

The Mayors of the Cities of Whyalla, Port Pirie and Port Augusta have today released their Spencer Gulf Cities (SGC) 2022 Federal Election Platform Document outlining the commitments sought from candidates for the seat of Grey. Key focus areas for SGC are aligned to its 9% population growth stretch target (for achievement over the next 10 years) and on delivering the workforce needed to support planned investment in the region, estimated at \$15billion and 9000 jobs.

“Our election priorities have been developed following consultation with the cities of Port Pirie, Port Augusta and Whyalla and we stand ready to support the next Federal government and the successful candidate for the seat of Grey to deliver prosperity and growth for both the region and the state” said Mayor Leon Stephens, Chair.

Commitments being sought from the candidates for Grey are, in summary:

## 1. Green / renewable energy infrastructure

SGC seeks a commitment for parties and candidates to work with it to:

- Establish a Green Energy Centre of Excellence / Education & Skills Hub in the region
- Identify and create opportunities to attract new businesses and industry aligned to the significant hydrogen production opportunities planned for Port Pirie and Whyalla
- Maximise delivery of forecast renewable energy private sector forecast investment

## 2. Water infrastructure

SGC seeks parties and candidates to commit to working with it to ensure water security for residents and industry through:

- Supporting the conduct of demand studies and modelling aligned to current and future water needs
- Support infrastructure investment aligned with demand modelling
- Support the development of climate change and adaption strategies (as they relate to water use)

## 3. Housing

SGC seeks a commitment for parties and candidates to work with it to enable delivery of housing supply to meet current and future needs including:

- Creating incentives to accelerate residential development with a priority focus on housing built to rent, diversity of dwelling types and delivery of truly affordable housing (for rent and for sale)
- Creating incentives to upgrade existing poor-quality dwellings to increase rental supply
- Sharing in the cost and risk of delivering new housing by contributing to the cost of common infrastructure

## 4. Education and workforce

SGC seeks a commitment for parties and candidates to provide regionally based resources and funding that enables development and delivery of workforce, education and skills programs, projects and support aligned to identified regional job opportunities, skills gaps and barriers to employment, with the following aims:

- Secure traineeship, apprenticeship (including school-based apprenticeships) and academic opportunities aligned with skills needs now and into the future
- Support workforce development and service delivery and assist local businesses to access skilled workers aligned to specific regional needs (including access to skilled and unskilled migration)
- Better connect young people in schools with future opportunities through collaboration with industry, and providing enhanced career guidance aligned with future job opportunities

- Increase regional engagement with existing government programs and support for both employers and jobseekers and ensure alignment with current and future needs in training and education in the region

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**Attachment:** SGC Federal Election Platform

# 2022 Federal Election Platform

## To all candidates for the seat of Grey

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Spencer Gulf Cities (SGC) is a strategic partnership between the cities of Port Pirie, Port Augusta, and Whyalla that works collaboratively across all levels of government, industry, and community to promote regional prosperity and growth.

SGC has established a 9% population growth stretch target for achievement over the next 10 years. Filling current job vacancies and delivering the workforce needed to support planned investment in the region (estimated at \$15billion and 9000 jobs) and improving city liveability to attract and retain residents, is vital to delivering population growth.

The pipeline of planned economic investment and major government projects include:

- Whyalla Hydrogen Hub (\$593m, expected delivery 2025)
- Port Pirie Green Hydrogen Project (\$750m, \$5m design study currently underway)
- Northern Water Supply Project (Desalination Plant) (\$~1bn)
- Solar and wind energy projects across the region to assist in the greening of heavy industry
- Tourism experience development including Whyalla Giant Cuttlefish Sanctuary, Southern Flinders Ranges Tourism Precinct, Arid Lands Botanic Garden Port Augusta

We seek commitment from all candidates for the seat of Grey to support and strongly advocate for key priorities that will maximise flow-on benefits from this economic growth and build regional sustainability:

### 1. **Green/Renewable Energy Infrastructure**

Establish a Green Energy Centre of Excellence / Education & Skills Hub; identify and create opportunities to attract new businesses and industry aligned to the significant hydrogen production projects planned for Port Pirie and Whyalla; and maximise delivery of forecast renewable energy private sector investment.

### 2. **Water Infrastructure**

Ensure water security for residents and industry through supporting the conduct of demand studies and modelling aligned to current and future water needs; supporting infrastructure investment aligned with demand modelling; and supporting the development of climate change and adaption strategies (as related to water use).

### 3. **Housing**

Enable delivery of housing supply to meet current and future needs including creating incentives to accelerate residential development (with a focus on built to rent, diverse typologies and affordable housing); create incentives to upgrade existing poor-quality dwellings to increase rental supply; and sharing in the cost and risk of delivering new housing by contributing to the cost of common infrastructure.

### 4. **Education, Workforce and Skills Development**

Provide regionally based resources and funding that enables development and delivery of workforce, education and skills programs, projects and support aligned to identified regional job opportunities, skills gaps and barriers to employment.

**Further detail on each of these priorities is provided below.**

These election priorities have been developed following consultation with the cities of Port Pirie, Port Augusta and Whyalla. Spencer Gulf Cities stands ready to support the next government and the successful candidate for Grey to deliver prosperity and growth for both the region and the state.



Mayor Leon Stephens

Port Pirie



Mayor Brett Benbow

Port Augusta



Mayor Clare McLaughlin

Whyalla

## 1. GREEN/RENEWABLE ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

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The SGC region has access to some of the best and most diverse renewable and low carbon energy resources in the developed world, creating significant competitive advantage for the region. Not only does the region provide an ideal location for commercial deployment of renewable energy generation facilities, but it also offers considerable potential to research, trial and test new and emerging renewable energy technology.

