

Three city centres for Sydney recognises growth but infrastructure needed

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The new vision for Sydney as being three city centres at the Sydney CBD, Parramatta and the Western Sydney airport is a good response to the Sydney's growing population, but infrastructure must support the three city centres, says the Urban Taskforce.

"Clearly Sydney has grown dramatically over the last 200 years from its original centre and the emerging focus on Parramatta as the second CBD is very appropriate," says Urban Taskforce CEO, Chris Johnson. "The third city around the proposed Western Sydney airport could become an 'aerotropolis' accommodating new and emerging industries, which will provide jobs for the growing population of Western Sydney. This would be best facilitated through the use of flexible zoning which allows new and innovative industries to take advantage of the location close to the airport and other key transport links"

"The most important requirement to ensure the growth of Parramatta - the second city will be the timely provision of infrastructure, particularly the public transport, to connect the cities across the metropolitan area. Parramatta will need a new metro rail connection back to the Sydney CBD to relieve the over-crowded Western heavy rail line and to connect to the Sydney Olympic Peninsula. This may require a rethink of the proposed light rail project."

"The third city at the Western Sydney airport will also need good infrastructure including a rapid transit metro rail system. The Western Sydney Rail Needs Scoping Study, produced by the Federal and NSW Governments, outlining the various options is a good beginning for this."

"Importantly the emerging cities will need to be mixed use dynamic cosmopolitan environments that permit significant height and density. This will require negotiations with the Federal Government on how aviation standards are interpreted, which can limit the height of buildings in certain areas. If other global cities like New York can accommodate tall buildings around their airports, Sydney should be able to match this."

"Global cities like Sydney experience issues with housing affordability and funding infrastructure. It is essential the implementation of the Three Cities approach to Sydney encourages additional housing supply and looks to long-term sustainable funding mechanisms for infrastructure, such as land taxes."

"The 'Three Cities' of Sydney opens up the possibility of much more growth and density, concentrated on these three areas, connected with timely and efficient transport links. The future prosperity of Sydney depends very much on the success of this strategy, and key to this success is ensuring that the planning system is flexible enough to allow development around this areas to happen in an efficient and timely manner."

*The **Urban Taskforce** is a property development industry group, representing Australia's most prominent property developers and equity financiers.*

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