

BILL SHORTEN AND LABOR

LABOR'S PLAN FOR CITIES

Labor



A Fair Go
For Australia

INTRODUCTION

Australia is one of the most urbanised countries on earth. Although there are significant benefits that come from urbanisation, including its contribution to GDP, a number of negative side effects are taking a toll on our cities.

Urban sprawl, growing congestion on roads, increasingly crowded public transport, declining housing affordability and an unequal distribution of employment opportunities, particularly in outer suburbs and growth areas, impact people's quality of life.

The natural environment is suffering from increased pollution and a loss of green space due to poorly planned urban development. Similarly, Australia's agricultural food bowls, which play a critical role in supplying our cities, are also under pressure.

Growing the productivity, sustainability and liveability of our cities requires collaboration. Labor will work in partnership with state and local governments, as well as with business and communities, to ensure our cities are places of opportunity for everyone.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

The Liberals abandoned Australian cities when they took office in 2013. They abolished the Major Cities Unit, disbanded the Urban Policy Forum, discarded the annual State of Australian Cities reports, failed to appoint a Minister for Cities until 2015 and failed to produce a National Urban Policy.

Despite a change in rhetoric when Malcolm Turnbull became Prime Minister, the Liberal Government has continued to neglect Australian cities with no real investment for policies or programs. Their 'signature' program – City Deals – falls well short of what is required to achieve genuine structural change in our cities and is subject to political whim. Policy experts themselves have identified that this program lacks transparency and clear guidelines, treats local government as a stakeholder rather than a partner, fails to adequately engage the private sector and does not align with other relevant strategies.

LABOR'S RECORD

Since World War II, every Labor Government has made an important contribution to Australia's urban development and progress, including in our outer suburbs.

In 1945, Ben Chifley commenced post-war reconstruction with large-scale investment in public housing. Gough Whitlam connected Western Sydney and other suburban areas to sewerage and established the Department of Urban and Regional Development. Bob Hawke and Paul Keating invested in the Building Better Cities Program.

And the former Labor Government put in place a large number of policies to support the development of our cities, which included:

- ☑ **Establishing Infrastructure Australia** to provide independent advice to government about the merits of major projects.
- ☑ **Creating the Major Cities Unit and Urban Policy Forum** to ensure policy is informed by expert opinion and underpinned by an evidence base, including through the annual State of Australian Cities report.
- ☑ **Establishing the Australian Council of Local Government** to bring local councils into the conversation.
- ☑ **Creating the Centre of Excellence for Local Government** at the University of Technology Sydney to promote best practice.
- ☑ **Conducting a review of capital city strategic planning systems** through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) – this was chaired by former Deputy Prime Minister Brian Howe with Lucy Turnbull as Deputy Chair.
- ☑ **Releasing the Urban Design Protocol** after consulting extensively with industry, which promotes guidelines for sustainable urban development.
- ☑ **Releasing Australia's first ever comprehensive National Urban Policy**, which identified three key pillars of productivity, sustainability and liveability.

Labor's plan for cities will build on this proud track record.

COLLABORATION

A Labor Government will re-establish the Urban Policy Forum to ensure meaningful engagement with policy experts and industry, drawing on their knowledge to make better decisions.

CITY PARTNERSHIPS

Labor will overhaul and replace the Coalition's City Deals with a City Partnerships program that will foster more genuine collaboration between the three levels of government.

To achieve this we will:

- ☑ **Re-establish the Major Cities Unit** within the independent Infrastructure Australia and task it with recommending and assessing the progress of City Partnerships.
- ☑ **Establish an expert panel to update strategic planning guidelines for cities** as well as to develop guidelines for City Partnerships, in consultation with the Minister, which will include benefits to the economy.
- ☑ **Refresh the National Urban Policy**, which Labor released when last in government, to ensure City Partnerships align with its objectives, for example, in areas like sustainability and smart technology.

