



NATIONAL
Growth Areas
ALLIANCE

FEDERAL BUDGET SUBMISSION

2020-2021

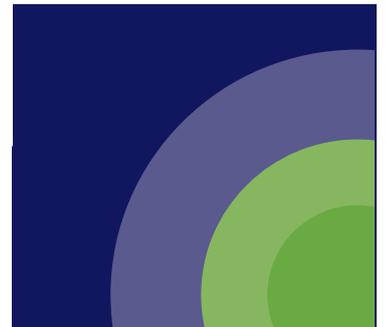




Table of contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 4 |
| SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS | 4 |
| NATIONAL GROWTH AREAS ALLIANCE | 6 |
| 5 MILLION RESIDENTS OF AUSTRALIA’S GROWTH AREAS | 7 |
| Population, infrastructure, jobs, skills, education..... | 7 |
| Looking to the Future..... | 8 |
| GROWTH AREAS AND THE AUSTRALIAN ECONOMY..... | 9 |
| Australia’s next economic powerhouse | 9 |
| Deficits impacting economic growth and national productivity | 10 |
| BUILDING BLOCKS FOR GROWTH..... | 11 |
| REBALANCE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL CITIES | 11 |
| Population growth projections..... | 11 |
| Implications for outer urban growth areas of unequal growth in capital cities..... | 11 |
| Future directions to reduce the burden on growth areas..... | 12 |
| 1. Population Recommendations 2020-21 | 12 |
| 2. Cities Policy Recommendations 2020-21 | 12 |
| INVEST IN PLACES FOR PEOPLE | 13 |
| Shortage of public open space and sports facilities | 13 |
| 3. Recreation Infrastructure Budget Recommendations..... | 13 |
| Health facilities and service delivery in new and growing communities | 14 |
| 4. Health Facilities and Service Delivery Budget Recommendations | 14 |
| Dedicated Funding for Community Facilities and Services..... | 14 |
| 5. Dedicated Funding for Community Facilities Budget Recommendations..... | 15 |
| Environmental and natural disaster remediation in growing urban areas | 15 |
| 6. Environmental and Natural Disaster Remediation in Growing Urban Areas Budget Recommendations | 16 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| UNLOCK ECONOMIC GROWTH..... | 16 |
| Leverage Urban Freight Task for Good Growth..... | 17 |
| 7. Improving Freight Task Budget Recommendations..... | 17 |
| Incentivise Precinct Development..... | 17 |
| 8. Precinct Development Budget Recommendations..... | 17 |
| Industry and Jobs Growth Initiatives..... | 17 |
| 9. Industry and Jobs Growth Initiatives Budget Recommendations..... | 18 |
| Catalyse Higher Education and Research Institutions where people live..... | 18 |
| 10. Skills and Education Budget Recommendations..... | 18 |
| PRIORITISE TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS | 19 |
| Urban Congestion Fund..... | 19 |
| 11. Urban Congestion Fund Budget Recommendations..... | 19 |
| Leveraging Current Investment..... | 19 |
| 12. Leveraging Current Investment Budget Recommendations..... | 19 |
| Transformational Transport Infrastructure..... | 20 |
| 13. Transformational Transport Infrastructure Budget Recommendations..... | 20 |
| REFERENCES..... | 23 |



EXECUTIVE

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Rebalance Australia's capital cities

Rebalance the spatial structure of our capital cities by distributing infrastructure, jobs and housing more evenly across metropolitan areas, including bringing new jobs closer to where the growing population lives.

- 1. Population:** ensure the Centre of Population is sufficiently resourced and include outer urban growth area representatives on the *National Population and Planning Framework and Treasurer's Forum on Population*.
- 2. Cities Policy:** fully fund commitments made in the Western Sydney City Deal, increase resources for parties in City Deal negotiations; review planning of greenfield developments in outer urban growth areas; and recognise the role and function of outer urban growth areas as distinct from capital cities and regional areas.

Invest in places for people

As we change our cities to accommodate growth, innovative place-based and neighbourhood planning and design will bring together the elements required to support productive, liveable and resilient places for people to live and work and for businesses to invest.

- 3. Recreational infrastructure:** A national approach to Federal Government co-investment in sport and recreational facilities in outer urban growth areas.
- 4. Health facilities and service delivery:** Prioritise the needs of current and future growth area communities and ensure funding is available for the facilities and range of services needed.

The National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA) is an alliance of Councils from the fast growing outer urban areas around Australia's major cities. We have a shared vision of growing communities that are resilient, liveable and thriving places. However, this vision remains unachievable while investment in vital infrastructure and services does not keep pace with our population boom.

Supporting growth areas is about equity. We believe that every Australian deserves to live in a safe, sustainable and liveable community – regardless of their postcode.

We make 13 recommendations for the Federal Budget 2020 – 21, in line with the NGAA's four guiding principles for future policy and investment decisions to support growth areas and the nation:

- ▶ Rebalance Australia's capital cities
- ▶ Invest in places for people
- ▶ Unlock economic growth
- ▶ Prioritise transport solutions

An Appendix of priority projects is available separately from the NGAA Secretariat.

SUMMARY



5. **Dedicated funding for community facilities:**

A co-investment model, like that proposed to address the sports and recreation facilities deficit, available to local government at a quantum and scale to address the needs of outer urban growth areas.

An urgent long-term extension of the Federal Government's contribution to kindergarten funding, due to end in December 2020.

6. **Environmental and natural disaster**

remediation in growing urban areas: Act to mitigate the risk of environmental changes and natural disasters in outer urban growth areas.

Unlock Economic Growth

Unlock the economic value in outer urban growth areas and support new economies by matching skilled labour to emerging industry opportunities, fostering the growth of innovation precincts for knowledge intensive and small business jobs and expanding the opportunities associated with freight and logistics.

7. Improving freight task: Enhance Melbourne's future freight and logistics by establishing intermodal freight terminals that will leverage the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail, existing ports and airport, and planned Outer Metropolitan Ring Road.

8. Precinct development: Provide direct funding via a co-investment model with local and state governments to accelerate precinct development and industry attraction in outer urban growth areas.

9. Industry and jobs growth initiatives: As part of the Federal Government's Growth Centre Strategy, fund a planning review which aligns targeted investments to connect growing

labour markets in the outer suburbs to the Industry Growth Centre initiative, across cyber security, advanced manufacturing, food and agribusiness, medical and pharmaceuticals and Mining Equipment, Technology and Services (METS).

Implement the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Australian Government's Role in the Development of Cities recommendations to provide grants to projects with potential to generate significant employment growth in outer urban growth areas.

