

STATE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

- At the September 2007 Forum meeting, members received a presentation from Michael O'Brien MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier about the State Planning and Development Review and its objectives. Mr O'Brien has been appointed to chair a steering committee established to carry out the Review.
- Members were advised that work will be undertaken in three stages: firstly, adoption of methodology to reduce the number of minor matters within the planning system; secondly, work to open points of constriction within the planning system with particular consideration of intergovernmental issues; and thirdly, a review of the strategic setting to achieve a greater degree of involvement from Local Government in higher level strategic planning. Given the costs of the planning system to State and Local Government, largely borne by Local Government, reforms to gain greater efficiencies and to ensure that South Australia's planning system remains competitive on a national basis are essential.
- The steering committee has met with the LGA to discuss the approach being taken in the Review and in particular, consultation with councils. Mr O'Brien also gave a presentation on the Review at the LGA's General Meeting held on 18 October 2007.
- The LGA is keen for the Review to lead to an enhanced system that incorporates a sustainable approach to land use and infrastructure planning by ensuring:
 - the interface of State and Local Governments in the planning process occurs effectively at both strategic and decision-making levels;
 - that open, transparent, accountable and timely development decisions are made by Local and State Governments;
 - more effective public participation and involvement in shaping the desired future development of local communities; and
 - an appropriate balance between social, environmental and economic outcomes.
- A series of issues papers have been prepared by the LGA to inform councils and facilitate their feedback on the matters, and to assist in the LGA's discussions with the steering committee. The topics covered include:
 - The Planning Strategy (including population growth, transport planning and infrastructure);
 - Major projects;
 - Development Plan Amendment processes;
 - Streamlining processes for the assessment of development applications by councils;
 - Building human resources; and
 - Consultation between State and Local Government; and community engagement on the planning system.

Background

- On 19 June 2007 the State Government announced the State Planning and Development Review. The Review is directed by a small, independent steering committee, reporting to the Minister for Urban Development and Planning, Paul Holloway. It is taking an intensive and wide-ranging look at the planning system, with a view to ensuring South Australia leads the nation in planning reform.
- The committee membership includes Michael Hickinbotham, Fiona Roche and Grant Belchamber from the Economic Development Board, Tim Jackson and Stuart Moseley from Local Government, and planning law expert Jamie Botten. The committee will engage additional expertise as required during the Review process.
- The steering committee will report progressively to the Government during the course of the Review to ensure early adoption and implementation of recommendations for reform. It is expected the steering committee will complete its work by the end of this year.
- The main objectives of the Review and the resulting reforms will be to:
 - Realise a range of targets and objectives in South Australia's Strategic Plan;
 - Establish South Australia as the most competitive place in Australasia in which to do business;
 - Improve the performance, timeliness, certainty and accountability of the planning system – in both State and Local Government arenas; and
 - Review the role and responsibilities of Planning SA and Local Government - within the overall planning system.
- Overall, the State Planning and Development Review is expected to deliver a new wave of reform to build on the important planning system changes already being implemented in South Australia.