



An Australian Government Initiative

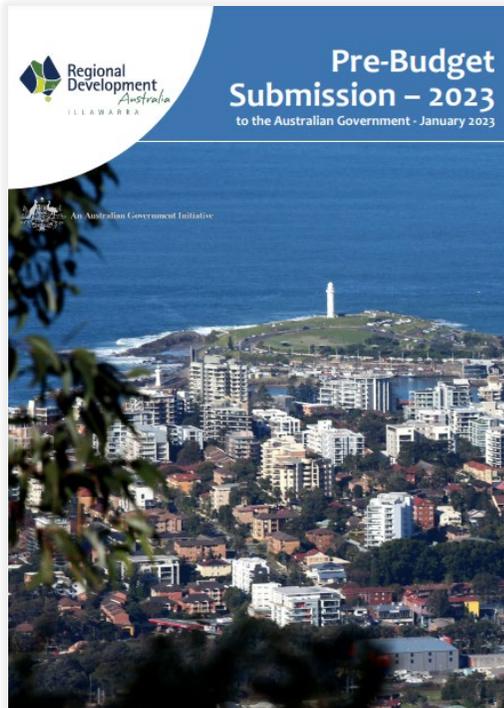


Regional
Development
Australia

ILLAWARRA

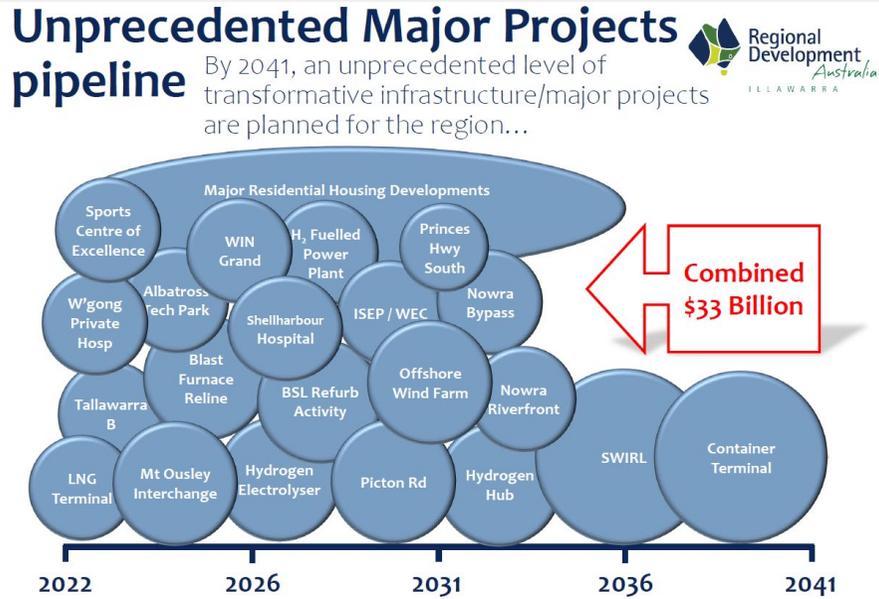
Quarterly Report to the Region January to March 2023

Top 5 Achievements



1. Unprecedented Major Projects Investment Pipeline Briefings generate support
2. 2 year Skill Shortages research project launched
3. Defence advocacy and investment attraction activities gain momentum
4. Submissions put to NSW Government – Illawarra Election Priorities and Australian Government for Pre-Budget Submission
5. Leadership Illawarra Program onboards next cohort

Unprecedented Major Projects Investment Pipeline briefings generate support



The Illawarra region has an unprecedented level of transformative major projects/ infrastructure planned in the next 20 years.

Our analysis indicates we have a \$33 billion pipeline of major projects which is great news for jobs and growth. The projects are in the areas of renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, transport, health and commercial construction.

During this quarter, we have provided briefings and been encouraged by our stakeholders to continue working on finding solutions to the challenges of delivering these projects, especially the skilled construction workers required. We will need an additional 2,800 workers by January 2024, and up to 4,250 workers in 2029.



