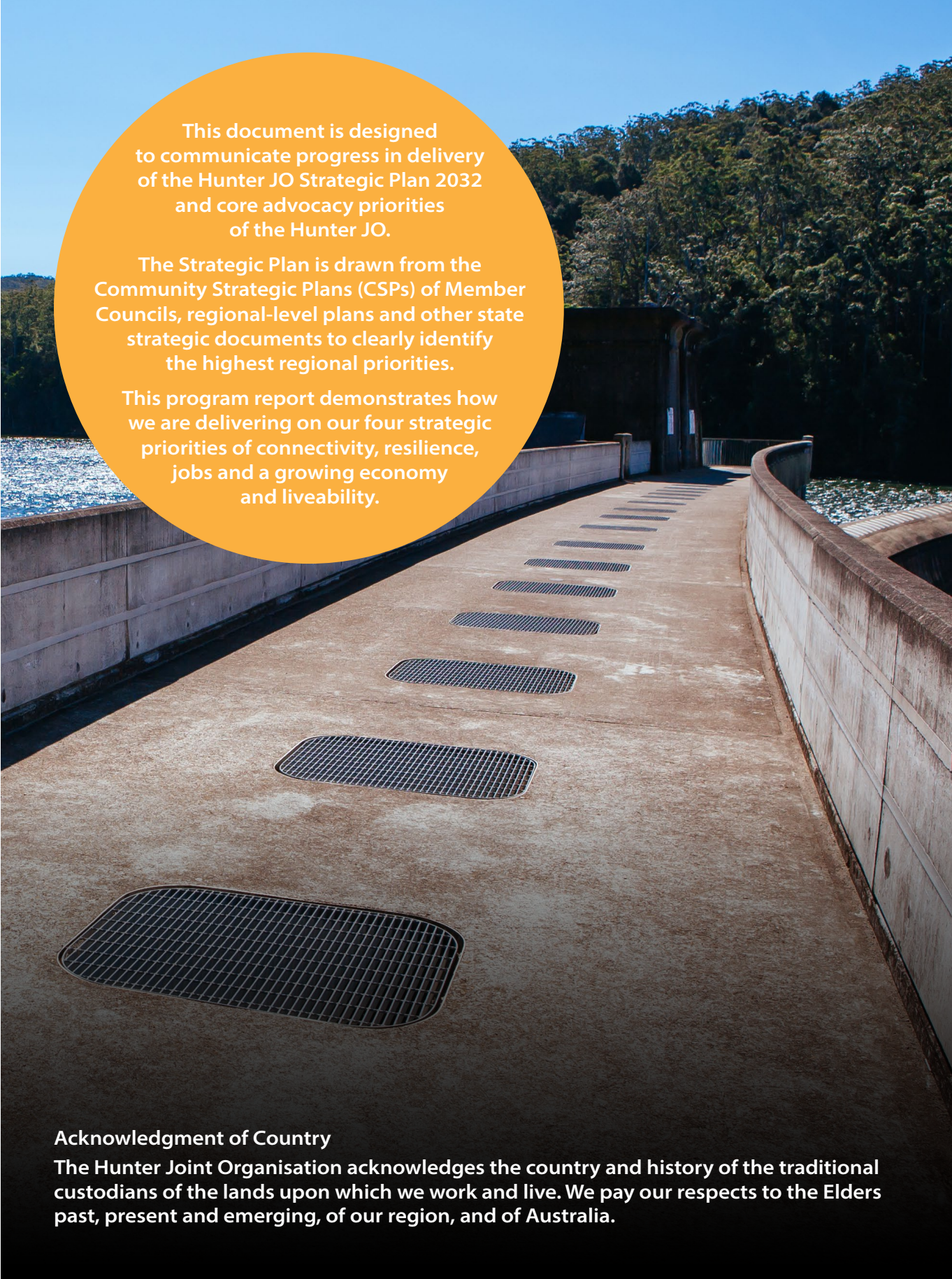




**Hunter JO Six-monthly
Program Report - February 2024**



This document is designed to communicate progress in delivery of the Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032 and core advocacy priorities of the Hunter JO.

The Strategic Plan is drawn from the Community Strategic Plans (CSPs) of Member Councils, regional-level plans and other state strategic documents to clearly identify the highest regional priorities.

This program report demonstrates how we are delivering on our four strategic priorities of connectivity, resilience, jobs and a growing economy and liveability.

Acknowledgment of Country

The Hunter Joint Organisation acknowledges the country and history of the traditional custodians of the lands upon which we work and live. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, of our region, and of Australia.

For all enquiries please contact Hunter Joint Organisation on 02 4978 4020 or email rppd@hunterjo.com.au.
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Hunter JO Program Report

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Who we are

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

Strategic Planning and Priority Setting

To establish strategic regional priorities for the Joint Organisation area and to establish strategies and plans for delivering those strategic regional priorities.

Regional Leadership and Advocacy

To provide regional leadership for the joint organisation area and to be an advocate for strategic regional priorities.

Intergovernmental Collaboration

To identify and take up opportunities for intergovernmental co-operation on matters relating to the Joint Organisation area.

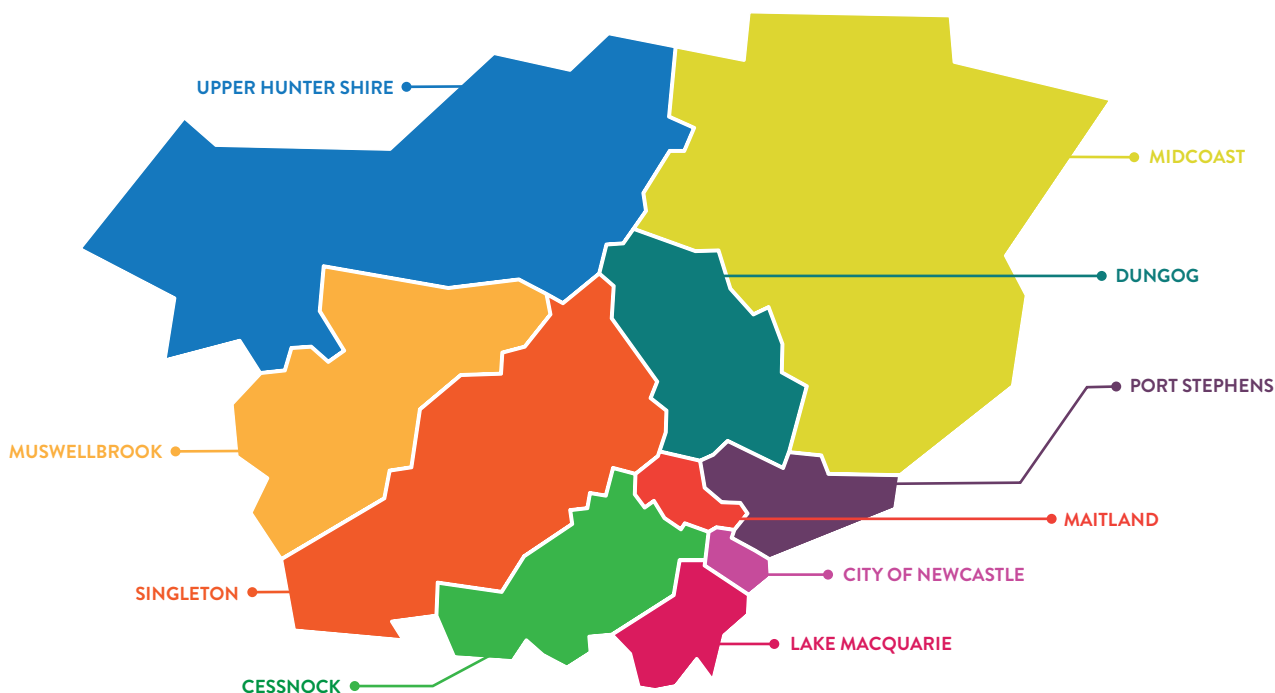


Our Mission

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



The Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) is a collaborative body that brings together the ten Councils in the region to provide a united and local voice for our communities.



