



# Cessnock City Council **ECONOMIC GROWTH AGENDA**

*Image credit: Elysia Wellness Retreat Hunter Valley*





# WHY ADVOCACY?

Advocacy is the process of influencing others to create positive outcomes. Cessnock City Council has limited resources and funding so without support we cannot deliver every action within the Community Strategic Plan. Successful advocacy will result in more projects, infrastructure and programs being delivered for our community.





# A GROWING COMMUNITY

By 2036, Cessnock's population will have grown to almost 80,000 people and another 5,000 homes will have been built in our towns and villages to accommodate the growth. Behind this growth is a liveable region renowned for its relaxed country lifestyle, excellent infrastructure, skilled labour and strategic location.

Economic leadership, infrastructure funding and a strategic commitment from all levels of government are critical ingredients to realising economic and social prosperity within the Cessnock LGA.

## Support our vision for a thriving, attractive and welcoming Cessnock

We invite the Federal and NSW Governments to work with us to ensure our communities achieve their economic potential and in doing so create jobs and rewarding lifestyles.

# ADVOCACY AGENDA

## CREATE JOBS VIA THE HYDRO KURRI KURRI PLANNING PROPOSAL



**SEEK A COMMITMENT FROM THE NSW GOVERNMENT AND ALL ASSOCIATED DEPARTMENTS TO PRIORITISE THE PROCESSING OF THE HYDRO KURRI KURRI PLANNING PROPOSAL.**

The 2015 development proposal involves the reestablishment of employment at the former Hydro Aluminium smelter, capitalising on the established electricity transmission infrastructure and direct access to a major freight network. The creation of 13,160 construction jobs, 6,900 ongoing jobs and the provision of future housing opportunities makes this development vital in supporting the expansion of Kurri Kurri, Cessnock and Maitland.

A co-ordinated effort by Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE), the Biodiversity Conservation Division of DPIE and Transport for NSW is required to ensure minimal delays occur in processing this application.

## BEAUTIFY AND NATURALISE CESSNOCK CBD DRAINAGE CHANNELS



**SEEK A COMMITMENT FROM HUNTER WATER TO BEAUTIFY AND NATURALISE CESSNOCK CBD DRAINAGE CHANNELS TO TRANSFORM THEM INTO A VISUAL AND SOCIAL ASSET FOR THE COMMUNITY.**

The drainage channel infrastructure within the Cessnock CBD is arguably the centre's most significant physical challenge. The channels form a 2.5km long linear barrier restricting access and reducing connectivity. While concrete lined, open drains are efficient at moving water, they do not provide any improvements to water quality and create a significant visual impact that reflects negatively on the CBD's image and perception.

Council is seeking a commitment from Hunter Water to transform the drainage system into an asset for Cessnock and at the same time improve water quality, flood resilience, wildlife habitat, cycling links and native vegetation ('naturalise' the channels by replacing the concrete).



## RICHMOND VALE RAIL TRAIL AND SHIRAZ TO SHORE CYCLE TRAIL PROJECT



**SEEK \$25 MILLION IN FUNDING FROM FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT TO CONSTRUCT THE RICHMOND VALE RAIL TRAIL AND SHIRAZ TO SHORE CYCLEWAY.**

The Richmond Vale Rail Trail project is a 32 kilometre cycling and walking track along the former Richmond Vale rail line between Kurri Kurri and Hexham, along the former Chichester to Newcastle water pipeline between Shortland and Tarro, and through the Hunter Wetlands National Park.

The Shiraz to Shore Cycleway connects Newcastle to Wine Country via the Richmond Vale Rail Trail and aims to create a showpiece for attracting cycle tourism to the Hunter region. The trail will create much needed employment, health and social benefits. The establishment of the Richmond Vale Rail Trail and Shiraz to Shore Cycleway is estimated to cost \$25 million, will attract 367,000 overnight stays from cycling tourists who will spend \$69 million in the Hunter each year.

