



TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Introduction	3	Strengths	19
Vision	3	Weaknesses	20
Objectives	3	Opportunities	22
Rationale	5	Challenges	23
Process	5	The City's Role	24
Background	6	Provider	24
Table: Summary Of Annual Events in Greater Geraldton 2019/20	7	Facilitator	24
Strategic Context	8	Partner	24
Table: Relevant Key City Of Greater Geraldton Documents	9	Funder/Supporter	25
Table: Regional Australia Local Government Events Strategies Comparison	12	Promoter	25
Definitions	17	Landlord	25
Analysis Of Current Situation	19	Action Plan	26
		Monitoring & Evaluation	32
		Appendix A	33



INTRODUCTION

Vision

Geraldton is an attractive destination for high quality and inclusive events that cater for visitors, community and business.

Objectives

The objectives of this Events Strategy are:

- Local economy is supported by a coordinated and balanced calendar of diverse events increasing visitation to the region.
- City of Greater Geraldton is a leader in local government inclusive events delivery.
- Community events contribute to community liveability and wellbeing.
- Efficient and effective processes ensure that the City of Greater Geraldton is a user friendly event location.

Guiding Principles

- Events are accessible for residents and visitors
- Events reflect and cater for our cultural diversity
- Events reflect our heritage and our future
- Events reflect our commitment to sustainability
- Events attract visitors and promote our unique region
- Events within Greater Geraldton are delivered, facilitated or supported by the City depending on the specific objectives and nature of event
- Events are predominantly delivered across Greater Geraldton by local community groups, organisations and businesses





Rationale

Events, celebrations, commemorations and festivals play an important role in Geraldton's social and economic fabric. They can bring substantial new dollars into the economy, contributing to tourism, retail, hospitality, service and professional services, supporting local employment as well as the economy. Events can also build Geraldton's profile and reputation as a great place to visit, live and invest.

Events bring communities together, providing entertainment and celebrating our heritage and special interests. They contribute to residents having a sense of pride in our community, as well as developing skills and learning or social connection opportunities for volunteers.

This Events Strategy will provide the City of Greater Geraldton with a clear direction in relation to events held in the Greater Geraldton area. It aims to:

- Acknowledge the importance of events to Greater Geraldton in terms of the economic, social and cultural benefits.
- Facilitate community members, organisations and businesses to deliver quality events for the community.
- Improve coordination of events provided and supported by the City.
- Support a strategic, diverse, vibrant and sustainable program of events in Greater Geraldton.
- Attract and support events that provide optimal benefits (social, cultural and economic) to the Greater Geraldton area.
- Strengthen Greater Geraldton's position as a desirable place to live, work and play.

It should be acknowledged that Covid-19 impacts may significantly influence and inform this iteration of an Events Strategy for the City of Greater Geraldton.

Process

The development of this strategy has involved the following:

- Community consultation, including interviews with external event organisers
- Consultation with internal stakeholders, including Risk, Environmental Health, Economic Development, Communications, Parks & Gardens & Recreation
- Review of recurrent City events
- Research and review of externally conducted local events
- Review of existing events strategies from a range of Australian and international cities, shires and municipalities
- Council Consultation
- Drafting and revision

Background

The City of Greater Geraldton provides and supports a large number of events held within the City. These events make our city a vibrant, social and cultural place to live and enrich the lives of our residents. Some of the many events the City delivers include:

- Australia Day Festival
- WoW Fest
- Christmas on the Terrace
- Mayor's Mystery Bus Tour & Lunch
- ANZAC Day
- NAIDOC Week
- Seniors Week
- HMAS Sydney II Memorial Service
- Thank A Volunteer Day
- Breast Cancer Awareness
- Aquarena Family Fun Day
- Queens Park Theatre Performances
- Big Sky Readers & Writers Festival

In addition to these City of Greater Geraldton events, many other community events are delivered throughout the year and have received City support, such as:

- Harmony Day
- Funtavia
- Sunshine Festival
- Mullewa Family Fun Day
- Mullewa Muster & Rodeo
- Mullewa Agricultural Show

The following table, summarised from the City's annual Events Calendar, depicts the main events held across Greater Geraldton throughout the calendar year and categorises them according to target audience and scale as well as nature of event (A complete version of the City of Greater Geraldton Events Calendar is contained in Appendix 1).

This extensive events calendar is delivered annually despite the City having no existing events strategy or equivalent. As a result, the City's delivery and support of events lacks clear guidance and vision. In turn, this means that there is no clear policy or guidelines in regard to what events the City provides and supports.

The impact of this is less assurance of cohesion, shared vision or strategic relevance. Although a diverse range of events is something to strive towards, there is benefit in a strategy that ensures the right mix and timing of events as well as alignment with the City's strategic direction. Provision of events that act as major tourist attracters, promote and raise the profile of Geraldton, and offer a variety of cultural experiences in the community are all anticipated positive impacts of a formalised events strategy.

Summary of Annual Events in Greater Geraldton 2019/20



Event	Demographic	Genre	Scale
Sundays by the Sea (Summer Season)	Family	Music	Minor Event
Films on the Foreshore (Summer Season)	Family	Film	Minor Event
Geraldton Australia Day	Family	Heritage	Major Event
Mullewa Australia Day	Family	Heritage	Minor Event
First Nations Festival	Family	Indigenous	Medium Event
Waitangi on the Foreshore	Family	Multicultural	Medium Event
Mid West Art Prize - Opening	Family	The Arts	Medium Event
GRAMS Family Fun Day	Family	Indigenous	Medium Event
Harmony Festival	Family	Multicultural	Medium Event
Fight Night: Fists of Fury	Family	Sports	Minor Event
National Youth Week	Youth	Youth	Minor Event
Fools Festival	Family	Music	Medium Event
WOW - Wind on Water Festival	Family	The Arts	Major Event
ANZAC Day	Family	Heritage	Medium Event
Mullewa ANZAC Day	Family	Heritage	Minor Event
Funtavia	Family	The Arts	Medium Event
Reconciliation Week	Family	Indigenous	Medium Event
Boating & Caravan Show	Family	Leisure	Major Event
Mullewa Rodeo & Muster	Family	Sports	Major Event
Big Sky Readers & Writers Festival	Family	The Arts	Medium Event
WA Day	Family	Heritage	Medium Event
NAIDOC Week	Family	Indigenous	Medium Event
City to Surf	Family	Sports	Medium Event
Outback Bloom - Mullewa Wildflower Festival	Family	Wildflowers	Minor Event
Mullewa Wildflower Show	Family	Wildflowers	Minor Event
87th Mullewa District Ag Show	Family	Agriculture	Minor Event
Battle of the Bands	Youth	Music	Minor Event
52nd Fremantle to Geraldton Ocean Classic	Family	Sports	Medium Event
National Children's Week	Children	Children	Minor Event
Seniors Week	Seniors	Seniors	Minor Event
Sunshine Festival	Family	Heritage	Medium Event
Remembrance Day	Family	Heritage	Minor Event
Service for the Unknown Soldier	Family	Heritage	Minor Event
HMAS Sydney II Memorial Service - 80th	Family	Heritage	Medium Event
Carols by Candlelight	Family	Music	Minor Event
Aquarena Family Fun Day	Family	Sports	Medium Event
Christmas on the Terrace	Family	CBD Vibrancy	Major Event
100 Years Commemoration Commercial Air Service	Family	Heritage	Medium Event

