

MEDIA RELEASE

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Towong Shire Council Joins Call For \$150 million State Government Support Fund

Towong Shire Council has joined with Indigo Shire Council and other rural Councils across Victoria in requesting more State Government support in the form of a dedicated Rural Community Support Fund.

The \$150 million fund would help deliver essential, local services and infrastructure. Locally it could enable the delivery of key projects including the Upper Murray Events Centre, Walwa Streetscape Works and Eskdale Pedestrian links.

Towong Shire Council Mayor Cr David Wortmann said Council's request for financial support from the State forms part of a joint submission to the 2017/2018 State Budget from 38 rural councils for a \$150 million annual, dedicated Rural Communities Benefit Fund.

"Many of Victoria's rural councils are under increasing financial pressure to deliver services and maintain significant infrastructure assets across vast geographic areas, all with reduced State funding.

"The combined population of rural council areas is about 740,000 or 15 per cent of the Victoria's total population and despite contributing significantly to the State's economy and employment, comparatively rural councils receive little support from state government.

"In fact, it is becoming an all too common trend for rural councils to defer spending on infrastructure and reduce services in order to maintain the bare minimum for their communities.

"As part of the joint 2017/2018 Rural Councils Victoria (RCV) Budget Submission, Towong Shire Council has included specific requests for using a portion of a dedicated fund for urgent and essential community services," Cr Wortmann said.

Projects in Towong Shire that could be funded under a rural communities support fund include:

- Upper Murray Events Centre, Corryong (final funding contribution)
- School Crossing Supervisors program
- Upgrades to book collections in the Corryong and Tallangatta libraries
- Mobile Library Service
- Walwa Streetscape Project
- Eskdale pedestrian links

Towong Shire Council is a member of Rural Councils Victoria which represents 38 rural councils across Victoria. The combined population of these local government areas is 740,000 or fifteen percent of Victoria's total population.

[Download a copy of the 2017/2018 Rural Councils Victoria Budget Submission](#)

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