



# PROGRAM



Host Council



Presenting Partner



urban policy for sustainable  
and resilient cities

**NATIONAL CONGRESS**

4-5 May 2023, South Australia









## Welcome from our Host Council

On behalf of everyone at Mount Barker District Council, I'd like to welcome you all to the 2023 National Congress of the National Growth Areas Alliance.

As the fastest growing LGA in South Australia, Mount Barker is experiencing the growth issues and challenges of other NGAA member Councils, albeit at a smaller scale. The stakes are high as we strive to manage growth in a manner that gives our community the best chance of not only being sustainable and resilient but also to thrive into the future.

The challenges of growth areas are many and the advocacy and research role of the NGAA is a valuable collaborative forum for addressing issues such as climate change, environmental pressures and the impact of growth on nature, sufficient, regular and accessible transport options, education, employment, health and social services and social inclusion. If we add to these challenges the cost of living, the cost and availability of housing and pressure to limit the burden on current and future residents and businesses, it's clear there is much to focus our minds and energy.

It's also clear that business as usual will not be enough if we are to respond to the change that is on us now and will increasingly impact our Councils into the future. Our visions for our respective Councils are no doubt quite similar. We are all striving to meet the current and future needs of our community whilst learning to live sustainably and even regeneratively. The planet is in strife and we need to work together towards a future our communities can feel hopeful about. Critically, we must also work collaboratively and with vigor with our State and Federal Governments and with researchers and deliverers in the public and private sector.

The NGAA National Congress - Suburbia 3.0 Urban Policy for sustainable and resilient cities - provides an opportunity for us to come together to consider these challenges and the opportunities that we must embrace, together. I am very much looking forward to welcoming you in person to our district and the outcomes of the congress.

**Mayor David Leach**  
**Mount Barker District Council**

## About Mount Barker District

Located on the traditional lands of the Peramangk people, Mount Barker is a place where a committed, connected community and a combination of culture, geography, environment and infrastructure create unique conditions for people to prosper.

The regional city of Mount Barker is destined to become the second biggest population centre outside of Adelaide, including supporting a regional population of 130,000 and 14 smaller townships within the Mount Barker LGA. Strategic and structure planning, research and local engagement is focussing on ecological sustainability, diverse local employment options, a thriving local economy, quality community infrastructure and events to capitalise on the opportunities that await SA's most vibrant growth region.

The region's advantages include a stunning hills landscape, a variety of rural, industrial and retail precincts, proximity to interstate road and rail infrastructure, ample reclaimed water supply and world-class broadband.

The district's close proximity to Adelaide and the attractive natural environment has contributed to the area's popularity with residents, businesses and visitors alike. Because of this, a key part of Council's growth will centre around Natural Parklands, existing and new places of beauty and biodiversity where people can linger, learn, enjoy and be proud of. The proposed Natural Parklands program will expand the established series of parks and trails in Mount Barker to connect up key tourism, community and recreation sites on both public and private land, like Womma Mu Kurta (Mount Barker Summit), Ukaria Cultural Centre, Laratinga Wetlands and the Summit Sports and Recreation Hub, which recently hosted a 'Gather Round' AFL game.

We are excited about the future for the Mount Barker district and how we balance economic prosperity, ecological sustainability and community wellbeing.

# Welcome

## NGAA Chair



### Welcome to the NGAA National Congress.

As representatives of outer urban growth area councils and communities, we are at the forefront of creating Suburbia 3.0 - Australia's third generation of urban development. Suburbia 3.0 must be better than what has gone before. Our fast growing communities must be sustainable and resilient under changing climate scenarios.

NGAA events like Congress and our Research Symposia are fantastic opportunities to share insights and lessons from our growth areas experiences. We can learn from this and from previous generations of urban development: the first generation in the inner cities with compactness and dwelling diversity; and the open space and attributes of the second generation middle ring suburbs.

Outer suburban planning and design must evolve to support large populations living healthy, sustainable lives. We cannot deliver 'cheaper housing' without understanding how climate-exacerbated emergencies will impact on highly mortgaged communities.

Living in the outer suburbs impacts on the quality of your life, whether you can get healthcare when you need it, what sort of education opportunities and jobs you have access to. For too long, outer urban growth areas have done the heavy lifting to house most of Australia's population growth without commensurate investment from all levels of government.

A cross sectoral, tri-level commitment to well planned suburbs is integral to creating Suburbia 3.0. Funding is part of this: growth areas need assurance that Federal infrastructure investment will be allocated on the basis of greatest need and impact.

