



Victorian Budget 2020/21

Putting People First

Overview



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Budget Paper No. 2 – Strategy and Outlook
Budget Paper No. 3 – Service Delivery
Budget Paper No. 4 – Statement of Finances
(incorporating Quarterly Financial Report No. 1)

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Treasurer's message



2020 has been tough. The toughest year most of us will ever live through.

It's asked more of us than we could ever have imagined. Tested us in ways we never thought it could.

It's also shone a bright light on some of the dark cracks in our society and in our economy:

A mental health system that is broken.

An economy that asks workers to choose between their health and feeding their family.

Too many Victorians without the security and stability of a home.

At the same time, it's also shown us what matters most: the safety and security of our families, our kids, our parents.

Having confidence in what tomorrow, or next month, or next year might look like.

And those things that hold us together. Taking care of each other. Looking after each other.

It's why this Budget is about doing exactly that – looking after people.

It's about helping Victorians find work, ensuring not just a job, but security and certainty for them and the people they love.

It's about looking after families, making sure they can have confidence in their future – and a future for their kids.

It's about taking care of the people we love most, and ensuring that if the worst were to happen, we know they'll have the care they need.

And it's about building a strong recovery – and an even stronger future for our State.

These are uncertain times. But we are presented with a rare opportunity.

An opportunity to create a Victoria where – regardless of gender or age or background – every Victorian can achieve their potential and feel positive about their future.

This is a Budget that will help deliver on that future.

A Budget to repair, recover and make us stronger than before.

This is a Budget that puts people first.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Pallas'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

Tim Pallas
Treasurer of Victoria

Victoria's recovery

This has been a year like no other.

At the start of 2020, we faced a devastating bushfire season. Weeks later, a global pandemic – a once in 100-year event – arrived at our doorstep.

Now, as the year closes out, we begin our State's recovery.

At the very heart of our recovery effort – people. That means protecting and creating jobs. Looking after families. Taking care of Victorians' loved ones.

Building strong and connected communities. And setting our State up for a strong recovery.

Underpinning it all – a strong economy that works for working people.

A health recovery first

As a global pandemic descended upon us, we knew we had to act – fast.

It's why in March we began to ready our healthcare system: commissioning new beds, new builds, additional staff and innovative technology to deal with the potential incoming demand.

This Budget builds on this investment, providing \$9 billion for our health system, including:

- \$2.8 billion to support our health services, including supporting the delivery of elective surgery delayed during the pandemic
- \$200 million on the Metropolitan Health Infrastructure Fund

These numbers speak to a broader effort shared by every Victorian.

The three million tests that have been taken, collected and processed. The extensive network of more than 200 testing sites that has been established across Victoria.

The hundreds of thousands of Victorians who worked round the clock to keep our State safe and fed and moving. And the sacrifice and courage of every single Victorian who helped drive this virus down.

Because as a Government we understood: there was no economic recovery without a health recovery first.

Economic outlook and recovery

Before the pandemic, we faced a very different scenario.

Economic growth and employment growth were particularly strong, averaging around 3.5 per cent a year over the three years to 2018-19.

The unemployment rate had fallen to an 11-year low of 4.6 per cent in 2018-19.

The Victorian economy was experiencing an extended period of strong jobs growth, with 523 000 new jobs created between November 2014 and March 2020.

Indeed, Victoria created more jobs than any other state or territory in the nation.

But like economies around the world, the global pandemic is having a serious economic impact.

Due to lower consumer and business confidence and the necessary health restrictions put in place to keep our State safe, Victoria's GSP is forecast to contract by 4 per cent in 2020-21, following a small decline in 2019-20.

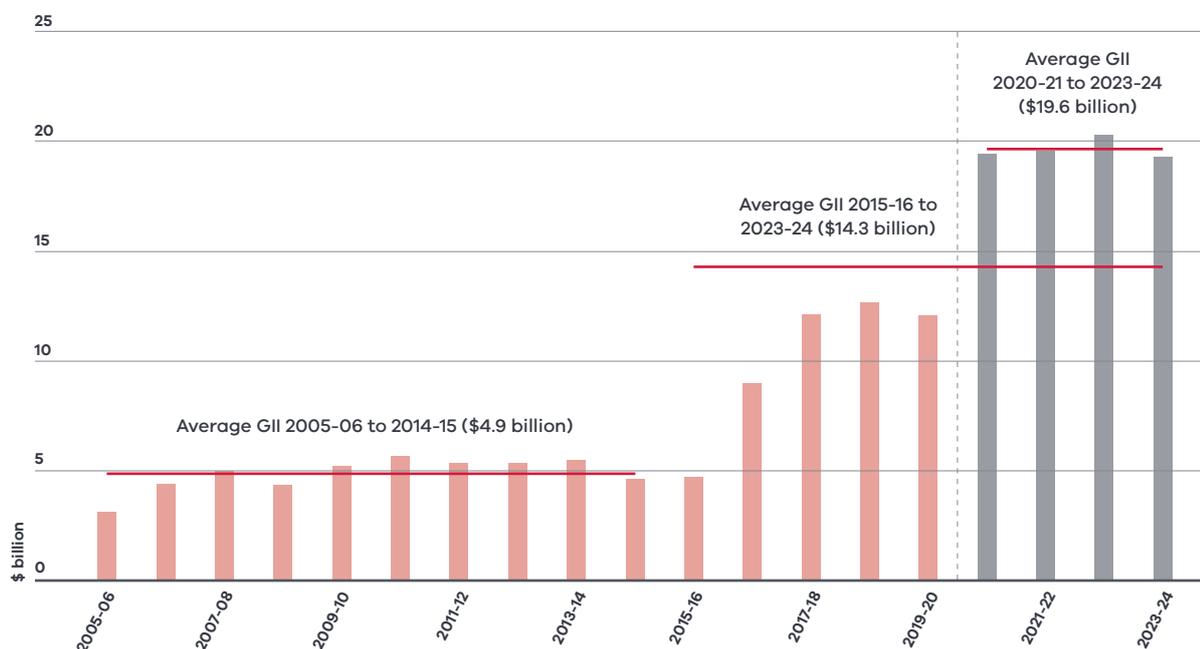
Employment fell by 180 000 between the March and September quarters 2020 and is expected to fall by 3.25 per cent in 2020-21. The unemployment rate is forecast to peak at 8.25 per cent in the December quarter 2020, and average 7.75 per cent in 2020-21.

VICTORIAN ECONOMIC FORECASTS (PER CENT)

	2018/19 actual	2019/20 forecast	2020/21 forecast	2021/22 forecast	2022/23 projection	2023/24 projection
Real gross state product	3.0	-0.25	-4.00	7.75	3.25	3.00
Employment	3.4	1.2	-3.25	3.50	2.25	2.00
Unemployment rate	4.6	5.4	7.75	7.00	6.25	5.75
Consumer price index	1.7	1.7	0.75	1.50	1.75	2.00
Wage price index	2.7	2.4	1.00	1.75	2.00	2.25
Population	2.1	1.60	0.20	0.40	1.10	1.70

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics; Department of Treasury and Finance

GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT



Source: Department of Treasury and Finance

Without record levels of support from government, these impacts would be far worse.

These numbers also demonstrate the significant investment and effort that will be required to drive Victoria's – and Victorians' – recovery.

As public health restrictions ease and Victoria begins its recovery, a strong rebound in economic and employment growth rates is forecast, particularly in 2021-22, aided by strong Government support and record low interest rates.

But risks to the economic outlook are greater than usual.

The *Jobs Plan*, as well as other initiatives announced since the *2019-20 Budget Update*, will support around 125 000 jobs over the life of these initiatives.

That's in addition to the future benefits of these investments.

Modelling by Deloitte Access Economics also estimates that Government's expenditure and revenue decisions will result in a cumulative \$43.9 billion increase to GSP over the budget and forward estimates period.

The *2020-21 Budget* funds capital projects with a total estimated investment of up to \$19.8 billion, creating the largest capital program in our State's history.

The *2020-21 Budget* also provides funding of \$29.2 billion over four years in output initiatives, building on the Government's \$11.4 billion investment in the *2019-20 Budget*.

Average government infrastructure investment from 2020-21 to 2023-24 will be around four times the 10-year average to 2014-15.

But investment in services as well as infrastructure will be key. In addition to being integral in the recovery of our communities, this Budget's investment in services and support will also help drive our rebuild, supporting thousands of new Victorian jobs.

