



Benalla

BENALLA RURAL CITY

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

2025 - 2029

DRAFT



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work, and pay our respect to their Elders past and present.

IMAGE CREDIT

TRC Tourism, Allison Anderson

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ACRONYMS

TERM	DEFINITION
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
DJSIR	Department of Jobs Skills Industry and Regions
DMP	Destination Management Plan
FTE	Full Time Equivalent jobs
IVS	International Visitor Survey
LGA	Local Government Authority
NVS	National Visitor Survey
PV	Parks Victoria
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
RDV	Regional Development Victoria
REDS	Regional Economic Development Strategy
TLaWC	Taungurung Land and Waters Council
TNE	Tourism North East
VEP	Visitor Economy Partnership
VIC	Visitor information centre
VV	Visit Victoria

Contents

Welcome to Benalla	4	Strategy	22
About this Plan	5	Strategic priorities	24
Consultation	5	Grow our share	25
Destination management best practice	6	Grow our value	25
Governance	6	Build our industry	25
A regional focus	6		
Stewardship and sustainability	6	Action Plan	26
Indigenous ownership	6	Prioritised action plan	27
Market alignment	6	1. What we can do now	27
Attracting investment	6	2. What we can do next	29
		3. What we can do in the longer term	31
Tourism in Benalla	7		
Regional context	8		
Our distinctiveness	9		
Art, culture and heritage	10		
Nature and outdoors	10		
Sport	10		
Our visitors	11		
High Country target markets	11		
Benalla target markets	11		
Opportunities	13		
Starting point	14		
Tourism strengths	14		
Tourism weaknesses	14		
Realising our potential	15		
Product development opportunities	21		

Welcome to Benalla

Welcome to Yorta Yorta, Taungurung and Bpangerang Country, where you can see the art in everything. Here, tourism isn't just about visiting, it's about transforming our community and economy for the better.

Through tourism, we're not just inviting people to enjoy our culture, nature and beauty, but also to foster a deeper connection with our region. Knowing our place means celebrating our unique identity and history and strengthening our sense of belonging. By attracting visitors and investments, we create jobs that empower our young people, build a sustainable future, and that benefits us all.

As tourism flourishes, so does our community. We're enhancing liveability with vibrant activities, upgraded facilities, and a diverse range of dining, shopping, and accommodation options. These mean more opportunities for everyone to enjoy Benalla's offerings, making it a destination where people want to live, work, and play.

With tourism, we're shaping Benalla into a dynamic hub of creativity, culture, and opportunity, where you can see the art in everything.



About this Plan

This is a plan for the development of tourism in Benalla for five years from 2025 - 2029. It is designed to direct the efforts of government, industry and community in their decisions regarding tourism. It also ensures that investment is effective in delivering exceptional experiences for visitors as well as value for the Benalla community.

This Destination Management Plan (DMP) succeeds the Benalla Rural City Tourism and Events Strategy 2018-2022. It is designed to complement and be complemented by the Victorian High Country Destination Management Plan 2023 – 2033 at the regional level, Experience Victoria 2033 at the state level, and Thrive 2030 at the national level.

Accompanying this document is the destination assessment, which provides the context for the strategic direction of the plan. The assessment includes a detailed analysis of the strategic context, the visitor market, products and experiences, and an evaluation of the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges.

Building on the assessment, this plan draws on the aspirations of the Benalla community and tourism industry to support strong advocacy to government. The DMP aims to harness the strengths of the region to enable growth of the destination, increase investment, leadership and economic and social benefit through visitation.

Whilst tourism in Benalla employs only around 5.1 per cent of the workforce,¹ it is a valuable industry for the community as it provides entry-level jobs, opportunities for new businesses to start up, a platform to commercialise the significant creativity in the region, and increased liveability for the community. This plan recognises that for the region to be effective in providing connected and seamless experiences, it must

have a capable and empowered industry that is supported by an effective governance framework.

It is important to acknowledge that this plan has been developed at a time of cost-of-living pressures and budgetary restraint at a national and global level. Building the foundations for the region over the course of this plan and establishing the ability to be able to capture opportunities as they arise, as well as removing some barriers to growth, will provide the region with opportunities well into the future.

Consultation

This plan has been developed in conversation with communities, industry, Local Government, and other interested parties.

Consultation has included:

- One-on-one meetings with interested parties and identified stakeholders
- LGA meeting and briefings
- Industry and community workshop
- Online community survey
- Site visits across the region

A full description of the outcomes of the consultation is included in the Destination Assessment.

Plan review

It is recommended that this plan be reviewed in 2027 or at least once during its five-year period. This will ensure the projects and strategies are still relevant for building Benalla's tourism most effectively.

