



**HUNTER JO
PROGRAM REPORT**
APRIL - JUNE 2021

This publication was produced by the Hunter Joint Organisation.



ENQUIRIES

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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:

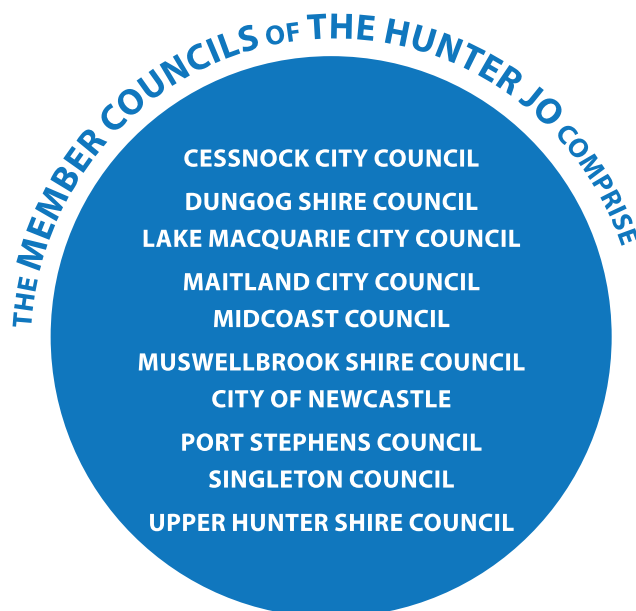
- Regional Strategic planning and priority setting
- Regional leadership and advocacy
- Intergovernmental collaboration

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

NAME	ROLE	CONTACT
Joe James	CEO, Hunter Joint Organisation	0405 217 249 ceo@hunterjo.com.au
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REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY

MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENTS

MINISTER	DATE	FOCUS OF ENGAGEMENT
Paul Scully MP, Shadow Minister for Natural Resources	14 April 2021	Hunter 2050 Foundation

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENTS

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT	DATE	FOCUS OF ENGAGEMENT
<p>State Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member for Maitland – Jenny Aitchison Member for Cessnock – Clayton Barr Member for Myall Lakes – Stephen Bromhead Member for Swansea – Yasmin Catley Member for Newcastle – Tim Crakanthorp Member for Charlestown – Jodie Harrison Member for Wallsend – Sonia Horner Member for Lake Macquarie – Greg Piper Member for Port Stephens – Kate Washington <p>Federal Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member for Newcastle – Sharon Claydon Member for Lyne – David Gillespie Member for Hunter – Joel Fitzgibbon Member for New England – Barnaby Joyce Member for Shortland – Pat Conroy Member for Paterson – Meryl Swanson <p>Candidates running for the seat of Upper Hunter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Layzell Jeff Drayton Sue Gilroy Dale McNamara Sue Abbott Eva Pears Kate Fraser Tracy Norman Kirsty O’Connell 	4 May 2021	<p>Support requested for funding applications lodged by the Hunter JO under the Stage 2 – Bushfire Local Economic Recovery (BLER) Fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerating Event Economics (Regional Event Attraction) Hunter 2050 Foundation Hunter BioCircular Shiraz to Shore <p>This communication was in response to advice from Resilience NSW that the grants program is significantly oversubscribed and that State and Commonwealth Members of Parliament would be provided the opportunity to comment on the value of local project applications.</p>

REGIONAL SUBMISSIONS

SUBMISSION FOCUS	CLOSING DATE	STATUS
Technical submission provided to NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) around the role of certified consultants and the implication on Council's contaminated land management approach.	31 March 2021	Completed

MEDIA

FOCUS	RELEASE DATE
NEWCASTLE AIRPORT RUNWAY A COLLABORATIVE WIN FOR HUNTER Focus: Acknowledgement of the Federal Government's announcement to invest \$66 million in the 2021 budget towards the upgrade of Newcastle Airport's runway, and of the importance of local leadership and collaboration in contributing to this outcome, which has been a key advocacy priority for the Hunter JO since its inception. Full media release: https://www.hunterjo.com.au/news/media-statements/	Friday 7th May 2021

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION

REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND NETWORKS

During the reporting period (April – June 2021) Hunter JO staff have hosted or participated in the following regional networks and committees.

