
Affordable housing for key workers



What we need

An increase in the density and dwelling typologies of affordable housing in new and established areas for essential workers with low and moderate incomes.

Why

Currently, there are no federal or state government housing programs or policies specifically designed to support key workers' access to housing. Delivery of affordable, sustainable housing choices for low- and moderate-income earners more broadly has been limited by lack of enabling legislation and consistent funding.

In Victoria, initiatives to provide key worker housing are also inconsistent across LGAs. Housing affordability, whether renting or purchasing, is a challenge for many in the north because of escalating house prices and other barriers to affordable housing and diversity of dwelling type.

As demand outstrips supply, more people across Melbourne's north undertake a long commute between home and places of work and activity centres, predominately by car. This includes key workers in service occupations such as health, education and emergency services, who often need to travel long distances to their places of employment or are faced with having to relocate. This may also require an increase in public transport investment to ensure easier movement of workers.

Provision of affordable housing for key workers will unlock growth opportunities for businesses that are struggling to recruit staff. It also means there will be a larger labour catchment to support workforce requirements.

From a social construct, ensuring that affordable housing is strategically targeted at key workers and accessible to employment precincts will help increase the social capital and resilience of communities and benefits to the economic sustainability of a range of industries.

Programs designed to support key workers must apply both the key worker definition and an income threshold to determine eligibility.