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***Population Attraction and Retention Strategies for  
Rural Victorian Communities***

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July 2017

## Executive Summary

Rural Councils Victoria (RCV) has commissioned the *Population Attraction and Retention Strategies for Rural Victorian Communities* project. The project aims to identify a priority set of Projects for implementation over three years consistent with RCV's role, mandate and capacity, as well as opportunities that exist to influence State government policy and programs. The Population Attraction and Retention Strategies for Rural Victorian Communities project has involved the following key activities:

- 1) A review of population and economic trends in rural Victoria
- 2) A review of population attraction and retention strategies being undertaken in Australia, the USA, Canada and Scotland

The review of population and economic trends noted that:

- Rural Victoria's population is projected to grow by 156,470 from 712,376 in 2011 to 868,846 in 2031; much of this growth will be experienced in the peri-urban rural LGAs
- 12 of 38 Rural LGAs are projected to experience net population growth but will experience an overall loss of population aged under 65 years. 17 of 38 Rural LGAs are projected to experience net population loss but will experience an increase in people aged 65 and older
- Rural Victoria's population of people aged over 65 is the projected to increase by some 100,000 through to 2031.
- Rural Victoria generates some 9.24% of Victoria's Gross State Product
- Between 2006 and 2011 the number of jobs in rural Victoria grew by more than 5,000 however 20 of 38 rural LGAs experienced net job losses in this period

The review of population attraction strategies in Australia, the USA, Canada and Scotland observed that a range of programs are in place to support rural communities and economies and that the number of people in rural locations and that:

- Scotland and Tasmania had defined population growth targets
- The USA and Scotland place great emphasis on a community economic development approach
- The USA has a range of Community Development Financial Institutions that provide accessible/low cost finance to rural communities, businesses and individuals
- Canada's Atlantic Provinces have in place an Economic Growth Strategy that seeks to address an ageing workforce
- Victoria's Barwon South West RDA's work on population attraction identified "market segments" that are more attracted to moving to a rural location
- population attraction is a function of the availability of *economic opportunities*, *liveability* including access to key services, and *promotion* – i.e. the provision of required information to target markets

The Projects identified are summarized in the table below

<i>Project</i>	<i>Overview</i>
<b>Rural Population Growth Policy</b>	Advocacy platform to Government/Opposition
<b>Rural Investment Attraction Program</b>	Identify, collate and promote significant private sector investment opportunities
<b>Rural Workforce Development Plan</b>	Identify current/future workforce needs – both numbers and skills
<b>Older Persons Services &amp; Accommodation Program</b>	Opportunities for NFP/private sector investment in services/housing stock
<b>Alternate Service Delivery</b>	Identify/promote effective alternate service delivery models
<b>Community Planning Update</b>	Collate needs/identify common themes/reflect the voice of "potential entrants"
<b>Rural Promotion Program</b>	Promote opportunities and advantages of living in rural Victoria

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## 1. Introduction

Rural Councils Victoria (RCV) has commissioned the *Population Attraction and Retention Strategies for Rural Victorian Communities* project.

The project aims to determine drivers and barriers to population attraction and retention and economic development relevant to Victorian rural communities and identify a priority set of Projects for implementation over three years consistent with RCV's role, mandate and capacity, as well as opportunities that exist to influence State government policy and programs.

### 1.1 Key Project Activities

The Population Attraction and Retention Strategies for Rural Victorian Communities project has involved the following key activities:

- 3) A review of population and economic trends in rural Victoria – i.e. the 38 rural Local Government Areas (LGAs).
- 4) A review of population attraction and retention strategies being undertaken in Australia, the USA, Canada and Scotland (95% of Scotland is classified as rural) and the identification of practices that could be utilised in rural Victoria

The findings of 1 and 2 were presented to the RCV Executive for discussion and review

- 5) The identification of relevant projects for implementation over three years that are consistent with RCV's role, mandate and capacity, as well as opportunities that exist to influence State government policy and programs.

A draft program of Projects was developed with feedback from a Working Group of the RCV Executive. These Projects were also presented to RCV Mayors and CEOs Forum.

### 1.2 Rural LGAs

There are 38 rural LGAs in the RCV network (in alphabetical order):

Alpine Shire (S)	East Gippsland (S)	Mitchell (S)	South Gippsland (S)
Ararat (RC)	Gannawarra (S)	Moirra (S)	Southern Grampians (S)
Bass Coast (S)	Glenelg (S)	Moorabool (S)	Strathbogie (S)
Baw Baw (S)	Golden Plains (S)	Mount Alexander (S)	Surf Coast (S)
Benalla (RC)	Hepburn (S)	Moyne (S)	Swan Hill (S)
Buloke (S)	Hindmarsh (S)	Murrindindi (S)	Towong (S)
Campaspe (S)	Indigo (S)	Northern Grampians (S)	Wellington (S)
Central Goldfields (S)	Loddon (S)	Pyrenees (S)	West Wimmera (S)
Colac Otway (S)	Macedon Ranges (S)	Queenscliffe (B)	
Corangamite (S)	Mansfield (S)		

(B) = Borough / (S) = Shire / (RC) = Rural City

As at 2016 it was estimated that the total population of the rural LGAs was 731,193 representing 12.1% of Victoria's population.

The rural LGAs have a total area of some 17,910,437 Ha – this represents 75% of the Victoria's total land area

## 2 Rural Victoria Population and Economic Trends

The following sections provides an overview of the population and economic trends in the Victorian rural Local Government Areas (LGAs). The population forecasts are those made Victoria in Future 2016 provided by the Department of Environment, Water, Land and Planning (DWELP).

The economic data is largely based on the 2011 ABS Census

## 2.1 Victorian Population

The Victorian population is projected to grow as noted in the following table

	Years					
	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	Change 2011 to 2031
All People	5,537,817	6,048,791	6,605,677	7,170,982	7,733,283	2,195,466
People Aged <65	4,760,331				6,283,908	1,523,577
People Aged 65 & Over	777,486				1,449,376	671,890

This represents an overall 40% increase in the State's population over this period – 83% of this growth will take place in the Greater Melbourne Metropolitan Area. This growth includes an 86% growth in the population aged 65 years and older.

## 2.2 Regional City LGAs Population Trends

The population of Victoria's 10 Regional City LGAs – *Geelong, Bendigo, Ballarat, Wodonga, Shepparton, Mildura, LaTrobe, Warrnambool, Horsham* and *Wangaratta* is projected to grow from the 2011 level of some 715,800 people by more than 216,000 people. More than 75% of this projected growth to occur in Geelong, Bendigo and Ballarat.

	Years					
	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	Change 2011 to 2031
Population	715,831	758,107	812,759	871,256	932,580	216,750
% of State Population	12.9%	12.5%	12.3%	12.1%	12.1%	

This projected growth represents a 30% growth in the population of the Regional Cities and represents 10% of the Victoria's overall population growth.

## 2.3 Rural LGAs Population Trends

The population of Victoria's 38 rural LGAs is projected to grow by more than 156,000 people as noted in the following table.

	Years					
	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	Change 2011 to 2031
Population	712,376	731,193	766,925	816,120	868,846	156,470
% of State Population	12.9%	12.1%	11.6%	11.4%	11.2%	

This represents a 23% growth in the population of the rural LGAs and represents 7.1% of Victoria's overall population growth.

The projected population growth within the 38 rural LGAs varies significantly as noted in the following table.

Forecast Population 2011 to 2031	Forecast Population Change 2011 to 2031		
	Overall Change	Age < 65	Age 65 & Over
9 of 38 Rural LGAs are projected to experience population growth across all age cohorts these LGAs are peri-urban in that they adjoin either the Greater Melbourne Metropolitan Area and/or Geelong, Ballarat or Bendigo – the exception is East Gippsland (S)	149,731	99,658	50,112
12 of 38 Rural LGAs are projected to experience population growth these LGAs will experience an overall loss of population aged under 65 years and an increase in people aged 65 and older	24,399	-9,485	33,813
17 of 38 Rural LGAs are projected to lose population these LGAs will experience an overall loss of population aged under 65 years and an increase in people aged 65 and older (the exception is West Wimmera (S) which is forecast to experience contraction in all age cohorts)	-17,660	-34,372	15,962
<i>Totals</i>	156,470	55,802	99,886

The change in population aged under 65 years represents less than 4% of Victoria's growth in this age group.

The change in population aged 65 years and over represents 15% of Victoria's growth in this age group. By 2031 people aged 65 years and over will account for some 27% of the rural Victoria population - this compares to 18% for the balance of Victoria's population.

## 2.4 Implications for Population Attraction Projects

Population attraction related projects for rural Victoria need to recognize the:

- Range of differences in population growth that have been, and are forecast to be experienced by the 38 LGAs – i.e.
  - Growth in all age cohorts – and some with significant growth
  - Growth – but overall loss of people aged under 65
  - Contraction – but an overall gain of people aged 65 and over
- Significant growth in people aged 65 and over
- Opportunities, and challenges associated with growth in the Greater Melbourne Metropolitan Area – and in the Regional Cities with significant growth rates (i.e. Geelong, Ballarat or Bendigo)

## 2.5 Rural LGAs Contribution to Gross State Product

Gross Regional Product (GRP) / Gross State Product (GSP) is the net measure of wealth generated by the region.

The 38 rural LGAs generate a combined Gross Regional Product of more than \$34.6B which is some 9.2% of the Victoria's Gross State Product as noted in the following table. Almost 80% of Victoria's Gross State Product is generated in the Greater Melbourne Metropolitan Area.

	\$M	% of GSP
Victorian GSP	\$374,435.00	
Regional Cities GRP	\$41,053.10	10.96%
Rural LGAs GRP	\$34,606.96	9.24%

## 2.6 Jobs

In the period 2006 to 2011 the total number of jobs in Victoria grew by more than 282,000 as noted in the following table – this represents a 15% growth in the number of jobs

Jobs 2006	Jobs 2011	Change 2006 to 2011	% Difference
1,905,411	2,187,616	282,205	15%

In the period 2006 to 2011 the total number of jobs in the 38 rural LGAs grew by more than 5,000 as noted in the following table – this represents a 2% growth in the number of jobs

Jobs 2006	Jobs 2011	Change 2006 to 2011	% Difference
229,307	234,369	5,062	2%

The change in the number of jobs within the 38 rural LGAs varied significantly as noted in the following table.

	Change in Number of Jobs 2006 to 2011
18 of 38 rural LGAs experienced net jobs gain 2006 to 2011 <i>77% of this growth occurred in 7 rural LGAs</i>	11,487
20 of 38 rural LGAs experienced net job losses 2006 to 2011	-6,425
<b>Net Gain</b>	<b>5,062</b>

## 2.7 Rural Workforce

The total number of people with jobs living in a rural LGA is more than 306,000 – this represents 12% of all jobs in Victoria.

These rural workers may be:

	No of Workers	% of Total
• Living and working in a rural LGA	191,896	63%
• Living in a rural LGA and working elsewhere The location of work may be in another rural LGA, a Regional City LGA or in the Greater Melbourne Metropolitan Area, or in another State	114,150	37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>306,046</b>	

In 9 rural LGAs - Golden Plains, Moorabool, Queenscliffe, Macedon Ranges, Surf Coast, Indigo, Mitchell, Hepburn Pyrenees – the percentage of workers living in the LGA and working elsewhere exceeds 50%. The percentage of workers living in the Golden Plains LGA and working elsewhere is almost 80%.

## 2.8 Workforce Age

Workers living in rural LGAs are older than the rest of Victoria with 9 of the 38 rural LGAs having 30% or more of workers aged 55 years plus

Workers	No of Workers	No of Workers aged 55 +	%
Living and working in a rural LGA	191,896	50,113	26%
Living in in a rural LGA and working elsewhere	114,150	24,823	22%
<i>Total</i>	306,046	74,936	24%
Victoria - less rural based workers	2,163,414	350,193	16%

## 2.9 Implications for Population Attraction Projects

Population attraction related projects for rural Victoria need to recognize that economic opportunities – be that a job or an opportunity to invest - is a key to attracting or retaining people in rural Victoria.

