



# EAST GIPPSLAND EVENT GROWTH ACTION PLAN 2021–26



**EAST GIPPSLAND**  
SHIRE COUNCIL



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## ACRONYMS USED:

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| BEV    | Business Events Victoria                            |
| DGL    | Destination Gippsland Ltd                           |
| DELWP  | Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning |
| EGMi   | East Gippsland Marketing Incorporated               |
| EGSC   | East Gippsland Shire Council                        |
| GLaWAC | Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation  |
| LGA    | Local Government Authority                          |
| SMA    | Sports Marketing Australia                          |
| VV     | Visit Victoria                                      |



# 1. INTRODUCTION

The East Gippsland Event Growth Action Plan 2021–2026 (the Plan) outlines how East Gippsland can increase the economic, social and environmental benefits from events. An assessment framework and strategies will enable East Gippsland Shire Council (EGSC) to support and develop local home-grown events, and attract leisure, sports and business events that will encourage overnight stays in East Gippsland and growth in the local visitor economy<sup>1</sup>.

The Plan is well-timed to assist EGSC in leveraging events to support the Shire's economic and social recovery post COVID-19, bushfires and prolonged drought. The focus will be on growing the value of events to the visitor economy through increasing yield and shifting current seasonal visitation patterns to more sustainable year-round visitation across the Shire. The Plan sets out a plan for identifying the best events to attract, develop and grow, and building a balanced and sustainable portfolio of events that contribute to the local economy, provide social outcomes for local communities, and deliver lasting legacies.

***"Events are important in building the profile and reputation of East Gippsland as a vibrant events destination year-round. They create compelling reasons to visit and return, and provide a means to showcase East Gippsland's coastal wilderness, high country landscapes, lakes, rivers, coast, beaches, and diverse local produce from wine through to seafood."***

Events outcomes will be maximised by EGSC collaborating with the new regional events entity under Destination Gippsland, and Gippsland's local government authorities (LGAs). The Plan incorporates actions to enable EGSC to increase efficiencies and outcomes by working as part of a regional collective while enhancing its competitive strengths and unique identity. Development of the Plan has occurred in tandem with the preparation of the Gippsland Regional Events Strategy 2020–2025 to ensure alignment.

The Plan has been prepared for EGSC by Tilma Group, with support from JJ Strategic Consulting. It reflects the culmination of desktop review, stakeholder engagement, and analysis of East Gippsland's strengths, challenges, opportunities, and current event portfolio.

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<sup>1</sup> Local community events are excluded however the Plan recognises the potential for these events to grow to become important tourism or business events.

# EVENT BENEFITS FOR EAST GIPPSLAND

- Support the recovery of local economies and communities in the short term through the attraction of visitors, visitor spend and increased vibrancy across the Shire, with the aim of establishing a sustainable events industry that generates long-term benefits
- Increase visitor length of stay and expenditure locally, and encourage off-peak visitation and dispersal across the Shire, delivering direct and indirect economic impacts to the community
- Raise the profile and reputation of East Gippsland and the experiences it offers
- Increase vibrancy and appeal for visitors and residents alike
- Foster community spirit, innovation and pride from vibrancy and entertainment
- Foster skill development through volunteer opportunities and engagement
- Lead to investment, business growth and development through promotion of East Gippsland region, and attracting new residents to live, work and play
- Activate sport, recreational, cultural and entertainment community assets, venues and public spaces.

Research indicates three-quarters of event attendees would not have gone to a destination if not for an event. An event is the main reason for 57% of first-time visitors and 69% of repeat visitors to visit a region<sup>2</sup>.



<sup>2</sup> Gibson, C. & Stewart, A. (2009). *Reinventing rural places: The extent and impact of festivals in rural and regional Australia*.

## 2. INDUSTRY GUIDED PROCESS

To ensure the Plan is supported by the local events industry, engagement with stakeholders and the business community was a central element in its development. A Project Steering Group was created with members from across the events sector. See Attachment 1 for a list of stakeholders who participated in the consultation process.

Engagement included:

- A project initiation and information-gathering session with EGSC staff
- 15 one-to-one meetings with EGSC staff, event organisers and stakeholders
- Seven focus group meetings (EGSC Councillors, Economic Development Advisory Committee, internal staff and land managers, event advocates and experts, event owners, business events and business venues, business and tourism associations)
- A Discussion Paper outlining key findings and recommended strategic priorities which was shared with EGSC staff and EGSC councillors and the Project Steering Group
- A workshop with the Project Steering Group to test findings and recommendations in the Discussion Paper (conducted via teleconference due to COVID-19 travel restrictions)
- Draft Plan presented to the Project Steering Group, feedback gathered and draft updated
- Presentation of the Plan to EGSC.

***"The Plan provides a framework for a collaborative approach between the local events sector, tourism operators and other businesses, the community, and EGSC in the development of East Gippsland as a competitive and sustainable event destination."***

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Development of the Plan has occurred intandem with the preparation of the Gippsland Regional Events Strategy 2020-2025 to ensure alignment. The main partners are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Partners in events in East Gippsland





### 3. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

EGSC recognises the value of events in helping the local economy grow, and creating a thriving community. The revised East Gippsland Shire Council Plan 2017–2021 sets the goals for the Shire to become known as an adventure destination, and to host innovative local, national and international events that are attracted to the region's unique natural environment, and that in turn attract investment and stimulate the local economy.

The Plan will support delivery of the EGSC's goals, and aligns with a priority of the 'Toward 2030 Gippsland Destination Management Plan' to invest in diverse and exciting regional events.

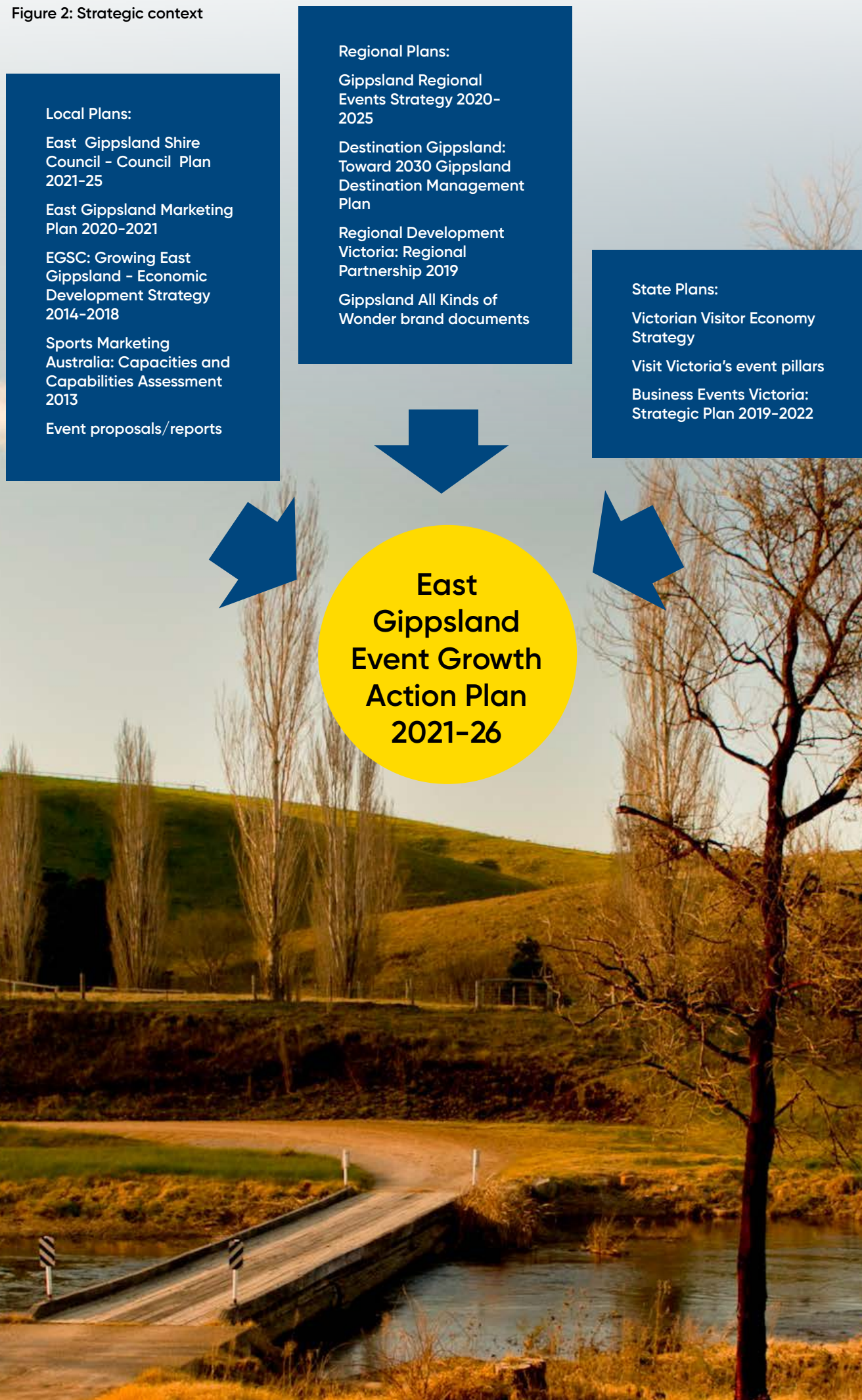
The Plan has been developed in tandem with the Gippsland Regional Events Strategy 2020–2025 to ensure East Gippsland fully leverages regional event development and acquisition opportunities, and the strategies complement each other.

The Plan will support delivery of activities and the objectives outlined in a number of other EGSC and regional and state plans, and will support the Victorian Government's efforts in rebuilding the visitor economy post COVID-19 (Figure 2):





Figure 2: Strategic context



## 4. INDUSTRY AND CONSUMER MACRO TRENDS



| TREND                                    | IMPLICATIONS  |
|--|---|
| COVID-19, reinvigoration and reinvention | The COVID-19 shutdowns of public gatherings brought considerable disruption to events. At the same time, it has provided an opportunity for event organisers to take stock, review what was working and what wasn't, up-skill, improve their digital presence, and engage with consumers in new ways. |

Hybrid events



COVID-19 has seen the development of hybrid events in response to social distancing requirements. These events incorporate both in-person and virtual elements such as live-streaming. They have the potential to reduce demand for in-region business events as organisations grow comfortable with virtual meetings. However, according to research conducted by the Professional Convention Management Association, the Chinese are expecting a 'pent-up demand' for face-to-face events<sup>3</sup>. There is potential for other countries such as Australia to experience this same trend.



|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Responsible events | Essential to the success of events are sustainable and inclusive practices, and respect for the environment. Attendees are demanding that events proactively preserve their social license. In early 2020, three quarters of Australian event managers stated that sustainable practices are now a priority, a huge increase from just 11% of event organisers in 2019 <sup>4</sup> . Hosting events that are inclusive is not a passing trend; nor is it optional: events are all about building community. Examples include diverse and gender-balanced entertainment line-ups, use of accessible venues, and family-friendly spaces such as a breastfeeding room and a children's play area. |
|--------------------|---|



Authentically local

Event offerings across Australia are becoming formulaic in their programming resulting in an increased sameness. Travellers want to experience a connection to 'place': uniquely local culture, life as a local, and local produce.



