create a Centre of Outdoor Recreation Education, Training and Tourism in Albany — Great Southern Centre of Outdoor Recreation Excellence (GS CORE). Potential partners include Department of Education, Department of Parks and Wildlife, University of WA, Curtin, Notre Dame, Edith Cowan and Murdoch Universities and the City of Albany.

OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

✓	Should these partners and this project come together, it has the potential to strengthen Albany's opportunity to become a world class trails hub and trails tourism destination
✓	In addition, although this is yet to be determined, its physical location also has the potential to facilitate trails activity, if it can be centrally located
✓	An iconic Lower Great Southern (sub-region) tourism trails product which leverages Albany's central position, unique natural landscapes, links to GS CORE and builds on Albany's existing tourism capacity has the potential to position Albany within the region as an internationally significant trails area and attract an international niche trail market
✓	GS Core Develop tourism trails product ie. hire services guided experiences

See Volume 4 for further information.





A variety of audit tools were used to assess the readiness for Albany to become a World Class Trail Hub. This included the following:

- Audit and assessment of existing trails
- 5 As Assessment Tool (Accommodation, Activities, Attractions, Amenities and Access)
- Audit of Marketing, Governance and Tenure
- Albany Trail Type Opportunity Analysis
- Trails Hub Inventory Assessment Tool

3.1 AUDIT AND ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING TRAILS

INTRODUCTION

As previously mentioned, in the context of this strategy 'trails' have included all **non-motorised** activities such as walking, horse riding, off-road/rail trail cycling, mountain biking, aquatic trails (such as kayak trails and diving trails), rock climbing and interpretive/heritage trails. Urban footpaths and shared paths were considered if they created connections onto a mapped trail or potential trail centre or trail head location.

The management of trails is determined by the land owner or manager. The following trails were considered for the audit, based on the land owner (in priority order):

- ✓ Trails managed by the City of Albany (audited)
- ✓ Trails managed by DPaW (reviewed)
- ✓ Iconic Regional Trails with sections within City of Albany (reviewed and considered)
- ✓ Other Regional Trails outside of City of Albany (considered)

As a significant proportion of trails within the study area reside on land not managed by City of Albany, these trails were reviewed to ensure balance and identification of the key gaps in trail provision. Albany has also been identified as the regional hub for many of the greater region's iconic trail offerings and these were considered within the audit.

To undertake the assessment, trail locations were identified through stakeholder consultation, PCG feedback site visits and a review of review of existing marketing collateral. A desktop audit of identified trails was undertaken using information sourced from previous trail planning documents and stakeholder consultation. Physical assessments of trails and associated infrastructure was undertaken reviewing the variety of trails on offer, their general condition, key issues, the type of natural and physical environment and the overall trail experience.

The trails were audited on their suitability and opportunity to support the vision of Albany being a World Class Trails Hub. It was based on a comprehensive range of criteria including: existing supply, site opportunity, site deliverability, user group suitability, market potential, land management, physical condition and trail experience.

The detailed audit and assessment of trails informed the recommendations, objectives and actions. See Volume 4 – Background and Review Report for further information.



SUMMARY FROM AUDITED TRAILS

The trails audit found that Albany has a significant but unbalanced offering of trails. The balance between trail types and trail management is summarised in Table 3 below.

Trail Type	Managed by City of Albany	Within City of Albany LGA	Significant Regional Product	Total km (approx)
Walking	50km	147km	50km	250
Rail Trail Cycle Touring	13km	62km	75km	75
Mountain Bike	0.7km	0km	0km	1
Equestrian	30km	0km	0km	30
Paddling	0km	0km	0km	0
Climbing	0km	0km	0km	0
Aquatic	0.3km	0km	0km	0.2
TOTAL (approx)	94km	209km	125km	

Table 3: Existing Trail Offering

WALKING

Albany offers a significant amount of walking based trails with local and regional trail offerings. A total of 147km of walk trail is located within the City of Albany but is outside of its management. Within the City of Albany, 50km of managed trails currently exist but quality is variable and generally signage is poor. The overall trail quantity has National Destination Significance with sufficient trails for a holiday over a week of unique experiences but quality and supporting elements do not meet National Destination requirements.

EQUESTRIAN

Equestrian based trails are catered for at current levels with trail sufficient for a short break or weekend trip.

RAIL TRAIL CYCLE TOURING

Albany offers a significant amount of rail trail and cycle touring offerings. However, 62km of trail is located within the City of Albany but is outside of its management. Off road cycle touring (on the Munda Biddi) is the only significant alternative trail type to walking, currently marketed and promoted.

MOUNTAIN BIKE, AQUATIC AND CLIMBING

Mountain Bike, Aquatic and Climbing trails are under catered for and currently only meet Local Destination Significance requirements.

As with the local trail offerings, the majority of regional offerings outside of the City of Albany are walking and Rail Trail Cycle Touring trails and there are no significant alternative trail types.



TRAIL POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Albany boasts a range of trail development opportunities with countless unique trail environments. A Prioritisation Framework was used to assess the precincts and locations to determine possible precincts for trails development. Locations were prioritised considering both the opportunity and the deliverability assessments.

RECOMMENDED PRIORITY TRAIL PROCESS

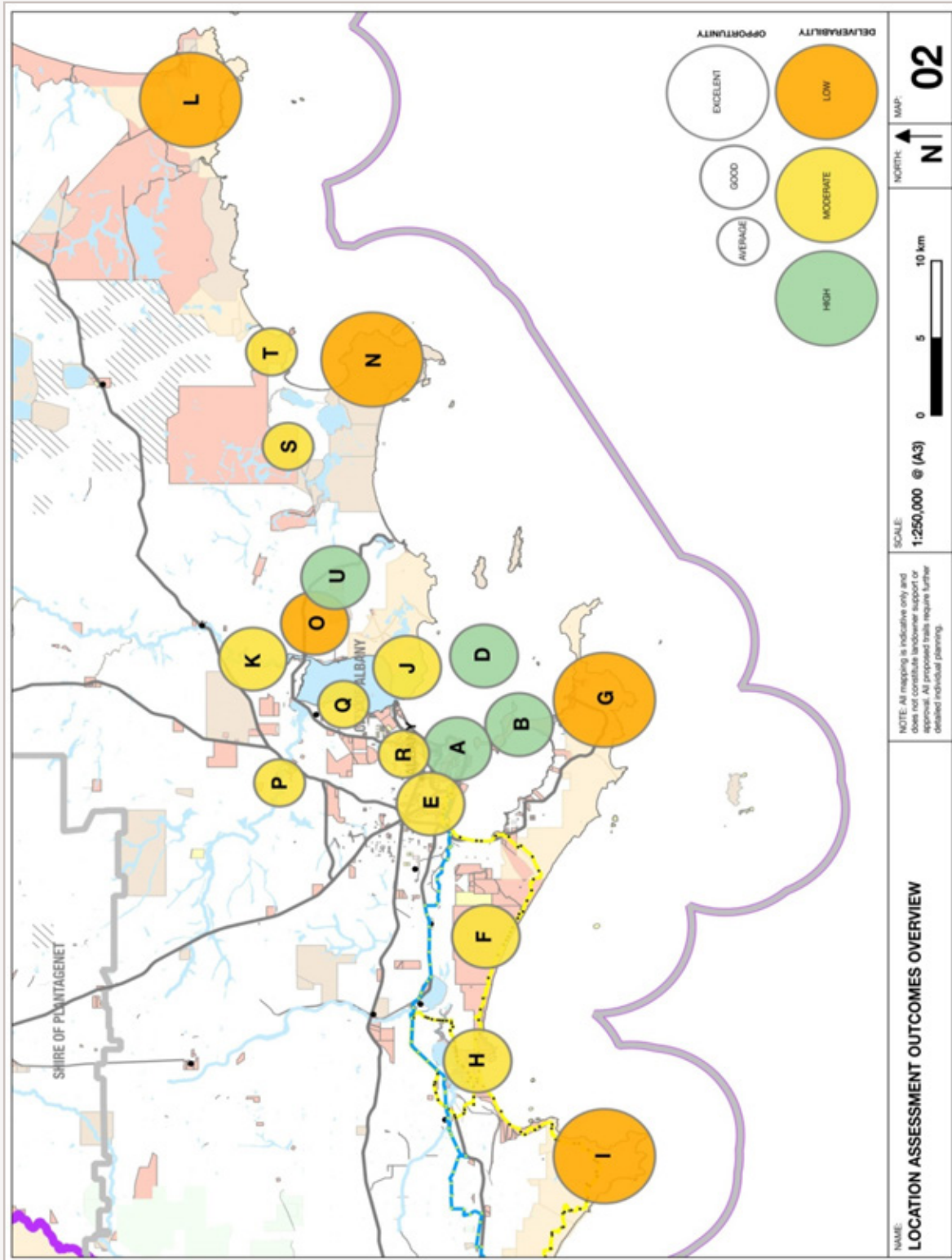
The Location Opportunity assessed the Access, Value, Quality and Diversity of a location. Locations were identified as having Excellent, Good, Average or Below Average opportunity; identifying the location's relative importance and uniqueness.

The Location Deliverability assessed the Constraints, Stakeholders, Planning & Land Use of a location. Locations are identified as having Long, Medium or Short deliverability; identifying the potential development timeframe.

