NATIONAL URBAN
POLICY

A vision for the sustainable growth
of our cities and suburbs

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. From the desert to the high Country, connecting to our beaches and sand, through the snow, the rivers and salt waters, in our cities, the bush and islands, we reflect, respect and celebrate the unique and diverse communities we serve.

We walk with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, celebrating the oldest continuing living cultures in the world—listening, learning and yarning to understand the past and work as one towards an inclusive future. We pay our respects to all Elders past and present. We are committed to creating positive change and promoting meaningful reconciliation.

We especially acknowledge that for millennia First Nations people have successfully managed the lands, waters and resources which now make up Australia's urban areas. First Nations people maintain an enduring bond with Country and view our cities and suburbs not only as spaces for habitation but also as extensions of their culture, community and ancestral lands, carrying profound cultural significance.

Getty Images Credit: Elize Strydom

Minister's foreword

The design, planning and management of our cities impacts almost every aspect of the daily life of Australians. Similarly, urban policy has the potential to position us to achieve our individual and collective aspirations.

The Albanese Government is focused on taking the pressure off families and businesses and helping them reach their potential. Housing affordability is a first-order priority. At the same time, we are working to improve access to essential services like health care, child care, education and skills and training.

The Albanese Government is focused on the future. We are investing in industries and manufacturing that will help Australia be internationally competitive as the global economy shifts, new technologies emerge and the world undertakes a clean energy transformation. We can pursue all these goals as we protect our natural environment, decarbonise our economy and make ourselves more resilient to natural hazards.

We seek to unite our country. To build social cohesion and celebrate our rich history and modern culture. We know diversity, inclusion and ensuring everyone can reach their potential are a source of national cultural and economic strength.

The National Urban Policy aims to outline our priorities as we work with partner governments on issues that impact our urban spaces. The design of our cities and the infrastructure that underpins them provide the foundations of connecting Australians. That connection is essential to achieving the social, economic and environment outcomes that Australians expect and deserve.

Australia is already home to globally significant cities. We have unique natural endowments, world-class institutions, a stable investment environment and a rich cultural history. We can leverage these strengths to ensure our cities contribute to the open, prosperous, multicultural social democracy that is modern Australia.

In working towards these goals, our approach is to collaborate with partner governments, industry, workers and communities. I thank all those who have contributed to the development of this policy and their ongoing work in helping Australia's urban spaces support us all to reach our potential.

Senator the Hon Jenny McAllister
Minister for Emergency Management and Cities

The National Urban Policy overview

Shared governments' vision for sustainable urban growth*

Our cities are shaped by the people who call them home. Our governments are committed to policies that enable all people to participate in and benefit from opportunities in our cities, living comfortably in close proximity to education and work places, shops, leisure and service facilities.

Ensuring our cities and suburbs meet the needs of current and future generations, our governments commit to collaboratively govern and holistically plan our cities within existing footprints first and with housing affordability as a primary goal.

We support balanced economic growth and our path to net zero, while strengthening our natural ecosystems, unique culture and the wellbeing of our communities.

This sustainable future can only be achieved through genuine partnerships, informed by First Nations knowledge and care for Country, and the contributions of our diverse communities.

We are planning metropolitan regions which are well-connected, foster active transport, drive innovation and support our cities and suburbs as hubs of productivity.

By delivering on this vision together, our cities will be adaptable, resilient to challenges, deliver economic opportunity and supportive of everyone who calls them home.

* This vision was agreed by the Australian, state and territory governments.

Liveable and equitable

Our urban places should support access for everyone to the basics of a decent life, including suitable and affordable housing, health care, education and work.

They should be vibrant and welcoming and support connection to cultural and community pursuits. Our urban places should be inclusive, promote social cohesion and foster connection among individuals and communities. Our cities should ensure we all have the chance to reach our potential.

Productive and innovative

Our urban places should support economic growth and encourage innovation.

Good urban policy can ensure our cities drive productivity and deliver prosperity. Urban places can support productivity by facilitating trade, freight and transport linkages domestically and globally. These connections enhance competition and drive innovation. Urban places should support their skilled workforces through efficient infrastructure connections and high-quality education and training institutions.

Sustainable and resilient

Our urban places value and protect Australia's unique environment and biodiversity for future generations.

Planning and development should support our path to net zero and provide opportunities for connection with the environment. Our cities, communities and systems should be resilient to the impacts of climate change and other risks.

Principles

| Planning and development should produce equitable and inclusive outcomes | Planning and investment choices should bolster economic growth, productivity and innovation | Design and development should support sustainable and climate resilient urban environments | Urban governance should be cooperative and collaborative | Decisions should be guided by evidence-based practice |

Contents

Part 1: Introduction

Getty Images Credit: Jon Hicks

A National Urban Policy

With the last National Urban Policy released in 2011, it is timely that the Australian Government update its approach to urban policy. The challenges and opportunities for our urban places have evolved since 2011. Many of the priorities identified in 2011 remain. However, new technologies and economic opportunities have emerged as the global economy changes. Our cities have also faced challenges like COVID-19, and new work patterns have emerged. Our cities are increasingly experiencing the effects of a changing climate. Our population has grown at an average annual rate of 1.4 percent between 2013 and 2023, with growth predominantly concentrated in our urban areas.[1] It is also ageing, with the proportion of people aged 65 years and over increasing at a faster rate than other age groups. The global community has committed to new frameworks like the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. This National Urban Policy updates the Australian Government's approach in light of the opportunities emerging and the changing circumstances facing Australia's cities.

Nearly 80 percent of Australia's population lives in our 20 largest cities.[2] Most people in Australia live in urban areas. How our cities are designed, planned and managed has a profound impact on the daily lives of people. The quality of urban places and the connections between them impact access to basic services, our participation in community life and the amount of time we can spend with friends and family. Well-designed urban policy can promote innovation, reduce inequality, connect us to the natural world, improve social cohesion and help us all achieve our individual and collective potential.

The actions of the Australian Government have a substantial impact on our urban places and can play a proactive role in shaping our cities. The Australian Government has a range of levers that affect how our urban places develop and evolve. These levers sit across portfolios in infrastructure and transport, housing, social services, health, education, industry and science, skills, environment, migration, energy and climate change. Improving the social, economic and environmental outcomes that people in Australia expect requires all levels of government, industries and communities working together to provide effective urban policies, plans and practices.

Australia's urban places

This policy seeks to cover all of Australia's cities, including our capital cities in which nearly 18 million people reside.[3] It provides a framework and goals that support all cities, large and small—from our central business districts to suburban and peri-urban realms and everything in between.

Australia's cities feature differing characteristics and levels of urbanisation, population density and use. Our inner-city rings are characterised by higher population density and high access to employment, services, infrastructure, public transport and amenities; middle-city rings typically have lower density than inner-city areas but often have high-density precincts around public transport hubs; while outer-city rings represent suburban Australia, typically including established and greenfield urban suburbs, and surrounding rural areas. As our cities grow, middle and outer-city rings often experience stresses on infrastructure.

Our largest cities are vitally connected to their regional counterparts. As they become more highly urbanised, they will also need to consider new factors in planning, designing and managing sustainable growth, with this policy serving as a guide.

Urban governance

All levels of governments can work together to support the shared governments' vision.

The Australian Government plays a substantial role in our cities and suburbs, with responsibility for many national level policies and programs that are key inputs to urban development, housing, infrastructure, transport, climate, migration and labour. The Australian Government has unique capacity, as a policymaker, investor and regulator, to foster collaborative action across partner governments to support delivery of a shared national vision.

Getty Images Credit: Rupert Hitchcox Photography Limited

State and territory governments create liveable places through their primary responsibility for urban policy and planning, as well as implementing updates to building construction regulations through the National Construction Code. They have a role in establishing vision and guidance for infrastructure, priority growth areas and precincts, as well as regional plans through strategic planning. They also drive state and territory policies, regulations and guidance materials and some higher priority planning assessments.

Territory and local governments are responsible for the operational management of urban places, including development planning and controls and local planning assessments, and deliver environmental and resource management.

The private sector plays a critical role in the way our cities are developed, influencing the built environment and contributing to the growth, productivity and sustainability of our urban places. Community and stakeholder participation is also vital in planning, developing and managing cities, ensuring ongoing support for the evolving character of our urban places.

The consultation process

In the 2023-24 Budget, the Australian Government committed to deliver a National Urban Policy. The policy is informed through extensive consultation, including with the reconvened Urban Policy Forum and the Urban Policy Network. A draft was also released for public consultation.

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts received a total of 93 survey responses and more than 200 written submissions during the public consultation period. A range of organisations and individuals provided submissions across the diverse stakeholder landscape, representing state, territory and local governments, peak industry bodies, academics, not-for-profit and private organisations, and private citizens.

