

2026 STATE ELECTION PLATFORM

Completing Our Communities



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INTRODUCTION

Outer Melbourne Councils (OMC) is a regional alliance of nine local governments that form a ring around metropolitan Melbourne and who cover nearly 2 million residents. This includes the shires of Cardinia, Yarra Ranges, Mitchell and Nillumbik, and the cities of Casey, Hume, Melton, Wyndham and Whittlesea.

OMC members believe that our residents should have access to jobs, services and infrastructure no matter where they live. This unites us in our collective approach to improving outcomes for one quarter of Victoria's population.

We remain a region of unrivalled potential. The outer suburbs are where much of Melbourne's population and housing growth will occur, and with the right investment, they can provide the services, industry and livability that sustain the entire greater Melbourne region.



CHALLENGES FACING OUTER MELBOURNE COMMUNITIES

Population growth and underinvestment

Our region has experienced rapid population growth, with OMC local government areas absorbing almost half of Victoria's population growth over the past decade. Despite this, investment by State and Commonwealth Governments in infrastructure and services has not matched demand.

This imbalance has created significant livability challenges. Critical infrastructure – roads, public transport, health facilities, schools, community facilities – has not kept pace with residential need, resulting in substantial service gaps.

Unless addressed, these shortfalls will worsen as population pressures mount, causing living standards in outer Melbourne to significantly decline. Already, many OMC areas face higher levels of disadvantage – such as family violence, financial stress, youth unemployment - and councils struggle to meet local needs with their constrained financial resources.

Future outlook

The Victorian Government's housing development targets released in June 2024 signal more population growth ahead. By 2051, the number of homes across OMC areas is projected to nearly double, which could push the population of outer Melbourne to 4 million – roughly half of Melbourne's anticipated 8 million residents.

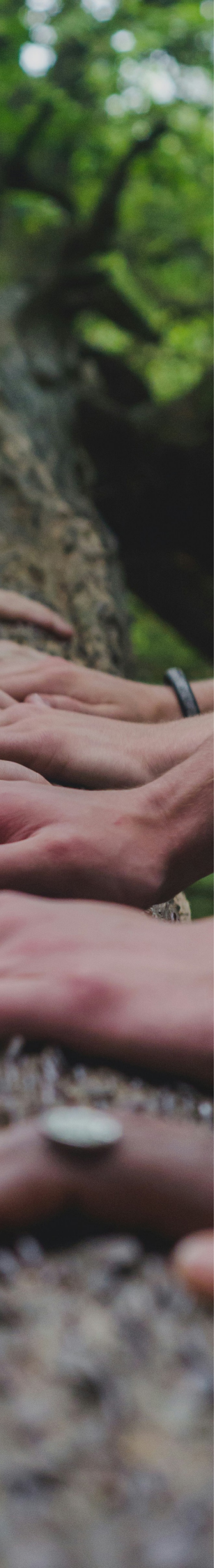
As such, a failure to invest now in infrastructure for outer Melbourne will only create a much larger financial burden for the State in the future, as the infrastructure backlog and social costs compound.

SUMMARY

Outer Melbourne Council's 2026 State Election Platform sets out a practical investment plan to secure the future of the communities where Melbourne is growing fastest. OMC's members are responsible for accommodating a substantial share of Victoria's population growth, yet government investment in services and infrastructure has not kept pace.

This platform responds to that imbalance with a comprehensive agenda that, if adopted, will ensure that Melbourne's outer suburban communities remain productive, connected and liveable.





Replacement of the Growing Suburbs Fund

This successful social infrastructure co-investment initiative was unfortunately abolished by the Victorian Government in 2025 - putting key projects at risk. A new, dedicated approach is needed to ensure that growing communities continue to receive the social infrastructure they need.

Transport – *Connecting People to Opportunity*

Outer Melbourne residents travel further and rely more heavily on road networks and public transport to access employment and essential services. Upgrading key roads, adding new train stations and rolling out frequent bus services will reduce congestion and support efficient freight movement. Beyond that, helping residents reach major employment centres quickly and reliably will lift workforce participation.

Driving Economic Growth - *Strengthening Freight and Industrial Capacity*

Outer Melbourne is central to Victoria's economic future. Its industrial land, logistics corridors and employment precincts support statewide supply chains. Targeted funding of enabling infrastructure will unlock private sector investment and expand local employment opportunities. Strengthening these economic foundations will benefit the entire Victorian economy.

Building Complete Communities

Complete communities are formed when population growth is matched with local services, social infrastructure and everyday destinations - from community facilities to open spaces. Delivering these alongside residential development transforms new suburbs from a collection of houses, into a place where people can live locally, stay connected and maintain a high quality of life.

Unlocking More Land for Homes

Outer Melbourne will deliver a large share of Victoria's future housing supply, yet current tax settings limit the ability of councils to recycle surplus land into new housing. Reform of the Windfall Gains Tax is needed so that land can be unlocked and the supply of new housing accelerated.

