

Whitehorse City Council submission to Infrastructure Victoria Draft 30-year strategy

Victorians have good access to housing, jobs, services and opportunities

#	Recommendation:	Council response:
1	Build more social housing Consistently invest in new social housing to provide more Victorians on low incomes with access to a secure and the 2026 pre-prep affordable home.	• Supportive. Victoria's provision to be seen in the national context - currently social housing represents only 2.8% of all homes in Victoria, compared with a national average of 4.0%. This is particularly concerning given that over 53,000 households are currently waiting for social housing, and 36,000 people on the priority waitlist are waiting an average of 19.5 months before they can access a home. • A clear plan for how Victoria will reach the national thresholds will be critical to ensure this recommendation is accepted and acted on. Expanding affordable housing consistent with state and national goals is also needed to reduce pressure on social housing demand.

- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A mandated Social and Affordable Housing Contribution would be desirable to generate revenue for this specific form of housing, particularly where government funding is contributing to housing developments.• Social housing needs to be well-located and be mandated at State level in planning schemes, however it should also be equitably distributed, and opportunities sought on private land if well-located government land is not readily available. The council can work with Homes Victoria to identify sites with more certainty if the State Government commits to the 15-year program to build 4,000 social homes as recommended by IV.• Need to consider the delivery of complementary community service and support needs of social housing community. Planning for social housing should not be isolated to housing matters. |
|--|---|

2 **Facilitate markets and invest in kindergarten infrastructure**

Facilitate markets for private and not-for-profit investment in kindergarten infrastructure. Share regularly updated information about the demand for and supply of kindergarten places. Publish priorities for government investment to deliver kindergartens in communities that will have the greatest need.

- Historically councils have stepped in to the space of underserved and unserved kindergarten markets where community need is at its greatest - planning and financial incentives are required if the private sector are to be encouraged to provide infrastructure in these locations
- The market would benefit from all levels of government providing joined up stewardship to create durable change for more competitive, inclusive and resilient market systems
- Significant investment has and continues to be made in Infrastructure for more kindergarten places by local government and the Department of Education (DE) through Building Blocks Partnerships, grants, and Kindergartens on School Sites (KOSS) however this may not meet the Best Start Best Life (BSBL) Reform growth estimates
- All councils work with DE on information concerning demand and supply through the development of KISPs – Kindergarten Infrastructure Service Plans however

data needs to be regularly updated and agreed upon. As well as using consistent data sources to ensure the unmet demand is accurate to ensure new infrastructure is located in areas of greatest need

- The 2026 Pre-Prep LGA roll-out plus the priority cohort roll-out will further exacerbate the pressure on existing and future kindergarten infrastructure
- Government needs to compel providers to work together to optimise access which may include the consolidation of smaller unviable services to free up infrastructure for other community uses and/or reduce the burden on Council's maintaining underutilised assets.
- Need to partner with the Australian government to share data to ensure provision planning is informed by entire ECEC market.

3	Plan and deliver expanded and new schools Identify schools to expand and confirm areas that will need new schools. Fund expansions of existing schools and begin delivery of new schools. Minimise costs by expanding the built capacity of existing schools and building larger new schools.	Support. • Several schools in Whitehorse are expanding to meet increased student demand. Whitehorse advocates for new schools to be established to meet the anticipated population growth, including new precincts surrounding the SRL stations in Box Hill and Burwood.
4	Expand TAFE in Melbourne's growth areas and some large regional centres Expand TAFE campuses in Melbourne's west, north and south- east growth areas, and some large regional centres, to train more students to fill skills gaps, especially in construction, energy and health.	Support. • Expanding Box Hill Tafe is supported, to meet increase in population and student enrollments. • Support the availability of regional centres in the eastern region, focused on the skill gap sectors of construction, health and energy. The largest industry sector in Whitehorse is Health Care and Social Assistance (21% of all jobs in Whitehorse), and the construction sector is also strong (8.5% of all jobs in Whitehorse). • Investing in training opportunities for the identified key sectors align with current and projected investment in the Eastern Region including Suburban Rail Loop, the North-East Link Project, Level Crossing Removals and ongoing infrastructure investment in the health sector.

