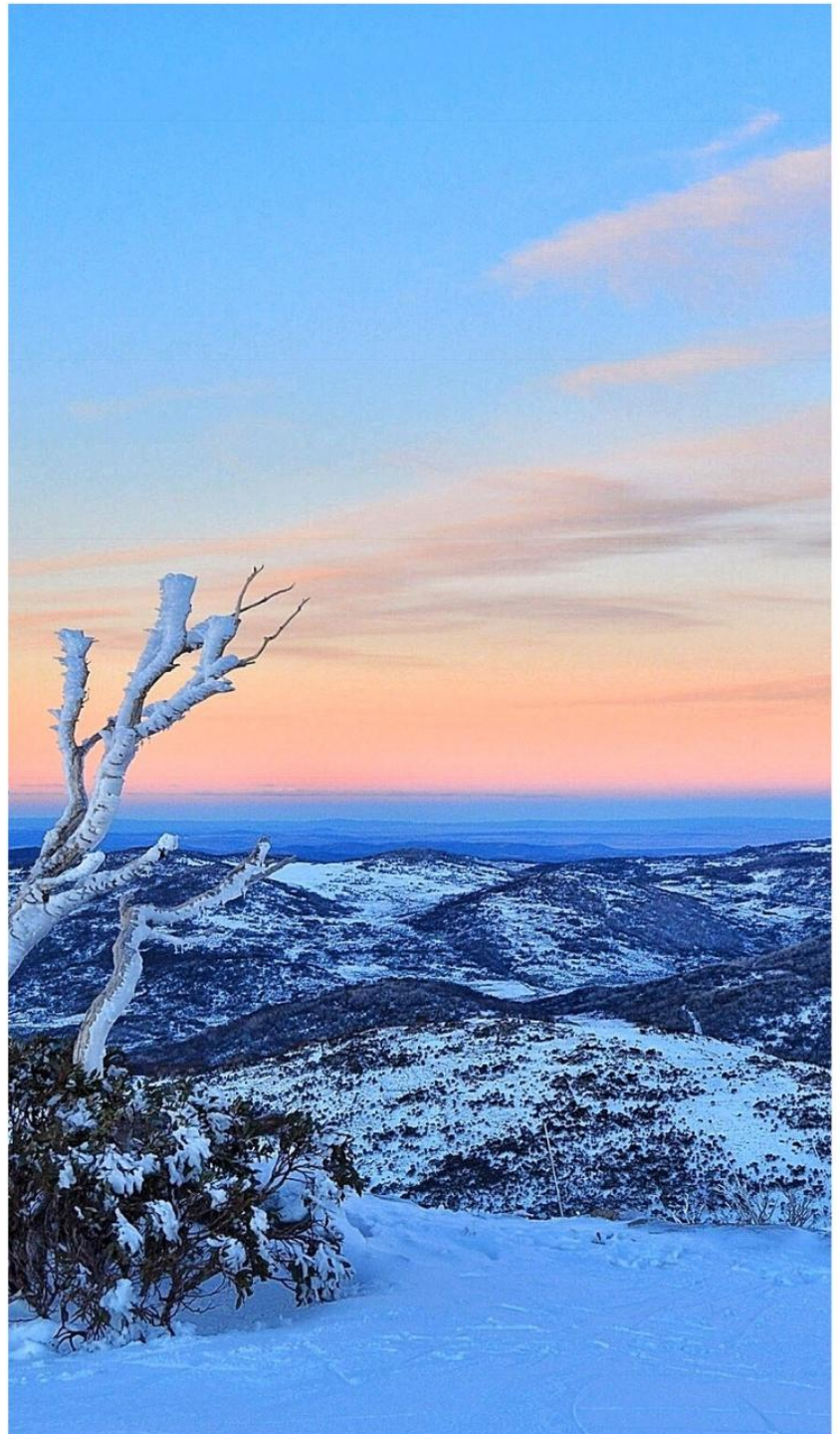




**CANBERRA REGION  
JOINT ORGANISATION**

*Regional leadership connecting our communities*



# Statement of Strategic Priorities

## 2025 - 2029



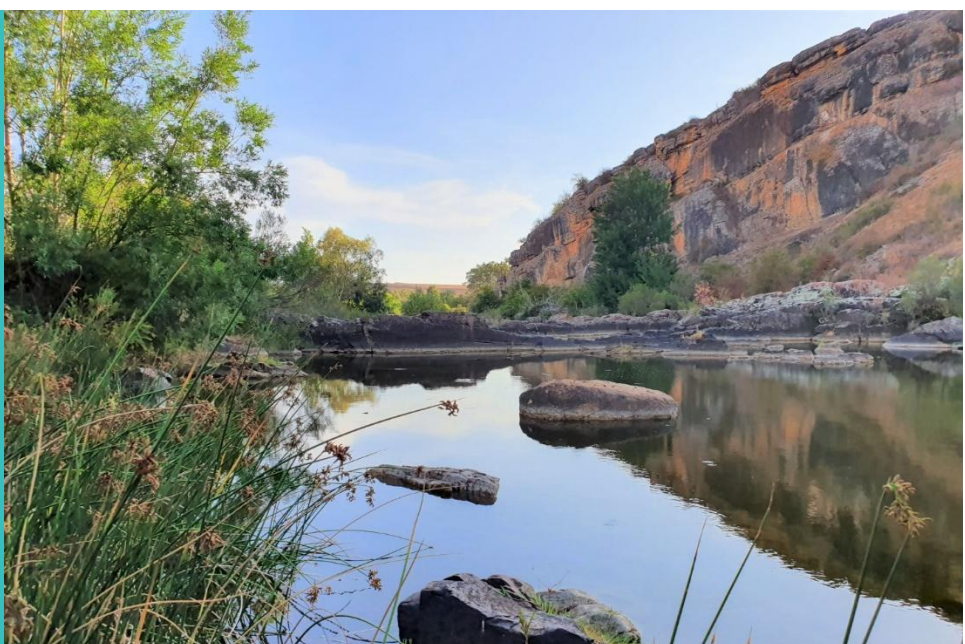
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## Acknowledgement of Country

The Canberra Region 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.



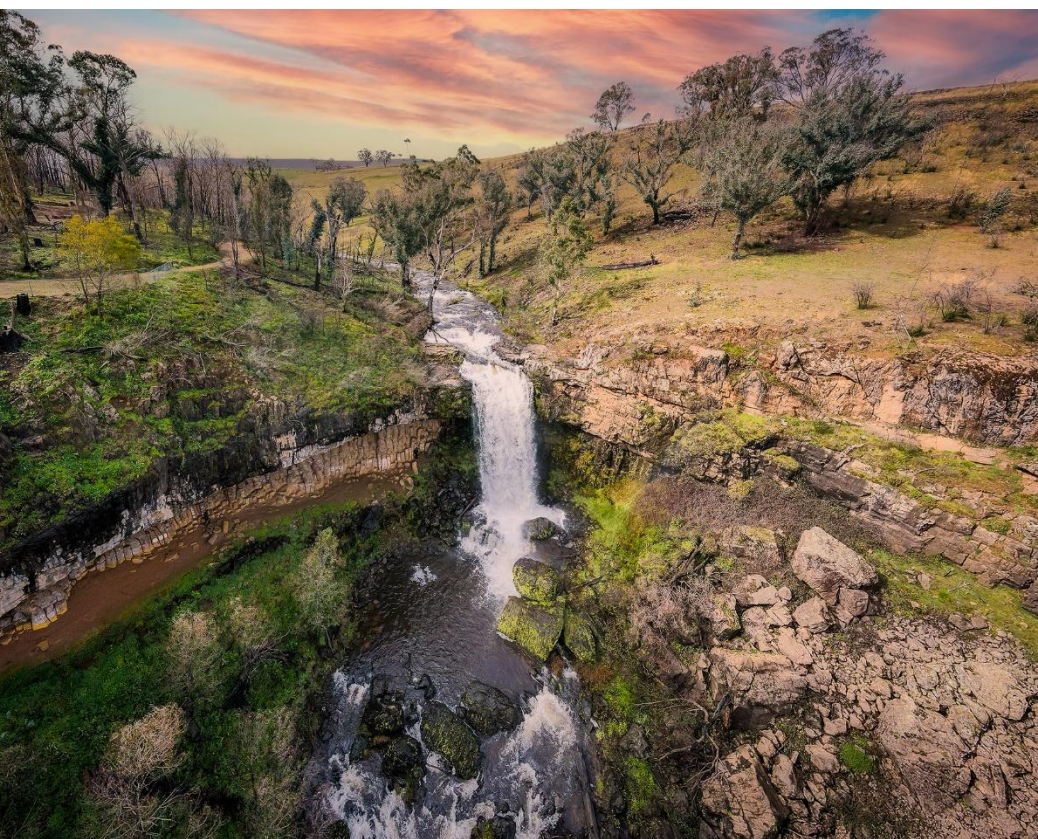
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## 01 STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) brings together eleven member councils, the ACT Government and key regional partners to deliver a shared vision for our communities. More than just a collection of councils, we are a collaborative network that spans state and territory borders—uniting local leadership, strategic advocacy and cross-sector partnerships. Together, we are building a diverse, inclusive and connected region—one that is resilient, forward-thinking and positioned for sustainable growth.