(Scale Key: Major Event: 3-5,000+, high profile, broad reach/regional; Medium: 500-1,000, reasonably significant, still broad reach; Minor: Small numbers, more likely to be local focus)

Additionally, issues with the service provided by the City to both internal and external stakeholders wishing to hold events in Greater Geraldton have been identified and will be addressed through the heightened clarity of a strategic approach and associated enhanced event approval guidelines and processes.

This will assist the City to overcome negative public perceptions and be viewed as more proactively working in support of stakeholders to ensure the success of their events and that they are delivered in a safe and compliant manner that meet all requirements. Changes in recent years, particularly in the areas of insurance and risk, have complicated the holding of public events much more than in the past.

Community groups and event organisers sometimes lack the specific skills and knowledge to deliver events successfully without assistance and guidance. A strategic approach to events by the City will improve clarity regarding roles and responsibilities of City departments and officers involved in events planning, coordination and approvals and ensure better communication with internal and external parties.

Further to the issues outlined above, the City periodically experiences pressure, largely on an ad hoc basis, from external event organisers seeking significant financial and/or in-kind support. This is a common issue across the local government sector, with many councils forming a policy position or formalising a process for such requests.

There is benefit in further considering how requests for external event support can be better dealt with, such as an application process that is clearly defined and consistently applied criteria to evaluate local benefits, that will assist Council planning and budget processes. It is therefore proposed that this matter not be addressed in the Events Strategy but rather is referred for consideration forming part of a future review of the City's grants or sponsorship processes.

Strategic Context

There is a range of City of Greater Geraldton documents that should guide and inform this strategy, as outlined below. Prior to addressing those, it is important to note the significance of the timing of finalisation of this strategy during the Covid-19 pandemic and its implications for this strategy. City of Greater Geraldton is, like the rest of the local government sector and society more broadly, emerging from a period of restrictions that saw the closure of public facilities and cessation of programs with a major impact on delivery of events. As a result of the impacts of current circumstances, it is proposed that the City's Events Strategy be considered as a staged approach to the resumption of planning for, and delivery of, events going forward from now into the short to medium term future during the community and economic recovery phase.

An Events Strategy to guide the City's role in events is aligned with the City of Greater Geraldton Strategic Community Plan 2017 – 2027, as well as other key strategic City documents, including the Geraldton Jobs and Growth Plan and the Destination Management Plan.

The elements of these plans and strategic documents relevant to an Events Strategy are summarised in the following table.

<p>Strategic Community Plan 2017-2027</p> <p>(Community Goal: Improving overall satisfaction with Greater Geraldton as a place to live.)</p> <p>(Economy Goal: Increase annual visitation numbers.)</p>	<p>Community Goal:</p> <p>1.1 Our Heritage and the Arts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recording, recognising and preserving our social, environmental and built heritage 2. Recognising and preserving Aboriginal heritage, history, traditions, languages and culture 3. Facilitating engagement in the arts in all its forms 4. Fostering and facilitating community and cultural events <p>1.2 Recreation and Sport</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supporting the strong sporting culture that has shaped Greater Geraldton’s identity and lifestyle <p>1.5 Recognise, value and support everyone</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supporting and strengthening community groups, organisations and volunteer services 2. Supporting young people to develop the skills to make valuable contributions to their communities 3. Providing community services and programs that support people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds 4. Supporting initiatives that enhance education and learning opportunities for all community members 5. Enhance relationships and services between rural and urban areas <p>Economy Goal:</p> <p>3.2 Lifestyle and Vibrancy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuing to promote the City as the destination of choice for regional events 2. Promoting events and unique tourism experiences that aid in attracting visitors and investment 3. Revitalising the CBD through economic, social and cultural vibrancy
<p>Community Voice Project – Range and Level of Service Delivery Report to CGG 2020</p> <p>(Community Events – service area to be maintained)</p>	<p>Level of service delivered through CGG Events to remain unchanged.</p> <p>Suggested consideration of fewer, bigger events(some combined)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For referral to review of IPF and CSP to be completed in 2021-22.

Relevant Key City of Greater Geraldton Documents

<p>Geraldton Jobs and Growth Plan 2020-2023</p> <p>(To revitalise the city centre as a distinctive and magnetic place for residents, businesses and visitors – an active destination embracing Geraldton’s nautical history and assets.)</p> <p>(To retain wealth within Greater Geraldton and minimise economic leakage through innovative and thriving small businesses seizing opportunities to serve the local population)</p>	<p>Create a lively and active city centre and streets through the day into the evening</p> <p>Promote Geraldton’s maritime history, industry and attractions and sporting culture</p> <p>Develop the City Centre as a leading Midwest destination with diverse uses and occupants</p> <p>Develop the Geraldton foreshore as a key leisure attraction</p> <p>Deliver staged and ongoing activation of the city centre</p> <p>Attract/create more music and sporting events and maximise the opportunities from existing sports tourism</p>
<p>Geraldton City Centre Revitalisation Plan</p> <p>(Place Branding and place pride, measured by increased number of city centre events held.)</p>	<p>Recognise and acknowledge Geraldton’s Aboriginal and European heritage in the city centre, through storytelling, public art, events, built form etc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wealth of history reflected and celebrated in the city centre to contribute to people’s knowledge about the place • Oral histories collected as part of the senior/retirees initiative are to be re-interpreted in public art, and a collective event or publication • Key on-going role of Yamaji art group in city centre events and artworks (include Yamaji artists in the artisans register) <p>Program regular events and activities that are city centre specific</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular events that draw people into the city centre, are unique and therefore a drawcard use • Liaise with the City’s events team to establish events that could be held regularly, and are city centre unique • Include in the regular events calendar and promote as city centre specific events • Encourage the organisers of all markets to collaborate in providing one large market in the heart of the city centre