10. Skills and education: Improve access through decentralising vocational and university campuses and the spatial distribution of Commonwealth supported places.

Prioritise transport solutions

Improve overall transport performance to service Australia's outer urban growth areas through integrated networks which connect people and jobs and support active, shared and public transport connectivity to lessen dependence on private vehicles.

11. Urban Congestion Fund: NGAA recommends twelve key projects across the country that will reduce congestion and get people to work, home or study on time.

12. Leveraging current transport investment: NGAA recommends Federal Government funding for three major projects in NSW and WA that align with current infrastructure delivery and would enhance long-term outcomes.

13. Transformational transport infrastructure: NGAA recommends Federal Government focus on transformational road, rail and air transport projects, including those that may form part of current or future City Deal negotiations.

NATIONAL GROWTH AREAS ALLIANCE

The National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA) is an alliance of Councils from the fast growing outer urban areas around Australia's major cities. We have a shared vision of growing communities that are resilient, liveable and thriving places. However, this vision remains unachievable while investment in vital infrastructure and services does not keep pace with our population boom.

Supporting growth areas is about equity. We believe that every Australian deserves to live in a safe, sustainable and liveable community – regardless of their postcode.

NGAA member councils have first-hand knowledge of:

- the impact of unplanned population growth rates at double the national average,
- inadequate transport, health, education, community and social infrastructure to cope with increased demand, and
- lack of government focus on the health, education and employment prospects of communities in rapidly-developed greenfield suburbs.



5 MILLION RESIDENTS OF AUSTRALIA'S GROWTH AREAS

Population, infrastructure, jobs, skills, education

Five million people live in just 31 municipalities in Australia's outer urban growth areas, where member Councils of the NGAA are located. The population of outer urban areas has doubled in one generation, and infrastructure provision has not kept pace with that growth.

By 2036, approximately 7.9 million people are expected to live in outer urban growth areas, making up 25% of Australia's population, up from 20% currently. The importance of the outer suburbs to Australia's population will continue to grow, driven by an average growth rate of 3.3% p.a., to Australia's 1.5% (ABS medium series).

There is significant catching up to do in terms of overall infrastructure investment in growth areas. Between 2011-16, outer urban growth areas accommodated 35% of Australia's population growth with only 13% of overall infrastructure spending.ⁱ

The deficits in jobs, skills and infrastructure in outer urban growth areas are severe, and if left unaddressed will have significant impact on the future productivity and resilience of one fifth (soon to be one quarter) of Australia's population.

Growth Indicators – Australia compared to NGAA

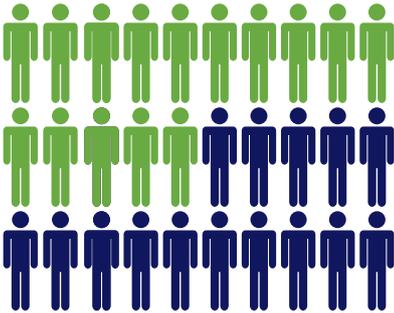
| Measure | Australia | Growth Areas (NGAA) | % of Australia in NGAA |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Population 2018 | 24,981,326 | 4,950,082 | 19.8% |
| Growth (5 years to 2018) | +1,505,640 (+6.5%) | +675,040(+15.8%) | 44.8% |
| Median age | 38 (+1year) | 34 (Unchanged) | |
| Language other than English | 20.8% +2.7% in 5 years | 24.7% + 3.9%in 5 years | 22.8% |
| Dwellings | 9,924,844 (+8.5%) | 1,650,466 (+15.1%) | 27.6% of dwelling growth |
| Unoccupied dwellings | 10.5% | 7.1% | |
| Average household size | 2.55 (unchanged) | 2.87 (+0.01) | NGAA households have 1/3 person more than Aust average. |
| Economy (2017/18) | \$1,720billion | \$207 billion | 12.0% |
| Total jobs (2017/18) | 12,580,227 | 1,703,589 | 13.5% |
| Employed Residents (2017/18) | 12,580,227 | 2,425,353 | 19.2% |

Source: National Economics, modelled series, 2017/18 update for economy.id

Looking to the Future

The demographic and economic changes that are occurring in our cities are profound. With one in every five Australian citizens living in a fast-growing city, suburb or town,ⁱⁱ the right investment in these areas will not only impact local communities, but the nation.

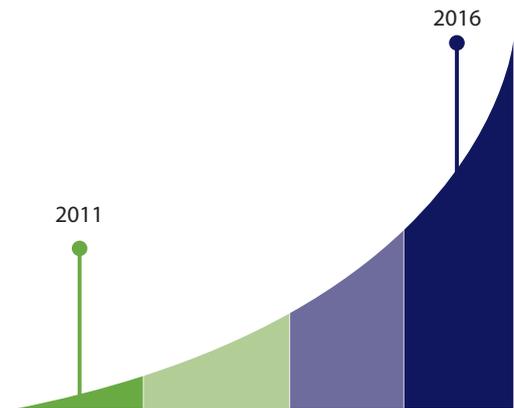
Population size (2018)



4.9 million

1 in 5 Australians live in growth areas

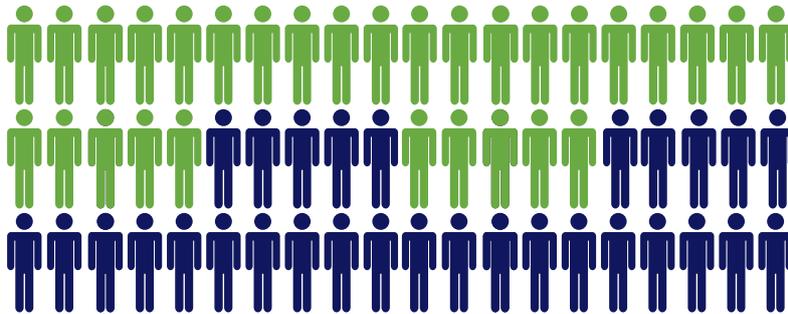
Population growth (2013-18)



675,040 people

15.8% growth over five years in growth areas, compared to 6.5% growth nationally

Population growth (2036)



7.9 million

1 in 4 Australians live in growth areas

Our vision for communities in the outer suburbs of every city is clear – resilient, liveable and productive communities. Each citizen deserves access to safe, sustainable, high amenity places with the opportunity to work and study close to home or in connected centres that are regionally accessible.

GROWTH AREAS AND THE AUSTRALIAN ECONOMY

Australia's next economic powerhouse

Outer Urban Growth Areas have become a major driver of economic and employment growth in Australia. The national economic significance of Growth Areas is large, accounting for 12% of GDP despite only making up just 31 (or 6%) of Australia's 537 Local Government Areas (LGA).

