

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

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Acknowledgement of Country

Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC) recognises the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we operate.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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Presidents Report

I am pleased to present our annual report for the year ending 30 June 2024.

This year, the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC) has continued its vital role in fostering collaboration among member councils and presenting a united front on regional matters to State and Federal Government agencies. Our focus remained steadfast on ensuring the financial sustainability of our councils, a goal made more challenging by the persistent inflationary pressures and an evolving regulatory landscape.

NSROC engaged productively with IPART and the State Government on the development of a fit-for-purpose Rate Peg methodology to ensure that it reflects the prevailing economic conditions, empowers councils to keep pace with cost increases, and enables them to continue to invest in vital community assets and services. We also put forward our positions on the reform of the emergency services levy funding and worked with the State Government to improve outcomes from waste management.

We continue to work with other organisations to progress matters of interest to local government. We were key to the formation of the Greater Sydney Waste Leadership Forum, which brings together all metropolitan Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCs), Resilient Sydney, and the NSW Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to address the complexities of waste management in a strategic and integrated manner. This collaborative initiative marks a significant step forward in tackling waste-related issues in a coordinated and sustainable way.

NSROC advocated for a planning system that promotes sustainable development, ensures that housing targets are realistic and achievable, and delivers the essential infrastructure needed to support our growing population. This includes crucial amenities like community facilities, playing fields, open spaces, transport networks, and waste management infrastructure.

Initiatives such as facilitating a direct dialogue between NSROC's General Managers Advisory Committee (GMAC) and senior representatives from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) regarding the proposed Low

and Mid-Rise Housing Reforms helped to buttress our reputation as supporting Government's objectives while also ensuring that the interests of our communities are taken into account.

In line with our commitment to evidence-based advocacy, NSROC resourced the development of a sophisticated model to evaluate the financial and environmental effects of the NSW EPA's proposed Food and Garden Organics (FOGO) mandate. This model provided valuable data that informed our discussions with the EPA and strengthened our advocacy for a balanced approach to implementing the FOGO mandate.

As we transition into the new financial year, NSROC remains dedicated to working collaboratively with our member councils, the NSW Government, and key stakeholders to address the evolving needs of our region.

I would like to express the appreciation of the Board to the General Managers of our member councils, particularly the work of the General Managers' Advisory Committee, chaired by Steven Head, for their ongoing support of NSROC. I also acknowledge the commitment and goodwill of the many council officers who participate in various NSROC projects and professional officers' groups.

The Board and I recognise that it is both a privilege and a significant responsibility to represent our member councils and the Northern Sydney community. We look forward to working together to ensure our shared priorities are heard at both the state and federal levels.

[INSERT
PHOTO]

Councillor [INSERT NAME]
NSROC President

Example Signature

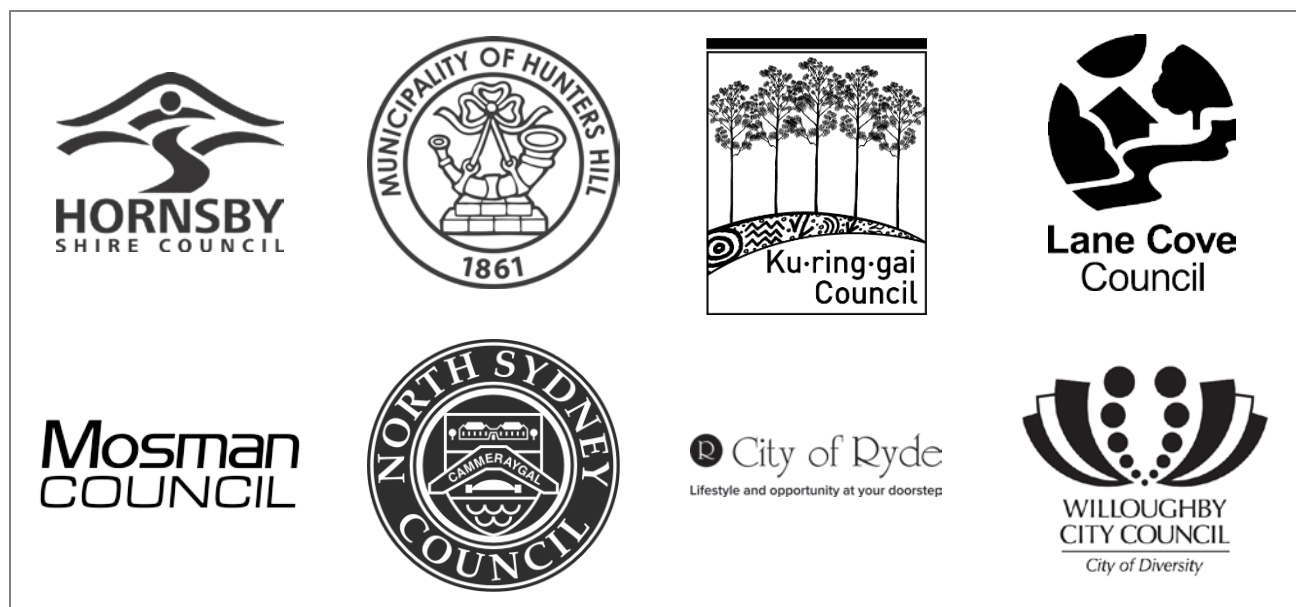
About NSROC

The Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC) members are the eight councils in the northern Sydney area: Hornsby, Hunter's Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney, Ryde, and Willoughby.

