



**NATIONAL
Growth Areas
ALLIANCE**

2026-27 Pre-Budget submission

Beyond Bricks: Housing and Infrastructure in Australia's
Growth Areas

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands across Australia on which we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We recognise their rich culture and their enduring connection to Country and the role this plays in shaping sustainable communities.

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A Budget for a new Australia

The 2026–27 Federal Budget will be delivered in a context unlike any Australia has experienced. While the ongoing priorities of the Albanese Government remain front of mind (housing, climate, productivity), Australians are also embracing new ways of expressing culture, identity and community. There is a growing awareness of the importance of social cohesion and resilience, both locally and nationally.

The National Growth Areas Alliance believes that our member councils, situated in fast-growing outer metropolitan areas, play a critical role in building strong and connected communities.

Our submission is grounded in the view that **local government remains underutilised and underestimated in its capacity to shape the wellbeing of its communities**. With short-term, inconsistent and insufficient funding, councils cannot fully meet their responsibilities as stewards of the people and businesses who call their areas home.

This pre-budget submission positions local government as fundamental to the equitable delivery of national priorities. From this foundation, we outline the essential role our member councils play in addressing Australia's housing shortages and make the case for sustained investment in community-building facilities, infrastructure, services and programs.

When new suburbs grow quickly and large numbers of residents arrive to begin their lives in new neighbourhoods, deliberate effort and investment are required to ensure a positive and cohesive community identity can form. Long-term inequitable infrastructure funding in Growth Areas continues to place our communities at risk.

Governments continue to contribute to a social divide in Australia based on proximity to historical town centres established during European settlement. Cities have continued to expand geographically, yet investment priorities remain focused on established city centres, signalling their needs are more legitimate than those of new communities. After more than two centuries of concentrated investment, this pattern persists despite the clear demographic and economic strength of Growth Area communities.

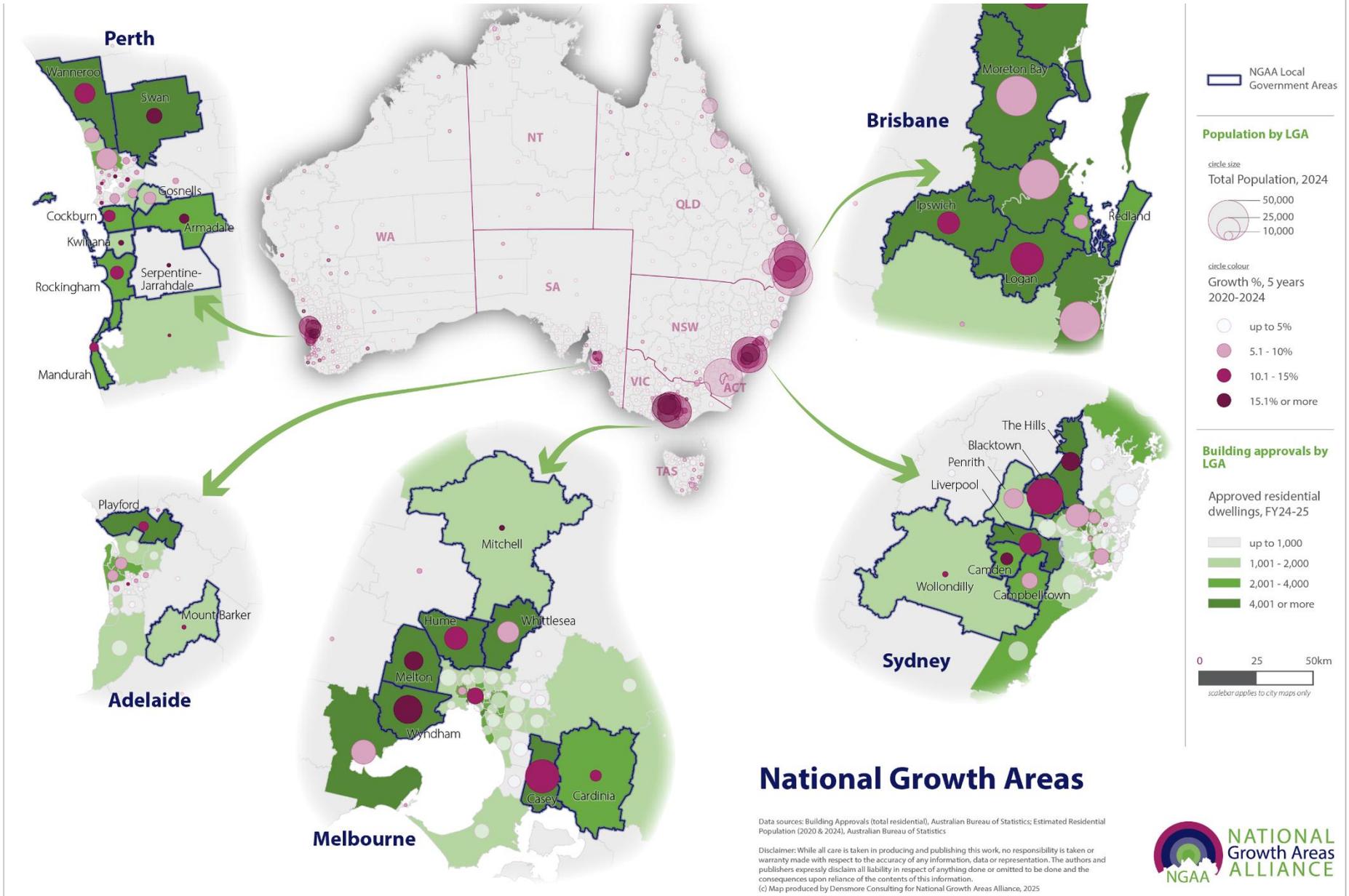
Australia's 29 Growth Area Councils are home to 5.8 million people: young families, ambitious workers in the prime of their careers and skilled migrants who have chosen these areas to meet their aspirations.

