STRATEGIC DESTINATION MARKETING
AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2011–2014
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The City of Wodonga would like to acknowledge and recognise the support and contribution that the Albury Wodonga tourism and business community have made in the development of this plan.
A STRATEGIC APPROACH

Why develop the plan?

This three year Strategic Destination Marketing and Development Plan is a strategic approach to destination management and marketing for the Albury Wodonga region, specifically for Wodonga City. It has been developed to provide a strategic direction for tourism and its development in the city of Wodonga and to align council priorities with the needs of the tourism industry and key stakeholders going forward.

The successful implementation of the plan will see an increase in the recognition of tourism as a major source of economic and regional development, by government and the private sector as well as assist with the alignment of local, regional and state-wide strategies affecting the tourism industry.

How is the plan to be used?

The City of Wodonga and other key stakeholders will use the plan to formulate action plans and activities that lead to the realisation of the vision and address priority marketing and development issues for the destination. The plan also requires a coordinated effort between organisations that may not have a history of working closely together.

This plan can also be used as a tool, guide or reference for individual tourism businesses, local government, government agencies, property developers and other key stakeholders in their own planning efforts. Stakeholders can also take the opportunity to leverage off integrated marketing programs.

Due to the level of investment planned within Wodonga City over the next few years, the plan has been designed to look at short term (current) activities and long term activities when planned infrastructure is in place.

How was the plan formed?

This plan is based on research, consultation and input from the City of Wodonga, City of Albury, regional tourism bodies and industry stakeholders.

As requested by Wodonga City Council, a separate section on the Visitor Information Centre, its current role and its future has been undertaken.
This analysis sits within the overall Strategic Destination Marketing and Tourism Plan, however due to the current circumstances and priority it has been separated and will be included in a separate report to the council.

Key stakeholders and industry consulted as part of the research and development of the plan have included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wodonga City Council</th>
<th>Industry &amp; Stakeholders</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Councillors</td>
<td>Moteliers Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO &amp; Executive</td>
<td>Bandiana Army Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>Albury City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonegilla &amp; Arts/Cultural Services</td>
<td>North East Tourism representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing &amp; Communications</td>
<td>Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Information Centre</td>
<td>Tourism Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Planning Group</td>
<td>Murray Regional Tourism Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Destination Overview

Wodonga is the fifth largest regional city in Victoria with an overall service area population of 170,000. It is strategically located on one of Australia’s main transport and communication corridors between Sydney and Melbourne.

It is located on the picturesque Murray River and close to the diverse tourism experience offerings of North East Victoria, making it the perfect gateway and stop over destination.

Wodonga has enjoyed unprecedented growth during the past 25 years and now boasts a residential base in excess of 35,000 people. Wodonga is about letting people enjoy life at their own pace, whether that be taking a stroll along the river's edge, a day trip to historic Beechworth or the wineries at Rutherglen, a hit of golf on one of the four golf courses, water activities at Lake Hume or taking advantage of the proximity of the snowfields, there is something for everyone.

Described by many as an ‘adolescent’, it is a regional city that is on the verge of a new image and style. With the current planned infrastructure development, this new modern image and style will fast become a reality. The following key projects are underway or planned:

- Mann Retail Centre with up to 60 retail outlets, scheduled to open Dec 2012
- New Performing Arts, Community and Entertainment Space - a flat floor multipurpose venue with retractable seating and catering for conferences of up to 300 people
- Rail way line removal – 40 hectares of prime land will be released back for redevelopment – this aims to reshape the town centre by doubling the size of the CBD, creating pedestrian friendly environments and shared access pathways, provide better transport facilities for buses, coaches and taxis, house modern retail and office space, have a 4 or 5 star hotel with conference and exhibition facilities, townhouse style accommodation, urban squares for community gatherings and will facilitate the alignment of Elgin Boulevard and extend the existing roads across VicTrack land
- Plan to open up and beautify the entry to Wodonga (from the highway) and the main street
• Swimming Pool relocation, which will make available the current land opposite for sale and development
• Gateway Lakes infrastructure to support events attraction – sealed road, toilets, parking, fencing

In addition, the City of Wodonga is working on the creation of community spaces and designs for the CBD along with the attraction of high quality accommodation and conferencing facilities.

It is clear therefore that Wodonga has the opportunity to ‘recreate’ and ‘reposition’ itself within its current environment and community and to reinvigorate itself in a tourism, leisure and events sense, on a grand scale in the next 5 – 10 years and as its city ‘grows up’ and is revitalised.

There is a rich migrant history that can be harnessed and further developed with the current and planned investment in Bonegilla and the implementation of its own dedicated marketing plan and public relations strategy.

It also has fantastic sporting venues and facilities, which can be capitalised on with the resourcing and implementation of the existing Sporting Event Attraction Strategy.

The range of cultural and arts venues and activities is a key selling point for the region. With new arts spaces coming online, the existing calendar of arts and cultural events and festivals along with Albury Wodonga being home to the world renowned Flying Fruit Fly Circus and the only professional theatre company in Regional Victoria - the Hothouse Theatre Company, the opportunity is great. The ongoing refinement and implementation of the council's Cultural Services Strategy has a critical role to play.

The Gateway Village Precinct, located on the Lincoln Causeway between Albury and Wodonga is the current home to the Visitor Information Centre, a variety of galleries and studios and La Maison Restaurant and Cafe. Connecting visitors to the river, Byrne Lagoon is also located here which is a haven for bird watchers, nature lovers and artists. The Hume Murray Farmers market is also held in the precinct every two weeks.

Directly opposite is Gateway Lakes, a developing open air events space. It is an irrigated site with 3 phase power however it needs a sealed road, toilets, fencing and car parking facilities to be ‘sold’ as a multi-purpose events space. The recent ‘Chryslers on the Murray’ was held here which attracted more than 14,000 people.
Other key tourism and leisure experiences of the region include; Bandiana Army Museum which attracts 15,000 plus visitors annually, Huon Hill, Belvoir Park Playground, Sumson Gardens, Lake Hume and Hume Weir, all of which can be linked into themes and experiences in and around the region.

