

# Annual Report

2018/19



# Comment from the Chair

On behalf of the Eastern Region Group of Councils (ERG), I am pleased to present the 2018/19 Annual Report. The ERG continues to be a successful collaboration between the councils of eastern metropolitan Melbourne: Knox, Maroondah, Manningham, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges.

The year's highlight was an incredibly successful advocacy campaign, resulting in \$616 million in Federal funding commitments for high priority regional projects and programs. These include much needed funding for headspace services in Monash and Lilydale, commitment to build at least the first stage of the Monash Rail, Canterbury Road and seven station car park upgrades, and contributions towards regional sport and recreation facilities.

We joined forces on submissions to State Government on shared policy issues, funded research into areas for potential further collaboration and supported ongoing collective projects.

**Importantly, the ERG's reputation as a recognised, respected and united voice for the communities of Melbourne's east is growing.**

I recognise the commitment of our members in 2018 and 2019. The leadership and willingness of our Mayors, Councillors and Chief Executive Officers to find common ground to work together for the benefit of the broader region is commended.

Our collaborative efforts accelerated this year with the appointment of an ongoing Secretariat, whose work coordinating and supporting the ERG has grown our influence and impact.

I look forward to building on the year's achievements in the remainder of 2019 and beyond.

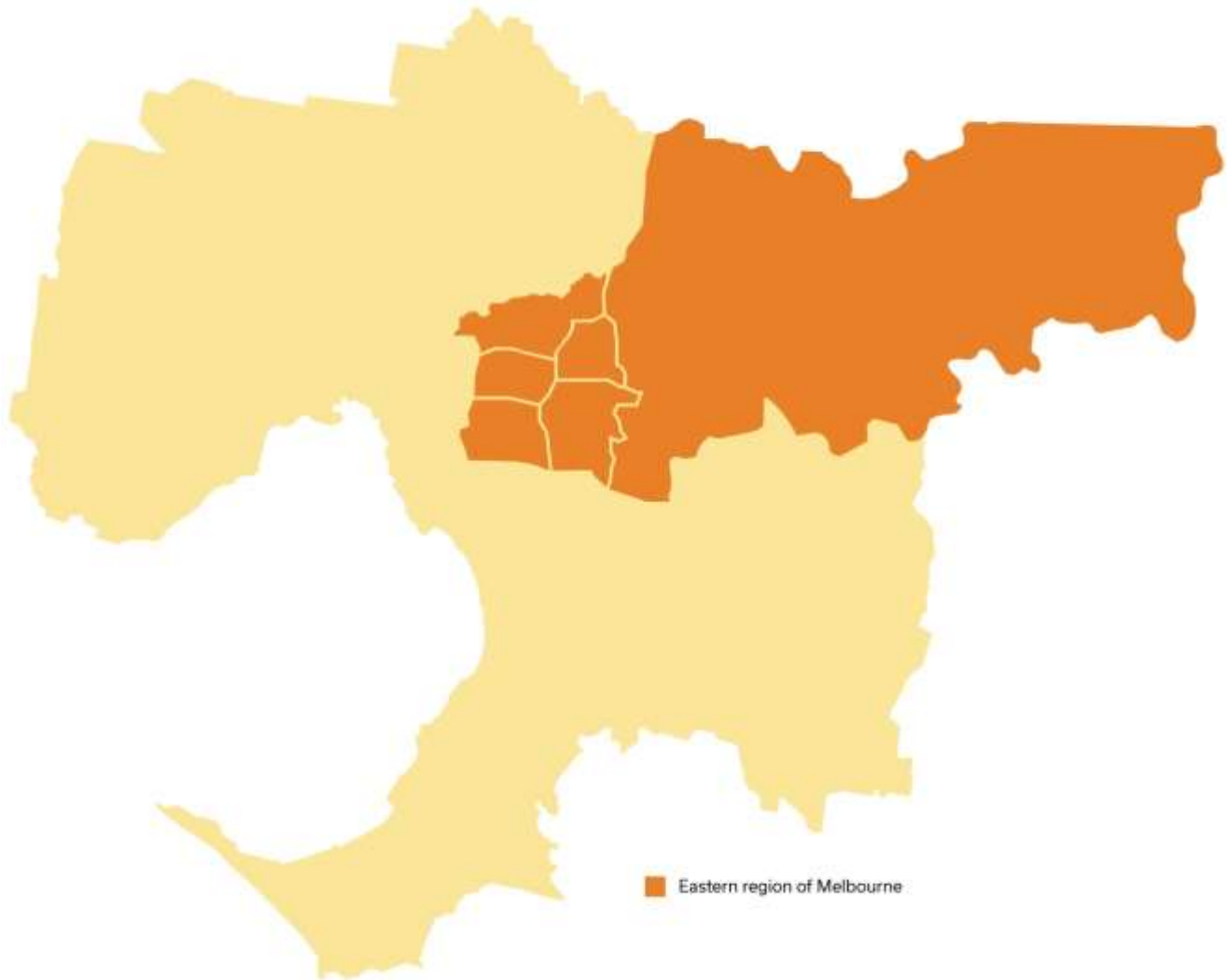


**Councillor Jake Keogh**

**Mayor, Knox City Council**

**Chair, Eastern Region Group of Councils**

## Our region



The eastern region of Melbourne stretches from the diverse middle and outer ring suburbs such as Glen Waverley, Doncaster, Box Hill and Ringwood, to townships like Yarra Junction and Olinda in the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges.

**Our region is home to nearly 1 million people, employs more than 365,000, and produces approximately \$54 million in gross regional product each year.**

Characterised by the transition from well-established suburbs to semi-rural and rural landscapes, our total land area is 311,104 hectares, or 31% of Greater Melbourne.

Our region is the traditional home of the Wurundjeri and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nations.

# About the ERG

We are a collaboration between six councils of eastern metropolitan Melbourne: Knox, Maroondah, Manningham, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges.

We work collaboratively on issues of common significance, importance and priority through advocacy, research and integrated planning on behalf of the communities of the eastern region.

**Our vision is to collectively pursue better community outcomes in a high demand environment, and service effectiveness and efficiency in a resource constrained environment.**

This is achieved through integrated planning (built and social) initiatives, joint procurement and shared services, and collaborative regional advocacy.

