

# Local Government's Vision for Planning Reform



# MAV'S PLANNING REFORM PLATFORM



**SOCIAL LICENCE OF  
THE PLANNING  
SYSTEM**



**SUSTAINABILITY AND  
FUTURE  
GENERATIONS**



**DELIVERING THE HOUSING  
VICTORIANS NEED**



**GOOD DECISIONS  
GROUNDED IN LOCAL  
COMMUNITIES**



**A HIGH-IMPACT, LOW  
FOOTPRINT  
PLANNING SYSTEM**



**CONTINUOUS  
IMPROVEMENT**



**INTEGRITY,  
TRANSPARENCY AND  
ACCOUNTABILITY**

# OUR VISION FOR THE ACT...

1. A planning system that prepares us for the next 40 years
2. Local government collaborating to help deliver the housing, jobs, infrastructure and places Victorians need
3. Continuously improving and developing processes to unlock opportunities and nimbly respond to challenges
4. Transparent and fair processes which empower communities to make better decisions



# TARGETED LEGISLATIVE REFORMS:

1. Update the Objectives of Planning in Victoria
2. More housing and infrastructure capacity
3. Improve the operation of existing bodies
4. New statutory advisory bodies
5. Formalised pathways for significant development
6. Improve planning scheme amendment processes
7. Fair process and enforcement
8. A planning system based on integrity and transparency



# UPDATE THE OBJECTIVES OF PLANNING IN VICTORIA

1. Net-zero communities
2. Transparent and accountable decision making
3. Council's primary role in planning for their municipality
4. Sustainable transport hierarchy
5. Design excellence
6. Healthy and resilient environments



# MORE HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY

1. Mandatory social and affordable housing contributions
2. Fit for purpose housing definitions:
  - Social
  - Affordable
  - Key-worker
3. Definition of “basic and essential” infrastructure aligned with community expectations
4. Viable off-the-shelf and bespoke infrastructure contribution options



# IMPROVE THE OPERATION OF EXISTING BODIES

## 1. Referral authorities:

- Better define roles and responsibility to ensure they're resourced to meet them
- Require referral authorities to respond to referrals in a timely and effective manner

## 2. VCAT

- Ability to dismiss applications that have no prospect of success

## 3. Planning Panels Victoria

- Hear more matters on the papers



# NEW STATUTORY ADVISORY BODIES

## 1. VICTORIAN PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Similar to Building Regulations Advisory Committee (BRAC)
- Advise Minister and Department on legislative, regulatory and VPP changes
- Representatives nominated by local government, civil society, planning and development industries

## 2. COMMISSIONER FOR FUTURE COMMUNITIES

- Advocates for the interests of future communities in the planning system, with a focus on climate change, housing and infrastructure
- Reports publicly on how the system is serving future communities





# FORMALISED PATHWAYS FOR STATE AND REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT

1. Clear principles on how trigger criteria/thresholds should be established
2. Ensure community input and existing planning policy is considered
3. Equitable cost-sharing arrangements
4. Requirements for documents and decisions to be made public during and following the decision-making process



# IMPROVE PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT PROCESSES

1. Improved time-bounding and transparency of process from authorisation through to approval
2. Minimum notice period to affected councils prior to gazettal of planning scheme amendments (especially VC amendments)



# FAIR PROCESSES AND ENFORCEMENT

1. Submissions in favour of an application be as valid as objections
2. Establish classes of application based on complexity, scale and what the planning framework must provide for each
3. Provide for applications to go on hold by mutual agreement between the responsible authority and the applicant
4. Broaden penalty types and severity for non-compliance, including restricting development rights
5. Develop more 'carrots' – how do we incentivise best practice?

... and *Myers* Supreme Court Decision



# A PLANNING SYSTEM BASED ON INTEGRITY AND TRANSPARENCY

1. Require permit applicants and submitters to disclose financial incentives
2. Clearer criteria for decision-making, record reasoning for application and amendment decisions
3. If introducing independent determinative planning panels, ensure the Act clearly defines:
  - The criteria that must be met to trigger a referral to panel (the same criteria regardless of the responsible authority)
  - The composition of a panel, including at least two community representatives
  - That the costs of the panel are to be borne by the applicant
  - Decision timeframes

