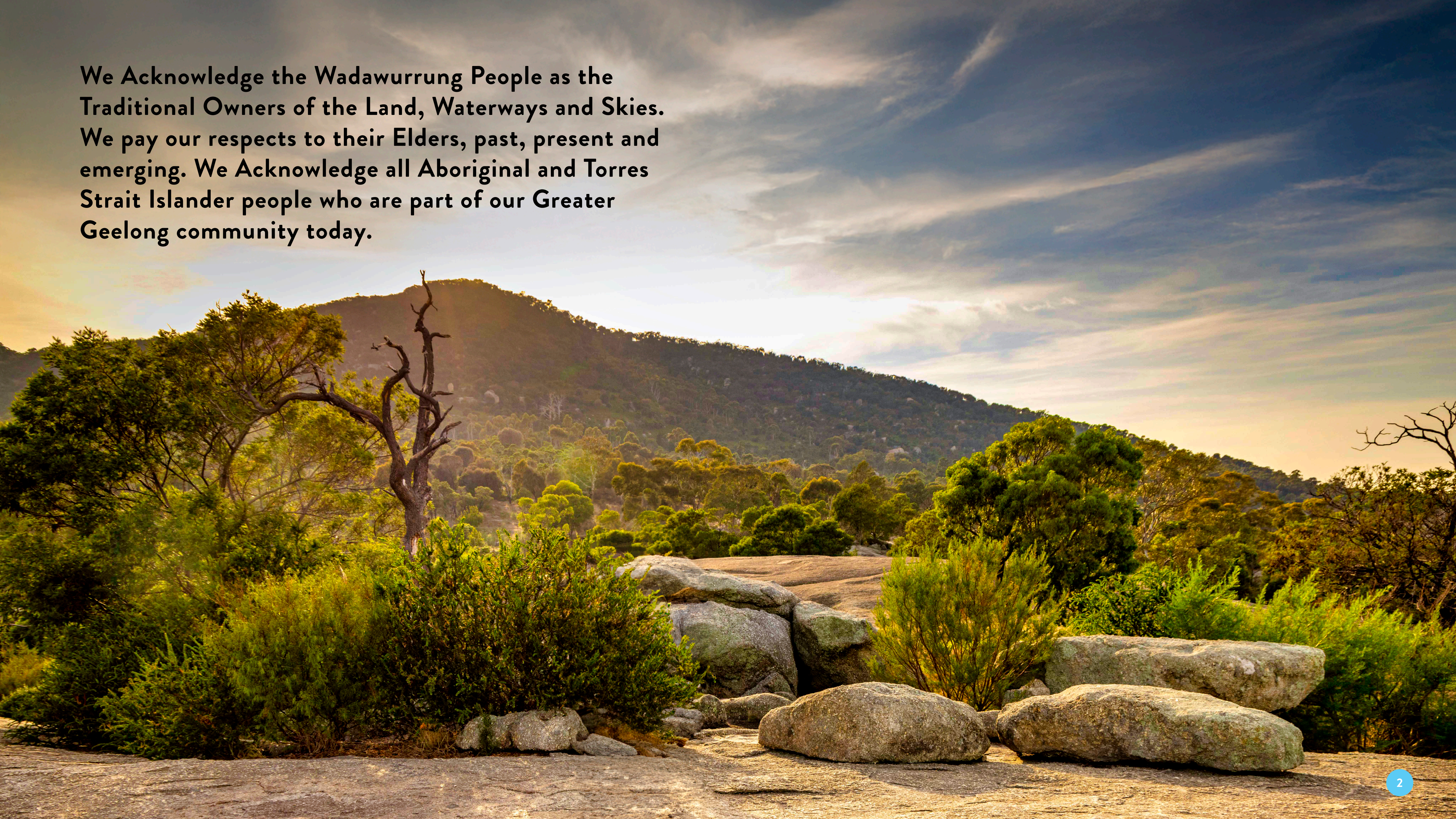


GEELONG MAJOR EVENTS

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

We Acknowledge the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We Acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong community today.



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



It has been my pleasure to chair Geelong Major Events Committee during 2024-25. The highlight was the successful launch and implementation of our

new Major Events Strategy for Geelong, which has positioned us strongly to attract, support, and grow world-class events for our region.

In 2024-25, we proudly sponsored 12 major events, generating more than \$90 million in economic impact for Greater Geelong. This achievement reflects the hard work, collaboration, and vision of our committee, regional venues, event organisers, volunteers and the broader community.

