

MEDIA RELEASE

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Master Builders and Property Council Call for Best Practice Planning

On Thursday 1 October, the MBA and the Property Council will jointly run an election debate, titled *'Property, Planning and Politics'*, putting a spotlight on planning, with the Canberra Liberals, ACT Labor and ACT Greens, set to discuss the critical nature of planning policies in the current COVID-19 induced recession

Today, both industry associations are outlining the detail of their planning policies and calling on all candidates in next month's ACT election to implement a best practice planning system which is outcomes focused, to support growth, delivers infrastructure where and when we need it, and makes Canberra the lifestyle destination of choice.

Master Builders ACT CEO Michael Hopkins said, "The 2020 ACT election has been characterised by a focus on policies which create jobs and support the ACT's economic recovery out of the COVID recession. The planning system is a key tool that the ACT Government has control over, which can help drive the economic recovery.

"In recent times both industry and community stakeholders agreed that the ACT's planning system is in desperate need of reform, which means that the ACT has entered the COVID recession with a planning system that is more likely to hinder than help the economic recovery," Mr Hopkins said.

ACT Executive Director of the Property Council of Australia, has called for a more detailed planning strategy which is closely linked to population projections, "We are calling on all political parties to be focused on implementing a planning system which drives population growth to secure our future," Ms Cirson said.

"Without growth we will not have a strong economy, even the RBA has observed that population growth is a key reason our economy has experienced higher average growth than in many other advanced economies.¹," Ms Cirson said.

Mr Hopkins said, "Housing policy has been hotly debated by Labor, Liberal and Greens' candidates, however none of the major parties appear to understand that the planning system needs to deliver housing types which meet the requirements of our future community, where and when we need it – not just issue arbitrary housing targets set by politicians, which don't have a plan to see them delivered.

"Housing policy needs to deliver a diversity of housing including single detached housing, a range of medium density housing options, and high density housing planned along infrastructure corridors such as stage 2 of the light rail corridor."

¹ Reserve Bank of Australia, Statement on Monetary Policy, November 2019.

Ms Cirson said, “Time is money, and inefficient and costly planning systems increase the cost of housing and reduce choice for Canberrans, for our not only growing but ageing population. We need to ensure our city is geared to deliver the outcomes we need.

“That includes fast track planning reform. What we learnt during the GFC was that while government projects were important, they did not match the job creation potential of private construction, and we must act to identify critical projects to aid our recover and create jobs and get them through the planning system.”

Mr Hopkins said, “All Canberrans have high expectations about the ACT’s planning system, and as a planned city, we expect that infrastructure spending be directed towards infrastructure that will support the cities long term growth plans.

“It is time for a root-and-branch overhaul of the ACT Planning and Development Act, Territory Plan and development assessment processes,” Mr Hopkins concluded.

View the Property Council’s election priorities [here](#).

View Master Builders ACT’s election priorities [here](#).

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Authorised by Michael Hopkins on behalf of Master Builders Association of the ACT.