Financial outlook

As a result of the Government's strong financial management, Victoria had sound public finances coming into the pandemic, which has provided significant scope to support Victorians when it was most needed. Our low debt and strong credit rating placed the State in a strong position to face this once-in-a-century crisis.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Government has been supporting Victorians – delivering our State's health response, supporting businesses and households, and protecting jobs.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT FISCAL AGGREGATES

	Unit of measure	2019/20 actual	2020/21 budget	2021/22 estimate	2022/23 estimate	2023/24 estimate
Net result from transactions	\$ billion	(6.5)	(23.3)	(13.1)	(6.7)	(5.9)
Net cash flows from operating activities	\$ billion	(2.9)	(21.8)	(4.0)	(2.6)	(1.8)
Government infrastructure investment	\$ billion	12.0	19.4	19.5	20.3	19.2
Net debt	\$ billion	44.3	86.7	109.7	132.9	154.8
Net debt to GSP	per cent	9.6	19.5	22.5	26.0	28.9

Source: Department of Treasury and Finance

More than \$13 billion has been committed to support households, workers and businesses through the pandemic. This Budget builds on that support and delivers new investments to drive economic recovery.

Total revenue in 2020-21 is expected to be 4.2 per cent lower than 2018-19 levels, while state tax revenue is forecast to decrease by 9.7 per cent compared with 2019-20. Net debt will reach \$86.7 billion this financial year and grow to \$154.8 billion by the end of the forward estimates.

Total expenditure is expected to be \$90.0 billion in 2020-21, before declining by 6.2 per cent in 2021-22. The projected peak in 2020-21 reflects the Government's objective to support economic growth in the short to medium term, with this expenditure tapering as the economy recovers.

The combined impact of reductions in revenue from the global recession and increases in vital expenditure has resulted in an operating deficit of \$6.5 billion in 2019-20 and a forecast deficit of \$23.3 billion in 2020-21. Further operating deficits are forecast over the forward estimates. This is expected to reduce to a deficit of \$5.9 billion by the end of the forward estimates, reflecting the short-term costs of initiatives funded in this Budget.

Fiscal strategy

In *Labor's Financial Statement 2018*, the Government committed to stabilising net debt at 12 per cent of GSP over the medium term to deliver three major infrastructure projects – North East Link, Melbourne Airport Rail, and 25 additional level crossing removals.

The impact of the economic downturn on the State's revenue base, in addition to critical efforts to respond to and recover from the pandemic, means net debt to GSP will increase by around 19 percentage points over the budget and forward estimates.

While borrowings will continue to grow until revenues and expenses better align, borrowing costs are at historically low rates and expected to be lower than the economic growth rate.

Low interest rates mean the increase in borrowings can be managed without significantly increasing the proportion of the Budget spent on interest payments. Interest expense as a share of total revenue remains manageable.

In short, now is the time to borrow in order to rebuild.

These investments will help drive Victoria's recovery from the global pandemic, helping to get more Victorians back in work and giving more families confidence about their future.

The Government remains committed to sound fiscal management. In the medium term, this requires the realignment of revenues and expenditure, coupled with a strategy to fund the Government's infrastructure program.

The timing of this must be balanced against the Government's important role in supporting the economic recovery.

The Government's medium-term plan involves four steps:

- Step 1: creating jobs, reducing unemployment and restoring economic growth
- Step 2: returning to an operating cash surplus
- Step 3: returning to operating surpluses
- Step 4: stabilising debt levels

The Government is committed to ensuring expenditure is targeted to key priority areas in order to deliver the greatest possible economic and social benefits for Victorians.

- **Creating secure, decent jobs**
- **Taking care of those we love**
- **Looking after families**
- **Building strong, connected communities**
- **A strong recovery**





Investing in every corner of the State



STATEWIDE

- \$6 billion for Victoria’s Big Housing Build, including to build more than 12 000 new social and affordable homes, and make housing more accessible and affordable for Victorians, supporting thousands of jobs
- \$2.8 billion to maintain capacity in our health system as hospitals move to COVID Normal, allowing for more elective surgeries
- \$2 billion for the Breakthrough Victoria Fund to build on our strengths in research and development across key industries
- \$1.9 billion to upgrade 162 schools, build one new school and four additional stages at recently built schools
- \$1.7 billion cash flow boost for businesses through the deferral of 2020-21 payroll tax liabilities for payrolls up to \$10 million
- \$1.6 billion invested in cheaper, cleaner energy to power the economic recovery
- \$1.6 billion to transform how we support students with disability
- \$1.3 billion for child protection initiatives providing support for care leavers, early intervention for families and support for vulnerable children
- \$1.1 billion in grants to support small and medium-sized businesses
- \$1 billion invested in the training system, providing greater access to training through a number of initiatives
- \$869 million invested in mental health initiatives, including more acute mental health beds
- \$836 million in New jobs tax credits to re-hire staff, restore hours and create new jobs
- \$774 million invested in early childhood education, including free kindergarten programs in 2021 and the continued roll-out of funded 3-year-old kinder
- \$626 million for Digital Future Now package to support our transition to a digital economy
- \$619 million Jobs for Victoria initiative to help provide targeted and tailored support for Victorians most affected during this pandemic
- \$450 million for a statewide road maintenance blitz to improve safety for all road users and help maximise the productivity of the Victorian road network.
- \$388 million invested in the Keeping Victorians Moving initiative to reduce congestion and wait times for registration and licensing services across the State
- \$250 million to employ tutors in every government school and for every non-government school that needs them
- \$235 million to build our Recovery Workforce to create jobs across mental health, family violence, health and child protection
- \$191 million to provide solar panel system and battery storage rebates to more homes and small businesses
- \$120 million top up for the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund

Big Housing Build

3-year-old kinder in 2021

Princes Highway upgrade

Point Hicks Lighthouse visitor facilities

Wilsons Promontory revitalisation

Mallacoota Inlet access upgrade

-  Arts
-  Clean Energy
-  Education Initiatives
-  Emergency Services
-  Environment and Parkland
-  Health
-  Justice
-  Public Transport
-  Regional Investment
-  Roads
-  Sport and Recreation

Creating secure, decent jobs

A decent job is worth more than just a pay cheque. It's about creating security, dignity and certainty for you and the people you love the most.

As we rebuild from this pandemic, we need to support Victorians to train, retrain and find new opportunity.

We need to help those hardest hit by this pandemic find work – ensuring not only a job, but certainty and self-belief.

And we need to make sure we're creating strong, secure and decent jobs for the future – and for our future generations.

This Budget provides a comprehensive plan to rebuild our economy, create secure and decent jobs, and ensure a bright future for every Victorian.

Jobs Plan

At the heart of our economic recovery must be job creation. It's why this Budget delivers a targeted set of initiatives that form the *Jobs Plan*.

Working across four key priorities, the *Jobs Plan* includes an ambitious target – to create 400 000 new jobs by 2025 and 200 000 by 2022.

In guiding Victoria's recovery, the *Jobs Plan* plays to our State's strengths, advancing opportunities for growth in new innovative industries, and fundamentally, getting more Victorians back into work.

This includes a dedicated focus on those most impacted by this pandemic: women, young people, those aged over 60, and Victorians who have plenty of experience but don't always have a formal qualification.

As we rebuild from the pandemic, we want to make sure these Victorians – and every Victorian – is part of our recovery.

The *Jobs Plan* will make sure no one is left behind.

Further detail on the Plan is provided in a separate budget information paper, *Jobs Plan*.

Jobs for Victoria

The Andrews Labor Government's new \$619 million Jobs for Victoria initiative will assist hundreds of thousands of Victorians looking for work.

This includes \$250 million to support businesses to hire at least 10 000 Victorians through a six-month wage subsidy.

These positions will be for Victorians hardest hit by this pandemic, including young people, retrenched workers and people who have been long-term unemployed.

At least \$150 million of subsidy support will go towards getting women back in work, with around a third of such placements being provided to women over 45, recognising their additional barriers to employment.

These subsidised positions will be focused on creating new ongoing permanent jobs, making sure we're providing long-term security for these workers and their families.

This investment will also deliver targeted and tailored support for unemployed Victorians – whether that's advice about training pathways, career counselling or more intensive support.



Sick pay for insecure workers

This pandemic has exposed many of the frailties in our nation – none more so than insecure and casual work.

Nearly two-thirds of the total decline in employment in Australia from February to August was among casual employees.

For these workers that has very real consequences – economic consequences, and as we've seen with coronavirus (COVID-19), health consequences too.

Workers shouldn't have to choose between going to work sick and losing wages. That's why the Andrews Labor Government will invest \$5 million to develop a new Secure Work Pilot Scheme.

