

20 June 2024

Ms Sue Higginson  
Chair NSW Portfolio Committee No.7 – Planning and Environment  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000

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**Re: Inquiry into the Development of the Transport Oriented Development Program**

Dear Ms Higginson

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Portfolio Committee – Planning and Environment. I write in response to the Questions taken on Notice during the Hearing.

*The Hon. Mark Buttigieg asked what further information is required by the Committee. It is presumed The Hon. Buttigieg meant Council rather than Committee.*

At the time of the public hearing Councils had yet to be advised of the housing targets they had been allocated and the timeframe they had to undertake the necessary planning to deliver them. This information is critical to ensure appropriate consultation with communities and planning. This information was made available to Councils on 29 May.

Councils are also keen to ensure that supporting infrastructure and services are delivered alongside increased housing density. This includes transport services, essential services (including waste), employment opportunities and adequate provision of supporting utility, transport, health, education, community and recreational infrastructure. Government has yet to release regional plans that provide vision and direction for strategic planning and land use to support the increased population.

While government has committed \$520M to provide community infrastructure in the TOD precincts, there is no clarity on how it will be allocated or certainty of funding to individual councils. This lack of clarity also applies to the distribution of funds collected by government under the recently introduced Housing and Productivity Contribution. Funding certainty and the provision of supporting infrastructure is critical to ensuring the liveability of our communities.

*The Hon. Jacqui Munro asked about the resourcing of councils and town planners and whether government should have a team that can provide extra capacity to councils to deal with DAs, and to work with developers and the community.*

Council planning staff are highly skilled and best placed to understand the local context in which they operate and make decisions. Rather than seek extra capacity from a government team, it is our view that council strategic planning teams could provide valuable insight to government staff that have become disconnected from decision making on the ground.

*The Hon. Peter Primrose asked for a list of priority infrastructure and services.*

NSROC is currently in the process of developing a list of priority infrastructure for the region and will share that list with the Committee when it is approved. More broadly NSROC is keen to ensure that supporting infrastructure and services are delivered alongside increased housing density.

Increasing the region's population without sufficient planning will lead to negative impacts such as increased road congestion and an inability to meet demands for recreational spaces. It will exacerbate the strain on our already under pressure health, education, childcare and aged care facilities.

NSROC councils were deeply disappointed with government's recent decision to withdraw \$36m funding for a critical sports facility at Westleigh Park. This is in direct conflict with [NSROC's Review of Supply and Demand for Sport's Facilities](#) which demonstrates the need to increase the current supply capacity of NSROC sports facilities by 40% by 2026 (181Ha) and 49% by 2036 (222Ha) to meet minimum projected population growth in the area.

NSROC acknowledges the housing crisis and agrees that new housing capacity should be well located with access to services and public transport. A strategic approach to managing population growth is needed to ensure that essential services, utilities and infrastructure including water, sewerage, waste collection and community facilities are expanded to be able to cope with the increase in demand.

If you require further information, please don't hesitate to contact Dr Meg Montgomery on  
or at

Yours sincerely

Mr Steven Head  
Chair NSROC General Managers Committee  
Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils