



## POLICY

### GROWING SUBURBS FUND

*Mitchell Shire Council is seeking a commitment from the State Government to continue to support the Growing Suburbs Fund to bridge the community infrastructure deficit that continues to exist in Interface Councils.*

#### CURRENT SITUATION

The Interface Councils are the collection of ten councils that surround Metropolitan Melbourne. The ten councils are home to more than 1.6 million residents<sup>1</sup> and this figure is predicted to grow another +765,000 persons from 2016 - 2031<sup>1</sup>.

With this accelerated growth comes a range of problems, including the inability to keep up with the basic provision of local infrastructure and services. Lack of infrastructure and services has led to longer commute times, sparse public transport services, overcrowded schools and limited access to community spaces and recreation facilities for residents. This reduces the liveability of these areas, affecting both physical and mental health, and in turn, increases the demand on other services, such as psychologists and general practitioners, which are already limited in Interface areas.

It is estimated that the cost of providing and/or upgrading key infrastructure and services to an adequate level in the Interface Councils from 2016-2031, will equate to over \$10.9 billion<sup>1</sup>. However, it is also estimated that the provision of this additional infrastructure and services will contribute to the delivery of approximately 33,000 additional jobs in the Interface from 2016-2031, and will mitigate some of the costs associated with current and future congestion<sup>1</sup>.

Mitchell Shire is one of the ten Interface Councils and has a current population of around 45,000<sup>2</sup>. It is also one of the fastest growing councils in Victoria<sup>3</sup> and in the next 25-30 years, our population is expected to grow to over 230,000<sup>4</sup>. As Mitchell Shire will accommodate such rapid population growth, the Growing Suburbs Fund will be vital in order to support Mitchell Shire to fund key infrastructure and services in a timely manner to ensure the liveability of the Shire is enhanced and maintained.

#### THE ASK

IN BUDGET

An investment of \$50 million (currently \$25 million) in 18/19 and a commitment to \$50 million per annum in forward estimates, with index increases based on the average growth rate across Interface areas.

#### THE BENEFITS

A \$50 million 18/19 allocation and commitment to \$50 million per annum going forward will ensure the Growing Suburbs Fund is able to bridge the community infrastructure deficit that continues to exist in the Interface Councils. Proper levels of investment in the Interface areas will contribute to significantly enhanced liveability, including economic development, and avoid long-term social problems and more extensive and expensive intervention in the future.

1. Essential Economics Pty Ltd (2017), One Melbourne or Two?, Implications of Population Growth for Infrastructure and Services in the Interface Areas.

2. Forecast.id.com.au. (2018). Population forecasts, Mitchell Shire, forecast.id [online] Available at: forecast.id.com.au/mitchell [Accessed 9 Jan. 2018].

3. Allan, G. and Allan, G. (2018). Australia's top 20 fastest growing areas, .id blog. [online] .id blog. Available at: blog.id.com.au/2017/population/population-trends/australias-top-20-fastest-growing-areas/ [Accessed 9 Jan. 2018].

4. Potential Development Sequencing Northern Growth Corridor. (2016). Final Version, PATCH design and plan, (calculated on new figure of 17 dwellings/ha).

**MORE INFORMATION.**  
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