

2026

2027

The
Municipal
Association
of Victoria
Annual
Plan

SHAPING OUR FUTURE

Helping local councils build a
resilient & sustainable Victoria

YEAR 3



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Municipal Association of Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria, and recognises their continuing connection to lands, waters, and culture.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present who carry the stories, traditions, cultures, and aspirations of First Peoples, and who forged the path ahead for emerging leaders.

We support local government's commitment to strengthen relationships with Victoria's First Peoples communities and for it to encourage greater unity, knowledge, cultural awareness and respect for the first occupants of our land through its strong community links and local representation.

Disclaimer and Copyright

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is the statutory peak body for local government in Victoria, representing all 79 municipalities within the state.

The Strategic Plan 2024-2027, and associated Annual Plans have been prepared by the MAV to set directions for the MAV that respond to the local government sector's vision for a more sustainable future.

All actions contained in this plan are subject to available funding.

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Introduction

The MAV Strategic Plan 2024-2027 ‘Shaping our Future’ outlines the strategic directions and objectives and strategies we will implement to empower local councils to not just face the future, but actively shape it. The 2026-27 Annual Plan defines the actions we will take this year to meet the four-year objectives in collaboration with the MAV’s multidisciplinary team, councils across the state, and partners from industry, academia and other levels of government.

Climate volatility, demographic shifts, digital disruption, and rising costs are reshaping the way we live, work, and connect.

The prosperity and social cohesion of our state depends on the strength of our communities and the capacity of local leaders to adapt to increasingly complex global challenges with local solutions.

Local government is the first tier of government where democracy meets daily life – where trust and resilience are built through services, spaces, and connections that sustain almost seven million Victorians.

This trust and deep knowledge of local communities ideally positions local councils as essential partners for both state and federal governments, supporting communities through rapid change.

Navigating the energy transition will take trusted local partnerships and community confidence. Meeting the housing supply targets will take investment in the local infrastructure and services that support growing communities. Embedding Treaty will take deep listening, respectful

relationships and place-based leadership. Safeguarding social cohesion will take strong local institutions, shared spaces and community connection. Embracing AI and technology will take digital inclusion, local capability, human-centred leadership, and effective local democracy that reflects local needs and preferences, facilitates public participation and strengthens communities.

Yet, the Victorian local government sector is under unprecedented strain, operating with less certainty, greater community expectation and mounting financial pressure.

Sector-wide transformation is underway, and the MAV has the courage and commitment to lead change, build lasting partnerships and attract the sustainable investment communities need to navigate the future.

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) stands with Victoria’s 79 councils as the steadfast champion of local government through a single, unified and influential voice.

About Local Government in Victoria

Local government is where global challenges translate to local action – strengthening trust and resilience through the places, services and experiences people rely on every day.

Each of Victoria's 79 municipalities tells its own unique story. From the bustling streets of urban centres to the expansive reaches of rural communities, each locality has its own distinct needs and aspirations and its own proud achievements. Collectively, Victoria's councils manage infrastructure assets valued at over \$140 billion while delivering vital programs that touch every aspect of community life and reach almost 7 million people across all corners of the state.

The public value that Local Government delivers is undeniable: households pay around \$2,000 annually in rates but receive an estimated \$4,000 in avoided costs and wellbeing benefits from public open space alone. Beyond this, research highlights that for every \$1 spent on primary prevention initiatives, \$14 is saved in future healthcare costs.

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is the legislated peak body for local government in Victoria, amplifying the voice of all 79 councils. Representing communities across the state, MAV works with the sector to develop solutions grounded in local knowledge and community needs across metropolitan, rural and regional Victoria. Our investments in foresight, innovation and global partnerships help future-proof Victorian communities and position Victoria as a national leader. In addition to this the MAV offers sector-specific, not-for-profit procurement and insurance services, a local government innovation lab and statewide annual learning and convening programs designed to support Victorian local government to meet the challenges of a fast-changing future.

Every year, the MAV delivers its commitments through the Shaping our Future Annual Plan which is further strengthened through robust delegate engagement. Twice a year State Council brings together all 79 Victorian Councils to identify opportunities to continually improve the services councils provide to Victorian communities and shape the advocacy agenda for the MAV. This results in the MAV working closely with both state and federal governments, meeting regularly with ministers and MPs to progress issues that matter to Victorian communities.

Ahead of the 2026 State election, the MAV consulted the Local Government Sector, which has identified the priorities of all Victorian councils:

- 1. Growing futures:** A stronger Victoria will be built on connected local infrastructure both above and below ground
- 2. Local futures:** A safe, inclusive and vibrant democracy begins with cohesive communities with diverse local leadership
- 3. Productive futures:** Our shared prosperity depends on state-local transport links
- 4. Regenerative futures:** Cleaner and fairer energy will be powered by fairer local benefit sharing
- 5. Transformative futures:** Victoria's closest tier of government needs funding to deliver on fast-changing community expectations

These advocacy priorities, developed in consultation with all Victorian councils, are addressed through Shaping our Future, which establishes the foundations for thriving, resilient communities.

