



vpa
Victorian Planning Authority

Victorian Planning Authority **Strategic Plan**

2021-2024



Aboriginal Acknowledgment

The **Victorian Planning Authority** proudly acknowledges Victoria’s Aboriginal community and their rich culture and pays respect to their Elders past and present.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia’s first peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life and how this enriches us.

We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards the equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice.

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Foreword



Message from the VPA Board Chair

The VPA is planning for urban growth at a time when Victorians value the important places in their lives more than ever.

When facing uncertainty, organisations can inch forward tentatively or they can be bold and ambitious. In this uncertain time, the VPA is choosing boldness and ambition.

This strategic plan sets a course to meet the expectations of the communities we serve. We understand the Victorian community expects its government to drive jobs growth and investment, with land developments that support new and thriving workplaces and communities.

We have the experience and the capacity to meet these expectations, through driving the development of high-quality and achievable land use plans for areas of state and regional significance. This will drive certainty about both investments and quality-of-life – supporting Victorian communities in finding their own paths forward.

Our stakeholders have told us that we are well-trusted plan makers who understand how to deliver, and they want us to move to the next level in our impact, capability and efficiency. This is what we are committed to do.

The VPA values its partnership with the community, local government, Victorian Government agencies and industry, and we are proud to share this strategic plan – our road map for getting things done together.

Jude Munro AO



Message from the VPA CEO

The VPA is Victoria's specialist agency for urban growth planning. We map government policy into place, planning for new and renewing communities in designated urban growth areas across Victoria.

We are a trusted problem solver and an expert advisor. We work closely with DELWP’s Planning Group, Victorian Government agencies, local government, the development industry and the community to deliver land use plans that get built. Our on-ground expertise also enables us to bring delivery insight to the policy table, helping government shape urban growth across the State.

In all these roles, we must be an organisation that embodies excellence. That means being a talent builder, growing our skill set to drive the creation of exceptional places. We must also be an agile innovator; an organisation that responds to challenges with both precision and flexibility.

This especially so now – the uncertainties of a post-pandemic world have sharpened our focus. What we do well today, we must do even better tomorrow.

For this reason, our strategy embraces all of our roles – to press us boldly forward. This includes bringing leadership to our partnership roles where our expertise is vital to getting things built. Our strategy also embraces ambition – setting a path that will see the VPA maximise our impact to deliver greater and greater value to our Ministers, our communities and the economy of the state.

Stuart Moseley

We are VPA

The space we're in

We are the Victorian Government's lead urban growth planning agency. We have the agility and skill to unlock urban growth in areas of state and regional significance. We're here to make an impact – planning great communities and delivering plans, for all Victorians.

We have a track record of delivering in complex situations, navigating the system to deliver at speed. We facilitate investment and development to support Victoria's economic future.

We bring people and organisations together to get plans made and built. We're accessible, responsive and transparent, and we nurture trusted relationships with our stakeholders.

We have a unique leadership position in the planning and development system – a specialist government entity using expert advice to make land development-ready.

We don't just deliver plans, we deliver plans that get built – delivering outstanding social, environmental and economic outcomes for growing urban communities across the state.

“ We deliver
urban growth plans
that get built ”

The difference we bring

We deliver expert, evidence-led urban growth planning solutions throughout the state.

We have a clear and defined role: delivering zoned urban land for jobs and housing in designated areas across Victoria – greenfields, renewal, regional – and advising on infrastructure coordination and post-plan delivery.

We're an open door and a trusted entity for the community, government and the development industry. We lead whole-of-government solutions and work collaboratively with councils and landowners.

Our people bring a professional and outcome-oriented attitude to delivering the state's complex urban development objectives. We're focused on action, solutions and on getting traction by working alongside our trusted partners. We leverage calculated risks to innovate and deliver.

We are well-practiced plan-makers, we understand the state's urban system and our stakeholders have confidence in our capability to deliver.

The VPA prepared the Black Forest Road PSP in Werribee, which is now home to quality parks, diverse and affordable housing and a new community for Victoria.