**Australian tourism operating environment**

The external tourism environment can be unpredictable and challenging, economic variables including exchange rates, natural climatic events, consumer confidence and oil prices have impacted on visitation across Australia and Victoria.

As a result the travel patterns of consumers’ and the purchasing behaviour for all types of visitors (domestic and overseas) has changed significantly due to the rising AUD, global financial crisis along with the growth in low cost airlines, rising fuel prices and increased use of the internet as a research and booking tool.

Travellers are now trending towards more frequent short-stay trips with a strong focus on value for money, in recent months more and more Australians are travelling outbound taking advantage of the rising Australian dollar.

The market mix is also quite different to that of ten years ago. Intelligent marketing and communication techniques are needed in order to reach target audiences and hold their attention within a technologically driven world that is cluttered with messages.

**Visitation Overview**

Recent visitor statistics as cited in the *Tourism Trends Wodonga 2009/10* report highlight the importance of Tourism to the region.

**Domestic visitors spent 349,000 nights in Wodonga over the 09/10** financial year with an average of 2.7 nights per person, this alone equates to a **visitor expenditure of $36,645,000**. The direct and indirect economic impact of **Domestic overnight visitors, Domestic day trippers and International visitors equated to $97,685,000 in 2009/10**.

The **main purpose of visiting the area was to visit Friends and Family (VFR)**, which aligns with the trend Victoria wide, where visitor nights were more likely to be spent at a friends or relatives house or on own their property (e.g. holiday house). Of the visitors to Wodonga **66% are from Victoria, 17% of these come from Melbourne**.
Domestic overnight visitors to Wodonga experienced some growth in 09/10 however numbers are overall below levels seen in the 04/05 fiscal year. A decline in visitation is a trend that has affected most of regional Victoria; other reasons could include the development of the Bypass and the low water levels at Lake Hume during the drought.

The Business and Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) markets make up on average 63% of visitation (years 2005/2010), with the traditional Tourism Holiday & Leisure market making up an average 25% of visitor numbers for the same period (source: Tourism trends Wodonga 2009/10).

As outlined in the Tourism Research Australia, Tourism Profiles for Local Government Areas (3yr average and as at June 2007), the comparative and combined Albury Wodonga visitation summary and statistics are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMESTIC OVERNIGHT</th>
<th>Albury</th>
<th>Wodonga</th>
<th>Albury Wodonga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitors (000')</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor nights (000')</td>
<td>1098</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>1451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average stay (nights)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average spend p/trip ($)</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average spend p/night ($)</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend ($ million)</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures highlight the reliance that Albury and Wodonga have on each other with regard to visitation. Apart from the fact that the consumer sees the two destinations as one, as regional cities they are complementary to each other and can offer and attract more ‘together’ than they can individually.

Recorded visitation for the international and domestic day trip markets for Wodonga are too small to be statistically reliable. The following Albury visitation for these markets should however be considered as part of the visitation market for Albury Wodonga, due to the fact that in tourism terms and in the visitors eyes, the two destinations are considered one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALBURY</th>
<th>International</th>
<th>Domestic Day</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitors (000')</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor nights (000')</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average stay (nights)</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average spend p/trip</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>($)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average spend p/night ($)</strong></td>
<td>89</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spend ($ million)</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Visitor Profiling**

The *Albury Wodonga Visitor Profile & Satisfaction Report* was undertaken from June – August, 2008. The following top line information was delivered via this report and is relevant to this Strategic Destination Marketing and Development Plan. *(Source: Tourism Research Australia)*

**The top two reasons for visiting Albury Wodonga were:**
- ‘It was a convenient stop over point’ (35%)
- ‘To visit family’ (25%)

Visitors to Albury Wodonga expected:
- ‘Tour around and explore’ (67%)
- ‘Relaxation and rejuvenation’ (55%)
- ‘Spend time with partner/family/friends’ (55%)
- ‘Chance to discover or learn something new’ (47%)
- ‘Good shopping’ (46%)
- ‘Explore the river’ (44%)

Visitors to the Albury Wodonga are:
- ‘Eating out’ (67%)
- ‘Walking’ (64%)
- ‘Going shopping’ (55%)
- ‘Visit friends/relatives’ (29%)
- ‘Visiting museums or art galleries’ (26%)
- ‘Visiting historical sites’ (26%)
- ‘Going to the river’ (22%)

Actual experiences were somewhat better, or much better than expected in the case of:
- ‘Experience our nation’s/Australia’s history’ (47%)
- ‘Spend quality time with partner/family/friends’ (45%)
- ‘Good shopping’ (44%)
- ‘Tour around and explore’ (43%)
- ‘Food and wine experiences’ (42%)
• ‘A chance to discover or learn something new’ (40%)
• ‘An adventure’ (40%)
• ‘Experience Albury Wodonga’s heritage’ (40%)

Food and beverage, roads, signage, friendliness of locals, local atmosphere, variety of things to see and do, personal safety and security, public toilets and value for money were the key strengths of Albury Wodonga. Visitors were more likely to rate these aspects as important and to be satisfied with these aspects.

Visitors to the region are travelling primarily for VFR, experiences that are desired and are also relevant to the local market i.e.; eating out and shopping. Overwhelmingly however, activities around **Art, Culture, History and the Outdoors** are what visitors expect and want to do when visiting Wodonga. These types of experiences have two main elements that are relevant to the target market – **Doing** – the opportunity to engage with and immerse themselves in the experience on offer and **Novelty** – The experience is unique and different to that which can be had elsewhere.

**Who are the people that visit Albury Wodonga?**

Nearly three quarters (73%) of visitors to Albury Wodonga were overnight visitors and 27% were day visitors.

![ Overnight visitors and Day Trippers chart ]

![ Source of visitors chart ]
- Of the domestic visitors, 39% were from Victoria, 38% from New South Wales, 6% from South Australia, 5% from each of Queensland, Western Australia and Australian Capital Territory and 1% from Tasmania.
- Nearly one quarter (24%) of visitors to Albury Wodonga visited friends or relatives, while 36% visited for holiday and leisure purposes.
- Just under half (48%) of all visitors were 35-54 years of age.
- Visitors were more likely to have travelled with their partner/spouse (39%), or their immediate family (27%).
- The majority of visitors (81%) used private transport/their own vehicle in order to reach Albury Wodonga.
- Bookings most commonly made before the trip were with accommodation providers (33%), however, 42% did not make a booking prior to their trip to Albury Wodonga.
- Nearly half (49%) of all visitors made bookings via the internet, with accommodation being the most common booking (79%).

