



# GSEM CITY DEAL





# The GSEM City Deal

The Greater South East Melbourne (GSEM) City Deal seeks to balance the short-term needs created by COVID-19 while planning for the medium and long-term requirements of the region.

The GSEM City Deal will focus on creating jobs for an adaptive, skilled workforce and devise ways for people to work close to home so workers can spend more time with their families rather than on long commutes that are detrimental to health, social cohesion and the environment.

To be ready for work, people need to be physically and mentally healthy, have safe homes and the right skills. This is what the South East Melbourne strives for.

The GSEM City Deal will address the needs of communities so people are able to thrive. That includes reducing domestic and family violence, ensuring consistent, quality access to healthcare and ensuring people get the education they need to do the jobs they want.

Greater South East Melbourne, which consists of eight council areas, is one of Australia's fastest growing regions and one of the nation's most important economic centres.

We are a city within a city. Greater South East Melbourne has a population of more than 1.4 million, generates \$74.7 billion in annual gross regional output and is home to more than 500,000 jobs. Pre-Covid-19, greater South East Melbourne made a greater economic contribution than any other non-CBD region in Australia.

The region's population is growing so fast that jobs growth and infrastructure investment are struggling to keep up. GSEM's population is expected to exceed two million by 2036.

This rapid growth means homes and jobs are located some distances apart, hampering residents' access to employment and services.

The GSEM City Deal comes at a vital time for the region, state, and nation, with challenges emerging on many fronts. All levels of government working together can get growth right, activate under-utilised assets, ignite jobs growth and ensure residents can live more resilient and prosperous lives.

Through real-time tracking of social, environmental and economic data driving evidence-based decision making, the GSEM City Deal can accelerate job creation, boost productivity and improve liveability by activating and connecting the southeast's knowledge centres and Metropolitan Activity Centres to its employment precincts.

The GSEM City Deal will utilise the following domains:

**Economic sustainability** – Enable industry growth, exports and innovation, and build a skilled workforce, including enhanced public investment and co-investment.

**Environmental sustainability** – Improve the environment, amenity, and resilience of the region, including tri-government collaboration to leverage circular economies.

**Stronger families and communities** – Support families and communities to be stronger, healthier, more resilient and feel safe through innovative interventions and regulatory reform.

**Transport and connectivity** – Enhance the transport system to better facilitate social inclusion, employment, education, physical activity, business and economic growth.

# GSEM Position Paper overview

## Economic sustainability

*GSEM's vision is for all levels of government to collaborate to create and retain jobs, enable industry growth, exports and innovation, build a skilled workforce with success powered by renewables. To enable this, GSEM is working to ensure that:*

- Outcome 1: Globally competitive innovative businesses have access to international and domestic markets.
- Outcome 2: The region is home to an even more diverse range of industries which provides job opportunities for an adaptive, skilled workforce that lives locally.
- Outcome 3: The economy and workers of Greater South East Melbourne are supported by environmentally sustainable world class infrastructure.
- Outcome 4: The region is home to leading edge education, training and research.

## Environmental sustainability

*As the region's population continues to grow, there is a need to set a clear framework for sustainable development. To enable this, GSEM is working to ensure that:*

- Outcome 1: Greater South East Melbourne has a secure water supply and is a leader in adaptive water recycling and integrated water management.
- Outcome 2: Assets, features and amenity is protected against the effects of climate change.
- Outcome 3: The region's highly successful food and fibre sector is secure and continues to grow.
- Outcome 4: Greater South East Melbourne is a zero waste, net positive emissions region that invests in key green infrastructure projects.

## Stronger families and communities

*GSEM is committed to supporting families and communities to be stronger, healthier, more resilient and more secure. To enable this, GSEM is working to ensure that:*

- Outcome 1: Every community member has access to suitable and affordable housing.
- Outcome 2: Families, individuals and communities feel safe and respected.
- Outcome 3: Every child experiences positivity and support from early years to adulthood.
- Outcome 4: All residents manage their primary health and have opportunities to remain engaged and independent for life.
- Outcome 5: Communities are dynamic, vibrant and inclusive and celebrate their successes and values.

## Transport and connectivity

*GSEM is committed to ensuring connectivity (including transport systems) that facilitates social inclusion, employment, education, physical activity, business and economic growth for its communities. To enable this, GSEM is working to ensure that:*

- Outcome 1: The region's transport system is resilient and embraces the polycentric city model, facilitating a self-sustaining south east.
- Outcome 2: Investment in integrated transport delivers strong employment, social inclusion and physical activity.
- Outcome 3: Greater South East Melbourne is a nationally significant freight zone, supported by industry, technology, education and innovation, delivering growth.
- Outcome 4: The region is connected to a global community through innovative use of technology solutions.



# The Greater South East Melbourne region

Greater South East Melbourne is one of the fastest growing regions in Australia’s fastest growing city and is one of the country’s most important economic centres.

The region includes eight local government areas: the shires of Cardinia and Mornington Peninsula, and the cities of Casey, Frankston, Greater Dandenong, Kingston, Knox and Monash.





# Economic sustainability

## ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S MOST PRODUCTIVE REGIONS

Greater South East Melbourne is one of Australia's most productive industrial and economic regions. It is home to one of the country's largest manufacturing hubs, as well as a industry specialisations including healthcare, construction, tourism and agriculture.

Greater South East Melbourne (GSEM) group advocates for further investment, prosperity and jobs across the region. GSEM sees a productive, economically sustainable and connected economy hand-in-hand with liveability and high quality of life for residents. We want to address employment retention, creation and under-employment, which would reduce social disadvantage and access to services, education, training and employment.

GSEM's vision is for all three levels of government to work together to ensure job creation and retention, industry and export growth and foster innovation to ensure continued success in one of Australia's most liveable regions.

A City Deal commitment to develop the region as a global future-focussed economic ecosystem comprises four outcomes. These are:

- Outcome 1: Globally competitive innovative businesses have access to international and domestic markets.
- Outcome 2: The region is home to an even more diverse range of industries which provides job opportunities for an adaptive, skilled workforce that lives locally.
- Outcome 3: The economy and workers of GSEM are supported by environmentally sustainable world class infrastructure.
- Outcome 4: The region is home to leading edge education, training and research.



### **Outcome 1: A globally competitive business environment with access to global and local markets**

The region is one of Australia's most important economic centres, with \$74.7 billion in Gross Regional Product (GRP) and just under 20 per cent of Gross State Product (GSP).

There were 124,185 businesses in Greater South East Melbourne in 2018, with an average annual growth rate of 4 per cent a year since 2014. Most of these businesses were in the Construction Industry (21 per cent), Professional Services (10.6 per cent) and Transport Logistics and Warehousing (10.2 per cent).<sup>1</sup>

The region is home to two National Employment and Innovation Clusters (NEIC), at Monash and Dandenong. The Monash NEIC has world class research institutions including CSIRO, Monash University, Monash Medical Centre and the Australian Synchrotron.

These major research and development centres mean the region is also a centre for industry-led research, development and scientific testing centres, global engineering firms and advanced manufacturing companies.

<sup>1</sup> ABS Cat no 8265.0 Counts of Australian Businesses, including entries and exits, June 2016 to June 2018

*Greater South East Melbourne is home to scientific research of global significance.*



Dandenong has traditionally been one of the major manufacturing areas of Melbourne, the Dandenong NEIC home to a number of key industrial parks including Victoria's first eco-industrial park LOGIS, Hallam Business Park and Estate One.