Leadership and engagement at the Federal level is vital to drive reforms and deliver transformational infrastructure in partnership with states and councils. NGAA members have a shared vision of growing communities that are liveable, and thriving. But we can't do it alone. Our vision is unachievable without national policy leadership to support all who are reimagining the future of outer suburban development.

Our discussions today will inform our position on the National Urban Policy framework, the foundation of the major policy overhaul that growth areas need. I look forward to your insights on this crucial next step for Australia's growth areas.

**Cr Matthew Deeth**  
NGAA Chair

# Message

## From the Chief Executive Officer



This is an exciting time for our Alliance as we join the process of developing a new national urban policy. The next stage of the Alliance's journey is embodied in our updated logo with a fresh new fuchsia colour representing the evolution of growth areas and our national advocacy efforts.

It is vital that growth area concerns and ambitions are taken into account in the government's urban policy development. This year we are holding a Local Government Forum during National Congress, to highlight the innovative ways local government is pursuing better urban development outcomes and to articulate the policy barriers to better growth. It will inform the messages we take to Canberra as the National Urban Policy framework unfolds.

One of our strengths as an Alliance is the generosity and openness of our Members in sharing their expertise and their different approaches to the challenges and opportunities in growth areas. National Congress is a prime example of this.

Thank you for your contribution, whether that is participating as a presenter or panellist, providing input to the Local Government Forum, entering a project in this year's NGAA Awards or joining in the many discussions throughout our two day event.

On Friday, Mount Barker District Council will lead a fabulous field trip to show us some of the ways they are pursuing sustainable growth, then a networking lunch at the renowned Howard Winery that will be a great way to finish our two day event.

We are grateful to our hosts, Mount Barker District Council for their support of the 2023 National Congress and also to our event partners, the City of Casey and the City of Playford.

I encourage you to make the most of all the opportunities to connect with your growth area peers throughout Congress. I look forward to catching up with all our delegates and presenters over the next two days.

**Bronwen Clark**  
Chief Executive Officer



## About the NGAA

We are the peak body for local governments in Australia's outer metropolitan growth areas, funded by our member councils. We advocate at the Federal Government level for a stronger focus on the needs of fast-growing outer suburbs. Our members are united by experiences of rapid population growth and infrastructure deficits. Together, we represent more than 5.3 million people living in the fast-growing suburbs around Australia's capital cities.

### Notice something new?

We've refreshed our logo to signify the evolution of Australia's growth areas. The new colour of fuchsia represents Suburbia 3.0 and our call for a fresh new approach to national urban policy. We've added a tree outline to show the importance of environment and sustainability for growth areas.

## About Australia's fast growing outer suburbs

- One in every five Australians lives in a growth area – 5.3 million people
- Growth area populations are growing more than twice as fast as the national average (2.9% growth compared to 1.2%)
- The population of growth areas increased by 34% in the past decade. The rest of Australia grew by just 14.9%.
- There have been more than a thousand new homes approved in growth areas every week for the past six years, and more than 60,000 every year for the past decade.

Want to know more? The NGAA brings together three categories of research - member, partner and NGAA commissioned - to ensure that we advocate for policy change which supports growth and builds stronger new communities. Visit [www.ngaa.org.au](http://www.ngaa.org.au) to see our latest research.



## Our Members

### NSW

Blacktown City Council  
Liverpool City Council  
Penrith City Council  
Wollondilly Shire Council

### VIC

Cardinia Shire Council  
City of Casey  
City of Whittlesea  
Hume City Council  
Melton City Council  
Mitchell Shire Council  
Wyndham City Council

### SA

City of Playford  
Mt Barker District Council

### WA

City of Armadale  
City of Cockburn  
City of Gosnells  
City of Kwinana  
City of Swan  
City of Wanneroo

## Strategic Partners

### QLD

Council of Mayors South East Queensland  
Suburban Futures

## 2023 National Congress Venues

### Thursday 4 May

#### National Congress

9.00am – 4.30pm

Upper North and South Rooms  
Adelaide Hills Convention Centre  
145A Mount Barker Road, Hahndorf SA  
and via Zoom

#### NGAA Awards Ceremony and Dinner

6.00pm – 10.00pm

Upper North and South Rooms  
Adelaide Hills Convention Centre  
145A Mount Barker Road, Hahndorf SA

