

Experts to review city housing to make Sydney more affordable

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Lord Mayoral candidate Councillor Angela Vithoukas has promised a roundtable of experts within 100 days of being elected to develop a comprehensive long-term strategy to address housing affordability in the City of Sydney.

Cr Vithoukas, leader of the Sydney Matters Independent Team, said the roundtable would bring together the best and brightest economists, urban planners, developers and community leaders to review the City of Sydney's current planning, economic and social services policies.

She said this was the best solution to ensure the City's future was sustainable and affordable.

Cr Vithoukas said she was concerned by recent reports that suggest affordability only continues to worsen.

"We have recently seen the City propose a new plan for Sydney that will restrict housing supply into the future, despite supply being identified as one of the solutions that can ease the massive affordability crunch," Cr Vithoukas said.

"According to [forecast.id](#) the number of new dwellings to be built in the City of Sydney in 10 years will be 60% less than what it is today, with new builds being cut to a quarter in 20 years.

"We need to get all the issues on the table. We need to review planning proposals such as the Central Sydney Planning Strategy while it is still in draft phase to determine the potential impacts it will have on future housing stock.

"We also need to review what role the City of Sydney can play in reducing the costs of housing stock, review the community engagement processes in determining the future of the city and identify council owned property that could increase housing options."

Cr Vithoukas said the issue was one of great significance yet it had received inadequate action from any of the three tiers of Government.

"The fact that Sydney was ranked as the world's second most unaffordable city last year, with the income-to-house price multiple climbing to 12.2x from 9.8x, is a major issue that needs urgent attention of the City," Cr Vithoukas said.

"In recent years there has been an 82 per cent fall in the number of lower income households living within a 10 kilometre radius of the city – this is not healthy in many ways.

"By being unaffordable, we are discouraging a diverse and sustainable community, we are moving lower income earners further away from their jobs, lengthening their commute times and adding to congestion of our streets.

“We need to start driving change that will reverse the current situation instead of making token efforts and finger pointing at the other levels of Government as we have seen by the City of Sydney’s current administration.

“It’s not good enough that the City had a stakeholder summit to consider solutions and 18 months later we still have nothing to show for it.

“While it is an issue that is the responsibility of all three levels of Government, I am not prepared to sit back and wait while more and more of Sydney’s diverse community are forced further out of the city.”

“Sydney Matters is about bringing a fresh new independent voice to the table and will do what it can to drive that change and work in consultation with the other two tiers of Government to address this issue in a way that benefits the whole of Sydney.”

Clr Vithoukaskas said Lord Mayor Clover Moore and Liberal challenger Christine Forster have failed to present a solid array of policies for the future of the City of Sydney.

In contrast, the Sydney Matters Independent Team has released comprehensive policies promising the upgrade of parking technology, appointment of a Night Mayor to re-invigorate the city, plans to help entrepreneurs with start-up businesses and plans to reduce the appalling level of homelessness in Sydney.

“The current Lord Mayor has wasted years and millions of dollars while the city has languished in terms of the technology that can make our city smarter, safer and easier for businesses, of all sizes, to operate in,” Clr Vithoukaskas said.

“It’s also become clear that the Liberal party candidate, Christine Forster, has simply been mimicking or amplifying a number of the Sydney Matters policies without providing very much details. Virtually nothing original has come from the Liberal party.”