The MAV is committed to ensuring councils have the resources, capability and recognition they need to lead their communities into a prosperous and sustainable future.

The Future is Local.

About the Municipal Association of Victoria

OUR PURPOSE

to support Victorian councils to create thriving, resilient and inclusive communities.

OUR VISION

to be a nation-leading resource hub for Victoria's local government sector, specialising in strategic foresight, policy and research, leadership and governance, service design and advocacy.

The Big Picture

While local councils serve the needs of their communities, they also operate in a global context that acknowledges that what we do locally has broader implications, both for our neighbours and for the planet as a whole. These acknowledgements are increasingly taking the form of international agreements designed to deliver a better future for everyone.

The strategic directions and objectives outlined in the 4 year Strategic Plan, 'Shaping our Future' are aligned to leading global agreements between national and city governments on climate, sustainable development, and resilience. The United Nations

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a global framework for our work to support a more sustainable future for people and planet.

'Shaping our Future', recognises that local governments must increasingly engage internationally to deliver on the SDGs and advance communities' aspirations; that councils must navigate the local impacts of complex global challenges like climate change, economic inequality, and information integrity; and that international engagement offers opportunities to share knowledge, build partnerships, and bring local voices to national and global conversations.

Thinking globally to make positive impact locally.

Our impact in support of **SDG 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING** is achieved through supporting councils to strengthen local services, community infrastructure and social connection.



Our impact in support of **SDG 5 GENDER EQUALITY** is achieved through strengthening the ability of councils to lead gender equitable initiatives that advance inclusive and lasting change for their communities.



Our impact in support of **SDG 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH** is achieved through supporting councils to enable local economies and jobs and ensure fair and equitable employment in the local government sector.



Our impact in support of **SDG 9 – INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE** is achieved through advocating for infrastructure investment and innovation capability both within the local government sector and within communities.



Our impact in support of **SDG 10 – REDUCED INEQUALITIES** is achieved through championing equity between metro, regional and rural councils and equitable access to services within communities.



Our impact in support of **SDG 11 – SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES** is achieved through supporting this core local government mandate with investment in innovation and dissemination of global best practice.



Our impact in support of **SDG 13 – CLIMATE ACTION** is achieved through supporting councils to deploy mitigation, adaptation and community resilience.



Our impact in support of **SDG 16 – PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS** is achieved through strengthening local democracy, governance and trust.



Our impact in support of **SDG 17 – PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS** is achieved through connecting tiers of government, enabling partners and communities.



The Future is Local



The capacity of councils to also lead community and businesses in exploring optimistic scenarios for future change is vital. The MAV Future is Local initiative brings together experts, council leaders and partners to co-design a future-fit local government sector.

The 2027 Future is Local Program will encompass several interconnected initiatives that step beyond 'business as usual' to anticipate and build legitimacy, capacity, momentum and endurance for sector-wide transformation.

This year the MAV, through its Future is Local Taskforce, will continue to build upon sector wide responses to major forces of change reshaping the landscape of local government here and around the world, including:

Financial sustainability

Advocating to address unsustainable trends in cost shifting and revenue sharing arrangements with other levels of government.

New extremes of climate volatility

Pricing in future risk and joining the dots between spatial, health and climate planning to support community resilience.

Demographic shifts, peaks and cliffs

Planning for rapid and uneven population growth, an aging population, lower birth rates, skills shortages and other shifts.

The proliferation of digital technologies

Harnessing the right governance, skills and collaboration to ensure local government is tech-enabled not tech-led.

Social instability and fragmentation

Fortifying active citizenship and combatting rising polarisation linked to misinformation and disinformation.

Infrastructure resilience and risk

Moving beyond building back better to build to withstand increasingly frequent natural disasters and supporting the energy transition.

In 2026 and beyond we will use our state election campaign as a platform to secure the future of Victoria's local government sector, advocating to:

Establish a Multi-Year Transformation Fund to lead the local government sector to be more efficient and responsive to changing community needs.

Establish a Local Government Accord formalising local government as an equal partner with the State government, enabling structured engagement to shape policy, strengthen service delivery, and improve outcomes.

Our Roles and Impact

To achieve our Strategic Plan, the MAV is focused on four interconnected ways of working – visioning, advocating, strengthening and convening. Together, these ways of working enable the MAV to turn strategy into action, strengthen the local government sector, and deliver meaningful, measurable impact for Victorian communities.



Overview of Strategic Directions

The MAV Strategic Plan 2024-2027: Shaping our Future sets out our four-year roadmap to achieving our purpose to support Victorian councils to create thriving, resilient and inclusive communities.

Shaping our Future recognises that while local councils exist to serve the needs of their communities, they also operate in a rapidly changing global context that requires constant innovation to anticipate future needs and deliver local solutions.

The following **10 strategic directions** enable MAV to prioritise shaping our annual actions throughout the life of this plan and beyond.

1.
**Active
Local
Democracy**

We will work with local government and other levels of government to ensure that local policies reflect the needs and preferences of local communities. Effective local democracy can facilitate public participation, improve service delivery, strengthen communities, and improve development outcomes.

