



MEDIA RELEASE

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RCV: Nowhere near enough for regional roads fix

Regional Cities Victoria (RCV) said the Victorian Government's funds for roads maintenance in the 2026–27 State Budget reflects growing pressure to act on the deteriorating condition of regional roads.

RCV Chair Cr Ben Blain said the reported \$1bn funding falls well short of what is needed to fix a network that is failing regional families, communities, businesses and industries every day.

“RCV has been pushing hard for a serious uplift in roads funding, and these reports show that pressure is being heard,” Cr Blain said.

“But let's be clear: around \$1 billion is just a band-aid on a bullet hole.”

The reported commitment, a slight increase from last year's \$976 million allocation, includes funding for resurfacing roads, fixing potholes, maintaining bridges and delivering emergency repairs, with around 70 per cent expected to be directed to regional Victoria.

Cr Blain said that while regional investment is welcome, the scale of the problem requires far more than another patch-up program.

“Most of our regional arterial roads are reaching the end of their design life. They don't just need patching, they need rebuilding.

“This is what happens when you keep putting band-aids on roads that are structurally failing. It's more expensive in the long run, and it's putting safety and productivity at risk right now.”

Earlier this month, RCV launched its [election campaign advocacy](#) including a \$2 billion regional roads package to restore the safety, reliability and productivity of the network.

Cr Blain said the proposed package is above and beyond existing funding, delivering an additional \$500 million per year over four years to properly address the backlog and stabilise the network.

“This isn't about small top ups to existing budgets, it's about recognising the scale of the problem and funding it accordingly.

“And that's just a start on the level of investment required to move from short-term fixes to long-term solutions.”

That call was reinforced through a [Regional Roads Roundtable](#), bringing together leaders from freight, agriculture, tourism and local government, who collectively warned that the current state of regional roads is unsustainable.



Roundtable participants highlighted worsening safety risks, rising costs for freight and businesses, and growing impacts on regional communities and liveability.

“There is no debate anymore, every sector is saying the same thing. The network is under strain, and the consequences are being felt right across the economy,” Cr Blain said.

“Regional roads carry the freight that keeps Victoria moving. They connect workers to jobs, families to services, and visitors to destinations. When they fail, the whole state pays the price.”

Cr Blain said RCV would continue to work constructively with all parties in the lead up to the Victorian election, but would not back away from calling for the level of investment required over the next term of government.

“Regional Victoria deserves roads that are fit for purpose. We’ve seen hundreds of billions poured into metro transport projects while our regional roads deteriorate.

“It’s time to stop patching yesterday’s roads and start building tomorrow’s network right across our state.”