

# REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT VICTORIA

Annual Report 2021–22



REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT VICTORIA

Front cover: Stawell Town Hall

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#### **Accessibility**

This document is available in PDF at [rdv.vic.gov.au](http://rdv.vic.gov.au)

#### **Acknowledgment**

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in this century and beyond.

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## Chief Executive foreword

Over the past year, Regional Development Victoria (RDV) has continued its proud history of supporting rural and regional Victoria – working with regional businesses and communities to deliver initiatives that further grow vibrant, prosperous and resilient communities.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has had significant economic and social impacts, the regional Victorian economy is rebounding strongly. With unprecedented population growth, our key focus has been on housing, skills and workforce, and targeted investments in infrastructure and jobs.

We continue to see Victorians move to our regions, and importantly, those who moved over the last couple of years are staying. This has brought new knowledge, skills and opportunities, and has supported the growth of social capital in our regional cities and towns.

Facilitating regional investment through the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund (RJIF), continued to be one of RDV's core functions throughout 2021–22. During this period, 110 grants, totalling \$116 million, have been awarded to support the creation of 1,988 new jobs and private sector investment totalling \$556 million.

In addition to unprecedented levels of investment and delivery, we are planning for the next generation of regional development initiatives through our Investment Fast-Track Fund which is supporting 24 projects.

The Regional Partnerships continue their program of transformational work in collaboration with local communities, identifying priorities for action that are locally specific and integral to regional resilience and growth. In April this year, we welcomed members to a Regional Partnerships Forum in Melbourne. Members met with the Premier, senior Victorian Government Ministers and decision-makers to discuss challenges and opportunities facing rural and regional communities. The insights and dedication of Regional Partnership members ensure that local challenges are understood and that opportunities are realised by government – we are thankful for their significant contribution.

Focusing on place and the particular challenges and opportunities for local economies and communities is central to the approach RDV takes to drive growth and prosperity.

Our future focus is underpinned by the recently launched Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS). These will be central to our engagement with regional stakeholders and how we work across government to support regional prosperity. The REDS were developed to enable regional Victoria to leverage its various strengths and comparative advantages by identifying strategic opportunities that will drive sustainable growth and long-term economic development.

The REDS will enable RDV to work across government and with regional communities and businesses to support innovation, tackle challenges and facilitate investment decisions to achieve stronger outcomes for rural and regional Victoria.

Regional Victoria faces a challenge in accessing appropriate and affordable housing, which is impacting on the attraction and retention of workforces in many areas. In 2021–22, RDV delivered four Regional Workforce Pilots in areas facing acute workforce pressures and housing availability – (in Alpine, Ararat, Great South Coast and Robinvale).

The pilots are delivering targeted responses to drivers of workforce shortages and a place-based coordination approach which identifies opportunities to address these complex issues. Intelligence from the pilots will help shape other place-based interventions across the state.

The Cross Border Commissioner has continued to work across all levels of government and with communities and businesses, to navigate the unique challenges that border communities face. The important work of the Cross Border Commissioner aims to reduce the barriers that come with differences in the way neighbouring states conduct their business.

The announcement of the regional Commonwealth Games in 2026 is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for regional Victoria. RDV is working with government and regional partners to support delivery of the games and its legacy for regional Victoria.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the work and dedication of RDV staff. The knowledge, skills and passion of RDV staff, and their deep understanding of the economies and the communities they live and work in, are central to all that RDV delivers for regional Victorians.



**Beth Jones**

Deputy Secretary Rural and Regional Victoria  
Chief Executive Regional Development Victoria

## RDV Executive team



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Deputy Secretary Rural  
and Regional Victoria and  
Chief Executive Regional  
Development Victoria



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Loddon Mallee



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Hume



**Sara Rhodes-Ward**  
Regional Director,  
Gippsland



**Mitch Watson**  
Acting Regional Director,  
Grampians

## Regional Victoria – a vital part of our state

Rural and regional Victoria is home to one in four Victorians. It accounts for 740,200 jobs and 23.7 per cent of the state's small businesses (defined as employing between 1–19 staff).

Victoria has a regional economy generating over \$85.6 billion, which accounts for 18.3 per cent of Victoria's total economy.

## An overview of Regional Development Victoria

Regional Development Victoria (RDV) is the Victorian Government's lead agency for developing rural and regional Victoria.

A statutory authority operating within the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR), RDV facilitates economic and community development in rural and regional Victoria.

### Purpose

RDV works to ensure that rural and regional communities and economies are vibrant, thriving, and inclusive. It does this by creating jobs and enabling vital infrastructure to drive positive outcomes for communities.

With a focus on partnerships, RDV leverages the strengths of each region. These partnerships ensure that government investment harnesses local opportunities and addresses local issues. By working with local businesses and communities, RDV is able to understand the issues most important to rural and regional Victorians.

RDV plays an important role in joining up the government in rural and regional Victoria. It works with all levels of government - across different departments - and businesses and local communities. RDV uses local insights, ideas, and experiences to enable outcomes for regional communities through a coordinated, whole-of-government approach. This collaboration helps RDV to ensure that rural and regional Victoria continues to prosper and be a great place to live, work and invest.

RDV provides timely advice, facilitates local solutions, and supports long-term, sustainable recovery. Another core role for RDV is supporting rural and regional communities and businesses through natural disasters, emergencies, and unplanned events, such as COVID-19 and associated cross-border issues.

## Organisational structure

RDV sits within the Rural and Regional Victoria (RRV) group of the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions. It is supported by enabling teams that focus on policy and strategy, regional programs, recovery and investment, and business performance.

RDV creates strategic partnerships with key stakeholders, builds regional coalitions and joins up government locally, regionally and across Victoria. RDV strives to improve prosperity in rural and regional Victoria through service delivery and grants, and as a facilitator, investor, partner and advisor. It adopts a strong evidence-based approach to inform policy and to support work, taking a whole-of-government view.

RDV has a strong presence throughout rural and regional Victoria, divided across five regions:

- Barwon South West
- Gippsland
- Grampians
- Hume
- Loddon Mallee

Each region incorporates teams with expertise in investment and trade, economic development and planning and coordination. This ensures local businesses and communities receive support that is specific to their needs.



## Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund

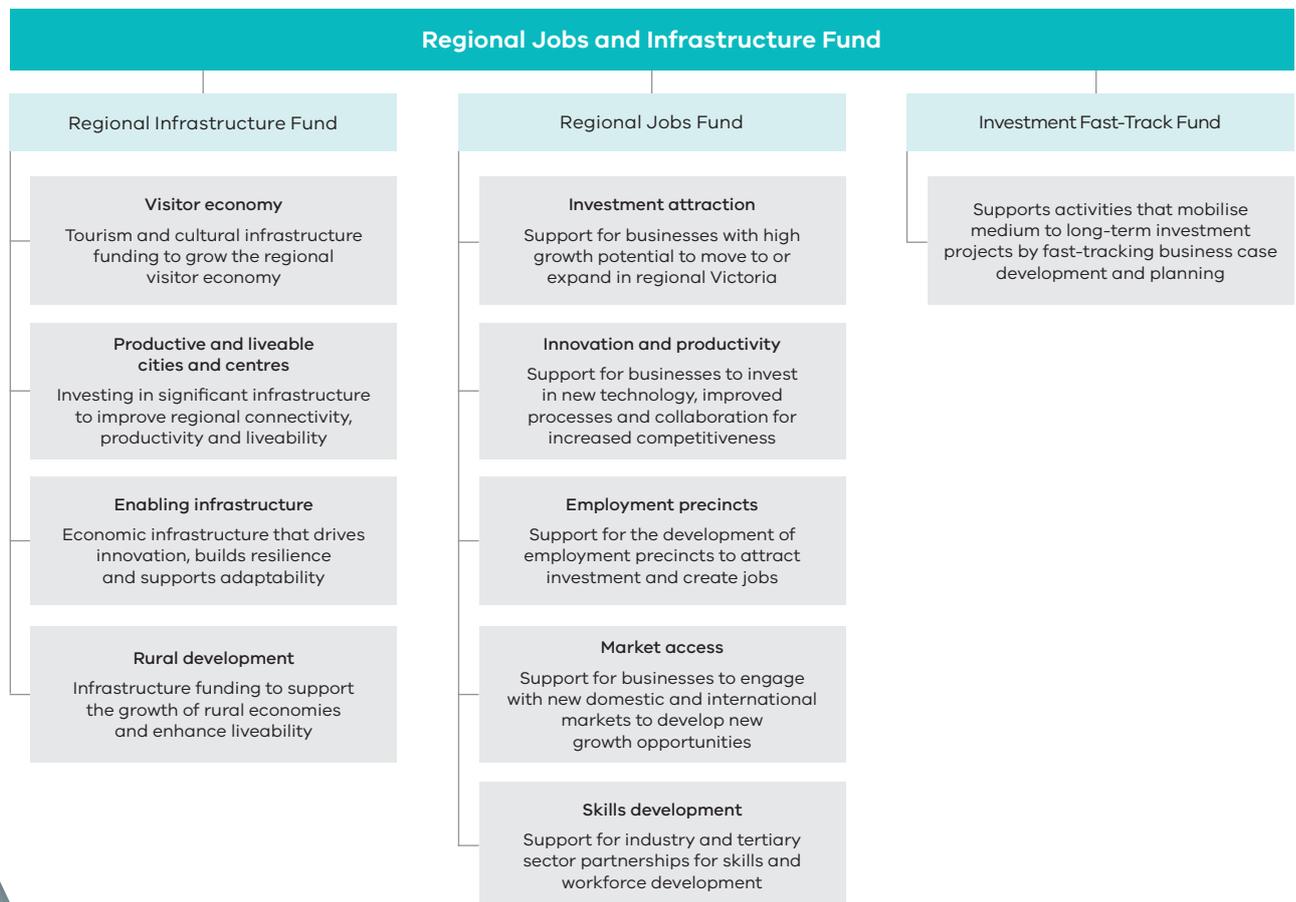
Since July 2015, the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund (RJIF) has enabled economic and community development in Victoria's regions, supporting the creation or retention of approximately 13,000 jobs for regional Victoria. The fund supports jobs growth, provision of infrastructure and community development throughout rural and regional Victoria.

The fund has three main components:

- Regional Infrastructure Fund
- Regional Jobs Fund
- Investment Fast-Track Fund

Under the current round of RJIF, there have been 110 grants awarded, totalling approximately \$116 million, including:

- 34 Regional Jobs Fund projects, supporting the creation of 1,988 new jobs and private sector investment totalling \$556 million
- 52 Regional Infrastructure Fund projects which will support over \$120 million in new investment
- 24 Investment Fast-Track Fund projects which will assist regional investment projects reach shovel-ready stage.





## Regional Jobs Fund

The Regional Jobs Fund (RJF) provides grant funding to attract new investment, create new jobs – and retain existing jobs in regional Victoria – and help businesses improve their productivity and competitiveness.

## Regional Infrastructure Fund

The Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) provides grants for infrastructure projects that have the potential to stimulate economic and community activity. Supporting the growth of rural and regional Victoria, this includes projects that seek to support recovery from COVID-19 and other major economic challenges.

## Investment Fast-Track Fund

The Investment Fast-Track Fund supports activities that mobilise medium to long-term investment projects by fast-tracking business case development and planning. It aims to increase the pipeline of investment-ready projects to boost employment and improve the liveability of rural and regional Victoria.

## Regional Partnerships

Victoria's Regional Partnerships were established by the Victorian Government in 2016. They recognise that local communities are in the best position to understand the challenges and opportunities faced by their regions.

Through ongoing consultation, the Partnerships ensure regional communities have a greater say in what matters to them. This ensures that the voices of these communities are heard directly by Government.

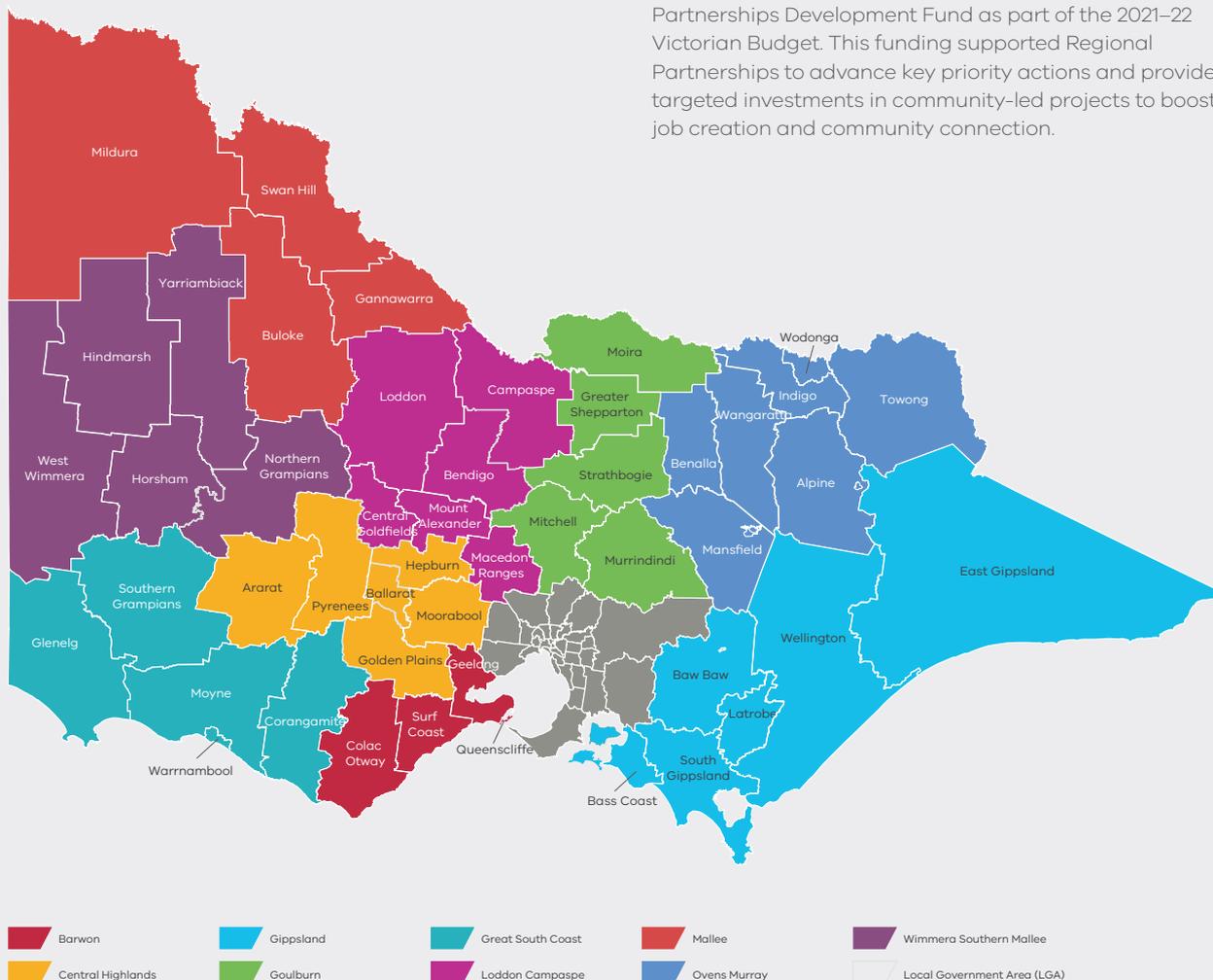
The nine Regional Partnerships are made up of more than 150 committed and empowered local leaders, including business and community members, Regional Development Australia (RDA) representatives, local government CEOs, and Victorian Government Deputy Secretaries.

