Southern & Hills Local Government Association

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Media Release

SHLGA calls for infrastructure and liveability to keep pace with housing growth

The Southern and Hills Local Government Association (SHLGA) is calling for housing, infrastructure and liveability to be planned together as governments work to increase housing supply.

In a submission to the national Productivity Commission's Housing Supply Regulation review, SHLGA has supported reforms that help deliver more homes in the right places, while stressing that new housing must be supported by the infrastructure and services communities need.

SHLGA President Mayor Moira Jenkins said the Southern and Hills region was facing significant growth over coming decades.

"We absolutely need more housing, but we also need to make sure we are creating communities that work well for the people who live there," Mayor Jenkins said.

"That means planning for roads, public transport, water and wastewater, stormwater, open space, recreation and community facilities alongside new housing - not trying to catch up after the growth has occurred."

SHLGA is calling for councils to have better information about State Government and utility infrastructure capacity and investment plans, so local infrastructure can be properly coordinated with new development.

Mayor Jenkins said funding infrastructure ahead of growth was a major challenge for councils.

"State and Commonwealth governments have an important role to play, particularly where major infrastructure supports several developments or provides wider benefits to the community and economy," she said.

The submission also argues that efforts to speed up housing delivery should not weaken the characteristics that make communities good places to live.

"Our region is growing because people value the lifestyle, character, natural environment and distinctive communities of the Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island," Mayor Jenkins said.

"We need to accommodate growth while protecting those qualities.

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“Tree canopy, open space, good design, accessibility and environmental protection should not simply be seen as costs that slow development down. They help create healthier, more resilient and liveable communities.”

Mayor Jenkins said getting growth right from the beginning was also more cost-effective than fixing problems later.

“If we don’t plan properly, we can end up with more congestion, greater car dependence, inadequate open space and infrastructure that hasn’t kept pace with the community,” she said.

“Success should not just be measured by how quickly we build homes. It should be measured by whether we are building well-connected, resilient and liveable communities where people want to live.”

ENDS

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