



BUDGET 2019/ 20 FACT SHEET

Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership

For almost three years, Regional Partnerships have been a cornerstone of how the Victorian Government has engaged with regional Victoria. Thousands of locals have attended Regional Assemblies in Wimmera Southern Mallee and have told the Wimmera Southern Mallee (WSM) Regional Partnership what is important for this region; and, in turn, helped shape the priorities of the Partnership, and the Victorian Government.

Partnerships are now maturing. Recently, the WSM Regional Partnership published its [Outcomes Roadmap](#), which outlines the key, long-term strategic areas of focus for the Partnership going forward, and where it is looking to make a real difference.

The outcomes the Partnership is striving for:

Economic Diversification - A vibrant economy with a thriving, innovative agriculture industry and emerging tourism opportunities

Telecommunications - High quality, reliable digital connectivity and services

Connectivity – Public Transport & Roads - Safe, accessible and connected roads and rail

Strong Local Government - Sustainable, connected and change-ready local government

Energy - Affordable, sustainable and renewable energy

Rural and Remote Funding - Focussed funding that drives infrastructure investment and business growth into rural areas

Early Years - Equity of access to early years education and care

Family Violence - WSM Families are safe and supported

Workforce - A high performing, valued and empowered workforce

Health & Education - Quality health and education for all

Youth Disadvantage - Young people in WSM reach their full potential

Budget 2019/ 20:

The Budget provides **\$2.6 billion for the Government's *Delivering for Regional and Rural Victoria Program*** which will provide a whole of Government focus on delivering for communities across the state. The program will improve public transport, country roads, tourism infrastructure and TAFE facilities, and provide critical health facility upgrades for regional and rural Victoria while supporting 4,500 jobs.

The ***Delivering for Regional and Rural Victoria program*** provides **\$134 million** to create jobs and deliver priority projects, including the Government's election commitments, across rural and regional Victoria.

The Budget also provides **further tax relief for rural and regional businesses**. The **regional payroll tax rate will be reduced to 25 per cent of the metropolitan rate by 2022-23**, while eligibility for the tax rate will be expanded with the current 'business location test' removed from 1 July 2019. The payroll tax-free threshold will be increased to \$700,000 by 2022-23. **A land transfer duty concession will also be introduced for regional Victoria** to encourage regional businesses to relocate and expand in regional areas.



Victorian Budget initiatives that support Partnership priority outcomes include:

- **\$7.2 million** for **Growing Victoria's agriculture industry**, supporting collaboration between industry and Victorian TAFEs and agricultural colleges to deliver the Certificate III in Shearing, and the Agricultural college at Longerenong to upgrade its accommodation facilities

Other significant 2019/20 Budget investments in the Wimmera Southern Mallee region include:

- Through the **Local Sports Grants**, the government has committed **\$175 million** to develop more than 65 community sports infrastructure projects across the State including the upgrade of **Lord Nelson Park, St Arnaud**
- **Hindmarsh, Northern Grampians and Yarriambiack** will be three of the first six rural and regional local government areas to receive the roll out of **universal 3-year-old kinder**

Key investments in the 2019/20 Budget relevant to all Regional Partnership regions

Wimmera Southern Mallee will share in a range of significant state-wide investments, including:

- **\$357 million** toward ongoing **regional road maintenance** to ensuring our highways and connecting roads are safe and well maintained
- **\$136.2 million** for an **additional 500,000 specialist appointments** for rural and regional Victorians and an easy to access registry for General Practitioners to provide information on hospital waiting lists
- **\$23.9 million** to better respond and meet the needs of victim survivors in emergency accommodation including **in the Wimmera**
- **\$0.4 million for Young Farmer Scholarships** to up-skill the next generation of farmers for continued growth and success of the agricultural industry
- **\$3.2 million to make our farms safer** through continued support to the National Farmers Federation program to improve health and safety outcomes on farms
- **\$4 million** to continue the good work of the **National Centre for Farmer Health** to support tailored health promotion
- **\$5.2 million** to boost Victorian wine exports through a range of activities trade missions, symposiums and international marketing campaigns to increase export capabilities and capabilities of our wine industry
- **\$5.7 million for collaborative Aboriginal cultural heritage management**, ensuring Aboriginal voices are at the heart of government decision making
- A commitment to **upgrade camp sites and 4WD tracks** across regional Victoria using **\$35.1 million** to improve amenity and support regional tourism
- **\$11.2 million for front line services** in regional Victoria for on ground wild-life management services and minimise the impacts of wild dogs on biodiversity, primary producers and community health



- **\$0.5 million for the Country Women's Association** to support its advocacy and policy work in advancing the rights of rural women in Victoria from 2019 to 2022
- **\$2.6 million for the Victorian Patient Transport Assistance Scheme** to continue the provision of subsidies for rural and regional Victorians who are required to travel long distances for medical care

But not all initiatives take new money

Partnerships have been effective in bringing different areas and levels of Government and others together to address regional issues. The Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership has been instrumental in attracting additional resources to the region to support local initiatives over the past year including:

- Advocating for **development of new towers** in priority locations to be considered as part of the **\$11 million Victorian Mobile Black Spots Program**, with a potential to leverage funding from the Commonwealth's **\$380 million Mobile Black Spot Program**
- Working with the Victorian Government on the development of the **Wimmera Southern Mallee Digital Plan**, currently being progressed through the Connecting Regional Communities Program. The plan identifies infrastructure, supply and demand of services, unmet digital needs and potential solutions, as well as **priority digital projects for the Wimmera Southern Mallee**
- Securing **\$24 million** from the **\$332 million** Regional Roads Victoria maintenance budget **towards resurfacing and rehabilitation of arterial roads** in the Wimmera Southern Mallee
- **Partnering with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning** to develop the Grampians New Energy Taskforce to map out the region's new energy future
- **Championing the uptake of tele-health across the Wimmera Southern Mallee** in collaboration with the Wimmera Southern Mallee Health Alliance, which has secured **\$100,000** from the Victorian Telehealth Specialist Clinic Project initiative to deliver **specialist clinic services** and improve access to health care for families in the Wimmera Southern Mallee
- **Working with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Department of Education and Training** to increase employment in health roles across the region
- Advocating for **increased home-based care options** for children and young people in the out of home care system through the DHHS Made to Measure Care project
- Fostering **collaboration between local governments** in the Wimmera Southern Mallee to submit applications to the **\$20 million Rural Councils Transformation Program**

In 2019, as part of the natural evolution of Partnerships, the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership will identify one or two key issues, mirroring the outcomes it is striving to achieve, where it will work with Government and stakeholders to make a substantial difference. It means in 2019, there will not be a large Regional Assembly, but smaller targeted meetings where the Partnership will engage with the community and stakeholders in a more decisive, focused and strategic way.

For more information on the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership, go to <http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/regional-partnerships/wimmera-southern-mallee> or follow our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/WSMRP/Y> You can read our May 2019 newsletter [here](#).