



# MEDIA RELEASE

## RCV response to 2024-25 Victorian Budget

Tuesday 7 May 2024

Regional Cities Victoria (RCV) Chair Cr Shane Sali, Mayor of Shepparton, described today's Victorian Budget as a modest Budget for regional Victoria.

"It's a Budget that does what it has to, but not necessarily what it needs to for regional Victoria," Cr Sali said.

"There's a lot we've been asked to look back on, but not that much to look forward to."

Cr Sali acknowledged modest investment in regional areas across health, transport and education as well as emergency recovery and road maintenance.

However, he said RCV was concerned about the lack of future investment opportunities in community infrastructure needed to meet the growing number of people who want to live and work in regional Victoria.

"We are disappointed the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund has not been reinstated, because for regional Victoria there is no pathway for future projects beyond the existing pipeline currently under construction.

"Local infrastructure projects are a vital part of any regional community. They not only improve the liveability of regional cities and towns but also contribute to the local economy and create local jobs," Cr Sali said.

"Regional Victoria needs considered investment to underpin long-term economic prosperity and improve liveability in the regions. Challenges such as trunk infrastructure to unlock new housing and workforce shortages need to be addressed urgently to support regional Victoria's growth.

"RCV will continue to work with and advocate to the Victorian Government to ensure regional Victorians are not left behind – showcasing everything our regions have to offer and capitalising on people's interest to live, work, and visit our cities."

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

Collectively, these cities are home to more than 800,000 Victorians, and contribute to approximately 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.*