NSW Level Crossing Improvement Program

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Guidelines for regional council minor works (LCIP-RCMW)

Guidelines for NSW councils

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to outline the Program's objectives, eligibility criteria, assessment criteria, assessment processes and timeframes for councils.

The Level Crossing Improvement Program (LCIP) was established to fund a range of level crossing safety initiatives in NSW.

The guidelines outlined in this document refer to a sub-program called the Level Crossing Improvement Program - Regional Council Minor Works program (LCIP – RCMW) which will focus on minor works on local and regional road approaches to level crossings.

Transport for NSW (Transport) is seeking applications from NSW regional councils for minor low-cost engineering works and safety improvements on road approaches to level crossings. This document outlines the funding criteria and the process for councils to submit projects to Transport for funding consideration.

Transport may consider any unsuccessful projects for other future opportunities should funding become available.

1.2 Amendment of guidelines

The guidelines may be amended from time to time. When this happens, the changes will be communicated to all impacted stakeholders and published on the Transport website. Councils are expected to comply with the guidelines in place at the time of their application submission.

2. Program overview

2.1 Program background

The NSW Government aims to reduce the risk, incidence, and severity of incidents across the transport network and has set an aspirational goal of zero road trauma by 2056.

Central to moving towards zero fatalities and serious injuries on the NSW transport network is the Safe System approach. By focusing on each part of the system – safe people, safe roads, safe speeds, and safe vehicles — if one part of the system fails, the rest will protect people from being killed or seriously injured.

The Safe System approach is underpinned by the following principles:

- The human body has physical limits to withstanding the impact of a crash.
- People sometimes make mistakes, but this shouldn't cost anyone their life.
- Roads, roadsides, travel speeds and vehicles need to be designed to help avoid a crash or reduce the impact of a crash if it happens.

- Road safety is a shared responsibility. We all need to make decisions with safety in mind, from the design of our roads and vehicles, investments, laws, and education, to each road user acting safely every day.
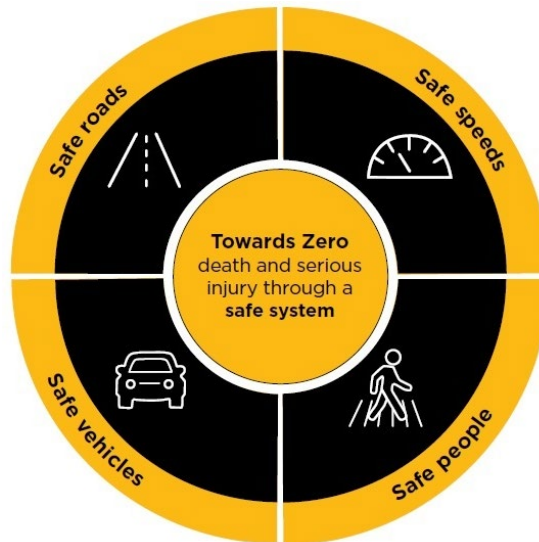
The NSW Level Crossing Strategy Council (LCSC) assists NSW to achieve the aspirational goal of towards zero trauma – and is committed to improving the safety of level crossings to move closer to this safer future.

The LCSC Strategic Plan 2021 – 2030 has been guided by the Safe System approach. It looks at the system of level crossings as a whole and provides a framework for consistent and coordinated action by road and rail agencies represented on the LCSC to achieve safer level crossings in NSW. The LCSC, State and Local Government road authorities, and Rail Infrastructure Managers (RIMs) will use the LCSC Strategic Plan to guide their work towards reducing risk at level crossings for a safe and efficient transport network across NSW.

All projects submitted for funding approval in NSW should align with the Safe System philosophy, the LCSC Strategic Plan and contribute to towards zero deaths and serious injuries.

2.2   Program information

This Program will be funded by the Level Crossing Improvement Program (LCIP), which has been established by Transport for NSW to improve level crossing safety across NSW. The LCIP currently receives $7.3m a year in funding, with a focus on accelerating major level crossings upgrades assessed as a priority for safety enhancements, and to fund safety education and enforcement campaigns.

Funding under the LCIP-RCMW is supplementary to the existing capital and maintenance programs of Rail Infrastructure Managers (RIMs) and agencies responsible for the management of roads to improve and maintain safety at the level crossings on their networks.

