



FIXING THE FOUNDATIONS – REIV ELECTION PRIORITIES 2026

Real Estate Institute of Victoria

www.reiv.com.au reiv@reiv.com.au

CONTENTS

03 ABOUT THE REAL
ESTATE INSTITUTE OF
VICTORIA

04 STATE OF THE
SECTOR

05 RESEARCH-BACKED
REIV ELECTION
PLATFORM

06 KEY ELECTION
PILLARS

07 POLICY
RECOMMENDATIONS
1

08 POLICY
RECOMMENDATIONS
2

09 POLICY
RECOMMENDATIONS
3

10 POLICY
RECOMMENDATIONS
4

11 POLICY
RECOMMENDATIONS
5



THE REAL ESTATE INSTITUTE OF VICTORIA

The REIV is the peak representative body for real estate practitioners in Victoria.

Established in 1936, the REIV aims to enhance the professional excellence of its members to benefit the communities they serve and to advocate for their interests.

REIV members specialise in a range of real estate service areas, including residential, rural, commercial and industrial leasing and sales, auctions, business broking, buyers' agency, property management, owners' corporations, and valuations.

REIV represents the vast majority of Victorian businesses registered to deliver these services, supporting Victorians through their real estate journey.

Real estate businesses employ more than 23,000 people in Victoria in a market that handles around

\$147 billion in transactions annually, totaling over 20 per cent of Gross State Product.

The property sector's contribution to the Victorian economy is significant; its economic impact is larger than the mining, arts and recreation sectors combined. Property transactions and related charges directly contribute billions of dollars in stamp duty, land tax and other state government charges, accounting for more than 52 per cent ² of state government revenue.

The REIV strives to work with all side of politics, government agencies and stakeholders collaboratively, to ensure that informed regulatory policy is developed to provide certainty and fairness for all stakeholders.

As the peak representative body for real estate practitioners in Victoria, the Real Estate Institute of Victoria (REIV) is deeply invested in helping to ensure the ongoing prosperity of the state's property sector.

STATE OF THE SECTOR

No ordinary election year for Victorian real estate

Like healthcare, education and sport, the state of the property sector remains fundamental to the Victorian experience.

In serving to both reflect and shape the lives of Victorians, and the state's economic fortunes more generally, property's importance cannot be overstated.

After all, real estate, whether in the form of a home, workplace, retail premises, investment asset or community space – touches every Victorian, and decisions relating to first home ownership, family homes, investment properties and intergenerational wealth have material economic and social implications.

Not to mention that this is a sector that continues to contribute nearly half of the state's total tax revenue and, as such, represents a foundational pillar of Victoria's economic and fiscal stability.

Its relative health is not only a subject of industry interest, but a matter of broader public significance. A stable, confident and well-functioning property market underpins employment, investment, infrastructure delivery and essential government services across the state.

Not least when taken against the backdrop of an ongoing cost of living crisis, soaring state debt and an increasingly fraught geopolitical landscape abroad

The sector's importance is further heightened by its complex and multi-layered stakeholder environment.

Alongside a deeply invested Victorian Government, this environment encompasses regulators, financial institutions, businesses, professional practitioners, investors, community organisations and everyday Victorians. This rich stakeholder mix reflects the sector's economic scale and social impact, together with the importance of effective policy settings

balancing fiscal objectives, regulatory integrity, market confidence and community outcomes.

Central to this ongoing public interest, is the question of property policy reform, particularly from a tax and regulatory perspective. Key to which is how to fairly balance the competing interests of the sector's different stakeholders in a way that makes a positive difference for all Victorians.

A question which takes on even more importance in the lead-up to November's state election and the opportunity to positively shape Government policy.



RESEARCH-BACKED REIV ELECTION PLATFORM

Ensuring a robust real estate sector that strikes a fair balance between stakeholder interests

As the peak representative body for real estate practitioners in Victoria, the Real Estate Institute of Victoria (REIV) is deeply invested in helping to ensure the ongoing prosperity of the state's property sector.