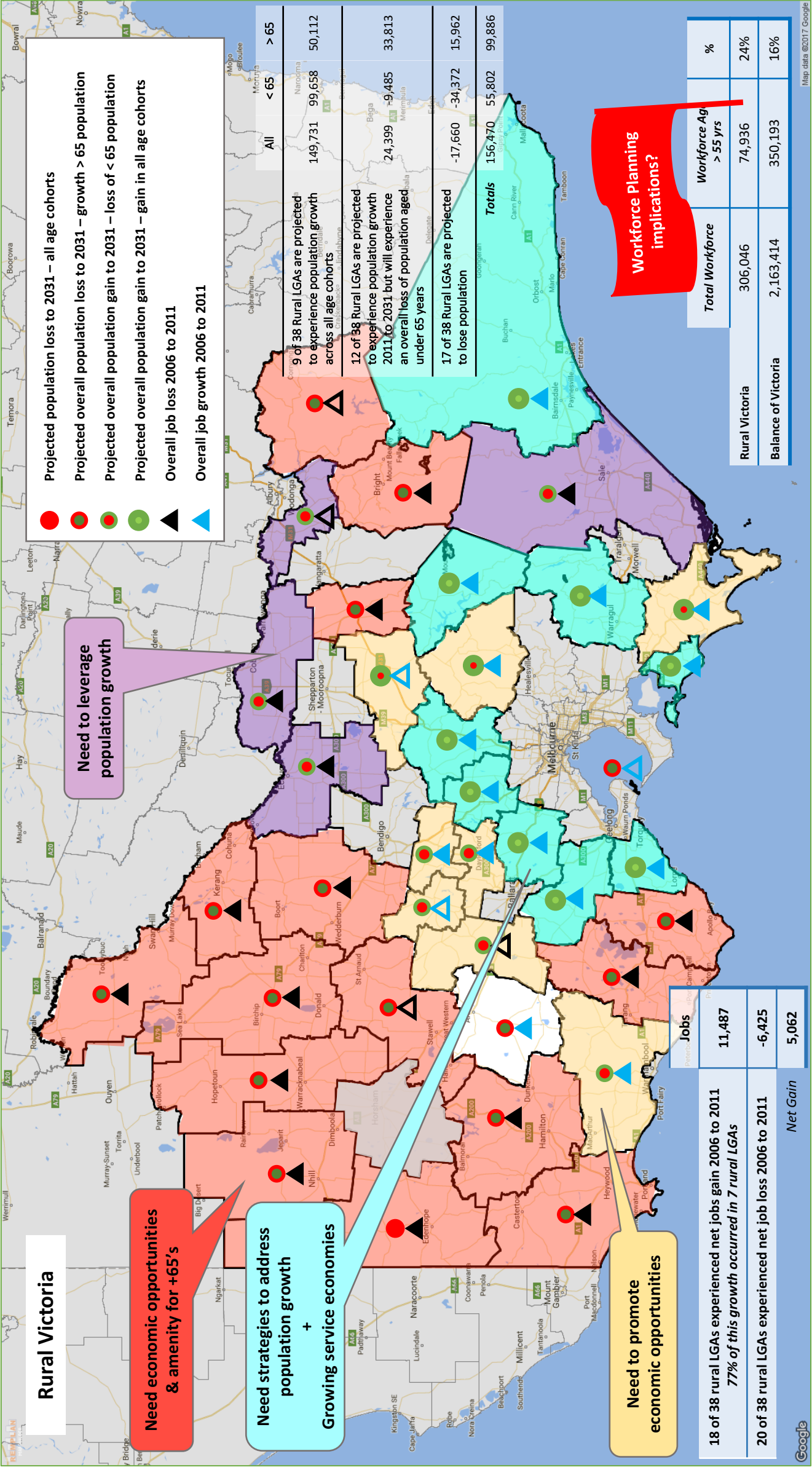
Given the growth of employment in rural Victoria relative to the rest of the State it is important that

- existing investment opportunities (and associated employment opportunities) are effectively promoted to potential investors
- new investment opportunities are identified – particularly those that can make innovative use of existing assets

Given the relative contribution of the 38 rural LGAs to GSP compared to Greater Melbourne it is important that rural Victoria can communicate the scale of investment opportunities across rural Victoria so that the private sector can better understand the scale of opportunity.

The relative age of the rural “workforce” indicates that there is greater need to replace “retiring” workers and that there are opportunities for younger workers to take the place of those leaving the workforce.





### 3 Review of Population Attraction Approaches in Other Rural Areas

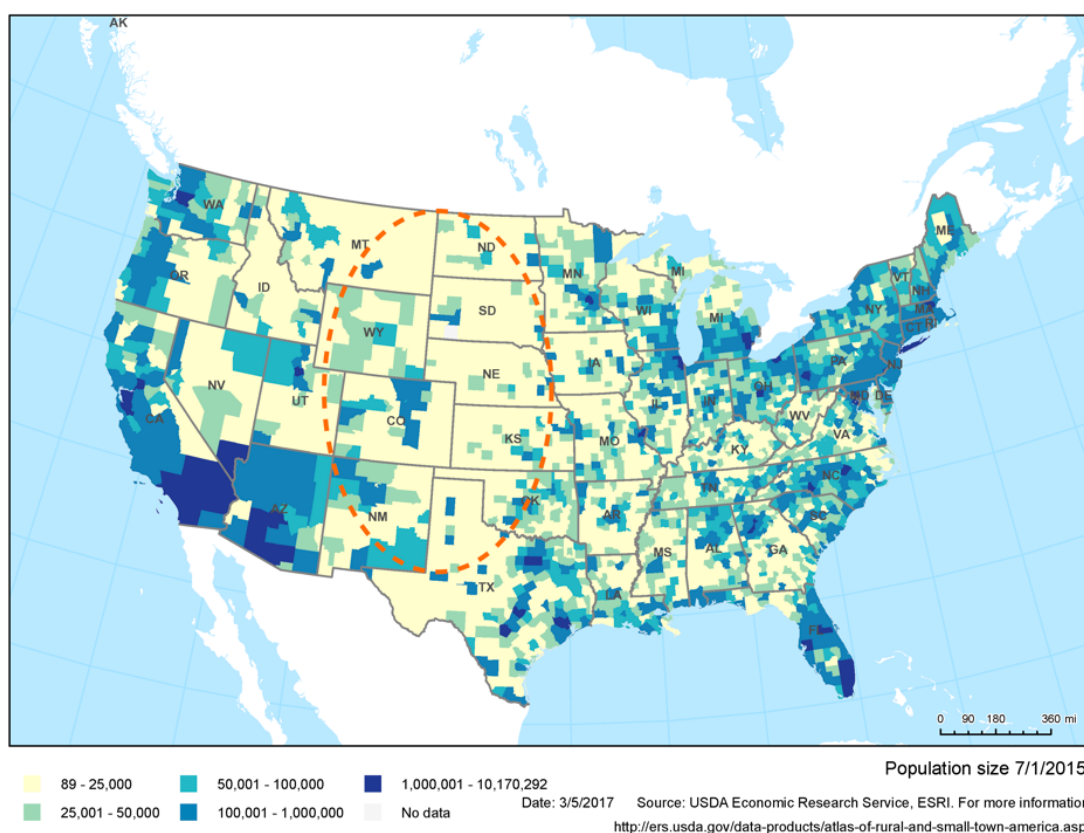
The *Population Attraction and Retention Strategies for Rural Victorian Communities* project has included a review of population attraction and retention strategies and the identification of practices that could be utilised in rural Victoria to support population attraction and/or retention being undertaken in Australia, the USA, Canada, and Scotland (95% of Scotland is classified as rural)

The review involved a desktop review of information from relevant websites and phone interviews with

- Government representatives (both State and Federal)
- University representatives
- NGO representatives

#### 3.1 USA

The review of the population attraction and retention strategies being undertaken in the USA focused on the “rural” States with smaller populations as indicated on the following diagram



State	Estimated Population 2016	Estimated Population 2010	Change 2010 to 2016
Colorado	5,540,545	5,029,324	511,221
New Mexico	2,081,015	2,059,192	21,823
Nebraska	1,907,116	1,826,341	80,775
Montana	1,042,520	989,417	53,103
South Dakota	865,454	814,191	51,263
North Dakota	757,952	672,591	85,361
Wyoming	585,501	563,767	21,734

Population changes in rural America mirror that of the Victorian/Australian experience

*The number of people living in rural counties stood at just over 46 million in 2014—nearly 15 percent of U.S. residents. However, the population of rural America has declined by 116,000 over the last 4 years, with losses of about 30,000 people in each of the last 2 years. While these declines are small, 2010-2014 is the first period of overall population decline on record for rural America as a whole, and stands in stark contrast with the urban population, which continues to grow by more than 2 million per year. Not all rural areas have experienced population loss in recent years. Some rural counties have seen population growth, with nearly 700 growing rural counties together adding over 400,000 residents between 2010 and 2014. These counties are concentrated in scenic areas such as the Rocky Mountains or southern Appalachia, or in energy boom regions such as in the northern Great Plains. The 1,300 rural counties losing population since 2010 are widespread in regions dependent on farming, manufacturing, or resource extraction.*

*US Department of Agriculture – Rural Development*

### 3.1.1 Overview of Findings

There were no dedicated population attraction strategies/policies in place. There is wide recognition that many rural communities need support with respect to retaining/attracting people.

Rural communities/businesses have access to a range of Government development programs, funding programs and/or low/no interest loans

A range of Community Development Organisations (CDOs) support rural communities particularly with respect to housing – many CDOs are:

- providing community economic development programs aimed at helping to identify and leverage assets that could attract investment
- also Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) which provide low interest financing for communities and/or businesses – often financing is contingent upon a community having undertaken a community economic development process

### 3.1.2 Population Attraction Strategies

There were no specific population attraction strategies but population growth was a desired outcome of broader strategies/programs being undertaken.

### 3.1.3 US Department of Agriculture – Rural Development

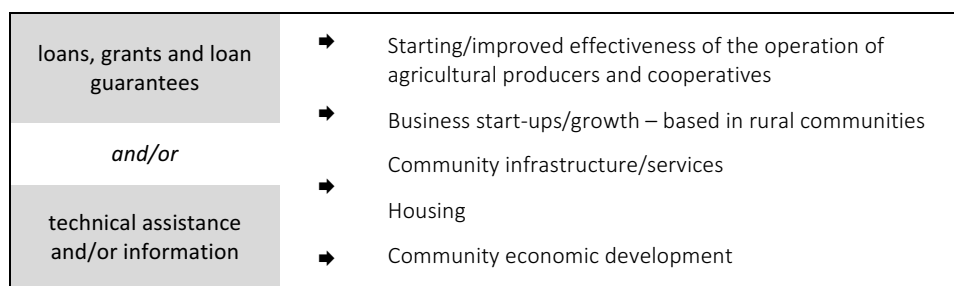
<https://www.rd.usda.gov/>

Focus - helping improve the economy and quality of life in rural America to support viability of agriculture sector

The key mechanisms employed by USDARD to achieve this are:

- providing loans, grants and loan guarantees to support essential services such as housing, economic development, health care, first responder services and equipment, and water, electric and communications infrastructure.
- promoting economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks, credit unions and community-managed lending pools.
- providing technical assistance (i.e. consulting) and information to help agricultural producers and cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their operations.
- providing technical assistance (i.e. consulting) to help communities undertake community empowerment programs. help rural residents buy or rent safe, affordable housing and make health and safety repairs to their homes.

