

## **ULMARRA RIVERBANK EROSION PROTECTION WORKS**

### **23 FEBRUARY 2007**

Federal Minister Local Government, Territories, Roads, Hon Jim Lloyd, Luke Hartsuyker Federal Member for Cowper, Steve Cansdell, State Member for Clarence, Councillor colleagues, ladies and gentlemen and girls and boys of Ulmarra Primary. I acknowledge the traditional custodians of these lands, the Yaegl people and thank Trevor Kapeen for his welcome to country.

This is an important day, upon which for the first time in the short history of Clarence Valley Council we are able to welcome a Federal Government Minister to our Valley. Thus it is a great pleasure to warmly welcome Minister Jim Lloyd to Ulmarra today.

Jim is rightly acknowledged by local government across the land as a very good friend of local government. There is ample evidence to support this friendship.

For example the Minister was very supportive of the latest tranche of Roads to recovery and in 2005/06 Councils received a double allocation under that program. This meant an additional \$2.7 million to Clarence valley roads and will make a substantial difference to the lives of many valley residents.

Minister Lloyd was also very supportive of the National Local Government Roads and Transport Strategy. He also played a lead role in securing through both houses of Federal Parliament in 2006, a resolution recognising the role and importance of local government in our Federal system of government.

It is an opportune occasion to also applaud and thank the Minister for his recent announcement under Auslink Strategic Regional Program, which provides \$78,900 for Baryulgil Creek Bridge replacement and \$73,800 for Flagstone Creek Bridge replacement, both on Clarence Way. Clarence Valley Council will contribute the balance of funds amounting to \$356,000. The government's support will assist local cattle and timber industries compete nationally and globally and will enable replacement of narrow one lane timber bridges with two lane concrete box culver structures.

I must not let this occasion pass with the Federal Minister present without restating the case for a local government Federal growth tax from Personal Income tax collections. Local government struggles to meet ever rising community expectations. A growing Council revenue stream from the Commonwealth will be critical to effectively address such needs especially in the critical area of infrastructure provision and renewal.

In this era of substantial surpluses, and given that the federal government has around 80% of all revenue raising capacity in Australia it is an opportune time for introduction of a dedicated infrastructure Fund. Access to each of these resource streams are critical to local government if it is to address infrastructure backlogs in health, water, sewerage, roads, tired libraries, swimming pools, halls and the like.

The Draft Mid North Coast Regional Strategy identifies Grafton city and Maclean as growth areas with at least 7000 homes to be constructed in the next 25 years, a number I believe to be too conservative. Demographer Bernard Salt points to Yamba as the most desired sea change destination in NSW.

Council is excited by and determined to meet these challenges but we must work in even closer partnership with the other tiers of government if we are to deliver the necessary infrastructure.

All Australians live within local government boundaries. By addressing infrastructure needs all Australians can benefit from enhanced lifestyles, development and jobs.

Council is an active member of the Pacific Highway Taskforce which has as its only objective the completion of upgrading of the Highway to dual carriageway standard by 2016. Council notes with appreciation the close cooperation between Federal and State governments with this most important project and given the cost to complete of between 8 and 10 million dollars at best estimates, Council urges a continuation of that cooperation so that the totally unacceptable road carnage may be dramatically reduce at the earliest possible time.

This 4 million dollar rock armouring project was funded on a 1:1:1 basis under the Regional Flood Mitigation Program and was a standout three tiers of government partnership. Council thanks the Minister for the Federal contribution, the State government for its financial support and the Chairman of Councils Floodplain Management Committee and Committee members for their vision and perseverance.

The armouring project protects the levy wall, which thus gives greater protection to the residents in Ulmarra Village. There is also an enhanced capacity for village development.

Council successfully sponsored a motion at the 2006 Australian local Government Association National Assembly to lobby for reintroduction of 2:2:1 funding for flood mitigation projects. The 2003 COG sponsored change to the formula has meant that local government has been forced to increase its contribution to projects to 33.3% which means that fewer projects are effected.

In recent months Council has achieved sign off on Alipou Creek and Iluka Floodplain Risk Management plans and expects to complete similar plans for remaining segments of the floodplain in the next year. Council will then need to make representations to State and Federal governments for funding support for the identified high priority projects under those plans.

Again I wish very warm welcome to Minister Jim Lloyd on this special occasion. I also again express thanks to State and Federal governments for their support of this important erosion protection project. May our strong and effective partnership continue to flourish.

Ian Tiley  
Mayor  
Clarence Valley Council  
23<sup>rd</sup> February 2007