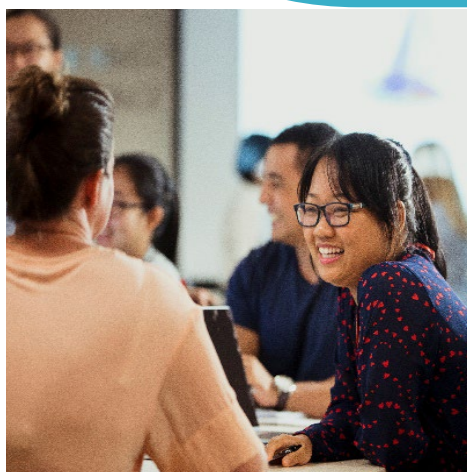




November 2025

Consultation summary

Community and stakeholder feedback on
Victoria's draft 30-year infrastructure strategy



About us

Infrastructure Victoria is an independent advisory body with 3 functions:

- preparing a 30-year infrastructure strategy for Victoria, which we review and update every 3 to 5 years
- advising the government on specific infrastructure matters
- publishing research on infrastructure-related issues.

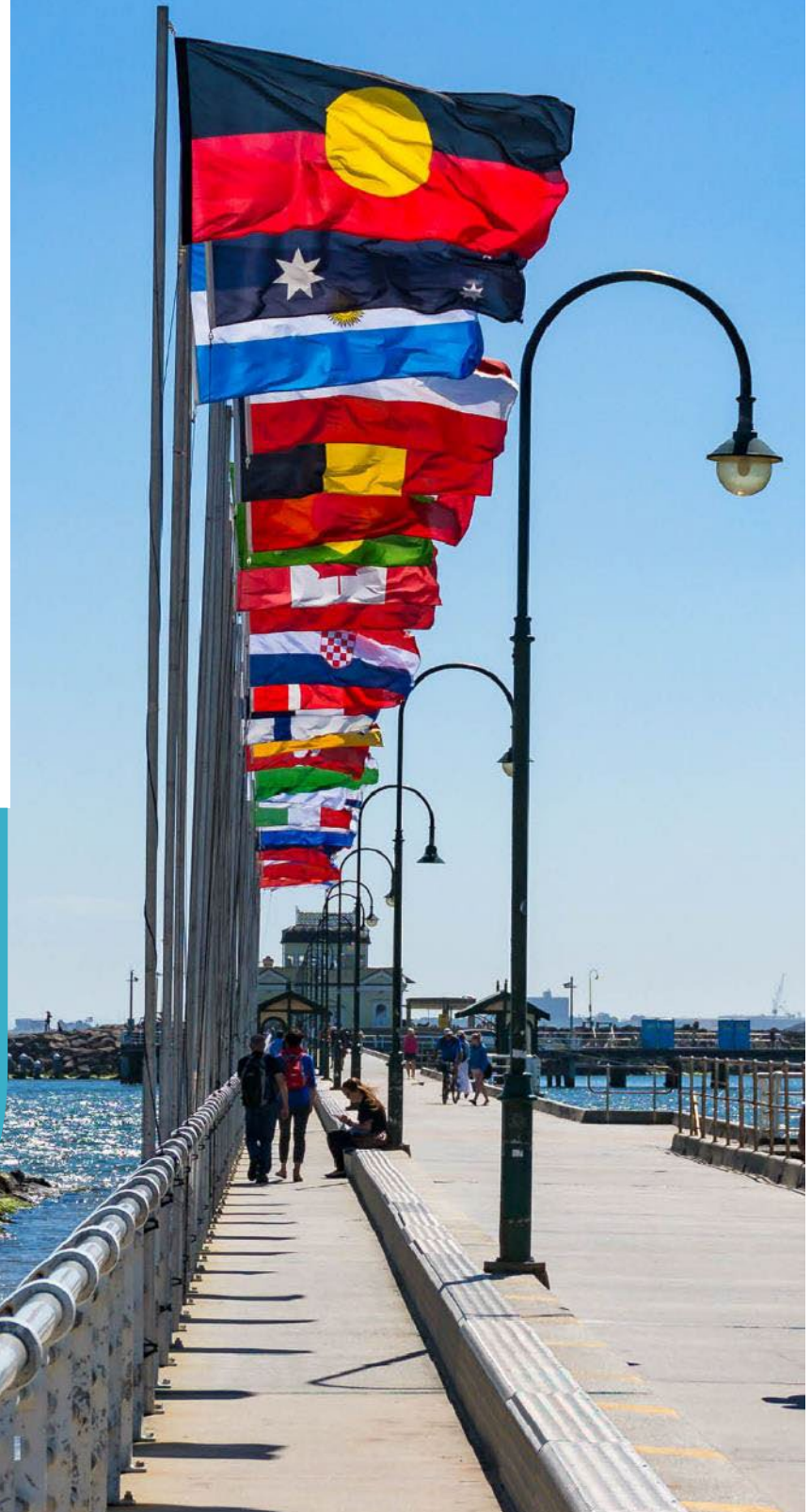
Infrastructure Victoria also helps government departments and agencies develop sectoral infrastructure plans.

Infrastructure Victoria aims to take a long-term, evidence-based view of infrastructure planning, and we inform community discussion about infrastructure provision.

Infrastructure Victoria does not directly oversee or fund infrastructure projects.

Acknowledgement

Infrastructure Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country in Victoria and pays respect to their Elders past and present, as well as Elders of other First Peoples' communities. We recognise that Victoria's infrastructure is built on land that has been managed by Aboriginal people for millennia.





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Summary

In March 2025, Infrastructure Victoria published *Victoria's draft 30-year infrastructure strategy* for public comment.

It made 43 draft recommendations to the Victorian Government. These are infrastructure priorities for action in Victoria over the next 5 years. It also named 7 future options. Future options are projects, policies and reforms that Victoria is likely to need over the next 30 years. They show clear benefits, but do not necessarily require immediate government action. The Victorian Government is not required to respond to future options.

We invited Victorians to have their say

This report is a high-level summary of the feedback we received on *Victoria's draft 30-year infrastructure strategy*. It notes what we heard. It shows where new evidence from the community and our stakeholders shaped *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2025–2055*. See [Appendix 2](#) for the full list of draft recommendations and updated recommendation numbers.

We held an 8-week consultation and heard from communities and organisations across Victoria (Figure 1). We held 3 public webinars, 9 sector workshops and 7 government briefings. We received over 300 submissions. Individuals contributed 45% of submissions. The rest came from advocacy groups (15%), peak bodies (13%), local government (12%), private sector and businesses (8%), and others including state and Australian government agencies and universities (7%). See [Appendix 1](#) for a list of stakeholder submissions.

Our team of planners, economists, social researchers, transport professionals and public policy experts did a detailed review of all submissions. We also considered feedback gathered during our workshops with industries and governments. The written submissions and workshops resulted in over 2,500 individual points of feedback on the draft strategy.

Figure 1: Our engagement program by the numbers



Most stakeholders strongly supported the draft strategy recommendations

The draft strategy attracted strong support from Victorians. Most stakeholders we heard from gave full or partial support to the draft strategy recommendations (see Table 1). They very strongly supported some recommendations, in particular:

- advancing integrated water management and more use of recycled water (draft recommendation 25)

- expanding TAFE in Melbourne's growth areas and some large regional centres (draft recommendation 4)
- making rail freight more competitive, reliable and efficient (draft recommendation 41).
- improving asset management of all government infrastructure (draft recommendation 37)
- extending metropolitan trains and running more services in Melbourne's west (draft recommendation 11)
- better preparing infrastructure for climate change (draft recommendation 27)
- making government infrastructure more accessible (draft recommendation 6)
- building a new bus rapid transit network (draft recommendation 10)
- running faster bus services, more often, in Victoria's largest cities (draft recommendation 9).

More than one in 5 submissions were about draft strategy recommendation 14. It recommended making local streets safer for children and communities by introducing 30km/hr speeds in places that children often visit including around schools, playgrounds, childcare centres and kindergartens. Opinions were diverse but a big majority stakeholders of (79%) supported or partially supported the draft recommendation.

There was also mixed support for the future option to charge people fairly to use roads, but the majority were still supportive of the change.

Stakeholders told us unequal access to infrastructure and funding were key challenges

Many stakeholders noted that people living in growth areas and parts of regional Victoria had less access to infrastructure compared with the established suburbs of Melbourne and regional cities. Stakeholders called for more health, transport and community infrastructure in Melbourne's outer north, west and south-east, and in some regional areas.

They also requested specific infrastructure projects in some local communities. For example, submissions called for new local community facilities or new public transport services and initiatives.

Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2025–2055 takes a long-term, statewide view. Our recommendations typically relate to infrastructure priorities that apply in many places. In some instances, we already covered requests for specific infrastructure projects in our draft recommendations – like more frequent and direct bus services in Victoria's largest cities (draft recommendation 9).

Occasionally, we name specific locations in a draft recommendation. This is because the evidence shows strong demand and many benefits in those locations. Our team of infrastructure experts gather this evidence using transport and economic modelling, analysis of Victorian Government planning policies and data to show a clear need to build infrastructure to serve growing communities.

