



Advocacy Priorities  
for the City of Melton





### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Melton City Council acknowledges the Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners and custodians of this land and pays respect to their Elders past and present.

## INVESTMENT IN GROWTH NEEDS A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

The City of Melton is experiencing rapid growth, with population forecast to almost double to 455,980 over the next two decades, supported by the development of more than 109,000 new homes. It is an exciting period of growth and together, with government partners, we will create a liveable community. The City of Melton is delivering on the ambitions of the housing agenda of the Victorian Government and the Australian Government. However, investment in housing must be supported by investment in infrastructure and services. It takes a partnership approach to investment by all levels of government to create a liveable city.

### GROWTH



75

BABIES BORN PER WEEK



79

FAMILIES MOVE INTO THE MUNICIPALITY PER WEEK



6.61%

ANNUAL POPULATION GROWTH

### NUMBER OF RESIDENTS

241,121

2025

363,485

2036

455,980

2046

### NUMBER OF DWELLINGS

81,656

2025

125,838

2036

160,103

2046

Source: Profile id. September 2025

# GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT RECOGNISES GROWTH

A collaborative approach between local, state, and federal governments in delivering infrastructure and services is essential to maintaining the liveability of our community. The Australian Government and Victorian Government have made significant investments in the City of Melton, with a range of major projects either committed, in planning, or under construction.



## Projects currently under construction or in planning

PROJECT	COMPLETION
<b>New Melton Hospital</b> – \$900 million commitment by the Victorian Government	2029
<b>New Melton TAFE</b> – \$55 million commitment by the Victorian Government.	2028
<b>New Melton train station</b> – a funding commitment by the Victorian Government as part of the Level Crossing Removal Project	2027
<b>Upgrade to the Western Highway between Melton and Caroline Springs</b> – \$1 billion commitment from the Australian Government	TBC
<b>Upgrades to the Melton Highway</b>	2026
Upgrades to the Melton Highway – signalised intersection on Leakes Road funded by the Victorian Government	2026
Upgrades between the Regency and Crowne Drive funded by the Victorian Government	2026
<b>Calder Park Interchange</b> – funded jointly between the Australian Government and Victorian Government	TBC
<b>Melton Line upgrade</b> – \$650 million jointly funded by the Australian Government and Victorian Government	2027
<b>Derrimut, Hopkins and Boundary Roads intersection upgrade</b> – funded by the Victorian Government	2027
<b>New bus services to new estates</b> – funded by the Victorian Government	2026
<b>Level crossing removals on Ferris, Coburns, Exford and Hopkins Roads</b> – funded by the Victorian Government	2026
<b>New Schools</b> – a commitment in the 2025/2026 Victorian State Budget	
Kolorer College (formerly Cobblebank Secondary School)	Opening 2026
Murrum Primary School (formerly Toolern Waters Primary School)	Opening 2026
Wiyal Primary School (formerly Plumpton Primary School)	Opening 2026
Mindalk Primary School (formerly Tarneit Plains Primary School)	Opening 2026
Aintree North Primary School (interim name)*	Opening 2027
Additional stages of new schools: Yarrabing Secondary College	Opening 2027
<b>Upgrades to existing school facilities</b> – a commitment in the 2025/2026 Victorian State Budget	
Kurunjang Secondary College	2027
Melton South Primary School	2027
<b>Community Centres</b> – Building Blocks funding by the Victorian State Government	
Weir Views Children’s and Community Centre	2027
Deanside Children’s and Community Centre	2028
Diggers Rest Children’s and Community Centre	2028
<b>Aquatic and Leisure Centre in Fraser Rise*</b> – supported by \$15 million investment by the Australian Government	2028
<b>Community Services Building in Cobblebank*</b> – supported by the Victorian Government (\$4.6 million) and Australian Government (\$15 million)	2027

\* denotes interim name

# CITY OF MELTON IN 2051

The investments we make today will create the community we want for the future.

- Prosperous
- Educated
- Connected
- Healthy
- Safe
- Sustainable

Council's advocacy priorities represent our community's ambitions for access to jobs, education, health, transport and the environment, and are guided by the principles of considered planning and strong, strategic partnerships.

Our community is ambitious, young and diverse with a median age of 33 years and has a higher proportion of larger households than Greater Melbourne. We are also a culturally diverse community with almost 36 per cent of residents born overseas representing 161 different countries.

Between the last Census years 2016 and 2021, our community's level of education and average income increased, however, there is a high rate of youth disengagement and below-average levels of attainment of tertiary education.

Investment in intergenerational infrastructure and services underpin economic prosperity and community wellbeing.

### Population 2025



300 ————— 30,000

### Population projection for 2046



300 ————— 30,000

### Employment projections for 2041

#### Employment precincts

#### Priority projects

- Melton Hospital
- Aquatic and Leisure Centre in Fraser Rise
- Community Services Building in Cobblebank
- Western Intermodal Freight Terminal (WIFT)
- Outer Metropolitan Ring (OMR)
- Proposed train station
- Existing train station



Sources  
Population projections – Profile id.  
Jobs – Precinct Structure Plans

**11,421 JOBS**  
Plumpton Major Town Centre and Industrial Precinct

**10,027 JOBS**  
Melton Industrial Precinct

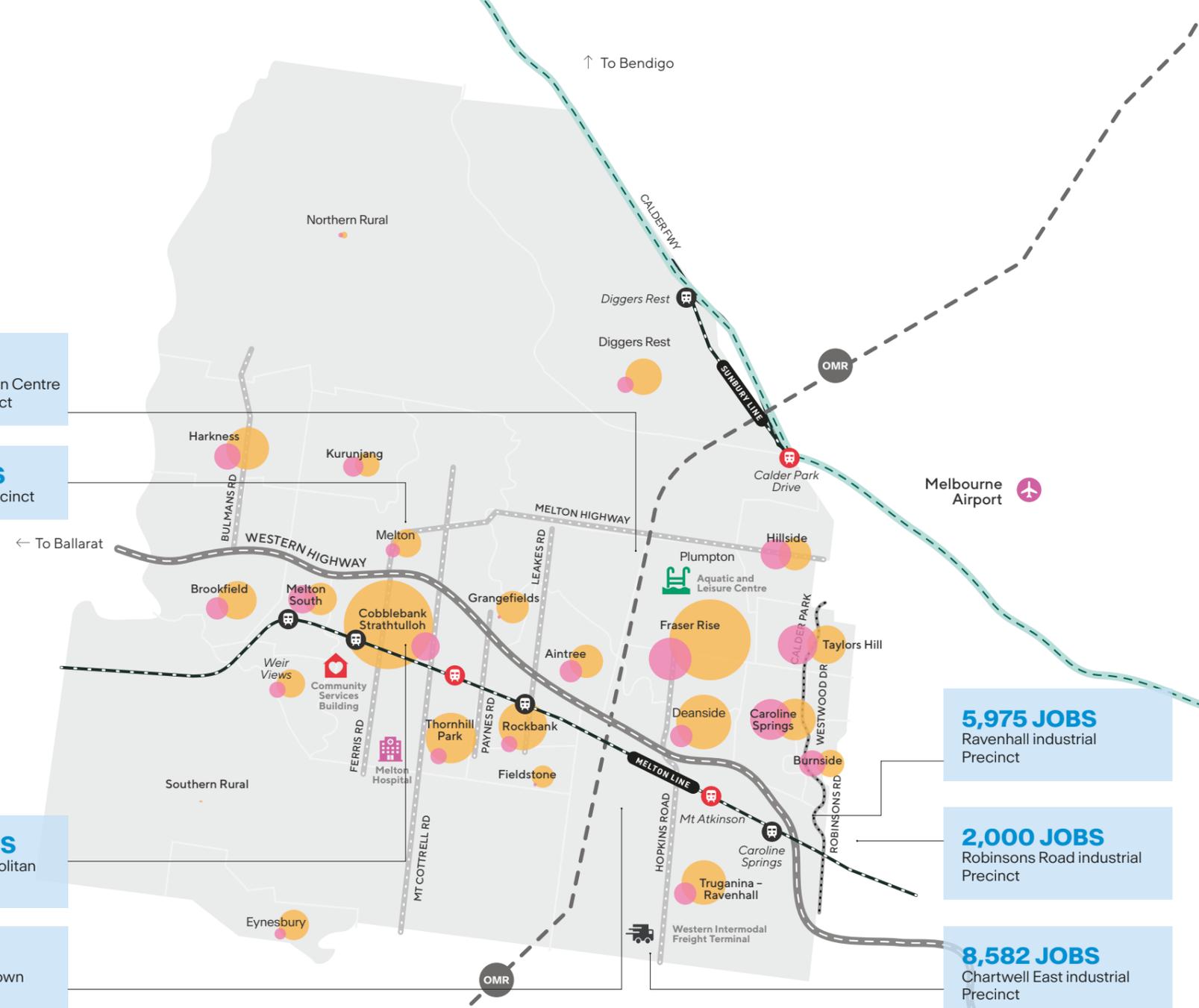
**24,000 JOBS**  
Cobblebank Metropolitan Activity Centre

**3,200 JOBS**  
Mt Atkinson Major Town Centre

**5,975 JOBS**  
Ravenhall industrial Precinct

**2,000 JOBS**  
Robinsons Road industrial Precinct

**8,582 JOBS**  
Chartwell East industrial Precinct





'The Victorian Government should extend the metropolitan train network to Melton, Mount Atkinson and Deer Park. These places have strong population growth and plans for metropolitan activity centres, including the new Melton Hospital.