MINISTER	DATE
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 RMS Reference Group (Project)	Lake Macquarie City Council
Regional Contaminated Land Working Group	Hunter JO
Hunter Regional Waste Strategy Group	Hunter JO
Hunter JO Circular Economy Sub-Committee	Hunter JO
Hunter Circular Facilitators Group	Hunter JO/DPIE
NSW JO Chairs Forum	JO Network
JO Network EOs Meetings	JO Network
Climate Action Professional Officers Group NSW	LG NSW
EPA Local Government Advisory Group	NSW EPA
RLE Human Services Sub-Committee	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
Hunter Central Coast Regional Recovery Committee	Resilience 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
Australasian Land and Groundwater Association Newcastle Branch Committee	ALGA
Local Government Special Interest Group – Contaminated Land	ALGA
Local Government Climate Change Planning Toolkit Working Group	DPIE
Hunter Freight and Supply Chain Taskforce & Working Group	Committee for the Hunter
Hunter Regional Transport Plan Sub regional workshops (Upper Hunter, Hunter North and Lower Hunter)	Transport for NSW
Hunter Venture Fund Sub-Committee	Hunter JO

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>ACT NOW ON ADAPTATION: COASTAL WISE COMMUNITIES</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>TRANSFORMING RESILIENCE WITH THE INTEGRATED PLANNING & REPORTING FRAMEWORK</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&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	Successful
	<p>SIMTABLES FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT</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	Successful
Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (Regional NSW)	<p>HUNTER 2050 FOUNDATION</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> <p>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,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver supply chain transition support to 30 highly vulnerable businesses in the region; and • Support up to 2000 workers in making critical career transitions, as the economy recovers and begins to transform. 	\$4,000,000	Pending

Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (Regional NSW) Cont.	<p>ACCELERATING EVENT ECONOMIES</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>HUNTER BIOCIRCULAR</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>SHIRAZ TO SHORE</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"> • 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; and • 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. 	\$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 continues to participate in meetings of the Committee. The Hunter JO will also nominate staff representatives to participate in two subcommittees to be established, which will focus on infrastructure prioritisation and progressing the establishment of the Blue Green Grid at a regional scale.

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:

- At a state-wide level, Resilience NSW's Strategic Directions project is underway, a proposed agency-wide transformation that will allow resilience NSW to re-profile its workforce to become more sustainable over the longer term. This aims to deliver an increase in ongoing roles and reduction in temporary and contract roles to ensure it has enduring capability and capacity to deliver their 2020-2023 Strategy, deliver State outcomes and support disaster affected people. Phase 1 and 2 are now complete and recruitment for role vacancies will commence in June 2021. To support disaster resilience activities across NSW, Resilience NSW will have regionally based Local Coordination teams
- The Regional Disaster Preparedness Office Skye Moore has been operational since 23rd March, providing support to Councils with flood recovery activities
- Hunter JO staff and the Regional Disaster Preparedness Officer are represented on the Hunter-Central Coast RLE Resilience and Recovery Subcommittee, which is jointly convened by Regional NSW and Resilience NSW. The JO is leading a committee task group to:
 - Confirm the specific issues / opportunities to improve sharing of best practice, and to build connections across Councils; and
 - Identify specific priority actions that agencies can jointly deliver on to support / drive more regional approaches (and avoid duplication).
- 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, Port Stephens. The Regional Disaster Preparedness Officer will continue to work with councils to support them to release their dashboards. Two training online forums were delivered in March/April 2021 to assist Council communication and IT staff become dashboard "superusers".
- Two forums delivered December 2020 focused on building awareness of Local Government Emergency Management Arrangements.
- Get Ready branding and resources 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.

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.

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: The Hunter JO’s has been advised that its \$300,000 funding application lodged under the NSW Government’s Bushfire Community Recovery & Resilience Fund Phase 2 to deliver the project has been successful. HJO staff are currently finalising the funding agreement with Resilience NSW, including updating project activities and project plans to meet amended grant delivery timeframes.

DELIVERY STATUS: Scheduled to commence June 2021.