|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Immersive experiences | Some event attendees want interactive, immersive, personalised, local, compelling and extraordinary experiences. |
|-----------------------|--|



|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Participatory sports events | Participatory sports events have strong appeal to participants who are willing to travel to take part in their sport. Such events are often a key motivator for travel to regions participants may not otherwise visit. Participatory sports events present an opportunity to create awareness of what the destination offers and encourage return visits. |
|-----------------------------|--|



|   |  |
|---|--|
| Quality over quantity and yield over volume | Boutique events and micro festivals are small, niche and tailored, and focus on high quality and exclusivity over volume and mass numbers. Examples include the use of 'hidden' or otherwise inaccessible locations, VIP experiences, and 'live like a local' experiences. |
|---|--|



|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Arts tourism | Domestic arts tourists are high value travellers who travel further, stay longer and spend more than domestic travellers overall, especially in regional Australia, when on overnight trips and travelling interstate. Domestic tourists are more likely to attend the arts than visit wineries or attend sports events; arts activities attract double the number of day-trips compared to organised sport events, and are more popular than markets, heritage sites, wineries, wildlife parks, zoos, aquariums, amusement parks and casinos, as well as national and state park visits for overnight visitors <sup>5</sup> . |
|--------------|--|



|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Agritourism | Demand for agritourism experiences is increasing. Consumers' growing desire to know where their food, drink and fibre comes from, and to experience a genuine connection with producers and regional Australia with hands-on immersive experiences means produce is becoming the travel souvenir of choice <sup>6</sup> . |
|-------------|---|

<sup>3</sup> Hybrid events here for a long time, CIM Business Events

<sup>4</sup> The 2020 Event Trends Report, Eventbrite

<sup>5</sup> Domestic Arts Tourism, Australia Council

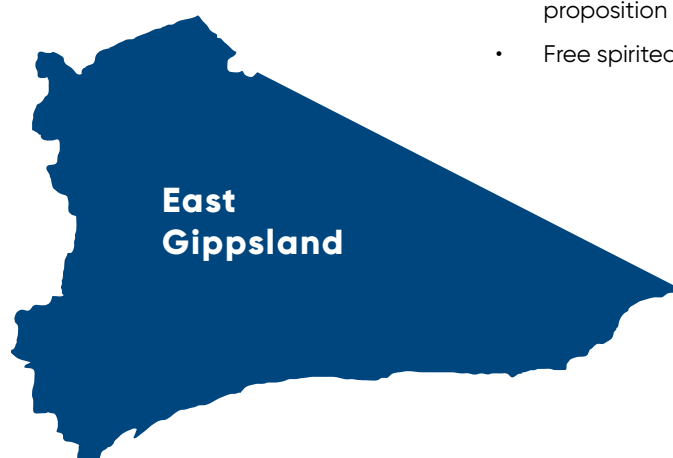
<sup>6</sup> NSW Food and Wine Tourism Strategy 2018-2022, Destination NSW

## 5. EAST GIPPSLAND SNAPSHOT

### The shire



- 47,316 residents<sup>7</sup>
- 83% of the land is in public ownership, mainly as state forests, national and coastal parks, marine national parks
- 3–6 hours to Melbourne (3 hours from Bairnsdale, 6 hours from Mallacoota); 4 hours from Mallacoota to Canberra or 7 hours to Batemans Bay, NSW



### The brand

- A diverse region that welcomes you into a sanctuary ripe with natural abundance and adventurous possibility
- Nature is the anchor, unique proposition and backdrop for events
- Free spirited and adventurous



### The visitors



- Attracts 1.6 million visitors<sup>8</sup>
- 97% of visitors are domestic
- 51% are domestic overnight visitors
- 46% are domestic day trippers
- 56% are visiting for a holiday
- 25% are visiting friends and relatives<sup>9</sup>
- \$335 is the average spend per trip by domestic overnight visitors (based on a three-night stay)
- \$93 is the average spend by day trippers<sup>10</sup>



### Competitive strengths

- Nature-based and experiential tourism, outdoor adventure activities – mountain biking, hiking, cycling, trail running, white water rafting, 4WD, camping, fishing
- Gippsland Lakes, the largest inland lakes in Australia
- Water-based activity – lakes, coast, ocean, Snowy River, 90 Mile Beach
- Remoteness, sense of escape from the city
- Wine and food, produce and seafood (abalone and sea urchins are unique to area)
- Upcoming ecotourism destination status



<sup>7</sup> Profile id, 30 June 2019

<sup>8</sup> Year-end December 2019, Tourism Research Australia

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> LG Profile, 2018



## 6. EVENTS PROFILE

### Our events

East Gippsland Shire Council currently issues over 200 event permits annually and supports 43 tourism events<sup>11</sup> each year (excluding markets and smaller community and civic events).

**43** tourism events

**62.5% sports**

**35% food, arts/culture, agricultural**

**2.5% business**

Eleven of these events are external events that are not guaranteed for future years. Home-grown events are organised largely by local community organisations and passionate individuals. Business events are a growing focus for East Gippsland.

A clear focus and direction on event sponsorship allocation is needed for East Gippsland to realise its full potential and ensure resource efficiencies. A contemporary, balanced events portfolio that leverages East Gippsland's local produce and natural and built assets will competitively present East Gippsland as an event destination in Victoria. Events need to align with and bring to life the regional brand to drive distinctiveness from other destinations.

A growing reputation for seafood, wine, fishing and adventure sports provide a basis for the development and growth of events unique to the destination. Shaping and growing these events with a focus on increasing their sustainability, building the East Gippsland brand, and maximising economic and social outcomes is vital to ensure they achieve their full potential and enhance the Shire's competitiveness.

| Distinctly East Gippsland events  | Regular events   |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mallacoota Wild Harvest Seafood Festival</li><li>• Bruthen Blues and Arts Festival</li><li>• Buchan Rodeo</li><li>• Paynesville Classic Boat Rally</li><li>• Paynesville Music Festival</li><li>• Gippsland Lakes Paddle Challenge</li><li>• Lakes Entrance Beach Netball</li><li>• Feast on East @Metung</li><li>• East Gippsland Winter Festival</li><li>• Alpine Car Rally of East Gippsland</li><li>• Orbost Rodeo</li><li>• Omeo Rodeo</li><li>• Twin Rivers Bream Classic</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fishing</li><li>• Adventure</li><li>• Rodeo</li><li>• Sport</li><li>• Car Rallies</li><li>• Business meetings<sup>12</sup></li></ul> |

<sup>11</sup> Number of events per audit content supplied by East Gippsland Shire Council staff

<sup>12</sup> A small but growing number of business meetings are being held in East Gippsland

## Events and seasonality

East Gippsland has a solid mix of events in late summer and autumn. The existing calendar of events shows a gap in local home-grown events in winter and spring, and a reliance on securing external events.

Gaining a balanced and strategic calendar that drives regional dispersal and aligns with the

tourism seasons should always be the focus. It is important for events to be used to balance the peaks and troughs of visitation across the year to support the visitor economy, rather than work against it, such as not holding events at times when accommodation operators experience high occupancy.

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <b>January</b><br><br>Alpine Classic<br>PGA Bairnsdale Golf Club Pro-Am<br>Hobie Kayak Bream<br>Beach Netball<br>Marlo Annual Woodchop<br>Beach Netball                               | <b>February</b><br><br>Peaks Challenge Gippsland<br>Bruthen Blues and Arts Festival<br>Paynesville Music Festival<br>Paynesville Classic Boat Rally<br>Hobie Kayak Bream<br>Vic Bream Classics | <b>March</b><br><br>Hinnomunjie Picnic Races<br>Hooked on Lakes<br>Marlay Point Overnight Yacht Race<br>Opera by the Lakes<br>Paynesville Gold Cup<br>Hobie Kayak Bream<br>Vic Bream Classics<br>Super Flow MTB at Mt Taylor<br>CLB 3x3 Basketball | <b>April</b><br><br>Wild Harvest Seafood Festival<br>Festival of the Lakes<br>Buchan Rodeo<br>Omeo Rodeo<br>East Gippsland Field Days<br>Adventurethon |
| <b>May</b><br><br>Gippsland Lakes Paddle Challenge<br>Victorian Broadbill Swordfish Competition   | <b>June</b><br><br>Feast on East @ Metung<br>East Gippsland Winter Festival  | <b>July</b><br><br>East Gippsland Winter Festival<br>Deep Winter<br>Twin Rivers Bream Classic  | <b>August</b><br><br>Vic Bream Classics  |
| <b>September</b><br><br>Adventure Junkie X-marathon<br>Australian Off-road Motorcycle Championships and Victorian Off-road Championships<br>Snowy River Sprint<br>Frostbite XL Gravel | <b>October</b><br><br>Great East Rail Trail Ride<br>Golf Australia Women's Spring Tournament<br>Tour of Gippsland  | <b>November</b><br><br>Alpine Car Rally of East Gippsland<br>Squash Vic Country Individual Championships<br>Cattlemen 100 MTB Omeo   | <b>December</b><br><br>Orbost Rodeo<br>Lakes Entrance NYE Fireworks<br>Vic Bream Classics  |



Off-peak visitation (May–August)



Potential external sport and business events that are not confirmed for the future calendar

## Our event visitors

In the short term (the next one to two years), domestic visitors will be the region's primary focus, extending to international markets once international travel resumes post COVID-19. Domestic visitors are expected to remain the mainstay market for East Gippsland. The Shire's

location on the eastern edge of the state positions it to target southern NSW and the ACT as well as its traditional Melbourne and regional Victoria markets. The recommended target visitor markets for East Gippsland align with the Gippsland Destination Management Plan.



### Sports participants and spectators

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



### Food and wine lovers

Domestic short break couples and singles with a real enthusiasm for food, wine and unique experiences. They tend to travel to the destination on weekends and will visit throughout the year.



### Experience seekers

Short break couples and singles (intrastate, interstate and international), families (intra-regional and intrastate) and local residents seeking a new and unique event experience either to participate in or watch. These are weekend visitors across the year and school holiday families.



### Business event delegates

Primarily Victoria-based government departments and industry associations seeking to hold meetings, retreats and training in locations around the state to meet the needs of their stakeholders. May be day trips or overnight stays.



### Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) and Older Tourers

These are visitors to East Gippsland that may not decide to visit because of an event, but may attend while they are here, extending expenditure in the community.



