

MAV STRATEGY 2021-25

THE VOICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is the legislated peak body for Victoria's 79 councils. The MAV is a membership association, accountable to its constituent members through State Council and an elected Board. The MAV was formed in 1879, with the Municipal Association Act 1907 officially recognising us as the voice of local government in Victoria. We are a driving and influential force behind a strong and strategically positioned local government sector.

Our role is to:

- Represent and advocate local government interests
- Promote the role of local government
- Build the capacity of councils
- Facilitate effective networks
- Provide policy and strategic advice
- Support for Mayors and Councillors
- Provide insurance and procurement services.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we live. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

VISION MISSION VALUES

INFORMED
INFLUENTIAL
CREDIBLE
CAPABLE

RESPONSIVE
ACCESSIBLE
CONNECTED
TRUSTED



MEMBER PRIORITIES

- Financial sustainability
- COVID-19 relief and recovery
- Health and well-being
- Waste and resource recovery
- Transport and infrastructure
- Planning and building
- Business and digital transformation
- Climate impacts and emergency management

MEMBER SERVICES

- Advocacy and representation
- Issue analysis and policy development
- Collaborative strategic procurement
- Resources and advice
- Network support and collaboration
- Insurance services
- Communications and engagement
- Representation of Victorian sector federally
- Training and professional development

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAV PRESIDENT AND CEO



CR DAVID CLARK
President



MS KERRY THOMPSON
Chief Executive Officer

Our 2021-25 Strategy will guide the MAV's policy and advocacy activities over the next four years. It outlines the priorities and actions that are needed to ensure we can continue to deliver for our communities and local businesses.

It is a commitment to serve the interests of our member Councils and their communities by representing and advocating for local government. This commitment will involve raising the sector's profile and providing strategic policy advice and capacity building programs as well as insurance and procurement services to local government.

This strategy has evolved from the achievements of the previous one, which was delivered in the most challenging of circumstances as the MAV was among those to respond to both bushfire emergencies and the COVID-19 pandemic. It also takes into account the current dynamic circumstances facing Victorian councils.

The bushfires of 2019-20 and the COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted the resilience of Victoria councils and their communities. Despite consistent hits to councils' financial positions throughout last year, councils have demonstrated an ability to innovate and lead in times of uncertainty. The consistent challenges of the past two years are likely to remain in some form over the next four years. The pandemic has engendered us with an understanding of what uncertainty truly means for our sector and beyond.

With this comes the opportunity to harness our experience to strengthen our work and our communities.

The economic impacts of COVID have given cause to an even greater focus on the need to support local business and develop regional economies. We acknowledge the financial sacrifices made by councils during the pandemic and will continue to call on other levels of government to make certain councils are not forced to fill shortfalls in state and federal funding.

Despite these challenges, nationally, our passion and appreciation for community has well and truly been re-invigorated.

Two examples of the value of locally-led policy delivering high quality outcomes for community can be seen in the Royal Commissions into Aged Care and Victoria's Mental Health System. Both Royal Commissions acknowledged the integral role community connections play in ensuring people have access to services when they need them most.

Strengthening our communities and local business in every region of Victoria will rely on councils' local knowledge and expertise. The MAV remains committed to advocating for councils' on the issues that affect them. Significant investments into current and future State Government reforms, such as social and affordable housing, kindergarten expansion and waste resource recovery, will rely on strong, constructive, and open partnerships. Top-down approaches to reform have time and time again fallen short of meaningful long-term improvements.

The MAV continues to advocate to other levels of government to acknowledge the central role of councils in the successful development and implementation of reforms affecting our communities.

As we move beyond the pandemic's immediate impacts, climate change will remain a concern for our sector.

The potential for meaningful intergovernmental action is considerable.

Councils have shown their commitment to tackling climate change, putting in place local adaptation and mitigation actions. Strong partnerships will be vital for encouraging whole of government commitments to addressing climate change and its impacts on waste recovery, planning, the natural environment, health, transport and emergency management.

