

11 July 2024

Ms Jo Hutchinson
Assistant Secretary Cities and Suburbs Unit
Dept of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts
urbanpolicyinput@infrastructure.gov.au

Dear Jo,

DRAFT NATIONAL URBAN POLICY – PIA SUBMISSION

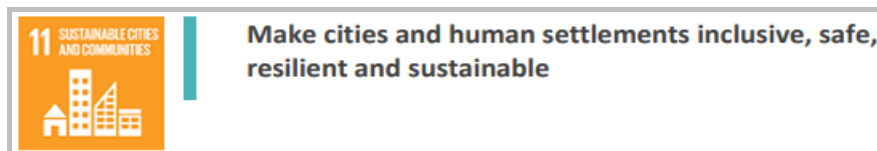
The Draft National Urban Policy is a substantive and welcome first step towards the Commonwealth Government, States and Territories adopting a more coherent agenda on how Australia’s urban areas should grow and change.

The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) strongly supports the Commonwealth’s engagement and emerging leadership in urban policy.

The [Draft National Urban Policy](#) (NUP) expresses the Commonwealth’s commitment to achieving urban areas that are liveable, equitable, productive, sustainable and resilient. It lays down principles that will help all Governments plan and invest towards meeting these outcomes.

PIA applaud the continuing First Nations engagement – and see this as a significant step forward. We also acknowledge the input of the National Urban Forum which includes senior members of the Planning Institute.

PIA acknowledge the strength of tying the NUP principles and goals to the UN Sustainable Development Goalsⁱ – and commitments to meeting global carbon emissions reduction targets.



Our submission endorses the goals and objectives of the NUP – and its supporting budget initiativesⁱⁱ. However, the greatest impact of the NUP can be how it aligns with over \$256 Bnⁱⁱⁱ of Commonwealth infrastructure investment over the next four years - and influence longer term decision-making across portfolios and tiers of Government to deliver better cities and towns. PIA sees the NUP as a ‘capstone’ for strategic plans which will shape our nation by integrating land use, infrastructure and service delivery over the long term.

PIA’s submission opens with our ‘asks’ of the Commonwealth to refine the NUP - and to promote its further development and implementation. The following sections include our input on governance, structure and content of the NUP. PIA will continue to offer our support in shaping the policy, its delivery and ongoing review.

PIA is also a member of the Australian Built Environment Council (ASBEC) and we strongly endorse the contents of their submission.

PIA KEY ASKS

PIA's Key Asks focus on the following seven issues to ensure that the National Urban Policy can fully realise its stated purpose '...to better integrate an urban lens across policy-making to ensure future Australian Government policies, programs and investment are supporting sustainable growth in urban places.'

These seven Key Asks are:

1. **Embed First Nations voice and insights throughout NUP - especially by framing the sustainability goal through the lens of healing and Caring for Country – and via an ongoing conversation with First Nations people.**
2. **Establish the national leadership role of the NUP - by demonstrating how it influences the decisions of successive circles of influence across and beyond the Commonwealth Government.**
3. **Adopt a national 'spatial' vision - for a sustainable and prosperous Australia that acknowledges the different roles of cities and regions and the greater value which can be created.**
4. **Adopt governance reforms to implement the NUP including:**
 - a. **formalising partnerships with States, Territories and Local Government - commencing with an expanded Planning Ministers Forum.**
 - b. **tying the NUP outcomes to criteria for infrastructure funding and financing decision making.**
 - c. **Transforming 'possible actions' into a focused set of committed actions with implementation pathways and monitoring.**
5. **Elevate the NUP principles - and rationalise the goals, objectives and their supporting text.**
6. **Establish a pathway and process for the evolution of the NUP - towards providing clearer guidance on the spatial pattern and nature of settlement to best fulfil NUP outcomes.**
7. **Respond to the numbered and highlighted PIA recommendations in this submission - and consider the tabulated feedback on the Draft NUP document.**

These 'asks' are elaborated in our feedback to the submission and attached tables.

