

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Inequity and missed opportunity, not just growing pains, the issue for outer suburbs**

The National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA) has today released the *State of Australia's Fast-Growing Outer Suburbs* report showing growing inequity in infrastructure investment affecting the lives of five million Australians living in growth areas.

“Australia is a suburban nation and will continue to be so as population growth rates soar. Five million of us live in the fast-growing suburbs on the outskirts of our capital cities. We produce 13% of Australia’s jobs and 11% of GDP.

“We need to stop the inequity of those suburbs generating 35% of population growth and 25% of job growth between 2011-16 but only receiving 13% of infrastructure investment,” said Ruth Spielman, Executive Officer of the NGAA.

Income disparity, unemployment, educational attainment and health indicators in Australia are all heavily impacted by postcode. The fast-growing outer suburbs have a lot of catching up to do – possible with the right policy and funding support.

The *State of Australia's Fast-Growing Outer Suburbs* shows that these areas are in economic transition, with rapid growth in medium and high technology jobs. But at present, population growth is outpacing jobs and infrastructure growth. Local economies and communities are trying to respond to the growth levels, but can only achieve so much on their own.

Ms Spielman said that although fast-growing outer suburbs are punching above their weight when it comes to the Australian economy and population, Government policy and investment has not kept up. She noted that there is massive opportunity which is being squandered.

“Our fast-growing outer suburbs provide homes to a high percentage of Australia’s migrant intake, and every week we celebrate the birth of thousands of babies. We provide homes for CBD workers and pay taxes which finance CBD transport. We also provide jobs and services for people in neighbouring regional areas.

“Programs such as City Deals show promise but we need a dedicated policy focus and infrastructure funding mechanism to overcome the infrastructure backlog and to build suburbs and jobs of the future,” she said.

“The opportunity to divert attention towards the burgeoning population and economy of the fast-growing outer suburbs is there for the taking. By doing so, the Federal Government can choose to address some of the greatest inequities in modern Australia.

“We need to stop funding inequality where there is marginal gain and start funding where it will make a real difference – the population growth hotspots in Australia’s fast-growing outer suburbs,” Ms Spielman said.

The *State of Australia's Fast-Growing Outer Suburbs* is available at [www.ngaa.org.au/research-and-submissions](http://www.ngaa.org.au/research-and-submissions)

**Media Contact: Ruth Spielman 0407 324 178 or Bronwen Clark 0448 401 257**