The department also engaged with First Nations peoples and organisations, through a First Nations-led partner. Through this engagement the department has integrated First Nations knowledges, perspectives and aspirations into the policy. First Nations perspectives on housing, environment, sustainability, resilience and community engagement are essential to our understanding of inclusive and liveable cities.

A detailed description of the feedback heard during engagement and consultation is summarised in the National Urban Policy consultation feedback report. The government has listened to the valuable feedback and input, much of which is reflected in this document and will continue to inform ongoing policy development and implementation.

Elements of the National Urban Policy

In April 2023, National Cabinet agreed to develop a shared vision for sustainable growth in our cities and suburbs. That shared vision, detailed in Part 2 of this policy, forms the foundation of the Australian Government's National Urban Policy.

Part 3 elaborates on the shared vision by describing in greater detail the social, economic and environmental outcomes that the Australian Government intends to pursue through urban policy. The goals identified are liveable and equitable; productive and innovative; and sustainable and resilient.

Part 4 describes how the goals will be advanced. The first section, 'Implementation principles', provides guiding principles that aim to align decisions on policies, planning and investment and the ways in which all parties should work together. The second section, 'Implementation plan' outlines the next steps the Australian Government will take under the policy. The third section, 'Reporting', outlines the key metrics that will assist in monitoring progress toward the goals. The fourth section, 'Additional opportunities', highlights opportunities identified in consultation that may be considered as the policy develops.

The National Urban Policy was informed by the State of Australian Cities report and complements a broad range of strategies, policies, reports and frameworks, including the Australian Government's Regional Investment Framework and the Infrastructure Policy Statement, and the Northern Australia Action Plan 2024–2029.

Getty Images Credit: franckreporter

Getty Images Credit: SolStock

First Nations—connecting with Country

First Nations cultural heritage is interwoven within Australian urban places, enriching urban landscapes and promoting cultural richness and sense of community.

First Nations people belong to the world's oldest continuing living culture, spanning more than 60,000 years, and composed of many distinct communities and groups, with their own languages and traditions. First Nations people have successfully managed the lands, waters and resources throughout Australia for millennia. First Nations people maintain an enduring bond with Country and view our cities and suburbs not only as spaces for habitation but also as extensions of their culture, community and ancestral lands, carrying profound cultural significance.

Delivery of each of the policy's goals should be informed by First Nations perspectives and knowledges and respect their stewardship of, and connection to, Country. Our urban areas are an inherent part of Country and enable people to connect with Country. The Australian Government embraces this concept, acknowledges the need for self-determination, and recognises that our cities are grounded in thousands of years of history and stewardship of Country by its First People.

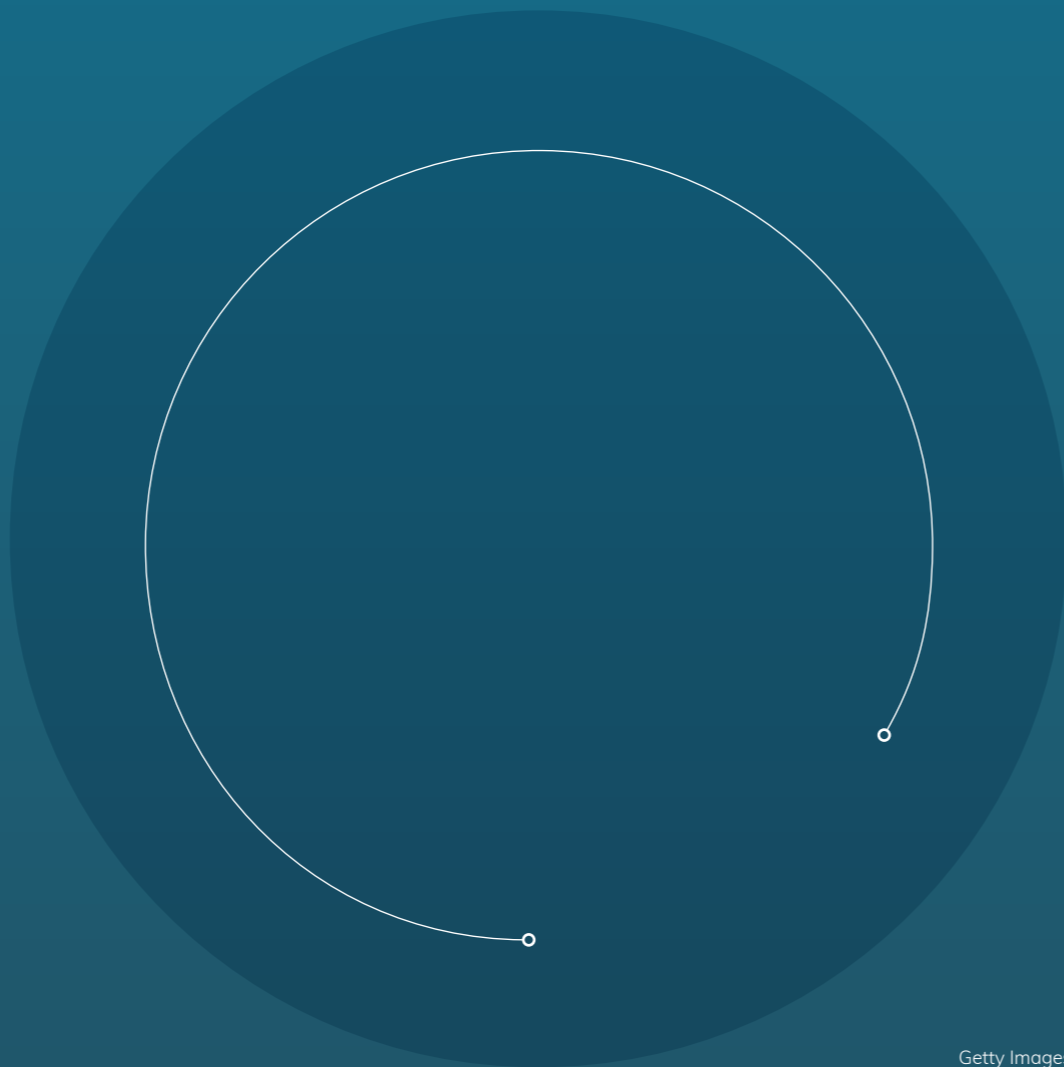A significant number of First Nations people live in urban areas. The interests and aspirations of First Nations people are integral to shaping the future of our cities. This includes people living on their ancestral lands, as well as those living off Country to gain better access to education, employment opportunities and essential services. The presence of First Nations people creates opportunities for cultural connection and stronger urban communities and contributes to the diversity and vibrancy of our cities.

Critical factors that can support improved urban connection with Country include respecting First Nations knowledges and culture, meaningful involvement and cultural preservation. First Nations should be incorporated in the design, development and management of urban and natural places, including Elders-led approaches. First Nations knowledge is critical to achieving sustainable places, as First Nations people have protected our environments to support ecosystems and communities that inhabit them.

Understanding and enabling connection with Country is beneficial for all Australians because it speaks to our national identity, supports a stronger connection to land and each other and promotes a sense of shared responsibility. Collective stewardship can unite people in their efforts towards the sustainable growth of cities that provide for belonging, community and wellbeing.

First Nations perspectives, understandings and aspirations will continue to inform the implementation of the policy and improved outcomes for First Nations people in urban places.

Part 2: Shared national vision

Getty Images Credit: Shaun Egan

Getty Images Credit: Matteo Colomboe

In 2024, national planning ministers jointly agreed a shared governments' vision for sustainable growth and committed to working towards realising it through future Planning Ministers' Meetings. This followed a 2023 decision from National Cabinet to develop such a shared vision and to contribute to the National Urban Policy.

This vision represents a unified commitment from governments to respond collaboratively to shared opportunities and challenges in urban places.

This vision was agreed by the Australian, state and territory governments.

