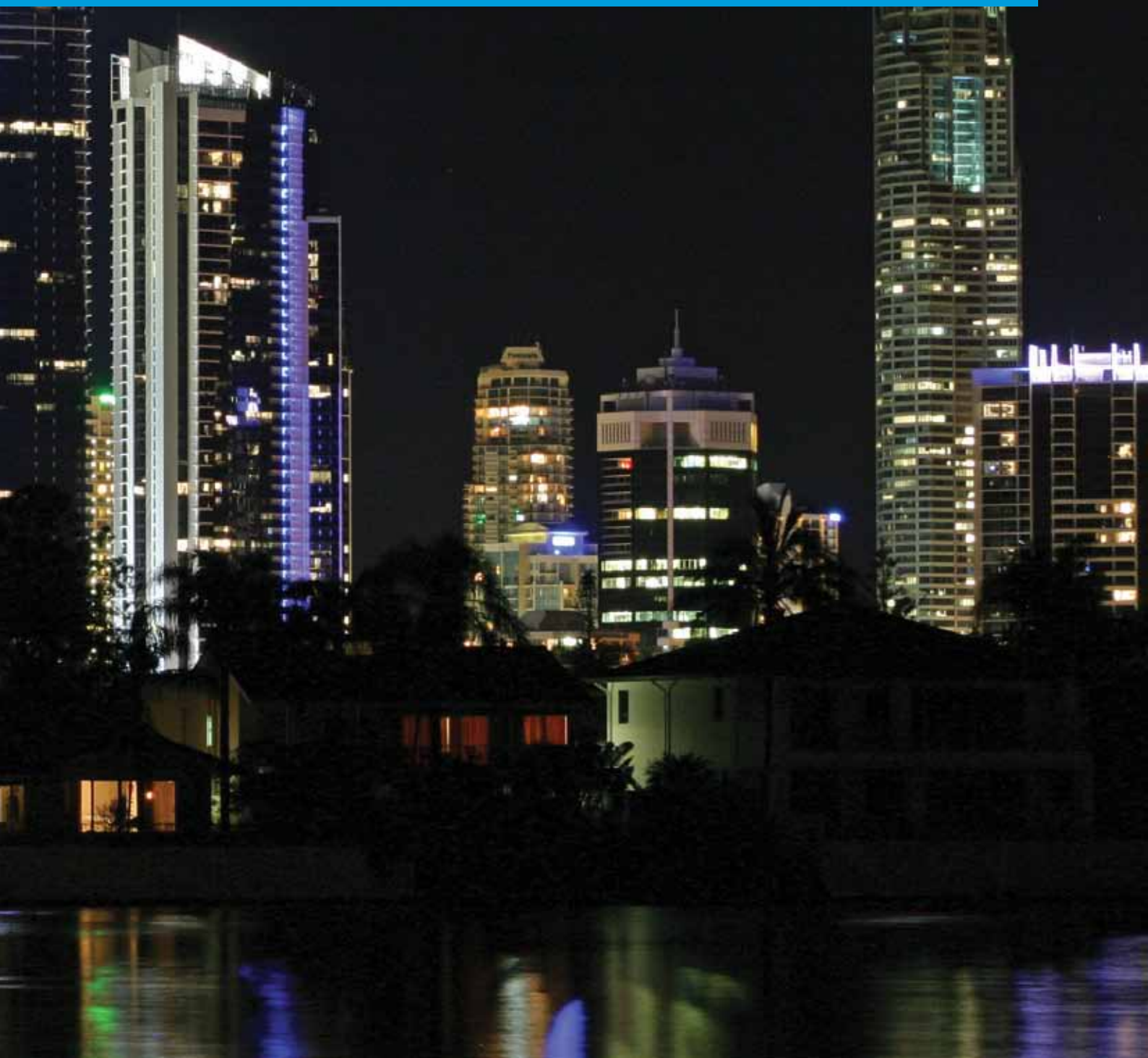


Gold Coast, QLD



Chapter 6

Governance



Chapter 6

Governance

A National Urban Policy should provide a framework to monitor the performance and the outcomes of our existing planning framework as it applies in our major cities and across Australia. This means looking at the productivity and outcomes of planning systems particularly in relation to affordable and timely delivery of housing to meet the future population growth of Australia.

Housing Industry Association

The National Urban Policy provides a framework for the Australian Government to support the State, Territory and Local Governments to meet their capital city and broader strategic planning objectives.

As part of its commitment to the productivity, sustainability and liveability of our major cities, the Australian Government is committed to supporting regional cities develop comprehensive strategic plans in line with the COAG national objective and nine criteria. Regional cities often lack the capacity and resources to undertake comprehensive strategic planning. This has stifled their ability to attract the capital and investment required for long-term economic growth, population and demographic change, to meet the service needs of their regions and to address the long-term environmental challenges.

The Australian Government will support State, Territory and Local Governments in all major cities to:

- complete metropolitan plans that better deliver on the COAG criteria, not just in capital cities but in all major cities across Australia;
- undertake detailed policy, planning, feasibility assessment, and/or design to implement components of metropolitan or city plans to maximize the efficiency of land use and transport, facilitate housing affordability and diversity, increase public transport and active travel, undertake climate change mitigation and adaptation, facilitate social inclusion and economic participation, and identify and protect infrastructure corridors and sites; and
- improve coordination and governance arrangements within and between governments.



GOVERNANCE	Objectives and priorities
12. IMPROVE THE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF OUR CITIES BY:	<p>Lack of integration and poor strategic alignment of metropolitan planning and infrastructure delivery detracts from the productivity, sustainability and liveability of cities.</p> <p>Metropolitan planning and governance that supports nationally agreed principles and outcomes need to be a priority. Consideration should also be given to which level of government is the most appropriate to deliver facilities and services in the most efficient and effective ways.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Facilitating a whole-of-governments approach 	<p>A high proportion of local government authorities are struggling to keep up with infrastructure demands and the delivery of facilities and services to local communities. In addition, there are sites of national, state or territory significance that are affected by the decisions of multiple jurisdictions and planning bodies.</p> <p>Better results can be achieved if goals, objectives and funding are aligned across jurisdictions and agencies, and between the three tiers of government.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Integrating planning systems, infrastructure delivery and management 	<p>The Council of Australian Governments has agreed that capital city strategic planning systems should be integrated across functions including land-use and transport planning, economic and infrastructure development, environmental assessment and urban development.</p> <p>This best practice approach to planning and implementation should be applied across all Australian major cities, including regional cities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Encouraging best practice governance and applying the principle of subsidiarity 	<p>Consideration should be given to facilitate the most appropriate levels of government to deliver facilities and services in the most efficient and effective ways.</p>
13. STREAMLINE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES BY:	<p>Cumbersome administrative processes and red tape can slow down the planning, release and development of land, infrastructure and vital services. This represents significant cost to businesses, government and the community.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of approval processes for development 	<p>Efficient and effective assessment and approval processes for development is in everybody's interests. The focus should be on minimising time and costs for proponents and government administrative bodies, but this needs to be balanced with appropriate consideration for, and input from, stakeholders and communities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Encouraging participation and engagement with stakeholders 	<p>Better outcomes can be achieved if stakeholders and end-users are engaged in the planning, delivery and management of infrastructure and services.</p>
14. EVALUATE PROGRESS BY:	<p>Monitoring progress and evaluating the effectiveness of policies, programs and investments on urban outcomes is essential to ensure that we are achieving our objectives and continuing to improve outcomes for our cities and people.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Research, analysis and reporting 	<p>Providing quality reporting, analysis and research is essential to tracking progress against indicators and providing feedback to further refine policies and initiatives.</p> <p>The Australian Government will continue to publish the <i>State of Australian Cities</i> report on an annual basis, with an indicator framework for Australia's major cities with populations above 100,000.</p>

Improve the planning and management of our cities

Lack of integration and poor strategic alignment of metropolitan planning and infrastructure delivery detracts from productivity, sustainability and liveability of cities. Many local government authorities are struggling to keep up with infrastructure demands and the delivery of facilities and services to local communities. In addition, there are sites of national, state or territory significance that are affected by the decisions of multiple jurisdictions and planning bodies.

