



### Fact sheet

The Victorian Government's sustained investment in regional development since 1999 has led to strong population growth in a number of areas across provincial Victoria. The result is that many communities in provincial Victoria are experiencing high levels of growth and unprecedented change.

Recognising the pressures placed on local government in managing this growth, the Victorian Government will provide further assistance to councils to undertake strategic regional planning.

#### 1. Planning for growth in provincial Victoria

The Government will provide \$15.9 million to provide a new direction in regional planning that focuses on developing long-term regional and sub-regional plans, a vision, and a set of actions to achieve common goals for the development of sustainable communities. \$500,000 of this will help regional communities identify the impacts of the emerging drivers of change.

Victoria's regional planning capability will be further supported by:

- Improving access to strategic planning information and advice through the appointment of 15 additional planners to support local councils to accelerate statutory planning for key growth areas;
- Extending the *Urban Development Program* to provide support for the development of precinct structure plans in key regional growth areas;
- Appointing a new Deputy Chair to the Priority Development Panel with a focus on regional Victoria whose key role will be to convene panels to facilitate major rezoning proposals, reducing delays in finalisation of plans.

The Government will co-ordinate these activities across the state through a newly established Ministerial Taskforce to report to the Premier, to be chaired by the Minister for Regional and Rural Development.

#### 2. Supporting Buy Locally

The Government will provide \$500,000 to expand the *Buy Locally* program to extend its reach to include business-to-business activity in regional cities.

This initiative will increase local purchasing of local products by local communities – at individual and business-to-business levels.

#### 3. Helping to develop community enterprises in small towns

The Government will provide \$150,000 to broaden the *Community Enterprises in Small Towns Program* to include a broader range of new and existing community enterprises that seek to employ local people.

The initiative will be broadened to include support for:

- new community-managed enterprises that may not be seeking to replicate a lost important commercial service but rather establish an alternative business opportunity; and
- existing community-managed enterprises that seek to employ local people as part of any prospective expansion or refocus.



#### 4. Creating Indigenous planning internships

The Government will provide \$50,000 seed funding to establish a planning internship program to raise the participation of Indigenous students in planning higher education courses.

This initiative aims to improve the quality of planning advice and expertise in provincial Victoria by providing local government with trained Indigenous planners to assist with new heritage legislation requirements.

#### 5. Planning the future of Gippsland's resource infrastructure development

The Government will provide \$100,000 to assist the *Gippsland Resource Infrastructure Development* organisation undertake a study into the future resource transport infrastructure requirements of the region.

As prices rise for increasingly scarce energy sources such as oil and gas, the potential to use Victoria's brown coal resources for other applications increases. Coal drying, gasification and other technologies have the potential to produce exportable commodities from brown coal, such as diesel and other liquid and gas fuels, fertilisers and export-quality brown coal in competition to black coal. A number of new projects are on the drawing board that could involve developments of \$10 to 20 billion by 2020.

*The Victorian Government's provincial economic statement Moving Forward: Making Provincial Victoria the Best Place to Live, Work and Invest was launched in November 2005. This \$502 million program aimed to build on provincial Victoria's strong economic success since 1999, drive further growth and development in regional cities, communities and industries, and attract more people, jobs and investment to regional and rural areas. Consultations conducted by the Government in November and December 2007 showed strong support for the direction taken by Moving Forward, but also highlighted new challenges. Moving Forward: Update – The Next Two Years responds to these consultations. It reinforces the Government's strong support for provincial Victoria, continues to deliver the highly successful Moving Forward agenda and introduces additional initiatives to tackle the challenges ahead. Moving Forward: Update addresses five key areas: **growth and change; industry; skills; infrastructure; and drought and a changing climate.***

For more information contact:

Anthony Sherry

**Regional Development Victoria**

Manager, Implementation and Evaluation

Tel (03) 9651 9436

Email: [anthony.sherry@rdv.vic.gov.au](mailto:anthony.sherry@rdv.vic.gov.au)