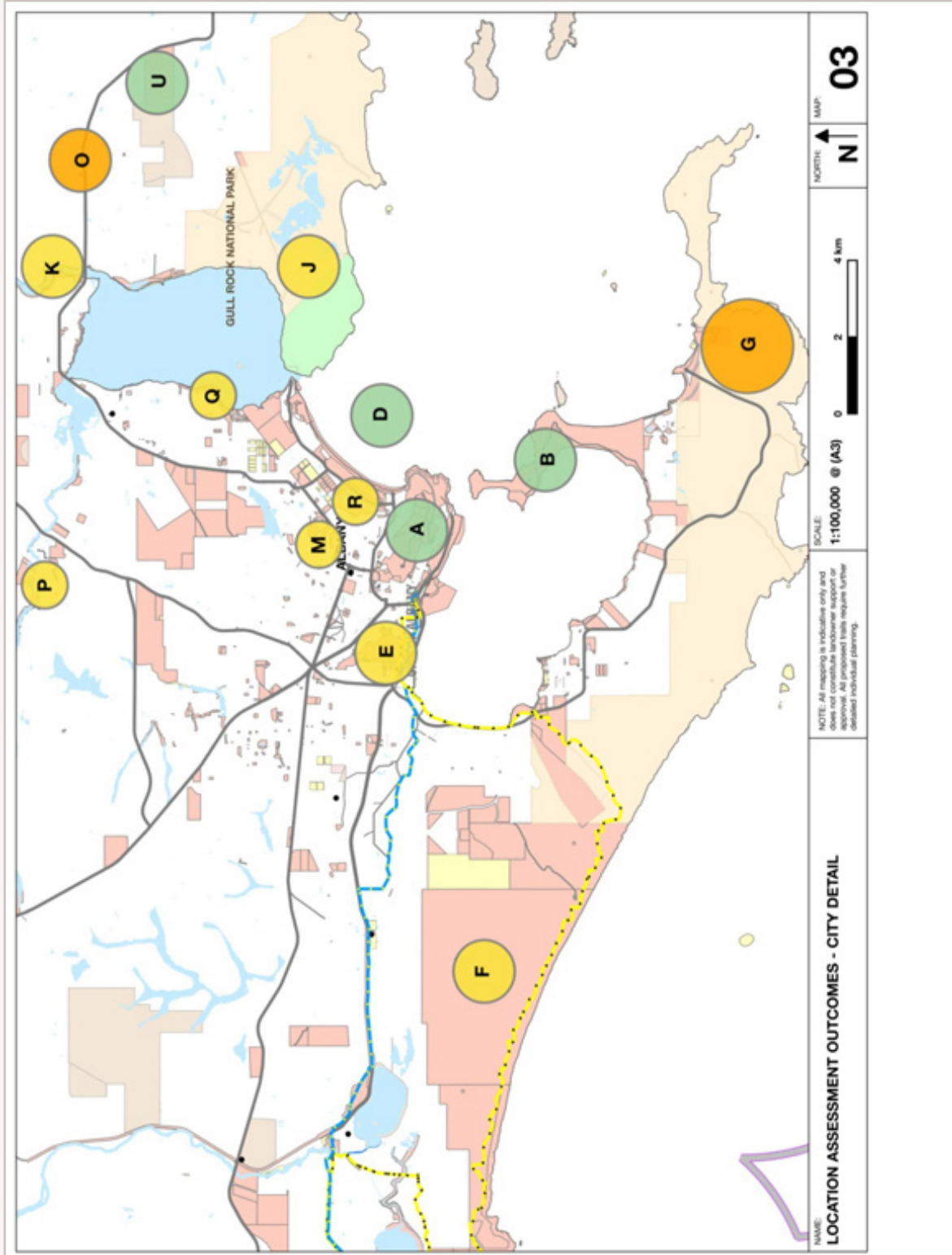
Table 4 details the opportunity and deliverability of each identified precinct, not taking into consideration the user group requirements and constraints (which are discussed further in following pages).

Identifier	Location	Land Manager	Opportunity	Deliverability
A	Mount Adelaide & Clarence	City of Albany	Good	High
B	Vancouver Point	City of Albany	Good	High
C	City Centre	City of Albany	Good	High
D	King George Sound	Dept Transport	Good	High
E	Mount Melville	City of Albany	Good	Moderate
F	Sandpatch	City of Albany	Good	Moderate
G	Torndirrup	DPaW	Excellent	Low
H	Torbay / Mutton Bird	City of Albany	Good	Moderate
I	West Cape Howe	DPaW	Excellent	Low
J	Mt Martin	DPaW	Good	Moderate
K	Kalgan River	City of Albany	Good	Moderate
L	Waychinicup	DPaW	Excellent	Low
M	Bluff Rock	City of Albany	Average	High
N	Two Peoples Bay	DPaW	Excellent	Low
O	Private Land	Private	Good	Low
P	King River	City of Albany	Average	Moderate
Q	Bayonet Head Oyster Bay	City of Albany	Average	Moderate
R	Lake Seppings	City of Albany	Average	Moderate
S	Reservoir Hill	Department of Water	Average	Moderate
T	Boulder Hill	City of Albany	Average	Moderate
U	Poikeclerup	City of Albany	Good	High

Table 4: Opportunity and Deliverability by Location



- SITES**
- Population Centre
- EXISTING TRAILS**
- ▬ Bibbulmun Track
- ▬ Munda Biddi
- ▬ Cycle Trail
- ROADS**
- ▬ Highways, Freeway
- ▬ Main Road sealed
- ▬ Minor road sealed
- ▬ Minor road unsealed
- ▬ Track



- SITES**
- Population Centre
- EXISTING TRAILS**
- ▬ Bibbulmun Track
- ▬ Munda Biddi
- ▬ Cycle Trail
- ROADS**
- ▬ Highways, Freeway
- ▬ Main Road sealed
- ▬ Minor road sealed
- ▬ Minor road unsealed
- ▬ Track



Maps 2 and 3 show the results of the prioritisation of both opportunity and deliverability of the precincts and locations.

In addition to the site opportunity and deliverability, the framework further assessed the opportunity, suitability and deliverability of each individual user group in each of the identified priority locations. Each individual site was assessed for user group suitability including assessment of Ground Conditions, Topography, Terrain, Vegetation, Planning, Access, Stakeholder Support and Community Support.

The prioritisation framework also assessed the market potential and existing supply of trails for each user group in Albany. The market potential is based on the identified recreation and participation trends. Each of the locations was given a High, Medium or Low score. Combining all of the scored assessments including the site opportunity, site deliverability, user group suitability, market potential and existing supply provided each location and user group with a hierarchical rating for each location and ultimately determined the priority projects.

Prioritisation Framework		
ASSESSMENT (& SCORING)		
Site Opportunity (1 — 3)	=	PROJECT PRIORITY LIST (Score of 7 — 21)
Site Deliverability (1 — 3)		
User Group Opportunity (1 — 3)		
User Group Suitability (1 — 3)		
User Group Deliverability (1 — 3)		
User Group Market Potential (1 — 3)		
User Group Trail Supply (1 — 3)		

Table 5 Assessment and Scoring for Prioritisation Framework

Some of the identified high priority projects are not necessarily a priority for major stakeholders or land managers or easily achieved projects. This strategy will focus on the City of Albany managed trails. The Strategy will also be used to demonstrate the opportunities for other land managers and as a development guide.

Table 6 identifies all projects across all tenures, by location, user group and in order of priority. Realistically not all priority projects will be achievable within the period of the strategy. They are identified to ensure the long term vision remains to achieve the World Class Trails Hub.

This helped to identify the following key precincts and Priority Projects discussed in detail in Volume 2.



Table 6: Trails Priority Project by Land Manager and User Group

TRAILS PRIORITY PROJECT – High Priority and CoA Land Manager							
Order	Identifier	Location	Land Manager	User Group	Opportunity	Deliverability	Priority
1	A2	Mt Clarence & Adelaide	CoA	Mountain Bike	Good	High	High
2	A1 & A4	Mt Clarence & Adelaide	CoA	Walking	Excellent	High	High
3	A3	Mt Clarence & Adelaide	CoA	Interpretation	Excellent	High	High
4	E3	Mt Melville	CoA	Mountain Bike	Good	High	High
5	E1 & E4	Mt Melville	CoA	Walking	Excellent	Moderate	High
6	B1	Vancouver Point	CoA	Walking	Excellent	High	High
7	C1 & C3	City Centre	CoA	Walking	Excellent	Moderate	High
10	E2	Mt Melville	CoA	Interpretation	Good	High	High
12	C2	City Centre	CoA	Interpretation	Excellent	Moderate	High
15	B2	Vancouver Point	CoA	Interpretation	Good	High	High
19	B4	Vancouver Point	CoA	Paddle	Excellent	High	High
20	B3	Vancouver Point	CoA	Aquatic	Excellent	High	High
21	F2	Sand Patch	CoA	Equestrian	Excellent	High	High
22	K2	Kalgan River	CoA	Paddle	Excellent	High	High
TRAILS PRIORITY PROJECT – High Priority and Other Land Manager							
8	G3	Torndirrup	DPaW	Mountain Bike	Excellent	Low	High
9	N/A	Waychincup	DPaW	Mountain Bike	Excellent	Low	High
11	B4 & G4	King George Sound	DoT	Paddle	Excellent	High	High
13	G1	Torndirrup	DPaW	Walking	Excellent	Moderate	High
14	N/A	West Cape Howe	DPaW	Climbing	Excellent	Moderate	High
16	J2	Mt Martin	DPaW	Mountain Bike	Good	Moderate	High
TRAILS PRIORITY PROJECT – Moderate Priority and CoA Land Manager							
23	U1	Poikeclerup	CoA	Mountain Bike	Good	High	Moderate
29	F3	Sand Patch	CoA	Interpretation	Good	High	Moderate
30	N/A	Bayonet Head Oyster Bay	CoA	Interpretation	Good	High	Moderate
31	K1	Kalgan River	CoA	Walking	Good	High	Moderate
32	K1	Kalgan River	CoA	Mountain Bike	Good	High	Moderate
38	N/A	Bayonet Head Oyster Bay	CoA	Paddle	Excellent	High	Moderate
41	N/A	King River	CoA	Paddle	Good	High	Moderate



