

Monday 17 September, 2018

Tamworth Regional Council Mayor, Cr Col Murray

Cr Murray is a retired businessman and was elected to Tamworth Regional Council in 2004. He is now serving in his fourth term on Council and his ninth year as Mayor. He was first elected Mayor in 2010 and served as Deputy Mayor for two years prior.

Cr Murray believes strongly that a structured and co-ordinated approach is the only way to strengthen regional cities in NSW and to ease the population pressures of capital and coastal cities.

“We have a strong role to play in the future development of Australia,” he said. “Regional cities have a lot to offer and, in my view, are an underutilised resource.”

Cr Murray sees his role as Mayor to keep a focus on strategic initiatives to ensure the Region continues to grow and develop where future generations can thrive while enjoying a quality lifestyle and a variety of educational and employment opportunities.

“Getting the policy right is the first step,” he said. “It’s essential for Local Government to interact with the State and Federal governments on policy development. Engagement between the three levels of government is the key – developing strong relationships means local government can have influence on future policy to achieve what’s needed to improve the lives of those who live in our community.

“It’s important to articulate our future strategies effectively so they will be built into the outcomes State and Federal governments plan to deliver.”

Cr Murray has strongly advocated for reform and modernisation of Local Government in NSW to bring a strategic planning focus to the Region and enable it to reach its potential as the northern capital for NSW.

During his terms as Mayor, Cr Murray has:

- Chaired Country Mayor’s Association from 2012 to 2013.
- Chaired Namoi Councils – an organisation which comprises six local government areas of the North West – for more than 10 years until 2017.
- Deputy Chair of Regional Capitals Australia – an alliance of local government associations advocating for growth and sustainable development of regional cities across the nation - since 2015.
- Presided over completion of the \$80m Westdale Wastewater Treatment Plant and Effluent Reuse Farm in October 2011.

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- Presided over the December 2013 completion of the \$15.2m Split Rock Dam to Barraba Pipeline which secured the projected water needs of the Barraba community for the next 50 years.
- Oversaw the development and implementation of the NOW Initiative funded by \$10.7m from the Federal Government including construction of the Tamworth Regional Youth Centre which opened in April 2015.
- Championed the initiative of Council buying a 250-hectare site at Westdale in February 2016 to ensure a ready supply of industrial land over the next 20-30 years to attract new business and boost employment opportunities with potential for up to 5000 jobs.
- Championed security of Tamworth's water supply with Council co-funding the Augmentation of Chaffey Dam with the State and Federal governments which was completed in May 2016.
- Drove the Fitzroy Street Beautification Project in the Tamworth CBD, creating a plaza for community use between Peel Street and Kable Avenue, which opened in November 2017.
- Presided over planning and securing funding for the first stage of the Northern Inland Centre of Sporting Excellence in Tamworth which started construction in September 2017. Council has partnered with the State and Federal Governments to fund the \$17.2 million project. It will be completed in December 2018.
- Led Council through the ongoing Upgrade of Manilla Road which started at Oxley Vale in 2012 and will culminate late in 2018 on the northern fringe of Tamworth's CBD. There will be an upgrade of the Jewry Street intersection with traffic lights and the addition of a second bridge over the Peel River to be completed in 2019 to better enable production capacity of Tamworth's powerhouse industrial area.
- Secured \$7.418m in State Government funding in November 2017 for Stage One of the Tamworth Rail Freight Intermodal Terminal.