PIA FEEDBACK ON THE DRAFT NUP

1. Embed First Nations voice and insights throughout NUP

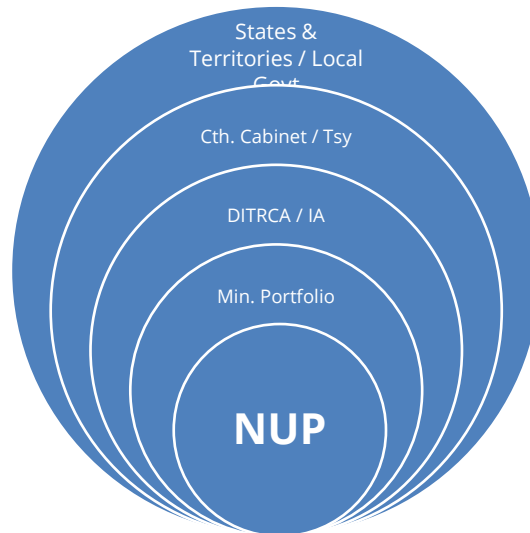
The NUP benefits from applying First Nations perspectives throughout rather than selective inputs. This should include:

- A. *Framing the **sustainability goal through the lens of healing and Caring for Country**. This should also strengthen a nature positive agenda for the NUP.*
- B. ***Strengthening links between the NUP and Closing the Gap priorities and targets.***
- C. *The NUP should reference back how initiatives will be communicated in an **ongoing conversation with First Nations people**.*

2. Establish the national leadership role of the NUP

The NUP can - and should - influence directions and decisions of the Commonwealth Government. While the NUP is neither a national population plan^{iv} nor an infrastructure plan^v it can provide a frame for aligning decisions that affect places. It should be a tool for coordinating and influencing the various Commonwealth Government levers and policy settings that have spatial impacts.

There is no constitutional barrier to the Commonwealth showing national leadership on the nature and distribution of future growth. The States and Territories need the Commonwealth to broker a shared vision for how the actions of every tier can be most effective.



PIA recognises that in this initial phase of the NUP's establishment, it is more likely to have its most direct influence within the Commonwealth ministerial portfolio of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government. However, PIA believes that it is essential for the NUP to project a distinct national leadership role across the full spectrum of public sector agencies that have spatial impacts or responsibilities (spheres of influence illustrated above).

3. Adopt a 'spatial' vision

Establishing an urban vision for Australia's future should be the capstone of all elements of the NUP. A coherent set of goals and objectives cannot be formed without an explicit vision.

While the NUP will affect urban places it is not yet a spatial plan. It should set out how its goals, objectives and actions would lead to positive change in different cities and settlements. To do this the NUP should set the scene to:

- A. Adopt a *national 'spatial' vision* - for a sustainable and prosperous Australia that acknowledges the different roles of cities and regions and the greater value which can be created.
- B. Establish a *process to refining a shared spatial vision involving the States and Territories* which identifies outcomes sought for the future of urban mega regions, capital cities and a hierarchy of regional settlements.

A spatial vision should reference Infrastructure Australia's *Strengthening Communities* paper and work by PIA on the role of a [National Settlement Strategy](#) to know if future public decisions and investment achieve the value embodied in a vision. The vision does not need to herald a population policy – but should reference the potential of different settlements to accommodate change under different growth scenarios.

Ultimately a shared spatial vision should be reflected in complementary State, Territory city and regional plans through:

- C. *States and Territories agreeing to **adopt a complementary vision, consistent growth scenarios and the consistent use of planning parameters** so that collectively the plans of States and Territories advance a shared vision.*

A key issue that should be considered in finalising the NUP is the extent to which it should express support for preferred settlement patterns (at a strategic level). For example, PIA believes there is ample evidence to support the NUP more explicitly prioritising compact settlement patterns, and more housing diversity and choice.