		• An Eastern Regional Health Innovation and Care Economy Strategy was developed in 2023 with several key focus areas, including building a highly trained local workforce that aligns with projected population and jobs growth in the area. Career development and upskilling in the health sector was also noted as critical.
5	Build libraries and aquatic centres for Melbourne's growing communities Fund councils to plan and build libraries and aquatic recreation centres in Melbourne's growth areas.	• Acknowledging the need for councils to have funding to plan and build libraries and aquatic recreation centres is very welcome. It's also immensely practical, given that lags in local recreation and community facilities such as libraries delays new growth areas being good places to live. Pressures on pool and library delivery are sector-wide however, not just in the growth areas. • We recommend that this recommendation be broadened to encompass the new activity centres. While they may have existing facilities, these will need to be scaled up in those locations where housing will be significantly increased. • Recognition that funding up to one third of capital costs but no operational costs being included in the

		recommendations will not be sufficient to enable these facilities to be built and run. • We would also suggest that state contributions for public libraries also need to be increased in line with housing and population growth demands. The current funding has not been increased even by CPI for last 2 to 3 years. So funding is essentially going backwards while costs are increasing. It does not support any capital. • Whitehorse is a key growth area for Victoria, with 3 proposed Activity Centres near tram and train zones, as well as one of the highest housing targets in metro-Melbourne. Aqualink Nunawading is a much-loved and well-used facility which is in urgent need of an upgrade and reaching end-of life. Council has committed \$80million for an upgrade to this facility and is seeking \$20million in external funding support.
6	Make government infrastructure more accessible Complete priority public transport stop upgrades to meet legal accessibility requirements and fund further	Support in principle. • Support the need to prioritise the upgrade of all public transport stops to meet accessibility requirements. This action will meet the accessibility needs of users and

	upgrades. Provide better public information on accessibility in government buildings.	potentially encourage a greater use of public transport services.
7	Rezone locations near existing infrastructure for more home choices Change all relevant planning schemes to rezone for more homes in Victoria's cities and reach housing targets. More homes should be close to public transport and open space, with good access to services.	• Support the intent that homes need to be built close to public transport and have adequate open space with good access to services. • Significant increases in population in established suburbs also require evaluation that there is adequate open space and services however, particularly those not located near existing waterways and with limited parks and garden access council input is required regarding rezoning. • Recent changes to State Government policy to support the delivery of housing in Victoria will contribute to this recommendation. For Whitehorse this includes the allocation of local government housing targets in Plan for Victoria (Whitehorse housing target - 76,500), expansion of the Activity Centres program to include another 50 train and tram zones (including Blackburn, Nunawading, Mitcham stations), various changes to the residential development provisions in planning schemes and the release of draft structure plans for

		SRLA precincts (Box Hill and Burwood). In a well-established municipality such as Whitehorse, improvements to accessibility and active transport options are also key to unlocking existing infrastructure. It is critical that councils and the community are involved and supported in the rollout of these reforms. Council has concerns about the implications of the Windfall Gains Tax on the rezoning of council land for housing and asks State Government for clarity on how this will be handled or if there will be an exemption or support for councils.
	FUTURE OPTION: Mandate more affordable homes near existing infrastructure Choose a mechanism to mandate more housing that is affordable for low-income households and close to public transport, open space and services.	• Support overall, but recommend this recommendation be brought forward for immediate action. • Reviewing definition of affordable housing at Section 3AA and the income ranges at Section 3AB of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 could be undertaken now to better reflect the housing needs of those on low incomes.

	FUTURE OPTION: Phase out residential stamp duties Over the long term, phase out residential stamp duties and phase in residential land tax.	No position
8	Extend Melbourne's trams to encourage more new homes nearby Increase services on key tram routes in activity centres that have been designated for additional housing development. Complete a detailed assessment of tram extensions in Melbourne's established suburbs. Start building extensions in areas that can support more new homes. Rezone land around the extended tram lines so more homes are built.	• Victoria's growing population and economy requires a properly planned transport network. • A clear, prioritised and sequenced transport plan – as required by law and recommended by Infrastructure Victoria – is critical to ensure smaller, effective local projects are properly addressed and that the Big Build does not absorb the majority of resources and funding. • Better integration of land use and infrastructure planning is essential to manage congestion, increase accessibility to critical services, and improve community connection. • Councils are committed to a collaborative approach to transport planning. To achieve the best possible outcomes, communities require early and meaningful engagement from State and Federal governments.

- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilising councils' local knowledge of priorities and conditions leads to more effective project sequencing, targeted funding and realistic timelines for delivery. • Provide opportunities to extend tram route 109 along Whitehorse Rd, Box Hill from its current terminus west of Market St to Middelborough Rd in the east. This initiative will provide a public transport service supporting the expected increase in population, whilst providing access between the Metro and SRL station with tram route 109 to Box Hill town hall, Box Hill City oval, Box Hill High school and Laburnum train station. • The extension of tram services from Wattle Park to Burwood East is identified in the draft IV document as a priority for construction by 2030. Whitehorse Council supports detailed assessments of this service, particularly in light of the planned Suburban Rail Loop Burwood station and structure plan, which will encourage a doubling of population and employment in the area. The tram extension would connect to new SRL Burwood station and to the existing tram services along Burwood Highway. |
|--|---|

9	Run faster bus services, more often, in Victoria's largest cities Run buses more often, for longer hours, and give buses priority on the road. In stages, straighten out existing bus routes so they are fast and direct.	Support in principle. • This recommendation is supported through the Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy and advocacy initiatives. • Supports the initiative to upgrade the Box Hill Transport Interchange to provide improved accessibility, frequency and span of hours. • In addition to the need for improvements to bus services, infrastructure to support the bus network is in clear need of upgrade within the City of Whitehorse. The existing bus facilities at the Box Hill bus interchange are dysfunctional and disconnected, causing safety, connectivity and accessibility issues for bus patrons, particularly those connecting to train, tram, and taxi services. As well as improving safety and connectivity, improving the bus facilities will unlock and facilitate regionally significant economic, social and environmental outcomes for Melbourne's east, and leverage off the substantial private investment and population growth. Investigations by the Victorian Government over previous decades, including a Ministerial Advisory Committee and a subsequent Box Hill Transit Interchange Steering Committee, have
---	--	---

		determined that the facilities are in urgent need of improvements. Urgent commitment for action is needed.
10	Build a new bus rapid transit network Complete a detailed assessment, reserve the required land, and build a new bus rapid transit network. Start with routes that connect train stations and busy destinations in Melbourne's north, west, and south-east, and extend the new Eastern Busway along Hoddle Street.	Support in principle. • Supports the bus rapid transit service along the Eastern Freeway as part of the NEL project, commencing at Hoddle Street. Opportunities to extend the busway service along Hoddle Street. • Supports the initiative to upgrade the Box Hill Transport Interchange and service the proposed SRL stations in Box Hill and Burwood (refer to comment in recommendation 9) • Whitehorse Council also advocates for the bus rapid transit service it to be extended east from Doncaster Road to Mitcham train station. This would service additional patrons along the Eastern Freeway in Nunawading and Mitcham.
11	Extend metropolitan trains and run more services in Melbourne's west Extend and electrify metropolitan trains to Melton. Reallocate trains that serve Melton to other areas in Melbourne's west and regional Victoria. Assess delivery	Support in principle.

	of a new train station at Altona North accompanied by land rezoning.	
12	Run more bus and coach services in regional Victoria Deliver more bus services in regional cities. Run more V/Line coach services to better connect small towns to regional cities. Start with routes that improve access to jobs, education and healthcare.	Support in principle.
13	Make off-peak public transport cheaper and simplify regional fare zones After upgrading the myki ticketing system, charge lower fares for off-peak travel on Victoria's buses, trains and trams. Simplify fares and reduce the number of regional fare zones.	Support in principle.

Victorians are healthy and safe

#	Recommendation:	Council Response:
14	Make local streets safer for children and communities Reduce speed limits to 30km/h on local streets, starting in places that children often visit including around schools, playgrounds, childcare centres and kindergartens.	• Supportive. There should be a less rigid approach to speed zone policy and a faster approval process. We are supportive of a policy that allows for safer speeds such as 30km/h can be considered and implemented where appropriate, particularly in precincts where children frequent – a group who are at highest risk • Giving councils more autonomy – such as a flexible speed zoning policy – will allow tailored solutions to suit local conditions, leading to better protection of vulnerable road users, and reducing fatalities and injuries. • Support a policy that allows for safer lower speed limits in local streets, such as 30km/h at appropriate locations.
15	Build safe cycling networks in Melbourne and regional cities	• Supportive. Investment in the strategic cycling network will help shift to the state's goal of 25% mode share by 2030.

