

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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Permanent funding needed to future-proof community infrastructure

Councils and public works engineers are calling for permanent funding in the upcoming Federal Budget to improve the liveability and productivity of Australian communities.

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), with support from the Institute of Public Works Engineers Australasia (IPWEA), is urging the Federal Government to make the highly successful Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) program permanent, with \$500 million per year ongoing and funding indexed annually.

ALGA President Councillor Linda Scott said the LRCI program has supported councils across the nation to build and revitalise local playgrounds, community centres, libraries, sporting grounds and bike paths.

“The direct delivery of funding to councils, without the need for time-consuming grant applications, has ensured the quick and effective delivery of local projects,” Cr Scott said.

Cr Scott also said making the LRCI permanent would be an investment in Australia’s future productivity.

“The recent [upgrade of Gunnedah Aerodrome](#) – funded in part through the LRCI program – is a fantastic example of how this program is supporting local economic growth, and making our cities, towns and regions more attractive places to live, invest and visit.”

ALGA’s [2021 National State of the Assets report](#), delivered by IPWEA, found \$9.2 billion worth of local government buildings and community facilities are currently in poor condition.

IPWEA President Myles Lind said: “Our communities depend on a vast network of infrastructure assets, managed by local councils. We often take this infrastructure for granted until something fails.

“When infrastructure assets are nearing the end of life, councils must be able to renew and replace these assets, before they fail, whilst still planning for future improvements.

“IPWEA supports ALGA’s call to make the LRCI program permanent. This program offers councils the opportunity to plan for the renewal of infrastructure assets and act before assets fail, renewing and revitalising infrastructure, so they can continue to serve our communities.”

In summary, ALGA, supported by IPWEA, is calling for:

- The Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program to be made permanent with ongoing funding of \$500 million per year, with funding indexed annually.

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Background

- Since July 2020, \$3.25 billion has been committed through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program, with the latest \$250 million announced in the October 2022 Budget.
- ALGA's [2021 National State of the Assets report](#), delivered by IPWEA, showed that \$9.2 billion worth of local government buildings and facilities (including libraries, community halls, arts and cultural facilities and recreation centres) are in poor condition and in urgent need of maintenance and upgrades.

About ALGA

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) is the national voice of local government, representing 537 councils across the country. In structure, ALGA is a federation of state and territory local government associations.

About IPWEA

The Institute of Public Works Engineers Australasia (IPWEA) is the peak association for infrastructure asset management and professionals who deliver public works and engineering service.