The MAV will continue to support councils to navigate new legislative frameworks, including the new principle-based Local Government Act and the Gender Equality Act. These Acts place greater emphasis on local decision-making, equity and inclusion.

Through facilitating collaboration within our sector and influencing the decisions that affect our members, the MAV will ensure councils are ready to navigate changing legislative landscapes.

In the next four years and recognising that there remain uncertainties that may challenge intentions, the MAV will continue to deliver positive outcomes for its members.

This strategy sets out our intentions through objectives and actions, in line with the key themes of:

- Economically sound councils
- Healthy, diverse and thriving communities
- Well planned, connected and resilient built environment
- Changing climate and a circular economy
- Sector capability and good governance
- Effective and responsive MAV

Through this strategy, it will expand our deliverables to build sector capacity, engagement and resilience. This strategy is not just outwardly focused. It is part of our commitment to members to ensure that MAV also reflects, collaborates and improves its systems and processes.

So, among the priorities will be further organisational improvements, engagement with member Councils for the review of the MAV rules and the implementation of actions arising from our inaugural Staff Engagement Survey.

Through this approach, the MAV seeks to balance our planned activities with the unforeseen issues that will emerge. This will be essential to both our success and our members' success.



Cr David Clark
President



Ms Kerry Thompson
Chief Executive Officer

HOW WE GO ABOUT OUR BUSINESS

The MAV's purpose is to advance the interests of local government in Victoria. We do this in two primary ways. First, through advocacy and policy development and secondly, through providing member-focussed services.

Our advocacy and policy development is focussed on:

- influencing decision-makers with informed, data-driven and realistic policy positions
- highlighting future opportunities and challenges facing councils and communities
- leveraging local government's expertise to inform our advocacy activities
- developing relationships with stakeholders to build understanding of local government
- collaborating with governments to shape new initiatives and reform programs.

We deliver services to our members focussed on:

- building the capacity and capability of the local government sector
- offering commercial services and programs that meet council needs
- highlighting best practice and sharing knowledge from across Victoria and nationally
- engaging with member councils on emerging needs in relation to procurement and insurance services.



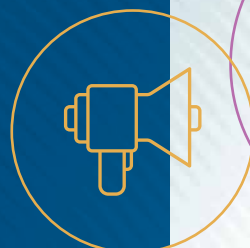
MAV President
Cr David Clark
Pyrenees Shire Council



Deputy President Metro
Cr Rohan Leppert
Metro Central Region
City of Melbourne



Deputy President Rural
Cr Ruth Gstrein
Rural South West Region
Corangamite Shire Council



BOARD



Cr Joseph Haweil
Interface Region
Hume City Council



Cr Brett Tessari
Rural Gippsland Region
Bass Coast Shire Council



Cr Tom Melican
Metro East Region
City of Banyule



Cr Jennifer Anderson
Rural North Central Region
Macedon Ranges Shire Council



Cr Jami Klisaris
Metro South East
City of Stonnington



Cr Aaron Scales
Rural North East Region
Towong Shire Council



Cr Kristopher Bolam
Metro Southern Region
City of Frankston



Cr Murray Emerson
Rural North West Region
Northern Grampians Shire
Council



Cr Kathy Majdlik
Metro West Region
City of Melton



Cr Kylie Grzybek
Rural South Central Region
City of Greater Geelong

PREPARATION OF THIS STRATEGY

The MAV 2021-25 strategy was been developed in collaboration with our members. The aim is to capture our strategic objectives as a sector and how the MAV will deliver enhanced services and outcomes.