It is time to adopt a realistic definition of Australian cities that reflects the distinct characteristics of inner, middle and outer rings. Each has its own needs, functions and aspirations. A national definition must recognise all parts of our cities as equally valuable, productive and central to Australia's future.

Recommendations

Action	Budget	Implementation
Recognise growth areas as distinct metropolitan regions and adopt this definition consistently across government portfolios	Nil	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a standardised metropolitan geography classification in Centre for Population analysis and data dashboards for housing, planning, and land use. This would guide federal and state funding programs, enabling more targeted policies and allocations similar to regional area support. 2. Apply city geographic definitions across portfolios to ensure investment is allocated equitably based on community and economic needs.
Realign Commonwealth funding programs related to housing and infrastructure for immediate use and impact in Growth Areas, acknowledging competitive grant funding is not appropriate for enabling infrastructure.	Realignment of existing funding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New Homes Bonus: Allocate unused funding to development-ready Growth Areas where enabling infrastructure is the only barrier to supply. 2. Housing Support Program - prioritise urgent enabling infrastructure delivery in Growth Areas through replenished and geographically targeted funding. 3. Infrastructure Investment Program – allocate to regionally significant projects across Growth Areas.
Urgent investment in infrastructure to enable social cohesion in Growth Areas, while developing a long-term, place-based, coordinated investment framework for strategic and social infrastructure and services in Growth Areas	uPPP extension: - \$500 million per year for five years designated for Growth Areas Thriving Suburbs/Places - \$500 million per year for five years designated for Growth Areas Local Roads & Community Infra.: - \$1 billion ongoing with increase in Growth Areas per capita formula.	Immediate measures: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. urban Precincts and Partnerships: Expand to include regionally significant infrastructure in Growth Areas to maximise return on Federal investment in the area 2. Thriving Suburbs program (rename Thriving Places): reinstate and expand Thriving Places and Local Roads and Community Infrastructure to overcome the vast infrastructure deficit in Growth Area communities
Rollout National Community Cohesion Workforce Development Program in new suburbs across Growth Areas in conjunction with targeted community infrastructure delivery and Council-led community cohesion initiatives.	\$15 million p.a. for three years for Council-led community cohesion focused events & festivals \$3.9 million over three years for workforce training delivered in 29 Growth Area Councils.	Immediate measures: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial support for bolstered whole-of-community Growth Area Council-led events. 2. Social Cohesion funding: New funding for community cohesion program in Growth Areas.

Australia's 29 Growth Area LGAs are the epicentres of population growth and building approvals



National Growth Areas Alliance

The National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA) is the peak body for local governments in Australia's outer-metropolitan growth areas - home to more than 5.8 million people. United by growth rates double the national average and long-term under-investment in vital infrastructure, NGAA advocates to state and federal governments for equitable strategic infrastructure investment and national policy reform.

Growth areas need national policy leadership to reimagine outer-metropolitan development as integral to sustainable capital-city growth, supported by long-term funding for urban-standard infrastructure and improved federal and state services in the outer suburbs.

Our platform centres on social, environmental and economic resilience - the foundation of liveable, thriving places and the capacity to respond to shocks such as climate-driven extremes, economic change and rising living costs.

National Growth Areas Alliance Member councils



Modernising Australian Cities' Geography

Recommendation: Recognise Growth Areas as nationally significant metropolitan regions and adopt this definition consistently across government portfolios

Budget allocation required: Nil

1. Use a standardised metropolitan geography classification in Centre for Population analysis and data dashboards for housing, planning, and land use. This would guide federal and state funding programs, enabling more targeted policies and allocations similar to regional area support.
2. Applying city geographic definitions across portfolios to ensure investment is allocated equitably based on community and economic needs.

The 2025 Population Statement and Centre for Population data show that capital cities make up over two-thirds (68% or 18,752,600 people) of Australia's population. Capital cities are expected to grow nearly twice as fast as other areas, accounting for 80% of the projected increase of more than 2.7 million people by 2035-36.

These trends underscore the need to adjust Budget spending to reflect variations *within* cities.

Recognise Growth Areas as nationally significant metropolitan regions

There are clear differences between local government areas within capital cities in terms of population size and growth rates, housing, access to facilities and services and diversity within communities. These differences have significant implications for planning, funding, and ultimately, equity and social cohesion.

Outer metropolitan growth regions are growing significantly faster than inner and middle capital city regions but there is little reflection of this in Government infrastructure investment.

In the last five years Growth Areas population grew by more than 650,000 - 43% of Australia's growth over that time. By 2024, the resident population in Growth Areas reached more than 5.8 million. Higher birth rates than the national average mean one in four Australian children already live in Growth Areas. This trajectory is set to continue, with over 7 million people projected to be living in Growth Areas by 2031.

Outer metropolitan growth regions are nationally significant in their own right, as recognised in existing Federal policy initiatives such as Outer Suburban Study Hubs and Telecommunications in New Developments.

Growth Areas generate \$713.5 billion in annual economic output, with the Manufacturing sector making the greatest contribution. Even with a local jobs shortfall relative to resident workers, Growth Areas support 1.6 million jobs.

Develop a standard geographical classification for growth areas to improve decision-making

Differences in settlement patterns across regional Australia have long been understood using the nationally accepted Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA+) in terms of four remoteness regions: inner regional, outer regional, remote and very remote areas. **There are no equivalent nationally recognised classifications to differentiate distinct sub-regions within major cities.**

The lack of a definitive and transparent methodology to distinguish growth areas within either the ASGS remoteness structure major cities', Greater Capital Cities Statistical Areas or under the urban structure, limits the recognition of distinct metropolitan regions in state and federal government policy and programs, contributing to spatial inequities that impact their communities.

The NGAA is partnering with the University of Adelaide's Australian Centre for Housing Research (ACHR) to develop a transparent methodology, and trialling a new, robust and repeatable classification of growth areas: [A new geographical classification for National Growth Areas¹](#).

