

# Getting to Yes:

## OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO AFFORDABLE FAMILY HOUSING IN THE INNER CITY

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A project funded by the University of Melbourne 'Carlton Connect' initiative, the Urban Development Institute of Australia, Places Victoria, and the City of Melbourne, with the support of the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development, Housing Choices Australia, the Planning Institute of Australia, SGS Economics and Planning, and MGS Architecture

The social, economic and environmental advantages of providing a range of housing in the established parts of Melbourne have been recognized by successive state planning policies. However, these policies have largely failed to convince the development community to expand beyond a high-density one- and two-bedroom apartment model in the central city area, with 3+ bedroom units remaining an expensive, niche product restricted to the 'top' of buildings.

A number of reasons for this policy implementation failure have been posited, including higher construction costs for multiple unit housing, an absence of an integrated metropolitan planning approach to affordable housing, inadequate funding for social housing, the lack of supportive planning policies (inclusionary zoning, density bonusing), longer investment time-frames and higher risks/uncertainty in the inner city, and cultural barriers to children growing up in inner city flats.

**However, research in several North American and European cities suggests that inner city renewal that provides affordable family housing is possible, in planning and governance regimes relatively similar to Australia.**

### WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?

This project seeks to answer the question: What are the major barriers to creating family friendly affordable housing in inner Melbourne, and how might these barriers be overcome?

In order to do this, the project researchers and partners will examine what form 'family friendly' housing may take, what 'affordable' housing means in the context of the inner city, and what market, industry, and institutional forces shape the current mix of housing options within the City of Melbourne's local government area.

An important focus of the research is the dynamics of the different actors that constitute the supply-side providers of housing in central Melbourne: planners, private developers, and non-profit housing providers. Together, we are investigating how the housing industry can incorporate ideas from international best practices.

### WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

The research project involves industry representatives from local and state government, the development and property institute peak bodies, social housing and not-for-profit housing providers, and researchers from the fields of planning, social geography, architecture, urban design, and quantity surveying from the University of Melbourne.

### HOW WILL THE RESEARCH BE USED?

The research will suggest options for the private development industry, housing associations and planners to realise a greater diversity of housing form and tenure in the central city area.



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Image: Ole Fryd



Architecture Planning Interior Design



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