



**TO: MINISTER FOR PLANNING**

**RE: PROPOSAL TO INITIATE THE MURRAY BRIDGE RESIDENTIAL GROWTH AREAS  
BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME – FOR INITIATION**

## **PURPOSE**

To recommend that you proceed with the initiation of the Murray Bridge Residential Growth Areas Basic Infrastructure Scheme Draft Outline (Draft Outline) in accordance with section 163(4) the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*.

## **BACKGROUND**

Section 163(1) of the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* (the Act) provides that you may initiate a Basic Infrastructure Scheme (Scheme) in relation to the provision of basic infrastructure in, or in connection with, a designated growth area.

The proposed designated growth area is identified as the Murray Bridge Residential Growth Areas (see Figure 1), which aligns with the affected area of the Murray Bridge Residential Growth Areas Code Amendment (the Code Amendment; ID10060). The proposed Scheme intends to provide for the basic infrastructure required to support the development anticipated by the Code Amendment.

Section 163(6) of the Act requires the preparation of a Draft Outline to formally initiate the preparation of the Scheme.

This advice relates to the updated Draft Outline (**Attachment 1**) for the purposes of section 163(4) of the Act to support your decision on whether to proceed with the preparation of the Draft Scheme.

### Code Amendment

On 10 March 2023, you initiated the Code Amendment, with the Designated Entity responsible for undertaking the Code Amendment was the Rural City of Murray Bridge (Council).

The Code Amendment sought to rezone approximately 97.5 hectares of rural living and abandoned horticultural / agricultural land towards the western outskirts of Murray Bridge for low to medium density housing.

Consultation on the Code Amendment was held from 11 September 2023 to 23 October 2023. Following consultation, you advised Council that further information relating to the provision of infrastructure was required to support the Code Amendment.

Council considered a Basic Infrastructure Scheme was the appropriate mechanism to provide for this infrastructure, and commenced working with the Department for Housing and Urban Development (the Department) to establish a Scheme.

This Code Amendment was adopted under section 73(10) of the Act on 5 February 2026 with the application of the Coordinated Development Overlay (Overlay) to the entirety of the affected area, which effectively prevents development of these properties until such time that infrastructure agreements are in place.

### Basic Infrastructure Scheme

As per section 162(1) of the Act, basic infrastructure can include the following:

- Roads or causeways, bridges, culverts associated with roads.
- Stormwater management infrastructure.
- Embankments, wells, channels, drains, drainage.
- Water infrastructure and sewerage infrastructure.
- Communications networks.
- Electrical and gas infrastructure.

Section 163(6) of the Act requires the preparation of a Draft Outline to initiate a scheme.

The State Planning Commission (Commission) first considered the Draft Outline on 17 October 2024, and resolved to recommend that a Scheme be initiated, subject to amendments and consultation on the Draft Outline. The recommended amendments included:

- Consideration of a simplified flat-rate based scheme should be considered in lieu of the more complex “plan-cost-apportion” approach in order to expedite preparation and implementation of the Scheme.
- Further detail in the Draft Outline in order to inform meaningful discussions with landowners, by providing:
  - A clear model for the Scheme, which minimises the number of supporting documents and makes the role of each document
  - Clear meaningful principles to guide scheme preparation
  - A summary of the intended funding approach.

Amendments were subsequently made to the Draft Outline to:

- Restructure the document to better align with how the Scheme itself is to be structured, with the intention to make it as simple as possible whilst ensuring that all legislative requirements and considerations are addressed.
- Clarify that a single charge (under Part 13, Subsection 7 of the Act) is proposed for further investigation, and that this will become payable when land is developed, noting the Scheme Coordinator will need to follow the process and meet the principles in the Act to develop this charge.
- Include principles in the Draft Outline on the preparation of the Draft Scheme.

The Commission also noted the importance of ensuring the Code Amendment is not unduly delayed pending preparation of the Scheme. This was achieved via the new Coordinated Development Overlay, which has now been applied as part of the adoption of the Code Amendment on 5 February 2026.

The Draft Outline underwent consultation with Council and landowners as required under the section 163(10) of the Act.

Further amendments were made as a result of feedback received during this consultation, as well as to align with legislative changes to section 163 of the Act, which came into effect in January 2026.

