



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Funding for regions welcomed, following Commonwealth Games cancellation

Regional Cities Victoria has welcomed the Victorian Government's release of further detail today about additional investments to be made across regional Victoria, following the disappointing cancellation of the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

"There is no doubt that the decision to cancel the Commonwealth Games was a shock, and very disappointing for regional communities. We welcome the Victorian Government committing to delivering on some of the promised legacy, directing funds into boosting housing, tourism, and sporting groups in country communities," RCV Chair Cr Andrea Metcalf said.

Funding redirected from the Commonwealth Games budget includes:

- A new \$150 million Regional Worker Accommodation Fund, in addition to a \$1 billion boost to social and affordable housing in regional cities and towns;
- \$140 million to bring new events, multi-cultural festivals, and more visitors to regional Victoria, including workforce development programs, \$70 million for new visitor attraction campaigns, and \$60 million for tourism infrastructure such as new destination accommodation;
- \$10 million to grow our food and fibre exports and encourage more people to buy Victorian;
- \$35 million for new community sport infrastructure and another \$25 million to support community sport programs;
- \$20 million to support Aboriginal businesses, employment programs, and Aboriginal cultural tourism initiatives across regional Victoria;
- A \$25 million Council Support Package, recognising the investment ratepayers have already made in planning and preparing for the Commonwealth Games; and
- A doubling of the Tiny Towns Fund to \$20 million, providing grants of up to \$50,000 to projects and organisations in communities with up to 5,000 people.

"While nothing can match being broadcast into billions of lounge rooms around the world, we look forward to working with the Victorian Government to attract more visitors to regional Victoria, sell more Victorian grown and made products to Australians, and support the massive population growth across our regional cities," Cr Metcalf said.

"A lack of housing stock is keeping regional businesses from attracting the workers they need, and many locals are increasingly being priced out of the market – especially renters. These new investments in workers accommodation and social and affordable housing are very welcome," Cr Metcalf said.

"Regional Cities Victoria has been calling for local community sporting groups in every corner of the state to see a benefit ever since the Commonwealth Games was first announced. It is fantastic to see this will come to fruition."

But RCV says the additional investment in tiny towns does not make up for the abolition of the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund in the recent State Budget. Regional cities still have no access to any funding



to help build community centres, new open spaces, and provide the infrastructure needed to make regional Victoria a better place to live and work. It also puts access to Federal Government grants in jeopardy.

“Regional Victorians had excitedly welcomed the Commonwealth Games because of the long-term value it promised for their communities. We are pleased many of these benefits will still flow. But we must see a renewed focus on making our regional cities even better places to live and work,” Cr Metcalf said.

Regional Cities Victoria will continue to advocate to the Victorian Government to ensure funding is delivered across all parts of the State, and in a timely manner.

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

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