

More Homes More Opportunity



The Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier of Victoria

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IF COUNCILS WON'T UNLOCK SPACE FOR MORE HOMES – WE WILL

More homes mean more opportunity – that's why the Allan Labor Government is setting clear housing targets in every Victorian local government area for councils, government and industry to deliver over the next 30 years.

But we'll be clear: if individual councils don't try to meet these targets, they'll lose their planning powers.

Premier Jacinta Allan and Minister for Planning Sonya Kilkenny today visited Hawthorn to announce the final council housing capacity targets and call on all councils to join government in meeting them together.

Since releasing draft targets last year, the Government has met with every Victorian council to understand their plans and the barriers they face in unlocking the capacity – and has worked with councils to help shape the final targets to ensure they are accurate, fair and achievable.

Where growth has gone over the last 30 years

Over the last 30 years, Victoria grew by 65 per cent – but the growth wasn't even. Housing in outer suburban Melbourne councils like Melton grew 433 per cent, in Wyndham by 346 per cent and in Casey by 211 per cent.

In comparison, inner-suburban council areas like Boroondara and Bayside recorded some of lowest rates of housing growth in all of metro Melbourne – growing by 24 and 28 per cent respectively in three decades.

Since 1996, the western suburbs of Melbourne collectively grew 114 per cent, and the north and the southeast grew 75 per cent. The inner southeastern and eastern suburbs grew 32 per cent and 36 per cent respectively.

The council housing targets are about the next 30 years

Victoria needs 2.24 million new homes by 2051 to preserve the dream of homeownership for young people and workers, and to make sure there's enough rentals for those who need them. But where these homes go matter.

More homes are needed in established suburbs close to jobs, transport and services, so that young people can live near family and work. And pressure needs to come off outer suburbs that have carried too much of the load.

That's what the targets achieve: Taking pressure off Melbourne's urban fringe areas by delivering 70 per cent of growth in established areas and 30 per cent of growth in the outer suburbs – instead of the other way around.

New greenfield housing sub-targets that have been introduced for growth area councils in metro Melbourne – as well as in Geelong, Bendigo and Ballarat – are all about recognising those unique growth pressures.

Young people and workers in Regional Victoria need more homes, too. The statewide target projects 25 per cent of homes will be in Regional Victoria by 2051. Targets will mean regions can continue growing the right way, in line with their traditional share of the state's homes and population.

The opportunity for councils to work with government

Times have changed. Government believes more and more councils have recognised the severity of Australia's housing crisis and are now up to the task of delivering more homes in a way that's right for locals.

Councils that have previously clamped down on home growth, like Boroondara, are now ready to focus on the future. The targets state 65,500 new homes will be needed in Boroondara by 2051 – an 88 per cent increase.

This rate of growth is appropriate for Boroondara, given the space in the municipality for gentle infill, the opportunity to unlock strategic sites, the busy commercial precincts in Camberwell, Hawthorn and Kew, and an inner-suburban setting close to well-serviced trams and train lines that have had every level crossing removed.

Last year, the Government also announced a raft of actions to help deliver these targets, including more Activity Centres, a 10-year plan for greenfields, and working toward a system for developers to contribute to infrastructure.

We are prepared to step in if they don't

These targets are about the capacity in each council area for more homes. It's up to councils to work together with Government and industry to unlock this capacity in a way that's right for the community.

But if councils have no interest in doing so, there will be consequences.

The landmark Plan for Victoria, to be released soon, will contain a declaration that Government will hold councils accountable with explicit directions to change planning schemes if they are not providing enough housing capacity – and, if required, the Government will step in to update planning schemes.

It means that if councils don't start doing the planning work now to meet these targets, the Government will intervene and unlock space for more homes – including through rezoning. The Minister for Planning will also retain her powers to intervene or fast-track developments.

There are regular formal steps in the planning process over the coming years where Government can clearly discern if a council is serious or not about tackling the housing crisis and making more room for homes. It's in their hands.

The final council housing targets for every local government area can be found at: engage.vic.gov.au/project/developing-a-new-plan-for-Victoria/page/housing-targets-2051.

Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"It's simple – work with us to unlock space for more homes or we'll do it for you."

"It's not fair that Victorian families and young people have been completely locked out of living in some areas, while other parts of Melbourne have had to bear the brunt of all that growth."

"We're in a housing crisis and the status quo is not an option. It's time to shake things up."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Planning Sonya Kilkenny

"There are many councils who have done the right thing and made life better and more affordable for locals."

"To the councils who used to block and who are now ready to build, I say to them: let's talk."

Quote attributable to Member for Southern Metropolitan Region Ryan Batchelor

"We need every council to be a part of this effort, because the number one issue for families, workers and young people right now is the cost of living and the cost of housing."

Quote attributable to Member for Southern Metropolitan Region John Berger

"Hawthorn is well suited for more homes – we want to support young people here who just want the opportunity to live, buy and raise a family in the area where they grew up."