By 2030, the government should:

- extend metropolitan train services from Sunshine to Melton by electrifying the Melton line
- build two more tracks to provide four tracks from Sunshine to Caroline Springs to allow for faster Geelong, Ballarat and Wyndham Vale V/Line services
- build two new train stations at Thornhill Park (Paynes Road) and Mount Atkinson (Hopkins Road) to support communities currently without rail access.'

INFRASTRUCTURE VICTORIA, VICTORIA'S INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2025-2055, NOVEMBER 2025

# OUR COMMUNITY

## CULTURAL DIVERSITY

India, Philippines, New Zealand, UK and Vietnam\*

Top five countries by birthplace

36%\*

Born overseas

39%\*

Language spoken at home other than English

## RESIDENTS

2,128\*

First Nations residents 1.2 per cent, compared with Greater Melbourne average of 0.7 per cent

33\*

Median age (Melbourne 37, Victoria 38, Australia 38)

70%\*

More than 70 per cent of residents are under the age of 49 years

## HOUSEHOLDS

3.1\*

Average household size (no. of persons)

45%\*

Couples with children

6%\*

Older couples without children

## EDUCATION

41.7%\*

Without any qualification, compared with Greater Melbourne (35.2 per cent)

22%\*

University qualification compared with 29 per cent Victoria

74%\*

Fewer school leavers go on to post-secondary education or training compared with 77.2 per cent Victoria

\$1,866#

Median weekly household income

985\*

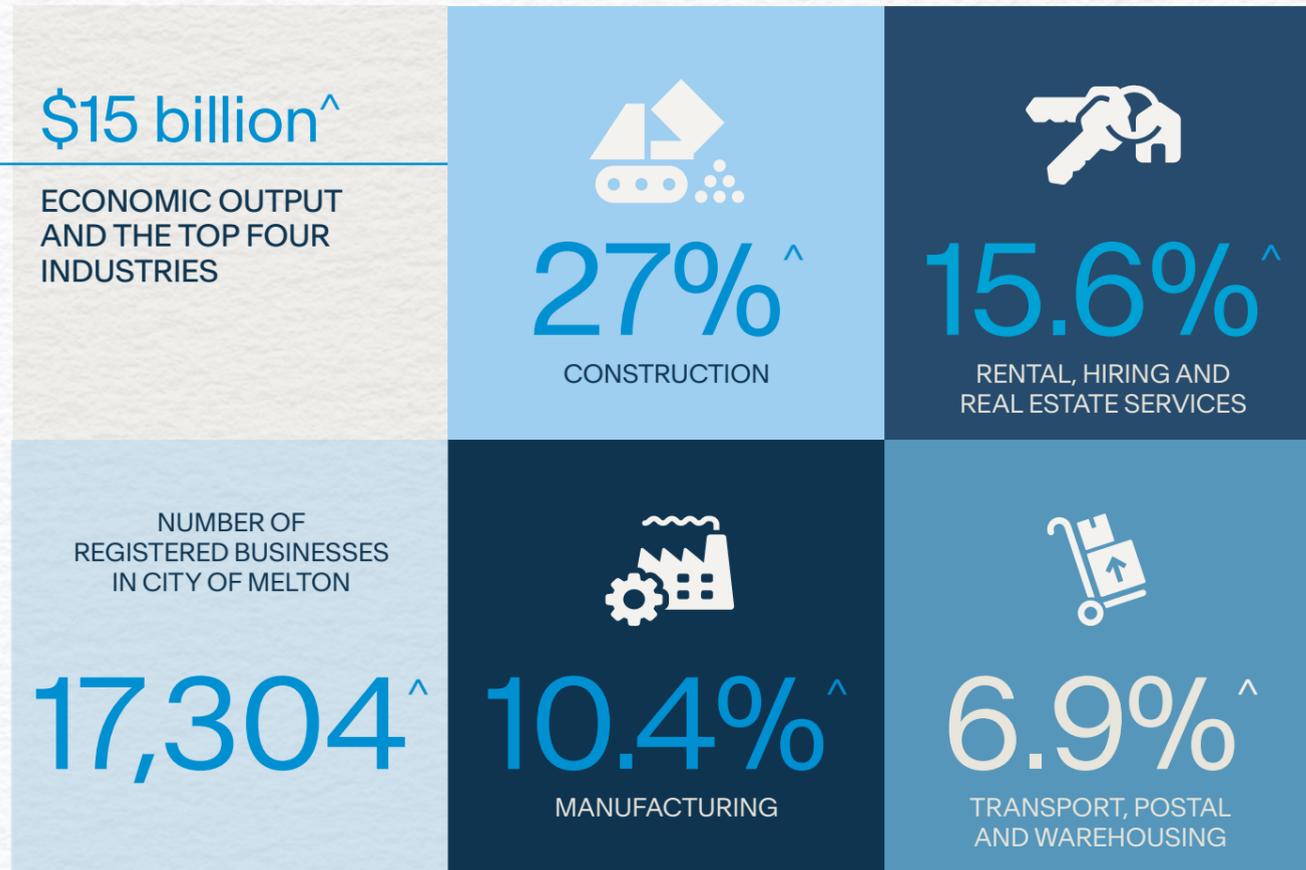
SEIFA index of disadvantage. Compared with 1,018 (Greater Melbourne), 1,010 (Victoria) and 1,001 (Australia)

120,689\*

Working-age population (aged 15–64 years)

Sources  
\* 2021 Census data  
^ Profile.id September 2025  
# REMPLAN 2025

ECONOMIC



Sources  
 \* 2021 Census data  
 ^ Profile.id September 2025  
 # REMPLAN 2025

HOME OWNERS

**\$730,000**<sup>#</sup>

Median house price

**16.6%**<sup>#</sup>

Applicable households experiencing mortgage stress

**4,545**<sup>^</sup>

New dwelling approvals July 2024 to June 2025

RENTERS

**\$580 pw**<sup>#</sup>

Median rent per week (2024)

**43.8%**<sup>#</sup>

Applicable households experiencing rental stress

**21.7%**<sup>^</sup>

Renting their property



### EARLY YEARS

#### Who are they?

Age 0–6  
Early learning to primary school aged

#### What do they need?

- Childcare
- Early learning
- Active open spaces
- Sport and recreation
- Community services
- Allied health services

8.3 per cent of population



### MIDDLE YEARS

#### Who are they?

Age 7–14  
Primary to secondary school age

#### What do they need?

- Quality education
- Specialised learning
- Sporting and community clubs
- School holiday programs
- Public transport
- Mental health services
- Access to food
- Mentoring and coaching

15.5 per cent of population



### YOUNG COMMUNITY

#### Who are they?

Age 15–24  
Youth, tertiary education, career establishment

#### What do they need?

- Employment opportunities
- Quality education
- Creative work spaces
- Mental health services
- Diversified industries
- Public transport
- Support programs
- Financial literacy
- Crime prevention and community safety
- Tertiary education

13.4 per cent of population



### ADULT YEARS

#### Who are they?

Age 25–59  
Career, family formation, home ownership, childcare needs, ageing parents

#### What do they need?

- Parenting and family services
- Skilling
- Local employment opportunities
- Health and fitness
- Social services
- Community and cultural spaces and services
- Public and road transport infrastructure
- Tertiary education
- Community safety

51.2 per cent of population



### SENIORS

#### Who are they?

Age 60+  
Transition to retirement, social connection, children grown and left home, independence

#### What do they need?

- Social activities
- Adult learning and digital skilling
- Health and wellness
- Community groups and centres
- Volunteer and employment opportunities
- In-home care
- Public and road transport infrastructure
- Ageing well
- Community Safety

