



**St Kilda Tourism & Events**

Friday, July 8, 2022

Adele Denison  
Head of Arts, Festivals and Events - City Growth and Culture  
Via email: [adele.denison@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:adele.denison@portphillip.vic.gov.au)

Dear Adele, Events Team, Mayor and Councilors.

We write to provide positive and constructive feedback regarding the Draft Events Strategy 2023-2026.

**Summary:**

We support events and acknowledge the important role they play in the City of Port Phillip. St Kilda Tourism and Events believes the event strategy must think big and be committed to making a significant statement in the coming 4 years.

Please find below some key points we have identified in the document, to make comment on and some items we believe should be considered.

The strategy document states:

**1. Presents Port Phillip as a premier choice for event promoters and attendees.**

In our experience private promoters believe it is difficult to deal with the City of Port Phillip in comparison to other metropolitan councils. We should consider how best to change this perception and open the doors to premium events that support the strategy.

**2. Strive to positively impact behaviour within our public spaces, enhance participation and engagement for events that meet our priorities, ranging from funding opportunities and fee waivers to in-kind support through Council services.**

In our opinion, events in the City of Port Phillip (CoPP) have been seen as a revenue stream with too little focus on economic benefit to the broader community i.e., small businesses. It is time to supercharge the CoPP event activity!  
To attract premium events that meet the strategy and drive year-round inbound overnight visitation, it is necessary to allocate appropriate and significant direct financial investment (as opposed to fee waivers). The key objective should move away from merely assessing inbound enquiries to actively seeking out and acquiring premium events.

**3. Seek to produce or support new events to meet gaps where required.**

We commend Council in this pertinent inclusion. The 'events calendar' should have a sharp strategy, mission statement and balance across the key stakeholder groups, being residents, visitors and businesses.

**4. "Welcome major events that contribute to branding of the municipality as a major events site, a home for iconic Victorian events."**

We believe the wording should be 'source' rather than Welcome. We need to be proactive at sourcing outbound events, as opposed to passively welcoming events. Local amenity can also be improved to assist with attracting and retaining large scale events that deliver significant benefits to all three stakeholders. Holding targeted rounds of expressions of interest is not adequate, we must actively source events that suit the strategy.

Such events include:

- Red Bull Sky Racing – across Port Phillip Bay
- Amenity investment such as 4 x Pontoons out in Bay, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame
- St Kilda Ferris Wheel in South Beach Reserve
- St Kilda Tourism and Event strongly supports CoPP working with the GPrix to gain benefits for the event.

**5. Itinerant trading**

Itinerant trading should not be employed unless the opportunity is not taken up by local traders. Therefore, first right of refusal on any and all events relating to food, beverage and appropriate 'other' services. Event providers should not directly compete with existing local business, take away business from the area or drive business to a supplier that is not a permanent trader in the area. Events should bring benefit to the area, rather than cannibalise existing traders.

**6. Winter or shoulder seasons**

We thoroughly agree that the event strategy and calendar must be year-round, however winter and shoulder month events must be 'appropriate' for the time of year. Visitation in these periods must be irrespective of inclement weather, so the scale and type of event is critical.

**7. More time, more marketing.**

For Council and private promoter events, we must have a much larger marketing effort, this should be a key consideration when negotiating with events coming to the area. The event strategy as a whole must include a marketing plan and marketing criteria that promoters must achieve and be accountable for. 'South Side Live' was a prime example of a fabulous event, that key learnings can be taken from. It was unfortunately significantly undermarketed and as such was under visited.

**8. Key Stakeholders**

Re-form the event committee made up of residents, traders and council. This will allow more fluid communications and feedback as well as more accurate representation of the areas needs.

**9. Key Focus**

The strategy needs a key focus e.g. *there is always something to see in St Kilda, St Kilda – Melbourne’s playground*. If a tagline can be decided on, we should scream it from the rooftops and plaster it on the walls. Eg. paint a big mural on the walls of Jacka Blvd that say *Melbourne’s playground*. Again think BIG.

For true economic recovery, events need to show tangible benefits to traders and the wider community. An innovative marketing plan should be created to ensure each event reaches its key objectives and allows for maximum benefit to flow back into the area.

**10. Criteria Matrix**

Careful curation of events is paramount to their success and what they put back into the community. There should be a specific criterion set out that an event must achieve.

For Example

Criteria A: Achieve a tangible positive economic outcome for the local area.

Criteria B: Provide a positive social outcome for the local area.

Criteria C: Active promotion and marketing of the event.

Any subsequent criterion should be measurable and comparable so that events can be evaluated across the line. Post event feedback should be collected from traders and community members in direct and indirect proximity to the event.

**11. South Beach Reserve** should be considered for long term and premium events/activations with additional approval criteria. The Foreshore Traders would like to be a part of that consultation. It needs to include parking, amenity and have stringent bump in and bump out criteria. Fencing must be up for the least amount of time.

South Beach Reserve should be included in delegation to Council Executive. This real-estate is too guarded, and the right events will be embraced from the local community and bring business to the whole precinct.

**12. SKTE supports long stay events** that build momentum and encourage overnight stays.

**13. Road closures** have the most detrimental impact on the entire City. Road closures need to be reserved for early morning events and should be removed by 10am. Road closures cut off the blood supply to the area and negatively impact all key stakeholders. SKTE strongly oppose road closures.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback and we look forward to positively working with you and your team to finalise the 2023-2026 Event Strategy.

Best Regards,



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