

MEDIA RELEASE

11 December 2015

The Northern Territory is ignored again in National Stronger Regions funding

Roper Gulf Regional Council Mayor, Tony Jack expressed disappointment today that the recently announced second round of the National Stronger Regions funding has not funded any projects in the Northern Territory.

“The regions of the Northern territory largely missed out in round one when only one project in Darwin received funding. This time there was no projects at all in the Northern Territory that got funding.

I cannot speak on behalf of other Councils whose projects didn’t get up but Roper Gulf Regional Council is very disappointed.

Our Transport Hubs project is a very strong local project which fitted the intention and guidelines of this funding very closely but missed out in both rounds. These projects are economic multiplier and will make our towns safer and more liveable. We will now have to reduce our scope of works substantially as the Australian Government will not support them.

Unlike most local Governments in the richer south and east we do not have strong rates bases and are dependent on Government funding support for infrastructure and general operations. We cannot continue to use scarce resources and time to put these project applications up if it is clear that the funding is being exclusively spent in the more popular southern and eastern states”. He said.

Promises of a third round are starting to sound quite hollow,” said an exasperated Mayor Jack.

I call on the Minister for Northern Australia, Mr Frydenberg, to have a careful look at how local and regional infrastructure is being funded particularly here in the Northern Territory. It is good that there are some major projects underway but without substantial investment in local infrastructure we will end up with a third world situation of rich enclaves surrounded by physically isolated and disadvantaged communities...a two speed Australia.

We show innovation everyday up here but we are feeling quite unsupported at the moment.

I also call on our federal members to stand up as they currently seem to be missing in action when it comes to supporting local infrastructure funding.

At least the Northern Territory Government continues to support and champion local infrastructure development”. Mayor Jack said.

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