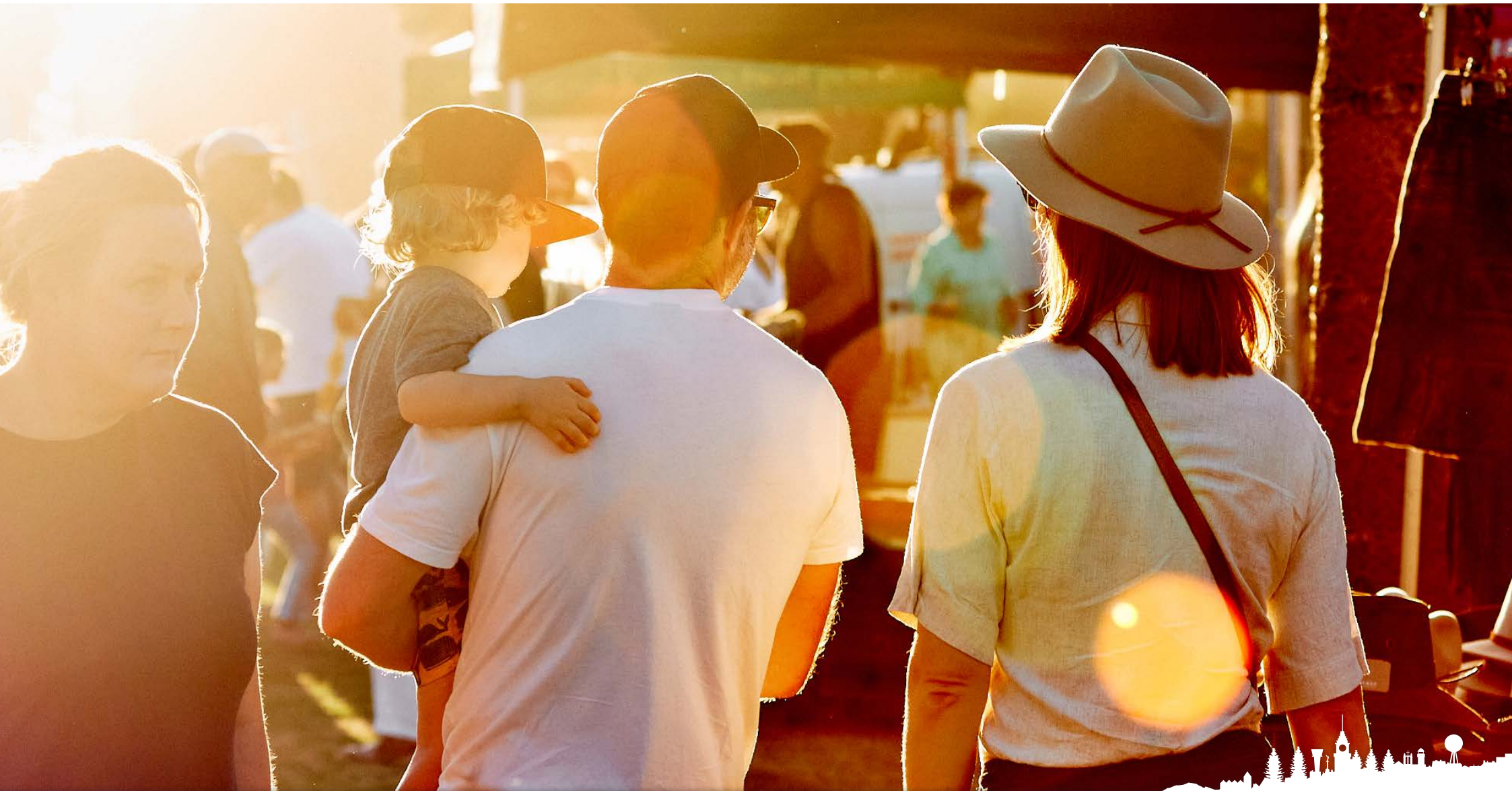


# WARRNAMBOOL EVENTS STRATEGY **2024-2028**





# Acknowledgement of Country

Warrnambool City Council acknowledges the Peek Whurrong and Kirrae Whurrung Peoples of the Gunditjmara, Eastern Maar Nations as the Traditional Owners of the land, waterways and skies within the Warrnambool municipality. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



# Acronyms & Definitions

Community event	Events that are primarily for residents of Warrnambool and the surrounding Shires that Warrnambool serves as a service hub.
The City	Warrnambool City Council
Destination events	Events that attract visitors from outside the region. These may be sport, business or leisure events.
Fit for purpose events	Events that can help meet the City's aspirations for events and align to the values.
GORRT	Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism, the region's Regional Tourism Board (destination management organisation)
Next economy	The climate-safe global economy founded on renewable sources of energy that the world is transitioning to. Leveraging the transition offers many opportunities for a local economy that is proactive.
WAG	Warrnambool Art Gallery
NVS	National Visitor Survey



# Executive Summary

**This Events Strategy builds on the successes from implementing the Warrnambool Events Strategy 2018-2022, outlining how Warrnambool City Council can focus its resources on maximising benefits from events.**

Based on analysis of Warrnambool's current events landscape, the Strategy recommends a focus on achieving the following aspirations for Warrnambool's events:



## **The four strategic priorities over the coming four years will be to**

1. Identify and nurture fit for purpose events.
2. Maximise events' contribution to the local economy.
3. Empower and enable community and industry to deliver successful events.
4. Ensure events are socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable.

Guiding principles will support the identification of events to support the local economy, while identified measures of success will enable the City to identify progress on achieving the aspirations.





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# PART A: SETTING THE SCENE



# 1. Introduction

Warrnambool City Council (the City) is familiar with the economic value that events deliver, particularly by attracting visitors into the region: Warrnambool is home to the 150-year-old May Racing Carnival, Australia's foremost Speedway events, a regional art gallery and performing arts theatre, and an abundance of sporting events including women's AFL, car rallies, outdoor participation sports events, and Australia's oldest cycle race and the world's longest one-day women's cycling race. Innumerable community events also contribute their vibrancy to the quality of life in Warrnambool for the community, reflecting their diverse interests, and adding vibrancy for visitors.

A strategic review of Warrnambool's events industry and how it is supported by the City revealed that there is opportunity to grow the economic and social value of events held in the region. Different types of events have different purposes, achieve different desired outcomes for the City and the community, and support different community and organisational goals, as described in the table below.

