

# Mid West Regional Profile

## 2013



## Overview of the Region

The Mid West road network faces supports a significant freight task reflecting a diverse and high volume of mining and agricultural product. The network must continue to meet pressure for transport efficiency gains as well as satisfying increasing community interest in safety, environmental and social issues. The growing population on the coast and continuing evolution of the tourism industry will place additional demands on road infrastructure.

### Area

The Mid West Region covers an area of approximately 286,558 square km (11.3% of the State) and comprises 16 local Government authorities.

### Road Length

Road Type	Road Length (km)	% of State
National Land Transport Route	701	13.74%
State Road	1,805	13.47%
Local Road	17,741	13.53%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,247</b>	<b>13.53%</b>

### Population

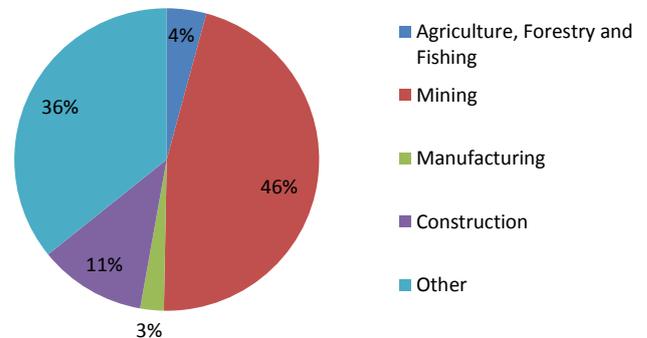
The Region's population was estimated as 54,368 in 2011 (2.3% of the State). The Region's enviable lifestyle, proximity to the metropolitan area, strong supportive social infrastructure and relatively cheap housing are attracting even more interest from retirees and those looking for a sea-change. A number of growth scenarios have been calculated and depending on actual developments, the region's population could grow to 80,000 – 90,000 by 2026. *(Source: Mid West Development Commission).*

### Economic

The Mid West region has a diverse economy built around mining, agriculture, fishing and tourism. An important contributor to the Western Australian economy, the Mid West's Gross Regional Product was \$5.9 billion in 2010-11, representing 2.7% of the State. *(Source: Main Roads Western Australia Regional Digest 2011-12).*

Mining is the most valuable sector, contributing over \$2.5 billion to the GRP in 2011. Agriculture is second in terms of value, bringing in \$854 million in the same year. *(Source: Mid West Development Commission).*

**Mid West Region Gross Regional Product Contributions 2010-11**



### Strategic View of Road Use

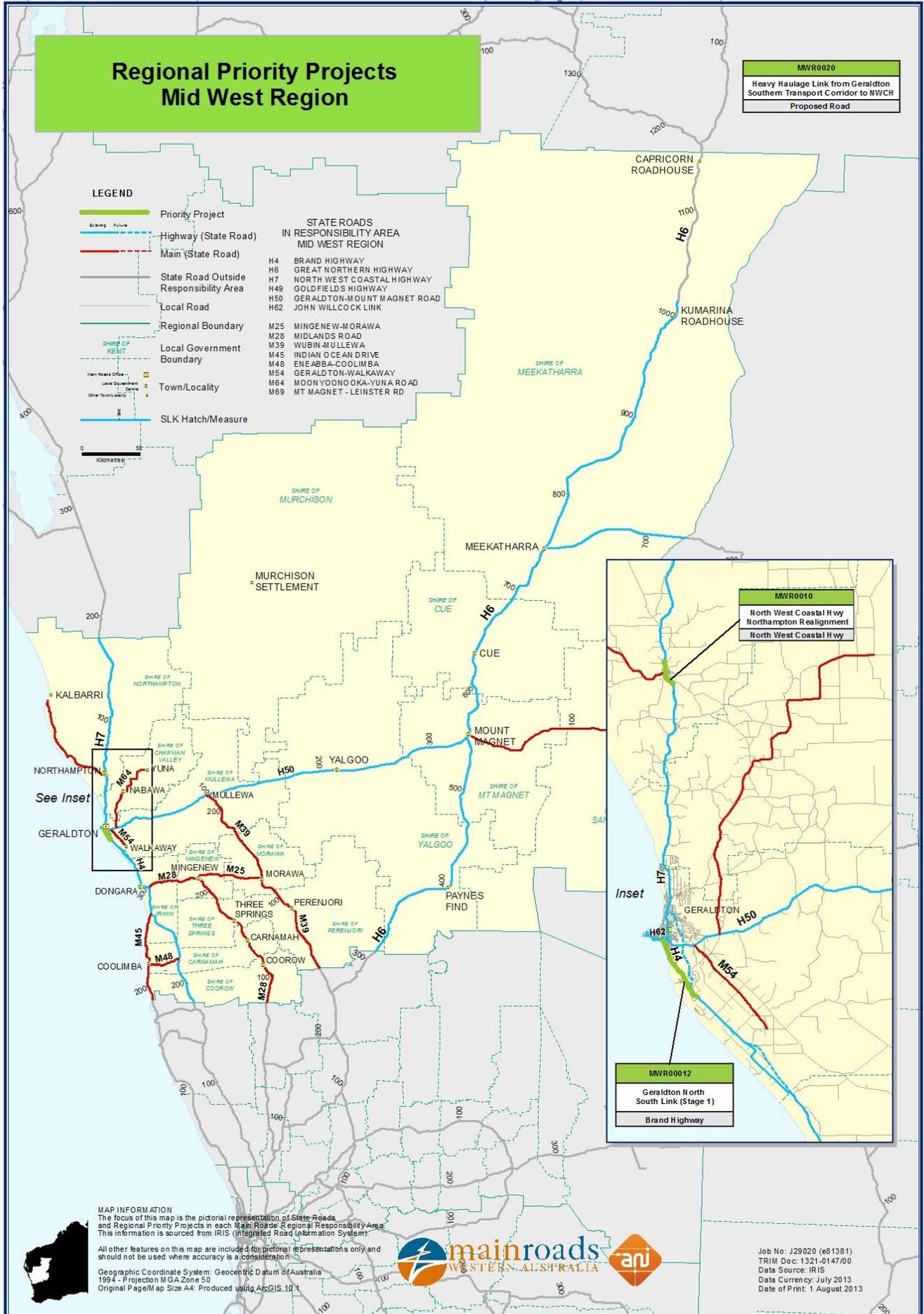
**Mining** – Mining attracts a significant amount of investment and generates money within the region. It is expected that the mining sector will continue to grow in the Mid West, and the nature of the development places significant stress upon the road network. This is due to the high vehicle numbers (often heavy vehicles with regular over size – over mass movements) involved in taking plant and fuel to and exporting product from sites.

