

NSW Budget 2023-24



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Billions in Budget boost to regional NSW to improve quality of life and business opportunities

The Minns Labor Government has delivered a suite of new initiatives to regional NSW investing in essential services and infrastructure, improving service delivery and the quality of life in rural and regional communities.

The 2023-24 NSW Budget includes **\$3.8 billion** for regional health facilities, **\$1.4 billion** for regional schools, and **\$1.8 billion** in new investments to strengthen regional NSW.

The NSW Government is committed to supporting regional communities to thrive and to continue to be a great place to live, work and set down roots.

Helping regional communities thrive:

- **\$1.2 billion** of targeted projects and grant programs that support councils, communities and businesses across regional NSW to enhance economic growth, social development, wellbeing and community amenity.
- **\$350 million** for the Regional Development Fund to invest in the future needs of regional communities, aligned with the Australian Government Regional Investment Framework.
- **\$252.1 million** for world class digital services and telecommunication pricing to rural and regional NSW.
- **\$6 million** to support regional community newspapers to improve the long-term sustainability of regionally focused media.
- **\$5.2 million** to establish the Regional Future Jobs and Investment Authorities to work with community leaders to transition away from a coal-based economy.

Reinvesting in regional essential services:

Health:

- **\$438.6 million** for 500 new regional paramedics to address the paramedic shortage and improve ambulance response times.
- Doubling of the incentive payments for healthcare workers moving to regional and remote areas from \$10,000 to \$20,000.
- **\$572.3 million** to ensure 1,112 nurses and midwives, whose positions were funded only temporarily until June 2024 will be made permanent, with hundreds of these positions in rural and regional New South Wales.
- **\$419.1 million** to begin the introduction of Safe Staffing levels in NSW hospitals.

Education:

- **\$1.4 billion** over four years to deliver a massive pipeline of new and upgraded schools for regional NSW.
- **\$769.3 million** to 2027 for 100 new preschools on public school sites where they are needed most across the state.
- **\$40 million** to support not-for-profit early childhood education in high growth and regional communities, as well as a trial of more flexible service delivery models.
- Providing equal opportunities for rural and remote students through digital uplifts under the Rural Access Gap program.

Supporting resilient agricultural and regional industries:

- **\$5.5 million** to appoint an independent Agriculture Commissioner to provide more protection for our farmland, ensure food security and a more prosperous agricultural industry.
- **\$10 million** to establish the Good Neighbour Program to tackle weed and pest infestations between neighbouring public and private lands.
- **\$58.8 million** to help Landcare address environmental degradation with interventions that improve and sustain agricultural productivity, environmental protection, resilience to natural disasters and community vitality.
- **\$2.2 million** to re-engage a Dairy and Fresh Food Advocate to review supply chains, address food security issues, and be a voice for farmers.
- **\$77.2 million** to support beekeepers, horticulture and industries affected by the varroa mite.
- **\$80 million** to protect NSW from the march of red imported fire ants.
- **\$39 million** partnership with the Australian Government, supporting sheep and goat farmers implement a mandatory individual electronic identification across NSW to provide traceability to protect primary producers from biosecurity risks.
- **\$13 million** Feral Pig Control Program to reduce the number of feral pigs and protect primary producers and farming communities.
- **\$11.1 million** for the Farm Business Resilience Program to help farms to prepare for and adapt to climate change.

- **\$10.2 million** to support prawn fishers, farmers and businesses with targeted responses to white spot disease.
- **\$13.5 million** to assist timber mills recovering from the Black Summer bushfires with the Construction Softwood Transport Assistance Program.

Addressing regional housing pressure:

- **\$1.5 billion** from the new Housing and Productivity Contribution to deliver enabling infrastructure in key growth areas, including the Central Coast, Lower Hunter and Illawarra-Shoalhaven.
- **\$100 million** from the new Housing Infrastructure Fund to deliver infrastructure projects in regional New South Wales to unlock housing supply.
- Debt financing of **\$700 million** to accelerate the delivery of social, affordable and private homes primarily in regional NSW.
- **\$60 million** for Build to Rent trials in the South Coast and Northern Rivers.

Upgrading critical regional roads, rail and transport services:

- Continuing the **\$1.4 billion** delivery of a new regional rail fleet.
- **\$390 million** for the establishment of the Regional Emergency Road Repair Fund to support regional councils in managing existing roads, particularly those damaged by natural disasters.
- **\$334 million** for the establishment of the Regional Roads Fund to build new roads in rural and regional areas.
- **\$333.9 million** to replace ageing timber bridges through the Fixing Country Bridges program providing improvements to regional bus services and supporting councils through the Fixing Local Roads Program.
- **\$95.5 million** for the Fixing Country Rail program to continue delivery of improved capacity and reliability on the regional rail network.
- **\$10 million** to improve the network of heavy vehicle rest stops across regional New South Wales.

Supporting Regional NSW transition to a clean energy future:

- **\$1 billion** in seed funding to create the NSW Energy Security Corporation, which will help deliver projects that provide affordable, accessible and reliable energy across NSW.
- **\$804 million** to accelerate the delivery of Renewable Energy Zones and other critical transmission projects.

Supporting disaster recovery and preparedness:

- **\$4 billion** for targeted disaster recovery programs to support communities, regional councils, and businesses across NSW to recover, rebuild and prosper.
- **\$5 million** to support the Two Rooms Project, helping flood survivors in Lismore get back into their homes.

- **\$3.3 million** for a natural disaster detection system to protect communities in high-risk areas.

Ensuring water security:

- **\$222.4 million** with the Australian Government for improvements to critical water supply infrastructure for Wilcannia, Eurobodalla and Cobar.
- **\$217.5 million** to continue Safe and Secure Water Program initiatives, supporting regional towns dealing with water supply, quality and safety risks.
- **\$5 million** contribution for the Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative to improve water security and catchment health.
- Delivering the Murray-Darling Basin Plan commitments to support river health, access to water and better water efficiencies to minimise the impacts of Australian Government buybacks.

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