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ALPINE SHIRE EVENTS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

DISCUSSION PAPER

ALPINE SHIRE COUNCIL | FEBRUARY 2021



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VERSION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Alpine Shire Council (Council) has engaged Urban Enterprise to prepare the *Alpine Shire Events Strategy and Action Plan*. This document covers a four-year period from 2021-25 and is intended to be a blueprint for Council to guide decision making, forward planning and strategic direction for events within the Shire.

As such, this Strategy, identifies the needs and priorities of the community and provides a clear and realistic framework for Council to guide the future delivery of events. The outcome of this is to ensure the sustainability of the events sector whilst delivering the best possible outcomes for the community.

This Discussion Paper provides preliminary findings and strategic considerations to inform the preparation of the Strategy. These findings are based on background research and analysis, as well as stakeholder consultation.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

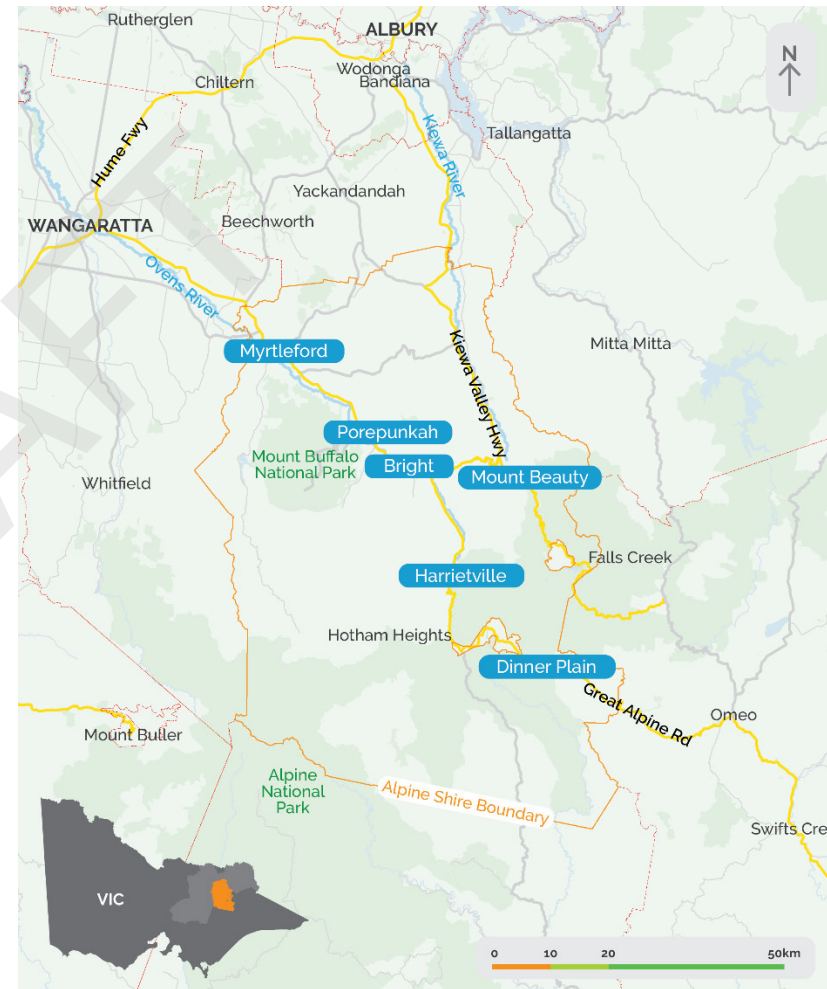
An analysis of the Shire's events sector was conducted by Urban Enterprise, drawing on information provided by Council, desktop research and consultation with community and industry. The findings from this analysis are summarised below.

Where relevant, this report takes into account the community and industry priorities at a **sub-regional** level, which disaggregates the Shire into the following key areas (based on Council's local tourism regions):

- Bright and surrounds;
- Harrietville and surrounds;
- Mt Beauty and surrounds;
- Myrtleford and surrounds;
- Dinner Plain; and
- Other towns as specified.

The Shire and key sub-regions is illustrated in Figure F1.

F1. ALPINE SHIRE



Source: Urban Enterprise, 2020

Events Profile

The Shire has a strong and popular events sector, totalling over 100 tourism and community events in 2018-19 and attracting around 170,000 attendees¹. This includes, based on survey estimates, around 122,000 visitors from outside the Shire, with the remaining attendees being local residents. As such, the events sector provides a significant contribution to the regional visitor economy.

The events calendar is heavily concentrated in the Bright area, which attracts over 50% of events and 64% of total attendees. This generally includes events being held during peak periods of high-visitation (e.g. public holidays, weekends). As a result, this creates congestion (and market saturation), leading to reduced resident amenity, and even safety issues within Bright.

The events sector also aligns with the branding and product strengths of the area, driven by nature-based events, sport and outdoor recreation. Whilst these are key drivers of visitation, there are opportunities to develop a more diverse range of event types, particularly *Arts and Culture* and *Food and Beverage* events. These events typically attract high-yielding lifestyle leader visitor markets and may provide higher contribution to the economy.

Event Infrastructure

A total of 58 significant event venues/facilities were audited, based on information provided by Council, stakeholder consultation and desktop research.

Around one-third of all venues are located in the Bright area. Over half the audited facilities are outdoor venues only, which caters to the large proportion of outdoor and nature-based events. However, this presents issues in terms of seasonality as these venues can only host events during warmer (peak) months. In addition, many of these venues (as identified by stakeholders) require significant upgrades in terms of quality, supporting infrastructure and, in some cases, size.

There is also a gap in the provision of high-quality 'all-weather' indoor venues, which would allow for a larger range of events to occur during off-peak times, particularly the colder winter seasons.

¹ Alpine Shire Council, 2020

Whilst Bright is well supported with outdoor event venues, Mt Beauty is identified as having limited dedicated outdoor event spaces to cater for larger events.

Event Resourcing and Support

As outlined in the Council Plan, the Alpine Shire is committed to "support festivals and events" as this promotes economic growth and liveability outcomes for residents.

More specifically, Council supports the management and delivery of the events sector through its events funding program and support services including the provision of event approvals.

In the 2020-21 financial year, Council approved around \$160,000 in financial sponsorship and logistics support to 39 events. Whilst over the past four financial years, Council has provided an average of around \$200,000 p.a. to the sector.

The funding amount provided to each event is determined by a 'tiering' system, based on (amongst other things) the events identified impacts to the economy, community, Shire profile and growth potential.

Council has a difficult role in providing support to the events sector, as it must consider the strategic direction of the events calendar, utilising limited resources to deliver a large event portfolio and meet community expectations. As such, Council should also consider alternative revenue sources (e.g. hire fees) to help fund the events sector and grow the overall budget.

Economic and Community Impact Assessment

Events held within the Shire attracts, on average, around **122,000 event visitors p.a.** from outside the Shire and generates **\$22.6 million in additional visitor expenditure**. This was estimated to provide the following economic benefits for the region.

An economic assessment of events in the Shire estimated that the sector attracts around 122,000 event visitors p.a. from outside the Shire, which generates \$40.2 million in economic output and supports an additional 194 jobs.²

In addition to the economic benefits, there are numerous important social and community benefits, including:

- Developing a sense of community and increasing community engagement;
- Promoting civic pride and cultural identity
- Revitalisation of local areas and improving liveability;
- Contributing to the resilience of local economies; and
- Improving the tourism ‘brand’ of the Shire.

However, these community benefits need to be measured against some of the identified disbenefits of the events sector, including the impact to resident amenity and liveability.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

The following table summarises the strategic considerations for the events sector, based on the research and consultation findings. These outline the areas of need for the events sector to meet community, industry and Council aspirations.

T1. STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

Strategic Considerations	
Events Calendar Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging event dispersal (geographically and seasonally) • Support the attraction of more diverse and high-yielding event types • Attract more signature events • Maximise visitor yield – so that fewer visitors generate greater benefits • Strike greater balance between ‘community’ and ‘tourism’ events
Event Infrastructure Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify infrastructure gaps and upgrades required to develop the sector • Develop contemporary indoor venues to attract events year-round • Develop contemporary visitor accommodation to support large tourism events • Improve industry knowledge of available facilities
Event Resourcing and Support Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailor the event funding criteria and funding categorisation levels to better support the sector (inc. identification of alternative funding sources) • Provide clear event guidelines and improve the efficiency of the event application and approvals process • Increase awareness of funding programs and event support • Industry capacity building and business recovery • Increase awareness of events • Provide a standardised assessment of events to determine the impact of the sector

² This includes the direct and indirect impacts derived from additional visitor expenditure. The total impact represents benefits to the Hume Region, while the direct impact represents benefits to the Alpine Shire.

STRATEGIC EVENT FRAMEWORK

The strategic framework for event delivery and management in the Shire sets the vision, objectives and guiding directions for the sector.

Vision

Create a sustainable and diverse events sector that provides community benefits, showcases the region's assets and generates positive economic outcomes across the Shire.

Strategic Objectives

The vision is supported by the following key objectives, which should guide and support event development in Alpine Shire:

- **Promote community benefits.** Support events that foster community engagement and are aligned to resident values, without impacting amenity or liveability outcomes.
- **Spread economic benefits.** Encourage delivery of events during low visitation periods, and in less popular locations, to spread the economic benefits across the Shire more sustainably.
- **Suitable event infrastructure.** Encourage and facilitate investment in infrastructure to support the delivery of existing and new events.
- **Event support.** Ensure the events sector receives adequate financial and non-financial support to deliver events.
- **Higher-yielding events.** Encourage events that deliver maximum value to the Shire, particularly those that drive overnight stays and increase visitor yield.
- **Brand alignment.** Ensure the delivery of new and existing events align with the Alpine Shire's identified brand and product strengths.

Strategic Directions

The following directions have been developed in response to issues, opportunities and needs of the events sector.

Direction 1: Develop a sustainable events calendar. Create a more sustainable events calendar that focuses on spreading economic benefits across the Shire and decreases impacts on resident amenity in areas with high levels of visitation.

Direction 2: Deliver improved event facilities and supporting infrastructure. Improve the variety and quality of event infrastructure, including indoor and outdoor venues to support a diverse range of events.

Direction 3: Support the events sector. Provide efficient and effective support and resources to develop a sustainable and diverse events sector.

A number of opportunities and potential strategies for each strategic direction are presented later in this report for further discussion.

PART A. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

DRAFT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

Alpine Shire Council (Council) has engaged Urban Enterprise to prepare the *Alpine Shire Events Strategy and Action Plan*. This document covers a four-year period from 2021-25 and is intended to be a blueprint for Council to guide decision making, forward planning and strategic direction for events within the Shire

Events are a vital part of the region's livelihood, providing a range of economic and social benefits for both residents and visitors. However, over recent years the Shire has experienced significant growth in the events sector, totalling over 100 events in 2018-19 and attracting around 170,000 participants and spectators³. This poses several challenges for Council, including the lack of strategic direction to manage events, as well as utilising limited resources to deliver the event portfolio and meet stakeholder expectations.

This Strategy, therefore, identifies the needs and priorities of the community and provides a clear and realistic framework for Council to guide the future delivery of events. The outcome of this is to ensure the sustainability of the events sector whilst delivering the best possible outcomes for the community.

This Discussion Paper provides preliminary findings and strategic considerations to inform the preparation of the Strategy. These findings are based on background research and analysis, as well as stakeholder consultation.

³ Alpine Shire Council, 2020

1.2. PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this project is to:

Provide Council with strategic direction and an action plan for the management and delivery of events into the future.

To achieve this aim, the key project objectives include the following:

- Provide Council with a better understanding of the values and expectations of the community;
- Enable Council to allocate its limited resources more efficiently; and
- Establish a framework that allows Council to proactively identify and mitigate risks before it impacts stakeholders.

The project will also demonstrate the economic value of events to the economy, as well as the social value to the community.

1.3. METHODOLOGY

The Discussion Paper includes the following components:

- **Project context** – a summary of local, regional and state policies and strategies that is relevant to the events sector.
- **Events profile** – an assessment of the Shire's events sector, including types of events, attendees, location and infrastructure, which is used to identify gaps and opportunities for future delivery of events.
- **Events resourcing** – an overview of the level of resources and support provided by Council and other stakeholders to manage and deliver events in the region.
- **Consultation** – engagement with community members, event organisers, industry and Council to understand potential issues and opportunities facing the events sector. This is supplemented by a comprehensive community and event

organiser survey to better understand community aspirations and opportunities for event development.

- **Economic and community impact** – an economic and social impact assessment to determine the impact to the local economy, as well as the impact to the community.
- **Strategic framework** – outlining the vision, objectives and directions for Council to guide event management and delivery. This includes a summary of key opportunities for further discussion, to help inform the preparation of the draft report.

1.4. PROJECT DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this project, the following definitions and classifications apply.

T2. PROJECT DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Event	An event is defined as a facilitated public occasion for the purposes of leisure and entertainment.
Tourism Event	A tourism event is where a large proportion of the attendees travel to the event from outside the Shire. In these instances, the event is the 'main' driver of visitation to the region.
Community Event	A community event is where a large proportion of attendees are residents of the Shire (or visitors already in the region for other purposes)
Event Attendees	Event attendees refers to the total number of persons attending an event, including locals and visitors.
Event Visitors	Event visitors are defined as those visiting from outside of the Shire for the purpose of attending an event

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This section includes contextual information to support development of (and influence) the Events Strategy. This includes an overview of key policies and strategies that influences the strategic direction of the report, as well as background information relating to the Shire and its visitor economy.