NSROC brings these councils together to work on projects and common goals to create solutions that benefit not just individual communities, but the entire region. Furthermore, NSROC actively seeks opportunities to work together with State and Federal government departments and community organisations.

By working collaboratively NSROC seeks to deliver outcomes for the social, environmental, and economic benefit of our local communities and encourage growth and cooperation across the metropolitan area.

Our Member Councils



Role of NSROC

- Advocate regional positions and priorities.
- Collaborate for the benefit of the Northern Sydney region.
- Provide strong local government leadership.

Directions and Objectives

NSROC partners with its member councils to enhance the liveability, productivity, and sustainability of the region. NSROC works to:

- Strengthen resilience through advocacy and leadership.
- Improve waste and resource management.
- Improve place making through urban planning and infrastructure.
- Strengthen organisational operations and sustainability.

Key Principles

NSROC helps its member councils achieve their specific community goals by following these main principles:

- Supporting council operations that are sustainable and improve community resilience.
- Collaborating effectively with other councils in the Sydney region, State and Commonwealth Governments, industry, and local communities' or community organisations.
- Working together to create a better region by sharing best practice case studies, research, and information.

NSROC Board

The NSROC Board guides and oversees the organisation's activities. Each member council is represented on the Board by their Mayor and one Councillor. In addition to the Annual General Meeting, the NSROC Board convenes at least four times a year to discuss important strategic matters and give guidance to NSROC's activities.

Board Executive Positions

Each year, the Board selects a President and two Vice-Presidents to form the organisation's Executive.

The NSROC Executive members during the 2023-2024 year were:

President	Mayor Carolyn Corrigan, <i>Mosman Council</i>
Vice President	Councillor Andrew Zbik, <i>Lane Cove Council</i>
Vice President	Councillor Nathan Tilbury, <i>Hornsby Shire Council</i>

General Managers Advisory Committee

The General Managers Advisory Committee (GMAC) consists of the General Managers of the eight NSROC Councils. GMAC supports the NSROC Board by guiding the day-to-day operations of NSROC.

In 2023-24, Mr Steven Head, General Manager of Hornsby Shire Council, was the Chair of GMAC. Mr Dominic Johnson, General Manager of Mosman Council served as NSROC Treasurer.

Professional Officers Group and Other Committees

To encourage regional dialogue and promote the sharing of resources, NSROC regularly brings together a range of Professional Officer Groups (POGs), each with representatives from our member Councils. These POGs meet on an ongoing basis to address shared challenges and identify opportunities for collaboration across council borders, ensuring more cohesive and effective regional strategies.

The following POGs play a key role in supporting our ongoing work:

- Arts and Cultural Services
- Community Services
- Communications and Media
- Environmental Sustainability
- Financial Services
- Local Emergency Management
- Sports and Recreation

NSROC also establishes project-specific working or steering groups as required. These groups are focused on tackling particular regional issues and projects. The current working groups include:

- Waste Advisory Group
- Northern Sydney Transport Leadership Group

These groups work collectively to drive forward region-wide initiatives, ensuring that local needs are effectively addressed.

Key Activities

Strengthen Resilience Through Advocacy & Leadership

NSROC facilitates collaboration on key issues and activities to generate benefits – social, environmental, and economic – for local communities and for the region as a whole. During the year, NSROC advocacy efforts focused on ensuring council financial sustainability, addressing the Sydney metro region’s current waste infrastructure crisis, and responding to proposed reforms to the rating and planning systems.

Key Meetings

The NSROC President, Executive Director, Board, and GMAC have continued proactive engagement with stakeholders to advocate evidence-based positions on key issues affecting councils.

During the reporting year, NSROC met with key government Ministers and MPs, including:

- The Hon. Paul Scully, MP - Minister for Planning and Public Spaces.
- The Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC - Minister for Water, Minister for Housing, Minister for Homelessness, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Youth, and Minister for the North Coast.
- The Hon. Stephen Kamper, MP - Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport.
- Office for The Hon. Penny Sharpe, MLC - Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage.
- The Hon. Anoulack Chanthivong, MP - Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Building, and Minister for Corrections.
- The Hon. Scott Farlow, MLC - Shadow Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, Shadow Minister for the Hunter, Shadow Minister for Housing, and Shadow Minister for Cities.
- The Hon. Matthew John Kean - Member for Hornsby.
- Ms Felicity Lesley Wilson, MP - Member for North Shore.
- Mr Alister Henskens, MP - Member for Wahroonga.

NSROC representatives also met with other key stakeholders and agency representatives, including:

- NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA)
- NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
- Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART)
- Local Government NSW (LGNSW)
- Resilient Sydney
- City of Sydney
- Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC)
- Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC)
- Western Sydney Parklands (The Parks)
- Northern Sydney Mental Health Regional Leadership Group
- Sydney Water
- Connect Macquarie Park Innovation District (CMPID).

