



**The Hon Shaun Leane MP**

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Suburban Development

Thursday, 20 May 2021

## **BUILDING STRONG LOCAL COMMUNITIES FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

The *Victorian Budget 2021/22* supports strong communities and suburbs with funding for vital local projects and policies – while also driving the creation of new local jobs.

With \$87.6 million in new funding for local infrastructure and programs – from playgrounds to libraries – the Budget invests in the projects that matter to local residents, while contributing to Victoria’s continuing recovery.

The investment includes \$50 million for the Growing Suburbs Fund to continue to deliver hundreds of local infrastructure projects and community facilities in Melbourne’s fastest-growing areas.

Since being established in 2015, the Andrews Labor Government’s Growing Suburbs Fund has delivered more than \$325 million towards 253 projects, creating 8,800 jobs.

Recent investments include \$4.3 million for a youth mental health support centre in Rosebud and \$2 million for a new community centre in Mickleham, including kinder and maternal child health consulting rooms. Applications for the next round of funding will open in the second half of 2021.

The Budget also includes almost \$11 million for our six Metropolitan Partnerships to continue to bring together community and business voices in driving and delivering local projects.

Last year’s Budget invested \$20 million for suburban revitalisation work in Boronia, Frankston, Lilydale, Noble Park, Reservoir, Tarneit and Altona. This year’s Budget builds on that investment, including \$900,000 for the revitalisation of the Springvale Boulevard shopping strip – boosting local businesses and supporting local jobs.

A new \$1.8 million Leadership for Women in Local Government program will be developed by the Gender Equality Advisory Committee to offer leadership training opportunities for women to improve diversity and inclusion in councils, and achieve the Government’s target of 50 per cent female mayors and councillors by 2025.

Support for rural roads will also be strengthened with \$1.4 million to improve management, alongside \$11.5 million to continue the Roadside Weeds and Pests control program.

The Labor Government’s strong record of investment in local libraries continues, with \$9.3 million for the Public Libraries Resource Program to enable our libraries to buy new books and collection items, run online services and deliver outreach programs.

A review of council emergency management capability – the Councils and Emergencies project – will receive \$280,000 to complete the third and final phase, with a report expected to be completed by the end of the year.

**Quotes attributable to Minister for Local Government and Suburban Development Shaun Leane**

*“Our local government and suburban programs are about people and communities. Across Victoria, we’re delivering the local projects that matter – and driving the local jobs that will secure our recovery.”*

*“Metropolitan Partnerships play an essential role in placing local voices at the heart of government decision-making – giving local people a say on what happens in their local community.”*

*“It’s important that councils truly represent the communities they serve. This investment will give more women the chance to develop careers in local government and shape their communities.”*