**Victoria and New South Wales are the major source markets for Wodonga.** A high VFR proportion of visitors in their own vehicles often means that traditional tourism products i.e. accommodation and car hire companies may not necessarily see the direct economic benefits of visitors to the region however capitalising on VFR to encourage dispersal in the area and growing the target segment groups will benefit the wider community.

**How do they travel and disperse in and around Albury Wodonga?**
- Visitors to Albury Wodonga were also likely to visit Beechworth (30%), Melbourne (25%) and Holbrook (21%).
- Common stop over points for visitors prior to arriving in Albury Wodonga included Holbrook (11%), Melbourne (11%), Sydney (10%) and Canberra (7%), while 52% of visitors did not stop before Albury Wodonga.
- Common stop over points for visitors after Albury Wodonga included Beechworth (24%), Melbourne (14%), Yackandandah (13%) and Rutherglen (12%), while 42% of visitors did not stop anywhere after Albury Wodonga.
- Nearly seven in ten visitors travelled along the Albury Wodonga bypass during their visit with 55% stating the bypass was excellent.

The above figures reiterate that Albury Wodonga is a Gateway stop for visitors on a longer trip or who are visiting other towns in the region. Albury Wodonga is not considered a mono destination but rather an important and practical stop in a larger
itinerary and should be marketed accordingly. Wodonga needs compelling reasons to pull people off the bypass and into the town.

**How did the visitors decide to visit?**

- Of all visitors to Albury Wodonga, 17% planned their trip while on the road, 6% the day before setting out, 18% in the week before setting out, 14% two to three weeks before, 22% one to three months before, 14% three to six months before, and 7% six to twelve months before.
- The majority of visitors (72%) did not consider another destination as an alternative to Albury Wodonga.
- Of all visitors, 40% relied on prior experiences to help plan their trip, while 27% used the internet and 26% asked friends or relatives.

**Victorian Domestic and International Visitation Forecasts**

Domestic visitors in Australia are forecast to grow at an average annual rate of 0.6% over the period 2009 – 2020 reaching 70.6 million visitors by 2020.

By applying the national forecast of +.6% to the latest data for Victoria, it is estimated that Victoria will receive 16.8 million domestic overnight visitors by 2020 with regional Victoria to increase by 5% per annum equating to 52.3 million nights. *(Source: Victoria market Profile Year Ending 2009 – Tourism Victoria)*

Assuming Victoria maintains is current market share of international visitors, there will be an estimated 2.3 million visitors in 2020. (These figures are specific to Regional Victoria, Wodonga figures are not available)

Seasonality also plays a role in with regard to when visitors come to Wodonga. Spring is the most the most popular time of year, attracting almost 30% of annual domestic overnight visitation (based on a 5 year average).

*In developing the marketing positioning, identifying key product and tourism experiences and ensuring the creation and implementation of strategies and actions to attract the right key target markets and sectors, the all of the above information will be drawn on.*
## Target Markets

The identified key target markets for Albury Wodonga, their characteristics and tourism/touring style are outlined below. There will still be other markets that visit the region, however these are deemed to be the ‘key’ markets that will be targeted via the implementation of this plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Target</th>
<th>Tourism and travelling style, characteristics and activities</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **HOLIDAY & LEISURE** (relevant to Albury Wodonga & surrounds) | - Looking for security, reliability  
- Can be empty nesters  
- Can be cautious of new things  
- 50yrs+  
- Pre planners, requiring detailed information, however an increasing number ‘planning on the road’  
- Look for value for money  
- VFR  
- Touring/ Caravanning  
- Historical places, musical performances, cultural events and activities  
- Gardens, parks, country and wildlife experiences  
- Food & wine experiences  
- Discovery, nostalgia  
- Events – Arts, Cultural, Sporting  
- Tend to be singles /couples 50 – 64yrs or singles/ couples retired 64yrs+  
Some have never used the internet – this is changing  
The retired are referred to as the ‘grey nomads’  
Visiting / caring for those travelling for medical reasons | Melbourne, Sydney, Regional Victoria, Regional NSW, SA |
| **Traditional Family Life** | - Family focused with traditional values  
- Seeking quality, value for money and consistency  
- Like to mix and meet with other people  
- Indulgent and boutiques destinations  
- Attend events – Arts, Cultural, Sporting  
- Activities include; bushwalking, national parks, country & wildlife, gardens & parks, snow skiing, golf, tennis, horse riding, fishing  
- Will visit and attend ; art galleries, musical performances, historical places  
- Interested in food, wine  
- Shopping and entertainment experiences  
- Family groups, singles/ couples under 45yrs with kids under 16yrs, singles/ couples under 45yrs with no kids  
- Heavy users of the internet and digital devices | Melbourne and Regional Victoria |
### HOLIDAY & LEISURE
(relevant to Albury Wodonga & surrounds)

#### Socially Aware
- Upmarket professionals
- Always looking for something new and difference
- Indulgent and boutiques destinations
- Attend events – Arts, Cultural, Sporting
- Activities include; wilderness, bushwalking, national parks, country & wildlife, gardens & parks, snow skiing, golf, tennis, bike riding, horse riding, adventure
- Will visit and attend; art galleries, musical performances, historical places
- Food, wine and special events
- Shopping and entertainment experiences
- Family groups, singles/ couples under 45yrs with kids under 16yrs, singles/ couples under 45yrs with no kids

Heavy users of the internet and digital devices

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#### BUSINESS & CONFERENCING
(relevant to Albury Wodonga & surrounds)

#### Business
- Professional companies and individuals from various sectors
- Looking for quality accommodation, restaurants and entertainment options
- Book online
- Company pays
- Minimal dispersal

Heavy users of the internet and digital devices

---

### Traditional Family Life
(holiday & leisure activities)

- Historical places
- Cinema
- Events
- Art galleries
- Music festivals
- Nature experiences
- Gambling
- Cinema
- Touring
- VFR

### Visible Achievement

- Art
- Cultural & Sporting Events
- Food & Wine
- Shopping
- Nature experiences
- Historical places

### Socially Aware

- Cultural Experiences
- Musical and theatre experiences
- Restaurants
- Festivals
- Wineries
- Museums and Art galleries
- Up market accommodation

### Business

- Quality accommodation with business services
- Entertainment options
- Restaurants
- Transport Options (fly/drive)
### SWOT

The following SWOT outlines the conditions, trends and factors that will either assist or hinder Wodonga’s tourism industry in achieving the three year vision, and has been used to help determine the strategies outlined in this plan.

