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of Landscape Architects
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4 August 2016

Mr Greg Vann
Project Director, SEQ Regional Plan Review
Queensland Government
Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning
PO Box 15009
City East Qld 4002
By email: seqregionalplan@dilgp.qld.gov.au and greg@buckvann.com.au

Dear Mr Vann,

South East Queensland Regional Plan (2009-2031) Review: Further Response by AILA Queensland

Thank you for meeting with representatives of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) on 20 June and for the Department's letter dated 6 July acknowledging our interest and welcoming the AILA's continuing involvement in the review and evolution of the SEQ Regional Plan. As suggested, we have prepared this submission to elaborate upon those areas where the technical expertise of AILA members can assist the Department in its ambition for the new plan. These ideas are contained in this letter.

We believe that a key point-of-difference for South-East Queensland, compared to other regions of similar scale, is that our community is outdoor-oriented 365 days a year, in our residential lifestyle, our recreation choices and our tourism 'product'. With one of the world's best climates for living, an amazingly bio-diverse environment and a highly accessible coastline and hinterland, SEQ is unique and should remain so. All of these elements contribute to the 'Sense of place' which defines our region. However, as population and urban density increase, these attributes are at risk. Best-practice planning and design solutions from other cities and regions offer useful examples, but do not address the local issues specific to our distinctive subtropical character and outdoor lifestyle. It is this regionally specific approach that is needed from the SEQ Regional Plan.

The Challenge

This unique sense of place can be preserved and enhanced through evidence based and proactive regional planning. The profession of landscape architecture is central to both broad-scale planning and site-sensitive design, in the cities, in rural areas and on the fringes, to ensure that new development provides people-friendly places and that the quality and quantity of open space is enhanced. To that end, AILA (Qld) recognises the limitations of prior regional planning processes to address the central issue of open space. Challenges exist both within the urban footprint and at regional scale, its complex and interrelated objectives (including nature conservation, recreation, amenity, buffers, inter-urban breaks and catchment protection) and overlapping management

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responsibilities. It is not yet clear where and how issues of regional open space ‘fit’ within the current framework of “Shaping SEQ”.

AILA believes that the long term framework of the SEQRP requires bold choices and the vision to make big calls now, so that our grandchildren are able to have a similar lifestyle to that which we currently enjoy. This would establish true inter-generational equity. On this basis, we have developed the table we presented in our initial letter further to highlight key intergenerational aspirations that the AILA (Qld) believes are critical to underpin the success of the new Plan. The following suggestions and discussion are offered to support this position in the light of the significant opportunity the SEQRP review offers our community.

Theme: GROW

AILA Queensland Position on the SEQRP	Intergenerational Aspiration
Key Issue: <i>Urban Form</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protect and reinforce <i>inter-urban breaks</i> and green wedges to encourage compact urban form and a high quality setting for our urban areas.• Support the provision of <i>publicly owned and managed</i> open space within rapidly developing urban areas and in areas transforming to higher density.• Creatively address the challenge of providing adequate <i>quality and variety</i> of publicly accessible open space, including both public open space and other urban places which effectively contribute to function and enjoyment of the public realm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a gap between high density and open space provision. The current TOD focus on jobs and beds has lost sight of open space. This is currently evident in Brisbane’s Fortitude Valley development where there are the highest densities yet but no new open space. Open space should and can be a distinguishing feature of higher density in SEQ compared to all other capital city regions.• Establish the framework for / encourage the identification in areas of significant urban growth of <i>regional urban open space opportunities</i> which have a broader social and amenity agenda including embracing arts and culture.• Ensure all open space needs of high density living are provided for within a <i>15-minute walking distance</i> or accessible by frequent public transport.



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Theme: LIVE

AILA Queensland Position on the SEQRP	Intergenerational Aspiration
Key Issue: <i>Green Infrastructure and Open Space</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster <i>innovative and high quality landscape</i> and urban design at all scales; acknowledge that quality of space is as important as quantity. • Recognise the <i>wider role of water bodies and the water / land interface</i> in providing social and environmental value to regional open space systems. • Encourage <i>green infrastructure</i> strategies and projects that enhance liveability, such as green roofs, green streets, public open space networks and improving urban tree canopy coverage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the <i>funding of urban parkland management and maintenance</i> to incorporate more innovative approaches and support higher design outcomes. This could be achieved for instance by requiring each new planning scheme to undertake a landscape analysis of urban structure options at both a whole of shire level and then at key urban fronts. Good green spaces support diversity, high quality liveability and good environmental outcomes: it is more than protecting interurban breaks. • Require all public open space and public realm development feasibility to be assessed based on <i>whole of life cost</i>. • Review <i>street design standards</i> to rebalance vehicular priorities and ensure provision of street trees and other landscape appropriate to the subtropical location. • Acknowledge the role of landscape and open space in mitigating the effects of <i>Climate change</i> and long term development risks and enable this service to be valued accordingly.