2.2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2018, Council commissioned the development of an *Events Delivery Review*⁴, which provided an overview of the Shire's events sector and outlined opportunities for improvements. This led to a series of recommendations that were reviewed by Council, which are detailed below (alongside the implementation status).

The Council status regarding implementation of the recommendations – see Table T3 has been categorised as either 'adopted' (green), 'to be reviewed' (orange) or 'not adopted' (red).

T3. ALPINE EVENTS DELIVERY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

#	Recommendation	Council Status
1	Events Team staff resourcing levels remain at 1.6 FTE, providing that Council implements the further recommendations of this report	Adopted
2	Council pursues continued growth in events, with a focus on bolstering events held outside peak periods, the use of towns other than Bright, and the use of Alpine Events Park	To be reviewed
3	Council invests in undertaking community consultation to understand community tolerance and community thresholds for event delivery in each key township.	To be reviewed
4	Council works closely with external approval agencies to develop succinct joint guidelines (Event Principles) to consistently manage events through the Shire.	To be reviewed
5	Council makes changes to the Event Funding Program to:	
5a	<i>Reduce the annual allocation for the Event Funding Program from \$270,000 in 2017-18 to \$100,000 in 2019-2020</i>	<i>Not adopted</i>
5b	<i>Establish a competitive application process for events held during peak periods in Bright</i>	<i>To be reviewed</i>
5c	<i>Introduce criteria to prioritise funding for applicants who demonstrate their event is held outside of peak periods, at Alpine Events Park, or in a town other than Bright.</i>	<i>To be reviewed</i>
5d	<i>Introduce criteria to prioritise funding for applicants who demonstrate their event is aligned with the Event Principles and the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan strategies.</i>	<i>Adopted</i>
5e	<i>Increase the required level of community engagement for major events.</i>	<i>Adopted</i>

⁴ Prepared by Projectura

#	Recommendation	Council Status
6	Council allocates \$11,325 annually for an annual subscription fee to the SmartyGrants grants management software	Adopted
7	That regular internal and external working group meetings are established to support event development and approvals.	Adopted (Better Approvals project and Events Risk Management Panel)
8	Council allocates \$4,750 annually for the Integrated Monitoring Systems' (IMS) Reserve Manager Standard Program which supports the management of facility and open space bookings.	Adopted
9	Council allocates \$5,000 annually to deliver two free event forums to event organisers to improve event management	Adopted
10	Council develops and implements a fee schedule for use of community buildings, facilities, parks and open space.	To be reviewed

Source: Projectura, Events Delivery Review, 2018; Alpine Shire Council, 2020

This events strategy will consider these findings and recommendations, which will help inform future directions for the events sector. In particular, some of these recommendations will be reviewed in this Strategy to assess whether further consideration (and implementation) is required.

2.3. STRATEGIC AND POLICY CONTEXT

Events are widely recognised for their social and economic benefits. An overview of key strategic documents and policies have been provided below, including their implications for event development in Alpine Shire.

2.3.1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTEXT

The following local government documents, prepared by Council, will directly influence the future directions of the events strategy.

The *Alpine Shire Economic Development Strategy (in progress)*, currently being prepared by Urban Enterprise, will provide a framework for the Shire to help achieve sustainable economic growth. This includes a series of strategies and actions to create a more sustainable visitor economy by increasing geographic and seasonal visitor dispersal.

This includes opportunities to leverage events to encourage visitation during 'off-peak' periods and across other (less popular) destinations and townships. As such, the strategic directions of this events strategy will be influenced by the economic development framework, to ensure alignment of strategies and opportunities.

The *Alpine Shire Community Vision 2030* outlines a series of principles as well as key directions for the Shire in order to achieve Council's 2030 Community Vision:

The Alpine Shire provides outstanding opportunities for its residents and visitors through sustainable growth in balance with the natural environment.

The key directions from the Community Vision document that need to be considered when developing the Events Strategy include:

- Ensuring economic prosperity (focusing on tourism's contribution to economic growth);
- Maintaining the identity and character of communities; and
- Enhancing communities (through increased engagement);

The *Alpine Shire Council Plan 2017-2021* outlines strategies and initiatives the Council will undertake to work towards the 2030 Vision. More specifically, this details Council's desire to support festivals and events to:

- Provide a welcome environment for visitors and business; and
- Encourage investment and strengthen the local economy.

Finally, the *Alpine Liveability Plan 2013-2017* establishes a framework to provide the best possible health and wellbeing outcomes for our community. This includes a focus on events to help achieve community resilience and promote community sustainability.

2.3.2. REGIONAL CONTEXT

The following outlines the strategies from the broader region that could influence the local events sector within the Shire. This includes documents from the wider Hume Region, as well as Tourism North East.

The *Hume Regional Growth Plan* identifies the need for the provision and improvement of venues in the region to accommodate cultural and sporting events, with the ultimate objective of increasing visitation.

Victoria's High Country Destination Management Plan sets the goal of securing high profile world-class mountain bike events in the region as part of the Ride High Country – Mountain Bikes priority project. This is expected to maximise product exposure and assist in driving event visitation to the region.

The *North East Victoria Cycling Optimisation Masterplan* identifies the need to expand the region's cycling events program due to the economic benefits that they generate. Relevant event opportunities include multi-day High Country mountain bike events as well as international slopestyle events, both of which could be considered as part of the events strategy.

2.3.3. STATE GOVERNMENT CONTEXT

The State Government provides overarching policy and strategic support for the development and attraction of events to grow regional economies and support the development of visitor destinations.

Victoria's 2020 Tourism Strategy highlights that events play an important tourism role in Victoria in terms of regional dispersal, generating visitor expenditure and encouraging year-round visitation. Future development of events must consider the promotion of existing and emerging tourism strengths and brands, as well as timing and location.

State strategic direction focuses on continual development of events to diversify tourism strengths and support the development of events enabling infrastructure that encourages the attraction of events, as well as the range of industry benefits that can be gained from improved event calendar management.

2.3.4. CURRENT AUSTRALIAN EVENTS AND TOURISM CONTEXT

Until recently, Australia and the state of Victoria, had experienced a period of sustained visitor economy growth. There has been a dramatic shift in the tourism landscape both nationally and internationally as a result of the unprecedented bushfire season and Covid-19 pandemic of 2019-20. The full extent and impact of these events is yet to be determined.

A recent analysis and insights note produced by Austrade⁵ forewarns that the pandemic is likely to have a 'widespread and long-lasting impact on tourism', with the factors including escalation of travel restrictions; sharp reductions in air capacity; social distancing, self-quarantine and bans on gathering; and restrictions on non-essential travel most likely to have a damaging impact on Australia's visitor economy:

The study identified that already severe impacts have been recorded across the tourism industry, including accommodation, aviation, and businesses. In reference to regional impacts, it highlights that '*all tourism regions are now being impacted by Covid-19, with isolation and the closing of domestic borders significantly inhibiting*

⁵ Coronavirus Analysis and Insights Note, Austrade, 2020

domestic travel as well. An example of the scale of impact on the events industry is demonstrated by results of the Whitsunday Tourism Association’s survey, with a loss of \$122 million estimated by the end of April, due to cancellations caused directly by events.

The study states that OECD optimistically estimates a 45% tourism downturn worldwide should visitor numbers start to recover by July 2020, and a more realistic 70% reduction should numbers recover in September.

These impacts will be acutely felt across the events sector, with larger events requiring long lead times to plan and organise, and limited flexibility regarding date, number of attendees (for social distancing purposes) or location changes. Additionally, the nature of regional events as promotional tools and a mechanism to attract visitation during the off-peak season makes it particularly difficult for existing events to offer any means of alternative offer within the virtual space that will still offer any benefit to the region.

Ensuring mechanisms are in place to support and assist industry during the significant rebuilding period to come will be key to re-establishing a vibrant visitor economy and events sector for the region. This should include prioritising improvement of Councils events resourcing and support frameworks to enable event operator training and development to occur while events themselves are unable to be conducted. This will be explored further in later sections of this report.

2.4. LOCATIONAL CONTEXT

2.4.1. ALPINE SHIRE

Alpine Shire Local Government Area (LGA) covers around 4,788 square kilometres and is located in Victoria’s north-east, approximately 300km north-east of Melbourne, 50km south of Albury-Wodonga and 40km south-west of Wangaratta. The Shire is accessible via key transport routes including the Kiewa Valley Highway and the Great Alpine Road.

⁶ <https://www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au/community/tourism-and-events/tourism>

In 2019, the Estimated Resident Population of the LGA was 12,814, with the population concentrated in the towns of Bright, Myrtleford, Mount Beauty, Harrietville and Porepunkah.

Within the Shire boundaries are two major alpine resorts – Falls Creek and Mount Hotham – that are located within the municipal borders (but managed under their own Resort Management Boards). These drive visitation to the Shire, particularly during the winter months, and provide significant contributions to the Shire’s tourism industry in terms of flow-on spend.

2.4.2. SUB-REGIONAL APPROACH

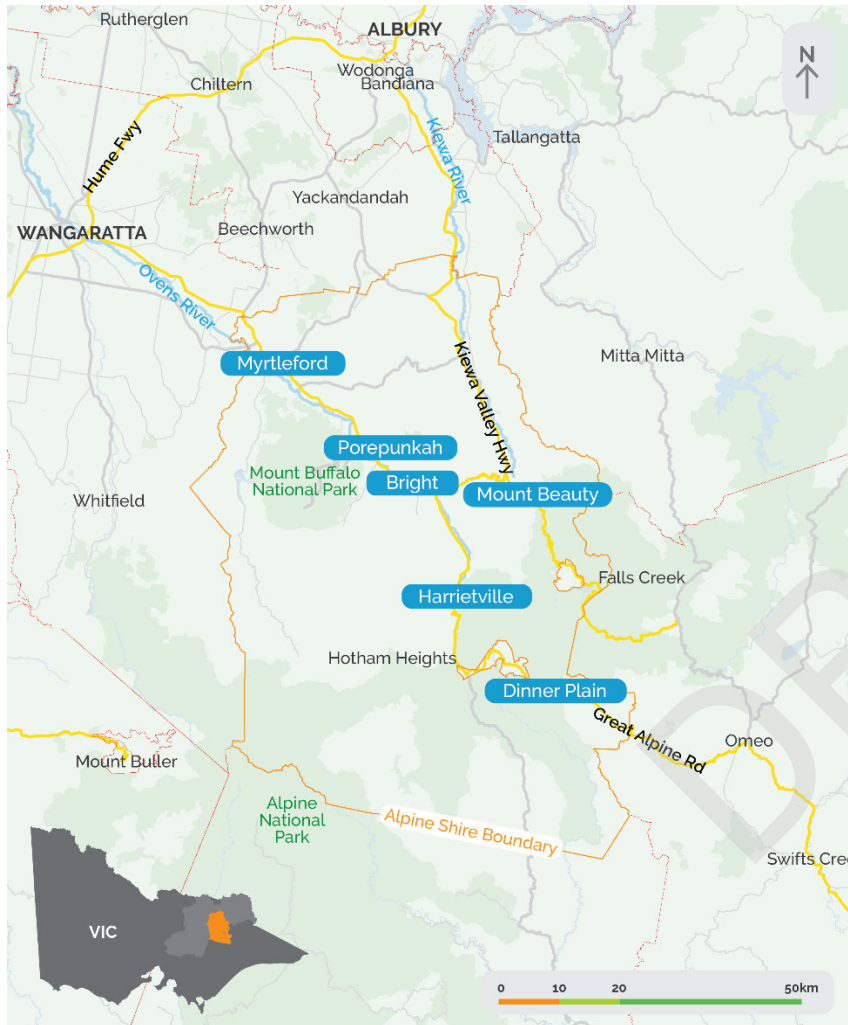
There are several key townships within the Shire that influences the level of residential, employment and economic growth. In addition, the townships provide a variable contribution to tourism and the events sector, meaning the priorities and needs of the community (and industry) are likely to vary across the municipality.

Therefore, it is necessary to provide analysis and strategic direction at a **sub-regional** (i.e. township) level, which disaggregates the Shire into the following key areas (based on Council’s local tourism regions)⁶:

- Bright and surrounds;
- Harrietville and surrounds;
- Mt Beauty and surrounds;
- Myrtleford and surrounds;
- Dinner Plain; and
- Other towns as specified.

These sub-regions are illustrated in Figure F2.

F2. ALPINE SHIRE



Source: Urban Enterprise, 2020

⁷ Economy ID, 2020 (represents the 2018-19 year)

2.5. TOURISM CONTEXT

The following provides an overview of the Alpine Shire visitor economy, in the context of the events sector. Tourism (including tourism-related events) plays a key role in driving the economy, contributing \$163 million in output (15% of total) and 807 jobs (19% of total) per annum⁷.

The visitor economy directly supports the *Accommodation & Food Services* industry, and *Retail Trade*, as well as providing indirect benefits to a broad range of other service industries and businesses within the supply chain.

2.5.1. VISITATION

As shown in Table T4, Alpine Shire received around 850,000 visitors in 2019, which represents approx. 16% of total visitors to the High Country region.

Visitation is driven by the domestic market, including domestic overnight (60%) and daytrip (39%) visitors, which means the Shire is less susceptible to the general decline of international tourism (due to COVID-19).

Up until the recent natural disasters – including bushfires and COVID – the Shire had experienced significant growth over the past 10 years, with visitation increasing by +344,123 visitors (6% p.a.).

