



REPORT: Submissions - Public Exhibition - Dubbo Region Events Strategy

DIVISION: Community, Culture and Places
REPORT DATE: 24 September 2025
TRIM REFERENCE: ID25/1887

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose	• Seek endorsement	
Issue	• This report informs Council of submissions received following public exhibition of the draft 2025-2030 Dubbo Region Events Strategy.	
Reasoning	• Strategy endorsement.	
Financial Implications	Budget Area	Performing Arts and Events Operational Budget
	Funding Source	Destination Events Fund and Community Funding Program
	Proposed Cost	Subject to applications received under the
	Ongoing Costs	Destination Events Fund and Community Funding Program
Policy Implications	Policy Title	Financial Assistance Policy
	Impact on Policy	No policy implications
Consultation	Community	Broad and targeted communications supported the public exhibition period.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Towards 2040 Community Strategic Plan is a vision for the development of the region out to the year 2040. The Plan includes four principal themes and a number of objectives and strategies. This report is aligned to:

Theme: 2 Thriving and Inclusive Communities'
CSP Objective: 2.3 Our community enjoys diverse sports, recreation, and social activities.
Delivery Program Strategy: 2.3.3 Increase opportunities for entertainment, recreation, and cultural activities for all ages.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Dubbo Region Events Strategy be adopted with the following amendment:
Focus Area 2: Action 3: Investigate the use of public and private space to support niche and major event activity.
2. That the CEO write to each respondent thanking them for their submission and providing a copy of Annexure A.

Craig Arms
Director Community, Culture and Places

LW
Events and Partnerships
Team Leader

BACKGROUND

At its August 2025 meeting, Council reviewed the draft Dubbo Region Events Strategy, designed to enhance transparency around Council’s involvement in supporting and attracting events. The strategy features an analysis of the 2024 events landscape, highlighting gaps and opportunities, and reflects community aspirations gathered through stakeholder engagement. It is supported by a five-year implementation plan, with progress to be tracked and reported annually through measurable actions and outcomes.

The Strategy has three focus areas:

Focus Area 1: Our local events industry is diverse, culturally rich and appealing

Through strategic advice, best-practice leadership and strong engagement we will help facilitate meaningful and impactful events that resonate broadly with the community.

Focus Area 2: Our community enjoys a strong and dynamic event ecosystem

We will forge robust connections and pathways for stakeholders to capitalise on and thrive from event activities. Through strategic marketing, we will amplify local and visiting audiences, driving sustained growth and engagement.

Focus Area 3: The Dubbo Region is a premier destination for major and large-scale events

We will actively champion the strategic expansion of local events and attract major large-scale events, thereby cultivating a diverse and balanced portfolio that ensures event dispersal throughout the Local Government Area.

Previous Resolutions of Council

26 August 2025	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That Council endorse the 2025-2030 Dubbo Region Events Strategy for public exhibition for a minimum period of 28 days.2. That the Chief Executive Officer provide a report detailing feedback received during the public exhibition period.
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The draft strategy was placed on public exhibition between 27 August 2025 and 25 September 2025.

REPORT

Council communicated the opportunity to provide feedback into the draft 2025/2030 Dubbo Region Events Strategy as follows:

Broad communications – wider community

- 4 x What’s On E-blasts (database: 4,327 recipients)
- 2 x YourSay Eblasts (database: 274 recipients)
- 94 x radio mentions
- 1 x media release
- 1 x Economic Development Eblast (database: 4,447 recipients)

3 x advertisements in newspapers
3 x pop up events (New Residents Night, Centro Shopping Centre and Geurie Markets)

Targeted communications – event organisers

4 x emails to Dubbo Region Events Network (database: 186 recipients)
3 x posts on Dubbo Region events Network Facebook page (156 members)

Submissions received

Following the close of the public exhibition period on 25 September 2025, a total of five submissions were received. Each was carefully reviewed and considered in relation to the overarching strategy, with relevant points aligned to existing actions across the three key focus areas.

Focus Area 1

Action		No of questions/ Concerns
Action 1	Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.	16
Action 2	Develop an Event Permit Policy that outlines safety and compliance obligations for public events in public spaces	7
Action 4	Investigate ways in which Council can help facilitate the initiation of cultural events and support events that engage local creatives and our live music industry.	2
Action 6	Develop tactics and resources to help event organisers attract and retain volunteers	1
Action 7	Develop a business case for Council's consideration on staff delivering events that will achieve strategic outcomes.	2
Total		28

Focus Area 2

Action		No of questions/ concerns
Action 1	Investigate and implement additional ways to promote events to the local community	4
Action 3	Investigate the use of public space to support niche and major event activity	1
Total		5

Focus Area 3

Action		No of questions/ concerns
Action 1	Investigate ways in which Council can support the dispersal and growth of locally organised events throughout the LGA	2
Action 2	Investigate and report on the scope of Wellington becoming an adventure sports hub.	1
Action 4	Seek to attract a live entertainment event appealing to youth	1
Total		4

Some questions focused on how Council intends to measure and report on outcomes, while other matters raised fell outside the scope of the strategy.

Measuring progress and reference to page 37 of the strategy	2
Matters or questions outside the scope of the strategy. Where possible, these will be addressed directly with the respondent.	9

Given that many questions and concerns centred on the development of the Event Support Policy (Focus Area 1: Action 1), it is important to clarify its intent.

The Event Support Policy aims to establish clear guidelines around the level of assistance Council provides. This encompasses a wide array of support for local event organisers, along with strategies designed to attract externally managed events to the region.

The policy will outline Council's reasoning for providing support to both locally hosted and regionally attracted events, helping to promote transparency and strengthen community awareness.

An accompanying implementation plan will guide the policy's delivery, with Council providing annual reports detailing the actions undertaken to support events and the outcomes achieved.

Amendment to action

Staff have identified the need to amend one focus area:

Focus Area 2, Action 3:

Investigate the use of public space to support niche and major event activity.

Amend to:

Investigate the use of public *and private* space to support niche and major event activity.

Timeframe

Key Date	Explanation
29 October	2025-2030 Dubbo Region Events Strategy finalised.
29 October	Letter thanking each respondent and attaching a copy of Annexure A.

APPENDICES:

- 1 [↓](#) Annexure A: Submissions - 2025 - 2030 Draft Dubbo Region Events Strategy
- 2 [↓](#) Draft 2025-2030 Draft Dubbo Region Events Strategy

SUBMISSIONS

2025-2030 DUBBO REGION EVENTS STRATEGY

SUBMISSION 1: TIM HOSKING

1) Council as an event manager - Council runs several events throughout the year including a schedule of live performances at the theatre. The value of these events to the local community could be highlighted.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 7

Develop a business case for Council's consideration based on staff delivering events that will achieve strategic outcomes.

2) Council choosing not to run big events like other Councils: This is inconsistent with a range of other Councils who can access significant levels of grant funding that are unavailable to the general community. Gil, Forbes, Orange, Bathurst all have run their own big events and generated significant activity with it, opportunities for local artists. I would question why DRC couldn't host a big event per year given the experience event management staff and facilities DRC has access to.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 7

Develop a business case for Council's consideration based on staff delivering events that will achieve strategic outcomes.

3) Lack of audiences: This is a key challenge for smaller events that struggle with basic financial viability. A mix of changing young person habits (not drinking), disconnection from local artists and a failure of social media platforms making it impossible to get the word out. Event managers (often volunteers or small venues) have to take big financial risks to get their events done, this is only possible for a limited time. DRC helping with small event promotion does assist here. Underwriting some of the other financial risks could also really help - insurance? Staging? production costs? grants for media promotion packages?

Strategy references

Focus Area 1: Action1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

Focus Area 2: Action1

Investigate and implement additional ways to promote events to the local community.

4) mid-sized venues. Dubbo has a shortage of good 200-500 person performance spaces in the CBD that bookable for events. The theatre is too expensive, unsuitable or unavailable for many of these, civic centre room is too bulky even with the shutters. We have some aging unmaintained venues (eg Wesley, RSL) and some rooms that aren't activated for some reason (eg Amaroo basement). This limits our ability to put on and attract shows. Could Council work with venue operators somehow?

Strategy reference with proposed amendment

Focus Area 2: Action 3:

Investigate the use of public space to support niche and major event activity.

Amend to:

Focus Area 2: Action 3:

Investigate the use of public *and private* space to support niche and major event activity.

SUBMISSION 2: SHARON QUILL

Hello Events Team, thank you, I really welcome this strategy and the strong vision it sets for our community. The commitments around safe, successful, and sustainable events are spot on. I would however love to see some of the “how” brought forward. Right now it feels like the actions come late and are a bit light.

my notes:

Wellington and villages - Great to see dispersal mentioned, but how will this actually happen? Could we introduce an “Out of Dubbo” grant category or a dedicated budget stream? Incentives for organisers to take events to villages and Wellington would make a real difference. Helping organisers connect and work with village committees to shape and support local events would be valuable.

Strategy references

Focus Area 3: Action 1:

Investigate ways in which Council can support the dispersal and growth of locally organised events throughout the LGA.

Focus Area 3: Action 2:

Investigate and report on the scope of Wellington becoming an adventure sports hub.

Accessibility - I noted it's mentioned but not actioned. To be honest, I haven't checked, but an accessibility checklist and incentives for things like interpreters and other accessibility support would show we're serious about inclusion.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

Co-design and alignment - Co-design feels missing. For example, WPCC locks in programming 18–24 months ahead - why not create an annual notice or forum so community event organisers can align with that schedule / collaborate to enhance each other's events? A regional events forum bringing together council teams, venues, and organisers so we're not working in silos could be beneficial.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

Tracking success - I feel like there's no clear way to measure if we're hitting the mark.

Strategy reference

Page 37.

Measuring progress.

Marketing - Is there a crossover strategy between council marketing, venues, and village teams? A centralised calendar and joint campaigns would be powerful - and if communicated at an overall event forum for the future programming imagine the opportunities...

Strategy reference

Focus Area 2: Action1

Investigate and implement additional ways to promote events to the local community.

Final thoughts: Overall I think the vision is great, but we need clearer pathways. Dedicated resourcing for villages, real measures for success, practical accessibility actions, co-design opportunities, and stronger cross-team collaboration inside and outside of council would make this strategy really sing.

SUBMISSION 3: ERIFILI DAVIS

As a practicing creative, President of CrACN, Vice-President of Wesley House Players, Secretary of Dubbo Filmmakers, and small business owner of Studio 138 (which runs the inspire&ignite program for young people and coordinates the Dubbo Regional Council-supported Black Box Creative Sessions at the Western Plains Cultural Centre), I welcome the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Dubbo Region Events Strategy.

Overall Theme

The strategy has strong foundations, but to achieve a truly vibrant and balanced events portfolio, it needs to give arts and culture equal visibility alongside sport. Both sectors drive economic growth, tourism, and destination branding, while also enriching liveability and community pride. By broadening its measures of value, improving transparency, leveraging existing systems, and providing plain-English tools for organisers, Dubbo can foster an events landscape where sports, arts, and community celebrations complement each other, delivering a sustainable, diverse, and appealing calendar year-round.

Gaps & Risks Identified

- **Imbalance in Event Mix**
Arts forms such as theatre, screen, visual arts, and conferences are underrepresented compared with sport and live music.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

Focus Area 1: Action 4:

Investigate ways in which Council can help facilitate the initiation of cultural events and support events that engage local creatives and our live music industry.

Page 11

First paragraph

'This strategy does not cover private events, conferences, regular gatherings or locally organised sporting events.'

- **Narrow Measures of Value**
Economic benefits of cultural events like DREAM Festival are not highlighted despite comparable visitation and spend to the sports events listed on page 25.

The Strategy is an analysis of the events landscape in 2024.

- Sustainability Risks
Volunteer fatigue and rising costs threaten both community arts and sports events.

Strategy references

Focus Area 1: Action 1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

Focus Area 1: Action 6:

Develop tactics and resources to help event organisers attract and retain volunteers.

- Promotion & Audience Development
The Dubbo Region Events Calendar is underutilised, with visitors often unaware of evening cultural activities.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 2: Action 1:

Investigate and implement additional ways to promote events to the local community.

- Practical Barriers
Compliance processes and frameworks can be complex; grassroots organisers need plain-English tools and templates.

Strategy references

Focus Area 1: Action 1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

Focus Area 1: Action 2:

Develop an Event Permit Policy that outlines safety and compliance obligations for public events in public spaces.

- Transparency & Equity
Event bidding costs and hosting fees require greater clarity to help community understand value for money.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

Opportunities & Suggestions

- Broaden and Balance the Event Mix
Position Dubbo as a destination for both major sports and major arts events, and seed new arts-led events in underutilised months (Jan, Feb, July, Nov).

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

- Strengthen Measurement of Arts Impact
Include case studies of previous arts events (e.g., DREAM Festival) to show comparable tourism and spend outcomes.

The Strategy is an analysis of the events landscape in 2024.

- Support Long-Term Sustainability
Implement an Event Support Framework for all event types and introduce sponsor–organiser matchmaking or showcase opportunities, particularly for grassroots events.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

- Boost Promotion & Visibility
More actively market the Dubbo Region Events Calendar to accommodation providers, attractions, and business events.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 2: Action 1:

Investigate and implement additional ways to promote events to the local community.

- Make Support Practical & Accessible
Provide editable templates, guides, and targeted training sessions (although sometimes they add to volunteer fatigue).

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

- Build Transparency and Trust
Publish information on event bidding and hosting costs, alongside rationale for support decisions.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

SUBMISSION 4: KERRY PALMER

These are my views, and questions that arise:

Overall I became aware of the Draft at the recent new resident's night that ArtClub supported. Although I had participated in Council held event strategy workshops last year, as a businessperson, community group representative and volunteer, I received no direct communication about this Draft.

Curious that we are actively encouraged to attend workshops and provide feedback into the development of an Event Strategy (and have local people and volunteers deliver events) ... but when it comes to submitting feedback on the DRAFT Dubbo Regional Events Strategy – no such follow-up engagement opportunity is offered on either the outcomes or for obtaining robust submissions. This seems like a missed opportunity and may impact how many submissions Council receives.

This isn't as transparent or strategic a pathway as can be for Dubbo Regional Council to support local event organisers and assist in the growth and prosperity of our local events program.

An outline of how we communicated the public exhibition period:

Broad communications – wider community

4 x What's On Eblasts (database: 4,327 recipients)

2 x YourSay Eblasts (database: 274 recipients)

94 x radio mentions

1 x media release

1 x Economic Development Eblast (database: 4,447 recipients)

3 x advertisements in newspapers

3 x pop up events (New Residents Night, Centro Shopping Centre and Geurie Markets)

Targeted communications – event organisers (including respondent)

4 x Emails to Dubbo Region Events Network (database: 186 recipients)

3 x Posts on Dubbo Region events Network Facebook page (156 members)

The draft strategy seems wordy, aspirational and of no specific targeted goals to ultimately deliver impactful economic, social and cultural benefits. However, it does appear to establish Council priorities to support events and attraction initiatives.

Mass participation sports events appear to be 'bread & butter' events that are attracted due to high volume and quality of our sporting facilities, accommodation, strong transport links and visitor services. It seems Council finds stakeholder engagement and management resource intensive.

Strategy references

Focus Area 3: Action 1: Investigate ways in which Council can support the dispersal and growth of locally organised events throughout the LGA.

Focus Area 3: Action 4:
Seek to attract a live entertainment event appealing to youth.

There are no reporting requirements. How does this draft strategy serve to enhance the social and cultural fabric of the community and regional identity? (while also driving economic growth and tourism)

Strategy reference

Page 37.
Measuring progress.

All document images should be captioned and attributed appropriately.

Noted.

Opportunity

Dubbos event calendar lacks creativity with self-expression and individuality with touch points for people that are relevant and resonant and meaningful to deliver impactful social and cultural benefits. Community-led events focus on social capital, equity and local community needs...

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 4:
Investigate ways in which Council can help facilitate the initiation of cultural events and support events that engage local creatives and our live music industry.

Such as DREAM (Dubbo Regional Entertainment Arts Music) Festival established in 2010. Sadly, momentum is significantly lost, and this events future is uncertain, after Council took over the volunteer run event in 2020 and ran it for the first and last time in 2023. Council demonstrated it cannot sustainably manage or grow such large-scale events, indicating that it lacks the resources to continue running the festival and was seeking to hand it back to a volunteer organisation !

The Strategy is an analysis of the events landscape in 2024.

Does Council have capacity to provide best-practice management and ensuring events are safe, successful, and sustainable, to become a leader in activating the Strategy?

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

Provide opportunities for council innovation and capacity building in tandem with community. The NSW State Governments Reconnecting Regional NSW Community Events Program (CEP) aimed to support economic stimulating activity (post pandemic) in events for regional NSW. Dubbo Regional Councils CEP funding spend in 2022 was \$280,000. with an 'event' that imported a pre-made product from Victoria ('Sky Castles' that was created for an event in that state) DRCs approach to this non-competitive, allocated funding opportunity was to take an entirely internal decision-making process without community consultation and choose an easy course of action to throw something together rather than maximising the potential benefits for our community.

How might Dubbo Regional Council have invested that funding into developing a product that was unique to this region AND supported several local small businesses, creatives or community groups in the process, thereby injecting direct economic stimulus locally? Event evaluation must not only be measured by increased economic activity, including direct benefits for local businesses and increased visitation in event and hospitality sectors.

Outside the scope of the strategy.

Page 25 - Events should not be seen as a cost centre, rather as a driver of economic, social and cultural impacts for the region. The benefits and value of events should be measured and these event impacts should ideally be communicated both internally and externally to showcase the value of events. Events Research Paper 2021

The table on this page 25 in the Draft Strategy reflects the economic impact only. So, How will the social and cultural benefits and values be measured? and communicated?

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

Thought should also be given to what an event aims to deliver- for example; Will it improve community cohesion and sense of belonging ? OR Will it increase levels of community pride? What evaluation processes will Council employ to assess the effectiveness and efficiency relevant to the needs of Dubbo groups and its communities? What will this strategy deliver in terms of event development and enhancing regional identity?

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

Does this Draft inform future improvements to event planning, design, initial stages of event implementation and delivery, administration, monitoring and evaluation? How will Council demonstrate that existing events are enhanced? How will the Event Strategy create different forms of community connection, including between local community members, between council staff, stakeholders, local businesses, artists, schools, community organisations and residents? (and visitors to the region)

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

Villages I have a property in Geurie with potential to develop for visitor economy activity, however the property is currently impacted by damage from water runoff from the roadway. This issue and concern have not been adequately addressed by Council and impacts our plans. Can Council also address that long standing issue via this submission? ArtClub classes and events are designed for rich creative experiences. As small businesspeople and community volunteers we constantly seek collaboration to support and foster our initiatives. This draft suggests there is great intent to do so, which we look forward to. Councils Submission processes have rarely been an engaging, interactive activity. When frank & fearless feedback is sought, we are happy to provide, hopefully without prejudice. I'm prepared to elaborate on any of the above points if require.

Outside the scope of the strategy.

SUBMISSION 5: GERALDINE MCKAY

Introduction

Thank you for providing the opportunity to contribute to the Draft Events Strategy. This submission is presented on behalf of Dubbo Rotunda Market, coordinated by Better Markets Inc. The following outlines our key concerns and recommendations regarding the strategy, with particular focus on its application to local markets.

Recognition of Markets as Events

We strongly advocate for Dubbo Regional Council to formally recognise markets as events. Currently, Council staff have indicated that markets are not deemed events and, as such, are not eligible for event funding. This position appears inconsistent, especially considering that the Macquarie Food & Wine Inc.–run Dubbo Farmers Markets previously received \$20,000 in Council funding. We seek consistent treatment of all market events.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 1:

Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.

Fair and Transparent Administration of Market Regulations

It is essential that the Council administers market regulations in a manner that is fair, even-handed, and transparent. At present, Dubbo Rotunda Market is the only market required to provide risk assessments from participants, based on feedback from stall holders in both Dubbo and Wellington. Furthermore, Dubbo Rotunda Market uniquely prohibits food sellers from permitting dogs on their stalls or in their food-carrying vehicles. We request that regulations be applied consistently across all markets.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 2:

Develop an Event Permit Policy that outlines safety and compliance obligations for public events in public spaces

Addressing Congestion Rules

We encourage Council to reconsider the restrictive rule requiring a 3-metre clearance past stalls on Dubbo's main street. In comparison, successful markets in Tamworth, Darlinghurst, and North Sydney operate with much narrower access—often just one metre—while still accommodating crowds, patrons with disabilities, and pram pushers. The 3-metre rule, which is unique to Dubbo, unnecessarily restricts market activity.

Outside the scope of the strategy.

Advance Booking for Market Dates

Better Markets Inc. has experienced difficulties securing future dates for advertising in the Dubbo Regional Council tourist booklet. In contrast, Dubbo Farmers Market has its dates confirmed well in advance, allowing inclusion in promotional materials. We request that all markets are granted equal access to advance booking for event dates.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 2:

Develop an Event Permit Policy that outlines safety and compliance obligations for public events in public spaces

No Smoking Policy

We recommend the adoption of a mandatory no smoking policy for all events where food is offered within the precinct. This would align with NSW legislation implemented in June 2015

Outside the scope of the strategy.

Markets as Tourism Drawcards

Markets are significant drawcards for tourism. Better Markets Inc. invests in advertising across television, radio, and social media, not only within Dubbo and the western regions but also targeting areas such as the Hunter Valley and Western Sydney. These efforts are aimed at attracting visitors to Dubbo and encouraging longer stays in the area.

Community Engagement and Volunteer Contribution

The Dubbo Rotunda Market Facebook page has 8,764 followers and received over 95,000 views in the past month—numbers that are comparable to Dubbo Regional Council’s own social media reach. All activities are carried out by volunteers, with no paid employees, representing a substantial contribution to the social and economic fabric of Dubbo.

Victoria Park as a Preferred Venue

Victoria Park should remain a preferred venue for events and markets, offering a shaded and inviting environment for the community and stallholders. By comparison, Ollie Robbins Oval lacks shade, is exposed to extreme temperatures, and does not provide a safe or comfortable setting for market and event participants. Workplace safety must be prioritised. Victoria Park’s visibility to passing traffic and its proximity to public transport, including both regional and local bus and rail services, make it highly suitable for attracting day trippers to Dubbo. The public give highly positive feedback re markets in Victoria Park and they enjoy picnicking in the shade of the trees with food from the market.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 2:

Develop an Event Permit Policy that outlines safety and compliance obligations for public events in public spaces.

No. 1 Oval Car Park as Wet Weather Alternative

In the event of wet weather, when sporting activities are typically cancelled, the No. 1 Oval car park provides an obvious alternative venue to Victoria Park Red Drive (Memorial Drive event space).

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 2:

Develop an Event Permit Policy that outlines safety and compliance obligations for public events in public spaces.

Concerns Regarding Ollie Robbins Oval

Ollie Robbins Oval is not a suitable venue for markets and events. It lacks adequate amenities, presents an unappealing outlook over the back of buildings on Bligh Street, and suffers from both insufficient parking and unsafe pedestrian crossings over Bligh Street.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 2:

Develop an Event Permit Policy that outlines safety and compliance obligations for public events in public spaces.

Formal Permitting Process

We request that the Council issue formal permits in the form of documents that can be presented to Police, serving as official authority to conduct markets or events within defined precincts. There have been multiple occasions when Police attending incidents on Macquarie Street were not satisfied with the documentation provided by Council.

Strategy reference

Focus Area 1: Action 2:

Develop an Event Permit Policy that outlines safety and compliance obligations for public events in public spaces.

Training for Stall Holders

As market organisers, we provide training to our stall holders, covering topics from basic email writing to conducting risk assessments and offering social media tips. Support from Council in the form of practical “how to” guides would be greatly appreciated, as many stall holders begin with little experience but can be nurtured to the point where some have established business premises in central Dubbo.

Outside the scope of the strategy.

Encourage Activity in the heart of Dubbo ie Macquarie St & Victoria Park

Since its start on 25th October 2015, the Dubbo Rotunda Market aimed to revitalise central Dubbo with Council's support. However, Dubbo Regional Council has since given the impression that the market is unwelcome at these venues. Every year there are new rules which make it harder to produce the market. Feedback from more than 100 businesses on Macquarie St shows the market is a valued event, providing financial benefits to those open that day and increasing their visibility. The market is funded completely by the stall holders site fees and the work of the volunteers, so this costs the Macquarie St businesses nothing but benefits them greatly. Sadly the voice of one (now retired shop keeper) has been heard – word for word in the negative and new rules imparted to the market organisers, by Council, as new restrictions have been placed on the market over the past decade. Why the animosity and such influence from one person?

The market has the best intentions to benefit the heart of Dubbo and much benefit in expenditure flows onto business across Dubbo and the region.

Some farming families told us that their participation at the Dubbo Rotunda Market kept them going mentally and helped put food on their table during the worst of the drought in recent years.

Outside the scope of the strategy.



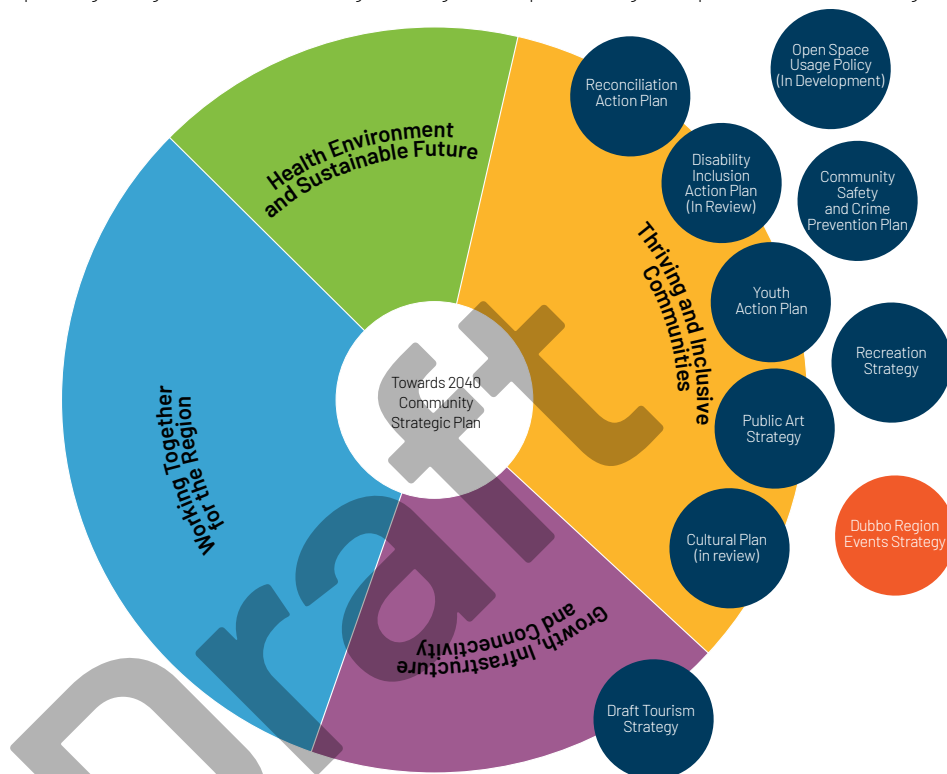
2025 - 2030
DUBBO
REGION
EVENTS
STRATEGY



How the Dubbo Region Events Strategy connects with our other strategic plans

The 2025-2030 Dubbo Region Events Strategy will be embedded in our integrated planning and reporting framework to ensure what is committed is delivered through measured planning and resource allocations.

At the centre of the framework is the Towards 2040 Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The Dubbo Region Events Strategy is a key document providing strategic direction and sits alongside a range of other plans, strategies and policies as shown in the diagram below.



Strategic Context

- CSP Strategic Pillar 2: Thriving and Inclusive Communities
- 2.3: Our community enjoys diverse sports, recreation, and social activities
- 2.3.3: Increase opportunities for entertainment, recreation, and cultural activities for all ages.
- 2025/2026 Operational Plan action 2.3.3.1: Finalise the Dubbo Region Events Strategy

External Documents

- Event Research Paper 2021 (Mayvin Global Pty Ltd, MI Associates Pty Ltd)
- Central Orana Regional Economic Development Strategy
- ODIN360 draft report
- Developing a Council Community Events Policy – A toolkit for NSW Councils (NSW Premier & Cabinet)

The design of the strategy has a whole-of-community approach, to be used by everyone in the region, contributing to a thriving vibrant inclusive community.

For more information on Council's plans visit:
dubbo.nsw.gov.au/About-Council
(A-Z Plans and Strategies)



or scan the QR code

Disclaimer statement

The information is current at the time of completing this strategy and some information may change during the lifetime of the 2025-2030 Dubbo Region Events Strategy. Community members are advised to contact relevant service providers, organisers, authorities, and Dubbo Regional Council Customer Experience Team if they have any questions.



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wiradjuri people who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, work and play. We pay our respects to Elders past and present of the Wiradjuri Nation and thank them for their care of the land, water and sky and extend that respect to other Indigenous Australians.

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Executive summary

The Dubbo Region Events Strategy is a blueprint designed to guide the creation of new events, nurture the growth and sustainability of existing events, and ultimately cultivate a vibrant, diverse, and culturally rich events calendar. By fostering a thriving events landscape, this strategy not only serves to enhance the social and cultural fabric of the community but also drives economic growth, tourism, and regional identity.

Beyond shaping the future of events in the Dubbo Region, this strategy establishes clear pathways for strengthening connections between events and the broader community. It also seeks to attract and secure new events that will deliver widespread benefits across the entire Local Government Area (LGA), supporting the dispersal of economic, cultural, and social benefits.

The development of this strategy has been informed by face-to-face consultation with a diverse range of stakeholders, including event organisers, creative practitioners, event suppliers, hospitality venues, performers, tourism operators, and sporting organisations. Additionally, feedback from the wider community was actively sought and gathered through an online survey, providing valuable insights into community needs, preferences, and aspirations for the local events landscape.

A thorough analysis of the current events environment was undertaken as part of the strategic planning process, revealing critical gaps and untapped opportunities. This data-driven approach ensures that the strategy is not only responsive to existing challenges but also forward-thinking in its efforts to build on meaningful event activity. Further shaping this document is an extensive review of best-practice models, benchmarking against leading event strategies, and detailed online research to identify innovative and effective approaches to event development and management.

At its core, the Dubbo Region Events Strategy provides a structured and strategic framework for Council to undertake its role as a Provider, Leader, Collaborator, and Advocate for events. Through this approach, Council aims to develop a well-balanced and sustainable events portfolio that maximises social, cultural, and economic benefits, positioning the Dubbo Region as a premier destination for events.

Events provide compelling reasons for communities to come together and celebrate. They enrich communities, drive economic outcomes and build on our sense of place and destination appeal.

Our vision

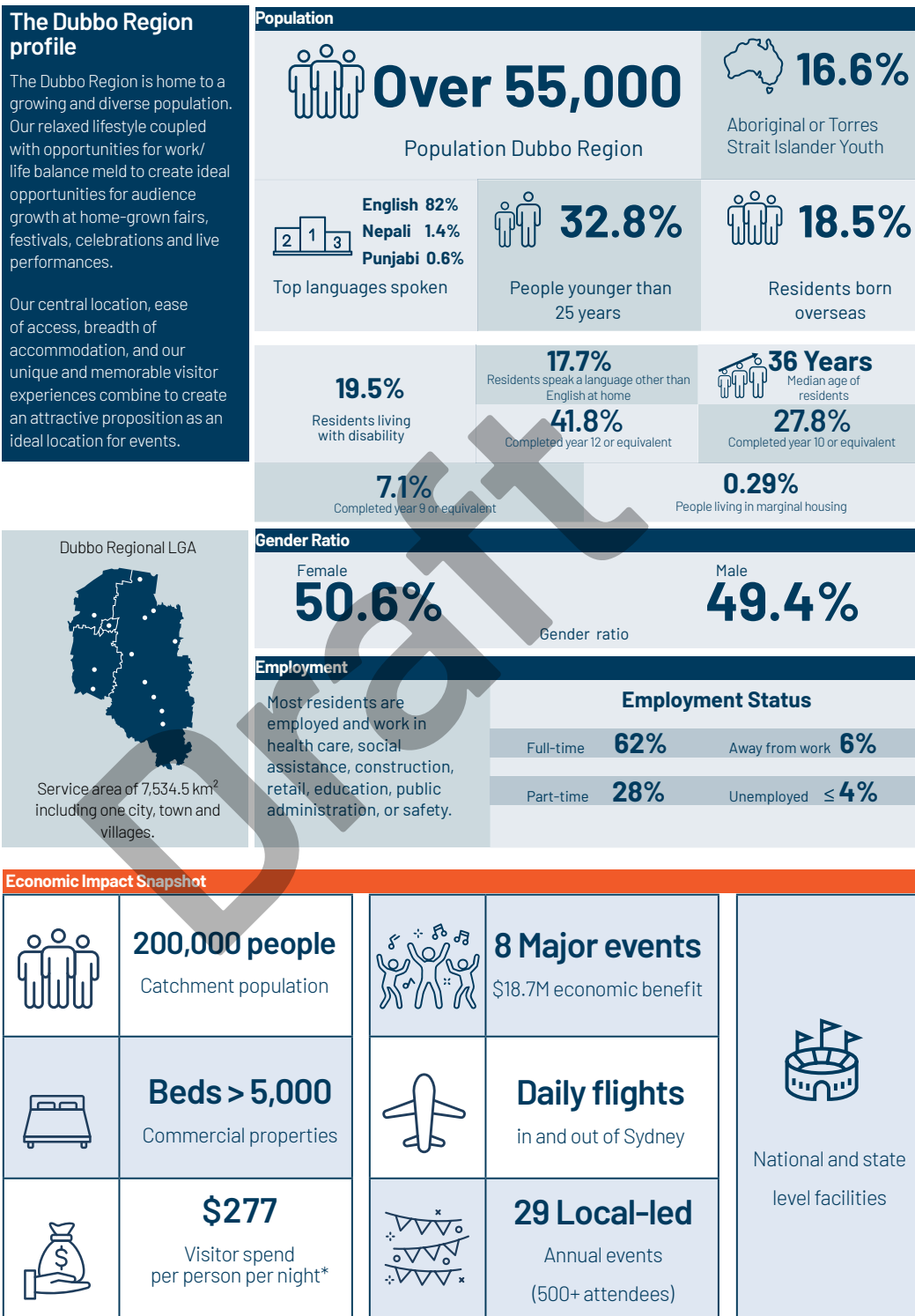
Our community is connected and enriched through access to a diverse, culturally-rich and appealing range of events.

We want to grow our local events program, and by doing so fuel our community's pride, liveability, reputation and economy.



Our commitment

- Foster a transparent, accessible and responsive event support framework providing the time, tools and pathways to help events be safe, successful and sustainable.
- Support and secure event activity that delivers social, cultural and economic benefits to our community.
- Support the dispersal of event activity outside the city of Dubbo and into the town of Wellington and our villages.



Economic Impact Snapshot

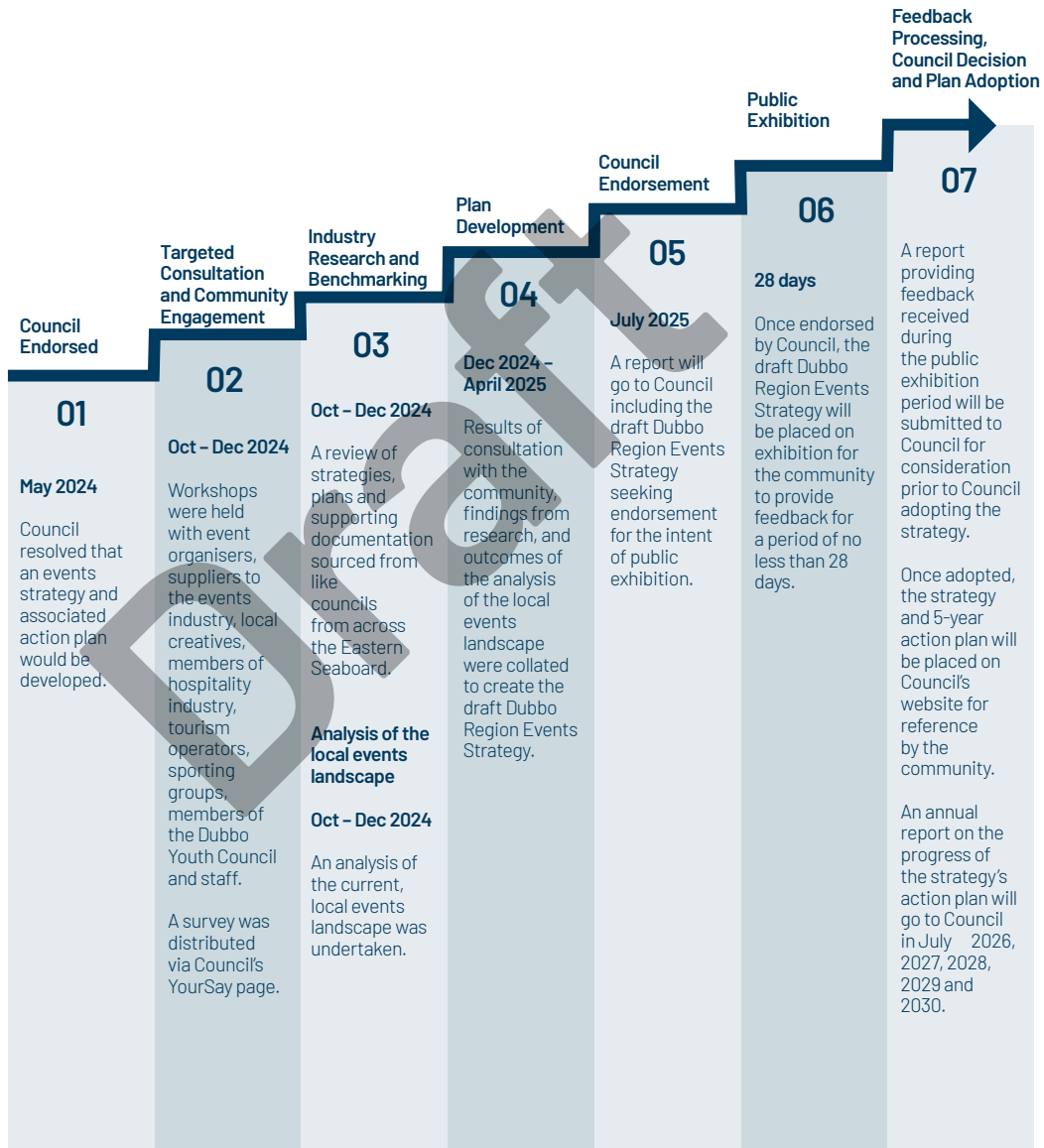
<p>200,000 people</p> <p>Catchment population</p>	<p>8 Major events</p> <p>\$18.7M economic benefit</p>	<p>National and state level facilities</p>
<p>Beds > 5,000</p> <p>Commercial properties</p>	<p>Daily flights</p> <p>in and out of Sydney</p>	
<p>\$277</p> <p>Visitor spend per person per night*</p>	<p>29 Local-led</p> <p>Annual events (500+ attendees)</p>	

*Tourism Research Australia based on two years average spending YE June (2023-2024)

How we developed this strategy

Dubbo Regional Council developed this plan through an analysis of the current events landscape, online research and community consultation.

A deep dive into the 2024 events program helped to uncover gaps and opportunities, whilst desktop research informed Council of opportunities and challenges faced by similarly sized regional centres. Industry workshops and one-on-one meetings with key external and internal stakeholders unveiled the needs and aspirations of our community.



What our community told us

In 2024, we undertook a comprehensive engagement process to ensure the Dubbo Region Events Strategy reflects the needs and aspirations of those who bring our events to life.

As part of this process, we:

- Hosted 16 workshops with key stakeholders, providing a collaborative space to share ideas, challenges, and opportunities.
- Conducted one-on-one meetings with event organisers, creatives, suppliers, hospitality venues, performers, tourism operators, and sporting organisations to gain deeper insights into their experiences and needs.
- Collected valuable feedback from industry professionals and the broader community, helping to shape a strategic approach to event development, support, and innovation.

“ I don't know what you do and how you can support my event. ”

“ It's hard to find volunteers. ”

“ Council needs to provide more support. ”

“ We need help to promote our event. ”

“ There are too many forms to fill out. ”

“ Council's hire charges are too expensive. ”

“ We want more live music events (Youth Council). ”

“ Council and the community lack the understanding and appreciation of the arts and culture. ”

“ We don't know what's on. ”

“ I find out about the event after it's been held. ”

“ Lack of free events for families and access to public transport. ”

“ The event calendar on dubboregion.com.au is difficult to navigate. ”

“ Council needs to provide in-kind support. ”

“ Council favours sporting events. ”

“ Council needs to invest in local and externally organised cultural events. ”



Via our survey, in order of preference, our community told us they value experiences that ...

- 1  Celebrate different cultures
- 2  Include live performances
- 3  Offer entertainment for my family
- 4  Allow me to enjoy my favourite sport
- 5  Are cost free
- 6  Allow me to taste regional produce or provide a dining experience
- 7  Allow me to indulge in a special interest
- 8  Provide insights into our local history
- 9  Spark my creativity

Events generate enormous economic and social value. They bring our community together, support our arts and small business and contribute significantly to our community's well-being and our destination appeal.



Guiding principles

When developing strategic documents, three guiding principles ensure that Council remains connected to and representative of community needs and voices. The principles detailed below steer the Dubbo Region Events Strategy:

1

Integrated and Coordinated Proactive Approach

Federal, State and Local Government acts, regulations, policies and licensing as well as Council-led management policies.

2

Evidence-Based Decision Making

Continuous review and assessment of the current events landscape and consultation with the community will help inform future actions under the strategy.

3

Monitoring and Evaluation

The strategy sets out a five-year framework supported by an action plan that will be reviewed annually to monitor progress and adapt to community needs, ensuring that focus areas and priority actions are planned for and resourced.

Cultural events are gatherings that showcase aspects such as religion, cuisine, music, art, and other elements unique to a particular group or commonly shared. These events provide an opportunity for people to come together, socialise, connect, create, share meals, and find inspiration.

What is an event?

It is a gathering open to members of the public to attend. It can be a small gathering or an event of significant scope and scale. It can be described as a festival, fair, show, market or sporting event. It can be staged indoors or outdoors, on privately owned land or on public land. This strategy does not cover private events, conferences, regular gatherings or locally organised sporting events.

Council context

Council's role is to maximise outcomes from events held in the Dubbo Region. Council's Events Unit takes carriage of event support, compliance and capacity building.

Our core roles are:

Event support: single point of contact for events, strategic advice, financial assistance, best practice event management, guidance and facilitation of capacity building and skill development. Council also supports the promotion of events via a number of online, digital, broadcast and out-of-home touchpoints.

Event permits: facilitation of compliance and regulatory requirements for public events held on public land.

Event attraction: securing externally organised events that deliver economic, cultural and social benefits.

The Events Unit provides support to Council ceremonies and civic events, such as the Australia Day events as well as Anzac Day and Remembrance Day.

The Events Unit is not structured to curate or deliver community events.

Core roles of the Events Unit

The following pyramid graph indicates and provides a representation of where staff spend their time in relation to the key roles of the Events Unit.



Council's role is to champion community desires, advocate for event organisers and seek out opportunities to strengthen event activity and propel cultural, social and economic outcomes that can be delivered through building event capacity and capability.

Regional context

The Dubbo Regional Local Government Area (Dubbo Region) is situated 350 km north-west of Sydney and comprises of a major regional city, a township and 16 villages.

The Dubbo Region has a population of 56,600 (2023 REPLAN) and is anticipated to grow by almost 10,000 people by 2041. Serving as a core regional city for neighbouring towns, the city of Dubbo services a population of 200,000 and a land area one-third the size of NSW.

Key industries across the region include construction, health care and social assistance and accommodation and food services. With both public and private investment, the Dubbo Region continues to experience sustainable long-term growth. Significant growth is attributed to projects including NSW's first Renewable Energy Zone (Central West Orana), the Dubbo Project (polymetallic resource of rare earth materials), New Dubbo Bridge, Old Dubbo Gaol Heritage Plaza, Taronga Western Plains Zoo Serengeti Plains Visitor Experience and Eco-Accommodation, Inland Rail Narramine to Narrabri and the Mindyarra Maintenance Centre. The projects are expected to provide over 8,000 jobs in the region in the next five years with increased population to support the infrastructure projects.

With the events and tourism sectors closely intertwined, they play a vital role in supporting the growth of the region. Major events, such as festivals and sporting competitions, attract visitors from outside the area, boosting demand for local services including accommodation, dining, transportation and retail.

This influx of visitors and new residents not only generates direct economic benefits but also enhances the region's visibility and reputation as a vibrant destination. In turn, strong tourism infrastructure, supports the success of events by offering appealing amenities and experiences. Together these create a cycle of economic stimulation, job creation and community engagement that contributes to the sustainable development of our growing region.