Review of Supply and Demand for Sports Facilities in the NSROC Region

In late 2023, NSROC finalised the Review of Supply and Demand for Sports Facilities in the NSROC Region, identifying a critical shortfall in sports facility capacity across member councils. The review, which is based on the 2022 NSW Government Common Planning Assumption Projections, revealed that a 49% increase in sports facility capacity (around 222 hectares) will be required by 2036 to meet growing demand. This shortfall has been and will continue to be exacerbated by increased housing density across the region, which places further demands on recreational space.

The review noted a decline in participation in traditional sports such as lawn bowls and croquet. However, sports like soccer and AFL are facing high demand, further contributing to the capacity gap.

The review recommended a regional approach to address this shortfall, including advocating for greater access to school sports facilities, and exploring opportunities to repurpose existing spaces. Upgrading current facilities with synthetic surfaces, better lighting, and improved maintenance practices was also encouraged.

The official launch event was hosted by NSROC's President Mayor Carolyn Corrigan (Mosman Council) and Board delegate Mayor The Hon Philip Ruddock AO (Hornsby Shire Council) at Westleigh Park. The event was attended by media representatives, council members as well as community stakeholders. The event highlighted the need for more sport facilities like that proposed for the Westleigh Park site in the Northern Sydney region.

NSROC has used the review findings to guide advocacy efforts, support council grant applications, and inform the development of the NSROC Infrastructure Strategy.

NSROC was proud to receive the Parks and Leisure Australia (PLA) Research Award at the 2024 PLA NSW/ACT Regional Awards of Excellence for its 'Review of Supply and Demand for Sport Facilities in the NSROC Region'.

The annual PLA Awards of Excellence recognise exceptional contributions to the parks and leisure sector, celebrating those who create spaces that enhance community well-being.

The award acknowledges the review's in-depth research and analysis, which provides a valuable tool for informing future planning and investment in sport and recreation facilities across the region.

Review of the Rate Peg Methodology

Throughout the last financial year, NSROC actively engaged in advocacy related to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal's (IPART) review of the rate peg methodology. This review was crucial for NSROC member councils as it directly impacts their capacity to generate income, financial planning and ability to deliver community services.

NSROC lodged detailed submissions through the formal consultation process. This was supplemented by senior level direct engagement with IPART representatives to express regional concerns and recommend adjustments to the rate peg methodology that reflected the economic realities and specific needs of the northern Sydney region.

Key aspects of NSROC's advocacy included:

- Support for the rate peg to reflect annual wage increases as prescribed by the Local Government State Award. This was to ensure that councils could maintain service levels in the context of a cost increase that is outside their direct control.
- Concerns about the burden of the ESL on councils, urging that they should not be responsible for covering these costs without compensation. NSROC recommended that IPART obtain accurate data on ESL contributions from Revenue NSW to ensure fair assessments.
- Argued that growth in rates from supplementary valuations should not reduce the population factor in the current rate peg methodology. This was to prevent penalising councils for growth in their areas.

Throughout these engagements, NSROC maintained a clear and consistent position that the rate peg methodology needed to be flexible and responsive to the diverse needs of councils across NSW. By advocating for these changes, NSROC aimed to secure a financial framework that supported sustainable growth and service delivery across northern Sydney councils.

This ongoing effort underscored NSROC's commitment to ensuring that the voices of its member councils were heard in state-level policy discussions.

NSW Parliament Standing Committee for the Inquiry into the Ability of Local Governments to Fund Infrastructure and Services

In early 2024, the NSW Government initiated an IPART review of the NSW Council Financial Model. NSROC responded with detailed feedback on the draft Terms of Reference, expressing concern over the limited scope. Our submission called for the review to examine councils' revenue base, address funding equity, and assess whether current funding models were sufficient to meet community needs. NSROC's submission emphasised the need for transparent and fair solutions for cost shifting, particularly regarding waste levies, rate exemptions, and emergency service contributions.