Membership of Regional Partnerships reflects the diversity of Victoria's regions. This year, more Aboriginal Victorian members have joined Regional Partnerships and there is a greater representation of women. These groups make up 61 per cent of the business and community representatives.

Since inception, Regional Partnerships have achieved valuable outcomes for their communities, securing support for regional priority projects across areas like tourism, digital connectivity, mental health and agriculture. Examples include advocating for providing better digital connectivity through the Connecting Victoria program, stronger support for families, children and youth through the Youth Live4Life program and opportunities to grow regional tourism attractions through the Croajingolong Coastal Wilderness Walk.

In April, members gathered in Melbourne for the 2022 Regional Partnerships Forum. Bringing together Victorian Government representatives, Members of Parliament and Ministers, the Forum included panel sessions featuring departmental secretaries, Regional Partnership Chairs, and private, public and social service sector leaders. The plenary session – *Capitalising on the Regional Renaissance: opportunities and challenges* – explored what is required to seize opportunities to drive economic growth, build stronger and more inclusive communities and lead on climate solutions in regional Victoria.

An additional \$5.12 million was provided for the Regional Partnerships Development Fund as part of the 2021–22 Victorian Budget. This funding supported Regional Partnerships to advance key priority actions and provide targeted investments in community-led projects to boost job creation and community connection.



## Reporting on Regional Partnerships

Regional Partnerships involve local community and business leaders working alongside representatives from state and local government, and Regional Development Australia (RDA) to ensure regional views are presented directly to government.

### Barwon

In 2021–22, the Barwon Regional Partnership focused on local place-based initiatives that align with the Partnership's focus of 'Good Growth'. Growth, that is environmentally and socially sustainable, shares the benefits equitably across the Barwon region and embraces the region's rich Aboriginal culture.

#### Regional priorities include:

- **Critical infrastructure for now** – building public transport connectivity and planning for the region's future transport needs, seeking a proportionate share of digital infrastructure funding, advocating for the Barwon Women's and Children's Hospital, advocating for improvements to major road infrastructure and leveraging the Big Housing Build for outcomes in social and key worker housing.
- **Securing a sustainable, prosperous future** – seeking support for integrated water management, water recycling and rehabilitation projects, activating private sector investment in regional manufacturing opportunities, boosting investment in the Regional Renewable Organics Network, advocating for the redevelopment of the Geelong Gallery and exploring the opportunities arising from the relocation of the Spirit of Tasmania.
- **Aboriginal self-determination and Caring for Country** – seeking opportunities to support Aboriginal self-determination through the Porronggitj Karrong (Barwon River Aqueduct Park) and Kitjarra-dja-bul bullarto langi-ut (Barwon River Parklands) projects to centre Traditional Owner cultural values, improve public access and protect environments.

#### Highlights:

- Securing funding for the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation to progress knowledge gathering activities required to inform the Porronggitj Karrong project.
- Collaborating with RDA Barwon South West to investigate the freight and tourism opportunities arising from the Spirit of Tasmania's relocation from Melbourne to Geelong.
- Collaborating with regional stakeholders (G21 – Geelong Region Alliance, Committee for Geelong) to align priorities and provide a unified voice for the region.
- Strengthened collaboration with the Great South Coast Partnership, including a joint presentation to a Ministerial Committee which highlighted shared opportunities for the Barwon South West region.
- Partnership members meeting with the Minister for Public Transport and Roads and Road Safety and the Minister for Transport Infrastructure and Suburban Rail Loop to convey the importance of integrated public transport to the region.
- The Chair presenting on the Partnership's focus on good sustainable growth at the annual G21 – Geelong Region Alliance conference in April 2022.

324,300

Population  
(2020)

21.8

Population  
growth  
(2011–20)

\$17.6B

Gross Regional  
Product  
(2020)





## Case study:

### **The Barwon Women's and Children's Hospital**

In May 2022, the Victorian Government announced more than \$500 million would be allocated in the 2022-23 State Budget to the construction of the Barwon Women's and Children's Hospital in Geelong. The Barwon Women's and Children's Hospital will add an outstanding public asset to the Barwon region. It will improve community access to world-class health care in a modern facility that meets contemporary expectations.

## Great South Coast

The Great South Coast Regional Partnership (GSCRП) continued to collaborate with stakeholders across industry, government, education and community to realise opportunities for the region. This year, the GSCRП continued to build on the high value pathways identified through the Great South Coast Economic Futures Report.

### Regional priorities include:

- **Equitable access to digital infrastructure, innovation and technology** – establishment of digital innovation hubs in Hamilton and Portland to expand Internet of Things connectivity across the region, enable investment into Internet of Things applications and technology in high-value agricultural activities and leverage the Connecting Victoria Program to address connectivity shortfalls through improved mobile coverage.
- **A strong and diverse Great South Coast economy with more local jobs and a growing workforce** – diversification through green hydrogen pilots, leveraging the Hycel investment, key worker housing through activation of regional and rural residential sub-divisions, and high value tourism – site identification and concept planning – for geothermal hot springs attractions.
- **Accessible, quality education and career pathways that give people of all ages an opportunity to realise their potential** – provided funding for additional internships under 'Grow Our Own Mental Health Workforce' program, to address critical workforce shortages.
- **Roads, transport and infrastructure that drive prosperity, safety and liveability across the Great South Coast** – funding to support Dairy Supply Chain Road Network projects as identified in the Barwon South West Dairy Supply Chain Study, prioritisation of investment to upgrade dangerous, narrow state-owned arterial roads and additional services and commitment to VLocity trains for Warrnambool rail service.

### Highlights:

- Development of a strategic vision for the partnership to maximise its effectiveness as an advocate and catalyst for beneficial change in the local community, including a framework for identifying and developing regional priorities.
- A deepening engagement with Traditional Owners and the broader Aboriginal community and leveraging the planned opening of the Budj Bim Cultural Landscape (Gunditjmarra Country) in June 2022.
- Met with ministers and departmental secretaries to discuss a range of issues including potential interventions around the housing affordability and supply within the Great South Coast region.
- Consultation on the GSC Regional Economic Development Strategy to identify opportunities and targeted interventions aimed at achieving stronger outcomes for the region.
- Strengthened collaboration with the Barwon Regional Partnership, including a joint presentation to a Ministerial Committee of Cabinet which highlighted shared opportunities for the Barwon South West region.
- Representation on the Great South Coast Economic Futures Project Steering Group, including agreement to invest further in project development through the Regional Partnership Development Fund.

104,200

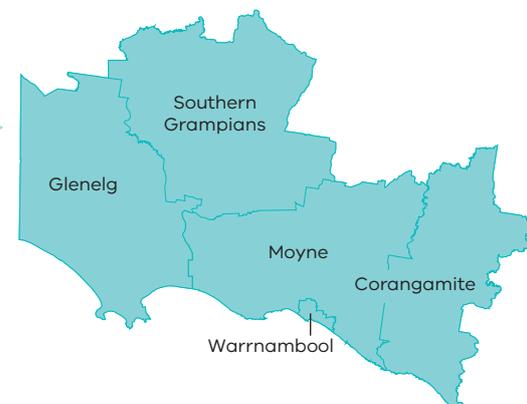
Population  
(2020)

2.4%

Population  
growth  
(2011-20)

\$5.8B

Gross Regional  
Product  
(2020)





## Case study:

### **Great South Coast Economic Futures Implementation Plan**

The Great South Coast Economic Futures Report was commissioned in 2019 to uncover the region's latent potential, new high value investment opportunities and barriers to investment.

The report identifies seven high value economic growth pathways aimed at diversifying and growing the region's economy and has already underpinned the State Government's investments in Hycel and the Portland Diversification Fund.

In 2021, the Partnership collaborated with RDA Barwon South West and the five Great South Coast councils to deliver the Great South Coast Economic Futures Implementation Plan, which builds out key actions to progress each of the pathways identified in the report.

The plan guides the work of the region-led Project Steering Group that will now focus on activating emerging opportunities in high value agriculture, tourism and green hydrogen. This work continues to inform the Partnership's annual priorities submission and advice to the Victorian Government.

## Wimmera Southern Mallee

This year the Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership (WSMRP) focused on developing and progressing priorities identified across its strategic outcomes for housing, health, innovation, jobs and energy.

### Regional priorities include:

- **Housing** – supporting new residential land development across the region by advocating to secure funding under the National Housing Infrastructure Facility. In addition, the partnership is advocating for funding to support the Wimmera Development Association to deliver a significant housing project in small and medium towns across the region.
- **Health** – advocating for mental health funding to be prioritised for Wimmera Southern Mallee under the State Mental Health Budget initiative that will directly address chronic service delivery gaps in the region.
- **Innovation** – calling for the establishment of a Grains Innovation Hub in partnership with Agriculture Victoria, seeking to capitalise on the agricultural strengths in the region and identify opportunities to innovate and apply new technologies and skills in the grains sector. The WSMRP is collaborating with the Central Highlands Regional Partnership to champion the Agriculture Investment Attraction Taskforce to unlock economic potential by enabling key opportunities to drive more processing of raw product within the region. It is also seeking support to deliver new mobile towers at identified black spots and activate a Farmer Data Cooperative.
- **Jobs** – supporting employers in the region to meet their workforce needs by piloting initiatives identified by the For Want of a Worker project, to uncover systemic barriers to workforce attraction and retention.
- **Energy** – Supporting the delivery of the Western Victorian Transmission Network Upgrade – including a 500 kilovolt connection from Sydenham (Melbourne) through to Bulgana (15 kilometres north of Ararat).

### Highlights:

- Initiated the Horizon Highway – an economic, social and cultural roadmap project for Wimmera Southern Mallee – designed to provide a long-term, unified regional vision that local stakeholders can drive into the future.
- Engaged with the newly established Grampians Health to advocate for Wimmera Southern Mallee health priorities.
- Implemented a Wimmera Southern Mallee Skills Audit to better understand where the regional skills gaps and training needs are and ways to facilitate opportunities to develop these skills across the region.
- Hosted a stakeholder workshop in August 2021 to identify three priorities for delivering mental health services in the Wimmera Southern Mallee.
- Collaborated with the Wimmera Development Association to identify actions needed to address the critical housing priorities and expansion of housing stock in the region through the Wimmera Southern Mallee Housing Blueprint.
- Launched the Orange Door family violence program in Horsham, with the aim of commencing community services in August 2022.

47,400

Population  
(2020)

3.1%

Population  
growth  
(2011-20)

\$2.5B

Gross Regional  
Product  
(2020)





## Case study:

### Digital connectivity

The WSMRP successfully advocated for increased digital connectivity across the region. In May 2022, the Victorian Government committed \$1.25 million to a new 4G Mobile Network across Wimmera Southern Mallee's more isolated and remote regional districts.

The network will be built by telco Pivotal and received additional funding through the Commonwealth Government's Regional Connectivity Program Round 2. This network will significantly improve digital connectivity across the region, which has the poorest service access in Victoria.



## Case study:

**The CHRP has identified accessible and connected public transport as a priority for the region. This will assist in enabling access to employment, education, services, and civic participation for some of the most disadvantaged communities in the region.**

Through collaboration with the Department of Transport, the Partnership commissioned an initial phase of work as part of a larger project for Improving Public Transport Connectivity in the Central Highlands. This initial research will engage diverse community stakeholders to identify the immediate opportunities for improving public transport connectivity in the region. The Partnership will seek to implement these opportunities under the Department of Transport's Flexible Local Transport Solutions Program (FLTSP).

Stage Two of the project will advocate to secure funding to deliver larger opportunities identified during the research phase. During this stage, the Partnership will engage closely across government and regional partners to ensure the Central Highlands is able to deliver priorities for a connected, modern transport service in time for the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

## Central Highlands

The Central Highlands Regional Partnership (CHRP) continued to develop key relationships with stakeholders and community across the region to progress priorities across the Partnership's three key pillars of jobs, housing and connectivity. These pillars define aspirations for a region where workers and businesses thrive, communities have the housing they need, and digital and transport connectivity enhance the economic vibrancy and social cohesion of the Central Highlands.

### Regional priorities include:

- **Jobs** – supporting employers in the Central Highlands to meet their workforce needs by piloting initiatives identified by the For Want of a Worker project, to uncover systemic barriers to workforce attraction and retention. The Partnership is also seeking to establish an Agriculture Investment Attraction Taskforce in a joint priority with the WSMRP.
- **Housing** – resolving market failures by activating enabling infrastructure so that housing developments can become commercially viable, coordinating work across social housing providers and local governments to maximise opportunities from the Big Housing Build, and facilitating region-wide coordination of planning amendments to ensure available supply of residential and industrial land.
- **Connectivity** – seeking Government commitment for a minimum service standard for mobile and broadband services to all communities. This includes developing solutions to provide an evidence base for regional improvements to service availability and advocating to the Federal Government to implement domestic roaming to ensure regional Victorians have access to mobile connectivity during emergencies.

### Highlights:

- Provided funding to the Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative to educate community leaders on self-determination and Treaty.
- Implemented the Improving Public Transport in the Central Highlands project, a research project that has engaged community stakeholders across the region to propose solutions for improving transport connectivity and accessibility throughout the Central Highlands.
- Secured funding support to undertake the Western Victoria Grain Industry Supply Chain Study, a research project that will highlight opportunities to grow the agricultural economy by improving efficiencies of grain movement in the region.
- Continued collaboration with WSMRP Southern Mallee Regional Partnership and Regional Development Australia Grampians to implement workshops under the For Want of a Worker project, which sought to identify place-based solutions to the Grampians' workforce supply challenges.

207,300

**Population**  
(2020)

18.1%

**Population growth**  
(2011-20)

\$10.2B

**Gross Regional Product**  
(2020)



## Ovens Murray

Ovens Murray Regional Partnership (OMRP) continued its advocacy efforts to assist the region to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic – especially for its tourism and visitor economy sector.

### Regional priorities include:

- **Digital future** – promoting opportunities for small and medium enterprises in the digital economy and calling for the development of an Ovens Murray Digital Infrastructure Roadmap.
- **Disadvantaged youth** – developing place-based solutions to tackle entrenched disadvantage and help young people in the region reach their full potential through the Wodonga Project and a Wodonga Education First Youth Foyer.
- **Tourism** – building key infrastructure that the region needs to maintain a thriving visitor economy, including developing the region's alpine resorts, mountain biking infrastructure and iconic walking trails.
- **Economic development** – establishing serviced industrial land to meet market demand and unlock transformative investment for the region, including through developing the LOGIC Industrial Precinct.