Tourism context

Tourism is one of the key pillars in the Dubbo Region's economy, with visitors adding approximately \$155 million annually through spending on accommodation, dining, attractions and retail. The influx of tourism supports regional businesses and sustains employment across various sections.

Led by Taronga Western Plains Zoo, which welcomes around 300,000 visitors annually, the Dubbo Region offers a solid mix of visitor experiences including the Old Dubbo Gaol, Wellington Caves and the Royal Flying Doctor Service Visitor Experience. Dubbo Regional Council has a key marketing focus on attracting families to the region, with family focused events and activities.

Economic contribution from the tourism sector into the Dubbo Region

By integrating tourism and events strategies, Dubbo Region leverages its attractions and a vibrant events calendar to draw visitors, thereby driving economic development and reinforcing its position as a leading destination in Central NSW.

Dubbo Regional Council provides funding for events that focus on boosting the local economy and bringing people from outside the area to the Dubbo Region.

Council's support for events, ranging from major festivals to cultural gatherings, directly feeds into the Region's tourism success by increasing visitor numbers and spend, while showcasing Dubbo as a dynamic and welcoming destination.

In 2024, Council's event attraction program secured eight major sporting events, generating an economic impact of \$18.7 million. Six of these events involved junior competitors who travelled with their families, increasing the likelihood of visitors arriving early or extending their stay to visit local family-focussed attractions..



Visitors to the Dubbo Region	
	Two years average Year Ending June (2023-2024)*
Domestic - Day Trip	764,924
Domestic - Overnight	712,114
International	12,600
Total Visitors - Dubbo Region	1,489,637

Average Domestic and International Stay and Spend	
Two years average Spending Year Ending June (2023-2024)*	Current Average
Domestic - Day Trip Spend (no nights)	\$185
Domestic - Average Stay (nights)	2.2 nights
Domestic - Average Spend per Night	\$277
Domestic - Average Spend per Trip	\$614
International - Average Spend per Night	\$31
International - Average Spend per Trip	\$1,264

*Source Tourism Research Australia

Events and festivals are intrinsically linked with the visitor economy. This strategy will align the support and attraction of events with Council's destination marketing activity.

Why events are important

Events are powerful drivers of social cohesion, cultural expression, economic growth and community pride and well-being.

Factors such as an events program, target market and scope and scale influence outcomes and largely determine what benefits can be delivered to the community.

Events deliver **cultural** outcomes

Attributes

- Showcase our history and heritage
- Support the collaboration between local creatives
- Celebrate traditions and belief systems
- Boost creativity and innovation
- They are family focused

Outcomes

- Engage our creatives and live performance industry
- Support small business
- Enhance connectivity and community pride
- Provide a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and history



Events deliver **social** outcomes

Attributes

- Appeal to groups of locals and visitors
- Inclusive with broad community appeal
- Have an engaging program that promotes escapism

Outcomes

- Promote a sense of belonging and wellbeing
- Enhance the sense of place and liveability
- Support small to medium businesses



Events deliver **economic** outcomes

Attributes

- Attract mass participation or mass gatherings
- Are held over multiple days
- Are held outside school holiday and long weekend periods
- Has a marketing reach outside the LGA
- Engage a significant number of local suppliers, vendors and stallholders
- Can provide evidence-based visitor numbers

Outcomes

- Direct and indirect economic impacts
- Provide destination marketing opportunities
- Elevate the Dubbo Region's reputation as an events destination
- Support job creation and retention
- Stimulate asset or infrastructure development/renewal
- Draw the attention of local and regional media
- Incentivise return visitation as a tourist



Our events landscape 2024

The Dubbo Region boasts a stable of home-grown community events and an expanding portfolio of externally organised major sporting events. Understanding our region's profile and identity is integral to the growth and prosperity of our annual events calendar.

The Dubbo Region boasts an evolving events landscape that reflects diverse interests, different cultures, and the deep-seeded passion of our event organisers. With a mix of annual festivals, cultural celebrations and recreation events our event calendar plays a crucial role in enhancing social cohesion, driving tourism, and stimulating the local economy.

Events in our region are spread throughout the year, creating opportunities for residents and visitors to engage in unique and memorable experiences. However, some months—particularly January, February, and November—remain underutilised, presenting potential gaps for new event development. Identifying and addressing these gaps will ensure a well-balanced event calendar that maximises participation and benefits for the entire community.

The annual NAIDOC celebrations honour and showcase Indigenous Australian culture, while multicultural events provide platforms for diverse groups to share their traditions, cuisine, and artistry. Strengthening the synergy between Indigenous and multicultural events through event curation, production and timing, will further enrich our cultural programming and create deeper connections between communities.

Large-scale sporting events are a significant pillar of our event landscape, with competitions and tournaments drawing participants and spectators from across the state and beyond. From grassroots sports to elite-level competitions, these events not only foster community spirit but also position our region as a hub for high-calibre sporting activity. Continued investment in the attraction of these events during low visitation periods will enhance Dubbo's reputation as a go-to destination for major sporting events ultimately fuelling our economy and supporting long-term economic growth.

Creative empowerment builds meaningful and successful events.





Event classifications

In the Dubbo Region, events can be segmented into four classes based on the individual event's programming, audience and outcomes.

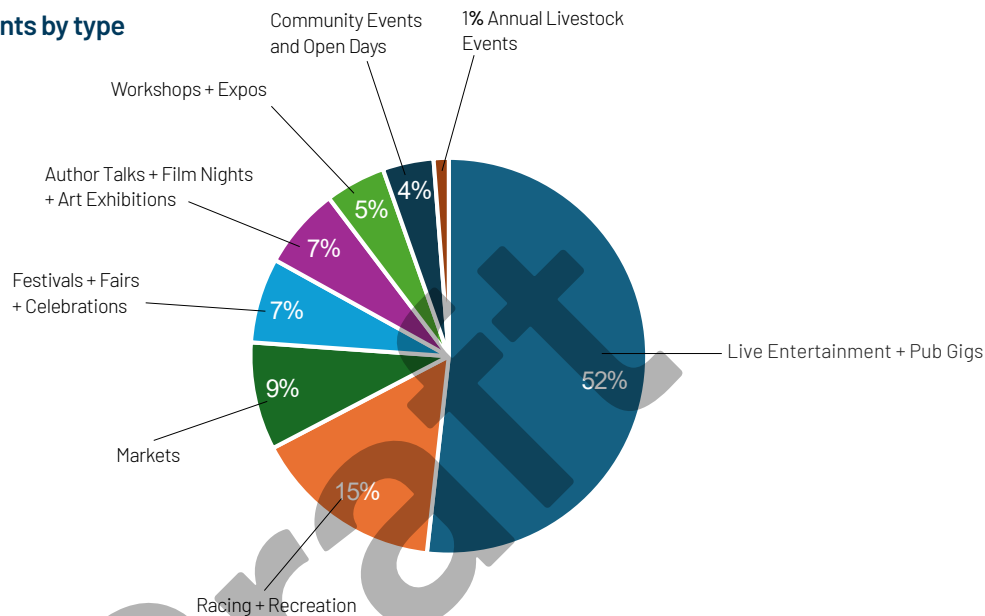
Community Events	Regional Events : 1,000 people or more	Major events : >20% attendance from outside LGA	Large Scale Events : >50% attendance from outside LGA
Events with a focus on community engagement and well-being. These events may promote our community's history and culture.	Events that celebrate our region, attract large numbers of locals and via programming create distinctive experiences with broad appeal.	Locally organised events that have broad community appeal, attract visitors and have the potential to showcase our Region.	Events arranged by external event organisers that include mass participation or attract mass gatherings.
Outcomes	Outcomes	Outcomes	Outcomes
Community well-being and connectivity, sharing of traditions and experiences, and support for creatives and performing artists.	Strong social and cultural benefits, adds diversity to the events calendar, engages suppliers and small business, and facilitates skill and volunteer development.	Delivers strong economic, social and cultural benefits, builds the region's reputation as a destination for events, has strong regional brand connections generating strong public relations and marketing opportunities.	Delivers strong economic, social and cultural benefits, builds the region's reputation as a destination for events, generates leads and provides significant media attraction and marketing opportunities.
Examples	Examples	Examples	Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fong Lees Lane NAIDOC Celebrations Michael Egan Book Fair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beers to the Bush Cross Cultural Carnival Man from Ironbark Festival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dubbo Stampede Dubbo MotorFest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Rugby Junior State Championships Little Athletics Region 3 Championships.

Types of events

In 2024, 649 event listings were processed by Council and promoted via a range of channels. (Refer page 22).

Live Entertainment and Pub Gigs are at the forefront of event activity with 52% of the annual events calendar offering live music and performances across a range of venues. Festivals, Fairs and Celebrations represented 7% of activity across the LGA presenting opportunities to build on this type of event activity.

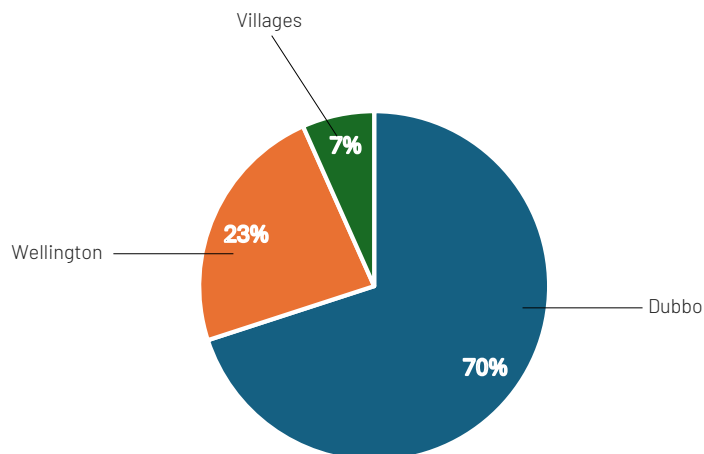
Events by type



Locations

Event and market activity takes place across the LGA. Not surprisingly, and due to its population base, access to accommodation and venues, the majority of event activity is staged in Dubbo.

Events and markets in our LGA



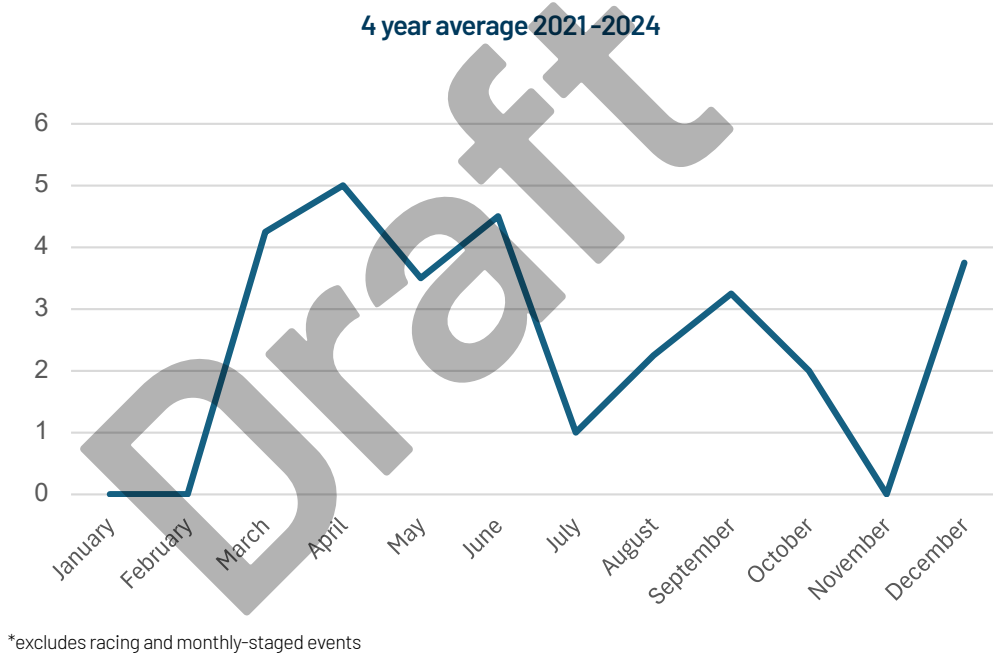
Annual community-led events

An analysis of annual event activity spanning four years, 2021-2024 shows that locally organised events recovered well following the pandemic in 2020/2021.

