

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Regional Development



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BRINGING MORE BUILDING SURVEYORS TO REGIONAL VICTORIA

The Allan Labor Government is backing new methods to speed up local housing and planning approvals across Victoria's Wimmera and Mallee regions – unlocking much needed supply.

Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Development Michaela Settle today represented Minister for Regional Development Gayle Tierney at a housing development in Murtoa backed by the Labor Government, to announce a feasibility study and shared services pilot, to bring more Municipal Building Surveyor services to local councils.

The Labor Government is backing this trial with a \$200,000 grant, led by Yarriambiack Shire Council. The council will work in partnership with Buloke, Hindmarsh and Loddon shires, as well as Swan Hill Rural City Council.

Building surveyors work across the state to assess building permit applications, conduct building inspections at mandatory stages and issue occupancy permits and certificates of final inspection.

Small rural councils often face challenges in engaging the Municipal Building Surveying services needed for timely housing and planning approvals, a challenge this trial aims to address.

The project will be delivered in three phases. It will first identify the challenges and opportunities around sharing surveying services between councils, before establishing a 'Shared Service Hub' to support the participating councils with more cost-effective access to surveying services.

The Hub will provide a Municipal Building Surveyor service that can be engaged in a shared manner by all five local councils, instead of councils needing to engage individual services.

The third phase will evaluate the program and lead to recommendations that can potentially be replicated across other regional councils.

The feasibility study will run until early 2026, and the outcomes will then be shared widely with all rural and regional Councils, so other regions can consider setting up their own Hubs to speed up approvals.

Support for this project is part of the Labor Government's record \$45 billion investment across rural and regional Victoria since 2014 to make our cities and towns even better places to live, work, stay and play.

For more information, visit rdv.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Gayle Tierney

"This initiative will make it easier for regional councils to access the building surveyor services they need, helping to fast-track property development in communities like the Wimmera and Mallee."

"We're proud to work with Rural Councils Victoria to back innovative ideas such as shared services, supporting rural communities to deliver the housing and infrastructure essential for their economic growth."

Quotes attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Development Michaela Settle

"Municipal Building Surveyors play a crucial role in supporting the safe and timely delivery of commercial and residential buildings, and this project promises to bring more of these services to the Wimmera and the Mallee."

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"From supporting the provision of housing to driving economic growth, this project will support these five councils to continue helping the development of thriving businesses and communities."

Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Jacinta Ermacora

"This trial is a game-changer for regional councils, helping to unlock new housing opportunities and make the development process more efficient for our local communities."

Quotes attributable to Rural Councils Victoria Chair Cr Mary-Ann Brown

"Rural Councils Victoria welcomes the announcement to fund a trial to bring more municipal building surveyors to rural Victoria. Rural communities are in desperate need of more housing and this trial will assist in addressing the housing challenges faced by these rural communities"

"It is pleasing to see that government has taken the RCV Rural Housing Action Plan into consideration and is delivering on the ask to increase rural expertise and capacity to deliver housing projects".

"Rural Councils Victoria is looking forward to working closely with the government to see more projects like this delivered in rural Victorian communities."