

Victoria's Housing Statement

– Two Years On



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The Municipal Association of Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria, and recognise their continuing connection to lands, waters, and culture. We pay our respect to Elders past and present who carry the memories, traditions, cultures, and aspirations of First Peoples, and who forge the path ahead for emerging leaders.

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President's message

Australia remains in the grip of a housing crisis that has been decades in the making.¹

This housing crisis calls for bold leadership and new public policy approaches. It calls for more cooperation between levels of government.

The two-year anniversary of Victoria's Housing Statement is an important opportunity to take stock and consider better ways that State and Local Government - with communities - can work together to enable the high quality, affordable housing Victorians need.



The housing crisis is about much more than planning approvals. New homes need new infrastructure. Financial barriers, labour shortages and rising construction costs mean it's often cheaper to buy an existing dwelling than build a new one. Faster planning decisions alone won't see more homes being built.

Victoria's councils understand this, as our communities feel the effects of delayed infrastructure and the lack of affordable homes in our communities.

With the MAV, they have led the call for comprehensive planning reform as one important lever for distributing, enabling and incentivising affordable housing supply.²

Local government is uniquely placed to lead local communities through change, bring together experts and community voices to design and construct great places, and support the rapid approval of well-located homes near jobs and transport.

This value is not always understood by other levels of government, especially in the context of fast top-down reform. But when we all pull together, we can achieve a lot. Councils are powerful facilitators of transformative change in local communities.

We need that transformative change if we are going to rise to meet the housing challenges of the day, while meeting another formidable challenge – preparing our built environment for more severe heatwaves, fires and floods.

Without a joined-up approach, reform will continue to be done *to* councils and communities, not *with* them, and government risks losing the social licence for transformative change.

To achieve genuine, community acceptance for transformative change in our planning and housing system, local government needs a seat at the reform table.

It won't be simple, but Victoria can achieve the Housing Statement target of 800,000 new homes by 2034.

Let's make sure that those homes and every community are great places to live.

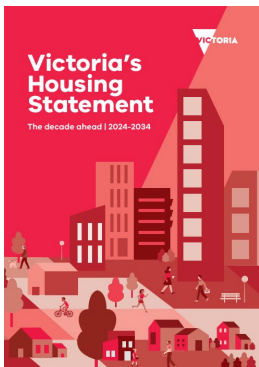
Cr Jennifer Anderson
President, Municipal Association of Victoria

¹ [State of the Housing System 2025](#), National Housing Supply and Affordability Council.

² [Reforming Victoria's Planning System](#), April 2025, Municipal Association of Victoria.

1 The Housing Statement

[Victoria's Housing Statement The Decade Ahead 2024-2034](#) was revealed on 20 September 2023.



Housing affordability is at its lowest in decades, and it's taking so much longer to save for a deposit than it used to.

...

Without a reset – and without a more active planning system – we cannot seriously expect things to improve, more houses to be built, and more Victorians to enjoy the security of somewhere to live.

...

That's why this Housing Statement puts forward an ambitious plan to tackle the root of the problem: housing supply. We're setting a bold target to build 800,000 homes in Victoria over the next decade.

It's a simple proposition: build more homes, and they'll be more affordable.

Premier's message, page 3

The Housing Statement (September 2023) is Victoria's response to the National Housing Accord (October 2022) and National Cabinet Housing Plan (August 2023).

Developed and launched with input from property industry peak bodies, but without input from local government or planning peak bodies, the Housing Statement identified 34 actions that are primarily focused on planning system reform.

The Housing Statement is silent on housing market conditions, the property industry's fiscal environment and the role of government taxes (with the exception of the new short stay levy). As a result, the government's attention has been focused on reforming some parts of the planning system, even though housing supply is influenced by more than just planning, and the planning system must manage more than just housing approvals.

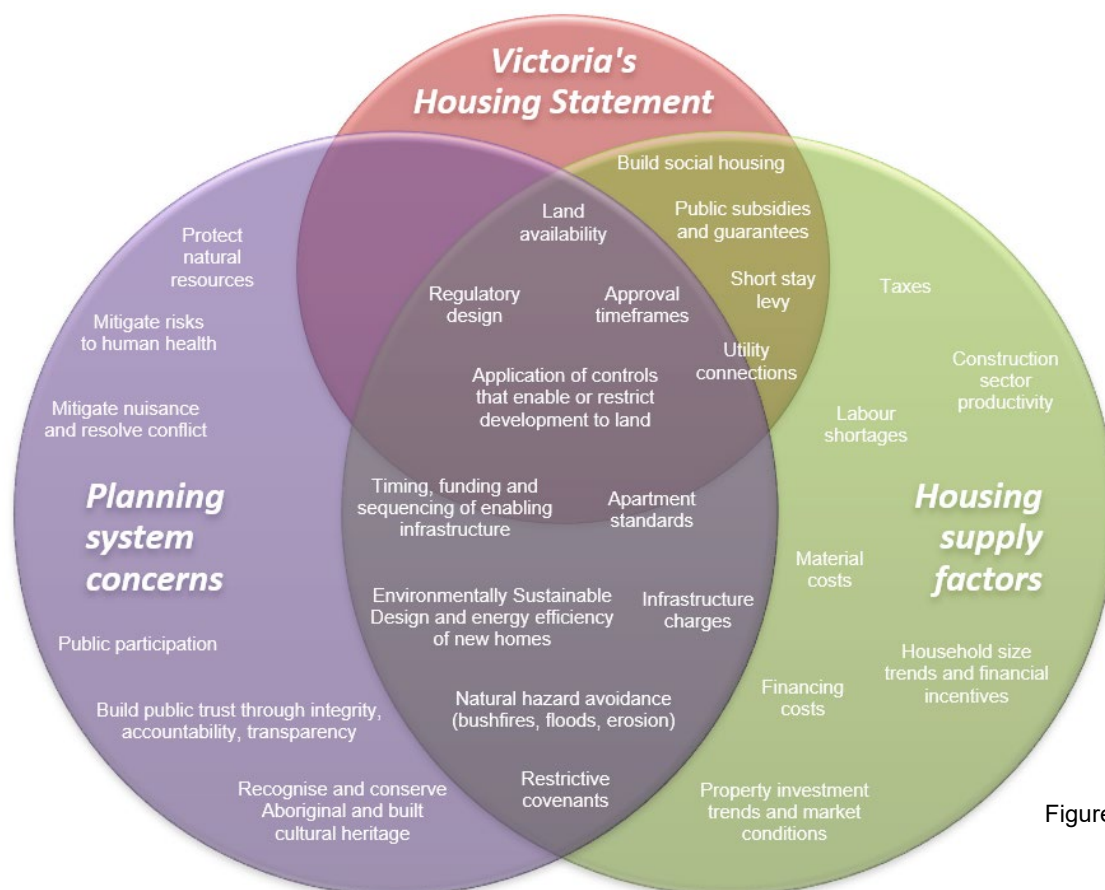


Figure 1 (MAV)

2 Implementation

Progress on the 34 actions

Victorian Government progress on delivering the Housing Statement has been considerable: 14 of the 34 actions are well advanced or complete. Notably, all of the commitments to protect renters' rights are either complete or nearly complete.

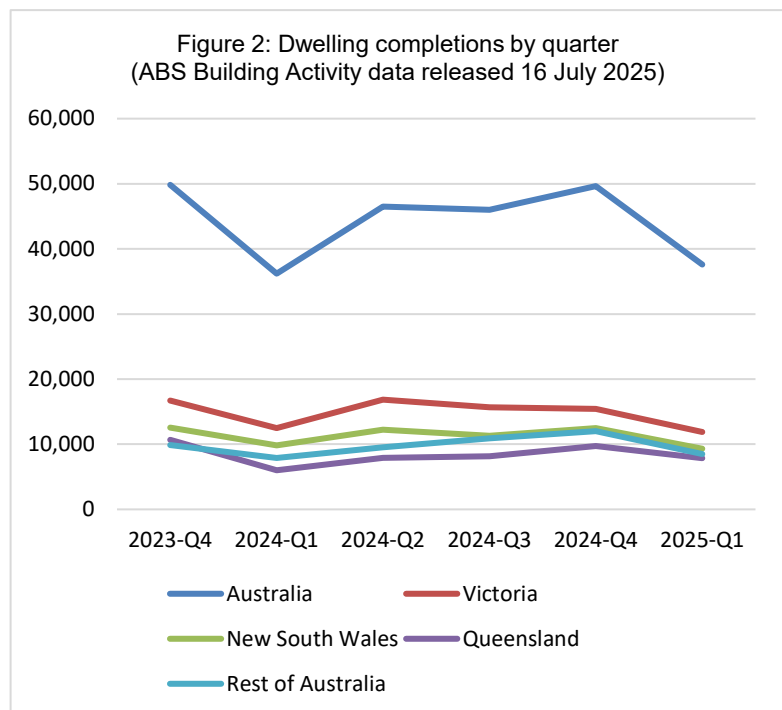
The MAV has considered all 34 actions and provided an assessment of the progress under each, as well as the local government regulatory impact. (See Section 7.)

Progress towards the 800,000 new homes target

In every quarter since the release of the Housing Statement, Victoria has completed construction on more new homes than any other State. Most of these homes were approved and commenced construction prior to the release of the Housing Statement.

For the three quarters with available data since the start of the Housing Statement's 10 year timeframe (1 July 2024), Victoria has seen an average of 14,461 dwelling completions.

This will need to rise to an average of 20,460 in order to meet the Housing Statement's target of 800,000 new homes within the decade (30 June 2034): an unprecedented construction pace.



Geographical distribution of the 800,000 new homes target

To distribute the share of new homes across local government areas, the Victorian Government released draft Housing Targets in 2024 and set final Housing Targets on 24 February 2025. Targets were introduced into planning schemes on 2 September 2025.

Since 2 September 2025, councils have been required to have regard to the Housing Targets when reviewing planning schemes. However, the methodology for the final Housing Targets has not been made available, and the Victorian Government's new housing capacity assessment tool is still under development.

Without the methodology and capacity assessment tool, councils are reliant on their own housing capacity studies completed earlier. Whether these studies will be consistent with Victorian Government expectations remains entirely speculative.

The MAV is aware that councils have placed Municipal Planning Strategies and housing-related strategic planning projects on hold (in some cases abandoning planning scheme amendments altogether) due to the absence of information from the government.

3 Local Government responses

Immediate response

Local Government immediately understood the ambition and scale of the Housing Statement, and what it would take to implement it well.

Representatives of each of Victoria's 79 Councils assembled three weeks after the release of the Housing Statement and welcomed its stated objectives. They resolved:

To commit to good faith engagement with the State Government to work in genuine partnership on further planning reforms, including and especially a thorough review of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the development of Plan Victoria and Activity Centres, in the interests of ensuring a system that works to provide supply and affordability while retaining integrity, accountability, transparency and the ability for local communities to add value to community, regional, metropolitan and Statewide plans and development;

To formally request that the Planning Minister enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the MAV that establishes this partnership and enables genuine input and improvement from the local government sector to any and all fundamental planning system reforms.

The Victorian Government did not agree to enter into a MOU on these terms.³

Collective local government responses

The MAV has nevertheless worked with member councils, experts and stakeholders to call for comprehensive planning reform as an important lever for distributing, enabling and incentivising affordable housing supply.

It has done so through commissioned publications on [metropolitan](#) and [regional and rural](#) planning, through the [MAV Housing Taskforce](#) and research institutions, and through [submissions](#) to the Victorian Government and Parliament.

With significant input from council planners across the state, the MAV published [Reforming Victoria's Planning System](#) in April 2025, a comprehensive submission to the Victorian Government setting out a blueprint for reforming the planning system.

It aims to achieve:

- A high-impact, low-footprint planning system, producing certainty for industry, regulators and communities;
- The delivery of housing that Victorians need;
- Ensuring resilience in a changing climate and addressing intergenerational equity;
- Public participation targeted efficiently;
- Social licence through State-Local Government and Community partnerships;
- Integrity, Transparency and Accountability; and
- Strong planning system stewardship and continuous improvement.

The Victorian Government has not responded to the submission.

³ See [Reforming Victoria's Planning System](#), page 12

Local Government Housing Innovation Program

The MAV has also led the way in creating the Local Government Housing Innovation Program with the City of Greater Dandenong under a Commonwealth Housing Support Program grant.

The Program has four multifaceted projects, working alongside specialists and the local government sector:

<i>Leading Communities Through Housing Change</i> To help councillors navigate the changing landscape of housing supply and policy, the MAV has designed the professional development program <i>Leading Our Communities Through Housing Change</i> . The program provides a holistic suite of resources designed to support, develop, and empower Councillors in their service to the public to build social license in communities.	<i>Adopting AI for Planning in Victoria's Councils</i> Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping industries across the globe and local planning in Victoria is no exception. MAVlab has produced the groundbreaking report <i>Adopting AI for Planning in Victoria's Councils</i> . The report provides guidance to councils when integrating AI into local planning, to ensure robust and ethical governance and the safeguarding of democratic values, community trust and human judgment.	<i>Exploring under-utilised public land</i> <i>Exploring adaptive re-use of council-owned buildings</i> These projects identify and assess underused council-owned land and buildings that could be repurposed for housing, aiming to facilitate cost-effective and affordable residential development. We have partnered with four councils to develop prototypes and business cases for site redevelopment across different renewal contexts.
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4 Local Government regulatory impacts

Councils are the most exposed to planning reform

Councils are by far the largest employer of planners in Australia.⁴ Victorian councils and their planners are the most prolific users of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and its subordinate legislation, and local government is therefore the level of government most exposed to planning system changes.

While many think of local planning as something that happens in the council chamber, this is a tiny proportion of each councils' planning decisions, assessments, enforcement and administration. Over 95% of planning applications are determined under delegation.

Council planners provide the public face of the planning system. The system relies on local planners' knowledge about state and local planning policies and controls, their skill in navigating a complicated regulatory framework, and their ability to deal with regulatory defects they come across – for they are the first to find them. The efficiency of local planning depends entirely on the quality of design of the regulatory system they administer.

⁴ Fallding, J and Williams, D, 2023. [State of the Profession Report](#), prepared for Planning Institute of Australia.

The Victorian Government has stopped assessing Local Government regulatory impacts

None of the Housing Statement actions with relevance to local government have undergone any regulatory impact assessment that considers local government.

Without a strategy for reform, or an evidence base, or even a philosophy about the role of planning in addressing housing and environmental crises at pace, the Housing Statement is a collection of initiatives that are being applied all at once.

Far from achieving speed, efficiency and certainty, cascading planning reform projects have caused significant regulatory dysfunction at the local level. This is a direct result of a reform approach that creates new regulations that local planners are expected to apply, without testing them with local planners first.

The [Victorian State-Local Government Agreement](#) was designed to avoid this. It is no longer being observed.

The MAV has sought to understand and describe the local government regulatory impact of all 34 Housing Statement actions. (See Section 7.)

Figure 3: excerpt of the Victorian State-Local Government Agreement.

Paragraph 10

Where the Victorian Government intends for local government to administer or enforce new primary legislation, or new or revised regulation, the relevant lead department shall, subject to exceptional circumstances, consult with local government in accordance with the Victorian Guide to Regulation. In doing so, the relevant department shall consider the impacts of the regulation on local governments, including any cost and resource impacts on local governments of administering the regulation.

5 New problems

State-wide planning provisions introduced without warning

The MAV has called out the unreasonable resourcing impacts on councils caused by the introduction of major changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions without warning. These impacts have been well documented by the Select Committee inquiring into amendment VC267, which introduced the Townhouse and Low-Rise Code on 6 March 2025.⁵

When the regulatory design of a new state-wide planning provision is made known for the first time on the day it comes into effect, councils are unprepared. On day one, council planners must understand the new provisions, understand their consequences on other planning provisions and applications already lodged, update internal systems, update forms and templates, field enquiries from applicants and the public, and apply the new provisions – all simultaneously. In place of a careful program of consultation, notice and transition from old to new provisions comes inefficiency and disruption.

In the more extreme cases, where a new state-wide planning provision switches off state and local policies and controls without warning, strategic planning projects underway by councils that are considering the use of those policies and controls can be made redundant. Councils are increasingly abandoning or deferring research and planning scheme amendments as a result – including those that seek to facilitate housing supply. The volume of council-led strategic planning has slowed down considerably since September 2023 due to the uncertainty and unpredictability of reforms to the Victoria Planning Provisions.

⁵ See Finding 7, Recommendation 5 and discussion at section 2.5.1 of the [Final report](#), May 2025, Legislative Council Select Committee on VPP Amendments VC257, VC267 and VC274.

Unmeasured cost-shifting

Three new Ministerial approval pathways have been created since the Housing Statement was released: Clause 53.22 ('significant economic development'), Clause 53.23 ('significant residential development with affordable housing') and Clause 53.25 ('Great Design Fast Track'). Each extinguishes some of the built form controls otherwise found in the planning scheme and make the Minister the responsible authority. The Housing Statement promises faster decision-making timeframes than would otherwise be the case, but evidence of this is not being published.

Council planners must still assess applications under these pathways. Only councils hold the property data necessary to issue notice correctly, and only councils hold the expertise necessary to provide accurate conditions that relate to municipal responsibilities (such as waste collection, local parking and traffic, street trees and a range of land use conflicts, covenants and past permits stored on council systems).

Whereas previously assessment and decision could be made completely within one government body, assessments are now broken into parts: the Department will make an assessment, the council will make an assessment, and the Minister will make the decision. Those decisions are made in a closed forum without public scrutiny, reducing the opportunity to build public trust through transparency and accountability.

While council planners still do significant work, and while council planners are frequently spending more time fielding public questions than before, the Victorian Government now collects the fee.

A Bill to amend the Planning and Environment Act

The final action in the Housing Statement is to "Build a modern, fit-for-purpose planning system": a review and rewrite of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

The Housing Statement proposes to rewrite the Act "to establish and clarify timeframes for decisions, as well as looking at the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in our planning system – including councils, the Minister for Planning, the Victorian Planning Authority and the Department of Transport and Planning."

The scope of this action exceeds the scope of all others. The opportunity to rewrite the principal Act establishing the entire planning framework is exciting and important – and it must be done in a way that generates efficiency for all planning system users and maintains public trust in the system.

Councils, council planners and the MAV have made every effort at every opportunity to encourage the Victorian Government to consult councils on the drafting instructions for the Bill.

Overwhelmingly it will be council planners who will be required to administer any new provisions. If the Bill is going to produce true regulatory efficiency, they must be consulted.

To date, no councils have been consulted on the proposed terms of the Bill.

The MAV understands that Cabinet is aiming for the Bill be introduced, agreed by both Houses of Parliament and receive Royal Assent by the end of 2025.

6 A Better Way

Social licence

As the level of Government closest to our communities, councils are uniquely placed to lead local communities through change, bring together experts and community voices to design and construct great places, and build support for the rapid approval of well-located homes near jobs and transport we need.

When supporting councils to lead their local communities through these changes, the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments can meet their state-wide and national housing supply objectives.

Transformational change requires more than top-down plans and system changes. It requires those plans and systems to be understood by all who will be affected. It requires public trust that decisions are being made for the right reasons. And it requires a decision-making framework built on integrity, transparency and accountability.

If councils and communities have ownership over the decisions that must be made to achieve an unprecedented pace of housing construction, we will be far better placed to achieve it.

Joined-up government

The Victorian Auditor General conducted system-wide audits of the planning system in 1999, 2008 and 2017. The 2008 review observed that the Department had not adequately considered planning system oversight and coordination, and should develop a more comprehensive framework for measuring the performance of the state's planning system.⁶

The 2017 review heavily criticised the government for not taking up the 2008 recommendations. It provided a new recommendation, that the Department “strengthen its approach to overseeing and continuously improving the planning system, by... incorporating a requirement in the revised Victoria Planning Provisions for its regular review [and by] facilitating the development of a technical committee to undertake regular reviews.”⁷

In 2025, a Legislative Council Select Committee inquiry was held into three major planning reforms introduced in February and March (new Activity Centre and SRL Precinct controls, and the new Townhouse and Low-Rise residential code). The MAV made a submission to the Inquiry⁸ identifying a series of deficiencies in the process that led to the reforms, and several unintended consequences arising from the regulatory design of the new provisions.

In its final report⁹ adopted unanimously by all members of the Select Committee, the Committee took up the MAV's recommendations.

In its chapter titled ‘Oversight of the Victoria Planning Provisions’, the Select Committee found that “The Victorian Government failed to implement the recommendations of the Victorian Auditor-General in 2008 and 2017 to create a performance and continuous improvement mechanism for the Victoria Planning Provisions. This has contributed, in part, to the problems with the planning system that the amendments are trying to solve.”

The Select Committee recommended that the government consult relevant stakeholders and act on the VAGO recommendations from 2008 and 2017. The government has not yet done so.

⁶ [Victoria's Planning Framework for Land Use and Development](#), May 2008, Victorian Auditor-General.

⁷ [Managing Victoria's Planning System for Land Use and Development](#), March 2017, Victorian Auditor-General.

⁸ [Submissions to Inquiry into VPP Amendments VC257, VC267 and VC274](#), April 2025, Municipal Association of Victoria

⁹ [Final report](#), May 2025, Legislative Council Select Committee on VPP Amendments VC257, VC267 and VC274

The MAV and local government have long argued that a small ‘planning system oversight advisory committee’ by whatever name, with the right balance of state and local government system designers and administrators at the table, would have the potential to avoid regulatory design mistakes of the type that have proliferated since the Housing Statement was released.¹⁰

A statutory body of this type would be charged with understanding the full scale of the Victorian planning system, make recommendations about its continuous review, and maintain a structured approach to planning system user feedback and engagement. It would generate understanding and alignment across state and local government at a time when it is needed most.

It would be advisory only, unable to bind the Victorian Government in any way.

The benefits of such a body are many, but the greatest benefit is to the Victorian Government. A statutory body that is small enough to generate trust and collegiality would be able to provide the Victorian Government with complete advice about how to reform the system as efficiently as possible, without generating unintended consequences. Not advice that has to guess about the experience of the majority of system users, council planners, but direct advice: immediate, accurate and reliable.

Such a mechanism is 26 years overdue.

With a Bill to Parliament coming up to amend the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, a perfect opportunity has arrived to implement it now.

¹⁰ Pages 36-38, [Reforming Victoria's Planning System](#), April 2025, Municipal Association of Victoria.

7 Detailed analysis

Victoria's Housing Statement two years on: analysis of Victorian Government progress and Local Government regulatory impacts

Housing Statement Action		Victorian Government progress	<p>● = not applicable</p> <p>● = none or minimal</p> <p>● = some</p> <p>● = substantial or complete</p>	Local Government regulatory impact	<p>● = not applicable</p> <p>● = none or minimal</p> <p>● = moderate</p> <p>● = substantial</p>
01 Good decisions, made faster					
01.01 Clear the backlog	Having applications sitting in the system doesn't get homes built. We'll begin the work to clear the backlog of 1,400 housing permit applications that have been stuck with councils for more than six months. We'll have a dedicated team that works with project proponents, local councils, and referral agencies to resolve issues delaying council decision making – to avoid projects ending up in VCAT and to get homes built. Once we have a clearer picture of projects and if decisions keep lagging, then the Minister for Planning won't hesitate to call them in.	●	<p>The premise that applications were “stuck with councils” was unfounded.</p> <p>The 25 January 2024 update claiming that “the backlog of housing approvals [is] more than halfway cleared” implied that the Victorian Government had assisted the clearing of the backlog. This was incorrect. The council singled out for criticism, Boroondara, corrected the government's claims. There was no further reporting on the ‘clearing of the backlog’.</p> <p>The DTP established a case management service to work with councils, referral agencies and project proponents, local councils, to mediate issues in delivering housing permit applications that had been delayed for more than six months. The DTP annual report for 2023/24 identified 900 applications were ‘cleared’, however the report did not detail the nature of those applications, nor reasons for delay. The DTP website indicates that the service remains active.</p> <p>The MAV has not identified any Ministerial call-in of an application from a council since 20 September 2023. The Minister has called in five matters before the tribunal.</p> <p>NB: Occasionally the media refers to matters being ‘called in’ which are not, in fact, call-ins under the Act but rather decisions made under new Ministerial approval pathways (see 01.02).</p>	●	<p>Departmental planners seeking to “resolve issues” required council planners to facilitate requests for information, taking time otherwise spent fulfilling responsible authority duties and assessing planning applications and consent requests.</p> <p>However, the action may have had some benefit in assisting the Department to understand the resourcing levels of Victorian Government referral authorities and how these can contribute to delays.</p> <p>Being the first action, ‘Clear the backlog’ implied that the primary factor holding back housing supply is or was delayed planning approvals, specifically where councils are the responsible authority. This framing was immediately debunked by the MAV.</p>
01.02 Make big decisions faster	We'll make sure big decisions are made faster by expanding Victoria's Development Facilitation Program. This will make the Minister for Planning the decision maker for significant residential developments that include affordable housing. We'll streamline the planning process for medium to high density residential developments that meet the set criteria: construction costs worth at least \$50 million in Melbourne or \$15 million in regional Victoria, and delivering at least 10 per cent affordable housing. This will include new build-to-rent projects. It'll mean around 13,200 additional homes will be brought to market that would otherwise be delayed – and it'll cut application timeframes for these types of projects from more than 12 months down to four.	●	<p>The Development Facilitation Program (DFP) has been greatly expanded, to facilitate new Ministerial approval pathways at Clause 53.22 (‘significant economic development’), Clause 53.23 (‘significant residential development with affordable housing’) and Clause 53.25 (‘Great Design Fast Track’) of the Victoria Planning Provisions, which apply to all of Victoria.</p> <p>The 10% affordable housing requirement is more accurately described as 3% (see p25, Reforming Victoria's Planning System, MAV 2025), and the actual number of new affordable homes is not being publicly reported. <i>The Age</i> recently reported that many approved developments are making cash payments in lieu of providing affordable housing on site.</p> <p>The government is also not reporting application timeframes. While the time for assessment proper has been cut, the time for pre-application has greatly expanded: councils are aware that applications regularly spend 6-12 months in “pre-application” phase.</p> <p>The latest pathway to be created, the Great Design Fast Track, can pick up proposals as small as an 8 x 2-storey townhouse row. This intervention “ends the long-held notion that the Planning Minister's role in deciding individual permit applications is reserved for matters of ‘state significance.’” (p20, Reforming Victoria's Planning System, MAV 2025).</p>	●	<p>The new Ministerial approval pathways transfer responsible authority status from councils to the Minister. “Councils are now losing their biggest fee paying applications to the Planning Minister and DTP. The MAV understand that loss of income to Councils because of the Development Facilitation Program has cost some councils up to 40% of their statutory planning fee revenue.” (p83, Reforming Victoria's Planning System, MAV 2025)</p> <p>Councils are still required to assist the Minister. Councils, and not the Minister, hold the property data necessary to issue accurate notice and are required by law to provide this information on request. Councils are also required to provide conditions for proposed approvals, to ensure that municipal service-related requirements on the land owner are accurately reflected. In many cases, council planners are required to undertake a near-complete assessment of the application in order to do this properly. None of this work is compensated, the referral timeframes are often unreasonably short: this cost-shift has not been measured.</p>
01.03 Increase housing choice in activity centres	We'll introduce clear planning controls to deliver an additional 60,000 homes around an initial 10 activity centres across Melbourne: Broadmeadows, Camberwell Junction, Chadstone, Epping, Frankston, Moorabbin, Niddrie (Keilor Road), North Essendon, Preston (High Street) and Ringwood. Activity centre plans will guide investment in the things a growing suburb needs like community facilities, public spaces and parks. The program will also consider the best way to incentivise more affordable housing.	●	<p>Planning for the first 10 Activity Centres has been completed, the next 50 have been identified in Plan for Victoria, and the Victorian Budget has funded a program to complete planning for those 50 Activity Centres by June 2026.</p> <p>A Legislative Council Select Committee inquiring into the planning process for the first 10 Activity Centres found that “The speed with which the activity centres program and planning controls were developed was a factor that contributed to the under-utilisation of the expert Activity Centre Standing Advisory Committee”, and recommended that “That the Victorian Government review the expert advisory mechanism and consultation methods (with planning experts, local councils and communities) for the first 10 activity centres and make improvements about both in relation to the next 50 activity centres.” (see report)</p> <p>The Minister suggested to PAEC on 11 June 2025 that the planning process for the next 50 Activity Centres would be broadly similar to that for the first 10, and faster. The Minister would not say if planning for Activity Centres would apply mandatory affordable housing contributions (p13, same link).</p> <p>Though the work on this action is funded, fast and substantial, a major missing piece is a clear mechanism for infrastructure funding and delivery, including open space.</p>	●	<p>Most councils have existing planning frameworks for activity centres, in some instances more facilitative of new development than is planned under the Activity Centres program. The translation of this work into Activity Centres plans has been opaque.</p> <p>The consultation process with councils on the first 10 Activity Centres was inadequate, frustrating and led to errors. The MAV critiqued the process in its submission to the Select Committee (see pp7-15, especially pp12-14 re consultation). Many councils are particularly concerned about the effect of near-identical ‘deemed to comply’ controls for all Activity Centre cores on the quality, diversity and differentiation of new development.</p> <p>The new residential codes associated with the Activity Centre peripheries have created significant administrative complications for councils (see action 01.05).</p> <p>Without a clear plan for infrastructure funding and delivery, including open space, councils are concerned about the scale of funding gaps being created and the risk of future calls on councils to fill them, especially where land value has been greatly increased through State Government-led rezoning. The MAV understands that councils are finding it challenging to influence outcomes but remain committed to participating constructively in the process.</p> <p>Infrastructure contributions reform is required across the state – not only in Activity Centres.</p>

Housing Statement Action		Victorian Government progress	● = not applicable ● = none or minimal ● = some ● = substantial or complete	Local Government regulatory impact	● = not applicable ● = none or minimal ● = moderate ● = substantial
01.04	Making it easier to build a small second home	●	<p>On 14 December 2023, Amendment VC253 made changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions, and the Building Amendment (Small Second Dwellings) Regulations 2023 made changes to the Building Regulations 2018, to coordinate the approval processes to build a small second home. Neither councils nor the community housing sector were consulted on the form of the provisions.</p> <p>The new provisions prevented the approval of dependent persons units (DPU), which had an important role in the social and community housing sector to provide on site supported accommodation for homeless youth and the elderly. It also emerged that the pre-fabricated DPU and granny flat industry had very few designs that complied with the new provisions that would meet market demand and the intent of the new provisions. Councils were obliged to refuse DPU applications, generating very significant frustration. Following lobbying by the MAV, PIA and community housing providers, the Minister amended all planning schemes to allow DPUs, via VC259 on 28 March 2024 and extended again via VC266 on 3 March 2025.</p> <p>A small second dwellings working group was established by DTP in mid 2024 to explore options for improvements to the controls. The working group was delayed by the other residential codification work, which further confused how small second dwellings / DPUs are assessed (see action 01.05).</p>	●	<p>The anomalies relating to small second dwellings caused very significant administrative disruption and additional work immediately following VC253, and the situation remains uncertain, with DPUs continuing to be facilitated under ‘transitional provisions’.</p> <p>Councils were not widely consulted on the reforms prior to introduction. The errors created by VC253 have needed to be corrected 5 times via VC249, VC255, VC259, VC252 and VC266.</p> <p>State and Local Government are finding it difficult to measure the impact of small second dwelling reforms on housing supply because the actual use of these dwellings (short stay accommodation vs long term residency) is unable to be accurately measured.</p>
01.05	Faster permits and planning certainty	●	<p>Residential development has been codified by type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Two or more dwellings on a lot, 1-3 storeys (clause 55): VC267, 6 March 2025. This is the “Townhouse and Low-Rise Code.”One dwelling (and small second dwellings) on a lot (clause 54): VC282, 11 August 2025. This carried over many of the updated standards from VC267 and applied similar exemptions.Two or more dwellings on a lot, 4-6 storeys (clause 57): currently under development. <p>VC267 was the first to introduce a mechanism that simultaneously:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Provided that where standards are met, the objectives are deemed to be met;Extinguished third party review where the objectives are deemed to be met;Exempted decision-makers from the ability to consider local policy as well as the clause 65 and section 60 considerations when making a decision. <p>This is a significant change to the role of the responsible authority and of planning. The ramifications for decision making, and the extent of matters that could no longer be considered, were criticised by councils and the Legislative Council Select Committee inquiring into VC267.</p> <p>The Select Committee found that VC267:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Should not have extinguished the decision-making considerations at clause 65, these considerations being important where risks to human life and health, and to the environment, should be identified and managed (recommendation 7);Lowered environmentally sustainable design standards for new homes in 28 LGAs (finding 16);May lead to the excessive removal of existing trees and reduce tree canopy (finding 15);Was not the subject of proper consultation (finding 6); andCaused significant disruption to councils that should be remedied by a new policy to give notice of such major changes in future (recommendation 5). <p>In May 2025, the Department informally committed to a six-month review of the Code. In September 2025, local council planners were informed that a review would instead occur some time in 2026.</p> <p>VC288 was gazetted on 18 Sept 2025, making two dwellings on a lot a VicSmart (10-day) approval.</p>	●	<p>VC267 was not the subject of proper consultation, was introduced without warning, and was required to be implemented immediately, before systems, forms and procedures were able to be updated. The transitional arrangements 6 March 2025 to 31 March 2025 were unclear. The period immediately after 6 March 2025 saw councils scrambling to immediately understand and implement the new provisions, updating systems and forms without any guidance from the Department.</p> <p>The MAV argued that VC267 would create eight unintended outcomes (see MAV submission to the Select Committee, paragraphs 83 to 132) and had inappropriately exempted decision-makers from the longstanding decision guidelines in the Act and VPPs (paragraphs 133 to 138), and made recommendations for changes to the new provisions (paragraphs 139 to 142). The Select Committee broadly agreed with the MAV’s recommendations.</p> <p>The administrative burden associated with VC267 remains significant. Some councils have had to find additional resources to field questions and concerns from applicants and third parties, to explain why the existence of third party appeal rights is unknown until late in the assessment, and why objections written by third parties in good faith may have been disregarded once it was established that third party appeal rights are indeed exempt. This inefficiency was not adequately considered in the design of the new clause 55, was not the subject of proper consultation with councils, remains a significant problem, and has eroded public trust and confidence in government.</p> <p>The Tree Canopy standard in Clause 55 is poorly worded and remains difficult to interpret, leaving the ‘deemed-to-comply’ test open to dispute. Councils have often become more cautious with their assessments as a result.</p> <p>Most of the regulatory design problems under VC267 (Clause 55) were repeated under VC282 (Clause 54). Clause 57 is also being redrafted, with consultation now underway, potentially repeating some of the features of clause 55 that the Select Committee recommended against. The regulatory design of the new residential codes remains the problem most often raised with the MAV by council planning teams.</p>
	We’ll expand the Future Homes program to encourage more new builds. Future Homes provides four sets of readymade architectural designs which can be purchased by developers and adapted to a site through a streamlined planning process. We’ll create more high-quality designs for 4 and 5 storey developments, and we’ll expand the areas where they can be used.	●	<p>On 29 November 2023, Amendment VC243 made changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions to expand Future Homes state-wide. Prior to this, no Future Homes designs had been taken up by developers in the two-year-pilot areas (Maribyrnong and Monash). Since state-wide expansion, no Future Homes applications have been approved. Land assembly remains challenging.</p> <p>One high profile refusal in Banyule, having been appealed, has been called in from the tribunal and referred to a panel for review by the Minister. Two Homes Victoria-led Future Homes applications are well advanced in Shepparton and Swan Hill.</p>	●	<p>Councils assess Future Homes applications as they are made on a case-by-case basis. Similar to the above, councils have reported that considerable additional work is required to explain to third parties why notice and review rights have been exempted.</p>
	We’ll also make changes to the types of homes that require planning permits. Single dwellings on lots bigger than 300 square metres, and not covered by an overlay, will no longer require a planning permit. Single dwellings on lots smaller than 300 square metres, where an overlay doesn’t exist, will be ticked off within 10 days.	●	<p>On 29 November 2023, Amendment VC243 removed permit requirements for single dwellings on lots of 300sqm or more (previously, the limit was 300-500sqm depending on what the schedule to the zone specified), and introduced the 10-day VicSmart stream for single dwellings on lots less than 300sqm.</p>	●	<p>Applications that claim to conform with certain standards must be assessed more quickly than previously and limit the considerations a decision-maker can draw on when deciding whether to issue a permit (VicSmart); this often requires a lot of informal advice to applicants from councils to identify important planning matters (such as land degradation, water quality and natural hazard risks) that are missing from the planning decision.</p>

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01.06 Red Tape Commissioner reforms	We'll introduce legislative reforms to strengthen our planning system. The legislation will implement Red Tape Commissioner recommendations, as well as other reforms like giving VCAT the power to dismiss matters without a prospect of success and imposing time limits on submissions. Planning Panels will also be able to undertake hearings on the papers and join parties.	●	<p>The <i>Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025</i> received Royal Assent on 18 March 2025, but its provisions (as they relate to the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>) have not commenced. They must commence on 25 November 2025 or an earlier day to be proclaimed.</p> <p>Planning system changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A new 'low-impact amendment' type of planning scheme amendment, designed to be faster than standard amendments.• Clarifying the process for landowner-initiated planning scheme amendments.• Reducing and streamlining the role of planning panels in certain circumstances.• A new 'application check' within 5 business days of receipt of an incomplete application.• Allowing the Minister to define 'material detriment' to clarify the extent of notice to be given of planning applications.• Applying default permit expiry provisions.• Allowing the Minister to exempt certain applications from the metropolitan planning levy.	●	<p>Some of the reforms in the Act require systems and template form changes for each responsible authority ahead of commencement, on 25 November 2025 or an earlier day to be proclaimed.</p> <p>Councils are yet to be informed of the precise commencement date and what will be required to prepare.</p> <p>The MAV has requested that the DTP clarify how and when this program of information, and consistent application across the sector, will occur.</p>
01.07 Convert commercial buildings to residential	The Property Council of Australia (PCA) and the City of Melbourne have identified close to 80 commercial office buildings that are currently under-used because of changing work patterns and demand for flexible floor space increasing. We'll work with the PCA and the City to consider opportunities to facilitate the conversion of these offices into around 10,000-12,000 apartments and mixed-use properties.	●	<p><i>The Age</i> identified the error with the action the day after the Housing Statement was released, reporting that the 80 buildings commercial-to-residential project was undertaken by design studio Hassell and planning consultancy Ethos Urban for the Property Council but had “nothing to do with” the City of Melbourne, the mistake possibly originating with a misreading of an article in <i>The Age</i> in the previous month.</p>	●	<p>N/A.</p> <p>The City of Melbourne has its own building retrofits program and proposes (p40) to “Partner with industry to support and facilitate adaptive re-use / conversion of vacant commercial office buildings” in FY27-29.</p>
01.08 Provide quicker water connections	As our towns and cities grow, utility connections – like water and electricity – need to happen quickly. We'll work to speed up water connections in greenfield areas to get Victorians into their new homes faster. We'll revise our statement of expectations to water corporations, strengthening the need to engage with developers and local councils early and regularly through the permit process – and setting clear timelines these water corporations need to meet to connect new communities and developments to the essential services they rely on.	●	<p>The action was effectively repeated in Plan for Victoria, Action 11 (p80). Progress on the actions are difficult to measure because they are not regulatory in nature. Water corporations have increased planning staff and worked to clear backlogs, partner with industry and decision-making authorities, and have appointed housing statement implementation leaders. The current budget contains significant funding for greenfield development and structure planning.</p> <p>Statements of expectations to water corporations are yet to be revised in the way described in the action.</p>	●	<p>The MAV argued in April 2025 that “the absence of enabling infrastructure (roads, sewer, water and power) prevents efficient and timely housing construction. Under-resourced state and local authorities responsible for providing that infrastructure (the cost of which has also greatly increased in recent years) are increasingly struggling to provide effective and coordinated infrastructure at speed.” Uncertainty about the cost and timing of connections creates significant complications for councils' strategic and financial planning. Municipal drainage maintenance is a growing problem in a financially constrained environment</p>
01.09 More resources to support a faster, fairer planning system	To give industry greater certainty, the Department of Transport and Planning will bolster its resources in the coming months – including by bringing on 90 new planners – to help with a range of priorities like clearing the backlog, making good decisions faster and increasing housing choice in activity centres.	●	<p>The recruitment campaign was launched on 31 October 2023. It is unclear if the 90 positions were filled as there was no further public reporting.</p>	●	<p>Councils are the largest employers of planners in Victoria but cannot compete with Victorian Government salaries, and many positions remain vacant. There was some additional disruption caused by the recruitment campaign but this has gone unmeasured.</p>
02 Cheaper housing, closer to where you work					
02.01 Support institutional investment	Institutional investors – larger entities like superannuation funds or insurance companies – can play a critical role in housing supply. These entities have already shown their appetite to invest in long-term, stable rental properties and build-to-sell developments. We'll establish an Institutional Investment Framework, creating a dedicated planning pathway and one-stop shop for these investors – attracting more investment at scale in social, affordable, key worker and market homes.	●	<p>The Institutional Investment Framework was released in 2024 without proactive media. The framework advertises the Development Facilitation Program planning approval pathways. No public reporting on the progress towards institutional investment in housing has been released.</p>	●	<p>The Framework is silent on the role of local government, but councils will be required to consider Development Facilitation Program planning applications without compensation (see action 01.02).</p>
02.02 Activate the Arden Precinct	A landmark precinct in central Melbourne, Arden will be a globally recognised destination for bio-medical and health sciences. Arden is an urban renewal precinct set to transform into a thriving community and a new home for Melbourne's growing technology, life science, health and education sectors. Just two kilometres from the centre of Melbourne's CBD, Arden is a central and connected precinct which will be home to up to 34,000 jobs and around 20,000 people by 2051. We'll commence a market search for proposals to activate the Arden Precinct ahead of the Arden Metro Tunnel train station opening earlier in 2025. Our intention is to partner with the private sector, industry and investors to start delivering the Arden precinct – with quality and affordable housing to support diverse residents and key workers, including affordable build to rent, build to sell, shared equity and key worker housing.	●	<p>In May 2024, the government announced that plans for a new Royal Melbourne Hospital campus in Arden had been abandoned (see The Age, May 2024). The City of Melbourne subsequently raised concerns about the land sale and development strategy (see The Age, July 2024). Four consortia were shortlisted in October 2024 (see Development Victoria). The market search has therefore commenced and the government is still in negotiations with the shortlisted consortia.</p> <p>The government is also still considering the matter of cost recovery to fund required new drainage to facilitate development in Arden, following the abandonment of the Urban Renewal Cost Recovery Scheme.</p> <p>Therefore, while the delivery of Arden is being progressed, the precinct won't be “activate[d] ahead of the Arden Metro Tunnel train station opening” later this year.</p>	●	<p>Regulatory impact will apply to one council (Melbourne) and not to local government generally. Negotiations for land sale and development obligations are between Development Victoria and the consortia, not the council. The respective roles of the Victorian Government, the City of Melbourne and Melbourne Water in collecting revenue and delivering infrastructure are still to be determined.</p>