Labor is also committed to honouring any signed City Deal, however we will offer councils and state or territory governments the opportunity to deepen their agreement.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Labor will continue to build on its strong track record of investing in properly integrated transport systems involving public transport and roads.

If elected Labor will:

NATIONAL:

- ☑ **Establish a Park and Ride fund** to invest in parking facilities for commuters at train stations around the nation.

MELBOURNE:

- ☑ **Help complete the Melbourne Metro Tunnel**, which will increase the capacity of rail network by allowing train services to be added to the Craigieburn, Cranbourne, Frankston, Pakenham, Sandringham, Sunbury, Upfield, Werribee and Williamstown lines.
- ☑ **Invest in the Suburban Rail Loop**, which will deliver a new 90 kilometre underground rail line through Melbourne's western and eastern suburbs via the airport, linking every major train line.
- ☑ **Move quickly to deliver the much-needed Frankston to Baxter Rail Upgrade**, building on the significant investment the Andrews Labor Government has made in Frankston infrastructure.
- ☑ **Extend the number 11 tram route**, providing better public transport services to Melbourne's booming northern suburbs.
- ☑ **Invest in public transport solutions to serve the needs of the Monash University Clayton Campus**, and the broader Monash National Employment and Innovation Cluster.
- ☑ Labor will continue to invest in the next stages of the **South Geelong to Waurn Ponds Rail Upgrade**, duplicating track, expanding platforms, constructing a new bridge and implementing grade separations.

SYDNEY:

- ☑ **Invest in Western Sydney Rail** to connect the Sydney rail network with the new Western Sydney Airport, whilst reducing congestion.
- ☑ **Invest in Sydney Metro West**, which will double the rail capacity between Parramatta and the CBD, while slashing travel times between Parramatta and the City to just 20 minutes, with trains running every two minutes.

BRISBANE:

- ☑ **End the gridlock in South East Queensland** by investing in the **Cross River Rail project** to expand the capacity of the region's rail network so it can deliver more trains more often including to both the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast.

GOLD COAST:

- ☑ Support the delivery of **Stage 3A of the Gold Coast Light Rail project** – extending the network from Broadbeach to Burleigh Heads.

PERTH:

- ☑ **Invest in METRONET** to deliver 72 kilometres of new passenger rail and up to 18 new stations, unlocking the potential of more than 5,000 hectares of land around the new stations for investment in housing, jobs and services for growing communities.

ADELAIDE:

- ☑ **Modernise and electrify the line connecting Adelaide's CBD to Gawler** on the outer northern metropolitan fringe.

CANBERRA:

- ☑ **Reduce traffic congestion** for residents of the City's south by investing in the Stage II construction of Canberra's Light Rail project.

More information is available in Labor's Nation Building Infrastructure plan.

SUPPORTING OUR OUTER SUBURBS

Too often we see the population of our outer suburbs increase before the necessary infrastructure, such as public transport and social infrastructure like schools, hospitals and recreational space, are put in place.

But if we get the planning right, particularly in our growth areas, then we can improve people's quality of life and make our cities more efficient.

To this end, Labor will invest in a number of infrastructure projects in outer urban areas that are experiencing significant growth to relieve this pressure, which comes in addition to our extensive plan for public transport.

NATIONAL:

- ☑ **Labor's Park and Ride fund** will invest in parking facilities for commuters at train stations, especially those in outer areas with growing demand.

SYDNEY'S OUTER SUBURBS:

- ☑ **Deliver key upgrades to the Appin Road** to ease congestion and improve safety on this vital link between Sydney's South West and the Illawarra.
- ☑ **Upgrade Dunheved Road** between Richmond Road and Werrington Road in Penrith to transform it into a four-lane dual carriageway.
- ☑ **Build a fuel pipeline to the new Western Sydney Airport** to avoid the need for trucks to cart dozens of loads of aviation fuel through Sydney suburbs each day.
- ☑ **Progress planning for the M9**, also known as the Outer Sydney Orbital, in close consultation with the local community.

