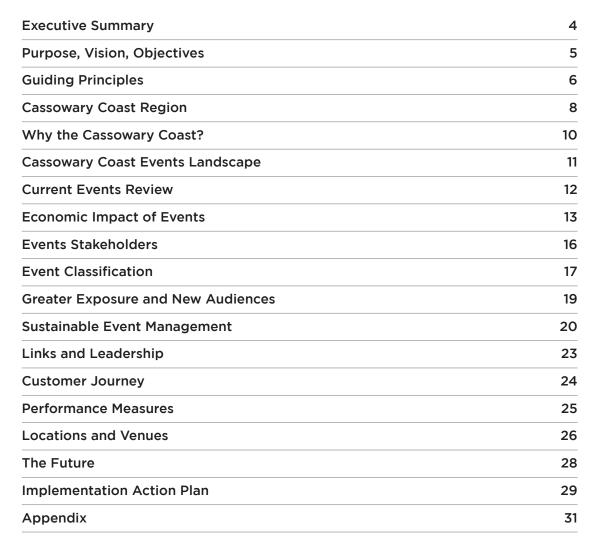


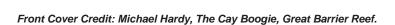




#### **Events Strategy 2024-2028**

# **Contents**





Cassowary Coast

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Events have a valuable role, in engaging the local community, generating social and economic benefits, and adding vibrancy to our destination.

The Cassowary Coast region hosts community celebrations, unique events, and several significant major events. Whether they are sports, arts and culture, food and drink, music festivals or business events, they contribute to the diversity and fabric of our region, tell our story, and provide new opportunities.

In preparing this strategy, an analysis into the current event landscape has been undertaken. This includes how a balanced events calendar can be curated, optimising existing venues and underutilised event sites, streamlining the event permitting process, identifying where capacity-building and support is needed, and how events can support tourism, cultural, economic, community and sustainability goals.

Building on existing Council, local and regional tourism and events strategies and plans, this Events Strategy draws on the unique attributes of the Cassowary Coast region, which is a destination like no other. Council is very supportive of local events, and this strategy will guide ongoing support (financial and operational), as it seeks to grow existing events, revive previously successful events, and attract new events to the region.

The strategy also aims to build self-sufficiency for event organisers, create business and job opportunities, and increase participation and integration by local businesses.

An action plan is created alongside this Strategy, including developing performance targets and measures, enhancing Council support, and producing an online portal with event organiser support resources and inventory of event assets.

Leveraging events for destination marketing, and to strengthen participation in various Council and community initiatives are forecast positive outcomes of this Strategy.



## **PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY**

The Purpose of the Cassowary Coast Events Strategy 2024-2028 is to provide a framework to continue building as an events region, to attract events and enhance existing events, and to present a clear direction and focus through to 2028 and beyond.

The strategy recognises that a vibrant and balanced events program will deliver socio-economic benefits, grow community capacity and pride and build our destination's reputation.

## **VISION**

Cassowary Coast will have a vibrant calendar of sustainable events that reflect our destination, unique lifestyle, and enhance our profile.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this Strategy are to -

- Enhance the profile and exposure of the Cassowary Coast exposure reflecting the attributes and quality of the region, reaching beyond the region, connecting with new audiences, appealing to visitors, and strengthening the regions reputation and profile.
- Contribute to economic growth attract visitors, entice longer stays, increase local spending, optimise opportunities for local event suppliers, events in shoulder season, regional dispersal, support for clubs and non-for-profits (NFP's).
- Strengthen sustainable events and practices
   considerate to the environment, responsible production practices, utilise existing infrastructure, showcase sustainable living, event growth and self-sustainability, partnerships and flow-on business
- Contribute to a balanced program of events across the calendar year and in the variety of event
  types, support and grow existing events, attract new
  events that align with this strategy.
- Share and foster community pride community engagement, build capacity in volunteering community and not-for-profit entities, reflect who we are and where we live.



## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The guiding principles from the Cassowary Coast Economic Development Strategy will underpin the Cassowary Coast Event Strategy.



#### **Environmental Stewardship**

We will maintain an unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability.



#### **Recognition and Advancement of Traditional Custodians**

We will develop pathways for greater recognition and participation of Traditional Custodians with events in the region.



#### Liveability

We will enhance the attractiveness of the Cassowary Coast for people to live, work and visit.



#### **Innovation and Digital Advancement**

We will adopt a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship within the Council, industry and community.



#### \_\_\_\_ Connectedness, Collaboration and Cohesion

We will facilitate greater engagement and collaboration between the Council, event stakeholders, and the community.

(Source: Cassowary Coast Economic Development Strategy 2023-2033)

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The Strategy considers and aligns with strategic and operational plans of Council, regional bodies and State agencies as listed below and outlined in the appendix.

- Cassowary Coast Regional Council Corporate Plan 2021-2025
- Cassowary Coast Region Tourism Strategy
- Cassowary Coast Regional Council Economic Development Strategy 2023-2033
- Cassowary Coast Regional Council Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2023-2025
- Cassowary Coast Visitor Information Services Strategy

- Tourism and Events Queensland Strategic Plan 2022-2026
- Cairns and Great Barrier Reef (Tourism Tropical North Queensland) Event Strategy 2025
- Queensland Tourism Industry Reference Panel Towards 2032
- Council Major Capital Projects: Mission Beach Town Centre Revitalisation, Innisfail CBD Revitalisation, Cardwell Mountain Bike Project, Banyan Park Beautification

# **METHODOLOGY**



Engagement with key stakeholders including, community, Event Organisers, Accommodation Providers, Cassowary Coast Tourism, Tourism Tropical North Queensland, and Tourism and Events Queensland.



Internal workshops with council team members including Customer Service, Community Services, Communications and Engagement, Regulatory Services, Waste, Economic Development and Facilities teams.



Internal workshops and briefings with Councillors and the Council Executive Leadership Team.



Desktop research of the region's current events' landscape, venues/facilities, existing research, strategies and outcomes from recent events such as Red Bull, Autofest and TARGA.



