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Mildura Rural City Council



OUYEN Inc.



# Contents

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# Message from Chairman



I am pleased to present the Ouyen Community Plan and Community Planning Strategy for 2020 - 2025. This encompasses 75 years of research and history from 1944 to 2019 and is a reflection of the hard work, dedication and persistence of the community who consistently volunteer time and energy to drive our priorities.

Over the past 21 years Ouyen Inc. have formed extensive long-term partnerships with stakeholders, industry and community groups. This has included Mildura Rural City Council, Mallee Track Health and Community Services, private enterprise, State and Federal Government. Our partnerships are our greatest resource and this has enabled us to shape our future and surpass various challenges.

Notably, in October 2018 the Ouyen Recreational Lake was formally opened and was attended by 3,000 people who enjoyed the fireworks, music and 'catching up' with friends and family. This is a monumental accomplishment and we are proud of the Ouyen

Lake Working Group for 20 years of consistently striving for success in this project. We have a unique social dynamic and ability to be self-sustaining with limited resources, support and professional expertise.

I hope you enjoy reading this plan and that this gives further insight into the progress we have made as an organisation that represents the emerging interests of the community.

I would like to thank Ouyen Inc. and Mildura Rural City Council Project Officer Cassey Gloster for the development of this document. We also thank the Ouyen Service Centre for the support in assisting with the everyday functions of the committee and the integral service provided to Mallee Track communities.