11.6 per cent of population



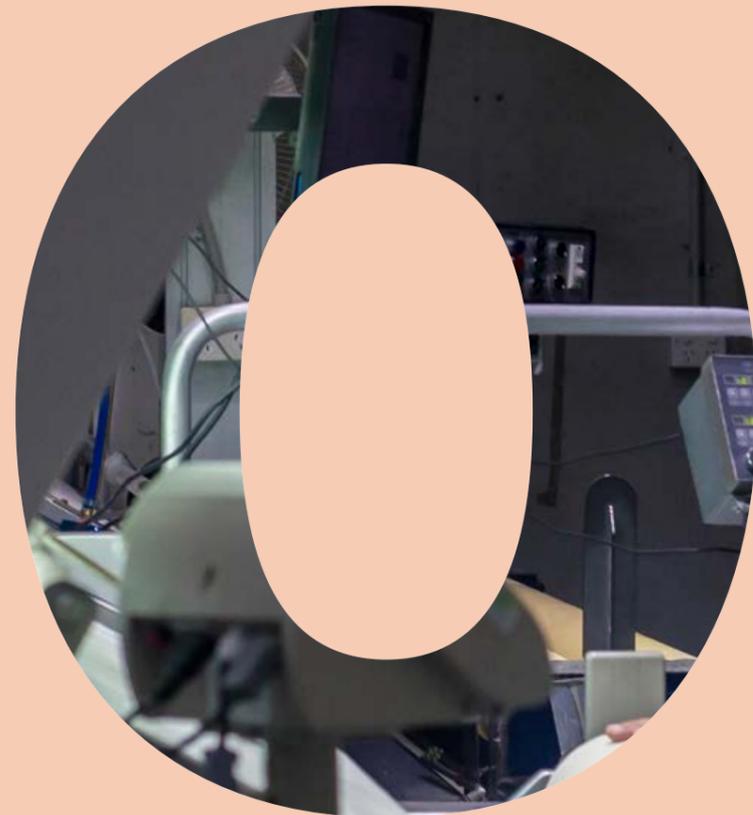
## OUR PRIORITIES

We have identified six advocacy priorities that will deliver on the needs and aspirations of our community.

1. Employment and Investment Attraction
2. Transport
3. Education and Skills
4. Health and Wellbeing
5. Environment
6. Financial Sustainability

# EMPLOYMENT AND INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

Investment in infrastructure and job creation to create a prosperous local economy



We want to create 100,000 new local, high-value, diverse jobs by 2051.

## Asks

- Fast-track development of **employment precincts** in Derrimut Fields, Chartwell East, Warrawee, Warrensbrook and Ravenhall (Quarry Site)
- Fund and build the Western Intermodal Freight Terminal (**WIFT**)
- Fund and construct the **Outer Metropolitan Ring (OMR)** (Road and Rail)
- Invest in a **localised skilled workforce** to fill existing shortages

The City of Melton currently has 13 Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs) approved that guide development in residential and industrial areas. A further 11 PSPs are yet to be developed, five of which include major employment precincts.

The unemployment rate is 5.9 per cent, (compared with 4.5 per cent) in Greater Melbourne (March 2025),\* the highest rate since December 2021. Localised, high-value jobs are linked to our future prosperity and our economic, social and environmental sustainability – we need more opportunities for residents to work close to home.

The City of Melton has a jobs shortage because significant population growth has not been matched by employment growth. There are only 0.38 jobs for each member of the labour force, compared with growth area average of 0.6.

While there was an 87 per cent increase in the number of registered businesses from 9,276 in 2019 to 17,304 in 2024, 73 per cent of our local workforce leave the municipality to access employment.

A business-as-usual approach will see this trend increase. A projected jobs shortfall of 100,000 jobs by 2051 will see daily commutes grow from 45,000 in 2021 to 110,000 by 2051 – the highest of any growth area.^

With investment in the new Melton Hospital, the Community Services Building in Cobblebank and supply chain and logistics businesses in Ravenhall and Truganina, we are on our way to creating exciting employment opportunities for our residents.

	Melton	Greater Melbourne	Victoria
Youth disengagement*	9.6%	7%	7.5%
Unemployment	6.0%	4.5%	4%

Source: \* Profile id. September 2025, ^ Melton Jobs and Investment Attraction Strategy 2020



'Melbourne's booming west is making a claim to be the nation's new business powerhouse, fuelled by population growth and rapid urban development.'

**SARAH PERILLO, *HERALD SUN*, 22 MAY 2025, 'THE MELBOURNE SUBURB LAUNCHING THE MOST BUSINESSES IN AUSTRALIA'**

'Having grown up locally, it was important to me to invest locally and currently have three businesses based in the City of Melton. I want to continue to invest by providing employment, training and placement opportunities for youth within the hospitality industry. Without public transport and walking and bike paths, young people can't travel to work safely. Greater investment in public transport and road upgrades will drive investment locally with surrounding business opportunities and give young people the start to their career that they need.'

**BRENTON, WITCHMOUNT ESTATE**

52,922<sup>^</sup>

JOBS

THE TOP FOUR INDUSTRIES FOR EMPLOYMENT



Source: <sup>^</sup> Profile id. September 2025

**Fast-track development of employment precinct plans**

A commitment has been made within the Victorian Government’s *Plan for Victoria* for the development of the following employment precincts: Derrimut Fields, Chartwell East, Warrawee, Warrensbrook and Ravenhall (Quarry Site). We seek a commitment for investment to create jobs and:

- ask the Victorian Government to fast-track development of employment precincts in Derrimut Fields, Chartwell East, Warrawee, Warrensbrook and Ravenhall (Quarry Site)
- seek a partnership with the Victorian Government and Australian Government for investment in precinct development of the Cobblebank Metropolitan Activity Centre with a review of the Urban Design Framework and identification of future economically significant projects
- ask for investment by the Victorian Government and Australian Government in the supporting transport infrastructure that attracts commercial investment.

**Western Intermodal Freight Terminal (WIFT)**

In 2023, the Australian Government accepted the recommendations of an independent review of the Inland Rail Project to develop two intermodal terminals, with Beveridge the first terminal to be delivered.

The Victorian Government is moving to protect land in Truganina for the future WIFT within the Chartwell East Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) area and plans to unlock land in the Derrimut Fields PSP area for industrial use. The WIFT, in Melbourne’s west, will be a key driver for local employment, creating 2,000 direct jobs and 39,000 indirect jobs and increasing productivity.

The WIFT is located close to around 50 per cent of existing interstate freight rail customers and will remove up to 2,000 daily truck movements from Melbourne’s inner west. With land set aside, it has the capacity to handle 1,800-metre-long, double-stacked trains and space for new logistic hubs.

Council seeks a commitment from the Victorian Government and Australian Government to:

- construct Victoria’s second freight terminal in Truganina, the WIFT
- acquire the land required for the WIFT and develop the Chartwell East PSP.



### Outer Metropolitan Ring (OMR) road and rail

The Outer Metropolitan Ring will connect the Melbourne's north and west outer growth corridor that stretches from Little River in Melbourne's west to Kalkallo in the north. It has provision for up to four rail tracks and six road lanes. This intergenerational project is long overdue and will be a gamechanger for residents and business, securing Victoria's long-term economic prosperity.

The OMR would connect the Hume Freeway, Calder Highway, Western Highway and the Princess Freeway. It will connect millions of residents in the growing outer municipalities of Mitchell, Whittlesea, Hume, Melton, and Wyndham with road and rail transport.

A freight rail connection will connect the Commonwealth's Inland Rail Project to the WIFT and south-west rail. It will connect freight transport hubs and employment precincts such as Melbourne Airport, Port of Melbourne, the future Baywest and regional centres.

The OMR has been in planning for far too long. It's time that investment commenced to unlock our growth residential precincts and the major employment precincts in the north and west of Melbourne. Council is calling on the Australian Government, in partnership with the Victorian Government, to progress land acquisition and fund the construction of the OMR, including road, freight, and passenger rail services.

