



MEDIA RELEASE

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One new bus route for regional cities

Regional Cities Victoria (RCV) says today's \$100 million announcement regarding statewide bus investment delivers just one new route across Victoria's 10 regional cities – in Geelong – highlighting the need for a broader regional focus.

RCV Chair Cr Ben Blain said every new bus route was important, but warned that without serious investment in regional bus services, people had no choice but to rely on their cars regardless of how cheap public transport is.

“Currently, regional Victorians are effectively subsidising free public transport for Melbourne networks, while being left with services that are less reliable, less connected and underinvested,” Cr Blain said.

“For many people in regional areas, public transport simply isn't a viable option for getting to work, school or daily life.

“Local bus networks in most regional cities have not been reviewed in more than 15 years, exacerbating the lack the coverage, frequency and integration needed to support growing populations and modern commuting patterns.”

With regional cities expected to accommodate significant population growth by 2051 as part of the Victorian Government's housing targets, RCV has consistently called for a more demand-driven approach to planning local bus services, to ensure new and growing communities are supported with timely public transport.

“Regional Victoria has a critical role to play in the state's future growth, and coordinated investment in transport and infrastructure will be essential to getting this right,” Cr Blain said.

RCV also noted the importance of aligning increased bus services with improvements to regional roads.

“Bus drivers and passengers rely on safe, well-maintained roads every day. As services expand, it's important that road infrastructure keeps pace,” Cr Blain said.

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 roads investment package is above and beyond existing funding, to deliver an additional \$500 million per year over four years to properly address the backlog of roads maintenance and stabilise the regional network.

“Regional Victorians deserve bus services and roads that are fit for purpose.”