### Friday 5 May

#### Field Trip by Mount Barker District Council

8.45am – 1.45pm

Bus departs from Adelaide Hills Convention Centre

Lunch to follow field trip, then bus returns to Adelaide Hills Convention Centre

*Note – times are local South Australia time*



Mt Barker District Council trail users

## Transport

### Friday 5 May

8.45am Bus departs from Adelaide Hills Convention Centre

1.45pm Bus returns from lunch to Adelaide Hills Convention Centre



## Thursday 4 May

9.00am	<b>Welcome to Country</b>
9.20–9.35am	<b>Welcome to National Congress</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MC, Bronwen Clark, NGAA Chief Executive Officer</li> <li>• Councillor Matt Deeth, Wollondilly Shire, NGAA Chair</li> <li>• Mayor David Leach, Mount Barker District Council</li> </ul>
9.35am	<b>Address by the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development &amp; Local Government</b>
10.00–10.30am	<b>Keynote address: Policy for a climate crisis – what needs to change now and in the future</b> Aaron Hill, Managing Director Economic Insights, Accenture Introduced by Mayor Glenn Docherty, City of Playford
10.30am –11.00am	<b>MORNING TEA</b>
11.00–11.45am	<b>Keynote address: Sustainable suburbs – the view from the outdoors</b> Sophie Thomson, Author and ABC TV presenter Introduced by Cr Stephanie Davies, Cardinia Shire Council
11.45–12.20pm	<b>Keynote address: Preparing communities for growth – an urban change literacy project</b> Jen Michelmores, CEO Studio Thi; Stepchange Cities Partnership Introduced by Cr Todd Carney, Deputy Mayor, Penrith City Council
12.30–1.15pm	<b>LUNCH</b>
1.15–2.15pm	<b>Panel session 1: Resilience in Suburbia 3.0 – Changing outcomes for growth area communities</b>  Panellists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Samantha Rich, Adjunct Lecturer, Yuwaya Ngarra-Li Institute of Global Development</li> <li>• Gavin Cotteril, Founder and Managing Principal, GC3 Digital</li> <li>• Dr Sangeetha Chandrashekar, Senior Research Fellow, Life Course Centre</li> </ul> <b>Moderator:</b> Cr Brett Treby, Deputy Mayor, City of Wanneroo  A new suburb built at a rapid pace, filled with new residents in a new landscape is inherently vulnerable, particularly as the frequency and intensity of natural disasters increases. But what could a community achieve if it was built with resilience in mind? If it was designed to respond to the country on which it is built, and the people who will call it home?
2.15–3.15pm	<b>Panel session 2: Designing Suburbia 3.0 – What needs to change to deliver climate-adapted new communities?</b>  Panellists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jen St Jack, Principal, St Jack and Co</li> <li>• Kathryn Sierlis, Manager of the Growth and Investment Department, City of Casey</li> </ul> <b>Moderator:</b> Mayor Terresa Lynes, City of Gosnells  The way new suburbs are designed and built in Australia needs to change: to adapt to our current and future climate, to respect the landscape in which they are built, and to provide safe, amenable communities for generations of residents. With decades' worth of rapid growth to catch up with, does the answer lie in updating planning regulations, or is it time to take a climate reality check and maybe overhaul the system?

<b>3.15–3.30pm</b>	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>
<b>3.30–4.25pm</b>	<b>Forum: Local Government leading the way to Suburbia 3.0</b> Hearing from the experts within NGAA's membership, this session kick starts NGAA's advocacy for a focus on outer urban growth areas in the Albanese Government's promised National Urban Policy Framework. Through a facilitated discussion, we will highlight the innovative ways local government is pursuing better urban development outcomes, and articulate the policy barriers to sustainable growth.
<b>4.25–4.30pm</b>	<b>Wrap up and close</b> Cr Joseph Haweil, Mayor, Hume City Council
<b>6.00–10.00pm</b>	<b>NGAA AWARDS CEREMONY AND DINNER</b>

## Friday 5 May

- 8.45–1.45pm**      **Field trip by Mount Barker District Council**
- Bus departs Congress venue in Hahndorf at 8.45am and arrives back at 1.45pm
- Sites include:
- South Australia's first Certified Passive House Display Home, Hahndorf
  - Laratinga Wetlands, Mount Barker
  - Summit Sports and Recreation Park, Mount Barker
  - Wear comfortable shoes for 15 minute walk under Bald Hills Road (bus transport also available)
  - Ukaria Cultural Centre, Mount Barker
  - Lunch at Howards Winery, Nairne



AFL Gather Round match, Summit Sport and Recreation Park



## Presenting Partner

The City of Casey is Presenting Partner for the 2023 National Congress. The City of Casey is one of the fastest growing regions in Australia, with more than 300,000 residents from around 150 different cultural backgrounds.



