



# Northern Beaches Events Strategy

2018 - 2023



northern  
beaches  
council

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# 1 Overview

The Strategy aspires to ensure events sustain and promote the Northern Beaches as an iconic and extraordinary place.



### Why an events strategy?

Council wants to ensure events on the Northern Beaches continue to meet the needs of our local community, now and in the years to come. The Northern Beaches Events Strategy 2018 – 2023 will ensure outcomes are maximised, opportunities are explored and that there is a clear pathway to identifying, attracting and supporting events.

The establishment of the Northern Beaches Council in 2016 created an opportunity to review the annual program of events being delivered across the Northern Beaches and to talk to the community about the role events play in our town centres, villages and public spaces.

This Events Strategy has been developed based on community feedback and with input from a range of stakeholders including community organisations, event organisers, local business and community representatives.

### The Strategy is designed to provide:

- Strategic direction for events on the Northern Beaches, informed by our draft Community Strategic Plan and feedback gained through community consultation activities
- An overview of the challenges and opportunities that exist for holding events on the Northern Beaches
- Principles and priorities that will govern decision making about all events on the Northern Beaches
- A roadmap to success highlighting key goals, actions and measures for how Northern Beaches Council, together with event organisers, can best facilitate events that achieve the strategic direction.

This Events Strategy is a key step forward in ensuring events on the Northern Beaches lead to greater social, environmental and economic benefits for everyone.



### Scope

The Events Strategy covers both Council and third-party events run by event organisers where Council is the approving body. This includes community celebrations, festivals, civic commemorations and art and cultural events. These may be reoccurring or one-off. It also encompasses special interest events, place-based activations, food and beverage events as well as one-off major events that have the capacity to attract large numbers of visitors to some of our unique destinations. The Strategy does not include events where Council venues are used for private events on an ad-hoc or regular basis, business events, regular gatherings, markets or sporting events such as Nippers.

The Strategy aspires to ensure events sustain and promote the Northern Beaches as an iconic and extraordinary place.