<p>Destination Management Plan 2017</p> <p>Tourism Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow the greater Geraldton visitor economy to \$197m in 2020-21 • Deliver a great visitor experience • Build industry leadership, collaboration and capability • Develop and communicate 'Brand Geraldton: a clear tourism identity 	<p>Formalise and upgrade selected sites currently used for mountain bike riding...and supporting events that help grow visitation to the region.</p> <p>Continue to support development of the West End cultural precinct, enhanced with events, performances, installations, light shows, displays-exhibitions, social-cultural gatherings, galleries/artisans etc. Promote to visitors as the cultural epicentre of Geraldton hospitality and entertainment.</p> <p>Project to deliver an Events, Sports and Conferences Strategy, acknowledging that conferences and certain events are unique in that they bring entirely new visitors to the region, creating genuine growth in the visitor economy (specific reference to QPT and GMC).</p>
<p>CBD Revitalisation Plan 2020</p> <p>(Reposition Geraldton's city centre as a successful City Centre for retail, commerce, hospitality, community and civic life, is important for Geraldton as the Mid West's regional capital. It links to infrastructure, tourism, reducing leakage from the local economy, employment, local pride, and overall liveability.)</p>	<p>Council's overarching intent to create and maintain a vibrant City Centre.</p> <p>The strategies to achieve this outcome are underpinned by the Geraldton City Centre Revitalisation Plan and the Rocks Laneway activation strategy.</p> <p>Promoting Greater Geraldton and its potential business opportunities to facilitate targeted economic development.</p> <p>Revitalising the CBD through economic, social and cultural vibrancy.</p> <p>The Foreshore and central city streets are already becoming a welcoming hub of commerce, leisure and entertainment for residents and visitors alike.</p>

In addition to reviewing the suite of City policies and strategic documents that inform development of an Events Strategy, extensive research was conducted in regard to other regional local government strategies and approaches to events.

The following table outlines the vision and key points or objectives from a range of local government event strategies from regional WA and across the country. This research highlights the competitiveness of regional Australia in endeavouring to be regarded as an events destination, with the common themes considered in development of the City’s Events Strategy, particularly in regard to competition and opportunities. Common themes included:

- Focus on visitor attraction for economic benefit
- Recognition of significance of economic benefit of events
- Lifestyle and liveability community benefits
- Natural environment attraction, as a rural or coastal location
- Opportunity to expand annual events calendar by focusing on shoulder, or off-peak, times
- Council’s multiple roles as events deliverer, supporter and facilitator
- Infrastructure often of a high quality to support events, providing opportunity to maximise utilisation
- Opportunity to explore diversity in mix of events

Regional Australia Local Government Events Strategies Comparison

Council	Key Points/Objectives	Aim/Vision
Broome	Focus on economic impact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring visitors to Broome specifically for the event • Enrich the experience of those already visiting Broome • Connect with the community and create a vibrant atmosphere Cultural events, participation sports and conferences considered the events best suited to Broome Build depth in events calendar as opposed to a single major event	Shire as the driving force of a successful events strategy

Council	Key Points/Objectives	Aim/Vision
<p>Bunbury</p>	<p>Acknowledged that events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • play an important role in the cultural fabric of community and provide significant cultural, economic and social benefit. They act to bring people together • foster a shared sense of place for the region and celebrate diversity • act as an important catalyst for tourism and economic development • raise the profile and reputation Bunbury as a destination • deliver economic benefit through local spend and repeat visitation • encourage social wellbeing and connectedness, facilitating community participation and pride. <p>The City of Bunbury is committed to ensuring our community and visitors have the opportunity to experience and participate in a range of quality and exciting events.</p>	<p>Bunbury will be recognised as the regional events destination in Western Australia with a vibrant and diverse annual events calendar that provides positive outcomes for our economy and showcase our culture and community.</p>
<p>Shepparton (VIC)</p>	<p>Acknowledged exceptional regional benefits for the cost and resources dedicated to events</p> <p>Focus on gaps in the events sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events during off peak periods • Development of additional arts, cultural and food events to diversify events base 	<p>Continue to develop Greater Shepparton into a major events hub in central Victoria capitalising on quality sports infrastructure and investment in arts and cultural assets</p>

Regional Australia Local Government Events Strategies Comparison

Council	Key Points/Objectives	Aim/Vision
Mildura (VIC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop major events delivering economic, tourism and branding outcomes • Support the development of community events that contribute to liveability and wellbeing • Facilitate event growth and sustainability through building event organisers' capacity • Implement efficient and effective processes to ensure Mildura is a user friendly event location 	A leading events destination contributing to our lifestyle and achieving outstanding results for our community
Warrnambool (VIC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver social advantages • Support economic and cultural outcomes • Respect and celebrate the environment • Encourage event best practice 	Warrnambool will continue to host a diverse calendar of events that deliver social, cultural and economic benefits to our community. Our events will be recognised for being inclusive, adopting industry best practice and promoting community strengths and opportunities for the benefit of our residents, businesses and visitors
Fraser Coast (QLD)	<p>Events play an important role in the region's cultural, social and economic development</p> <p>Support events that promote social inclusion, cultural awareness, environmental and economic benefits</p> <p>Provide a coordinated and balanced calendar of events</p> <p>Maximise utilisation of existing infrastructure and facilities</p>	Fraser Coast Region to be regarded as the events capital of regional Queensland, with a vibrant, dynamic and diverse range of year round events activities contributing to the overall resilience, wellbeing and sustainability of the Fraser Coast's economy, culture and community

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Regional Australia Local Government Events Strategies Comparison

Council	Key Points/Objectives	Aim/Vision
Cairns (QLD)	<p>Recognition of events as an economic driver</p> <p>Additional social benefits for community</p> <p>Focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively attracting events (sporting, cultural and business) • Building capacity of the region to deliver high quality events • Striving for best-practice in innovation, environment and management of City supported events • Attracting high profile national and international events • Maximising sustainable economic growth from events 	Set a civic leadership benchmark within the areas of events and sponsorship
Coffs Harbour (NSW)	<p>Key role of events in attracting large numbers of new and repeat visitors</p> <p>Also provide a vibrant backdrop for activity, entertainment, education and wellbeing for residents</p> <p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To attract, grow and retain events in Coffs Harbour • Generate economic, social and community benefits • Provide expertise, frameworks and support for others to run successful events 	To be leading regional destination for sports, tourism, events and innovative festivals

Definitions

In the process of developing this strategy it became apparent that one of the issues facing City staff who organise and assist with events as well as those who are part of the approval process for events, is the definition of an ‘event’ and how this might be distinguished from other like activities such as ‘functions’. This issue creates problems for organisations, businesses and individuals who wish to organise events or functions and are unsure of the procedures and approvals required. Currently an ‘event application’ must be approved for public events with gatherings of small-large numbers of attendees (often 500-1,000 plus people), whilst a ‘function permit’ is required for a private event, often with small numbers of people, assuming any other relevant risk criteria are met – however this distinction is not clear to the public when they first discover the events and function applications on the CGG website.