Types of value	Economic value	Social value	Environmental value
Examples of value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing direct and indirect economic benefit, including attracting new money into the local economy</li> <li>Supporting growth and skills development in local industries, including creative industries and industries connected with the next economy (the climate-safe economy)</li> <li>Brand and marketing benefits by building a positive identity of Warrnambool, telling the story of the people and the place, and playing a role in changing perceptions. This supports attracting new residents, jobs and investment.</li> <li>Adding to the vibrancy of the visitor experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusively connecting community members and building social cohesion</li> <li>Providing legacy outcomes that support community members, such as improved sporting and accessible infrastructure, and by building skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecting people to natural environments, supporting the desire to conserve and regenerate them</li> <li>Educating people on environmental matters and their role in protection</li> <li>Protecting fragile marine environments</li> </ul>
Types of events that deliver these benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business events related to local industries</li> <li>Destination events (sports, business and leisure events that attract visitors)</li> <li>Events that attract grants and sponsorship from outside the region</li> <li>Events that buy from local suppliers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events that reflect the interests of locals, including sports events</li> <li>Events that engage community members in team-building and volunteerism</li> <li>Events that celebrate and showcase local culture and heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events held away from fragile natural environments</li> <li>Events that do not impact nature, animals and plants</li> <li>Events that have environmental policies</li> <li>Events that educate and empower attendees to rethink waste and energy consumption</li> <li>Businesses events aligned with the next economy</li> </ul>





**The events ecosystem is broad, including civic events, events primarily for the community, and events that attract visitors, whether spectator or participation sporting events, festivals and other leisure events, or business events.**

Therefore, events touch on many City teams, and involve numerous types of stakeholders in the community. For this reason, there is a need to focus the City's resources in order to maximise the benefits that events deliver to the community and local economy.

There is a need for the City to delineate the support it provides to events that are primarily for community and deliver social benefits from those that attract visitors and deliver economic benefits to ensure that both can be maximised as per their purpose and strategic alignment. Within the limitations of human and financial resources, the City must be clear on its purpose to invest in events that are fit for purpose to achieve its aspirations for events. Focusing resources will help achieve the City's aspirations for events, in particular by leveraging the hard work of event organisers to help them maximise the benefits for the community from the events they are delivering.

Building on the successes of implementing Warrnambool Events Strategy 2018-2022, this Events Strategy focuses on enabling the City to maximise the benefits of events for the local community and its economy and environment.







## 2. The value of events

**Events build community. They bring together young and old and disparate subcultures, enlarge social networks, and support social cohesion. Events provide communities with resilience during times of hardship, and events can support charities, providing opportunities to raise funds.**

Events are catalysts for economic benefits, and are deceptively effective creators of local jobs. Events are a great strategy to grow the visitor economy, as they are important drivers of tourism into regional areas, and they can place a town on the map, being a great way to promote a destination. Three-quarters of event attendees would not have gone to a destination, if not for an event. For 57% of first-time visitors and 69% of repeat visitors to a destination, an event is the main reason for visiting – and most event attendees intend to return to the host destination in the

future. Attendees become destination advocates with 59% providing positive word of mouth recommendations of the event to others, and 42% of the destination.

Delegates travelling to business events are particularly valuable for a local economy as they are high yielding with a high average spend per trip. Additionally, many take pre- and post-event tours, bring along companions, and return for leisure having experienced a destination for the first time through the event, further adding to their economic impact.

Business events also have value beyond attracting visitors; benefits that are enduring, substantial, and significant, including enhancing individual and organisational performance, and creating and circulating innovation and knowledge. Business events that reflect local industries and therefore attract locals as well as visitors deliver the greatest value.

<sup>1</sup> Events: Drivers of Regional Tourism, 2014, Tourism Research Australia

<sup>2</sup> Events: Drivers of Regional Tourism, 2014, Tourism Research Australia

<sup>3</sup> Role of Business Events, Business Events Council of Australia

<sup>4</sup> Role of Business Events, Business Events Council of Australia





### 3. Purpose of the strategy

**This four-year Events Strategy outlines how the City's Events & Promotion team will focus on supporting the growth and attraction of destination events, as well as increasing the economic benefits of events, achieved through a suggested implementation framework.**

The Strategy aligns with regional strategic plans, and has been developed in consultation with key events stakeholders, including a broad range of City staff, event organisers, venue managers, regional organisations, and Eastern Maar representatives.

The Strategy distinguishes between two types of events, as follows.

Type of event	Definition
Destination events	Events that attract visitors from outside the region. These may be sport, business or cultural/leisure events.
Community events	Events that are primarily for residents of Warrnambool and the surrounding Shires that Warrnambool serves as a service hub.





## 4. Informing the strategy

**Desktop research and the development of an audit of sport and leisure destination events, and event venues**

**Consultations with a broad range of local and regional events stakeholders**

**Findings and Discussion Paper shared with Project Steering Group and Council's Executive Management Team**

**Draft Strategy shared with Project Steering Group and Council's Executive Management Team, and placed on public exhibition for feedback**

**Final Strategy delivered to Council for adoption**



## 4.1 Forces Shaping Events



### Building pressures on event viability

Events are risky, increasingly competitive, and resource intensive.

Costs to deliver events have skyrocketed in recent years, while grant and sponsorship opportunities have reduced; many events are dependent on annual grants to cover operational costs.

Attendee behaviour is changing, such as purchasing tickets last minute.

More Australians are interested in 'casual' volunteering within a defined (short) timeframe, rather than being willing to support the perpetuity of an annual event.



### Quality over quantity

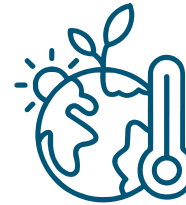
Today's event attendees want interactive and immersive experiences that connect them to locals and local culture, and provide them with a sense of place.

Destinations are focusing on attracting fewer visitors with higher per capita value and therefore lower negative impact, rather than trying to attract many attendees with lower value.



### Travel with purpose

Today's travellers increasingly want to connect with our extraordinary planet. 2/3 of Australians are looking for purposeful travel where there are opportunities to give back to the destination, and are seeking experiences that bring self-discovery and growth, enriching their lives through experiences and learning. 3/4 of travellers are seeking out sustainable options.



### Climate change and the next economy

Prioritising the longevity of a destination, and its ability to cope with the impacts of climate change, rather than prioritising short-term targets for visitor numbers will help meet travellers' expectations for sustainability, and reduce damage to sensitive natural environments.

