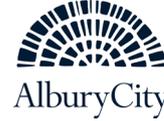




Australian Government



Porta, Wodonga, Victoria, Australia.



LibraryMuseum, Albury, New South Wales, Australia.

# Statement of Intent for the Albury Wodonga Regional Deal

*between the*

**Commonwealth of Australia, State of New South Wales, State of Victoria, Albury City Council and Wodonga City Council**

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This Statement of Intent is an agreement between the three levels of government to work together, in consultation with the community and local business sector, to pilot a Regional Deal for Albury Wodonga.

Combined, Albury Wodonga is one of Australia's largest regional economies, with a population of just over 90,000. Population growth in the region over the past five years has been strong (1.58 per cent per annum) and strong growth is expected to continue over the next two decades.

The Regional Deal will bring together all levels of government to harness local opportunities and strengths, including Albury Wodonga's strategic location and its unique lifestyle advantages. The Regional Deal will seek to ensure that Albury Wodonga prospers over the next decade by supporting population growth and economic development while also ensuring it remains a nationally-significant, liveable and prosperous region.

The Regional Deal will expand on the joint planning and priority-setting already undertaken by the Albury City Council and the Wodonga City Council through their Two Cities One Community partnership. To support the development of the Regional Deal, the Australian Government will provide an initial investment of \$3.2 million to support further strategic planning and projects with the local community, subject to funding being matched by the local councils.

Regional Deal partners acknowledge that community, business and government stakeholders will continue to be critical to identifying local priorities and delivering on a shared vision for the region. All levels of government will work collaboratively with the community to ensure the Regional Deal reflects the local community's aspirations for their region.



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## Priority areas for action

Priority areas for the Albury Wodonga Regional Deal include:

### 1. Economic Development

- We will focus on driving economic development in the region, building on the region's existing economic assets and advantages, such as access to infrastructure and freight routes, abundance of land, natural resources and environment, a growing population and proximity to quality education institutes.
- Opportunities include supporting growth in key sectors such as manufacturing and logistics, defence, agricultural business, and tourism; as well as supporting further decentralisation of public sector jobs to regional areas.

### 2. Harmonisation

- As Australia's first cross-border pilot Regional Deal, we will focus on working together to address cross-border challenges and harmonise regulatory barriers faced by sectors working on both sides of the border, and streamline cross-border service delivery. This will help to support business growth and job creation, and improve services for the local community.

### 3. Infrastructure and connectivity

- We will focus on opportunities to develop infrastructure that connects Albury Wodonga to key freight and infrastructure routes, and improves mobility for our people, industry, businesses and services. Connectivity will drive productivity for our businesses, improve the liveability of our communities and lift the competitiveness of our region.
- We will explore opportunities to leverage existing and proposed investments in the region, including the North-East Rail Line Upgrade and Inland Rail, as well as opportunities arising from the business case for faster rail between Melbourne and Albury Wodonga and the National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy.
- Opportunities to improve the region's mobile connectivity, capability and reliability by addressing telecommunications issues, upgrading local networks and progressing 'smart' initiatives will also be explored.

### 4. A Liveable Community

- We will focus on building a healthy and strong community in Albury Wodonga, helping to address challenges arising from a growing and ageing population and improving social outcomes for all residents.
- We will explore opportunities to facilitate greater participation in regional and local sports and activities offered in the region, with a focus on promoting female participation.
- We will explore opportunities that enhance liveability through good urban design, well considered accessible public spaces, improved access to open space and natural areas, invigoration of our CBDs and activation of the Murray River.



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## 5. Quality Regional Education and Health

- We will focus on encouraging new students to study at the quality education institutions in Albury Wodonga, seek opportunities to bring international students to the region and establish the region as a research centre of excellence.
- Opportunities will be explored to improve education and training pathways and outcomes, particularly for young people, and better connect education providers to local industry, business and community to address unemployment, workforce development, reskilling and adjustment for growth.
- We will explore opportunities to improve and deliver quality, integrated health facilities and services that attract high quality health and education professionals to the region to meet the demands and challenges of a growing and ageing population.

## 6. Supporting the Indigenous community

- We will work alongside the local Indigenous communities to investigate opportunities to improve education, health, employment, and economic outcomes, while recognising the strong connection to country and the importance of preserving, acknowledging and respecting the Indigenous culture.
- We will consider other initiatives or opportunities that are consistent with the vision and focus areas during the development of the Regional Deal.

## Albury Wodonga Regional Deal Governance

The signing of the Statement of Intent marks the beginning of the partnership between the Australian Government, New South Wales and Victorian State Governments, the Albury City Council and the Wodonga City Council, to develop the Albury Wodonga Regional Deal.

The Regional Deal will define priorities, investments, commitments and accountabilities for achieving joint outcomes over the life of the Deal. The establishment of a Regional Deal will require the three levels of government to consider all appropriate levers to support improved outcomes for the Albury Wodonga region.

Formal governance arrangements will be developed and agreed between the Regional Deal partners for the development of the Regional Deal. In addition to these arrangements, the parties commit to engage meaningfully with the community, civic leaders and industry in the development and implementation of the Regional Deal, through the establishment of community and business advisory groups.



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## Agreement

All parties agree to progress the development of a Regional Deal for Albury Wodonga in accordance with this Statement of Intent.

**Signed** for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by:

**The Hon  
Michael McCormack MP**  
Deputy Prime Minister  
Minister for Infrastructure,  
Transport and Regional  
Development  
Leader of The Nationals  
Federal Member for Riverina

**Signed** for and on behalf of the State of New South Wales by:

**The Hon  
John Barilaro MP**  
Deputy Premier of New South  
Wales  
Minister for Regional New South  
Wales  
Minister for Industry and Trade

**Signed** for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by:

**The Hon  
Jaclyn Symes MP**  
Minister for Agriculture, Minister  
for Regional Development,  
Minister for Resources  
Leader of the Legislative Council

**Signed** for and on behalf of the Albury City Council by:

**Cr Kevin Mack**  
Mayor of AlburyCity

**Signed** for and on behalf of the Wodonga City Council by:

**Cr Anna Speedie**  
Mayor of Wodonga

Dated: 10 July 2020