

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Regional Planning Hub program?

Regional Planning Hub is a new ongoing program to support councils in rural and regional Victoria. The program is being delivered by the Regional Planning Partnerships team within the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

The program provides rural and regional councils with statutory and strategic planning support and resources to:

- assist with peak workloads and priority developments
- build land use planning capacity and capability
- improve planning schemes to streamline and simplify processes and approvals
- facilitate significant regional planning projects.

Why is the Regional Planning Hub program being established?

The Regional Planning Hub program supports an identified planning need in rural and regional councils, which was first identified through stakeholder feedback to the *Planning and Building Approvals Process Review Discussion Paper* (2019) by the Commissioner for Better Regulation.

The Regional Planning Hub program is part of the Victorian Government's commitment to implementing the Commissioner for Better Regulation's planning reforms over the next four years.

For more information, click [here](#).

Is there a hub in each region?

No, there are no physical hubs in each region. However, Regional Planning Partnerships team members are located in a number of DELWP regional offices.

How long will the Regional Planning Hub program run and how much funding is available?

The Regional Planning Hub program is an ongoing program, with \$2 million per year for 2021-22 and 2022-23 and \$1.5 million of funding per year ongoing.

What services will the Regional Planning Hub program offer, and how?

Rural and regional councils can access support and resources for statutory and strategic planning work. This may be in the form of DELWP officer assistance, engagement of contractors/consultants managed by DELWP or direct funding to councils. Councils can also access support and resources for professional development, such as funding for accredited training courses and attendance at relevant conferences.

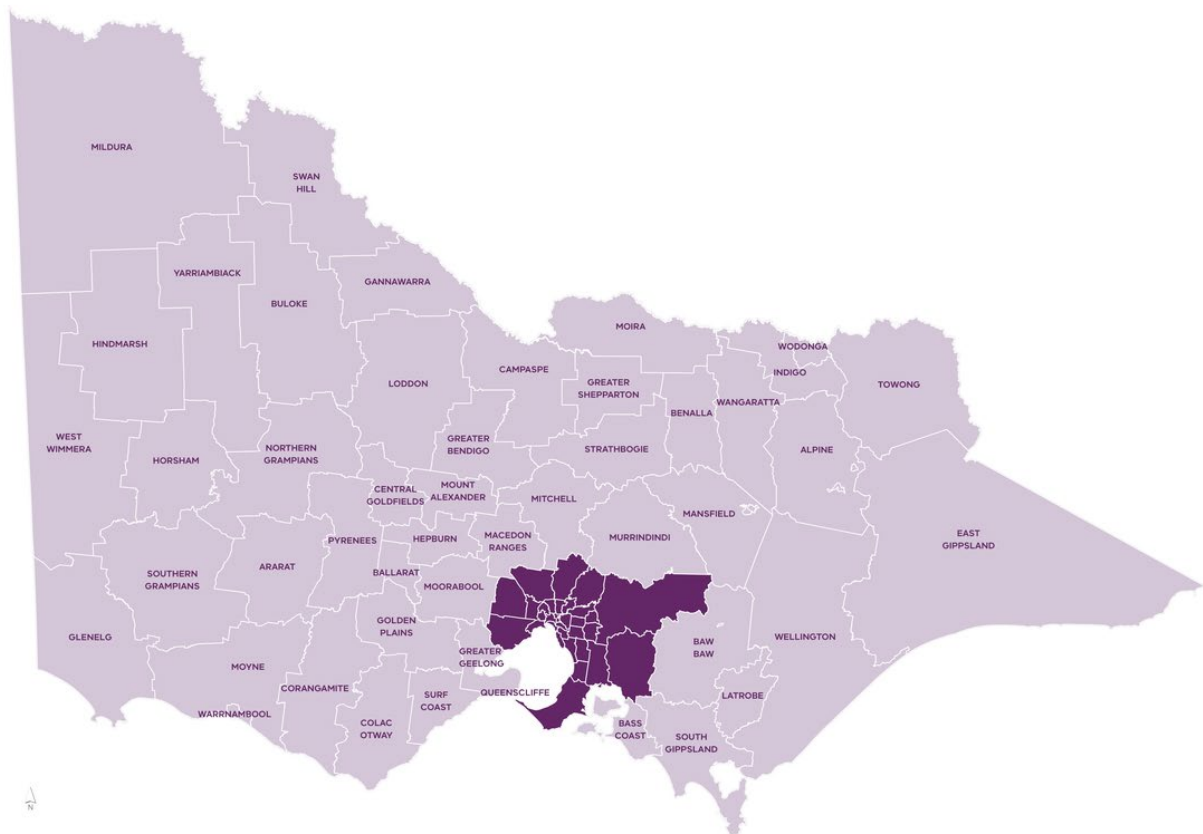
Regional Planning Hub program

In addition, the Regional Planning Partnerships team is working in conjunction with other Victorian Government departments and agencies to provide support and resources to councils.

