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# Build up, not out says researcher

• Housing

By AMY BLOM

West Australians continue to favour low-density homes according to research released last week but the City of Gosnells has bucked this trend and moved towards medium housing density.

The Bankwest housing density report showed approvals for stand alone homes in WA had increased by 38.2 per cent over the past year, while approvals for medium density homes, including town houses and units, only increased by 18.2 per cent over the same period. This was in contrast to the City of Gosnells, which saw a slight decline in separate housing in favour of medium housing.

City of Gosnells chief execu-

utive Ian Cowie said the city had been encouraging higher density living, particularly in central Maddington, which would take advantage of transit links as well as commercial, employment and educational opportunities.

“Higher density living provides an opportunity for more services to be located closer to people’s homes, which reduces time and costs associated with travel,” he said.

“Areas with a vibrant mix of activity can also generate a sense of community and identity.”

Senior research fellow at Curtin University’s sustainability policy institute Jemma Green said housing developments similar to the planned development in Maddington were what other local government areas should be aiming

for to curb urban sprawl.

“Every new suburb of low density housing that is built comes with huge problems,” she said.

“It is actually really expensive to do because you have to build new roads and amenities and everything.

“Ideally we should be building up rather than out and the developments would be best suited going along transport developments.”

“I think people in Perth are just used to sitting in transit because they live in low density housing far away from where they work.

“But if we actually built well designed urban spaces things would change.”

**What do you think? Should we build up or keep building homes? Email [editorial@examinernewspapers.com.au](mailto:editorial@examinernewspapers.com.au).**