## Event venues and accommodation

| Business <sup>13</sup>  | Arts/culture  | Sports <sup>14</sup>   | Accommodation <sup>15</sup>   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 small venues for small conferences and business even (&lt;100 delegates)</li> <li>10 venues for 100–200 delegates</li> <li>5 venues for &gt;200 delegates (limited onsite accommodation)</li> <li>8 providers with accommodation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forge Creek Theatre (362 patrons)</li> <li>Nyerimilang Heritage Park (1,000 patrons)</li> <li>GLaWAC auditorium (80 patrons)</li> <li>Bairnsdale Art Gallery</li> <li>Orbost Exhibition Centre</li> <li>Outdoor/public sites and recreation reserves</li> <li>Public arts trail (under development)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National level – lawn bowls</li> <li>State level – yachting, squash, tennis, AFL, cricket</li> <li>Planned WORLD Sport Facility – state level for netball, hockey and soccer</li> <li>MTB track parks: Mt Taylor, Colquhoun State Forest, Nowa Nowa and Omeo (under development)</li> <li>Ninety Mile Beach – beach games, surf lifesaving and surfing (Mallacoota and Lakes Tyers)</li> <li>Gippsland Lakes – kayaking, fishing, powerboats and yachting</li> <li>East Gippsland Rail Trail – Bairnsdale to Orbost with the Discovery Trail to Lakes Entrance</li> <li>Road cycling – previous Great Victorian Rail Trail, State and National events, Alpine Highway (High Country)</li> <li>Recreation reserves</li> <li>Motorsports Complex</li> <li>Bairnsdale Horse Racing Club</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>242 providers*</li> <li>2,418+ beds</li> <li>8+ resorts/hotels</li> <li>20+ B&amp;Bs</li> <li>34 caravan/camping parks</li> <li>45+ motels/cabins</li> <li>65+ self-contained</li> </ul> |

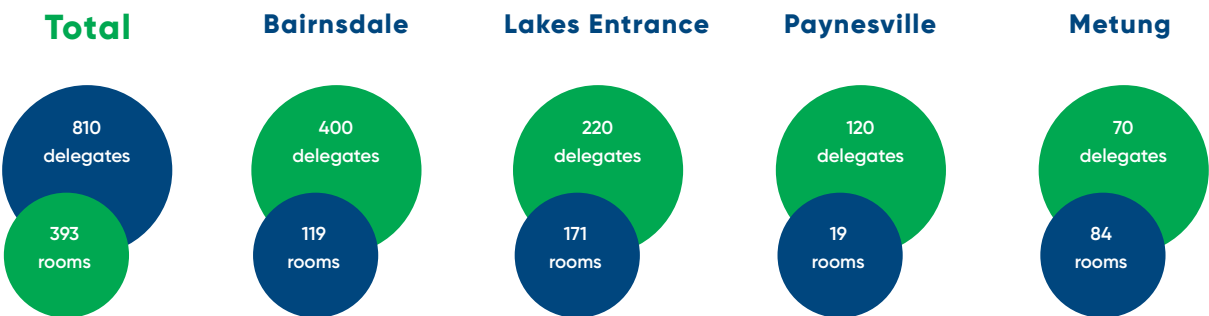
<sup>13</sup> Indicative only as capacity is dependent on seating or function style set up and the total of combined breakout rooms

<sup>14</sup> May not represent actual capability to host as based on analysis of venues and facilities by Sports Marketing Australia in 2013

<sup>15</sup> This summary is indicative only. Not all accommodation properties provide information on their capacity and in some instances, only the number of rooms, under-representing the total number of beds. Airbnbs are not included separately due to time constraints in gathering this information.

## Business events capacity

The eight venues across the Shire with onsite accommodation are clustered along the East Gippsland coast and their capacity ranges from 19 to just under 100 rooms. The following table illustrates the spread of these venues and their combined capacity in each location.



Based on venues with onsite accommodation capacity, East Gippsland is best positioned to host meetings of 50-70 delegates.

Of the largest venues with accommodation, Lakes Entrance has a venue with capacity for 200 delegates (75 rooms), and in Bairnsdale one venue

has capacity for 200 delegates (47 rooms), and a second has capacity for 120 delegates (50 rooms). Paynesville's largest venue has capacity for 90 delegates (19 rooms). Other venues have capacity for smaller groups.



## 7. GAPS ANALYSIS

| Strengths  | Gaps  | Potential impacts  |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quirky food events based on region's strengths</li> <li>Sporting events attract visitors to area who wouldn't necessarily come otherwise and encourage them to return for leisure</li> <li>Wilderness areas, diverse scenery and terrain are attractive for road cycling, mountain biking (downhill, enduro and social rides), and trail running</li> <li>Post-bushfire business pledges put the spotlight on East Gippsland for business events</li> <li>Investment in sporting infrastructure</li> <li>Council events team available to guide event organisers through regulatory requirements</li> <li>Event grant program for regional and community events</li> <li>Dedicated resources to promote region</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events attracting visitors from broader region, Melbourne and interstate</li> <li>Indigenous cultural experiences as event experiences</li> <li>Off-peak and shoulder season events (May-August)</li> <li>Signature home-grown events to position region</li> <li>Growing existing events and building capacity of local event organisers</li> <li>Strategic planning for growth of existing signature events</li> <li>Complicated event planning guide</li> <li>Robust visitor data collection and Return on Investment (ROI) measurement</li> <li>Community and businesses not aware of value of events, and therefore lack appreciation</li> <li>Collaboration and collaborative marketing across small individual events</li> <li>Coordination and packaging of events to encourage greater overnight stays and spend</li> <li>Accommodation range, including eco and 5 star anchor hotel</li> <li>Fit for purpose business event facilities</li> <li>Service culture</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient accommodation to attract multi-day events</li> <li>Inconsistent service experience</li> <li>High investment in events with limited return</li> <li>Events not leveraged for maximum economic and social benefit</li> <li>High turnover in event committees</li> <li>Resource allocation decisions not focused on outcomes for region</li> <li>Events fail to support the building of the East Gippsland brand and appeal</li> <li>Venues and public spaces developed without consideration for events results in missed opportunities</li> </ul> |



## 8. LOOKING FORWARD

### Our vision

**East Gippsland events celebrate the destination and its location, and create compelling reasons to visit year round.**

### Our aspirations

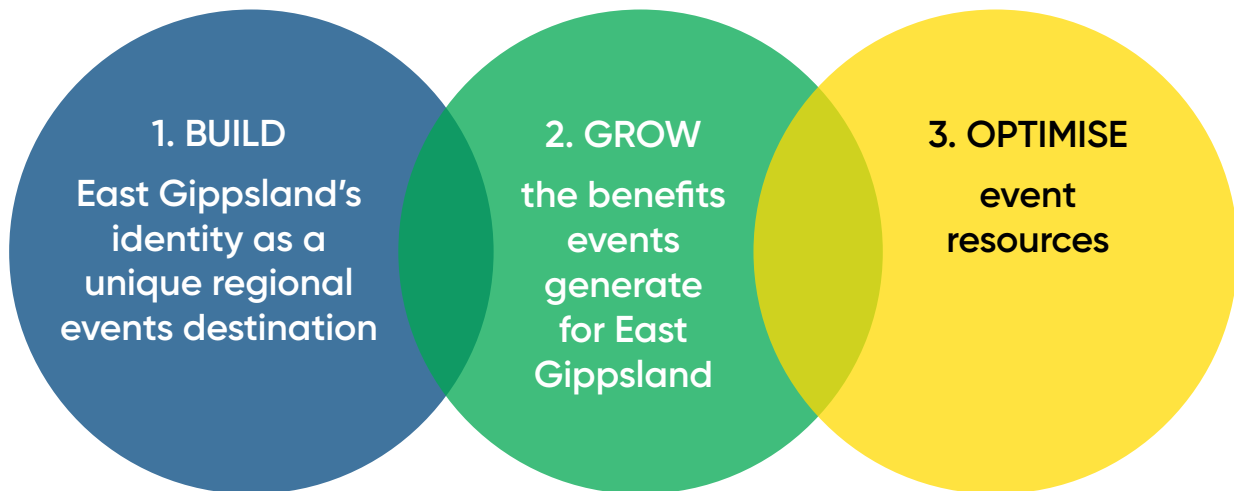
The aspirations of the Plan are to:

- Enhance the role events play in the economic and social wellbeing of communities across the Shire
- Increase awareness of the destination's brand and unique strengths
- Increase overnight visitation, dispersal and spend, particularly in the off-peak and shoulder periods
- Enhance the capability of local event organisers, committees and volunteers
- Ensure events support the stewardship of East Gippsland's natural environments
- Increase the sustainability of local events
- Ensure East Gippsland is a core component of the Gippsland Regional Events Strategy 2020-26



## Our priorities

We will achieve the vision and aspirations through our focus on three priorities:



## Strategies

A series of targeted strategies provide a robust framework for action, directing where attention and resources are required to deliver on the vision.

The Action Plan (see section 12 below) outlines how each of these strategies will be activated.

| Priorities | 1. Build East Gippsland's identity as a unique regional events destination  | 2. Grow the benefits events generate for East Gippsland                           | 3. Optimise resources  |
|------------|---|---|--|
| Strategies | 1.1 Support events that showcase East Gippsland's unique qualities, establish a clear point of difference, and resonate with target audiences | 2.1 Increase the economic contribution to East Gippsland from events              | 3.1 Foster collaboration and coordinated effort in event planning, acquisition and marketing |
|            | 1.2 Develop a balanced and sustainable calendar of events   | 2.2 Maximise the impact of event marketing  | 3.2 Build local event capability   |
|            | 1.3 Leverage attention gained from bushfire recovery activity to attract business events  | 2.3 Ensure EGSC's event sponsorship is achieving the maximum return on investment | 3.3 Ensure infrastructure facilitates event growth and development                           |
|            | 1.4 Ensure East Gippsland is event-friendly   | 2.4 Foster responsible event management   | 3.4 Create the right internal environment  |

## 9. THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS AND EGSC

This Plan reflects the thoughts and aspirations of key stakeholders in East Gippsland's events. Many of these will play a role in contributing expertise and resources towards delivery of the Plan's priorities.

These stakeholders include:

- EGSC staff and Councillors
- Local event organisations
- External event management companies
- East Gippsland Marketing Inc
- Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC)
- Chambers of Commerce and local business and tourism associations
- New regional events entity
- Destination Gippsland Ltd
- Tourism operators
- Sporting bodies and agents
- Visit Victoria
- Business Events Victoria
- Parks Victoria
- Gippsland Ports
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

In recent years, EGSC's events team has been extremely supportive of events in terms of both funding and operations. Looking ahead over the next five years, EGSC's role will become more strategic and targeted to grow the value of events to the Shire. This will require delineation of an events team focused solely on events which drive positive economic outcomes for the region, working closely with the new regional events entity and Destination Gippsland in developing and acquiring events.

### Key roles of EGSC's tourism (economic development) events team

**Leader** – Provide leadership in event development, attraction and growth, ensuring that East Gippsland events have the capacity to grow and develop in a sustainable way.

**Collaborator** – Be the connector that brings together the towns and villages, event organisers, and tourism operators, and ensures collaboration, sharing of resources and joint contribution towards East Gippsland's vision and the broader regional vision for events in Gippsland.

**Facilitator** – Facilitate initiatives and activities that build the capacity of event organisers.

**Coordinator** – Encourage the coordination of event organisers, venues, and tourism operators to ensure East Gippsland is positioned to attract events, event timing minimises seasonality, and economic outcomes from event visitors are maximised.

***"The success of any event is dependent on the collaboration and partnership of the many stakeholders involved."***



# 10. THE RIGHT EVENTS FOR EAST GIPPSLAND

## A balanced portfolio of events

A key area of focus of the Plan is to identify events that will deliver a maximum return on investment, and/or make a significant contribution to East Gippsland's brand and economy. The intention is to create a balanced portfolio of events across arts/culture/leisure, business and sport that will boost the visitor economy, and enhance the liveability of the Shire. By taking a portfolio approach, EGSC can readily understand the gaps in the events calendar, and opportunities for new event attraction and development.

