



June 2025

Regional Partnership Priorities



Spencer Gulf
Cities

Acknowledgement of First Nations people

We pay our respects to the traditional owners of the land on which we live and work. We acknowledge their ancestors and their sharing of their country. We pay respect to the many Aboriginal groups and cultures that work, walk and live in the Upper Spencer Gulf region.



Foreword

The Spencer Gulf Cities (SGC) comprising the Port Pirie Regional Council, City of Whyalla and City of Port Augusta is a strategic partnership between the Councils with a core role of advocacy to support our regional communities and economies to be healthy, strong and have the support they need.

The SGC recognise that the Upper Spencer Gulf has traditionally been a significant economic contributor to the state and nation.

Not only is the region blessed with significant mineral and renewable energy resources, but it is also home to some of the most significant first Nations cultural heritage, natural biodiversity assets and landscapes in the world.

There are opportunities and challenges for the region, the state and nationally in supporting economic growth in the Upper Spencer Gulf. Contributions and collaboration between governments that has been achieved to date to support

this economic growth are recognised and acknowledged.

SGC regional communities are strong and resilient and seek to continue to partner with governments, industry and small businesses to realise the growth potential.

The Regional Priorities included in this document set out the issues of importance to the region, the outcomes being sought and the partnerships that the SGC seeks to have, and continue, with Federal and State Governments as advocates on behalf of their communities.

Member Councils of the SGC stand ready to play their role in supporting the region achieve economic, social and environmental sustainability now and into the future. The contributions that the Councils will make are clearly articulated in these Regional Priorities.



Contents

Key actions and outcomes

Set out below are the key actions and outcomes sought aligned to the seven regional priority areas of focus.

1. Intergovernmental Partnerships	5
2. Housing	7
3. Workforce and Skills	9
4. Social Impacts	10
5. Infrastructure	11
6. Land Use Planning	13
7. Economic Development	14
8. Environment	15

1. Intergovernmental Partnerships

A constructive, proactive and genuine partnership between the State Government and the SCC to maximise public value and outcomes (economic, social, environmental) delivered to/within/from the region through joint planning and delivery.

Outcomes sought

State Government & SGC

- Continuance of the Upper Spencer Gulf Intergovernmental Group (USGIG) with close alignment, through its Chair (Minister Koutsantonis representing the Premier), with the State Government's Hydrogen Taskforce Sub Committee of Cabinet. Membership to continue to include the Mayors and CEOs of the SGC and the CE of the Department of Premier and Cabinet with input from relevant Ministers and Agencies, as required, in key areas of activity;
- A continuing role for the USGIG Housing and Workforce & Skills Advisory Groups and creation of another group focussing on the Social Impact of Growth, reporting directly to the USGIG;
- To directly tackle obstacles and make decisions about innovative and strategic approaches in a timely fashion, the membership of the Advisory Groups formed by the USGIG to continue to comprise the highest level of public sector decision makers within State and Local Government;
- The key role of the USGIG's Advisory Groups be to keep under review State and Federal Government program funding and guidelines to ensure they are flexible and adaptable to the specific needs of the region;
- The Chair of the USGIG and the Chair of the SGC to make a joint presentation to the Hydrogen & Upper Spencer Gulf Sub Committee of Cabinet, at least twice a year, on issues it is addressing, outcomes being achieved and obstacles being faced;
- The State Prosperity Project be central to the work of the USGIG with the State Government and Council websites to:
 - ◊ recognise the existence of the USGIG, its terms of reference and outcomes being achieved;
 - ◊ include relevant information for investors about engagement with the State Government and Councils through weblinks and other avenues.

Federal Government

- Delivery of Federal programs and grants in areas such as green energy, mining, workforce and skills development, housing and social services within the SGC Region to ensure that:
 - ◊ programs and funding are achieving Federal policy outcomes and also meeting the region's needs and where necessary recast offerings; and
 - ◊ new program developments align with the unique needs of the region.
- SGC and the State Government to engage with the Federal Government, (including through a joint delegation(s) to Canberra, at appropriate intervals, in partnership with other key stakeholders) to promote opportunities for collaboration on SGC regional priorities between the Federal, State and Local Governments.