In 2018, 1.7 million jobs were located in growth areas, (13.5% of Australia's employment, up from 9.6% in 2006), but a significant shortfall in local employment opportunities remains for the workforce 2.45 million people. There are nearly one million young people who will be looking for further study and employment opportunities within the next decade.

Growth Areas' role has become even more important as Australia's economy becomes more reliant on services and knowledge intensive activities. Growth Areas have a strong entrepreneurial culture with businesses growing at double the national average. The proposed Australian Business Growth Fund has the potential to assist further business and knowledge economy jobs in Growth Areas and we hope that there will be opportunities to advise on its implementation.

A new approach to planning and investment should be aimed at enabling the opportunities provided by Growth Areas with a focus on projects that directly influence employment and knowledge capacity.

A business as usual approach, that fails to integrate the Growth Areas with high income and high skill jobs, further embeds spatial inequalities that diminish the productivity benefits from agglomeration.

To successfully transition to the new economy, Growth Areas need transformational infrastructure that responds to the high level of existing demand for housing and jobs.

Transformational infrastructure includes transport and internet infrastructure as well as economic assets such as airports, universities and hospitals. Research by NIEIR shows that capital investment in a region, such as transport, telecommunications, universities, hospitals and cultural assets, is a core driver of economic activity and growth.ⁱⁱⁱ

Economy (GRP)



\$207b

12% of Australia's GDP in 2018

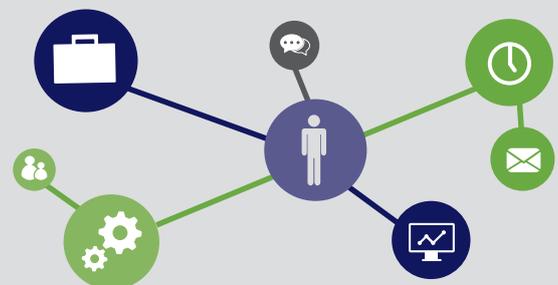
Businesses



Grew by 7.4% (2014-16)

More than double national rate (Australia had 3.4%)

Workforce 2017/18



2.45 million people

19% of Australia's total workforce

Local Jobs



1.7m

13.5% of Australia's employment in 2018

Deficits impacting economic growth and national productivity

Growth Areas continue to experience significant deficits that impact the everyday life and future prospects of their five million residents:

Skills



Year 12 completion 44% vs 48% nationally
Bachelor degree 13% vs 18% nationally

Jobs



69 jobs for every 100 workers in 2016 - worse than 2006

Infrastructure



Between 2011-16:

- just 6% of Australia's local government areas
- accommodated 35% of population growth and 25% of job growth
- but only received 13% of asset growth

- ▶ **Skill gaps:** 16.1% of residents aged 15+ have a bachelor's degree, compared to the national average of 22%.
- ▶ **Major shortfalls in infrastructure:** while Growth Areas support 20% of Australia's population, they only share in 13% of non-dwelling capital stocks
- ▶ **Large deficits in social infrastructure:** For example, there are only 2.5 tertiary education jobs per thousand people in the Growth Areas compared to 8.6 at the metropolitan level. This is a similar story for hospitals, cultural assets and government jobs.
- ▶ **Poor health conditions:** Due mostly to their high levels of lifestyle risk factors including high levels of obesity and psychological distress and low levels of physical activity.

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR GROWTH

The National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA or the Alliance) endorses four guiding principles as building blocks for future policy and investment decisions to support growth areas and the nation:

1. Rebalance Australian Capital Cities

Rebalancing the spatial structure of our capital cities needs better planning and investment that supports distributing infrastructure, jobs and housing more evenly across the metropolitan area, including bringing new jobs closer to where the growing population lives. This is a necessary shift in traditional metropolitan planning practices in Australia.

2. Invest in Places for People

As we rebalance the structure of our cities at a metropolitan scale to accommodate growth, innovative place-based and neighbourhood planning and design will bring together the critical elements required to support productive, liveable and resilient places for people to live and work and for businesses to invest.

3. Unlock Economic Growth

Unlock the value in the fast-growing cities, suburbs and towns on the outskirts of Australian capital cities and support the growth of new economies by matching skilled labour to new and emerging industry opportunities, fostering the growth of high amenity, industry and service led innovation precincts for knowledge intensive and small business jobs and expanding the opportunities associated with freight and logistics.

4. Prioritise Transport Solutions

Improve overall transport performance to service the outer urban growth areas of Australia's capital cities through integrated transport networks which connect people and jobs and support active, shared and public transport connectivity to lessen dependence on private vehicles.

REBALANCE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL CITIES

Managing population growth is a responsibility that is shared between all levels of Government. Increasingly, as the closest level of government to the community, Local Governments are facing significant challenges arising from rapid and sustained population growth. Key to managing population growth is efficient spatial distribution geared towards matching infrastructure investment with the pace of growth.

Population growth projections

Over the next 30 years, Australia's population is projected to increase by 11.8 million people, with 80% of the growth in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth. This is equal to adding a new city, roughly the size of Canberra, each year for the next 30 years.^{iv} The 31 fastest growing cities, suburbs and towns around our capital cities are forecasted to be home to 8 million people by 2036^v, and continue to grow at 3% per annum, significantly faster than the Australian growth rate (1.7 % per annum. between 2011 and 2016.^{vi})

Implications for outer urban growth areas of unequal growth in capital cities

- *Long commutes and urban congestion:* Australia's larger capital cities are now experiencing the challenges that come with ever-expanding population and unbalanced growth distribution. The economic gains of concentrating economic activity in Central Business Districts are being outweighed by lost productivity in travel-time and congestion. In 2016, the job deficit position was 69 for every 100 workers living in the outer suburbs with up to 80% of workers across the nation commuting from the outer suburbs.^{vii}

Well planned cities - where the location of jobs, homes and their supporting infrastructure networks are coordinated to maximise accessibility and liveability - will deliver the best outcomes for communities in growth areas on the outskirts of Australia's capital cities. Interventions that better align the distribution of new jobs growth, transport and social infrastructure to growth areas will support polycentric and better performing cities,

with multiple activity hubs critical for the nation's economic and social sustainability.

- *Pressure on critical infrastructure for new communities:* Beyond transport solutions, servicing the demands of a growing population for water, energy and telecommunications is placing demands on the capacity of existing national infrastructure.