Theme: SUSTAIN

AILA Queensland Position on the SEQRP	Intergenerational Aspiration
Key Issue: <i>Landscape Management</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support best practice sustainable landscape management and water sensitive urban design to promote healthy functioning of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require that agencies undertake <i>open space management plans</i> for all public open space systems.



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<p>landscapes including natural values and to deliver maximum public benefit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support best practice in the management of rural areas including restriction on widespread tree clearing and promotion of natural sequence farming. • Acknowledge the role of open space systems in mitigating storm surge and other extreme weather events and incorporate integrated water management planning into urban open space systems. 	
<p>Key Issue: Accessible places</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the needs of demographically, culturally and socially diverse communities • Ensure future planning does not compromise the creation of a safe and inclusive public realm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim for a <i>universally accessible network</i> of regional open space from Noosa to the border and from Gatton to Redlands. Require the larger master planned estates to take the lead. • Ensure social housing enjoys equitable open space access as high priced housing.
<p>Key Issue: Scenic Amenity</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop further the concept and methodology for Scenic Amenity management within SEQ – including a review and update of Implementation Guideline Number 8#. • Protect the scenic amenity, character and sense of place of our valued coastlines and hinterland landscapes and promote scenic enhancement across the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a programme of <i>scenic amenity management guidelines</i> and possible financial support to landowners in key tourism locations and significant landscapes. • Support the development of strategies and measures that pro-actively target <i>landscape and scenic amenity enhancements</i>. • Establish a framework for recognising, managing, measuring and monitoring <i>all publicly accessible open space</i>, including terrestrial, beach and aquatic (e.g. the recreational importance and accessibility of Moreton Bay is not yet adequately reflected in our strategic framework).

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Key Issue: Cultural Landscapes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of the inherent association that indigenous peoples have with the landscapes of SEQ. • Recognition that this association has evolved over tens of thousands of years, for which the landscape was a source of food, shelter, and cultural adaptation. • Willingly and proactively fulfil our federal obligations to indigenous rights, at a SEQ level. • Recognise UNESCO guidance cultural landscapes, which includes: <i>“Landscape designed and created intentionally by man: embraces garden and parkland landscapes constructed for aesthetic reasons which are often (but not always) associated with religious or other monumental buildings and ensembles”.</i> <p>Organically evolved landscape: <i>“This results from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative and has developed its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment”.</i></p> <p>Associative cultural landscape: <i>“justifiable by virtue of the powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent”.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have greater meaningful integration of <i>indigenous values</i>, specifically associated with landscape connections, into the Regional Plan. • Find opportunities for indigenous groups to have voice on landscape matters, through proactively working with communities rather than reactive consultation methods. • Plan for greater long term integration of indigenous history into planning and design narrative when addressing landscapes of significance in SEQ.

Please note AILA Queensland provided a detailed analysis of *Implementation Guideline Number 8* at the consultation phase of the current SEQRP, outlining our concerns with the methodology and – particularly – the tools for assessing the impacts of development on scenic amenity values. We attach for your information a copy of our response for your consideration.