¹ [Benalla Economy Profile](#) | [Employment, Tourism](#) | [REMPLAN](#)

Destination management best practice

Tourism is a complex industry to manage because there are many touchpoints to the visitor experience. Public infrastructure and services need to be in harmony with private business to offer outstanding visitor experiences.

These need to be aligned with what visitors are seeking, what locals are wanting, and what is on offer in the broader visitor experience beyond the region. Understanding best practice in tourism management can help navigate some of these challenges and opportunities at a local scale. Below is a list of important elements of tourism management best practice that have informed the recommendations in this plan.

Governance

Tourism governance is the decision making framework that joins all of the moving pieces of the tourism industry. While governance in itself will not deliver outstanding experiences, lessons from reviews of many of the nation's leading tourism regions show that it plays an important role in providing a seamless visitor experience and ensuring value flows to the community from the visitor economy.

A regional focus

It is important to understand how a destination's offerings fit within the broader regional offering, and more importantly, to understand what makes a place special within it. Connecting and collaborating with nearby towns and experiences and being clear with regional and state tourism marketing agencies about what makes the place so unique, are central to effectively connecting with visitors. Tourism North East and Visit Victoria are vital in helping bring the broader region together.

Stewardship and sustainability

Increasingly, councils and destination management organisations are seeking to act as stewards of their places, rather than just managing them. The difference is about caring for, and nurturing, place and people. Being environmentally sustainable in business and destination practice is important not only for the community, but also increasingly important to visitors.

Indigenous ownership

Ensuring recognition of stories, land custodianship and Indigenous ownership of Indigenous tourism product and experiences is central to achieving long term sustainability as a community and a destination. Inviting Indigenous representation on boards of management and decision making is a key part of this process.

Market alignment

Understanding the people who could be motivated to visit the destination – who they are, what gets them excited, what they are looking for in life and their travels – helps develop successful tourism experiences. Identifying the gaps between what people are seeking and what is on offer in the region can provide investment opportunities and create points of difference.

Attracting investment

Working with regional and state agencies to attract investment into the tourism industry can provide opportunities to develop public and private infrastructure, products and experiences. If well designed, public infrastructure such as tracks and trails, major built infrastructure and experiences can encourage private investment in new products. Investment prospectuses can also be developed with the support of a business concierge service to assist potential investors in navigating complex approval and planning processes



Tourism in Bendalla

KING RIVER
KING RIVER
AWNING

Regional context

Benalla is on Taungurung, Bpanggerang and Yorta Yorta Country. It is one of 7 LGAs and 4 Alpine resorts within the Tourism North East region, known as Victoria’s High Country. Benalla is a strategic location in the region for several reasons:

- Located just off the Hume Freeway where most of the traffic heading between Melbourne, NSW and Queensland travel.
- At the midpoint between Melbourne and the Victorian Alpine area.
- Central to attractions in the region, within easy reach of the Murray, Rutherglen, Shepparton, Wangaratta, and the rest of Victoria’s High Country.

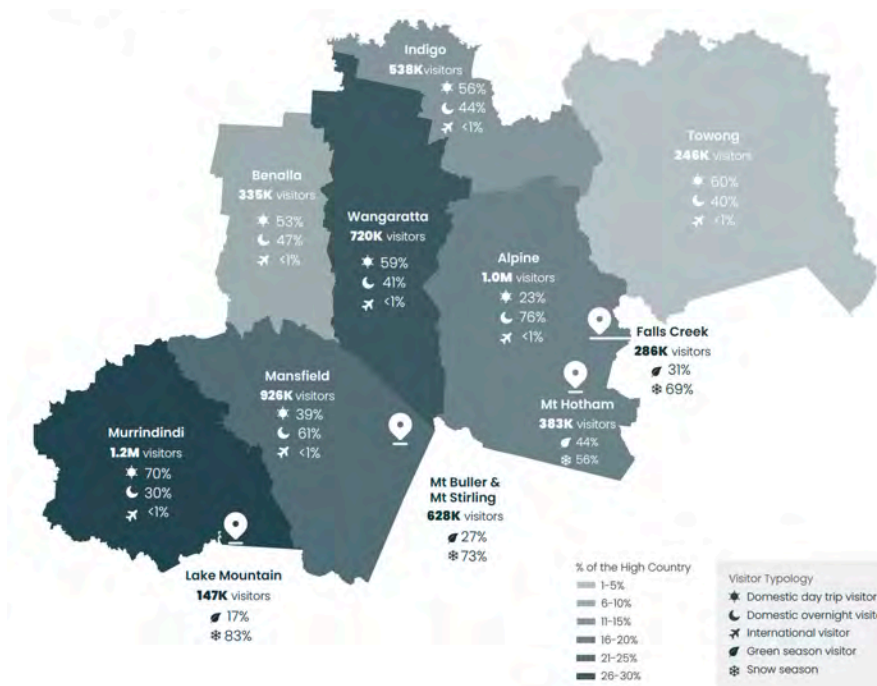
Benalla has significant opportunity to grow its tourism market share. In 2022, Victoria’s High Country welcomed 5 million visitors, with approximately 2.5 million of these being overnight. In 2023, Benalla attracted around 335,000 visitors, of whom 160,000 stayed 379,000 nights. Spending an estimated \$131 per night and \$100 per day trip, this equates to an estimated annual tourism spend of \$71 million in Benalla each year.² Figure 1 shows the distribution of visitors across the region.

