



# MAYORAL MEMO - 6 APRIL 2022

Is there such a thing as having a good problem? If we wanted to celebrate an exciting achievement with our children and we couldn't decide which exceptional restaurant to visit it would sound like a good problem. Before the Boxing Day Test Match in 1995, the Australian Cricket Selectors had to decide which one of two players to drop from the previous Test. They had to choose either Stuart Law, who scored 54 not out on debut or Ricky Ponting, who was out for 96 on debut. That sounds like a good problem for a selector.

Dubbo has a good problem at the moment but, nonetheless, one I would like to solve. Too many people want to live here!

Evocities launched in September 2010 with a message to metropolitan areas. Make a move to a regional city, such as Dubbo, where a higher quality of life awaits you and a wide range of opportunities exist for personal and professional growth. In various other forums, regional leaders have extolled the virtues of regional living.

It would appear that the message is getting through.

In the latest data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the population

in regional Australia grew by 70,900 but people living in capital cities decreased by 26,000. This is over a one-year period. Of the regional growth, Dubbo did particularly well with 3,297 new residents or 4.7 per cent of the total regional growth in Australia. When you consider Dubbo only comprises 0.21 per cent of the total population in the nation, you realise just how impressive that population shift is.

For years we have been shouting to the world that people should move to Dubbo and now that people are listening, we need somewhere for them to live. And therein lies our problem complete with an additional exacerbator.

Our current population is 54,044 people. If that was our population in 1911, at a national average of 4.5 people per household, that would have required 12,010 houses. By 1966 the number of people per household had reduced to 3.47. Dubbo would have then required 15,575 dwellings. Jump forward to 2016, the latest date where we have accurate information, and the average is down to 2.61. With the same number of Dubbonians, we now need 20,707 places for us to live.

With more people wanting to live in Dubbo and fewer people residing in each household, it seems somewhat obvious what our problem is. Not enough housing! And that is not an easy problem to solve. More housing blocks, higher-density housing and taking advantage of existing planning laws to utilise current spacious yards will all figure in the mix. These all take time and city-dwellers want to move here now.

With the population growth not showing any signs of decline, tell me your solution for more housing at [mayor@dubbo.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mayor@dubbo.nsw.gov.au)

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**Mayor of Dubbo Regional Council**

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