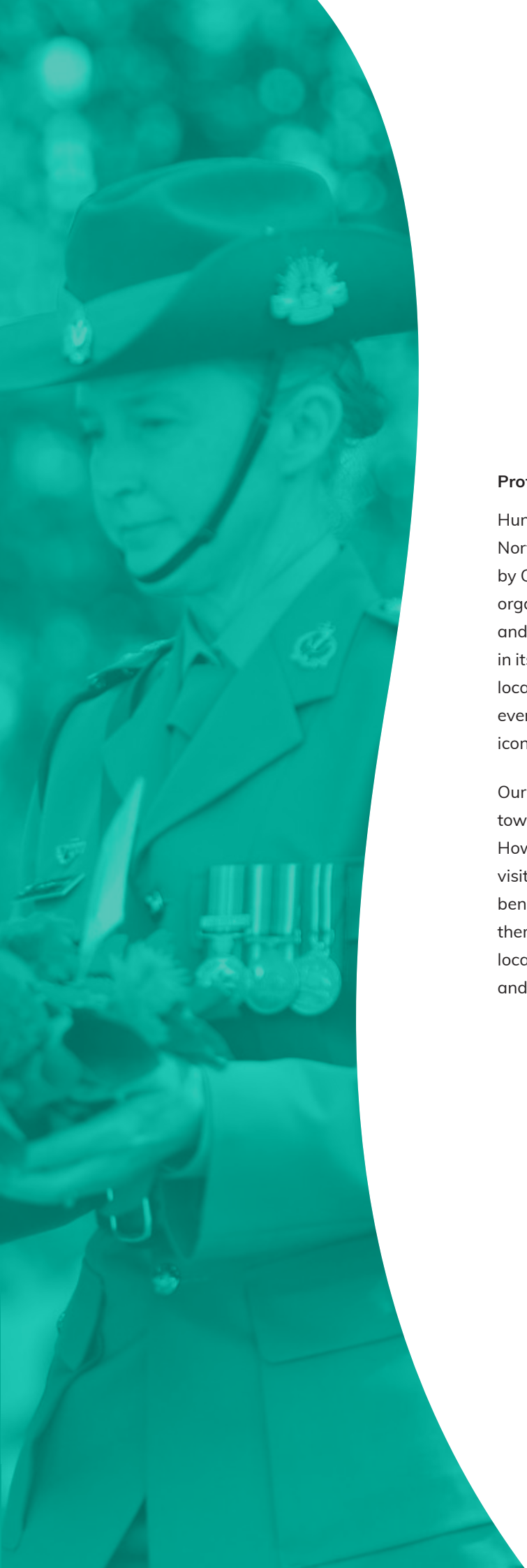


## 2 Events on the Northern Beaches

We are a diverse community made up of many unique town centres, villages and open spaces and we share a common love of the place we live.







### **Profile of events on the Northern Beaches**

Hundreds of events take place across the Northern Beaches every year. These are delivered by Council, local community groups and event organisers. Events come in all shapes and sizes and each has a different purpose and adds value in its own distinct way. They range from small local place-based activations through to major events that attract thousands of visitors to our iconic destinations.

Our incredible natural environments and unique town centres are deeply valued by our community. However, whilst major events that bring significant visitors to places like Manly are valued for their benefits to the local economy and for tourism, there is a strong desire in the community for more local events to be spread throughout other villages and town centres across the Northern Beaches.

A key focus of the Strategy is to recognise the diversity of events that range from major events through to local community events so that outcomes are maximised. The following event categories provide a framework that enable a clear pathway to identifying, attracting and supporting events:

#### **Tier 1 - Major Events**

These events have a strong resonance with a town centre or village and attract visitors to the destination from outside the region

Characteristics include:

- Attract significant numbers of visitors upwards of 20,000 attendees
- Generate support from state agencies and national / international organisations
- Contribute to immediate and long-term measurable economic and community outcomes
- Attract significant metropolitan, national and international media coverage.

#### **Tier 2 - Signature Events**

These are significant events in terms of the scale and the number of attendees however they attract more locals and visitors from across the Northern Beaches region.

Characteristics include:

- Generate support from local businesses and organisations, potential to be major events in the future
- Vibrant and diverse
- Contribute to measurable economic and community outcomes
- Attract local and metropolitan media coverage.



### **Tier 3 - Local Community Events and Activations:**

These events are targeted at the local community to provide place-based activities in our villages and town centres. These events focus on fun, entertainment and the value of being local. Characteristics include:

- Focus on engaging and activating the local town centre, village or place
- Generate support from local businesses, organisations and community groups
- Contribute to social and community outcomes
- Attract local media coverage.

### **Tier 4 - Civic Events & Commemorations**

Council manages and funds a range of civic events and also supports the delivery of a number of ceremonies hosted in conjunction with local community groups and businesses including ANZAC Day services and other national service days. Other ceremonies and civic-style events are both supported and managed by Council. Council also hosts citizenship ceremonies in accordance with Federal Government regulations and guidelines.

### **Council's role**

Council, as the manager of our public spaces, plays a key role in the delivery of an overarching annual events calendar across the Northern Beaches. This is done in a number of ways:

#### **Council-funded and run events**

Council funds and delivers an annual events program that delivers more than 70 Council-run major, signature, community and civic events attracting an estimated 280,000 people each year. In addition Council also delivers hundreds of events and activations through its numerous services including Library Services, Community Arts & Culture, Youth and Aged Services, Manly Art Gallery and Museum, Children's Services, Waste Management, Road Safety, Natural Environment, Aquatic Services and Glen Street Theatre. Council's events program is strategically linked to delivering outcomes identified in Council's draft Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028.

#### **Council support for community-run events**

Council recognises the important role community-run events play in activating our open spaces, towns and villages. Council provides access and improvements to public space as well as in-kind support, financial assistance and resources to support a range of events.

### **Third-party events approved by Council**

Council is the approving body for third-party events run by event organisers that take place in public spaces. This includes events ranging from small local place-based events to major events that attract partners such as Destination NSW and other State Government agencies.