The size of the visitor market is projected to grow in Victoria over the life of this plan. Tourism Research Australia projects a growth in tourism spend in the state of 32 per cent to 2028, with projected increases of 67 per cent for domestic daytrip visitors and 29 per cent for domestic overnight visitors across the state.³ If tourism in Benalla can increase at these rates, this will equate to an increase to nearly 570,000 visitors per year, spending an estimated \$1.16 billion.⁴

This plan aims to ensure investment in tourism is targeted and effective in maximising this potential value. Tourism in Benalla is guided by the vision and values of Benalla Rural City Council. It also supports, and is supported by, the plans and brands of Victoria’s High Country and Visit Victoria. Benalla’s tourism offerings are

aligned with these, and as such, there is significant opportunity to leverage the work being done at regional and state level to increase the number of people and the value of visit to the region.

Figure 1. Share of visitors in Victoria’s High Country Region⁵



² Tourism Research Australia Local Government Area Profiles – Benalla 2023

³ Tourism Research Australia - Victoria’s Tourism Forecasts 2023-2028

⁴ Note figures are estimated based on 2023 domestic overnight and 2019 daytrip figures as more recent figures are not available.

⁵ Victoria’s High Country Destination Management Plan 2023 - 2023

Our distinctiveness

While there are many facets to the Benalla experience, the region's strengths are firmly based in arts, culture and heritage. This is cleverly positioned, as it is an area that is not otherwise 'owned' within the High Country region but is deeply aligned with the broader Victorian brand.

Benalla's brand "See the art in everything" is well substantiated through the region's product offering with longstanding investments in arts, culture and heritage. This brand underpins the other product offerings in the region, adding a richness and depth to the overall regional experience.

This investment also makes economic sense. Arts and culture visitors have been shown to spend significantly more in regions they visit than other types of visitor, so there is a clear imperative to further consolidate and invest in this well-considered brand.

Tourism experiences are best when they are multi-layered, and that is what arts, culture and heritage can do best. Adding depth to experiences such as cycling or walking trails with stories of the past, art installations and cultural interpretation can elevate them from being 'just another trail' to something extraordinary. This can be as much the case for motorsports, golf or team sports. Overlaying stories, arts and culture, adds dimension and distinctiveness to experiences that could be otherwise had in other parts of the state, or country.

Benalla's core experiences span three areas of art, culture and heritage, nature and outdoors, and sport. A full analysis of Benalla's tourism product is in the Destination Assessment.

BENALLA
See the art in everything





Art, culture and heritage

Art, culture and heritage are at the heart of Benalla’s experience offering, playing a strong role in the profile of the community and in attracting visitors. Arts and culture are locally recognised as being an important economic driver in the region, and the Benalla Art Gallery is renowned as one of Australia’s best and most striking regional galleries. This is supported by street art installations and the Benalla Street Art Festival, silo and water tank art and installations in the Winton Wetlands.

Main products and experiences:

- Benalla Art Gallery
- Home to the Benalla Street Art Festival
- North East Victoria Silo Art trail
- Lotjpatj Natjan Danak Sculpture Walk
- Benalla Aviation Museum
- Ned Kelly history, including the Benalla Costume and Kelly Museum
- Benalla Heritage Festival
- Benalla Migrant Camp
- Sir Edward ‘Weary’ Dunlop Memorial
- Heart of Art Benalla
- Taunguarung, Yorta Yorta and Bpangerang stories and Aboriginal Community Garden
- Siva Singh Memorial.



Nature and outdoors

Benalla has a beautiful rural and urban landscape, and there are a number of opportunities to enjoy it. The Botanical Gardens, known for its rose garden, along with the Winton Wetlands and trails throughout the region offer visitors the choice of walking, riding or drive touring.

