

2026-2031

Tourism Strategy

Draft



Mildura Rural City Council

Acknowledgement of Country

Mildura Rural City Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land, which now comprises the Mildura Rural City municipality. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and celebrate and respect their continuing cultures and acknowledge the memories of their ancestors.

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Message from the Mayor

Mildura Rural City is entering an important period for the future of tourism across our region. With our unique Murray River setting, strong food and wine identity, vibrant events calendar, rich cultural heritage and position as a gateway to the broader tri-state region, tourism continues to play a vital role in supporting our local economy, businesses, communities and visitor experience.

The Tourism Strategy provides a clear direction for how we can strengthen Mildura's visitor economy over the coming years. It recognises the assets that make our region distinctive, including the riverfront, arts and culture, nature-based experiences, local produce, major events, heritage places, and the character of our towns and rural communities.

This draft Strategy has been informed by local knowledge, industry insight and community input. It responds to opportunities to grow visitation, encourage longer stays, improve destination appeal, support tourism operators, enhance product development, and strengthen Mildura's profile as a welcoming and memorable place to visit.

It also acknowledges the challenges facing the sector, including workforce availability, changing visitor expectations, transport and access constraints, climate impacts, accommodation needs, and the importance of coordinated promotion and investment. These issues require a shared and practical approach across Council, industry, community and government partners.

Through this Strategy, Council seeks to build on Mildura's strengths while supporting sustainable tourism growth that benefits residents, businesses and visitors. The focus is on creating high-quality experiences, encouraging collaboration, improving visitor services and infrastructure, and ensuring tourism contributes positively to the liveability and identity of our region.

We look forward to continuing the conversation with our tourism operators, community members, Traditional Owners, local businesses, regional partners and government stakeholders as the Strategy is refined and delivered.

Together, we can strengthen Mildura's position as a distinctive, sustainable and compelling visitor destination.



Tourism Advisory Committee Message

The Tourism Advisory Committee is pleased to support the development of the Mildura Tourism Strategy 2026-2031.

This Strategy represents an important step forward in strengthening Mildura's visitor economy and positioning our region as a leading destination. It reflects a clear commitment to collaboration between Council, industry, and key stakeholders to deliver sustainable tourism growth.

The Strategy provides a strong and practical framework to grow visitation, increase visitor spend, and build on Mildura's reputation as a vibrant and diverse regional destination.

The Committee looks forward to continuing to work closely with Council and industry to support the implementation of this Strategy and to realise long-term benefits for the community and visitor economy.



Executive Summary



Project Background

Mildura Rural City Council is shaping the future of its visitor economy with a 5-year Tourism Strategy. This Strategy will provide a clear strategic foundation that unifies tourism, events, and visitor servicing under one cohesive vision.

Designed to guide Council's efforts in attracting high-impact events and leveraging tourism development opportunities, this Strategy will play a critical role in enhancing the region's appeal as a vibrant and attractive regional destination.

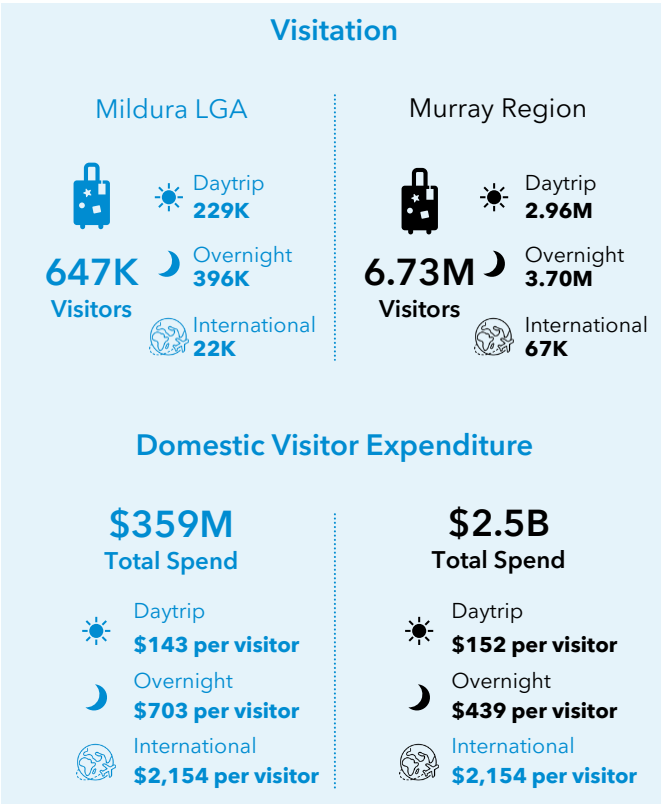
Through this Strategy, Council aims to foster sustainable growth, strengthen the regional identity, and deliver meaningful outcomes for the local community and visitors.



Visitor Profile

According to Tourism Research Australia (TRA) data collected for the 2025 calendar year, there were 647,000 visitors to the region, accounting for 10% of total visitation to the Murray Region. The breakdown of daytrip visitors (229,000, 35%) and overnight stays (396,000, 61%) leans positively toward the higher-yielding overnight visitor.

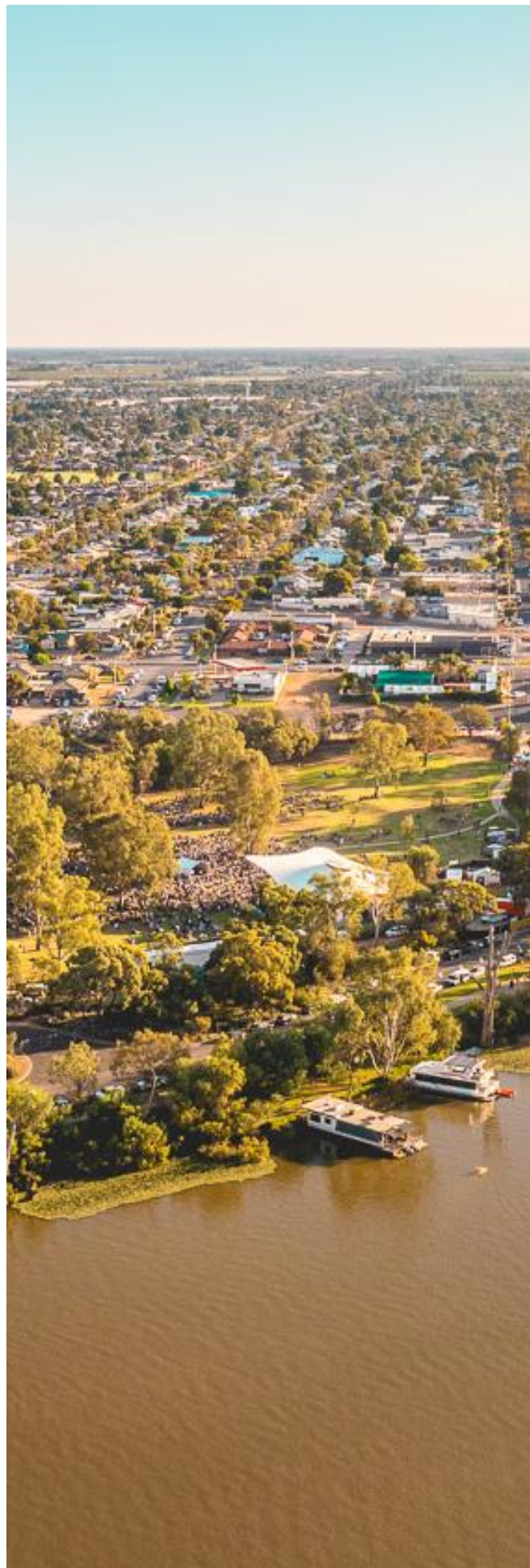
Visitor expenditure for 2025 reached \$359 million, with overnight visitors contributing 78% of this figure at an average spend of \$703 per person, compared to \$143 for day trip visitors. The broader Murray region welcomed 6.73 million visitors and generated \$2.5 billion in domestic expenditure in 2025, with similar trends showing higher spend and volume from overnight visitors. These figures highlight the significant economic contribution of tourism and the value of overnight visitation to both our immediate region and the wider Murray region.



Strategic Considerations

The following presents an overview of the strategic considerations that will shape this Strategy. These focus on leveraging the region's natural assets, addressing the geographic location and transport connectivity, and consider gaps in product and events.

- **Distance from major cities and critical population mass**
- **Limitations of accessible and cost - effective transport**
- **Targeting the purpose of visitation**
- **Shift in demand for Visitor Services**
- **The role of Council and key partners in the visitor economy**
- **Unlocking underutilised natural assets**
- **Events as a driver of visitation**



Strategic Framework

Strategic Intent

'The Mildura region is a renowned destination inspired by the beauty of the Murray River, where culturally rich landscapes, distinct events and exceptional hospitality invite visitors to live like a local and return again and again.'

Objectives

1. Engage the tourism industry to create a collaborative and united team, that generates experiences and offers which appeal to the region's existing and emerging target audiences.
2. Support the development of tourism experiences that celebrate the region's strengths and align with current market demand.
3. Leverage and expand the calendar of events to drive visitation and increase length of stay.
4. Invest in infrastructure and product development projects that support the region to become a destination of choice.

Measures of Success

- Growth in visitation and expenditure, aiming to reach pre-pandemic visitation levels by year 5 of the strategy (approximately 1.5% p.a.).
- Increase investment in the visitor economy including tourism infrastructure and product development through both public and private investment channels.
- Attraction and growth of a diverse calendar of events that drive visitation across seasons and markets.
- Stronger destination awareness and higher intent to visit the region among aligned target markets.

Strategic Priority

Strategic Priority 1. Industry Capability, Innovation And Growth – We will focus on strengthening the capacity, capability, and sustainability of the region's tourism industry through targeted industry development, training and education, and coordinated product development. We recognise that a successful visitor economy depends on a skilled, engaged, and innovative industry that can respond to changing visitor expectations and emerging market opportunities.

Strategic Priority 2. Inspiring, Informing And Engaging Visitors – We will examine and improve how the region presents to the market and how the destination integrates with all stages of the visitor journey. This strategic priority encompasses destination marketing, digital presence and visitor services taking a holistic and coordinated approach to the visitor experience.

Strategic Priority 3. Driving Visitation Through Sustainable Events And Activations – We will focus on the strategic use of events and activations to attract visitors, increase length of stay and spend and disperse visitors physically and seasonally. A stronger focus on a sustainable approach to events is reflected in this strategic priority.

Strategic Priority 4. Investment For Future Tourism Growth – We will aim to attract and enable one-off and ongoing investment to support the growth and management of the visitor economy in the region. We recognise the role of Council in facilitating investment in supporting tourism infrastructure and attracting private investment in tourism businesses such as accommodation and attractions.

Strategic Priority 5. Collaboration And Partnerships For A Stronger Visitor Economy – We will focus on strengthening collaboration between Council, tourism operators, events organisers, Traditional Owners, regional partners, and government agencies to support a cohesive and resilient visitor economy. It reinforces that strong partnerships are essential to delivering coordinated marketing, product development, events, and investment outcomes that benefit the region.

Project Context



Introduction

The Mildura Tourism Strategy 2026-2031 has been designed to guide Council’s efforts in attracting high-impact events and leveraging tourism development opportunities. This Strategy will play a critical role in enhancing the region’s appeal as a vibrant and attractive destination.

Through this Strategy, Council aims to foster sustainable growth, strengthen the regional identity, and deliver meaningful outcomes for the local community and visitors.

In developing the Strategy, consideration has been given to the current status of the region’s visitor economy and the broader regional, state and national context and identified opportunities where strategic partnerships can deliver the greatest value.

The strategic framework that forms the foundation of the Strategy has been developed through extensive research and data analysis, stakeholder engagement and informed strategic thinking.

