



Spencer Gulf Cities launches 'Regional Partnership Priorities' paper **EMBARGOED until 9am Tuesday 13 September 2022**

Spencer Gulf Cities has today launched a 'Regional Partnership Priorities' paper focused on increasing the region's capacity to support forecast economic growth.

The Upper Spencer Gulf Common Purpose Group Inc. (trading as Spencer Gulf Cities (SGC)) is a strategic partnership between the cities of Port Pirie, Port Augusta and Whyalla. Spencer Gulf Cities' core role is advocacy to support our regional communities and economies to be healthy and strong.

The Upper Spencer Gulf region has historically been a significant economic contributor to the state and nation through its natural resources and industrial strengths. Over the last decade, the regional economy has diversified to capitalise on those natural resources to become a significant renewable energy 'powerhouse'. Planned public and private sector investment in hydrogen power, supported by significant infrastructure projects over the next five years, will further establish the USG region as one of the most important nationally in meeting emissions targets.

Not only is the region blessed with significant mineral and renewable energy resources, but it is also home to some of the most significant First Nations cultural heritage, natural biodiversity assets, and landscapes in the world. More and more opportunities are being opened up for tourists, visitors and locals to sustainably engage in cultural and nature-based experiences across the region. These experiences are both rare and unique.

"The future looks bright for our region and Spencer Gulf Cities looks forward to welcoming new community members, businesses and investors working together to deliver sustainable and exciting regional growth" said Mayor Stephens, Chair of Spencer Gulf Cities.

Mayor Stephens went on to say, "Spencer Gulf Cities recognises the significant economic potential of the region as well as the need to increase the enabling capacity to support growth. We recognise the need to bring the community on the journey to ensure our communities and existing businesses benefit and thrive from forecast economic growth. Equally, we recognise that growth needs to be sustainable, to protect, conserve and value the significant environmental and cultural assets we depend on".

"The purpose of the 'Regional Partnership Priorities' paper is to focus our efforts on increasing regional economic, social and environmental capacity. Key actions and outcomes are aligned to six regional priority areas: Economic Development, Housing, Workforce, Education & Skills, Infrastructure, Image & Liveability and Environment. In developing our priorities, we've consulted with our councils, community and industry representatives and key stakeholders including Regional Development Australia organisations, and South Australian Government agencies. We look forward to working with these stakeholders with focused collaboration, sharing of resources and intelligence to deliver forecast growth for the benefit of both the region and the state", said Mayor Stephens.

The work by SGC also supports current planning processes underway by the State Planning Commission including development of a Structure Plan for USG. "This work by the State Planning Commission is highly valued by Spencer Gulf Cities and will be critical to delivering planned major projects".

"Spencer Gulf Cities recognises the 'once-in-a-generation' opportunity that planned and forecast growth projects present for the region. It equally recognises the need to 'get it right' in terms of planning and support for growth to ensure existing communities and businesses benefit and that long lasting legacy is delivered in the form of growth in population and prosperity".

"A truly collaborative approach is needed between all three levels of government, industries and the community sector to deliver the support needed. Strong communication, commitment and resourcing is needed as part of a regional partnership framework and approach. Spencer Gulf Cities is looking forward to exploring these priorities with members of the South Australian Government Cabinet during its visit to the region this week", said Mayor Stephens.

A copy of the paper can be found at https://upperspencergulf.com.au/download/key_documents/Spencer-Gulf-Cities-Regional-Partnership-Priorities.pdf.

*****END*****

Contact: Mayor Leon Stephens, SGC Chair & Mayor Port Pirie Regional Council – Mobile 0417 080 961