A survey of regional organisations delivering events and support service providers.



# **CASSOWARY COAST REGION**

Cassowary Coast region was designed-by-nature to be spectacular! Located at the heart of two World Heritage areas, many places and experiences of the Cassowary Coast have established themselves as iconic.

The Cassowary Coast region is located midway between Cairns and Townsville in Tropical North Queensland.

Stretching along Australia's northern coastline the Cassowary Coast has over 30 tropical islands and is nestled between the two World Heritage Listed Areas of - the Wet Tropics Rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

The towns of Innisfail, Tully, Mission Beach and Cardwell are the main centres for the diverse population of close to 30,000. The region's four priority industries are Agriculture, Transport and Logistics, Aquaculture and Tourism.

Access to the region from Cairns international airport is a 1 hour drive through to Innisfail, and from the south, a 2 hour drive from Townsville airport to Cardwell. With the Bruce Highway following the coast through the region there is good road access. Transport options also include rail, air, and ocean ports.

Traditional culture and customs are led and shared by First Nations Peoples of Girramay, Gulgnay, Jirrbal, Djiru, Warrgamay, Bandjin and Mamu.



Cassowary Coast as a popular tourism destination features a number of renowned and iconic locations including:

- Mission Beach being the birthplace of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park
- Tully River being the home of adventure rafting tours and iconic events such as Red Bull Defiance and the World Rafting Championships
- Dunk Island (Coonanglebah) off the coast of Mission Beach and lies within the traditional sea country of the Bandjin and Djiru Peoples
- Hinchinbrook Island (Munamudanamy) being the traditional homelands of the Bandjin and Girramay Peoples and Australia's largest island national park with the internationally recognised Thorsborne Trail
- A myriad of Wet Tropics waterfalls and crystal clear creeks including Cardwell Spa Pools, Murray Falls, Tully River, Henrietta Creek, Mena Creek Falls, Nandroya Falls, and Alligators Nest

- Girringun Art Centre (Cardwell) showcasing nationally and internationally acclaimed artists
- Paronella Park (Mena Creek) which is a not to be forgotten experience at this multi-awarding winning unique attraction
- Tropical Art Deco, celebrating the unique art deco culture and built history of Innisfail through the annual Art Deco Festival and Art Deco trail
- Golden Gumboot at Tully representing and celebrating Tully as the wettest town in Australia

**Cassowary Coast has attracted and supported** significant major events and is home to many community events, events that celebrate the unique lifestyle places and cultures that are the fabric of the region.



# WHY THE CASSOWARY COAST?

A destination 'designed by nature' - the Cassowary Coast identifies with Unique Selling Points (USP) under the banner of 'Nature and Adventure'.

In order to grow and diversify the events landscape of the Cassowary Coast, and achieve our Vision, we need to have a clear understanding of who we are and what makes our region stand out compared to other locations within Tropical North Queensland and, more broadly, other Queensland and Australian destinations.

Events have a valuable role, in engaging the local community, generating social and economic benefits, and adding vibrancy to our destination. Whether they are sports, arts and culture, food and drink, music festivals or business events, each event provides the opportunity to celebrate our region, tell our story, provide new opportunities or challenge us.

Our competitive advantages include -

- Accessibility via two major cities and airports (Cairns & Townsville)
- Spectacular locations set amongst two World Heritage listed areas being the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and the Wet Tropics Rainforest
- Accessible coastal islands including Dunk, Hinchinbrook and Garden Island
- Nature based event locations: Dunk Island Spit, Tully Gorge, rainforest trails
- Future venue infrastructure (new or revitalised):
   Cardwell Mountain Bike Trails, Mission Beach

- Town Centre, Innisfail CBD, Tully CBD (Banyan Park), Port Hinchinbrook and Dunk Island Resort and Spit
- A council who values and supports events and is progressing the region's Eco-destination certification
- Strong First Nations culture
- Major event hosting capacity, as demonstrated by events including Red Bull Defiance, TARGA, and the World Rafting Championships



# CASSOWARY COAST EVENTS LANDSCAPE

Across the Cassowary Coast a variety of events and monthly markets happen during the year, which are well known to local communities.

Events such as the Innisfail Feast of the Senses, Feast of the Three Saints, Cardwell UFO Festival, Innisfail Art Deco Festival, Ona Mission Multisport Adventure, Cardwell Seafest, Tully Bulls and Bikes, and local markets have established themselves over time. While newer events like Innisfail Riverfest and the Mission Beach Outdoor Film Festival are more recent additions to the calendar.

Over recent years the Cassowary Coast has also featured some major events which contributed to wide domestic and international exposure and has demonstrated the region's credibility as an event host:

- 2017 Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay
- 2019 World Rafting Championships, Tully
- 2019, 2022, 2023 Red Bull Defiance, Mission Beach
- 2021 TARGA Great Barrier Reef, Innisfail

A more balanced calendar of events, across the year, and in the variety of event types and locations, is a key objective of this strategy.

When planning the annual event calendar, categorising events by type highlights us gaps and opportunities, and where to improve the diversity and timing of events.

Cassowary Coast Events are identified under the following event types, as used in tourism marketing:

- Food and Wine
- Festivals and Celebrations
- Exhibitions and Shows
- Concert or Performance
- Sporting Event

- Markets
- Business Event
- Community Event
- Classes, Lessons, Workshops and Talks

Analysis of the current events calendar reveals it is not well balanced across the year, and that there are gaps in the types of events.

Shoulder seasons (pre and post the peak visitor periods) of October to May, provide opportunities for events to generate social and economic activity when it is needed. In addition, local businesses have more capacity to deliver event support services and accommodation availability during quieter months.

Opportunities exist to add more diversity in event types in the region, such as business events (conferences, incentive travel and meetings), research and educational, and workshops (professional development). Gaps in event types available to entrepreneurial event organisers include wellness, music festivals, eco-living, bush-skills, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, tropical agriculture, culinary exploration, nature immersion, and varied outdoor endurance challenges.