42	N/A	Boulder Hill	CoA	Mountain Bike	Good	Moderate	Moderate
43	F1	Sand Patch	CoA	Walking	Good	Moderate	Moderate
44	N/A	Torbay Mutton	CoA	Walking	Good	Moderate	Moderate
46	C3	Lake Seppings	CoA	Walking	Good	Moderate	Moderate
47	C3	Lake Seppings	CoA	Interpretation	Good	Moderate	Moderate
TRAILS PRIORITY PROJECT – Moderate Priority and Other Land Manager							
27	N/A	Two Peoples Bay	DPaW	Walking	Excellent	Low	Moderate
28	N/A	Waychicup	DPaW	Walking	Excellent	Low	Moderate
33	B3	King George Sound	DoT	Aquatic	Good	High	Moderate
34	N/A	Reservoir Hill	DoW	Mountain Bike	Good	Moderate	Moderate
35	G3	Torndirrup	DPaW	Interpretation	Good	Moderate	Moderate
36	N/A	Private Land	Private	Mountain Bike	Good	Moderate	Moderate
37	N/A	West Cape Howe	DPaW	Mountain Bike	Good	Low	Moderate
39	N/A	Private Land	Private	Equestrian	Excellent	High	Moderate
48	J1	Mt Martin	DPaW	Walking	Good	Moderate	Moderate
TRAILS PRIORITY PROJECT – Low Priority and CoA Land Manager							
52	N/A	Torbay Mutton	CoA	Mountain Bike	Average	Moderate	Low
53	N/A	Torbay Mutton	CoA	Equestrian	Good	High	Low
54	N/A	Torbay Mutton	CoA	Paddle	Good	High	Low
56	N/A	Boulder Hill	CoA	Walking	Good	Moderate	Low
57	N/A	Torbay Mutton	CoA	Aquatic	Good	Moderate	Low
60	C1	Bluff Rock	CoA	Walking	Average	High	Low
61	E5	Mt Melville	CoA	Climbing	Average	High	Low
62	N/A	Bayonet Head Oyster Bay	CoA	Walking	Average	High	Low
64	N/A	King River	CoA	Walking	Average	Moderate	Low
TRAILS PRIORITY PROJECT – Low Priority and Other Land Manager							
55	N/A	Two Peoples Bay	DPaW	Paddle	Good	High	Low
58	N/A	Two Peoples Bay	DPaW	Aquatic	Good	Moderate	Low
59	G4 & G6	Torndirrup	DPaW	Paddle	Good	Moderate	Low
63	N/A	Private Land	Private	Walking	Average	Moderate	Low





PRIORITY PROJECTS:

From the extensive work and community engagement undertaken, 7 key projects for the City of Albany and 2 key projects for other land managers were identified, which will assist Albany to become a Trails Tourism Hub.

The key Trails Projects (in priority order) are:

City of Albany Land Manager:

1. Albany Heritage Park (Mount Adelaide and Clarence)
2. City Centre
3. Mount Melville
4. Kalgan River
5. Vancouver Peninsula
6. Sand Patch
7. Poikeclerup

Other Land Manager:

1. Torndirrup National Park
2. Mount Martin and Gull Rock National Park

Each project identifies the existing trails and indicates the **general location** of possible future trail links without necessarily reflecting specific alignments, land tenure or access availability.

Detailed studies of each location (following the development guidelines are required prior to any construction of the trail network to confirm proposed future trails and links.

See Volume 2 for more information – including project sheets for each priority project.



3.2 ASSESSMENT AS A TRAIL HUB — FIVE AS

A key component of a successful trails hub is the capacity to service the needs of the trails tourist through an adequate supply in the Five As — Accommodation, Activities, Attractions, Amenities and Access. An assessment of the Five As was undertaken to identify Albany's current position to service the needs to tourists.

In general terms, Albany has an adequate supply of general services to support a Trails Hub. Trails tourists can seek a range of accommodation types, depending on the type of trail activity they are undertaking. Development of Albany as a trails hub, with a range of trail activities from short day walks to overnight cycle tours should create demand for a range of accommodation types.

A comprehensive range of amenities are already available within the City of Albany, particularly focused around the re-activation of the City Centre and the new town square. Some specific trails amenities and improvements were identified in the audit and covered in detail in Volume 4.

3.3 ASSESSMENT OF MARKETING, GOVERNANCE AND TENURE

MARKETING

Visitor Information/Trails Brochures

A range of trail brochures are available at the Albany Visitor Centre. Many of the brochures and maps are out of date and there is a consistent lack in branding, quality, design and information. The Albany Visitor Guide generally promotes the use of trails. Walking trails, which are the most popular (as shown in the market research survey) are primarily promoted in a small booklet, published by the City of Albany.

A separate Clarence Downhill brochure exists but is not linked to any other cycling trails or maps. The Top trails brochure promotes the Luke Pen Trail and Ellen Cove dual use path and a separate brochure promotes the Stidwell Bridle Trail.

The Amazing Albany Website

The website is very comprehensive and accessible. Trails are not directly promoted and unfortunately, there are no maps or downloadable information. There is very limited information about the outdoor and trail activity.



OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

✓	There is an opportunity to enhance trail information and maps to tie attractions and amenities together with trails activity.
✓	Develop a comprehensive and consistent brand and embed into all new marketing strategies of trails within the City of Albany
✓	Update and link all trails information into the Amazing Albany Website
✓	Town Square

GOVERNANCE

The City of Albany manages trails on City of Albany land and Department of Parks and Wildlife manage their trails. In terms of community involvement, there are currently a number of community groups and clubs who are all active and work closely with the City of Albany and DPaW to monitor and support the maintenance of trails. This reflects a strong community involvement, which can be harnessed to great benefit for the Albany trails hub.

TENURE

Albany's existing trails and the identified trail opportunities are located on varied tenures. The success of Albany's trails hub will be impacted by the constraints of the various tenure types. Though the Conservations Reserves of Albany (managed by DPaW) hold the desired landscapes for trail development and a significant proportion of the available land offerings within the Albany LGA, they are significantly constrained by local management plans and stakeholder support. The Department of Water Policy 13 has significant impact over a large proportion of reserves. Long term strategies are needed in order to facilitate the realisation of Albany's desire to be a world class trails hub.

OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY

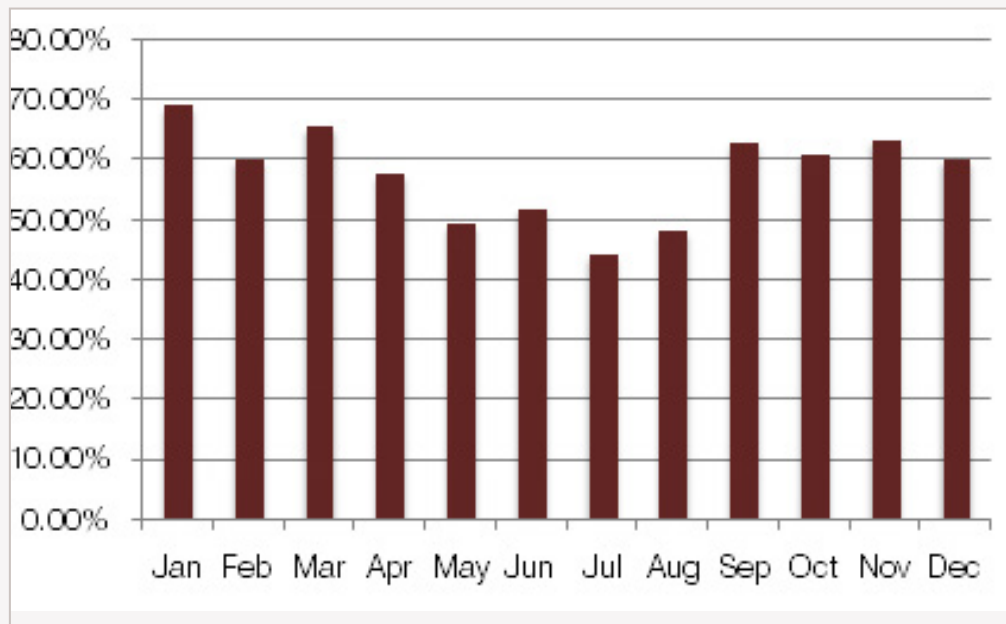
✓	Significant opportunities exist for improved trail networks on City of Albany managed land which is actively used for trails recreation and due to the relative ease of development
✓	Where appropriate Crown Land could be investigated for future trail opportunities
✓	Long term strategies are needed to develop opportunities with other land managers.



3.4 TRAILS HUB INVENTORY ASSESSMENT — SUMMARY

An assessment was made using the World Class Trails Hub Strategy Inventory Assessment tool which results in a Spider Graph indicating (in a summary format across the six components of a trails hub) which areas are strengths and which areas should be a focus for improvement.

In summary, the spider graph reflects that Albany has strengths as an established tourist destination with a suitable capacity in accommodation services and attractions to support growth in tourists. It also has a very suitable landscape and aesthetic factors which make it ideal for developing a unique trails destination.



Graph 1- Visual Representation of Albany Trails Hub Inventory Assessment

While Albany is not lacking in its overall trails offering it is not coordinated or promoted well. There is a lack of connectivity between trails and the town. There are opportunities to improve loops and trail connections, trail mapping and on-route signage. There are also opportunities to develop new trails, specifically mountain bike and aquatic trails.

Due to Albany's broad range of unique natural features and existing trails and trail opportunities, Albany should be promoted as an **all-trail-type hub** and there should be a range of trail user friendly businesses which focus on servicing the needs of all trail user segments.

As there is no apparent centre for trail activity and the town's topography affects the sense of connectivity to trails, some trail information nodes should be created. The Visitor Centre provides opportunity for a central Trail head for Bibbulmun and Munda Biddi Trails and a link



to the Town Square. The Albany Heritage Park, incorporating Mount Adelaide and Mount Clarence could also provide a centralised trail head. Looped trails are also an opportunity to contribute to creation of a 'trail centre'.

Though there is an active cycle friendly business community, the current lack of cycle trail-product is restricting the capacity of these businesses to grow. There is an opportunity to achieve the capacity to be an international mountain bike destination by building more mountain bike trails and a regionally based mountain bike trail product. This will support the growth in ancillary services, such as cycle friendly businesses to meet the needs of those visitors. There are also opportunities to build events associated with trail activity and similarly branding and coordinated marketing efforts to position Albany for its trail offering.

Significant trail development opportunities exist on land not managed by the City and there are challenges in developing trails on this land. If community support for the trails hub continues to grow, this will help provide the momentum to build, in particular, more off road cycling trails.





3.5 ALBANY TRAILS HUB READINESS SUMMARY

Based on the comprehensive analysis undertaken the following summarises Albany's position to achieve the vision of a World Class Trail Tourism Hub (TTH) situated around high quality trail systems, supported by a complete package of hospitality and visitor services:

Strengths

- ✓ Nature's Playground — unique landscapes consisting of iconic coastline, granite and mountains
- ✓ Established and developing tourism industry
- ✓ Quality and diversity of natural environment, landscape and attractions
- ✓ Good base of 5 As with capacity to absorb growth
- ✓ Strong international reputation, enhanced by ANZAC heritage
- ✓ Plenty of existing walking trails
- ✓ Established dual use and downhill trail
- ✓ The Mounts (Adelaide and Clarence) in close proximity to town centre with tremendous visual amenity
- ✓ Bibbulmun Track and Munda Biddi are iconic trails, both ending/starting in Albany
- ✓ Wide range of existing recreational facilities
- ✓ Wilderness with high conservation values
- ✓ Heritage values — Indigenous and European
- ✓ Supportive land management within City of Albany
- ✓ Supportive community groups and clubs

Weaknesses

- Range of land managers with different management regimes
- Land size limits and land access limitations (water catchment, Parks and Wildlife management plans)
- Sandy country next to coastal vistas is expensive to develop sustainable trails on
- Not enough capacity in mountain bike trail yet to make it internationally significant cycle trails destination
- Lack of information, connectivity, coordination and branding of trails for trail users and visitors
- Current brand positioning based around mature destination attracting older demographic, not trails tourist
- Lack of aquatic trails
- Lack of coordination the the region for destination marketing

Opportunities

- ✓ Position Albany as general trails and outdoor adventure destination and a hub for all trails activity in the region
- ✓ Develop mountain bike and aquatic trails



- ✓ Work within broader region to develop and promote a cluster of trail products to raise the region to an international level
- ✓ Encourage trail events to bring trail tourists into Albany
- ✓ Link Albany trails hub to Great Southern Outdoor Centre of Excellence
- ✓ Develop a trail centre within the City Centre and links to key trails
- ✓ Develop loops around key trail routes — create linkages with the central town and with existing trails
- ✓ Develop Albany Heritage Park (Mount Adelaide and Clarence) as a key recreational trail precinct
- ✓ Signage and maps for current trails to make finding and using trails easier
- ✓ Collate trails information and promote through a suite of tools
- ✓ Maintenance programs required which are sustainable, environmentally sensitive and appropriately funded

Threats

- Regional competition with Trails Hubs emerging throughout South West – particularly Margaret River
- Unable to overcome existing brand positioning to attract new visitors
- Environmental impacts such as invasive species, dieback, erosion
- Business and community not supportive of trails tourism
- Lack of collaboration within region to promote/share regional trails product
- Land access issues preventing the new trail types which are needed
- Lack of coordination of the trails hub across various land owners





3.6 KEY SUMMARY

Albany has significant potential as a Trails Tourism Hub destination.

This potential could be enhanced through development of a critical mass of trails and trail related services in the City and wider region. In particular a focus on mountain biking to attract a young and new market segment, further enhanced with new aquatic trails and improvements to bushwalking trails and other outdoor activities.

The key is differentiating Albany from its competitors through cohesive promotion of existing trails and creating new iconic mountain bike and paddling trails in unique landscapes.

In the longer term, Albany's potential can be further enhanced when clustered with an iconic regional product, based around the entire Lower Great Southern Region.

Albany can be ideally positioned as the central trail hub surrounded by a range of trail and outdoor activities throughout the entire Lower Great Southern Region. Clustering with the GS CORE will also add to this appeal and position Albany as a world class outdoor adventure destination.

The recommendations aim to build capacity within Albany to be the base from which a range of trail activities can occur and which would ultimately attract an international audience.

This Trails Hub Strategy will focus on:

- creating appropriate trail activity and supporting infrastructure to support the needs of all trail users within the City of Albany boundaries
- building the capacity within Albany to support a range of trail activity and
- building Albany's branding position as an outdoor adventure (through trails) destination



4.1 VISION

The City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy has been developed to provide strategic guidance to enable the City to become one of Australia's primary trails destinations:

A World Class Trail Tourism Hub (TTH) situated around high quality trail systems, supported by a complete package of hospitality and visitor services set within our unique natural landscapes.

The City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy is a comprehensive document, which includes some broad objectives and a variety of integrated and interdependent trails and trail hub projects which provide a framework to assist planning within the City of Albany for the next 10 years (2015 – 2025).

The following 4 objectives are key focus areas in achieving the City's vision:

- 1 Objective 1: Trail Network**
Develop, upgrade and maintain a high quality trails network for a broad range of outdoor adventure trail users.
- 2 Objective 2: Trails Infrastructure and Services**
Well planned and designed facilities and services which directly encourage the use of the trails network.
- 3 Objective 3: The Visitor Experience**
Support Albany to provide an exceptional trails visitor experience which will deliver economic and tourism benefits to the community
- 4 Objective 4: Governance, Management and Cooperation**
Optimise governance, management and cooperation across trail land owners, stakeholder groups and regional partners throughout the Lower Great Southern region in order to support Albany's position as the region's central trail hub and trails destination.
Specific strategies have been developed to support each Objective.



4.2 OBJECTIVE 1: TRAIL NETWORK

Develop, upgrade and maintain a high quality trails network for a broad range of outdoor adventure trail users.

Strategies:

- 1.1 Work towards upgrading existing trails to meet the Trails Development and Construction Guidelines, focusing on walking and equestrian trails
- 1.2 Develop an environmentally sensitive, sustainable and consistent approach to new trail construction through the use of a Trail Development Process, Trails Construction Guidelines and a Trail Framework Template
- 1.3 Undertake a mountain bike trail 'pilot project' to demonstrate an environmental sensitivity and low impact recreational activity, within the City Centre
- 1.4 A phased and prioritised approach to trail development in the trails precincts, commencing with trails within the City Centre and expanding outwards
- 1.5 Develop a range of new trails set in iconic locations to attract new trail growth segments, with a focus on mountain biking trails and aquatic trails

This links with the City of Albany Community Strategic Plan: Key Theme 3 — A Connected Built Environment

4.3 OBJECTIVE 2: TRAILS INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Well planned and designed facilities and services which directly encourage the use of the trails network.

Strategies:

- 2.1 Identify and support the development of a Trails Hub Centre to provide a central contact and information point
- 2.2 Develop a standard approach to trailheads, signage and style guidelines to identified priority trails
- 2.3 Develop and implement a recognised classification system for a variety of trail users, which will be consistently promoted through the trails network
- 2.4 Develop a range of Trailheads and supporting infrastructure for identified key locations for a variety of trail user groups
- 2.5 Develop a unified brand of trails maps, linking to existing Amazing Albany brand, in a variety of formats
- 2.6 Encourage a variety of support services to trail users to assist their access to the trails network

This links with the City of Albany Community Strategic Plan: Key Theme 3 — A Connected Built Environment and Theme 2 — Clean, Green and Sustainable





4.4 OBJECTIVE 3: THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Support Albany to provide an exceptional trails visitor experience which will deliver economic and tourism benefits to the community

- 3.1 Develop a coordinated marketing presence, linking signage, maps and other marketing collateral to increase awareness of the trails and services in Albany and the Lower Great Southern region.
- 3.2 Identify key trails and tourism websites and promote Albany and the region's trails opportunities
- 3.3 Explore opportunities for trails promotion and events within existing City of Albany program
- 3.4 Encourage and support services and businesses to undertake recognised Hospitality Accreditation and provide a comprehensive package of hospitality to all trails visitors
- 3.5 Encourage and support new trail business opportunities and identified gaps in service provision

This links with the City of Albany Community Strategic Plan: Key Theme1 — Smart, Prosperous and Growing

4.5 OBJECTIVE 4: GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND COOPERATION

Optimise governance, management and cooperation across trail land owners, stakeholder groups and regional partners throughout the Lower Great Southern region in order to support Albany's position as the region's central trail hub and trails destination.

Strategies:

- 4.1 Link identified priorities, (eg key precinct projects, budget, maintenance and responsibilities) to the 10 year Asset Management and Financial Plans to ensure an ongoing commitment and progress towards the City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy and provide a list of annual priorities to key stakeholders
- 4.2 Identify and develop funding models and Business Cases which will create ongoing operational sustainability
- 4.3 Explore opportunities for sub-regional (LGS) collaboration (including GS CORE) to promote the regions nature trail experiences
- 4.4 Improve coordination across the City of Albany to seamlessly deliver and manage trails infrastructure
- 4.5 Establish a network of people and agencies with the skills and knowledge to support and guide the implementation of the City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy

4.6 MISSION

The City of Albany acknowledges the importance of the need to respect and enhance the environment and consistently acknowledge the cultural and heritage importance of our assets.