In 2024, the Dubbo Region hosted 29 annual events organised by the community, attracting 500 people or more.

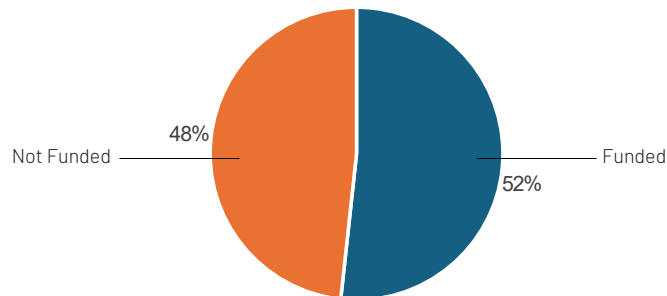
As demonstrated by the graph below, no local events (audience >500) are held in January and February likely due to seasonal heat conditions. In March event activity is strong peaking in April with our region enjoying moderate temperatures during these months. In July, there is a trough in event activity with only the local NAIDOC celebrations held during this time. Event activity rises again in Autumn and peaking in December due to Christmas/New Year event activity.

The months of January, February, July and November present opportunities to introduce new, home-grown events that would enrich the region's event calendar and ensure year-round activity.



In 2024 Council provided funding assistance to 15 locally organised, annual events delivering a range of social, cultural and economic benefits.

Council fund 52% of local annual events



Events that were supported financially by Council in 2024.

✓ Great Australian Stone Festival	✓ ORISCON Harmony Week Gala Nite	✓ Dubbo MotorFest
✓ Holi Mela Festival of Colours	✓ Stock Route Country Music Festival	✓ NAIDOC Celebrations Dubbo and Wellington
✓ Wellington Rotary Vintage Fair and Swap Meet	✓ Wellington Show	✓ Under Western Skies Festival
✓ Burrendong Fishing Classic	✓ Dubbo Eisteddfod	✓ Cross Cultural Carnivale
✓ Man from Ironbark Festival	✓ Dubbo Winter Whiskey Festival	✓ Carols by Candlelight Dubbo and Geurie



The event ecosystem

The Event Ecosystem is an interconnected network of stakeholders that collectively connect, or benefit from, event activity. Events generate spend throughout multiple industry and business sectors across the Dubbo Region. Events boost tourism, support creatives, create jobs and stimulate direct and in-direct spend.



What we do: We support events

Council plays a vital role in supporting event organisers, providing guidance and resources to assist the delivery of events that are well-planned, safe, sustainable and align to Council's strategic objectives. The delivery and ownership of the event remains with the organiser. Council does not deliver events. Council is committed to strengthening the capacity of event organisers and fostering a thriving, diverse events calendar.

Support extends across various areas, including strategic advice, assistance to plan events based on best-practice event management, advice on how to market and promote an event through to post event analysis. By empowering event organisers with the tools and knowledge needed to deliver high-quality events, Council helps create a dynamic events landscape that benefits the local economy, tourism, and community well-being.

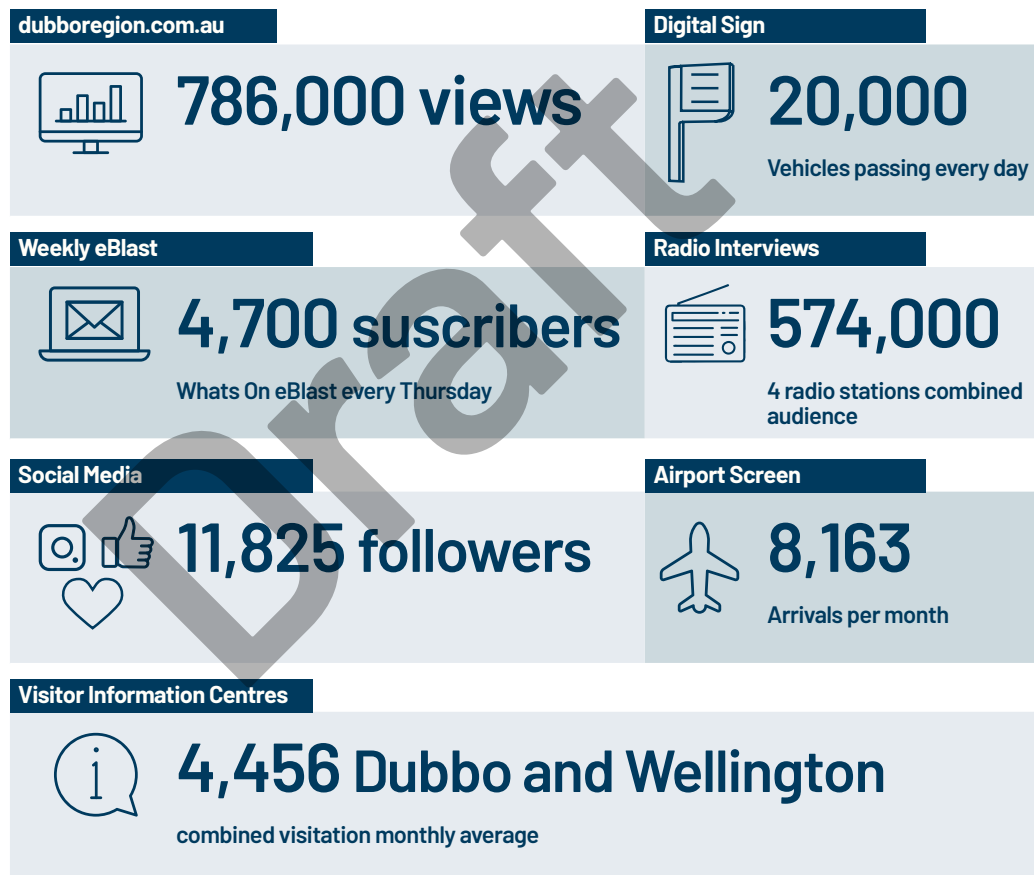


How we promote events

Council provides a range of free promotional opportunities across multiple channels. At the centre of this effort is the Dubbo Region Events Calendar, which serves as a key resource for residents, tourists, media and organisers to discover what's happening across the region.

In addition to a calendar listing, eligible events may also benefit from broader exposure through various promotional channels, including the weekly "What's On" eBlast, the digital sign at Elston Park, Dubbo Region social media platforms and screens at both the Dubbo and Wellington Visitor Information Centres and the Dubbo Regional Airport. Events may also be featured in the weekly "What's On" radio segment, broadcast every Friday across four local stations.

Through these initiatives, Council is committed to helping event organisers maximise their reach and impact, as part of our broader strategy to support and strengthen the region's diverse events landscape. This includes advice regarding the most effective ways that organisers can market and promote their events.



Access to the Events Calendar following this link: www.dubboregion.com.au/events

or scan the QR code



What we do: We permit events

Under Section 68 of the Local Government Act, any public event held on public land requires Council approval. This process ensures events meet safety, regulatory, and compliance requirements while minimising risks to attendees, the environment, and surrounding infrastructure.

Safety emergency and risk, environmental compliance and corporate governance staff are responsible for regulatory compliance. The Events Unit plays a crucial role in guiding and supporting event organisers through the permit application process. This includes helping organisers to understand their obligations under State and Local acts, regulations, policies, and standards and ensuring they have the necessary documentation and plans in place.

By working collaboratively with event organisers, Council aims to facilitate a smooth and efficient approval process supporting events and, at the same time, increasing the capacity of event organisers to deliver safe, well-managed, and successful events.

In 2024, the Events Unit processed 55 event permits across 24 locations within the LGA.



What we do: We attract events

Large-scale events are powerful drivers of liveability, economic growth, and destination branding. They bring communities together, enhance the region's cultural vibrancy, and reinforce a destination's reputation as an event-friendly hub.

Beyond their immediate appeal, these events generate long-term benefits, including job creation, business growth, and infrastructure investment. They stimulate local industries such as hospitality, tourism, retail, and transport, while fostering innovation and attracting further event opportunities.

Moreover, large-scale events instil community pride, encouraging residents to engage with and celebrate their region. By positioning the Dubbo Region as a premier host for large-scale events, we enhance our profile, foster economic resilience, and elevate desirability as a place to live, work, and visit.

Who we target and why



Mass participation (sporting events) with junior competitors

- ✓ Increase spend and visitor night stays outside school holiday periods.
- ✓ Support our local tourism industry
- ✓ Create opportunities for local sporting clubs to increase skills of junior players through exposure/ interaction with elite-level competitors
- ✓ Builds the experience and capacity of sporting officials and volunteers
- ✓ Return immediate tourism benefits and/or return visitation
- ✓ Have broad participation appeal
- ✓ Can be secured over multiple years
- ✓ Return sustained growth and reputation capital



Mass gatherings (live entertainment events)

- ✓ Attract visitation from outside the Dubbo Regional Council LGA
- ✓ Deliver economic benefits through purchase of goods and services via our local event supply chain
- ✓ Create opportunities to engage local musicians, as well as suppliers to the live entertainment industry
- ✓ Heighten our liveability and generate civic pride
- ✓ Have broad spectator appeal
- ✓ Return social and cultural benefits

In 2024, Council secured eight events delivering a combined economic impact of \$18.7 Million. The economic impact of each event is calculated based on the number of visitors x number of nights x domestic overnight spend.
ref: Tourism Research Australia's Quarterly Report

	Event	Month	Nights	Visitors	TRA Domestic Overnight Spend pp*	Economic Benefit
1	Cricket NSW State Challenge	Jan	4	950	\$293	\$1,113,400
2	Little Athletics NSW Region 3	Feb	2	1,600	\$293	\$937,600
3	NSW Touch Junior State Cup**	Feb	3	11,000	\$293	\$9,669,000
4	Bowls NSW Championships	Feb	4	1,700	\$293	\$1,992,400
5	NSW Junior Rugby Championships U14 Boys and Girls	June	3	3,000	\$291	\$2,619,000
6	Veterans Cricket NSW over 60s	Oct	5	300	\$277	\$415,500
7	Veterans Cricket NSW over 70s	Nov	7	300	\$277	\$581,700
8	Cricket NSW Youth Championships	Dec	4	1,200	\$277	\$1,329,600
						\$18,658,200

**The NSW Touch Junior State Cup brought over 11,000 visitors to the region including surrounding towns such as Narromine and Gilgandra and estimated to have injected over \$9 million into the wider region.