Visitors are drawn to the Shire for numerous reasons, with the following product and experience strengths providing strong motivation for visitation:

- Events and festivals;
- Nature-based assets (inc. national parks, alpine resorts, etc.);
- Cycling tourism (aligning with the 'Ride High Country' brand); and
- Food, wine and ferments.

More specifically, event visitation to the Shire totalled almost 80,000 in 2019⁸, which represents 9.4% of total visitation. Event visitors were primarily overnight (73%), demonstrating the value of events in attracting high-yielding markets. As such, the events sector provides a significant contribution to the visitor economy, in terms of total visitation (and subsequent visitor spend).

Therefore, it is important that the events sector is managed efficiently and effectively to ensure it continues to provide value to the tourism industry and the economy more broadly.

T4. ALPINE SHIRE VISITATION 2019

	All Visitors		Event Visitors		Event Visitors as % of total
	No.	%	No.	%	
Daytrip	331,674	39%	20,889	26%	6.3%
Domestic Overnight	508,342	60%	57,900	73%	11.4%
International	12,047	1%	1,036	1%	8.6%
Total Visitors	852,063	100%	79,826	100%	9.4%

Source: Tourism Research Australia (TRA), National Visitor Survey (NVS) and International Visitor Survey (NVS), 2019 YE Dec.

Note: Event visitors provided by TRA data does not align with the Council database of event attendees, as the database includes residents as well as 'incidental' visitors that may not list events as the primary purpose of visit (thereby leading to undercounting).

BENCHMARKING EVENT VISITATION

Table T5 benchmarks the number and proportion of event visitors against three competing Victorian tourism regions with identified strengths in the events sector.

It shows that, relative to these regions, the Alpine Shire performs favourably in terms of proportion of event visitors, which demonstrates its strong and popular events sector.

⁸ Event visitors were classified based on 'purpose of visit' of visitors to the Shire

T5. EVENT VISITOR BENCHMARKING 2019

	Geelong and the Bellarine	Yarra Valley and the Dandenong Ranges	Phillip Island	Alpine Shire
Event Visitation	702,319	397,293	135,626	79,826
Total Visitation	6,427,688	6,989,966	2,657,628	852,063
Proportion of Event Visitors	10.9%	5.7%	5.1%	9.4%

Source: TRA, NVS and NVS, 2019 YE Dec

2.5.2. VISITOR EXPENDITURE

The visitor economy generated \$379 million in direct expenditure for 2019 – see Table T6 – driven by domestic overnight visitors (81%). This represents 22% of total visitor expenditure in the High Country and provides significant benefits to the regional economy.

Identifying the average spend for visitors to the Shire is important for determining to economic impact of events to the economy (which is explored in subsequent sections of this report). In particular, by attracting high-yielding overnight visitors, the events sector can generate greater value for the visitor economy (through higher levels of average spend), compared to daytrip visitors.

T6. ALPINE SHIRE VISITOR EXPENDITURE 2019

	Spend (\$m)	%	Average spend per trip	Average spend per night	ALOS ⁹
Daytrip	\$37.3m	10%	\$112		1
Domestic Overnight	\$306.2m	81%	\$602	\$208	2.9
International	\$35.8m	9%	\$2,975	\$358	8.3
Total	\$379.3m	100%			

Source: TRA, NVS and NVS, 2019 YE Dec

⁹ Average length of stay

2.5.3. VISITOR ACCOMMODATION

In order to attract overnight visitors to tourism events held within the Shire, particularly for multi-day events, there needs to be sufficient quantity and quality of accommodation.

As shown in Table T7, total capacity (at a given point in time) of holiday beds and camping sites is 25,301. However, this is concentrated around the Bright area (40%), which is proximate to Porepunkah (22%), which reflects the strong events calendar in this area.

It is important that there are sufficient accommodation options (and bed capacity) to attract high-yielding overnight visitors to events. Having relatively limited capacity in other towns across the Shire will impact the ability to host larger tourism events and promote visitor dispersal.

T7. VISITOR ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY

Township	Holiday Beds	Caravan Park/Camping Sites	Total	%
Bright	7,187	3,000	10,187	40%
Myrtleford	789	1,500	2,289	9%
Mount Beauty	1,388	1,000	2,388	9%
Harrietville	892	500	1,392	6%
Porepunkah	2,473	3,000	5,473	22%
Wandiligong	72	300	372	1%
Dinner Plain	3,200	-	3,200	13%
Total	16,001	9,300	25,301	100%

Source: Alpine Shire Council, 2020

PART B. RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

DRAFT

3. EVENTS PROFILE

3.1. INTRODUCTION

A profile of the Alpine Shire events sector was prepared for this report, including an analysis of the type of event, location (i.e. sub-region), attendance and event-related infrastructure. The purpose of this is to provide a holistic understanding of the sector, identify strategic gaps and opportunities for improving the future management and delivery of events.

The events profile was developed using the following assumptions and data:

- Unless otherwise indicated, the data is presented as a three-year average covering the period 2016-17 to 2018-19;
- Both tourism and community events are included in the profile;
- Event attendees refers to the total number of persons attending an event, including both locals and visitors;
- Events that were held more than once annually were counted overall as one event (the exception being for event seasonality and attendance, where each occurrence of the same event was counted separately for each month and total attendance aggregated).
- For events where attendance and/or visitation figures were not available, no estimate was provided (and this represents a gap in the data).

The information presented in this section is drawn from events data provided by Council and supported by desktop research and stakeholder input. Whilst this information is comprehensive, it is not designed to be an exhaustive list of all events and, as such, some small-scale events are excluded from the analysis.

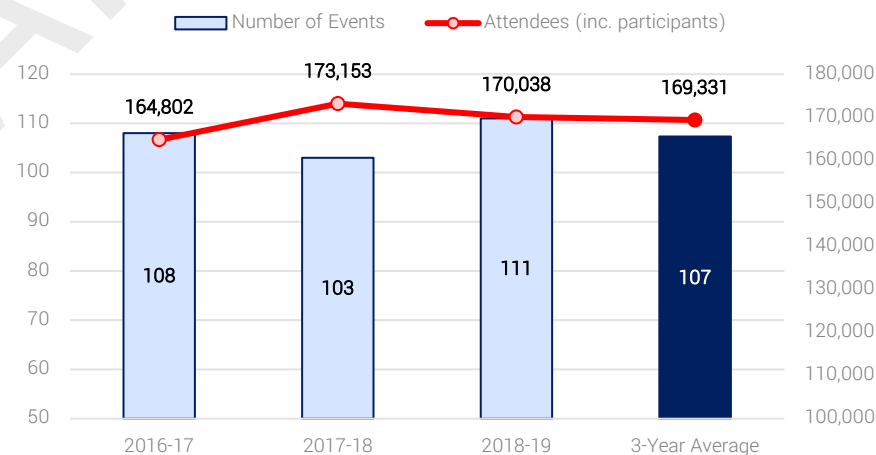
3.2. OVERVIEW OF EVENTS

The following information is drawn from Council’s annual events database, using a three-year average from 2016-17 to 2018-19¹⁰

3.2.1. NUMBER OF EVENTS AND ATTENDANCE

Figure F3 shows that the Shire hosts an average of **107 events p.a.**, which includes one-off events, annual events, seasonal and monthly events (counted as one event for the purposes of this assessment). These events attract, on average, around **170,000 attendees** each year, which includes both local residents and visitor markets.

F3. NUMBER OF ANNUAL EVENTS



Source: Alpine Shire Council, compiled by Urban Enterprise, 2021

¹⁰ The event schedule for 2019-20 was excluded due to disruptions caused by the bushfires and COVID-19 pandemic

Using survey data to estimate the number of visitors as a proportion of total attendees, it is estimated that, on average, there were a total of **122,000 event visitors** p.a. from outside the Shire.¹¹

This is a significant number in relation to the number of Shire residents and visitors to the region. **As such, there is risk of overcrowding the townships, which needs to support the attendees in terms of services and infrastructure.**

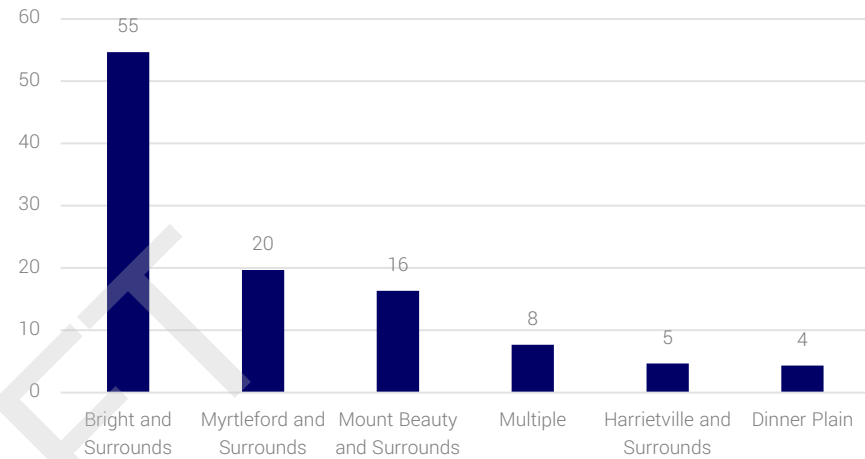
3.2.2. EVENTS BY SUB-REGION

The following demonstrates the volume of events and attendance by sub-region, to better understand the variability in the events sector across the Shire.

As shown in Figure F4, the events calendar is driven by the Bright sub-region, which hosts over half the events held in the Shire (55 events or 51%). This is followed – by some distance – the other major township areas of Myrtleford (20 events) and Mount Beauty (16 events).

This also includes 8 events held in multiple locations, which have not been attributed to a single sub-region as the impact is shared across the Shire.

F4. EVENTS BY SUB-REGION (3-YEAR AVERAGE)



Source: Alpine Shire Council, compiled by Urban Enterprise, 2021

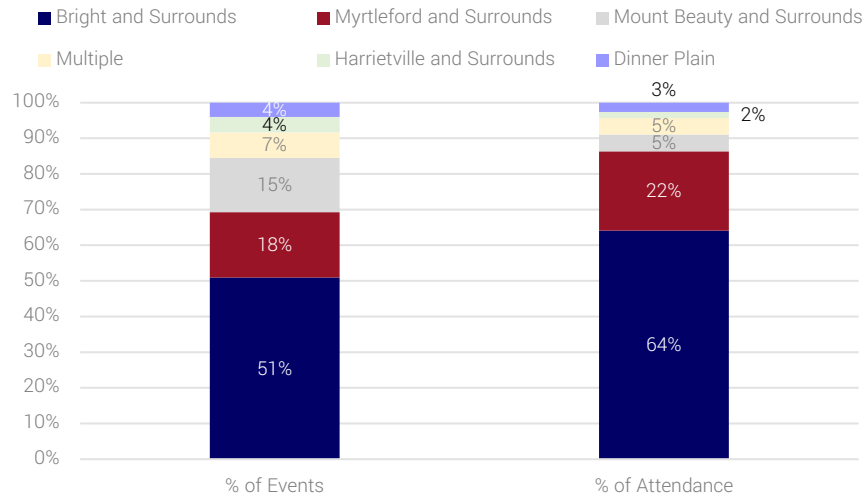
As such, Bright dominates the proportional breakdown of events and attendees by sub-region, generating 51% of total events and 64% of total attendance (Figure F5).

The next most popular location is Myrtleford (18% events and 22% attendance), while Mount Beauty hosts 15% of events, these are typically small as it only equates to 5% of attendance.

This comparison shows that the events sector is heavily concentrated in Bright, which faces event overload in terms of occurrences and attendance. Developing and/or re-locating events to other locations could help to alleviate the pressure off Bright, achieve greater visitor dispersal and increase the sustainability of events (and the visitor economy).

¹¹ This assumes that 30% of attendees to community event are visitors; and 75% of attendees to other tourism events are visitors.

F5. ANALYSIS OF EVENTS BY SUB-REGION



Source: Alpine Shire Council, compiled by Urban Enterprise, 2021

3.2.3. EVENTS BY CATEGORY

Events in the Shire have been categorised by genre (based on Council categories), with Figure F6 showing the number (and proportion) of events by type, as well as proportion of attendees.

As shown below, the sector is driven by **Nature and Recreation-based** events, leveraging the Shire's natural assets and product strengths, including:

- **Sport & Outdoor Recreation** (35% of events and 34% of attendees) –sports tournaments, car shows, races, marathons, etc; and
- **Cycling events** (15% of events and 8% of attendees).

¹² Includes art and cultural festivals, music festivals and concerts.

¹³ Includes public events such as Carols by Candlelight, Remembrance Day, etc.

When aggregated, these types of events generate 50% of all events and almost half of all attendees (42%).