Business events can help local businesses effectively navigate a local economy's transition during the global shift to the next economy.



### Active lifestyles and wellbeing

People are embracing healthier lifestyles to maintain their physical and mental health.

Participation sports events have strong appeal to niche audiences who are willing to travel to take part in their sport.

Sports events are a key motivator for travel.



### Inclusion

Hosting events that are inclusive is not a passing trend, and nor is it optional as events are all about building community.

Events should reflect the diversity of the community – on the organising committee, on stage, and amongst attendees.

<sup>5</sup> Consumer Insights Research, Tourism Australia, 2021

<sup>6</sup> Sustainable Travel Report 2023, Booking.com



## 4.2 Strategic Alignment

Warrnambool's overarching strategy is **Warrnambool 2040: The community vision for the future (W2040)**.

Warrnambool 2040's vision	Warrnambool will be Australia's most resilient and thriving regional economy	Warrnambool will be a city where all people thrive	Warrnambool will be Australia's most liveable regional city	Warrnambool will be Australia's most sustainable regional city
<p><b>How events can support this vision</b></p>	<p>Destination events will attract new money into the local economy by attracting visitors to Warrnambool.</p> <p>Business events will support innovation, business growth, and the transition of the local economy to the next economy through capacity building.</p> <p>Events will buy local to support local event suppliers, including the local creative industry. Events will apply for state and federal government funding and corporate sponsorship from outside the region.</p>	<p>Events will be proactively inclusive of all in Warrnambool's diverse community, and provide opportunities for healthy recreation, social connection, and connection with Eastern Maar culture.</p>	<p>Events will bring to life Warrnambool's public spaces, providing affordable and accessible recreation for the community.</p> <p>Events will leverage the City's investments into well-connected public and active transport to reduce emissions.</p> <p>Events will create positive marketing opportunities for Warrnambool and expose the city to potential new residents and investors.</p>	<p>Events will improve protections of and connections with Warrnambool's spectacular natural inheritance by proactively reducing emissions and waste, and impacts on the natural environment.</p> <p>Events have an opportunity to educate and change behaviour by connecting people with responsible choices.</p>

Events do not happen in isolation; they should help achieve the organisational objectives of the City, and the strategic objectives for the region.



Strategic plan	Alignment
<b>Warrnambool Economic Development Strategy 2023-2028</b>	<p>Economic development objectives that events will support include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the social and economic prosperity of all residents.</li> <li>• Increase visitation and visitor spend, by driving visitor growth through destination awareness, and attracting a high-yielding visitor base through quality events.</li> <li>• Attract investment in public and private infrastructure, specifically event venues.</li> <li>• Support an environmentally sustainable economy, including by supporting growth in existing industry specialisations.</li> </ul> <p>Events can also be aligned with the needs and opportunities in this plan, such as to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract large scale tourism events to maintain growth in the visitor economy.</li> <li>• Improve destination branding and increase destination awareness as a key visitor attraction on the Great Ocean Road.</li> <li>• Attract working-aged residents and young families to support the local workforce and help sustain the local economy.</li> <li>• Support business diversity and sustainability to create a more viable economy and expand the jobs base.</li> <li>• Build regional collaborations and partnerships across the City, industry and government to achieve economic development outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>The destination's brand promise</b>	<p>Events bring to life and showcase Warrnambool's value proposition: "Escape to a playful coastal city inspired by the beauty of nature and the Southern Ocean. Warrnambool offers city lifestyle experiences wrapped up in the spectacular beauty and wild nature of the raw Southern Ocean. This combination offers opportunities for relaxation, refined refreshment, and brings a new sense of playfulness, adventure and rejuvenation."</p>

Strategic plan	Alignment
<b>Active Warrnambool 2019-2030</b>	<p>The Events Strategy is aligned with opportunities and objectives in this Strategy, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renew sport and active recreation assets.</li> <li>• Maintain the strong culture of participation in sports clubs.</li> <li>• Support the sustainability of sporting clubs, recognising the importance of volunteers.</li> <li>• Encourage more diverse use of sporting reserves and open space.</li> <li>• Establish safe and functional walking and cycling connections to all facilities and spaces.</li> <li>• Promote the sustainable and responsible use of physical and environmental assets.</li> </ul>
<b>Visitor Economy Master Plan for the Great Ocean Road Region 2021-2030</b>	<p>The Events Strategy aligns with this plan's overarching goals to achieve economic, environmental and community priorities that deliver</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A thriving, inclusive and resilient visitor economy.</li> <li>• Strong, sustainable communities.</li> <li>• A healthy natural environment.</li> <li>• An alignment of the vision of stakeholders, and new levels of collaboration.</li> </ul>
<b>The Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan</b>	<p>The Events Strategy aligns with this plan's strategies to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Position the region for economic growth.</li> <li>• Improve connections.</li> <li>• Sustain natural assets.</li> <li>• Strengthen communities.</li> <li>• Increase collaboration.</li> </ul>
<b>Creative Industries Strategy for South West Victoria</b>	<p>The Events Strategy is aligned with this plan's goal to build beneficial and sustainable creative industries in South West Victoria, and achieve cultural, social and economic outcomes that benefit the community, local creatives, and the local economy.</p>
<b>The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	<p>Actions in this Events Strategy are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Economic growth</li> <li>9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure</li> <li>11. Sustainable cities and communities</li> <li>12. Responsible consumption and production</li> <li>13. Climate action</li> <li>14. Life below water</li> <li>15. Life on land</li> </ul>