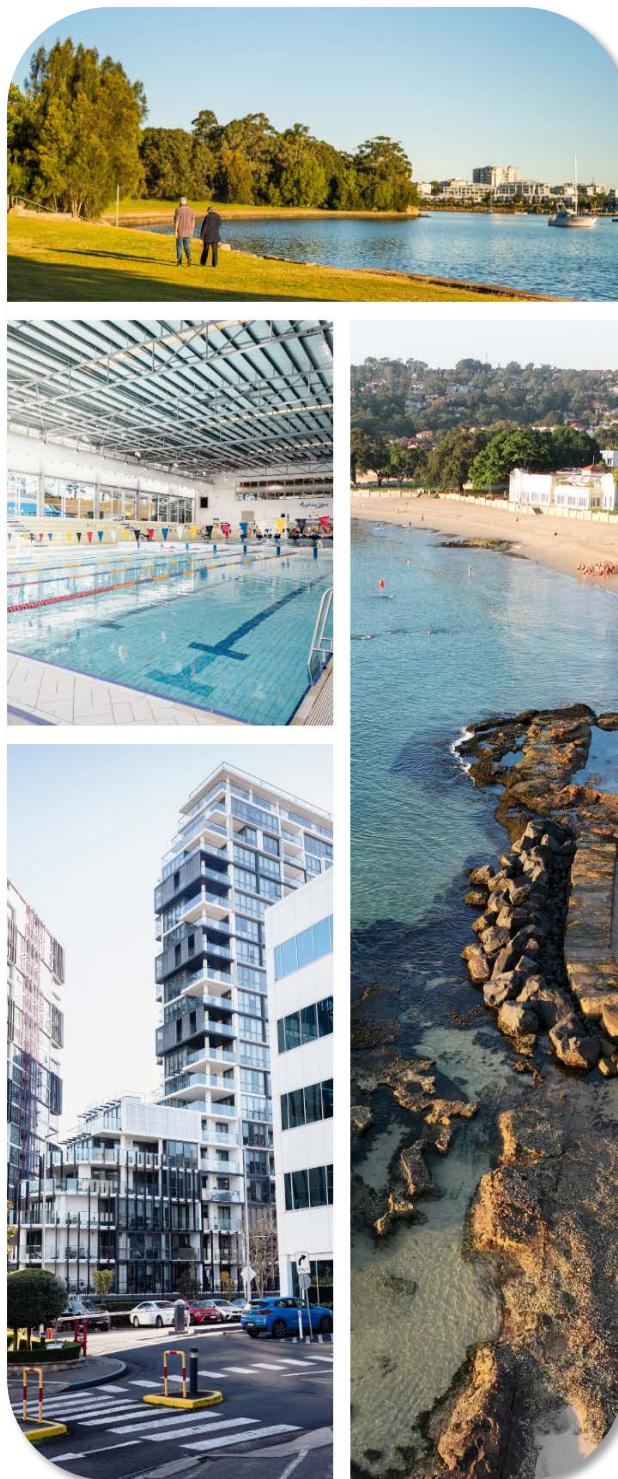
In March, the NSW Government withdrew the referral to IPART in favour of a NSW Parliament Standing Committee for the Inquiry into the Ability of Local Governments to Fund Infrastructure and Services. NSROC actively participated in this inquiry, lodging a submission on 10 May 2024. The submission raised concerns regarding councils' dependency on limited revenue sources such as user fees and rates. It also criticised the rate peg system and statutory caps on fees, which restricted councils' financial flexibility. Additionally, NSROC discussed the impacts of Build-To-Rent housing, which affected the rate base by increasing the proportion of rating-exempt land.

NSROC called for reforms to the Special Rate Variation process, citing its complexity and resource demands. It also advocated for collaboration with the state government to address funding challenges and ensure councils could meet evolving community needs.

Federal Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability

In May 2024, NSROC submitted feedback to the Federal Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability. The submission highlighted the challenges faced by councils, including financial constraints caused by the rate peg, narrow rate bases, and the growing costs of infrastructure and services. It also raised concerns about rating-exempt land and Build-To-Rent

developments, which reduce revenue while increasing demand for services. NSROC called for reforms to funding models, greater support from state and federal governments, and collaboration to address these sustainability issues. The submission also emphasised the need for improved workforce attraction and retention strategies.



Images Courtesy of City of Ryde and Mosman Council

Key Activities

Improve Waste & Resource Management

This year NSROC has undertaken a range of evidence-based projects and advocacy activities to improve waste and resource management in line with the Regional Waste Strategy 2022-2027. These include collating and analysing information to assist our councils make better waste management decisions, participating in cross regional projects and advocating for new waste and resource recovery infrastructure to meet the urgent needs of the growing population.

Greater Sydney Waste Leadership Forum

NSROC championed the establishment of the Greater Sydney Waste Leadership Forum (the Forum), enabling Sydney's Regions of Councils to work more effectively with the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and help solve Sydney's waste management crisis.

The Greater Sydney region will reach landfill capacity in 2028 for non-putrescible waste and by 2036 for putrescible waste. Unlike other cities in Australia, Sydney does not have short or long-term waste infrastructure plans reserving sites for waste management, including transfer, processing, and landfill.

NSROC worked successfully with the EPA, SSROC, WSROC, The Parks Councils and Resilient Sydney, and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed to create the Forum. The Forum seeks to identify and accelerate the delivery of priority projects, overcome barriers, and support ongoing partnership activities.

Strategic Site Utilisation Review

The identification of potential infrastructure sites is a high priority in the NSROC *Regional Waste Strategy 2022*. Having a council owned waste facility in the region would lessen member councils' dependency on the very few commercial waste service providers in Sydney and give councils greater leverage when negotiating contracts. NSROC is considering possible sites within the region that might host a waste transfer station, organics processing facility or a waste depot.

