



Youth Parliament of Western Australia

## **Housing Supply and Rental Reform Bill 2024**



## **Explanatory Memorandum:**

Western Australia's housing and renting systems are at a breaking point, heightened by soaring rent and overall living costs. This continues to put extreme financial pressure on WA families. The Housing Supply Reform Bill 2024 presents a multifaceted strategy tackling housing supply, tenant rights, homelessness, and rental affordability. Part 2 prioritizes tenant protection by eliminating 'without-grounds' terminations and bolstering privacy rights. Part 3 extends support to homeless youth transitioning from state care to individuals under 25 and creates key reports overseen by the Department of Communities to ensure accountability among service providers.

Parts 4 and 6 target housing supply by optimizing construction resources and the workforce, whilst also utilizing vacant properties to bolster supply. This is further strengthened through the diverting of profits into a HAFF fund.

The cessation of NRAS threatens 13,000 tenants, prompting Part 5 to establish a state-run scheme for affordable rental retention and framework for new market entries into the scheme. Part 7 addresses ecological concerns, aiming to increase native vegetation with incentives for planting. A mandated registry tracks progress, yielding environmental and economic benefits like biodiversity support and urban heat island effect mitigation.



Western Australia

# Housing Supply and Rental Reform Bill 2024

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Youth Parliament of Western Australia

## **Housing Supply and Rental Reform Bill 2024**

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**No. 5 of 2024**

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**A Bill for**

**An Act —**

**To strengthen tenancy rights, legislate the formation of a state-run rental affordability scheme, whilst offering additional support for first home buyers, and increasing urban forest regimes in metropolitan areas.**

*[Assented to 29 JULY 2024]*

The Youth Parliament of Western Australia enacts as follows:



## Part 1 — Preliminary

### 1. Short Title

This is the *Housing Supply and Rental Reform Bill 2024*.

### 2. Commencement

This Act comes into operation on the day on which this Act receives the Youth Governor's Assent.

### 3. Terms used

In this Act —

***Building Permit*** means a Building Permit Uncertified (BA2) for residential dwellings issued by the City under the *Building Act 2011*;

***Child*** means a person under 18 years of age;

***CHO*** means Community Housing Organization;

***Disadvantaged Youth*** means individuals who are under the age of 25 and are economically disadvantaged, or school-aged young people not attending school or a vocational pathway, or youth engaged in OOHC services;

***Dwelling*** means anything that is used wholly or mainly for residential accommodation as defined by the Australian Taxation Office;

***Dutiable rate***: means the property's purchase price or the property's value on the open market, whichever is higher;

***Emergency*** has the meaning given to it in the *Emergency Management Act 2005*;

***FHOG*** means First Homeowners Grant;

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***Financial Dependent*** includes the following: a tenant's spouse or de facto partner, A tenant's child under the age of 18, or someone with whom the tenant has an interdependency relationship;

***Full-time income*** means an individual who works a minimum of 38 hours a week or is considered by their employer to be working full-time;

***HAFF*** means the Housing Australian Future Fund established in 2023;

***HAS*** or ***WAHAS*** means the Western Australian Housing Affordability Scheme;

***Hostile Infrastructure*** means any urban design strategy in which public spaces and structures are designed in a manner that prevents them from being able to be utilised by individuals acting in an anti-social manner, or comfortably inhabited as resting places by homeless individuals;

***Housing Authority*** means the Housing Authority referred to in the *Housing Act 1980 section 6(4)*;

***Homeless Individual*** means any person(s) who lacks a fixed, regular nighttime residence, and resides in a public or private area not designed or suitable for a human being to sleep or live.