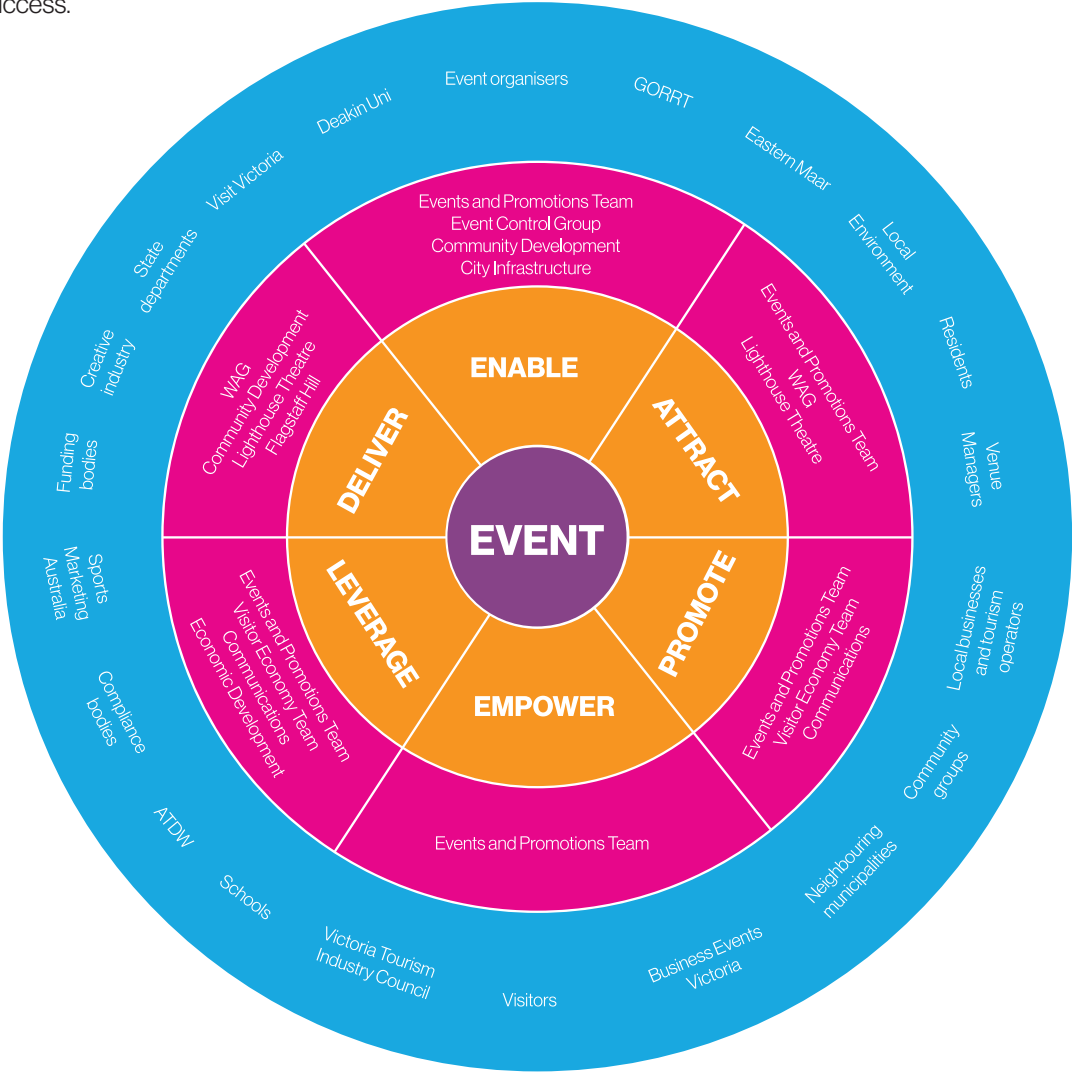




# The Events Ecosystem

Events are complex activities that touch on many different stakeholders, both within local government and without. They can be very resource intensive, and require close collaboration and communication across teams both internally and externally to achieve desired outcomes.

The following diagram highlights the various roles the City plays in events, and showing how events require a ‘whole of local government’ approach to gain maximum outcomes. The outer circle demonstrates that many external stakeholders are vital to a healthy events ecosystem, with strong leadership and collaboration required to drive success.



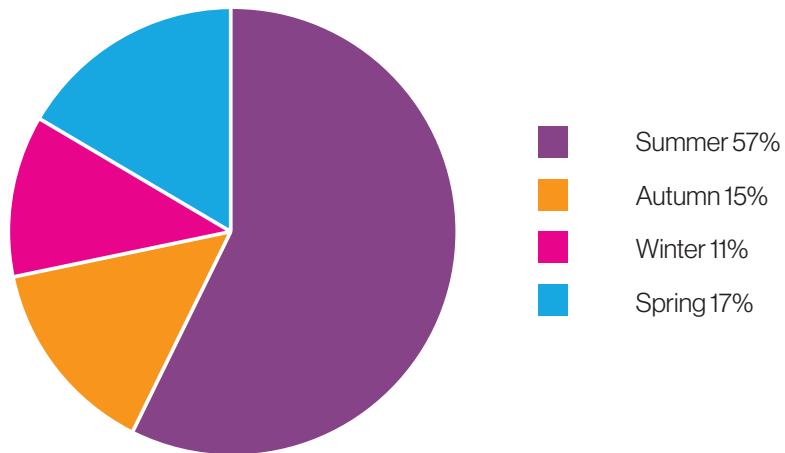
Role	Description
Enable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide cash and in-kind support to events to help them achieve their full potential</li> <li>Provide a concierge approach to help event organisers navigate event compliance</li> <li>Ensure events meet regulations through event and development approval processes</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the City's events venues are fit for purpose for target events and their audiences</li> <li>Deliver infrastructure to support resource recovery, reducing emissions, and regenerative initiatives by event organisers and attendees</li> <li>Reduce barriers for event organisers to deliver environmentally, economically and socially sustainable events</li> </ul>
Attract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactively bid for suitable business and sports events</li> <li>Attract cultural events</li> </ul>
Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create awareness of events with visitor markets</li> <li>Create awareness of events within the community</li> <li>Capture quality content at events to support future event and destination marketing</li> <li>Use events to build Warrnambool's destination brand profile and raise awareness of the region and what it offers</li> </ul>
Empower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empower event organisers, community groups and businesses to run successful events</li> <li>Provide best practice information and event management templates for event organisers in an online events hub</li> <li>Build the capacity of local event organisers</li> <li>Facilitate collaboration between local event organisers and venue managers</li> <li>Identify and share state and federal grant funding opportunities</li> </ul>
Leverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage events to increase their economic impacts (e.g., by increasing visitation, length of stay, visitor expenditure, event organiser spend with local suppliers, out of region grants, etc)</li> <li>Encourage Eastern Maar procurement and authentic participation</li> </ul>
Deliver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver events that achieve desired community development outcomes</li> <li>Deliver cultural, leisure and tourism events</li> </ul>



