



Destination **GIPPSLAND**

A wonderland of events

GIPPSLAND REGIONAL EVENTS STRATEGY

2020-2025

The Gippsland Regional Events Strategy is a joint project of Destination Gippsland and Gippsland’s six local government authorities: Bass Coast Shire Council, Baw Baw Shire Council, East Gippsland Shire Council, Latrobe City Council, South Gippsland Shire Council and Wellington Shire Council and the Latrobe Valley Authority in collaboration with event stakeholders across the region and state.

The Strategy is a priority project of the Gippsland Destination Management Plan and was funded by the Victorian State Government through the Latrobe Valley Authority, as part of the Latrobe Valley Visitor Economy Events and Marketing project.

Development of the Strategy was overseen by a Project Control Group comprising a Chief Executive Officer or nominated representative of each of the local government authorities, Latrobe Valley Authority and Destination Gippsland.



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Executive summary

The Gippsland Regional Events Strategy 2020-2025 presents a transformational model that will position Gippsland to lead the way as a competitive regional and major events destination in Victoria and Australia.

Activation of the Strategy will attract visitors and businesses, bring communities together, foster new ways of thinking, enhance the personality of and pride in our region and bolster our economy by an additional \$9.6 million in regional income in five years, growing to \$20.6 million in 10 years. The new event activity will generate 132.5 jobs in five years, rising to 282.5 in year 10.

Bringing together Gippsland’s six LGAs, Latrobe Valley Authority (LVA) and other strategic partners with a collective vision and focus is the cornerstone of the Strategy. We stand together as one to drive recovery in our communities and foster economic and social resilience and wellbeing through a reignited events industry and a compelling events calendar.

The Strategy is a key action of the Gippsland Destination Management Plan (DMP) and delivers on its strategic priority of investing in diverse and exciting regional events.



*Investing in developing and acquiring regional and major events as a collective will deliver a return of \$62:1 to the Gippsland region.**

*ROI on additional visitor spending per \$ of Strategy spend (assuming any fund earnings are treated as a reserve which can be drawn upon if needed, otherwise accumulated over the first 10 years).

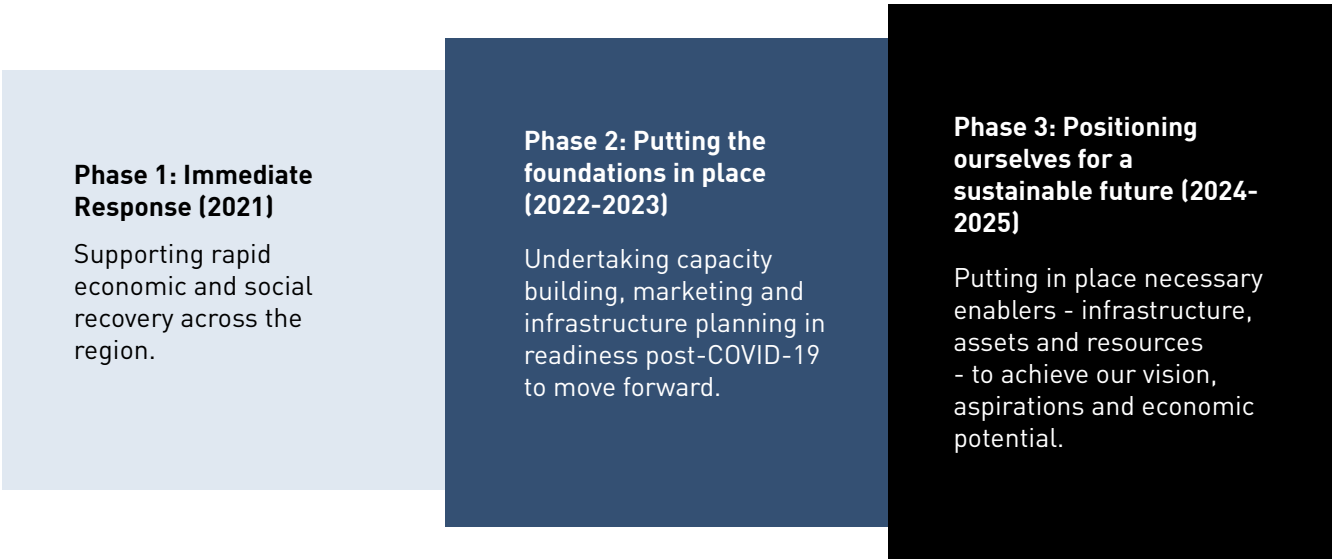
Our vision

Gippsland events deliver a state and national profile for the region, creating economic and social benefits now and into the future.

Our aspirations

- Position Gippsland as a competitive regional events destination
- Create a strong, single voice in attracting funding and investment support
- Develop events that build a positive destination profile and enhance brand recognition
- Attract new events that are aligned to the region’s brand and competitive advantages
- Foster community connection and sense of pride in the region
- Grow overnight visitation and spend, particularly in the shoulder months and off-peak
- Maximise the dispersal of the economic and social benefits of events across the region
- Ensure responsible stewardship of Gippsland’s natural assets
- Enhance the capability and sustainability of home-grown events
- Celebrate Gippsland’s uniqueness, innovation, and creativity through events.

Strategic priorities



Economic outcomes

An innovative funding model based on a diversified funding pool will deliver strong results for Gippsland. The fund will allow Gippsland to compete on a national scale and attract significant investment, providing for strategic acquisition, growth of existing and creation of new events across the region.

Within five years of the Strategy’s activation, Gippsland will receive a Return on Investment (ROI) of \$17.08 in additional visitor spending per dollar of Strategy spend, increasing to \$52.36 in year 10. If earnings achieved from the fund are retained, the ROI increases to \$19.36 in year 5 and \$62.93 in year 10.



INTRODUCING THE REGIONAL EVENTS STRATEGY

The rationale for the Strategy

This five-year Gippsland Regional Events Strategy, Gippsland – A Wonderland of Events, provides a clear blueprint for the acquisition and development of regional and major events across Gippsland's six LGAs – Bass Coast, Baw Baw, East Gippsland, Latrobe, South Gippsland and Wellington.

Events are a valued strategy to grow visitation and expenditure and reduce the impacts of seasonality, enhance dispersal throughout our towns and

villages, and build resilience in the visitor economy and communities. This Strategy presents a transformational model to position Gippsland for the future, while supporting short term economic and social recovery. The Strategy's development is timely as it will ensure event benefits are fully realised in the region's recovery from long term drought, severe bushfires and a global pandemic (COVID-19).

Gippsland events and the road to recovery

As stated in the recent report of the Victoria Tourism Industry Council Visitor Economy Recovery Taskforce, recovery from the global pandemic will require extraordinary action and a need to think big. Industry recovery is likely to take three years at best and out to five years at worst. Market demand will be subject to the shifts from intrastate to interstate and eventually to international travel.

This Strategy provides the platform for the region's LGAs and partners to work together to secure funding and pool resources needed to create a compelling events portfolio to support short term recovery. Longer term, the Strategy will build resilience in the industry by creating an environment that fosters the growth and sustainability of events, lifts community pride and liveability and contributes to rebuilding local economies.

'As our families, communities and nation come to terms with the uncertainty, isolation and social and economic disruption of the world in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the power of the arts and creativity [and events] to connect and uplift us, to reduce expenditure across health and social services and to stimulate tourism and local economies, has never been more important.'

Dr Wendy Were, Executive Director Advocacy and Development

The Strategy will be instrumental in building Gippsland's brand position and reputation as an events destination. It will drive improved event hosting capability and investment in event infrastructure, accommodation and tourism experiences.

Production of the Strategy has been led by Destination Gippsland in partnership with the six LGAs and LVA. The Strategy reflects the culmination

of desktop review, stakeholder engagement, and analysis of Gippsland's event strengths, challenges, opportunities, current event portfolio, and performance relative to competitor destinations.

The events landscape post-COVID-19 is still unclear but this Strategy has been developed within the assumption that events will be able to be held from 2021 with COVID-safe protocols in place.

A transformational model for regional events

We are breaking new ground with this transformational model for event acquisition and development. The Strategy brief was to deliver an inspiring and innovative model to truly galvanise and sustain economic and social benefits into the local communities through events.

A cornerstone of the new model is an industry first—harnessing the collective strength of the region’s LGAs to compete nationally as one voice for events and optimise the associated economic and social benefits across Gippsland. It creates a focus for all of the LGAs, LVA and strategic partners in relation to acquiring and developing regional and major events and enables them to leverage the collective strength to achieve outcomes beyond what would be possible independently.

We will establish a regional events entity, Events Gippsland, to lead the development and acquisition of regional and major events for the six LGAs. This entity will include representation from the LGAs, LVA and other strategic partners and be supported by an events acquisition and development fund. The fund will allow for strategic and proactive acquisition, growth of existing and development of new events across the region.

Allocation of the event acquisition and development fund will be phased. Initially the focus will be on achieving quick wins to support the economic and social recovery efforts. Beyond this phase, the attention will be on growth and development of events and building resilience and sustainability across the region. Four-year strategic funding agreements will be developed between Events Gippsland and each LGA, specifying their objectives and targets for the regional and major events portfolio and supporting actions based on their level of investment.

The new fund will take over from the Gippsland Regional Event Acquisition Fund that was established to support industry recovery, reactivate the Gippsland community, enhance pride of place, and drive visitation back to the region post the drought, bushfires and COVID-19.

What activating the Strategy will mean for Gippsland

Implementing the Strategy will deliver substantial returns to the Gippsland region in terms of visitor spending, jobs and regional income. The benefits will be progressively generated as the portfolio of regional and major events is developed and extended and the events are staged. Specifically, the benefits will include:

	Year 2		Year 5		Year 10
Event attendance	31,000		120,000		236,000
Overnight visitors	15,050		62,900		141,600
Total spending in the region by attendees ¹	\$7.15 million		\$29.04 million		\$62.30 million
Total jobs generated (FTE)	32.5		132.5		282.5
Total regional income	\$2.35 million		\$9.6million		\$20.6 million
Return on investment	\$8.94		\$19.36		\$62.93

Growth in overnight visitors is the major driver of the increase in jobs and regional income generated.

¹Based on average spend of overnight visitors of \$190 and \$90 for day trip visitors.

Our project approach

As a regional events strategy, ownership by the LGAs and events stakeholders is fundamental to its successful activation. Collaboration has been the central thread in the Strategy’s development.

A Project Control Group provided representation from all LGAs, LVA and Destination Gippsland and extensive engagement was undertaken with stakeholders.



See Attachment 1 for a full list of all stakeholders engaged in the Strategy’s development.

Our vision

Gippsland events deliver a state and national profile for the region, creating economic and social benefits now and into the future.