Many stakeholders, especially local councils, also raised the need for more funding to meet Victoria's changing demands for infrastructure.

We modified draft recommendations and options based on stakeholder evidence

We made 43 draft recommendations and identified 7 future options for the government.

Recommendations propose actions for the Victorian Government to start in the next 5 years. They are projects, policies and reforms that Victoria will need to start before 2030, or actions that help government plan early for long-term challenges. The *Infrastructure Victoria Act 2015* requires the Victorian Government to respond to our final recommendations.

Future options are projects, policies and reforms that Victoria is likely to need over the next 30 years, show clear benefits, but do not necessarily require immediate government action. The Victorian Government is not required to respond to future options.

All recommendations and future options in the final version of the strategy have had, at least, minor wording changes since the draft. Many of the updated recommendations and future options note new evidence that stakeholders provided.

The final strategy, [*Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2025–2055*](#), makes 45 recommendations and identifies 8 future options for government to consider. This includes 2 new recommendations:

- Upgrade train infrastructure and run more services in Melbourne's north (see recommendation 12).
- Set future waste levy prices and audit landfill (see recommendation 40).

We also changed draft recommendation 33 to develop regional energy plans, guide transition from fossil gas and maintain reliable gas supply into one recommendation and one future option:

- Develop area-based energy plans and support renewable gas production (see recommendation 35).
- Plan for gas infrastructure changes (see future option).

This was in response to some confusion about the meaning and timing of the draft recommendation from our stakeholders. It was also due to further policy development and announcements on gas by the Victorian Government.

Where we did not incorporate feedback from stakeholders it was for one or more of these reasons:

- they provided no new evidence
- the available evidence was not strong enough to support a change
- the changes were outside the scope for a statewide strategy.

For example, some stakeholders wanted to share feedback on major projects that the government has already made decisions on, like the Suburban Rail Loop and Airport Rail. The infrastructure strategy is future focused, while these projects are already committed. We take existing Victorian Government projects, decisions and commitments as our starting point, and make recommendations about future government actions. We also make decisions about how to get the most benefit out of existing commitments.

More detail on the changes we made is outlined in [What we heard and did](#). For a look at how the recommendation numbers and text changed between draft and updated recommendations see [Appendix 2](#).

Acknowledgment

From the team at Infrastructure Victoria, thank you. We value the time taken by the Victorian community and our stakeholders to share their views with us. [*Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2025–2055*](#) is for all Victorians.

Our engagement program

Infrastructure Victoria is committed to meaningful engagement. Our research reflects the needs, interests and preferences of Victorians. Building evidence and support for our recommendations to the Victorian Government, in consultation with our stakeholders and the public, makes our recommendations stronger. Our evidence-based recommendations provide practical advice to the Victorian Government to help ensure infrastructure meets Victoria's current and future needs.

In developing our engagement program, we reflected the International Association for Public Participation's core values.¹ Public participation means people affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process. The purpose of this report is to share the feedback we received and how it influenced *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2025–2055*.

We consulted on the objectives of the 30-year infrastructure strategy first

The *Infrastructure Victoria Act 2015* requires us to consult on the objectives and the draft of Victoria's 30-year infrastructure strategy. Between February and June 2023, we invited Victorians to help set the objectives of the 2025 infrastructure strategy, define the major infrastructure challenges and opportunities, and propose infrastructure options and policies that address them.

Figure 1: Victoria's draft 30-year infrastructure strategy objectives



A detailed summary of this first phase of the strategy engagement program is outlined in the [Strategy objectives engagement report: Victoria's 30-year infrastructure strategy](#).

Feedback from our other projects also informed the strategy

Community input from our other research projects also helped us develop [Victoria's draft 30-year infrastructure strategy](#).

We surveyed:

- 6,000 people for [Our home choices: how more housing options can make better use of Victoria's existing infrastructure](#) – 3 draft recommendations and 2 future options relate to improving housing choices for Victorians (draft recommendations 1, 7, and 22).²
- 1,000 people for [Towards 2050: gas infrastructure in a net zero emissions economy](#) – 2 draft recommendations relate to gas use, including develop regional energy plans, guide transition from fossil gas and maintain reliable gas supply (draft recommendation 33), and speed up household energy efficiency and electrification (draft recommendation 34).³
- 4,000 Victorians, who also completed a choice modelling exercise, to shape [our bus reform research](#). This is relevant to 3 draft recommendations (9, 10 and 12).⁴
- 4,000 people for the [Access to social infrastructure consumer research](#), relevant to draft recommendations 4, 16 and 17.⁵

We hosted an 8-week consultation program

The official engagement period for feedback on [Victoria's draft 30-year infrastructure strategy](#) ran from Tuesday 4 March until Monday 28 April 2025. We held some briefings and consultations with government and stakeholders outside this period.

The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) is the leading international organisation advancing the practice of public participation. Using the IAP2's spectrum of engagement, we committed to:⁶

- consult with Victorians
- keep them informed
- listen to and acknowledge their concerns and aspirations
- provide feedback on how their input influenced the final strategy.

The methods we used to allow all Victorians to have their say included:

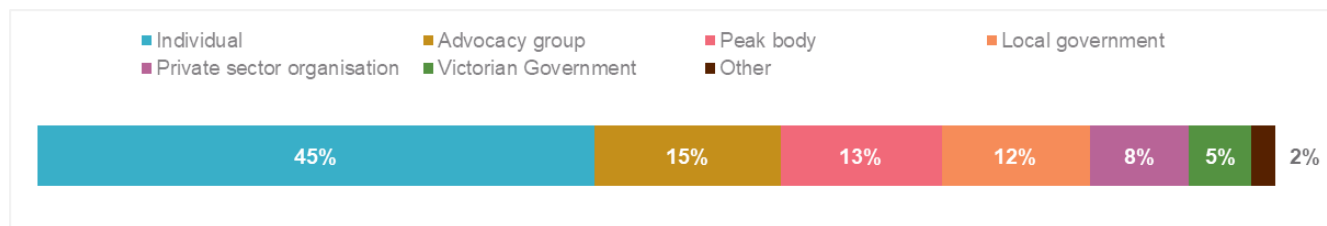
- a submissions process through the Victorian Government's engagement website engage.vic.gov.au
- 3 webinars including statewide, regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne
- 7 targeted briefings with government stakeholders
- 9 sector-specific workshops: across sectors, active and public transport, education and training, energy, environment, growth areas, health, housing and planning, roads and freight.

We heard from a diverse range of stakeholders

Our engagement program aimed to hear from a diverse range of stakeholders.

Figure 2 shows we received submissions from individuals (45%), advocacy groups (15%), peak bodies (13%), local government (12%), private sector organisations (8%), Victorian Government (5%) and others (2%). This includes both direct email submissions and submissions through the Engage Victoria website.

Figure 2: Submissions to Victoria's draft 30-year infrastructure strategy 2025–2055 by type



Source: Infrastructure Victoria (n= 309).

We asked stakeholders for permission to publish their submission. [Appendix 1](#) contains a list of organisations who gave their permission to publish.

We recorded more than 57,000 page visits to the Infrastructure Victoria and Engage Victoria webpages during the period and 22,500 active users.

The draft 30-year infrastructure strategy attracted strong support

There were no draft recommendations that most stakeholders did not support. Table 1 shows the most supported draft recommendations. See [What we heard and did](#) for more detail on each.

More than one in 5 submissions were about draft strategy recommendation 14. It recommended making local streets safer for children and communities by introducing 30km/h speeds in places that children often visit including around schools, playgrounds, childcare centres and kindergartens. It attracted 67 submissions – the highest number of submissions on one recommendation.

Opinions were diverse but a big majority of stakeholders (79%) supported or partially supported the draft recommendation. Of the 15 submissions that did not give the draft recommendation their support, most were from individuals, who thought 30km/h was too low or would increase travel times. Of those that partially supported the recommendation, around 20 submissions wanted us to recommend funding for supporting infrastructure to slow drivers down.

Some stakeholders added further evidence to support safer local speed limits. We also highlighted the importance of complementary infrastructure like crossings to facilitate safer speed limits.

There was also mixed support for the future option to charge people fairly to use roads, but the majority were still supportive of the change.

Some stakeholders worried a road user charging system would be more expensive for households with limited access to public transport, such as those living in growth areas. Some growth area councils said users should not be charged for roads until growth area residents had reliable public transport choices.

Others suggested it should be a national scheme to prevent distortion across state borders and reflect the higher economic contribution and productivity focus of freight vehicles. Developers noted an increased expense if areas around activity centres were subject to a congestion levy in planning provisions.

Several stakeholders pointed to different pricing options, including a variable distance charge, a tiered system based on emissions and congestion, and a dynamic pricing system.

In the update to the road pricing future option, we added a new case study based on the example of congestion pricing in New York City. We also added the consideration that any expanded parking levy be limited to parking above mandatory minimums. See future option – Charge people fairly to use roads.

