

MEDIA RELEASE

MID MURRAY COUNCIL CALLS FOR URGENT RETHINK OF TRURO BYPASS FUNDING CUT

The Mid Murray Council is urging the Federal Government to reconsider its decision to cut funding for the critical Truro Bypass project.

Planning for the \$202 million project has been underway in recent years following a \$161.6m commitment from the previous Federal Government, and additional funding committed by the SA Government.

Under the project, a bypass was to be built for the Sturt Highway around the town of Truro to remove through-traffic, especially heavy vehicles, from its main street. Council supported the project, believing it would improve safety for road users, residents and pedestrians, as well as enhancing the amenity of the main street of Truro and productivity of the national road network for freight transport.

The Federal Government announced today that the Truro Bypass was one of several major infrastructure projects nationally to have federal funding withdrawn following the outcomes of its Infrastructure Investment Program Review.

Mid Murray Mayor Simone Bailey said Council and the Truro community were deeply disappointed at the decision.

"Council and the Truro community have been advocating for the construction of a heavy vehicle bypass for many years after several worrying truck crashes and near-misses in the town's main street," Mayor Bailey said.

"We consider the bypass to be a vital piece of infrastructure to address ongoing pedestrian and road safety concerns in Truro. We believe it would also have significant productivity benefits for the national road network by allowing freight vehicles to travel more efficiently along the Sturt Highway between Adelaide and the Eastern States.

"A project of this magnitude can't be delivered without the leadership and investment of the Federal Government and we urgently ask them to reconsider this decision. The project is well progressed and our community is strongly invested in seeing this project delivered."

The Council and the Truro community have been strong advocates for the bypass for decades, prompted by concerns about heavy vehicles often speeding through the town's main street, which is frequented at peak times by school children and pedestrians.

Last month, Council also adopted the *Truro Township Master Plan*, which maps out a future vision for the town's centre to be redeveloped as a tourist and community destination following the construction of the bypass.

"Council and the Truro community have invested significant time and energy into planning for the future of the town once the heavy freight bypass is constructed," Mayor Bailey said.

"Those plans set out a vision for Truro to build on its popularity as a stopping point for travellers to become a tourist destination in its own right, and would have paved the way for substantial redevelopment and investment in the town centre to create spaces for our community to enjoy events, recreation activities, and connection with others.

“It is unclear what the Federal Government’s funding decision means for Truro’s future, but Council would like to reassure the community that we will continue to advocate for the heavy freight bypass to be built.

“We will also consider how we can act on the *Truro Township Master Plan* to ensure we keep working towards the community’s vision for a positive and vibrant future for Truro.”

Council will continue to advocate with the State and Federal Governments about the need for the Truro Bypass project.

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