

# Red Tape Commissioner Planning Reform

December 2021



[reform.planning.vic.gov.au](https://reform.planning.vic.gov.au)



Environment,  
Land, Water  
and Planning

# Turning Best Practice into Common Practice

Implementation of the Planning Reform Program

15 December 2021

Anna Cronin – Commissioner for Better Regulation



Better Regulation  
Victoria



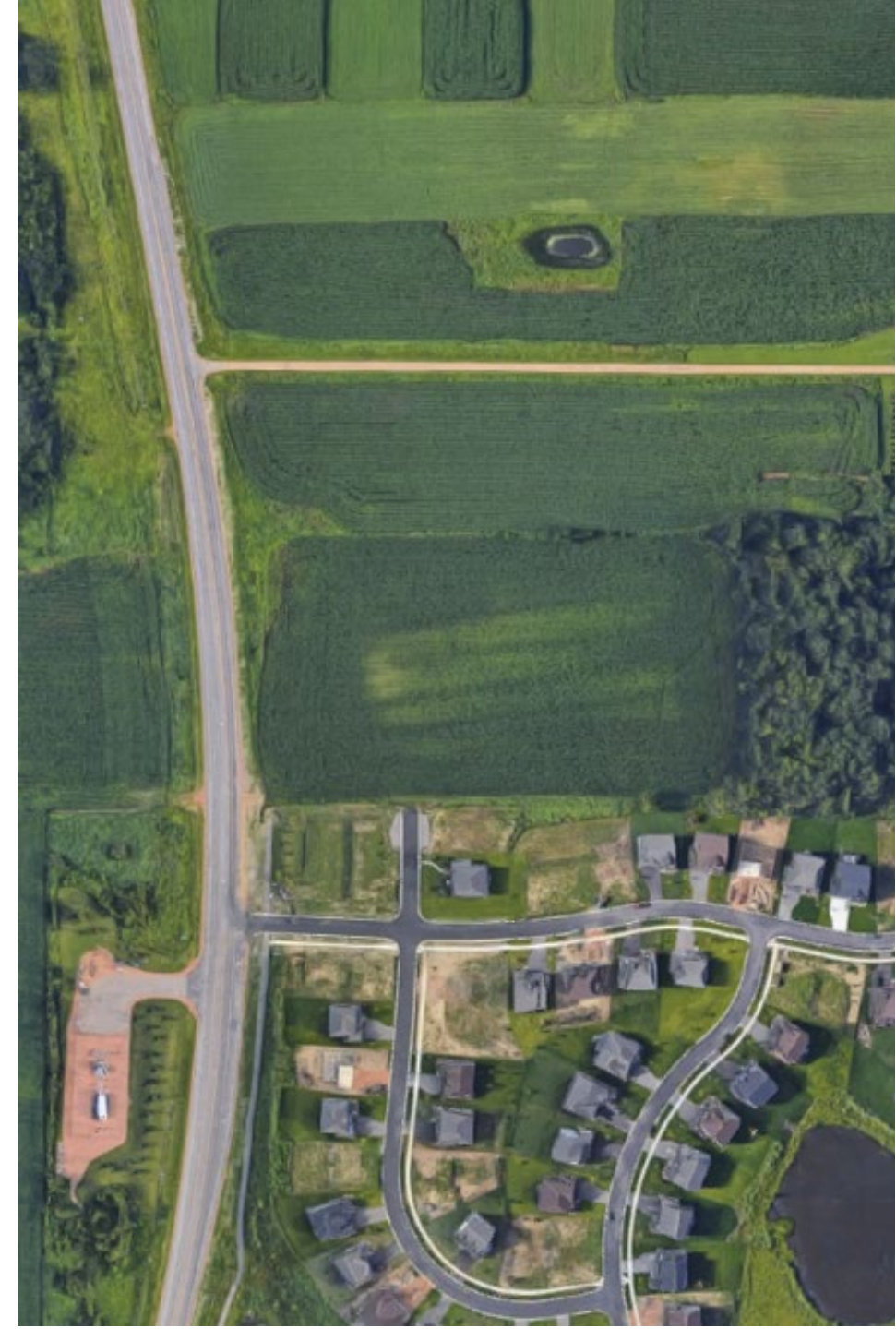
# Planning and Building Approvals Process Review

## The review

- Established by the Treasurer and Minister for Planning in March 2019
- Focus on the planning process from end to end
- Industry and local government input throughout 2019
- Discussion paper released October 2019
- Final report December 2019

## The outcomes

- 19 recommendation on planning to reduce delays and costs
- Recommendation relevant to post COVID-19 recovery
- Separate Building System Review



# Consultation

Intensive engagement and consultation with key stakeholders throughout the review.

## Engagement on the Discussion Paper

- 'Town Hall' meetings for industry and councils
- 5,000 page views incl. over 1,000 downloads
- 108 Submissions from:
  - 37 from councils
  - 22 from individuals
  - 49 from businesses, community groups and industry associations



Final Report is available on the BRV website

### Expert Advisory Panel:

- Bill Kuszniarczyk: Deputy Chair - Victorian Planning Authority
- Kate Roffey: Director of Deals, Investments & Major Projects – Wyndham City Council
- Radley de Silva: Former CEO – Master Builders Victoria

