

# Media Release



5 February 2009

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## CUT IN LOCAL COUNCILS SUPPORTED

The Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) welcomes state government moves towards the voluntary reduction in the number of individual Councils in WA.

UDIA is responding to today's announcement by Local Government Minister John Castrilli regarding local government reform.

"There are a number of local government's struggling to meet the demands of increasing residential development activity in their area," UDIA CEO Debra Goostrey said.

"Due to their size, location, as well as a lack of resources or qualified staff, many local governments cause delays to development during the planning approvals process."

"Delays in the approvals process are a major contributor to the affordability crisis that hit the WA housing market in 2007 and we expect that voluntary amalgamations will consolidate resources and allow for a more strategic approach to development," Ms Goostrey said.

"Whilst the industry has been subdued over the last 12 months - the UDIA December quarter figures released today show a 28.5% increase in land sales," Ms Goostrey said.

"The market recovery will put pressure on the approvals system so it is essential that the Government focuses on reform to avoid future land shortages."

**Ends.**

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