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: The Hunter JO’s has been advised that its \$300,000 funding application lodged under the NSW Government’s Bushfire Community Recovery & Resilience Fund Phase 2 to deliver the project has been successful. HJO staff are currently finalising the funding agreement with Resilience NSW, including updating project activities and project plans to meet amended grant delivery timeframes.

DELIVERY STATUS: Scheduled to commence June 2021.



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:

- Preliminary outputs from a project being piloted with Cessnock and Maitland Councils to design and develop (prior to broader regional roll out) a Contaminated Land Information database are now being evaluated. This pilot project is seeking to:
 - Develop regionally consistent classification categories for contaminated land
 - Source information on a regional basis to populate new and/or upgraded information systems of Councils
- The Hunter JO recently participated in a workshop facilitated by NSW DPIE to develop standardised conditions of development consent relating to contaminated land. NSW DPIE have reviewed the Hunter Joint Organisations Register of Consent Conditions in this process, which are widely used by Councils throughout NSW, as evidenced by them being accessed on the Hunter JO website over 100 times during the past 12 months.
- 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
- Ongoing provision of technical advice to Councils (i.e. a Helpdesk) on issues involving contaminated land management (land use planning, UPSS and public land management)
- 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.
 - Sourcing information on a regional basis to populate new and/or upgraded information systems
- 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)
- Co-ordinating and facilitating joint regional responses from Councils to influence NSW statutory guidelines, including:
 - EPA practice note providing opportunity for Councils to propose amendments or changes and reviewed and contributed to other regions submission to guidance on the preparation of environmental management plans for management of contaminated land.
 - Draft Guidelines for consultants reporting on contaminated land
 - Draft Guidelines for Implementing the Protection of the Environment Operations (Underground Petroleum Storage Systems) Regulation 2019.

- Delivered on-site UPSS Inspection training program to all HJO member and Central Coast Councils.
- Facilitation of online sessions exploring the role of laboratories in contaminated land, as well as the prevalence of fraudulent reporting
- 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).
- An online technical Q&A Session delivered 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:

- The Hunter JO Board endorsed exploring a “Regional Collaboration Pledges Partnership” with CCP (the first region in Australia to do so) at its April 2021 meeting. This recognises that all 10 of the Hunter JO’s member councils and Central Coast Council are now members of CPP or have endorsed becoming a member of CPP, making the Hunter JO region the first region nationally to have achieved all Councils becoming CPP members.
- A Regional forum is being planned for the 24 June 2021 focusing on:
 - Session 1 - presentations on the latest climate science training and a case study of “Charging the Regions Program”.
 - Session 2 - workshopping the areas of shared regional interest / opportunities for collaboration identified by Councils in November 2020. This session will drill down further into each of these areas and identify specific actions/projects for collaboration moving forward. The aim of the session is not to say that all councils have to share the same priorities for their CPP pledges and actions but to identify where these overlap, so that collaboration areas can be identified and supported moving forward. The regional priorities previously 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: A pre-project "Act on Adaptation" Survey, has been launched 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. Results from this survey will contribute to the evidence base that will inform the focus and format of Communication Resources to be developed under the project.

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 next meeting of the Subcommittee is scheduled for Wednesday 19th May 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
- The group organised and delivered the Circular Economy Think Tank 10 May, with over 100 people attending to develop ideas for our Region's circular economy.

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.
- Other CE projects currently being delivered by the Hunter JO and partner organisations (e.g. Circular Economy Roadmap) are providing valuable inputs and justification for the design and establishment of the Circular Economy Hub.
- Circular Economy Hub to be co-designed alongside Lake Macquarie City Council's Living Lab proposal for the circular economy.

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:

- A Circular Economy Strategic Roadmap Workshop was delivered on 13 April 2021. Over 40 leaders in the Circular Economy field representing industry, academia, government and Not for Profit organisations worked collaboratively to define a Circular Economy strategic roadmap for the Hunter and Central Coast Region. This included developing a vision, focus areas and action plans for the strategic roadmap. The day was launched by Mayor Kay Fraser from Lake Macquarie City Council, and featured keynote speakers including Lisa McLean from NSW Circular and Paul Klymenko, CEO of Planet Ark.
- Workshop outputs are now being collated and refined prior to reporting to and inviting feedback from the wider circular economy eco-system in the region prior to finalising the Circular Economy Strategic Roadmap.