As a result of the community engagement process an overarching Mission statement has been developed in line with the Great Southern Development Commission's Regional Blue Print:

"We will respect and enhance the region's environment and heritage assets in a sustainable manner."

The Principles underlying this are:

1. Locate new trails in iconic locations, within the City Centre and expand outwards
2. Focus on new trails growth markets of mountain biking, paddling and aquatic
3. Rationalize and upgrade existing trails
4. Give priority to trails that provide loops and connectivity
5. Support trail development models that capitalize on iconic coastal landscapes
6. Build the right trail in the right place





This links with the City of Albany Community Strategic Plan: Key Theme 5 - Civic Leadership
The following Action Plan has been developed based on the findings from the initial report, additional research and analysis and through community engagement.

The strategies and targets has been prioritised and incorporated into a 10 year Action Plan. Longer planning and implementation horizons have also been allowed where it is viewed strategies are more complex and require additional resources and partnerships to bring them to completion.

IMPLEMENTATION HORIZONS

As such strategies are categorised according to the following planning horizons:

Short Term (S) – planned works to be developed within 1 – 5 years

Medium Term (M) – planned works to be developed within 5 – 10 years

Long Term (L) – planned works to be completed after 2025 (beyond the scope of this strategy)

Responsibility for the strategy implementation is listed with the Directorate within the City of Albany.

Opportunities for partnership are also listed for some strategies and include both internal (within City of Albany) and external partnerships (key agencies and stakeholder groups). The opportunities for partnerships are flexible and may change over time.

TYPES

Trails Hubs and Trails are the responsibility and under management of a variety of different land managers and organisations. Within this Action Plan the way the City will work at reaching the targets are categorised according to the following role of the City:

Direct (D) – Council has a direct influence on the target

Influence (I) – Council has an influence on the target but other external factors outside our control may also impact it

Monitor (M) – Council has no influence on the result but monitors it to assist in future planning



SECTION 5: ACTION PLAN

5.1 OBJECTIVE 1 – TRAILS NETWORK

Develop, upgrade and maintain a high quality trails network for a broad range of outdoor adventure trail users.

Strategy	Target	Type	Implementation Horizon	Implementation Responsibility	Opportunities for Partnership
1.1 Work towards upgrading existing trails to meet the Trails Development and Construction Guidelines, focusing on walking and equestrian trails	Trail Construction guidelines adopted		S	Recreation Services, City Reserves and Albany Heritage Park Manager	Lotterywest DSR
	Review and upgrade existing Albany Heritage Park Trails Network	D			
	Review and upgrade Mike Stidwell Trail and Network.	D	S — M		
	Review and upgrade existing Top 5 Trail Project Network.	D			
1.2 Develop an environmentally sensitive, sustainable and consistent approach to new trail construction, through the use of a Trail Development Process, Trails Construction Guidelines and a Trail Framework Template	Trails Development Process Policy developed and adopted	D	S	Recreation Services, Planning and City Reserves	Clubs
	Trail Construction guidelines adopted	D	S		
	Trails Development Process Policy and Construction Guidelines launched and promoted	D	S		



Strategy	Target	Type	Implementation Horizon	Implementation Responsibility	Opportunities for Partnership
1.3 Undertake a mountain bike trail 'pilot project' to demonstrate an environmental sensitivity and low impact recreational activity, within the City Centre	Completion of a pilot MTB trail at Albany Heritage Park	D	S	Recreation Services and City Reserves, Albany Heritage Park Manager, Planning AMTB club	GSDC Lotterywest DSR Clubs
	Code of conduct and yield hierarchy developed, installed and promoted.	D	S		
	Launch of the MTB Trail at Albany Heritage Park	D	S		
	Pilot Project Evaluation completed	D	M		
	Code of Conduct Evaluated	D	S		
1.4 A phased and prioritised approach to trail development in the trails precincts, commencing with trails within the City Centre and expanding outwards	Trail development undertaken as per trails priority schedule over 10 year period	D	M	Recreation Services, Planning and City Reserves	GSDC Lotterywest DSR DoT
1.5 Develop a range of new trails set in iconic locations to attract new trail growth segments, with a focus on mountain biking trails and aquatic trails	Develop at least three new MTB Trails with a focus on the Albany Heritage Park and Top 7 Projects.	D	S—M	Recreation Services, Planning and City Reserves	GSDC Lotterywest DSR DoT
	Develop at least two new aquatic Trails from the Top 7 Projects	D/I	S—M		
Implementation Horizons – Short (S) planned works within 1—5 years, Medium (M) planned works within 5—10 years, Long (L) planned works beyond 2025 Type – Direct (D) Council has direct influence on target, Influence (I) Council has influence but other external factors may impact, Monitor (M) Council has no influence on results but monitor to assist in future planning					





SECTION 5: ACTION PLAN

5.2 OBJECTIVE 2 — TRAILS INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Well planned and designed facilities and services which directly encourage the use of the trails network.

Strategy	Target	Type	Implementation Horizon	Implementation Responsibility	Opportunities for Partnership
2.1 Identify and support the development of a Trails Hub Centre to provide a central contact and information point	Trail Hub Centre and Visitors Centre consolidated	D	S	Recreation Services, Tourism Development, Business & Economic Development, Planning	GSDC Lotterywest
	Trail Hub Centre established	D	S — M		
	Visitor Centre staff trained in trails promotion	D	S		
	Supporting end of trip facilities are installed at Visitor Centre Trail Hub Centre	D	S — M		
2.2 Develop a standard approach to trailheads, signage and style guidelines to identified priority trails	Trailhead and signage piloted at City Centre (town square)	D	S	Recreation Services, Planning and City Reserves, Albany Heritage Park Manager	GSDC Lotterywest DSR
	Wayfinding signage piloted at Albany Heritage Park	D	S		
	Evaluation of wayfinding signage at Albany Heritage Park completed	D	S		
	Implement consistent signage in the top 7 Trail Projects	D	S — M		
2.3 Develop and implement a recognised classification system for a variety of trail users, which will be consistently promoted through the trails network	Pilot a classification system at Albany Heritage Park	D	S	Recreation Services and City Reserves, Albany Heritage Park Manager	GSDC Lotterywest DSR Trails WA
	Evaluate the classification system	D	S		
	Approve a recognised classification system for top 7 Trail Projects	D	S — M		
	Implement classification system for all new trails	D	S — M — L		
	Retrofit of all existing trails with classification system	D	M		



Strategy	Target	Type	Implementation Horizon	Implementation Responsibility	Opportunities for Partnership
2.4 Develop a range of Trailheads and supporting infrastructure for identified key locations for a variety of trail user groups	A Trailhead developed at City Centre (town square)	D	S	Recreation Services, Tourism Development	GSDC Lotterywest DSR
	A Trailhead developed at Albany Heritage Park	D	S		
	Realignment of the Munda Biddi and Biblumnumn Track to the City Centre Trail Head	D	S — M		
	Number of Trail heads developed and implemented	D	M		
2.5 Develop a unified brand of trails maps, linking to existing Amazing Albany brand, in a variety of formats	All new trails marketing collateral to incorporate Amazing Albany branding	D	S — M	Recreation Services, City Reserves, Business & Economic Development, Albany Heritage Park Manager	ACCI GSDC
	Development of the web based Trails Maps, within the Amazing Albany website	D	S — M		
	Increased number of hits and downloads on the Trails Page within the Amazing Albany website	D	S — M		
2.6 Encourage a variety of support services for trail users to assist with their access to the trails network	Increase in the number and variety of support services to trail users	I/M	L	Recreation Services, Business & Economic Development, Tourism Development	ACCI GSDC
<p>Implementation Horizons – Short (S) planned works within 1—5 years, Medium (M) planned works within 5—10 years; Long (L) planned works beyond 2025</p> <p>Type – Direct (D) Council has direct influence on target, Influence (I) Council has influence but other external factors may impact, Monitor (M) Council has no influence on results but monitor to assist in future planning</p>					





SECTION 5: ACTION PLAN

5.3 OBJECTIVE 3 – THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Support Albany to provide an exceptional trails visitor experience which will deliver economic and tourism benefits to the community

Strategy	Target	Type	Implementation Horizon	Implementation Responsibility	Opportunities for Partnership
3.1 Develop a coordinated marketing presence, linking signage, maps and other marketing collateral to increase awareness of the trails and services in Albany and the Lower Great Southern region.	The consolidated Trail Hub Centre and Visitor Centre is promoted and clearly recognised	D	S	Recreation Services, Tourism Development, Business & Economic Development, Corporate Services,	ACCI GSDC Trails WA
	All new trails marketing collateral to incorporate Amazing Albany branding	D	S		
	Development of the web based Trails Maps, within the Amazing Albany website	D	S		
	Increased number of hits and downloads on the Trails Page within the Amazing Albany website	D	S		
	Annual Community perception survey shows an increase in satisfaction and awareness of Albany trails.	D	S — M		
3.2 Identify key trails and tourism websites and promote Albany and the region's trail's opportunities	An increase in the number of links to the Amazing Albany Trails Page	D	S	Recreation Services, Tourism Development, Corporate Services,	Trails WA DSR ACCI GSDC



Strategy	Target	Type	Implementation Horizon	Implementation Responsibility	Opportunities for Partnership
3.3 Explore opportunities for trails promotion and events within existing City of Albany program	Calendar of trails promotional events developed	D	S	Recreation Services, Tourism Development,	AMTB club ACCI GSDC DSR Lotterywest
	Increase in the number of events incorporating trails activity	D	S — M		
	Host an annual trails event that promotes Albany as a trails destination	D/I	S — M		
	Host at least 3 significant trails events that promote Albany as a trails destination.	D/I	S — M — L		
3.4 Encourage and support services and businesses to undertake recognised Hospitality Accreditation and provide a comprehensive package of hospitality to all trails visitors	At least 50% of identified trail related business have undertaken recognised Hospitality Accreditation	I/M	S — M	Recreation Services, Tourism Development, Business & Economic Development,	ACCI DSR
3.5 Encourage and support new trail business opportunities and identified gaps in service provision	Audit of trail supporting business & gap analysis.	I/M	L	Recreation Services, Tourism Development, Business & Economic Development,	ACCI GSDC
	Increase in the number of new trail business established	I/M	L		

Implementation Horizons – Short (S) planned works within 1-5 years, Medium (M) planned works within 5-10 years, Long (L) planned works beyond 2025
Type – Direct (D) Council has direct influence on target, Influence (I) Council has influence but other external factors may impact, Monitor (M) Council has no influence on results but monitor to assist in future planning





SECTION 5: ACTION PLAN

5.4 OBJECTIVE 4 – GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND COOPERATION

Optimise governance, management and cooperation across trail land owners, stakeholder groups and regional partners throughout the Lower Great Southern region in order to support Albany's position as the region's central trail hub and trails destination.