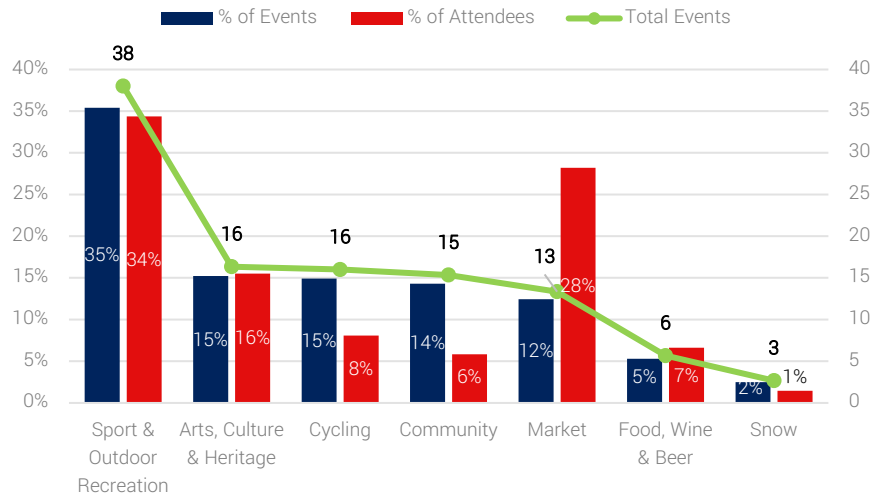
In terms of event occurrence, this is followed by **Arts, Culture & Heritage** events¹² (15% of events and 16% attendees), **Community events**¹³ (14% of events and 6% attendees) and **Markets**¹⁴ (12% of events and 28% of attendees).

This analysis demonstrates that the event strengths lie in the nature-based and recreation category, which should be a key focus to consolidate and improve the events sector for the Shire. However, there are opportunities to:

- **Grow the number of Arts and Culture events, which typically drives strong attendance (and high-yielding lifestyle leader visitors), as the proportion of attendance (16%) is greater than the proportion of events (15%);**
- **Focus on attracting cycling events with greater visitor impact, as despite a significant proportion of events (15%), it only receives 8% of total attendance;**
- **Expand the Food, Wine and Beer events, which accounts for a small proportion of events but generally attracts high attendance as this is a desirable event-type (particularly for high-yielding lifestyle leader markets); and**
- **Further develop the markets – including regular food, artisan and makers markets – which promotes repeat visitation year-round (from locals and visitors) and ongoing economic benefits to local businesses.**

¹⁴ Each market is counted as a single event, however, attendance for all event occurrences is counted, which is why the proportion of attendances is more than double the number of events.

F6. EVENTS BY TYPE (3-YEAR AVERAGE)



Source: Alpine Shire Council, compiled by Urban Enterprise, 2021

3.2.4. SEASONALITY OF EVENTS

Figure F7 shows the average number of events held per month across the calendar year. This assessment includes all occurrences of a single event (e.g. monthly markets) to accurately depict the seasonality of events, meaning the total number depicted here (150) is greater than the 3-year annual average (107).

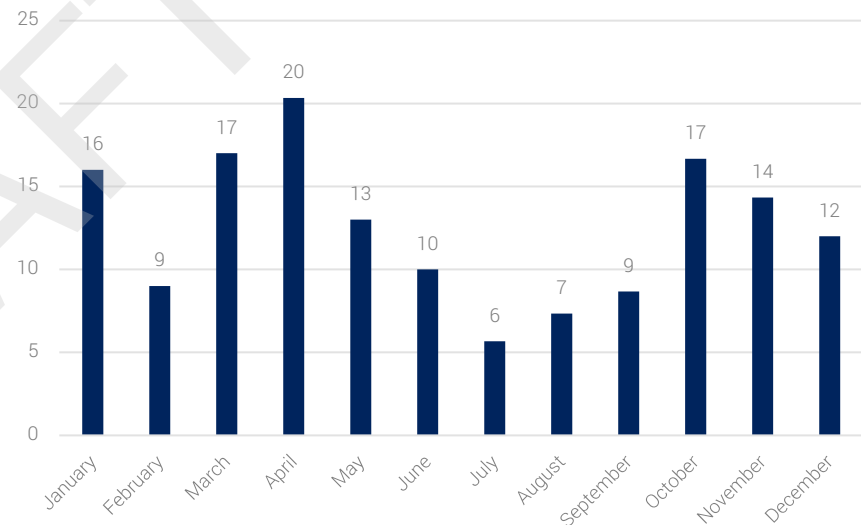
The busiest times for events are across the **Autumn** (50 events or 34%) and **Spring** (40 events or 26%) shoulder seasons, driven by the months of April (20 events), March (17 events) and October (17 events).

This is followed by Summer (37 events or 25%), with most events occurring in January (16); while the Winter months (23 or 15%) held the lowest number of events – with the fewest events held in July (6).

Autumn is the dominant event season, which also makes it the busiest in terms of events held and number of attendees, which is attributed to school holidays and cooler weather making outdoor and recreation events more appealing.

However, to avoid market saturation and encourage off-peak dispersal, there is an opportunity to host more events during the slower winter months and/or during the shoulder months of February and September. This is key to creating a more sustainable event sector and providing greater economic and social benefits to the Shire.

F7. EVENTS BY MONTH (3-YEAR AVERAGE)



Source: Alpine Shire Council, compiled by Urban Enterprise, 2021

3.2.5. EVENTS BY SIZE

The size of events, which is represented by attendance figures¹⁵, is categorised according to Council's *Event Funding Program Guidelines*, including:

- **Tier 1 (small events).** Up to 1,000 attendees.
- **Tier 2 (major events).** 1,000-5,000 attendees.
- **Tier 3 (signature events).** Over 5,000 attendees.

Table T8 uses these categories to demonstrate event size within the Shire. This shows that over half of all events are (on average) small events – 62 p.a. or 59% – followed by major events (37 p.a. or 36%). However, there are very few signature events (5 p.a. or 5%).

T8. EVENTS BY TIER CATEGORY

Tier	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	3 Year Average	%
Tier 1 (small)	64	51	70	62	60%
Tier 2 (major)	37	39	35	37	35%
Tier 3 (signature)	6	4	4	5	5%

Source: Alpine Shire Council, compiled by Urban Enterprise, 2021; Note: the totals do not equal the average number of events as some events missing attendance data.

Therefore, there are opportunities to identify and attract additional Tier 3 (signature) events, as these events generate the greatest level of visitation, provide substantial economic benefits and helps promote the region as a visitor destination.

The signature events, which are a key focus for Council, includes (as of 2018-19):

- Brighter Days Festival (12,000 attendees);
- Bright's Iconic Rod Run (15,000 attendees)
- La Fiera Festival (around 5,000 attendees); and
- Bright Rotary Markets (8,000 attendees)

¹⁵ Provided in the events database

3.3. ALPINE RESORTS EVENTS PROFILE

In addition to the events that are hosted within the municipality, it is important to identify the list of events occurring within the Alpine Resort boundaries, including Falls Creek and Mount Hotham. Whilst these are not under the direct influence of Council, these should be considered when reviewing the future management of events to avoid any duplication or conflicts with events within the Shire.

According to a high-level audit conducted by Urban Enterprise, there are 14 significant events held across both alpine resorts, categorised by the following typologies:

- Sport & Outdoor Recreation (9 events);
- Cycling (2 events);
- Food, Wine & Beer (2 events); and
- Arts, Culture & Heritage (1 event).

There is an opportunity for Council to collaborate with the Resort Management Boards to ensure events are coordinated across multiple jurisdictions to avoid duplication or congestion.

This could also benefit Council by leveraging visitors to the resorts and encouraging dispersal to the municipality, which can promote increases in visitor expenditure and flow-on economic benefits.

4. EVENT INFRASTRUCTURE

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The following provides an overview of the available facilities and infrastructure used to host tourism and community events.

The information presented below is based on an audit of venues – both indoor and outdoor – identified as currently hosting tourism and community events. This is drawn from Council's events database, supplemented by survey results and desktop research.

Note: whilst this audit is comprehensive, it may exclude smaller venues for events not included in Council's database (e.g. bars, open spaces, etc.).

4.2. OVERVIEW OF EVENT FACILITIES

A total of 58 significant event venues/facilities were identified in the audit, including location, type and management. Key points to note include:

- Most facilities are outdoor venues only (33 or 57%), while around one-third are indoor venues. However, a further six venues can be utilised for both indoor and outdoor events; and
- 31 venues (53%) are managed by Council, while the remaining are 'non-council' facilities (i.e. private, community organisations, not-for-profits, clubs, etc.).

In addition, some facilities are more highly utilised and deliver a range of events year-round to support the sector. These include:

- Pioneer Park (5+ events);
- Bright Brewery (5 events);
- Big Hill Mountain Bike Park (5 events);
- Howitt Park (4 events);
- Myrtleford Showgrounds (4 events); and
- Myrtleford Town Piazza (4 events);

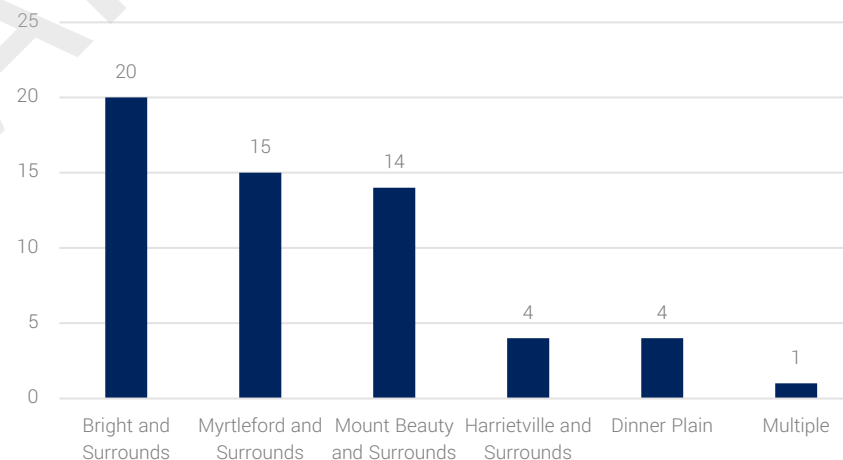
See Appendix B for a detailed assessment of all event venues included in the audit.

4.3. EVENT FACILITY BY LOCATION

Figure F8 shows the number of facilities by sub-region, which demonstrates that majority of facilities are located in Bright (20 or 34%), followed by the Myrtleford (15 or 26%) and Mount Beauty (14 or 24%) areas.

This level of event infrastructure reflects the concentration of events in Bright (identified in the events profile). Therefore, to encourage dispersal of events, additional event facilities may be required in other areas across the Shire.

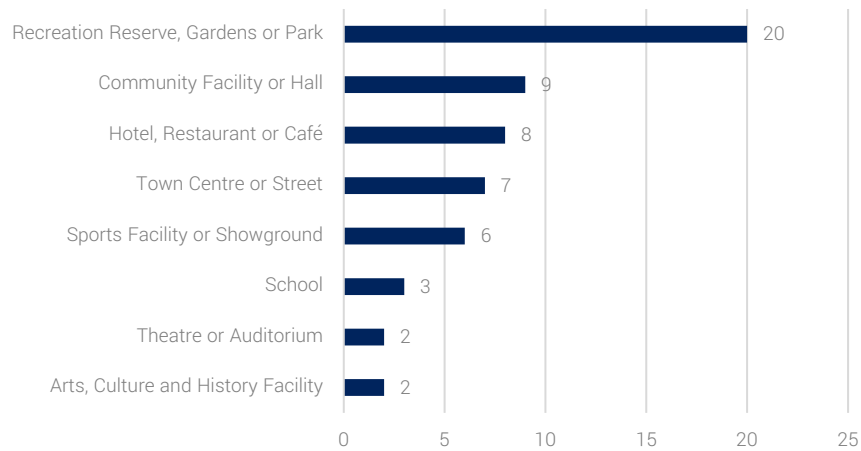
F8. EVENT FACILITIES BY LOCATION



Source: Various, compiled by Urban Enterprise 2021

4.4. EVENT FACILITY BY TYPE

F9. EVENT FACILITIES BY TYPE



Source: Various, compiled by Urban Enterprise 2021

Figure F9 shows the breakdown of facilities, which has been categorised into seven indoor and outdoor venue categories. Key points to note include:

- The most common facility type (20) is outdoor reserves, gardens or parks, comprising almost one-third of the audited venues. This capitalises on the large number of outdoor recreation and nature-based events but has limitations in terms of seasonality and the cost of providing temporary infrastructure;
- Other popular venues include community based facilities such as halls (9) and sporting clubs/showgrounds (6); and
- Private operators of accommodation, restaurants and cafes (8) are also responsible for hosting a number of events in the Shire. These are generally used for private (and smaller) functions and offer little community benefit.

This analysis highlights gaps in conferencing facilities and purpose-built 'all-weather' venues to allow for events to occur during off-peak times, particularly the colder winter seasons, as well as night-time. There is also a lack of large-scale indoor performance venues to host one-off music concerts or festivals.

5. EVENT RESOURCING AND SUPPORT

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This section provides an overview of event resourcing and support for the events sector within Alpine Shire. It focuses primarily on the support provided by Council to facilitate the management and delivery of events.

The level of resourcing, and types of support provided by Council, is reviewed in subsequent section of this Strategy to ensure alignment with the strategic needs of Council and the community.

5.2. ALPINE SHIRE COUNCIL

5.2.1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The importance of the events sector is recognised by Council in the *Council Plan 2017-21*, which notes Council's commitment to "support festivals and events" as this promotes economic growth and liveability outcomes for residents. Council plays a critical role in supporting and managing event delivery, including:

- Facilitate community groups to deliver community events;
- Facilitate groups and commercial operators to deliver small to major tourism events;
- The planning and delivery of civic events;
- Financial support via the event funding program; and
- In-kind support including waste management advice, bin supply, traffic management advice, etc.

5.2.2. EVENT FUNDING GUIDELINES

Alpine Shire Council provides annual *Event Funding Program Guidelines* for event organisers seeking Council funding. Funding is provided in the form of 'Seed Funding' to assist in the delivery of annual events during the first three years of operation. This helps encourage events to grow during the initial phase, until they become more sustainable.