The vision is clear, the objectives are achievable and realistic, and the measures provide a strong foundation to ensure the Strategy is delivered in an effective and timely manner.

Scope of Works

This report has been prepared through completion of the following scope of works:

Project Inception and Situation Analysis	- Reviewed 20+ strategic documents. - Research into target markets. - High level product audit taking stock of key attractions, supporting products, events and infrastructure. - Site visits to key towns and attractions. - Visitation data analysis.
Stakeholder Engagement	- Industry and Community Workshops (2) - Council Workshops (3) - External stakeholder Meetings (4) - Business and Community Survey (63 respondents)
Strategic Framework	- Identification of issues and opportunities, based on assessment, site visits, engagement and product audits. - Development of strategic framework, including strategic intent, objectives and an identification of priority projects.
Strategy	Incorporating all the key inputs into a practical strategic approach that Council can realistically deliver to support and grow the visitor economy in the region.

The Destination

Our municipality is the largest in Victoria, covering over 22,000 square km and home to over 57,000 residents. Located approximately 550km from Melbourne and 396km from Adelaide, the region is accessible by air and road. The municipality includes a network of inland towns such as Merbein, Red Cliffs and Ouyen which will be considered in the Strategy when it comes to visitor dispersal and increasing length of stay.

In 2025, the region welcomed over 647,000 visitors, reflecting its growing appeal as a distinctive and multifaceted destination. Of these, 61% stayed overnight, 35% visited on day trips, and 3% were international travellers.

Visitors are drawn to the region's unique strengths, including its ancient natural landscapes, breathtaking night skies, warm, sunny climate and of course the mighty Murray River. The region's reputation for high-quality, locally grown food and drink further enhances its appeal, offering an authentic and immersive experience that celebrates the region's agricultural heritage and relaxed lifestyle.

Events play a significant part in the visitor economy and drive year-round visitation to special interest events, led by the critical mass and diversity of motor sports events, agricultural events the likes of the Mildura Show and Mildura Field Days and regional arts and culture events.

Underpinning the visitor experience at all stages of the visitor journey are marketing activities and visitor services, that raise awareness of the destination and guide visitors whilst they are in the region encouraging them to ultimately stay longer and spend more.

This Strategy will consider how all elements of the visitor economy can work together effectively and outline our role in building a thriving local tourism industry.

Figure 1: Mildura Regional Context



Source: Mildura Rural City Council 2024

Strategic Context & Considerations



Strategic Alignment

Underpinning the success of the Mildura Tourism Strategy is the alignment to existing strategic policy and direction at a local, regional, state and national level.

Relevant documents reviewed are listed in the adjacent table and include government plans and strategies. Some of the strategies are recently expired but have been reviewed to inform the development of the new Strategy.

Key tourism documents include the Murray Region Destination Management Plan, the regional plan for the Visitor Economy Partnership (VEP) and the connector between local and state government. This plan was revised in 2025 to reflect the changing environment and to incorporate further stakeholder input into the plan.

Experience Victoria 2033 is the State plan on the supply side of the tourism industry with Visit Victoria 2030 covering the State’s demand strategy. Both strategies speak to the strengths of the State and recognise the anticipated recovery and growth of the sector post-COVID.

Other key documents are detailed in Appendix B.

Table 1: Related Strategic Documents

National
• Thrive 2030
State
• Experience Victoria 2033 • Visit Victoria 2030
Regional
• Murray Region Destination Management Plan 2023-2027 and 2025 update • Mildura Wentworth Local Area Plan 2023 • Mallee Regional Economic Development Strategy 2022
Local
• MRCC Visitor Servicing Strategic Plan 2025 • MRCC Events Strategic Plan 2025 • MRCC Council Plan 2025 – 2029 • MRCC Community Vision 2021-2040 (2025 update) • Mildura Regional Motorsport Strategy 2023 – 2028 • Mildura RV, Caravan and Camping Strategy 2022



Community Vision and Council Plan

Our Tourism Strategy is part of Council's **Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework**, which contributes to the delivery of the 2040 Community Vision and overarching 2025 Council Plan.

The Strategy supports the vision for Mildura Rural City Council to be a “liveable people friendly community” and aligns with the five strategic pillars (and subsequent strategic outcomes) outlined in the Council Plan: *Environment, Community, Place, Economy, Leadership*.

Figure 2: Mildura Rural City Council Strategic Pillars and Outcomes



Source: Mildura Rural City Council Plan, Council Plan, 2025.

Strategic Considerations

Distance from major cities and critical population mass

The region is a significant distance from its closest capital cities located 396km from Adelaide in South Australia and 542km from Melbourne in Victoria. As a result, the region lies beyond a convenient travel range for most day-trip and short-stay visitors, reducing opportunities for spontaneous visitation. The distance forces all visitors into deliberate trip planning which increases the chance for visitors to be attracted to other destinations that are closer to home.

To compete with other destinations, targeted marketing and positioning is required for visitors to consider the region and see value and interest over other more accessible destinations. A clear understanding of where target audiences are based will help direct marketing activity, targeting people with the strongest propensity to visit the region.

Limitations of accessible and cost-effective transport

The region is challenged by limited affordable transport options, creating barriers for visitors and residents. There is no passenger rail service leaving people reliant on long distance buses, private vehicles or expensive flights from Melbourne. There are no direct flights from Adelaide and one daily direct flight to and from Sydney. The current air services are cost prohibitive and, when compared to other destinations' prices, impact the region's appeal. Additionally, transport services within the destination are limited, so a fly-in visitor will require a hire car to explore the region.

The opportunity to attract short stay visitors is further limited by the distance and time required for road travel to the region via private vehicle and bus.

These transport constraints place the region in a difficult position to become a destination of choice and grow its tourism market share.

Targeting the purpose of visitation

Currently, visitors' most common purpose of visit is holiday and leisure (49%) followed by visiting friends and relatives (37%) and business (10%).

Visitor markets vary in spend and length of stay, making it essential that the region's marketing campaigns are clearly aligned to defined target audiences and the destination's strategic objectives. Developing a strong understanding of target audiences—including visitor behaviours, seasonal visitation patterns, and spend—alongside consideration of external influences, will inform more effective marketing campaigns and product development that attract the right visitors, at the right time, and maximise yield.

Shift in demand for Visitor Services

Consumer research of visitor preferences for information when travelling within Australia, indicates a growing preference for digital visitor information.

Research shows whilst in a region visitors are primarily using smart phones to access information (83%). Visitors who didn't use a Visitor Information Centre (VIC) suggested this was due to a preference for digital tools. Visitors to VICs are generally looking for information regarding specific businesses and attractions, directions and assistance. After a trip, visitors are likely to share their experience via word of mouth (54%) and social media (47%). Almost half (46%) will leave a review and 11% of visitors do not share their experience at all. This demonstrates the critical importance of maintaining an accurate, always-on digital presence. This engages prospective visitors and effectively guides them toward making a booking.

The role of Council and key partners in the visitor economy

Council plays a critical role in many visitor economy activities including marketing and promotion, industry development, visitor services and events. Council adopts a range of roles, including:

- **Provider** - Council provides, delivers, as well as enables/coordinates services and infrastructure.
- **Advocate** - Council advocates to government and other decision-makers to deliver outcomes.
- **Facilitator** - Council brings groups of people and organisations together to form partnerships, create opportunities and solve problems.
- **Partner** - Council partners with service providers, agencies, businesses and community groups to deliver services, infrastructure and events.
- **Regulator** - Council is responsible for regulating a range of activities throughout the municipality, influencing local laws, governance practices and planning mechanisms to influence outcomes

A group of key partners including other government agencies, community and private industry will be needed to support Council to successfully implement this Strategy.

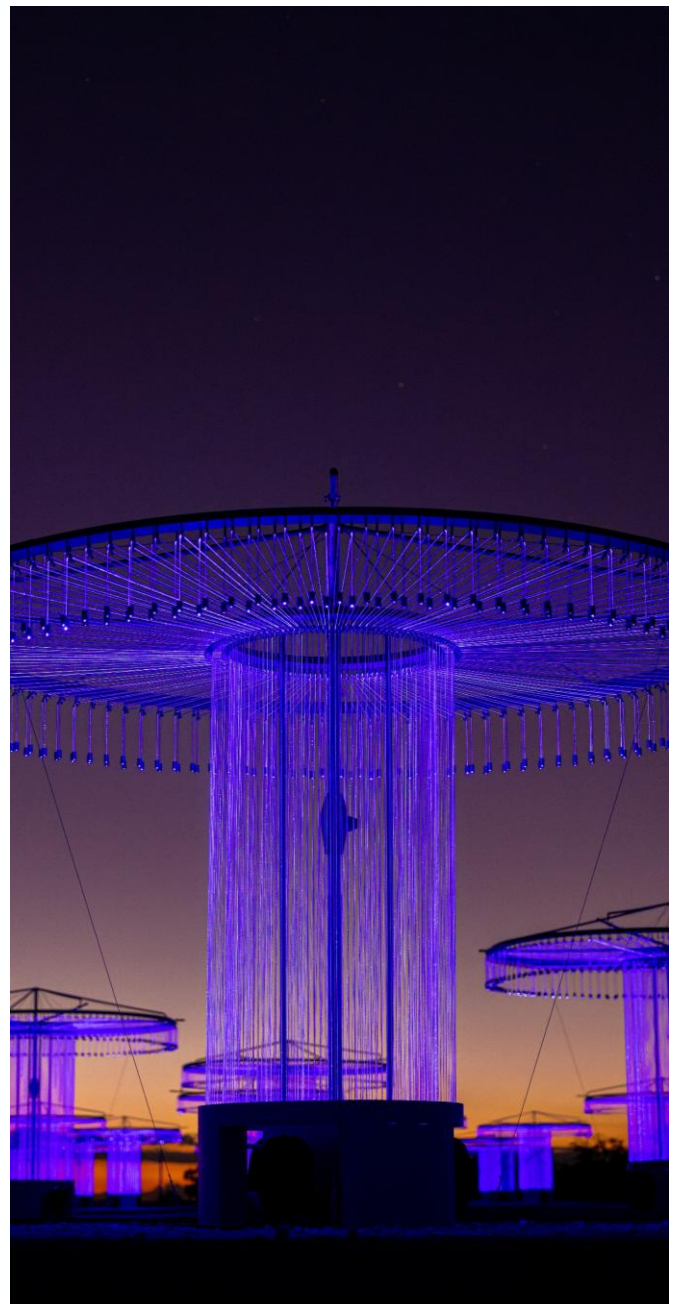
Unlocking underutilised natural assets

The Murray River and the collection of world-class National Parks in the region, appeal to visitors driven by nature and outdoor adventure. Whilst there are a proportion of these types of visitors drawn to the region, visitation could be increased through improvements in accessibility, awareness and bookable experiences. By introducing curated, packaged products such as kayak, paddle board and canoe hire, guided river tours, hiking and stargazing experiences, bird-watching tours, or transport-inclusive national park trips, the region can convert passive interest into active participation. Creating packaged products and activities also aligns with broader visitor trends toward short-break, experience-led travel and has the propensity to grow length of stay and spend.

Events as a driver of visitation

Events can be used as a strategic lever for driving visitation to the region, with the potential to increase demand across key visitor segments, fill gaps in the calendar and drive visitor spend.