Our aspirations

- The aspirations of the Strategy are to:
- Position Gippsland as a competitive regional events destination
 - Create a strong, single voice in attracting funding and investment support
 - Develop events that build a positive destination profile and enhance brand recognition
 - Attract new events that are aligned to the region’s brand and competitive advantages
 - Foster community connection and sense of pride in the region

- Grow overnight visitation and spend, particularly in the shoulder months and off-peak
 - Maximise the dispersal of the economic and social benefits of events across the region
 - Ensure responsible stewardship of Gippsland’s natural assets
 - Enhance the capability and sustainability of home-grown events
 - Celebrate Gippsland’s uniqueness, innovation and creativity through events.

We will deliver on this vision and aspirations by developing and acquiring events that, as the DMP notes, are:

Compelling	Competitive	Engage	Sustainable	Collaborative	Protective
Grow market share, spend and yield	Stand out in the Victorian market, and beyond that, Australia and overseas	Engage the community to build understanding about the importance of tourism to the economy	Lift product price and quality and incorporate sustainable tourism principles	Work together as a region across jurisdictions to grow tourism	Ensure long term sustainable management of natural and cultural assets

These elements are equally vital to developing a competitive regional events portfolio and maximising the economic and social impacts of events across Gippsland.

A three-phase approach

The Strategy will be activated across three phases:

Phase 1: Immediate Response (2021)

Phase 2: Putting the foundations in place (2022-2023)

Phase 3: Positioning ourselves for a sustainable future (2024-2025)

Partners in the activation of this Strategy












The various partners and their roles and responsibilities:

Events Gippsland	Gippsland Local Government Authorities	Latrobe Valley Authority
Strategic activation of the Strategy and advocacy to state and federal government to attract funding and investment support Administering the regional events acquisition and development fund and applying for government funding to boost this fund Proactive, strategic acquisition and attraction of external events to the region (sport, business, leisure) Supporting the development and growth of home-grown events with the potential to deliver regional outcomes Incorporating the functions of Business Events Gippsland Regional event facilitation and support Leveraging regional events to showcase and market the destination and provide a compelling reason for people to visit, stay and return	Funding support for local community and tourism events Attracting events that deliver local community benefits Management of local government regulatory responsibilities of events Management and maintenance of local government operated event infrastructure and facilities Making infrastructure available for regional and major events Hosting regional and major events Coordinating local volunteers to support events Capacity building of local event committees Engaging the support of communities in events and encouraging a host mentality amongst businesses and residents Leveraging regional events to create economic and social benefits for shire Brand profiling and marketing of local events Contributing to regional events acquisition and development fund	Attraction of investment into event infrastructure and its activation within Latrobe Valley Collaborate with Events Gippsland and businesses to maximise event outcomes Facilitating community activation initiatives and activities that promote placemaking, activation and attraction, and capability and capacity building within the region Facilitating long-term sustainable prosperity through economic and community growth through initiatives such as the Latrobe Valley Sports and Community Initiative, the Community and Facility Fund, and Smart Specialisation projects that address regional strengths
Destination Phillip Island	Destination Gippsland	Visit Victoria
Roles and responsibilities as Regional Tourism Board for Phillip Island Leveraging regional events to capture economic and social benefits for destination Brand profiling and marketing of local events Media / PR Facilitating industry development	Activation of the DMP Destination advocacy Destination brand development and activation Investment attraction to support product and infrastructure development Marketing of regional and major events Media / PR Gathering and sharing visitor insights Facilitating industry development	Regional Victorian marketing campaigns Development and management of digital and media platforms Regional event investment and event attraction
Regional Development Victoria	Business Events Victoria	Protected area managers
Identifying regional priorities and securing project funding Drive the agenda of the Gippsland Regional Partnership	Grow the business events sector and realise positive economic and social benefits for Victorian communities Building relationships, knowledge and partnerships across Victoria and Australia to increase the number, size and length of stay of business events held across Victoria	Protection of natural assets Facilitating access through event permitting Management and maintenance of infrastructure and facilities



Our measures of success

The performance of Events Gippsland and partners in the implementation of this Strategy will be monitored and assessed against the following measures of success. Targets have been set that reflect a combination of pre-COVID benchmarks and aspirational growth as a result of activation of this Strategy. It is recommended that the targets are reviewed in December 2021 or at the end of Phase 1 and once the new industry 'normal' is in place to ensure they remain appropriate.

Measures of success		Aspirational targets for 2025
	Increased overnight visitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased proportion of domestic overnight visitors to 45%²
	Increased visitor spend	<ul style="list-style-type: none">12% increase in average trip spend by domestic visitors³
	Increased visitation during shoulder and off-peak months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">20% increase in shoulder and off peak visitation
	Brand reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased year-round visitationIncreased digital engagementEvents supported and attracted that align to the region's brand and competitive advantages
	Event legacies generated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recognised as an outstanding host by major event companiesEnhanced event infrastructure/facilities for local communities
	Event acquisition and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">25 events acquired per annumEvents supported and attracted that celebrate Gippsland's uniqueness, innovation and creativity
	Distribution of event benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All 6 LGAs receive direct and indirect benefits from event acquisition and development
	Increased event capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Business and management plans in place for all funded regional home-grown events to support future viability
	Adoption of a host mentality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All 6 LGAs actively participating in the Gippsland Ambassador programProgram completed by minimum of 75% of local and regional events
	Responsible stewardship of Gippsland's natural assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Environmental sustainability plans in place for all funded regional home-grown events and regionally acquired events
	Enhanced liveability of the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased community involvement in regional eventsIncreased activation of public spacesIncreased contribution of events to Gross Regional Product

²Compared with domestic overnight visitation comprising 35% for year end December 2019
³12% increase based on 9.6% per annum growth in domestic tourism expenditure in regional Victoria for year ending December 2019 (9.8% for domestic overnight and 9.2% for domestic day trip expenditure)

BACKGROUND THINKING & CONTEXT

Strategic context

Investing in diverse and exciting regional events is a strategic priority within the Gippsland DMP. A regional events strategy is the number one action within this strategic priority. To compete on a national scale and capitalise on events brought to the region, a strategy was acknowledged as a means to rethink existing models of acquisition and delivery.










The Strategy has been developed to align with Visit Victoria's four key event pillars: sports, creative, culinary and festivals. For the Gippsland region, new sporting venues, emerging creative industries and a growing reputation for food and wine represent opportunities to grow the calendar of events and become a significant events region within Victoria. By focusing on brand strengths and supporting these with events, the region has an opportunity to build both brand and event credentials.

The Strategy seeks to build on the considerable contributions and actions to date of LVA in event acquisition and infrastructure development. LVA will be an important partner in the Strategy's activation. The plans and initiatives of Regional Development Victoria and Business Events Victoria are also taken account and leveraged where appropriate.

Gippsland's six LGAs are critical partners in the Strategy's development and activation. Each LGA has its own tourism and events plan or economic development strategy that articulates their aspirations for development and the role of events. These plans formed part of the desktop review process to ensure the Strategy aligns with and enhances their outcomes wherever possible.

The Strategy builds on the outcomes achieved by the short-term Gippsland Regional Event Acquisition Fund. The Fund provided for LVA and Destination Gippsland to partner with the six LGAs and Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) to attract, acquire and deliver events that improve economic and social outcomes in Gippsland post drought, bushfires and COVID-19. Establishment of the fund was supported by the Gippsland Local Government Network, the six LGAs, LVA and the Destination Gippsland Board.

Macro industry trends

Trend	Implications
 COVID-19, reinvigoration and reinvention	The COVID-19 shutdowns of public gatherings brought considerable disruption to events. At the same time, it has provided the opportunity for event organisers to take stock, review what was working and what wasn't, upskill, improve their digital presence, and engage with consumers in new ways.
 Hybrid events	COVID-19 has seen the development of hybrid events in response to social distancing requirements. These events incorporate both in-person and virtual elements such as live-streaming. They have the potential to reduce demand for in-region business events as organisations grow comfortable with virtual meetings. Although according to research conducted by the Professional Convention Management Association, the Chinese are expecting a 'pent-up demand' for face-to-face events ⁴ . There is potential for other countries to experience this same trend.
 Responsible events	Essential to the success of events are sustainable and inclusive practices and respect for the environment. Attendees are demanding that events proactively preserve their social license. In early 2020, three quarters of Australian event managers stated that sustainable practices are a priority, a huge increase from just 11% of event organisers in 2019 ⁵ . Hosting events that are inclusive is not a passing trend; nor is it optional: events are all about building community. Examples include diverse and gender-balanced entertainment line-ups, use of accessible venues, and family-friendly spaces such as a breastfeeding room and a children's play area.
 Authentically local	Event offerings across Australia are becoming formulaic in their programming resulting in an increased sameness. Travellers want to experience a connection to 'place': uniquely local culture, life as a local, and local produce.
 Immersive experiences	Event attendees want interactive, immersive, personalised, local, compelling and extraordinary experiences.
 Participatory sports events	Participatory sports events have strong appeal to participants who are willing to travel to take part in their sport. They are often a key motivator for travel to regions they may not otherwise visit. Participatory sports events present an opportunity beyond the event benefits to create awareness of what the destination offers and encourage return visits.
 Quality over quantity and yield over volume	Boutique events and micro festivals are small, niche and tailored, and focus on high quality and exclusivity over volume and mass numbers. Examples include the use of 'hidden' or otherwise inaccessible locations, VIP experiences, and 'live like a local' experiences.
 Arts tourism	Domestic arts tourists are high value travellers who travel further, stay longer and spend more than domestic travellers overall, especially in regional Australia, when on overnight trips and travelling interstate. Domestic tourists are more likely to attend the arts than wineries or sports events; arts activities attract double the number of day-trips compared to organised sport events, and are more popular than markets, heritage sites, wineries, wildlife parks, zoos, aquariums, amusement parks and casinos, as well as national and state park visits for overnight visitors ⁶ .
 Agritourism	Demand for agritourism experiences is increasing. Consumers' growing desire to know where their food, drink and fibre comes from and to experience a genuine connection with producers and regional Australia with hands-on immersive experiences means produce is becoming the travel souvenir of choice. ⁷

⁴https://www.cimbussinessevents.com.au/hybrid-events-here-for-a-long-time-but-organisers-struggling-with-budgets/?goal=0_cfaa913906-ec1f5da86d-153706265

⁵The 2020 Event Trends Report, Eventbrite

⁶www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/domestic-arts-tourism-connecting-the-country

⁷NSW Food and Wine Tourism Strategy 2018-2022

Gaps analysis

Current strengths

- Six LGAs actively collaborating to attract events and contributing to a joint acquisition fund
- Natural assets offer a point of difference for events (Southern Hemisphere's largest inland lake system, alpine/ high country, wilderness areas, rural landscapes and coastline)
- Unique events based on quality food and wine producers
- Strong agriculture, engineering and energy technology sectors attract business travellers and meetings/conferences
- Steady growth in overall visitation to region
- Dedicated resources to promote the region
- Host range of events
- Investment in sports facilities and arts/culture infrastructure
- Passionate event organisers and committees establishing and delivering events

Gaps identified

- Dispersing event benefits across region
- Strategic support for growing existing events and building capacity of local event organisers to create sustainable events
- Packaging events to extend length of stay
- Accommodation stocks and range in some areas to attract major events
- Standardised approach to data collection to measure event impacts
- Affordable equipment hire
- Efficiencies in volunteer training
- Coordination of business event packages and itineraries
- Single voice to advocate and attract investment relative to competitors in the rest of Victoria
- 'Fit for purpose' conference facilities with meeting and accommodation for groups over 400 people

Potential impacts

- Loss of local events through event organiser burnout and/or unsustainable management
- Events not leveraged for maximum economic and social outcomes
- Limited ROI on investment in event acquisition and development
- Inefficiencies in resource allocations
- Failure to attract investment into regional and major event development
- Declining competitiveness in attracting business events
- Lack of support from local communities and business due to insufficient outcomes
- Environmental and social impacts



THE GIPPSLAND REGION

Covering the entire eastern part of Victoria, Gippsland stretches from Melbourne's outskirts to Phillip Island and along the eastern coastline of Victoria and inland to New South Wales. This region is a major producer of the State's energy, a significant contributor to the water supply and a prolific food producer with dairy, beef, seafood, honey, vegetables, wine, beer and spirits.

