



**Minister for Housing and Local Government
Honourable Maciu K. Nalumisa**

**Parliament
Government Buildings
SUVA**

Thursday, 01 October 2026

Written Questions 246 of 2026:

Hon. Jovesa Vocea to ask the Minister for Housing and Local Government - Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following;

- (a) the number and estimated value of major development projects facilitated during the 2025-2026 financial year;
- (b) explain the measures introduced to improve turnaround times and co-ordination between the Department, municipal councils and relevant infrastructure agencies when considering major development proposals; and
- (c) measures undertaken to ensure that planning approval processes support investment while maintaining proper planning, infrastructure and development standards.

The information requested relates to major development projects approved during the period 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2026, together with the measures being implemented by the Department of Town and Country Planning (DTCP) to improve coordination, turnaround times, transparency and accountability while maintaining proper planning, infrastructure and development standards.

(a) Major Development Projects Approved - August 2025 to July 2026

For the period 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2026, DTCP facilitated the approval of 124 major development projects across the Central, Western and Northern Divisions, with a combined approved development value of approximately FJ\$1.231 billion.

Division	Major Developments Approved	Approved Development Value
Central	72	\$757,572,139.00
Western	38	\$395,846,072.61
Northern	14	\$77,485,333.00

Division	Major Developments Approved	Approved Development Value
TOTAL	124	\$1,230,903,544.61

These approvals covered a broad range of development activity, including tourism and accommodation, commercial and mixed-use development, residential development, warehousing and logistics, institutional development, utility infrastructure and industrial development.

(b) Measures to Improve Turnaround Times and Co-ordination

Mr. Speaker Sir, the Department recognises that major development proposals often require coordinated technical input from a number of infrastructure and utility agencies, particularly in relation to water and wastewater capacity, electricity supply, road access, traffic impacts and other supporting infrastructure.

To improve coordination and reduce unnecessary delays, DTCP has instituted fortnightly coordination meetings with key infrastructure and utility agencies, including the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA), Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) and Energy Fiji Limited (EFL), together with other relevant agencies where required.

These meetings provide a structured forum for agencies to consider major proposals collectively, identify technical requirements at an early stage and provide comments and proposed conditions for incorporation into the planning assessment and approval process. This reduces, as far as practicable, the need for the Department or the applicant to engage separately and sequentially with each agency before the assessment can be completed.

The coordination meetings also enable DTCP to assess the infrastructure implications of a proposal at an early stage, including:

1. the availability and capacity of water supply;
2. wastewater and sewerage infrastructure capacity;
3. the availability and adequacy of electricity supply;
4. road access and the capacity of the surrounding road network;
5. the likely impact of the development on traffic flow and road safety; and
6. any infrastructure upgrading or other conditions required to adequately support the proposed development.

This coordinated assessment is particularly important for major developments because the Department must consider not only whether the proposed land use is appropriate, but also whether the surrounding infrastructure has sufficient capacity to support the proposed scale and intensity of development.

Coordination with Municipal Councils

DTCP also works closely with the relevant municipal councils, recognising their important role as the first point of lodgement and referral in the development approval process.

The Department maintains regular engagement with municipal councils to identify and discuss critical and major development proposals, clarify referral requirements and ensure that applications requiring DTCP consideration are forwarded to the Department in a timely manner.

Municipal councils have been reminded that major development applications should not be held unnecessarily where referral to DTCP is required. DTCP officers remain in regular contact with councils to follow up significant applications, clarify documentation requirements and resolve procedural matters that may otherwise delay referral and assessment.

This engagement also enables DTCP and municipal councils to discuss complex or significant developments at an early stage and to address issues before they become avoidable administrative delays in the statutory process.

The Department also maintains an internal five-day turnaround target for major development matters once all information and documentation necessary for assessment have been provided.

Rezoning Master Tracker and E-Register

The Department has also established a master tracker and e-register for rezoning applications as an additional case-management and monitoring tool. The e-register provides a consolidated view of each application and records key dates, its current status, outstanding actions and the office or authority responsible for the next step.

By enabling DTCP and municipal councils to monitor the movement and ageing of rezoning applications against relevant processing timelines, the

e-register strengthens transparency and accountability on both sides. It allows delays and outstanding actions to be identified early, supports timely follow-up and reduces the risk of applications remaining unattended at any stage of the process. This initiative complements the Department's regular engagement with councils and the wider reforms being undertaken to improve the development approval system.

