

May 2016

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR WAGGA RAIL TRAIL

On behalf of Riverina Regional Tourism, it is with pleasure that I provide this letter of support for the proposed Wagga Rail Trail.

The proposed 21km sealed, off-road trail connecting the CBD of Wagga Wagga with the village of Ladysmith will mostly follow a disused rail line. Following a gentle gradient through rural countryside, the trail is safe and traffic-free, making it a trail that everyone can enjoy.

The Wagga Rail Trail will greatly enhance the city of Wagga Wagga and the Riverina region as a tourist destination. The project will promote the appeal of regional NSW and provide Wagga Wagga with a draw-card attraction that will assist in cementing the city's place on the tourism map. The new tourism attraction proposed with this project has the potential to increase visitation and economic development within our region.

RRT supports the project for a number of reasons, including its appeal to a wide target audience. It complements existing attractions in Wagga Wagga and is a reason for visitors to stay longer in our region. The proposed Wagga Rail Trail also aligns with a number of strategies outlined in the Riverina Destination Management Plan:

1. Develop nature-based tourism attractions

The development of nature-based tourism sites was identified as a key priority for product development in the Eastern Riverina.

2. Develop the Eastern Riverina as a 'hub and spoke' tourism destination

This strategy involves leveraging the significant visitor markets to Wagga Wagga through the development of day trips to nearby towns with interesting attractions, encouraging visitors to stay longer.

3. Increase the 'Visiting Friends and Relatives' market

The Wagga Rail Trail has the potential to increase the VFR market by adding something new to the list of things to see and do in our region. This keeps VFR travellers in our region longer, increasing their length of stay, which contributes to an increase in overnight visitor spending.

The proposed Wagga Rail Trail would be a welcome addition to tourism infrastructure in the region and assist to fulfil the recommendations of the Destination Management Plan. It has the potential to contribute significant economic benefits to the local community and the Riverina region. Riverina Regional Tourism is pleased to offer our support and look forward to continuing to work with the Wagga Rail Trail Committee to make this a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory N Lawrence".

Gregory N Lawrence
Chair