## CREATE JOBS VIA THE BLACK HILL INDUSTRIAL PRECINCT



**SEEK A COMMITMENT FROM THE NSW GOVERNMENT AND ALL ASSOCIATED DEPARTMENTS TO PRIORITISE THE PROCESSING OF THE BLACK HILL INDUSTRIAL PROPOSAL.**

The establishment of the Black Hill Industrial Precinct is on the horizon with the Cessnock Development Control Plan updated to include the Black Hill Employment Area. This site has huge potential, to be transformed into a Hunter freight hub and an industrial precinct which could be home to up to 1,000 jobs. It is recognised in the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan as a key catalyst area due to the jobs it could create. It will assist in connecting Greater Newcastle and the Hunter region to global markets, providing significant advantage in attracting large scale industry to the region.

A co-ordinated effort by Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE), the Biodiversity Conservation Division of DPIE and Transport for NSW is required to ensure minimal delays occur in processing this application.





# GROW THE HUNTER VALLEY VISITOR ECONOMY



**SEEK A LONG-TERM FINANCIAL COMMITMENT FROM DESTINATION NSW TO STRENGTHEN THE HUNTER VALLEY TOURISM BRAND AND PROVIDE CONSISTENT MARKETING FOR ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S PREMIER VISITOR DESTINATION.**

The Hunter Valley is home to Australia's oldest wine producing region with around 4,500 acres under vine and one of the highest profile food and wine destination in Australia. The Hunter Valley including Wollombi Valley offers excellent business conferencing, accommodation, food, wine, chocolate, cheese, mindfulness activities, adventure and entertainment. The inconsistent nature of grant funding for destination marketing has resulted in no long-term marketing plans, limited digital product, loss of experienced staff and poor collaboration in marketing activities.

An annual commitment of \$500,000 by Destination New South Wales will allow Cessnock City Council, Singleton Council and Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Association to develop a Hunter Valley Marketing Plan, maintain the Hunter Valley Tourism Brand and market the Hunter Valley locally, regionally and internationally.

## FUTURE PROOF GREATER CESSNOCK'S TRANSPORT NETWORK



**SEEK AN ANNUAL COMMITMENT FROM FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT TO FUND THE CESSNOCK LGA INTEGRATED TRANSPORT MASTER PLAN.**

To create a road network that meets the needs of the Cessnock community in 2041, all levels of government will need to support and fund the Cessnock LGA Traffic and Transport Strategy. In response to increasing growth in development, population and associated increase in travel demand, Cessnock City Council initiated the development of the traffic and transport strategy to ensure we have a plan for our communities future.

The Cessnock LGA Traffic and Transport Strategy 2018 has identified the need to upgrade Wollombi Road and Maitland Road between Bellbird and Cessnock, to a four lane, two way corridor with signalisation at selected intersections to ensure that the route continues to perform at satisfactory service levels with the anticipated additional traffic volumes. Council is seeking government funding of \$62 million to complete the upgrade works.

Council is seeking \$20 million to create an expedient connection between Maitland and Kurri Kurri by widening Main Road to four lanes between Cliftleigh and Kurri Kurri, as identified in the Cessnock LGA Traffic and Transport Strategy. The road capacity upgrade will improve the connection to the Hunter Expressway from Cliftleigh, reduce vehicle commute times between Maitland and Kurri Kurri and improve safety.

\$1 million is required from the state or federal government to develop concept plans for the Cessnock CBD Bypass. By 2041, Cessnock will require a northern and southern CBD By-Pass to ensure traffic can move efficiently throughout the city. The concept plans will ensure the traffic and transport needs of the Cessnock community are developed in advance of the future need.





## PROVIDE M15 HUNTER EXPRESSWAY COMMUTER PARKING



**SEEK A COMMITMENT FROM FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT TO FUND AND CONSTRUCT PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES ALONG THE M15 HUNTER EXPRESSWAY.**

Cessnock City Council seeks support to improve existing commuter car parking locations along the M15 exit points of B86 John Renshaw Drive, Main Road Kurri Kurri and A43 at Branxton. The public are currently using these locations for carpooling without the facilities to accommodate this activity. These unofficial 'park and ride' facilities are resulting in traffic parking congestion, unsafe driver behaviour, littering and vandalism. By providing suitable 'park and ride' facilities the government will reduce road congestion, improve safety and solve an existing problem.

