

Housing delivery positions a good beginning for Sydney's housing crisis

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The advertising of seven new positions to drive housing delivery by the Department of Planning and Environment is a good first step to help Sydney's housing crisis, says the Urban Taskforce.

"The new positions of a Director and six Managers for Housing Delivery advertised by the NSW Government are a good beginning to tackling Sydney's housing crisis," says Urban Taskforce CEO, Chris Johnson. "The Urban Taskforce have called for a NSW Commissioner for Housing Supply to unlock large housing projects caught in the NSW planning system so we are pleased to see these new roles being advertised. Our concern though, is whether these positions will have enough authority to have an impact across all government agencies."

"The Urban Taskforce has asked its members for examples of large housing projects caught up in the planning system and we have received details of around 40 projects that represent 40,000 new homes in brownfield and greenfield sites. Many of these projects are languishing waiting for government agencies to resolve road, traffic and infrastructure issues. Delays can add significant costs to a project with some holding costs being as high as \$500,000 a month. Most of these projects are on sites nominated by the state government for growth through Priority Precincts, corridors or urban activation zones."

"It is good to see that the new housing delivery positions will be 'identifying and removing blockages to the supply of housing including affordable housing'. There are many areas in the planning system that are slowing down supply including a lack of coordination between government agencies, excessive levies, confusion with council amalgamations and more precautionary approaches to re-zonings and planning proposals."

"The Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey for 2017 has nominated Sydney as the second most unaffordable city in the world above Vancouver and Auckland and below Hong Kong. Clearly significant government action is required to help increase housing supply in order to address the housing affordability crisis."

"The New Zealand government has set an excellent example and initiated the Auckland Housing Accord, a program to tackle the housing crisis in Auckland. Sydney could learn from the range of initiatives the Accord covers. These include a Housing Action Plan, the identification of Special Housing Areas which are identified for fast-track development and a proactive Development Programme Office."

"The Urban Taskforce has identified a range of initiatives to drive quicker production of housing for Sydney and we are keen to work with the NSW Government on ways to improve housing delivery and increase housing affordability"

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

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