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Premier of NSW

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Treasurer

Rob Stokes

Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

MEDIA RELEASE

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ACCELERATED PLANNING PROJECTS TO DELIVER JOBS AND BOOST THE ECONOMY

Thousands of new homes, new industrial complexes and six schools are among the first wave of projects that will have their assessments fast-tracked to boost the State's economy and create opportunities for thousands of new jobs in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian, Planning and Public Spaces Minister Rob Stokes and Treasurer Dominic Perrottet have today announced the first 24 projects to undergo a fast-tracked assessment process as part of the NSW Government's new Planning System Acceleration Program.

"By fast-tracking assessments, we will keep people in jobs and keep the construction industry moving as we ride out the COVID-19 pandemic and set our sights on economic recovery," Ms Berejiklian said.

The 24 projects identified in the first tranche of fast-tracked assessments have the potential to:

- Create almost 9,500 new jobs during construction and once complete;
- Inject \$7.54 billion into the State's economy;
- Deliver more than 325,000 square metres of new public open space, parks and environmental conservation lands; and
- Allow more than 4,400 new homes to be built, including more than 1,000 social and affordable homes.

Mr Stokes said decisions will be made on the first tranche of projects within the next four weeks.

"This will mean shovel-ready projects can get underway and the construction pipeline can continue to grow," Mr Stokes said.

"If approved, these projects will be a win-win for NSW: delivering jobs for today, and local community and business benefits tomorrow."

"It's important to note that this is not a greenlighting exercise, the same stringent checks, balances and community consultation that ensures transparency, public benefit and merit-based assessment of projects remain."

The criteria to identify and progress projects through a fast-tracked assessment

process has also been released.

To be considered for a fast-tracked assessment, the development application (DA) or rezoning must already be in the system, deliver a public benefit, demonstrate an ability to create jobs during construction and once complete, be able to commence construction within six months (for a State Significant Development application or State Significant Infrastructure application) or allow a DA to be lodged within six months (for a rezoning).

The criteria has been formulated by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment in consultation with government agencies and key industry groups. A probity advisor will continue to oversee and report on the fast-tracked process to ensure it is transparent and robust.

Mr Perrottet said additional projects that fit the new criteria would go through the fast-tracked process, with further tranches to be announced.

“We know our planning system will be a key lever in driving investment in NSW as we come out of this crisis,” Mr Perrottet said.

“NSW already has the country’s biggest infrastructure program and we need to do what we can now to make sure that continues.”

Fast-tracking project assessments is one of the key pillars of the NSW Government’s Planning System Acceleration Program that will create opportunities for more than 30,000 jobs by the end of September 2020.

Other elements of the Program include a new one-stop shop for industry, clearing the backlog of cases stuck in the Land & Environment Court and investing \$70 million to co-fund vital new community infrastructure in North West Sydney.

To view the fast-tracked assessment criteria and list of projects visit www.planning.nsw.gov.au/fast-tracked-assessments.