



MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA



POLICY FRAMEWORK

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The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is the legislated peak body for Victoria's 79 councils.

Our purpose is to advocate for local government interests; build the capacity of councils; protect and support the viability of councils; and promote the role of local government.

This policy framework was developed by the MAV in line with our strategic priorities. It expresses key positions across several policy areas, but is not intended as a replication of all positions adopted through our strategic plan or state council resolutions. It is intended that this document will be reviewed, updated, and added to in response to emerging issues and priorities.

November 2022

1. Ageing

Preface

Local government has a universal responsibility to strategically plan for the health, wellbeing, needs and priorities of their older residents. Councils possess local knowledge and deliver sophisticated integrated planning that addresses intersectional needs and identities of older people.

Delivering high-quality home and community care services to older residents has also historically been a critical role for Victorian local government.

Whilst Federal aged care reforms have resulted in councils reviewing their role in direct service delivery, they maintain a commitment to and strong interest in advocacy and stewardship of a changed service system in their communities. For some councils, the move away from direct service delivery has enabled greater investment in programs and strategic planning. Other councils are in the process of reimagining their future role. Some councils will continue to provide varying levels of service delivery and plan to expand and grow their service offerings.

Regardless of councils' future role in the service system, a connected inter-governmental approach between Federal, State, and local government will be essential to enable all older Victorians to access high-quality services and a range of age-friendly opportunities within their local communities.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 1.1 The right for older people to age well, be respected and valued, be heard, and actively participate in community life.
- 1.2 Access to affordable, client focussed, high quality services which enable independence and allow older residents to remain living at home for as long as possible.
- 1.3 Access to high quality care options for those older residents who wish to remain in their local community.
- 1.4 Sustainable community transport options for senior Victorians which are accessible, affordable, safe and direct.
- 1.5 Sustainable programs which facilitate active community participation with positive health and wellbeing outcomes and are inclusive of multicultural and diverse seniors.
- 1.6 Recognition of the extensive knowledge, relationships and networks of local government including council roles in strategic planning for ageing, expertise in the health and well-being of local communities, connection to and relationship with older people, and as a provider of local services, facilities, programs and events.
- 1.7 Local Government's participation in the development, stewardship and implementation of ageing and the aged care service system.

Reviewed: May 2022

2. Circular Economy

Preface

As the level of government charged with collecting and disposing of household waste, local government sees first-hand that Australia's current model of production and consumption is unsustainable.

Significant policy and regulatory reform are needed to achieve an economic system that views generation of waste as a design flaw and ensures our production and consumption habits support, rather than challenge, our transition to a net zero emissions economy.

We must move away from a linear economic model where materials move from manufacturing through to disposal with limited re-use, recycling, or recovery, to a circular economy where waste avoidance, reuse, recycling, and recovery are maximised.

Designers, manufacturers, importers, distributors, and consumers of products must take greater responsibility for the environmental impacts of products throughout their lifecycle, from design to disposal.

All levels of government, all of industry and the community have a critical role to play supporting the transition to a circular economy.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 2.1 Promotion of and greater adherence to the waste hierarchy, with waste avoidance the highest priority
- 2.2 Greater use of product stewardship approaches for end-of-life consumer goods, to ensure those deriving a direct benefit from the goods are bearing the cost of recovery, reuse, recycling and disposal rather than the broader community
- 2.3 Using legislation to prohibit excessive packaging and the use of hard to recycle materials, or restricting their use only to where there are no suitable alternatives
- 2.4 Councils retaining the autonomy to tailor waste services to meet the needs of their communities, while advancing Victoria and Australia's move to a circular economy
- 2.5 Equitable access to the environmental, economic, and social benefits of re-use, recycling, and recovery across Victoria
- 2.6 A comprehensive Container Deposit Scheme that captures as many container types as possible, including wine and spirit bottles
- 2.7 Greater transparency in State and Federal decision-making, including through publication of cost-benefit analyses and evidence bases for major waste and recycling reforms such as the Victorian Government's kerbside recycling reforms
- 2.8 A clear and stable Waste-to-Energy regulatory framework that focuses on protecting future recovery opportunities and does not rely on an arbitrary cap on feedstock
- 2.9 Smarter investment of the landfill levy into reducing waste and improving the long-term sustainability of our resource recovery system
- 2.10 Greater support for public and private procurement of recycled content to help drive markets for recycling and remanufacturing
- 2.11 Cooperation between all levels of government, communities, and industry to promote and protect opportunities to repair and reuse products
- 2.12 Access to timely data on waste and recovery streams to inform decision making
- 2.13 Mandatory adoption of the Australasian Recycling Label on all packaging
- 2.14 Greater investment in long-term state-wide community education campaigns