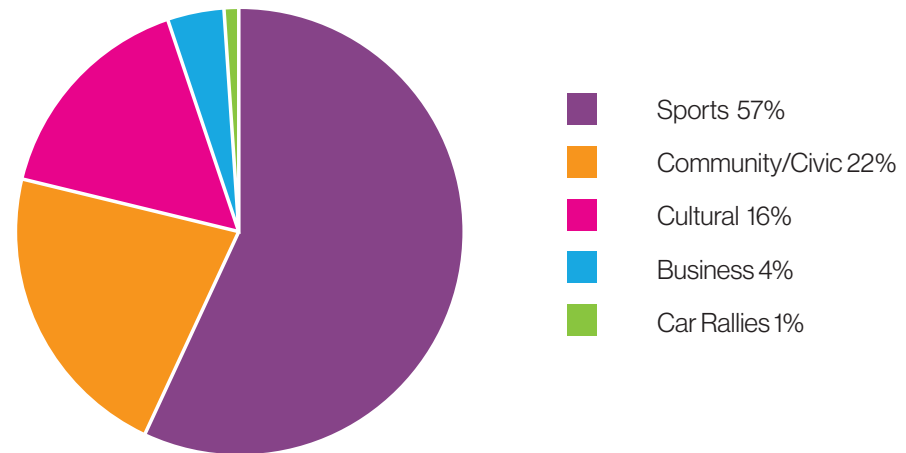
## 5. Events Snapshot

### 5.1 Event Activity

Events by season



2023 Council Funding By Event Type



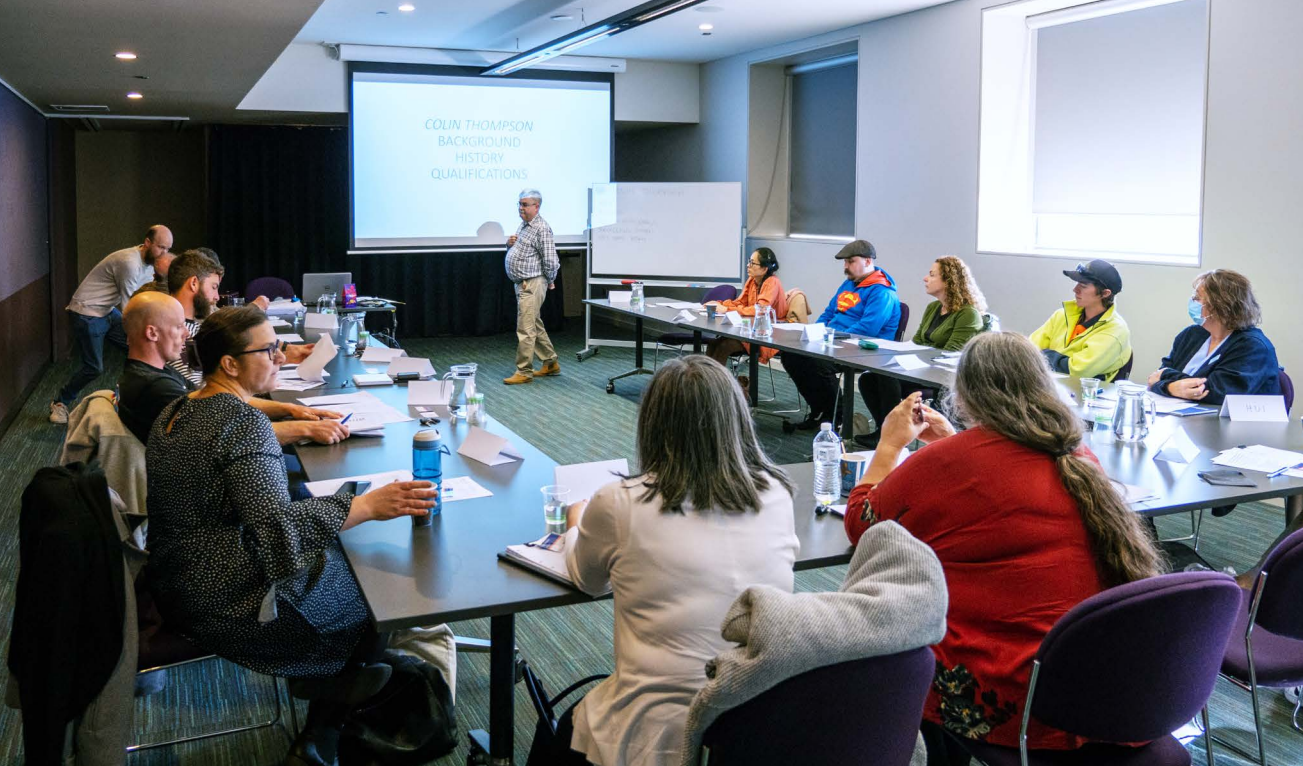
#### Two events each draw significant visitation:

- May Racing Carnival attracts around 25,000 attendees, with 2/3 being visitors who double accommodation occupancy during the event.
- Grand Annual Sprint Car Classic in January attracts around 12,000 attendees, with 84% of attendees being visitors who increase accommodation occupancy by half (during peak tourism season).

<sup>7</sup> The audit of Warrnambool's events developed to support the development of the Events Strategy focused on destination events, and excluded events for the community, civic events and smaller activations.

<sup>8</sup> Localis





## 5.2 Event Venues & Infrastructure

### City-managed and privately-owned venues

- 2 regional cultural centres (theatre and gallery)
- Variety of business event venues up to 350 delegates; largest with accommodation has capacity for 200 delegates
- Variety of open spaces for events; but a gap in a large-capacity all-weather venue

### Warrnambool can host national or major events in

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| • BMX             | • Road cycling        |
| • Cricket         | • Horse Racing Events |
| • Surf lifesaving | • Golf                |
| • Speedway racing | • Lawn bowls          |
| • Indoor bowls    |                       |

### Warrnambool can host state level competitions in

- |            |              |
|------------|--------------|
| • AFL      | • Triathlons |
| • Cricket  | • Netball    |
| • Tennis   | • Pickleball |
| • Shooting | • Running    |
| • Golf     | • Hockey     |

## 5.3 Community

**Though Warrnambool's population is around 35,000, the regional city is the service centre for over 100,000 residents in nearby southwestern Victoria.**

Warrnambool has a neutral SEIFA index of 961 for relative socio economic advantage and disadvantage.

- Highly engaged in participation sports
- 17.5% volunteer
- More vocationally trained workers and fewer professional workers compared to Victorian average, with high employment rates
- Fewer families compared with Victorian average
- Household incomes are 17.5% lower than Victorian average
- Older and aging population

The City aims to attract working-aged residents and young families to support the local workforce and help sustain the economy.

