

# Wyndham Festival and Events Framework





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# Introduction

*Set on the Western edge of Melbourne, Wyndham City is one of the most diverse and fast-growing communities in Australia. As its population has increased, so has its level of activity and interest in festivals and events. Council is responding to this by setting a 'road-map' for the future with the Wyndham Festival and Events Framework.*

*The Framework seeks to provide Council with clear directions for its planning, delivery, decision-making and support for festivals and events in Wyndham.*

# Summary

## The aim of the Festival and Events Framework is:

To enable the delivery of festivals and events to build a strong community, both socially and economically, and a vibrant, liveable city inclusive of all.

This document first provides a contextual overview of Wyndham, including the benefits of festivals and events and Council's various roles within them. It then outlines, across four key objectives, the issues and opportunities and strategic directions for each, together with the specific actions that Council will take over the next 2 years to progress these.

## The four key objectives are:

1. To build a diverse portfolio of events and festivals in Wyndham for now and for the future.
2. To ensure events and festivals support the development of a strong economy in Wyndham and to facilitate the attraction of a range of events and festivals to the city that target visitors.
3. To plan, develop and maintain accessible and appropriate infrastructure and event spaces across the city; and
4. To build capacity and support for the quality delivery of events and festivals.





## About Wyndham

*Wyndham is currently home to over 250,000 people and in the last decade has experienced the largest and fastest growth of all Victorian municipalities. It is anticipated this trend will continue with estimates the residential population is set to exceed 380,000 people by 2036 - the size of Canberra. Wyndham City is a large and diverse community, both geographically and demographically.*

The City of Wyndham is located on the western edge of Melbourne. Ideally located between the metropolitan areas of Melbourne and Geelong - Wyndham is just 20 minutes to the south of the Melbourne City business district and 20 minutes north of Avalon Airport.

Wyndham covers an area of 542km and features 27.4 km of coastline bordering Port Phillip to the east. As a meeting place for people of the Kulin nations, Wyndham City has a rich and diverse Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Wyndham is characterised by its strategically placed location with excellent logistic connections to air and sea ports. The City also offers intensive agriculture at Werribee South, major retail precincts and the Werribee Park tourism precinct - one of the largest and most frequently visited tourism destinations in metropolitan Melbourne.

Wyndham is experiencing growth across all age groups. In 2018, a quarter of the population is under the age of 15 - the highest proportion in all Victoria. In 2017, 4,491 babies were born to Wyndham parents, which is around 86 babies born every week. Families with young children will continue to make up a high proportion of the Wyndham population in the future. Although, currently over-65 year olds form a relatively modest part of the Wyndham population, it is forecast to be the fastest growing age group in Wyndham between 2018 and 2035.



## Strategic Context

### Wyndham 2040 and the Wyndham City Plan

The Wyndham Community Plan, Wyndham 2040, articulates the City's vision for the future. A number of statements relate specifically to the importance of events and festivals including:

- Local events and attractions will build Wyndham's reputation as a place to visit and be a source of community pride.
- Our parks and open spaces will connect people with the outdoors and each other. They will be activated and inviting destinations for residents and visitors.
- Wyndham will celebrate culture and art. We will share stories that challenge and inspire.

The Wyndham City Plan 2017-21 outlines strategic priorities for this Council. It articulates a vision for a healthy liveable city that:

- Is future focused and plans for sustainable development
- Embraces diversity and is welcoming and inclusive
- Consists of connected, vibrant neighbourhoods that provide for the cultural social economic and recreational needs of the community
- Encourages a healthy and active lifestyle
- Supports the diverse educational needs of the community
- Empowers the community to lead

Events and festivals can encourage outcomes in all these areas.

### Positioning Wyndham

From an economic investment and liveability perspective, events and festivals offer the following opportunities:

- Strengthening Wyndham City's reputation and brand as a regional, national and international visitor destination
- Increasing local economic output through the development of a robust calendar of events and festivals
- Enhancing urban amenity and making the most of Wyndham's natural assets and unique selling points
- Building the night time economy and activation of city centres
- Supporting emerging creative industries and development of a creative city
- Supporting innovation, entrepreneurial energy and capacity
- Building and facilitating partnerships
- Strengthening investment through events attraction and events positive impact on liveability





# Methodology

This Framework has been developed on a sound evidence base with targeted consultation and engagement. Key steps in developing the Framework have included:

- Review of the national and international literature,
- Benchmarking with six targeted Councils,
- Conducting an Online Community survey,
- Consultations with key stakeholders both internal and external to Council through one to one or group interviews, and
- Analysis of the City's current events portfolio.

The outcomes of all this activity have been used to underpin the Framework.

# Definitions

**For the purposes of this paper:**

An event is defined as an organised gathering of individuals and/or groups often with a common interest enabling them to celebrate unique aspects of a community or location by engaging with new experiences, culture, nature, food, music, entertainment, sport, learning, business and the arts.

A festival is defined as a series of events or programs linked around a particular theme or place.



