



Australian Government
Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

6 July 2024

By email: urbanpolicyinput@infrastructure.gov.au

Dear Department,

Subject: A National Urban Policy for Australia

I am reaching out on behalf of the [Business Council for Sustainable Development Australia \(BCSDA\)](#), in our role as a pivotal advocate for sustainable development within the business sector and as a global network partner of the [World Business Council for Sustainable Development \(WBCSD\)](#).

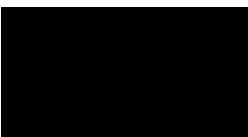
Our collective mission is to champion sustainable business practices that are not only globally recognized but also carefully adapted to meet the unique demands of the Australian landscape.

Outlined in the following pages is our feedback to the Consultation you have requested on the **Subject**. We thank you for the opportunity to make these submissions.

We confirm our submission can be made public.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
COUNTRY COMPARATOR	2
BCSD INSIGHTS & RESOURCES ON THE TOPIC	3
RELEVANCE TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS	5
RESPONSES TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS	6
REFERENCES / RESEARCH / SOURCES	18

Yours faithfully,



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Executive Summary

BCSD Australia is a leading business NGO dedicated to promoting sustainable development in Australia. We analyse government, inter-government, and business consultation documents to provide informed submissions on behalf of our members. This submission addresses the National Urban Policy Consultation Draft (May 2024) provided by the Commonwealth of Australia, offering recommendations to enhance its effectiveness in promoting sustainable urban development.

Support for National Urban Policy Goals

BCSD Australia fully supports the National Urban Policy's goals of creating liveable, equitable, productive, sustainable, and resilient urban areas. These goals align with our vision for sustainable development and are crucial for the future growth and wellbeing of Australian cities and suburbs.

Key Recommendations

1. Enhancing Sustainability
 - Implement comprehensive circular economy programs to minimize waste and maximize resource efficiency.
 - Promote renewable energy infrastructure and green building technologies to reduce carbon emissions.
2. Improving Liveability
 - (Prioritized) Invest in green spaces and public infrastructure to enhance the quality of life, including urban parks, community gardens, and recreational facilities.
 - Ensure the integration of smart city technologies to improve urban services and infrastructure efficiency.
3. Ensuring Equity
 - Expand access to affordable housing and essential services to promote social inclusion and reduce disparities.
 - Foster inclusive urban design practices that consider the needs of all residents, including marginalized communities.
4. Boosting Productivity
 - Invest in smart city technologies and innovation hubs to drive economic growth and technological advancement.
 - Enhance public transport infrastructure to reduce congestion and improve accessibility.
5. Building Resilience
 - Integrate climate adaptation and disaster preparedness into urban planning to protect against climate-related impacts.
 - Develop urban resilience hubs to provide essential services and support during emergencies.

Additional Transformational Recommendations

1. Establish a National Urban Sustainability Fund
 - Create a dedicated fund to finance innovative urban sustainability projects, supporting green infrastructure and renewable energy initiatives.
2. Promote Regenerative Urban Development
 - Shift from sustainable to regenerative development, focusing on restoring natural habitats and enhancing urban biodiversity.
3. Implement Universal Basic Services (UBS)
 - Ensure all urban residents have access to essential services such as healthcare, education, housing, and digital connectivity.
4. Foster Innovation through Urban Living Labs
 - Establish Urban Living Labs to test and develop sustainable urban solutions in real-life settings, encouraging collaboration and co-creation.
5. Enhance Climate Resilience with Nature-Based Solutions
 - Integrate nature-based solutions into urban planning to mitigate climate impacts and improve urban biodiversity.

Conclusion

BCSD Australia commends the comprehensive nature of the draft National Urban Policy. By incorporating our recommendations and additional transformational actions, the policy can be even more effective in driving sustainable, inclusive, and resilient urban development. We look forward to collaborating with the government and other stakeholders to achieve these ambitious goals and ensure the successful implementation of the National Urban Policy.

Country Comparator

These international examples highlight the importance of integrating sustainability, resilience, and innovation into urban policy. They offer valuable lessons for Australia in developing and implementing a robust National Urban Policy that addresses contemporary urban challenges and leverages global best practices.

1. Singapore

- **Compact Urban Growth:** Singapore has implemented a compact urban growth strategy to maximize land use efficiency and minimize environmental impact. This includes high-density, mixed-use development and a robust public transport system.
- **Green Infrastructure:** The city-state has invested heavily in green infrastructure, including extensive parks, green roofs, and vertical gardens to enhance urban biodiversity and resilience.

2. Germany

- **Urban Renewal Projects:** Germany has focused on revitalizing urban areas through sustainable practices and public-private partnerships. These projects often involve converting former industrial sites into residential and commercial areas.
- **Energy Efficiency:** The country has stringent regulations and incentives for energy-efficient buildings and renewable energy usage in urban planning.

3. Scotland

- **Place-Based Approach:** Scotland emphasizes a place-based approach to urban development, integrating wellbeing into urban planning. This approach includes extensive community engagement and consideration of local needs.
- **Green Infrastructure:** Scotland has implemented green infrastructure solutions, including urban forests and sustainable drainage systems to manage water runoff and improve urban resilience.

4. Canada

- **Smart Cities Challenge:** Canada has launched a Smart Cities Challenge, encouraging cities to develop innovative approaches to urban challenges using data and technology. This initiative promotes smart infrastructure and enhances urban services.
- **Affordable Housing Programs:** Canada has implemented various programs to increase the availability of affordable housing in urban areas, including public funding and incentives for private developers.

5. Netherlands

- **Circular Economy:** The Netherlands promotes a circular economy in urban development, focusing on recycling, waste reduction, and the sustainable use of materials. This approach is integrated into urban planning and construction practices.
- **Climate Adaptation:** Dutch cities are leaders in climate adaptation strategies, including the development of flood-resistant infrastructure and the integration of water management into urban planning.

6. Japan

- **Disaster Resilience:** Japan has extensive measures to enhance urban resilience to natural disasters, including earthquake-resistant building codes and comprehensive disaster preparedness programs.
- **Aging Population:** Japanese urban policy also addresses the challenges of an aging population, focusing on accessible infrastructure and services for elderly residents.

Case Studies

Detailed Examination of Specific Instances

Case Study 1: Singapore's Urban Policy

- **Successes:** Effective integration of green infrastructure and smart city technologies.
- **Challenges:** High cost of living and maintaining equitable access to housing.

Case Study 2: Germany's Urban Renewal Projects

- **Successes:** Revitalization of urban areas through sustainable practices and public-private partnerships.
- **Challenges:** Balancing historical preservation with modern urban needs.

Case Study 3: Scotland's Place-Based Approach

- **Successes:** Inclusion of wellbeing in urban planning and community engagement.
- **Challenges:** Addressing diverse urban needs within a unified policy framework.

BCSD Insights & Resources on the Topic

Implementing the National Urban Policy (NUP) in Australia presents a significant opportunity for businesses to support sustainable practices and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This business case outlines the economic, social, and environmental benefits of engaging in sustainable urban development, demonstrating how businesses can drive profitability, innovation, and long-term resilience while advancing global sustainability objectives.

Economic Benefits

1. **Increased Investment and Growth**

- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** By participating in PPPs, businesses can secure long-term contracts for urban infrastructure projects, leading to steady revenue streams and increased investment opportunities.
 - **Market Expansion:** Sustainable urban development can open new markets for green technologies, construction materials, and renewable energy solutions, driving growth in emerging sectors.
2. **Cost Savings and Efficiency**
 - **Energy Efficiency:** Implementing green building technologies and energy-efficient practices can significantly reduce operational costs for businesses through lower energy consumption and maintenance expenses.
 - **Resource Optimization:** Adopting circular economy principles helps businesses minimize waste and optimize resource use, leading to cost savings and increased resource efficiency.
 3. **Innovation and Competitiveness**
 - **Smart Cities Technology:** Investing in smart city solutions enhances operational efficiency and service delivery, fostering innovation and making businesses more competitive in the digital economy.
 - **Sustainable Products and Services:** Developing sustainable products and services can differentiate businesses in the market, attracting environmentally conscious consumers and clients.

