

# WoMEDA West of Melbourne Summit presented in partnership with The Age

**Day 1 – Dinner – Western Grounds, Wednesday 22 October 2025**

**PROGRAM IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE**

	<b>Agenda:</b>
5.30pm to 6.00pm	<b>Pre-Dinner Drinks and Canapes</b>
6.10pm sharp	<b>Welcome by MC</b> , Stephen Wall, Deputy Chair, WoMEDA and Chief Executive Officer, City of Wyndham  <b>Welcome to Country</b> , Wurundjeri Elder Bill Nicholson
	<b>Welcome and introductory remarks</b> Professor Peter Dawkins AO, WoMEDA Chair and Emeritus Professor of Economics, Mitchell Institute, Victoria University
	<b>Introduction of Minister Clare O’Neil</b> by Patrick Elligett, Editor, The Age.
	<b>The West of Melbourne’s Future and the Albanese Government</b> <b>Hon. Clare O’Neil MP, Minister for Housing, Homelessness, Cities</b>
	<b>Q&amp;A</b> Facilitator by Patrick Elligett
	Main Course Served
	<b>Launch of <i>Western Growth: Unlocking Melbourne’s Economic Engine</i> (WoMEDA’s Strategic Foundations Paper)</b> <b>Professor Peter Dawkins AO, WoMEDA Chair and Emeritus Professor of Economics, Mitchell Institute, Victoria University</b>
	<b>Facilitated Panel Discussion of the Big Issues and Opportunities for the Future of the West of Melbourne</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prof. the Hon. Jill Hennessy, Chair, Western Health</li> <li>• Gabrielle Trainor AO, Former Interim Chief Commissioner, Infrastructure Australia and Bradfield Development Authority (Board Member)</li> <li>• Carl Retschko, Co-Head of Origination, Plenary Group</li> <li>• Professor Adam Shoemaker, WoMEDA Board Member and Vice Chancellor &amp; President, Victoria University.</li> <li>• Jerril Rechter AM, WoMEDA Board Member and Vice President, Western Bulldogs Football Club</li> </ul> <p>Facilitated by Annika Smethurst, State Political Editor, The Age.</p>
	Dessert served during Panel Discussion
8.30pm to 9.00pm	Coffee, Tea, Networking

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**Day 2 – Conference– The Refectory at Werribee Park, Thursday 23 October 2025**

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	<b>Agenda:</b>
8.00am	Arrival and Registration
	<p><b>Welcome by MC, Stephen Wall</b>, Deputy Chair, WoMEDA and Chief Executive Officer, City of Wyndham</p> <p><b>Welcome to Country</b></p>
	<p><b>Welcome and introductory remarks about WoMEDA’s <i>Western Growth: Unlocking Melbourne’s Economic Engine Paper</i></b>          Professor Peter Dawkins AO, WoMEDA Chair and Emeritus Professor of Economics, Mitchell Institute, Victoria University</p>
	<p><b>Population &amp; Economic Dynamics of the West of Melbourne:</b>          Simon Kustenmacher, Director &amp; Co-Founder, The Demographics Group          Professor Janine Dixon, Director, Centre of Policy Studies, Victoria University          Q&amp;A Facilitator: Stephen Wall</p>
	<p><b>The Past, Present and Future of the West of Melbourne – George Megalogenis in conversation with Hon. Dr Steve Bracks AC:</b>          Hon. Dr. Steve Bracks AC, Former Premier of Victoria, Foundation Chair WoMEDA and Chancellor, Victoria University          George Megalogenis, Author, Journalist and Political Commentator</p>
	<p><b>Precincts, City Planning, Economic Development and Jobs for the West of Melbourne:</b>          Panel facilitated by Adam Carey, Senior City Reporter, The Age.</p> <p>Panel Discussion on Precincts, City Planning, Economic Development and Jobs:</p> <p>Matt Carrick, Secretary, Department Jobs, Skills, Industry &amp; Regions          Professor Beth Webster, Director, Melbourne Institute of Applied and Economic Research, The University of Melbourne          Peter Seamer AM, Planning Strategies</p> <p>Followed by comments from the Chief Executive Officers of the municipalities with official or proposed precincts</p> <p>Fiona Blair, Chief Executive Officer, Brimbank City Council          Celia Haddock, Chief Executive Officer, Maribyrnong City Council          Roslyn Wai, Chief Executive Officer, Melton City Council          Stephen Wall, Chief Executive Officer, City of Wyndham</p>