**Scott Anderson**  
Ouyen Inc Chairman



# Ouyen 'A Town Of Choice'

## ABOUT OUYEN

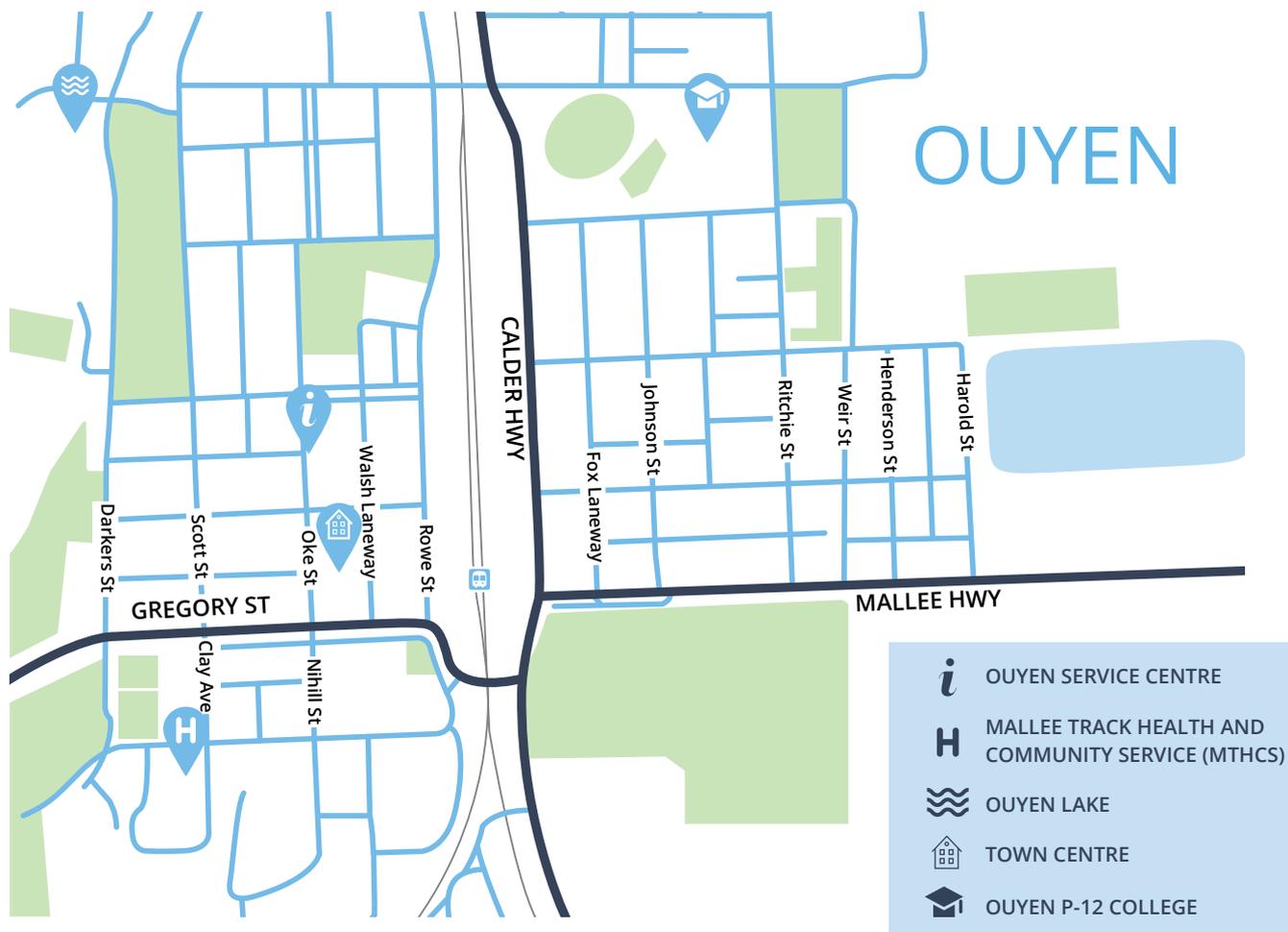
### History

The Ouyen community is situated in the Mildura municipality at the intersection of the Calder Highway and Mallee Highway, 105 kilometres south of Mildura, 441 km north-west of Melbourne and 400km east of Adelaide. The area was first occupied by the Wergaia people which some believe means 'pink-eared duck' and others claim it refers to 'ghost waterhole'.

Ouyen was first settled in the early 1900's around the Ouyen Railway Station and historically the major economic input has been agriculture with a particular focus on dryland cropping and prime lamb production. However in recent years, health services, mining, tourism, retail, and education have provided increased levels of local employment.

Ouyen is likely to continue as an important service centre because of its strategic location, located at the intersection of two major highways and some distance from major cities. There is abundant evidence of best practice in community-based small town self-reliance in Ouyen's streetscapes, festivals, strong local retail sector, dedicated volunteer base, success in attracting key infrastructure and dynamic local progress association Ouyen Inc.

*To provide the vision, direction, leadership and unity to create a dynamic future for Ouyen.*



