

# Urban Planning and Safety

## 2024



**Trends and industry opportunities have made 2024 the perfect time to advance your career in urban planning and safety.**

Job prospects for 2024 look strong as innovations in urban planning have created a growing demand for professionals with the skills to design sustainably, innovate digitally-enable spaces and create engaging infrastructure.

## Key takeaways from 2023



### **Shortage of urban and regional planners created opportunities for new professionals**

Over the past decade there has been a steady increase in the demand for urban and regional planners. However, 2023 saw a drop in the number of urban and regional planners across Australia. According to an Australia Government report, this trend is a new development as the shortage was felt in 2023, but not in 2022<sup>1</sup>.

This trend presented quite the opportunity for those looking to become urban and regional planners. In 2023 and into 2024, a wealth of projects have surfaced across the country that require urban planners, such as increased infrastructure in regional centres and transitioning to net zero.<sup>2</sup>



### **Major infrastructure and planning organisations committed to drastically reducing emissions by 2030**

The role that the infrastructure sector can play in reducing carbon emissions has been an ongoing conversation for many years. However, 2023 saw organisations and bodies outline plans to curb rising greenhouse emissions, including the Planning Institute Australia (PIA) and the Australian Government's Department of Infrastructure.

The Australian Government committed to reducing overall gas emissions to 43% below 2005 levels by 2030 and achieving net zero by 2050, with the largest focus being the transport and infrastructure sectors.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, PIA has committed to pushing for the planning and infrastructure sector to use 82% renewable power generation by 2030 to assist with net zero goals.

# Urban planning and safety at a glance



## Did you know...

Infrastructure Sustainability Advisor was listed as one of the most in-demand roles for 2024. This role includes guiding environmental and sustainable practices in planning and infrastructure projects<sup>5</sup>.



## Discover the average salary of these in-demand positions

Work Health and Safety Managers <sup>6</sup>	\$130K per year
Work Health and Safety Officers <sup>7</sup>	\$95K per year
Sustainability Officer <sup>8</sup>	\$95K per year
Urban Planners <sup>9</sup>	\$93K per year
Town Planners <sup>10</sup>	\$88K per year



## What are the key industries for Health and Safety worker?<sup>13</sup>

1. Public Administration
2. Construction
3. Mining
4. Health care and social assistance



## The most valued soft skills when working across industries and sectors...<sup>11</sup>

- Communication
- Adaptability
- Critical thinking
- Project and time management

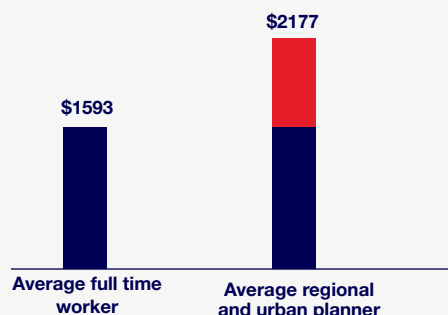


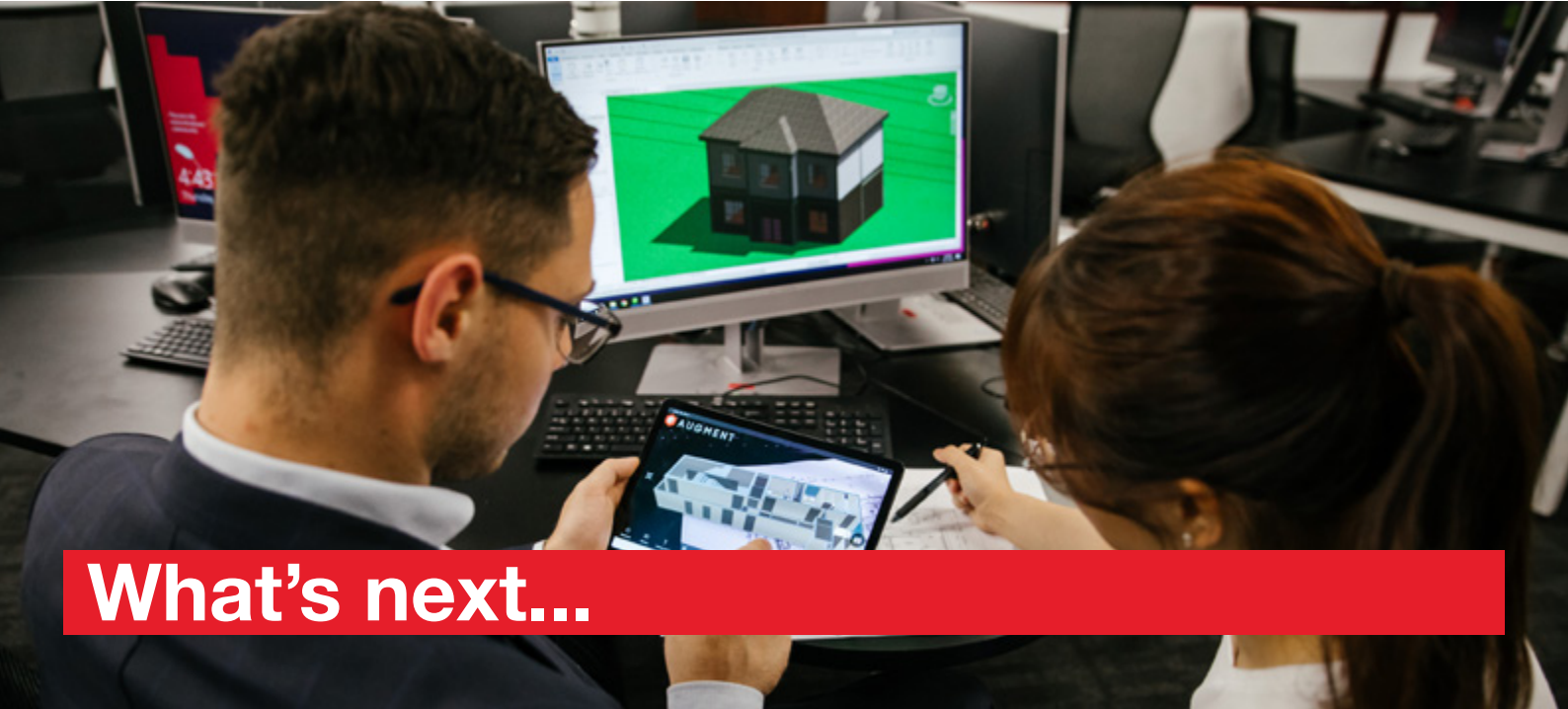
Employment levels in the role Urban and Regional Planner are projected to **increase by 18.6%** in the next 2 years, rising to **16,200 positions** in the sector.<sup>12</sup>

