

# 10-Year Victorian Road Maintenance Funding

Conversation summary

MAY 2024



Authorised by the Victorian Government, Melbourne  
1 Spring Street Melbourne Victoria 3000

Telephone (03) 9655 6666.

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If you need this information in an accessible format  
such as large print or audio, please telephone  
(03) 9655 6666 or email [community@transport.vic.gov.au](mailto:community@transport.vic.gov.au)

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## Acknowledgement of Country

We proudly acknowledge First Peoples throughout Victoria. We acknowledge their ongoing strength in practising the world's oldest living culture. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners' lands, waters and skies on which we live and work, and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We recognise the use of Song Lines as an integral part of First Peoples Culture, which allowed First Peoples to easily connect their journeys across the land. Known as trade routes and ceremonial routes, many of the transport networks and assets we use today are along those traditional Song Lines.

The new approach to road maintenance is one step toward strengthening our partnerships with Traditional Owners and First Peoples in Victoria to ensure that their aspirations are realised.



### Description of artwork

Aaron (Gunaikurnai) 'Movements Between the Five Clans' 2019, acrylic on canvas.

'The tracks are going between the five clans of the Gunaikurnai and the hands are the symbols of my spirit travelling around the campsites.'

This artwork was created through programs provided by the Torch. The Torch provides art, cultural and arts industry support to Indigenous offenders and ex-offenders in Victoria. The Torch aims to reduce the rate of re-offending by encouraging the exploration of identity and culture through art programs to define new pathways upon release.



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## Introduction

Road maintenance isn't just about fixing roads; it's about movement and safety, economic growth, and helping the whole community.

The 2023-24 State Budget committed \$2.8 billion for a program of road maintenance, renewal and flood recovery works across the metropolitan and regional road network over a 10-year period.

This is in addition to year-on-year funding for Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) to maintain assets across the state's 23,000km arterial road network, ensuring our roads and roadside infrastructure are safe and reliable.

To ensure this funding is used efficiently and delivers real improvements for Victorian road users, DTP undertook a targeted stakeholder engagement program from August to October 2023 to inform the implementation of this new 10-year road maintenance funding model.

This new funding model will allow us to develop best practices for maintaining and strengthening our road network, so we can continue to connect people and freight to where they need to go safely and efficiently.

This new approach to road maintenance will allow us to prioritise maintenance works that are most important to the community and take a more efficient and sustainable approach to road maintenance over the next decade.

**This new funding model will allow us to develop best practices for maintaining and strengthening our road network.**

## Engaging across sectors and the state

In 2023, DTP undertook a comprehensive engagement program to inform the implementation of Victoria's new 10-year funding model for road maintenance. We used a three-pronged approach.



### Workshops with Local Government Areas and key stakeholders

During August and September 2023, we met with 93 Local Government Areas and key stakeholders to understand what road assets were most important to them, what challenges they face with the current roads maintenance program, and what good service looks like to them.



### Analysis of existing DTP road user research and reporting

This data analysis gave long-term insights into road maintenance priorities for Victorians, allowing us to understand consistent and changing trends over time. We looked at data spanning from 2018 to the present, including:

- Customer involvement surveys (2019 and 2022)
- Ministerial listening tours (2023)
  - Frankston, Wyndham, Ballarat and Barwon South West
- Customer service centre reporting (2018 to 2023)
- Freight and logistics strategies



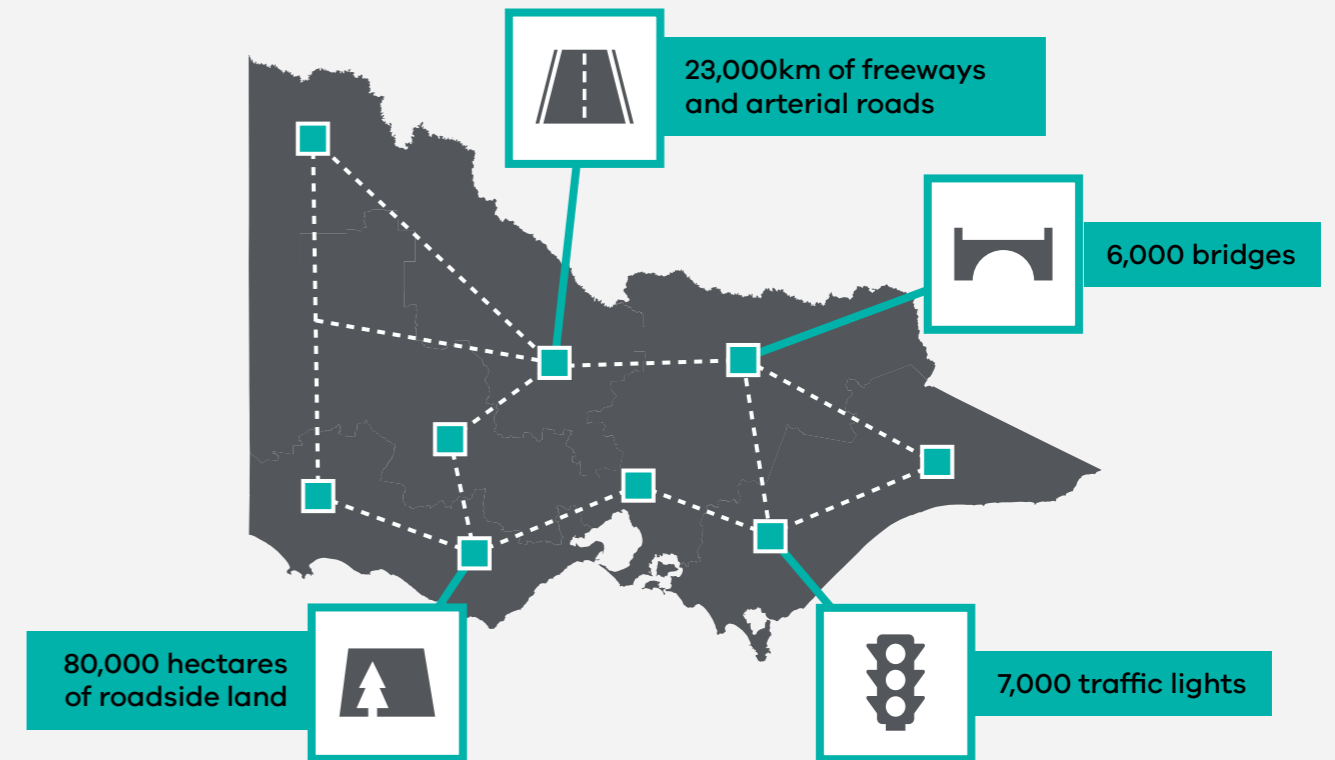
### Engagement with Traditional Owner groups and consideration of Registered Aboriginal Party Country Plans

We are committed to working in partnership with Victoria's First Peoples, ensuring we incorporate Traditional Owner Caring for Country rights, aspirations and opportunities into our new approach to road maintenance.

**This report highlights the feedback received from key stakeholders and the insights gained from road user research, highlighting the priorities of the broader community.**

## Better roads for Victoria

DTP is responsible for maintaining assets across the state's 23,000km arterial road network, including:



Over the past 10 years, the Victorian Government has invested almost \$6 billion to maintain and strengthen our roads. We have delivered:



Around **450** new road projects in development and delivery



More than **400 km** of new lanes built



More than **12,000 km** of roads rebuilt or resurfaced



**Thousands** of signs repaired or replaced



**Thousands** of kilometres of roadside weeds and grass mowed, slashed and sprayed

## Engagement highlights

93

Total stakeholder groups

19 Stakeholder organisations

4 Motorist and motorcyclist groups



2 Road safety partners of Victoria



3 Active transport groups



5 Freight and farming groups



3 Emergency services



2 Victorian First Peoples groups



74 Local Government Areas

26

Metropolitan  
North West 12  
South East 14

48

Regional  
Hume 12  
Grampians 11  
Barwon South West 9  
Loddon Mallee 10  
Gippsland 6

## What we asked

The purpose of the engagement workshops was to give stakeholders a chance to talk about the current road maintenance program, their priorities, and what they wanted from road maintenance.

We sought to understand what is most important for our stakeholders when it comes to maintaining different types of road assets, and the effects on them and other road users if those assets aren't well maintained.

For each asset category, we asked participants to identify the key challenges they face, their asset priorities, and to explain what 'good service' means to them.

These discussions provided valuable insights to inform our new approach to road maintenance through our 10-year funding model.