## GROW HUNTER VALLEY CONFERENCE AND MEETING REVENUE



**SEEK A COMMITMENT FROM FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT TO FUND A HUNTER VALLEY CONFERENCE AND EVENTS COORDINATOR TO CAPITALISE ON THE EXISTING CONFERENCE AND MEETING CAPACITY.**

The Hunter Valley provides world-class options for conferences, business meetings and business events up to 1,000 people in size. Accommodation capacity exists in the Hunter Valley from Tuesday to Thursday outside of the school holidays. A dedicated resource in the form of a Conference and Events Coordinator will engage with key stakeholders, seek opportunities, create marketing material and provide a point of contact within the Hunter Valley for conferencing inquiries. This position will grow the Hunter Valley Visitor Economy and help achieve the State governments aim to grow regional overnight visitor expenditure to \$25 billion by 2030.





## PROVIDE AGRICULTURAL WATER SECURITY AND RESILIENCE TO THE CESSNOCK LGA



**SEEK A COMMITMENT FROM HUNTER WATER AND THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE PROJECTS THAT DELIVER INCREASED VOLUMES OF WATER FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES WITHIN THE CESSNOCK LGA.**

The Greater Hunter regional water strategy which was created as part of the Regional Water Security Program does not contain any initiative that supports agriculture (or other industry) within the Cessnock LGA. Cessnock's desire to grow the agriculture industry is restricted by water security and resilience constraints. A large scale recycled water scheme that could provide secure water for agriculture would be a desired outcome for the Cessnock LGA.

## REDUCTION OF MOBILE BLACKSPOTS ACROSS THE LGA AND IMPROVE DATA TRANSFER CAPACITY



**SEEK A COMMITMENT FROM FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF MOBILE BLACK SPOTS ACROSS THE CESSNOCK LGA AND IMPROVED DATA TRANSFER CAPACITY FOR EXISTING TOWERS LOCATED WITHIN WINE COUNTRY.**

There are 54 mobile black spots across the Cessnock LGA and our aim is to reduce that number of black spots to zero. This critical infrastructure supports 2,266 tourism jobs, the Hunter event economy and customer satisfaction outcomes for people visiting our region.

If Cessnock wishes to grow the visitor economy beyond the current value of \$510 million in annual output then constraints in mobile phone coverage and capacity must be addressed.

## ESTABLISH A NEWCASTLE FAST RAIL STATION AT THE M15 AND M1 INTERCHANGE



**SEEK A COMMITMENT FROM THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT TO LOCATE THE FUTURE NEWCASTLE FAST RAIL STATION AT CAMERON PARK (ADJACENT TO M15 HUNTER EXPRESSWAY AND M1 PACIFIC MOTORWAY INTERCHANGE)**

A Cameron Park location would best serve the populations of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and northern parts of the Central Coast via the M1 Pacific Motorway. The station would also be accessible to residents of Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Maitland, Branxton and Singleton via the M15 Hunter Expressway.

Fast rail is catalyst infrastructure for Newcastle and the Hunter Valley and provides an opportunity to grow the visitor economy, ignite new connectivity with eastern Australia, reduce travel time between Newcastle and Sydney - Attracting Knowledge workers, improving demand for its regions services and attracting new and diverse local business, and improve education and training opportunities.



## MODIFY RESOURCES FOR REGIONS FUNDING PROGRAM GUIDELINES



**SEEK A COMMITMENT BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO RESHAPE AND REFOCUS THE RESOURCES FOR REGIONS PROGRAM SO FUNDING IS DISTRIBUTED TO COMMUNITIES MOST IN NEED.**

The Resources for Regions Grant Program aims to support the ongoing prosperity of mining-affected communities in regional NSW. Resources for Regions is a successful and flexible program but currently provides inequities in funding across neighbouring Councils. Cessnock City Council would like to see the program modified so that the base allocation amount is increased from \$1M to \$1.5M. We also seek an amendment to the weighted funding allocation, where the mining employment location quotient and the SEIFA Socio-Economic Disadvantage index are considered equally in the funding calculation.

The suggested changes to the Resources for Regions Program will ensure funding is directed to communities most in need and provide a fairer distribution of funding.