Social Benefits

1. **Enhanced Reputation and Brand Value**
 - **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** Engaging in sustainable urban development enhances a company's reputation and brand value by demonstrating a commitment to CSR and contributing positively to society.
 - **Community Engagement:** Businesses that invest in local communities and infrastructure projects foster goodwill and strengthen relationships with stakeholders, including customers, employees, and local governments.
2. **Talent Attraction and Retention**
 - **Workplace Environment:** Sustainable business practices create healthier, safer, and more attractive workplaces, helping companies attract and retain top talent.
 - **Employee Engagement:** Companies that prioritize sustainability often see higher levels of employee engagement and satisfaction, leading to increased productivity and reduced turnover rates.

Environmental Benefits

1. **Reduced Environmental Impact**
 - **Emissions Reduction:** Setting ambitious emissions reduction targets and adopting clean technologies can help businesses reduce their carbon footprint, contributing to global efforts to combat climate change (SDG 13).
 - **Sustainable Resource Management:** Implementing circular economy practices and sustainable resource management reduces waste and conserves natural resources, supporting environmental sustainability (SDG 12).
2. **Resilience and Risk Management**
 - **Climate Adaptation:** Investing in climate-resilient infrastructure and urban planning helps businesses mitigate risks associated with climate change and extreme weather events, ensuring long-term operational stability.
 - **Biodiversity Conservation:** Integrating green infrastructure and promoting urban biodiversity enhances ecosystem services, contributing to the health and resilience of urban environments (SDG 15).

Alignment with SDGs

1. **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**
 - Businesses can contribute to making cities more inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable by participating in urban development projects and adopting sustainable practices.
2. **SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy**
 - Companies investing in renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies contribute to the global goal of ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy.
3. **SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure**
 - By supporting sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation, businesses can help build resilient infrastructure and promote inclusive and sustainable industrial growth.
4. **SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**
 - Sustainable business practices create decent work opportunities and support sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth.
5. **SDG 13: Climate Action**
 - Businesses that implement climate action strategies contribute to efforts to combat climate change and its impacts, aligning with global climate goals.
6. **SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production**
 - Adopting sustainable production and consumption practices helps ensure sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.

Conclusion

Supporting the implementation of the National Urban Policy through sustainable business practices not only aligns with the SDGs but also offers significant economic, social, and environmental benefits for businesses. By leveraging opportunities in sustainable urban development, businesses can drive growth, enhance competitiveness, and contribute to a more sustainable

and resilient future for urban communities. This strategic approach positions companies as leaders in sustainability, fostering long-term success and positive societal impact.

Below are some key resources and publications by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) on the topic of urban development and mobility:

1. **Urban Mobility Revolution:** WBCSD has released several studies and reports focused on transforming urban mobility. A notable report, "A Blueprint for the Urban Mobility Revolution," highlights the potential of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) to decarbonize urban transport and improve efficiency and inclusivity. It provides recommendations for adopting and enabling MaaS through flexible regulatory approaches and data-sharing frameworks ([WBCSD Transformation](#)).
2. **Data-Driven Urban Mobility:** Another significant publication discusses the role of digitalization and data-sharing in creating resilient and sustainable urban mobility systems. This report emphasizes the importance of interoperability, governance, and capacity-building to overcome barriers in data-sharing and harness the value of shared data for broader economic and environmental benefits ([WBCSD Transformation](#)).
3. **Sustainable Mobility Map in Lisbon:** WBCSD launched a sustainable urban mobility systems map in Lisbon, aimed at catalysing collaboration among stakeholders to achieve safe, efficient, and clean mobility. The map identifies priority action areas such as high-quality mass transit, zero-emission vehicles, and coherent policy frameworks to guide sustainable urban mobility efforts ([WBCSD Transformation](#)) ([WBCSD Transformation](#)).
4. **Transforming Urban Mobility Project:** This flagship project brings together over 20 global companies to address urban mobility challenges using cutting-edge technology and collaborative models. The initiative aims to foster safer, cleaner, and more efficient urban mobility systems by leveraging AI, cloud technology, and data-sharing principles ([WBCSD Transformation](#)).
5. **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan in Brazil:** In Feira de Santana, Brazil, WBCSD, in collaboration with local authorities and businesses, launched a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan. The plan includes significant investments in cycling infrastructure, public space enhancements, and measures to improve traffic safety and public transport security ([WBCSD Transformation](#)).
6. **Sustainable Urban Development in Asia:** WBCSD has partnered with Keppel and DBS to scale up sustainable urban solutions in Asia. This collaboration focuses on energy optimization, sustainable infrastructure, and digitalization to support urbanization in rapidly growing regions like India ([WBCSD Transformation](#)).

These resources reflect BCSD's comprehensive approach to addressing urban mobility and development challenges through innovative solutions, strategic collaborations, and sustainable practices.

Relevance to the Sustainable Development Goals

The National Urban Policy and the related analysis and recommendations provided by BCSD Australia align with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the United Nations. Here are the key SDGs relevant to this context, along with their corresponding indicators:

1. SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

- **Target 11.1:** Ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.
 - **Indicator 11.1.1:** Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements, or inadequate housing.
- **Target 11.2:** Provide access to safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transport systems for all.
 - **Indicator 11.2.1:** Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age, and persons with disabilities.
- **Target 11.3:** Enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated, and sustainable human settlement planning and management.
 - **Indicator 11.3.1:** Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate.
 - **Indicator 11.3.2:** Proportion of cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban planning and management.
- **Target 11.6:** Reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities.
 - **Indicator 11.6.2:** Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (e.g., PM2.5 and PM10) in cities.
- **Target 11.7:** Provide universal access to safe, inclusive, and accessible, green, and public spaces.
 - **Indicator 11.7.1:** Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age, and persons with disabilities.

2. SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

- **Target 7.2:** Increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.
 - **Indicator 7.2.1:** Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption.
- **Target 7.3:** Double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.
 - **Indicator 7.3.1:** Energy intensity measured in terms of primary energy and GDP.

3. SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

- **Target 9.1:** Develop quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure.
 - **Indicator 9.1.1:** Proportion of the rural population who live within 2 km of an all-season road.

- **Indicator 9.1.2:** Passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport.
- **Target 9.4:** Upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable.
 - **Indicator 9.4.1:** CO2 emission per unit of value added.

4. SDG 13: Climate Action

- **Target 13.1:** Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.
 - **Indicator 13.1.1:** Number of deaths, missing persons, and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population.
 - **Indicator 13.1.2:** Number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies.
- **Target 13.2:** Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning.
 - **Indicator 13.2.1:** Number of countries that have communicated the establishment or operationalization of an integrated policy/strategy/plan which increases their ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change.

5. SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

- **Target 8.3:** Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation.
 - **Indicator 8.3.1:** Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex.
- **Target 8.5:** Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.
 - **Indicator 8.5.2:** Unemployment rate, by sex, age, and persons with disabilities.

6. SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

- **Target 10.2:** Empower and promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status.
 - **Indicator 10.2.1:** Proportion of people living below 50 percent of median income, by age, sex, and persons with disabilities.

Key Considerations and Recommendations

- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Align urban infrastructure projects with SDG 9 to ensure sustainable and resilient infrastructure development.
- **Affordable Housing:** Enhance policies under SDG 11 to address housing affordability and access.
- **Green Building Technologies:** Promote SDG 7 by incentivizing the adoption of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures in urban development.
- **Smart Cities Technology:** Foster innovation (SDG 9) by integrating smart city technologies to improve urban management and services.
- **Climate Adaptation and Disaster Preparedness:** Integrate climate action (SDG 13) measures into urban planning to build resilience against climate-related hazards.

By focusing on these SDGs and their indicators, BCSD Australia believes that Australia can ensure that its National Urban Policy is aligned with global sustainability goals and promote comprehensive, inclusive, and sustainable urban development.

Responses to Specific Questions

How do you think the Australian Government could be more involved in urban policy?

