



**HUNTER JO  
PROGRAM REPORT**  
APRIL 2021

This publication was produced by the Hunter Joint Organisation.



#### **ENQUIRIES**

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#### **SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHIC CITATION**

Hunter JO Program Report (April 2021), Hunter Joint Organisation, Thornton NSW.

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# THE HUNTER JO

## WHO ARE WE

The Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO) is a collaborative body that brings together the ten councils in the region to provide a united and local voice for our communities. As the hub for local intergovernmental collaboration, our statutory mandate includes identifying key regional strategic priorities, advocating for these priorities, and building collaborations around these priorities with other levels of government, industry and community.

## OUR STATUTORY FUNCTIONS

Our statutory functions defined by the NSW Local Government Amendment (Regional Joint Organisations) Act 2017 comprise:

- Regional Strategic planning and priority setting
- Regional leadership and advocacy
- Intergovernmental collaboration

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

As the hub for local intergovernmental collaboration, we strengthen our communities by being the local voice on strategic issues in the Region.

## HUNTER JO BOARD

Our Board is made up of members from each of our member councils, with each Mayor as a voting representative, and the General Managers of each of the councils in a non-voting capacity. Our Board also includes a representative from NSW Government.



## OUR TEAM

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## REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY

### MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENTS

MINISTER	DATE	FOCUS OF ENGAGEMENT
Stuart Ayres - NSW Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney	16 March 2021	Shiraz to Shore Project
Matt Kean – NSW Minister for Energy & Environment	24 February 2021	Hunter 2050 Foundation
Minister Tudehope – NSW Minister for Finance and Small Business	17 February 2021	Focus of meeting

### REGIONAL SUBMISSIONS

SUBMISSION FOCUS	CLOSING DATE	STATUS
Preparing environmental management plans for contaminated land.	16 March 2021	Shiraz to Shore Project
Technical submission provided to draft EPA practice note providing detailed guidance on the preparation of environmental management plans for management of contaminated land.	10 March 2021 (extension requested)	In progress

### MEDIA

SUBMISSION FOCUS	CLOSING DATE
<p><b>HUNTER COULD BE CAUGHT-SHORT BY EARLY POWER STATION CLOSURES</b></p> <p>Focus: Reports of early coal-fired power station closures in the region should trigger accelerated diversification efforts for the Hunter, including the establishment of the Hunter 2050 Foundation.</p> <p>Full media release: <a href="https://www.hunterjo.com.au/news/media-statements/">https://www.hunterjo.com.au/news/media-statements/</a></p>	8th March 2021
<p><b>HUNTER REGION TAKES COFFEE CIRCULAR WITH GREEN CAFFEEN</b></p> <p>Focus: Swap-and-go coffee cup scheme, Green Caffein, has launched a partnership with Hunter Joint Organisation. Seven councils in the region are participating, with the scheme adding to the Hunter Joint Organisation's commitment to the circular economy and waste reduction.</p> <p>Full media release: <a href="https://www.hunterjo.com.au/news/media-statements/">https://www.hunterjo.com.au/news/media-statements/</a></p>	11th February 2021

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION

### REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND NETWORKS

During the reporting period Hunter JO staff have hosted or participated in the following regional networks and committees.

MINISTER	DATE
Hunter Regional Plan Steering Committee	DPIE
Urban Development Program Committee	DPIE
Transition Hunter Central Coast (HCC) working group	DPIE
Metropolitan Regional Waste Coordinators Group	DPIE (EPA)
Coastal Practitioners Working Group	DPIE
Hunter JO Regional Economic Development Forum	Hunter JO
Hunter RMS Reference Group (Project)	Hunter JO
Hunter JO Regional Economic Transition Standing Committee	Hunter JO
Greater Newcastle Metro Plan Steering Committee	City of Newcastle
Cities Power Partnership (CPP) Regional Workshop	Hunter JO
Regional Contaminated Land Working Group	Hunter JO
Hunter Regional Waste Strategy Group	Hunter JO
Regional Planning Forum	Hunter JO
Smart Region Forum	Hunter JO
Hunter JO Circular Economy Sub-Committee	Hunter JO
Hunter Circular Facilitators Group	Hunter JO/DPIE
Hunter Water Regional Water Plan Advisory Committee	Hunter Water
NSW JO Chairs Forum	JO Network
JO Network EOs Meetings	JO Network
Climate Action Professional Officers Group NSW	LG NSW
Multicultural NSW Joint RAC	Multicultural NSW
Resources NSW - Steering Committee (NSW Energy & Resources Knowledge Hub)	NIER / University of Newcastle
EPA Local Government Advisory Group	NSW EPA
RLE Human Services Sub-Committee	Regional NSW
Hunter & Central Coast Regional Leadership Executive	Regional NSW
Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Working Group	Regional NSW
Upper Hunter Futures Working Group (Project CG)	Regional NSW
Business Attraction Committee	Regional NSW
RLE Recovery & Resilience Sub-Committee	Regional NSW
Project Control Group Hunter Identity and Positioning	Regional NSW
Hunter Identity and Positioning Local Government Reference Group	Regional NSW
RLE Economic Development Sub-Committee	Regional NSW
Hunter Industry Roundtable	Regional NSW
Hunter Education and Training Sub-Committee	Training Services NSW
Hunter Sport and Recreation Group	NSW Office of Sport

# STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PRIORITY SETTING

## STATUS OF REGIONAL GRANTS AND FUNDING SUBMISSIONS

FUNDING PROGRAM	PROJECT TITLE	AMOUNT	STATUS
Increasing Resilience to Climate Change Grant (Round 3) LG NSW	<p><b>ACT NOW ON ADAPTATION: COASTAL WISE COMMUNITIES</b></p> <p>This project aims to develop a communication framework and supporting resources around coastal hazards across the region's coastal councils.</p>	\$120,000	Successful
Bushfire Community Recovery & Resilience Fund Phase 2 (Resilience NSW)	<p><b>TRANSFORMING RESILIENCE WITH THE INTEGRATED PLANNING &amp; REPORTING FRAMEWORK</b></p> <p>This project would provide an innovative approach to support our bush fire affected Councils to embed resilience principles and projects into their IP&amp;R which in turn will provide Council the ability to allocate recurrent funds and commit to long term resourcing (financial and staff) for resilience projects.</p>	\$300,000	Pending
	<p><b>SIMTABLES FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT</b></p> <p>Simtables provide a "State of the Art" tool that can be used to engage communities in localised place-based emergency information sessions. This project seeks to purchase a Simtable for the collective use of member Councils and to provide direct support to Councils in undertaking the extensive community engagement associated with their use.</p>	\$300,000	Pending
Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (Regional NSW)	<p><b>HUNTER 2050 FOUNDATION</b></p> <p>Establishment of the 2050 Foundation aims to manage industrial change in the region, by leading investment and redevelopment as well as helping businesses and workers seize new opportunities. Funding has been sought to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support initial cost of design and feasibility work, at both the organisational and project level, for new energy, agribusiness and SME transformation and growth in the region,</li> <li>• Deliver supply chain transition support to 30 highly vulnerable businesses in the region; and</li> <li>• Support up to 2000 workers in making critical career transitions, as the economy recovers and begins to transform.</li> </ul>	\$4,000,000	Pending



Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (Regional NSW) Cont.	<p><b>ACCELERATING EVENT ECONOMIES</b></p> <p>This project seeks to strengthen the region’s collective voice and the capacity of Councils to collaboratively pitch for major events for the region. It includes undertaking an events and opportunity audit, and identifying, preparing and implementing shared destination and event management resources including an event managers toolkit, prospectus, website and integrated council shared services, approvals and event data.</p>	\$861,476	Pending
	<p><b>HUNTER BIOCIRCULAR</b></p> <p>This focuses on delivering concept plans for 4 multi-element circular economy waste processing precincts in the region. Each precinct would represent a key part of the Hunter and outline the potential for circular processing, green energy and value-added businesses delivering diversified employment opportunities and new industries to the Hunter.</p>	\$300,000	Pending
	<p><b>SHIRAZ TO SHORE</b></p> <p>Significant opportunity exists to link existing and planned cycleway infrastructure across member Councils; to create an integrated region wide network. This would provide both a valuable region wide recreational resource for residents, and the foundation upon which to generate economic and business development by holistically promoting the region as a key cycling destination. This project would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather all existing cycle tourism experiences across the Hunter Region, including mountain biking, road and recreation cycling opportunities and package them up into a cohesive cycle tourism plan including a brand, marketing plan, product development, training and website; and</li> <li>• Develop the concept and planning for a connected cycling trail called “Shiraz to Shore” extending over 100km among the vineyards of the Hunter Valley, through heritage towns and rail trails to the beach and lake experiences of the Hunter. Funding will also be sought for a build program that could construct all sections of the Shiraz to Shore Trail, including the Richmond Vale Rail Trail section.</li> </ul>	\$19,515,600	Pending

# PROGRAM ACTIVITY REPORT

The following Activity Report provides an update on the status and nature of current programs and activities being undertaken by the Hunter JO, covering the period July 2020 to present. Reporting is provided against each of the priority Action Areas included in the Hunter Joint Organisation's Strategic Plan 2018-21.

## ASPIRE. ACT. ACHIEVE.





## **ACTION AREA 1: Our communities stay inclusive, proud and safe and celebrate diversity**

### **1.1 Develop an engaging online presence which tells the stories of the diverse places and people which make up the Hunter Region**

#### **HUNTER JOINT ORGANISATION WEBSITE**

**PURPOSE:** The Hunter Joint Organisation website (<https://www.hunterjo.com.au/>) aims to actively, regularly and effectively engage member Councils, partner organisations and the broader community on the activities and progress of the Hunter JO.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Ongoing review and updating of website news and content

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity

### **1.2 Work with the Department of Planning and Environment, Hunter Valley Research Foundation and other partners to closely monitor housing affordability in the region and identify key areas of concern**

#### **URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GREATER NEWCASTLE COMMITTEE**

**PURPOSE:** The Urban Development Program Greater Newcastle Committee's primary objective is to provide advice to State Government on matters relating to the supply and servicing of land for residential development, to meet short and longer-term demand across the Greater Newcastle subregion. The UDP Greater Newcastle Committee applies to the local government areas of Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Newcastle and Port Stephens.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Commencing November 2020, the Hunter JO is now represented on the Committee.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity

### **1.3 Develop and implement a targeted program to advocate for measures to improve housing affordability in the region**

#### **URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GREATER NEWCASTLE COMMITTEE**

There are currently no active programs for this action.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Not yet started (subject to resourcing)

#### 1.4 Continue to work together to deliver the programs to increase community resilience and preparedness for natural disasters through the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy

##### REGIONAL DISASTER PREPAREDNESS OFFICER PROGRAM

**PURPOSE:** To support Councils increase their capacity and capability to prepare, respond to and recover from disasters through:

- Improving collaboration between local councils and agencies
- Strengthening Council local emergency management plans
- Establishing local recovery plans
- Identifying priority systems, strategies and investments (within and across Councils) to mitigate risks
- Integrating climate change adaptation strategies into emergency management systems
- Establishing regional networks focussed on building Council and community resilience

##### ACTIVITY:

- Disaster Dashboards have been prepared for all Hunter JO member Councils and Central Coast Council. These websites provide a consistent platform across Council areas that consolidate emergency information and alerts, utility outages, basic preparedness advice and local recovery information into one location. At this point in time Councils who have activated their Disaster Dashboard include Central Coast, Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, MidCoast, City of Newcastle and Port Stephens. The Regional Disaster Preparedness Officer will continue to work with councils to support them to release their dashboards. A training resource and online forum will also be developed to assist Council communication and IT staff become dashboard “superusers”.
- Two forums were delivered December 2020 focused on building awareness of Local Government Emergency Management Arrangements. Participants represented a variety of roles including General Managers, Directors, Local Emergency Management Officers & Deputies, Control Room Operators, Community Engagement Managers, Resilience Officers, and Community Development Officers.
- Get Ready branding and resources have been prepared for all Councils in the Hunter JO and Central Coast Council. A “Get Ready” for Summer social media resource pack was provided to Councils in December 2020. The next round of Get Ready information materials focusing on “Get Ready - Animals” will be provided to Councils in March 2021. Get Ready is a program run by Resilience NSW and the State Government to generate participation in disaster preparedness activities, with the aim of improving the disaster resilience of people in NSW
- Hunter JO staff and the Regional Disaster Preparedness Officer are represented on the recently established Hunter-Central Coast RLE Resilience and Recovery Subcommittee, which is jointly convened by Regional NSW and Resilience NSW. The Subcommittee has met twice since December 2020, and a working group has been established to refine the Regional Recovery Action Plan in line with identified short and long-term priorities.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress (funded until March 2022)

##### REGIONAL COMMUNITY DISASTER VULNERABILITY MAPPING

**PURPOSE:** To integrate and analyse spatial datasets (demographics, infrastructure and natural hazard characteristics) to identify relative community vulnerability to a range of natural hazards at a local community (Statistical Area) scale across the region.