Spencer Gulf Cities Councils

To support and enhance the relationship and partnerships with State and Federal Governments, the SGC are committed to:

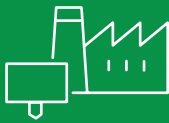
- Advising governments on appropriate engagement and consultation strategies to ensure community understanding and engagement in their programs and initiatives;
- Making clear commitments and budget allocations in areas of individual or joint responsibility and/or to augment grant funding provided from State and Federal Governments;
- Where appropriate, align Council strategic, asset and financial plans to achieve agreed outcomes.



2. Housing

The proactive facilitation of housing developments that provides suitable and diverse accommodation offerings to support workforce needs, population projections, and tourism visitation.

The SGC is committed to:



Adopting and keeping under review Land Availability Statements for the 3 individual Council areas, updated as required, as a resource to potential housing developers;



Reviewing Councils' own land holdings to identify land for potential housing development and working through the financial models to bring projects on-line with government and non-government partners;



Ensuring Councils have in place relevant infrastructure to support a growing housing market and associated population growth;



Keep under review and update the SGC Housing Survey (July 2024) with particular reference to the number and nature of houses required to meet employment trends/growth relative to the demographic of workers desired to be attracted;



Continuing to facilitate discussions/engagement with developers and private land holders to support housing projects.

The SGC seeks State Government/Federal Government commitment to:

- Supporting the work of the USGIG Housing Advisory Group;
- Releasing key land packages to the market in the 3 cities to seek projects and housing types relevant to needs;
- Addressing the upgrade, maintenance and new build of SA Housing Trust Houses in the region;
- Adopting a long term Housing Infrastructure Plan for the Upper Spencer Gulf;
- Conducting forums with potential developers alongside the Office of Regional Housing, SA Housing Trust and community housing providers to promote housing projects and the nature of housing required;
- Finding timely solutions to address water capacity/pressure issues and availability of sewer to support housing developments with SA Water, including through Council initiated short term solutions transferred to SA Water to manage;
- Working with the State Co-ordinator General (when appointed) to facilitate housing projects, where appropriate;
- Utilising the State Government's Housing Road Map to give effect to code amendments, engineering solutions, planning approvals and other land use matters to support housing developments;
- Delivering on the targets in the Federal Government's Housing Accord and other initiatives relevant to South Australia through the adoption of housing targets for the region;
- Exploring joint housing projects addressing community, business and government worker needs.



3. Workforce and Skills

Ensuring the USG region can attract, retain, and grow its own suitably skilled and work ready workforce to fill current and forecast jobs.

Outcomes sought State Government:

- Finalise the USG Workforce Strategy and ensure its implementation is monitored and evaluated with key regional stakeholders and the USGIG Workforce & Skills Advisory Group;
- Establish a USG Job and Skills Hub and appoint a Manager Spencer Gulf Workforce with appropriate resources to facilitate information and coordinate service provision by multiple service providers within the region to support employers and workers (both current and prospective) about job opportunities, including approaches to securing trainees and apprentices, education, training and upskilling workers, and attraction of talent to the region;
- Establish a presence in each Council area for the work of the USG Job and Skills Hub and Manager Spencer Gulf Workforce;
- Providing funding support to the TACTIC, RESA, Uni Hub Spencer Gulf, the 3 Regional Development Australia and SGC “Goal 1000” employment and training initiative and promote engagement by key State and private project proponents as a tool to support access to key skills and workers;
- Ensure government procurement requires local employment positions, including in areas that will assist in the employment of First Nations Peoples and suited to tackling intergenerational unemployment;
- Set USG targets for jobs and training through TAFE and other providers, including monitoring progress in achieving these targets;
- Implement the Port Augusta Technical College and realise the opportunities this initiative will deliver for the region;
- Continue to support TAFE and the Uni Hub to deliver programs in key skills/job areas with associated infrastructure to support delivery;
- Support strategies for skilled migration in key “hard to fill” positions with associated training and development opportunities;
- Work to increase the number and nature of secondary, tertiary and vocational training and education providers and the courses/pathways they deliver in-region to meet emerging needs;
- Work with regional employers and training providers to ensure program delivery is “place based” to ensure successful outcomes in the region;
- Align future job prospects in the region with school programs and initiatives to support students to align skills development with future jobs.

