Interactions between Coalition policies and Planning Institute of Australia policies

As the national representative of the planning profession, the Planning Institute of Australia acknowledges and welcomes the Coalition Government's focus on jobs, growth and a smart, economically competitive Australia.

Planning for the future is critical to our long-term productivity and liveability. Our cities and regions are the engines of our nation's economy, and planning is an important tool in effectively managing the numerous and rapid changes facing those communities. The Planning Institute views good planning as the best way to tackle the economic, social and environmental challenges facing Australia today.

Planning helps us to:

- manage urban growth;
- secure critical infrastructure investment;
- determine appropriate settlement patterns for our cities and towns; and
- generate economic development that contributes positively to the wellbeing of individuals and communities as well as the natural and built environments on which we rely.

Our cities are home to 75 per cent of the nation's population and generate more than 80 per cent of our wealth. Our prosperity is largely driven by the hundreds of thousands of workers that commute into and out of our cities every day to create value by networking, negotiating, innovating and implementing. Making these cities work better would enhance productivity and boost the economy.

The Planning Institute therefore welcomes the Government's Smart Cities Plan and applauds the creation of a dedicated portfolio for Urban Infrastructure and Cities (and Digital Transformation). Now is the time to sharpen our focus on smart policy and technology, and there is much to be gained in a national approach to city planning that guides dynamic and sustainable urbanisation.

Housing affordability was a key issue in this year's election, and needs to be addressed in order to preserve Australia's economic performance and labour market efficiency as well as social equality and cohesion. The Government's establishment of an Affordable Housing Working Group earlier this year, with a view to boosting the supply of
affordable rental housing, was undoubtedly a step in the right direction. However, we feel much more needs to be done, and we encourage the Government to work with us on progressing this as a national priority. There are many ways planning can help facilitate the delivery of housing aspirations – through effective development assessment systems, policy advocacy and proactive master-planning processes – and we are ready to work with your Government on producing, refining and implementing these as appropriate.

It is well-established now that climate change poses a real threat to Australia. The Government's investment of $2.55 billion to incentivise Australian businesses to reduce carbon emissions will certainly help in addressing these climate-related challenges. So, too, will the National Energy Productivity Plan to support investments in new technology and reduce emissions from ozone-depleting gases. We do have some concern, however, that the need to radically reduce Australia's dependence on fossil-fuelled urban transport systems is currently under-represented in the Coalition's urban platform, notwithstanding the investments flagged for rail.

PIA collaborates with leading industry groups in the sustainability and built environment sector through our membership of Australian Sustainable Built Environment Coalition (ASBEC). We look forward to working with the Government to assist in the effective implementation of programs that reduce our environmental footprint as Australians.

Preparing and protecting our communities from extreme environmental hazards is another area where planning plays a critical role. To this end, we have just completed work on a National Land Use Planning Guidelines for Disaster Resilient Communities. These guidelines are intended to provide the context, process frameworks and tools for integrating natural hazard risk reduction and resilience into land use planning practice. With your Government's support, we hope they represent an essential first step in creating a national disaster resilience framework.

Good planning is key to creating more liveable, prosperous and sustainable built environments that foster national productivity and well-being. PIA is committed to assisting planning professionals in this work through leadership, advocacy and education – and partnering with Government is an integral part of ensuring the best outcomes are delivered.

We hope you find the below table useful in outlining the numerous alignments in our policies and how PIA can assist in bringing them to fruition. We look forward to working with you on this exciting and vitally important work for our country.
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<tr>
<th>Coalition policy</th>
<th>Planning Institute position</th>
<th>How PIA can help</th>
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<td>The Turnbull Government has demonstrated strong leadership in cities policy.</td>
<td>Commit to a Minister for Cities, supported by a well-resourced, dedicated team that has professional expertise in planning, infrastructure, economics, transport and related disciplines, and skills in collaboration and brokering integrated outcomes across complex areas of policy and implementation.</td>
<td>PIA is committed to continuing to provide trusted professional advice to the Assistant Minister and the bureaucracy. With a strong membership of planners in all sectors across the country, we can assist in facilitating collaboration and driving action to deliver better cities. Appropriately resourcing this action is critical and PIA provides access to a diverse pool of talented professionals that can be drawn upon by the Government.</td>
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<td>The Prime Minister has appointed the Assistant Minister for Cities and Digital Transformation, the Hon. Angus Taylor MP, to lead the agenda from within his own portfolio.</td>
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<td>Located at the centre of Government, the Turnbull Government’s Smart Cities Plan is able to drive action across the Commonwealth and coordinate engagement with other levels of government, the private sector and community.</td>
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<td>Collaboration, innovation and investment are central to the Coalition’s Smart Cities Plan and its commitment to deliver City Deals.</td>
<td>Implement a forward looking cities agenda focussed on innovation and the integration of land use planning, infrastructure and productivity, which informs key investment decisions that address vital urban freight and passenger transport priorities.</td>
<td>PIA supports City Deals and looks forward to working with the Government to provide advice on how this mechanism can, and should, be used to not only leverage infrastructure investment but achieve more holistic outcomes for our cities through good planning. City Deals provide the opportunity to package a range of actions and</td>
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<td>City Deals will be focused on making our cities more liveable.</td>
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liveable through better coordination, integrated planning and targeted infrastructure investment.

The Turnbull Government recognises that infrastructure projects, and urban rail in particular, are about much more than transport. They are investments in housing supply, jobs closer to home, quality of life and healthy environments.

Public transport is essential to ensure Australian cities remain world-class. The Turnbull Government has committed $4 billion investment in public transport nationwide, including:

- $1.7 billion towards Sydney Metro;
- $860 million towards Melbourne Metro;
- $95 million towards Gold Coast light rail;
- $490 million towards the Forrestfield Airport Link; and
- $43 million towards Flinders Link in Adelaide.

Central to our Smart Cities plan is a cooperative approach to long term planning, underpinned by outcomes with a shared goal for a city. The planning profession is adept at integrating and balancing a range of competing objectives and perspectives to achieve desired outcomes. PIA stands at the ready to provide advice on this matter.

PIA also strongly supports the Government’s renewed focus on urban infrastructure, particularly public infrastructure. Smart investment in public transport has the power to transform at all levels, from the city and region to the suburb and neighbourhood. Infrastructure investment must go hand-in-hand with land use planning to ensure that the maximum positive benefit is gained from the investment.

Elevate the importance of planning for our major cities and regions and the need for greater collaboration by

Collaborative and bilateral approaches are essential for ensuring long-term planning in our cities. Strategic spatial planning
targeted investment and reform.

The Smart Cities Plan elevates the importance of planning and the Commonwealth’s engagement and investment in the planning of Australia’s cities and major centres.

This will involve action-oriented bilateral engagement with states and territories on planning and investment strategies for our cities and growth centres.

The Turnbull Government will ensure that the Council of Australian Government’s structures reflect our core priorities and underpin our commitments to cities policy.

| establishing a Planning Ministerial Council. | needs to be considered in the context of the interconnected nature of cities to each other and their regions. Greater reform and appropriate streamlining of planning systems are also key to get more effective planning outcomes, with efficient but fair processes. Planning systems around the country are critical factors in how outcomes are delivered, and it is PIA’s strong contention that a clear mechanism for bringing together Planning Ministers and their Departments is needed. PIA recently assisted in the meeting of the Heads of Planning Departments and a clear message from that process was the need for a directive ‘from the top’ for all states to come to the table. |