Reviewed: May 2022

3. Climate Change

Preface

Since May 2017, the MAV has formally recognised that we are in a state of climate emergency requiring urgent action by all levels of government, including local government.

Victorian councils have a strong track record of actively working to reduce emissions and increase organisational and community resilience to climate impacts.

As owners or managers of more than \$100 billion in community assets and infrastructure, Victorian councils appreciate the critical importance of understanding and mitigating climate change risks. Climate impacts on the social, environmental, and economic health of communities, on council services, and on councils' financial positions and are also priority concerns.

Councils and communities are already directly experiencing the impacts of climate change and are increasingly exploring these impacts in more detail. With the right resources, local government are willing to engage and support communities to address climate change.

Strong policy leadership and significant financial investment is urgently needed from both the State and Commonwealth governments to accelerate the transition to a net zero emissions economy and strengthen community resilience to climate change.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 3.1 Setting of ambitious science-based interim emissions reduction targets that support the State and Commonwealth 2050 zero emissions targets, accompanied by whole-of-government policies and programs
- 3.2 Funding councils to support achievement of corporate and community zero emissions targets and strengthen resilience to climate change impacts
- 3.3 Amending the National Construction Code to improve energy efficiency and support the transition to a net zero-emissions built environment
- 3.4 Policy leadership and investment that incentivises decarbonisation and climate resilience, and accelerates the transition to renewable energy, green hydrogen, energy storage and energy efficiency
- 3.5 Support and promotion of low and zero emissions vehicles and increased uptake of active and public transport
- 3.6 Reforming the planning system to better integrate climate change considerations. This includes net-zero carbon buildings, cooling and greening of the public and private realm, facilitating well connected communities and promoting zero-emissions public and private transport
- 3.7 An evidence-driven and State-led approach to ensure that planning schemes accurately reflect and manage environmental hazards and increasing climate change risks
- 3.8 Amending Schedule 1 of the Climate Change Act to include decisions under planning, transport, agriculture, and energy legislation

Reviewed: May 2022

4. Early Years

Preface

A key responsibility of Victorian councils, and one they have a long and proud history of delivering, is strategically planning for the health, wellbeing, safety, connection to culture, access and participation, and development of its youngest citizens. Councils take a whole-of-community, whole-of-system approach to building community strength and addressing the underlying causes of inequity and vulnerability of children and families. A council Municipal Early Years Plan is place-based with a focus on prevention, equity, health, and long-term social and educational outcomes for children.

Local government understands the importance of the early years and continues to formally embrace this through a range of plans, infrastructure provision, service delivery and support. Childhood is a stage of life where investment has the greatest return and opportunities to intervene have the greatest impacts. A municipality that has a focus on children is one that benefits all members of the community.

Access to and participation in universal services such as Kindergarten is the bedrock of a child's future with irrefutable evidence showing that participation in a quality kindergarten program for two years improves a child's outcomes for life. Local government is embedded in a complex service system of Early Years regardless of whether they deliver early years services directly or not. All Victorian councils provide early years infrastructure, most deliver a Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme for part or all their municipality and all are municipal planners for their communities which include families and children.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 4.1 The rights of all children to be safe, included, heard, connected to culture, and have access to the services and programs they need.
- 4.2 A well-connected, accessible, and effective service system that supports families to raise happy and healthy children who can achieve their full potential.
- 4.3 A collaborative and effective relationship between Commonwealth, State and Local government that provides a foundation for effective planning, resourcing and delivery of agreed reforms and policies.
- 4.4 Sustainable funding to councils to assist with investment in the provision of early years infrastructure, services planning and delivery.
- 4.5 An educated community that understands the critical importance of the early years and the role, they play in achieving this.
- 4.6 A State where vulnerability, location and disadvantage do not determine outcomes for children.