The SGC is committed to:



Providing pathways through participating in job creation and training programs aligned with their own workforce needs providing work experience and other skills development where jobs align with industry growth needs;



Ensuring resources are available for businesses to use to attract workers and their families to the region in collaboration with Regional Development Australia boards, industry bodies and other key stakeholders.

4. Social Impact

Joint planning and coordination to mitigate the social impact of changing demographics, industry transition, and socio-economic trends to maintain the social wellbeing of the people that live, work and visit the USG Region.

Outcomes sought SGC/State Government/Federal

- Collaborate and partner with key community organisations to identify the scope of social issues that result from growth and population changes;
- Agree and implement with key stakeholders strategies for monitoring and evaluating progress towards addressing social issues;
- Ensure that priority areas and roles for key players are identified, addressed and appropriately resourced;
- Identify key support for migrant and other disadvantaged groups in accessing services and assimilating in local communities.

Children & Youth

- State and Federal Governments collaborate with SGC Councils:
 - ◊ schools and community groups to promote programs and resources to support children and youth in the region;
 - ◊ by increasing the number and nature of childcare centres and services to support working families;
 - ◊ the Commissioner for Children and Youth to inform issues and approaches to supporting children and youth;
- Councils' playgrounds, parks, gardens, arts and other community infrastructure supports access to children and youth, including those with disabilities or physical or mental impairments.

Image & Liveability

- Councils to work with the State Government to ensure image and liveability issues are adequately identified and resourced;
- Work with the RDAs to ensure their economic development activities have a focus on liveability and image.

First Nations Peoples

SGC/State Government

- Support the completion of the Master Plan for Port Augusta with a focus on supporting First Nations peoples to address social issues in a culturally appropriate manner;
- Ensure engagement with First Nations Peoples to ensure programs and activities are culturally appropriate.