Main products and experiences:

- Benalla Botanic Gardens and Roses
- Winton Wetlands: Citizen science, birdlife, visitor centre, art and stargazing
- Cycling: Road riding – local roads, wetlands, lake
- Mountain Biking - Mount Samaria State Park and Reef Hills State Park
- Aboriginal Community Garden
- Walking tracks - Lake Benalla 4.25km and nearby State Parks and Reserves, Warby and Strathbogie Ranges.
- Rural towns and landscapes: Baddaginie, Devenish, Goorambat, Swanpool, Tatong, Thoona and Winton
- Lake Nillahcootie – fishing, boating and swimming.



Sport

Victoria is a sporting state, and many people travel extensively for sporting competitions and events. Benalla is well set up to receive golfing, bowls, football, horse racing, indoor sports such as basketball, and also hosts Australia’s largest gliding club, which attracts visitors from around the world.

The jewel in the sporting crown for Benalla is the Winton Motor Raceway. Described as Australia’s action track, the Raceway attracts around 100,000 visitors per year who generally stay overnight in the region, many camping. Although motor racing is not a pillar of the regional or state tourism strategies, it does attract more people than any other attraction in the region, is actively growing, with plans to expand if funding is secured.

Main products and experiences:

- Winton Motor Raceway – venue hire and corporate events, camping
- Benalla Indoor Recreation Centre
- Benalla Golf Club
- Benalla Bowls Club
- Goldrush Hot Air Ballooning
- Victorian Ballooning Federation
- Benalla Gliding Club.

Our visitors

Benalla mostly attracts domestic day and overnight visitors from Melbourne and neighbouring regions.

Regional Victoria has the benefit of a growing and thriving source market in metropolitan Melbourne, as well as several growing regional centres nearby. Visitors from the High Country and neighbouring regions currently spend more than those from Melbourne, identifying an opportunity to better engage this high value market.⁶

Benalla enjoys direct connectivity with Melbourne not only through the Hume Freeway, but also through the Express Passenger Train (XPT) and VLine rail services, and light aircraft to Benalla airport, both within walking distance to the centre of town. Benalla is also at about the halfway point between Melbourne and the alpine resorts of Hotham and Falls Creek, and is on a main route for caravanners and others travelling north on long trips.

With this level of connectivity, Benalla has the opportunity to engage with a high number of visitors, many of whom are already predisposed to the product and experiences on offer.

High Country target markets

Victoria's High Country visitors fall into two primarily self-drive markets:⁷

Lifestyle Leaders are progressive, educated and professional individuals who actively seek out new experiences. They enjoy an active social life and have extensive social networks in which they are viewed as trusted advisors and influencers. They are higher in affluence and discretionary expenditure than the average Australian, so travel frequently and spend more when travelling. They account for 40 per cent of the market.

The Habituals are travellers who come to the High Country each year (sometimes many times a year) and tend to return to a consistent location and often travel with the same group. They are heavily influenced by the recommendations of friends and family members, prioritise value for money, and are often motivated by familiarity with a destination. They account for 28 per cent of the market.

Victoria's High Country focuses on Lifestyle Leaders because of their propensity to travel, experience new things and consider multiple destinations when they travel. This means there is a strong ability to influence them with focused and motivating marketing communication and effective product development.

The Lifestyle Leader market is also a focus for Visit Victoria and strongly aligns to Tourism Australia's High Value Traveler (HVT) audience. As such, Victoria's High Country is well placed to collaborate with both Visit Victoria and Tourism Australia on statewide and national demand driving tourism strategies.

Benalla target markets

As part of the High Country region, Benalla stands to gain from the targeted marketing and market development activities being undertaken through the visitor economy partnership.

The Lifestyle Leaders clearly align with Benalla's product - in particular, they like to stay active, and the majority likes to experience local culture and nature. They plan for their own trips and are less likely to prefer their trips organised for them.

Within and outside of the Lifestyle Leaders, there are four potential sub-markets that could specifically be drawn to Benalla. These sub-markets present significant opportunities to Benalla to target with key marketing messages, product and experience development and visitor services. These are listed on the following page.

⁶ CommIQ credit card insight data – Benalla Jan – Oct 2023.

⁷ Victoria's High Country Destination Management Plan 2023 - 2033



PASSING TRAFFIC

Passing Traffic drive to the High Country, ski fields, or Murray Region for a week or weekend holiday from Melbourne. These could be couples or families looking to break their journey with a stop, something to eat, a look in a special shop and a walk around/play. If this market can be engaged to stop for a great experience, they may stay longer and spend more, or think about returning as a weekend chaser. This market are the window shoppers who could be converted to customers.

Potential: With Alpine Resorts Victoria reporting over 800,000 visitors to their resorts in 2023,⁸ and 5 million visitors annually to Victoria's High Country, there is a significant opportunity to connect with this market as they make the journey to the region.