USDAR's key program areas are summarized in the following diagram



### 3.1.4 Rural LISC

[http://programs.lisc.org/rural\\_lisc/](http://programs.lisc.org/rural_lisc/)

The Local Initiatives Support Corporation, known as LISC, commenced in 1980 and is one of the largest NFP organizations in the USA supporting projects to revitalize communities. These include more affordable housing, better schools, safer streets, growing businesses and programs improving financial stability.

LISC's purpose as a non-profit \*Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) is to provide capital to projects in low-income, disadvantaged and underserved communities at affordable rates. LISC offers this capital to local nonprofit developers, small businesses and other service providers who may not be able to get credit in the conventional marketplace. LISC receives investment capital from a range of sources that include all levels of government, foundations, banks - to date LISC has provided more than \$16.2B.

LISC launched Rural LISC in 1995 to expand its reach beyond urban areas to include rural communities. Rural LISC partners with 76 community development organizations, including four financial intermediaries working to transform communities in 1,973 counties across 44 states.

Rural LISC's strategies follow the five goals of LISC's Building Sustainable Communities model:

- Expanding Investment in Housing and Other Real Estate
- Increasing Family Income and Wealth
- Stimulating Economic Development
- Improving Access to Quality Education
- Supporting Healthy Environments and Lifestyles

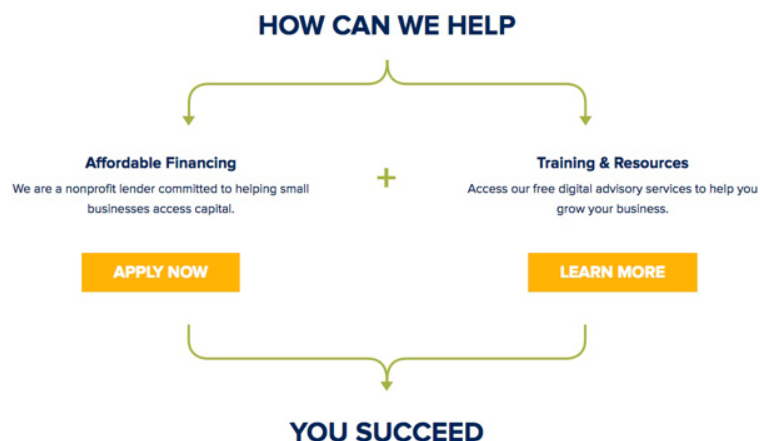
LISC Rural notes that *"Rural America. -is 3 million square miles and 71 million people. It is countryside, small towns, mountains, farmland and coastal shores. Rural America is part and parcel of our entire country, and it matters! Rural communities lack quality, affordable housing and health care. They are losing jobs and land to suburban sprawl. They do not receive the necessary government funding and support to provide decent education and transportation services. They are often unable to keep up with technology and the mainstream economy.*

*Despite the image of rural America as a farm-driven economy, less than nine percent of rural jobs are in the combined farming, agricultural services, forestry and fishing industries.*

*Recognizing that rural communities' needs are not focused on agriculture alone, Rural LISC provides a wide range of services, including training, technical assistance, information and financial support, to help rural community developers address the problems rural communities face."*

Rural LISC staff collaborate with CDCs to help identify priorities and challenges, delivering the most appropriate support to meet local needs. Rural LISC forges alliances among rural organizations, funders, lenders and policy makers, mobilizing corporate, government and philanthropic support to provide rural community development organizations with:

- loans, grants and equity investments
- local, statewide and national policy support
- technical and management assistance



#### 3.1.4.1 LISC Institute for Comprehensive Community Development

<http://www.instituteccd.org/About-us.html>

LISC has established the LISC Institute for Comprehensive Community Development serves LISC staff, organizations and individuals who partner with LISC, and others working in urban and rural communities across the country by providing training and information about best practices, ideas and news from around the field of comprehensive community development.

#### 3.1.5 National Main Street Center, Inc.

Many rural centers utilise the Main Street approach.

<http://www.mainstreet.org/main-street/about-main-street/main-street-america/the-main-street-approach.html>

Established in 1980 as a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Main Street Center, Inc. works with a nationwide network of coordinating programs and local communities to encourage preservation-based community revitalization, and has equipped more than 2,000 older commercial districts with the skills, and organizing framework they need for renewal during its 35-year history.

The National Main Street Center, Inc. notes that “since 1980, over 2,000 communities have been part of Main Street, bringing renewed energy and activity to America’s downtowns and commercial districts, securing \$65.6 billion in new investment, creating more than 556,000 net new jobs, and rehabilitating 260,000 buildings.

The Main Street Approach begins with creating a vision for success on Main Street that is rooted in a solid understanding of the market realities of the district, and is informed by broad community engagement. Main Street promotes a community-driven process that brings diverse stakeholders from all sectors together, inviting them to be proactive participants in the revitalization process. This essential step provides a foundation for outlining the community’s own identity, expectations, and ideals while confirming real and perceived perceptions, needs and opportunities. It also ensures that the vision is a true reflection of the diversity of the community.



A vision of success alone is not enough. Communities must work together to identify key strategies, known as *Community Transformation Strategies* that will provide a clear sense of priorities and direction for the revitalization efforts. Typically, communities will find two to three Community Transformation Strategies are needed to help reach a community vision. These strategies will focus on both long and short-term actions that will move a community closer to achieving its goals.

### 3.1.6 Marketing Hometown America

This program has been developed by the University of Nebraska. The program provides support for rural communities to be able to undertake a process to attract people to live in rural towns through the identification of desired, and shared, outcomes, the key assets that can be leveraged and the key challenges to be addressed.

The projects that communities have undertaken vary according to the needs of the community involved.

The process has been developed using feedback from people who are considering moving to a rural community.

<http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/29de58a3 - /29de58a3/1>

### 3.1.7 Cost Advantages

Most of the States provide information regarding their relative standing to other States with respect to the costs associated with moving businesses to and/or operating a business.

### 3.1.8 Investment Readiness

Many of the funding programs that State Government provide to support local governments/towns require them to be “investment ready”. While there can be a number of factors that relate to being investment ready the common requirement relates to having

- an economic development strategy with identified priorities
- appropriate town planning/land use planning frameworks in place.

The State Governments will provide funding for the use technical expertise/consulting support to facilitate investment readiness.

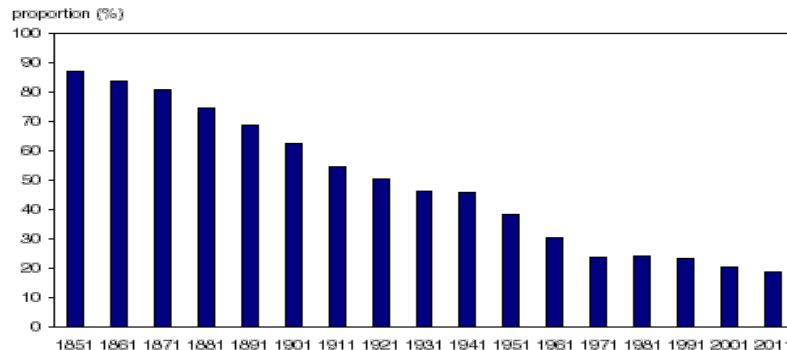
### 3.1.9 Implications for Population Attraction Projects

- Strong focus on community economic development related processes including: -
  - community engagement
  - a focus on community wellbeing
  - the identification and broad agreement of the key assets that can be leveraged to engage the private sector and grow the local economy
- Importance of research about understanding priorities of people considering moving to rural towns
- Availability of accessible/low cost finance
- Access to technical support

### 3.2 Canada

Canada's rural population while growing in number is trending down with respect to the proportion of the population living in rural areas as noted in the following diagram

Proportion of the population living in rural areas, Canada, 1851 to 2011



#### 3.2.1 Overview of Findings

- All Canadian Provinces have significant rural areas that are key to the national economy through natural resources and related economic activities including forestry, agriculture, fishing and mining
- Provincial Governments have in place regional and economic development programs and processes like those in place in Victoria
- The “Atlantic” Provinces did have in place a “Population Strategy” that had the need to address an ageing workforce as of its key drivers – this has since been refocused to a “Growth Strategy”
- The *State of Rural Canada* Report observes that policy decision-making is central to addressing rural population decline

#### 3.2.2 State of Rural Canada Report

The *State of Rural Canada* report has been prepared by the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) to draw attention to rural challenges and opportunities, and to provide a source of information and a platform for information sharing. The CRRF was organized with a focus on developing rural research and knowledge dissemination and promoting an active process of engagement with rural stakeholders. The *State of Rural Canada* report makes the following observations - that are relevant to rural Victoria:

- “Canada requires vibrant management services, supportive public policy, a dynamic entrepreneurial culture, urban and port / gateway centres, and the resource producing rural and small town places that power the economy. Urban and rural are not separate. They are partners who together support the quality of life that Canadians enjoy.”
- “there is nothing inevitable about rural decline: where it is occurring, it is largely intentional by virtue of what we choose to do or not to do in our policy decision-making.
- “The metrics that are being employed by our policy makers fail to understand how rural services themselves unleash multiple social and economic benefits.”
- “population aging and the recruitment of a “next generation” workforce together require investments that build robust new development foundations.”
- “rural places are employing innovative strategies to deal with ageing populations. They are using their volunteer resources to service and engage ageing residents, understanding how an ageing population can be a vital social, economic and cultural asset to communities.”

- “In Newfoundland, we see the success of engaging young entrepreneurs to address, in part, local economic decline. While there are hurdles to overcome, their youth-oriented entrepreneurship programs are helping to revitalize community economies and build important skills for the future.
- “we are facing a critical window for succession planning in businesses across the country.
- “*Rural communities themselves must be active participants in understanding, planning and investing in their own futures* - A necessary shift for rural Canada from case making (i.e., repeatedly making the case that rural communities deserve more help and attention), to place making (i.e., getting on with the task of planning and building communities with a high quality of life that will attract and retain both residents and capital).”

### 3.2.3 British Columbia

No specific population attraction strategy – focus on a broader approach – “on a rising tide all boats will float”. The Provincial Government provides website for economic development with “toolkits” and success stories from several sectors/locations in BC. Many of these success stories emphasize the importance of communities coming together to identify and agree key priorities

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/economic-development/success-stories>

### 3.2.4 Alberta

No specific population attraction strategy. Alberta's Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDAs) developed out of a need to stimulate long-term economic development and growth strategies in Alberta's rural and urban communities. REDAs in Alberta are autonomous grassroots-based non-profit organizations comprised of member communities and regional stakeholders that work together to foster business development and prosperity in a defined geographic area. This collaboration and cooperation enables members and stakeholders to undertake projects that they could not necessarily do on their own.

A review of REDA websites notes that all have information regarding moving to and/or investing in the region. Some sites indicate “development” projects being undertaken by the REDA

<http://communityeconomicdevelopment.alberta.ca/regional-economic-development-alliances-redas/>

### 3.2.5 Atlantic Provinces

The Atlantic Provinces are the Canadian provinces bordering the Atlantic Ocean, comprising New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island

	Population Trends			
	2011	2006	Difference 2006 to 2011	% Change
Canada	33,476,688	31,612,897	1,863,791	5.9
Newfoundland and Labrador	514,536	505,469	9,067	1.8
Prince Edward Island	140,204	135,851	4,353	3.2
Nova Scotia	921,727	913,462	8,265	0.9
New Brunswick	751,171	729,997	21,174	2.9

The Provinces had developed a Population Attraction and Growth Strategy in 2013 – a key driver for the strategy was the need to address an ageing workforce.