#### STRENGTHS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A gateway destination to the:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Snowfields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wine regions of Rutherglen, Beechworth, Milawa and King Valley to the south, and Tumbarumba to the north</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Historic towns of Yackandandah, Beechworth and Chiltern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nature based tourism experiences – bushwalking, cycling, walking, fishing Rail trails</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant natural assets such as Huon Hill, Murray River and Hume Weir - man-made but natural in its setting

A dedicated arts and cultural precinct (Gateway Island Precinct) and the current construction in the city centre of a new performing arts and community arts space

A significant immigrant history, which is highly tangible and boasts original sites which are still accessible (Bonegilla)

A diverse military history that can be explored at the Bandiana Army Museum, which houses one of the largest collection of Army vehicles and paraphernalia

Local amenities such as Belvoir Park playground, Sumson Gardens and Willow Park

Lake Hume access via Ludlows Reserve and Kookaburra Point

A progressive council that is committed to redeveloping its city to better position it as a place to live, work and visit.

The climate - hot dry summers, mild autumns and spring, along with cool winters

Wodonga is a strong regional service centre, that has high quality medical and defence facilities that bring visitors to the town

Many quality sporting venues – catering for a wide range of sports, large numbers and groups

More than 80km of leisure cycling and walking paths in and around the river

A destination on the Hume Highway well placed for the traveller between Sydney and Melbourne

A growing events calendar with support from Tourism Victoria and local government
Combined, Albury Wodonga are able to hold events of significance

Wodonga is part of the Murray RTB and the major regional city outside of the North East RTB

**WEAKNESSES**

Lack of diverse and innovative tourism product and experiences

Lack of unique selling points to draw visitors

Lack of basic infrastructure that services the tourism industry including; a mix of accommodation, shopping and restaurants (particularly when compared to Albury)

The recently developed Hume Highway bi-pass has reduced direct traffic into the city

The lack of understanding of what is tourism and the benefits to the wider community and businesses

The city’s entrances in particular from the North when entering from the Hume highway is not aesthetically pleasing and inviting

There is no longer a joint council funded working Tourism group between Albury and Wodonga since the demise of Destination Albury Wodonga (DAW) in 2010

There is a lack of infrastructure that utilises the Murray river comparative to other similarly located destination towns

Some events can be too localised

Albury vs. Wodonga mentality
OPPORTUNITIES

Proposed infrastructure developments within the CBD of Wodonga will provide retail, dining, accommodation and conferencing options to local residents and visitors.

CBD and Mann retail centre developments in the centre of Wodonga.

The re-vitalisation of High St to improve the streetscape and appeal for residents and visitors.

Growth in the use of the internet to research and book travel.

Gateway Island Precinct on the Lincoln Causeway, currently houses the Visitor Information Centre, various galleries and arts and culture venues and picturesque picnic areas and Byrne lagoon. Potentially this can be developed further into a food, produce, arts, culture and events area.

Indigenous opportunities as identified in the Burraja Strategy.

Arts and Culture – a regional centre of excellence with new performing arts and community arts spaces under construction.

Linking with touring routes – Great Alpine Road, Sydney to Melbourne Touring Route, North East, High Country Rail Trail, Hume and Hovell Walking Track.

Further investment in ‘mainstream’ infrastructure for the city and surrounds.

Educating local industry and community with regard to the benefits of tourism, leisure and event visitation and its flow on effects.

Industry development and training.

Local ambassador program and possible tourism dollars promotion.

Rail trail development and promotion – walking, riding, running.

Wodonga as an RV town catering for the RV market.

Growing existing events, attracting and building new events, specifically sporting and cultural events and festivals.

Increased collaboration with City of Albury to market and promote the region to interstate markets as well as cooperative development and management of local promotions and joint publications (e.g. Official Visitors Guide).

Attracting the business tourism and regional conference market (long term – when infrastructure is in place).
THREATS

Lack of support and investment from industry
Lack of support and investment from local government
Lack of investment / reinvestment into tourism infrastructure
Lack of ongoing commitment from the local community to embrace ‘tourism’
Natural disaster
To have no Visitor Information Centre if Gateway was to close

Competitors
The global market is highly competitive with a significant number of destinations offering similar experiences to those available in the region. Not only does Wodonga have to compete with other towns within the region and other locations across Australia, but also with an ever increasing number of international destinations with low cost airlines providing access. An increased variety of tourism experiences, all over the Australia and the world are opening up for travellers at lower costs.

Many Australian and worldwide destinations are embracing this and investing heavily in new tourism infrastructure in an effort to capitalise on those consumers looking for experienced based travel that is niche and not commercialised.

In some sectors, specifically smaller events, Wodonga competes directly with Albury which has the accommodation and leisure infrastructure such as shops and restaurants to cater for a larger number of visitors.

On a wider regional scale Wodonga competes with towns such as Rutherglen, Bright and Beechworth whose tourism offering within the town is greater than that of the City of Wodonga. These very competitors however are also Wodonga’s allies, the region needs to work together to provide an overall compelling reason for visitors to come to the region.
POSITIONING

Core positioning pillars can be used as a guide for future marketing and brand development activity. They provide us with the way in which the destination will be sold to the marketplace.

The Positioning Promise
The promise is how the Wodonga region is positioned to the potential visitor. Not what we believe Wodonga to be but rather how we are thought of. Understanding the promise and positioning helps to establish a brand benchmark – for the quality and type of tourism experiences travellers can expect when visiting the region, aligning with what the destination can offer. Individual products and experiences can then add value in order to further stand out from their competitors.