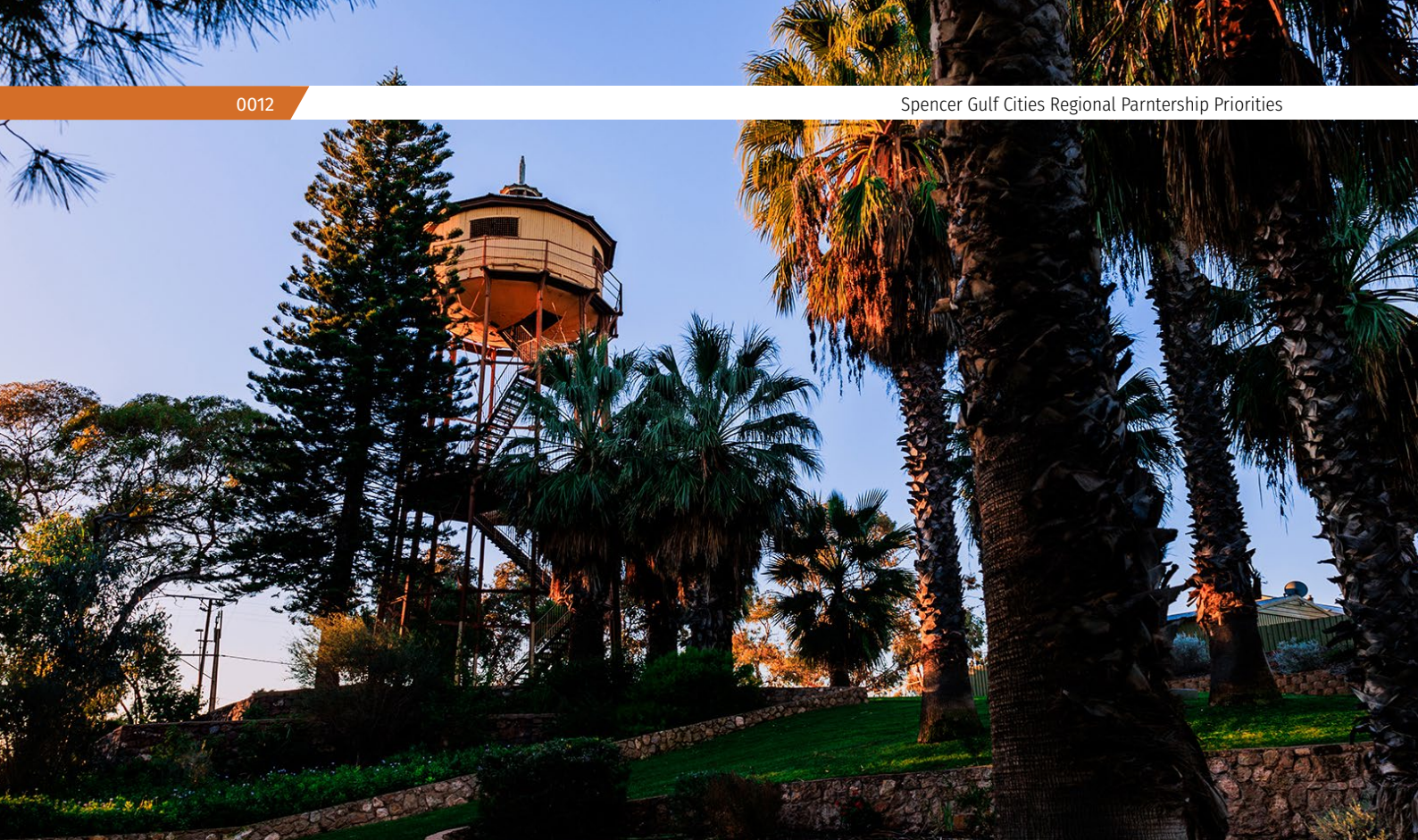
5. Infrastructure

Coordinate infrastructure planning and provision in the Upper Spencer Gulf to ensure the ongoing success, sustainability, viability and growth of the region.

Outcomes sought

State Government & SGC

- Target key funding programs of State and Federal Governments to support the development and implementation of infrastructure projects, including through precinct partnerships;
- SA Water to review its current and future water and sewer infrastructure needs to support growth projections and establish targets and plans to meet needs including through the adoption of staged approaches;
- Support the delivery of projects for the export of renewable energy, including battery storage aligned with community and economic growth needs in the region;
- Identify the unique waste management issues that will result from energy and mining industries and ensure facilities and collection arrangements are consistent with needs, including opportunities for circular economy initiatives;
- Progress key roads and highways projects in the region;
- Recognise and utilise the State Co-ordinator General (when in place) to ensure projects that address needs are provided by removing barriers;
- Collaborate to secure funding for upgrades to the Whyalla and Port Augusta airports as required from time to time;
- Remove the current inability for Council's to levy appropriate and equitable rates on electricity generators (including wind farms and solar farms).



State Government and Federal Government

- Joint planning and investment in foundational infrastructure (Gas, Electricity, Water, Hydrogen) required for the transition to green steel/green ore and decarbonisation of heavy industry;
- Joint planning and investment in the region's Sovereign Steelmaking Capability, State Prosperity Project, Green Iron Strategy and critical minerals;
- Joint planning and investment of the Northern Water Project;
- Joint planning, funding and delivery of Regional Precinct Partnership Program Projects.