However, this strategy has been superseded by the Atlantic Growth Strategy which is a jointly funded by the Canadian and the four Provincial Governments. The Growth Strategy has five key focus areas:

- Trade and Investment
- Clean Growth and Climate Change
- Innovation
- Skilled Workforce/Immigration
- Infrastructure





### 3.2.6 Implications for Population Attraction Projects

Focus on developing communities that will attract and retain both residents and capital – this will need the existing community to look outside of itself to understand what would be attractive to new residents

An ageing workforce will not resolve itself and if not addressed will impact ongoing business operations and business investment - Immigration can be a key source of new workers

### 3.3 Scotland

95% of Scotland is classified by the Scottish Government as rural.

#### 3.3.1 Population – Purpose Target

The Scottish Government has determined a “Purpose Target” for the Scottish population – “To match average European (EU15) population growth over the period from 2007 to 2017”

The Scottish Government deems this important as “The rate of sustainable economic growth is dependent on three key drivers: Productivity; Participation in the labour market; and Population Growth. Population growth is a key contributor to, and a consequence of, a more vibrant society and a more dynamic economy. It is also particularly vital to maintaining the sustainability of many of our rural and coastal communities.”

A review of the trends in Scotland's population between 2011 and 2015 indicates that most population growth (i.e. 75%) has been in "Large" and Other" Urban Areas. The non-urban areas experienced a net increase in population however "remote" areas experienced a contraction of population.

Population of Scotland – 2001 to 2015

	2011	% of Total Population	2015	% of Total Population	Change 2011 to 2015	% of Change 2011 to 2015
SCOTLAND	5,299,900		5,373,000		73,100	
Large Urban Areas	1,827,570	34%	1,872,082	35%	44,512	61%
Other Urban Areas	1,873,611	35%	1,884,150	35%	10,539	14%
Accessible Rural	596,379	11%	615,214	11%	18,835	26%
Accessible Small Towns	500,187	9%	502,269	9%	2,082	3%
Remote Rural	314,516	6%	313,691	6%	-825	-1%
Remote Small Towns	187,637	4%	185,594	3%	-2,043	-3%

### 3.3.2 Scottish Rural Development Programme 2014 - 2020

The [Scottish Rural Development Programme 2014 - 2020](#) delivers Pillar 2 of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). It funds economic, environmental and social measures for the benefit of rural Scotland (and receives significant funding from the EU – i.e. approximately A\$2.35 B). The key purpose of the SRDP 2014 - 2020 is to help achieve sustainable economic growth in Scotland's rural areas: The main priorities are:

- Enhancing the rural economy
- Supporting agricultural and forestry businesses
- Protecting and improving the natural environment
- Addressing the impact of climate change
- Supporting rural communities

The SRDP has several funding streams to which eligible participants can apply

#### [Rural Development: LFASS](#)

Providing essential support to fragile farming businesses in remote and constrained rural areas.

#### [Rural Development: Forestry Grant Scheme](#)

A range of grants for woodland creation, agroforestry, tree health, woodland improvement, processing and marketing and sustainable management of forests

#### [Rural Development: Agri-Environment Climate Scheme](#)

Targeted support for land managers to undertake management and capital work for environmental purposes.

#### [Rural Development: Environmental Co-operation Action Fund](#)

Facilitation for land managers to work together to deliver collaborative environmental projects.

#### [Rural Development: Beef Efficiency Scheme](#)

To deliver economic and environmental improvements in the beef sector.

#### [Rural Development: New Entrants](#)

- Start-up grants for new entrant young farmers of up to 40 years old (as set by Europe).
- Capital funding for new entrants, regardless of age, to improve their business.

[Rural Development: Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme](#)

Grants to \*crofters to take forward improvements on their crofts which will help to sustain their business.

**\*Note** - A **crofter** is one who has tenure and use of the land, typically as a tenant farmer, especially in rural areas

[Rural Development: Food Processing, Marketing and Co-operation](#)

Support for SMEs in the food and drink sector with start-up grants for new enterprises, and business development grants.

[Rural Development: Small Farms Grant Scheme](#)

Targeted support for small farms that face similar issues as crofters regarding sustainability.

[Rural Development: Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund \(KITF\)](#)

Taking advantage of strong performance in research and development and ensuring that the learning from here and elsewhere can be transferred to on the ground improvement. KITF will assist in the sharing and implementation of innovative ways of improving working practices along with continuing support for Monitor Farms.

[Rural Development: Advisory Service](#)

Expanded Advisory Service which will provide advice and assistance to farmers, crofters and other land managers. We are aiming for this to be available from 2016.

[Rural Development: Broadband](#)

Support for broadband provision in rural areas.

[Scottish Rural Network](#)

Supporting and promoting rural development through the sharing of ideas and best practice.

### 3.3.3 LEADER

LEADER is a bottom-up method of delivering support to communities for rural development – this program runs throughout the EU. The aim of LEADER is to increase support to local rural community and business networks to build knowledge and skills, and encourage innovation and cooperation to tackle local development objectives. Grants are awarded by *Local Action Groups* to projects that support delivery of a Local Development Strategy. Local Development Strategies include actions that will allow individuals, communities and businesses to:

- drive community action on climate change
- enhance rural services and facilities, including transport initiatives
- enhance natural/cultural heritage, tourism and leisure
- support food and drink initiatives (for example short supply chains, community food)
- build co-operation with other LAGs in Scotland, UK and Europe
- exchange learning and knowledge with each other, realise their potential, build opportunities for all

### 3.3.4 Implications for Population Attraction Projects

Recognition of the importance of population growth to overall economic growth

Involvement of communities in identifying/developing relevant solutions

Access to significant levels of funding - programs targeted at specific rural needs/related sectors – including support for new entrants

Sharing/exchange of knowledge and learnings

### 3.4 Australia

A review of programs and process in Australia identifies that the Commonwealth, and all State Governments are attempting in various ways to address growth in regional and rural areas. The common theme is the identification and prioritization of projects that are seen to support improved economic and/or community outcomes within various regions in each State.

The only State that has a formal “population attraction” strategy in place is Tasmania including a target for the level of population to be achieved.

#### 3.4.1 Commonwealth Government

The Commonwealth Government supports regional and rural development through a wide range of initiatives across a range of government departments.

##### Regional Australia Ministerial Taskforce

The Regional Australia Ministerial Taskforce chaired by the Prime Minister will aim to improve the lives of rural, regional and remote Australians. It will come up with ideas across portfolios including health, education, transport and infrastructure, employment, industry and communications.

##### Regions 2030

The Commonwealth Government has recently released its Regions 2030 policy which bring together existing and new funding programs aimed at support growth in regional and rural Australia with a focus on the following areas:

- Jobs and economic development
- Infrastructure
- Health
- Education
- Communications

##### Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development

The Department provides:

- a range of programs “which are funded under the Infrastructure Investment Programme as well as the Regional and Community Programmes. Additional funding assistance is also offered for local roads.” – not all of these programs are available to rural Victoria
- advice and assistance to departments and agencies completing Regional Australia Impact Statements (RAIS) as part of the policy development and Cabinet submission process

##### Decentralisation of Government Departments

More recently the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development has required all Ministers to provide information regarding the potential to move major city-based departments and agencies into regional Australia. This information will be used to develop business cases for such movement by late 2017

##### Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Pilot Project

The Australia Government noted the work of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) in the USA and UK – see Section 3.1.4.

In 2014, the Australian Government – through the Department of Social Services -undertook a Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Pilot Project – The CDFI pilot project sought to “build the capacity and resilience of disadvantaged and financially excluded individuals by attracting investment and injecting funds into community finance organisations that offer them financial services and products that they would otherwise not be able to access from mainstream sources.”

The evaluation of the pilot recommended that one of the recommendations arising from an evaluation of the pilot was to “Extend the pilot for a further three years. This would allow time to conduct a more thorough analysis of the longitudinal impacts of CDFIs on financial exclusion. It would also facilitate the development of a CDFI sector in Australia” the full evaluation can be found at

[https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/02\\_2013/cdfi\\_evaluation\\_report\\_0.pdf](https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/02_2013/cdfi_evaluation_report_0.pdf)

### 3.4.2 Queensland

Economic Development Queensland (EDQ) has established the *Advancing Our Cities and Regions Strategy*. EDQ notes that the “Advancing our cities and regions strategy is an innovative approach to renewing and repurposing surplus and under utilised state property to deliver better community outcomes, create jobs and drive economic growth.

<http://www.edq.qld.gov.au/infrastructure/advancing-our-cities-and-regions-strategy.html>

Property Queensland within the Department of State Development is working with government land-owning agencies to identify sites that represent property opportunities that will deliver on government priorities, and generate economic development and community outcomes.

To help achieve this strategy, eight economic and community zones have been identified where Economic Development Queensland (EDQ) will lead the delivery of a range of projects, many of which will be iconic developments to transform precincts and catalyse economic growth and diversification in our cities and regions.”

Developments will need to deliver strong community benefits, meet broader government priorities such as innovation, affordable housing and expanded tourism, and will involve engagement with local governments, the community, stakeholders and industry.

New projects will also build on EDQ's existing development portfolio of community, residential, urban renewal and industrial developments and provide additional income for reinvestment in future infrastructure projects.

#### Projects of Note

**Ageing in Place pilot project** <http://www.edq.qld.gov.au/infrastructure/ageing-in-place-pilot-project.html>

The Ageing in Place pilot project is about caring for people as they enter their senior years by providing suitable housing options to enable people to stay in their towns, close to friends and family. The project will enhance regional liveability and support sustainability in local communities where there is a shortfall in dwellings suitable for older people. Often residents in more remote or regional towns throughout Queensland are confronted with the difficult decision to move to a bigger centre because of a lack of appropriate accommodation in their own communities.

#### Industrial Incubator

Concept is to provide facilities to support start-up “industrial” businesses – i.e. trade services, construction etc. in rural centres

### 3.4.3 New South Wales

The NSW Government has established the *Regional Development Framework*: which has the following key areas of focus: -

Program 1: providing quality services and infrastructure in regional NSW

Program 2: aligning effort to support growing regional centres

Program 3: identifying and activating economic potential

<http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/invest-in-nsw/regional-opportunities/regional-development-framework>

The process for identifying regional priorities in NSW is yet to be implemented. The Regional Leadership Group will become the core decision making group for each region. It will consist of will include the “right people from each agency involved in on-the-ground regional delivery as well as representatives

from Joint Organisations and/or Regional Organisations of Councils, and the relevant Regional Parliamentary Secretary. The Regional Leadership Group will agree on the priorities for each region

The implementation of the *Regional Development Framework* will be supported by

#### *The Regional Enablers Project*

The Regional Enablers Project seeks to identify the key economic drivers for regions so that investments can be targeted to those sectors. This project has already been piloted in three regions and is being rolled out across the State.

#### *The Regional Economic Opportunities and Infrastructure Priorities Project*

The Regional Economic Opportunities and Infrastructure Prioritisation Project will involve a comprehensive literature review of proposals from all levels of government and non-government organisations, and targeted stakeholder engagement to identify the key economic opportunities and barriers in regional NSW. The project will apply modelling to prioritise projects so that information can inform the work of Infrastructure NSW.

#### *Enhancing Cost Benefit Analysis*

The Department of Industry is looking at ways of enhancing its cost benefit analysis to ensure that estimates are accurate, reliable and based on comprehensive information. This will involve taking into consideration non-market benefits and commercial assessments of flow on prospects. In using this methodology, it is expected that resources will be more efficiently allocated to activities with the best long term benefits for regional communities and the State.

### 3.4.3.1 Evocities

This is a collaboration of seven regional cities to promote the advantages of living/investing in a regional city. The EvoCities websites notes that the “campaign aims to change perceptions of life in a regional city and encourage people to live, work and invest in an EvoCity. It showcases the abundance of opportunities in the Evocities due to their lower cost of living, strong career and business opportunities and enhanced lifestyle.

