



Minister for Transport; Planning

Our ref: 72-24706

Mayor Tracey Roberts JP
President
Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA)
PO Box 1544
WEST PERTH WA 6872

(For the Attention of all Mayor's and CEO's of Local Government Authorities)

Dear Mayors and CEOs,

REQUEST TO COUNCILS ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As the impacts of COVID-19 continue to impact our day-to-day functions, it is vital that we work together to do everything we can to support our communities over the weeks and months ahead.

The pandemic is disrupting the way businesses and service providers ordinarily operate and is creating new challenges that require changes in community behaviour. We have noted that over the past week some retailers, supermarkets and other businesses are struggling to meet the unprecedented consumer demand we are experiencing. On the other end of the scale, there are industries being impacted by the challenges brought about by COVID-19. It is vital local businesses are afforded every opportunity of support to withstand the economic headwinds ahead.

To this end, on behalf of the State Government I would like to ask your local government to use their discretionary powers and planning processes to both promote development and support businesses during this uncertain time. Specifically, I would encourage all local governments to fast-track the assessment of development applications for non-controversial developments to support the creation of jobs. An example of this could be a pragmatic assessment of change of use proposals to promote development and flexibility in application of car parking requirements to encourage new business activation.

Equally Councils across the State can support their communities through this period by adopting a flexible approach to enforcement and compliance actions for servicing and supply of supermarkets during the period.

I encourage Councils to continue to maintain open lines of communication with important service providers including retailers and suppliers as this situation evolves as new issues and challenges arise.

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- 2 -

It is important that we all work together during this exceptional period to respond to this evolving situation. The WA Government is committed to supporting you so you can continue to effectively assist your communities as we deal with the challenges ahead.

If you or your teams have any questions in relation to the planning response to COVID-19 please contact the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage's Kathlene Oliver on 6551 9211.

Your Sincerely,



**HON RITA SAFFIOTI MLA
MINISTER FOR PLANNING**

25 MAR 2020