Once in place, this two-year pilot will provide up to five days of sick and carers pay at the national minimum wage for casual or insecure workers in priority industries. Businesses, unions and workers will also contribute to the design.

Most importantly, it will mean these workers no longer have to choose between the health of their colleagues and co-workers – and putting food on the table for their family.

Turning digital demand into online opportunity

The pandemic has required a rapid shift to online activity. This Budget will help us embrace new technology – and make it one of Victoria's strengths.

The Andrews Labor Government will provide \$626 million in a landmark Victoria's Digital Future Now investment to radically improve mobile coverage and broadband access in regional areas, while supporting businesses and creating new jobs.

This includes \$250 million to co-fund business-grade broadband connectivity for Victorian suburbs and regional towns through the Gigabit State program, which we will work to deliver in partnership with the Commonwealth.

Gigabit State will address gaps in the availability of reliable high-speed fibre optic and wireless broadband services for business users – helping them find new customers and new markets.

This includes upgrades in regional towns with satellite and fixed wireless services – giving them access to broadband.

It will also provide more opportunity for Victorians, with the construction and operation of this new broadband infrastructure to support nearly 2 000 jobs.

Up to \$300 million will eradicate mobile blackspots in populated areas of regional Victoria – supporting local businesses, local economies and local communities. This investment remains subject to a co-contribution from the Commonwealth, which has responsibility for our nation's telecommunications network.

An investment of \$64 million will deliver the Digital Skills and Jobs Program, enabling unemployed Victorians to undertake digital skills training or a digital internship – helping them find new opportunity and employment.

This ground-breaking investment will assist 5 000 unemployed workers into a potential new career, helping them to retrain and reskill, with a strong focus on supporting women.

Breakthrough Victoria Fund

Our recovery will require big ideas and even bigger innovation.

It's why this Budget includes a \$2 billion Breakthrough Victoria Fund to position Victoria as an international leader in research and technology.

The fund will help support new Victorian jobs, driving investment in research, innovation and the next great breakthroughs over the next 10 years.

This investment will focus on priority industries, including medical research, health and life-sciences, agri-food, advanced manufacturing, clean energy and digital technologies.

The fund will also help support research and development, adoption and commercialisation, supporting 15 700 jobs over the next 10 years.

A further \$210 million will be provided for medical research, helping to secure the next big breakthrough for Victorian patients.



Support for Victorian businesses

When the pandemic hit, the Government moved quickly to support Victorian businesses and their workers.

Significant support has been provided to businesses, including providing grants to the industries hardest hit, cutting taxes and fees and providing additional support to help during the pandemic. This support includes:

- \$2.6 billion in grants from the Business Support Fund to support the hardest-hit sectors including hospitality, tourism, accommodation, creative industries, and retail
- More than \$2 billion in tax deferrals, including allowing businesses with payrolls of up to \$10 million to defer their 2020-21 payroll tax liabilities for up to 12 months. This represents a \$1.7 billion cash flow boost to businesses in 2020-21
- More than \$1.8 billion in relief from taxes and fees, including a full refund and waiver of 2019-20 payroll tax for small and medium businesses, providing cash back in their bank accounts when they needed it most. This includes exempting businesses in Victoria participating in the JobKeeper program from payroll tax and WorkCover premiums on additional wages paid to staff who were stood down or earned less than the JobKeeper payment
- Freezing and waiving a number of taxes and charges – 2020 and 2021 liquor licence fees have been waived, while the 2020-21 Fire Services Property Levy was frozen at the 2019-20 revenue target. Increases to the landfill levy have also been deferred

- The \$100 million Sole Trader Support Fund to help sole traders in affected sectors
- \$92 million over the life of the program for carbon farming on private and public land by incentivising the restoration of native vegetation and carbon plantings. This will also deliver jobs and improve productivity for our farmers

This Budget builds on this record level of support, providing \$836 million in New jobs tax credits for small and medium businesses who re-hire staff, restore hours and create new jobs.

This incentive means the more these businesses re-hire staff and employ new workers, the less payroll tax they'll pay.

This tax relief measure will be available for two years, saving businesses a combined \$836 million and helping to support an estimated 9 400 Victorians back into work.

The Government will also increase the threshold for paying payroll tax on an annual basis from \$40 000 to \$100 000, reducing administration costs and providing \$309 million of cash flow support to 7 000 businesses.

And for the very first time, small businesses will also be eligible for Solar Homes, with up to 15 000 rebates available to help reduce energy costs.

Restarting Victoria's tourism economy

In 2018-19, Victoria's tourism industry contributed \$29.4 billion to our economy – and employed 263 000 Victorians.

To make sure this industry gets back on its feet – and to support the Victorian jobs that rely on it – this Budget includes \$510 million to restart Victoria's visitor economy.

A dedicated \$107 million Visitor Economy: Industry Support Package will provide much-needed support to Victoria's thousands of tourism workers and businesses.

The Andrews Labor Government will also deliver a new Victorian Regional Travel Voucher Scheme to encourage more Victorians to holiday in their home State.

Vouchers will provide almost \$28 million to encourage Victorians to explore their own backyard, providing an immediate boost to local economies, local communities and local jobs.

This Budget will make sure we're building the industry too, funding the immediate delivery of tourism infrastructure projects across the State.

This investment will support shovel-ready projects that attract new visitors, while also backing local events, marketing and new community-identified initiatives.

Funding is also provided to support our Regional Tourism Boards and upgrade local galleries and creative spaces, drawing new visitors to local communities.

Backing our recovery in regional Victoria

Real recovery needs to extend to every corner of our State. It's why we're investing more than \$8 billion to support regional economies to get back on track by creating jobs all over Victoria.

This includes a massive \$465 million Victorian Tourism Recovery Package, including \$149 million to build, upgrade and invigorate 10 iconic tourist locations across our State.

From the Great Ocean Road to Gippsland, this investment will enrich Victoria's visitor experience.

We're also investing in creative spaces with \$35 million to develop and upgrade a range of venues across our State, including upgrades to Euroa Community Cinema and a new exhibition space at the former Kyneton Primary School.

This Budget also delivers an additional \$156 million boost to extend our flagship Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund. This investment will deliver projects identified by communities, supporting local jobs and driving local economies.

We're also investing in the regional infrastructure that will create local jobs and support local communities – delivering improved local schools, upgrades to regional hospitals, improvements to country roads and more reliable journeys for regional rail passengers.

Additional detail about these investments can be found further in this document, and the Rural and Regional Budget Information Paper.

Clean energy to power our recovery

Creating the jobs, communities and grid of the future

A centrepiece of our recovery is a transformational \$1.6 billion investment to drive our State's clean energy future – creating new jobs and new opportunities, particularly in regional Victoria.

The Andrews Labor Government will invest \$682 million to develop Victoria's Renewable Energy Zones, bolstering system strength and unlocking new renewable energy investment that will support economic growth and jobs.

This includes funding to begin planning for at least 600 megawatts of new, clean energy through a second Victorian Renewable Energy Target auction. This will help to ensure the Government meets its legislated target of 50 per cent of electricity generation from renewable sources, which has been estimated to create around 24 000 jobs by 2030 and generate up to \$5.8 billion in additional economic activity.

Local communities will also benefit with \$21 million for local energy projects that increase the use of clean energy – like microgrids, stand-alone power systems and neighbourhood batteries.

This Budget also includes:

- \$448 million for energy efficiency upgrades for homes, including 250 000 low income households and 35 000 social housing properties, providing cheaper energy bills for families, improved living comfort and more energy efficient homes
- \$191 million to expand the Solar Homes program, including 42 000 additional solar rebates for households and, for the first time, 15 000 solar rebates for businesses
- \$50 million for clean energy transition initiatives
- \$31 million to transform the way industry uses energy and help businesses save money
- \$25 million for the rollout of a fast-charging network for electric vehicles across major highways and key tourist destinations in Victoria

And in order to create jobs and reduce waste, this Budget will fund Recycling Victoria:

A new economy, a \$322 million investment in our circular economy policy announced earlier this year. In addition to the Recycling Victoria package, to fast-track our shift to a circular economy, this Budget invests \$41 million to build regional and material recovery facilities. These investments will strengthen our State's recycling sector and improve technology.



Supporting regional Victorian businesses

To support regional businesses to open, relocate and expand, the Andrews Labor Government will deliver a 50 per cent stamp duty concession on the purchase of commercial and industrial properties, brought forward to January 2021.