4. Adopt governance reforms to implement the NUP

The NUP requires a robust governance to support implementation. This calls for stronger ambitions to move beyond 'business as usual' policy-making to ensure the (final) vision, goals, objectives and principles of the NUP are achieved. This should include action by the Commonwealth to:

- A. ***Formalise partnerships with States, Territories and Local Government to implement NUP – commencing with an expanded Planning Ministers Forum.** Clear governance is needed that facilitates ongoing partnerships with State, Territory and Local Governments to ensure implementation of the NUP. At a minimum, this could sit with the existing planning ministers meeting. Ideally, governance should include National Cabinet, Board of Treasurers and/or Infrastructure Ministers given the breadth of issues that need to be considered within and across governments. An ongoing mechanism for industry and stakeholder engagement is also essential - including PIA.*
- B. ***Establish Commonwealth Whole-Of-Government buy-in to the NUP.** The NUP needs to be embedded across portfolios, with the expectation that the NUP guides all Australian Government departments and agencies in their policymaking where there is the potential for spatial implications in urban areas (such as population policy; defence estate planning; regional development and the implications of tax policy).*
- C. ***Transform 'possible actions' into a focused set of committed actions with implementation pathways and monitoring.** These need to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (rather than the current list of 'possible actions'). Progress on these actions should then be reported on regularly, ideally as part of the annual State of Australian Cities reporting. The Cities and Suburbs Unit could have responsibility for the program management of these actions, supporting the potential governance reforms that would embed a cross-portfolio role for the NUP. Ideally, there will be some early wins and demonstration projects that provides exemplars for progress.*
- D. ***Tie the NUP explicitly to infrastructure funding criteria and financing decision making.** Linking Australian Government infrastructure funding and financing to the achievement of measurable outcomes that achieve the NUP's ambitions. This should apply to specific projects put forward for funding (such as through the Infrastructure Australia – Infrastructure Plan - process), as well as funding programs delivered by the department (and, ideally, across all Australian Government departments).*
- E. ***Integrate the NUP with the Housing Accord to achieve 'well-located' housing.** The NUP can provide clear guidance around the Australian Government's expectations for what constitutes 'well-located' housing, supporting the Housing Accord's goals. The delivery of 'well-located' housing (along with more diverse housing typologies that will better community need) requires high-quality regional, local and neighbourhood scale plans, which can enable the right housing in the right locations. This is*

particularly relevant for infill in existing neighbourhoods that are served by appropriate infrastructure, services and employment accessibility. It is very difficult to determine what is 'well-located' outside the context of an integrated strategic plan.

A measure of success for the NUP should be the Commonwealth using policy levers and its balance sheet to support urban outcomes consistent with the policy. For example, rather than seeing Defence sell surplus land in inner urban areas to maximise cash for base upgrades, this land could be used for more strategic urban purposes. Similarly, thinking about tax policy in the light of urban policy is critical given this can influence housing outcomes - where and what type of development will be most incentivised.

The success of the NUP regarding States and Territories would be demonstrated by their implementation of land use and infrastructure plans which accord with the outcomes sought. There would be evidence that State programs and infrastructure proposals most aligned with the NUP being funded by the Commonwealth.

5. Rationalise the NUP hierarchy of goals, objectives and principles

The vision is paramount. For a policy as broad as the NUP fewer layers of headings is appropriate. The principles are not given sufficient status as an appendix and they include elements that would be better expressed as objectives.

- A. *The NUP goals and objectives should be integrated into a single layer of headings.*
- B. *The NUP principles should be elevated to the status of objectives – and not be a separate appendix.*
- C. *Future refinement of the NUP should conceive objectives and actions that best fulfil the goals - rather than embed so many existing Commonwealth commitments.*

PIA notes the draft NUP adopts the heading hierarchy^{vi} set out in Attachment A and commented on below:

NUP Heading Hierarchy	PIA Feedback
VISION <i>The desired future state – the vision is not finalised in the draft</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PIA urge the Commonwealth to seek broad buy-in across the Commonwealth and States, Territories and Local Government for a national spatial vision.
GOALS <i>The draft NUP expresses these as broad outcome statements for communities and places</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several of these have a strong spatial dimension – or would require spatial planning to be realised and for synergies and trade-offs to be managed.
OBJECTIVES <i>statements of outcome, discussions of challenges and include expressions of existing Govt positions /priorities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The objectives should more closely demonstrate how the Governments they would fulfill the goals – especially by incorporating content included in the principles.
PRINCIPLES <i>They are intended 'to guide decision making as it relates to investments in and policies for urban development'</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> However, the same could be said of the objectives and some actions. The principles are clear expressions of the outcomes sought from the NUP and should be applied towards the achievement of the vision and the formulation of all other layers – the principles should be incorporated upfront in revised expression of the goals and especially the objectives.