FUNDING LEVELS

As shown in Table T9, there are three funding categories/tiers that event organisers can apply for.

T9. FUNDING CATEGORIES

Category	Maximum Funding Value (p.a.)	Requirements
Tier 1 (small and community events)	\$3,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attracts up to 1,000 attendees• Participation mostly from locals but includes some visitors• Create a sense of community, wellbeing and celebrates local culture
Tier 2 (major events and festivals)	\$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attracts between 1,000-5,000 attendees• Includes high proportion of attendees from intrastate and interstate visitors from outside the region• Attracts visitor yield and provides considerable economic and community benefit.

Category	Maximum Funding Value (p.a.)	Requirements
Tier 3 (signature events)	Over \$10,000 ¹⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts over 5,000 attendees • Short term, one off major, large scale events that achieve a significant economic, tourism or community benefit. • Generate a substantial increase to visitation and spending • Increase the profile of the Alpine Shire (via visitation or media).

Source: Alpine Shire Council, 2020

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

To assess each event application for funding, Council applies the following **assessment criteria**, which varies according to the event 'tier':

- **Economic and tourism impacts.** The ability to generate economic benefits for the Shire.
- **Profile.** The ability to create local, regional or national interest for the Shire and drive overnight stays/visitor yield.
- **Community impact and benefits.** Ability to increase community engagement, resident amenity and share information across the community.
- **Capacity and capability.** The potential for event growth/development, financial capacity of the event organisers and skillset.
- **General benefits.** This includes the operating/marketing plan of the event, potential long-term sustainability, legacy and alignment to community values.

These funding guidelines, including efficacy of funding tiers and assessment criteria, will be reviewed as part of this Strategy to ensure it best meets Council requirements and community needs.

¹⁶ Depending on the level of funding requested, Signature Events may need to present directly to Council to provide greater detail.

5.2.3. EVENT SUPPORT

The level of event funding provided by Council is shown in Table T10, which averages around \$200,000 over the past four financial years.

For the most recent 2020-21 financial year (prior to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and bushfires), Council approved around \$160,000 for 39 events, which includes financial sponsorship and logistics support.

T10. COUNCIL EVENT FUNDING

2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
\$198,700	\$254,960	\$199,950	\$163,744

Source: Alpine Shire Council, 2020

In order to be eligible for funding, applicants must apply for an Events Permit, as well as provide (or apply for) the following as required:

- Event Management Plan;
- Risk Management Plan;
- Emergency Management Plan;
- Traffic Management Plan;
- Site Plan;
- Other permits from relevant stakeholders, e.g. VicRoads, Parks Victoria; and
- Other Council permits such as Occupation of Road Reserve, Signage Permit and Planning Permit (if applicable).

The process for event funding is comprehensive and involves multiple stakeholders and guidelines. The efficacy of this process, including the level of funding, assessment criteria and application requirements, will be reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of relevant stakeholders and benefits the community.

Council should also consider alternative revenue sources to help fund the events sector/supplement the events budget, which operates on limited resources.

5.3. STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to Council's role, there are a range of non-Council organisations that have various levels of responsibility for operating and supporting events in the Alpine Shire. Existing key partnerships with regards to event attraction, development and funding include:

- **Tourism North East.** Tourism North East is the regional tourism board and provides assistance to Council in terms of product development, marketing, and promotional strategies. More specifically, Tourism North East can work collaboratively with Council with respect to coordination of a complementary events calendar that aims to keep visitors in region for longer and increase visitor yield.
- **Visit Victoria and Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR).** These are the State Government bodies that administer the Regional Events Fund (REF), with Visit Victoria being a key partner in promotion and strategic planning for the tourism sector.
- **Creative Victoria.** Creative Victoria provides a range of grants targeted towards the arts sector which may be able to be accessed for arts-based events and activations in the shire.
- **Local Tourism Organisations and industry event operators.** These groups play an important role in attracting, promoting and assisting the delivery of events. This includes business support, assisting organisers with the application process and providing amenity for attendees (e.g. accommodation, retail, food, etc.).

Council influence and support can be enhanced through collaboration with relevant stakeholders that can assist in the delivery and management of events.

6. CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

6.1. INTRODUCTION

To inform development of the Strategy and future directions for events, extensive stakeholder engagement has been undertaken to ensure that the strategy reflects community values meets stakeholder expectations. The engagement approach included a combination of:

- Workshops with community and business and event organiser reference groups;
- Meetings with key government, Council and industry stakeholders to help inform the project vision and objectives;
- Listening posts with community members; and
- Surveys of community representatives and event organisers, including:
 - 86 responses from the community survey, representing a cross-section of residents, to identify community aspirations and key issues facing the community in relation to events; and
 - 37 responses from event organisers to identify issues facing the events sector and opportunities for event enhancement and development.

The complete consultation schedule to-date is detailed in Appendix B

The following provides a summary of the key consultation outcomes, focusing on the issues and opportunities raised by the community, local industry and event organiser stakeholder groups.

Please note: the information in this section is a summary of the key points raised, which were obtained from detailed meeting minutes and survey findings.

6.2. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The feedback received from community members, local industry and event organisers – via meetings and surveys – is outlined below.

It is important to differentiate the feedback by stakeholder type, so that the Strategy can respond to the specific issues and needs for each group.

6.2.1. COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The events calendar

Residents see the events calendar as too congested, with a number of events held over consecutive weekends – particularly in Bright – and causing over-crowding of town centres (and reducing amenity). As such, locals tend to avoid towns hosting large tourism events, as local infrastructure (i.e. roads) and services are overwhelmed by visitors from outside the region.

The general view is that the events sector is driven by the pursuit of economic benefits, rather than community/social benefits. As such, more balanced support is required to provide positive impacts for residents.

This is supported by the community survey results, with 77% of respondents believing that the events sector has a negative impact on the community, including overcrowding, waste, noise pollution and environmental impacts.

Disperse events geographically and seasonally

Events are seen as too heavily concentrated within the Bright area, particularly over weekends, leading to significant congestion issues.

The community wants to disperse some (inc. tourism and community events) relocated across the Shire so that other local economies and communities can experience the benefits – and at the same time alleviating overcrowding in Bright.

Whilst recognising that majority of events need to be held over weekends, it was identified that:

- Fewer events should be held over long weekends/public holidays, as these times already attract a significant number of visitors; and
- More events need to be rescheduled to traditionally 'slower' months, such as winter and during school term, to facilitate year-round visitation.

Event infrastructure

The quantity and quality of event facilities and venues was raised as an issue, particularly the availability of indoor (i.e. all-weather) venues, the lack of large scale event venues and poor quality of existing facilities (e.g. toilets, lighting, etc.). In particular, sufficient lighting is needed to allow for night-time events in the Shire, which could stimulate the night-time economy and grow the potential economic benefits.

However, this was balanced with the potential negative impact of developing more (and larger) venues, which could contribute to increased congestion of towns. As such, the development of infrastructure needs to consider the community impact.

Many survey respondents listed Pioneer Park and other outdoor spaces (e.g. town centres, Mount Buffalo) as key venues that drive events, with little to no indoor venues identified.

Issues and Barriers to Event Development

When asked to identify the key barriers to a thriving event industry in the Shire, the following issues were raised (in order of frequency):

- Lack of funding for events (or in-kind support);
- Lack of suitable facilities/venues; and
- Poor marketing and promotion of events.

Council Support

In general, the community recognises that Council provides sufficient support to the events sector, with 37% of respondents listing Council's performance as positive (Extremely well or Very Well).

However, around one-quarter of responses were negative, arguing that Council does not provide enough support to deliver and manage events.

In terms of improving this level of support and developing the event sector, many residents identified the need for Council to:

- Improve communication and consultation with community;
- Adopt a more strategic focus to the events calendar that balances tourism and liveability; and
- Increase the focus on community and grassroots events.

Other key points raised by the community includes:

- More diversity in the types of events is required to meet resident demand, particularly food and wine, as well as arts and culture events;
- There is a lack of event promotion and communication to residents, leading to poor awareness of local events occurring across the Shire;
- The environmental cost of events also needs to be considered, particularly the impact on waste and open spaces; and
- Although the Shire hosts several signature (i.e. Tier 3) events, there is potential to attract more of these 'iconic' events, particularly cycling events that leverages the cycling assets of the region.

6.2.2. BUSINESS AND EVENT ORGANISER FEEDBACK

Following engagement with local businesses and event organisers, the following feedback was provided.

Event support and resources

Event organisers identified the need for additional support from Council and other organisations (e.g. Tourism North East) to facilitate the delivery of events, particularly in response to the impacts of the bushfires and COVID-19 pandemic. This includes:

- Clear direction and leadership that provides guidance for organisers to safely run events in response to social distancing restrictions;
- A consistent and effective funding structure that supports the continuation of existing events and allows new events to become established;
- A more streamlined approvals process, which currently requires multiple application forms from different organisations. Organisers felt that more guidance is also needed to navigate this process, and that the process should be simple and easy to follow;
- Improved communication between event organisers and Council, which could be facilitated through a centralised directory of resources/guidelines;
- Encourage collaboration between event organisers, to avoid event duplication, expand the support network and identify opportunities for local businesses to support event visitation; and
- More coordinated marketing and promotion of key events in the region – using both traditional and social media platforms.

Despite these areas for improvement raised, majority of survey respondents (79%) felt that Council provides a supportive role for the events sector.

In terms of resources, most event organisers (69%) obtain outside (i.e. non-Council) funding to help run the event, particularly private sponsorship. This indicates that the current level of Council funding (or in-kind support) may need to be reviewed to ensure sufficient resources are provided to deliver events.

Event infrastructure provision

Event organisers found that the general quality of event infrastructure and facilities requires improvement (in terms of capacity, outdated facilities, etc.), and that an infrastructure audit is needed to identify gaps and areas for improvement.

It was also recognised that there is variability in the level and quantity of event-related infrastructure across the Shire, which affects the ability of smaller towns to host events. This includes appropriate venues (e.g. all-weather), amenities (e.g. lighting, toilets) and supporting infrastructure (e.g. accommodation) – each of which is needed to host tourist events; attract visitors and promote visitor stays in the region.

This results in majority of tourist events being held in larger towns such as Bright and Myrtleford, whilst smaller towns such as Mount Beauty are limited in the ability to host large events (or multiple events at the same time). This has flow-on effects to local economies, as it constrains the level of event visitation and visitor expenditure.

As such, many event organisers found that the lack of suitable indoor facilities (21% of respondents) and the lack of suitable outdoor facilities (5% of respondents) as key issues facing event development in the Shire.

In addition, a lack of high quality visitor accommodation was identified as a barrier to support large-scale tourism events, as well as multi-day events, which constrains the level of visitation.

Issues and barriers to event growth

When asked to identify the barriers to a thriving event industry, the following key points were raised (in order of frequency):

- Financial resourcing and funding (inc. accessing funding);
- Marketing and promotion costs;
- Lack of suitable facilities; and
- Government regulation, including obtaining relevant approvals from Council (and other organisations).

More specifically, when addressing the issue of accessing Council funding or in-kind support, most organisers were either: not aware of the availability of funding; or the application process was too onerous.

These issues identified by event organisers are focused on funding and finance and should be addressed by Council to alleviate some of the key barriers to event development.

Event development opportunities

In terms of the potential to develop and grow the sector, around 70% of event organiser responses had not planned on running any new events in the near future. This could be attributed to the uncertainty surrounding the tourism industry, following the bushfires and impact of COVID-19.

However, many potential signature events were identified as a possibility to be hosted in the Shire, particularly sport and recreation events that leverages the region's natural assets and aligns to existing product strengths.

Use of volunteers

Volunteers are seen as a crucial component of event delivery, with 94% of survey respondents utilising volunteers to support events. In some cases this included upwards of 100-150 volunteers per event.

However, it was agreed that the sector in general could better utilise volunteer support, including:

- A central directory of volunteers that could be accessed by organisers;
- Council developing a volunteer register; and
- Council promoting the benefits of increased volunteerism, such as improving community engagement, connections, etc.

7. ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1. INTRODUCTION

This section examines the economic and community (i.e. social) benefits of events held within the Alpine Shire. This includes both commercial/tourism events as well as community events, noting that all events are likely to have some level of impact on the economy and community.

7.2. ECONOMIC IMPACT OF EVENTS

Events typically deliver a range of direct and indirect economic benefits to a region, generated by increased visitation and length of stay and quantified by increasing visitor expenditure.

7.2.1. METHODOLOGY

The economic impact was calculated through the following approach:

- Identifying the *net impact* of events, quantified by **additional visitor expenditure** generated by **event visitors** from outside the Shire;
- Measuring the economic impact through the following variables: Additional economic output; and Job creation; and
- Using the input-output method (using relevant industry multipliers)¹⁷ to identify the direct and indirect impacts, which are defined as follows:
 - The *direct* effect is represented by visitor expenditure; and
 - The *indirect* effect reflects the additional, flow-on output generated by other sectors of the economy, particularly the supply-chain.

All figures in this section are indicative only and based on Urban Enterprise assumptions (using industry multipliers relevant to the Hume Region). These are subject to further investigation and analysis, including the recommendation to conduct ongoing primary research at all Alpine Shire events.

Definitions for key economic terms are provided in Appendix C

7.2.2. TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF EVENTS

The following estimates the annual economic impact of event visitors to the Shire, which is based on the following assumptions (drawing on existing visitation and expenditure data from Section 2.5):

- Of the 122,435 event visitors, 29,384 (24%) are assumed to be daytrip visitors, spending an average of \$122 per person; and
- The remaining 93,050 (76%) are assumed to be overnight visitors, spending an average of \$208 per trip. This also assumes that overnight visitors will spend one night in the region – a conservative estimate – to attend an event.