The 50 per cent land transfer duty concession will now apply to contracts entered from 1 January 2021 – rather than 1 July 2023 – for commercial and industrial properties anywhere in regional Victoria.

This investment will save a further \$40 million and builds on our existing cuts to payroll tax in regional Victoria – currently the lowest rate anywhere in Australia.

Helping our farmers put food on the table

This year, our farmers have helped keep our State fed. And as we begin our recovery from the pandemic, our farmers and producers will be more important than ever.

Making sure we're helping farmers take advantage of new technology and remain internationally competitive, this Budget invests \$65 million in a landmark new strategy for Victoria's agricultural sector.

This comprehensive strategy will develop, fund and deliver better infrastructure across the supply chain, explore new technology and innovation and boost energy efficiency on our farms.

These initiatives will save time and reduce costs for producers, so they can focus on creating jobs and growing their business – as well as putting food on the table for families across the State.

This Budget also invests \$50 million in the next generation of Victorian farmers, with agricultural college upgrades at Dookie, Longerenong and Geelong.

This Budget invests \$65 million in a landmark new strategy for Victoria's agricultural sector

Building skills to get back to work

The Andrews Labor Government is investing \$1 billion in TAFE and training – driving economic recovery and giving Victorians the skills they need to get back into the workforce.

This Budget will help support more Victorians to train, retrain and find new opportunities, including:

- Up to 80 000 new Free TAFE and subsidised training places. Almost 60 000 of these places will be in Free TAFE courses including health, and community and disability services. \$155 million will be dedicated to creating new opportunities for young people, women and those most affected by economic disruption to reskill and upskill
- \$57 million for the delivery of accredited short courses and a workforce skill set pilot, helping unemployed Victorians reskill and find a job fast
- \$19 million to introduce innovative new models for apprenticeships and traineeships, providing enhanced support for apprentices including those most at-risk of dropping out, and new measures to encourage women to pursue non-traditional roles, including in the building and construction industry
- Funding to attract and support people to reskill as teachers at Victorian TAFEs, including teacher scholarships and mentoring

We are also committing \$100 million to the Building Better TAFEs Fund for projects that will help set our students up for success, with:

- Chisholm Institute's Frankston Campus Redevelopment Stage 2, building a new modern, cutting edge, multi-level learning facility for students
- Melbourne Polytechnic's Collingwood Campus Redevelopment, delivering a rebuild of the campus to establish an education, industry and community precinct

Funding will also be provided to create a single integrated senior secondary certificate, making sure every student in every school can get the skills they need – both academic and vocational.

Supporting new apprenticeships

Our apprentices have helped build our State – we want to make sure they help build our recovery too.

This Budget invests \$58 million to support Victorian workers to earn while they learn.

This includes \$33 million to expand opportunities for apprentices and trainees through a flagship Big Build training pathway. This transformative new approach will see up to 1500 apprentices and trainees employed across our Big Build each year.

This investment will also create more opportunities for a broader group of Victorians to work on our State's Big Build, including a focus on women and other Victorians who may otherwise miss out.

Funding is also provided to expand the pilot of higher apprenticeships and traineeships to 400 existing workers in the social service sector. This support will enable highly experienced disability support workers who don't have a qualification to undertake courses such as the Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management.

To make sure Victorians of all backgrounds have the support they need to recover, a further \$34 million will help deliver the Economic Recovery Support for Victoria's Multicultural Communities and Young People package.

This investment will help make sure Victorians in our multicultural communities are getting the dedicated support they need during our recovery.



A place to call home: Victoria's Big Housing Build

Victoria's Big Housing Build will give thousands of Victorians the security and stability of a home – and support tens of thousands of Victorians into jobs.

We will invest \$6 billion to build more than 12 000 new social and affordable homes, and make housing more accessible and affordable for Victorians.

Record investment in social and affordable housing

This year has shown us just how much 'home' matters.

It's also thrown into sharp relief how far too many Victorians are still missing out on the safety and security that a home affords.

They're pensioners. Victorians with a disability. Those struggling with mental health. Family violence victims. And single parent families.

Fundamentally, they're Victorians – and they all deserve a place to call home.

It's why this Budget delivers our State's biggest ever investment in public, community and affordable housing.

Victoria's Big Housing Build will transform the social and affordable housing system with \$5.3 billion in funding to construct more than 12 000 new dwellings, including:

- 9 300 new social housing dwellings replacing 1 100 old housing units
- 2 900 new mainly affordable and low-cost homes in locations that are close to jobs and transport

The package also includes funding to accelerate the public housing capital upgrade program, including enhanced gas heater servicing. These works will improve the comfort of home for public housing tenants and support jobs.

Victoria's Big Housing Build will be delivered through partnerships with the community housing sector, private sector construction, industry and other investors.

It is estimated that 10 000 jobs will be supported on average per year, over the next four years, as well as increasing economic activity across the State. A quarter of the total investment will be in regional areas.

This package builds on the \$498 million provided through the Building Works package for maintenance and upgrades across public and community housing.

Victoria's Big Housing Build will give thousands of Victorians the security and stability of a home

Making housing more affordable

Victoria's Big Housing Build also includes \$678 million to help unlock more affordable and accessible housing for Victorians.

The Victorian Homebuyer Fund provides \$500 million to accelerate Victorians into home ownership. The Fund will contribute to the purchase price in exchange for a proportionate equity interest in the property. This reduces the size of the deposit required and will help Victorians afford their homes sooner. The fund will support the purchase of both established and newly-built homes.

To increase the supply of housing and create more options for renters by establishing the build-to-rent sector in Victoria, from 1 January 2022, Victoria's Big Housing Build will provide a 50 per cent land tax discount for eligible new developments until 2040. These developments will also be exempt from the Absentee Owner Surcharge over the same period. Investment in the build-to-rent sector will stimulate construction activity, create jobs and support Victoria's economic recovery.

Tax relief on stamp duty for residential property transactions of up to \$1 million will also be provided. A waiver of 50 per cent for new residential properties, and 25 per cent for existing residential properties, will be available for purchases of up to \$1 million for contracts entered into between the day after announcement and 30 June 2021.

The Government has also extended the \$20 000 First Home Owner Grant for people buying or building a new home in regional Victoria to apply to contracts of sale entered up until 30 June 2021. This extension gives more Victorians the opportunity to live locally and enter the property market for the first time, while also supporting jobs in regional Victoria.

To unlock construction activity, Victoria's Big Housing Build includes \$52 million to implement the Commissioner for Better Regulation's planning reforms and to grow housing supply across the State through the Victorian Planning Authority programs Affordable by Supply and Streamlining for Growth.

In addition, \$59 million is provided for targeted planning system reforms. The reforms will have a critical role in unlocking private sector investment and supporting government initiatives, including the delivery of infrastructure, jobs and housing.



Taking care of those we love

This year, we were reminded of what matters most in life – the health and wellbeing of the people we love. As we begin our State’s recovery, that will continue to be our focus.

That means building a mental health system that Victorians can actually rely on.

It means making sure our healthcare system is there for those who need it.

It means finding new ways to deliver care – particularly for our most vulnerable.

And it means looking after the Victorians who look after for us.

It’s a \$9 billion investment. But most importantly, it will give every Victorian confidence that their loved ones will be taken care of.

Building our health response

Our hospitals and local healthcare services have been the backbone in our State’s response to the pandemic.

We want to help keep them strong, investing a further \$2 billion to build new hospitals and upgrading existing ones. This includes:

- \$384 million to commence the first stage of the Warrnambool Base Hospital redevelopment, including a new emergency department, operating theatres and acute inpatient beds
- \$75 million to purchase land and undertake detailed planning and early works for a new Melton hospital
- \$66 million to acquire land in Cranbourne, Pakenham, Torquay, City of Whittlesea, Eltham, Point Cook and the inner south and continue planning for new community hospitals
- \$10 million for planning to upgrade the existing site and create an additional site for the Royal Melbourne Hospital, and investigate the potential for a new Royal Women’s Hospital site in the Arden Renewal Precinct in North Melbourne

- \$7.6 million to expand maternity accommodation and upgrade critical infrastructure in Wangaratta for local mums and bubs
- \$4.8 million to begin planning for the future expansion of the Werribee Mercy Hospital, helping to meet the needs of our city’s growing west
- \$4.5 million to accelerate planning and design for the expansion of the Angliss Hospital at Ferntree Gully

This Budget provides \$200 million to establish a new Metropolitan Health Infrastructure Fund to fund upgrades and improvements across our city and suburban health services.