There is an opportunity to unscramble the hierarchy and give stronger expression to the principles. The principles can be integrated into the objectives - and where decision criteria are expressed – these should be placed in an implementation framework.






6. Feedback on the content of the Australian Government goals

The content of the goals is supported notwithstanding overlap with the objectives. The goals for should be traceable from the vision. PIA has recommended that the CSU consider rolling the objectives into the goals.

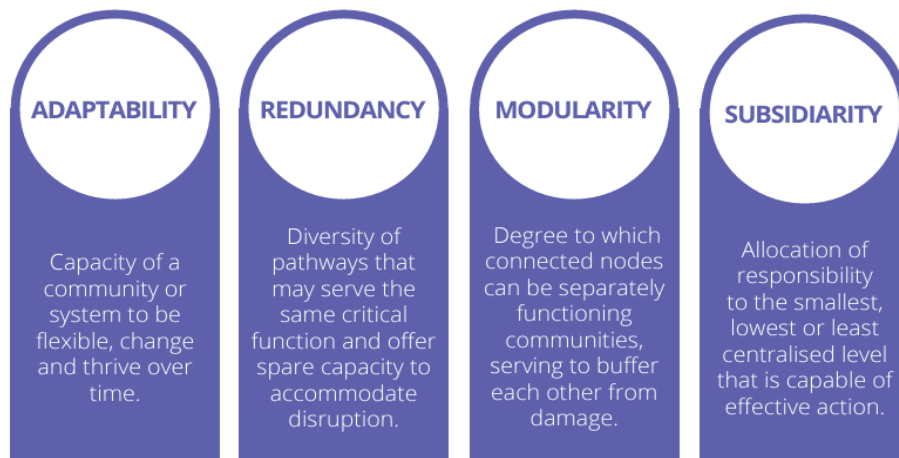
- A. *The goals should be stripped back into clear statements – while the supporting text and dot points on ‘factors’ could be rationalised based on feedback in relation to sustainability and resilience (table below).*

The goals are labelled ‘what we want our cities to be’ and are expressed mostly in relation to living in existing and large urban areas. The NUP should explain their relevance to new settlements and for different scales (eg remote and regional towns to mega cities). The IA report *Strengthening Communities*^{vii} could be referenced for its characterisation of different urban settings.

PIA offer the following feedback on the application of the goals in different urban settings – and note the need to refine the Sustainability goal with respect to First Nations input and have a nature positive approach.

NUP Goal	PIA Feedback
<p>Liveable</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PIA applaud this goal applying to peoples’ shelter and community needs linked to lived experience. It does not prejudice the development of a range of important responses. The description of factors should be drafted positively rather than as topics (eg ‘excellent’ water and air quality). What is liveable in a remote urban area differs from the inner suburbs of a major city – the goals should be relevant to different scales of urban settlement and spatial settings.
<p>Equitable</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity also has a spatial dimension and the ‘factors’ should be characterised for different urban scales and settings.
<p>Productive</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Productivity has a strong spatial dimension and this goal would apply very differently in relation to major city agglomerations – and the nature of industries and workforces in dispersed settings.
<p>Sustainable</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This goal is expressed in human centric terms – and needs to emphasise a nature positive approach for urban areas involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species and ecosystem protection and recovery Environmental losses being off-set Urban footprints being within nature’s limits Designing for nature Framing this goal through a First Nations lens of healing and Caring for Country – rephrasing the dot point to ‘collaboration with First Nations people to understand and value traditional approaches’. Rather than ‘moving towards’ - adopt a specific carbon emissions goal for urban areas to in line with Government’s commitment to Paris Agreement and interim targets for emissions reduction.
<p>Resilient</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A goal for urban resilience is strongly supported – but the scope is interpreted traditionally in relation to response to shocks / climate change hazards. PIA offers a more pro-active interpretation of planning for resilience – adding a goal to embed the characteristics of resilient systems into decision making (ie adaptability, redundancy, modularity and subsidiarity – see figure). This promotes scenarios, consideration of governance and decision pathways that respond to uncertainty. Under factors: climate resilience with respect to ‘infrastructure’ needs to be separated from planning frameworks - cognisant of natural hazards.