### **The value of events**

Events cut across every sector of our community and touch on tangible and intangible legacies. They play a significant role in connecting the community, driving visitation and delivering economic outcomes. As such, they are catalysts for promoting community wellbeing and social inclusion. Whilst economic measures are readily identifiable, it is more difficult to capture the cultural value of events but that does not diminish their socio-cultural value.

Northern Beaches Council's Community Satisfaction Survey (2017) identifies events and festivals are key drivers of community satisfaction, whilst in relative terms they are deemed less overtly important. Another key finding in the study was that keeping town centres and villages vibrant will contribute to improving overall community satisfaction and events are a key platform to achieve this outcome.



## Event benefits

### Arts & Culture

- Boost creativity and innovation
- Promote opportunities to work collaboratively
- Build capacity in the community and local leadership.

### Social

- Strengthen social cohesion
- Promote sense of belonging and wellbeing
- Encourage community participation and involvement for all abilities
- Enhance the sense of place and promote liveability for local residents.

### Community

- Promote cultural connections
- Acknowledge and celebrate Indigenous heritage
- Increase community satisfaction
- Encourage cultural diversity and inclusiveness
- Promote more active lifestyles
- Promote awareness of environmental programs and initiatives
- Encourage the protection of environmental values.

### Economic

- Support local businesses and job creation
- Increase tourist visitation and spend
- Showcase local industries
- Drive urban renewal and improved infrastructure
- Enhance the profile of key destinations.

### 3 What the Community Told Us

‘We love the big events but I want to see more local events spread across the Northern Beaches that can be easily accessed.’

(Feedback from community participant)





Consultation played an integral part in developing this Events Strategy. We engaged and listened to more than 1,100 people from across the Northern Beaches including community members, third-party event organisers, local businesses and Council staff. The aim was to reach as many people as possible and this was done in a number of ways, including an online survey, face-to-face consultation through a series of pop ups and activations at major events, workshops with third-party event organisers, businesses, community members and consultation with Council staff.

People said events ...

- Reflect and strengthen our shared identity
- Acknowledge what is locally important
- Enhance a place and bring the community closer together
- Are fun for family and friends.

One common message from participants in the consultation was that they valued events for many reasons but mainly because 'events enhance our sense of connection to people and places'.

## How we listened

### Community survey

We hosted an online survey that generated over 400 responses and over 80% of survey participants were Northern Beaches residents. The largest group and a third of respondents were aged 40 to 54, while the smallest group were aged under 18. The survey was designed to get feedback about current events on the Northern Beaches and get information about community priorities for future events.

### Community pop ups

There were six pop ups in high pedestrian traffic areas across the Northern Beaches with the aim to gain 'on-the-ground' feedback from the community. We engaged with over 230 people at our pop up locations:

- Dee Why beachfront
- Avalon Woolworths
- Manly Corso
- Belrose – Glen St Theatre
- Frenchs Forest Organic Market
- Warriewood Beaches Market.

### Community workshops

We hosted well attended community workshops that were designed to gain input about the role Council can play to support and collaborate to deliver future events on the Northern Beaches.

### Council staff workshops

We held workshops with key internal Council stakeholders. These sessions enabled us to hear feedback on Council's current event planning and approvals processes and seek information to make it easier to hold events on the Northern Beaches.

### Connecting to the Community Strategic Plan

'Connected community' was a core theme throughout the extensive engagement for the Community Strategic Plan where more than 2,500 people defined a vision which is founded on a need for better opportunities for social interaction:

*Northern Beaches - a safe, inclusive and connected community that lives in balance with our extraordinary coastal and bushland environment (draft CSP, June 2017).*

This Events Strategy will be critical to achieving this vision and it will guide our approach to achieving the following goals in the Community Strategic Plan:

- **Places for People** - aspiring to create welcoming, accessible and affordable private and public places that foster good health and social interaction
- **Community and Belonging** - aspiring to care for everyone in the community, making sure that people feel safe, supported and included
- **Participation and Partnerships** - aspiring to achieve better outcomes for the community in the long term by tapping into the wealth of local knowledge and expertise that exists within the community
- **Vibrant Local Economy** - aspiring to create a thriving and vibrant local economy where traditional and new industries are innovative and technology helps to stimulate growth and local jobs
- **Environmental Sustainability** - aspiring to be leaders in managing our resources sustainably and for the long term to ensure that development is balanced with our lifestyle and environment.