Strategy	Target	Type	Implementation Horizon	Implementation Responsibility	Opportunities for Partnership
4.1	Link identified priorities, (eg key precinct projects, budget, maintenance and responsibilities) to the 10 year Asset Management and Financial Plans to ensure an ongoing commitment and progress towards the City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy and provide a list of annual priorities to key stakeholders	D	S — M	Recreation Services, Planning and City Reserves,	
	Annual Trails priorities incorporated into 10 year Asset Management Plans				
	Priority projects are completed within life of strategy	D	M		
4.2	Identify and develop funding models and Business Cases which will create ongoing operational sustainability	D/I/M	S — M — L	Recreation Services, Planning and City Reserves, Business & Economic Development, Tourism Development, Corporate Services	DSR



Strategy	Target	Type	Implementation Horizon	Implementation Responsibility	Opportunities for Partnership
4.3 Explore opportunities for sub-regional (LGS) collaboration (including GS CORE) to promote the regions nature trail experiences	Alternative funding models and Businesses Cases developed	D/I	S — M — L	Recreation Services, City Reserves, Business & Economic Development	DSR GSDC
	Agreed pilot funding model trialled in one of the top 5 projects, in partnership with community	D/I	S — M — L		
	Evaluation of the pilot on improved trails sustainability and community engagement.				
4.4 Improve coordination across the City of Albany to seamlessly deliver and manage trails infrastructure	Participate in regional trails planning	D	S	Recreation Services, Business & Economic Development	DPaW DSR GSDC
	Actions identified for future sub regional collaboration	M	M — L		
	GS CORE established and funded	I/M	M — L		
4.5 Establish a network of people and agencies with the skills and knowledge to support and guide the implementation of the City of Albany Trails Hub Strategy	Establishment of Trails Network Implementation Group	D	S — M	Recreation Services, Planning and City Reserves, Business & Economic Development, Tourism Development	DPaW DSR GSDC
	Successful implementation of the strategy	D	M — L		
<p>Implementation Horizons – Short (S) planned works within 1—5 years, Medium (M) planned works within 5—10 years, Long (L) planned works beyond 2025</p> <p>Type – Direct (D)/Council has direct influence on target, Influence (I) Council has influence but other external factors may impact, Monitor (M) Council has no influence on results but monitor to assist in future planning</p>					



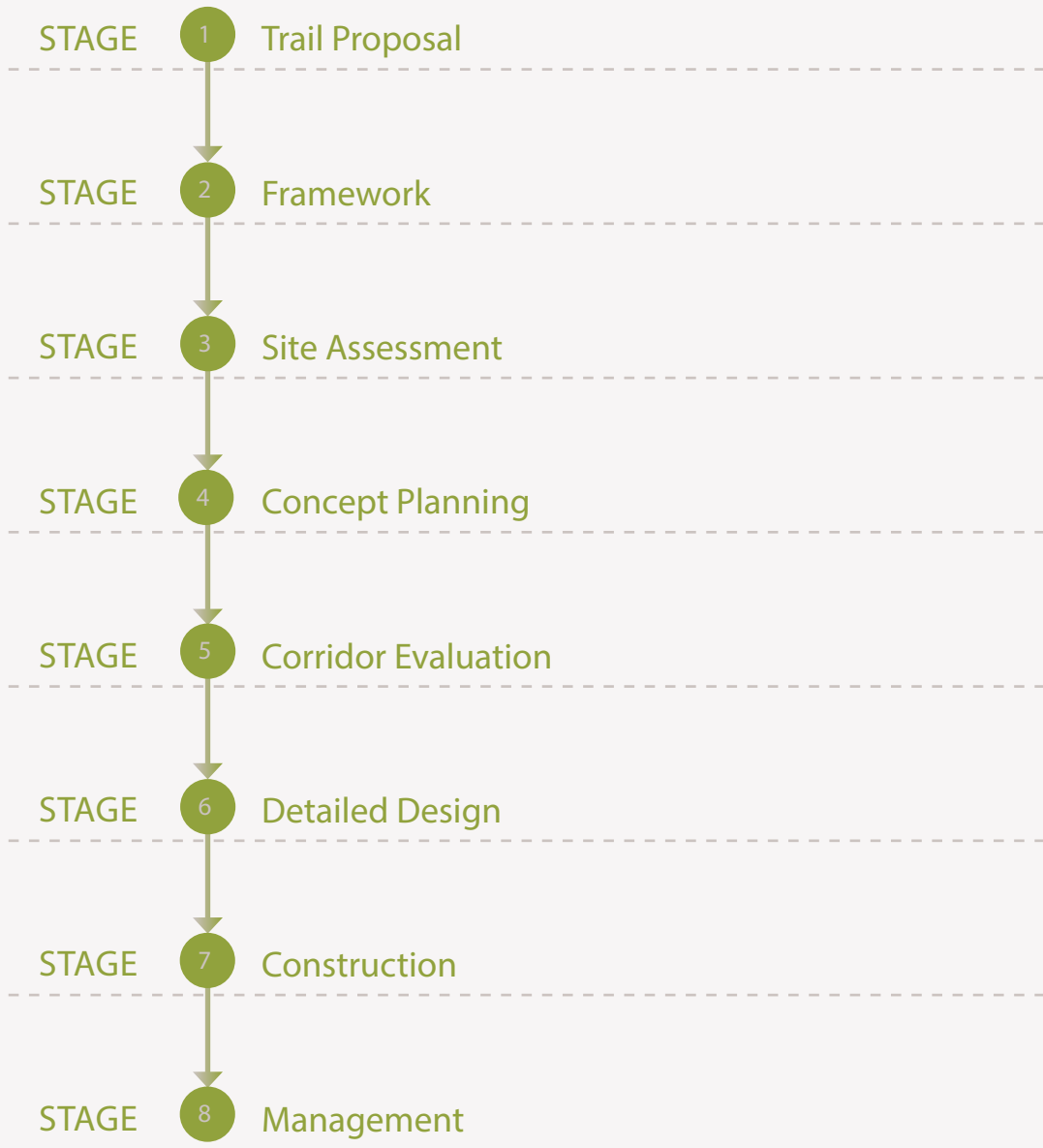


6.1 TRAIL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This process, briefly outlined in the table below, is deliberately prescriptive in order to ensure the delivery of the highest possible standard of trails which are sustainable and an asset to trail owners and the community.

The trail development process is the planning, design and construction procedures required to ensure the long-term sustainability of a trail facility.

To ensure successful trail development the required stages are outlined in the graphic below.





This process, briefly outlined in the table below, is deliberately prescriptive in order to ensure the delivery of the highest possible standard of trails which are sustainable and an asset to trail owners and the community.

Stage	Outcome		
Trail Proposal	The proposed area is supported in principle, or not supported due to constraints precluding trail development.		
Framework	A project outline including a clear understanding of project objectives, stakeholders, roles, requirements and execution		Desktop
Site Assessment	Undertake a broad scale study of the area and identify constraints		
Concept Plan	Conceptual design plan produced		
Corridor Evaluation	Concept plan checked and flagged in the field		
Detailed Design	Detailed trail design produced including classifications, technical trail features, construction types and specifications, and gain approvals.	Field	
Construction	Trail is constructed following the design specifications		
Management	Management plan implemented detailing maintenance and monitoring requirements		





The definitions of these eight stages are provided below.

