



# Event Attraction Strategy



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## Message from the Mayor

Tamworth is well known as an events City, primarily because of the world renowned Country Music Festival. The city and region has enormous capacity to host a large number of people across a range of quality venues, supported by a strong accommodation and hospitality sector.

Events bring enormous economic, social and cultural benefits to the region, however they come at a substantial cost, with little or no direct revenue stream being returned to Council.

While it is well documented that the Tamworth Country Music Festival attracts many thousands of people to the region, it may be argued that the principal beneficiaries of the festival are accommodation providers, hotels, restaurants, cafes and retailers. The reality is that the majority of businesses benefit directly or indirectly from economic activity that 50,000 visitors bring to the region.

This event attraction strategy has drawn on the expertise of council staff, the Tamworth Business Chamber and

wide consultation across the community.

The focus of the strategy is on maximising the economic benefit of hosting events that extend over several days such as conferences, state and national sporting championships, university games and international acts that will potentially attract overnight visitation from the tourism sector.

The events rate levy provides Council and the region with the capacity to bid for or establish new events throughout the year, with a strong focus on filling low season gaps in the calendar and establishing events that will grow the economic prosperity of our city and region. Council will remain extremely vigilant in ensuring it continues to maximise funding opportunities and support through the State and Federal Governments to support the establishment and attraction of new events.

The strategy articulates the type of events we aim to attract to our region and gives Tamworth Regional Council the framework to establish, attract, retain and grow quality events.



**Mayor, Tamworth Region**





## Introduction

*"Major signature events, sporting events and conferences all contribute to the economic activity and prosperity of the Region"*

*The city of Tamworth and the surrounding region has a growing reputation for hosting an enviable calendar of events and festivals, of national and international significance.*

While events create a clear economic benefit to the city, they also create opportunities for the community, business and visitors to connect and celebrate our city and region; improving liveability, social relationships and community pride.

Major signature events, sporting events and conferences all contribute to the economic activity and prosperity of the city, resulting in direct and in-direct employment opportunities through year-round visitor attraction and encouraging those visitors to explore the wider region.

Tamworth and the regional towns and communities that make up the local government area, host a number of vastly different events each year, ranging from annual anchor events which attract national and international visitation such as Tamworth Country Music Festival and the National Cutting Horse Futurity, to large sporting events and regional events such as the Taste Tamworth Festival and Nundle Go for Gold Chinese Easter Festival.

Tamworth Regional Council recognises the opportunity and benefits associated with increasing the event activity across the year and as such, has developed this strategy to guide the investment from Council, in order to attract or develop new events within the region.

The strategy will act as a guide for Council to determine the level of support/ investment events may receive, based on the events economic impact, the social and cultural benefits, and the wider exposure the region would receive from a marketing and branding perspective.



## The opportunity

*"Through the strategy Council seeks to attract major events, business and sporting events, conferences and small scale events which can be established in or may relocate to the Tamworth region"*

### *Why does Tamworth need an event attraction program?*

While Tamworth enjoys a robust calendar of events, Tamworth Regional Council is committed to casting the net wider to include events which specifically;

- are staged in off-peak and shoulder seasons
- are a new event which will compliment the existing robust event calendar
- attract intrastate, interstate and international visitors
- maximise utilisation of the venue infrastructure the city enjoys.

Through the strategy Council seeks to attract major events, business and sporting events, conferences and small scale events which can be established in or may relocate to the Tamworth region.

The Event attraction strategy for the Tamworth Region provides Tamworth Regional Council with the framework to inform our approach to attracting, staging and promoting major events in the city and region, ensuring we maximise economic and social benefits and heighten exposure of the Tamworth brand while strengthening our position as an events destination.

A economic model will be used to determine the value of events to the city. Current factors considered are length of event, estimated attendance per day, overnight visitation, average daily spending based on Tourism Research Australia, Destination NSW and Economy ID data.

The strategy focuses on;

- positioning Tamworth and the region as a progressive, modern, dynamic and relevant region
- building Tamworth's profile as a tourism and events destination
- enhancing our major event calendar by hosting a diverse combination of events
- continuing to foster and develop vibrancy and community pride
- promoting Tamworth as an attractive place to work, live, visit and invest
- growing job opportunities for locals residents
- increasing opportunities for the business sector to be involved in major events and support opportunities for community participation and social inclusion
- utilisation of existing assets and infrastructure, with the potential to further develop these assets.



