$1 billion infrastructure improvement benefits local communities

New national research has revealed a $1 billion improvement in the condition of Australia’s libraries, recreation centres, galleries, cultural centres and community halls over the past three years.

ALGA President Councillor Linda Scott said a $500 million per year local government community infrastructure fund would support councils to continue to maintain and improve the important local facilities Australians use every day.

“Preliminary data from ALGA’s 2024 National State of the Assets report shows since 2021, the amount of local government buildings and facilities in poor condition has dropped from 10 per cent to eight per cent,” said Cr Scott.

“This is a fantastic result and testament to the increased federal investment in councils from both the Coalition and Albanese governments in recent years.

“However, we must continue to invest in our critically important community infrastructure, and ALGA is calling for a new $500 million per year funding program in next week’s Federal Budget.”

Cr Scott said as a tier of government councils collect less than four per cent of national taxation, and heavily rely on state, territory and Commonwealth funding.

“Financial Assistance Grants are essential to our ongoing sustainability and we are also asking the Government to deliver on its pre-election commitment to ‘fair increases’ to this funding,” Cr Scott said.

Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA) President Ian Daniels said:

“Community infrastructure from roads, footpaths and cycleways, stormwater drains, parks and gardens, bridges, libraries, community centres, and sporting facilities support nearly every aspect of our day-to-day activities.

“Our communities depend on this vast network of assets for their livelihoods and wellbeing but often take them for granted until something fails. When infrastructure assets fail, councils are forced to react which erodes confidence and wastes valuable resources.

“IPWEA supports ALGA’s call to create a new, dedicated fund for community and transport infrastructure, similar to the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) program.

“This approach provides councils with more options and opportunities to better plan for the maintenance and renewal of existing assets as well as the provision of new and upgraded assets that enhance the quality of life for our communities.”
In summary, ALGA supported by IPWEA, is calling for:

- A dedicated $500 million per year fund, indexed annually, to support councils to build, maintain and revitalise community infrastructure.

- This funding should be allocated on a formula basis, and for untied local roads and community infrastructure projects.

-ENDS-

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Background

LRCI program:

- Since July 2020, an additional $3.25 billion has been committed to councils by both Coalition and Labor Governments through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program. More information: https://investment.infrastructure.gov.au/about/local-initiatives/local-roads-and-community-infrastructure-program

National State of the Assets report:

- 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.

- Preliminary data from the 2024 report - due to be released in the coming months – shows that $8.1 billion worth of local government buildings and facilities are currently in poor condition.

- ALGA established the NSoA project in 2012 to improve the performance and management of the $500 billion worth of public infrastructure owned and managed by local governments, with the first report published in 2013.

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.