## Membership and partnerships

Each Council is represented Each Council is represented by its Mayor, Deputy Mayor or second Councillor, and the Chief Executive Officer.

The ERG elects a Chair and Deputy Chair to preside over the ERG for the full year commencing in December. CEOs and the ERG Secretariat are ex-officio attending members of the ERG; voting rights are held by Councillor members only.

We work closely with other regional groups in the east, including the:

- Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance (EAHA)
- Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA)
- Eastern Transport Coalition (ETC).

A list of our members is on pages 13-14.

## 2018/19 achievements

### Summary of outcomes against the ERG Strategic Plan

Our work program is guided by the draft *ERG Strategic Plan 2018-21*. The Plan includes a series a regional collaborative initiatives. While the initiatives are identified as priorities by year, many are long-term or ongoing projects and programs.

The following tables summarise outcomes of the 'Year 1' (2018/19) Strategic Plan initiatives:

## Advocacy

Initiative	Outcomes
Strategic Advocacy Statement and Plan	<p>We developed our advocacy statement <i>Regional Priorities for Melbourne's east</i> for the 2019 Federal election. Identifying our investment priorities for the region, the Statement includes the priority areas of: transport, community sport, housing affordability and youth mental health.</p> <p>We produced a video showcasing our investment priorities: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pW_hCer8pT4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pW_hCer8pT4</a></p>
Federal funding commitments	<p>We strongly advocated to the Government and Opposition for Federal funding for our region's priorities. Federal funding of \$616 million was announced for regional projects and programs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Headspace services for Monash (\$3.4 million over four years) and Lilydale (\$4.5 million over 3 years, including a Youth Health Hub);</li><li>– Commitment to build at least the first stage of the Monash Rail (\$475 million);</li><li>– Canterbury Road upgrade - city bound third lane in the Bayswater Business Precinct (\$24.5 million);</li><li>– Station car parks (\$15 million for Heathmont, Heatherdale, Croydon, Ringwood, Mitcham, Ferntree Gully and Boronia stations);</li><li>– Regional trail: Yarra Valley Trail Stage 1 (Lilydale to Yarra Glen);</li><li>– Appointment of a Federal Housing Minister (Michael Sukkar MP);</li><li>– Women's sport - female change room facilities (part of a Federal budget package);</li><li>– Warburton Mountain Bike Destination Stage 1;</li><li>– 'Homes to Homes' initiative (aims to raise funds for social and affordable housing) and regulation changes to support growth of the community housing sector.</li></ul> <p>The Federal Opposition announced several commitments matching some of the above, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Dedicated Federal Housing and Homelessness Minister;</li><li>– \$88 million investment to create a 'Safe Housing Fund' to increase transitional housing options;</li><li>– Contribution towards a second synthetic hockey pitch at Ashwood Reserve.</li></ul>