Road safety

Prompt repairs and responses

Communication

Potholes

Proactive maintenance



## What we heard in Regional Victoria

We know each of our rural and regional areas have unique and varying road networks. Each of these regions comes with its own challenges for good road maintenance, from frequency of use to geotechnical and weather conditions, flooding, fire and freight.

We have a growing population and a growing and changing freight task. So, the demands on our roads are increasing.

Road materials, labour and construction costs have increased, and supply chains are under pressure.

In addition, Victoria is experiencing more frequent climate events – we have experienced more flooding in the past three years than in the past 20 years, which has had a significant impact on road quality throughout Victoria.

This presents some significant challenges in the way road maintenance and strengthening works are planned, prioritised and delivered across rural and regional Victoria.

### Regional feedback themes

Road surfaces and drainage are the most important assets for all regional council groups, followed by structures, such as bridges, culverts and tunnels. These assets are also where the lowest levels of satisfaction are reported.

The impacts of maintenance are extremely varied, but across asset types, the most common concerns are:

- 1 Deterioration of assets
- 2 Safety issues
- 3 Disruption and its community and economic impacts

### Top priorities



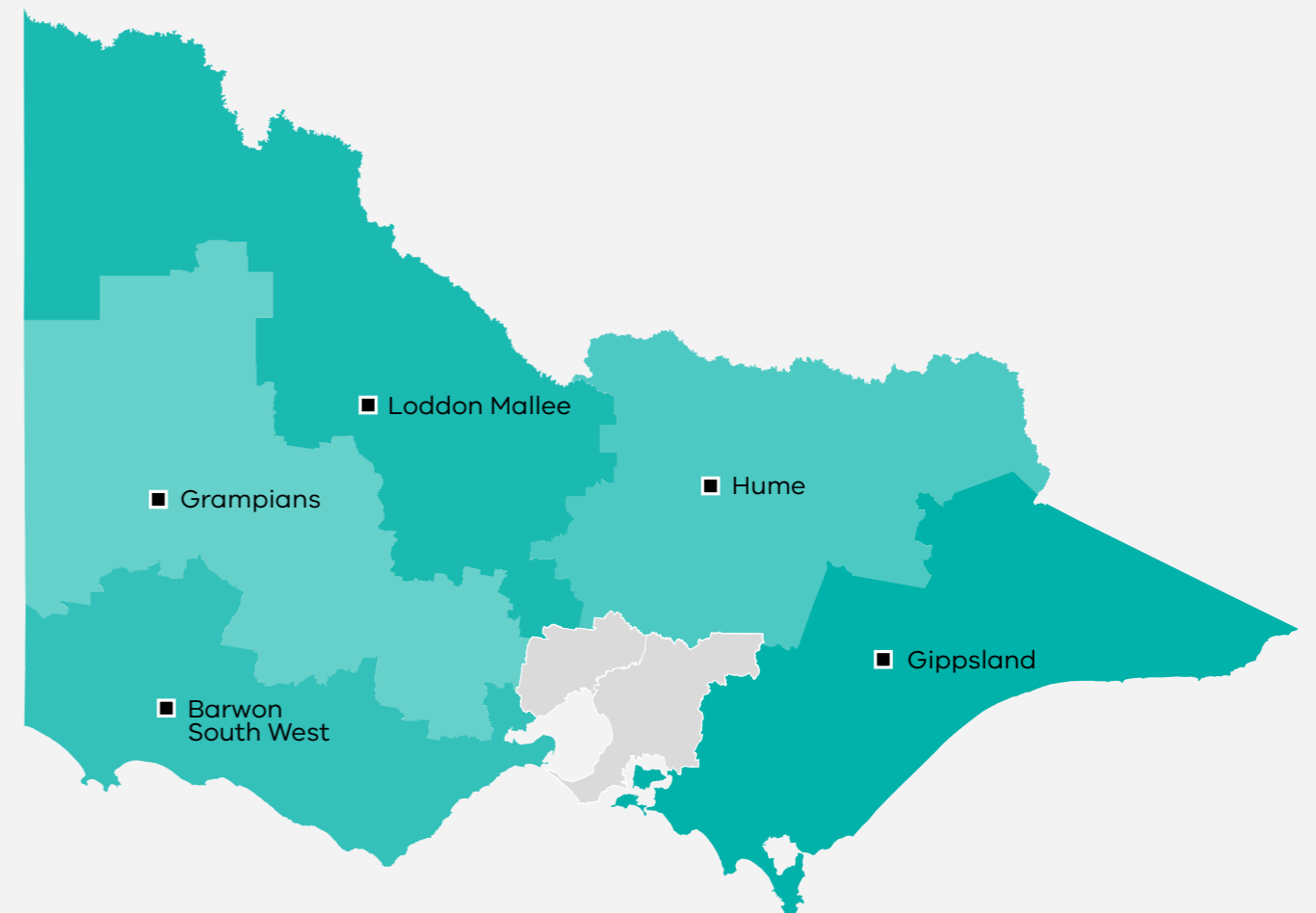
Challenges include:

- changing weather conditions, seasonal changes and climate shifts causing road damage, pavement degradation and landslide risks
- increase in road freight causing more strain on the road network
- road aesthetics at town entrances are a concern, including overgrown vegetation, graffiti, damage to bus stops and other roadside amenities
- community concerns around potholes, road deterioration and slow repair times, impacting road safety and driver experience
- poor water drainage and damaged culverts, resulting in pavement damage, lane closures and safety concerns
- a need for clarity of responsibility for local and state roads.

Good service looks like:

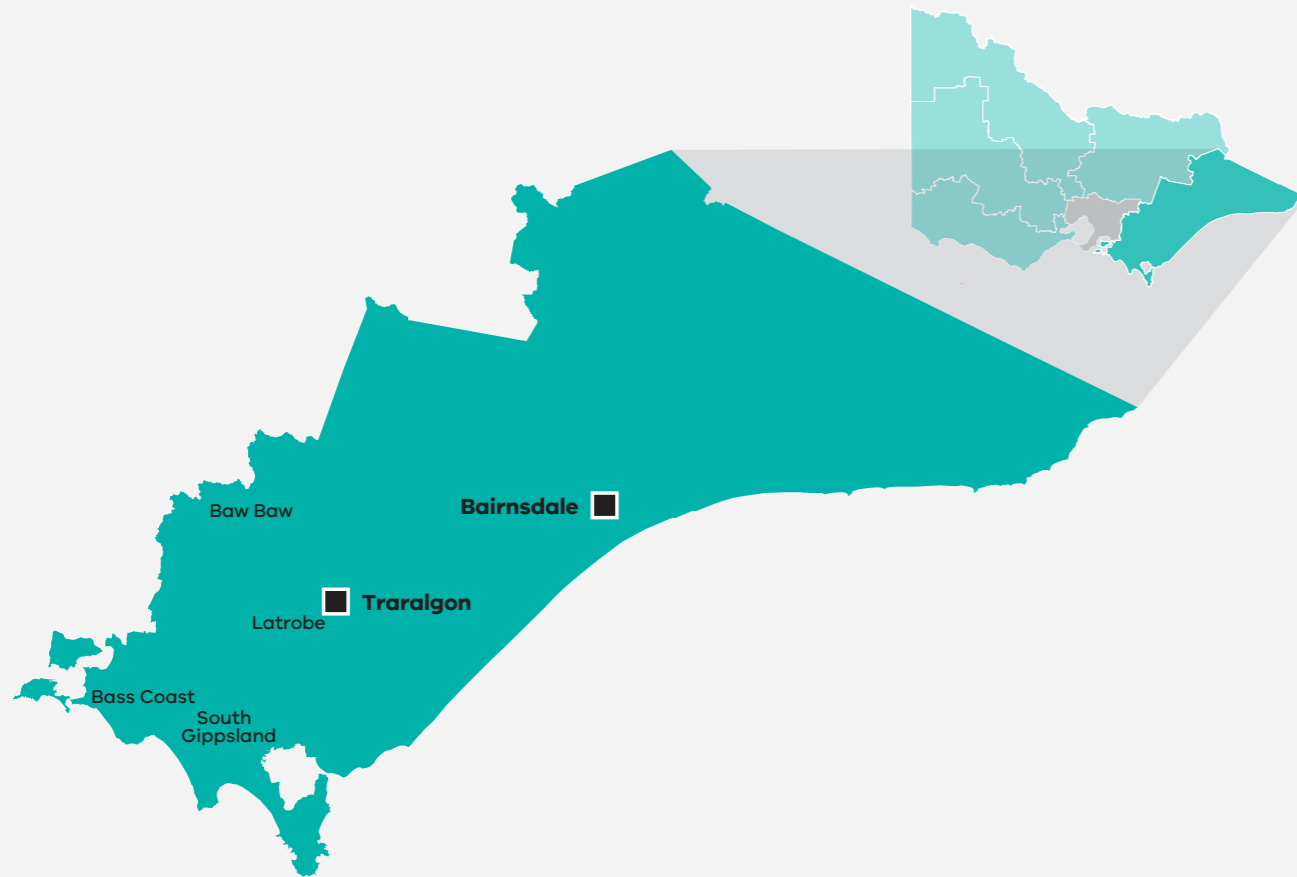
- Proactive maintenance
- Safer roads
- Faults being addressed quickly

**Road surfaces and drainage are the most important assets for all regional council groups.**



# Gippsland

Population: 154,000



## Region profile

Gippsland region covers a diverse area from the Bass Coast all the way to the Baw Baw National Park and through to the NSW border in the far east.

