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## **Outer Suburbs key to Australian Cities Policy**

National Growth Areas Alliance Executive Officer, Ruth Spielman, has been appointed to the Cities Reference Group, convened by Assistant Minister for Cities and Digital Transformation, The Hon, Angus Taylor MP.

In welcoming her appointment to the Group, Ms Spielman said the level of population growth, particularly in outer suburbs, means cities policy is of major importance.

“For Australian cities to function better, the growing outer suburbs need jobs and services closer to home and they need to be better connected to other parts of their city. There is a massive backlog in these areas and residents experience nightmare commutes getting to and from work. We need to do better.

“The ‘forgotten middle child’ between Australian inner cities and regions, communities in growing outer suburbs want a better quality of life through more public transport, better road connections and access to essential services.

“Cost of living for the five million residents of Australia’s growing outer suburbs is a key concern, and affordable housing is just one component,” she said.

The National Growth Areas Alliance advocates for a stronger government focus on the needs of fast-growing outer suburbs, currently home to 5 million people. The Alliance’s 21 member councils are calling for dedicated funding for critical infrastructure and services for outer growth areas, and for all levels of government to commit to assisting outer suburbs reach their full potential.

“New and growing areas on the outskirts of Australia’s capital cities offer opportunities to build the outer suburbs and jobs of the future. Let’s not squander it.

“I look forward to bringing an outer suburban perspective to these important discussions and to policies and investments that will result in fairer and more resilient cities,” Ms Spielman said.

The Cities Reference Group will hold its first meeting on 26 April, 2017.

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