# Council's Role

# in Events and Festivals

*Wyndham City Council currently takes a range of roles in events and festivals as outlined below:*

<b>Producer/ Presenter</b>	<b>Council delivers and is fully responsible for the event.</b> Delivery may be wholly organised in-house; outsourced to a contracted event manager or a combination of in-house leadership and delivery with sub-contractors. Might also be produced through a partnership or consortium arrangement.
<b>Funder and Sponsor</b>	<b>Council provides a financial contribution and/or in-kind support for an external organisation.</b> Support may include annual or multi-year agreements, various grants programs, fees for service or capital projects. Grants and sponsorship adhere to guidelines. In-kind support may include the provision of venues or public spaces; event planning assistance; traffic management; waste management; power, water and toilet provision; safety and security equipment or materials. This might also include event attraction activity.
<b>Supporter</b>	<b>Council builds the capacity of event managers both within and external to the organisation.</b>
<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>Council assists the creation, attraction or presentation of the festival or event but without providing material assistance.</b> This may include advocacy, partnership brokering, capacity-building programs, mentorships, communications with residents or traders.
<b>Venue Provider</b>	<b>Council provides places and spaces for events to be held with appropriate infrastructure.</b>
<b>Marketing/ Promotion</b>	<b>Council contributes to promotion of the event to the public.</b> This may include communications, marketing, advertising, public relations via Councils own publications, listings or editorials.
<b>Permitting Processes</b>	<b>Council issues permits and ensures compliance.</b> Council assesses, manages and ensures compliance with permits, by-laws, traffic, pedestrian movement and safety issues. This role focuses on protecting the community from risk and negative impacts. Council have a responsibility to ensure the safety and amenity of events held on public space, and often maintains an overview of events using a mandatory Event Permit, which includes all the permits and requirements for the event including detailed site plans, safety plans, risk management plans and temporary structure permits.
<b>Bystander/ Observer</b>	<b>Council has no engagement with an event not held on Council controlled or managed land.</b> Council may record the events occurrence for planning purposes.



*Evidence both nationally and internationally points to festivals and events strengthening local communities and contributing to cohesion, identity, well-being and engagement, with ensuing social and economic benefits. Community festivals are seen to have positive outcomes for community well-being and the development of social capital, or value to the community through the development of connections and goodwill. From an extensive scan of the literature, the benefits can be defined across these five areas:*

### **Strengthening Culture, Identity and Harmony**

- Fulfilling a basic human social need to gather together to affirm a shared meaning or interest
- Strengthening cultural identity and maintenance
- Advancing community cohesion
- Fostering intercultural understanding
- Offering inclusion and legitimacy to all Wyndham's cultures

This is the benefit most often cited as the reason for local governments to support festivals and events. It covers a range of impacts, both short-term and long-term, which lead directly to a more connected, peaceful, cooperative, healthy and happy society.

### **Facilitating Activation and Engagement**

- Creating a sense of vibrancy and activity in the City of Wyndham key areas, especially Activity Centres
- Supporting the community and fostering active collaboration and engagement in community life, sporting activity, networking and capacity-building
- Developing local pride in place through a contribution to liveability and by exciting new uses of public space

Successful events and festivals ground themselves in their community by offering opportunities for active engagement by community members in the planning and execution of the event as well as offering accessible, inclusive and participatory experiences. Increasing the number and type of events improves the vitality and vibrancy of public space. This then has a positive impact on the health, well-being, attractiveness and safety of public spaces.

The Evidence Base:

The Benefits of Events  
and Festivals



### Developing Arts and Creativity

- Supporting local artists and attracting artists and creative activity and industry to Wyndham
- Providing broad public access to arts activity and creative practice as audience and/or participants, increasing cultural vibrancy

The arts and creativity are increasingly recognised as assuming an important role in the development of civil society, mental health, education, innovation, economic activity and social discourse. They are at the heart of most important festivals and are an essential element in any event that aims to provide interest, attraction or excitement.

There is a mutually beneficial relationship between festivals/events and arts/culture/creativity. Creative people provide much of the content needed by festivals and events, while festivals and events offer opportunities for artists, musicians, performers and others to share their work - often developing new work in partnership with the festival or event. Quality artistic activity, in turn, inspires the broader community to further involve themselves in artistic and cultural pursuits and an exciting sense of vibrancy can spread and endure.



### Contributing to a Robust Local Economy

- Supporting local businesses involved in the delivery of festivals and events
- Driving visitation and economic activity
- Promoting Wyndham as a tourism events destination

Festivals and events are a rapidly developing industry - estimated at over \$10 billion in just three states (VIC, NSW and TAS). Festivals and events tend to spend a large proportion of their budget locally, and over half the artists engaged by festivals Australia-wide are locally based. Festivals that spend locally contribute to a robust local economy. The other local economic contribution is from visitor expenditure, provided visitors engage with the local economy. Overnight stays, food and beverage sales, visits to other tourist attractions and so on can all benefit from increased visitation to the area. This idea feeds into Wyndham's Visitor Economy Strategy. Some events may be more valued for their economic contribution to the city than for any social benefits they bring, but even those with a primarily social or cultural focus can have a net positive economic impact on the city.

### Strengthening Image, Pride and Reputation

- Strengthening Wyndham's image as a great place to live, work, play and visit
- Engendering a positive view of Council amongst key stakeholders and partners

Having a positive public image for both the place and the Council, assists not only with visitation, but also with community satisfaction, cooperation and the possibilities for entrepreneurial innovation. It is important that local people are proud of where they live so they develop a connection with place. This leads to stronger individuals and stronger communities.





# Snapshot of Current Events in Wyndham

*An extensive range of events are offered in Wyndham through Council, community and other providers. These events are diverse in range: from small to large; free and paid; indoor and outdoor; some targeted at particular age ranges, communities, places, others inclusive of everyone, targeting all of Wyndham, the Region and beyond.*

They will all have a defined focus and purpose in aligning with achieving the Festival and Events benefits outlined above. Below is a snapshot of the current range of events in the City.

