

MPs asked: 'Put your money where your mouth is'

8 October, 2007

Communities deserve answers on infrastructure funding call

The National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA) is calling on Federal Members of Parliament to publicly support the alliance's demand for a \$3.1 billion funding increase for social and community infrastructure in fast-growing municipalities.

Representing one in four Australians, NGAA's 30 member councils have put written questions to their local MPs as they continue the Fund The Gap campaign. Politicians have until October 19 to respond.

"Awareness of our campaign is growing and our community, like us, is seeking answers," NGAA national spokesman, Cr Linton Reynolds, said.

"This is a critical issue in rapidly-expanding local government areas where \$11.7 billion needs to be spent on social and community infrastructure over the next 15 years.

"NGAA councils face a shortfall of \$3.1 billion, or \$206 million, each year in delivering essential amenities such as libraries, public open spaces, swimming pools, child care services and roads.

"That equates to around \$39 for every resident represented by the NGAA, which is not much considering there's a Federal Government surplus this year alone of more than \$17 billion.

"Senior members of the Federal Government and Opposition have given NGAA encouraging signs that they recognise the need for more funding for our councils, but we need our local MPs to give those councils a national voice."

NGAA councils plan to circulate MP responses to local communities as well as holding ongoing discussions with ratepayers and candidates during the upcoming Federal election.

Key points:

- Population represented by NGAA 5.25 million
- Expected NGAA population by 2022 6.66 million
- Forecast infrastructure spend 2007-2022 \$11.7 billion
- Estimated funding shortfall \$3.1 billion
- Estimated yearly shortfall \$206 million
- Funding sought per NGAA resident \$39 P/A

For more information visit www.fundthegap.org

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