Continue building protected and connected cycle corridors across Victoria. Publish updates to the strategic cycling corridor network.	• Increasing bike trips creates multiple benefits including improved health outcomes, reduced carbon emissions, and reduced congestion. • The lack of bicycle infrastructure, such as separated on-road bike lanes and off-road paths, is a significant barrier for potential cyclists, whether they're riding to school, work, or for fun. • State and Federal funding is required to provide strategic cycling corridors and support the delivery of local bike paths, trails, and links. • State and Federal funding is required to provide strategic cycling corridor connections and access across (or over) State arterial roads that present significant constraints to cyclist and pedestrians using the Strategic Cycling corridor networks, such as at Elgar Rd that would connect the Box Hill to Ringwood SCC with the Box Hill to Hawthorn SCC. • Support the inclusion of safe cycling networks in major road and rail projects. Whitehorse Council and the Whitehorse community have had to advocate strongly
--	--

		for modest improvements to cycling infrastructure in projects such as North East Link (NEL). NEL is a project that the State Government predicts will increase car traffic within the City of Whitehorse, so investment in safe and accessible cycling improvements should automatically be included in program scopes ahead of Council(s) and the community needing to advocate for offerings. It is pleasing to see the inclusion of the Box Hill to Hawthorn Strategic Cycling Corridor (SCC) identified as a priority route. Council also recommends the connection of the Box Hill to Ringwood SCC with the Box Hill to Hawthorn SCC, including a solution to the significant constraint created for cyclists along the SCC due to the need to cross Elgar Rd.
16	Help government schools share their grounds Prioritise which government school sports fields and facilities could deliver the greatest benefits if they were shared with local communities outside school hours. Give these schools extra help for maintenance if they voluntarily share their grounds	Whitehorse Council supports this initiative and would like to also see encouragement for private schools to somehow be included for shared community facilities.

	outside school hours. Offer funding for upgrades to incentivise shared access outside school hours.	
17	Invest in maintenance, upgrades and expansions of community health facilities Develop and fund 5-year priorities for Victorian Government investment in community health facilities.	• Suggest that the Strategy also incorporate recommendations regarding funding for councils to plan for how public facilities and local infrastructure accommodates and responds to the expected rise from the phenomenon loosely described as "healthy bodies/cognitive decline" as a growing aging population sees more people experience earlier onset dementia - there will be a big push for an increasing number of people continuing to participate in community life while also needing significant carer support. • Add increasing Neuro diversity and mental health to challenges facing community that require additional funding and potentially better infrastructure. • An Eastern Regional Health Innovation and Care Economy Strategy was developed in 2023 with several key focus areas, including the provision of local health services that respond to local needs (Focus area 4). The strategy notes that there are pockets of

		disadvantage in the region, and that the most common long-term condition in 2021 was mental health. It was also noted that as the population continues to age, there will be an increased need for assistance with further research required to gauge the community's health needs now and into the future.
18	Build more residential alcohol and other drug treatment facilities Plan and start building residential rehabilitation and withdrawal facilities to meet the demand for alcohol and other drug treatment.	No position
19	Invest in digital healthcare Expand digital healthcare to improve the quality of care and ease demand on public hospitals. Deliver a statewide medical image sharing system and a statewide virtual care service that remotely monitors suitable patients at home.	- Support in principle. - Digital connectivity is crucial to the effectiveness of this approach, so this recommendation needs to be aligned with digital infrastructure maintenance and investment keeping pace with demand.
20	Upgrade critical public hospital infrastructure	With the expected population growth in Whitehorse together with increased use of public transport such as

	Define the scope and timeframes to upgrade the Royal Melbourne Hospital and begin the first stage of construction. Continue with upgrades at the Alfred and Austin hospitals.	the SRL network and stations, there is a need to advocate for increased hospital infrastructure to match the growth. It is noted that Box Hill Hospital and other public health facilities in Whitehorse are not specifically discussed. Future growth and improved integration of the Box Hill Hospital and health precinct with the surrounding activity centre is being considered as part of the SRL project.
21	Better use prisons and invest more in health facilities and transition housing Use prison capacity to move people to facilities that meet their needs. Invest more in prison health facilities and post-release transition housing. Close old prisons that are underused and expensive to keep.	No position