Greater South East Melbourne is one of Australia's largest manufacturing regions, and manufacturing remains a prominent sector in the region in terms of employment and output. However, the composition of manufacturing in the region is changing.

In 2006, more than 20 per cent of all employment based in Greater South East Melbourne was in manufacturing. Subsequent readjustment within the manufacturing sector, led by car plant and automotive parts closures in Dandenong, Casey and Kingston, have contributed significantly to the employment decline. By 2016, food processing had become the region's major manufacturing sub-industry.

Although by 2016 manufacturing was still the highest employing industry, it had fallen to 13.2 per cent. Healthcare (12.3 per cent), Retail Trade (12.0 per cent) and Construction are also now major employing industries in the region.<sup>2</sup>

Other areas of specialisation include agriculture, with green wedge areas in Casey, Cardinia and Mornington Peninsula acting as a food bowl for Greater Melbourne.

The visitor economy is also important in Greater South East Melbourne. The coastal and winery regions along Port Phillip Bay and the Mornington Peninsula attracted 2.3 million visitors over the year to September 2019, making it the second most visited tourist destination in Victoria after the Great Ocean Road.<sup>3</sup> It generated \$1 billion in GRP in 2017-2018, employing 10,700 people.<sup>4</sup>

The region is home to three Metropolitan Activity Centres (MAC) as defined by state planning policy – Frankston, Dandenong and Narre Warren-Fountain Gate. These MACs “play a strategically important role for their subregional catchments by providing the community with good access to a range of major retail, community, government, entertainment, cultural and transport services.”

The Victorian Government, via the Victorian Planning Authority, acknowledge that “it is vital (that) jobs continue to grow in our suburbs, to reduce congestion on our roads and public transport system; minimise our environmental footprint; and give people back precious leisure time. At present 86% of Melbourne residents work outside of the central business district and the Victorian Government has a vision to encourage Metropolitan Activity Centres to develop with a diverse range of jobs, activities and housing for their subregional catchments.”<sup>5</sup>

The region's MACs, along with key education, employment, health and recreation precincts, need to be designed for the community, taking into account the unique characteristics of the region and individual communities that will influence opportunities for healthy lifestyles and community interaction.

Delivering well-planned and meaningful design standards that add value to the amenity and enjoyment of natural and built environments and the overall liveability of our communities will ensure the region continues to thrive and attract people to visit, live and work.

<sup>2</sup> ABS Census

<sup>3</sup> [business.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1865161/Regional-Victorias-Top-Attractions-year-ending-September-2019.pdf](https://business.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1865161/Regional-Victorias-Top-Attractions-year-ending-September-2019.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [business.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1855603/Value-of-Tourism-to-Victoria-Summary-updated-January-2020.pdf](https://business.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1855603/Value-of-Tourism-to-Victoria-Summary-updated-January-2020.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [vpa.vic.gov.au/urban-renewal/metropolitan-activity-centres/](https://vpa.vic.gov.au/urban-renewal/metropolitan-activity-centres/)





Construction employment has grown considerably in the region, with an extra 16,000 workers in the 10 years to 2016. There are a high number of construction businesses based in the area, comprising more than 20 per cent of businesses in Cardinia (29.4 per cent), Casey (24.7 per cent), Frankston (26.7 per cent), Knox (21.7 per cent) and Mornington Peninsula (26.7 per cent).<sup>6</sup>

While manufacturing is no longer the region's major employer, there is now greater diversity in the industries and specialisations based in Greater South East Melbourne.

A City Deal combining the resources of local, state and federal governments is needed to ensure businesses, industries and employment opportunities are available locally enabling the south east economy to be a vital contributor to the state's and nation's economic future.

<sup>6</sup> ABS Cat no 8265.0 Counts of Australian Businesses, including entries and exits, June 2016 to June 2018

## **Outcome 2: The region is home to an even more diverse range of industries which provides job opportunities for an adaptive, skilled workforce that lives locally**

Employment growth has been strong for workers living in South East Melbourne, rising to 595,500 in November 2019, an increase of 21,400 workers over the previous year.<sup>7</sup>

The South East Melbourne economy is transitioning from an industrial, manufacturing-centred economy to one that is more diverse, knowledge and services-based. A highly skilled and adaptive workforce that is future focussed and responsive to the changing nature of work is needed for the region's future prosperity.

There are many professional and high-level skilled jobs based in South East Melbourne, reflecting the advanced technology industries in the Monash and Dandenong NEICs, as well as the health-sector-related research and development undertaken within Monash, Frankston and Berwick health and education precincts.

Most professional and high-skill occupations require post-school, higher-education qualifications. The ABS Census data shows that the proportion of GSEM residents working as professionals is slowly increasing (from 16.7 per cent in 2006 to 19.3 per cent 10 years later).

Higher education attainment is associated with strong employment prospects and outcomes, increased income and improved health. However, there is room for improvement in terms of the level of higher education attainment across the region. Only Monash (34.8 per cent) and Kingston (25.3 per cent) have proportions of residents with higher education qualifications that are higher than the state average (24.3 per cent).

More worryingly, Cardinia (13 per cent), Casey (14.3 per cent), Greater Dandenong (16.4 per cent), Mornington Peninsula (11.7 per cent) and Frankston (14.2 per cent) all had proportions of 20-to-24-year-olds not engaged in any form of education or training that were higher than the state average (11.1 per cent). There is a need to increase participation and access to relevant skills across the GSEM region in order to increase productivity, as well as address problems associated with social disadvantage.<sup>8</sup>

There are also areas within South East Melbourne that experience ongoing high levels of unemployment. Latest available small area labour force data (June quarter 2019) showed that Greater Dandenong (7.6 per cent), Casey (5.3 per cent), Frankston (5.3 per cent) and Cardinia (4.9 per cent) all had unemployment rates greater than the Melbourne average (4.7 per cent). Some suburbs in the region experience extreme levels of poverty and disadvantage, particularly Doveton, Hampton Park, Dandenong, Springvale, Springvale South, and Noble Park West, which scored in the lowest 10 per cent (that is, 1 on the 10 range scale) across the four SEIFA indexes<sup>9</sup> compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

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<sup>7</sup> Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business, Small Area Labour Markets, June Quarter 2019, released December 2019

<sup>8</sup> ABS Census

<sup>9</sup> Socio-economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFAs) indicate the level of social and/or economic disadvantage in a geographic area, giving a score for each area in Australia on a scale of one to ten. A low score (e.g. 1 or 2) indicates high levels of disadvantage, whereas a high score such as 10, places an area in the top 10 per cent of wealth and advantage. It is derived from combining a series variables relating to low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment and other attributes of disadvantage from the Census. The four SEIFA indexes are the Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) reflecting educational and occupational levels, the Index of Economic Resources (IER) related to income and wealth, the general socio-economic Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) and the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD) on economic and social conditions.



A City Deal will focus on investment in skills, creating or attracting more jobs into the region. There are already considerable and established education assets in South East Melbourne, including Chisholm Institute (six campuses - including Frankston and Dandenong), Holmesglen TAFE, Federation University, Monash University (Peninsula and Clayton campuses), Monash Medical Centre, Frankston Hospital (as a leading teaching hospital), Frankston Private Hospital and Casey Hospital. There is an opportunity to have stronger partnerships that bring together industry, training providers and education institutions to increase education, research, training and labour market participation for everybody in South East Melbourne creating benefits, not only in terms of regional productivity, but for Victoria and Australia.

