Overview of the Region

The Wheatbelt North region is one of the most diverse in the state, servicing a road network that caters for a wide range of transport and community needs from farmers to fisherman, coastal communities to thriving service centres such as Northam. The main road transport need of the mining industry, apart from servicing, is the cartage of iron ore. The pastoral industry relies on road transport for the movement of stock to abattoirs and ports. Similarly the agricultural industry is dependent on road transport to ship out produce to markets in southern and eastern Australia and Asia. The above coupled with the need of local residents for intra and inter-regional travel generates the need for a reliable and an appropriate road network in the Wheatbelt North.

Area

The Wheatbelt North region covers an area of approximately 99,599 square km (3.9% of the State) and comprises 25 local Government authorities.

Road Length

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road Type</th>
<th>Road Length (km)</th>
<th>% of State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Land Transport Route</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>12.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Road</td>
<td>1,352</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Road</td>
<td>24,317</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>26,332</strong></td>
<td><strong>17.60%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Population

The Region’s population was estimated as 52,321 in 2012 which represents 2.2% of the State. Northam and Jurien Bay are two of the nine Super Towns in the southern half of the state being transformed; building on their strong community spirit, unique geographical and economic features to create a new scale of regional centre that will cater for Western Australia’s growing population. (Source: Main Roads Western Australia Regional Digest 2011-12).

Economic Activity

The majority of the existing land tenure of the Wheatbelt North consists of privately owned land, which is essentially agricultural and pastoral. The Wheatbelt North economy is principally based on agriculture and mining. These activities also combine with fishing, tourism, retail and building and construction. The Gross Regional Product was estimated at $4.3 billion in 2010-11. (Source: Main Roads Western Australia Regional Digest 2011-12)

Strategic View of Road Use

Mining – The Wheatbelt’s mining industry has grown significantly over the past five year period, increasing in value by nearly 200 per cent. In particular, the iron ore, gold, silver, gypsum and mineral sands production in the Wheatbelt has seen some dramatic increases over the past few years.

Agricultural – Agriculture is the dominant industry sector in the Wheatbelt Region as a whole. While wheat and wool production are the main agricultural activities, other cereals, pulses, oilseeds, fruit and vegetable crops and livestock also contribute to agricultural production. Producers are also increasingly diversifying into non-traditional industries including olives, wine, turkeys, marron, yabbies, deer and alpacas. Historically much of the agricultural produce was transported by rail but recent years have seen a large proportion of the inputs and outputs from the farming sector transported by road.

Tourism – Over the past ten years, tourism has grown steadily and has considerable potential for diversifying the regional economy. Any increase in tourism will have obvious benefits to the Region’s retail, recreation and hospitality industries. Major attractions in the Region include the Pinnacles, south of Cervantes and the historic towns of York, Northam and Toodyay. Other attractions include the rugged coastline to the north of Perth, the historic Avon Valley, New Norcia and the Yilgarn area.
Wheatbelt North Region Priority Projects

Regional Priority Projects
Wheatbelt North Region

Map information:
The scale of this map is the pictorial representation of State Roads and Regional Priority Roads in the Wheatbelt Region. The boundaries of the Wheatbelt Road and the surrounding areas are shown.

Other features on this map are included for pictorial representation only and should not be used for navigational or other purposes.


Mixed or mixed text

Main Roads

Western Australia

mainroads

ANU
**Great Northern Highway – Muchea to Wubin**

**Project Description**
Reconstruct and upgrade various sections between Muchea and Bindoon, New Norcia and Bindi Bindi, Bindi Bindi and Wubin including realignment, reconstruction, construction of passing lanes, intersection improvements, roadside area upgrades and preconstruction including design, land acquisition and service relocations. Bypasses of Bindoon, New Norcia, Miling and Wubin will also be considered. Upgrade standard is 9m seal with 1m sealed shoulders.

**Program Outcome**
Road Efficiency Improvements

**Local Government**
Various Wheatbelt North Region

**Electoral District**
Moore

**Project Location**
Great Northern Highway 37.0 SLK – 255.0 SLK.

**Background**
Great Northern Highway is part of the National road network within Western Australia and is the main link between the south and north of the State. It also forms part of the interstate route linking Perth and Western Australia to Darwin and the Northern Territory. The road serves many user groups including agriculture, mining and tourism and is the main route for transport of goods to and from the north of the State. With the large proportion of heavy vehicles, increasing traffic volumes, narrow seal and poor alignment, certain sections of this road are overdue for reconstruction and realignment.