We work together to share knowledge, build capacity and develop long-term solutions. As a united region, we use our collective voice to advocate for change and deliver positive outcomes for our communities.

Over the next four years, we will support our member councils through strong civic leadership and by addressing key challenges across environmental protection, economic development and critical infrastructure. We are committed to taking clear action and delivering measurable results.





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## 02 OUR VISION

# Diverse. Inclusive. Connected.

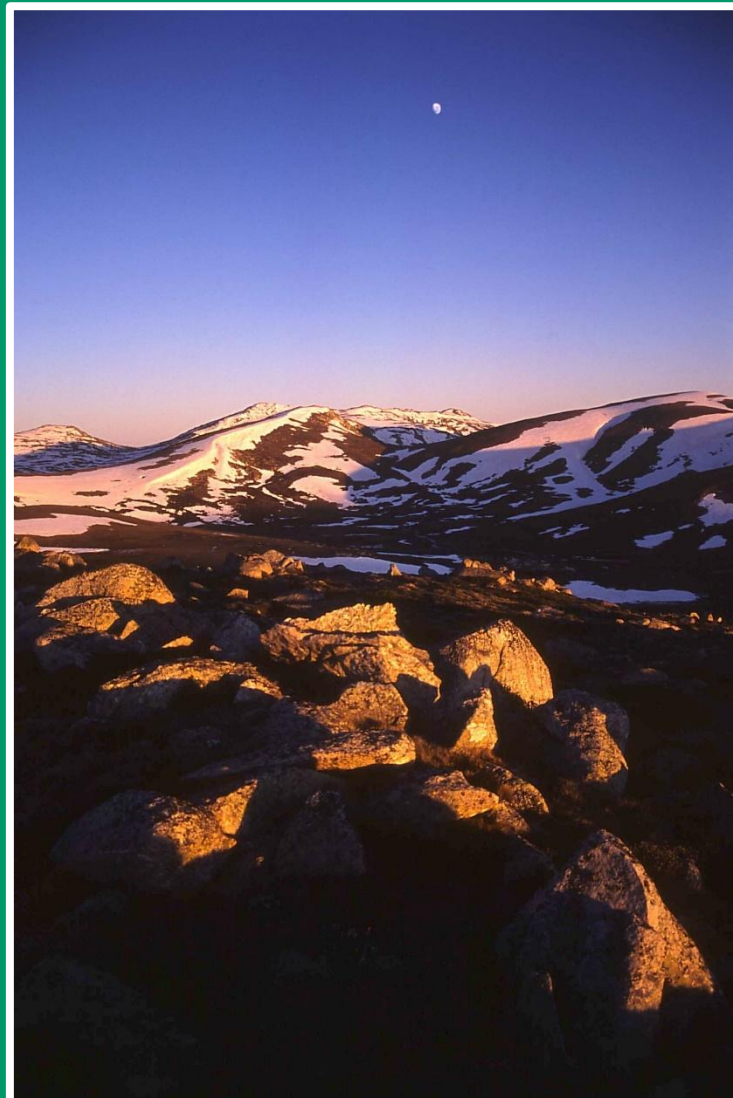
The vision of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation, '**Diverse, Inclusive, Connected,**' embodies the unique identity of the Canberra region and sets it apart as a dynamic and forward-thinking region.

This vision captures the essence of the region's diverse landscape, which spans from the picturesque south-west slopes to the majestic Snowy Mountains and the vibrant coastal stretches of the Sapphire Coast. It reflects our commitment to embracing and celebrating the rich cultural tapestry and heritage that define our communities.

'Connected' not only refers to our robust physical and digital infrastructure that links towns and cities but also to the strong sense of community and collaboration that underpins our approach to regional development.

The inclusiveness aspect of our vision underscores our dedication to ensuring that every individual and community, regardless of background, has equal access to opportunities and a voice in shaping the region's future.

Together, these elements create a distinct identity for the Canberra Region, one that is grounded in respect for our natural and cultural heritage and driven by a collective spirit to innovate and prosper.