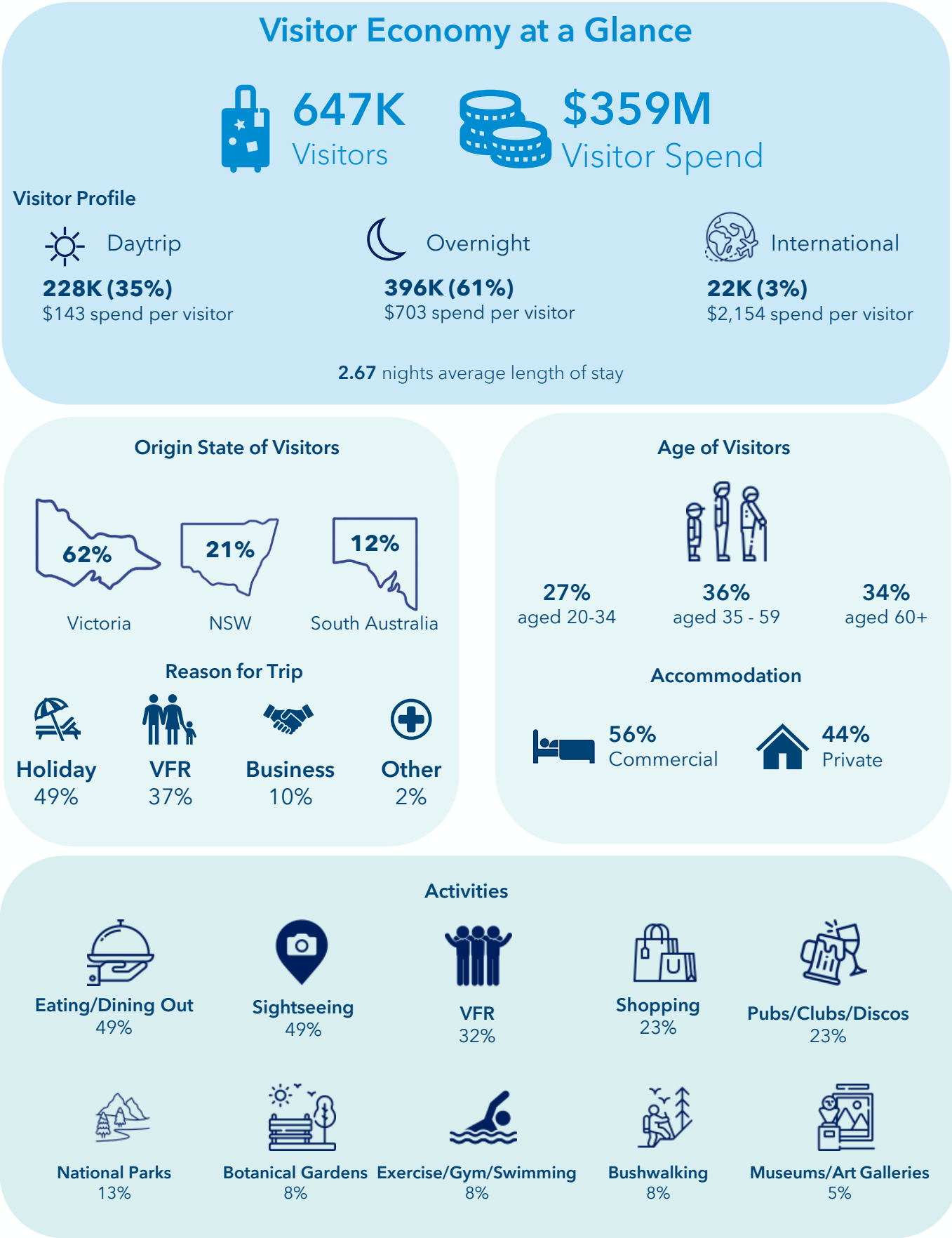
Well-curated events such as food and wine festivals, cultural celebrations and arts events are an incentive to visit, particularly for holiday and leisure visitors who are seeking new destinations. Understanding the markets drawn to various events types and their economic impact can assist to determine which events to attract and grow.



Destination Landscape



Figure 3: Mildura Rural City Council Visitor Economy 2025.



Visitor Economy Analysis

Analysis of visitation data (figure 3) highlights clear trends and identifies opportunities for the region.

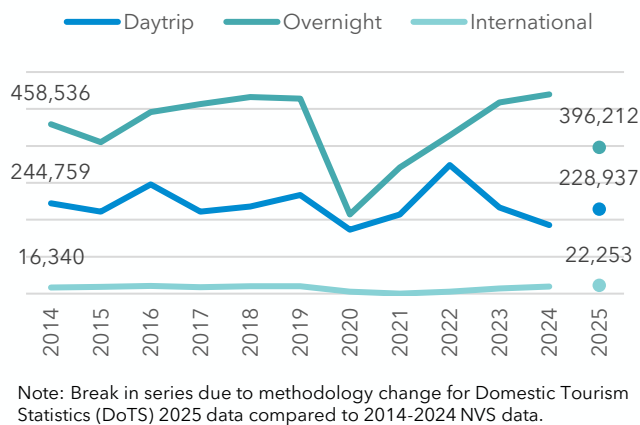
- Day trip visitors account for 229,000 visits (35%), while overnight visitors represent the majority at 396,000 visits (61%). Overnight visitors deliver significantly higher value, spending on average \$703 per person and staying for an average of 2.67 nights, reflecting a strong length of stay. This presents an opportunity to develop packaged experiences that align with visitor time in the region and encourage extended stays.
- Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) is a key driver of demand, accounting for 37% of all visitation. These visitors are more likely to stay in private accommodation (44%) and generate spend across other categories, including dining and attractions. This suggests strong potential to leverage local residents as ambassadors to increase awareness and participation in the region's tourism offering.
- Business travel accounts for 10% of all visitation. Routine travel has been excluded from the 2025 TRA data collection, stating *'the new data will support updated treatment of fly-in fly-out work to exclude routine travel.'* This has impacted the large number of repeat business visitors to the region recorded in the data. In 2024, 29% of visitors indicated business as the reason for trip. This market presents an opportunity to increase discretionary spend outside business hours and the opportunity to encourage them for return leisure visits with family and friends.
- Interstate markets contribute to the total visitor mix with 21% of visitors travelling from New South Wales and 12% from South Australia. This highlights opportunities to strengthen engagement with key cross-border markets and grow repeat visitation.
- Visitation is relatively evenly distributed across the year, with each season attracting a consistent share of visitors—summer (21%), autumn (31%), winter (26%) and spring (22%) (TRA, 2024). This balanced seasonality provides a strong foundation for continuing to grow year-round activity and reduces reliance on peak periods.
- Dining out is the most popular visitor activity, with 49% of visitors eating at restaurants or cafés, highlighting the strength of the region's food and hospitality offering. This is matched by sightseeing (49%), which would account for general exploration of the region. This is followed by visiting friends and relatives (32%), attending pubs, clubs and discos (23%), and shopping for pleasure (23%). These patterns indicate strong demand for social, food-based and town-centre experiences.
- In contrast, engagement with natural assets is comparatively low. Only 13% of visitors reported visiting National Parks, and just 17% participated in water-based activities, despite the Murray River being a recognised hero asset. This may reflect barriers related to awareness, accessibility, product availability or distance. These results highlight a clear opportunity to strengthen product development, improve promotion, and enhance access to nature-based and water-based experiences to better leverage the region's natural assets.

Trends and Forecasts

Historical Visitation

Historical visitation to the region between 2014 and 2024 is depicted in Figure 4, with 2025 visitation figures highlighted separately for each visitor type. Between 2014-2024, domestic overnight visitation was consistently the strongest market for visitors to our region. Domestic overnight visitation increased from 458,536 in 2018 to 539,466 in 2024, representing an average annual increase of 1.6%. Domestic daytrip visitors also account for a considerable proportion of overall visitation to the region. However, the number of daytrip visitors has observed a decreasing trend over the ten years to 2024, falling from 244,759 visitors in 2014 to 185,747 in 2024. International visitors do not currently represent a large amount of visitation to the region, yet have rebounded well from 2022 onwards, rising to 19,007 visitors in 2024. This uptick presents an opportunity for continued growth of the international visitor market to the region over the next five years. However, attracting international visitors should remain secondary to maintaining a strong focus on the domestic overnight markets. In 2025, the region attracted higher daytrip (228,937) and international visitors (22,253) relative to 2024, while the number of overnight visitors (396,212) was lower relative to 2024.

Figure 4: Historical Visitation by Visitor Type, Mildura Rural City Council, 2014-2025



Forecast Visitation

Visitation forecasts indicate that our region can anticipate an additional 98,753 visitors in 2035 relative to 2025, with visitation projected to reach 746,154 visitors. Forecast visitation to the region from 2026 through to 2035 is shown in Figure 5. This is based on TRA data for the 2015 to 2025 calendar years. The scenario presented is based on the midpoint of:

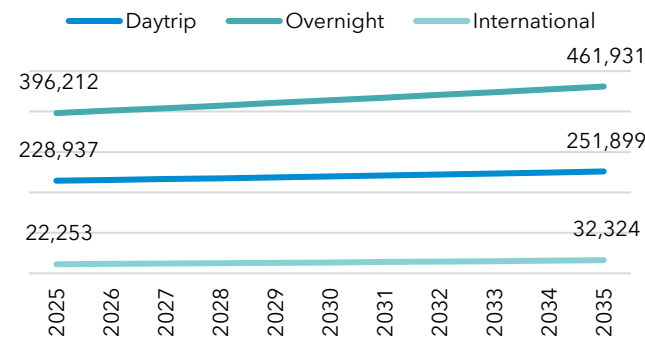
- Combined Victorian and South Australian historical population growth;
- Historic visitation growth for the region;
- TRA forecasts for visitation growth in Victoria and South Australia combined; and
- TRA forecast international inbound arrivals.

Overall, the region can expect to accommodate an additional 9,875 visitors to the region per annum, which represents an average annual growth rate of 1.4%. The largest projected growth is expected in the domestic overnight market, rising to 461,931 visitors (+65,719) in 2035 at an average annual increase of 1.5%.

Forecast visitation does not consider macroeconomic impacts, including cost of living pressures impacting holiday and leisure travel, as well as unforeseen economic shocks.

Introducing new tourism product to bolster the visitor experience in the region will impact the forecasts and could lead to higher and faster growth in visitation. Similarly, transport connectivity upgrades and improvements to air access can influence visitation projections.

Figure 5: Forecast Visitation by Visitor Type, Mildura Rural City Council, 2025-2035



Local and Regional Context

The region is positioned as part of a broader regional Murray-centric destination which is rich in natural and cultural attractions. This provides a strategic opportunity to look beyond the local government and state boundaries and work with a more regional vision.

Visitation figures demonstrate there is a significant audience in neighbouring LGAs who are likely to be attracted to our region as a destination.

As the central hub of the western Murray region, the city of Mildura is surrounded by iconic nature-based drawcards. This includes an attractive and accessible stretch of the Murray River, as well as world-renowned protected areas such as Mungo National Park, part of the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area, one of the region's most compelling outback experiences and other leading National Parks such as Murray Sunset and Hattah Kulkyne.

Our region could position itself as the ideal base for multi-day nature-based travel and a service centre for restocking for remote campers and caravanners.

Our region also sits on several significant east-west and north-south travel corridors, including routes from Adelaide to Sydney, Melbourne to the outback, and Canberra to Adelaide. From South Australia, it acts as a natural gateway to the Murray region and the broader destinations to the east.

A collective regional marketing effort with related partner regions is likely to maximise reach, consistency and return on investment, when underpinned by close collaboration with relevant State and National tourism bodies.

Murray Regional Tourism (MRT) will continue to play a key role in supporting Mildura's visitor economy through industry leadership, capacity building, advocacy and collaboration. MRT will help strengthen the tourism sector by providing training, industry insights and reporting, stakeholder engagement opportunities, strategic project delivery, trade and media support and advocacy for investment and funding across all levels of government.

Mildura Region (Mildura and Wentworth LGAs)



1.03M

Visitors



\$532M

Visitor Spend



Daytrip Visitors

394,814 (38%)

\$185 spend per visitor



Overnight Visitors

615,114 (60%)

\$665 spend per visitor

2.55 nights ALOS

Murray Region (Murray Tourism Region including 13 LGAs)



6.73M

Visitors



\$2.5B

Visitor Spend



Daytrip Visitors

2.96M (44%)

\$152 spend per visitor



Overnight Visitors

3.70M (55%)

\$439 spend per visitor

2.35 nights ALOS

Target Markets

At a local level, target markets have been identified based on demographic and behavioural characteristics and include:

- Arts and Culture
- Family Fun
- Outdoor Adventure
- Gastronomy
- Grey Nomads
- Events

These have been aligned to the broader regional markets in Figure 6.

The TRA visitation data and primary visitor market research builds an image of the target market for our region. Segmentation for the Murray Region can be seen on the following page.

The three leading markets for the region are:

- Murray Habituals
- Explorer and Discoverer
- Road Trip

A large proportion of visitors to the region (37%) are visiting for the purpose of visiting friends and relatives. These visitors are likely to stay in private accommodation and invest time in localised activities. This audience aligns to the Murray Habitual market and is likely a repeat visitor.

Almost half of all visitors (49%) are in the region for the purpose of holiday and leisure, likely aligned to the road trip and explorer and discoverer market. This market seeks new and exciting experiences and destinations. This presents an opportunity for product development that meets the expectations of this audience.

The product strengths of the region, the Murray River, National Parks and culture and heritage link directly to the identified leading markets. The emergence of younger nomads is recognised by primary market research and stakeholders in the region. Products and experiences will benefit from adapting to this socially conscious market. There is a desire from this audience to undertake large numbers of activities and experiences, and they are keen to research these in advance primarily via social media.

The location of the region, whilst a challenge to attracting short stay visitors and mass markets, is appealing to the road trip audience for whom the journey is as important as the destination. This is a dispersal opportunity to encourage visitors to take their time making their way through the expansive area.

There is alignment of these target markets to the State identified audiences of lifestyle leaders and high value visitors, predominantly in the road trip and explorer and discoverer audiences.

This demonstrates the importance of aligning with State marketing campaigns to focus on attracting more of this segment who generally stay longer and spend more.

A proportion of visitors to the region (10%) are visiting for business purposes. Whilst these visitors don't align directly to the leading target markets for the region, there is the opportunity to engage and inform this cohort with the aim to convert them from just business visitors into returning holiday/leisure visitors.

Figure 6: Target Markets Overview

Our target markets and their goals				
Arts and Culture To discover new artistic inspiration and to relax and unwind in a scenic and culturally stimulating environment.	Outdoor Adventure To explore new and exciting outdoor destinations and challenge themselves with various adventure sports and activities.	Grey Nomads To explore new and diverse destinations across Australia and to enjoy a relaxed and enriching lifestyle.	Family Fun To discover new artistic inspiration for her marketing projects and to relax and unwind in a scenic and culturally stimulating environment.	Gastronomy To discover and experience unique and extraordinary culinary delights.
Murray Region target markets				
Murray Habituals The traditional Murray region visitor who travels to the Murray region at least once every two years – the Murray's biggest advocate.	Back to Basics The simple traveller, the free spirit - escaping to nature to press pause on real life, spend time with loved ones, and hit reset.	Road Trip Inspired by the freedom of a road trip, this market wants to explore the country, see new destinations and escape the city.	Explorer & Discoverer Socially conscious and adventurous travellers, open to travelling to new destinations and seeking new, unique experiences.	Luxury Travellers With a holiday mindset of indulgence, the luxury traveller seeks relaxation achieved through high quality experiences.
Who are they?				
• All ages and travel groups. • Large friend/relative group travel. • Mostly VIC (51%) and NSW (26%). • Self-sufficient travellers. • Stay for long trips during peak periods.	• Mostly 40-60 years old without children or with adult children. • Preference for longer stays at any time of year (49%).	• Mostly NSW (31%) and VIC (22%), high proportion born overseas. • Take longer trips less frequently. • Young couples, friends, families with older children, grey nomads.	• Young families and singles, mostly aged 18-40 years old. • Middle income earners. • Travel on weekends and more frequently throughout the year.	• Mostly older travellers, predominately adult couples. • Higher income. • Likely to travel midweek or any time of year.
Alignment to Visit Victoria's target market segments				
-	-	Lifestyle Leaders	Lifestyle Leaders	High-Value Travellers
Strength of market alignment to our region				
STRONG	MODERATE	STRONG	STRONG	MODERATE
• Self-sufficient travellers who typically self-cater and stay in holiday homes, caravan parks or free camping. • Stay for long trips during peak periods. • Travel in large groups, typically family groups, friend groups or multi-generational family groups.	• High overlap in characteristics with Murray Habituals, but don't regularly visit or have a strong allegiance to the region. • Seek a relaxing nature-based experience away from the hustle and bustle of town. • Caravan and camping.	• Travel for longer periods than other segments - opportunity to increase yield and length of stay. • Most likely to travel midweek and off-peak assist in reducing seasonality. • Opportunity for dispersal across the region as open to exploring all the Murray region's destinations.	• The largest market segment, predominately Millennials, not yet fully captured by the Murray region. • Young and open to new experiences, most likely to engage in a diverse range of experiences. • Want to pack their trip with activities and experiences - a key opportunity to increase visitor yield.	• Critical market opportunity to grow visitor yield and support investment in more boutique offerings. • Attracted to food and wine, so growth in this sector is an opportunity to support local producers. • A shift in the perception of Murray region destinations.

Products, Events and Experiences

The Murray Region Destination Management Plan (DMP) identifies a broad range of product strengths across the region. In table 2, the region has been benchmarked against the broader regional strengths. There is strong alignment across the region and many of the regional strengths, nature, fishing, golf and First Nations are also key product strengths for our region.

The primary strengths nature, fishing and golf are evident in the product offering and see moderate levels of participation for visitors. The assets are strong for these product strengths, but the participation levels do not match this as strongly.

The secondary strengths are food, drink and produce, water sports and river cruising, festivals and events, history and heritage and First Nations. These products exist and have capacity to be strengthened. There is a growing appetite for authentic First Nations experiences which are a pillar and focus of the State's tourism strategy.

Emerging strengths include arts and culture and business events. Arts and culture events are rapidly emerging with new events and attractions such as the Trail of Lights (ToL) and the partner installation of Fibre Optic Symphonic Orchestra (FOSO) in Wentworth. There is a large proportion of existing business visitors that could drive business events visitation to the region. A lack of business events infrastructure at scale, such as conference centres and corporate accommodation limit the viability of this as a growth area.

Table 2: Product Strengths of Mildura Rural City and the Broader Murray Region

Product Category	Murray Region	Our Region
Nature Based		
Fishing		
Water Sports		
Houseboats & River Cruising		
Food, Drink & Produce		
Golf		
Festivals & Events		
Business Events		
History & Heritage		
First Nations		
Arts & Culture		

Primary Strength
 Secondary Strength
 Emerging Strength

Current Hero Products

The hero products for the region are the Murray River, the world-class ToL art installation and motorsports events.

Currently, these products are all driving visitation to the region and should continue to be developed and featured in the marketing of the region.

These products are all distinctly different yet have the potential to leverage from one another. This poses the opportunity to develop packages and marketing campaigns that speak to niche audiences.

The Murray River is an outstanding asset for the region and is a leading tourism attractor for the bordering states of Victoria and NSW. Locally, it is best suited to house boats, waterskiing, fishing and passive water sports including paddle sports, sightseeing and bird watching. Improvements to accessibility can only increase these activities and attract more visitors.

The ToL is a world-class attraction that has the propensity to drive ongoing visitation to the region. The installation will be semi-permanent for some years to come and demonstrates limited-edition exclusivity that feeds curiosity of visitors. When packaged with the installation of FOSO in Wentworth, there is significant appeal to a range of visitor audiences not just arts enthusiasts. Fly/drive accommodation packages should be explored to attract the urban arts and culture market to this unique attraction.

The region has a long-established reputation for motorsports with a diverse calendar of highly regarded events that attract passionate competitors and spectators from across Australia. Taking ownership of this strength and strategically leveraging the audiences to experience other local attractions and activities whilst in the region can lead to increasing length of stay and repeat visitation.

Murray River



Trail of Lights (ToL)



Motorsports Events



Primary Product Strengths

The primary product strength of nature is led by the Murray River and the multitude of activities that can be undertaken in and around the water. Other waterways such as Kings Billabong, Lake Hattah and Lake Mournpall also provide opportunities for visitors to engage in freshwater activities.

Houseboats are synonymous with Mildura's wide stretch of the Murray, drawing visitors for an iconic river-based experience.

Fishing aligns with water and nature as a product strength and often goes hand in hand with National Parks for camping and caravanning.

Golf is a strength that aligns with the broader Murray region. There is a strong supply of golf experiences in our region, with four leading golf courses and a driving range, plus Wentworth Golf Club in NSW. This is another packaging opportunity to capture these visitors for other activities and encourage repeat visitation.

Challenges

- Limited hero products and experiences that celebrate the region's outstanding nature-based assets.
- Difficulty accessing on-water activities due to infrastructure, equipment hire available or safety constraints.
- Underutilised assets that can encourage visitor dispersal across the region, including Hattah - Kulkyn National Park.
- Authorised free camping options are limited.

Opportunities

- Water activation through on-water product development and equipment hire.
- Packaging of products and experiences that extend beyond the LGA border and align to the target markets for the region, including golf trips and camping and caravanners.
- Proximity to Mungo National Park and Perry Sand Hills in NSW.
- Development of culturally safe tourism experiences that strengthen connection to country and community wellbeing including respectful storytelling and experience development.

Hattah Kulkyn National Park



Kings Billabong



Golf



Secondary Product Strengths

There are a large number of secondary product strengths which speaks to the fact that there is a diverse product offering in the region. These strengths include food, wine and produce, water sports and river cruising, festivals and events, history and heritage and arts and culture.

Food, drink and produce is a long-standing strength of the region and well-known icons such as Stefano's Restaurant continue to raise awareness and draw visitors. This story needs to continue to be told as new businesses and producers are rivalling urban offerings.

Access to food and drink based agritourism is extremely limited and is an opportunity to showcase the agricultural strength of the region. Starting small with farm gate offerings and farmers markets can engage the visitor in grassroots agriculture stories and experiences.

Arts and culture has a strong foundation in Mildura with the Mildura Arts Centre (MAC) housing the gallery, sculpture park and theatre and the neighbouring Rio Vista Historic House. Open daily the venue attracts regular visitation to its broad offering. The opportunity exists to build on MAC's foundation though attracting high-profile exhibitions, shows and events.

Sustaining and growing major events will assist to attract visitors, promote visitor dispersal and increase economic contributions. Focusing on growing arts and culture events outside of peak periods is a key opportunity to capitalise on both these emerging strengths and grow an emerging visitor market.

Challenges

- Regulation and red tape hold up businesses in the opening and evolution phase.
- Limited promotion for contemporary food and drink offering.
- Lack of large-scale, indoor event venues.
- Event organisers are often working in isolation.
- The digital 'What's On Mildura' platform could be optimised for an improved user experience.
- Volunteer burnout is impacting the delivery of events.
- Events scheduling is clashing with neighbouring destinations and hallmark events.
- Dispersal of activities outside of Mildura city limits.
- Limited arts focused events.

Opportunities

- Focus on event attraction to fill gaps in the existing event calendar with complementary events not the same type of events.
- Investigate the opportunity to host visiting exhibitions at Mildura Arts Centre (MAC).
- Wider promotion and packaging of ToL and FOSO.
- Attract major arts and culture events that attract visitors and increase length of stay.
- Leverage the proximity to the Silo Art Trail.
- Focus on including events in 'always on' marketing of the region.
- Leverage visitors who are in the region for sports events to engage in other activities.



Emerging Product Strengths

Business Events are an emerging strength for the region with strong evidence in the existing visitation of business visitors. The ability to attract and host business events is hampered by the lack of a large-scale conference venue. There is appetite for regional business events in the sector, however, for such events to be an attractive proposition, the required amenity and infrastructure needs to be in place.

The emerging strength of First Peoples culture and tradition provides an opportunity to tell the local story through experiences on and off country. Messaging through visitor services and marketing channels will help to engage visitors and raise awareness of the First Nations story of the region. There is an identified opportunity to develop bookable, immersive cultural experiences.

Challenges

- Lack of large-scale conference venue.
- Limited corporate accommodation.
- There are very few First Nations experiences that visitors can regularly access.

Opportunities

- Engage with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Enterprises to explore the development of experiences and products.
- Promote the local First Nations story leveraging the strong awareness of Mungo National Park.
- Continue to tell the story of new and emerging food and drink businesses particularly through digital platforms.
- Leverage our membership with Business Events Victoria to attract boutique business events and conferences to the region.



Destination Performance Index

The Destination Performance Index (DPI), developed by Urban Enterprise, is a tool used to evaluate the relative performance of visitor destinations across Australia. The DPI ranks Australian LGAs using seven key indicators related to their visitor economies, including:

- **Total Visitation** - Demonstrates the overall strength and scale of the visitor economy.
- **Total Overnight Visitation** - Demonstrates the destination's ability to attract overnight stays, contributing to higher visitor yield.
- **Total International Visitation** - Suggests the destination's iconic status and its comparative strength in international markets.
- **Seasonality** - Assess the spread of visitation across the year, supporting year-round employment and business sustainability.
- **Product and Experience Consumption** - Measures the breadth and uptake of tourism products and experiences, indicating the destination's level of development.
- **Visitor Staying in Commercial Accommodation** - Demonstrates visitor willingness to spend on accommodation, signaling higher economic yield and level of private investment.

The DPI aims to identify the comparative strengths and weaknesses of visitor destinations, highlighting opportunities for improvement to ensure long-term sustainability. The DPI is primarily based on data from the TRA National (NVS) and International Visitor Surveys (IVS). Due to sampling limitations, only LGAs that attract more than 50,000 visitors annually are included in the rankings. The total number of Australian LGAs assessed in the index is 537.

The DPI demonstrates that our region is performing among some of the leading destination Victorian Councils that are ranked in the top 20 such as Ballarat, Campaspe, Hepburn, Mornington Peninsula and Bass Coast.

Based on the results of the destination performance index the following are the key findings:

- Our region ranks within the top 100 LGAs in Australia for tourism performance and in the top 20 in Victoria.
- Only Campaspe Shire has a higher ranking than our region in the broader Murray tourism region.
- The major comparative disadvantage is the level of product and experience consumption by visitors in the region (ranked 167 in Australia).
- The DPI highlights the need for the development and investment in products and experiences within the region.
- Seasonality ranks positively demonstrating an even spread of visitation dispersed throughout the year ranking second in the Murray Tourism Region.
- Overnight visitation is performing well, and our region is ranking as number 1 in the Murray Tourism region.

Table 3: Australian LGA Ranking, Mildura Rural City

Category	Rank
Total Visitation	125
Total Overnight Visitation	55
Total International Visitation	126
Seasonality	53
Product & Experience Consumption	167
Visitors Staying In Commercial Accommodation	62
Total	70

Source: Urban Enterprise, 2026.

Table 4: Comparative Ranking of Mildura LGA

	Mildura Rural City Council	No. of LGAs
Murray Region	2	13
Victoria	16	79
Australia	70	537

Source: Urban Enterprise, 2026.

Destination Management



The Structure and Role of Council in the Visitor Economy

The tourism portfolio sits with Council's Economic Development and Tourism Branch.

The budget allocated to Council's tourism activities which includes strategic tourism (including industry development, marketing and promotion), visitor services and events is estimated at \$2.7 million (2025/26).

There is a newly formed Tourism Advisory Committee which has been introduced to support Council to deliver on tourism actions and provide industry insight.

Council also has a range of other tourism related partnerships and memberships including Business Events Victoria (BEV) and Victoria Tourism Industry Council (VTIC).

The official Visitor Economy Partnership (VEP) for the Murray region, is Murray Regional Tourism (MRT) which operates as a formalised and independent organisation that collaborates with State Government, neighbouring councils and industry to lead, market and grow the tourism sector. Council is currently reviewing its partnership agreement with MRT alongside the Murray River Councils Group.

Council's role in the visitor economy is to create an environment where tourism can thrive and support the local community. Key tasks include managing visitor information services, supporting and attracting events and local businesses, ensuring safety and general amenity. These areas of focus are outlined on page 32. Council shapes the destination identity through placemaking, investment attraction and marketing.



Areas of Focus

Council has identified the following key areas of focus in developing this strategy. They are:

1. Visitor Services
2. Events
3. Strategic Tourism (including industry development, marketing and promotion)

The following provides an introduction to each area and the key challenges and opportunities which have been reflected through the development of this Strategy.

Visitor Services

Council manages the accredited Mildura Visitor Information Centre, welcoming 89,919 visitors in 2024/25. An action from the previous strategy, to install Visitor Inspiration Points, is currently being delivered to support businesses to provide visitor services and create alternate locations where visitors can access information in region.

Digital visitor services (websites and social media) are currently led by the strategic tourism team, with visitor services staff providing input into the content on these channels. Visitor servicing is currently operating successfully in a traditional manner. To service visitors into the future, a stronger digital approach will be needed to complement the traditional activities. Ensuring visitors can gain access to accurate and useful information 24/7 at any stage of the visitor journey, will assist to convert from dreaming to booking. To retain the current level of face-to-face services and offer additional services at events, investigation into a visitor economy volunteers program is needed.

Leading challenges and opportunities identified include:

- Opportunity to leverage the positive perception of visitor services and offer more diverse activities as they are well received.
- Parking at the VIC is a challenge for large/long vehicles, and all vehicles during busy periods.
- Digital improvements are needed to effectively service the visitors 24/7 and adapt to the use of AI.
- Packaging opportunities for businesses.

Events

Council's primary role in relation to events is to administer event permits, provide funding support and provide general advice to event organisers. Event attraction is also coordinated by the events team, through strategic partnerships with key industry groups such as BEV, Sports Marketing Australia and MRT who help to facilitate this.

Council plays a facilitation role by enabling other organisations to deliver events, rather than leading the delivery itself. Adequate financial and staff resources are critical to attracting and supporting more events.

Leading challenges and opportunities identified include:

- Event attraction and business events need focus and dedicated resources.
- Repeat major events would encourage and align with attracting repeat visitation.
- Opportunity to explore a signature Mildura event.
- 'What's On Mildura' website is working well and would benefit from minor improvements in content and user experience.
- Current event infrastructure is unable to cater for large-scale events.
- External events are struggling with volunteers and funding.

To position our region as a leading event destination, a review of Council's events policy will be beneficial to clarify the definition of events and explain how Council works with different types of events. Strategically, attracting key external events to fill gaps in the existing event calendar that align with our region's product strengths is an ongoing role. Where possible repeat events will be beneficial to provide stability and reduce the impact on resourcing.

Strategic Tourism

Council's strategic tourism team is responsible for industry development, marketing and promotion activities. Leading challenges and opportunities identified include:

- Increased awareness of attractions outside Mildura city is needed to support dispersal.
- Opportunity to align the actual experiences in the region to marketing campaigns.
- Industry engagement must be improved for marketing programs to benefit all.
- Opportunity to leverage the tri state location.
- Capitalise on the twin river towns of Wentworth and Mildura.

Based on the research and stakeholder engagement for this Strategy there is a need for a clear strategic direction for marketing and promotion activity that aligns with State and national directions. This alignment will extend reach and is likely to deliver a stronger return on investment.

Supporting this, smaller scale independent campaigns at a local level that speak to target audiences will lean into assisting with dispersal and increasing spend and length of stay. The strength and professionalism of the digital presence including social media and websites should continue and would be a key responsibility of this team.

Industry and product development is also the role of the strategic tourism team. Currently, engagement includes regular communications via a newsletter sharing industry updates and opportunities to participate in activities and interactions for events and marketing campaigns. Through the MRT partnership there is a range of industry training and development opportunities that are offered to local tourism businesses.

Leading challenges and opportunities identified include:

- Opportunity for greater engagement with industry and increased provision of training and education.
- Opportunity to strengthen the role of Council in product development.
- Gaps in luxury and boutique accommodation.
- Opportunity to improve the water-focused products and experiences.
- Council red tape is a barrier to product development.
- Opportunity to strategically package attractions, experiences, accommodation and transport.

Evidenced through stakeholder engagement is a demonstrated desire for increased industry connection and the need for training and networking. Through deeper engagement with industry, Council will be able to support product development and growth.

There is strong potential for major infrastructure projects that can attract both public and private investment and stimulate targeted growth in the visitor economy, such as large-scale event facilities and enhanced riverfront development. The Strategic Tourism team would be involved in these types of projects.

Stakeholder Engagement

The development of this Strategy has been underpinned by in-depth stakeholder engagement, which has enabled a comprehensive understanding of the local conditions, challenges and opportunities for our region's visitor economy.

The table below details the stakeholder engagement program that took place across November and December 2025.

Table 5: Stakeholder Engagement Undertaken

Activity	Description	Participants
Council Workshops 3 workshops	- Council Tourism and Events Staff - Council Staff (related departments) - Tourism Advisory Committee	8 15 7
Industry Workshops 2 workshops in-region with industry and community (Note: Ouyen workshop cancelled due to lack of attendance)	- Tourism Operators and Related Business Events - Event Organisers and Industry	10 12
Business and Community Survey Online Survey open from 24 Nov – 22 Dec 2025	30 question online survey distributed publicly	63
1:1 Stakeholder Meetings 4 interviews with local business and other key stakeholders	- Murray Regional Tourism - Business Events Victoria (BEV) - Wentworth Shire Council (WSC) - First People of the Millewa-Mallee Aboriginal Corporation (FPMMAC)	4

Community and Business Survey Responses

The survey was open for public response between 24 November to 22 December 2025 and received 63 responses. Of these respondents, 32 (51%) live in the Mildura city limits and 19 (30%) live outside of Mildura city area, 9 (14%) from Wentworth Shire and 3 (5%) outside the LGA.

25 respondents (40%) own a business within the region. Sectors represented were:

- Accommodation (8),
- Events (4); and
- Retail (4).

38 respondents (60%) identified as women, 24 (38%) identified as men and 1 identified as non-binary or gender diverse.

The adjacent infographic depicts the key results of the survey which clearly articulated that Council's role in the visitor economy should be:

- Investing in facilities and attractions that drive visitation.
- Attracting more visitors.
- Enhancing town centres and commercial precincts.
- Attracting new tourism business investment.

The survey reported the leading challenges for tourism businesses:

- Cost of doing business.
- Red tape and permit requirements.
- Limited transport options.
- Lack of Council support.

Businesses are seeking support from Council for product development in the form of:

- Easier pathways through Council's regulatory requirements.
- Grants program for minor equipment and infrastructure works.
- Regional tourism data made available to understand market demands for new product.

Overall, community sentiment towards tourism and events was positive but focused on foundational support to assist business and provide engaging activities for residents.



Key Insights Shaping the Strategy

The following section summarises the key strategic considerations and outlines the primary challenges and opportunities for the region's visitor economy. These insights draw on the full suite of research, data analysis and stakeholder engagement undertaken in developing this Strategy. Collectively, these considerations provide the evidence base that has directly shaped the strategic framework and resulting recommendations and action plan.