The region experiences regular and frequent severe climate events that impact the road network during emergencies, having lasting impacts on the network infrastructure. Higher-than-average rainfalls and wet soil conditions contribute to an increase in the number of damaged roads, with regular storms and floods resulting in maintenance delays and difficult road conditions.

The region is also home to two major arterial roads, Princes Highway and South Gippsland Highway. As these are primary freight routes, increased traffic can accelerate road degradation and significantly impact network structures.



## Participants

Bass Coast, Baw Baw, East Gippsland, Latrobe City, South Gippsland, Wellington Shire

## What we heard

Gippsland Local Government Areas told us the following assets needed the most improvement:



Roads



Drainage



Natural and social

If assets are not well maintained, the main impacts include:

- Road safety, due to variety of reasons including unaddressed damaged pavement, overhanging vegetation on road reserves impeding visibility for larger vehicles and potentially access during an emergency.
- Economic risks – poor roadside management, leading to frequent flooding and an adverse impact on the area's aesthetics significantly affecting tourism in the region.
- Rural drainage not being maintained causing deterioration from wet weather.

Good service includes:

- Proactive maintenance across all assets.
- A climate resilient network.
- Effective electrical and side road infrastructure installed, functioning barriers and signage, and safe bridges with no load limits.
- A transparent maintenance strategy, with improved interface between the State Government and Councils.

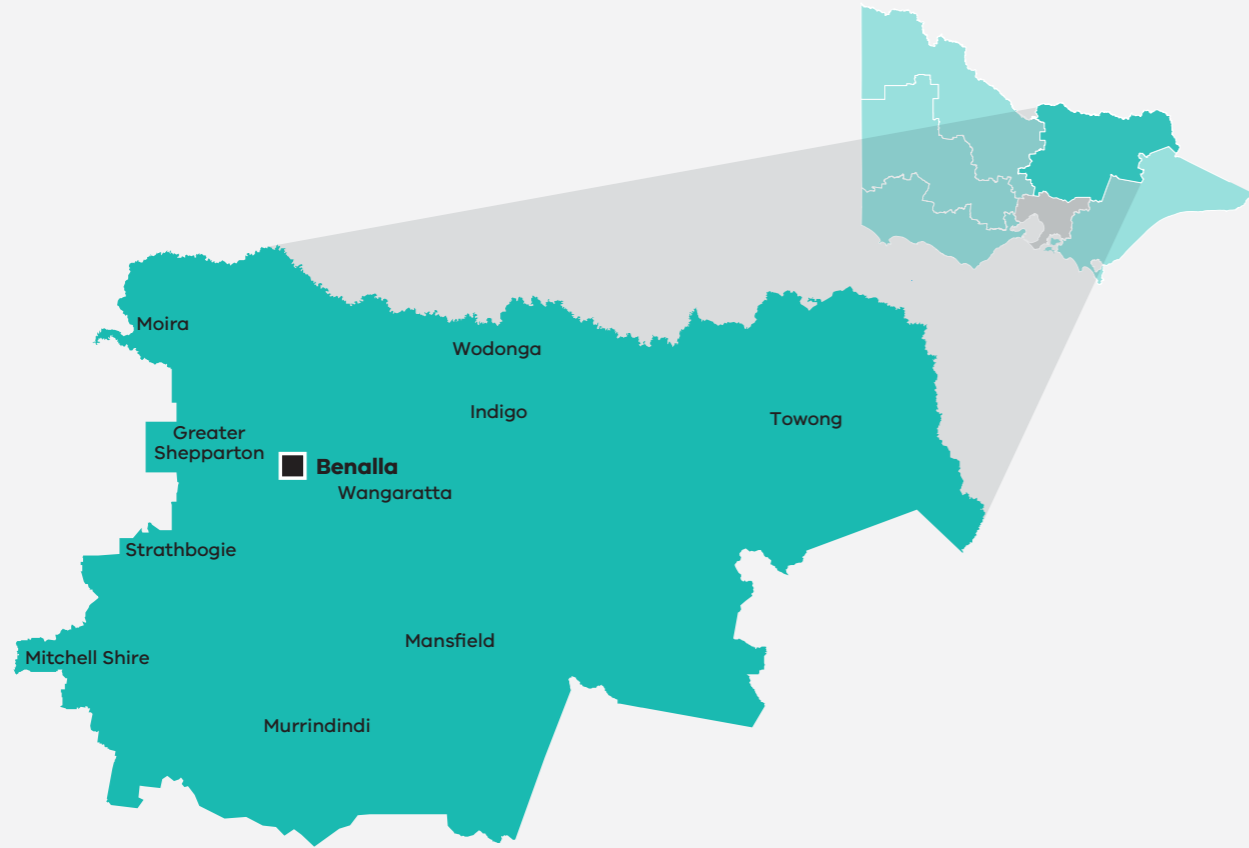
This feedback aligns with DTP road user survey data, which found road surfaces to be the highest priority for maintenance in the Gippsland region over a number of years. Road matters with the least satisfaction included road smoothness, accommodating freight on roads, and drainage.

All Gippsland Local Government Areas recognised the need for a climate resilient network that is built and maintained to accommodate and withstand escalating weather conditions in the region. With climate conditions continuing to have an impact on road pavement, drainage, vegetation and land, it is crucial that we have a strategy that is resilient and allows us to adapt to the changing needs of the region.



# Hume

Population: 283,000



## Region profile

Hume region experiences the extremes of climatic conditions with freezing temperatures in the Alpine Region to soaring heat in the region's north, creating ongoing challenges for road maintenance.

The region is also susceptible to frequent emergency events, particularly bushfires and flooding, and the associated damage to the road network.

Hume encompasses twelve local government partners across the Alpine, Goulburn Murray and Ovens areas, balancing climate challenges with freight demands, thriving tourism and urban growth. All of these elements contribute to a demanding maintenance program in Hume Region.

Much of the region's sub-surface material is composed of sandy clay and volcanic soils, creating drainage issues, cracking and roughness on the road surface. This also translates to an increased risk of landslips in the Alpine areas.



## Participants

Alpine Shire, City of Wodonga, Greater Shepparton City Council, Indigo Shire, Mansfield Shire, Mitchell Shire, Moira Shire, Murrindindi Shire, Rural City of Benalla, Rural City of Wangaratta, Strathbogie Shire, Towong Shire

Good service includes:

- A well-maintained road network, adequate drainage and effective management of roadside vegetation.
- Timely response to identify and repair faults on the road network.
- Better communication between DTP and local government partners to identify opportunities to collaborate on shared maintenance priorities (i.e. grass mowing, works intersecting with local roads).