### Highlights:

- The OMRP successfully advocated for strengthened government support for the region's visitor economy, particularly for Victoria's Alpine Resorts including:
  - \$5 million to support ongoing management of Victoria's Alpine Resorts – supporting the transition to Alpine Resorts Victoria
  - \$3.6 million for Mount Buller Electricity Upgrade (Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund)
  - \$2 million for the Mount Buller Mountain Bike Trail
  - \$2.5 million Mount Hotham Snow Play and Activity Hub
  - \$2.1 million Mount Hotham Visitor Economy Growth and Resilience Project.
- Championed the role of the visitor economy, agribusiness and agritourism sectors in leading economic recovery from the pandemic and identified opportunities to activate the King Valley Prosecco Road wine region.
- Helped to secure \$1 million to fund the Tomorrow Today initiative supporting vulnerable young people and their families into employment in Benalla.
- Advocated for improved public transport in the region, and welcomed the commencement of new VLocity rolling stock on the North East rail line.

131,400

Population  
(2020)

11.1%

Population  
growth  
(2011-20)

\$6.5B

Gross Regional  
Product  
(2020)





## Case study:

**The Regional Partnership's advocacy and strategic work to establish the High Country as the state's premier destination for cycle tourism, has continued with ongoing investment in marketing, private sector activation and cycle infrastructure through the North East Victorian Cycling Optimisation Masterplan.**

The Ride High Country initiative has seen over \$20 million invested into destination marketing, and activation of commercial opportunities in accommodation, hospitality and visitor experiences. The latest round of private sector funding has generated over \$5 million in projects, created 69 new jobs in the sector and seen the retention of a further 50 jobs.

The masterplan and advocacy by the OMRP on the importance of this cycle tourism hero brand has also led to major investments in cycle infrastructure such as the \$8.5 million announced in the 2022-23 State Budget for enhancements to the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail and \$15 million for the Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park.

The OMRP is also partnering with the Department of Transport on the ongoing improvement of passenger rail services and the connecting public transport network to enable greater resident and visitor mobility across the region.



## Case study:

**In May 2022, \$5.8 million was announced in the 2022-23 Victorian Budget for the joint management of Barmah National Park with the Yorta Yorta Nation. This investment acknowledges the ongoing advocacy by the GRP for First Nations prosperity and parity with non-Indigenous people in the region.**

The GRP has previously supported the development of a masterplan for the Barmah National Park as a potentially regionally significant tourism destination with considerable cultural and environmental significance.

The GRP has also previously partnered with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning on the development of a Pathways Model to support greater opportunities for Aboriginal people to gain employment in the natural resource management sector.

## Goulburn

The Goulburn Regional Partnership (GRP) refreshed its priority outcomes and continued to advocate for transformational and strategic projects within the region.

### Regional priorities include:

- **First Nations prosperity and wellbeing** – seeking to achieve regional growth through economic inclusion, prosperity and shared value of Aboriginal people. The Partnership is currently championing the Jobs on Country model for employment in the region.
- **Population health and wellbeing** – ensuring Goulburn residents are fit, healthy and engaged. Priorities include progressing work to identify gaps and issues for mental health services in the region.
- **Education and employment** – developing skills to be lifelong learners and engage with the community, by strengthening connections between education and employment and establishing the Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence.
- **Climate change and the environment** – addressing the challenges of climate change and enhancing its natural environment by ensuring regional towns like Strathbogie have access to core power infrastructure to enable growth. The Jobs on Country model also supports this by centring on Aboriginal cultural land management practices.
- **Sustainable growth** – supporting communities to grow sustainably with strong liveability and amenity. Priorities for the Partnership include the implementation of the Seymour Revitalisation Plan to support the town's infrastructure and liveability.
- **Economic development** – building a diversified and thriving economy that provides opportunities for all. The GRP supports projects such as the Skyline Road Tourism Precinct, Goulburn Murray Irrigation District resilience and adaptive capacity work, improvements to freight infrastructure and initiatives to recognise Goulburn as a tourism region.

### Highlights:

- Acted as a strong voice for the region's mental health service needs, working with the Department of Health on reforms to the system, including \$196 million to replace and expand mental health facilities at Goulburn Valley Health.
- Engaged with the Department of Transport to identify opportunities to strengthen public transport within the region. Most recently, the Government announced \$250 million to purchase new VLocity trains on the Shepparton rail line allowing the move to nine daily services in late 2023.
- Identified and advocated for solutions to worker shortages within the region, resulting in \$500,000 for the Goulburn Valley Seasonal Worker Support Program.
- Supported the development of community infrastructure, including \$130,000 for the Euroa Community Cinema.
- Activated opportunities to diversify the region's economy via the visitor economy, securing \$500,000 for planning and feasibility for the Skyline Road Tourism Precinct and \$3.5 million for the Eildon Reserves Redevelopment.
- Engaged with the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions on opportunities to attract more teachers through skilled migration.

170,400  
Population  
(2020)

15.0%  
Population  
growth  
(2011-20)

\$8.0B  
Gross Regional  
Product  
(2020)



## Mallee

The Mallee Regional Partnership (MRP) continued to support its diverse stakeholders throughout the region and maintained its commitment to delivering on long-term outcomes for industry, business and communities in the region.

### Regional priorities include:

- **Food and fibre** – increasing growth and diversification in the agriculture and food production sectors for a resilient future. MRP sought support for the implementation of the region's Renewable Energy Roadmap.
- **Economic diversification** – building a strong and diverse economy with a focus on emerging sectors and value adding. The Partnership highlighted opportunities for growth arising from the KerangLink interconnector and the Kerang-Red Cliffs "spur" connector.
- **Skills and education** – growing a workforce that meets the region's current and future workforce needs. The Partnership identified projects to build the workforce of the future by supporting the SuniTAFE SMART Farm and establishing a Mildura Tech School.
- **Connectivity** – connecting communities with equitable access to services across the region. MRP identified planning for the Murray Basin Freight Rail Project, upgrades to the Swan Hill-Bendigo passenger rail and programs to improve broadband services in small rural communities as a priority.
- **A resilient Mallee** – supporting vibrant, liveable and resilient Mallee cities, townships and settlements. The MRP sought urgent support for communities experiencing impacts of state border lockdowns.
- **Health and community** – building a strong, healthy and connected region with equitable access to resources which are responsive, inclusive and meet the unique needs of individuals and families. The MRP has been supporting initiatives which address entrenched disadvantage and implement changes to policy to ensure place-based solutions are effective.
- **Visitor economy** – a vibrant, growing visitor economy inclusive of natural and built environments, the arts and the region's cultural heritage. The MRP continued work to secure funding for tourism experiences that are unique to the region's natural and cultural assets.

### Highlights:

- Successfully secured the reinstatement of the Regional and Specialist Training Fund which reopened for applications in August 2021. This program is a targeted funding stream that supports training for specific skills in regional and specialist areas that were not being met by the previous training market.
- Worked in conjunction with the Loddon Mallee Regional Development Australia Committee to secure \$3.5 million in funding through the Commonwealth's Regional Connectivity Program to upgrade the nbn™ service technology in the town of Sea Lake to Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) technology.
- Implementation of the \$160,000 Small Towns Big Difference pilot program. This program supports community projects that improve the amenity, skills, access to services and liveability of small towns across the Buloke Shire.
- Successful implementation of the first Jobs and Skills minibuses which enabled SuniTAFE to provide a mobile "one-stop shop" career planning service. Staff are able to provide independent, no cost advice on study options, career planning, job seeking and skills recognition as well as a range of other services throughout the Mallee region, including in Charlton, Kerang and Robinvale.
- Supported the AgTech Summit – Growing Smarter in the Mallee 2022 – a two-day regional summit which provided growers across the region the opportunity to explore the latest innovations in horticultural production.
- Secured \$3 million through the 2022-23 State Budget to implement the Lake Cullulleraine 'Light State' project. This iconic tourism attraction will now incorporate a large-scale light show.
- Secured \$36 million through the 2022-23 Victorian Budget to construct a 30-bed alcohol and drug residential rehabilitation facility for Mildura.

131,400  
Population  
(2020)

11.1%  
Population  
growth  
(2011-20)

\$6.5B  
Gross Regional  
Product  
(2020)



## Case study:

The MRP successfully advocated for the establishment of the Mallee Regional Innovation Centre (MRIC) which was provided \$1.7 million in late 2018 to draw upon researchers from the University of Melbourne and LaTrobe University to address the key challenges of horticulture and natural resource management in the Mallee region.

Over the past three and a half years MRIC has met all expectations, developing a strong portfolio of research projects, providing an accessible library of data and research relevant to the region and most recently hosting a highly successful AgTech summit.

The presence of MRIC has catalysed a range of additional activity within the region. This has also become a leading partner in Victoria's Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub, and is one of Australia's Hydrogen Technology Clusters accelerating adoption of hydrogen as a carbon neutral fuel. Most recently MRIC has secured ongoing funding as the Mallee Regional Hub of the One Basin Cooperative Research Centre program.

## Loddon Campaspe

The Loddon Campaspe Regional Partnership (LCRP) continued to support its diverse stakeholders throughout the region actively leading, supporting, advocating, listening, and participating in over 60 projects and initiatives. It is striving to achieve long-term social, economic and environmental outcomes for the individuals, families and communities who live in and visit the region.

### Regional priorities include:

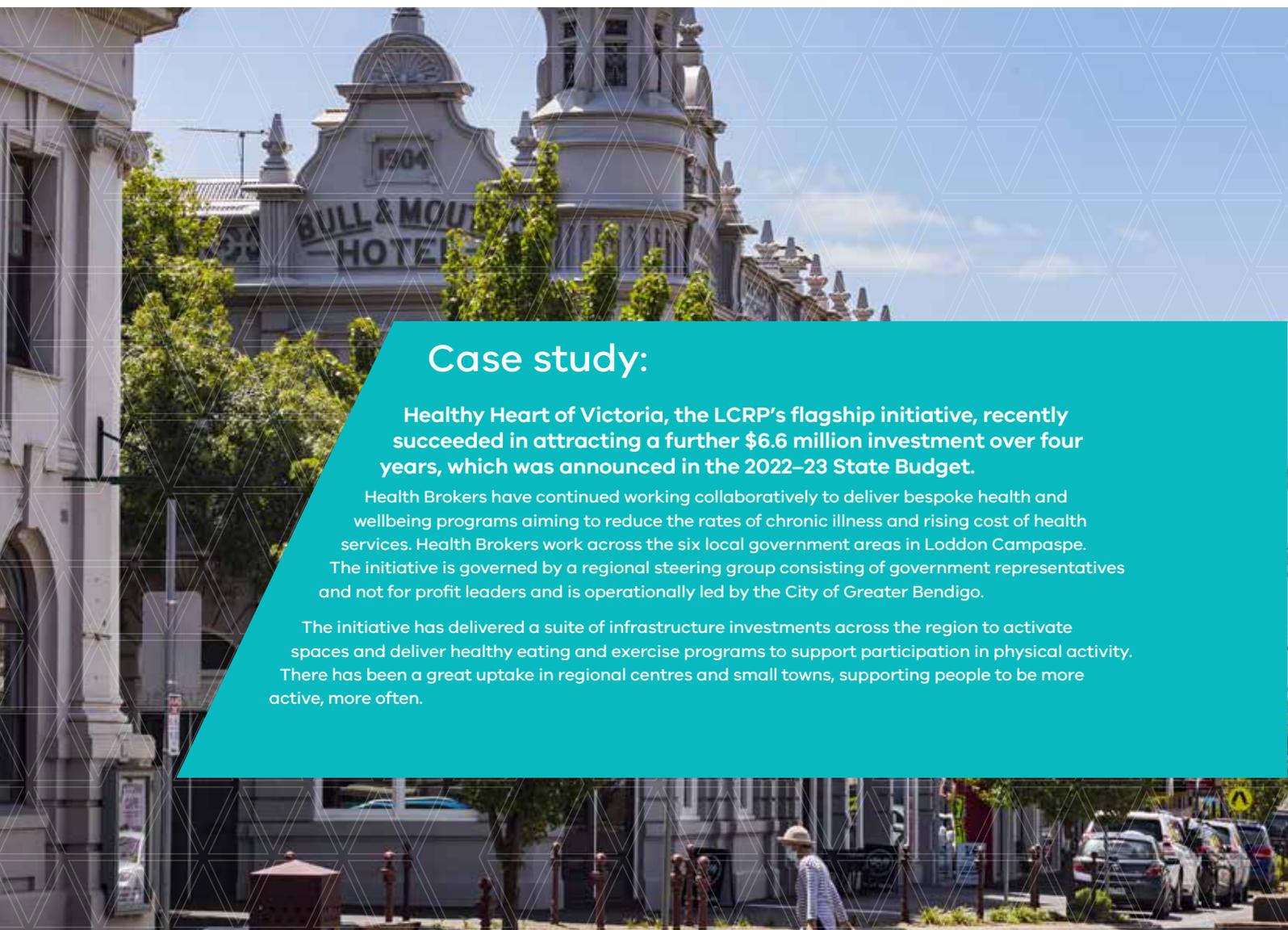
- **A growing economy** – creating a strong, diverse economy that enables people to actively contribute to their community by supporting initiatives such as the Loddon Mallee New Energy Taskforce (LMNET) and a Regional Investment Fund to help businesses grow.
- **Healthy Heart of Victoria** – active communities, healthy environment and productive lives at all stages by continuing to fund the Healthy Heart of Victoria initiative, which encourages active living within the region in a targeted and coordinated approach.
- **Create the best start for every child** – growing families and communities that give children the best start in life by delivering the Loddon Shire’s Strong Families, Strong Children initiative to support early years education and child and maternal health.
- **Youth our critical asset** – ensuring young people are safe, supported and engaged by expanding the Live4Life program throughout the region and establishing an Education First Youth Foyer in Bendigo.
- **A great environment to live** – nurturing a culture, heritage and environment that is protected and enjoyed by supporting the Loddon Campaspe Tracks and Trails strategy, as well as centring Aboriginal culture by funding the Dja Dja Wurrung-led Bendigo Creek Revitalisation project.
- A connected region – ensuring all people in the Loddon Campaspe Region benefit from economic activity and access to services through increased passenger rail services and investing in infrastructure required to upgrade the digital capacity of the region.

## Case study:

**Healthy Heart of Victoria, the LCRP’s flagship initiative, recently succeeded in attracting a further \$6.6 million investment over four years, which was announced in the 2022–23 State Budget.**

Health Brokers have continued working collaboratively to deliver bespoke health and wellbeing programs aiming to reduce the rates of chronic illness and rising cost of health services. Health Brokers work across the six local government areas in Loddon Campaspe. The initiative is governed by a regional steering group consisting of government representatives and not for profit leaders and is operationally led by the City of Greater Bendigo.

The initiative has delivered a suite of infrastructure investments across the region to activate spaces and deliver healthy eating and exercise programs to support participation in physical activity. There has been a great uptake in regional centres and small towns, supporting people to be more active, more often.



