



5 May 2021

The Hon Mark Coulton MP
Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government
Member for Parkes
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Via email: Mark.Coulton.MP@aph.gov.au

Dear Minister,

Re: Support for the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program

On behalf of the Regional Capitals Australia (RCA) executive board and membership, I am writing to show our strong support in for the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) program that featured in the 2020-21 Federal Budget.

This program has delivered numerous direct and indirect benefits to regional communities and RCA strongly encourages the Government to continue to fund this program in the upcoming budget, with commitment to continue funding year on year.

Benefits of the program

This program has allowed councils to invest in important road and community infrastructure that would have previously struggled to secure sufficient funding. Further, it has not only delivered funding for essential works, it has also been a significant job stimulator across regional Australia.

The allocation approach has facilitated the development of a wider range of projects, which is essential in ensuring a sustainable and tangible improvement in community infrastructure. By removing the competitive element of the funding, significant burden has been taken off councils in having to prepare lengthy, expensive and complex applications. Understanding the amount of money allocated to each council from the outset allows for better planning and prioritisation of projects.

The infrastructure improvements delivered under this program have facilitated a more connected and liveable Australia, which is essential for sustainable population growth in regional capital cities.

About Regional Capitals Australia

RCA is an alliance of 25 local governments representing regional cities around the nation. Regional capitals are home to almost four million people and service the needs of another four million Australians who live in surrounding areas. Just over one-third of Australians rely on having a socially thriving regional capital to meet their everyday needs.

Many people are drawn to the lifestyle and affordability offered by regional capitals and 25 per cent of these centres are growing faster than the national average, with one million additional people projected to live in a regional capital in less than ten years.

Ensuring that these cities grow in a sustainable manner is vital to our economy, and as such the future of regional Australia is an imperative policy challenge for the Federal Government.

Regional Capitals Australia

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There is enormous potential in terms of productivity and contribution to our nation's growth if the capacity of our regional capitals is harnessed. There is also the opportunity to alleviate the burden of congestion in our metropolitan capitals by investing in regional capitals.

If you have any questions in the interim, please do not hesitate to contact our Secretariat Rachael Sweeney on 0422 067 858 or email secretariat@regionalcapitalsaustralia.org. (Federal lobby register no: 18169904232).

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Mack", with a small flourish at the end.

Cr Kevin Mack
Chair, Regional Capitals Australia | Mayor, Albury City Council