Food and Garden Organics (FOGO) Mandate

NSROC is supporting Councils consider how best to implement the State Government's proposed mandate for the provision of FOGO collection services, from businesses in 2025 and households in 2030. We have:

- Delivered a Regional Organics Implications Study, including a costs and benefits modelling tool for Councils and a life cycle carbon assessment.
- Delivered a comprehensive submission on the implementation and operation of the proposed mandate including the need for a genuine co-design process
- Partnered with the Centre for Organic Research and Education, including a webinar for councils on local organics processing and updates on international developments
- Established of a shared FOGO research and resource repository
- Coordinated site visits to organics processors to see first-hand the implications of mixing food and garden organics.

With FOGO described as the biggest change in waste management since the introduction of recycling, and the lack of collection and processing infrastructure, NSROC will continue to help Councils' meet the considerable implementation challenges.

Northern Sydney Community Recycling Centre

Since its establishment in 2017, the Community Recycling Centre (CRC) in Artarmon has proved a popular destination for local residents looking to safely dispose of their problem waste and e-waste. This past year has seen a 4% increase in users and a 6% increase in the weight of problem wastes. Almost 90% of users are from the six partner councils that contribute funding.

NSROC also investigated other CRCs to identify the characteristics of high performing sites to inform future opportunities and review the services currently provided.

Wianamatta Biorefinery

Over the last two years NSROC has participated on the Steering Group for the Sydney Water led feasibility study for organics processing in western Sydney. The study assessed four processing design options for their technical, commercial, and end-product market viability. NSROC was keen to see what processing options opportunities could be viable given the limited current capacity in Sydney to process kerbside food organics.

The next step is for Sydney Water to call for interest from industry, to build a suitable biorefinery on the site. Identifying such opportunities remains an important role for NSROC, assisting member councils to best meet the requirements of the organics mandate.

Sydney Waste Risk Reduction and Resilience Study

Since November 2022, NSROC has been a member of the Steering Committee for a project led by Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC) and funded by the NSW Disaster Reduction Fund.

The project was undertaken in response to several natural disasters in 2022 which resulted in metropolitan landfills being closed and the trainline to Woodlawn being cut which temporarily prevented the disposal of municipal residual wastes. The scale of the impact highlighted how dependent councils are, on a small pool of contractors and facilities.

The consultancy played a valuable role in creating a systematic risk management approach at both the local and regional scale. The project also led to the formation of a Cross Sector Liaison Group with representatives from metropolitan ROCs, peak bodies, and waste industry players as well as relevant state government agencies. The group meets regularly to share expertise and information to reduce the risk of such events stopping the collection of waste from Sydney's households.

Although the data and reports were specific to SSROC member councils, many of the facilities and contractors also service NSROC councils and a similar approach could be in this region if warranted.



Images Courtesy of City of Ryde and Mosman Council

Key Activities

Improve Place Making Through Urban Planning & Infrastructure

NSROC continued its work to enhance the region's liveability, productivity, and sustainability by advocating for essential infrastructure to support the increasing population. NSROC advocates for a planning framework that promotes sustainability and ensures housing targets are realistic and supported by commitments by decision makers to provide the necessary community infrastructure. This includes infrastructure related to waste and resource management, sports and recreation, transport, and social and cultural amenities. NSROC has continued to engage in government reviews to ensure that proposed reforms consider local government perspectives and the impact on local communities.

Response to NSW State Government Low to Mid-Rise Housing Reforms

During the 2023-24 Financial Year, NSROC engaged extensively with the State on its proposed low and mid-rise housing reforms. NSROC raised concerns with the reforms, arguing that the "one-size-fits-all" approach failed to consider local circumstances and could negatively impact heritage, safety, and the environment. We advocated for a place-based planning approach and recommended deferring the reforms to allow councils to demonstrate how they would achieve housing targets through strategic planning. NSROC expressed willingness to collaborate with the government to develop a framework that balances housing supply with community liveability. On behalf of member councils, we submitted formal feedback, participated in meetings, and sought opportunities to work constructively with government agencies to shape the reforms and mitigate potential negative impacts.

Transport Oriented Development Program

In December 2023, the NSW State Government proposed a Transport Oriented Development (TOD) Program aiming to deliver housing around 39 transport hubs in the Sydney region. NSROC made a submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the Development of the TOD program and participated in a public hearing, using both opportunities to voice concerns and advocate for changes. Specifically, NSROC called for place-based planning, echoing its stance on the Low to Mid-Rise Reforms, and

urged the government to demonstrate how essential community infrastructure would be delivered alongside the housing increases the TOD aimed to achieve. NSROC remains committed to collaborating with the government to find solutions that balanced housing supply with community needs.

Resilient Sydney

Throughout the year, NSROC maintained a strong working relationship with Resilient Sydney, reflecting their shared commitment to improving the region's capacity to withstand and adapt to various shocks and stresses. Both organisations played an active role in the Greater Sydney Waste Leadership Forum, a collaborative initiative tackling systemic waste management issues and driving the transition towards a more sustainable and resilient waste system across metropolitan Sydney. Resilient Sydney's strategy, shaped by extensive community consultations, including those within the NSROC region, addresses a broad range of challenges. This approach aligns with NSROC's ongoing advocacy for more comprehensive and nuanced planning and infrastructure development. The partnership between NSROC and Resilient Sydney underscores the importance of collaboration and a united vision in addressing complex issues and building a more resilient future for northern Sydney.