Reviewed: May 2022

5. Emergency Management

Preface

Victorian councils play a critical role in emergency management. They are the tier of government closest to community and have an intricate understanding of local needs. Using these strong community connections, they can identify many of the opportunities available to enhance resilience, and relief and recovery outcomes, through a community-first lens. Victoria's emergency management sector has been undergoing significant reform since the 2009 Black Saturday fires, following a Royal Commission. Further floods, bushfires, heatwaves and other emergencies have triggered additional reviews and inquiries.

Roles and responsibilities of councils have continued to evolve throughout the reform journey. Victorian Government expectations, changing legislation and revised emergency planning arrangements have created significant complexity and resourcing constraints. This has increased the risk of councils being unable to comply with the broad range of requirements, ultimately risking community outcomes.

The lack of role clarity, minimal training for statutory roles and completely inadequate funding to deliver emergency management responsibilities is concerning.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 5.1 Commitment to reaching absolute clarity on council roles and responsibilities in emergency management. Any changes must be informed by the principles outlined in the MAV's Role of Local Government in Emergency Management Position Paper.
- 5.2 Ensuring local, council-led recovery coordination post-emergencies is maintained and that state recovery agencies do not interfere with local decision making.
- 5.3 Proper resourcing of councils to ensure they have the capability and capacity to deliver emergency management roles and responsibilities. This includes annual indexed funding for a full-time staff member in every council, plus dedicated funding for hazard mitigation works and local resilience building. Funding allocations should be informed by local emergency risks identified through Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees and replace the inadequate Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program.
- 5.4 Funding all actions proposed to address capacity and capability gaps identified in Local Government Victoria's Councils and Emergencies Project.
- 5.5 Commitment to the development and rollout of a council emergency management training strategy to ensure council officers have the skills they need to perform statutory roles, such as Municipal Recovery Manager, Emergency Management Officer and Fire Prevention Officer.
- 5.6 Resourcing of state-based control agencies to deliver hazard specific planning in line with their subject matter expertise, rather than relying on councils.
- 5.7 Dedicated resourcing for Regional Emergency Management Planning Committees.
- 5.8 Streamlined Natural Disaster Financial Assistance program (a Victorian component of the Federal Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements) to reduce administrative burdens and ensure funding flows fast for councils impacted by an emergency.

Reviewed: May 2022

6. Financial Sustainability

Preface

Local government delivers the services and infrastructure that Victorian communities rely on every day. As a democratic third tier of government, councils need long-term financial sustainability to ensure they can deliver on the priorities and needs of their communities. As councils find themselves increasingly challenged by delivering services on behalf of other tiers of government alongside revenue constraints and rising costs, there is a real risk that communities will have reduced autonomy. In turn, the local resilience which state and national governments rely on in times of crisis is reduced.

Nationwide, councils collect 3.6% of taxation revenue, yet manage 24.4% of non-financial public assets and employ 190,000 people. Asset portfolios, service delivery costs, and the capacity of communities to pay also vary significantly from council to council. This means that financial transfers from other levels of government are vital to ensure equitable outcomes. The long-term financial viability of Victoria's 79 councils has been diminished by Victorian and Commonwealth Government policies that limit constrain council revenue and increase expenditure. This includes the current rate capping policy, historical freezes to Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants, increases on levies collected from councils, and shifting funding and service delivery responsibility to local government.