The NGAA seeks to advance this work in collaboration with the Centre for Population and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to improve planning and deliver better targeted resource allocation across all portfolios.

This classification will be based on robust, repeatable ABS data, available at the key spatial scales aligned with the Australian Standard Geographical Structure.

Inequities caused by the single 'Greater Capital City' definition

Analysis of RMIT's Australian Urban Observatory '[City Liveability Scorecards for Growth Areas](#)' highlights significant differences in community infrastructure and services between growth and non-growth areas of capital cities. The Scorecards use data from 10 indicators—such as social infrastructure, walkability, public transport access, open space, and housing affordability—to show how liveability varies by suburb. Inner city areas tend to score higher on liveability, while outer suburbs generally score lower, especially when compared to non-growth areas.

- Residents in growth areas face a **37% accessibility gap in public transport**.
- Growth areas have **68% less access to sports and leisure facilities** (Liveability indicator score: 0.07 vs. 0.23).
- Access to arts and cultural facilities in growth areas is 44% lower (Liveability indicator score: 0.49 vs. 0.87)
- Access to **health care facilities in growth areas is 48% lower** (Liveability indicator score: 1.25 vs. 2.42).
- Growth areas score **21% lower for access to education facilities** (Liveability indicator score: 1.99 vs. 2.53).

Urgent enabling infrastructure to meet Housing Accord Targets

Recommendation: Realign Commonwealth funding programs *related to housing and infrastructure* for immediate use and impact in Growth Areas, acknowledging competitive grant funding is not appropriate for enabling infrastructure.

1. New Homes Bonus: Allocated unused funding to development-ready Growth Areas where enabling infrastructure is the only barrier to supply.
2. Housing Support Program - prioritise urgent enabling infrastructure delivery in Growth Areas through replenished and geographically targeted funding.

Around a third of development ready greenfield sites in Growth Areas, (potentially 82,500 dwellings) are currently unable to proceed due to lack of enabling infrastructure.² Alarming, some development has already gone ahead without connected sewerage and insufficient potable water access.

Growth areas are the only regions in Australia where housing approvals and completions have remained strong.

In 2024-25 alone, Growth Area councils recorded 64,335 dwelling approvals - almost half of all dwelling approvals across Australia's capital cities³

Growth Areas need upfront investment in enabling infrastructure to unlock new housing supply.

Examples include:

- 8,000 unbuilt houses in south-west Sydney due to sewerage constraints
- 3,600 homes in wester Sydney unbuilt due to stormwater infrastructure delay



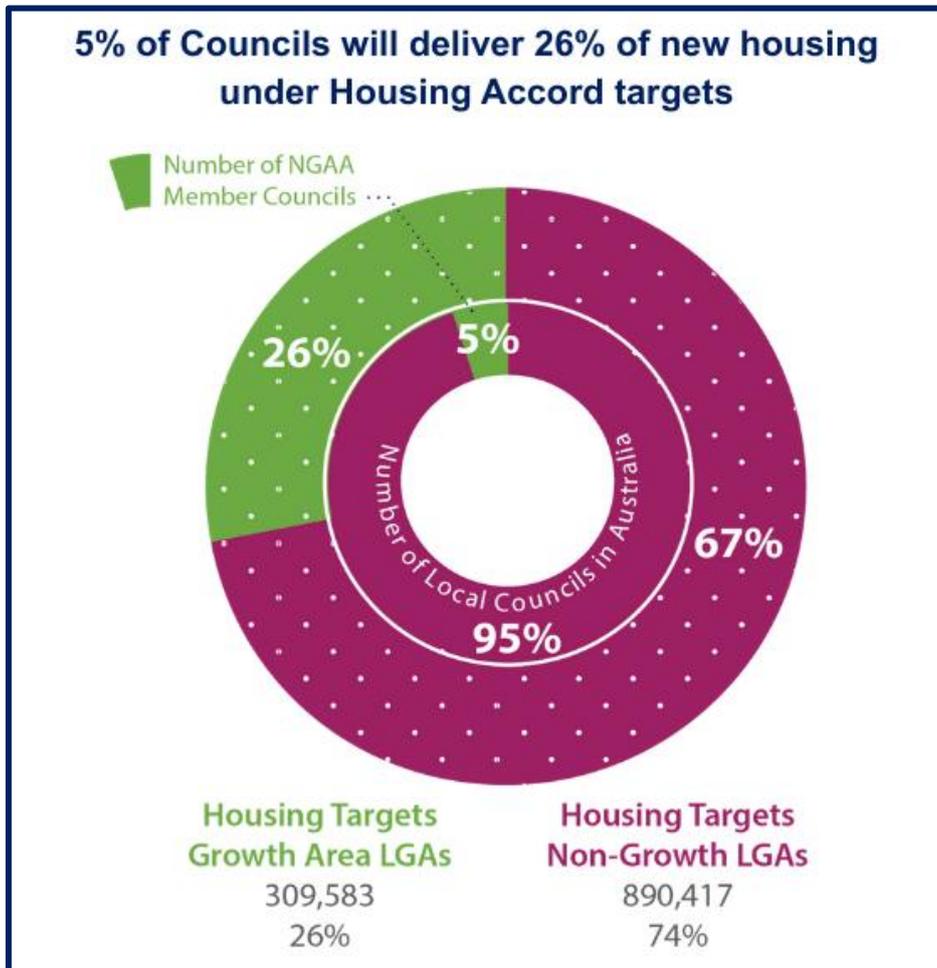
Appendix 1 provides a detailed list of development-ready projects in Growth Areas that, when funded, would deliver housing supply that meets the Accord targets.

The Case for Housing-Enabling Investment in Growth Areas

While attention is focussed on convincing inner and middle ring areas to welcome new housing and population growth, and while state planning schemes are overhauled to remove safeguards, Australia's 29 Growth Area councils are continuing to build homes at scale and at pace.