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## 03 ABOUT CRJO

The Canberra Region Joint Organisation consists of eleven member councils alongside the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Government and the Canberra Airport.

The total population of the Canberra region, including the ACT exceeds 800,000 with a combined area of 70,499km<sup>2</sup> and a gross regional product (GRP) of \$25.61 billion.

### What We Do

The Canberra Region Joint Organisation allows our members, state agencies and other stakeholders to work together at a regional level to identify shared priorities for local government advocacy and regional projects, contributing to better community outcomes.

Canberra Region Joint Organisation's core objectives include:

- Establishing strategic regional priorities and developing plans for delivering these priorities
- Providing leadership and advocating for making real change in our communities
- Identifying opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation and become one voice on matters relating to the region

### Our Region

The Canberra region is situated in south-eastern New South Wales and envelops the ACT. The region extends from the picturesque south-west slopes, through the dynamic Sydney-Canberra Corridor, across the scenic Eurobodalla, down to the vibrant Sapphire Coast, and up into the majestic Snowy Mountains.

Characterised by its unique and diverse geography, the Canberra Region boasts a predominantly rural landscape. The region also encompasses a mosaic of smaller townships and villages, alongside expanding residential and rural residential areas, especially near Canberra and the coastal regions.

The topography of the region is remarkably varied, spanning from the coastal plains to the alpine areas in the southwest, and across the rolling tablelands in the west. This diverse landscape defines the region's natural beauty and shapes its community and way of life.





# THE CANBERRA REGION

*at a glance*



11 Member Councils



70,499km2 Combined Area



857,129\* Population  
(ACT 473,855. CRJO LGAs 383,274).



10.11% of NSW  
Population



\$25.61B GRP



38,386 Local  
Businesses



2 Special  
Activation Precincts



\$4.69B Visitor Economy  
(end 2019)



23,870 Daily Commutes  
to ACT (ABS data 2021)

**Source:** Canberra Region .id Profile website, ABS Census, Canberra Region Economic Development Strategy.  
\*All population figures are 2024 ERP.

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## What's Important to Our Member Councils

The community strategic plans (CSPs) of our member councils send an overwhelming message about what is important across the region.

Recurring themes throughout the community strategic plans include:

Theme	Summary from Members Community Strategic Plans
<b>Our Economy</b> <i>We have a strong regional economy experiencing sustainable growth, which provides for a diverse range of employment opportunities.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Our location attracts business and industry to our region, boosting our local economy and jobs.</li><li>2. The local and regional tourism offering is expanded, increasing visitation to the region.</li><li>3. Our local established and emerging businesses are supported to thrive.</li><li>4. Our community can access affordable local housing, education, training, and employment options.</li></ol>

Theme	Summary from Members Community Strategic Plans
<b>Our Community</b> <i>Liveability, wellbeing, and inclusion.</i> <i>We are a network of vibrant, inclusive and diverse communities that value our rural lifestyle.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Our health and wellbeing are supported by equitable access to services.</li><li>2. We have a vibrant, inclusive, and creative community life.</li><li>3. Our community is connected, safe and proud.</li><li>4. We celebrate our diverse cultural identity and heritage.</li><li>5. Community resilience is an important focus going forward as the frequency of natural disasters occurs.</li></ol>

Theme	Summary from Members Community Strategic Plans
<b>Our Environment</b> <i>We appreciate our range of rural landscapes and habitats and are stewards of the natural environment for future generations.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Our natural environment is maintained, protected, and enhanced in line with community expectations.</li><li>2. We support and adopt environmental sustainability practices.</li><li>3. Our robust planning framework considers our rural character and natural landscapes.</li><li>4. We will reflect the importance of traditional custodians of our lands in our decision-making.</li></ol>



Theme	Summary from Members Community Strategic Plans
<b>Our Infrastructure</b> <i>Our community is well serviced and connected to built, social and communications infrastructure.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We have transport links that connect towns within the region and increase access to significant centres.</li> <li>2. We are proud of our liveable and accessible local places and spaces.</li> <li>3. Our existing community infrastructure is maintained, and we plan for and support the development of infrastructure that meets community needs.</li> <li>4. Water, waste, and sewerage services meet the needs of our community</li> <li>5. Our telecommunications infrastructure is sound and supports business, industry, services, and community access.</li> <li>6. We have a unique opportunity through the Canberra Airport and Port of Eden to connect us to the world.</li> </ol>

Theme	Summary from Members Community Strategic Plans
<b>Our Civic Leadership</b> <i>Our leaders operate ethically and implement good governance</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CRJO is an effective, responsible, and innovative organisation.</li> <li>2. CRJO is a financially sustainable organisation that can meet community needs.</li> <li>3. Our community is informed and engaged in decision-making.</li> </ol>



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## 04 OUR PRIORITIES

Our priorities are framed within the themes that resonate deeply with our communities as identified in Community Strategic Plans. These priorities for the Canberra Region Joint Organisation articulate how we will make our contribution towards what matters to the community.

