

# Focused On What Matters Most

Victorian Budget 2025/26

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## FREE TRAVEL FOR UNDER 18s, BETTER SERVICES & MORE HOMES

The Allan Labor Government is focused on what matters most: reducing the cost of public transport for families, getting Victorians home safer and sooner, and building the roads and rail projects our growing state needs.

The *Victorian Budget 2025/26* invests \$8.5 billion to continue building, maintaining and improving our state's road and transport networks, while delivering real cost of living help for families.

We've been putting money back into the pockets of Victorians with our regional fare cap, which has already saved Victorians more than \$132 million in its first two years.

### Free public transport for every child, every day, everywhere

Now we're going further. Families right across Victoria are doing it tough – every dollar counts.

With this year's Budget, we're on their side – making public transport free for every young Victorian under the age of 18 – every single day of the year.

That means cheaper school runs, more affordable weekends – and one less thing for families to worry about.

Costs can add up – especially for seniors. It's why this Budget will also make it free for Victorians with a Seniors Card to take public transport across our state on weekends.

It's a change that means seniors can experience all our state has to offer – without the extra expense.

### The biggest investment in upgrading roads, ever

Our road network plays a vital role – connecting Victorians to family, friends, education and employment, as well as helping to move millions of tonnes of goods and supplies around the state each year.

That's why last year we delivered Victoria's biggest investment in road maintenance, ever.

This year we're delivering even more – with a record \$976 million in funding for our Better Roads Blitz – aimed squarely at fixing the roads drivers rely on, by fixing potholes, repairing and resurfacing roads and bridges across our state.

Together with the Commonwealth Government, we're also delivering a \$1.2 billion Roads Blitz to tackle congestion and improve safety and connectivity. This funding will deliver critical upgrades, including:

- Donnybrook Road and Mitchell Street intersection in Donnybrook
- A new interchange between the Calder Freeway and Calder Park Drive
- The intersection of Berwick-Cranbourne Road, Clyde-Five Ways Road and Pattersons Road, Clyde North.

We'll also invest \$250 million with the Commonwealth Government to upgrade four intersections for commuters in Werribee, as well as adding an additional lane to the existing Werribee Main Road bridge crossing the Princes Freeway.

We're making roads safer – with more than \$1.1 billion being invested in road safety initiatives, as part of an updated Road Safety Action Plan launched at the end of last year.

Building on this work, this Budget invests an additional \$44 million to make local roads safer.

This includes pedestrian operated signals in Oakleigh, a signalised pedestrian crossing in Parkdale, upgrading Mt Emu Creek Bridge in Terang, flashing signage at Caledonian Primary School in Ballarat and an upgrade to the southern roundabout intersecting with Mount Alexander Road, Napier St, Fletcher St and Russell St in Essendon.

We'll also futureproof our road network, investing \$50 million for important maintenance work on San Remo Bridge – the key link to Phillip Island which ensures residents and the 3.5 million tourists who visit the island each year can get there easily.

### **New services enabled by the Metro Tunnel**

Every Victorian wants to get home sooner and spend more time with their family or friends – which is why this Budget will also deliver better roads, trains and buses.

The Metro Tunnel is the biggest transformation of our rail network since the City Loop opened more than 40 years ago.

It is the first step to enabling more services and delivering time savings for passengers – without it, the City Loop would reach full capacity, and Melbourne would grind to a halt.

With the Metro Tunnel opening this year, an investment of \$727 million will deliver turn up and go services through the Tunnel, and along the Sunbury and Cranbourne/Pakenham lines.

A further \$98.7 million will see passengers on other lines also benefit from more frequent services, following the opening of the Metro Tunnel. For passengers on the Werribee line it'll mean more peak services, extra off-peak services on the Craigieburn and Upfield lines, while Sandringham line passengers will for the first time see trains running every ten minutes on weekdays.

This builds on more than 2,000 additional weekly services added across the regional and metropolitan train network since 2015.

### **More homes for more Victorians**

The best way to make housing more affordable is to build more homes. And Victoria is leading the nation.

But in a housing crisis, more and more young people just don't have the same opportunities their parents had.

It's why the Government is taking bold action – making it easier to build more homes close to public transport and where young Victorians grew up, by cutting red tape and making planning approvals easier.

This Budget amplifies that effort, with \$61 million to continue the stamp duty concession announced in October 2024, slashing the price for off-the-plan apartments, units and townhouses for another 12 months.

A Victorian using this concession who buys off-the-plan could pay around \$28,000 less stamp duty on a \$620,000 apartment – with duty slashed from around \$32,000 to around \$4,000.

This Budget also invests \$24 million to support planning for 50 'Train and Tram Zones' that will help deliver more than 300,000 additional homes close to public transport, jobs and services for Victorians by 2051.

But living in the inner suburbs isn't for everyone. It's why we're giving families more opportunities for a home with a great backyard – unlocking a decade-long pipeline of greenfield land and backyards in Melbourne's growing suburbs.

