



POSITION STATEMENT

ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS AND INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Definitions

The Australian Bureau of Statistics defines a person as experiencing **homelessness** if they do not have suitable accommodation alternatives and their current living arrangement:

- is in a dwelling that is inadequate;
- has no tenure, or the initial tenure is short and not extendable; or
- does not allow the person to have control of, and access to, space or social relations.

This definition includes people living in supported accommodation for the homeless; living temporarily with other households; living in severely overcrowded dwellings; and those who are rough sleeping.

Rough sleeping describes people who are sleeping without shelter in locations which are not designed for habitation. This includes people sleeping in parks and other public areas; potentially in tents, cars or buildings not designed for housing.

Social housing refers to rental housing for people on low incomes which is managed by either the State Government's Housing Authority or a community housing provider.

Affordable housing generally refers to housing which is subject to eligibility and affordability requirements (such as housing with subsidised rentals, or owner-occupied housing provided under a subsidised loan or shared equity scheme). However, an affordable housing product can also be provided by the private market outside of these eligibility requirements.

Background

The State Government's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030 recognises that ending homelessness requires a whole of community response. Different levels of Government, the community services sector, businesses and individual community members all have different but important roles to play.

The City supports this position, however, believes that primary responsibility for addressing homelessness rests with the State Government. In this regard, the City welcomes the State Government's decision to consolidate the portfolios of Planning, Lands, Housing and Homelessness under a single Minister to enable a more coordinated response to homelessness across multiple government departments.

The City believes that the State Government should set targets for social and affordable housing in the metropolitan area with the aim of ensuring the provision of such housing occurs equitably across all local government areas.

The City has a strong track record of developing under-utilised land it owns for residential purposes. Many of these developments have occurred in the City's established suburbs where land is relatively inexpensive. These developments have provided opportunities for low-income families and first homebuyers to purchase land to build new homes.



The City wishes to continue with the development of under-utilised land to provide affordable housing options in the City and seeks the cooperation of the State Government to enable this to occur.

COUNCIL'S POSITION

1. Council is committed to supporting efforts to address homelessness by:
 - a. Developing appropriately located City-owned land for affordable housing.
 - b. Supporting innovative housing proposals such as small house developments.
 - c. Ensuring the Planning Scheme enables the development of a range of dwelling types and does not present impediments or disincentives to the development of affordable accommodation.
 - d. Supporting local community organisations responding to homelessness and housing affordability challenges by ensuring that their programs are eligible for support through the City's Community Funding Program.
 - e. Seeking State and Commonwealth Government grants to construct affordable housing.
 - f. Providing information on, and referral to, support services for those suffering from hardship or homelessness in Gosnells.
 - g. Providing information on the law around homelessness and begging.

2. Council calls upon the State Government to:
 - a. Set targets for social and affordable housing in the metropolitan area with the aim of ensuring the provision of such housing occurs equitably across all local government areas.
 - b. Expedite a decision on the City's proposal to undertake a residential subdivision at Hester Park in Langford which would include land suitable for affordable housing.
 - c. Develop land it owns in Corfu Way, Maddington, which is close to the Maddington Train Station and a District Activity Centre, for affordable housing as a matter of urgency.
 - d. Construct affordable housing on other vacant State Government land within the City.
 - e. Consider opportunities to expand temporary accommodation options through appropriate amendments to the Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Act.