



MEDIA RELEASE

***'The Winning Formula for Regional Victoria'* - how the 2026 Commonwealth Games can benefit all of regional Victoria**

7 June 2023

Regional Cities Victoria (RCV) today launches *'The Winning Formula for Regional Victoria'*, a document outlining the group's priorities to ensure a lasting legacy is created for the whole of regional Victoria as part of the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

As regional Victoria prepares for the biggest event it has ever seen, RCV is calling for measures that ensure all regional cities benefit from the influx of athletes, visitors and publicity the Games will bring.

RCV Chair, Cr Andrea Metcalf said the 2026 Commonwealth Games presents a unique opportunity that must reach all parts of the State - capturing real and positive benefits for locals, and creating a sustainable legacy that future generations can enjoy.

"This is the time for regional Victoria to shine on the world stage and we must ensure that we build on this exposure, maintaining momentum as we showcase our amazing regional cities and get long-term value out of the investment made through the Games," she said.

"It is a priority that First Peoples and Traditional Owners are engaged in all aspects of the Games delivery and ensure they reflect Victoria's rich cultural history."

"With the *Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund* discontinued in the 2023-24 Victorian Budget, our regional cities need assurance from the Government that they will invest in our regions to ensure they continue to be great places to live, work and visit."

[*The Winning Formula for Regional Victoria*](#) examines six key areas with recommendations that will ensure a lasting legacy for every regional city beyond the event period and across the whole state, not just for the five cities hosting events:

1. Pre-Games Opportunities – hosting & training

- Facilitation of partnerships between regional cities and participating countries to provide a base for their training and Games preparation.

2. Infrastructure – repairing an old legacy and creating a new one

- \$2 million for each city to conduct repairs or upgrade sporting facilities in their region.
- All equipment provided for the games is donated to local regional sporting organisations.
- \$30 million *Regional Parks and Civic Space Program* to create new parkland and upgrade existing open spaces.

3. Cultural Experiences – community engagement

- The Victorian Government to sponsor free cultural activities and events across the regions.

4. People - skilled workers & volunteers

- Creation of a new local Victoria Skills Authority liaison officer role to be based in each regional city for at least three years.



- Establish a *Commonwealth Games Regional Volunteer Program* to provide training, pre-employment qualifications and supported accommodation for 16–21-year-olds to volunteer at the Games.

5. Business procurement – business opportunities

- Regionally based businesses to make up 100% of all opportunities created through the Games' procurement processes, with priority given to First Nations businesses and employers.

6. Tourism and the visitor economy

- Invest \$30 million into a tourism campaign.
- To offer regional tourism packages when people are purchasing their Games tickets.
- Ensure the Royal Baton Relay visits all 10 regional cities, and that the baton is designed by a regional Indigenous artist.

Regional Cities Victoria comprises the 10 largest regional cities in Victoria – Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Horsham, Latrobe, Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Warrnambool and Wodonga.

Regional Victoria is home to more than 1.5 million people, or a quarter of all Victorians. Approximately 800,000 people call one of our regional cities home and the cities make up 10 per cent of Victoria's economy.

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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.