

Tuesday, 29 March 2022

MORE PROJECTS TO BOOST REGIONAL RECOVERY

The Andrews Labor Government is investing in a suite of new projects across regional and rural Victoria to deliver the infrastructure that locals and visitors need.

Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas today visited the Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative (BADAC) to announce a \$2.6 million grant, one of many projects funded through the *Regional Infrastructure Fund – Round 2*.

The Cooperative plans to develop a culturally safe, independent living community for local Aboriginal Elders.

The grant will support the construction of self-contained units, a large central hall for community meals as well as gardens and cultural spaces. Elders will be fully engaged in the design of the village, which will be able to house up to 16 residents.

This project builds on support provided by BADAC to Aboriginal Victorians across five local government areas in western Victoria.

The Cooperative delivers health, social and community development programs to Aboriginal people – including more than 700 people aged 45 and over who need culturally sensitive support as they get older.

BADAC's new village is just one of a range of new projects to be announced in coming weeks, as part of the *Regional Infrastructure Fund – Round 2*.

The new round follows a competitive process where local regional and rural councils and other eligible groups applied for grants. Other successful projects were announced last year under the *2020/21 Stimulus Round*.

The *Regional Infrastructure Fund* is part of the Victorian Government's flagship \$156 million *Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund*, designed to help businesses create more jobs in regional Victoria and support community projects.

The Fund is key to the Government's almost \$30 billion investment across regional and rural Victoria since 2015. Information and guidelines for the *Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund* can be found at rdv.vic.gov.au/rjif

Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas

"The Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative's new village will ensure local Aboriginal Elders have the support they need."

"We're backing this great regional project because it creates jobs for locals and delivers critical infrastructure for the community."

Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

"Congratulations to BADAC on receiving funding for this transformative project which will develop a culturally safe and supported independent living community for local Aboriginal Elders."

Quote attributable to Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle

"We know how much local projects matter to regional Victorians and I'm delighted to see important infrastructure delivered through this round."

Media contact: Nadia Dimattina 0438 701 306 | Nadia.dimattina@minstaff.vic.gov.au