**60%**

of Occupational Health and Safety Advisers live in capital cities, with high demand in **NSW, VIC and QLD**.<sup>13</sup>

## Average weekly earnings of a regional and urban planning positions<sup>12</sup>





# What's next...



## **\$120 billion investment in infrastructure means job growth for OH&S professionals**

In 2021, the Australian Government committed to a \$120 billion investment into infrastructure over the next ten years. This investment is designed to drive job growth and meet the needs of the future. This predominantly includes nationwide road and transport upgrades, such as light rail and highway funding.<sup>14</sup>

Even beyond the infrastructure sector, projects are beginning across Australia that require professionals skilled in the integration of safety procedures and environmental advisory.

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## **Net-zero will be a major consideration for design and development professionals for years to come**

The climate crisis has been front-of-mind for many industries in 2023, however none more than infrastructure professionals. Australian Design Review identifies that from 2024 going forward, three key principles will guide the evolution of the sector: "designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use, and regenerating natural systems".

Meeting these goals means new projects for design professionals such as, water-sensitive urban design and sustainable energy and resource systems within communities.<sup>15</sup>

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# What's next...



## Cost of living will present new challenges for urban planning

Throughout 2023 and into 2024 high inflation and economic pressure has left a strain on Australians housing and transport. This has spotlighted the need to elevate the accessibility, productivity and equity of urban infrastructure. Beyond housing and transport, public services and amenities that are vital to cities may be a catalyst for equitable urban planning in 2024.

According to KPMG, the challenges of creating more accessible cities during the cost-of-living crisis could be solved through further development of public transport infrastructure, “activation of spaces, accessibility for citizens, better connections to essential services and employment opportunities” in the coming years. These will require a fresh wave of urban planners and innovative minds to accomplish these goals.<sup>16</sup>

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[Click here to learn more about the Master of Artificial Intelligence](#)



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## Sources

- <sup>1</sup> Australian Government, Jobs and Skills Australia. '2023 Skills Priority List Key Findings Report'. Published 2023
- <sup>2</sup> Planning Institute Australia. 'New data shows growing shortage of urban planners - bad news for housing; regional communities; transition to net zero'. Published 2023
- <sup>3</sup> Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts. 'Transport and Infrastructure Net Zero Roadmap and Action Plan'
- <sup>4</sup> Planning Institute Australia. 'Achieving net zero emission: An enabling role for planning'. Published 2023
- <sup>5</sup> Hays. 'Skills in demand for 2024'. Published 2024
- <sup>6</sup> Seek. 'How to become a Work Health and Safety Manager'
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- <sup>11</sup> Hays. '7 job-ready soft skills you need today'
- <sup>12</sup> Australian Government, Labour Market Insights. 'Urban and Regional Planners'
- <sup>13</sup> Australian Government, Labour Market Insights. 'Occupational Health Safety Advisers'
- <sup>14</sup> Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts. 'Budget Announcements, 2023-24 Budget'
- <sup>15</sup> Australian Design Review. 'HDR's six architecture and design trends for 2024'. Published 2024
- <sup>16</sup> KPMG. 'The future of public transport report'. Published 2022

Correct as of February 2024