Shared governments' vision for sustainable urban growth

Our cities are shaped by the people who call them home. Our governments are committed to policies that enable all people to participate in, and benefit from, opportunities in our cities, living comfortably in close proximity to education and work places, shops, leisure and service facilities.
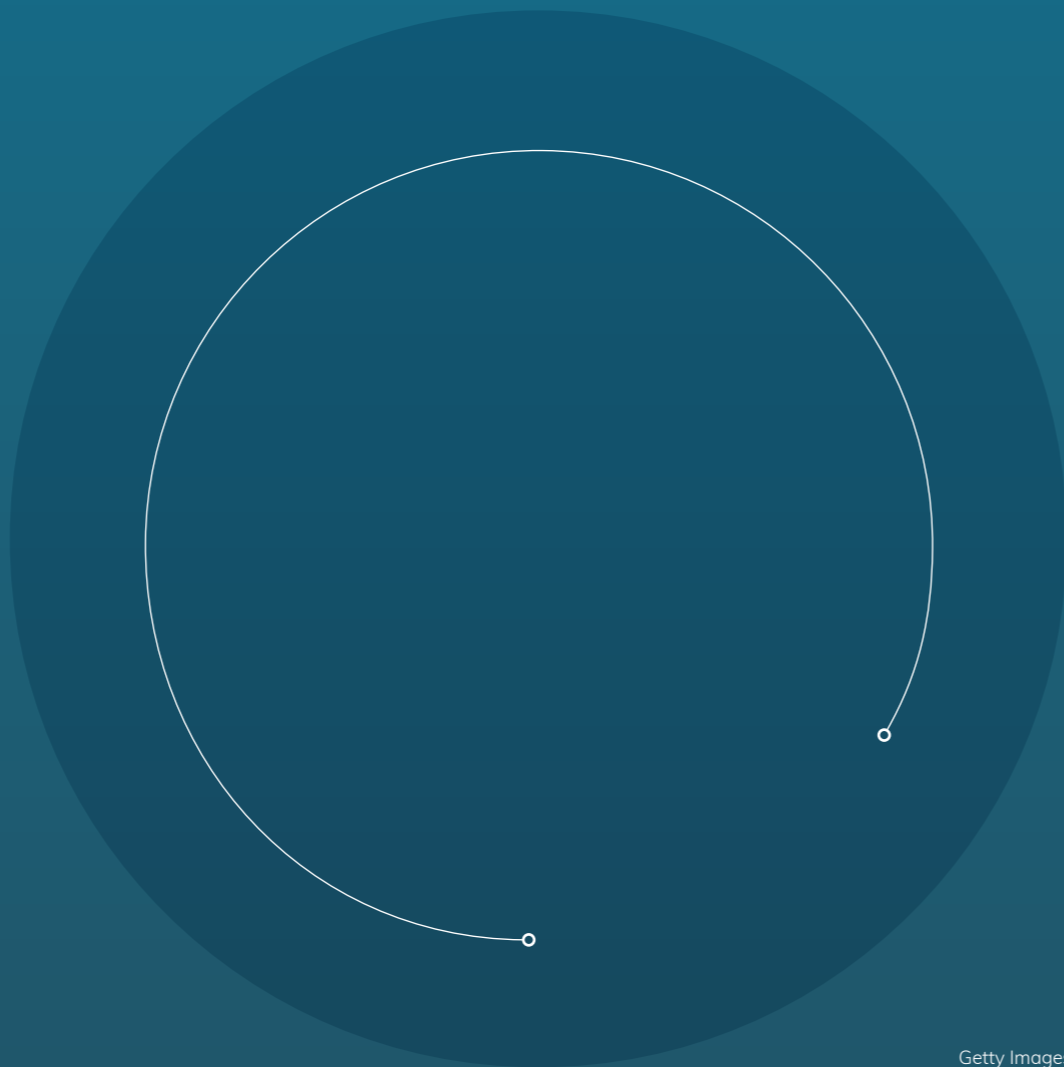
Ensuring our cities and suburbs meet the needs of current and future generations, our governments commit to collaboratively govern and holistically plan our cities within existing footprints first and with housing affordability as a primary goal.

We support balanced economic growth and our path to net zero, while strengthening our natural ecosystems, unique culture and the wellbeing of our communities. This sustainable future can only be achieved through genuine partnerships, informed by First Nations knowledge and care for Country, and the contributions of our diverse communities.

We are planning metropolitan regions which are well-connected, foster active transport, drive innovation and support our cities and suburbs as hubs of productivity.

By delivering on this vision together, our cities will be adaptable, resilient to challenges, deliver economic opportunity and supportive of everyone who calls them home.

Part 3: Australian Government's urban goals

Getty Images Credit: Insert photographer name

Getty Images Credit: SolStock

Australian Government's urban goals

Liveable and equitable

Our urban places should support access for everyone to the basics of a decent life, including suitable and affordable housing, health care, education and work.

They should be vibrant and welcoming and support connection to cultural and community pursuits. Our urban places should be inclusive, promote social cohesion and foster connection among individuals and communities. Our cities should ensure we all have the chance to reach our potential.

Productive and innovative

Our urban places should support economic growth and encourage innovation.

Good urban policy can ensure our cities drive productivity and deliver prosperity. Urban places can support productivity by facilitating trade, freight and transport linkages domestically and globally. These connections enhance competition and drive innovation. Urban places should support their skilled workforces through efficient infrastructure connections and high-quality education and training institutions.
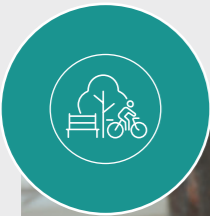
Sustainable and resilient

Our urban places value and protect Australia's unique environment and biodiversity for future generations.

Planning and development should support our path to net zero and provide opportunities for connection with the environment. Our cities, communities and systems should be resilient to the impacts of climate change and other risks.

Liveable and equitable

Our urban places should support access for everyone to the basics of a decent life, including suitable and affordable housing, health care, education and work.

They should be vibrant and welcoming and support connection to cultural and community pursuits. Our urban places should be inclusive, promote social cohesion and foster connection among individuals and communities. Our cities should ensure we all have the chance to reach our potential.

Getty Images Credit: SolStock

Urban places should be liveable and equitable for everyone who lives in them. Liveable and equitable cities can ensure that all individuals are safe and able to take advantage of the benefits from fully participating in society—for economic, social and wellbeing purposes. This promotes health, wellbeing and safety, while enabling people to connect to their communities.

Housing affordability—An adequate supply of housing that is affordable, suitable, connected and well located is a priority. In supporting housing affordability, we should aim to ensure housing is high in building quality, contributes to sustainability and promotes the character of local communities.

Delivering services—Urban places should ensure access for all to jobs and essential services such as education, health care and child care. These are the foundations for living a decent life in our urban places, and governments must ensure these are available to all. Disparities in access to health, education and public transport infrastructure often impact outer urban places, with disproportionate impacts for people from lower socio-economic backgrounds, people with disability, older people, single-parent families and First Nations people.[4]

Inclusion and social cohesion—Australia benefits from being one of the most successful multicultural nations in the world, with an increasing ethnic and cultural diversity. Vibrant and safe urban places enable us all to experience the benefits of diversity and cultural richness. Public spaces and services should embed support for the inclusion of people experiencing vulnerability, including First Nations people, women and girls, people with disability, single-parent families, older people, migrants and refugees, and LGBTIQA+ persons. Valuing diversity in urban places fosters opportunities for creative participation in shared community life and enhances social cohesion.

Community life—Our cities should support participation in community and cultural life. This includes artistic, religious, sporting, cultural, community and democratic activities. These are fundamental to social and cultural cohesion and thriving urban communities and economies.

Getty Images Credit: Andrew Merry

Liveable and equitable urban places should aim to provide:

- suitable, safe housing that is affordable and located close to jobs, education, health care, child care and other essential services and amenities

- effective, safe and affordable transport networks, including active and public transport options

- community and social infrastructure that supports a sense of belonging by encouraging connection, cultural activities and communal interactions; and emphasising the importance of fostering community bonds

- First Nations people with opportunities to connect with Country and ensure access to services, amenities, cultural activities and community

- a range of safe and accessible public spaces, including parks, plazas and communal open spaces, roads and streetscapes and natural environments, to foster a healthy lifestyle and active travel

- dedicated spaces for the arts, culture, religion, health, recreation and sporting infrastructure

- access to services and opportunities for all, recognising and addressing existing disparities.

Examples of major Australian Government initiatives supporting this goal

Australian Government commitments through the **Federation Funding Agreements** on **Infrastructure**, **Education and Skills**, **Health**, and **Affordable Housing and Community Services** support a range of state and territory priorities.

Programs such as the **Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program and Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program** help to ensure our precincts not only improve accessibility to services but also enable community connection and leverage additional investment. The **Thriving Suburbs Program** supports the Government in delivering investment to community infrastructure projects.

States and territories have agreed via National Cabinet to a **National Planning Reform Blueprint** of measures to improve housing supply through planning reforms. This will increase housing in our cities, test building of houses better suited to the changing climate and encourage the building industry's transition to net zero.

Programs such as the **Housing Australia Future Fund** and **First Home Guarantee** help to improve housing availability and affordability. Supported by the **Social Housing Accelerator** payment, all governments are working towards the Australian Government's **National Housing Accord**—a range of reforms to improve housing supply and affordability. This includes a shared ambition to build 1.2 million well-located homes over 5 years from 2024. The Australian Government's **Housing Support Program** will further support increased housing supply by funding projects that deliver enabling infrastructure, provide amenities to support new housing or improve building planning capability.

The Australian Government is targeting disparities in digital connectivity. The **Peri-Urban Mobile Program** supports the deployment of new or upgraded mobile phone infrastructure to address mobile reception and coverage issues in peri-urban areas. The **Planning Ministers' Meeting** is also working to streamline planning arrangements and legislative reforms to support **telecommunication deployments in new developments**.