Source: ^ Profile id. September 2025

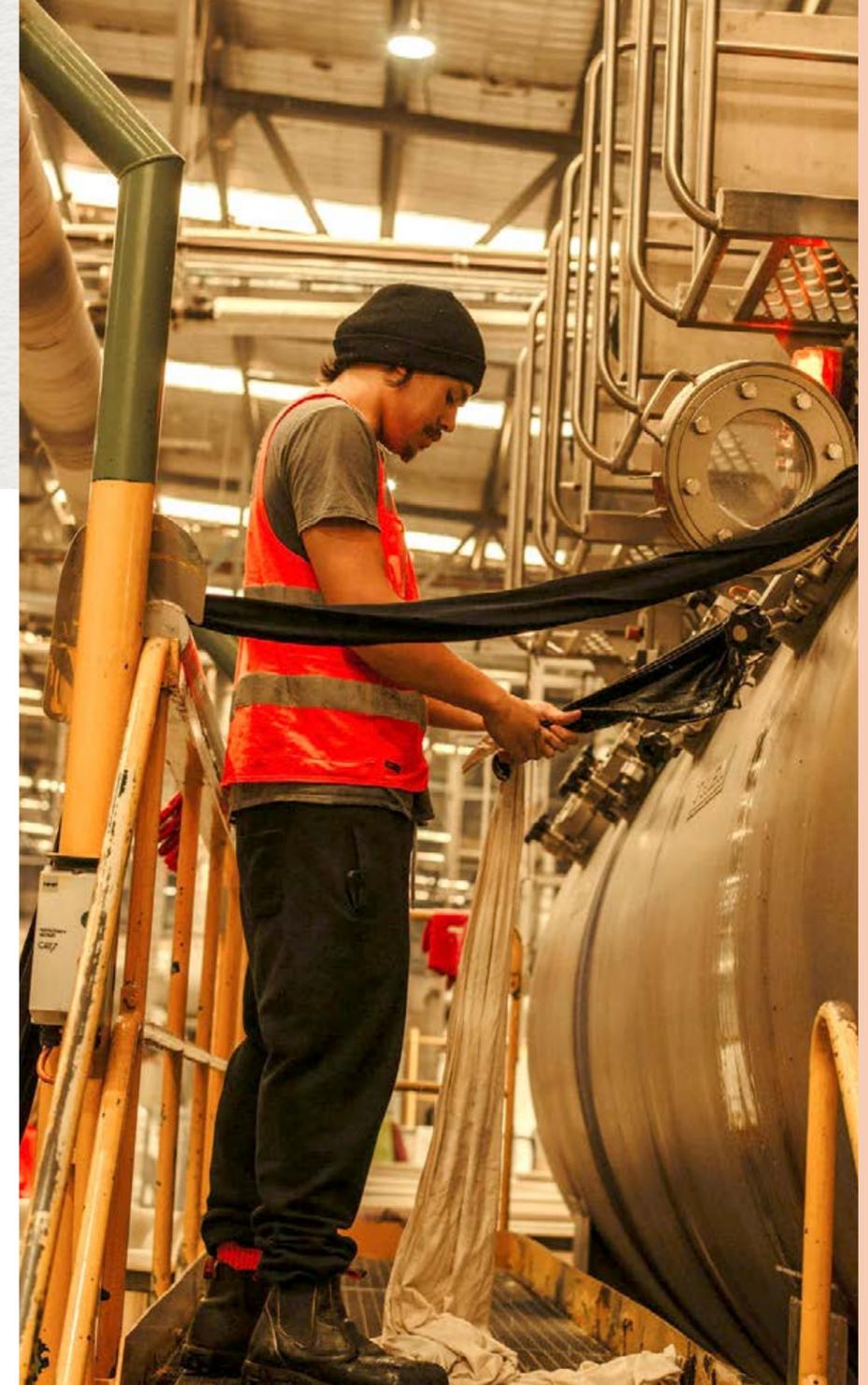
The City of Melton's workforce is set to triple over the next 30 years. It's an exciting time for investment.

### A Localised Workforce

Between 2021 and 2031, forecasts for the City of Melton indicate a 82.4 per cent increase in population of working age. We need job-ready workers for the local jobs being created through investments in a new hospital and growing construction, schools, warehouse and logistics sectors.

The new Melton Hospital, when it opens in 2029, will create 3,975 direct jobs and 2,485 indirect jobs. New supply chain and logistics hubs will see 39,000 jobs created over the next 30 years within the WIFT, Melbourne Business Park, Horizon 3023 by Dexus, Goodmans Group Troupes Road Estate, Robinsons Road and others. Construction of 109,000 dwellings and community infrastructure over the next 30 years will create an estimated 300,000 jobs during construction. An additional 50 kinder rooms will be required by 2029 to meet the Best Start Best Life initiative and the new schools opening now and into the future will need skilled and qualified educators.

Investment is needed to build a skilled local workforce and address existing gaps. This includes education and training initiatives, paid placements that allow students to gain on-the-job experience, funding for course fees to boost participation, and incentive programs for workers in early learning, maternal and child health, education, and health – similar to those offered in regional centres.



# TRANSPORT

Investment in critical transport infrastructure and services to deliver a connected, accessible, and productive community



Artist render of future interchanges on Western Freeway

Housing growth must be matched with investment in transport infrastructure and services.



## Asks

- Invest in an **Outer-Western Roads Package** to upgrade roads and interchanges that are critical to employment and residential growth:
  - increased capacity, urbanisation and upgraded interchanges on the Western Highway including Bulmans, Ferris, Mt Cottrell, Paynes, Leakes, Hopkins, and Christies Roads
  - duplication and urbanisation of the Melton Highway
  - duplication of the Ferris Road rail bridge
  - duplication and urbanisation of Hopkins Road
  - the declaration and upgrade of the Palmers Road Corridor from the Western Freeway to the Calder Freeway (Robinsons Road, Westwood Drive and Calder Park Drive)
  - declaration as an arterial road and upgrade of Taylors Road
- Electrification of the **Melton Line**, with works undertaken concurrently with the Sunshine Station upgrade to activate in 2030
- **Three new train stations** – Mt Atkinson, Thornhill Park and Calder Park
- Reconfiguring existing **bus routes** and additional services in growth areas to increase frequency and efficiency
- Investment in the missing **active transport network** on major arterial roads, priority shared path networks and the Werribee River Shared Trail

The Victorian Government's *Plan for Victoria* has set the target of 109,000 additional homes in the City of Melton by 2051.

To support this ambitious target, corresponding government investment in transport infrastructure and services is required in line with growth.

A poor transport network is a barrier for residents to find and maintain employment, access education and services and it can create social and economic disadvantage.

As our population, and commercial activity booms, so too does demand for improved transport infrastructure to relieve pressure on existing infrastructure and increase productivity.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

Over  
**120,000**

residents have no access to public transport within a 10-minute walk



**COMMUNITY SENTIMENT RESEARCH**

Only  
**28%**

of residents believe existing public transport is suitable



**COMMUNITY SENTIMENT RESEARCH**

**62.3%**

rated major roads poor or very poor



**COMMUNITY SENTIMENT RESEARCH**

**63%**

rated traffic congestion a significant issue





'Our facility is a major investment at Enhance Place and accessed via Hopkins Road, Truganina that will service over 4,000 stores, premises, and customers in Victoria, stocking products from over 2,000 suppliers. Each day there are many truck movements in and out of our facility with thousands of pallets of inventory to be processed at the site each week. The condition of Hopkins Road is a major safety concern for our drivers and up to 700 team members. The existing congestion on the road means that the heavy vehicles are impeded from turning out of the site onto Hopkins Road and a risk to all vehicles on the stretch of road between the Western Highway and Boundary Road. Urgent investment is needed as our area grows rapidly with significant investment from other major supply chain and logistics companies.'

**STATE GENERAL MANAGER, COMMERCIAL BUSINESS**

## Outer-Western Roads Package – road corridors in urgent need of investment

**Our arterial road corridors are critical connections between our communities, activity centres and employment precincts.**

