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Business Hunter welcomes high speed rail endorsement

Business Hunter has welcomed news that infrastructure Australia has endorsed the next phase of development of high speed rail between Newcastle and Sydney.

Media is reporting that the Federal Government's infrastructure investment advisory body has signalled support for the development phase of the high speed rail project, which would include planning and design, market sounding and progressing environmental approvals.

Infrastructure Australia recently completed its evaluation of the High Speed Rail Authority's business case for the Newcastle to Sydney route. Media reports indicate the yet-to-be-released review indicates the preferred route would include six stops at Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Central Coast, Sydney CBD, Parramatta and Western Sydney Airport, with construction to potentially begin by 2027.

"It is great to see Infrastructure Australia giving its stamp of approval to advancing this critical project for our region," Business Hunter CEO Bob Hawes said.

"At a time when our region is really facing up to some of the economic challenges of the energy transition, this project presents enormous opportunities for job creation, skills enhancement, investment attraction, housing delivery and vastly improving our connectivity with Sydney and the Central Coast.

"It would be an enormous boost to the diversification and resilience of our regional economy.

"Business Hunter urges the Federal Government to get on board with Infrastructure Australia's recommendations and approve the next phase of high speed rail.

"Of course, we would like to see a funding commitment made to constructing the entire route, but every phase gets us a step closer to delivery of this transformative project.

"The Infrastructure Australia endorsement is a positive sign that the hard work and advocacy of many stakeholders is being recognised. Now is the time to keep the vision alive and ensure the Hunter is front and centre in Australia's transport future."

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