Events are also not systematically promoted on events calendars and listed in databases. This presents an immediate opportunity that the delivery of this strategy will prioritise to achieve wider exposure and towards reaching new audiences.



## **CURRENT EVENTS REVIEW**

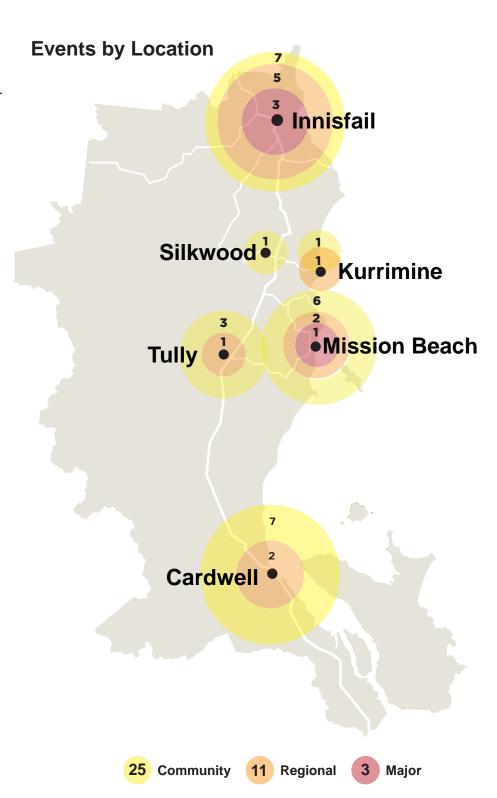
To consider the current landscape of events a review was conducted of the events calendar, the timing and type of events, and past events.

Stakeholder engagement highlighted some past events that are no longer active. Amongst these were the Mission Beach Aquatic Festival, Innisfail Harvest Festival, Dunk Island Fishing Tournament, Port Hinchinbrook Fishing Classic and Sailing Regatta, and the Community Cassowary Festival.

In reviewing the current calendar of events some key considerations identified are -

- The events calendar is not well balanced across the year, and does not have great depth in the variety of event types
- 65% of current events occur in a fourmonth period (July to October)
- November to May period has very low event activity
- Balancing the regional events calendar may require incentives for events to deliver outside the traditional peak visitor period from July to October.
- Events are spread across the region, which is positive for dispersal
- A number of events are well established, demonstrating selfsustaining, well-produced and attended events
- The majority are community events, which reflects a high level of community pride and volunteerism
- The Major events appeal as drawcard / aspirational events that gain wide exposure and reach new audiences
- Less than 20% of local events and markets are listed on the <u>Australian</u> <u>Tourism Data Warehouse</u> (ATDW)

   thereby not leveraging no-cost exposure which is targeted to a wide visitor audience.
- Cassowary Coast Tourism's events
   calendar needs to be optimised
   for event listings and for increased
   awareness and exposure.



# **ECONOMIC IMPACT OF EVENTS**

A key aim of this Strategy is to provide opportunities for local businesses, ongoing job creation and new business opportunities through a growing and vibrant events calendar.

- Local businesses can be event suppliers, with businesses benefiting from increased local spending.
- Businesses can be integrated into events through programme participation
- Local businesses have the opportunity to build social capital and show community support through sponsorship or other beneficial support of community-led events.
- The economic impact of events is both direct and indirect. Direct impacts can include purchase or rental of goods and services to produce the event, accommodation, food and beverage, job creation, business incubation, and associated additional experiences within the tourism sector and supply chain.

#### **Visitor Spending**













Accommodation

Shopping,

Entertainment

#### **Event Spending**











Accommodation

Workforce

Equipment

supplies

Services & Entertainment

Indirect economic impact is the flow-on spending that occurs because of the event. This is spending not directly related to the event, such as pre and post event stays, and spending on food and beverage and associated activities.

Events are important in destination marketing, and provide indirect economic impacts that accrue through increased awareness of the destination and in attracting new or repeat visitation.

Additional economic benefits include the creation of new partnerships and collaborations, new business models, increased capacity building and professional development and job creation and retention.

Tourism Research Australia (TRA) provides the following data on 'Festivals and Events' (2019), providing insight to the domestic events audience and their economic impact through attending events.



#### **HEADLINE STATS FOR 2019**





NIGHTS 13.6 MILLION 3.4 NIGHTS PER TRIP



**SPEND** \$3.6 BILLION \$921 PER TRIP \$268 PER NIGHT

Australians took almost 3.9 million day trips to attend festivals, fairs and cultural events, spending \$461 million.

#### WHO ARE THEY?

- On average, 3.4% of domestic overnight visitors went to a festival, fair or cultural event. This was higher among:
  - → 20 to 24 year olds (4.2%)
  - → friends or relatives travelling together without children (5.8%).
- Capital city residents accounted for 56% of visitors to a festival, fair or cultural event.
- Interstate travellers accounted for 39% of visitors. Traditionally, interstate travellers stay longer (an average of 4.3 nights), and are more likely to attend festivals.

#### WHAT DO THEY DO?

- Outside of the traditional social activities such as eating out at a restaurant or café (77% of visitors), festival, fair and cultural event visitors enjoyed:
  - → sightseeing and looking around (36%)
  - → going to the beach (25%)
  - → going to markets (20%)
  - → attending the theatre, concerts or other performing arts (17%).

Source: Tourism Research Australia - Festivals and Events. 2019 is the latest TRA data available, this data being prior to impacts of COVID19.



"



# **EVENTS STAKEHOLDERS**

Collaboration and partnerships are necessary for any region to host a diverse and successful event calendar, with Council playing a key role in this process.