Delivering the Promise
Identifying how we can better deliver on the promise does not mean that all tourism products should be delivered in exactly the same way. The marketing and development of experiences in the region requires not only product suppliers to understand the disposition and evolving expectations of the target markets, but also the ongoing engagement with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that the promise made about the region delivers, and where possible, exceeds, the marketing promise.

The Promise - key experiences and product or the future
- Digital delivery of Visitor Information
- Wodonga the "gateway"
- Food & Wine opportunities

High Priority - SHORT TERM:
- Wodonga CBD infrastructure including accommodation
- Focus on arts, culture and festivals (inc Gateway Precinct)
- Sporting events and facilities

High Priority - LONG TERM:
- Business Tourism and Conferenceing
- Nature Experiences specifically along the Murray
- Burraja Development

Medium Priority - SHORT TERM:

Low Priority - LONG TERM:
- Digital delivery of Visitor Information
HIGH PRIORITY – Short term

Arts, Culture & Events (including Gateway Island Precinct)
The City of Wodonga has developed a strong Cultural Services Plan that encompasses the wide variety of events, public art, art development programs, entertainment and cultural engagement in Wodonga.

The Gateway Island Precinct currently serves as an Art and Culture hub with a variety of tenants. With further development and linkages to the new Arts Space in the centre of Wodonga, the City Council should leverage current positioning and encourage community groups to develop experiences and retail opportunities that drive visitation to the area.

The City’s Cultural Services Plan, the proposed further development of the Gateway Island Precinct including the plans for the Burraja Aboriginal Centre and growth of the annual ‘Carnivale’ and other arts and cultural events should underpin the growth of tourism in this sector for the region.

These activities and events will not only appeal to locals but also a wider catchment in surroundings communities; tourist visitors in key identified segments would also be interested in these experiential products.

Sport & Events
Both Albury and Wodonga currently serve as a regional centre for sporting events and competitions. With upgraded facilities such as the Aquatic Centre in coming years, it is essential that Wodonga is aggressive in targeting regional events that bring economic benefit to the region.

It is important that both Wodonga and Albury work together, presenting a united front when bidding for larger events. With current accommodation infrastructure limitations in Wodonga, the area needs to be seen as the one destination offering a wide range of products and services rather than a destination with divided sporting and service facilities and tourism offerings.

Wodonga should continue to position itself as a regional sporting hub to attract more specialised events i.e. Basketball, tennis and cricket - in conjunction with Albury.

Sporting events not only engage the local community in competition and community spirit, but bring large numbers of visitors, who may otherwise have no reason to visit the area to stay in most cases more than one night in the region.
History & Heritage
The Bonegilla Migrant experience exemplifies the strong migrant linkages in Wodonga and the region. The award winning product is one of the strongest iconic attractions in the city; with high standard marketing materials and add on links to the Albury museum, Bonegilla should remain a priority and continued focus in the future.

As highlighted in the TRA, Albury Wodonga Visitor Profile & Satisfaction Report, 47% of visitors to the region are interested in ‘experiencing the nation’s/ Australia’s history. There is a real opportunity in a cross marketing sense to grow the audience by working with other similarly placed products around Australia; for example the Melbourne Immigration Museum. The nature of the product also provides a compelling story that should be shared via a public relations strategy that will assist with getting the Bonegilla experience into the lives of the wider Australian community.

Although its core functionality is not tourism the Bandiana Army Museum has a world class collection of Army memorabilia that tells a story of the history of our defence forces over the years.

Both of these products would appeal to visitors who are looking to learn more about Australia and its rich history. All target segments are likely to seek similar experiences to these when on holidays.

HIGH PRIORITY – Long term
Business Tourism & Conferencing
Of important economic value to the city, the Business Tourism sector should be a long term target market for Wodonga.

With the current level and style of accommodation on offer in Wodonga, the attraction of business events will prove difficult. This market looks for 4 star plus facilities with complimentary meeting and conference space, along with good dining, entertainment and recreation options. With planned and confirmed infrastructure coming on line in the next 5 – 10 years, Wodonga will be able to host, on its own a wider variety of business tourism events.

As an interim and ongoing, Wodonga City needs to work with Albury to ensure that the Albury Wodonga destination is promoted and positioned as being able to deliver a wide range of business tourism events, to this market.
Nature & Water (The River)
Located on the banks of the Murray River, there is limited infrastructure and activities for locals or visitors alike to experience.

Whilst there are a number of other destinations along the Murray that tap into its natural beauty and have a strong positioning already, Wodonga remains untapped. It is not a recommendation to try and emulate other destinations and compete for the adventure market however with some development riverside, Wodonga can try and retain some of the market share of visitors who are looking for picnic and other outdoor recreation experiences. According to the TRA statistics 49% of visitors state that their expectations of exploring the river were met, but 18% of visitors stated that their actual experience was somewhat worse or much worse than expected; the highest proportion of all experiences.

Nature experiences along the river would appeal to all target markets and importantly be used and enjoyed by locals alike.

BURRAJA Cultural Centre
As a long term high priority goal, the recommendations made in the Burraja Cultural Centre Governance and Planning study should be endorsed by council. The development of such a centre would have wide tourism benefits, it would expand the areas positioning as an arts and culture hub and be a “hook” to bring interested visitors off the highway.

Key target tourist profile groups, the education market (schools) and the business tourism market would all benefit from such a deep immersive cultural experience.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – Short Term
Wodonga the Gateway
Albury-Wodonga is a natural gateway to some of the more traditional tourist destinations of Beechworth, Bright, Rutherglen and key tourism experiences such the snow fields, food and wine and wineries.

From a marketing perspective, Wodonga city should be looking at ways to tap into the market that is visiting the region for leisure activities rather than positioning themselves as a competitor. Wodonga is predominantly a service centre and not in its own right a traditional leisure tourist destination. Having such an array of experiences and destinations close to Wodonga is the positioning it should develop.