<sup>9</sup> Primarily sourced from Census

<sup>10</sup> Socio-Economic Indexes for Australia (SEIFA) 2021. 1,000 is the score the median Local Government Area, with numbers below this indicating more disadvantage.

<sup>11</sup> Warrnambool Economic Development Strategy







## 5.4 Visitors

**At the western end of the Great Ocean Road, and its only city, Warrnambool attracts almost a million visitors a year, who stay around 1.3 million visitor nights.**

Overnight visitors stay on average for 3 nights, and spend \$379 per trip. Together, domestic overnight visitors spend \$154 million per year in Warrnambool. Over a third (37%) of holidaymakers and over half (56%) of business visitors are domestic overnight visitors.

Most visitors to Warrnambool congregate in one small area over one short time of year: an estimated 800,000+ visit Warrnambool's beach, foreshore and Lake Pertobe area each year, with 36% visiting between November and February (peak tourism season).

## 5.5 Event Visitors

Domestic overnight event visitors to the Great Ocean Road visiting primarily to attend an event come principally from

- Greater Melbourne
- Greater Geelong
- Regional Victoria
- Interstate

New events appeal to overnight event visitors.

Warrnambool's major events tend to attract older males, revealing a gap of events for younger working age adults and their families, and youth.

## 5.6 Competitive Strengths

***“Warrnambool offers city lifestyle experiences wrapped up in the spectacular beauty and wild nature of the raw Southern Ocean.”***

The destination's appeal lies in its

- Hero experience: big, healthy nature and landscapes – Country is the one thing all of the community's niche groups value
- Water, including the ocean, rivers, Lake Pertobe, Tower Hill, and whales in winter
- City lifestyle experiences by the sea, with quality eateries, quirky street art, and appealing streetscapes
- Cultural quarter between the beach and the CBD
- Eastern Maar culture
- Vibrant creative community

Key industries include health care, manufacture, construction, education, retail, and rental, hiring and real estate. Deakin University's hydrogen fuel cell research hub, Hycel, forms a key part of Warrnambool's preparations to leverage the next economy.

<sup>12</sup> Attracting this demographic by improving the City's liveability has been identified as an aim in the City's economic development strategy.



# 5.7 Gaps Analysis

A snapshot of the region’s current capability in enabling and maximising the social, environmental and economic outcomes from events is as follows.

CURRENTLY ACHIEVING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Variety of events year-round, particularly sporting events, which are Warrnambool's key event strength</li><li>• Quality sports and business event venues</li><li>• Event Control Group streamlines event approvals</li><li>• Council provides funding and in kind support to events, including event management resources</li></ul>
GAPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of weather protected venues pushes most events into summer</li><li>• Gap of destination winter school holiday event, larger cultural and music events, and events for youth and younger adults</li><li>• Event viability is declining with costs increasing, and volunteer burnout at a peak</li><li>• Events are not currently contributing to achieving Council's sustainability goals</li><li>• Limited four-star accommodation</li><li>• Limited collaboration amongst event stakeholders, combined with reliance on Council</li><li>• Lack of multi-year funding opportunities for events</li><li>• No consistent and transparent process of measuring positive impact and ROI from events</li></ul>
RISK/IMPACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Destination events are not achieving their full potential benefits</li><li>• Summer months are congested which causes social and environmental challenges, and reduced ability to leverage events</li><li>• Reduced appeal of Warrnambool during winter</li><li>• Loss of homegrown events to increased costs and other challenges</li><li>• Events having negative impact on the environment</li><li>• Reduced competitiveness of Warrnambool as a business events destination as other regional destinations invest in infrastructure</li></ul>

<sup>13</sup> Warrnambool's destination brand







## 6. Visitor markets

**Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism (GORRT) has had customer profiles developed for a range of target markets for the wider region. For Warrnambool, the profiles Jess (professional mum) and Miriam (wealthy empty-nester) represent household decision makers when it comes to travel, engage with GORRT's marketing content, and form a large portion of current visitors.**

Strong representation from other profiles includes

- Cameron – active family Dad
- Cathy and Michael – holiday park family
- VJ – heart of a multi-generational family in Melbourne's growing western suburbs (a growing market)
- Jim – retired regular road tripper (an age group that is growing in visitation)

<sup>14</sup> See <https://greatoceanroadtourism.org.au/training-and-development/customerprofiles>

Slightly different visitor profiles visit for Warrnambool's major events, such as the May Race Carnival and speedway events, however they were not identified as separate profiles during the development of GORRT's key customer profiles. Different profiles will be attracted to different kinds of events, such as Matthew the professional with a love of the outdoors who would visit Warrnambool to attend spectator and participant sports events, and Ashley the young professional who would visit Warrnambool to attend a cheese and wine festival.

To align with the City's Economic Development Strategy, an area of focus should be on attracting younger working-age attendees and young families to events, to experience Warrnambool, and be attracted to live here. There is also currently a gap in events for children, youth and younger adults.

WCC will facilitate a community event as part of its commitment to fostering community engagement, wellbeing and inclusiveness. Council will produce an annual plan for an approved seasonal event that meets the objectives, sustainability and growth on the overarching goals of the Events strategy including attraction, promotion and economic activity.



# PART B: THE STRATEGY



## 7. Strategy on a page

Vision	Warrnambool has a diverse, vibrant and inclusive portfolio of events that attract overnight visitors, and have a positive impact on the local economy, community and environment.					
Values	We are a proud sporting community	We are creatives, entrepreneurs and innovators	We are connected through our appreciation of nature	We are collaborative and mutually supportive		
Brand proposition	City lifestyle experiences wrapped up in the spectacular beauty and wild nature of the raw Southern Ocean.					
Aspirations	Attract new revenue into the local economy, providing a boost to local businesses	Attract overnight visitors outside of peak visitation times, particularly in winter	Provide an appealing reason for visitors to stay longer and spend more	Showcase Warrnambool's destination brand of city lifestyle experiences wrapped in raw, wild nature	Inspire and empower environmental enhancements, and social benefits to improve liveability	
Visitor markets *	Jess (professional mum)	Miriam (wealthy empty-nester)	Cameron (active family Dad)	Cathy and Michael (holiday park family)	VJ (heart of a multi-generational family)	Jim (retired regular road tripper)
Strategic Priorities	Identify and nurture the fit for purpose events	Maximise events' contribution to the local economy.	Empower and enable community and industry to deliver successful events	Ensure events are socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable		

\* Visitor markets (Refer Page 25)



## 8. Vision

Warrnambool has a diverse, vibrant and inclusive portfolio of events that attract overnight visitors, and have a positive impact on the local economy, community and environment.