3.
**Health and
Wellbeing**

We will work with the local government sector, community health organisations, the acute health sector and other levels of government to improve population health and wellbeing, creating place-based services that meet the diverse needs, experiences and identities of different population groups at different life stages.

2.
**Connected
Places**

We will work with the local government sector to inspire people to collectively reinvent the public spaces at the heart of their communities, creating places that connect people to resources, opportunities, and to each other. We will strengthen the connection between people and the places they collectively inhabit through urban planning, transport, built forms, and the creation of a collaborative process by which we can shape our places to maximise shared value.

4.
**Sustainable
Economy**

We will work with the local government sector to design and support practices that facilitate long-term economic growth without negatively impacting the social, environmental and cultural aspects of the community. To do this, we will explore diverse strategies for achieving economic growth that strengthen local industries and improve circular economy performance. We will prioritise working with councils to enable the right conditions for creative and entrepreneurial thinking to meet future challenges and needs.

5.
**Future
Gen**

We will embrace FutureGen, a movement to improve lives in the present, the future, and for years to come. By collaborating with young people and the local government sector, we will drive long-term change for future generations. These changes will encompass a wide range of initiatives, mobilising people from all backgrounds to reshape our ways of living, working, and future planning.

6.
**First Peoples
Local Government
Relations**

We will work with the First Peoples' Assembly to connect with councils across the state to build understanding and capacity in treaty negotiations and continue to close the gap.

8.
**Diversity, Equity
and Inclusion**

We will collaborate with local governments, partner organisations, and communities to craft policies and initiatives that enhance representation and participation across diverse groups. Our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) spans various ages, races, ethnicities, abilities, genders, religions, cultures, and the LGBTIQA+ community, ensuring a broad spectrum of perspectives and experiences are valued and integrated.

10. **Intergenerational Infrastructure**

We will work with the local government sector to ensure funding is invested by all levels of government into intergenerational infrastructure, ensuring the population is supported by the necessary services and facilities as it grows. By working to ensure the funding of public transport, roads, and community facilities, we will enable economic and productivity growth by reducing congestion and allowing people to move efficiently around their communities and the state.

7.
**Climate and
Regenerative
Design**

We will work with the local government sector, civil society, universities and other levels of government to plan and design for climate change, using regenerative approaches, technology, and innovation to create more resilient urban communities.

9.
**Resilience and
Recovery**

We will work with the local government sector, as well as state and federal agencies, to enhance the economic and social resilience of communities to withstand and recover from disasters, including the effects of climate change. This will involve extensive collaboration on community-identified disaster resilience projects throughout the state, aimed at enhancing local preparedness and resilience against future disasters.

Major Initiatives and Actions

The MAV 2026-27 Annual Plan identifies the actions we will take this year to deliver the outcomes of our Strategic Plan 2024-27: **Shaping Our Future**. Our annual planning process sees the MAV translate strategy into action and ensure that our efforts are aligned to what matters most.

As the context for our work continues to shift rapidly, we will remain ready to adapt and respond, maintaining a balance between delivering on planned actions that are subject to available funding and longer term strategy, while addressing emerging issues of most importance to Victorian councils and communities.

1. ACTIVE LOCAL DEMOCRACY

We will work with local government and other levels of government to ensure that local policies reflect the needs and preferences of local communities. Effective local democracy can facilitate public participation, improve service delivery, strengthen communities, and improve development outcomes.

MAJOR INITIATIVE	ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
Amplify the impact of the local government sector to strengthen local democracy and build local capacity and leadership.	Advance the Active Democracy and Engagement program to strengthen civic participation, leadership capability and local capacity across the sector through targeted education, advocacy and support initiatives.	The MAV has developed and commenced implementation of initiatives that have contributed to growth in civic participation and stronger leadership capability.
	Partner with the Australian Resilient Democracy Research Network (ARDRN) to conduct research that explores the drivers of civic participation and active democracy.	The MAV through research partnerships has created a revised evidence base relating to the drivers of active democracy and participation.
	Continue to build and develop the Disinformation and Local Democracy program to support councils.	The MAV has pursued beneficial thematic partnerships in key areas of need including harassment of local officials, emergency management and social cohesion. The MAV has advocated for the role and needs of local government in relation to disinformation and local democracy to state and national governments and supranational entities.
	Invest in city leadership capability across the sector to equip current and emerging leaders with the capabilities needed to steward municipalities through long-term transitions while continuing to deliver for communities every day.	The MAV has delivered the Local Leaders Series: Leading Through Compounding Crisis and partnered with University College London Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose on the Public Sector Capabilities Index to advance the direction set out in The Future is Local: A Pathway for Transforming Local Government in Victoria.
	Implement the Local is Global Strategy to advance the MAV City Diplomacy Program ensuring international engagement of councils. *Note this was previously referred to as the <i>Diplomacy Strategy in 2025-2026 Annual Plan</i> .	The MAV has built strategic relationships to enhance sector international engagement with key international networks, the diplomatic corps, international business community and the Australian Government.
	Work to safeguard democratic representation and effective local decision making by implementing strategic approaches that address information manipulation and harassment of local leaders.	The MAV has implemented a holistic response model to address information manipulation and harassment of local leaders.
	Build upon multiple approaches that promote respectful civic engagement across Victoria including a Councillor Health, Safety and Wellbeing Program, Safety Reference Group and Councillor OHS Toolkit.	The MAV has implemented a range of service offerings that support the safety and wellbeing of elected representatives.

