

melbourne's **west**



Western Melbourne Tourism Strategy 2021-24

good, better, west





It is an exciting time for Melbourne's west and a time of opportunity for Western Melbourne Tourism (WMT) and the local visitor economy. This document sets out WMT's 2021–2024 strategic plan and provides a framework and themes to work innovatively and collaboratively to realise this potential.



Contents

About us	3
Map	4
Our vision, purpose, values, roles and priorities at a glance	5
About our roles and priorities	6
Impact priorities - strategic action plan	7
Organisational priorities - strategic action plan	9
Board Members	12
Contact details	13



About us

Western Melbourne Tourism Inc (WMT) is an urban regional tourism board incorporated for the purposes of developing a stronger more competitive tourism sector in Melbourne's west. Melbourne's west embraces the municipal areas of Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton, Moonee Valley and Wyndham councils.

WMT exists to increase the recognition and contribution of visitors to the region's economy; supporting our local visitor economy businesses and promoting the attributes that make Melbourne's west a compelling place to visit to drive economic growth.

The new context

Melbourne's west is a region experiencing substantial growth. It is a young vibrant emerging multicultural region, diverse and full of creative energy. It has a thriving arts and cultural scene, an enormous range of nature-based attractions, and a burgeoning food and hospitality culture set into the unique gritty character of our local neighbourhoods.

The region's visitor economy has been substantially challenged by the Covid pandemic. The loss of international and interstate travel, events, corporate travel and business events and intakes of international students have hit hard, which has in turn diminished general confidence for people to move and travel. Through 2020 and 2021 WMT commissioned periodic economic impact assessments which forecast a 40-50% economic hit to our region. As we return to 'a new normal' of a vaccinated economy, we will respond proactively to regroup, reset and regrow.

Lock downs have meant many more people are working from home and spending more time and money in their immediate local community than ever before. The sphere of tourism has shrunk. An increased focus on 'the local' in leisure time and visitor experience has shifted market priorities and opens new opportunities on which our region can capitalize.

Despite the pandemic the development outlook remains strong. Significant capital

investment is in the pipeline including the Melbourne Airport Rail Link (and Sunshine Interchange) as well as the development of Avalon Airport as a second international air terminal.

The development of the Werribee Open Range Zoo will accelerate with a full commitment of government funding. The new Western United A-League soccer Stadium at Tarneit, a major leisure precinct development at Moonee Valley Racecourse, ongoing expansion at Essendon Fields, renovation/ redevelopment of Seaworks on the Williamstown waterfront, and the proposed new 'Museum of the Future' at Scienceworks in Spotswood are other new developments ahead. Significant cycling trail infrastructure will come to fruition as part of the Westgate Tunnel project to provide further new connectivity to explore the region by bike. There is also an expanding supply of hotel accommodation.

It's time for the west.

Western Melbourne Tourism is here to work collaboratively to ensure more people know about, experience, fall in love with and return to the west - all to strengthen the western community.

melbourne's **west**



Our vision, purpose, values, roles and priorities at a glance



Our vision

A thriving visitor economy in Melbourne's west – everyone loves the West.

Our purpose

To drive visitor activity through advocacy, partnerships and experiences.

Our values

- Courage • Collaboration • Accountability
- Creativity • Integrity

Our roles

- Advocacy & Voice • Promotion & Storytelling
- Expert Advice & Research • Events & Programs
- Collaboration & Connection

Our impact priorities



Our organisational priorities



About our roles and priorities

Our roles

Advocacy & Voice

We advocate to local and state government on the benefits of the tourism economy to the west and for increased investment in the west's visitor economy

Promotion & Storytelling

We actively drive a positive narrative for the west and promote the region's visitor experiences

Expert Advice & Research

We provide strategic advice to key stakeholders on tourism in the west, including data, research and market insights

Events & Programs

We work in partnership to enable regionally coordinated events and programs

Collaboration & Connection

We facilitate the connection and collaboration of key stakeholders in the west

Our impact priorities

Strong Partnerships

Exceptional relationships with local/state government and business.

