

Townsville ideal as the second State capital

TOWNSVILLE'S continuous population growth, continued development and urban growth make the northern city a valid candidate for Queensland's second State capital.

Recently released population data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) lends support to the premier Anna Bligh's recent suggestion that Townsville could be the second State capital in a plan to shift some of the enormous growth in the south-east corner of the State to the regions.

The estimated resident population of the Townsville City Local Government Area ballooned to reach 181,743 as at June 30, 2009. Growth from 2008 to 2009 was a huge 5606 people, reflecting a growth rate of 3.2 per cent.

PRDnationwide Townsville director Paul Bow said this information reflected the strength of the Townsville residential property market.

"Population growth of this magnitude really underpins the sustainability of the Townsville residential property market," Mr Bow said.

"Population growth is a key driver of dwelling demand and this latest data indicates that the demand in Townsville is well and truly there.

"Furthermore, this information provides investors with confidence knowing that population growth equates to continuing rental demand and is also conducive to solid capital growth."

In a breakdown by Statistical Local Area (SLA) — the smallest geographical area that the data is available for — the strongest growth between 2008 and 2009 was experienced in the Oonoonba-Idalia-Cluden SLA with a change of 10.3 per cent (455 people), followed by Mt Louisa-Mt St John-Bohle with a change of 9.2 per cent (626 people), then Condon-Rasmussen-Bohle Basin with a change of 7.9 per cent (1960 people) and Kelso with change of 4.6 per cent (449 people).

"It's no coincidence that the high growth areas are on the urban fringes where a range of new subdivisions are being developed," Mr Bow said.

"Growth in established areas is limited to infill development and/or an increase in density, which we have witnessed in areas such as the CBD and South Townsville with unit development."

Mr Bow said Townsville had no shortage of flat land suitable for residential development.

"We have the hard and soft infrastructure in place or being developed to support an expanding population, therefore we welcome the Premier's suggestion that the regions, including Townsville, are well placed to absorb some of the rapid growth that Queensland is experiencing and alleviate some of the pressure off the south-east corner of the State."

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