Our strategic priorities focus on:

- fostering a robust and diverse **economy**,
- enhancing the liveability and inclusiveness of our **communities**,
- protecting and nurturing our natural **environment**,
- developing resilient and modern **infrastructure**, and
- upholding strong **civic leadership**.

In pursuit of these priorities, we will implement action plans and commit to working collaboratively with our member councils, government agencies, and stakeholders.



# Our Economy

*...fostering a robust  
and diverse economy*

What do we want for our region?	What is the role of CRJO?
<b>1.1. The Canberra Region Economic Development Strategy Prospectus for Collaboration (CREDS) fully implemented</b>	<p>1.1.1 Support business development of existing and emerging industries in the region.</p> <p>1.1.2 Promote the skills and innovation required to secure the region's long-term success.</p> <p>1.1.3 Develop a visitor economy, in partnership with stakeholders, on a regional level.</p> <p>1.1.4 Work with the State Government to leverage regional economic development strategies for local businesses.</p>
<b>1.2. Championing a circular economy</b>	<p>1.2.1 Work as a region to support Circular Economy industries.</p> <p>1.2.2 Develop and promote a regional circular economy strategy that identifies gaps in regional waste and recycling infrastructure, with the aim advocate for investment to address those gaps.</p>

## Key Delivery Partners

Government	
<b>Federal Government</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation works alongside the Australian Government across industry, energy, infrastructure, regional development, trade, and tourism portfolios to foster economic growth, improve connectivity, and strengthen the visitor economy across the region.
<b>State Government (NSW)</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation partners with the NSW Government through agencies responsible for industry, treasury, planning, trade, and tourism to deliver strategic investment, support business development, and grow the regional visitor economy
<b>ACT Government</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation collaborates with the ACT Government across economic development, tourism, planning, and environmental portfolios to support integrated regional growth, attract visitors, and ensure sustainable development on both sides of the border.
<b>Local Government</b>	Through its member councils, the Canberra Region Joint Organisation supports local economic initiatives and tourism development, ensuring regional priorities are reflected in state and federal policy and investment decisions.



## Key Delivery Partners

Non-Government	
<b>Industry and Business Sector</b>	Business chambers and industry associations, industry clusters and innovation hubs, local businesses and entrepreneurs, and major employers.
<b>Tourism and Hospitality Sector</b>	Local tourism and hospitality businesses, regional tourism organisations, destination marketing organisations, cultural and heritage sites, and tourism attraction operators.
<b>Academic and Training Institutions</b>	Local universities and TAFEs, vocational training providers, and research institutions.
<b>Circular Economy and Sustainability</b>	Environmental NGOs and advocacy groups focusing on sustainable development, circular economy initiatives and networks, waste management and recycling companies, sustainability consultants and think tanks.
<b>Community and Economic Development Groups</b>	Local economic development agencies, community development organisations, social enterprises and cooperative groups.

What do we want for our region?	What is the role of CRJO?
<b>2.1 Quality and affordable housing is available and in good supply</b>	<p>2.1.1 Lobby for State and Federal government investment and legislation that delivers in affordable housing initiatives.</p> <p>2.1.2 Coordinate the efforts of local planning regulations to increase affordable housing development.</p> <p>2.1.3 Collaborate with developers, not-for-profits, and other stakeholders to facilitate affordable housing development.</p> <p>2.1.4 Understand the regional housing needs, identify innovative housing models and share best practice.</p>
<b>2.2 Health services are accessible for all</b>	<p>2.2.1 Support local health districts to develop service and infrastructure plans that meet regional needs.</p> <p>2.2.2 Lobby State and Federal government for better health services in their region. This includes advocating for more funding, improved infrastructure, and increased staffing to address the primary, tertiary and aged care gap.</p> <p>2.2.3 Advocate for the increase to the number and skills of healthcare professionals in the region through training initiatives or incentives to attract health workers.</p> <p>2.2.4 Work together to increase the chance of securing grants or other financial support for health projects.</p>
<b>2.3 Communities are supported to address cost of living pressures</b>	<p>2.3.1 Advocate to State and Federal governments for policies and funding that directly reduce the cost of living, such as subsidies for utilities, public transport, or health care.</p> <p>2.3.2 Identify and share programs that encourage local government and residents to buy locally to stimulate the local economy and reduce costs.</p>