Option Chosen: Ensure alignment across governments on spatial and strategic planning

BCSDA Response: BCSD Australia believes that ensuring alignment across governments on spatial and strategic planning is crucial for achieving cohesive and sustainable urban development. This approach facilitates coordinated efforts between federal, state, and local governments, ensuring that urban planning and policy are consistent, efficient, and effective across all levels of government. Alignment on spatial and strategic planning enables the integration of national priorities with local needs, fostering a holistic and inclusive approach to urban development.

BCSDA Recommendation: BCSD Australia recommends that the Australian Government adopt a collaborative framework to ensure alignment across all levels of government. This framework should include:

1. **Inter-Governmental Committees:** Establish committees comprising representatives from federal, state, and local governments to facilitate ongoing dialogue and coordination on urban planning and policy matters.
 - **Example:** The UK's National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) plays a similar role, providing expert advice and fostering collaboration between national and local governments on infrastructure planning.
2. **Standardized Planning Guidelines:** Develop standardized guidelines and benchmarks for urban planning that can be adapted by states and territories to ensure consistency while accommodating regional differences.
 - **Example:** Germany's Federal Spatial Planning Act sets out clear guidelines and standards for spatial planning, ensuring that federal and regional planning efforts are aligned.

3. **Integrated Data Systems:** Create integrated data systems and platforms for sharing spatial data and urban metrics across governments. This can enhance transparency and inform decision-making processes.
 - **Example:** The European Union's Urban Data Platform provides access to a range of urban data, facilitating integrated planning and monitoring across member states.
4. **Regular Review and Assessment:** Implement mechanisms for the regular review and assessment of urban planning initiatives to ensure they align with national strategic objectives and respond to emerging challenges.
 - **Example:** Singapore's Urban Redevelopment Authority conducts regular reviews of its Master Plan, ensuring alignment with national goals and adapting to new urban challenges.

By adopting these measures, the Australian Government can play a pivotal role in fostering aligned, strategic urban planning that supports sustainable development goals, enhances urban resilience, and promotes economic and social well-being across the country.

This collaborative and integrated approach will not only improve the effectiveness of urban policy but also ensure that all levels of government are working towards common goals, maximizing the impact of investments and policy initiatives in urban areas.

What goal in the draft National Urban Policy is the highest priority for you

Option Chosen: Sustainable

BCSDA Response: BCSDA Australia prioritizes sustainability as the highest goal in the draft National Urban Policy. Sustainability is fundamental to ensuring that urban development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable urban development promotes environmental stewardship, economic viability, and social inclusiveness, creating resilient communities that can thrive in the long term.

BCSDA Recommendation: To enhance the sustainability of urban areas, BCSDA Australia recommends the following actions, supported by practical examples:

1. **Emissions Reduction Targets:** Establish clear, ambitious emissions reduction targets for urban areas, with detailed action plans for sectors such as transport, construction, and waste management.
 - Example: Copenhagen aims to become the world's first carbon-neutral capital by 2025, implementing comprehensive strategies across all sectors to achieve this goal.
2. **Promotion of Green Building Technologies:** Provide incentives for businesses to invest in green building technologies and practices, contributing to healthier and more sustainable urban environments.
 - Example: The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification in the United States incentivizes sustainable construction and has led to a significant increase in green buildings.
3. **Development of Renewable Energy Infrastructure:** Invest in renewable energy infrastructure within urban areas to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and enhance energy security.
 - Example: Freiburg, Germany, known as the "Green City," has integrated renewable energy sources such as solar and wind into its urban planning, achieving high levels of energy sustainability.
4. **Implementation of Circular Economy Programs:** Develop comprehensive programs to promote recycling, waste reduction, and the use of sustainable materials in urban development.
 - Example: Amsterdam has implemented a city-wide circular economy strategy that focuses on waste reduction, recycling, and the use of sustainable materials, setting a global benchmark for urban sustainability.
5. **Enhancement of Public Transport Systems:** Expand and improve public transport systems to reduce carbon emissions, decrease traffic congestion, and provide accessible, efficient transportation options for all residents.
 - Example: Singapore's extensive and efficient public transport system is a model for reducing urban carbon footprints and enhancing sustainability.
6. **Integration of Green Infrastructure:** Incorporate green infrastructure such as parks, green roofs, and urban forests into urban planning to improve air quality, enhance biodiversity, and provide recreational spaces for residents.
 - Example: New York City's High Line, a linear park built on a historic freight rail line elevated above the streets on Manhattan's West Side, has transformed an industrial relic into a green urban oasis.

Conclusion: By prioritizing sustainability, the National Urban Policy can drive the transformation of Australian cities into hubs of innovation, resilience, and environmental stewardship. These recommendations, drawn from global best practices, provide a pathway to achieving a sustainable urban future that benefits both the environment and society. BCSDA Australia looks forward to collaborating with the government and other stakeholders to implement these strategies and achieve the sustainability goals outlined in the National Urban Policy.

What other key goals should be included in the National Urban Policy? Include a brief description of why?

BCSDA Response:

Goal 1: Digital Connectivity

Description: Enhancing digital infrastructure to support smart cities, economic innovation, and inclusive growth.

BCSDA Recommendation: Digital connectivity is essential for the modernization of urban environments. It enables the deployment of smart city technologies, improves the efficiency of urban services, and fosters economic innovation. By investing in high-speed internet infrastructure and promoting digital literacy, cities can support economic growth, enhance quality of life, and ensure inclusivity in the digital age.

Practical Examples:

1. South Korea:

- Initiative: Nationwide deployment of 5G networks.
 - Impact: Boosted technological innovation and supported the development of smart cities with advanced digital services.
2. Estonia:
- Initiative: e-Estonia project.
 - Impact: Created a digital society with e-governance, e-residency, and high levels of digital literacy, attracting global businesses and startups.

Goal 2: Social Inclusion

Description: Fostering inclusive urban environments that support diverse communities and equitable access to opportunities.

BCSDA Recommendation: Social inclusion ensures that all residents, regardless of their background, have access to resources and opportunities. Policies should focus on affordable housing, accessible public spaces, and services for marginalized groups to build cohesive and resilient communities.

Practical Examples:

1. Barcelona, Spain:
 - Initiative: Superblocks program.
 - Impact: Reclaimed public spaces for community use, enhancing social cohesion and urban livability.
2. Toronto, Canada:
 - Initiative: Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy.
 - Impact: Focused on improving quality of life in underserved areas through targeted investments in community services and infrastructure.

Goal 3: Climate Resilience

Description: Strengthening urban areas to withstand and recover from climate-related impacts.

BCSDA Recommendation: Climate resilience is essential for protecting urban populations and infrastructure from climate change impacts such as extreme weather events and rising sea levels. Implementing adaptive measures in urban planning can mitigate risks and ensure the sustainability of cities.

Practical Examples:

1. Rotterdam, Netherlands:
 - Initiative: Rotterdam Climate Proof program.
 - Impact: Developed innovative water management solutions to protect the city from flooding and enhance urban resilience.
2. New York City, USA:
 - Initiative: OneNYC plan.
 - Impact: Integrated resilience strategies to address climate risks, including flood protection and energy resilience.

Goal 4: Health and Wellbeing

Description: Prioritizing the health and wellbeing of urban residents through accessible healthcare, green spaces, and active transport.

BCSDA Recommendation: Ensuring health and wellbeing in urban areas involves creating environments that support physical and mental health. This includes providing accessible healthcare services, developing green spaces, and promoting active transport options like walking and cycling.

Practical Examples:

1. Copenhagen, Denmark:
 - Initiative: Citywide cycling infrastructure.
 - Impact: Promoted active transport, reducing pollution and improving public health outcomes.
2. Melbourne, Australia:
 - Initiative: Expansion of urban green spaces.
 - Impact: Enhanced urban biodiversity, provided recreational areas, and improved residents' mental health and wellbeing.

Goal 5: Economic Resilience

Description: Building economically resilient cities that can adapt to economic shocks and support diverse economic activities.