The Government’s relentless focus on new homes in infill and densification in established areas overlooks the reality that over 300,000 new homes are already slated to be built in outer metropolitan Growth Areas – mostly in greenfield sites.

Federal and State Governments must acknowledge and support the housing and population growth that is happening every day in outer metropolitan areas across the country, at the same time as pursuing densification in established suburbs.



Recommendation: Urgent investment in community and social infrastructure in Growth Areas, while developing a long-term, place-based, coordinated investment framework for strategic and social infrastructure and services in Growth Areas

This recommendation can be implemented by:

1. Creating a Growth Areas Investment Framework (using new standard ABS classification), providing an opportunity to implement the 2024 National Urban Policy which risks redundancy due to neglect.

As an immediate measure:

2. urban Precincts and Partnerships: Renew and fund \$500 million for Growth Areas including regionally significant infrastructure to maximise return on Federal investment
3. Thriving Suburbs program (rename Thriving Places): reinstate, fund to \$500 million
4. make the \$1 billion Local Roads and Community Infrastructure ongoing to overcome the vast infrastructure deficit in Growth Area communities

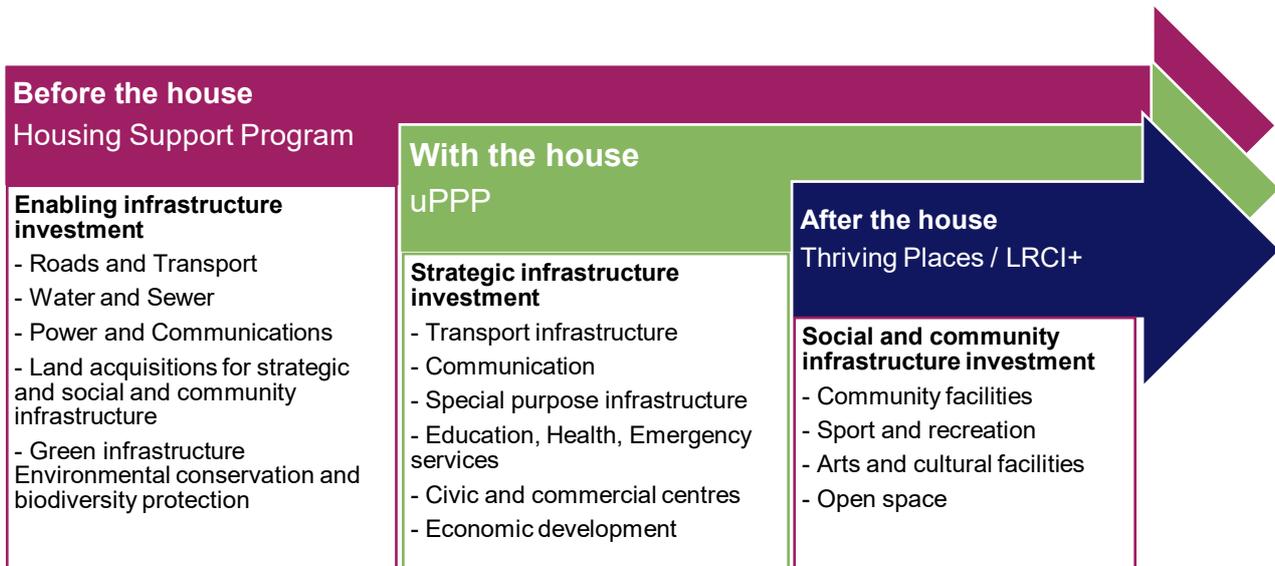
Urgent community and social infrastructure investment

The timing and sequencing of infrastructure funding is critical to meeting the needs of people and place as they develop. Infrastructure has a major impact on national productivity by providing equitable access to jobs, transport, health and education facilities, as well as creating national social cohesion via places for people to gather, connect and build communities in new developments.

Where is the Albanese Government's National Urban Policy?

A Growth Areas Investment Framework is in line with the Albanese Government's National Urban Policy which is an holistic place and people-led investment framework. It's goal is to create policies and programs that create liveable and equitable, productive and innovative, and sustainable and resilient urban centres. Sadly, the Policy has been neglected in this second term of Government.

The current Housing Accord targets are impossible to meet without infrastructure needed **Before the House** (recommendation 2) and successive governments have missed the chance for strategic investment in infrastructure needed **With the House** which is eventually, if ever, cobbled together over decades from various Federal and State sources. Finally, infrastructure needed **After the House**, once new neighbourhoods are fully populated, and social connection is vital, is increasingly left to local government to advocate for and fund despite the costs being far outside their budget.



Stronger Commonwealth leadership can provide clarity, certainty and accountability

Misalignment between growth area housing delivery and State infrastructure delivery delays national housing targets, diminishes productivity and undermines social cohesion in new communities.

The Federal Government has a critical role to play in addressing these systemic issues. Through targeted enabling infrastructure funding, early feasibility and pre-investment planning, national network coordination, and reform of infrastructure funding models, the Commonwealth can unlock housing supply at scale.

Focus on inter- and intra- governmental coordination

Current infrastructure frameworks and ad hoc grant programs do not reflect the pace, scale or sequencing of growth occurring in outer metropolitan areas, resulting in persistent delivery gaps that delay housing supply and entrench inequality.

Growth areas are accommodating a disproportionate share of population growth and housing delivery. Funding models that rely heavily on developer contributions or retrospective investment place an unreasonable burden on new communities and delay the provision of essential services.

Relying on ad hoc competitive grant programs, advocacy and submission processes is both inefficient and costly for councils. In contrast, Australian and international research highlights the importance of coordination across the three tiers of government and involving local councils in decision-making are key success factors for place-based regional strategies. Stronger coordination and collaboration, rather than competition also reduces the administrative burden on councils.⁴ Three examples below exemplify this need for cross-government coordination for regionally significant infrastructure.

