

LAND USE

TOPROC seek your commitment to:

- Support the creation of Area Plans for all urban areas and townships covered by the TOPROC Councils
- Work with Councils in the development of Master Plans to ensure they are able to be included in the Planning Scheme
- Commit to recognising local government as a level of government in the Planning Act, not just as a service authority
- Provide a funding plan for initiatives and infrastructure contained in Area Plans
- Implement social planning and fund the outcomes from it, as a key element of strategic planning for the Northern Territory
- Commit to a deadline to finalise all Area Plans

BACKGROUND

TOPROC faces pressures from residential and industrial growth in the form of land release, use of water and provision of infrastructure which require careful thought and long-term planning.

A study by KPMG in 2015 found that Councils bear substantial costs from planning decisions but have little control over them. Government consultation is limited, which impacts on community trust and sensible long-term planning decisions, often leaving Councils and the community with the legacy of rushed decisions. For example, the Darwin Mid Suburbs Draft Area Plan identifies a need for various community services and facilities without providing either a funding plan or Council consultation.

Social planning is standard practice in most parts of Australia to ensure that new developments and sub-divisions recognise the social impacts of these projects. This includes provision for people displaced by demolition of public housing, homeless people, community centres and sporting facilities. In addition, the future of town camps in the Northern Territory is another issue that requires meaningful consultation between the Northern Territory Government and Councils. The Northern Territory Government needs to provide a greater focus on social planning when making land planning decisions considering Council's limited capacity and resources in this area.

TOPROC believes the successive Northern Territory Governments are indifferent to these issues and Council and community concerns. Councils require early consultation to effectively operate with certainty and complete long-term planning. Effective land use planning requires consistent and ongoing communication between the Northern Territory Government, Councils and land developers.

TOPROC Councils want to play an earlier and more active role in land use planning decisions by the Northern Territory Government, Planning Commission, Development Consent Authority and agencies such as the Power and Water Corporation and developers. This includes being consulted during the initial planning stages and continually informed throughout the decision-making process.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

Northern Territory Government

- Consult Local Government when making decisions that will create a significant impact on Councils
- Recognise Master Plans
- Involve Councils in the creation of Land Use Plans

TOPROC

- Provide feedback and input into Northern Territory Government planning opportunities
- Work with the Government to advance Land Use Plans
- Participate in Northern Territory Land Planning Committees

KEY FACTS

- City of Darwin entered into a triparted funding agreement to create a City Master Plan. The Master Plan has since been included as a background document in the Planning Scheme
- The City of Darwin Master Plan was referenced by Member for Solomon Natasha Griggs when announcing the construction of Barneson Boulevard, demonstrating the important role of Master Plans in long-term Territory planning
- The City of Palmerston has created a Master Plan that provides long-term direction for the next 30 years
- Infrastructure such as regional waste management facilities are being identified in regional land use plans as opportunities, however there is no identified upfront commitment of funding support by the Northern Territory Government