***Informal Caregiver Mission*** means an unmeasured extent of time in which a person provides care within an already existing relationship; such as a family member;

***Interdependency Relationship*** means someone the individual has a close personal relationship and lives with, and where one or each of them provides the other with domestic support and personal care;

**Lessor** means the owner of assets or property that have been leased to another party under a binding contractual agreement;

**Major Renovations** means structural change to the foundations, roofing, flooring, exterior or load-bearing walls of a dwelling, or the extension of an existing dwelling to increase its floor area;

**Market Value** means the value of an asset or service within the financial market, according to participants within the market;

**Metropolitan** means the Perth Metro area and the Peel Region of WA;

**Native vegetation** means flora naturally growing in Australia;

**NRAS** means the *Australian Government National Rental Affordability Scheme (2008)*;

**Out-Of-Home-Care (OOHC)** means a living arrangement provided via specialized government and/or non-government programs for children and young people who cannot live with their families;

**Part-time** means an individual who works at least 19 and no more than 37 hours per week;

**Personal Information** means information relating to the tenant including identification, financial information and contact details;

**Permanent Resident** means an individual who has applied for and successfully met the relevant criteria to be granted a permanent visa that allows them to remain in Australia indefinitely;

**Preferential Admission** means the act of choosing to allow immigrations to prioritize one applicant over another;

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**Private land** means the land owned by individuals, businesses or non-governmental organizations;

**Principal Place of Residence (PPR)** means the dwelling considered as the full-time home of the individual or individuals residing. This can be a house, flat or unconventional property such as a houseboat.;

**Regional** means all areas in Western Australia outside the Perth metropolitan region;

**Rural** means an area that is not classified as metropolitan or regional.

**SEIFA** means the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas. An index utilized by the Australian Bureau of Statistics;

**Tenants** means an individual who holds the occupation or temporary possession of land or property, rented to them by a landlord that holds ownership of them;

**Tenancy Management Information** means the information relating to the tenancy history of a tenant, including reports and financial statements;

**Urban Forest** means the collection of trees and other plant vegetation growing in and around urban settings to improve urban environments;

**WA** means the State of Western Australia;

**Youth** mean an individual between the ages of 15-25.

## Part 2 — Legislative Reform

### Division 1 — Protecting tenants' rights

#### 4. Notice of termination for just cause

Amend the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987* to replace:

64. Notice of Termination by lessor without any ground with—

#### **64. Notice of Termination by lessor for just cause:**

- (1) A lessor may give notice of termination of a residential tenancy agreement by specifying a just cause including the following:
  - (a) The lessor or family needs to live in the property;
  - (b) The lessor is intending on selling the property;
  - (c) The landlord is undertaking major renovations which require vacant possession; or
  - (d) The tenant or the tenant's visitor, whether by act or omission intentionally or recklessly causes serious damage to the premises, including any safety equipment, or to any common areas.
- (2) Where a lessor gives notice of termination under this section, the period of notice must be not less than 90 days before the day on which the tenant is required under the notice to give to the lessor possession of the premises.

#### 5. Rental Accommodation Liveability

- (1) Amend the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987* to insert:

#### **45A. Climate Comfort —**

It is a term of every residential tenancy agreement:

- (a) that the lessor must provide a measure of air-conditioning the property to ensure liveable conditions.

- (2) Amend the Residential Tenancy Regulations 1989 to insert:

**12A. Essential Services —**

- (i) air-conditioning; if the fault is identified in the months of December to February.

**6. Protecting Tenants' Privacy**

Amend the Residential Tenancies Act 1987 to insert:

**50A. Tenant Information Protection —**

- (1) A lessor and leasing agency must securely store all personal and tenancy management information relating to the tenant;
- (2) The lessor and leasing agency will not disclose a tenant's personal or tenancy management information unless:
- (a) the tenant consents; or
- (b) the sharing of information is required by law.

**50B. Breach of Tenant's Privacy —**

- (1) A tenant's privacy is breached where:
- (a) the information shared has the necessary quality of confidence;
- (b) the information is disclosed under circumstances indicating an obligation of confidence;
- (c) there is unauthorised use of the information.

**50C. Disposal of Documentation —**

- (1) A lessor or leasing agency must dispose of tenants' personal information within six months of termination of the tenant's interest in the property;
- (2) Failure to comply will result in a fine of no more than \$5,000.