2 year Skill Shortages research project launched

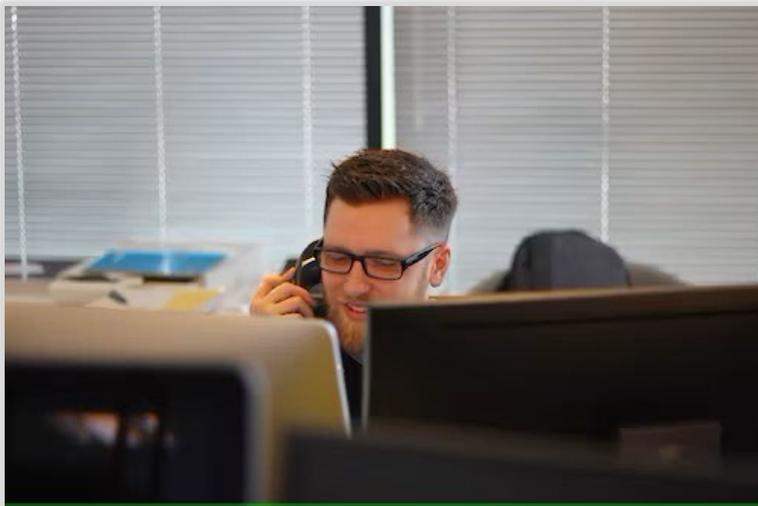
With growing demand for skilled workers in the Illawarra region, RDA Illawarra has invested in a two-year research program to deliver timely skills demand data at a local level.

The first Skilled Worker Demand Survey is **Open Now** with responses being taken by research partner EMRS by phone and online.

Contact admin@rdailawarra.com.au to find out more, arrange a phone survey or complete the online survey at this [link](#)

Findings from in-depth interviews with ten key industry bodies and regional employers revealed the following:

- There is an opportunity for more engagement with TAFE and UOW
- Workers moving into the region have high salary expectations
- There is a lack of affordable or available housing
- Illawarra labour market conditions are closely aligned to the Sydney market
- Lack of labour is creating constraints on major project delivery
- Heavy industry trades require specialised experience - importing trades from light manufacturing is not a ready-made solution
- The Illawarra lifestyle is a key attraction.



Defence advocacy and investment attraction activities gain momentum



Defence industry and investment attraction has been a key activity for RDA Illawarra during the last quarter.

Two strategies have been released, a major conference held and there is a significant opportunity for Illawarra businesses to gain a share of the \$32 billion defence industry spending.

RDA Illawarra contributed to the 10-year Defence Strategy by KPMG, recently launched by Business Illawarra.

The Defence Strategic Review was launched by the Australian Government.

RDA Illawarra welcomes the release of both Strategies and we look forward to continuing to work on Defence initiatives and advocacy, as we have done for the past decade.

Submissions put by RDA Illawarra to: NSW Government – Illawarra Election Priorities & Australian Government for Pre-Budget Submission

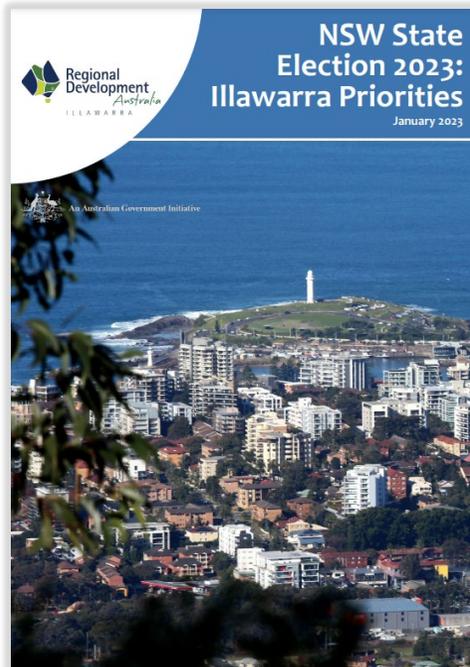


RDA Illawarra has used its considerable local knowledge and regional network to develop recommendations for the NSW State Government and Australian Government on four key themes:

- Development of the Port of Port Kembla
- Delivering critical Infrastructure
- Satisfying an ageing and growing Population and
- Fulfilling Housing demand

Read our Pre-Budget Submission to the **Australian Government** January 2023 [here](#)

Read our **NSW State Election 2023: Illawarra Priorities** January 2023 submission [here](#)



NSW State Election 2023 – Illawarra Priorities

Infrastructure

Picton Road Duplication

Divided Highway over full length – Productivity & Safety

Funding Request - \$650m

Picton and Mount Ousley Roads comprise a major freight connection between the Illawarra and Western Sydney.

Currently this 21km stretch of road is largely single lane, with only 18m of passing lanes divided over several sections.

Heavy vehicles make up 25% of the 30,000 daily vehicle movements along this vital arterial link, which operates at capacity during daily peaks. Growth in the adjacent Wilton and Macarthur growth areas is expected to deliver an additional 30,000 homes by 2040, placing further pressure on commuter corridors.

Picton Road is forecast to reach capacity by 2032 and should be upgraded to a four lane, divided carriageway along its entire length.

South-West Illawarra Rail Link (SWIRL)

Direct Rail Link from Port Kembla to South-West Sydney

Funding Request - \$30m

By 2045, the population of the Illawarra is forecast to grow by 65,000 and commuters to Greater Sydney will increase by 20,000.

Freight movements make up 40% of east-west peak road traffic and there is currently no rail alternative. A rail connection between Port Kembla and Western Sydney is needed to alleviate expected landslide freight congestion as Port Kembla expands.

This initiative urgently requires the funding and commissioning of a detailed network plan and business case to improve the resilience and connectivity of the Illawarra Shoalhaven's rail network, including clear timetables for delivery, detailed costings for each improvement and a complete investigation of the South-West Illawarra Rail Link concept.

Port Kembla

Port Precinct Master Plan

Develop an overall strategy for Port Kembla precinct and industrial lands

Funding Request - \$25m

The Port of Port Kembla is an economic asset of national significance, critical to the future economic growth and development of NSW. Port Kembla is currently underutilised and has capacity for growth. It is a deep-water harbour surrounded by large parcels of employment generating industrial land, presently vacant employment land gives growth opportunities.

The Port is NSW's largest motor vehicle import hub and bulk grain export interface, and has growing dry bulk, bulk liquid and general cargo. Significant developments are underway in the surrounding industrial precinct, including an LNG import terminal, a natural gas/hydrogen co-fired power station, renewable (wind) energy projects and manufacturing.

With several key landowners developing plans for their own land, holistic strategic master planning of the Port Kembla Industrial Precinct is needed to ensure long-term economic benefits are realised over the next 20 years. Once Port Botany reaches its operational capacity, Port Kembla could deliver a constant terminal for over five capacity by 2040.

There are significant major capital investment projects exist for the Port Precinct, including Defence infrastructure and renewable energy. If planned and implemented effectively, these capital investment projects will deliver substantial economic benefits to the Illawarra region, and beyond.

Effective coordination and planning are imperative to ensure that economic opportunities deliver significant long-term private sector investments, as well as creating high value jobs. RDA Illawarra is requesting funding for a forty-year Strategic Master Plan for the Port Kembla Industrial Precinct, which includes surrounding industrial lands at Unanderra and Kembla Grange.

NSW State Election 2023 – Illawarra Priorities

Population

Public Transport

Develop a 30-Minute City for residents of the Illawarra and provide a more liveable city

Funding Request - \$10m

The Illawarra Shoalhaven region is the third most populous in Regional NSW and, by 2041, the region's population is expected to increase by nearly 65,000 people, with most growth expected in the Wollongong and Shellharbour LGA's. Efficient, safe and effective public transport is key enabler to connect regionally significant precincts that provide jobs, housing, goods and entertainment. Some residents in these precincts will find employment close to home, but many will continue to travel for jobs and education in the regionally significant centres and employment lands.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven region is poorly served by public transport, with only 0.29 access points (bus/train/ferry stops) per thousand residents – seven times fewer than Newcastle/Macquarie area. As a result, over 88% of commuter trips are done by private vehicle. The lack of public transport services adversely contributes to cost of living pressures, which are currently at a record high.