MAJOR INITIATIVE	ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
(Cont.)	Create opportunities to celebrate and acknowledge the contribution of Local Elected Leaders in Victoria including the Annual Councillor Service Awards.	The MAV has delivered the Annual Councillor Service Awards acknowledging and celebrating the contribution of Councillors across Victoria.
	Commence review and update of the Active Citizen Guide and Stand for Council materials in preparation for the 2028 council elections.	The MAV has demonstrated support for prospective candidates in the 2028 council elections through the commencement of a review and update of candidate information and resources.
Prepare a comprehensive Learning and Development Framework to guide the development of innovative, contemporary, and inclusive programs that meet the needs of Elected Members, council officers, and the sector.	Implement a Councillor Professional Development Program incorporating what is required by the Local Government Act.	As a core service the MAV has delivered a program of Councillor Professional Development that meets councillor needs and legislative requirements.
	Implement the Mayors Institute Program to build confident, capable and collaborative mayoral leadership that strengthens governance, sector-wide impact, and community outcomes.	The MAV has planned, delivered and evaluated a range of initiatives via the Mayors Institute Program.
Prepare a Governance Framework to guide external input into policy, strategy, program development and service delivery.	Leverage the expertise and networks of sector representatives and subject matter experts, via a range of MAV Advisory Panels who provide strategic advice, monitor research and provide pathways for policy development.	The MAV has continued to embed MAV Advisory Panels as a core governance structure to inform policy development and strengthened advocacy on the emerging issues impacting councils and communities across Victoria.
	Undertake the MAV 2027 Board Election and Induction program for elected Regional / Board Directors.	The MAV has delivered a comprehensive 2027 Board Election and induction program ensuring that elected Regional and Board Directors are effectively informed and prepared to fulfil their governance role.
	Undertake bi-annual customer and stakeholder research to gather insights and trends to inform the development of the MAV Strategic Plan 2028 – 2032.	The MAV has captured and analysed high quality stakeholder insights that underpin the development of a responsive and evidence based Strategic Plan 2028 – 2032.
	Develop an Advisory Services Framework that defines MAV’s role and delivers targeted support to strengthen the capability and performance of the local government sector.	The MAV has reviewed and advanced delivery of a broad range of advisory service offerings for Victorian councils.
	Complete a strategic stakeholder analysis by mapping existing MOUs to ensure comprehensive current and future engagement across policy, strategy and program development.	The MAV has reviewed existing MOUs to ensure comprehensive intergovernmental engagement with a broad range of stakeholders.
	(Cont.)	

MAJOR INITIATIVE	ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
(Cont.)	Enhance the delegate experience by providing strengthened opportunities for sector-wide engagement, representation and influence through the implementation of the MAV Delegate Engagement Framework.	The MAV has implemented the Delegate Engagement Framework to strengthen sector representation through Regional Meetings, State Council and the National General Assembly.
	Collate a repository of robust data on councillor needs and experience to inform the review and design of current and future MAV services.	The MAV has an established and actively used an evidence base on councillor needs and experiences, enabling more targeted, responsive and effective service design and delivery.
	Deliver the 2027 Victorian Convention of Councillors as a professional development, leadership, and collaboration forum for elected members.	The MAV has delivered the 2nd Victorian Convention of Councillors ensuring that content and deliverables matched the mid-term requirements of councillors.
Develop a program of Thought Leadership and Practice Evolution to inspire and upskill the sector.	Ensure that the MAV inform the way forward for local government in Victoria through the coordination of The Future is Local program of evidence led initiatives including preparation of a position paper, and facilitation of the Future is Local Taskforce.	The MAV has prepared and launched the Future is Local Roadmap with the support of external funding support to support Phase 3 of this project.
	Enable sector-wide collaboration and professional development through a coordinated program of conferences, events and webinars.	The MAV has delivered high-impact, well-attended events that strengthened sector leadership, fostered innovation, and reinforced MAV's role as a key convener and advocate for local government.
	Deliver the Annual MAVlab Awards program and case study library to celebrate innovation across local government and build sector capability and connections.	The MAV has delivered the Annual Innovation awards program showcasing new approaches to local government service delivery.

2. STRATEGIC DIRECTION: CONNECTED PLACES

We will work with the local government sector to inspire people to collectively reinvent the public spaces at the heart of their communities, creating places that connect people to resources, opportunities, and to each other. We will strengthen the connection between people and the places they collectively inhabit through urban planning, transport, built forms, and the creation of a collaborative process by which we can shape our places to maximise shared value.

