

Media Release

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Federal Budget Must Not Neglect Urban Infrastructure

The Urban Development Institute of Australia's (UDIA) Federal Budget Submission states that investment in urban infrastructure must be a priority for the Federal Government in its upcoming Budget, as inadequate funding and poor planning are contributing to poor social, economic and environmental outcomes for the nation.

"Australia's roads and other urban infrastructure are struggling to keep up with population growth and other pressures in our major cities." said UDIA National President Julie Katz. "Without significant new investment in infrastructure, congestion and lack of access to critical services threatens to damage Australia's productivity and quality of life."

UDIA's Budget Submission recommends the Government explore alternative opportunities for funding infrastructure, such as tax increment financing and public private partnerships (PPPs), in addition to providing incentives for State Governments to better manage their urban growth.

UDIA also calls for the retention and expansion of existing federal housing initiatives such as the National Housing Supply Council (NHSC), the Housing Affordability Fund (HAF), and the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS), which recently received its last round of funding.

"The NRAS program has been a highly successful affordability initiative, and the industry has welcomed the latest round of funding" said Ms Katz. "However we don't believe that the program should conclude after this latest round, and call on the government to make a commitment to continue support for NRAS and other housing programs in the Federal Budget".

Other issues raised by UDIA in its budget submission were unfair taxes and charges such as stamp duties and developer levies that adversely affect housing affordability.

"Unfair and inefficient government charges can account for as much as 30% of the cost of a new home" said Ms Katz. "We're calling on the government to undertake a review of unfair developer charges, and to remove stamp duty in favour of fairer and more efficient taxes such as the GST.

For further information or comment, please contact:

Julie Katz, UDIA National President – jkatz@tpgvic.com.au, 0413 307 030