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02.03 Boost the Victorian Homebuyer Fund	Saving for a deposit is taking longer, and getting harder. In the early 2000s, it took a typical Victorian household 3.6 years to save a deposit for a house. Today, it takes an average of 6.2 years. We'll release another \$500 million from the Victorian Homebuyer Fund, putting home ownership within reach for more Victorians. This additional funding will support around 3,000 more Victorians into a home through a shared equity model. The Fund provides eligible participants with a contribution of up to 25 per cent of the purchase price of the home, with participants contributing a minimum of 5 per cent of the purchase price. Since the Fund started in October 2021, we've supported 4,251 settlements with \$1.07 billion – including many Victorians who have found it particularly tough to get into the housing market. From the existing program, half of participants are women, more than half are single people, and two-thirds are first home buyers.	●	Implemented. The government announced in July 2025 that the Victorian Homebuyer Fund will remain open until the total \$2.8 billion investment is exhausted and that, after this, Victorians will transition to the Federal Help to Buy shared equity scheme.	●	N/A.
02.04 Introduce tougher penalties for real estate agents and sellers who break the law	Victoria has zero tolerance for real estate agents and sellers who flout the rules. We'll crack down on dodgy real estate agents by introducing tougher penalties for those who break the law, including taking commissions away from agents who underquote on properties. It'll mean more protections for Victorians looking for a home, and the majority of agents who do the right thing won't be unfairly disadvantaged by those who break the law to get ahead.	●	Implemented. The maximum penalty was increased by <i>Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025</i> , the relevant provisions of which will commence shortly. The work of the Underquoting Taskforce continues. The government has not released the Property Market Review 2022.	●	N/A.
02.05 Unlock surplus government land	We've heard from institutional investors and the private sector that they need more clarity and certainty when it comes to under-used and surplus government land, in order to guide their investments. We'll unlock and rezone surplus government land to deliver around 9,000 homes across 45 sites in both metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. As part of this work, we'll set a target of at least 10 per cent of affordable homes to be built across these sites.	●	According to a 16 May 2025 update : <ul style="list-style-type: none">240 homes across 2 sites have been identified, with an expression of interest program underway.A further approximately 600 homes across 10 sites have been identified as part of Development Victoria's Small Sites program.	●	As no projects have proceeded to planning, the current regulatory impact is assessed as 'none'. When any projects progress to planning, applications are likely to be assessed under clause 53.23. The relevant councils will then be called on to assist the Development Facilitation Program team and the Minister with notice, permit conditions, the acquittal of permit conditions, enforcement and public enquiries – without compensation.
02.06 Strengthen design standards to ensure high quality builds	With more and more Victorians choosing to live in apartments, they should be the best they can be – with liveability and wellbeing front and centre. We've already strengthened Victoria's apartment design standards, with previous reforms improving the internal and external design of new builds. But we know there's more to do, so we'll strengthen the existing standards to make sure they deliver the variety of homes Victorians want into the future. Our clear new standards will ensure appealing, comfortable, sustainable, and fit-for-purpose homes.	●	The government published its response to the 2021 Inquiry into Apartment Design Standards in 2024, indicating that the Better Apartment Design Standards would be updated “over the next three years”. Plan for Victoria repeated this commitment (action 6), making implementation of the government's response to the inquiry a 'short term milestone'.	●	The program to update the Better Apartment Design Standards is yet to be designed. Councils will expect to be consulted on proposals to change the standards when the time comes.
02.07 Introduce a Short Stay Levy	While short stay accommodation – like Airbnb or Stayz – has become a popular feature of Victoria's visitor economy, it's also reduced the ability for many properties to be used for longer term accommodation. In Victoria, there are more than 36,000 short stay accommodation places – with almost half of these in regional Victoria. More than 29,000 of those places are entire homes. These are places that cannot be used for longer-term accommodation or rented out on fixed term agreements – so it makes sense that they should provide some benefit toward the places that can. We'll introduce a levy on short stay accommodation platforms. The Short Stay Levy will be set at 7.5 per cent of the shortstay accommodation platforms' revenue. And the revenue raised from the levy will go to Homes Victoria, supporting their work building and maintaining social and affordable housing across the state, with 25 per cent of funds to be invested in regional Victoria. This also means other local council charges on short stay accommodation will be removed.	●	The 7.5 per cent short stay levy was legislated for in late 2024 (<i>Short Stay Levy Act 2024</i>) and applied from 1 January 2025. The government expects that the levy should raise \$60 million per year. The Act was agreed in a form that allowed councils to regulate short stays if they choose, such as requiring a permit, imposing conditions, restricting the number of nights a property can be used for short stay, and allowing councils to impose registration fees. Councils also have available to them short stay levy data collected by the State Revenue Office for their municipality (see The Age). Councils also requested that there be a closer nexus between the region of collection and the region of investment of affordable housing, but this has not been taken up. The funds raised, and the effect of the levy on the property market and the availability of rental accommodation, has not yet been measured.	●	The status of Local Laws addressing short stay accommodation remained very unclear for the 15 month period between the announcement of the Housing Statement and the passage of the <i>Short Stay Levy Act 2024</i> . Since the commencement of the Act, some Councils are now actively considering how local short stay accommodation regulations should or should not operate alongside Victorian legislation.
02.08 Give growing communities the local infrastructure they need	We'll bring forward a \$400 million package of works along growth corridors – providing the basic infrastructure that will make a difference on the ground to new and growing communities. Drawing from the Growth Areas Public Transport Fund and Building New Communities Fund, we'll look at priority projects where they're needed most for things like toilets, shelter and lighting upgrades at bus stops and train stations, footpaths and cycling paths.	●	The allocation of funds was announced in April 2024.	●	The investment contributes towards the construction of local infrastructure in new and growing communities, planning responsibilities for which are shared by state and local government.
02.09 Keep making precincts about people and places	The Department of Transport and Planning is leading the whole-of-government delivery and coordination of Priority Precincts such as Arden, Docklands, Fishermans Bend, Footscray, East Werribee, Parkville and Sunshine. We want to create places where people have vibrant, liveable and sustainable communities, affordable housing and quality jobs which help to grow Victoria's economy. Our priority precincts will capitalise on the benefits of major infrastructure investments to support thriving communities and encourage further investment.	●	The action is an aspiration rather than a measurable initiative. See action 02.02 for discussion about Arden.	●	Victorian Government decisions about Priority Precincts that will one day be returned to councils to plan and manage can create significant consequences for the future state of council finances, particularly in relation to funding and maintaining infrastructure.