##### PROJECT OUTPUTS:

- Spatial datasets and mapping. A strategy for disseminating project outputs to Councils is currently being formulated.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Complete

## DISASTER READY COUNCILS PROJECT

**PURPOSE:** To develop a suite of guideline resources to raise awareness and build the capacity of Councils to become “Disaster Ready” (i.e. to anticipate the risks posed by natural disasters; regularly identify and review strategies to address risks; and actively implement and test these strategies across the range of functions and services Council provides).

**ACTIVITY:**

- Draft documents currently under review to look at required updates to reflect changing environment around disasters and to incorporate the linkages with Council’s Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework and core service requirements.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In Progress

## TRANSFORMING RESILIENCE WITH THE INTEGRATED PLANNING & REPORTING FRAMEWORK PROJECT

**PURPOSE:** To provide an innovative approach to support bush fire affected member Councils embed resilience principles and projects into their IP&R, which in turn will provide Council the ability to allocate recurrent funds and commit to long term resourcing (financial and staff) for resilience projects.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Submission of grant application to deliver project lodged under the NSW Government’s Bushfire Community Recovery & Resilience Fund Phase 2 (Resilience NSW)

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Delivery Subject to External Approval and/or Funding - Advice Pending

## SIMTABLES FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

**PURPOSE:** Simtables provide a “State of the Art” tool that can be used to engage communities in localised place-based emergency information sessions. This project seeks to purchase a Simtable for the collective use of member Councils and to provide direct support to Councils in undertaking the extensive community engagement associated with their use.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Submission of grant application to deliver project lodged under the NSW Government’s Bushfire Community Recovery & Resilience Fund Phase 2 (Resilience NSW)

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Delivery Subject to External Approval and/or Funding - Advice Pending



## **ACTION AREA 2:**

**Our enviable environment is protected for future generations and our resources are used efficiently**

### **2.1 Continue to work together to deliver the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy**

#### **REGIONAL CONTAMINATED LAND PROGRAM**

**PURPOSE:** To build capacity and capability of Councils to manage contaminated sites on private and Council managed land, and to support councils transition to their new role as regulator of the Underground Petroleum Storage System (UPSS) Regulation.

#### **ACTIVITY:**

1. Continuing to convene and facilitate regular meetings of Regional Contaminated Land Working Group (encompassing the former UPSS Transition Working Group) comprising representatives from all HJO member Councils
2. Provision of technical advice to Councils (i.e. a Helpdesk) on issues involving contaminated land management (land use planning, UPSS and public land management)
3. Delivering supporting documentation to build capacity of Council staff and raise the level of compliance of UPSS sites handed over to Councils by NSW EPA. These include:
  - Standard Conditions of development consent
  - Template Fuel System Operation Plan (FSOP) Guide
  - UPSS Procedures
  - UPSS Risk Assessment Template
  - Conducting an Initial Review of the Potential for Contamination in Planning Approvals Processes
  - Initiating the Investigation, Remediation and Site Audit Process.
4. Piloting design and development (prior to broader regional roll out) of a Contaminated Land Information database with Cessnock and Maitland Councils. This includes:
  - Development of regionally consistent classification categories
  - Sourcing information on a regional basis to populate new and/or upgraded information systems
5. Raising issues and queries identified by Councils to the attention of relevant NSW government agencies and Industry bodies, particularly on matters that lack implementation guidance (e.g. UPSS regulation)
6. Co-ordinating and facilitating joint responses in order to influence NSW statutory guidelines, including:
  - Draft Guidelines for consultants reporting on contaminated land
  - Draft Guidelines for Implementing the Protection of the Environment Operations (Underground Petroleum Storage Systems) Regulation 2019.
7. Delivered on-site UPSS Inspection training program to all HJO member and Central Coast Councils.
8. Facilitation of online sessions exploring the role of laboratories in contaminated land, as well as the prevalence of fraudulent reporting
9. Workshops and New Guideline Released - Conducting an Initial Review by Council and Initiating the Investigation, Remediation and Site Audit Process to determine whether contamination needs to be addressed during the assessment of a Planning Application (as required by SEPP 55).
10. An online technical Q&A Session between 45 staff from all Member Councils and an Engineering/Construction company SPEL Stormwater on the on-site capture and treatment of hydrocarbons, specifically focusing on the stormwater quality issues associated with service stations

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress (funded until August 2022)

## CITIES POWER PARTNERSHIP

### PURPOSE:

- To facilitate Hunter JO member Councils joining the Cities Power Partnership (CPP)
- To support regional collaborative efforts by Councils, the Hunter JO and CPP in delivery of shared pledges made by Councils:

### ACTIVITY:

- 9 of the 10 Hunter JO member Councils and Central Coast Council are now formal members of the Cities Power Partnership program. The remaining council is considering membership at a Council meeting on the 23rd March. This would make the Hunter region the first nationally to have all member Councils committed as CPP members. The Hunter JO is now exploring the opportunity for the JO itself to have a formalised partnership arrangement with CPP. This could then be used as a format that could be adopted by other regions.
- A second Regional forum is being planned for April, which will focus on the latest climate science training and the regional shared collaboration areas. A report will be distributed to Council staff for review and feedback in late-March, which details the shared collaboration areas identified in November 2020. The workshop will drill down further in each of these areas and identify specific actions/projects for collaboration moving forward. The aim of this is not to say that all councils have to share the same priorities for their CPP pledges and actions but to identify where they overlap, so that these collaboration areas can be identified and supported moving forward. The regional priorities identified by Councils include:
  - 1) Regional Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy and provision of fast-charging infrastructure throughout key locations
  - 2) Ensuring Council fleet purchases meet strict greenhouse gas emissions requirements and support the uptake of electric vehicles.
  - 3) Supporting and encouraging Community based Renewable Energy
  - 4) Supporting and encouraging Council based Renewable Energy
  - 5) Supporting and facilitating amendments to planning laws and controls to encourage community and industry to adopt renewable energy.
  - 6) Facilitating advocacy and coordinating business cases that address tensions and reluctance around initiatives.
  - 7) Regional Education and behaviour-change programs to support residents and business tackle climate change through, clean energy, energy efficiency and sustainable transport.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity

## REGIONAL LITTER GOVERNANCE PROJECT

**PURPOSE:** To support participating Councils review and improve overall corporate governance and management of litter related issues. Elements of review include: litter management costs, litter policies and monitoring systems; staff engagement in litter management and reporting; location and number of public litter bins; and efficacy of current Council litter clean-up practices. The project will also produce localised litter educational materials to support community education and internal staff campaigns.