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

#	Recommendation:	Council Response:
---	-----------------	-------------------

22	Invest in secure homes for Aboriginal Victorians Fund a 10-year program to build social homes for Aboriginal Victorians and provide secure and sustainable tenancies. Work with Aboriginal housing providers and Traditional Owner corporations to develop capacity across the Aboriginal housing and homelessness sector.	• Support. Aboriginal Victorians having access to safe and secure housing is crucial to achieving national Closing the Gap outcomes.
23	Fund better health and wellbeing infrastructure for Aboriginal Victorians Fund and start health and wellbeing infrastructure projects for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs). Provide additional annual funding to further develop the skills and capacity of health and wellbeing ACCOs to plan, develop and deliver new and upgraded infrastructure in a self-determined way. Establish an interim fund for minor works and repairs until a self-determined perpetual infrastructure fund is introduced.	• Support in principle. • In collaboration with ACCOs initiatives and fund health and wellbeing infrastructure projects, invest in the needs of First Peoples and any infrastructure developed as a result of this Strategy complements other funded health and wellbeing facilities. • It will also be important to provide additional annual funding to further develop the skills and capacity of ACCO's so they have resources and autonomy to plan, develop, and deliver new and upgraded infrastructure in alignment with self-determination.



Victoria has a thriving natural environment

#	Recommendation:	Council Response:
24	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from infrastructure Adopt carbon values and measure carbon in infrastructure projects to reduce emissions.	• Support national leadership to establish standards on data collection, measurement and reporting of embodied emissions. This would enable a fair comparison and assessment of emissions from transport infrastructure. • Council supports initiatives that promote and encourage use of sustainable and active transport that contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions • Preference to add 'circular economy' principles to read "Adopt circular economy and carbon values, and measure carbon in infrastructure projects to reduce emissions." It is not only about putting an emission factor on materials rather, exploring ways to reduce from the beginning with material choice.

		Need to be more specific about what measuring carbon in infrastructure means, preference it to spell out that this should include Scope 3 and embedded emissions. Suggest clarification is made to the word 'carbon values' - Include reduction of emissions by avoiding creation in the first place with innovative/good design.
25	Advance integrated water management and use more recycled water Work with partners to fund and deliver integrated water management projects. Determine the costs and benefits of introducing recycled drinking water in Melbourne and Geelong and build a pilot recycled drinking water facility. Deliver a community education campaign on the need for more water sources.	Support
	FUTURE OPTION: Plan for and invest in manufactured water Plan for and invest in manufactured water. Return more water to Traditional Owners and the environment.	Support
26	Better use government land for open space and greenery	Support, with a recommendation that early introduction be included in the Strategy, given the rapid

Fund actions to better connect open spaces to each other and plant more trees and shrubs in urban areas. Give Victorians access to more public land in fast growing suburbs. Target at least 30% tree canopy and shrub cover on public land.

development plans currently underway. Liveable neighbourhoods are critical to individual and community health and wellbeing.

- VicHealth's Know your postcode research highlights the risks of not factoring in sufficient open space and good access to services, and how their lack of has been shown to result in much poorer life expectancy and chronic ill-health outcomes.
- The Victorian Government can play a greater role in providing open space as part of major infrastructure and planning projects.

Examples in Whitehorse include:

- Works for the North East Link project along the Eastern Freeway will see a loss of linear open space. The Victorian Government has made no commitment to providing new open space for the Whitehorse community to compensate for this loss.
- The recently released draft Suburban Rail Loop Structure Plans for Box Hill and Burwood envision a doubling of population and employment for the areas

		however are expecting local governments to provide appropriate open space to these growing communities. With constrained financial abilities, Council needs the Victorian Government to provide community spaces for the population they are enticing to the area. Council cannot do it alone. Specific examples within the draft SRL Box Hill Structure Plan see the Council provided land for new open spaces identified, however only a commitment from the Victorian Government for them to 'investigate' the retention of a temporary open space. • Opportunities exist on larger redevelopment sites to plan for more substantial open space and canopy (e.g., Burwood Brickworks development and potentially the former Box Hill brickworks site).
--	--	--

