

MEDIA RELEASE

Embargoed: 12am, Friday, 26 February, 2021

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS VITAL TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY

An aggressive agenda to fund and build infrastructure projects needed to boost the livability and productivity of major cities and regions will be essential to Australia's recovery from the economic effects of COVID-19, according to the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA).

UDIA National – the nation's peak organisation for the urban development industry - has welcomed release of Infrastructure Australia's latest Infrastructure Priority List.

The addition of 44 new proposals shows there is clear demand for investment in transport, water, energy, and social infrastructure.

"The list represents a blueprint for the projects that federal, state and local governments should be targeting for investment and delivery," said UDIA National President, Simon Basheer.

"The 44 new proposals comprise a mix of infrastructure assets and network enhancements that are essential in sustaining and supporting the growth of our cities.

"We need to go further, however, and ensure the infrastructure planning is matched by the strategic land use and housing supply especially at the State and local government level, that can complement the projects.

"The prioritisation of projects should include analysis of the associated land use and housing opportunities to maximise the dividend from investments made by government and the private sector.

"That is why UDIA National has recommended an Infrastructure Accord to insulate the identification, funding and delivery of major projects from politics.

"It would bring a truly bipartisan approach to the prioritisation of projects and better ensure the stability of funding decisions.

"There is no time to waste, given Australia still confronts a difficult path to recovery from the economic effects of COVID-19.

"New housing construction has been a central pillar to efforts so far – thanks to the Government's *HomeBuilder* initiative and record low interest rates.

"Accelerating the funding and delivery of major infrastructure projects on the list would add to the tools available to governments to foster a sustained recovery.

"UDIA National also urges governments to properly scrutinise the trunk infrastructure needs of housing development opportunities that emerge from the list, particularly transport and major lead in services infrastructure projects.

"This would ensure we can create a more robust pipeline of new and diversified housing stock to keep pace with population growth and demographic demands."

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