Stronger Infrastructure Partnerships

As Victoria's population grows, demand for government services and infrastructure continues to increase, while budgets become more constrained. Supporting councils to explore new infrastructure delivery models, including partnerships with private investors, can help accelerate projects and stretch public funds further.

The following section provides a consolidated snapshot of OMC's priority investment asks across each state electorate.

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REPLACEMENT OF THE GROWING SUBURBS FUND



Outer Melbourne communities have absorbed almost half of Victoria's population growth over the past decade. This has created significant liveability challenges as government investment in social infrastructure has struggled to keep pace with residential need, resulting in a growing gap.

Established in 2015, the Growing Suburbs Fund (GSF) was a critical Victorian Government initiative which worked to reduce that social infrastructure gap. By establishing a co-investment process with councils, the GSF helped deliver sports facilities, parks, community buildings and other much-needed local projects.

Between 2015 and 2025, over \$339 million in GSF funding was invested by the Victorian Government into outer Melbourne communities represented by OMC member councils.

Over the ten years of the GSF, for every \$1 spent by the Victorian Government on projects, OMC members collectively spent \$1.52 – which highlights the collaborative and cost-effective nature of the program.

The 2025/26 State Budget completely abolished the GSF, after it had been steadily reduced over two years. The abolishment of the GSF has meant that residents living in outer Melbourne have lost a dedicated funding stream for much needed social infrastructure.

Outer Melbourne councils relied on GSF grants to deliver projects that their capped rate base could not fully cover. These important community infrastructure projects are now likely to be delayed or cancelled.

"...local council areas that are trying to plan for the growth, but don't necessarily have the rate base...is something that [the Growing Suburbs] Fund has been able to really recognise and provide in advance of that growth, as best as possible."

~ The Hon. Jaclyn Symes MP, Victorian Treasurer, 15 May 2026



OMC ASK

The Victorian Government should establish a new **Outer Suburban Infrastructure Fund**, with \$50 million of annual funding, to replace the GSF.

The growth pressures on outer Melbourne have not lessened – in fact, they are intensifying. A dedicated fund ensures that social infrastructure (such as halls, parks, pools, maternal and child health centres) demanded by outer Melbourne communities is delivered.

Without it, OMC members face an infrastructure deficit that will only widen. Without such a fund, the costs of under-provision (such as congestion, fraying social cohesion and disengagement) will ultimately come back to the State Budget in other, more expensive forms.

The **Outer Suburban Infrastructure Fund** would involve OMC member councils proactively nominating priority social infrastructure projects for State investment – with the caveat being that only projects which have a degree of capital funding already allocated by a council can be nominated. This ensures every proposal has genuine local backing and that councils share responsibility for delivery. This co-funding requirement drives discipline in project selection, prioritising those that meet real community needs and are ready to proceed.

TRANSPORT

Connecting People to Opportunity



Outer Melbourne sits at the heart of Victoria's freight and commuter networks. Every day, large freight volumes move through our communities, while residents travel significant distances to access jobs, education and services. When key routes are congested or unreliable, productivity falls and Victorians face longer, more costly commutes.



Upgrades to the metropolitan rail network have improved mobility, but rapid population growth across outer Melbourne has outpaced transport access, reinforcing an existing heavy reliance on private vehicles. Car ownership and congestion are rising fastest in outer Melbourne because residents have limited practical alternatives for everyday travel.



Bus services in outer Melbourne are infrequent or non-existent, while key arterial roads struggle to carry growing traffic and freight. A balanced approach is required: new train stations and frequent bus services to improve accessibility, alongside targeted upgrades to road corridors that keep people and goods moving efficiently.

Improving transport connectivity is not simply a mobility issue - it is an economic participation issue. Ensuring residents can reach major employment centres quickly and reliably will lift workforce participation and strengthen local economies.

OMC has identified several priority transport projects where coordinated State investment will improve Victoria's transport network.