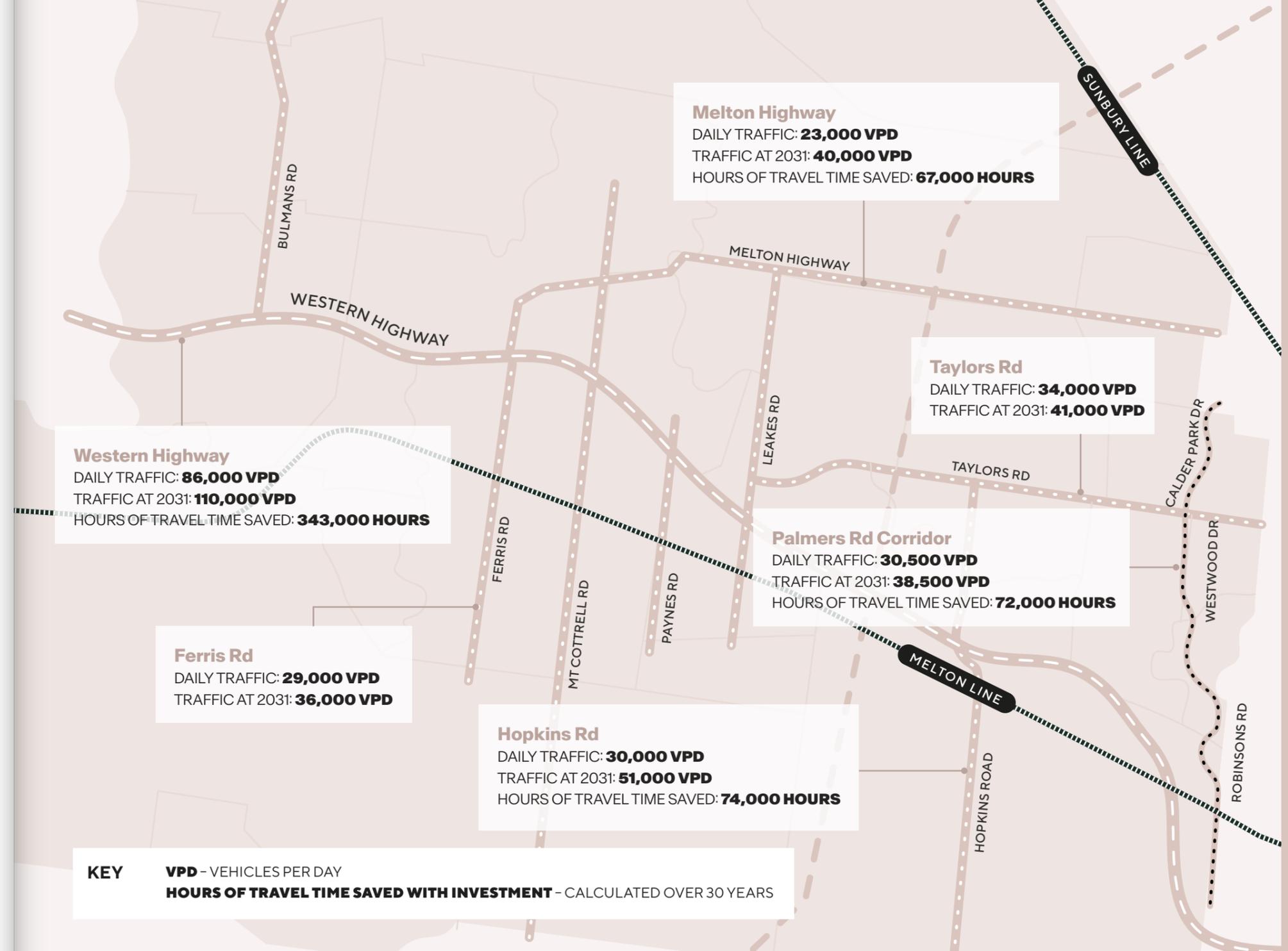
The major arterial roads in the City of Melton are not suitable for the existing high volume of traffic. They are predominantly of a rural standard with unsealed shoulders, no public lighting, open drains and non-existent bike and pedestrian paths. With rapid employment and residential growth, roads that are already unsuitable and under pressure will experience further congestion as demand increases.

Fast-tracking infrastructure projects including the Western Highway, Melton Highway, Hopkins and Ferris Roads, and the Robinsons Road, Westwood Drive and Calder Park Drive corridor is urgently needed to service key employment precincts including Horizon 3023, Melbourne Business Park and Cobblebank Major Activity Centre (MAC).

Investment in an **Outer Western Roads Package** to upgrade roads and interchanges that are critical to employment and residential growth will unlock jobs, improve productivity, liveability and safety.

It's time for strategic federal and state investment that delivers a number of road and interchange upgrades consecutively to the Western Highway, Melton Highway, Hopkins Road, Ferris Road, the Palmers Road Corridor and Taylors Road.

Independent cost-benefit analysis by Clarity Consult demonstrates that these projects provide an opportunity to improve productivity and reduce congestion with significant returns on investment. Furthermore, delivering them will attract increased commercial investment, support 73,000 future jobs and provide a range of economic benefits.



### Electrification of the Melton Line – investment in rail to increase productivity

The growing suburbs along the Melton rail line are serviced by diesel regional trains with commuters having to fit into already overcrowded Ballarat services.

The Victorian Government and Australian Government have invested in an upgrade of the Melton line to carry nine-car Vlocity trains. While this will improve capacity during peak times by 50 per cent, there will not be any improvement to frequency. However, extension of the electrified rail network from Sunshine to Melton and the separation from the Ballarat line, would triple current capacity, increase frequency and improve travel times.

In 2024–25, the Ballarat Line grew by 2.12 million passengers per year with Melton stations combined growing by 684,200 passengers per year. Additionally, 806,050 annual passengers used Melton Station, making it the fifth most-used station in Victoria’s regional network.

Over the next 25 years, more than 100,000 dwellings are expected to be constructed in the City of Melton. This will mean more than 300,000 residents will almost exclusively be serviced by the Ballarat railway line. The existing rail network will not cope with this increase in population.

The upgrade of the rail network would divert traffic from surrounding roads leading to less congestion. It will embed more affordable, healthy and sustainable transport practices in our community.

Four level-crossing removal projects to be completed by the end of 2026 and the construction of the Cobblebank Stabling Yard has future-proofed the duplication and electrification of the Melton Line. Council is calling on government to deliver the electrification to coincide with the Sunshine Station upgrade so that both are completed by 2030, a position supported by Infrastructure Victoria.

### Three new train stations

#### Mt Atkinson, Thornhill Park and Calder Park

Train station car parks in Caroline Springs, Rockbank, and Cobblebank are over capacity by 7:30 am and trains are already reaching capacity in peak periods. Getting to and from existing train stations is creating heavy congestion on major arterial roads and increasing the travel times for commuters.

As a result of limited car-park capacity and access to existing train stations, people opt out of the public transport system and stay instead on the road network. New train stations at Mt Atkinson, Thornhill Park and Calder Park will provide accessibility to public transport and enable employees to access new employment hubs without the need for an additional car.



## BY 2041, THE ELECTRIFICATION OF THE MELTON LINE AND CONSTRUCTION OF TWO NEW STATIONS AT MT ATKINSON AND THORNHILL PARK WILL RESULT IN:

12,000	77,300	15,147	33,000
fewer cars on the network every day	less private vehicle kilometres travelled every day	fewer trips by car per day, primarily in City of Melton	entries and exits every day for all stations in the City of Melton
\$236,251	27%	36.1%	Start now!
daily reduction in the ‘cost of congestion’	increase in public transport usage across Melton – 15,000 additional commuters	or 6,363 more bus boardings in City of Melton	Work on the electrification of the Melton Line to coincide with the Sunshine Station upgrade

## Bus Network – expanding public transport

The City of Melton needs a more frequent, direct and better-connected bus network. The Victorian Government has committed to new services within the new growth communities including:

- new route – Thornhill Park to Cobblebank Station
- new route – Rockbank Station to Tarneit Station via Mt. Atkinson
- Rockbank, Aintree, Watergardens Station, Caroline Springs Package: routes 444, 461, 463 and 464 redesign and service uplifts.

We welcome these investments that will get residents to train stations efficiently and alleviate stress on train station car parks.

Lack of access to effective public transport increases financial hardship, impairs health and wellbeing outcomes, and reduces people's equity of access to services, jobs, education and opportunity.

Melton City Council has completed a review of the local bus network and our analysis has shown that more direct and frequent bus routes in the Caroline Springs area have increased patronage in recent years, while indirect and infrequent bus routes in the Melton area have decreased in patronage in the same timeframe. A smarter bus network can better connect our community. With a modest additional annual investment, more people can have access to a local bus network linking them to jobs and vital services.



We are calling on the Victorian Government to review the bus networks to refine existing routes to create more frequent and direct routes with turn-up-and-go services. We are also calling for an additional \$10 million a year implemented over time to improve connections into the growth areas that currently have no or few services. This funding will create east-west and north-south connections and ensure the new proposed routes commence with more frequent services and link directly to key destinations including train stations, retail, recreation and employment precincts.

## Active Transport – affordable, healthy and socially connected ways of travelling

There is no safe way to travel between Melton and Caroline Springs and on to the CBD using active transport. There are missing walking and cycling connections on major arterial roads and there is much to be done to increase participation in active transport. Council is investing in active transport across our local roads and is seeking the Victorian Government to do the same.

The 2021 Census showed that in the City of Melton, 0.8 per cent of residents rode a bike and 1.3 per cent walked to work, compared with the Melbourne metropolitan average of 1.4 per cent who rode a bike and 3.5 per cent who walked to work.

An increase in the use of active transport, including walking, cycling and scooters, will decrease the number of vehicles on our road network, reducing congestion and embedding more affordable, healthy and sustainable transport practices in our community.