Ahead of November's state election, it also recognises the importance of articulating a clear vision for the sector, and a means of realising it that can help to enlighten public discourse and influence Government policy at a critical time.

The REIV's sector vision is as follows:

A robust, resilient and professionally led Victorian property sector that inspires confidence, attracts investment, supports sustainable economic growth, delivers stable and accessible housing outcomes, and strengthens Victoria's long-term prosperity.

Headlined by a focus on greater residential property transaction price transparency, and more balanced tax and regulatory settings across residential and commercial real estate, the REIV's election platform seeks, on behalf of its members, to realise the Institute's vision of a professionally managed and robust Victorian property sector.

This reform agenda draws on the REIV and its members' unique insights gleaned from their day-to-day experiences within the sector and their engagement with other stakeholders.

Importantly, it has also been informed by the results of a recently conducted, REIV-commissioned independent survey of 1,000 Victorian adults – including key residential real estate sector cohorts in property owners, renters and rental providers. Or, in other words, Victorian voters.

As such, the survey results can be seen to represent underlying proof points for a policy approach which is centred on striking the right balance between different stakeholder interests to ensure positive sector outcomes for all Victorians.

The REIV welcomes stakeholder engagement regarding the platform over the coming months.



KEY ELECTION PILLARS



- 1** **Advance a modern, equitable and transparent property market framework** that builds enduring consumer trust and market confidence.
- 2** **Create stable and competitive regulatory and taxation policy settings** that enable investment in housing supply and support a healthy rental ecosystem.
- 3** **Restore the competitiveness of Victoria's commercial and industrial property sectors** to drive enterprise, productivity and economic growth.
- 4** **Reform first home buyer support mechanisms** to better enable entry into home ownership for younger Victorians.
- 5** **Embed higher standards of professionalism and accountability** across the property sector to enhance outcomes for the community and the economy.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



1 - Advance a modern, equitable and transparent property market framework that builds enduring consumer trust and market confidence.

Effectively tackle underquoting and boost consumer confidence by creating greater price transparency, while protecting fundamental property owner rights.

The REIV urges the Victorian Government to adopt a more nuanced and holistic approach to improving price transparency and consumer confidence in residential property transactions.

Set out in the organisation's "A Blueprint for Marketing of Residential Real Estate in Victoria", which was developed by the REIV-convened and industry representative- Strategic Working Group, the REIV makes eight recommendations as part of its informed sector-wide response to price transparency.

The blueprint is headlined by a proposed requirement for vendors to confirm their reserve price falls within a ten per cent advertised price range no later than three clear business days before auction. A fairer and more effective alternative to the Government's proposal to mandate the publication of reserve prices seven days prior to auction or fixed-date sale.

With the potential to trigger inflated reserve prices, a fall in clearance rates and an increase in offers prior to auction, the Government's proposal threatens to compromise the transparency and effectiveness of the public auction process.

Whereas the blueprint recommendations strike the right balance between ensuring greater price transparency for prospective buyers and protecting vendors' right to achieve the best possible sale price.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The REIV's blueprint recommendations are as follows:

- vendors to confirm their reserve price falls within a ten per cent advertised price range no later than three clear business days before auction;
- marketing to display a single, vendor-advised asking price for private residential property sales;
- compulsory disclosure of all sale prices once a sale contract becomes unconditional;
- enhanced criteria for comparable sales information;
- building and pest inspection report included in the Vendor's Statement (Section 32);
- mandatory bidder registration;
- digital access for inclusivity, convenience and sustainability; and
- stronger enforcement mechanisms to uphold industry professional standards.

VOTER VIEWS

If forced by law to advertise a single reserve price seven days prior to auction when selling a property, 94 per cent of surveyed Victorian property owners would either raise their reserve price, switch to private sale, be more inclined to accept an offer prior to auction or consider all these options.