Our competitive strengths

- Largest in-land lake system in the Southern Hemisphere, and together with its coastline and extensive area of national parks, alpine and high country, has diverse natural landscapes and environment, offering visitors a sense of space and untouched beauty
- Quality food and beverage producers with a growing reputation across the state and nationally
- Agriculture, engineering and renewable energy technology sectors are core industries based on regional strengths
- A diverse events calendar including quirky festivals celebrating the local culture and history, a range of sporting events, business events, agricultural shows, food and wine events featuring the region's produce and music festivals.

These competitive strengths are woven into the DMP's five hero experiences that are quintessentially Gippsland. These experiences need to be a recognisable backdrop for or a core component of Gippsland's regional events offering to leverage the destination's competitive advantages.



World Class
Natural Sanctuary



Rivers and
Coastal Paradise



Paddock and
Ocean Produce



Inspired
Adventure



Vibrant Local
Communities

Each LGA has its own unique strengths as an events destination, as summarised in the following table. By drawing on these strengths and assets in their choice of events to develop and attract, the LGAs can gain a point of difference in the visitor markets and collectively create a balanced regional events portfolio.



Bass Coast Strengths



- Strong and diverse tourism assets (Phillip Island, penguins, motorsports, natural environment, surf breaks, windsurfing inlet, and agricultural landscapes)
- Business events assets
- Proximity to Melbourne market
- Compact area for event visitors to move around
- Range of accommodation options and event venues including world class venue, Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit
- Event organisers can access expertise in event compliance and logistics and source event equipment locally

Baw Baw Strengths



- Natural assets – hills country, national parks, subalpine terrain and greenscapes
- National standard downhill MTB tracks and cross country trails
- Alpine ski experience (Mt Baw Baw)
- Major event infrastructure (Lardner Park)
- Arts/culture experiences
- Food and wine producers
- Distinctive seasonal experiences with changing weather and landscape
- Small, unique, character villages
- Closest destination to Melbourne (less than 1 hour) with direct train line

East Gippsland Strengths



- Dominance of natural assets as a backdrop and core element for events- inland lakes system and coast through to alpine high country
- Nature-based and experiential tourism, outdoor adventure – MTB, hiking, cycling, trail running, white water rafting, 4WD, camping, fishing
- Remoteness, sense of escape from the city
- Wine and food/produce and seafood (abalone and sea urchins are unique to area)

Latrobe City Strengths



- Hub in region with easy distance to key attractions and within 1.5 hours to central Melbourne
- Host a calendar of major events
- High-speed rail service from Latrobe City to Melbourne
- International, national and state standard venues with ability to host a diverse range of sporting events
- Engineering and renewable energy technology
- Increasing arts/culture infrastructure/venues
- Proximity to national parks

South Gippsland Strengths



- Locally produced goods, gourmet food and wines
- Dairy capital of Australia
- Wilsons Promontory National Park – accessible wilderness areas, wildlife spotting, hiking trails and camping
- Quaint small towns and villages
- Great Southern Rail Trail

Wellington Strengths



- Gateway to the western end of the Gippsland Lakes
- Natural assets – lakes, coastline/beaches and national parks
- Destination for fishing, boating, hunting, 4WDing
- Aviation
- Arts/culture spaces
- Tarra Bulga National Park

Brand Gippsland

Events Gippsland will operate under the Destination Gippsland brand and will work with Destination Gippsland in incorporating events into the brand. The region's events portfolio needs to align with the destination's tourism brand and showcase its unique features to grow the region's identity and appeal in the minds of visitors and local communities. This identity is the catalyst for repeat visitation, business and infrastructure development and community pride and connectedness.

The Destination Gippsland brand 'all kinds of wonder' captures the diversity of the region and provides a platform to position Gippsland as a unique events destination. The DMP sets the intention

for the Regional Events Strategy to leverage the Gippsland brand positioning and imaging, broadening and highlighting the region's visitor offering through new events. The DMP acknowledges that events are a powerful means to profile and celebrate the region's strengths and help activate and bring the brand story to life.

The brand proposition 'discover unique experiences without pretense in Gippsland', brand personality and signatures (below) provide a lens to guide the development of existing events and the attraction of new regional events to ensure they embrace the region's unique qualities.

Our Personality

- Humble, honest and unpretentious
- Grounded
- Generous
- Free spirited

Signatures

- The world class sanctuary for all
- Water lover's paradise
- Abundance of 'paddock to plate' goodness
- Alpine inspired adventure
- Intimate, local communities

Case Study: Building a USP for a destination through an event

Eat Local Week champions and celebrates the producers of a stunning array of local food and wine in South East Queensland's Scenic Rim and encourages visitors to taste their wares. Launched in 2011, the event has grown in size and scale every year. From a week of activities the event has extended over a month and has positioned the Scenic Rim as a food and wine destination with activity year round.

Scenic Rim Regional Council successfully secured \$25,000 per annum over three years from the state government to support event marketing and PR activity focused on elevating the profile of the event and the Scenic Rim as a region known for authentic food, farming and culinary experiences.

Profile of region and events

Region

286,887 residents – 4.3% of Victoria's population⁸

Higher proportion of residents aged 55+ compared with Victoria as whole

Largest area of public land in Victoria, with 1.6 million hectares

One of Australia's longest established food tourism destinations

Majority of accommodation stock is 3-star rated

Events

283 Events - 51% Community events (attracting community), 32% Sports events (attracting visitors and community), 15% Arts/Cultural events (attracting visitors and community)

Major events spaces: Lardner Park and Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit, and in design phase, a motorsport venue development in Latrobe City. Sporting facilities: 4 international standard, 8 national and 8 state

\$190 spent per person per night by event visitors⁹

Business events sector is worth an estimated \$475 million to the regional Victoria visitor economy and supports 3,127 regional jobs annually¹⁰

Visitors

7,358,000 visitors to Gippsland region annually¹¹

98% are domestic visitors, 64% are domestic day trip visitors (most visitors are from Victoria)

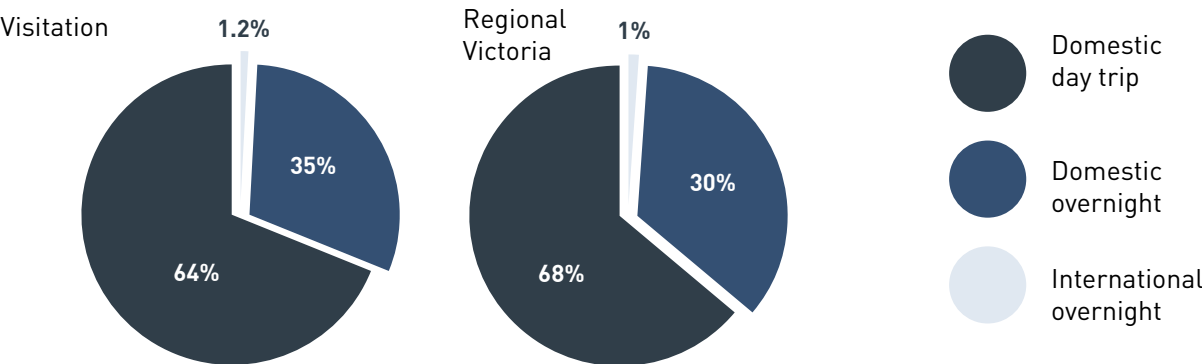
Attracts 11.9% of visitors to regional Victoria

Attracts a higher proportion of domestic overnight visitors than regional Victoria overall

Peak season - November to January, Easter and school holidays

3 nights average length of stay

\$105 average spend per night by domestic overnight visitors and \$316 per visitor,¹² \$103 average spend by domestic day trip visitors



⁸ Regional Development Victoria, 2019
⁹ Tourism Research Australia (TRA), national average spending, the year ending September 2017
¹⁰ Business Events Victoria Strategic Plan 2019-2022
¹¹ International Visitor Survey and National Visitor Survey, YE Dec 19, Tourism Research Australia. While more recent visitation figures were available, December 2019 provides a benchmark of visitor numbers pre-COVID
¹² Gippsland Regional Summary YE March 2020
* Based on a simple average of Tourism Research Australia LGA data of the 6 LGAs overnight visitors in commercial accommodation and recognising additional spending by event attendees

Event visitors

The target visitor markets for events emerge from an analysis of destination strategies, the Gippsland destination brand and desktop research.



Sports participants and spectators

Those people fully committed to their competitive sport or participation events. Participants and spectators will travel from intrastate and interstate (and overseas) for the event or championship across the year (based on sport code) and during the week and weekends.

‘Real Seekers’

As per the Gippsland destination brand, those seeking to connect with nature, the people, arts, culture, land and produce in authentic ways. Includes domestic short break couples and singles (intrastate and interstate), families (within region and intrastate) and local residents seeking a new and unique event experience either to participate in or watch. These are weekend visitors across the year and school holiday families.



Business events

Corporate groups, expos, government and association meetings - within region, intrastate and interstate (size of groups varies across the region). May be day trips or overnight stays.

Tourers (older couples) and Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR)

Intrastate and interstate visitors that may not decide to visit because of an event, but may attend while they are here, extending spend in the local community.

