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City centre revitalisation must be priority for new planning and development bodies

Canberra Business Chamber is largely supportive of the new governance structure for urban renewal and land development introduced by the ACT Government today, but says consultation with stakeholders will be key to the new entities achieving their aspirations.

“Strategic and cohesive management of land release and urban renewal is vital to Canberra’s continued development as a modern, vibrant and liveable city,” Canberra Business Chamber CEO, Robyn Hendry said.

“We must continue to encourage investment and growth in our region. For the ACT, land sales and property development are major economic drivers, but they must also deliver social benefits. Remember at the heart of it all, we are talking about building places for people to live, work and play.”

“Therefore, coordinated planning is important to ensure all aspects are considered in decision-making.”

Canberra Business Chamber has long called for revitalisation of the city centre because it will contribute positively to local business growth, economic diversification, and attracting visitors to Canberra.

“We are pleased the City Renewal Authority’s role will include a focus on encouraging and promoting a vibrant city through the delivery of design-led, people-focused urban renewal, and encouraging and promoting social and environmental sustainability,” Ms Hendry said.

“City centre revitalisation is critical to Canberra’s positioning on the global stage and we support efforts to improve the presentation and vibrancy of this area.”

The Chamber believes it will be important for the Boards of the new bodies to understand the local context, while bringing in new thinking from outside the ACT.

“Canberra Business Chamber would like to meet with the new Boards once they have settled in to provide briefings on our priorities for the city,” Ms Hendry said. “For nearly three decades we have been actively listening to what locals, particularly local businesses, want from urban development. This makes us well placed to help the Boards determine the projects that would provide the best return for the ACT.”

“It will be of great interest to the Chamber to monitor how the Directorate responsible for planning, land and environment supports the objectives of the newly created bodies. Particularly, in regard to delivering high quality design, planning and social outcomes.”

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