MAJOR INITIATIVE	ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
Develop a MAV policy and research hub to strengthen the capacity of local government to respond to and shape the future of their communities.	Co-ordinate the development of MAV Policy Position Papers and Submissions to ensure that local government is at the centre of the development of intergovernmental policy.	The MAV has represented the local government sector as a central voice in shaping the development and implementation of legislation and policy.
	Implement a transparent framework to manage, monitor, and report quarterly on the progress of State Council motions.	The MAV has continued to communicate the progress and status of State Council Motions via quarterly reporting and the monitoring of the progress dashboard.
	Deliver a comprehensive annual snapshot highlighting MAV performance, impact and outcomes.	The MAV has met the legislative requirement of completing an Annual Report (including financials) to be tabled in State Parliament.
Work with the local government sector to strengthen place-based planning and design, creating connected public spaces that support community wellbeing and shared value.	Informed by the Future is Local Roadmap, design a strategic insights hub, to share insights to inform sector transformation.	The MAV has enabled more coordinated and consistent approaches across the local government sector, driving greater collective impact and reform.
Establish and test a sustainable and high impact operating model for MAVlab with a range of founding partners.	Continue to evolve the MAVlab operations, financial and community model to trial additional revenue streams and engagement tactics to support ongoing financial sustainability.	MAVlab has continued to work collaboratively with 79 local governments and the broader sector to prepare for and respond to the increasing complex challenges that communities are facing.
Implement the Intergovernmental Relations and Advocacy Framework.	Develop, prioritise and advocate for local, emerging and national priorities to strengthen outcomes for the local government sector.	The MAV has continued to build upon a clear, coordinated advocacy agenda that reflects the needs of local government, strengthens MAV's influence, and drives positive policy and funding outcomes at all levels of government.
	Regularly brief local government sector leaders on new and emerging intergovernmental policy to create opportunities to amplify the voice of local government.	The MAV has co-ordinated leadership consultation mechanisms including CEO Connect and Regional Meetings that have created opportunities to influence state and federal government policy.
	(Cont.)	

MAJOR INITIATIVE	ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
(Cont.)	Shape a Local Government Accord to further strengthen the relationship between the Victorian Government and local government sector by establishing collaborative, stable and long term partnership areas where legislation, regulation, and service delivery intersect.	The MAV has established a pathway towards a State and Local Government Accord that formalises engagement and collaboration to enhance outcomes for communities across Victoria.
	Deliver the MAV Victorian State Election Campaign that serves as a coordinated advocacy effort designed to ensure that the priorities of Victoria's 79 councils, and their communities, are clearly understood and acted upon by candidates and political parties ahead of the State Election.	The MAV has engaged with MPs and Candidates alongside the local government sector and regional alliances to deliver The Future is Local – Statewide Election Campaign representing the local government sector.
Work with councils, State Government, and non-government stakeholders to meet Victoria's current and future housing needs.	Develop an online hub of housing innovation resources to showcase the outcomes of the housing innovation program to unlock locally led affordable housing opportunities.	The MAV has supported councils with data and insights to identify and activate underutilised public land or buildings for housing, supporting more strategic, place-based responses to housing need across Victoria.
	Activate the MOU with the Council to Homeless Persons to support councils in providing local responses to people experiencing homelessness.	The MAV has strengthened collaboration between councils and specialist homelessness organisations, supporting improved community outcomes.
Support local government participation in arts, cultural and creatives to build economic prosperity and social wellbeing.	Update the MAV Arts, Cultural and Creative Industries Commitment, in alignment with Creative State 2025.	The MAV has a refreshed, future-focused commitment that strengthens MAV's leadership in arts and culture, aligns with state strategy, and supports councils to champion creative industries in their communities.
	Collaborate with councils and creative industries peak bodies on advocacy efforts that support local council arts and culture initiatives and strengthen local creative industries.	The MAV has championed the growth of council culture and creative industries initiatives through targeted advocacy and collaboration with peak bodies.

3. STRATEGIC DIRECTION: HEALTH & WELLBEING

We will work with the local government sector, community health organisations, the acute health sector and other levels of government to improve population health and wellbeing, creating place based services that meet the diverse needs, experiences and identities of different population groups at different life stages.

MAJOR INITIATIVE	ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
Strengthen the ability of councils to undertake community well-being planning, implementation, and partnership development through key strategic activities.	Partner with a range of stakeholders to build local government and community resilience to respond to extreme heat and heatwaves.	The MAV has continued to build upon partnerships to support councils in responding to well-being and resilience needs related to extreme weather events.
	Support councils to lead and implement gender-equitable initiatives, grounded in an intersectional approach to advance inclusive and lasting change for their communities.	The MAV has strengthened the sector's leadership in advancing gender equity across local communities.
	Improve population health outcomes through advocacy, support, and health promotion initiatives with a focus on mental ill health.	The MAV has enabled more proactive and preventative approaches to mental health across the local government sector.
	Lead a Maternal Child Health service transformation, ensuring the inclusion of a contemporary, sustainable funding model that reflects true service costs and supports a stable workforce, digital infrastructure, and long-term system sustainability.	The MAV has supported a more sustainable and future-ready Maternal Child Health system, with improved funding, workforce stability and service delivery outcomes.