Prime Minister's Office Investment Taskforce

The Director of Town and Country Planning also participates in the Investment Taskforce coordinated through the Office of the Prime Minister.

The Taskforce provides a whole-of-Government mechanism for significant development and investment matters involving several agencies to be considered collectively. Where progress is being affected by a planning, regulatory, infrastructure or inter-agency issue, DTCP works with the responsible agencies to identify the outstanding requirements and establish an appropriate pathway for resolution.

The Department has assisted in resolving development matters through this process so that projects capable of meeting the relevant statutory and technical requirements can progress in a timely manner.

The Taskforce does not replace or dilute any statutory approval requirement. Its purpose is to improve coordination and resolve matters that can properly be addressed so that compliant development and investment are not unnecessarily delayed by administrative or inter-agency issues.

Building Permit Approval System (BPAS)

A further significant reform is the Building Permit Approval System (BPAS), which will complement the Department's existing coordination and tracking measures.

BPAS is intended to provide an integrated online platform through which municipal councils, DTCP, infrastructure and utility agencies, regulators and other relevant stakeholders can participate within a common approval workflow.

The remaining relevant regulations and legal requirements are being progressed for clearance through the Office of the Solicitor-General before the system proceeds to full online implementation.

Once BPAS is operational, it is intended to enable:

- a) electronic lodgment and management of applications;
- b) applicants to track the status and progress of their applications;
- c) municipal councils, DTCP and relevant technical agencies to participate within a common system;
- d) referrals, comments and approval conditions to be managed electronically;
- e) greater visibility of which agency has responsibility for the application at each stage;
- f) clearer monitoring of agency responsibilities and processing timelines; and
- g) improved transparency and accountability throughout the approval process.

Once operational, BPAS is expected to strengthen coordination, transparency and accountability across the approval process and significantly reduce avoidable processing time by giving applicants and agencies clearer visibility of application status, outstanding actions and processing timelines.

(d) Supporting Investment while Maintaining Planning, Infrastructure and Development Standards

The Department's approach is to facilitate investment while maintaining compliance with the relevant planning legislation, approved planning requirements, infrastructure standards and development controls.

The planning approval process should provide investors and development proponents with a clear and timely pathway for consideration of their proposals, while ensuring that approved developments are properly planned, can be adequately serviced and do not impose unacceptable impacts on existing infrastructure or surrounding communities.

Pre-Consultation with Proponents

A key measure actively promoted by DTCP is pre-consultation with proponents of major developments and/or their authorised agents before formal lodgement through the relevant municipal council.

The Department encourages proponents and their professional advisers to engage with DTCP at an early stage to discuss the development concept, applicable planning requirements, the information and

documentation required for assessment, likely infrastructure requirements and any technical reports or assessments that may be necessary.

The purpose of pre-consultation is to ensure, as far as practicable, that submissions are complete, properly prepared and in order before formal lodgement through the relevant municipal council.

Incomplete submissions, missing technical information or unresolved planning matters can lead to requests for further information and extend processing time. Early engagement therefore gives proponents greater clarity at the outset and enables potential planning and infrastructure issues to be identified before significant time and resources are committed to the formal assessment process.

Maintaining Standards While Facilitating Investment

The measures outlined in part (b) support this objective by introducing greater visibility, coordination and accountability throughout the approval process. Regular engagement with municipal councils and the rezoning e-register support timely referral and monitoring of applications, while the fortnightly technical meetings enable infrastructure constraints to be identified and addressed early.

Where infrastructure matters can appropriately be addressed through works or conditions of approval, those requirements are incorporated into the consent. Where substantive issues remain unresolved, they must be addressed before development proceeds. This ensures that development and the infrastructure required to support it progress in a coordinated manner.

The Prime Minister's Office Investment Taskforce provides an avenue for cross-agency issues affecting significant investments to be resolved without displacing statutory or technical requirements. BPAS, once operational, will further strengthen this framework through digital tracking, clearer agency responsibilities and improved visibility of processing timelines.

The guiding principle is facilitation with compliance. DTCP seeks to remove avoidable administrative delays and provide a clear and predictable approval pathway while ensuring that developments remain properly planned, adequately serviced and compliant with applicable laws and standards.

The Ministry will continue to work with municipal councils, infrastructure agencies, other Government stakeholders and development proponents to improve the efficiency, transparency and accountability of the planning approval process while maintaining proper planning and development standards.

ENDS