Food and Wine Opportunities
As part of the Murray Food bowl and already host to a well known Farmers Market, Wodonga should continue to look at further opportunities to tap into the surrounding Food & Wine
culture. A food and wine retail opportunity could be considered for the Gateway precinct (the location of the food grower’s fortnightly market) using produce from surrounding areas; this would further cement the Wodonga “gateway” to the Food & Wine Murray region.

LOW PRIORITY - Long Term
Digital delivery of Visitor Information

The digital landscape is a highly complex and constantly evolving environment. It is increasingly an essential part of life, becoming an important component of modern marketing due to word of mouth recommendation (social media) and is becoming rapidly mobile.

As a result consumers use the web differently and tend more get information by “snacking” on a number of different sites rather than just one portal or website.

On the rise is;
• Social web
• Online video
• Mobile internet / portability
• Real time information stream
• Dependency
• User customised marketing / advertising
• Truly integrated campaigns
• eCommerce
• Older users embracing online

On the decline
• Traditional media
• Static information based websites
• Display advertising

With the focus shifting from other traditional methods of communication towards digital and online, it is imperative that Wodonga’s official website content is written in the most optimised way so that search engines, such as Google, will be able to pick it up and move it higher up the list, and higher into the users reach. The site should be interactive, real time and have constantly updated information.

Whilst not traditionally a “long term – low priority” it is recognised that a digital strategy is required for Wodonga, it should incorporate technology at the VIC, social media options, getting tourism operators “e-enabled”, mobile sites and applications and the future of the official Albury Wodonga website, so with this in mind we have categorised Digital as a Long Term project.


NB: Gathering and creating digital content for example videos, photos, blogs, articles etc however is a high priority and is something that Wodonga should start doing immediately so if/when a new website goes live, new technology is embraced at the VIC or other digital platforms and programs are developed sufficient content will be at hand to populate.
EXPERIENCE AND TOURISM OFFERINGS

By better understanding the needs of the target markets, at an emotional and functional level, the industry cannot only enhance existing products, but also identify opportunities and create new products that will deliver experiences that make would-be-visitors want to come to the Albury Wodonga region.

Features and attributes of the region

By taking stock of the features and attributes available in the region and matching these with what the target wants, it is possible to develop an ideal set of experiences that fulfil their underlying emotional benefits. The features and attributes of Albury Wodonga are therefore identified as;

**UNIQUE FEATURES AND ATTRIBUTES**

- Rich immigrant history
- Part of the Murray food and wine bowl
- The Murray river and reserves

**OTHER FEATURES AND ATTRIBUTES**

- Local arts, culture and crafts
- Vast network of walking and cycling tracks and trails
- Regional events and festivals
- Wide range of superior sporting venues and facilities
- Water activities such as canoeing, swimming, water skiing and boating
- Indigenous culture
- Gateway connections
- Clear night sky, wide open spaces and fresh air
- Distinctive seasons providing a variety of weather experiences
STRATEGIC FOCUS OF WODONGA

The Vision

As highlighted in the Economic Development Strategy 2011 – 2013, the Economic Development Vision 2033 for the City of Wodonga is;

"to maintain and promote Wodonga’s economic resilience, sustainability, liveability, community well being and cultural diversity’

From a tourism perspective Wodonga should be recognised as a gateway destination to the Murray and North East districts. It is a destination to celebrate Australia’s rich immigrant culture, a place to reconnect with the landscape via a range of soft adventure activities and a hub in which to base oneself for the purpose of attending local events and festivals, touring and enjoying the vast array of tourism and leisure experiences of the surrounding towns.

Strategic Tourism Goals

To assist the region in achieving its vision the following goals have been identified. How these are measured is detailed later in the document.

Product Development

• Sustainable development and improvement of tourism product and experiences

Tourism Infrastructure and Investment

• Increase tourism investment for infrastructure and facilities in Wodonga and improve the economic value of tourism

Strategic Marketing

• Increase visitation and length of stay in the destination from all key target markets
• Undertake ‘smart marketing’ focused on identified market sectors and core positioning

Industry Engagement and Development

• Educate, train and engage industry to improve overall business skills, profitability and sustainability across the region

Tourism Structures and Networks

• Improve, across and within all levels, working and cooperative relationships between industry, local and state governments and business organisations

Visitor Servicing

• Improve the way in which information is delivered based on changing and evolving visitor needs
KEY STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACTIONS

The following section details the strategies and actions that have been developed under each of the identified Strategic Goals. Priority for each has been given a rating of high, medium and low, the interpretation of this is shown below.

**HIGH** = undertake within the next year  
**MEDIUM** = investigate further and cost, with a view to undertake within the next 18 months  
**LOW** = investigate, cost and potentially undertake within the next 3 yrs

**PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT**

**Strategic Goal 1: Sustainable development and improvement of tourism product and experiences.**

**Recommendation 1.1**
- Encourage, develop and support product and experiences that compliment the way in which the destination is positioned, at the same time considering the region in which we operate and the tourism linkages that have and can be formed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify and apply for relevant tourism and business development funding programs from:</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tourism Victoria (via Murray RTB)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• TQUAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Regional Development Victoria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ARTS Victoria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide funding assistance to regional events that demonstrate growth opportunity and appeal to a wider than local audience</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain a ‘whole of council’ approach to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach is taken to tourism and tourism related business development opportunities.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop an incentive scheme for new products investing in the city, by providing subsided assistance in marketing programs and development tools i.e. Business Planning to assist with their business start up.</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support and assist where possible the Burraja Governance and Planning Study</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Recommendation 1.2**

- Develop a suite of experiences that personify Wodonga and act as a drawcard to attract target segments
- Maximise cultural and historic assets and festival and events and expand areas of niche specialisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Priority</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate and encourage the development of evening performances and entertainment to encourage overnight visitation (<em>Arts Space, Gateway Island Precinct, Fruit Fly Circus and Hothouse Theatre</em>)</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify 2 local events and festivals that can be grown and leveraged to attract attendance and visitors from outside the region e.g. Carnivale, Children’s Fair and or Red Fest</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate the development of the Burraja indigenous cultural experience to capture the wider education market and interest other markets travelling to the region.</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance the Murray River and Albury Wodonga regional tourism experience by further developing walking, cycling and other recreational experiences (<em>Albury Wonga Wetlands link, Wodonga Pathways, Indigo and Towong Shire connections</em>)</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend and link trekking and bushwalking experiences in the region to enhance the areas reputation as a premier place for iconic walks</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop regional food experiences and trails, along with commercial retail food experience at the Gateway Island Precinct to local food growers and their market.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimise leakage to other cities and shires by facilitating the development of short term secure storage areas in Wodonga for caravans, large based vehicles and public dump sites for RVs.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating or linking local attractions across Albury Wodonga and bundle products for suggested itineraries and touring programs</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE & INVESTMENT

Strategic Goal 2: Increase tourism investment for infrastructure and facilities in Wodonga and improve the economic value of tourism.