We need to increase the level of education and training participation as well as opportunities for workers to find and access employment.

There were more than 520,000 jobs based in South East Melbourne at the last Census in 2016, just over a quarter of all jobs in Greater Melbourne. However, there is capacity to further consolidate centres of employment and grow employment based in the region.

South East Melbourne covers some of the fastest population growth areas in Victoria. An extra 90,000 residents are predicted to live in Cranbourne East over the 20 years to 2036 – the highest population increase out of all small areas in Victoria.<sup>10</sup>

While it is to be expected that jobs based in population growth areas such as Cardinia and Casey lag behind established suburbs and inner-Melbourne, the high population growth rates in parts of the region in recent years means many new residents face long commutes to work. In 2016, there were 137,914 employed residents in Casey, with 99,668 of those Casey workers needing to commute out of the municipality for jobs.<sup>11</sup>

Longer journeys to work on congested roads for residents of South East Melbourne increasingly impact on their quality of life, productivity and the liveability of the region.

A research paper released by the University of Melbourne's Sustainable Society Institute found that the reporting of heart disease and obesity and long travel times to and from work in central Melbourne, as well as car use for the journey to work transport method, were positively correlated.

The report states:

*... cheaper housing and better access to open space, which may attract people to outer suburban living, comes at a price, commonly associated with the lower population and job densities at greater distances from central Melbourne.<sup>12</sup>*

A City Deal would see greater collaboration between levels of government to develop and plan local centres for employment. An example is the collaboration between the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) and the Cities of Monash and Greater Dandenong in establishing the two South East Melbourne National Employment and Innovation

<sup>10</sup> DELWP, *Victoria in Future 2019*

<sup>11</sup> [economy.id.com.au/casey/workers-place-of-residence-industry](http://economy.id.com.au/casey/workers-place-of-residence-industry)

<sup>12</sup> University of Melbourne, Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute *Melbourne: How big, how fast and at what cost?* (2019) p. 17





Clusters (NEICs). The overall purpose of the NEICs is to provide local employment, ensuring local residents in outer and middle Melbourne have the similar employment opportunities as residents of inner-Melbourne and while reducing congestion.

**Outcome 3: The economy and workers of South East Melbourne are supported by environmentally sustainable world-class infrastructure**

South East Melbourne is serviced by the Monash Freeway, Princes Highway, Eastlink, Peninsula Link, and the Nepean and Burwood Highways.

Three lines of Melbourne's radial train network – the Glen Waverley, Cranbourne-Pakenham and Frankston lines – connect the region to the Melbourne CBD and other arms of the metropolitan and regional rail network. There is also access for businesses to national and international markets through the Port of Hastings and to a lesser extent, Moorabbin airport.

A number of large-scale infrastructure projects are currently underway, including the High Capacity Metro Trains project, running on the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines, major upgrades to Hallam Road, the Monash Freeway, South Road, Thompsons Road and the Mordialloc Freeway. There are also upgrades on the Frankston line, including new stations completed at Frankston and Carrum, and new stations at Mentone, Edithvale, Chelsea, Bonbeach and Cheltenham underway.

There are also continuing level crossing removals along the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines in Dandenong, Hallam, Pakenham, Lyndhurst, Berwick and Cranbourne.

These large-scale projects reflect the demand for a better and more connected transport infrastructure system posed by the growing population.

High residential population growth in South East Melbourne highlights the limitations of Melbourne's traditional infrastructure – the road and rail network was principally designed to move people and goods in and out of Melbourne CBD.



The economic infrastructure network of Greater Melbourne largely channels goods and workers into the central city area, Tullamarine Airport (and to a lesser extent, Avalon Airport) and the Port of Melbourne.

This is a major inhibitor of growth for businesses based in South East Melbourne. While the region acts as a major national manufacturing centre, almost all of the goods produced for export have to go via the road network through the central city to the Port of Melbourne or Tullamarine airport. The inefficient network means the cost of getting goods to market is often significantly more expensive and time-consuming compared to cost and time required between international ports.

The increasing levels of private and business car journeys on the road network, together with freight movements across the city to the airport and Port of Melbourne has resulted in increased congestion, longer journey times for drivers and increased Co<sub>2</sub> emissions.

The current transport network, in term of both road and rail, has poor east-to-west connectivity. The creation of the suburban rail loop will go some way in creating cross-city public transport access, but that project is at the very early stages and is not expected to be completed for 30 years. Existing public transport access in the new growth areas of Casey and Cardinia is particularly reliant on buses and locations with no electrified rail such as the Mornington Peninsula have outdated bus access.

A GSEM City Deal offers the opportunity to have all levels of government work together to provide future transport infrastructure that incorporates better residential and business precinct planning, reducing carbon emissions, powered by renewable energy.

#### **Outcome 4: The region is home to leading edge education, training and research**

Collaborative and industry-leading medical research is currently being undertaken in south east Melbourne, with the region already home to significant health, education and research facilities including Monash University, Chisholm Institute, Holmesglen, Federation University, CSIRO, Monash Medical Centre, Peninsula Health Academic Centre and the Australian Synchrotron.

With around 43 per cent of all applied research in Australia currently being performed in Universities and an estimated return of 220 per cent for every dollar invested into the health and medical research workforce, continued public and private sector investment into health, education and research is vital for the regions booming Health Care and Social Assistance sector.

The region is home to two thriving Health and Education Precincts at Frankston and Berwick which are significant contributors as major health, education, training and research hubs for the Greater South east Melbourne region.

Within the Frankston Metropolitan Activity Centre, the Frankston Health and Education Precinct includes Monash University Peninsula Campus (Monash Peninsula), Frankston Private Hospital, Frankston Hospital (Peninsula Health), Peninsula Aquatic and Recreation Centre and Chisholm Institute Frankston Campus. Then 800 metre precinct is surrounded by over 100 healthcare and social assistance businesses and residential housing.

Accounting for nearly \$200 million worth of economic activity across Victoria and over 4,500 enrolled students, Monash Peninsula is currently undertaking over \$52.7 million worth of health and medical related research projects.

This includes Australia's leading National Centre for Healthy Ageing which is testing and implementing new models of care and interventions to provide improved health

outcomes, with the potential to be scaled national and internationally.

Boasting an innovative \$15 million Academic Centre in partnership with Monash Peninsula and over 6,200 employees, Peninsula Health has a vital role as a major teaching hospital in the region. The hospital is the leading provider of acute secondary and tertiary hospital services across the Frankston and Mornington Peninsula region.

With health-related courses being the most popular amongst higher education qualifications across Australia and high rates of employment in health care and social assistance across the region, it is vital that public and private sector investment in medical infrastructure, training and research continues.

Chisholm Institute's Frankston Campus, home to over 12,000 students across 131 courses, features the new \$85 million Frankston Learning and Innovation Precinct boasting advanced student-focussed training facilities with a collaborative real-world learning approach ensuring local workforce meets the needs required in the region.

Australia is home to over 172 registered higher education providers and 4,277 vocational education and training providers, with participation in higher education and training largely resulting in greater employment outcomes and quality of life.

A GSEM City Deal seeks to ensure the region's population is able to participate in education and training opportunities that integrate with the needs of the local workforce, with access to affordable housing and a lifestyle that enables positive health outcomes and connected communities.