BCSDA Recommendation: Economic resilience involves creating urban economies that are adaptable and diversified. This includes supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs), fostering innovation, and ensuring that economic activities can withstand and recover from shocks.

Practical Examples:

1. Singapore:
 - Initiative: Economic Development Board (EDB) strategies.
 - Impact: Diversified the economy through investments in technology, finance, and manufacturing, making the city-state resilient to global economic changes.
2. Austin, USA:
 - Initiative: Support for tech start-ups and creative industries.
 - Impact: Developed a vibrant and diversified local economy that can better withstand economic fluctuations.

What do you think would most improve the liveability of Australian cities? (100 characters)

Option Chosen: Investment in Green Spaces and Public Infrastructure

BCSDA Response: BCSD Australia believes that investment in green spaces and public infrastructure is paramount to improving the liveability of Australian cities. Green spaces provide numerous benefits, including enhancing mental and physical health, improving air quality, and fostering community cohesion. Public infrastructure, including transport, healthcare, and recreational facilities, ensures that urban environments are accessible, safe, and conducive to a high quality of life.

BCSDA Recommendation: BCSD Australia recommends a multi-faceted approach to investing in green spaces and public infrastructure to enhance liveability:

1. Developing and Expanding Green Spaces

- **Initiative:** Create and expand urban parks, community gardens, and green corridors.
- **Example:** Singapore's Garden City initiative has transformed the city into a lush, green urban space with extensive parks and green areas, significantly enhancing residents' quality of life.

2. Enhancing Public Transport Infrastructure

- **Initiative:** Invest in sustainable and efficient public transport systems to reduce congestion and improve accessibility.
- **Example:** Melbourne's extensive tram network is a model of effective public transport, providing residents with convenient and eco-friendly commuting options.

3. Improving Healthcare and Recreational Facilities

- **Initiative:** Develop accessible healthcare centres and recreational facilities to support community health and wellbeing.
- **Example:** The Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne incorporates large green spaces and recreational areas, providing a healing environment for patients and their families.

4. Promoting Active Transport

- **Initiative:** Develop infrastructure that supports walking, cycling, and other forms of active transport.
- **Example:** Copenhagen's extensive cycling infrastructure has made it one of the most bike-friendly cities in the world, promoting physical activity and reducing traffic congestion.

5. Implementing Smart City Technologies

- **Initiative:** Integrate smart city technologies to improve urban services and infrastructure efficiency.
- **Example:** Barcelona's smart city initiatives, including smart traffic management and energy-efficient street lighting, have enhanced urban liveability by making city services more efficient and responsive.

6. Ensuring Affordable Housing

- **Initiative:** Invest in affordable housing projects to ensure all residents have access to safe and affordable homes.
- **Example:** Vienna's social housing model provides affordable, high-quality housing for a significant portion of the population, contributing to the city's high liveability ranking.

Conclusion: Investing in green spaces and public infrastructure is essential for enhancing the liveability of Australian cities. These investments not only improve environmental quality and public health but also foster social cohesion and economic vitality. By learning from successful global examples and implementing a comprehensive approach, Australian cities can become more liveable, sustainable, and resilient, benefiting all residents and future generations.

What do you think would most improve equity in Australian cities? (100 characters)

Option Chosen: Expand Access to Affordable Housing and Essential Services

BCSDA Response: BCSD Australia believes that expanding access to affordable housing and essential services is crucial to improving equity in Australian cities. Ensuring that all residents, regardless of their socioeconomic status, have access to safe, affordable housing, healthcare, education, and other essential services is foundational to creating equitable urban environments. This approach addresses systemic barriers and promotes inclusive growth, enhancing the overall quality of life and social cohesion in urban areas.

BCSDA Recommendation: BCSD Australia recommends a comprehensive strategy to expand access to affordable housing and essential services, supported by practical examples from successful initiatives:

1. Affordable Housing Initiatives

- **Initiative:** Increase the supply of affordable housing through public funding, incentives for private developers, and community housing projects.
- **Example:** Vienna's social housing program, which provides high-quality, affordable housing for a significant portion of its residents, ensuring that housing costs remain reasonable and accessible.

2. Integrated Social Services

- **Initiative:** Develop integrated social service centres that provide healthcare, education, and social support services in underserved areas.
- **Example:** The Community Health Centres in the United States offer a comprehensive range of health and social services to underserved populations, improving access and reducing disparities.

3. Public Transport Accessibility

- **Initiative:** Improve public transport infrastructure to ensure that all residents can easily access essential services and employment opportunities.

- **Example:** The extensive public transport system in Berlin, Germany, offers affordable and efficient transportation options, connecting residents to key services and economic opportunities.
4. **Educational Opportunities**
 - **Initiative:** Invest in educational programs and facilities in low-income areas to provide equitable learning opportunities for all children.
 - **Example:** Finland's education system, which emphasizes equal access to high-quality education regardless of socioeconomic background, has resulted in some of the highest educational outcomes in the world.
 5. **Community Engagement and Participation**
 - **Initiative:** Foster community engagement and participation in urban planning processes to ensure that the needs and voices of all residents are considered.
 - **Example:** Participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, allows residents to have a direct say in how public funds are allocated, leading to more equitable and responsive urban development.
 6. **Access to Quality Healthcare**
 - **Initiative:** Expand access to quality healthcare services, particularly in underserved urban areas, to ensure all residents can receive necessary medical care.
 - **Example:** The National Health Service (NHS) in the UK provides comprehensive healthcare services that are free at the point of use, ensuring equitable access for all citizens.

Conclusion: Expanding access to affordable housing and essential services is fundamental to improving equity in Australian cities. By adopting successful strategies from around the world and implementing targeted policies, Australia can ensure that all urban residents have the resources and opportunities they need to thrive. This approach not only enhances social cohesion but also contributes to the overall sustainability and resilience of urban communities.

What do you think would most improve productivity in Australian cities?

Option Chosen: Invest in Smart City Technologies and Innovation Hubs

BCSDA Response: BCSDA Australia believes that investing in smart city technologies and creating innovation hubs are key to enhancing productivity in Australian cities. Smart city technologies can streamline urban management, reduce operational costs, and improve service delivery. Innovation hubs foster collaboration, support start-ups, and drive economic growth through technological advancement and entrepreneurial activities.

BCSDA Recommendation: BCSDA Australia recommends a strategic approach to investing in smart city technologies and developing innovation hubs to boost urban productivity. This includes leveraging technology, fostering innovation ecosystems, and learning from successful global examples:

1. **Implementation of Smart City Technologies**
 - **Initiative:** Deploy smart technologies for efficient urban management, such as intelligent traffic systems, smart grids, and digital public services.
 - **Example:** Barcelona's smart city initiatives, including smart traffic management and energy-efficient street lighting, have improved urban efficiency and reduced costs.
2. **Development of Innovation Hubs**
 - **Initiative:** Establish innovation hubs and incubators to support start-ups, small to medium enterprises (SMEs), and research and development (R&D) activities.
 - **Example:** Silicon Valley in the United States is a prime example of an innovation hub that supports technological advancements and start-up growth, driving significant economic productivity.
3. **Enhancement of Digital Infrastructure**
 - **Initiative:** Invest in high-speed internet and digital infrastructure to support connectivity and enable digital transformation across urban areas.
 - **Example:** South Korea's nationwide deployment of 5G networks has enhanced digital connectivity, supporting smart city initiatives and boosting productivity.
4. **Promotion of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)**
 - **Initiative:** Encourage PPPs to fund and manage smart city projects, ensuring high standards of design, implementation, and sustainability.
 - **Example:** Singapore's Smart Nation initiative, which involves collaboration between the government and private sector, has successfully implemented various smart technologies, enhancing urban productivity.
5. **Support for Research and Development (R&D)**
 - **Initiative:** Provide funding and incentives for R&D in technology and urban solutions to drive innovation and create new economic opportunities.
 - **Example:** Israel's investment in R&D has led to the development of a robust high-tech industry, contributing to the country's high productivity and economic growth.
6. **Development of Sustainable Transport Systems**
 - **Initiative:** Invest in sustainable and efficient public transport systems to reduce congestion and improve mobility.
 - **Example:** The extensive public transport system in Tokyo, Japan, supports high levels of urban productivity by providing reliable and efficient mobility options for residents and workers.