Northern Planners Group and Engagement with Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI)

The Northern Planners Group, composed of representatives from NSROC member councils, Northern Beaches Council, the NSW Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure (DPHI), and the (then) Greater Cities Commission, played a crucial role in addressing regional planning challenges throughout the year. Meeting monthly, the group focused on coordinating approaches to issues such as increasing senior housing supply, navigating Build-to-Rent developments, and providing feedback on state-level planning reforms.

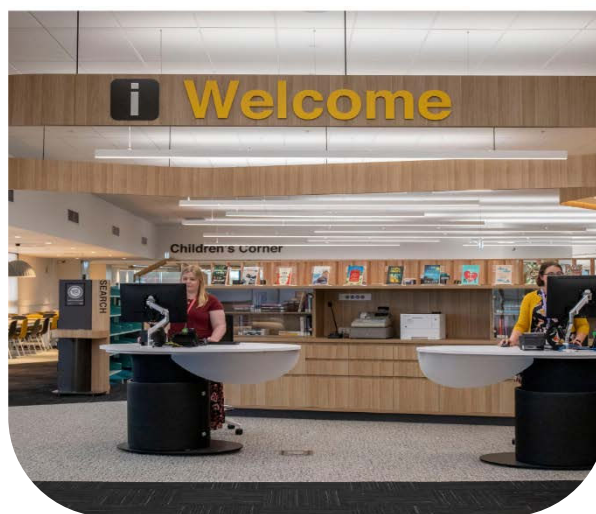
Alongside this, NSROC engaged significantly with the DPHI, advocating for council interests on key housing and planning reforms. We lodged formal submissions to DPHI on the Housing and Productivity Contribution Ministerial Order, raising concerns about potential impacts on infrastructure funding and calling for greater transparency in the process. NSROC also submitted a detailed response to the Low and Mid-Rise Housing Reforms, outlining concerns about the one-size-fits-all approach and potential strain on existing infrastructure.

NSROC also sought meetings with DPHI to further advocate for council priorities and participated in the Transport Oriented Development Program, where we submitted feedback and requested participation in public hearings to express concerns about the blanket reforms and advocate for greater consideration of local contexts.

The consistent efforts of both the Northern Planners Group and NSROC's engagement with DPHI reflects our commitment to ensuring that regional and state-level planning decisions are well-informed and consider the unique needs and priorities of the Northern Sydney region.

Electric Vehicle Policy Document and Recommended Controls

The State Government amended State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 to facilitate installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers by setting out circumstances where installation is permissible with or without consent. In response to these amendments, NSROC commissioned a consultancy to assist councils to develop their policy positions and applicable development controls for the installation of EV chargers on public land. The policy statement is in template form allowing councils to tailor it to their council preferences. The development controls cover a range of circumstances with recommended settings that allow for EV chargers to be installed in locations safely, account for impact on local amenity and ensure equitable treatment of EV owners and other community members through appropriate licence conditions and on-street restricted parking provisions.



Images Courtesy of City of Ryde and Hornsby Shire Council

Key Activities

Strengthen Organisational Operations & Sustainability

NSROC has been assisting member councils to maintain and improve services for the community. This has been achieved through activities such as sharing best practice information through our Professional Officers Groups, supporting the community recycling centres, and making it easier for councils to work together and access government funding.

Asphalt Contract Services

During the 2023-2024 financial year, member councils worked collaboratively to manage and optimise asphalt services procurement. Key activities included responding to vendor requests for price adjustments due to rising bitumen costs and overseeing contract management. Discussions focused on the potential extension of the 2022-2024 asphalt contract, transparency in product specifications, and strategic procurement improvements. A working group was established to develop a procurement strategy for future tenders, and member councils were engaged in preparing for re-tendering or contract extensions in 2024-2025.

Shared Internal Audit Service

NSROC provides a shared internal audit service to Hunter's Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney and Strathfield councils. Over the 2023-24 financial year, NSROC transitioned the shared internal audit service from Ku-ring-gai Council to being directly managed by NSROC, with the office relocating to Lane Cove. The service operates on a cost recovery basis for participating councils, with no cost to non-participants. Recruitment of the permanent Head of Internal Audit was finalised, and the service is operating efficiently and to a high standard.

Supporting Member Councils

NSROC maintained an environmental scan for financial support (including grants) and economic stimulus opportunities. This information was shared with GMAC and relevant Professional Officers Groups (POG). NSROC provided a forum for members to discuss available funding and exchange advice on applications. Representatives from funding providers attended POG meetings to discuss the details of the funding, its intended

purpose and provide advice on the application process.

Update to the NSROC Constitution

The 2024 updates ensure that the NSROC Constitution aligns with the NSW Fair Trading Model Constitution 2022 and reflects the *Associations Incorporations Act 2009* and *Associations Incorporation Regulation 2022*. Previously, where the NSROC Constitution was silent on a matter, the model constitution would have applied. The updated NSROC Constitution is a standalone document and completely compliant with the regulations. The updated constitution, available on the NSROC website, was approved by the Board and registered by NSW Fair Trading.

