

Transport corridors through the Shire of Victoria Plains.

The Shire of Victoria Plains has a diversity of activity, with the main sources of transport going through and within the Shire two trailer road trains, they transport a variety of goods such as grain, hay, lime sands, gravel and in the future a possibility of minerals.

In the past few years the reliance on lime sands has been enormous, and have seen a 100% growth rate in the amount of sand traveling through our Shire, the majority of sands go straight through to places east of us, this has in the last five years seen the deterioration of our roads to a point that in some sections they are having to be reconstructed earlier than has been planned, this in turn has been a problem of letting our normal maintenance of the rest of the Shires roads fall down, this in turn has now put the Shire into a place where it cannot sustain a programmed maintenance schedule but to rely on a reactive program.

There has also been talk of one of the five lime sands routes being deleted and the route that traverses through our Shire will be the route they will take to go east, this in turn will put double and may be up to triple the load of trucks going through our Shire, and with the funds we have will not be sustainable for the Shire to maintain.

With the added effect of a gravel pit opening up on one of the major through roads for the lime sands the effect will be greater and without funding will not be a safe road to utilize from a Shires point of view and a residents point of view and a safety point of view.

There is also two very large hay plants located within the Shire, with the location of these in two plants in different areas of the Shire one in the East and one in the West it is a struggle to keep the local and secondary roads in a condition they can use, most of these roads are gravel and with the limited funds and crews keeping up with the maintenance on these roads is at best just holding our heads above water, with this product it doesn't have a season, and farmers are stock piling on their properties waiting for the best time to sell or when the plant wants the product, this also puts a strain on the roads they travel to and from the plant to off load there produce.

If the mines they are looking at starting up because of the rising price in the commodities that can be found within the Shire, this will then in turn put an extra load on a different set of roads, that at the moment just have grain on them and for a short period of time through the year, this will decimate the infrastructure we have now and without a influx of funding will not be sustainable.

So with the pressures of the different groups of producers our roads without major funding on our assets and that is what they are, will not survive the future and the safety of all road users will in turn be put at risk, and with the road toll being higher in the country this will only escalate in the future if nothing is done.

What is required is more funding in infrastructure not just on the main roads but our local roads, that school buses and mums with children have to traverse every day, they are not all sealed but gravel for most of them, this is the problem they deteriorate very quickly and finding the materials to repair and upgrade the roads are getting harder, and in the future having to import materials from a distance, which will in turn put even more pressure on the infrastructure.