



Talking to candidates for local government elections?

Contacting your local councillors?

Ask them what they will do about homelessness!

“Local governments influence the private housing market through their planning and development control decisions, have strong connections to the local community, and are well positioned to facilitate a ‘whole of government’ approach to housing outcomes. Despite this, councils in Australia have traditionally been unwilling to recognise the housing impacts of planning decisions, or to assume a proactive role in shaping housing outcomes” *AHURI, 2004*

**Affordable housing is everyone’s problem, and all levels of government have a role to play in finding solutions**

## **Affordable housing: What can local government do?<sup>1</sup>**

- Develop a local housing strategy that analyses supply and demand, identifies groups in housing need and recommends actions
- Develop partnerships with state government on housing

### **Planning schemes**

- Review controls to ensure they provide for a variety of housing types.
- Planning scheme should require adaptable housing design
- Specific mechanisms in planning scheme to retain and promote affordable housing.
- Planning incentives/negotiation/requirement to levy developer contributions for affordable housing

### **Encourage community housing**

- Identify suitable sites for community housing development/spot purchase.
- Planning assistance to streamline community housing development assessment process
- Donation of funds or land for the development of community housing.
- Establishment of a trust fund for community housing ventures.

### **Providing or partnering to provide community housing**

- Contributing to community renewal processes in collaboration with social housing providers.
- Joint venture community housing/affordable housing initiatives
- Establishment of a not for profit housing company, in partnership with state government.

### **Advocacy and information**

- Housing advisory committees or reference groups involving community stakeholders.
- Media releases about the need for affordable housing.
- Maintaining local data about housing issues
- Charter or policy statement outlining council commitment to safe, secure, affordable and culturally appropriate housing.
- Educating developers about more appropriate and environmentally sustainable housing types.

### **Community development/service provision**

- Services for homeless people, residents of caravan parks and independent living units
- Co-ordinating services for low income disadvantaged social, public and private housing tenants.
- Grants/rate relief to sustain financial viability of low cost accommodation.

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<sup>1</sup> This fact sheet is based on Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Policy Bulletin ISSUE 35 February 2004  
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