

## Ahead of 2022 Election, Strata Peak Body Responds to Victorian Liberal Policies on EV Charging, Rooftop Solar & VCAT Funding

Wednesday, 23 November 2022: Following this week's formal launch of the Coalition's [Real Solutions Plan](#), property peak body Strata Community Association (Vic) has responded to three key policy announcements of interest to Victoria's \$343 billion strata (apartment and townhouse) living sector:

- Establishing a \$50 million Community Charging Fund to leverage co-investment with businesses and community organisations, including councils, to install 600 new electric vehicle (EV) charging stations across Victoria
- Providing 1 million households with a rebate of up to \$1,400 for solar panels and \$3,000 for a home battery, doubled for rental properties
- Tackling Victoria's legal and administrative backlog by investing \$100 million to appoint additional Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) members, and expanding tribunal facilities to accommodate these new appointments

SCA (Vic)'s 2022 Election Priorities call for existing government sustainability programs such as the successful Solar Homes Program, and support for EV charging infrastructure, to be specifically extended to strata properties such as apartments and townhouse estates, where owners corporations (formerly known as bodies corporate) govern and maintain the common property.

According to estimates from the National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS), **60 per cent of energy consumption in the average apartment building originates from common property areas.**

SCA (Vic) President Gregor Evans said that while the announcements made by the Coalition in their policy manifesto are broadly welcomed, **a greater emphasis needs to be placed on retrofitting and accessibility of EV charging and solar in strata, and the role of owners corporations in facilitating these.**

"What will be critical to making rooftop solar and EV charging more accessible to all owners and residents is **regular consultation and partnership with industry on how retrofitting can take place in existing buildings and properties,**" said Mr Evans.

**"Making renewable generation and storage more accessible in strata unleashes an unparalleled multiplier effect,** providing lower running costs to owners corporations, and real cost-of-living savings to households.

"Whether a Coalition or Labor Government is elected this Saturday, **SCA (Vic) are keen to work with all relevant ministers and across all portfolios to minimise equity issues affecting the implementation of sustainability programs in existing strata buildings,**" he added.

SCA (Vic)'s flagship election policy proposal for a **Strata Helpline to provide general advice and information to lot owners and residents,** also aims to address administrative burden placed on dispute resolution services such as VCAT, while simultaneously reducing overall out-of-pocket costs for legal advice on owners corporation matters.

"The commitment from the Opposition towards greater funding and allocation of resources to VCAT is welcome from an industry perspective," said Mr Evans.

"However, **more can and should be done to enhance the general advice, information and support available to owners, residents about their owners corporation** prior to attending a VCAT hearing, such as implementing a Strata Helpline," he said.

[Read the SCA \(Vic\) full election priorities here.](#)

[And check out our visual election tracking scorecard here.](#)

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#### **About Strata Community Association (Vic)**

[Strata Community Association \(Vic\)](#) is the peak body for the Owners Corporations sector, which comprises commercial, industrial, and recreational properties ranging from two units in a suburban street to many hundreds of units in inner city apartment buildings.

Owners Corporations represent property valued at over \$300 billion dollars and encompass commercial, retail, lifestyle resorts, retirement villages, car parks, storage facilities, industrial and, increasingly, mixed developments.

More than \$1 billion per year is collected and spent. It is estimated that around 1.6 million Victorians — a quarter of the state's population — either live in, or own property in, an owners corporation.

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