Communities are best served by councils that are equipped to act on local priorities. Too often the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments discount the powerful economic drivers local councils can activate through local employment and stimulus.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 6.1 Restoring Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants to 1% of federal tax revenue
- 6.2 Recognition from the Victorian Government that financial sustainability is a key component of councils' rightful position as a legitimate third tier of government
- 6.3 Councils being given ongoing resources rather than one-off transition payments to manage additional responsibilities placed on them
- 6.4 Reforming the rate capping system to ensure it provides for financial sustainability of councils and autonomy for local communities to act on their priorities
- 6.5 Greater consideration in Regulatory Impact Statements of the costs that will be borne by local government
- 6.6 Agreements for co-funded services between levels of government being revised, as many have shifted unfair burdens onto local government over time
- 6.7 Local Government being consulted earlier in the consideration of major reforms, to ensure financial and operational impacts can be properly addressed
- 6.8 Greater focus on untied or broad-purpose grant programs that reduce administrative costs and empower local communities, rather than competitive specific-purpose grants.
- 6.9 Matched-funding requirements and ongoing maintenance costs being carefully considered when delivering grant programs for local infrastructure
- 6.10 Recognition of the economic value councils provide as major employers and drivers of local economies

Reviewed: May 2022

7. Gender Equality and Preventing Family Violence

Preface

Everyone in every community has the right to be safe, included, and equal in their homes, workplaces, and communities. Yet violence against women and inequalities based on gender, race, ability, age, and sexuality persist.

The MAV is committed to preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women, promoting gender equality, and supporting councils to do the same.

Councils have a responsibility to provide leadership to foster safety, wellbeing and equity for all members of their communities and are uniquely positioned, by their deep-rooted community connections, to undertake primary prevention work. Many Victorian councils have been engaged in such activities for over a decade. In recognition of this leadership the state government has provided support to the MAV and significant investment in councils via grants programs to progress the prevention of family violence at the local level.

The MAV and councils endeavour to take an evidence-based approach predominately guided by the frameworks of Our Watch, Australia's national agency for the primary prevention of violence against women. We recognise gender inequality as the most influential context enabling violence against women to occur across our entire community.

With an evolving and growing workforce dedicated to gender equality and primary prevention of family violence in the local government sector, the MAV seeks to ensure that this workforce is supported, capable, and has the capacity to deliver the best outcomes for Victorian communities. We are also committed to promoting gender equality wherever possible across the sector.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 7.1 Continued and increased investment in the local government sector to:
 - strengthen and grow existing primary prevention work in councils
 - commence new activity across the state leveraging councils' reach and influence to positively impact community outcomes
 - ensure that councils have the resources needed to effectively deliver on existing (and any future) legislative obligations, such as those under the Gender Equality Act and Health and Wellbeing Act.
- 7.2 Workforce development for local government including appropriately tailored training, resources, and professional development opportunities.
- 7.3 Alignment of work occurring across state government to ensure issues affecting local government are cohesive and cognisant of council needs.
- 7.4 Recognition of the diversity of councils' size, location, and unique needs particularly in relation to investment, workforce development, and legislative obligations/state government requirements.
- 7.5 Opportunities for local government to expand their partnerships and activities.
- 7.6 Improved monitoring and evaluation of local government activity to continue to build the evidence base.
- 7.7 Opportunities to increasing women's representation in local government leadership.

Reviewed: May 2022

8. Good Governance

Preface

Council Governance includes the rules, laws, policies, processes and culture which underpin the activities of a democratically elected council. Good governance practices are vital to support councils to make decisions and act in the best interests of the community now and into the future.

The MAV supports the principles of good governance as described by the *Local Government Act 2020* (Act) including that decisions and actions are: taken in accordance with the relevant law; made in terms of economic, social and environmental sustainability; and are transparent. Councillors' governance role is to participate in decision making of the Council, represent the interests of the municipal community in that decision making and contribute to the strategic direction of the Council.