Council delivers a range of events directly. Children's Week Picnic and Fromage à Trois Cheese Festival at Werribee Park, State Rose and Garden Show at the Victorian State Rose Garden, Pet & Animal Expo at Civic Centre and Australia Day are all viewed as major Wyndham events, regularly attracting audiences over 5,000. The State Rose and Garden Show attracted 16,000 over 2 days in 2017.

Council's strategic direction to develop Vibrant City Centres has resulted in the development of an activation and events program in activity centres in Wyndham. This has included the development of the Winter Street Party which has run since 2016 in Werribee City Centre with 6600 people attending in 2018.

Another example was the 2018 Werribee Pop-up Park, presented over a six-week period during summer and staged in the Werribee City Centre at Station Place. This event drew approximately 19,000 attendees.

Council also delivers events as a core mechanism to provide community education, engagement, networking and community strengthening opportunities. Some examples are:

- Youth Services deliver a program of young people's arts and performance events through the FReeZA program including battle of the bands and open mic nights. Four Youth Festivals are held in different districts across the city with a focus on a positive celebration of young people and promoting positive perceptions in the community. These also have strong involvement and engagement from other youth service partners.
- Wyndham Learning Festival is a week-long community wide festival celebrating lifelong learning, facilitated in partnership between Libraries and Learning with Wyndham Community & Education Centre.
- The Wyndham Seniors Festival runs a multitude of events organised by Council and community during the Victorian Seniors Festival held in October each year.

- Park Lounge is an example of a local event developed in partnership with a broader Festival, in this case Midsumma
- WYNovation is a festival that unlocks and drives business innovation via a summit, masterclass and business luncheon.
- Civic events such as NAIDOC, Reconciliation Week, IDAHOBIT Day, International Women's Day and White Ribbon Day are held to mark particular days or weeks of significance.

Council is further engaged in delivering a range of civic and corporate events, including citizenship ceremonies, sister city, mayoral events, sod turnings and launches.

A large number of events are run in Wyndham by community groups and private organisations. Larger scale community festivals and events include Weerama Festival, Wyndham Multicultural [Eid] Festival, Wyndham Diwali, Christmas at the Lakes, Chinese New Year and Wyndham Holi.

In addition, there has been a growing range of small to large cultural festivals that have emerged as the population grows. For many new communities, events and celebrations are seen as particularly important in maintaining culture and building a sense of community.

There are events of comparatively substantial scale with which Council has little or no direct involvement. These include occasional sporting events such as equestrian events at the National Equestrian Centre, commercial music festivals like One Electric Day and Let Them Eat Cake, and events held at and managed by the Werribee Open Range Zoo.

Wyndham City Council, does not currently tend to organise any large major events produced primarily for visitation and economic impact, but it did invest in a partnership with Netball Victoria to host the State Titles at Eagle Stadium in 2016 and 2017.





## Snapshot of Current Event Spaces

*Wyndham City has many places, spaces and precincts with varying capacities in which festivals and events can occur. Detailed below are the major events spaces. This is not to understate the importance of having smaller local neighbourhood parks and facilities available for smaller events and activations.*

### Werribee Park

Wyndham is home to one of Victoria's busiest tourism precincts at Werribee Park with more than 1.3 million people visiting this zone annually. The park also hosts an annual calendar of events with some individual events attracting 6,000 visitors or more.

The Werribee Park precinct includes Victoria's State Rose Garden, Werribee Park Mansion and Werribee Open Range Zoo; the National Equestrian Centre, Shadowfax Winery and Werribee Park Golf Club.

### Presidents Park

A vast, flat and open space in Wyndham Vale adjacent to sporting fields, playgrounds, a skate park and barbecue area. It is currently used as an events space for large events but lacks the necessary infrastructure. There are concerns about its suitability of use for this purpose. A master planning project has commenced for the park and will include exploring whether events should continue to occur here and if so, what types of events and what infrastructure would be needed to support them.

### Werribee City Centre

Watton and Synnot Streets are key retail and business areas in the Werribee City Centre with a low architectural profile, trees, and easy pedestrian access to small plazas, the river, Kelly Park, Wyndham Park and the Railway Station. Watton Street has been used for parades such as Weerama Festival, and Council's Winter Street Party and the Werribee Pop-up Park use Station Place as their centre point.

### Wyndham Park

Located adjacent to the river in central Werribee, Wyndham Park is undergoing a major redevelopment, to be completed by late 2019. This includes the provision of an event space to accommodate a capacity of approximately 5,000 people.

### Chirnside Park

The recently redeveloped Chirnside Park Hub, located near the Werribee town centre, is a state of the art sporting facility that includes a new grandstand, media rooms and event spaces. This facility was recently opened and has been identified as a premier events space with a capacity of approximately 5,000 people.

### Eagle Stadium

This multi-purpose indoor recreation facility is the largest in Melbourne's West. It has multiple courts for basketball and other court sports; a gymnasium and café and has hosted the Victorian netball finals.

### Wyndham Harbour

Wyndham Harbour in Werribee South is a waterfront commercial development which has previously hosted Australia Day and New Year's Eve celebrations.

### Werribee Racecourse

This vast expanse of space, close to the centre of Werribee, has hosted events such as Holi and is seeking to expand its festival and events repertoire. It has a capacity in excess of approximately 10,000 people.

