



Catch up

with the outer suburbs





Australia's population is booming and so are its outer suburbs.

More than a third of our nation's population growth from 2011-2016 occurred in the outer suburbs, where National Growth Areas Alliance councils are located. The rate of population growth in the outer suburbs is faster than any government planned or expected.

Every year, around 136,000 people move to new suburbs on the outskirts of our capital cities. And while families, houses, neighbourhoods, communities and local businesses are being built, vital supporting infrastructure is not.

Planning for Australia's future population growth is important. But so is delivering infrastructure and services for the five million people who are already here as part of the population boom.

Infrastructure has the capacity to transform our economies and communities. It is time for governments to Catch Up with the outer suburbs, and match the vitality and pace of growth in new communities.

The Facts about Australia's outer suburbs



People and Place

- One in five Australians live in the outer suburbs - that's five million people
- Communities are growing at double the national rate and have the highest birth rates in Australia
- Just 31 of Australia's 537 Councils have accommodated 35% of recent population growth



Economy

- Major driver of economic and employment growth, contributing over 11% of GDP
- Industries are in transition, with greater than national average growth in high technology jobs



Infrastructure

- Received only 13% of federal infrastructure investment in the same period that they generated 35% of population growth and 25% of jobs growth (2011-2016)
- Have 20% less infrastructure provision than the metropolitan average



Jobs and Business

- Home to 13% of Australia's jobs and contribute over 11% of GDP
- Strong entrepreneurial culture with business growth more than double the national average between 2014-16
- Current workforce of 2.21 million people

Australia's next economic powerhouse

Australia's fast growing outer suburbs are a largely unrealised economic asset. They have the potential to be the nation's future economic and entrepreneurial powerhouse.

Right now, there is a workforce of 2.21 million people in the outer suburbs, and another 1 million local residents will join the workforce over the next decade – we need to **Catch Up** with job demand.

Ready access to greenfield industrial and employment land and direct proximity to regional areas already enable the outer suburbs to contribute \$186.7 billion to the Australian economy.

This would be significantly increased if transport connections were better, innovation precincts were funded, freight spent less time in traffic and employees had a choice of jobs in diverse industries.

In 2019 we call on the Federal Government to **Catch Up** with infrastructure need before the opportunity is lost.

Opportunity for a social and cultural boom

We are calling on all levels of government to **Catch Up** with the energy, enthusiasm and potential in our fast growing outer suburbs.

Investment in vital infrastructure has not kept up with the people moving to our fast growing outer suburbs, leading to postcode discrimination, nightmare commutes, reduced productivity and declining liveability.

Recent discussions have focussed on planning for future population growth. The five million people already living in the outer suburbs feel largely overlooked.

Right now, basic health, education, social and community services and facilities are either unfunded or inadequately funded. It's time to **Catch Up**.

Our common sense recommendations

Councils at the forefront of population growth have three common sense recommendations this election year:

1. Get 5 million people to work, study or home on time
2. Create jobs where the workforce lives
3. Build the facilities to build communities.

How long is too long?

People moving into new suburbs understand that they will not have immediate access to the infrastructure and services enjoyed by people living closer to the city. But how long should they wait?

- 10 years for a whole new suburb to use just a single exit road.
- 8 years since one suburb overtook the population of a major regional city and still no thought of a hospital.
- 17 years to find out the promised train station in a new suburb might be *considered* in the next 5 years.



Get 5 million people to work, study or home on time

Australia's outer suburbs are a long way from the city.

Homes and neighbourhoods are built quickly and efficiently in designated growth zones as part of local and state government strategic plans.

But the building seems to stop there.

Freeway and highway upgrades and interchanges, bus routes, railway lines, walking and cycle paths should all be built as part of the plan. But they are not.

Nightmare commutes, overcrowded trains, traffic jams at highway exits, no safe footpaths for kids to walk to school – this is the daily experience of life in the outer suburbs.