Table 1: Most supported draft recommendations by number of submissions and level of support

Draft recommendation	Number of submissions	Full support	Partial support
25. Advance integrated water management and use more recycled water	32	94%	6%
4. Expand TAFE in Melbourne's growth areas and some large regional centres	33	88%	12%
41. Make rail freight competitive, reliable and efficient	32	87.5%	12.5%
37. Improve asset management of all government infrastructure	33	84%	16%
11. Extend metropolitan trains and run more services in Melbourne's west	54	83%	17%
27. Better prepare infrastructure for climate change	45	82%	18%
6. Make government infrastructure more accessible	35	80%	20%
10. Build a new bus rapid transit network	44	80%	20%
9. Run faster bus services, more often, in Victoria's largest cities	51	75%	25%

Table 2: Recommendations which attracted a diversity of views

Draft recommendation	Number of submissions	Full support	Partial support	Not supported
14. Make local streets safer for children and communities	68	53%	25%	22%
Future option – Charge people fairly to use roads	19	47%	31.5%	21.5%

For more detail on the changes we made see [What we heard and did.](#)

What we heard and did

This section gives a high-level summary of feedback on [Victoria's draft 30-year infrastructure strategy](#). It then summarises our actions in response, ordered by topic area. Submissions that we have permission to publish are available to read on [our website](#).

Our team read and assessed the submissions

Our team read and assessed all the submissions that we received. We typically made major changes to a draft recommendation or added a new recommendation when:

- we received compelling feedback during consultation, such as strong new evidence and reasoning which aligned with the strategy objectives
- the external environment changed, due to factors such as new government policies or investments.

We also made minor updates to recommendations. These reflected the release of more recent data, or referenced supporting evidence received during consultation.

Not all submissions commented on every recommendation. We include percentages in the following section that show support among people or organisations who did comment on a specific recommendation.

Many submissions included ideas for new recommendations. We reviewed each proposal against strict criteria. New recommendations had to:

- have compelling evidence to support action
- be actions that the Victorian Government can start within 5 years
- relate to use and effectiveness of infrastructure, at substantial scale for a statewide strategy
- advance the strategy objectives and address our strategic priorities.

We added 2 new recommendations based on stakeholder feedback

There were 2 new recommendations added to *Victoria's 30-year infrastructure strategy 2025–2055* based on the criteria above:

- Set future waste levy prices and audit landfill (see recommendation 40).
- Upgrade train infrastructure and run more services in Melbourne's north (see recommendation 12).

We also changed draft recommendation 33 to develop regional energy plans, guide transition from fossil gas and maintain reliable gas supply into one recommendation and one future option:

- Develop area-based energy plans and support renewable gas production (see recommendation 35).
- Plan for gas infrastructure changes (future option).

We updated all draft recommendations in some way for the final version of *Victoria's 30-year infrastructure strategy 2025–2055*. Some changes that stakeholders suggested did not meet our criteria and were not made.

For example, submissions often requested more funding, more projects, more specificity and higher priority. Sometimes, we considered these suggestions but did not include them in the final strategy. This is not because the ideas were not important or needed. Rather, the suggestions did not focus on projects and policies for the Victorian Government to prioritise over the next 5 years that help set up Victoria well for the next 30 years.

Some submissions called for broad mandates or requirements without providing sufficient evidence for their need. Others called for actions that are not within the remit of the Victorian Government. Some suggestions had benefits that were too localised for us to include in a statewide strategy.

The next section outlines what we heard and what we did in response to feedback for each infrastructure topic area. See [Appendix 2](#) for changes in recommendation ordering and numbers between the draft and updated strategy.

Across sectors

Accessibility

Improving access to infrastructure for all Victorians means making it accessible for everyone including people with mobility challenges, people with lived experience of disability or parents using prams. Our stakeholders were supportive of draft recommendation 6 to make government infrastructure more accessible. Some stakeholders were disappointed at the slow pace of accessibility upgrades and called for more urgency.⁷ Others suggested more actions like upgraded footpaths, better integrated infrastructure and more public transport services.⁸

We edited this recommendation based on stakeholder feedback, including noting accessibility issues at some train stations, and stressed the importance of consulting with people with lived experience of disability when designing the improvements.

See recommendation 6.

Asset maintenance

The Victorian Government owns more than \$400 billion worth of infrastructure.⁹ Submissions expressed support for draft recommendation 37 to improve asset management of all government infrastructure. Contributors' responses focused on improving information sharing, leadership and skills capability. Some stakeholders requested specific sectors be prioritised. Others suggested more focus on the benefits of good asset management including improved safety, climate resilience and contributing to a circular economy. Several stakeholders asked us to be clearer on the scope of the recommendation when referring to 'all government infrastructure'. Others wanted to see their sector or project, including freight or roads, singled out for priority.

We made small adjustments to this recommendation for the final strategy. We clarified that the recommendation relates to Victorian Government and not local government infrastructure. We also referenced our report *[Getting better use from infrastructure: how Victoria can improve its asset management](#)* released in June 2025.¹⁰

See recommendation 38.

Digital technologies

Digital technologies can deliver many benefits during the lifecycle of infrastructure.¹¹ Our stakeholders supported our draft recommendation to use more digital technologies across government infrastructure projects. Some suggested including a reporting mechanism, or assigning a relevant government department, to store and make public the lessons learned on the use of these technologies.

Others queried our focus on building information modelling and suggested we use the term 'digital engineering' instead. Some stakeholders suggested the recommendation use the 'digital by default' terminology already adopted by others.¹² We did not adopt these suggestions, choosing instead to use plain language terms that more people can understand. Others suggested the use of building information modelling should be compulsory for all government funded projects to 'ensure consistent quality and efficiency improvements in all projects'.¹³ In response, we removed some duplication of the benefits of digital technologies some stakeholders called out in the recommendation and costings sections.

Some stakeholders wrote to us about the growing demand for data centres driven by artificial intelligence, along with the associated land, water and energy implications.¹⁴ While we did not refer to data centres explicitly in the draft strategy, we modelled several energy scenarios. This included a scenario where demand for electricity increases 15% above existing forecasts, potentially driven by growth in energy-intensive industries such as data centres.¹⁵ We were also cognisant of work underway by the Australian Energy Market Operator on data centre energy demand.¹⁶

In response to this feedback, we recognised the value of data centres in enabling digital technologies. We added links from the recommendation to the [Victorian digital asset strategy](#) and [National Digital Engineering Policy Principles](#) to highlight the connection to relevant existing policies.

See recommendation 41.

We also recommended that area-based energy plans should cover large energy users, such as data centres.

See recommendation 35.

Long-term sector-based plans

Stakeholders strongly supported draft recommendation 35 to prepare and publish infrastructure sector plans to shape Victoria's cities.

More than 60 submissions commented on this draft recommendation. The submissions explored topics such as more collaboration with local government, communities and businesses in developing the sector plans. Some suggested expanding the scope to include infrastructure not owned by the Victorian Government. Others thought other sectors should have separate long-term sector plans, including freight, open space, sport and recreation, and tourism.

Other stakeholders called for:

- the plans to name funding mechanisms
- strong alignment with existing national and state policies including *Plan for Victoria*¹⁷
- all plans to include climate change risks.

We used stakeholder evidence to further shape the updated recommendation. We clarified that sector plans are statewide and that the recommendation covers infrastructure owned or operated by the Victorian Government. We changed the time horizons for delivery of the plans to better align with *Plan for Victoria*.¹⁸

For clarity, we listed some of the sub-sectors in the scope for each sector plan. For example, we added freight, roads and public transport under the transport infrastructure sector plan. We also noted the urgent need to plan for more roads and public transport in growth areas.

Publishing infrastructure sector plans will allow the public to see how decisions are made, fostering trust and accountability. This will also allow industry to give feedback on assumptions for future population, jobs, and land use ensuring the Victorian Government is using best practice to reach its goals.

– Engineers Australia¹⁹

See recommendation 36.

Future major infrastructure projects

The strategy notes that the government should prepare now for major infrastructure projects that Victoria will need in the long term. Draft recommendation 43 to create and preserve opportunities for future major

infrastructure projects attracted strong support (63%). Of the stakeholders who gave partial support, some named other major projects they thought we should add to the list including:

- Doncaster rail link²⁰
- Port of Hastings²¹
- a railway station for Avalon Airport²²
- an airport for south-east Melbourne²³
- Lilydale Bypass.²⁴

We examined each of these proposals alongside the available evidence and the degree to which they supported the strategy objectives and strategic priorities. In some instances, the proposals were outside the scope for a statewide strategy, in others we did not have enough evidence to prioritise them for inclusion in *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2025–2055*.

Some councils wanted to see more local government involvement in future planning. Other stakeholders called for more urgency in delivering projects, especially for the Western intermodal freight terminal and the Outer metropolitan road and rail corridor.²⁵ Some stakeholders also suggested the final strategy include standalone recommendations for projects including the City Loop reconfiguration and Melbourne Metro 2.