### PROJECT OUTPUTS:

- Development of a Litter Communications Toolkit including library of photos and video clips for future use in community campaigns
- Development of a Litter Engagement Toolkit for Council staff
- Comprehensive audits of public place waste and recycling bins in Port Stephens and Muswellbrook Shire Council areas including recommendations for improvements to bin condition, types and placement
- Case study of public place bin auditing developed to encourage and assist other Councils to undertake this important task, and share key findings from the two audits completed

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Complete

## RECREATIONAL PARKS AND SPORTS FIELD LITTER REDUCTION PROJECT

**PURPOSE:** To support participating Councils reduce litter at selected recreational parks and sports fields to meet objectives set in the Hunter Region Litter Plan. This involves identifying key recurring litter items at each site and delivering community awareness strategies to eliminate these items at their source.

### PROJECT OUTPUTS:

- Litter surveys completed at six parks across the region. Surveys identified better than anticipated results (i.e. minimal litter), leading to a further six sites now being investigated
- Litter Information signage deployed at 12 target locations across the Central Coast, Singleton, Muswellbrook, Port Stephens Council areas

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Complete



## 2.2 Establish a Coastal Resilience Sub Committee, made up of representatives from relevant Hunter JO councils, to increase collaboration in planning for climate change

### HUNTER CENTRAL COAST COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM PRACTITIONERS ROUNDTABLE

**PURPOSE:** Jointly established by the Hunter JO and Department of Planning, Industry & Environment (who now facilitate the working group) to:

- Promote collaboration between Agencies and Councils to address common issues and needs relating to components of the NSW Coastal Management Framework, and on broader initiatives to facilitate adaptation to a range of coastal management issues arising from climate change
- Provide the opportunity to share experiences across the region;
- Work together to integrate coastal management in broader council land use and corporate (IP&R) planning processes.
- Advise the Department on regional themes and topics for future forums, workshops, presentations and other relevant communications on regional coastal management planning and issues.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Continued participation by Hunter JO staff in quarterly meetings of the Working Group
- In response to issues being experienced by coastal councils, the Hunter JO has been successful in leading a funding application to the NSW Government's Increasing Resilience to Climate Change Program – see "Act on Adaptation" below.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity

### ACT NOW ON ADAPTATION

**PURPOSE:** To support coastal councils consistently and effectively engage with coastal communities and stakeholders through development of a communication framework on coastal hazards, including coastal erosion and inundation, sea level rise and coastal storms. Key deliverables will include:

- Capacity building through development of an evidence based approach to community engagement and communication around coastal adaptation across the coastal councils of the Hunter and Central Coast;
- Communication and media protocol;
- Communication resources; and
- Integrated Planning and Reporting package to integrate the approach into Councils key strategic documents.

**ACTIVITY:**

- The project has commenced and is currently in the project design and inception stage.
- A pre-project "Act on Adaptation" Survey, will be conducted by project partner the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) Social Research Unit and regional office. The purpose of the research is to better understand residents' experience of living, working in and visiting our coastal communities, and the impact of various coastal hazards (erosion, sea level rise, inundation, storms) people may have experienced. The draft survey is currently being reviewed by Councils and other key stakeholders prior to being implemented.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## 2.3 Work together to find an effective recycling solution for the region

### CIRCULAR ECONOMY SUBCOMMITTEE

**PURPOSE:** To provide oversight and guidance to the delivery of HJO Circular Economy Initiatives

**ACTIVITY:**

- The Hunter JO convenes quarterly meetings of the Subcommittee to facilitate input and oversight of the various Circular Economy initiatives being implemented by the JO – see following projects
- The Subcommittee met 18th February 2021.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity

### HUNTER CIRCULAR FACILITATORS GROUP

**PURPOSE:** Jointly convened by the Hunter JO and Department of Planning, Industry & Environment, to provide a network of committed, knowledgeable and capable people with the potential to drive the circular economy program forward in the Hunter. The role of the group is to:

- Share information
- Harness, drive and coordinate cross stakeholder efforts toward a circular economy.
- Avoid duplication in progressing the circular economy in the region.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Facilitators group continues to meet on a bi-monthly basis

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity

### HUNTER AND CENTRAL COAST CIRCULAR ECONOMY HUB

**PURPOSE:** To drive and facilitate development of the Circular Economy (CE) across the Hunter and Central Coast by Councils, government agencies, business and industry groups and the community. The CE Hub would focus on:

- Providing leadership and planning to establish a common vision and plan for the region's move to a CE
- Facilitate the acquisition and sharing of research and information among stakeholders in the CE, including the provision of a "problem concierge" (i.e. a regional broker to link stakeholders with issues to those who can provide solutions)
- Continuing to curate and grow the CE ecosystem (website, industry networking, collaboration and development)
- Facilitating and delivering joint projects and initiatives across organisations
- Coordinating and advocating an agreed regional voice on CE for the region to State and Federal Governments
- Consistent and coordinated promotion of the region to researchers, innovators and investors
- Building knowledge in the region to capture and translate innovation and best practice into day to day operations, and to enact sustained change in organisational culture and systems required to progress the Circular Economy.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Workshop delivered January 2021 to refine the project scope with key stakeholder organisations

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Design and Development

## CIRCULAR ECONOMY ROADMAP

### PURPOSE:

- To develop a common understanding and definition for the circular economy of the region relevant to all stakeholders – government, business and academia.
- Gain broad regional support and engagement for the development of a circular economy in the Hunter and Central Coast region.
- Develop a strategic roadmap for the region that is:
  - aspirational and helps partners and stakeholders understand roles and measures of success
  - practical in that it manages and objectively prioritises the range of ideas and initiatives being put forward by stakeholders
- To create an identity for the region as a leader in the transition to a circular economy and as a place to do circular economy activities, providing business attraction and local support for the circular economy
- To provide leverage and connect with other key circular economy frameworks and strategies at all levels of government