OMC ASKS

<p>Expansion of Outer Melbourne Buses</p> 	<p>State Electorates: Bass / Pakenham / Berwick / Cranbourne / Narre Warren South / Narre Warren North / Broadmeadows / Kalkallo / Greenvale / Sunbury / Kororoit / Melton / Sydenham / Macedon / Euroa / Eltham / Warrandyte / Eildon / Bundoora / Thomastown / Mill Park / Yan Yean / Point Cook / Laverton / Werribee / Tarneit / Monbulk / Croydon / Evelyn</p> <hr/> <p>Local Government: All Outer Melbourne Councils</p> <hr/> <p>Funding Ask: \$250 million</p> <hr/> <p>Funds would help deliver a package of bus service upgrades and new routes. Key elements include: improving weekend frequency on Route 828 (Berwick to Hampton); improving weekend and evening Kilmore Town bus services to match the train timetable; introducing a SmartBus along Princes Highway between Pakenham and Fountain Gate; fixing existing bus routes in Melton to create more frequent and direct routes with turn-up-and-go services; extending routes in Whittlesea growth areas such as Wollert and Donnybrook; increasing service frequency across Tarneit, Werribee, Point Cook and Williams Landing; and trialling new local access services including rural connections from St Andrews and Arthurs Creek to Mernda/Hurstbridge stations, establishing an orbital high-frequency bus route linking Werribee, Melbourne Airport and Box Hill along the Suburban Rail Loop North corridor and a Mount Dandenong service connecting Belgrave, Tecoma, Upwey and Belgrave South. Collectively these upgrades will align services with train timetables, improve reliability and provide practical public transport alternatives in areas currently dominated by car travel.</p>
<p>Outer Metropolitan Ring & E6 Freeway (Road & Rail)</p> 	<p>State Electorates: Bundoora / Thomastown / Mill Park / Yan Yean / Kalkallo / Sunbury / Kororoit / Sydenham / Laverton / Werribee / Tarneit</p> <hr/> <p>Local Government: Whittlesea City Council, Mitchell Shire Council, Hume City Council, Nillumbik Shire Council, Wyndham City Council, Melton City Council</p> <hr/> <p>The combined Outer Metropolitan Ring (OMR) / E6 Freeway project is a visionary 100km high-speed transport corridor connecting the north and west of Melbourne – stretching from Werribee to Thomastown. This project is long overdue and will be a game changer for residents and business, securing Victoria’s long-term economic prosperity. It would link the existing Princes Freeway, Western Highway, Calder Freeway, Hume Freeway and M80 Ring Road - connecting millions of residents in growing outer municipalities. It will connect freight transport hubs and employment precincts, such as Melbourne Airport, the Port of Melbourne, the future Baywest and regional centres. Furthermore, a freight rail connection will link the Commonwealth’s Inland Rail Project to the Western Interstate Freight Terminal and south-west rail. The OMR/E6 project is intended to support rapid population growth in outer North and West suburbs, where the Victorian Government has set the target for an additional 421,500 homes to be built by 2051. This project has been in planning for far too long – that is why the OMC is calling upon the Victorian Government, in partnership with the Commonwealth, to commit to all aspects of the project, including road, freight, and passenger rail services.</p>

Melton Line Electrification and Mt Atkinson & Thornhill Park Train Stations	State Electorates: Kororoit / Melton
	Local Government: Melton City Council
	Funding Ask: \$5.5 Billion
	<p>Electrification of the Melton Line and construction of new stations at Mt Atkinson and Thornhill Park will transform public transport access for Melbourne's fast growing western corridor. Extending the electrified network from Sunshine to Melton will significantly increase capacity, improve service frequency and reduce travel times, addressing growing demand on the Ballarat line as population and patronage continue to rise. Together with new stations serving emerging communities, the project will provide reliable access to jobs, education and services. Infrastructure Victoria estimates that this project would return benefits of up to \$1.70 for every dollar spent.</p>
	
Truganina Train Station	State Electorate: Laverton
	Local Government: Wyndham City Council
	Funding Ask: \$165 Million
	<p>Construction of a new train station at Truganina will improve public transport access for residents in Melbourne's rapidly growing western suburbs. The station will help relieve pressure on Tarneit Station and surrounding roads, while providing connections to employment areas, including the Western State Significant Industrial Precinct. It follows initial planning money provided by the State Government in the 2022 Fiscal Update to prepare for the eventual construction of a new station.</p>
	
Beveridge Train Station	State Electorate: Yan Yean
	Local Government: Mitchell Shire Council
	Funding Ask: \$70 million
	<p>Funds will deliver a new V/Line-serviced train station at Beveridge, within the Lockerbie North Precinct Structure Plan area. Rapid population growth across Melbourne's northern growth corridor is transforming Beveridge from a rural township into a major residential and employment centre, with the population forecast to rise from around 9,000 today to approximately 75,000 in 2041. At the same time, the Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal will generate significant daily commuter demand. Currently, residents and workers must travel to Wallan or Donnybrook stations, placing increasing pressure on already congested roads and train stations.</p>
	

Racecourse Road Duplication	State Electorate: Pakenham
	Local Government: Cardinia Shire Council
	Funding Ask: \$60 million
	<p>This involves adding new lanes and upgrading a major intersection to remove a key bottleneck. Racecourse Road is a key connection between the north and south of Pakenham, and the Monash Freeway. With many residents travelling towards the city for work every morning, a congestion-free link between the Princes Highway and Monash Freeway is essential for a functional road network. A 10-minute trip along Racecourse Road can balloon to over 30 minutes during peak hour and will only get worse as Pakenham grows by more than 7,000 residents in the next decade.</p>