Each stakeholder group has an important contribution to make to ensure that events are successful. Stakeholders include -

- **Event Owners and Organisers**
- Event Stakeholders venues/locations, sponsors, accommodation, support services
- Volunteers
- First Nations Peoples
- Local community, NGO's and interest groups
- Industry and Business local supply chain including tourism operators, local business and industry such as transport
- Cassowary Coast Regional Council (CCRC) facilitation, permits, venues, support and funding
- Cassowary Coast Tourism (CCT) calendar, marketing, promotion and packaging
- Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) / Tourism & Events Queensland (TEQ) - wider marketing exposure and support





# **EVENT CLASSIFICATION**

Through the development of this Strategy, Event Categories were identified. These Categories ensure that Council can focus on providing support based on social, environmental, sustainability and economic benefits to the region. This also provides transparency and accountability to community and stakeholders when Council supports events.

#### **Event Categories –**

#### Community

Events with a focus on community engagement and enrichment, that enhance our social fabric and share our attributes.



#### Regional

Events that enhance the region, celebrate our locations and lifestyle and add value to our regional appeal to travellers.



#### Major

Major events are a drawcard for attracting visitors and delivering wide exposure to showcase the destination and our unique selling points.



The table below outlines the event categories with detail on the event attributes, primary audiences, event organisers, opportunities, event types and examples of events under each category.

EVENT CATEGORIES	COMMUNITY	REGIONAL	MAJOR
DESCRIPTION	Events with a focus on community engagement and enrichment, that enhance our social fabric and share our attributes	Events that enhance the region, celebrate our locations and lifestyle, and add value to our regional appeal.	Events that are a drawcard for attracting visitors and deliver wide exposure to showcase the destination and our Unique Selling Points (UPS).
ATTRIBUTES	Celebrate aspects of our community and our locations  Can be a one-off event Capacity to be an ongoing event  Local and/or regional media coverage  Facilitates community involvement and/or participation.  Supports a community need  Ceremonial, remembrance, civic, commemorative, or celebratory events  Social benefits for community and add to liveability	Showcases our cultural, sporting, community or lifestyle opportunities  Usually a recurring event Capacity to be an ongoing event  Local and regional media coverage  Facilitates community involvement and/or participation  Involves consultation with local Traditional Owners, and community groups, and suppliers.  Ability to add diversity to the events calendar  Delivers measurable economic and social benefits	Showcase our region's locations and USP (features key destination attributes)  Can be one-off or a recurring event Anchor event that generates a regional legacy  Regional and State media exposure National and/or international viewer Usually with a large audience and/or customer base  Involves consultation with local Traditional Owners, community groups, and suppliers  Ability to add diversity to the events calendar  Delivers measurable economic benefits  Supports tourism visitation and stay targets
PRIMARY AUDIENCE			Local community, region. National and/or international A focus on attracting more participants from outside the region (eg 35%+). A quantified large audience / customer base.
EVENT ORGANISERS	Volunteer committee, Council, or local incorporated organisation.	Professional event organiser, Council, or local incorporated organisation	Professional event organiser, or a local incorporated organisation
OPPORTUNITIES	Enhance community values, growth, cohesion, and pride	Focus and appeal of a year- round diverse calendar of events Increased exposure for the region Growing capability of events Homegrown flagship events in the shoulder season	Target one major event a year (subject to calendar and budgets) Wide exposure for the region, reach new audiences Destination marketing
	Meet sustaina	able event requirements for event t	ype and size
SUSTAINABILITY	Sustainability Plan for large events  Meet permit, regulatory, legal requirements for activity in sensitive areas		
EXAMPLE EVENTS	Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC, ANZAC Day and Battle of the Coral Sea Commemorations, Feast of the Adventure, Outrigger Regatta's, Sailing Regatta's Kurrimine		TARGA GBR, Red Bull Defiance, Autofest, World Rafting Championships

# **GREATER EXPOSURE AND NEW AUDIENCES**

At present approximately 80% of the region's current events are not utilising tourism marketing channels and are missing the opportunity to reach more potential visitors and/or reach beyond an already established customer base.

This restricts exposure for the event and the destination. Events that list on tourism calendars positively contribute towards the appeal and richness of a 'destination'. Put simply, the more events featured in a destination, the more appealing a destination is to a wider audience.

Opportunities exist for event calendar listings which are currently being under-utilised:

- The <u>Cassowary Coast Tourism</u> (CCT) events calendar. CCT is the Local Tourism Organisation (LTO) and is the destination marketing organisation for the Cassowary Coast Local Government Area.
- The <u>Australian Tourism Data Warehouse</u> (ATDW), which feeds into the public-facing <u>Queensland</u> <u>Events Calendar</u> and hundreds of tourism and travel related websites and smartphone apps.

Additionally, events should consider gaining further exposure through other calendars including regional event calendars for Cairns and Townsville.

Event organisers can self-register their events on the Cassowary Coast Tourism regional calendar of events. This provides opportunity for event organisers to connect with visitor audiences as well as the local community, and can open further opportunities to leverage tourism channels for even wider exposure.

The ATDW platform was created to support the Australian Tourism industry with digital marketing, to extend exposure and attract more business. Event organisers are able to list their event on ATDW at no cost and this provides the benefits of increasing their digital distribution and online marketing exposure.

Cassowary Coast's event categories align with ATDW's event-type classification, which streamlines the process for local event organisers when connecting with tourism opportunities.

Encouraging events to be listed on CCT and ATDW will improve alignment with council initiatives and is forecast to benefit both the events and the Cassowary Coast region through increased exposure.

#### **ATDW Content Flow of Product Listing**



AUSTRALIA'S SMARTEST TOURISM DESTINATION

Source: ATDW.com.au





## SUSTAINABLE EVENT MANAGEMENT

Sustainable event production should be a core consideration in event management and planning.

Sustainability for events means taking action towards preserving our natural environment, promoting a healthy, inclusive society and supporting a thriving local economy . Sustainable event management includes identifying and managing environmental and socio-economic risks and opportunities.

Sustainability is central to the <u>Eco-Destination</u> <u>Certification</u> programme that Council is currently undertaking (2024), and is one of the Guiding Principles in the CCRC Economic Development Strategy.

Events can be an ideal platform to showcase 'sustainability in action'. Existing sustainability

objectives, programmes and initiatives in the community and within Council can be leveraged by and through events. This can be in event marketing, event programming and attendee experiences.

