

30 April 2020

ON THE ROAD TO TACKLING COVID-19 IMPACTS:
Western Queensland Councils welcome fast tracking of roadworks funding

Members of the Western Queensland Alliance of Councils have welcomed the decision by the Australian and Queensland governments to deliver \$185million of vital roads project funding ahead of planned investment timeframes.

The announcement this week means works will commence sooner on key inland freight corridors providing an important stimulus response to support regional communities, business and industry at this critical time.

Works will include sealing roads, building overtaking lanes, upgrading intersections and improving safety.

Jointly funded regional roads projects for the West include:

- Flinders Highway
- Kennedy Developmental Road (Hann Highway)
- Carnarvon Highway, Dawson Highway and Dawson Developmental Road (Springsure – Tambo)
- Gulf Developmental Road
- Balonne Highway,
- and the local government-controlled Floraville Road in Burke Shire.

Roads are the economic arteries that connect our communities with each other and beyond. They provide vital links to the coast and ports, driving economies across the nation.

The 21 councils of the Western Queensland Alliance stand ready to ensure our communities can bounce back and continue to deliver the \$9.5 billion we inject into the economy.

Mayor Jack Bawden, Chair of the North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils said: “We are fortunate to be COVID-19 free in our region, however we are still feeling the massive impact across our industries and businesses. The announcement of this funding being fast-tracked is a good step from both levels of government and will help stimulate our local economies. We certainly will be looking to ensure our council workforces get the opportunity to deliver some of these works. However, there are other essential links across the regions that need to be upgraded and we look forward to further funding announcements by the state and federal governments in coming months.”

Mayor Tony Rayner, Chair of the Remote Area Planning and Development Board said: “The Western Queensland Alliance of Councils had already outlined in its 2020 State Budget submission that the one thing that was needed most was investment in roads. We are pleased to see that both the Australian and Queensland governments agree.”

Mayor Stuart Mackenzie, Deputy Chair of the South West Local Government Association said: “Time and time again it’s been proven that local councils are best placed to deliver essential infrastructure programs as noted in the LGAQ’s *COVID-19 \$600 million Battle Plan*. We know the priorities, have the people to deliver and just get on with it. What we need now is a steady stream of announcements like this to keep our communities firing as part of the COVID-19 recovery phase.”

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