# Strategic direction

## Vision

The Tamworth Region is recognised and acknowledged as a leading regional events destination in NSW, showcasing a diverse and vibrant calendar of events that offer experience rich benefits to visitors and positive economic outcomes for the city and region.

## Mission

To increase the regions ability to attract, retain and grow the annual events calendar, by creating opportunity for business to capitalise on increased visitation to the region and fostering an inclusive community culture where residents become engaged and active ambassadors.

The strategy is themed around 4 main goals:

<b>Goal 1</b> Tourism & marketing	Actively target and support events which increase overnight visitation to the region, particularly during low visitation seasons.
<b>Goal 2</b> Economy	Develop strategic partnerships and support events that provide maximum economic benefit to businesses and the region.
<b>Goal 3</b> Investment	Invest in events that align with the regions strengths and strategic goals.
<b>Goals 4</b> Lifestyle	The Tamworth region benefits enormously from the vibrant and diverse calendar of events, which continually showcase the region as a highly desirable place to visit, live and invest.

# Objectives

- Grow and promote the diverse and vibrant annual calendar of events
- Identify, target and attract new iconic events that increase overnight visitation
- Support the development, growth and sustainability of existing events
- Support organisations, individuals, community groups and businesses to deliver high quality events to the Tamworth Local Government region
- Support and promote the Destination Tamworth brand
- Develop partnerships to increase investment and support of events in the Tamworth LGA
- Use events to strengthen the appeal of the city and region as a leading destination to visit, live and invest
- Ensure alignment with regional plans and strategies.

"The Tamworth Tomorrow – Driving the Tamworth Region's Economic Growth 2016-2021 economic development strategy identifies eight strategic pillars which contribute to growth in the city and region Tourism and Events is one of these key pillars"

## Strategic alignment

*The strategy provides Tamworth Regional Council and the community with a clear direction for the strategic attraction of events, which will build on the success of the existing event calendar and achieve greater economic, cultural and social benefits for the city and the region.*

*Tamworth Tomorrow – Driving the Tamworth Region's Economic Growth 2016-2021 aims to:*

- connect operators in the region
- build on Tamworth's established brand
- improve the quality of the visitor experience
- extend visitor length of stay and expenditure
- drive tourism dollars throughout the region
- offer a rich tourism experience
- develop a deep and supported destination brand and marketing platform.

### Relationship to other strategies / plans

#### Tamworth Regional Council Cultural Plan 2018 – 2023

- **Goal 3** Develop audiences, events and programs to reflect a bold and innovative local arts culture
- **Goal 5** Provide sustainable and engaging infrastructure, spaces and places.

#### Tamworth Region Community Strategic Plan – 'Keychange' 2017-2027

- **P1** A strong and diverse economic base
- **P2** Promote 'Destination Tamworth' as a great place to visit a great place to live.

#### Destination NSW – The New Regional Conference Strategy and Action Plan 2017 – 2021

Strategic Imperative (SI):

- **SI 2** A New Destination Framework - Develop a framework to prioritise and systematically support regional business conference destinations.
- **SI 3** Partnering with Government and Industry - Develop a strong collaborative network of Local Government and industry business partners to nurture and realise regional conference opportunities.
- **SI 4** Destination Infrastructure Development - Assist Regional NSW in developing business cases, which promote investment in conference infrastructure by Local Government and the private sector.
- **SI 6** Activating Regional Networks - Develop regional networks to leverage business conference opportunities.
- **SI 9** Destination Marketing - Improve and increase the promotion and awareness of regional business conference destinations relevant to their capability.

#### New England North West Regional Plan 2036 – NSW planning and environment

- **Direction 8** Expand tourism and visitor opportunities
- **Direction 9** Coordinate growth in the cities of Armidale and Tamworth

#### Destination Country & Outback NSW Destination Management Plan 2018-2021

- **Goal E** Facilitate the development or enhancement of products, experiences and events

# SWOT Analysis

## Strengths

- » Regional city – easily accessible by air / road
- » Diverse range of venues
- » Largest regional venues
- » Unique experiences
- » Growing population base
- » Well established calendar of events
- » Strong identity through country music
- » Appetite for events
- » Accessibility
- » Good community participation and support for events
- » Affordable / compared to metropolitan cities