As shown in Table T11, these visitor estimates are expected to generate **\$22.6 million** in additional visitor expenditure, which is estimated to have the following ongoing direct and indirect economic impact to the region¹⁸.

- Economic output of \$40.2 million; and
- An additional 194 jobs.

Of this, the direct effect of \$22.6 million and 138 jobs are benefits that will remain in the Shire. Therefore, the delivery of events in the Shire generates significant annual economic benefits.

¹⁷ Developed by REMPLAN (using available industry multipliers for the Hume Region) and applied by Urban Enterprise.

¹⁸ The total impact represents benefits to the Hume Region, while the direct impact represents benefits to the Alpine Shire.

T11. TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

	Output	Employment
Direct Impact	\$22,645,000	138
Indirect Impact	\$17,547,000	56
Total Impact	\$40,192,000	194

Source: Urban Enterprise, 2021; Note: this assumes average spend on local retail, accommodation, food and beverage and transport.

7.2.3. ECONOMIC IMPACT BY EVENT TYPE

Table T12 shows the economic impact by event type, which applies the average visitor attendance for each category, and subsequent additional visitor expenditure.

In terms of total impact (inc. direct and indirect), the event types with the largest visitation (and spend) – Sport & Outdoor Recreation and Markets – generate around 65% of the economic benefits of events.

T12. ECONOMIC IMPACT BY EVENT TYPE

Event Type	Output	Employment	% of Impact
Sport & Outdoor Recreation	\$14,314,000	69	36%
Market	\$11,744,000	56	29%
Arts, Culture & Heritage	\$6,457,000	31	16%
Cycling	\$3,360,000	16	8%
Food, Wine & Beer	\$2,751,000	13	7%
Community	\$971,000	5	2%
Snow	\$598,000	2	1%

Source: Urban Enterprise, 2021; Note: this assumes average spend on local retail, accommodation, food and beverage and transport; Totals may not equal due to rounding.

In contrast, when examining the economic output *per event*, some of the event types with smaller total impact have a greater *relative* impact – particularly Food, Wine & Beer and Arts, Culture & Heritage.

In addition, markets typically attract substantial economic benefits through ongoing visitation and spend year-round.

T13. ECONOMIC IMPACT PER EVENT

Event Type	Output per Event	Employment per Event
Market	\$880,800	4.2
Food, Wine & Beer	\$485,471	2.3
Arts, Culture & Heritage	\$395,327	1.9
Sport & Outdoor Recreation	\$376,684	1.8
Cycling	\$210,000	1.0
Snow	\$224,250	0.8
Community	\$63,326	0.3

Source: Urban Enterprise, 2021

Understanding the varying impacts of event typologies for the local economy can help shape Council's focus for event attraction and promotion (depending on need and identified gaps). It is recommended that further research is conducted by Council to understand the economic opportunities that could be generated different event types.

7.2.4. VALUE-FOR MONEY ANALYSIS

When compared against annual Council investment (average of \$200,000), the total direct visitor expenditure impacts (\$22.6 million) – in addition to flow-on benefits – ensures that the events sector generates **value for money**.

This has the potential to create additional (qualitative) benefits for the economy, which can include (amongst other things):

- Increasing the value of the visitor economy;
- Encouraging additional public investment in tourist infrastructure;
- Encourage spend opportunities for local retail and hospitality businesses; and
- Increase commercial activity within key towns and town centres, which could promote additional business investment and revitalisation/activation of towns.

However, whilst the regional economy benefits from the hosting of events, this can also create disbenefits for many local businesses due to the displacement of local resident expenditure. This occurs when towns experience an influx of event

attendees, preventing some residents from visiting the area and engaging in local consumption of goods and services (e.g. groceries, restaurants, etc) to avoid congestion. As a result, some businesses claim that the presence of events leads to a decrease in business activity. It is recommended that Council monitors this effect, via surveys of local business owners, to assess the true economic impact of events.

7.3. COMMUNITY IMPACT OF EVENTS

In addition to the economic impacts of events held in the Alpine Shire, there are also a number of qualitative social and community benefits. Events provide destinations with exposure and create community engagement, in order to enhance liveability and favourability¹⁹. The development of events can create a range of social and community benefits for the local community. Including:

- **Events build communities and connect people.** Linking people through social events builds health, confidence and self-esteem, which can have significant positive impacts on both individuals and communities and strengthen their engagement and resilience. Events can also be a mechanism to deliver important messages to residents, share information and knowledge;
- **Increases community engagement.** Community events can increase community engagement through participation, as well as the use of volunteers to assist in the delivery of events. Providing volunteer opportunities are important – particularly for older residents – to increase resident contribution to the Shire’s activities and engage with other locals.
- **Promoting diversity.** Participation in multicultural arts and culture events leads to the promotion of trust and acceptance. The positive recognition and expression of diversity through a range of art forms is important in creating a cohesive society;
- **Civic pride and cultural identity.** Events provide opportunities for individuals and groups to generate pride through public celebrations and local festivals. This

can also foster a stronger cultural identity for residents, which is important in strengthening the liveability of the Shire;

- **Regional development.** Government funding for events can revitalise a local area – through increases commercial activity – which supports employment and wealth generating economic activities; and
- **Contributing to the resilience of local economies.** Investment in event infrastructure and events contributes to local economies by providing a focal point to attract tourist dollars, helps promote a city’s image as a visitor destination and assists in attracting high skilled and educated workers to communities²⁰.
- **Improving the tourism ‘brand’ of the Shire.** Through hosting a diverse range of popular events, the events sector will help enhance the status of Alpine Shire as a desirable visitor destination.

However, the community benefits – whilst important – need to be measured against some of the disbenefits when considering the future management of events. The following are drawn from the background analysis of the Shire’s events sector, in combination with the community survey results²¹:

- **Impact on resident liveability.** Tourism events targeted at visitors from outside the Shire can impact the liveability of residents through traffic and pedestrian congestion leading to reduced amenity, and even safety issues associated with over-crowding.
- **Increases in cost of living.** The growth in commercial and economic activity, attributed to events, can also lead to increases in cost of living, ranging from higher costs of goods and services (targeted to visitors), to potential increases in Council rates to help fund future events.

Although events generally provide a positive economic and social impact, there are several negative impacts to consider to ensure the sector aligns with community and business needs. This will influence the future management and delivery of events.

¹⁹ Tourism and Transport Forum, 2014

²⁰ Creative Victoria, The Arts Ripple Effect: Valuing the Arts in Communities

²¹ In response to the question to provide detail of the social impacts of events.

PART C. STRATEGIC EVENT FRAMEWORK

DRAFT

8. STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

8.1. INTRODUCTION

The following sections of this report outline the strategic considerations and framework for events attraction and development in Alpine Shire. This will help identify the future directions for Council – in terms of key strategies and actions – to improve the management and delivery of events.

Drawing on the consultation findings, assessment of the events sector and current resourcing, the following strategic considerations have been identified. These summarise the strategic areas of focus to meet the needs and requirements of the community and key stakeholders.

8.2. EVENTS CALENDAR CONSIDERATIONS

ENCOURAGING EVENT DISPERSAL (GEOGRAPHICALLY AND SEASONALLY)

The most significant finding from the research and consultation was the concentration of tourism events within the Bright area, particularly during peak periods (i.e. weekends, public holidays).

Whilst this generates event visitation into Bright, which is critically important for the local economy, it also impacts on resident amenity due to congestion and safety issues associated with over-crowding.

Therefore, a key consideration for Council should be to promote dispersal of events across the Shire (inc. new and re-location of existing). This will help to alleviate the strain on Bright infrastructure and activate the events sector (and generate local economic benefits) in other towns.

In addition, the scheduling of events over consecutive weekends, public holidays and other peak periods (e.g. school holidays) creates inefficiencies in the events calendar. Council could address these issues by focusing on the seasonal dispersal of events, including:

- More events during the 'off-peak' winter months;
- Attracting business events to generate mid-week visitation; and
- Avoiding events during high visitation periods, inc. long weekends, public holidays, etc.

This could also help avoid some of the key issues facing the sector, including duplication of events, multiple events occurring simultaneously and conflicting use of event facilities.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES BY EVENT TYPE

Another key finding from the background research is the skew towards outdoor and nature-based events, including sport, outdoor recreation, cycling and snow. Whilst these are critical events that align with the Shire's brand and product strengths, there is an opportunity to offer a wider range of event types to meet community and visitor needs, including:

- **Food, Wine and Beer.** These can be developed further, leveraging existing facilities (i.e. Bright Brewery) as well as the growth potential for food and beverage manufacturers in the region (e.g. export of beer hops).
- **Arts, Culture and Heritage.** These events typically attract high-yielding 'lifestyle leader' visitor markets (particularly from Melbourne), which could increase the economic benefit of the sector. In addition, they can contribute to increased amenity for residents, including the fostering of cultural identity. This type of events can include: music festivals, Aboriginal cultural events, makers and artisan events, food festivals and wellness events.

The economic impact assessment also identified these event types as high yielding, which results in substantial benefits for the economy (on a per event basis) and makes them lucrative for Council and businesses.

ATTRACT MORE SIGNATURE EVENTS

Although the Shire provides a comprehensive events calendar, only a small number of annual events are considered to be 'signature' or large scale events, which, according to the Shire's guidelines:

- Attract over 5,000 attendees;
- Achieve a significant economic, tourism or community benefit.
- Generate a substantial increase to visitation and spending; and
- Increase the profile of the Alpine Shire (via interstate visitation and media).

In particular, the opportunity to create a new signature cycling event (or enhance/develop an existing cycling event) was identified. There is potential to leverage the growth of cycle tourism by offering a large-scale cycling event, which would also align with the brand and product strengths of the Shire.

Council should consider allocating funding to support the attraction of signature events, which may include allocating a budget for matched funding.

Delivery of any new or existing signature event should consider the dispersal requirements to meet the needs to the community.

MAXIMISE VISITOR YIELD

Undertake event planning to encourage higher yield tourism so that fewer visitors can provide high benefit to the Shire (without creating congestion or impacting amenity). This could consider the following (which may be reflected in future funding criteria):

- Multi day events that have a much greater opportunity to encourage overnight visitation (and increase yield);
- Working with local suppliers and food operators increases the local economic benefits of events; and
- Linking smaller events that have synergies to encourage visitors to visit more than one event during a trip.

STRIKE BALANCE BETWEEN 'COMMUNITY' AND 'TOURISM' EVENTS

Whilst the above focuses more on tourism-related events, a key outcome from the community consultation was Council to strike a better balance between community and tourism events. This could mean an increased focus on **community and grass roots events**, designed to foster community engagement and liveability (without impacting amenity).

8.3. EVENT INFRASTRUCTURE CONSIDERATIONS

EVENT INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES AND GAPS

Event organisers and the community consultation identified the current standard of event facilities as being a barrier to the events sector. This includes:

- Quality of venue and supporting infrastructure (e.g. lighting, toilets) to service attendees;
- Size of venue, with a key issue for the region being lack of large-scale indoor venue to support major events; and
- Appropriate access to venue, accommodating both pedestrians and traffic.

An assessment of event venues (and supporting facilities) should be undertaken to identify the required improvements to venues and also establish a clear hierarchy of facilities to accommodate small, medium and large scale events.

In addition, the audit identified a gap in suitable facilities across the Shire, with majority concentrated in Bright. This is a significant barrier to event dispersal in other locations, which is impacting the sustainability of the events sector.

As such, Council should identify opportunities to develop and/or upgrade appropriate event infrastructure in key locations across the Shire.

LACK OF CONTEMPORARY INDOOR VENUES

The event infrastructure audit identified a lack of contemporary indoor event venues to support 'all-weather' events, night-time events and accommodate large-scale performances. This also includes a lack of indoor conference facilities, which could attract the business market and encourage mid-week visitation.

Although the pavilion was recently developed in Pioneer Park, both industry and community recognised this as only being suitable for small to medium-sized events. Therefore, a new large indoor event facility should be considered for the Shire, which best meets the needs of industry, the community and visitors.

LACK OF CONTEMPORARY VISITOR ACCOMMODATION

The stock of visitor accommodation across the Shire is a barrier to generating overnight stays to multi-day events. Whilst there are many small-scale facilities, including campsites, motels and holiday homes, there are a lack of suitable accommodation options to support high-yielding overnight event visitors.

The provision of commercial accommodation is recognised as a key project in the Alpine Shire Economic Development Strategy, as this could support not only the events sector, but general growth in the visitor economy.

PROMOTE AVAILABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Through our undertaking of the infrastructure audit, it became clear that there is limited information on current event facilities, including size and availability.

This could be overcome through the establishment of an event infrastructure directory/event organiser guide, providing a greater level of detail on available facilities and supporting event delivery. This may be developed specifically for event types, including specific information for:

- Arts and Cultural events;
- Sport & Outdoor Recreation;
- Weddings; and
- Business events and conferences.

8.4. EVENT RESOURCING AND SUPPORT CONSIDERATIONS

EVENT AND FUNDING CATEGORISATION

As outlined in this report, there are three event categories that determine the level of Council funding available:

- Tier 1 (small and community events) – up to \$3,500;
- Tier 2 (major events and festivals) – up to \$10,000; and
- Tier 3 (signature events) – over \$10,000.