Princes Highway & Coniston Avenue Intersection Upgrade	State Electorate: Berwick
	Local Government: City of Casey
	Funding Ask: \$30 million
	<p>Funding will deliver a signalised intersection at the junction of Princes Hwy, Coniston Ave and the Wilson Botanic Park access road in Berwick, alongside new pedestrian crossings and upgraded street lighting. Princes Hwy carries high traffic volumes (including 950,000 visitors to Wilson Botanic Park annually) and lacks safe crossing points near the park entrance and nearby bus stops, creating risks for pedestrians and bus users. Installing traffic signals and improving lighting will enhance safety for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians while improving access to the park.</p>










Disaster Resilient Roads Package	State Electorates: Monbulk / Eildon / Evelyn
	Local Government: Yarra Ranges Shire
	Funding Ask: \$25 million
	<p>Roughly 700km of local roads remain unsealed. This project would seal priority routes in areas most exposed to bushfires, landslips and intense rainfall. This would enable reliable all-weather access and improve emergency response times. If left unsealed, these roads increase evacuation risk for communities and could isolate townships during emergencies.</p>

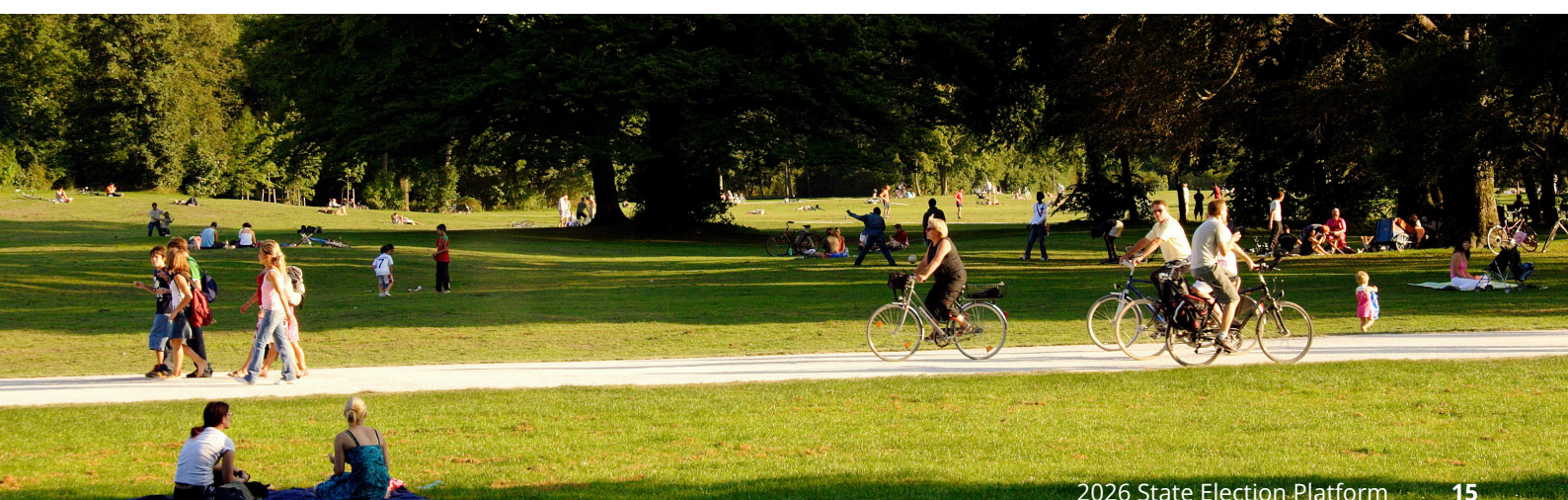


Aitken Boulevard Duplication	State Electorate: Greenvale
	Local Government: Hume City Council
	Funding Ask: \$22 million
	<p>This project involves the construction of a second carriageway between Craigieburn Road and Somerton Road. Given recent duplication works on feeder roads, there is a strong possibility of significant congestion if this traffic bottleneck is not addressed. Intersections and street lighting along the route will also be upgraded.</p>



Civic Drive Roundabout Upgrade 	State Electorates: Eltham / Bundoora
	Local Government: Nillumbik Shire Council
	Funding Ask: \$6 million
	Investment will support a business case to upgrade the roundabout at Diamond Creek Road and the Greensborough Bypass, one of Melbourne's most dangerous intersections. With traffic volumes expected to increase by several thousand following the completion of the North East Link, this project will investigate grade separation to improve safety, reduce congestion and accommodate traffic demand. Upgrading this critical junction will strengthen the road network in Melbourne's north-east.
Somerton Rd & Section Rd Intersection Upgrade 	State Electorate: Greenvale
	Local Government: Hume City Council
	Funding Ask: \$3 million
	This project involves the construction of signalised intersection at Somerton Rd & Section Rd. It also includes the provision of public lighting for enhanced safety and the construction of shared user path, connecting existing paths to the Greenvale Recreation Reserve.
Yan Yean Road - Stage 2 Preparation 	State Electorate: Yan Yean
	Local Government: Nillumbik Shire Council
	Funding Ask: \$1.75 million
	This involves sealing Eisemans Road, De Fredericks Road and Hacketts Road in Yarrambat. This is necessary preparation work which must be completed prior to the Stage 2 upgrade of Yan Yean Road.
Warburton Highway Safety Upgrades 	State Electorates: Eildon / Evelyn
	Local Government: Yarra Ranges Council
	Funding Ask: \$1.6 million
	This project will deliver targeted safety upgrades along the Warburton Highway between Wandin and Warburton, improving conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. The highway passes through several townships where residents, school students and visitors regularly cross to access bus stops and key trails, creating ongoing safety risks. With traffic volumes continuing to grow - particularly during peak visitor periods - these upgrades will improve safety and support tourism access in a key regional transport corridor.

