

# STATE ELECTION PLATFORM 2026



**SouthWest Victoria**  
ALLIANCE



The next phase of growth in south west Victoria depends on smart investment in infrastructure and people.

## Building the Foundations for a Stronger South West

### Overview

As south west Victoria looks to the 2026 Victorian State Election, the SouthWest Victoria Alliance (SWVA)'s goal for the region remains clear: laying the groundwork for growth and resilience.

SWVA's refreshed vision release in 2024 remains the foundation for the group's priorities and advocacy, focusing on jobs, housing, transport and liveability. The emphasis must be on investments needed to attract and retain people to the region, unlock economic potential and prepare for the future.

### Our Message

#### Laying the Groundwork for Growth and Resilience

Whether it's roads or childcare, aquatic centres or housing; SWVA's message is

consistent. The next phase of growth in south west Victoria depends on smart investment in infrastructure and people. These priorities are not just election talking points; they are the building blocks of a stronger regional future.

Building on the strength of the regions agricultural and tourism sectors, key targeted investments can fix and grow transport in the south west, develop new businesses and economic opportunities while creating communities that people want to move to and live in.

Now is the time to invest, to boost economic activity and to build back after drought to foster resilience into the future.

The asks from Victoria's south west align with priorities of the State – focusing on transport, jobs, and services, with an emphasis on growing the region's economy and supporting our people.

### Policy Platform

The Big Statewide Ask:  
A New \$1 Billion Regional  
Growth and Liveability Fund

SWVA calls for a **new statewide \$1 billion Regional Growth and Liveability Fund**, modelled on the former Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund and simplifying the number of grants programs administered.

The Fund would be split evenly:

**\$500 million**

for **Economic Development and Productivity Projects**

**\$500 million**

for **Community Infrastructure and Liveability Projects**

This long-term, flexible fund would give regional areas the certainty to plan and deliver transformative projects.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# CREATING JOBS AND SECURING RESILIENCE

South west Victoria's economy is evolving and with strategic investment, it can grow stronger, more diverse, and more resilient.

## Priorities

### Childcare and Early Years

Support the creation of a Childcare Centre of Excellence for **\$5 million** to provide a local pipeline of bachelor qualified early childhood educators.

Funding for kinder infrastructure upgrades to meet growing community needs.

### Local Industry Support and Job Creation

- Support place-based industry development, workforce attraction and training aligned with key local industries.
  - Investment in upgrades to Warrnambool Airport to bring commercial air services to the region.

- Tourism Accommodation investment to capitalise on the 12 Apostle Visitors Centre.

### Unlocking Housing and Industrial Land

- Reform of the Windfall Gains Tax and regional developer contributions to better support regional development.
- A small town sewage program.
- Funding streams to help councils and developers deliver essential services (roads, sewerage, etc.) and unlock development-ready land.
  - Wollaston Road infrastructure
  - Harrington Road housing infrastructure
  - Camperdown Production Precinct – trunk infrastructure investment



*Enabling women to re-enter the workforce is integral to strengthening our local economy. Provision of childcare is key to this.*

## COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND LIVEABILITY

# MAKING THE REGION A PLACE TO STAY AND THRIVE

Current stagnant population growth and workforce shortages being faced by the region, making the region more liveable is not just a community priority – it's an economic one.

## Priorities

### Health and Wellbeing

- Support for the *Lookout Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centre*, addressing critical health and recovery needs in the region.

### Upgrading key community facilities

- Briery Wellbeing and Recreation Hub (Warrnambool City)
- Portland Multipurpose Recreation and Community Facility (Glenelg Shire)
- Camperdown Theatre (Corangamite Shire)
- Library and Community Hub (Southern Grampians)



*London Bridge natural arch along the Great Ocean Road.*

### Tourism Investment

- Investment in the Hamilton Gallery as a cultural tourism drawcard.
- A dedicated Visit Victoria campaign to promote south west Victoria's natural and cultural assets and capitalising on the 12 Apostles opening.
- Budj Bim / Tae Rak Masterplan Implementation and Infrastructure Delivery.

# CONNECTING COMMUNITIES AND BUSINESSES

Transport is the backbone of regional economies, and for south west Victoria, sustained economic growth hinges on better connections, both within the region and to the rest of the state.

## Priorities

### Better Train Services

The south west needs more frequent, reliable and higher capacity train services to and from the area. Longer trains running on improved timetables will connect communities with jobs, education and services.

- Increased capacity on the Warrnambool line as passengers are standing Camperdown to Melbourne.



### Highway/Arterial Road Upgrades

Duplication, passing lanes, widening and bridge improvements.

- Henty Hwy and Princes Hwy
  - Heywood to Portland
  - Mount Gambier to Portland
- Princes Highway West
  - Heywood and Portland intersection
  - Area around Heathmere/Bolwarra is in dire condition.
  - Heywood to Dartmoor
- Princes Highway widening and passing lanes as per the Princes Highway West Strategy, Dairy and Grain Supply Strategies
- Princes Highway – Allansford Intersection and Speed improvements
- Widening of 1.5kms of Glenelg Highway commencing at Coleraine racecourse heading east.
- Upgrade and widening of Coleraine Edenhope Road from its intersection with Glenelg Highway for 2kms.

### Highway/Arterial Road Maintenance

Investment in major highway maintenance across the region to ensure freight and passenger safety and efficiency.

- Princes Highway West
  - Warrnambool to Panmure
  - Warrnambool to Port Fairy
- Glenelg Highway
  - within Glenelg to Casterton
  - between Glenthompson and Coleraine
- Henty Highway
  - Hamilton to Heywood
  - South of Hamilton
- Hamilton Highway
  - between Penshurst and Hamilton
- Hopkins Hwy
  - between Mortlake and Warrnambool
- Casterton-Portland Road
- Woolsthorpe – Heywood Rd (Bessibelle)
- Cobden Warrnambool Road



# Priorities

## Local Roads Fund

A dedicated fund to support councils to maintain and upgrade smaller roads vital to local industries and communities.

### Warrnambool City Council

- Allansford intersection treatment
- Clarke Street Allansford
- Pertobe Road improvements
- Wangoom Road – the section between Mortlake Road and Aberline Road
- Dalton's Road Bridge

### Southern Grampians Shire

- Petschels Lane and South Boundary Road, Hamilton
- Coleriane-Cavendish Road
- Nareen Rd, Nareen
- Cavendish-Glendingning Rd, Cavendish

### Glenelg Shire

- Darts Road and Cashmore Road, Portland.
- Vaughans Road, Breakaway Creek. Access into Tae Rak and Budj Bim UNESCO World Heritage site.

- Casterton-Dartmoor Road, Glenelg Highway and Chaffey's Lane intersection.
- Range Road, Wanwin Road, Wirey Swamp Road and Doughboys Road.

### Corangamite Shire

- Cobden-Port Campbell Road
- Cobden-Warrnambool Road

## SUMMARY

# BUILDING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

By investing in \$1 billion for regional growth and liveability, alongside a dedicated transport investment package, the State Government can:

Drive economic productivity and innovation



Support resilient, liveable communities



Attract and retain a skilled regional workforce



Lay the foundations for a stronger, more resilient south west Victoria



The Port of Portland