## **Division 2 — Short-Term Rental Reform**

### **7. Emergency Accommodation**

Amend the *Short-Term Rental Accommodation Act 2024* to insert:

#### **30A. Emergency Accommodation —**

In the event of an emergency as declared under the *Emergency Management Act 2005*, the Minister for Housing may designate a Short-Term Rental Arrangement an ‘emergency accommodation’—

- (a) the Minister may direct that affected persons may be housed within emergency accommodation for up to 30 days;
- (b) the Minister must reimburse the owner of the emergency accommodation at not less than 75% of the previously advertised rate.

## **Division 3 — Social Housing Reform**

### **8. Review of Section 75A**

The Housing Authority must commit to a review of section 75A of the Residential Tenancies Act and ensure it is not discriminatory against individuals with mental health and cognitive impairments.

### **9. Right of Appeal**

Insert section 71EA into *the Residential Tenancies Act 1987*:

#### **71EA. Right of Appeal against Criteria —**

A tenant is permitted to appeal via an internal review against a strike carried out through the use of this criteria.

**10. Dispute Resolution**

Insert Section 71CA and Section 71CB into the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987*:

**71CA. Dispute Resolution Process —**

The lessor is to provide a dispute resolution process free of charge for tenants in social housing;

**71CB. Usage of Dispute Resolution Process —**

Prior to issuing a notice of termination, the lessor and tenant must have participated in a dispute resolution process.

**Division 4 — Emergency Public Housing**

**11. Public Housing Rental Rate Reform**

- (1) For a period of three years from the date of proclamation, the rental rate formula of 25% of the household's assessable income will be reduced to 10% of the household's assessable income for all new public leasing leases;
- (2) The Minister may review and extend this clause after the elapsement of three years.

**12. Rental adjustment of New Public Housing**

- (1) The commitment of public housing investment by the State Government will allocate 30% of newly built public housing to be under a new rental formula:
  - (a) the formula is based on the cost-rental model, in which rent is decided by covering the cost price and maintenance of the property;
  - (b) the allocation rate is increased by 5% for areas outside the Perth Metropolitan or Peel region or low socio-economic areas;

- (i) these classifications will be derived from areas ranking low on the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA).
- (2) This procedure will have an expiration date of two years after completion of a development;
- (3) This adjustment will run alongside the *Public Housing Rental Rate Reform*.

## **Part 3 — Youth Homelessness**

### **Division 1 — Support for Homeless Youth**

#### **13. Out-Of-Home-Care Transitional Support**

All Out-of-Home-Care support programs must extend their intake criteria service period from a maximum of 18 years of age, to a maximum participant age of 25 years. If an applicant is over 18 years of age, they must:

- (a) submit proof to the service provider that they are actively searching for their own accommodation; and
- (b) are searching for a job; or
- (c) require additional support due to extraneous circumstances such as a physical or intellectual disability;
  - (i) in this case, the Department of Communities will be responsible for deciding if a young person's extraneous circumstances qualify them for the program after 18 years of age.

#### **14. Homelessness Support**

- (1) The Department of Communities will incentivise the use of churches and local club buildings as centres for support programs and as shelter for disadvantaged youth and homeless individuals during the months of June — August;
  - (a) churches and club buildings will be incentivised through a payment of \$1000 for each week they offer this service between the specified months;
  - (b) these facilities must be consulted prior to offering their services and be subject to an inspection every 6 months. To be conducted by the Department of Communities.
- (2) The Western Australian Government will commit \$25 Million to construct a social services facility with the capacity for 80-100 studio apartments;

- (a) Location and funding will be decided through a feasibility assessment of specific areas to decide the most beneficial location of this facility. The assessment will include, but is not limited to:
  - (i) analysis of socio-economic data of surrounding metropolitan areas near any proposed site;
  - (ii) the homeless rate or other suitable data pertaining to the number of homeless individuals in the area;
  - (iii) appropriateness of location and easy accessibility to key amenities and infrastructure.