## DISCUSSION

The proposed designated growth area for the Scheme is identified as the Murray Bridge Residential Growth Areas (MBRGA), aligning with the affected area of the Code Amendment.

The designated growth area comprises 84 allotments across three precincts (see Figure 1).

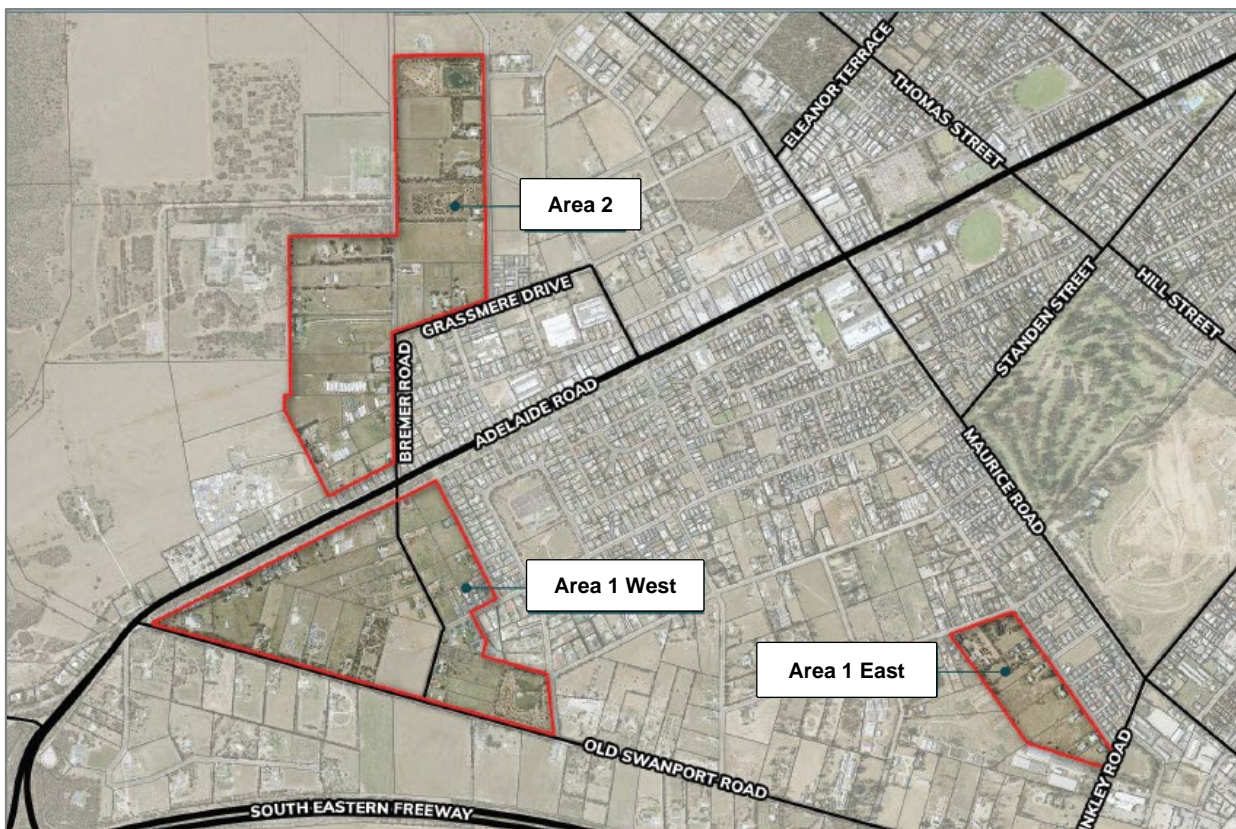


Figure 1 – Proposed Designated Growth Area

### **Area 1 West:**

There are 56 allotments in total:

- 24 allotments within the bounds of Adelaide Road, Old Swanport Road and Agricultural Drive.
- 27 allotments within the bounds of Agricultural Drive, Adelaide Road, Zema Avenue and Christian Road, including several allotments that have already been developed with limited potential for further division.

- Nine (9) allotments within the bounds of Agricultural Road, Christian Road, Rural Avenue and Old Swanport Road, one of which contains the Rural Avenue wetlands.