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02.10 Priority planning projects for growing suburbs	We know we need to increase opportunities for homes in Melbourne’s inner and middle suburbs. At the same time, a home in our newest suburbs and regional cities will continue to be an attractive choice for many households. Growth areas will remain important – and we’ll need to support that growth in our suburbs while building the transport and infrastructure to connect people to jobs and services. The Victorian Planning Authority will continue preparing Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs) for new housing and jobs in Melbourne and regional Victoria. Further work across 21 priority projects will continue to be developed to deliver more than 60,000 homes and 60,000 jobs. They’ll deliver a sustainable supply of greenfield land, and more jobs close to home, while we plan for more housing choice in all parts of Victoria.	●	The precinct planning projects listed within the Housing Statement (p21) are generally progressing . The Victorian Planning Authority was subsumed into the DTP and will soon disband. Its functions will be led by a new ‘spatial planning’ division of the department.	●	Council participation in VPA-led precinct planning projects is necessary to ensure that decisions are efficient for both levels of government, land owners, developers and future communities. Councils and industry have reported that there remains some delay with Ministerial approval of completed PSPs.
03 Protecting renters’ rights					
03.01 Restrict rent increases between successive fixed-term rental agreements	We’ll restrict rent increases between successive fixed-term leases, cracking down on an emerging trend which has seen some landlords evict tenants at the end of their first fixed-term lease in order raise the rent substantially when re-listing the rental property. If agents or landlords are issuing a new lease after they’ve evicted previous tenants on their first fixed-term one, they’ll have to offer the property at the same rent for at least 12 months. It’ll reduce the incentive for landlords to churn through renters by evicting them, and give renters more certainty over their living arrangements.	●	The <i>Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025</i> banned no-fault evictions. The government has said that this “goes further than previous commitments in the Housing Statement which banned rent increases between successive fixed term leases.”	●	N/A.
03.02 Ban all types of rental bidding	In 2021, we made it illegal for real estate agents or landlords to solicit or encourage higher offers than the advertised price of a rental property. But a tight rental market with vacancy rates at record lows has put an incredible amount of pressure on prospective tenants. More and more, we’re seeing people make their own unsolicited bids – either to pay more weekly rent or to pay more than four weeks in advance – to try and give their applications a competitive edge. We’ll level the playing field for renters by closing this loophole and banning all types of rental bidding for good. We’ll make it an offence to accept bids, and introduce tougher penalties for agents and landlords who break the law.	●	The <i>Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025</i> bans rental bidding. The relevant provisions will commence by 25 November 2025.	●	N/A.
03.03 Establish Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria	With more people in Victoria renting than ever before, it’s inevitable that the number of rental disputes has increased, too. Often, a rental dispute can be just one of a range of cost of living pressures a renter could be facing. And when that happens, a quick resolution can make a world of difference. But you shouldn’t have to end up at VCAT to have simple repairs done, or to get the money you’re owed. VCAT should be a last resort for tenants and landlords, not the first stop. We’ll establish Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria, providing a one-stop shop for renters, agents and landlords to resolve tenancy disputes over rent, damages, repairs and bonds. It’ll have a clear pathway to settle issues in a faster, fairer and cheaper way – freeing up VCAT for more serious or complicated matters.	●	Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria was established in June 2025. It has resolved more than 2,200 disputes and averages 290 calls per day (see media release , September 2025).	●	N/A.
03.04 Introduce a portable rental bond scheme	Anyone who’s ever moved house knows costs can add up, quickly. And when you’re between homes, every dollar counts. We’ll build a portable rental bond scheme, where tenants can carry their rental bond from one property straight over to another – rather than having to pay a new bond each time. It’ll ease the financial burden on tenants, who won’t have to fork out a substantial amount of money every time they move – or wait until they’ve got their old bond back to pay their new one. It’ll streamline the administrative process for agents and property managers, who handle dozens of rentals at any one time. And it’ll create a more efficient rental market – which is good news for both renters and landlords.	●	A new IT system to support a future portable rental bond scheme is undergoing testing in 2025 (see media release , October 2024).	●	N/A.
03.05 Extend notice of rent increase and notice to vacate periods to 90 days	Rent increases and eviction notices can be incredibly distressing. Some renters facing increases may not be able to afford to stay where they are, and be forced to change their housing situation altogether. Evicted renters have to quickly figure out their next steps – including finding a new place to live, budgeting, packing, and coordinating logistics – all while dealing with the emotional stress of their changing situation. For families with children, eviction notices can be particularly traumatic. We’ll give renters more certainty, and ease the stress evicted renters face, by extending notice of rent increases and notice to vacate periods to 90 days.	●	The <i>Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025</i> extended notice of rent increases and notice to vacate periods to 90 days. The relevant provisions will commence by 25 November 2025.	●	N/A.
03.06 Introduce mandatory training and licensing for real estate agents, property managers owners corporation managers and conveyancers	Every real estate transaction involves significant financial investments and legal complexities, and renters often rely on agents to provide accurate information and advice. We’ll introduce mandatory continuing professional development for real estate industry professionals – including agents, property managers, conveyancers and owners corporation managers. It’ll mean better skills for real estate workers, encourage ethical conduct across the industry, and give renters the peace of mind they deserve.	●	The <i>Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025</i> implements the mandatory professional development for real estate industry professionals. The relevant provisions will commence by November 2026.	●	N/A.
03.07 Make rental applications easier and protect renters’ personal information	Applying for a rental property should be a fast, fair, straightforward process. But the reality is many renters – who usually apply for more than one property at a time – can face a field of different demands for information, records or documents just so they can secure a place to live. We’ll standardise rental applications, saving renters time and giving them a clear idea of what they can expect to be asked for during the application process. We’ll also limit the kind of information agents or landlords can keep on file, and how long they can keep it for, better protecting renters’ privacy and data.	●	The <i>Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025</i> allows standardised application forms to be regulated. The relevant provisions will commence by 25 November 2025 and the regulations are expected to be determined after then.	●	N/A.
03.08 Deliver a Rental Stress Support Package	Right now, around five per cent of Victorian households are facing serious renting stress – meaning they’re at risk of being evicted because they can’t afford to pay their rent. There are a range of organisations who work tirelessly to prevent homelessness and help renters stay in their homes, providing legal assistance, financial information and advice, and advocacy services. We’ll back their critical work for Victorians in need by delivering a \$2 million Rental Stress Support Package through the Victorian Property Fund. The package will help address the high demand for rental assistance these organisations are seeing, while we work to boost social, affordable and market housing supply across the state.	●	The Rental Stress Support Package was announced in May 2024.	●	N/A.

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04 More social housing					
04.01 Launch Australia's biggest ever urban renewal project	<p>Melbourne's high-rise public housing towers were built after World War II, between the 1950s and 1970s. They're reaching the end of their useful lives, and no longer fit for modern living. Constructed at a time that pre-dates current building codes, the towers no longer meet the minimum standards Victorians expect – including many of Victoria's Better Apartment Design Standards. The towers fail against noise, sustainability, waste and recycling, bedroom area dimensions, room depth, ventilation, private open space, accessibility and minimum amenity standards. Substantial investment would be needed to retrofit the towers. But even then, their design means that many tower homes would never be able to meet contemporary codes, nationwide energy rating schemes or accessibility needs for many households.</p> <p>We'll launch Australia's biggest ever urban renewal project: retiring and redeveloping all of Melbourne's 44 ageing highrise public housing estates by 2051. Starting with towers in Flemington, North Melbourne and Carlton, we'll bring forward a program of works to progressively retire each tower and redevelop each site.</p> <p>Not only will the redevelopment mean households will move into a new home that meets every modern building standard – it'll boost the overall number of social homes across these sites by 10 per cent, while also boosting the number of affordable and market homes across the sites. There are currently around 10,000 people living across the 44 towers. Once we've redeveloped them, we anticipate around 30,000 people will live across these sites.</p>	●	<p>Homes Victoria reports that the redevelopment program is underway across 5 precincts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'Tranche 1' sites: Carlton and North Melbourne (in the City of Melbourne) and Flemington (in the City of Moonee Valley); and• Richmond (in the City of Yarra) and South Yarra (in the City of Stonnington). <p>This Housing Statement action is the subject of a current inquiry by the Legislative Council's Legal and Social Issues Committee.</p> <p>The MAV State Council resolved (p13) in August 2024 to seek from government: more genuine engagement with Local Government and residents; data and evidence to justify the demolition; and the exploration of alternatives to demolition and replacement.</p>	●	<p>Regulatory impact so far applies to five councils and not to local government generally. The call on those councils from public housing residents to engage with the public housing urban renewal project, and specific proposals about the timing and extent of demolition and relocation, has been significant in some cases.</p> <p>Homes Victoria's broad, sector-wide engagement with councils has concluded, as the Big Housing Build moves from consultation and engagement to implementation. In relation to the public housing towers renewal project, the MAV understands that Homes Victoria continues to engages with councils, particularly at the officer level.</p>
04.02 Build 769 more homes through the Social Housing Accelerator	<p>On top of our Big Housing Build, we'll build up to 769 new social housing homes over the next five years with funding from the Commonwealth Government's Social Housing Accelerator. Announced in June this year, the Social Housing Accelerator is a \$2 billion investment in new social homes across Australia, with \$496.5 million provided for new homes across Victoria. We'll use this funding to build 769 new homes including low density developments on Homes Victoria owned land, as well as medium and high density developments on Victorian Government owned land. We'll also examine site spot purchases we can make across the state for further developments. This funding will support the redevelopment of the two towers in Carlton.</p>	●	<p>The Victorian Implementation Plan for the Social Housing Accelerator Program was determined in October 2023. 231 homes have been announced for Carlton (September 2023 – also part of the public housing renewal action above), 120 for Broadmeadows (October 2023) and a further 104 for Heidelberg West (June 2024).</p>	●	<p>Projects are exempt from the requirement for planning permission under clause 52.20. The relevant councils will nevertheless be called on to assist Homes Victoria in proposing appropriate relevant conditions of approval.</p>
04.03 Invest \$1 billion in the Affordable Housing Investment Partnership	<p>We'll invest \$1 billion in the Affordable Housing Investment Partnership (AHIP) program, providing low interest loans and government guarantees to finance social and affordable housing for Victorians that need it most – including projects that provide affordable housing for essential and key workers. The new AHIP expands on the previous Building Financial Capacity of Housing Agencies (BFCHA) initiative, bringing the total funding available up to \$2.1 billion. This is the first time that government low interest loans and government guarantees are available in Victoria for affordable housing as well as social housing.</p>	●	<p>The Affordable Housing Investment Partnership (AHIP) has made available up to \$2.1 billion in low interest loans and government guarantees. Assemble Communities was reported to be the first to access the AHIP for their development at 402 Macaulay Rd, Kensington (construction is nearing completion).</p> <p>The extent to which the full AHIP funding provision has been taken up is unreported. The opportunity to register interest in AHIP remains open.</p>	●	<p>None.</p>
04.04 Buy off-the-plan to boost social housing stock	<p>Developers need a certain level of apartment pre-sales before a housing project can commence construction – which can often add delays to new projects kicking off. We'll explore opportunities to buy pre-sale off-the-plan apartments in medium and high density developments to boost Victoria's social housing stock. We'll consult with industry on opportunities to buy at scale through spot purchasing. And we'll buy directly from project proponents, making sure we don't reduce stock in the market.</p>	●	<p>If there is any progress on this action it has not been reported by government.</p>	●	<p>None.</p>
04.05 Headleasing leftover apartments	<p>When a development project is finished, there are often a small number of units that don't end up being sold or leased. This means there could be as many as several thousand apartments left empty right now that could make a home for someone. Industry feedback suggests there may be opportunities for long-term headleases of these leftover apartments at social housing rental rates to support families who need social and affordable housing. We'll call for expressions of interest to test market appetite to add some of these apartments to our supply of social and affordable housing and help reduce the waiting list. The approach to market is not intended to subsidise developers beyond current social housing rental arrangements, or affect Homes Victoria's financial position.</p>	●	<p>If there is any progress on this action it has not been reported by government. Homes Victoria recently recruited for an 'internal homebuyer', but this role may be limited to securing dwellings for displaced public housing tenants, i.e. is associated with action 04.01.</p>	●	<p>None.</p>