### ACTIVITY:

- Inception / initial planning workshop delivered December 2020 with core project partners
- Broader Stakeholder workshop to provide input to development of the strategic roadmap to be delivered 13 April 2021

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## CIRCULAR ECONOMY ECO-SYSTEM PROJECT STAGE 2

### PURPOSE:

- Provide and improve circular economy communication for all circular economy eco-system participants in the Hunter and Central Coast
- Build circular economy knowledge through education and capacity building opportunities for Hunter JO member councils and Central Coast Council
- Develop and improve circular economy data and analytics systems for use by all circular economy eco-system participants in the Hunter and Central Coast

### ACTIVITY:

- Invitations disseminated to Councils for 1st training session on 18th March 2021
- Newsletter process developed in preparation for sending out to eco-system database in April 2021
- Hunter JO working with Lake Macquarie City Council, Newcastle Council, Central Coast Council and University of Newcastle on exploring the city scan tool as method to analyse circular economy data for the benefit of the Hunter and Central Coast eco-system

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## CIRCULAR ECONOMY PROCUREMENT PROJECT

**PURPOSE:** To support Councils to prioritise recycled materials and circular economy services in their procurement systems and processes, and to collaborate with the Hunter JO and other participating councils to develop a common framework for a joint regional procurement of recycled materials.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Consultant brief developed to design and deliver procurement project. Request for Quotation to be issued during March 2021.
- Circular Economy Regional Procurement MoU endorsed by Hunter JO Board in October 2020. Formal signing of MoU document completed February 2021 by Council General Managers

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## “SMALL ACTS BIG CHANGE” REGIONAL COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

**PURPOSE:** To deliver a regional communication campaign to improve community waste avoidance behaviours at the top end of the waste management hierarchy, along with reuse and recycling habits.

**ACTIVITY:**

- A Masterclass in smartphone filming was provided to Council staff on 4th March 2021. With video currently representing the most engaging content on social media, the workshop aimed to build the capability of Council staff to capture great video (using the resources available to them) to utilise in Council social media channels to support local community awareness, education and engagement programs.
- A video was produced and launched September 2020 targeting the region wide issue of illegal dumping. The video seeks to address the ongoing issue of illegal dumping by educating the community on how to avoid this outcome. The video can be viewed at <https://www.hunterjo.com.au/video-puts-spotlight-on-the-illegal-dumping-of-demolition-waste/>
- Ongoing development and maintenance of the “Small Acts Big Change” campaign website
- Ongoing design and delivery of the Small Acts Big Change social media and television advertising campaign, which build upon the series of short videos produced by the campaign focusing on community champions across the region.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## COMMUNITY RECYCLING CENTRES AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

**PURPOSE:** To deliver a regionally coordinated approach to promoting community awareness of Community Recycling Centres (CRC's).

**ACTIVITY:**

- Continued regional delivery of CRC advertising across the Upper and Lower Hunter region in conjunction with the Small Acts Big Change campaign

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## REGIONAL RECYCLING SOLUTION (YELLOW BINS)

**PURPOSE:** To investigate preferred options for development of a new regional materials recovery facility

**ACTIVITY:**

- A summary project brief identifying the potential opportunities and focus for the Hunter JO to participate in the delivery of this project has been provided to the Hunter JO Board for consideration at its April 2021 meeting.
- HJO staff have continued to participate in and contribute to the regional working group led by Lake Macquarie City Council and Hunter Resource Recovery.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Design and Development

## GREEN CAFFEINE SWAP-AND-GO COFFEE CUP SCHEME

**PURPOSE:** The Hunter JO and seven-member councils are partnering with Green Caffein to deliver a Swap-and-Go Coffee Cup scheme for Hunter residents. The scheme aims to eliminate distribution of disposable cups by providing participating cafes and coffee outlets with reusable cups which are available for scheme members to use when buying their coffee. Councils participating in the initiative are Maitland, Port Stephens, Lake Macquarie, Cessnock, Singleton, Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Joint media promotion by the Hunter JO, participating Councils and Green Caffein to encourage cafes to join the program commenced 11th February 2021.
- The official launch of the program occurred 10 March 2021, at which point 47 cafes had registered their participation across the region. On a Local Government Area basis these included Maitland (9), Muswellbrook (2), Port Stephens (17), Cessnock (4 cafes), Lake Macquarie (12), Upper Hunter (1) and Singleton (2).

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## STATE AND REGIONAL WASTE MANAGERS NETWORK

**PURPOSE:** To facilitate information sharing and collaboration between Councils and waste regions that contribute to the achievement of local and regional waste reduction targets.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Coordination and facilitation by the Hunter JO of quarterly meetings of the Regional Council Waste Managers Network (most recent meeting 16 December 2020)
- HJO staff continue to represent the Hunter and Central Coast in the NSW Regional Waste Coordinators Network convened by the NSW Environment Protection Authority

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity



### **ACTION AREA 3:**

**Our economy is multifaceted, resilient and is Australia's leading smart regional economy**

#### **3.1 Establish an Economic Sustainability Sub Committee, made up of representatives from member councils, to coordinate the economic development activity of the JO and report to the Board.**

##### **HUNTER JO REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this regional network to be convened by the Hunter JO involving Council and Agency staff representatives is to:

- Capture regional expertise and knowledge to identify, design and deliver regional economic development initiatives in areas of shared regional interest.
- Facilitate operational alignment and collaborative design and resourcing between organisations to deliver these initiatives
- Facilitate ongoing networking, linkages, knowledge and resource sharing between Councils, government agencies and other key stakeholders involved in economic development programs across the region
- Provide a consultative forum to facilitate input to the Hunter JO, to assist it represent member Council interests and viewpoints to the various regional committees and networks on which it sits as a representative of local government.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Next meeting of the Regional Economic Development Forum scheduled for delivery March 2021
- Terms of Reference endorsed by the Hunter JO Board at its February 2021 meeting. General Managers invited to nominate staff representatives to participate in the Forum.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity

#### **3.2 Work with the Hunter Research Foundation, University of Newcastle and other research partners to gather and analyse economic data and develop a regional attraction plan based on regional strengths in research, education, transport and logistics, aerospace, agribusiness and tourism.**

##### **HUNTER IDENTITY AND POSITIONING STRATEGY**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this project being coordinated by the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation, is to establish the identity and brand of Greater Newcastle and the region to:

- Establish a unified brand platform for the Hunter
- Define and promote the region's competitive advantages
- Support the region to compete in the global marketplace, to capture the movement of talent and investment

**ACTIVITY:**

- The Hunter JO is represented on both the Project Control Group and the Local Government Reference Group which met in January 2021 and March 2021.
- A consultant has been engaged to assist in defining the project scope and develop the brand and identity key elements with stakeholders. The first meeting with PCG and consultants was 11 March 2021.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ATTRACTION STRATEGY

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this project is to identify and align the elements of a range of economic development and attraction programs across the region where there is a shared interest for the region and that avoids duplication. The ultimate outcome is a priority list of clear actions for the HJO to pursue that are consistent with the HJOs statutory functions and strategic plan.

