

MEDIA RELEASE

Infrastructure Australia report highlights Melbourne tipping point for planning

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The report shared by Infrastructure Australia today about the future of Victoria and Melbourne places the city's livability conditions at the forefront of issues facing our state," Radley de Silva, CEO Master Builders Victoria, said. "We are at a tipping point in planning for the city we want to have."

"The message is clear: we need to follow the recommendations of the independent agencies that have been tasked with solving our urban development challenges," Mr de Silva said, "and not allow elected officials to waste time and money spinning their wheels for political posturing."

We need more allegiance and adherence to this independent advice because it takes the long view of Victoria's and Australia's populations as unified communities who need to live and work together, not ones that are divided along party lines," he said.

"It is sadly ironic that recommendations made by such independent bodies—done for the benefit of all—don't carry more weight," Mr de Silva said. "Everyone suffers that waste of research and data."

Mr de Silva outlines a shortlist of actions that must be taken at this 'watershed' moment.

"If the best aspects of Melbourne and Victoria are to thrive instead of atrophy, we need to see critical infrastructure projects not just planned but made shovel-ready," he said. "That means transportation infrastructure as well as schools, aged-care centres and hospitals, too."

"We need an overhaul of the planning approvals process among councils to make them efficient and objective—not beholden to the whims of a small number of political constituents who have a knee-jerk resistance to change of any kind."

"We need to densify our neighbourhoods by focusing on those that are established and have access to transportation corridors, to avoid sprawl and spreading infrastructure resources ever thinner."

"Building and construction is now Victoria's biggest full-time employer, and that reflects the huge demand for what our industry is asked to deliver," Mr de Silva said. "We certainly need a building and construction minister who can spearhead the delivery of critical projects and the necessary work force to deliver on the building needs of our rapidly growing population."

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