<p>Clyde Road Corridor Upgrade</p> 	<p>State Electorates: Bass / Cranbourne / Berwick</p> <hr/> <p>Local Government: City of Casey</p> <hr/> <p>This project will duplicate up to 14km of arterial road (up to three lanes in each direction), signalise intersections, build new shared path connections, install new bus stops and pedestrian crossings, improve traffic management technology, and provide necessary planning for Clyde-Five Ways Road and Ballarto Road to accommodate future growth.</p>
<p>Donnybrook Road Duplication</p> 	<p>State Electorates: Yan Yean / Kalkallo</p> <hr/> <p>Local Government: Whittlesea City Council / Hume City Council</p> <hr/> <p>Funds will support the duplication of Donnybrook Road between Epping Road and Merri Creek & between Dwyer Street and Donnybrook Station. This will improve capacity and safety on a critical east-west transport corridor serving Melbourne's northern growth areas. The upgrade will separate traffic, add turning lanes and support the introduction of bus services linking residents to Donnybrook Station and nearby employment precincts. As Donnybrook's population grows rapidly, the project will improve traffic flow, reduce congestion and provide more reliable access to jobs, schools and key services.</p>
<p>Kilmore Bypass</p> 	<p>State Electorate: Euroa</p> <hr/> <p>Local Government: Mitchell Shire Council</p> <hr/> <p>Construction of the Kilmore Bypass will divert through-traffic from the Northern Highway away from Kilmore's town centre, improving safety and traffic flow for residents and businesses. As Kilmore's population is projected to double over the next two decades, the existing highway through the township is expected to face increasing congestion and heavy vehicle traffic. Delivering the bypass will support more efficient freight movement through the region, while improving safety for local residents.</p>



DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH



Strengthening Freight and Industrial Capacity

Outer Melbourne is central to Victoria's economic future. The region contains major logistics corridors, industrial precincts and critical construction supply chains.




However, many key corridors and industrial areas across outer Melbourne face infrastructure constraints that limit their economic potential. Road bottlenecks slow freight movements, while a lack of enabling infrastructure in emerging industrial areas prevents new employment land from being activated.




At the same time, outer Melbourne continues to be characterised by a high level of outbound commuting. In the Casey and Cardinia growth areas, around 110,000 residents leave their municipality each day to travel to work. This has economic costs through lost productive time, and social costs - with studies estimating that for every additional ten minutes spent commuting, a person's engagement in community affairs is reduced by 10 per cent.

Targeted State investment can unlock private sector activity, improve supply chain efficiency and support the industrial employment growth. Strengthening these foundations will help improve Victoria's productivity, drive economic growth and provide greater job opportunities closer to where people live.



OMC ASKS

Thompsons Road Upgrade and Extension 	State Electorates: Berwick / Pakenham
	Local Government: City of Casey
	Funding Ask: \$900 million
	<p>This significant project involves upgrading and extending Thompsons Road from Berwick-Cranbourne Rd in Clyde, to Koo Wee Rup Rd in Pakenham. This would deliver a 30km cross-metropolitan high-capacity transport, freight and public transport route from Carrum to Pakenham, servicing Frankston, Greater Dandenong, Casey and Cardinia. It would unlock the south east employment corridor (up to 100,000 local jobs), as well as new freight and residential land - creating over 500 construction jobs. Finally, it would enable regional connections to Gippsland (M1), South Gippsland (C422), Mornington Peninsula (M780 & M11) and the EastLink (M3).</p>
New Pakenham TAFE 	State Electorate: Pakenham
	Local Government: Cardinia Shire Council
	Funding Ask: \$65 million
	<p>Construction of a new TAFE campus in Pakenham will provide local access to vocational education and training for one of Victoria's fastest growing communities. The facility would focus on delivering skills in areas such as modular construction, advanced manufacturing and renewable energy - supporting the needs of local industry across Melbourne's south-east and Gippsland. By reducing the need for students and apprentices to travel long distances for training, this project will improve access to education and help build a skilled workforce to support economic growth.</p>
Lang Lang Truck Bypass 	State Electorate: Bass
	Local Government: Cardinia Shire Council
	Funding Ask: \$57 million
	<p>Funding will support the planning and construction of a dedicated truck bypass around the Lang Lang township, connecting local sand quarries directly to the South Gippsland Highway. Sand extracted from this region is a critical input for Melbourne's construction industry, supporting housing and infrastructure development. Currently, trucks are forced to travel through the town centre. This requires them to slow down and operate alongside pedestrians - reducing freight efficiency. A dedicated bypass would enhance regional supply chains, while also improving community safety.</p>