**Division 2 — Maintaining Integrity of Youth Homelessness Support Services**

**15. Children Evicted to Homelessness**

- (1) The Housing Authority must report on the number of children evicted from either their direct care or from institution(s) under their control;
  - (a) the report shall be made available to the public;
  - (b) the report will be published every 12 months; and
  - (c) include all relevant information regarding the eviction. This information should include:
    - (i) reason for eviction including the relevant statute;
    - (ii) child's age and length of tenancy;
    - (iii) the child's cultural background;
    - (iv) any other information the Housing Authority deems necessary to the accurate reporting of these statistics;
    - (v) any actions taken by the Housing Authority since the last report.

- (2) An independent third party, selected by the Department of Communities, will then provide a list of recommendations on how the Housing Authority can act to improve the rates of eviction and other metrics;
  - (a) these recommendations shall be completed and shared with the public and the Housing Authority within 90 days of the initial report's publication;
  - (b) the Department of Communities reserves the right to change which independent third party they use at any time, if appropriate reasoning is provided.

**16. Review of Homelessness Support Services**

- (1) The Department of Communities shall review all OOHC services that provide support to homeless youth. These services must be found to:
  - (a) handle sensitive information regarding individuals under their care appropriately and confidentially;
  - (b) ensure that the wellbeing of young people, both physically and mentally, is maintained at all times;
  - (c) staff and facilities are fully capable to provide these services;
  - (d) abide by all state laws and regulations.
- (2) If an OOHC provider is found to violate any of the above criteria, they will be held accountable and appropriate penalties will be applied at the discretion of the Department of Communities.

**17. Investigation Into the Use of Hostile Infrastructure**

The Department of Communities will investigate the use of “hostile infrastructure” in Western Australia using the following criteria:

- (a) infrastructure must be for a proper purpose, such as deterring unwanted or anti-social behaviour; and

- (b) provide an aesthetically pleasing environment via infrastructure design; and
- (c) does not unintentionally restrict access to public spaces for certain groups, such as those with a physical disability.

**18. Procedures for Removal of Hostile Infrastructure**

The Department of Communities may set procedures for investigation and removal of hostile infrastructure.

**19. Standards for Future Hostile Infrastructure**

Any new infrastructure must fulfil all criteria outlined in *Clause 17*.

## **Part 4 — Supply**

### **Division 1 — Increasing Supply of Construction Workers in WA**

#### **20. Increasing Skilled Worker Migration**

Once existing pre-requisites for immigration as outlined in the Migration Act 1958 (Cth) have been met, allocations in applicants with background skills and intent to work in construction are to be given preferential admission within Western Australia's annual existing immigration allocation.

#### **21. Construction-Related Work Opportunities for Youth**

The construction industry may liaise with Vocational Education and Training (VET) centres to employ students in work which utilises the skills that they have gained from VET centres;

- (a) assuming that parent or guardian consent has been authorised;
- (b) the employee has been given a one-day paid training session on construction site safety;
- (c) the employer/construction site manager has a working with children's check;
- (d) the young person:
  - (i) may not work during school hours if under 18 years of age, unless permission is granted by the WA Board of Education;
  - (ii) must not start before 6am;
  - (iii) must not finish after 10pm;
  - (iv) must have access to all relevant PPE;
  - (v) receive all award protections for both construction and casual worker benefits;

**22. Terminating Employment**

Employers may terminate employment of young employees if the following applies:

- (a) they are a danger to themselves;
- (b) they are a danger to others in the workplace; or
- (c) they are consistently unable to complete tasks assigned.

**23. Weekend Employment**

Employers may continue to hire youth on weekends or public holidays during the school term if the following applies:

- (a) they have completed one holiday-long employment period;
- (b) parent or guardian permission is granted.

**24. Training Facilitation**

Employers are encouraged to facilitate upskilling opportunities to youth with a high work ethic through the following forms:

- (a) micro-credentials;
- (b) apprenticeship opportunities;
- (c) paid training opportunities.

**25. Rehabilitation Pathways in the Construction Industry**

- (1) The Department of Justice may establish partnerships with construction companies to create direct pathways for people exiting prison to work in the construction industry as:
  - (a) tradespeople; or
  - (b) apprentices.