	<b>Morning Tea. Mansion Balcony (weather permitting)</b>
	<b>Guests make their way to be seated in relevant room in the Mansion for their Concurrent Panel Session.</b>
	<p><b>Concurrent Session 1</b>  <b>Investment Attraction:</b>  Panel facilitated by Dr Tony McGough, Partner, Research &amp; Consulting Victoria, Knight Frank</p> <p>Danni Jarrett, Deputy Secretary, Industry, Trade and Investment, CEO Invest Victoria &amp; Global Victoria; Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions  Kelvyn Lavelle, Chair, Plenary Health, New Footscray Hospital  Leigh Petschel, Chief Financial Officer, Port of Melbourne  Jim Parashos, Chief of Aviation, Melbourne Airport  Dr Jack Dan, Chief of Strategy, CDC Data Centres</p>
	<p><b>Concurrent Session 2</b>  <b>Environment and the Circular Economy:</b>  Panel facilitated by Jodie Hallam, Acting Managing Director, Greater Western Water</p> <p>Hon. John Thwaites AM, Chair, Monash Sustainable Development Institute  Peter Murphy, Managing Director, Alex Fraser Group  Amanda Smith, Director City Operations, Wyndham City Council  Dr Thami Croeser, Vice Chancellor's Research Fellow, RMIT University</p>
	<p><b>Concurrent Session 3</b>  <b>Health, Skills, Education and Youth:</b>  Panel facilitated by Professor Peter Dawkins AO, WoMEDA Chair and Emeritus Professor of Economics, Mitchell Institute, Victoria University</p> <p>Prof. Russell Harrison, Chief Executive Officer, Western Health  Jayne Nelson, Chief Executive Officer, IPC health  Prof. Adam Shoemaker, Vice Chancellor, Victoria University  Jim Dannock, Senior Advisor, Victorian Skills Authority  Professor Peter Hurley, Mitchell Institute, Victoria University  Melissa Hardham, Chief Executive Officer, West Justice</p>
	<p><b>Concurrent Session 4</b>  <b>Arts, Culture, Sport &amp; Tourism</b>  Panel facilitated by Jerril Rechter, WoMEDA Board Member and Vice-President, Western Bulldogs Football Club</p> <p>Brendan McClements, Chief Executive Officer, Visit Victoria  Scott Chapman AM, Chair Victorian Tourism Industry Council and Western Melbourne Tourism  Ari Suss, Chief Executive Officer, Avalon Airport  Ameet Bains, Chief Executive Officer, Western Bulldogs Football Club  Naomi Oakley, Indigenous Cultural Program Manager, Footscray Community Arts Centre</p>
	Main Course Served in The Refectory
	<p><b>Introduction of Premier of Victoria:</b>  Chip Le Grand, State Political Editor, The Age</p>
	<p><b>Vision for the Future of the West of Melbourne:</b>  Hon. Jacinta Allan MP, Premier of Victoria</p>
	Q&A with Premier. Facilitated by Chip Le Grand
	Dessert

	<p><b>Infrastructure: Transport, Housing and Other Key Infrastructure Assets</b> 2 Panels Facilitated by Patrick Hatch, Transport Reporter, The Age.</p> <p><b>Panel 1 Transport</b> Dr Jonathan Spear, Chief Executive Officer, Infrastructure Victoria, Jeroen Weimar, Secretary, Department of Transport and Planning Gabrielle Trainor AO, Former Interim Chief Commissioner, Infrastructure Australia and Bradfield Development Authority (Board Member) Carl Retschko, Co-Head of Origination, Plenary Group Dr John Stone, Honorary Senior Fellow, The University of Melbourne</p> <p><b>Panel 2 Housing and Other Key Infrastructure Assets</b> Caryn Kakas, Head of Housing Strategy, ANZ Emeritus Professor David Hayward, Public Policy &amp; Social Economy, RMIT Along with Jonathan Spear, Jeroen Weimar, Gabrielle Trainor, Carl Retchko.</p>
	<b>Afternoon Tea on the Verandah of the Mansion</b>
	<b>Brad Battin MP, Leader of the State Opposition in Conversation with Chip le Grand The Age State Political Reporter</b>
	<b>The Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop, Minister for Housing and Building and Minister for Development Victoria and Precincts, the Hon. Harriet Shing in conversation with WoMEDA's Chair, Professor Peter Dawkins AO about Priority Precincts and related issues.</b>
	<p><b>Closing panel</b> <b>How do we achieve Success in the West?</b> Panel Facilitator: Sophie Aubrey, The Age</p> <p>Hon. Melissa Horne MP, Minister for Ports &amp; Freight, Roads &amp; Road Safety, Health Infrastructure, Local Government, State Member for Williamstown Trung Luu MLC, Western Metropolitan Region Cr Mia Shaw, Mayor, Wyndham City Council Cr Dr Phillip Zada, Chair, LeadWest</p>
	<p><b>Concluding Remarks by Patrick Elligett, Editor, The Age and Peter Dawkins, Chair, WoMEDA</b></p> <p><b>and Launch of the Western Growth Dialogue by WoMEDA Board Members: Peter Dawkins, Kelvyn Lavelle and Jerril Rechter</b></p>
5.30pm	<b>Event concludes.</b>