**ACTIVITY:**

- A summary project brief has been provided to the Hunter JO Board's April meeting for consideration

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Design and Development

### 3.3 Deepen relationships with the Department of Planning and Environment and the Hunter Development Corporation and gain a commitment to a formal JO role in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 and Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036. Be an effective and outcome-oriented committee member.

## GREATER NEWCASTLE METROPOLITAN PLAN – REVIEW OF REGIONAL GOVERNANCE OPTIONS

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this project is to identify and explore potential regional governance models and/or legislative change that would ensure integrated, collaborative and effective delivery of the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan.

**ACTIVITY:**

A briefing paper was prepared for and considered by the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Steering Committee (GNMPSC) at its meeting on 4th March 2021. The recommendation of the Paper was endorsed, which is for the Hunter JO to now develop an options paper that:

1. Ideally, considers the governance review undertaken by ARUP on the delivery of the GNMP
2. Reviews existing regional governance models and legislative mechanisms established to drive collaborative delivery of regional plans (including the Delivery, Co-ordination and Monitoring Committee role in other regions)
3. Identifies potential alternative governance models and legislative mechanisms that could also be appropriate for delivering on the principles established within the MoU for GNMP delivery
4. Provides recommendations on a preferred model and a process for progressing its establishment in collaboration with the NSW Government.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## HUNTER REGIONAL PLAN REVIEW STEERING COMMITTEE

**PURPOSE:** The primary objective of the Steering Committee is to provide advice to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on matters relating to the review of both the Central Coast Regional Plan 2036 and Hunter Regional Plan 2036. This review is being undertaken during 2021.

**ACTIVITY:**

- The Hunter JO is represented on the Steering Committee.
- The most recent meeting of the Committee occurred 29th February 2021.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## HJO REGIONAL PLANNING FORUM

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this regional network to be convened by the Hunter JO involving Council and Agency staff representatives is to:

- Facilitate operational alignment and collaborative design, delivery and resourcing of regional land use planning strategies and initiatives
- Facilitate networking & knowledge sharing between Councils, agencies and other key stakeholders involved in regional planning initiatives
- Provide a consultative forum to assist the JO represent member Council interests and viewpoints to the various regional committees and networks on which it sits, including (but not limited to) the Hunter Regional Plan Review Steering Committee and Urban Development Program.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Next meeting of the Regional Planning Forum scheduled for delivery March 2021
- Terms of Reference endorsed by the Hunter JO Board at its February 2021 meeting. General Managers invited to nominate staff representatives to participate in the Forum.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity

## POPULATION SCENARIO PLANNING

**PURPOSE:** To prepare population scenarios as a platform for informing an agreed long-term vision for regional population growth, and to influence strategic regional planning processes, delivery programs and regional migration strategies by all levels of government for the Hunter Region.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Consultant brief and request for quotation currently underway (March 2021) for a consultant to develop population scenarios and deliver a series of stakeholder workshops over the coming months.
- Summary project brief endorsed by Hunter JO Board in June 2020

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

### 3.4 Work with the Hunter Regional Leadership Executive to deliver the Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Project Action Plan, monitor its success and review as needed.

## HUNTER 2050 FOUNDATION

**PURPOSE:** The Hunter 2050 Foundation is an innovative approach to manage industrial change. It will lead investment and redevelopment in the region as well as helping businesses and workers seize new opportunities. The 2050 Foundation represents an innovative model for economic leadership that is proactive, market driven and locally led. It draws on the best models in Australia, whilst moving beyond the typical suite of government-led structural adjustment policies of the past by focusing on engaging in key markets to accelerate investment and redevelopment. In its first three years of operation the Foundation would aim to:

- Establish impact investment funds to invest in energy, industrial development and business innovation projects in the Hunter, building a pipeline of capital for new economic activity and local jobs
- Create a business innovation program supporting 300 local SME's to grow and an annual new industry capability program to grow industries including Defence
- Build a career transition program to provide support to 6000 workers in the region looking to pursue new opportunities
- Establish the organisation, its Board and management including the creation of 15 local jobs in the organisation itself



**ACTIVITY:**

- A range of funding opportunities continue to be identified and investigated as to their relevance for funding the Foundation. These include:
  1. Advocating for funding to establish the Foundation to be allocated from the joint Commonwealth and State Regional Recovery Partnership Program. This follows a workshop on 9th March 2021 convened by the Commonwealth that explored regional priority projects with the potential to be funded through the Program. A decision on the allocation of funding is expected to be made by the end of March.
  2. A grant application was submitted to the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF). Approximately \$4 million has been sought over two years to:
    - Develop regional capability in funds management
    - Develop regional capability in industrial land redevelopment through feasibility studies; and
    - Develop regional capability and undertaking in workforce transition and small & medium business diversification
- A media, communication and engagement strategy was completed in February 2021, including a focus on promoting the Foundation through social media channels.
- A media campaign was launched 8th December 2020 on the Hunter 2050 Foundation project. Coverage received was positive, with the story being covered in an exclusive in The Australian, and the media release also being picked up in newspaper (local and national), radio (local) and television (SkyNews). Engagement beyond media coverage has continued, with enquiries being received through the Hunter 2050 website (<https://www.hunter2050.org.au/>) and social media channels.
- An internal working group of the HJO continue to meet weekly to progress the work program of the Foundation, including a focus on:
  - Organisational development of the Foundation
  - Stakeholder communications and consultation
  - Funding Opportunities and Relationships
  - Project Planning and Management

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress**UPPER HUNTER REGION WEBSITE**

**PURPOSE:** The delivery of this website was a key action in the Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Action Plan. It was developed in partnership between Regional NSW and the Hunter JO, to provide a central location for resources for investors, local business and community for the Upper Hunter.