The Plan is supported by a refreshed assessment framework to enable EGSC to proactively assess and determine the best-fit events for the region, how those events should be supported, and the outcomes desired from that assistance. Pragmatic and transparent, the framework includes recommended event categories for East Gippsland, and outlines the required resource allocation including funding for the acquisition and development of events.

The assessment framework will ensure that event resources are allocated adequately and strategically to attract, support and leverage events that deliver economic and social outcomes, and achieve the vision and objectives of the Plan.

The assessment framework aligns with the Gippsland Regional Events Strategy and the role of the new regional events entity in acquiring and developing regional and major events, and working with EGSC and the other Gippsland LGAs to maximise event outcomes. The framework identifies those events that should be handed to the regional events entity to acquire and develop, with EGSC collaborating to ensure direct value back to the Shire. These are the major and regional events that the collective strength of the regional events entity has the capacity to best leverage.



## Event categories

The following event categories will form the balanced portfolio of events for East Gippsland, with the supporting assessment framework identifying how events are assessed and categorised.

| Description  | Attributes  | Types of events*   | Priority Sectors / Themes  | Example Events   |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Major Events</b>  |   |  |  |  |
| <p>Major events are part of the remit of the new regional events entity.</p> <p>These are events that help position the destination in the minds of travellers. They are typically external acquired events (but could be home-grown) that have a close connection to East Gippsland and showcase the strengths and USP of the Shire.</p> <p>These events should occur in shoulder and off-peak season and will often go over multiple LGA boundaries in the Gippsland region. They are events that East Gippsland alone would not have the resources or capacity to acquire or develop.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showcase and celebrate the USP and strengths of the Shire</li> <li>• Support tourism targets by attracting intrastate and interstate overnight visitors</li> <li>• Opportunity to attract international visitors</li> <li>• Deliver measurable economic benefit across the region and state</li> <li>• National and state media exposure</li> <li>• Can be supported by state and federal funding</li> <li>• Attract the attention of Visit Victoria, with inclusion in state event campaigns</li> <li>• Managed by professional event organisers and a team of experts (local or external)</li> <li>• Ability to facilitate community involvement in events/activities</li> <li>• Add to the diversity of East Gippsland's event calendar</li> <li>• Activate key infrastructure</li> <li>• Involvement of and consultation with local businesses, artists and community groups</li> <li>• Can be a one-off or recurring event</li> <li>• Require a 1-2 year lead time for successful planning</li> </ul> | <p>Arts/Culture/Leisure events</p> <p>Sport and participation events</p> | <p>Themes aligned to brand pillars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adventure</li> <li>• Nature</li> <li>• Waterways</li> <li>• Food Provenance</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gippsland Mountain Biking Festival</li> <li>• Adventure Racing World Series or Championships</li> <li>• State significant food event</li> <li>• Indigenous Cultural Festival</li> </ul> |

| Home-Grown Events   |  |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Home-grown events are within EGSC's remit.</p> <p>These are annual events of state or regional significance that provide variety and richness, and deliver value as destination marketing tools.</p> <p>These events add colour and vibrancy to the region, with a focus on shoulder and off-peak seasons.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showcase local cultural, community or lifestyle opportunities</li> <li>• Attract intrastate and interstate visitors</li> <li>• Deliver measurable economic benefit to the Shire</li> <li>• State and regional media exposure</li> <li>• Managed by a professional event organiser or volunteer committee</li> <li>• Ability to facilitate community involvement in events/activities</li> <li>• Adds to the diversity of the Shire's event calendar</li> </ul>          | Arts/Culture/Leisure events              | <p>Themes aligned to the local culture and lifestyle in the communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adventure</li> <li>• Nature</li> <li>• Waterways</li> <li>• Food Provenance</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wild Harvest Seafood Festival</li> <li>• East Gippsland Winter Festival</li> <li>• Paynesville Classic Boat Festival</li> <li>• Paynesville Music Festival</li> <li>• Bruthen Blues and Arts Festival</li> <li>• Feast on East @ Metung</li> <li>• Alpine Car Rally</li> </ul> |
| External Events   |  |  |  |   |
| <p>These are events within EGSC's remit unless their size and impacts are equivalent to that of Major Events.</p> <p>These events fill the calendar year-round, with a focus on shoulder and off-peak seasons.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract intrastate and interstate visitors</li> <li>• Provide opportunity for mid-week visitation</li> <li>• Deliver measurable economic benefit to the region</li> <li>• State and regional media exposure</li> <li>• Managed by a professional event organiser</li> <li>• Ability to facilitate community involvement in events/activities</li> <li>• Capacity to be an ongoing event</li> <li>• Require 12 months' lead time for planning and acquisition</li> </ul> | Sporting events and participation events | <p>Aligned to sports facilities and sporting organisations and the local culture, producers and artisans in the communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports championships (e.g. bowls, cricket, tennis, AFL, hockey, soccer, netball, squash)</li> <li>• Participation sports (e.g. road cycling, trail running, mountain biking)</li> <li>• On/in-water sports (e.g. fishing, yachting, super boats, surfing, surf lifesaving, kayaking, swimming)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PGA Golf Pro Am</li> <li>• Super Flow at Mt Taylor</li> <li>• Squash Vic Country Individual Championships</li> <li>• CLB3x3 Paynesville Basketball</li> <li>• Tennis Victoria Junior Tour Event</li> </ul>   |
|   |  | Arts/Culture/Leisure events              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Touring art shows and theatre</li> <li>• Literary and cultural festivals</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Ballet</li> <li>• Melbourne performance company shows</li> </ul>  |
|   |  | Business Events                          | <p>Industry associations, government departments and corporate team building and incentives in the 50-70 delegate range</p> <p>In 3-5 years, there is potential to increase that to 200 if necessary accommodation is developed.</p>   | <p>Agricultural sector team building</p> <p>Australian Forest Products Association seminar</p> <p>Australian Farmers Federation meetings</p> <p>Team building for corporates in Melbourne and Canberra</p>  |

\*Types of events





## Arts/Culture/Leisure Events

Arts, cultural and leisure events play an important role in forming and celebrating the identity of a destination and its community. Home-grown arts and cultural events in particular can establish or build a point of difference from other destinations compared with external events that are held in multiple locations.

Events such as Wild Harvest Seafood Festival are important in differentiating East Gippsland, increasing vibrancy and liveability, and strategically positioning East Gippsland in the minds of travellers similar to Port Fairy Folk Fest or Deni Ute Muster.

Cultural events give leisure visitors more reasons to travel to and stay in East Gippsland, and add value to business and sport event visitors either through additional activities or the energy they create in the region.

It is proposed that support is directed to home-grown arts/culture/leisure events to maximise the benefits the region can receive from them.



## Sport and Participation Events

It is proposed that existing resources be tasked to focus on attracting sport and participation events to East Gippsland, and maximising benefits to the region from sports event attendees. This is due to the region's strength in sporting infrastructure and assets, including the waterways and Omeo mountain bike trails, sports events' ability to attract visitors year-round, and their potential for high yield.

## Business Events

Business events can bring high-yield visitors year-round, and open up opportunities for return leisure visits. Although business event infrastructure and fit for purpose venues are currently limited in East Gippsland, the pledges made after the 2019/20 bushfires stimulated a keen interest amongst industry for this type of event. In consultation with Business Events Victoria, it was agreed that East Gippsland would target industry associations, government departments, and corporate team-building and incentives in the 50-70 delegate range. There will also be focus on building capability and skills amongst local operators interested in attracting the business event market. In 3-5 years, there is potential to increase delegate numbers to 200 if required accommodation is developed.



# 11. EVENT SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Fundamental to the Plan's activation is a refreshed event sponsorship program focused on targeted investment to achieve improved event outcomes for East Gippsland and a healthy ROI for EGSC. Event sponsorship will be aimed at the strategic acquisition of events, and nurturing those home-grown events with the potential to become significant destination events for East Gippsland. It will replace the existing Regional and District Event Sponsorship (RADES) program.

The event sponsorship program will comprise of three streams of event sponsorship to ensure a fair and transparent allocation of funds. The program's funds will include EGSC's investment into the new regional events entity's Regional and Major Events Fund. This investment will enable EGSC to leverage regional activity to significantly enhance event outcomes for East Gippsland.

Local events that deliver social outcomes for local communities will continue to be funded through Council's existing Community Grants Program.

## 1. Pathway to Growth Program (Home-grown events development)

The aim of this program is to support a small number of home-grown events over a three year period with cash and capacity building to help them to elevate their event and ensure long term sustainability and viability.

This program offers an additional capacity-building opportunity beyond the planned region-wide Event School initiative of the new regional events entity. Both programs are focused on building the sustainability and viability of home-grown events. They differ according to their inclusions, with the EGSC program providing a customised support package.

An allocation of \$80,000 or 50% of the budget is recommended, with a minimum of \$20,000 per event assigned to four different events per year as part of a multi-year agreement.

The goal will be to partner with the new regional events entity to lobby state government (Regional Arts Victoria, Regional Development Victoria, Visit Victoria, etc) to at

least double the \$20,000 to each of these home-grown events.

The support package can include a paid coordinator and/or paid professionals to assist with aspects of event delivery. For example, an event may want to use this funding to engage a marketing expert to manage marketing and sponsorship, or someone to manage risk/compliance and administration, or a creative director to help develop the event experience.

To be eligible for this support, events will need to have an existing business plan in place, and support will be linked to KPIs that will be reviewed annually and upon funding acquittal.

The following diagram illustrates the pathway for events undertaking this program to becoming regional events.





## 2. External Events Fund

An allocation of \$20,000 or 15% of the total budget is recommended to go towards state and regional championships, regional sport and participation events, and arts/culture/leisure and business events, working with external bodies and partners to acquire the best fit events to fill gaps in the calendar.

These funds will be matched with the new Events Gippsland Regional and Major Events Fund as appropriate.

## 3. Regional and Major Events Fund

By contributing to a regional funding pool under the new regional events entity model, EGSC has the potential to attract major and regional events to the Shire. A \$50,000 allocation (or 35% of Council's event sponsorship budget) to this regional events fund will allow East Gippsland to gain a return that they would not be able to achieve independently.

A service level agreement will be established with the regional entity, clearly outlining the expected return and value expectations from East Gippsland. For example, to acquire the Adventure Racing World Series with at least 50% of the event held in East Gippsland, and develop a mountain biking event series that connects East Gippsland trails with other Gippsland trails.

## Measurement of return

Further to applying KPIs to support the assessment of events, it is important that all tourism events supported by EGSC undergo a consistent measurement of success using the following formulas. This will help EGSC determine the return on investment for their event support and help benchmark for future funding rounds.

Return on investment: Visitor nights x average visitor spend (NVS<sup>16</sup>) / Total grant value = X:1

Cost per visitor: Total annual grant value / Total annual event visitation = \$X cost per event visitor

<sup>16</sup> Using National Visitor Survey data

## 12. ACTION PLAN

This Action Plan outlines the strategies and associated actions to be realised over the next five years to set the foundations for achieving the vision and objectives for East Gippsland as a competitive events destination.