NSROC's Website

NSROC has regularly updated the website content and introduced a continuous improvement program to strengthen overall cyber security of the site. Visitors can use the resources available on the website to learn more about NSROC and its member councils. They are also able to access NSROC's previous year's annual reports, our current business plan, current strategies and recent submissions. The website hosts a page devoted to the Community Recycling Centre in Artarmon, detailing opening hours, public holiday closures as well as information on what the centre will and won't accept for recycling.

Submissions Report

NSROC is committed to representing the collective interests and priorities of its member councils in Northern Sydney and beyond. Lodging formal submissions is a key strategy in influencing government policy, legislation, and regulation to achieve better outcomes for the community.

During the 2023-24 period, NSROC was pleased to support its members by lodging the following submissions.

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**Submissions Lodged
in the FY 2023-24**

Date Lodged	Submission Topic	Submitted To	Link
5 Jul 2023	Review of the Rate Peg Methodology – Draft Report	<i>Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART)</i>	View
21 Jul 2023	Proposal to Regulate E-Products Regulation for Small Electrical Products and Solar Photovoltaic Systems	<i>Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)</i>	View
31 Aug 2023	Creative Industries Policy	<i>Create NSW</i>	View
11 Sep 2023	Housing and Productivity Contribution Ministerial Order	<i>NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI)</i>	View
21 Nov 2023	Housing and Productivity Contribution (HPC) Ministerial Order (Addendum)	<i>NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI)</i>	View
22 Dec 2023	Determination and Interim Authorisation for SSROC Joint Procurement	<i>Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC)</i>	View
2 Feb 2024	Response to the – NSW Plastics: Next Steps	<i>NSW Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)</i>	View
23 Feb 2024	Explanation of Intended Effect - Low to Mid-Rise Housing Reforms	<i>NSW Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure (DPHI)</i>	View

Date Lodged	Submission Topic	Submitted To	Link
15 Mar 2024	Feedback on Terms of Reference for NSW Council Financial Model Review	<i>Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART)</i>	View
28 Mar 2024	Parliamentary Inquiry into the Development of the Transport Oriented Development Plan (TOD)	<i>Portfolio Committee No. 7 – Planning and Environment – NSW Parliament</i>	View
16 Apr 2024	Improving Planning Processes to Deliver Infrastructure Faster - Explanation of Intended Effect	<i>NSW Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure (DPHI)</i>	View
1 May 2024	Feedback on Synthetic Turf in Public Open Space Guidelines	<i>NSW Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure (DPHI)</i>	View
10 May 2024	Inquiry into the Ability of Local Governments to Fund Infrastructure and Services	<i>Portfolio Committee No. 7 – Planning and Environment – NSW Parliament</i>	View
21 May 2024	Witness Statement for the Parliamentary Inquiry into The Development of the Transport Oriented Development Plan	<i>Portfolio Committee No. 7 – Planning and Environment – NSW Parliament</i>	View
22 May 2024	Feedback on the Reforming the Emergency Services Funding System Consultation Paper	<i>NSW Treasury</i>	View
29 May 2024	Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability	<i>Federal House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport</i>	View
31 May 2024	Feedback on Solar Sunshot Consultation	<i>Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA)</i>	View
20 Jun 2024	Response to Questions on Notice following the Inquiry into the Development of the Transport Oriented Development Program	<i>Portfolio Committee No. 7 – Planning and Environment – NSW Parliament</i>	View

Professional Officers Groups Report

Professional Officer Groups (POGs) are an integral part of NSROC's collaborative approach, providing a structured platform for council representatives to share expertise, discuss common challenges, and develop regional solutions. NSROC facilitates these groups by providing administrative support, coordinating meeting schedules, and ensuring that discussions align with the organisation's strategic priorities.

Arts and Cultural Services

The Arts and Cultural Services Professional Officer Group (POG) actively contributed to arts and cultural development across the region during the 2023-2024 financial year.

Member councils collaborated on joint submissions to Create NSW, supporting the formation of state-wide arts and culture policies. They also explored various funding opportunities, including multi-year grants and other financial support for cultural initiatives. Member councils shared updates on recent activities and successful exhibitions, including Mosman's receipt of an Audience Development Fund grant and Hornsby Shire Council's ongoing Art Policy development. The group began working collectively to cross promote regional art trails and events via digital platforms and social media. Local councils implemented significant arts projects, including youth-focused programs and public art strategies, enhancing the region's cultural offerings.

Communications and Media

The Communications and Media POG discussed implementing the Office of Local Government NSW's (OLG) Model Social Media Code within their respective councils. This entailed aligning existing practices with the latest regulations and council policies to ensure compliance and effectiveness in their social media activities. The POG also examined communication strategies for Special Rate Variations (SRVs), emphasising the importance of robust community engagement. Additionally, the group considered the use of hard copy advertising, pre- and post-state election communication strategies, and the implications of using AI technology for drafting purposes. Members frequently used the group for informal

discussions outside of meetings, exchanging ideas, sharing free-use image content, as well as seeking advice on communications and projects.

