



MAYORAL MEMO - 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

When I was first elected as Mayor of Dubbo City Council in September 2011, I was approached by several people from our development community who expressed frustration with the development landscape in Dubbo. They wanted their developments to be approved in less time because time was money. I took these concerns to our General Manager and spoke with our development staff, and there was some frustration expressed by our staff with the thoroughness of the applications being submitted which required multiple rounds of submissions – therefore delaying the process. I am not a fan of “he said, she said” and I would rather have items sorted head-on so I decided the best solution was to put developers and our staff in the one room and have an open discussion. The first Mayoral Developers Forum was held in December that year.

I have told the story about our forums at metro conferences and I have had a response of horror from Councillors present. I have been told that putting developers and development staff in the one room together is just asking for corruption. On the contrary, I think having an open and transparent discussion with a room full of people, including Councillors,

would expose any corruption very quickly. Besides, I am not sure if anyone would be silly enough to hand over a brown paper bag with 80 people in the room!

The primary aim of the forum is to facilitate better conversations and strengthen relationships across the development industry. Ultimately we have Councillors, developers and our development staff who all want to see Dubbo grow and progress. Each of the three groups may have a slightly different focus but Dubbo is the ultimate winner with good development.

The next forum is being held on Wednesday 13 September at the Western Plains Cultural Centre from 5.30pm. If you are involved in any way in the development industry in Dubbo, you are invited. That includes banks, solicitors, architects, builders and everyone else that is crucial to make development occur.

The forum provides updates on current progress of different strategic plans in the region as well as some updates on individual projects. More importantly, the forum serves as a melting pot of idea and strategies and facilitates discussions and networking amongst people involved in the overall industry.

Our current housing shortage is a major issue and this is a topic that is being worked on by Ministers and governments at both the State and Federal level. If there was an easy solution, we would no longer have the problem, but this is a tough problem and will be solved by multiple small changes rather than one single action. Addressing this issue requires the engagement and involvement of all stakeholders.

By sharing expertise and insights, we lay the groundwork for a prosperous future for Dubbo.

Councillor Mathew Dickerson

Mayor of Dubbo Regional Council

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