New technologies and business models for provision of water, energy and telecommunications infrastructure will influence how services can be delivered to growing communities. Meeting this challenge will require governments to anticipate these changes and plan to provide the regulatory environment to ensure supply is delivered efficiently, sustainable and maintained equitably.

Future directions to reduce the burden on growth areas

Planning systems and governance frameworks: Improved planning systems and governance frameworks, such as those within the City Deal model, are critical to streamline the actions of all three levels of government. Continued reform of the responsibilities shared between the three levels of government for planning, funding and delivery of strategic transport, economic and community development infrastructure is the only way forward. Sector-led infrastructure at state level leads to uncoordinated outcomes and assets, with communities suffering from delivery lags in critical community and social infrastructure. Enhanced collaboration across and within tiers of Government provides the best chance of delivering thriving communities at scale.^{viii}

Innovative funding and financing mechanisms: With increasing budget pressure on funding competing infrastructure priorities across the nation, continued dialogue is needed at COAG and across sectors to build the capacity and mechanisms within local governments for private/public partnerships in infrastructure, including the role of developer contributions, institutional investment and value capture projects.

1. Population Recommendations 2020-21

1.1. As part of the Australian Government's Planning for Australia's Future Population^{ix}, ensure the **Centre of Population is sufficiently resourced** to achieve its objectives to promote deliberate and collaborative

planning for population growth and infrastructure investment, ensuring a focus on improving projections in outer urban growth areas of capital cities.

1.2. Include representation of outer urban growth areas in the **National Population and Planning Framework and Treasurer's Forum on Population**, to support the Federal Government's national population growth and infrastructure planning.

2. Cities Policy Recommendations 2020-21

2.1. Ensure commitments made in the **Western Sydney City Deal** are fully funded and the governance and review mechanisms established ensure equitable and long-term benefits for all local government participants and their communities.

2.1.1. In particular, decisions on North-South Rail must be expedited to create planning certainty and must be based on the best outcomes for current and future residents and businesses.

2.2. Increase resources available to parties involved in City Deal negotiations, to achieve an equitable Deal in an efficient timeframe, including a **capacity-building program for collaborating local governments** to identify and prepare suitable proposals for the **South East Melbourne and North and West Melbourne City Deals**.

2.3. Leverage the learnings from the current City Deals to inform improved and **replicable models to enhance future deals for local government**, including, but not limited to, Planning Partnerships and Governance models.

2.4. In partnership with state governments (COAG) and growth area councils (NGAA) fund a **review of the planning and delivery and long-term needs of greenfield developments** in outer urban growth areas, with a focus on the alignment between forecast population growth, housing development, transport and community infrastructure and the necessary funding models, including developer contributions.

2.5. Give policy and funding **recognition to the cities, towns and suburbs in outer urban growth areas as geographic and demographic areas distinct from major capital cities and regional areas**; noting the role they play in providing facilities and services for regional populations, and allowing for programs such as the Building Better Regions Fund to be available to all localities in growth areas municipalities.

INVEST IN PLACES FOR PEOPLE

As we rebalance the structure of our cities at a metropolitan scale to accommodate growth, at the local level, place-based and neighbourhood planning and design will bring together the critical elements required to support productive, liveable and resilient places for people to live and work and for businesses to invest.

The Alliance calls on federal and state governments to take a renewed focus on planning for places at the local and neighbourhood level, ensuring that metropolitan scale plans are sequenced with development to support growth^x, investing in places where people want to live.^{xi}

Shortage of public open space and sports facilities

With rapid growth there has been an historic undersupply of recreation facilities. Over time the increasing demand that is associated with fast population growth -- compounded by funding constraints of local and state government - has led to these communities having a significant shortage of public open space and sports facilities. Faced with long commutes to sporting precincts, many forego active recreation, entrenching a pattern of disadvantage, resulting in reduced quality of life and increased health costs, social isolation, lack of social cohesion, physical and mental health problems.

Co-investment in critical community, recreational and social infrastructure projects in outer urban communities is urgently required. Rapid population growth leaves residents in newly developed suburbs and towns without reasonable access to regional level sporting facilities. This results in lower participation in organised sport, high travel costs and rising government health care costs.

A significant problem for high growth areas is that the provision of facilities and services lags behind population growth and invariably never reaches the level of provision seen in established inner metropolitan areas.

Existing Federal Government funding programs are inadequate to meet the scale of investment needed for growth area sports and recreational facilities. While

some funding is available for localised recreational facilities through State Government agencies and developer contributions there is practically no funding available for the regional level facilities needed to cater for current and future communities in high growth areas.

3. Recreation Infrastructure Budget Recommendations

NGAA recommends a national approach be taken to the need for Federal Government co-investment in sport and recreational facilities in outer urban growth areas.

A number of NGAA members in Perth have taken a national leadership role on this issue through the Growth Areas of Perth and Peel (GAPP) group. Those councils have presented to the Federal Government and Infrastructure Australia an evidence-base to show the national significance of the impact of poor access to facilities. They are seeking \$350 million in combination with State Government, Local Government and private investment to rectify the inequitable access to facilities experienced in their region (*NGAA Project 3.1*).

Within the GAPP proposal are ten projects, including the City of Armadale's Regional Recreation Reserve (*NGAA Project 3.2*) and the City of Gosnells' Sutherlands Park Redevelopment (*NGAA Project 3.4*). Additional funding is also required for the City of Wanneroo's Regional Northern Coastal Suburbs Swimming Pool (*NGAA Project 3.5*).

In South Australia, NGAA recommends funding for Mount Barker District Council's Regional Indoor Aquatic and Leisure Centre: Stage 1 (*NGAA Project 3.6*) to address a lack of indoor community aquatic facilities in the Adelaide Hills Region, replace existing outdoor pool which is at end of life, and cater for the current and projected population growth.

In Victoria, funding is required for a business case for the City of Whittlesea's Mernda Aquatic and Indoor Sports Centre (*NGAA Project 3.3*). The City of Whittlesea has a current shortfall of 21 indoor courts and 18 competition compliant outdoor courts – a deficit that will continue to grow as the local population increases by 69% between 2019 to 2041 (from 229,791 in 2019 to 388,417).^{xii}

Health facilities and service delivery in new and growing communities

While there are well-documented links between health behaviours and health outcomes, there is also a growing body of work suggesting that the way we are designing and building our suburbs can have a significant impact on the health outcomes of our communities.

Outer urban growth areas have relatively higher rates of obesity, death from heart disease, and psychological distress. Social isolation is also a significant concern. Loneliness can affect all ages and is exacerbated by long travel times for work or recreation.^{xiii}

These health and wellbeing outcomes are directly related to poor social and environmental conditions, and result in reduced quality of life, increased healthcare costs and increased productivity costs to local businesses.

