

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Wednesday, 16 February 2022

A REGIONAL LED BID FOR THE 2026 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

The Victorian Government has signed a Heads of Agreement with the Commonwealth Games Federation and Commonwealth Games Australia to enter exclusive negotiations to bring the 2026 Commonwealth Games to the state – with a vision to deliver a model of Games unprecedented in the competition’s history.

Premier Daniel Andrews and the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula today confirmed that, if awarded, the 2026 Commonwealth Games would return to Victoria. However, this competition would be hosted across the state, unlike the event in Melbourne in 2006.

The Government and Commonwealth Games Australia will now develop *Victoria’s 2026 Commonwealth Games Submission* – which will assess the viability of hosting the event.

The submission will focus on a new way to host the Games, showing how events could be held in multiple locations across regional Victoria to showcase the best of what the state has to offer and ensure a uniquely Victorian experience for the athletes and spectators.

Victoria will work to deliver a world-class Commonwealth Games across Victoria that leaves a legacy for the state.

A regionally focused Commonwealth Games would expand the capacity of Victorian regional cities for major events, tourism, arts, culture and sport. Not only would the events mean new economic opportunities through event infrastructure – it would deliver the double benefit of creating local jobs and housing. The Games would also drive participation in sports at both a community and professional level, throughout the state.

A major cultural festival would accompany the 2026 Commonwealth Games that celebrates the diversity of competing nations.

Victoria is Australia’s sporting capital, hosting the first Olympic Games in the southern hemisphere in Melbourne in 1956. Our enviable calendar of major events today includes the best of world sport, with the Australian Open followed by the Rip Curl Pro at Bells Beach, the Formula 1® Australian Grand Prix at Albert Park, Melbourne Cup Carnival and the Boxing Day Test.

The Commonwealth Games Federation will assess this submission prior to any decision being made to award the Games to Victoria.

Quotes attributable to the Premier Daniel Andrews

“Victoria is Australia’s sporting state, and, if awarded, the 2026 Commonwealth Games would demonstrate to the world a new way to deliver the competition.”

“We would hope to have the majority of events in our regional cities – to display the best of Victoria, create jobs and housing and infrastructure that will deliver for the long term.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula

“We’re working hard to bring the 2026 Commonwealth Games to Victoria because it would showcase our state globally, deliver major economic benefits and support jobs.”

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Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas

"This will be a game changer for regional communities across Victoria, being able to watch some of the world's best athletes close to home. It will create lasting benefits for decades to come, with more jobs and support for businesses."

Quote attributable to Commonwealth Games Federation President Dame Louise Martin DBE

"We are pleased to have entered into an exclusive dialogue with Victoria and Commonwealth Games Australia to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games. Victoria is one of the world's greatest sporting states and there is no doubt it has the venues, infrastructure and people to stage a world class edition of the Games."

Quote attributable to Commonwealth Games Australia President Ben Houston

"Hosting great Games is a key pillar in the Commonwealth Games Australia strategic plan and given our window for hosting the Games is 2026, we are thrilled to join the Commonwealth Games Federation in exclusive dialogue with Victoria to host the Commonwealth Games once again."