



2019 STATE ELECTION PRIORITIES

HUNTER BUSINESS CHAMBER



CREATING A THRIVING HUNTER REGION

The Hunter is set to boom as an economic region and lifestyle hub, but its future prosperity relies heavily on the delivery of projects that will enhance its appeal as a region in which to live, invest and do business.

The election advocacy priorities the Hunter Business Chamber has identified in this document are short-to-medium-term projects that are vital to improving the region's transport connectivity, liveability, economic diversity and competitiveness.

The priorities the Chamber has identified fall into two categories:

- Essential **transport infrastructure** to keep our region moving, providing connectivity and efficiency to stimulate economic growth, while improving safety and convenience for local communities and ensuring productivity is not stifled by congestion;
- **Priority precincts** that will drive employment growth, economic diversification, tourism and, in the case of the Broadmeadow Precinct, enhance urban amenity and liveability.

Delivery of promised infrastructure is a key pillar of the NSW Business Chamber's 2019 State Election campaign, **Keeping NSW Number 1**. At a regional level, the Hunter Business Chamber is calling on the next government to prioritise the delivery of the projects in this document.

We ask all candidates in the 2019 NSW State Government election to confirm their commitment to seeing these vital, regionally significant projects fully funded and implemented, with the actions outlined achieved within the next term of government.



KEEPING NSW NUMBER 1

The Hunter Business Chamber is the largest regional business chamber in Australia, established in 1886. We represent about 2,000 predominantly Hunter-based member organisations to all levels of government. We are the peak industry organisation in the region, reflecting the interests of all business sectors.

The Hunter Business Chamber's regional advocacy platform is part of the NSW Business Chamber's **Keeping NSW No 1** election campaign. The statewide campaign comprises four key pillars:

- Skilling NSW for the future and tackling youth unemployment
- Cutting energy costs for NSW businesses and residents
- Improving the delivery of major infrastructure
- Protecting NSW from natural disasters

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

1. FAST RAIL CONNECTION WITH SYDNEY

A fast-rail link to Sydney will have a transformational impact on the economy and liveability of the Hunter, bridging the geographical divide between our region and Australia's biggest city and financial centre. Faster rail between Sydney and Newcastle will connect jobs for the Hunter, encourage investment and reduce congestion on the M1, making both road and rail transport faster, safer and more convenient.

Action: Advance investigation and implementation of a faster rail link beyond concept stage.

2. COMPLETION OF THE INNER CITY BYPASS

When complete, the Newcastle Inner City Bypass will vastly improve connectivity between Newcastle and Lake Macquarie and enhance access to the growing John Hunter Hospital precinct. The NSW Government committed to the 3.4-kilometre final stage in 2014. Construction funding to deliver on this commitment is urgently needed to relieve cross-city traffic congestion and facilitate the expansion of the John Hunter Health and Innovation Precinct.

Action: Commit funding and commence construction.

3. ROAD UPGRADES TO SUPPORT TRADE, TOURISM AND COMMUNITIES

Improved access to Newcastle Airport and the Port of Newcastle is imperative to realising Greater Newcastle's potential as a global gateway city. Upgrading of link roads to these assets will support their growth, boost tourism opportunities and improve connectivity and safety for local communities in Port Stephens and Newcastle.

Action: The Chamber is advocating for funding commitments to progress the following projects:

- o M1 extension to Raymond Terrace
- o Dual carriageway from Hexham to Williamtown
- o Dual carriageway from Stockton to Williamtown

4. SINGLETON AND MUSWELLBROOK BYPASSES

Lack of progress on the Singleton and Muswellbrook bypasses has long been a source of frustration for those Upper Hunter communities. Uncertainty over the Government's commitment to the projects has eroded business confidence and is thwarting economic development.

Action: Commit to a funding and construction timeline for the Singleton Bypass and begin work on the project. Complete planning and design for the Muswellbrook Bypass and commit to a timeline.



PRIORITY PRECINCTS

5. JOHN HUNTER HEALTH AND INNOVATION PRECINCT

Redevelopment of the John Hunter campus will deliver increased and improved clinical capacity and facilitate an enhanced health, education and research precinct servicing the region and northern NSW. The precinct will meet increasing demand for a broad range of health services and contribute significantly to the development of the region's knowledge sector, driving employment growth and economic diversification.

Action: Complete Master Plan and commence construction.

6. BROADMEADOW SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT PRECINCT

The redevelopment of the Broadmeadow Precinct will provide the region with a new community hub and a sporting, entertainment and tourism destination that will boost the Hunter's growing reputation as a premiere event venue. A Master Plan has been developed for an integrated development combining contemporary residential and community spaces, cafes, restaurants, commercial uses and first class-sports and entertainment facilities.

Action: Commit to the Master Plan, implement and commit to funding for staged development.

7. NEWCASTLE AIRPORT PRECINCT - TERMINAL AND RUNWAY UPGRADE

A terminal upgrade and runway expansion at Newcastle Airport will open new opportunities for trade, tourism, employment and economic investment at this key global gateway. Acting now to strengthen and widen the runway to 'Code E' standard, combined with scheduled Defence maintenance and resurfacing work, would position the airport to accommodate larger, longer-range aircraft, increasing its viability as a destination for airline partners. The proposed terminal and runway upgrade is vital to achieving the Airport's 2036 vision of becoming an international gateway supporting increased trade and tourism, as well as an innovation hub for advanced manufacturing, defence and aerospace.

Action: Commit \$150 million for runway and terminal upgrade.

CONTACT

For further information on the priorities outlined in this document, or for media comment, contact:

Bob Hawes, CEO Hunter Business Chamber

02 4969 9600

info@hunterbusinesschamber.com.au