Actions will be implemented over the following time frames:

- **Short-term** – within one year (2021-2022)
- **Medium-term** – between two to four years (2022-2025)
- **Long-term** – in five years or more (2025 and beyond)
- **Ongoing actions** will be implemented between 2021 and 2026

### 1. BUILD East Gippsland's identity as a unique regional events destination

EGSC will encourage and support home-grown events that forge an identity based on the Shire's natural and built assets, and enhance its competitiveness as a tourism destination and as a vibrant, innovative and thriving community. These will include sports, business and arts/culture/leisure events that utilise and celebrate the natural wilderness, lakes, rivers and coastal areas, activate open and public spaces, and personify the destination brand for visitors and local communities.

Support for home-grown events can deliver multiple benefits, including building local skill levels, encouraging innovation and resilience in the community, increasing jobs in tourism and events, and growing East Gippsland's reputation for delivering high quality events. Strategic guidance of events that align with the brand and have potential to grow will enable East Gippsland to accelerate the development of home-grown events that provide a strong point of difference for the destination. Targeted support is proposed because home-grown events can take up to three years to build profile in their target markets and build visitor numbers.

Continual investment is occurring in sports and recreation infrastructure to improve facilities and

quality of experience. Sports events are important in drawing participants and spectators across the year and creating awareness of what the destination offers. A growing network of mountain bike trails supports East Gippsland's positioning as an adventure tourism destination, and will enable the Shire to attract state, national and international level mountain bike events, particularly when linked with trails across Gippsland.

Attracting and encouraging events over the winter and shoulder seasons and their dispersal continue to be important in supporting a thriving visitor economy. Business events provide an opportunity for the Shire across the year, leveraging the attention gained through the bushfires.

Ensuring the Shire is regarded as event-friendly is an important element in attracting external events. Organisers consider the support and facilitation local government offers when deciding where to host events. Streamlined processes for navigating event compliance across different EGSC departments and other regulatory agencies will also support local volunteer event committees. A 'one-stop-shop' online events portal and a clear point of contact for leisure, business and sporting events will assist event organisers and EGSC officers, and enhance resource efficiencies.



## **Potential Gippsland Mountain Bike Festival**

**Name: STOMP**

**Date: May**

**Duration: 3-4 days**

**Location: East Gippsland, Baw Baw and Wellington**

Gippsland is a world-class natural sanctuary, providing opportunity for world class events around nature, outdoors and adventure.

Existing mountain bike trails in Baw Baw and Wellington along with the newly developed trails in East Gippsland present an exciting opportunity to develop a home-grown mountain bike festival that links these trails and appeals to all levels of expertise, especially families and non-competitive riders. Working with local mountain bike clubs and expert event producers, this festival will offer a competitive element along with supporting events and activities that appeal to the general public.

### **Key success factors:**

- Liaise with local mountain bike clubs to establish their preferences for an event and to ensure they are engaged throughout the development and planning stages
- Work with each LGA to offer their own unique experience, i.e. competition, entertainment, food/ beverage, and link it all together through a high quality curated program

- Work with a corporate partner for sponsorship of the event to establish a strong prize pool
- Investigate the viability of a mountain biking 'celebrity' as a face of the event to help with publicity
- Develop a robust business plan and financial model to ensure long term viability
- Secure strong state, regional, industry and community support
- Carefully consider the event timing to combine fine weather with filling a gap in the regional calendar of events
- Secure state government support to engage a professional event producer to execute event delivery
- Secure support from the three LGAs and landowners to assist with event operations and compliance matters

Forecasted visitor numbers: 500+ riders, support crew, spectators

### **Benchmark events:**

Cannonball MTB Festival, Thredbo

Crankworx, Whistler

Estimated investment required: \$150,000 per annum



| Actions  |   | Time frame  | Responsibility  | Estimated investment  |
|----------|---|-------------|---|---|
| Strategy | 1.1 Support events that showcase East Gippsland's unique qualities, establish a clear point of difference, and resonate with target audiences   |             |   |   |
| 1.1.1    | <b>Home-grown event development</b><br>Invest in four home-grown events, with professional expertise provided over three years to work with existing events with potential for growth, to curate unique events that build the East Gippsland brand and maximise economic and social outcomes.<br>Events to consider (some could be combined): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wild Harvest Seafood Festival</li> <li>• East Gippsland Winter Festival</li> <li>• Paynesville Classic Boat Festival</li> <li>• Paynesville Music Festival</li> <li>• Bruthen Blues and Arts Festival</li> <li>• Feast on East @ Metung</li> <li>• Buchan Rodeo</li> <li>• Gippsland Lakes Paddle Challenge</li> </ul> | 2021 – 2024 | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: DGL, VV                                     | \$80,000/year   |
| 1.1.2    | <b>Major adventure events acquisition</b><br>Work with the new regional events entity to attract the Adventure Racing World Series as an anchor event for the Shire.  | Ongoing     | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: DGL, SMA, VV                                | \$25,000/year over a multi-year agreement (part of the \$50,000 contribution to the Regional & Major Events Fund)<br><br>(Total required of \$100,000 with \$25,000 contribution from EGSC, \$25,000 from DGL and \$50,000 from State Government) |
| 1.1.3    | <b>Develop a Gippsland mountain bike event</b><br>Work with neighbouring LGAs and the new regional events entity to develop a multi-destination mountain bike event that complements East Gippsland's own mountain bike event.<br>(As per Potential Gippsland Mountain Bike Festival described earlier.)  | 2021-2022   | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: LGAs, mountain bike clubs                   | \$25,000, with contributions from partner LGAs and state government (Estimated total investment of \$150,000)   |
| 1.1.4    | <b>Acquire external events</b><br>Proactively acquire external events that will fill gaps across the calendar, as per the assessment framework. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim to secure multi-year agreements to maximise outcomes and ensure resource efficiencies.</li> </ul>  | Ongoing     | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: event organisers, sporting agents and clubs | \$20,000, with the opportunity to leverage the Regional & Major Events Fund to support acquisitions   |
| 1.1.5    | <b>Enhance cultural awareness and integration</b><br>Work with GLaWAC to develop a guide for event organisers on how local Indigenous culture can be incorporated into events.  | 2021-2022   | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: GLaWAC                                      | Within existing resources   |

#### ACRONYMS USED:

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| BEV   | Business Events Victoria                            |
| DGL   | Destination Gippsland Ltd                           |
| DELWP | Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning |
| EGMi  | East Gippsland Marketing Incorporated               |
| EGSC  | East Gippsland Shire Council                        |

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| GLaWAC | Gunaiurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation |
| LGA    | Local Government Authority                        |
| SMA    | Sports Marketing Australia                        |
| VV     | Visit Victoria                                    |

| Strategy | 1.2 Develop a balanced and sustainable calendar of events  |              |   |   |
|----------|--|--------------|---|---|
| 1.2.1    | <b>Balanced events portfolio</b><br>Establish and maintain a balanced events portfolio encompassing arts/culture, music, food/produce/wine, sports, recreation and business. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support events based on the assessment framework.</li> </ul>   | Ongoing      | Lead: EGSC  | Within event funding program                          |
| 1.2.2    | <b>Event bundling</b><br>Bundle participatory events to extend reach and appeal such as combining relevant fishing events to create an East Gippsland fishing festival.  | Ongoing      | Lead: External marketing partner<br>Partners: DGL, event organisers                             | Within operational budget                             |
| 1.2.3    | <b>Off-peak events</b><br>Actively encourage event organisers to host events out of peak season where appropriate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preference given to off-peak events in event funding assessment.</li> </ul>  | Ongoing      | Lead: EGSC  | Within event funding program                          |
| Strategy | 1.3 Leverage attention gained from bushfire recovery activity to attract business events   |              |   |   |
| 1.3.1    | <b>Strategic partnerships</b><br>Establish strategic partnerships to proactively promote East Gippsland to the business events market, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Business Events Victoria and the new regional events entity in the development of business event bids.</li> <li>Work with TAFE Gippsland and local industry sectors to attract conferences and business meetings in their specific areas of expertise.</li> </ul> | Ongoing      | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: New regional events entity, BEV, TAFE Gippsland, local industry sectors | Within existing resources                             |
| 1.3.2    | <b>Single point of contact and coordination</b><br>Establish a single contact to respond to business event enquiries, coordinate on-ground requirements, and work with Business Events Victoria in attracting events.  | 2021         | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: BEV, local venues, external marketing partner                           | Human resource requirement/ Within existing resources |
| 1.3.3    | <b>Capability building</b><br>Work with Business Events Victoria to build local businesses knowledge of the business events sector and the capability to develop their businesses and experiences to meet needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore mentoring arrangements to provide this support.</li> </ul>   | Ongoing      | Lead: EGSC Business events coordinator role<br>Partners: BEV, regional events entity            | Within existing resources                             |
| 1.3.4    | <b>Trade marketing</b><br>Develop collateral to enable East Gippsland to support regional participation at Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME).  | Ongoing      | Lead: External marketing partner<br>Partners: New regional events entity, BEV, VV               | Within existing resources                             |
| 1.3.5    | <b>Business events portal</b><br>Maintain a business events portal within the Visit East Gippsland website that presents the destination as attractive for business events, and brings together the small venues and boutique offerings into a convenient one stop shop to support conference/meeting organisers in sourcing and booking facilities and activities.  | 2021/Ongoing | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: External marketing partner  | Within existing resources                             |

| Strategy | 1.4 Ensure East Gippsland is event-friendly  |              |  |                              |
|----------|--|--------------|--|------------------------------|
| 1.4.1    | <p><b>Events Guide</b></p> <p>Review and update the existing events planning guide, rationalising content to provide a succinct, straightforward, step-by-step process for event organisers.</p> <p>The guide should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flow chart and step-by-step application process, including key milestones and trigger points for specific requirements</li> <li>• Event application form</li> <li>• Roles and responsibilities of approval agencies.</li> </ul>   | 2021         | Lead: EGSC   | Within existing resources    |
| 1.4.2    | <p><b>Event liaison</b></p> <p>Continue to deliver a one-stop-shop, event liaison service, offering a single point of contact for event organisers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event liaison officer to direct community and tourism event enquiries to their respective teams.</li> <li>• Service to be focused on streamlining the regulatory process and access to funding and resources, and providing guidance on event timing and development.</li> </ul>  | Ongoing      | Lead: EGSC   | Within existing resources    |
| 1.4.3    | <p><b>Pre-approved event sites</b></p> <p>Pre-approve the identified event precincts for specified 'fit for purpose' events to streamline the approvals process and give certainty to event organisers.</p> <p>(See Action 3.3.1 for potential sites)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate the pre-approved sites within the regional event infrastructure master plan activity (regional events entity).</li> <li>• Communicate pre-approved sites to event organisers and use this information to support event acquisition bids.</li> </ul>   | 2021/Ongoing | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: New regional events entity | Within existing resources    |
| 1.4.4    | <p><b>Interagency events committee</b></p> <p>Establish an interagency events committee that meets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quarterly to proactively plan for events, identifying what is required to host and attract events and foster a culture of 'event-enabling'</li> <li>• at additional times as required to discuss and process event applications.</li> </ul> <p>The group is to have representation from decision-makers in all areas involved in holding events on public land and public roads, including planning, transport, parks and recreation, sustainability, and utilities. External regulatory bodies will also be involved to ensure there is complete awareness and transparency on events being processed and approved.</p> <p>(Ballina Shire Council's Regulatory Services Group provides a potential model that can be explored as a benchmark.)</p> | 2021/Ongoing | Lead: EGSC   | Within event funding program |