## Weaknesses

- » Cost of air travel
- » Country music main identity
- » 'country hick' perception
- » Limited understanding by community of economic benefit
- » Uneven spread of events across calendar
- » Difficulty accommodating patrons in high season
- » Accommodation price gauging

## Opportunities

- » Community awareness campaign around economic benefit
- » State government support and focus for events
- » Regional focus from state strategies
- » Sporting centre of excellence opportunities
- » Identification and target of events in low season
- » Targeting of events complimentary to the Tamworth landscape
- » Increase growth through seed funding
- » Annual marketing of city and region

## Threats

- » No strategy to actively target events
- » Competing regions / cities
- » Events not support by local industry / community
- » Accommodation price gauging
- » Retention of events
- » Lack of investment in infrastructure improvements





## Our role

*Tamworth Regional Council will continue to advocate an event focus for the city and act as a catalyst for partnerships. Council is committed to working in partnership with industry to strengthen our position as an event-friendly city.*

Council will utilise in-house marketing and communications resources to promote the capacity and ability of the city and stakeholders to deliver events and champion event initiatives for the benefit of stakeholders. Dedicated Entertainment Venues and Events teams will assist with the delivery and staging of events, whether they be inhouse or external stakeholder staged events.

A dedicated staff member will work with venue managers and stakeholders to actively bid on events and to develop new initiatives.

## Measurement of event value

A Tamworth Event Impact Assessment Model 2018 has been developed to guide the process of valuing events to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of funds.

The model recommends;

- an economic impact tool
- a hosting cost model with tested results
- establishment of a qualitative assessment expert panel

The five factors are considered by the National Institute of Economic and Industrial Research (NIEIR) to determine the economic impact. These factors were used to develop a local measurement model.

1. Type of event
2. Level of significance
3. Length of event
4. Estimated attendance per day
5. Average daily spend (Tourism Research Australia / Destination NSW)

Consideration will also be given to marketing / branding impact, seasonal capacity, community / social impact etc.

The assessment process will be reviewed on an annual basis.

*"A dedicated staff member will work with venue managers and stakeholders to actively bid on events and to develop new initiatives"*

# Planning for success

Objective	Action	Outcome	Measure	Partners
<b>Goal 1 Tourism and Marketing</b> <i>Actively target and support events which increase overnight visitation to the region, particularly during low visitation seasons.</i>				
Develop marketing livery and marketing plan to support the attraction of events to the city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Develop event specific collateral / portfolio and investigate tradeshow to showcase the regions event capacity</li> <li>» Review website to include event section</li> <li>» Include event specific section in marketing plan</li> <li>» Leverage opportunities through Destination Tamworth marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Attraction of high quality state, national and international events</li> <li>» Promotion of Tamworth as a leading events destination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Number of new events in the region</li> <li>» Awareness of the cities event capabilities</li> <li>» Growth in market competitiveness</li> <li>» Destination Tamworth improved image with stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Media</li> <li>» Tourism operators</li> <li>» Destination NSW</li> <li>» Event organiser</li> <li>» Venue managers</li> <li>» TRC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Destination Tamworth Marketing / Comms Events</li> <li>◦ Entertainment venues</li> <li>◦ AELEC/Sports</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Promote a vibrant and diverse event calendar to increase visitor numbers to the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Update event wall at VIC</li> <li>» Update event calendar on website</li> <li>» Social media posts and promotion to align with events and venues</li> <li>» Use #tamworthnsw</li> <li>» Support cooperative marketing campaigns</li> <li>» Provide marketing advice to event organisers</li> <li>» Encourage event organisers to engage with Destination Tamworth/ Tamworth Regional Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Strengthen the Tamworth / Destination Tamworth brand</li> <li>» Increase visitor numbers and length of stay</li> <li>» Promotion of Tamworth as a place to live, work, invest and play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Level of media coverage</li> <li>» Number of hits to Destination Tamworth webpage, particularly event calendar</li> <li>» Social media engagement</li> <li>» Growth in visitation / nights</li> <li>» Brand awareness</li> <li>» Increase sense of local pride</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Media</li> <li>» Tourism operators</li> <li>» Destination NSW</li> <li>» Event organiser</li> <li>» Venue managers</li> <li>» TRC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Destination Tamworth Marketing / Comms Events</li> <li>◦ Entertainment venues</li> <li>◦ AELEC/Sports</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Encourage tourism packages and offers to compliment major events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Develop joint initiatives with regional tourism operators</li> <li>» Support venue operators to promote and package events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Promote destination and increase visitor numbers</li> <li>» Increase length of stay</li> <li>» Support local operators (tourism and business)</li> <li>» Strengthen Destination Tamworth brand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Brand awareness</li> <li>» Engagement with operators</li> <li>» Number of visitor nights</li> <li>» Enhanced business confidence</li> <li>» Increased economic growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Media</li> <li>» Tourism operators</li> <li>» Destination NSW</li> <li>» Event organiser</li> <li>» Venue managers</li> <li>» TRC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Destination Tamworth Marketing / Comms Events</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Encourage collaboration between TRC and stakeholders, both local and external	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Continue networking events to share information and resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Cross promotion of events</li> <li>» Increase reach / effectiveness of marketing campaign</li> <li>» Increase industry connection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Number of joint initiatives</li> <li>» Level of media exposure</li> <li>» Funding and support from state government / external parties</li> <li>» Brand awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Tourism operators</li> <li>» Destination NSW</li> <li>» Event organiser</li> <li>» Venue managers</li> <li>» TRC - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Destination Tamworth Marketing / Comms Events</li> <li>◦ Entertainment venues</li> <li>◦ AELEC/Sports</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Actively target conferences and events to the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Subscribe to industry database and target conferences to the city and region that are complimentary to our DNA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Secure new events based around target sectors</li> <li>» Establishment of new events in low season</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Number of new events</li> <li>» Brand awareness</li> <li>» Industry support / engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Destination NSW</li> <li>» Government associations</li> <li>» Associations database</li> </ul>