A new Events Application Kit is currently being developed by the City and a clear definition of what an event is, and what types of events must use the kit, is included. The new Events Application Kit will need to be completed for any event to be held on City land, regardless of the number of attendees, although the amount of information to be completed and need for approval will depend on the type of event. This one kit will replace the current event application and function permit application and remove the distinction.

A ‘festival’ is often thought of as a type of event, even though it usually comprises of a series of combined events. For example, Geraldton’s annual Sunshine Festival would certainly be commonly thought of as an event, but is comprised of several events and activities over numerous days.

It is difficult to determine a single overarching definition for an event. Most events strategies define events by referring to a number of aspects or characteristics of events, or by describing a set of different types of events.



For the purposes of this strategy, an **'event'** is defined as:

A gathering of people brought together for a common purpose by some prearrangement, that is not considered business as usual and not covered by standard operating procedures. It is time limited and may be delivered to the wider community or a target audience.

Events may be:

'community events' organised by Council, local groups or organisations for the community, such as Christmas on the Terrace, Harmony Day, GRAMS Family Fun Day.

'major events' which are larger scale and may have a regional, state, national or international profile and be managed by Council or external event organisers, including WoW Fest, Relay for Life.

'signature events' are usually major iconic events, held annually, attract significant numbers of visitors and showcase the region, such as Mullewa Muster, Sunshine Festival and Funtavia.

'civic events' conducted by Council which recognise days and events of significance. They are usually ceremonial, remembrance, advocacy or celebratory in nature, including Australia Day, NAIDOC Week, citizenship ceremonies, HMAS Sydney memorial service.

And a **'festival'** is defined as:

A collection of events that celebrate a single or general theme and are promoted as one within this theme, and occur within a defined time frame.

However, for the sake of brevity, the term 'event' will be employed in a general sense to include both festivals and events.

The City does however organise a number of smaller, internal functions that are not open to the public and many of the issues raised in this strategy are relevant to those as well.



ANALYSIS OF CURRENT SITUATION

Strengths

Mediterranean Climate

- The region's sunny Mediterranean climate with hot, dry summers and mild winters makes it suitable for outdoor events year round.

Foreshore Area

- Since the redevelopment of the Foreshore, it has become home to a range of community events that have experienced large growth since moving to the Foreshore location. These events include the Australia Day event, WoW Fest and Harmony Day, which combined attract thousands to enjoy the foreshore annually. Consultation has shown that the foreshore area is a favoured event venue and there is local enthusiasm and pride about this area.

Population Growth

- The current population of the Greater Geraldton local government area is 38,629, as stated in the Community Profile on the City of Greater Geraldton's website. The population is projected to grow to 46,567 by 2030 and 81,904 by 2050. Population increase slowed between the past two ABS Census data collections, which may bring into question whether the estimated growth will be achieved.

Local Community Groups

- There are a large number of diverse community groups in Geraldton willing to get involved with and contribute to events. The City has been successful in bringing large numbers of these groups together for some of its events, e.g. Australia Day.

Events Resources

- The City has an established Events & Venues team as part of the Community and Cultural Development business unit that conducts events on behalf of the City, manages bookings for the City's assets including parks and Geraldton Multi-Purpose Centre (GMC) and more recently has assumed responsibility for coordination of the event approvals process. Additionally, the City has various business units that support events, including Environmental Health, Finance, Risk, Communications, Economic Development, Parks & Gardens and Recreation.

Events Role in Place Making

- Community connection is the key outcome for smaller events and entertainment the primary driver for larger events. Presenting large-scale events overcomes the potential disadvantage of a regional location that would alternatively require people to travel over 4 hours to Perth. Additionally, the high end major and signature events are attracting tourists and contribute to changing the perception of Geraldton as a 'drive through town'.

Reputation of the City in supporting major external event organisers

- CGG has a history of successful support to major externally run events, such as Cold Chisel, Triple J One night stand, JLT AFL Friendly Match, having developed professional relationships and confidence by organisers in CGG Staff to ensure delivery of a high standard event. CGG staff experienced in a variety of fields to provide support, enabling Geraldton to be an event destination that is trusted by promoters and event holders alike from further afield. This could also be regarded as a weakness i.e. would these events happen if CGG Staff did not help to develop them?

Community Support

- There is strong community participation and support for events e.g. numbers attending Australia Day; local ticket sales for WoW Fest.

ANALYSIS OF CURRENT SITUATION

Weaknesses

Lack of policy/direction

- No current policy or strategic direction in place to guide the City's vision or role in regard to delivery or support for events.

Events information and application processes

- The City's events information and application processes are not user friendly or easily accessible or understandable, both internally and for the public. Information, if available, has been regarded by stakeholders as scattered, complicated and often provided too late or at the last minute.

External event organiser capacity

- Community events commonly organised by local groups and volunteers with limited capacity or capability.

Poor internal coordination

- A lack of communication and coordination between City departments resulting in confusion and complication.

Attitude towards events

- There is sentiment amongst external stakeholders that the City is generally discouraging of events through their cumbersome processes and requirements and the way event stakeholders are dealt with by the various City departments.
- Additionally, there is potentially limited understanding by the community of the economic, social and other benefits of hosting major events.

Funding for events

- Limitations of funding for events from Council's annual Operational Budget based on financial capacity that can create uncertainty from one year to the next and impact on long term planning.
- Demand placed on the City by external event organisers seeking financial support by way of sponsorship or in-kind support which can be unaligned to strategic priorities or unreasonable and in excess of the City's financial or resource capacity.
- Funding/grants often short term and therefore challenge in growing event sustainability. Diversity of events
- Limited events for some demographic groups e.g. young people; also limited diversity of event mix – e.g. no significant food event.

Unclear roles and responsibilities

- City's role in events is somewhat unclear – particularly with events such as Anzac Day and HMAS Sydney memorial services that are not City events by nature however, the City is responsible for most of the organisation of these events. What the city will/will not do in these cases should be more clearly defined.