NGAA believes health indicator deficits in outer growth areas needs to be addressed through:

- urban design to encourage active transport and social cohesion
- local job creation to reduce commute times
- provision of community and recreational facilities and
- provision of local health facilities and services.

The scale at which growth area populations are expanding – and will continue to expand in greenfield areas in coming decades – will exacerbate overcrowding in existing health facilities and cause significant problems in areas where no hospital exists

4. Health Facilities and Service Delivery Budget Recommendations

NGAA encourages Federal and State Governments to focus on and prioritise the needs of current and future growth area communities, and ensure sufficient funding is available to build the facilities required and deliver the range of services needed.

As an illustration of the need for a heightened response to growth area health needs, the City of Melton in Melbourne's west and the Shire of Wollondilly in Sydney's south west both have rapidly expanding populations and no local hospital or integrated health centre.

The City of Melton currently has a population of 165,000 - larger than most regional cities in Victoria, but does not have a hospital (*NGAA Project 4.4*). Melton's population will grow to 485,000 people by 2015 and travel times from the municipality to access public hospital services in Sunshine, Footscray and Ballarat already exceed the long-accepted general standard for 'access to hospital' for an average person of 30 minutes. A Business Case is under development for a hospital in Melton, and long term commitment to the health needs of this rapidly growing community is needed from both Federal and State Governments.

The Shire of Wollondilly's population will triple in coming decades. Recent improvements and upgrades at the neighbouring Campbelltown Hospital only cater for growth until 2024, which doesn't include any growth currently occurring at within the Shire of Wollondilly. This will place significant pressure on the existing health system. At a minimum, an integrated health care facility is required within the Wilton Growth Area, ahead of a tertiary level hospital to service Wilton and the Wollondilly Shire in the longer term (*NGAA Project 4.1*).

Similarly, the delivery of mental health services in growth areas has not kept pace with the needs of the population. Significant gaps in service delivery have emerged across health network catchment areas, leaving new and recently-established suburbs (who generally have higher a proportion of vulnerable at-risk groups compared to other LGAs in their catchment) with insufficient access to mental health services. This is particularly the case in both the City of Whittlesea (*NGAA Project 4.2*) and Mitchell Shire Council (*NGAA Project 4.3*) in Melbourne's northern suburbs where investment in mental health service delivery is urgently needed.

Dedicated Funding for Community Facilities and Services

There is a clear and significant gap in the funding available to local government to build community facilities such as playgrounds, libraries, kindergartens, arts, cultural and social facilities (in addition to recreational facilities outlined above).

Australia's outer urban growth areas are home to 1.2 million children, and thousands of babies are born every week within NGAA member councils. Due to the geographic location of their home, those children will

have insufficient access to community facilities and services that will allow them to thrive.

Disengagement by youth from schooling and higher unemployment rates is a challenge for all growth area councils. In 2016, 11.6% of 15 to 24-year olds in NGAA areas were disengaged with employment and education, compared to 9.6% in Australia^{xiv}. For some growth areas like the City of Playford, South Australia, the rate is as high as 61 percent, impacted by intergenerational unemployment and poverty.^{xv}

5. Dedicated Funding for Community Facilities Budget Recommendations

NGAA recommends a co-investment model, like that proposed to address the sports and recreation facilities deficit, be made available to local government at a quantum and scale sufficient to address the needs of outer urban growth areas.

The scale of the community infrastructure deficit is felt most prominently in outer urban growth areas, where new communities are being built rapidly in greenfield sites – with no existing facilities.

NGAA also supports the Australian Local Government Association's call for Federal Government investment in community infrastructure.

Hume City Council, in Melbourne's north west has \$276 million of community infrastructure to construct including open space, early years centres, community safety initiatives, walking and cycling networks as well as sport and recreation facilities (NGAA Project 5.2).

The growing population in Liverpool City Council in Sydney's west, would benefit from facilities to activate the Georges River and Lighthorse Park precinct and increase utilisation of existing open space, with a pedestrian/cycleway bridge, railway overpass, playground, and informal oval lawn.

The project will provide much needed connection to a place for social gathering, active transport, passive recreation, sporting facilities. (NGAA Projects 5.3 and 5.4)

Outer urban growth areas are the epicentre of Australia's baby boom, with more than 100 babies born every week within some NGAA members' communities. While this has an enormous impact on council services, the early years education prospects of those children are compromised by insecure kindergarten funding. **NGAA calls for an urgent long-term extension of the Federal Government's limited contribution**

to kindergarten funding which is due to end in December 2020. (NGAA Project 5.1)

Environmental and natural disaster remediation in growing urban areas

The majority of NGAA member councils are located at the interface between metropolitan and regional areas. Many of their local economies rely on agriculture and agribusiness. The landscape is often a combination of agricultural land, state or national parks and natural bushland abutted by new housing developments.

This places many new communities in precarious situations during heatwaves, bushfires, droughts, storms and floods as structural mitigation has not yet been developed to ensure the safety of expanded populations and changes land uses.

Furthermore, the rate of new development in growth areas places pressure on the decision-making cycle within local governments, forcing rapid planning and approval cycles which can lead to removal of tree canopy, housing stock which can be poorly sited and not designed to account for local climatic factors such as flood, heat and fire and exacerbation of urban heat island on communities. Vulnerable homes –located in high risk areas and not designed to mitigate the risks of climate hazards – have poor outcomes for health and wellbeing, household running costs and are more expensive to insure. These issues impact affordability and resilience.^{xvi}

Universally, extreme heat, defined by the Climate Council as temperatures 40 degrees and over, and Urban Heat Island effect, has been prioritised as a key issue of concern for governments, organisations, businesses and communities alike. Western Sydney, a geographic area that has no sea breeze and has unprecedented urban development, is already hot and is set to get hotter. Western Sydney can be 10 degrees hotter than the city during extreme heat events, residents use 100% more energy to cool their homes than Sydney's East and there has been a 250% increase in very hot days (35+ degrees) over the past three decades.^{xvii}

How we respond to the challenge of urban heat spans the roles and responsibilities of many different organisations and public sector agencies. While local government and health providers are often closest to the community impact of urban heat on residents, they are not always empowered from a regulatory or

resource perspective to develop and drive adaptation outcomes.