*Ref. Tourism Research Australia's Quarterly Report

Events should not be seen as a cost centre, rather as a driver of economic, social and cultural impacts for the region. The benefits and value of events should be measured and these event impacts should ideally be communicated both internally and externally to showcase the value of events. Events Research Paper 2021.

Key strengths

Our competitive strengths in the event attraction market

- Strategically located in the centre of New South Wales
- Access to a catchment population of 200,000 people
- Strong transport links including road, rail and air
- Envyable air services including daily flights via two airlines Sydney/Dubbo/Sydney
- Availability of 5,000 beds in the Dubbo Region's commercial accommodation sector
- State-of-the-art and elite-level venues and sporting fields
- A strong tourism brand leveraging the iconic Taronga Western Plains Zoo
- Strategic linkages between destination marketing to attract visitors and destination marketing to attract large-scale sporting events
- A proven record for successfully hosting large-scale elite level sporting events
- Well-developed event supply industry
- The region is at the forefront of major advances in the green energy opening opportunities to attract trade/industry events, particularly to Wellington
- Wellington has natural attributes to support adventure sports and attract major event activity
- Gentle terrain are attributes attractive to car and bike rallies
- Distinct seasons



Key opportunities

Our natural attributes

Wellington is uniquely positioned to become a prime destination for adventure sports and outdoor events, thanks to its diverse natural landscapes and accessible terrain. Key natural assets include:

- Burrendong Dam – A premier location for water-based sports, including fishing competitions, skiing and paddle sports.
- Mount Arthur – Offering rugged terrain ideal for trail running, mountain biking, and adventure races.
- Macquarie and Bell Rivers – Providing a scenic setting for paddle sports, dragon boat races, and water-based recreational events.
- Cycle and Running Trails – A well-established network of trails suitable for marathons, cycling races, and multisport endurance events.

A key action of the Dubbo Region Events Strategy is to explore opportunities for Wellington to become a host destination for regional and state-level competitions.

By leveraging our natural attributes and investing in strategic locational positioning, the Dubbo Region can strengthen its reputation as a premier destination for outdoor adventure and competitive sports.

Our Indigenous community

Across Australia, events celebrating Indigenous culture, traditions, and deep connections to Country play a vital role in storytelling, education, and cultural preservation. With Indigenous residents making up 16.6% of the Dubbo Region's population, our community is uniquely positioned to initiate an event that not only honours Indigenous Australian heritage but also elevates young and emerging Indigenous talent and fosters Indigenous entrepreneurship.

From storytellers, artists, and musicians to dancers, filmmakers, and actors, we are home to a thriving cultural community that offers event organisers an abundance of talent and creative expertise. These practitioners bring depth and authenticity to events, ensuring that local and visiting audiences experience genuine and meaningful cultural engagement.

A key focus of the Dubbo Region Events Strategy is to foster stronger collaboration between event organisers, the creative community and our Indigenous People.

This strategy will align with actions under Council's Reflect Reconciliation Plan and support development of Indigenous sporting and cultural events.

*ABS 2021



STRATEGY**Our passion for cars and bikes**

Our community has an inherent passion for cars and bikes, a desire that is clearly reflected in the success of events such as the monthly meet of Dubbo Classic Cars and Coffee, and the large crowds attending the newly created Dubbo MotorFest. These events highlight our community's strong appetite for all things automotive, attracting car enthusiasts, collectors, and bike lovers from near and far. Further, owners of unique and iconic cars and bikes are often older, have greater expendable incomes and they prefer to travel outside school holiday periods.

With purpose-built venues like Morris Park Speedway and Lincoln County Speedway, Dubbo is well-equipped to host motorsport events. Additionally, the Wellington Aerodrome is perfectly suited to support drag racing and other high-octane activities.

A key goal of the Dubbo Region Events Strategy is to promote Dubbo as a premier destination for a variety of motorsport-related events, including rallies, ride-ins, and regional qualifiers. By capitalising on our existing infrastructure and the community's passion for cars and bikes, Dubbo can become a leading hub for motorsport in the wider region, drawing in enthusiasts and competitors from across the State.

Our sporting fields

Dubbo boasts a high standard of sporting infrastructure, with world-class playing fields that support a variety of sports, including football, cricket, and athletics. These facilities position Dubbo as a key player in attracting and hosting major sporting events that have a significant positive impact on both the community and the local economy.

Council strategically seeks to attract major sporting events that are staged outside school holiday periods and secured over multiple years. By doing so, we can ensure that Council-owned and managed facilities are utilised to their full potential, generating economic activity, tourism, and community engagement throughout the year.

Securing these events on a long-term basis not only brings economic benefits, including increased visitor numbers, accommodation bookings, and local business revenue but also helps to create a sense of pride within the community, foster skill development of players and volunteers, and provide an opportunity for residents to engage with high-quality sporting competitions on their home turf. Through this approach, Dubbo can build a reputation as a premier sporting destination, delivering ongoing benefits for both the local economy and the broader region.

This strategy will align with the Central Orana Regional Economic Development Strategy and its action to develop the region as a hub for regional sporting events.



STRATEGY

Our gap in winter

The Dubbo Region enjoys strong visitation, especially during the spring and autumn school holiday periods, thanks to attractions like Taronga Western Plains Zoo, which draws families and leisure travellers to the area. These periods see high demand for accommodation, providing a boost to local businesses and the region's tourism sector.

However, July experiences soft visitation. Event activity is also minimal during the month of July. This presents a significant opportunity for the development of a new winter-themed event, particularly one that appeals to families and capitalises on the school holiday period.

By creating a unique, family-friendly winter event, the Dubbo Region can fill the seasonal gap, attracting visitors during a traditionally quieter time. This would not only help increase bed occupancy rates and support local businesses but also contribute to the region's destination marketing activities, offering an exciting new attraction to both residents and visitors alike. The winter event would provide an opportunity for the community to showcase its creativity and foster a new tradition that could grow in significance year after year.

Our support to events

Consultation with event organisers revealed limited awareness of the various types of support Council provides to events especially beyond formal funding programs. There is also some confusion around how and why different levels of support are offered to locally developed events versus those attracted to the region.

A key opportunity for Council is to promote its objective event support decision-making framework, helping organisers and the broader community understand the rationale behind support levels.

Whilst Council is not structured to deliver events, it can help steer the passion and creative flair of a new event committee by providing best-practice event management guidance.

Conversely, a longstanding event may seek funding from Council to help market the event to audiences outside the Dubbo Regional LGA.

Staff time and financial support can be equally important depending on what stage the event sits on its lifecycle.

With measured and strategic support, events such as previously held DREAM Festival, and the current Cross Cultural Carnivale, Dubbo Stampede and Dubbo MotorFest, have potential to develop into flagship or hallmark events.

The development of an Event Support Policy will articulate Council's strategic, meaningful and measurable support to events depending on the event's outcomes and its lifecycle position (startup, growth, maturity and decline) with each stage presenting opportunities and challenges and requiring different levels of assistance.

Definitions:

Flagship Event: Reflects the unique culture of a place, drives overnight visitation, and delivers long-term regional benefits. (NSW Government Regional Event Fund)

Hallmark Event: A recurring event with such tradition, appeal, or publicity value that it defines the image or brand of the destination, the host venue, community or destination with a competitive advantage. Over time, the event and destination can become inseparable.

Ref: International Journal of Event Management Research



Our youth

The Council's Youth Action Plan, developed through months of comprehensive community and stakeholder consultation, identified several focus areas. One key area is to "attract and support events, recreation, and social opportunities." The Plan also emphasises Council's commitment to "support and attract events, programs, and services that promote youth mental health, social engagement, and opportunities for skill development." Further, under the Department of Regional NSW's Regional Youth Insights Report, a priority area for Central West and Orana included, 'Provide additional recreation activities and events'.

While our young people have opportunities to develop and nurture skills as musicians, singer/songwriters, and dancers through access to a conservatorium of music, four theatre companies, and six dance studios, there is a gap in our annual events calendar that meets the specific entertainment needs of our youth. Whilst Council stages a number of Youth Week events there remains an imbalance between family events and those specifically designed for young people (aged 12-24 years) which make up 32.8% of our residential population.

Council's support for the development of grass-roots live entertainment events appealing to young people, and/or its attraction of brand-led music festivals for youth will help bridge the current gap in our annual events calendar and help deliver outcomes for state and local plans.



'57% of youth noted that a 'more fun and interesting things' initiatives would make life in their town and surrounding areas better (most common answer), Priority areas for Central West and Orana, Regional Youth Insights Report

Key challenges

Streamlining Compliance Obligations

Section 68 of the *NSW Local Government Act 1993* outlines activities that generally require prior approval from the Council before being carried out. This includes a range of activities on public land, such as hosting events, engaging in trade or business, and using public address systems.

Council is responsible for issuing event permits and ensuring that activities are meeting local and state regulations. Our volunteer-run event organisers are sometimes reluctant to obtain these approvals due to several factors, including a perceived administrative burden, a lack of awareness of their obligations, concerns about potential delays or restrictions and fatigue.

Event organisers may not be aware of the importance of timelines, placing pressure on staff to review documentation within short lead times.

During the consultation phase, event organisers raised issues regarding the paperwork required by Council to permit events. A key action under the strategy is to investigate programs and systems that have the capacity to streamline event permits and reduce the burden placed on both the event organiser and Council, whilst maintaining legal obligations to protect the event organisers, members of the public and Council.

Event bidding and hosting fees

In the current competitive landscape hosting rights to stage a large-scale event is increasingly transactional. Third-party brokers, promoters and sporting organisations now often require Councils to pay for the rights to host their event. Regional centres such as Dubbo, Bathurst, Orange, Mudgee, Tamworth, and Wagga Wagga are all vying for the same high-profile events, making it a highly competitive market.

However, Council does not have an unlimited pool of funds or human resources to incentivise major events. Strategic decision-making is essential to ensure that each event opportunity is evaluated based on the potential outcomes it can generate. Council's return on investment is multifaceted and includes:

- Economic benefits, such as increased visitor numbers, tourism spending, and local business activity.
- Reputational outcomes from hosting state and national-level events, which enhance the region's status as a premier event destination.
- Social and cultural benefits, fostering community engagement and promoting diversity and inclusion.

To ensure the sustainable attraction and retention of these events, a key action in this strategy is to collaborate with local businesses through a partnership framework. This collaboration will provide tangible return benefits for businesses that invest in attracting large-scale events to the region. By pooling resources and building these strategic partnerships, Council can better support the long-term success of securing major events while sharing rewards with the local business community.

Well-managed events are an important part of the development of vibrant sustainable local communities, contributing to the community social fabric and the local economy. Increasingly, successful events have become an important strategy underpinning local economic development. It has also become increasingly clear that poorly managed events can result in significant environmental and personal harm. Developing a Council Community Events Policy – A Toolkit for NSW Councils – NSW Government Premier & Cabinet.

Lack of purpose-built outdoor event spaces

While the Dubbo Region boasts several attractive indoor venues for events, the availability of purpose-built outdoor (non-sporting) event spaces remains limited. The Dubbo and Wellington Showgrounds are the only primary venues designed to support a wide range of multi-faceted events. The region's showgrounds are fenced, offer undercover options, provide amenities, ample parking and attributes to support large-scale events attracting large numbers of people. However, these spaces are in high demand, with limited availability for event organisers. In 2024, the Dubbo Showground hosted 143 events and was booked for 264 out of 365 days, including event activity every weekend of the year. This high occupancy leaves little room for additional or new events to be scheduled.