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:

- A Circular Economy executive education session for Councils was delivered on Thursday 18 March 2021. Fourteen participants including Directors, Managers and a General Manager from across 8 different Councils in the Hunter JO region received information on how to activate, incubate and accelerate the circular economy within their individual local government areas and as a collective through the Hunter JO.
- Work has commenced on a collaborative project between the Hunter JO, Lake Macquarie City Council, Newcastle Council, Central Coast Council and the University of Newcastle, which is 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 May 2021.
- Circular Economy Regional Procurement MoU was endorsed by Hunter JO Board with 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:

- 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.
- Ongoing delivery of marketing through social media platforms

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.
- Review of the program is currently underway to ensure advertising is still fit for purpose and as part of the normal end of year grant reporting process.

DELIVERY STATUS: In progress

HUNTER RECIRCULAR PROJECT (REGIONAL RECYCLING SOLUTION - YELLOW BINS)

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

ACTIVITY: The focus of this project is to identify and implement a collaborative regional approach by Hunter JO member Councils to maximise the value and circularity of recyclables (yellow bin), by taking a circular economy approach to the processing of these materials.

A regional response to this issue is currently being led by Lake Macquarie City Council (LMCC) and Hunter Resource Recovery (HRR), which is aiming to develop an EOI process to find market based solutions for the recycling of the yellow bin materials. Hunter JO staff are participating in (but not leading) this regional process.

The role of the Hunter JO's participation in the regional investigations process is to:

1. Continue to contribute regional information and perspectives to the investigations of preferred options for development of a new regional materials recovery facility being led by LMCC and HRR
2. Assist with identifying and facilitating opportunities for enhanced regional collaboration arising from the regional investigations process
3. To assess regional alignment of the solutions identified through the investigations process with the region's broader Circular Economy Agenda, including the potential to integrate recyclables within more broadly focused circular economy innovation precincts (including recycling, energy and associated industries)

DELIVERY STATUS: In progress

GREEN CAFFEEN SWAP-AND-GO COFFEE CUP SCHEME

PURPOSE: The Hunter JO, seven-member councils and Central Coast Council are partnering with Green Caffeen to deliver a Swap-and-Go Coffee Cup scheme. 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, Upper Hunter and Central Coast Council.

ACTIVITY:

- Program officially launched in Hunter Region in March 2021, with cafés and customer participants growing steadily with over 4,000 single use coffee cups avoided at last review. Updated statistics on usage and landfill avoidance to be provided at the 6 monthly review.
- Central Coast Council have recently confirmed they will now join the regional program, to be launched in July 2021.

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 (next meeting 16 June 2021)
- 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:

- Terms of Reference endorsed by the Hunter JO Board at its February 2021 meeting, following which General Managers nominated staff representatives to participate in the Forum.
- First meeting of the Forum held on 30 March 2021, which was held as a joint session with the Regional Planning Forum (refer Action 3.3). Outputs from the 30 March meeting are available on the "Past Events" section of the Hunter JO website.
- The next quarterly joint meeting of the Regional Economic Development Forum and Regional Planning Forum is scheduled for 17 June 2021

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 (PCG) and the Local Government Reference Group (CRG). The PCG meets fortnightly throughout the project and the CRG meets as required – having met in Dec 2020 and April 2021. Further meetings are proposed for June and July 2021.

DELIVERY STATUS: In progress

REGIONAL STRATEGY REVIEW: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE HUNTER

PURPOSE: There are currently a range of strategies and initiatives being prepared and/or implemented across the region at various scales (local to federal), and by various agencies that are targeting economic development and investment attraction. The purpose of this project is to identify and review the focus and activities of the many initiatives currently in play in the region, to identify those priority areas of shared interest and/or gaps that the Hunter JO needs to be actively involved in addressing. This seeks to avoid duplication with existing programs, improve alignment between them, and ensure the shared interests of Councils are being considered. The outcome of this work will be a priority list of clear actions for the Hunter JO to pursue that are consistent with its statutory functions and strategic plan.