5. STRATEGIC DIRECTION: FUTUREGEN

We will embrace FutureGen, a movement to improve lives in the present, the future, and for years to come. By collaborating with young people and the local government sector, we will drive long term change for future generations. These changes will encompass a wide range of initiatives, mobilising people from all backgrounds to reshape our ways of living, working, and future planning.

MAJOR INITIATIVE	ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
Develop a local government FutureGen civics program co-designed with young people to participate in local government as a democratic tier of government.	Produce a youth civic engagement playbook, highlighting best practice approaches and stories of the impact of civic participation across the Victorian local government sector.	The MAV has launched a Youth Civic Engagement Playbook which is widely used by Victorian councils as it provides clear best practice models and real stories that strengthen councils' capacity to engage young people.
	Amplify opportunities for local government to engage in existing youth programs that enhance active local democracy.	The MAV has supported Victorian councils to actively participate in established youth programs that support local democracy with more councils integrating these opportunities into their engagement work.
	Establish partnerships to create a suite of resources to support increased democratic participation of young people in state, federal and local government elections.	The MAV has worked with partners to develop youth-focused election participation resources which has led to increased awareness and more confident participation amongst young people in democratic processes.
	Partner with ABC Heywire and associated programs to amplify the voices, experiences and ideas of young people living in regional, rural and remote Victoria, placing them at the centre of national conversations about their communities.	The MAV has facilitated increased engagement between partner organisations and young people living in rural and regional Victoria.

6. STRATEGIC DIRECTION:
FIRST PEOPLES LOCAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

We will work with the First Peoples' Assembly to connect with councils across the state to build understanding and capacity in treaty negotiations and continue to close the gap.

MAJOR INITIATIVE	ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
Deepen dialogue with the First Peoples' Assembly to support local engagement with councils.	Deliver Strengthening Councils Treaty Awareness Project with a focus on Rural and Regional Councils across Victoria.	The MAV has delivered the Strengthening Councils Treaty Information and Awareness pilot project.
Develop a MAV First Nations Framework that supports the sector to progress Aboriginal self-determination and reconciliation.	With guidance from the First Peoples Expert Advisory Panel, facilitate collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and capacity-building on key First Peoples priorities including the Victorian Treaty process, Strengthened relationships with ACCOs and collaboration with Ngaweeyan Maar-oo to increase the sector's delivery of Closing the Gap priorities.	The MAV has evidenced strengthened partnerships between local governments and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), working collaboratively with Ngaweeyan Maar-oo to enhance the sector's contribution to achieving Closing the Gap targets.
	Strengthen First Peoples children and their families' access to universal children's services including Maternal Child Health and Kindergarten through sustained collaboration with councils, ACCOs, and Aboriginal peak bodies.	The MAV has evidenced strengthened access to universal services as a result of sustained collaboration with councils, ACCOs, and Aboriginal peak bodies.
	Support the MAV's First Peoples Expert Advisory Panel to lead the design, process and scope of MAV First Nations Strategic Approach.	The MAV has co-designed a culturally grounded, inclusive, and actionable process and scope for developing the MAV First Nations Action Plan that works to establish a solid foundation for long-term reconciliation and systemic change within local government.

7. STRATEGIC DIRECTION: CLIMATE & REGENERATIVE DESIGN

We will work with the local government sector, civil society, universities and other levels of government to plan and design for climate change, using regenerative approaches, technology, and innovation to create more resilient urban communities.

MAJOR INITIATIVE	ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
Work with civil society, universities, all levels of government and other global partners to embed global agreements on climate sustainable development and resilience.	Lead engagement and advocacy to influence an intergovernmental approach to delivering on State and Federal climate commitments in partnership with the Victorian Greenhouse Alliances and ALGA.	The MAV in partnership with the Victorian Greenhouse Alliances and ALGA led a coordinated and influential advocacy effort that strengthens the voice of local government in shaping Australia's national climate agenda.
Design a local government lead regenerative design approach to enable councils to work with their communities to regenerate planetary health and deliver positive outcomes for both people and planet.	Deliver effective representation and advocacy for councils engaging in Victoria's renewable energy transition, including their role in brokering community benefit arrangements and building the social license for the energy transition.	The MAV has supported opportunities for councils to have a better understanding of their role and available opportunities in the transition to renewable energy resulting in communities being able to navigate the energy transition.
	Strengthen opportunities to build increased Councillor capability for managing climate risks and opportunities through the delivery of professional development.	The MAV has worked with sector partners to build climate risk and opportunity capability among elected representatives.
Support the local government sector to invest in climate resilient infrastructure and asset management systems.	Continue to advocate to the federal and state government on the Build to Withstand campaign to ensure betterment funding is available to Victoria.	The MAV has contributed to improved access to betterment funding, supporting councils to build back stronger and more resilient infrastructure.
	Collaborate with local government to shape and deliver procurement solutions for both current and emerging electric vehicle infrastructure demands.	The MAV has supported sector capability to procure and deliver EV infrastructure to meet current and emerging needs.
	Monitor major supply chain events affecting the price of goods and services to ensure the local government sector is informed as required.	The MAV has supported improved awareness of future signals and supply chain impacts resulting in opportunities for proactive planning.
	Contribute to innovative public private partnership initiatives that are planning for climate resilient infrastructure now and into the future.	The MAV has supported the work of partnership initiatives with the M9 alliance, Greenhouse Alliances and SECCA.

