




Speech By
Michael Healy

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Housing Construction Jobs Program

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.23 pm): This month we have observed Homelessness Week. During that week I took the time to inspect two new department of housing building sites in Cairns and saw firsthand our Housing Construction Jobs Program in action. The Palaszczuk Labor government is backing its commitment to reduce homelessness with an investment of more than \$54 million in Cairns alone to build new homes for people in need. The Housing Construction Jobs Program will deliver 137 new homes, creating approximately 31 construction jobs each year in Cairns until 2022.

Since 2017 contracts have been awarded to commence 97 new homes and we now have tasked Bryant Building Contractors to deliver another 56 in the Cairns region. Importantly, these projects create jobs in our local construction industry. In Westcourt, 14 new one-bedroom homes are expected to be completed by June 2020 supporting 120 construction jobs at a cost of \$4.68 million. The new housing projects will be place based to deliver the type of property that will best help manage housing demand in priority regions.

For most locations, growing demand is for smaller, more accessible properties, usually one- or two-bedroom apartments. Regardless of the style of development, new homes will be located in areas of economic and community growth close to critical infrastructure, transport, employment and education opportunities. Construction will start at a new Cairns city site in October to deliver 42 one-bedroom homes. These homes will provide enhanced accessibility for residents, with level thresholds, wider hallways and extra clearance spaces making them particularly suitable for people who mobilise in wheelchairs.

Importantly, project bank accounts will be used on these projects to ensure subcontractors are paid in full on time for the work they do. The Palaszczuk government is also investing \$13.7 million to fund 20 specialist homelessness services in the Cairns region. These services will provide tailored support to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to help build their capacity and to connect them to the relevant community support networks. They include mobile outreach services, food trucks, community kitchen upgrades, drop-in centres and backpacks containing essential supplies.

Following the introduction of the Queensland Housing Strategy in June 2017 the Palaszczuk government's efforts to provide safe, secure and sustainable homes through building more social housing have supported more than 1,544 industry jobs for Queenslanders and generated a broader economic impact, supporting more than 7,500 contract and trade opportunities.