Trail Proposal	<p>At the beginning of trail project the viability of the proposal should be assessed through preliminary background investigations of community support, legislative requirements, existing and proposed land use and management considerations.</p> <p>An Impact Evaluation Checklist (IEC) can be completed (desktop) to check for major constraints such as management plans, existing master plans, disease risk areas, water catchment.</p>
Framework	<p>Development of a clear framework guides and informs the entire project.</p>
Site Assessment	<p>The site assessment, combined with the framework inform the development of the concept plan.</p> <p>Conduct on ground, desktop and literature review of:</p> <p>Location, Access, Land Use, Landscape, Ground Conditions, Existing Recreation Use, Heritage and Environmental Protections and Constraints, Conflicts and Sensitivities.</p> <p>It is advised to meet with stakeholders to garner support and mitigate concerns at this stage.</p>
Concept Plan	<p>The concept plan illustrates what the trail system may look like and addresses key strategic priorities such as:</p> <p>Detailed review and identification of; location of trailhead, configuration of trails, alignment of trail corridors and estimation of development costs.</p> <p>It also identifies construction stages and makes broad cost estimates.</p> <p>The concept plan can form a crucial consultation tool to be presented to stakeholders.</p>
Corridor Evaluation	<p>The Corridor Evaluation stage completes the IEC by undertaking detailed checks and surveys within the proposed corridor identified in the Concept Plan and documenting environmental or heritage protection strategies where required.</p> <p>The corridor evaluations help to formally establish and agree on the location of trail corridors with land owners/managers and other stakeholder and should be developed into a report which can be used to seek approvals to proceed with detailed design.</p> <p>It may require work with specialist consultants to undertake; Dieback Mapping, Flora Survey and Aboriginal Heritage Survey, establishing estimated design, construction and management costs, identifying appropriate ways in which trails can be developed.</p> <p>Once the constraints have been assessed and any mitigation strategies documented, the proposed trail corridor can be flagged in the field.</p>



Detailed Design	<p>Review corridor evaluation outcomes, adjust trail corridor alignments and undertake detailed trail design including; trailhead nature and design, additional major feature designs, definitive trail lines and trail feature types & locations.</p> <p>The draft design plan should include construction ready specifications, final detailed design plan drawings related to these and timescales for approval by the Steering Group.</p> <p>Detailed design should include:</p> <p>Definitive trail lines, flagged in the field and identified on the plan, including the location of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turns • Technical Trail Features • Built structures • Drainage features • Hardened surfacing <p>Schematic construction plans including specified drawings for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turns • Technical Trail Features • Built structures • Drainage features • Trail tread construction cross sections • Hardened surfacing <p>Details of resources and materials required A signage plan Estimated probable construction costs</p>
Construction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop detailed construction & tender specification including; prescriptive trail plan & drawings, chainage identifying trail construction type and feature location, documentation of typical trail features & drainage techniques, construction management plan & standards. 2. Secure final approvals and permits 3. Advertise tender, select supplier 4. Appoint trail builder 5. Administer contract 6. Develop 'as built' documentation required for ongoing assessment and management of the facility.
Management	<p>Trails, like any other facility, require ongoing management and maintenance. A management plan should encompass all aspects of managing the trail and should be developed and agreed on by the Steering Group. The management plan should be informed by the Framework, and any broader land management policies. The plan should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background information (Outlined in the Framework) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trail system • The classification of the trails • Target use • The amount and type of use • Clarification of management roles and responsibilities (outlined in the Framework) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail adoption and volunteer roles • Funding and resources • A record of the infrastructure and costs or link to the appropriate system or asset database • Maintenance program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit • Frequency • Standards (e.g. construction, hygiene, signage) • Works program • Funding and resources • Hazard inspection and reporting procedures • Visitor statistic recording procedures • Marketing





6.2 TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION

In order to assist the City of Albany to create an environment that fully supports the development of Albany into a Trails Tourism Hub the following principles have been suggested. These general design and location considerations should be taken into account before and during construction of any trail.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR TRAILS TOURIST HUBS

- ✓ Locate new trails in iconic locations, within the City Centre and expanding outwards
- ✓ Focus on new trails growth markets (Mountain Bike and Aquatic)
- ✓ Give priority to trails that provide loops and connectivity
- ✓ Development of trail activity nodes which capitalise on iconic coastal landscapes

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SUSTAINABLE TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

Trails Location and Corridor Evaluation

Trail Network:

- The trail network and trailhead should be located such that riders finish their ride with a descent back to the trailhead. Most riders tend to prefer to do any hard climbing early during their ride, finishing with a descent.
- A mountain biking trail system should be easy to navigate and intuitive, with the majority of trails offered as loops, and generally following the same overall direction of travel. It should ideally be possible to ride one lap of the entire trail network, without backtracking, without crossing over any trails and without missing any large sections of trail.
- For a trail network, especially mountain biking, the easiest trails should be located near the trailhead, with increasingly harder trails located further from the trailhead. This is a risk management technique to prevent inexperienced riders accidentally ending up on very difficult trails.
- A trail network should be sympathetic to the terrain and topography, without trying to squeeze a large network of trails into a small space.
- Follow existing tracks/trails where possible to minimise disturbance to the landscape.
- Avoid areas of dense vegetation that may require heavy clearing, avoid environmentally sensitive areas (e.g. areas of endangered flora) and areas with high erosion potential
- Trails should meander to take advantage of natural and man-made features and to create interest.
- Avoid long straight sections with long steady grades.
- Use aerial photography, supported by extensive on-the-ground verification, to enable the best possible routes of proposed trails to be selected that maximises use of already-disturbed locations and that minimises the need for clearing of vegetation.

**Drainage planning:**

- Proper drainage is of considerable importance in constructing a lasting, maintenance-free facility. Water should be removed from trail surfaces as fast as possible, wherever possible. The steepness of some trails and the type of soil dictate individual site requirements for the frequency of draining water from trails.
- Culverts and other drainage controls (steps and water bars) should be used to direct runoff away where needed.
- It should be noted that some slope is desirable on shared-use trails.

Trails Design and Construction**Trail Direction:**

- Trail direction should be a consideration, especially for mountain biking trails where riders ride at speed.
- Single-direction trails are recommended for mountain biking trails in a network to improve visitor experience and safety.

Trail Width:

- Walk trails in the locations proposed should have a maximum trail width of 1.5m where purpose-built trail is required. On suitable sections a more intimate experience can be provided by reducing the trail width to around 1 to 1.2m.
- Shared-use trails should have a minimum trail width of 2.5m.
- Consistency of width is particularly important for mountain bike trails.

Trail Height:

- On trails only to be used only for walking (where cycling and mountain biking are to be excluded) height clearance should be around 2.5m.

Trail Surface materials:

- Walk trails can range from smooth natural earth surfaces to rashed limestone or more hardened surfaces, depending on the grade and purpose of the trail.
- A smooth compacted surface is most appropriate for shared-use trails and mountain bike trails.
- The surface should be firm enough to provide cyclists with a relatively smooth ride, and free of potholes and undulations.
- Choose appropriate materials for the trail's sub-base and topping (surface layer) to ensure longevity and suitability of the trail for the intended user groups.
- Use debris from trail clearing to prevent use of unwanted paths

Drainage:

- Ensure local drainage is maintained along natural watercourses where possible.



**Signage:**

- Effective signage will reduce possible conflicts between different types of trail users — for example, walkers and trail bikes or 4WDs, or cyclists and walkers. A code of conduct and field hierarchy will also reduce conflict between different trail users.

Rating:

- All trails should be given a trail difficulty rating

Road Crossings:

- A crossing should have enough space cleared and levelled on both sides of the road to allow trail users travelling together to gather in a group and cross en masse, to reduce overall time spent at the crossing.
- The crossing should be at a straight, level area allowing both trail user and vehicle driver good visibility and the driver ample stopping distance.
- The trail should be clearly marked on each side of the road for easy recognition and the crossing be designed to move the trail user away from the road reserve as quickly as possible.
- If at all possible the trail should not slope down — or up — to the road.

Further information is provided in *Austrroads Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice — Pt 14 — Bicycles*.

**Horse Trail Design**

The following was extracted from *Horse SA's Horse Trail Infrastructure – Guidelines for Peri Urban Precincts (2010)* by Tredwell Management and provides some highly valuable guidance with regards to horse trail design:

- **Barriers/control points:** Controlling access onto a trail, modifying speed or direction of users, often providing a barrier to unauthorised vehicular access. Suitable barriers may include the use of bollards, posts or rocks. Barriers should not require a horse to step over an obstacle exceeding 35cm in height and should have no protruding sharp edges. A cavaletti (step-over) allows safe access for horse and rider and should preferably be 3m wide, with a step-over height of 30-35cm. Control points should provide a hardened, horse-friendly surface.
- **Bridges:** the single most expensive item to include on a trail and may need to service recreational trail users and other users, such as emergency service vehicles. Careful consideration of construction materials is required, avoiding noisy materials and providing anti-slip surfacing. The colour and consistency of the surface of the trail should continue from the trail tread approaching the bridge, and over the bridge itself. Preferred widths are greater than 3.5m wide, with parapets.
- **Boardwalks:** a series of interconnected bridges positioned above ground height, enabling users to navigate over areas of sand, marshes or wetland. Horse trails rarely have boardwalks.



- **Hitching posts, Rails and Rings:** most likely to be required at trail heads, watering points and rest stops, including horse float parking sites. A hitching ring is a heavy duty ring anchored firmly into another solid fixture, such as a wall. A hitching post is a single upright post, strong enough to at least withstand a 750kg horse pulling back. A hitching rail accommodates 2 – 4 horses and should be placed at least 6m away from any other trail infrastructure, including the trail itself, installed on a hardened surface.
- **Mounting blocks:** installed at trail heads, rest stops and gates where horse riders are required to dismount to open and close. Riders normally mount the horse on the left hand side (head facing forward) and require a clear area around the mounting block. Wheelchair accessible mounting ramps might be considered at trail heads. One, two, or three step designs might be considered, dependent on budget, sitting and materials selected. Individual step heights approx. 250mm, width greater than 500mm and depth greater than 250mm.
- **Watering Points:** Trail heads require an identified source for stock water. Troughs require regular inspection (preferably daily) cleaning and maintenance. Taps fitted with self-turning-off handles can be supplied by mains water. If access to mains water is not available it may be necessary to provide rainwater tanks that collect runoff from shelters or other structures and may form part of other bridle trail infrastructure, such as covered seating and interpretive facilities at trail heads and rest stops. Such facilities would require on-going maintenance to ensure reliable water supply and that the supply meets all relevant health regulations. Maintenance would most likely be undertaken by the relevant land manager.
- **Traffic Separation:** riding along roadsides should be avoided as far as possible. Horses under the control of a rider are permitted to travel either way on the verge or footpath with due care. Where unavoidable, the provision of a natural or artificial barrier between the horse rider and vehicles on the carriageway should be considered. Provision of sufficient space between carriageway and trail would be considered a natural barrier, as would vegetation and earth mounding. Loss of roadside verges (at bridges or on the crest of hills and bends) creates 'crush points', which need to be carefully considered in terms of trail user safety.
- **Road Crossings:** crossing points should be minimised as far as possible, and safety for all trail users can be improved by careful selection of crossing points. If room permits, the installation of a horse holding bay is preferable, creating an area where horses can be held at halt, prior to crossing a road. A Pegasus crossing could be installed where regular crossings over busy roads are anticipated.
- **Crossing points:** need to be well signed, with holding bays/bump rails (approx. 1.4m high) located on a firm, natural surface. Crossing points require maximum sightlines for oncoming traffic and need to be free of hazards (street furniture, poorly placed signage, obtrusive landscaping).