Characteristics of resilient systems:



Having a goal to embed the characteristics of resilient systems^{viii} into urban policy will lead to decision-making pathways that better navigate uncertainty.

- B. *Expand the scope of the NUP goal of 'resilience' to embed the characteristics of resilient systems into strategic decision making (refer item 6).*

7. Feedback on the content of the objectives and 'possible actions'

The six headline objectives are supported as positive statements that reinforce the goals – they should have a line of sight back to an adopted vision.

The elements of the objectives which are contained in the discussion should be drawn out so that the summary of objectives (p6) is more clearly derived from the text.

The 'key urban challenges' contain the ingredients of each objective and these should be reframed as desired outcomes within each objective. The 'discussion' should then cover the challenges to how these outcomes would be achieved. The discussion could describe the spatial synergies and ways to resolve the trade-offs needed to fulfill the objectives. Ultimately, this would require a next step in the development of the NUP towards an integrated settlement and infrastructure strategy.

PIA generally support the 'possible actions' under each objective - but recommend they be transformed into a focused set of 'committed actions' with implementation pathways and monitoring (see 4C above).

The elevation of the principles into the layer occupied by the objectives - and the integration of the principles dot points (actions/priorities/criteria) into the 'possible actions' would strengthen the alignment and rationale of the actions.

- A. *Relevant appended actions, criteria and priorities should be integrated with the 'possible actions' in the Objectives.*

PIA also observes that the framing of the objectives underplays the relationship of urban land with rural areas, natural resources and rural and remote communities. We recommend the NUP include an explanation of the how the NUP relates to natural resource management policy, rural and remote communities and regional partnerships and programs.

PIA offer the following feedback on the content of the NUP objectives and ‘possible actions’:

NUP Objective	PIA Feedback
<p>1. No-one and no place left behind</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the headline objective is an excellent statement of the need for well located, well designed, accessible and affordable housing – the discussion is limited to an outline of existing Australian Government platforms (eg National Housing Accord, National Planning Reform Blueprint) – but not yet a National Housing and Homelessness Plan). As a result the discussion does not fully address solutions beyond supply in the private market. • The discussion is relevant to existing urban areas (especially cities) – it should explain its application to smaller regional settlements – and also to the potential establish of new urban areas. • Regarding possible actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PIA strongly endorse “the development of a nationally consistent framework for national growth areas that establishes standards for infrastructure and services” – this is a central tenet of a national settlement strategy. ○ Integrated regional land use and infrastructure plans are the primary mechanism for coordinating growth strategies for urban settlements. PIA recommend adding underlined text: “strategically plan for growth” – <u>in collaboration with all levels of government through the existing regional planning frameworks.</u> ○ Likewise add to “invest in supporting infrastructure” – <u>that aligns with regional planning and reinforces desired urban outcomes.</u>
<p>2. All people belong and are welcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This objective is extremely broad and includes very different aspects of culture and experience - from First Nations heritage to the night time economy, community infrastructure and sporting facilities. • PIA acknowledge that community participation is becoming more important as a source of social cohesion and community groups are stepping up to lead their communities in self-organising patterns. • Regarding possible actions (add underlined): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Planning for and ensuring community infrastructure such as multipurpose community hubs are provided and can be used by diverse groups for meeting places, information dissemination, emergency response and recovery and community or partnership programs.</u> ○ Support protection and enhancement of our significant heritage places and cultural landmarks in the urban environment – <u>using regional strategic plans to find synergies and resolve trade-offs on the protection, recognition and new use of places with heritage and cultural significance.</u>
<p>3. Our urban areas are safe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This objective combines different topics of personal safety, safe and inclusive spaces - with planning for natural hazards. Should the inclusivity discussion be moved to objective 2 – and the discussion of public spaces to objective 5? • The objective should highlight the emerging National Adaption Plan (link), National Climate Risk Assessment - and emerging principles. • In relation to the p29 paragraph on natural hazards - the recovery phase after disasters needs to be more closely connected with future resilience in the context of rebuilding and support provided. Investment must be directed at adaptation and step change in equal proportions to immediate recovery. • Re vulnerable infrastructure – funding should not discriminate against strengthening, relocating or re-conceiving infrastructure needs – rather than simple replacement.