**Area 1 East:**

- Nine (9) allotments bound by Bywaters Road, Brinkley Road and Commerce Road.

**Area 2:**

There are 20 allotments in total:

- 12 allotments west of Bremer Road and north of Adelaide Road.
- 8 allotments bound by Bremer Road, Grassmere Drive and Greenlands Drive.

**Strategic Considerations**

The following sets out the strategic considerations relating to this proposal and rationale for the Commission recommending support for a Basic Infrastructure Scheme.

An assessment against the relevant State Planning Policies (SPPs) and Regional Plan(s) are provided in **Appendix A**.

The Greater Adelaide Regional Plan (GARP) identifies Murray Bridge as having significant long-term growth opportunities. It has existing capacity for an additional 8000 houses, and new growth areas identified in the GARP could support an additional 23,400 homes over the longer term.

This level of growth has the potential to establish Murray Bridge as one of Greater Adelaide's largest satellite cities over time, marking a strategic shift in the eastern corridor once Mount Barker consolidates.

The Murray Bridge Structure Plan 2024 (Structure Plan) is a Council strategic initiative that puts in place the framework to manage and sustain growth. The Code Amendment is one of many identified for implementation of the Structure Plan, and aligns with both the GARP and the Murray Mallee Regional Plan (MMRP).

The proposed Scheme is identified to support the Code Amendment, which in turn has been prepared to support the population growth in Murray Bridge as well as a range of strategic planning outcomes identified in the regional plans and Structure Plan.

*Planning and Design Code Policies*

The recent rezoning of the MBRGA increases development potential by applying the Suburban Neighbourhood Zone to enable future residential development at predominantly low density with complementary non-residential uses compatible with a low density residential character.