These vital research initiatives, facility upgrades and collaborative partnerships have the potential to strengthen Australia's competitive advantage as a leader in education, training and research, while boosting productivity in the Health Care and Social Assistance sector, creating new jobs and delivering improved services and facilities for the Greater South East Melbourne region.



# Environmental Sustainability

## BALANCING NATURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Greater South East Melbourne is one of the most established residential areas in Australia, set within one of the most identifiable and productive parts of the country.

It has a diverse range of natural features including some of Victoria's most visited National Parks, RAMSAR listed wetlands and coastlines that are a key tourist drawcard. Greater South East Melbourne is also shaped by diverse features such as the important water tributaries running through the Dandenong catchment, the state significant Bunyip Food Bowl and internationally recognised sandbelt golf courses.

As the popularity of the region continues to grow, the challenge for all levels of government is to balance the needs of the natural attributes that make the region special while setting a clear planning and investment framework so that economic development can continue in appropriate locations. This is in line with the Victorian Government's *Plan Melbourne*, a key outcome of which is 'Melbourne is a sustainable and resilient City' (Outcome 6). The directions and policies underlying this outcome guided GSEM's approach in structuring the Environmental Sustainability domain as part of the City Deal proposal.

GSEM's environmental sustainability outcomes also align with the UN's sustainable development goals relating to clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, sustainable cities and communities, responsible production and consumption and climate action.<sup>1</sup>

GSEM recognises that our climate is rapidly changing and the best means in which to be a constructive partner in adapting to a changing climate and tackling the catastrophic type of events witnessed over the 2019-2020 summer, is to develop enduring partnerships. These partnerships must be multifaceted and involve clear policy responses together with mechanisms to unlock capital funding for investment. Our response must also be viewed through an extended time horizon, considering the needs of a region anticipated to grow to just under two million people by 2036.

The GSEM City Deal is well positioned to drive this approach to environmental sustainability, as strong relationships and linkages between key authorities, institutions and industry groups already exist. These include the Greater South East Councils Climate Change Alliance, education and research institutions such as Monash University and CSIRO, water authorities Greater South East Water and Melbourne Water and leading private sector businesses including Bosch, Jayco and Armstrong Flooring. GSEM member Councils also have very strong relationships with schools through Sustainability Victoria's ResourceSmart program and the Dolphin Research Institute's *I sea, I care* program; as well as energised and established community group networks.



*The challenge is to balance the needs of the region's natural assets with appropriate development.*

<sup>1</sup> [sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300)

GSEM is seeking support for the following outcomes through the City Deal:

Outcome 1: Greater South East Melbourne has secure water supply and is a leader in adaptive water recycling and integrated water management.

Outcome 2: Assets, features and amenity is protected against the effects of climate change.

Outcome 3: The region's highly successful food and fibre sector is secure and continues to grow.

Outcome 4: Greater South East Melbourne is a zero waste, net positive emissions region that invests in key green infrastructure projects.

The ability to constructively tackle the environmental challenges society faces will require partnerships across government, business and the community. GSEM see the City Deal process as the ideal mechanism for recognising and embedding these opportunities.



### **Outcome 1: Greater South East Melbourne has secure water supply and is a leader in adaptive water recycling and integrated water management**

The combination of a growing population and a warming and drier climate means there is an urgent need to plan for a reliable and sustainable water supply for Melbourne. The annual average amount of water being stored in the city has decreased by 68 billion litres over the last five years.<sup>2</sup> The Bureau of Meteorology forecast modelling also shows that below average rainfall, warmer temperatures and lower storage inflows are more likely.

An increasing demand for water and diminishing supply is already a reality, with 125 billion litres of costly desalination water supplied to service Greater Melbourne in 2019-2020 alone.

The Victorian Government's water plan, *Water for Victoria*, states that a sustainable transition must occur in the water supply mix. While almost 100 per cent of the current water supply is from catchment, this will fall to around 50 per cent by 2050, when the increased level of supply is anticipated to a mix of desalinated water, recycled water planned projects, stormwater planned projects and other yet to be determined sources.<sup>3</sup>

The region is the home of the Eastern Treatment Plan (ETP), a sewerage facility that treats nearly half of Melbourne's sewage. The plant already uses this sewage to provide Class A recycled water to a range of locations across the region and produces 380 million

<sup>2</sup> Melbourne Water website [melbournewater.com.au/water/securing-our-water-supply](http://melbournewater.com.au/water/securing-our-water-supply)

<sup>3</sup> *Water for Victoria*, The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2016, p.87





litres of recycled water each day for diverse customers including commercial laundries, residential developments, public parkland and agri-businesses. ETP has further capacity to diversify the number of recycled water customers, reduce the growing reliance on desalinated supply as well as minimising the sunk cost of pouring treated wastewater into Port Phillip Bay.

Following the release of the Victorian Government’s *Water for Victoria* strategy a much more collaborative approach has been formulated at a catchment level regarding Integrated Water Management. Members of GSEM have collaborated with traditional land owner representatives, the Catchment Management Authority and Water companies to develop a Strategic Directions Statement for the Dandenong and Western Port catchments. This work has drawn on the successful work already undertaken in areas such as stormwater treatment and harvesting and has placed a high focus on new opportunities to explore recycled water projects.

South East Water, GSEM Councils and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning are currently undertaking feasibility studies to identify a diverse range of recycled water uses in the Greater South East Melbourne region.

A key focus underlying all the prospective recycled water projects has been to develop strong relationships with local partners who are critical to the economic prosperity and liveability of the region. The recent major sporting event, the Presidents Cup held at Royal Melbourne Golf Course in Black Rock, was evidence of the economic value to the state provided by the sandbelt golf courses and with new strategic investors like the Hawthorn Football Club<sup>4</sup> and large agricultural producers including Butler Market Gardens, Peninsula Fresh Organics and Red Hill Cherries who are reliant on a reliable cost-effective water supply, a strong case for strategic investment can be formed.

<sup>4</sup> The proposed development is a 27.9 hectare site in Dingley Village to be developed and used by the Hawthorn FC. The proposed development includes main training oval the size of the MCG, multi-purpose training area, two additional ovals, and built form elements such as pavilion, function centre, offices and the like)



This GSEM outcome responds directly to objectives contained in *Water for Victoria*, specifically *'Enabling agricultural development and supporting change'* (Policy 4.1) and *'Use diverse water sources to protect public spaces'* (Action 5.1) The liveability of all Australian cities is contingent on the further diversification of water sources and GSEM believes the strategic position of the Eastern Treatment Plan provides GSEM with the basis to position the region as the water recycling capital of Australia.



## Outcome 2: Assets, features and amenity is protected against the effects of climate change

The 2019-2020 bushfire season in Victoria and New South Wales shows the catastrophic impact the effects of climate change can have on communities, property, businesses, local economies and the natural and built environment. The impacts of climate change, such as rising temperatures and increased frequency and severity of extreme weather conditions (including flooding, heatwaves, bushfires) will vary regionally across Australia.

The 2019-2020 bushfire season highlighted the importance of local government in coordinating the emergency management response when natural hazards take place. Councils are a key provider of a range of services to the community and the core service provider of much of the physical infrastructure that communities use daily.

Extreme weather events such as catastrophic bushfires highlight the sheer strain vital community infrastructure can be placed under. Both state and local government have substantial portfolios of infrastructure assets including roads, buildings and drains, and are required to report on the value and depreciation of these assets each year in their financial statements. Yet the potential implications of climate change on asset sustainability are currently not well understood, or measured.