Our polling shows transport is the most important issue for residents of outer suburbs.

- In Melbourne's north, residents of the new suburb of Aurora were pleased to see bus stops along their streets, but had no idea they would have to wait seven years for the first bus to arrive.
- In Sydney's west, while populations soared, it took governments decades to accept that not all traffic goes directly to the CBD, and that a north-south rail line will transform the city.

We want to make 2019 the year that all levels of government realise that five million people already live in the growing outer suburbs. They need attention. And they need equitable access to safe and efficient transport.

Fund Congestion Busting Transport

Fixing the congestion pressure points outlined below will transform the outer suburbs. See the pull-out map (inside the back cover) for more congestion busting projects across Australia.

Adelaide's North

Freight and passenger vehicles face a daily traffic battle in Adelaide's north as they travel between key industrial and employments hubs on a single carriageway arterial road.

- Upgrade four km of Curtis Road in Munno Para to dual carriageway.

South East Melbourne

More than 60% of residents travel outside South East Melbourne to work. Congested, unsuitable roads and no access to trains restricts job growth in Officer South and Pakenham West. Congestion hampers economic development in the Casey Cardinia region and keeps people in their cars for up to two hours a day.

- Build eight intersections on the Princes Highway between Pakenham and Beaconsfield
- Extend Thompsons Road with a 30km high-capacity route linking employment, freight and residential areas
- Complete the Southern Dandenong Bypass and upgrade Glasscocks Road to connect people to jobs in the nearby National Employment and Innovation Cluster
- Extend the rail network from Cranbourne to Clyde.

Melbourne's West

Key road and rail projects are vital to link residential and employment growth areas, including a fast rail link between Sunshine and Geelong, a region that is home to more than 500,000 people.

The Western Highway is a critical arterial road link and an important economic driver at a National, State and Metropolitan levels. By 2021 another 6 new estates will be built adjacent to the Highway with 55,100 new dwellings and an estimated population of 153,400.

- Upgrade the Western Highway to an Urban Freeway Standard from Melton to Deer Park including interchanges, additional lanes and replacing direct access points and bus stops
- Help fund the fast rail link between Sunshine and Geelong via Wyndham
- Add capacity and four new stations on the Regional Rail Link line to Wyndham Vale and further capacity on the Werribee Line.

Melbourne's North

Melbourne's northern metropolitan boundaries are growing faster than transport infrastructure can cope. Dedicated urban congestion funding is needed for road upgrades and transport corridors. Jobs and activity centres underway will not deliver outcomes if residents can't access them.

- Duplicate key arterial roads - Mickleham, Somerton and Sunbury Roads
- Bring forward the delivery of the E6 Freeway connecting the Hume Freeway to the M80 Ring Road. The current timeframe of 15 to 30 years is too long to wait.
- Fund a study into the Wollert Transport Corridor to improve public transport services for the booming population, activity and employment areas.

Perth's North

The 800 hectare Neerabup Industrial Area will create thousands of local jobs in the City of Wanneroo. It is accessed via the single carriageway of Flynn Drive. Upgrading Flynn Drive is a critical connector to Northlink WA, Mitchell Freeway and the future intermodal terminal at Bullsbrook.

- Upgrade 2.4km of Flynn Drive to dual carriageway

Sydney's West

More investment will maximise outcomes from future population growth in Western Sydney and investment in the Western Sydney Airport and surrounding aerotropolis. Cater for more North South and East West movement - not all journeys are into the city.

- Commit to and construct the flood evacuation grade Castlereagh Connection in the corridor first identified in 1951
- Plan and fund future stages of Mulgoa-Castlereagh Road across the Penrith City Centre, between Glenmore Parkway and Andrews Road.
- Deliver Stage 1 of North South Rail by 2026 and fund the entire line from Macarthur to Tallawong
- Expand and modernise public transport in Greater Macarthur before the population reaches 150,000.