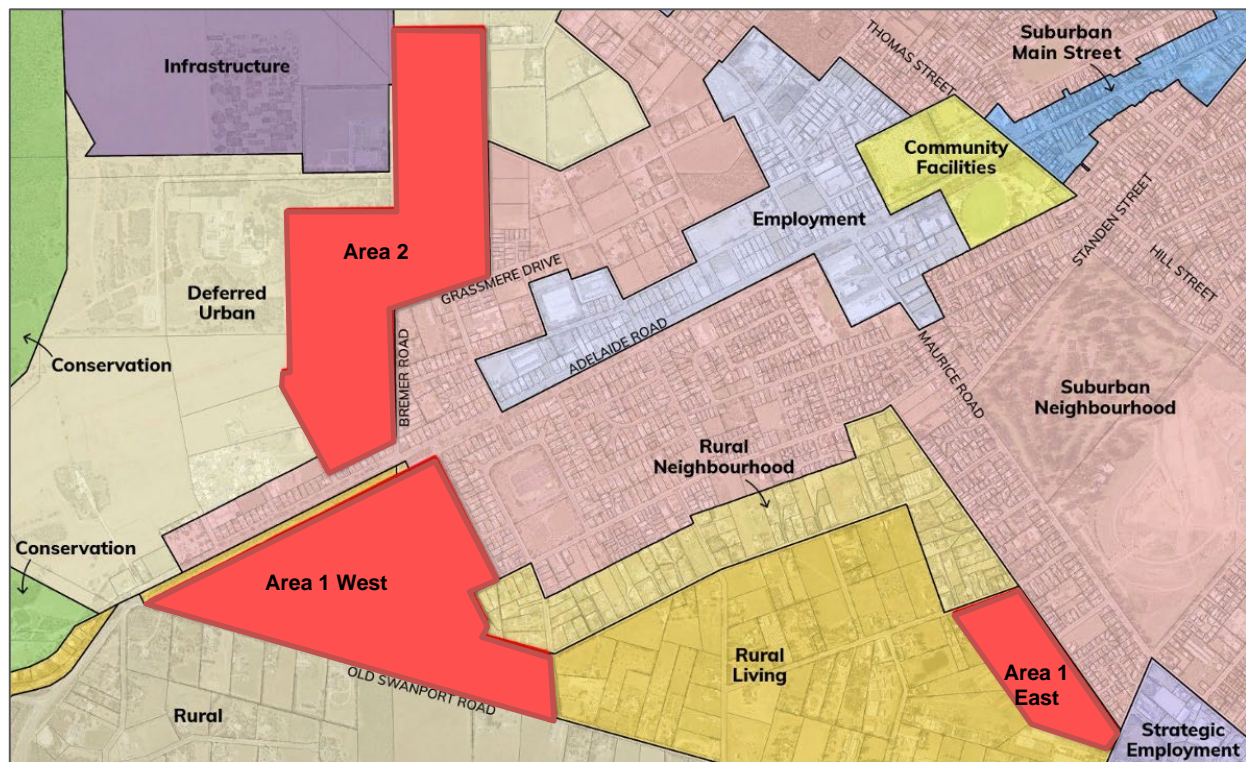


Figure 2 – Current zoning of Designated Growth Area and surrounds – Coordinated Development Overlay in **RED**

The minimum allotment size varies by dwelling type are:

- Detached dwelling – 500m<sup>2</sup>
- Semi-detached – 400m<sup>2</sup>
- Row dwelling – 500m<sup>2</sup>
- Group dwelling – 350m<sup>2</sup>
- Residential flat building – 300 m<sup>2</sup>

The overlays applicable to land within the Designated Growth Area are:

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| • Coordinated Development                | • Murray-Darling Basin            |
| • Affordable Housing                     | • Native Vegetation               |
| • Gas and Liquid Petroleum Pipelines     | • Prescribed Water Resources Area |
| • Hazards (Bushfire – Medium Risk)       | • Water Resources                 |
| • Hazards (Bushfire – General Risk)      | • Traffic Generating Development  |
| • Hazards (Bushfire – Urban Interface)   | • Urban Transport Routes          |
| • Hazards (Flooding – Evidence Required) |                                   |

### Need for Scheme

The aim of preparing a Scheme is to create a delivery mechanism for the subject sites given that all three precincts have highly fragmented land ownership.

It was considered that a Basic Infrastructure Scheme was the most appropriate mechanism, as the sites themselves will not likely require social infrastructure and will be solely for residential purposes. It is noted that should local social infrastructure be required, it will need to be negotiated through a separate mechanism, such as an Infrastructure Deed.

The Commission supports the progression of the Scheme for the following reasons:

- There is a significant number of landowners.
- The land is fragmented.
- Development will occur over in an ad-hoc manner over a long period of time.
- Infrastructure requirements/delivery/timeframes will need a coordinated approach.

In the absence of a Scheme, Council would be required to coordinate infrastructure using Land Management Agreements (LMAs) and Infrastructure Agreements. This is resource intensive and requires all landowners to agree and sign individual LMAs. This can significantly prolong the development process and where landowners do not agree, it can result in poor and uncoordinated development outcomes.

Several benefits arise from the use of a Scheme, including:

- coordination of the development of the precincts in accordance with the recommendations from supporting reports;
- securing infrastructure commitments from various agencies and stakeholders around timing and scope of works to ensure that it is delivered in line with the staging identified in the Scheme; and
- equitable apportionment of infrastructure costs across all landowners.

#### Investigations to date

The Code Amendment was underpinned by a significant body of work undertaken by Council, including the Future City Program and Community Infrastructure Model (CIM). This work also formed the early investigations required to consider a Scheme proposal. including in relation to:

- Land demand and supply
- Water and wastewater infrastructure
- Stormwater infrastructure
- Energy provision
- Roads and active transport network
- Telecommunications
- Community Infrastructure
- Flood and stormwater management
- Cultural assessment
- Site contamination.

These background reports have been reviewed as part of the work to develop the Draft Outline. The Department has worked with Council to scope the more detailed level of infrastructure planning required for the Scheme to serve the growth area.

The Scheme is intended to support the efficient delivery of infrastructure across multiple ownerships by clearly identifying required infrastructure, costs and timing, which in turn allows for the coordinated and orderly delivery of new housing and services.

As part of this, targeted consultation will occur with relevant agencies, including the Department of Infrastructure and Transport (DIT), and SA Water.

Should you proceed to publish the outline of the Scheme, the next level of infrastructure planning will occur. This will include establishing a clear program of infrastructure works required to develop the precincts for residential purposes, along with staging and prioritisation details.

## **Procedural Considerations**

The following sets out the key procedural considerations that satisfy the legislative requirements for the initiation of the Scheme.