## Leadership in Growth Areas Award Partner

The City of Playford is the Leadership Award Partner for 2023, having won the Award in 2022. Located in northern Adelaide, the City of Playford is growing rapidly.



## Donations

In lieu of gifts to presenters, the NGAA is making a donation to the Save Our Wildlife Foundation, a science-led, grass roots animal rescue and rehabilitation organisation in South Australia. Volunteers care for orphaned, sick, injured and displaced wildlife and relieve suffering through effective rescue and rehabilitation, releasing back into the wild whenever possible.

[www.save-our-wildlife.org.au](http://www.save-our-wildlife.org.au)





## **Aaron Hill**

*ANZ Economic Insights Lead and Managing Director  
Accenture Strategy*

Aaron leads the Australian and New Zealand Economic Insights team with Accenture. He works on economics and public policy with a focus on interaction between policy reform and economic growth. Previously, Aaron was a partner at Deloitte Access Economics, adviser to the Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer, the Hon Wayne Swan, and economic adviser to the SA Premier, the Hon Jay Weatherill.



## **Sophie Thomson**

*Author and ABC Gardening Australia presenter*

Sophie's passion for the environment and gardening led to a media career in talkback radio, television and writing. Her bestselling book 'Sophies Patch' is about transforming a dry paddock in Mount Barker into a lush garden. Sophie's community engagement includes the Native Bee BNB Project with native bee hotels installed in eight councils. She is patron of the Beekeepers' Society of South Australia and Ambassador for Horticultural Therapy SA.



## **Jennifer Micheltmore**

*Chief Executive  
Studio THI*

Jennifer is an urban strategist and designer with over 15 years experience. Studio THI is a not-for-profit urban change studio who focus on amplifying the positive impacts of urban development to create a more equitable and resilient future for all.



## **Gavin Cotterill**

*Founder and Managing Principal  
GC3 Digital*

Gavin is an acclaimed Digital Twin expert trusted by public and private executives to develop world-leading Digital Twin strategies and programs. With a career spanning three decades across the built and natural environment he demonstrates a unique blend of policy, strategy, and business case experience.





## **Samantha Rich**

*Adjunct Lecturer*

*Yuwaya Ngarra-Li Institute of Global Development*

Samantha is a Wiradjuri Designer and housing researcher dedicated to embedding First Nations worldview into the built environment. Her experience across diverse typologies of health, housing, urban design, and Designing for Country has developed her skills in culturally sensitive design and engaging authentically with First Nations Communities.



## **Jen St Jack**

*Principal*

*St Jack and Co*

Jen is a climate change consultant and coordinator of the Resilient Hills and Coasts climate partnership. She works with state and local governments to connect people, ideas and policy, with the aim of accelerating action towards a liveable, safe and resilient world, now and into the future.



## **Kathryn Seirlis**

*Manager, Growth and Investment Department*

*City of Casey*

Kathryn has 20 years experience in planning, infrastructure and economic development of growth areas in south-east Melbourne. The City of Casey Growth and Investment Department drives the delivery of connected and resilient communities by planning and facilitating innovative development and investment outcomes.



## **Dr Sangeetha Chandrashekeran**

*Senior Research Fellow*

*Life Course Centre*

Sangeetha is an economic geographer who focuses on the political economic dimensions of environmental change. She has researched the energy transition in Australia with a focus on social equity and environmental outcomes. A Senior Research Fellow on the Places Program in Life Course Centre, Sangeetha is leading research into the relationship between place, inequality and the life course.

# NGAA AWARDS 2023



## Research and Practice Award

For research or innovative practice that has been led by Local Government and which has resulted in improved outcomes for growth areas.



## Built Environment Award

This category is for completed projects in the built environment that show best practice design, collaboration and impact.



## Partnerships – Building Connections Award

This category showcases partnerships and collaboration that have achieved better outcomes for communities.



## Advocacy Award

This category is in support of Councils' efforts to achieve outcomes in funding or policy that were achieved through dedicated advocacy efforts.



## Leadership in Growth Areas Award

*Sponsored by Playford City Council*

This category recognises an individual (or a team) from within a NGAA Member Council who has shown an outstanding commitment and leadership to pursuing better outcomes for growth areas, in any aspect of Council work.



**MOUNT BARKER**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Host Council



Presenting Partner

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[www.ngaa.org.au](http://www.ngaa.org.au)