## Advocacy (continued)

Initiative	Outcomes
Submissions	<p>We developed formal advocacy submissions to State Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Seeking consideration and clarification of options available under the <i>Building Act 1993</i> to help address homelessness in our region, by enabling churches and other community organisations to provide temporary accommodation.</li><li>– Seeking continuation of the <i>Better Indoor Stadiums Fund</i>. The Melbourne East Regional Sport and Recreation Strategy identifies the need for additional multipurpose indoor sports courts as a high priority, and many member councils have planned projects contingent on BISF support.</li><li>– Outlining our regional position on Infrastructure Victoria’s draft Economic, Social and Environmental regional profile for the east.</li><li>– Seeking support to initiate improved protection for council authorised officers undertaking statutory roles on behalf of State Government. In recent years, there have been cases of assaults and abuse of officers working for member councils.</li><li>– Outlining our concerns about consultation, development of regulations and proposed implementation timetable on the draft Local Government Bill.</li></ul>
Stakeholder engagement	<p>We engaged with and continued to build strong relationships with key stakeholders including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– the Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance, Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action and Eastern Transport Coalition (we held a joint briefing with the Eastern Transport Coalition on the State Government’s Suburban Rail Loop project);</li><li>– meeting with several State and Federal MPs and candidates to outline the role of the ERG and share our investment priorities for the region;</li><li>– hosting State Government representatives to discuss issues such as waste and the pending Local Government Bill.</li></ul>
Website and social media	<p>We designed and launched the first ERG logo and website to promote the ERG brand and raise our profile: <a href="http://www.easternregiongroup.org.au">www.easternregiongroup.org.au</a>.</p> <p>We initiated a social media presence via Twitter to support our Federal advocacy: <b>@easternregion1</b></p> <p>We produced a video showcasing our investment priorities: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pW_hCer8pT4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pW_hCer8pT4</a></p>

## Joint procurement and shared services

Initiative	Outcomes
Joint procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Joint procurement within and beyond the region in a variety of categories has resulted in benefits including: significant savings (e.g. 14% for line marking; 3% for road re-surfacing), long term certainty (e.g. in price and a place to send organic material) and shared learnings.</li><li>– Building on these examples of collaborative procurement in a variety of categories, we supported the Eastern Region Procurement Network (ERPN) to investigate the potential for joint procurement in the capital works category. The ERPN found potential savings in the categories of flood lighting (22%), sports nets renewal (7%), and kerb and channel renewal (18%). The ERPN is now running category forums to continue their work and will report back on findings later this year.</li><li>– Alignment and standardising of tender documentation substantially progressed, with Conditions of Tendering almost complete.</li><li>– Member councils are continuing to collaborate on tenders where possible. For example, Monash and Knox recently collaborated for the delivered meals tender.</li></ul>
Develop a Regional Assessment Service model for aged care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Member councils agreed to undertake research to understand the current and future market across the region, explore service models and identify a preferred model to attract direct Commonwealth funding for a Regional Assessment Service model for aged care.</li><li>– A shared Regional Assessment Services Memorandum of Understanding was established. The Regional Assessment Options Project is now complete, and discussions underway to consider and progress future delivery at both a local and regional level.</li><li>– The eastern region is also represented on the Municipal Association Victoria (MAV) Statewide Community Care Task Group, which is currently considering a position paper and advocacy to the State and Commonwealth on the future role/s of local government in the State in Regional Assessment.</li></ul>
Regional approach to economic development and planning that supports the Eastern Metropolitan Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– All ERG councils are members of the State Government led Eastern Metropolitan Partnership (EMP) and Economy and Planning Working Group (EPWG).</li><li>– The EPWG specifically supports preparation of the Eastern Region Land Use Framework Plan, part of the implementation of the State Government’s metropolitan planning blueprint, <i>Plan Melbourne</i>. The State Government is currently considering its function and operation.</li></ul>