And because we know our local health services are at the heart of our regional communities, an extra \$120 million for our Regional Health Infrastructure Fund.

Having already invested \$350 million in the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund to improve regional health facilities, this additional Budget boost will help make sure Victorians get the very best care – wherever they live.

We’re also making sure our hospitals and health facilities have access to the latest equipment and technology. This Budget provides:

- \$85 million for engineering upgrades and to replace medical equipment in metropolitan, rural and regional hospitals
- \$30 million to refresh clinical technology including pathology, diagnostic imaging and patient management systems

This Budget will also provide \$40 million to improve energy efficiency in our State’s public hospitals, with solar power and high-efficiency LED lighting.



Continuing care for Victorians

Throughout 2020, our hospitals and healthcare system have done an incredible job in caring for Victorians.

To continue that work, and ensure we remain ready to respond to the pandemic, this Budget invests a further \$9 billion.

That includes funding for elective surgery, ambulance services and the continuous improvement of Victoria's testing and tracing capabilities.

This also includes \$2.8 billion to maintain hospital capacity and ensure the ongoing health of Victorians. This investment will mean:

- The continued operation of new facilities opened to deal with the pandemic
- Additional investment to cover the cost of new higher cost therapies, treating patients with complex conditions
- Supporting the delivery of elective surgery delayed during the pandemic

This Budget invests \$869 million to ensure Victorians have the mental health support they need

Mental health support when it's needed most

This pandemic has had a profound impact on the mental health of Victorians – and revealed the very deep cracks in our mental health system.

This Budget invests \$869 million to ensure Victorians have the mental health support they need as we get on with fixing a broken system.

This includes \$605 million to start implementing the Royal Commission into Mental Health's interim report findings and recommendations, including:

- An investment of \$492 million to build 120 more acute mental health beds in Geelong, Epping, Sunshine and Melbourne. This is an addition to the 24 beds announced earlier this year bringing the total to 144
- \$21 million to deliver the statewide expansion of the Hospital Outreach Post-Suicidal Engagement (HOPE) service, with individual, intensive and one-on-one support for Victorians as they rebuild their lives
- \$19 million for 35 acute treatment beds for public mental health patients in private health services
- \$16 million to support Victorians with lived experience of mental illness use their personal expertise to improve our mental health system
- \$8.7 million to establish Victoria's first residential mental health service designed by people with lived experience and their families and carers
- \$7.7 million to address workforce shortages in the mental health sector and support future expansion of the workforce

- \$4.4 million to continue support for Aboriginal wellbeing programs and commence design to establish a new Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing Centre
- \$2.2 million to establish the Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health, which will bring together people with lived experience, researchers, and medical staff to improve our State's mental health support

This Budget also includes \$26 million to meet critical demand, funding extra inpatient beds and increased access to community mental health services. A further \$3.9 million will provide mental health and wellbeing support for asylum seekers.

As the demand for mental health services grows, so too does the need for highly qualified professions. To support Victorians who want to join the workforce, the Budget provides \$13 million to promote pathways into employment, including scholarships and mentoring.

Protecting our parents and grandparents

This pandemic has thrown the safety and wellbeing of our loved ones in some private aged care facilities into sharp relief.

That's why this Budget will see Victoria step in to help cover the cost of introducing minimum staff-to-resident ratios in private aged care, with a \$40 million investment to train more nurses and personal care workers.

As the primary regulator and funder of aged care, this investment also relies on the Commonwealth coming to the table.

With this additional investment, we want to make sure that same level of care and comfort extends to every Victorian living in aged care, regardless of who owns the facility that supports them.

Care from the comfort of your own home

As challenging as it's been, this year has given us new insight into how we can deliver care remotely – or in the comfort of a patient's home.

As we recover from this pandemic, we want to make sure we continue to give patients flexibility in their care, allowing them to choose what is best for them and their families.

This Budget will invest \$121 million for Better at Home, increasing the delivery of hospital services in patients' homes – ensuring these Victorians can receive the care they need in the comfort of their own home.

We've also seen that for many people, telehealth is a much simpler and easier way to attend an appointment.

It's why this Budget also invests \$13 million to boost virtual care technology, making it easier for busy families and patients in regional and rural communities to access support.

This funding includes investing in new software to facilitate telehealth appointments, a trial of telehealth with Ambulance Victoria and the purchase of devices to make home-based care safer for patients and clinicians.



Photo: Ian ten Seldam

Our recovery workforce

Supporting us the whole way through this pandemic has been our mental health professionals, family violence specialists and child support workers.

This Budget, we're investing in our Recovery Workforce, increasing support for these hardworking Victorians, creating better pathways to roles in these vital sectors and recruiting more positions.

With a total package of \$235 million, new jobs will be created across mental health, family violence, and child protection.

Recognising the incredible skill and knowledge of our carers, this package also includes \$4.6 million to support them into employment in the community services, disability and aged care sector.

This includes assistance to help carers with their caring responsibilities while they study, helping with the cost of study materials, mentoring and additional supervision and support.

Helping those with drug and alcohol addiction

The impact of drug and alcohol addiction extends across families, workplaces and communities.

To help support Victorians struggling with addictions, and their loved ones, this Budget invests \$26 million to extend new alcohol and drug support. Dedicated funding will also go towards reaching and supporting Victorians who have become disengaged from treatment during the pandemic.

This Budget will also provide \$1 million to support the continuation of the Aboriginal Metropolitan Ice Partnership Initiative.

Supporting our ambulance services

In an emergency, minutes matter.

This Budget backs our paramedics and their patients, providing \$136 million to upgrade and expand our vital ambulance services.

This includes making sure our paramedics can continue to respond rapidly in an emergency, as well as the extension of the Mobile Stroke Unit and Victorian Stroke Telemedicine initiatives.

This investment also includes funding to deliver year-round ambulance services in Nagambie and 24-hour operations at the Diamond Creek ambulance branch, giving these communities confidence that care is always close by.

Improving care for cancer patients

Cancer touches almost every Victorian family. And we want to make sure our world-class health system continues to provide the very best care to cancer patients. This supports the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre Alliance to build on its work delivering programs to improve patient outcomes, contributing knowledge to the Victorian biomedical industry and increasing our understanding on diagnosis and treatment.

Looking after families

This pandemic has been the hardest thing many of us will ever go through.

We've worried about our kids and their future. We've worried about our parents and their health.

Some have had to worry about keeping a roof over their head – or keeping the lights on.

We want to make sure that as we recover, we're giving Victorians less to worry about.

Covering the cost of kinder. Helping our kids to catch-up.

Making sure more Victorians don't have to worry about paying their power bill. Making sure fewer Victorians have to worry about taking sick leave.

This Budget is about looking after Victorians – and looking after their families.

Driving down power bills

Spending more time at home has meant bigger power bills for many families.

That's why this Budget will help hundreds of thousands of families cover that cost – and help drive down their energy use.

\$448 million is available to help more Victorians improve the energy efficiency of their home, while reducing the cost of their power bills. This includes:

- \$335 million to replace older wood, electric or gas fired heaters with new more efficient heating and cooling for 250 000 low-income households.
- \$112 million will deliver upgraded energy systems for 35 000 social housing homes – reducing bills for tenants and making winter and summer more comfortable.

This Budget will also provide a one-off \$250 payment to help cover the cost of electricity bills for Victorian households that have an eligible concession card holder such as at least one JobSeeker, youth allowance recipient or pensioner.

The Andrews Labor Government's Solar Homes will also be accelerated for an additional 42 000 solar rebates, cutting the cost of solar installations for local families and reducing their power bills.

Additionally, the Solar Homes battery program will be expanded with 17 500 rebates made available over the next three years. 'Postcode eligibility' will also be removed, meaning Victorian's in every corner of the State can now apply for a battery rebate.

Funding will also continue to be provided for training, safety and quality audits.

Extra support for parents and families

Even with kids back at school, the daily balancing act that many families know all too well isn't easy.

We want to give families one less thing to worry about – and help support more parents, particularly women, back into work.

This Budget will deliver free kinder for 2021 and support for more outside school hours care – saving parents thousands of dollars and giving parents greater flexibility when it comes to work, study, training or re-entering the workforce. This investment includes:

- \$302 million to continue the rollout of universal three-year-old kindergarten, including additional funding for the early childhood LOOKOUT program to support the additional needs of families as a result of the pandemic
- \$170 million to make kinder free next year, saving families around \$2 000 for every child enrolled in a participating funded kindergarten program
- \$82 million to increase the availability of before and after school care. Grants of up to \$75 000 will be made available to start new outside school hours care programs at up to 400 government schools
- \$68 million to provide grants to local government and other eligible providers to build, expand and upgrade kinders and early childhood facilities
- \$8.7 million for three-year-old children from refugee and asylum seeker families to access free or low-cost kindergarten, and for early intervention support to help parents and kids struggling as a result of the pandemic.