### Highlights:

- Aligned to the Deep Dive of 2019 – Supporting Youth from education to employment – the Partnership supported the Bendigo Tech School to deliver an innovative Girls in STEAM community enterprise project, encouraging local young women to explore engineering and trades pathways.
- The Walking Together project led by Traditional Owners Dja Dja Wurrung neared implementation phase, including finalisation of planning and detailed designs for multiple locations.
- The Partnership undertook analysis into the data surrounding gender equity across leadership, the economy and social areas. This foundational work provided a strong platform to undertake further work to ensure equity imbalances can be identified and addressed.
- Successfully secured an additional \$6.6 million over four years for the Healthy Heart of Victoria initiative to continue its work program, build upon previous success and ensure longer -term health benefits are realised across regional communities in Loddon Campaspe.
- Successfully advocated for the establishment and creation of a new \$40 million Victorian Industry Investment Fund (state-wide) to provide grants to support rapidly growing businesses, including supply chains that underpin economic resilience in regional areas.
- Funding for new Telstra macro cell site towers, including the required fibre backhaul to provide new and improved coverage along the Kyneton to Trentham Road, along the Calder Highway and along the nearby rail line (\$450,000).
- The LCRP worked with local partners including Agnico Eagle / Kirkland Lake Gold to secure eight mobile 5G enabled towers across the region through the Commonwealth's Regional Connectivity Program. This includes approximately \$1.1 million worth of funding which will result in seven new Telstra macro mobiles sites and fibre backhaul to the east of Bendigo, at Fosterville Mine, Axedale, Goornong, Knowsley, Colbinabbin, Toolleen Sports Club and Heathcote Raceway, providing improved handheld coverage to the area.
- Funding was secured to deliver Live4Life in 2022-23 – a community-led youth mental health program with \$70,000 in funding supporting the program to be delivered in Central Goldfields Shire.
- Successful advocacy has seen the return of weekend train services between Maryborough and Ballarat and continued delivery of service improvements to the Bendigo and Echuca line.
- Supported the establishment of the Bendigo Climate Collaboration and region-wide Energy Summit and solar showcase, providing businesses across the region with the opportunity to explore the latest innovations in solar energy and the renewables sector. An amount of \$52 million was secured through the 2022–23 State Budget to provide a long-term solution for the Bendigo groundwater initiative.
- Investments across the region to activate spaces and deliver healthy eating and exercise programs to support participation in physical activity. There has been a great uptake in regional centres and small towns, supporting people to be more active, more often.

**131,400**  
Population  
(2020)

**11.1%**  
Population  
growth  
(2011-20)

**\$6.5B**  
Gross Regional  
Product  
(2020)



## Gippsland

In March 2021 the Gippsland Regional Partnership introduced a new Regional Partnership Chair and welcomed a number of new business and community members whose focus has remained on strengthening collaboration and coalescing the Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) with the Gippsland Regional Plan 2020–25.

### Regional priorities include:

- **Carers of our Country, environment and national assets** – advocated for priorities such as the Croajingolong Coastal Wilderness Walk, Gippsland Lakes Aquatic Trail and Omeo Mountain Bike Park.
- **Highly educated and skilled people, lifelong learners** – sought prioritisation of the Gippsland Regional Skills Demand Profile, an expansion of the Department of Education and Training Financial Incentive Program and the establishment of The Huddle, a program to improve education and employment outcomes for young people, including from migrant and refugee backgrounds, by leveraging the power of sport.
- **Happy and healthy communities** – advocated for improved health infrastructure in West Gippsland and the prioritisation of funding from the Big Housing Build to ensure community housing is well targeted for the needs of the community.
- **Creators of a new economy** – identified opportunities to diversify and strengthen the regional economy, including via the Hydrogen Energy Supply Chain pilot, establishment of a facility to upcycle solar panels and improving amenity and infrastructure at Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort. The GRP also sought support for Start Up Gippsland and the establishment of a place-based small business investment fund.
- **A connected Gippsland** – identified opportunities to connect communities via the Mallacoota Wilderness Coworking Space and Innovation Hub, upgrades to Kilcunda pedestrian and intersection infrastructure, and improvements for transport infrastructure in San Remo.

### Highlights:

- In April 2022 the Gippsland Regional Partnership members met with the Minister for Energy to discuss the Gippsland opportunities in new energy, recycling and product stewardship and the importance of alignment with government policy, resulting in an open invitation for the Partnership to connect across their work.
- The Partnership's advocacy to expedite a refreshed Gippsland Workforce Plan resulted in funding support for the development of a renavigated Skills Demand Profile currently underway and due for release later this year. The Partnership is actively engaged on the Regional Skills Taskforce and across the various working groups including Energy, and Food and Fibre.
- Secured \$75 million funding support in the 2022–23 State Budget to continue the development of the Croajingolong Coastal Wilderness Walk – identified as a hero project in the Destination Management Plan.
- The Partnership was actively involved in the formal opening of the contemporary Morwell GovHub facility which can accommodate up to 300 public sector employees, of which nearly 200 are new jobs to the region.
- The Partnership supported two innovative projects within the region with seed funding. Funding was granted to the SME Export Hub, which facilitates export opportunities and provides access to online platforms to make exporting more accessible. In addition, Federation University was supported to upskill the region's food and fibre small and medium enterprise sector, drive growth and provide innovation support to turn challenges into opportunities.

291,000

Population  
(2020)

12.0%

Population  
growth  
(2011-20)

\$18B

Gross Regional  
Product  
(2020)



## Case study:

The Gippsland Regional Partnership's ongoing advocacy to improve digital outcomes initiated the inaugural Gippsland Digital Plan. The plan resulted in a specific allocation from the Regional Digital Fund that aimed to support regional business and service providers to improve digital capability through small scale projects to address needs identified in the Digital Plan.

The Partnership supported six signature projects with an investment of \$390,000 including Destination Gippsland's Visitor Economy Digital Training Program, the GippsTech project which addressed gaps and built awareness in digital skills for small business, the Gippsland East Local Learning and Employment Network, the Broadening Horizons Digital Learning Series, the Neighbourhood Houses Gippsland project and the Mallacoota Digital Hub.

The Partnership continued its advocacy focusing on bridging the digital divide that regional Victoria experiences across access, affordability and usability. The unification of Regional Partnership voices was important in the establishment of the \$550 million Connecting Victoria program. The purpose of the program is to fast-track broadband and mobile coverage improvement and in Gippsland, 10 business and community critical locations have been selected for works.

## Regional Development Australia

Victoria's six Regional Development Australia (RDA) committees are part of a network of 52 committees across Australia, that work with all tiers of government, business and community groups to support regional economic development.

A partnership between the Commonwealth, state and territory governments, RDA committees work to develop confident regional economies that harness their competitive advantages.

Comprised of people with diverse experience in business and public life, the committees identify economic opportunities and leverage private and public sector investment in the regions. Over the last year RDV has supported Victoria's RDA committees to increase their collaboration and alignment with Regional Partnerships.

The RDA committees:

- identify areas of collaboration and opportunity between the State and Commonwealth Government for regional Victoria
- address cross-jurisdictional barriers faced by regional Victorians
- support informed regional planning
- consult and engage with communities on economic development
- liaise with governments and local communities about government programs, services, grants and initiatives for regional development
- contribute to business growth plans and investment strategies
- promote increased awareness of Commonwealth Government programs in their RDA region.

Victoria's six RDA committees cover all parts of the state:

- Barwon South West
- Gippsland
- Grampians
- Hume
- Loddon Mallee
- Melbourne.

### Barwon South West case study

#### **Affordable housing and accommodation supply for key and essential workers – a critical enabler to realise the forecast economic growth for the region**

With funding provided from RDA Barwon South West, Moyne Shire is leading the 'Delivering Key Worker Housing in the Barwon South West' project on behalf of seven local government areas including Colac Otway Shire, Corangamite Shire, Glenelg Shire, Southern Grampians Shire, Surf Coast Shire and Warrnambool City Council.

The project will result in a road map to advance the findings and recommendations from the 'Key and Essential Worker Housing Supply Action Plan' (Sep 2020). This important next step is in the final stages and will articulate models and options for investment in housing and accommodation supply in the region.

The Committee also provided input into the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue Inquiry into Housing Affordability and Supply in Australia. Following the submission to the inquiry, RDA Barwon South West was invited to attend a public hearing, the outcomes of which are still being finalised.

## Grampians case study

### For Want of a Worker project

This year, the RDA Grampians Committee continued to engage with industry and the community to advocate for local issues and work more closely with the Regional Partnerships.

This included supporting the completion of Phases 2 and 3 of the For Want of a Worker (FWOW) project. This project aimed to understand systemic causes for workforce issues and develop sustainable solutions.

Phase 2 of the project included a report that outlined five opportunities that could address systemic workforce issues. Phase 3 consisted of two workshops that presented the opportunities to key stakeholders for implementation. RDA Grampians has partnered with Jobs Victoria to develop localised jobs boards that can be housed on local councils' websites to promote jobs in the area.

## Gippsland case study

### Clean Energy Vision and Prospectus project

The RDA Gippsland Committee played a pivotal leadership role in regional strategic planning to enable short, medium and long-term regional outcomes. The Committee's continued engagement with business, industry and three tiers of government has informed government understanding of the impacts, needs and opportunities arising across Gippsland.

To support transition to a clean energy future, RDA Gippsland committed \$50,000 funding towards a Clean Energy Vision and Prospectus project. The project proponent, Committee for Gippsland, has engaged NOUS Group to work with industry and community to develop a roadmap for the transition of the energy sector.

A concerted effort to strategically plan Victoria's energy sector's transition is a high priority following the announcement of Yallourn Power Station's closure being brought forward four years to 2028. This project will help the region leverage our regional strategic advantages and skilled workforce to maximise the economic development potential of a clean energy sector in Gippsland.

## Hume case study

### Identifying priority projects for the Hume Region

The RDA Hume Committee has undertaken engagement with the region's stakeholders to develop a comprehensive pipeline of Hume's economic development projects.

The RDA has analysed this pipeline to identify priority projects with alignment to the region's strengths and comparative advantages that have the potential to deliver economic impact on a regional scale.

This work has resulted in the development of an active database of projects and opportunities that the RDA will maintain through its regular engagement with stakeholders and use as a basis for its advocacy with the Commonwealth for investment into the region.

## Loddon Mallee case study

### Mallee Hydrogen Roadmap

This year the RDA Loddon Mallee, together with the Mallee Regional Partnership, commissioned research into the transition to hydrogen energy in a decarbonised economy and what role the Mallee can play in facing this global challenge.

Energy and carbon advisory service provider, Energetics Pty Ltd analysed local, national and international hydrogen markets to advise on the opportunities and constraints in developing a green hydrogen energy sector in the Mallee.

The Hydrogen Roadmap produced from this work has pointed to the rich solar resource, and plentiful biomass available in the Mallee and the resulting potential to produce green hydrogen cost effectively. Growing agricultural and logistics sectors are likely to create local demand for hydrogen. The positioning of the Mallee at the crossroads of interstate freight routes with good connection to Victoria's ports raises the potential for an expanding market beyond our region.

## Supporting regional recovery from COVID-19

The Victorian Government provided support to help Victorian businesses and communities manage the impacts of and support recovery from COVID-19.

A range of initiatives was put in place throughout the pandemic response to keep regional Victorians connected, showcasing the value rural and regional Victoria brings to the state and assist with recovery. RDV continued to deliver a range of support through existing programs and worked closely with the Cross Border Commissioner to support communities along Victoria's borders with New South Wales and South Australia.

### COVID-19 support summary

In 2021–22, RDV worked with communities, businesses and across government to ensure that rural and regional Victoria was supported through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Existing programs such as the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund (RJIF), along with the Regional Recovery Fund and the Regional Community Event Fund, were facilitated by RDV to help manage the impacts of and support recovery from COVID-19.

The Regional Recovery Fund (RRF) was established through the 2020–21 Victorian Budget with an allocation of \$10 million over two financial years, 2020–21 and 2021–22.

The RRF provided flexible support, stimulating socio-economic growth and recovery, by investing in projects and innovative ideas that address regional needs. This included supporting immediate and persisting challenges and opportunities (place-based needs).

The Regional Community Event Fund opened on 1 November 2021 to provide support for rural and regional communities to get back to hosting and attending the many community events they are known for. The fund helped public community events in regional Victoria with marketing support and the increased costs of running COVIDSafe events.

To support our border communities, RDV implemented a Border Broker network. The brokers worked across state and local governments and chambers of commerce, industry, regional tourism boards and community groups to identify, triage and enable responses to identified issues. Working alongside Agriculture Victoria and the Office of the Cross Border Commissioner, the border brokers worked on local solutions to minimise the impacts of border restrictions.

### Barwon South West

During 2021 and early 2022, RDV Barwon South West continued to convene the COVID-19 Coordination Group of regional stakeholders to share information and provide regular and responsive updates on outbreaks and changing restrictions.

Stakeholders in the region provided input to support the development of the Barwon and Great South Coast Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS). The Barwon and Great South Coast REDS identified the impact that COVID-19 had on the visitor economy.

Through the Regional Recovery Fund, RDV provided Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism Limited with \$450,000 to support the Geelong, The Bellarine and Great Ocean Road Interstate and Intrastate Cooperative Marketing Campaign and \$400,000 for the pilot Tourism Jobs Bank project.

### Gippsland

Gippsland participated in the Vaccination Economy Trials in October 2021. The successful trial was a collaborative effort between RDV, local government and selected businesses including East Gippsland Art Gallery, Lake Squash and Movie Theatre, North Pier Hotel and the Phillip Island Nature Park. The trial was instrumental in moving business toward full operation by allowing higher patron numbers with all attendees confirmed as being fully vaccinated.

The Regional Recovery Fund supported two of the hardest hit COVID-19 localities in Gippsland. Bass Coast and East Gippsland Shires each received \$50,000 to improve the visual appeal of shopfronts and building façades council wide. Across both shires, 96 businesses were assisted to upgrade or beautify their shopfronts which in turn reinvigorated numerous community streetscapes and townships. Vibrant and attractive streets, shops and public spaces are key to a prosperous town centre, generating local and tourist interest.

## Grampians

RDV Grampians supported local industries and business to help navigate the challenges caused by COVID-19 on Victoria's borders with South Australia by contributing to the team of border brokers.

The Grampians Border Brokers helped address challenges and enabled opportunities including the management of workforce impacts and provided support to ensure supply chains and services were accessible during border closures.

## Loddon Mallee

The Regional Recovery Fund provided funding of \$75,000 per council to Campaspe, Loddon and Buloke Shires, to assist the re-engagement and development of volunteers.

A reduction of volunteer numbers for council activities was experienced because of the pandemic and this impacted a range of activities and services provided by community groups, service clubs and events. Rural towns are heavily reliant on volunteers and this project engaged a coordinator in each shire to develop a community-based volunteer strategy and implement actions to re-engage volunteers.

## Hume

The RDV Hume team established and delivered the Border Representatives Reference Group (BRRG), chaired by the Minister for Regional Development. The group was first established in August 2021 following changes to border restrictions and the implementation of a permit system between Victoria and New South Wales.

The BRRG brought together key government departments and agencies, including local government CEOs and mayors, to identify and inform government of the challenges faced by border communities. This included identifying impacts and potential risks for impacted border communities to enable discussion around potential solutions, and ensuring stakeholders were satisfactorily consulted and informed of future changes to the border.

