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Call for State political parties to improve liveability

Local government is calling on political parties to commit to actions that will improve liveability for all Victorians in the lead up to November's state election.

Cr Mary Lalios, President of the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) said councils had identified solutions to address growing challenges such as congestion, homelessness and population growth.

"We want to help the State achieve better connected communities. This requires a long-term plan to guide delivery of more reliable and connected transport options in response to growing traffic congestion."

Cr Lalios said local government also played a key role in the sustainability of our built environment, and facilitated planning solutions to provide more affordable housing options and expand renewable energy.

"We call on the government to support councils with State level policies and resources to help balance a range of competing tensions faced by local communities," Cr Lalios explained.

Strathbogie Shire Mayor Amanda McClaren said Strathbogie, like other small rural shires, face challenges to deliver acceptable levels of service to residents while remaining financially sustainable, despite significantly reducing operating expenditure over the last five years through efficiency initiatives.

"The recent three year freeze on indexation of Financial Assistance Grants, the termination of the Country Roads and Bridges Program in 2015 and the introduction of the Fair Go Rates Policy has placed revenue pressure on the Strathbogie Shire," Cr McClaren said.

Cr McClaren said Strathbogie has introduced an innovative approach to attracting new residents, by introducing a two year rates exemption for first home buyers who purchase in the shire.

"House prices in the Strathbogie Shire are very affordable; we have a great climate and vibrant communities."

"We want to attract new residents to grow the shire, but we need greater funding to support this growth to ensure the liveability of regional Victoria now and into the future," Mayor McClaren said.

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