SGC Commitments:

- Consider areas where Council infrastructure needs upgrade and/or areas for new works, roles and responsibilities;
- Keep Council Asset & Infrastructure Plans under review and aligned with Financial Management Plans;
- Keep the SGC Regional Transport Plan 2030 under review and updated as growth projects progress in the region;
- Deliver Council projects and initiatives, including those part funded by the Federal and/or State Governments, in an efficient and effective manner.

6. Land Use Planning

Coordinate land use planning in the Upper Spencer Gulf to support the ongoing sustainability and growth of the region.

Outcomes sought

State Government & SGC

- Adoption of an Upper Spencer Gulf Structure Plan to provide greater certainty to the community and stakeholders about the long-term vision for the region;
- Continue to inform the preparation of new Regional Plans for the Eyre and Western, Far North and Mid-North and Yorke Planning Regions, to be published by the State Planning Commission;
- Support the State Government to deliver on the issues highlighted in the Master Plan for Port Pirie and finalise the Master Plans for Whyalla and Port Augusta;
- Support the finalisation of the Regional Plans to which the SGCs are associated;
- Support the State Government's portal of information prepared for the region with relevant and up to date information for developers and other users;
- Give effect and/or support code amendments to support growth projects in the region;
- Work with the Co-ordinator General (when in place) to give effect to projects that might otherwise unreasonably stall;
- Address Native Title claims in conjunction with governments and promote appropriate cost recovery and claims costs management.

7. Economic Development

To maximise the USG Region's contribution to the delivery of the State's economic ambitions as outlined in the South Australian Economic Statement and State Prosperity Project.

Outcomes sought

SGC/State/Federal Governments

- Update Economic Development Strategies and Plans to align with the South Australian Economic Statement, State Prosperity Project, and Primed for Growth documents;
- Develop a business case for a Regional Renewable Energy/Clean Fuels/Green Iron-Green Steel Centre of Excellence;
- Ongoing funding and support of the USG Job & Skills Hub and Manager Spencer Gulf Workforce to attract skills to the region and grow a suitably skilled local workforce;
- Ongoing funding and support for the Whyalla Regional Coordinator role;
- Provide appropriate support to Nyrstar to enable its continued operations in Port Pirie;
- Continue to provide funding to the RDAs in the region and participate in collaborative projects;
- Determine the value of entering into partnership agreements (using various structures) to establish clear roles and support for growth projects between governments and project proponents, where appropriate;
- Encourage and support the use of First Nations enterprises and the formation of new enterprises to take up contracts and opportunities presented through growth projects;
- Work with current and new local tourism organisations and providers to ensure tourism product is fit for purpose and attractive to tourists;
- Ensure enabling infrastructure and services are in place to support economic growth.

8. Environment

Sustainable environmental management, including consideration of the impacts of climate change, is critical to community wellbeing and economic stability and growth.

Outcomes sought SGC/State Government/Federal

Undertaking joint work to:

- Identify and action environmental opportunities and challenges (current and forecast) in relation to climate change, management of biodiversity, environmental protection and management, revegetation, soil quality, pollution, air and water quality along with risk management strategies;
- Develop opportunities to protect, showcase and sustain key environmental assets e.g. for ecotourism experience development;
- Participate in programs and activities on the journey to net zero emissions;
- Put in place 'Environmental infrastructure' e.g. tide gates, rock walls, walking / cycling trails;
- Ensure environmental studies and research is undertaken in key development areas to identify and protect environmental impacts;
- Undertake work on the disposal of waste resulting from new/expanding industries and ensure appropriate facilities and practices are adopted in consultation with the Environment Protection Authority and key project proponents and industry groups, including the adoption of circular economy initiatives;
- Keep under review policy directions of governments in the adoption of nuclear energy, storage and waste management initiatives.





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