Victoria is resilient to climate change and other future risks

#	Recommendation:	Council Response:
---	-----------------	-------------------

27	Better prepare infrastructure for climate change Fund high-priority, cost-effective infrastructure adaptation actions when climate adaptation action plans are updated in 2026. Produce an energy sector adaptation plan.	• Significant adaptation progress requires long-term, flexible funding arrangements. Councils are well-equipped to deliver place-based adaptation action but require a significant uplift in funding to do so. We strongly support calls for the Victorian Government to provide funding for the next round of Adaptation Action Plans. • Council supports initiatives that promote and encourage use of sustainable and active transport that contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions • We also welcome the creation of an energy adaptation plan which would provide clarity on the responsibilities of different levels of government in the energy transition. • Insurance reform and new forms of risk infrastructure. The global insurance sector is responding to escalating and new insurance risk with strategies like parametric insurance triggering payouts based on predefined event parameters (rather than damage assessments)
----	--	--

		and enhanced climate adaptation measures. Meanwhile, investment in risk-modelling technologies is expanding as policymakers are exploring national and cross-border risk-sharing schemes. • Future design of stormwater draining assets including pits and pipes to be in accordance with the updated Australian Rainfall and Runoff 2018 Guidelines
28	Use new flood maps to revise planning schemes Produce a common set of flood projections based on the latest climate data. Use this information to update flood studies and maps and apply them in planning schemes. Minimise building in areas at high risk of flooding.	• There is a need for the implementation of a consistent state- wide planning approach to flooding and coastal inundation with the Minister for Planning made responsible for implementing best-available hazard data into planning schemes • We support recommendations that the Victorian Government should coordinate flood studies and maps for all councils and work with councils to update planning schemes to reflect the most up to date flood information. • Noting that "Flood Risk" is no longer just about being in vicinity of overflowing rivers/dams - much of our critical water infrastructure is no longer fit for purpose when

		combined with new weather patterns - e.g. short extremely heavy rain bursts - resulting in serious flooding from backed up drains in urban areas never before considered at risk of flooding. • Dynamic hydraulic and Hydrologic modelling is being undertaken as a joint project between Melbourne Water and Whitehorse City Council. The Australian Rainfall and Runoff 2018 Guidelines have been applied for the flood modelling, which include blockage risk assessment, hazard assessment and Climate Change. The current deliverables indicate greater number of properties identified as Land Liable to Flooding for localised flooding, which will inform amendments to be applied in the change of the Planning Scheme for the municipality. • Whitehorse City Council is also currently involved in discussions about an amendment of the Planning Scheme Provisions with Melbourne Water and other municipalities and is expected to commence the
--	--	--

		process once the Flood Modelling is completed and endorsed by Melbourne Water.
29	Coordinate faster delivery of key energy infrastructure Fast-track key energy projects and coordinate enabling infrastructure. Establish a unified energy transition project pipeline and conduct annual progress assessments. Create a central energy transition coordinator to align priorities, improve transparency and manage risks.	• We support measures that will provide councils and communities with clear, consistent and up-to-date information on renewable energy projects and enabling infrastructure. This will help to build the social licence for the energy transition and enable councils to negotiate legacy benefits on behalf of their communities. • It is implied that the 'a unified energy transition project pipeline' encompasses renewable energy. This is important to distinguish/highlight to achieve climate resilience and to mitigate future risks.
30	Improve environmental assessments and site selection for energy projects Reform environmental assessments and help energy project proponents select good sites.	• Councils need to spend additional resources interpreting environmental assessments undertaken by developers. Any changes to environmental approvals and regulations should meet local expectations and ensure that environmental impacts are minimised.
31	Invest in home, neighbourhood and big batteries for more energy storage	• We support initiatives (non-competitive grant funding) that enable councils and communities to further invest