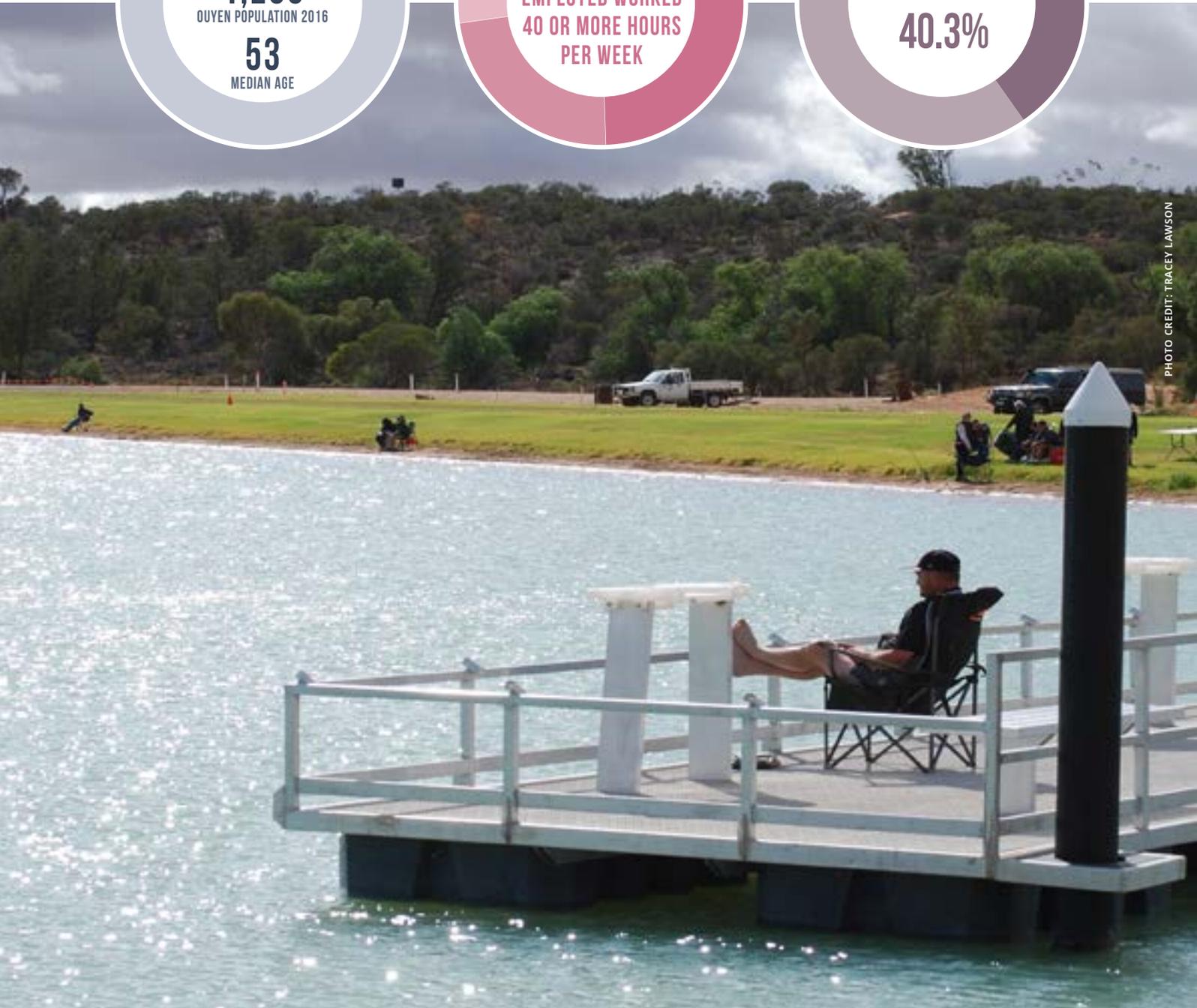
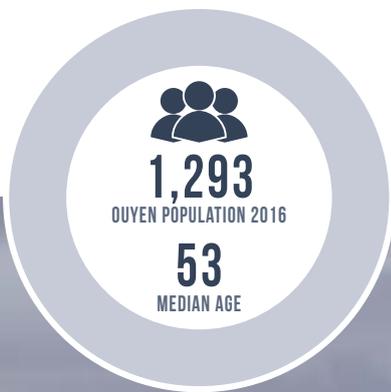
## POPULATION

At the 2011 census Ouyen had a population of 1,085. The 2016 census recorded 1,293 usual residents. The median age of residents was 53 years and children aged 0 - 14 years made up 13.9 percent of the population and people aged 65 years and over made up 29.9 percent.

Over 40.3 percent of people participated and/or completed voluntary work through an organisation or a group which is double the state average, whilst the unemployment rate of 23.35 percent was slightly higher than the state average and 49 percent of people who were employed worked 40 or more hours per week, which is 6.6 percent higher than the state average.

Major industries for employment include grain and sheep farming, health services, primary and secondary education, local government, trade, labourers, machinery operators and/or drivers and retail workers.

\*Census Data Code POA3490 (POA)



# Introduction

The first Ouyen Community Plan was initiated in 2008 and a subsequent review commenced in 2017. In 2018 Ouyen Inc. approached Mildura Rural City Council to assist with the development of a new and innovative plan and community planning strategy to develop existing and future projects.