BIG TRIPPERS

Big Trippers look to travel slowly and experience the 'real' Australia. Interested in spending two or three days enjoying heritage, easy nature based experiences and cultural attractions. There are many competitors for the Big Trippers, because they are not afraid to go off the beaten track, and they love to find hidden gems. They also like to enjoy free activities and a reasonably priced coffee, but will spend for the right experiences, and can support services and retail in the towns.

Potential: With more than 800,000 registered RVs, caravans and campervans in Australia embarking on 15.5 million trips over 62.3 million nights per year, there is significant scope for Benalla to connect with more of this market.⁹



WEEKEND CHASERS

Weekend Chasers seek some inspiration and new experiences that enrich their view on the world, connect them to a new place and provide them with good food and drink. The Weekend Chasers are hotly contested in Victoria. While Melbourne receives many Weekend Chasers from the regions, the regions also receive them from Melbourne and other regions.

Potential: More than 40 per cent of Victorians as planning to take a road trip within Australia in the next six months, and more than 83 per cent of those intend to take the trip within Victoria.



GROUPS AND NICHE

Groups and Niche travel for conference, sports or education either to Benalla or nearby, looking for opportunities to learn, share experiences, train, or engage in team building. This market is diverse, with travel often initiated to attend events such as sporting meets, conferences or cultural events. Groups and Niche may also travel in commercially or privately organised tour trips, including for schools, friend groups or university field trips.

Potential: There is inconsistent and outdated research available on the potential of this market. In 2019, Sports Events were estimated to bring 1.5 million visitors and 2.5 million visitor nights to Regional Victoria,¹⁰ indicating that in sport alone, there is market opportunity to attract group travel. Business events and education, as well as private niche tour groups also have potential for the region.

⁸ Alpine Resorts Victoria Visitation Statistics Winter 2023 End of Season Report

⁹ Caravan Industry Association of Australia 30 June 2023

¹⁰ Event Visitors to Victoria – Sporting Events, Cultural Events and Festivals. August 2019.



Opportunities



Starting point

The Benalla Region is starting from a solid asset base on which to build a flourishing tourism industry. Ongoing investment in infrastructure such as the Benalla Art Gallery, Winton Wetlands Precinct, Silo Art, Benalla Street Art Festival, Winton Motor Raceway, tracks and trails, airport and the Benalla brand, provides many opportunities for visitors to engage in the region, however there are some intrinsic weaknesses that need to be accounted for, and if possible, addressed.

Maximising strengths and managing weaknesses is critical to ensuring the robust development of the visitor economy. Listed below are some of Benalla's key tourism strengths and weaknesses for consideration within this plan.

Tourism strengths

- **Strong existing arts, culture and heritage assets** - including Benalla Art Gallery as one of the best regional art galleries in Victoria, the established and successful Benalla Street Art Festival, Benalla Migrant Camp, Ned Kelly's Sash, and the Aboriginal Community Garden.
- **Winton Wetlands** - assets including the Mokoan Hub, sculpture and art trails, Lotjpatj Natjan Danak sculpture walk, stargazing, Mokoan Discovery Trail connecting to Benalla, walking tracks.
- **Winton Motor Raceway** - regular events and drive school. Plans for expansion into larger events and festivals, potential hosting of V8 Supercars, motorsport museum and convention centre.
- **Aviation Precinct** - within close proximity of town, with existing assets including the migrant camp, ballooning & gliding (seasonal), flying, and aviation museum.
- **Local produce** – as part of the food bowl of Victoria, there is plenty of nearby local produce to tap in to, including beverages.
- **Beautiful natural, rural and urban landscapes** – changing year-round.
- **Infrastructure and visitor servicing** – new VIC, tracks and trails network.

- **Growing and strengthening economy** outside of tourism.
- **Gateway** and/or connector to the wider region.
- **Connectivity** to road, rail and flying.
- **Strong and relevant brand** that is versatile and able to be rolled out across products and experiences in the region.
- **Weather** – mild climate with sunny days and good flying conditions.

Tourism weaknesses

- **Food, beverage and dining** opportunities for visitors – particularly in the evenings.
- **Quality accommodation** at a range of levels and price points.
- **Signage, wayfinding and visitor servicing** – no indication of the arts presence from the highway, lack of wayfinding for cycling and walking trails.
- **Connection within the industry** – operators understanding where they 'fit' into tourism.
- **Bookable tourism product** – very little paid tourism product in the area, most attractions are free and provided by Council.
- **Brand infrastructure** - Whilst the "See the art in everything" brand is well positioned, there is currently a lack of infrastructure behind it that can be used by operators to get on board with the brand.
- **Marketing resources and infrastructure** – A lack of resource dedicated to strategic marketing for Benalla to maximise marketing impact.
- **Retail options** – limited unique retail options within the Bridge Street East Precinct.