We agree that these are important infrastructure projects, but we do not think that they are priorities for the government to start building within the next 5 years. They remain future options for this reason, and we recommend that the government plan for the future by developing business cases and detailed assessments.

In response to stakeholder feedback, we added a new future infrastructure project to the recommendation, pointing to the need for more hospital capacity in Melbourne's outer north. Stakeholder concerns regarding strong population growth and its impacts on existing hospital services were backed by strong evidence on growing demand for services relative to existing capacity.²⁶

See recommendation 45.

Circular economy

Stakeholders including local councils, industry groups and government agencies were supportive of draft recommendation 38 to prepare for more recycling and waste infrastructure in Victoria.

Some pointed out issues that we could emphasise in the recommendation. This included that Victoria is running out of landfill space. Victoria will need more waste and recycling facilities. These facilities aim to keep resources in use for longer rather than bury them in the ground. Our stakeholders agree they will need better waste and recycling data and more funding. Stakeholders held different views on the suitability of waste-to-energy plants in a low emissions and circular economy.²⁷

In updating the draft recommendation, we highlighted issues with community acceptance for waste and recycling sites. We also noted the need to better align the Victorian and local governments in identifying suitable locations for new facilities. Our updated recommendation specifies that the Victorian Government needs to map potential locations for new facilities and then protect these locations. We also developed a new recommendation, responding to concerns about landfill capacity and the need to encourage investment in alternatives.

See recommendations 39 and 40.

Climate change

Stakeholders and community members told us they strongly support action on climate change. Many called for urgent measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to adapt infrastructure for the new climate and to

improve flood mapping (draft recommendations 24, 27 and 28). They included local councils, water corporations, environment groups, and industry groups.

Some of the key themes from stakeholders included the need for:

- clearer guidance on carbon measurement
- more use of alternative materials in infrastructure
- a focus on reducing carbon in the initial stages of planning and design
- more discussion of the productivity gains of reducing carbon
- more funding for local councils specific to adaptation
- more focus on nature-based solutions
- more funding and monitoring of the government's adaptation action plans
- more focus on coastal adaptation planning
- better embedding climate change risk, mitigation and adaptation into the planning system.

In updating the recommendation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions of infrastructure, we further emphasised that governments take a consistent approach to valuing carbon in infrastructure in different jurisdictions. We also updated our references with the latest available climate reporting and data.

See recommendation 25.

We clarified that governments should consider coastal erosion, along with flood and fire, when preparing infrastructure for climate change (draft recommendation 25). This includes that the government fund high-priority, cost-effective infrastructure adaptation actions when it updates climate adaptation action plans in 2026.

See recommendation 28.

In response to evidence from stakeholders, we also revised our sea level rise guidance in our flood mapping recommendation to 'at least' 1.1 metres. It was previously set at 1.1 metres (draft recommendation 28). This guidance allows for local variation in coastal hazard assessments. We noted the challenge for government to both manage flood risk and find suitable locations to build more new homes.

See recommendation 29.

Community infrastructure

Alcohol and drug addiction recovery facilities

Stakeholders strongly supported draft recommendation 17 to build more residential alcohol and other drug facilities. More than 80% of submissions were in full support. Stakeholders proposed broadening the recommendation to focus more on harm reduction facilities and highlight the benefits of integrated mental health and alcohol and drug treatment services.

Some wanted us to better target the recommendation. They requested facilities in certain locations. Some mentioned the need for recurrent funding for new infrastructure and better asset management of existing facilities. Several stakeholders noted that Warrnambool does not have a residential rehabilitation facility and that it is the only health service network region that does not have these services.²⁸

Victoria faces significant and growing public health challenges arising from alcohol and other drug use. Fortunately, with the right investment and planning, we are well-placed to deliver a coordinated, evidence-based, and effective response that reduces

drug-related harms and supports community health and wellbeing.
Infrastructure is fundamental to achieving this.
– Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association²⁹

Evidence from our stakeholders helped inform updates to the recommendation. We:

- confirmed the link between alcohol and other drug treatment facilities, and mental health infrastructure
- clarified the difference between alcohol and other drug treatment withdrawal facilities and residential rehabilitation facilities
- recognised the need for a facility in the Warrnambool region
- increased the cost of the recommendation from \$100 million to a range of \$100 million to \$150 million, to allow for variation in costs to build residential rehabilitation facilities.

See recommendation 19.

Libraries and aquatic centres

Draft recommendation 5 was to build libraries and aquatic centres for Melbourne's growing communities. Stakeholders identified funding issues, including the amount of money these facilities can cost to build, and the ongoing maintenance and operational funding required. In addition to the growth areas named in the draft, some stakeholders requested we include other locations, including some regional areas.

Some growth area stakeholders pointed out that existing aquatic centres needed urgent upgrades. We did not have data that allowed us to make evidence-based recommendations for aquatic centre upgrades, so we scoped our recommendation to cover new facilities only. They also suggested that planning for libraries and aquatic centres should be considered along with community hubs and activity centre planning to meet population growth.

In response to stakeholder evidence, we increased the recommended proposed grants to \$35 million for aquatic centres (previously \$25 million) and \$15 million for libraries (previously \$10 million). We increased the recommended Victorian Government share of costs to at least one third (previously capped at one third). We also made the method for prioritising facilities in Melton, Casey, Wyndham and Cardinia clearer.

See recommendation 5.

Prisons and transition housing

We received 11 submissions that shared views on better using prisons and investing more in health facilities and transition housing (draft recommendation 21). Of these, 91% were in support. The remainder expressed partial support.

Some noted that people leaving prison may be better housed in social homes as renters – that this helps them feel more secure and can be an alternative to transition housing. Tenant groups suggested that Infrastructure Victoria strengthen the recommendation by calling for more supported social housing.³⁰ They noted that a lack of social housing means people often spend longer than anticipated in transition housing.

Some First Peoples' organisations wanted to see the recommendation 'explicitly state the need to repurpose prisons for Aboriginal Community-controlled transitional housing proportional to the numbers of Aboriginal people exiting prison'.³¹

Since releasing the draft strategy, Victorian prisoner numbers have started growing again, meaning there is no longer spare prison capacity to repurpose. However, the need to invest in prison health facilities and transition housing remains. We updated the recommendation to emphasise the need for facilities that can help reduce reoffending and added actions to support culturally safer corrections facilities for First Peoples.

See recommendation 22.

Education and training

Kindergartens

Stakeholders broadly supported draft recommendation 2 to facilitate markets and invest in kindergartens. Some wanted the recommendation to further clarify funding mechanisms, co-location with other services and further local planning. Some councils did not think private sector kindergartens, where combined with long day care, should be included in the recommendation. They also highlighted the financial challenges for not-for-profit organisations to deliver kindergarten programs without funding support.

Some stakeholders suggested the recommendation also include investment in Aboriginal kindergartens, child and family centres and multifunctional Aboriginal children's services.³²

Changes to the recommendation included emphasising the importance of Victorian Government collaboration with local governments, and the benefits of co-locating kindergartens with TAFEs. In response to local government concerns over cost shifting, we clarified the Victorian Government's responsibility for investing in kindergartens. We also cross-referenced our infrastructure contributions recommendation as a potential funding source.

See recommendation 2.

Schools

Some stakeholders were strongly interested in our 2 draft recommendations relating to the growing demand for and use of Victoria's government schools. Most stakeholders supported draft recommendation 16 to help government schools share their grounds. Some partially supported it, but none opposed it.

Requests from stakeholders included:

- to expand the recommendation to apply to non-government schools and indoor facilities
- to simplify the Joint Use Agreement process
- to make the recommendation mandatory.

There was also strong interest in draft recommendation 3 to plan and deliver expanded and new schools. No submissions opposed the draft recommendation. Most submissions were from local councils suggesting various changes to the recommendation for clarity such as:

- protection for open space if schools are expanded
- the role of public private partnerships for new schools³³
- co-location of community infrastructure³⁴
- aligning with population growth and transport access.

Some stakeholders suggested the recommendation include a requirement for all new school buildings have adequate energy performance 'resulting in lower energy use and positive health outcomes'.³⁵

In the final strategy, we refined some of the wording in the recommendation. We welcomed the July 2025 Victorian Government announcement to trial opening 41 school grounds in Melbourne's west. We noted that open school grounds can improve walkability and connectivity across local communities. We clarified that opening school grounds is for informal recreation, rather than formal sporting agreements. We also pointed to a New Zealand funding model that addresses after-hours vandalism.

See recommendation 3.

TAFE

The draft strategy noted that TAFEs in Melbourne's west, north and south-east growth areas, and some large regional centres, must expand in the future to train more students to fill skills gaps, especially in construction, energy and health.³⁶

Most stakeholders responding to the draft recommendation were looking to further clarify issues including:

- recognising the role some regional universities and private registered training organisations play in supporting delivery of TAFE with infrastructure³⁷
- acknowledging the need for connecting transport infrastructure³⁸
- for TAFEs to have greater autonomy over infrastructure funding from asset sales.³⁹

In response to stakeholders, we emphasised the importance of transport access and digital infrastructure connectivity for TAFE campuses. We added the potential for public private partnerships to deliver TAFEs. We also highlighted the opportunity for TAFEs to benefit from selling any excess land to reinvest in new and expanded facilities.

See recommendation 4.

Energy

Many stakeholders agreed Victoria faces challenges in building enough new renewable energy generation, storage and transmission infrastructure to reach its net zero emissions targets. The role of fossil gas in Victoria's energy transition also interested them. There was strong support for draft recommendation 33 to develop regional energy plans, guide transition from fossil gas and maintain reliable gas supply, and for draft recommendation 34 to speed up energy efficiency and electrification (see Figure 3).

Some stakeholders asked us to consider widening the scope of draft recommendation 34 so that more Victorians can afford to retrofit homes, including those on low incomes, living in rental housing, apartments and social housing. Others suggested solar panels for social housing residents, and that the recommendation include more information on installation costs and efficiency savings. Some stakeholders queried the timing of the recommendations and whether government and industry should go faster on gas substitution to reduce emissions faster.

A peak body for the property industry was among many stakeholders supporting the shift to all-electric:

The shift to all-electric new homes is reducing energy costs for Victorian households at a time when cost of living pressures remain high.
– Property Council of Australia⁴⁰

Gas industry stakeholders were opposed or only partially supportive of the draft recommendations.⁴¹ Some suggested the recommendations should more clearly recognise the potential for existing gas network infrastructure to meet energy storage needs and host renewable gases.⁴²

In response to stakeholder feedback on draft recommendation 33 we:

- clarified the wording of our recommended approach to area-based energy planning so that it includes future electricity and gas needs and opportunities
- removed the recommended action to secure gas supplies, in response to the Victorian Government releasing the *Gas security statement*⁴³
- created a new future option to plan for the expected decline in gas use by homes and businesses by partnering with the energy industry to prepare for decommissioning. See future option – Plan for gas infrastructure changes.

We also reduced the cost of the updated recommendation to reflect these changes in scope.

There were some differing views on the proposed mandatory energy efficiency disclosure scheme when selling or leasing homes (part of draft recommendation 34).

Feedback included:

- that multi-climate hazard assessments, such as flood and fire risks, also be included in the scheme

- that the recommendation be expanded to mandate minimum energy efficiency ratings or requirements for all homes including all rental, social housing and low-income households
- the need for the scheme to limit red tape and costs to homeowners
- that the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme should be used as the reporting scheme.

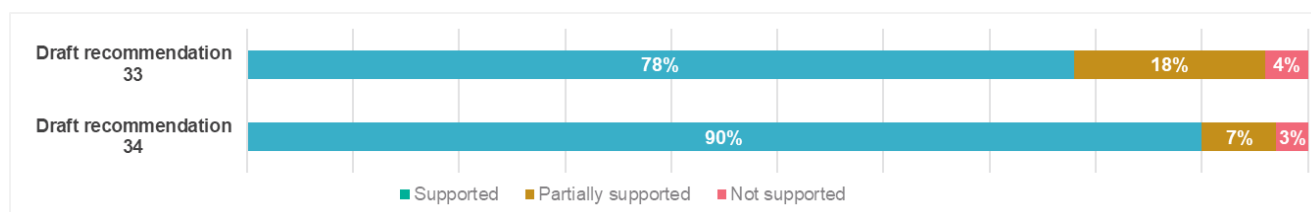
The requirement for Victorian homeowners to disclose the energy efficiency of their homes at the time of sale or lease may be difficult to verify and may create excessive red tape and cost to homeowners. There must be cost-effective ways to provide this information.

– Engineers Australia⁴⁴

In response to feedback on draft recommendation 34 to encourage household efficiency and electrification we:

- recognised existing Victorian Government action including the Victorian Energy Upgrades program, the State Electricity Commission’s one-stop shop on information, education and support, and mandatory rental standards⁴⁵
- removed the reference to replacing gas space heating and hot water systems at end-of-life, following the Victorian Government’s release of the *Gas security statement*⁴⁶
- reduced the recommendation costs, reflecting new Victorian and Australian government funding, and the inclusion of air conditioning costs for public housing as our base case (reflecting new standards).

Figure 3: Levels of support for draft recommendations 33 and 34



Draft recommendation 33 to develop regional energy plans, guide transition from fossil gas and maintain reliable gas supply (n=23); draft recommendation 34 to speed up household energy efficiency and electrification (n=34).

Energy sector planning

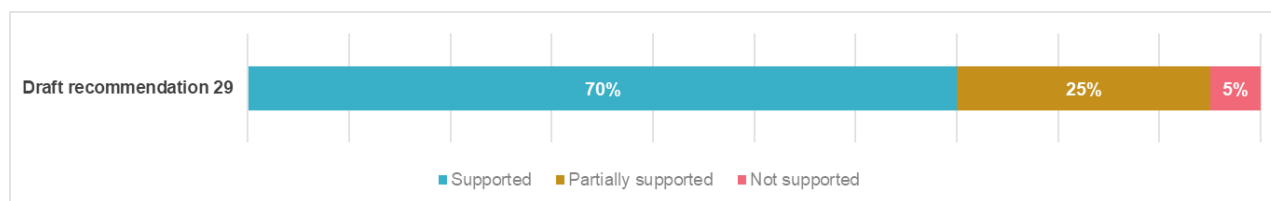
Most energy sector stakeholders were in favour of draft recommendation 29 to fast-track key energy projects and enabling infrastructure.⁴⁷ Several stakeholders expressed support for a central energy coordinator that would be responsible for transparent reporting, enabling infrastructure and coordinating across government.⁴⁸ But we also heard that one function would not be able to oversee all the different moving parts and that it risked duplicating work already being done. We changed the recommendation to focus on the outcomes the government can deliver to better coordinate the energy transition. This includes publishing a live pipeline of energy projects.

Many stakeholders, especially regional local councils, were concerned fast-tracking projects would compromise consultation with Traditional Owners, affected communities and landholders.⁴⁹

While the VFF is not opposed in principle to faster delivery of energy infrastructure or improved environmental assessments, this should not occur at the expense of adequate consultation with Victoria’s farmers and a full understanding of the impact of the proposed infrastructure on farmland and operations.

– Victorian Farmers Federation⁵⁰

Figure 4: Levels of support for draft recommendation 29



Draft recommendation 29 to speed up household energy efficiency and electrification (n=36).

Some stakeholders also wanted us to clarify that faster approvals for environmental assessments (draft recommendation 30) should not come at the expense of community engagement or biodiversity assessments.

In updating the recommendation, we made it clearer where further government action to reform environmental assessments, including legislation, differs from actions already underway. We also added a new section on cultural heritage management, including pointing to relevant Yoorrook Justice Commission findings, and highlighted the need for early and deep engagement with Traditional Owners.⁵¹

See recommendation 31.

First Peoples

The infrastructure strategy recommendations are statewide and can benefit all Victorians. They also include 2 recommendations relevant to First Peoples. The recommendations aim to close the gap between outcomes for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Victorians and support self-determination goals.⁵²

Infrastructure Victoria worked closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led organisations to develop the 2 draft recommendations most relevant to their communities.

Aboriginal Housing Victoria participated in the development of draft recommendation 22 to invest in secure homes. Data from the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) informed draft recommendation 23 to fund better health and wellbeing infrastructure for Aboriginal Victorians. In April 2025, Infrastructure Victoria and VACCHO released a co-authored report *Investing in Aboriginal health and wellbeing infrastructure*.⁵³

Nearly 80% of submissions fully supported draft recommendation 22 to invest in secure homes for Aboriginal Victorians. Others suggested changes to the draft recommendation including requests to strengthen the wording about the importance of culturally safe housing and good access to services.

In response to additional evidence from stakeholders, we updated data referencing Aboriginal households on waitlists for social housing. We also strengthened the narrative around importance of culturally appropriate homes and economic opportunity. See strategy recommendation 23.

Most stakeholders (75%) fully supported draft recommendation 23 to fund better health and wellbeing infrastructure for Aboriginal Victorians. Some stakeholders suggested we be clearer about funding and highlight the importance of culturally safe buildings and self-determination, among other issues.

In response to stakeholder feedback, we changed the wording in the recommendation to reaffirm Aboriginal self-determination goals. We acknowledged existing funding mechanisms, and skills and planning capacity within Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. We included references to the Yoorrook Justice Commission findings.⁵⁴ We also updated references in costings to align with 2025/26 Victorian Government budget announcements, including the extension of the Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program and general updates on the direction of Treaty negotiations and legislation.

Aboriginal Victorians are 10 times more likely to experience homelessness than other Australians, and Victoria has the nation's highest rate of Indigenous people seeking homelessness support. These stark indicators show that without significant infrastructure investment, inequitable outcomes will persist.

– Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation⁵⁵

See recommendations 23 and 24.

Freight

Draft recommendation 42 to encourage off-peak freight delivery in urban areas attracted majority support from stakeholders. Some stakeholders raised concerns about the need to manage potential impacts on noise and amenity. One local government objected to the recommendation and argued for resolving residential and industrial land use conflicts before encouraging off-peak freight delivery.⁵⁶

Others suggested more work was needed to overcome barriers to off-peak freight including costs, lighting at loading docks for night deliveries, workforce readiness, regulatory and data barriers, and the need for coordination between tolls and freight shipping.