# Our Community

*...enhancing the liveability and inclusiveness of our communities*

What do we want for our region?	What is the role of CRJO?
<b>2.4 Resilient communities</b>	2.4.1 Ongoing engagement with those communities prone to natural disasters to identify risks and opportunities that will aid better planning and preparedness.
	2.4.2 Based on the data collected, develop tools and resources that are easily understood and accessible to the community.
	2.4.3 Identify programs of work that can be undertaken to help communities be better prepared and facilitate the smooth execution of the disaster recovery plans across the region.
	2.4.4 Work with councils to communicate and embed the plans and processes into its day-to-day operations.

## Key Delivery Partners

Government	
<b>Federal Government</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation commits to partnering with key government departments and stakeholders, including those involved in social services, regional development, health, education, and emergency management, to deliver vital outcomes for the region.
<b>State Government (NSW)</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation and the NSW State Government collaborate through departments and agencies across planning, justice, health, rural fire services, emergency management, and infrastructure to achieve impactful results within the region.
<b>ACT Government</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation and the ACT Government work together to support seamless and borderless regional development, community well-being, and emergency management efforts for both the state and territory.
<b>Local Government</b>	Through all member councils, the Canberra Region Joint Organisation plays a crucial role in partnering with members to ensure advocacy and regional collaboration in the successful delivery of projects for the region and within their respective communities.

## Key Delivery Partners

Non-Government	
<b>Housing and Development</b>	Affordable housing advocacy groups, developers, not-for-profit housing organisations, community housing providers, investors, urban planning experts.
<b>Health and Community Services</b>	Health service providers, community health organisations, health advocacy groups, universities, medical colleges, professional health associations.
<b>Economic and Business Sector</b>	Local business chambers, economic development boards, consumer advocacy groups, economic policy think tanks, and philanthropic foundations.
<b>Education and Research</b>	Academic institutions.
<b>Emergency Management</b>	Local emergency services, Environmental groups, NGOs in disaster relief and management, and technology companies.



# Our Environment

...protecting and nurturing  
our natural environment

What do we want for our region?	What is the role of CRJO?
<b>3.1 Best practice waste management</b>	3.1.1 Review and implement the Waste Management Strategy to reduce waste generation and improve recycling and resource recovery.
<b>3.2 Our natural environment is protected</b>	3.2.1 Implement strategies to protect native flora and fauna, including controlling invasive species and supporting native species. 3.2.2 Support initiatives and programs to promote healthy water ways and enhance catchment and water quality. 3.2.3 Implement strategies to protect our built heritage. 3.2.4 Enhance climate action in the region, including increasing resilience to natural hazards and protecting diverse environmental assets.
<b>3.3 Net zero emissions</b>	3.3.1 Work with stakeholders to promote/recommend zero emissions actions and practices in this region. 3.3.2 Develop and support net zero programs and actions within the region in alignment with government expectations and targets.

## Key Delivery Partners

Government	
<b>Federal Government</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation partners with the Australian Government across key portfolios including environment, water, energy, industry, and regional development to support long-term sustainability, economic growth, and resilience across the region.
<b>State Government (NSW)</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation works in collaboration with the NSW Government through relevant agencies responsible for planning, environment, heritage, and waste management to deliver coordinated and sustainable outcomes for regional communities.

## Key Delivery Partners

Government	
<b>ACT Government</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation maintains a strong partnership with the ACT Government to support integrated regional planning, environmental protection, heritage conservation, and service delivery across the border, fostering seamless development for the broader region.
<b>Local Government</b>	Through its member councils, the Canberra Region Joint Organisation drives regional collaboration, advocacy, and project delivery, ensuring that local priorities are championed and regional outcomes are achieved in line with community needs.
Non-Government	
<b>Environmental and Conservation Groups</b>	Local conservation groups and NGOs focused on environmental protection, wildlife conservation organisations, landcare groups.
<b>Industry and Business</b>	Waste management and recycling companies, businesses and industry groups committed to sustainability and zero emissions goals, and renewable energy providers.
<b>Academic and Research Institutions</b>	Universities and research institutes, think tanks and policy research organisations.
<b>Community and Advocacy Groups</b>	Local community groups and advocacy organisations.
<b>Climate Action Groups and Networks</b>	Indigenous groups, land councils.
<b>Water Management and Quality</b>	Catchment management authorities, water utility companies, and groups focused on waterway health and quality.