### 3.4.3.2 Balranald Shire Council

Balranald Shire Council has produced a resource for Population Attraction and Retention – the resource includes:

#### **Strategic Levers to Building Capacity for Population Attraction and Retention – including:**

- Economic Development Levers
- Social Capital Development Levers
- Liveability Development Levers

#### **Population Attraction and Retention Strategies – including strategies for:**

- Attraction and Retention of Immigration and Migrants
- Attraction and Retention of Youth
- Attraction and Retention of Retirees
- Attraction and Retention of Health Professionals
- Employment Generation

### 3.4.4 South Australia

SA does not have a population attraction strategy/goal for rural communities. The following funding programs were offered as initiatives to support rural communities

#### **Regional Development Fund**

There are several programs that have been supported under the Regional Development Fund

#### **Fund my Idea**

The Country Cabinet ‘Fund My Idea’ Program provides \$150,000 per annum to support communities that host Country Cabinet meetings, for project proposals that will assist the community meet its economic and social needs.

Projects are nominated by and voted on by the general public.

[http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions/grants/regional\\_development\\_fund/country\\_cabinet\\_fund\\_my\\_idea\\_program](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions/grants/regional_development_fund/country_cabinet_fund_my_idea_program)



### **Regional Food Initiatives**

The Regional Food Initiatives Program has committed \$600,000 over a two-year period between 2014-16 to support regionally-based food organisations to build a stronger regional food presence in South Australia

[http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions/grants/regional\\_development\\_fund/regional\\_food\\_initiatives\\_program](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions/grants/regional_development_fund/regional_food_initiatives_program)

### **Major Projects**

The Major Projects Program supports major economic projects designed to strengthen regional industries, support local economies and opportunities through investment in strategic projects.

[http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions/grants/regional\\_development\\_fund/major\\_projects\\_program](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions/grants/regional_development_fund/major_projects_program)

### **Community Infrastructure**

The Community Infrastructure Program supports investment in regional communities to develop their economic infrastructure and grow their capabilities as a foundation for future jobs and economic growth.

[http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions/grants/regional\\_development\\_fund/community\\_infrastructure\\_program](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions/grants/regional_development_fund/community_infrastructure_program)

### **Small Grants**

In 2014-15 the Small Grants Program awarded over \$1.29 million to support new regional employment and investment opportunities linked with State Government priorities.

[http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions/grants/regional\\_development\\_fund/small\\_grants\\_program](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions/grants/regional_development_fund/small_grants_program)

### **South Australian River Murray Sustainability Program**

The River Murray is central to the social and economic structure of the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin region.

The river corridor is home to more than 90,000 people who rely on the prosperity of their local industries to sustain their communities.

By working to develop more industries in the region that are less dependent on water, our river communities are better placed to respond and be more resilient to the effects of fluctuating water availability and future climate change challenges.

SARMS is helping to:

- build strong and sustainable irrigation communities
- secure water resources needed for a healthy environment and a prosperous state
- boost regional productivity and help river communities adapt to a future of reduced water availability.

<http://pir.sa.gov.au/regions/sarms>

### **Industry Participation policy**

The South Australian Industry Participation Policy (IPP) specifies that for all expenditure above \$33,000, the government must determine if there is a business in the state or the region that can deliver the product or service.

[www.industryadvocate.sa.gov.au/industry-participation-policy](http://www.industryadvocate.sa.gov.au/industry-participation-policy)

#### **3.4.5 Western Australia**

WA's Department of Regional Development advises that there is no rural population attraction strategy. The department promotes and facilitates the economic, business and social development of nine regions in Western Australia:

Kimberley

Mid West

South West

Pilbara

Wheatbelt

Great Southern

Gascoyne

Peel

Goldfields-Esperance

## Major Projects

The regional development organization for each of the above have identified a range of major projects – these have been classified into the following areas of strategic focus

- [Aboriginal Initiatives](#)
- [Agriculture](#)
- [Community & Culture](#)
- [Economic Development](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [Justice](#)
- [Parks, Wildlife & Environment](#)
- [Recreation & Sport](#)
- [Roads & Transport](#)
- [Tourism](#)
- [Water](#)

**Note** - The *Regions* and *Major Projects* listed above are linked to the respective web pages

### 3.4.6 Tasmania

The Tasmanian Government has established the Population Growth Strategy which aims to grow the state's population, from the current 515,000 people, to 650,000 people by 2050 and has as its vision for Tasmania to be the best place in the country to live, work, invest and raise a family.

The Tasmanian Government has observed that "Tasmania has the oldest and slowest growing population in the country. Unless we take action now, Tasmania's population is likely to go into decline in the next four decades. A declining population will result in a slowing economy, fewer people in our workforce to support those unable to work and a reduced capacity to fund essential services such as education and health."

The Strategy has three key areas of focus:

Objectives	
<i>Job creation and workforce development</i>	to facilitate job creation and identify current and future employment opportunities to inform investment in education and training and migration strategies
<i>Key Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively pursue investment, business relocation and job creation</li> <li>Identify and project current and future employment opportunities</li> <li>Invest in real skills for real jobs</li> </ul>
<i>Liveability</i>	to build and promote Tasmania's liveability and foster a culture which is vibrant, inclusive, respectful and supportive
<i>Key Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain our best and brightest</li> <li>Increase engagement with the Tasmanian diaspora and encourage them to return home</li> <li>Actively pursue overseas migration</li> <li>Increase our share of humanitarian entrants</li> <li>Increase numbers of international students</li> </ul>
<i>Migration</i>	to actively pursue and facilitate overseas and interstate migration as well as encourage return of the Tasmanian diaspora
<i>Key Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nurture our vibrant communities</li> <li>Support families to achieve a work-life balance</li> <li>Assist migrants to settle and feel welcome in Tasmania</li> <li>Create inclusive and supportive communities</li> </ul>



### 3.4.7 Victoria

There is no policy with respect to population attraction to regional/rural Victoria. All regions have completed a Regional Growth Plan that identified where future population growth can be accommodated and the development required to support population growth.

#### Regional Plans

Regions in Victoria have developed regional plans that have identified development priorities for the region. The various regions all aspire regarding growth – there are no specific population targets espoused by such plans.

#### Regional Partnerships

More recently the State Government has introduced nine Regional Partnerships across regional and rural Victoria. The partnerships aim to engage with communities on priorities for their region, building on existing strategies and plans - harnessing the good ideas, the energy and the passion of locals. Priorities will be presented directly to the Victorian Government's Rural and Regional Ministerial Committee.

#### Barwon South West Region

The Barwon South West (BSW) RDA Committee has undertaken the development of a study that seeks to identify how the region can attract more people to reside and/or invest in the BSW region – the study identified:

- a summary of population influences, drivers, attractors and barriers in the context of regional Victoria and the Barwon South West. These fall within four key areas of Lifestyle, Economic, Environment, and Connections

LIFESTYLE		ECONOMIC	
<b>INFLUENCE/TRENDS</b> Ageing agricultural workforce Ageing population - need for health services	<b>DRIVERS</b> Regional centre services Diverse range of services	<b>INFLUENCE/TRENDS</b> Reducing agricultural labour intensity Strong population growth in metropolitan Melbourne, decreasing affordability.	<b>DRIVERS</b> Regional centre employment Diverse range of jobs
<b>ATTRACTORS</b> Education Pace of life Health services Shopping	<b>BARRIERS</b> Lack of health and other services	<b>ATTRACTORS</b> Lower cost of living/housing Jobs	<b>BARRIERS</b> Lack of relevant employment Lower pay Cost of relocation Internet speed and availability
ENVIRONMENT		CONNECTIONS	
<b>INFLUENCE/TRENDS</b> Tree change, sea change movement (s)	<b>DRIVERS</b> Coastal amenity	<b>INFLUENCE/TRENDS</b> Social and professional/business networks	<b>DRIVERS</b> Inclusive communities
<b>ATTRACTORS</b> Natural beauty	<b>BARRIERS</b> Distance - many towns and areas are too far to commute to a regional centre	<b>ATTRACTORS</b> Family and friends Return migration	<b>BARRIERS</b> No social networks Loss of professional networks Responsibility to care for elderly relatives in current location

- target markets most likely to be attracted to the region and best aligned with existing economic and lifestyle opportunities in the BSW:
  - Overseas migrants, including skilled migrants and recent migrant groups already in Melbourne;
  - Students, including both regional and metropolitan students;

- Regional returners, especially young families;
  - Business owners, both existing within the region and those within metropolitan Melbourne with potential to move to regional areas or set up a regional office; and
  - “Plant the seed”: tourists and students who may visit the region short term, and then return to reside at a later time.
- Objectives with respect to attracting population:
    - Objective 1: establish incentives for businesses and government agencies to relocate to the region
    - Objective 2: attract skilled, young Australians to live in the BSW, especially diaspora
    - Objective 3: address labour shortages and increase local population through targeted migration
    - Objective 4: retain and improve higher education opportunities in the region
    - Objective 5: promote liveability gains, especially in rural centres
    - Objective 6: improve resources for strategic planning in rural and regional areas

#### 4 Relevant Studies/Commentary

A review of relevant studies and/or commentary notes that the population attraction and the reasons for people wanting to move to rural locations are multifactorial.

##### 4.1 People count: Population growth causes basic economic growth

*Overview Population growth is economic growth. Taking steps to attract people to move to a community is an important strategy.*

Posted on January 19, 2017 by [Kurt Schindler](#), Michigan State University Extension

“One of the characteristics of the new economy is that jobs follow people. People move to quality places. Currently millennials tend to seek urban, large city downtowns to live. That trend will continue for some years yet. It is a generalization. Not everyone fits that mold. The task for rural communities or small towns is to define their niche and target those people who seek the assets and attributes they have to offer.

The ultimate local goal for the new economy is to attract and retain these people-assets: well-educated youth, seniors, immigrants and entrepreneurs. For growth in the new economy, a community and region should have a deliberate, purposeful, formally-adopted population attraction strategy. Such a strategy may involve many of the same things the community does to attract tourists, attract medical staff to a local hospital, and more.

What attracts people to a town, county and region? The same things that have already been pointed out in this series: [green](#) and [blue](#) infrastructure, vibrant downtowns, arts, culture, activity and things to do. But more specifically, it comes down to “place matters”. People are attracted to a [place](#). The types of places which are popular and successful in getting new population have the following:

- [Entrepreneurial infrastructure](#) – a community that is supportive of new businesses startups and has programs such as economic gardening in place
- [Diversity](#) – communities that are tolerant of and socially welcome diversity of race, religions, beliefs and life-styles.
- [Green](#) and [blue](#) infrastructure – natural areas, parks, trails, water resources and so on
- Social infrastructure – a community with social activities, events and things to do
- Public transportation infrastructure – a choice as to how one gets around the community, not just automobile, but also bike, walking, and public transportation to and between amenities
- [Variety of housing](#) – a choice of different types of housing, not just single family homes on lots, but also housing downtown, apartment buildings, and so on (what is important is to provide choice)
- Information technology infrastructure – high-speed internet
- Collaborative capacity – a community that works together and has many collaborative and cooperatives efforts for accomplishing community-wide projects

#### 4.2 Super connected lifestyle locations - The rise of the 'e-change' movement

The *nbn co* commissioned a report by Bernard Salt with respect to the likely impact of access to the national broadband network to people's propensity to move from larger urban centres. The report identified many "lifestyle" towns across Australia including 164 in Victoria. Many of these are in the LGAs that are projected to experience significant population growth – see Section 2.

The research undertaken in preparing the report noted a significant increase in people working from home and projects that by 2026 this may as many as 8% of Australia's workforce and contends that this trend will grow the propensity to move from larger urban centres.