Conclusion: Investing in smart city technologies and creating innovation hubs are essential strategies for enhancing productivity in Australian cities. These investments drive economic growth, improve urban management, and foster technological innovation. By adopting successful global practices and implementing a comprehensive approach, Australian cities can become more productive, competitive, and sustainable, benefiting businesses, residents, and the economy as a whole.

What do you think would most improve Sustainability in Australian cities?

Option Chosen: Implement Comprehensive Circular Economy Programs

BCSDA Response: BCSD Australia believes that implementing comprehensive circular economy programs is crucial for improving sustainability in Australian cities. A circular economy aims to minimize waste and make the most of resources by promoting recycling, reusing, and repurposing materials. This approach not only reduces environmental impact but also drives economic growth and innovation through sustainable practices.

BCSDA Recommendation: BCSD Australia recommends a multi-pronged strategy to implement comprehensive circular economy programs, supported by practical examples from successful global initiatives:

1. Development of Circular Economy Infrastructure

- Initiative: Invest in infrastructure that supports recycling, composting, and waste-to-energy processes.
- Example: The Netherlands has developed extensive recycling facilities and waste-to-energy plants, becoming a leader in circular economy practices.

2. Promotion of Sustainable Product Design

- Initiative: Encourage businesses to design products with sustainability in mind, focusing on durability, reparability, and recyclability.
- Example: The Cradle to Cradle certification program encourages manufacturers to create products that are safe for both humans and the environment and can be fully recycled or composted.

3. Implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

- Initiative: Adopt EPR policies that hold manufacturers accountable for the entire lifecycle of their products, including disposal and recycling.
- Example: Germany's Packaging Act requires producers to take responsibility for the packaging waste they generate, leading to high recycling rates and reduced waste.

4. Community Engagement and Education

- Initiative: Launch educational campaigns and community programs to raise awareness about the benefits of a circular economy and encourage sustainable behaviours.
- Example: The Zero Waste Scotland program educates communities about waste reduction and recycling, helping to achieve significant decreases in waste generation.

5. Incentives for Businesses and Consumers

- Initiative: Provide financial incentives, such as tax breaks or subsidies, for businesses and consumers that adopt circular economy practices.
- Example: Sweden offers tax incentives for repairs of electronics and home appliances, encouraging consumers to fix items rather than dispose of them.

6. Integration of Circular Economy Principles in Urban Planning

- Initiative: Incorporate circular economy principles into urban planning and development projects to ensure sustainable use of resources.
- Example: Copenhagen's Resource and Waste Plan integrates circular economy strategies into the city's planning processes, aiming for zero waste and high recycling rates by 2025.

Conclusion: Implementing comprehensive circular economy programs is essential for enhancing sustainability in Australian cities. These programs minimize waste, promote resource efficiency, and drive economic growth through innovative and sustainable practices. By learning from successful global examples and adopting a holistic approach, Australian cities can lead the way in sustainability, benefiting the environment, economy, and society as a whole.

What do you think would most improve the resilience of Australian cities?

Option Chosen: Integrate Climate Adaptation and Disaster Preparedness into Urban Planning

BCSDA Response: BCSD Australia believes that integrating climate adaptation and disaster preparedness into urban planning is essential for improving the resilience of Australian cities. This approach ensures that cities are equipped to withstand and recover from climate-related impacts, such as extreme weather events, sea-level rise, and natural disasters. By proactively addressing these risks, cities can protect their infrastructure, economy, and communities, ensuring long-term sustainability and stability.

BCSDA Recommendation: BCSD Australia recommends a comprehensive strategy to integrate climate adaptation and disaster preparedness into urban planning, supported by practical examples from successful global initiatives:

1. Climate Risk Assessments

- **Initiative:** Conduct detailed climate risk assessments for urban areas to identify vulnerabilities and prioritize adaptation measures.

- **Example:** The City of New York’s Climate Resiliency Design Guidelines incorporate climate risk assessments to inform the design and construction of resilient infrastructure.
2. **Resilient Infrastructure Development**
 - **Initiative:** Invest in resilient infrastructure, such as flood defences, stormwater management systems, and resilient energy grids.
 - **Example:** Rotterdam, Netherlands, has developed innovative flood defence systems, including the Maeslantkering storm surge barrier, to protect the city from sea-level rise and storm surges.
 3. **Community-Based Adaptation Strategies**
 - **Initiative:** Engage communities in developing and implementing adaptation strategies that address local needs and enhance social cohesion.
 - **Example:** The Community Resilience Program in New Orleans involves residents in planning and implementing flood risk reduction measures, improving community resilience and preparedness.
 4. **Integration of Green Infrastructure**
 - **Initiative:** Incorporate green infrastructure, such as urban forests, green roofs, and wetlands, into urban planning to enhance natural resilience and mitigate climate impacts.
 - **Example:** Singapore’s Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park transformed a concrete canal into a naturalized river, improving flood management and creating a vibrant public space.
 5. **Disaster Preparedness and Response Planning**
 - **Initiative:** Develop comprehensive disaster preparedness and response plans, including early warning systems, evacuation protocols, and community education programs.
 - **Example:** Japan’s extensive disaster preparedness measures, including earthquake early warning systems and community drills, have significantly enhanced the country’s resilience to natural disasters.
 6. **Policy and Regulatory Frameworks**
 - **Initiative:** Establish policy and regulatory frameworks that mandate climate adaptation and resilience measures in urban development projects.
 - **Example:** California’s climate adaptation legislation requires state agencies to integrate climate resilience into their planning and investment decisions, ensuring long-term resilience across sectors.

Conclusion: Integrating climate adaptation and disaster preparedness into urban planning is critical for enhancing the resilience of Australian cities. These measures protect urban infrastructure, support economic stability, and safeguard communities from climate-related risks. By adopting best practices from global examples and implementing a coordinated strategy, Australian cities can build resilience, ensuring they can thrive in the face of future challenges.

Which of the following do you see as the most important objective?

Select all that apply

No-one and no place left behind

All people belong and are welcome

Our urban areas are safe

Our urban areas are sustainable

Our urban environments and communities promote health and wellbeing

Our urban areas promote productivity

Undecided

BCSDA Response:

1. No-one and No Place Left Behind
2. All People Belong and Are Welcome
3. Our Urban Areas Are Safe
4. Our Urban Areas Are Sustainable
5. Our Urban Environments and Communities Promote Health and Wellbeing
6. Our Urban Areas Promote Productivity

BCSDA Recommendations

1. No-one and No Place Left Behind

Recommendation: Ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities across all urban areas to prevent social and economic disparities. This includes investing in underserved communities and providing targeted support for vulnerable populations.

Example:

- **Portland, USA:** The city's Equity Initiative focuses on reducing disparities and increasing opportunities for all residents through inclusive policies and investments in marginalized communities.

2. All People Belong and Are Welcome

Recommendation: Foster inclusive and diverse urban environments by promoting social integration and cultural inclusivity. Implement policies that support affordable housing, accessible public spaces, and community-building activities.

Example:

- **Toronto, Canada:** Known for its multiculturalism, Toronto has various programs and policies that celebrate diversity and promote social inclusion, making it a welcoming city for all.

3. Our Urban Areas Are Safe

Recommendation: Enhance public safety through comprehensive urban planning, including well-lit streets, safe public transport, and effective law enforcement. Invest in community policing and crime prevention programs.

Example:

- **Tokyo, Japan:** Tokyo is one of the safest cities in the world, thanks to its well-planned urban design, effective policing, and strong community engagement in safety initiatives.

4. Our Urban Areas Are Sustainable

Recommendation: Promote environmental sustainability by integrating green infrastructure, reducing carbon emissions, and encouraging sustainable practices. Support renewable energy projects and sustainable transportation systems.