Delivering a coordinated, future-focused approach to urban freight will enhance supply chain efficiency, reduce emissions, and support Victoria's growing urban economy.

– Australian Logistics Council⁵⁷

Based on stakeholder feedback, we clarified that the scope of the recommendation applies to urban delivery zones consisting of consolidation warehouses and low emission delivery vehicles to provide efficient 'last mile' delivery. We expanded it to encourage multiple off-peak freight delivery pilot locations, and we recognised stakeholder concerns over the impacts of off-peak freight on amenity. Addressing these concerns could include managing the timing, location and vehicle types of the pilot. We also highlighted the benefits of off-peak freight including less air pollution and safer roads.

See recommendation 44.

For draft recommendation 41 to make rail freight competitive, reliable and efficient, we expanded the recommendation to include a rail freight coordinator to oversee planning and scheduling. We have suggested increasing capacity within Freight Victoria to undertake this role.

To best activate and ensure the success of (an off-peak freight) pilot, it's suggested it should incorporate incentives for off-peak operations. This could include reduced toll charges or priority access that could accelerate adoption.

– Port of Melbourne⁵⁸

See recommendation 43.

Health

Digital healthcare

Twenty-six submissions responded to draft recommendation 19 about investing in digital healthcare. More than 60% expressed their support and 39% partially supported it.

Stakeholders noted that some parts of Victoria need better digital connectivity for digital healthcare to succeed.⁵⁹ Others wanted to see better digital literacy and electronic medical records management included in the recommendation. Some mentioned a lack of suitable funding.

Some noted that the recommendation could be broader, supporting things like interhospital transfers, ambulance distribution and disaster response.⁶⁰ Others requested the recommendation include a recognition and co-commitment of investment in the digital capability of healthcare workers, including targeted investments in TAFE.⁶¹

In updating the recommendation, we clarified that digital healthcare improves access to care and can also improve quality of care, for example through better access to information. We also recognised that digital literacy is important in accessing digital care and that some vulnerable communities or groups may need further support.

See recommendation 20.

Hospitals

Draft recommendation 20 to invest in upgrades for critical public hospital infrastructure attracted majority support from stakeholders (61%) with the remainder suggesting partial changes.

Some stakeholders were concerned the draft recommendation prioritised upgrades for some hospitals over others, but all were urgent. These included requests to have more locations added to the recommendation.⁶² Several submissions said a new hospital in Melbourne's north should be added as a priority.⁶³

We updated the recommendation based on stakeholder feedback. We strengthened evidence around the urgency of hospital upgrades. We also clarified that all 3 of Victoria's largest hospitals need the government to set the scope, timing and funding for upgrades. We added the need for expanded hospital capacity in Melbourne's outer north as a priority in our recommendation on future major projects.

See recommendation 21.

Housing and planning

Social housing

Most stakeholders strongly supported draft recommendation 1 for more government investment in social housing. Some stakeholders (15%) wanted to see some changes. They felt the number of new homes we suggested was too low to meet demand and the timeframe (15 years) too long given the urgency of the problem.⁶⁴ They also suggested that local government housing targets, recently developed by the Victorian Government in consultation with councils, should include a sub-target for social homes.⁶⁵

Many councils now see more individuals and families living in cars, camping in public spaces, or occupying vacant buildings – all signs of worsening housing stress.
– Municipal Association of Victoria⁶⁶

Some suggested the government should also invest in targeted education and training programs to ensure there were enough qualified workers to meet the demand for all housing projects, including social housing.⁶⁷

Two individuals opposed government investment in social housing. One pointed out the impact of building social housing on labour and prices.⁶⁸ Another person with lived experience of social housing suggested government provide better rent assistance to people in need, rather than putting people together on the same block.⁶⁹

When updating this draft recommendation, we carefully considered financial sustainability and its impact on the state budget. We refined our advice on the recommendation's costs and potential savings. Given the diversity of views on the number of social homes the Victorian Government should build, we retained our proposal to build 60,000 new homes. In addition, we further clarified:

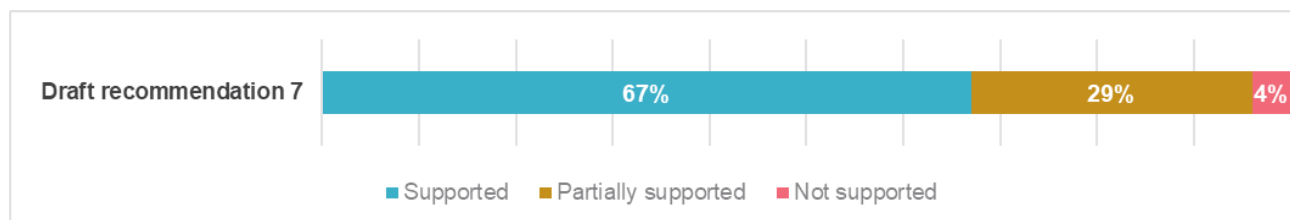
- The challenges of delivery: we emphasised the value of a long-term housing delivery pipeline while also noting that this may need to ramp up over time. This reflects feedback from the industry on the state's capacity to deliver the volume of new homes proposed as well as local area housing targets.
- Better asset management: we noted the opportunity to potentially extend the life of some housing with better asset management.
- Increasing density: we highlighted that the government can also boost social housing stock through more compact developments.

See recommendation 1.

Rezoning locations near existing infrastructure

There was strong interest in draft recommendation 7 to rezone locations near existing infrastructure for more home choices. Most stakeholders supported or partially supported the recommendation. Some stakeholders, including local councils, wanted to see more detail and discussion about supporting infrastructure in these zones. Some stakeholders did not support the recommendation on the grounds that councils are already doing this work and are best placed to lead it.⁷⁰

Figure 5: Levels of support for draft recommendation 7



Draft recommendation 7 rezone locations near existing infrastructure for more home choices (n=45).

We increased the expected cost of this recommendation based on similar examples from the 2025–26 Victorian Budget of rezoning in activity centres. We linked to our recommendation on flood mapping as a consideration when rezoning. We also linked to our recommendation on tram extensions as an example of where rezoning can start.

See recommendation 7.

Affordable housing

More than 75% of submissions on the future option to mandate more affordable homes in established areas were supportive. A peak body for local government said it should be brought forward immediately due to the unmet demand, suggesting it would also reduce the pressure on demand for social housing.⁷¹ Many others agreed that action to provide more affordable homes is urgently needed.⁷²

Some developers said government mandates for a proportion of dwellings to be built as affordable housing would worsen economic feasibility for new projects, and might mean that housing projects don't go ahead.⁷³ Others said that while mandatory inclusionary housing was 'almost always well-intended, it also almost always has disastrous results'.⁷⁴ They suggested it would be better if government fully funded the housing or offered incentives – such as greater yield – to offset the cost to developers.⁷⁵

In response, we removed terminology around 'mandating' affordable homes, replacing this with 'making more homes affordable'. We noted that government has a range of potential policy responses it can consider.

Some renters are having to make unfair sacrifices, such as skipping meals, and going without essentials like healthcare to pay rent. Others are having to stay in unsuitable and unsafe housing because it is all they can afford, which can have detrimental health effects.
– Tenants Victoria⁷⁶

Stamp duty

The draft future option to phase out stamp duties was supported or partially supported by most stakeholders (85%). The peak industry body representing property development and investment was supportive of replacing stamp duty but noted that any alternative levy should come 'from a broad base rather than solely levied upon the property sector'.⁷⁷ The updated future option highlighted overall stakeholder support for land tax or value capture mechanisms. We also clarified that land tax reform in the Australian Capital Territory has not caused any increases in the residential rental market.

See future option – Phase out residential stamp duties.

Transport

Cycling

Draft recommendation 15 to build safe cycling networks in Melbourne and regional cities attracted a large number of submissions (58). Key issues raised included funding, bike lane design, network design and the need to connect cycling corridors to local roads. Some growth area residents and councils also suggested the recommendation should support investment in local cycling network infrastructure. They said supporting cyclists with safe cycling infrastructure, especially in car-dependent growth areas, helps support active, healthy communities and reduces congestion.⁷⁸

A mode shift away from cars is needed if Victoria is to reach its emissions reduction targets and will deliver a range of health, economic and environmental benefits for communities. Provision of safe, affordable, accessible, fast, and reliable public transport, and active transport infrastructure, is critical to enable this shift.
– Municipal Association of Victoria⁷⁹

In updating the draft recommendation, we added new cycling corridors in Melbourne's south-east, and new local links along western cycling corridors to better connect into activity centres and key destinations. We also added new evidence on the benefits of safe cycling infrastructure, based on our commissioned research. Based on this new evidence, we changed the priority of some of our proposed upgrades and proposed a second phase of upgrades for the government to consider from the mid-2030s.