There were a number of opportunities for member input and feedback to validate and prioritise objectives. Key activities included:

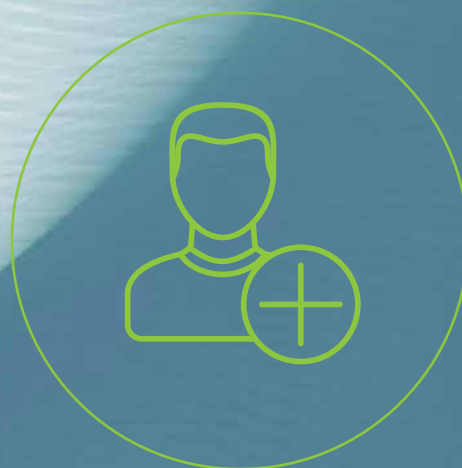
- **Regional consultation.** Meetings of the MAV's regional groups, including MAV representatives, Mayors and CEOs, were held in April 2021.
- **Member survey.** Members were asked to complete a wide-ranging survey on their perceptions of the opportunities and challenges facing the sector over the next four years. They were also able to identify priorities areas of focus for MAV-led activities.
- **Engagement activities.** Ongoing work by MAV board members, MAV staff, councillors and council officers is reflected in this strategy. This includes consideration of national local government issues as well as the policy and reform activities of external stakeholders, primarily Federal and State Governments.
- **MAV board deliberations.** The MAV board held a number of discussions on the emerging opportunities for the sector and the MAV's role in pursuing these opportunities. This included a board workshop to endorse the draft Strategy for consideration at State Council.
- **Current MAV priorities.** A number of the priorities and actions of the 2019-21 MAV Strategy continue to be a major focus of this Strategy. This includes relevant resolutions from past State Council meetings.

MONITORING AND REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE

The MAV strategy will be reviewed annually through reporting to State Council and the Annual Report over the next four years. Based on these reviews, the Strategy will be updated to reflect our performance and incorporate emerging issues.

After the second year of the MAV Strategy, the intention will be to refresh the priorities and actions in annual with the next board elections in 2023. The aim is to ensure that all MAV activities contribute to the delivery of our strategic objectives.

Using the measures identified for each activity, we will assess and report on the outcomes in our Annual Report to members. We will also report on the factors influencing the outcome, including our progress in building our capability and improving our processes.



STRATEGIC OUTCOMES



THEME 1

Economically sound councils



THEME 2

Healthy, diverse and thriving communities



THEME 3

Well-planned, connected and resilient built environment



THEME 4

Changing climate and a circular economy



THEME 5

Sector capability and good governance



THEME 6

Effective and responsive MAV



THEME 1

Economically sound councils

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

To secure long term financial viability for Victoria's 79 councils

OBJECTIVES

INITIATIVES FOR 2021-22

Assist councils to provide COVID-19 recovery activities that enhance economic recovery and their communities

- Council COVID-19 recovery examples shared with Members of Parliament (MPs), Ministers and key State Government departments
- Participation in Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) forums on employment and economic development

Undertake advocacy to protect the integrity of councils' rates base and financial position from unfair and unfunded decisions by State and Federal government

- Undertake a review of the current financial health of Victoria's councils, including changes to council revenue over the past five years
- Provide a regular report on the impact of State Government decisions on councils' financial position
- Renegotiate an increased maternal and child health unit cost and a new contemporary funding model to maintain the 50:50 partnership funding between State and local government

Support Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) national advocacy campaigns to secure additional Federal Government financial support for councils, including defending and extending Federal Financial Assistance Grants for Victorian councils

- Implements national advocacy actions agreed through ALGA
- Maintain relationship with the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission regarding Victoria's share of national Financial Assistance Grants

Support improvements to council asset management capacity and capability through policy development, advocacy and strategic partnerships

- Complete survey and sector forum to confirm priority issues
- Advocate for fair outcome from urban stormwater and drainage infrastructure reforms

Support a range of business improvement and transformation activities for councils, particularly in the digital and technology area

- Establish a Local Government Innovation Taskforce comprised of Council CEOs to champion digital leadership across the sector
- Advocate for equitable access to digital infrastructure and services, including new strategic procurement opportunities
- Coordinate multi-council digital committees on innovation and best practice across service delivery, information management and data governance



THEME 2

Healthy, diverse and thriving communities

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Councils have the capacity and capability to both plan for ongoing community need and deliver a range of services to meet that need

OBJECTIVES

Strengthen the ability of councils to undertake community well-being planning, implementation and partnership development through key strategic activities

Advocate for councils' role in current, emerging, and future policy directions in ageing, disability, and aged and community care