Leading Challenges

Limited transport services exacerbate the distance

The gaps in transport services such as passenger rail leaves visitors and residents dependent on long-distance buses, private vehicles or high-priced flights from Melbourne, with no direct flights from Adelaide and only one daily service to Sydney. Airfares are often expensive compared with other regional destinations, reducing Mildura's appeal as a short-break option. Local transport is also limited, meaning most fly-in visitors require a hire car to get around. Long travel times by road and bus further constrain Mildura's ability to attract short-stay visitors.

Barriers to doing business

The rising cost of doing business such as insurance, rents, wages, supplies, combined with complex Council red tape and compliance requirements creates barriers for starting and growing businesses in our region. Without streamlined processes and clearer support pathways, many businesses struggle to bring new ideas to market or scale their operations with confidence.

Marketing alignment with state and national bodies

To gain extensive reach in both the interstate and intrastate markets, alignment with state and national marketing campaigns and directions are required. This will extend the reach and potentially return on investment in marketing activities.

Limited industry engagement and low trust levels

There is a desire from industry for stronger connection with Council. Product development and international readiness have been identified as areas that could benefit from greater support, alongside general industry connection and networking.

Dispersal of visitors beyond borders

With many natural assets and attractions located beyond Mildura's city limits and across LGA and state boundaries, dispersing visitors throughout the wider area is essential to increasing length of stay and spreading economic benefit. The absence of a formal partnership with Wentworth Shire Council means collaboration is currently ad hoc and inconsistent, limiting the region's ability to present a consistent, unified visitor experience or leverage shared opportunities.

Product and experience development

There is very little new product being developed in the region and much of the product lacks sophistication and the ability to speak to a higher yield audience. There are gaps in the key product strength areas including agritourism and First Nations experiences and luxury accommodation.

Digital platforms are not reaching their full potential

Mildura.com and What's On Mildura are not operating seamlessly. There are URL issues, a poor user experience on some pages, limited search functionality and generally a confusing visitor experience. This must be addressed to align with the changes in consumer behaviour relating to visitor services and digital preferences. Changes posed by the rise of AI will need to be considered, as visitors begin to plan their travel with the use of these tools.

Incorporating multicultural experiences

The region is rich in diverse cultural stories, traditions and heritage sites that present strong opportunities for the development of unique visitor experiences. Through respectful engagement and self-determination these stories can be translated into authentic experiences that connect visitors to place.

Mildura doesn't 'own' a major signature event

Whilst the calendar of events is strongly populated, many of the major/hallmark events are one-off and ad hoc. There is no consistent major/hallmark event that can remain a constant on the calendar and draw repeat visitation on an annual basis e.g. Deni Ute Muster.

Hero assets have barriers to engagement

The Murray River is the region's hero asset, yet the access is limited to those who already have their own equipment and have prior on-water experience. To broaden participation and engagement with the river there is a need to improve accessibility through infrastructure for user-friendly entry points and smaller equipment hire and guided activities.

Unclear roles and responsibilities of Council

The local tourism industry lacks clarity around roles and responsibilities for Council in relation to tourism activities. This lack of clarity makes it difficult for the operators to navigate Council processes and procedures and for actions to be delivered.

Housing affordability and availability

Across the region housing shortages are impacting the availability and affordability of adequate worker housing. Competition between short-term accommodation and the residential rental market can further reduce housing availability for workers, exacerbating labour shortages and affecting service quality and operating hours for tourism businesses.



Leading Opportunities

Product and experience development including packaging and bookable experiences

There is a strong opportunity to develop the product and experience offer in the region and create bookable packages. Agritourism, Ecotourism and First Nations products are key areas of focus that align with leading target markets for the region and the State.

Digital Visitor Servicing Improvements

Improving the 24/7 digital presence and AI friendly content to assist visitors at all stages of the visitor journey has the ability to impact visitor decision-making.

Leverage the tri state location and align with and develop touring routes

Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia together represent a broad and accessible source market. With the continuing rise in caravanning and camping, touring routes are important to capture passing traffic and encourage increased length of stay. Strategic partnerships between the states may lead to projects that drive visitation to the region.



Upskill and collaborate with industry

The current engagement with industry is minimal and ad hoc and could benefit from a coordinated approach. There is appetite from the industry to connect and collaborate and Council can facilitate this.

Formalise partnership with Wentworth Shire Council

Developing a formal partnership between our region and Wentworth Shire would strengthen cross-border collaboration, expand shared marketing reach, and unlock mutual benefits by positioning the two destinations as a unified regional experience recognising similarities and celebrating differences.

Sustainable event programming

Consideration must be given to the sustainability of event programming ensuring it delivers economic, cultural and social benefits to the community without placing unrealistic expectations on resources and infrastructure. Community impact and expectations must also be taken into consideration for volunteers and First Nations people.

Deliver authentic and targeted marketing activities focused on strong conversion

Tailoring all marketing activities to focus on key audiences with the aim for strong engagement and high conversion.

Leveraging partnerships

Tourism partnerships provide Council with valuable opportunities to broaden reach and maximise investment across activities such as industry development, destination marketing and product and experience development. By fostering and leveraging strong working relationships, partners can pool resources, expand collective budgets and deliver higher-quality outcomes for the visitor economy. Potential partners include MRT, neighbouring LGAs, Visit Victoria, Destination NSW, Tourism SA, BEV, VTIC and Tourism Australia.

Strategic investment attraction for luxury accommodation and a large-scale events venue

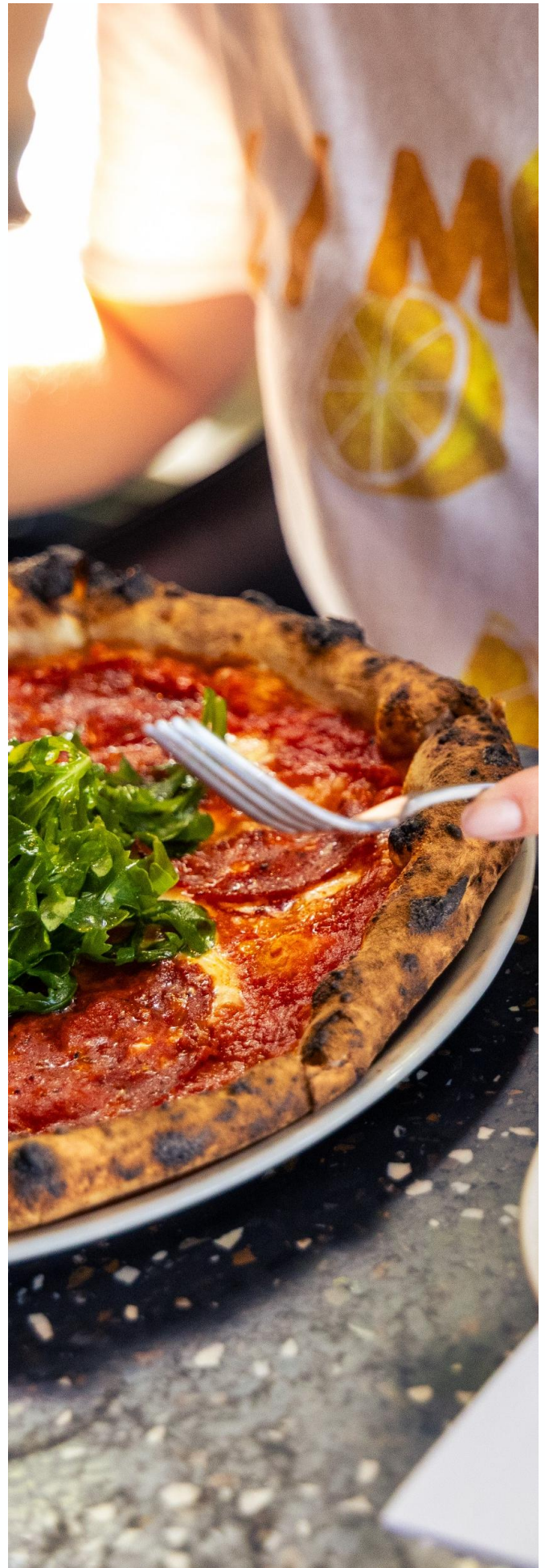
There is a lack of luxury and boutique accommodation which appeals to higher yield visitors, limited corporate accommodation and no large-scale events venue to attract business and other indoor events. Strategic investment attraction will be needed to continue to grow these markets.

Targeting visitors within day trip and short break radius

A number of large population centres fall within a shorter driving distance to the region such as Horsham, Hay, Echuca, Swan Hill, Renmark and Deniliquin. These centres are potential short stay markets that should form part of targeted marketing programs.

Opportunity to strengthen First Nations engagement and create storytelling and products

There is a strong presence of First Nations heritage and culture in the region. It is important the local Traditional Owners are continuously engaged to ensure stories are accurately shared and products are developed with cultural sensitivity.



Strategy



Strategic Framework

Strategic Intent

'The Mildura region is a renowned destination inspired by the beauty of the Murray River, where culturally rich landscapes, distinct events and exceptional hospitality invite visitors to live like a local and return again and again.'

Objectives

1. Engage the tourism industry to create a collaborative and united team that generates experiences and offers which appeal to the region's existing and emerging target audiences.
2. Support the development of tourism experiences that celebrate the region's strengths and align with current market demand.
3. Leverage and expand the calendar of events to drive visitation and increase length of stay.
4. Invest in infrastructure and product development projects that support the region to become a destination of choice.

Measures of Success

Indicator	Measurement method
Growth in visitation and expenditure, aiming to reach pre-pandemic visitation levels by year 5 of the strategy (approximately 1.5% p.a.).	• Annual evaluation of TRA data and report developed. • Analyse spend data annually to understand detailed visitor spend and its origin.
Increase investment in the visitor economy including tourism infrastructure and product development.	• Number of new tourism businesses established annually. • Number of new tourism products developed
Attraction and growth of a diverse calendar of events that drive visitation across seasons and markets.	• Number of tourism events attracted annually. • A balanced calendar of annual events.
Increased awareness of Mildura as a visitor destination with diverse tourism services and experiences and a stronger intent to visit among target markets.	• Conduct annual sentiment survey to extract data for actual and potential visitors to understand behaviours.

Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priority 1. Industry Capability, Innovation And Growth	We will focus on strengthening the capacity, capability, and sustainability of the region's tourism industry through targeted industry development, training and education, and coordinated product development. We recognise that a successful visitor economy depends on a skilled, engaged, and innovative industry that can respond to changing visitor expectations and emerging market opportunities.
Strategic Priority 2. Inspiring, Informing And Engaging Visitors	We will examine and improve how the region presents to the market and how the destination integrates with all stages of the visitor journey. This strategic priority encompasses destination marketing, digital presence and visitor services taking a holistic and coordinated approach to the visitor experience.
Strategic Priority 3. Driving Visitation Through Sustainable Events And Activations	We will focus on the strategic use of events and activations to attract visitors, increase length of stay and spend and disperse visitors physically and seasonally. A stronger focus on a sustainable approach to events is reflected in this strategic priority.
Strategic Priority 4. Investment For Future Tourism Growth	We will aim to attract and enable one-off and ongoing investment to support the growth and management of the visitor economy in the region. We recognise the role of Council in facilitating investment in supporting tourism infrastructure and attracting private investment in tourism businesses such as accommodation and attractions.
Strategic Priority 5. Collaboration And Partnerships For A Stronger Visitor Economy	We will focus on strengthening collaboration between Council, tourism operators, events organisers, Traditional Owners, regional partners, and government agencies to support a cohesive and resilient visitor economy. It reinforces that strong partnerships are essential to delivering coordinated marketing, product development, events, and investment outcomes that benefit the region.

Implementation Plan

The following provides a guide for interpreting the action plan for the Mildura Tourism Strategy.