Signature event relevance

- Greater Geraldton currently has WoW Fest as its 'signature event' – an event which the City is now known for and attracts large numbers of visitors, but relies heavily on attracting high profile and expensive headline acts to deliver a high quality and popular event.

Infrastructure

- The Geraldton Multipurpose Centre (GMC) has a significant strength as a prime location near the foreshore; however, it has weaknesses in its capacity, design and vulnerability to adverse weather conditions.

Distance from Capital City

- High cost of travel by plane and distance by car from Perth restricts tourists travelling to the region for events and increases cost of events when performers, special guests, equipment etc. is required from Perth or other parts of country.

Lack of accommodation

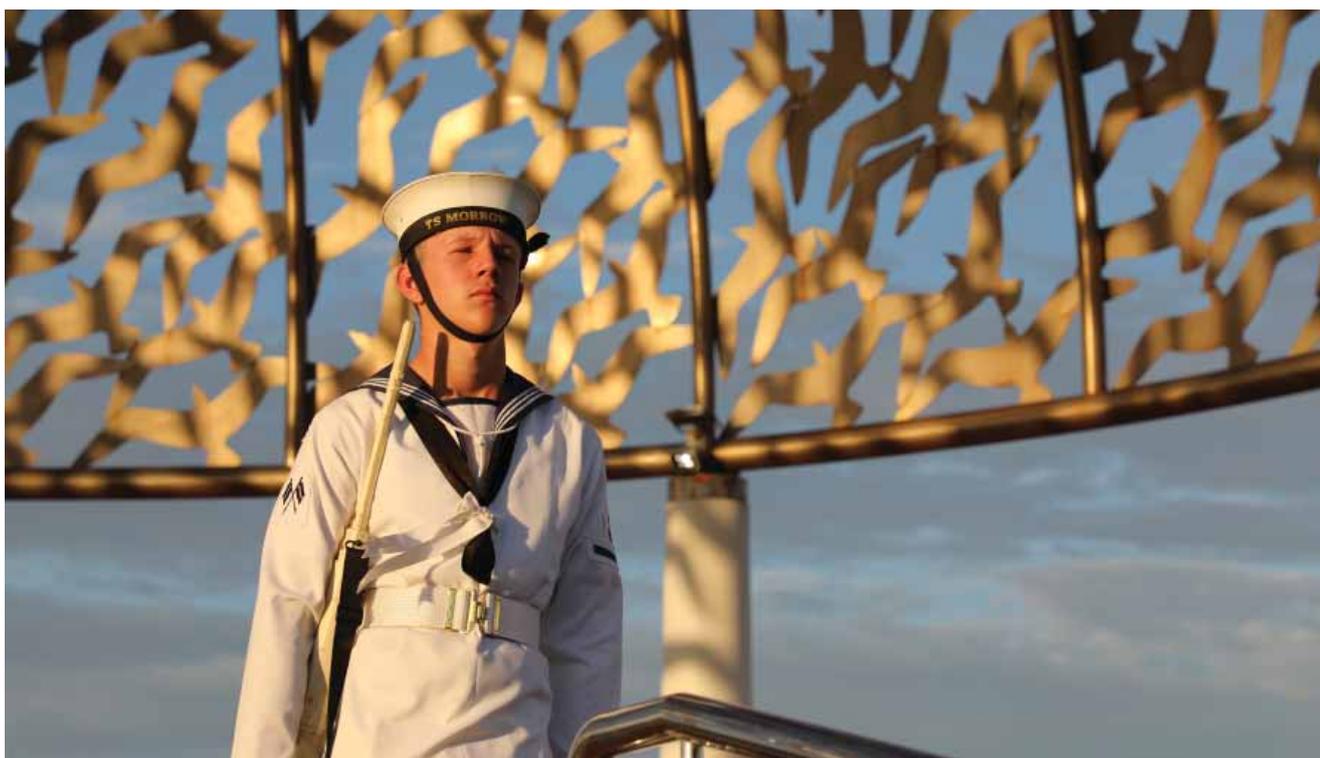
- Lack of available accommodation creates similar problems, although it is acknowledged this has improved in recent years.

Lack of knowledge regarding legal/risk requirements and logistics

- Community groups often do not have a clear understanding of the legal or risk requirements and logistical organisation required to hold successful events and there is a lack of clear information available to address this.

Poor marketing and promotion

- Events occurring in the area often not well promoted. A common complaint is that people often do not know about events, or find out too late. With technology rapidly evolving and changing the way we experience our everyday lives there are many new methods of marketing and promotion, however choosing the right combination of methods for the intended target audience can be difficult.
- Lack of awareness of a 'go to' or 'one stop' source for information about what is happening in the area. For consideration is whether sites such as Visit Geraldton are regarded as that source of information for what is happening in the region.



Opportunities

Improve infrastructure at foreshore

- Improve infrastructure at foreshore to enable more events – e.g. power, shade, parking.
- Improve power and weather protection for stage/soundshell at the foreshore for regional events and community celebrations to increase the accessibility and functionality of the Foreshore for events of all scales.

Signature Greater Geraldton Event

- Continue to review and develop WoW Fest as the City's 'signature event' ensuring contemporary relevance and success so that it becomes synonymous with the region and attracts large numbers of visitors annually to Greater Geraldton, with associated economic benefits, whilst also delivering a high end event for the local community.
- Alternatively, consider support for, or development of, a signature event that embraces and celebrates the strengths of Geraldton and the region.

Targeted Marketing

- Shift the focus of the marketing strategy for WoW Fest to target out of town areas as a means of raising the profile by approaching the visitor/tourism market first, acknowledging that the prestige of the event plays a role in "town pride" and supports economic development in the City.

Recognition of the City's role

- Consider whether it is important for the public and rate payers to know who the event organiser is and any allocation of financial support or City resources to support events.

Events Diversity

- Continue to explore opportunities internally and with external stakeholders for events that provide for the broad range of demographic cohorts in the community.
- Explore opportunities to expand the diversity of events, including sports based events, capitalising on the natural competitive advantage of climate, weather conditions and quality of infrastructure.

External Event Organiser Capacity

- Support the development of capacity and capability in the external event organiser network.

Events Funding

- Seek external grant and sponsorship funding that strategically aligns with the City's Events Strategy whilst offsetting the City's cost to deliver a range of events across greater Geraldton.
- Continue to develop and maintain relationships with stakeholders, including government, funding bodies and potential sponsors.

External Major Event Destination

- Investigate increased opportunities for commercial promoters/ external organisers to bring their expertise to deliver major or different types of large-scale events to Geraldton that may reduce reliance on the City's resources.

