

VISITOR ECONOMY PLAN

Tourism is worth almost \$300 million annually to the Tamworth economy, directly employing over 1,200 people. It's an important industry. Despite the strong contribution of tourism to the region's economy there are opportunities to significantly increase its current value. The Visitor Economy Plan (VEP) is a blueprint for how to do this. How Tamworth Regional Council, Industry, and other key stakeholders, such as Destination NSW, can work together to sustainably build a stronger visitor economy. Elements of the VEP are outlined below.

Background

The VEP has been developed simultaneously with:

- **Blueprint 100**
- **Our Community Plan 2023 - 2033**
- **Tamworth Tomorrow - Economic Development & Investment Strategy**
- **NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030**
- **Destination Country and Outback NSW Destination Management Plan**

Extensive desktop research, including analysis of Tourism Research Australia's (TRA) latest data and consultation with key stakeholders from within and outside the region, was also undertaken.

Guiding Principles

1. **Inclusive** of the whole region and all communities.
2. **Informed** Recommendations that are evidence-based.
3. **Showcase our strengths** Alignment with NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030.
4. **Customer-centric** Commercial success will come from putting the visitor first.
5. **Future-focused** Understanding of global and domestic trends to sustainably grow the visitor economy.
6. **Measurable** deliverables and outcomes.

Tamworth is the Capital of Country Australia

- Innovation and creativity sit at the heart of the Tamworth region. From being first to light up the streets to delivering world-class events such as the Tamworth Country Music Festival.
- Our industry is constantly evolving; creating new experiences, events and accommodation for visitors to enjoy.
- The appeal of regional Australia is at an all-time high. There has never been a greater opportunity to reinforce Tamworth region as the Capital of Country Australia.

Inspiring visitors to stay longer and explore further

A key to success is encouraging visitors to explore the entire region, its city, towns and villages. From enjoying the great outdoors to savouring local produce, exercising their sporting skills, or immersing themselves in history, the arts and culture, there are myriad experiences awaiting visitors. Some are provided by a vibrant tourism industry while others occur naturally. Along the way, visitors will meet legendary characters and create lasting memories inspired by remarkable stories.

A prioritised Action Plan

The VEP Action Plan has been prioritised to align with the three core phases of the NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030:

- **Phase 1:** Recovery: 2022 – 2024
- **Phase 2:** Momentum: 2025 – 2026
- **Phase 3:** Accelerate: 2027 and beyond

High-level Goals

There are three high-level goals, designed to contribute to the liveability and vibrancy of the Tamworth region. Each goal is linked to measurable objectives.

1. **Sustainably grow visitation to the Tamworth region.**
2. **Increase visitor yield.**
3. **Encourage greater regional dispersal.**

Priority Actions

Increase visitation & visitor expenditure (demand)	Develop and activate a world-class place brand for the Tamworth region by using the Capital of Country Australia positioning to create & reinforce the destination's competitive advantages
	Develop a multi - year destination marketing campaign and create content that reflects both strategic destination brand stories and a range of tactical activities. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Tamworth Multiple Attractions (TMA) ticket. This initiative would deliver direct benefits to the collective institutions/ attractions and provide a simple and easy way to encourage more visitors to experience more. • A series of inspiring experientially led itineraries and trails that connect experiences and attractions to places to stay and encourage wider regional dispersal. For example, Taste Tamworth Trails (culinary and produce).
	Implement a multi-channel approach to visitor services including place branding and partnerships
	Implement a hyper-local campaign aimed at the residents to target the Visiting Friends and Relatives market
Enriching the visitor experience (supply)	Proactively pursue, attract, and support new aligned strategic event initiatives that will reinforce Tamworth region as the events capital of Country Australia, such as agricultural and equine events
	Develop and implement with the local Aboriginal communities the opportunity to create a unique Aboriginal cultural precinct that stretches across the landscape (land, water, sky) and celebrates connection to Country.
	Activate Tamworth's assets and precincts. Pursue funding & investment opportunities for key precincts such as AELEC, Performing Arts & Cultural Precinct and the Tourist Precinct.
	Promote the revitalisation and enhancement of the region's accommodation offering
Establish key enablers for success	Revitalise and enhance the region's nature-based and recreational facilities, museums and public arts
	Continue to strengthen collaboration across LGA boundaries and with regional and State organisations
	Launch and implement an industry leadership program to build industry capacity and capability to be visitor-centric and future focused
	Facilitate digital transformation and connectivity to future-proof the region's visitor economy and to meet the expectations of visitors

Our Starting Point

	Goal	REQUIRED ACTIONS
	<p>Increase the average overnight visitor length of stay by one night. If ¼ of current overnight visitors stayed one more night, it would deliver an additional \$20 million to the Tamworth region visitor economy.</p> <p>Increasing length of stay will essentially depend on four factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A deeper understanding of the priority target markets (consumer research) • Visitor perceptions of the overall experience that the Tamworth region has to offer (Brand Identity) • Awareness of how much there is to see and do (Visitor Servicing & Visiting Friends & Relatives (VFR) market) • Industry leadership, collaboration, digital transformation & investment (a unified visitor economy voice) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Implement an initial marketing campaign, 'One More', to encourage visitors to stay one more night Deliver a new place brand for Tamworth region that reinforces its positioning as Capital of Country Australia Implement a multichannel approach to visitor servicing that involves partnerships with local business. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google research indicates that 85% of leisure travellers decide on activities only after arriving in the destination Actively target the Visiting Friends & Relatives market: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represents 35% of all visitors. Higher than any other visitor segment. • VFR stay longer than other segments Establish a strategic and integrated approach to all visitor economy related functions.
Success	Increased length of stay will be measured through Tourism Research Australia's National Visitor Survey data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand-tracker program to measure change in destination preference • Increase in industry partnership activity & dollars invested in partnership activity • Increase in the number of experiences listed on Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW)