

# Events Strategic Plan

2020- 2025



*the city within  
a World Heritage  
National Park*





# Acknowledgement

The City of the Blue Mountains is located within the Country of the Darug and Gundungurra peoples. Blue Mountains City Council recognises that Darug and Gundungurra Traditional Owners have a continuous and deep connection to their Country and that this is of great cultural significance to Aboriginal people, both locally and in the region.

For Darug and Gundungurra People, Country takes in everything within the physical, cultural and spiritual landscape - landforms, waters, air, trees, rocks, plants, animals, foods, medicines, minerals, stories and special places. It includes cultural practice, kinship, knowledge, songs, stories and art, as well as spiritual beings, and people: past, present and future.

Blue Mountains City Council pays respect to Elders past and present while recognising the strength, capacity and resilience of past and present Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Blue Mountains region.

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## Prologue

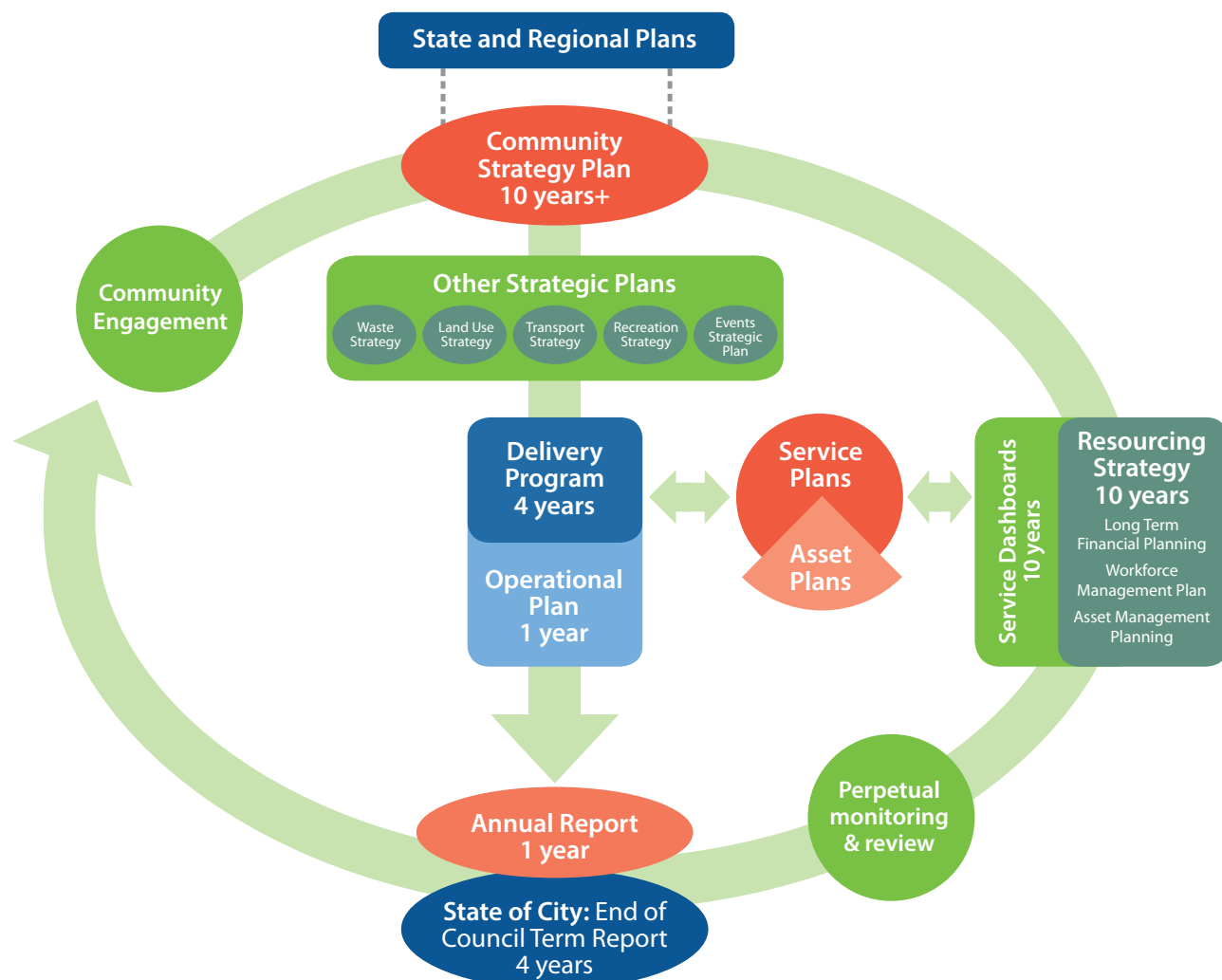
The Events Strategic Plan is informed by Council's Community Strategic Plan, and sits alongside other Council Strategies which guide development of the City and inform Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

The Council recognises the contribution that Events provides specifically to the local community, and to visitors and the economy more generally. We also acknowledge the significant challenges faced by event organisers, in delivering safe, successful and sustainable events.

In recent years the context for events has changed. Increasing threats have driven the need for increased professionalism in managing and delivering high quality, safe events. However, in meeting this challenge, Council is well placed to deliver strategic and capacity building work in the area of training, the preparation of strategic documents, and distribution of useful resources (e.g. risk management assessment templates, etc).

This Strategic Plan sets out Council's role in building this capacity, what Council will seek to deliver to enable this and provide an opportunity for future dialogue to shape successful event management.

## INTEGRATED PLANNING & REPORTING FRAMEWORK





# 1 Strategic Plan







## 1.1 About This Strategic Plan

The Events Strategic Plan 2019-2024 has been informed by the Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan 2035 (CSP), and developed in consultation with internal stakeholders. It has also been informed by relevant best practice policy and research, and follows from the Blue Mountains Destination Management Plan which identifies the aspiration to develop an Events Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan aligns with three of Council's Key Directions from the Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan 2035, namely "Thrive, an economically sustainable city," "Care, an inclusive healthy and vibrant city," and "Protect, an environmentally responsible city". It supports the following objectives of Thrive, Care and Protect:

<b>PROTECT</b>	Objective 2.2	"Resources are used and managed in an environmentally responsible way."
<b>CARE</b>	Objective 3.4	"The Blue Mountains is a centre of culture, creativity and life-long learning"
<b>THRIVE</b>	Objective 6.2	"The City of Blue Mountains has a strong identity that builds on its natural and built heritage and creative strengths as a City of the Arts and a City surrounded by a World Heritage Area"
<b>THRIVE</b>	Objective 6.4	"The Blue Mountains is a leader of sustainable tourism and destination management within a World Heritage Area"





It should be noted that this Strategic Plan relates primarily to events and festivals on public land. Most of these events are organised by the community for the community with a small portion organised either by Council or commercial operators. This plan does not include or relate to events on private land. Nor does it relate to the many events which are run by Council staff at the Cultural Centre, Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub, Aquatic Centres or pools, or by the Environment or Community Teams at Council.

In 2018 Blue Mountains City Council promoted 308 events, both public and private, through the Seasonal Calendar of Events. Of this number, 90 events involving an event application were conducted on public land.

This document complements other Council strategies such as the Cultural Strategic Plan, the Economic Statement (2019) and the Destination Management Plan (2017).

## 1.2 Vision & Principles

Our vision for this Events Strategic Plan is to “Optimise economic and community benefits of the local and visitor economy” through the development of events.

Council will achieve this by supporting event organisers through the provision and maintenance of event infrastructure and via targeted events to activate key sites, such as Katoomba Town Centre, or particular sectors.

### The Guiding Principles which inform this vision are to:



### 1.3 Purpose

The purpose of the Blue Mountains Events Strategic Plan is to:

- Document Council's support for community events and festivals;
- Identify actions to build capacity in event organisers to optimise the benefits of events while minimising their impacts;
- Identify mechanisms to attract a high yield event for the Blue Mountains;
- Identify and evaluate the job creation and economic impact associated with events.

Council seeks to address these long standing challenges as it recognises the benefits of events and festivals, which include:

- Direct and indirect economic benefits of key events for the local economy;
- Improved promotion of the Blue Mountains and of our unique World Heritage status;
- Better utilisation and activation of community assets often in our town centre precincts;
- Encourage safe high quality events.

This is a 5 year Strategy that will focus on events and festivals conducted on public land, including:

- Civic Events;
- Community & Cultural Events; and
- Commercial Events.

Business events and some regular monthly or weekly events (e.g. Grower's markets or parkrun) or those held on private property remain outside of the scope of this document.

The outcomes of the Blue Mountains Events Strategic Plan will be to:

1. Provide relevant training to build capacity for our Event organisers to deliver best practice events for both residents and visitors to the Blue Mountains
2. Undertake a risk audit of key event sites
3. Identify priority actions to develop the City's event infrastructure
4. Identify the need for a high yield event to boost key industries and/or activate specific locations
5. Obtain generic DA for select Council owned event sites if feasible
6. Council will work with the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to amend the Standard Local Environment Plan to provide greater flexibility for events and temporary uses, and opportunities for certain events to be considered complying development
7. Create useful templates for event strategies, risk assessments and management plans





## 1.4 Method

This Strategic Plan has been developed in consultation with key internal stakeholders and a significant amount of research. The Strategic Plan is informed by ongoing conversations with Event Organisers.

Below is a summary of what has been involved in the development of this strategic plan:

- A literature review and scan of similar Event Strategies for other local Council areas such as: Redland City (QLD), Newcastle (NSW), Penrith (NSW), Coffs Harbour (NSW), Eurobodalla (NSW) and Launceston (TAS).
- A literature review of key State Government documents relevant to Event Management including Office of Premier and Cabinet's Event Starter Guide, the Guide to Traffic and Transport Management for Special Events and Australia's Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism.
- A thorough review of existing Council event application processes and support including:
  - Four case studies on existing events to determine economic impact on the City; and
  - An audit of all current events in the Blue Mountains to determine location, scale and type.
- Two internal workshops held with relevant staff involved in various tasks such as: Open Space & Recreation, Traffic Management, Risk Management, Economic Development and Culture; and
- A number of one on one interviews with relevant staff were also undertaken.

**Council acknowledges the hard work and dedication of event organisers who work tirelessly to make community events & festivals happen. This plan aims to support these event organisers and improve on what we have to benefit both the local economy, community and visitors to our region.**









## 2 Strategic Direction



Image: Rhianna Reid

## 2.1 Support local event industry development

- Provide hard and soft resources (eg. Soft resources - templates, risk assessments. Hard resources - cable covers, signage) to event holders to increase capacity for best practice
- Develop training for local event organisers to ensure safe, high quality events
- Encourage and support a diverse event calendar
- Promote best practice and a culture of continuous improvement for events
- Raise awareness and capture the value of events for the community and the economy
- Work with industry to support events which activate our key town centres
- Clarify Council's role to develop a consistent and sustainable approach to event management
- Promote opportunities based on evidence/ experience of running events
- Create evaluation framework for events. Establish baseline and trend data

## 2.2 Develop the City's event infrastructure

- Investigate large event venue
- Identify sites for mass gathering across the city for improved security
- Explore high yield event – trial site
- Streamline event processes: move to online system
- Develop templates for risk management and training provided to event organisers to improve safety at events
- Progress city activation in key locations
- Maximise use and return on council assets
- Undertake a risk audit of key event sites
- Platform for events to upload own promotional material
- Investigate potential to increase event related items for use by event organisers
- Investigate the efficacy of obtaining generic event approvals, via the lodgement of Development Applications, for key Council owned sites so as to permit these sites to be used for a range of events without the need for development consent to be sought and obtained for each individual event

## 2.3 Position the Blue Mountains as a premier sustainable event destination

- Leverage our City's World Heritage setting
- Aim to increase overall economic yield of events
- Attract high yield event – trial site
- Advocate via Master planning and other processes to optimise City event sites
- Develop events attraction plan/program
- Enhance liveability for Blue Mountains residents via events
- Develop Waste Factsheet to encourage sustainable event practices
- Work in partnership with industry to support events which activate our key town centres





# 3 Implementation Plan



### 3.1 Support local event industry development

Blue Mountains City Council will continue to:

- Provide resources and training to event organisers;
- Support and promote diverse events calendar;
- Clarify Council's role and streamline processes; and
- Promote best practice and continuous improvement.

#### Key Priorities for Delivery:


Action	Who/Where	Timeframe	Measure	Benefit
Provide hard and soft resources (eg. Soft resources - templates, risk assessments. Hard resources - cable covers, signage) to event holders to increase capacity for best practice	Via Council's Event Coordinator	By November 2019	Resources available	
Deliver relevant training for local event organisers to ensure safe, high quality events	Council / Consultant with industry	By June 2019, and ongoing	Good take up by event organisers/ training highly evaluated	
Encourage and support a diverse event calendar – good variety of events across the year, in various locations	Council	Seasonally	Calendar of Events distributed seasonally	 
Promote best practice and a culture of continuous improvement for events. Raise awareness of value of events for the community and economy	Industry / Council	Ongoing	Gazette articles x 2 annually	   
Provide online links to potential funding sources for Event Organisers	Council	By January 2020	Links available and utilised by staff for referral	 
Work in partnership with industry to support events which activate our key town centres.	Council	Ongoing	Increase in amount yielded, assists event application for funding	 
Clarify Council's role to develop a consistent and sustainable approach to event management.	Council / Event organisers	Ongoing	Event organisers attend and report benefit	
Promote opportunities based on evidence/experience of running events	Council / Event organisers	Ongoing	New opportunities identified and pursued	 
Create evaluation framework for events. Establish baseline and trend data	Council	By Dec 2020	Baseline year 1 thereafter report trends on key events in annual report	  

### 3.2 Develop the City's event infrastructure

Blue Mountains City Council will continue to:

- Provide improved resources for event organisers;
- Progress city activation in key areas;
- Streamline event processes; and
- Maximise use and return on Council Assets.

#### Key Priorities for Delivery:

Action	Who/Where	Timeframe	Measure	Benefit
Investigate large event venue	Industry / Council	By December 2024	Investigation completed	
Identify possible sites for mass gathering across the city for improved security	Council	By December 2019	Audit of events sites with suggested measures produced	
Explore high yield event: trial site	Industry / Council / DNSW	Ongoing – dependent on industry leads	Site-trialled if feasible	
Streamline event processes: move to online system (dependent on funds and resources)	Council	By December 2021	Funds identified, Online application process implemented by Dec 2021	
Develop templates for risk management and training provided to event organisers to improve safety at events	Council	By November 2019	Resources available	
Progress city activation in key locations	Council	Ongoing	Activation in key sites occurs	
Maximise use and return on Council assets	Council	Ongoing	Usage improves, returns are maximised	
Platform for events to upload own promotional material implemented/ use encouraged	Council	By June 2021	Reduced workload for Calendar of Events	
Investigate potential to increase our collection of event related items for hire to event organisers for a nominal fee	Council	September 2021	Collection is improved and well utilised	
Investigate the efficacy of obtaining generic event approvals, via the lodgement of Development Applications, for key Council owned sites so as to permit these sites to be used for a range of events without the need for development consent to be sought and obtained for each individual event	Council	July 2021	DA is in place	
Conduct site risk audit for key event locations	Council, key sites	December 2020	Sites identified, risks assessed, risk register developed	





### 3.3 Position the Blue Mountains as a Premier Sustainable Events Destination

Blue Mountains City Council will continue to:

- Advocate via Master planning and other processes to optimise CBD event sites;
- Work in partnership with industry to support events which activate our key town centres;
- Leverage world heritage setting to position Blue Mountains as premier events destination.

#### Key Priorities for Delivery:

Action	Who/Where	Timeframe	Measure	Benefit
Leverage world heritage setting to position Blue Mountains as premier events destination	Industry / Council	Ongoing	Attract high yield event, and range of high quality conferences	
Aim to increase the economic yield of events	Industry / Council	Ongoing	Economic impact studies show improved result	
Attract high yield event: trial site	Industry / Council/ DNSW	Ongoing – dependent on industry leads	Event attracted	
Advocate via Master planning and other processes to optimise CBD event sites	Council	As opportunities arise	Improved event sites across the city	
Develop Events Attraction Plan/ Program	Council / consultant	By June 2021	Plan / Program produced	
Enhance liveability for Blue Mountains residents via events. Waste factsheet to support sustainable event practices	Council	March 2020	More sustainable events	
Work in partnership with industry to support events which activate our key town centres	Industry / Chambers / Council	Ongoing	Events highly evaluated, businesses report positive impact	



### 3.4 Blue Mountains Events Snapshot

#### Benefits of events



There are direct and indirect economic and tourism benefits including job creation driven by increased spending in the area.



Raising the profile of the Blue Mountains World Heritage destination and as a great place to visit, live and invest.



Social and community benefits and environmental outcomes which contribute to our livability appeal.



Celebrate creativity and innovation in our business and wider community.



Sense of community pride and increased wellbeing which people derive from participation.



Activation of townships and good use of community assets.

A key challenge and opportunity for the City of Blue Mountains is to better support the organisers of local events and festivals in recognition of the contribution, both social and economic which they provide to the City. The challenge of meeting new security requirements has been made more acute in view of recent counter terrorism requirements which now impact on-road events. It is therefore important to clarify Council's role in support of these public events.





## Council's Events Role Defined

Blue Mountains City Council has a number of roles in terms of public land events including:

**Regulator:** This includes Approval authority for temporary structures on public lands (including roads) via a Development Application (DA) process. These tasks are managed by two separate areas of Council but coordinated by one section which is the point of contact for all events on public land.

**Employer:** Currently, Council employs 2 staff (1.8 FTEs) in the Events processing area. Council does not employ staff to deliver or secure events for the Blue Mountains LGA or to promote the region as a premier events location.

However, Council does deliver a suite of Cultural and other events at the Blue Mountains Cultural Centre and at the Blue Mountains Theatre and Hub, and supports NAIDOC activities and International Day Against Homophobia or Transphobia (IDAHOT). Council also delivers events noted on page 7 via its Aquatic Centre and pools program or via the Environment and Community Teams.

**Asset Owner / Coordinator:** Here Council is Coordinator of overall event approval process including checking that all required documentation is received, circulated to relevant areas of Council and external agencies such as Roads & Maritime Services (RMS) for comments and checked for compliance. The Event Coordinator will also ensure any Council services required by the event, such as additional bins or toilet cleans etc. are secured. In addition, in 2018/19 financial year, Council has also contributed significantly to improving risk management resources for event organisers, with the development of Risk Assessment Templates supported by training. A number of events will have their risk assessments transitioned to the new template which will reduce the risk for event organisers, and improve their capacity to adapt their risk assessments as needed.

**Partner/ Advocate:** In 2019 Council directed significant financial resources to strategic work to review the operations and structure of the Winter Magic Festival and contributed funds towards developing a 5 year Strategic Plan with associated Management plans to ensure the festival's safety, success and sustainability for 2020 and beyond. It is hoped that much of this one off investment in strategic work will have relevance for other local events. At the present time, Council contributes significantly to Traffic Management and implementation costs for ANZAC Day and Vietnam Veterans' Day.

At the present time this Council does not have an Event Manager to attract new events to the Blue Mountains. With other Councils actively marketing their area for events, it is noted that this gap may result in the loss of significant market share for the Blue Mountains, with the associated reputational damage.

## Snapshot of Public Land Events

Events may be considered through a number of lenses, and in the following pages we will step through consideration of events

- By type (with associated terminology of Civic, Community & Cultural & Commercial)
- By size (with associated terminology of large, medium and small)
- By season (with associated terminology of Summer, Autumn, Winter, Spring)
- By Economic impact (with associated terminology of High yield, Medium yield and Local event)



## Events by Type

The Blue Mountains hosts approximately 90 events on public land over a calendar year across the categories of:

- Civic Events;
- Community & Cultural Events; and
- Commercial Events

Category	Example of Events (indicative)	Key Organizers	Other
Civic Events	ANZAC Day, Australia Day, Citizenship Ceremonies, White Ribbon, Youth Week, Seniors Week and NAIDOC Week celebrations	RSL Branches, BMCC	Held in civic locations such as town squares or War Memorials for short periods or days of National significance.
Community & Cultural Events	Winter Magic Festival, Rhododendron Festival, Leura Harvest, Leura Gardens Festival, Glenbrook Festivals, IDAHOT, Blue Mountains Music Festival, Blue Mountains Ukulele Festival and Trek for Timor	Community led volunteer committees	Often held on road requiring road closures.
Commercial Events	Ultra-Trail, multiple music events run by local event organisers	Commercial Operators	Usually ticketed events run for profit or charity.

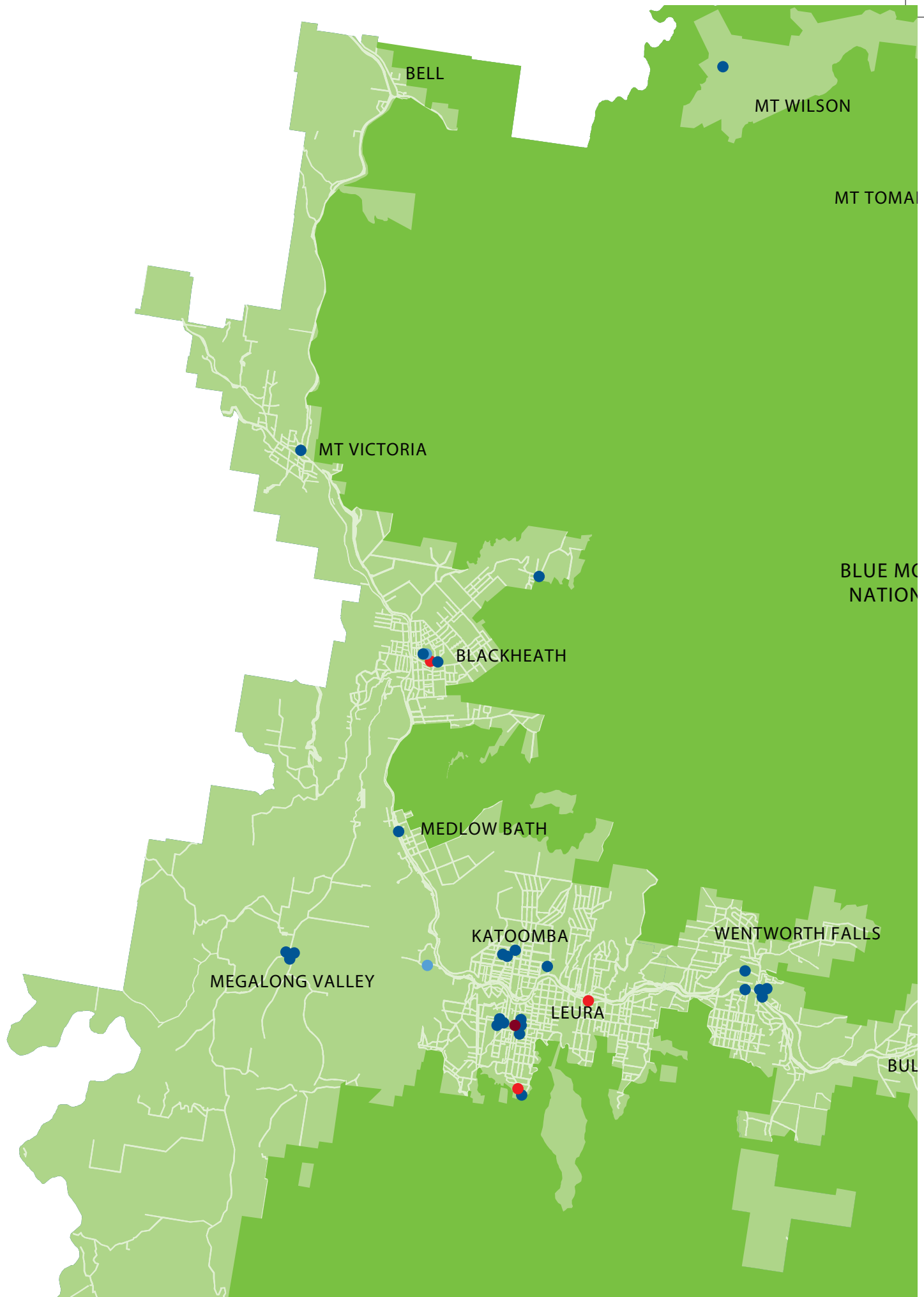
## Events by size

Events are considered by audience size in the table below. Only two, Winter Magic Festival and Ultra Trail, are large in size with an audience over 10,000 while the remainder are small to medium events as per the below table:

Category	Attendees	Number and name of Events
Large	Over 10,000	Winter Magic Festival, Ultra Trail
Medium	2,000-10,000	Anzac Day Springwood; Australia Day Glenbrook, Spring Festival Glenbrook; Leura Harvest; Leura Village Fair; Blue Mountains Ukulele Festival; Blackheath Rhododendron Festival; Springwood Foundation Day
Small-medium	500- 2,000	Springwood & Blackheath growers market; Mid Mountains festival Lawson; Lanterns on the Lake Wentworth Falls; Woodford to Glenbrook, Lady Luck Katoomba, Oktoberfest, Six Foot Track Marathon
Small	Less than 500	Carols, Running Wild x 3, Hounslow Classic







The majority of events, regardless of size, are held in Katoomba, as depicted on the map below.

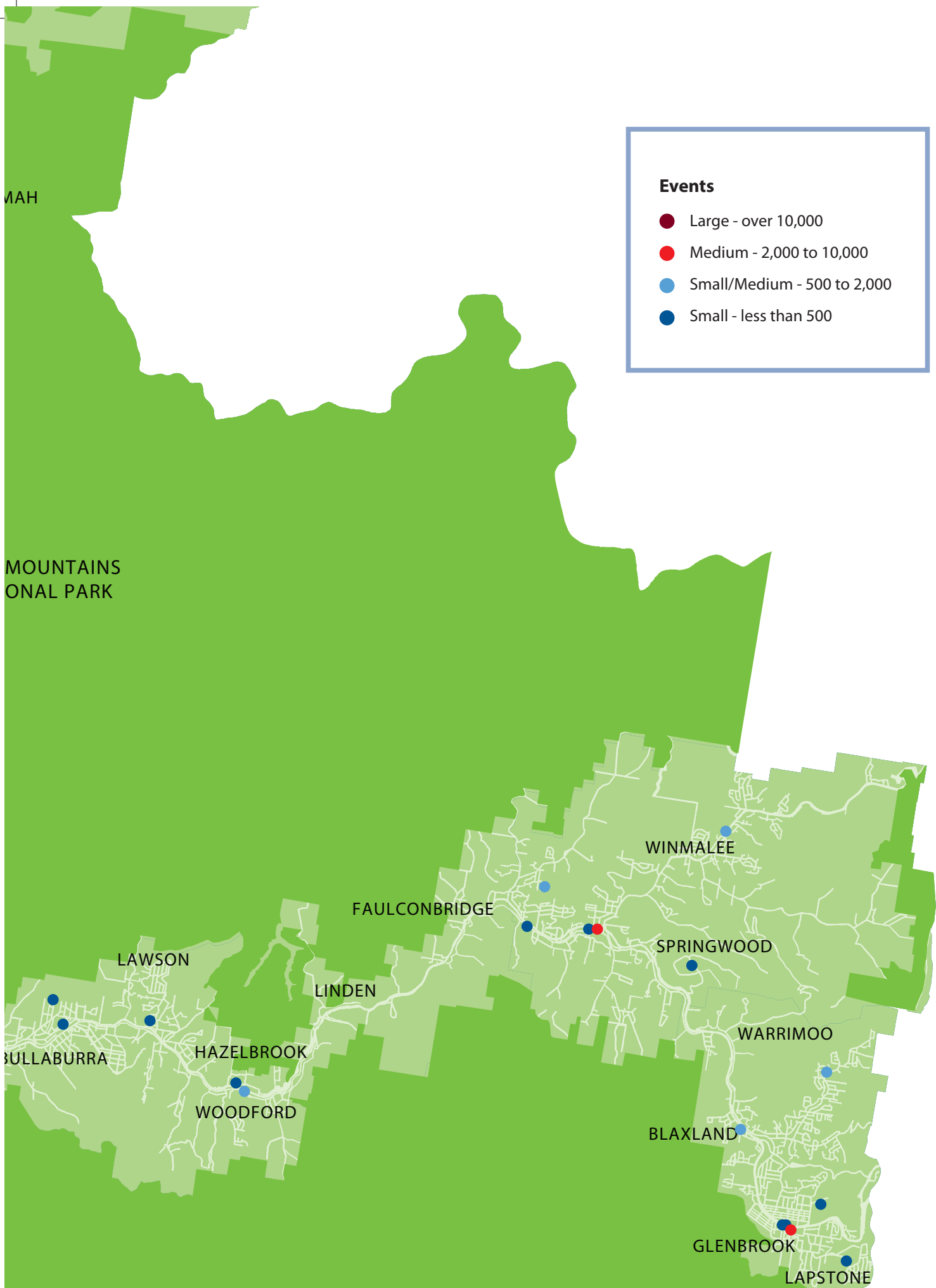


Figure 1. Scale and location of events across the Blue Mountains



## Events by Season

The busiest season for events is Spring, followed by Autumn, Summer and Winter as depicted in the graph below. This graph depicts all events, whether or not they have an application process or not.

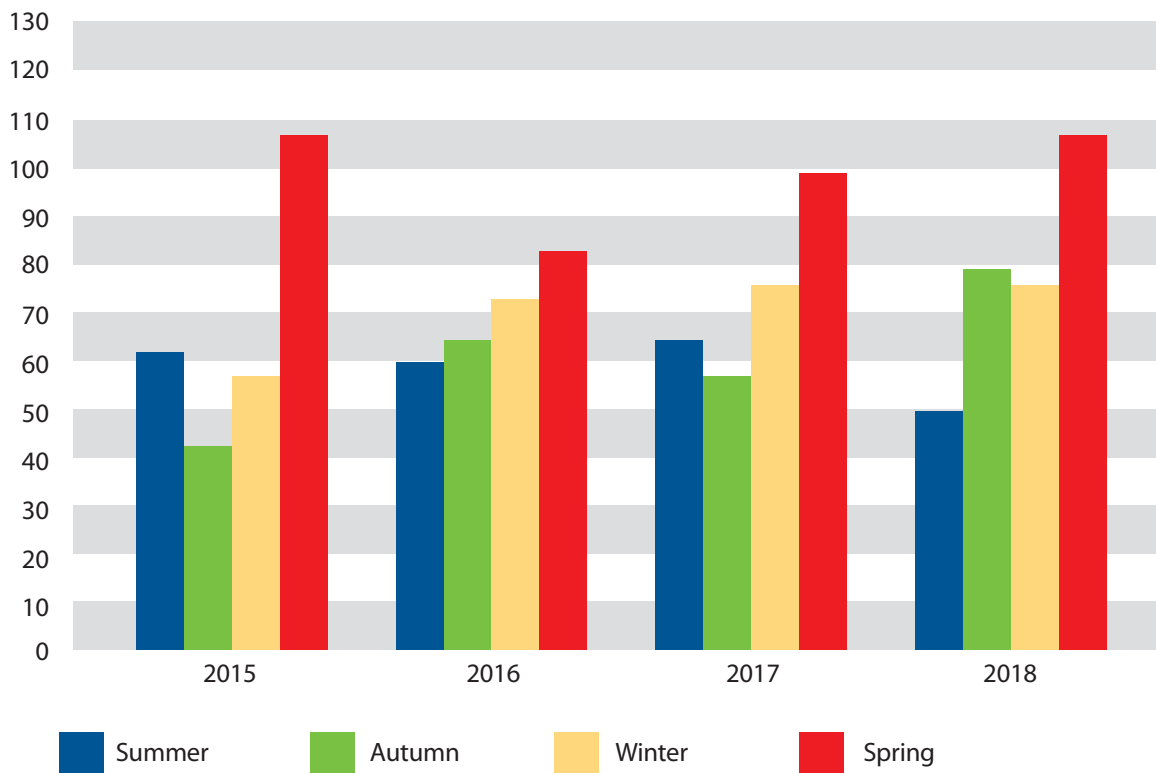


Figure 2: Graph: Events by Season: 2014 – 2018

This graph gives a picture of how the events fall per season, with spring clearly being the busiest. These are financial years, so the 2015 Summer calendar represents 2015/2016 and so on.

In 2018 there were 308 events in total, 90 of which involved event applications.

In 2015 there were 260 events, 84 of which entailed an application process.

Other Significant Events which are not held on Council land include:

- Ultra Trail
- Leura Gardens Festival
- BM Music Festival (but with one stage at Carrington Place)
- Sculpture at Scenic World
- Dinosaur Valley at Scenic World (held bi-annually)
- Sport for Jove Events at Everglades



## Challenges and Opportunities

The SWOT Analysis compiled below (Figure 3) is the product of internal consultation, and details the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities as well as threats for this activity and sector.

The Blue Mountains enjoys considerable benefits as a World Heritage destination and as the inaugural City of the Arts. We are well placed to deliver events of an international standard. However, this same world heritage topography dictates that we lack for some vital infrastructure. We lack large tracts of flat land with ample car parking for large audiences. We lack for venues with existing permissions to accommodate large crowds. If we are to grow our audiences and to share our unique setting with a wider audience, we will need to establish innovative event venues and some well planned, sustainable events to achieve this.

Council's position as asset owner also places particular pressure on us in terms of liability and event security, and due consideration must be given to managing and mitigating this risk. We also have external threats beyond our control such as a natural disasters (e.g. bushfire risk), global financial shocks and managing congestion from increased visitation which all pose significant risk from time to time. We endeavor to plan for and mitigate risks where possible, and to prepare our event organisers to assess the viability of events appropriately.

A key challenge and opportunity for the City of Blue Mountains is to better support the organisers of local events and festivals in recognition of the contribution, both social and economic which they provide to the City. The challenge of meeting new security requirements has been made more acute in view of recent counter terrorism requirements which now impact on-road events. It is therefore important to clarify Council's role in support of these public events.

Event Infrastructure is one of our key weaknesses. Therefore, securing funds to upgrade ageing infrastructure and to build new event infrastructure is a key goal for the future. Also, while we have a very full event calendar, a quick audit reveals that many of these events struggle to meet the growing security and compliance requirements. In addition, many struggle with committee burnout and governance risks.

While we offer a unique setting and quality service, Blue Mountains City Council lacks the infrastructure and personnel (i.e. dedicated event manager) to market the region for such events. We compete with many other Councils and private organisations, here and elsewhere, to secure high yield events for our Local Government Area without the available resources to market our region. The application process for events is currently undergoing a business improvement process to streamline operations and eventually transition to online applications. At the present time, Council resources dedicated to this service are stretched and more resources are needed.

Despite our aspiration to develop and maintain a diverse and vibrant event calendar, Council has limited control in achieving this. Some events are the legacy of the hard work of previous generations and some of these events struggle with succession, and to meet requirements for risk management and traffic management.





## Event Strategic Plan: SWOT Analysis

### Strengths

- World Heritage setting & City of the Arts
- Attractive for endurance, running events
- Destination Management Plan
- Active, skilled community
- Vibrant calendar
- Dedicated Event Team provides one point of liaison
- Established industry
- Proximity to Sydney
- Strong partnership with Police and Rural Fire Service
- Calendar of Events has widespread distribution

### Weaknesses

- Topography=no available large sites/ venues
- Lack of large scale accommodation/ parking/ land to support large events
- Little room in Events calendar
- Traffic management and security costly
- Ageing venue infrastructure
- Competing interests for sites such as ovals
- Increased road traffic
- Events understaffed
- Businesses don't support road closures

Figure 3 SWOT Analysis



## Opportunities

- Blue Mountains City of the Arts
- Unique setting
- Strong community participation
- Thriving music sector
- Social media provides free marketing platform
- Blue Mountains branding complementary process
- Partnerships with private and other sectors
- Risk Management work improves resource base for events
- Economic impact reports improves funding applications

## Threats

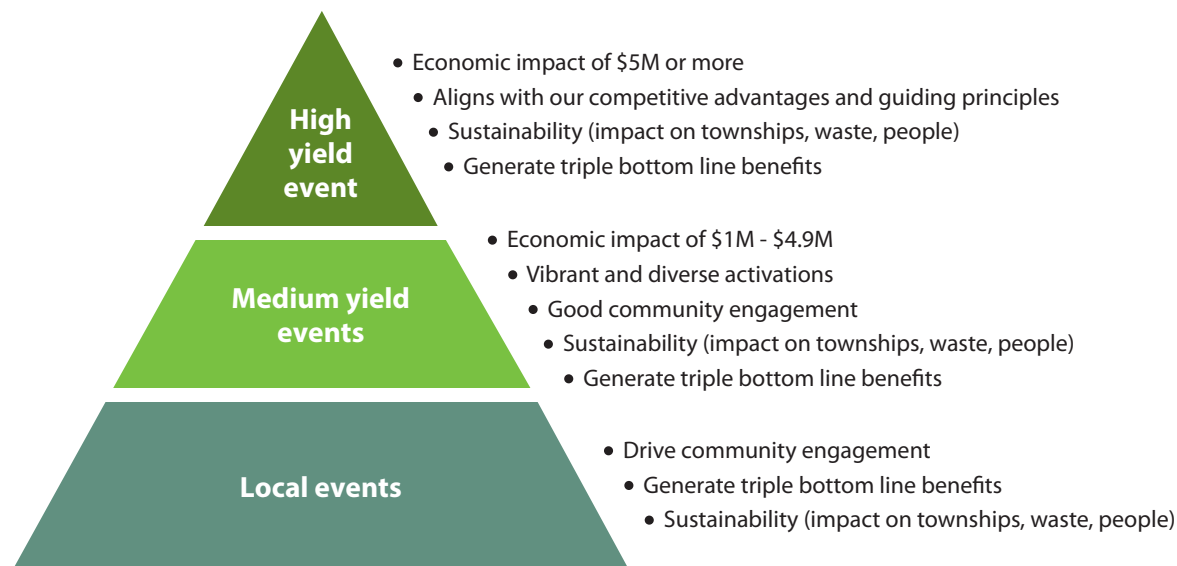
- Cost & Management Security concerns
- Legislation changes
- Costs of compliance
- Volunteer shortage
- Volunteer Committee burnout
- Natural disasters-Bushfire risk
- Other areas actively compete for events
- Growth in outbound travel
- Limited sponsorship for events
- Impact on residential amenity
- Popular events exceed capacity





## Audit of Events

### Category of Events



**Goal: to increase high yield events, and to secure a new high yield event by 2024.**

**Goal: to maintain a good mix of events, and to support a culture of continuous improvement in the sector.**

It should be noted that while Economic Impact is the determining lens for how events are ranked within this framework, that considerations of social engagement, and community benefit as well as environmental benefits and impacts should also be simultaneously assessed. For example, how waste is generated and managed should also be incorporated in assessing an event's sustainability credentials. Currently, our economic modeling software does not take these additional layers of evaluation into account.



## Case Study 1: High yield event: Ultra Trail 2018 (Commercial event)

Ultra Trail is one of our high yield events and is an ideal event in terms of its fit with our world heritage environment, our affinity with nature based recreation and its link to other aspects of our visitor economy, such as food and wine. The event showcases our spectacular surrounds, is professional in its engagement with sustainable values and risk requirements, and generates significant revenue for Blue Mountains businesses. This is derived from the large number of domestic overnight visitors the event attracts. Note that locals are not included in these REMPLAN calculations but these participants and their supporters account for an additional 899 people, bringing the total event attendees to 17,024 people.

Direct Impact	Domestic Day	Domestic Overnight	International	Total
Number of Visitors	0	15,262	863	16,125
Number of Nights	n/a	2.82	6.00	
Estimated Expenditure per Visitor (\$)	\$77	\$491	\$654	
Total Estimated Expenditure (\$)	\$0	\$7,488,758	\$564,402	\$8,053,160

Source: REMPLAN

Once the flow on effects to the economy are factored in the total economic impact is \$12.5 million, which is a great result for the event, and for Blue Mountains employment and associated businesses.

### Tourism Impact Summary (Tourism Activity: 4 days)

Impact	Direct Effect	Supply-Chain Effect	Consumption Effect	Total Effect	Type 1 Multiplier	Type 2 Multiplier
Output (\$M)	\$8.053	\$2.704	\$1.799	\$12.555	1.336	1.559
Long Term Employment (Jobs)	42	9	7	58	1.214	1.381
Wages and Salaries (\$M)	\$2.025	\$0.738	\$0.445	\$3.208	1.364	1.584
Value-added (\$M)	\$3.696	\$1.294	\$1.067	\$6.057	1.350	1.639

Source: REMPLAN



Image: Provided by Ultra Trail (courtesy of Andrew Green, inciteimages.com)

## Case Study 2: Medium yield Winter Magic Festival (Cultural & Community)

Winter Magic Festival is the largest event by size in the Blue Mountains and was held annually in Katoomba from 1994 until 2017, and then reestablished in 2019. It has been a much loved community driven festival, since its inception in 1994. The Winter Magic Festival was originally created by Council as a community focused arts festival to celebrate the winter solstice. 2018 would have been the 25th anniversary of the Festival, and in 2019 the Festival returned with a renewed focus on arts and music.

Winter Magic is organised by a not-for-profit incorporated association, Winter Magic Festival Inc. As NSW state and local government regulation has increased, so has the administrative and expense burden for the committee. In late 2017 the then Winter Magic Committee conducted its own review and decided to postpone the festival for 2018, citing both safety concerns and increased costs. In 2019 the Festival was celebrated in late June with a revised format, no parade but an increased emphasis on music performance. This appeared to be well received and while it attracted a sizeable crowd this was a little more manageable than that of 2017, partly because much of the entertainment was held in venues, generating better outcomes for cafes and some local businesses.

Its economic contribution to the City is significant. In 2017 Council commissioned Taverner Research to determine its economic contribution to the city. A summary sheet of the report's findings are provided on the following page. Note that \$1.8 million is the correct figure for economic impact since we cannot include locals in these calculations.

The study conducted by Taverner Research at the 2017 event identified the following:

- 43,700 estimated visitors to the event;
- 61% of visitors live outside the Blue Mountains Local Government Area; and
- Expenditure generated from 26,600 non locals was estimated at \$1.8M
- 2 out of 5 visitors stayed at least one night, but most visitors (56%) were day trippers

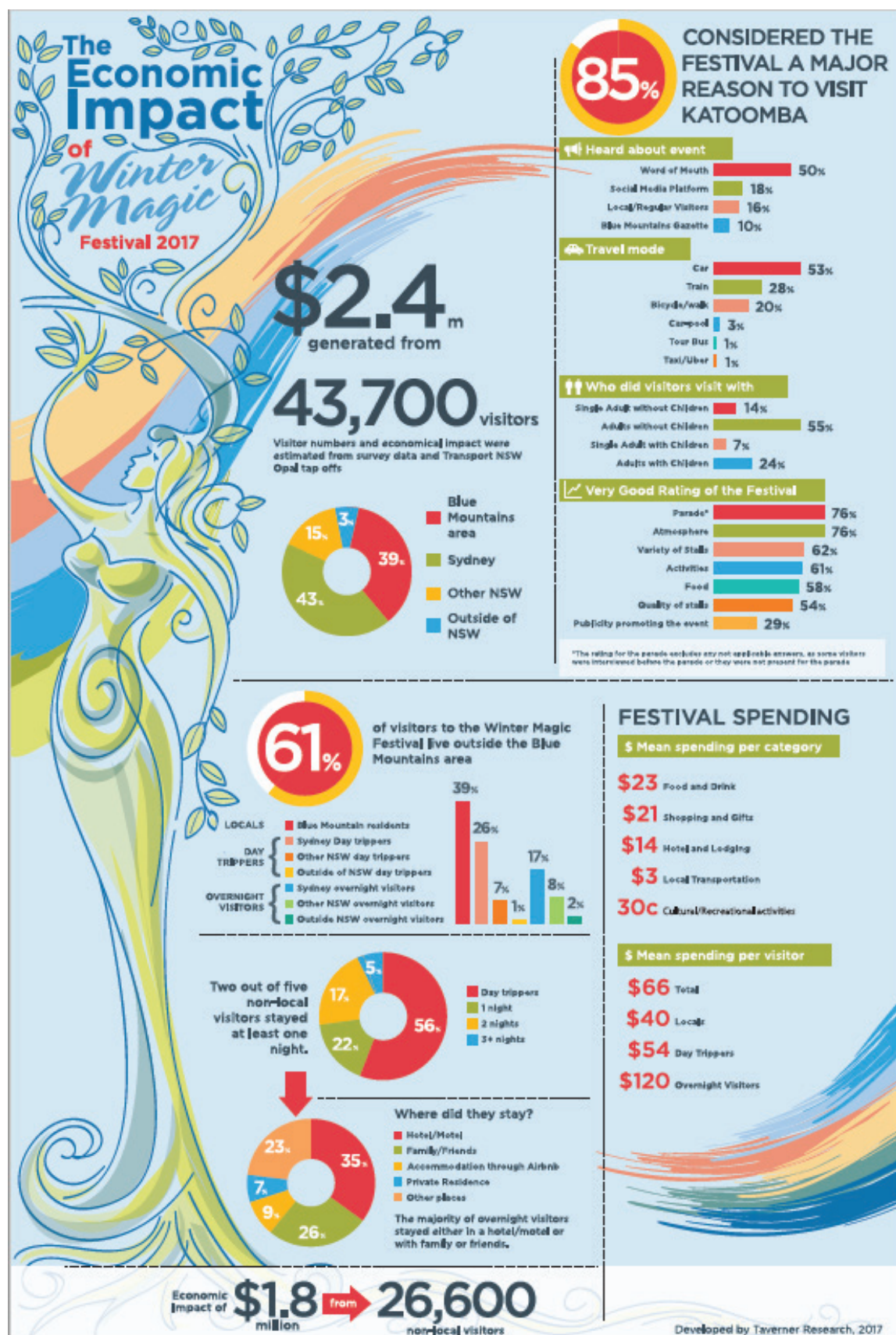
However, per person it has a relatively low spend when compared to the other events profiled above.

As detailed above, Council has made a one-off investment to deliver a 5 year Event Strategy and Management Plans in partnership with the Winter Magic Festival Committee. This will ensure a safe, sustainable and successful Winter Magic Festival for the future. The strategy and other management plans will be a useful resource for other events.



Image: Dominique van Gennip





Source: Taverner, 2017

## Case Study 3: Medium Yield

### Blue Mountains Music Festival (Cultural & Community)

The Blue Mountains Music Festival is a key cultural event in the Blue Mountains Calendar which has significant benefits on many levels for the mountains – cultural, community, and economic- particularly given it involves the public school community of Katoomba and generously donates back profits to these schools.

The economic impact of this niche festival is significant. The Blue Mountains Music Festival has a loyal repeat patronage, and is supported by locals and non-locals alike. It is interesting to note that of their 357 volunteers, 62% are locals, and there are also a significant amount of non-local volunteers.

For a festival of this size, which is well managed, and has a high level of community engagement, this is a very good result. This first table gives an indication of the Direct Economic impact of the event. It should be noted that the economic modeling cannot account for locals so once these figures are added back in it comes to a total patronage of 4032 participants.

Name Blue Mountains Music Festival 2018

Duration 3 days

Direct Impact	Domestic Day	Domestic Overnight	International	Total
Number of Visitors	1,064	1,463	80	2,607
Number of Nights	n/a	3.50	3.50	
Estimated Expenditure per Visitor (\$)	\$77	\$609	\$382	
Total Estimated Expenditure (\$)	\$81,928	\$890,967	\$30,520	\$1,003,415

Source: REMPLAN

This table calculates the flow on effects to the economy to give a total economic impact of \$1.56 million. This is an excellent result for a niche Katoomba festival.

#### Tourism Impact Summary (Tourism Activity: 3 days)

Impact	Direct Effect	Supply-Chain Effect	Consumption Effect	Total Effect	Type 1 Multiplier	Type 2 Multiplier
Output (\$M)	\$1.003	\$0.337	\$0.224	\$1.564	1.336	1.559
Long Term Employment (Jobs)	5	1	1	7	1.200	1.400
Wages and Salaries (\$M)	\$0.252	\$0.092	\$0.055	\$0.400	1.364	1.584
Value-added (\$M)	\$0.461	\$0.161	\$0.133	\$0.755	1.350	1.639

Source: REMPLAN





## Case Study 4:

### Leura Gardens Festival (Cultural) – On Private land

The Leura Gardens Festival showcases the extraordinary spring beauty of some of Leura's cool climate gardens and their magnificent displays of azaleas, rhododendrons, dogwoods, camellias and other cool climate exotics, as well as flowering annuals, perennials and bulbs. The festival has a loyal repeat visitation and attracts both domestic and international visitors. The amount of overseas visitation is limited however, and more opportunity exists to market this festival to key international markets such as Korea, China and Japan.

The Leura Gardens Festival identifies its main challenge as securing new gardens. Like many festivals, they need to work to secure the required amount of volunteers. In recent years, this has meant that the festival has had to scale back its operations to just 2 'long' weekends, rather than opening for 9 days. This model is a good example of successful adaptation in the face of challenging circumstances, to ensure a sustainable festival.

Again, this niche festival delivers a positive economic impact, as well as excellent community and cultural benefits. The proceeds of festival go to the local hospital. In 2018 the festival estimate they received 5,212 visitors. Of this, 2,589 stayed an average of 2.4 nights.

The direct spend resulting from this visitation is calculated as below:

Direct Impact	Domestic Day	Domestic Overnight	International	Total
Number of Visitors	1,652	2,589	0	4,241
Number of Nights	n/a	2.60	0.00	
Estimated Expenditure per Visitor (\$)	\$77	\$452	\$0	
Total Estimated Expenditure (\$)	\$127,204	\$1,171,264	\$0	\$1,298,468

Source: REMPLAN

The following table calculates the flow on effects to the economy to give a total economic impact of \$2 million. This is an excellent result for this niche Leura festival.

#### Tourism Impact Summary (Tourism Activity: 6 days)

Impact	Direct Effect	Supply-Chain Effect	Consumption Effect	Total Effect	Type 1 Multiplier	Type 2 Multiplier
Output (\$M)	\$1.298	\$0.436	\$0.290	\$2.024	1.336	1.559
Long Term Employment (Jobs)	7	1	1	9	1.143	1.286
Wages and Salaries (\$M)	\$0.327	\$0.119	\$0.072	\$0.517	1.364	1.584
Value-added (\$M)	\$0.596	\$0.209	\$0.172	\$0.977	1.350	1.639

Source: REMPLAN





## Glossary of Terms

BMCC	Blue Mountains City Council
LG Act	Local Government Act 1993
LGA	Local Government Area
Public Land	Public land is defined (in the Dictionary to the Local Government Act) to mean any land vested in or under the control of the council.
Event	Interchangeable with the word 'festival' and is defined as any organised themed activity that brings people together in a public gathering. For example, community festivals (e.g. Winter Magic), memorial events (e.g. ANZAC Day), Christmas carols and other events held on public land.
Triple Bottom Line	First bottom line is profit and loss, so measures economic viability, the second bottom line is social responsibility to the people involved or impacted, the third bottom line takes account of environmental responsibility.
REMPPLAN	REMPPLAN is the Economic Modeling software used by many Councils. It provides a range of Economic Data including the ability to measure the Economic impact of events.









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