Community Services

The Community Services POG was actively engaged throughout the financial year with significant discussions centred around Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) reforms, as well as addressing concerns about service provision under new pricing models and the impact on community transport. The CSPOG also commenced soft social infrastructure mapping to identify service gaps, particularly in aged care, and held workshops to explore solutions.

Environmental Sustainability

Over the 2023-2024 financial year, the Environmental Sustainability POG focused on advancing initiatives aimed at reducing emissions and promoting renewable energy. Key activities included the progression of a tender for an emissions monitoring platform. The group also explored innovative opportunities like community solar bulk buy programs and public EV charging infrastructure. Efforts to enhance resilience were prioritised through participation in the review of the Resilient Sydney Strategy, and updates were provided on Net Zero emissions targets and reporting requirements.

Financial Services

The Financial Services POG reviewed the IPART Rate Peg Methodology and explored the potential impacts of NSW Competitive Neutrality Policies on council-run services. Members also addressed the financial implications of changes to the Emergency Services Levy and discussed the integration of data analytics tools to support

council strategic planning. Implementation considerations included superannuation payments for contractors, cyber security risks, and meeting updated accounting and reporting requirements.

Updates to the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting were discussed, as well as recent OLG circulars regarding waste workers' employment changes. Members also discussed operational plans, delivery programs, and the challenges of long-term financial planning, particularly around post-COVID revenue concerns and infrastructure needs.

Local Emergency Management Operations

The Local Emergency Management Operations POG in the 2023-24 financial year focused on disaster preparedness and recovery planning. The group collaborated on the development of Disaster Adaptation Plans under the State Disaster Mitigation Plan and discussed the integration of Local Emergency Management Committees for the Lower North Shore.

Key discussions revolved around the establishment of recovery roles under the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act, funding for evacuation centres, and operational criteria. The POG also engaged with the NSW Reconstruction Authority and other agencies to improve regional disaster planning and resilience, including waste risk management and support or spontaneous volunteers during emergencies.

Northern Sydney Transport Leadership Group

The Northern Sydney Transport Leadership Group (NSTLG), composed of representatives from NSROC member councils, the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) Transport for NSW, and the former Greater Cities Commission, serves as a platform for information exchange and collaboration on transport-related matters in the Northern Sydney region.

Over the 2023-24 financial year, the NSTLG played a key role in addressing transport and infrastructure challenges across the region. The group discussed active transport issues, including strategic cycleway corridors and the interface between cities, particularly around Hornsby.

The City Plans and Transport-Oriented Development State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) were prominent topics, with ongoing consultations involving councils.

Sports and Recreation

Members of the Sports and Recreation POG collaborated to finalise the Review of Supply and Demand for Sports Facilities in the NSROC Region. The study highlights a significant gap between supply and demand despite proactive efforts by councils to enhance sports facilities.

Members shared insights into individual council initiatives aimed at expanding the availability of such amenities within the region, emphasising consultations with female athletes to ensure their needs are met. Members shared experiences related to the implementation of online booking systems for council facilities. Members also shared data on pricing structures for sports and recreation venue and facility bookings with the aim of keeping costs to the community consistent across the region.

Waste Advisory Group

During the 2023-24 financial year, the Waste Advisory Group (WAG) focused on several critical waste management and sustainability projects. The group engaged in consultations on e-product waste regulation, including solar PV and EV batteries, as these materials are expected to increase in future waste streams. The group received updates on the Regional Organics Implications Study and the Co-Mingled Recycling Sustainability Solutions project. A notable discussion on waste management reforms, including cardboard and paper export bans, and the EPA's Waste Levy Review, shaped future tender considerations. The WAG also contributed to regional and state waste strategies, with members providing feedback on the NSW Plastics Discussion Paper, while updates on Sydney Water's Biorefinery Feasibility Study and EPA grant opportunities underscored the group's ongoing collaboration with government agencies to improve waste management infrastructure and practices across the region.

Abbreviations & Acronyms

Abbreviation	Description
ACCC	Australian Competition & Consumer Commission
CRC	Community Recycling Centre
CSPOG	Community Services Professional Officers Group
DAP	Disaster Adaptation Plans
DCCEEW	NSW Department of Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
DPHI	NSW Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure <i>(Previously known as NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) up to January 2024)</i>
EPA	NSW Environmental Protection Authority
EV	Electric Vehicle
E-WASTE	Electronic Waste
FOGO	Food Organics and Garden Organics
GCC	Greater Cities Commission
GMAC	General Managers Advisory Committee
HPC	Housing and Productivity Contribution Ministerial Order
IPART	Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
LGA	Local Government Area
LGNSW	Local Government New South Wales
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
MWRR	Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery
NSROC	Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils
NSTLG	Northern Sydney Transport Leadership Group
NSW	New South Wales
OLG	Office of Local Government NSW
PLA	Parks and Leisure Australia
POG	Professional Officer Group
ROC	Regional Organisation of Councils
RWS	Regional Waste Strategy
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy
SRV	Special Rate Variations
SSROC	Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils
TOD	Transport Oriented Development Program
WAG	Waste Advisory Group
WASM	NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy
WSROC	Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils

Contact Us



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