



MEDIA RELEASE

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JOBS, INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT FUNDS FOR REGIONAL CITIES

Regional Cities Victoria Chair Anna Speedie has today welcomed the Andrews' Government's third State Budget, handed down this week.

In its pre-Budget submission, RCV outlined the contrast between regional Victoria's slowing economy, going backwards for the fourth consecutive year, against experiencing the lowest unemployment level in our regions since November 2014. RCV called for the Government to focus on jobs, infrastructure, liveability and tourism.

Cr Speedie said "RCV is pleased to see the Government prioritise creating and sustaining jobs in the regions, through the 25 per cent cut to payroll tax, and moving government jobs to Ballarat and the Latrobe Valley.

"We also want to congratulate the Government for answering RCV's call to honour the agreement to spend more than ten per cent from the sale of the Port of Melbourne on roads and rail in regional Victoria. There is definitely more to do but this is an important first step.

"RCV is working closely with the Government on a Treasury Shared Service funding model which would allow regional councils to access cheaper finance to invest in other region-building infrastructure projects.

"Victoria's regional cities are some of the best and affordable places to live in the country. We welcome the Government's announcements aimed at attracting young people to regional cities by doubling the First Home Owners Grant.

"We are disappointed to see the Government not prioritise reinvestment in the Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund. This fund produced a pipeline of projects with the potential to further energise regional Victoria's visitor economy, which employs more than 114,000 people in our regions. RCV will continue to work alongside Government to see these projects progress.

Cr Speedie also acknowledged funding that came out of the Government's Regional Partnerships for the first time, particularly around digital infrastructure, and pledged to continue to work with them in the future.

RCV's pre-Budget submission is available here:

<http://www.regionalcitiesvictoria.com.au/category/research-publications/submissions/>

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RCV is a regional leadership group dedicated to building a sustainable Victoria by providing strategic advice, coordination and advocacy to State and Federal Governments to support policies which enable Victoria's regional centres to grow and develop.

Comprising Mayors and CEOs of the 10 largest cities in regional Victoria – Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Horsham, Latrobe, Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Warrnambool and Wodonga – RCV is focused on achieving real change in regional Victoria through policy development and active implementation of those policies