What councils are a rural and regional council?

Rural and regional councils are shown on the map below.

Rural and Regional Councils in Victoria



How will councils benefit from the Regional Planning Hub program?

The Regional Planning Hub program provides rural and regional councils with access to support and resources to help deliver their statutory and strategic planning functions. The program also provides support and resources in ways that benefit councils at a regional level. This includes partnering with other government agencies or stakeholders to deliver targeted training at a regional level in specific areas of interest, and organising forums to build regional collaboration.

How do councils apply for Regional Planning Hub assistance?

Councils can request statutory and strategic planning support and professional development assistance through the Regional Planning Hub portal [here](#).

Councils can also contact the Regional Planning Partnerships team at regional.planning.hub@delwp.vic.gov.au to discuss their planning needs, prior to submitting a request.

What do councils need to demonstrate to be eligible for assistance? Can you provide an example?

Rural and regional councils are eligible for assistance if the request meets the following Regional Planning Hub criteria:

- **Need for assistance** – The assistance will address demonstrated need for surge support in statutory or strategic planning work or will improve capacity in councils. This may be due to, for example, an increase in planning permit applications or planning scheme amendments, specific skills required outside of available resources or staff shortages.
- **Statutory and strategic alignment** – The assistance will support a matter of demonstrated sound planning need. For example, it is a legislative or statutory requirement or has clear links to government policy, it is strategic work identified through a planning scheme review or strategy, or it aligns with government policy and priorities.
- **Social, environmental and economic impact** – The assistance will support Victoria's liveability and/or economic development and recovery in regional Victoria. For example, it will support a council's assessment of a planning permit application for a priority development, it will make changes to the planning scheme that will streamline approvals to facilitate development, or it will provide clear policy direction for decision makers and encourage investment in the region.
- **Planning improvement** – The assistance will deliver an improvement to a planning scheme and/or process. For example, it will update the planning scheme with current local content and policy or implement completed strategic planning work that will improve decision making, it will remove redundant provisions, or it will streamline policy within one or more planning schemes.

Does a request have to meet all the Regional Planning Hub criteria?

No, although requests for assistance that meet all or a higher number of criteria will be prioritised for assistance.

Our request for assistance meets most of the criteria. Why wasn't it supported?

DELWP will endeavour to support as many requests for assistance as possible. However, if your request wasn't supported, it may be due to the following:

- You may already be receiving other funding or assistance from government departments or agencies
- Your request for assistance may have limited links to the Regional Planning Hub program and/or is more suited to receive support from other planning reform initiatives or other government departments or agencies

You can contact the Regional Planning Partnerships team at regional.planning.hub@delwp.vic.gov.au if you would like more information about why your request wasn't supported and other opportunities for support through other planning reform initiatives.



Regional Planning Hub program

How will requests be prioritised?

Priority will be given to requests for assistance that meet all or most of the Regional Planning Hub criteria. Priority will also be provided to councils that have not recently received funding or assistance from government departments or agencies and/or can demonstrate the request may benefit a broader region.

How long will it take before I know if my request is successful?

The timeframes will vary for each request. However, the Regional Planning Partnerships team will assess your request against the Regional Planning Hub criteria once all required information has been provided.

Our request was supported. What happens next?

The Regional Planning Partnership team will contact you to discuss the support or resources that will be provided to meet the council's request.

How long do I have to request assistance from the Regional Planning Hub program?

You can put in a request for assistance, via the portal, at any time.

Can I make multiple requests for assistance?

Yes. There is no limit to the number of requests that a council can make through the Regional Planning Hub portal. Each application will be assessed against the Regional Planning Hub criteria and prioritised accordingly.

Who can I contact for more information?

You can contact the Regional Planning Partnership team via email regional.planning.hub@delwp.vic.gov.au if you would like more information about the Regional Planning Hub program.