Our Vision

We are a region that:

- Is globally connected and whose residents enjoy transport and digital infrastructure and systems that enhance their economic and lifestyle opportunities;
- Is prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks;
- Has an economy that continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs; and
- Will protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments.

Our Board

The Hunter JO 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.



Cr Sue Moore
Mayor Singleton Council



Cr Jay Suvaal
Mayor Cessnock City Council



Cr John Connors
Mayor Dungog Shire Council



Cr Kay Fraser
Mayor Lake Macquarie City Council



Cr Philip Penfold
Mayor Maitland City Council



Cr Claire Pontin
Mayor MidCoast Council



Cr Steven Reynolds
Mayor Muswellbrook Shire Council



Cr Nuatali Nelmes
Lord Mayor City of Newcastle



Cr Ryan Palmer
Mayor Port Stephens Council

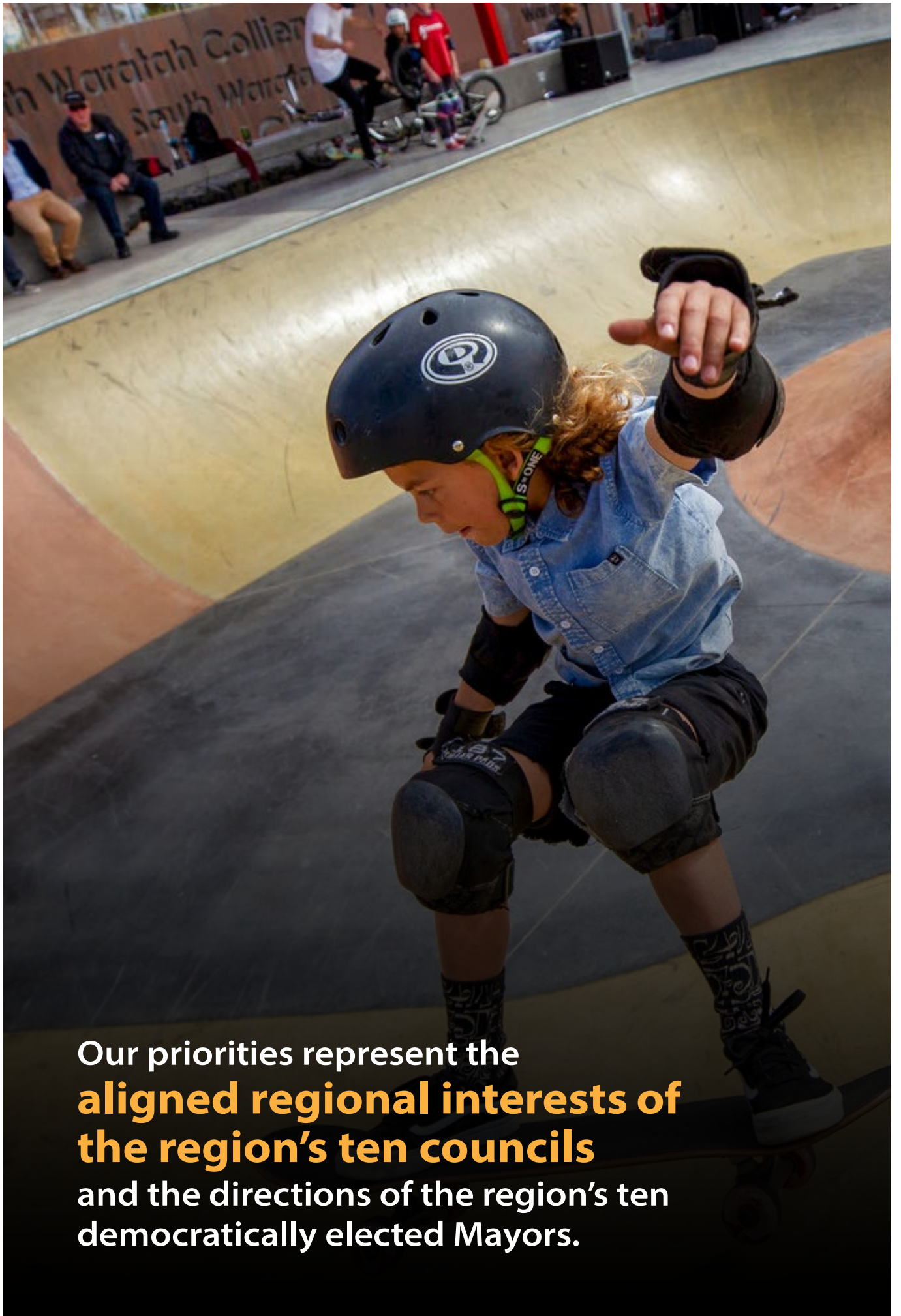


Cr Maurice Collison
Mayor Upper Hunter Shire Council

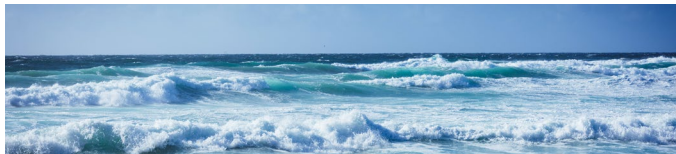


Our Team

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Our priorities represent the **aligned regional interests of the region's ten councils** and the directions of the region's ten democratically elected Mayors.



Our Priorities

Our Strategic Themes



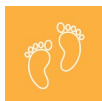
Connectivity - A globally connected region whose residents enjoy transport and digital infrastructure and systems that enhance their economic and lifestyle opportunities.



Resilience - We are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks.



Jobs and a Growing Economy - The Hunter economy continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs.



Liveability - Protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments that we enjoy in our Region.

*Refer to [Appendix](#) for our full list of Strategic Directions and Objectives.

Our Advocacy Priorities



Our unique lifestyle and attractive environment is protected and enhanced.



A resilient region prepared for change.



All levels of government contribute to ensuring the Hunter's successful economic evolution.



A globally focused Hunter connected to international markets.



Infrastructure and transport systems that connect the region.



Improving authority and resourcing for place-led decision-making at a local and regional scale.

Our Delivery



Regional Advocacy

1. Economic Evolution Authority

Purpose	Status Update
<p>The region needs a clear, place-based, integrated whole of government policy and planning approach to drive the Region's economic evolution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial meeting held between Hunter JO staff and representatives from the Commonwealth Net Zero Economy Agency in August 2023 to communicate and explore the regional priorities, opportunities and challenges for the region's economic evolution identified by the Hunter JO Board. Regional advocacy 'Blueprint for Evolving the Hunter's Economy' prepared and provided to Minister Bowen and Greg Combet (Commonwealth Net Zero Economy Authority) and Minister Houssos (NSW Future Jobs and Investment Authorities). Advocacy to the Hon Courtney Houssos, NSW Minister for Natural Resources seeking representation from the Hunter JO on the Royalties for Rejuvenation Hunter Expert Panel.