The **National Agreement on Closing the Gap** sets out priority reforms and ambitious targets under a shared commitment to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to live healthy and prosperous lives, with Target 9 of the agreement being that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people secure, appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and need. The **Indigenous Advancement Strategy** is the way the Australian Government funds and delivers a range of programs for First Nations Australians.

Cost of living measures such as tax breaks for those earning $45,000 or under, provided through the 2024–25 Budget, are helping Australians combat rising living expenses linked to relatively high consumer price inflation. The government also contributes to a range of community infrastructure,[5] **active transport**[6] and **road safety** programs.[7]

The **Early Years Strategy** sets out the Australian Government's vision to best support Australia's children and their families. This articulates how the government will prioritise child-centred policy development and targeted investment in early years measures to support all children's development.

The **National Disability Insurance Scheme** and the **Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031** include policy priorities to ensure built environments are accessible and enable people with disability to participate in work, education, and social and cultural life.

Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place—Australia's cultural policy for the next five years contains a range of actions that renew and revive Australia's arts, culture and heritage sector.

Productive and innovative

Our urban places should support economic growth and encourage innovation.

Good urban policy can ensure our cities drive productivity and deliver prosperity. Urban places can support productivity by facilitating trade, freight and transport linkages domestically and globally. These connections enhance competition and drive innovation. Urban places should support their skilled workforces through efficient infrastructure connections and high-quality education and training institutions.

Getty Images Credit: Walter Bibikow

Cities are engines for economic growth and productivity which are essential to maintaining and sustaining our high quality of life and progress towards all goals. Productive and innovative cities create jobs, attract businesses and investment, facilitate global trade connections and encourage knowledge sharing between the public sector, the private sector and Australia's world-class universities and research institutions.

Global competitiveness—Our cities connect Australia to the global economy and are hubs for investment and innovation. The international flow of goods, services and people brings new technologies, ideas and opportunities for Australian businesses. As the home for financial and professional service sectors and multinational firms, cities ensure Australia remains connected to global innovation and adoption of world's best business practices. Efficient international freight and transport connections make sure we can take advantage of these linkages and increase trading and investment opportunities for Australian firms.

Investment in infrastructure—Public infrastructure investments that connect workers, business and resources can help increase productivity and efficiency and encourage private investment to drive economic growth. Improving the efficient functioning of cities, through strategic land-use choices and the right infrastructure project selection, is central to urban policy. Place-based approaches can support emerging industries to become globally competitive. Efficient transport infrastructure creates deeper labour markets, increasing the number of potential employee and business matches with better connected communities. Digital infrastructure also plays a key role in supporting connectivity, helping to attract business and investment. For example, knowledge industries thrive in connected city conditions, as they are not reliant on the movement of goods but on the creation of knowledge and how it is used and shared.

Leveraging technology—Integrated information and communication technologies and intelligent solutions can transform cities to be more responsive to community needs. Technological innovation can make cities more efficient and resilient, reducing resource consumption and costs while improving service provision. Artificial intelligence has numerous city applications, including automated city traffic and waste operations, strategic workforce planning, and disaster resilience. By taking careful advantage of technology, connection and data, Australia can transform our cities and the potential for economic and productivity growth.

Innovation and research—Cities are research and innovation hubs. The sharing of knowledge and ideas among highly skilled workers is a key driver of productivity. In this way, knowledge services industries are key to cities' success. By supporting these sectors through well-connected education and research precincts, cities can maximise their benefits to the broader economy.

Getty Images Credit: Sutthichai Supapornpasupad

Getty Images Credit: Michael Hall

Developing and attracting human capital—Developing, attracting and retaining skilled workers and business leaders is a key challenge to leverage the benefits of our cities. Supporting Australia's world-class educational institutions and their linkages to industry will ensure we maximise the development of local talent. Attracting international talent to Australia can support productivity gains by allowing for a larger pool of workers to be better matched to jobs and targeting of persistent skills deficits across key sectors of the economy.

Removing barriers to productivity—The productivity of Australia's cities relies on the efficient flow of people, goods and services through and within them. Improved connectivity between cities and regions is important to further generate widespread benefits and ensure markets are competitive. Effective and integrated urban freight, including protection of freight corridors while considering the needs in residential areas, is also critical to creating productive urban places that can viably serve all communities. Increases to productivity can also be driven by planning and zoning decisions that support business entry and competition, improve the feasibility of increased density and support mixed-use developments and industrial agglomeration. Mixed-use development can encourage economic growth and diversification of economic activities.

Industry clusters are able to share common infrastructure and leverage the unique advantages of a particular location's supply chains, networks and concentrations of skilled labour, creating economies of scale.

Productive and innovative urban places feature:

- well-planned transport to connect people and resources to the places they need to go
- efficient global freight and transport connections that facilitate the flow of people, goods and technologies
- physically and digitally connected sectors that support industries to take advantage of data, technological change and knowledge spillover
- efficient land use that improves the spatial distribution of economic activity and maximises the benefits of agglomeration. This includes precincts that support local business, innovation and investment
- world-class education and research institutions with strong connections to business and industry
- highly skilled workforces supported by education and training facilities and a skilled migration program
- deep labour markets across diverse industries that allow better matching of employees with firms.

Examples of major Australian Government initiatives supporting this goal

The Australian Government's **Infrastructure Investment Program** supports targeted investment in land transport infrastructure to alleviate congestion, better connect the regions, improve road safety and meet the national freight challenge. This 10-year commitment to an investment pipeline will support a range of outcomes in line with the National Urban Policy. The **National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy** sets a national vision for freight systems and supply chains to contribute to a strong and prosperous Australia.

The Australian Government is committed to its vision for a dynamic and inclusive labour market as outlined in **Working future: the Australian Government's white paper on jobs and opportunities**, which contains a roadmap to position the Australian labour market for the future. The **National Skills Agreement** seeks to deliver the Australian Government's 5-year agreement with state and territory governments to work in partnership to ensure that the national vocational education and training (VET) system provides high-quality and accessible education and training to boost productivity. The agreement will also ensure that people in Australia are supported to obtain the skills and capability required to obtain secure, well-paid jobs.

The Australian Government has established 10 **Jobs and Skills Councils** (JSCs) to provide industry with a stronger voice to ensure Australia's VET sector delivers better outcomes for learners and employers. JSCs identify skills and workforce needs for their industries, map career pathways across education sectors, develop contemporary VET training products, support collaboration between industry and training providers and act as a source of intelligence on issues affecting their industries.

The **Future Made in Australia agenda** will revitalise manufacturing in Australia through economic and industrial energy transition opportunities, including a core focus on renewable energy and clean energy transition.

The implementation of this agenda will make Australia's economy more prosperous and resilient.

The Australian Government is committed to positioning Australia as a top ten digital economy and society by 2030 through the **Digital Economy Strategy 2022 update**. The strategy sets the framework and direction to achieve this vision. The Australian Government is also **expanding full-fibre connections** for 1.5 million homes and businesses, with an expected Gross Domestic Product (GDP) uplift of up to $20 billion by 2030.[8]

The **National Reconstruction Fund Corporation** is investing in seven priority areas of the Australian economy by providing finance in the form of debt, equity and guarantees to support Australian projects that drive high-value industry transformation in resources, transport, medical science, defence capability, renewables and low-emission technologies, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, enabling capabilities.

The Australian Governments **THRIVE 2030 Strategy** sets out a vision for the long-term sustainable growth of the visitor economy. The strategy prioritises the development of compelling experiences and events in Australia's cities; and tourism infrastructure that benefits visitors and residents alike.

Getty Images Credit: davidf

Sustainable and resilient

Our urban places value and protect Australia's unique environment and biodiversity for future generations.

Planning and development should support our path to net zero and provide opportunities for connection with the environment. Our cities, communities and systems should be resilient to the impacts of climate change and other risks.

Getty Images Credit: imamember

Sustainable urban places operate without compromising the ability of future generations to live well.

Nature and biodiversity—Cities are places where natural and built environments coexist. Densification and infill development can support sustainability through reduced impacts on the surrounding natural environment and greater use of existing infrastructure. Promoting connection with green infrastructure, such as parks, bushland and canopies, and blue infrastructure, such as lakes, oceans, wetlands and rivers, has social and economic benefits for communities. They play a key role in encouraging the uptake of active transport and mitigating the urban heat island effect by providing shaded pathways, cooler environments and more comfortable conditions. They also help to preserve urban agriculture. Green and blue infrastructure also encourage biodiversity in our cities, providing areas for native plants and animals, as well as movement pathways and habitat corridors that connect wildlife populations across fragmented urban landscapes.

Reducing emissions—Cities are where most of Australia's energy-related emissions, including greenhouse gases, are produced. They can also be places that catalyse change, striving toward a more sustainable built environment, reduced emissions and more circular economies. Cities will play an important role in the clean energy transformation which will catalyse the reduction of Australia's emissions. The Net Zero 2050 Plan and associated six sectoral decarbonisation plans will assist achievement of our emissions reduction targets and boost sustainability in urban places.