Our current and potential future regional and major events portfolio

- + GIPPSLAND MTB FESTIVAL
- + ADVENTURE RACING WORLD SERIES
- + LARGE SCALE MUSIC FESTIVAL (E.G. DAY ON THE GREEN OR RED HOT SUMMER)
- + MULTI DAY SMALL VILLAGE FESTIVAL

- BEYOND THE VALLEY MUSIC FESTIVAL
- FARM WORLD
- MTB AND CYCLING EVENTS
- SKIING
- LARDNER PARK EVENTS



BAW BAW



BASS
COAST

- AUSTRALIAN MOTORCYCLE GRAND PRIX
- WORLD SUPERBIKES
- ISLAND WHALE FESTIVAL
- SOUNDS OF SUMMER
- PRO SURFING

- + SUSTAINABILITY/MARINE CONFERENCE
- + HEALTH & WELLNESS CONFERENCE /FESTIVAL
- + STATE SURFING CHAMPIONSHIPS
- + LONG COURSE EVENT/IRONMAN
- + SWIM, BIKE, RUN EVENT



LATROBE

- INTERNATIONAL ROSE GARDEN FESTIVAL
- OZ TIMBER CONFERENCE
- PRE-SEASON AFL MATCHES
- BIG BASH LEAGUE
- STATE LEVEL SPORTING EVENTS

- + MAJOR INTERNATIONAL SPORTING EVENT
- + BUSINESS EVENTS (ENGINEERING, MANUFACTURING, HEALTHCARE, ENERGY, STEM, TIMBER)
- + TOURING THEATRE OR ARTS SHOW
- + NATIONAL SPORTING EVENTS



SOUTH
GIPPSLAND

- UNIFY GATHERING
- LOCH VILLAGE FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL
- MEENIYAN GARLIC FESTIVAL
- MIRBOO NORTH ITALIAN FESTA

- + TRAIL RUNNING
- + RAIL TRAIL CYCLING & RUNNING EVENTS
- + BOUTIQUE VILLAGE FESTIVAL



WELLINGTON

- TINAMBA FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL
- TARRA TERRITORY FESTIVAL
- WEST SALE AIRSHOW

- + GIPPSLAND MTB FESTIVAL
- + ADVENTURE RACING WORLD SERIES
- + ABORIGINAL FESTIVAL
- + FISHING FESTIVAL
- + TOURING THEATRE OR ARTS SHOW



EAST GIPPSLAND

- EAST GIPPSLAND WINTER FESTIVAL
- EAST GIPPSLAND FIELD DAYS
- ALPINE CAR RALLY OF EAST GIPPSLAND
- WILD HARVEST SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

- + GIPPSLAND MTB FESTIVAL
- + ADVENTURE RACING WORLD SERIES
- + FISHING FESTIVAL
- + ABORIGINAL FESTIVAL

- EXISTING EVENTS
- POTENTIAL EVENTS



- ALL REGIONS
- + GIPPSLAND WINTER FESTIVAL
- + GIPPSLAND PRODUCERS FESTIVAL



OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our strategic priorities

Phase 1: Immediate Response (2021)

Supporting rapid economic and social recovery across the region.

Phase 2: Putting the foundations in place (2022-2023)

Undertaking capacity building, marketing and infrastructure planning in readiness post-COVID-19 to move forward.

Phase 3: Positioning ourselves for a sustainable future (2024-2025)

Putting in place necessary enablers - infrastructure, assets and resources - to achieve our vision, aspirations and economic potential.

As noted earlier, this Strategy has been developed with the assumption that events will commence from 2021 with COVID-safe protocols in place. The events landscape in 2021 and the government support that will be available for events, however, are unclear. The timing of the phasing will change as needed.

Phase 1: Immediate Response (2021-2022)

In Phase 1, our focus will be on short term response and recovery, with four prongs of activity:

1. **Hosting COVID-safe events** to welcome visitors back to the region
2. **Event acquisition and marketing** to drive bed nights and visitor spend in local communities
3. **Partnerships** with industry groups and event stakeholders
4. **Establishing the structure and frameworks** for activation of the Strategy

Phase 1 will be a period of uncertainty for the events sector and the broader community, with operational requirements changing in response to health and safety risks. We will need to be sufficiently agile in our responses.

Hosting COVID-safe events

To support the immediate recovery of the events sector across Gippsland, and to ensure that this Regional Events Strategy has the best chance of success, we need to assist local event organisers in accessing relevant information and resources to help them bounce back.

As a result of event cancellations, there is a pipeline of events seeking to relaunch or be hosted for the first time in Gippsland. These events will require guidance on specific COVID-safe considerations and planning and assessing their prospects.

WE WILL:

- Develop an event ready grant program to support events with the increased cost of creating a COVID-safe event¹²
- Design an Event Recovery program that supports immediate recovery and long term resilience that includes:
 - » developing tools and resources to help events navigate the COVID protocol, e.g. a simple checklist of things to consider and a COVID-safe plan template
 - » assisting individual events in the implementation of COVID-19 guidelines and developing plans for launch of their events
 - » one-to-one coaching to help event organisers to reimagine their event i.e. smaller premium events over a period of time rather than a one off mass gathering to not only satisfy COVID protocol but to support the future sustainability of the event¹³
- Secure funding for three part-time Event Recovery Officers to service western (Baw Baw and Bass Coast), central (Latrobe and South Gippsland), and eastern (Wellington and East Gippsland) in delivering the Event Recovery program

¹³ See funding example in Tasmania: http://www.premier.tas.gov.au/site_resources_2015/additional_releases/grants_to_support_events_in_tasmania



Case Study: Investing in events to support recovery

A new local events funding program was recently launched by Southern Downs Regional Council to support the region's recovery from the combined impacts of drought, bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic. Recognising the importance of the events industry, the \$380,000 program will assist and support event organisers by providing a funding source to help develop and deliver successful and sustainable events that make a positive contribution to the Southern Downs regional economic outcomes.

The Council believes that creating a strong events calendar will assist greatly with the economic recovery of the region. The program will be used to support existing events as well as potentially attracting new signature events to the region.

Events acquisition and marketing to boost recovery

We will fill beds and reignite the visitor economy with quick wins via the acquisition of regional events that align with and build on the strengths of the LGAs and can be hosted within existing infrastructure. Recognising that event acquisition takes nine months on average to move from agreement to delivery of the event on the ground, immediate action is critical. The events acquired through the Gippsland Regional Events Acquisition Fund and rescheduled

for this period will form a starting point for phase 1 acquisition. Events over and above these will be acquired as appropriate, with a focus on high participation, multi-day events to attract overnight visitation and spend.

The event acquisition will need to be supported with marketing activity that promotes the upcoming events calendar.

Case Study: 2020 National Table Tennis Championships

The Championships provide an example of the potential economic impacts from high participation events. The event was secured for Gippsland and was to be held at Traralgon Sports Stadium, but had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. The event would expect to attract 2,205 people over 10 days of competition (1,055 competitors and officials, plus 1,150 accompanying partners), with 2% from the local area, 23% from Victoria, 70% interstate and 5% international.

Such an event would generate 16,600 bed nights and an economic impact of \$4.6million, with \$50,000 provided in event funding support.



WE WILL:

- Work with event organisers who host the events acquired through the Gippsland Regional Events Acquisition Fund as part of recovery efforts
- Work with the LGAs and Victorian Government to develop an immediate event acquisition plan to secure additional events as required to attract overnight visitors across the region, taking into account seasonal and geographic spread, the LGAs' competitive strengths, brand, capacity and appetite to host and gaps in the calendar (as per assessment framework)
- Plan and execute a regional and major event marketing campaign in the second half of the year to launch and promote the 2022 calendar

Partnerships

Continuing to forge long term partnerships and alliances with industry groups such as Food and Fibre Gippsland, arts/culture entities, sporting organisations and sports event agents, LVA, Business Events Victoria, Visit Victoria, Melbourne Convention Bureau, Sport and Recreation Victoria and Regional Development Victoria is important to attract events that align with and will enhance the destination brand and positioning.

Multi-year partnership agreements with external

event organisers will be put in place to capture the maximum benefits, with a focus on brand profiling, overnight visitation and spend and the ROI from event funding. These partnership agreements will outline what the events will bring to Gippsland over the funding period and what the region will offer in return and will include activity across each year.

WE WILL:

- Develop a collective regional partnership with sports event bodies/sports agents to support attraction of regional and major sporting events, with Events Gippsland brokering event acquisition on behalf of the LGAs
- Continue to foster partnerships with external tourism and event entities and industry bodies in securing and hosting region-wide events
- Introduce three-year strategic partnership agreements for external major and regional events with event organisers and venues
- Work with Business Events Victoria to attract business events to Gippsland and reignite the business event pledges for East Gippsland

Establishing the structure and frameworks for activation of the Strategy

During Phase 1, we will establish our new regional events entity, Events Gippsland. This will allow the transition from immediate response and recovery efforts to a new level of resilience and optimism for

the future. We will secure the necessary funds and human resources to develop the scope of work for activating the Strategy across the next phases.

WE WILL:

- Establish Events Gippsland as a separate unit within Destination Gippsland, with a strategic events committee having oversight of the unit and the Strategy's activation (see Activating the Strategy below for further details).
- Attract funding to establish the Events Fund to support Phase 1 actions and those planned in Phases 2 and 3
- Establish and adhere to an assessment framework that:
 - » outlines best-fit event categories
 - » creates a balanced events portfolio for the region
- Set up an Events Sponsorship Program for the acquisition and development of events
- Apply a standard measurement tool to understand the ROI for all regionally funded events. (This will become a core component of a standardised data collection methodology to be rolled out in Phase 2.)

Case Study: The power of events in supporting recovery

The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival has been held annually since 1970, and today draws close to a half million attendees over the course of seven days. The festival is of major economic importance for New Orleans, contributing \$300 million to the city each year, and is rivalled only by the city's Mardi Gras.

In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina slammed the city, causing \$100 billion in damage. Flood waters covered 80% of the city and displaced hundreds of thousands of residents across three states. It left debris through the streets, destroyed buildings and badly damaged a key venue, the Fair Grounds Race Course.

Holding the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival as soon as possible post Katrina was seen as a way to show the city was open for business and to be a beacon of hope for New Orleanians.

On Friday, April 28, the gates opened, the crowd poured in, and the New Orleans Jazz Vipers kicked things off with a new song, "Hope You're Coming Back." The festival was shortened that year to six days, and there were two fewer stages, but nearly 350,000 people attended. It looked, sounded and felt like the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, brought people together and was a major bright spot during one of the most trying years in the city's history, winning back just a little bit of normalcy.



Phase 2: Putting the foundations in place (2022-2023)

Beyond recovery, attention will be focused on ensuring the foundations are right. This will include reigniting and bringing greater resilience into the events sector, continuing to inspire visitors to return through marketing, and planning for future infrastructure that will support further development and growth. We will continue to drive increased

bed nights through events acquisition, injecting new money into local communities, while nurturing existing home-grown events, and commence planning for a new series. During this phase we will also embed Events Gippsland as Gippsland’s regional events entity.

Reigniting our existing home-grown events and developing new events

Events School

To restore confidence and enthusiasm within Gippsland’s events sector, we propose targeted support for Gippsland’s home-grown events with the potential to become regional events. Extending the current Events School initiative in East Gippsland to the whole region would provide an opportunity to nurture these events, increase their sustainability and deliver efficiencies for the LGAs in their capacity building. This support would be tailored to the needs of the event, but would seek to put in place the elements for a financially sustainable event, including areas such as governance structure, financial model, event curation, development of event plans and marketing.