This Budget invests a further \$12 million to unlock more greenfield land for new homes with backyards. Over the next decade, our greenfields plan aims to progressively unlock 180,000 more homes in new suburbs across Melbourne's outer south-east, north and west

This is in addition to our \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build and \$1 billion Regional Housing Fund, which are delivering at least 13,300 social and affordable homes that people are proud to call their own – with thousands of Victorians already living in these modern, well-designed and energy efficient homes.

In this year's Budget, \$101 million will also be invested from the Commonwealth's Housing Support program to support the delivery of around 868 social and affordable homes.

As well as funding for new homes, this investment will deliver enabling works, rejuvenation and maintenance of older homes, and rapid construction of new homes through world-class modern methods of construction.

This Budget also includes \$61 million to continue supporting critical frontline services for people experiencing and at risk of homelessness – helping those most in need, including families, young people and First Peoples.

### **Better connecting growing communities**

The Labor Government has delivered record investment to improve transport connections in Melbourne's growing west – removing level crossings, delivering the West Gate Tunnel and Metro Tunnel and upgrading the Melton Line.

Now, in partnership with the Commonwealth Government, we are upgrading Sunshine Station – a major step to delivering Airport Rail – by untangling six kilometres of track between West Footscray and Albion.

To fast track the project, the Budget allocates \$4 billion towards the Sunshine Station redevelopment – bringing forward \$2 billion of the Government's investment in Airport Rail – to kickstart works as soon as possible.

This Budget delivers \$162 million in new and improved bus services, with a focus on connecting communities in Melbourne's growing suburbs to train stations, schools, health services and jobs.

New bus connections will be introduced linking Cairnlea, Thornhill Park, Riverwalk, King's Leigh and Mt Atkinson estates with nearby train stations.

Additional bus services will also provide access to the new Tarneit West Station and the Wyndham Law Courts when they are completed.

In the north, Wollert, Beveridge and Broadmeadows will get new or improved services including a new route connecting Mystique Estate in Wollert's north to Epping Station.

In the south east, the community will get a new cross Peninsula bus service directly connecting Hastings and Mornington via Tyabb Road.

This Budget also delivers level access tram stops on Droop St in Footscray improving access to the new Footscray Hospital, together with the new modern and accessible Next Generation Trams that will commence testing on the network from later this year.

We're continuing to invest in upgrading the accessibility of the network. New platform edge tactile ground surface indicators will be installed at Ferntree Gully, Upper Ferntree Gully, Heidelberg and North Richmond – boosting safety for people with a disability.

### **Investing in regional Victoria**

In every corner of the state, our Big Build investments are continuing to deliver crucial road and public transport connections – including upgrading every regional rail line to deliver more frequent and reliable services.

Following the completion of the Gippsland Line Upgrade this year, this Budget will deliver services on the Traralgon Line every 40 minutes outside peak. Bendigo passengers will also benefit from longer trains running on more weekend services and passengers along the Seymour Line will benefit from additional peak services.

We're also investing in ensuring our regional rail network continues to be sustainable and reliable, with \$270.4 million to support regional rail operations and maintenance. More CCTV cameras will also be installed at stations along the Geelong and Ballarat Lines as well as Bendigo Station.

We're cementing Victoria's reputation as Australia's freight and logistics capital, with \$122 million to support the sector, which contributes \$36 billion to our state product and provides jobs for more than 240,000 Victorians across the state.

Through this investment, we'll make sure that our freight network keeps Victorian farmers, manufacturers and other industries connected to key markets, both at home and overseas. This includes delivering vital maintenance across the rail freight network and our local ports, while also protecting land for future terminal upgrades.

### **Funding for cyclists**

Transforming our transport network is about more than just cars, trains, trams and buses – that's why we'll also deliver safer cycling and walking options in our growing suburbs.

Safer and better-connected cycling infrastructure will be delivered in Weir Views, Melton South and Melton while new, connected paths will be delivered across Hillside, Plumpton, Sydenham and Taylors Lakes – giving residents more options to safely walk and ride.

This comes on top of the more than 90 kilometres of new or improved bike lanes we've delivered right across inner Melbourne in the past five years. When the Veloway opens this year, there will be even better cycling connections for people living in Melbourne's west.

This is a Budget that's focused on what matters most – delivering more cost of living relief, more housing and more services to get Victorians home, sooner and safer.

**Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure and Minister for Public and Active Transport  
Gabrielle Williams**

*"This is a Budget focused on what matters most – making it cheaper and easier for families to get where they need to go."*

*"While some wanted to cut and cancel the Metro Tunnel, this year it opens – delivering five new stations and unlocking more capacity in the City Loop, enabling us to add even more services."*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Roads and Road Safety and Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne**

*"We delivered record roads funding last year and this Budget will deliver even more, while boosting the amount of freight we move by rail – a win for regional Victoria."*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Housing and Building and Minister for Development Victoria and Precincts  
Harriet Shing**

*"We are determined to help more Victorians to find a home they can be proud to call their own – everyone deserves the dignity of a roof over their head, close to the services and amenities they need."*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Planning Sonya Kirkenny**

*"Building more homes in our inner-suburbs, close to trains and trams and more homes with backyards in our outer-suburbs, means young people have more opportunity to rent or buy a place in a community they love."*