Action Priority

The priority level for each strategy has been identified by determining their level of importance, logical staging, as well as which actions can deliver immediate impact. The following priority levels have been used:

- **Priority.** Actions or initiatives that will deliver an immediate and significant impact on the visitor economy. These are critical steps that address urgent needs or unlock major opportunities, such as industry engagement, digital improvements, infrastructure improvements, or programs that directly increase product development.
- **Other.** Actions that will have a meaningful impact over time but are not urgent. These may include initiatives that build capacity, strengthen partnerships, or enhance existing services. While important, they can be scheduled after high-priority actions are underway. This includes actions that will contribute positively to the visitor economy but are long-term or supplementary. These initiatives often focus on refinement, innovation, or enhancements that improve the overall experience but do not require immediate implementation.

Delivery Time Frame

- Short Year 1-2
- Medium Year 3-4
- Long Year 5+
- Ongoing

Council's Role and Supporting Stakeholders

The Action Plan describes the role/s of Council in delivery and implementation, which includes a combination of **Provider, Advocate, Facilitator, Partner, Regulator** (as identified in the Council Plan). External stakeholders will be engaged and invited to adopt relevant actions to deliver in partnership with Council or independently.

Investment

The investment identified for each action has been classified as funded from existing budget or additional budget.

Areas of Focus

Key areas of focus were identified by Council in developing this Strategy. They are:

1. **Visitor Services**
2. **Events**
3. **Strategic Tourism**

To avoid a siloed approach the action plan has been developed under strategic priorities that incorporate the areas of focus listed above. Each team's role is detail on page 30 of the strategy.

Strategic Priority 1. Industry Capability, Innovation And Growth

Project	Action	Delivery Time Frame	Council Role	Council Department Lead	Funding Source	Measure
Priority Projects						
1.1. Deliver workshops and training to upskill visitor economy businesses.	Provide in person and online training opportunities to develop visitor economy businesses including packaging, visitor services, business diversification, digital marketing.	Short	Provider	Strategic Tourism	Existing	Four training opportunities delivered each year.
1.2. Promote the benefits and opportunities linked to Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW).	- Promote the benefits of ATDW listings using case studies. - Ensure Council staff are trained on how to establish and manage ATDW listings. - Offer training to industry to establish an ATDW listing.	Short	Provider	Visitor Services Strategic Tourism	Existing	One in-person and one online ATDW training session delivered per year.
1.3. Deliver an event organiser capacity building program.	- Facilitate quarterly workshops for event organisers with practical sessions including funding sources, grant acquittal, marketing and human resourcing. - Develop a mentoring program with event experts and external event organisers, including creative directors.	Medium	Provider Facilitator	Events	Existing	Four training opportunities delivered each year.

Strategic Priority 1. Industry Capability, Innovation And Growth

Project	Action	Delivery Time Frame	Council Role	Council Department Lead	Funding Source	Measure
Other Projects						
1.4. Support tourism businesses to access and apply for external grants and funding.	- Promote grants and funding opportunities through Council communications with tourism businesses. - Provide guidance and support for businesses seeking grant funding.	Ongoing	Facilitator	Economic Development	Existing	- Include grant opportunities in industry communications - Promote Council support for grant applications.
1.5. Promote Council's Business Concierge service to tourism businesses.	- Promote the Business Concierge service in communications with the tourism industry. - Create a case study of a tourism business who has successfully used the business concierge process to navigate Council's regulatory requirements.	Medium	Provider	Visitor Services Strategic Tourism Economic Development	Existing	Two case studies developed each year and shared through industry communications.
1.6. Incentivise innovative tourism businesses that align to product strengths and fill gaps.	Develop a pitch program that provides small-scale start-up grants to businesses that aim to meet specific product gaps in the visitor economy.	Medium	Provider	Strategic Tourism Economic Development	Additional	Pilot a pitch program to fill a specific product gap i.e. equipment hire.
1.7 Investigate the delivery of an International Readiness Program for local tourism businesses.	Work with MRT and Visit Victoria to deliver an International Readiness Program in the region.	Medium	Facilitator	Strategic Tourism	Existing	Support a minimum of two businesses to participate in the Visit Victoria International Readiness Program.

Strategic Priority 2. Inspiring, Informing And Engaging Visitors

Project	Action	Delivery Time Frame	Council Role	Council Department Lead	Funding Source	Measure
Priority Projects						
2.1. Integrate Accredited Visitor Services in the Mildura Riverfront Precinct.	- Continue to establish the accredited visitor information kiosk in the Riverfront Precinct. - Monitor and measure the use of the Riverfront Visitor Kiosk. - Ensure supporting amenity is available for visitors to encourage use of the service i.e. long vehicle parking, toilets, out of hours information, digital services.	Ongoing	Provider	Visitor Services	Existing	Generate monthly reports to monitor visitation and enquiry type and assess the viability of this service each year.
2.2. Develop targeted micro, in-region campaigns for niche cohorts such as outdoor adventure and gastronomy visitors.	- Create low cost (predominantly digital campaigns) that speak to niche visitors and drive dispersal. - Work with industry to create packages that speak to the needs and desires of different cohorts. - Measure success of campaigns and adjust accordingly.	Ongoing	Provider	Strategic Tourism	Existing	Two measurable micro campaigns delivered each year.
2.3. Elevate and improve the digital presence for a seamless visitor experience.	- Improve the content and user experience on the Mildura.com website/s and rationalise all the tourism sites into one easy to navigate platform. - Ensure content is regularly updated including events. - Maintain a strong and professional social media presence across relevant channels. - Ensure the digital channels are optimised to take advantage of AI advancements.	Short	Provider	Strategic Tourism	Existing	- Increased monthly traffic to Mildura.com. - Optimise the website for GEO. - Consolidate website platforms.

Strategic Priority 2. Inspiring, Informing And Engaging Visitors

Project	Action	Delivery Time Frame	Council Role	Council Department Lead	Funding Source	Measure
Other Projects						
2.4. Implement the Visitor Inspiration Point project across the Mildura LGA.	- Introduce Visitor Inspiration Points across the region. - Measure the use of the Visitor Inspiration Points over time to ensure viability. - Offer regular training to Visitor Inspiration Point hosts.	Medium	Provider	Visitor Services	Existing	Establish two inspiration points each year.
2.5. Develop targeted campaigns that engage key visitor markets in New South Wales and South Australia.	- Conduct research into the visitor behaviours of neighbouring state visitors and map typical journeys. - Ensure that marketing activity aligns with school holiday visitation. - Align with the Tri State Economic alliance proposed in action 1.5 of the Mildura Economic Development Strategy and identify any opportunities for strategic projects and partnerships.	Ongoing	Provider	Strategic Tourism	Existing	Deliver one campaign each year in partnership with Destination NSW or Tourism SA that engage interstate markets.

Strategic Priority 3. Driving Visitation Through Sustainable Events And Activations

Project	Action	Delivery Time Frame	Council Role	Council Department Lead	Funding Source	Measure
Priority Projects						
3.1. Leverage attractions such as MAC, ToL and FOSO to increase visitation through activations and events.	Develop packages with attractions, transport and accommodation to increase overnight visitation.	Short	Provider Facilitator	Visitor Services Strategic Tourism	Existing	Create three packages each year and measure the uptake of each package type.
3.2. Review and update Council's Event Funding and Support Policy.	Review the event policy and include a definition of an 'event' in the document and a clear outline of Council's role in events.	Short	Provider	Events	Existing	Completed review of Council's Event Funding and Support Policy with clarified definitions and roles.
3.3. Explore a major signature event that showcases Mildura's strengths and anchors the annual events calendar.	- Create a detailed business case to establish a signature event for Mildura including requirements including human and financial resources, event options, target audiences, general event concept and marketing framework. - If the business case is proven, seek funding to deliver the event.	Medium	Provider	Events	Additional	Business case complete by year three of the strategy.
3.4. Attract major annual events that align with the region's strengths.	- Develop an event attraction prospectus. - Proactively seek events that have an existing following or new events that have potential to develop a significant repeat audience and negotiate multi-year agreements.	Ongoing	Advocate Facilitator	Events	Existing	- Complete an event prospectus inclusive of event spaces, support available from Council (paid and in kind) the estimated audience and case studies from successful events. - Use the prospectus to approach and attract events.

Strategic Priority 3. Driving Visitation Through Sustainable Events And Activations

Project	Action	Delivery Time Frame	Council Role	Council Department Lead	Funding Source	Measure
Other Projects						
3.5. Implement the Mildura Regional Motorsport Strategy 2024-2028	- Deliver the remaining relevant actions from the strategy. - Evaluate the strategy deliverables and any measurements. - Develop a new strategy to continue to support and grow this sector beyond 2028.	Long	Provider Advocate Facilitator	Parks and Recreation	Additional	- Deliver a minimum of 75% of the strategy actions by 2028. - New strategy drafted in 2028 to replace the outgoing strategy.
3.6. Grow the arts and culture product offering and investigate multi-day arts and culture events during off-peak periods.	- Work with MAC to identify and secure exhibitions that could generate economic impact in line with operational budgets and grant opportunities. - Work with existing arts and culture events to collaborate and grow the presence of these events.	Medium	Facilitator Partner	Arts and Culture, Events	Additional	- Deliver one event per year in partnership with MAC. - Grow dedicated arts and culture visitation measured through event attendance and ticket sales.

Strategic Priority 4. Investment For Future Tourism Growth

Project	Action	Delivery Time Frame	Council Role	Council Department Lead	Funding Source	Measure
Priority Projects						
4.1. Implement actions from Council's RV, Caravan and Camping Strategy.	- Deliver the remaining relevant actions from the strategy. - Review strategy upon completion consider remaining actions will for future operational delivery where relevant. - Maintain RV Friendly status by ensuring ongoing compliance with RV Friendly criteria and support appropriate infrastructure and services.	Short	Provider Advocate	Strategic Tourism	Additional	- Successful delivery of a minimum of 75% of the actions in the strategy by 2027. - Ongoing RV friendly status achieved.
4.2. Support fishing and other passive water activities through accessible, inclusive water-based infrastructure and experiences.	- Investigate equipment hire opportunities. - Establish accessible kayak launches. - Investigate the need and locations for fishing platforms and cleaning tables. - Ensure any new water facilities are accessible and multipurpose such as non-motorised boat launches alongside fishing platforms.	Medium	Advocate Facilitator	Parks and Recreation Economic Development Works and Infrastructure Strategic Tourism	Additional	- Installation of one accessible kayak launch by 2031. - Installation of at least one fishing platform and cleaning table by 2031.
4.3. Proactively seek boutique and luxury accommodation investment.	- Work with the Economic Development team to seek investors in accommodation. - Understand the barriers to accommodation development and work to reduce these i.e. planning and building, zoning, available land etc. - Incentivise accommodation providers to operate in the region.	Long	Advocate Facilitator	Strategic Tourism Economic Development	Existing	- Develop and implement an incentive program for boutique accommodation by 2030. - Support the establishment of at least two new boutique accommodation businesses by 2031.

