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## **REGIONS TO BENEFIT FROM RECORD TRANSPORT AND ROADS INVESTMENT IN NSW BUDGET**

Regional NSW will benefit from an unprecedented investment in the 2020-21 NSW Budget, which will deliver safer roads, more efficient freight networks, better connections for regional communities and a major boost in local jobs.

Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Paul Toole said the Government's record \$33 billion transport budget would drive projects that will serve future generations for years to come.

"We're delivering more for the regions than ever before, and we're doing it as fast as we can," Mr Toole said.

"We are building a better NSW by turbocharging funding for the small projects communities need now and accelerating the big infrastructure that will support future growth.

"Right across the State, the NSW Government is investing in game-changing projects like the Coffs Harbour bypass, and the final link in the upgrade of the Pacific Highway which is now almost fully duplicated between Hexham and the Queensland border.

"We're transforming journeys on the South Coast in the same way, with \$432 million in this year's Budget for the Princes Highway, including the new Nowra Bridge and planning for further upgrades between Nowra and the Victorian border.

"Nearly every major highway is seeing investment that will deliver safer journeys and improved productivity – from new overtaking lanes on the Newell, planning for the Singleton and Muswellbrook bypasses on the New England Highway and sealing of the Silver City and Cobb in the Far West."

Mr Toole said fast-tracked funding for two of the NSW Government's key election commitments would create thousands of regional jobs at a time they were needed the most and see regional communities benefit faster.

"This year's Budget includes accelerated funding for Fixing Local Roads with \$312 million to repair, maintain and seal the roads communities use every day and another \$108 million towards the Fixing Country Bridges program to replace old timber bridges," Mr Toole said.

"That's hundreds of projects that will start across the state in the next 12 months, helping councils to create and support jobs, drive productivity and keep our regional communities connected."

Mr Toole said the NSW Government was committed to improving public transport in the regions, with further funding in the Budget for the new Regional Rail Fleet and construction of a purpose-built maintenance facility at Dubbo.

“We have also committed \$13.5 million for the continued planning and delivery of the 16 Regional Cities Program to boost bus services in key regional centres where we are also working to allow customers to track their bus in real-time,” Mr Toole said.

“These investments and projects will not only make journeys safer, faster and more reliable – they will also create and support thousands of jobs as part of the NSW Government’s plan for a prosperous, post-pandemic economy.”

Some of the highlights from the Budget include:

- **Almost \$432 million** (\$1.4 billion over four years) for projects underway on the Princes Highway including the new Nowra Bridge, the Batemans Bay Bridge, Albion Park Rail Bypass and the Berry to Bomaderry Upgrade, as well as planning for further upgrades between Nowra and the Victorian border;
- **Almost \$342 million** (\$383 million over four years) to complete duplication of the Pacific Highway, including completing construction between Woolgoolga to Ballina;
- **\$135 million** (\$1 billion over four years) for planning and early works for the Coffs Harbour Bypass;
- **More than \$15 million** (\$436 million over four years) to continue planning for the Great Western Highway upgrade between Katoomba and Lithgow;
- **Almost \$158 million** for the Newell Highway, including delivery of additional overtaking lanes, flood mitigation works, heavy duty pavement upgrades as well as planning for the Parkes Bypass and new Dubbo Bridge;
- **More than \$50 million** (\$61.6 over next two years) towards completion of the sealing of the Silver City and Cobb Highways in the Far West to open up the region for tourism and freight operators;
- **Almost \$9 million** to continue planning for the Muswellbrook and Singleton Bypasses on the New England Highway;
- **More than \$43 million** (\$1.3 billion over four years) for the Regional Rail **Fleet Program** to replace the ageing fleet and build a rail maintenance facility in Dubbo; and
- **More than \$31 million** (\$258 million over four years) initial NSW and Australian Government investment in a Fast Rail network.

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