Recommendation 2.1
- Attract new investment to deliver more accommodation styles, retail opportunities and other leisure investments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Build the retail, cafe, restaurant and movie/cinema offering in Wodonga via the CBD revitalisation project and re-development (in progress)</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage and attract new investment in 4 star plus accommodation with complimentary conference facilities and family friendly accommodation in Wodonga, along with investment into the refurbishment and update of existing accommodation (already in progress)</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target and approach entities to further develop commercial opportunities relevant to the visitor within the Gateway Island Precinct, strengthening the Arts, Culture, and Food positioning and developing a hook for visitors to go to the precinct</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify potential ‘tourism businesses’ that could complement the Gateway Island Precinct and encourage the establishment or attraction of these businesses e.g. boat and lake tours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the top 5 infrastructure needs of Wodonga and put a plan in place to ensure the realisation of this infrastructure</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendation 2.2
- Improve supply and quality of tourism experiences by enhancing access, infrastructure and investment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade pedestrian crossing between Gateway Island Precinct and Gateway Lakes so the area can be better used for events</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Gateway Lakes to make it more appealing and economic for large events to be held in the area e.g. toilets, road, fencing, parking</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake visitor satisfaction research to better understand the infrastructure requirements of visitors already coming to the region</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish and market Wodonga as an RV friendly town. Investigate and install RV dump sites and ensure adequate parking is available within Wodonga.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STRATEGIC MARKETING

Strategic Goal 3: Increase visitation and length of stay in the destination by undertaking “smart marketing” focussed on identified market sectors and core positioning.

Recommendation 3.1

- Work in conjunction with Albury City to deliver united ‘tourism marketing messages’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Priority</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undertake an audit and review of all current assets in the market for both Albury and Wodonga including all collateral and websites</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify key tourism marketing assets required in the future, taking into consideration key target markets and visitor needs and characteristics</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce duplication and costs by working with Albury City to develop one suite of joint Albury Wodonga collateral e.g. Albury Wodonga Official Visitors Guide, Trails – with a cooperative brand</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce duplication and costs by working with Albury City to develop one joint Albury Wodonga website (redirect all other Albury or Wodonga owned sites to a main site). The official site should be mobile friendly with increasing numbers of visitors accessing internet via mobile devices. (NB: Although visitalburywodonga.com is owned by Albury City, it sits within the Tourism Victoria visit.com suite of websites and would be recommended)</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in a ‘tourism branding exercise’ in conjunction with Albury City for the development of ‘brand Albury Wodonga’ which can be agreed and committed to with longevity by both councils.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop in conjunction with Albury City, a joint ‘partnership prospectus’ for release to industry in April 2012</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate the possibility of sharing subscribed research costs with Albury City such as the Tourism Monitor and Data Insights to keep abreast of key marketing and visitor trends (via and in conjunction with the Murray RTB)</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Promote Wodonga through the delivery of Albury Wodonga consumer campaign activity in conjunction with Albury City. For example Tactical Airline and Rail campaigns into Melbourne. (*NB: this is a long term action and would be recommended once Wodonga has more infrastructure in place and industry buy in*)

**Recommendation 3.2**  
- Market, promote and position Wodonga (Albury Wodonga) as a regional gateway offering quality tourism and event experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Priority</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigate and undertake cooperative brand and tactical marketing activity with Murray RTB and North East RTB when relevant</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in cooperative marketing programs with key touring routes, trails and walks including:</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sydney Melbourne Touring Route</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- High Country Rail Trail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hume and Hovell Walking Track</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create and enhance Wodonga’s promotional image gallery and content bank as new infrastructure comes on line.</td>
<td>High – Low (ongoing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider the future development of an Albury Wodonga mobile phone application in which users can access information whilst in the region but also prior to visiting. I Phone, I Pad and Android (<em>NB: this should be considered as part of the wider Visitor Information Centre recommendation and should be a joint initiative between the two councils</em>)</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure Wodonga tourism information on partner websites and in collateral is up to date and accurate</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to use Bonegilla as an iconic attraction in the region, promoting its cultural significance and rich emigrant history</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further investigate and develop social media marketing activity with the likes of face book, twitter and foursquare</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Recommendation 3.3**

- Capitalise and promote the regions Art and Cultural strengths and Sporting and Outdoor experiences to special interest travellers to encourage patronage, spend and length of stay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continue to participate in state and national Arts and Cultural promotions and forums, including Get into the Art, Melbourne International Art Show, Regional Arts Australia Conference as highlighted in the Wodonga Cultural Services plan 2007 -2012</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that the key festivals for the region are included in all relevant publications, websites, calendar of events and listed with media outlets.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage and sponsor targeted media and influential bloggers to attend and cover art shows, cultural events and festivals to build on the arts and cultural positioning of the region</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote any community festivals and events that have been developed to a national standard</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote Wodonga as a premier destination for sporting events with first class facilities</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a value add program for events including the creation of events passports, event apps and event kits targeted at attendees, partners, families and spectators</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource and implement the existing Sporting ad Event Attraction Strategy</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In conjunction with Albury City and the VIC’s coordinate and manage a central events calendar, accessible to all</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and target one new event annually – sporting, cultural or other and work to entice its organisers to hold it in Albury Wodonga</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Goal 4: Engage the community and educate and train industry to improve overall business skills, profitability and sustainability across the region.

