



MEDIA RELEASE

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Respect for the regions: RCV calls for \$3 billion investment in Victoria's future

Regional Cities Victoria (RCV), representing the state's 10 largest regional cities, has today released its 2026/27 State Budget Submission, calling for essential investment in a \$1 billion Regional Fund and a \$2 billion Regional Roads Package.

A year out from the Victorian state election RCV Chair Cr Shane Sali, Mayor of Greater Shepparton, said regional communities watch billions being directed to metropolitan projects while regional funds are cut.

"Regional Victoria is not asking for special treatment, it is asking for investment that matches its contribution to the state. We are asking for the essentials," Cr Sali said.

"Every Victorian dollar invested in the regions works hard to unlock housing, create even more jobs, and easing the pressure on Melbourne – but we cannot do this alone."

The submission calls for:

- A \$1 billion Regional Fund following the discontinuation of the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund (RJIF), which once delivered over 13,000 jobs and leveraged nearly \$670 million in its final round.
- A \$2 billion Regional Roads Package over four years to tackle dangerous deterioration, reduce fatalities, and fix freight and tourism links.
- Tax reform and relief to ease cost-shifts and unfair levies such as the Emergency Services Volunteer Fund.
- Support for resilience, including ongoing drought relief and "building back better" during disaster recovery.

Cr Sali said the upcoming Budget was a chance for government – and the alternative government – to reset its relationship with regional Victoria.

"This coming Budget should be a turning point. A renewed commitment through a \$1 billion Regional Fund and a \$2 billion Regional Roads Package will go a long way toward unlocking housing supply, making our roads safer, and restoring confidence that regional Victoria matters," Cr Sali said.