The report also includes a survey of 1,000 people on matters relating to lifestyle preferences – the survey found that:

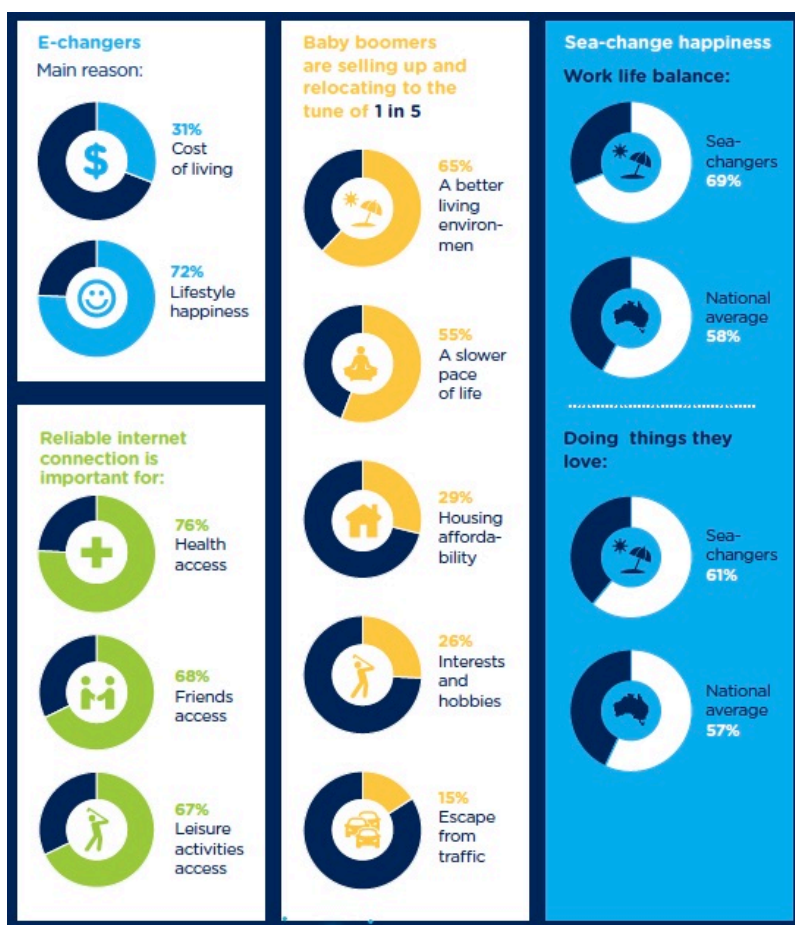
- about 40 % of Australians surveyed said they had considered a seachange and 32 % said that they had considered a treechange. These figures compare with just 18 % who had thought about a city change.

The report observes that "Dreamy lifestyle locations trump practical workplace cities in the Australian mind."

- when it comes down to who had actually made the move some 26 % said they had changed cities, 14 % said they had moved to a seachange town and 15 % had moved to a treechange town.

The report observes that Australians are around two times as likely to think about moving to a lifestyle town as they are to actually move to such a town. No doubt commuting and the cost of living are motivating forces. *But it always comes back to jobs.* Commuting from a lifestyle town is impractical as a long-term proposition for most Australians.

##### Super connected lifestyle locations – Survey Outcomes



The report postulates that “super connectivity made available by access to the nbn™ network in the 2020s and Australians will look at ways of telecommuting from any of the by then 650 towns within striking distance of capital cities. Who knows, by 2030 perhaps the proportion of Australians living in this e-change zone (between 30 km and 150 km from a capital city CBD) might rise from 15 per cent today to closer to 20 per cent?”

#### 4.3 Attracting and retaining skilled people in regional Australia: A practitioner’s guide

The report was prepared by the Standing Committee on Regional Development in 2004 and observes that “Attracting and retaining professional and skilled people to live and work within regional communities is one of the major challenges in building sustainable regions. A community that can also offer the services supplied by professional and skilled workers supports the people who are living in regional communities and the businesses operating there. This provides the foundation stone for attracting new residents and businesses.

In summary, this issue is critical to sustaining regional communities as viable entities into the future – communities that are self-sufficient in terms of professionals and tradespeople are more likely to retain their residents and attract new ones.”

The report notes a number of Key Success Factors as identified in the following diagram.



#### 4.4 Rural Migration Trends and Drivers - Rural Councils Victoria

This report identified a range of factors impacting rural migration including the identification of locations from which most people who migrate to rural Victoria originate (based on ABS Census data) and noting a:

- RCV Study in 2012 found that population attraction and retention strategies are often developed and implemented without sufficient evidence, robust evaluation processes, or clear objectives such as target demographic groups.
- survey of RCV local government officers undertaken as part of this project 1, most respondents (75%) cited lack of resources (including funding) to analyze and understand data as the key constraint to developing effective attraction and retention strategies.

The report also identified a range of observations, or “tips” with respect to population attraction and retention strategies: An analysis of these observations draws three key themes with respect to attracting people to and/or retaining people in rural locations those themes being:

- 1) Identification of target “markets” – i.e. those cohorts who are more likely to consider moving to rural areas; and promoting the advantages and opportunities that are attractive to these cohorts
- 2) Developing, and promoting the liveability that people desire including access to education and health services
- 3) Developing, and promoting economic opportunities including employment and opportunities for investment

## An Analysis Rural Migration Trends and Drivers

Themes	Need to:
<b>Targeted marketing &amp; promotion</b>	address key decision drivers for moving to rural Victoria
	identify target cohorts that are more likely to consider migrating to rural locations
	promote key advantages of living in rural areas/communities
	ensure that newcomers, potential newcomers and visitors have ready access to information
<b>Liveability</b>	develop, and promote, the access to education and health services
	have processes to engage young people
<b>Economic opportunities</b>	foster employment and workforce development opportunities
	foster the development of existing and or the “start-up” of local businesses
	have identified and expedite private sector investment opportunities
	have effective community economic development processes

## 4.5 Regional Australia Institute

The Regional Australia Institute (RAI) has released the report “*Lighting Up our Great Small Cities: Challenging Misconceptions*” which an analysis of the economic opportunities in 31 regional cities throughout Australia – see [http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Lighting-Up-our-Great-Small-Cities\\_Report\\_EMBARGOED.pdf](http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Lighting-Up-our-Great-Small-Cities_Report_EMBARGOED.pdf)

The RAI’s projections of future regional city contends that “regional cities have the potential to produce \$375 billion in output in 2031, representing a 65 per cent increase from 2013 levels and a contribution of 15 per cent to the national economy’

The report contends the following “myths” regarding the capacity and capability of regional cities with respect to attracting investment and delivering positive returns for investors:

*Myth 1: Slow or Declining Growth*

Australia engages in a mostly negative public discussion about regional economies. A side effect of this long-term debate is that many believe that regional city economic performance inevitably lags metropolitan outcomes and that ‘many regional cities are suffering low and negative growth’.

*Myth 2: Regional Cities will be Left Behind in the New Economy World*

Australia’s economy is becoming services focused with the growth of jobs concentrating in new economy industries. It is assumed that regional cities are inevitably being left behind in this trend. However, Regional cities are already producing more output in new economy industries (finance, education, health and professional services) than old industries (agriculture, mining and manufacturing).

*Myth 3: Population Size is the Most Important Factor in Predicting Economic Performance*

Regional cities are often characterised as interesting, only when they are big. This drives a misconception that all the benefits of cities grow with population size. In fact, when it comes to participation, historical growth or projected growth in output there is no statistical difference between big or small regional cities. The challenge for policy makers at the national, state and local levels is to cultivate city performance, not size.

*Myth 4: Past Performance is the Best Predictor of Future Growth*

While trends are important, history does not predetermine the destiny of a city. Changing macro-economic conditions are having a significant impact on regional city growth trajectories and a third of all regional cities have already or are predicted to change their output growth trajectories. Developing smart strategies that respond to changing trajectories is important to successful small cities policy.

A key tenant of the report is the need to demonstrate to the private sector that there are attractive investment opportunities outside of the capital cities.

While this report is on regional cities it stands to reason that the similar misconceptions impact investment opportunities in rural areas.

#### 4.6 Implications for Population Attraction Projects

Population attraction is dependent on a combination of factors most notably: -

- Economic opportunities – i.e. access to employment and/or investment opportunities
- Liveability – i.e. access to relevant services and/or a desired lifestyle
- Promotion – i.e. providing relevant information to target markets

### 5 RCV Population Attraction and Retention Projects

The *Population Attraction and Retention Strategies for Rural Victorian Communities* project has sought to consolidate the lessons of RCV's prior projects along with evidence from the broader knowledge base to determine a practical, actionable set of Projects for the Stronger Rural Councils Initiative (SRCI) to support over the next three years for the benefit of its members and that are consistent with RCV's role, mandate and capacity, as well as opportunities that exist to influence State government policy and programs.

The *Population Attraction and Retention Strategies for Rural Victorian Communities* project has considered the implications for population attraction and retention and economic development relevant to Victorian rural communities arising from the implications arising from the review of:

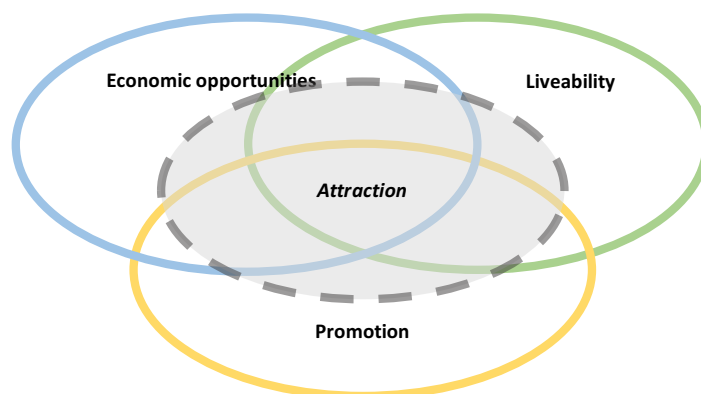
- population, demographic and economic data for each of the 38 RCV LGAs
- population attraction and retention efforts in Australia, USA, Canada and Scotland
- previous RCV, and other relevant studies

#### 5.1 Key Assumptions

The identification of the Projects has assumed that:

- 1) population attraction is a function of:
  - available employment and/or *economic opportunities*
  - attractive levels of *liveability* including access to relevant services and housing
  - the effective *promotion* of relevant opportunities and benefits to likely markets

To this end the identified Projects attempt to address one, or more of these factors



- 2) collectively, the Projects need to add value to rural LGAs in various situations i.e. those that are projected to:
  - lose population – but experience a relative growth of population aged 65 years plus – and have experienced a net loss of jobs
  - gain population – but will experience a net loss of population aged under 65 years – but have experienced a net loss of jobs
  - gain population – but will experience a net loss of population aged under 65 years and have experienced a net increase in jobs
  - gain population across age ages and have experienced a net increase in jobs
- 3) RCV Councils are resource constrained and/or have limited skills/experience with respect to undertaking activities such a market research, Investment attraction – particularly with the private sector, and promotion
- 4) There is no common mechanism/portal for promoting rural Victoria to key markets
- 5) RCV has limited resources with respect to the delivery of significant projects

## 5.2. Overview of Population Attraction and Retention Projects

The following table provides an overview of the Population Attraction and Retention Projects. These projects will be delivered over the next three years.

