

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

---

7 May 2026

### **Victorian Budget: Council welcomes investment, but more is needed**

Melton City Council has welcomed transport, health and education investment in the 2026/27 Victorian Budget, but says it falls short of what is needed to keep pace with demand in one of Australia's fastest-growing areas.

Council is appreciative of the funding announced in the Victorian Budget for two new bus services for Melton South, a new primary school in Rockbank, upgrades to Melton Primary School, clean-up works along the Western Freeway, and to prepare the Melton Hospital for its opening in 2029. However, more investment is needed in major roads and transport.

While Council welcomes the \$152.7 million joint investment from the Victorian and Australian Governments to progress design and preparation works for the electrification of the Melton rail line, the community is looking for a clear commitment to fund delivery of the project which was promised in 2018.

With the City of Melton's population expected to double over the next 30 years, Council is concerned the rail network will not meet future demand, putting more pressure on already congested roads.

In 2024/25 alone, patronage on the Ballarat Line grew by 2.12 million passengers, with stations in the City of Melton collectively recording an increase of 684,200 passengers.

Over the next 25 years, the Victorian Government has set a target for the City of Melton to deliver 109,000 new dwellings that will see 455,980 residents who will be largely reliant on the Melton line in the Ballarat rail corridor.

While the planned introduction of nine-car VLocity trains will increase capacity on the Melton line by around 50 per cent during peak times, it will not improve the frequency of trains. Electrification of the rail line will triple capacity and increase frequency.

Council is calling for a funded commitment to deliver electrification of the Melton rail line by 2030, along with new stations at Mt Atkinson and Thornhill Park, as recommended in Infrastructure Victoria's 30-year infrastructure strategy (2025–2055).

See the list of City of Melton inclusions in the Victorian Budget at [melton.vic.gov.au/vic-budget](https://melton.vic.gov.au/vic-budget).

#### **Quotes attributable to City of Melton Mayor Cr Lara Carli:**

*"Melton City Council welcomes the \$152.7 million investment from the Victorian and Australian Governments to progress design and preparation works for the electrification of the Melton rail line, and we recognise this as an important step forward."*

*"However, our residents are frustrated with no clear timeframe for delivery and want certainty on this project."*

*"Electrification of the Melton rail line was promised as part of the Western Rail Plan in 2018, and our community has been waiting for its delivery ever since."*

*"Council is supporting the government's housing targets with thousands of people choosing to call the City of Melton home. However, growth must be matched with investment in major roads, public transport and community infrastructure to keep pace with our population and support jobs, education and liveability."*

ENDS

Melton City Council media enquiries (not for publication): Catherine Chapman– Media and Communications Advisor on 0427 595 552