We develop and improve our relationships with local business and all levels of government. We bring valuable knowledge and coordinated expertise and in doing so influence better outcomes for the visitor economy in the west.

Coordinated local business and tourism sectors

We bring key stakeholders in the west together, with a focus on local businesses and the tourism industry, to build relationships and engage in activity that boosts outcomes for the visitor economy in the west.

Growth in visitors

We help build awareness of visitor experiences in Melbourne's west and drive recovery, yield and growth in visitor numbers in relevant markets.

Our organisational priorities

Leadership in tourism

We are the 'go to' authority in the west for everything relating to tourism and the visitor economy.

Financial sustainability

We have diversified funding, including strong support from state and local government. We operate efficiently, maximising the value of our resources.

Remarkable team and networks

We are impactful and effective because of our people. Our team is engaged, skilled and connected. Our board actively leads and supports Western Melbourne Tourism.



Impact priorities - strategic action plan

Our impact priorities are about how Western Melbourne Tourism supports and adds value to the local community, economy and its partners. It is about positive social impact that is bigger than Western Melbourne Tourism.

Below we outline the actions we plan to take to progress each priority within our strategy. Core measures are listed in the first column. In the table below, we explore growth measures requiring additional funding to enable them.

Strong Partnerships - exceptional relationships with local/state government and business

To succeed in this we will...

Work to:	As measured by:
Advocate to all levels of government including federal, state and local government on behalf of Melbourne's west	Recognition by key government stakeholders, requests for input to government processes
Build upon relationships with key government and relevant entities eg VTIC, Vic Govt (DJPR), Committee for Melbourne, Austrade, Transport Vic	Having 'a seat at the table' with these groups and positive outcomes for the region achieved
Provide a valued strategic resource for all partner councils in Melbourne's west related to the region's visitor economy	Recognition from all partners Councils as a valued resource/ delivery of initiatives and projects (not possible as individual Councils)

To grow our organisation we will...

Partner with other leading western organisations, to advocate to all levels of government for funding for key visitor economy projects
Develop and implement a government engagement strategy to influence federal, state and local government decision-making related to the visitor economy in Melbourne's west
Strategically assess broadening the base to include other Local Government Areas or agencies into planning and engagement



Impact priorities - strategic action plan cont.

Coordinated local business and tourism sectors

To succeed in this we will...

Work to:	As measured by:
Lead advocacy for the tourism sector on behalf of industry, business and the local community	Acknowledged by the visitor sector as the lead voice for the region's visitor economy; Success in gaining government funding support for projects and programs (esp for Covid recovery)
Inform and share business and industry information and development opportunities including professional development and capability building for the sector	Number/range of opportunities generated for local business and tourism sectors. Delivery of WMT own annual visitor economy oriented programs
Build a strengthened corporate identity for the region under which industry B2B activities can be promoted and connected	Successful development of a regional identity acknowledged and 'owned' by the local visitor sector across the region.

To grow our organisation we will...

Develop the capability of our team so that we can perform our own marketing, digital engagement, grant writing and project management in house
Build a corporate partnerships model to attract more corporate partners to engage with Western Melbourne Tourism
Build our database and communications infrastructure/networks to improve our reach and connectivity



Impact priorities - strategic action plan cont.

Growth in visitors

To succeed in this we will...

Work to:	As measured by:
Create an engaging umbrella destination identity for the region to facilitate collaborative/cooperative activity across the region eg. marketing, sharing of content, linking of experiences across the region	Creation of new digital content suitable for sharing and distribution through key mainstream tourism channels eg web, socials
Upgrade the representation and coverage of the region in relevant visitor gateway channels eg Visit Victoria	Growth in representation of Melbourne's west content in Melbourne destination content channels as well as ATDW listings
Build a following on WMT's new consumer channels eg website, social media.	Social media metrics eg, views, likes, followers, hits etc
We actively drive a positive narrative for the west and promote the region's visitor experiences through PR and media.	Media coverage achieved

To grow our organisation we will...