- **Signage:** signage requirements vary from trail to trail and specific requirements may be imposed by various land managers (signage plans/policies). Signage hierarchy:
 - Primary signage – Trail Heads
 - Secondary signage – wayfinding markers
 - Tertiary signage – location specific (e.g. 'Close the Gate')
 - Regulatory signage (e.g. road signs)

Each land manager will have policies, specifications, application requirements and approval processes that must be complied with. All stakeholders (land managers, funding agencies, community groups) should review and approve all information contained on all signage.

- **Horse yards:** yards often hold horses for overnight stays and need to be well constructed.
- **Trail Heads:** provide an entry point onto a trail network, and include signage (with key trail information), horse float parking, tie up rails, horse yards (potentially), stock water source, rider and other trail user facilities. Perimeter fencing with gates is preferred to provide an extra level of security. Key considerations include trail head entry and exit points, vehicle turning circles, sightlines, and provision of sufficient parking numbers (including horse float parking). Consideration is also required for power availability, water (stock and human consumption), facilities for camping and BBQ areas and any resultant implications for neighbouring land uses/properties and conservation/heritage areas.
- **Trail Dimensions:**
 - The trail ceiling (trail surface to lowest overhead obstruction) should be 3m.
 - The trail tread width should be minimum 500mm (single horse track/bridle trail).
 - The trail corridor width should be minimum 1m (obstacle free, assuming trail tread is located centrally within the corridor).
- **Trail Surface:** A natural trail surface is preferred and long sections of asphalt or concrete avoided. Unstable, loose surfaces and loose debris (stones larger than 10mm across) are not suitable. The trail surface should be maintained in a safe condition, with the removal of any sharp objects (glass, metal scraps, loose wire), with the timely repair of deep pot holes/bog holes. Steep slippery surfaces such as rocky outcrops can be dangerous, although the degree to which certain surfaces/obstacles are acceptable is dependent on the experience and technical ability of the rider and the level challenge intended for the specific bridle trail.
- **For multi-use trails:** the use of trotting fines as surfacing options offers a relatively cost effective option to other surfaces, whilst serving to reduce impacts such as erosion of the trail tread. Trotting fines are a natural by-product of a variety of mining operations, comprised of 2mm diameter crushed aggregate (also known as crusher dust). This type of material is readily available from quarries.



6.3 SIGNAGE GUIDELINES

TYPES OF TRAIL SIGNAGE

For the purposes of Albany's trail hub, there are five forms of Trail signage:

1. Trail Head
2. Waymarking
3. Directional
4. Interpretive
5. Management

Trail Head

The Trail head is the area where users can access the trail. This area is accessible by road and usually provides parking and some amenities for trail users (toilets, information, and rules). Trail head signage features the following information:

- Trail name
- Trail type (i.e. walk, mountain bike, equestrian)
- Trail length and difficulty information (including classification system and personal safety, Estimated completion time;)
- Environmental or management information, such as code of conduct
- Orientation and Navigation (this information is particularly relevant where a trail head is at the beginning of a trail network, where the user needs to make decisions regarding which path to take) including Graphic image/map for orientation.
- Land manager contact information

Where a trailhead is marking a trail network the trailhead signage should include a Map of the trail system. The map should clearly show how trails link up. For example where a single track trail uses a section of fire road or vehicle track this should be marked as a continuous trail. Maps should always be orientated north and include a legend and scale.

Waymarking

Waymarking is signage on the trail which directs trail users. A familiar waymarking example is the Bibbulmun 'wagyl'. The extent of waymarking signage will depend on the target market and trail grade – the harder the trail, the less the need for trail markers, but the more important it is to have clear information at the trail-head (warning of trail conditions, length, duration, etc).

Waymarking signs should be attached to posts at the start of trails, at regular intervals along each route – and particularly at corners and at intersections to direct users and keep them on the correct trails. The user must clearly be able to see where to go from the trailhead





sign to the trail access point. If the entrance to the trail cannot be seen from the trailhead, directional signage may be used to point the way.

At Intersections:

- Trail markers should be installed a couple of metres prior to an intersection.
- A trail marker should be installed 10 – 20m from the intersection to confirm the user has taken the correct path. (Users should be able to see this confirmation marker from the intersection).
- Where a trail has no intersections or other options, trail markers do not need to be installed.
- For single direction trails always install 'no entry signage' at intersections that cross single direction trails, or at the exit points of single direction trails.

Waymarking signs should be placed between 0 – 1.5m above the ground (900mm recommended) depending on the terrain and the seasonal effects of vegetation. The height chosen should remain consistent and the marker (triangle or arrow) should be mounted with the apex pointing toward the direction to be followed. Trail markers are usually located on the left side of the main trail direction for loop trails. Two-way trails will require bi-directional markers.

Directional

Directional signage directs users to a trail head from the town or from other key landmarks. Where a trail meets another trail or multiple trails it may be useful to install directional signs that point to a destination e.g. to the trail head, or to a car park. It may be useful to use orientation signs with a map and 'you are here' points at these locations.

Interpretive signage

Interpretive signage is generally used to describe natural or cultural heritage information to engage the visitor in the experience on the trail. Interpretive information can be provided at a Trail Head, and is often included in walking trails which are specifically designed to be interpreted experiences. Interpretive signage can also be used to highlight a particular point of interest.

Management signage

This would generally be used in instances where a trail is temporarily closed or realigned due to natural hazards or incidents.

Overall trail signage should be obvious without being obtrusive to the natural environment. Signs should never be attached to trees or other vegetation as not only is it destructive, it also creates maintenance issues.



OVERALL GUIDELINES FOR SIGNAGE

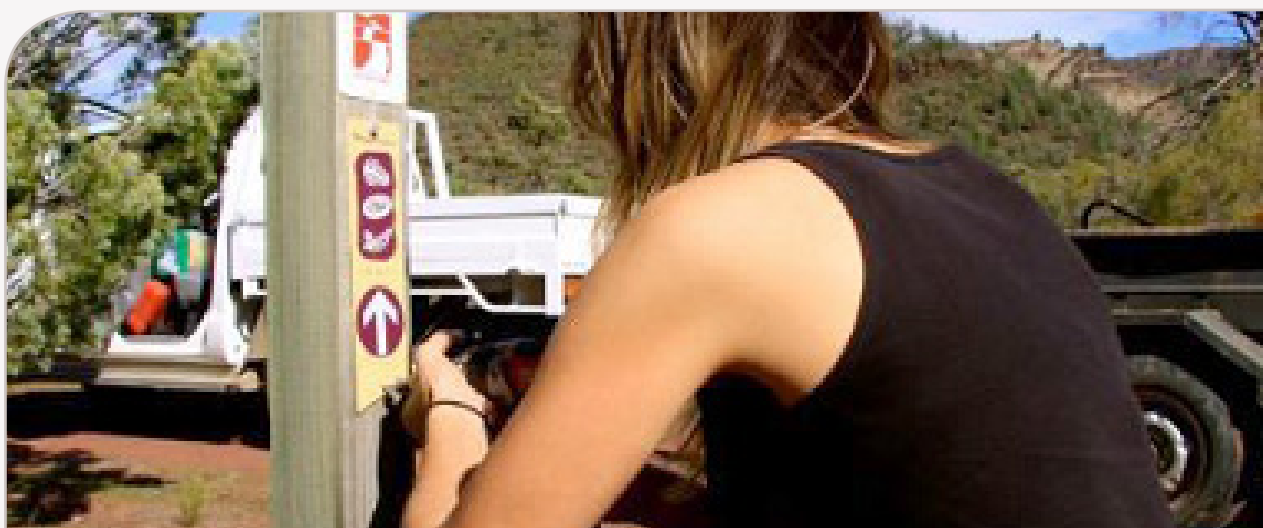
Placement of signage

Specifically, signs should be placed with consideration of approach speed, space to manoeuvre without obstruction or blocking the pathway for other users, offer clear visual lines of other trail signs and minimise the potential impact on the views of the landscape. The approach speed should allow three seconds for people to view and read the sign and also enough time to make a decision on the relevant action prompted by the sign. As a general rule, signs should be placed at a height within half a meter above or below the forward line of vision, depending on the angle of the sign.

Signs should also be located and positioned where their attention does not create a hazard or obscure a hazard. Surrounding vegetation or environmental effects such as sun glare should also not impact on the visibility, legibility and durability (fading of the text) of the sign information.

Branding for signage

Trail signage should be standardised across the City of Albany, through the use of the Albany Trails Hub brand and consistent colouring to guide all trail signage. The trail markers should have a distinguishing symbol or logo for each trail but this should be consistent with overall branding.





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