Create jobs where the workforce lives

Productive outer suburbs will generate Australia's next economic boom. As a nation, we have an enormous asset in the outer suburbs' workforce, land and entrepreneurial spirit.

A concerted effort by all levels of government to skill up our workforce, attract new industries and commit to transformational infrastructure will have enormous long-term benefits for the national economy.

Australia's outer suburbs are home to a workforce of 2.21 million people, with another million ready to join within the next ten years. We already have the highest jobs growth rate in the country (2.4%) but that is still not fast enough to keep pace with the population growth rate of 3% (double the annual average rate).

Entrepreneurialism is strong in the outer suburbs, with business growth double the national rate, and a shift

towards high knowledge intensity jobs in the face of reductions in traditional manufacturing.

There is also a skills gap, with 13% of residents in the outer suburbs having a bachelor degree compared to the national average of 19%. This gap is a major barrier to economic development, particularly as we shift towards the new economy.

Let's commit to work together to **Catch Up with the outer suburbs** aspirations and drive, and all play our part in building an economic powerhouse.

- Federal Government must take the lead and show its confidence in the outer suburbs, encouraging further investment.
- Commitments from Federal government are missing from transformational infrastructure projects.

Create Jobs and Skill our Workforce

Local Government in Australia’s growth areas has a vision for jobs and services close to home for a diverse and skilled workforce. Outer suburbs need transformational infrastructure to continue to contribute to economic nation building. Capital investment in hubs such as airports, universities and hospitals, and associated transport and digital infrastructure, will drive economic activity and growth. These are some of the many projects ready to transform the outer suburbs. See the pull-out map (inside the back cover) for more job creating projects across Australia.



.....○ Transformational Infrastructure

- **South East Airport Masterplan**
South East Melbourne has a larger population than Adelaide, Hobart, Canberra or Darwin but doesn’t have its own commercial airport. It’s 80km to Melbourne or 110km to Avalon Airports with no direct public transport.
- **Wyndham Freight Infrastructure Investment Plan**
A freight infrastructure investment plan for Melbourne’s south-west, including running the new Inland Rail link via the Outer Metropolitan Ring corridor; building the Western Interstate Freight Terminal at Truganina; and fast-tracking work on a port freight rail shuttle.
- **North South Rail Link**
Around 300,000 people leave Western Sydney each day for work, mostly by car, resulting in road congestion and adverse health impacts. The Sydney Metro Northwest will stop at the edge of the North West Growth area which will house 250,000 people. The rail link will connect the North West Growth Area and the South West Growth Area, via the Western Sydney Airport.



.....○ Innovation, Employment and Education Precinct Development

Precinct development opportunities include:

- **SA: The Lyell McEwin Health Precinct, Elizabeth South** is a high-tech, smart health hub for northern Adelaide that will create a health services cluster with jobs, education, health care and accommodation.
- **NSW: Campbelltown Collaboration Hub** will provide local jobs, linked to the health and education precinct and the knowledge jobs of the future. Campbelltown City will double its’ population of 167,000 people in the next 20 years and currently, around 60% of local workforce has to travel outside the area for work.
- **Victoria: Mernda Health and Wellbeing Hub** will create more than 300 local jobs and provide essential community services in the heart of Mernda Town Centre. Mernda’s population is projected to increase by 114% over the next two decades, and the area also serves the surrounding regional area.
- **WA: Armadale Higher Education Centre** is the only one of Perth’s eight Strategic Metropolitan Centres without a purpose built Higher Education/TAFE campus. There are currently 27 primary and 12 high schools in the City with older teens making up a significant proportion of the population.
- **SA: The Mount Barker Innovation and Gig City Hub** would provide a connection to ‘smart city’ activities in the Adelaide CBD and allow co-working for home-based businesses and reduced operational costs for existing businesses.