Helping kids get back to the sports they love

This Budget delivers the Get Active Kids Voucher Program to support kids to get moving and help families with the costs of community sport.

This \$21 million investment will help children get involved in organised activities by providing \$200 vouchers for sports equipment, uniforms or memberships.

This is expected to support up to 100 000 young Victorians to get back on the pitch, court, the nets or field – while also giving families one less thing to worry about.

An inclusive education for every young Victorian

Teachers and families have done an incredible job in supporting our students. We want to help make their school communities stronger than ever, delivering an historic investment in inclusive education.

In addition to upgrading 39 specialist schools, a \$1.6 billion investment will transform support for students with disability, doubling the number of students receiving extra support to 55 000.

A world-leading pilot in more than 100 schools will now be rolled out across Victoria, putting the needs of students with disability at the heart of our response.

Every government school will benefit from the reform, which will enable access to students who may have previously been ineligible for targeted support – such as those with autism, dyslexia or complex behaviours.

This reform will be supported by the creation of up to 1730 jobs across the State by 2025, as well as new support and resources for our incredible school staff in delivering inclusive education for every student.

Helping our kids catch-up

To make sure no student is left behind, more than 4 100 tutors will be deployed across Victorian schools in 2021.

This Budget includes \$250 million that will provide support to more than 200 000 students across the State.

The investment will also help support more Victorians back into work, employing 4 100 tutors – with an estimated 80 per cent of roles filled by women, who have been among the most impacted financially by the pandemic.

This investment will also deliver more Koorie Engagement Workers and Multicultural Education Aides to support students and their families.

While our students were learning from home, more than 71 000 mobile devices were loaned out by schools.

This Budget delivers a \$25 million investment that will allow kids who need them to keep these devices – ensuring all government school students have access to technology at home.

Funding will both help with the costs of new devices purchased to support remote learning and the provision of replacement equipment, such as laptops and tablets.

Building the future our kids deserve

As kids get back into the classroom, this Budget delivers the single biggest investment ever in our schools – making sure students have the classrooms, libraries and learning spaces they deserve.

A \$1.9 billion school Building Blitz delivered in this Budget will bring our total investment in improving and building new schools to more than \$9.2 billion over the past five years.

This latest investment is expected to support more than 6 400 in construction and supply jobs across Victoria.

As part of the build, and to help meet the needs of local families, this Budget invests in a brand-new school and four extra stages at new schools, while purchasing land for a further 11 schools.

This Budget will see a further 123 schools across Victoria receive funding for upgrades, delivering new classrooms, gyms and learning spaces for local kids.

\$389 million will also support improvements at 39 specialist schools across Victoria, giving every child every opportunity to grow confidence, make friends and be their best.

A further \$20 million will see the Inclusive Schools Fund deliver improved learning spaces such as playgrounds, outdoor sensory areas and quiet re-engagement spaces.



Metro Schools



METRO NEW SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION, ADDITIONAL STAGES AND UPGRADES FOR GROWTH

- Ascot Vale West Primary School
- Box Hill North Primary School
- Clyde North Station Primary School – Stage 2b
- Dromana Primary School
- Footscray Primary School
- North Melbourne Hill Proposed School
- Preston High School – Stage 2b
- Reservoir Primary School
- Ruskin Park Primary School
- Templestowe Heights Primary School

METRO SCHOOL UPGRADES

- Alkira Secondary College
- Altona College
- Ashwood High School
- Auburn High School
- Auburn South Primary School
- Badger Creek Primary School
- Banyule Primary School
- Bayside P-12 College
- Bayswater Secondary College
- Bell Primary School
- Billanook Primary School
- Blackburn High School
- Boronia West Primary School
- Bundoora Primary School
- Burwood East Primary School
- Camberwell Primary School
- Carrum Downs Secondary College
- Carwatha College P-12
- Chatham Primary School
- Diggers Rest Primary School
- Emerald Secondary College
- Exford Primary School
- Fairhills High School
- Fawcner Primary School
- Fitzroy Primary School
- Flemington Primary School

- Footscray High School - Kinnear Street Campus
- Gladysdale Primary School
- Gleneagles Secondary College
- Glenroy Central Primary School
- Greenhills Primary School
- Hampton Park Secondary College
- Heathmont College
- Hoppers Crossing Secondary College
- Karingal Primary School
- Keilor Heights Primary School
- Kingswood Primary School
- Lalor Primary School
- Lalor Secondary College
- Lilydale Heights College
- Lilydale High School
- Lyndale Secondary College
- MacRobertson Girls High School
- Mentone Park Primary School
- Mickleham Primary School
- Mill Park Secondary College
- Monmia Primary School
- Mount Alexander 7-12 College
- Mount Waverley Secondary College
- Newlands Primary School
- Norwood Secondary College
- Oakleigh Primary School
- Oakleigh South Primary School
- Pakenham Consolidated School
- Parktone Primary School
- Pascoe Vale Primary School
- Peter Lalor Secondary College
- Reservoir High School
- Ringwood Secondary College
- Rosebud Secondary College
- Rosehill Secondary College
- South Oakleigh Secondary College
- Strathaird Primary School
- Sunbury West Primary School
- Sunshine Primary School
- Sydney Road Community School
- Syndal South Primary School
- Taylors Lakes Primary School
- Taylors Lakes Secondary College
- Thornbury High School
- Upper Yarra Secondary College
- Vermont Secondary College
- Watsonia Heights Primary School
- Watsonia Primary School
- Wattle Park Primary School
- Westall Primary School
- Western Port Secondary College
- Woodville Primary School
- Woori Yallock Primary School

METRO SPECIALIST SCHOOL UPGRADES

- Ascot Vale Special School
- Bayside Special Developmental School
- Belmore School
- Bulleen Heights School
- Coburg Special Developmental School
- Concord School
- Croxton Special School
- Diamond Valley Special Developmental School
- Emerson School
- Frankston Special Developmental School
- Furlong Park School For Deaf Children
- Glenallen School
- Heatherwood School
- Jacana School for Autism
- Jackson School
- Marnebek School Cranbourne
- Melton Specialist School
- Merriang Special Developmental School
- Monash Special Developmental School
- Nepean Special School
- Port Phillip Specialist School
- Rosamond Special School
- Southern Autistic School
- Sunshine Special Developmental School
- Vermont South Special School
- Victorian College For The Deaf
- Warringa Park School
- Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School
- Yarraville Special Developmental School

Regional Schools



STATEWIDE

Our education investments extend to every corner of our State, including:

- \$1.9 billion school building blitz, delivering great schools for tens of thousands of Victorian kids and creating thousands of jobs across the State
- \$1.6 billion in an unprecedented, multi-year reform to improve support for students with disability in government schools
- \$250 million for government and non-government schools to employ tutors to support students who need help to get back up to speed
- 123 schools will be upgraded, giving local kids the classrooms they deserve
- 39 specialist school upgrades to make sure every child can be their best
- New Schools Planning Fund will enable further planning to deliver the Government's commitment to open 100 new government schools across the state by 2026

REGIONAL ADDITIONAL STAGES

- Wangaratta District Specialist School - Benalla campus
- Wonthaggi Secondary College - San Remo campus

REGIONAL SCHOOL UPGRADES

- Bairnsdale Secondary College
- Beechworth Primary School
- Bellaire Primary School
- Bendigo Senior Secondary College
- Beveridge Primary School
- Birregurra Primary School
- Cape Clear Primary School
- Chewton Primary School
- Churchill North Primary School
- Clifton Springs Primary School
- Concongella Primary School
- Currawa Primary School
- Elmore Primary School

- Epsom Primary School
- Falls Creek Primary School
- Geelong South Primary School
- Grovedale West Primary School
- Hazelwood North Primary School
- Hopetoun P-12 College
- Korumburra Secondary College
- Kurnai College
- Kyabram P-12 College
- Kyneton High School
- Linton Primary School
- Lorne P-12 College
- Maiden Gully Primary School
- Merbein P-10 College
- Merrivale Primary School
- Myrtleford P-12 College
- Nagambie Primary School
- Natimuk Primary School
- Newstead Primary School
- Northern Bay P-12 College
- Rainbow P-12 College
- Skipton Primary School
- Stawell Secondary College
- Strathmerton Primary School

- Tarnagulla Primary School
- Tooborac Primary School
- Traralgon College - Grey St Senior Campus
- Waaia Yalca South Primary School
- Wallan Primary School
- Warragul Regional College
- Wodonga Middle Years College

REGIONAL SPECIALIST SCHOOL UPGRADES

- Ballarat Specialist School
- Baringa Special School
- Barwon Valley School
- Cobram and District Specialist School
- Colac Specialist School
- Hamilton Parklands School
- Hampden Specialist School - campus 1 and 2
- Horsham Special School
- Nelson Park School
- Swan Hill Specialist School

Korumburra
Secondary College

Building strong, connected communities

This Budget will build strong, connected communities.