Residents of the Ouyen and district communities are highly engaged in community issues and participated in focus groups, open meetings, one on one interviews, online/hard copy surveys and group sessions. Data was collected during the Advancing Country Towns project from 2011 to 2017 and included several consultation sessions with community members, advisory groups, project groups and stakeholders. In October 2017 Ouyen Inc held further small intensive group discussions with nineteen willing community members to determine the relevance of previous findings and determine if there were any new or emerging trends.

## ABOUT OUYEN INC

Ouyen Inc. is a voluntary incorporated community organisation, established on 3 December 1997, including community elected individuals who bring a range of views regarding economic and social development for the community of Ouyen. The committees purpose and function is to provide vision, direction, leadership and unity to create a dynamic future for Ouyen.

Membership is open to all members of the Ouyen and district community that reside or own a property within the Mildura Rural City Council Local Government Area.

Ouyen Inc. works closely with many stakeholders including the Mildura Rural City Council.

Ouyen Inc. strives to provide opportunities for all residents and visitors.



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## DEVELOPING THE OUYEN COMMUNITY PLAN

This is the second community plan for Ouyen covering a period of 2008 – 2025 with a focus on long term sustainability, strategic collaboration and many notable achievements since implementation in 2008.

In 1988 Ouyen was selected for inclusion in a study as an example of a small town with a dryland farming rural base. It was also noted that Ouyen was an important rural service centre <sup>iv</sup>, and a key element to the Victorian Governments Rural Futures Initiative 2008 (RFI) with a strong focus on proactively responding to pressures in change. <sup>v</sup>

The Ouyen Community Plan continues to be recognised as the community's strategic planning document for the implementation of projects and services in the community. The plan will support the delivery of high quality, efficient and effective projects, programs, services and improved outcomes.



## Our 10 Key Themes

THE COMMUNITY PLAN IS PLANNED AND EXECUTED UNDER 10 KEY THEMES:

01	Our Values		06	Connecting Our Region	
02	Our Vision		07	Leadership and Governance	
03	Community Wellbeing		08	Protecting Our History	
04	Protecting Our Natural Environment		09	Our Concerns	
05	Building a Strong Local Economy		10	Project Action Plan	

# Achievements to date

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The Ouyen community have successfully achieved the following:

- Ouyen Recreational Lake Mildura Rural City Council 'Project of the Year 2019'
- Advancing Country Towns Project
- Ouyen Recreational Lake Project
- Resilient Services Project
- Brigade Sustainability Pilot
- Mallee Research Station Business Case
- Independent Living Business Case
- Keeping Kids Connected
- Roxy Theatre 'Mallee Up in Lights' Project
- Roxy Theatre Storage Project
- Ouyen Visitors Information Centre
- Ouyen Community Engagement Project
- Oke Street Lighting Project.
- Ouyen Regional Sale Yard
- Ouyen High Tech Truck Wash
- Kiamal Solar Farm
- Community Engagement Project (OP-12)
- Ouyen P-12 College Amalgamation
- Ouyen Community Club
- Iluka Mines
- Ouyen United and Walpeup Underbool Football and Netball Club Merger
- Ouyen Recreational Ground Upgrade
- Development of 2nd Recreation Reserve Football Oval
- Ouyen Netball Courts Lighting Project
- Ouyen Men's Shed
- Redevelopment of the Ouyen netball courts and lighting
- Ouyen P-12 Mentoring Program
- Ouyen IGA Supermarket Upgrade
- Doctors in Secondary Schools Program
- Resurfacing of the Ouyen Railway Bridge
- Railway Crossing Upgrades
- Murray Basin Rail Project
- Rail Sidings Rapid Appraisal
- Ouyen Youth Skate Park
- Salvation Army Thrift Shop.



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## Events

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- Mallee Root Festival
- Ouyen Pacing Cup
- Ouyen Farmers Festival
- Ouyen Traders Christmas
- Ouyen Mothers Day Classic
- Ouyen Anglers Fishing Competition
- Ouyen Mini Rowing Regatta
- MTHCS Christmas Celebration
- Ouyen Débutante Ball
- Ouyen Sporting Events - tennis, basketball, netball, football and bowls
- Vanilla Slice Triumph
- Successful return of Harness Racing to Ouyen
- Ouyen Lake Community Celebration
- Rohan Gregg Memorial Tennis Tournament
- Inaugural Trinita Enduro
- Mallee Up In Lights Launch Night.

# Our Priorities

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## 01. OUR VALUES

Ouyen is a well connected, welcoming, inclusive and family friendly community.

### Our community values are:

- Well connected, family friendly and welcoming community
- New community members are welcomed and are able to connect
- Safe, friendly and diverse people and interests
- Warm weather, peaceful and quiet
- Access to high quality health and wellbeing services
- Access to sporting clubs and facilities
- Ouyen Recreational Lake development
- Education and employment opportunities
- Attractive streetscapes and town entrances
- Quality infrastructure and assets that are well managed, used and maintained
- Low density and affordable housing.

## 02. OUR VISION

The vision for Ouyen is a place where there is:

- Advocacy, innovation and support to grow jobs and attract visitors
- Promote existing commercial and new industrial development opportunities
- Projects that capture tourism and local spend
- Attract new and middle-aged families to the community
- Integrated, innovative and local health, wellbeing and community services
- Framework to bring together government and community
- Place based funding from Local, State and Federal Government to deliver services locally
- Professional employment opportunities for residents
- Local educational opportunities
- High speed internet services
- Shop buildings occupied, and local businesses supported
- Clean and tidy town appearance.

## 03. COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Activities and initiatives that produce vibrant towns and regions with a rich history, a safe and healthy community, and a strong sense of community pride.

### This includes a focus on:

- Economic, recreational and social development
- Well funded and supported Emergency Services by Government and community
- Sporting / non sporting events, activities and facilities
- Family day care and supported playgroups
- Early, Primary and Secondary education
- Youth services
- Aged care services
- Well maintained parks and gardens
- Clean and safe public amenities
- Ouyen Recreational Lake for social, boating and fishing activities
- Swimming pools for training, water safety programs, school carnivals and competitions
- Community halls and buildings
- Animal Control
- Heritage
- Libraries.

## 04. PROTECTING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Working towards conserving and promoting the natural beauty of our region.

### This includes a focus on:

- Residential and recreational water supply
- Drainage management
- Environmental initiatives
- Recycling
- Energy efficiency
- Sewerage management
- Waste facilities and services
- Biodiversity and natural heritage
- Noxious weeds.



## 05. BUILDING A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY

Supporting the development of a prosperous and diversified economy delivering lifestyle benefits to the community through employment, income and sustainable economic growth.

**This includes a focus on:**

- Tourism
- Economic infrastructure and diversity (i.e. industry)
- Employment opportunities
- Business support
- Attracting new residents
- Major events
- Education and skills
- Placed based investment
- Marketing and promotion
- Quality services.

## 06. CONNECTING OUR REGION

Focusing on linking our towns and connecting our region to larger cities.

**This includes a focus on:**

- Partnerships with outlying Mallee Track communities – Including Walpeup, Underbool, Torrita, Linga, Boinka, Tutye, Cowangie, Murrayville, Carina, Panitya, Mittyack, Kulwin, Hattah, Patchewollock and neighboring communities
- Service integration and partnerships
- Quality road network and transport services
- High quality and fast speed communication networks
- Place based projects and funding supported by Local, State and Federal Government
- Bike paths and walkways
- Public transporting including rail and bus.
- RV Friendly Status to be maintained (dump point).

“ The Ouyen Lake is the largest Mallee community project to date ”



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The community wouldn't continue without our volunteers

## 07. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Ensuring a strong Local and State Government that is representative of our unique community and effective in meeting the needs of the community.

**This includes a focus on the need for:**

- High level public participation, communication, consultation and engagement
- Expertise for strategic delivery of initiatives and projects
- Participation in Council decision making
- Governance
- Advocacy
- Access to grant funding

Need to form partnerships with Local, State and Federal Government to strategically integrate services and for Ouyen Inc to deliver projects and programs that are place based.