MELBOURNE'S OUTER SUBURBS:

- ☑ **Upgrade key arterial roads** to create new jobs and slash travel times for residents in Melbourne's northern and south eastern suburbs.
- ☑ **Build Victoria's first fully separated high-speed busway from Doncaster Road to Hoddle Street** as part of our commitment to the North East Link project, which will ease traffic congestion and connect Melbourne's growing northern and south eastern suburbs.

BRISBANE'S OUTER SUBURBS:

- ☑ **Upgrade the M1 Pacific Motorway** between Eight Mile Plains and Daisy Hill; Daisy Hill and the Logan Motorway; Varsity Lakes and Tugun; as well as three interchanges (Exits 41, 45 and 49).
- ☑ **Extend Gateway Motorway** from Bracken Ridge to the Pine River and upgrade the Bruce Highway between the intersection with the Gateway Motorway and Deception Bay Road.
- ☑ **Eliminate notorious level crossings** at Lindum Road (Wynnum West); and Boundary Street (Coopers Plains).
- ☑ **Upgrade and widen the Ipswich Motorway** between Rocklea and Darra.

PERTH'S OUTER SUBURBS:

- ☑ **Upgrade and extend the Tonkin and Roe Highways** to enhance road safety and ease congestion across Perth's eastern and southern suburbs.
- ☑ Invest in the future of Perth's northern suburbs by **expanding the Mitchell Freeway**, which is one of Perth's busiest roads - with up to 140,000 vehicles per day - and a critical to link Perth's northern suburbs to commercial, residential and recreational facilities in the wider metropolitan area.
- ☑ **Extend Stephenson Avenue north from its intersection with Scarborough Beach Road to the Mitchel Freeway and construct a new freeway interchange**, unlocking up to 95 hectares of land for housing and commercial developments.
- ☑ **Deliver a new traffic and rail bridge at Fremantle**, which will duplicate the existing rail capacity, removing the current conflict between passenger and freight rail.
- ☑ Construct an interchange at the intersection with a **bridge carrying Leach Highway over Welshpool Road including the duplication of the Highway rail over-bridge south of the interchange**, increasing the Highway's long-term capacity.

ADELAIDE'S OUTER SUBURBS:

- ☑ **Continue the upgrade of North South Corridor** into a non-stop motorway, with the next priority to be the section of South Road between Glenelg Tram Overpass and Tonsley.
- ☑ **Deliver critical safety upgrades** to the Springbank Road, Daws Road and Goodwood Road intersection, renowned as one of Adelaide's most dangerous.
- ☑ **Eliminate notorious level crossings** in Westbourne Park and Brighton Road in Hove, which are traffic accident black spot and a cause of frustration to motorists.

Beyond the benefits that these infrastructure initiatives will provide, a Shorten Labor Government will bring a new, collaborative approach to the challenges that urbanisation present.

We will work with COAG to identify potential growth areas around our cities and to ensure that our pooled resources achieve maximum effect.

This will mean focussing our efforts on boosting jobs growth in outer and middle ring suburbs, either through direct investment, investing in research precincts around universities and hospitals, or through consideration of incentives for the location of business, or supporting innovative funding models for local governments in high growth areas.

If people can't access employment, training or educational opportunities, if people are stuck in their cars for hours commuting to and from work, and, if people cannot enjoy their quality of life, then they can't achieve their potential. And of course, this means that, in turn, our cities won't fulfil theirs.

Successful cities are inclusive cities, with diverse vibrant communities - not disconnected enclaves of privilege and disadvantage.

GROWING REGIONAL CITIES

Australia's regional cities play a critical role in contributing to the national story - socially, culturally and economically. Regional cities also play an essential role in supporting the smaller towns surrounding them, which depend on them for jobs and services.

This brings a number of challenges and opportunities including ensuring diversity in the jobs market to retain and attract workers, access to aviation to connect with capital cities, and sufficient high quality infrastructure, to support the population including well-resourced hospitals, universities, schools and TAFEs and a properly implemented fibre National Broadband Network.

