

LeadWest News

FROM THE CHAIR



LEADWEST LAUNCHES ADVOCACY PRIORITIES AHEAD OF THE 2025 FEDERAL ELECTION

In January, LeadWest officially launched its Federal Election Advocacy Priorities with a theme of “Invest in Melbourne’s West”.

LeadWest Chair Cr Dr Phillip Zada said the benefits of infrastructure investment went beyond just the building of new facilities.

Investment is vital to supporting sustainable growth, easing the cost-of-living pressures, and breaking the cycle of high unemployment, traffic congestion and poor public transport options in Melbourne’s west.

The upcoming Federal Election offers an important opportunity to redress funding imbalance.

CANBERRA VISIT A SUCCESS!

In February, LeadWest met with federal parliament MPs including the Hon Catherine King Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development & Local Government; Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs the Hon Tim Watts; Senator Steph Hodgins-May from the Australian Greens; Dr Daniel Mulino, Member for Fraser, Sam Rae, Member for Hawke, and Peter Khalil Member for Wills. The delegation also met with senior advisers from the office of the Opposition Leader Mr. Peter Dutton as well as the office of the Hon Kristy McBain, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories.

The visit to Canberra provided a great opportunity to discuss unlocking investment to provide real benefits for Melbourne’s west.

ADVOCACY WIN

\$1.1 BILLION TO FIX THE WESTERN HWY

LeadWest has enthusiastically welcomed a game-changing announcement from the Hon Catherine King, Minister for Infrastructure Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, committing \$1.1 billion to fix the Western Highway.

The Western Highway is an aged and rural-standard highway. It is a critical national road link and is the second largest freight carrier of any national highway, carrying more than 5,400 trucks and around 86,000 vehicles on the stretch of highway between Melton and Caroline Springs daily.

LeadWest pushed hard for the upgrade whilst in Canberra and see this as a huge win. The Western Highway was also the site where LeadWest launched its Federal Election Advocacy Priorities campaign.

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

MELBOURNE AIRPORT RAIL RECEIVES \$2 BILLION BOOST!

A new era of transport connectivity is on its way.

LeadWest is delighted that the 6 March Melton Hwy announcement came hot on the heels of the previous week's announcement by the Albanese Government for an additional \$2 billion funding towards transforming Sunshine Station as part of the Melbourne Airport Rail project (MAR).

The Prime Minister also announced that the Victorian Government will bring forward its Melbourne Airport Rail funding to enable the works at Sunshine Station to begin earlier and transform it into a hub for regional rail services connecting to Melbourne Airport.

Bringing forward the works at Sunshine Station will also support plans for the electrification of the Wyndham and Melton lines.

ADVOCACY WINS

LEADWEST WELCOMES BILLIONS IN INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

The recent wave of infrastructure funding is hugely exciting. In addition to 15 new school bus specials for Wyndham and Melton we have welcomed:

- ✓ \$2 billion for Melbourne Airport Rail
- ✓ \$300 million for the Melton Line electrification
- ✓ \$15 million towards the Plumpton Aquatic Centre
- ✓ \$5 million for Footscray's Creative West arts and cultural hub
- ✓ \$1.1 billion upgrade to the Western Highway

This ticks off five of our key federal advocacy asks. We look forward to seeing these projects come to fruition.

ADVOCACY

STILL MORE TO DO

While the recent funding announcements goes a long way to improving connectivity and infrastructure throughout the west, LeadWest continues to advocate for the country's fastest growing region to ensure the delivery of:

- Fixing the Calder Freeway
- Western Intermodal Freight Terminal
- Electrification of the Wyndham line
- Increased green spaces and shade across the west
- The Western Aquatic and Early Years Centre in Hobsons Bay
- The environmental wetlands centre in Altona's internationally recognised RAMSAR wetlands
- Addressing Homelessness - Melbourne's west is one of Australia's homelessness hotspots
- Regional Walk and Cycle Connectivity Plan
- West Link Stage 2 connecting two of the fastest growing suburbs in Wyndham
- Full implementation of the Sunshine Station Masterplan

Pic: Launch of the 2025 Federal Election Advocacy Priorities - Cr Susan Yengi, Cr Dr Phillip Zada, Cr Katharine Nikolic



Pic: LW Canberra Delegation meet Minister Catherine King and Dr Daniel Mulino MP



ADVOCACY CONTINUES

**LEADWEST AT
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
VICTORIA**

LeadWest Chair, Deputy Chair and Executive Officer spent the day at Parliament House Victoria on 4 March

They met with the Hon Natalie Hutchins, Minister for Government Services, Minister for Treaty and First Peoples, Minister for Prevention of Family Violence, Minister for Women, Steve McGhie Member for Melton, Luba Grigorovitch, Member for Kororoit, David Ettershank, Member for Western Metropolitan, Moira Deeming Member for Western Metropolitan and the Chief of Staff from the office of the Opposition Leader Brad Battin.