Access to event experts

For those volunteer-based event committees struggling to fulfil aspects of their event such as compliance, administration, logistics and marketing, access to event professionals can enable them to focus on their areas of strength and deliver a successful event. There are service providers across the region that event organisers can access to meet event compliance, administrative and logistical requirements and marketing needs. Currently Bass Coast Shire Council provides this opportunity to funded events.

Home-grown events planning

Five new home-grown festival concepts are proposed for development in Gippsland. These events would draw on and profile Gippsland’s strengths and brand values and support achievement of the Strategy’s aspirations. During this phase, Events Gippsland will work with the LGAs, other partners and professional event curators in analysing the feasibility of these events and then put in place a phased development plan for those selected.

WE WILL:

- Extend the brief of the Events School program to include event organisers region-wide requiring guidance on how to elevate their event to a regional or major event level and increase event viability
- Create a database of external professional event experts and share with local event organisers.
- Initiate the feasibility analysis and planning of the new suite of home-grown events.

Bringing focus to our business events and industry sectors

Business events attract business visitors and spend across the year and mid-week, filling venues and generating activity in local economies. Business events also provide a means to showcase the region’s strengths in its industry sectors, build business relationships and attract investment.

Bringing Business Events Gippsland into the functions of Events Gippsland will enable the acquisition of business events to be considered as part of the regional events portfolio and support coordination of business event activity across the LGAs.

The region’s industry strengths such as agriculture, horticulture, engineering, and energy can be leveraged to generate benefits for businesses and producers and the visitor economy. Collaborations with industry bodies such as Food and Fibre Gippsland can benefit producers and events seeking to offer authentic paddock to plate experiences and enable the events sector to leverage additional funding streams.

WE WILL:

- Elevate business events activity with Events Gippsland assuming the functions of Business Events Gippsland
- Work with Business Events Victoria, event venues and industry sectors to build Gippsland’s profile for meetings, team building and expos
- Collaborate with industry groups in leveraging funding streams and promotional activities.

Maximising the economic contribution from event visitors

Integrating events into the local visitor economy

Integrating events into tourism activity and vice versa is critical to maximise the economic and social outcomes events offer the region. Bundling events together with tourism experiences will help to raise the profile of an event and a destination, increase an event’s appeal and reach, e.g. partner activities around a sporting event, and encourage increased length of stay and repeat visitation. There are also opportunities to encourage event organisers to work

together with local businesses and business and tourism associations. Local business involvement can create a sense of local ownership and advocacy for the event, with whole towns becoming engaged, increasing the events profile and appeal, and generating greater spend in local communities.



Case Study: Maximising local outcomes

The Meeniyar Garlic Festival in South Gippsland was developed with a clear commitment to engaging the whole community and creating direct benefits for local businesses. From the outset, the whole town was engaged in the event from its first introduction at a public meeting. Local community groups are actively involved, with some handling elements of the event logistics and others selling garlic themed products. They benefit from income generated for their group or club and the social connections made. Local businesses enjoy the surge of visitors into the area, with the event promoting what the region has to offer.

The Festival incorporates different elements to appeal to a broad audience, while staying true to its theme of celebrating garlic and showcasing the region. Garlic growers selling their garlic and sharing their knowledge with patrons adds authenticity to the event. Visitor numbers have grown to nearly 7,000, with 30-40% visitors from greater Melbourne and 15% from Latrobe Valley.

The event’s business and event management model and professional approach has ensured the event is cashflow positive. Income is generated from grants, stall holders and sponsors and ticketing (\$10 entry for adults) and supports media/PR activity/TV advertising and hire of a large marquee for cooking shows. Visit Victoria’s Regional Events Fund has supported the marketing and communications/social/PR campaigns in 2019 and 2020, and the industry peak body, the Australian Garlic Industry Association, is actively involved in the event.

Region-wide approach


Region-wide activation is central to the success of a collective approach to regional event acquisition and development. Each LGA is seeking to increase length of stay and expenditure and enhance the experience for visitors and local communities. Where an event is held within one LGA or across several, the other LGAs can extend the event experience and

give more reasons for visitors to stay and spend through tactical product development and marketing initiatives. Coordinated planning between Events Gippsland and the LGAs will be required to maximise event marketing outcomes and present a consistent brand image.

Cross promotion

Encouraging event organisers to link with complementary events and to package accommodation and experiences around their event will be key to LGAs maximising economic outcomes. Seasonal event calendars are an important tool to support promotional activity and product development to leverage events, as well as help event organisers to avoid date clashes.

While Melbourne provides a significant source of event visitors (business, leisure and sport), the region’s proximity to Canberra and southern NSW is a further market opportunity. Promoting events unique to the region and linked into a journey through cross border alliances will support attraction of these interstate visitors.



Case Study: Leveraging events to extend benefits

Events that link towns or go further and cross boundaries into other shires, provide opportunities to disperse event benefits. The Barry Sheene Tribute Ride for example, involves participants riding motorcycles from Bairnsdale in East Gippsland to the Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit in Bass Coast. The event showcases the destinations along the route to the hundreds of riders and local businesses benefit from the riders stopping and spending.

Assessing and measuring return on investment

A consistent data collection and measurement methodology is critical to enable transparent decision making on event investment. This aligns with key actions within the DMP of: Adopt an appropriate methodology for effective economic impact analysis and reporting around events; and Develop Key Performance Indicators and ROI models

for entities funding events. The methodology will provide a standard data collection approach and a ROI formula to enable Events Gippsland and the LGAs to consistently measure the impacts of events. The rigour of the methodology will be dependent upon events capturing the necessary data to allow assessment and measurement of outcomes.

Case Study: Maximising ROI from event investment

Latrobe City Council is achieving strong ROI, around 30-50:1, from their strategic approach to event investment. In selecting major events to acquire, the Council focuses on criteria including economic impact from event visitors, promotion of region and the ability to leverage visitors through dispersal, media mentions and database of event organisers.

The required ROI is determined by factors such as media profile, event location, time of year and nature of the event. Where events may achieve similar ROI, consideration is given to whether an event fills a gap in the calendar or positions the destination e.g. engineering conference that profiles the city’s engineering assets.

Events that achieve the greatest ROI for the Council are mass participation sporting events where attendee numbers are largely certain. Large sports franchises also deliver significant ROI based on the broadcast value and media mentions they generate and the community pride and liveability for residents.

The Council works with funded event organisers to assist them to maximise economic impact where needed.

WE WILL:

- Build the capability of event organisers and local tourism businesses in bundling accommodation and experiences around events to encourage overnight stays and spend
- Work with Destination Gippsland to leverage events through bundling, packaging and development of itineraries
- Leverage visitors that are travelling through the region to an event, encouraging local businesses to create mini-event experiences along the journey that offer more compelling reasons to travel to the region, stay and spend
- Link similar events across the region and work with Destination Gippsland to market as an event series to encourage increased length of stay
- Develop a seasonal calendar of major and regional events across the year and region, integrating LGA event calendars to provide a forward planning tool to support coordination of events and marketing activity and maximise leverage opportunities
- Provide a standard data collection methodology, with a requirement for all funded regional and major events to use
- Destination Gippsland to:
 - » develop an event marketing kit to share with event owners to help them in promoting the brand and the region
 - » work with LGAs to encourage and support region-wide activations during major events as per the assessment framework

Planning our infrastructure and service needs

To establish Gippsland as a competitive regional events destination with a balanced portfolio of local and acquired events requires the right context. We need to influence the context to make sure the impact and legacy of regional events are maximised and recognised.

Venue capability

The majority of the region’s events infrastructure is designed for sports. There has been significant investment in sporting facilities for AFL, tennis, cricket, soccer, swimming, basketball and netball. Lardner Park is the region’s principle multi-purpose venue with capacity for hosting a range of events. The Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit is a world class event venue that is not yet realising its potential beyond motorsports. Latrobe City is currently designing a motorsport venue development that will include motorsport facilities, accommodation and event spaces. These major event spaces start to position Gippsland as a significant events region.

The region also has venues for smaller scale sports and leisure events and arts/cultural events including outdoor and regional theatre / performance spaces, with recent upgrades to the Warragul Arts Centre, a new Latrobe Creative Precinct at Traralgon, planned expansion of the Port of Sale precinct and proposed opportunities for Cowes and Wonthaggi. The focus on boutique events post COVID rather than mass

gatherings will put the spotlight on smaller venues and their readiness to meet demand.

As home to events and festivals, the LGAs have an important role in the design and development of public spaces and infrastructure. There is a need for a cohesive approach to planning across the region, linked to event portfolio planning and event acquisition and development. This is in alignment with a strategic priority of the DMP to invest in place making to support the visitor economy. A region-wide event venue and infrastructure master plan will identify asset strengths, the gaps and development requirements appropriate to each LGA. Taking a holistic view of the region will prevent duplication and competing infrastructure across the LGAs. The plan will also include outdoor spaces and facilities such as mountain bike trails. Latrobe Valley Authority’s planned Latrobe Valley Sports and Community Precinct Prospectus will provide a useful starting point for cataloguing and promoting event infrastructure.

Case Study: Event investment legacy outcomes

Crucial upgrades to the Traralgon Tennis Centre to meet international standards enabled the Traralgon Tennis Club to retain the high-profile ITF Traralgon International Junior Tournament and its associated legacy benefits. Held every January since 1993, the tournaments past winners list includes high ranking players such as Lleyton Hewitt, Roger Federer, Alicia Molik Nick Kyrgios, Richard Gasquet, Marion Bartoli, Helena Dochich and Alex Serev.

To avoid losing the tournament, the Club needed to act quickly and worked closely with Tennis Australia, Latrobe City Council and Regional Development Victoria to develop a master plan and secure funding for infrastructure works. \$800,000 was secured through a combination of State Government, Latrobe City Council and Tennis Australia contributions. Stage 1 saw the surface of all 24 courts upgraded, with 22 receiving plexicushion (the same surface used at Melbourne Park for the Australian Open), plus two classic clay courts, new fencing and establishing the centre as Gippsland’s Regional Centre of Tennis Excellence. Stage 2 included the development of a show court with tiered seating, and extensions to the clubhouse outdoor decking for improved spectator viewing of the action. More recently LED lighting upgrades and further resurfacing to 14 courts have occurred with support from the LVA.

As well as retaining the event at Traralgon, the investment has delivered a valuable legacy for the community - a world class tennis facility that can be used by residents and future event organisers. The annual tournament provides a \$1.2m economic benefit to the region. The Club’s upgrade also spurred additional economic activity in the area. Food Co. On Franklin established itself in a former house across the road and has become a popular foodie hub in Traralgon servicing the community, tennis patrons, soccer teams and spectators.