### Lawrie Emmins Reserve

This reserve is currently being master planned with a view to including a significant sporting events area and a community event space with a capacity of approximately 5000 people.

### Encore Events Centre

A purpose-built, Council-owned, flexible event and function space in Hoppers Crossing.

### Wyndham Cultural Centre

The Cultural Centre includes a theatre space for over 470 patrons, the Werribee library and the Wyndham Art Gallery.





# Strategic Assessment:

## SWOT

*The following information summarises the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats arising through research and consultation:*

### Strengths

- History and track record of successful and community valued events
- Strong internal events expertise
- Strong internal events expertise
- Event place assets including Werribee Park precinct
- Activation of Activity Centres and community spaces
- Commitment from Council to build pride and identity
- Growing number of community events and high rates of participation
- Growing range of spaces to stage events
- Culturally diverse community

### Weaknesses

- Werribee City Centre can be perceived as neither a regional city or part of Melbourne CBD.
- No event identity
- Limited events attraction budget
- Limited stadium capacity
- Limited business event facilities
- Traffic and car issues
- Managing environmental impacts of events
- Limited sponsorship support from partner agencies and organisations
- Limited accommodation
- Public transport connections between Werribee City Centre and Werribee Park

### Threats

- Competition from other Regional and neighbouring Councils for the same audience and funding/events opportunities
- Competition from Melbourne CBD
- Demand for support for too many smaller events
- Reputation affected by lack of events skill by community
- Conflict with surrounding neighbourhoods and adverse amenity impacts

### Opportunities

- Growth of the City
- Community interest in cultural events
- Capacity to grow visitor economy
- Creative city opportunity
- Events attraction potential
- Make most of our built and natural assets, including coast
- Optimising world appetite for recycling/waste management with our unique strengths in this area
- Plan and build inclusive events spaces and infrastructure across the city
- Establishment of signature event
- Link to other strategies e.g. Arts and Culture Framework, Visitor Economy
- Growth of Avalon Airport including International Flights
- Future development of Werribee Open Range Zoo as a night experience
- Growth of business events through emerging investment in conference facilities and a growing number of local businesses
- Maximising sporting venues capacity for state-wide and national competitions
- The Werribee City Centre precinct (Eagle Stadium, Racecourse, Chirnside Park, Wyndham Park)



# The Wyndham Festival and Events Framework

*Aim: To enable the delivery of festivals and events to build a strong community, both socially and economically, and a vibrant, liveable city inclusive of all.*

**Objective 1.**

*To build a diverse portfolio of events and festivals in Wyndham for now and for the future.*

**Strategic Direction**

- Build on the strengths of the current Council program of events and festivals, ensuring ongoing community relevance.
- Actively pursue opportunities to further strengthen the events and festivals portfolio in the City, with a focus on addressing current gaps and leveraging partnerships.
- Develop a signature event.

**Objective 2.**

*To ensure events and festivals support the development of a strong economy in Wyndham and to facilitate the attraction of a range of events and festivals to the city that target visitors.*

**Strategic Direction**

- To strengthen our capacity to attract events to Wyndham, with a focus on increasing the availability of resources to leverage this and our understanding of the economic impact of events.
- To build a portfolio of festivals and events that engage with local business, help activate activity centres and stimulate the night time economy across the municipality
- To maximise the opportunity of events and festivals to support creative industries and industries that support events in the City.

**Objective 3.**

*To plan, develop and maintain accessible and appropriate infrastructure and event spaces across the city.*

**Strategic Direction**

- To plan and deliver a range of events spaces and infrastructure across the City as it grows.
- To maximise the opportunity of current master-planning activities at key sites to deliver event space outcomes and resolve outstanding issues.
- To assist in working with partners to maximise use of key Wyndham event assets for which Council is not the landowner.

**Objective 4.**

*To build capacity and support for quality delivery of events and festivals*

**Strategic Direction**

- To provide targeted funding and capacity building support for community event and festival producers.
- To strengthen Council's permit systems, guidelines and processes for events and festivals.
- To promote and market Wyndham's events and festival calendar and create opportunities for further growth and investment.



*Objective 1. To build a diverse portfolio of events and festivals in Wyndham for now and for the future.*

**Issues and opportunities**

During the development of the Festivals and Events Framework, Council staff, external stakeholders and the general community almost universally endorsed the notion of a vibrant and comprehensive festivals and events landscape and expressed approval of an increasing role for Council in growing, supporting and evolving this aspect of the community's life.

A key strategic consideration for Council is how it should shape future festivals and events supporting or creating new festivals and events to fill perceived gaps.

Key areas arising for potential expansion are:

- **Arts Festivals** - of various sorts, ranging from a major 'signature' arts-based event to multicultural arts
- **Community/Multicultural** - a whole-of-community representative culture-focused festival
- **Food & Wine Festivals** - particularly focusing on the strengths of the area
- **Major Tourism Events** - multi-day events that promote tourism, contribute to local economy and overnight stays
- **Markets** - including growers' and makers' markets with enough significance to attract people from other areas
- **Music Festivals** - a wide range of options, target audiences, styles and formats
- **Sporting/Leisure Events** - titles, tournaments, fun-runs or one-off events hosted in Wyndham's existing facilities.

Some gaps can be met through working with other partners, at a local, Regional or State level.