Because we understand – investing in our communities means investing in the people who call them home.

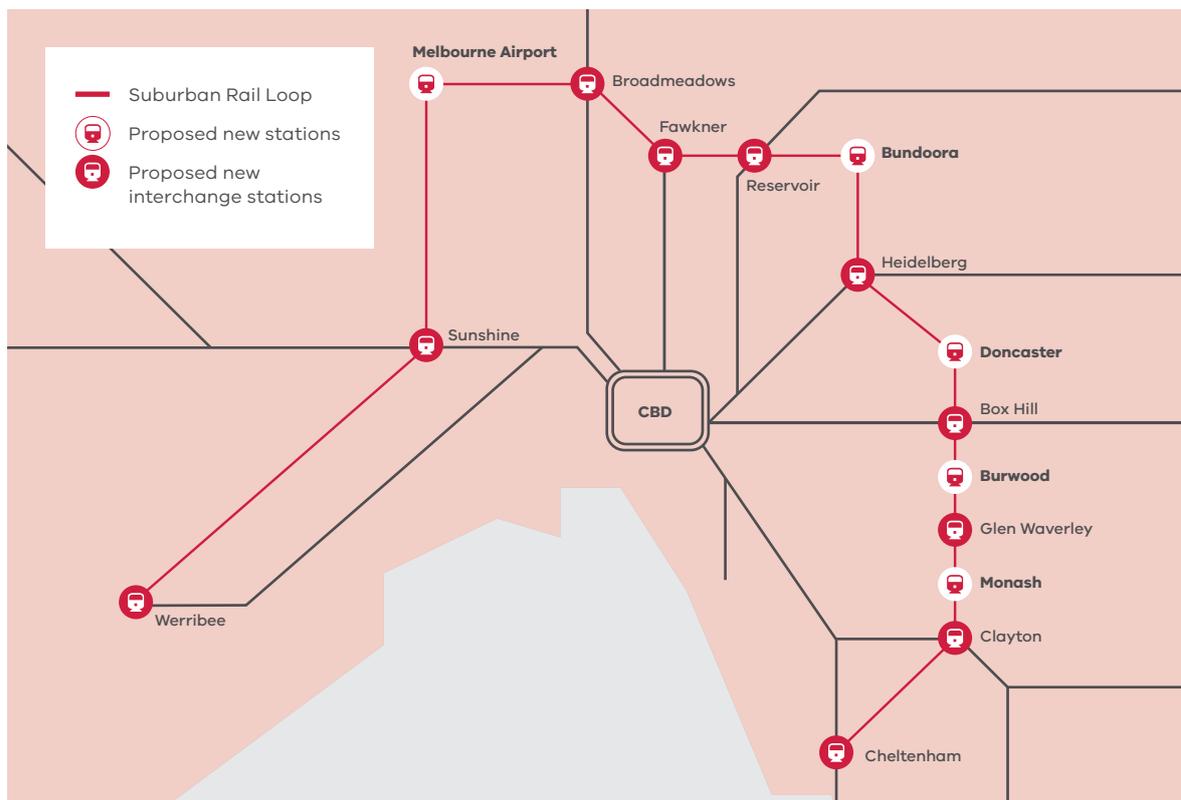
Investment in local road and rail means more time spent with loved ones. A new school means more certainty for local families.

Every one of these investments is an investment in what matters most: people.

Suburban Rail Loop

The Suburban Rail Loop will transform Victoria's public transport system and connect Melbourne's middle suburbs, linking every major rail line from the Frankston line to the Werribee line, via the airport.

And with three transport super hubs at Clayton, Broadmeadows and Sunshine – regional passengers will also benefit, no longer having to travel through the CBD to get to work, our world-class hospitals or universities in the suburbs.



This is a project that will fundamentally change the way we travel, connecting Victorians to jobs, education, healthcare – and most importantly, to each other.

This Budget invests \$2.2 billion to kick-off initial and early works on Stage One running between Cheltenham and Box Hill – laying the groundwork for tunnelling, including preparation of our tunnel boring machine launch sites and geotechnical investigation.

Not only will this investment kick-start work on this city and State-shaping project, it'll support initially up to 800 jobs – getting more Victorians into work and supporting our State's recovery.

This project is anticipated to support a further 20 000 jobs during construction and take thousands of passengers off existing rail lines and 200 000 fewer cars off our major roads.

Geelong Fast Rail

This year has shown spending time with those we love is the most important thing.

It's why making sure passengers have a fast, reliable rail connection between Geelong and Melbourne matters more than ever.

This Budget delivers \$2 billion towards Geelong Fast Rail – matching the Commonwealth's contribution to the project.

Funding will go toward preparing a business case and design as part of the First Stage of work, supporting over 2 800 jobs at the peak of construction.

Once complete, this project will mean fewer stops, faster trips and less crowded trains. It'll also reduce reliance on the Princes Freeway corridor. Most importantly, it'll mean less time commuting – and more time spent with the people you love.

Building better rail for regional Victoria

This Budget invests in the rail projects that will get Victorians home sooner to their families – while driving Victoria's economic recovery and creating hundreds of jobs.

This Budget invests \$3.8 billion to maintain and support our regional rail network including:

- \$899 million to upgrade the track between South Geelong and Waurn Ponds stations and develop a business case for the South Geelong Tunnel
- \$400 million for Stage 3 of the Shepparton Rail Line Upgrade to allow the line to accommodate nine daily return passenger services
- \$260 million to complete Stage 2 of the Warrnambool Rail Line Upgrade, which will allow modern VLocity trains to operate to and from Warrnambool for the first time



Next Generation Trams

Victorians love their trams with over 200 million trips completed annually on the network.

This Budget invests \$1.5 billion to purchase 100 Next Generation Trams and commence the establishment of a tram maintenance facility in Melbourne's north west, keeping our trams up to scratch.

These trams will improve reliability, capacity and accessibility – with low floors making it easier for more Victorians to get on and off.

Importantly, these new trams will be manufactured in our State, supporting over 1800 jobs in manufacturing and supply chains at the peak of production.

Improving our road network

Our road network is vital to connecting Victorians to work, to school and to each other.

That's why in the past five years the Andrew's Labor Government has invested in growing and improving our road network.

This Budget continues that work, investing \$450 million in a road maintenance blitz, maintaining, repairing and resurfacing roads across metropolitan and regional Victoria.

This includes an investment of \$35 million to strengthen bridges and replace older intelligent transport systems.

A further \$17 million will upgrade freight routes for farmers and processors in Victoria's vital south-west dairy supply chain, saving them time and money.



And to help support our broader economic recovery, this investment is expected to support over 50 jobs at the peak of construction. Other key improvements to our road network include:

- \$255 million to enable a five-year program of upgrades to the iconic Great Ocean Road
- \$241 million to complete Stage 3 of Princes Highway East duplication between Traralgon and Sale
- \$117 million to fund metropolitan road and intersection upgrades

The \$388 million Keeping Victorians Moving initiative will deliver technology upgrades and additional resources to reduce congestion and improve travel times on the metropolitan road network as well as funding to reduce the wait time for registration and licensing services.

An additional \$63 million will deliver a new School and Community Safety Program, with:

- Funding to increase road safety around schools, protecting students and their families
- New and enhanced pedestrian crossings
- Regional intersection upgrades
- Temporary walking and cycling infrastructure
- Development funding for a shared user path as part of the Hurstbridge line works

Transforming Melbourne's Arts Precinct

Our State's reputation as Australia's cultural capital will be permanently cemented, with a \$1.4 billion investment to transform Melbourne's Arts Precinct.