## 9. Values

We are a proud sporting community	We are creatives, entrepreneurs and innovators	We are connected through our appreciation of nature	We are collaborative and mutually supportive
Our community loves participating in all kinds of sports, and proactively encourages female participation.	We are readying our local industries for the next economy, and building on the strength of our entrepreneurs, creative industries and diverse cultures.	Nature is important to our lifestyle and economy and we will continue to conserve and regenerate it.	We leverage our strengths by working together to maximise outcomes.

## 10. Aspirations





# 11. Strategic priorities

To enable and support Warrnambool's destination events, and to support the achievement of the aspirations, the recommended priorities for the City over the coming three years are as follows.

1. **Identify and nurture fit for purpose events.**
2. **Maximise events' contribution to the local economy.**
3. **Empower and enable community and industry to deliver successful events.**
4. **Ensure events are socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable.**

These priorities are within the circle of influence of the City's Events & Promotion team within the City Growth directorate, and other teams whose roles touch on events. Other actions which will support maximising outcomes from events, such as the provision of cycle paths and public transport to enable sustainable transport use by event attendees, have been noted in other strategic plans of the City.

For each of the strategic priorities, considerations have been provided. These are recommended actions to achieve the priorities with flexibility for the team in which are delivered as priority actions and which when resources permit.





# Enablers



## Empowering community and industry

Enabling the community's event organisers to deliver their events more efficiently, and more effectively achieve their desired outcomes through resource-efficient capacity building to empower them.

Support local businesses to leverage events to increase sales and visitor spending in the local economy.

Facilitate collaboration in the local events industry.



## Building a strategic and well-resourced Events & Promotion team

With a clear focus on maximising the economic benefits of events, this team can concentrate its resources on achieving this aspiration.



## Whole of local government approach

With the City having so many teams with touchpoints with events, it's key that there is a collaborative approach to supporting events to maximise outcomes from them, with clear responsibilities for teams so everyone knows their part to play in the events ecosystem.



## Focused approach

The City has the authority and confidence to turn down requests that divert resources away from achieving its aspirations for events.

A focused approach will result in greater return on investment.







## 11.1 Identify and nurture the fit for purpose events

**Current event trends are making it more costly and difficult to deliver events, making it even more important for local governments to think strategically about the events they support and how they support them, and to focus on leveraging what the region already has before looking to develop new events.**

To support the local economy, a balanced portfolio of events delivered by local event organisers and attracted to Warrnambool, supported by multi-year funding and support programs will offer a greater return on the City's investment than providing many small annual grants to community events that have little economic impact. Attracting business events related to local industries will build local capacity and innovation.

Events that are aligned with the values and desirable principles of this Strategy will provide the most value to Warrnambool. A pragmatic and transparent assessment framework will enable the City

to determine the events that are fit for purpose for the region, how those events should be supported, and the outcomes desired from the City's investment and support.

## 11.2 Guiding principles

Recommended overarching principles for determining events that are fit for purpose for Warrnambool are as follows.

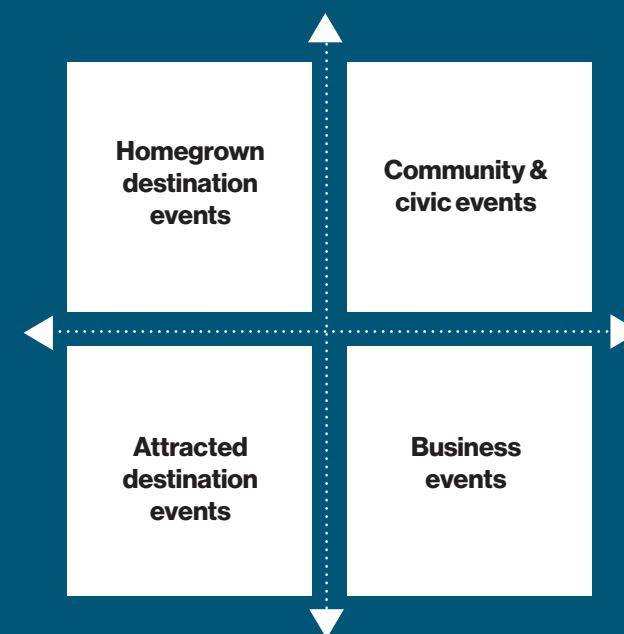
These principles will be used to make future decisions on new events that are supported by the City and will empower existing supported events to improve in these areas, as part of a collective effort to achieve desired outcomes from events.





Principle	Description
<b>Economic value</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events that result in larger economic gain or leave a positive legacy for Warrnambool such as events that attract and encourage overnight visitation, run over multiple days, use local suppliers, provide opportunities for the local creative industry, leave behind legacy infrastructure, enable community organisations to fundraise, and/or develop local skills.</li> <li>Regular events tend to provide greater cumulative economic impact than one-off events.</li> <li>Events that attract potential new working-age residents.</li> </ul>
<b>Attract target visitor markets</b>	Events that attract target visitor markets.
<b>Calendar fit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events that fill gaps during off-peak and shoulder season, and outside of long weekends.</li> <li>Events held March–November and mid-week, particularly events that disperse visitation over a longer period i.e., multi-day events will have the most value.</li> <li>Events held in January or during the Easter school holidays contribute to overtourism rather than to the visitor economy.</li> </ul>
<b>Environmentally sustainable</b>	Events that respect the environment, including events that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce and offset emissions</li> <li>Have minimal impact on natural habitats</li> <li>Encourage and enable the use of active and public transport</li> <li>Purchase sustainably</li> <li>Recover resources</li> <li>Educate and engage attendees and suppliers in sustainable behaviours</li> <li>Conserve waterway health</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusive and accessible</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events that are held in accessible venues</li> <li>Events that provide opportunities for social inclusion.</li> <li>Sports events that increase participation by females.</li> </ul>
<b>Brand alignment</b>	Events that align to (and activate) the destination brand: “Warrnambool offers city lifestyle experiences wrapped up in the spectacular beauty and wild nature of the raw Southern Ocean.”
<b>Community and cultural value</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events that the community is proud of.</li> <li>Events that offer positive value for residents of all ages.</li> <li>Events that enhance the artistic and cultural diversity of Warrnambool.</li> <li>Events that celebrate Warrnambool heritage and Eastern Maar culture.</li> </ul>

There are different categories and types of events which can make it challenging for a local government to understand which they should support and enable, and when to say no to requests for help. To support the event principles outlined above, the following event categories have been recommended as fit for purpose for Warrnambool. These categories will enable the City to be strategic and transparent in what they support.