Developing capacity and understanding of sustainable event management will be enabled through producing an event organisers and venues 'Sustainable Event Guidelines'. This will assist communication and connection with ideas and initiatives towards improving and developing event sustainability in our region.

Sustainable event production requirements will be applicable relative to the size of the event. The requirements will also be tailored based on the event venue and types of activities.

As part of the delivery of this Strategy, Council will investigate which resources and assets should be made available to event organisers to help facilitate sustainable event production. This could be items available for loan to prevent re-creation of once-off items, checklists, shortlists of sustainable event suppliers etc.

### Why embrace sustainability?

# Embracing sustainability will help your business to:

- Improve profitability and reduce costs by optimising resource use.
- Enhance your reputation and build a competitive advantage by appealing to a growing market of sustainability-minded customers. Taking action to improve the sustainability of your business can also improve your reputation within your community, including your employees.
- Build staff satisfaction and appeal to potential employees. Sustainability actions can support your business to attract and retain staff with a shared passion and commitment.
- Reduce your carbon footprint and create a cleaner environment. Your business can play its part in contributing to Australia's emission reduction targets, as well as becoming more resource-efficient and saving money over the long-term.
- Adapt to and increase resilience to climate change by adopting strategies that adapt to and mitigate against the impacts of our changing climate. You can also think of action in this area as contributing to future-proofing your business.

- · Respond to changing customer expectations.
- Your customers are seeking to do less harm and more good across the environment, communities, and culture. Visitors are becoming more interested in the sustainability of the places they visit. Tourism Australia's **Future of Demand Research** highlights that sustainability is front and centre for visitors to Australia. Visitors want to travel lightly, leaving the places they visit better than how they found them.



#### TOP TIP

Make it easy for consumers to find sustainability achievements on your website. Sustainable options are a priority for travellers, with up to 23% of consumers willing to pay more for sustainable experiences.

(Booking.com)

Source: Sustainable Tourism Tool kit

The sustainability management of events supports regenerative tourism principles, where the events and their attendees not only do no harm, but visitors attracted to the region by the events, would understand that their visit contributes to improvements to the natural environment and socio-economic programmes. Rather than simply being a consumer, eco-destination tourists, visiting for events would understand they are playing an important role.

As a key objective of this strategy, sustainability for events encompasses environmental considerations such as -

- Protection of the natural environment from event impacts
- Avoiding unnecessary single-use plastic
- · Providing access to water refill points
- Waste minimisation, resource recovery and recycling
- Conservation of resources consumed in producing the event
- Sustainable supply chain (food, materials)
- Utilisation of existing infrastructure
- Use of renewable energy where possible
- Reducing the carbon impact of events, and increasing carbon-offsetting opportunities where the opportunity
  exists

Sustainability goes beyond environmental, and includes social and economic sustainability. Socio-economic considerations include -

- Inclusion of First Nations People's culture where appropriate
- Accessible to people of all abilities, where possible
- Inclusion and empowerment of youth, through participation
- Inclusion of the elderly through assisted participation
- Involvement of the local community, NGOs, social enterprises and citizen-led programmes
- · Local supply chain (food, materials, vendors, staff)
- Professional development, skills and jobs creation
- Prioritising opportunities for local business participation

#### **Self Sufficient Events**

A number of local events that have been running for some time show elements of being self-sufficient and able to continue being held.

Many events run on the energy of volunteers and are fuelled by the passion and enthusiasm of a few or a small group. Event organisers, especially those who are volunteering their time, are at risk of burn-out if they lack support and resources and if the events are not well-attended.

In the event landscape review, several popular events were identified that are no longer running due to lack of organising capacity and resources.

The implementation of this Events Strategy offers the opportunity to leverage resources and exposure and to build the capacity of events to be self-supporting into the future and to potentially reinvent past events.

Focus areas include -

- Self-sufficiency of the event, including collaboration and partnerships, governance and accountability
- Growth potential through decreasing reliance on public resources over time as events grow and evolve
- Supporting skills development and creation of local-led small businesses to support and attract events and pursue event partnership opportunities
- Increasing volunteerism and support
- Leveraging industry networks and commercial opportunities



## LINKS AND LEADERSHIP

In addition to attracting new events, this Strategy acknowledges the importance of developing and supporting established local events. Underlying this approach is one of collaboration and partnership with Council, community and event organisers. Council's role in events will vary depending on the event classification.

Strategic and operational linkages between council and event organisers is multi-layered and incorporates a whole-of-organisation approach across Council's operational teams including -

- Infrastructure
- Facilities and Venues
- Regulatory Services
- Environmental Health
- Planning
- Community Services
- Customer Services
- Tourism and Event Development
- Library and Museum Services
- Economic Development
- Waste Services
- Communications and Engagement

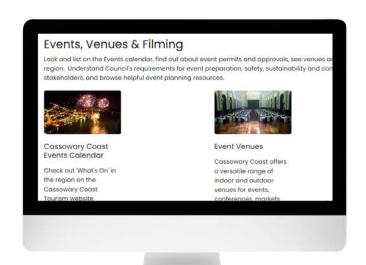
Adopting an event partnership model within Council will underpin the achievement of the Vision of this Strategy. This needs to be balanced with what Council can reasonably and realistically provide to event organisers, ensuring that support provides value for money through transparent and accountable processes to measure and assess opportunities and resource allocation.

Council acknowledges that event organisers need to be provided a "no wrong door approach". That is, no matter the method of interaction (face to face, telephone, digital) there is an overall understanding of event processes and systems across Council with the front-facing Council

teams adopting a concierge/facilitation approach with the website as the key entry and navigation point for event organisers.

Services for event organisers and customers will be improved through streamlining event permit application and enquiry processes.

Council will also develop and implement an Event Assessment and Evaluation Framework to effectively measure the ROI against the relevant criteria which includes social, economic, and environment metrics outlined in the Performance Measurement Section.