Strategic Priority 4. Investment For Future Tourism Growth

Project	Action	Delivery Time Frame	Council Role	Council Department Lead	Funding Source	Measure
Other Projects						
4.4. Implement Mildura Riverfront Masterplan.	Continue to seek funding to implement Stage 2 of the Riverfront Masterplan as identified in the Mildura Economic Development Strategy.	Long	Provider	Works and Infrastructure Economic Development	Additional	Proactively seek and submit for funding opportunities to implement the Masterplan.
4.5. Undertake a feasibility study for a major events and conference facility.	- Invest in a feasibility study for a major events facility which identifies suitable key locations for investigation. - Work with Business Events Victoria to understand the regional Victoria event market.	Long	Advocate Facilitator	Events Economic Development	Additional	Complete feasibility study for major events facility by 2031.
4.6. Advocate for the development of a Southern Outback Touring route.	- Investigate the viability of a touring route from Melbourne to the Outback through central Victoria. - Develop a concept plan for a Southern Outback Touring Route. - Liaise with enroute Councils, MRT, Visit Victoria and Tourism Australia to develop the route as a product.	Long	Advocate	Strategic Tourism	Additional	Develop a concept plan for a Southern Outback Tourism Route in partnership with MRT and Visit Victoria.
4.7. Grow Mildura's agritourism offering through targeted product development.	- Host a forum with agriculture businesses to discuss the opportunities linked with agritourism. - Support agriculture businesses to navigate the regulatory requirements of agritourism and encourage them to undertake pilot projects where suitable and compliant. - Leverage Council's agribusiness support identified in Strategic Direction 2 of the Mildura Economic Development Strategy.	Long	Advocate Facilitator Regulator	Strategic Tourism Environmental Health	Additional	- Deliver an annual agribusiness forum. - Create a fact sheet to guide agritourism businesses through the regulatory processes by 2028.

Strategic Priority 5. Collaboration And Partnerships For A Stronger Visitor Economy

Project	Action	Delivery Time Frame	Council Role	Council Department Lead	Funding Source	Measure
Priority Projects						
5.1. Establish a distinctive brand identity for Mildura building on current platforms and past work.	Using the existing tourism brand Mildura.com, work with industry to develop a new positioning statement and campaign concept. This action is to be delivered in alignment with action 1.8 from the Mildura Economic Development Strategy.	Long	Provider	Strategic Tourism	Existing	Develop a strengthened brand and marketing campaign that can be placed in market for the life of the Strategy.
5.2. Strategically align all tourism activities with regional, state and national visitor economy agencies.	- Work with MRT to align marketing activities with the broader region at a State level to benefit from inter and intrastate marketing campaigns. - Engage with Tourism Australia to identify how the region can benefit from international marketing campaigns. - Work with Invest Victoria to align investment opportunities and product development.	Medium	Partner	Strategic Tourism Economic Development	Existing	- Meet regularly with regional and state bodies to develop project concepts. - Identify four opportunities to be presented to Invest Victoria.
5.3. Establish a strong network of visitor economy businesses.	- Develop an annual industry support program that incorporates famils and networking events to encourage education and collaboration. - Continue to deliver the industry newsletter on a regular basis.	Ongoing	Provider/ Facilitator	Visitor Services Strategic Tourism	Existing	- Conduct two industry famils each year. - Deliver two networking events each year. - Grow the newsletter distribution to include 75% of the region's total tourism businesses with an open rate in line with the industry average.

Strategic Priority 5. Collaboration And Partnerships For A Stronger Visitor Economy

Project	Action	Delivery Time Frame	Council Role	Council Department Lead	Funding Source	Measure
Priority Projects						
5.4. Build the operational relationship with Wentworth Shire Council.	- Investigate the establishment of an MOU with Wentworth Shire Council for visitor economy activities as detailed in action 1.2 of the Mildura Economic Development Strategy. - Develop strong working relationships at all levels. - Identify opportunities for partner projects and packaging.	Medium	Partner	Visitor Services Strategic Tourism Events	Existing	- An MOU or alternate agreement with Wentworth Shire Council by 2028. - Deliver one partner project every two years.
5.5. Continue to participate in the cross border and state-wide VIC network.	- Participate in quarterly group meetings with all adjoining region VICs to collaborate on group projects and initiatives. - Attend professional development events where relevant.	Ongoing	Partner	Visitor Services	Existing	Attend two professional development events each year related to Visitor Services.

Strategic Priority 5. Collaboration And Partnerships For A Stronger Visitor Economy

Project	Action	Delivery Time Frame	Council Role	Council Department Lead	Funding Source	Measure
Priority Projects						
5.6. Work with Traditional owners and Aboriginal Enterprises to create a First Nations engagement plan for tourism.	- Meet regularly with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Enterprises to discuss opportunities including but not limited to upcoming events, training and education, funding and grant for product development. These meetings would be First Nations-led with clear expectations for decision-making authority. Product and experience design needs to align with responsible and ethical tourism practices. - Industry and product development should support socially responsible outcomes such as employment pathways, skill development and community benefit. Also align with long-term community aspirations. - Undertake regular engagement and training with the VIC to ensure that First Nations storytelling is shared appropriately and aligns with cultural protocols and expectations.	Medium	Partner	Strategic Tourism Events Visitor Services	Additional	- Regular meetings with Traditional Owners. - Two First Nations visitor ready experiences developed by 2030. - Bi-annual cultural awareness training for VIC staff to ensure storytelling is shared appropriately and aligns with cultural protocols and expectations in line with responsible and ethical tourism practices.
5.7. Establish a cross-Council visitor economy volunteer program.	- Develop a volunteer program that can be used across the VIC, Events, TOL/FOSO and Tourism - Ensure that this program is compliant with relevant legislation and Volunteering Australia's National Standards.	Medium	Provider	Visitor Services	Additional	- Develop a program framework by 2028. - Undertake a pilot of the program in 2029. - Refine and implement the final program by 2031.

Appendices



Appendix A: Acronyms and Glossary of Terms

Acronyms

Acronym	Expanded
AAG	Average Annual Growth
AAGR	Annual Average Growth Rate
ATDW	Australian Tourism Data Warehouse
BEV	Business Events Victoria
DPI	Destination Performance Index
FPMMAC	First People of the Millewa-Mallee Aboriginal Corporation
IVS	International Visitor Survey
Km/Kms	Kilometres
LGA	Local Government Area
MAC	Mildura Arts Centre
MRCC	Mildura Rural City Council
MRT	Murray Regional Tourism
NPV	Net Present Value
NVS	National Visitor Survey
TRA	Tourism Research Australia
VTIC	Victorian Tourism Industry Council

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Domestic Daytrip Visitor	TRA define domestic day trips (visitors) as those that must have a round-trip distance of at least 50 kilometres from the respondent's usual place of residence and a minimum duration of four hours.
Domestic Overnight Visitor	TRA define domestic overnight trips (visitors) as trips involving a stay away from home for at least one night, at a place at least 40 kilometres from home. Only those trips where the respondent is away from home for less than 12 months are in scope.
International Visitor	TRA define international visitors as short-term travellers aged 15 years and over who have been visiting Australia for a period of less than 12 months.

Appendix B: Strategic Context and Alignment

State

Experience Victoria 2033

Experience Victoria is the Victorian Government's strategic plan to shape the future of the state's visitor economy over the next 10 years from the supply side of the sector. This document identifies visitor trends that lead to opportunities to expand service excellence for visitors. The focus on nine key settings that can support the product priorities include visitor servicing, aviation and transport and industry excellence. These are particularly relevant to the critical needs of Mildura as a destination.

The plan identifies the state's goals to attract high-value domestic and international travellers and facilitate innovative tourism projects.

Five product priorities reflecting the strengths of Victoria's tourism industry have been identified by the State Government to have the greatest potential to increase visitor yield over the next decade. These include:

- First Peoples
- Arts and Culture
- Wellness
- Nature
- Food and Drink

There is strong alignment with these pillars to the strengths of the Mildura region, in particular nature, food and drink and first peoples followed by arts and culture and wellness that are emerging strengths.

Visit Victoria 2030

Visit Victoria 2030 strategy is the state's plan to grow the visitor economy to \$53.4 billion by 2030 through a demand-led approach. It focuses on leveraging the strengths which include events, food and drink, creativity, culture and diversity through the brand platform 'Every Bit Different'. Using the Integrated Growth Framework - Create, Convert, and Connect - Visit Victoria aims to attract high-yield international, interstate, and intrastate visitors, strengthen industry capacity, and foster collaboration across government, industry, and communities.

Regional dispersal is an identified priority which is relevant to the Mildura region with the aim to position regional Victoria as the ideal rural break for Melbournians and the desire to encourage interstate visitors to see more of the regions.

A focus on industry engagement and initiatives that will strengthen industry capacity and capability leans into the gaps in the tourism industry in the Mildura region.

Key identified challenges which align to the Mildura region are aviation access, workforce capacity and investment pipeline. These key challenges present an opportunity for advocacy.

Regional

Murray Region Tourism Destination Management Plan

The Destination Management Plan (DMP) covers the entire Murray region and aims to position the region, including Mildura, as Australia's premier inland destination for waterways, nature and culture. Specific to the Mildura region the plan emphasises leveraging its unique assets such as the Mildura Riverfront and proximity to Mungo National Park to develop iconic tourism experiences. Key strategies include waterfront activations, attracting mid to high end visitor accommodation, and creating cultural attractions such as the Powerhouse Precinct on the Mildura Riverfront. The desire is to attract new markets, increase visitor yields and strengthen its position as a leading destination in the Murray region.

Local

Mildura Community Vision 2021-2040 & Council Plan 2025-2029

The Council Plan outlines the commitment to growing a thriving economy and enhancing the region's status as a visitor destination through the development of a Tourism Strategy. Through supporting projects and strategic actions Council seeks to boost visitor engagement, increase economic benefit and position Mildura as an attractive and vibrant city for visitors and locals.

The Community Vision highlights Mildura's key strengths including the connection to the Murray River, vibrant event calendar, rich culture and heritage and strong agricultural industry. The vision identifies tourism as an economic driver.

Mildura Rural City Council Visitor Servicing Strategic Plan 2025

This strategy was created to deliver visitor servicing led actions for Mildura over five years from 2021 - 2025. The majority of the actions within the strategy have been completed and some undelivered actions have been transitioned to other departments.

The Visitor Servicing Strategy provides a foundation for the Tourism Strategy by improving and repositioning local visitor servicing from a traditional information model to an inspiration-led, experience approach that supports the full visitor journey beginning before the visitor sets foot in the region. The outgoing strategy reinforces the importance of the role of visitor services being a connector between Council, tourism operators, community and regional and state partners.

Some of the unfinished actions from the outgoing strategy which are still relevant will be carried over to the new strategy including continuing improvements to digital programs, building a volunteer team that can support the delivery of all visitor economy activities including events and continuing the roll-out of the visitor information points and the second accredited kiosk in the riverfront precinct.

Mildura Rural City Council Event Strategic Plan 2025

Our region has a strong calendar of events and the purpose of the Events Strategic Plan was to position the Mildura region as a major event destination with a year-round calendar of events.

More than half of the actions from the outgoing strategy have been delivered with the COVID-19 pandemic and resourcing shortages impacting the delivery of some outstanding actions.

Delivered actions have focused on creating an event friendly destination and adjusting the policy and framework to be able to support and where necessary deliver events for visitors and the community.

Events are critical in this Tourism Strategy to drive visitation, support dispersal, build the destination brand raise awareness, position the Mildura region as an attractive location to host events and deliver economic and social outcomes for the region.

Growing what is good Country Plan - Voices of the wotjobaluk nations wotjobaluk, jaadwa, jadawadjali, wergaia and jupagulk peoples

This plan provides a comprehensive, community-led framework articulating the aspirations, priorities, and responsibilities of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, and Jupagulk Peoples for caring for Country, strengthening culture, and achieving long-term social and economic sustainability. Developed through extensive consultation with Traditional Owners, the plan emphasises self-determination, increased time on Country, cultural revitalisation, education and meaningful employment pathways, stronger partnerships with government and land managers, and a unified voice in decision-making.

Central to the plan is the integration of traditional knowledge with contemporary land and water management practices, including cultural burning, joint management of parks and reserves, and protection of significant places. The plan also outlines clear measures of success and implementation pathways, positioning it as a strategic foundation to guide partnership-based action, policy alignment, and future investment while ensuring Wotjobaluk values, governance, and cultural authority remain at the centre of regional planning and development.

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