

2021/22 BUDGET FACT SHEET

Central Highlands Regional Partnership



Since 2016, the Central Highlands Regional Partnership has been working to bring the voice of its communities to the heart of Government. Thousands of locals have engaged with the Partnership to share their views on what is important for their region. This has helped shape the priorities of the Partnership, and the Victorian Government.

Now in its second term, the Central Highlands Regional Partnership is already hard at work providing its advice to Government to ensure Central Highland's rural and regional communities have every opportunity for a strong recovery and a prosperous future.

The outcomes the Partnership is striving for:

Better health - A healthy community that embraces physical activity and healthy eating.

Transport connectivity - Integrated and accessible transport across Central Highlands enhancing our economic vibrancy and social cohesion

Digital Access for All – Consistent, quality digital services are accessible for all, unlocking vital improvements in productivity, education, employment, health and lifestyle.

Cohesive Regional Land Use Planning – Brings broad regional benefit through up to date, shared strategic direction and targets.

Agriculture - A productive, diverse and resilient food and agriculture industry.

A carbon-neutral region – zero net greenhouse gas emissions in the Central Highlands by 2050.

A skilled workforce - A regional economy with long-term work opportunities and a skilled labour force that meets the needs of the market today and in the future

Reduce Homelessness – Few people experience homelessness as affordable housing is broadly available and support services are accessible.

Visitor Economy - A vibrant, growing visitor economy

Advanced manufacturing - An innovative, collaborative manufacturing industry

Shared services - Transformational rural and regional Council service delivery.

Budget 2021/22 - Creating Jobs, Caring for Victorians:

The 2021/22 Victorian Government Budget is focused on building a long-term plan that truly helps Victorians recover, with an almost \$3.7 billion investment in rural and regional Victoria, taking the Government's total investment in regional Victoria to \$26 billion since 2015.

Through the 2021-22 Budget, the Government has renewed its commitment to Regional Partnerships, including \$5.1 million for the Regional Partnerships Development Fund.

Regional Partnerships and their communities have raised issues such as housing and skills shortages, early childhood and mental health as critical issues for the Government to address. This Budget includes a number of state-wide initiatives focused on boosting key regional industries, creating jobs and caring for Victorians.

Across the state these initiatives include \$3.8 billion to build Victoria's new mental health system; a \$383 million investment in skills, training and higher education; and \$1.2 billion to support children and families and provide more child protection workers.

The Government is also investing \$2 million in the successful Community Leadership program and \$3 million in the Growing Regional Opportunities for Work (GROW) program – helping create jobs for people who experience barriers to employment while investing in local leadership to support recovery.

Victorian Budget initiatives that support the Central Highlands:

- **\$986 million** to build 25 brand-new, modern X'Trapolis 2.0 trains, with major works in Ballarat, supporting close to **150 jobs in Ballarat**.
- **\$11 million** to **upgrade and reopen the Lydiard Street level crossing** in Ballarat.
- **\$44 million** to further plan, upgrade and maintain our regional roads, including an **improved intersection at Western Freeway and Learmonth Road in Ballarat**.
- **\$20 million** to **support the work of our Tech Schools**, including in Ballarat.
- **\$148 million** to **establish the new Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership**, including seven regional learning centres, with one located in Ballarat – ensuring rural and regional teachers are able to access professional development opportunities regardless of their location.
- **\$94 million** to upgrade 17 schools across regional Victoria – including Forest Street Primary School.
- **\$7 million** to **strengthen youth participation and connection** through the **Regional Presence Project** and **Aboriginal youth mentoring programs** in regional areas including Ballarat.
- **\$141 million** to deliver **five new Youth Prevention and Recovery Care (YPARC) units, totalling 50 beds specifically for young people**. Delivering sub-acute care, four of these services will be located in regional Victoria, including in the Grampians region.
- **\$3.6 million** to **support the continued free public Wi-Fi network services** in the Ballarat and Bendigo central business districts.

Victorian Budget initiatives that support all regions:

Central Highlands will share in a range of significant state-wide investments including:

- **\$7.1 billion** to continue building a world-class healthcare system, including **\$556 million** to build and expand 10 community hospitals.
- **\$3.8 billion** to build Victoria's new mental health system.
- **\$252 million** to provide housing support, including targeted initiatives to address homelessness.
- **\$94 million** in upgrades to 17 regional schools
- **\$716 million** for school programs and support for our teaching workforce, including **\$148 million** to establish the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership, dedicated to the professional learning and development of Victorian teachers.
- **\$218 million** for mental health support in schools.
- **\$167 million** to continue the roll out of universal three-year-old kindergarten, covering the whole state in 2022.
- **\$209 million** to further support the TAFE and training sector.
- **\$86 million** to establish the Victorian Skills Authority to champion and strengthen the vocational education and training sector.
- **\$1.2 billion** to support children and families, including hundreds of new child protection workers and more help for families in need.
- **\$354 million** to continue to address family violence.
- **\$788 million** to reduce the impact of bushfires on Victorian communities, the economy and the environment, including:
 - **\$272 million** to upgrade the vital communication technologies our emergency services need to keep Victorians safe in an emergency, including funding for Forest Fire Management Victoria and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) to upgrade their radios.
 - **\$384 million** to continue the Reducing Bushfire Risk program and Safer Together strategy, reducing the impact of bushfires on Victorian communities, the economy and the environment.

- **\$623 million** for community infrastructure that supports the strength of our neighbourhoods and communities, including **\$55 million** to deliver local sports infrastructure upgrades.
- **\$250 million** to protect and preserve our natural environment, including support for volunteers and local community organisations to help conserve our native species and their habitats.
- **\$160 million** to support Victoria's tourism sector to drive visitation and employment.
- **\$8.9 million** for Visitor Economy Partnerships to support local ideas and initiatives to bring more visitors to Regional Victoria.
- **\$1.7 million** for Business Events Victoria to attract more business events to regional Victoria, while supporting local jobs.
- **\$44 million** to plan, upgrade and maintain rural and regional roads.
- **\$613 million** to support the reliability of V/Line train services, including maintenance across the regional rail network.
- **\$3.1 million** for operating and maintenance works on regional public transport assets.
- **\$20 million** to deliver on the Victorian Government's commitment to position Victoria as a leader in low-emissions agriculture, including accelerating research in emissions reducing technologies.
- **\$1.4 million** to continue the work of the Rural Women's Network to support women who are finding new and innovative ways to grow and improve their communities.
- **\$5.8 million** for the Rural Financial Counselling Service, recognising the key role the service has played in assisting farmers to recover from the impacts of drought, bushfires and the pandemic.

Please note: This list is not exhaustive. For further information visit: <https://www.budget.vic.gov.au/>