



HUNTER REGION UNITED TO UNLOCK DELAYS TO THE DEVELOPMENT INDUSTRY

Embargo Saturday 23 May 2020 The urban development industry has come together as a united front to streamline the interface between the development industry, local councils and the Roads and Maritime arm of Transport for NSW (formerly Roads and Maritime Services or RMS) across the Hunter region.

UDIA NSW, Hunter Joint Organisation and Property Council of Australia met with Paul Toole Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, and Transport for NSW representatives on 21 May 2020 to provide constructive solutions to significant delays which have impacted the development industry.

Recent research has shown there are nearly \$8 billion in total capital investment in development projects across the Hunter region, which can be unlocked by more efficient interaction between RMS and the urban development industry.

The projects analysed in relation to the report are spread across industry sectors, vary dramatically in both scale and complexity, represent a portion of those currently under assessment in the region.

- 16 Residential projects
- 12 Commercial projects
- 10 Infrastructure projects
- \$7.8 billion total capital investment
- 33,000 construction jobs

The meeting cemented the industry peak bodies into an ongoing reference group overseen by the Minister to provide clear, ongoing engagement between government, government agencies and industry.

The reference group will meet in two to three months to assess progress on the organisations 7-Point Plan to unlock development in the Hunter region.

Quotes Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) NSW Hunter Chapter Chair, Geoffrey Rock:

The Urban Development Industry of Australia (UDIA) NSW has been actively concerned by delays caused by the RMS which have been impacting the ability to progress development projects.

“UDIA NSW has had numerous meetings with government and government agencies over the years on this issue. The current situation is costing our region jobs and investment opportunities as well as

negatively impacting housing affordability. We see this group as being able to deliver some quick wins as well as long-term, sustainable 'whole of government' solutions to remove the delays," said UDIA NSW Hunter Chapter Chair Geoffrey Rock.

"Improved productivity is on the national, state and local agenda and these unnecessary and lengthy hold ups are the antithesis of a productive economy. The Hunter region is bleeding jobs right now and we need swift action to guarantee future employment, investment and housing in the Hunter," said Mr Rock.

"Based on our recent engagement with Transport for NSW and Minister Toole, we are optimistic that with the Minister's support and the involvement of Transport's senior executive we can finally get on the right course," said Mr Rock.

UDIA NSW CEO Steve Mann:

"All across NSW we are looking for ways to provide economic recovery in a post-COVID-19 environment. This means more jobs on the ground for our regional cities and future-proofing our supply pipeline," said UDIA NSW CEO Steve Mann.

"NSW Government is working towards planning reform this year and one of the key details of UDIA NSW's submission to the Productivity Commission featured four recommendations on improving the referral process between government and agencies," said Mr Mann.

"With nearly \$8 billion and 33,000 jobs waiting to be unlocked in the Hunter, it is imperative for the government to take swift, decisive action on these delays and proactively identify opportunities for getting investment moving across NSW," said Mr Mann.

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