Our economic value at a glance

Our strategic **land use plans** are an important foundation to the **\$56b** **development and construction industry** which accounts for **more than 10%** of Victoria's gross state product *

From **2017 to 2021** we have prepared **contributions plans** to fund around **\$1.9billion** worth of **community and development infrastructure** **

In **2019 & 2020** we completed a total of **36** **planning projects** across Victoria

Our **Streamlining for Growth Program** has delivered:

- **\$170m to \$210m** in time savings; **
- **119 years** of time saved in land development delivery;
- and
- **8:1 benefit-cost** ratio between 2016 and 2019

We are **partnering** with **35** **councils** to deliver our **planning projects**

Between **2016 & 2020** our **planning projects** delivered zoned land for about **338k & 236k** **dwelling jobs** across Victoria

Between **2010 & 2021** **gazetted PSPs** have unlocked about **\$2billion** in GAIC

As at June 2021 **11** **projects** underway & **7** with board sign-off on the **Fast Track program** as part of the government's response to the **COVID-19 crisis**.
On the way to unlocking \$17 billion in estimated economic value.

Selendra Rise development in the Cranbourne East PSP.



Our values

Everything we do is guided by the Victorian Public Sector values. The table below shows how we apply these, and our own unique values, in our working lives. We demonstrate our values externally when we're serving and interacting with the community and stakeholders. We also demonstrate our values internally: they inform our operations and the way we treat one another.

Value	What this means to us	The behaviours we demonstrate
 Partnership	We bring people and organisations together	We collaborate, share information, engage with our stakeholders and value their expertise to achieve better outcomes.
 Leadership	We are purpose driven and deliver innovative solutions	We lean in, apply best practice, and bring out the best in our people to get things done and make a positive difference.
 Professionalism	We inspire trust and confidence	We step in, act with honesty and integrity, are accountable and respected for our expertise and evidenced based advice.
 Responsiveness	We are adaptable and outcomes focused	We are accessible, and strive to provide a high level of service at all times.
 Inclusion	We value everyone equally	We recognise difference, celebrate diversity and consider all points of view for a fairer, socially responsible and respectful workplace and society.

Our values in action

Our values in action:
Partnership – We help our partners build their capability

Through the government's Streamlining for Growth Program, we funded the Growth Areas Health Check. We partnered with Melbourne's seven growth area councils to identify and address capacity constraints in the local council permit approval process. The Health Check resulted in an implementation plan for each council, building their capacity to assess applications, leading to quicker development approvals.

Our values in action:
Leadership – Developing our people is the key to our success

A number of our leaders have participated in the Juno Adaptive Leaders Program, a collaborative mentor program supporting disadvantaged community members. Participants have gained immensely in their practical leadership and communication skills. Mentees have benefited from being coached by our staff.

Our values in action:
Professionalism – We are experts in delivering urban growth solutions

Many regional councils are trusting us to address their land supply challenges. We are planning authority for important urban growth projects in our growing regional cities and towns, preparing growth frameworks and subsequent PSPs and plans for urban renewal. We are delivering urban growth solutions and imparting our expertise to regional councils.

Our values in action:
Responsiveness – We pivot to face new challenges quickly

As part of the Victorian Government's response to the COVID-19 crisis we are delivering our Fast Track program. This program is accelerating 18 pre-existing projects to unlock approximately \$17 billion in estimated economic value, around 86,000 homes and 95,000 jobs across Victoria.

Our values in action:
Inclusion – We continue to build a diverse workforce

Our People & Culture Strategy 2021-24 is our new road map to continue to build a diverse workforce where people feel like they truly belong, are included and equal amongst their peers. Our strategy will include the delivery of an inclusion, diversity, belonging and equity plan, a reconciliation action plan and a gender equality action plan.

“By **applying our values** to our thinking and our behaviour, we **invite open collaboration** with our partners – they know we are **fair and reliable**”

Our drivers for change

There has been incredible change across Victoria.