Example:

- **Copenhagen, Denmark:** The city aims to become carbon-neutral by 2025 through extensive investments in cycling infrastructure, renewable energy, and green building standards.

5. Our Urban Environments and Communities Promote Health and Wellbeing

Recommendation: Create healthy urban environments by providing access to green spaces, recreational facilities, and healthcare services. Promote active transportation and healthy lifestyles.

Example:

- **Melbourne, Australia:** Melbourne's investment in urban parks, cycling paths, and community health programs has significantly improved the health and wellbeing of its residents.

6. Our Urban Areas Promote Productivity

Recommendation: Enhance urban productivity by investing in smart city technologies, innovation hubs, and efficient public transport. Support policies that foster economic growth and create job opportunities.

Example:

- **Singapore:** The city-state's Smart Nation initiative promotes the use of technology and innovation to enhance productivity, improve urban services, and support economic growth.

Conclusion

Each of these objectives is crucial for the holistic development of urban areas. By ensuring no one and no place is left behind, promoting inclusivity, safety, sustainability, health, and productivity, we can create vibrant, resilient, and thriving cities that meet the needs of all residents. BCSD Australia supports a balanced approach that integrates these objectives into a cohesive urban policy framework.

Do you agree with the Australian Government's goals for cities and suburbs?

(Liveable, Equitable, Productive, Sustainable, Resilient)

BCSDA Response: Yes, BCSDA Australia agrees with the Australian Government's goals for cities and suburbs. These goals align with our vision for sustainable urban development that promotes social inclusion, economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, and resilience to future challenges. Each goal is integral to creating vibrant, thriving urban environments that can support the needs of all residents and businesses.

Detailed Agreement and Recommendations

1. Liveable

- **BCSDA Agreement:** We support the goal of making cities and suburbs liveable by ensuring they offer a high quality of life, are socially inclusive, affordable, accessible, healthy, and safe.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Encourage PPPs to fund and manage urban infrastructure projects, ensuring high standards of design and sustainability.
 - **Example:** Melbourne's Federation Square, a major public space developed through a PPP, combines cultural, recreational, and commercial activities, enhancing the city's liveability.

2. Equitable

- **BCSDA Agreement:** Equity is essential for social cohesion and economic inclusion. We support policies that ensure fair access to resources, opportunities, and amenities for all community members.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Affordable Housing Initiatives:** Expand initiatives like the National Housing Accord to increase the supply of affordable housing in well-located urban areas.
 - **Example:** Vienna's social housing model provides affordable, high-quality housing for a significant portion of the population, contributing to the city's equity and inclusiveness.

3. Productive

- **BCSDA Agreement:** Productivity is a cornerstone of urban prosperity. We support the integration of innovation, technology, and infrastructure to drive economic opportunities and shared prosperity.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Smart Cities Technology:** Invest in smart city technologies that enhance connectivity, efficiency, and sustainability of urban services.
 - **Example:** Barcelona's smart city initiatives have enhanced urban management, reduced operational costs, and improved service delivery, boosting overall productivity.

4. Sustainable

- **BCSDA Agreement:** Sustainability is fundamental to urban development. We support initiatives that promote environmental sustainability and resilience to climate change.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Emissions Reduction Targets:** Set clear, ambitious emissions reduction targets for urban areas, with detailed action plans for sectors such as transport and construction.
 - **Example:** Copenhagen aims to become the world's first carbon-neutral capital by 2025, implementing comprehensive strategies across all sectors to achieve this goal.

5. Resilient

- **BCSDA Agreement:** Building resilience is vital to withstand future challenges. We support robust measures to enhance urban resilience against economic, social, and environmental shocks.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Climate Adaptation Planning:** Integrate climate risk assessments into urban planning processes and infrastructure projects.
 - **Example:** Rotterdam's Climate Proof program has developed innovative water management solutions to protect the city from flooding and enhance urban resilience.

Conclusion: BCSD Australia fully supports the Australian Government's goals for making cities and suburbs liveable, equitable, productive, sustainable, and resilient. By implementing comprehensive strategies and leveraging best practices from around the world, we can ensure that Australian cities are well-equipped to meet current and future challenges, creating a better environment for all residents and businesses.

Do you think the Australian Government focussing on the objectives will lead to the achievement of the goals?

BCSDA Response: Yes, BCSD Australia believes that if the Australian Government effectively focuses on the stated objectives, it will lead to the successful achievement of the goals of making cities and suburbs liveable, equitable, productive, sustainable, and resilient. However, the success of this focus relies heavily on the implementation of robust strategies, continuous stakeholder engagement, and adaptive management practices.

BCSDA Recommendations

1. Clear Implementation Strategies

- **Recommendation:** Develop clear and detailed implementation strategies for each objective to ensure they are actionable and measurable.
- **Example:** The Netherlands' comprehensive National Policy Strategy for Infrastructure and Spatial Planning outlines clear objectives and detailed implementation plans to ensure cohesive and effective urban development.

2. Continuous Stakeholder Engagement

- **Recommendation:** Maintain continuous engagement with all stakeholders, including businesses, communities, and local governments, to ensure the objectives are aligned with the needs and aspirations of all urban residents.
- **Example:** In Portland, USA, the city's comprehensive plan involved extensive community engagement and collaboration with various stakeholders to ensure the plan reflected the community's vision and priorities.

3. Adaptive Management and Regular Review

- **Recommendation:** Implement adaptive management practices and conduct regular reviews to assess progress towards the objectives and make necessary adjustments.
- **Example:** Singapore's Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) regularly reviews and updates its master plan to adapt to emerging challenges and opportunities, ensuring continued progress towards urban development goals.

4. Leveraging Technology and Innovation

- **Recommendation:** Utilize technology and innovation to enhance the effectiveness of strategies aimed at achieving the objectives.
- **Example:** Barcelona's smart city initiatives use technology to improve urban management and service delivery, significantly contributing to the city's liveability, sustainability, and productivity.

5. Ensuring Adequate Funding and Resources

- **Recommendation:** Secure adequate funding and resources to support the implementation of initiatives aimed at achieving the objectives.
- **Example:** Germany's KfW Development Bank provides financial support for sustainable urban development projects, ensuring the availability of resources needed to achieve urban development goals.

6. Promoting Policy Integration and Coherence

- **Recommendation:** Ensure policy integration and coherence across different levels of government and sectors to avoid conflicting objectives and promote synergistic outcomes.
- **Example:** The integrated urban planning approach in Copenhagen aligns policies across transportation, housing, and environmental sectors to achieve cohesive and sustainable urban development.

Conclusion: By focusing on the objectives and implementing these recommendations, the Australian Government can effectively achieve the goals of making cities and suburbs liveable, equitable, productive, sustainable, and resilient. Continuous stakeholder engagement, adaptive management, leveraging technology, ensuring adequate funding, and promoting policy integration are critical to the successful realization of these goals. BCSD Australia supports the government's commitment and looks forward to collaborating on achieving these objectives.

Are there other key urban challenges that you think are important on a national scale that are not included in the draft National Urban Policy? Would you like to elaborate?

BCSDA Response: Yes, BCSD Australia identifies additional key urban challenges that are crucial on a national scale and should be included in the draft National Urban Policy. These challenges include digital inequality, aging infrastructure, and mental health support.

BCSDA Recommendations

1. Addressing Digital Inequality

Challenge:

- Digital inequality refers to the gap between individuals who have access to modern information and communication technology and those who do not. This disparity can lead to significant socio-economic disadvantages.

Elaboration:

- **Impact:** Lack of access to digital technology can hinder educational opportunities, job prospects, and access to essential services.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Expand Digital Infrastructure:** Invest in expanding high-speed internet access to underserved urban and rural areas.
 - **Promote Digital Literacy:** Implement programs to improve digital literacy among marginalized populations.
 - **Example:** Estonia's e-Residency program and comprehensive digital infrastructure ensure that all citizens have access to digital services, promoting inclusivity and economic growth.

2. Upgrading Aging Infrastructure

Challenge:

- Many urban areas in Australia face the issue of aging infrastructure, which can lead to inefficiencies, increased maintenance costs, and safety hazards.