Continue to represent council's statutory role in the delivery of the Victorian Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Service

INITIATIVES FOR 2021-22

- Participate in development of a new Victorian Disability Act and associated strategy
- Facilitate council networks and leadership around the Gender Equity and Prevention of Violence against Women Network, the Local Government Disability Planners Network and the emerging area of mental health and wellbeing
- Represent councils in the development of new State Government Strategies for Youth and for LGBTI+
- Participate in the finalisation of the Local Government Victoria's Victorian Local Government Aboriginal Strategy
- Actively participate in the Federal Government Victorian Community Care Advisory Committee (VCCAC) and responded through ALGA to the next 10-year National Disability Strategy
- Participate in the advisory group supporting the Commissioner for Older Victorians
- Maintain regular council network meetings to continue communication to the sector regarding policy and advocacy issues
- Secure a new four year 2022-25 MCH MOU with the State Government on behalf of local government
- Influence new State Government policy and guidelines to ensure council's priorities and challenges are addressed

OBJECTIVES

INITIATIVES FOR 2021-22

Continue to work with the state and federal governments to advocate and represent council's role in early years education and care services

- Advocate for council priorities at the State Government Ministerial Kindergarten Reform Consultative Committee
- Continue MAV network meetings with councils to ensure advocacy and representation of early educational and care services is targeted in State Government advisory and working groups

Advocate for councils' interests and activities in the areas of community safety and public health regulation

- Liaison undertaken regarding councils' role supporting the COVID-19 health response and vaccine rollout
- Convene the Local Government Gambling, Alcohol and Other Drugs Issues Forum
- New Department of Health/MAV tobacco control service agreements implemented

Represent the interests of councils with the emergency management sector, including through ongoing reform programs

- Participate in the third phase of Department of Jobs, Precincts and Region's Councils and Emergencies project
- Collaborate with councils to influence and implement State Government reforms flowing from emergency management reviews, including the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements
- Participate in the development of the Whole-of-Government Bushfire Management Strategy and support council input



THEME 3

Well-planned, connected and resilient built environment

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Councils continue to play a central role in creating and maintaining a well-planned, connected and resilient built environment

OBJECTIVES

INITIATIVES FOR 2021-22

Advocate for an effective Victorian planning system, which has local decision making at the centre

- Secure commitment from Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DEWLP) to strengthen engagement and consultation with councils on planning reforms
- Pursue reforms to the planning scheme amendment process to reduce delay and improve efficiencies
- Establish a regular forum for council engagement and knowledge-sharing on planning issues

Advocate for a building regulatory system that puts community safety first and equitably assigns responsibilities and resources among regulators

- Secure commitments from the State Government for an increased role and funding for local government in building reform
- Strengthen dialogue and engagement with key building regulation agencies, including the Victorian Building Authority

Work with councils, State Government and non-government stakeholders to meet Victoria's current and future housing needs

- Influence development of a Local Government Housing Compact to support delivery of social and affordable housing
- Secured commitment from Victorian Government for mandatory affordable housing contributions
- Explore streamlining of land supply process to meet growing demand in regional Victoria

Strengthen advocacy and partnerships to influence key investments in freight productivity, first and last mile impediments, transport connectivity and road safety by all levels of government

- Develop and commence a local roads funding advocacy plan
- Support Department of Transport (DoT) to engage effectively with local government to deliver Victorian Freight Plan and road safety priorities

Improve the capability of local government to plan, design and deliver walking and riding programs and projects

- Hold at least three forums on walking and riding, and share information via an online resource hub



THEME 4

Changing climate and a circular economy

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Councils are supported to reduce emissions, manage the impacts of a changing climate and continue their transition to a circular economy

OBJECTIVES

Advocate for practical leadership and investment to support councils to reduce emissions and build resilience to climate change impacts

Advocate to the State Government for greater support for councils and greater flexibility in the implementation of State-led waste and recycling reforms

Partner with the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) to develop and promote resources to support councils to implement the Environment Protection Act 2019 and relevant regulation