Activate a business to consumer (B2C) approach that is able to capture and showcase regional content, promotions, experience packages for visitors
Lead and develop specific programs and cooperative campaigns aimed at specific consumer markets to drive visitation and business yield to the region



Organisational priorities - strategic action plan

Our organisational priorities are the key enablers that Western Melbourne Tourism must focus on internally to continue to grow and thrive as an organisation and have the greatest impact for the western community.

Below we outline the actions we plan to take to progress each priority within our strategy. Core measures are listed in the first column. In the table below, we explore growth measures requiring additional funding to enable them.

Recognised leadership in tourism

To succeed in this we will...

Work to:	As measured by:
Research and provide expertise on the visitor economy of Melbourne's west	Research/data reports generated, contributed to and shared on the visitor economy in Melbourne's west
Provide leadership and advocacy for a renewed regional tourism focus within Greater Melbourne	More funding is provided by government for visitor economy development in the sub-regions across Melbourne, including Melbourne's west
Develop a clear value proposition that ensures our voice and leadership makes a difference	Representation at a range of forums where our leadership is recognised and valued

To grow our organisation we will...

Develop our thought leadership focus and increase the Executive Officer/ Chair's time spent doing media, public relations and engagement in public forums
Increase time and resources allocated to COVID-19 recovery in Melbourne's west and associated visitor economy opportunities for government, business and community
Invest in innovative digital resources and insights that will help demonstrate leadership and value to all local councils, business groups and industry



Organisational priorities - strategic action plan cont.

Financial sustainability

To succeed in this we will...

Work to:	As measured by:
Map the partnership value and outcomes we are seeking and audit our current partnerships	Number of partnerships identified that add value to Western Melbourne Tourism
Focus on delivering the initiatives that secure the short-medium term financial future of Western Melbourne Tourism	Percentage of time invested in revenue generating projects and initiatives that breakeven at minimum
Develop a clear and compelling unique value proposition (prospectus) that can be pitched to secure funding	% growth in additional sources of (non Council) revenue

To grow our organisation we will...

Develop a new revenue model that may include membership and corporate partnerships, philanthropy, B2C offerings and steady multi-year government funding
Promote, market and license our model of western visitor economy collaboration to other regions in Melbourne facing similar challenges
Ensure fundraising and strategic networking is part of the Western Melbourne Tourism culture and all Board member's responsibilities



Organisational priorities - strategic action plan cont.

Remarkable team and networks

To succeed in this we will...

Work to:	As measured by:
Build upon the strong foundations of organisational leadership set by the Executive Officer and Chair	Developing a strong Western Melbourne Tourism team culture, identity and good governance
Maximise skills, inclusion and representation on the Board	Adding new Board members with skills, also representative of community of the west
Update our governance model and clarify the regional role and responsibilities of the Board and members	Developing a refreshed Terms of Reference that outlines Board roles and responsibilities agreed.

To grow our organisation we will...

Expand our resources, skills and digital technology
Develop a shared annual calendar of events and opportunities for Western Melbourne Tourism board members and staff to attend and represent Western Melbourne Tourism
Invest in training and development for our team members to ensure retention of top talent enabling them to fulfil their potential at Western Melbourne Tourism

Our Board Members



Scott Chapman
(Chair)
Independent



**Cr Pamela
Sutton-Legaud**
Hobsons Bay City
Council



Dr Colin Drake
(Dep Chair)
Senior Lecturer and
Course Chair, Victoria
University



Susan Lee
Director, CVC
Consulting



Cr Julie Shannon
Melton City Council



Robyn Grattidge
Director Business
Development, Zoos
Victoria



Cr Sarah Carter
Maribyrnong City
Council



Craig Bray
Manager Western
Melbourne, Parks
Victoria



Cr Heather Marcus
Wyndham City Council



**Anthea
Dimitrakopoulos**
General Manager Sales,
Quest Apartments



Cr Ava Adams
Moonee Valley City
Council



Asha Bee Abraham
Industry Development
Coordinator, Footscray
Community Arts
Centre/Arts West



Cr Maria Kerr
Brimbank City Council



Richard Ponsford
Executive Officer

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Connect with us

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