## What we heard

Hume Local Government Areas told us the following assets need the most improvement:



Roads



Drainage



Structures

If assets are not well maintained, the main impacts include:

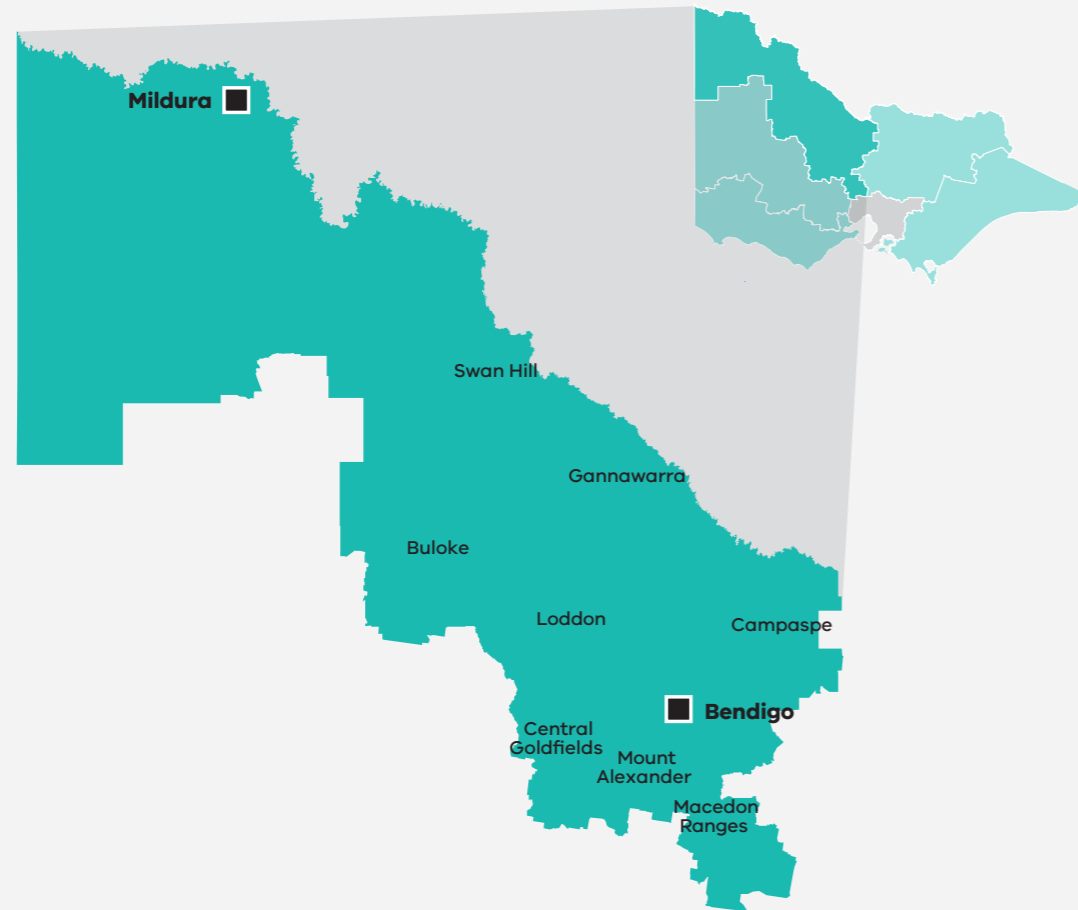
- Road deterioration and damage to the road surface impacting ride quality and experience.
- Economic impacts, freight impacts and safety concerns if roads are not maintained and fit for purpose.
- Network disruption (i.e. load limits, lane closures, detours).

This feedback aligns with DTP road user survey data, which found road surfaces to be the highest priority for maintenance in the Hume Region over a number of years. Road matters with the least satisfaction included road smoothness, freight and accommodating public transport.

All 12 Hume Region Local Government Areas identified that, when it comes to community concerns regarding road maintenance, stakeholders do not make the distinction between local roads and state-managed roads. As a result, our local government partners often bear the brunt of maintenance complaints on behalf of DTP. Sharing maintenance programming and messaging with our local government partners will help address this issue.

# Loddon Mallee

Population: 348,000



## Region profile

Loddon Mallee is an economic rural region occupying more than a quarter of the state, making it the largest region in Victoria.

Loddon Mallee stretches from Greater Melbourne to the northernmost point of Victoria, sharing a border with South Australia and New South Wales, and has one of the most consistently warm climates in Victoria. It has two major regional cities, Bendigo and Mildura, and also contains the major settlements of Castlemaine, Echuca, Gisborne, Kerang, Kyneton, Maryborough, Swan Hill, Wedderburn and Wycheproof.

Hot and dry conditions in the north can lead to softer bitumen, cracking and roughness, resulting in roads 'bleeding' or asphalt deformation, while further south, the Loddon area receives high rainfall, with wet conditions providing their own challenges.

These are also major food production areas, with agricultural and agribusiness activities and major freight routes accelerating road use that creates road degradation.



## Participants

Buloke Shire, Campaspe Shire, Central Goldfields, City of Greater Bendigo, Gannawarra Shire, Loddon Shire, Macedon Ranges Shire, Mildura Rural City, Mount Alexander Shire, Rural City of Swan Hill

## What we heard

Loddon Mallee Local Government Areas told us the following assets need the most improvement:



Roads



Drainage



Structures

Good service includes:

- A high quality road network with a reliable surface for a safer travel experience with less speed reductions.
- Consistently maintained and cleaned culverts with better integrated drainage systems that are reliable and safe.
- Adherence to the Road Management Act.

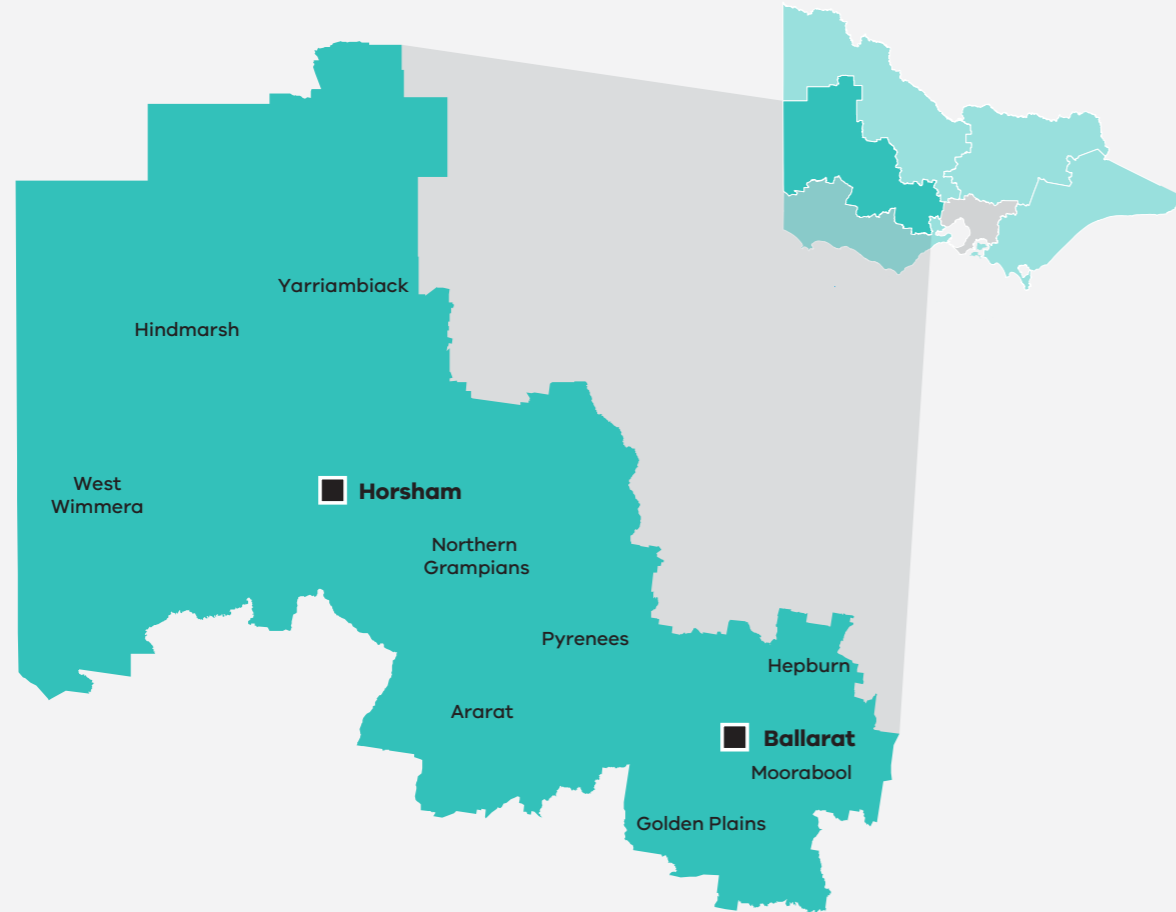
This feedback aligns with DTP road user survey data, which found road surfaces to be the highest priority for maintenance in the Loddon Mallee region over a number of years. Road matters with the least satisfaction included consistent maintenance of road surfaces shoulders and drainage, road safety, smoothness, traffic and freight.

If assets are not well maintained, the main impacts include:

- Increased hazards leading to increase in risk to vehicles and personal safety due to road damage and deterioration from poor drainage.
- Disruptions and delays to the delivery of goods and services due to poor road condition and restrictive load limits on bridges.
- Decreased customer satisfaction and loss of community confidence in rural and regional areas that rely on the road network as the sole or primary transport option.

# Grampians

Population: 261,000



## Region profile

The Grampians region, taking in a large portion of western Victoria including Ballarat, Horsham and the surrounding rural municipalities, is characterised by dry conditions that can lead to softening bitumen and deformation in the road network.

Cooler climates further south in comparison can result in brittle roads, while clay-heavy soil conditions can produce excess cracking and roughness.

The busy highway network, including the Western Highway, requires significant pavement rehabilitation along its length to reduce impacts on freight efficiency and general traffic movements.



## Participants

Ararat Rural City Council, City of Ballarat, Golden Plains Shire, Hepburn Shire, Hindmarsh Shire, Horsham Rural City Council, Moorabool Shire, Northern Grampians Shire, Pyrenees Shire, West Wimmera Shire, Yarriambiack Shire

Good service includes:

- Safe infrastructure that meets the demands of the network, with no load limits and efficient, safe travel at the speed limit.
- Proactively maintained roads, drainage, roadsides and roadside amenities.
- Well-maintained drainage systems that have a regular cleaning program.

## What we heard

Grampians Local Government Areas told us the following assets need the most improvement:



Roads



Drainage



Structures

This feedback aligns with DTP road user survey data, which found road surfaces to be the highest priority for maintenance in the Grampians region over a number of years. Road matters with the least satisfaction included road smoothness, traffic and freight.

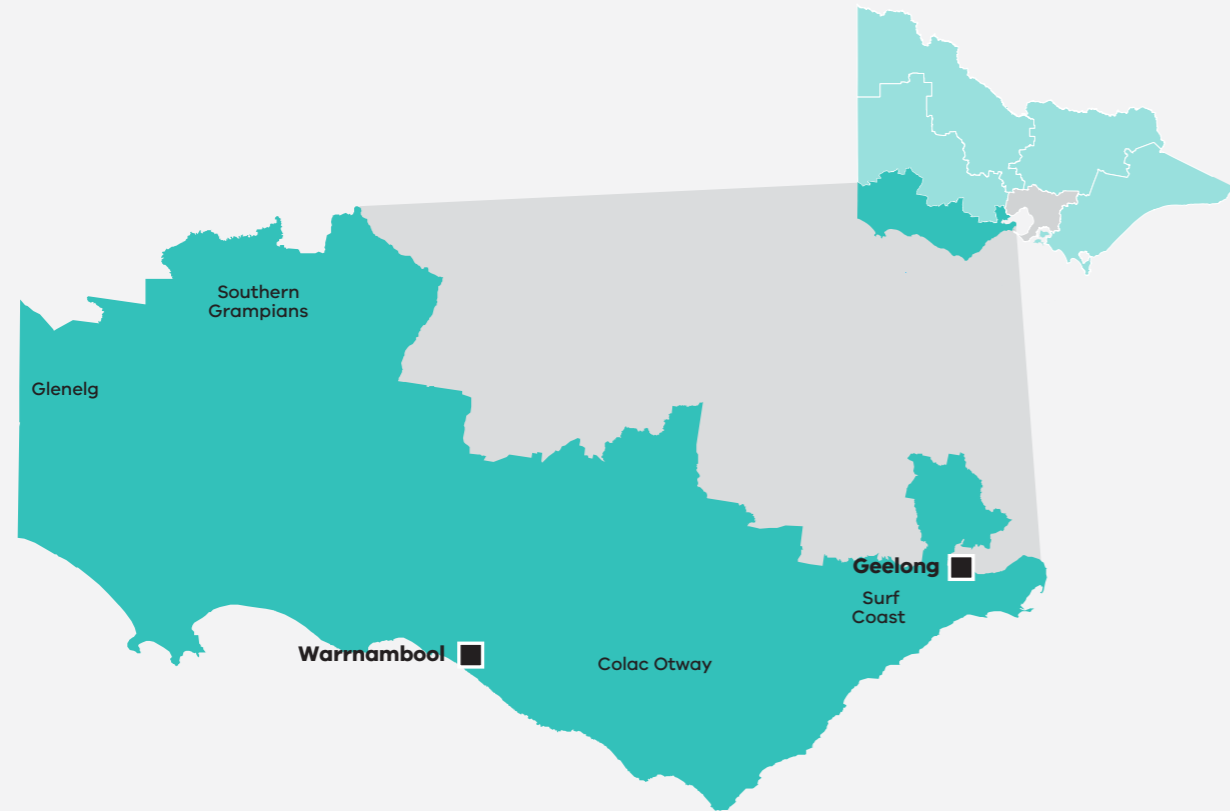
In addition, participants who attended the Ministerial listening tour in Ballarat noted increasingly high traffic volumes with larger freight vehicles as a concern to road maintenance. They wanted quality freight corridors that could accommodate the growing number of heavy vehicles and the commitment to continued network maintenance for safety.

If assets are not well maintained, the main impacts include:

- Increased hazards to personal safety and property damage due to road damage and deterioration from poor drainage.
- Disruptions and delays to the delivery of goods and services due to poor road condition and restrictive load limits on bridges.
- Decreased customer satisfaction and loss of community confidence in rural and regional areas that rely on the road network as the sole/primary transport option.

# Barwon South West

Population: 480,000



## Region profile

The Barwon South West region borders the nation's largest population growth corridor, west of Melbourne. Inland agriculture, dairy, timber, coastal tourism and manufacturing contribute around \$26 billion towards local and national economies.

Two deep-sea ports in Portland and Geelong, and one international airport at Avalon, provide strong international networks in Barwon South West. The region is also home to the iconic Great Ocean Road, spanning 243km of coastline.

Three of Victoria's top five fastest growing areas (outside Greater Melbourne) are located within the Barwon South West region. Keeping communities, tourism and industry connected provides an ongoing need for road maintenance and renewal.



## Participants

Borough of Queenscliffe, City of Greater Geelong, Colac Otway Shire, Corangamite Shire, Glenelg Shire, Moyne Shire, Southern Grampians Shire, Surf Coast Shire, Warrnambool City Council

## What we heard

Barwon South West Local Government Areas told us the following assets need the most improvement:



Roads



Drainage



Natural and social

Good service includes:

- A well-maintained road network with a reliable road surface for safer travels.
- Better integrated pavement and drainage systems.
- Proactively maintained roadside vegetation, including beautification at town entrances.
- Rapid response and strong collaboration across state and local government.

This feedback aligns with DTP road user survey data, which found road surfaces to be the highest priority for maintenance in the south west over a number of years. Road matters with the least satisfaction included road smoothness, traffic and support for freight.

People at the Ministerial listening tours in the south west noted the road network was failing to meet several critical needs, affecting safety and public confidence in the network. In addition, poor road conditions and infrastructure affected the movement of freight and hampered tourism.

If assets are not well maintained, the main impacts include:

- Decreased community satisfaction, and increased complaints directed at local government for arterial roads.
- Pavement damage and safety risks due to surface water not draining efficiently and accelerating deterioration.
- Road user safety and poor ride quality due to infrastructure maintenance and renewal not keeping pace with modern day requirements.
- Disruptions to the network, delays getting goods to market and economic risks.

## What we heard in Metropolitan Melbourne

The metropolitan road network plays a key role in Victoria's transportation landscape, including the most extensive freeway network in the country.

These roads serve as the arteries for various modes of transport, including:



### Metropolitan Melbourne feedback themes

Maintenance was the most important priority, followed by communication and transparency of the maintenance program.

The impacts of poor maintenance are community dissatisfaction and safety issues.

Challenges include:

- Lack of proactive maintenance
- Localised flooding
- Slow response to issues
- Unpresentable streets
- Deterioration of road assets