A review of these classifications and funding streams could help improve the efficacy of the funding model and better meet the needs of the Shire.

Table T14 provides an overview of potential classification criteria to be considered as part of this discussion paper. Development of this criteria has been drawn from the *Visit Victoria* event tier classification, as utilised by the Regional Events Fund guidelines, which could help with obtaining State Government funding for events in the Shire.

This will enable more targeted event attraction and will provide further funding support to events that will drive out of region visitation, without impacting the delivery of local and community events.

Key points to note include:

- A standalone category for signature events allows Council to focus on the delivery major events of state or national significance, which would generate significant benefits to the visitor economy. This could also include events held across multiple destinations to encourage visitor dispersal.
- The recommended level of funding support for signature events will encourage the attraction of a new event or allow an existing event to expand into this category. Providing a cap on funding, however, will help manage budget restrictions.
- The event tiers have been re-categorised to focus on profile, ranging from local (community), municipal or regional (North East) significance. This

provides more clarity on the scope of event impact – in terms of the mix and number of attendees – and how wide-reaching the benefits should be.

- The funding levels for the tiers have been adjusted to provide a cap on the regionally significant events, as well as supporting various local and community events.

Note: these recommendations are indicative only, to be examined as part of this Discussion Paper. Following agreement by stakeholders, Urban Enterprise will provide an alternative categorisation of existing events based on these criteria.

T14. EVENT CATEGORISATION CONSIDERATIONS

Event Category	Overview of Criteria
Signature Event (State or nationally significant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events that are exclusive to Victoria (or Australia) • Majority of attendees inc. intrastate, interstate and international visitors from outside the Shire • Has a state-wide or national profile • Able to link multiple destinations • Attracts over 10,000 attendees
Signature Funding Level: up to \$50,000	
Tier 1 Event (Regionally significant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events that are exclusive to the North East region of Victoria • A large proportion of attendees are visitors from outside the Shire • Has a state-wide profile • Attracts between 5,000 to 10,000 attendees
Tier 1 Funding Level: up to \$10,000	
Tier 2 Event (Alpine Shire significant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events that are unique and significant to the Alpine Shire • Has a Shire-wide profile • Attracts a relatively even mix of local residents (where event is being held), residents from other townships and visitors from outside the Shire • Attracts between 1,000 to 5,000 attendees
Tier 2 Funding Level: up to \$5,000	
Tier 3 Event (Locally significant/ community events)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally-based or community events that are significant to townships • Attracts mostly local residents (where event is being held) and a small proportion of other residents and visitors to the region • Attracts up to 1,000 attendees
Tier 3 Funding Level: up to \$2,500	

Due to limited Council resources, other opportunities to generate revenue/funding for events should be explored, including implementing hire fees for community facilities and open spaces.

FUNDING ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Whether new funding categories are established, or the existing ones remain in place, the assessment criteria should be examined to ensure they address the strategic needs of the Shire.

These considerations are summarised in Table T15 (overleaf), including a review of existing criteria and recommended new ones. As community values and industry needs change over time, the assessment criteria should reflect this, including:

- Allowing for a more sustainable events calendar (by promoting geographic and seasonal dispersal);
- Consideration of the environmental impact;
- Focusing on visitor markets and event types that can maximise economic benefit; and
- Increasing the focus on community impacts and benefits to residents.

T15. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS

Criteria	Considerations addressing strategic needs
Existing criteria	
Economic and tourism impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drives off-peak visitation • Held in locations with fewer events and lower visitation
Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts new (high-yielding) visitor markets – e.g. business, lifestyle leaders, etc. • Branding and product strength alignment
Community impact and benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering community development and contributing to health and wellbeing • Supporting infrastructure requirements and impact on amenity
Capacity and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to accommodate visitors to the area • Event accessibility • Encourage events to become self-sustaining and less reliant on financial support
General criteria	N/A
Recommended criteria	
Environmental impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event considers and mitigates its environmental impact (e.g. waste, sewerage)
Event management planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure (for specific events) that organisers complete event management training, in particular risk and emergency management training courses

EVENT GUIDELINES AND APPROVALS

The current approvals process for event delivery (and funding) should be reviewed, with event organisers identifying issues such as engaging with multiple approval agencies, lack of clarity of approvals required and event guidelines. As such, areas for potential improvement include the following:

- Less onerous application process, particularly for community organisations that may not have the capacity to undertake (which could create different requirements depending on the event tier);
- Centralised system/point of contact within Council that provides consistent advice, including outlining the permits required and the responsible organisation;
- Improve communications for the status and timing of pending applications; and
- Collaborating with relevant agencies to develop consistent and clear guidelines to better manage events and improve clarity for the approvals process.

AWARENESS OF FUNDING PROGRAMS AND EVENT SUPPORT

Event organisers, particularly smaller bodies, have limited time and capability in accessing funding programs (or in-kind support). Whilst some are successful in attracting funding, the awareness of grant programs (from Local and State Government) is limited amongst event organisers.

Ongoing assistance and promotion of funding support available to event organisers will be useful in building the knowledge of the industry to encourage the delivery of events.

INDUSTRY CAPACITY BUILDING AND BUSINESS RECOVERY

Development of a toolkit for current and potential event operators has been suggested to help grow the capacity of the events sector and would provide necessary support to event operators. The toolkit could include online resources such as video tutorials/FAQs; workshops, and recorded event management workshops.

This would be highly beneficial to organisers seeking support for the application process and Council funding. In particular, event management training to increase knowledge around risk and emergency management would improve the funding and approval process.

In particular, capacity building is needed to support business recovery (and promote business resilience) as the events sector (including organisers and the tourism industry) recovers from the impacts of the 2020 bushfires and COVID-19 pandemic. This includes assistance to help deliver events under a 'COVID normal' environment, overcoming ongoing social distancing restrictions, hygiene requirements, etc.

AWARENESS OF EVENTS

The consultation highlighted a lack of awareness of events occurring across the Shire, with many residents and local businesses unaware of upcoming events. This constrains the level of attendance and business support.

There is an opportunity for Council to create awareness and disperse information regarding events (through collaboration with other tourism and industry bodies), which could generate interest from hospitality and accommodation businesses to support events and increase attendance.

STANDARDISED ASSESSMENT OF EVENTS

There is currently no standard for identifying the value of events in the Shire and undertaking events research. Some opportunities for gathering standardised information on events include:

- Development of a standardised survey questionnaire to measure the social, economic and environmental outcomes of events;
- Development of a standardised methodology for calculating the economic benefits of events; and
- Development of a portal to record all events and associated impacts across the region.

9. STRATEGIC EVENT FRAMEWORK

9.1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the report provides a strategic framework for event delivery and management in the Shire. The aim of this section is to set the vision, objectives and guiding directions for the sector.

Vision	Strategic Objectives	Strategic Directions
<p>Create a sustainable and diverse events sector that provides community benefits, showcases the region's assets and generates positive economic outcomes across the Shire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote community benefits. • Spread economic benefits. • Provide suitable event infrastructure. • Continue event support • Promote higher-yielding events • Encourage brand alignment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a sustainable events calendar 2. Deliver improved event facilities and supporting infrastructure 3. Support the events sector

This is explored in greater detail below

9.2. VISION

The vision for the events sector, drawing on the consultation outcomes and strategic needs of the Shire, is to:

Create a sustainable and diverse events sector that provides community benefits, showcases the region's assets and generates positive economic outcomes across the Shire.

9.3. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The vision is supported by the following key objectives, which should guide event development and the Strategy's strategic directions:

- **Promote community benefits.** Support events that foster community engagement and are aligned to resident values, without impacting amenity or liveability outcomes.
- **Spread economic benefits.** Encourage delivery of events during low visitation periods, and in less popular locations, to spread the economic benefits across the Shire more sustainably.
- **Suitable event infrastructure.** Encourage and facilitate investment in infrastructure to support the delivery of existing and new events.
- **Event support.** Ensure the events sector receives adequate financial and non-financial support to deliver events.
- **Higher-yielding events.** Encourage events that deliver maximum value to the Shire, particularly those that drive overnight stays and increase visitor yield.
- **Brand alignment.** Ensure the delivery of new and existing events align with the Alpine Shire's identified brand and product strengths.

9.4. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Direction 1: Develop a sustainable events calendar. Create a more sustainable events calendar that focuses on spreading economic benefits across the Shire and decreases impacts on resident amenity in areas with high levels of visitation.

Direction 2: Deliver improved event facilities and supporting infrastructure. Improve the variety and quality of event infrastructure, including indoor and outdoor venues to support a diverse range of events.

Direction 3: Support the events sector. Provide efficient and effective support and resources to develop a sustainable and diverse events sector.

Discussion points:

- Do you agree with the vision, objectives and directions of the strategic framework?
- What other elements would you include or consider?

9.5. FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW

The Strategic Events Framework is detailed below, including three key directions and subsequent opportunities to be reviewed as part of this Discussion Paper. This highlights the areas of focus and helps identify potential strategies to be included in the final strategy.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1: DEVELOP A SUSTAINABLE EVENTS CALENDAR

Create a more sustainable events calendar that focuses on spreading economic benefits across the Shire and decreases impacts on resident amenity in areas with high levels of visitation.

The Alpine Shire already has a strong events calendar, attracting over 100 tourism and community events annually that attracts a combination of residents and visitors to the Shire.

However, there remain issues with the events sector that is impacting its sustainability, including lack of seasonal and geographic dispersal, calendar congestion as well as overcrowding, which impacts the level of resident amenity.

As such, the following opportunities to enhance the events calendar and increase the economic and social sustainability of the sector have been identified:

Opportunities:

- Identify Council levers and policies that can be utilised to shape the direction of events and encourage seasonal/geographic dispersal. Examples of levers to be used includes withholding funds and/or refusal of permits unless certain conditions are met.
- Grow existing events that align with the region's product and brand strengths, particularly outdoor, nature-based events, and cycling events.
- Attract new events that appeals to high-yielding visitors, in order to maximise the economic impact of events. This should include a focus on *Food, Beer and Wine*, as well as *Arts, Culture and Heritage* events.
- Support the attraction of State and Nationally-significant signature events, through funding incentives and proactive engagement with relevant organisations.

Discussion points:

- How can the events sector be more sustainable?
- What other levers could Council utilise to influence the events sector?
- What other opportunities can be considered?

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2: DELIVER IMPROVED EVENT FACILITIES AND SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Improve the variety and quality of event infrastructure, including indoor and outdoor venues to support a diverse range of events.

This is an important direction to encourage event development, including attracting new events to different locations and during off-peak period.

Council should promote and facilitate investment in infrastructure to ensure the existing (and future) stock is fit-for-purpose and meets the needs of residents and visitors.

Opportunities:

- Complete a detailed audit of existing event facilities across the Shire to:
 - Identify infrastructure improvement requirements; and
 - Identify infrastructure gaps in key locations, including provision of outdoor and indoor venues.
- Investigate the opportunity for a dedicated outdoor events space in Mt Beauty.
- Explore the opportunity for a dedicated quality conferencing and business events venue in Bright or Myrtleford.
- Support development of contemporary and large scale indoor venues to be utilised year-round.
- Create a directory of event infrastructure and available facilities, to be used as a guide for event organisers and support event delivery.

Discussion points:

- Is there any investment interest from the private sector in developing new event infrastructure?
- What locations would benefit from more indoor venues?
- What are opportunities can be considered?

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3: SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EVENTS SECTOR

Provide efficient and effective support and resources to develop a sustainable and diverse events sector.

Council has delivered on its ongoing commitment to support the events sector, including facilitation of community events, overseeing the application process as well as providing financial support for event organisers.

This commitment should continue, albeit with some modifications for improving the efficacy of Council support, to ensure the sector has adequate resources and assistance to deliver events.

There will, therefore, be a continued role for Council to assist event operators (particularly smaller community organisations) through the event approval processes, accessing funding programs and general event support.

Opportunities:

- Provide disaster recovery assistance to help the events industry recover from the impacts of COVID-19 and support a 'COVID-normal' operating environment.
- Review funding levels and adjustments to the event categorisation structure, which includes a specific focus on attracting signature events.
- Review the funding assessment criteria to ensure they address the strategic needs of the Shire and align with community aspirations. This includes amendments to existing and development of new criteria.
- Undertake a review of the approvals process and application requirements for event organisers, to identify areas for improvement and increased efficiency.
- Collaborate with relevant agencies to provide consistent and clear guidelines for event management (and improve deliver of events).
- Provide training and support tools to strengthen industry capacity, including resources and workshops designed to inform event management processes, particularly risk and emergency management procedures.

- Improve awareness of funding programs and support available to organisers, which could involve collaboration with industry and tourism organisations (e.g. Tourism North East).
- Enhance the level of event promotion and marketing, to encourage visitation and business support.
- Investigate options to generate revenue from the sector by charging hire fees for community facilities (inc. buildings, parks, etc.)
- Investigate the potential to create a standardised process for event registration, reporting and data collection.
- Increase collaboration with the Alpine Resorts to improve event management across the Shire and leverage the benefits from events held in these areas.

Discussion points:

- What are the other opportunities to obtain local, state and private funding?
- What is the current level of training, support and communication provided by Council? Would you like to see more?
- What are opportunities can be considered?

