

Media Release

Mr Frank McGuire MP

Parliamentary Secretary for Crime Prevention
Parliamentary Secretary for Medical Research



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IMPROVING COMMUNITY SAFETY IN WESTERN VICTORIA

The Andrews Labor Government is helping locals to make their communities safer through a range of community-backed ideas and projects.

Ararat Rural City Council recently finished installing new lighting thanks to more than \$231,000 in funding from the Government as part of the Public Safety Infrastructure grant program, which aims to reduce crime and increase community safety.

The project features 26 new lights across pathways through the Ararat Skate Park, and throughout Alexandra Gardens, to improve natural surveillance and visibility. The lighting has encouraged people to enjoy these facilities for longer periods of time, which has led to increasing perceptions of safety in the community.

Ararat's new Crime Prevention Education and Awareness Campaign will also provide locals with strategies to prevent theft and trespassing, and encourage the community to report suspicious behaviour.

Ararat Rural City Council partnered with Victoria Police, Victorian Farmers Federation, Greater Ararat Business Network and Crime Stoppers to develop educational resources specifically designed to provide measures to protect the livestock, equipment and properties of farmers, business operators and local residents.

The campaign includes an educational booklet with tips and information to better protect farms, businesses or homes from opportunistic theft and three videos featuring local police and members of the community.

Northern Grampians Shire Council have also been able to install nine LED lights across a car park, pedestrian crossing and playground after being awarded a \$36,650 Community Safety Infrastructure Grant.

Taylor's Gully Park is frequently used by staff, parents and children of the Marrang Kindergarten and Early Learning Centre, with local residents expressing safety concerns due to a lack of lighting and visibility in the area.

The increased lighting will help deter anti-social behaviour and crime, with the council reporting a drop in offending and improvements in perception of safety at other locations where lighting has been installed.

Since 2015-16, the Labor Government has invested over \$85 million in crime prevention and has supported more than 860 projects that increase community safety and confidence across Victoria. This includes \$20 million over four years announced in the *Victorian Budget 2021/22*.

Applications for the next round of competitive grants will open on Monday 15 November and close on Friday 11 February 2022. For more information visit crimeprevention.vic.gov.au/buildingsafercommunities.

Quotes attributable to the Parliamentary Secretary for Crime Prevention Frank McGuire

"Our government is listening to local concerns and providing funding to make a direct impact."

"I'm delighted to see the community already embracing these upgrades after our digital meetings. The Crime Prevention strategy is being rolled out across the state and is focusing on addressing causes rather than symptoms of crime."

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