



FIVE POINT PLAN FROM INDUSTRY TO GREEN OUR CITIES HEADING TO HUNT

Industry leaders from over 50 organisations in urban planning, infrastructure, utilities and greening sectors converged on Canberra yesterday to develop key policy recommendations to inform the greening of Australian cities and the Australian Governments upcoming *Cities Policy* position paper expected to be released in coming months.

There was consensus in the room about the positive impacts of greening cities including; reducing health costs, reducing energy costs, increased retail, increased sense of community and social equity and the significant environmental benefits.

“If we consider that a carefully located mature street tree could save a household over \$400 per year in reduced residential air conditioning costs you start to think about the impact that greening our cities can have¹” said [AILA](#) CEO, Shahana McKenzie

The event saw key Members of Parliament, [Hon Fletcher MP](#), [Hon Albanese MP](#) and [Mr Bandt MP](#) address attendees highlighting the commitment to industry consultation, with Fletcher firmly articulating his contribution to the city agenda, “I will be working with Minister Greg Hunt... the Prime Minister, and other Ministers to articulate and implement the Government's cities agenda,”

The [Hon Greg Hunt MP](#) commended the commencement of the Government consultative process begun at the workshop, ‘Liveable, green and vibrant cities are absolutely critical to Australia’s prosperity. Establishing a shared long term vision for each of our cities will rely on strong collaboration across all levels of government, informed by the knowledge and experience of industry and experts,’

I welcome the creation of the Living Cities Alliance and look forward to considering their ideas alongside the input of stakeholders from across the sector.”

Fletcher also discussed new ways in which funding for new projects could be approached, “...there are limits to the Commonwealth’s funding capacity... one of the fairest ways to fund new infrastructure investment is for the beneficiaries of that infrastructure to contribute to the cost,

Value capture is increasingly used internationally to ensure that projects go ahead, residents receive the benefits, but some of the cost is offset though the uplift in value to beneficiaries.”

Bandt addressed the importance of precincts when envisioning about how to make our future cities more liveable; “...they include affordable housing, public and open spaces. They have great places to meet, eat and drink... they’re built for people, not cars,”

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¹ Dr Libby Gallagher (2015) Beyond ‘Green’ Streets – Mitigating Climate Change through Residential Street Design, PHD Thesis, University of Sydney

Progressive investment streams were also not far from the mind of Bandt and during his address at the event, strongly encouraging attending organisations to make sure they have a clear agenda on what they want from Government, and to lobby and campaign towards it – linking it into tax reforms where possible.

Albanese in his address called on the Government to appoint a new minister, outside of the environment portfolio to fully commit to championing productivity, sustainability and liveability, and also welcomed AILA's announcement for a Living Cities Alliance, saying it would be; ..."an important opportunity for industry leaders to collaborate on what they think an urban policy agenda for the national should look like."

A key outcome of the day was the formation of the **Living Cities Alliance**. This will enable a consultative framework to inform Government policy development from the sectors that contribute to this space.

"Harnessing the collaborative efforts of the organisations that have a keen interest in our cities becoming greener, more liveable and resilient has to be a key priority and objective for all of us in the industry over the coming months," said McKenzie.

The Living Cities Alliance will be developing five key policy priority areas for consideration by the government in the coming two weeks.

"We can see at there is a real momentum towards progressing this agenda and given that there will be an election this year, the window to consult, in a clear united way and provide our expertise to those developing the policies, is narrowing."

Some of the opportunities identified by the alliance included;

- A National Green Streets pilot program to support economic, social and environmental development in our urban and suburban centres;
- Accelerating green roof installation using incentives such as the creation and trading of stormwater retention credits;
- A national Grey to Green retrofit investment fund to help leverage private sector investment for enhancing green spaces in our urban centres; and
- Piloting creative financing mechanisms for precinct-scale green infrastructure investment, such as the Green Benefit Districts launched in the City of San Francisco.

In the coming week is it expected the report to Hunt, will detail the key recommendations from attendees and outlining the economic, health and environmental benefits of a raft of innovative, greener city initiatives that could be implemented in Australia's urban centres.

This document will be presented to Hunt in advance of the Government's [Cities Policy Forum Position Paper and Summit](#) being released early this year.

The workshop was presented in partnership with [Engineers Australia](#), [2020 Vision](#), [Lawn Solutions](#), [Fleming's Nurseries](#), [Andreasen's Green](#) and [AECOM](#).

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[Images for media usage can be downloaded here – higher resolution on request.](#)

Interview Opportunities:

- **Shahana McKenzie**, CEO [AILA](#)
- **Dr Brent Jackson**, Director of Policy, [Engineers Australia](#)
- **Phil Wilkinson**, Executive Manager, [Australian Institute of Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heating](#)
- **Wayne Wescott**, CEO, [Greenfleet](#)
- **Jess Miller**, Partnerships Manager, [202020 Vision](#)
- **Professor John Boland**, [CRC for Low Carbon Living](#)
- **Professor Tony Wong**, Chief Executive, [CRC for Water Sensitive Cities](#)
- **Matthew Dillon**, President, [Green Roofs Australasia](#)
- **Ian McKenzie**, [Institute of Australian Consulting Arboriculturists](#)
- **Megan Flower**, General Manager, [Landscaping Victoria](#)

About the Living Cities Workshop:

The Living Cities Workshop is an event presented by the Australian Institute for Landscape Architects (AILA), and co-supporting partners [Engineers Australia](#), [202020 Vision](#), [Lawn Solutions](#), [Fleming's Nurseries](#), [Andreasen's Green](#) and [AECOM](#). The workshop gathered over 80 representatives from key infrastructure, urban planning and greening organisations to collaboratively to develop, and then submit an Action Plan and Report to Minister Hunt's department to inform the Government's [Cities Policy Forum Position Paper and Summit](#). In addition, AILA announced the establishment of a first-ever Living Cities Alliance calls on organisations to unite in providing a consultative framework to inform Government policy development, and make recommendations on target setting to make our cities greener and more liveable. Expressions of interest to be involved in the Alliance are being accepted from interested organisations.



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