Part of the required response to Urban Heat Island is within the mandate of local government. NGAA members are currently exploring mitigation actions such as building materials (roof colour and material selection), paved and permeable surfaces, greening trees and other vegetation (verge widths, species selection, growing time, community attitudes) and water sensitive design.^{xviii}

6. Environmental and Natural Disaster Remediation in Growing Urban Areas Budget Recommendations

NGAA recommends specific action be taken to mitigate the risk of environmental changes and natural disasters in outer urban growth areas, where large communities are at risk, as well agricultural industries that directly support broader metropolitan populations.

The City of Playford in Adelaide's northern suburbs along with the Gawler River Flood Management Authority, is seeking funding for water management and mitigation works in the lower stretches of the Gawler River to significantly reduce the periodic flooding of property, road closures and damage to infrastructure and significant horticulture and government investment, including the \$155.6 million Northern Adelaide Irrigation Scheme (NAIS) which is currently under development. (NGAA Project 6.1).

In Penrith in Sydney's west, the Castlereagh Connection project would improve flood evacuation capacity for current and future communities as well as improve transport connectivity. Some 64,000 people will need to evacuate in a 1 in 100-year flood in the Hawkesbury-Nepean valley region, not taking into account the 30,000 additional homes proposed for North West Growth Area (NGAA Project 13.3).

UNLOCK ECONOMIC GROWTH

The shift towards a service and knowledge-based economy has a major impact on the location of jobs across Australia, with employment in large metropolitan cities accounting for almost 87% of national job growth.^{xix}

The fast-growing cities, towns and suburbs of Australia's capital cities play a pivotal role in the nation's economy by providing affordable housing to a large resident base and also employment land for export industries such as manufacturing, freight and logistics. They account for more than 12 per cent of GDP, despite making up only six per cent of Australia's LGAs.^{xx}

The jobs analysis in the *State of Australia's Fast Growing Outer Suburbs 2018*, suggests that the traditional economic role of outer urban growth areas is transitioning. Several indicators show early signs of entrepreneurial activity and an increase in knowledge intensity and high-tech job activity.^{xxi} The rate of growth of high-tech jobs in outer urban growth areas is outpacing the national average.

Health, education and professional services are driving most of the high skilled growth in the outer suburbs, with 40% of the jobs growth over the last 5 years in high skilled occupations.^{xxii} High skilled jobs are important to the outer suburbs as they offer higher incomes and generate higher economic multipliers, with other economic sectors benefitting from their activity. Given the historic reliance on population and construction-based employment and the constraints on greenfield development, it is critical to support these seeds of transition to ensure that outer urban growth areas secure a growing and equitable share of high-tech jobs. They are important catalysts for economic transition and offer better distribution of agglomeration hubs and precincts to the outer suburbs.

However there is a significant deficit in educational attainment in outer urban growth areas, with the percentage of residents who have completed Year 12 or a Bachelor degree trailing the national average^{xxiii}. Current geographic distribution of Commonwealth Supported Places for Bachelor Degrees is heavily weighted to inner city University campuses, thereby lowering the viability of new campuses being established in outer urban areas, where large numbers of university students reside and curtailing future career choices.^{xxiv}

Research by the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) shows that capital investment such as transport, telecommunications, community and social infrastructure including universities, hospital and cultural assets is a core driver of economic activity and growth in a region.

Securing catalyst institutions such as universities, hospitals, recreational and cultural assets in the places where one in five Australians live is critical because they:

- attract more knowledge intensive jobs for residents
- attract higher skilled workers
- can play an 'anchor tenant' role in precinct development and further agglomeration – all strengthening economic performance and productivity.

Leverage Urban Freight Task for Good Growth

Looking to the expanding freight and logistics sector within outer urban growth areas, there is an increasing urban freight task. According to the 2015 Australian Infrastructure Audit Australia's containerised freight task is projected to increase by 165% by 2031,^{xxv} with cities and outer urban growth areas being the primary location for this growth. The outer suburbs provide freight corridors, together with first- and last-mile transport and handling operations, warehousing and storage - all of which impact the structure and function of our cities

7. Improving Freight Task Budget Recommendations

NGAA recommends the future freight and logistics capacity of Melbourne be enhanced through the establishment of intermodal freight terminals that will leverage the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail, existing ports and airport, and planned Outer Metropolitan Ring Road (NGAA Projects 7.1 and 7.2)

Incentivise Precinct Development

Domestic and international evidence shows that innovation precincts are increasingly important in driving agglomeration and economic growth. The Australia Government through the *Statement of Principles for Australian Innovation Precincts* supports place-based innovation ecosystems.^{xxvi} The Alliance seeks collaboration between government, business, research and education sectors to develop precincts that support growth.

8. Precinct Development Budget Recommendations

NGAA Recommends provision of direct funding via a co-investment model with local and state governments to accelerate targeted precinct development and industry attraction in outer urban growth areas in line with the Australian Government's Statement of Principles for Australian Innovation Precincts^{xxvii}:

Outer urban growth areas are significantly underrepresented in Australian precinct development, yet offer great opportunities for greenfield and brownfield developments, making use of large local workforces and adjacent residential land, and broadening the scope for innovation across a range of industries.

In Hume City Council in Melbourne's north west, the 40-hectare Maygar Army Barracks site in Broadmeadows (owned by the Australian Government) is ideally located in the Northern State-Significant Industrial Precinct and is surrounded by Northcorp Industry Park. Future change of use of the Broadmeadows site could see expanded industrial and employment related opportunities and be a major benefit for the local and state economy (NGAA Project 8.3).

Similarly, employment precincts in the City of Hume will be unlocked with interchange upgrades on the Hume Freeway. Employment projections anticipate 43,000 jobs will be located in Hume between 2016 and 2031, including jobs in zoned and planned new employment precincts with access to the Hume Freeway. This includes industrial precincts planned for advanced manufacturing and logistics companies, and new town centres planned for a range of health, education and professional services companies. Two new Hume Freeway interchanges (Gunns Gully Road and English Street) and a new bridge connection (Cameron Street) are required to unlock development in these precincts (NGAA Project 11.12)

Industry and Jobs Growth Initiatives

Employment in Australia's outer urban growth areas from 2011-16 grew faster (2.6%) than the national average (1.2%) but not fast enough to keep pace with population growth (3%). Similarly, business numbers grew at nearly double the national average.

Outer urban growth areas have a workforce of 2.4 million people but only 1.7 million jobs. Added to this

deficit is a large cohort of nearly one million young people who will be looking for work within the next decade.

While employment growth has been strong, the job deficit position is no better than in 2006. Currently there are 69 local jobs for every 100 workers in growth areas, which leads to large number of workers commuting outside there are to employment, causing congestion and with a high economic and social cost. Local job creation and improved transport access to local jobs are key to addressing this deficit.

