



Rural Councils Victoria

Rural Housing Action Plan

Delivering the homes rural Victoria needs

Rural communities across Victoria need affordable and sustainable housing.

To guide the delivery of affordable housing for rural communities, RCV surveyed member councils to fully understand the diverse needs of rural communities.

Based on that research, RCV developed our five-point Rural Housing Action Plan which outlines the crucial steps needed to address the unique housing challenges faced by rural Victorian communities.

Investing in rural housing

Rural Housing Action Plan

Rural Councils Victoria is calling on the state and federal governments to support the provision of affordable, and sustainable housing in rural communities across Victoria.

To address the housing challenges faced by rural communities there needs to be an appropriate level of facilitation and financial resources for rural councils and their communities.

Rural areas are often overlooked in housing discussions or considered the same as regional areas, this is not the case.

Rural communities deserve targeted investments to ensure they get the homes they need.

Through strategic financial support for the Rural Housing Action Plan, rural housing markets can be revitalised, economic stability promoted, and overall quality of life in rural communities enhanced.

1. Rural Enabling Infrastructure Initiative

Connections to sewerage, water, energy

To promote the development of affordable rural housing, Rural Councils Victoria is advocating for the establishment of a Rural Enabling Infrastructure Initiative, tailored to rural areas.

Rural Enabling Infrastructure Initiative will encourage the construction of sustainable and well-planned housing developments by making land ready for development while keeping costs manageable for both developers and future rural homeowners.

Rural Enabling Infrastructure Initiative should include both subsidised infrastructure roll out and low interest loans.

3: Rural Housing Expertise and Capacity Building

Project implementation and oversight

Adequate staffing and expertise are crucial to the success of the Rural Housing Action Plan.

Rural Councils Victoria urges policymakers to invest in Rural Housing Expertise and Capacity Building.

This investment would ensure that rural councils are able to attract and retain qualified professionals who understand the unique challenges of rural housing development.

Expert staff will ensure efficient project implementation and proper oversight in rural communities.

2. Council Developer Support and Risk Mitigation

Bridging funds to help councils develop homes

A number of councils across rural Victoria have invested in developing homes in their communities but it is hard to do successfully without adequate government support.

As part of the Rural Housing Action Plan, RCV calls on governments to deliver a Council Developer Support and Risk Mitigation program tailored to rural development projects.

This will help rural councils to develop land themselves and mitigate the risks associated with doing so.

This approach will encourage more councils to develop land, attract more interest from other investors and increase the overall supply of affordable homes in rural communities.

4: Rural Housing Policy Reform

Streamline housing approvals

Rural communities need comprehensive planning reforms aimed at streamlining rural housing approvals.

Rural Housing Policy Reform would focus on expediting the development-approval processes for homes in rural areas.

This would reduce delays and costs, and make it easier for developers to participate in rural affordable housing projects.

5. Targeted Rural Housing

Specific funding to deliver rural homes

There needs to be specific funding for Targeted Rural Housing Solutions to address the unique housing needs of rural communities.

Rural Councils Victoria is calling on government to support projects that specifically provide housing for critical groups such as rural low-income individuals and families, key workers, seniors, and women who are disproportionately affected by rural housing challenges.



Short-stay levy

Rural communities need their fair share

The proposed Short Stay Levy will have implications for many rural communities, especially those with a tourism-based economy.

We recognise that the impact of short-stay accommodation is not uniform across rural communities.

Rural areas, particularly those with a high concentration of short-stay properties, often face unique challenges and opportunities.

A portion of the Short Stay Levy revenue should be allocated for reinvestment into rural (not just regional) areas.

This reinvestment should focus on delivering the actions outlined in this plan including infrastructure, key worker and other housing and council capacity support.

This will help to ensure that rural communities can harness the economic potential of the short-stay sector while also providing the housing rural communities desperately need.

RCV is committed to advocating that rural communities get their fair share from this levy.

There should be a **review of the Short Stay Levy after 12 months** of operation to assess if it is working and whether support is going into the rural communities that need it.

Councils innovate to deliver homes

Councils across Rural Victoria are finding new ways to deliver homes for their communities, but they can't do it on their own: below are three examples of what is being done

Moyne Shire Council

Delivering worker accommodation

With the support of the State Government, Moyne Shire Council delivered 11 studio-style cabins at the Mortlake and Koroit Caravan Parks for key workers.

Council built and leases the cabins to local businesses.

The cabins help address the shortage of affordable accommodation for skilled workers.

Mount Alexander Shire Council

Engaging a housing broker

Mount Alexander Shire Council has a staff member to broker housing solutions. Council says government investment in housing brokers across rural Victoria would yield significant progress and innovation in addressing affordable housing needs in rural and regional areas.

Pyrenees Shire Council

Developing housing subdivision

Pyrenees Shire Council developed its own subdivision in order to open up land for new homes.

The Correa Park development is fully sold and has added accommodation for 100 families in Beaufort in western Victoria.



About Rural Councils Victoria

The only statewide and national voice for rural Victorian communities

Rural Councils Victoria represents rural communities across the state's 34 rural local government areas.

RCV supports and promotes sustainable, liveable, prosperous rural communities.

Rural Councils Victoria

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