



Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
GPO Box 594
CANBERRA ACT 2601

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To Whom It May Concern

Draft National Urban Policy – submission from the Greater Hobart Strategic Partnership

On behalf of the Greater Hobart Strategic Partnership, thank you for the opportunity to participate in the public consultation process for the draft National Urban Policy. We welcome the Australian Government's increased focus on urban reform and acknowledge the importance of an overarching policy in determining specific directions and targets.

The Greater Hobart Strategic Partnership is a collaboration between the Hobart, Clarence, Glenorchy and Kingborough Councils. Together, our four councils are home to 200,000 residents representing nearly 40% of the Tasmanian population and are responsible for a large proportion of Tasmania's economic activity, job creation and population growth. A significant component of the state's labour force reside in the Greater Hobart area, with the region's economic activity accounting for 44% of the state economy value added.

We acknowledge the work that has gone into the draft National Urban Policy and welcome the focus on supporting liveable, equitable, productive, sustainable and resilient cities. While the draft strategy is quite broad in its scope and areas of focus, our submission has identified some key elements that we consider to be of greatest significance as the strategy is finalised.

Strategic collaboration

Our Councils established the Greater Hobart Strategic Partnership approximately five years ago as a strategic collaboration to address common challenges and opportunities facing Greater Hobart. From thought leadership and policy development through to advocacy, funding attraction and project delivery, the Partnership has demonstrated the value of collaboration across government in supporting urban development, strategic land use and transport planning.

Our approach to intergovernmental partnerships has been underpinned through a multi-faceted governance framework: working with the Tasmanian Government to implement the *Greater Hobart Act 2019* through the Greater Hobart Committee, and both the Tasmanian and Commonwealth governments to deliver the Hobart City Deal.

While we acknowledge the Commonwealth's pivot away from City Deals to a new urban infrastructure agenda and associated funding programs, it will be important to ensure mechanisms are in place to continue strategic partnerships across three levels of government in delivering urban policy and investment attraction. Strategic collaboration must be a central feature of any urban infrastructure framework and we strongly support this being reflected as a key principle in the draft National Urban Policy.



Infrastructure investment for liveable cities

Greater Hobart has experienced strong growth over the past decade, with a population increase of nearly 15%. While this trajectory has moderated in recent years, more than 40,000 new residents are expected to be added by 2050.

Supporting growth and Greater Hobart's status as the world's best small capital city will require a coordinated and ongoing commitment to investment in targeted infrastructure and transport projects. Commonwealth infrastructure programs must be funded to an adequate level to ensure urban centres across Australia can benefit from this capital investment.

While we welcome the development of the *Urban Precinct and Partnerships Program* and the *Thriving Suburbs Program*, we note that further rounds of funding will be required in order for these programs to truly achieve their ambitions of unifying urban places, growing economies, serving communities and enhancing liveability and prosperity.

We also welcome the overt focus on the development of active transport, which is acknowledged in the draft policy as an important component of urban health and liveability outcomes. We look forward to further details regarding the \$100 million Active Transport Fund given the strong alignment with the proposed Greater Hobart Active Transport Network.

Increasing the level of Commonwealth investment in these programs will support jobs and generate economic activity, while ensuring liveability and other social benefits continue to be enhanced in the years to come.

Unlocking housing opportunities

We support the strong emphasis on housing availability and affordability in the draft policy. Greater Hobart is the country's least affordable metropolitan rental market, with rents increasing by 60% since 2016. It is now more expensive to rent in Hobart than Melbourne, despite the average rental household income in Tasmania being 18% lower than the Victorian capital.

With the Greater Hobart area home to approximately 40% of the Tasmanian population, our four councils have a major role to play in facilitating increased housing supply. We note there are significant infill and urban development opportunities within Greater Hobart that are waiting to be unlocked. Between the development of the National Urban Policy, the National Housing and Homeless Plan and the National Planning Reform Blueprint, it will be important for the Commonwealth's hierarchy of housing policies to improve housing supply and diversity through capitalising on these infill opportunities.

Community safety, inclusivity and sustainability

Addressing anti-social and criminal behaviour across Greater Hobart is a shared challenge for our Councils, including greater support for anti-racism measures that support our diverse population. We welcome the focus on urban safety and inclusivity in the draft policy and note the need to provide tailored support for our diverse communities.



There is also a need to ensure appropriate infrastructure and programs are in place to deter and respond to local crime, including practical on-the-ground initiatives in our urban areas matched with longer-term engagement and education programs that promote awareness and action against racism in the community.

Ensuring our environmental, climate and weather policies are fit-for-purpose will be central to long term sustainability and community resilience. We welcome the draft policy's strong focus on net zero and emissions reduction, while also highlighting the need for a coordinated approach to the increasing prevalence of hazards and natural disasters. Our councils are committed to being climate leaders for current and future generations and know that many climate solutions can reduce living costs, create jobs, and improve the air quality, health and wellbeing of our urban areas.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to participate in the consultation process regarding the draft National Urban Policy. We would welcome the opportunity to make further contributions throughout the development of the policy and its associated implementation arrangements.

For further information regarding the Greater Hobart Strategic Partnership, please do not hesitate to contact Joe Fennessy, Executive Officer, on 0499 500 086 or fennessy@hobartcity.com.au

Yours Sincerely

Michael Stretton
Chief Executive Officer
City of Hobart

Ian Nelson
Chief Executive Officer
Clarence City Council

Tony McMullen
General Manager
Glenorchy City Council

Dave Stewart
Chief Executive Officer
Kingborough Council