



**The Hon Martin Pakula MP**

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

**The Hon Jaclyn Symes MP**

Minister for Regional Development

Tuesday 24 November 2020

## **VISIT VICTORIA: EXPERIENCING THE BEST AT HOME**

Regional restaurants, pubs, hotels and small businesses will be at the forefront of our recovery. Backing these businesses and their workers, the Andrews Labor Government is investing to attract more tourists and make sure more Victorian families can experience the best our state has to offer.

The *Victorian Budget 2020/21* provides significant investments in tourism and major events – to get people out of the house and into regional Victoria and the city, supporting local businesses and local jobs.

The Labor Government will provide \$465 million for the *Victorian Tourism Recovery Package*, to help the sector bounce back after a year of bushfires and necessary health restrictions to protect Victoria from coronavirus.

To encourage more people to get out and explore their state, the Budget includes \$28 million for up to 120,000 \$200 vouchers to offset the cost of accommodation, attractions and tours in regional Victoria.

Nearly \$150 million will build new visitor accommodation, improve major tourist trails, and get more people out to taste the world-class produce, food and wine on our doorstep.

The package will fund improvements to the Mallee Silo Art Trail, Falls Creek to Hotham Alpine Crossing hiking trail, the Brambuk Cultural Centre in Halls Gap and the Ballarat Centre for Photography, as well as the King Valley's Prosecco Road.

More than \$47.5 million will build better visitor infrastructure along the Great Ocean Road, including \$2 million to build more campsites along the surf coast.

A further \$18.5 million is set aside for a Gippsland Tourism Recovery Package that will build new accommodation, upgrade the East Gippsland Rail Trail and improve tourism infrastructure across Victoria's east.

The recovery package also includes \$150 million for the Regional Tourism Investment Fund, which will focus on projects in areas identified as a priority in the Government's *Regional Tourism Review*, including nature-based, First Nations, arts and culture, and food and wine tourism.

Visit Victoria will receive \$58 million to market Victoria to travellers within the state and around the country. Additional support will be provided for regional tourism bodies and programs to help businesses learn new digital and other skills.

Aboriginal tourism businesses will also get \$1.6 million in support for advisory services, mentoring and digital skills development.

As well as helping more people get out and see the best of regional Victoria, the Budget also includes \$152 million to attract more events to our world-renowned major events calendar – increasing the Major Events Fund's capacity to \$100 million per year, driving economic activity and strengthening our state's reputation as the sporting, cultural and major events capital of Australia.

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The Labor Government's Regional Events Fund has been renewed with \$20 million to continue supporting blockbuster events outside Melbourne, and the Melbourne Convention Bureau will continue to bring visitors from around Australia and the world to its business and convention events as part of a \$9.7 million boost to the *Business Events Program*.

Sports fans and community groups will benefit from major investments in sporting infrastructure, including a \$40 million boost for the fifth stage of Geelong's Kardinia Park stadium redevelopment. Combined with previous commitments, the Labor Government is fully funding the \$142 million final stage of the project that will ensure Kardinia Park remains the country's premier regional stadium, boosting the local economy and backing local jobs.

In Melbourne, the Budget funds a range of AFL club projects with strong community benefits, including \$36.6 million for the next stage of the Western Bulldogs' Whitten Oval masterplan which provides a new grandstand for spectators at AFLW and VFL games plus facilities for important community programs, including Sons and Daughters of the West.

AFL legend Danny Frawley's contribution to football and mental health awareness will be recognised with \$7.3 million to develop the Danny Frawley Centre for Health and Wellbeing at St Kilda Football Club's Moorabbin headquarters.

Essendon's Tullamarine base will get \$6.3 million to build new women's facilities and extra capacity for community sport, and \$7.3 million will go towards upgrades at North Melbourne's Arden Street home – providing more space to deliver the club's multicultural programs, including the important work of The Huddle.

The Budget also provides \$15.5 million for Richmond's Punt Road Oval redevelopment, which will deliver integrated AFL and AFLW facilities and support the work of the Korin Gamadji Institute, the Bachar Houli Foundation and the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School.

A further \$22 million has been allocated to develop the State Basketball Centre in Knox, including facilities for the local community, while professional sport will share \$7 million in funding to aid the recovery of the sector from the effects of the pandemic.

VFL clubs will share in \$1 million to build development pathways as teams enter the new multi-state East Coast League.

An investment of \$3 million will repair and strengthen Port Melbourne's Princes Pier to ensure the ongoing safety of the community in enjoying and accessing this important historical and cultural asset.

#### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula**

*"We want Victorians to get out and enjoy our wonderful state, as we look forward to a very different year in 2021."*

*"As we recover, we're backing our tourism businesses and workers with important investments that will help now and provide the foundation for a sustained recovery."*

#### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes**

*"We're investing in the experiences Victorians know and love – keeping people coming back and attracting new visitors to our regions."*

*"We're delivering for people in regional Victoria and the jobs that tourism brings to our state."*