Supported by the Cross Border Commissioner and other Government departments, the group provided key RDV stakeholders with the opportunity to obtain important information directly and to give timely feedback to Government to inform decision making on border issues.



## Cross Border Commissioner

Through 2021–22, Victoria’s Cross Border Commissioner continued to support border communities including advocating across all levels of government on their behalf. For the first half of the year this work focused on advocacy for ongoing COVID-19-related border restrictions along the New South Wales and South Australian borders.

As border restrictions, movement restrictions and their more immediate consequences lifted, the Cross Border Commissioner was able to return to addressing and engaging with border communities on a range of pre-existing, non-COVID-19-related border issues.

During the year, the Cross Border Commissioner worked on a range of issues affecting border communities, including:

- Continuing an important emergency management role through his contribution to COVID-19 response and recovery, including responding to more than 9,000 public enquiries relating to domestic border restrictions and assisting many distressed people to negotiate those restrictions.
- Advocating into New South Wales and South Australia on their border restriction design and gaining approval for entry into each of the two states for compassionate cases.
- Providing learnings from the border restrictions into debrief processes.
- Reopening work on pre-existing border issues such as road rule information for young drivers, vocational education and training access, school transport, justice and policing, and working with government agencies on practices to address or minimise their impact.
- Working with the New South Wales Cross Border Commissioner to progress the Annual Work List under the Memorandum of Understanding for Cross Border Cooperation between Victoria and New South Wales signed by the premiers in 2020.
- Liaising with South Australia about its intention to establish a South Australian Cross Border Commissioner, the advent of which will facilitate efforts to address anomalies on that border.

The Cross Border Commissioner completed and implemented changes formalising the connection of the role with Victoria’s emergency management structures, pursuant to Recommendation 16 of the Inquiry into the 2019–20 Victorian fire season (Phase 1) Report by Victoria’s Inspector-General for Emergency Management.

## Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS)

In May 2022 the nine Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) were released. The REDS provide a consistent, evidence-based framework to understand Victoria's regional economies and identify a range of strategic directions that will unlock new economic growth.

Regional Victoria plays a critical role in driving the state's economic growth and prosperity. While there are common opportunities and challenges across the regions, there are also distinct differences formed by local geography, history, and cultural heritage, and unique endowments that have supported the growth of particular industries and settlement patterns.

To support Victoria's diverse regional economies, REDS provide context and enable strategic engagement with each region's distinct strengths and opportunities. They offer a foundation for stakeholders across all levels of government, regional communities and businesses to work together, explore innovation, tackle challenges, make targeted investment decisions and achieve stronger outcomes for regional Victoria.

REDS have been developed for each of Victoria's nine Regional Partnership regions.

REDS identify a wide range of economic opportunities, including agricultural diversification, low-emissions energy transition, regional innovation, developing technology-based advanced manufacturing, and growing the visitor economy to showcase regional Victoria's diverse natural and cultural attractions.



## Geelong City Deal

The Geelong City Deal (GCD) is a 10-year partnership between all three levels of government working with industry, community, the private sector and in collaboration with Traditional Owners to revitalise Geelong and unlock the potential of the Great Ocean Road economy.

In 2021–22, the Victorian Government committed an additional \$120 million to the GCD's Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre project, bringing the total investment in the GCD by the state to \$292 million. The Commonwealth Government is investing \$183.8 million and other key funding partners are contributing \$12.25 million, resulting in a total funding contribution of \$502.48 million towards the GCD.

RDV, through its newly established Geelong and Great Ocean Road Major Projects branch is leading the delivery of the GCD which will see facilitation of new private investment and creation of businesses and jobs that will allow the region to benefit from its natural assets and encourage visitors to spend more time in the region.

A three-year review of the GCD commenced in 2022 to assess long-term progress towards the agreed objectives. The review also provides an opportunity to explore further priorities and the future direction of the partnership.

### Key achievements in 2021–22

#### Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre precinct development

The Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre is a significant project within the GCD and progressed in 2021–22 in line with the Geelong City Deal Implementation Plan released in October 2019.

Development Victoria is delivering the Public Private Partnership precinct development with the Melbourne and Convention and Exhibition Centre Trust, which was announced as the operator of the facility this year.

An expression of interest process was undertaken in the first half of 2022 to transform an existing Deakin University car park into a thriving convention centre precinct, positioning Victoria's second largest city as a global and national competitor for business events, including construction of a new luxury hotel.

Focused stakeholder engagement sessions commenced in the first half of 2022 with detailed design works and tender process planned to take place later this year. Early works also commenced in 2022 with full construction expected to commence in 2023.

#### Shipwreck Coast Priority Projects and 12 Apostles Precinct redevelopment

The GCD is delivering \$108.15 million of investment in priority projects along the Shipwreck Coast including the 12 Apostles Precinct redevelopment.

Development Victoria is delivering the project and appointed Grimshaw Architects in March 2022 as the head designers for the coastal works component of the overall development. Main works include delivery of an international standard Visitor Experience Centre along with other infrastructure and visitor amenities.

Planning and design are underway for both the coastal works and Visitor Experience Centre, working in partnership with the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.

The GCD's Shipwreck Coast Priority Projects commitment also includes a \$23.4 million Private Sector Business Enablement Fund (PSBEF). The Commonwealth and Victorian Governments announced \$15.68 million in funding across five projects under Round 1 of the PSBEF on 3 February 2022. The projects include Princetown Enabling Public Works; Sow and Piglets Brewery; Kangarooie Camp; Great Ocean Road Retreat; and the 12 Apostles Hot Springs Resort.

The five projects have the potential to create up to 360 new jobs in the Shipwreck Coast region and stimulate over \$150 million in private investment, principally through new and improved accommodation offerings.

Round 2 of the PSBEF opened on 4 April 2022 and closed on 16 May 2022.

#### Progress of other GCD projects underway in 2021–22

Despite some setbacks to construction as a result of the impacts of COVID-19, there has been significant progress across the remaining GCD projects including completion of the Greenspine Block 1; Geelong Train Station Upgrade; and Improving Accessibility in Central Geelong projects. Other key project progress in 2021–22 includes:

- **Deakin University Geelong Future Economy Precinct Road Upgrade Project** – the final project deliverables included lighting and electrical works along the Epworth Place extension. The road extension will provide external access to the Precinct and complement works already completed including two sets of traffic lights installed at Pigdons Road.



- **Queenscliff Ferry Terminal Upgrade** – construction on the new terminal building commenced in 2021–22 with the ground and first floor structures, precast concrete walls and new roof structure completed.
- **Green Spine** – Block 1 was completed and open to the public in December 2021. Detailed design for Block 3 will address key issues identified during the community engagement completed in March 2022.
- **Geelong Arts and Culture Precinct Public Realm** – Development Victoria completed schematic detailed design and community engagement for the project.
- **Geelong Train Station Upgrade** – this project was completed in May 2022. The project delivered replacement lighting in carparks and the bus interchange, six new heritage style bench seats incorporating Wadawurrung Traditional Owner cultural design elements, new wayfinding and passenger information displays, closed circuit TV devices and MYKI pedestals.
- **Laneways Breakthrough Project** – the start of major works commenced in December 2021 with Rendine Construction announced as the successful construction contractor.
- **Apollo Bay Harbour Redevelopment** – detailed designs were completed for the civil works, the Waterfront Promenade and the Port Operations Depot incorporating community feedback provided in November 2021.
- **Apollo Bay (Wild Dog Creek) to Skenes Creek Coastal Trail** – designs, along with flora and fauna assessment, cultural heritage management planning and geotechnical investigations were completed.
- **Kennett River Tourism Infrastructure Project** – designs are well progressed for the road and parking upgrades and designs are being considered for the toilet and wastewater treatment.
- **Barwon River Planning Project** – completed in May 2021.

## 2019–20 Victorian bushfire recovery

RRV continues to deliver support measures to businesses and communities impacted by the 2019–20 bushfires. The consequences of emergencies and economic shocks are particularly challenging for parts of rural and regional Victoria that have a narrower economic base, smaller numbers of key or anchor businesses, and more limited access to staff, resources and digital connectivity.

Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV) and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services are responsible for leading recovery coordination and administering the Local Economic Recovery (LER) program under State-Commonwealth Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). RRV is delivering five bushfire programs valued at over \$46 million to support local and regional recovery needs, predominantly within the Hume and Gippsland regions:

- The \$34 million Regional Economic Stimulus and Resilience grant program (funded through LER) is supporting delivery of 10 Hume (including three in the Alpine area) and 10 Gippsland projects valued at \$32.9 million with a focus on tourism, hospitality, enabling infrastructure, and industry and business development, consistent with local community and local government priorities.
- The \$8.54 million Bushfire Tourism and Business Fund is supporting eight projects across the Hume and Gippsland regions and is expected to create more than 260 jobs and unlock over \$120 million in private investment. A further four projects under the Ride High Country Private Sector Activation Initiative (totalling \$1.9 million) will expand cycle tourism in North East Victoria.
- The \$3 million Community Events, Arts and Leadership Program is delivering \$1.65 million in supporting 16 local government area community events, \$700,000 to support creative industries and \$500,000 in leadership programs for the Hume and Gippsland regions.
- \$500,000 in funding for GROW Gippsland (funded through LER) to support bushfire recovery in East Gippsland/Wellington local government areas by investing in strategic and transformative infrastructure.
- The \$500,000 Regional Industry Groups and Chambers of Commerce Program to facilitate networking events, tourism opportunities and pro-bono business partnerships. There are 31 eligible groups receiving up to \$10,000 each to support their projects.

### Case Study

#### North East Victoria Smoke Sensor Network

The 2020 fires caused a loss of \$140 million across the five winery regions of the north east.

Smoke sensor stations use predictive real-time instruments that inform critical business decisions to minimise the economic impact that is caused by smoke taint. An initial study completed in 2020 by La Trobe University involved placing sensors in a small selection of vineyards and is estimated to have saved those wine businesses at least \$10 million.

The North East Victoria Smoke Sensor Network project, funded through the LER, is set to expand the network of sensor stations across the region and has the potential to save the wine industry over \$80 million in a single year of extreme bushfires.

The network is designed to be scaled to support other regions across the state and has the potential to be deployed nationally and internationally. Additionally, the region-wide smoke exposure and composition information available from the network would be of benefit to other industries within the agriculture sector as well as state and local community health agencies.

### Tambo Valley Honey

The 2019 bushfires which devastated East Gippsland had a significant impact on Tambo Valley Honey, a small family-owned honey and bee-keeping business.

With funding from the LER, Tambo Valley Honey will deliver a unique honey experience to Gippsland, similar to that of a brewery or winery. There will be a vast selection of honeys to sample and purchase from across Gippsland and beyond as well as other bee-related products such as beeswax candles, wraps, polish, lip balms, skin treatments, beverages, yoghurt, ice cream and confectionery.

The final phase of the project is a café which will have a menu based around as many honey products as possible and feature a little bit of history on the bee-keeping pioneers of East Gippsland.

The Tambo Valley Honey Shop will deliver economic stimulus to Bruthen and complement the tourism and ecotourism offering of East Gippsland and Gippsland. It will also support more value-adding and innovation for honey-related products.





# Regional report Barwon South West

## Regional Director's report

The Barwon South West region extends from the Bellarine Peninsula to the border with South Australia. It is Victoria's largest region by population (434,619), employment (191,510) and Gross Regional Product (\$24.2 billion) and incorporates Victoria's largest regional city, Geelong.

Like many other parts of regional Victoria, the region has seen significant migration of people from metropolitan areas, which presents a number of opportunities and challenges. Barwon South West has two distinct sub-regions, Barwon and the Great South Coast, each with strengths in tourism, and a commitment to workforce development and population growth.

The region features culturally significant Aboriginal sites including the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Budj Bim Cultural Landscape, the You Yangs and Tower Hill.

In 2021–22, RDV Barwon South West worked with regional industries to help create 640 jobs, exports valued at over \$108 million and almost \$424 million in investment.

The establishment and opening of a new Regional Development Victoria office in Portland in April 2022 supports our ongoing investment in the diversification of the Portland economy.

Regional communities are also benefiting from new arts and community hubs with the launch of the Barwon Heads Arts and Community Hub and the construction of the Queenscliffe Hub. The MAC Multi Arts Centre in Torquay and the Garvoc Community Hub are also providing spaces for community activities.



Major infrastructure projects in the region have been prioritised with the establishment of a new Geelong and Great Ocean Road Major Projects branch to deliver major infrastructure projects, including the Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCEC), the 12 Apostles Precinct redevelopment and other projects under the Geelong City Deal.

### Paul Roth

Regional Director, Barwon South West  
(July 2021 – March 2022)

### Kerri Erler

Acting Regional Director, Barwon South West  
(March 2022 – June 2022)

## Regional highlights

- Enabled construction of more than \$12 million of visitor infrastructure at five sites across the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Budj Bim cultural landscape: Lake Condah (Tae Rak), Tyrendarra Township, Tyrendarra IPA (Indigenous Protected Area), Kurtonitj and Budj Bim National Park.
- Managed the \$17.4 million Portland Economic Diversification Plan, which incorporates the \$7.5 million Portland Diversification Fund. The fund supports activities to strengthen the Glenelg Shire's economic diversification, growth and resilience. The plan also supported development of a dedicated team in Portland, including a new Regional Development Victoria office which opened in April 2022.
- Supported Hanwha Defense Australia to establish an Armoured Vehicle Centre of Excellence at the Avalon Airport Industrial Precinct to build self-propelled howitzer vehicles to deliver the Commonwealth's Land 8116 program. The project is anticipated to deliver over 300 new jobs and provide substantial supply chain benefits to other Victorian manufacturers.
- Facilitated a \$10 million investment by Care Essentials in Geelong for the purchase and commission of a fully automated machine to manufacture patient-warming blankets. The machine will produce six million forced-air warming blankets annually, significantly increasing the company's capacity and creating 100 new jobs for the Geelong region.
- Supported the Great South Coast Regional Workforce Pilot to plan enabling infrastructure for residential development in Simpson and Timboon, develop a Key Worker Housing Plan and identify relevant local transport solutions.

## Key outcomes

### Cape Bridgewater foreshore infrastructure

The project included construction of a 400m rock revetment, creating vegetated sand dunes to prevent further erosion and control beach access across the dunes, and a large sandstone viewing platform. This aspect of the project is complete. The second stage of the project is currently underway and entails connecting pathways, carparks and landscaping.

### Opening of the Regional Development Victoria Portland Office

A dedicated RRV Portland office that supports, delivers and operationalises initiatives arising from the Portland Economic Diversification Plan is now functional, and fully staffed. The office was officially opened by the Minister for Regional Development on April 1, 2022. The office also supports Glenelg Shire Council by providing temporary office space to a small team of council staff after extensive storm damage to the Glenelg Shire Council office in February 2022.

### Gunditjmara War Memorial Mural

This important community project created a large-scale Indigenous war memorial on the water tower in Heywood. The project highlights and celebrates the significant contributions of Indigenous veterans and particularly the five Lovett brothers who fought for their country in WW1 and WW2 and returned home to the Lake Condah mission. The memorial provides a space for celebration of all Indigenous servicemen and servicewomen.