The legislative requirements provide a clear base framework about what good governance is in the local government setting. This framework is supported by the MAV. However, the MAV is also committed to viewing good governance as being more than the requirements of this legislative framework. As a demonstration of this commitment, MAV has and continues to work in partnership with the sector to develop a deeper understanding and practice about how to deliver good governance now and into the future. We do this by delivering a comprehensive professional development program and by providing resources and information which focus on good governance. The MAV is committed to evolving and changing our offering to strengthen the good governance practices at councils as the needs of the sector evolve and change.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 8.1 The implementation of an accredited and tailored councillor training and development program which has a mix of technical and personal development domains.
- 8.2 A State Government budget allocation for councillors to access training and development to suit their individual needs including coaching and mentoring.
- 8.3 A structured ongoing 'induction process' for councillor teams throughout their term in office to promote an ongoing and deeper understanding of good governance practices.
- 8.4 Development of new early intervention processes and supports to address governance issues as they arise.
- 8.5 A better resourced councillor conduct panel process.
- 8.6 Model policies and procedures for the good governance documents which are prescribed by the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- 8.7 A new tertiary (Bachelor or Masters degree) course for governance professionals which combines the study of subjects which are critical to contemporary public management with subjects which are particular to local government and focus on good municipal governance.

Reviewed: May 2022

9. Land Use Planning

Preface

Councils support an efficient and fair planning system that places community input and wellbeing at its centre. As the level of government closest to the community, councils are best placed to lead and implement planning policy that responds to local needs and vision. Councils understand that local areas pay a high price for poor planning decisions that place short-term gain over the long-term benefits of sound strategic planning.

Despite resource constraints, Victorian councils lead the way in developing innovative solutions to key planning problems. This includes policy now adopted by the State such as mandated apartment design standards, or the development of Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) policy. Councils press for planning reform and strong policy leadership on a range of issues important to their constituents, particularly climate change mitigation and adaptation and mechanisms to meet the systemic lack of social and affordable housing.

Councils advocate for reforms to the planning system that improve transparency in decision making, responds to the urgency of the climate crisis, delivers necessary infrastructure, and empowers communities to make informed decisions on the future of their neighbourhoods.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 9.1 Recognising the importance of planning in providing sustainable, healthy, and vibrant communities, and that local decision making should be prioritised
- 9.2 Where decisions are made at a state level, ensuring councils and communities are meaningfully consulted, and properly resourced for their involvement
- 9.3 Reviewing the current balance between community benefit and private profit, particularly where significant windfalls are made at the stroke of a pen
- 9.4 Greater transparency from the Victorian Government, including releasing reports produced by advisory committees to better inform public debate
- 9.5 A state-led and evidence-based approach to ensuring planning schemes appropriately reflect and respond to current knowledge of hazards
- 9.6 Working with Traditional Owners, councils, and communities to better align the planning system with principles of treaty and self-determination
- 9.7 Involving councils earlier in amendments to both legislation and the Victoria Planning Provisions, both to help shape policy and be ready to implement changes on day one.
- 9.8 Partnering with councils to pursue process improvement in the planning system, and helping to share best practice across local government
- 9.9 Ensuring infrastructure contribution mechanisms are fit-for-purpose, provide councils with the necessary funds to deliver infrastructure, and reflect community expectations on the types and standards of infrastructures they want for their neighbourhoods
- 9.10 An Environmentally Sustainable Development particular provision that sets a minimum expectation state-wide, while still allowing communities to innovate through higher standards.
- 9.11 Empowering councils to seek mandatory social and affordable housing contributions
- 9.12 Making climate change mitigation an 'objective of planning in Victoria' in the *Planning and Environment Act* and adding decisions under this Act, particularly those regarding strategic planning, to Schedule 1 of the *Climate Change Act*.
- 9.13 Ensuring that councils have the resources and tools to pursue enforcement action, and that penalties are sufficient to act as a real deterrent to breaching the planning scheme
- 9.14 Reforming the planning scheme amendment process to reduce delays at the authorisation and final approval stages, and the resource burdens councils face in developing and implementing local policy

Reviewed: May 2022

10. Maternal and Child Health

Preface

For over 100 years, Victorian local government has been providing Maternal and Child Health Services to the families in their communities. This free Universal service is provided in every Victorian municipality for families with children from birth to school age. The maternal and child health service focuses on optimising the health, development, and wellbeing of the child in the context of their family and community using a family-centered, collaborative partnership approach.