2. Reuse of Mining & Industrial Lands

Purpose	Status Update
<p>There is an urgent need for legislation and policy change to provide clarity, certainty and a clear pathway to enable adaptation and reuse of mining and industrial lands to support the region's economic evolution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priorities regarding reuse of mining and industrial lands included as a core priority in discussions with the Net Zero Economy Agency and 'Blueprint for Evolving the Hunter's Economy' provided to State and Commonwealth Government Ministers (see above). This advocacy priority included in the Hunter JO's submission to the 'Review of the Regional Development Act 2004 Issues Paper', referenced in Additional Advocacy (see below).

3. Transport Connectivity

Purpose	Status Update
<p>International and intra-region connectivity through integrated transport planning, infrastructure and services will be fundamental to the region's successful economic evolution.</p>	<p>Workshop held between Hunter JO Board and senior Transport for NSW representatives on 19th October 2023. Key outcomes included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment from Senior Transport Executives to engage on regular basis with Hunter JO Board (appropriate frequency to be determined) Commitment for TfNSW Planning team to engage directly with Councils to better identify local priorities and address local data gaps to inform preparation of SRTIPs. <p>The Hunter JO is in the process of planning a second workshop aimed at operational staff within the Hunter Region's councils, putting the positive outcomes from the Board Workshop into practical application of regional transport planning with Transport for NSW.</p>

4. Road Funding

Purpose	Status Update
Policy and funding should not leave some communities worse off, but should address the structural inequities where regional communities bear an undue road funding burden compared with capital city counterparts.	<p>Following correspondence from the Hunter JO regarding the inequity of road funding between metropolitan and regional areas, a reply has been received from the Hon Jenny Aitchison, Minister for Regional Transport and Roads regarding the roads funding, and providing further transparency on the formula used.</p> <p>New funding allocations have now been announced for the Regional Emergency Road Repair Fund in the NSW State Government budget. We are waiting for further information to see how this will be applied across the Hunter Region.</p>

5. Return of Waste Levy Funds

Purpose	Status Update
Significant funding and investment is needed to implement circular economy and waste management initiatives to unlock economic growth and sustainability for the Hunter region.	<p>The NSW Minister for the Environment has approved a review of the NSW Waste Levy. Through the Hunter JO, NSW Environment Protection Agency (EPA) staff engaged with councils and stakeholders in late 2023 seeking input to inform the design and scope of the review, via briefings provided to the Hunter JO General Managers Advisory Committee (GMAC), Hunter JO staff and the Hunter Regional Waste Managers Group.</p> <p>The Hunter JO also took the initiative to prepare a regional submission, providing recommendations for the focus and scope of the review. This submission has been finalised and provided to Minister Sharpe, Rayne de Gruchy and Tony Chappel (EPA). View the Hunter JO's Waste Levy Submission here.</p>

Additional Advocacy & Political Engagements

Purpose	Status Update
<p>Regional Submission on Regional Development Act and Trust Fund.</p>	<p>The Hunter JO has provided a regional submission to the 'Review of the Regional Development Act 2004 Issues Paper', providing the Hunter region's position on the Regional Development Road Map and Trust Fund process. As this review is likely to have significant impacts in the Hunter Region, the Mayors of the Hunter JO collaborated at the December 2023 meeting of the Board in order to provide a coordinated response to the review.</p> <p>The Hunter JO also held a meeting with Chief of Staff, Minister for Regional NSW regarding the review, and attended the December Development Roundtable held in Maitland, along with a number of Mayors from the region. View the Hunter JO's Regional Development Act & Trust Fund Submission here.</p>
<p>Shiraz to Shore Advocacy Engagement.</p>	<p>In conjunction with the Richmond Vale Rail Trail Supporters Group, Hunter JO staff participated in a field trip to a section of the proposed Richmond Vale Trail, with the following Commonwealth Parliament representatives and Cessnock City Councillors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meryl Swanson MP, Federal Member for Paterson • Dan Repacholi MP, Federal Member for Hunter • Cr Jay Suvaal, Mayor Cessnock City Council • Cr Rosa Grine, Councillor Cessnock City Council <p>This meeting explored the broader opportunities for the region that would be provided by the Hunter Cycle Tourism Strategy and Shiraz to Shore Trail.</p>

Intergovernmental Collaboration

Highlights - Hunter JO Workshops, Forums and Events

Resilience Games

Hunter Disaster Resource Sharing Workshop ('Resilience Games') was delivered with support from AECOM. This workshop explored the challenges and opportunities involved with sharing resources between councils across the region during a disaster. The workshop followed a design sprint methodology, taking the groups through setting the scene, ideation, prototyping and testing. 30 people attended including representatives from 9 councils, NSW Police, NSW SES and NSW Reconstruction Authority.

AECOM will now deliver a report and recommendations based on the workshop findings and other research to suggest ways in which to improve the effectiveness of councils sharing and helping each other during disasters. Early ideas from the workshop suggested a need to better communicate and learn from each other and understand what each LGA has to offer, with potentially Hunter JO facilitating a regional resource sharing database pending resourcing.

2 November 2023

Plugging into the Future: Electrifying Council Fleets Event

More than 60 council representatives from across the Hunter and surrounding regions attended Hunter JO's 'Plugging into the Future: Electrifying Council Fleets' event. Councils heard from expert speakers on how best to navigate the essential aspects of transitioning to electric vehicle fleets, including total cost of ownership, charging, and planning. The attendees test drove a range of EVs and browsed the electric trucks and outdoor equipment on display, such as electric ride on mowers and BBQs.

This highly successful event was delivered in partnership with Cities Power Partnership. Positive feedback was received from attendees and the event received positive coverage from local media. This included a live ABC radio cross, and articles by Newcastle Herald and several other local newspapers.

30 November 2023

Hunter Biodiversity and Conservation Forum

The Forum was organised in response to interest from Member Council staff in collaborating and identifying opportunities for improved biodiversity and conservation outcomes in the Hunter region. It featured presentations from key state government teams, Q&A panel sessions, and a workshop session to identify collaborative opportunities and priorities.

The Forum was attended by 50 people including staff from Member Councils, state government agencies, LGNSW and the Hunter JO.

7 September 2023

Highlights - Hunter JO Workshops, Forums and Events

International Insights for a Circular Hunter

Delivered in conjunction with both the Hunter Innovation Festival and Circularity 2023, this event featured presentations and a panel discussion with three expert keynote speakers: Nicole Garofano (Planet Ark Environmental Foundation's ACE Hub), Eloise Lobsey (Hunter Joint Organisation), and Annie Jiang (Go Circular). The event also included the official launch of the Hunter Circular website by Mayor Kay Fraser. The event was sponsored by Hunter Innovation Festival, The Business Centre Newcastle, NSW Energy & Resources Knowledge Hub, and the University of Newcastle, attracting 77 stakeholders from across industry, local government, and university researchers.

26 October 2023

Textiles Circularity Think Thank

This event brought together key players from local government, industries, and other stakeholders across the region's textiles value chain. The event was attended by 35 stakeholders from Local Government, industry, and other groups across the textiles value chain, who together:

- brainstormed and provided insight into the gaps and opportunities for greater circularisation of textiles in the Hunter
- developed and pitched an education campaign, and
- workshopped potential pilot projects to address the identified gaps and opportunities.

The event also spurred participating businesses and organisations to continue to pursue discourse around textiles circularity in the Hunter, including delivery of a follow-up Think Tank on the 18th October delivered by the NSW Smart Sensing Network (NSSL).