As a result of the local Government amalgamations in the 1990s and the uptake of technology, a reasonable level of sophistication exists in capturing the extent of assets across the region. However, Councils asset maintenance regimes have developed largely off historical 'whole of life' analysis.

In the *Climate-related and other emerging risks disclosures: assessing financial statement materiality using AASB/IASB Practice Statement 2* released in April 2019, the AASB noted entities can no longer treat climate-related risks as merely a matter of corporate social responsibility and may need to consider them also in the context of their financial statements.<sup>5</sup>

The document reflects the transition that is currently occurring where consideration of *Climate-related risks from potential acute or chronic natural disasters, [and] change[s] in climate patterns* which is commonplace in corporate reporting will need to be assessed and reported financially. This rapidly changing regulatory environment will require GSEM to work with all levels of government to better appreciate asset vulnerability and develop risk mitigations.



<sup>5</sup> Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) *Climate-related and other emerging risks disclosures: assessing financial statement materiality using Practice Statement 2*, April 2019, p.3

### **Outcome 3: The region's highly successful food and fibre sector is secure and continues to grow**

The Victorian Government has identified food and fibre as a key pillar of the national economy, with the state accounting for 27 per cent of Australia's food and fibre exports.<sup>6</sup> The sustainability of the agricultural sector is critical to the security of food provision locally, given broader climate changes predicted to reduce the extent of arable land in Australia where food production has traditionally occurred. At a local level, the rise of 'community gardening' with its connection to food production is becoming an increasingly critical ingredient in contemporary neighbourhood design.

Land capability work completed by the Victorian Government highlights that much of land utilised for market gardening, vineyards and livestock production in metropolitan Melbourne exists within the GSEM region. Further, the region acts as a gateway to Gippsland, which is nationally recognised for its primary production.



Beyond the emerging export markets two transformative changes have occurred over the past two decades to lift the profile of Greater South East Melbourne's primary producers.

The first has been the substantive increased investment in 'tourism ventures' directly associated with food and wine production across the region. These food and wine producers have become key influencers in the domestic and international tourism markets, as seen in the Mornington Peninsula.

The second is the investment in moving from an economy focused on primary production to one which has seen manufacturing businesses throughout the region, particularly in Knox, Casey, Cardinia and Dandenong. Food Product Manufacturing was the only manufacturing sub-industry to grow employment between the 2011 and 2016 Census.

A region previously known for automotive component manufacturing is now rapidly growing a reputation for food processing.

Critical to both the environmental qualities the region is renowned for and its ongoing economic prosperity is the development of a greater understanding of the relationships between primary production and food-based manufacturing across the region and into Gippsland. Formulating a much stronger appreciation of the 'components' that go towards making up the 'business of food' by developing a strong regional strategy.

Through an understanding by state and federal governments on the influence the food and fibre sector has on the regions economic prosperity and environment, a GSEM City Deal that focusses on the benefits of bringing all levels of government together to formulate a plan with producers and manufacturers is highly beneficial.

<sup>6</sup> The 'food and fibre' sector includes Meat, Animal fibre, Dairy, Horticulture, Prepared foods, Forest products, Grain Skins and hides, Wine, Animal feed, textile clothing and footwear (TCF) and Seafood products. For further information see [agriculture.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/505266/Food-and-fibre-export-performance-report-2018-2019.pdf](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/505266/Food-and-fibre-export-performance-report-2018-2019.pdf)

#### **Outcome 4: Greater South East Melbourne is a zero waste, net positive emissions region that invests in key green infrastructure projects**

Increasingly all levels of government are establishing strategies and setting targets towards zero waste and zero net emissions. With a population of 1.4 million expected to grow to almost two million by 2036, there is an opportunity for GSEM to be a leader in campaigning and communicating the benefits of waste and emissions reductions, promoting behaviour change and investing in key infrastructure projects for a sustainable urban environment. This includes expanding the region's green infrastructure and the construction of carbon-neutral homes.

There are many benefits to providing green spaces and infrastructure within urban environments. From health, wellbeing and social aspects, to reduced energy usage, costs and mitigation of climate change impacts such as Urban Heat Islands (UHI).

Urban green infrastructure includes a range of vegetation types across public parks and reserves, waterways, grasslands, private gardens, road reserves and nature strips.<sup>7</sup>

Councils have commenced mapping the extent to which human activity is influencing the temperature of places by identifying UHIs across Melbourne and projecting the growth in these heat islands based on projected temperature increases. This work is showing considerable variations within municipalities of up to 10 degrees in the surface temperature within a single local government area on a warm summer's day.<sup>8</sup>

The latest Victorian Government projections forecast an additional 230,000 private dwellings in the region over the two decades to 2036.<sup>9</sup>

This is an opportunity build carbon neutral homes that will assist in meeting emissions targets. A GSEM City Deal would allow councils in the region to team up with state and federal agencies to subsidise and promote green residential buildings, as well as work towards changing national codes that will reduce a building's energy consumption.

<sup>7</sup> See [resilientmelbourne.com.au/living-melbourne/#why](http://resilientmelbourne.com.au/living-melbourne/#why)

<sup>8</sup> The most recent climate modelling completed by the DELWP assumes a temperature increase of 1.6 degrees for Melbourne based on a medium emissions forecast by 2050.

<sup>9</sup> DELWP, *Victoria in Future 2019*





ClimateWorks says the upfront costs associated with building carbon neutral homes is only 4 per cent of existing construction costs and land prices for a detached home.<sup>10</sup>

The GSEM City Deal provides an opportunity to bring together all levels of government, traditional owners and industry to collaborate on green infrastructure projects to increase the region's tree canopy and reduce the energy consumption of residential dwellings.

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10 [climateworksaustralia.org/news/australias-buildings-must-be-built-for-a-zero-carbon-future/](https://climateworksaustralia.org/news/australias-buildings-must-be-built-for-a-zero-carbon-future/)



# Stronger Families and Communities

## WHERE PEOPLE ARE ACTIVE, HEALTHY, VALUED AND SAFE

The GSEM City Deal provides a unique opportunity to increase human capital, strengthen families and communities and improve long-term liveability across the region.

These benefits can be delivered through four strategic approaches: Policy and regulatory reform; evidenced-based primary prevention approaches; partnerships and social investment; and time-series studies to provide evidence of effectiveness and social return on investment.

Increasing resilience and improving safety and security will enable individuals and families to lead productive and healthy (physical and mental) lives.

Examples of where primary prevention approaches can be applied include: Increased social and affordable housing; reduced family violence; embedded practice of positive psychology across universal education and development of early years and young people; and localised primary health initiatives to improve health literacy, nutrition and reduce drug and alcohol consumption.

A GSEM City Deal commitment to stronger families and communities comprises five key priority outcomes:

- Outcome 1: very community member has access to suitable and affordable housing.
- Outcome 2: Families, individuals and communities feel safe and respected.
- Outcome 3: Every child experiences positivity and support from early years to adulthood.
- Outcome 4: All residents manage their primary health and have opportunities to remain engaged and independent for life.
- Outcome 5: Communities are dynamic, vibrant and inclusive and celebrate their successes and values.



### **Outcome 1: Every community member has access to suitable and affordable housing**

Equitable access to adequate housing affects and supports positive health and wellbeing outcomes across the life course. Individuals and families need access to suitable and affordable housing in order to be safe and well.