The maternal and child health service is part of the universal service system, which councils have a statutory and social responsibility for planning and supporting the health and wellbeing of children and families. In their municipalities.

Within the governance of a Memorandum of understanding, the MAV (on behalf of Victorian councils) and State Government partner in decision-making for the planning, funding, and provision of the Victorian MCH Service.

Victorian councils place based approach to MCH service provision enables the tailoring of the service to meet the needs of the families in their community. The Maternal and child health data also feeds into local governments sophisticated strategic planning and their response to population growth, services, and infrastructure.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 10.1 An ongoing partnership with local government in the provision of the universal maternal and child health service, including an increase in the State Governments unit cost to meet the 50:50 funding arrangement.
- 10.2 Continued free universal MCH service provision within each local government area ensuring families of children from birth to school age are appropriately supported.
- 10.3 A focus on the most vulnerable children and families within each community being provided with additional support through the Enhanced MCH service, provision of and connection to adequate local services and referral pathways to meet their needs.
- 10.4 Acknowledgement of the increasing needs and complexity for families of young children in recent times
- 10.5 Sustainable MCH program provision that can adapt to the needs of the community.
- 10.6 A contemporary workforce strategy which includes adequate training places and scholarships for Maternal and Child Health Nurses to meet the current and future workforce demand
- 10.7 A new contemporary health record database that meets the requirements of the MCH service

Reviewed: May 2022

11. Public Health and Wellbeing

Preface

Local government plays a major role in creating the environment for communities to prosper and enjoy improved health and wellbeing. Councils can influence areas such as employment, social support, access to sport and cultural activities which are key ingredients in the health and wellbeing of communities.

Local government also has key roles in health protection and in prevention and population health. As well food safety regulation, tobacco education and enforcement, issuing of onsite wastewater management systems and responding to nuisances, council environmental health officers provide key roles in emergency recovery. Victorian councils develop health and wellbeing plans identifying infrastructure and activities which enhance opportunities for people to keep well.

Councils are statutorily required through the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 to provide immunisations to children in their municipalities under the age of 18 years of age. While GPs and other health providers are fully funded to provide these vaccines, councils are subsidizing their delivery of National Immunisation Program vaccines to preschool children and secondary school students to increasing extents. Some councils estimate they subsidise vaccine delivery by up to 40%.

The focus of all levels of government on mental health is welcomed but councils fear the lack of local co-ordination of new funding programs from both federal and state government will lead to service gaps and wastage through duplication of scarce resources including trained workforces. The Royal Commission into Mental Health recommended the establishment of Local Community Collectives to promote mental wellbeing and social inclusion.

The decriminalisation of sex work from December 2023 will result in councils having to deal with many more complaints from the community and businesses with no recognition or support being provided through the Victorian Government's implementation plan.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 11.1 Councils to be recognised and supported to co-ordinate health and wellbeing activities that prevent ill-health and promote wellbeing
- 11.2 A collaborative and effective relationship between Commonwealth, State and Local government that provides a foundation for effective planning, resourcing and delivery of agreed reforms and policies.
- 11.3 Local government to be involved in the design and operation of Local Community Collectives
- 11.4 A review of funding for councils' delivery of vaccines to preschool children and secondary school students under the National Immunisation Program.
- 11.5 Maintaining funding for the Local Government Building Accessible Communities Program to aid the State Government's delivery of the Victorian Disability Plan and rollout of universal design principles which will assist people with disabilities have easier access to public facilities
- 11.6 The Victorian Government adequately resources and supports WorkSafe and Victoria Police to respond to worker and community concerns following the decriminalisation of sex work in Victoria.

Reviewed: May 2022

12. Social and Affordable Housing

Preface

Housing is a critical determinant of health and wellbeing of communities across the state. Access to safe, secure and affordable housing provides the basis for improved life outcomes, access to education, jobs and services, and better mental and physical health. The significant shortage of affordable housing across Victoria is therefore a cause for considerable concern.

