

**4 March 2024**

## Local government role in housing supply critical to success

Ahead of the Lord Mayoral debate, the state's leading housing and homelessness peak has revealed the proactive and preventive approaches that local governments can adopt to help remedy unmet housing need and homelessness.

In letters addressed to mayoral and councillor candidates across all 77 of Queensland's local government areas, Q Shelter outlined the key role local councils can play in solutions to homelessness, planning levers for strategic housing supply, and partnerships with community housing providers.

Q Shelter's Executive Director, Fiona Caniglia, says Queensland's housing challenges are well-documented and each tier of government plays a vital and interconnected role in the facilitation of housing supply, diversity, affordability, and future planning.

"Local governments are engaged with people at all points of the housing crisis, from planning processes and supply, local regulations on short-term rentals, or front-line contact with people experiencing homelessness through the management of public spaces and council facilities," says Ms Caniglia.

"In terms of public attitudes and response to homelessness, they are also key to engagement with the broader community. They often field local concerns about visible homelessness, the welfare of those experiencing homelessness and the community concerns about housing diversity and density.

"In playing such a vital role, we have proposed the consolidation and expansion of Public Space Liaison Officer (PSLO) roles across the local government sector connected to housing, homelessness, health, and other human services.

"We would also like to see the development of an integrated 'Housing and Homelessness' strategy to align the work across local government and industry in a place-based framework."

Ms Caniglia says local government planning schemes and measures are crucial for successfully implementing housing supply strategies, particularly in interpreting population targets into land supply and planning schemes for Queensland.

"Some Councils have adopted progressive planning system reforms, however there are additional levers that will help achieve supply where it is needed and as quickly as possible," says Ms Caniglia.

“These include fast-tracked approval processes for social and affordable housing projects and ensuring land supply and housing targets are aligned with population projections for the region.

“Councils could also consider further regulating short-term rental accommodation to incentivise the retention of housing in the private rental market.”

Ms Caniglia says in Queensland, local governments display leadership, innovation, and partnerships, particularly with community housing providers, whose expanding role is due to increased funding opportunities from both state and federal governments.

“Local governments could consider discounts on development application fees, infrastructure charges and rates for social and affordable housing projects.

“To effectively address both current and future housing needs, it’s crucial to identify suitable land and sites for affordable housing projects and to adopt targets aligned with those needs and based on recent modelling by AHURI on current and future needs.”

Q Shelter is available for comment on the housing and homelessness solutions that local governments should consider for 2024. Fiona Caniglia will be attending the Brisbane Lord Mayoral debate at the Queensland Media Club on Thursday 7 March, and will be available to speak to media.

**ENDS**

### **Media comment**

Media enquiries: Melinda Burton on 0400 740 067

Q Shelter Communications Team: 07 3831 5900 [comms@qshelter.asn.au](mailto:comms@qshelter.asn.au)

### **About Q Shelter**

For over 35 years, Q Shelter has worked as a peak body to improve housing outcomes for Queenslanders. Over this time, we have remained an unwavering voice for solutions through advocacy, strategic engagement and capacity building.

Besides influencing solutions and policy, Q Shelter provides professional development and shares resources to assist other organisations to be effective, so that our combined capacity to respond to housing need is strengthened.