Greater South East Melbourne has traditionally been seen as a desirable residential location and is a major mortgage belt area of Melbourne. While there are high levels of home ownership across the south east, there are signs that housing is increasingly becoming unaffordable. Households are considered to be under 'mortgage stress' when more than 30 per cent of household income goes towards mortgage repayments and associated housing costs. Using this measure<sup>1</sup> Casey (11.4 per cent) Cardinia (14.2 per cent), Greater Dandenong (19.4 per cent) and Monash (13.1 per cent) have higher proportions of households experiencing mortgage stress than the Greater Melbourne average (11 per cent).

<sup>1</sup> See [ahuri.edu.au/policy/ahuri-briefs/understanding-mortgage-stress](http://ahuri.edu.au/policy/ahuri-briefs/understanding-mortgage-stress)

*Greater South East Melbourne is working to ensure all members of the community are valued, feel safe and can thrive.*

While the levels of home ownership is high, the number of people living in rental accommodation in Greater South East Melbourne has been increasing, following the state-wide pattern.<sup>2</sup> Frankston (26.8 per cent), Monash (27.8 per cent) and Greater Dandenong (32.6 per cent) now all have higher proportions of households renting than the state average (26.7 per cent). The increase in renters has seen an increase in 'rental stress', which occurs when 30 per cent or more of household income goes towards rental payments. Using this measure, over 90 per cent of rental properties are not deemed affordable in five of the eight Greater South East Melbourne councils, which correlates to the higher proportions of people in Casey (29.7 per cent) Cardinia (29.7 per cent), Frankston (33.2 per cent) Greater Dandenong (33.4 per cent) and Mornington Peninsula (33.2 per cent) experiencing higher levels of rental stress when compared to the Victorian average (28.1 per cent).



It is concerning that the percentage of social housing across seven of the eight councils in the GSEM region is lower than (the already low) Greater Melbourne average (2.6 per cent), with the lowest percentage in Cardinia of 0.9 per cent. As a result, there is a growing reliance on rooming houses, which are increasing in number. The condition of many of these properties is poor and residents often report feeling unsafe, resulting in increasing homelessness across the region, as people choose to sleep rough rather than face the unpredictability and violence in rooming house accommodation.

The incidence of rough sleeping is also increasing in parts of the region. Official estimates of this form of homelessness, such as those made by the Australian

Bureau of Statistics, are considered to be significantly under-calculated in comparison to estimates by housing agencies supporting people experiencing homelessness. For example, the ABS Census 2016 homelessness count in Frankston was 546, whereas housing support agencies report about 2000 people presenting as homeless for housing assistance.

<sup>2</sup> The proportion of households renting in Greater South East Melbourne increased from 19 per cent in 2006 to 23.5 per cent in 2016,



## **Outcome 2: Families, individuals and communities feel safe and respected**

To achieve stronger families and communities in Greater South East Melbourne, it is essential for all people to experience equality and respect in all of their relationships, particularly within their families, and to feel safe within both their home and their community. This includes breaking the cycle of family violence and violence against women.

There is currently a high incidence of crime in parts of Greater South East Melbourne. The latest crime statistics data by council for Victoria (year to September 2019) show that Casey had the second highest incidents of crime out all Victorian councils after the City of Melbourne, while Greater Dandenong was among the top five.<sup>3</sup>

Further police data illustrates there are high levels of family violence in parts of Greater South East Melbourne, with Frankston experiencing the highest rates of family violence incidents out of all Greater Melbourne LGAs. Casey and Greater Dandenong also demonstrate very high numbers of incidents.

Research shows that the trauma experienced by children who are present at family violence incidents impacts on their ability to learn. The Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System (VCAMS) data<sup>4</sup> shows that in four of the eight councils, more young people were present at family violence incidents and experienced higher rates of child abuse substantiation compared to the Victorian average. The VCAMS data also showed Greater Dandenong, Casey and Cardinia all had a greater proportion of children considered to be 'developmentally vulnerable'.

## **Outcome 3: Every child experiences positivity and support from early years to adulthood**

The foundations for an individual's future are set in the early childhood years.

Positive early childhood experiences promote healthy brain development. Negative experiences such as trauma and abuse impede the ability to learn and may contribute to poor life outcomes. Research demonstrates the trauma of being exposed to violence, being subjected to abuse and having to leave your home and family to live in out-of-home care can have profound and ongoing negative impacts on children's mental and physical health and the ability to make social connections.<sup>5</sup>

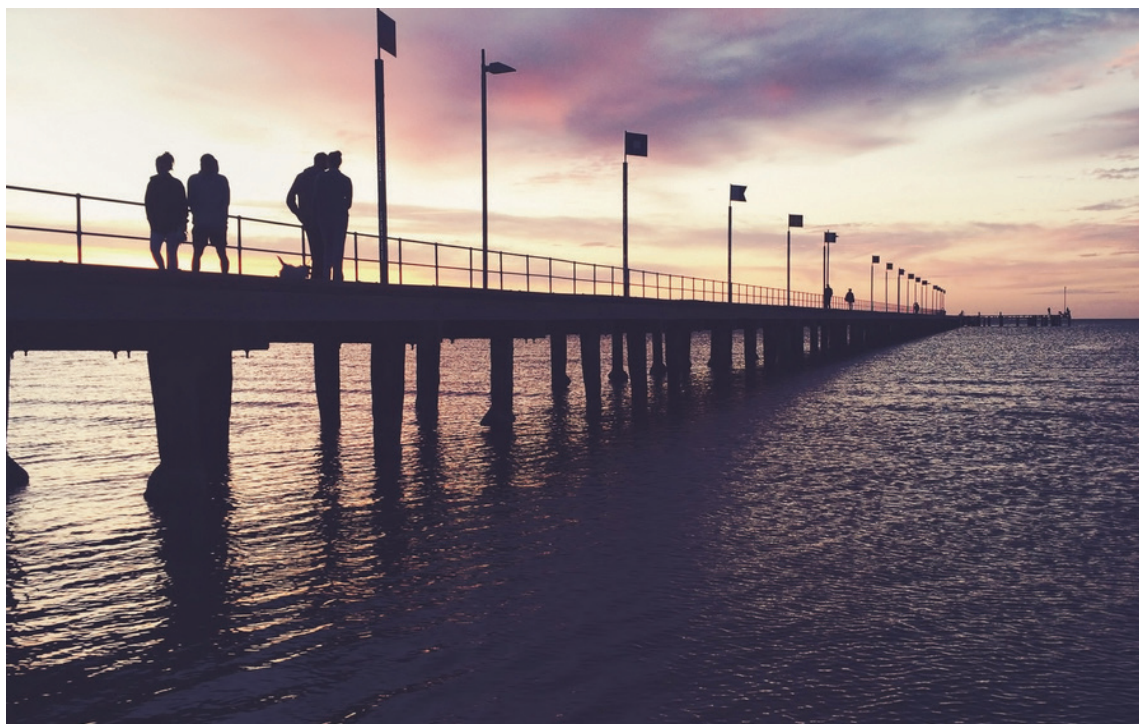
VCAMS data indicates Frankston and Greater Dandenong have higher proportions of children on child protection orders than Victoria, with four of the eight GSEM councils experiencing higher than the Victorian average of child abuse substantiations (Frankston had almost double with 12.4 per cent, compared to 6.7 per cent for Victoria).