Technology

The development of experiences across the journey to events is an opportunity to capitalise on the distances and increase the appeal for visitors and the economic and social outcomes for local communities. Online booking and packaging of accommodation with events is key to coordinating

the existing accommodation stock and encouraging overnight stays. Technology is also an important consideration in the delivery of events for participants and spectators – for information, ticketing and event viewing. Connectivity in region is critical.

Event friendly

Each LGA is responsible for managing the approval process for events. To be competitive in attracting and developing regional events, Gippsland must be regarded as an event friendly destination. This will require a coordinated approach across LGAs to streamline processes where events cross boundaries and overall, a commitment to providing a policy environment that encourages events and helps them to flourish.

Gippsland also must be recognised as an appealing and compelling events destination amongst event owners and conference organisers. Again, a coordinated approach in presenting Gippsland’s strengths and selling points as an events destination will help to gain cut through and build the region’s profile.

WE WILL:

- Undertake a region-wide event venue and infrastructure master plan that identifies the key regional event venues and sites in each LGA, their best-fit events and any infrastructure gaps that need to be addressed to increase their competitiveness, including accommodation requirements
- Develop an accommodation and supporting infrastructure master plan for the region with business cases developed for priority accommodation development projects (including consideration of options such as glamping and mobile tiny houses to meet accommodation needs)
- Work with State Government in attracting investment into the priority projects
- Work with Lardner Park in a review of the venue’s master plan and business model to identify gaps and opportunities to increase economic sustainability and maximise regional event outcomes
- Work with LGAs to ensure local infrastructure is made available to support regional and major events
- Encourage the identification and development of pre-approved event-ready sites across the region to streamline application and permitting processes
- Coordinate permitting approvals for event organisers where events involve multiple LGAs
- Create and promote an online events infrastructure prospectus incorporating state, national and international level sports, cultural and business venues across the entire Gippsland region, pre-approved sites and destination content, drawing on the Latrobe Valley Sports and Community Precinct Prospectus

Accommodation

Insufficient stock or a limited range of accommodation is an issue for many parts of the region, particularly for hosting large scale events. While coordination exists to accommodate event visitors across towns, the distances from event venues can negatively impact the visitor experience. Understanding the accommodation development needs to support key event sites across the region is

critical. Then, attracting investment into permanent and temporary accommodation to support regional and major event acquisition and development. The need for accommodation investment attraction is highlighted in the DMP with a key action included of developing an investment guide for the region to attract potential investors, particularly for accommodation.

Phase 3: Positioning ourselves for a sustainable future (2024-2025)

In this phase the focus is on setting up the whole of Gippsland for the future. We will establish new home-grown events that will enhance Gippsland’s profile and brand awareness and generate economic and social benefits across communities. We will put in place the important enablers of our future – a

strong volunteer base, quality service standards and infrastructure. This phase is also about maintaining relationships with event organisers of acquired events and keeping up the momentum achieved in Phase 2.

Establishing new home-grown events

During this phase, we will be building the balanced portfolio. Event acquisition to date will be filling the calendar and the efforts of the home-grown event development program will begin to show results. This phase is about maintaining and building on this activity whilst also starting to activate the new home-grown events.

This will include ensuring these events are scheduled in the upcoming events calendar and identifying leverage opportunities. This activity will occur alongside events acquisition.

WE WILL:

- Action the new home-grown events as per their development plans in phase 2
- Incorporate the events into the regional events calendar
- Work with Destination Gippsland in identifying leverage opportunities and event marketing

Optimising event resources

We need to create a thriving and sustainable events industry with the capability and capacity to support the activation of this Strategy.

Event equipment and support

An important component of the supply chain in Gippsland is event equipment hire providers. Due to the distances across the region, equipment hire can be a costly component of event delivery, particularly if local suppliers are unable to meet needs. Those involved in the supply chain for events need to be given the opportunity to engage with event

organisers and venue owners, to tender for projects and to work together. Local solutions help to ensure economic value is retained in region, support event sustainability and employment opportunities. GROW Gippsland provides a model of local collaboration to build capability and maximise local and social procurement opportunities and outcomes.

Infrastructure development

When the events infrastructure master plan is complete, funding will be required to undertake the necessary event and supporting infrastructure development. A coordinated approach across the

region will maximise funding opportunities and ensure the region is developed as one events destination, ‘Events Gippsland’, reducing duplication and competing venues.

Volunteer pool

Event success is dependent upon access to skilled and enthusiastic volunteers. A pool of ready volunteers can support the acquisition of external events and enhance the region’s reputation as an events destination. Gippsland has a strong volunteer culture, with people often involved in multiple volunteer roles. The online platform, Gippsland Volunteering, provides a regional volunteer database, however currently it does not include event volunteer opportunities or training. There are many entities involved in the registration and management of volunteer databases and training programs and development of training resources across and within LGAs. Standardised content would create cost savings and a consistency in approach as there are core competencies that all event volunteers and event committees need.

Provision of a centralised event resources hub for the events industry to access information and

resources would increase efficiencies and foster a cooperative approach across the region. Access to training in core competencies would also remove that requirement from event committees, allowing them focus on the ‘on the job’ training.

Creating a coordinated database of volunteers would enable LGAs to tap into volunteer resources in other shires where needed. A coordinated and professional approach to volunteering will also appeal to education institutes and support the development of long-term relationships with them to secure regular intakes of student volunteers. Partnerships with high schools, TAFE Gippsland, Chisholm TAFE, Federation University and Melbourne universities should be developed to maximise the opportunities provided to students by internships and volunteer roles in events. The business community is also encouraging staff to volunteer to extend skills and support local communities in need.

WE WILL:

- Broker affordable equipment hire for Gippsland event organisers and develop a list of preferred event equipment providers within each of the LGAs
- Monitor the commonly required event equipment needs of local and external event organisers to help inform equipment purchase decisions by LGAs
- Work with LGAs to secure funding and undertake the required infrastructure development works
- Develop a centralised database of event volunteers and volunteer opportunities (Gippsland Events Volunteering database)
- Facilitate a regional network of LGA officers responsible for community engagement and volunteer database content management to encourage sharing of resources and coordination of joint projects
- Extend the volunteer pool by:
 - » establishing partnerships with tertiary institutions and high schools in sourcing new volunteers on a project basis
 - » working with Volunteering Victoria in recruiting the business community to assist in short term event roles
 - » working with the Local Learning and Employment Network to engage youth
- Raise the profile of event volunteering and event volunteer opportunities via social media, including promotion of volunteering opportunities by events
- Develop an Event Resources Hub for Gippsland - a one stop shop providing access to the information and resources needed to run an event¹⁵

¹⁵ The new VTIC hub is a good current example of a hub https://hub.vtic.com.au/?utm_source=VTIC%20Subscribers%20MASTER&utm_campaign=3f8a9335b8-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_01_31_03_29_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_19915674cf-3f8a9335b8-305393223

Fostering a strong service culture

Gippsland host mentality

Service excellence is critical to the Gippsland’s brand and reputation. A good or bad experience at an event, attraction or service provider could be the difference between a return visit to the region and recommendations or negative word of mouth. Many event organisers, volunteers, venues and local businesses are doing a great job in welcoming visitors and delivering good service. However, this is not consistent. A shift is needed in mindset and perspective to encourage all visitor touch points to present the best face for the destination and encourage greater expenditure.

The *My Phillip Island Ambassador Program* seeks to equip front line staff to become local ambassadors through product knowledge about what Phillip Island offers and outstanding customer service. There is an opportunity to leverage this platform as it can be

readily re-skinned and content customised for other LGAs under a Gippsland Ambassador umbrella. Use by event organisers and their volunteers across the region as well as other visitor touch points will be instrumental in building a welcoming, host mentality in the events sector. Often as the face of events, volunteers and local residents are important ambassadors for a region.

Introducing a program for the tourism and events industry that profiles and nurtures those delivering exceptional experiences would provide a further opportunity to enhance the professionalism and competitiveness of local events.¹⁶

Regular networking opportunities would facilitate greater collaboration and cross promotion and help to inspire those working in the sector.

WE WILL:

- Roll out the My Phillip Island Ambassador Program platform across the region as a Gippsland Ambassador program, with incentives in place to encourage take up and advocacy by event organisers, local businesses and the community
- Incorporate within the Events Resource Hub links to existing training content and resources, and develop new material as needed to provide standard online training resources covering core competencies for volunteer event committee members and event volunteers
- Coordinate a schedule of event volunteer training offered across region, incorporating training available through other community-based organisations such as pre-accredited training offered by Neighborhood Houses, and using face-to-face training workshops as opportunities to encourage networking and collaboration
- Encourage Destination Gippsland to develop a program to profile and support those tourism and events operators delivering exceptional experiences

¹⁶ See British Columbia’s Remarkable Experiences program: <https://www.tourismvi.ca/grow-your-business/remarkable-experiences/> and Queensland’s Best of Queensland program: <https://teq.queensland.com/experiences/best-of-queensland-experiences>





A BALANCED PORTFOLIO

Portfolio approach

Holistic oversight of the overall portfolio of events is vital to achieving a balance of events, with consideration of the sum of all parts rather than the merits of an individual event alone. A portfolio approach over the term of this Strategy will allow for a variety of large and small, sport and culture, business, fixed, recurring and one-off events to be identified and supported. This ensures that over the whole portfolio over time a wide range of significant impacts can be delivered.

The intention is to create a balanced portfolio of events across arts/culture/leisure, sports and business. Currently there is a dominance of sporting events and a need for increased arts/cultural and business events to diversify the portfolio and enhance the region's appeal as a place to work, live, play and stay. Small festivals and events could be coordinated around a common theme to increase the region's profile and strength in that area and provide efficiencies for event organisers.

The best-fit events

The events industry is highly competitive, and visitors are looking for unique event experiences that have a connection to the place and the community. To make strategic decisions about investment into events, it is important to identify the best-fit events for the region (and also those that are not a fit for the region).

Events that are the best fit for the destination are those that align with and profile the brand, celebrate what is unique about Gippsland, match with infrastructure and community values and encourage

The portfolio will support the destination vision 'Gippsland's natural beauty, outstanding experiences and life changing moments inspire the world to visit' by focusing on events that are:

- **Compelling** - Grow market share, spend and yield
- **Competitive** - Stand out in the Victorian market, and beyond that, Australia and overseas
- **Engaging** - Engage the community to build understanding about the importance of events to the economy
- **Sustainable** - Lift price and quality and incorporate sustainable event principles
- **Collaborative** - Work together as a region across jurisdictions to attract and develop events
- **Protective** - Ensure long term sustainable management of natural and cultural assets¹⁷

regional dispersal and the spread of economic and social benefits.

In assessing investment in event development and acquisition, preference will be given to events that are scheduled in off-peak and shoulder seasons to maximise economic benefits. A Winter Festival is a priority for the region to encourage visitation and broaden the perception of Gippsland as a winter destination and what it offers.

