

20 December 2019

In reply please quote reference: **A5356610**

The Hon. Richard Wynne
Minister for Planning
Level 16, 8 Nicholson Street
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Dear Minister

Re: Ministerial Advisory Committee on Planning Mechanisms for Affordable Housing

We, Mayors across Melbourne, write this joint letter to urge you to introduce mandatory planning mechanisms for affordable housing in Victoria.

Across our municipalities, we are seeing more and more people unable to find safe, secure accommodation. As the level of government closest to the community, we hear first-hand of our communities' housing struggles and their concerns for the future.

We see increasing numbers of persons sleeping rough on our streets. We know parents are sleeping in cars with their children. We see the renters in our community facing a lifetime of insecure and unaffordable housing, facing high levels of housing stress and unable to enter home ownership.

Across Victoria, there are more than 80,000 people waiting for social housing. Demand for affordable housing is growing, and far exceeding supply. We need 3,000 new social housing dwellings every year, for the next 12 years, to respond to demand. In recognising the required solutions are many and complex, we believe that the planning system has a critical role in addressing the scale of this crisis.

We acknowledge the work of the State Government in seeking to address this critical issue. The recent legislative reforms to define affordable housing and embed the delivery of affordable housing as an objective of the planning system are positive and a welcome first step. We also welcome the establishment of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Planning Mechanisms for Affordable Housing, which will deliver its report to you this month.

However, it is evident to us that existing tools in the planning system alone will not meet affordable housing demand. These tools rely on voluntary agreements with developers, and in practice have proven to be unpredictable, uncertain, and ineffective. We cannot rely on these tools to provide the housing Victoria needs.

All of our councils have taken action to address the housing crisis: by funding homelessness prevention and response programs; using our land and assets for the delivery of community housing, by negotiating with developers to secure affordable housing; or by setting up housing trusts. We are limited in what we can do, but we do it anyway.

We call on you as Minister to introduce controls that mandate the delivery of affordable housing by private developers through the planning system. This must be done in a way that is broadly applied, equitable, flexible, transparent, and is phased in its introduction. We urge you to consult with councils and other key stakeholders in introducing these controls.

We are united in our call, and in our conviction to act in response to the housing crisis. We call on you to provide us with the tools to get more affordable housing built in our communities.

Yours sincerely



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Cr Georgina Oxley
MAYOR
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Cr Clarke Martin
MAYOR
Bayside City Council



Cr Peter Lockwood
(Knox City Council)
Chair Person
Eastern Affordable Housing
Alliance



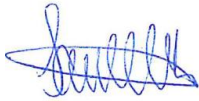
Cr Colleen Gates
MAYOR
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