Rail connection from Macarthur Region to maximise investment in Western Sydney Airport

The Macarthur region in NSW urgently needs a metro rail link to Western Sydney International Airport. Years of limited investment in public transport and roads have led to congestion in

Campbelltown, forcing residents to rely heavily on private vehicles for jobs, healthcare, and education. Notably, 70% of cars at Campbelltown train station come from outside the local area, mainly Camden and Wollondilly.

A metro connection from the airport to Campbelltown would allow neighbouring residents to use public transport, freeing up carpark land for better economic uses. Two metro extensions are needed - via Glenfield (Leppington) and between Campbelltown-Macarthur. These would improve worker access to the new airport, support regional mobility, and enhance Campbelltown City's regional role.

Maximise investment in Melbourne's Outer North and West by building OMR-E6 Connecting Wyndham, Melton, Mitchell, Hume, Whittlesea

Melbourne's outer north and west are rapidly growing, with municipalities like Mitchell, Whittlesea, Hume, Melton, and Wyndham preparing for millions of new residents. Effective transport is vital for these areas. The Outer Metropolitan Ring E6 (OMR-E6) is a planned 70-kilometre corridor linking key regions, featuring up to six road lanes and four rail tracks for integrated transportation. This major project aims to boost economic growth, ease congestion, and support net-zero emissions through reliable transit.

Meet Housing Accord targets through Medium-High Density Development in Perth's Growth Areas

Western Australia's Perth and Peel @3.5million⁵ land use planning and infrastructure frameworks aim to accommodate 3.5 million people by 2050, shaping urban development over the next 30 years. These plans seek to reduce urban sprawl, promote diverse housing, and guide government and developers. Nearly half of the planned 800,000 new homes - at least 380,000 - will be delivered through infill development, mostly within existing suburbs in the Central sub-region, especially near METRONET. Growth Area LGAs will accommodate 98,850 infill dwellings (26% of their total development) alongside 277,010 greenfield dwellings. Infill proportions vary, from 4% in Serpentine-Jarrahdale to 49% in Cockburn, but are generally high.

Long term funding is best practice and proven in Australia

A 2024 review of international best practices in urban infrastructure funding for NGAA⁶, all had multi-year funding frameworks that provide stability for large-scale projects and ensure consistent investment across political cycles.

In Australia, **Roads infrastructure programs** offer a good model for providing local government with dedicated and ongoing funding streams for enabling infrastructure. Programs such as the Black Spot Program and Roads to Recovery have been a long-established source of funding for local councils to help them deliver safer roads and pedestrian infrastructure identified through systematic planning and scheduled works.

Funding recipients under the **Roads to Recovery** program, for example, have a set program allocation for each five-year program cycle and choose the projects on which they will spend their funding based on local priorities. Similarly, the **Safer Local Roads** and Infrastructure Program, funds projects which address current and emerging priorities in road infrastructure needs in an application-based, ongoing funding stream of around \$200 million per year. A factor in the longevity of road funding programs is that a portion of Australian Government funding for road infrastructure is sourced from revenue received from fuel excise since 2014⁷.

Urgent need to address community cohesion

Recommendation: Rollout **National Community Cohesion Workforce Development Program** in new suburbs across Growth Areas in conjunction with targeted community infrastructure delivery and bolster support for Council-led community cohesion events.

Budget Required:

- \$15 million to expand Council-led initiatives aimed at building community cohesion.
- \$3.9 million over three years for workforce training delivered across 29 Growth Area Councils where 309,000 new homes will be built by 2029;

Impact: Structured rollout of accredited training, peer learning and local coaching will equip councils and community leaders with evidence-based tools that strengthen social connection in new neighbourhoods.

Australians are feeling the effects of growing division and fear, strengthened recently by national security concerns and rapid social change. It is a critical time to invest in grass-roots social connection initiatives, which can be delivered effectively through Councils, the arm of government closest to the people.

With more residents born overseas in NGAA municipalities than Australia as a whole, Growth Area councils are uniquely positioned to lead this work, as some of the most culturally diverse communities in Australia.

5% of all residents in Growth Areas were born in India, a proportion almost twice that of Australia's population overall (2.6%). There are also higher percentages of residents born in New Zealand and the Philippines compared to Australia as a whole. Nearly 29% of residents speak a language other than English at home, well above the national average of 22%, with Punjabi, Arabic, Filipino or Tagalog and Hindi far more commonly spoken in growth areas.

Council-led whole of community events and festivals

Social cohesion programs funded through the Department of Home Affairs, including Harmony Day events, are a vital source of community building in Growth Areas. Local Government is a foundation provider of whole-of-community social cohesion events. While we support Federal initiatives to combat Islamophobia and Antisemitism, we note that bolstering Growth Area Councils' capacity to engage all cultural groups across the community is a fast, effective and proven way to build cohesion. We also note that funding allocated to individual ethnic and cultural groups is important but Councils invariably assist with delivery without being a formal event partner.

Growth Area Councils have proven they can run successful events and festivals, and in a time where impact is needed quickly, bolstering local governments' resources in this field will deliver the best return on investment.

Events and Festivals run by Growth Area Councils can easily be replicated, expanded and delivered more often with Federal Government support. Examples include:



Feast of Nations is a three night cultural festival delivered by Campbelltown City Council in south-west Sydney that transforms the city centre into a shared civic space celebrating the LGA's three largest cultural communities, Pasifika, South Asian and Southeast Asian, through food, performance, arts and hands on cultural exchange. The project's success is attributed to its relational, co designed model, with Council working alongside community leaders from inception through delivery to ensure cultural authenticity, shared ownership and accessibility, including multilingual signage and inclusive communications. In 2024 the festival attracted approximately 10,000 attendees and generated an estimated \$300,000 to \$600,000 in direct economic impact for local traders, with evaluation data recording 91% overall satisfaction and 96% of attendees feeling welcome and included.