A total of $1M in funding is available across Regional NSW for the 2025/26 financial year to plan and deliver minor, low-cost works aimed at improving safety on council managed roads near public level crossings.

2.3 Project requirements

Transport is seeking applications from councils for safety improvement projects that can be developed and delivered by councils (or council sub-contractors) on council-managed roads.

Program objective:

Applications should align with the objective of the Program which is to improve road safety around public level crossings.

Eligibility requirements:

Applications for funding must comply with the criteria outlined in the Eligibility sections below in section 2.4 and section 3.

2.4 Road and rail boundaries

Council shall discuss any works proposed within the rail corridor with the relevant Rail Infrastructure Manager (RIM) as there may be additional requirements under the Rail Safety National Law. If the rail corridor is not fenced, then assume the rail corridor extends approximately 15 metres from the outermost rail on both approaches to the level crossing unless otherwise stated in the interface agreement.

For a project with works inside the rail corridor to be eligible for funding consideration, Councils must attach a written letter of support from the RIM to the project nomination. The treatment undertaken within the rail corridor must also comply with the list of eligible treatments listed in section 3.2.

1. Please refer to Section 3.1 of this guideline to access the NSW Public Level Crossing link to assist with identifying the applicable RIM for each public level crossing.

3. Eligibility

3.1 Who can apply for funding?

Only public level crossings in regional NSW are eligible for funding. This includes Newcastle, Central Coast and Wollongong. Level crossings located in councils in Greater Sydney are not eligible.

A list of eligible local government areas is shown in Appendix A. Please note that LGA's with no level crossings are not listed in Appendix A. A map of the public level crossings

in an LGA can be found at the NSW Public Level Crossing Finder by entering a local government area into the search box.

3.2 Types of work eligible under the Program

- The works proposed must be on a local or regional road.
- Proposed works must be on road approaches to operational level crossings. Any works within the rail corridor require written support from the relevant RIM.
- All minor works submitted for funding must focus on improving level crossing safety.

It is expected that any works developed under this program would be in accordance with Australian Standard 1742.7 (2016), Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, Part 7: Railway Crossings

The scope of minor works permitted under this Program are listed below:

- Remediation to the level crossing surroundings to increase sighting distances including permanent removal of vegetation and other items affecting sighting distances.
- Advanced warning signage, line marking and delineation on road approach.
- Installing Vehicle Activated Signage (VAS) on road approach.
- Minor realignment of road approach to improve sighting distance.
- Removing solid materials.
- Installing new or upgrading existing street lighting near a level crossing.
- Upgrading of existing pedestrian level crossing approaches adjacent to a road or at standalone pedestrian level crossing sites.
- Installing treatments to slow traffic (traffic calming) (but not speed limit reductions See "Have your say about speed limits").

3.3 Types of work not eligible under the Program

- Works relating to private level crossings
- Works on roads that interface with an inactive/non-operational rail line.
- Projects with awarded contracts for construction or already commenced construction.
- Works within the rail corridor that do not have written support from the relevant RIM.
- Works to rail infrastructure associated with the interface that are the responsibility of the RIM such as primary traffic control devices.

3.4 Eligible costs

Costs must be directly related to the development and implementation of the project scope outlined in the application.

3.5 Non-eligible costs

The funding request must not include:

- ongoing maintenance costs associated with a project
- costs associated with works not listed as eligible treatments above
- costs associated with works on private land not accessible by the public.

4. Timeframes

4.1   Delivery timeframes

Applications for the Program close 5pm, Friday 2 May, 2025 with successful councils expected to be notified by the end of May 2025.

Minor works projects should be short term in nature, and must be completed in the following timeframes:

- Design and planning approvals must be complete within six months of the project's successful notification letter.
- Provision of a Post-Completion Report (PCR) must occur within three months of the completion of construction.

All projects must be finalised (including PCR submitted to Transport) by **30 June 2026**.

Failure to comply with the timeframes is a breach of the funding conditions.