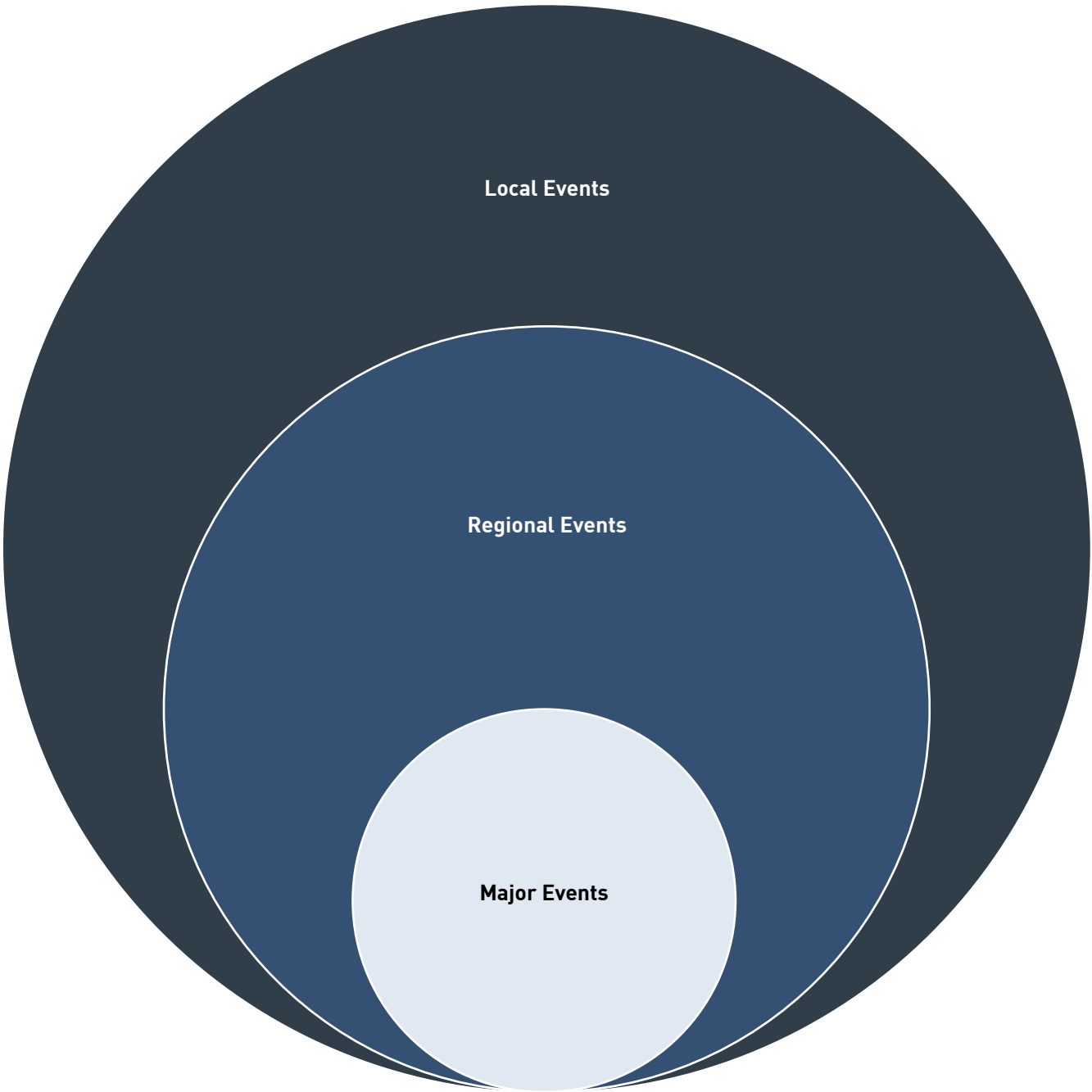
Assessment framework

The Strategy provides a pragmatic and transparent assessment framework to enable Events Gippsland to proactively assess and determine the best-fit events, how those events should be supported, and the outcomes sought from that assistance. The framework includes the event categories for Gippsland and outlines the required resource allocation including funding for the acquisition and development of events.

The assessment framework will ensure that event resources are allocated adequately and strategically to attract, support and leverage events that achieve the vision, aspirations and targets of the Strategy.

¹⁷Toward 2030 Gippsland Destination Management Plan

Event categories



Major events defined

- Drive significant bed nights and economic return for the region
- Will become anchor events in the calendar and will be built around the main regional drivers providing the greatest sense of consumer connection
- Are clearly based on regional strengths and align with the Regional Events Strategy and core brand attributes
- Are home-grown or external events that have a close connection to Gippsland and showcase and celebrate the USP of the region
- Have potential to change perceptions and position the destination in the minds of travellers
- Should occur in shoulder and off-peak seasons and are typically considered Gippsland’s ‘own’ anchor events, creating a regional legacy
- Have a sustainable financial model in place that has revenue generated via tickets sales, participation fees, sponsorship etc
- Attract funding from State Government/ Visit Victoria and commercial partners
- Have a clear marketing plan that will attract international, national and intrastate audiences
- Are curated and produced by paid professionals, with strong integration with local community

Example events:

- Tier 1 sporting events e.g. Australian Ladies Masters Golf, National Table Tennis Championships, Adventure Racing World Champs, Beach Volleyball World Tour Event
- Medium size business events over extended nights (i.e. 5 nights)
- New home-grown event: Food/producers festival that takes place over an extended period across the region

Regional events defined

- Are of state or regional significance that may be one-off or recurring; provide variety and richness; and deliver value as destination marketing tools
- Based on destination strengths and align with the event strategy and core brand attributes
- Fill the calendar year-round and add to the diversity of the region’s event calendar
- Have a sustainable financial model in place that has revenue generated via tickets sales, participation fees, sponsorship etc
- Attract some external funding from government or commercial partners and is aligned with the priorities of the region
- Have a clear marketing plan that will attract national and intrastate visitors
- May be home-grown or external, with the acquisition focused on the business and sporting events

Example events:

- Work with Business Events Victoria in attracting business events and hosting satellite events for global conferences
- New home-grown event: MTB festival that links trails in East Gippsland, Wellington, Latrobe City and Baw Baw
- Tier 2 sporting events e.g. Summer of Surf, National Championships
- Create series of participation events across the region and elevate significance and marketing e.g. trail running, cycling, motorsports, fishing
- Strategic investment into existing events such as East Gippsland Winter Festival and Phillip Island Whale Festival to elevate classification and outcomes

Local events defined

- Events and activities that are driven by and supported by local communities and deliver primarily social outcomes in a local area
- Add to the social fabric of Gippsland, with a focus on community engagement and enrichment
- These events remain the responsibility of the LGAs

Example events:

- Local community events e.g. local show
- Civic Events e.g. Australia Day
- Community engagement events e.g. Youth Week, Seniors, etc

Local events will remain the responsibility of LGAs as they typically are supported for the community benefits they deliver as opposed to economic outcomes.



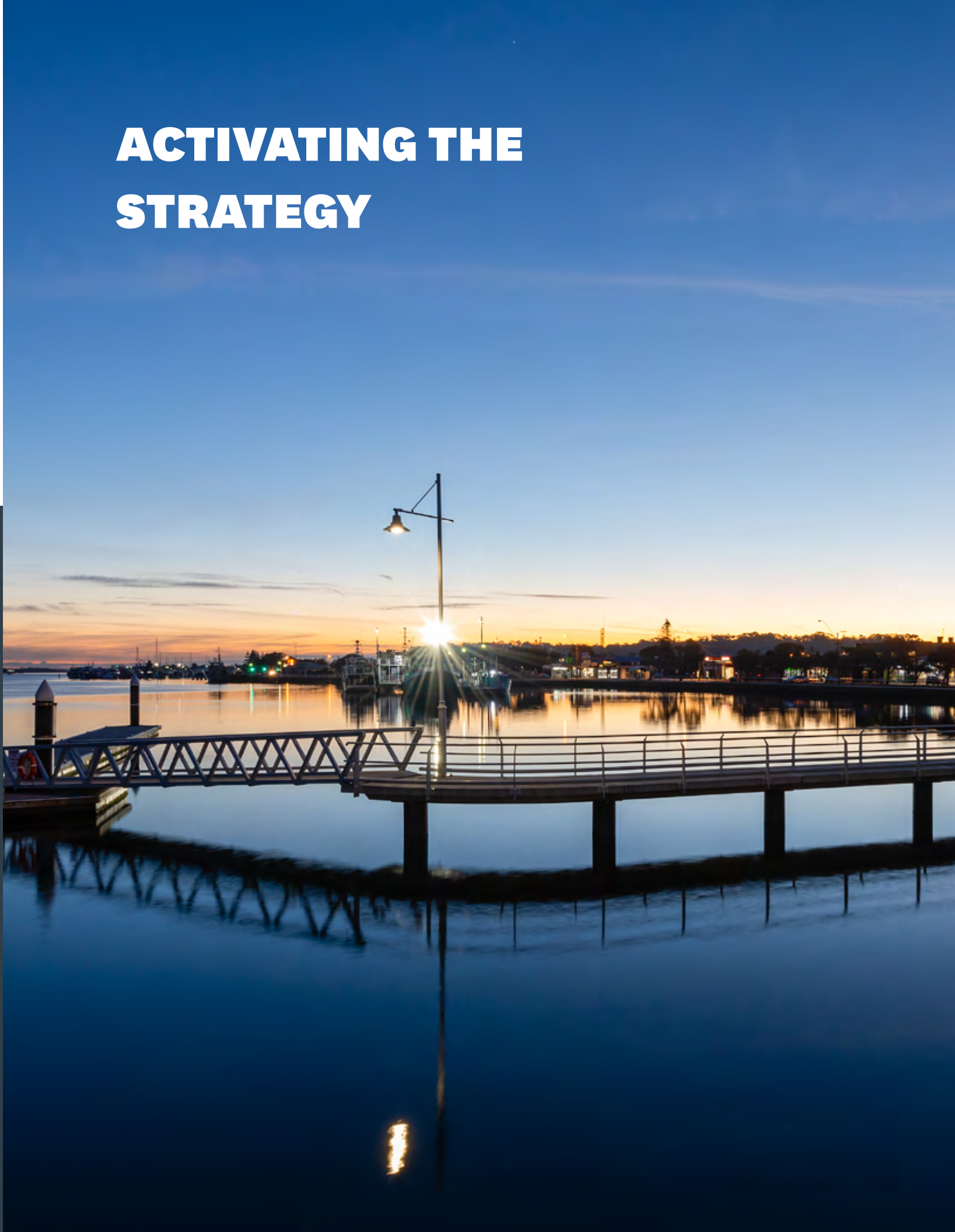
Case Study: Major events acquisition

Around 7,000 spectators, comprised equally of locals and travellers, with 5% from interstate, attended the two day World Jousting Championships at Lardner Park, Warragul. The event offered an epic weekend of medieval mayhem culminating in back-to-back World Jousting Championship titles. An immersive pop-up medieval village complete with traders, artisans and historically accurate displays and demonstrations enabled visitors to travel back in time.