### Draft Outline Requirements

The Draft Outline must be consistent with section 163(6), which identifies that it must:

- Provide information about:
  - i. the nature and intended scope of the basic infrastructure; and
  - ii. any related development that is proposed; and
- Identify the proposed designated growth area; and
- Provide information about the proposed timing or staging of the various elements of the scheme (to the extent such information is known); and
- Outline, so far as is reasonably practicable, a funding arrangement for the scheme, including whether it is proposed to impose a charge under Subdivision 7; and
- Provide information about the person or body that will be carrying out the work envisaged by the scheme (to the extent that is known); and
- Identify any basic infrastructure or other assets that might be expected to be transferred to another entity when the scheme has been completed; and
- Provides information regarding the operation and administration of the scheme and the associated costs (to the extent such information is known); and
- Identifies further studies or assessments (if any) required to finalise the scheme for adoption.

The Commission is satisfied that the amendments made to the Draft Outline meet these requirements to enable progression of the Scheme.

### Engagement

As part of the preparation of the Draft Outline, reasonable steps must be taken to consult on the Draft Outline in accordance with section 163(10). The Department consulted with Council, landowners, relevant infrastructure agencies and utility providers, including DIT and SA Water.

Should the scheme proceed, the Scheme Coordinator will undertake further consultation as per section 166(1)(c) of the Act on the Draft Scheme, which will also include a draft funding arrangement. This round of consultation is subject to the requirements under the Community Engagement Charter.

### Scheme Coordinator

To finalise the Basic Infrastructure Scheme, a Scheme Coordinator must be in place to prepare a final Basic Infrastructure Scheme for your consideration.

If you determine to approve the Draft Outline and proceed with the preparation of the Draft Scheme, and the Draft Outline is published on the PlanSA Portal, you will need to refer the Scheme to the Chief Executive of the Department, pursuant to section 163(13) of the Act, for the appointment of a Scheme Coordinator under section 165 of the Act.

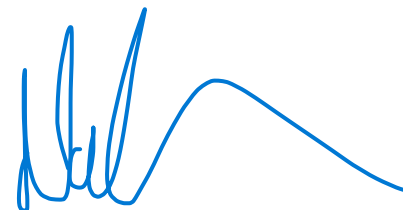
## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that you:

1. Note the advice of the State Planning Commission on the Murray Bridge Residential Growth Areas Basic Infrastructure Scheme Draft Outline (the Draft Outline) provided to you as required under section 163(4) of the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* (the Act).
2. Note that the State Planning Commission has recommended that the Murray Bridge Residential Growth Areas Basic Infrastructure Scheme proceed under section 163 of the Act, and that the Draft Outline is consistent with the requirements of section 163(6) of the Act.

NOTED

NOTED



**NICK CHAMPION MP**

18/5/2026



**CRAIG HOLDEN**

Chair, State Planning Commission  
28 / 04 / 2026

### Attachments:

1. Murray Bridge Residential Growth Areas Basic Infrastructure Scheme - Draft Outline – v6 (#24516496)

Contact: Cherie Gill  
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# APPENDIX A

## **Alignment with State Planning Policies**

State Planning Policies (SPPs) define South Australia's planning priorities, goals and interests. They are the overarching umbrella policies that define the state's interests in land use.

The *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* requires the SPPs to be considered in the proposal to initiate an infrastructure scheme. Development of the designated growth area and the need for coordination and integration with infrastructure provision aligns with several SPPs. The most relevant policies include:

### ***SPP 1 – Integrated Planning***

**Objective:** *To apply the principles of integrated planning to shape cities and regions in a way that enhances our liveability, economic prosperity and sustainable future.*

This Code Amendment contributes to an adequate supply of land that is serviced by infrastructure for housing growth over the next 15 years or more. Further it supports a logical extension of the existing urban footprint.

The location of the affected areas assist in defining the boundary of the Murray Bridge township by formalising the extent of residential development, thus minimising potential impact upon adjoining rural areas. These areas do not encroach into the Environment and Food Production Area.

GICU has worked with local government, landowners, utilities, and other major stakeholders to ensure appropriate agreements are in place to facilitate coordination, funding, timing and the delivery of critical infrastructure.