20 June 2023

Collaborating for disaster resilience - Mid North Coast

Representatives from the Hunter JO visited Mid North Coast JO to share learnings around Council collaboration, Disaster Risk Reduction Programs and other collaborative JO projects, initiatives and processes.

7 August 2023

Standing Engagement - Convened by Hunter JO & Local Government

Hunter JO Circular Economy SubCommittee	Quarterly
Circular Economy Facilitators Group	Quarterly
Disaster Waste Management & Resource Recovery Preparedness Working Group	N/A
Contaminated Land Working Group	Bi-monthly
Regional Waste Managers Network (Regional Waste Strategy Group)	Quarterly
National Simtable Working Group	Monthly
Sustainability Educators Group	Monthly
Hunter Net Zero Network	Bi-monthly
Hunter Resilience Network	Bi-monthly
Revolving Energy Fund Action Group	Monthly

Standing Engagement - Convened by Others

Hunter Central Coast Coastal Management Practitioners Roundtable (NSW Department of Planning & Environment)	Monthly
NSW JO Chairs Forum	Quarterly
NSW JO Executive Officers Network	Monthly
Regional Resilience Program Advisory Committee (RPPAC) - Canberra Region JO	Monthly
Hunter IP&R Network	Monthly
Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration Network - Office of Energy & Climate Change	Weekly
Hunter Regional Leadership Executive (Regional NSW)	Quarterly
Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Steering Committee	Quarterly
Regional Business Attraction Committee (Regional NSW)	Quarterly
Resources NSW Steering Committee (NIER)	Quarterly
Regional SDG's Dashboard Project Group	Quarterly
Unified Voice - Hunter Advocacy Coordination and Collaboration (Committee for the Hunter)	Monthly

Regional Programs and Capacity Building

Program Status Report

Strategic Themes	Project	Funding	Delivery Date
CONNECTIVITY			
● ● ●	Cycle Tourism Strategy (Shiraz to Shore)	Grant	31-03-2024
● ● ●	Airports Strategy (Freight and Logistics)	Grant	31-03-2024
RESILIENCE			
● ● ●	Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework	Grant	15-12-2023
● ● ●	Act Now on Coastal Adaptation	Grant	30-09-2023
● ● ●	Disaster Risk Reduction	Grant	30-06-2024
● ● ●	Simtables for Community Empowerment	Grant	01-06-2023
● ● ●	Disaster Waste & Resource Recovery Preparedness	Grant	30-06-2024
● ● ●	Regional Transport and Connectivity Vulnerability Assessment	Grant	30-06-2024
JOBS AND A GROWING ECONOMY			
● ● ●	Circular Economy Ecosystem	Grant	30-06-2024
● ● ●	Circular Precincts and Futures Hub	Grant	31-03-2024
● ● ●	Hunter Circular Knowledge Hub	Grant	30-06-2023
● ● ●	Hospitality Circularity Project	Grant	31-03-2026
● ● ●	Hunter Global Tourism	Grant	31-03-2024
● ● ● ●	Priority Infrastructure List	Hunter JO	30-06-2024
● ● ●	Circular Data Project	Grant	30-06-2024
● ● ●	Cert III & IV Waste Management Training	Grant	30-06-2024
● ● ●	Circular Textiles	Grant	30-06-2024
LIVEABILITY			
● ● ●	Accelerating Event Economies	Grant	31-12-2023
● ● ●	Community Recycling Centres	Grant	30-06-2024
● ● ●	Illegal Dumping Program	Grant	31-03-2027
● ● ●	Landfill Emissions Data Project	Grant	30-06-2024
● ● ●	Contaminated Land Program	Grant	15-12-2023
● ● ● ●	Net Zero Acceleration	Grant	30-06-2024



Connectivity

A globally connected region whose residents enjoy transport and digital infrastructure and systems that enhance their economic and lifestyle opportunities.

Objectives - Where do we want to be?

1.1 Within the region there is a robust integrated transport solution that underpins the experience/liveability and productivity of its residents and visitors comparable to its global peers.

1.2 Through its port and airport the Hunter is a globally connected and economically prosperous city-region, recognised as a key international gateway, providing its communities with a vibrant and unique lifestyle and growth in products and services to replace the economic output of thermal coal.

1.3 Digital connectivity that ensures community access to core services on commuter routes across the region and between Sydney and Newcastle and to enable business development, growth and innovation.

1.4 A region that is built around sustainable transport outcomes.

Cycle Tourism Strategy (Shiraz to Shore)

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.

Status Update

The draft Hunter Cycle Tourism Strategy has been provided to the project stakeholders for review, including the Shiraz to Shore Concept Plan.

Site visits have been undertaken with land managers along each section of the Shiraz to Shore trail, including those from Singleton, Cessnock, Lake Macquarie and Newcastle Councils, and NSW National Parks. A presentation on the Shiraz to Shore Concept has also been provided to the Urban Development Institute of Australia, and to the Property Council in the Hunter Region.

Situation Analysis has been completed for Hunter Cycle Tourism Strategy, and Audit Assessment Report of the Shiraz to Shore trail has been completed, with the Concept Design and Business Case to follow.

Strategic Directions

1.1.2, 1.1.5, 1.4.1, 4.1.2

Airports Strategy (Freight and Logistics)

Purpose

To develop:

- A strategy and business case for airfreight and passenger infrastructure and connectivity logistics for the region.
- An integrated airports strategy for the region including assessments of passenger, airfreight and transport links across the region.

Status Update

The Hunter Airports Strategy has now been completed. Outcomes of the project include.

- Hunter Airports Strategy Final Reports - Long and short form
- Hunter Airports Strategy Business Case

The business case has been provided to Newcastle Airport, City of Newcastle and Port Stephens Council and will be utilised by the Airport in their efforts to secure funding to deliver the regionally important Cargo Terminal.

A presentation on the outcomes of the Hunter Airports Strategy was provided to stakeholders from the Hunter JO Member Councils, Newcastle Airport, Committee for the Hunter, Royal Newcastle Aero Club, Dantia, and RDA Hunter in December 2023.

Strategic Directions

1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3



Resilience

We are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks.

Objectives - Where do we want to be?

2.1 We are recognised as innovative leaders in Council capacity building and policy support for climate change action, resilience and disaster preparedness.

2.2 We take leadership and drive regional best practice in climate action.

2.3 Our region is resilient to environment risks, natural hazards and climate change.

Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework

Purpose

To support Member Councils embed resilience principles and projects into their Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R), in order to support their ability to allocate recurrent funds and commit to long term resourcing (financial and staff) for resilience projects.

Status Update

The Resilience IP&R Package has now been finalised and is available on the Hunter JO website, with a high level of interest from stakeholders since its publication. The project has been officially acquitted, with the following documents also now available on the Hunter JO Website at closure of the project; Resource Sharing Arrangements and Council Needs Synthesis Report, Resource Sharing Plan including Shared Fatigue Management Guideline template, and Summary Factsheet. The Hunter JO will continue to progress Resilience IP&R work through the DRRF program. Resource-sharing and MOU to be progressed through Disaster Waste project and presented at Hunter Councils Risk Management Committee meeting in February.

Strategic Directions

2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2

Act Now on Coastal Adaptation

Purpose

The objectives of this project are to:

1. Develop an Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Package which embeds resilience to Climate Change into Councils operations through incorporation into the overarching IP&R documents.
2. Provide a coastal adaptation communication framework, media templates and suite of practical resources to directly build the capacity of the coastal councils of the Hunter and Central Coast.
3. Build capacity within Councils to reduce risks, increase resilience and reduce climate vulnerability by collaboratively building community understanding and literacy around coastal management and adaptation issues and bridging the gap between the IP&R framework and prioritisation of Climate Change resilience.