Realising our potential

There is room for Benalla to better maximise its assets for the benefit and growth of the visitor economy. While the region’s natural and cultural assets, leisure and lifestyle options make it one of Victoria’s most liveable regions, these are yet to be harnessed to their full potential for tourism and economic benefit. Underpinning this is the need to generate and stimulate investment and private enterprise that meets the needs of visitors and builds a vibrant visitor economy.

Opportunities and challenges often go hand in hand in the development of a thriving industry and region. Understanding what is holding the region back and exploring the opportunities to address them helps target investment and resources. The following opportunities and challenges have been identified for the region for the life of this plan.

THEME	CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
INVESTMENT		
Public investment	Limited financial capacity of Council to deliver services and the major projects needed to elevate the visitor economy.	Advocate to state and federal government for investment in projects that will generate growth in the visitor economy and leverage private investment. Create a government funding prospectus with priority projects for the region.
Private investment	Lack of private investment in products, services and experiences that support the visitor economy.	Enterprise investment prospectuses, communicating a ‘red carpet, not red tape’ approach with business concierge and planning assistance for key areas that require development, such as food and beverage, accommodation, experiences (eg. bike and e-bike hire, tours), brand aligned experiences.
CONNECTING WITH THE MARKET		
Marketing strategy	Lack of resource and direction in connecting with the market. Lack of voice in TNE means little marketing is undertaken for the Benalla region.	Develop a simple, clear and prioritised tourism marketing strategy that leverages small investment to maximum impact – such as engaging strategically with influencers, media, famils, advocacy and programs with TNE and Visit Victoria. Work to develop a product proposition to experience Benalla such as a ride/rail/art weekend experience, and package as a core offering.
Online presence	Duplication and lack of coordination across websites and socials for Benalla.	Negotiate the rationalisation of VisitBenalla.com.au to support Enjoybenalla.com.au, align with brand and build consistent message.

THEME	CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
		<p>Ensure seamless connection with social media and harness the power of influencers to organically build audience, especially through events.</p> <p>Further develop the events calendar on EnjoyBenalla.com.au with regular social posts and updates, as well as profiles on operators and products coming online.</p>
Freeway signage	No signage indicating what Benalla has to offer on the Hume Freeway. No indication of the creative credentials in the region to draw interest or visitation.	<p>Significant through traffic passing the region on the Hume Freeway.</p> <p>Harness Benalla’s art credentials to build a highway installation (potentially as part of the Benalla Street Art Festival) to draw people in to Benalla and show what it has to offer.</p> <p>Brand aligned signage on the Freeway to indicate the brand and start the journey of brand recognition.</p>
Directional signage	<p>Lack of directional signage for visitors around the city – in vehicles and walking.</p> <p>Lack of interpretive signage around the city.</p>	<p>Extend the connective brand aligned signage from the Hume Freeway into the town and into key experience areas. Develop a storytelling theme to support the Benalla brand to connect the attractions together.</p> <p>Signage audit and strategy to develop coordinated visitor experience and engage more people from the Hume Freeway and into major attractions.</p>
MAJOR ATTRACTION DEVELOPMENT		
Benalla Art Gallery	<p>Lack of secure funding for the Benalla Art Gallery ongoing. Staff occupied with seeking and building funding streams rather than product and opportunity development.</p> <p>Lack of reliable and up to date climate control system means an inability to attract blockbuster exhibitions.</p>	<p>Inclusion in priority project advocacy document seeking funding for Benalla Art Gallery redevelopment full funding and climate control system update so it can attract blockbuster touring exhibitions.</p> <p>Exploration of events and marketing opportunities around blockbuster exhibitions to build reputation of the Gallery and collection. Collaborate with others such as quality local food and beverage producers or Indigenous storytellers to provide full cultural experience.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to build on existing relationships with peer regional galleries in the expanded region (such as SAM, Wangaratta Art Gallery, HYPHEN Wodonga, and MAMA Albury) to collaborate, cross promote, possibly present an expanded event across all galleries, and generate more ‘cultural road trip’ visitors to hop from one to the other. Art galleries can also be creative in their delivery – like having pop up installations in unexpected places, offering wine and art, growing masterpiece collections and offering online shops for creative pieces.</p>
Aviation Precinct	Uncoordinated and poorly signed access to the precinct, lack of space for the Migrant	Inclusion in priority project advocacy document seeking funding for masterplan to maximise the value from these significant assets for community and visitor experience. Important to maximise the opportunity from