As an investment it will help drive our State's recovery, bringing visitors from interstate and overseas, creating thousands of Victorian jobs and giving families a new public place to enjoy. This investment includes:

- Developing a new stand-alone National Gallery of Victoria Contemporary with a focus on contemporary art and design
- Creating a 18 000 square metre immersive public garden – a space for all Victorians to enjoy, with outdoor performances, public art, cafes and restaurants
- Supporting critical upgrades for the Arts Centre Melbourne to improve visitor and audience experience
- Building shared infrastructure that will serve all the facilities in the precinct more efficiently

The project will support an estimated 5 000 jobs in construction and support more than 200 new ongoing jobs in Victoria's creative sector when complete.

This Budget also provides \$220 million to further support the creative sector, including a \$21 million screen industry recovery plan.

Up to \$35 million will help build and upgrade creative spaces in regional communities, driving tourism and supporting local jobs.

A strong recovery

2020 has shown us what matters most.

The safety and security of our families, our kids, our parents. Having confidence in what tomorrow might look like.

And those most basic things – our connection to each other, looking after one another.

It's why this Budget is dedicated to doing exactly that: looking after people.

As we rebuild, we know we need to bring every suburb – every Victorian – with us.

This Budget is about repair, recovery, and making us stronger than before.

Open spaces for local communities to enjoy

This year we've come to appreciate our local parks, playgrounds, footy ovals and sporting fields more than ever. As Victorians spend more time outdoors with the people they love, this Budget invests in new local community spaces.

\$52 million will see upgrades at parks including Albert Park, Braeside Park, Brimbank Park, Dandenong Ranges, Mornington Peninsula, Organ Pipes, Plenty Gorge, Point Cook, and other locations around Victoria – investing in community facilities for local families to enjoy.

This Budget also invests \$110 million for the Community Sports Infrastructure Stimulus Program to build and upgrade community sports facilities across the State, partnering with local communities and councils.

An additional \$27 million will deliver new and upgraded community sport and recreation facilities, including community club lighting and scoreboards, seniors' community sports infrastructure, community football and netball facilities and female friendly changerooms.

\$75 million in the Growing Suburbs Fund will deliver hundreds of local infrastructure projects in Melbourne's diverse and rapidly growing suburbs.

From playgrounds to sporting pavilions, these projects will help bring communities together, while also supporting local jobs.

A further \$20 million will revitalise town centres in Broadmeadows, Boronia, Frankston, Lilydale, Melton, Noble Park, Reservoir and Tarneit, delivering upgrades and improvements to local community spaces. Funding will enable the construction of a missing section of seawall at Altona Beach to protect the foreshore against rising sea levels and storm damage.



Supporting and protecting communities, as we recover

For some communities in our State, 2020 began with bushfires – and then the global pandemic hit.

We're making sure these Victorians are at the heart of this Budget

That includes long-term recovery – working with locals to support and rebuild their communities in the years and months to come.

The Labor Government is investing \$124 million for the establishment of Bushfire Recovery Victoria over the next four years, a permanent and dedicated agency to work directly with bushfire-affected communities to listen, to respond and support Victorians in their recovery journey.

This Budget also delivers \$46 million for the management of bushfire risk through expanded mechanical fuel treatments and the recruitment of additional firefighters.

An additional \$20 million investment will staff the State Control Centre 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to ensure we're prepared to respond to emergencies all year round.

Emergency service staff and volunteers will also be supported to respond to incidents, with \$4 million to enhance public emergency warning and information systems, and support emergency staff to access critical information while they're out in the field.

Victoria Police has been at the forefront of our response to both the bushfires and then the pandemic. This Budget invests \$400 million in its work, including \$39 million to support coronavirus (COVID-19) enforcement and operations.

Further funding will go towards critical technology improvements, tackling speeding and turning at-risk young people away from crime.



Helping young Victorians and their families

As we recover, we want to build a stronger, fairer Victoria – that begins with our young people and their future. The Andrews Labor Government are investing \$1.3 billion to protect and support children and their families.

This Budget delivers \$75 million to make the landmark Home Stretch program universal – ensuring every young person in out-of-home care can receive support up to the age of 21, helping to make sure they have the stable foundation to begin their lives.

Home Stretch provides an accommodation allowance so a young person can remain living with their kinship or foster carer if they wish, or transition to supported independent living arrangements.

From 2021, that support will continue up to the age of 21 for every young Victorian in out-of-home care.

This Budget also delivers:

- More support for early intervention to help families stay together
- Continued support for vulnerable children who are unable to live safely with their families
- Additional case managers and care teams for young people

A fairer future for Aboriginal Victorians

A fairer future for our State means a fairer future for Aboriginal Victorians.

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering over \$357 million, the biggest ever investment in support for our Aboriginal communities. This includes:

- \$86 million to reduce representation of Aboriginal Children in care and continue to support self-determination for Aboriginal Victorians
- \$40 million for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to establish a community-led service delivery fund to support health and social services
- \$21 million to better incorporate Aboriginal values and expertise into water management and to continue to protect cultural heritage
- \$14 million to create two new Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program funding rounds. Grants will support projects that are a priority to Aboriginal communities, creating jobs for Aboriginal Victorians and restoring connection with Country

To advance the Treaty process between Aboriginal Victorians and the Government, this Budget also invests \$20 million to support greater self-determination and ensure more community voices are being heard. This includes:

- Continued funding for the First Peoples' Assembly to negotiate Treaty on behalf of Aboriginal Victorians
- Delivering a new campaign to further build collective understanding amongst all Victorians about the importance of the Treaty process

During the pandemic, Aboriginal communities and Government have worked closely to support Aboriginal communities, including the work of the COVID-19 Aboriginal Community Taskforce.

This Budget continues that partnership, providing \$23 million to deliver immediate, culturally safe support to Victorian Aboriginal communities across health, human services and aboriginal affairs portfolio programs during the pandemic and support critical recovery efforts.

Empowering people with disability

As our State recovers stronger and fairer, we need to make sure every Victorian has the support – and independence – they deserve.

The Andrews Labor Government is investing \$1.6 billion to ensure an inclusive education for students with disability.

In addition to this investment, this Budget provides \$12 million to support the new State Disability Plan.

This Budget also delivers \$209 million to support Victorians who are not eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Funding of \$4.8 million extends the Intensive Support Team, which has already helped more than 1 300 Victorians with complex needs who have found difficulty in navigating the NDIS or receiving an appropriate plan.

Younger Victorians with disability who are ineligible for the NDIS will also be supported to maintain their independence, with another \$42 million through our Home and Community Care Program for Younger People.

We are also committing \$6.7 million for the Disability Worker Regulation Scheme to improve quality of care and service standards across the disability workforce.

Keeping women and children safe

Keeping women and children safe has been this Government's priority from the very beginning.

This Budget continues that commitment, delivering \$238 million to support victim survivors and their families.

This investment includes:

- \$18 million for family violence refuge responses, supporting the operation of 2 new and 13 redeveloped core and cluster refuges, enhancing case management responses
- \$9.7 million for prevention and early intervention activities, which provides funding to prevent and respond to family violence earlier, including in our culturally diverse communities
- Therapeutic and flexible support for children, young people and adults impacted by family violence
- 5 700 family violence flexible support packages for victim survivors of family violence every year
- Adolescent family violence services for young people and their families

In line with the Royal Commission into Family Violence's recommendations, an extra \$2.7 million will deliver improvements including better multi-agency information sharing – giving perpetrators nowhere to hide.

An additional \$11 million will help keep perpetrators accountable, including continuing the Caring Dads program following its successful trial.

Advancing gender equality

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to gender equality and to implementing the historic *Gender Equality Act 2020*. That's why in this Budget we've provided \$13 million to implement this Act, including:

- Establishing the Office of the Gender Equality Commissioner, ensuring effective administration and implementation of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- Developing and maintaining a reporting platform for in scope entities to facilitate defined entities' submission of Gender Equality Action Plans and progress reports

This Budget also invests \$38 million to continue the Government's Respectful Relationships program in Victorian schools. This program promotes and models respectful behaviour, and teaches our children how to build healthy relationships.

We are committing a substantial investment to help women recover from this pandemic, with funding to support economic security, employment and gender equality.

Additional information about our support for Victorian women can be found in the Gender Equality budget information paper.

Backing our LGBTIQ+ communities

This pandemic has taken a lot from us – but it hasn't taken our determination to achieve a more equal and inclusive future for every Victorian.

This Budget provides \$1 million in funding for the LGBTIQ+ Community Grants program, strengthening the sustainability and leadership capability of the sector.

It also provides \$2 million for LGBTIQ+ organisations that have been impacted during the pandemic, ensuring they can continue their important work supporting LGBTIQ+ Victorians.





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Victorian Budget 2020/21
Overview

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