Status Update

Presentation on the Coastal and Estuary Support Package provided to the 2 October Coastal Practitioners meeting. Feedback was given about the benefit of having regionally consistent messaging about coastal hazards for the community. A summary of the Package was also sent to councils' communications representatives. This project is now complete. Final Coastal and Estuary Communications Support Package is now publicly available on the Hunter JO website - <https://www.hunterjo.com.au/projects/act-now-on-adaptation-coastal-communication/>.

Strategic Directions

2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 4.3.1



Resilience

We are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Purpose

To facilitate place-based regional collaboration across four sub projects to empower Councils and communities in the region to reduce disaster risk through early action. The focus of the sub-projects includes:

- Regional Support and Capacity Building - embedding disaster resilience into Council operations and building capacity to communicate disaster resilience to local communities.
- Disaster waste management and resource recovery preparedness - assisting Councils to plan place-based solutions for effective disaster waste management and resource recovery systems
- Delivering a regional transport vulnerability and connectivity assessment and mitigation plan
- Continued refinement and expansion of the use of Simtables regionally for multi-hazard disaster engagement

Status Update

Hunter Resilience Network scheduled for 8 February, with Cessnock and Singleton giving case study updates on their projects. Lessons in Disaster training by Gender and Disaster Australia scheduled for 5 March at Hunter JO offices, capped at 25 attendees. Resilience Canopy Training discussions also underway for early 2024.

Beat the Heat resources have been updated on website and communicated to councils. Disaster Comms Framework review is underway with upcoming engagement with council communications staff planned.

Needs and Opportunities Analysis is continuing with some delays experienced from the project consultant. Councils have been provided with LGA specific data reports for review, and Needs Analysis reports are due to be provided in late January / early February.

Strategic Directions

2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2

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 has purchased two Simtables for the collective use of Member Councils and is providing direct support to Councils in undertaking the extensive community engagement associated with their use.

Status Update

This project was formally completed on 1 June 2023. However, the Simtables continue to be used for community engagement for disaster resilience across the region. The Hunter JO hosted a Simtable Program Development Workshop on 18 and 19 December 2023. The Workshop was attended by Simtable users and program managers from across NSW and QLD, including Noosa Council, Ku-ring-gai Council, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, and several Joint Organisations. The workshop provided training for Simtable users, worked towards the development of shared program resources, and identified opportunities for the group to work together going forward.

The Simtables program continues to facilitate community engagement activities across the region, using the Simtables to help communities understand their disaster risks and actions that can be taken to improve preparedness.

Strategic Directions

2.1.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2



Resilience

We are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks.

Disaster Waste & Resource Recovery Preparedness (Disaster Risk Reduction Sub-Project)

Purpose	Status Update
<p>To understand disaster waste needs and risks in the Hunter and Central Coast, and prepare a regional support package to assist councils to plan for effective disaster waste management.</p>	<p>Phase I of the Disaster Waste and Resource Recovery Preparedness Project was completed on 21st December 2023, which included the following deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Assessment Criteria (for temporary disaster waste sites) • Waste Type V Material Composition Matrix • Disaster Waste Material Flow Analysis • Predicted disaster waste volumes. • Constraints mapping at regional, sub regional and local scales that identify vulnerabilities to flood, tsunami, storm, and bushfires for existing waste management facilities <p>Phase II planning is now underway, which will develop a Regional Support Package, Regional Disaster Waste Management Plan and DRAFT MOU to support delivery. Phase II will also review the temporary site selection process determined through Phase I.</p>
<p>Strategic Directions</p>	<p>2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2</p>

Regional Transport and Connectivity Vulnerability Assessment (Disaster Risk Reduction Sub-Project)

Purpose	Status Update
<p>To provide an assessment of the risks posed to Hunter and Central Coast region's transport networks by natural disasters, and the actions and partnerships required to mitigate these risks</p>	<p>The Joint Organisation Network has continued to engage with TfNSW towards a statewide Resilience Plan - an initiative assessing transport and connectivity vulnerability across regions to boost network and infrastructure resilience. This goes beyond existing plans to improve infrastructure planning, policies, and overall network resilience, delivering benefits for both councils and TfNSW. TfNSW and Hunter JO hosted a workshop on Wednesday 31 January to collaboratively gather and define council business & user requirements for the development of a spatial data sharing tool providing a comprehensive, real-time representation of potential vulnerabilities beyond existing state and local systems, to support improved decision-making, planning, and response strategies.</p>
<p>Strategic Directions</p>	<p>2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2</p>



Jobs and a Growing Economy

The Hunter economy continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs.

Objectives - Where do we want to be?

3.1 Coordinated planning and investment by all levels of government that empowers the region and its residents to maintain and grow jobs, economic opportunities and quality of life.

3.2 Accelerated and amplified market-driven investment in innovation that capitalises on the region's existing natural strengths and attributes which create jobs in future industries.

3.3 A globally focused region that drives talent attraction and retention.

3.4 A region that is built around Circular Economy principles as a driver of future jobs.

3.5 We are recognised as a destination of choice for international and domestic visitors.

Circular Economy Ecosystem

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.

Status Update

Ecosystem engagement work has continued including the compiling of new case studies for the Hunter Circular website. Collaboration and information sharing is strengthening between Hunter Circular and other hubs (ACEHub).

Our premier Hunter Circular event for 2023 - "International Insights for a Circular Hunter" was held on the 26th October 2023 at the Q Building in Newcastle, in conjunction with both the Hunter Innovation Festival and Circularity 2023. The event featured presentations and a panel discussion with three expert keynote speakers: Nicole Garofano (Planet Ark Environmental Foundation's ACE Hub), Eloise Lobsey (Hunter Joint Organisation), and Annie Jiang (Go Circular). The event also included the official launch of the Hunter Circular website by Mayor Kay Fraser.

The event was sponsored by Hunter Innovation Festival, The Business Centre Newcastle, NSW Energy & Resources Knowledge Hub, and the University of Newcastle.

We also featured seven stalls showcasing CE initiatives and projects; Circular Economy Living Lab, The Business Centre Newcastle, Cha Cha Biochar, Resourceful Living, PV Industries, Go Circular, and the University of Newcastle.

The event was attended by 77 stakeholders from across industry, local government, and university researchers.

Strategic Directions

3.4.1, 4.2.2, 4.4.2



Jobs and a Growing Economy

The Hunter economy continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs.

Circular Precincts and Futures Hub

Purpose

To deliver concept plans and business cases for four multi-element circular economy precincts, that would each represent a key part of the Hunter. Project outputs will outline the potential for circular processing, renewable energy production and value-added businesses, delivering diversified employment opportunities and new industries to the region. Key project deliverables will include:

- A concept plan and strategy for Circular Economy Precincts, including an Anaerobic Digestion component for the circular processing of organics and biogas or energy production for the precinct.
- A concept plan and strategy for establishing a Circular Economy Futures Hub.

Status Update

GHD have been engaged to deliver this project and an Expert Panel of industry representatives appointed to advise the consultant at each project stage. The Expert Panel consists of Annie Jiang, Dr. Anumitra Mirti, Granville Taylor, Mark Glover and Troy Uren.

Stage 1 - Inception has now been completed.