**Current Status**
The existing road width is inadequate for the increasing volumes of heavy traffic on this section (currently 32% of all traffic), and these sections feature poor horizontal and vertical geometry, and very limited passing opportunities. The average annual daily traffic is currently 1,000 with a high number of crashes in the past five years (156). Oversize, over width movements of up to 8.5m width travel on this highway under escort conditions along some sections of narrow width.

**Benefits and Justification**
Realignments involve shortening of the route leading to decreased travel times and improved freight transport efficiency. Completion of the upgrade may allow triple road train operations to extend further south thus increasing freight transport efficiency. Also, the improved horizontal and vertical geometry and wider road will significantly benefit the safety for all road users.
Chidlow-York Upgrade (Stage 1) – Three Bridges Section

**Project Description**
Reconstruct, realign and primerseal 6km of road in three sections of the Chidlow-York Road to achieve 9m sealed road with 1m sealed shoulders.

**Program Outcome**
Road Efficiency Improvements

**Local Government**
York

**Electoral District**
Central Wheatbelt

**Project Location**
Chidlow-York Road 32.4 SLK – 38 SLK.

**Background**
Chidlow-York Road forms an important link to the Metropolitan area from the eastern and south-eastern Wheatbelt and forms part of the route known as the Great Southern Highway. It is an alternative to Great Eastern Highway for eastbound overweight and over width traffic and carries dangerous goods, grain, fertiliser, general freight and tourist traffic. The horizontal alignment, narrow seal width and limited passing opportunities have been identified as inadequate for the volume and type of traffic that use the road.

**Current Status**
The seal width, passing opportunities and geometry on this section of road are inadequate for the increasing heavy vehicle traffic and recreational/tourist traffic volumes using this road. Also, maintenance costs resulting from edge wear are high. Chidlow-York Road has a total crash rate 1.5 times the average for roads of a similar standard and a heavy vehicle crash rate almost 3 times the average for roads of a similar standard.

**Benefits and Justification**
The project will benefit the community by reducing road maintenance costs. In addition, improved horizontal and vertical alignments and increased overtaking opportunities will reduce the crash rate.
Great Eastern Highway – Wooroloo to Northam

**Project Description**
Construct passing lanes, improve intersections, replace four bridges on minor realignments and widening. Install traffic calming islands and medians in Bakers Hill town site.

**Program Outcome**
Road Safety

**Local Government**
Northam

**Electoral District**
Avon

**Project Location**
Great Eastern Highway 59SLK – 66 SLK.

**Background**
Great Eastern Highway forms part of the Perth - Adelaide Corridor, and is the major east-west road link between Perth and the Eastern States, and Perth and the eastern part of Western Australia. It is also the route for dangerous goods being transported from Perth to Kalgoorlie. This section carries commuter traffic between the towns of Clackline, Bakers Hill and Northam to the Metropolitan area.

**Current Status**
Traffic in this section is increasing, particularly heavy vehicle traffic. Large combination vehicles, including B-doubles now use this section. There are inadequate passing opportunities in this section for the growing volumes of traffic. The average annual daily traffic count is 5,200 for this section of road.

**Benefits and Justification**
Construction of passing lanes on this section of the highway will improve transport efficiency and more importantly improve safety for all road users. Traffic calming within Bakers Hill will improve safety at this location between local movements and those travelling through on the highway.
Project Description
Construct additional overtaking Lanes from Yanchep to Lancelin.

Program Outcome
Road Efficiency Improvements and Road Safety

Local Government
Gingin

Electoral District
Moore

Project Location
Indian Ocean Drive 52.8 SLK – 66.0 SLK.

Background
Indian Ocean Drive is a coastal link between Perth Metropolitan Area and Brand Highway south of Dongara. Over the past 36 years various sections of the Perth to Dongara coastal route have been constructed and opened to traffic. With the completion of the final link of the route between Lancelin and Cervantes (in September 2010), this road forms part of a strategic commercial and tourist route from the Perth Metropolitan Area to the Mid-West Region.

Indian Ocean Drive also forms part of Agricultural Lime Cartage Route 1, and therefore heavy vehicle traffic on the section is substantial.

Current Status
Peak flows are experienced on this road during summer & other holiday periods as this route provides numerous Coastal attractions. As a result there are conflicts between heavy vehicles, cars and caravans. The forecast traffic volumes will require an improved shoulder width in order to minimise shoulder and seal edge maintenance costs. The lack of overtaking lanes has also been recognised as a potential issue. There is also a need to minimise the potential conflict between turning and through vehicles at intersections.

Benefits and Justification
Construction of additional passing lanes on this section of the Indian Ocean Drive will improve transport freight efficiency and safety particularly during peak seasonal flows.
Great Eastern Highway – Walgoolan to Ghooli

Project Description
Reconstruct and widen sections of Great Eastern Highway and construction of passing lanes.

