

## **8.1. MM01: Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) – Election 2025 Priorities**

A Federal Election must be held by 17 May 2025.

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) has developed a framework and resources for a national advocacy campaign for local government in the lead up to this election. The “Put Our Communities First” campaign seeks to secure additional Federal funding to support every council to play a bigger role delivering local solutions to national priorities.

All Australian councils have been asked to participate in this campaign to ensure a coordinated approach to deliver the best possible outcomes.

The campaign advocates for new Federal funding to be distributed to all councils on a formula-basis, similar to the Commonwealth’s Roads to Recovery Program, or the previous Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program. This will ensure that every council and community benefits, and supports local decision-making based on local needs.

ALGA has developed free campaign resources that can be adapted and used by all councils to ensure a consistent and effective approach. Participating in a national advocacy campaign does not preclude this council from advocating on additional local needs and issues, but it will strengthen the national campaign and support all 537 Australian local governments.

The ALGA Board—comprised of representatives from each of Australia’s State and Territory local government associations— has identified five funding priorities that align with key national priorities.

These five funding priorities are:

- \$1.1 billion per year for enabling infrastructure to unlock housing supply;
- \$500 million per year for community infrastructure;
- \$600 million per year for safer local roads;
- \$900 million per year for increased local government emergency management capability and capacity; and
- \$400 million per year for climate change adaptation.

Research from Equity Economics found that 40% of councils have cut back on new infrastructure developments because of inadequate enabling infrastructure funding. This research also shows that achieving the National Housing Accord’s housing targets would incur an additional \$5.7 billion funding shortfall, on top of infrastructure funding gaps already being felt by councils and their communities.

A five year, \$1.1 billion per annum program would fund the infrastructure that is essential to new housing developments, and Australia reaching its housing targets.

ALGA's 2024 National State of the Assets report indicates that \$8.3 billion worth of local government buildings and \$2.9 billion worth of parks and recreation facilities are in poor condition and need attention.

Introduced in 2020, the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program supported all councils to build, maintain, and upgrade local facilities, with \$3.25 billion allocated on a formula basis. This program had a significant impact, driving an almost \$1 billion improvement in the condition of local government buildings and facilities. A \$500 million per year replacement fund would support all councils to build, upgrade, and revitalise the community infrastructure all Australians rely on.

Councils manage more than 75% of Australia's roads by length, and tragically more than half of all fatal road crashes in Australia occur on these roads. In 2023 the Australian Government announced that it would double the Roads to Recovery funding over the forward estimates, providing councils with an additional \$500 million per year. However, recent independent research by the Grattan Institute highlighted a \$1 billion local government road maintenance funding shortfall, meaning there is still a significant funding gap. Providing local government with \$600 million per year tied to road safety programs and infrastructure upgrades would support all councils to play a more effective role addressing Australia's unacceptable road toll.

Local governments are at the forefront of grappling with climate impacts as both asset managers and land use decision-makers. However, funding and support from other levels of government has failed to keep pace, placing an inequitable burden on councils and communities to fund this work locally.

A \$400 million per year local government climate adaptation fund would enable all councils to implement place-based approaches to adaptation, delivering local solutions to this national challenge.

Fires, floods, and cyclones currently cost Australia \$38 billion per year, and this is predicted to rise to \$73 billion by 2060. Australian councils play a key role preparing for, responding to, and recovering from natural disasters, but aren't effectively funded to carry out these duties.

The Government's \$200 million per year Disaster Ready Fund is significantly oversubscribed, especially considering the scale and cost of disaster mitigation projects.

Numerous national reviews – including the Colvin Review and Royal Commission into Natural Disaster Arrangements – have identified the need for a significant uplift in local government emergency management capability and capacity. A \$900 million per year fund would support all councils to better prepare their communities before natural disasters, and more effectively carry out the emergency management responsibilities that have been delegated to them.

**I therefore recommend:**

- 1. THAT** Council supports the national federal election funding priorities identified by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA); and
- 2. THAT** Council supports and participates in the Put Our Communities First federal election campaign; and

**3. THAT** Council write to the local federal member(s) of Parliament, all known election candidates in the federal electorate and the President of the Australian Local Government Association expressing support for ALGA's federal election funding priorities.

**COUNCILLOR ZOË BAKER  
MAYOR**