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| **THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT** |
| Victoria’s 79 councils provide for the peace, order and good government of their municipal area, deliver services and facilities for their community, and manage the resources of the district. Local government must operate in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* and has responsibility for implementing diverse programs, policies and regulations set by State and Federal Governments. As councils have to respond to local community needs, they also have powers to set their own regulations and by-laws, and to provide a range of discretionary services. Local laws developed by councils deal with important community safety, peace and order issues such as public health, management of council property, environment and amenity. Local laws often apply to noise, fire hazards, abandoned vehicles, parking permits, disabled parking, furniture on footpaths, graffiti, burning off, animals in public spaces and nuisance pets. |  |  |
| Victorian councils are responsible for $91.2 billion of infrastructure including roads, bridges, town halls, recreation and leisure facilities, drains, libraries and parks. They also provide over 100 services for local communities from the cradle to the grave. Every time a person leaves their house they are using services provided by local councils. |

**SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Each Victorian municipality is different – its community may be young or old, established or still developing, rural or urban, and its population may vary from fewer than 2,900 people to more than 313,500. Each council collects rates from property owners in its municipality to help fund its local community infrastructure and service obligations. Rural council budgets average $69 million, while metropolitan council budgets average $201 million.

**Road assets**: local roads, drains, bridges, foot and bike paths, public street lighting, litter bins, school crossings, bus shelters, parking spaces.
**Community assets**: libraries, internet services, sporting facilities, community halls, parks and gardens, swimming pools, playgrounds, animal shelters, public toilets, public art, cemeteries. **Community services**: public tips, removal of dumped rubbish, youth and family counselling, childcare programs, playgroup, preschools and kindergartens, school holiday programs, immunisations, food safety inspections, planning advice and approvals, street cleaning.
**In-home services**: Family day care, parenting and baby health advice by maternal and child health nurses, multilingual telephone services, recycling and hard waste collections, home maintenance, delivered meals, gardening services and respite care.

Fact Sheet Creating better communities

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| **General Public Services** |
| Emergency prevention and protection | Community disaster/ emergency plans |
| Animal management and control | Animal shelters, pet registration |
| Tourism | Visitor Information Centres, marketing plans |
| Commerce and industry | Local industry networks, incentive programs |
| Community information | Community directory, websites/ online services, counselling and support groups |
| **Health and Welfare Services** |
| Aged care programs | Meals on wheels, home care, home maintenance |
| Maternal and child health services | Health checks, nutrition and parenting advice |
| Family and children’s services | School immunisations, childcare, playgroups, youth services, school holiday programs, aerosol art program |
| Disability services | Wheelchair access, respite care, personal care |
| Cultural development | Festivals, public art, theatre productions, art galleries |
| Public libraries | Book loans, free internet access, reading sessions |
| Leisure and recreation services | Swimming pools, sports ovals, club facilities |
| Housing | Housing diversity through planning schemes |
| Public health services | Food safety inspections, public toilets, tobacco enforcement, pandemic planning |
| Employment | Community jobs program, traineeships |
| Migrant and indigenous services | Language aides, multilingual phone lines |
| **Land Use Planning** |
| Statutory planning | Land use regulation, planning application assessment, zone and overlay controls |
| Strategic planning | Neighbourhood character, heritage overlays |
| Planning system reform | Pre-lodgement certification |
| Built form sustainability | Energy efficient housing, sitting and design guidelines |
| Rural land use management | Agricultural production, economic development strategy |
| Forestry | Forest regulation enforcement, supervise timber harvest |
| Native title, Indigenous cultural heritage | Recognition of traditional land owners |
| **Environment** |
| Waste management | Kerbside recycling, landfills, compost bins, hard waste |
| Catchment management | Tree planting, protection of water catchments |
| Stormwater management  | Litter traps, flood and litter management |
| Native vegetation management | Conversation of native vegetation, tree clearance permits |
| Salinity and water quality | Reticulated sewerage, drainage, water re-use programs |
| Weed management | Weed/pest control for roadside reserves, weed officers |
| Sustainability | Solar heating for buildings and pools, walking tracks |
| **Infrastructure and Assets** |
| Asset maintenance and development | Town halls, buildings |
| Road and footpath construction and maintenance | Roads, roundabouts, bridges, nature strips, bike paths |
| Traffic and parking management | Traffic and parking signs, street cleaning, speed humps |
| Public space maintenance | Parks and gardens, street lighting, cemeteries |
| Leisure facilities | Recreation and community centres |