The region has been earmarked for two significant hydrogen production projects that provide a catalyst opportunity to establish the SGC region as a renewable energy hub and leader in associated innovation, technology, and skills development.

### Election commitment sought:

#### **Spencer Gulf Cities seeks a commitment for parties and candidates to work with it to:**

- Establish a Green Energy Centre of Excellence / Education & Skills Hub
- Identify and create opportunities to attract new businesses and industry aligned to the significant hydrogen production projects planned for Port Pirie and Whyalla
- Maximise delivery of forecast renewable energy private sector investment

## 2. WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

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SGC recognises the importance of access to water for the community and industry and the importance of water quality. Existing potable water supply infrastructure, both trunk water supply (Morgan to Whyalla pipeline) and wastewater treatment plants and infrastructure, is ageing and is unable to meet increasing demand. Renewal and increased capacity of that infrastructure is needed to increase supply of potable water to support forecast economic and population growth. New infrastructure is also needed to increase access to non-potable water supply to support greening strategies aimed at improving city liveability.

A demand and supply assessment is needed that considers forecast community and industry need for both potable and non-potable water supply and infrastructure upgrades planned to meet forecast demand. Opportunities to augment and capitalise on proposed water infrastructure projects such as planned renewal of 34km of the SA Water Morgan to Whyalla pipeline and the Northern Water Supply Project (Desalination Plant) need to be considered as part of this assessment. Water allocation for the region needs to be assured and progressively increased to meet forecast population increases, increasing water needs of industry and increasing impacts of climate change. There is a need for a future water demands assessment to be undertaken to ensure allocations are consistent with project needs, including the manner in which they can be met.

### Election commitment sought:

#### **Spencer Gulf Cities seeks a commitment for parties and candidates to:**

Commit to working with the SGC to ensure water security for residents and industry through:

- Supporting the conduct of demand studies and modelling aligned to current and future water needs
- Support infrastructure investment aligned with demand modelling
- Support the development of climate change and adaption strategies (as they relate to water use)

## 3. HOUSING

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The region is facing a shortage of housing that is inhibiting workforce attraction and retention. Access to rental accommodation at all levels (social, affordable and executive level) and of all dwelling types is limited. Housing for sale is either limited or not meeting potential new resident needs, with a significant portion of available stock being old and outdated. Increasing rental and housing sales prices are creating barriers for low-income workers to access housing. There is also a lack of housing diversity, particularly smaller dwellings to allow downsizing and ageing in place.

The region is experiencing significant barriers to new housing development including access to local labour and construction trades, access to finance (based on perceived risk), cost of common infrastructure delivery for greenfield sites and the size of the development (minimum number of allotments to ensure viable delivery). The longevity of the need for housing and potential return on investment also requires evidence (proof of sufficient and ongoing demand) to motivate existing landowners and builders to undertake new development and to attract developers to the region.

Hard data, information, innovative solutions and regional coordination is required to identify opportunities to increase housing supply, secure new builds and to ensure ongoing housing affordability. SGC is currently working to both secure funding to develop a housing demand and supply study as well as identify some short-term opportunities to unlock housing across all three cities, including through the community housing sector.

#### Election commitment sought:

##### **Spencer Gulf Cities seeks a commitment for parties and candidates to:**

Work with SGC to enable delivery of housing supply to meet current and future needs including:

- Creating incentives to accelerate residential development with a priority focus on housing built to rent, diversity of dwelling types and delivery of truly affordable housing (for rent and for sale)
- Creating incentives to upgrade existing poor-quality dwellings to increase rental supply
- Sharing in the cost and risk of delivering new housing by contributing to the cost of common infrastructure

## 4. EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

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The forecast for economic and jobs growth for the SGC region is significant across a range of sectors including renewable energy, mining, tourism and services to support a growing population, particularly allied health and medical services. To support this growth and maximise the economic and social potential of the region, a pipeline of both skilled and unskilled workforce is needed, aligned to current and forecast jobs and skills needs. A key focus for SGC is also on reducing employer reliance on Drive-in-Drive-Out and Fly-in-Fly-Out workforce, and increasing employment opportunities for local people, particularly youth.

Addressing the housing shortage is key to enabling workforce attraction. Of equal importance is the need to unlock existing latent workforce capacity. Whilst unemployment levels are at historical lows, there remains significant opportunity to increase workforce capacity through increasing participation and assisting unemployed and underemployed people into work. Opportunities need to be created for existing workers to be upskilled and reskilled and for local people with barriers to work to be assisted into skills and education pathways and into available work. A roadmap is needed to address short-, medium- and long-term workforce priorities including quantifying and addressing current and emerging workforce and skills needs and resources required to address those needs.

#### Election commitment sought:

##### **Spencer Gulf Cities seeks a commitment for parties and candidates to:**

Provide regionally based resources and funding that enables the development and delivery of workforce, education and skills programs, projects and support aligned to identified regional job opportunities, skills gaps and barriers to employment, with the following aims:

- Secure traineeship, apprenticeship (including school-based apprenticeships) and academic opportunities aligned with skills needs now and into the future
- Support workforce development and service delivery and assist local businesses to access skilled workers aligned to specific regional needs (including access to skilled and unskilled migration)
- Better connect young people in schools with future opportunities through collaboration with industry, and providing enhanced career guidance aligned with future job opportunities
- Increase regional engagement with existing government programs and support for both employers and jobseekers and ensure alignment with current and future needs in training and education in the region