4.2   Key dates for submission and assessment

Key dates - estimated timeline	Date
Launch and consultation period opens	17/03/2025
Submission period closes	02/05/2025
Successful Announcements	by 30/05/2025
All projects completed by	30/06/2026

For approved projects, Transport will organise the execution of a Funding Deed between Transport and the relevant council. Transport will then establish projects within its financial system to enable payment of approved funding in accordance with the executed Funding Deed.

Councils can request feedback on their submission by writing to CouncilLXMinorWorks@transport.nsw.gov.au

5. Funding

5.1   Funding overview

Program funding

A total of $1 million in funding across regional NSW is available in 2025/2026, and all eligible councils are encouraged to apply. If additional funding becomes available, councils may be awarded further projects.

Project funding

A maximum of $200,000 will be awarded for each successful project. To balance high safety benefits and equitable funding distribution, Transport may limit the number of projects awarded to each council.

5.2 Co-contributions

Collaboration and co-funding from other organisations are strongly encouraged. Councils must list all funding sources contributing to the project.

Councils are required to submit written confirmation of any funding co-contributions for projects at the application stage.

6. Application process and selection criteria

6.1 Overview

This section outlines how councils can submit applications for the program, the assessment process and application outcomes.

It is expected that councils will have undertaken appropriate collaboration with key stakeholders (such as the Rail infrastructure Manager and, adjacent property owners) prior to submitting a nomination.

6.2 Supporting evidence

Applications must be completed with the following information for each project:

- Basic information about the project – including, but not limited to:
  - project location (including GPS co-ordinates)
  - photos
  - consultation with relevant authorities (RIMs etc)
  - description of the proposed scope of works
- Road traffic counts for the project location if available.
- Project timeline for delivery, including expected start and finish dates.
- Cost estimates, funding sought from Transport and details of any co-contributions.
- Evidence of an interface agreement, or a commitment to seeking to enter into an interface agreement by the time the infrastructure works are complete.
- Any relevant community, emergency services, or other agency consultation and feedback to support the project.
- A summary of expected safety outcomes.
- A summary of expected benefits to the community.
- Engineering report(s) and/or risk assessments if available

- Co-contributions details and supporting evidence.
- Written support from the relevant RIM for any works proposed in the rail corridor.
- Any other supporting evidence including audits, risk assessments, or reports that have identified non-compliances to Australian Standards or other relevant standards.

6.3   How and where to apply for funding

Applications must be submitted through the online grants managements system – https://transportrom.smartygrants.com.au/CouncilLXMinorWorks

Applications for the Program open from Monday 17 March 2025 and close 5pm, Friday 2 May 2025. Late submissions will not be accepted unless agreed to prior to the closing date.

Councils must provide all mandatory information in the application form and are encouraged to provide additional materials to support their case in relation to the assessment criteria.

Councils may withdraw an application at any time, with written advice of the withdrawal to be provided to Transport via email to CouncilLXMinorWorks@transport.nsw.gov.au.

Any queries about submission of applications can be sent via email to CouncilLXMinorWorks@transport.nsw.gov.au

The NSW Government may refuse to consider any application not received as outlined above.

6.4   Application assessment process and panel

Each project will be subject to a competitive merit-based assessment process based on eligibility criteria and assessment criteria to enable selection of projects which meet the Program objective of improving road safety around public level crossings.

Applications will be assessed by a panel formed within Transport. The panel will review all applications based on the principles and priorities outlined in these guidelines, including assessment of project eligibility (see section 3); adherence to program delivery timeframes (see section 4) and adherence to funding guidelines (see section 2).

The assessment panel will then prioritise eligible applications.

Project allocations are subject to the discretion and recommendation of the assessment panel, maximising the impact of eligible projects within the Program budget.

After completing the application assessments, the panel will submit recommendations to the Chief Centres for Road Safety and Maritime Safety, as the chair of the Level Crossing Strategy Council (LCSC), for approval.

The decision of the Chair on behalf of the Level Crossing Strategy Council is final. The LCSC may also, at its discretion, choose not to award funding to projects that may meet the criteria.

The Chief Centres for Road Safety and Maritime Safety as Chair of the LCSC is the final decision maker and at their discretion, they may introduce modifications to grant terms, conditions, or allocations consistent with these guidelines. Transport may request additional information from the council to help further support the submission.