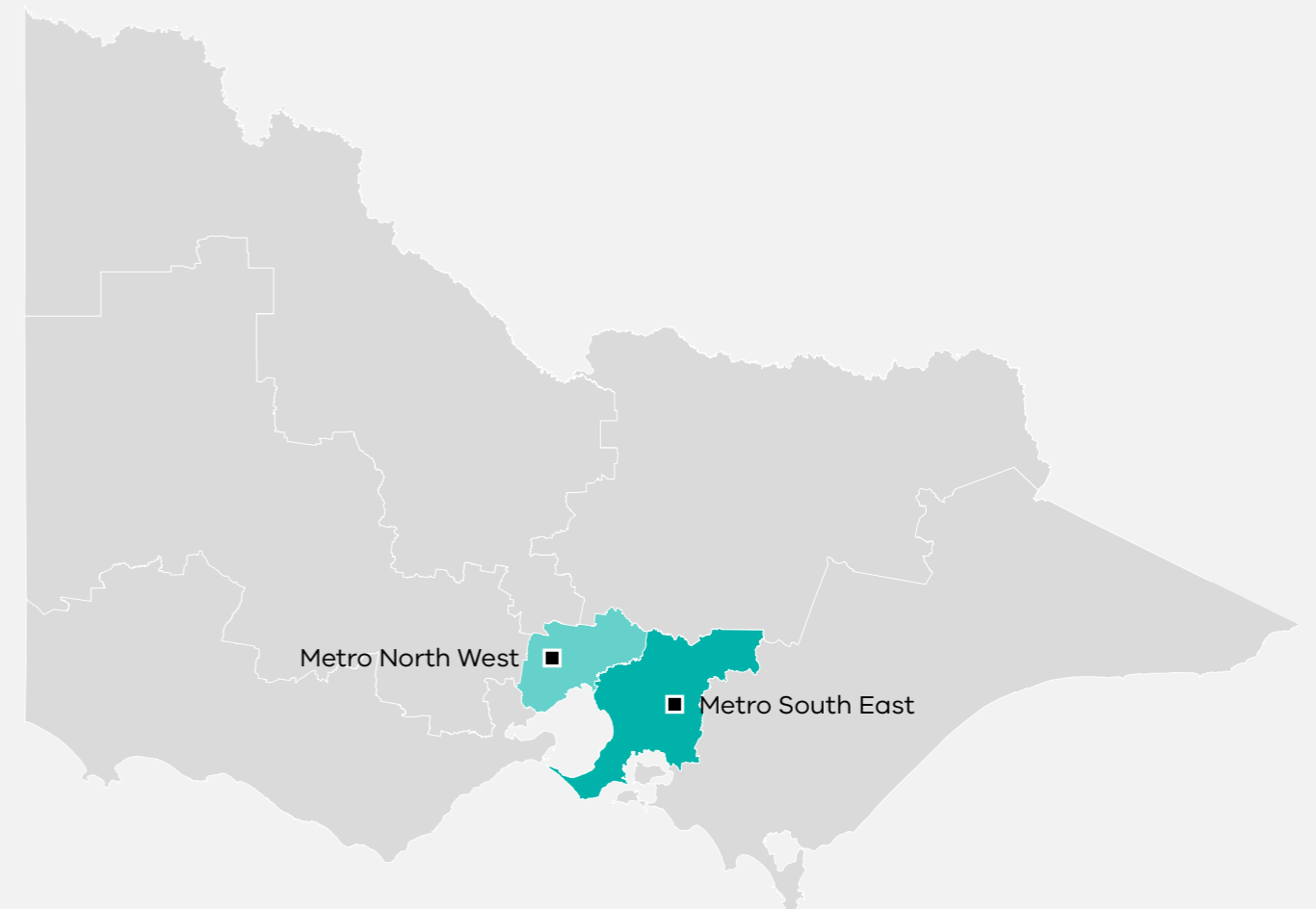
Good service looks like:

- Proactive maintenance
- Visibility of maintenance planning
- Faults on the road network being addressed and repaired promptly

The economic wellbeing of Victoria, including the freight and tourism industries, rely heavily on the conditions and accessibility of the road network. Almost all goods in the metropolitan area and more than 80 per cent of goods in regional Victoria are transported by road.

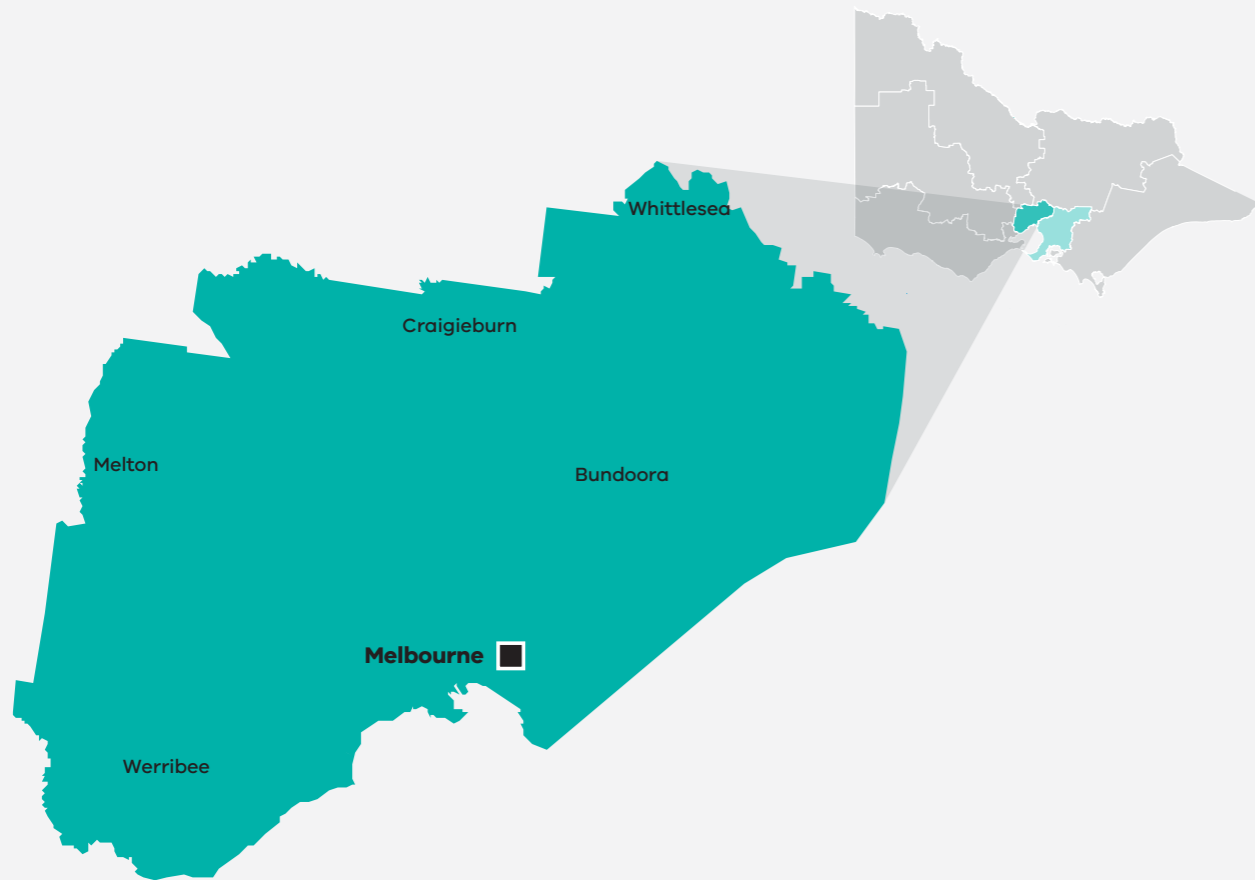
**The metro road network plays a critical role in supporting the daily lives of Melburnians and the prosperity of the Victorian economy.**

**Maintenance was the most important priority, followed by communication and transparency of the maintenance program.**



# Metro North West

Population: 2.3 million



## Region profile

Melbourne's North West encompasses a range of suburbs, including Broadmeadows, Carlton, Collingwood, Greensborough, Heidelberg, Reservoir and Melbourne's central business district to the north, as well as Essendon, Footscray, Sunshine and Werribee to the west.

Melbourne's west is experiencing rapid development, with Wyndham at the forefront of this growth, having the fastest increase in population (from 2019 to 2022) and emerging as a thriving industrial and logistics hub. Meanwhile, to the north the region is evolving into a diverse and vibrant community with a greater need to build stronger interconnections between suburbs.

The upkeep of road infrastructure, including both the pavement and surfaces, as well as effectively managing the drainage network, stands as a critical priority as they play a key role in providing access to employment, social services, healthcare and education, promoting economic development and growth in the region.



## Participants

Banyule City Council, Brimbank City Council, City of Darebin, Hobsons Bay City Council, Maribyrnong City Council, Melton City Council, Merri-bek City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Nillumbik Shire Council, Wyndham City

## What we heard

If assets are not well maintained, the main impacts include:

- Reputational harm to the council – local and state-managed roads often lack transparency, causing the community to contact local council with enquiries, requests, and complaints for state-owned roads.
- Community dissatisfaction – roads serve to open new areas, encouraging economic and social development. Failure to properly maintain this road infrastructure negatively affects residents in various ways.
- Risks to safety for both vehicle users and pedestrians when there are poor road surface conditions.

Good service includes:

- A well-maintained road network with a reliable road surface for safer travels.
- Proactively maintained roadside vegetation and beautification of town entrances.
- Proactive inspection and maintenance program for a more functional drainage system.
- Prompt repairs and servicing of structures and roadside infrastructure and upgrading ageing infrastructure.

This feedback aligns with DTP road user survey data, which found road surfaces, lighting, safety, road smoothness and traffic to be the highest priority for maintenance in the Metro North West region across numerous years. People were least satisfied with traffic, freight and accommodating public transport on roads.