Events, Venues & Filming'- customer focused event services webpage (in development)



# **CUSTOMER JOURNEY**

The following actions consider the journey of the customer, being an event organiser or general event enquirer, and are incorporated into the Strategy's Implementation Plan.

- Map the event organiser (customer) journey
- Develop an Events page on Council's website allowing users to connect to the region's Events Calendar, bookable venues, support information and resources, licence and permit application forms, and the Grants programme
- Investigate ways that red tape can be reduced and streamline processes for event organisers
- Develop a suite of digital resources for event organisers
- Develop a sponsorship policy focused on major events
- Review community grants on an annual basis ensuring alignment with Events Strategy

- Support sustainability and build capacity with event organisers (community/NFP)
- Review the internal resourcing required for the "concierge support approach"
- Continue to develop the scope of the Event Working Group (that was established during the development stage of this Strategy) and ensure that this group continues to function and meet regularly
- Trial Event Organiser network meetings to facilitate communication, knowledge sharing and collaborative development

# **EVENT CALENDAR PROMOTION**



# **PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

**Example** 

Event outcomes need to be measured against the Vision and Objectives of this Strategy. This will include socioeconomic, and sustainability metrics which will be developed as part of the Implementation Plan. The measurement framework will be scalable in accordance with the event type and classification.

Examples of impact measurement will include simple metrics such as number of attendees, visitor origin, length of stay, visitor nights (by accommodation type), primary purpose of the visit, direct and indirect spending, social, and environmental benefits and impacts.

Satisfaction, wellbeing, community engagement and involvement, community pride and other associated benefits will also be measured where possible and relevant.

#### Event Name goes here date goes here Queensland ATTENDANCES TOTAL XX TOTAL XX X,XXX **%** 🖺 ESTIMATED ECONOMIC AND TOURISM IMPACTS DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE NET PROMOTER SCORE COMMUNITY PRIDE NONE OF XX% XX% XX% +XX XX% XX% XX% XX% IT'S LIVE! (ier) LOGO GOES HERE

Source: Tourism and Events Queensland



# **LOCATIONS AND VENUES**

Across the Cassowary Coast region there is a diversity of accessible event venues and locations.

A venue and location portfolio is a valuable tool in attracting events and connecting event organisers with suitable locations for hosting an event.

In reviewing current events we can identify the region's more active locations and venues. At the same time it demonstrates which venues have capacity and facilities that could cater to increased event activation.

Additionally there are pipeline infrastructure projects that present possible future event venues that should be considered in future assessments, especially larger scale venues and locations.

The table below identifies event venues and locations that currently host regular activity, some of Council's priority venues for event activation, and future venues to be considered.

Active event locations	CCRC Priority Venues	Future potential event locations
Cardwell Foreshore	Showgrounds - Innisfail	Cardwell Sports Grounds
Cardwell Community Hall	Showgrounds - Tully	Cardwell Mountain Park
Cardwell Country/ Golf. Bowls Club	Shire Hall - Innisfail	Elandra Resort
Aquatic Centres	The Con Theatre	Dunk Island Resort
Tully River & Gorge	MARCS Park	Innisfail CBD (revitalisation)
Tully Showgrounds	Aquatic Centres	Mission Beach CBD (revitalisation)
Dunk Island - spit & trails	Cardwell Sportsgrounds	Hinchinbrook Island & Port
Castaways Resort	Cardwell Community Hall	Parks, Reserves & Sports Fields
Mission Beach Resort	Warrina Lakes	Tully Country Club
South Mission Beach		Paronella Park
Wongaling Beach		Tully Horse Performance Centre
Innisfail Showgrounds		Tully Multi Purpose Centre
Innisfail Shire Hall		Privately owned rural/ industrial land
Markets - Park locations		Street Closures
		School Grounds





## **Venue Assessments**

Sports Marketing Australia (SMA) completed a Cassowary Coast Capacity and Capability Assessment report in 2022. Key aspects considered in the report include infrastructure (Council owned, privately owned, and natural locations that can be venues), accommodation capacity, transport links and accessibility.

Through this process SMA utilised a 'Rating Key' system to provide a venue rating for 26 current and potential sporting event locations (Refer to the Appendix to view the table showing venues and ratings).

Event venues potential ratings are classified as international, national, state, regional, or local. SMA sports venue ratings consider several factors including -

- Participant numbers, bed nights and profile of events that are hosted for the sport annually. Some events have fewer events with lower number of bed nights compared with other sports that will impact the rating.
- Facility rating
- Likelihood of being able to attract events to the region because of factors such as competing destinations

The portfolio of 'Sports Facilities' in the SMA report presents an example template for presentation of venues and locations. This presentation format assists event organisers who are seeking to match venues and facilities to specific event needs in order to deliver a successful event.



# WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE?

This Strategy provides the framework for event attraction and retention seeking to provide a clear direction and focus for events within our region through to 2028 and beyond.

Considering our Unique Selling Points (USP) and objectives, specific events and/ or event types can be grown or targeted. Outcomes can be assessed and measured to ensure that there is benefit to the Cassowary Coast.

Some of the opportunities identified when looking to the future and noted for further consideration include -

- Capacity building for identified current events
- Targeted annual major event(s)
- Improve our regional exposure and appeal via events
- Space activation at specific locations in peak periods
- 2032 Olympics and Paralympics training venues/locations
- · Venue activation and optimisation
- Volunteer programme initiatives and recruitment
- Support is aligned to key objectives (performance measurement)
- Support includes potential development of free-to-hire/ low hire fee assets to enable sustainable events
- Shoulder season drawcard for visitors
- Cassowary Coast Tourism to collaborate with event organisers to develop packages to support pre and post event visitation (increased length of stay)
- Align Council support with Events Strategy. e.g. grants.



# **IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN**

This implementation plan lists the actions to be undertaken to achieve the Vision and Objectives of the Cassowary Coast Events Strategy 2024-2028.

