

Thursday, 4 July 2024

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

Dear colleagues,

Have Your Say – A National Urban Policy for Australia

Status of Our Submission: Public

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Draft National Urban Policy. We acknowledge the leadership of the Australian Government in this field, and see that this policy, when adopted, will create significant value to urban development across Australia into the future.

The policy as drafted is a robust and comprehensive document which will be a catalyst for a range of effective policies and investments. We offer two comments in terms of strengthening the framing of the document, for consideration below. These comments reflect our work with hundreds of urban centres across Australia, and we have also consulted with our colleagues at the Australian Smart Community Association, and the Smart Cities Council.

1. URBAN ENVIRONMENTS SUPPORTING EXISTING SMART CITY INVESTMENT & LEADERSHIP

First, whilst the Draft Policy speaks to and engages with issues of digital connectivity and technology, and its increasingly important role in an urban context, we see value in specific reference to smart cities in the Policy. This will build on and highlight the significant and active investments in programs and policies across the country, and promote Australia's leadership in this field (recognised recently by IMD with 4 Australian cities being ranked in the top 35 smart cities globally). The addition of smart technology to our cities is only going to become more prevalent, and is likely to be a key driver in the economic development, sustainability, and liveability of our cities.



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2. ICONIC URBAN ENVIRONMENTS PROMOTING EXCITEMENT, ENJOYMENT & DESIRABILITY

Second, whilst the Policy identifies a number of sound goals and objectives considering issues of visitation, vibrancy, cultural development, and prosperity, it may be worth considering the value of specific, positive, and authoritative language relating to cities being exciting, iconic, enjoyable and even desirable.

This kind of branding and identity has been fundamental to the success and global reputations of cities like New York, Seoul, and Barcelona, and is a reasonable and worthy aspiration for many of Australia's urban centres.

We would be happy to discuss these comments or provide further feedback as required. Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute.

Yours sincerely,



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