Demographic shifts in our cities and towns, an uncertain economic environment and digital and technological acceleration are driving change across the state.

Despite the uncertain implications of change, there is sustained demand for well-planned urban growth.

Victoria's Big Build and infrastructure investments require seamless coordination across government portfolios. Changing community needs and preferences will impact how we manage urban change and develop Melbourne and our key regional cities and towns.

There has never been a greater need for the expertise of the VPA in delivering plans that work – supporting our state's economic recovery, standard of living, sustainability and liveability.

We have seen extraordinary agility at the VPA. There is an opportunity to embrace new and flexible ways of working, better tap into the skills and expertise of our people and strengthen the VPA's impact and the benefits we deliver for the future of the state.

Together, these drivers for change — across urban Victoria, within the planning system and the VPA — influence the strategic choices we make for our organisation and for Victorian communities.

Incredible change across Victoria

It's likely the current global and local economic conditions - and changes in community values and preferences - will have lasting, albeit uncertain, post-pandemic impacts across Victoria.

The state's planning system and the VPA will have a key role in Victoria's socio-economic recovery. Climate change remains a critical focus across the globe, with sustainability innovation evolving at speed.

Victoria's population growth was **0%** in the 12 months to December 2020

The demographic profiles of cities, towns and places in Victoria are evolving.

An ageing population and changed patterns of population growth are shifting the social make-up, outlook and expectations for place-making across the state. At the same time, travel, work and leisure behaviours are disrupted and yet to settle into new patterns.

Net overseas migration to Victoria was down **19,000** in the 12 months to December 2020

Digital and technological acceleration and user proficiency has created challenges and opportunities for Victorian communities and businesses.

Businesses are engaging with space differently and using new ways to offer services and new ways to distribute and provide goods. Workplaces are becoming more dispersed and diverse.

In April 2021 **30%** of businesses had staff teleworking with **45%** experiencing improved staff wellbeing as a benefit

The changing face of urban Victoria

We have seen a shift in the community's values, needs and preferences for how and where they choose to live and work.

New lifestyles and location decisions will impact on where and how Victoria plans and builds liveable new communities, manages urban change and develops regional Victoria, while locking in access to services and amenity.

Regional Victoria house prices rose **12.9%** in the seven months to April 2021

Demand for greenfield land in Melbourne, regional cities and peri-urban settings continues to grow. At the same time, the need for diversity and well-designed density in established Melbourne and beyond has never been greater. And the Melbourne CBD will be recovering economically for some time.

Greenfield activity doubled with over 20,000 lots sold to March 2020 compared to 8,600 in 2019

There is a need to ensure the places we plan for are prosperous, liveable and sustainable - supporting local jobs, housing affordability and environmental outcomes like integrated water management.

Victoria's significant infrastructure spend is reshaping our cities and regions. This will directly impact the complex and fast-paced planning landscape and our role in it, leveraging lasting urban value from this infrastructure investment.

In 2019 the Victorian Government announced investment for more than **\$100 billion** in infrastructure for roads, rail, schools, hospitals & social housing

Roles for coordinating, integrating and advising on how infrastructure and land development align will need to be stronger and clearer. The VPA has a key role to play in ensuring we realise the potential of the state's infrastructure investment for the communities of the future.

Extraordinary agility at the VPA

The complexion of modern public purpose organisations is changing. The pandemic has accelerated the pace of change, creating an opportunity and imperative to embrace new and flexible ways of working and shape a future working environment that enables our people to do their best work.

Staff supported **19 Board meetings** giving direction on **37 project reports** in 2020

As development patterns change and we recalibrate our role across Victoria, demand for the VPA's expertise will grow and we will innovate to enhance our expertise and impact in new settings. **Harnessing and developing the diverse expertise and experience of our people will enable us to grow our impact as a purpose-driven and leading organisation that is resilient to future shocks.**

In 2019/20 we progressed **107 projects** including **18 Fast Track COVID** stimulus projects and a **Bushfire Recovery project**

Expectations on Victorian public sector agencies are higher than ever. **There is a need to amplify our reputation as a trusted agency – maintaining our social licence and strengthening our authorising environment.** Our delivery-informed evidence and insight will help drive the improvement of Victoria's planning system to meet changing needs.