Climate adaptation—Urban places will need to plan, adjust and adapt in the face of changing climate. The adaptations of each city will be unique and should be developed in partnership across government with the private sector and with communities. Adaptation in urbanised areas may include increasing tree canopy, introducing more permeable surfaces, upgrading the infrastructure and networks cities rely on, or preparing communities for disaster.

Resilience—Resilience is the capacity of built and natural systems, businesses, institutions, communities and individuals to survive, adapt and thrive no matter what stresses and shocks they experience. Climate change makes the need for our cities to be resilient more pressing as natural hazards become more frequent and severe. Our cities will also need to be resilient to the natural and human-induced crises that may impact on safety and wellbeing. Delivering resilient urban places will enhance Australia's ability to resist, absorb, accommodate, recover, transform and thrive in a timely, effective manner in response to shocks and stresses.

Sustainable and resilient urban places should support:

- low greenhouse gas emissions through support for clean energy infrastructure, improved energy performance, reduced embodied emissions and encouraging public and active transport
- protected, rehabilitated and restored natural spaces and biodiversity
- water sensitive urban design principles and planning
- accessible opportunities for connection to natural environments
- hazard reduction and buffers (where appropriate) between natural and built environment
- resource circularity to improve the way we produce, consume and dispose of materials
- adaptive urban planning and risk-based approaches toward urban development in areas of high environmental risk
- minimised impacts of urban heat
- improved land use and planning for local climate, risks and weather
- networks and infrastructure that are able to function and support communities in times of disaster
- urban systems that are ready to respond to interruptions and unforeseen events.

Examples of major Australian Government initiatives supporting this goal

The Australian Government is providing certainty and driving investment in low emissions and renewable technologies through the **Net Zero 2050 Plan**. To complement this, the Australian Government is developing six sectoral decarbonisation plans, which will feed into both Australia's Net Zero 2050 Plan and 2035 emissions reduction targets. These plans will cover the electricity and energy; industry; resources; built environment; agriculture and land; and transport sectors. The **Transport and Infrastructure Net Zero Roadmap and Action Plan** will examine potential pathways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050 across all transport modes (road, aviation, maritime and rail), freight and supply chains, active transport planning, and supporting infrastructure.

The National Circular Economy Framework will set the strategic direction for a national effort across regulatory, policy, research and market-based landscape, including consideration of opportunities to support circularity in urban planning, construction and manufacturing.

The **New Vehicle Efficiency Standard** will provide more fuel-efficient options, while the **National Electric Vehicle Strategy** provides a nationally consistent framework to get Australia's road transport sector on a pathway to net zero emissions, providing a vision to increase the uptake of electric vehicles.

The Australian Government is committed to prepare for national-level risks and impacts from climate change through the **National Climate Risk Assessment**, which will inform national priorities for climate adaptation and resilience and enable consistent monitoring of climate risk across Australian jurisdictions. In addition to this, the **National Adaptation Plan** will provide a consistent national approach to increase adaptation efforts and build national resilience to climate impacts. The **National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework** and **Second National Action Plan** sets out the

Getty Images Credit: Steve Waters

foundational work required nationally, across all sectors, to reduce existing disaster risk, minimise new disaster risk and deliver better climate and disaster risk information.

The **Capacity Investment Scheme** provides a national framework to encourage new investment in renewable capacity, such as wind and solar, as well as clean dispatchable capacity, such as battery storage. It aims to help build a more reliable, affordable and low-emissions energy system for all Australians.

The Australian Government is investing $100 million into **Community Solar Banks** to provide shared solar systems and help to lower electricity costs for more than 25,000 households.

The **Consumer Energy Resources Taskforce is** implementing the Consumer Energy Resources Roadmap to integrate consumer energy resources, such as rooftop solar and batteries, into the electricity grid to facilitate Australian consumers' access to clean, affordable and secure energy.

The **Rewiring the Nation** program is investing in new transmission lines to deliver affordable, reliable renewable energy to cities, towns and regional communities. It will make clean energy more accessible and affordable for Australian consumers.

The **Nature Positive Plan** will better protect the environment while supporting sensible development. It will deliver stronger environment powers, faster environment approvals, and more environment information and transparency.

Part 4: Implementation

Getty Images Credit: pixdeluxe

Getty Images Credit: SolStock

1. Implementation principles

The National Urban Policy implementation principles aim to align decisions on policies, planning and investment and provide a framework for how all parties can work together to achieve the policy's goals. The principles are designed to be adaptable for use by all levels of government, underscoring the importance of collaboration, best practice, evidence-based actions, and supporting the unique character of our cities and urban places. The Australian Government will promote the use of these principles when progressing areas of common, shared or national significance that interact with urban goals. The principles align with Australia's international commitments and provide the practical link between good urbanisation and the goals which support Australian's quality of life.

Principle 1: Planning and development should produce equitable and inclusive outcomes

Inclusion, equity and fairness are integral to ensure that improved wellbeing outcomes are shared across urban communities. This principle focuses on addressing disparities in access to housing, services and opportunities, ensuring that all urban residents benefit from urban growth and development.

- **Prioritise housing affordability:** Implement strategies to improve housing affordability.
- **Ensure equitable access and affordability:** Design urban places that are accessible and affordable and provide easy access to services, transport and employment opportunities.
- **Promote social cohesion:** Support inclusive urban design and policy that connects communities and celebrates the multicultural character of Australian cities.
- **Promote public health:** Foster environments that support access to health care and promote active transport, community infrastructure and amenities, healthy living, and other community services.
- **Support safe and inclusive communities:** Develop urban places where all residents are safe and can feel a sense of belonging and community.

Principle 2: Planning and investment choices should bolster economic growth, productivity and innovation

Urban places are drivers of economic growth and productivity. Urban investments and decision making should prioritise local economic productivity through mixed-use zoning and the support of diverse local businesses.

- **Productivity:** Encourage economic diversity, investment and innovation by understanding the competitive advantage the urban area offers and supporting a range of industries, fostering entrepreneurship, and supporting innovation, research and development. Promote place-based economic uplift through access to employment opportunities closer to home, reducing commuting time and improving local productivity and wellbeing.
- **Leverage technological innovation:** Embrace digital technologies and innovation to improve urban efficiency, enhance service accessibility and address contemporary challenges. This includes digital infrastructure, data-driven decision making, and technology solutions that contribute to sustainable urban development.
- **Support new industries:** Promote place-based economic uplift that aligns with existing local strengths and supports globally competitive industries.
- **Support access to skills and education:** Enhance access to quality education and skill development for lifelong learning opportunities for all residents, fostering a culture of innovation and adaptability.
- **Promote mixed-use developments:** Encourage zoning that supports business competition, local economic productivity, cultural activities and community social engagement, fostering vibrant, multifaceted urban areas during the day and night.
- **Create urban hubs and precincts to support industry:** Integrate local hubs and precincts that support strategic industries into local development strategies to maximise the benefits of agglomeration.

- **Freight and transport hubs:** Support freight and logistics movement pathways to create linkages between productive urban centres and transport hubs.

Principle 3: Design and development should support sustainable and climate-resilient urban environments

Urban design and development should enhance wellbeing, connection and resilience. This principle emphasises the need for cities to adapt to both current and future challenges, including climate change and other disruptions.

- **Enhance health and wellbeing:** Prioritise the creation of green and blue spaces, ensuring equitable access to nature and promoting physical and mental health and active lifestyles.
- **Innovate in sustainable urban development:** Lead in the adoption of sustainable practices and technologies in the built environment sector, promoting resilience and adaptability.
- **Support the circular economy:** Implement policies that reduce waste, emissions, pollution and landfill; and develop a nature positive economy by adopting circular economy principles, models and systems.
- **Take a nature positive approach:** Develop environmentally sensitive, healthy precincts and infrastructure that support repair or regeneration of species and ecosystems.
- **Promote resilience and adaptation:** Develop strategies to enhance urban resilience, including disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation and the use of nature-based solutions. Foster local and regional self-sufficiency in water, energy and other essential resources. Mitigate the impact of climate and natural hazards and retain or improve insurability of infrastructure and housing.

Getty Images Credit: Ommaphat Chotirat

Principle 4: Urban governance should be cooperative and collaborative

Urban governance should be collaborative, inclusive and adaptive, engaging all levels of government, communities and stakeholders. Planning should be integrated, responsive to local contexts and inclusive of all voices, particularly marginalised and vulnerable groups. This principle aims to ensure that governments work together to deliver on shared priorities.

- **Aligned policies and governance:** Promote collaboration and partnerships across all governmental urban planning and development frameworks.

- **Place-based approaches:** Collaborate with private and community sector, as well as the community, to develop places that reflect local culture, character and needs.

- **Democratic and accountable governance:** Ensure appropriate democratic governance and decision-making frameworks that incorporate engagement with local communities. Ensure decisions are made within a framework characterised by transparency, accountability, probity and community engagement.

