

Make sure your voice is heard in the State Government's 'Plan for Victoria'

Home is where the heart is – and there is nothing more important than making sure all levels of government plan carefully for our increasing population and where they will live.

Knox, Maroondah, Manningham, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges are joining forces to make sure their communities voices are heard during the consultation for A Plan for Victoria.

The Eastern Region Group of Councils want to make sure that the Victorian Government considers what local communities value when they develop their Plan for Victoria. Engagement has commenced on the Plan and closes at the end of June.

Knox Mayor, Councillor Jude Dwight and ERG Chair said the State Government aims to deliver 800,000 new homes over a decade, mainly in existing urban areas which could have significant impacts on the east. In the Eastern Region alone, our population may grow by half a million residents over 30 years.

"While we know the population is expanding and we welcome people to our region, this will inevitably put more demands on our natural assets and the facilities and services councils provide.

"Growth will put pressure on our transport infrastructure, open spaces, schools, and health and community services. We need to work with the State Government to keep pace with their planned rate of growth and make sure negative impacts are avoided."

"We're calling on all our residents to get involved in A Plan for Victoria – it's important to have your say about what you want your future to look like".

In late 2023 the State Government announced a Housing Statement with far-ranging reforms to planning processes and local government roles and that a new Plan for Victoria would be developed.

Cr Dwight said, *"The potential impacts of a Plan for Victoria on the region are significant. To strengthen our collective voice, the ERG engaged SGS Economics & Planning to provide advice and identify where we should prioritise our efforts to balance the impacts of growth with the things our communities value – this is called Plan East, and it will assist the ERG councils submissions to A Plan for Victoria."*

As a region, the ERG has identified four priorities it wants to see addressed in the State's Plan for Victoria:

- **Community access and productivity** - increase sustainable transport options and reduce car dependency through bus and train network improvements
- **Infrastructure to support growth**- Fund and deliver drainage, recreation, social and community infrastructure to support sustainable growth and protect amenity and environmental values
- **Our natural assets** - Maintain and improve access to quality open space and our urban tree canopy to build climate and community resilience.
- **Managing housing growth** - Leverage major projects and local council expertise to deliver diverse and affordable housing in areas with access to services that are not exposed to flood and climate risk.

"Our region is very diverse, from the urban areas of Doncaster and Box Hill to the wineries and agricultural land in the Yarra Ranges. That diversity, combined with significant investment in major infrastructure projects, presents opportunities to leverage and improve the liveability for our current and future communities.

"We are asking for your partnership and support.

"Please add your voice so that the Plan for Victoria reflects the views and needs of our region. "We want you to help create the communities that we all want to be a part of."

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A Plan for Victoria is now open for you to have your say at www.engage.vic.gov.au/shape-our-victoria

The ERG comprises the local government areas of Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges in Melbourne's east and collectively represents almost 1 million Victorians, over 300,000 jobs generating \$41M GRP annually. See www.easternregiongroup.org.au