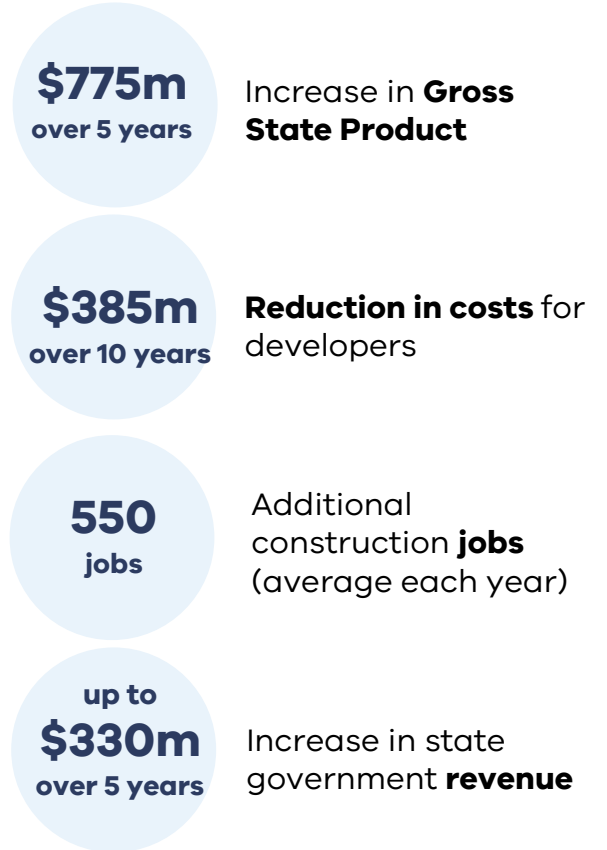
# A better approvals system can help support economic recovery

## FASTER APPROVALS

- SGS estimated that the total delay costs could be as large as around \$400 million to around \$600 million per year
- SGS Economics believe a **one month reduction in average approvals time** is readily attainable from implementing the 27 recommendations
- SGS note that improvements in greenfield areas, including a PSP, could shave years off timeframes
- This will bring forward the construction of **4,800 dwellings worth \$1.8 billion**
- Benefits include:
  - Construction jobs brought forward
  - Reduced land holding costs
  - Reduced rents for new homeowners
  - Higher state and local government revenues

## REFORM DIVIDEND

- Based on the one month reduction in approvals timeframes bringing forward 4,800 dwelling, SGS Economics estimates:



# BRV Planning Approvals Framework



## STRATEGIC PHASE

- A1 Simplify planning schemes
- A2 Streamline planning scheme amendments
- A3 Streamline the PSP process
- A4 Escalate planning for sites of strategic importance

## STATUTORY PHASE

- Preparing the application**
- B1 More help with applications
  - B2 Ensure lodged applications are complete
  - B3 Move to online processing and tracking
  - B4 Improve planning resources and training
- Assessing the application**
- B5 Modernise public advertising of proposals
  - B6 Stream applications according to risk
  - B7 Reduce requests for further information
  - B8 Reduce response times for referrals
- Deciding the application**
- B9 Make decisions in a reasonable time
  - B10 Promote best practice delegation of decisions

## POST PERMIT APPROVALS PHASE

- C1 Checking compliance with permit conditions
- C2 Streamline variations to the terms of a permit
- C3 Reduce timelines for electricity connections
- C4 Simplify payment of infrastructure contributions
- C5 Approvals by other authorities
- C6 Coordinate planning and building permit assessments

## (Plus) BUILDING PHASE

- D1 Expand the workforce of building surveyors, inspectors and fire safety engineers
- D2 Improve access to building records
- D3 Streamline building permit requirements for low-risk work
- D4 Standardise construction management plans
- D5 Improve consistency of council asset protection requirements
- D6 Distinguish building 'consultants' from building surveyors
- D7 Clarify processes for enforcement

Detail of the recommendations can be found in the Final Report

# Thank You

Anna Cronin

Commissioner for Better Regulation



# Planning Reform

**\$111 million over 4 years** – front loaded to maximise opportunities to support economic recovery sooner.

**5 focus areas** of 45+ initiatives.

## Objectives:

- A more **efficient, clear system**
- Provide **market certainty** - timeframes and pathways
- Increase **community confidence** in the system
- Ensure **integrity of decisions**



## Five focus areas for reform

### **1. Update and simplify planning rules and processes**

*New state codes / more planning permit exemptions / A new online portal / time savings in Planning Panels and VCAT*

### **2. Partner with local council planning departments**

*Surge capacity support for regional councils / capacity building / digital grants / VPA Streamlining for Growth*

### **3. Focus on major projects and investment attraction**

*New concierge service / dedicated teams for priority projects / streamlined decision making*

### **4. Planning for priority precincts and growth areas**

*Framework to declare priority precincts / new tools to support faster planning and assessment / VPA Affordable by Supply*

### **5. Prioritising infrastructure delivery**

*Improve infrastructure contributions / new tools to support infrastructure delivery / better alignment between growth and services*

# Consultation to Date

**2020/21 State Budget:**  
Funding announced

**February 2021:**  
Initial discussions -  
industry and councils

**March 2021:**  
First planning scheme  
changes

**July 2021:**  
Launch of Regional  
Planning Hub

**August 2021:**  
Start of Better  
Approvals Pilot

**September 2021:**  
Council CEO briefings  
Digital reform survey of 79  
Councils

**October 2021:**  
Rural Councils Victoria  
briefing

Engagement on  
Major Projects  
pathway  
ResCode discussion  
paper released

**November 2021:**  
Planning Reform  
website launch  
Release of RTC Report

**December 2021:**  
Consultation on  
scheme amendment  
reforms (continuing  
into 2022)

# What's next?

- **New code assessment model for ResCode** – discussion paper available for comment until end 2021
- Launch of the new **major projects pathway** - early 2022
- Targeted consultation on **precincts reform and planning scheme amendment** processes just beginning this month – and continuing into 2022
- Reforms to **referral agency and post-permit processes** – consultation via Better Planning Approvals in early 2022
- **Legislative changes** – mid-late 2022