10. NEXT STEPS

The strategic considerations, framework and opportunities identified in this Discussion Paper will be provided to Council and the broader community for feedback. This will be used to inform the development of the Events Strategy and Action Plan, which will include the following:

- Strategies and initiatives for Council to consider; and
- An Action Plan to guide the delivery of the Strategy, including key tasks, responsibilities, timeframes and measurable KPIs.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A EVENT INFRASTRUCTURE AUDIT

Venue Name	Address	Venue Type	Sub-region	Management	Indoor/Outdoor	Current Events
Alpine Gate Cafe	38 Great Alpine Rd, Myrtleford VIC 3737	Hotel, Restaurant or Café	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor	International Women's Day event
Alpine Park Wandiligong	White Star Road, Wandiligong VIC 3744	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Bright and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Ora Holt Memorial Ride, Wandi Cross, Wandiligong Nut Festival, Alpine Colour Fun Run
Anglican Church Hall	14 Clyde St, Myrtleford VIC 3737	Community Facility or Hall	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor	n.p.
Bakers Gully		Town Centre or Street	Bright and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Alfred 6 Hour
Bicentennial Park	Boat Ramp Rd, Mount Beauty VIC 3699	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Mount Beauty Parkrun
Big Hill Mountain Bike Park	Bogong High Plains Tourist Drive, Mount Beauty VIC 3699	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Victoria Down Hill Series Down Hill Race, Mount Beauty Gravity Enduro, Victorian DownHill Series Round 1, Victorian Mountain Bike Championship Series / Team Mount Beauty, White Mud Classic
Bright Art Gallery and Cultural Centre	28 Mountbatten Ave, Bright VIC 3741	Arts, Culture and History Facility	Bright and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor	Australian Adventure Travel Film Festival, Bright Spring Festival
Bright Bowls Club	14 Churchill Ave, Bright VIC 3741	Sports Facility or Showground	Bright and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor / Outdoor	n.p.
Bright Brewery	121 Great Alpine Rd, Bright VIC	Hotel, Restaurant or Café	Bright and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor	Bright Running Festival, Darker Days, High Country Women's Cycling Festival, 5Zero, Tour of Bright
Bright Community Centre	1 Railway Ave, Bright VIC 3741	Community Facility or Hall	Bright and Surrounds	Council	Indoor	Australian Adventure Travel Film Festival, Get a Grip of the Grind, Harrietville Music Camp
Bright Courthouse Theatre	1-3 Park St, Bright VIC 3741	Theatre or Auditorium	Bright and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor	Bright Cabaret Festival
CBD of Bright	Bright	Town Centre or Street	Bright and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Bright Rotary Markets including Easter, Gala, Spring and Twilight markets, Remembrance Day
Bright Skate Park	Bright	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Bright and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Bright Skate Events
Centenary Park	Canyon Walk, Bright VIC 3741	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Bright and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Bright Oktoberfest, Life Ed Duck Race, Australia Day Community Celebrations
Dederang Recreation Reserve	Dederang Recreation Reserve, Kiewa Valley Highway, Dederang 3691	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Non Council	Outdoor	Dederang Races
Dinner Plain Alpine Village	Horseshoe Cir, Dinner Plain VIC 3898	Town Centre or Street	Dinner Plain	Non Council	Outdoor	Dinner Plain Sled Dog Challenge, Dinner Plain XC Enduro, Dinner Plain Easter Festival

Venue Name	Address	Venue Type	Sub-region	Management	Indoor/Outdoor	Current Events
Falls Creek Nordic Bowl	Bogong High Plains Rd, Falls Creek VIC 3699	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Non Council	Outdoor	Kangaroo Hoppet
Great Alpine Road and Shared Trail	Great Alpine Road	Town Centre or Street	Multiple	Non Council	Outdoor	Alpine Classic
Harrietville Primary School	165 Great Alpine Rd, Harrietville VIC 3741	School	Harrietville and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor / Outdoor	Harrietville Primary Annual Duck Race, Harrietville Bush Markets
Howitt Park	7 Riverside Ave, Bright VIC 3741	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Bright and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Audax Alpine Classic & Bonjour Bright, Buffalo Stampede, Bright Make It Bake It Grow It Markets, Carols by Candlelight,
Hydro Park	Lakeside Ave, Mount Beauty VIC 3699	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Australia Day Community Celebrations
Ireland and Gavan St	Bright	Town Centre or Street	Bright and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Bright Autumn Festival
Jubilee Park	Myrtle St, Myrtleford VIC 3737	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	La Fiera
Les Peart Oval	1 Tennis Ct Ave, Mount Beauty VIC 3699	Sports Facility or Showground	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Mount Beauty Music Festival
Marian College	11 - 49 Prince St Myrtleford VIC 3737	School	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor / Outdoor	Marian 100
Mount Beauty Auditorium	31 Bogong High Plains Rd, Mount Beauty VIC 3699	Theatre or Auditorium	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	n.p.
Mount Beauty Community Centre	Kiewa Cres, Mount Beauty VIC 3699	Community Facility or Hall	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Council	Indoor	Mt Beauty Music Festival, Mount Beauty Art Show, Mount Beauty Community Markets
Mount Beauty Cricket Club	Lakeside Ave, Mount Beauty VIC 3699	Sports Facility or Showground	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor / Outdoor	Bright Rotary Markets Gala Day, Mount Beauty Cricket Club NYE
Mount Beauty Library	61 Lakeside Ave, Mount Beauty VIC 3699	Community Facility or Hall	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Council	Indoor	n.p.
Mount Beauty Neighbourhood Centre	1 Tennis Ct Ave, Mount Beauty VIC 3699	Community Facility or Hall	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Council	Indoor	Summer Festival
Mount Beauty Recreation Reserve	Mount Beauty Recreation Reserve, Lakeside Avenue, Mount Beauty VIC 3699	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	n.p.
Mount Beauty Secondary College	Tail Race Rd, Mount Beauty VIC 3699	School	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Council	Indoor / Outdoor	Carols by Candlelight
Mountain Creek Campground	Mountain Creek Rd, Tawonga VIC 3699	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Non Council	Outdoor	Bogong Conquestathon
Mountain View Holiday Retreat	194 Great Alpine Rd, Harrietville VIC 3741	Hotel, Restaurant or Café	Harrietville and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor	Harrietville Music Camp
Mudgegonga Hall	1395 Myrtleford-Yackandandah Road, Mudgegonga VIC 3737	Community Facility or Hall	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Council	Indoor	Australia Day Breakfast

Venue Name	Address	Venue Type	Sub-region	Management	Indoor/Outdoor	Current Events
Myrtleford Golf Club	Myrtleford Golf Club, 251 Myrtleford-Yackandandah Rd	Sports Facility or Showground	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Non Council	Outdoor	16th Great Alpine Classic Golf Tournament
Myrtleford Lawn Tennis Club	6 Lewis Ave, Myrtleford VIC 3737	Sports Facility or Showground	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor / Outdoor	Easter Tennis Tournament
Myrtleford Recreation Reserve	Myrtleford Recreation Reserve, Myrtleford VIC 3737	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Myrtleford Rodeo Little Tackers Event, Myrtleford Golden Spurs
Myrtleford Showgrounds	109 Odonnell Ave, Myrtleford VIC 3737	Sports Facility or Showground	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Touratech Travel Event and Expo, Myrtleford Show, Show'n'Shine & Swap Meet, Myrtleford Festival,
Myrtleford Township CBD	Myrtleford VIC 3737	Town Centre or Street	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Myrtleford Bush Market
Mystic Flight Park		Airfield	Bright and Surrounds	Non Council	Outdoor	AAA Paragliding Bright Open
Mystic MTB	Mystic Trail Head, Coronation Ave, Bright VIC 3741	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Bright and Surrounds	Non Council	Outdoor	Myrtleford Wingvan Wing Jam, Pineapple Express
Myrtleford Town Piazza	Great Alpine Rd, Myrtleford VIC 3737	Town Centre or Street	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Myrtleford Farmers Market, Carols by Candlelight, Myrtleford Bush Markets, ANZAC Day
Nimmo Bridge Recreational Area	Nimmo Bridge Reserve, Myrtleford VIC 3737	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Ovens River Challenge
Old School Museum	29 Elgin St, Myrtleford VIC 3737	Arts, Culture and History Facility	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Council	Indoor	Myrtleford Flea Markets
Pioneer Park	Coronation Avenue, Bright VIC 3741	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Bright and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Katy Perry Concer, Brighter Days Festival, AARC 2018 2-Day Gala Event, Bright Spring Festival, Bright's Iconic Rod Run, Spartan Run
Porepunkah Hall	1 Martley Street, Porepunkah VIC 3740	Community Facility or Hall	Bright and Surrounds	Council	Indoor	Porepunkah Community Christmas Party
Porepunkah Pub	13 Nicholson St, Porepunkah VIC 3740	Hotel, Restaurant or Café	Bright and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor	Easter Sunday Concert
RC McNamara Reserve	RC McNamara Reserve Lewis Avenue Myrtleford VIC 3737	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Myrtleford and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Alpine Relay for Life
Riverside Park	Riverside Park, Porepunkah VIC 3740	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Bright and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Porepunkah Community Christmas Party
RSL Memorial Bright	Mafeking Square, Bright VIC 3741	Community Facility or Hall	Bright and Surrounds	Non Council	Outdoor	Remembrance Day
State Forest, Harrietville	Harrietville Victoria 3741	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Harrietville and Surrounds	Non Council	Outdoor	Razorback Run
Tavare Park	Tavare Park, Harrietville VIC 3741	Recreation Reserve, Gardens or Park	Harrietville and Surrounds	Council	Outdoor	Harrietville Bush Market, Veteran Car Club of Australia 1 & 2 Cylinder Rally, Australia Day Community Celebrations

Venue Name	Address	Venue Type	Sub-region	Management	Indoor/Outdoor	Current Events
Wandiligong Public Hall	462 Morses Creek Road, Wandiligong	Community Facility or Hall	Bright and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor	Wandiligong Hall Markets
West Peak Hotel	1 Lakeside Ave, Mount Beauty VIC 3699	Hotel, Restaurant or Café	Mount Beauty and Surrounds	Non Council	Indoor	Music events
Ramada Resort by Wyndham Dinner Plain	12 Big Muster Drive, Dinner Plain, Victoria, 3898	Hotel, Restaurant or Café	Dinner Plain	Non Council	Indoor	n.p.
High Plains Hotel	25 Big Muster Dr, Dinner Plain VIC 3898	Hotel, Restaurant or Café	Dinner Plain	Non Council	Indoor	n.p.
Onsent Retreat + Spa	Big Muster Drive, Dinner Plain, Victoria, 3898	Hotel, Restaurant or Café	Dinner Plain	Non Council	Indoor	n.p.

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APPENDIX B STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION SCHEDULE (PHASE 1)

Stakeholder Group	Date	Format	Attendees
Event Organiser and Business Reference Group #1	23/11/2020	Online workshop	Amanda Hore, Ben Saunier, Mike Dealy, Allan Marsland, Paul Ashton, Paul Hughes, Darren Murphy, Debbie Geddes
Event Organiser and Business Reference Group #2	24/11/2020	Online workshop	Jason Reid, Jean-Pierre Ronco, Monique Hoedemaker, Jocelyn Ceccanti, Glenyse Peacock, Aaron Smith
Community Reference Group	24/11/2020	Online workshop	Graham McCallum, Hannah Heydon, Melissa Palezza, Patrick McGillivray, Pip Vietz, R. Pitman, Zoe Kromar
Events Risk Council	1/12/2020	Online workshop	Elaine Burrridge, Charlie Sexton, Doug Incoll, Lesley Finch, Julian Atherstone, Brett Cooper, Rebecca Steer
Alpine Shire Council	8/12/2020	In-region presentation	Cr John Forsyth, Cr Sarah Nicholas, Cr Katarina Chalwell Cr Ron Janas, Cr Tony Keeble, Cr Charlie Vincent, Will Jeremy, Nathalie Cooke, Elaine Burrridge
Project Steering Group	25/11/2020	In-region workshop	Renate Griese, Melanie Atkins, Elaine Burrridge, Michael Buckley, Brett Jordan, Kirsten McDonald, Tom Courtice
Tourism North East	2/12/2020	In-region meeting	Bess Nolan-Cook
Alpine Community Plantation	24/11/2020	Teleconference	Nick Gall
Community Listening Post – Myrtleford	23/11/2020	In-region listening post	Not recorded
Community Listening Post – Mount Beauty	23/11/2020	In-region listening post	Not recorded
Community Listening Post – Bright	24/11/2020	In-region listening post	Not recorded

APPENDIX C ECONOMIC TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Output data represents the gross revenue generated by businesses/ organisations in each of the industry sectors in a defined region. Gross revenue is also referred to as total sales or total income.

Employment data represents the number of people employed by businesses / organisations in each of the industry sectors in a defined region. Employment data presented in this report is destination of work data. That is, no inference is made as to where people in a defined region reside. This employment represents total numbers of employees without any conversions to full-time equivalence. Retail jobs for instance represent typical employment profiles for that sector, i.e. some full time, some part time and some casual.

The increase in direct and indirect output and the corresponding creation of jobs in the economy are expected to result in an increase in the wages and salaries paid to employees. A proportion of these wages and salaries are typically spent on consumption and a proportion of this expenditure is captured in the local economy.

Impacts used in this assessment include the following terms:

- Direct effects – Direct output in the region.
- Indirect effects:
 - Supply-Chain (or industrial) effects - The increased output generated by servicing industry sectors in response to the direct change in output and demand; and
 - Consumption effects - As output increases, so too does employment and wages and salaries paid to local employees. Part of this additional income to households is used for consumption in the local economy which leads to further increases in demand and output in the region

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