## 08. PROTECTING OUR HISTORY

Ouyen History Resource Centre

**This includes a focus on:**

- Digitising History Centre content and availability online to reduce volunteer burden.

## 09. OUR CONCERNS

The community is impacted by a number of concerns and challenges.

**Concerns that were highlighted:**

- Gap between rural community and urban policy (red-tape)
- Isolation from larger cities
- Limited access and funding to deliver specialist and health services including, prenatal, antenatal and post-natal support, maternal child health, mental health and 24 hour emergency care services
- Attracting and retaining General Practitioners (GP)
- Limited access to entertainment, sporting, non-sporting and youth activities
- Government support for future economic development
- Lack of younger and middle aged families
- Aging and declining population
- Volunteer burnout and changing patterns of volunteerism<sup>vi</sup>
- Limited access to public transport
- Poor and unreliable phone and internet service
- Lack of non-sporting activities
- Lack of independent living accommodation for the elderly
- Lack of investment and service coordination to meet local priority
- Limited career and educational opportunities
- High quality roads and footpaths
- Better storm water and drainage management
- Maintenance of local infrastructure and beatification of public spaces
- Bushfire threat.

## 10. PROJECT ACTION PLAN

Below is a list of the projects that the community identified as part of the planning process.

Project Description	Next steps/Actions	Partners
<p><b>OUYEN LAKE PROJECT STAGE 3</b> to provide accommodation to generate income for long term sustainability.</p> <p>Second amenities facilities, play equipment, aquatic storage facility, BBQ area, and heritage display.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Investigate and determine project scope, objectives, forecast costing, budget and implementation</li> <li>2. Consultation with local businesses</li> <li>3. Seek quotations</li> <li>4. Funding strategy.</li> </ol> <p>● Refer to business case here: <b>Ouyen Recreational Lake Business Case</b></p>	<p>Ouyen Inc GWMWater MRCC Mildura Regional Development State Government Commonwealth of Australia Community</p>
<p><b>INDEPENDENT LIVING VILLAGE</b> with purpose built aged independent living units and facility in Ouyen.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stakeholder consultation</li> <li>2. Further business model generation and planning</li> <li>3. Acquire old Ouyen Primary School site</li> <li>4. Design specifications</li> <li>5. Funding strategy.</li> </ol> <p>● Refer to business case here: <b>Ouyen Independent Living Village Business Case</b></p>	<p>Ouyen Inc MTHCS MRCC Community</p>
<p><b>INTERMODAL TERMINAL</b> Freight terminal at Ouyen Rail Yards to lower transport costs for local containerised export commodities, increase employment, economics, reduced road damage, accidents, and congestion.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Confirm stakeholders, volume of freight, and identification of potential terminal operators</li> <li>2. Business Case</li> <li>3. Vic Track, Community and private enterprise consultation.</li> </ol> <p>● Refer to Rapid Appraisal here; <b>Ouyen Intermodal Terminal Rapid Appraisal</b></p>	<p>Ouyen Inc Private Enterprise VicTrack Community</p>
<p><b>HEALTH SERVICES FACILITY UPGRADE</b> Enhance allied health services by developing a fit for purpose facility and expansion that will improve the quality of the service.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Investigate and determine project scope, objectives, forecast costing, budget and implementation.</li> </ol> <p>● Mallee Track Health and Community Services Strategic Plan 2018 - 2023</p>	<p>MTHCS Ouyen Inc</p>
<p><b>SERVICE INTEGRATION</b> Integrate and expand health related services - Not limited to Maternal Child Health Services (MCHS), Playgroup, Early Years Services and Programs.  Further funding to expand existing and new services.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bring stakeholders together to form partnerships.</li> </ol>	<p>MTHCS MRCC</p>