Work with the State Government to protect and enhance the natural environment

INITIATIVES FOR 2021-22

- Climate change advocacy evident across MAV activities and communications
- Deliver forums and resources that build council capacity and share practical learnings in climate adaptation and mitigation
- Strengthen collaboration with other organisations working to accelerate the transition to net zero emissions and a circular economy
- Actively influence State Government recycling reforms, including kerbside waste and e-waste
- Deliver forums that build council capacity in transitioning to a circular economy
- Represent local government on relevant reference groups including the Container Deposit Scheme Advisory Group and the High Risk and Hazardous Waste working group
- Establish an Memorandum of Understanding with EPA to support the role of EPA and councils as co-regulators under the Environment Protection Act
- Develop joint resources and guidance to support councils to meet the requirements of the new EPA Act and regulations
- Represent the sector on relevant reference and advisory groups including the Environmental Sustainability Commissioner's Reference Group, the Native Vegetation Advisory Group and Electric Line Clearance Consultative Committee
- Deliver forums and resources that build councils' knowledge and capacity in natural resource management



THEME 5

Sector capability and good governance

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

A diverse, engaged and highly capable local government sector grounded in good governance and connected to its community

OBJECTIVES

INITIATIVES FOR 2021-22

Strengthen local government's capacity to deliver good governance

- Represent council interests on the oversight board for the implementation of the Local Government Act
- Deliver capacity building activities in relation to good governance practices
- Prepare a positioning paper about future professional development pathways for governance professionals

Influence the development and implementation of State Government legislation that impacts local government

- Monitor the implementation of key legislation, particularly implementation of the government's response to the rates review
- Advocacy to the State Government to ensure the MCH qualification legislation regulations do not affect councils current MCH workforce.
- Represent and advocate for local government in the role out of new regulations affecting maternal child health and other community services

Develop a strategic framework to support the design and delivery of MAV learning and events activities

- Develop MAV Learning and Events Strategy
- Implement a learning management system and digital learning platform to support the design and delivery of online learning content
- Commence a review and update the 2006 MAV Councillor Capability Framework

Deliver a relevant and contemporary learning and events program that builds sector capacity and capability

- Deliver the agreed events program for 2021-22
- Achieve overall participant satisfaction of greater than 70% for learning and events programs



THEME 6

Effective and responsive MAV

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

An MAV that is an influential voice for local government, providing effective advocacy and value-adding services

OBJECTIVES

INITIATIVES FOR 2021-22

Modernise the constitution of the MAV

- Commence the MAV Rules review with a target completion of May 2022
- Advocate to the State Government to update the Municipal Association Act

Invest in a proactive relationship program with Victorian Parliamentarians and State Government agencies

- Deliver engagement program targeting major political parties and influential upper house MPs in the State Parliament
- Renegotiate the Victorian State-Local Government Agreement
- Redevelopment of Partnership Agreements with the new departments of Health (DH) and Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) and the Department of Education and Training (DET)

Continue to build an effective communications and engagement experience for members

- Develop a new MAV communications and engagement strategy in consultation with councils
- Create advocacy campaign templates for Council communicators in the lead up to the State and Federal elections and on priority issues
- Establish an annual communications plan to promote the benefits of MAV procurement and insurance to increase opportunities for council participation

Provide insurance and procurement services that offer high quality and value for money outcomes for councils

- Complete negotiations with State Government on the future structure of LMI insurance
- Renew a range of key procurement vendor panels for councils
- Explore new procurement opportunities for councils in new and emerging markets

COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Alpine Shire Council

Cr John Forsyth

Ararat Rural City Council

Cr Jo Armstrong

Ballarat City Council

Cr Amy Johnson

Banyule City Council

Cr Tom Melican

Bass Coast Shire Council

Cr Brett Tessari

Baw Baw Shire Council

Cr Tricia Jones

Bayside City Council

Cr Alex del Porto

Benalla Rural City Council

Cr Danny Claridge

Boroondara City Council

Cr Lisa Hollingsworth

Brimbank City Council

Cr Ranka Rasic

Buloke Shire Council

Cr Daryl Warren

Campaspe Shire Council

Cr Colleen Gates

Cardinia Shire Council

Cr Brett Owen

Casey City Council

Ms Noelene Duff

Central Goldfields Shire Council

Cr Grace La Vella

Colac Otway Shire Council

Cr Stephen Hart

Corangamite Shire Council

Cr Ruth Gstrein

Darebin City Council

Cr Susan Rennie

East Gippsland Shire Council

Cr Mendy Urie

Frankston City Council

Cr Kris Bolam

Gannawarra Shire Council

Cr Travis Collier

Glen Eira City Council

Cr Neil Pilling

Glenelg Shire Council

Cr Anita Rank

Golden Plains Shire Council

Cr Owen Sharkey

Greater Bendigo City Council

Cr Rod Fyffe

Greater Dandenong City Council

Cr Sean O'Reilly

Greater Geelong City Council

Cr Kylie Grzybek

Greater Shepparton City Council

Cr Seema Abdullah

Hepburn Shire Council

Cr Lesley Hewitt

Hindmarsh Shire Council

Cr Ron Ismay

Hobsons Bay City Council

Cr Matt Tyler

Horsham Rural City Council

Cr Robyn Gulline

Hume City Council

Cr Joseph Haweil

Indigo Shire Council

Cr Jenny O'Connor

Kingston City Council

Cr Steve Staikos

Knox City Council

Cr Lisa Cooper

Latrobe City Council

Cr Sharon Gibson

Loddon Shire Council

Cr Gavan Holt

Macedon Ranges Shire Council

Cr Jennifer Anderson

Manningham City Council

Cr Stephen Mayne

Mansfield Shire Council

Cr Mark Holcombe

Maribyrnong City Council

Cr Simon Crawford

Maroondah City Council

Cr Mike Symon

Melbourne City Council

Cr Rohan Leppert

Melton City Council

Cr Kathy Majdlik

Mildura Rural City Council
Cr Jason Modica

Mitchell Shire Council
Cr Rhonda Sanderson

Moira Shire Council
Cr Libro Mustica

Monash City Council
Cr Brian Little

Moonee Valley City Council
Cr Narelle Sharpe

Moorabool Shire Council
Cr Tom Sullivan

Moreland City Council
Cr Oscar Yildiz

**Mornington Peninsula
Shire Council**
Cr Despi O'Connor

Mount Alexander Shire Council
Cr Tony Cordy

Moyne Shire Council
Cr Daniel Meade

Murrindindi Shire Council
Cr Sandice McAulay

Nillumbik Shire Council
Cr Peter Perkins

**Northern Grampians
Shire Council**
Cr Murray Emerson

Port Phillip City Council
Cr Tim Baxter

Pyrenees Shire Council
Cr Damian Ferrari

Queenscliffe Borough Council
Cr Ross Ebbels

South Gippsland Shire Council
Ms Julie Eisenbise

**Southern Grampians
Shire Council**
Cr Bruach Colliton

Stonnington City Council
Cr Jami Klisaris

Strathbogie Shire Council
Cr Chris Raeburn

Surf Coast Shire Council
Cr Adrian Schonfelder

Swan Hill Rural City Council
Cr Les McPhee

Towong Shire Council
Cr Aaron Scales

Wangaratta Rural City Council
Cr Dean Rees

Warrnambool City Council
Cr Vicki Jellie

Wellington Shire Council
Cr Malcolm Hole*

West Wimmera Shire Council
Cr Bruce Meyer

Whitehorse City Council
Cr Andrew Munroe

Whittlesea City Council
Ms Lydia Wilson

Wodonga City Council
Cr Kev Poulton

Wyndham City Council
Cr Sahana Ramesh

Yarra City Council
Cr Claudia Nguyen

Yarra Ranges Shire Council
Cr Fiona McAllister

Yarriambiack Shire Council
Cr Graeme Massey



*Cr Hole sadly passed away on 10 April 2021.
Cr Scott Rossetti was the Substitute Representative at the time of printing.

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