ACTIVITY:

- Summary project brief endorsed by the Hunter JO Board at its April meeting.
- Initial project literature review underway.

DELIVERY STATUS: In progress

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 endorsed by the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Steering Committee (GNMPSC) at its meeting on 4th March 2021, and a summary project brief derived from this paper endorsed by the Hunter JO Board at its April 2021 meeting. Consistent with these resolutions, Hunter JO staff are currently formulating 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

HUNTER JO 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:

- Terms of Reference endorsed by the Hunter JO Board at its February 2021 meeting, following which General Managers nominated staff representatives to participate in the Forum.
- First meeting of the Forum held on 30 March 2021, which was held as a joint session with the Regional Economic Development Forum (refer Action 3.1). Outputs from the 30 March meeting are available on the "Past Events" section of the Hunter JO website.
- The next quarterly joint meeting of the Regional Planning Forum and Regional Economic Development Forum is scheduled for 17 June 2021.

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:

- Engagement of a preferred consultant is currently being negotiated to deliver key elements of this project.
- Based on work currently underway, a collaboration with the NSW Government has been identified to assist with the development of baseline information for the project. Savings derived from the collaboration will facilitate additional workshops being delivered with Councils and key stakeholders that are currently being planned for July – Sep 2021.

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 Request for Quotation process is underway to secure a consultant to assist with designing the structure and form of the Hunter Venture Fund, a central feature of the 2050 Foundation. This work will:
 - Review and provide recommendations on potential corporate entity options for housing the Hunter Venture Fund
 - Provide recommendations on the structure & design of the Venture Fund
- 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
- Priority areas have been identified by the sub working group and these are being progressed along with a plan for governance and community engagement.

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.
- Priority areas have been identified by the sub working group and these are being progressed along with a plan for governance and community engagement.

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 brief 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:

A Request for Quotation process is currently being initiated to seek the services of a consultant to support the Hunter JO progress:

- The initial facilitation of a Regional Events Strategy Working Group
- Delivery of an initial suite of practical activities to pilot collaborative action between Councils around regional events. For example, initial development of a regional events calendar or coordinating a regional facilities audit across participating Councils
- Scoping up the process and scope of activity that would be required for the region to bid for a World Masters Games event.

This is consistent with the Hunter JO Board resolution from April 2021 to:

- Establish a Regional Events Strategy Working Group
- Undertake a review of opportunities and costs associated with hosting a World Masters Games; and
- Review existing strategies and develop a roadmap for the implementation of key actions to attract major events to the region.

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: Future stakeholder engagement sessions are yet to be scheduled by DSSN. Next steps will be presentation of the draft DMP to Councils and the Hunter JO for review.

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.

A briefing by Damien Pfeiffer - Director Development Services, Transport for NSW on the changes that have resulted directly from this regional collaboration is scheduled for the June 2021 Hunter JO Board meeting.

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.

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:

- Following joint consultation sessions held by Transport for NSW and DPIE staff with individual Councils in February 2021, Transport for NSW delivered three further sub regional workshops (Upper Hunter, Lower Hunter and Hunter) during April & May 2021. The purpose of these included:
 - Sharing the collective findings of the February consultation sessions
 - Improving understanding of the key transport links within each sub-region, between sub-regions and beyond the Hunter.
 - Starting a sub-regional priority list for further consideration.
- A briefing session was also provided by Transport for NSW on the combined outputs of the February council consultation sessions to the joint session of the Hunter JO Regional Economic Development and Planning Forums held on 30 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:

- A Request for Quotation process has been completed and a preferred consultant contracted to research and provide recommendations on an appropriate infrastructure prioritisation methodology for the region. This work will include:
 - Researching and assessing existing infrastructure prioritisation methodologies currently in use in Australia and internationally
 - Participating in a workshop process with key regional stakeholders to examine the research findings and needs of the Hunter JO and stakeholders, to inform recommendations for refining the focus, scope and outputs of the project.
 - Making recommendations on the preferred methodology or methodologies for undertaking objective, evidence-based analysis and prioritisation of infrastructure projects at regional and subregional scales in the Hunter Region, both at an overall level and for specific infrastructure categories.
- 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)