Recommendation 4.1
- Address skills and service standards within industry and wider community
- Engage and connect with industry to ensure they are informed, interested and supportive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Via industry networking functions inform and educate the community and industry on the wider benefits of tourism to the city, consumer expectations and trends. Coordinate training and skill development exercises and sessions in conjunction with regional and State bodies and stakeholders including:</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Customer service</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hospitality up-skilling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Developing effective websites for small operators and E-enabling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Working with the media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Working in the digital space</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Regional cross promotion and the benefits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Business Planning, PR &amp; Marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via the Murray Regional Tourism Board, coordinate training and skill development through Tourism Excellence, Tourism Leadership Programs and others as offered.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage tourism operators to become accredited through the National Tourism Accreditation Program</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with the local media to educate and engage the community so they become ‘tourism and event ambassadors’ (regular columns and articles of a positive nature)</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendation 4.2 Encourage environmental sustainability within the tourism industry and beyond

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimise the impact of tourism on the environment through the adoption and promotion of sustainable initiatives</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support litter reduction and tidy town programs in the community and support community groups in their efforts to reduce</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
litter and create tidier towns

Encourage tourism operators to implement strategies to reduce their impact on the environment and to get Eco Certification

Medium

TOURISM STRUCTURES & NETWORKS

Strategic Goal 5: Improve working and cooperative relationships between Regional Tourism Boards, industry, business organisations and local and state governments.

Recommendation 5.1
- Develop additional tourism and business networks and increase the ‘connection time’ with industry and key stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buy into the Murray RTB and if it is financially feasible, the North East RTB</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Establish an ‘alliance; between the City of Wodonga, the City of Albury and local industry with agreed and formal MOU’s which clearly state roles, responsibilities and actions. (Not a formal incorporated body, rather a regular scheduled forum with an independent chair). Agenda items and reporting could look at:  
  - Murray RTB actions and issues  
  - Touring route participation  
  - General sharing of information  
  - Albury Wodonga ‘tourism branding’  
  - Albury Wodonga Marketing Action Plan detailing and costing all cooperative activity  
  - Events calendar with details such as; dates, flexibility, venues, organisers, attendance, infrastructure requirements  
  - Event bids and attraction activity  
  - Arts and cultural activity  
  - Funding and funding applications  
  - Tourism Excellence and Leadership Programs                                                                                                                                                           | High     |
| Ensure key City of Wodonga staff are engaged with industry at a regional and state level via participation in relevant industry forums, committees and networking events  
Provide support to cooperative industry organisations                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Medium   |
Work across industry, other Local Governments, organisations and industry stakeholders to deliver consistent and accurate messages about Wodonga and its tourism offering.
**VISITOR SERVICING**

**Strategic Goal 6: Improve the way in which information is delivered taking into account changing and evolving visitor needs**

**Recommendation 6.1** Improve on the visitor experience once visitors are in the region through new, updated and relevant visitor interaction points and information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigate existing touch screen systems nationally and the possibility of linking with or developing similar systems for Albury Wodonga (stand alone units, supported by website and iphone app such a Alpine Explorer)</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest in the installation of Wi-Fi hotspots, strategically positioned for ‘best access’ by the increasing number of ‘digital travellers’ – VIC’s, Library and Arts Space, Gateway Island Precinct</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine key areas where tourism signage or display boards are required or should be updated and source funding for construction and placement</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grow the volunteer program to be able to offer during peak times and at key events a ‘Welcome to Wodonga’ booth and or area</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate and invest in an accommodation booking system for the region, operated out of the Wodonga VIC and linked (if possible) to the official website. This could evolve to include dining, entertainment</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement a visitor services program and passport to distribute to visitors already in the city but not necessarily thought of as tourists i.e. at hospital, sporting events, conferences and the like</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with other VICs in the region to ensure that they are providing visitors with up to date and accurate collateral and information</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
MEASURING SUCCESS

To monitor the overall effectiveness of the initiatives outlined in this plan, Wodonga council will review the following indicators on a regular basis. These indicators will be used to assist the destination to build on its strengths and address any areas of weakness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Goals</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product Development</strong></td>
<td>Character, attractiveness and</td>
<td>• Number of new tourism products and tourism operators making improvements to existing product&lt;br&gt;• Number of different products and experiences available to visitors&lt;br&gt;• Number of ‘new’ tourism related packaged products available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable development of tourism</td>
<td>visitor satisfaction with the destination</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>product and experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Tourism Infrastructure &amp; Investment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase tourism investment for</td>
<td>Development of tourism</td>
<td>• Level of funds invested in leisure and tourism-related infrastructure and facilities in the destination&lt;br&gt;• Proportion of tourism operators from the destination expressing positive business confidence&lt;br&gt;• Proportion of visitors to new and improved facilities and products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infrastructure and facilities in the</td>
<td>infrastructure and facilities in the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>destination and improve the economic</td>
<td>destination, and visitor use of the</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>value of tourism</td>
<td>facilities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Strategic Marketing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase visitation and length of stay</td>
<td>Visitation to the destination</td>
<td>• Visitor numbers to the destination, length of stay and average spend per visitor&lt;br&gt;• Proportion of target market profiled tourists visiting the destination&lt;br&gt;• Proportion of visitors from non-traditional source markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the destination by undertaking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;smart&quot; marketing focussed on identified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>markets sectors and core positioning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Community Engagement &amp; Industry Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve performance of the destination</td>
<td>Performance of the destination relative</td>
<td>• Market share of domestic holiday visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relative to other destinations</td>
<td>to other destinations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Tourism Structures &amp; Networks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve working and cooperative</td>
<td>Expand Wodonga’s profile in relevant</td>
<td>• Number of cooperative marketing initiatives&lt;br&gt;• Number of joint funded programs&lt;br&gt;Wodonga representation at relevant industry forums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationships between Regional Tourism</td>
<td>forums</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boards, industry, business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>organisations and local and state</td>
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<tr>
<td>governments</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Visitor Servicing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the way in which information</td>
<td>Satisfaction results of visitors to the</td>
<td>• Visitor services programs for visitors&lt;br&gt;Relevant Visitor Information methods for the changing market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is delivered taking into account</td>
<td>area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changing and evolving visitor needs</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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