

Media Release

Ms Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Regional Development
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COMMUNITY KEY IN PLAN FOR PORTLAND AND GREAT SOUTH COAST

The community will be at the heart of the Andrews Labor Government's major new drive to create jobs and provide the conditions for businesses to thrive in the Great South Coast.

The \$17.4 million *Portland Economic Diversification Plan* includes upgrades to key local freight roads, funding for crucial foundation infrastructure to help attract new businesses, and a fund for local projects to grow the economy.

The plan includes \$2.5 million for stage two of the Henty Employment Precinct, which will deliver important infrastructure to help attract private-sector investment and is due to start later this year. Works at the precinct will include the provision of gas infrastructure and improved NBN.

The new investment builds on a previous \$1.5 million grant provided through the *Regional Infrastructure Fund* for stage one of the precinct, which included drainage works to prepare the site. The precinct's development is being delivered by the Glenelg Shire, and works have so far created around 59 jobs in construction.

Stage two also includes the development of service roads to improve access to a proposed truck service centre and retail outlet next to the site. The service centre will enable heavy-vehicle servicing and retail facilities, providing 30 jobs across retail, mechanical repairs and other support industries.

Nearly \$5 million will upgrade important freight roads across Glenelg Shire to improve access to the Port of Portland and export opportunities, including Mumbannar-Wanwin Road, Wilsons Road and Heathfield Lindsay Road.

Key infrastructure projects will be backed by the \$7.5 million *Portland Diversification Fund*. The Government will respond to priorities identified by council, businesses, industry, the Great South Coast Regional Partnership and the local community to support job creation across a range of industries.

Regional Development Victoria (RDV) will establish a new office in Portland to work closely with all local people and organisations to identify suitable projects based on local priorities and opportunities.

RDV will help identify initiatives the Fund could support over the next six months, including skills training for growth industries, housing for workers, culturally inclusive industry opportunities and investment grants.

Investment grants will be facilitated by RDV working with the council, businesses and industry to identify opportunities that will act as drivers for economic development.

This new plan comes on top of a funding agreement announced earlier this year to help secure the future of Alcoa's Portland Smelter, securing more Victorian jobs and protecting the local economy.

Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas

"We are working with the Portland community to maximise jobs growth and support the region's innovative business operators. It's about building on existing strengths and investigating new opportunities for growth."

Quote attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

"The upgrades to key freight roads will allow better access to the Port of Portland, creating new export opportunities and supporting jobs - bringing a much-needed boost to the local economy."

Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Gayle Tierney

"The payoff for these important initiatives will come in the form of new jobs across Glenelg Shire and a strong, thriving community. We're working to make the region an even better place to live, work and invest."

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