## 4 Community Priorities

‘We have one of the most beautiful, aspirational regions in the world and we really don’t use it to our full advantage.’

(Feedback from community participant)



Feedback we received through the community consultation presented the following priorities for events on the Northern Beaches. These formed the basis for the development of the Strategy's Goals and Actions:

### **1 Focus on innovative, exciting and vibrant events that add value to our Northern Beaches lifestyle**

There is a strong desire to see events that are: inclusive of all abilities, reflect the distinctive lifestyle, showcase local talent and create new experiences in locations that aren't traditionally used for events. Events were also seen to add value where they contribute back to the community.

### **2 Spread events across the Northern Beaches to connect, welcome and be inclusive.**

People said events connect communities by bringing people together, creating common experiences that enhance a strong sense of the people and the place we live. Events welcome visitors and provide memorable experiences of a place. Many people said they want to ensure accessibility is addressed at all events; they want to see family-friendly events that are affordable; would like to see some new events, and particularly satellite events held further north along the peninsula.

### **3 Boost the local business economy through events**

A dynamic events calendar is seen as a good way to attract visitors, explore safe night-time activities and drive tourism to boost local business profiles as well as employment and volunteer opportunities. Many people said that events help promote the Northern Beaches as a destination.

### **4 Support our community organisations to deliver new and engaging events**

Event organisers are also looking for more information to guide and support them to create and deliver new events. They were keen to see more online information and an easier event application and approval process. There is a call for more support for existing community events to boost awareness and attendance.

## **5 Make transport easier for people to get to and from events**

There was a unanimous call for better transport connectivity across the Northern Beaches. It was suggested the lack of public transport made it challenging for people to travel to and from events. Most admitted that they drove which would add to event-related traffic congestion. Community and stakeholders suggested 'park n ride' and shuttle services from transport hubs options be explored. They also suggested holding events away from Manly to share the vibrancy and entertainment of events with the rest of the Northern Beaches and make it easier for different communities to experience events.

## **6 Deliver and promote sustainable events that maintain and protect our environment**

It was loud and clear from the feedback that events should be encouraged and supported to be sustainable, using reusable materials and recycling bins where possible. It was suggested that events should educate, demonstrate and promote sustainable initiatives and results.









## 5 Strategic Direction for Events

### **Vision**

Events on the Northern Beaches will celebrate our unique vibe by connecting our people, places, businesses and culture. Our events will be dynamic, creative, innovative and inclusive; reflecting our personality and promoting the Northern Beaches as an extraordinary place to live, invest and play.



### Benefits of a strategic approach

The formation of the Northern Beaches Council in 2016 created an opportunity to look at how events benefit the Northern Beaches community. It also gave Council the chance to ask the community 'what do you want from events now and in the future?' The risk with delivering events for historic reasons or in an ad hoc manner is inefficiencies and poor quality experiences that don't reflect the aspirations of the community. Our strategic approach over the next five years will focus on:

- Consistency, quality and efficiencies in planning, approving and delivering events
- Developing an events calendar incorporating large and small events, with a greater spread of events in the many towns, villages and open spaces across the Northern Beaches
- Promoting a shared identity across the Northern Beaches community
- Collaborating with community event organisers to ensure equity, diversity and more local events
- Promoting partnerships to boost the visitor economy and economic outcomes
- Working with third party event organisers to create and deliver new events
- Encouraging more events to demonstrate improved environmental outcomes and waste minimising strategies
- Promoting and delivering ongoing public health programs and environmental education.