**ACTIVITY:**

- The Hunter JO is now managing the website and associated Facebook, in collaboration with the Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Working Group, the four Upper Hunter Councils, and Regional NSW.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity

## UPPER HUNTER FUTURES PROJECT

**PURPOSE:** Convened by Department of Regional NSW, this project aims to:

- Consider the current economic, planning and social landscape
- Provide a robust analysis of plausible scenarios for the future
- Develop a set of actions that guide a transition towards achieving economic diversification and resilience.

**ACTIVITY:**

- The Hunter JO is represented on the Project Control Group for this initiative
- A review has been completed and analysed by the Project Control Group. Actions arising will be incorporated into the updated Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Project Action Plan
- A stakeholder workshop was delivered early 2021 to facilitate broader input to the review and its recommendations

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## UPPER HUNTER ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION WORKING GROUP

**PURPOSE:** The Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Working Group and Action Plan is responsible for articulating the Upper Hunter region's priorities for delivering a sustainable and secure economic future – leveraging existing regional advantages and expanding into new growth areas of agribusiness, renewable energy and the export of expertise in mining, advanced manufacturing and professional services to global markets.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Hunter JO representatives continue to participate in the Working Group, to develop an integrated suite of policies to help the Upper Hunter's unique communities prosper over the long term.
- Workshop held in February that helped identify priority actions for the next 1-2 years and 3-5 years for the Upper Hunter. These will be collated by the Department of Regional NSW and reported back to the Working Group at the next meeting.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity

### 3.5 Collaborate to ensure Newcastle and the Hunter realise our potential as a smart region and innovation ecosystem, driving jobs and investment whilst ensuring technology improves livability and sustainability for our region

## SMART REGION PROJECT

**PURPOSE:** The Smart Region Project will be an overarching collation of smart region activities and projects across the region placed within an annual review document produced to market the progress of our region. Initially the project will review the existing state of smart city thinking and activity across the region to get a baseline of progress. This program will then outline the priorities of the region in the smart region context and develop a suite of priority actions and templates for regional use.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Summary project for the project endorsed by the Hunter JO Board in August 2020.
- An initial workshop was delivered 25 November 2020 to gain an understanding of where each council is at with smart projects and to workshop draft objectives developed for the Smart Region project.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Design and Development

### 3.6 Develop a sustainable model to coordinate council-run events across the region and showcase the Hunter and attract local, national and international visitors.

#### REGIONAL EVENTS STRATEGY (ACCELERATING EVENT ECONOMIES)

**PURPOSE:** To strengthen the region's collective voice and the capacity of Councils to collaboratively pitch for major events for the region.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Initial discussions held February 2021 with some councils with a view to piloting a sub-project with two focus areas: sports and the arts. This idea continues to be tested more broadly with Council staff to determine the level of shared interest.
- An application for grant funding under the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF) was submitted January 2021 to deliver this initiative. Funding has been requested to focus on:
  - 1) Establishing a partner task group
  - 2) Undertaking an events and opportunity audit
  - 3) Identifying, preparing and implementing destination and event management resources including event managers toolkit, prospectus, website and integrated council shared services, approvals and event data.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Design and Development

### 3.7 Work with Destination NSW, Newcastle Airport and other partners to more strongly promote the Hunter as a multifaceted visitor destination. Develop a regional destination management plan.

#### DESTINATION SYDNEY SURROUNDS NORTH (DSSN) DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

**PURPOSE:** To prepare a Destination Management Plan for the DSSN area, which includes the Hunter Region.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Stakeholder engagement currently being coordinated by DSSN. This will include one on one engagement with Councils during February and March 2021.
- Hunter JO staff are participating in the stakeholder engagement process.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

### 3.8 Work with the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities to undertake more detailed exploration of the opportunities created by a City Deal, as well as the pre- conditions and process to develop a City Deal in the Hunter.

#### CITY DEAL ADVOCACY

There is currently no active advocacy occurring around a City Deal, based on advice from the Commonwealth Government that there are no plans for Commonwealth Investment in City Deal initiatives at the current time. However other projects being initiated by the Hunter JO including the Population Scenario Planning and Regional Infrastructure Priority List initiatives will provide important foundations for future planning and advocacy work around a City Deal.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Not progressing

**3.9 Explore and act on smart ways to transform local and global disruptions, such as the disruption of recycling services, into economic opportunities for the Hunter. ination. Develop a regional destination management plan.**

**HUNTER BIOCIRCULAR**

**PURPOSE:** To embrace world-leading innovations to develop a flagship community resources recovery model. By demonstrating a Circular Economy approach, Hunter BioCircular seeks to move the region toward zero waste to landfill, and in doing so provide long term economic, social and environmental benefits from processing waste locally, which will help transition the regional economy, deliver new local jobs and reduce carbon emissions.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Ongoing stakeholder engagement to develop the next steps for developing the concept plan and feasibility analysis.
- An application for grant funding under the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF) was submitted January 2021 to support with progressing the Hunter BioCircular concept. This would focus on delivering concept plans for 4 multi-element circular economy waste processing precincts in the Hunter region. Each precinct will represent a key part of the Hunter and outline the potential for circular processing, green energy and value-added businesses delivering diversified employment opportunities and new industries to the Hunter.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress



## ACTION AREA 4:

**Our people and products move across the region easily on integrated and accessible transport networks**

### 4.1 Establish a Transport Connectivity Sub Committee, made up representatives from member councils, to coordinate the transport and associated infrastructure planning activity of the JO and report to the Board.

There are currently no active programs in this area.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Not yet started (subject to resourcing)

### 4.2 Coordinate and prepare submissions on regional planning initiatives such as the 2056 Freight and Ports Plan.

#### HUNTER RMS PROJECT DELAYS - INDUSTRY & LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFERENCE GROUP

**PURPOSE:** Comprising representatives from the Hunter JO, Lake Macquarie City Council, Urban Development Institute of Australia, NSW (UDIA), the NSW Property Council and Dantia, the functions of this reference group are to:

- Contribute to the internal review of Transport for NSW (TfNSW) operations relating to land use planning
- Support the triaging of projects delayed by the former Roads and Maritime Services (RMS)
- Support the development of, and the implementation of, a strategic plan identifying actions and outputs aimed at reducing delays within the Hunter region
- Provide feedback on policy initiatives arising from the work of the Reference Group

**ACTIVITY:**

Key outcomes arising from the reference group's work includes:

- Improvements to the security deposit requirements for Works Authorisation Deeds in Regional and Outer Metropolitan NSW.
- The creation of a new corporate structure within Transport for NSW, including a Director-level role within Transport for NSW's Regional and Outer Metropolitan team to focus on land use and development opportunities.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity

### 4.3 Work with the Transport for NSW and other partners to access and analyse detailed transport data across the region and understand gaps in infrastructure and services.

