

SGC Mayors meet to Review Regional Partnership Priorities

25 July 2024

The Spencer Gulf Cities (SGC) Mayors met on Tuesday 23 July to review and update its Regional Partnership Priorities last adopted in September 2022

<https://upperspencergulf.com.au/download/125/key-documents/1629/spencer-gulf-cities-regional-partnership-priorities.pdf>

The workshop recognised that the SGC had achieved the following matters as part of its Partnership Priorities adopted in September 2022, many of which had involved engagement with the State Government.

- Revised its approach to meeting on a quarterly basis with the State Government with the Minister for Local Government co-chairing the group with the Chair of the SGC. The group is called the “Upper Spencer Gulf Intergovernmental Group” (USGIG). Its key focus has been to support growth opportunities in the region;
- Recently wrote to the Premier following the Cabinet Reshuffle to seek a closer connection between the USGIG and the Hydrogren Task Force Sub Committee of Cabinet, following discussions with the new Minister for Local Government about the potential value of this “reset”;
- Established an Advisory Group focusing on Housing which has met on 5 occasions to date and reports to the USGIG;
- Currently establishing a Workforce & Skills Advisory Group to be chaired by the SA Skills Commissioner and is scheduled to meet for the first time in the coming weeks. This group which will also report to the USGIG;
- Worked with the State Government to prepare a document entitled “Upper Spencer Gulf – Primed for Growth” including a forward from the Premier and the 3 Mayors. The document highlights the various projects in place and proposed in the Region along with the opportunities for new workers, business development opportunities and promotes workers and their families coming to the region;
- Conducted various Housing Surveys to inform the housing needs in the region during construction and ongoing;
- Raised the importance of ensuring that the SAHA housing stock (now to be managed by the SA Housing Trust) is fit for purpose;
- Worked with Renewal SA’s Office of Regional Housing on proposals for future local housing projects;
- Raised concerns regarding water and sewer infrastructure needs for housing developments;
- Identified land parcels for housing projects some of which are on state government land or held by the private sector;
- Commenced discussions across government regarding the identification of the social impact on communities of the development in the region and how to address emerging issues;
- Participated and supported the conduct of the USG Workforce Summit in 2023 and the Summit planned for 30 July 2024;
- Ensured that regional businesses and training and education institutions are engaged in the development of the Upper Spencer Gulf Workforce and Skills Strategy.

The State’s Prosperity Project has a focus on the region and will support the delivery of the 107 projects valued at \$30.3 B with 25,593 construction workers and ongoing jobs over 5,000. This Project also guides the work of Councils in supporting growth in the region. SGC councils welcome the State’s Prosperity Project and appreciated the promotion of it during February in Region by the Premier and key Cabinet Ministers.

The workshop identified that work will naturally continue, with Councils playing various roles such as:

- Advocacy to governments (State and Federal) regarding the impact of projects on the region and support programs and infrastructure delivery needed on the ground where it's a natural partnership to ensure delivery;
- Investment in Councils' own local community infrastructure to support population growth;
- Engaging with their communities to make sure they are aware of the growth and the opportunities it brings for local employment and business development;
- Encouraging housing developers to invest in projects in region;
- Ensuring that local business opportunities are supported through advice and guidance from Councils;
- Raising the importance of the social impacts of growth and making sure that Council programs and projects support the social fabric of the region and communities and that government and non-government providers are well informed and supported to address important social and services delivery issues;
- Recognising the changing demographics of our communities and workforce and making sure that their various needs are accommodated and supported;
- Raising the profile of living, working and visiting our cities and region and celebrating the incredible tourist, mineral and green energy resources that we have;
- Making sure our communities are engaged and informed on changes occurring and developers and project proponents are supported to engage with our communities.

Mayor Stephens as Chair of the SGC said:

"The next steps are for us to reset the priorities, recognising gains made to date and the work that still needs our focus and attention. The draft document will be consulted on with Councils and promoted to governments and the community".

"We are in the early stages of the roll out of these projects, many of which will be in play for 10 years before they reach the ongoing/operational phases. But, we need to carefully plan, form partnerships with key players and ensure our communities are updated and aware of the opportunities and changes occurring. There is much to do and our Councils are ready to continue working with governments, project proponents, key stakeholders and our communities".

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