3 November 2006

DLGSR
Dynamic Planning for a Growing State
IPA/IDAS Improvement Project
Reply Paid 15031
City East QLD 4002

THE PLANNING INSTITUTE AUSTRALIA PIA (QUEENSLAND DIVISION)
SUBMISSION ON DYNAMIC PLANNING FOR A GROWING STATE DLGSR
DISCUSSION PAPER

Dear Sir / Madam

The Planning Institute Australia (Queensland Division) “PIA” welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the review of the Integrated Planning Act 1997 (the IPA) and IDAS. PIA congratulates the Minister and the DLGSR in taking this initiative. After almost 10 years of experience and operation of the IPA, it is considered timely to review the operations and effectiveness of the legislation and to assess its performance against the original objectives and against a background of increasingly complex urban and regional planning and growth management issues, together with changing community aspirations and expectations.

The intent of the discussion paper to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the IPA/IDAS and to reinforce the fundamental objects of the IPA is supported. PIA is very conscious that the original intent of the IPA was to focus on outcomes and support a performance-based planning and development system. This is an opportune time to revisit these objectives and to assess the effectiveness of the Act to date in this regard.

PIA notes that its submission made to DLGSR dated 31 March 2006 was clearly taken into account during the preparation of the Discussion Paper. We thank you for that consideration, while noting also that there are still some matters which PIA believes require further thought and analysis. While some are structural and inherent in the legislation, others are more the subject of implementation, sound administration and relationship management.
PIA is pleased to present our submission provided in two parts:

1. Executive Summary; and
2. Detailed Submission (Attachment A).

The Executive Summary provides a response to the key strategies and proposed improvements. PIA has prioritised the eight most important strategies to deliver improvement to IPA/IDAS. These are:

State and Regional Planning (Strategies 3 and 4);
Local Government Planning Policy (Strategies 8 and 9);
Infrastructure Planning and Charging (Strategy 10); and
IDAS (Strategies 13, 14 and 15).

PIA proposes that a project team led by a DLGPRS project manager, supported by a working group, is required to drive forward each of the above four listed groups of strategies and ensure that all stakeholders contribute to the outputs and therefore also take ownership of the outcomes. PIA offers DLGPRS the participation of highly experienced planners in each of these key strategy areas to participate in these working.

The Detailed Submission (Attachment A) sets out detailed responses to each of the proposed improvements, with short comments as appropriate and a recommendation about whether the improvement is endorsed.

The PIA Queensland Young Planners Group has also held a ’Think Tank’ workshop to gain the views of their peers in response to the IPA/IDAS improvements. A separate submission will be submitted for your consideration.

PIA recommends that you consider the following overarching planning matters to inform improvements to IPA/IDAS.

**Principles**

There are some principles that all sound planning legislation should seek to embrace and ensure they are followed through in practice and implementation. They include:

- To be outcome focussed and facilitate good development. The objective should clearly be to enable appropriate development to proceed as expeditiously as possible;
- An Act and supporting regulations which are written as plainly and clearly as possible, to be widely understood by all;
- Administrative processes which are as straightforward and effective as possible;
- Conditions of development which are fair, reasonable and relevant, with a clear basis in sound policy;
- Infrastructure charges and contributions which are soundly based;
- Transparent decision-making processes and timelines; and
- An effective, accessible and inexpensive dispute-resolution process.
Strategic Planning

A stronger and more positive approach to regional planning across the State is supported, on the basis that it is strategic, quick and efficient and deals with issues in an appropriate way. Note that to achieve most of this only minimal amendments to the Act are required, but decisive decision making and good governance are essential.

While a "one size fits all" model should be avoided, it is possible to learn from the OUM model and ensure strong leadership and coordination across government, in particularly in areas of high priority.

Regional planning outside SEQ should underpin key principles, based on the experience of SEQ. For example:

- Establish appropriate regional planning processes, rather than just prepare plans;
- Link plans clearly with programs and budgets;
- Implementation plans to include forward expenditure commitments;
- Ongoing monitoring and formal review;
- Plans are outcome focussed and set clear priorities;
- Clear policies and principles to direct land use and development;
- Underpin plans with some statutory powers to assist implementation;
- Consult with all stakeholders; and
- Collaborate with local government.

Provide leadership and a genuine "whole of government" commitment and ensure the planning process is given due priority for resources. Avoid the current confusion in SEQ between the role of DLGPSR and OUM and also avoid duplicating undue processes in complementary local government planning processes. Place the emphasis on establishing a regional planning process which is relevant to specific needs.

Regional plans should be prepared against very tight time-frames in order to meet the needs of the foreseeable future and to give longer-term direction to achieve desired outcomes. This will become particularly important as the debate about Climate Change hots up and the reality begins to bite.

Set early and clear policies, principles, priorities and direction, building wherever possible on the extensive work undertaken in some areas through the consultative RPAG process, but not yet capitalised on. Ensure decisive action and good governance.

Overall, strong leadership is required from an agency empowered to provide strong planning leadership at the state and regional level.

In addition to the above comments, the document entitled "Key Strategies to Improve the IPA and IDAS" is attached to demonstrate a suggested approach.
Resources

The Discussion Paper contains many recommended actions which require DLGPSR to undertake key tasks, many in the short and medium-terms. To some extent, the fact that these measures are necessary and proposed reflects that past and existing outputs by DLGPSR have been incomplete. This has in large part been due to the lack of capacity in DLGPSR to undertake these functions.

PIA would be concerned that the Department will be sufficiently resourced with the appropriate levels of skills and experience to undertake these tasks, some of which have always been the remit of the Department to manage successfully. It is possible that it is the Government as a whole, rather than just DLGPSR, which will be responsible to deliver on some of these actions, but the opportunity clearly exists for the Department to show planning leadership across the State. It is also recommended that the respective planning roles of DLGPSR and the many other agencies employing planning skills be resolved, in order to reduce unnecessary duplication of effort and confusion.

The PIA QLD Division looks forward to continuing a collaborative working relationship with the Department. This is a timely opportunity to make genuine and earnest changes to the legislation, in the light of almost 10 years of operational experience. PIA understands that the State Government is very genuine in its intent to take this opportunity to ensure the IPA can operate in the most efficient and effective way to guide planning and development for the next 10 years.

Should you have any further comments or enquiries about this submission, please do not hesitate in contacting PIA on the abovementioned contact number.

Yours faithfully,

Michael Kerry
President
PIA Queensland Division