Objective	Action	Outcome	Measure	Partners
<b>Goal 2 Economy</b> <i>Develop strategic partnerships and support events that provide maximum economic benefit to businesses and the region.</i>				
Support events of significance based on economic benefit and branding opportunities	» Providing funding through major events and seed funding program » Funding assessments based on benefit criteria » Identify state, national and international conferences and sporting events	» Support businesses and tourism operators » Significant economic, community and branding benefit	» Level of media coverage » Increased economic growth » Positive feedback from business industry » Event evaluations to measure success / benefits » Positive branding	» Tourism operators » Destination NSW » Event organiser » Venue managers » TRC: » Destination Tamworth Marketing / Comms Events » Entertainment venues » AELEC /Sports
Identify and leverage strategic partnership opportunities	» Networking with key event organisers and stakeholders » Align with state strategic plan » Align with destination network » Identify and apply for funding to support and develop events	» Increased sustainability of events, less reliance on council funding » Increased opportunity and capacity to win major event bids » Increased capacity to establish and stage new events	» Amount of investment / internal and external » Number of new events » Increased economic activity » Collaboration with stakeholders » Growth in brand awareness » Improved relations with stakeholders	» Tourism operators » Destination NSW » Event organiser » Venue managers » TRC: » Destination Tamworth Marketing / Comms
Investigate opportunities for key events markets (business, sporting, cultural, music)	» Identify industry sectors from associations database and target conferences » Work with venue operators/ managers to identify suitable events within available calendar space	» Diverse offering of events across range of demographics	» Number of conferences » Number of sporting events » Number of cultural events » New events » Community and visitor satisfaction from surveys	» Destination NSW » Government associations » Associations database





Objective	Action	Outcome	Measure	Partners
<b>Goal 3 Investment</b> <i>Invest in events that align with the Regions strengths and strategic goals.</i>				
Provide funding / in-kind support in line with event strategy	» Event attraction to be included in marketing plan » Review event evaluations to include clear measures	» A fair and equitable process for supporting events in the city and region » Increase diversity and frequency in calendar of events	» Number of event secured » Number of events established » Diversity of events supported » Media coverage » Community and visitor satisfaction » Innovation in events » Event evaluations to measure outcome and benefit of event	» Tourism operators » Destination NSW » Event organiser » Venue managers » TRC: ◦ Destination Tamworth Marketing / Comms Events ◦ Entertainment venues ◦ AELEC /Sports
Support the growth and development of new events	» Actively target and bid on conferences » Work with local event organisers and venues to develop new events » Provision of advice and financial support to event organisers	» Promote the development of significant, unique and new events » Promotion of Destination Tamworth brand » Addressing gaps in event calendar » Economic benefit through visitation	» Number of events established » Diversity of events supported » Media coverage » Industry engagement and feedback	» Tourism operators » Destination NSW » Event organiser » Venue managers » TRC: ◦ Destination Tamworth Marketing / Comms Events ◦ Entertainment venues ◦ AELEC /Sports