#### HUNTER RMS PROJECT DELAYS - INDUSTRY & LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFERENCE GROUP

There are currently no active programs in this area.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Not yet started (subject to resourcing)

**4.4 Engage at a senior level with key transport stakeholders including Transport for NSW, Roads and Maritime Authority, Newcastle Airport, Port of Newcastle and Keolis Downer to better understand their forward planning for the region.**

**HUNTER REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLAN**

**PURPOSE:** Transport for NSW are in the initial stages of developing a Hunter Regional Transport Plan. Its development is occurring in collaboration with DPIE's current process to review the Hunter Regional Plan to ensure these key documents are complementary. The Regional Transport Plan will aim to

- Enable Transport for NSW to respond proactively to anticipated changes in land use, demographics and travel demand
- Establish a transport vision for the region
- Details short, medium and long-term initiatives that in combination, support the transport vision

**ACTIVITY:**

- Transport for NSW and DPIE staff delivered joint consultation sessions with all Hunter JO member Councils during February 2021
- Combined outputs from Council consultation will be presented to the Hunter JO Regional Economic Development and Planning Forums in March 2021.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

**4.5 Use the in-depth evidence base to prepare Hunter JO agreed priority list of infrastructure, system and service improvements which will make the greatest difference to communities and businesses across the region. This will include expansion and connectivity between cycleways.**

**REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITY LIST**

**PURPOSE:** To prepare an agreed list of regional and subregional infrastructure priorities to:

- Build and advocate a stronger case for investment in infrastructure priorities across the region
- Identify the potential for shared interests and collaboration between Councils and other stakeholders in delivering local and regional scale infrastructure initiatives.
- Identify a longer-term infrastructure investment pipeline, to provide transparency and confidence for potential investors, professional services and contractors to build their presence in the Hunter

**ACTIVITY:**

- Consultant brief and request for quotation currently underway (March 2021) to engage a consultant to research and provide recommendations on an appropriate infrastructure prioritisation methodology for the region.
- Summary project brief for the project endorsed by the Hunter JO Board in August 2020.
- Regional "Ready to Rebuild" advocacy campaign delivered in collaboration with Committee for the Hunter July 2020, focusing on influencing Commonwealth Government economic stimulus investment toward shovel ready local government infrastructure projects.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## REGIONAL CYCLE TOURISM MASTERPLAN

**PURPOSE:** Significant opportunity exists to link existing and planned cycleway infrastructure across Hunter JO member Councils; to create an integrated region wide network. This would provide both a valuable region wide recreational resource for residents, and the foundation upon which to generate economic and business development by holistically promoting the region as a key cycling destination. The purpose of this project is to prepare and implement a cycle tourism masterplan / Destination Management Plan for the region.

**ACTIVITY:**

An application for grant funding under the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF) was submitted January 2021 to deliver the “Shiraz to Shore” project. The focus of this project would include:

- Gathering all existing cycle tourism experiences across the Hunter Region, including mountain biking, road and recreation cycling opportunities and package them up into a cohesive cycle tourism plan including a brand, marketing plan, product development, training and website; and
- Developing the concept and planning for a connected cycling trail called “Shiraz to Shore” extending over 100km among the vineyards of the Hunter Valley, through heritage towns and rail trails to the beach and lake experiences of the Hunter. Funding has also been sought for a build program that could construct all sections of the Shiraz to Shore Trail, including the Richmond Vale Rail Trail section.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Delivery Subject to External Approval and/or Funding - Advice Pending

### 4.6 Develop and implement a targeted advocacy program to gain commitments from infrastructure and service delivery agencies, including the Australian Government, to deliver agreed priorities.

There are currently no active programs in this area.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Not yet started (pending completion of Action 4.5)



## **ACTION AREA 5:**

**Our educational facilities support and encourage our young people and foster lifelong learning and encourage our young people**

- 5.1. Establish a Social Sustainability Sub Committee, made up representatives from member councils, to coordinate the education, health and related policy and planning activities of the JO and report to the Board.**
- 5.2 Engage at a senior level with key education stakeholders including the University of Newcastle, TAFE NSW and School Infrastructure NSW to better understand their forward planning for the region.**
- 5.3 Work with the NSW Department of Education to better understand and test their projections for growth in student numbers throughout the Hunter.**
- 5.4 Use the in depth evidence base to prepare a Hunter JO agreed priority list of school infrastructure improvements which will make the greatest difference to communities across the region.**
- 5.5 Advocate to Schools Infrastructure NSW and the Minister for Education to gain commitments to deliver agreed schools infrastructure improvements.**
- 5.6 Work with TAFE NSW to expand access to training and vocational services across the region, including through innovative models such as Connected Learning Centres, Specialist Centres and Mobile Training Units.**
- 5.7 Work with the University of Newcastle and TAFE NSW to help raise awareness, aspiration and achievement of tertiary education opportunities for primary and secondary school students in the region.**
- 5.8 Work with Indigenous educational and community groups to support and encourage young Indigenous people into tertiary education.**
- 5.9 Work with local Libraries and education providers to develop and implement technology for life learning schemes to ensure all generations take advantage of new technology to improve quality of life.**

There are currently no active programs in this area.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Not yet started (subject to resourcing)





## **ACTION AREA 6:**

**Our people have access to the full range of health care fostering active and healthy communities**

- 6.1 Work with the Hunter New England Local Health District and other key partners to audit health services across the region, identify accessibility gaps and prioritise actions.**
- 6.2 Hold regional stakeholder workshops to gain input from community members and health professionals to better understand the priority health needs of local communities.**
- 6.3 Use the in-depth evidence base to prepare a Hunter JO agreed priority list of improvements to health services and facilities which will make the greatest difference to communities across the region.**
- 6.4 Explore innovative models of housing to enable older people to age in place in Hunter towns and villages.**

There are currently no active programs in these areas.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Not yet started (subject to resourcing)