NUP Objective	PIA Feedback
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>PIA would like to see governments and the community moving from natural hazard responses as a crisis or event – towards treating adaptation planning and infrastructure works as part of a program response to building long-term resilience. So each time we plan or build something, we think about the future climate and making sure its fit for purpose. This means adopting principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Not allowing homes to be built in harm’s way – by settlement planning using best knowledge of climate scenarios consistent with regional growth strategy – and risk appetite.</i> ○ <i>Managing known risks to where people already live – by adapting building standards to the prevailing hazard and risks.</i> ○ <i>Working out where we actually have to retreat or move towns when risks become unacceptable.</i> </i> • <i>Regarding possible actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Elaborate the dots on climate risk in land use planning to include disaster management, evacuation, adaptation actions and support for transformation and appropriate mitigation.</i> ○ <i>PIA recommend including coherent national principles for addressing climate change and natural hazard adaptation in regional land use and infrastructure planning.</i> </i>
4. Our urban areas are sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This objective is significant in tying the NUP into national processes for carbon emission reduction. The NUP should describe the status to be given to interim targets and the role of the NUP regarding the built environment and the transport and infrastructure sector plans.</i> • <i>The NUP should identify and guide key urban policy decisions that could impact achieving emissions reductions (see PIA (2023) Achieving Net Zero Emissions). For example urban footprint expansion and mode share targets are raised – but not included as objectives. The NUP could outline the circumstances where jurisdictions should adopt these. Another step would be required through the development of nationally consistent regional spatial strategies.</i> • <i>PIA supports this objective including establishing nationally consistent approaches for regional strategic plan adoption.</i> • <i>Regarding possible actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Dot 1 sub dot 4 (p32) ‘reform urban planning and zoning rules...’ is an over simplification which misses the key step of requiring best practice spatial strategic plans to establish outcomes and inform zoning and other planning and assessment criteria for allocating development rights. It cannot be assumed that ‘prioritising mixed use neighbourhoods’ will always reduce emissions or achieve other urban outcomes.</i> ○ <i>Dot 1 sub dot 6 (p32) recommends building national standards for considering disaster and climate risk. The action could be better phrased to give NUP status to those national standards that are already best practice (eg AIDR) across all natural hazards and make these BAU in the preparation of strategic land use and adaptation plans.</i> ○ <i>Dot 1 sub dot 9 (p33) networks of blue and green spaces should be identified as elements of essential infrastructure (Urban Green Infrastructure).</i> ○ <i>Dot 2 sub dot 1 replace ‘mitigate’ with ‘address’ – as this is too ambitious an objective – rather add suffix ...and support adaptation, transformation and mitigation planning and programs as appropriate for the identified risk.’</i> </i>
5. Our urban environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This objective is important in elevating the importance of urban amenity and local accessibility to services, jobs and open spaces in denser urban areas.</i>