In considering the gaps identified that Council could specifically focus on, it is recommended that the following three areas are given initial attention for development:

**Establishing a Wyndham Signature event**

Many towns and cities have a 'signature' festival: an event that characterises or is uniquely associated with that place. The benefits focus on achieving the social and community outcomes of strengthening culture, identity, harmony, image, pride and reputation. Because events represent the place they are staged in, they must be deeply rooted in the locality. Successful 'signature' festivals usually evolve over time rather than being specifically created. Given the significant changes in population and growth that have occurred across the City, it is time to consider what a Wyndham signature event should be now.

It is recommended that Council commit to developing a Wyndham signature event: an event for the over 250,000 people that live here. The intent would be to work with community to determine what this would be. The overarching feature is that it needs to be about all of Wyndham, reaching out to new and emerging communities, and engaging the whole city to support participation and build community pride. At this early stage, it is anticipated that Council would deliver this.

A first step would be the development of a scoping study to confirm the parameters of the event. Through analysis, consultation and community engagement, it would tease out the options for the signature event including its purpose, focus, form, location and costs. Part of this process would include consideration of how the Weerama Festival relates to this concept and the implications for both the Weerama Festival and Council from options moving forward.





TRANSFORMING FESTIVALS: CASE STUDIES

MONA

The Museum of Old & New Art (MONA) opened in Hobart in 2011 and was promptly acclaimed by The Times of London as the “most exciting addition to the Australian cultural landscape since the Sydney Opera House”. In response to MONA’s impact on city and state, the Lonely Planet declared Hobart the seventh best city in the world to visit and MONA the best art gallery in 2013. In 2017, 338,000 interstate and international visitors attended MONA and it was estimated the museum alone contributes \$760m to the state’s economy annually. MONA is considered an “anchor institution” – it strengthens and amplifies the economic, social and cultural well-being of Hobart and more broadly, Tasmania.

Borne from, and riding the wave of MONA’s incomparable brand, are two distinctly unique festivals, Mofo and Dark Mofo. Mofo was originally launched in Hobart in 2009 but in 2018 a mini Mofo was relocated and presented to great acclaim in Launceston. Following its success, State Government committed significant funds to move the event for the following three years to the north of

the state. This support was driven by the desire to disperse inbound Tasmanian visitors beyond Hobart so regional communities could receive the financial benefit of a major cultural event.

Sitting as a companion piece to Mofo is it’s ritualistic and provocative sibling, Dark Mofo. This midwinter festival, held in Hobart during the winter solstice, celebrates ancient pagan traditions side by side with contemporary performance showcasing large-scale public art installations, music disruptions, a winter feast and even a mass nude swim.

MONA and it’s offspring have transformed Hobart and Tasmania from the cultural backwater they once were, to an international cultural destination with sure-fire credibility and a heady future.

MANCHESTER

The City of Manchester was the world’s first industrial city and is now one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse in the UK. According to the recently released Economist Intelligence Unit annual global survey, it is now the most liveable city in the UK.

Manchester International Festival (MIF)

launched in 2007 as the world’s first festival of original, new work and special events. MIF emerged as a legacy of the 2000 Commonwealth Games and was championed by Manchester City Council as the first manifestation of the new brand concept of Manchester as the ‘original modern city’. In a crowded field, MIF’s value proposition as a festival was that it would be a biennial, artist-led festival with a focus on commissioning and producing new work as well as presenting special events by leading world artists.

MIF supports economic growth by substantially raising the city’s profile, drawing national and international visitors and attracting inward investment by positioning itself as a leading cultural city with an ability to showcase major large-scale events. In 2017, MIF contributed £40.2 million to the city’s economy and had a record visitor count of over 300,000 people during the 17day event. MIF plays a significant role in making Manchester a ‘liveable city and a great place to live, work and study’ as recognised by a high number of respondents to their 2017 audience survey. It’s fair to say, MIF has been a transformative game changer for what was once an economically depressed.

Establishing a City Transforming Festival

If a signature event is about local focus, the concept of a City Transforming Festival sets a much broader perimeter. Once established, the focus would be to secure substantial metropolitan interest with aspirations for a national impact in the longer term. Examples of City Transforming festivals here and overseas include Manchester International Festival and Hobarts’s MOFO and Dark MOFO.

A City Transforming festival would take significant development work and investment but supports the vision for the city into the future. The focus would be determined through an initial scoping study which would include an opportunity analysis, consider economic viability, partnership and funding opportunities. It would be built from a process of community and expert consultation. It would also include an assessment of the infrastructure capacity required and any potential investment that would need to occur to ensure Wyndham infrastructure was able to meet the vision for the Festival.

Establishing an Arts and Culture Festival

Wyndham lacks an Arts and Cultural Festival and given its size and growing cultural maturity, this is a gap that should be a priority to address. There are a range of media that could be the focus (film, writers, performance, a combination). If this direction is supported a feasibility study would be undertaken to determine the best response.

Strategic Directions

- Build on the strengths of the current Council program of events and festivals, ensuring ongoing community relevance.
- Actively pursue opportunities to further strengthen the events and festivals portfolio in the City, with a focus on addressing current gaps and leveraging partnerships.
- Develop a signature event.