Elaboration:

- **Impact:** Aging infrastructure can impede economic growth, reduce quality of life, and pose safety risks to residents.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Infrastructure Renewal Programs:** Develop and fund programs specifically aimed at upgrading and maintaining critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and public transport systems.
 - **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Encourage PPPs to leverage private sector investment and expertise in infrastructure projects.
 - **Example:** The US's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) aims to address aging infrastructure with significant investments in transportation, water, and energy systems.

3. Enhancing Mental Health Support

Challenge:

- Urban environments can contribute to mental health issues due to factors like social isolation, noise pollution, and high living costs.

Elaboration:

- **Impact:** Poor mental health can affect productivity, quality of life, and overall well-being of urban residents.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Mental Health Services:** Increase funding and access to mental health services in urban areas, particularly in high-stress environments.
 - **Green Spaces and Recreational Areas:** Develop urban green spaces and recreational facilities that promote mental well-being.
 - **Community Programs:** Implement community programs aimed at reducing social isolation and fostering community connections.
 - **Example:** The UK's "Five Year Forward View for Mental Health" includes initiatives to improve mental health services and support in urban areas, recognizing the unique challenges posed by urban living.

Conclusion

Addressing digital inequality, upgrading aging infrastructure, and enhancing mental health support are critical urban challenges that should be incorporated into the National Urban Policy. By expanding digital access, renewing infrastructure, and promoting mental health, Australia can ensure more inclusive, efficient, and resilient urban environments. BCSD Australia advocates for a holistic approach that includes these additional challenges to achieve comprehensive urban development and sustainability.

Each objective in the draft National Urban Policy includes potential actions. What other actions would you like to see included?

BCSDA Response: BCSD Australia supports the inclusion of additional actions that enhance the effectiveness of the objectives outlined in the draft National Urban Policy. These actions focus on digital transformation, community resilience, green finance, and inclusive urban design.

BCSDA Recommendations

1. Objective: Liveable Urban Areas

Additional Action: Promote Digital Inclusion Programs

- **Recommendation:** Implement digital inclusion programs to ensure all residents have access to affordable internet services and digital literacy training.
- **Example:** The Digital Inclusion Alliance of Australia (DIAA) aims to bridge the digital divide by providing access to technology and training, ensuring everyone can participate in the digital economy.

2. Objective: Equitable Access

Additional Action: Establish Urban Resilience Hubs

- **Recommendation:** Create urban resilience hubs that provide essential services, support during emergencies, and community engagement opportunities.
- **Example:** The Resilience Hubs Initiative in the United States offers physical spaces that provide resources and support to communities during emergencies, enhancing overall resilience.

3. Objective: Productive Cities

Additional Action: Foster Green Finance Initiatives

- **Recommendation:** Develop green finance initiatives that provide funding for sustainable business projects and urban infrastructure.
- **Example:** The UK Green Investment Bank supports investment in green projects, providing capital and expertise to drive sustainable economic growth.

4. Objective: Sustainable Development

Additional Action: Implement Urban Agriculture Programs

- **Recommendation:** Support urban agriculture programs to promote local food production, reduce food miles, and enhance food security.
- **Example:** Detroit's Urban Agriculture Program has transformed vacant land into productive urban farms, providing fresh produce to local communities and creating economic opportunities.

5. Objective: Resilient Communities

Additional Action: Enhance Climate Adaptation Education

- **Recommendation:** Develop educational programs focused on climate adaptation and resilience to inform residents and businesses about best practices and resources.
- **Example:** New York City's Climate Resilience Education Initiative provides educational materials and workshops to help residents understand climate risks and adaptation strategies.

6. Objective: Inclusive Urban Design

Additional Action: Promote Inclusive Urban Design Practices

- **Recommendation:** Encourage inclusive urban design that considers the needs of all residents, including people with disabilities, the elderly, and children.
- **Example:** The City of London's Inclusive Design Strategy ensures that urban spaces are accessible and welcoming to all residents, enhancing social inclusion and equity.

7. Objective: Health and Wellbeing

Additional Action: Support Mental Health First Aid Training

- **Recommendation:** Provide mental health first aid training for community leaders, public service providers, and businesses to better support mental health in urban areas.
- **Example:** Australia's Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) courses equip individuals with the skills to provide initial support to those experiencing mental health issues, improving overall community wellbeing.

Conclusion: Including these additional actions in the draft National Urban Policy will enhance the effectiveness of the outlined objectives, ensuring more comprehensive and impactful urban development. BCSD Australia advocates for these recommendations to promote digital inclusion, community resilience, green finance, urban agriculture, climate adaptation education, inclusive urban design, and mental health support. These actions will contribute to creating liveable, equitable, productive, sustainable, and resilient urban environments in Australia.

Do you agree with the principles in Appendix A?

BCSDA Response: Yes, BCSD Australia agrees with the principles outlined in Appendix A of the draft National Urban Policy. These principles provide a comprehensive and cohesive framework for guiding urban development in a way that is collaborative, adaptive, inclusive, and sustainable. They align well with our commitment to promoting sustainable development and reflect the best practices in urban planning and management.

Detailed Agreement and Recommendations

1. Collaborative and Adaptive City Planning and Governance

- **BCSDA Agreement:** We strongly support the emphasis on integrated long-term strategic planning that involves all levels of government and local communities. This ensures that urban development is aligned with a shared vision and can adapt to changing circumstances.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Inclusive Engagement:** Enhance engagement with diverse community groups, including marginalized populations, to ensure their voices are heard in the planning process.

- **Example:** The City of Melbourne's participatory budgeting initiative, which involves residents in decision-making on budget allocations, exemplifies collaborative governance.

2. Purposeful Place Making Increases Wellbeing and Connection

- **BCSDA Agreement:** We agree that purposeful place-making fosters community wellbeing and environmental sustainability. Creating connected, regenerative urban precincts is vital for enhancing social and environmental outcomes.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Green and Blue Spaces:** Increase the development of green and blue infrastructure to promote mental and physical health, and enhance urban biodiversity.
 - **Example:** The High Line in New York City, a linear park built on a disused railway track, has significantly improved community wellbeing and urban green space.

3. Urban Development Should Actively Improve Social, Environmental, and Economic Outcomes

- **BCSDA Agreement:** We support the principle that urban development should promote equity, wellbeing, and environmental protection. Transformational change is needed to achieve these goals.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Circular Economy Practices:** Encourage the adoption of circular economy practices to reduce waste and promote the sustainable use of resources.
 - **Example:** Amsterdam's Circular Economy Action Plan, which aims to reduce the use of primary raw materials by 50% by 2030, serves as an effective model for integrating circular practices in urban development.

4. Improving the Evidence Base Will Underpin Urban Innovation

- **BCSDA Agreement:** We endorse the commitment to evidence-based policy interventions and improved data collection to inform urban planning and innovation.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Data Sharing Platforms:** Develop national data sharing platforms that facilitate the exchange of urban data between government, industry, and academia.
 - **Example:** The UK's Smart Cities program, which uses open data to drive urban innovation, demonstrates the importance of a robust evidence base for informed decision-making.

5. Fair and Inclusive Development Builds Equitable Communities

- **BCSDA Agreement:** We agree that inclusive and fair urban development is crucial for building equitable communities. Social and environmental outcomes must be prioritized in decision-making processes.
- **Recommendation:**
 - **Affordable Housing Initiatives:** Expand initiatives to ensure access to affordable, high-quality housing for all urban residents.
 - **Example:** Vienna's social housing model provides affordable, high-quality housing to a large portion of the city's population, fostering social equity.

Conclusion

BCSD Australia agrees with the principles outlined in Appendix A of the draft National Urban Policy. These principles provide a solid foundation for achieving sustainable, inclusive, and resilient urban development. By incorporating best practices and enhancing community engagement, data-driven innovation, and equitable development, Australia can ensure its cities and suburbs thrive in a sustainable and inclusive manner.

Do you have any other comments?