Build the facilities to build communities

Councils across Australia's booming outer suburbs are doing all they can to help their residents live in safe, healthy and happy communities. But they cannot achieve that outcome on their own.

There is a clear and significant gap in the funding available to local government to provide the facilities all Australians deserve, no matter their postcode.

Large, energetic populations in the outer suburbs – including 1.2 million children and thousands of babies born every week – can only reach their potential if they have access to sport, cultural, educational and social facilities.

Active, vibrant communities are healthy and socially

connected. Together, we need to facilitate those connections - at community workshops, library book clubs, kindergartens, during soccer games or walking the dog at the park.

Community facilities are needed in Australia's new suburbs to help residents build communities from the ground up.

- In Perth, parents are forgoing sports participation for their children due to lack of local facilities.
- In Melbourne's west four class rooms of children are born every week in one council area alone.

We believe the Federal Government must be part of this addressing this unique situation – building a community from the ground up.

Dedicated Funding for Community Facilities

These are some of the many community facilities needed to transform the outer suburbs. See the pull-out map (inside the back cover) for more community building projects across Australia.



.....○ Perth

Three quarters of Perth’s population growth is in the outer suburbs. There is a significant shortage of public open space, particularly for local sports facilities. In the face of long commutes to sporting precincts, many families simply miss out on active recreation, entrenching disadvantage and embedding health risks.

- Growth area Councils in Perth need dedicated Federal Government funding for sporting precincts to leverage State Government, development contributions and their own investment. There are shovel ready projects across Gosnells, Cockburn, Armadale, Serpentine-Jarrahdale and Swan, and several in the City of Wanneroo: Alkimos Regional Open Space, Butler North District Open Space, Kingsway Regional Space and the Regional Northern Coastal Swimming Pool.



.....○ Melbourne’s North and West

Home to some of the fastest growing suburbs in Australia, and with populations set to double by 2041, a secure and sufficient co-investment stream is vital for Councils to provide community infrastructure like sports facilities, community centres and kindergartens.

- Mernda aquatic and recreation centre will provide equitable access to sporting facilities for 58,000 people in the City of Whittlesea
- Direct investment is needed to meet a significant need for community facilities for the City of Hume
- An indoor sports stadium in Cobblebank will help meet the growing sports court shortage in the City of Melton.



.....○ South East Melbourne

Thirty eight additional soccer pitches are needed now in south east Melbourne, and a commitment to the Casey Regional Soccer Precinct will not only benefit local clubs and players, but also those from regional areas further afield.

- Fund the Regional Soccer Centre of Excellence in Casey.

What do we mean by 'outer suburbs'?

Probably not what you're thinking. Places you may consider 'country towns' are these days operating as outer suburbs. They are located beyond established transport routes, and they need more jobs, services, schools and hospitals than the local area is providing.

- It's 84km from the Sydney GPO to the new suburb of Wilton in the Shire of Wollondilly.
- 65km from Melbourne GPO to new estates on the edge of Pakenham in Cardinia Shire Councils.
- In Perth's north, the major growth area of Yanchep is 55km from the city.
- The town of Gawler in Adelaide's north, once a country town is now an outer suburb, 50km from the CBD.
- Brassall, on the outskirts of Ipswich in south east Queensland now functions as an outer suburb area of Brisbane, nearly 50km away.



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Our largest cities are playing catch up in delivering infrastructure to support past growth, let alone provide for future decades. ”

Planning Liveable Cities,
Infrastructure Australia, 2018

Apartments, townhouses or separate homes on blocks between 125m² and 500m² are the norm, with 700m² billed as a large house block in new suburbs.



www.catchup.org.au



CatchUp



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An Alliance of Councils from across Australia's growing outer suburbs, we are united by our shared vision of growing communities that are resilient, liveable and productive places.

Alliance Members have first-hand knowledge of the impact of population growth rates at double the national average, inadequate infrastructure to cope with the increased demand, and long-term lack of government investment in roads, public transport and essential services.

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