Initial actions - Year 1 and 2		Timeframe
1.1	Continue to deliver and grow the existing program of Council events, within a continuous improvement framework	Year 1 & 2
1.2	Support, facilitate and advocate for others to establish more events in Wyndham through the key areas identified for potential expansion	Year 1 & 2
1.3	Work with the community to establish a Wyndham signature event. The first stage would be the development of a business case	Year 1
1.4	Conduct a feasibility study on Wyndham holding an Arts and Cultural Festival. This would include identifying the appropriate arts media and focus and develop an implementation plan	Year 2
1.5	Conducting a scoping study into the delivery of a City Transforming Festival for Wyndham	Year 2
1.6	Through the development and implementation of the creative framework project, encourage and effect a greater level of artist and creative industry engagement in Wyndham events and festivals	Year 2
1.7	Identify and establish appropriate partnership brokerage opportunities across all significant festivals and events to reduce costs and increase collaborative engagement and market reach	Year 1 & 2
1.8	To grow the Werribee City Centre Winter Street Party Event	Year 1 & 2



**Objective 2.**  
*To ensure events and festivals support the development of a strong economy in Wyndham and to facilitate and attract a range of events and festivals to the city that target visitors.*

### Issues and Opportunities

#### Economic impact of Events and Festivals within a Wyndham Context

“The ‘economic impact’ of a major event refers to the total amount of additional expenditure generated within a defined area, as a direct consequence of staging the event.

For most events, spending by visitors in the local area (and in particular on accommodation) is the biggest factor in generating economic impact. Whilst an event within a defined precinct in Wyndham has the capacity to increase consumer expenditure within that precinct, it is visitor expenditure that influences a net positive impact on the city’s economy. In the simplest terms a visitor’s expenditure within a region, including at festivals and events adds to revenue generated by local business that otherwise would not have occurred within a citywide context.

Retention of local community spend is an important economic factor when rationalizing the support and delivery of Festivals and Events within the City of Wyndham. Leakage of discretionary expenditure out of the local economy is an important area for Councils such as Wyndham to address. With so many visitors to Wyndham staying with family and friends (54%) it is also very important to have a strong offering of experiences, festivals, events, food and hospitality for locals to take their guests to.

Measurement of the economic impact of an event is also not constrained to the event itself with indirect impacts also effecting supply chains. This can include the value of local goods and services that are procured to deliver an event.



The engagement of local suppliers will contain expenditure and revenue within the local economy while the reverse applies when suppliers outside the region who are contracted to the event extract money out of the local economy.

Festivals and Events help create vibrant, compelling Activity Centres where more and more people will want to live. A strong cultural offering is a significant contributor to attracting highly educated professional people to live and work in Wyndham. A vibrant night time experience offered by safe, well-organised and appealing festivals and events can have significant social and economic benefits for a community. The ongoing expenditure of new residents in Werribee City Centre and other Activity Centres will significantly assist new and existing businesses including retailers. Having strategic goals to attract new businesses, students, creatives, professionals and inner-city dwellers as part of a diverse ‘on-trend’ mix of events and festivals, is essential.

### Events and Accommodation

The accommodation sector is a key player in the generation of revenue derived from events and this is a major challenge for Wyndham because:

- Wyndham is close to the Melbourne CBD and greater metropolitan area and as such there is less appetite for visitors to invest in overnight accommodation, as is the advantage offered to regional centres
- Wyndham at present does not enjoy a strong night economy and as such this is an impediment to encouraging overnight visitation
- The visiting friends and relatives market typically stay in free family accommodation, rather than commercial accommodation at a fee

### Events attraction

- In the first instance, any major event conducted in the city must consider the existing level of infrastructure and venues to host the event. At present Wyndham lacks the capacity to host a single day, single venue event of more than 10,000
- The Werribee Park Tourism Precinct provides a unique location for events however the challenge remains in dispersing tourism yield and expenditure to the city’s activity centres
- Events should not be defined by a single day or weekend experience and within a metropolitan context, opportunities for extended events or festivals over a number of weeks should warrant exploration
- Given the proximity, Wyndham’s greatest competitors in terms of events are the Melbourne CBD and Geelong. Both destinations have a current advantage in infrastructure and venue capacity.
- An events attraction fund warrants further investigation in terms of:
  - Better understanding of the capacity a fund can influence attracting an event
  - Better understanding of the desired level of funding required to compete with other regions in securing a major event



Business Events

- Business conferences and the like have the capacity to grow local expenditure, most particularly in accommodation and hospitality
- These business events are typically delivered by the private sector however Council also has capacity with the delivery of events of the calibre of WYNnovation

Building local business capacity

To benefit from events, local businesses must be geared to engage and participate. Consideration must therefore for be given to:

- Creating a shared culture of benefit among the business community
- Promoting events through a collective and shared approach with a shared message and brand as the capacity for businesses to reach visitors is far greater than Council's capacity alone
- Packaging visitor experiences that maximise opportunity
- Ensuring businesses offer a quality experience including participation in events and activations.

Partnerships

There are significant opportunities to further capitalise on local assets and partnerships including but not limited to:

- Parks Victoria
- Werribee Open Range Zoo
- Werribee Racing Club
- Werribee Football Club / Chirnside Park
- Werribee and Sanctuary Lakes Golf Clubs
- Wyndham Harbour
- Eagle Stadium
- Major accommodation and hospitality providers

Measurement of economic impact

The capacity to measure the success of events and their impact on community and local economy is critical in ensuring the net worth of an event is measurable beyond the “look and feel” and that Council can accurately report impacts to the community and make informed decisions in relation to event growth or further event attraction.