### Queenscliffe Hub

The Queenscliffe Hub, redeveloped and consolidated the Visitor Information Centre, the Queenscliff Library and the Historical Museum into an integrated space creating a destination for locals and visitors. The Victorian Government contributed \$2.5 million towards the \$5.7 million project.

### Garvoc Community Hub

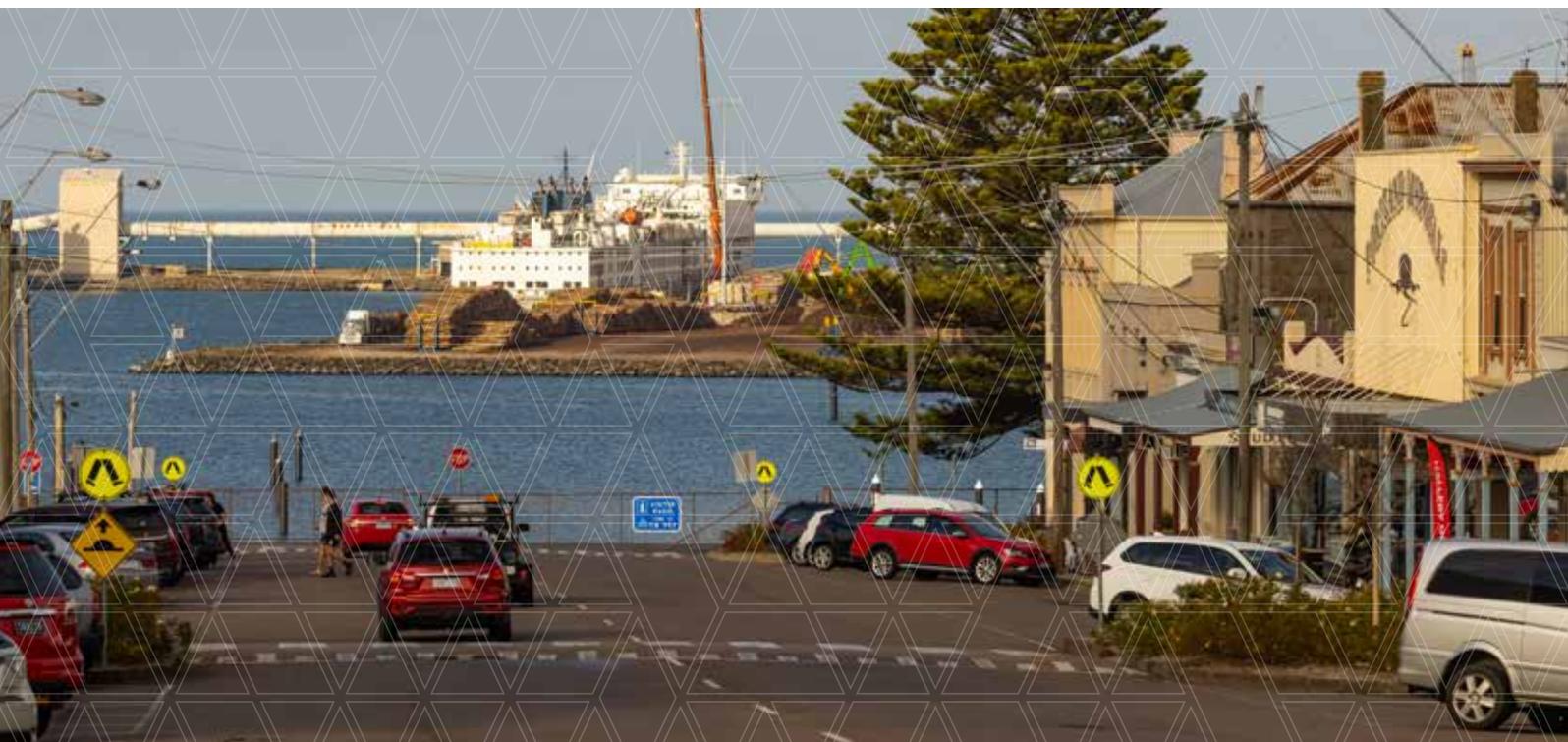
This multi-use facility supports the needs of the local community to host events, social and recreational activities, meetings and workshops. It also provides a family day care service delivered by Moyne Shire Council which will enable young families to access to childcare without having to commute to a larger centre. The new hub was opened in April 2022.

### Warrnambool City Council – Business case for the redevelopment of Warrnambool Art Gallery

Delivery of a business case for the redevelopment of the Warrnambool Art Gallery through a third-party contractor. The business case will provide detailed development costs, visitation forecasts, financial forecasts, an economic impact assessment and a feasibility conclusion for the preferred site.

### Samaritan House and FormFlow Housing Project

Launch of innovative accommodation units for homeless men in the Geelong region, utilising a prototype small house unit developed by Geelong-based manufacturer FormFlow and Deakin University School of Architecture.



### Moyne Shire Council – East Beach Precinct

The East Beach Precinct project is supporting the implementation of the northern section of the East Beach Masterplan and will include replacement of toilet and shower amenities, landscaping, creation of a large lawn area for passive recreation, construction of BBQ shelters with BBQ facilities, accessible passive recreation areas, seating and furniture, roadworks and car park.

### Wadawurrung – City of Greater Geelong urban design guidelines

Support for a new partnership between the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, the Geelong City Deal and Revitalising Central Geelong.

### Business events attraction

Led by Tourism Geelong and The Bellarine and the Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism Board, in collaboration with the accommodation and conferencing sectors, the project is delivering a tailored business events campaign to attract organisations to book and host events in the region, elevating Greater Geelong, The Bellarine and the Great Ocean Road region as a business events destination of choice.

### Off-road vehicle drawer manufacturing facility – Impact Import Group

Supported Impact Import Group Pty Ltd to invest \$1.49 million to establish an Off-road vehicle drawer manufacturing facility in Geelong which will create 32 new full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs in the manufacturing sector and replace products previously imported from South Korea.

### Barwon Heads Arts and Community Hub

The Barwon Heads Arts and Community Hub, which was supported by a \$1 million investment from the Victorian Government, was completed and opened. The project involved refurbishing an old kindergarten site and turning it into a community space to support the visual arts, music, drama, theatre, dance, poetry and literature communities across the Bellarine Peninsula.

### Stage One Forrest Mountain Bike Revitalisation Project

Construction commenced in 2022 on the Barwon Flow Trails, part of a package of works for the Forrest Mountain Bike Revitalisation Project that will deliver 9.3 kilometres of new mountain bike trails and rejuvenate more than 8 kilometres of existing trails thanks to \$2.07 million from the Victorian Government, including \$500,000 from the Regional Infrastructure Fund.







# Regional report Gippsland

## Regional Director's report

Gippsland is a slice of Victoria filled with wondrous destinations of stunning natural beauty, as well as lively residential centres, townships and picturesque farming communities.

Over the past few years, perhaps our most precious feature has been the tenacity of our community and the strength of its bonds. It has allowed us to come together and support each other through numerous emergency events and fuelled our commitment as we embrace the opportunity to reshape and reposition our region.

It is with a sense of possibility that we work with our partners at the Latrobe Valley Authority to further look to diversify our economy from one based on traditional coal-fired power generation to an economy filled with numerous possibilities grounded in the abundant strengths of our region.

Together with industry, government, education providers and the community we continue to deliver community infrastructure and maximise opportunities for economic diversification, growth and the creation of quality, long-term local jobs with a focus on the strategic areas of food and fibre, new energy, advanced manufacturing, tourism and health.

Our region is modernising, rebuilding and navigating the challenges of COVID-19, drought, bushfires and flood as well as transitioning out of traditional energy generation models and native timber harvesting into modern, sustainable industries. I continue to be impressed with the commitment of our partners and communities to work towards ensuring a contemporary, vibrant and prosperous future.



RDV also supports Regional Partnerships and the Regional Development Australia (RDA) Gippsland Committee. These committees draw membership from the community and provide invaluable local leadership in the pursuit of strengthening the environmental, social and economic resilience of Gippsland.

On behalf of the team at RDV Gippsland we thank all of our community partners, business and industry stakeholders, councils and local and regional associations for the privilege of continuing to work with you to make Gippsland the most liveable region in Australia.

**Sara Rhodes-Ward**  
Regional Director, Gippsland

## Regional highlights

- Continued to support council recovery through the East Gippsland Bushfire Economic Recovery Working Group, identifying key projects and delivering \$73 million of Victorian Government grant funding following the 2019-20 bushfires that destroyed key assets and infrastructure and impacted the region's tourism, agriculture and forestry industries. More than 75 per cent of the priority projects are in the delivery phase.
- Continued to support construction of an on-water café at Bullock Island near Lakes Entrance, East Gippsland, with a commitment of \$1.5 million to the Lakes Entrance Fisherman Limited. The project will deliver a new cafeteria with a fresh fish sales outlet, an all-abilities access ramp and fishing fleet viewing platform.
- Continued to deliver the Stage 1 main works package of the Regional Car Parks Fund, which will provide 270 new free car parks in Moe, Morwell and Traralgon, with Stage 2 expected to commence early 2023. Construction works are expected to create 75 full-time jobs for local contractors.
- Supported delivery of the \$42 million Latrobe Creative Precinct, which included \$12 million Victorian Government investment. The project delivered a state-of-the-art, 750-seat performing arts centre in Traralgon, refurbished the existing performing arts centre and created an outdoor civic space in the Precinct.
- Supported industry diversification across the region, with a focus on creating jobs and attracting investment to support the transition of the energy, mining and native forestry sectors. This included securing full tenancy at the Morwell Innovation Centre, where lead tenant Alinta Energy relocated their contact centre and management from offshore, creating 239 new jobs for the region. Other tenants include Opal Australia and Committee for Gippsland.

## Key outcomes

### Bidfood Australia Limited cold storage food distribution facility project

Established a \$13.3 million distribution facility for Bidfood Australia in Morwell, creating 40 new jobs. The project provides the efficient and competitive supply of food products to customers in the region, including local hospitals, aged care, schools, clubs and restaurants.

### LV Shade Sails and Canvas Pty Ltd new manufacturing facility project

Supported LV Shade Sails and Canvas Pty Ltd to undertake an investment of \$600,000 in a new manufacturing facility at Traralgon, including upgrades to machinery and technology. The new manufacturing facility will enable the optimising of product handling and manufacturing processes, increasing production to approximately 20 shade sails per day and create seven new jobs.

### GBP Exports meat processing facility project

Supported a \$3 million investment with GBP Exports in Poowong to install new cold store facilities, new infrastructure and processing equipment. This will enable increased production, improved traceability assurance and expansion into export markets. The project will create 40 new jobs.

### The Arches Experience, Gurney's Cidery

In June 2022, with Victorian Government support, Gurney's Cidery completed construction of The Arches experience, an underground cellar that used recycled concrete and steel from the decommissioned Hazelwood Power Station. The Arches experience at Gurney's Cidery in South Gippsland is an immersive tour of the cider making process. The project allows for greater fermentation and storage, increasing annual cider production from 40,000 litres to 250,000 litres providing increased opportunity to meet local and export demand.

### Paynesville Foreshore Stages 1 and 2

Redevelopment of Paynesville's maritime precinct and foreshore commenced in 2021 and will support tourism by celebrating the town's rich Aboriginal and European history and providing a place to fish, recreate and enjoy the Gippsland Lakes. In early 2022, with Victorian Government support, an improved foreshore design was completed and geotechnical works commenced. The first piles have been installed, which form the foundations for construction of the boardwalk. Work also commenced on upgrading the public amenities block.

### Nowa Nowa Boggy Creek

The Nowa Nowa Boggy Creek project, completed in August 2021, delivered an upgrade to the existing informal Boggy Creek Walking Track (1.2 kilometres), upgrades to an adjacent carpark area, and installation of interpretative signage and artwork designed by Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation. The project, developed in response to the ongoing transition of the forestry industry in Gippsland, was fully funded by the Victorian Government and was led by RDV Gippsland, working collaboratively with the Nowa Nowa Community Development Group, Parks Victoria, East Gippsland Marketing and the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation.

### Great Southern Rail Trail extension (Leongatha to Korumburra)

In 2021–22, Regional Infrastructure Funding of \$500,000 assisted the addition of 15 kilometres of continuous trail to the Great Southern Rail Trail (GSRT), from Leongatha to Korumburra. This included the upgrade and replacement of five bridges. The project was completed in conjunction with funding from the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund for a further extension of the trail from Korumburra to Nyora. These completed works on the GSRT extended the trail from 72 kilometres in length to 108 kilometres of unbroken rail trail from Nyora to Port Welshpool.

### Wonthaggi Activity Centre Streetscapes

Following the completion of a Wonthaggi Streetscapes Masterplan, the Wonthaggi Activity Centre Streetscapes project will provide better pedestrian access, improved cycling and motorist networks and create new alfresco dining areas in Wonthaggi. The project will help to revitalise the local economy, create jobs and improve tourism and community infrastructure.

The Wonthaggi Streetscapes Masterplan is expected to be completed in 2022, with implementation works commencing shortly after.

### Rawson Skate Park and Recreational Vehicle (RV) Park

Officially opened in December 2021, the completed Rawson Skate Park and RV Park project provides much needed recreational facilities for the young people of the town including a skate park, tennis hit up wall, free-throw basketball court, drinking fountains, picnic tables and shelter, and landscaping that includes disability-compliant walkways and public toilets. The RV and long vehicle parking areas aim to draw even more people to the town and boost the local economy. The total project value is \$484,173.



# Regional report Grampians

## Regional Director's report

This year, RDV Grampians' priorities included ongoing support associated with recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 and reaffirming our strategic approach to rural and regional development.

Our work leveraging the region's unique strengths to drive growth and innovation across our resilient communities, identifying and activating opportunities, and addressing place-based challenges is now supported by the recently published REDS for the Wimmera Southern Mallee and Central Highlands. These strategies provide directions in supporting the continued development of a vibrant and resilient Grampians economy and community.

A key avenue for delivering regional economic development outcomes is through work to support and facilitate investment. This year saw more than \$127.85 million worth of investment facilitated in the Grampians via a range of funding streams.

The team worked across government in delivery and support of initiatives including the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee, Department of Justice and Community Safety's Better Connected Care Initiative and the announcement of Ballarat as a hub for the regional Commonwealth Games. RDV plays a critical role not only in economic development across the Grampians but also as a vehicle to link up services and engage with rural and regional communities to maximise the benefit of government investment.

RDV Grampians' work with the Central Highlands and Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnerships continues to inform investment decisions to enable long-term solutions to local issues.

In the Central Highlands this included the \$2.6 million provided for the Ballarat and Districts Aboriginal Corporation Independent Living Community for Aboriginal Elders, \$1.048 million for the Ballarat Community Hub and \$326,000 for the Navigators Community Multi-Purpose Hub.



While in the Wimmera Southern Mallee, projects include \$2.8 million to support Easing Yarriambiack's Affordable Rental Housing Shortage, \$1.225 million for the Hamilton Street Pedestrian Bridge and \$500,000 for upgrades to the Rainbow Rises Events Centre motor sports venue.