Project Description	Next steps/Actions	Partners
<b>YOUTH SERVICES / ACTIVITIES</b> Community Youth Services Project. Place based programs, services and support for local youth.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consultation to facilitate and deliver project to support youth in future employment opportunities.</li> </ol>	Ouyen Inc Ouyen P-12 Youth MTHCS
<b>COMMUNITY EVENTS</b> Mallee Root Festival Ouyen Farmers Festival Ouyen Pacing Cup Mothers Day Classic Vanilla Slice Triumph - Founder of event / Supporter for MRCC Local Government Area Other.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ongoing consultation with community groups to ensure funding opportunities are available and suitable strategic planning is provided to expand capacity.</li> </ol>	Ouyen Inc Committees Community MRCC State Government
<b>OUYEN RECREATIONAL GROUND URBAN TO RURAL WATER PROJECT</b> Convert urban supply to rural water to reduce cost to community group and Mildura Rural City Council.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop brief for design works</li> <li>2. Seek funding to develop design specifications</li> <li>3. Seek quotations</li> <li>4. Funding strategy and submissions.</li> </ol>	Ouyen United Kanga Football and Netball Club MRCC GWMWater
<b>INDUSTRY/EMPLOYMENT/ ECONOMICS</b> Abattoirs Intermodal Solar	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Further community consultation and engagement with key partners</li> <li>2. Identify potential development locations / sites.</li> </ol>	Ouyen Inc Private enterprise
<b>OUYEN GOLF CLUB UPGRADE AND DISABILITY ACCESS PROJECT</b> Inclusive of exterior veranda, building and amenities upgrade.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Design specifications for disability access bathroom facility and outdoor area</li> <li>2. Quotations</li> <li>3. Funding strategy and submission.</li> </ol>	Ouyen Golf and Tennis Club Ouyen Inc MRCC
<b>OUYEN TENNIS CLUB SYNTHETIC TURF PROJECT</b> Replace the existing grass surface with a low maintenance and long-term cost effective synthetic surface.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Design specifications</li> <li>2. Quotations</li> <li>3. Funding strategy and submissions.</li> </ol>	Ouyen Golf and Tennis Club State and Federal Government MRCC
<b>OUYEN AIRSTRIP EXPANSION AND UPGRADE</b> Night time landing restrictions. Inclusive of widening the existing runway, sealing, install a pilot/passenger holding building, car parking and footpaths.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Form committee to lead project</li> <li>2. Identify and consult with specialists in aviation field</li> <li>3. Investigate planning and engineering requirements</li> <li>4. Design specifications</li> <li>5. Funding strategy and submission.</li> </ol>	Ouyen Inc State and Federal Government MRCC Emergency Services
<b>OUYEN BOWLS CLUB ARTIFICIAL TURF AND BUILDING UPGRADE PROJECT</b> Replace the existing grass surface with a low maintenance and long-term cost effective synthetic green.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Planning, quotes and funding submissions.</li> </ol>	Ouyen Bowls Club Ouyen Recreational Reserve State and Federal Government MRCC

Project Description	Next steps/Actions	Partners
<b>OUYEN GOLF COURSE IRRIGATION SYSTEM UPGRADE PROJECT</b>	1. Planning, quotes and funding submission.	Ouyen Inc Ouyen Tennis and Bowls Club
<b>OUYEN ROXY THEATRE SHIPPING CONTAINER, REAR ACCESS AND GREEN ROOM</b>	1. Complete Shipping Container Storage Project 2. Rear access and green room design specifications 3. Funding strategy and submission.	Ouyen Roxy Theatre Incorporated Ouyen Inc
<b>OUYEN SOLAR PROJECT</b>	1. Complete construction ● Refer to website here: <a href="https://kiamalsolarfarm.com.au/">https://kiamalsolarfarm.com.au/</a>	Total Eren Ouyen Inc Other private investors and companies
<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT</b>	1. Ongoing annual program. ● Refer to website here: <a href="http://www.ouyen.vic.au/community-plan/">http://www.ouyen.vic.au/community-plan/</a>	Ouyen Inc Iluka
<b>OUYEN MALLEE MOTORCYCLE CLUB PROJECT</b> Provide the safety and portable equipment to run events. Acquire site and further development.	1. Quotes and funding submissions. 2. Further consultation.	OMMC (Ouyen Mallee Motorcycle Committee) Ouyen Inc
<b>PUBLIC TRANSPORT</b> Passenger Rail and Taxi.	1. Ongoing consultation with local member.	Ouyen Inc State Government Federal Government MRCC
<b>ADVISORY GROUP PARTNERSHIPS</b>	1. Partner with outlying communities on future projects to enhance long term sustainability.	Ouyen Inc Walpeup Development Committee Underbool Progress Murrayville Development Committee Other local committees
<b>OUYEN TOURISM PROJECT</b> Tourist attraction located around Ouyen and Railways inclusive of a Hall of Fame/Discovery Centre. 'Mile of Machinery' display located at town entrance points displaying farming history. Cycling and driving trail linking Patchewollock with interactive QR Code System to access local history.	1. Establish Working Group 2. Develop scope 3. Preliminary costings 4. Operational analysis 5. Strategic plan / mini business case.	Ouyen Inc MRCC MRD Community