Facilitating a whole-of-governments approach

The Australian Government is committed to working with all spheres of Government to improve outcomes in cities. This is demonstrated in its commitment to taking major reforms to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and is genuinely engaging local governments around Australia through such forums as the Australian Council of Local Governments (ACLG), the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors (CCCLM), and the National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA).

Integrating planning systems, infrastructure delivery and management

Through the COAG agreement on city strategic planning systems, the Australian Government has committed to coordinate its own activities and investment in cities. The *National Urban Policy* supports strategic planning which meets the agreed national objective criteria in all major cities of over 100,000.

Since Infrastructure Australia was established in 2008 there has been a transformation in the approach to Australia's national infrastructure policy. This has been achieved through developing an annual priority list of infrastructure projects, conducting the first ever national audit of infrastructure, establishing a national Public-Private Partnership policy and guidelines, and developing landmark national port and freight strategies. Infrastructure Australia is an important source of advice for all levels of government, industry and the private sector, and has helped

deliver important outcomes across the transport, water, energy and communication sectors.

Encouraging best practice governance and applying the principle of subsidiarity

The Australian Government is committed to the principle of subsidiarity. It strongly believes in supporting local government to deliver projects that are achieving results.

Further initiatives to improve the planning and management of our cities

To further improve the planning and management of our cities the Australian Government will:

- Ensure its policies, investment and other activities across government meet the objectives of the *National Urban Policy* and COAG cities' reform
- Work in cooperation and partnership with State, Territory and Local Governments, businesses and the community
- Work with States and Territories to address issues identified in the COAG Reform Council's review of strategic planning systems, and to incorporate best practice reforms
- Seek the support of states and local government, through COAG, to expand the use of the national criteria for *Capital City Strategic Planning Systems* to the planning of regional major cities
- Implement the *Sustainable Communities—Liveable Cities* program to assist regional cities to commence the development of strategic planning systems equivalent to those of capital cities for all cities greater than 100,000 population. The aim will be to have planning systems in place for all major cities that are consistent with the COAG national criteria (Appendix A).

Streamline administrative processes

In managing cities, considerable time and resources are used in administrative processes. Cumbersome administrative processes and 'red tape' can slow down the planning, release and development of land, infrastructure and vital services. This represents significant cost to businesses, government and the community. Despite statements of continuing commitment over the last two decades to reduce red tape and pursue micro-economic reforms within all levels of government, there is frustration that reforms are progressing too slowly.

The experience in many reform areas is that the process of problem identification, policy development and agreement, legislative change and actual implementation, is extremely time consuming. There are varying reasons for this, including lack of resources allocated to the reform task, resistance to change from stakeholders, internal and external to governments, and other competing priorities.

The Council of Australian Governments initiated a Productivity Commission review of *Performance Benchmarking of Australian Business Regulation: Planning, Zoning and Development Assessments*. The outcomes of this review will be taken into consideration in informing the actions that the Australian Government pursues in this area.