|       |   |              |   |                           |
|-------|---|--------------|---|---------------------------|
| 1.5.5 | <p><b>Online resources</b></p> <p>Provide a dedicated resource centre for event organisers (on the EGSC website), linking with and leveraging content on the regional Event Resources Hub. Content to be provided includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events Policy</li> <li>• Templates for Traffic Management, Waste, Sustainability and Accessibility</li> <li>• List of fit for purpose sites, and the type of events that have pre-approval in those precincts</li> <li>• Database of events infrastructure/venues and their supporting services</li> <li>• Links to upcoming training opportunities</li> <li>• Shop Local database (See Action 2.3.4)</li> <li>• Checklist with supporting resources to assist event organisers in maximising event outcomes e.g. meet with the events officers and the external marketing partner to discuss how to market your event; post event review processes</li> <li>• State Government's Future Proofing Community Sport and Recreation Facilities online guide and toolkit</li> <li>• Equipment database (See Action 3.3.6)</li> <li>• Volunteering database (See Action 3.2.4)</li> </ul> | 2021/Ongoing | <p>Lead: EGSC</p> <p>Partners: New regional events entity</p> | Within existing resources |
| 1.5.6 | <p><b>Assessment framework</b></p> <p>Implement the proposed assessment framework to simplify and support the approval process for tourism/economic events.</p> <p>Key elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update application process and relevant documentation.</li> <li>• Communicate the new framework and processes to industry and the different pathways for tourism/economic and local community events.</li> </ul>  | 2021/Ongoing | Lead: EGSC  | Within existing resources |
| 1.5.7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively change perceptions around permitting times</li> <li>• Promote and showcase the fact that EGSC have reduced the event permitting process timeframe from over 100 days down to less than 30. Add details to the website and notify event promoters and stakeholders like SMA and DGL of this major improvement.</li> </ul>  | 2021/Ongoing | Lead: EGSC  | Within existing resources |

## 2. GROW the benefits events generate for East Gippsland

Event visitor spend will be increased through promotional activity that creates awareness of what is on offer and inspires visitors to explore and spend beyond an event. Tourism has an important role in content generation for events to encourage visitors to stay longer. Shire-wide activation is key to leveraging events and enhancing the visitor experience. Engagement and involvement of the Shire's towns and villages and sectors such as hospitality, retail, accommodation and attractions through packaging and itinerary development will enable visitors to immerse themselves in what East Gippsland has to offer, and spread the benefits across the visitor economy.

A comprehensive events calendar will support event organisers and local businesses in their cross promotion, marketing and forward planning, and creates awareness amongst local residents who are important advocates for encouraging visits from family and friends (the VFR market).

With a focus on a targeted investment approach, EGSC will optimise the value of sponsored events in the region, and build East Gippsland's competitive strengths and reputation for quality events.

A diverse calendar of events giving consideration to timing, type of event and location will spread benefit as widely as possible across the Shire and the calendar year, and balance short-term economic return and longer-term destination benefits. Measurement mechanisms that allow transparency in understanding the results of events are needed to assist EGSC in monitoring and measuring event impacts. There is an opportunity to leverage the new regional events entity's development of a standardised data collection and measurement methodology for events. This will address the current lack of baseline data for measuring event outcomes.

Environmentally responsible, sustainable events are an important part of East Gippsland's values and aspirations. Building the Shire's reputation for responsible events will enhance EGSC's distinction as an Ecotourism Australia-certified ecotourism destination once achieved.

| Actions  |  | Time frame   | Responsibility  | Estimated Investment      |
|----------|--|--------------|---|---------------------------|
| Strategy | 2.1. Increase the economic contribution to East Gippsland from events  |              |   |                           |
| 2.1.1    | <b>Package and bundle events</b><br>Create multi-experience packaging of activities, itinerary ideas and special value deals around events to encourage overnight stays and dispersal across East Gippsland.   | Ongoing      | Lead: External marketing partner<br>Partners: EGSC, tourism operators, local businesses | Within existing resources |
| 2.1.2    | <b>Cross promote with other offerings</b><br>Cross promote events with arts and cultural experiences and family-friendly activities to broaden appeal and awareness of destination offering, e.g. cycling/mountain biking or motorsport with food/wine and/or cultural activity. | Ongoing      | Lead: External marketing partner<br>Partners: EGSC, tourism operators                   | Within existing resources |
| 2.1.3    | <b>Support businesses in cross promoting</b><br>Provide event organisers and local businesses with information and tools to assist them in cross promoting and maximising the value from events.   | 2021/Ongoing | Lead: External marketing partner<br>Partners: EGSC, event organisers, local businesses  | Within existing resources |

| Strategy | 2.2 Maximise the impact of event marketing  |              |  |   |
|----------|---|--------------|--|---|
| 2.2.1    | <b>Events calendar</b><br>Create a comprehensive two-year (internal) events calendar for event organisers, local businesses and the community to support their marketing and forward planning.  | 2021/Ongoing | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: External marketing partner   | Within existing resources   |
| 2.2.2    | <b>Leverage regional events calendar</b><br>Link the forward planning calendar of events with the new regional events entity's regional calendar to leverage regional and state event activity.   | Ongoing      | Lead: External marketing partner<br>Partners: New regional events entity                                     | Within existing resources   |
| 2.2.3    | <b>Marketing campaigns</b><br>Develop and implement seasonal event and annual event-specific marketing campaigns (including social media and media releases) in conjunction with relevant stakeholders to promote events to local residents and visitors, build local event advocates, and encourage positive word of mouth promotion to VFR.   | Ongoing      | Lead: External marketing partner<br>Partners: Event organisers, local businesses, DGL, EGSC                  | As part of service agreement with external marketing partner, and business sponsorships |
| 2.2.4    | <b>Align with the brand and natural assets</b><br>Encourage new events and associated product and experience opportunities that are consistent with the brand pillars (e.g. mountain biking and Indigenous events and events which activate and showcase the Gippsland Lakes)   | Ongoing      | Lead: External marketing partner<br>Partners: EGSC   | Within existing resources   |
| 2.2.5    | <b>Joint marketing</b><br>Work with Destination Gippsland Ltd in planning and executing marketing activity to build profile and awareness amongst target external event promoters.  | Ongoing      | Lead: External marketing partner<br>Partners: DGL  | Within existing resources   |
| 2.2.6    | <b>External marketing partner service agreement</b><br>Include within the service agreement with the outsourced marketing provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Event marketing and leverage to showcase the destination and its experiences (including Action 2.2.3).</li> <li>Providing guidance to event organisers in their development of event marketing plans and campaigns.</li> </ul> | 2021         | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: External marketing partner   | Within existing resources   |
| 2.2.7    | <b>Cross promotion across boundaries</b><br>Work with neighbouring destinations, including cross border, in cross promotion of events, and development of event packages to increase offering and length of stay, including complementary events such as the Apollo Bay Seafood Festival.   | Ongoing      | Lead: External marketing partner<br>Partners: Other destination tourism organisations, event organisers, DGL | Within existing resources   |
| 2.2.8    | <b>Develop event-based destination campaigns</b><br>Use events in destination marketing campaigns to give visitors, especially overnight visitors, a compelling reason to visit, with a focus on shoulder and off-peak season events.   | Ongoing      | Lead: External marketing partner<br>Partners: EGSC   | Within existing resources   |
| 2.2.9    | <b>Database reach</b><br>Require event organisers to list their event on the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse as part of the assessment criteria for event support.  | 2021/Ongoing | Lead: EGSC   | Within existing resources   |



| Strategy | 2.3 Ensure EGSC's event sponsorship is achieving the maximum return on investment   |                       |  |  |
|----------|---|-----------------------|--|--|
| 2.3.1    | <b>Event development and acquisition funds</b><br>Maintain a competitive budget for events development, acquisition and leveraging to support a balanced portfolio of events across the year.   | 2021/Ongoing          | Lead: EGSC   | \$150,000/annum will be required to deliver on this Strategy |
| 2.3.2    | <b>Assessment tool</b><br>Implement the proposed event funding assessment tool to focus EGSC funding on achieving desired outcomes, with a robust measurement framework for ROI.<br>Collaborate with DG and neighbouring Councils to look at developing a region wide assessment tool software program that can be used by all Councils for regional and home grown events, and by DG for acquisition of regional and major events.   | 2021                  | Lead: EGSC   | Within existing resources                                    |
| 2.3.3    | <b>Develop data collection systems and processes</b><br>Work with the new regional events entity in creating a standard survey tool. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require all EGSC funded events to implement attendee surveys and provide EGSC with survey results to provide an understanding of ROI and other event impacts.</li> </ul>  | 2021-2022/Ongoing     | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: New regional events entity | Within existing resources                                    |
| 2.3.4    | <b>Promote 'Shop Local'</b><br>Develop a database of local suppliers for use by event organisers and the business community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include the use of local suppliers, or a demonstrated effort to source local, as part of the competitive bid process in the event funding assessment criteria.</li> <li>Advocate to external event organisers the benefits of utilising local suppliers.</li> </ul>   | 2021/Ongoing          | Lead: EGSC   | Within existing resources                                    |
| Strategy | 2.4 Foster responsible event management   |                       |  |  |
| 2.4.1    | <b>Sustainable events</b><br>Identify opportunities to integrate 'ISO 1021: Sustainable Events' into home-grown events and encourage the use of this standard by independent event organisers holding events in the region.   | 2021-2024 and Ongoing | Lead: EGSC   | Within existing resources                                    |
| 2.4.2    | <b>Environmental management resources</b><br>Develop and include in the online event resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Checklist of things all events must do to be sustainable and responsible.</li> <li>Environmental policy template for event organisers to support their funding assessment application process.</li> <li>Guidelines to support and align with East Gippsland's eco-destination accreditation.</li> <li>Information on climate- and environmentally-friendly options for recyclables and disposable goods and promotional products.</li> <li>The State Government's Future Proofing Community Sport and Recreation Facilities online guide and toolkit.</li> </ul> | 2021                  | Lead: EGSC   | Within existing resources                                    |
| 2.4.3    | <b>Best practice</b><br>Ensure EGSC-produced events demonstrate best practice in environmental management.  | Ongoing               | Lead: EGSC   | Within existing resources                                    |
| 2.4.4    | <b>Accessible events and venues</b><br>Encourage and educate event organisers and event venues on accessibility and the need to consider 'access for all' in planning events and designing/refurbishing venues.   | 2021/ongoing          | Lead: EGSC   | Within existing resources                                    |

### 3. OPTIMISE event resources

This priority is very much about ensuring the necessary elements are in place for the successful implementation of this Plan.

A collaborative approach by EGSC (and across EGSC's departments) and events, tourism, regional and state partners is a cornerstone of the Plan. A coordinated approach with the new regional events entity and the LGAs in the broader Gippsland region will encourage leveraging of event activities, cross promotion, and opportunities to pool resources such as volunteers, event equipment and training programs. A region-wide commitment to a quality service culture is also important for East Gippsland, particularly when visitors are travelling across other Gippsland shires to reach the destination.

