

BUSINESS HUNTER

11 November 2022

Greater Cities Commission

Via Email - engagement@gcc.nsw.gov.au

RE: BUSINESS HUNTER RESPONSE TO SIX CITIES VISION DISCUSSION PAPER

Business Hunter is pleased to write in support of the Greater Cities Commission “*Six Cities Vision*” Discussion Paper and provide feedback for consideration.

Introduction

Business Hunter supports an approach to collectively build the scale, scope and potential for a world-class region of better jobs, housing, education and leisure that is productive, sustainable and liveable for everyone, as detailed in the Paper.

As the peak business organisation for the Hunter region, Business Hunter is the voice of Australia’s largest regional economy, with a membership and affiliates group spanning more than 4,200 businesses across ten local government areas of the Hunter region. We represent the perspectives of member and affiliate businesses across all sectors and all sizes of business, including the entire footprint of the **Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle City Region** as characterised in this plan.

Comments

As an organisation that exists to support business, Business Hunter believes the overall objective of The Commission to “*collectively build the scale, scope and potential for a world-class region of better jobs, housing, education and leisure that is productive, sustainable and liveable for everyone - while celebrating and leveraging each city’s unique character and strengths*” will have significant and measurable impact across the Hunter.

As a region in the throes of a critical housing shortage, Business Hunter welcomes the acknowledgment by The Commission that they have “*clearly heard the need to give direction that allows for faster delivery on the ground, particularly relating to housing and local infrastructure, with measurable and timebound targets that reflect what matters to people in the Six Cities Region*” and firmly reinforces their position. Our region is current proof that without housing, we will not have the workers necessary to deliver this vision.

With diversification of the Port of Newcastle and expansion of Newcastle Airport live policy and advocacy platforms for multiple stakeholders in the region, it is

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positive to see integrated thinking on the three international airports and three deep water ports detailed within this plan.

We also strongly support the growth strategies and a targeted emphasis on delivering productivity in the regions to help support solutions that will unlock jobs, economic growth and diversity.

We support the intention of The Commission to work with partners “*to shape the development of at least three new innovation districts in the Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle City, Central Coast City and Illawarra-Shoalhaven City, complementing the existing innovation districts in Greater Sydney*” and would offer to connect key representatives from The Commission with leaders of our world class facilities in new energy technology, the Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources (NIER), located at the University of Newcastle, and the Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI) – a joint initiative of the University of Newcastle and Hunter New England Health, to explore alignment and opportunities for collaboration toward this important goal.

The strategic focus on the Six Cities Region presents an enormous and crucial opportunity to position the Sydney megaregion for sustainable growth and diversification. With the proper settings in place, we can build better communities with enhanced economic, social and environmental benefits, lifting the global competitiveness of NSW.

Business Hunter supports the intentions of the six shapers detailed in this plan and looks forward to additional detail via the release of the new regional plans for the Hunter and Central Coast.

We welcome further opportunities to work collaboratively with The Commission to execute the vision for the Six Cities Region and are available to meet should you require further information.

Sincerely,



Bob Hawes
CEO
Business Hunter