Operate a regional approach to economic development and business support

- The Melbourne East Regional Economic Development Group (MEREDG), including economic development leads from the region’s member councils, leads this approach.
  - MEREDG is currently developing a Project Endorsement Framework and Memorandum of Understanding to determine its regional priorities. This will be presented to the ERG for feedback, endorsement and potential resourcing
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Regional libraries

- Five of the six ERG members appointed an independent consultant to undertake a preliminary assessment of the potential benefits, costs, challenges and opportunities of merging the two regional library administration functions that currently operate in the region, the Eastern Region Library corporation and Whitehorse-Manningham Library corporation. The scope did not include a review of library services.
  - The preliminary assessment found there are potential cost savings, however there are several other considerations and the need for a shared service ethos between members.
  - The next steps are currently being considered.
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## Integrated planning (social)

Initiative	Outcomes
Regional collaboration to address rise of gambling-related harm and levels of exposure in schools and sporting clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Gambling-harm prevention work has continued, with a specific focus on supporting sporting clubs through the <i>Changing the Game</i> project. This includes: determining key priorities within the club environment that need attention; working together to produce values-based message addressing the priorities and promoting creation of safe and inclusive environments; creating a communications strategy for the target audience; re-engaging clubs with the <i>Good Sports</i> program. The work has been done with a holistic view of clubs, including gender equity work through the <i>CLUBS</i> (Community Leaders United by Sport) program, and reducing alcohol harm normalisation. The next <i>Changing the Game</i> forum is scheduled for early 2020.</li> <li>– Several member councils support and encourage participation of local sporting clubs and schools in the Victorian Responsible Gambling Association's <i>Love the Game</i> program. This program is designed to reduce to exposure of young people to sports betting promotion and disrupt the social norm of betting and sport.</li> <li>– Several member councils support the Alliance for Gambling Reform, who launched a Federal election campaign calling for a ban on sports gambling advertising.</li> <li>– Monash City Council has partnered with Deakin University to host local focus groups designed to understand the relationship of older adults with electronic gaming machines at local venues. Research findings have been finalised and approved by the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation. It is expected to be available shortly.</li> </ul>
Secure funding to address family violence and support gender equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– All ERG councils are collaborating to prevent violence against women via cross-sector TFER partnership, guided by the <i>Together for Equality and Respect Strategy</i> (Preventing Violence Against Women in Melbourne's East 2017-2021).</li> </ul>
Positive mental health: require funding for additional services, particularly young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ERG contributed to successful advocacy for Federal funding for a headspace service in Monash and Lilydale.</li> <li>– The State Government recently announced (another) 1-year extension for the School Focused Youth Service (SFYS).</li> <li>– Several member councils made submissions to the State Government's Royal Commission into Mental Health. Interim findings are expected in November 2019, and final recommendations by October 2020.</li> <li>– The region has formed the Mental Health Support and Prevention Network with member councils and service providers.</li> </ul>
Develop a funding model to attract support from Government to address the region's affordable housing shortfall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance (EAHA) continues to lead the region's advocacy for more affordable and social housing in the east.</li> <li>– A regional forum on homelessness, led by Monash City Council and in conjunction with the South East Melbourne region, is planned for November 2019.</li> <li>– Knox City Council is undertaking the 'Laying a Social Housing Pipeline Project', which will result in a 'Strategic and Surplus Sites Framework'; a 'Social Housing Futures Fund (and other options) Investigation'; and Report. This has potential to be explored by other member councils or at a regional scale.</li> </ul>

## Integrated planning (built)

Initiative	Outcomes
Eastern Regional Trails Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– All ERG councils, plus Boroondara, with Sport and Recreation Victoria, commissioned development of a Strategy to identify priority trails for new projects and upgrades to meet the growing demand for quality trails that provide communities of the east with a range of social, health, environmental, economic and tourism benefits.</li><li>– The Strategy is complete and has been endorsed by all participating councils.</li><li>– ERG contributed to successful advocacy for funding for high priority trails identified in the Strategy. Federal funding received for construction of the Yarra Valley Trail Stage 1 - Lilydale to Yarra Glen.</li><li>– The Eastern Regional Trails Working Group is working to coordinate and advocate for the Strategy's implementation. Current priorities include: obtaining funding for the development of a Regional Trails Marketing Plan and coordinating trail investment timing by aligning council capital works programs.</li></ul>
Eastern Regional Female Participation in Sport Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– No update as this stage.</li><li>– Identified as a potential regional project for 2019/20.</li><li>– As well as a lack of female-friendly facilities to cater for the growing demand of women and girls participating in sport, there are still cultural issues in sporting clubs that need to be addressed to provide a female-friendly environment.</li><li>– Several member councils are working closely with sporting clubs on gender equity through the <i>CLUBS</i> program (outlined above).</li></ul>

