



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## NEW PLAN FOR CITY FAILS TO DELIVER FOR NORTHERN SYDNEY

The State Government is preparing a Metropolitan Strategy to accommodate Sydney's growing population. On Thursday last week, the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, Craig Knowles, released a Discussion Paper which will form the basis of the Department's consultation with the community. The Northern Sydney Region of Councils (NSROC) believe that the process is a positive step but remain concerned that the detail is missing and the needs of their communities are not being addressed.

"This Discussion Paper proves that the government is committed to planning for Sydney's future and we welcome the Minister's stated intention of providing long term guidance on where new suburbs should be built and how development can be better integrated" stated the President of NSROC and Mayor of Willoughby, Councillor Pat Reilly. "However, like the Ministerial Directions Paper released in May 2004, this offers no detail on how planning will be achieved in our region and how growth in our communities can be accommodated without sacrificing quality of life".

"While the Discussion Paper identifies the need to get the balance right, the key directions for managing change are all focused on regions outside Sydney, new release areas, and areas in Western Sydney which the state government has identified as needing urban renewal and job creation. The north of Sydney barely rates a mention and my concern is that there is an assumption that we have everything we need, yet we are expected to accommodate more and more people."

"The Discussion Paper makes no new commitments to transport infrastructure, does not identify what will replace the current government policy of forced urban consolidation, and has not addressed our issue of declining commercial occupancy rates as companies move from established centres like Chatswood and North Sydney to cheaper sites in the city's west. We house a large part of Sydney's so-called global arc, the area that generates wealth and jobs for the city, but this can not continue without a long term government commitment to providing infrastructure to enable our region to remain efficient and competitive."

"There has not been much consultation with councils to date" added the NSROC President. "We had a two day conference in June and that was about it, but I still accept the Minister's word that this will be a genuine partnership between the state government and local communities."

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