Between 2017 & 2020 **8 GAIC WIKS** valued at around **\$64million**

Our strategic pillars: Growing our state through plans that get built

We are VPA:
urban growth planner



Planning great urban places in areas of state and regional significance

We are VPA:
trusted problem solver



Facilitating land use and infrastructure solutions so that plans get built

We are VPA:
expert advisor



Bringing delivery-informed insights to urban policy and projects

We are VPA:
talent builder



Unleashing the expertise and potential of our people

We are VPA:
agile innovator



Leading a future-ready organisation

Our pillars in action

Urban growth planner in action – Our urban planning tools and processes are constantly adapting

- We have developed a lean planning process called PSP 2.0 that is replicable, streamlined and collaborative, to enable Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs) to be developed quicker and with stronger partnerships.
- We are adapting the PSP 2.0 process to apply to plans for urban renewal by developing an Urban Renewal Products and Processes Framework. The framework will guide the scoping and delivery of projects, allowing replicable and streamlined processes so we can commence and deliver our projects faster.
- Our update to the PSP Guidelines is designed to keep pace with new policy direction and provide aspirational targets for PSP development. This update incorporates Victorian Government and international best practice policy, including the '20-Minute Neighbourhoods' framework and alignment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
- One of the impacts of COVID-19 has been a significant net migration to Victoria's regions. We are developing the Regional Victoria Strategic Land Supply Program to help regional councils under the greatest pressure to unlock land for development and provide certainty to government, landowners, and the community.

Trusted problem solver in action – We are building trust and certainty in the development industry

- Estimating infrastructure costs for our plans has often been an opaque process for industry and has sometimes been slow and expensive. We developed the Benchmark Infrastructure Cost guide which reduces potential for infrastructure 'scope creep' and provides certainty on allowable items. This has resulted in more transparency and efficiency in the Infrastructure Contributions Plan and Development Contributions Plan development process giving industry confidence that government is consistent and predictable.
- In response to delays in delivery of some items of essential infrastructure, we revised the process for the delivery of GAIC Works In Kind agreements to better support the needs of new communities. We have since delivered eight agreements, valued at \$64 million and resulting in savings to the state in the order of \$7-8 million and bringing forward the provision of key infrastructure.

Talent builder in action – We support our staff to excel

- We wanted to establish clear pathways into the organisation to develop and retain talent, so we created the student/graduate/planner three-year pathway program. Students work during their last year of undergraduate study, progress to graduate role for one year and then are offered a fixed term contract. Each year, we have at least three people moving through this program at each level.
- We regularly support our staff on secondments to build their skills and improve our relationships and reach across government. In the last year we have seconded staff to Building Better Regulation Victoria, the Building Victoria's Recovery Taskforce, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and the Department of Transport.

Agile innovator in action – We are resilient and adapt to change

- Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, as we moved to a world of remote working, we implemented resilience and adaptability training as part of our ongoing commitment to staff wellbeing. This training helped our staff develop skills to improve overall emotional health and provided tools to help us operate in rapidly changing environments.

Expert advisor in action – We innovate giving industry and community more housing choice

- We provided greater certainty for builders seeking to provide housing diversity in greenfield PSP areas by coming up with an updated Small Lot Housing Code. This work will make it easier for approvals to be sought under the Code and housing diversity to be delivered in our precincts.

Our risk themes:

Managing risk in achieving our strategy



VPA prepared the Leneva Baranduda PSP to unlock new housing in Wodonga.
Photo courtesy of City of Wodonga.