Projects	Overview	Attraction Factor Supported		
		Economic Opportunities	Liveability	Promotion
<b>Rural Population Growth Policy</b>	Advocacy platform to Government/Opposition re support for growing the population of rural Victoria	●	●	●
<b>Rural Investment Attraction Program</b>	Identify, collate and promote significant private sector investment opportunities – and the identification and engagement of potential investors	●		●
<b>Rural Workforce Development Plan</b>	Identify current/future workforce needs in rural Victoria – both numbers of workers and the skills that are required. Includes identifying potential sources of workers	●		●
<b>Older Persons Services &amp; Accommodation Program</b>	Opportunities for NFP/private sector investment in services, facilities and housing stock relevant to the needs of older people residing in rural Victoria	●	●	●
<b>Alternate Service Delivery</b>	Identify/promote effective alternate service delivery models that improve access to services in rural Victoria	●	●	
<b>Community Planning Update</b>	Identify and collate common themes and needs across the range of community plan and analyse how these support the needs of the target markets for population attraction		●	●
<b>Rural Promotion Program</b>	Development of a digital platform that provides relevant and contemporary content and that support the work of RCV Councils to promote opportunities and advantages of living in rural Victoria			●

A detailed description of the projects is provided in the Appendices of this document

### 5.3. Estimation of Required Resources

An estimation of the resources that will be required to deliver the projects has been undertaken. This includes an estimation of the

- Consulting days required to undertake the project
- Project Management hours – this assumes that RCV has limited resources with respect to project management and that each project will require resources to organize requirements with respect to:
  - relevant meetings
  - engagement and consultation with RCV Councils and other stakeholders
  - other expertise
- Additional expertise that may be required – this expertise fall into one or more of the following categories:
  - Economic Research and Impact Modelling
  - Economic Development and Investment Attraction
  - Land Use Analysis
  - Graphic Design – including digital platform development and operation
  - Event Management
  - Related travel costs



**Appendix 1 - Population Attraction and Retention Projects – Description and Estimated Resources**

## Project #1 - Rural Population Growth Policy

### Overview

RCV to commission the development of a *Rural Population Growth Policy* to advocate to Government, and the Opposition, the merits of supporting population growth in Rural Victoria.

### Context

The forecast for the collective population growth of the 38 RCV LGAs to 2031 represents 7% of Victoria population growth in this period – this growth:

- is highly concentrated with 9 of 38 Rural LGAs are projected to experience population growth across all age cohorts – 7 of these LGAs adjoin Greater Melbourne and/or Geelong ➡ *Need support for addressing fast growing populations*
  - includes a loss of people aged under 65. 12 of 38 Rural LGAs are projected to experience population growth 2011 to 2031 but will experience an overall loss of population aged under 65 years ➡ *Need support for growing population and jobs*
  - will not be experienced in 17 of 38 Rural LGAs that are projected to lose population
- Between 2006 and 2011 the number of jobs in Rural Victoria grew by 5,062 representing 1.8% of the growth in jobs in Victoria. Jobs in 18 of the 38 RCV local economies grew by almost 11,500 from 2006 to 2011 with 5 LGAs accounting for almost 70% of this growth. 20 RCV local economies experienced a loss of a total of 6,425 jobs in the same period. ➡ *Need support for growing investment and jobs*

### Project Description

RCV to commission the development of a *Rural Population Growth Policy* to advocate to Government, and the Opposition, the merits of supporting population growth in Rural Victoria. The Policy would foster a wider understanding of the need for, benefit of and community and political support for population growth in rural Victoria and would advocate for population growth in rural Victoria and that would:

- support improved access to services (including those in health, education and recreation) to maintain positive levels of liveability for rural LGAs that have experienced:
  - a contraction of population
  - significant population growth (i.e. peri-urban LGAs)
- support greater levels of private sector investment in rural Victoria
- support workforce requirements (see also Project #2)
- grow the population of people aged under 65

The development of the *Rural Population Growth Policy* would involve:

- i. An updated analysis of demographic and economic trends in rural Victoria based on 2016 ABS Census data – and other relevant sources
- ii. identification of relevant:
  - Government policy and programs (e.g. Reduction of Payroll Tax, removal of Stamp Duty, increase of First Home Buyers Bonus)
  - Priority projects – as espoused by RDA Committees and Regional Partnerships – and the level of investment required to deliver such projects
  - Opposition policy
- iii. Consultation with RCV Councils regarding:
  - key strengths,
  - the current capacity to support population growth,
  - barriers to population growth and key needs; and
  - policy gaps
- iv. Development and impact modelling of population growth scenarios for rural Victoria including the impact on employment and economic growth
- v. Consultation with other key stakeholders including:
  - DTF re current levels of Government expenditure in rural Victoria
  - RDV re future policy direction
  - Opposition re relevant policy platforms

## vi. Cost Benefit Analysis

Undertake the cost benefit of growing the population of rural Victoria and how it would mitigate growth pressures in Greater Melbourne and Regional Cities. The process would involve:

- consultation with RCV Councils (and through them relevant agencies) to identify:
  - current capacity of rural Victoria to absorb growth –including:
    - capacity for residential growth
    - capacity of key services – including schools
- support for the needs of the rural LGAs that are projected to experience a significant increase in population including the identification of the support required to grow the number of local jobs
- the identification of major areas of cost saving for Government through the efficient use of infrastructure in not having to service the offset of growth in Melbourne that would be accommodated in rural Victoria
- the preparation of a cost benefit analysis using the outcomes of the population growth scenarios and economic impact modeling from the development of the Rural *Population Growth Policy* including identifying how growing population in rural Victoria compares with growing population in Greater Melbourne

vi. Development of a final report that includes recommendations for a *Rural Population Growth Policy*

## Estimated Resources

	<i>Consulting Days</i>	<i>Economic Research</i>	<i>Graphic Design</i>	<i>Travel</i>
<b><i>Policy Development</i></b>				
An updated analysis of demographic and economic trends in rural Victoria	3	\$15,000		
Identification of Government (and *Opposition) policy, programs, key projects relevant to population attraction in Rural Victoria	5			
Consultation with *RCV Councils	6			\$1,500
Development and impact modelling of population growth scenarios	5	\$25,000		
Consultation with other key stakeholders	5			\$1,500
Identification of major costs of interface development costs/costs of other key projects	10			\$1,500
Cost benefit analysis	7	\$40,000		
Development of a final report/recommendations	5		15,000	\$1,500
Project Management	5			
<b><i>totals</i></b>	<b>51</b>	<b>\$80,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>

## Notes

\*The State Opposition has established the *Victorian Population Policy Taskforce* – see <http://vicpopulation.com.au/>

\*Assumes that RCV members will meet in relevant groupings

## Project #2 - Rural Workforce Development Plan

### Overview

Development of a Rural Workforce Development Plan that:

- identifies current and future workforce needs in rural Victoria – both in quantum and skills required
- underpins promotion of current, and future work related opportunities in rural Victoria
- identifies potential sources of workers including immigration

### Context

The age of the Rural Workforce is considerably older than workforce in the rest of Victoria. As at 2011 the Rural Workforce (i.e. those people living and working in the 38 RCV LGAs) was 191,896 people. 50,113 – or 26% - of these people were aged 55 years or older.

<i>Workers</i>	<i>No of Workers</i>	<i>No of Workers aged 55 +</i>	<i>%</i>
Living and working in a rural LGA	191,896	50,113	26%
Living in in a rural LGA and working elsewhere	114,150	24,823	22%
<i>Total</i>	306,046	74,936	24%
Victorian - less rural based workers	2,163,414	350,193	16%

This suggests that rural Victoria is, and will, lose workers at a faster rate than the balance of Victoria. This is compounded by 29 of the 38 Rural LGAs projected to lose a population of some 44,000 people aged under 65 years through to 2031. The potential unavailability of the required workforce will negatively impact future economic development and investment attraction which will compound the challenges associated with population growth in rural Victoria.

### Project Description

RCV to commission the preparation of a *Rural Victoria Workforce Development Plan* – the plan would seek to identify and quantify the jobs required in Rural Victoria and thereby provide information about the scale and range of employment opportunities. The Plan would:

- 1 Undertake an in-depth analysis of the demography and skills profile of the existing Rural Victoria workforce (using 2016 ABS Census data) including: -
  - 1.1 review of unemployment trends and the level of workforce participation and
  - 1.2 reference to the economic modelling of an increase in rural population – see Project #1
  - 1.3 consultation with RCV Councils re specific opportunities, needs and/or challenges to attain the workforce required by their local economies – including the impact of major investment opportunities – see Project #3
  - 1.4 an analysis of major industry sector development strategies
- 2 Provide an understanding of current needs and a projection of workforce needs in the next 10 years with respect to number of workers and the skills required
- 3 Identify potential sources for the recruitment of required workers and the information required to provide to potential workers – these potential sources would include:
  - 3.1 Young people residing in rural Victoria who are soon to enter the workforce and/or may be residing in Melbourne or a Regional city for the purposes of study
  - 3.2 Workers based in Melbourne who may have lived in rural Victoria previously
  - 3.3 Government “employment transition” programs
  - 3.4 Immigration –and/or related – programs (i.e. Victoria will accept some 5,500 plus refugees in 2018)
- 4 Identify how effective support can provided for people who are attempting business “start-ups” in Rural Victoria including:
  - 4.1 Foster entrepreneurial skills
  - 4.2 Access to business advice and mentoring
  - 4.3 Facilitating access to capital
  - 4.4 Access to appropriate workspaces
- 5 Prepare final Report and Workforce Development Plan

**Estimated Resources**

	<i>Consulting Days</i>	<i>Economic Research</i>	<i>Travel</i>
Undertake an in-depth analysis of the demography/skills profile of Rural Victoria workforce	4	\$20,000	
Consultation with RCV Councils	6		\$1,500
Understanding of current needs and a projection of workforce needs in the next 10 years	5		
Identify potential sources for the recruitment of workers and the information required	4		\$1,500
Identify how effective support can provided for business “start-ups”	4		
Final report	5		
Project Management	4		\$1,500
<b><i>totals</i></b>	32	\$20,000	\$4,500

### Project #3 - Rural Investment Attraction Program

#### Overview

Identification, promotion and facilitation of \*significant private sector investment opportunities in rural Victoria through a collaborative approach across RCV Councils that presents an attractive scale of investment to the private sector and associated benefits to Government and grows the capability of RCV Councils with respect to investment attraction.

#### Context

Access to economic opportunities is central to supporting population attraction and/or retention in rural Victoria – this includes attracting private sector investment into sectors that enable rural LGAs to regenerate their respective economies and generate jobs.

The relative size, density and growth of Victoria's metropolitan based economy relative to the rural economy presents a challenge to rural Victoria with respect to the attracting private sector awareness. The RAI have identified that there are misconceptions of the value of economic opportunities outside of the capital cities. There is a need to highlight the scale and range of available investment opportunities.

There is also a need, in some LGAs, to identify key assets (including improved infrastructure) that could be leveraged to create private sector investment opportunities that are consistent with community values and innovation. This may require innovative processes and/or insight into market needs, and/or understanding of policy changes to identify the leverage points. Some RCV Councils may need assistance with this process.

At present, many of the 38 RCV Councils are attempting to either attract private sector investment to an existing opportunity and/or identify opportunities for private sector investment. RCV Councils, in a rate capping operating environment, will find it increasingly difficult to find resources to support investment attraction and/or have varying levels of experience and expertise in engaging the private sector. The scarcity of expertise, experience and resources will likely compromise attempts to secure private sector investment. There is a need to identify how a more collaborative process amongst RCV Councils could create a more robust "portal" that makes more efficient, and effective use of scarce resources in the attraction of private sector investment.

Finally, the process for collating, identifying and/or promoting investment opportunities should create a legacy of improved capability within RCV Councils with respect attracting investment from the private sector.