Hilldene Employment Precinct 	State Electorate: Euroa
	Local Government: Mitchell Shire Council
	Funding Ask: \$31 million
	<p>This involves building enabling infrastructure for the Hilldene Employment Precinct near Seymour, which will then unlock new industrial land and support local job creation. The precinct will address industrial land shortages in the region and provide industrial lots with strong access to the Hume Freeway and Victoria’s northern freight corridor. Council has already completed early planning works, but enabling infrastructure is required before businesses can open within the precinct.</p>
Bulla-Diggers Rest Road Bridge 	State Electorate: Sunbury
	Local Government: Hume City Council
	Funding Ask: \$4 million
	<p>Funding will support the construction of a new two-lane bridge over Jacksons Creek on Bulla–Diggers Rest Road, replacing the existing single-lane bridge that currently restricts traffic flow and creates safety risks. This road is a key connection between Sunbury, Diggers Rest, the Calder Freeway and Melbourne Airport, carrying significant commuter and freight traffic. However, the current bridge forces vehicles to give way in alternating directions, creating delays and increasing the risk of accidents. A new two-lane bridge would remove this bottleneck, improve safety and strengthen an important freight route used by trucks travelling across Melbourne’s north-west.</p>
Hopkins Road Duplication 	State Electorate: Kororoit
	Local Government: Melton City Council
	<p>Duplication of Hopkins Road between the Western Freeway and Boundary Road will upgrade a critical north–south transport corridor that links critical employment precincts in Mt Atkinson, Warrawee, Derrimut Fields, Chartwell East and Ravenhall. The project will deliver additional lanes, signalised intersections, safer pedestrian and cycling paths and improvements to the Western Highway interchange - addressing significant congestion and safety risks. With traffic volumes expected to rise sharply as nearby communities and employment precincts grow, this upgrade will improve freight efficiency and productivity, whilst providing safer, more reliable travel for residents and workers.</p>

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BUILDING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

Outer Melbourne municipalities have absorbed almost half of Victoria's population growth over the past decade, but government investment in social infrastructure and services has not matched demand.

This imbalance has created significant liveability challenges. Investment in critical social infrastructure – community halls, parks, pools, sports centres, maternal and child health centres – has not kept pace with residential need, resulting in substantial gaps.

Unless addressed, these gaps will worsen as population pressures mount, causing living standards in outer Melbourne to decline. This would compound existing challenges in our communities, which already face higher levels of family violence, financial stress and youth unemployment.

Complete communities are formed when population growth is matched with local services and social infrastructure. Delivering these alongside residential development transforms new suburbs from a collection of houses, into real communities – with a strong social fabric and high quality of life.

ISSUES IN FOCUS – GAIC:

Outer Melbourne councils are required to deliver significantly more social infrastructure than established areas, simply to keep pace with population growth. For example, the Melton City Council alone must deliver 20 new community centres, 10 active open spaces and 3 new libraries over the next decade.

While developer contributions and the Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution (GAIC) are intended to help fund this infrastructure, in practice there are persistent funding gaps, delays in expenditure and sometimes limited alignment between where funds are collected and where they are ultimately invested.

GAIC must be fixed so that funding is delivered earlier, used transparently, and directed to the communities where it is collected. This means giving councils a stronger role in setting priorities and ensuring investment keeps pace with growth. Without reform, infrastructure will continue to lag - leaving fast-growing communities without the services they need, when they need them.

CASE STUDY:

The Pool and Library Access Gap




Over one-third of Melbourne's babies and toddlers live in outer suburban communities, yet these areas have significantly fewer aquatic centers and libraries than inner Melbourne. According to Infrastructure Victoria, in 2021 Yarra City Council had roughly 5,000 young people per pool – compared to around 48,000 young people per pool in the Wyndham local government area.




Historically, the Victorian and Federal governments helped fund the construction of new libraries and pools across our suburbs. But in recent years local councils have been left to go it alone, with only ad hoc funding contributions. This is unjust and unsustainable.

It's only fair that the cost of new pools and libraries is split equally between the Federal Government, the Victorian Government and local councils. This approach will decrease the access gap faced by outer Melbourne residents and help improve their quality of life.





