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Victoria's success depends on faster, stronger investment in Melbourne's booming West

Melbourne's West urgently needs improved transport connections, more local jobs and greater access to tertiary education and childcare as the population boom continues at pace in Australia's fastest growing metropolitan area.

Melbourne's western suburbs (City of Maribyrnong, City of Brimbank, City of Wyndham, City of Melton and City of Hobson's Bay) are now home to almost one million people, with an estimated population of 1.8 million by 2050.

WoMEDA (the West of Melbourne Economic Development Alliance) has released its **Immediate Priorities** paper this week ahead of the Victorian state election, urging government and the private sector to speed up investment and infrastructure delivery, especially transport connections. At present, nearly half the workforce must commute out of the West to access their workplace.

"We applaud the critical investments in the inner West that have been made to relieve pressure in the transport system, including the Metro Tunnel and the Westgate Tunnel. However, further major investment in rail and bus connections must continue, especially in the outer West, where road congestion is reaching an unsustainable level," said **WoMEDA Chair, Professor Peter Dawkins**.

"This booming population will become the foundation of Victoria's future economic strength if we can lock in the next stage of critical infrastructure. For major industries currently expanding across the West, it would spur productivity and employment growth and connect our communities to local jobs and services," said **WoMEDA Executive Director Giulia Baggio**.

Immediate measures include expediting construction of the Melbourne Airport Rail Link, electrification of the Melton train line, reallocation of V/Line trains to boost services on the Wyndham Vale line and a redesigned bus network with significantly more services.

Additional priorities include:

- **Creating more local jobs** by developing major employment precincts that attract private investment, support industry growth and create employment closer to where people live (Footscray, Werribee East, Sunshine & Cobblebank)
- **Expanding tertiary education in the outer west**, including doubling TAFE training places in Wyndham through Victoria University and The Gordon to meet enormous industry demand for skills and vocational training

- **Developing a West of Melbourne housing strategy** to support the construction of 10,000 homes each year until 2036 to meet population growth, mainly in Wyndham and Melton
- **Significantly increasing childcare services** in the outer West to address the 'childcare desert' and support workforce participation.

To read WoMEDA's ***Immediate Priorities for the West of Melbourne***, visit womeda.com.au

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About WoMEDA

WoMEDA is an alliance of significant public and private organisations established in 2015 across the West of Melbourne to help drive long-term prosperity for communities in the West, supporting a booming population to create a booming economy.

In consultation with state and federal governments, businesses and community leaders, WoMEDA undertakes economic research and strategic discussion on priority initiatives that will grow our industries, attract public and private investment, create more local jobs and supercharge Victoria's economy.

WoMEDA acknowledges the Wurundjeri, Bunurong and Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the lands West of Melbourne on which we live and work.