- **Deliver high-quality places with appropriate density:** Develop high-quality and functional urban places with appropriate density that enables easy access to services and transport infrastructure and promotes social cohesion. Prioritise urban planning, with investment and housing that support people's choices to live closer to work, services and other amenities and maximise the utility of investment in supporting infrastructure.

Principle 5: Decisions should be guided by evidence-based practice

Urban development and policies should be driven by a strong evidence base. High-quality data at the local level can provide valuable insights. This principle emphasises the importance of data-driven decision making and the need for a strong evidence base of research, supported by clear standards and guidelines to inform shared practice.

This National Urban Policy is supported by the State of Australian Cities report—a comprehensive research report providing insights into life in Australian cities. By benchmarking, and tracking the data points over time, policymakers and urban planners can gain actionable insights into the changing nature of Australian cities, informing future decision making and policy development. These data points support evidence-based policy making by providing quantifiable data on various aspects of urban life, enabling more informed and targeted urban strategies.

- **Collaboration for data improvement:** Increase collaboration across all levels of government to enhance the national urban evidence base, contributing to the State of Australian Cities reports and ensuring that data and information are comprehensive, openly accessible and up to date. This requires a commitment to ensure reliable, accurate, complete and consistent information is collected and data privacy and sensitivity considerations are observed.

- **Clear measurement and evaluation frameworks:** Use clear and consistent indicators, frameworks and methodologies. Monitor implementation of plans, policies and programs in cities, contributing to consistent and comparable reporting on progress. Develop performance measurement tools that inform urban plans, policies, programs, development, targeted investment and decision making.

- **Innovation through research:** Foster urban innovation through initiatives such as 'living labs' and 'digital twins' to de-risk investment on larger scales. Improve on the high-quality domestic urban research base that aligns with achievement of both national and global goals.

2. Implementation plan

This section outlines how the Australian Government will translate the shared vision, goals and principles into actionable steps for realising our national prosperity and wellbeing, as outlined in this National Urban Policy. The policy is intended to deliver stronger alignment and partnerships between, across and within governments to create the conditions for change that support our shared urban vision. Our cities are shaped by governments, communities and the private sector, and we all have a role to play in addressing challenges and taking advantage of opportunities in our cities.

Australian Government

To implement the policy:

1. The Minister for Cities will lead implementation of the policy, supported by the Cities and Suburbs Unit in the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts.

2. The Australian Government will establish cross-portfolio forums to progress urban policy initiatives, coordinate work impacting urban areas, monitor progress and improve coordination with state and territory counterparts.

3. The department will work through interdepartmental committees and bilaterally with portfolios across the Australian Government to inform the development and implementation of Australian Government policy and investment decisions with urban impacts. This will include broader consideration and alignment with the National Urban Policy, the principles and shared vision.

4. The department will review existing urban funding programs and Australian Government guidance to identify opportunities for more integrated strategic urban investment and planning.

5. The Australian Government will deliver regular State of Australian Cities reports that include performance and progress reporting; and area of focus reports to provide greater depth on key issues.

6. Infrastructure Australia will work closely with the department to support integrated infrastructure planning and advice.

Collaboration with partner governments

Under the National Urban Policy, the Australian Government will work with partner governments on urban policy opportunities under existing mechanisms, including the following:

7. The Australian Government will work with all governments to support the delivery of the shared vision for sustainable urban growth, primarily through regular Planning Ministers' Meetings. This includes working with partner governments to identify how best to collaborate to achieve the shared vision.

8. The Australian Government will work with partner governments to progress a shared work plan and initiatives to deliver on the shared vision that will:

9. Build on the National Planning Reform Blueprint and extensive initiatives already underway in each state and territory by identifying actions to address the common, shared or nationally significant challenges that require coordinated action

   – Capture agreed collaborative activities with partner governments, including co-developed tools, policy and guidance, knowledge exchange, research and data capture initiatives.

   – The Minister for Cities and the department will engage on urban issues through other ministerial forums with urban impacts, such as ministerial councils on Infrastructure and Transport, Energy and Climate Change, and Housing and Homelessness, and the Building Ministers' Meeting.

Stakeholder engagement

Under the National Urban Policy, the Australian Government will work with key stakeholders on urban policy issues, including the following:

10. The Urban Policy Forum of government-appointed urban policy advisors, including academic, local government and industry representatives, will be retained to provide advice on the implementation of the urban policy agenda.

11. Stakeholder workshops will be facilitated to develop specific reform options to support delivery of the goals and the vision.

12. The department will work with key stakeholders to establish a platform for the collection, organisation and dissemination of National Urban Policy aligned information that supports stakeholders to realise urban places consistent with the goals.

3. Reporting

By tracking the realisation of these goals over time, policymakers and urban planners can gain actionable insights into the changing nature of Australian cities, informing future decision making and policy development.

The State of Australian Cities report is a companion document to the National Urban Policy. The report is framed around the goals and offers comprehensive insights into life in Australia's cities. The datapoints used in the report have been listed in the table below to provide readers with a link to the goals, noting that factors that support one goal invariably have flow-on impacts elsewhere. The State of Australian Cities report provides greater detail and offers comprehensive analysis.

The availability of consistent and comparable national level data is constantly changing and, as such, the data in the State of Australian Cities report may be adjusted in the future to accommodate emerging trends and challenges.

Getty Images Credit: SolStock

National Urban Policy goals and related data points

Liveable and equitable

Data points	Context
City population growth	Population growth data helps planners anticipate future infrastructure and service needs for sustainable urban expansion.
Demographics: • First Nations • Age • Language spoken at home (other than English)	Demographic data shows city diversity, informing tailored services, housing, and urban design.
Household income	Income data identifies economic disparities, guiding policies on housing, social services, and development.
Housing: • Dwelling stock • Housing affordability • First Nations home ownership • Average household size • Social housing • Homelessness • First Nations homelessness	Housing data points assess access, affordability, and equality across demographic groups, including First Nations.
People's attitudes to liveability	Data on people's attitudes to liveability shows the lived experience in cities to balance the statistical data.
Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage	The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage summarises economic and social conditions to determine advantage or disadvantage levels within cities.
Access to services: • Healthcare access • First Nations access • Disability access • Education access • First Nations education access • Child care access • Open public space • Culture and leisure access • Event attendance and participation • Community and sport infrastructure	Access to services data measures the accessibility and proximity of essential services for city residents.
Movement: • Commuting distance • Car dependency • Public transport use • Active travel • Walkability	Movement data captures commuting patterns, transport preferences, and urban design effectiveness. This information is key to understanding urban mobility and accessibility and the environmental impact of travel choices.
Safety	Safety data reflects security levels and perceptions within cities.

Productive and innovative

Data points	Context
Economy: • Gross Domestic Product • Gross Regional Product	Gross Domestic Product and Gross Regional Product demonstrate local economic activity and highlight areas of high economic activity within cities.
Labour force data: • 3-year employment growth • Working age population • Unemployment • Underemployment • Underutilisation • Proportion of First Nations persons aged 25-64 who are employed	Labour force data, including employment growth and working age population, illustrate the use of available labour pools within cities and their post-COVID-19 recovery.
Major industries of employment: • Health care and social assistance • Information technology • Tourism • Knowledge-based industries • Culture • Sport • New industries (like net zero)	Major industries of employment data reveal labour market diversity and job concentration, which can inform targeted investment decisions.
Business innovation	Business innovation metrics indicate economic growth potential and adaptability.
Education attainment: • Year 12 attainment • Certificate III+ • University • Vocational attainment • First Nations education	Educational attainment data points help identify skill gaps within cities and inform education investment for future job markets.
Spatial distribution of jobs (employment precincts)	Spatial distribution of jobs maps employment precincts and common transport modes used by employees.
Night-time economy revenue	Night-time economy revenue indicates city liveliness and post-COVID nightlife recovery.
Physically connected: • Freight • Passenger kilometres • Road congestion	Physically connected data measures freight movement, passenger travel, and road congestion. This data point reflects economic activity, infrastructure efficiency, and quality of life issues related to travel time and accessibility.
Digitally connectivity	Digital connectivity data measures the extent and quality of digital infrastructure, including internet access and usage across different urban areas.
Population dynamics: • Overseas migration • Internal migration • Natural population increase	Population dynamics data tracks overseas and internal migration patterns, as well as natural population increase, showing how urban populations change over time.