The biggest barriers to the take-up of active transport are safety concerns as residents are forced to ride on arterial roads with vehicles traveling up to 110 kilometers per hour, or ride on uneven nature strips. Additionally, there are remaining at-grade level crossings on the Melton Line at Mount Cottrell Road, Paynes Road, Leakes Road and Troups Road North that require safe active transport connections on both sides of the road.

We seek investment in the missing shared-path network on major arterial roads, priority shared-path networks and the Werribee River Shared Trail.



## EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Investment in state-of-the-art education from early years to tertiary to address workforce gaps and enable our community to be workforce ready



A good education has the power to transform lives.



### Asks

- Additional **schools and early learning centres** across the municipality aligned with growth
- Provide **specialised learning** including STEM, Tech School, special needs learning and English language
- Broaden courses in the new Melton **TAFE** beyond construction to skill the logistics, health, education and community services sectors
- Invest in a tier one **university** in Cobblebank to provide teaching, health, science and engineering education
- Invest in additional libraries and ongoing **library** services in the City of Melton

Our youngest residents need quality teachers, access to resources, co-curricular programs, specialist programs and availability of school places. A good education has the power to change a life. It shapes us as individuals and is important for the social and economic development of every community.

As a rapidly growing community, securing quality, well-located early years, primary, secondary and tertiary education opportunities for our residents is paramount.

Melton City Council acknowledges the significant investment in education by the Victorian Government and seeks assurances that this investment will continue in line with growth, so that all residents have every opportunity to reach their full potential. We also call on the Australian Government to partner with the Victorian Government for the extension of the TAFE program beyond construction and to fund university provision locally to skill our workforce to service the new hospital, schools, supply chain and logistics, engineering and the digital industries.

### Projected student growth within the City of Melton

THREE-YEAR-OLD KINDER STUDENTS	3,876	5,003	5,557
	2025	2030	2035
FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDER STUDENTS	4,089	5,060	5,621
	2025	2030	2035
PRIMARY STUDENTS	25,369	32,618	38,255
	2025	2030	2035
SECONDARY STUDENTS	19,146	25,507	28,994
	2025	2030	2035
TERTIARY LEVEL	22,365	28,308	33,627
	2025	2030	2035

Source: Profile id. September 2025

### State of the Art Education – early learning, primary, secondary and specialist school

With 75 babies born each week, that's a minimum of 3,900 children needing kinder in three years' time, and primary school in five years' time. Infrastructure Victoria estimates that the regions of Wyndham and Melton–Bacchus Marsh will need a combined extra 28,000 school desks between 2026 and 2036.

Population growth estimates show that by 2030, the number of primary school children in the City of Melton will increase from 25,369 in 2025 to over 38,255 in 2035 – an increase of 12,886 more primary school children across the municipality in just 10 years. The delivery of primary schools must be aligned with this projected future need. Infrastructure Victoria states that the schools should be built bigger from the outset to cater for the projected growth rather than uplift and temporary facilities being brought in as the school grows.

Planning for the delivery of additional secondary schools is also critical as we estimate that the increase of 9,848 secondary students by 2035 will require an additional nine secondary schools.

Many schools in the City of Melton are already exceeding capacity resulting in limited access to co-curricular subjects including trade, arts and IT. We work closely with the Department of Education and Training and the Victorian School Building Authority to identify potential future school sites and call on the Victorian Government to continue to invest in education addressing equity and inclusion, giving all children their best start in life to reach their full potential.

**'By strengthening equity of access, we create learning environments that open doors for all learners, giving them fair opportunities to succeed in the future.'**

**ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD)**





**The provision of specialised learning including STEM, Tech School, special needs learning and English language**

Mainstream curriculum is not the only requirement for learning in the City of Melton. Access to specialised learning including English as a second language, STEM, tech schools and special needs learning is accessible in all other areas of Melbourne. Residents of the City of Melton, do not have the same level of access to specialised education.

A dedicated STEM-focused curriculum would give secondary students from our community access to high-tech, hands-on programs that provide skills they need to navigate the future workplace that includes automation and globalisation. Our rapidly increasing population of aspirational families and students would thrive if given the opportunity to attend a secondary school focused on STEM, especially girls. It would also provide them tertiary and workplace opportunities already afforded students in other parts of



**By 2050, those groups most under-represented in higher education should increase to achieve parity across the Australian population.**

AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES ACCORD 2024

Melbourne. We are also seeking the establishment of a Tech School in the City of Melton.

A significant part of the growth in the City of Melton is from overseas migration. Our city has 63,763 residents, or 36 per cent of the total population born overseas and 69,725 residents, or 39 per cent, who speak a language other than English at home.

There are currently newly arrived, school-aged children and young people in the municipality attending mainstream local schools without the support of a specialised English language curriculum.

The Western English Language School (WELS) for newly arrived students provides a specialised curriculum. Students who attend mainstream school after studying at WELS have a higher rate of academic success and Victorian Certificate of Education completion. Our local schools have reported that a large percentage of students who were entitled to receive 6–12 months of intensive English language instruction through WELS did not enrol due to the long public transport round-trip journey to and from the Braybrook campus. While there is now a primary-level English language school, a secondary-level school is urgently required.

An additional specialist school is required across the municipality to increase accessibility to quality education for all children. It is important that people are provided choice and equity in access to specialist programs and services.



## TAFE

We welcome the commitment to build the new TAFE campus in Cobblebank by 2028. We want to ensure that the TAFE can skill workers to fill existing workforce gaps and prepare for future workforce needs including logistics, health, education and community services. We call on the Victorian Government to partner with the Australian Government to invest further to extend the TAFE offering to meet this requirement.

## University

Cobblebank is the perfect location for a university campus aligned with the new Melton Hospital to train doctors, nurses, midwifery, maternal child health and allied health specialists for outer metropolitan areas and regional centres. Situated near the new TAFE, Cobblebank secondary school and hospital, a university in Cobblebank will be close to the rail station connecting students from our region to the skills they need locally.

Attracting and retaining teachers within the City of Melton is very difficult, and workforce gaps sometimes mean classes go without teachers. There is an immediate need to skill locally. Establishing a university in Cobblebank will help create high-skilled, high-paying jobs. It will see Cobblebank become a health and education precinct of national significance with hospitals, schools, TAFE, and future civic and justice provision.

A university in Cobblebank will deliver on the four pillars of the 2024 Australian University Accord, a government initiative to improve the quality, accessibility, affordability, and sustainability of Australia's higher education system.

**'Without local university provision, our daughter has had to move into on-campus accommodation in Clayton, as the lack of reliable public transport and poor road infrastructure made daily travel to university impractical.'**

**PAMELA, BROOKFIELD RESIDENT**

## Library Services

The City of Melton community experiences some of the lowest levels of literacy in the state. In the last analysis of Victorian adult literacy, it was found that within the City of Melton 17 per cent of adults have low-level literacy, compared with the statewide average of 14 per cent. Up to 3 per cent more of our school-aged children are considered developmentally vulnerable regarding language and cognitive skills, and communication skills. A significantly lower proportion of our children aged six months to four years are read to by a family member every day (54 per cent), compared with the Victorian average 70 per cent.

For our community, these statistics underscore the need for increased investment in the development of literacy skills. While not part of the formal education and training system, libraries play a vital complementary and community-based role in promoting and encouraging literacy development. Public libraries support families by providing free literacy and learning resources and early literacy programs, encouraging families to borrow and utilise library resources to broaden learning.

Infrastructure Victoria projects that by 2036, the City of Melton will service one library per 47,000 residents compared with other inner councils with one library per 4,000 residents. With the need for three additional libraries across the City of Melton over the next decade, Council supports Infrastructure Victoria and the Outer Metropolitan Councils in calling for equal joint funding from the Victorian Government, Australian Government and local governments to build new libraries.

# HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Investment in the needs of each generation for a safe, active, healthy, socially connected community



Every generation deserves to feel safe, and have access to localised allied health and wellbeing programs and services.



## Asks

- **Localised community and allied health service** provision for adults and children, including mental health, family violence prevention and outreach programs for the community comprising culturally safe first nations and CALD community services
- Fund **Early Years** education and wellbeing programs including extending Building Blocks beyond 2032, ongoing funding for facility maintenance, maternal child health suites and the CALD outreach program and increased funding for resource capacity in child protection referrals and supported playgroups.
- A partnership with all levels of government, developers and social housing providers to deliver new **affordable and social housing** in the City of Melton
- Additional programs for **youth** engagement to provide mental health, skills training, early intervention for homelessness and crime prevention, creative arts and sports, and wrap-around family services to break generational disadvantage
- Support the delivery of **aged care** services including localised providers not based in Brimbank, increase in the service charges payable to Council by the Australian Government to cover gaps between funding and the cost-of-service delivery, and for service delivery regions to be aligned with Council boundaries
- Invest in **community infrastructure, sporting, recreation and active open spaces** including the delivery of the Kororoit and Toolern Regional Parks



'When you try to get into the system and you're told you need an occupational therapist or physiotherapist assessment to get a particular support, but then you find there's no appointments anywhere near where you live, it's deflating.'