NUP Objective	PIA Feedback
and communities promote health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The NUP should endorse the application of value capture/sharing to fund the delivery of the full range of infrastructure needed to support growth in liveable urban areas.</i> • <i>Funding of bundles of local and green infrastructure items should be facilitated. These are of comparable importance to other enabling infrastructure for growth and should be evaluated and prioritised accordingly.</i> • <i>This objective will require the elevation of design protocols and recognition of different classes of local and green infrastructure as more significant elements of urban areas.</i> • <i>Regarding possible actions:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>As an additional action (supported by PIA and ASBEC): ‘deliver best practice urban environments through a renewed commitment to adopt and champion Creating Places for People: An Urban Design Protocol for Australian Cities. (An urban design protocol connects the vision in the NUP to urban design and planning at state/territory and local levels.)’</i> ○ <i>As an additional action: set out the means by which aggregated packages of local and green infrastructure items should be considered and prioritised for funding by IA and State infrastructure bodies.</i> ○ <i>Expand the action addressing urban heat beyond ‘using cool paints’ to ‘...retrofitting neighbourhoods with shade, active transport, improving walkability and tree planting programs.’</i>
6. Our urban areas promote productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Planning for urban productivity alongside growth and density is a key aspect of integrated spatial land use and infrastructure planning.</i> • <i>One of the key roles of long term growth planning is the identification, location and timing of key enabling infrastructure for growth and urban productivity. This should be highlighted within this NUP objective – and reference relevant IA discussion papers.</i> • <i>The objective should adopt outcomes promoting agglomeration economies and strengthening effective job density by the location of concentration of jobs and housing and strategic investment in physical and digital connectivity.</i> • <i>The links between local accessibility, amenity and productivity should be emphasised in Obj. 5 and 6 and identify the advantages of urban planning for a travel time budget.</i> • <i>The NUP should endorse the application of value capture/sharing to fund the delivery of the full range of infrastructure needed to support urban productivity.</i> • <i>Regarding possible actions (PIA suggested amendments underlined):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>improve strategic planning at all levels and consultation between governments and industry to ensure better coordination between freight infrastructure and networks, land use planning and urban development <u>through the existing regional planning network.</u></i> ○ <i>(new) <u>identify critical corridors or sites for investment in key enabling infrastructure based on scenario planning.</u></i> ○ <i>better coordinate Australia’s migration settings, including through the development of a principles-based multi-year planning model for migration <u>to locations requiring particular skills and with capacity in networks.</u> Targeted and well-planned migration will help deliver better outcomes for Australia in infrastructure, housing, service delivery and the environment.</i> ○ <i>(new) <u>support improvements and access to data and digital platforms nationally that assist with the land use planning land evidence base for better policy formulation.</u></i> ○ <i>(new) <u>explore initiatives for AI to play a role on everyday urban activities.</u></i> ○ <i>improving the climate resilience of vulnerable infrastructure critical to the economy - <u>and connecting recovery funding closely with resilience targets.</u></i>

8. Endorsement of the NUP Principles

PIA strongly endorse the content of the principles. They are “intended to inform the achievement of the NUP goals and objectives’ - by guiding the way cities and other human settlements are planned, designed, financed, developed, governed and managed.”

The principles describe the means of achieving the outcomes embedded in the objectives more succinctly than the corresponding content included in the objectives. They include clear statements of outcome and lead into a stronger set of actions.

- A. *The content of each of the principles should be migrated into the objectives rather than remain a separate appendix. The objectives and possible actions should be rationalised and modified accordingly.*

9. Monitoring and Review of NUP outcomes and actions

The monitoring and review of the NUP should include, but extend beyond, the State of Australian Cities reporting. It should report on the achievement of outcomes derived from the goals and objectives as well as the implementation of adopted actions.

- A. *The NUP should scope and adopt a review cycle - addressing NUP performance outcomes for urban areas as well as progress on action implementation.*

The NUP should set out how the State of Australian Cities Reporting would reflect performance against NUP outcomes – on the extent to which urban areas reflect the vision, goals and objectives of the NUP. The NUP should nominate performance criteria to be reported and describe what a successful spatial expression of the policy look like.

A complementary review process should apply to the implementation of adopted actions. These need to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. Progress on the implementation of these actions should then be reported on regularly, ideally along with the annual State of Australian Cities reporting. The Cities and Suburbs Unit could have responsibility for the program management of these actions, supporting the potential governance reforms that would embed a cross-portfolio role for the NUP. Ideally, there will be some early wins and demonstration projects that provides exemplars for progress.

NEXT STEPS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE NUP

PIA anticipate the next steps for the development and implementation of the NUP to include:

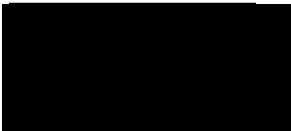
- Brokering a shared vision across Commonwealth, State and Territory Government stakeholders.
- Achieving some form of National Cabinet adoption or acknowledgement of the NUP - and how it would influence Federal agencies and the investment prioritisation of infrastructure bodies.
- Establishing the means to better align plans - across and with State land use and infrastructure planning processes (eg shared scenarios (eg popn / city scales), coherent or consistent planning parameters and timescales)
- Forming expectations for good practice long-term strategic plans for cities - as a basis for aligned decision making.
- Establishing of NUP governance and review oversight – potentially via a National Planning (& Infrastructure) Ministers Council - with potential PIA/ALGA involvement.