Sustainable and resilient

Data points	Context
Disaster impacts: • Disaster activations • Funding support provided • Insurance costs	Disaster impact measures, including activations, funding support and insurance costs, reveal disaster costs and the effectiveness of resilience practices.
Energy resilience	Energy resilience metrics indicate the robustness of power supply systems.
Emissions reductions	Emissions reduction data measures cities' progress in lowering carbon footprints and meeting emissions targets.
Heat-Health Index exposure	Heat-Health Index exposure indicates how urban areas are impacted by higher temperatures associated with climate change.
Population-weighted density	Population-weighted density captures city density and urban spread.
Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) and National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS) building energy efficiency ratings	NatHERS and NABERS ratings measure energy efficiency in new residential and commercial buildings, impacting comfort, health, costs, emissions and energy infrastructure needs. NABERS also measures existing commercial buildings.
Transport emissions	Transport emissions data is used to measure progress in reducing transport-related emissions across different transport modes.
Electric vehicle uptake	Electric vehicle uptake data shows progress towards a more sustainable transport system.
Resource use, waste disposal and reuse (circular economy)	Resource use, waste disposal and reuse data demonstrate the integration of circular economy principles in cities.
Urban biodiversity levels, including tree canopy coverage	Urban biodiversity levels show the variety, abundance and health of flora and fauna ecosystems within cities.

Getty Images Credit: pamspix

4. Additional opportunities

The consultation process provided an opportunity for stakeholders to identify opportunities for all levels of government and the private sector to play a role in supporting urban areas. The additional opportunities identified below are examples of the thinking that will continue to inform policy development as the National Urban Policy is implemented, including through the Australian Cities Ministerial Working Group.

Liveable and equitable

Additional opportunities for liveable and equitable urban places include:

- ensuring urban growth investment is informed by national population projections, skills needs, and community and business strengths and unique advantages
- supporting infill development through strategic planning of housing, economic and social infrastructure, while taking advantage of existing infrastructure and improving accessibility
- supporting mapping public transport options to community needs to reduce travel times and congestion
- ensuring that plans for new and expanded communities include accessible education, arts, religious, sporting, community and cultural facilities
- supporting the provision of targeted urban interventions in areas experiencing inequality
- supporting diversity by allowing for ageing in place and planning for and delivering key worker accommodation near their places of work
- supporting First Nations heritage in both traditional and contemporary ways and facilitating renewal of heritage places with new interpretations that create shared value
- supporting housing affordability by implementing strategies, including through the National Housing and Homelessness Plan, to address housing affordability, including through public and social housing, to take pressure off renters and reduce homelessness.

Productive and innovative

Additional opportunities for productive and innovative urban places include:

- facilitating private investment in infrastructure and innovative technologies
- co-locating like industries or related sectors to promote knowledge transfer and spillover
- continually improving the efficiency of freight and people transport networks, including through ensuring mixed modes of transport and adapting to changing work patterns that increase non-radial journeys and trips that are outside peak hours
- supporting ports to undergo modern renewal, and other initiatives that create a sense of value for industrial places
- supporting internal and external migration that supports the skill needs our future economy
- improving access to high-quality digital connectivity and telecommunications
- improving results against indicators in Australia's Measuring What Matters Framework.

Sustainable and resilient

Additional opportunities for sustainable and resilient urban places include:

- further supporting the renewable energy transformation to support decarbonisation and reduce energy costs
- improving air and water quality and enhancing the natural environment
- supporting biodiversity, natural environments and ecosystems
- shifting skills and building labour capacity to support emerging sustainable industries
- considering whole-of-precinct or city risk mapping
- planning for long-term climate risks and weather patterns and preparedness for extreme weather events, impacts of climate uncertainty as well as health or economic crises, including accessible public information and accessible early warning systems

Getty Images Credit: Peter Adams

- considering urban heat in planning and incorporating appropriate mitigation strategies
- identifying areas for protection, restoration and sustainable development through regional plans
- delivering new infrastructure with resilient principles incorporated, and back-up infrastructure systems
- considering standardised definitions and guidance on sustainability in the built environment. This could include national guidance on topics such as increasing green spaces and wildlife corridors in urban environments
- incorporating prevention and education strategies into city planning to prepare people for potential disasters and improve overall community resilience
- strengthening economic security to safeguard against socio-economic and environmental stresses

- reducing urban greenhouse gas emissions to achieve net zero targets in line with Australia's international commitments in the built environment, including through built and transport sector net zero plans
- working to better align planning vertically across all levels of government and horizontally across portfolios that reflect the shared vision for sustainable growth
- provide clear guidance on projected urban population and demographic change, support necessary infrastructure and enhance environmental services (blue and green space, biodiversity, water and air quality)
- consider urban planning challenges and opportunities at the larger system level, such as natural river catchment level planning for flood resilience, supporting interdependencies and relationships between urban and regional areas.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Accessibility	The ability to access and benefit from a process, system, service or product. If something is accessible then anyone can directly access or use it, regardless of their ability, location, language, culture, time and resources, or any other differentiating factor that contributes to the diversity of our communities.[9]
Active transport	All forms of transport that require physical activity for movement, including cycling, walking and other non-motorised forms.[10]
Adaptation (climate)	The process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects. In human systems, adaptation seeks to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In natural systems, human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects.[11]
Affordable housing	Another form of subsidised housing that is appropriate for the needs of a range of low- to moderate-income households and priced so that these households find it easier to meet other basic living costs, such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education.[12]
Agglomeration	The wider economic benefits that arise from the concentration of businesses and activities in a specific geographic area, leading to increased productivity and efficiency.
Biodiversity	The variety of all life forms. There are 3 levels of biodiversity: • genetic diversity—the variety of genetic information contained in individual plants, animals and microorganisms • species diversity—the variety of species • ecosystem diversity—the variety of habitats, ecological communities and ecological processes.[13]
Biodiversity corridors	Linear landscape structures that link habitats and helps movement of, and genetic exchange among, organisms between these habitats.[14]
Blue infrastructure / blue spaces	Water systems that deliver environmental, economic and/or social values and benefits to communities. This includes waterways, wetlands, drainage corridors and other water features.[15]
Circular economy	A system where materials are reused rather than being wasted. In a circular economy, products and materials are kept in circulation through processes like maintenance, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture, recycling and composting.[16]
Community	An interconnected group of people who can influence one another's wellbeing. An individual's community is usually considered to be broader than the people with whom they live or have immediate family ties.[17]
Congestion	A condition in transport where the speed of traffic is slowed. Congestion is measured by the Australian Automobile Association using average speeds as percentages of free flow speeds and average speeds as percentages of speed limits.[18]
Cost of living	Major household expenses for people living in Australia, including housing, food, utilities, petrol, health care and education fees.[19]
Digital connectivity	The ability to access the digital services, applications, online platforms and digital devices that are central to participation in the digital economy and the digital transformation of services.[20]
Green spaces / green infrastructure	All of the vegetation that provides environmental, economic and social benefits such as clean air and water, climate regulation, food provision, erosion control and places for recreation in urban spaces.[21]
Homelessness	While there is no single definition of homelessness, for statistical purposes in Australia, someone experiencing homelessness is someone who is in an improvised dwelling, tent or sleeping rough; or has no security of tenure—e.g. temporary lodgings, supported accommodation or couch surfing; or does not have control of and space for social relations for example; severely crowded dwellings; and does not have access to suitable alternatives.[22]
Major city/cities	Defined in this policy as the 20 most populated Australian cities, included in the 2024 State of Australian Cities report.
Mixed-use zoning	Land-use zoning that provides for a range of residential, commercial, industrial and other uses.[23]
Mixed-use developments	Developments utilising mixed-use zoning.
National Cabinet	A forum for the Prime Minister, Premiers and Chief Ministers to meet and work collaboratively. National Cabinet was established on 13 March 2020 and is chaired by the Prime Minister. The Commonwealth and state and territory governments individually have flexibility to determine the best way to achieve any agreed outcomes made by National Cabinet in their jurisdiction.
Net zero	Refers to achieving an overall balance between greenhouse gas emissions produced and emissions taken out of the atmosphere. This includes efforts to reduce emissions as much as possible and remove carbon from the atmosphere (involving capturing and storing carbon in vegetation, soil, oceans or another storage facility).[24]
Place-based approach	A collaborative, long-term approach to building thriving communities delivered in a defined geographic location. The approach is ideally characterised by partnering and shared agenda, shared design, shared stewardship and shared accountability for outcomes and impacts.[25]
Planning Ministers Meeting (PMM)	A meeting of all state and territory government ministers with primary responsibility for planning matters, convened by the Commonwealth Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.
Population density	The ratio of a human population to a given land area. It is measured as people per square kilometre.[26]
Public space	Comprises all places publicly owned or of public use, accessible and enjoyable by all for free.[27]
Social cohesion	The belief held by citizens of a given nation-state or urban area that they share a moral community, which enables them to trust each other.[28]
Social housing	Government-subsidised short- and long-term rental housing for people on low incomes and who often have experienced homelessness or family violence or have other special needs.[29]
Social infrastructure	The facilities, spaces, services and networks that support the quality of life and wellbeing of our communities. Types of social infrastructure assets include health and aged care, education, green/blue and recreation, arts and culture, social housing and justice and emergency services.[30]