**26. Opportunities for Construction**

- (1) The Department of Justice must ensure low-risk young people encountering the justice system have opportunities to serve

their community service in a government-contracted construction service.

- (a) the nature of this work should not require specialist knowledge or qualification;
  - (b) contracted agencies must provide access to all relevant PPE and appropriate levels of supervision.
- (2) The Fines Enforcement Registry shall increase opportunities for construction company sponsors through the Work and Development Permit Scheme.

**27. Incentives for the construction industry to take on apprentices**

- (1) For every apprenticeship completed, the business which sponsors the apprenticeship shall receive a stimulus payment of \$1000.

## **Part 5 — Establishing The Western Australian Housing Affordability Scheme**

### **Division 1 — Transition from the NRAS**

#### **28. WAHAS Tenancy Requirements**

An applicant will only be able to enter the scheme if they fit the following criteria. The below figures are representative of a full-time salary. Part-time is considered to be half of all figures.

- (1) Tenants must reach one of the following income thresholds based off their living situation;
  - (a) the maximum income for tenants with the household composition of one adult is \$40,000 per year after taxation;
  - (b) the maximum income for tenants with the household composition of one adult with one child is \$55,000 per year after taxation;
  - (c) the maximum income for tenants with the household composition of one adult with two or more children is \$80,000 per year after taxation;
  - (d) the maximum income for tenants with the household composition of two adults is \$80,000 per year after taxation;
  - (e) the maximum income for tenants with the household composition of three adults is \$120,000 per year after taxation;
  - (f) the maximum income for tenants with the household composition of four adults is \$160,000 per year after taxation;
  - (g) the maximum income for tenants with the household composition of two adults with one child is \$95,000 per year after taxation;

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**Part 5**                    Establishing The Western Australian Housing Affordability Scheme

**Division 1**            Transition from the NRAS

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- (h) the maximum income for tenants with the household composition of two adults with two or more children is \$110,000 per year after taxation;
  - (i) if the number of children in the household exceeds four, the maximum income threshold of the tenants is raised by \$7,500 per child after the fourth.
- (2) Applicants must be an Australian Citizen or Permanent Resident;
  - (3) Applicants must provide the household income from the 12 months prior to submitting application;
  - (4) The applicants must continue to provide proof of income to the tenancy manager/provider on an annual basis. Applicants must be able to provide income details within 14 days of a request by the Department of Communities;
  - (5) Applicants must not be receiving other sources of government provided rental assistance, unless otherwise approved by the Department of Communities.

**29.      Effect of Income Threshold on Existing NRAS Tenants**

- (1) if an existing tenant continues to earn under the maximum income threshold, no changes will occur;
- (2) if the tenant earns more that 25% over the income threshold for more than two consecutive years, they will be issued a notice to find alternate accommodation and will no longer qualify for the WAHAS.

**30.      WAHAS Property Requirements**

For a property to be eligible to participate in the WAHAS, the owner (lessor) must;

- (a) rent out their property at a minimum of 20% below market value;

- (i) if property is considered regional, a minimum rent of 30% below market value is required. Any time a 20 percent figure is mentioned, assume the same is true for regional areas, just as a 30 percent figure.
- (b) be subject to their property receiving a living standard check by the Department of Communities before being accepted into the WAHAS;
- (c) provide an independent written valuation of the market value rent for each dwelling when it first becomes available to rent under the WAHAS and provided every two years from the date the property entered the scheme;
- (d) the rent charged can be adjusted provided the following requirements are met:
  - (i) state and territory residential tenancy laws are complied with;
  - (ii) rent charged remains at all times 20 to 30 percent below market value.

**31. NRAS Transition To HAS**

The Western Australian State Government will begin requisitioning NRAS properties to convert to WAHAS properties.