RDA Illawarra believes there is an urgent need for 'More Services, More Trains and More Buses'. Additional public transport services should be delivered to ensure equity of access to those in the Illawarra Shoalhaven region. Inadequate access is exacerbated by poor interconnectivity of rail, bus and community transport timetables and outdated route planning.

\$10 million funding is requested to deliver 'More Services to the Illawarra Shoalhaven region, which is currently disadvantaged through inadequate public transport. More Services could include More Trains, as well as More Buses and peak time Express bus services from nodes in Shellharbour to Wollongong, and Dapto to Wollongong.

Housing

Housing

Addressing the housing shortage that is now both a social and economic issue for the region

500 additional social houses over 5 years

One consequence of COVID-related restrictions has been an exodus of people from major cities into regional areas. Latest regional population data indicates that over 5,000 people left Greater Sydney for other regional areas in the year to June 2023. More than 1,800 people resettled in the Illawarra region during that time.

The regional impact of this influx has been seen in increased house prices, rents and the low availability of dwellings; median house and unit prices have peaked at over 11M and weekly rents increased by nearly 50% to rival those being achieved in Sydney. Availability of rental properties has plummeted, with vacancy rates of less than 1%.

Social housing waiting times in the Illawarra local government areas range between 5 and 10 years for properties of any size, with over 1,500 general applicants awaiting placement in social housing as well as a further 300 on the priority waiting list. The shortage of suitable dwelling in the Illawarra is acute and chronic as a time when the region needs to attract and house a construction workforce estimated to peak at over 4,000 in the next decade for key infrastructure projects in steelmaking, renewable energy, gas, housing, energy and transport with a value of over \$1.5bn.

Recent Budget announcements regarding housing promise to address the issue, but details yet to be released on the location of additional homes under the National Housing Account, and for social and affordable housing funded by the Housing Australia Future Fund.

The Illawarra region has no shortage of available land for housing and RDA Illawarra is calling on the NSW Government to commit to the delivery of more social housing in the Illawarra to address the length of the waiting list and the expected waiting time.

Leadership Illawarra Program onboards next cohort

A new group of enthusiastic emerging leaders commenced the Leadership Illawarra Program in late January. They were inspired by Eddy De Gabriele, Chair of RDA Illawarra, at a successful leadership session and have attended many other events during the quarter.

The 27 participants are from a diverse range of Illawarra businesses and industries from small business to large corporates and not-for-profit organisations.



Successful Leadership session with RDA Illawarra Chair Eddy De Gabriele



*2023-24 LIP cohort pictured with LIP program partners
Image by Brad Chilby*



Networking with coffee at Longboard Café, Wollongong

RDA Illawarra, in partnership with



The Illawarra Connection



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA



Eddy De Gabriele
(Chair) Business Owner



Joanna Kubota
(Deputy Chair) Executive Director - The
Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils



Jessica De Angelis
Executive Officer - Illawarra Shoalhaven
Local Health District



Trish McClure
Board Member



RDA Illawarra Board & CEO

More information on the RDA Illawarra
Board members
can be found [here](#).

If you have any feedback or insights, please
contact us here:

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City Futures Directorate - Shoalhaven
City Council



Craig Osborne
Managing Partner - RMB Lawyers



Paul Wellings CBE
Emeritus Professor - UOW



Mark Roberts
Senior Manager Strategic Projects -
UOW



Daniel Rowan
Business Owner



Nicky Sloan
CEO - Community Industry Group



Milco Stojanovski
Manager Slabmaking, Australian Steel
Products - BlueScope



Debra Murphy
CEO - RDA Illawarra