Media Release

Adam Giles
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory

Barkly buzzing with economic opportunity

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The Territory Government has congratulated the people of Tennant Creek on their proactive efforts to attract new economic opportunities to the region, including a possible gas pipeline and new rail corridor.

“It was great to see such a big turnout of Barkly residents and business people at a public information forum about the proposed gas pipeline in Tennant Creek today,” Chief Minister Adam Giles said.

“I want to thank the Regional Economic Development Committee (REDC) for hosting this fantastic event and playing an active role in shaping the future of their community.

“The Committee has been active in calling for an infrastructure corridor to Mount Isa in Queensland that would help unlock potential for mining, increase tourism and Defence opportunities.”

A Tennant Creek Mt Isa Cross Border Alliance has been formed to explore the regional economic benefits of an infrastructure corridor, including the gas pipeline.

“The REDC has been busy forming relationships with business, community and political leaders in Mount Isa who share their enthusiasm for these projects,” Mr Giles said.

“Many of those leaders attended today’s forum in Tennant Creek including Mt Isa Mayor Tony McGrady and local Member Rob Katter. It was a practical demonstration of what Northern Australia Development is truly all about.”

It is estimated that the Territory has more than 200 trillion cubic feet of gas resources in six onshore basins.

This is potentially enough gas to power Australia for more than 200 years and amounts to reserves almost 20 times the size of the Ichthys LNG Project. There is also more than 30 trillion cubic feet of gas offshore.

“The North East Gas Interconnector is a critical piece of economic development infrastructure and a priority Major Project for the NT Government,” Mr Giles said.
"After an evaluation by an expert panel in March this year, four private sector proposals have been shortlisted for the project with companies considering several routes including Tennant Creek to Mount Isa.

“The Government now believes the project is almost certain to go ahead. We are hoping to have a preferred proponent chosen by the end of the year with the aim of having the pipeline constructed and commissioned by mid-2018.”

In the recent Territory Budget, the Government also committed $1 million over two years for a feasibility study into a potential new rail project linking Tennant Creek and Mount Isa.

“Together these projects would mean real jobs in our regions, driving infrastructure development and new roads, as well as lowering the cost of living for Territorians,” Mr Giles said.

“After years of neglect, the Barkly Region is now a hub of activity, with several infrastructure projects currently underway including a new youth accommodation facility, a new pool, new subdivisions and police stations.

“Tennant Creek has never looked better and there’s a palpable excitement in the community about the opportunities ahead. It’s a dramatic turnaround after a decade of neglect and disinterest under the former Labor Government.”

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