Our purpose: the positive change we deliver

Our purpose:

Prosperous, liveable, and sustainable urban communities across a growing Victoria



- development unlocked in areas of state and regional significance across Melbourne and in key regional cities and towns
- post-pandemic economic health and resilience
- zoned land for houses and jobs delivered to market at speed
- timely provision of, and funding towards, essential infrastructure
- well-designed, affordable options for jobs and housing



- 20-minute neighbourhoods
- great places for a growing and changing urban Victoria
- efficient and well-connected communities
- local amenity, housing, jobs and services
- increased transport choices and reduced congestion



- development that mitigates and adapts to the impacts of climate change
- active, walkable and healthy places and communities
- protected and enhanced biodiversity
- integrated water management
- strong social and cultural fabric
- local open spaces and green infrastructure
- reduced travel and building energy

Density
done well

Suburban and
regional jobs

Better aligning
development and
infrastructure

Growing
regional cities
and towns

Our contribution to the big agenda



UN Sustainable Development Goals

Consistent with the principles and outcomes of *Plan Melbourne*, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) provide a framework within the global context to help ensure our plans align with international best practice in sustainability.

The goals enable planning, to the extent that it can drive and influence outcomes, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from development and mitigate the effects of climate change. They call for resilience to natural hazards and extreme weather events such as bushfire risk, flooding and the urban heat island effect.

Integration of the UN SDGs framework connects our structure planning to the international agenda.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals



20-Minute Neighbourhoods

The 20-minute neighbourhood hallmarks are about planning for living locally, living sustainably and social connectedness.

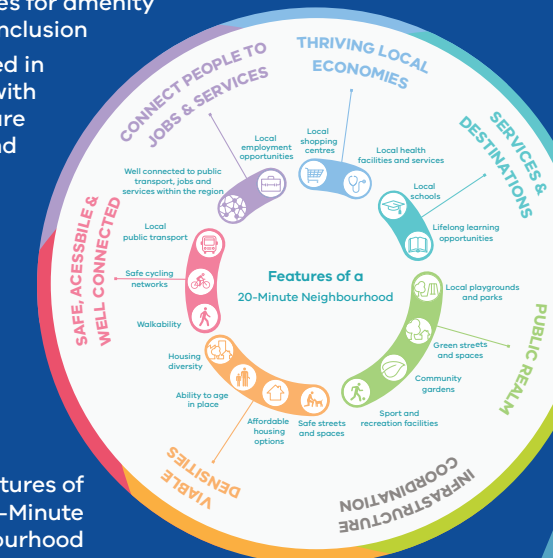
A 20-minute neighbourhood must:

- be safe, accessible and well connected for pedestrians and cyclists to optimise active transport
- offer high-quality public realm and open space
- provide services and destinations that support local living
- facilitate access to quality public transport that connects people to jobs and higher-order services
- deliver housing/population at densities that make local services and transport viable.

To genuinely create 20-minute neighbourhoods in greenfield communities, the urban form we plan for will need to:

- adapt to support increasing densities and intensity of activity
- ensure the design of the public realm provides more meaningful opportunities for amenity and social inclusion
- be developed in alignment with infrastructure planning and delivery.

Features of
a 20-Minute
Neighbourhood



Our new focus

Changing the game for Victoria

Our drivers compel us to think carefully about how we can make the greatest possible impact in a critical period for Victorians.

One of our key shifts is to prioritise how, where and why we work for the greatest impact. This strategy helps to make choices that set us up to deliver prosperous, liveable and sustainable communities.

When we deliver our planning and infrastructure coordination projects we have one of four roles:

- **Authority:** the VPA leads the project and submits to the Minister for Planning for approval
- **Provider:** the VPA leads the project and presents to the responsible decision-maker (council or minister)
- **Advisor:** the VPA provides formal advice or support to a council or state entity
- **Facilitator:** the VPA assists a council or state entity in its planning work

We have the most impact when we act as authority, or as provider to the Minister for Planning (or another client minister).

This is because these roles allow us to carry our planning proposals and advice directly to the decision maker. This in turn gives us greater strength to bring government and other stakeholders around the table because they can be confident in our ability to deliver.

For example, in Melbourne's greenfields – where the VPA has a criteria-driven work pipeline and standing authorisation to act as planning authority – we delivered nearly twice the government's housing supply metric over the three years 2018/19 to 2020/21 as we built stocks of zoned land to meet the state policy of 15-year zoned supply.