Discussion items included:

- Electrification of the Wyndham and Melton Lines
- Fixing the Calder
- Timely delivery of the MAR
- Housing and homelessness
- Better buses
- Western highway upgrade

Pic: LW Canberra Delegation meet Senator for Victoria Steph Hodgins-May (Australian Greens)

**STILL PUSHING FOR A
BETTER BUS NETWORK**

LeadWest continues to campaign for better bus services in Melbourne's west and has been calling for a major overhaul of the state's bus network urging State Government to prioritise Melbourne's west.

Over the last 12 months LeadWest has met with many MPs and State Government Ministers to share concerns about the need for improved transport services as a high priority for people living in the west.

LeadWest has welcomed the Allan Government's announcement of an additional 15 new school bus specials in the fast-growing growth areas in Melbourne's west.

LeadWest believes an improved bus network across the west is critical to improving accessibility to education and services, not just for students, but for all residents in the growth areas.

We will continue our advocacy to ensure that more is achieved for the whole of Melbourne's west.

**ADVOCACY OFFICERS'
ADVISORY GROUP**

PLANNING ADVOCACY PRIORITIES
AHEAD OF THE 2026 STATE ELECTION

The Committee has established an advocacy officers' advisory group which consists of advocacy officers from each of the member councils.

The group not only assists by providing regional knowledge but are also experts in issues impacting the member councils they represent.

The group meets every 6-8 weeks and their role includes making recommendations to the Committee about the determination and driving of strategic regional priorities; recommend actions on advocacy approaches and campaigns, draft position statements and contribute to the Strategic Plan and progress reports.

Pic: Chair and Deputy meet with State MPs: Steve McGhie Member for Melton, Minister Natalie Hutchins, Member for Sydenham and Luba Grigorovitch, Member for Kororoit



WORKING TOGETHER

COMMITTEE WORKSHOPS BETTER WAYS OF WORKING TOGETHER

In March the Committee came together for a facilitated workshop to look at our roles and expectations, find better ways to work together, define our values and identify what success looks like.

The Committee agreed we need to work together in the following ways

- **Respect** - Listen actively, be open to feedback, and engage in honest, respectful dialogue.
- **Collaboration** - Share ideas and work together with a shared vision and message.
- **Professionalism** - Demonstrate trust and consistency in all interactions.
- **Enthusiasm** - Foster a positive, enthusiastic environment, always assuming good intent.
- **Preparation** - Be well-prepared, take ownership of issues with solutions, and have courageous discussions.

WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

WE VALUE

- ✓ Mutual respect
- ✓ Professionalism
- ✓ Trust
- ✓ Positivity
- ✓ Enthusiasm
- ✓ Creating a safe & welcoming environment
- ✓ Support
- ✓ Always assuming good intent
- ✓ Consistency
- ✓ Courage
- ✓ Identify issues *and* solutions
- ✓ Active participation
- ✓ Shared vision and message
- ✓ Open, honest and respectful communication
- ✓ Listening
- ✓ Being prepared
- ✓ Sharing ideas and information
- ✓ Letting everyone have an equal voice

WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

SUCCESS

As a committee we agreed success is:

- Being unified with clear priorities and strong relationships between Councils and LeadWest
- Focussing on achieving outcomes including investment, policy and advocacy
- Enhanced value and recognition of LeadWest and improved community outcomes in the short, medium and long term

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

LEADWEST BRAND STRONG

We are encouraged by recent feedback from both Federal and State MPs that we come to meetings well prepared and with clear and convincing supporting documents. This helps in delivering strong advocacy asks to government and winning great outcomes for the west!

Feedback from stakeholders, government MPs and especially from Ministers is that our brand is strong and well respected, and the importance of the strategic alliance is highly valued.



Pic: LW Canberra Delegation: Lucas Gosling, Roslyn Wai, Cr Dr Phillip Zada, Cr Katharine Nikolic, Hillary Hastings, Fiona Blair, Cr Suan Yengi

OUR PEOPLE



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LeadWest respectfully acknowledges and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first peoples and Traditional Custodians of the land and waterways on which we live. We honour and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

LEADWEST JOINT DELEGATED COMMITTEE

Brimbank

Cr Katharine Nikolic (Deputy Chair)

CEO Fiona Blair

Hobsons Bay

Cr Diana Grima

Acting CEO Kerry Thompson

Maribyrnong

Cr Susan Yengi

CEO Celia Haddock

Melton

Cr Dr Phillip Zada (Chair)

CEO Roslyn Wai

Wyndham

Cr Peter Maynard

CEO Stephen Wall

LeadWest Executive Officer

Hillary Hastings

LEADWEST CANBERRA DELEGATION

Brimbank

Cr Katharine Nikolic (Deputy Chair)

CEO Fiona Blair

Maribyrnong

Cr Susan Yengi

Lucas Gosling (Director)

Melton

Cr Dr Phillip Zada (Chair)

CEO Roslyn Wai

LeadWest

Hillary Hastings (Executive Officer)

ADVOCACY OFFICERS ADVISORY GROUP

Brimbank

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David Bonnici

Melton

Pauline Hobbs

Gillian Cooper

Wyndham

Chris Brayne

Jonathon Elias