Complementary Events & Timing

- Work with City and external events to focus on opportunities for complementary events timed to maximise visitation to the region e.g. opening and closing of wildflower season.
- Identify event opportunities that increase visitation outside peak seasons.

Promotion through new technology

- Use of new technology to better promote and facilitate events (social networks, mobile apps etc).

Inclusive Events

- Explore the opportunity to establish City of Greater Geraldton as a regional leader in the state for inclusive events, supporting inclusive tourism.

Challenges

- **Gaining community support** for new events.
- **Obtaining funding** for the City's events, both through internal and external sources.
- **Financial sustainability** of events relying on grants and sponsorship, including community expectation of ongoing funding and in-kind support.
- **Attracting volunteers and qualified/experienced events staff.**
- **Increasing competition** from other regional and national destinations.
- **Facilitating timing of events** to maximise opportunities, reduce duplication and increase event period.
- **Promoting events effectively**
 - Making both locals and potential visitors aware of and enthusiastic about events occurring in Greater Geraldton.
- **Coordination**
 - Effective coordination between event organisers to minimise clashes of events in terms of both timing and content.
- **Relevance** of events into the future is important to their ongoing success – need to consciously review and refresh ideas for events, incorporating sound evaluation methodologies.
- **Weather conditions** and associated uncertainty, esp. in regard to significant wind and heat, can have an unpredictable and negative impact on delivery of outdoor events.



THE CITY'S ROLE

As with any local government entity, the City of Greater Geraldton plays many roles in relation to events in the region. For many events, the City plays a combination of roles.

Some of these roles include:

Provider

As the direct provider of an event, the City undertakes the event organising and is the main funder and promoter of the event. Other sponsors and supporters take a secondary role.

The largest major event provided by the City annually is the WoW Fest event, which features high profile performers in an evening concert format as well as a range of community activities over a weekend. This is followed by Australia Day held on the foreshore in Geraldton. This is a relatively large Australia Day celebration when compared with similar local government run Australia Day events; however, it has very strong community support and should continue to be provided by the City, at a similar scale.

In general however, the City should limit and carefully consider its direct provision of events. It should instead support, empower and build the capacity of other organisations, community groups and individuals to provide events by playing the alternative following roles.

Facilitator

The City supports a number of events organised by external groups and individuals by assisting with event coordination, regulation and advice. In this regard, the City should encourage collaboration between different groups and people, and provide advice and assistance about different funding opportunities that may be available for events. The City should also focus on assisting the building of capacity by such organising groups to become self-sustaining over time.

Partner

In an effort to facilitate events, and build the capacity of community groups to hold such events independently, the City sometimes will partner with the community group or organisation to deliver the event. The City will in this case provide some funding, coordination, regulation and advice for a limited period of time, with the goal of ultimately handing over all control of the event to the community group, once they're capacity has been built up to a suitable level.

For example, the City achieved this with Harmony Day. Having partnered with The Mid West Multicultural Association over three years to organise this annual celebration of cultural diversity, the City handed over the role to the Midwest Multicultural Association in 2013, and now provides minor assistance.

Some events may not be able to achieve full independence from the City, for example, events such as ANZAC Day and HMAS Sydney Memorial Service, which are led by organisations with limited event-delivery capacity such as RSLs. The City however is under a civic responsibility to ensure that memorial events of this kind continue, and therefore should monitor the situation and encourage such organisations to promote capacity building.

When the City partners or assists in the delivery of an event, expectations of what the City will and will not provide must be managed. Because every event is different, it would be impractical to create a generalised policy setting out what assistance the City will and will not provide to external organisations running events. However for each event the City does get involved with, from the very start of discussions, using the defined roles in this strategy, a clear and comprehensive statement of the City's responsibilities and that of the partners in regards to that event should be created and understood by all parties involved.

Funder/Supporter

The City provides sponsorship and funding through community grants and other funding arrangements for a number of events held within the region by other groups and individuals, and may not play any further direct or indirect role in the organisation of the event.

Mullewa Muster and Rodeo and Funtavia are two examples of this through the City's Signature Event funding program, which provides three year funding.

The City currently also receives ad hoc requests for funding and/or in-kind support for one-off major external events. Recent examples of this include PWA WindSurfing World Cup event, Houtman 500 Celebrations, HMAS Sydney 80th Memorial Service. These need to be diligently assessed for community and economic benefit given the limited financial capacity of the City to provide support. It is recommended that the issue of event sponsorship be further considered by the City, potentially through a review of the Community Funding Policy to incorporate an appropriate response by the City to managing such requests.

In addition to financial support, the City may provide in-kind support to various events in response to their requests, which, whilst not drawing on the City's budget, still equate to a cost to the City for the service provided to the event organisers.

Promoter

The City generates enthusiasm and energy for events organised by itself and others through leveraging online, printed and public relations activities.

The City also acts as a ticket outlet for a number of externally run events through the Queens Park Theatre. The City's customer service is also utilised as a ticket sales point for public access.

Landlord

The City hires out a range of community facilities and venues and plays no direct or indirect role in the organisation of the event.

Events are frequently held at facilities and venues for hire including the QEII Centre, Queens Park Theatre, Geraldton Multi-Purpose Centre and the many public grounds around the city such as Stow Gardens, Maitland Park and the foreshore area.

ACTION PLAN

FOCUS AREA ONE: EVENT MANAGEMENT & SUPPORT

Ensure the City is regarded as user friendly in its role of event management and approval for external event organisers.

Action	Outcome	Lead/Assist	Priority
1.1 Enhance the event application and approval process through streamlining and increased clarity	Streamlined and easy-to-use application documentation, including online systems Clarity resolved in regard to requirement for external event approval Event application assessment process and criteria reviewed and revised to deliver a consistent approach	Events & Venues/ Environmental Health, Compliance and Safety)	High
1.2 Develop a user friendly events toolkit	Events toolkit, including key information, advice and documents, accessible from City's website	Events & Venues/ Environmental Health, Compliance and Safety	High
1.3 Develop and implement appropriate risk management practices to manage City events	City's risk in events delivery managed, including review and revision of OSH requirements, practices and documentation	Events & Venues/ Environmental Health, Compliance and Safety)	High
1.4 Develop greater coordination of event management processes internally within the City	Centralised point of contact for event organisers Internal checklists and process developed and implemented Event approval process enhanced by increased communication and collaboration between City teams	Events & Venues/ Environmental Health, Compliance and Safety)	Medium
1.5 Facilitate the building of skill, knowledge and capacity in the external community event organiser sector	Information and education provided to external event organisers to increase capability and capacity to deliver safe, sustainable and successful events	Events & Venues/ External event organisers	Medium

