

# Media Release



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## LOCAL GOVERNMENT MOVE TO ABOLISH DAPs MISGUIDED: UDIA

The UDIA is pleased that common sense prevailed at yesterday's WA Local Government Association AGM with 2 motions that had the potential to undermine a critical aspect of sustainable development in Perth being defeated.

"The motions to abolish DAPs are a reflection of the fact that some people fundamentally misunderstand how the DAP system works," UDIA CEO Allison Hailes said.

"One motion included wording that claims DAPs are 'undemocratic' and that they erode local planning powers, which is simply not true," Ms Hailes said.

"The fact that DAPs are made up of a mix of local government representatives and technical experts mean that they strike a good balance between technical and local knowledge while ensuring transparency and consistency in decision making," Ms Hailes said. "This structure means informed, independent decisions are made based on current policy frameworks."

"It is important to remember that local councils still have ultimate control over development outcomes," Ms Hailes said. "That is because Local Government planning schemes and policies set the ground rules for what development can happen in an area."

"Regardless of who the decision maker is, whether it's the Council, a DAP or a planning officer, the planning schemes and policies must be applied," Ms Hailes said.

"Basically, if a local government is not happy with the outcome of a decision made by a DAP, then they need to look at their own local planning scheme and ensure that it reflects their strategic objectives for the area," Ms Hailes said.

"It is puzzling that a Council such as the City of Subiaco has called for DAPs to be abolished when the Mayor of Subiaco herself was recently in the media stating that Subiaco is 'open for business' and praised the excellent development that has occurred in Subiaco in recent years, as many of those projects have been approved under the DAP system," Ms Hailes said.

"Perth is a growing, cosmopolitan city projected to reach 3.5 million people by 2050," Ms Hailes said. "Our planning system needs to facilitate that growth and achieve good planning outcomes in a timely, cost effective and equitable way for the benefit of the broader community."

"There is no doubt that there is community concern in regard to increasing density in our metropolitan area," Ms Hailes said. "But changes to DAPs won't relieve that community angst."

"Community engagement and increased public education about why we need a denser city and how and when the community can provide input is more likely to assist when it comes to these issues," Ms Hailes said.

“It is also critical that people understand the benefits, including improved local facilities and services, quality infill development can bring to an area,” Ms Hailes said.

“While UDIA does not support the motion to abolish DAPs, if it is decided that another review of the DAP system is to be undertaken by the government then we will be more than happy to participate constructively in those discussions,” Ms Hailes said.

**End**

<b>For further comment:</b>	
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