In established Melbourne and regional cities and towns, where we do not have a guaranteed work pipeline and generally act as provider or advisor to councils, our contribution was much less.

Our pillars, priorities and broader work program will maximise our impact by directing our work towards places of state and regional significance, where we contribute to socioeconomic recovery and growth, and where we have the authorising environment to deliver.

Where these factors are present, we maximise the public value we deliver for Victorians.



Artists impression of VPA urban renewal project at the PMP Printing site in Clayton.

VPA Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Purpose

Our purpose defines the value we bring and our reason for being

Prosperous, liveable, and sustainable urban communities across a growing Victoria

Pillars

Our five strategic pillars respond to external drivers to deliver on our purpose

Pillar 1

We are VPA:
urban growth planner

Planning great urban places in areas of state and regional significance



Pillar 2

We are VPA:
trusted problem solver

Facilitating land use and infrastructure solutions so that plans get built



Pillar 3

We are VPA:
expert advisor

Bringing delivery-informed insights to urban policy and projects



Pillar 4

We are VPA:
talent builder

Unleashing the expertise and potential of our people



Pillar 5

We are VPA:
agile innovator

Leading a future-ready organisation



Priorities

Our priorities connect our pillars to tangible action

Our priorities are:

- 1.1 Use **state and regional** significance to trigger our involvement.
- 1.2 Adopt a preferred role as **planning authority** for government, or by acting as provider to government.
- 1.3 **Prioritise resources to speed up plans** that support Victoria's socio-economic recovery.
- 1.4 Deepen the impact of our plans to **secure better outcomes** and add value to government projects.
- 1.5 Define a criteria-driven forward pipeline of projects in **established Melbourne and in regional cities and towns**.
- 1.6 Leverage our impact and capability as planning authority in **outer Melbourne**.

Our priorities are:

- 2.1 Strengthen our **infrastructure coordination advice** to government.
- 2.2 Nurture our **collaboration and networks** with our **stakeholders and partners**.
- 2.3 Embed new ways of engaging with **Traditional Owners** and the **Victorian Aboriginal community**.
- 2.4 Continually **clarify our role, outputs and outcomes** for each project.
- 2.5 **Advocate and support delivery** of quality on-ground outcomes in the areas we plan for.
- 2.6 **Sequence** urban growth to align with infrastructure.

Our priorities are:

- 3.1 Assess the outcomes of our plans and use this to **drive continuous improvement**.
- 3.2 Bring **delivery-informed evidence** to add value to government's decisions, policies and projects.
- 3.3 Test and **operationalise innovations** to better map government policy into place.
- 3.4 Use our delivery expertise to **support planning and regulatory reform** that streamlines plan-making and delivery.
- 3.5 **Offer our expertise to government** to solve planning problems.

Our priorities are:

- 4.1 **Sustain a positive culture** that brings our values to life every day.
- 4.2 Establish strength-based **career pathways** within and through our organisation.
- 4.3 Lift our **community engagement, data literacy, and people management** skills.
- 4.4 Empower and develop our people to be **leaders, partners and team players**.
- 4.5 Explore dynamic gateway-based project **resourcing and prioritisation** models.

Our priorities are:

- 5.1 Create a leading model of **flexible and hybrid working**.
- 5.2 Build **replicable and innovative** products and processes.
- 5.3 Ensure strong organisational **governance, integrity and oversight**.
- 5.4 Strengthen **knowledge sharing** and cross-team and cross-project innovation and learning.
- 5.5 Strengthen our **financial resilience**.

