**Survey finds kinder building blocks aren’t in place**

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A house of cards. That’s what this year’s kinder reforms are built on as new data reveals just how much investment in infrastructure is needed to successfully implement the State Government’s overhauled program.

As election promises start to roll in, the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) has found that more than 70 percent of kinder buildings are more than 40 years old and upwards of $750,000,000 needs to be spend just to meet with current demands.

Having surveyed its member councils on early years infrastructure, the MAV also found the annual maintenance cost to councils on this aging fleet of buildings is north of $28m and 308 buildings will need to be renovated or replaced in order to implement the reform.

MAV President Cr David Clark said these were important reforms and councils want to ensure they can be achieved.

“Councils support the kinder reforms and their important role in giving our kids the best possible start in life, which is why we want to see them successfully implemented,” Cr Clark said.

“The reforms as they currently stand are built on a house of cards. They do not address the significant kinder infrastructure gap and the investment required to set up the sector for success.”

“The result of this survey highlights that 70 percent of council-owned early years infrastructure is more than 40 years old. Council expenditure on maintenance is estimated to be in the vicinity of $30m with generous lease arrangements. The age of these buildings only increases maintenance costs, especially in the current inflationary environment.”

Cr Clark highlighted the need for further investment from the State Government to bridge the infrastructure gap.

“Councils don’t have a resource to invest in this infrastructure and can’t be expected to replace and build almost 200 buildings needed for the current reform. Without significantly increased funding from the state government these reforms are simply unfeasible,” Cr Clark explained.