6.5 Assessment criteria and weighting

Criteria	Weighting	Source
Australian Level Crossing Assessment Model (ALCAM) rating for the Level Crossing	20%	Transport
Safety incident data (crashes and near misses near the level crossing)	15%	Transport
Safety and community benefits of the nominated project	15%	Derived from Council's application
Value for money and project deliverability	25%	Derived from Council's application
Evidence of identified defects e.g. audits, engineering report(s), risk assessments, photos, letters of support	25%	Derived from Council's application and supporting documentation

6.6 Notification regarding application

Councils will be informed in writing if they were successful or unsuccessful at the end of May 2025.

Councils can request feedback on their submission by writing to CouncilLXMinorWorks@transport.nsw.gov.au

7. Approved projects grant management

7.1 Grant agreement

Successful councils will receive a Funding Deed detailing the terms and conditions of the funding agreement, which will encompass crucial milestones, among other aspects.

7.2 Grant payment

Transport will be responsible for making milestone payments to successful councils in accordance with the reporting milestones outlined in the schedule.

Milestone	Percentage of funding payment	Financial milestone	Documentation to be provided
Milestone 1	50%	Agreement and initial planning	• Execution of Deed
Milestone 2	50%	Project completion	• Project Completion Report (including benefits

			realised, photographic before and after evidence, and summary of final costs)

7.3   Payments and reporting

Councils must provide Transport with monthly forecasting and actual expenditure reports providing progress on each project, including estimated completion date.

When milestones are scheduled for payment, evidence documenting the achievement of the milestone must be submitted to Transport as outlined below. Progress will be monitored by Transport with site visits where necessary.

7.4   Variations

- Funding is specific and not transferrable.
- Additional funding beyond the approved amount is not available.

Any variations to project scope or extensions of time for successful projects can be submitted but will need to be approved by Transport and should not seek additional funding.

The use of unspent funding will be at the discretion of Transport and will generally be required to be returned to Transport.

In instances where councils wish to cancel or withdraw projects from an approved project list, they must inform Transport in writing and seek formal approval.

Further information about project variations will be communicated to successful grant recipients at a later stage.

8.   Program governance

8.1   Benefits realisation

The Program will measure benefits throughout the project delivery and post completion. Councils may be required to provide the NSW Government with substantiating evidence regarding the realisation of key benefits and project outcomes during project delivery and post-completion. Additionally, the NSW Government may choose certain projects for a comprehensive assessment of benefits both during project delivery and after completion. Further information will be provided to successful grant recipients.

8.2   Ethical conduct and fraud control

Transport has a zero-tolerance approach to fraud and corruption and all staff are expected to call out behaviour which may be corrupt or unethical. All aspects of this Program will be subject to TfNSW Fraud and Corruption Control Policy. Transport commits to fraud and corruption prevention by:

- proactively identifying and managing corruption risks and applying appropriate controls
- honouring and embedding the Transport Code of Conduct and the Code of Ethics and Conduct for NSW Government Sector Employees by promoting staff awareness of fraud and corruption and its triggers
- fostering a culture of ethical safety by supporting and protecting people who report misconduct and praising those who identify ethical safety risks and issues.

8.3 Confidentiality and disclosure

Information submitted by councils may be provided to other organisations for the purpose of assessment as outlined in the LCIP-RCMW Guidelines. In addition, the details of successful projects may be made publicly available by Transport or the NSW Government under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW). Information from applications may also be used for research and analysis purposes.

Councils should identify any information submitted which they wish to be considered as confidential, supported by reasons for the request. Transport reserve the right to accept or refuse a request to treat information as confidential.

8.4 Government Information (Public Access) Act

Councils should be aware that information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)*. Information that is deemed to be commercially sensitive will be withheld. The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)* makes government information accessible to the public by:

- enquiring government agencies to make certain sorts of information freely available

- encouraging government agencies to release as much other information as possible

- giving the public an enforceable right to make access applications for government information

- restricting access to information only when there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

8.5 Probity

It is important to Transport and the NSW Government that we avoid bias and the perception of bias, and other probity issues in the operation of these projects.

Any information which would have a material impact on the decision to assess or approve an application must be disclosed in the application. This includes any actual or perceived conflict of interest within the submission under the question seeking any additional

information. The panel will review any conflicts of interest and may seek further information from councils. Decisions around conflicts of interest will be presented to the Chair of the Level Crossing Strategy Council for resolution.