The NUP has the potential to ultimately include a spatial expression for national settlement, incorporating:

- A national 'spatial' vision - for a sustainable and prosperous Australia that is specific on the role of its cities and regions and which responds to a coherent climate policy.
- A coherent set of regional plans – that are consistent in the planning and population assumptions, climate and environmental performance benchmarks and infrastructure demand parameters applied to guide growth or change for places and communities
- The Commonwealth Government becoming more 'spatially aware' of its impacts – establishing a role within Government to advise on the spatial implications of major funding, investment, monetary and taxation policy decisions.
- Infrastructure investment focussed on strategic outcomes for places – an infrastructure investment strategy designed to achieve regional plan outcomes including via Precinct Partnerships, City Deals or growth compacts.

PIA are committed to the development and implementation of the Draft National Urban Policy. Please do not hesitate to engage PIA through myself or our National Policy Director (john.brockhoff@planning.org.au).

Yours sincerely,



Matt Collins MPIA
Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENT A

DRAFT NUP VISION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES


The National Urban Policy

A shared government vision


PLACEHOLDER

The Australian Government is working with state and territory governments to reinstate a vision for sustainable growth in cities. This will be included in the final version of the National Urban Policy.


Australian Government goals: What we want our cities to be




Liveable




Equitable



Productive



Sustainable



Resilient

Australian Government objectives: Areas of focus

No-one and no place left behind

- Housing availability
- Housing affordability
- Homelessness and overcrowding
- Access to social services and transport
- Urban development patterns

All people belong and are welcome

- Accessible participation in community life
- Access to arts and culture
- Preservation of First Nations cultural heritage
- Night-time economy management
- Sustainability and accessibility in tourism
- Protection of natural and culturally important heritage sites and landmarks
- Investments in sport infrastructure

Our urban areas are safe

- Inclusivity and safety in public spaces
- Safety for marginalised groups
- Crime prevention and community safety
- Safety in movement
- Resilience

Our urban areas are sustainable

- Net zero and urban emissions reduction
- Transport emissions
- Building and construction emissions
- Circular economy and sustainability
- Green and blue spaces

Our urban environments and communities promote health and wellbeing

- Urban health and liveability
- Housing quality
- Active transport and social infrastructure

Our urban areas promote productivity

- Labour mobility
- Income inequality
- Transport and enabling infrastructure
- Active and public transport
- Future technologies
- Skills shortages
- Digital connectivity
- Urban freight and land use planning

Principles

City planning and governance must be collaborative and adaptive

Purposeful place making increases wellbeing and connection

Urban development should actively improve social, environmental and economic outcomes

Improving the evidence base will underpin urban innovation

Fair and inclusive development builds equitable communities

Fostering innovation and creativity hubs enhance diversity and broadens opportunities

ENDNOTES

ⁱ UN Sustainable Development Goals 11, 3, 9 and 13.

ⁱⁱ 2023-24 Commonwealth Budget initiatives include: establishment of Cities and Suburbs Unit (\$11.9M), Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program (\$150M), Thriving Suburbs Program (\$200M) – as well as some \$80M for Strategic Planning. These funds sit alongside the Regional Investment Framework.

ⁱⁱⁱ National infrastructure expenditure \$256.6Bn next 4 years to 2026/7 – Infrastructure Partnerships Budget Message ([link](#))

^{iv} Refer Commonwealth Treasury Population Statements ([link](#)) and ‘Planning for Australia’s Future Population. 2019 ([link](#))

^v Refer Infrastructure Statement ([link](#)) and Infrastructure Australia Infrastructure Plan ([link](#))

^{vi} Refer p6 of Draft NUP (copied in Attachment A)

^{vii} Infrastructure Australia (2022) Strengthening Communities ([link](#))

^{viii} Extract from PIA (2021) ‘Role of Planning in adapting to a changing climate’ ([link](#))