- (a) properties will be acquired over the course of 2.5 years, starting in 2025, and concluding in mid 2027;
- (b) appropriate protections will be in place for tenants and lessors during the interim timeframe between the end of the NRAS and the time their property is acquired, including but not limited to:
  - (i) a 20% reduction in rent for all tenants, subsidized by the government, until their property enters the HAS.
- (c) the remaining NRAS properties not transferred to the WAHAS program, will be approached for purchase by the WA government;

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**Part 5**                    Establishing The Western Australian Housing Affordability Scheme

**Division 1**              Transition from the NRAS

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- (i) the properties purchased will be provided as affordable rental stock in perpetuity;
- (ii) the management of these properties will be transferred over to CHO's;
- (d) if the lessor does not wish to continue in the new WAHAS scheme, or have their property purchased by the State, they will no longer be part of the program and their property will re-enter the private market.

**32.      Effect of Transition on Lessors**

Once a property has been purchased by the State, the following changes will take place to the property;

- (a) lessor will now receive an annual subsidy of \$8,500;
- (b) the contribution is in the form of a refundable tax offset for each dwelling per year.

**33.      Effect of Transition on Tenants**

Once a property has been acquired by the State, the new maximum income threshold will apply to all existing tenants;

- (a) if the tenant maintains their eligibility by earning under the threshold, no changes will occur for the tenant;
- (b) if the tenant earns 25% more than the maximum income for more than two consecutive years, they will be issued with a notice to find alternate accommodation within 90 days and will no longer be eligible for the scheme;

**34.      Penalties for Violating HAS Provisions**

If, through a filed complaint, inspection, or otherwise, a lessor is found to be renting out their property above the 20 percent for metro, or 30 percent for regional requirements, the lessor is at risk of being disqualified from the annual incentive for a period (in years) decided by The Housing Authority on a case-by-case basis;

- (a) in this situation, the Landlord should be ready to compensate the tenant due to unnecessarily high rent payments whilst under the WAHAS scheme.

**35. New Affordable Properties**

Alongside the buyback of NRAS properties, the government will commit to the allocation of an additional 5,000 properties to the WAHAS, at an estimated cost of \$476 Million;

- (a) this transition will occur over the course of 10 years, starting in 2025, and ending in 2035.

**Division 2 — Support for First Homeowners Amendments**

**36. Changes to the Dutiable Value of Properties Requirements**

- (1) The First Homeowner Rate of Duty will be changed so that;
  - (a) if the dutiable value of the property or vacant land does not exceed \$620,000, no duty is payable;
  - (b) if the dutiable value of the property or vacant land does not exceed \$800,000, a duty is payable of 50% of the original duty cost;
  - (c) property or land valued at more than \$800,000 will not receive a stamp duty exemption.

**37. Eligibility for First Homeowner Rate**

- (1) For applicants to be eligible for the FHOR, they must;
  - (a) be over the age of 18;
  - (b) have at least one individual who is applying be an Australian citizen or permanent resident;
  - (c) occupy the property as the principal place of residence (PPR) for at least six continuous months within 12 months of settlement or constructing a home;
  - (d) only purchase property as a trustee if buying for someone with a legal disability.

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**Part 5**                    Establishing The Western Australian Housing Affordability Scheme

**Division 2**            Support for First Homeowners Amendments

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- (2) Applicants must not have:
- (a) received an FHOG in any Australian jurisdiction;
  - (b) owned residential property anywhere in Australia before 1 July 2000;
  - (c) owned residential property after 1 July 2000 that you used as the principal place of residence (PPR) before 1 July 2004; or
  - (d) owned residential property after 1 July 2000 that you used as the principal place of residence (PPR) for at least six continuous months after 1 July 2004.

## **Part 6 — Increasing Market Competition**

### **Division 1 — Vacant Housing Transition Scheme**

#### **38. Criteria for Assessment of Vacant Housing**

- (1) A property will be declared vacant provided:
  - (a) the dwelling consumes zero litres of water (0L) over a consecutive two-year period;
    - (i) data to be derived from Water Corporation of WA.
  - (b) the dwelling is not listed for short-term rental accommodation;
  - (c) a building permit lapses and is not renewed after a two-year period;
    - (i) cooperation with the Building Services Board; under the authority of the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation, and Safety required.
  - (d) the owner is not on an informal caregiver mission;
  - (e) the owner is not within formal care institutions.
  