The Victorian Government is responsible for funding and delivering social and affordable housing. It also oversees the Victorian planning system which sets the policy and provisions for land use and development, including directing the location and design of housing. The planning system also sets the framework in which councils develop and implement local housing policies.

Despite their lack of direct influence over Commonwealth and state policy and investment decisions, councils have developed innovative solutions to local housing problems. In many cases they have contributed their own funds, assets and expertise to deliver housing strategies they have developed in consultation with their communities. Partnerships and shared investment from state government agencies has been key to new dwellings being created and necessary services arranged.

A coordinated response across governments, the private sector, the community housing sector, industry groups and the community are essential and necessary to achieving more social and affordable housing dwellings for people in need of assistance in finding a place to live.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 12.1 Formalised partnership arrangements between state and local government, underpinned by a state-wide agreement (Compact) which includes a mechanism to engage across the range of state agencies that influence social and affordable housing policy
- 12.2 Recognition that councils are essential partners in the creation and ongoing sustainability of social and affordable housing, and that they must be properly resourced to fulfill necessary planning, support and community development functions to support their communities
- 12.3 Implementation of planning mechanisms that empower councils to seek mandatory affordable housing contributions from developers and zoning options which require developments to include affordable housing options
- 12.4 Shared planning around building renewal and development of state owned and managed public housing to ensure they conform to local planning schemes and are fully integrated into the urban landscape, including environmentally sustainable design
- 12.5 Improving wrap-around outreach services for people with complex needs experiencing homelessness
- 12.6 Development of a shared social and affordable housing data and monitoring system that provides transparency and a basis for joint planning
- 12.7 A state-wide public awareness and community education campaign, matched with municipal engagement to encourage communities to be actively involved in the planning and delivery of social and affordable housing

Reviewed: May 2022

13. Transport

Preface

Victorian councils play a critical role in the planning, funding, delivery and maintenance of transport infrastructure. They are responsible for 87 per cent of the state's entire road network – approximately 132,420 kilometres in total – ensuring safe and reliable access to communities across Victoria. They use their strong community connections and intricate understanding of local needs to support decision making and investment.

Councils make land use planning and broader policy decisions that reflect community aspirations to create more liveable, productive and safe environments. They also advocate on behalf of local communities for further investment in local transport options. In some cases, they provide specific services such as community or school buses.

State and Federal governments must recognise the important role of councils in transport planning for local community needs. They must ensure greater alignment between funding streams, major projects and local priorities.

In recent times, governments have had a focus on big projects that don't solve local issues. State and Federal Governments must listen to communities, through their councils. They must ensure our views are at the decision-making table and that adequate funding for local priorities is provided.

Our Position

MAV advocates for:

- 13.1 Better integration of land use and infrastructure planning to control congestion, increase accessibility to critical services and improve community connection.
- 13.2 Early engagement from government on transport projects, including consultation on project sequencing and investment timelines to support local planning.
- 13.3 Implementation of a well-funded and ongoing local road funding stream to ensure maintenance issues that don't meet the criteria for other grant programs can be dealt with. Councils need much greater support to deliver safe, well-maintained roads. Existing funding streams and grants are either too rigid, or simply unsustainable.
- 13.4 Implementation of a well-funded and ongoing Council Road Safety Fund enabling all local governments to access funding to implement urgent hazard mitigation works that don't meet the criteria for existing grant programs.
- 13.5 Dedicated funding over four years to support local walking and bike riding infrastructure.
- 13.6 Dedicated funding over four years to address local road first and last kilometre issues.
- 13.7 Annual, ongoing funding to support improved local streetscapes.
- 13.8 Expansion of the TAC's Community Road Safety Grants and Local Government Grants Programs to provide more funding to councils and help ensure everyone can move across the local road network safely.
- 13.9 Indexed annual funding to match local government school crossing supervisor contributions.

Reviewed: May 2022