Create new support for home batteries and provide incentives to encourage people to join a virtual power plant. Expand the neighbourhood batteries program, or similar. Facilitate more investment in big batteries for the transmission network.	in energy storage. Facilitating investment in bigger batteries that supports a well-coordinated transmission network is essential. • Proactive partnership in particular for neighbourhood batteries is required driven by energy distributors (UE, Powercor, AusNet) as they hold the knowledge of energy constraints and data required to determine and prioritise suitable locations. These can include precinct development and sites that are proposed for high density including SRL and Activity Centres. • Work with energy industry and retailers to develop appropriate standards to ensure Virtual Power Plants are well regulated and provide adequate consumer protection, so that uptake is more enticing to householders. • Remove compulsory default to Time of Use (TOU) tariff after residential smart meters are installed. Provide sufficient support to households (especially vulnerable households) to understand what TOU tariffs are and
--	--

		provide exemptions to households that are unable to "load-shift" to take advantage of the TOU.
32	Determine long duration energy storage needs Determine the most efficient policy or investment options to provide enough long duration energy storage to meet Victoria's needs.	• Support investigating energy storage investment options to build the resilience of Victoria's energy supply. • This not only includes capital costs to develop the infrastructure but also acquiring land and/or facilitating long-term lease arrangements.
33	Develop regional energy plans, guide transition from fossil gas and maintain reliable gas supply Develop an energy plan for electrification and gas use that meets each region's needs and prepare gas infrastructure decommissioning for homes and some businesses. Secure gas supplies to meet demand. Set a renewable gas target and support renewable gas production.	• Many councils are already playing an important role in facilitating the transition to renewables, but more resources are required to ensure there is a fair transition with community benefit to host councils. • The development of regional energy plans should clarify roles and responsibilities for each level of government in the transition. They should also acknowledge the role councils can play in building social license and securing legacy community benefits.
34	Speed up household energy efficiency and electrification	• This should extend to all gas appliances e.g. cooking to encompass whole of household electrification.

Require efficient electric space heating and hot water when people replace their heaters at end-of-life and support low- income households to go all-electric. Complete social housing energy upgrades, including electrification. Require Victorian homeowners to disclose the energy efficiency of their homes at the time of sale or lease.

- Ensure that only high-quality and climate zone appropriate energy efficient appliances are allowed to enter the market/be part of the Victorian Energy Upgrade program

Victoria has a high productivity and circular economy

#	Recommendation:	Council Response:
35	Prepare and publish infrastructure sector plans to shape Victoria's cities Agree a set of assumptions for future population, jobs and land use for more compact cities. Require each department that owns infrastructure to develop an infrastructure sector plan as soon as possible, based on these assumptions, and publish strategic-level plans. Use the finished sector plans to decide infrastructure project funding	• Support in principle, subject to genuine local government participation in the creation of the plans. • Given this section includes 'circular economy', stronger emphasis is required on embedding the principles.
36	Reform infrastructure contributions Simplify Victoria's infrastructure contribution schemes to cover all types of housing developments and reflect the cost of infrastructure in different development settings.	• Support in principle, subject to co-design of a new scheme with local government. • There would be great benefit to simplifying the various infrastructure contributions schemes (ICPs, DCPs, GAICs and OSCs) in place, provided that transparency is maintained in the interests of developer certainty and government's ability to plan to meet demand with

		confidence. We support the Victorian Auditor-General's call for a development contributions framework with clear strategic goals, accountability and governance, and would like to see the final recommendation recognise that achieving such a scheme will only be possible if its creation is informed by local government data and expertise. • We request that the final report make it explicit that any new scheme must be adequate to supply councils with the revenue necessary to build local infrastructure commensurate with current and forecast need; councils do not have access to alternative revenue sources that could fill any funding gaps created by an inequitable scheme. • Whitehorse City Council introduced a municipal-wide Development Contributions Plan (DCP) in December 2023 to assist in funding essential infrastructure for a growing population and includes the identification of specific projects to be delivered over a 20-year period to 30 June 2042. The Whitehorse DCP is scheduled for review three years from gazettal and is an
--	--	--

	opportunity to update the infrastructure list and align with changes in State Government policy since the approval of the DCP. This includes allocation of local government housing targets (Whitehorse housing target - 76,500) in Plan for Victoria, and planning for the Box Hill and Burwood SRLA precincts. • Any new scheme must involve input from councils and provide adequate revenue to fund local infrastructure needs. As per the Infrastructure Victoria report (pg. 121), it should also create a simple, consistent and efficient system for Victorian (or State Government funded) infrastructure. It should also clearly identify responsibilities of state and local government in the administration of infrastructure contributions and apportionment of funds to local government for local infrastructure. • The contributions mechanism should also apply to commercial, industrial and retail development, not just housing development, which is the case for the Whitehorse DCP.
--	---