OMC ASKS

<p>Greenhill Recreation Precinct</p> 	<p>State Electorate: Kalkallo</p> <hr/> <p>Local Government: Mitchell Shire Council</p> <hr/> <p>Funding Ask: \$116 million</p> <hr/> <p>Funding will support the first stages of the Greenhill Recreation Precinct in Wallan, including a regional dedicated gymnastics centre and a major aquatics facility with a 25-metre indoor pool. The precinct will serve the rapidly expanding communities of Wallan, Beveridge and surrounding areas, where access to aquatic facilities is currently limited. By delivering modern recreation infrastructure that supports community sport, aquatic education and active lifestyles - the precinct will improve health and wellbeing, while strengthening social connection across the northern growth corridor.</p>
<p>Riverdale Aquatic Centre</p> 	<p>State Electorate: Tarneit</p> <hr/> <p>Local Government: Wyndham City Council</p> <hr/> <p>Funding Ask: \$50 million</p> <hr/> <p>The proposed Riverdale Aquatic Centre in Tarneit will be a significant partnership and will support the needs of Wyndham's growing population – increasing community wellbeing, strengthening community connections and improving water safety. Housing development in Wyndham has outpaced the development of aquatic and sports infrastructure. By supporting this project in partnership with Wyndham City Council, the State Government will ensure aquatic facilities are able to keep up with the significant growth being experienced in Melbourne's western suburbs.</p>
<p>Cardinia Life Regional Basketball and Gymnastics Stadium Redevelopment</p> 	<p>State Electorate: Pakenham</p> <hr/> <p>Local Government: Cardinia Shire Council</p> <hr/> <p>Funding Ask: \$20 million</p> <hr/> <p>Expansion of the existing Cardinia Life facility and the inclusion of a Regional Basketball and Gymnastics Stadium is needed in order to meet the needs of Cardinia Shire's rapidly growing population. The project will deliver four new indoor courts, a new show court with seating for 1,500 spectators and upgraded change rooms and amenities. These upgrades will significantly increase capacity for community sport and competition, ensuring local residents have access to modern facilities.</p>

Cranbourne Hub 	State Electorate: Cranbourne
	Local Government: City of Casey
	Funding Ask: \$10 million
	Funding will support the construction of a purpose-built, integrated community services hub in the heart of the Cranbourne activity centre. The Cranbourne Hub will offer the community easy access to a variety of Council and community services in one convenient location. The Hub will be home to Council's Cranbourne Customer Service and Youth Information Centre alongside Connected Libraries – Cranbourne Branch and Peninsula Legal Community Centre, with additional space for one or more complementary Community Service Organisations.
Stronger services for young Victorians in the Yarra Valley 	State Electorates: Eildon / Evelyn
	Local Government: Yarra Ranges Shire
	Funding Ask: \$10 million
	Funding will support stronger youth and mental health services across the Yarra Valley, responding to growing demand among young people aged 8–25. Geographic isolation and pandemic disruption has limited access to early support services, contributing to higher disengagement from education and work. Expanding early-intervention programs will provide young people with accessible support, strengthen families and reconnect young Victorians with education, employment and community.
Aqueduct Trail Upgrade 	State Electorates: Eltham / Bundoora
	Local Government: Nillumbik Shire Council
	Funding Ask: \$9 million
	This upgrade to the Aqueduct Trail in Nillumbik would fill a critical missing link in Melbourne's walking and cycling network. The project will deliver a new trail section connecting the Plenty River Trail near Lear Court to the Diamond Creek Trail at Allendale Road, creating a safe and continuous regional link for active transport and recreation.
Lilydale Recreation Reserve – Sport & Community Hub 	State Electorate: Evelyn
	Local Government: Yarra Ranges Shire
	Funding Ask: \$8.75 million
	This project will deliver a new multi-purpose community facility in Lilydale. The facility will include all-gender changerooms, umpire facilities, community spaces, a gym, kitchen and social areas, and will support a range of local sporting clubs and community users. Designed as a multi-use asset, the facility will also play a broader community role as a potential youth hub and emergency relief centre.

Progress Reserve Sports & Community Centre Upgrade 	State Electorate: Broadmeadows
	Local Government: Hume City Council
	Funding Ask: \$7 million
	New active sports fields and an upgraded community facility to provide new welcoming spaces for the community to come together.

Hardys Road Active Space Reserve 	State Electorate: Berwick
	Local Government: City of Casey
	Funding Ask: \$5 million
	This investment will assist in delivering a district cricket, soccer, and rugby facility in the rapidly growing suburb of Clyde North. The population is currently estimated at 68,506 (an increase of 114.5% from 2021 to 2026) and is expected to reach approximately 110,000 by 2036. District level facilities like this are needed to ensure equitable access to sport, recreation and opportunities that improve physical health, mental wellbeing, and social cohesion.

Whittlesea Youth Hub and Spoke 	State Electorates: Mill Park / Thomastown / Yan Yean / Bundoora
	Local Government: Whittlesea City Council
	Funding Ask: \$3 million
	Funding will support the establishment of a purpose-built Youth Hub in the Whittlesea local government area, delivering social services through a hub and spoke model across the municipality. The facility will provide a central location for youth programs, activities and specialist support - with outreach services delivered through schools, community centres and other local venues. By expanding access to prevention-focused youth programs, the project will strengthen youth engagement and improve wellbeing outcomes.