As we look ahead to 2023 and beyond with significant parts of our regional economy accelerating out of COVID-19 and towards a vibrant and exciting future, our work leading economic and community development in the Grampians will continue to be informed by our REDS, Regional Partnership priorities and our deep engagement with all of our stakeholders.

**Mitch Watson**  
Regional Director  
(February 2022 – June 2022)

## Regional highlights

- Supported Frew Foods International to attract a \$30 million new investment in meat processing in Stawell. The project creates a major increase in processing capacity with a focus on export market opportunities and will create 250 new jobs locally.
- Supported the Grampians Workforce Pilot which provided \$1.9 million funding to Ararat Rural City Council for workforce development opportunities. The pilot aims to address critical issues in the community including housing shortages and attraction of suitable workforces.
- Supported Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative with \$2.7 million funding to develop a culturally-safe, supported Elders Independent Living Community for 16 local Aboriginal Elders. The project will support construction of self-contained units, a central hall for community meals, gardens and spaces for social connection activities. Elders will be fully engaged in design and cultural details for the village.
- Supported Hindmarsh Shire Council with \$500,000 funding to develop the Rainbow Rises Events Centre. The project will deliver infrastructure to improve the venue for participants, crews, officials, volunteers and spectators, to establish the site as Victoria's premier off-road motor sports racing venue and attract additional events.
- Supported the Wimmera Southern Mallee (WSM) Regional Partnership to advocate successfully for increased digital connectivity in the region, with \$1.3 million towards a new 4G mobile network across its more isolated and remote districts committed by the Victorian Government and additional funding through the Commonwealth Government's Regional Connectivity Program Round 2.

## Key outcomes

### Improving public transport through the Central Highlands / Western Victoria Grain Industry Supply Chain Study

Supported the Central Highlands Regional Partnership as it continued its second term with new initiatives including a cooperative study with the Department of Transport to improve public transport in the Central Highlands and a Western Victoria Grain Industry Supply Chain Study to improve grain movement efficiencies.

### Cabins Across the Wimmera Mallee

The Regional Tourism Investment Fund is funding Cabins Across the Wimmera Mallee, a 'hero' project to deliver new self-contained cabins of consistent quality across the four Wimmera Mallee local government areas. The cabins will link closely with natural, arts and cultural attractions enabling visitors to pre-plan and book their experiences across multiple trails and destinations in the region. The project is expected to generate 10 ongoing jobs and deliver \$1.9 million in annual economic contribution.

### Ballarat Station Precinct

The transformative Ballarat Station Precinct project concluded with the opening of the refurbished Goods Shed conference centre in February 2022. The Goods Shed conference centre complements the commuter carparking, internal road (Railway Parade) and the 77-room Quest Hotel. The reinvigorated precinct has begun hosting events and can accommodate a range of other activities including outdoor events.

### The Aradale Solution – Economic and Social Development Strategy

The Aradale Solution project, supported through the Investment Fast-Track Fund, will deliver a comprehensive analysis and prospectus to unlock a mix of development opportunities and tenancies at the iconic Aradale Asylum precinct.

Located at the gateway to Ararat, the 100-hectare site features 63 precinct buildings with several of the original 1860s buildings deemed to be of state significance. The economic and social development strategy is needed to unlock the heritage and planning complexity of the buildings and assets, offering the market an incredibly attractive strategic land-use planning and development framework to secure commercial development investment and commence activation of the site.

### Regional carparks

Our regions are experiencing strong population growth and pressure on parking in regional cities. The Victorian Government committed to an additional 1000 free car parking spaces for Ballarat, over and above almost 1000 spaces delivered over the past three years with key precinct enhancements. Stage 1 is delivering almost 150 new spaces across three sites at the White Flat and Eastern Ovals and adjacent to the Ballarat Library. An additional 65 all-day free spaces have been completed with a further 81 spaces underway for completion in 2022. Three large multi-level sites delivering over 850 new spaces are at the feasibility planning stage.

### Grampians Peaks Trail

In November 2021, 160 kilometres of new and upgraded hiking trails stretching from Mount Zero in the north to Dunkeld in the south was officially opened as the Grampians Peaks Trail. This represented a \$20.2 million investment under the Regional Infrastructure Fund, supported by an additional \$10 million investment from the Australian Government. The trail (located almost entirely within Gariwerd National Park) offers 11 unique, well-equipped hike-in campgrounds delivered along the route. The Trail's establishment has the product on the ground to enable the indigenous Djab Wurrung People and Jardwadjali People to become licensed tour operators on their own lands.

### Ballarat Community Hub

This project will establish a community hub to co-locate likeminded social welfare and not-for-profit organisations through the development of collaborative meeting spaces and provision of access to essential technology. It will see the demolition of the interior of the existing building and the creation of modern, smart working spaces and meeting rooms accessible at reduced cost for not-for-profit and service delivery providers. It will provide an all abilities, accessible entrance and updates of the ageing façade.

### Easing Yarriambiack's Affordable Rental Housing Shortage project

The Easing Yarriambiack's Affordable Rental Housing Shortage project will enable Yarriambiack Shire Council to construct up to 14 new two-bedroom fully accessible houses for older aged residents across Warracknabeal, Hopetoun, Murtoa, Rupanyup and Woomelang. Rental housing is at a critically low level in the targeted towns and is at a point where provision of some community-based rental accommodation is considered essential infrastructure. The project will meet the twin objectives of retaining ageing residents in the town and freeing-up existing larger dwellings for rental or sale to new residents.

### Hamilton Street Pedestrian Bridge, Horsham

The project will see the construction of an accessible pedestrian and cycling bridge across the Wimmera River in central Horsham, at the extension of Hamilton Street. This will link the newly developed residential areas on the south east side of Horsham with Horsham's central business activity district, schools and the major health precinct. This project will provide improved economic, safety, recreational and liveability outcomes.

### Rainbow Rises Events Centre infrastructure development in Hindmarsh

The Rainbow Rises Events Centre project is the establishment of the site as a premier off-road motor sports racing venue and will create opportunities for additional events and activities to be held at the venue. The construction of permanent and essential infrastructure will bring the venue to an appropriate standard for participants, crews, officials, volunteers and spectators.

The improved infrastructure includes the construction of permanent and secure under cover facilities for catering services, event management, crew briefings, vehicle repairs, equipment storage, public and participants amenities, first aid and all-weather road access.

### Navigators Community Multi-Purpose Hub in Moorabool

This project will see the existing clubrooms and public toilet building demolished and the construction of a multi-use community building. The new building will include an open meeting space, internal and external storage rooms, kitchen, clubrooms, viewing area, accessible amenities, pathways and landscaping.

### Grampians Energy Project

The RDA Grampians Committee is leading the Grampians Energy Project. Phase 1 of this cross-departmental project will deliver a research program designed to comprehensively map the energy use and demand across the Central Highlands. The region encompasses the local government areas of Ballarat, Moorabool, Golden Plains, Hepburn, Pyrenees, and Ararat.







# Regional report Hume

## Regional Director's report

Located in North East Victoria, the Hume region is recognised for its national economic contribution to manufacturing, food production, agriculture, transport and the visitor economy. Hume is home to five of Victoria's six alpine resorts, providing over a quarter of the region's visitation.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19 impacting the workforce and delivery of major projects, the region continues to grow and adjust to the pressures of recent years. Our Investment and Trade team engaged with businesses on workforce shortages and supply chain impacts as the pandemic persisted. Input was given to government to inform decision making. This was on top of the team's 'business as usual', attracting 614 jobs and \$198 million capital expenditure through business investment enquiries. Highlights include support for medicinal cannabis company Cannatrek's \$18.8 million Shepparton glasshouse investment that will create 76 new jobs and for Goulburn Valley Linen's \$4.2 million expansion at Mooroopna which will create 32 jobs.

Our Economic Development team worked with delivery partners to unlock funding across programs including the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund, Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund, Enabling Tourism Fund, Regional Recovery Fund and Local Economic Recovery Fund. This work saw important community projects including Shepparton Art Museum, Hyphen Wodonga, Euroa Cinema, Better Parks for Seymour and Burraja Cultural and Environmental Centre delivered.

Our Regional Planning and Coordination team supported our Regional Partnerships and Regional Development Australia Committee to address community challenges and harness opportunities. This was done through projects like the North East Victorian Cycling Optimisation Masterplan, leading to \$8.5m funding for the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, and significant investment in rail improvements across the region.



Cross-government work saw us progress priority projects such as the activation of Lake Eildon through signing a Memorandum of Understanding across all relevant agencies, and the formation of a tourism alliance between Strathbogie, Greater Shepparton and Mitchell shires.

I acknowledge the resilience and ongoing work of our partners and communities who managed the impacts of COVID-19 and achieved outstanding results for our region.

Lastly, I thank the RDV Hume team for your hard work in driving regional development whilst personally navigating these challenges. Your contributions are greatly appreciated.

**Matt Nelson**  
Regional Director, Hume

## Regional highlights

- Facilitated Cannatrek Limited to establish an \$18.8 million glasshouse in Shepparton, creating 76 new jobs. The project is expected to quadruple Cannatrek's supply of medicinal cannabis products.
- Facilitated completion of Wodonga's distinctive new library-gallery Hyphen. The Victorian Government contributed \$4 million towards the \$10.2 million project, which will strengthen Wodonga's economic, cultural and social capacity.
- Supported development of a new glasshouse for family-owned Tatura company Flavorite, one of Australia's largest glasshouse producers of fresh fruit and vegetables. The Victorian Government contributed \$17.1 million towards the project which will create 60 new jobs to grow more produce year-round.
- Commenced the \$3 million Round 2 of the Ride High Country program, awarding 13 grant recipients up to \$500,000, creating 50 new jobs and bringing total capital investment to more than \$5 million to make the region the premier cycling tourism destination in Australia.
- Supported delivery of significant upgrades to the Euroa Community Complex including upgrading interiors, installing 160 new seats and refurbishing the cinema space, enabling the complex to accommodate patrons with a wide range of needs.
- Supported the Alpine Regional Workforce Pilot to develop a Key Worker Housing Plan by exploring medium to long-term opportunities to increase affordable housing options and develop a Seasonal Workforce Management plan, partnering with Tourism North East, to address systemic challenges associated with workforce planning.

## Key outcomes

### Alpine Resorts Winter Support Program

The Alpine Resorts Winter Support Program was launched to recognise the heavy impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on winter dependent businesses in Victoria's High Country, with a total of \$48.49 million funding provided. This was made up of the \$38.49 million Alpine Resorts Winter Support Program, established to assist businesses in Victoria's alpine resorts, Dinner Plain and surrounding towns, that were most impacted by COVID-19 restrictions between May and August 2021, and the Commonwealth Government's co-contribution of a further \$10 million to the Alpine Resort Management Boards (ARMBs) at Mount Buller, Mount Hotham, Falls Creek and the Southern Alpine Resorts to maximise opportunities for establishing economic recovery and developing green season offerings to ensure economic sustainability in the future.

### Winton Wetlands and Surrounds Indigenous Trail

The Winton Wetlands and Surrounds Indigenous Trail project was completed in May 2022, supported by \$2.9 million from the Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund. The project developed an Indigenous trail which enables visitors to engage with Indigenous culture through connection with the landscape and a series of Yorta Yorta Nation Indigenous artworks, digitally supported experiences and school education programs.

The project includes a series of Yorta Yorta Nation Indigenous artworks, an Indigenous school camp area and 12 kilometres of shared path. The trail integrates with existing pathways and the Mokoan Hub café.

### Tallangatta Holiday Park

The Tallangatta Holiday Park redevelopment project, supported by \$500,000 from the Regional Infrastructure Fund, will strengthen the Tallangatta township and surrounds to contribute towards a stronger, more liveable, attractive and sustainable region, create additional jobs at the park and help meet the growing demand for camping and caravan accommodation in Victoria's High Country.

The project included preparation and establishment of holiday park camp sites, internal road upgrades, core infrastructure works, a new playground with shade sail and landscaping.

### Ride High Country Round One

Projects from Round 1 of the Ride High Country program came to fruition this year. The Rustic Bus was awarded funding to create a unique, experiential, cycle-friendly accommodation and tour business that provides enhanced cycle visitor experiences in North East Victoria. The result is a repurposed coach converted into a self-contained mobile tiny house for up to six people.

Gundowring Fine Foods was awarded funding for its 'Treats on Wheels' project. The project has provided a caravan and two ice cream bikes that can be set up as pop-up refreshment stalls in strategic locations to suit a range of venues and event sizes; for example, at trail heads, in car parks, rest stops or regional venues and festivals.

### Delatite Wines – cellar door expansion and ecotourism experience

Funding from the Wine Growth Fund saw Delatite Wines complete its \$300,000 cellar door expansion and ecotourism experience project. The project has created an enhanced visitor offering and customer experience that will attract additional visitation to the region.

### Shepparton Art Museum

The Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) at Victoria Park Lake was completed and officially opened in November 2021. The redevelopment project received \$12.5 million from the Regional Infrastructure Fund in 2018, complementing contributions from the Commonwealth Government, SAM Foundation and Greater Shepparton City Council. The project delivered a new art museum with increased capacity and improved access to showcase its unique ceramics, Indigenous and multicultural offerings to visitors.

### Museum of Vehicle Evolution (MOVE)

Construction of the new \$2.15 million Museum of Vehicle Evolution (MOVE) in Shepparton was completed, providing a unique and engaging experience for visitors to the region, with \$900,000 funding from the Living Regions Living Suburbs fund.

In a contemporary and interactive exhibition space, MOVE displays legends of the Goulburn Valley trucking industry in the Kenworth Dealer Truck Pavilion, the Furphy Museum, the Farren Bicycle Collection, the Dick Clayton Collection of gramophones, telephones and radio, and the Loel Thomson Clothing Collection.

### Padman Stops

Through a \$1.2 million investment at its Strathmerton facility, Padman Stops and Padman Water Solutions will manufacture bespoke civil and hybrid products from concrete moulds as a result of diversification works, with support awarded through the Regional Jobs Fund, with the project set to generate 40 new jobs.

### Mansfield Autism Statewide Service (MASS)

Stage 1A of Mansfield Autism Statewide Service's Operation Gamechanger project is part of a \$40 million expansion by MASS to home new facilities and expanded services with the aim of supporting more families living with autism.

Victorian Government funding helped deliver construction and associated civil works for four accommodation buildings. Another eight of these self-contained units are planned adjacent to a new conference facility and associated infrastructure, for use by visiting families from across Victoria and Australia attending the retreat.

### Goulburn Valley Seasonal Worker Support Program

Fruit Growers Victoria Ltd utilised funding from the Regional Recovery Fund to support existing seasonal worker support projects. The project included a strategic marketing campaign – Pick Goulburn Valley – to attract seasonal workers to the Goulburn Valley and support training for both workers and growers. The project included an online platform for worker and grower registration, and a resource to manage its implementation.

### Better Parks for Seymour

Three significant parks were revitalised under the Improving Liveability, Better Parks for Seymour project. Works were completed at Chittick Park, Kings Park and Goulburn Park.