Melton Night Markets is a culturally themed night market series delivered by Melton City Council in Melbourne's west in 2024 and 2025 to boost the nighttime economy while strengthening connections with culturally and linguistically diverse communities through food, performance and place activation. The project was successful due to its data informed design, aligning themed markets with the City's demographic profile and significant cultural dates such as Chinese New Year, and through active partnerships with local community organisations, performers and businesses who were embedded in both planning and delivery. Across three events the markets attracted over 10,000 residents and visitors, achieving a reported 12% increase in business spend.



Fusion Food and Culture Festival
 The *Fusion Food and Culture Festival* is an annual multicultural community event held in Gosnells, WA. Welcoming 50,000 people each year to celebrant the region's vibrant cultural diversity, it is a demonstration that diversity is celebrated and all cultures are welcome. With more than 40% of residents in the City of Gosnells born overseas, and over a third speaking a language other than English at home, Fusion is a vibrant showcase of the City's rich cultural diversity. The event won the 2025 National Awards for Local Government, recognising the event for its role in building a stronger, more connected community through arts and culture.

Social Connection in new suburbs

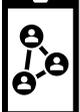
The Housing Accord building boom is creating large new communities at speed, and while this growth is essential, it also brings responsibility. As new suburbs take shape, we must support and nurture emerging communities so that connection, trust and belonging grow alongside new homes, ensuring Australia remains cohesive, resilient and confident in the face of uncertainty.

Growth Areas are some of Australia’s most diverse communities, and many residents struggle to form a sense of belonging. Language barriers, unfamiliar local norms and a lack of low-cost places to meet make everyday connection harder than necessary.

The proposed **National Community Cohesion Workforce Development Program** (based on Swinburne University’s [Activating Social Connection](#) project, funded through an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant) will help address this by providing a structured three-year rollout of accredited training, peer learning and local coaching to equip councils with evidence-based tools that strengthen social connection in new neighbourhoods.

[Activating Social Connection](#) has identified **seven evidence-based keys to building belonging, inclusion and resilience in fast-growing suburbs**. These findings outline practical steps needed to support communities experiencing rapid growth.

Growth Area councils are already applying these principles, but limited resources prevent delivery at scale. Federal investment is now required to roll out social-connection training and programs across all new suburbs, ensuring Australia can translate leading research into stronger, more resilient and connected local communities.

7 Keys to Local Social Connection						
Places to meet	Connector People	Groups that foster belonging	Problem-solving sessions	Food sharing events	Social media and digital tools	Accessible communication
						

Conclusion

Australia's growth areas are already doing the heavy lifting in housing delivery, economic contribution and population growth, yet they continue to be constrained by outdated policy frameworks and chronic underinvestment in the infrastructure that makes communities function. This submission makes clear that growth areas are not peripheral to Australia's cities. They are nationally significant metropolitan regions in their own right, home to more than 5.8 million people and central to meeting Housing Accord targets. Without timely investment in enabling, strategic and community infrastructure, the homes already approved and proposed in these areas cannot be delivered at the speed or scale required. Recognising growth areas through a consistent national geography and aligning funding accordingly is a practical and cost effective reform that would immediately improve decision making across government.

The 2026–27 Budget is an opportunity for the Commonwealth to provide leadership that matches the reality on the ground. By shifting from ad hoc, competitive grants to coordinated, long term, place based investment, government can unlock housing supply, lift productivity and strengthen social cohesion in Australia's fastest growing communities. Local governments in growth areas are ready to partner in this task and have demonstrated their capacity to deliver. What is needed now is certainty, coordination and commitment from the Commonwealth to invest before, with and after new housing is built, so that growth delivers not just more homes, but stronger, more connected and resilient communities across Australia.

Endnotes

¹ Page, K and Baker, E, 2025, [A New Geographical Classification for National Growth Areas: NGA25](#), Discussion paper for consultation, National Growth Areas Alliance and Australian Centre for Housing Research, University of Adelaide, <https://www.ngaa.org.au/resources/a-new-geographical-classification-for-national-growth-areas-nga25>

² Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) [2024 National Housing Pipeline Technical report](#), November 2024, <https://udia.com.au/research-insights/nhp/>

³ [National Growth Areas Alliance Housing and Property Market Insights | Number of approvals, Approvals | REMPLAN](#), accessed 16/01/2026

⁴ Gurran, N., Forsyth, A., Darcy, M., Searle, G., Buckle, C. and Zou, S. (2021) [Population growth, regional connectivity, and city planning—international lessons for Australian practice](#). AHURI Final Report No. 362, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/362>, doi: 10.18408/ahuri7322301.

⁵ Western Australia Government 2022 Perth and Peel @3.5 million <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/perth-and-peel-35-million-frameworks>

⁶ Morrison N, Gatarin G, and Strickling M (2024) [International Best Practices in Infrastructure Funding: Lessons for Australia's Outer Metropolitan Growth Areas](#), Urban Transformations Research Centre, Western Sydney University. <https://doi.org/10.26183/tmc6-gg23>

⁷ The Treasury 2025, Budget 2025-2026, Budget Paper No. 3, Part 2: Payments for specific purposes, page 69, https://budget.gov.au/content/bp3/download/bp3_2025-26.pdf

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2026-27 Pre-Budget submission

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Recommendation 2: Realign Commonwealth funding programs related to housing and infrastructure for immediate use and impact in Growth Areas, acknowledging competitive grant funding is not appropriate for enabling infrastructure.