ш	Action Item	Detail	Objective		YEAR			
#	Action Item	Detail	Objective	1	2	3	4	
1	CCRC Events webpage design	Develop a one-stop page (portal) to service event organiser & customer enquiries	Streamline customer links to event content and resources, improve service levels and advance automated processes		*			
2	CCT Events Calendar activation	Increase awareness and use of the CCT website Calendar of Events – by events and by customers	Exposure, Community Pride	*	*	*	*	
3 First Nations People Events engagement Discuss with First Nations representative organisations have events could work with culture Consider this advice relative to		representative organisations how events could work with culture	Community Pride Enhance regions profile		*	*	*	
4	Increase ATDW Exposure	Encourage wider use of ATDW for event listings (e.g. include in Community Grants/Sponsorship)	Exposure, Capacity Building, increase awareness, increase visitor outcomes	*	*	*	*	
5	Guide to Converting Business From Events	Develop a guide for local business on how to leverage business and exposure through events	Economic Growth, Capacity Building, destination development		*			
6	Portfolio of Venues & Locations	Develop a presentation portfolio of event locations and venues using a common display template (digital). Presentation to event organiser's	Enhance profile of region, Economic impact, Capacity Building, Venue / Location optimisation. Streamline processes	*	*	*	*	
7	Event Organisers Toolkit	Develop a digital event toolkit to assist event organisers: grow viability, link & leverage support resources, collaborate, increase exposure	Capacity building, Sustainability – viability, Event Growth, Leverage support resources	*				
8	Review and Improve Processes and Procedures	Advance the customer experience and map and review the event organiser inside Council's systems and processes	Streamlining processes, Building Capacity	*	*			
9	Develop Sponsorship Policy	Align to Events Strategy and Categories	Advance credentials and reputation building for sponsors Attract targeted events, and a balanced calendar	*				
10	Annual review of Community Grants	Align to Events Strategy	Balanced disbursement of financial support in alignment with key objectives	*	*	*	*	

#	Action Item	Detail	Objective		YEAR		
#	Action item	Detail	Objective	1	2	3	4
11	Develop a Performance Measurement Framework	I measurement tramework and		*	*		
12	Review the internal resourcing required for events support	Detail customer service delivery requirements, and relative resourcing needs. Aim at a "Concierge" style support from first point of contacts – a no wrong door approach.	Effective, efficient and increased capacity to support events	*	*		
13	Events Working Group (internal)	Continue engagement and develop the scope of the Event Working Group (as established during the development stage of this Strategy). Ensure that this group continues to function and meets regularly	Collaboration and stakeholder engagement Reflects needs and opportunities Customer service focus No silos within Council	*	*	*	*
14	Facilitate Networking and Collaboration (external)	Establish a networking platform for Event Organisers to meet regularly, communicate and collaborate	Leverage opportunities Enhance performance	*	*	*	*
15	Investigate Major Event opportunities	Develop a plan (pitch) for appealing to Major events that align with the Event Strategy's Vision and Objectives – enhance our profile and exposure, contribute economic outcome	Balanced program of events, exposure and enhanced profile, economic benefits	*	*	*	*
16	Volunteers facilitation initiatives	Provide information on the CCRC Events portal to support volunteer activation and opportunities. Review volunteerism possibilities and concepts for information sharing	Build enduring events Foster community pride Visitor attraction – voluntourism.	*	*	*	*
17	Sustainable event management requirements and support guide	Create minimum standards of sustainable event production Establish support, guidelines and resources	Sustainable event production practices Evolve growth in sustainability and viability		*		
18	Accessibility and inclusiveness audit	Audit all current event venues & locations, and event capability for Accessibility and Inclusiveness	Include in a Venue Portfolio (#6). Economic growth, community pride, enhance profile. Increase exposure - new audiences		*		
19	Review current established events for capacity and growth potential	Review events with potential for long-term growth and viability in alignment with the key objectives	An audit summary of local events and future potential. Develop a program to facilitate advancement of events to a Regional or Major	*	*		

# **APPENDIX**

#### **Events**

The table below lists events currently active across the region and identifies each event by name, location, event type, and event category:

Event Name	Month	Location	Type (ATDW)	Classification CCRC
Chinese New Year at Innisfail Temple	February	Innisfail	Festivals & Celebrations	Community
Feast of the Senses	March	Innisfail	Festivals & Celebrations	Regional
Cardwell Easter Markets	April	Cardwell	Markets	Community
ANZAC Day and Battle of the Coral Sea Commemorations	April & May	Various	Festivals & Celebrations	Community
Feast of the Three Saints	May	Silkwood	Festivals & Celebrations	Community
Mothers Day markets	May	Cardwell	Markets	Community
Girringun TUMRA Open Day	June	Cardwell	Festivals & Celebrations	Community
Cardwell Volkfest	June	Cardwell	Markets	Regional
Innisfail Show Day	July	Innisfail	Community	Community
Tully Show Day	July	Tully	Community	Community
Beachruns	July	Mission Beach	Sporting Event	Community
Tully Tight Ass Boogie	July	Tully	Sporting Event	Regional
Cardwell Australian UFO Festival	August	Cardwell	Festivals & Celebrations	Regional
Innisfail Game Fishing Tournament	August	Innisfail	Sporting Event	Community
Banana Races	August	Innisfail	Sporting Event	Regional
Autofest	August	Innisfail	Sporting Event	Major
Mission Beach Outdoor Film Festival	August	Mission Beach	Exhibition and Shows	Community
Red Bull Defiance	August	Mission Beach	Sporting Event	Major
TARGA GBR	September	Innisfail	Sporting Event	Major
Cay Boogie	September	Tully GBR	Sporting Event	Regional
Ona Mission Multisport Adventure	September	Mission Beach	Sporting Event	Regional
Tropical Art Deco Festival	September	Innisfail	Festivals & Celebrations	Regional
Tilapia Tournament	September	Innisfail	Sporting Event	Community
Kurrimine Classic Fishing Competition	September	Kurrimine	Sporting Event	Regional
Vaka Tua Motu - Outrigging	September	Mission Beach	Sporting Event	Regional
Cardwell Seafest	October	Cardwell	Festivals & Celebrations	Community
Cardwell Annual Barra Bonanza	October	Cardwell	Sporting Event	Community
Innisfail Annual Races	October	Innisfail	Sporting Event	Regional
Innisfail Riverfest	October	Innisfail	Festivals & Celebrations	Community
Coconuts Outriggers	October	Innisfail	Sporting Event	Regional
Tully Bull & Bike Ride	November	Tully	Sporting Event	Community
Mission Arts - Exhibition	December	Mission Beach	Exhibition and Shows	Community
Tour De Cassowary	December	Kurrimine	Exhibition and Shows	Community
Christmas Street Parties	December	Various	Community	Community

Events listed are promoted for general public participation. This list includes a majority of local events, not including sports club competition fixtures.