What do we want for our region?	What is the role of CRJO?
<b>4.1. Reliable and safe water supply</b>	<p>4.1.1 Develop and support regional water management strategies, focusing on sustainable water use, allocation and conservation, considering future growth.</p> <p>4.1.2 Work together to find efficiencies in the development and renewal of water and sewer infrastructure, including treatment plants and distribution systems, to maintain efficiency and sustainability.</p>
<b>4.2. Strategic freight and transport linkages that connect the communities and support industry</b>	<p>4.2.1 Advocate for improvements to regional transport planning, including the refinement and implementation of the South East and Tablelands Regional Transport Plan to better reflect the priorities of our councils. This includes supporting enhanced East–West freight connectivity, lobbying for safety and route upgrades across the region, and engaging with Transport for NSW, the ACT Cross Border Commissioner, relevant ministers, and industry bodies to ensure coordinated, place-based outcomes.</p> <p>4.2.2 Participate in regional transport and freight planning forums.</p> <p>4.2.3 Take a regional approach to improving infrastructure, including for electric vehicles.</p> <p>4.2.4 Advocate for delivery of the improved Canberra to Sydney rail network catering for fast trains.</p>
<b>4.3. A comprehensive telecommunications network and smart technologies</b>	<p>4.3.1 Advocate for telecommunication infrastructure improvements to deliver reliable services and eliminate telecommunications blackspots.</p> <p>4.3. Seek opportunities to support members to develop and embrace smart technology programs and infrastructure.</p>
<b>4.4. Transformative and region-enhancing infrastructure</b>	<p>4.4.1 Review and update the CRJO Infrastructure Priority Prospectus.</p> <p>4.4.2 Advocate for regional enabling infrastructure.</p> <p>4.4.3 Develop a Regional Critical Infrastructure Betterment Prospectus to support a more resilient region.</p> <p>4.4.4 Advocate for the NSW Government to develop integrated regional infrastructure growth plans that adequately address growth pressures.</p>

# Our Infrastructure

*...developing resilient  
and modern infrastructure*

## Key Delivery Partners

Government	
<b>Federal Government</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation works in partnership with the Australian Government across transport, infrastructure, telecommunications, water management, and environmental portfolios to support the delivery of essential services and long-term regional development.
<b>State Government (NSW)</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation collaborates with the NSW Government through agencies responsible for planning, water and environmental management, transport and freight, and regional infrastructure to advance coordinated, sustainable, and connected communities across the region.
<b>ACT Government</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation partners with the ACT Government in areas of regional transport planning, environmental sustainability, and land use to ensure cohesive cross-border development and efficient service delivery for the broader Canberra Region.
<b>Local Government</b>	Through its member councils, the Canberra Region Joint Organisation ensures local priorities in transport, infrastructure, and water management are reflected in regional strategies and actively supported through collaboration and advocacy.

## Key Delivery Partners

Non-Government	
<b>Water Management and Conservation</b>	Water utility companies and authorities, environmental NGOs, water industry bodies, and research institutions.
<b>Transport and Infrastructure</b>	Regional and local transport operators, freight and logistics companies, and infrastructure development firms.
<b>Telecommunications and Technology</b>	Telecommunications service providers, technology and smart infrastructure companies, industry bodies for telecommunications, digital inclusion and connectivity advocacy groups.



# Our Infrastructure

*...developing resilient  
and modern infrastructure*

## Key Delivery Partners

Non-Government	
<b>Regional Planning and Development</b>	Regional development authorities, chambers of commerce and industry associations.
<b>Community and Advocacy Groups</b>	Community-based organisations, advocacy groups for sustainable infrastructure and environmental protection, academic institutions and think tanks.
<b>Electric Vehicle Infrastructure</b>	Electric vehicle manufacturers and service providers, renewable energy companies and consultants, and sustainable transport advocacy groups.