# ERG Financial Statement - as at 30 June 2019

## Income

	Actual to 30 June 2019 (\$)
Annual ERG Council member contributions	150,000
Pro-rata contribution: Manningham	7,500
Additional contribution: regional libraries Stage 1 assessment ( <i>one outstanding</i> )	26,480
Additional contribution: Strategic Advocacy Plan (Knox, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse, Yarra Ranges)	19,200
Carry forward (surplus) from 2017/18	121,927
<b>Total income</b>	<b>325,107</b>

## Expenditure

	Actual to 30 June 2019 (\$)
Salaries	121,626
Travel allowance (staff)	377
Consultancies (total):	<b>133,862</b>
– Graphic and web design	23,352
– Regional libraries Stage 1 assessment	33,100
– Workshop facilitation	6,205
– Regional economic and demographic data	7,705
– Government relations advice	12,500
– Strategic Advocacy Plan development	48,000
– Legal fees (Supplementary Agreement to Section 193 Agreement)	3000
Mobile phones	1,092
Sundries (e.g. meeting catering, printing)	2,375
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>259,332</b>

## Accumulated surplus

<b>Accumulated surplus for year ending 30 June 2019 (income minus expenditure)</b>	<b>65,775</b>
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# ERG members 2018/19

## December 2017 to November 2018

Cr John Mortimore, Mayor, Knox City Council

Cr Jake Keogh, Deputy Mayor, Knox City Council

Mr Tony Doyle, Chief Executive Officer, Knox City Council

Cr Nora Lamont, Mayor, Maroondah City Council

Cr Mike Symon, Deputy Mayor, Maroondah City Council (ERG Deputy Chair)

Mr Steve Kozlowski, Chief Executive Officer, Maroondah City Council

Cr Paul Klisaris, Mayor, Monash City Council

Cr Rebecca Paterson, Monash City Council

Dr Andi Diamond, Chief Executive Officer, Monash City Council

Cr Andrew Davenport, Mayor, Whitehorse City Council (ERG Chair)

Cr Bill Bennett, Whitehorse City Council

Ms Noelene Duff, Chief Executive Officer, Whitehorse City Council

Cr Len Cox, Mayor, Yarra Ranges Council

Cr Tony Stevenson, Deputy Mayor, Yarra Ranges Council

Mr Glenn Patterson, Chief Executive Officer, Yarra Ranges Council (until August 2018)

Mr Troy Edwards, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Yarra Ranges Council (September-December 2018)

## December 2018-current\*

Cr Jake Keogh, Mayor, Knox City Council (ERG Chair)

Cr Peter Lockwood, Deputy Mayor, Knox City Council

Mr Tony Doyle, Chief Executive Officer, Knox City Council

Cr Rob Steane, Mayor, Maroondah City Council

Councillor Kylie Spears, Deputy Mayor, Maroondah City Council

Mr Steve Kozlowski, Chief Executive Officer, Maroondah City Council

Cr Shane McCluskey, Mayor, Monash City Council

Cr Rebecca Paterson, Monash City Council

Dr Andi Diamond, Chief Executive Officer, Monash City Council

Cr Bill Bennett, Mayor, Whitehorse City Council

Cr Sharon Ellis, Whitehorse City Council

Ms Noelene Duff, Chief Executive Officer, Whitehorse City Council (until August 2019)

Mr Simon McMillan, Chief Executive Officer, Whitehorse City Council (from September 2019)

Cr Tony Stevenson, Mayor, Yarra Ranges Council

Cr Richard Higgins, Deputy Mayor, Yarra Ranges Council

Ms Tammi Rose, Chief Executive Officer, Yarra Ranges Council (from February 2019)

\*Cr Paula Piccinini, Mayor, Manningham City Council (from May 2019)

\*Cr Anna Chen, Deputy Mayor, Manningham City Council (from May 2019)

\*Mr Andrew Day, Chief Executive Officer, Manningham City Council (from May 2019)

## Contact

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# Melbourne's eastern region. One united voice.

### Realm

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