

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for Suburban Rail Loop

Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery



Thursday, 25 August 2022

REGIONAL VOICES FRONT AND CENTRE OF VICTORIA 2026

Regional Victorian councils, business, tourism, industry and the creative sector are coming together to support delivering the 2026 Commonwealth Games at a Partnership Forum hosted by the Andrews Labor Government.

The Forum, being at the Melbourne Cricket Ground today, consists of more than 150 partners including regional councils, regional tourism boards, commerce and business groups from the four regional Hubs, regional Higher Education sector, tourism associations, Traditional Owner Groups and the sport and recreation sector.

The Labor Government will also invest \$2.7 million to support Traditional Owner Corporations across the regional Hubs over the next four years.

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (LaTrobe), Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (Geelong and Ballarat), and Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (Bendigo) are instrumental in the design, management and legacy of the Commonwealth Games across regional communities and will guide self-determination in the Games delivery.

The Victoria 2026 Partner Forum celebrates regional Victoria and will provide a comprehensive debrief on learnings from the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. Victoria 2026 will deliver a positive and enduring athlete experience, world class competition and a welcoming, enthusiastic and a legacy for host communities.

Victoria 2026 Organising Committee CEO Jeroen Weimar is being joined in a panel discussion by Commonwealth Games Australia President Ben Houston, Rodney Carter, CEO at Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and Jess Gallagher, a dual gold medallist in the tandem sprint and 1 kilometre time trial during Birmingham 2022, to talk about the opportunities the Games provide across Victoria State and the team's experience at Birmingham.

Victoria 2026 will introduce a new model delivering sports to four regional hubs in Geelong, Bendigo, Ballarat and Gippsland. Each hub will have its own athletes' village and host a range of sports, creating a legacy for Victoria that extends well beyond the competition period.

The Games will see major investment in community infrastructure, including housing and world-class sports facilities. This will leave a legacy of affordable housing for the regions and modern sports infrastructure to encourage Victorians to get active and attract future major events.

Regional Victoria will be activated with a program of cultural and business engagement experiences, highlighting the Commonwealth Games values of humanity, equality and destiny – and embracing Victoria's rich diversity and cultural history.

A Victoria-wide program of live sites and activations will ensure visitors are welcomed in every corner of the state, with the Queen's Baton Relay to traverse the regions in the weeks leading up to the Opening Ceremony.

For more information about the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games, visit vic.gov.au/victoria2026.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery Jacinta Allan

"Regional Victoria will be hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Games and it will be a team effort as we work alongside Council and communities to deliver this global event."

"First Peoples were at the heart of the Birmingham Closing Ceremony and we'll continue to work with Victoria's First Peoples to embed Aboriginal culture, heritage and stories in Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games."

Media contact: David Jarwood 0492 805 003 | david.jarwood@minstaff.vic.gov.au

Quote attributable to Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy Shaun Leane

“We want Traditional Owners and First Peoples to be central to the design of infrastructure and cultural programming – this investment will give Traditional Owner Corporations the support and skills that will leave a lasting legacy for generations to come.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Gabrielle Williams

“This investment will help ensure Traditional Owner voices and culture are at the heart of decision making, so that they play a key role in building Victoria 2026.”