#### **Strategic Alignment**

The Strategy aligns with the strategic plans of Council, regional bodies and State agencies as outlined below.

#### <u>Cassowary Coast Regional Council Corporate</u> Plan 2021-2025

Our Community: Focused on Our People

Objective C4 - We have a vibrant community through promotion and support of arts, culture and events as a key feature of the region's character, vitality and liveability

Objective C5 - We have an active community through growing participation in sport and recreational activities

Objective C6 - We grow the capacity of our community groups and support volunteerism

Our Infrastructure: Our Built Environment

Objective I3 - Encourage greater use of active transport with improved paths and cycleways

Objective I7 - Provide quality playgrounds, parks and community spaces

Our Economy: Our Future

Objective E4 We build regional vibrancy through activities and major events with a collaborative community focus

#### **Cassowary Coast Region Tourism Strategy**

The Events Strategy supports a range of actions in the Tourism Strategy's Strategic Themes including Relationships, Quality of Service, Business Support and Marketing.

# Cassowary Coast Regional Council Economic Development Strategy 2023-2033

The Events Strategy supports the 2033 Goals identified in the Economic Development Strategy as:

- Sustainable and Resilient Economy
- Attractive Place to Invest and Do Business
- Vibrant and Prosperous Communities.

Pillar 1 – Advocacy and Collaboration

Pillar 2 – Sustainability and Innovation

Pillar 3 - Workforce Development

Pillar 4 - Industry Planning and Prioritisation

# Cassowary Coast Regional Council Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2023 – 2025

The Events Strategy supports Council's ongoing commitment to reconciliation to create a trustful, supportive and collaborative environment for all First Nations peoples. The Strategy will identify where and how we can implement actions that make a difference and also celebrate the contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures contribute to the broader community.

#### <u>Cassowary Coast Visitor Information Services</u> Strategy

This strategy aligns in aspects under the key objectives titled Customer Experience, Destination Role, Economic Benefits, and Social Benefits.

- 2.4 Regional dispersal of visitors
- 3.2 Regularly present products, services, and events to the local industry networks
- 4.5 Fill product and services gaps

# **Tourism and Events Queensland Strategic Plan 2022-2026**

This strategies objectives focus on contributing to the Queensland economy, attracting visitors to Queensland and generating overnight visitor expenditure, enhancing the profile of Queensland and fostering community pride.

# <u>Tourism Tropical North Queensland (Cairns and Great Barrier Reef Event Strategy 2025)</u>

The key objectives of this strategy is to contribute to the Tropical North Queensland economy, attract visitors to TNQ, enhance the profile of TNQ and community engagement.

# **Queensland Tourism Industry Reference Panel** (Towards 2032) –

This is a plan to deliver uniquely to Queensland experiences in step with the needs of visitors, communities and the environment.

Sports Marketing Australia - Cassowary Coast Sports Facilities Rating

Sport Events Venue	Venue Rating	Sport	Location
Tully River, Cardstone	International	White Water Rafting	Tully
Frogs Hollow Community Centre	Local	Open space, mountain bike track	South Mission Beach
Kim Carrol Sporting Field	Local	Football, Cricket, Skydiving, large green space	Tully
Tully Grandstand	National	Rugby League. Touch Football, Gymnastics, Pickle Ball, Dog Showing	Tully
Islands: Dunk, Garden, Hinchinbrook	Not rated	Hiking, Trail Running, Canoeing. Adventure Sport	Cardwell, Mission Beach
Innisfail Bowls Club	Not rated	Lawn Bowls	Innisfail
Swimming Pools	Regional	Swimming	Cardwell, Tully, Mission Beach, Innisfail
Callendar Park	Regional	Netball	Innisfail
Goondi Bend Reserve	Regional	Football, Cricket, Rugby Union	Innisfail
Innisfail State Collage Oval	Regional	Cricket	Innisfail
The Con Theatre	Regional	Performance, Theatre	Innisfail
Warrina Lakes	Regional	Walking, Cross Country, open green spaces	Innisfail
Tully Country Club	Regional	Golf	Tully
Cardwell Sportsground & Country Club	Regional (future development to State)	Pump Track, Mountain Biking, Tennis, Sport Field, Skatepark, Gravel, Golf & Bowling	Cardwell
Callendar Park	State	Rugby League	Innisfail
Innisfail Shire Hall	State	Performance, Conference	Innisfail
Innisfail Tennis Club	State	Tennis	Innisfail
Pease Park Showgrounds	State	Horse Riding	Innisfail
Coastal Fishing	State	Fishing	Kurrimine Beach, Hinchinbrook Channel. Johnstone River. Mission Beach
Paronella Park, Hotel & Caravan Park	State	Outdoor events	Mena Creek
The Beach	State	Outrigger, Multi-sport, beach runs. Sailing	Mission Beach
Mission Beach Surf Lifesaving Club	State	Surf Lifesaving	Mission Beach
Castor Park	State	Football & Soccer	Mourilyan
Tully Horse Performance Centre	State	Equestrian	Tully
Tully Multi Purpose Centre	State	Indoor sports - Basketball, Netball, Volleyball, Futsal	Tully



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