



**HUNTER JO  
PROGRAM REPORT  
AUGUST 2021**

This publication was produced by the Hunter Joint Organisation.



#### **ENQUIRIES**

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#### **SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHIC CITATION**

Hunter JO Program Report (August 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

## MEDIA

FOCUS	RELEASE DATE
<p><b>HUNTER JOINT ORGANISATION SECURES \$862,000 FOR ACCELERATING EVENTS ECONOMIES</b></p> <p>The Hunter JO has received a \$862,000 grant towards their Accelerating Event Economies (A2E) Project through the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery (BLER) Fund run by the NSW Government. The Hunter Region already has fantastic event capability; however, there is potential for bigger and better events at a regional scale. This project is focused on unlocking that potential.</p>	26 July 2021
<p><b>HUNTER JO FIRST REGION NATIONALLY TO JOIN CITIES POWER PARTNERSHIP</b></p> <p>The Hunter region of NSW has committed to collaboratively tackling shared challenges of changing global energy markets and climate change impacts, by joining Australia's largest local government climate network the Cities Power Partnership. The Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO) and each of its member councils have signed an agreement to accelerate clean energy initiatives and jobs in an effort to move towards a cleaner tomorrow for their communities and set the region up for a prosperous future.</p>	11 June 2021
<p><b>LOCAL LEADERS TO GET THE CHANCE TO DEAL WITH HUNTER ENERGY INDUSTRY CHANGES</b></p> <p>The Hunter Jo welcomes the announcement by the NSW Government to establish an Expert Panel to assist the Hunter region's changing energy economy, a welcome step towards dealing with the real risks to the region's economy and jobs as local industries change.</p>	20 May 2021

# INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION

## REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND NETWORKS

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

NETWORK / COMMITTEE	CONVENER
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
Hunter Venture Fund Sub-Committee	Hunter JO
Cities Power Partnership	Hunter JO
Regional Priority Infrastructure List – Methodology Workshop	Hunter JO
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
Steering Committee: Hunter and Central Coast Regional Plan Review	DPIE
Hunter Estuary Stakeholder Workshop	Maitland City Council
Resources NSW Steering Committee	NIER

# STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PRIORITY SETTING

## STATUS OF REGIONAL GRANTS AND FUNDING SUBMISSIONS

FUNDING PROGRAM	PROJECT TITLE	AMOUNT	STATUS
Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (Regional NSW)	<b>ACCELERATING EVENT ECONOMIES</b> 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.	\$861,476	Successful
	<b>HUNTER 2050 FOUNDATION</b> 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.	\$4,000,000	Unsuccessful
	<b>HUNTER BIOCIRCULAR</b> 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.	\$300,000	Unsuccessful
	<b>SHIRAZ TO SHORE</b> 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.	\$19,515,600	Unsuccessful



# 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
- Commencing the transition of content from the former HCCREMS website onto the hunterjo.com.au website

**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 have commenced. 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 2021, 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 and 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". Funding for disaster dashboards has been extended until 31 December 2022.
- 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 and in July 2021, resources for a "Get Ready Animals" social media campaign.

**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 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. Initial preparation is underway. In July/August all Councils will be contacted to confirm the engagement plan details, including staff contacts and involvement for the working groups and technical groups.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In Progress

## 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 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. Initial preparation is underway. In July/August all Councils will be contacted to confirm the engagement plan details, including staff contacts and involvement for the working groups and technical groups.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In Progress.



## 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:

- Final 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
  - Delineate the risk posed by the contaminated land portfolio of Council
- The Hunter JO recently participated in a workshop facilitated by NSW DPIE to develop standardised conditions of development consent relating to contaminated land. The Hunter JO have provided extensive feedback on the draft conditions of development consent and are awaiting a response on the next steps of this NSW DPIE Project.
- 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)
- 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)
- Delivery of workshops to build capacity of Councils in interpreting contaminated land technical reports through the following sessions:
  - Preliminary Site Investigations and Sampling and Analysis Quality Plans (delivered 3 June 2021 this event attracted 70 participants from across all member Councils)
  - Tier 1 Screening Criteria, an Overview
  - Interpreting Laboratory Reports
  - Detailed Site Investigation
  - Site-specific Risk Assessment and Modelling
  - Remedial Action Plan, Site Remediation and Validation
  - Environment Management Plan
  - Ongoing Monitoring
  - The Site Audit Process, Reviewing Reports (an auditor's perspective) and Site Auditor Q&A
- Materials currently in development to support Council staff to review contaminated land reports is currently underway, to which the Hunter JO currently seeking input from member Councils, NSW EPA and NSW Site Auditors.

**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 second regional forum was delivered on the 24 June 2021 focusing on:
  - Session 1
    - Communicating Climate Change (Victoria Fratin, Communications Advisor, Cities Power Partnership); and
    - Charging the Regions - A Local Government EV fast charging network (Rob Law, Executive Officer, Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance)
  - Session 2 – workshopping the areas of shared regional interest / opportunities for collaboration identified by Councils in November 2020. This drilled down further into each of these areas and identified specific focus area / projects for collaboration moving forward. The aim of this session was 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 workshopped by Councils were:
    - 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

## HUNTER CENTRAL COAST RESOURCE RECOVERY STRATEGY

**PURPOSE:** To develop Hunter Central Coast Resource Recovery Strategy for the period 2022-2027 that is innovative, ambitious yet achievable, and representative of our region. The Strategy will align to the recently released Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy released by the NSW State Government and deliver an Action Plan with concrete steps towards delivering on strategy objectives.