While regional cities are rapidly developing as economic and service hubs, like the major capitals they are facing the need for supporting investment in enabling infrastructure.

A Shorten Labor Government will drive good policies and investment at a Federal level and collaborate with the states and territories and local government to implement those policies, and generate positive changes on the ground.

Investing in community infrastructure will help improve the social amenity of regional locations so that these places can attract and retain new workers and boost their tourism potential.

Increasing the amenity of regional cities and towns through improved services and community infrastructure, together with a focus on strategic regional development and our City Partnership program will help to address congestion problems in the urban capitals, as well as strengthening regional Australia.

More information is available in Labor's plan for regional Australia.

HIGH SPEED RAIL

High Speed Rail down Australia's east coast would revolutionise interstate travel, allowing people to move between capital cities in as little as three hours.

It would also turbo charge the economic development of the regional centres along its route, including the Gold Coast, Casino, Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Taree, Newcastle, the Central Coast, Southern Highlands, Wagga Wagga, Albury-Wodonga and Shepparton.

A Labor Government will establish a High Speed Rail Authority to preserve the corridor and work through a process for gathering international expressions of interest over the construction of a High Speed Rail link between Brisbane and Melbourne via Sydney and Canberra.

Labor will also begin the process of preserving the identified corridor with a \$1 billion investment.

ACTIVE TRANSPORT

Labor will invest \$260 million to upgrade the nation's cycling paths to encourage more people to ride bicycles to work or school and capitalise on the rapidly expanding cycling tourism market.

Our National Bike Paths Strategy will provide the largest ever investment in bike paths from the Federal Government and underscores our commitment to active transport.

Labor will partner with state and territory governments or local councils to unlock even more investment and make a difference to the health, safety and overall amenity for people living in cities and towns across Australia.

In government, Labor will also look to develop a national guide for cities that provides detailed national and international best practice designs and resources for practitioners for the effective design and delivery of bicycle infrastructure to enable significant cycling participation, while ensuring innovative outcomes for the entire transport system and return on investment for funds invested.

Labor's National Bike Paths Strategy builds on our legacy, where the former Federal Labor Government oversaw record investment in bike paths across the nation.

CREATING SMARTER CITIES

Labor will embed a Smart Cities Agenda in our National Urban Policy to ensure we are competitive with our global counterparts, while putting communities first.

Smart technology can make our cities more productive, sustainable and liveable by improving the investment decisions we make, including through more efficient management of urban infrastructure.

Smart cities don't just respond to the issues of the day but anticipate the challenges of the future by being resourceful with evidence-based decision making, having an overarching strategic vision, an integrated planning approach and supporting innovation.

Labor's approach will include collaboration with experts to identify new opportunities to enhance smart cities policy in Australia.

Labor will also broaden Infrastructure Australia's role by requiring projects to address new criteria. This means showing what provision for smart infrastructure has been included to ensure maximum benefit is achieved from any investment. This could include upgrading existing infrastructure where identified as appropriate, which saves both time and money.

HOUSING

Labor understands the profound impact housing stress, housing insecurity and homelessness can have on families and individuals in cities and towns around Australia.

Labor's comprehensive plan to tackle housing affordability includes:

- ☑ **Reforming negative gearing** so that deductions can only be claimed on newly built homes, which will increase new housing supply and support jobs. We will reform the capital gains tax concession and allow existing investors to maintain their current capital gains tax and negative gearing entitlements. There will be no retrospective taxation or impost on existing investors.
- ☑ **Building 250,000 new affordable rental homes** over the next decade in partnership with the community housing sector for Australians on low and moderate incomes. We will also ensure that one in 10 employees engaged in building new housing stock under our scheme are apprentices.
- ☑ **Creating a viable Build to Rent sector in Australia** – giving institutional investors better tax concessions; encouraging more construction; and stimulating the housing market. We will do this by cutting the managed investment trust withholding rate in half from 30 per cent to 15 per cent to encourage new housing supply.
- ☑ **Providing \$88 million over two years for a new Safe Housing Fund** to increase transitional housing options for women and children escaping domestic and family violence, young people exiting out-of-home care and older women on low incomes who are at risk of homelessness.
- ☑ **Limiting direct borrowing by Self-Managed Superannuation Funds.** Limited recourse borrowing in Self-Managed Superannuation Funds has exploded in recent years, increasing risk in the superannuation system and crowding out first homeowners.
- ☑ **Facilitating COAG processes** to introduce a uniform vacant property tax across all major cities.
- ☑ **Increasing fees for overseas investors buying Australian real estate** and increase penalties when they break the law.
- ☑ **Achieving better results from National Agreements**, including better rights for renters, planning reform, inclusionary zoning, and accelerated land release.
- ☑ **Re-establishing the National Housing Supply Council** and appoint a dedicated **Federal Housing and Homelessness Minister**.
- ☑ **Establishing a new and independent COAG Economic Reform Council** that will be given the autonomy to examine, track and report to COAG on long-term reform priorities, including on housing affordability and supply.

LIVING CITIES STRATEGY

Real action on climate change isn't just about protecting our environment – it's also about future-proofing our economy and protecting jobs. It also means recognising the need to change the way our cities work to keep our cities liveable.

Labor will collaborate with industry and governments to develop a Living Cities Strategy that considers the policy options and levers available to the Federal Government that could facilitate the preservation, enhancement and creation of green and blue infrastructure in urban areas.

This Strategy could include developing a green infrastructure plan, mapping and reporting on open space, new criteria to assess cities in the State of Australian Cities reports, opportunities to grow open space and improved governance to facilitate best practice.

Getting planning and infrastructure right within our cities is critical in order to reduce Australia's harmful carbon emissions, meet the Paris Targets and Sustainable Development Goals and move toward a zero emissions future.

It also provides an opportunity for the Federal Government to address recommendations listed in the 'Building Up and Moving Out' Report, which is the outcome of the inquiry into the Australian Government's role in the development of cities.

Policies already developed by Labor including on smart cities, active transport, urban rivers and city partnerships should also be used to assist in meeting the objectives of the Strategy.

Labor will also look at best practice when it comes to:

- ☑ **Ensuring action on climate change is built into major urban strategic plans** (mitigation and adaptation).
- ☑ The **integration of water, wastewater and stormwater into urban planning** to improve overall (including health and liveability) outcomes for our cities and regions.
- ☑ **Facilitating the transition to renewable energy** by supporting urban innovation and green urban growth e.g. net zero carbon and liveable precincts.

URBAN RIVERS

Labor will establish a \$200 million Urban Rivers Fund to restore our cities' rivers to their natural beauty. This fund will oversee investment in projects that make a difference in and around our waterways, such as building wetlands to capture and clean and filter stormwater.

Labor will engage state and local government, community groups and local environmental organisations to bring urban waterways and habitat corridors back to health.

Local environmental action groups will be able to apply for small grants, benefitting our urban environment, creating jobs and re-engaging, educating and mobilising local communities to act on local environmental protection.

EXPANDING THE WESTERN SYDNEY CITY DEAL

Labor will expand the Western Sydney City Deal to include Blacktown City Council through our City Partnerships program.

The Western Sydney City Deal was signed in March 2018 and includes the local government areas of Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Penrith and Wollondilly.

Including Blacktown City Council in our City Partnership for Western Sydney makes strategic sense given its focus on job creation and unlocking a 30-minute city.

Labor will also invest \$7.5 million in local priority projects identified by Blacktown City Council, consistent with what the other local councils received and calls on the New South Wales Government to match this commitment.

A UNITED LABOR TEAM WILL PUT PEOPLE FIRST

From the day Bill Shorten became Leader, Labor's team has remained united, with a single-minded commitment to delivering policies that put people first. A healthcare system underpinned by Medicare. An education system that gives every child in every school more individual attention – public, Catholic or independent. University and TAFE that are accessible for all.

**We have put forward our positive plans.
We are united. We are ready.**



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