### Council principles guiding the delivery of events

Linking to our strategic direction, Council's policies and what we heard through the consultation, we have developed principles that events on the Northern Beaches will strive towards. They will:

- Reflect the personality of our towns, villages and spaces
- Connect people with each other and to places in fresh and exciting ways
- Balance the economic, social and environmental outcomes across a diverse portfolio of major events
- Promote and focus on recycling, reusing and reducing waste
- Promote and implement Council's 'Disability Inclusion Action Plan'
- Activate and make our diverse places vibrant, safe, inclusive and accessible
- Promote partnerships and support for community programs and events
- Demonstrate best practice in risk management and public safety standards
- Continuously evaluate and review the existing events program
- Showcase what makes the Northern Beaches a great place to live and play.



## 6 Achieving Goals through Actions



The following goals, actions and measures provide a roadmap to achieving our vision for the Events Strategy and the goals in our Community Strategic Plan.

**GOAL 1: Support a diverse and exciting annual events program that is welcoming, inclusive, safe and that adds value to the Northern Beaches community.**

Key actions	Key measures of success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Event development plan</b> - establish a calendar management process with an overview of both Council-run and third-party run events.</li> <li>• <b>Cross organisation events working team</b> - undertake audit and evaluation processes to ensure events reflect Council's strategic goals and outcomes.</li> <li>• <b>Community event support program</b> - investigate a funding model to support major events, signature/ regional events and local community events. Identify potential events which could transition to significant events.</li> <li>• <b>Marketing</b> - promote events via social and digital channels.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility and inclusion policy</b> - develop an accessibility and inclusion policy, training, guidelines and toolkit for council events. The toolkit will guide internal planning of activities and events and will be promoted externally to guide the planning of non-Council events.</li> <li>• <b>Cultural and creative</b> - expand cultural events and creative opportunities, including safe nightlife events with the potential for young people to socialise.</li> <li>• <b>Event safety</b> - support the provision of appropriate resources, measures, actions and inspection programs to minimise risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the number of high quality local community-run events.</li> <li>• Identify and increase ROI on major events and signature/regional events.</li> <li>• Increase in attendance numbers and higher levels of engagement at events.</li> <li>• Number of Council business units engaged in event planning, applications, delivery, monitoring, evaluation and review processes.</li> <li>• Demonstrated evaluation and review of annual events.</li> <li>• High levels of satisfaction with events measured by event surveys and the Northern Beaches Community Satisfaction Survey.</li> <li>• Accessibility and inclusion guidelines and toolkit developed.</li> <li>• Number of external event organisers utilising the free 'What's On Calendar' service.</li> <li>• Increasing levels of engagement and conversion from digital and social media.</li> <li>• Safe events with minimal or no incidents or negative impacts.</li> </ul>

**GOAL 2: Activate our town centres and villages to reflect community aspirations, create vibrancy and enhance our sense of place.**

**Key actions**

- **Place-based activation program** - identify, develop, fund and deliver activations in consultation with place-based stakeholders.
- **Capacity-building workshops** - support local community and business groups to self-manage with 'lighter, cheaper, quicker' place activations, including safe nightlife opportunities.
- **Place planning process** - event related input into infrastructure and capital works and environmental compliance programs.
- **Marketing** - develop communication strategies to promote event activations in conjunction with local partners.

**Key measures of success**

- Positive feedback from local community including businesses and retailers reflected in placemaking data.
- Increase in the diversity and accessibility of locations utilised.
- Increased partnerships and number of community driven events delivering local activations.



### GOAL 3: Boost the economic and tourism benefits of events in key destinations.

Key actions	Key measures of success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Event attraction plan</b> - support the Regional Destination Management Plan by identifying new event opportunities, prepare feasibility assessments and determine potential partners, key stakeholder involvement and opportunities to schedule event delivery outside of peak periods.</li> <li>• <b>Events sponsorship plan</b> - develop a consistent approach to investing in events delivering the most beneficial economic, tourism and community, public health, safety and environmental outcomes, ensuring robust guidelines and good governance.</li> <li>• <b>Evaluation and review</b> - measure impact of events on local town centres and visitor perceptions and satisfaction.</li> <li>• <b>Venue upgrade plan</b> - identify and explore opportunities to upgrade venues with appropriate infrastructure to support events and activations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the number of events that generate measurable economic benefits including an upward trend in event visitors.</li> <li>• A diverse calendar of events spread throughout the year maximising low tourist season opportunities.</li> <li>• High levels of satisfaction from event organisers.</li> <li>• Increase in the economic yield from visitors.</li> <li>• Positive feedback from visitor perception and satisfaction surveys.</li> <li>• Identified opportunities for capital works upgrades to event-ready spaces are delivered.</li> </ul>