Initial actions - Year 1 and 2		Timeframe
2.1	Develop a business case including an outlined operating model for developing an events attraction fund	Year 1
2.2	Maintain investment in economic impact tools to better measure and understand the economic and community benefit of major events. This should include assessing the value of retaining local discretionary spend in the community	Year 1 & 2
2.3	Continue to develop and offer a program of events and activations that support local businesses in Activity Centres and precincts across the city	Year 1 & 2
2.4	Undertake research that provides an informed understanding of the types of events or festivals that have the greatest capacity to increase visitation and grow the local economy	Year 1
2.5	Support local procurement and creative industry involvement in events and festivals	Year 1 & 2

Strategic Directions

- To strengthen our capacity to attract events to Wyndham, with a focus on increasing the availability of resources to leverage this and our understanding of the economic impact of events.
- To build a portfolio of festivals and events that engage with local business, help activate activity centres and stimulate the night time economy across the municipality
- To maximise the opportunity of events and festivals to support creative industries and industries that support events in the City.



**Objective 3. To plan, develop and maintain accessible and appropriate infrastructure and event spaces across the city.**

*As outlined above, Wyndham has a wealth of events assets. The redevelopment at Wyndham Park and masterplans for Lawrie Emmins Reserve and Werribee Zoo all propose developing event spaces for up to five thousand people. In addition, the recent success of the Western Melbourne A-league soccer bid offers a new opportunity for large scale events through the development of a stadium with a capacity of 15,000.*

While the City has significant event assets, given its size and rate of growth there is a need to ensure that events spaces are incorporated as a core component of planning for new growth areas. Event spaces need to be accessible across the city. They need to meet a range of needs from large event spaces across the continuum to small neighbourhood and community spaces. This should be an integrated component of open space and community infrastructure planning.

Event infrastructure and functions should therefore be considered within existing and future master planning projects. This is already occurring within the Wyndham Park and Lawrie Emmins Reserve projects. It should also occur as part of future projects such as Presidents Park and Chirnside Park. There are a number of issues with Presidents Park use as an events space concerning which events, if any,

are appropriate and what infrastructure would be required to support these. The planned master-planning process will seek to address these questions with a clear direction forward.

Events that take place in Council's open spaces do not pay a fee to Council for conducting the event, however there is often increased wear and tear to the open space that Council needs to maintain. There is an opportunity for the event organisers to offset this additional maintenance cost. This will be a subject of consideration of the current Sport and Recreation open space bookings project.

There is a range of facilities and venues for indoor events across the City, some owned by Council others by community partners such as schools and churches. Promoting community awareness of these facilities will increase access and help better meet demand.



Partnerships

There is a range of events assets that Council does not own but can play a facilitation role in enhancing. Werribee Park Precinct is a major asset. There is an opportunity for Council to assist facilitate collaboration across the site between the Park, Zoo, Equestrian Centre, Shadowfax and Golf Course. The planned upgrade to K Road and Duncan’s road intersection commencing in 2019 as part of the Western Roads Upgrade (WRU) project and the reconstruction of K Road itself is vital for the effective operation of this precinct.

Werribee Race Course has significant potential to upgrade its event capacity. It is a significant asset in a central location, close to the Werribee City Centre. There is an opportunity to support the Werribee Race Course in planning and advocating for events infrastructure development. A potential events precinct exists incorporating Werribee City Centre,

Wyndham Park, Chirnside Park, Werribee Racecourse and Eagle stadium. Werribee Street Level Crossing Removal (LXRA) will assist in achieving this outcome.

The East Werribee Employment Precinct development provides opportunity for planning events spaces and cultural facilities. This is another area for potential Council influence in collaboration with State Government.

Strategic Directions

- To plan and deliver a range of events spaces and infrastructure across the City as it grows
- To maximise the opportunity of current master-planning activities at key sites to deliver event space outcomes and resolve outstanding issues.



Initial actions - Year 1 and 2		Timeframe
3.1	Map existing larger events spaces and infrastructure and determine gaps, opportunities and investment required for delivering the Festival and Events Framework objectives	Year 1
3.2	Master planning of Presidents Park, Lawrie Emmins Reserve, Werribee Zoo and Chirnside Park to include consideration of events use and infrastructure	Year 1 & 2
3.3	Explore how to maximise events precinct opportunities across Werribee City Centre, Wyndham Park, Chirnside Park, Werribee Racecourse and Eagle Stadium	Year 1
3.4	Encourage early completion of K Road improvements as part of the WRU Duncan’s Road interchange project	Year 1 & 2
3.5	Ensure access to events space (small to large) is a key consideration in planning for the City	Year 1 & 2
3.6	Develop and implement a program of events to activate Wyndham Park on its completion	Year 2 & 3
3.7	Ensure Encore can meet Council’s aspiration for the Centre, with infrastructure needs supported accordingly	Year 1 & 2
3.8	Map existing venues (both Council owned and community owned) to enhance access for community members to events spaces and incorporate into a community database	Year 2



Objective 4. To build capacity and support for quality delivery of events and festivals.

Issues and Opportunities

Financial support

Community grants play an important role in supporting local events. The current Council Community Grants program supports a broad range of events and festivals across all its grants areas. The program does not have one focussed festival and events stream. It recognises the mechanism of festivals and events as one means of gaining community outcomes targeted by the program overall. The Community Grants program is being fully reviewed this calendar year. There is an opportunity to ensure there is a detailed consideration of best practice events and festivals community grants funding incorporated into this process.