The table below provides insight into the priority principles for each category along with the recommended funding program and allocation, to ensure that the balanced portfolio of events across the year can be achieved. This framework is to be used to create the revised funding program for events and the evaluation criteria. It is important to note that not aligning with one principle or criteria does not exclude an event from funding as events will be assessed against each criteria using a rating system e.g. 2 points for high alignment with a category, 1 point for some alignment, and 0 points for not aligned.

Category	Homegrown destination events		Attracted destination events	Business events	Community and civic events
<b>Sub category</b> <b>Example events</b>	<b>Established</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jericho Cup</li> <li>Speedway events</li> <li>May Racing Carnival</li> <li>Melbourne to Warrnambool Cycling Festival</li> </ul>	<b>Emerging</b> <p>These are community events that have potential to become a destination event and reach the below criteria with support e.g. Warrnambool Multicultural Festival</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yoga Festival</li> <li>AFLW</li> <li>Life Saving Victoria Junior Championships</li> <li>Triumph National Rally</li> <li>Austin 7 National Rally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism Conference</li> <li>Rotary District 9820 Conference</li> <li>Pacific History Association Conference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Markets</li> <li>Warrnambool Multicultural Festival</li> <li>Wunta Fiesta</li> </ul>
<b>Economic value</b>	High		High	High	Low
<b>Number of attendees</b>	5,000+		2,000+	20-100 (typically 70-80)	
<b>Origin</b>	Over 60% from outside Warrnambool		Over 60% from outside Warrnambool	Over 80% from outside Warrnambool	Predominantly residents
<b>Attract target visitor markets</b>					N/A
<b>Calendar fit</b>	High		High	High	Low
<b>Brand alignment</b>	Medium		High	Medium	Low
<b>Community &amp; cultural value</b>	Medium		Low	Medium	High
<b>Environmentally sustainable</b>	High		High	High	High
<b>Inclusive &amp; accessible</b>	High		High	High	High
<b>Funding streams</b>	Destination Events	Pathway to Growth program	Event Acquisition Fund	Business Events & Conferences	Community Events





## 11.3 Event funding streams

**The Festivals and Events Fund 2023 was developed in line with the City's previous Events Strategy and complements support for events available from the state and federal governments, corporates, and philanthropic organisations. Whilst it is sound, it is recommended that the program be refined to support this next phase.**

The recommended funding streams include the following.

- Destination Events: This will replace the Tourism Events stream.
- Event Acquisition Fund: This is a new fund to support the acquisition of external sport and cultural events into Warrnambool.
- Business Events & Conferences: This stream will remain as per existing the existing fund.
- Pathway to Growth Program: This is a new multi-year funding stream to support community events that have potential to mature into a destination event (emerging homegrown destination event). Refer to details below on this recommendation.
- Community Events: This stream will remain as per the existing fund, but with a smaller budget allocation.
- Partnership Stream: A three-year partnership for Warrnambool's heritage major events with agreed benefits for both parties: the City and the sponsored event. The partnership agreement will be tailored to the event and should outline the desired benefits for Warrnambool, such as increased visitation, increased overnight visitation, increased destination awareness (via media reports on the event), or increased return visitation outside of the peak season (such as via sale of exclusive off-peak packages for attendees).

All events funded by the City must provide robust post event reporting, which includes the use of a consistent measurement of success using the following formulas.

**Economic impact:**

Visitor nights x Average visitor spend (NVS) = Event value to local economy

**Return on investment (ROI):**

Visitor nights x Average visitor spend (NVS) / Total grant value = XX:1 (economic impact output: input by the City)

**Cost per visitor:**

Total annual grant value / Total annual visitation to funded events = \$XX cost per visitor





## 12. Measures of success

**The Strategy will be reviewed annually by the City to ensure the actions continue to remain relevant. The performance of the event portfolio in achieving the Strategy's vision and delivering on the aspirations will be measured and reported on as part of the annual review.**

It is recommended measurable targets are set, for smaller achievements that demonstrate progress, as well as aspirational, action-inducing targets.

Outcome	Measure of funded events	Means of measurement
<b>Visitation benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numbers of overnight visitors outside of the peak tourism season</li> <li>Average length of stay</li> <li>Average visitor expenditure</li> </ul>	Attendee survey undertaken by event organiser
<b>Economic benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total visitor expenditure</li> <li>Visiting participant economic impact (e.g. expenditure by visiting entertainers and stall-holders)</li> <li>Event economic impact</li> <li>Return on investment (City's investment : Event economic impact)</li> </ul>	Data from attendee survey undertaken by event organiser input into Economy ID algorithm
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total amount of grants and sponsorship secured from outside the Shire</li> <li>Total amount of event organiser local expenditure</li> </ul>	Event organiser budget
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of local staff, artists, and business suppliers hired</li> <li>Number of local Aboriginal staff, artists and Aboriginal-owned suppliers hire</li> </ul>	Event organiser records
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average percentage of event budget spent with local suppliers across local events</li> </ul>	Post event report
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced individual and organisational performance</li> <li>Innovation and knowledge created and disseminated</li> </ul>	Number of business events connected with local industries
<b>Social benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skill development of local event organisers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of local event organisers participating in event management training</li> <li>Net Promoter Score by participants of training</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusion of Eastern Maar community and culture</li> <li>Improved accessibility of funded events</li> <li>Opportunities for local creatives</li> <li>Opportunities for youth</li> <li>Community satisfaction with events (Net Promoter Score)</li> </ul>	Post event report
<b>Environmental improvements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reductions in waste to landfill per attendee</li> </ul>	As part of their sponsorship agreement with the City, funded events must <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop a sustainability plan with measurable targets, including for waste reduction</li> <li>report on outcomes achieved to the City</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of event organisers estimating their event's emissions</li> </ul>	Post event report
<b>Brand building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events that showcase the region's appeal</li> </ul>	Alignment with brand value proposition