## CREATE VALUE FROM RECYCLING, WASTE REUSE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES



**SEEK A FUNDING COMMITMENT FROM FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT SO THAT 0% OF THE HUNTERS RECYCLABLE PRODUCTS ENTER LANDFILL.**



**SEEK A COMMITMENT FROM FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT TO FUND RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE AND THE HUNTER JOINT ORGANISATION TO CREATE VALUE FROM WASTE IN THE HUNTER**

The 10 Hunter Councils collect thousands of tons of recycling and waste each year. There is a moral and social obligation on governments of all levels to reduce the amount of waste entering landfill. With advancements in technology, automation and robotics there is greater opportunity than ever to create useful products from the waste we collect.

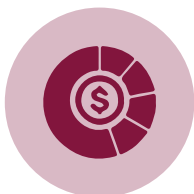
Councils are in a position to use products created from waste in road construction, path construction and maintenance activities. Council would like to see the State government redirect 100% of the waste levy back into local waste reduction programs that create jobs and reduce waste.



## IMPROVED GOVERNMENT-DELIVERED GRANT PROGRAMS



**SEEK A COMMITMENT FROM FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT TO STANDARDISE GRANT PROGRAM OPENING DATES AND INCREASE THE TIME TO SUBMIT APPLICATIONS.**



**SEEK A COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE AN ANNUAL GRANT FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE THAT IS FAIRLY DISTRIBUTED TO EACH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA.**

Government grant funding is vitally important to Council's ability to upgrade economic and social infrastructure. However, the uncertainty around which projects will be funded and the timing of the programs causes issues in budgeting, long-term planning, retention of project management staff and grant administration.

To improve fairness and to assist with project planning, Council would like to see more grant programs using an allocation to each local government area. In some circumstances, Council would like to see grant funding used for planning, land acquisition and design activities to progress strategically important projects.

## GROW HUNTER VALLEY AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION



**SEEK GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO ESTABLISH THE ROLE OF CESSNOCK AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER TO PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE 'WELCOME MAT' AND SUPPORT FOR INCREASING AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT.**

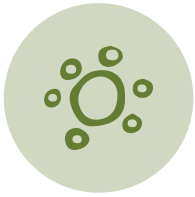
The Cessnock LGA has 103,084 hectares of rural zoned land that generates a diverse mix of agricultural products for local, regional and national consumption. Annual output from wine, beer and spirit manufacturing is \$328 million with a further agricultural output of \$154 million. Land underutilisation and emerging opportunities for agribusiness development for regional NSW is a strong prospect for sustainable economic growth based on global demand.

The Cessnock Agricultural Development Officer would provide a positive connection between industry, business owners and government for the purpose of creating new agricultural opportunities or growing existing industries such as eggs, poultry, olives, fruit, vegetables, hemp and food tourism.





## ESTABLISH AN ABORIGINAL TRAINING AND RESEARCH PRECINCT AT NEATH



**SEEK COMMITMENT FROM THE NSW GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT THE PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AN ABORIGINAL TRAINING CENTRE AT THE ABANDONED COAL MINE SITE IN NEATH.**

Through the NSW Legacy Mines Program, an abandoned coal mine site at Neath has been identified as a possible site to establish a vocational training and research precinct for mine site rehabilitation and productive land re-use.

The NSW Government owned abandoned mine site would provide first nations people, youth and the unemployed with valuable skills and employment opportunities for a career in the increasingly important work associated with the repurposing of mined lands and the maintenance or rehabilitation of other landscapes such as National Parks, degraded agricultural land or areas affected by fire or flooding.

## NEWCASTLE AIRPORT CODE E RUNWAY



**CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL SUPPORTS NEWCASTLE AIRPORTS PROPOSAL TO UPGRADING THE AIRPORT'S RUNWAY AND TERMINALS TO ACCOMMODATE LONG-RANGE, WIDE BODIED AIRCRAFT.**

The upgraded airport will support regional tourism and provide an opportunity to export fresh local products into the international market.

## NEWCASTLE MULTI-PURPOSE DEEP WATER TERMINAL



**CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL SUPPORTS THE PROPOSAL BY PORT OF NEWCASTLE TO BUILD A WORLD-CLASS, HIGHLY-AUTOMATED CONTAINER TERMINAL THAT WILL DELIVER SUBSTANTIAL COST SAVINGS FOR NSW EXPORTERS AND IMPORTERS.**

A container terminal at Port of Newcastle will provide Hunter importers and exports with faster shipping times, reduced freight costs and result in the removal of traffic from roads.



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