Failing to declare relevant information or making a false declaration on the application will make it ineligible for funding under the LCIP.

Transport staff must comply with the following policies to manage conflicts of interests relating to grants to support probity and transparency:

- Code of Ethics and Conduct for NSW Government Sector Employees
- Transport Code of Conduct
- Transport Conflicts of Interest Policy.

9 Public information

9.1 Public information

Formal public statements, media releases or statements, displays, publications and advertising made in NSW must acknowledge and give appropriate recognition to the contribution of the NSW Government to that project. Further information will be provided to successful grant recipients.

9.2 Publication of grant information

Transport will publish all information related to the LCIP–RCMW program on its website including, but not limited to:

- upcoming grant opportunities
- open grant opportunity guidelines
- all grants awarded
- the exercise of Ministerial discretion in making grant decisions that vary from the recommendation of officials, including the reasons for any such decision
- program evaluations.

10 Contact details

10.1 Contact us

Questions about this Program, including eligibility and the application process, can be emailed to CouncilLXMinorWorks@transport.nsw.gov.au

10.2 Complaint handling

Transport is committed to responding appropriately to complaints and feedback. Written complaints can be sent via email to CouncilLXMinorWorks@transport.nsw.gov.au

Complaints will be responded to within 21 days of receipt. Where this is not possible, due to the nature of the enquiry, Transport will:

- inform the stakeholder of the time needed to provide a final response

- provide a name and telephone number to call for further queries.

Any personal information shared through the complaints process will only be used to investigate and respond to that feedback in accordance with the Transport for NSW Privacy Policy. For more information visit our privacy page: Transport privacy | Transport for NSW.

Disclaimer

Before applying for funding under this fund or making any decision, councils should seek advice from their legal, business, and financial advisers to determine their eligibility for, and the terms of the funding.

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Transport recommends that users exercise care and use their own skill and judgment in using information from this publication and that users carefully evaluate the accuracy, currency, completeness, and relevance of such information.

Users should take steps to independently verify the information in this publication and, where appropriate, seek professional advice.

The LCIP-RCMW documents are subject to change at any time at the discretion of Transport.

11   Appendix

11.1   Appendix A - Eligible Local Government Areas

Appendix A – Eligible local government areas with level crossings

North	South	West
Hunter & Central Coast:	**South East Coast Precinct:**	**East Precinct:**
Central Coast	Kiama Municipal	Bathurst Regional
Cessnock City	Shellharbour City	Blayney Shire
Dungog Shire	Shoalhaven City	Blue Mountains City
Lake Macquarie	Wollongong City	Lithgow City
Maitland City	**South East Tablelands Precinct:**	Mid-Western Regional
Mid-Coast	Goulburn Mulwaree	**Central West Precinct:**
Newcastle City	Hilltops	Cabonne
New England Precinct:	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional	Coonamble Shire
Armidale Regional	Upper Lachlan Shire	Cowra
Gunnedah Shire	Wingecarribee Shire	Dubbo Regional
Gwydir Shire	Yass Valley	Forbes Shire
Liverpool Plains Shire	**Riverina Murray Precinct:**	Gilgandra Shire
Muswellbrook Shire	Albury City	Lachlan Shire
Singleton	Berrigan Shire	Narromine Shire
Tamworth Regional	Bland Shire	Orange City
Upper Hunter Shire	Carrathool Shire	Parkes Shire
Uralla Shire	Coolamon Shire	Warren Shire
Walcha	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional	Warrumbungle Shire
North Coast Precinct:	Edward River	Weddin Shire
Bellingen Shire	Federation	**Far West Precinct:**
Clarence Valley	Greater Hume Shire	Bogan Shire
Coffs Harbour City	Griffith City	Broken Hill City
Kempsey Shire	Junee Shire	Central Darling Shire
Kyogle	Leeton Shire	Cobar Shire
Nambucca Shire	Lockhart Shire	Moree Plains Shire
Port Macquarie-Hastings	Murray River	Narrabri Shire
Richmond Valley	Narrandera Shire	Unincorporated
	Temora Shire	Walgett Shire
	Wagga Wagga City	