The commitment and passion of event organisers and volunteers are drivers of event success. Developing skills and sustaining enthusiasm, particularly amongst volunteer-driven events, will ensure East Gippsland

delivers quality events all year round. The focus will be on developing and evolving events over time to keep the offer compelling for target markets and grow financially sustainable events.

To ensure event infrastructure is effectively used across the year requires understanding of the Shire's event precincts, their current infrastructure capacity, and any short falls to support event delivery, and then joint planning by EGSC and stakeholders. Attraction of investment in accommodation will be needed to support event development and growth. In the absence of purpose-built venues that combine accommodation and conference facilities, coordination is vital to bring together the different elements into a seamless and attractive proposition for event organisers.

To successfully develop and attract events, EGSC needs to adequately resource its role in events that drive tourism and economic outcomes, with a clear allocation of roles distinct from community and civic event activity.

| Actions         | Time frame  | Responsibility  | Estimated investment         |
|-----------------|---|---|------------------------------|
| <b>Strategy</b> | <b>3.1. Foster collaboration and coordinated effort in event planning, acquisition and marketing</b>  |   |                              |
| 3.1.1           | <b>Partnering with the new regional events entity</b><br>Collaborate and partner with the new regional events entity in the delivery of the Regional Events Strategy, leveraging resources and skills to support the successful activation of East Gippsland Event Growth Action Plan.  | Ongoing<br>Lead: EGSC<br>Partner: New regional events entity  | Within existing resources    |
| 3.1.2           | <b>Coordinated regional funding for sports events</b><br>Support a coordinated, regional funding arrangement with the regional events entity brokering the acquisition of events that will deliver regional benefits with sports event bodies/sports agents, with EGSC working directly with the sporting bodies/agents/clubs as relevant for events with only local impacts. | 2021/Ongoing<br>Lead: New regional events entity<br>Partners: EGSC, sports event bodies/sports agents, event organisers | As per event funding program |
| 3.1.3           | <b>Event Officers network</b><br>Connect EGSC with other event officers across the Gippsland region into a formalised network to enhance collaboration and sharing of information and tools to improve efficiencies.  | 2021/Ongoing<br>Lead: New regional events entity<br>Partners: Gippsland LGAs  | Within existing resources    |
| 3.1.4           | <b>Networking</b><br>Encourage networking and coordination by event venues and organisers interested in and with capacity to grow business events to East Gippsland.  | 2021/Ongoing<br>Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: Event organisers, venues  | Within existing resources    |

| Strategy | 3.2 Build local event capability   |                   |   |   |
|----------|--|-------------------|---|---|
| 3.2.1    | <b>Pathway to Growth Program</b><br>Support the home-grown events as per Priority 1 with a Pathway to Growth Program incorporating access to a paid coordinator or professional event curation, and a marketing support package with an external marketing provider to help local event committees realise the full potential of their events. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligibility requirements to include an existing business plan in place for each event.</li> <li>• Support is to be linked to KPIs that are reviewed annually.</li> </ul> | 2021-2024         | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: Event organisers, external marketing provider       | \$80,000 (\$20,000 to go to four different events (each) per year)<br>Work with the new regional events entity to source funding to at least double the \$20,000 to each of the four destination events from Regional Arts Victoria, Regional Development Victoria and Visit Victoria |
| 3.2.2    | <b>Information resources</b><br>Create user-friendly templates and information to help event organisers/committees meet event planning requirements and build an operating blueprint that remains when volunteers change. Distribute these through the online events portal.   | 2021/Ongoing      | Lead: EGSC  | Within existing resources   |
| 3.2.3    | <b>Event School</b><br>Facilitate one event per year to participate in a regional Event School program offered to home-grown events with the potential to become significant regional events.  | 2021              | Lead: New regional events entity<br>Partners: EGSC and other Gippsland LGAs | Within budget of new regional events entity   |
| 3.2.4    | <b>Volunteer pool</b><br>Support the new regional event entity's plans to develop a shared volunteer pool and coordinate volunteer training.   | 2021/Ongoing      | Lead: New regional events entity<br>Partners: EGSC                          | Within existing resources   |
| 3.2.5    | <b>Training</b><br>Leverage existing volunteer training providers to deliver training to build skills (e.g. the Neighbourhood House Network, TAFE).<br>Continue to deliver an annual event organiser workshop and/or online on-demand training program to improve event management and marketing skills.   | 2021/Ongoing      | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: DGL   | Workshop delivery (online content as part of Action 3.2.6)  |
| 3.2.6    | <b>Ambassador program</b><br>Work with DGL to roll out a My East Gippsland Ambassador program that provides online training modules in customer service and destination knowledge and specific modules for event volunteers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the program freely available to local businesses, event organisers, schools and local residents.</li> <li>• Incentivise event operators with preferential consideration for grants.</li> </ul>  | 2021-2022/Ongoing | Lead: EGSC Tourism Team<br>Partners: DGL                                    | \$15,000 (\$5,000 to reskin existing program, \$5,000- \$10,000 for content creation)   |



| Strategy | 3.3 Ensure infrastructure facilitates event growth and development   |           |  |                           |
|----------|--|-----------|--|---------------------------|
| 3.3.1    | <b>Identify and plan event-ready sites and facilities</b><br><br>As part of the new regional events entity's events infrastructure master plan activity, audit event sites and infrastructure to identify sites to be developed into fit-for purpose event precincts, the target events for those sites, and those events' site requirements (access, power, lighting and water supply and space for temporary structures). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with local business and tourism associations and community groups in identifying the best fit sites and any required development to meet event needs.</li> </ul> Potential sites could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lakes Entrance foreshore</li> <li>• Nyerimilang Heritage Park</li> <li>• Howitt Park</li> <li>• Gilsenan Reserve</li> <li>• Metung Village Green</li> <li>• Orbost Forest Park</li> <li>• Omeo Courthouse Garden</li> <li>• Bruthen Main Street</li> </ul> (Target events on these sites will be given pre approval to streamline the application process.) | 2021      | Lead: EGSC<br><br>Partners: New regional events entity, infrastructure owners, DELWP, business and tourism associations and community groups | Within existing resources |
| 3.3.2    | <b>Infrastructure and asset readiness</b><br><br>Complete an infrastructure and asset development plan for each EGSC-owned site and use to inform future infrastructure works. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus should start with the fit-for-purpose event precincts.</li> <li>• In developing the plan, leverage the planned Regional Events Strategy infrastructure master plan to avoid duplication of effort and ensure consistency.</li> </ul>   | 2021-2022 | Lead: EGSC   | Within existing resources |
| 3.3.3    | <b>Joint planning</b><br><br>Work with other land managers where potential sites are within their jurisdiction to plan event infrastructure and facility needs.  | Ongoing   | Lead: EGSC<br><br>Partners: Land managers/owners   | Within existing resources |
| 3.3.4    | <b>Capacity and capability audit</b><br><br>Review the findings of BEV's business event capacity and capability audit and expand on as needed to identify the current status and enhancements needed to meet business event host requirements such as technology, size and facilities.   | 2021      | Lead: EGSC<br><br>Partners: Event venues   | Within existing resources |

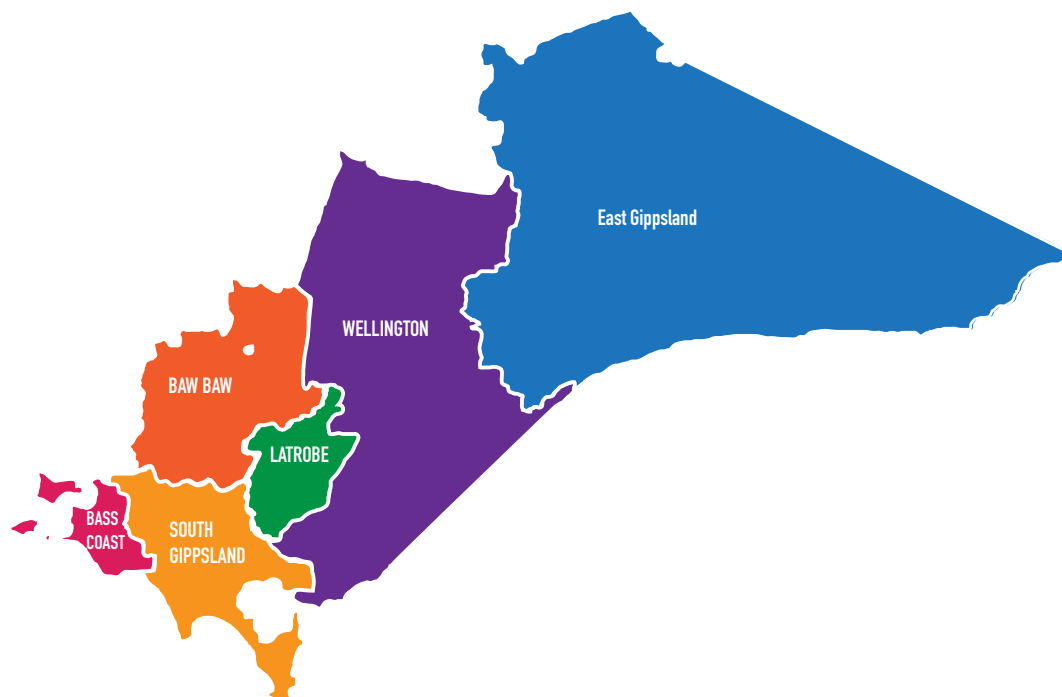
|                 |   |              |  |  |
|-----------------|---|--------------|--|--|
| 3.3.5           | <b>Investment prospectus</b><br>Create and pitch an investment prospectus, working with Destination Gippsland and Visit Victoria to attract eco-accommodation, wilderness lodge development, and temporary accommodation for events such as glamping and mobile tiny houses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Link with and draw on the findings of accommodation and supporting infrastructure master plan project of the new regional events entity in determining gaps and investment priorities.</li> </ul> | 2022-2023    | Lead: EGSC<br>Partners: DGL, VV                                | \$20,000   |
| 3.3.6           | <b>Equipment booking</b><br>Work with the regional events entity in establishing a regional online equipment booking system that incorporates loan equipment from all Gippsland LGAs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a list of preferred local equipment hire suppliers across the region.</li> </ul>   | 2021/Ongoing | Lead: New regional events entity<br>Partners: EGSC, other LGAs | Within existing resources  |
| <b>Strategy</b> | <b>3.4 Create the right internal environment</b>  |              |  |  |
| 3.4.1           | <b>Tourism events team</b><br>Ensure the events team is adequately funded and resourced to deliver on the Events Plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce a clear delineation between community/civic event roles and those in tourism/economic events.</li> </ul>  | Ongoing      | Lead: EGSC   | EGSC human resource budget allocation for tourism/economic events separate from community/civic events |
| 3.4.2           | <b>Event partners</b><br>Review the roles of the key partners for EGSC in promoting events to target markets and the local community (Visitor Information Centre, external event marketing partner/EGMi, Business & Tourism Associations), identifying where efficiencies can be achieved and coordination of activity.   | 2021/Ongoing | Lead: EGSC   | Within existing resources  |