#### Project Description

RCV to commission the development of a *Rural Investment Attraction Program*. The Program would support the improved attraction of \*significant levels of private sector investment through a collaborative approach across RCV Councils that presents a much larger scale of investment to the private sector and associated benefits to Government. The Program would include:

- 1 Developing an understanding of the overall scale, range and value of the existing significant private sector investment opportunities in rural LGAs including identifying the:
  - 1.1 type and range of key assets being leveraged and the investment attraction processes already in place and/or underway
  - 1.2 likely sectors/sources that will be attracted to the opportunity
  - 1.3 overall economic impact of the opportunities
- 2 Providing support for a collaborative approach to the identification of potential investors, including working with RDV and Invest Victoria, and the development of a collaborative and more cost-effective process for:
  - 2.1 identifying potential investors
  - 2.2 Promoting investment opportunities
  - 2.3 Engaging with and/or hosting potential investors
- 3 Providing support to RCV Councils to help them develop the capability required to:
  - 3.1 identify assets that could be leveraged by the private sector to create significant investment that represents a sustainable growth opportunity for the local economy
  - 3.2 development of associated business and/or investment cases
- 4 Generate a legacy of improved capability within individual Council with respect to managing investment attraction – this would:
  - 4.1 utilize the outcomes of the previous steps
  - 4.2 include the development and conduct of "Investment Attraction" workshop program for relevant RCV Council Officers and the development of appropriate support materials

**\*Note** Significant investment would be defined as a level of investment that would provide employment opportunities for people in the LGA in which the investment is to be sited as well as for adjoining LGAs.

## Estimated Resources

	<i>Consulting Days</i>	<i>Economic Research</i>	<i>Travel</i>
Consultation with RCV Network	6		
Review of existing private sector investment opportunities	10	\$25,000	\$3,000
Identification of potential investors/target markets	10		\$3,000
Development of collaborative process for engaging private sector	10		\$1,500
Develop/deliver legacy program	10		\$5,000
Identification of potential opportunities*	40		\$5,000
Project Management	6		
<i>totals</i>	106	\$25,000	\$17,500

**\*Note:** provision of a resource to work with RCV Councils to identify – and assess feasibility – of potential private sector investment opportunities

## Project #4 - Older Persons Services and Accommodation Program

### Overview

Develop an *Older Persons Services and Accommodation Program* that supports the capacity for communities to retain older people

### Context

The population of people aged 65 years plus in Rural Victoria is projected to grow by some 100,000 people to more than 230,000 through to 2031 – this will represent 15% of Victoria's population of people aged 65 years plus and will account for 27% of rural Victoria's population. 37 of the 38 RCV LGAs are projected to experience a growth in the population of people aged 65 years plus.

Many older people would be able to remain in the current community if there were greater availability of appropriate housing and relevant services. Retaining such people retains the demand for goods and services they require as well as the knowledge and experience that can provide to the community.

### Project Description

Develop an *Older Persons Services and Accommodation Program*. The Program would support the capacity for communities to attract and retain older people

The development of the Program will involve:

- 1 The conduct of Needs Analysis (using the outcomes of the population profiling completed for the Rural Population Growth Policy) – this would include a:
  - 1.1 demand analysis for housing, services, facilities relevant to the needs of people aged 65 years and older in rural Victoria and how this demand will change in the future
  - 1.2 gap analysis with respect to the current availability of housing, services and facilitiesThis will include consultation with RCV Councils
- 2 The identification of private and/or public landholdings/sites in rural LGAs that could be used for the development of housing and/or aged care accommodation and expedite access for potential investors  
This will include  
consultation with RCV Councils  
engagement of land use expertise to map location/size of available sites
- 3 Promote the opportunities for private sector investment in the:
  - 3.1 delivery of services relevant to the needs of older people including relevant allied health services
  - 3.2 development of housing stock that is more appropriate for the needs of older people (and bring multi-bedroom housing onto the market as older people sell current houses to access more appropriate housing)This will include engagement with private sector providers/investors to identify key needs/priorities with respect to decision-making  
This will also involve the development of relevant collateral to communicate investment opportunities
- 4 Facilitate the entry of NFP enterprises in the development and operation of aged care accommodation and/or other relevant services  
This will include engagement with the NFP sector to identify key needs/priorities with respect to decision-making  
This will also involve the development of relevant collateral to communicate investment opportunities
- 5 Prepare a final report including key findings and recommendations



## Estimated Resources

	<i>Consulting Days</i>	<i>Economic Research</i>	<i>Land Use Expertise</i>	<i>Graphic Design</i>	<i>Travel</i>
Demand/Gap Analysis – includes:					
(i) Review of relevant policy frameworks and strategies;	5				
(ii) consultation with RCV Councils and relevant agencies	12				\$5,000
Identification of private and/or public landholdings/sites that could be used for the development of housing and/or aged care accommodation including the:					
(i) Mapping of landholdings/sites – including capacity for the expansion of existing facilities;	5		\$50,000		
(ii) Estimation of the capacity that landholdings/sites could deliver and economic impact of development of the landholdings/sites	5	\$25,000			
Promotion of private sector opportunities – includes:					
(i) Consultation with private sector to identify barriers to investment and likely priorities	5				\$1,500
(ii) Development of relevant collateral to promote investment opportunities	3			\$25,000	
Promotion of NFP related opportunities - includes:					
(i) Consultation with NFP sector to identify barriers to investment and likely priorities;	5				\$1,500
(ii) Development of relevant collateral to promote investment opportunities	3			\$25,000	
Final Report	5				
Project Management	5				
<b>Totals</b>	53	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$8,000

**Project #5 – Alternate Service Delivery****Overview**

The *Alternate Service Delivery* Project seeks to identify and promote alternative means by which rural communities are delivering and/or enabling access to services that underpin liveability

**Context**

The retention and attraction of rural populations is highly dependent on having access to key services including retail, financial, health, education and transport related services.

Many of these services have ceased in rural towns where there has been a contraction in population. Some rural communities have and/or are developing alternate ways of accessing and/or delivering such services.

**Project Description**

RCV to commission an Alternate Service Delivery project that seeks to identify alternative means by which rural communities can access services that underpin liveability – the project will identify examples of working models of alternate service delivery and the process by which the community has achieved the outcome – including:

- The support for alternate service delivery being provided by other levels of government
- The need for capital to fund the establishment of working models and how such capital was accessed
- leveraging population growth in adjoining regional centres/cities

The project will require

- (i) Review of relevant literature/studies/reports;
- (ii) Consultation with RCV Network
- (iii) Consultation with relevant agencies/representatives;
- (iv) Analysis of service models and identification of key success factors and the Identification of benefits delivered
- (v) Development and delivery of a process for sharing/updating of outcomes with RCV network including the development of relevant collateral
- (vi) Preparation of a Final Report and recommendations

**Estimated Resources**

	<i>Consulting Days</i>	<i>Graphic Design</i>	<i>Travel</i>
Review of relevant literature/studies/reports;	5		
Consultation with RCV Network	6		
Consultation with relevant agencies/representatives;	5		\$5,000
Analysis of service models and identification of key success factors/ benefits delivered	5		
Development and delivery of a process for sharing/updating of outcomes with RCV network- including development of relevant collateral	5	\$25,000	
Final Report	4		\$2,000
Project Management	4		
<i>totals</i>	34	\$25,000	\$7,000

**Project #6 - Community Planning Update****Overview**

The *Community Planning Update* Project seeks to:

- provide insight into how RCV Network Councils' Community Plans and the community planning process can capture the findings of the Rural Population Growth Policy
- identify common needs that could be supported through Government support and or private sector investment

**Context**

Community Planning processes underpin local development, liveability, and the retention of the local population. In order that such development also supports population attraction the development needs to be relevant to the priorities of the cohorts that are potentially attracted to relocating to rural communities.

**Project Description**

The Project would include:

- 1 An analysis of existing Community Plans with a view to identifying:
  - 1.1 how they reflect the findings of the Rural Population Growth Policy
  - 1.2 common needs across multiple locations
  - 1.3 how they may be impacted by relevant Destination Management Plans
- 2 The identification of efficient means by which common needs can be supported and/or delivered
- 3 Reporting of Outcomes – including:
  - 3.1 Development of a process to share outcomes and implications with RCV Network

**Estimated Resources**

	<i>Consulting Days</i>	<i>Travel</i>
Consultation with RCV Network	6	\$2,000
An analysis of existing Community Plans with a view to identifying: (i) how they reflect the findings of the Rural Population Growth Policy (ii) common needs across multiple locations (iii) how they may be impacted by relevant RTO Destination Management Plans	40	
The identification of efficient means by which common needs can be supported and/or delivered	5	
Reporting of Outcomes – including:	5	\$2,000
(i) Consultation with RCV Network	6	\$2,000
(ii) Development of a process to share outcomes and implications with RCV Network	3	
Project Management	3	
<b><i>totals</i></b>	<b>68</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>

## Project #7 - Rural Promotion Program

### Overview

Development and delivery of *Rural Promotion Program* that promotes opportunities and benefits associated with residing in rural Victoria and provides relevant information to target markets.

### Context

Rural Victoria offers a range of lifestyle and employment opportunities. Post the completion of the previous Projects these opportunities may be expanded and/or become clearer.

At present, all RCV Councils are attempting to promote their respective LGAs to potential residents and/or business owners. The resources available to many RCV Councils for such endeavors are minimal and hard to find in a “rate capped” environment. This effort is overlapped to various degrees by the efforts of the various Regional Tourism Organisations and Local Tourism Organisations to promote their respective areas.

The work undertaken by RDA BSW with respect to population attraction has identified a range of cohorts that may be more amenable to consider migrating to Rural Victoria- these cohorts may be considered as “target markets” for Rural Victoria.

There has been no recent and/or significant research of the needs and/or perceptions of any “target markets” and the type of information they require and/or the communication channels that they prefer and/or consider as being reliable.

This combination of multiple channels, that are poorly resourced and or lacking in insight into the real needs and/or priorities of “target markets” may present an inadequate, disparate and/or confusing representation of the actual opportunities and/or benefits associated with Rural Victoria.

### Project Description

RCV to commission the development – and operation - of a *Rural Promotion Program* – the Program would offer a collaborative, better resourced and cost effective approach to promoting Rural Victoria to Greater Melbourne in particular- the Program would:

- 1 Provide a well-resourced portal that:
  - 1.1 be based on the outcomes of Rural Population Growth Policy
  - 1.2 could be leveraged by individual RCV Councils
  - 1.3 would include:
    - 1.3.1 an online platform with coordinated and mediated social media and that would provide links to RCV Councils
    - 1.3.2 regularly updated content including the:
      - development of attractive and contemporary collateral that is relevant to the needs of target markets
      - opportunities and benefits identified through other RCV projects (e.g. Rural Workforce Development Plan etc.)
      - Leverage promotional programs about Regional and Rural Victoria being undertaken by other agencies including Visit Victoria
    - 1.3.3 the capacity for specific enquiries to be made - and responded to
    - 1.3.4 the capacity to capture and report relevant metrics to RCV Councils
- 2 Include a calendar promotional events relevant to the interests of various Melbourne based target markets – this program would leverage
  - 2.1 Major events in Melbourne
  - 2.2 Major regional events

The project will involve:

- (i) Leveraging outcomes of the Rural Population Growth Policy and other projects re the identification of key messages/themes
- (ii) Consultation with RCV Councils
- (iii) Development of an effective digital platform
- (iv) Ongoing operation of the platform
- (v) Identification of key events that would provide an effective promotional platform for RCV Councils and the development of a plan for the scale of participation
- (vi) Development of relevant collateral for use in events
- (vii) Provision of staffing for these events

#### Estimated Resources

	Consulting Days	Graphic Design	Event Management
Review of existing promotion activities - includes	10		
Consultation with RCV Network	6		
Needs analysis	3		
Development of portal/digital platform	3	\$25,000	
Operation/update of the portal/digital platform		\$50,000	
Organisation/operation of a Calendar of Events*	2		\$250,000
Project Management	8		
<b>total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>

**\*Note** The funding required for participation in relevant events is dependent of the number of events and the scale of participation – this amount would need to be revised pending a decision on the content of the “calendar of events”

## Appendix II - RCV Analysis