Melton Youth Engagement 	State Electorates: Melton / Kororoit / Sydenham / Sunbury
	Local Government: Melton City Council
	Funding Ask: \$3 million
	Expanded youth engagement programs across the City of Melton will provide young people with access to mental health support, skills training and early intervention. Delivered in partnership with local organisations, this initiative will focus on prevention and opportunity, helping young people prepare for the workforce while addressing risks such as homelessness, disengagement and crime.

UNLOCKING MORE LAND FOR HOMES



Introduced in Victoria from 1 July 2023, the Windfall Gains Tax (WGT) imposes a tax of up to 50% on the uplift in land value resulting from certain rezonings. The intent was to allow the State to capture a portion of the profit gained when land is rezoned for residential or commercial use.

However, the WGT has created unintended consequences for local government and housing supply. Unlike tertiary education institutions and other non-profit providers, local councils are not exempt from WGT. When councils rezone and sell surplus land, they are taxed.

While the tax was intended to capture large private windfalls, the actual revenue raised has been limited.

In the 2024-25 financial year, WGT was budgeted to bring in \$109 million – but actual revenue was only \$15 million. Within this small revenue stream, the share attributable to the rezoning of council-owned land would represent a minuscule amount.

Despite this, the WGT can materially impact the feasibility of council plans to recycle surplus land into new housing, which in turn acts as a drag on housing supply and liveability outcomes, particularly in outer Melbourne.

By 2051, outer Melbourne's population is projected to be nearly 4 million – double the current figure. Without reform, the WGT will continue to act as a barrier to residential development in the very communities expected to support Victoria's growth.



OMC ASK

To ensure that the WGT supports rather than hinders Victoria's housing and infrastructure objectives, the Victorian Government should explore targeted reforms to its design and application to local government.

A key reform would be amending the *Windfall Gains Tax Act 2021* to exempt local government from WGT when council-owned land is rezoned and used for residential purposes. This would unlock additional land for housing and enable councils to reinvest proceeds into new social infrastructure projects.

CASE STUDY:

Huskisson Recreation Reserve

The Huskisson residential development is a proposed 19-lot neighbourhood on City of Whittlesea land within the under-utilised Huskisson Recreation Reserve in Lalor. Approximately 3,079 sqm of this reserve is proposed to be rezoned from Public Park and Recreation Zone to residential use, to enable housing development.

The rezoning triggers a Windfall Gains Tax liability of approximately \$382,500, representing 50% of the land value uplift. This tax makes the project commercially unviable without an exemption. At least 15% of the 19 new homes would be affordable housing delivered in a well-located neighbourhood, close to critical services and infrastructure.

If delivered, beyond provision of new affordable homes in a location with good access to public transport, healthcare, retail, and employment hubs, this project would address long-standing access and safety concerns of Huskisson Recreation Reserve. By orienting new homes to face the reserve, this project would seek to activate the park edge, improving passive surveillance and deterring antisocial behaviour.

STRONGER INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIPS



Across Victoria, demand for government services and infrastructure continues to grow, while ability of government to fund new projects is increasingly constrained. This means that governments at all levels must find new ways to deliver the transport and social infrastructure Victorians expect.

Local government plays a critical role in this task. Councils collectively spent more than \$4.1 billion on capital works in 2025-26 and \$4.15 billion in 2024-25 - reflecting their central role in delivering local infrastructure. The Victorian Government has acknowledged that, given the long lifespan of infrastructure assets, councils should consider a broader range of financing and delivery models, beyond a reliance on direct funding.

Despite this, many councils remain reluctant to pursue alternative financing models, such as public-private partnerships (PPPs). The core issue is access to organisational capability. Most councils do not have the in-house commercial, legal or financial expertise required to negotiate complex agreements with major lenders, private investors or infrastructure delivery partners.

As a result, councils typically avoid pursuing partnership models, even where they may represent the most practical way to deliver infrastructure sooner or spread costs more fairly.

This represents a missed opportunity. Around the world, well-structured PPPs allow governments to retain public oversight while leveraging private capital, expertise and efficiency to deliver infrastructure faster and more sustainably. In a constrained fiscal environment, PPPs can help stretch public funds further.



OMC ASK

To help unlock new pathways for infrastructure delivery, the Victorian Government should establish a dedicated **Local Infrastructure Partnerships** Advisory Unit within the Department of Treasury and Finance.

This unit would provide expert advisory support to councils and other public sector entities exploring PPPs or other innovative infrastructure delivery models.

The unit would not act as an approvals body or mandate the use of partnerships. Instead, its role would be to provide practical support including commercial advice, template contracts, risk-allocation guidance and assistance connecting councils with potential financing partners.

By strengthening the capability of the public sector to engage confidently with private capital, this reform would help unlock new infrastructure projects, accelerate delivery of social infrastructure and ensure governments can continue meeting the needs of growing communities, despite fiscal constraints.