2 - Create stable and competitive regulatory and taxation policy settings that enable investment in housing supply and support a healthy rental ecosystem.

Achieve a more affordable rental market by better enabling investor-driven housing supply.

The Victorian Government must ensure more evenly balanced regulatory and taxation settings if it is to encourage the private investment needed to ensure a healthy rental market ecosystem and address the state's persistent housing supply issues.

This comes after a decade of regulatory and tax reform, largely borne by rental providers, has failed to materially improve affordability for renters.

Importantly, this isn't to overlook critical regulatory changes needed to protect fundamental renter rights, which have been welcomed by the REIV. But, rather, to focus on a rental market policy approach that has failed to address the top two priorities – in availability and price – for any renter.

Consider, for example, damning data from Homes Victoria that shows a net decline of more than 22,000 active rental bonds between September 2023 and September 2025. So too, that rental vacancy rates across metropolitan Melbourne and key regional centres have remained persistently below the golden three per cent target.

And the fact that this is the result of a relentless 10-year period of rental regulation and property taxation policy initiatives that have served to increase regulatory complexity and holding costs for rental providers.

Indeed, one need only reflect on the 150 distinct rental market reforms introduced over the last decade that have impacted property investor ownership and rental provision. Not to mention that REIV research shows that land tax payable on a median-priced house and unit has more than doubled since 2020, even as median values have remained broadly stable or declined.

Key to this is revisiting several of the REIV's long-held advocacy positions, like easing land tax obligations on rental providers, that can serve to encourage rental property investment and ultimately benefit renters through increased housing supply.

The REIV recommends targeted tax reform, including incentives for so-called 'mum and dad investors', to boost rental supply. It is also calling on an accompanying freeze on any further regulatory reform.

Otherwise, in continuing to adopt a one-sided approach to remedying the state's rental crisis, and increasing the regulatory and taxation burden on rental providers, the Government risks ultimately harming the cohort – in renters – it's so desperately seeking to protect.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Easing land tax obligations on rental providers
- Targeted tax incentives to support increased supply of rental housing
- Freeze on further regulatory reform

VOTER VIEWS

81 per cent of surveyed Victorians, and 87 per cent of rental providers, agree the current Victorian rental market tax and regulatory settings are serving to discourage rental provider investment.

56 per cent of surveyed Victorian rental providers would either reduce the size of their property portfolio, sell and change their investment strategy, or sell and buy interstate if the current tax and regulatory conditions for rental providers do not change.

81 per cent of surveyed Victorians, and 83 per cent of renters, would support a revised rental market policy approach that is more favourable to rental providers if it served to boost Victorian rental property supply.

58 per cent of surveyed Victorian rental providers would be encouraged to increase their rental market investment if a revised Victorian rental market policy provided targeted tax incentives for rental providers. 44 per cent would be encouraged to increase their investment if tax and regulatory obligations on rental providers were frozen.



3 - Restore the competitiveness of Victoria's commercial and industrial property sector to drive enterprise, productivity and economic growth.

Boost business confidence, investment and economic growth by restoring the competitiveness of Victorian commercial and industrial real estate.

The REIV is highlighting the urgent need to review Victoria's land tax settings to address the significant and growing barriers they are creating for businesses seeking to invest, operate and expand within the state.

The 2024 changes to land tax thresholds – including a reduced tax-free threshold, the introduction of a COVID-debt levy, and broader increases in tax rates – have materially increased land tax liabilities across the board, affecting virtually every business holding commercial or industrial property in Victoria.

These changes mean businesses undertaking the same commercial activity, often in already constrained and challenging conditions, are now carrying substantially higher tax burdens without any corresponding improvement in services, infrastructure or regulatory support. This reflects an unusual and unprecedented taxation approach, where land tax liabilities have increased sharply without adequate transitional support or recognition of broader economic impact.