Stage 2 - Circular Economy Precincts design is near completion, with draft CE Precincts Concept Plans having been reviewed by the Expert Panel. The Concept Plans outline technological and process options for four sites across the region, based on an analysis of market and technical factors. The concept plans will inform the eventual business case and implementation plan to be developed in stage 4.

Stage 3 - Circular Economy Precincts Hub design has commenced, and will deliver a concept plan and strategy for a Futures Hub to support and curate the CE in the Hunter, particularly the development of the precincts.

Strategic Directions

3.4.1, 4.2.2, 4.4.2

Hunter Circular Knowledge Hub

Purpose

To create and pilot a digital circular knowledge hub for two distinct user groups – for council staff, and for the community at large. The aim is to address the information accessibility and knowledge barriers that prevail and frustrate uptake of circular services and recovery pathways in the region. By creating tools to broaden participation, these solutions will be supported to scale and increase their impact. The project will gather information on services and solutions available in the region, then deploy tools that will present that information in a user-friendly format designed specifically for that group's needs.

Status Update

The consulting firms Aurecon and Edge Impact have been engaged to collaboratively deliver this project, including data gathering, analysis, and opportunities and gaps report for Stream A of project - to underpin development of a digital portal for council staff members to enable circularity best practice for council-managed waste streams and facilitate knowledge sharing amongst councils.

A request for Quotation has been distributed to engage a consultant for Stream B of the project, which will develop a digital map tool to encourage the uptake of sharing, hiring, reuse and repair behaviours by connecting community members with circular solutions provided by businesses (B2C) and councils (C2C).

Strategic Directions

3.4.1, 3.4.2, 4.2.2, 4.4.2

Hospitality Circularity Project

Purpose

This project will create the 'Hunter Hospitality Circularity Network' and engage hospitality SME's across the Hunter region, to build their capacity to evaluate and adopt circular solutions for their business operations and supply chains, with a focus on organics and single-use items. The project will work with existing business networks in precincts across six Local Government areas to take a place-based approach to strengthening and building hospitality SME networks. Through co-design processes and Bin Trim assessment phases, the project will build the capacity of these networks to work collectively to identify and implement circular solutions that benefit from network efficiency and scale.

Status Update

GoCircular have been engaged as the core project partner to deliver this new project in partnership with the Hunter JO. GoCircular have commenced initial communications to engage hospitality businesses in the project.

Strategic Directions

3.4.2, 4.2.2



Jobs and a Growing Economy

The Hunter economy continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs.

Hunter Global Tourism

Purpose	Status Update
<p>To identify the international tourism opportunities of the Hunter region in preparation of the Newcastle Airport international upgrade. Key elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder engagement to bring all tourism, marketing and economic development organisations across the region together to identify how we want to position, brand and market the region as one to potential visitors. Undertaking a review of the region to identify priority tourism infrastructure needed to attract international visitors. 	<p>Key activities delivered under the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Situation Analysis for the Hunter Global Tourism project Investment Logic Mapping with stakeholders to determine priorities for the Business Case Assessment. Completion of the Hunter Global Tourism Options and Assessment Report Completion of an Export Ready Tourism Marketing Strategy and Business Case for the Hunter region, to leverage the Newcastle Airport investment into the upgrade. Communication of project outcomes to key project partners and stakeholders.
Strategic Directions	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 3.5.1, 3.5.2, 4.1.1

Priority Infrastructure List

Purpose	Status Update
<p>To develop a methodology and process for determining regional infrastructure priorities to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building and advocating a stronger case for investment in infrastructure priorities across the region Identifying the potential for shared interests and collaboration between Councils and other stakeholders in delivering local and regional scale infrastructure initiatives. 	<p>The initial infrastructure data capture identified missing projects and data gaps that need to be rectified. We are building a new project plan to resolve this issue and have commenced engagement with Councils and the previous product developer to improve the collection of missing infrastructure projects and data.</p>
Strategic Directions	3.1.1, 3.1.5, 4.5.1

Circular Data Project (Circular Economy Ecosystem Sub-Project)

Purpose	Status Update
<p>To deliver a comprehensive data management system that supports circular economy analysis and data use cases. The system will collect, store, and present data from different sources and build upon previous material flow analysis work and establish a methodology for continuous data updating and management.</p>	<p>A review of the draft version of the data platform is currently underway with the project working group. Opportunities are also being explored to partner with other JO's and State Government to enhance the project.</p>
Strategic Directions	3.4.1, 4.2.2, 4.4.2

Cert III & IV Waste Management Training (Circular Economy Ecosystem Sub-Project)

Purpose	Status Update
<p>To provide subsidised training opportunities for our member councils to improve the knowledge and capability of our waste and recycling industry workers</p>	<p>The delivery of Cert III and Cert IV in Waste Management by the Hunter JO commenced in August and September 2023. Academy Green are the training providers. Eighteen students from eight councils are doing Cert III, and 15 students from seven councils are doing Cert IV.</p>
Strategic Directions	3.4.1, 4.2.2, 4.4.2



Jobs and a Growing Economy

The Hunter economy continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs.

Circular Textiles (Circular Economy Ecosystem Sub-Project)

Purpose

To support member councils with the reported increase in the volume of clothing textiles by:

- Assisting councils to identify best practice recovery pathways for textile materials, and
- Bringing actors in the textile value chain together to explore gaps and opportunities for greater circularisation of textiles in the Hunter region

Status Update

In June 2023 the Hunter JO hosted a Textiles Circularity Think Tank with MRA Consulting Group to bring together key players from local government, industries, and other stakeholders across the region's textiles value chain. The event was attended by 35 stakeholders from Local Government, industry, and other groups across the textiles value chain. Together, the stakeholders brainstormed and provided insight into the gaps and opportunities for greater circularisation of textiles in the Hunter, developed and pitched an education campaign, and workshopped potential pilot projects to address the identified gaps and opportunities. The event spurred participating businesses and organisations to continue to pursue discourse around textiles circularity in the Hunter, including delivery of a follow-up Think Tank on the 18th October delivered by the NSW Smart Sensing Network (NSSN).

Strategic Directions

3.4.1, 4.2.2, 4.4.2





Liveability

Protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments that we enjoy in our region.

Objectives - Where do we want to be?

4.1 We are recognised as a destination for hosting world class events that align with our unique offering.

4.2 Making use of our opportunity to drive circular evolution of our region's economy.

4.3 Our natural environments including our bushland, estuaries, waterways and beaches are protected and enhanced.

4.4 Supporting our region to be on the path to net zero emissions and paving the way with smart innovative solutions that increase liveability.

4.5 A region with enriched neighborhoods and places supported by planned infrastructure that promotes community cohesion, active living and pride in culture and heritage.