<sup>3</sup> Victorian Crime Statistics Agency [crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/crime-statistics/latest-crime-data](http://crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/crime-statistics/latest-crime-data)

<sup>4</sup> VCAMS is a database of 150 indicators across four category areas (the child, family, community, services and supports) known to be of the most importance to the present and future lives of children. It is endorsed by the Victorian Government and is drawn from a range of departmental data sources, as well as the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other research bodies. Further information on VCAMS can be found here: [education.vic.gov.au/about/research/Pages/vcamstableau.aspx](http://education.vic.gov.au/about/research/Pages/vcamstableau.aspx)

<sup>5</sup> *Children affected by domestic and family violence: A review of domestic and family violence prevention, early intervention and response services.* Campo, Kaspiw, Moore and Tayton. Australian Institute of Family Studies





Another significant issue is bullying. Four of the eight GSEM councils have higher proportions of children and young people who were bullied in Years 7 to 9 (VCAMS), with over 20 per cent of children in Frankston and Greater Dandenong in this age group being bullied.<sup>6</sup> Bullying can have long-term negative impacts. Children or young people who are the target of bullying experience reduced participation, learning and enjoyment at school, with some experiencing ongoing negative impacts many years later.<sup>7</sup>

While 83 per cent or more of students in Years 5 and 6 across all Greater South East Melbourne councils reported feeling connected to their school, this drops to 68 per cent for students in Years 7 to 9. In Cardinia only 54 per cent of Years 7 to 9 students reported that they felt connected with their school.<sup>8</sup>

Incidences of bullying and negative experiences may cause future disengagement from education and training. Higher education attainment is associated with a range of positive life effects, including better employment outcomes, improved health and health literacy, greater levels of volunteerism and community engagement and social participation.

Education attainment is associated with higher incomes, financial resources that can be used to utilise preventative healthcare and greater access to organised physical activity.<sup>9</sup>

Higher education and training participation across parts of Greater South East Melbourne can be improved. Five of the eight Greater South East Melbourne councils had higher rates of people aged 15-to-24 who are not in employment and education. Half of councils have lower than the Melbourne average of people attending university.

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6 VCAMS

7 *Safe and Supportive School Communities Working Group – Bullying No Way!*

8 VCAMS

9 *Measuring the effects of education on health and civic engagement: Proceedings of the Copenhagen symposium. Chapter 4 What are the effects of education on health? OECD 2006*

#### **Outcome 4: All residents manage their primary health and have opportunities to remain engaged and independent for life**

Poverty and disadvantage have a profound impact on health. It is difficult to make healthy choices when you are experiencing financial insecurity, violence, discrimination and lack social support. The inequities of health between population groups are socially produced, avoidable, unfair and unnecessary.<sup>10</sup> The unequal distribution of power, money and resources can result in increased vulnerability and have differential impacts of harm.

Some suburbs in Greater South East Melbourne experience extreme levels of poverty and disadvantage. The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFAs) compiled by the ABS indicate the levels of social and/or economic disadvantage in an area, giving a score for each area in Australia on a scale of one to 10. A low score (1 or 2) indicates high levels of disadvantage, a high score such as 10, places an area in the top 10 per cent of wealth and advantage. Results are derived from combining a series variables relating to low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment and other attributes of disadvantage from the Census. Suburbs in Greater South East Melbourne that scored in the lowest 10 percent across the four SEIFA indexes<sup>11</sup> included Doveton, Hampton Park, Dandenong, Springvale, Springvale South and Noble Park West.

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<sup>11</sup> These are the Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) reflecting educational and occupational levels, the Index of Economic Resources (IER) related to income and wealth, the general socio-economic Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) and the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD) on economic and social conditions.



**Outcome 5: Communities are dynamic, vibrant and inclusive and celebrate their successes and values**

Liveability requires a strong sense of identity and belonging, as well as the opportunity for meaningful participation in social and economic life. By building social capital, we create vibrant and inclusive communities, promoting healthy lifestyles, positive mental health and longevity.

Greater South East Melbourne is well known for its culturally rich and linguistically diverse communities. Greater Dandenong and Monash are especially diverse, with over two thirds and half of their respective populations speaking a language other than English at home.

GSEM aims to develop stronger families and communities as part of the GSEM City Deal. Benefits include greater resilience, improved liveability, higher productivity, better health and a reduction of costs to state and federal government over the longer term.

# Transport and connectivity

## A REGION SHAPED BY TRANSPORT

Greater South East Melbourne has been shaped by its transport networks. Frankston's rapid growth followed the construction of a rail line in the 1880s and Dandenong's broad catchment made it a perfect 'market town'. More recently, as metropolitan Melbourne expanded, strong road and rail connections facilitated a vast increase in what is an incredibly diverse population of more than one million people and two nationally significant employment and innovation clusters at Monash and Dandenong.

The transport networks that enabled this rapid growth and prosperity have gaps which result in compromised and unsustainable travel patterns limiting the region's economic development. Breakdowns in connectivity have exacerbated social isolation, unemployment and physical inactivity. Projected growth and a need to sustain and improve the quality of life require further investment in transport and connectivity.

Accommodating increased population in Greater South East Melbourne is one of the great infrastructure challenges requiring acknowledgement and investment by all levels of government. A strong and resilient transport system is a major facilitator of liveability, economic productivity and environmental sustainability.

Transport and connectivity in Greater South East Melbourne could be transformed by major projects and policy changes at state or federal level. Transport issues require multi-modal solutions delivered across all levels of government. The Australian Government regulates heavy vehicles and provides funds for key infrastructure, the Victorian Government manages and provides significant funding for arterial roads and public transport, and councils manage local road and path networks. They must all work together to provide a positive outcome.

The freight task in Greater South East Melbourne and its link to jobs, economic development and prosperity affects all of Victoria and Australia. An aligned approach is required to build on this regional strength.

The policy context relating to transport and connectivity in the region is broad and complex, while the desired outcomes that would transpire as a result of a city deal are straightforward:

- Outcome 1: The region's transport system is resilient and embraces the polycentric city model facilitating a self-sustaining region.
- Outcome 2: Investment in integrated transport delivers strong employment, social inclusion and physical activity..
- Outcome 3: Greater South East Melbourne is a nationally significant freight zone, supported by industry, technology, education and innovation delivering economic growth.
- Outcome 4: The region is connected to a global community through innovative use of technology solutions.

*A coordinated approach to transport in the region will bring benefits of national significance.*



**Outcome 1: The region's transport system is resilient and embraces the polycentric city model, facilitating a self-sustaining region**

A polycentric city model aims to achieve a balanced metropolitan system where population and jobs growth is distributed across regions to achieve better economic, social and environmental outcomes for large cities. A polycentric city model brings significant improvements to residents and businesses by decreasing commute and travel times, increasing productivity and access to jobs, education and other services.

The region forms one of Melbourne's three major growth corridors. It is less reliant on central Melbourne for jobs than areas in the west and north. Greater South East Melbourne has long been incorporated into Victorian policy as playing a key role in

supporting a polycentric city. The Monash NEIC, Dandenong NEIC, Frankston and Berwick Health and Education Precincts and Metropolitan Activity Centres in Dandenong, Frankston and Fountain Gate-Narre Warren provide opportunities for the provision of more jobs closer to where people live.

