



Brendon Grylls

Minister for Regional Development; Lands; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development

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Regional Centres Development Plan (SuperTowns) announced

Portfolio: Regional Development

An exciting State Government initiative to begin the process of enhancing and stimulating growth in key regional towns in the southern half of the State was announced today by Regional Development Minister Brendon Grylls.

Mr Grylls said the Government had endorsed an initial nine towns to share in \$85.5million in Royalties for Regions funding this year under the Regional Centres Development Plan (SuperTowns).

Katanning, Collie, Esperance, Northam, Jurien Bay, Morawa, Boddington, Manjimup and Margaret River have been selected in the first round of the initiative that will give local communities the opportunity to plan and implement projects and services to cater for a major population expansion and economic growth.

The Minister said \$5.5million was available in 2011-12 to assist with strategic planning in these communities and \$80million would be allocated to kick-start transformational projects.

“The nine towns selected in the first round of SuperTowns now have the opportunity to build on their own unique identity and vision,” he said.

“With population growth set to double in Western Australia over the next 30 to 40 years, SuperTowns will offer more opportunities and amenities for people who choose to live in the State’s regional areas and provide an attractive alternative to living in Perth.

“Some regional centres in the southern half of WA will play a critical role in absorbing some of the predicted population growth and the SuperTowns program is designed to help strategically-placed country towns to effectively prepare for this event.

“Failure to prepare for rapid population growth would be a mistake, as it was in the Pilbara where lack of strategic planning has been disastrous.”

Mr Grylls said regional development commissions and local government authorities would play a lead role in the SuperTowns program and be resourced to participate effectively in both the planning phase and project roll-out.

“I am excited that Royalties for Regions has created the opportunity for many regional centres to unlock their potential and I look forward to offering them the chance to access funding and assistance from a number of key State Government agencies,” he said.

The Minister said regional development commissions needed to work closely with local government and professional planners on regional investment blueprints that enhanced economic and social linkages between SuperTown centres and neighbouring smaller communities.

Mr Grylls said towns not listed for first round funding would have the opportunity to participate in a future round.

“The selection process for the initial SuperTowns program was based on local and regional economic drivers, as well as each community’s readiness to attract and sustain growth,” he said.

The nominations were evaluated by a high-level steering group comprising senior representatives

from the departments of Regional Development and Lands; Planning; Local Government; and Agriculture and Food, and representatives from the WA Planning Commission, LandCorp, Regional Development Council and the six southern regional development commissions.

The steering group provided advice to the Regional Development Council, which made recommendations to Government for consideration by Cabinet.

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