Among the year's highlights were the Avalon Australian International Airshow, Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race and IRONMAN 70.3 Geelong Pro Series all events which draw significant crowds, national attention, and exceptional benefits for Geelong. These events not only showcase our region's capacity to host large-scale experiences but also enhance Geelong's reputation as a premier destination for sport and entertainment.

Looking ahead, we are excited to expand our calendar with more arts and culture experiences, including the prestigious Archibald Prize, the vibrant Wonder Children's Festival, and a new regional program aligned with the Melbourne Fashion Festival. These events will diversify our offerings, deepen community cultural engagement, and attract new audiences to our city.

Adding to this momentum, the arrival of Nyaal Banyul, the Geelong Convention and Event Centre represents one of the most significant infrastructure advancements in our region's history. This state-of-the-art facility will unlock new opportunities for more diverse events, driving economic growth, tourism, and cultural exchange, and firmly establishing Geelong as a premier destination on both the national and international stage.

On behalf of the Geelong Major Events Committee, I extend my sincere thanks to my fellow councillors, committee members, council staff, event organisers, venues, volunteers, and community members who help make these successes possible. The future for major events in Geelong is bright.

Cr Anthony Aitken
Chair



ABOUT GEELONG MAJOR EVENTS

Operating as a Section 63 Delegated Committee of the City of Greater Geelong, (GME) is tasked with attracting, supporting and funding major events that enhance the region’s profile, stimulate economic activity, and contribute to community vibrancy.

GEELONG MAJOR EVENTS COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2024-2025

July 2024 – September 2024	January 2025 – June 2025
Cr Anthony Aitken – Chair	Cr Anthony Aitken – Chair
Cr Melissa Cadwell	Cr Trent Sullivan
Cr Ron Nelson	Cr Andrew Katos
Cr Jim Mason	Cr Eddy Kontelj
Ali Wastie – City of Greater Geelong CEO	Tennille Bradley – Executive Director Placemaking designated proxy of CEO Ali Wastie
Tracy Carter – Executive Director Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine	Tracy Carter – Executive Director Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine
Robyn Birrell – External Committee Member	Robyn Birrell – External Committee Member
Kent Boorman – External Committee Member	Kent Boorman – External Committee Member
Shannan Gove – External Committee Member	Shannan Gove – External Committee Member
Julie Maxwell– External Committee Member	Julie Maxwell– External Committee Member
Brenden Caligari– External Committee Member	Brenden Caligari– External Committee Member
Natalie Valentine*– External Committee Member	

MEETINGS DURING THE PERIOD

Strategic Meetings	Ordinary Meetings
Monday 15 July 2024	Monday 19 August 2024
Monday 20 January 2025	Monday 16 September 2024
Monday 17 March 2025	Monday 24 February 2025
	Monday 14 April 2025
	Monday 19 May 2025

Note: there was a break in the meeting schedule, and change to the committee membership following the October 2024 Council Elections.

*Natalie Valentine resigned from her position in January 2025.

DELIVERING ON THE STRATEGIC VISION AND OUTCOMES

The 2024-25 financial year marked the first year of implementing the Geelong Major Events Strategy 2024–2029, which sets out a clear vision to position Geelong as Australia’s premier regional destination for events, where major events deliver exceptional outcomes and elevate the region’s profile on the national stage.

Guided by this strategic framework, the GME Committee supported a diverse calendar of events that reflected the region’s cultural vibrancy and international appeal. Highlights included iconic local gatherings such as the Festival of Sails and the National Celtic Folk Festival, alongside community-focused events like the Geelong Revival Motoring Festival.

Geelong proudly played host to internationally renowned events, including the Avalon Australian International Airshow and the Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race, further cementing the region’s ability to attract and deliver world-class experiences.



Additionally, with thanks to Visit Victoria and the Kardinia Park Stadium Trust, GMHBA Stadium hosted the Matildas, the Australian women’s national soccer team, for a landmark international match, reinforcing Geelong’s growing reputation as a dynamic destination for major events of national and international significance.



WORKING TOWARDS THE 2029 TARGETS



ECONOMIC IMPACT

Annual increase of 10% in total economic impact over the next five years to \$131 million by 2029.

2024-25 Results: On track

The \$93 million in economic return represents a year-on-year increase of 82%, driven largely by the exceptional performance of the bi-annual Avalon Australian International Airshow.



