

Media Release

Wednesday, November 27, 2013

Housing must keep up with Population Growth

The peak association representing Australia's development industry says new ABS figures highlight the critical need to improve the supply of land and new housing as well as increase investment in new urban infrastructure.

The figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics project Australia's population will double to 46 million people by 2075.

Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) National President Cameron Shephard said that Australia's economic productivity and the quality of life in our cities will be threatened if infrastructure and housing provision do not keep up with population growth.

"Our population is going to grow enormously over the coming decades, which will bring fantastic economic benefits for Australia and provide new opportunities for our society. It is essential however that we manage that growth sustainably, by ensuring we are well prepared to provide the new homes, roads, schools, public transport and other community infrastructure that those additional people will need."

"Failure to do so is likely to worsen existing congestion and housing affordability problems, threatening both the quality of life in our cities, as well as Australia's economic productivity."

"It is vital that the new Federal Government increases its focus on urban policy and Australia's cities, and that the recent abolition of bodies such as the National Housing Supply Council does not negatively impact on this vital area of economic and social policy. The ABS figures clearly show that as a nation we need to be putting more resources into planning and managing the growth of our cities, not less."

"Australia already suffers from a chronic housing shortage of several hundred thousand dwellings. Addressing the existing shortage as well as the additional demand caused by population growth is a major challenge for our policy makers."

UDIA is calling on both state and federal governments to work together to ensure there is better planning, greater land release, and more investment in critical urban infrastructure to support Australia's population growth.

"If governments improve planning and ensure that adequate land, housing, and infrastructure is provided, population growth can be sustainable and to the benefit of both the economy and broader community" concluded Mr Shephard.

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