What do we want for our region?	What is the role of CRJO?
<b>5.1. Long-term financial sustainability of CRJO</b>	<p>5.1.1 Ensure CRJO policies and processes demonstrate a high level of transparency and accountability.</p> <p>5.1.2 Develop and maintain Risk Management Framework with a clearly identified risk appetite.</p> <p>5.1.3 Ensure decisions are in line with the CRJO core objectives risk management framework and underpinned by sound business cases ensuring stringent financial discipline.</p> <p>5.1.4 Implement clear lines of communication and reporting to our Board, our stakeholders, and the wider community.</p>
<b>5.2. Opportunities for regional councils and stakeholders to work together to achieve a common goal</b>	<p>5.2.1 Participate in key forums including Regional Leadership Executive, Destination Networks, Joint Organisation Network and Forum, and with the NSW Cross Border Commissioner and OLG.</p> <p>5.2.2 Collaborate with ACT Government in delivering priorities identified in the Canberra Region Economic Development Strategy and the priorities in the Memorandum of Understanding between CRJO and ACT Government.</p> <p>5.2.3 Coordinate active networks within member councils to share learning, skills, and resources to build capacity.</p>
<b>5.3. Initiatives that can deliver better value to our members</b>	<p>5.3.1 Explore opportunities to create regional procurement opportunities.</p> <p>5.3.2 Continue to provide training and opportunities to build member councils capacity.</p> <p>5.3.3 Work with members Council's to assess operational pain points and identify other opportunities for regional collaboration and shared services.</p> <p>5.3.4 Develop and implement an Advocacy Strategy to advance the Statement of Strategic Priorities.</p>

## Key Delivery Partners

Government	
<b>Federal Government</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation engages with the Australian government to support regional development and facilitate cross-jurisdictional collaboration, ensuring national priorities are aligned with local needs and opportunities
<b>State Government (NSW)</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation partners with the NSW government across agencies responsible for local government, interjurisdictional coordination, and strategic policy to strengthen cross-border collaboration and support regional governance.
<b>ACT Government</b>	The Canberra Region Joint Organisation works closely with the ACT government to deliver shared objectives under the Canberra Region Economic Development Strategy, focusing on integrated planning, economic growth, and cross-border alignment.
<b>Local Government</b>	Through its member councils, the Canberra Region Joint Organisation leads coordinated advocacy, fosters local-to-regional alignment, and ensures the collective voice of councils is heard at all levels of government.
Non-Government	
<b>Professional and Regulatory Bodies</b>	Auditing and financial bodies, industry associations/networks.
<b>Educational and Training Institutions</b>	Universities/vocational training providers, professional development and training organisations.
<b>Regional and Economic Development Networks</b>	Regional leadership executive, destination networks, joint organisation network and forum, economic development agencies.
<b>Communication and Public Relations</b>	Media and public relations agencies, community engagement specialists, digital communication platforms and service providers.

# Our Civic Leadership

*...upholding strong  
civic leadership*

## Key Delivery Partners

Non-Government	
<b>Procurement and Resource Sharing</b>	Suppliers and service providers for regional procurement.
<b>Advocacy and Policy Groups</b>	Advocacy groups, policy think tanks and research institutions.



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## 05 TAKING ACTION

In pursuit of these priorities, we will implement targeted action plans and commit to collaborating with our stakeholders. CRJO will transform our strategic vision into practical steps, marked by effective collaboration and a results-focused approach.

The Canberra Region Joint Organisation is committed to open, transparent, and consistent communication with all stakeholders. We will engage regularly with member councils, government agencies, regional partners, and community representatives through meetings, updates, and collaborative initiatives. Our approach will ensure stakeholders are informed, involved, and empowered to contribute to shared regional priorities.

The Canberra Region Joint Organisation's Executive Officer will be accountable for developing Annual Action Plans. These plans will be presented for approval to the CRJO Board annually. To ensure ongoing oversight and transparency, the Executive Officer will also be responsible for providing comprehensive reports on the progress of these plans. These reports will be delivered quarterly to the General Managers Advisory Group (GMAG), offering an opportunity for regular review and input from key stakeholders. Additionally, a more extensive review and report will be presented to the CRJO Board every six months. This reporting schedule is designed to maintain a rhythm of evaluation and adjustment, ensuring that our actions remain aligned with our strategic objectives and are responsive to the evolving needs of the Canberra region.

Engagement with our member councils is paramount, keeping them informed and involved throughout this journey. By upholding high governance standards and maintaining open communication, CRJO is dedicated to bringing about tangible and positive changes, making the Canberra region more diverse, inclusive, and connected.

### Version History

Version	Board Meeting Date	Resolution	Adoption	Effective From	Review Period
5	7 March 2025	03/25-03	7 March 2025	1 July 2025	30 June 2029
All policies can be reviewed or revoked by resolution of CRJO Board at any time.					





**CANBERRA REGION**  
JOINT ORGANISATION