The project saw capital works undertaken to improve these key recreation and open space locations within the Seymour township. The three locations are regarded as the 'jewels in the crown' of Seymour and required upgrades to provide a range of modern facilities to attract visitors and new residents to town and retain existing residents.

### Kinglake Town Centre and Streetscape Renewal

Kinglake's streetscape project, which had been an identified community priority since the Black Saturday bushfires, was completed. Amongst a range of improvements, the \$1.749 million project involved an upgrade of the main retail precinct including improving the appearance of the town, creating outdoor spaces for people to gather informally, improving cyclist, pedestrian, and vehicular safety, and providing facilities to charge electric vehicles.







# Regional report Loddon Mallee

## Regional Director's report

With a population of approximately 342,000 people, Loddon Mallee encompasses 59,000 square kilometres spanning from the peri-urban area of Gisborne, through Central Victoria and on to the most northern parts of the state, including Mildura.

The RDV Loddon Mallee team is supporting 123 projects including \$106 million in grants, resulting in a total investment of \$351 million. This year the team supported the creation of 195 new jobs. This delivery commitment ensured the region was well placed to create jobs, enhance the liveability of the region and drive economic development.

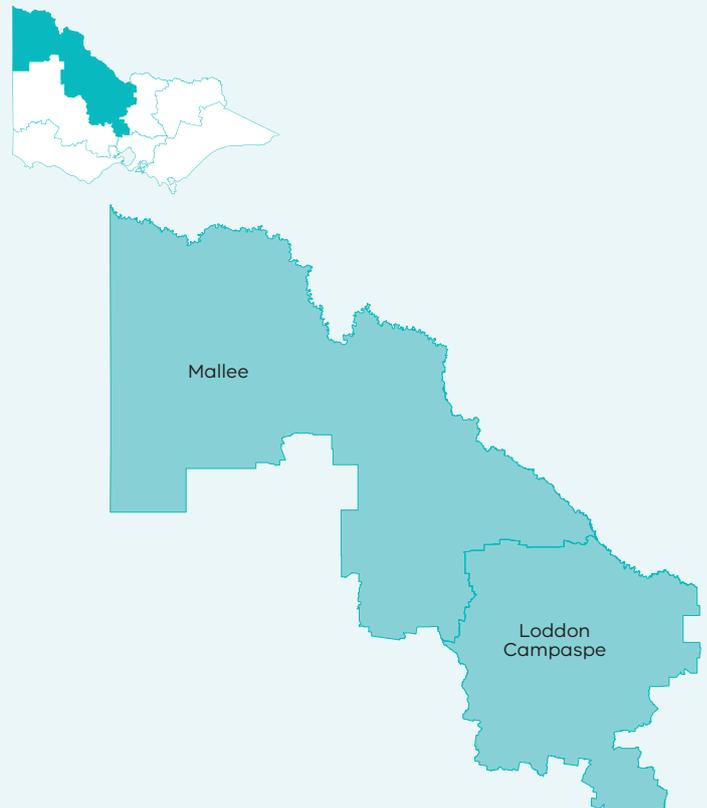
The availability and affordability of housing in the region was highlighted as a strategic priority this year and supported by the completion of the Loddon Mallee Housing Revitalisation Strategy. This strategy examines the barriers and opportunities for housing and includes five unique business cases to inform future projects.

The Regional Planning and Coordination team provided support to the Loddon Campaspe and Mallee Regional Partnerships and Regional Development Australia Committee and played a critical role in creating opportunities for our rural and regional towns and cities.

All three committees have supported strategic projects to help understand some of the most pressing opportunities in Loddon Mallee including the Food Industry Supply Chain analysis, Gender Impact analysis, Suitable Childcare Models for Rural Towns and digital connectivity needs for the region.

The region has supported a range of Aboriginal economic development projects, including elements for the Bendigo Airport, Bendigo Botanic Gardens and Central Goldfields Art Gallery. Dja Dja Wurrung People have led the Welcome to Country project, Walking Together project and are delivering works for the Goldfields track transformation project.

This year we have been proud to announce the Bendigo GovHub's official name, 'Galkangu' meaning 'we come together to make things happen together on Country.' The naming of Galkangu involved extensive consultation with the Djaara Traditional Owners and Elders and included the Indigenous naming of meeting rooms and spaces throughout the building. The GovHub is due for completion by the end of 2022.



The Loddon Mallee region continued to address the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic with an emphasis on supporting the region's borders and unique local needs with the implementation of the Border Broker initiative.

An important recovery project was the INVEST Loddon Mallee investment attraction website which showcases the unique economic strengths and investment opportunities of each of the 10 local government areas in Loddon Mallee featuring some of our most innovative and interesting industries.

### Rachel Lee

Regional Director, Loddon Mallee

## Regional highlights

- Supported key priorities for the Loddon Campaspe Regional Partnership including \$6.6 million for Healthy Heart of Victoria, funding for Youth Live4Life and additional weekend Maryborough-Ballarat train services.
- Supported Mallee Regional Partnership Light/State project in the Mallee with \$3 million for a light installation to reflect the unique environment and culture of the border region and delivered the Small Towns Big Difference Fund pilot project.
- Implemented the Border Broker initiative to support communities and businesses along the Victorian, New South Wales and South Australian borders during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Delivered Regional Development Australia Loddon Mallee priorities including Mallee Regional Skills Demand pulse check and Mallee Region Food Industry Supply Chain Analysis, which resulted in the True Foods upgrade and Australian Eatwell expansion.
- Continued to support private sector investment and job creation, including Apiam Animal Health's autogenous vaccine laboratory in Bendigo and DWM Engineering's new structural steel fabrication facility in Irymple, as well as continuing to support Cann Group's medicinal cannabis cultivation and processing facility in Mildura.
- Supported the Robinvale Regional Workforce Pilot, a government and industry partnership exploring seasonal workforce housing opportunities.



## Key outcomes

### Autogenous Vaccine Laboratory – Bendigo

Apiam Animal Health is undertaking an investment of \$4.2 million to construct a vaccine laboratory in Bendigo. The project is crucial for the development of vaccines to combat animal diseases such as swine flu, avian flu and parasite infestations and will create at least 40 highly skilled professional and technical jobs.

### Kerang Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Centre – Planning Project

Mallee District Aboriginal Services proposes to construct a new purpose-built facility in Kerang to deliver primary health care, allied health and family services. Funding of \$240,000 will support the architectural design plans, including community consultation, detailed design drawings and reports for planning approvals to ensure the project is ready for a future capital infrastructure investment.

### Australian Star project planning

Murray River Paddlesteamers has received funding from the Investment Fast-Track Fund to prepare technical drawings necessary for the construction of a new luxury Murray River Paddlesteamer cruising vessel. The plans include 20 cabins and suites for 40 guests, restaurant and function space, day spa, lounge and bars over two levels.

### Bendigo Art Gallery expansion – Schematic design and planning

The investment of \$280,000 from the Investment Fast-Track Fund will enable the schematic design and planning phase to be undertaken on the Bendigo Art Gallery expansion. This is the first step in supporting the expansion and progressing the project to be investment ready. It includes community and stakeholder engagement to inform the design and planning phase.

### Talbot wastewater upgrade planning project

Central Goldfields Shire received \$630,000 as part of the Regional Workforce Pilots to develop a structural plan to accommodate a centralised sewerage system to support additional housing and economic growth in Talbot. This project is key to unlocking future subdivision to support more housing development and help attract and retain a growing population.

### Growing Regional Opportunities for Work (GROW) Program – Bendigo 2021–23

Be.Bendigo has been funded \$500,000 to deliver the GROW initiative which has targeted outcomes to change local procurement practices and support local employment for people and communities with barriers to employment in areas of high unemployment.

### Koondrook to Kerang Rail Trail

Gannawarra Shire Council received \$500,000 to complete assessments, approvals and planning to support the Kerang to Koondrook Rail Trail project to move it towards an investment-ready position. Final designs of the route alignment and construction planning, along with environmental, cultural and vegetation assessments will also be completed as part of the project.

### Mildura CBD Revitalisation

Mildura Rural City Council received \$200,000 to undertake analysis and economic studies which will deliver a strategy to connect the Mildura CBD and the Riverfront Precinct. This project will deliver an economic study to understand commercial supply and demand, and an investment prospectus to attract investors to stimulate investment opportunities.

### Mildura freight and logistics head office

GTS Freight Management Pty Ltd has committed to a \$3 million upgrade of its freight and logistics head office in Mildura. The project will support 57 new ongoing jobs over five years and will safeguard the existing workforce of 160 employees.

### New structural steel fabrication facility

DWM Engineering Pty Ltd received support under the Regional Jobs Fund towards its new \$2.4 million investment in a structural steel fabrication facility at Irymple, creating 20 new jobs. The investment includes manufacturing storage and administration facilities and new plant and equipment.

### Mildura Riverfront Powerhouse

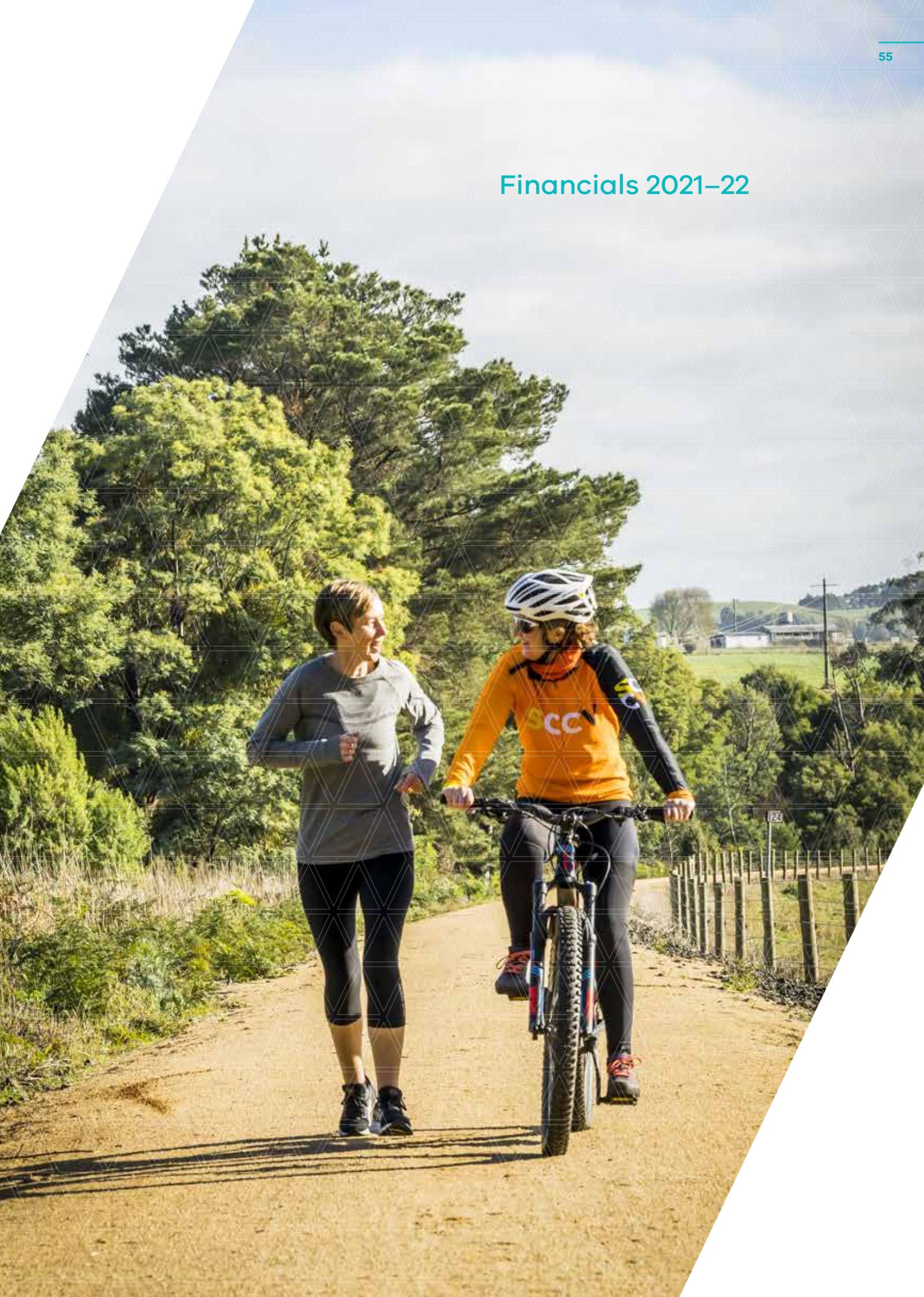
Mildura Rural City Council received \$500,000 to redevelop and upgrade the Powerhouse building, as part of the proposed establishment of the Village Square, which forms Stage 2 of the Mildura Riverfront Redevelopment.

### Bendigo Govhub – ‘Galkangu’

Main works commenced on the construction of the \$90 million Galkangu Bendigo GovHub being delivered in partnership by Regional Development Victoria, Development Victoria and Djaara (formerly Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation). The Galkangu building is due for completion by the end of 2022.

The state-of-the-art building will centralise a range of government services and accommodate up to 1,000 state and local government workers, creating a ‘one-stop-shop’ for customers while building a stronger and collaborative public sector presence in Bendigo. The project is forecast to generate more than 200 new local jobs during construction and inject more than \$130 million into the local economy.

## Financials 2021–22



## 2021–22 output targets and performance against Budget Paper 3 measures

Performance measures	Unit of measure	2021–22 actual	2021–22 target	Performance variation (%)
<b>Quantity</b>				
Actual export sales generated for regional businesses as a result of participation in government programs.	\$ million	136	110	23.6
Economic development and service delivery projects supported.	number	297	175	69.7
Jobs in regional Victoria resulting from government investment facilitation services and assistance.	number	2427	1770	371
New investment in regional Victoria resulting from government facilitation services and assistance.	\$ million	1410	1400	0.7
Participant satisfaction with implementation of RDV programs.	per cent	85	90	–5.6

## Revenue and expenses

Controlled income and expenses for the period ended 30 June 2022

	2022 (FY) (\$000's)	2021 (FY) (\$000's)
<b>Income from transactions</b>		
Output appropriations	207,405	373,205
Special appropriations	–	–
Regional Growth Fund appropriations	42,726	44,300
Grants	34,080	8,929
Sale of services	–	–
Interest income	726	742
Fair value of assets and services received free of charge	–	–
Other income	1,129	944
<b>Total income from transactions</b>	<b>286,066</b>	<b>428,120</b>
<b>Expenses from transactions</b>		
Grants and other transfers	(218,574)	(369,849)
Employee expenses	(28,935)	(30,043)
Capital asset charge	–	(3,215)
Depreciation and amortisation	(458)	(451)
Interest expense	(23)	(23)
Other operating expenses	(41,627)	(68,552)
<b>Total expenses from transactions</b>	<b>(289,617)</b>	<b>(472,132)</b>
<b>Net result from transactions (net operating balance)</b>	<b>(3,552)</b>	<b>(44,012)</b>

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