4.6 A region that is connected, inclusive and a fair.

Accelerating Event Economies

Purpose	Status Update
<p>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>	<p>The Events10 website and marketing campaign has been launched, with Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Singleton and Port Stephens Councils committing in kind resources to a 12-month pilot approach to determine the feasibility of the Events10 approach as a way of continuing to position our region as an events destination. This collaborative effort includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and maintenance of the Events10 website which provides information about the Hunter region to assist event planners in deciding to host their event in our region. Providing a point of contact for customers (event planners) Providing recommendations and local knowledge based on customer needs, for the customer to make direct contact with venues. An e-newsletter to event planners highlighting venues and destination information from the Hunter. Occasional marketing content may be shared on the Events10 social channels <p>A partnership has also been established with Newcastle Airport to implement a Hunter region marketing campaign, to fly into Newcastle Airport and travel across the Hunter. The campaign is using remaining funding from the Accelerating Event Economies program. All lower Hunter councils and tourism associations are interesting in investing to increase the reach of this initiative.</p>
Strategic Directions	1.2.1, 1.2.3, 4.1.1, 4.1.2

Community Recycling Centres

Purpose	Status Update
<p>To deliver a regionally coordinated approach to promoting community awareness of Community Recycling Centres (CRC's).</p>	<p>CRC community education on social media throughout July and August 2023 reached 499,077 over two months and with videos viewed more than 1.5 million times. The Creative Collective were engaged to run an online survey evaluating the community education activity, which was completed by 247 community members, and showed 50% had seen or heard promotions about their local CRC. At this point in time paid advertising for the CRC program has been suspended pending a further funding deed being provided by the NSW EPA.</p>
Strategic Directions	4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.3.1, 4.3.3



Liveability

Protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments that we enjoy in our region.

Illegal Dumping Program

Purpose

To support Member Councils manage illegal dumping by:

- Delivering a regional approach to target illegal dumping
- Employing skilled officers to undertake compliance action against illegal dumpers
- Undertaking proactive measures to prevent illegal dumping
- Targeting problematic and complex illegal dumping incidents.
- Increasing capacity to target problematic and complex illegal dumping incidents.

Status Update

The RID Program is progressing well, with a Program Logic successfully delivered in November 2023 by Clear Horizon consultants. This provides strategic direction for member councils and the Project Coordinator in facilitating the program over the next 3 years until 2027. EPA co-funding runs from 2022-2027.

Strategic Directions

4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3

Landfill Emissions Data Project

Purpose

To establish a landfill emission data management program for councils to assist in understanding their baseline landfill emissions, and building a model data management framework and tools to support the collation and interpretation of landfill emission data.

Status Update

- A Steering Committee has been established to support delivery of this project including representatives from NSW EPA, NSW OECC, Hunter JO, UNSW, University of Newcastle, and Hunter Councils. Additionally, a Landfill Emissions Working Group has been established with representatives from 8 out of 10 Member Councils.
- In 2023 we hosted a Landfill Emissions Masterclass for Councils and a Scoping Workshop to identify a clear path forward.
- A consultant has been engaged and is currently measuring landfill emissions for Hunter councils in accordance with the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act. A training package is being developed to support councils in continuing ongoing measurement and reporting. The Federal Government is considering expanding mandatory reporting to all publicly owned landfills.

Strategic Directions

4.2.2, 4.4.2

Contaminated Land Program

Purpose

To build capacity and capability within Member 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.

Status Update

This program will finish in March 2024 when remaining EPA grant funds are expended. All Member Councils have been advised of this timeframe. To maintain access to the range of resources produced through the regional programs delivered by the Hunter and other JOs), the NSW EPA funded LGNSW to launch a Contaminated Land webpage and Network for councils which can be used to access up to date information and communicate with council peers across NSW. Many Hunter Councils a have been actively using the LGNSW network since its establishment.

Strategic Directions

4.3.1, 4.3.3



Liveability

Protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments that we enjoy in our region.

Net Zero Acceleration

Purpose

To support Member Councils reduce their carbon emissions to achieve their part in the State's Net Zero target of 50 per cent reduction by 2030 and Net Zero by 2050. This includes employing a staff member dedicated to progressing the JO and its member councils toward net zero emissions, and to provide a link to other NSW government support mechanisms.

Status Update

- Revolving Energy Fund (REF) - Hunter JO, Central NSW JO, and Mid North Coast JO have released its draft 'Design a REF Kit' to the REF Action Group for feedback. The Kit supports councils interested in implementing a REF to design a suitable fund that meets their needs. The Kit is being piloted with select councils ahead of the final version being published.
- Last year we opened applications for the Council Net Zero Accelerator course for councils across the state. This course is NSW's first net zero course designed specifically for local government and has been developed by the Hunter JO in partnership with the NSW Government and Accelerate Zero. Following a competitive application process, six Hunter council employees were selected for the course from Cessnock City Council, Dungog Shire Council, MidCoast Council, Muswellbrook Shire Council, Port Stephens Council, and Singleton Council. These positions are subsidised by the NSW Government.
- The NSW Government's Sustainable Councils team is funding feasibility assessments for five Hunter councils (Cessnock, Maitland, Singleton, Lake Macquarie, Central Coast) to transition their aquatic centres from gas to net zero. The assessments will provide councils with shovel ready projects for grant funding opportunities, such as the Australian Government's \$100 million Community Energy Upgrades Fund.
- Powering Tomorrow – Regional Councils NSW PPA: The Hunter JO and Mid North Coast JO are facilitating a Power Purchasing Agreement (PPA) buyers group to support regional NSW councils to procure renewable energy in 2024. 18 councils have received the MOU to participate, including 5 Hunter councils. Regional Procurement will be coordinating the tender process, with specialist advice from expert advisors, including a technical energy advisor (Sourced Energy) and probity advisor (Procure Group). PPAs have historically been inaccessible for smaller and resourced constrained councils due to high upfront participation fees, ongoing trailing commissions (which result in increased costs for councils), and decision-making led by larger, metro councils. The Regional Councils PPA is a pathway forward for regional councils that is fit for purpose, led by regional councils, and will provide long term value. It consists of a low participation fee and no ongoing trailing commission. The PPA is supported by the NSW Government.
- From 11 September 2023, Hunter Joint Organisation, Regional Procurement and Local Government Legal now purchase GreenPower 100% renewable energy for its offices in Thornton. A network tariff cost saving was identified for the business, and a portion of this cost saving is now funding the purchase GreenPower. This means renewable energy is procured at no additional cost to the business.
- On behalf of Hunter Councils Inc, Hunter JO applied for the NSW Community Building Partnership 2023 grant. If successful, the grant funds will be used to purchase and install a 39.6kW solar PV system for the Hunter Councils Inc building at 4 Sandringham Ave, Thornton. If the grant application is successful, formal endorsement will be sought from the Hunter Councils Inc board to proceed with the project.

Strategic Directions

2.2.1, 2.2.2, 4.4.1, 4.4.2

Grants and Funding Proposals

Funding Source	Amount	Description
Local Government Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) Round 1	\$851,271	<p>Getting Local Government Disaster Ready – Disaster Resilience Capacity Building for the Hunter and Central Coast</p> <p>Focus: The project will build disaster resilience capacity and capability within 11 Hunter and Central Coast councils and their communities. This will be achieved by supporting development and implementation of local and regional Disaster Adaptation Plans, embedding resilience into councils’ IP&R framework, facilitating a regional resilience network, and supporting community engagement.</p> <p>Status update: The Expression of Interest submitted under Round 1 of this program has been successful, with the Hunter JO invited to submit a full proposal under Round 2.</p>



Appendix - Strategic Objectives and Directions

Connectivity

A globally connected region whose residents enjoy transport and digital infrastructure and systems that enhance their economic and lifestyle opportunities.