Growth Area Council Region Electorate	Project	Status
HOUSING ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE		
<p>Blacktown City Council West Sydney, NSW, covering the electorates of: McMahon, Chifley and Greenway</p>	<p>Storm Water Infrastructure for Riverstone East Stage 3 to deliver 3,600 homes.</p>	<p>Plans complete. Awaiting funding.</p>
<p>Wollondilly Shire Council South West Sydney NSW, covering the electorate of Hume.</p>	<p>Sewage Infrastructure for Wilton and Appin to deliver 8,000+ homes.</p>	<p>Sydney Water to deliver the Upper Nepean Treatment Plant by 2032.</p>
<p>Mount Barker District Council South-East Adelaide, SA, covering the electorate of Mayo</p>	<p>Waste Water and Water Recovery infrastructure to meet current and future demand for an estimated population of 64,800 residents expected by 2046</p>	<p>Plans complete. Awaiting funding.</p>
<p>City of Whittlesea, Melton City Council and City of Casey Covering the electorates of: Bruce, Holt, La Trobe, Gorton, Hawke, Lalor, McEwan, Scullin</p>	<p>Essential telecommunications infrastructure to ensure connectivity to new residential and commercial estates. Currently mobile and broadband coverage lacks committed funding and timely delivery, constraining growth and access to services.</p>	<p>TiND developed but requires enforcement to ensure telecommunications are delivered alongside other enabling infrastructure.</p>
<p>City of Cockburn South West Perth, WA. Covering the electorate of Fremantle</p>	<p>Housing enablement infrastructure for a large urban infill project in Hamilton Hill. Requires water and sewerage infrastructure as well as new road network and public open space. Enabling 800+ new homes.</p>	<p>WA State Government has reclassified Former Roe 9 Highway reserve to be developed for housing</p>
<p>Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale South East Perth, WA, covering the electorate of Canning.</p>	<p>Sewer and road infrastructure for Mundijong to enable 10,000+ houses</p>	<p>10,000 lots approved but cannot progress without infrastructure</p>
REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE		
<p>Blacktown City Council, Penrith City Council, Camden Council, Campbelltown City Council, Wollondilly Shire Council Western Sydney Growth Corridor, NSW, covering the electorates of: McMahon, Chifley, Greenway, Hume, Lindsay, Macarthur, Macquarie, Werriwa and Lindsay</p>	<p>Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport: full length extension from Tallawong in the north to Macarthur in the south. Enhancing connectivity to Western Sydney International Airport and other major employment precincts for over 500,000 Western Sydney residents and unlock significant opportunities for additional well-</p>	<p>Federal Government commitment to acquire land. Federal and State Government commitment for a southern extension business case, due Q1 2026.</p>

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	located dwellings and jobs around future station precincts.	
<p>Penrith City Council, Blacktown City Council</p> <p>West Sydney, NSW, covering the electorates of: Lindsay, Macquarie, McMahon, Greenway, Chifley</p>	<p>Castlereagh Connection.</p> <p>A 22-kilometre corridor critical for providing a regional flood evacuation route, improving east-west connectivity, and facilitating freight movement. Investment would alleviate local congestion and unlock housing in the Penrith CBD and more economic opportunities for Penrith and Western Sydney.</p>	Funds required for planning
<p>City of Playford</p> <p>North Adelaide, SA, covering the electorate of Spence</p>	Regionally significant road upgrade for North Adelaide to transform Curtis Road into a critical arterial road to ease congestion and improve safety.	Funding announcements have been made and initial traffic analysis by Council complete.
<p>City of Casey, Cardinia Shire</p> <p>South East Melbourne Growth Corridor, VIC, covering the electorates of: Bruce, Holt, La Trobe and Monash</p>	<p>Regionally significant road upgrades to meet current demand and unlock more capacity to support housing development.</p> <p>Road upgrades include: Princes Highway, Racecources Road, Clyde Road and Thompsons Road giving access to major employment zoned land and unlocking residential lots</p>	Business case for Thompsons Road completed but not yet released.
<p>Wyndham City Council, Melton City Council, Hume City Council, Mitchell Shire, City of Whittlesea</p> <p>West – North Melbourne Growth Corridor, VIC, covering the electorates of: Scullin, Corio, Calwell, Gellibrand, Gorton, Hawke, Lalor, McEwen and Nicholls</p>	<p>Nationally significant road projects and upgrades to deliver housing, support freight routes and improve connectivity.</p> <p>Critical upgrades include:</p> <p>OMR/E6, Donnybrook Road, Hume Freeway, Old Sydney Road, Western Highway, Melton Highway, Hopkins Road, Ferris Road, the Palmers Road Corridor and Taylors Road.</p>	OMR/E6 planning undertaken. Funding required for the land acquisition and construction.
<p>Melton City Council</p> <p>West Melbourne, VIC, covering the electorates of: Hawke and Gorton.</p>	<p>Electrification of the Melton Rail Line with two additional stations at Mt Atkinson and Thornhill Park.</p> <p>The Ballarat Line added 2.12 million passengers per year in 2024/25, with Melton stations alone accounting for 684,200 additional passengers. Melton Station now serves 806,050 annual passengers, making it the 5th busiest station in Victoria's regional network.</p> <p>This line will need to support an additional 300,000+ residents in the</p>	<p>Four level-crossing removal projects to be completed by the end of 2026.</p> <p>Funding to deliver the electrification to coincide with the Sunshine Station upgrade so that both are completed by 2030, a position supported by Infrastructure Victoria.</p>

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	next 25 years, a level the existing rail network cannot accommodate.	
City of Swan, City of Wanneroo North Perth Growth Corridor, WA, covering the electorates of: Durack, Hasluck, Cowan, Pearce and Swan	Regionally significant road upgrades to meet current demand and unlock more capacity to support housing development. Road upgrades include Whiteman Yanchep highway and Marshall Road Duplication, providing connectivity to a projected population of over 700,000 residents by 2046. Further providing access and transport linkages for the Neerabup Industrial Area which will become a regionally significant employment centre, providing up to 30,000 jobs. Marshall Road Duplication is expected to serve over 24,000 vehicles a day by 2041.	Planning Control Area has been established for Whiteman Yanchep highway.
City of Cockburn, City of Kwinana South West Perth, WA. Covering the electorates of Fremantle and Brand	Urgent road upgrades to support AUKUS housing and infrastructure delivery. Stock Road and Rockingham road safety and efficiency upgrades.	Plans for AUKUS are proceeding with the UK and US. Local precinct requires funding to cope with additional demand.
ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY		
City of Playford North Adelaide, SA, covering the electorate of Spence	Enable regionally significant employment precincts through the timely provision of enabling infrastructure, including transport, stormwater, water and sewer, to unlock investment in the Edinburgh Defence and Aerospace Precinct and Greater Edinburgh Parks, collectively expected to support up more than 85,000 jobs.	Plans complete. Awaiting funding.