9. Industry and Jobs Growth Initiatives Budget Recommendations

NGAA recommends as a part of the Federal Government's industry-led Growth Centre Strategy^{xxviii}, fund a planning review which aligns targeted investments to connect growing labour markets in the outer suburbs to the Industry Growth Centre initiative, across the six industry sectors of cyber security, advanced manufacturing, food and agribusiness, medical and pharmaceuticals and Mining Equipment, Technology and Services (METS).

NGAA recommends the Federal government implement the recommendations of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Australian Government's role in the development of Cities,^{xxix} to provide financial support, in the form of grants, to projects which demonstrate potential to generate significant employment growth in the rapidly expanding, outer suburban communities of Australian cities.

Investment opportunities include economic and social development through recycled water in Mount Barker District Council in Adelaide's south east, which would generate around 150 long term jobs and increase food production for export (NGAA Project 9.1).

Funding to create business incubators in outer urban growth areas shows a significant return on investment in terms of economic output and job creation. The Stretton Centre, in the City of Playford in Adelaide's north, was funded by the Suburban Jobs Program in 2015. After four years of operations, the Centre has supported local businesses to receive \$7.6M in grant funding, facilitated \$86.6M investment in northern Adelaide and created 559 new jobs. Initiatives in the west of Melbourne and Sydney have had similar impacts.

Catalyse Higher Education and Research Institutions where people live

Decisive action is required to address the skills deficit in outer urban growth areas, where residents have lower educational attainment rates and less access to vocational and higher education campuses. While the gap between growth areas and national average year 12 completion rate narrowed between 2011-16, the rate of residents with a Bachelor Degree or higher widened. To reach the national qualifications level, an extra 207,606 residents of growth areas would have to have finished a degree.^{xxx}

The skills gap between the fast growing outer suburbs and the national average is also a major economic development barrier, particularly in the new economy that favours qualified workers. Our economy is becoming more and more dependent on ideas and problem solving, with the largest increase in jobs across Australia being those that require higher-level qualifications.

10. Skills and Education Budget Recommendations

NGAA recommends improving access through decentralisation of vocational and university campuses and the spatial distribution of Commonwealth supported places, to create education student pathways close to home, grow local skills to support job growth and transition to the knowledge economy.

It is imperative that residents of growth areas are given equitable access to education opportunities and that those universities who establish campuses in outer urban areas are supported, including through the funding of Commonwealth supported places and co-investment from all levels of government.

Similarly, vocational education opportunities in many growth areas do not adequately meet the needs of the population. In the City of Armadale in Perth's south west, for example, there are currently 27 primary and 12 high schools but no Higher Education/TAFE campus. A major local higher education facility will contribute towards reducing youth unemployment rate (27%) and to address the high levels of social and economic disadvantage (SEIFA) by providing people with skill needed to find jobs. The 5 to 17 year cohort will account for 19% of the City of Armadale's projected total regional population of 209,512 by 2036 (NGAA Project 10.1).

PRIORITISE TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS

The outer suburbs of Australian cities expanded rapidly with increased private car ownership and the desire for affordable living away from inner-city congestion. However, access to services, jobs and leisure facilities is a growing challenge. New ways of working, supported by high quality digital infrastructure are starting to transform the skills and job profile of outer suburban communities, but families still rely on access to roads, rail and public transport to connect to the jobs, facilities and services far from home.

Life in most outer urban growth areas is not a 30 Minute City experience. Nationally, the story is a consistent one with up to 80 per cent of residents commuting from their suburb every day.^{xxxii} Given the gaps in public transport infrastructure and the “last-mile” challenge, community reliance on the private car to get to jobs located far from home is significant, and the demand for improved roads and road performance is now critical. As reported by the Australian Automobile Association, road performance is deteriorating nationally, with reliability and congestion worsening. The Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics estimated that congestion cost Australia \$16.5 billion in 2015. Without major policy changes, congestion costs are predicted to reach between \$27.7 and \$37.3 billion by 2030.^{xxxiii}

There are three problems with public transport for residents of outer urban growth areas, described by Infrastructure Australia’s Reform Series, *Outer Urban Public Transport; Improving Accessibility in lower density areas* (2018)^{xxxiii}. They are: lower levels of access, poor frequency and longer travel times. The Alliance firmly believes that these challenges go to the heart of the health, well-being and resilience of our communities.

Urban Congestion Fund

Outer urban growth area communities need better roads with reliable travel times, better public transport, commuter parking and pathways for active transport. Transport is critical to growing healthy and productive cities where people are connected to jobs.

11. Urban Congestion Fund Budget Recommendations

NGAA recommends the following projects that will reduce congestion and get people to work, home or study on time.

- 11.1. NSW – Wollondilly Shire Council: Appin and Picton Road Upgrades
- 11.2. NSW – Wollondilly Shire Council: Warragamba/Silverdale Road Duplication and Nepean River Crossing
- 11.3. NSW – Wollondilly Shire Council: Picton Bypass
- 11.4. VIC – Hume City Council: Bulla Bypass
- 11.5. VIC – Hume City Council: Road duplications in Hume
- 11.6. VIC – Hume City Council: Unlocking employment precincts in Hume through Hume Freeway interchange upgrades
- 11.7. VIC – City of Casey: Glasscocks Road Extension
- 11.8. VIC – City of Casey: Thompsons Road Extension
- 11.9. SA – City of Playford: Curtis Road Duplication & Intersection Upgrades
- 11.10. SA – Mount Barker District Council: Delivery of New Connector Road to Service Growth in Mt Barker
- 11.11. WA – City of Wanneroo: Advancing Whiteman Yanchep Highway construction
- 11.12. WA – City of Wanneroo: Neerabup Strategic Link-Flynn Drive Dualling

Leveraging Current Investment

The Federal Government’s infrastructure pipeline includes projects that will transform the transport systems in outer urban growth areas. In line with the agreed investment, there are a range of additional projects that would increase the impact of the major infrastructure spend.

12. Leveraging Current Investment Budget Recommendations

NGAA recommends Federal Government funding for the following projects that align with current infrastructure delivery and would enhance long-term outcomes.

Planning and funding for the delivery of the entire North South Rail link in Western Sydney is vital (NGAA Project 12.3). Stage 1 of the North South Rail Link will connect the Western Sydney aerotropolis to the western line at St Marys. This section is currently subject to a business case jointly funded by the NSW and Federal Governments and announced under the Western Sydney City Deal however, corridors have not been acquired and funding has not been committed. Outer suburbs of Sydney are poorly serviced by public transport^{xxxiv} - 42% of residents in in Outer Sydney are beyond walking access to public transport, compared with 2% in Sydney and 13% in middle ring suburbs. Our vision for the entire North South Rail Link will connect with the North West Metro at Tallawong (Schofields) and the South West at Macarthur. North South Rail will connect important population and employment growth precincts in the city's west with the future airport as well as across the broader region and support a 30-minute city.