BRAND MARKETING IMPACT

The Major Events portfolio has 20% Anchor Events.

2024-25 Results: On track

When considering the Avalon Airshow and Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race as anchor events, the portfolio consists of 33% anchor events, representing 4 out of the 12 total events.



COMMUNITY IMPACT

Increase in local participation and attendance at major events by 30% by 2029.

2024-25 Results: On track

Local residents accounted for 33% of the total attendance at major events in 2024-2025.



SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

Reduce the major events carbon footprint by 50% by 2029.

2024-25 Results: Working Towards

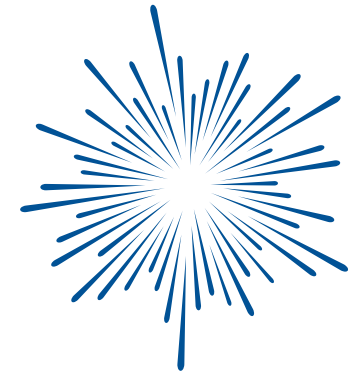
Current assessments indicate that 66% of attendees are satisfied with the sustainability efforts at major events. To achieve the sustainability targets, further initiatives and improvements are required.

GEELONG MAJOR EVENTS 2024-2025 IN THE NUMBERS



15

Number of sponsorship applications considered by the Committee



12

Events funded during the period



\$1,536,518

Total spend



56:1

ROI



\$93,503,742.29

Total Economic Impact for the region



499,004

Total overall attendance



327,355

Non-local attendance (people travelling from outside the region to attend events)



171,652

Local attendance



91%

Percentage of events with free access for the community



295

Total responses to Have Your Say surveys during the period



89%

Percentage of people that agree or strongly agree that the event they attended positively impacts the local community (economically, socially, culturally)



70%

Percentage of people that believed the event they attended strongly contributes to Geelong's reputation as a premier event destination

GEELONG MAJOR EVENTS, JULY 2024 – JUNE 2025

Major Events		Total Attendance	Local	Non-local	Economic Impact
2024 Victorian Gymnastics Championship Series	Priority	7,953	319	7,634	\$789,073
2024 Geelong Revival Festival	Anchor	28,461	12,612	15,849	\$5,393,963
2024 Melbourne Renegades at GMHBA Stadium	Priority	13,221	6,459	6,762	\$945,771
2025 Festival of Sails	Anchor	70,814	54,006	16,808	\$8,036,403
2025 Victorian Open Golf Tournament	Priority	9,256	5,408	3,851	\$1,562,376
2025 Head of the Schoolgirls Regatta	Priority	10,459	1,136	9,323	\$4,031,115
2025 IRONMAN 70.3 Geelong Pro Series	Priority	6,366	614	5,752	\$3,092,736
2025 3x3 Hustle National Championships	Priority	850	250	600	\$386,100
UCI Gran Fondo Lead in Event	Developing	452	57	369	\$169,810
2025 National Celtic Festival	Priority	16,212	8,686	7,526	\$3,445,266
2025 Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race*	Anchor	131,389	63,067	68,322	\$19,751,128
2025 Avalon Australian International Airshow*	Anchor	203,571	19,038	184,533	\$45,900,000**
TOTALS		499,004	171,652	327,355	\$93,503,742

*Events sponsorship provided from the 2024-25 Council Budget

**Represents the total increase in Geelong's gross regional product. The gross regional product calculates both direct expenditures, which would not have been imposed on the Geelong in the absence of the event, and the flow-on increase in economic activity that results from the direct expenditures.

EVENTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

MELBOURNE RENEGADES AT GMHBA STADIUM

The Melbourne Renegades' home season opener against the Hobart Hurricanes at GMHBA Stadium attracted over 13,000 attendees, with the Renegades winning by 6 wickets with 11 overs remaining. The event featured a Parade of Champions with 600 young players, various fan activations, a Guard of Honour by Woolworths Cricket Blast children, and a skin check activation by MSCAN. A two-minute fireworks and light show took place during the innings break.

The event delivered substantial national and international exposure for Geelong, with 763,165 Australian broadcast viewers generating \$4.96 million in Q1 media value through coverage on Channel 7, Fox, and Kayo. Positive commentary references further highlighted Geelong's attractions and event capabilities. Internationally, Renegades matches reach across the session saw an average of 2.23 million viewers in India and over 300,000 across the UK, South Africa, and New Zealand, significantly enhancing the region's global profile.