**DENISE AGED 72**

'Build libraries and aquatic centres for Melbourne's growing communities. Fund councils to plan and build libraries and aquatic recreation centres in Melbourne's growth areas.'

**INFRASTRUCTURE VICTORIA**

Every generation deserves to feel safe, have access to localised allied health and wellbeing programs and services, be socially connected within their community, and live their best lives.

Residents of the City of Melton have limited access to locally delivered services and programs. To counter this, Council has invested in the Community Services Building in Cobblebank and the Aquatic and Leisure Centre in Fraser Rise to provide accommodation for the delivery of these types of services. Council is building active open spaces, community centres, recreational facilities and sporting grounds in partnership with developers and government. Additionally, Council has a range of services and programs targeted for all stages of life including early years, children, youth, adults and seniors.

In our 2024 Community Sentiment Survey, the three top issues for the 1,200 respondents were cost of living, condition of roads and access to health services. The ability to exercise and participate in exercise and sport is prohibitive because of the cost of living. Additionally, treatment for various health conditions is prohibitive due to the lack of localised services.

## THE CITY OF MELTON HAS THE:

### Highest rate

of need across all determinants of health in the network, which is generally associated with high levels of disadvantage, high acute service use and high rates of chronic disease



### HIGHEST EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT PRESENTATIONS

for suicide or self-harm in 2019/20 and 2020/21 across the North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network



### SECOND HIGHEST PREVALENCE

of adult obesity and hypertension across the North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network



Source: North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network

OUR COMMUNITY IS RELATIVELY SEDENTARY COMPARED WITH THE VICTORIAN AVERAGE:\*

31%

of adults are obese compared with the Victorian average 23 per cent

29.8%

of residents are sedentary compared to the Victorian average 27.9 per cent (sedentary – prolonged sitting for more than 8 hours)

20%

of residents experience high or very high psychological distress

80.4%

do not meet the physical activity guidelines compared to Victorian average of 76.6 per cent

23.4%

of City of Melton residents reported their health status as fair/poor compared to 20.9% Victorians

2.6%

visited emergency department for help with mental health compared to 2.1 per cent in Victoria

COMPARED WITH GREATER MELBOURNE PER 100,000 PEOPLE, THE CITY OF MELTON HAS APPROXIMATELY:^^

Half the number of

doctors, nurses, paediatricians, chiropractors, physiotherapists, osteopaths, occupational therapists, aged care nurses

1/8

the number of obstetricians, antenatal, neonatal, postnatal and maternity nurses and gynaecologists

2.8

drug and alcohol counsellors compared with 13.1 across in Victoria

Source: \*Victorian Population Health Survey 2023, Victorian Agency for Health Information ^^Health Workforce Data

## Early childhood

Early childhood services provide development, health, education and wellbeing services from birth to school. Early childhood services, education and family services plays an important role in a young child's development, helping them to thrive emotionally, physically and mentally. Children in low socioeconomic households are more likely to have poor developmental outcomes, make a difficult transition to school, and have reduced aspirations and pass this risk on to their children in a cycle of intergenerational disadvantage.

Council calls for funding to:

- extend Building Blocks beyond 2032 and broaden funding scope to include ongoing facility maintenance and MCH suites
- continue CALD outreach programs in the City of Melton which experience a high uptake with positive outcomes
- resource capacity to manage the increase in child protection referrals
- increase supported playgroups.



## Youth

Every young member of our community deserves the support and opportunities to engage with learning and employment, pursue their ambitions, live in a safe community and have access to a range of programs and services. This will enable them to grow and contribute to their future and the economy. Council is seeking long-term funding to help us deliver critical education, social and wraparound services that our youth need to become strong and healthy young adults including:

- delivery of early prevention programs to counter the future need for intervention
- programs that build the capacity of young people to prepare for and secure education, training and employment
- investment in localised VET, trade and tertiary education
- programs that support mental health and community wellbeing
- additional localised service provision, aimed at ensuring that young people can access services when and where they need
- early intervention for homelessness and crime prevention
- wraparound family services that break the cycle of generational criminal behaviour
- programs that provide access to food for vulnerable families
- access to art, sports and social events.



## Ageing well

Local aged care provision is critical to ensuring that our older residents are socially connected, have access to allied health and wellbeing programs, in-house support and care, education programs and assistance to navigate the services available by all levels of government.

Council seeks:

- an increase in the funding for service charges to meet existing gaps between provision and service
- a realignment of the Aged Care Regions to match the municipal boundaries within the City of Melton boundary so that residents are provided the same level of services across the entire council area
- assistance to attract local providers to the City of Melton as the assessment providers are 6–9 months behind in referrals and lacking in local accessibility to services including occupational therapy and food services.



## Localised health services

The City of Melton has significant gaps in community and allied health services delivered locally. Identified gaps include early childhood intervention, family services, speech pathology, perinatal services, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, paediatric services, psychology, mental health services, disability services, social support programs, community legal services, emergency relief, alcohol and drug services, and culturally specific services for refugee, multicultural and first nations communities.

Yet many community and health services for outer-western Melbourne are based in the neighbouring cities of Brimbank, Maribyrnong or Wyndham. Geographically the City of Melton is four times the size of Brimbank, has a higher population and by 2041 will be home to 70 per cent more people. Lacking public transport limits access to services located in neighbouring council areas for City of Melton residents. Equity in access to services is critical for positive health and wellbeing outcomes for our community.



## Affordable and social housing

Many people move to the City of Melton because the housing is considered affordable compared with other municipalities.

However, this 'affordability' does not factor in limited access to public transport, lower number of local jobs and cost of living pressures.

While Melton City Council owns and manages 15 properties as affordable housing, we welcome the Victorian Government's Housing Statement and the Australian Government's housing reform agenda to add social and affordable housing for the most vulnerable in the community.

The 2021 Census shows that social housing makes up only 0.9 per cent of total housing stock compared with 2.3 per cent for the Western region, with only 491 units and homelessness increased by 70 per cent when comparing the 2016 to 2021 Census data.

Council seeks greater funding for additional affordable and social housing and for existing social housing to be replaced or upgraded.



## Sports and recreation – for an active community

There is strong evidence to support the need to increase the opportunity for physical activity in the City of Melton:

- 74.3 per cent of City of Melton residents are considered overweight or obese, the highest rate in Victoria
- 4.3 per cent of residents are sedentary compared to 2.5 per cent Victorian average
- 29.4 per cent of residents record lower levels of physical activity, compared with the Victorian average of 27.2 per cent
- two in five people do insufficient physical activity according to the Department of Health and Human Services
- the City of Melton's sport participation rate was 8.3 per cent, compared with other Victorian growth municipalities such as Moorabool (14.8 per cent), Mitchell (15.3 per cent) and Hume (11.6 per cent) (VicHealth, 2021).

We seek investment in community infrastructure, active recreational facilities, pools and open spaces, in partnership with the Australian Government and Victorian Government, to increase participation.



'The mental health system is letting children down massively. When my daughter was severely depressed and self-harming, I had to travel to Ballarat to the Mental Health Hospital. There should be a facility in Melton that can be accessed for emergencies. I believe Melton would greatly benefit from updated skateparks and a wider range of facilities that engage and support local teens and youth. Young people need safe, exciting spaces where they can be active, social, and proud of their community.'

**SARAH, AGED 43**



# ENVIRONMENT

Investment in managing waste, green canopy and renewable energy to protect the environment for future generations



## Asks

- Invest in **sustainability programs** including the expansion of the Circular Economy Hub, Renewable Energy and Zero Carbon Initiatives, the implementation of Integrated Water Management (IWM), Waste to Energy and increased tree canopy

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- **Reinvest the Landfill Levy** for Council-led waste and resource-recovery infrastructure, local education and behaviour-change programs, and illegal dumping enforcement and clean-up

Sustainability is at the core of everything we do. Council, through its waste collection and diversion programs, does much of the heavy lifting when it comes to reducing waste and promoting reuse.

A sustainable community addresses environmental challenges, enhances the wellbeing of our residents and ensures a resilient and vibrant future.

Melton City Council is committed to delivering improved, environmentally sustainable outcomes for our community and improved waste reduction and resource recovery.

Support from other levels of government is critical.