Improved rail services in Wollondilly Shire Council in south west Sydney (NGAA project 12.1) are needed to service the Wilton Growth Area that will accommodate an additional 45,000 people over the next 30 years, in addition to the already expanding urban areas of Picton, Tahmoor and Bargo, together with the future population of the Greater Macarthur Growth Area (a further 50,000 people). Current upgrades to rail infrastructure and rolling stock across the State to date have not addressed an already sub-standard commuter service on the main southern line.

In south west Perth, the METRONET railway line extension from Armadale to Byford provides the opportunity to unlock substantial development potential. **Sinking Armadale's railway station is a decisive once-in-a-generation investment that will catalase the much-needed revitalisation of Armadale's town centre** (NGAA Project 12.3). This joint investment by State and Federal Government provides the highest return out of all possible scenarios by creating 18,000 jobs in the future, accommodating 7,000 residents, 1,600 students, and unlocking more than \$2.2 billion worth in private investment.

Transformational Transport Infrastructure

Federal Government focus on transformational transport infrastructure projects in outer urban growth areas will improving access to employment, help to address the \$50 billion transport infrastructure deficit

in growth areas^{xxxv} and bring long-term benefits for the additional 3 million people living in those areas by 2036.

13. Transformational Transport Infrastructure Budget Recommendations

NGAA recommends Federal Government focus on transformational projects, including those that may form part of current or future City Deal negotiations.

Road transport projects include:

- **Castlereagh Connection in Penrith City Council** (NGAA project 13.3) the corridor for which has been identified since 1951, which would improve connectivity in Western Sydney's growing residential suburbs, improve flood evacuation capacity and safety for 60,000+ residents in the Hawkesbury and northern parts of the Penrith LGA, improve connection to regional NSW and access to existing motorway networks.
- **E6 freeway and Outer Metropolitan Transport** corridor in Melbourne's north and west, a 100-kilometre-long high-speed transport link for people and freight, which will be transformative for Melbourne and surrounding regional areas. It will create better connections to key international transport hubs such as Melbourne Airport, Avalon Airport, the Port of Geelong, and proposed Freight Terminals, as well as significant current and planned employment hubs (NGAA Project 13.5).
- The **Western Highway in the City of Melton** in Melbourne's west is a critical arterial road link that functions as an important economic driver at a National, State and Metropolitan level. The section of highway within Melton City Council suffers from significant levels of congestion during the peak periods. Use of stretch of road will grow considerably in the next two years with 6 new housing estates being built adjacent to the highway with 55,100 new dwellings and an estimated population of 153,400. Within Melton City Council, the Western Highway is projected to accommodate 85,000 vehicles per day by 2021 and 113,000 vehicles per day by 2031. Additional lanes and upgraded interchanges are necessary in order to support the booming growth in population and maintain efficient freight movements in and out of Melbourne. (NGAA Project 13.10).
- The **Shire of Mitchell in Melbourne's north** is calling for early provision of comprehensive, well

planned, accessible and affordable transport infrastructure in the northern growth corridor as their population rapidly expands in coming years (NGAA Project 13.12).

Rail projects include:

- In the City of Casey in Melbourne's south east, a new railway station at Berwick and active transport connection to service the **Berwick Health and Education Precinct**, a hub of knowledge, technology, health, employment, research and education for the south east (NGAA Project 13.1). Also, the **extension of the rail line from Cranbourne to Clyde** will significantly alleviate inadequate public transport services in one of Australia's fastest growth corridors and connect residents to jobs, services and their families (NGAA Project 13.10).
- The absence of a strong east-west transit connection between 2 major activity centres within the Perth Metropolitan southern suburb middle ring councils of Cockburn and Fremantle is considered an infrastructure gap impacting significant urban growth opportunities. The **Fremantle to Cockburn Transit link** is a regionally significant project and funding is sought for the preliminary route definition and scoping study (NGAA Project 13.11).
- In the **City of Gosnells in Perth's south east**, level crossing removals at Beckenham and Maddington stations would allow transit-oriented development to occur, thereby significantly improving traffic flow; decreasing congestion and safety risks for drivers (NGAA Project 13.7).
- The Victorian Government has invested \$50 million for detailed investigation of a **fast-rail link between Sunshine and Geelong, via Wyndham**. With \$4 billion already invested in the Regional Rail Link, Wyndham City supports calls for the Federal Government to capitalise on this opportunity and help fund this connection as a way of unlocking major employment opportunities. A 97 per cent increase in Victorian rail patronage since 2012/13 is one of the reasons provided by the Victorian Government for the need to investigate a fast-rail connection with Geelong to slash travel times between Victoria's two biggest cities, as well as creating a rail connection to Melbourne Airport. It is vital to note that Wyndham's population is already greater than Geelong's and connecting Melbourne, Geelong and Wyndham by fast rail

would unlock major employment opportunities while reducing traffic congestion (NGAA Project 13.8).

- The **Wollert and Epping North areas in the City of Whittlesea** in Melbourne's north are among the fastest growing in Australia. Population is forecast to increase from 34,899 in 2019 to 95,000 in 2041. There is limited access to public transport and the consequent traffic congestion and long commute times have a serious impact on the wellbeing of families and individuals and limit job growth in adjacent employment areas. Funding is sought from the Federal Government to provide the investment necessary to start the feasibility study into transport provision along the Wollert Transport Corridor as soon as possible (NGAA Project 13.6).
- The **Maldon–Dombarton Rail Line in Wollondilly Shire Council** would improve freight connectivity between Western Sydney Airport and Port Kembla International Gateways and reduce truck movements on Picton Road, Appin Road, the F6 and the Hume Hwy (Federal Highway) (NGAA Project 13.2).

Air Transport:

- The **South East Melbourne Airport project, led by Cardinia Shire Council** in Melbourne's south east, would respond to exponential population growth in the region, whereby, by 2031, over 2.5 million Victorians are projected to live closer (by travel time) to the South East Melbourne Airport than Melbourne Airport - larger than Brisbane Airport's catchment. The development of a South East Melbourne Airport will be essential to support population and employment growth in the south-east, and protect Victoria and Melbourne's liveability and competitiveness (NGAA Project 13.4).

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