Furthermore, there is a perception among external event organisers that the showground spaces do not meet high standards, which has led to a reluctance to book them for events. However, these spaces are well-equipped and fully capable of accommodating large-scale events.

Ollie Robbins Oval, while capable of hosting major events, presents challenges due to the lack of shade, fencing and car parking spaces. Event activity held on this location also impacts community access to Tracker Riley Cycleway. This has led event organisers to seek alternative venues, such as Victoria Park. However, Victoria Park is not designed for events; it holds a Regional Park classification and requires a high level of maintenance to ensure it is presented at a standard that can be enjoyed by the community and visitors. Its use for high-impact, large-scale events presents several issues:

- High turf quality and maintenance standards: The turf is maintained to a high standard for passive recreation and community enjoyment. Large-scale events can cause significant wear and damage, resulting in costly restoration and temporary loss of access for the public.
- Underground services: The Park has a network of underground utilities, which pose hazards for event organisers. These services must be marked, adding costs and complexity to event planning.
- Wet weather concerns: Victoria Park is unsuitable for use during wet weather, leading to further potential costs for the event organiser and heightened risks based on a requirement of the event to relocate to an alternate location.

This means increased costs and logistical challenges for event organisers and highlights the need for Council to investigate additional purpose-built event space in Dubbo.

The proposed development of the Macquarie River Event Precinct is currently in abeyance and subject to availability of funding. A key action under this strategy is to investigate availability of open spaces in the City in line with community desires, needs of event organisers and land management expectations.

As identified in both the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan and the Public Art Strategy, the inclusion of event activity in public spaces can add life to public spaces and create welcoming and safe locations for the community to gather and socialise. This strategy will also include the investigation into the activation of public spaces to support small-scale event activity.



STRATEGY

Fluctuation in event activity

In 2025, event organisers in the Dubbo Region are grappling with a number of challenges:

- Rising costs, which are putting pressure on event budgets and making it harder to maintain the scale and quality of events.
- Increased competition for the discretionary dollar, as people have fewer funds to spend on events amidst economic uncertainty.
- Difficulty attracting sponsors, as businesses face their own financial pressures and are more selective about where they invest their resources.

In addition, a significant concern is the reliance on volunteers. Like many cities and towns across Australia, the Dubbo Region is seeing a decline in the availability and capacity of volunteers to help organise and run events. This trend, driven by factors such as economic downturns and changing social dynamics, has led to the biannual scheduling or even cancellation of some events.

The number of home-grown annual events in the Dubbo Region is projected to decline from 29 to 22 in 2025, reflecting the growing strain on resources and volunteer capacity.

This trend underscores the need for a strategic response to ensure that event sustainability is supported, not only from the point of view of an individual event, but the entire local events landscape.

Council support is vital to help events explore alternative revenue sources, market to audiences outside the LGA and implement innovative volunteer engagement strategies.

An action under this strategy will be to provide a business case to Council on establishing a team of staff within the Organisation to deliver events that achieve strong cultural, social and economic outcomes.

Demand on accommodation

According to Destination Country and Outback NSW Ltd's draft Odin360 report, the Dubbo Region's accommodation sector faces several significant challenges:

1. The Central West Orana REZ and other major projects have increased demand for accommodation, driving up costs and making it difficult for leisure travellers to find affordable options.
2. Local accommodation property purchases to house workers has reduced the availability of accommodation for leisure travellers, impacting the leisure tourism sector
3. Insufficient investment in new accommodation developments and upgrades to existing facilities has worsened the shortage and constrained sector growth.

The Odin360 report also cites an expected and substantial influx of people from major construction projects, impacting accommodation, hospitality housing and other work opportunities.

This strategy will include key actions for Council to help address the anticipated shortages in accommodation that will be available to our visitor market. Whilst supply and demand typically lead to higher overnight tariffs, Council can, through education and advocacy, raise awareness of the consequences of overly inflated room rates. Whilst this practice does not occur in isolation in the Dubbo Region, it is important to consider that our destination has to work much harder than our counterparts on the eastern seaboard to attract major sporting events and high-profile live entertainment events. Large-scale events drive visitation that not only benefits the accommodation industry, but also benefit our attractions, our hospitality industry and small business.

Understanding the opportunities that can be garnered and shared through event activity by businesses across various industries in our region is a key action under this strategy.

As DRC looks to consolidate its event strategy, relevant to this report is identifying the other elements of the event industry – from event attraction and acquisition capabilities to accommodation and supplier capacities – that provide the necessary comparative framework to understand how to position Dubbo at the top of the host destination consideration set in regional NSW and beyond.

Events Research Paper 2021

Focus areas

Through an analysis of the current events landscape, and extensive consultation with key stakeholders and the broader community, three distinct focus areas are identified to guide the future development of events in the Dubbo Region.

Each of these focus areas is supported by a series of strategic actions to be implemented over a five-year period. This framework provides a clear, structured path for Council to Provide, Lead, Collaborate and Advocate for events, as well as define the outcomes we aim to achieve for the community.

Focus Area 1: Our local events industry is diverse, culturally-rich and appealing

Through strategic advice, best-practice leadership and strong engagement we will help facilitate meaningful and impactful events that resonate broadly with the community.

Cultivate Local Events

Focus Area 2: Our community enjoys a strong and dynamic event ecosystem

We will forge robust connections and pathways for stakeholders to capitalise on and thrive from event activities. Through strategic marketing, we will amplify local and visiting audiences, driving sustained growth and engagement.

Drive Business through Events

Focus Area 3: The Dubbo Region is a premier destination for major and large-scale events

We will actively champion the strategic expansion of local events and attract major large-scale events, thereby cultivating a diverse and balanced portfolio that ensures event dispersal throughout the Local Government Area.

Grow and Attract Events



Activating the strategy

Dubbo Regional Council plays an active role as a Provider, Leader, Collaborator, and Advocate to support the growth and success of events across the Local Government Area.

Council as a Provider and Leader

- Offers resources and expertise to help event organisers implement best-practice management, ensuring events are safe, successful, and sustainable.
- Continuously reviews and improves management policies, making it easier for the community to initiate and develop events.
- Guides local businesses on how to maximise opportunities from event activity.

Council as a Collaborator

- Develops strategies that encourage event organisers to engage local artists, creatives, and small businesses.
- Provides financial support and tools to help local event organisers create meaningful, engaging events that address gaps in the event calendar.
- Invests in external large-scale events to secure long-term cultural, social, and economic benefits.

Council as an Advocate

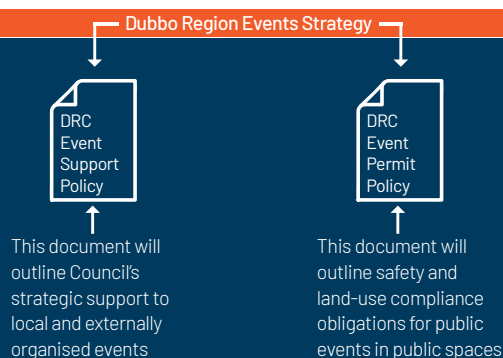
- Promotes events to help boost local attendance and attract visitors from outside the LGA.
- Markets the LGA to targeted audiences to increase large-scale event activity and its distribution across the region.
- Supports the expansion of locally organised annual events by promoting them to wider geographical markets.

This structured approach ensures that Dubbo Regional Council fosters a vibrant and diverse event landscape, benefiting both the community and the local economy.



Priority Actions

During the community consultation phase, it became evident that many event organisers and key stakeholders weren't fully aware of the types of support Council offers events. Furthermore, there was limited understanding of the rationale behind the varying levels of support provided. For example, the difference in support provided to a new community event compared to a large-scale sporting event. Council's key roles to support and permit events will be operationalised through the development of two key strategies.



Actions table

Focus Area 1: Our local events industry is diverse, culturally-rich and appealing. Through strategic advice, best-practice leadership and strong engagement we will help facilitate meaningful and impactful events that resonate broadly with the community.

Key: CCP: Community Culture and Places SPE: Strategy Partnerships and Engagement

Action	Responsible Division	Role of Council	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/2030
1. Develop an Event Support Policy that outlines Council's strategic support to local and externally organised events.	CCP	Provider	●				
2. Develop an Event Permit Policy that outlines safety and compliance obligations for public events in public spaces.	CCP	Provider	●				
3. Investigate a program that will streamline event applications.	CCP	Provider	●				
4. Investigate ways in which Council can help facilitate the initiation of cultural events and support events that engage local creatives and our live music industry.	CCP	Provider	●				
5. Develop a training program to help build the capacity of local event organisers	CCP	Provider	●	●	●	●	●
6. Develop tactics and resources to help event organisers attract and retain volunteers.	CCP	Provider		●			
7. Develop a business case for Council's consideration based on staff delivering events that will achieve strategic outcomes.	CCP	Provider					●

Focus Area 2: Our region enjoys a strong and dynamic event ecosystem. We will forge robust connections and pathways for stakeholders to capitalise on and thrive from event activities. Through strategic marketing, we will amplify local and visiting audiences, driving sustained growth and engagement.

Action	Responsible Division	Role of Council	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/2030
1. Investigate and implement additional ways to promote events to the local community.	CCP	Leader	●				
2. Develop collaborative opportunities for events seeking to promote to audiences outside the LGA.	CCP	Collaborator		●			
3. Investigate the use of public space to support niche and major event activity.	CCP	Leader			●		
4. Investigate strategies to address projected accommodation shortages to help meet future needs of event visitors.	SPE	Advocate					●
5. Develop a communications plan to heighten awareness of the business sector of the value of major events to the overall local economy.	CCP	Leader			●		
6. As part of the master planning project for the Dubbo and Wellington Showgrounds, investigate ways in which space can be made more attractive to event organisers.	CCP	Provider	●				

Focus Area 3: The Dubbo Region is a premier destination for major and large-scale events. We will actively champion the strategic expansion of local events and attract major large-scale events, thereby cultivating a diverse and balanced portfolio that ensures event dispersal throughout the Local Government Area.

Key: CCP: Community Culture and Places SPE: Strategy Partnerships and Engagement

Action	Responsible Division	Role of Council	2025/ 2026	2026/ 2027	2027/ 2028	2028/ 2029	2029/ 2030
1. Investigate ways in which Council can support the dispersal and growth of locally organised events throughout the LGA.	CCP	Leader					●
2. Investigate and report on the scope of Wellington becoming an adventure sports hub.	CCP	Leader					●
3. Develop a Corporate Partnership Program to attract private investment in the attraction of large-scale sporting events.	CCP	Collaborator			●		
4. Seek to attract a live entertainment event appealing to youth.	CCP	Advocate				●	
5. Develop marketing materials to attract externally organised events delivering strong economic and social benefits.	CCP	Advocate		●			

Measuring progress

Measuring and reporting on the strategy helps everyone understand how the region is progressing in supporting local events to launch and grow, creating a year-round offering of culturally rich, diverse and meaningful events. It will also articulate Council's progress against key outcome areas such as event attraction and dispersal of event activity across the LGA. In addition to internal quarterly updates, an annual report will be developed and provided to community. These reports will track progress, inform future bodies of work and will support evidence-based decision making. The Community Insights biennial survey provides quantifiable community insights on Council's services and living within the Dubbo Region. These figures are analysed and assessed against Council's corporate measures in a broader regional and environmental context to inform our priorities and actions.

Draft

Status	Version	Author	Date	Changes
Draft	1.0	Events and Partnerships Co-ordinator	July 2025	

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