Program Outcome
Road Efficiency Improvements

Local Government
Yilgarn

Electoral Region
Mining and Pastoral

Electoral District
Eyre

Project Location
Great Eastern Highway 291 SLK – 432.92 SLK.

Background
Great Eastern Highway forms part of the Perth-Adelaide Corridor, and is the major east-west road link between Perth and the Eastern States, and Perth and the eastern part of Western Australia. The road serves a number of user groups including agricultural, pastoral, mining, and tourism. It is also the route for dangerous goods being transported from Perth to Kalgoorlie.

Current Status
The pavement in this section is narrow and deteriorating due to its age. The great majority of the highway has deficient formation and seal width with sections of rough pavement. More than 92% of the pavement is greater than 35 years of age. The existing configuration and condition data indicates that 60% of this section requires reconstruction and 40% requires widening and overlay. This project is considered a high priority due to the poor quality of service this section of the highway provides and the importance of this route. The average annual daily traffic count for this section of the road is 1,400. There are limited opportunities for overtaking.

Benefits and Justification
The socio-economic benefits that would result from this project are high especially as the works are on a national highway with high traffic volumes and mix of heavy vehicles. Once the works are completed significant increases in freight movement efficiency and road-user safety. There will be flow on benefits to the community from reduced maintenance costs due to improved edgewear work as well. The provision of passing lanes will reduce driver frustrations.
Northam-Pithara – Ballidu to Pithara Section

Project Description
Widen & reconstruct; primerseal and seal. Upgrade standard is 7m seal with 1m sealed shoulders.

Program Outcome
Road Efficiency Improvements

Local Government
Wongan - Ballidu

Electoral District
Central Wheatbelt

Project Location
Northam-Pithara 129.12 SLK – 152.40 SLK.

Background
This road forms a major north-south link between Great Northern Highway and Northam through the eastern Wheatbelt. It carries heavy vehicle and freight traffic as well as local and tourist traffic. The Ballidu to Pithara section is very narrow at 5 m seal.

Current Status
The road width is inadequate for the volume of traffic and the increasing number of heavy vehicles using the route. There is a potential for use of this road by road trains, particularly road trains carting stock to the saleyards in Northam.

Benefits and Justification
The project will improve safety and increase efficiency for heavy freight transport and reduce road maintenance costs due to edgewear. It will also encourage use of this road by road trains, particularly those carting stock to the saleyards in Northam and as an alternative to Great Northern Highway.
Toodyay – Gidgegannup to Toodyay Section (Stage 1) Jimperding Brook Section

Project Description
Realignment and reconstruction of Jimperding Brook Section, replace existing timber bridge no. 369 over Jimperding Brook with RCBC drainage structure, improve intersection of Lovers Lane and construct new driveways.

Program Outcome
Road Efficiency Improvements

Local Government
Toodyay

Electoral District
Moore

Project Location
Toodyay 27 SLK – 29.5 SLK.

Background
Toodyay Road, formerly called the Midland - Goomalling Road, forms part of the Gidgegannup - Goomalling Route that links the north-eastern Wheatbelt to the Metropolitan area. The route carries a high proportion of heavy vehicles carrying grain and fertilizer and an increasing volume of commuter and tourist traffic.

Current Status
The road geometry of the proposed section is substandard for the increasing commuter traffic between Toodyay and the Perth Metropolitan area. There has been a number of serious injury or fatal crashes reported on Toodyay Road.

Benefits and Justification
The project will benefit from improved safety and reduced road maintenance costs due to edge wear and pavement repairs by improvement of the substandard curve, where vehicles often run wide onto the shoulder.
Brand Highway – Passing Lanes

**Project Description**
Construct additional overtaking lanes between Muchea and Jurien Road turn-off.

**Program Outcome**
Road Safety

**Local Government**
Dandaragan

**Electoral District**
Moore

**Project Location**
Brand Highway 0 SLK – 180.88 SLK.

**Background**
Brand Highway is a major inter-regional express route linking Perth and Geraldton and the coastal tourist destinations between. It carries a relatively high volume of mixed vehicle types.

The section of Brand Highway between 0 SLK and 180.88 SLK is significantly lacking in passing opportunities to overtake the large slow moving vehicles. These delays may lead to an increase in the accident rate, as frustrated road users may attempt to overtake slow moving vehicles in an unsafe situation. With traffic increasing, particularly heavy vehicle traffic, these passing opportunities are diminishing.

**Benefits and Justification**
Construction of additional passing lanes on this section of the Highway will improve transport efficiency and more importantly improve safety for all road users. The serious crash rate of 6 per 100MVKT will be reduced once the passing lanes are constructed.