The direct consequence is a less competitive investment environment, where higher ongoing holding costs reduce asset performance, suppress reinvestment, and discourage new capital from entering Victorian commercial and industrial real estate. In practical terms, it weakens business balance sheets, distorts investment decisions, and diverts potential growth away from Victoria at a time when economic momentum is critical.

All of which means Victoria's land tax policy must be comprehensively reviewed to ensure the cost of doing business does not become a structural deterrent to investment. A stable, fair and competitive tax framework is essential to restoring confidence, supporting economic activity, attracting capital, and enabling Victorian businesses to thrive.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review land tax settings to reduce property holding costs



4 - Reform first home buyer support mechanisms to better enable entry into home ownership for younger Victorians.

Ensure the state's first home buyer assistance regime effectively supports young people entering the residential property market.

The REIV is calling for a significant review of the state's first home buyer assistance programs to better support young people entering the residential property market.

The Institute is warning that existing first home buyer stamp duty exemption and concession thresholds do not reflect current market prices and are placing pressure on entry-level housing.

The current \$600,000 stamp duty exemption amount is influencing buyer behaviour and concentrating demand, with:

- only approximately 23 per cent of Melbourne sales falling under this cap; and
- \$600,000 being the most common (under \$2m) sale price in Melbourne in 2025.

While the substantial growth in median house and unit prices, across both metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria, since the COVID-19 pandemic – reflected in Melbourne's median house price of \$973,500 in Q4 2025 – means the current stamp duty concession cap of \$750,000 now excludes a significant segment of the residential property market.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review first home buyer stamp duty exemption and concession thresholds to better align with current prices and avoid market concentration around narrow price points

VOTER VIEWS

86 per cent of surveyed renters agree they'd be more likely to buy a home if stamp duty was removed.



5 - Embed higher standards of professionalism and accountability across the property sector to enhance outcomes for the community and the economy.

Improve industry capability and oversight to improve the consumer experience.

Drawing on the REIV and its members' unique insights as industry insiders, the Institute highlights the fact that strengthening professionalism within, and oversight of, the residential property sector will improve policy outcomes for sector stakeholders.

In recognising the key role played by real estate professionals in ensuring a high-functioning sector, the REIV is seeking to partner with the Government in enhancing the capability of this cohort through greater education and training support

The REIV is also calling for the establishment of a dedicated 'Housing Commissioner' to elevate effective residential property sector policy and ensure its goals are realised.

The Housing Commissioner would provide direction over fragmented housing policy areas, including:

- advising on and progressing recommendations arising from the Property Market Review, Owners Corporation Act Review, and similar inquiries;
- providing advice on property taxation settings and identifying opportunities for reform;
- acting as a conduit between industry and government to identify and address ineffective or unintended outcomes in legislation, including the Residential Tenancies Act and Sale of Land Act, and their associated regulations;
- promoting professional development across the real estate sector, addressing barriers to entry, and supporting a pipeline of skilled practitioners; and
- identifying issues in the broader regulatory intent and frameworks of Government agencies to ensure their objectives align with optimised consumer outcomes.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve sector professional capability, including through Government funding for education and training
- Develop a demerit point system to develop a compliance culture.
- Greater transparency on enforcement activity, progress and resulting learnings.
- Establish a dedicated Housing Commissioner

VOTER VIEWS

80 per cent of surveyed Victorians believe investing in real estate agent education and training to improve professional capability would be a positive move for the real estate industry.



THE REAL ESTATE INSTITUTE OF VICTORIA

The REIV is the peak representative body for real estate practitioners in Victoria.

Established in 1936, the REIV aims to enhance the professional excellence of its members to benefit the communities they serve and to advocate for their interests. It represents over 7,000 individual members and 2,000 real estate agencies.

REAL ESTATE INSTITUTE OF VICTORIA

617 Victoria St, Abbotsford VIC 3067
reiv.com.au | @rei_victoria

Call (03) 9205 6666
or email reiv@reiv.com.au