Action	Outcome	Lead/Assist	Priority
2.1 Undertake a gap analysis of the 'type' and 'timing' of events to identify opportunities in the calendar year and ensure a diverse mix	Annual events calendar demonstrates a balance of community, cultural, sporting, business, recreational and economic outcomes	Events & Venues	High
2.2 Implement a consistent event evaluation process to review the key events delivered by the City	Develop an event evaluation tool, including participant feedback survey, for post-event review processes City events reviewed annually taking feedback into consideration for future event planning	Events & Venues	High
2.3 Research and plan to deliver City events as inclusive events	City regarded as a leader in local government in delivery of inclusive events and inclusive tourism	Events & Venues/ Environmental Health, Compliance and Safety)	High
2.4 Support and encourage events that celebrate and capitalise on our unique assets and strengths including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wind; • ocean/beach; • local food/produce; • seafood; • local arts; • sports; and • indigenous culture • multi-culturalism and newly emerging assets and strengths such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • technology • sustainable/ renewable energy 	Diverse mix of events conducted annually, capitalising on the regions unique assets and strengths Work collaboratively with event organisers to encourage new events and minimise negative impact due to red tape	Events & Venues/ Economic Development, Sport & Recreation, L Community Development, Environmental Health, MWCC, Local businesses	Medium

FOCUS AREA TWO: ANNUAL EVENTS PROGRAM

Develop an annual events program of vibrant, inclusive and diverse events.

Action	Outcome	Lead/Assist	Priority
2.1 Undertake a gap analysis of the 'type' and 'timing' of events to identify opportunities in the calendar year and ensure a diverse mix	Annual events calendar demonstrates a balance of community, cultural, sporting, business, recreational and economic outcomes	Events & Venues	High
2.2 Implement a consistent event evaluation process to review the key events delivered by the City	Develop an event evaluation tool, including participant feedback survey, for post-event review processes City events reviewed annually taking feedback into consideration for future event planning	Events & Venues	High
2.3 Research and plan to deliver City events as inclusive events	City regarded as a leader in local government in delivery of inclusive events and inclusive tourism	Community Development/ Events & Venues	High
2.4 Support and encourage events that celebrate and capitalise on our unique assets and strengths including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wind; • ocean/beach; • local food/produce; • seafood; • local arts; • sports; and • indigenous culture and newly emerging assets and strengths such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • technology • sustainable/ renewable energy 	Diverse mix of events conducted annually, capitalising on the regions unique assets and strengths Work collaboratively with event organisers to encourage new events and minimise negative impact due to red tape	Events & Venues/ Economic Development, Sport & Recreation, Library & Arts, Community Development, Environmental Health , MWCC, Local businesses	Medium

Action	Outcome	Lead/Assist	Priority
2.5 Identify, attract and support new major events aligned to the City's strengths	New events that are high profile, address audience gaps/specific interests or those that extend tourist visitation are encouraged to be established in greater Geraldton	Events & Venues/ Economic Development, Local businesses	Medium
2.6 Facilitate partnerships between event organisers to consider timing or combine events to reduce duplication and clashes in calendar	Events are coordinated and distributed to avoid clashes, fill the gaps in the calendar, maximise attendance numbers and cluster complimentary events	Events & Venues/ External Event Organisers	Medium
2.7 Investigate development of sustainable event guidelines and toolkit	Sustainable events facilitated in the region by providing information and advice to event organisers	Events & Venues/ Environmental Health, Waste	Low

FOCUS AREA THREE: MARKETING & PROMOTION OF EVENTS

Events marketed and promoted effectively to maximise opportunities and growth of the events sector.

Action	Outcome	Lead/Assist	Priority
3.1 Review opportunities for promotion of the events calendar and continue to promote the calendar to maximise awareness of the broad events program	Awareness of events program increased to support greater attendance and events visitation	Communications / Events & Venues	High
3.2 Explore the use of new and emerging technology, including mobile apps, to promote and market events	Technology embraced to deliver best practice and ease of access for consumers, including social media and YouTube	Events & Venues/ICT	High
3.3 Promote Geraldton as an inclusive events destination to support events tourism	Geraldton regarded as an attractive inclusive events destination, enhancing inclusive tourism	Communications/ Economic Development, Community Development, Events & Venues	High
3.4 Undertake visitor surveys at major events to measure whether the events meet expectations	Visitor experience enhanced through incorporation of feedback from major event attendance	Events & Venues	Medium
3.5 Promote greater Geraldton as an events destination to secure major sports events	Increased profile of greater Geraldton as a sports events location	Sport & Recreation/ Economic Development	Medium
3.6 Improve promotion of greater Geraldton for business events in the region	Region promoted and marketed as an events destination for the business sector	Economic Development/ Communications	Low

FOCUS AREA FOUR: INFRASTRUCTURE & FACILITIES FOR EVENTS

Provide appropriate infrastructure, resources and facilities that support events delivery.

Action	Outcome	Lead/Assist	Priority
4.1 Identify gaps and limitations in existing infrastructure and facilities used for events	Audit of event infrastructure and facilities in greater Geraldton highlighting needs	Events & Venues/ Infrastructure Services	High
4.2 Improve events infrastructure at the foreshore, including weather protective structure and improved drainage for the stage and increased power in Stow Gardens	Event infrastructure at the foreshore maximises use of the space	Infrastructure Services/Events & Venues	Medium
4.3 Consider infrastructure and operational requirements of events when planning or redeveloping public open space and facilities	Infrastructure and facilities support events hosted within the region	Infrastructure Services/Events & Venues	Medium
4.4 Continue to promote City infrastructure and facilities to event organisers	City's public infrastructure and facilities event use maximised	Events & Venues/ Economic Development, Sport & Recreation	Medium

MONITORING & EVALUATION

This Events Strategy will be regularly monitored and evaluated in a number of different ways. Measures for each action will be developed and utilised to monitor progress of the strategy.

This strategy will be fully reviewed every 5 years to ensure that the strategy objectives are being met and that the strategy continues to align with the community's values, needs and aspirations.

The City will implement consistent evaluation methodology following City delivered annual events to provide input into future event planning. In addition to this, it is proposed that a consistent approach to event evaluation will also be required for each event that has successfully gained funding from the City of Greater Geraldton. This data can be used to inform future funding decisions as well as reviews of this strategy.