A coordinated approach to development through the establishment of the Scheme is envisaged to create efficiencies and cost savings to Council and landowners into the future. These efficiencies and cost savings are attributable to:

- An investment in strategic planning to understand future infrastructure demands
- A clear and consistent catalogue of required infrastructure
- Avoidance of interim infrastructure solutions and sacrificial infrastructure works
- Avoidance of repeated/constant use of legal tools
- Construction of infrastructure to future capacity
- Understanding of timing and triggers for works to be undertaken
- Ability for parties to undertake 'Works in Kind' and receive credit against the works.

### ***SPP 6 – Housing Supply and Diversity***

**Objective:** *To promote the development of a well-serviced and sustainable housing and land choices where and when required.*

The rezoning to support future growth will be located within the existing township and rezone the existing underutilised land area comprising large allotments, rural living and abandoned horticultural and agricultural area on the outskirts of the township.

The anticipated development provides suitable access to services along Adelaide Road, and within the town centre, as well as employment lands in Murray Bridge and nearby (such as Thomas Foods). Importantly, the Code Amendment supports provision for additional housing where there is an identified shortage and where employers are struggling to attract and house workers.

The proposed Code Amendment seeks to apply a staged growth of the township in a planned and coordinated manner, and which has undergone consultation with stakeholders, and enables the development of well-serviced housing and land choices as required.

The proposed Zone and use of Concept Plans will assist in the provision of a well-designed, diverse housing supply.

### ***SPP 11: Strategic Transport and Infrastructure***

**Objective:** *To integrate land use policies with existing and future transport infrastructure, services and functions to preserve and enhance safe, efficient and reliable connectivity for people and business.*

The South Eastern Freeway is the axis for the eastern spine connecting Mount Barker and Murray Bridge to Adelaide. The freeway also provides a critical freight connection to new employment lands planned near Monarto and Murray Bridge.

Development in the designated growth area seeks to utilise and build upon the existing road network and infrastructure.

Investigations informing the Code Amendment considered the proximity to key transport routes surrounding and within the township, noting that much of the growth areas will interface and interact with the established transport routes.

Transport planning work will be required to rationalise and develop long-term infrastructure improvements that will meet expected future travel demands associated with growth.

The SEAGas pipeline runs along Bremer Road and Agricultural Drive within the affected area of this Code Amendment. Whilst there was previous engagement with SEAGas as part of the original structure planning process, there will need to be ongoing engagement, and recognition of the existing Overlay that applies in this location.

Housing densities near the SEAGas pipeline will need to reflect the intent of the Code and relevant Overlay to protect this service from inappropriate development e.g., high density housing, and there may be a need for the Concept Plan to reflect the limitations adjacent to this critical infrastructure.

### ***SPP 14: Water Security and Quality***

**Objective:** *To ensure South Australia's water supply is able to support the needs of current and future generations.*

Future growth areas and development will need to consider region-wide and local flood mitigation strategies and water quality measures to ensure the cumulative impacts of stormwater are considered and constraints identified.

An infrastructure delivery scheme will support the Code Amendment, outlining the roles and responsibilities for funding, construction, and ongoing maintenance of the infrastructure and assets. This will be used to manage the timing of stormwater infrastructure provisions.

The 2024–25 State Budget included a commitment of \$843.6 million for housing initiatives and an unprecedented \$1.2 billion for water and wastewater infrastructure for housing developments over the next four years. In addition to this, GICU was established to cover all aspects of housing, housing infrastructure, urban development and planning, including the ministerial responsibilities related to the oversight of SA Water.

The GARP identifies that a high-growth scenario would see Murray Bridge needing water security investment in the early to mid-2030s.

### **Alignment with Regional Plan**

As with the SPPs, the directions set out in Regional Plans provide the long-term vision as well as setting the spatial patterns for future development in a region. This includes consideration of land use integration, transport infrastructure and the public realm.

The relevant Regional Plan is:

- Greater Adelaide Regional Plan (GARP)
- Murray Mallee Regional Plan (MMRP)

### ***Population and Land Supply***

The Murray Bridge Land Supply Region in the GARP includes the city of Murray Bridge, Monarto and several smaller towns on the River Murray.

The proposed Scheme will support the development anticipated by the Code Amendment, which will result in an increase in the number of people living within Murray Bridge's urban footprint.