Spatial distribution	The arrangement of individuals or units in a particular area or space—i.e. across Australia.	
Suburb/s	Officially recognised geographic zones within cities and larger towns, defined by state and territory governments in Australia. They are divided for administrative purposes like determining addresses.[31]	
Supply chain	The network of all the individuals, organisations, resources, activities, processes and technologies involved in the creation and sale of a product.[32]	
Sustainable development	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development calls for concerted efforts towards building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for people and planet, harmonising economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection.[33]	
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	The United Nations' blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all through implementation of 17 goals by 2030. The goals address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.[34] Goal 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities focuses explicitly on cities, recognising the challenges of urban sprawl, air pollution and limited open public space and setting targets and indicators to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.	
Transport infrastructure	The fixed installations, structures and networks that enable the movement of people and goods.[35]	
Urban heat or heat islands	The phenomenon in which urban areas are typically warmer than surrounding rural areas, particularly at night, because of the heat retained in hard surfaces and buildings.[36]	
Urban areas	Built localities with populations of more than 1,000 people.[37] They include established urban areas and urbanising areas, capital cities, major cities, regional cities, towns and suburban and peri-urban areas.	
Zoning	A form of regulatory implementation of planning which involves the division of the community into districts, or zones, within which regulations apply to the use of land or buildings and the intensity of that use, as well as the height and bulk or extent of that use.[38]	

References

1 Bureau of Communications, Arts and Regional Research. [DITRDCA] Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts. (15 August 2024). Customised Report on Population and Internal Migration [Data Set].

2 [ABS] Australian Bureau of Statistics. Australian Government. (2024). *Capital city growth the highest on record.* **https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/capital-city-growth-highest-record**, accessed 3 October 2024.

3 [ABS] Australian Bureau of Statistics. Australian Government. (2024). *Capital city growth the highest on record.* **https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/capital-city-growth-highest-record**, accessed 3 October 2024.

4 Giles-Corti, B., Saghapour, T., Turrell, G., Gunn, L., Both, A., Lowe, M., Rozek, J., Roberts, R., Hooper, P., Butt, A., Higgs, C. (2022). *Spatial and socioeconomic inequities in liveability in Australia's 21 largest cities: does city size matter?.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2022.102899, accessed 19 August 2024.

5 [DITRDCA] Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts. (n.d.). *Thriving Suburbs Program.* **https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/cities/thriving-suburbs-program, accessed 24 October 2024.**

6 [DITRDCA] Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts. (n.d.). *Active transport—walking and cycling.* **https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure/pab/active_transport, accessed 24 October 2024.**

7 [DITRDCA] Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts. (n.d.). *Road safety programs.* **https://www.roadsafety.gov.au/projects/road-safety-programs, accessed 24 October 2024.**

8 National Broadband Network corporation. (2022). *NBN Co welcomes $2.4 billion government investment to enable 1.5 million more homes and businesses to upgrade to full fibre NBN.* **https://www.nbnco.com.au/corporate-information/media-centre/media-statements/nbn-co-welcomes-24billion-government-investment-to-enable-15million-more-homes-and-businesses-to-upgrade-to-full-fibre-nbn**, accessed 24 October 2024.

9 Victorian Government. (2021). *Public Engagement Framework 2021–2025.* **https://www.vic.gov.au/public-engagement-framework-2021-2025/definitions**, accessed 24 July 2024.

10 Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute. (n.d.). *Glossary.* **https://www.ahuri.edu.au/glossary?letter=A#taxonomy-term-835**, accessed 9 August 2024.

11 UN-Habitat. United Nations. (2016). *Glossary of the Habitat III.* **https://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/Habitat-III-Glossary.pdf**, accessed 13 August 2024.

12 Department of Social Services. (2023). *National Housing and Homelessness Plan issues paper 2.* **https://engage.dss.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/national-housing-and-homelessness-plan-issues-paper_2.pdf**, accessed 29 October 2024.

13 [DCCEEW] Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. (2021). *Australia state of the environment 2021.* **https://soe.dcceew.gov.au/about-soe/glossary/B**, accessed 29 July 2024.

14 [DCCEEW] Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. (2021). *Australia state of the environment 2021.* **https://soe.dcceew.gov.au/about-soe/glossary/C**, accessed 29 July 2024.

15 New South Wales Government. (n.d.). Green and blue. **https://www.movementandplace.nsw.gov.au/place-and-network/built-environment-indicators/green-and-blue**, accessed 5 August 2024.

16 [DITRDCA] Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts. (2024). *Transport and infrastructure net zero consultation roadmap.* **https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/transport-and-infrastructure-net-zero-consultation-roadmap.pdf**, accessed 5 August 2024.

17 [ABS] Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2001). **Measuring wellbeing: frameworks for Australian social statistics,** 2001. **https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/latestproducts/4FDE4F3589A73648CA2571B80010B86B?opendocument**, accessed 19 August 2024.

18 Australian Automobile Association. (2018). *Road congestion in Australia.* **https://www.aaa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/AAA-Congestion-Report-2018-FINAL.pdf**, accessed 5 August 2024.

19 [ABS] Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Selected living cost indexes, Australia.*

20 New South Wales Government. (2024). *Digital Connectivity Principles Policy for NSW government-funded infrastructure projects.* **https://arp.nsw.gov.au/dcs-2024-01-digital-connectivity-principles-policy-for-nsw-government-funded-infrastructure-projects/#:~:text=Digital%20connectivity%20means%20the%20ability,digital%20transformation%20of%20government%20services**, accessed 5 August 2024.

21 Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation. (n.d.). *Establishing a national agenda for urban green infrastructure.* **https://www.csiro.au/en/research/environmental-impacts/sustainability/green-infrastructure**, accessed 13 August 2024.

22 [ABS] Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2012). *A statistical definition of homelessness.* **https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/4922.0Main%20Features22012**, accessed 28 October 2024.

23 Victorian Planning Authority. Victorian State Government. (2017). *Victorian Planning Authority glossary.* **https://vpa.vic.gov.au/glossary**, accessed 28 October 2024.

24 [DCCEEW] Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. (2021). *Australia state of the environment 2021.* **https://soe.dcceew.gov.au/about-soe/glossary/N**, accessed 29 July 2024.

25 Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works. Queensland Government. (2023). *Place-based approaches.* **https://www.housing.qld.gov.au/initiatives/place-based-approaches#:~:text=Place%2Dbased%20approaches%20are%20collaborative,accountability%20for%20outcomes%20and%20impacts**, accessed 5 August 2024.

26 [ABS] Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Regional population.* **https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/regional-population/latest-release**, accessed 13 August 2024.

27 UN-Habitat. United Nations. (2016). *Glossary of the Habitat III.* **https://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/Habitat-III-Glossary.pdf**, accessed 13 August 2024.

28 Larsen, C.A. (2014). *Social cohesion: definition, measurement and developments.* **https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egms/docs/2014/LarsenDevelopmentinsocialcohesion.pdf**, accessed 5 August 2024.

29 Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute. (n.d.). *Glossary.* **https://www.ahuri.edu.au/glossary?letter=S**, accessed 9 August 2024.

30 Infrastructure Australia. (2019). *Australian Infrastructure Audit 2019.* **https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-08/Australian%20Infrastructure%20Audit%202019%20-%206.%20Social%20Infrastructure.pdf**, accessed 13 August 2024.

31 [ABS] Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Suburbs and localities.* **https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/australian-statistical-geography-standard-asgs-edition-3/jul2021-jun2026/non-abs-structures/suburbs-and-localities**, accessed 5 August 2024.

32 [DITRDCA] Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts. (2024). *Transport and infrastructure net zero consultation roadmap.* **https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/transport-and-infrastructure-net-zero-consultation-roadmap.pdf**, accessed 5 August 2024.

33 United Nations. (n.d.). *Sustainable Development Goals, frequently asked questions.* **https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda-retired/#:~:text=%E2%97%8F,future%20for%20people%20and%20planet.**, accessed 21 August 2024.

34 United Nations. (n.d.). *Sustainable Development Goals.* **https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/**, accessed 21 August 2024.

35 [DITRDCA] Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts. (2024). *Transport and infrastructure net zero consultation roadmap.* **https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/transport-and-infrastructure-net-zero-consultation-roadmap.pdf**, accessed 5 August 2024.

36 [DCCEEW] Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. (2021). *Australia state of the environment 2021.* **https://soe.dcceew.gov.au/about-soe/glossary/U**, accessed 29 July 2024.

37 [ABS] Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2021). Urban centres and localities. *Australian Statistical Geography Standard (3rd Edition).* **https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/australian-statistical-geography-standard-asgs-edition-3/jul2021-jun2026/significant-urban-areas-urban-centres-and-localities-section-state/urban-centres-and-localities**, accessed 13 August 2024.

38 UN-Habitat. United Nations. (2016). *Glossary of the Habitat III.* **https://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/Habitat-III-Glossary.pdf**, accessed 13 August 2024.