Objective	Action	Outcome	Measure	Partners
<b>Goal 4 Lifestyle</b>  <i>The Tamworth region benefits enormously from the vibrant and diverse calendar of events, which continually showcase the region as a highly desirable place to visit, live and invest.</i>				
Support development of a proactive events industry	» Continue Event Marketing Support Program for smaller existing events » Determine demand for community capacity building workshops » Annual review of event program/ booking forms and venue information on websites » Provide advice and guidance to event organisers	» A vibrant and diverse calendar of events » Activation of venues and public spaces » An involved and engaged community	» Number of events funded » Event attendance » Number of event bookings » Community / visitor satisfaction surveys » Type and number of new events	» Tourism operators » Destination NSW » Event organiser » Venue managers » TRC: ◦ Destination Tamworth Marketing / Comms Events ◦ Entertainment venues ◦ AELEC /Sports
Coordinate a balanced event portfolio distributing a range of event types across the full year	» Event calendar used across entire organisation » Funding assessments and new events to take into consideration timing of events	» Events coordinated to avoid clashes, fill gaps and increase visitation in low seasons » Funding provided to a variety of event types	» Number of events held » Time of year events held » Number of event clashes » Accommodation occupancy » Community / visitor satisfaction surveys	» Venue managers » TRC: ◦ Destination Tamworth Marketing / Comms Events ◦ Entertainment venues ◦ AELEC /Sports
Continually improve processes for TRC to support deliver of events	» Staff attendance at training and networking events » Timely response to all event enquiries » Provision of templates for event organisers	» Provide outstanding customer service » Comply with industry best practice » Connect stakeholders to avoid red-tape	» Satisfaction of stakeholders » Turn around time for response to event enquiries » Enhanced confidence in event organisers	» Venue managers » TRC: ◦ Destination Tamworth Marketing / Comms Events ◦ Entertainment venues ◦ AELEC /Sports
Provide strategic advice and mentoring to support local event organisers to increase event sustainability and capacity	» Community capacity building workshops for industry stakeholders » Network with event organisers » Network with industry stakeholders	» High quality event delivery » Sustainable events that have capacity to grow	» Two workshops per year » Attendance at workshops » Increase in email database » Response to email blasts » Community / visitor satisfaction surveys	» Tourism operators » Destination NSW » Event organiser » Venue managers » TRC: ◦ Destination Tamworth Marketing / Comms Events ◦ Entertainment venues ◦ AELEC /Sports



## Classifying events

*"Regional, local and community events as well as conferences, business and sporting events are recognised as important contributors to the Tamworth region"*

*A key area of focus of the event strategy for the Tamworth Region is to clearly identify major events that will deliver the greatest return on investment and/or make the greatest contribution to the city of Tamworth and the region and importantly positively promote the Destination Tamworth brand.*

The term 'major event' is a classification given to events that generate significant, immediate and long term economic, social and cultural benefits to a destination.

Regular anchor events, like the Tamworth Country Music Festival and the National Cutting Horse Futurity, and one-off feature events are held throughout the year, catering to different audiences and meeting different objectives.

Regional, local and community events as well as conferences, business and sporting events are recognised as important contributors to the Tamworth region.

Events will be assessed not only on the direct economic benefit to the city and region, but also the tourism opportunities, social benefits and brand exposure for Tamworth Regional Council and Destination Tamworth.

The event hosting fee will be assessed against both quantitative and qualitative measures. Firstly it will be measured through an economic model. The model will assess the cost of the hosting fee against the potential economic impact of the regional economy. Through this model, events with higher economic impact will likely receive more financial support. The model will produce a range which will indicate the recommended maximum hosting fee. Once the value is determined, consideration will be given to the qualitative measures, including but not limited to;

- brand exposure
- seasonality
- visitor demographic
- stakeholder engagement.

An experienced assessment panel will further evaluate the particular event based on both measures and determine outcome on a case by case basis.

***For more information, please contact our Economic Development team on 6767 5555.***