The regional plans identify that Murray Bridge provides significant long-term growth opportunities. The city has existing capacity for an additional 8,000 houses, and the existing and new growth areas identified in GARP have the potential to establish it as one of Greater Adelaide's largest satellite cities.

In 2021, the region had a population of 22,689. Since 2016, the population has increased by 777 people. By 2051, the population of the Murray Bridge region is projected to grow by up to 2.9% per year, or more than 19,500 additional people over the 30-year period. Most of this growth is likely to occur within new growth areas of Murray Bridge.

Murray Bridge has ample land for expansion, both within the built-up area and at Gifford Hill. The current known supply is likely sufficient to accommodate short to medium-term growth if the identified land is developed.

The topography of the land, good interconnectivity with infrastructure networks and limited environmental constraints enable opportunities for large scale residential and employment lands development.

Job opportunities and demand for housing in Murray Bridge and the surrounding areas will be further increased following the recent commissioning of a new meat processing facility and other major local employment catalysts.

### ***Logical and Orderly Growth***

Meeting the needs of a growing population requires a strategic and coordinated approach to rezoning, to help balance the supply of infill development in existing suburbs and expansion into greenfield areas. It will also help ensure there is land for future industrial and commercial developments and encourage diversity of supply.

The GARP emphasises that land should be rezoned based on the timely and coordinated delivery of new or upgraded infrastructure alongside additional housing supply, or the delivery of housing development should be prioritised in areas with additional infrastructure capacity.

The application of the Coordinated Development Overlay assists in this respect, providing progressive certainty on the developability of the growth area.

Council has completed work on an updated Murray Bridge Structure Plan to inform future Code Amendments and schemes. This work, along with the GARP and MMRP, and the work already undertaken on the Community Infrastructure Model (CIM) form part of a suite of work Council has termed the Future Cities Program aimed at ensuring growth in Murray Bridge is appropriately managed and that infrastructure is available to support this growth.

The designated growth area supports future growth to be located within the existing township's urban

areas and periphery. The Code Amendment rezoned underutilised land comprising large allotments, rural living and abandoned horticultural and agricultural areas on the outskirts of the township, which will increase the quantity of residential allotments within the township, potentially further supporting greater housing diversity (in selected locations) and affordability.

Long established as a regional centre, Murray Bridge is well serviced with a wide range of community infrastructure. The establishment of new or significant upgrades to existing infrastructure will be required to support long-term population growth.

The Code Amendment will implement a Concept Plan that will identify desired locations for open space to support walkable neighbourhoods; along with locations for particular elements of basic infrastructure, such as preferred locations for key road links and detention basins.

### ***Funding Mechanisms***

Different infrastructure tools and models are suited to different circumstances and may depend on the nature of infrastructure required, the known level of detail available, who the beneficiary of the infrastructure will be and the timeframe for delivery.

Charging mechanisms should be:

- Fit-for-purpose.
- Proportionate in terms of administrative burden.
- Equitable with contributions based on beneficiaries.
- Evidence-based with accurate costing.
- Transparent with clear governance and accountability for the collected funds and how they are spent.

The Basic Infrastructure Scheme being considered as the mechanism aims to ensure the infrastructure required to support the future residential development is delivered in a timely, equitable and coordinated manner, and is considered to meet the principles above.

In terms of infrastructure charging, the GARP includes the following long-term strategic objectives:

1. Apply fair, transparent and proportionate contribution frameworks that can be costed into projects up-front, creating investment certainty and unlocking housing supply.
2. Evaluate the most effective and fit-for-purpose infrastructure funding mechanism for projects, such as deeds, infrastructure schemes and fixed charges.
3. Provide transparency of infrastructure costs associated with various housing options and critically analyse the cost benefits prior to land release or rezoning.
4. Develop models where infrastructure and services can be delivered by third parties to expedite projects, while maintaining appropriate quality control, engineering and other standards for construction and maintenance.
5. Apply a range of fit-for-purpose infrastructure funding mechanisms, including deeds, schemes and fixed charges, including investigating new fixed charges for basic infrastructure such as stormwater.
6. Identify infrastructure costs through the structure planning of future growth areas is used to inform infrastructure charges, including the initiation of infrastructure schemes.
7. Establish pilot infrastructure schemes and their use to establish development charges for infill and regeneration areas.