

# Local Government Reform

**Commitment:** The Nationals WA oppose forced local government amalgamations while supporting local councils working together to provide services to their communities.

## Background

The Nationals WA have stood firm with regional West Australians in opposing forced local government amalgamation. We recently expanded our position to include metropolitan local governments after the former Minister for Local Government implied that regional councils would be next.

However, we know that for some local governments working with their neighbours allows better provision of services for residents. The Nationals in Government supported the addition of a “regional subsidiaries” model into the Local Government Act 1995.

## Regional subsidiaries

The enactment of “regional subsidiaries” legislation has been championed for many years by The Nationals WA with Shane Love MLA introducing a Bill in the last Parliament supporting the model prior to the introduction of Government legislation.

The “regional subsidiaries” model ensures local governments can achieve economic sustainability while maintaining local identity and providing the services that their residents require.

## How it works

Councils can pool their resources, and with the approval of the Minister for Local Government, form a subsidiary body to provide a service or activity.

This allows two or more local governments to work together to undertake activities such as waste and environmental management, tourism and marketing opportunities, infrastructure delivery, resource sharing and in seeking grants for regionally significant projects.

The subsidiary is a body corporate and has a charter to govern who can be a member – including people with relevant external experience.

So now it is easier for regional local governments to get the benefits of working together while maintaining their individual community character.

## The Nationals WA position

We remain opposed to the forced amalgamation of local governments and will continue to work with local governments to ensure that any voluntary reform – such as resource sharing – can be accommodated.

**The Nationals WA welcome your feedback on this policy:**

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*for Regional WA*