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Recommendation 3: Urgent investment in infrastructure to enable social cohesion in Growth Areas, while developing a long-term, place-based, coordinated investment framework for strategic and social infrastructure and services in Growth Areas

Growth Area Council Region Electorate	Project	Status
CRITICAL URBAN PRECINCTS		
Campbelltown City Council South West Sydney NSW, covering the electorates of: Hughes, Macarthur and Werriwa	South West Sydney Community and Justice Precinct, providing essential services for isolated residents. Supporting the population of Macarthur, which is expected to exceed 550,000 in the next 15 years.	Plans completed. Awaiting funding.
Mitchell Shire Council North Melbourne, VIC, covering the electorates of: McEwen and Nicholls	Greenhill Recreation Precinct, providing long-needed aquatic and recreation facilities not covered by developer contributions.	Plans complete. Awaiting funding.
Wyndham City Council South West Melbourne, VIC, covering the electorates of: Corio, Gellibrand and Lalor	Investment to deliver East Werribee Precinct, which will deliver 60,000 jobs for the west	Planning by State Government in process.
Melton City Council West Melbourne, VIC, covering the electorates of: Hawke and Gorton.	Cobblebank Metropolitan Activity Centre. The activity centre will be home to thousands of jobs when it is fully completed, and will service a retail catchment of over 370,000 people. It will play a major service delivery role, through government, health, justice and education services.	Plans completed. Awaiting funding.
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE		
City of Casey South East Melbourne, VIC, covering the electorates of: Bruce, Holt and La Trobe	Deliver the Alexander Boulevard Community Library Hub to support an estimated 120,000-140,000 users each year, with a library, two multi-purpose community rooms, a large hall with commercial kitchen and a range of other amenities.	Alexander Boulevard Precinct Masterplan complete. Awaiting funding.
City of Whittlesea North Melbourne, VIC, covering the electorates of: Scullin and McEwen	A purpose-built Youth Hub offering comprehensive programs and specialist support with satellite locations that extend these services into schools, community centres, and mobile outreach, ensuring equitable access for all young people.	A grant-funded feasibility study was completed in July 2024, demonstrating the urgent need for dedicated funding to deliver a Youth Hub.

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<p>City of Swan</p> <p>North Perth, WA, covering the electorates of: Durack, Hasluck, Pearce and Swan</p>	<p>Ellenbrook Civic Heart, delivering community arts and cultural facilities. Servicing the current community and the new estates of Lexia and North Ellenbrook, an estimated 30,000 new homes.</p>	<p>Planning completed. Awaiting funds.</p>
<p>City of Cockburn</p> <p>South West Perth, WA. Covering the electorate of Fremantle</p>	<p>Construction and delivery of the Aboriginal Cultural Visitor Centre in Bibra Lake.</p>	<p>Land acquired, Detailed design is complete, and community engagement has been delivered. Shovel ready project.</p>
REGIONAL SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES		
<p>Cardinia Shire Council</p> <p>South East Melbourne, VIC, covering the electorates of: La Trobe and Monash</p>	<p>Essential upgrades to recreational facility, Cardinia Life, to allow current and future residents to access sport and aquatic facilities.</p>	<p>Business case complete. Planning underway.</p>
<p>City of Casey</p> <p>South East Melbourne, VIC, covering the electorates of: Bruce, Holt and La Trobe</p>	<p>Bells Road Active Space Reserve. District level AFL/Cricket/Netball facility that will support residents in Clyde North. Located adjacent to Wulerrp Secondary College.</p>	<p>Planning completed. Awaiting funds.</p>
<p>City of Armadale</p> <p>South East Perth, WA, covering the electorates of: Burt and Canning</p>	<p>Regional Recreation Reserve – Netball & Basketball Facility. A multi-stage regional centre for sporting and community groups in Perth's South-East growth corridor.</p>	<p>State Government have committed \$20m.</p>
<p>City of Gosnells</p> <p>South East Perth, WA, covering the electorates of: Bullwinkel, Burt, Swan and Tangney</p>	<p>SPLASH (Sutherlands Park Leisure and Aquatic Sports Hub), addressing a significant shortage of aquatic and indoor sport facilities for a population of 140,000 people.</p>	<p>Planning completed. Awaiting funds.</p>
<p>City of Cockburn</p> <p>South West Perth, WA. Covering the electorate of Fremantle</p>	<p>Regional Sports facility at Hamilton Hill to address population growth through infill developments and high multicultural</p> <p>Construct the Wally Hagan indoor sports stadium urgently.</p>	<p>Concept plan completed and costed at \$60m. Land acquisition underway. \$20m awarded by State Government.</p>
<p>City of Wanneroo</p> <p>North Perth, WA, covering the electorates Pearce</p>	<p>Construction of regional level sporting facilities, building and amenities at the 42ha Alkimos Regional Sporting Precinct including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 baseball/softball diamonds; • 24 netball courts; • 7 rectangular fields (soccer/rugby); 	<p>Council contribution of \$26m</p> <p>Funding shortfall \$68m</p> <p>State Government has purchased land.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 junior rectangular fields; • 3 hockey fields (including 1 synthetic); • 5 sport pavilions; • 2 playgrounds; • 1 community purpose site; • 1 dog exercise areas; and <p>Consideration for elite sporting facility.</p>	
<p>Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale South East Perth, WA, covering the electorate of Canning.</p>	<p>Expansion of the Serpentine Jarrahdale Community Recreation Centre including four indoor basketball courts, expanded court-sport space, contemporary change rooms and additional community amenities.</p>	<p>State Government have committed \$10m.</p>