Values

Our values underpin our strategy and everything we do

Partnership



Leadership



Professionalism



Responsiveness



Inclusion



Outcomes

The positive change we deliver



prosperous



liveable



sustainable

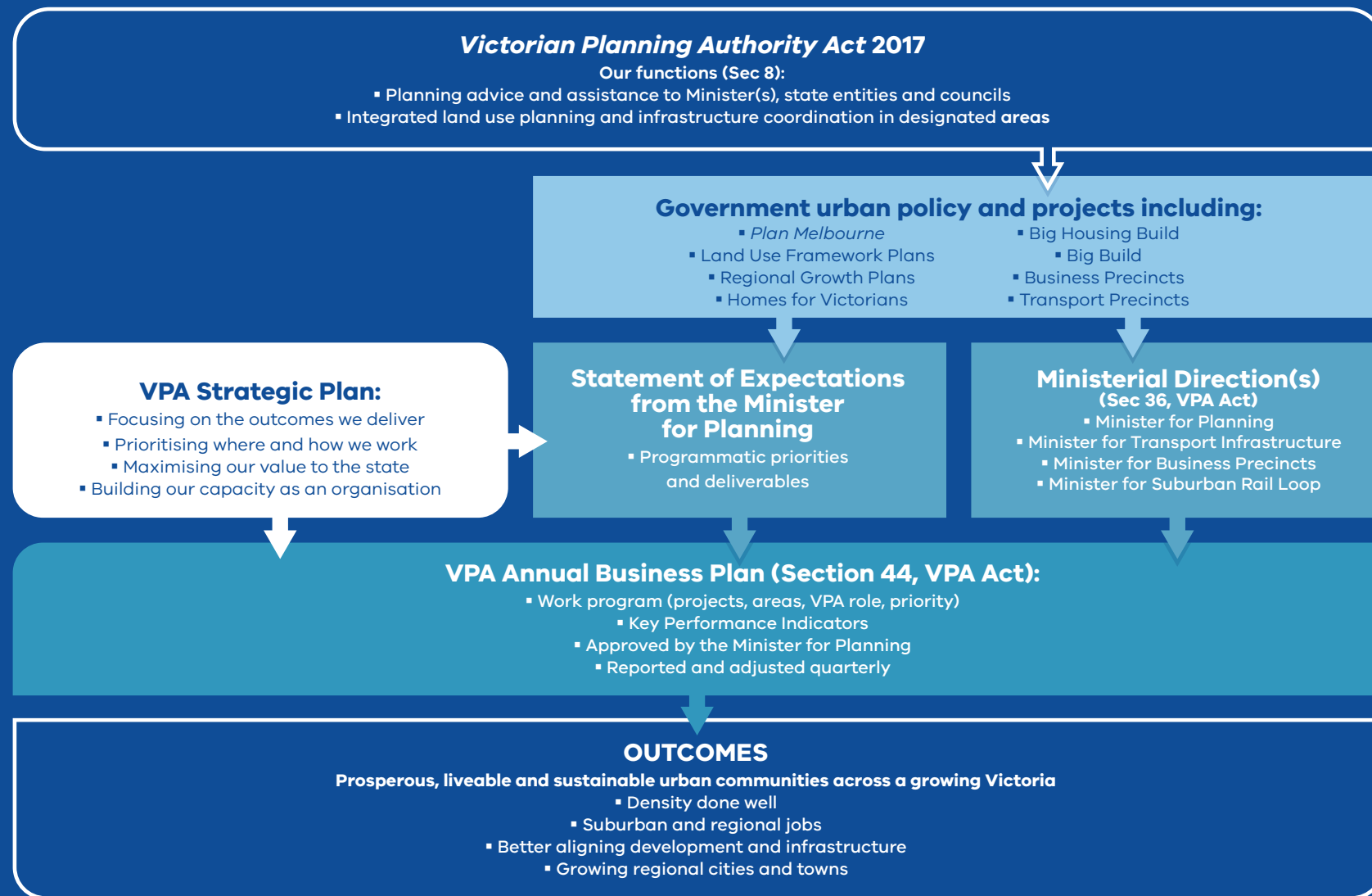
Density done well

Suburban and regional jobs

Better aligning development and infrastructure

Growing regional cities and towns

How we deliver our strategic plan ▶



Artist impression of
VPA urban renewal project
Arden Precinct



Victorian Planning Authority **Strategic Plan 2021-2024**

August 2021