

BETTER PLANNING AND STRONGER LOCAL GOVERNMENT

After seven years of Liberal promises we still don't have a Statewide Planning Scheme in Tasmania.

Our Regional Land Use Strategies are out of date and holding back urban growth, and we still don't have Tasmanian planning policies to guide development across the State.

Labor recognises the important role played by local government as a major regional employer, in representing the interests of their community, and delivering the basic services communities rely on.

Similarly, we recognise the important role of planning in driving economic growth, addressing challenges like the housing crisis, and preserving those things that make Tasmania so special.

A Labor Government will:

1. Support LGAT to develop a strategy to address shortage of planners. This will result in better and faster decisions.
2. Use planning to help address the housing crisis by making new housing supply and improved affordability a planning objective, and by working with local government to prioritise new infill and medium density development.
3. Ensure local government charges are consistent and fair by undertaking a statewide review of fees and charges.
4. Ensure communities have the final say over their future by committing to no forced amalgamations, while supporting voluntary amalgamations.
5. Work hand in hand with local government to deliver stronger regional economic development and better regional health services.
6. Work with local Government to deliver better strategic planning.

Better, faster planning decisions

Councils have been responsible for implementing the State Government's planning reform, often with limited resources. Making matters worse, there is a national shortage of planners across the country.

Labor will support the development of the Local Government Association of Tasmania's proposal to establish three regional pools of planners to provide high level planning services to councils, provide collegial support for early



Working For Tasmanians

career planners, and provide additional expertise and skills for councils to draw on.

Labor expects a free Planning Advice and Information Service would be made available through each of these planning pools to provide professional advice and support to the public for planning scheme and development application issues.

In the longer term, Labor believes better strategic planning will provide quicker and cheaper planning decisions, because it is strategic planning that identifies future growth areas and infrastructure requirements.

Use planning to help address the housing crisis

Labor will implement the recommendations related to planning from the Select Committee Report into Housing Affordability. These include:

- Making new housing supply and housing affordability an objective of Tasmanian Planning Policies
- Working with the Local Government Association of Tasmania and the tertiary education sector to mitigate the chronic skills shortage in the planning profession in Tasmania.
- Work with local governments to prioritise new infill and medium density development close to services, education and employment
- Amending the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* and *Housing Land Supply Act 2018* to include definitions of social and affordable housing and the implementation of inclusionary zoning
- Reviewing residential planning standards to ensure the planning framework enables a greater array of affordable housing options, including infill housing, increased density and better design outcomes

Fairer, more consistent fees and charges

Following the completion of the implementation of the Statewide Planning Scheme, Labor will conduct a review of planning fees and charges to ensure a greater degree of consistency across different municipal areas.

Tasmanian Labor will also improve transparency and accountability in the local government sector, particularly when it comes to budgeting. We will work with LGAT and councils to introduce a forum or initiative to enable greater public scrutiny of local government budgeting.

Working with local government for better health and economic outcomes

Local government is often best placed to know what a particular community needs. They know how their community feels about planning and development, what sort of health and employment policies their townships need, and what the key local infrastructure priorities are.

A Labor Government will work with councils to better understand the roles and functions between State and local



Working For Tasmanians

government to ensure less duplication and better coordination of essential services for all Tasmanians.

Partnership Agreements between the State Government and Local Councils will be developed to build a shared vision across community development, infrastructure, economic development, planning, education and employment. We will work constructively with LGAT to identify opportunities to work together to prevent family violence and enhance health and wellbeing across communities.

No forced amalgamations

A Labor Government will never force councils to amalgamate.

Where two or more communities want to amalgamate voluntarily, Labor will work with them through that process.

Strategic planning across Tasmania

Over the last seven years the Liberals have not made any investment in strategic planning.

This lack of investment has contributed to the ever-worsening housing crisis, the growing problem of traffic congestion in our cities, and the lack of quality public transport options.

A Labor Government will establish a State Planning Agency as recommended by the recent review of the Tasmanian Planning Commission.

This would be a dedicated standalone unit as is the case in other jurisdictions. Its functions will include:

- Developing and advising on land use regulations and policies
- Planning for growth across Tasmania including population growth, housing and transport.
- Mapping housing demand and land supply across the State
- Tasmania's Planning Policy Development
- Developing clear and easily understood education and communication material about Tasmania's Planning System to better inform the community about planning reform and the Tasmanian Planning System

These roles and responsibilities would be established through consultation with Local Government and Planning bodies across the State.

In addition, there must be an immediate investment in the review of the Regional Land Use Strategies across the State, and this means increasing the resources available to the Planning Policy Unit and Tasmanian Planning Commission. Delaying this work will only compound the current housing crisis.

Labor will provide \$2 million over 2 years to immediately fund the Planning Policy Unit and Tasmanian Planning Commission to complete the review of the Regional Land Use Strategies across the State.



Working For Tasmanians

Developing a fit-for-purpose planning framework for the Cradle Coast region

Labor will fund a one-year pilot project in the Cradle Coast region to:

- Build on the work done by councils to share resources
- Conduct a detailed analysis of services, fees and charges
- Work on the update of the Regional Land Use Strategy