THEME	CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
	<p>Camp to develop, need for infrastructure to meet the needs of all users.</p> <p>Conflict between users with a lack of strategic management of the precinct.</p> <p>Lack of clarity on where and how visitors can connect with the experiences available in the precinct, and little visible signage that connects to the overall Benalla story.</p>	<p>the Migrant Camp, Aviation Museum, Gliding Club of Victoria, Airport and Ballooning, as well as access from the town.</p> <p>The Benalla Migrant Camp and Aviation Museum in particular present significant opportunities to attract people seeking to connect with WWII history and their personal heritage. These need significant investment and resourcing to be able to develop and as such any plans need to include revenue streams such as ticket sales, experiences and café/dining options.</p> <p>Extend the town's creative credentials and connected storytelling into the precinct through murals, installations and signage.</p>
Winton Motor Raceway	Lack of funding for further development.	<p>Further engaging with the existing market attending the raceway through collaborations with local providers and accommodation packages.</p> <p>Inclusion in priority project advocacy document seeking funding for the current proposal for the motor racing museum, corporate function centre, expanding outdoor events and camping facilities, and more.</p> <p>Engage in the arts scene through participation in the Street Art Festival and other connections.</p>
Winton Wetlands	Wayfinding and signage is high quality but unclear for navigation for new visitors. No clear pathway of connectivity to Benalla.	Masterplan that maps and builds the visitor experience right to the heart of Benalla rather than being a finite experience. Improve signage and wayfinding to encourage more engagement from visitors, with storytelling and connective pathways with water stations and stops from Benalla.
Bpangerang, Yorta Yorta and Taungurung operated tours	No Indigenous product offering in the region.	Mount Buffalo is one of the Taungurung Peoples' important story places, as are places around Benalla, where there is an old greenstone axe quarry. Exploring opportunities for Taungurung, Yorta Yorta and Bpangerang-operated tours, cultural events and knowledge seminars which promote and interpret natural and cultural features of Country.
Town centre	Declining retail area with limited opening hours. Limited on street dining options. Limited active transport options.	Focused planning to encourage centres of activity in Benalla and main villages, connected where possible by all ability and active transport. Cityscape landscape and maintenance, and provision of strategic outdoor dining areas/food truck parking areas. .
Fawckner Drive and Commercial Hotel precinct development	Commercial Hotel is disused and vacant in the middle of town. Fawckner Drive is a low traffic area that could be made available for other uses.	Fawckner Drive and the Commercial Hotel precinct present a major event delivery opportunity for the centre of Benalla. Pedestrianising Fawckner drive and developing event infrastructure adjacent to the Commercial Hotel with a view to either purchasing the hotel or facilitating investment in its development will provide a well-designed space for events to be held year-round.

THEME	CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
		<p>The Commercial Hotel is a major asset in the centre of Benalla. It could be developed to facilitate a number of small operators providing a range of eating/drinking/brewing/distilling products, with set opening hours as part of the rental conditions. This could double as a small tourism and food/drink business incubator.</p>
Events	<p>Staffing and resourcing to attract and develop new events in the region.</p> <p>Limited fit for purpose event spaces.</p>	<p>Benalla Street Art Festival is a major asset that can continue to be capitalised on, especially if event infrastructure is developed. Consider supporting events leading up to and after the main event such as street art workshops, creative kids weekends/weeks (in holidays), local Indigenous art exhibitions, car art (to align with the Winton Motor Raceway), rural landscape art prizes, and others that align with the existing product and brand. As these evolve, they may become splinter events that can be held at different times to spread the value across the year.</p> <p>Developing an events space and providing planning assistance and council resourcing could open up new opportunities for events in the centre of Benalla and at the Winton Motor Raceway, including music and cultural festivals.</p> <p>The Rose Garden and Benalla’s historical Rose City status could be the basis of the development of a ‘Rose Floriade’ type of event in Benalla.</p> <p>Identifying niche and business events that align with the pillars of arts and culture, nature and outdoors and sports, and are the right size for the available accommodation and facilities can open up new event markets.</p>
Sport	<p>Need for further investment in current facilities. Lack of appropriate supporting accommodation.</p>	<p>Inclusion in priority project advocacy document seeking funding for planned \$15m indoor sports centre redevelopment, which presents the opportunity to attract sporting camps, training and competitions. Work to attract accommodation offering that will support this development.</p> <p>Gliding and hot air ballooning are significant opportunities for Benalla to develop, with potential for packaging experiences designed for the high end market. A state of the art mini golf development at the Benalla Golf Course can add to the suite of attractions and activities in the region.</p>