'I'd also love to see more sustainability initiatives in Melton such as community gardening, tree planting, recycling programs, and green events that bring people together and promote environmental awareness.'

**AAONE, MEMBER OF THE YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

'The government aims to divert 80 per cent of waste from landfill by 2030. The government should review the waste levy and set rates that can stimulate investment in new recycling and waste to energy infrastructure.'

**INFRASTRUCTURE VICTORIA, VICTORIA'S INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2025-2055, NOVEMBER 2025**

## Keeping the City of Melton clean

In 2024/2025, the City of Melton collected a total of 66,480 tonnes of kerbside waste. This comprised 40,686 tonnes of garbage and 25,794 tonnes diverted from landfill (including 14,146 tonnes of recycling and 11,648 tonnes of food organics and garden organics).

We are home to Victoria's largest landfill, the Melbourne Regional Landfill in Ravenhall, which processes the majority of Melbourne's waste, filling an area equivalent to the size of the MCG every 12 months. Recycling Victoria has set a target to reduce waste by 80 per cent by 2030, with an interim target of 72 per cent by 2025. With the Melton Recycling Centre now established, we aim to take the next step by developing a Circular Economy Hub to support emerging industries such as e-waste processing, repair services, and other circular economy initiatives that build on our existing success.

We need to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and do this quickly. Council seeks support from the Victorian Government by funding the Waste to Energy facility at Laverton as a strategic metropolitan solution and to expand the Melton Recycling Facility (MRF) into a regional-scale reprocessing and innovation hub supporting Victoria's circular economy transition.



## Keeping the City of Melton green

We recognise the health and wellbeing benefits of green open space and are committed to protecting and enhancing our beautiful natural environment. The City of Melton has the lowest tree canopy in metropolitan Melbourne at only 4.1 per cent compared with the average of 16.2 per cent. There is an urgent need to plant more trees to increase our tree canopy.

Trees serve as natural air purifiers, filtering out harmful pollutants from the air, creating a cleaner, fresher atmosphere.

Research has shown that neighbourhoods with good tree cover experience lower rates of respiratory issues and allergies.

Tree canopy has been found to have the strongest impact in reducing heat in urban areas. Reducing heat in our neighbourhoods is critical, particularly for vulnerable groups such as children, people over 65 years of age and those with pre-existing medical conditions.

In Victoria, during the heatwave of 2019 there was a five-fold increase in health-related public hospital emergency department presentations, with heat killing more Australians than any other natural disaster.

The Victorian Government has already invested in Greening the West, planting 46,000 trees locally. We seek continued investment by the Victorian Government to help council meet its goal to plant 100,000 trees over the next three years and increase our tree canopy cover to 30 per cent by 2050, the recommended level for a healthy environment.

## Investment in innovation

We are committed to our role in a whole-of-community partnership to respond to climate change. Melton City Council has adopted a net-zero emissions target by 2040 for Council operations. Actions to achieve this target are identified in Council's *Environment Plan 2017-2027*.

These include:

- bulk solar and battery programs for low-income households and community facilities
- support for zero-carbon precinct pilots (for example Cobblebank, Toolern MAC)
- incentives for electrification of homes and businesses in new growth areas.

Melton Council's Integrated Water Management (IWM) Implementation Plan outlines the recommended projects such as stormwater harvesting, wetlands, and water-sensitive urban design retrofits across growth areas.

We seek funding support to implement these recommendations.

## Reinvestment of the Landfill Levy

Council calls for the Victorian Government to reinvest the increased landfill levy into:

- new technology, behaviour change and education
- combatting illegally dumped rubbish
- council-led waste and resource recovery infrastructure
- local education and behaviour change programs
- illegal dumping enforcement and clean-up
- circular economy innovation pilots and trials.



# FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Investment in Council and its projects to ensure financial viability



## Asks

- Reinstatement of the **Growing Suburbs Fund** to a \$50 million funding pool
- Review the distribution of **Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution** and **Windfall Levy** funds to direct a guaranteed percentage to councils from the LGA where funds are collected for investment into community infrastructure
- Increase the **Commonwealth's local government Financial Assistance Grants** to one percent of GDP
- Review the **cost-recovery models** for maternal child health, school crossing supervisors and aged care to rebalance to 50:50 cost share

The City of Melton is one of Australia's fastest-growing regions, projected to nearly double its population to 455,980 over the next 20 years. This growth is supported by significant investment from both the Victorian Government and Australian Government. However, Melton City Council faces substantial financial pressures as a growth area council because of:

- demand for community infrastructure including libraries, pools, community centres, open active spaces and sport and recreational facilities that need to be delivered
- the number of rural roads needing surfacing and urbanisation
- the removal of the Growing Suburbs Fund (GSF) contributing to projects that now need full funding by Council
- the competitive nature of the Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution (GAIC) Fund and how the funds are allocated
- developer contributions not fully funding the community infrastructure required
- cost-shifting increasing the financial burden of service delivery
- rate-capping placing significant pressure on growth area councils that need to deliver a greater number of community facilities.



Council has a responsibility to deliver the services that the community needs, to the level that the community expects. Growth Councils have the added pressure to deliver far more community and road infrastructure than inner areas with established facilities. Melton City Council is doing the heavy lifting in facilitating the delivery of new homes to meet the need for affordable housing nationally. However, consideration of the funding structure to enable the long-term delivery of community infrastructure is critical. So we ask the Australian Government and Victorian Government to fund councils appropriately to ensure that we can continue to deliver these projects to the highest standard.

## Growing Suburbs Fund

The Growing Suburbs Fund was established in 2015 and since then, Council has received approximately \$50 million for more than 40 projects worth over \$150 million including community centres, parks, playgrounds, leisure centres and botanic trails.

This funding enables Council to deliver critical social and community infrastructure sooner. The Growing Suburbs Fund was originally a \$50 million funding pool, progressively reduced to \$25 million, \$10 million and \$5 million then de-funded in the 2025/2026 Victorian State Budget.

This means that Council needs to find additional funding to deliver critical social and community infrastructure. The pressures on growth areas have not diminished with the new housing targets in established areas as growth areas provide diversity and affordable housing options.

Council seeks the reinstatement of the Growing Suburbs Fund at \$50 million to meet the infrastructure needs in growth areas.



## Growth Area Infrastructure Contributions Fund (GAIC)

The City of Melton is a top contributor of GAIC funds collected by the Victorian Government but has the lowest percentage return of funds invested in community and transport infrastructure. Council is seeking a review of the GAIC fund that includes a guaranteed percentage of funds directed to local community projects and transparency of the decision-making of funding allocations. The original intention was for funds to be allocated in the areas where they are collected; however, the City of Melton is yet to receive its full allocation.

As a result, City of Melton residents are awaiting major infrastructure projects and operational services long after they have moved into the new estates.

Melton City Council seeks:

- a clear plan as to how the \$191 million shortfall is going to be invested in our community
- a percentage of the GAIC and Windfall Gains Tax to be allocated to councils from the LGA where funds are collected to cover gaps in funding for major community infrastructure such as leisure centres and libraries
- implementation of Infrastructure Victoria's *Strategic Plan* recommendations and the Outer Metropolitan Council's pool and libraries campaign, seeking a funding model for building community infrastructure that shares investment equally between the Australian Government, Victorian Government and local councils.

## Financial Assistance Grants

Melton City Council acknowledges and appreciates the significant allocation of \$28.38 million under the 2025/26 Financial Assistance Grants program. This places Melton among the top-four funded councils in Victoria, alongside Casey, Wyndham and Greater Geelong — each recognised for their scale, rapid population growth and extensive infrastructure responsibilities.

The size of the City of Melton's allocation reflects the recognition of the city's unique position as one of Australia's fastest-growing municipalities, with new communities expanding across multiple precincts each year. The grant remains an essential component of Council's financial base, helping sustain core services, maintain an expanding local road network, and manage demand for community infrastructure across a population that continues to grow faster than the state average.

However, while the Financial Assistance Grants provide a vital platform for service delivery, they are not designed to fund growth infrastructure. For council areas like the City of Melton, where the capital and service demands of new suburbs precede the maturing of the rate base, the grants alone cannot close the substantial funding gap. Council supports the Australian Local Government Association's campaign to increase the Financial Assistance Grants to one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue. This will help deliver the local services and infrastructure that our community need.

## Cost recovery models

Council requests a review of the cost shifting that has occurred for services including maternal child health, school crossing supervisors and aged care for an equitable rebalance. For long-term sustainability of service delivery, an equitable approach to funding these community services is needed.

Consideration is also required for the review of developer contributions to reduce the shortfall in funding key community infrastructure projects.



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