

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Wednesday, 20 September 2023

AFFORDABILITY PARTNERSHIP TO BUILD 152,000 REGIONAL HOMES

The Andrews Labor Government today released its landmark package to boost housing supply and affordability in rural and regional Victoria – representing the biggest shake-up to planning and housing reform in generations.

Victoria is growing. We're the fastest growing state in Australia, with our population set to hit 10.3 million by 2051 – and regional Victoria will be home to more than 2.3 million. To ease the housing pressure Victorians are facing, we need to build 2.24 million homes in that time – around 80,000 a year.

Victoria's Housing Statement – The Decade Ahead 2024-2034 sets a bold target to build 800,000 new homes across the state over the next 10 years, delivered through an *Affordability Partnership* with the housing industry.

That includes a target to build 648,000 new homes in metropolitan Melbourne and 152,000 new homes in regional and rural Victoria.

But we won't stop there. As part of our work to build the 2.24 million homes Victoria will need by 2051, we'll also set a regional target to build 425,600 of those homes across our regions and rural areas.

Victoria's Housing Statement focuses on five key areas to tackle the root of the problem – housing supply:

1. **Good decisions, made faster:** reforming Victoria's planning system, clearing the backlog of planning permits, giving builders, buyers and renovators certainty about how long approvals will take – and a clear pathway to resolve issues quickly if those timeframes aren't met
2. **Cheaper housing, closer to where you work:** unlocking new spaces to stop urban sprawl, building more homes closer to where people have the transport, roads, hospitals and schools they need and delivering vital, basic community infrastructure
3. **Protecting renters' rights:** closing loopholes that drive up the cost of living for renters, giving tenants more certainty over their leases, living standards and finances, and resolving disputes faster to keep them out of VCAT
4. **More social housing:** rapidly accelerating the rollout of social and affordable homes across Victoria and launching Australia's biggest urban renewal project across Melbourne's 44 high-rise social housing towers
5. **A long-term housing plan:** delivering a long-term plan to guide how our state grows in the decades ahead, and reviewing the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to build a planning system that works with Victorians – not against them.

In recognition of the joint effort needed to ease the housing pressure Victorians face, the Labor Government today signed the *Affordability Partnership* alongside the Property Council of Australia, Master Builders Victoria, the Urban Development Institute of Australia, the Housing Industry Association and Super Housing Partnerships.

There are a range of initiatives that will benefit people living in rural and regional Victoria. By expanding Victoria's Development Facilitation Program, we'll boost critical housing supply in regional Victoria.

We'll streamline the planning process for significant regional housing developments worth at least \$15 million and commit to delivering at least 10 per cent affordable housing, including build-to-rent projects.

We are making it easier to build a second small home – they give families the space to grow together, provide a critical second income or give kids somewhere to stay when they visit for the weekend. Dwelling garden units won't require a planning permit if they're less than 60 square metres.

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Saving for a deposit is taking longer and getting harder. That's why we'll release another \$500 million from the Victorian Homebuyer Fund, putting home ownership within reach for more regional Victorians. And we'll unlock and rezone surplus government land to deliver 9,000 homes across 45 sites in Melbourne and regional Victoria.

The Victorian Planning Authority will continue preparing Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs) for new housing and jobs in regional Victoria – with further work across priority projects in Wonthaggi, Ballarat, Shepparton South East, Corio Norlane, Bannockburn South East, East of Aberline and Ballarat North to continue, to deliver more homes and jobs.

The work being facilitated as part of this *Housing Statement* will support 16,000 jobs across Victoria.

This *Housing Statement* comes addition to our \$1 billion *Regional Housing Fund* – which will deliver more than 1,300 homes across regional Victoria in a mix of social and affordable housing. We're working closely with councils, regional partnerships and local communities to determine the right mix of stock and locations for each region.

We are also investing \$150 million in the *Regional Worker Accommodation* Fund to provide new housing options for regional communities where key workers are struggling to find affordable places to live. The package will make regional workers' jobs more secure and make it easier for businesses to find and keep staff.

As part of our \$5.3 billion *Big Housing Build*, 25 per cent of new social homes will be delivered in rural and regional Victoria – a \$1.25 billion investment in the housing regional Victorians deserve.

For more information, visit: www.vic.gov.au/housing-statement

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"The status quo is not an option, and admiring the problem will only make it worse. Unless we take bold and decisive action now, Victorians will be paying the price for generations to come."

"Whether you're buying your first place, upsizing or downsizing as life changes, or renting – the work we're doing will mean there'll be a place you can afford, and that you can call home."

Quote attributable to Minister for Housing Colin Brooks

"Nothing is more important than finding your own home – this package is delivering real and lasting benefits to rural and regional Victorians by helping more of them live where they want to live."

Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Harriet Shing

"Finding a place to live is one of the biggest challenges in attracting and keeping workers in the regions – the housing statement is about delivering more homes sooner, creating secure jobs, helping businesses to grow, and taking pressure off renters and first home buyers across rural and regional Victoria."