Whilst not proposed to be actioned as part of this strategy, it is recommended that into the future event organisers receiving significant financial or in-kind support from the City be required to submit a post – event report including information relating to:

- the number of attendees/volunteers
- attendee satisfaction
- post-event publicity and media reports
- visitor attendance, estimated visitor nights and visitor expenditure (for major events)
- financial details (including event revenue and expenditure)
- how the event met its strategic outcomes



APPENDIX A

Annual Events Calendar Key Events – CGG 2019/20

Date	Event	Demographic	Genre	Event Scale	Council Role
Monthly	Geraldton Night Markets	Family	Markets	Minor	Regulator
Seasonal	Geraldton Triathlon Association	Family	Sports	Minor	Regulator
Seasonal (Summer)	Sundays by the Sea	Family	Arts/ Cultural (Music)	Minor	Provider
Seasonal (Summer)	Films on the Foreshore	Family	Arts/ Cultural	Minor	Provider
JANUARY					
26th	Geraldton Australia Day	Family	Arts/ Cultural	Major Event	Provider
26th	Mullewa Australia Day	Family	Arts/ Cultural	Minor	Provider
26th	Tentative: 26th Annual Dragon Boat Classic	Family	Sports	Minor	Regulator
FEBRUARY					
	First Nations Festival	Family	Arts/ Cultural	Medium	Regulator
	Waitangi on the Foreshore	Family	Arts/ Cultural	Medium	Regulator
6th	Opera in the Park	Family	Arts/ Cultural (Music)	Minor	Provider
	National Apology Day	Family	Arts/ Cultural	Minor	
16-Feb	Mid West Art Prize - Opening	Family	Arts/ Cultural (Art Awards)	Medium	

Annual Events Calendar Key Events – CGG 2019/20

Date	Event	Demographic	Genre	Event Scale	Council Role
MARCH					
	Mullewa Rural Family Fun Day	Family	Arts/Cultural	Minor	Regulator/Supporter
	Mullewa Golden Bowls Carnival	Seniors	Sports	Minor	Nil
	Bendigo Bank Conference	Business	Conference	Minor	Provider
	GRAMS Family Fun Day	Family	Arts/Cultural	Medium	Regulator/Supporter
	Harmony Festival	Family	Community	Medium	Regulator/Supporter
	Fight Night: Fists of Fury	Family	Sports	Minor	Regulator
APRIL					
	National Youth Week	Youth	Community	Minor	Provider
	WA Youth Week	Youth	Community	Medium	Provider
	National Heritage Week	Family	Arts/Cultural (Heritage)	Minor	Regulator
	Fools Festival	Youth	Arts/Cultural (Music)	Medium	Provider
	WOW - Wind on Water Festival	Family	Signature Event Arts/Cultural	Major	Provider
25th	ANZAC Day	Family	Arts/Cultural (Heritage)	Medium	Provider
25th	Mullewa ANZAC Day Service & Morning Tea	Family	Arts/Cultural (Heritage)	Minor	Provider
	Funtavia	Family	Signature Event Arts/Cultural (Comedy)	Medium	Provider

Annual Events Calendar Key Events – CGG 2019/20

Date	Event	Demographic	Genre	Event Scale	Council Role
MAY					
	Ngala Family Fun Day	Family	Arts/Cultural	Minor	Regulator
	Reconciliation Week	Family	Arts/Cultural	Medium	Provider
3rd-5th	Tourism Conference	Business	Conference	Medium	Supporter
	Boating & Caravan Show	Family	Lifestyle	Major	Regulator
	Mullewa Muster & Rodeo	Family	Signature Event Sports	Major	Funder
JUNE					
	Big Sky Readers	Family	Arts/Cultural (Literature)	Medium	Provider
1st	WA Day	Family	Heritage	Medium	Regulator
JULY					
	NAIDOC Week	Family	Arts/Cultural	Medium	Provider
AUGUST					
	Mullewa Polocrosse Carnival	Youth +	Sports	Minor	Nil
	Outback Bloom – Mullewa's Wildflower Festival	Family	Arts/Cultural (Nature)	Minor	Supporter
	87th Mullewa District Ag Show	Family	Arts/Cultural / Sports	Minor	Supporter

Annual Events Calendar Key Events – CGG 2019/20

Date	Event	Demographic	Genre	Event Scale	Council Role
SEPTEMBER					
5th	Lee Kernaghan	Youth +	Comedy	Minor	
	Battle of the Bands	Youth	Music	Minor	
	GNFL Grand Final	Family	Sports	Medium	
17th	National Citizenship Day	Family	Civic	Minor	
	Hudson's Circus	Family	Circus	Minor	
29th	Bohemian Rhapsody - Adam Thompson	Family	Music	Minor	
OCTOBER					
	GYC Open Day	Family	Sports	Minor	
	52nd Fremantle to Geraldton Ocean Classic	Family	Sports	Medium	
	Relay For Life	Youth +	Community	Minor	
	National Childrens Week	Children	Community Event	Minor	
12th	Sun Princess	Tourists	Cruise Ship	Minor	
13th	Ian Moss and Troy Cassar-Daley	Youth +	Music	Minor	
	Seniors Week	Seniors	Community Event	Minor	
	Breast Cancer Morning Tea	Female	Civic	Minor	
	Battle of the Bands	Youth	Music	Minor Event	
	Sunshine Festival	Family	Community Event	Medium Event	

Annual Events Calendar Key Events – CGG 2019/20

Date	Event	Demographic	Genre	Event Scale	Council Role
NOVEMBER					
	Mayors Mystery Bus Tour	Seniors	Arts/Cultural	Minor	Provider
7th	Seniors Concert	Seniors	Arts/Cultural (Music)	Minor	Provider
11th	Remembrance Day	Family	Arts/Cultural (Heritage)	Minor	Provider
18th	Service for Unknown Soldier	Family	Arts/Cultural (Heritage)	Minor	Provider
19th	HMAS Sydney II Memorial Service - 80th	Family	Arts/Cultural (Heritage)	Medium	Provider
DECEMBER					
	Carols By Candlelight	Family	Arts/Cultural (Music)	Minor	Regulator
	Aquarena Family Fun Day	Family	Sports	Medium	Provider
	Christmas on the Terrace	Family	Markets	Major	Provider
5th	Thank a Volunteer	Family	Arts/Cultural (Awards)	Minor	Provider



City of
Greater Geraldton
a vibrant future



City of Greater Geraldton
63 Cathedral Ave,
GERALDTON WA 6531

P: 9956 6600

E: council@cgg.wa.gov.au

www.cgg.wa.gov.au