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05 A long-term housing plan					
05.01 A new plan for Victoria	<p>We'll update Plan Melbourne – the Victorian Government's current metropolitan planning strategy spanning 2017-2050 – and expand it to cover the whole state. A new plan for Victoria will set into action what our state will look like over coming decades. It'll focus on delivering more homes near transport, job opportunities and essential services in vibrant, liveable, and sustainable neighbourhoods.</p> <p>A new plan for Victoria will bring to life our target for 70 per cent of new homes to be built in established areas, while making sure growth areas deliver 30 per cent of new homes. We will establish local government targets for where those homes will be built. The plan will set our regions and rural areas up to thrive. We'll kick off initial industry consultation in the coming months, with broad and comprehensive community engagement to ramp up at the start of next year.</p>	●	<p>Plan for Victoria was released on 28 February 2025.</p> <p>Action 1 relates to the Housing Targets. The 'short-term milestone' to give effect to the Housing Targets in the Planning Policy Framework in every planning scheme was implemented on 2 September 2025 by amendment VC283. Prior to this date, Housing Targets were not in planning schemes.</p> <p>The methodology for the Housing Targets has not been published and the distinction between 'housing capacity' and 'realistic opportunities for new development' has not yet been clarified. Housing capacity and access to opportunities assessment tools, intended for use by councils, are still under development.</p> <p>Actions 2, 6, 8 and 11 in <i>Plan for Victoria</i> are reflected in various other Housing Statement actions.</p> <p>Action 12 in <i>Plan for Victoria</i>, to 'Protect and enhance our canopy trees', was progressed with an announcement on 14 September 2025.</p>	●	<p>The draft Housing Targets were released in June 2024 with the headline announcement that “Victoria’s councils will have the first chance to show where and how they can unlock space for new homes over the coming decades”. This ‘first chance’ never eventuated because the methodology for the Housing Targets was never released, and the tools to measure housing capacity and access to opportunities – which in turn indicate the extent of “realistic opportunities for new development” – are still under development. Some workshops with council officers did occur but without the methodology being disclosed or housing capacity assessment tools being available.</p> <p>The final Housing Targets were released on 24 February 2025 with the headline announcement that “if individual councils don’t try to meet these targets, they’ll lose their planning powers.” The message was clear: “if councils don’t start doing the planning work now to meet these targets, the Government will intervene and unlock space for more homes” and “There are regular formal steps in the planning process over the coming years where Government can clearly discern if a council is serious or not about tackling the housing crisis and making more room for homes. It’s in their hands.” The suggestion was that the housing targets now had statutory weight (incorrect), that councils now have everything they need to review planning schemes (incorrect), and that any failure to deliver against the Housing Targets from then on would be solely the fault of the councils (ignoring the shared responsibilities between state and councils in planning decisions, and also ignoring development feasibility factors beyond planning: the availability and cost of materials and labour, government taxes, interest rates, and property investment trends).</p> <p><i>Plan for Victoria</i> was released 4 days later on 28 February 2025, replicating the final Housing Targets. The MAV and councils welcomed the clarity provided by <i>Plan for Victoria</i> that Housing Targets are about capacity, not construction, and welcomed opportunities to understand the methodology for the housing targets and new tools to measure capacity and development opportunities, so that work could continue to review planning schemes to facilitate the Housing Targets (see Reforming Victoria’s Planning System, pp43-44).</p> <p>The Housing Targets were not introduced to planning schemes for another 6 months: they were introduced on 2 September 2025 by amendment VC283 alongside significant changes to the planning policy framework in all planning schemes. However, the methodology, and housing capacity assessment tools, are still not available to councils.</p> <p>Councils are currently undertaking municipal planning scheme reviews, due 31 October 2026, as required by Section 12B of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>. This is presumably one of the “regular formal steps ... where Government can clearly discern if a council is serious or not” referred to in the 24 February 2025 media release. One of the purposes of planning scheme reviews is to review all local planning controls against state policies and directions. These reviews cannot meaningfully consider housing capacity against Housing Targets until the housing capacity assessment tools have been completed. The MAV wrote to the Minister in July 2025 seeking urgent clarity about how planning scheme reviews should be conducted in this context. No response has been received.</p> <p>On 26 August 2025, in an article claiming that councils were falling short of Housing Targets (The Age) despite the Housing Targets not yet having been introduced to planning schemes, the Minister stated that the government would crack down on councils: “We have set out clear housing targets in every local government area to deliver over the next 30 years, and we will hold councils accountable with explicit directions to change planning schemes if they are not serious about delivering more homes for Victorians.” The MAV responded.</p> <p>Until the government publishes its methodology about how overall development capacity in a council area should be measured, and how “realistic opportunities for new development” should be identified, councils are unable to meaningfully review the controls in their planning schemes that impact housing capacity. In the meantime, councils continue to rely on housing capacity studies they have completed earlier, and their own assessments of housing capacity and opportunities for development in each municipality. Almost all councils understand that there is sufficient capacity within municipal planning schemes to comfortably facilitate the ‘housing targets’, and are waiting to test this against the housing capacity assessment tools that the government indicated would be available in the second half of 2024 – but which are not yet available.</p> <p>Council-led strategic planning projects (especially housing capacity studies) are generally on hold while the sector waits for clarity about how and when the tools to measure housing capacity and access to opportunities will be made available, and when the assumptions underpinning those tools can begin to be understood. The absence of clarity is causing significant delays and disruption across the planning system.</p> <p>MAV and Council requests that the new <i>Plan for Victoria</i> be complemented with regional-level plans, one for metropolitan Melbourne and multiple growth plans for the regions, was not taken up by the government. Planning at the regional scale carries many purposes; one is the ability to join up local and state government with communities and industry at the regional level, generating shared purpose and understanding. The MAV holds significant concerns about the consequences for planning system efficiency and coordination, and public trust in planning, stemming from the loss of opportunities for regional-scale planning (See Reforming Victoria’s Planning System, pp55-56).</p>

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05.02 Build a modern, fit-for-purpose planning system	We'll review and rewrite the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> to build a modern, fit-for-purpose planning system. We'll look to establish and clarify timeframes for decisions, as well as looking at the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in our planning system – including councils, the Minister for Planning, the Victorian Planning Authority and the Department of Transport and Planning.	●	<p>While the action suggests a comprehensive review and rewrite of the Act, resulting in a new principal Act, and while this impression continues to be made in statements to Parliament (p18) and to the media, the action is in fact a Bill to make various amendments to the 1987 Act in late 2025 – with the possibility that further amendments will be considered in the next term of Parliament.</p> <p>Council planners first learned of the areas of priority focus for the proposed 2025 Bill in workshops held on 24-27 February 2025. The local government sector expressed a view on these areas of priority focus in the MAV publication Reforming Victoria's Planning System, bringing together a short history of Victorian planning reform, a critique of the Victorian government's approach to reform, and a suggestion for a better way to conduct system-wide reform that has the potential to create the social licence necessary to facilitate transformative change. The sector submission makes 16 recommendations.</p> <p>The Victorian Government did not respond to <i>Reforming Victoria's Planning System</i>.</p> <p>Consultation on the next level of detail to inform drafting instructions for the Bill commenced with planning and industry peak bodies in July 2025, including the MAV. Councils have not been directly consulted.</p> <p>The MAV has made extensive written submissions about the next level of detail to inform drafting instructions for the Bill, but these submissions have not been able to be made in consultation with member councils and the planning experts within those councils.</p> <p>The MAV has made regular representations to the Department to request that new provisions that councils will be required to administer be the subject of consultation with council planners prior to any Bill being drafted, noting that the Victorian State-Local Government Agreement (which requires that “Where the Victorian Government intends for local government to administer or enforce new primary legislation, or new or revised regulation, the relevant lead department shall, subject to exceptional circumstances, consult with local government in accordance with the Victorian Guide to Regulation”) is not being upheld.</p> <p>The MAV understands that Cabinet is aiming for the Bill be introduced, agreed by both Houses of Parliament and receive Royal Assent by the end of 2025.</p>	●	The Local Government regulatory impact will be very significant. The MAV is prevented from disclosing any details publicly or to member councils.

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