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MEDIA RELEASE

\$18.61million funding boost for key projects across Melbourne East

The Melbourne East Regional Development Australia (RDA) Committee welcomes the announcement of \$18.31million for three key projects in the region under Round 4 of the Federal Government's Regional Development Australia Fund, adding to the \$300,000 received this year in Round 3.

Maroondah City Council was awarded \$10million in funding for its Aquanation project., which will replace the demolished Ringwood Aquatic Centre with a regional aquatic and leisure centre and new State Diving Centre. It will have a 66.5 metre FINA standard 10 lane swimming and diving pool, with flexible aquatic spaces for different sports and programs. The facility will also include a large gymnasium, three group fitness rooms, childcare, a café, community rooms and fully accessible change facilities.

Monash City Council received \$4.75million to establish an Eastern Innovation Business Centre. This is a business incubator hub that will provide mentoring, training, and computer based support within the region and across regional Australia. In particular, it will help start-up, home-based, micro and small businesses in the crucial early years of operation to operate successfully and prosper. The Centre will be located within the Monash Technology Precinct.

Yarra Ranges Council was awarded \$3.56million to redevelop the historic Yarra Glen Railway Station site into the Yarra Valley Regional Tourist Precinct, providing tourist amenity and activity and an information bureau. The 9 km disused portion of the Healesville to Yarra Glen railway will also be upgraded to connect the two towns, creating connections between the attractions offered.

"Melbourne East RDA played a key role in shortlisting local projects that were of major regional benefit and directly aligned with the Melbourne East RDA Regional Plan," said Professor Rod Hill, Acting Chair of Melbourne East RDA. "These proponents then submitted full applications to Regional Development Australia for consideration.

“All the proposals received were of very high quality and we are pleased that those selected for funding involve strong community support and collaborative regional partnerships,” he added.

“Each will be a factor in us achieving the Melbourne East RDA priorities and contribute substantially to the economic future of the region and its liveability for our residents.”

Earlier in the year, Yarra Ranges Council received \$300,000 in Round 3 of Regional development Australia funding for the Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail Visitor Nodes. This project will see five heritage station sites along the iconic 40 kilometre Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail transformed into visitor nodes – places that will attract users and the local community to gather socially, recreate, relax and picnic.

The Regional Development Australia Fund supports the infrastructure needs of regional Australia by funding capital infrastructure projects that are identified as priorities by local communities. The program is administered by the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport. More information on the Regional Development Australia Fund can be found at www.regional.gov.au.

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