- (2) Assessment of dwellings with this criterion to be conducted after a two-year period minimum.

#### **39. Intermediary Period of Vacant Declaration Entitlement**

- (1) After the two-year period is met a dwelling can be listed as a vacant dwelling;
  - (a) this can be contested by the property's owner within the period of six months after the vacant dwelling entitlement is made.
  
- (2) If the entitlement is contested by the owner or executor of the estate, the owner or executor must show cause as to why the vacant property should not be declared vacant;

- (a) if the contestation is successful, the vacant dwelling entitlement is lifted;
- (b) the timeframe of two-years will then reset.

**40. Vacant Dwelling Liveability Transition**

After the entitlement is made on the dwelling it will be assessed as to whether it reaches the National Construction Codes (NCC) and the Australian Standards for Construction.

**41. Private Market Transition**

- (1) If the vacant dwelling complies with the National Construction Codes and Australian Standards for Construction, it will be placed on the private market;
  - (a) the vacant dwelling will be valued by Landgate;
  - (b) once the property is evaluated it will be listed on the market at 25% under the evaluated amount.
- (2) Once the dwelling is sold any profit from the sale will be distributed to the Community Housing Grants Program.

## **Part 7 — Protections for Urban Tree Canopy and Vegetation**

### **Division 1 — Establishing the State Urban Forest Program**

#### **42. Establishment of the State Urban Forest Program**

- (1) In the State Urban Forest Program, private landowners will be encouraged, through grants, to plant new or preserve existing native vegetation on their private land in Western Australia;
- (2) The State Government will aid private landowners who commit to planting and maintaining native vegetation on their private land through;
  - (a) site assessments to establish the suitability of land for growing vegetation;
  - (b) recommendations for species selection and planting techniques;
  - (c) guidance on long-term maintenance.
- (3) The program will organize workshops and initiatives to educate the public about conservation efforts and sustainable native vegetation management, encouraging community participation;
- (4) The State Government will allocate funding for grants to private landowners who commit to planting and maintaining native vegetation on their private property. Grants shall be determined based on the size of planted land, species planted and predicted environmental benefits.
  - (a) the first 1000 private property owners will be fully reimbursed for the sum of money for the complete planting of the native vegetation on their private land but not for the maintenance of the native vegetation;
  - (b) for the first 3 months after the commencement of the Urban Forest Program, private landowners who can prove their commitment to planting or preserving and maintaining native vegetation will be reimbursed for all

the money spent on the maintenance of the native vegetation;

- (c) if the sum exceeds \$500, the private landowner will have 50% of the money reimbursed.

**43. Annual Report on State Urban Forest Program**

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation shall publish an annual report on a public forum on the Urban Forest Program, which outlines;

- (a) number of private landowners participating in the program;
- (b) number of native vegetation planted since the program's establishment;
- (c) the geographic distribution and species composition of native vegetation;
- (d) social, environmental and economic impacts of the Urban Forest Program;
- (e) recommendations for the betterment of the Urban Forest Program.

**44. Funding**

The state government shall provide the necessary funds to enact and sustain the Urban Forest Program. The Department of Water and Environmental Regulations may seek additional funding by, but not limited to;

- (a) grants;
- (b) private donations; or
- (c) partnerships with non-profit organizations.

## **Division 2 — Vegetation Registry**

### **45. Local Council-Based Registry on Private Land**

- (1) All Local Government Areas in Western Australia must create a registry of all the data collected from willing private landowners who have planted native vegetation on their private land, in Western Australia, after the establishment of the Urban Forest Scheme;
- (2) Local councils will use ground surveys to catalogue the native vegetation, documenting specific data for each vegetation, including:
  - (a) scientific and common name;
  - (b) distribution;
  - (c) population;
  - (d) health status;
  - (e) growth stage;
  - (f) notes on habitat.
- (3) The registry shall:
  - (a) Be reported biannually and maintained by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation;
  - (b) Have an online database where the public can access the registry.