Objectives - Where do we want to be?	Strategic Directions - How will we get there?
<p>1.1 Within the region there is a robust integrated transport solution that underpins the experience/ liveability and productivity of its residents and visitors comparable to its global peers.</p>	<p>1.1.1 Support local government having a collective voice in the planning and delivery of major transport infrastructure and systems.</p> <p>1.1.2 Proactively facilitate collaboration with key state agencies to support delivery of connectivity solutions that suit the regions current and future needs.</p> <p>1.1.3 Support Member Councils to influence other levels of government on a sustainable model for delivery and maintenance of road infrastructure.</p> <p>1.1.4 Support a Regional Integrated Transport Plan linking key services and centres.</p> <p>1.1.5 Identify and facilitate regional approaches for active transport outcomes that deliver connectivity, health, liveability and economic benefits.</p> <p>1.1.6 Private and public transport solutions operate on a net zero basis.</p>
<p>1.2 Through its port and airport the Hunter is a globally connected and economically prosperous city-region, recognised as a key international gateway, providing its communities with a vibrant and unique lifestyle and growth in products and services to replace the economic output of thermal coal.</p>	<p>1.2.1 Partnering with airport and port to identify and pursue priority actions to enable access to international markets for the benefit of the region.</p> <p>1.2.2 Influence government policy to prioritise the importance of access to international markets for the benefit of the region.</p> <p>1.2.3 Leading collaboration in the region between government, industry and community to ensure the benefits of international markets are region wide.</p> <p>1.2.4 Support a transport access strategy for regional connectivity to and from the airport.</p>
<p>1.3 Digital connectivity that ensures community access to core services on commuter routes across the region and between Sydney and Newcastle and to enable business development, growth and innovation.</p>	<p>1.3.1 Support and encourage investment in equitable and competitive digital connectivity and the elimination of mobile black spots across the region to ensure community access to commuter routes, core health and education opportunities, and to enable business development, growth and innovation.</p>
<p>1.4 A region that is built around sustainable transport outcomes.</p>	<p>1.4.1 Embed the direction of net-zero in all our connectivity strategies to provide a pathway and level of confidence to investors and community to support the transition to more sustainable transport outcomes.</p>

Resilience

We are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks.



Objectives - Where do we want to be?	Strategic Directions - How will we get there?
<p>2.1 We are recognised as innovative leaders in Council capacity building and policy support for climate change action, resilience and disaster preparedness.</p>	<p>2.1.1 We provide guidance and support packages to embed Climate Change action, resilience and disaster preparedness into Councils Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework.</p> <p>2.1.2 We drive council capacity building opportunities supported by an evidence base to improve regional resilience and community awareness.</p> <p>2.1.3 We drive opportunities to collaborate, adopt system thinking and circular economy opportunities to reduce our impact on climate change and increase resilience.</p>
<p>2.2 We take leadership and drive regional best practice in climate action.</p>	<p>2.2.1 We lead the way in regional best practice and work with all levels of government to drive policy and strategy on climate change.</p> <p>2.2.2 Engage and provide thought leadership in local, national and global climate change and resilience networks.</p>
<p>2.3 Our region is resilient to environment risks, natural hazards and climate change.</p>	<p>2.3.1 Apply and obtain financial grants for regional programs that support a resilient region.</p> <p>2.3.2 Facilitate and manage regional programs that support a resilient region.</p>

Jobs and a Growing Economy

The Hunter economy continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs.



Objectives - Where do we want to be?	Strategic Directions - How will we get there?
<p>3.1 Coordinated planning and investment by all levels of government that empowers the region and its residents to maintain and grow jobs, economic opportunities and quality of life.</p>	<p>3.1.1 Support a clear, place-based, integrated whole-of-government policy and planning approach to drive the region's economic evolution and jobs of the future.</p> <p>3.1.2 Support the establishment of an entity that has the authority and resources from the Commonwealth and NSW Government necessary to provide the institutional capacity and expert and empowered, place-based planning and decision-making capability.</p> <p>3.1.3 Support regional institutional capacity to assist businesses and workers impacted by changes in the economy.</p> <p>3.1.4 Drive collaboration to provide clarity, certainty and fairness in land-use policy and regulation as it relates to the use of former industrial and mining land and assets, or where local communities bear the impacts or have restrictions arising from the contribution of that place to broader regional or state benefits.</p> <p>3.1.5 Support government policy and planning that prioritise the investment into key regional catalyst areas.</p> <p>3.1.6 Support the place-based delivery of Aboriginal partnerships and employment programs in the Hunter.</p>
<p>3.2 Accelerated and amplified market-driven investment in innovation that capitalises on the region's existing natural strengths and attributes which create jobs in future industries.</p>	<p>3.2.1 Support and mature the innovation ecosystem in order to drive commercialisation of ventures and start-ups in the region which will provide growth in future jobs.</p> <p>3.2.2 Improve and accelerate the regions access to investment and capital markets to underpin the innovation ecosystem and the redevelopment of industrial and mining assets.</p>
<p>3.3 A globally focused region that drives talent attraction and retention.</p>	<p>3.3.1 Support efforts that position the Hunter globally in its areas of competitive and comparative strength.</p>
<p>3.4 A region that is built around Circular Economy principles as a driver of future jobs.</p>	<p>3.4.1 Support knowledge sharing and embed Circular Economy principles in our strategies and plans to provide a pathway to future jobs creation in our local supply chains and services.</p> <p>3.4.2 Support implementation of the Hunter Central Coast Circular Economy Roadmap.</p>
<p>3.5 We are recognised as a destination of choice for international and domestic visitors.</p>	<p>3.5.1 Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around regional tourism promotion to grow jobs in the region.</p> <p>3.5.2 Identify opportunities for growth and diversification of employment based in the tourism economy.</p>

Liveability

Protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments that we enjoy in our region.



Objectives - Where do we want to be?	Strategic Directions - How will we get there?
<p>4.1 We are recognised as a destination for hosting world class events that align with our unique offering.</p>	<p>4.1.1 Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around events and tourism.</p> <p>4.1.2 Identify opportunities for growth and diversification of the regional events and tourism economy.</p>
<p>4.2 Making use of our opportunity to drive circular evolution of our region's economy.</p>	<p>4.2.1 Support meeting our future regional infrastructure and operations for circular outcomes.</p> <p>4.2.2 Reduce carbon emissions through better waste and materials management.</p>
<p>4.3 Our natural environments including our bushland, estuaries, waterways and beaches are protected and enhanced.</p>	<p>4.3.1 Our Councils are well supported in protecting and enhancing the environment through regional programs, data collection, support resources and capacity building.</p> <p>4.3.2 Provide support and identify opportunities to improve and protect the regional Blue Green Grid.</p> <p>4.3.3 We drive council capacity building opportunities to protect the environment and human health from pollution.</p> <p>4.3.4 Provide support for regional conservation planning to protect regional biodiversity.</p> <p>4.3.5 Provide support and identify opportunities to enhance the health of the region's estuaries and other waterways.</p>
<p>4.4 Supporting our region to be on the path to net zero emissions and paving the way with smart innovative solutions that increase liveability.</p>	<p>4.4.1 Provide support and identify opportunities on regional collaboration around Electric Vehicles.</p> <p>4.4.2 Support regional collaboration around clean energy and future energy initiatives and industries.</p>
<p>4.5 A region with enriched neighborhoods and places supported by planned infrastructure that promotes community cohesion, active living and pride in culture and heritage.</p>	<p>4.5.1 Support Improved planning outcomes to enhance liveability and lifestyle.</p> <p>4.5.2 Support a healthy and active community.</p> <p>4.5.3 Support a safe and accessible society across the region.</p> <p>4.5.4 Support enhanced cultural opportunities and protected heritage.</p>
<p>4.6 A region that is connected, inclusive and a fair.</p>	<p>4.6.1 Support affordability and increased access to housing.</p> <p>4.6.2 Support an increase in the availability of jobs and services closer to people.</p> <p>4.6.3 Support equitable access to education and health services and facilities.</p>