**Pastoral/Agricultural** – The agricultural industry includes large areas of crop production near the coast, with greater emphasis on livestock and associated products in the pastoral hinterland. These activities generate a need for fuel and fertiliser to be transported to farms and movement of livestock and grain from farms. Grain movements in particular place seasonal pressures on the local network when it is delivered to receival bins at various locations and then transported around the region.

**Tourism** – Tourism traffic is concentrated along the coastal routes that provide access to National Parks and visitor attractions in and around Dongara, Geraldton, Northampton and Kalbarri.

**Social** – Many of the region's roads provide access between smaller towns, Geraldton and the coast, providing residents and visitors with access to goods and services as well as recreational activities.

# Mid West Region Priority Projects



## Brand Highway – Geraldton North South Link (Stage 1)

### Project Description

Realignment of Brand Hwy between Devlin Pool Road and Geraldton Southern Transport Corridor (Geraldton-Mt Magnet Rd).

### Program Outcome

Infrastructure for State Development

### Local Government

Geraldton-Greenough

### Electoral District

Geraldton

### Project Location

Brand Highway 355.01 SLK – 367.81 SLK.

### Background

Geraldton is an important regional and commercial centre as well as a busy port. As Brand Highway approaches Geraldton Port, conflict occurs between heavy haulage traffic bound for the port and North West and other traffic, including local residential traffic.