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Theme: PROSPER

AILA Queensland Position on the SEQRP	Intergenerational Aspiration
Key Issue: The Role of the Design Professions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster the continued growth of Queensland's <i>vibrant design and arts community</i> including requiring public art to be part of all projects. Ensure <i>professional Registered Landscape Architects (RLA)</i> are included in public projects requiring multi-disciplinary approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with AILA and others to establish <i>key metrics for measuring success</i> of open space provision and quality, and their relationship to liveability and sustainability. Review and consolidate the policies on % <i>for art</i> programme for all public works: (For instance this should apply to private developments over a certain size. It works in the Brisbane CBD. Each council could run a programme of supporting locals, and tap into school programmes). Encourage all local authorities to employ <i>registered landscape architects (RLA)</i> on staff when undertaking community planning activities.
Key Issue: A prosperous State	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the role of regional landscape and the public domain of urban areas in underpinning the State's <i>attractiveness to international and national tourists</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a <i>comprehensive audit</i> of places and spaces supported by visitor surveys which underpin the State's attractiveness to tourists. The SEQRP should acknowledge the <i>economic value of open space</i> for tourism, sustaining land values of well-designed communities, and promoting health.
Key Issue: A healthy State	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge the role of well-designed public open space in <i>promoting healthy choices</i> in the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require the measurement of <i>urban solar absorption</i> and monitor the provision of vegetation and open space to ensure a healthy urban living environment. Promote the provision of areas for <i>Community gardens</i> and local food production and distribution. Recognise and promote the importance of <i>shade</i> in our outdoor spaces.

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Theme: CONNECT

AILA Queensland Position on the SEQRP	Intergenerational Aspiration
Key Issue: <i>Public and Active Transport</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support strong public and <i>active transport links</i> to provide residents with access to a range of open space and recreational experiences. Redefine the <i>role and design of road corridors</i> that express the full potential of environmental, social and economic benefits from green infrastructure strategies, as well as the active retrofit of grey infrastructure to green infrastructure. Ensure Safety and amenity in public transport through an <i>integrated design approach</i> to transport hubs and connections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all new road corridor design allows <i>sufficient corridor width and space</i> for mature long term landscape and public realm environments to develop with other community uses. Acknowledge that roads are public space and take up about 10 % of all land use. Encourage the upgrading / re-purposing of road reserves to <i>shared streets, parkways and boulevards</i> wherever possible, at all scales, especially where public open space cannot provide for the needs of an expanding and denser population. Establish a collaborative framework, and annual targets, for funding and management of <i>regional trails and rail trails</i>.

AILA Queensland Position on the SEQRP	Intergenerational Aspiration
Key Issue: <i>Connect with the past</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge the role of landscapes and individual landscape elements in the State's heritage values and establish a suitable management regime to protect these qualities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a register of <i>Heritage trees and landscapes</i> through a community led process and ensure the protection and enhancement of such features in any future planning schemes. Fund a regional study of the <i>cultural history of landscape and flora in SEQ</i> with a view to listing and protecting and managing features significant to our community.



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Measures

We understand that your team is currently developing a range of indices for monitoring. We support this as it will ensure sufficient focus is applied to meeting the objectives of the plan. We believe that the following *measures* should be considered, which would support the achievement of AILA's intergenerational aspirations described above:

- *Publicly accessible outdoor open space* (not just "Public open space") including beaches & esplanades, rivers, lakes, reservoirs and other waterfronts; urban spaces (even if 'private'); golf courses etc. – measures could include total area, accessibility, degree to which they contribute to liveability, 'remoteness' (similar to the ROS categories) and usage. Should be in two categories – terrestrial and waterways.
- *Regional trails* – measures could include total km, standard and connectivity to activity centres and or recreation destinations of choice (for walking, cycling, horses etc.)
- *Outdoor recreation survey* (biennial) – measures such as participation rates, range of recreational opportunities of etc.
- *Landscape values* – not just "scenic amenity" (which AILA believes is not achieving the desired protection of scenic amenity for our region) but also character / place values, sensitivity, accessibility and heritage.
- *Street trees and usable streetscapes* (activation and pedestrian/cycle use) – regional shade cover and permeable surface (e.g. turf, garden space and bushland) targets to rebalance the priority on trees in streets.
- *Contribution to wider green infrastructure networks, establishing and reinforcing inter-urban breaks, corridors and ecosystem networks* – measured against an identified goal for green infrastructure across the region.

AILA looks forward to the findings and recommendations of the Shaping SEQ conversation and the involvement of our organisation in future stages of the formal review process. The AILA would be interested in offering representatives from our membership to participate in ongoing review activities, and to this end would establish a Regional Plan Working Group to engage with the State on specific methodologies and issues going forward if this would be of assistance.

Should you have any queries or wish to discuss please contact Georgina Scriha Queensland Chapter Manager, AILA on 0417 666 622 or georgina.scriha@aila.org.au.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Satherley', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Shannon Satherley
AILA Queensland State Vice President