Project Description	Next steps/Actions	Partners
<p><b>OUYEN FITNESS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING CENTRE (COMMUNITY GYM)</b></p> <p>Create a 24 hours community owned gym that can be utilised by the community to run fitness, health and wellbeing programs, personal training, group fitness and training classes, offer quality equipment and a children play centre.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish sub group / working group</li> <li>2. Research similar models</li> <li>3. Identify need and local sporting groups and programs</li> <li>4. Investigate suitable locations</li> <li>5. Preliminary costings</li> <li>6. Operational analysis</li> <li>7. Business Case</li> <li>8. Funding strategy and grant submissions</li> </ol>	<p>Ouyen Inc</p> <p>Sporting Groups</p> <p>MRCC</p> <p>Community</p>
<p><b>OUYEN CRICKET NETS</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seek quotations.</li> </ol>	<p>Ouyen Cricket Club</p> <p>MTHCS</p> <p>Ouyen Inc</p>

\*Source: Ouyen Community Plan Survey Data 2017



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## Other Projects / Initiatives

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**Below is a list of other projects and initiatives that the community identified.**

- New and innovative community events to increase opportunity and local spend
- Place based funding for services
- Better maintained streetscapes and roads
- Beautify entrance points to town
- High quality and fast speed internet service
- Arts projects - linking communities along Mallee Track.
- Service integration and collective impact
- Tourism plan
- Emergency Services UHF repeater
- Car wash
- Laundromat
- Continue to develop and support the Ouyen and District Mens Shed
- Digitise the Ouyen History Centre content.

# Contact us

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## Ouyen Inc

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## Mildura Rural City Council

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Telephone: (03) 5018 8100

## Mallee Track Health & Community Services

www.mthcs.com.au/

Telephone: (03) 5092 1111

# Acknowledgments

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Thank you to Scott Anderson as Chairperson of Ouyen Inc, Cassey Gloster from Mildura Rural City Council and those who provided insight, thoughts and ideas throughout the development of the Ouyen Community Plan 2020 - 2025.

The Ouyen Community Plan was developed by Project Manager, Cassey Gloster on behalf of partners Ouyen Inc. and Mildura Rural City Council.

A special thanks to photographers Philip Down, Tracey Lawson and Kerry E Whitelegg for the amazing photographs we have exhibited throughout this document.

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## References

- i. Dr Robyn Eversole, Program Director, Regional Development, RMIT University, Hamilton, pg 121
- ii. Ouyen Inc Business and Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015, pg 7
- iii. Ouyen Incorporated Rules, Constitution 1997
- iv. Dr Robyn Eversole, Program Director, Regional Development, RMIT University, Hamilton, pg 121
- v. Ouyen – Town of Choice Community Plan 2008, pg 4
- vi. Resilient Service Project 2014



This community plan was developed by the community of Ouyen  
in collaboration with:



Mildura Rural City Council



The plan was endorsed by Mildura Rural City Council on 23 October 2019.