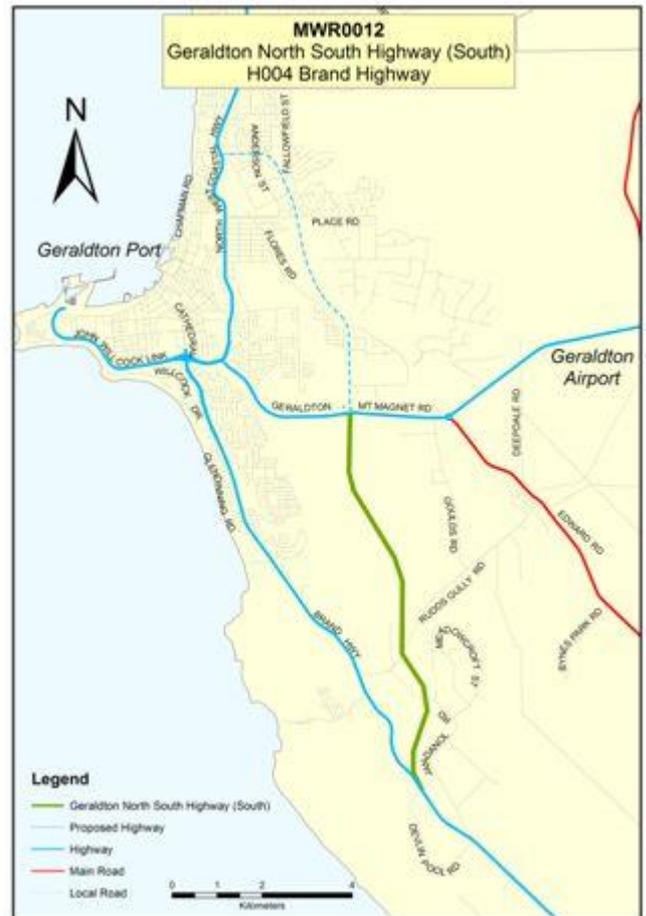
### Current Status

The section of Brand Highway to be bypassed currently has numerous intersections feeding residential developments in Tarcoola and Wandina. The intersections do not have traffic signals but congestion is approaching levels of concern. Studies conducted for the Geraldton area have identified the need for more efficient and safer road corridors to service the local community and the primary freight routes North South and East to and from the Port of Geraldton.

### Benefits and Justification

The Geraldton North-South Highway realignment has been identified to provide a dedicated through route for vehicles entering and leaving Geraldton and to allow improved access to and from the Port of Geraldton for heavy vehicles. The realignment is intended to remove commercial vehicles from the residential areas along the existing Brand Highway and North West Coastal Highway alignment within Geraldton.

The existing North-South route combines both a high percentage of heavy vehicles and local road users and it is expected traffic will increase, particularly from the north, with the potential development of the Oakajee Industrial area.



# Proposed Road - Construct Heavy Haulage Link from Geraldton Southern Transport Corridor to North West Coastal Highway

## Project Description

Utilise road reservation within the Oakajee Infrastructure Corridor to construct heavy haulage link from Oakajee Industrial Site to Geraldton Southern Transport Corridor (Geraldton-Mt Magnet Rd) bypassing Geraldton.

## Program Outcome

Infrastructure for State Development

## Local Government

Various

## Electoral District

Various

## Project Location

Proposed new road.

## Background

Geraldton's Port and surrounding Industrial sites will be linked to the planned industrial estate and port at Oakajee 22 km to the north by the North West Coastal Highway (NWCH). Some two lane sections of NWCH are currently near capacity. Several sites have accident statistics to national funding criteria levels.

## Current Status

A recent study for Geraldton's North-South route thoroughly investigated establishing a route through the eastern areas of Geraldton (Waggrakine and Moresby) for a future highway link. This met strong community opposition, with the steering committee adopting the current North West Coastal Highway alignment north of Webberton Road but restrained to a four lane dual carriageway and additional local traffic only river crossings to relieve congestion on North West Coastal Highway.

The planned North-South route has numerous intersections including a 90 degree turn at Webberton Road which limits its ability to cater for high-wide loads and 53 m road trains in the future. This project (highlighted in red in the locality map above) provides the missing link in providing a heavy haulage bypass of Geraldton. Good transport links are necessary to assure that the needs of the local community and the primary freight routes south and east to and from the future Oakajee Port are met safely and efficiently.

## Benefits and Justification

This project will lead to improved traffic flow for heavy haulage to and from the future Port of Oakajee and improved levels of service and safety for all road users. Completion of a heavy haulage bypass of Geraldton will have many benefits for the local community and industry within both Geraldton and the Mid West Region. The Corridor will provide an alternative route for freight vehicles, which will improve access and efficiency for the transport industry and improve safety for all road users by reducing conflict between freight and passenger vehicles.



## North West Coastal Highway – Northampton Realignment

### Project Description

Realign North West Coastal Highway in order to bypass Northampton Town site.

### Program Outcome

Infrastructure for State Development

### Local Government

Northampton

### Electoral District

Moore

### Project Location

North West Coastal Highway 49 SLK – 54.65 SLK.

### Background

North West Coastal Highway is a major arterial route linking the major regional population centres along the coast. With Brand Highway, it forms the main freight haul route between Perth and the State's North West.

It carries a mix of general freight, heavy haulage and tourist traffic. The existing road through Northampton town is unsuitable for Multi-Combination vehicles and over-dimensioned loads. Northampton is a historical site with narrow passage between buildings and the main street is of poor alignment.

The main street is also the central business district with street parking, pedestrians and sightseers.

### Current Status

Northampton town site is a significant restriction to the extension of the Triple Road Train Route from the north to Geraldton. The project aims to reduce the conflict between local and through traffic, thereby enhancing the safety and efficiency of freight transport, reduction of heavy vehicle noise and also to reduce the potential damage on heritage buildings due to the vibration of heavy vehicles.

### Benefits and Justification

The benefits from this road proposal will be improved road safety, more efficient road freight transport and a reduction in heavy vehicle noise in the Northampton town site. The realignment will have higher traffic capacity and be of higher design speed with time savings for through traffic. In conjunction with an upgrade/realignment of North West Coastal Highway in Geraldton, longer transport efficient Multi Combination vehicles could safely be introduced between the Geraldton Port and the North West.