See strategy recommendation 16 and our method report on how we prioritised cycling corridors for investment.

Extending tram routes

Stakeholders welcomed draft recommendation 8. Just over a third of submissions partially supported the draft recommendation to extend Melbourne's trams to encourage more new homes nearby. Many submissions included proposals for new extensions, or variations to the routes we propose.⁸⁰ Several stakeholders also noted the benefits of new tram extensions to support increased housing.⁸¹

In response to stakeholder evidence we:

- referred to existing government plans for tram network reform designed to better match capacity with demand along the busiest tram corridors
- added new evidence to support Fishermans Bend and Arden tram extensions
- included new benefit-cost ratio ranges, based on evidence from the supporting transport economics technical report
- increased the recommendation cost by \$200 million to include a level crossing removal for the Arden extension.

We also added a new reference to the potential infrastructure cost savings associated with delivering more homes in established suburbs rather than in growth areas.

We added 2 new tram upgrades for consideration once the initial 8 extensions have been completed: Airport West to Melbourne Airport and Highpoint to Sunshine.

See recommendation 8.

Faster, more frequent buses

The issue of more public transport in the form of faster and more frequent buses attracted more than 100 submissions. All stakeholders supported the recommendations in full or in part. Councils from several growth areas confirmed the urgent need for alternatives to cars. Issues included:

- longer operating hours in industrial and employment areas were flagged for shift workers
- new or extended routes to better connect to train stations
- bus rapid transit routes connected to the airport or other employment precincts nearby
- making sure the new buses on the rapid transit network were all-electric or hydrogen⁸²
- funding for supporting infrastructure such as bus stops, bus shelters and footpaths to improve access.

Regional stakeholders highlighted some other areas where bus and coach services needed further improvement including Warrnambool, Portland, Stawell, Halls Gap, Hamilton and Maryborough.⁸³

Poor operational frequency and timetabling of services means that many existing services are not operating at times that are useful for journey to work trips.

– Northern Grampians Shire Council

In response, we highlighted that adding new routes in growth areas that do not have any services should take priority. We added a new case study showing successful bus reforms so far, drawing on new data provided by the Department of Transport and Planning. See recommendation 9.

We added a new bus rapid transit route for government to deliver (from Mitcham into central Melbourne). This route would use the Eastern Busway (under construction) and existing bus lanes, improve journey times and encourage land use changes along the Doncaster to Mitcham corridor. We also made minor changes to the proposed West Tarneit to Highpoint route, now connecting into the recently announced West Tarneit station. See recommendation 10.

Following feedback from regional Victorians, we added Warragul and Drouin to the list of regional centres that need better bus services and included more examples of bus service limitations in regional Victoria. See recommendation 13.

Fares

The draft strategy recommended government make off-peak public transport cheaper and simplify regional fare zones (draft recommendation 13). Some stakeholders proposed short trip fares, 50 cent fares and dynamic pricing to promote more public transport use.⁸⁴ Some said our proposal might be difficult to implement.⁸⁵ Others saw service improvements in the off-peak period as important to realise the benefits of off-peak fares on passenger numbers.⁸⁶

Some stakeholders did not support the recommendation on the grounds that 'by Australian and international standards (Victoria's) fares are already relatively low, particularly in the regional network following fare capping in March 2023'.⁸⁷

Based on stakeholder feedback, we noted that fare reform can also be paired with an increase in public transport services, like more trains and trams. See recommendation 14.

Rail to growth areas

Extending metropolitan train lines out to growth areas (draft recommendation 11 and future option – Extend metropolitan trains to growth areas in Melbourne's north and south-east) was important to our stakeholders. Some supported the draft recommendation and future option as written.⁸⁸ Others said planning for electrification to Clyde and Kalkallo should be a recommendation and not a future option.⁸⁹

Some suggested the railway between Sunshine and Wyndham Vale should be electrified, or from Werribee to Tarneit. Stakeholders also proposed railway stations on the Regional Rail Link such as Truganina, West Tarneit and Black Forest Road stations.⁹⁰

Over 10% of total submissions were concerned with the lack of transport options in Clyde. Respondents, many of them Clyde residents, wrote of the difficulty in getting parking at Cranbourne station, clogged roads and long commute times. Our analysis shows that rail upgrades in Melbourne's outer west are needed sooner than in the south-east growth areas, so we retained a train extension to Clyde as a future option. We have updated the future option highlighting significant local community support for the project.

Some stakeholders suggested duplicating and extending the Upfield metropolitan train line to give more transport options to people in growth areas in the Hume, Whittlesea and Mitchell local government areas.⁹¹ They also recommended connecting the Upfield line to the Craigieburn line to 'allow full utilisation of the Upfield tracks, becoming the major corridor for suburban services for Wallan and reducing car ownership in the Northern Growth Corridor'.⁹²

Several stakeholders wanted the future option to reconfigure the City Loop, upgrade related power and signalling, and increase service frequency on the Craigieburn, Upfield and Frankston lines to be brought forward as a priority. Some suggested building sooner rather than later would result in less disruptions to passengers. Others wanted the future option to consider rail freight in the planning of the City Loop reconfiguration to reflect the industrial hub at the northern end of the Craigieburn and Upfield lines.⁹³

In the final version of the strategy, we created a new recommendation to duplicate the Upfield line. We noted that the City Loop reconfiguration project is the next logical step once the Upfield line is duplicated to improve rail capacity in Melbourne's north. We cross-referenced this future option to the new Upfield line recommendation.

See recommendations 11, 12 and future option – Extend metropolitan trains to growth areas in Melbourne's north and south-east.

Road pricing

There was mixed support for the future option to charge people fairly for roads, but the majority were still supportive of the change.

Some stakeholders worried a road user charging system would be more expensive for households with limited access to public transport, such as those living in growth areas.

Some growth area councils said users should not be charged for roads until growth area residents had reliable public transport choices.⁹⁴ Others noted partial support: 'a gradual move towards user-pays charging, including a trial to test its influence on behaviour, is supported only if rural and regional councils are not disadvantaged by the funding model'.⁹⁵

Others suggested it should be a national scheme to prevent distortion across state borders and reflect the higher economic contribution and productivity focus of freight vehicles.⁹⁶ Developers noted an increased expense if areas around activity centres were subject to a congestion levy in planning provisions.

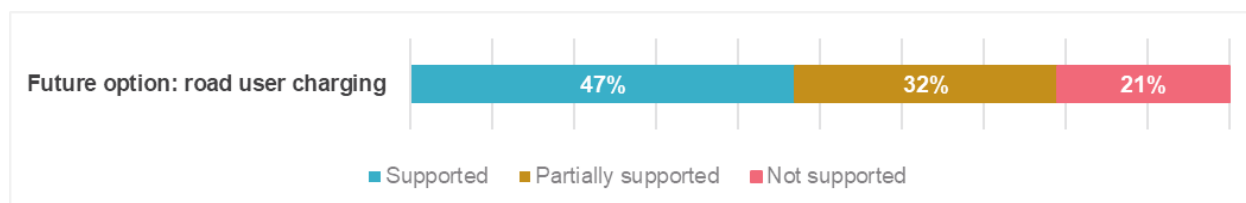
Several stakeholders pointed to different pricing options, including a variable distance charge, a tiered system based on emissions, and a dynamic pricing system.⁹⁷

Noting the benefits of road user charging in reducing congestion, some stakeholders thought it should be introduced sooner.⁹⁸

Road user charging is a crucial step towards updating road-based revenue models and managing travel demand effectively.
– Engineers Australia⁹⁹

In the update to the road pricing future option, we added a new case study based on the example of congestion pricing in New York City. We also added the consideration that any expanded parking levy be limited to parking above mandatory minimums. See future option – Charge people fairly to use roads.

Figure 6: Levels of support for future option to charge people fairly for roads



Future option to charge people fairly to use roads (n=19).

Road safety

Some stakeholders noted the importance of promoting more use of public transport to reduce road trauma. For example, Australia's peak road safety body noted 'mode shift from private vehicles to public transport for commuting would not only reduce total crashes, but also the severity of crashes' and 'will also reduce the incidence of risky driving behaviours such as inattentive, drink and drug driving'.¹⁰⁰

More than one in 5 submissions were about safer speeds on local streets. Draft strategy recommendation 14 recommended making local streets safer for children and communities by introducing 30km/h speeds in places that children often visit including around schools, playgrounds, childcare centres and kindergartens. It attracted 67 submissions – the highest number of submissions on one recommendation.

Opinions were diverse but a large majority of stakeholders (78%) supported or partially supported the draft recommendation.

Of the 15 submissions that did not give the draft recommendation their support, most were from individuals. Most thought 30km/h was too low. Some suggested it would increase travel times. Others mentioned a lack of community support, the problem of distracted pedestrians and the challenge of enforcement.

Of those that partially supported the recommendation, around 20 submissions wanted us to recommend funding for supporting infrastructure. They noted that drivers would not slow down unless roads were

designed to reduce speeds. Some stakeholders noted that community consultation would be needed to help Victorians understand the benefits. Others highlighted that childcare centres would be located on main roads. One council said more community engagement and supporting guidance is needed before the draft recommendation could be considered.