## Most important

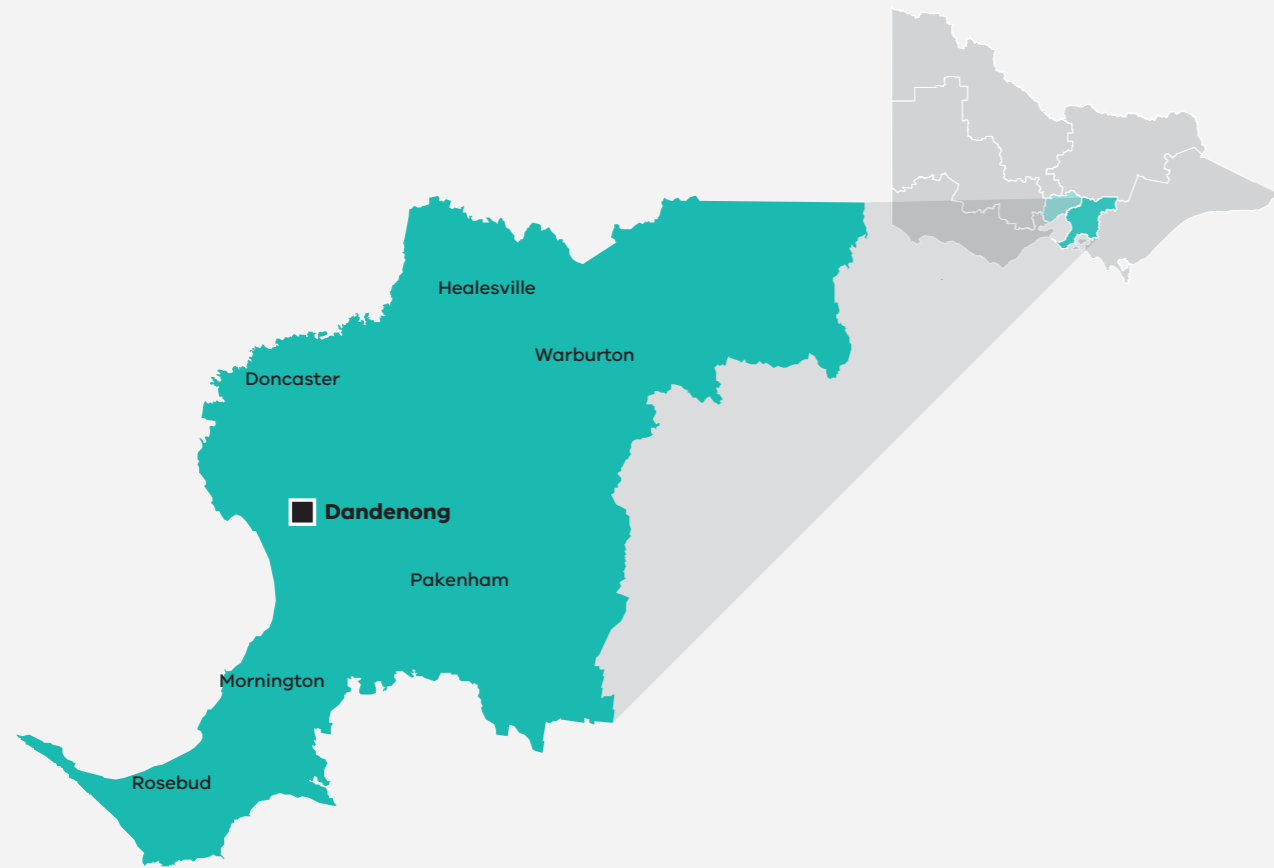
	Safety		Traffic management
	Proper maintenance of assets		Road smoothness
	Communication of works and safety		

## Least satisfaction

	Traffic		Accommodating freight on the roads
	Accommodating public transport on the roads		

# Metro South East

Population: 2.5 million

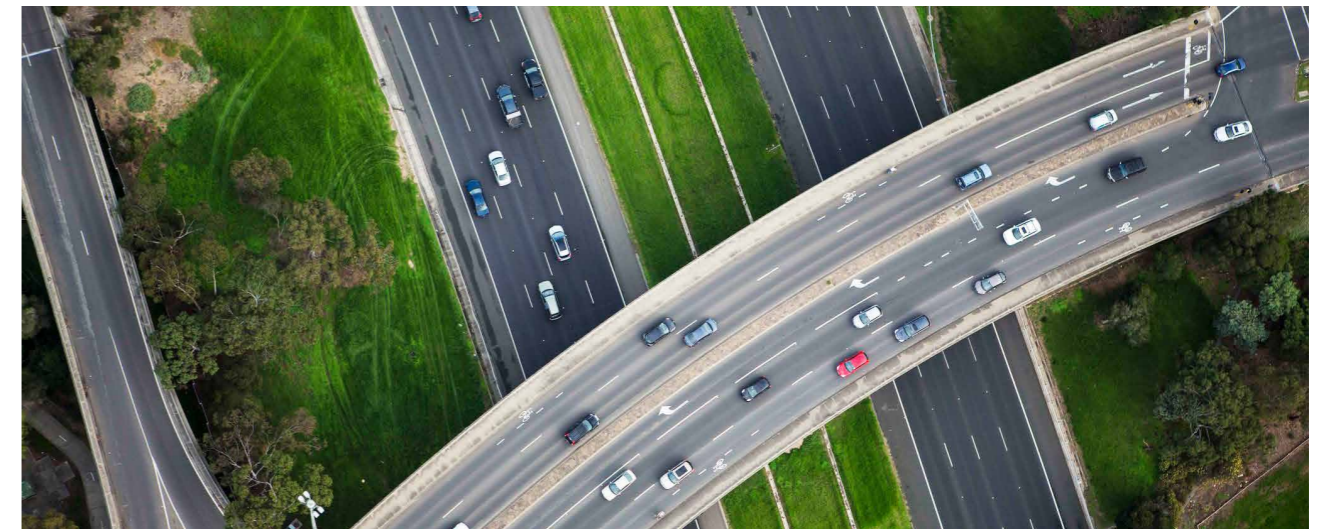


## Region profile

Melbourne's South East has a diverse, thriving and growing community, with the City of Casey being the third fastest growing region in the country.

Melbourne's South East has been identified as an official growth corridor, encompassing a number of suburbs from Dandenong to Pakenham in the east, down to Cranbourne and Clyde in the south.

Due to the rapidly increasing population in the region, it is essential to prioritise the upkeep of road pavement, signals and drainage infrastructure to reduce potential delays, alternative routes and other disruptions, especially to roads with a high volume of traffic.



## Participants

Bayside City Council, City of Boroondara, Cardinia Shire Council, City of Casey, City of Greater Dandenong, Glen Eira City Council, City of Port Phillip, City of Yarra, Frankston City, Knox City, City of Manningham, City of Monash, Mornington Peninsula Shire, Whitehorse City

## What we heard

If assets are not well maintained, the main impacts include:

- Community dissatisfaction – lack of maintenance of state-owned assets impact the user experience of residents and visitors, resulting in a negative perception of councils.
- Economic impacts – effective litter and vegetation maintenance, along with graffiti removal, play a crucial role in presentation. When a place looks unkept it can lead to unfavourable economic development outcomes.
- Maintenance of road assets needs to keep up with ageing infrastructure.
- Local flooding is an issue. Councils in the South East require better collaboration between themselves and DTP so they are aware of any proactive maintenance programs.

Good service includes:

- A well-maintained road network with a reliable road surface for safer travels.
- Proactively maintained roadside vegetation and beautification of town entrances.
- Prompt response to reported electrical faults on the road network.




This feedback aligns with DTP road user survey data, which found road surfaces, lighting, traffic signals, safety and road smoothness to be the highest priority for maintenance in the Metro South East region over a number of years. Road matters with the least satisfaction included traffic, freight and road smoothness.

People at the Frankston Ministerial listening tour highlighted the need for improved cycling infrastructure and road quality, and the impact of congestion on freight movement. They appreciated the recent use of road technology to help manage congestion.

## Most important

 Safety	 Communication
 Proper maintenance of assets	 Road smoothness
 Maintaining grip on the roads in wet weather	 High level of cleanliness and presentation

## Least satisfaction

 Traffic	 Accommodating freight on the roads
 Road smoothness	

# Key stakeholders

## Key stakeholder feedback themes

Five engagement sessions were held with external stakeholder groups, including active transport, emergency services, motorists and motorcyclist groups, Road Safety Victoria partners, and freight and farming groups.