The event attracts international competitors from France, Germany, England, Norway, Canada, Russia and features a strong team from Australia. It is the finale of a circuit including the European, Russian and Australian qualifiers.

Latrobe Valley Authority, Visit Victoria and the Baw Baw Shire Council collaborated to attract the event to Gippsland. The Championships are scheduled to return to Lardner Park in 2021.

ACTIVATING THE STRATEGY



Regional Event Strategy activation plan

The following provides a summary of the Strategy’s projects phased across the five-year implementation period.

	Phase 1	Phase 2		Phase 3	
Projects	2021	2022	2023	3034	2025
PHASE 1: IMMEDIATE RESPONSE					
Hosting COVID-safe events					
EVENT READY GRANT PROGRAM					
EVENT RECOVERY PROGRAM					
EVENT RECOVERY OFFICERS					
Events acquisition and marketing to boost recovery					
HOST EVENTS ACQUIRED THROUGH GIPPSLAND REGIONAL EVENTS ACQUISITION FUND					
EVENT ACQUISITION PLAN					
EVENT MARKETING CAMPAIGN					
Partnerships					
DEVELOP & LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS					
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS					
Establishing the structure and frameworks for activation of the Strategy					
ESTABLISHING EVENTS GIPPSLAND					
ESTABLISHING THE EVENTS FUND					
ESTABLISHING A BALANCED EVENTS PORTFOLIO					
SETTING UP THE EVENTS SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM					
PHASE 2: PUTTING THE FOUNDATIONS IN PLACE					
Reigniting our existing home-grown events and developing new events					
EVENTS SCHOOL					
EVENTS EXPERT DATABASE					
NEW HOME-GROWN EVENTS PLAN					
Bringing focus to our business events and industry sectors					
BUSINESS EVENTS FUNCTION					
DEVELOP & LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS					
Maximising the economic contribution from event visitors					
PRODUCT BUNDLING					
LEVERAGE THE EVENT JOURNEY					
EVENT SERIES					
INTEGRATED SEASONAL CALENDAR					
DATA COLLECTION					
DESTINATION MARKETING					
Planning our infrastructure and service needs					
INFRASTRUCTURE MASTER PLAN					
ACCOMMODATION INVESTMENT ATTRACTION					
LARDNER PARK MASTER PLAN & BUSINESS MODEL					
INFRASTRUCTURE READINESS					
STREAMLINED APPROVAL PROCESSES					
EVENTS INFRASTRUCTURE PROSPECTUS					
PHASE 3: POSITIONING OURSELVES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE					
Establishing new home-grown events					
LAUNCH OF NEW HOME-GROWN EVENTS					
Optimising event resources					
EQUIPMENT HIRE					
INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT					
GIPPSLAND VOLUNTEERING DATABASE					
VOLUNTEER POOL					
EVENT RESOURCES HUB					
Fostering sustainable events and a strong service culture					
AMBASSADOR PROGRAM					
TRAINING RESOURCES					
VOLUNTEER TRAINING SCHEDULE					
EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES PROGRAM					

Events Gippsland

The structure of Events Gippsland is designed to be sufficiently agile to anticipate and respond to changes in the market, to adapt and innovate to maximise the outcomes for the region and the LGA partners. The model proposed will withstand political cycles to provide certainty to partners and event organisers.

As a peak events body for the region, the entity will be the collective voice for this very important sector in Gippsland’s reputation and economy. Bringing together the LGAs, LVA and other event stakeholders, the new entity will provide cost savings on resources and remove duplication of effort.

Strategic purpose of entity:

1. Attract, host and invest in regional and major events to bring vibrancy to Gippsland and lasting benefits to the region and its people
2. Develop Gippsland into a compelling and sustainable events region
3. Change the perceptions of Gippsland amongst key visitor markets and event owners by developing and promoting a vibrant high-quality portfolio of events
4. Coordinate a balanced calendar of events that disperse visitation across the year and throughout the region

Events fund

An events fund is required to effectively deliver on the vision, aspirations and targets of the Strategy. Specifically, the fund will:

- Allow Gippsland to compete on a national scale and attract significant investment
- Enable strategic event acquisitions, growth of existing and creation of new events across the region
- Enhance competitiveness through ready access to funds
- Replace the short-term Gippsland Regional Events Acquisition Fund.

To be effective, this fund must be reliable i.e. available over multiple years to meet ongoing stakeholder needs and diversified across funding streams to ensure its sustainability.

5. Deliver regional legacies in brand building, establishment and growth of anchor events, enhanced event hosting capability and investment in event infrastructure, accommodation and tourism experiences

Events Gippsland will be established to align with the new structures proposed for regional tourism across Victoria under the regional review.

Single Entity Governance Model

Although it is recommended that legal advice is sought, a not for profit company limited by guarantee is the recommended legal operating structure, with a discretionary trust to hold the perpetual fund. An annual operating budget will be transferred from the fund to Events Gippsland.

As Destination Gippsland is already operating as a not for profit company limited by guarantee with a robust structure in place, it is advised that Events Gippsland operates as a unit within Destination Gippsland with a strategic events committee having oversight of the unit and the Strategy’s activation.

A Constitution and Trust Deed will articulate the charter and rules of the entity.

Diversified Funding Model

A diversified funding model allows Events Gippsland to access funds from a variety of sources, with the focus on accessing significant investment initially to create a perpetual fund that sits within a diversified trust. The perpetual fund will be topped up each year via LGA and industry contributions. Interest accrued by the fund will be re-invested to extend the overall fund value.

MEASURING OUR SUCCESS



The Strategy will be reviewed annually by Events Gippsland to ensure the actions continue to remain relevant over the five years. The performance of the event portfolio in delivering the Strategy’s vision and goals will be monitored, measured and reported on as part of the annual review.

Performance will be measured against the following overarching criteria, considering the phased actions:

Increased overnight visitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of overnight visitors in region as reported by Tourism Research Australian (TRA)• Length of stay as reported by TRA
Increased visitor spend	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor expenditure as reported by TRA
Increased visitation during shoulder and off-peak months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of visitors to region as reported by TRA
Brand reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of visitors to region as reported by TRA• Media mentions• Destination Gippsland website traffic• Proportion of events supported and attracted that align to the region’s brand and competitive advantages
Event legacies generated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proportion of major event companies that recommend Gippsland for events• Investment in event infrastructure
Event acquisition and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of successful event bids• Number of event proposals funded each year• Proportion of events supported and attracted that celebrate Gippsland’s uniqueness, innovation and creativity
Distribution of event benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proportion of LGAs hosting regional events• Proportion of LGAs participating in event marketing campaigns• Proportion of LGAs developing packages and activity around major events• Proportion of LGAs participating in regional capacity building
Increased event capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proportion of funded home-grown events completing Event School/ capacity building program• Number of new cooperative event marketing and/or product development activities
Host mentality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proportion of LGAs delivering Gippsland Ambassador program• Number of new Ambassadors in each LGA, certified as completing Ambassador programs
Stewardship of Gippsland’s natural assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proportion of funded and acquired events with an environmental sustainability plan
Enhanced liveability of the region (defined in tourism context by aspects of a growing economy, vibrant public spaces, community engagement in local events)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of residents attending regional events• Number of events and activities in public spaces• Economic growth metrics as reported by REMPLAN

ATTACHMENTS



Attachment 1: Stakeholders consulted

The following summarises all stakeholders consulted as part of initial information gathering and engagement. Those individuals and organisations that were unable to attend are not listed.

Stakeholders engaged

Gippsland region

<u>Destination Gippsland:</u> Terry Robinson Alison Conroy Dave Elder Janine Hayes Lyndel Moore Kelly McCarthy	<u>Visit Victoria:</u> Monique George Chris White Paul Matthews Andrew Wilson	Paul Ashton: Running Wild Jan Lucas: Volunteering Victoria Anthony: Event Ops Nicola Pero: Food and Fibre Gippsland, DG Board Katrina Cranwell: Regional Development Victoria Jason Sleeman & Amanda Millican: Sports Marketing Australia Chris Porter & Adeline Keh: Business Events Victoria Antonia Halloran-Lavelle: Regional Gippsland Neighbourhood House Network Nicholas King & Ian Johnson: Gippsland MTB Kelly McCarthy: Business Events Gippsland Caroline Liston: East Glppsland Neighbourhood House Network
<u>Latrobe Valley Authority:</u> Karen Cain Michael Timpano Jess Horton Jenni Hardy David Roberts	<u>Parks Victoria:</u> Will McCutcheon Braxton Laine	

East Gippsland

<u>East Gippsland Shire Council:</u> Mayor - Cr John White Sharon Raguse Jeanette Seignior Toby Feldmann Wayne Richardson Kellie Lawler Marc Taylor Sascha Johnston Stuart McConnell Anne Kaiser	Hayley Hardy: EG Marketing Jane Ponting: Gippsland East LLEN Martin Richardson & Angela Dunkley: Paynesville BTA Bruce Hurley: Lakes Entrance Action & Development Assoc Kate Nelson: EG MTB Club and Kate Nelson Consulting Sue-Ellen Latham: Seventy Events Nicola Watts: C4 Impact Jamie Savory & Megan Richards: Bairnsdale Chamber of Commerce and Industry Jodie York: Wild Harvest Seafood Festival Matt O'Donnell: Albert & Co / Bellevue Hotel
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Wellington

<u>Wellington Shire Council:</u> Mayor - Alan Hall Paul Johnson Ashley Smirl Allison Norfolk	Ben Joske: Central Gippsland Tourism Kim Hatton: Tarra Territory Festival Anthony Hilf: Lemonade Festival
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Bass Coast (incl Phillip Island)

<u>Bass Coast Shire Council:</u> Peter Francis Emile Barkley Teresa Mahood Janine Temme	Kim Storey: Destination Phillip Island Melissa Cashman: Phillip Island Nature Parks David Bennett: Phillip Island Operations
<u>South Gippsland</u> <u>South Gippsland Shire Council:</u> Rena Littlejohn Danielle Todaro Sophie Dixon	Rowena Ashley: Coal Creek Community Park and Museum Marty Thomas: Moos of Meeniyar, Meeniyar Traders Assoc Rosie Romano: Mirboo North Fiesta Mark Heath: Loch Food and Wine Festival Aidan and Rhett McLaren: Hills Alive & Unify Festival

Baw Baw

<u>Baw Baw Shire Council:</u> Rob Robson Mark Kestigian Melissa Moseley	Craig Debnam: Lardner Park Sally Brook: Southern Alpine Resort
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Latrobe City

<u>Latrobe City Council:</u> Peter Stewart Gail Gait Clint Hong Wendy Hrynyszyn Jess Middlemiss	Jacqui Almack: Latrobe City Business Tourism Association Cr Alan McFarlane: Tourism & Major Events Advisory Committee Rick Teychene: Boolarra Folk Festival Wayne Bailey: Coates Hire
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Destination
GIPPSLAND