8. STRATEGIC DIRECTION: DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

We will collaborate with local governments, partner organisations, and communities to craft policies and initiatives that enhance representation and participation across diverse groups. Our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) spans various ages, races, ethnicities, abilities, genders, religions, cultures, and the LGBTIQA+ community, ensuring a broad spectrum of perspectives and experiences are valued and integrated.

MAJOR INITIATIVE	ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
Lead and collaborate with sector and community leaders on emerging issues that impact human rights and social inclusion.	Collaborate with LGBTIQA+ peak bodies to deliver joint advocacy opportunities/ projects within the sector in alignment with Victoria's LGBTIQA+ Strategy Pride in our Future 2022-32.	The MAV has enabled stronger partnerships to progress LGBTIQA+ inclusion priorities across local government.
	Lead the delivery of the STAND Project Australia by supporting eight councils to reshape local narratives, strengthen social cohesion, and champion diversity, while fostering shared learning with European cities already implementing the initiative.	The MAV has strengthened the sector's ability to foster social cohesion and champion diversity through collaborative and internationally informed initiatives.
	Deliver a program of professional development training increasing the capability for council Early Years Culturally and Linguistically Diverse outreach workers.	The MAV PD program for (CALD) outreach workers has built confidence and knowledge of child development and local service systems, enhancing inclusion outcomes by fostering trusted relationships with families from diverse backgrounds.
	Contribute to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Social Cohesion and Antisemitism by informing the Committee's deliberations with local government insights that support stronger social cohesion, improved community safety, and effective responses to discrimination.	The MAV has positioned local government as a key contributor to addressing social cohesion challenges at a federal level.



9. STRATEGIC DIRECTION: RESILIENCE & RECOVERY

We will work with the local government sector, as well as state and federal agencies, to enhance the economic and social resilience of communities to withstand and recover from disasters, including the effects of climate change. This will involve extensive collaboration on community-identified disaster resilience projects throughout the state, aimed at enhancing local preparedness and resilience against future disasters.

MAJOR INITIATIVE	ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
Work with the local government sector, community, emergency services, and state and federal agencies to enhance the economic and social resilience of communities to withstand and recover from emergencies and disasters, including the effects of climate change.	Work with the Association of Bayside Municipalities (ABM) to help achieve their shared purpose to protect the natural, cultural, social and economic values of Port Phillip Bay through leadership, knowledge sharing and partnerships.	The MAV has strengthened partnerships with the ABM resulting in amplified advocacy and engagement with Bayside councils.
	Deliver the emergency management resource sharing protocols project to enhance council capacity to respond to disasters.	The MAV has delivered this project which has resulted in improved capability and a more resilient sector via efficient processes to support council resource sharing in emergencies.
	Respond to the impacts of compounding disasters through a range of advocacy and engagement activities that support council and community preparedness.	The MAV's advocacy efforts have resulted in increased whole of sector understanding regarding the impact of compounding disasters on councils.

10. STRATEGIC DIRECTION: INTERGENERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

We will work with the local government sector to ensure funding is invested by all levels of government into intergenerational infrastructure, ensuring the population is supported by the necessary services and facilities as it grows. By working to ensure the funding of public transport, roads, and community facilities, we will enable economic and productivity growth by reducing congestion and allowing people to move efficiently around their communities and the state.

MAJOR INITIATIVE	ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
Ensure the principles of access, equity, participation & human rights inform the planning and delivery of community infrastructure.	Explore models to establish long term state investment in new and renewal aquatic infrastructure.	The MAV has strengthened the case for sustainable, long-term state investment in aquatic infrastructure across Victoria.
	Advocate for funding to activate community services within council infrastructure resulting in safer, more engaged and socially cohesive communities.	The MAV has advocated for secure investment for the broad delivery of services that activate community infrastructure and increase community connectedness.
Support councils to develop and deliver holistic place plans and activations through internal governance, community engagement, key stakeholders and partnerships.	Develop a placemaking online hub, featuring local and international resources and case studies to support council officers.	The MAV has strengthened council capability to support housing growth in well-located areas through improved access to practical placemaking resources.
	Continue to lead a research project in partnership with key stakeholders to explore how local government can build community support for higher-density suburban housing.	The MAV has strengthened the sector's ability to build support for higher-density suburban housing through evidence-based approaches.

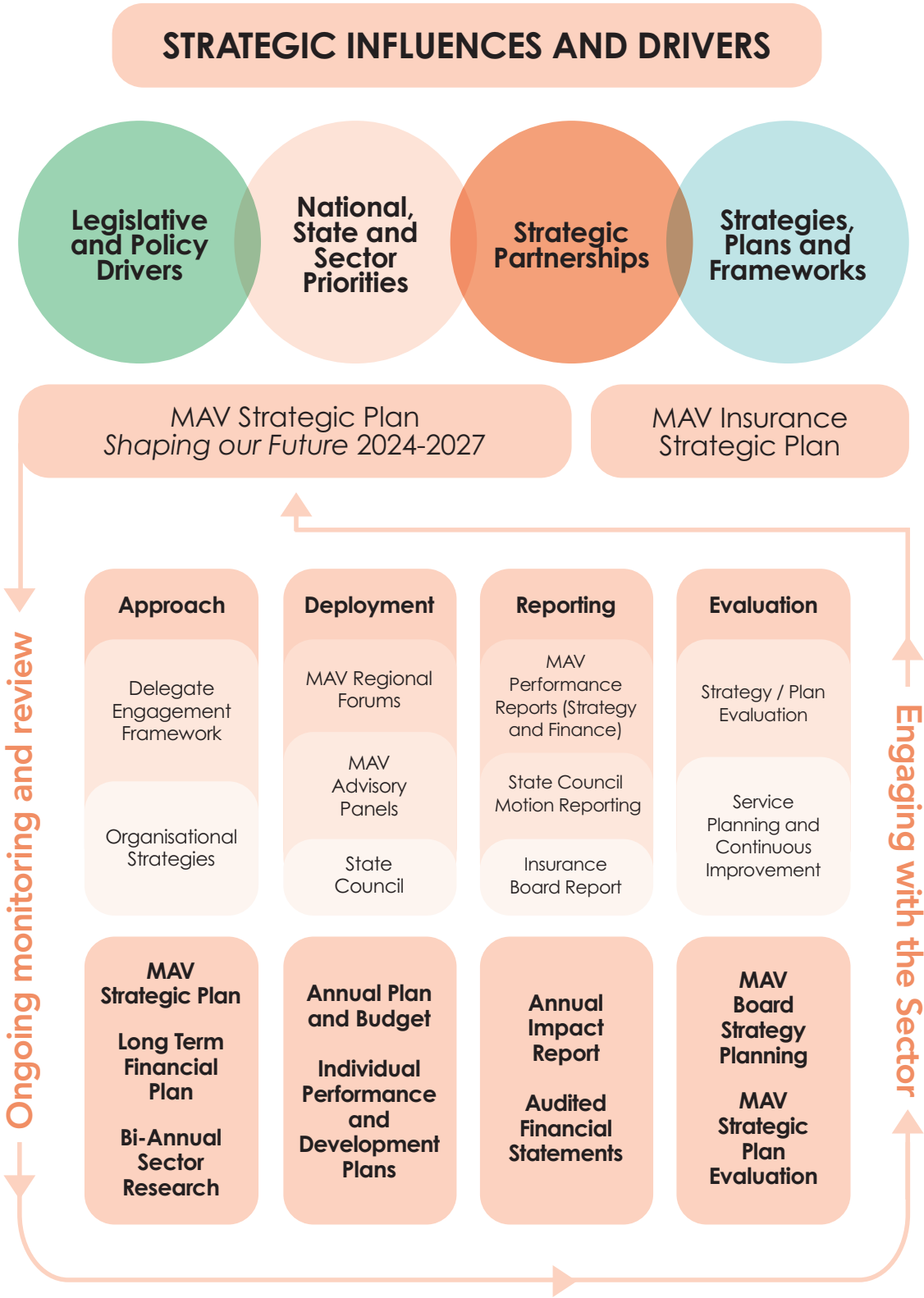
How this plan fits in with our work

The MAV's Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework provides the mechanism for implementing our Strategic Plan, outlining ways in which ongoing monitoring and analysis of performance occurs. Each year, this process results in the development of an Annual Plan, containing actions aligned to the strategic directions outlined in *Shaping our Future* (2024-2027). These actions are each subject to available funding.

This work is defined by our disciplined approach to annual integrated planning in aligning annual planning with financial and staffing resources to ensure we are able to respond to a dynamic environment.

In a context where unplanned and urgent work continues to emerge quickly, maintaining the balance between delivering on planned priorities and remaining responsive to emerging issues will continue to be critical. A clear and well considered plan allows us to respond with agility, without losing sight of our longer-term priorities outlined in our four-year Strategic Plan '*Shaping our Future*'.

This diagram shows how the Annual Plan (2026/27) fits within the broader Integrated Planning Framework:



Measuring Progress

QUARTERLY REPORTING

The MAV will report quarterly on the progress of actions listed in the Annual Action Plan. These reports will show progress on the actions that contribute to achieving the strategic directions set out in 'Shaping our Future'.

MAV ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

The MAV Annual Impact Report communicates our annual impact as the peak body for local government in Victoria. It demonstrates the MAV's performance against the strategic directions, major initiatives and actions in 'Shaping our Future' and details how the MAV has responded to emerging issues facing Victorian councils and communities throughout the year.





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