Council also provides support to non-Council events through direct sponsorship and in-kind support. It is important that a Festival or Event organiser recognise the value of Council’s sponsorship and treats Council with the same level of recognition as they would for a commercial sponsor for the same value. This is not always the case.

Criteria for Council support

For both internal and external events, it is important to ensure there are clear criteria to determine on what basis Council supports particular events. Council needs to be able to assess the merits of individual events and how well they align with both Council’s strategic objectives and expectations of quality and standards. Some of the principles that are important for consideration on an individual event basis are, the event being able to demonstrate within its event plan and implementation:

- A clear statement of purpose, including target audience
- What community or economic benefits it will provide, in accordance with the evidence base above
- Appropriately high quality of content and presentation
- Financial viability
- High standards of governance, event planning, management and safety
- High levels of inclusivity and accessibility to all people.
- High standards of environmental management and sustainability

- Opportunities for capacity building in event planning and delivery
- Low levels of negative impact on the community
- High levels of building Wyndham’s reputation and attractiveness outside the municipality

These principles will be further developed in work planned on reviewing event guidelines and resource material.

Building capacity through enhancing skills and knowledge

With growing community interest in delivering events, there is significant demand to build capacity in event management skills and knowledge for both Council staff and community members. Council can play an important role in utilising the specialist knowledge of its events team and other resources to facilitate and support events. Training sessions for event organisers both internal and external have been favourably received and should continue to be delivered. The current suite of resources online is due for review.





Permits for events

Council's permits and regulation processes are essential for assuring event quality. Wyndham City's current Event Planning Guide covers the requirements for an Occupancy Permit as a Place of Public Entertainment (POPE) and for Prescribed Temporary Structures; an Open Space approval issued by Council; and food service permits. Other permits may also be required from state or local agencies (for example for fireworks, road closures, music performance or alcohol service).

It is timely that work is occurring in the recreation area to develop an open space bookings policy. The area of permits for events requires review with a clear and rigorous application and permitting process to be implemented. Although Council takes a capacity building approach with non-Council delivered events, there are times when the specifics of an event proposal or the proven history of an event organiser are such that the event permit should not be granted. Current event application and approval/permit processes require review to enable this to occur more transparently and efficiently when this is the most appropriate course of action.

Environmental and sustainability issues

Wyndham City is committed to ensuring events are run sustainably and are actively working towards waste free major events by 2040.

Commitments for Wyndham City run events will include:

- The exploration of best practice waste management and reduced usage of single use plastics. Council's adopted Waste & Litter Strategy has ambitious targets relating to waste avoidance and diversion from landfill.
- Sustainable events management based on an ISO 20121:2012 framework. ISO 20121 identifies the potentially negative social, economic and environmental impacts of events, removing or reducing them, and capitalizing on more positive impacts through improved planning and processes. It considers waste, greenhouse gas emissions and water use.

For externally managed events, Council will integrate outcomes into the permit review and guidelines development process.



Marketing and promotion

Although Council is proactive in promoting events, consultation has suggested a strengthened role. Particular areas for more focus are in coordination and promotion of all events across the municipality, through an integrated mix of communications and marketing tools scheduled via an integrated marketing and communications plan. It is recommended that budgets plan for the appropriate activity as well as leveraging Wyndham City's tools - website, social media, media / PR releases, Wyndham News (delivered to the +75,000 households). There is also a focus on highlighting the range of event space opportunities and potential Wyndham offers for both community in general and to furthering the events attraction agenda.

Events and festivals are an important contributor to Wyndham's brand and reputation and assist in ensuring Wyndham should be a place of choice for people choosing to invest, live, work, study and visit.

Measurement and Evaluation

It is important that Council has a standardised Festivals and Event measurement and evaluation model while taking into consideration bespoke measurement against the objectives for each event. Measurement and evaluation should be part of all Festivals and Events so outcomes can be communicated to the community and stakeholders. This should address economic, social, environmental and strategic outcomes and include an evaluation of the marketing and communication.

Initial actions - Year 1 and 2		Timeframe
4.1	Within the planned review of the Community Grants program, focus on how festivals and events should best be funded	Year 1
4.2	Complete an open space bookings policy which outlines requirements, what is permitted, and not permitted in Council's open spaces. This should also consider fees where appropriate	Year 1
4.3	Review and strengthen Council's event permit processes and systems.	Year 1
4.4	Review Council's documentation regarding event management guides, templates for event plans, safety plans, marketing plans and so on to ensure festivals and events have clarity regarding Council's expectations and to support the development of festival management capacity in the city	Year 2
4.5	Support and assist with capacity-building of event producers where required and develop Council's capacity for festival and event provision and support	Year 1 & 2
4.6	Review event management processes in accordance with best practice from an environment and sustainability perspective	Year 1
4.7	Maintain an overview of Wyndham's festivals and events landscape, developing a database and calendar to assist with event planning and coordination across the municipality	Year 1 & 2





## Conclusion

*There are significant social and economic benefits to be derived from a strong and strategic program of festivals and events being offered in Wyndham. The evidence base is clear as is the strong support and interest from the local community.*

*The Wyndham Festival and Events Framework provides Council with a clear way forward in planning, delivering and making the most of its events and festival activity. The range of two year actions across each objective demonstrate a commitment to activities that will maximise opportunities and strengthen practice. A review will be undertaken at the end of the initial 2 year period to confirm progress and achievements and identify actions for the following two years.*