The top three asset classes identified were:



Roads



Roadside Infrastructure



Electrical

Participants in all sessions identified roads as the most important asset class. This includes pavements, pavement making and traffic management devices.

Safety proved to be the highest priority when it came to maintaining assets across all groups.

The varying focus areas and priorities of each group were evident when it came to the challenges across the road assets. Some challenges that were identified include:

- The need for sustainable, long-term solutions over temporary fixes.
- Considering two-wheelers in maintenance planning and delivery.
- Addressing the emergence of heavier emergency response vehicles and heavier zero emissions vehicles.
- Visibility of road maintenance planning.

Good service includes:

- Timely response to issues.
- Preventing or reducing the impact of floods with better maintenance of drainage systems.
- Improved communication regarding repairs, planned works, and inter-agency works.

For each asset category, we asked participants to identify the key challenges they face, their asset priorities, and to explain what 'good service' means to them.

## Active transport groups



### Participants

- Bicycle Network Victoria
- Aus Cycling Victoria
- Victoria Walks

### What we heard

Top priorities: Roads and roadside infrastructure.

If assets are not well maintained, the main impacts include:

- Hazards on the roads for riders, particularly with sudden potholes.
- Accidents on the roads caused by poor road surfaces and lack of drainage.

Active transport users told us the following assets need the most improvement:



Roads



Roadside Infrastructure



Drainage

Good service includes:

- A smooth road surface clear of debris, potholes and broken edges.
- Maintenance standards that consider vulnerable road users.
- Well-maintained safety barriers.
- Better drainage systems that reduce water on roads.

## Emergency services



### Participants

- Fire Rescue Victoria
- Victorian State Emergency Services
- Ambulance VIC

### What we heard

Top priority: Roads.

If assets are not well maintained, the main impacts include:

- Delays to reaching emergencies due to varying speed limits along freeways affecting the safety of patients.
- Economic impacts on emergency organisations that have self-funded operating costs because of Vehicle damage from poor road conditions.
- A need for permanent solutions instead of temporary fixes for potholes.

Emergency services representatives told us the following assets need the most improvement:



Roadside Infrastructure



Roads



Structures

Good service includes:

- Maintaining a high standard of ride quality, ensuring consistent speed limit and responding promptly to safety related repairs.
- Clear wayfinding signs and roadwork updates are critical for facilitating, planning and responding to emergencies.
- Having preset detours and regular works updates clearly communicated will contribute to a more reliable and efficient road network and improved safety outcomes for patients.

## Motorist and motorcyclist groups



### Participants

- RACV – Royal Automobile Club of Victoria
- Victorian Motorcycle Council
- Austroads
- MCEP – Motorcycling Community Engagement Panel

### What we heard

Top priority: Roads.

If assets are not well maintained, the main impacts include:

- Delays and detours due to damaged infrastructure, fires and floods. Alternative routes and access need to be considered in maintenance programs.
- Minor disruptions such as road patching with raised, shiny seals and gravel left on the road can be hazardous for motorcyclists.
- Increased safety risks for motorcyclists as they lose the capacity to stay on the roads when there is lack of drainage.
- Damages to road surfaces due to pooling of water on the roads.

Motorists and motorcyclist representatives told us the following assets need the most improvement:



Roads



Structures



Drainage

Good service includes:

- Making road maintenance standards motorcycle-friendly.
- Drainage systems designed to prevent motorcycles from falling into drains, emphasising hazard avoidance.
- Water on the road, and clear signage when this isn't possible.



## Road Safety Victoria Partners



### Participants

- Department of Transport and Planning
- TAC – Transport Accident Commission

### What we heard

Top priority: Roads.

If assets are not well maintained, the main impacts include:

- An increase in road trauma.
- Roadside barriers will be unable to continue to perform their function and save lives if they are not repaired promptly.
- Safety risks for vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians.

Road Safety Victoria representatives told us the following assets need the most improvement:



Roads



Roadside  
Infrastructure



Electrical

Good service includes:

- Clear and consistent communication about roadworks and maintenance for the safety and satisfaction of all road users.
- Clarity for the community around local vs state-owned roads.
- Reinstating infrastructure in a timely manner for safety and for public perception and confidence.
- Adequate lighting to support cyclist and pedestrian movement at night.
- Maintain signals, lighting and other electrical systems in a timely manner. Response times to maintenance is a contributing factor to the safety of road users.

## Freight and Farming groups



### Participants

- VFF – Victorian Farmers Federation
- Grain Growers
- CCAA – Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia
- VTA – Victorian Transport Association
- NHVR – National Heavy Vehicle Regulator

### What we heard

Top priority: Roads.

If assets are not well maintained, the main impacts include:

- Economic, productivity and safety impacts without effective roads, bridges and culverts for transporting products safely.
- An increased risk to road safety and subsequent road damage due to poor drainage maintenance and systems.
- An inability to cater for heavier energy-efficient vehicles.
- Detours and delays for delivery due to re-routed roads that go over bridges unable to take on the weight of heavy freight vehicles.

Freight and Farming representatives told us the following assets need the most improvement:



Roads



Roadside  
Infrastructure



Drainage

Good service includes:

- Effective coordination and consultation with the industry to ensure that roadworks are scheduled suitably.
- Placement of signs should consider larger vehicles to enhance visibility, safety and clarity for all road users.
- Providing safe access for heavy vehicles during maintenance works is critical for minimising disruptions, hazards and delays.

In addition, DTP freight strategies found the freight industry predicts there will be an increasing reliance on larger vehicles and the road network needs to adapt to enable this progression.

## Victorian Traditional Owner groups



As part of building a holistic view of road maintenance across Victoria, we met with two Victorian Traditional Owner groups. These were:

- Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
- Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations

We also reviewed the Country Plans for seven of the 11 Victorian Registered Aboriginal Parties:

- Taungurung
- Tojobaluk
- Wadawurrung
- Dja Dja Wurrung
- Eastern Maar
- Gunaikurnai
- Yorta Yorta

This research was conducted so we could understand the various views and perspectives of Victorian First Peoples on infrastructure development and maintenance, and to gain insights on how we can best incorporate Traditional Owner rights and opportunities into our approach to road maintenance.

DTP will continue engaging with Victorian Traditional Owner groups as part of yearly road maintenance plans.

### Victorian Traditional Owner group feedback themes

There were five key themes that came up in conversation with the Traditional Owners Corporations and in the seven Country Plans:

- Country and culture are connected.
- A larger role in land management.
- A larger role in influencing decision making.
- An increased role in fire management.
- Exploration of economic development opportunities for communities.

Additional themes commonly found included:

- Self-determination.
- Need for greater coordination between agencies regarding land and infrastructure management.
- Need to reach a consensus on the meaning of 'conservation' in a Victorian context.
- Exploration of mining rehabilitation opportunities
- Indigenous signage across traditional Country to build awareness and acknowledge stewardship.
- Simplification of procurement processes within government.

The Country Plans highlighted the cultural significance of land management for Aboriginal parties. Any changes in land use have a profound impact on their culture and heritage.

Roads are essential for accessing Country, and the way roads are being constructed is of great interest to Aboriginal groups. A common theme was the desire to be actively involved in various land management activities, which could lead to greater autonomy for their communities.

Conversations with the Registered Aboriginal Party and the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations highlighted their interest in maintenance of cultural heritage sites, economic opportunities, procurement and enabling self-determination.

There is growth potential for economic independence and that economic independence goes towards supporting their own communities.

The Federation of Victorian Traditional Owners Corporation suggested DTP consider cultural outcomes for roadside assets and signage. They are interested in opportunities for cultural recognition in freeway amenities or overpasses to help show the area recognises what Country road users are in.

There is a need for further involvement in decision-making processes, both in collaboration with other agencies and within their own communities.

Participation in further discussions will have a significant influence on determining land use, including the construction and maintenance of roads.

## Next steps

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback on the future of road maintenance in Victoria.

We value your time, energy and insights and will consider the challenges and priorities you shared to guide our new approach to road maintenance for the next decade, as we work to implement the new 10-year funding model for road maintenance in Victoria.

We are already working on how to best implement the feedback we've received, including greater transparency around planned works, considering local priorities in our investment decisions, and ongoing engagement to ensure our yearly plans deliver great outcomes for Victorian communities.

We will also use your feedback to shape new customer-focused metrics which, together with technical and safety standards, will guide our road maintenance planning and maximise benefits for Victorian road users.

Stay up to date at [vic.gov.au/road-maintenance](https://vic.gov.au/road-maintenance)

**We value your time, energy and insights and will consider the challenges and priorities you shared.**