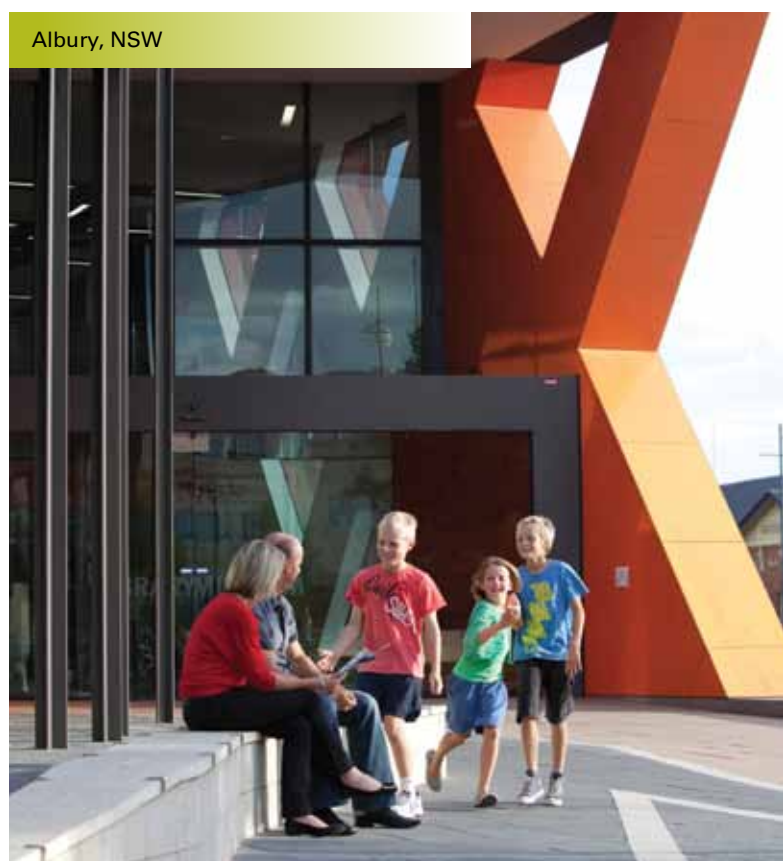
Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of approval processes for development

COAG has agreed to a set of reforms to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of approval processes for development. In 2009 COAG agreed to develop national performance measures for Development Assessment to improve the transparency and accountability for planning systems as the basis for future reforms. Under these reforms, progress has been made by the States and Territories toward more streamlined development assessment processes through, for example, increasing the use of 'complying' development to speed up

approvals, reforming intergovernmental referral processes and encouraging greater use of electronic processing.

Encouraging participation and engagement with stakeholders

The Australian Government actively encourages the participation of stakeholders and the community in issues which affect them. For example, following the release of the *National Aviation Policy White Paper*, Planning Coordination Forums were established. These were specifically designed for State/Territory, Local Government and the Commonwealth to discuss planning and development issues to better align planning at major city airports with surrounding Local and State/Territory planning intentions. Community Aviation Consultation Groups have also been established, including community representatives, to ensure open discussion about all aspects of airport operations, planning and development.



Further initiatives to streamline administrative processes

To continue to support initiatives that streamline administrative processes, for the improved planning, development and management of cities the Australian Government will:

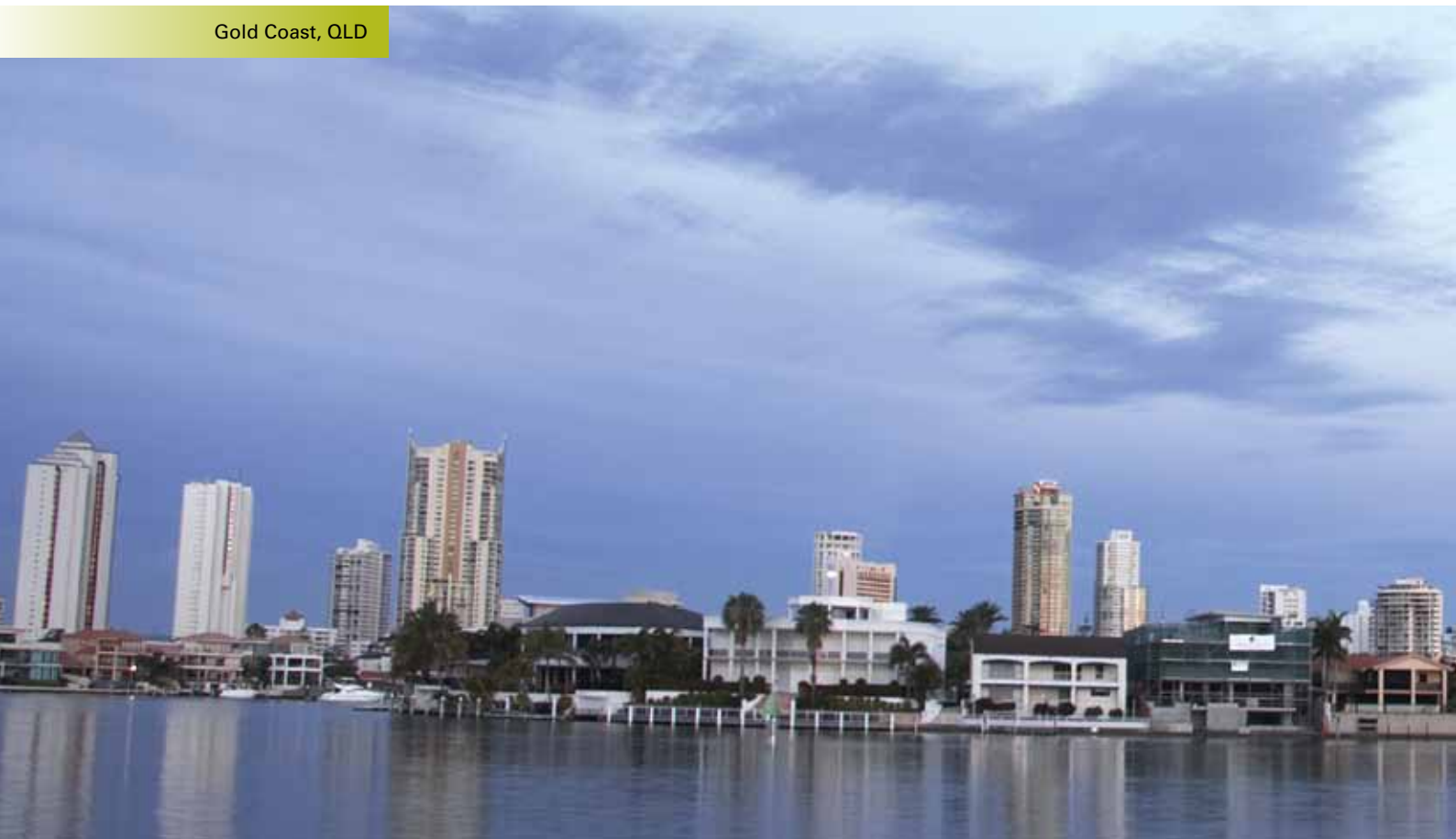
- Establish an Urban Policy Forum with key stakeholders and independent experts to advise on the *National Urban Policy* implementation
- Work with States and Territories to address issues identified in the COAG Reform Council's review of capital city strategic planning systems
- Support Local Government to undertake reforms to streamline administration and development approvals, and implement strategic spatial planning, in accordance with the *National Urban Policy* goals and objectives.

Evaluate progress

The Australian Government has emphasised the importance of evidence-based decision-making in all its policy areas. The Government's first step in re-engaging in urban policy was to compile and release the *State of Australian Cities 2010 Report*. The Australian Government has made other investments in research endeavours that support good evidence based decision-making, including providing \$20 million in funding to establish the Australian Urban Research Infrastructure Network (AURIN) based at the University of Melbourne.

The Australian Government supports governments, industries and communities involved in the planning, development and management of our cities through capacity building, community education, research monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

Gold Coast, QLD



Research, analysis and reporting

The Australian Government's inaugural *State of Australian Cities Report*, released in March 2010, outlines a diverse range of information about our cities and how they compare internationally. The report will continue to be published on an annual basis, with an indicator framework for Australia's major cities with populations above 100,000.

Further initiatives to monitor and evaluate progress

To further assist stakeholders in understanding what drives improvements in our cities' productivity, sustainability and liveability, the Australian Government will:

- Publish annual updates of the *State of Australian Cities Report* to track the progress of our cities in achieving objectives

- Include research into urban systems, environments and communities into the Australian Government's National Research Priorities (NRPs)
- Produce a spatial report, to be updated every five years, which shows the land use and infrastructure impacts of population change and structural change. This will provide a key document to guide planning and improve community understanding of Australia's urban issues
- Develop a set of Sustainability Indicators to measure Australia's progress towards more sustainable regional communities with \$10.1 million for a new *Measuring Sustainability Program*.