37	Improve asset management of all government infrastructure Fund asset managers to better understand the condition, use and performance standards of all government infrastructure. Use this information to develop asset management strategies and prioritise funding.	• Support in principle • At a national level, Infrastructure Australia has identified ‘digital by default’ as the desired infrastructure norm, with clear actions and programmatic intent to enable Digital Twins as a core opportunity for the infrastructure sector. • Three core areas could be addressed to realise maximum value: the need for greater leadership and coordination, comprehensive information sharing and exchange, and guidance on best practice to support future capability. • Given this section includes ‘circular economy’, stronger emphasis is required on embedding the principles.
38	Prepare for more recycling and waste infrastructure Identify places for new recycling and waste infrastructure and publish them in the next update to the Victorian recycling infrastructure plan. Plan for waste and recycling sites together with other commercial and industrial land. Make changes to	• Support in principle – agree there needs to be a State coordinated approach to recycling and waste sites and infrastructure.

	planning controls to allow for facilities where they are needed.	
39	Use digital technologies to better design, build, operate and maintain government infrastructure Pilot digital technologies on government infrastructure projects and report on their progress. Use building information modelling on major infrastructure and housing projects. Improve capabilities in government agencies and review procurement processes to promote greater use of digital technologies.	• Support in principle • Local government should be supported in the adoption of digital technologies to drive innovation at a local level.
40	Use modern traffic control technology for efficient and safe journeys Further extend modern traffic control technology like sensors and cameras along arterial roads in Victoria's largest cities. Begin expanding smart motorways into Melbourne's growth area freeways.	• Support in principle • Support initiatives that promote smart technology to provide for a safe, effective and efficient transport system
	FUTURE OPTION: Charge people fairly to use roads	• Support a review of road pricing options in consultation with local government.

	Introduce road charges that help manage congestion and improve productivity. Consider options such as car parking levies, off-peak freeway tolls, congestion pricing trials, or road user charging for all motorists with lowered fixed road charges. Work with the Australian Government on road pricing options.	
41	Make rail freight competitive, reliable and efficient Develop and publish a 30-year integrated rail freight network plan and fund a 10-year rail freight maintenance program. Develop a freight network coordination policy.	• The move to zero and low emission freight vehicles will exacerbate the maintenance challenge for local government and exceed capacity on local road infrastructure. • Support an integrated rail freight network plan and investment to shift freight from road to rail. • We also advocate for a network approach to investment in the freight routes that recognises the increased wear and tear on local roads and infrastructure.
42	Encourage off-peak freight delivery in urban areas Prepare for growing freight volumes in urban areas by piloting an off-peak freight delivery	• In-principal support. Any pilot must be developed in consultation with the affected councils.

	program in a high-density area of Melbourne. If successful, expand off-peak delivery for more productive and sustainable freight movement.	
	FUTURE OPTION: Plan for more efficient and sustainable urban freight Develop a network of urban freight delivery precincts in Melbourne to improve freight productivity and reduce emissions.	• Support in principle

43	Create and preserve opportunities for future major infrastructure projects Create and preserve opportunities to build major infrastructure projects which might be required in the long term. This includes expanding desalination capacity, City Loop reconfiguration, extending and electrifying metropolitan trains to growth areas in Melbourne's north and south-east, Melbourne Metro 2, the Bay West port, the outer metropolitan road and rail corridor and connecting western intermodal freight terminal.	• Support in principle • The future of Suburban Rail Loop is politically and financially uncertain, particularly sections beyond SRL East. Presuming SRL East continues its construction, it would be advantageous for the Whitehorse and surrounding communities to at least have an extension to Doncaster, where there are no rail services at all.
	FUTURE OPTION: Reconfigure the City Loop for more frequent and reliable trains Reconfigure the City Loop by splitting 2 City Loop tunnels into 2 separate cross-city train lines. Build around 3 kilometres of new train tunnels and upgrade related power and signalling. Increase service frequency on the Craigieburn, Upfield and Frankston lines.	• No position
	FUTURE OPTION: Extend metropolitan trains to growth areas in Melbourne's north and south-east	• No position

	Extend and electrify metropolitan trains to Clyde and towards Kalkallo to support growth in new suburbs.	
--	--	--