

More Homes More Opportunity



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WE WILL REWARD THE BUILDINGS THAT ARE DESIGNED THE BEST

More homes mean more opportunity – and more beautiful, well-designed buildings. That’s why the Allan Labor Government is going all-in on townhouses and apartments that are affordable to build and will stand the test of time in quality, design, aesthetics and sustainability: grand designs, without the grand cost.

Minister for Planning Sonya Kilkenny and Member for Albert Park Nina Taylor visited the *Ferrars & York* six-storey apartment building in South Melbourne today to announce a turbocharged plan for Victoria’s future homes that will drive a new era of affordable architectural heritage in this state. The plan will compel good design by:

- Rewarding affordable, well-designed buildings – and the developers who put in the effort to build them – by granting them a fast track through the planning system
- Expanding the ‘design book’ of great designs by including existing buildings that have made a mark and are loved by residents and the community
- Letting Victorians have their say for the first time on how Victoria’s streetscapes and buildings should look
- Building real life examples of ‘design book’ homes on government-owned land so Victorians can see and feel them – and then move in

All homes are beautiful, but the system shouldn’t be set up to reward buildings that detract from Victoria’s stand-out history of architectural diversity or won’t stand up in quality or sustainability.

This plan will drive change: flipping the script to promote, reward and speed up the construction of townhouses and apartment buildings that look great on the outside – and feel solid as a rock on the inside.

Rewarding the best and most affordable designs with a Great Design Fast Track

The Government will introduce a new, fast-tracked pathway for buildings with homes that meet the test of build quality, good design and sustainability – so developers can build better homes without the additional costs and delays associated with projects that might look a bit ‘different from the norm’.

The *Great Design Fast Track* will be developed by the Minister for Planning to focus on townhouse and apartment projects of three to six storeys in height. It is intended to apply statewide and work in a similar way to the current Development Facilitation Pathway (DFP) that exists for more significant housing projects.

As with the current DFP, locals would retain the right to know what’s going on and have their say. The DFP accelerates a project through that system, giving confidence to developers that their cost-sensitive projects won’t get stuck in an expensive state of limbo.

Through this fast track, Victoria can give a stronger arm to architects and developers who put in an effort and take on more personal risk by building projects that look great and add lasting value to streets and communities. They should not be punished by a culture that quashes creativity and sustainability.

Some of the best designs are already built – let’s celebrate them and build more of them

The Government will expand its *State Design Book* of ‘future homes’ – projects that are planned on paper alongside artists’ impressions but don’t yet exist – by welcoming into its pages the best examples of good, affordable designs that are already in the ground, home to Victorians and loved by locals.

While the Government is producing such a design book, which is still on track for completion by the end of 2024, the book will be more useful through the inclusion of high-quality developments that are already complete – at a scale up to 6 storeys. It will be a showcase of great buildings that were realistic and viable to deliver.

Eligible designs will be required to encourage sustainable, family friendly and accessible homes, with communal spaces and gardens. Examples of homes that *could* feature include the beautiful Balfe Park Lane, which delivered 72 one, two, three and four-bedroom apartments with a big communal backyard in East Brunswick.

The design book will also establish best practice principles and guidance for well-designed apartments and townhouses – to guide developers and give communities confidence about the long-term quality of new homes.

You can have your say on Victoria’s future suburban streetscapes

The design book will also be thrown open to the public for them to nominate great buildings they live in or love – which they think meet the good design criteria and deserve to be replicated across the state.

Never before have Victorians had this kind of say on the future architectural ‘look and feel’ of their streets, other than through the power of their own purchase.

We will secure government-owned land for ‘display homes’ of great design

The Government will also help to get these well-designed buildings in the air by securing government-owned land for innovative ‘demonstration’ developments to stand on.

The developments will have to demonstrate high quality design, liveability and sustainability, including modern methods of construction. This will be built into the expression of interest process for industry.

Victorians can also have a chance to explore these buildings – and see and feel the future homes of their state – because the Government will throw upon the doors. The demonstrator buildings can then go on to become homes for Victorians to buy or rent.

All these reforms build on the Better Apartments Design Standards introduced by the Labor Government to fix the mess left by the Liberals when they were last in power and approved thousands of poor-quality homes.

The reforms included the introduction of design standards, so apartments had access to natural light and outdoor space. Government will also reviewing current design standards to see how they can be strengthened further.

These are just some of the announcements the Government is making for more homes, more opportunities and better communities. To read more about the Government’s plans for more homes and more opportunity, visit vic.gov.au/more-homes.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Planning Sonya Kilkenny

“The community deserves affordable buildings that look great on the outside and feel solid as a rock on the inside. Our plan is for more grand designs but without the grand cost.”

“We have an incredible opportunity before us to renew our suburbs and streets with well-designed apartments and townhouses that are great for singles, families and downsizers – and which add to the architectural fabric of our state.”

Quotes attributable to Member for Albert Park Nina Taylor

“Our community has so many wonderful examples of good, solid and stunning buildings that are accessible for buyers and renters on different budgets – that’s exactly what we want more of.”