Government road safety partners agree that 30km/h is the best speed limit when vehicles mix with walkers and bike riders. A change in policy to let councils deliver safer speeds for their communities is long overdue.
– Streets People Love

Submissions from our stakeholders added further evidence to support safer local speed limits. We also highlighted the importance of complementary infrastructure like crossings to facilitate safer speed limits.

See recommendation 15.

Water

There was very strong support (94%) for our draft recommendation to advance the practice of integrated water management and use more recycled drinking water. No one opposed the draft recommendation, and it was this recommendation that attracted the strongest support (see Table 1). Many stakeholders requested we emphasise stormwater reuse more strongly. Some also mentioned that existing stormwater drainage was not built to deal with the increased stormwater runoff from densification and more severe storms due to climate change. They highlighted the role integrated water management could play in reducing flood impacts.

Some stakeholders also mentioned the need to state the importance of water conservation, especially given the previous success of water saving campaigns such as during the Millennium Drought. Several raised the issue that water sector prices are too low to deliver the infrastructure Victoria will need.

A truly integrated approach assesses all water sources, and all end uses – including drinking – and matches supply with demand in the most sustainable, cost-effective way.
– Water Services Association¹⁰¹

Based on these insights, we changed the main text in the recommendation. We expanded the scope of the costs and benefits of introducing recycled drinking water from Melbourne and Geelong to all of Victoria. We highlighted the need for more investment in ageing water infrastructure. We clarified the need for additional funding to encourage local government, and water and catchment management authorities to invest in integrated water management.

We further recognised that water supply costs will rise in the future due to the need to deliver manufactured water as well as maintain and update ageing infrastructure. We also clarified the sequencing for infrastructure delivery.

See recommendation 26 and future option – Plan for and invest in manufactured water.

Appendix 1: List of stakeholders who made a submission

The 127 individuals or organisations listed below were happy to have their name and submission published. Others requested anonymity or for their submission not to be published. Visit [our website](#) to read published and redacted submissions.

Ausnet	City of Ballarat
Australasian College of Road Safety	City of Casey
Australasian Railway Association	City of Greater Bendigo
Australia Post	City of Melbourne
Australian Gas Infrastructure Group	City of Stonnington
Australian Institute of Traffic Planning and Management	City of Whittlesea
Australian Logistics Council	City of Yarra
Australian Rail Track Corporation	Climate Action Merri-bek
Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council	CoHousing Australia Cooperative Limited
Banyule City Council	Community Housing Industry Association Victoria
Baw Baw Shire Council	Concerned Waterways Alliance
Bayside City Council	Consult Australia
Bendigo Health – Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit	Dr Philip Laird
Bendigo Kangan Institute	Eastern Regional Group of Councils
Beveridge Williams	Engineers Australia
BikeWest	Eukai on behalf of Vicinity Centres
Boroondara Council	Fastrack Australia
Brimbank City Council	Federation University
Calm It Castlemaine	Flic Brouwer
Caravan & Residential Parks Victoria	Friends of Latrobe Water
Cardinia Shire Council	Friends of the Earth Melbourne
Casey Residents and Ratepayers Association	Gas Appliance Manufacturers Association of Australia
Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia	Geelong City Council

Gippsland Regional Partnership	National Heart Foundation of Australia
Glenelg Shire Council	Niche Studios
GoGet	North Link
Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust	Northern Councils Alliance
Greater South East Melbourne	Northern Grampians Shire Council
Green Building Council Australia	Parklea Development
Grounded Community Land Trust Advocacy	Patrick Francis
Halvard Dalheim	Planning Institute of Australia
Hobsons Bay City Council	Promoting Inclusive Equitable Community Health
Hume City Council	Property Council of Australia
Industry Capability Network Victoria	Prosper Australia
Insight Planning Consultants on behalf of Massoon	RACV
Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia	Rail Freight Alliance
Jemena	Rail Futures Institute
Jobsbank & Social Traders	Regen Melbourne
La Trobe University	Regional Local Government Homelessness and Social Housing Charter Group
Landscape Foundation of Australia	Regional Transport Forum
Latrobe City Council	Royal Melbourne Hospital
Lynbrook Residents Association	Southerly Ten
Manningham Council	Squadron Energy
Matthew Milbourne – Moorabool Shire Council	Streets People Love
Melbourne 9	Tenants Victoria
Melton City Council	Tesla Motors
Mental Health Victoria	Thami Croeser
Merri-bek City Council	Thurstan Williams
Metropolitan Transport Forum	Tony Noble
Mitchell Shire Council	Tourism and Transport Forum
Mornington Peninsula Shire	Town and Country Planning Association
Municipal Association of Victoria	Trevor Forge
National Growth Areas Alliance	UNESCO Western Port Biosphere Foundation

Urban Design Forum Australia

Urban Development Institute Australia

Urban Transit Solutions

Veolia

VicHealth

Victoria Walks

Victorian Alcohol & Drug Association

Victorian Catholic Education Authority

Victorian Farmers Federation

Victorian Greenhouse Alliances and the Council
Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment

Victorian TAFE Association

Victorian Transport Action Group

Warrnambool City Council

Waste Management and Resource Recovery
Association

Water Services Association of Australia

Whitehorse City Council

Wimmera Southern Mallee Development

Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage
Aboriginal Corporation

Wyndham City Council

Yarra Ranges Council

YIMBY Melbourne

Appendix 2: Recommendations

Below is a list of recommendation numbers. Some of the recommendation numbers changed from the draft strategy to the updated version due to new recommendations being added.

Table 3: Recommendation numbers from draft to updated strategy

Updated recommendation number	Draft recommendation number	Title
Objective: Victorians have good access to housing, jobs, services and opportunities		
1	1	Build more social homes
2	2	Facilitate markets and invest in kindergarten infrastructure
3	3	Plan and deliver expanded and new schools
4	4	Expand TAFE in Melbourne's growth areas and some large regional centres
5	5	Build libraries and aquatic centres for Melbourne's growing communities
6	6	Make government infrastructure more accessible
7	7	Rezone locations near existing infrastructure for more home choices
Future option	Future option	Make more homes affordable near existing infrastructure
Future option	Future option	Phase out residential stamp duties
8	8	Extend Melbourne's trams to encourage more new homes nearby
9	9	Run faster bus services, more often, in Victoria's largest cities
10	10	Build a new bus rapid transit network
11	11	Extend metropolitan trains and run more services in Melbourne's west
New – 12	-	Upgrade train infrastructure and run more services in Melbourne's north
Future option	Future option	Extend metropolitan trains to growth areas in Melbourne's north and south-east
13	12	Run more bus and coach services in regional Victoria

Updated recommendation number	Draft recommendation number	Title
14	13	Make off-peak public transport cheaper and simplify regional fare zones

Objective: Victorians are healthy and safe

15	14	Make local streets safer for children and communities
16	15	Build safe cycling networks in Melbourne and regional cities
17	16	Help government schools share their grounds
18	17	Invest in maintenance, upgrades and expansions of community health facilities
19	18	Build more residential alcohol and other drug treatment facilities
20	19	Invest in digital healthcare
21	20	Fix critical public hospital infrastructure
22	21	Deliver corrections facilities and transition housing that reduce reoffending

Objective: Aboriginal people have self-determination and equal outcomes to other Victorians

23	22	Invest in secure homes for First Peoples
24	23	Fund better health and wellbeing infrastructure for First Peoples

Objective: Victorians have thriving natural environment

25	24	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from infrastructure
26	25	Advance integrated water management and use more recycled water
Future option	Future option	Plan for and invest in manufactured water
27	26	Better use government land for open space and trees

Objective: Victoria is resilient to climate change and other future risks

28	27	Better prepare infrastructure for climate change
29	28	Use new flood maps to revise planning schemes
30	29	Coordinate faster delivery of key energy infrastructure

Updated recommendation number	Draft recommendation number	Title
31	30	Improve environmental assessments and site selection for energy projects
32	34	Encourage household energy efficiency and electrification
33	31	Invest in home, neighbourhood and big batteries for more energy storage
34	32	Determine long duration energy storage needs
35	33	Develop area-based energy plans and support renewable gas production
New - future option	-	Plan for gas infrastructure changes
Objective: Victoria has a high productivity and circular economy		
36	35	Prepare and publish infrastructure sector plans
37	36	Reform infrastructure contributions
38	37	Improve asset management of government infrastructure
39	38	Prepare for more recycling and waste infrastructure
New - 40	-	Set future waste levy prices and audit landfill
41	39	Use digital technologies on government infrastructure
42	40	Use modern traffic control technology for efficient and safe journeys
Future option	Future option	Charge people fairly to use roads
43	41	Make rail freight competitive, reliable and efficient
44	42	Encourage off-peak freight delivery in urban areas
Future option	Future option	Plan for more efficient and sustainable urban freight
45	43	Create and preserve opportunities for future major infrastructure projects
Future option	Future option	Reconfigure the City Loop for more frequent and reliable trains

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