**ACTIVITY:**

- Project initiation meeting held between Hunter JO and Regional Waste Strategy Group
- Consultant appointed who has commenced reviewing the existing Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy (WARR) 2017-2021 and the Hunter JO's delivery against WARR objectives in that strategy.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

## 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 completed by project partner the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) Social Research Unit and regional office. The purpose of the survey was 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 the survey will now be provided to the Hunter JO to inform the focus and format of Communication Resources to be developed under the project.

The development of the Climate Change IP&R Package is underway, with the Hunter JO collaborating with DPIE to ensure the package aligns with the development of their Local Government Climate Change Toolkit. These will complement each other, as the Act Now project focuses on identifying a climate change commitment level moving forward, whereas the DPIE project focus is current maturity. A detailed update and options for engagement will be forwarded to Council staff by August.

**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 18 August 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:

- Circular Economy 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 April 2021, involving over 40 leaders in the Circular Economy field representing industry, academia, government and Not for Profit organisations. Participants 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.
- A draft Roadmap has since been developed following a month long feedback period with key stakeholders from the wider circular economy eco-system. The Roadmap is scheduled to be finalised in August after review by the Circular Economy Subcommittee and Facilitators Group

**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 communications officer, Kali Somerville, has been engaged 1 day per week to work on communications and engagement for the Circular Economy program. A communications plan has been developed and the content and processes are now in design. This will include:
  - A CE newsletter with local content, events and case studies as well as stories from national and international sources.
  - A LinkedIn CE network group to help facilitate engagement.
  - More regular updating and management of the [Huntercircular.com.au](http://Huntercircular.com.au) website content
  - Coordinating an annual CE event in the region (no funding at this stage)
- 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. This work will be completed in August 2021.

**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:**

- Circular Economy Regional Procurement MoU was endorsed by Hunter JO Board with formal signing of MoU document completed February 2021 by Council General Managers.
- A consultant, Edge Environment, has now been engaged to deliver the project.
- We will be developing a Council engagement plan over the next month to begin the consultation process for achieving increased circular procurement in our Councils.

**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 Caffeem 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 was officially launched in the Hunter Region in March 2021, with café and customer participation steadily growing.
- Central Coast Council have recently joined the regional program, launching in June 2021.
- First quarter statistics report show participation at 78 café's and 1,013 customers across the region with 18,746 disposable cups avoiding landfill.

**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 15 Sep 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.
- The next quarterly joint meeting of the Regional Economic Development Forum and Regional Planning Forum is scheduled for 22 July 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.
- The project has completed a perception survey with over 1200 respondents from all over Australia, 1 on 1 interviews with 10 large businesses and over 80 business surveys to provide a baseline understanding of perceptions of our region.

- The brand blueprint is now ready for consultation with the PCG, CRG and local government representatives and an engagement plan is in development.

**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:**

- Initial project literature review underway and initial consultation taken with project stakeholders to determine next steps.

**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 a Regional Governance 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 24 June 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 landuse 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.
- The next quarterly joint meeting of the Regional Economic Development Forum and Regional Planning Forum is scheduled for 22 July 2021 and will be an online only event.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Ongoing Role / Activity

## REGIONAL 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:**

- A consultant has now been engaged to deliver the 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 Aug/ Sep 2021.
- Invitations will begin to go out to key Council staff in early August to review the background documents and determine population planning status in each of our member Councils.

**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 consultant is now engaged 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 media, communication and engagement strategy was completed in February 2021, and our new communications officer is assisting with the implementation of this strategy.
- 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 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:**

- A second workshop is being planned for 16 August to check the status of smart city projects within each council and to workshop a data project for the circular economy project.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** In progress

### 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:**

The application for grant funding under the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF) was successful. Funding focusses on:

- 1) Establishing a partner task group and regional events strategy working 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.

Project initiation and planning is currently underway.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Project initiation and design

### 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

#### AIRPORT RUNWAY UPGRADE SUMMIT

**PURPOSE:** To coordinate a regional summit on ways to leverage the significant investment in the Newcastle Airport runway. Key focus areas of the summit include:

- Understanding the knowledge gaps for sectors that will be enabled through this runway upgrade
- How to activate the region and leverage the new international air traffic possibilities
- How to increase awareness of the opportunity and develop a strong positive narrative
- Identifying and targeting real outcomes for key sectors – like - citizen convenience and access to the world, freight, visitor economy, inward investment, export, education, business travel and defence industry

**ACTIVITY:**

- Initial summit scoping session completed with the airport and other key partners.
- Next step is to develop the project implementation plan for the summit proposed for October 2021

**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.
- The application for grant funding under the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF) was unsuccessful.
- Next step is to redesign the project to be focused on identifying one trial site, develop an implementation gap analysis for that site and to seek new funding opportunities for the concept.

**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.

Transport for NSW provided a briefing on the changes that have resulted directly from this regional collaboration at 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:**

The consultant has commenced the project with initiation meetings and the first deliverable of the consultancy complete, including research and assessment of existing infrastructure prioritisation methodologies currently in use in Australia and internationally. Next steps include:

- Participating in a workshop process, planned for 5 August, 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.

**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:**

- The application for grant funding under the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF) was unsuccessful.
- Next step is to redesign the project into the component parts and seek new funding opportunities.

**DELIVERY STATUS:** Project design

### 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)