## ATTACHMENT 1 – STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED

| STAKEHOLDERS   |  |
|--|--|
| EGSC   | Cr John White (Mayor)<br>Cr Dick Ellis<br>Cr Joe Rettino<br>Sharon Raguse<br>Jeanette Seignior<br>Toby Feldmann<br>Wayne Richardson<br>Kellie Lawler<br>Marc Taylor<br>Sascha Johnston<br>Stuart McConnell<br>Anne Kaiser  |
| East Gippsland Marketing Inc                                 | Hayley Hardy   |
| Gippsland East LLEN  | Jane Ponting   |
| East Gippsland Mountain Bike Club and Kate Nelson Consulting | Kate Nelson  |
| Seventy Events   | Sue-Ellen Latham   |
| C4 Impact  | Nicola Watts   |
| Bairnsdale Chamber of Commerce and Industry                  | Jamie Savory<br>Megan Richards   |
| Wild Harvest Seafood Festival                                | Jodie York   |
| Albert & Co / Bellevue Hotel                                 | Matt O'Donnell   |
| Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC)                              | Alice Pepper   |
| East Gippsland Economic Development Advisory Committee       | Bob Carter<br>Andrew Cruickshank   |
| East Gippsland Art Gallery                                   | Crystal Stubbs   |
| Event organisers   | Owen Polanski – East Gippsland Alpine Rally<br>Emma Orgill – Far East Victoria Landcare<br>Gabby Moore – Sailors Grave Brewing<br>Andrea Ford – Gippsland Opera  |
| Business & Tourism Associations                              | Martin Richardson & Angela Dunkley – Paynesville BTA<br>Bruce Hurley – Lakes Entrance Action & Development Association<br>Shane Kidd – Lakes Entrance Action & Development Association<br>Garry Squires – Orbost Chamber of Commerce<br>Maureen Webb – Omeo BTA<br>Susie Bady – Cann River Community and VIC |
| Business event organisers/venues                             | Andrew Cardwell – Lakes Entrance Golf Club<br>Sarah Carlisle – Venture Out<br>Rachel Bromage – Riversleigh Hotel<br>Gina – Bairnsdale Racing Club Committee<br>Tamara Cook – Captains Cove   |
| Visit Victoria   | Monique George<br>Chris White<br>Paul Matthews<br>Andrew Wilson  |
| Parks Victoria   | Will McCutcheon  |
| Sports Marketing Australia                                   | Jason Sleeman<br>Amanda Millican   |



## ATTACHMENT 2 – LGA PROFILE FOR EAST GIPPSLAND



|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Overview | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approximately 21,051 square kilometres and includes towns of Bairnsdale (the largest town and administrative centre), Paynesville, Lakes Entrance, Orbost and Mallacoota, Ensay, Swifts Creek, Omeo, and Buchan</li> <li>• Bordered by New South Wales to the east and to the north, and bordered by Towong, Alpine and Wellington LGAs to the west</li> <li>• Home to 47,316 residents<sup>17</sup></li> <li>• Approximately 83% of the land is in public ownership, mainly as state forests, national and coastal parks, and marine national parks</li> <li>• 4–6 hours to Melbourne (3 hours to Bairnsdale and 6 hours to Mallacoota); 4 hours from Mallacoota to Canberra, or 7 hours to Batemans Bay, NSW</li> <li>• Gaining distinction as an Ecotourism Australia-certified Ecotourism Destination</li> <li>• Major industries include agriculture, forestry, tourism and hospitality, fishing, timber, education, health care, food manufacturing and processing</li> <li>• Above average older population</li> <li>• The Shire's index of disadvantage (SEIFA) of 958 shows that the Shire is amongst the most disadvantaged in Victoria</li> </ul> |
|----------|---|

Overview Council vision and aspirations

Strategic Indicator 4.5. Tourism sector investment is sought in business capability, product development and experience to meet the changing needs of domestic and international markets

Target: > 1.3 million total visitors per annum

Target: > \$360 million tourism expenditure per annum

Target: > 100 tourism events per annum<sup>18</sup>

Current tourism events

- Food: food and wine festivals and farmers markets
- Sports: cycling, motorsports, basketball, rodeo, golf, paddling
- Music/arts: music festivals and events (Bruthen Blues & Arts Festival, Paynesville Music Festival)
- Adventure: mountain biking, trail running, adventure sport, dirt bikes
- Boating/Fishing: classic boats, yachting and fishing
- Community with tourism appeal: markets, local festivals and agricultural show days

<sup>17</sup> <https://profile.id.com.au/east-gippsland/population-estimate>

<sup>18</sup> EGSC Council plan (revised version)

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Events venues and infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business events venues for up to 300 delegates (informal seating) and 100–200 (formal seating) but no onsite accommodation, through to smaller facilities with capacity for 100–200 delegates and up to 75 rooms (160 beds)</li> <li>Sports facilities (national – bowls, state – yachting, squash, tennis, AFL, cricket)</li> <li>Planned WORLD Sport Facility – state level for netball, hockey and soccer</li> <li>Mountain bike track parks: Omeo (under development), Mt Taylor, Colquhoun State Forest and Nowa Nowa</li> <li>Ninety Mile Beach – beach games, surf lifesaving and surfing</li> <li>Gippsland Lakes – kayaking, fishing, powerboats and yachting</li> <li>East Gippsland Rail Trail – Bairnsdale to Orbost with the Discovery Trail to Lakes Entrance</li> <li>Road cycling – previous Great Victorian Rail Trail, State and National events, Alpine Highway (High Country)</li> <li>Outdoor/public sites and recreation reserves provide good event spaces</li> <li>Arts/culture – largest venues include Forge Creek Theatre (capacity 362 patrons), Nyerimilang Heritage Park (capacity 1,000 patrons)</li> </ul> |
|----------------------------------|---|

|                        |   |  |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Accommodation capacity | This summary is indicative only. Not all accommodation properties provided information on their capacity and in some instances, only the number of rooms, under-representing the total number of beds. Airbnbs are not included separately due to time constraints in gathering this information. |  |
|                        | Accommodation type  | Number of beds   |
|                        | Resort  | 291 (+ 1 other resort without capacity noted)                    |
|                        | Motel/Hotel   | 1159 (+ 12 motels without capacity noted)                        |
|                        | B&B   | 89   |
|                        | Caravan park/cabins   | 108 (total capacity across 33 caravan parks – sites plus cabins) |
|                        | Backpacker  | 5  |
|                        | Glamping  | Nil  |
|                        | Self-contained  | 771 (+ 15 accommodation providers without capacity noted)        |
|                        | School camp / campus / group accommodation  | (not captured)   |
|                        | TOTAL   | 2,418  |

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Brand essence | Positioning East Gippsland as “Free spirited and adventurous”                              |
|               | Wildness, remoteness and undeveloped nature of much of the Shire – unique areas to explore |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Destination strengths and points of difference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inland lakes system and peaked coast – from mountain to coast</li> <li>Gippsland Lakes – considered the largest navigable inland Lakes in Australia. Consist of three lakes – Wellington, Victoria and King</li> <li>Nature-based and experiential tourism, outdoor adventure – mountain biking, hiking, cycling, trail running, white water rafting, 4WD, camping, fishing, kayaking, stand up paddle boarding</li> <li>Remoteness, sense of escape from the city</li> <li>Ecotourism destination status (in process of attaining)</li> <li>Water-based activity – lakes, coast, ocean, Snowy River, Ninety Mile Beach</li> <li>Wine, food, produce and seafood (abalone and sea urchins are unique to area)</li> <li>Road touring</li> <li>State/regional sports event infrastructure</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Visitation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1,608,000 visitors<sup>19</sup></li> <li>Nearly all domestic travellers – 97.2%, with only 2.8% international overnight visitors even though region is on touring route from Melbourne to Sydney</li> <li>Slightly more domestic overnight visitors – 51%, with 46% domestic day trips</li> <li>3 nights average length of stay for domestic overnight visitors</li> <li>\$335 average spend per trip by domestic overnight visitors and \$93 by day trippers<sup>20</sup></li> <li>Just over half (56%) visit for a ‘holiday’ and 25% are ‘visiting friends and relatives’<sup>21</sup></li> </ul> |
|------------|--|

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Target visitor markets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short break couples and singles – intrastate and interstate</li> <li>Families – within region and intrastate</li> <li>Events – sports, arts/culture/music – intra-region, intrastate and interstate</li> <li>Business – small to medium corporate groups – intra-region, intrastate and interstate (southern NSW and ACT)</li> <li>Tourers/Grey Nomads (older couples) – intrastate and interstate</li> </ul> |
|------------------------|--|

|                               |   |           |           |           |               |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| Seasonality                   | <p>Visitation:</p> <p>Peak season: November–February.</p> <p>Off-peak season: May–August.</p> <p>Shoulder season: October, March, April.</p> <p>Event seasons: Events in calendar across the year except minimal activity in May and August</p>   |           |           |           |               |
| Recommended best fit events   | <p>Based on destination strengths including natural assets, brand and infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-day seafood festival – scallops, sea urchin, fishing, etc (opportunity for this to be developed into Victoria's premier seafood festival)</li> <li>• Link together similar events and package them as a series to create a coordinated calendar of activity e.g. fishing events</li> <li>• Activation of the lakes through off-peak events that profile local assets such as an air show (linking with Wellington Shire Council and Latrobe City Council air shows), creative art/cultural event e.g. light festival over lakes (Lake of Lights)</li> <li>• Winter night sky event based around winter solstice</li> <li>• Surfing events at Ninety Mile Beach</li> <li>• Water-based events e.g. boat show</li> </ul> |           |           |           |               |
| Event resourcing              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 dedicated events team members working 1.7 FTE capacity with key responsibilities of event permitting, sponsorship program support and leveraging and event acquisition</li> <li>• 1 business events resource (12-month recovery role)</li> <li>• Event support supplies such as road traffic signs, marquees and safety equipment</li> </ul>   |           |           |           |               |
| Event budget allocation       | Item  | 2017/18   | 2018/19   | 2019/20   | TOTAL FUNDING |
|                               | Economic Development Discretionary Fund commitment to regional events funding – Council approved  | \$60,000  | \$60,000  | \$60,000  | \$180,000     |
|                               | Council Events Operational budget contribution  | \$47,000  | \$47,000  | \$47,000  | \$141,000     |
|                               | Council contribution to Regional and District Events (RADES)  | \$104,500 | \$104,500 | \$104,500 | \$313,500     |
|                               | TOTAL EVENTS FUNDING  | \$211,500 | \$211,500 | \$211,500 | \$634,500     |
|                               | Anticipated 2020/21 event budget is \$154,500.  |           |           |           |               |
| Event funding program         | <p>Event Attraction sponsorship has over the past three years been accessed from two programs – the Events Operational budget and Regional and District Events (RADES). The Events Operational budget also contributes to community Australia Day and Anzac Day events, resources such as Council-branded flags and marquees, and event industry training programs.</p> <p>Measure ROI: Total estimated expenditure by event / sponsorship amount to reveal "for every dollar invested, return of \$x"</p>  |           |           |           |               |
| Gaps and opportunity analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Off-peak events between May – August – ideal time to attract sport and business events</li> <li>• On the ground coordination and proactive development of business events</li> <li>• Capability-building program and dedicated support to help ensure longevity and sustainability of local event organisers and committees</li> <li>• Professional event expertise to develop and deliver quality festivals and events</li> <li>• Limited range of accommodation, with majority of beds in caravan parks</li> <li>• Clear identity and brand appeal</li> </ul>  |           |           |           |               |