SUMMARY OF KEY EVENT METRICS

Event Classification	Priority
Total Visitor Nights	2,408
Estimated Job Creation	7.5
Total Economic Impact	\$945,771
Total Attendance	13,221

All post-event survey respondents rated the event as either "good" or "very good". The positive impact on the local community was widely recognised, with 96.43% of participants agreeing it contributes economically, socially, and culturally to the region. Furthermore, every respondent felt the event enhances Geelong's reputation as a premier event destination.



EVENTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

AVALON AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRSHOW

The Avalon Australian International Airshow (AAIA) is one of Victoria’s most significant major events, combining a world-class aerospace exhibition with a public spectacle of flying and on-ground aircraft displays.

Held 25–30 March 2025, the event commenced with industry-only trade days before opening to the public, Friday 28 to Sunday 30 March. The AAIA’s mission is to promote Australian aviation and industrial capability while showcasing innovation and expertise in the aerospace and defence sectors.

In 2025, the AAIA attracted 203,571 attendees, including a record 55,837 trade visitors. The event featured 902 exhibitors, including 244 international exhibitors from 28 countries, 447 interstate exhibitors, and 211 from Victoria. A total of 291 official delegations from 43 countries attended, including 20 Chiefs of Air Force or equivalents.

The AAIA also plays a vital role in workforce development, welcoming more than 7,000 students to the Career Days, offering families an opportunity to share in the excitement of aviation technology and displays.

SUMMARY OF KEY EVENT METRICS

Event Classification	Anchor
Estimated Job Creation	523
Total Economic Impact	\$45,900,000
Total Attendance	203,571

The AAIA delivers substantial economic benefits to the Geelong region through both direct expenditure during the event period and through flow-on economic activity. The AAIA positions Geelong as a premier event destination and highlights the region’s ability to deliver world-class international events.

The Have Your Say survey responses showed 74% agreeing that the event positively impacts the local community economically, socially, and culturally. Among respondents, 68% were satisfied with the event’s sustainability efforts, and 58% strongly agreed that the event contributes to Geelong’s reputation as a premier event destination.



EVENTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

IRONMAN 70.3 GEELONG PRO SERIES, MARCH 2025 GEELONG WATERFRONT

The IRONMAN 70.3 Geelong is an internationally recognised endurance event and in 2025 was part of the global IRONMAN 70.3 series. The event took place from Friday, 21 March, to Sunday, 23 March, with 1,649 triathletes competing across a 1.9km swim, a 90

SUMMARY OF KEY EVENT METRICS

Event Classification	Priority Event
Total Visitor Nights	12,693
Estimated Job Creation	24.74
Total Economic Impact	\$3,092,736.00
Total Attendance	6,366



STRATEGY KEY ACTION AREAS

Key Action Areas	Progress Status	Comments
Governance	On Track	A governance review was completed during the period, with the Committee resolving to maintain the current Delegated Committee structure. This model is considered the most agile for making timely funding decisions in a dynamic and evolving major event market.
Funding and Budget	Working towards	Budget constraints continue to pose a challenge for the Committee. As a result, there is a strong focus on maximising funding opportunities through external sources, including Visit Victoria's Regional Events Fund.
Stakeholder and Advocacy	Working towards	Building relationships across the industry is central to the work of the Geelong Major Events Committee. There is work to do to strengthen advocacy efforts and more effectively promote the benefits delivered through the major events program.
Objectives and measurements	On Track	Objectives and measurements outlined within the Geelong Major Events Strategy guide the acquisition and funding decisions of the committee.
Processes and documents	Complete	The implementation of the Geelong Major Events Strategy has included an updated suite of application, information, and evaluation documents, which continue to evolve to meet the needs of the Committee and the organisations it works with.
Event Selection	Complete	The four-step selection process has been operationalised through a weighted assessment framework that supports and guides the Committee's funding decisions.
Event Evaluation	On Track	Metrics are provided to the Committee using geo-fencing technology to estimate event attendance, alongside accommodation occupancy data from across the region. Work is ongoing to establish best-practice methods for estimating economic impact, with a focus on using reliable and verifiable spend data.
Communication	Working towards	City promotion of major events and the associated funding program remains a key priority. Ensuring that industry and the community have visibility of major events and can effectively leverage their benefits remains a focus area for the 2025–2026 financial year.
Infrastructure	Working towards	Infrastructure advocacy remains a City-wide priority.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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