



THE COUNTRY MAYORS ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

"What we want is nothing more than equity"

MEDIA RELEASE

COUNTRY MAYORS SEE RED

The Country Mayors Association of NSW is shocked to learn that Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, The Hon Catherine King MP, has chosen to put the red pen through major regional projects in NSW that have been committed for many years.

CMA Chairman, Mayor Jamie Chaffey, said 35% of the 50 projects nationwide scrapped are in NSW alone and the decision to abandon them will put the safety of road and rail users at significant risk, and have a dramatic impact on productivity in Regional and Rural communities.

"Financial sustainability of our Councils, coupled with a strong focus of maintaining rates, fees and charges at an affordable level for our residents are all under threat with the announcement from the Labor Government that all future Commonwealth funding will require a 50% contribution from Local Government for any joint project. Historically, most projects have been funded at a rate of 80% Commonwealth and 20% Local Government." Mayor Chaffey said.

The recent release of the Federal Government's Infrastructure spending review brings with it a disheartening revelation for the Ballina Shire and the Northern Rivers region. In particular, the significant funding loss for the crucial Bruxner Highway – Wollongbar to Goonellabah project, that initially held a Federal commitment of \$6.8 million.

Ballina Shire Council, Mayor Sharon Cadwallader expressed her disappointment, and said the setback was untimely given that route options were about to go on public exhibition. "The loss of the committed funds not only undermines progress but renders the work undertaken to date futile. The Bruxner Highway, plagued by a history of accidents, poses genuine safety concerns for the stretch between Wollongbar and Goonellabah."

In light of these developments, Ballina Shire Council is now urgently calling upon the NSW Government to continue the planning stage of the Bruxner Highway project.

"The potential consequences of neglecting this critical infrastructure project are too significant to ignore, and immediate action is imperative to ensure the security and prosperity of Northern Rivers NSW communities," added Mayor Cadwallader.



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The long awaited Northern NSW Inland Port project in Narrabri has also lost the financial support of the Federal Infrastructure Minister. The rail port was to be located on a 374ha site 7km west of Narrabri and would have provided connectivity to the proposed Inland Rail network, additional accessibility to most major ports across Australia and created hundreds of jobs once completed.

Mayor of Narrabri Shire Council, Cr Darrell Tiemens said regional communities are tired of being caught up in the cross-fire between Federal and State Governments. While we are trying to plan for the long-term future of our local communities and towns, various levels of government keep shifting the goal posts.

"This short-term thinking by governments of all persuasions needs to end." Mayor Tiemens said.

For further information, contact

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Mayor Narrabri Shire Council – Cr Darrell Tiemens – 0411 572 926

List of 17 NSW projects to be cut from Federal Funding

- Blaxland Road/Balaclava Road Intersection Improvements
- Bruxner Highway - Wollongbar to Goonellabah
- Commuter Car Park Upgrade - T1 North Shore, Northern and Western Line - Kingswood
- Commuter Car Park Upgrade - T1 North Shore, Northern and Western Line - St Marys
- Commuter Car Park Upgrade - Woy Woy
- Great Western Highway Upgrade - Katoomba to Lithgow - Construction of East and West Sections
- Gwydir Highway Improvements - Planning
- M7-M12 Interchange
- Mulgoa Road Stage 2 - Glenmore Parkway to Jeanette Street, Stage 5A Blaikie Road to Jamison Road and Stage 5B Jamison Road to Union Road
- Northern NSW Inland Port - Narrabri
- Oxley Highway Stage 2 - Planning
- Remembrance Driveway Corridor Upgrade - Camden Council
- Southern Connector Road, Jindabyne
- Sydney to Newcastle - Tuggerah - Wyong faster rail upgrade
- Toowoomba to Seymour - New South Wales - Moree Intermodal Overpass
- Werrington Arterial Stage 2 - Planning
- Western City Road Transport Network Development - Planning