Over 40 per cent of working residents of Greater South East Melbourne leave their council area to seek work elsewhere. In fast growing Casey, only 28 per cent of residents work within the municipality.<sup>1</sup> By providing jobs and a range of skills and learning opportunities closer to where people live, and closer to affordable housing on the outskirts of the city, greater economic growth can be realised, and people's quality of life can improve. This also takes pressure off the need to continually upgrade expensive infrastructure such as rail and roads. Planning

for and investing in emerging technologies and the digital transformation provide new opportunities to improve transport and connections. This can enhance the sense of liveability in the region, as well as increasing income, education and reducing commuting and travel times and building stronger families and communities.

Creating more jobs within Greater South East Melbourne would provide employment opportunities for residents who are experiencing unemployment. The latest small area labour force data (June quarter 2019) showed that 36,000 people in the GSEM region were unemployed. Greater Dandenong (7.6 per cent), Casey (5.3 per cent), Frankston (5.3 per cent) and Cardinia (4.9 per cent) all had unemployment rates greater than Melbourne's average (4.7 per cent).<sup>2</sup>

Providing jobs and services locally reduces travel time for those using private vehicles and makes alternative modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport a realistic alternative. Just under three quarters (73 per cent) of trips to work by residents of Greater South East Melbourne are undertaken by car.<sup>3</sup> Reduced use of private vehicles provides opportunities to review existing land uses to unlock valuable land and improve liveability.

The high capacity transport system in the region is set up to cater for access to and from Melbourne CBD at the expense of access to local Activity Centres and Employment

1 ABS Census

2 Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business, Small Area Labour Markets, June Quarter 2019, released December 2019

3 ABS Census







Clusters. If the objectives of Plan Melbourne are to be met this needs to change with focussed investment on improving access to locally-based employment opportunities and services for residents. A multi-modal approach to the transport system, integrated effectively with supportive land-use policies and ready for future technology changes is required to realise this vision.

### **Outcome 2: Investment in integrated transport delivers strong employment, social inclusion and physical activity**

The population of Greater South East Melbourne is diverse – 62 per cent of the residents of Greater Dandenong and 52 per cent of Monash residents speak a language other than English at home.<sup>4</sup> The City of Casey is a rapidly growing municipality and will be home to 500,000 residents within the next 20 years. Just under a quarter (24.6 per cent) of the population of Mornington Peninsula is aged over 65, compared to the metropolitan average of 14 per cent. One in 20 residents of Greater South East Melbourne have a disability that requires assistance with core activities.<sup>5</sup>

The current transport preference across Greater South East Melbourne is the private car, making travel by other modes of transport a barrier for residents who are unable to access and/or afford a vehicle, or who are unable to drive. Public transport services, particularly buses, in many areas fail to meet changing community needs. The existing walking and cycling networks are incomplete, reducing the ability to safely consider active transport as effective alternatives. This has a particular impact on groups such as the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community, indigenous communities, disabled residents, children and the elderly.

Social isolation is created when individuals are unable to connect with the society around them.

<sup>4</sup> ABS Census

<sup>5</sup> ABS Census

The continued growth in population in the region provides an opportunity for greater community development. As an established welcoming and multicultural area, with affordable housing and job employment opportunities, the region should remain a desirable destination for people of all demographics. However, if the transport network does not adapt to cater for this wide range of people, then growth in the region will be accompanied by greater social isolation, unemployment and physical inactivity.

Addressing these challenges requires a change in thinking and approach about how and why transport is provided. Clear goals are required for the development of a well-connected public transport network (buses in particular) which is targeted at those less likely to drive including the young, old, CALD, low-income and Indigenous communities. Cycling and walking paths must be planned and constructed to provide complete routes.



**Outcome 3: Greater South East Melbourne is a nationally significant freight zone, supported by industry, technology, education and innovation to deliver economic growth**

GSEM Melbourne is a rapidly growing significant location for freight catering for:

- Domestic industrial products (incoming materials for rapidly growing local manufacturing and outgoing manufactured products sourced and supplied to/from Victoria and mainland inter-state).
- Containerised imports and exports via the Port of Melbourne (international and domestic to/from Tasmania).
- Retail market warehousing and distribution, within the region, Melbourne-wide and to regional areas.

There are almost 600,000 jobs in Greater South East Melbourne, with 130,000 of these within the Monash and Dandenong NEICs. The Dandenong NEIC has the second highest concentration of economic activity outside the Melbourne CBD. This, along with Monash NEIC, Braeside/Moorabbin and Frankston, emerging hubs in the Pakenham South Employment Precinct, and major activity centres such as Narre-Warren Fountain Gate are contributing to this growing demand for freight, as well as helping meet the freight task for a far broader area.

This does not guarantee the role of the region as a dynamic smart employment, manufacturing and innovation zone and as a nationally significant freight hub in future. The freight task in Australia is both growing and changing, and nationally the plan for the freight task must consider accommodating this growth as well as change.

The freight and logistics sector contribute \$21 billion to Victoria's economy and employs about 260,000 Victorians. Freight volumes in Victoria are predicted to increase from around 360 million tonnes in 2014 to nearly 900 million tonnes in 2051.<sup>6</sup> Short-term, growth in freight demand will be taken up by road-based modes. Direct, efficient access to the arterial network is vital.

Longer-term, higher capacity freight modes, such as rail and/or higher capacity road vehicles are anticipated, driven by a demand for both increased productivity, efficiency and environmental sustainability. Pro-active planning of infrastructure and systems to enable this is imperative. An integral aspect of a higher capacity freight system is inter-modal facilities such as "inland ports" where freight can change mode as required.

A GSEM City Deal would give recognition and consolidation to Greater South East Melbourne as a nationally significant freight zone. Investment from all levels of government will be required to achieve this.

As the freight task changes, Greater South East Melbourne is the prime location to adapt and realise the benefits of intermodal freight and modern freight technology.



6 Victorian Freight Plan



**Outcome 4: The region is connected to a global community through innovative use of technology solutions**

The onset of COVID-19 and social distancing restrictions have acutely highlighted the need for communities to remain connected, ensuring sustained economic viability, sharing and cooperation within communities, online learning and the health and wellbeing of individuals. Remaining at, and working from, home have placed a greater demand on the existing telecommunications network – particularly the National Broadband Network.

Businesses and government alike are rapidly moving to online platforms in order to continue being connected with individuals, while providing services and programs that meets the needs of their communities and customers. The region is home to world class technology and systems through essential services (eg water supply and monitoring) – through to cutting edge research delivered through the Australian Synchrotron.

With almost 90% of Australians accessing the internet through their mobile phones and daily data usage growing, demand for more responsive, accessible and adaptive digital business solutions continue to influence economic sustainability and social connections.

Network coverage and telecommunications infrastructure impacts on our daily liveability and productivity, it is increasingly central to the way we work, do business and learn. Like the road and rail network, congestion can lead to reduced productivity, poor education outcomes and social isolation.



As telecommunications becomes more central to our lives at home and work than it has ever been, proactive investment in world-class technology infrastructure and systems that respond to and pre-empt growth in demand is vital to ensuring digital resilience and versatility in how and when public and private sector do business.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has identified the top four reasons why Australians are accessing the internet – being banking (79.5%), social networking (79.9%), purchasing goods or services (72.6%), entertainment (80%), formal educational activities (31.7%) and health services (46.1%) (SOURCE ABS 2016-2017).

Demand on the internet for education and health purposes will have significantly increased with the advent of COVID-19.

To harness the productive potential of information and communications technologies and the digital economy, including through a conducive and regulatory environment and a commitment to make data publicly available wherever this is practical.





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