BCSDA Response: BCSD Australia commends the comprehensive nature of the draft National Urban Policy. The inclusion of principles that promote liveability, equity, productivity, sustainability, and resilience is crucial for the future of Australian cities and suburbs. However, we believe there are opportunities to further innovate and accelerate sustainable growth through additional transformational recommendations.

Additional Transformational Recommendations

1. Establish a National Urban Sustainability Fund

Recommendation: Create a dedicated National Urban Sustainability Fund to finance innovative urban sustainability projects. This fund would support initiatives that promote green infrastructure, renewable energy, sustainable transport, and circular economy practices.

Example:

- **European Union:** The EU's European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) supports projects that improve urban sustainability, including green infrastructure and energy efficiency initiatives.

2. Promote Regenerative Urban Development

Recommendation: Shift from sustainable to regenerative urban development, which not only minimizes harm but actively improves the environment. This includes restoring natural habitats, enhancing biodiversity, and creating urban ecosystems that are self-sustaining.

Example:

- **Regenerative Design in Melbourne:** The city is incorporating regenerative design principles in its urban planning, such as creating urban forests and wetlands that restore natural ecosystems and provide recreational spaces for residents.

3. Implement Universal Basic Services (UBS) in Urban Areas

Recommendation: Introduce Universal Basic Services (UBS) to ensure all urban residents have access to essential services such as healthcare, education, housing, and digital connectivity. This approach promotes social equity and enhances quality of life.

Example:

- **Barcelona, Spain:** The city's commitment to UBS includes free public transportation for low-income residents, ensuring equitable access to essential services and reducing social disparities.

4. Foster Innovation through Urban Living Labs

Recommendation: Establish Urban Living Labs where innovative solutions for urban challenges can be tested in real-life settings. These labs would foster collaboration between government, academia, industry, and communities to co-create sustainable urban solutions.

Example:

- **Amsterdam Smart City:** This initiative involves multiple stakeholders in developing and testing smart solutions to improve urban living, from sustainable mobility to energy-efficient buildings.

5. Enhance Climate Resilience with Nature-Based Solutions

Recommendation: Integrate nature-based solutions (NbS) into urban planning to enhance climate resilience. NbS, such as green roofs, urban wetlands, and coastal buffers, can mitigate climate impacts and enhance urban biodiversity.

Example:

- **Singapore's ABC Waters Program:** This program uses nature-based solutions to manage stormwater, improve water quality, and enhance urban green spaces, making the city more resilient to climate change.

Conclusion: BCSD Australia supports the draft National Urban Policy and its objectives. By incorporating these additional transformational recommendations, the policy can be even more innovative, inclusive, and effective in driving sustainable growth. Establishing a National Urban Sustainability Fund, promoting regenerative development, implementing Universal Basic Services, fostering innovation through Urban Living Labs, and enhancing climate resilience with nature-based solutions are pivotal steps toward creating vibrant, resilient, and sustainable urban environments in Australia.

We look forward to continued collaboration with the government and other stakeholders to achieve these ambitious goals and ensure the successful implementation of the National Urban Policy.

References / Research / Sources

1. New Deal for Urban Australia (2008)

- **Key Findings:** Proposes a framework for urban development and sustainability in Australia.
- **Gaps:** Limited focus on contemporary urban challenges such as climate change and digital infrastructure.
- **Source:** [PDF Report](#)

2. Planning Institute Welcomes Release of Draft National Urban Policy (2024)

- **Key Findings:** Highlights goals and objectives for creating liveable, equitable, productive, and sustainable urban areas.
- **Gaps:** Needs more detailed implementation strategies and metrics for success.
- **Source:** [News Article](#)

3. Just Transitions: New Urban Research and Policy Perspectives

- **Key Findings:** Discusses contemporary urban policy and research perspectives in Australia.
- **Gaps:** Requires more empirical data and case studies to support theoretical insights.
- **Source:** [Journal Article](#)

4. National Urban Policy for Australia (2024)

- **Key Findings:** Official draft outlining goals and objectives for urban areas.
- **Gaps:** Lacks specifics on funding allocation and inter-governmental coordination.
- **Source:** [Government Page](#)

5. National Urban Policy: Consultation Draft (2024)

- **Key Findings:** Provides an overview of the proposed National Urban Policy.
- **Gaps:** More detailed stakeholder engagement and feedback incorporation needed.
- **Source:** [Consultation Draft](#)

6. Australian Urban Policy - ANU Press

- **Key Findings:** Critical narrative overview of urban policy in Australia since the late 2000s.
- **Gaps:** Needs current data and updated analysis post-2020.
- **Source:** [Chapter in Book](#)

7. The State of National Urban Policy in Australia - OECD (2016)

- **Key Findings:** Overview of national urban policy development in Australia.
- **Gaps:** Lacks recent policy developments and current urban challenges.
- **Source:** [OECD Report](#)

8. The National Urban Policy is Back, but it's Not Bold Enough Yet (2024)

- **Key Findings:** Analysis and critique of the current draft of the National Urban Policy.
- **Gaps:** Recommendations for making the policy bolder and more inclusive.
- **Source:** [Blog Post](#)

9. National Urban Policies - Habitat III

- **Key Findings:** International perspective on urban policies, including Australia's.
- **Gaps:** Comparative analysis with other nations needed.
- **Source:** [PDF Report](#)

10. Australia's National Urban Policy: The Smart Cities Agenda in Perspective - Key Findings: Analyses Australia's Smart Cities Plan within the context of national urban policy. - **Gaps:** More practical examples and outcomes from Smart Cities initiatives needed. - **Source:** [ResearchGate Article](#)

Business and Corporate Research on National Urban Policy

1. National Urban Policies - Cities Alliance

- **Summary:** Discusses the role of scientific research in aligning with business needs, with a focus on Australian cities and national urban policies.
- **Link:** [National Urban Policies - Cities Alliance](#)

2. Urban Policy and Research | Taylor & Francis Online

- **Summary:** This journal publishes research on urban studies and urban policy, particularly within Australia, New Zealand, and the wider Asia-Pacific region.
- **Link:** [Urban Policy and Research](#)

3. Just Transitions: New Urban Research and Policy Perspectives

- **Summary:** Examines contemporary urban policy and research perspectives in Australia, including statements from political parties on national urban policy.
- **Link:** [Just Transitions: New Urban Research and Policy Perspectives](#)

4. Australia's Sustainable Future Hinges on National Urban Policy

- **Summary:** Discusses the critical role of national urban policy in shaping the sustainable future of Australian cities, towns, and regions.
- **Link:** [Australia's Sustainable Future Hinges on National Urban Policy](#)

5. Urban Policy Forum—Progressing the Australian Government's Urban Policy Agenda

- **Summary:** Details the role of the Urban Policy Forum in supporting the Australian Government's vision for national urban policy and providing advisory support.
- **Link:** [Urban Policy Forum—Progressing the Australian Government's Urban Policy Agenda](#)

6. NATIONAL CITIES RESEARCH PROGRAM STRATEGIC AGENDA

- **Summary:** Outlines a coordinated, policy-focused research agenda for Australian cities, emphasizing the attraction of human capital and global company investments.
- **Link:** [NATIONAL CITIES RESEARCH PROGRAM STRATEGIC AGENDA](#)

7. Australia's National Urban Policy: The Smart Cities Agenda in Perspective

- **Summary:** Provides an analysis of the Australian Government's attempts at national urban policy, particularly focusing on the smart cities agenda.
- **Link:** [Australia's National Urban Policy: The Smart Cities Agenda in Perspective](#)

8. Labor's New National Urban Policy is Welcome. But Will it Be Enough?

- **Summary:** Critically examines the new National Urban Policy introduced by the Labor government and its potential effectiveness.
- **Link:** [Labor's New National Urban Policy is Welcome](#)

Additional Resources and Tools

- **Cities Alliance Publications:** Cities Alliance Publications
- **Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI):** AHURI Publications
- **OECD Urban Policy Review:** [OECD Urban Policy Review](#)
- **Infrastructure Australia Reports:** Infrastructure Australia