**GOAL 4: Work in partnership with event organisers in a customer focused manner to promote the delivery of events.**

Key actions	Key measures of success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Event approvals</b> - develop a user-friendly event application and permit process that is agile and relative to the size and impact of the event.</li> <li>• <b>Capacity building in event management</b> - provide advice and information to support community capacity and capability in event delivery. Develop an event toolkit to encourage best practice event management.</li> <li>• <b>Place planning process</b> - seek place based feedback and input into event related infrastructure and capital works and environmental compliance programs.</li> <li>• <b>Policies, fees and charges</b> - review Council policies and fees and charges to ensure they align with the needs of the community and the goals of the events strategy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish an agile and scalable application process and system.</li> <li>• Create event toolkit and framework.</li> <li>• Deliver event management information through various platforms.</li> <li>• Positive feedback from local community and event organisers.</li> <li>• Increase in the diversity and accessibility of locations utilised.</li> <li>• Undertake audits and reviews of events to assess regulatory compliance and determine the content and delivery of future education programs for event organisers.</li> </ul>

**GOAL 5: Investigate event related transport options to make it easier for people to get to and from events across the Northern Beaches.**

Key actions	Key measures of success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Event transport options</b> - explore potential alternatives including 'park n ride' and shuttle services from transport hubs for large scale events to reduce traffic congestion at event times.</li> <li>• <b>Advocate</b> - for more public transport services during large scale event times.</li> <li>• <b>Local resident notification</b> - ensure adequate notification of Large events to ensure the community is aware of potential traffic impacts.</li> <li>• <b>Marketing</b> - engage social media and other channels to promote event transport options.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive feedback on alternative transport options for events.</li> <li>• Implementing an alternative of event transport options such as 'park n ride' and shuttle services.</li> <li>• Increase in use of marketing and promotion to integrate event transport options.</li> </ul>



**GOAL 6: Continuously work to demonstrate and promote environmental sustainability in event delivery and theming.**

Key actions	Key measures of success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Event sustainability plan</b> - to be incorporated into the event toolkit and framework to support Council policies, planning and delivery of events.</li> <li>• <b>Event waste management</b> - development of sustainability checklists including consultation, sustainability indicators, and auditing to promote the NSW EPA Waste Hierarchy – avoid, reuse, recycle, recover energy, treat waste and dispose.</li> <li>• <b>Education</b> - Encourage and deliver programs and education initiatives that include promotion of waste management, food minimisation, environmental compliance and sustainability at events.</li> <li>• <b>Marketing and promotion</b> - actively promote the event efforts and results to affect behaviour change towards people living more sustainably.</li> <li>• <b>Monitoring and review process</b> - establish base-line data along with auditing and evaluation processes to track progress of key event sustainability indicators.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of base-line data on key sustainability indicators.</li> <li>• Increase in the number of events which don't use single use plastics.</li> <li>• Increase in number of events using recycling collection in addition to waste collection.</li> <li>• Improved communications promoting event sustainability measures and outcomes.</li> <li>• Reporting of survey feedback from event participants who say they have changed behaviour to adopt new and more sustainably orientated behaviour.</li> <li>• Reduction in the need for additional Council resources/equipment required for event cleansing .</li> </ul>





## 7 Evaluation and Review





### **Reviewing the Strategy**

Together with our community, we will review and update the Strategy to ensure events on the Northern Beaches continue to evolve, and that new events are encouraged, created and supported. Through evaluation and monitoring the continual process of reviewing and updating the Strategy will ensure that events add value to our local places and encourage visitors, while maintaining what makes the Northern Beaches an extraordinary place.