VISITOR SERVICING

Food and beverage	Not enough Sunday and night time dining options for visitors, not enough aligned to what the travelling market is seeking.	<p>Build on the proximity and connection to primary producers, including vineyards and local bakers to build a strong food and beverage culture. Work to develop local markets and meet the maker experiences.</p> <p>Develop a needs assessment for food and beverage, with identified opportunities for develop. Provide access to data for potential investors, and develop an investment prospectus.</p> <p>Develop pop-up initiatives with local charity groups for fundraising at strategic times to attract passing traffic – such as Friday afternoon woodfired pizzas delivered by the local Rotary club and advertise directly to traffic passing to go skiing in winter, or to coincide with major Winton Motor Raceway or other events.</p>
Opening hours	Limited options for visitors on weekends/public holidays and in the evenings.	Attract visitors through activations, popups and events to engender confidence in existing businesses to open longer or more visitor-friendly hours. Through the tourism association, build business cases and educating operators on the benefits of hours that suit visitors.
Connectivity and accessibility	<p>Limited riding and walking connectivity throughout the town, including wayfinding, signage and interpretation.</p> <p>East-West public bus offers services throughout Benalla, although limited at night and with limited information available for visitors on how to engage with the service.</p> <p>No Uber service or Uber Eats, and taxi services are limited, acknowledging the existing taxi providers are important.</p> <p>Only one EV charging station, not always reliable.</p>	<p>Develop path and track networks to connect the region with bike paths from the centre to key points of interest – including the Winton Wetlands and Silo Art. Integrate coordinated signage with interpretation and a storytelling theme throughout the network for legibility.</p> <p>Build out a rail/ride/art/eat product for people to have a full experience from Melbourne where they can catch the train and hire an e-bike to visit key areas of interest. Fully packaged, could also include accommodation. Attract investment in/development of e-bike, e-scooter and bike hire business.</p> <p>Enhance the visibility and accessibility of bus and taxi services to improve the visitor experience in Benalla.</p> <p>Capitalise on the significant accessible tourism market by building out accessibility in all new products and feature it in marketing.</p> <p>Work to attract an EV supercharging station. Work with Winton Motor Raceway to develop EV racing events to build out EV and sustainability credentials.</p>
Accommodation	Limited range of accommodation in the region, specifically a 4.5 star accommodation to support workers and raceway participants, and glamping/cabin/tiny home options that are aligned with what the market is seeking.	<p>Negotiate to attract a 4.5 star hotel, such as Quest or Mantra to Benalla. Work to provide a business case and planning advice to engender confidence in the investment.</p> <p>Develop an investment prospectus to attract investment in unique accommodation in the region.</p> <p>Facilitate opportunities for collaboration of existing accommodation and experiences to be packaged in rail/ride or weekend getaway packages. Champion these and market them.</p>

<p>Visitor Information Centre (VIC)</p>	<p>New building needing to create more compelling reasons for visitors to engage.</p>	<p>Attract a food and beverage tenant to the new VIC with strict guidelines on opening hours, food quality and fit out that aligns with market preferences (such as local produce, daily specials, fresh options, Sunday and holiday hours). Offer marketing support to ensure business success, including collaborating with film screenings and events.</p> <p>As tours or bike/e-bike/scooter hire are developed for the area, work to establish the VIC as a central booking area and hub for visitor activity. Ensure that during the Benalla Street Art Festival and other events, the VIC has a key role to play in the events through acting as a hub or event space.</p> <p>Partner with the Benalla Art Gallery, Benalla Migrant Camp and local Indigenous groups to build the arts and culture credentials of the VIC. This could potentially be done through expanding local art collections, displaying some artworks and/or extending the local art shop from the gallery into the VIC.</p> <p>Consider inviting in local pop-up stalls into the VIC to expand the local creative offering.</p> <p>Maximise new theatre space through special screenings and film festivals, potentially creating a new film festival for gliding and ballooning, or something similar.</p>
<p>INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT</p>		
<p>Tourism association</p>	<p>No tourism association or chamber of commerce.</p>	<p>Develop and facilitate a local tourism industry association with regular industry catchups, including guest speakers from the RTO and state government, providing insight and information on the Benalla and High Country brand, the nature of visitors, trends, and opportunities, as well as showcasing new and developing product in the region.</p> <p>Through the association, build out partnerships within and across the regions for marketing and packaging.</p>
<p>Brand toolkit</p>	<p>Limited use of the Benalla “See the art in everything” brand across the region.</p>	<p>Harness the power of the Benalla brand by ensuring it is fully rolled out across the region through developing a simple brand use toolkit and guideline. Continually educate and communicate on the brand through the tourism association.</p>
<p>Workforce</p>	<p>Limited availability of hospitality and tourism workforce and accommodation to support them.</p>	<p>Facilitate innovative education and training for workers to gain qualifications in hospitality and tourism management could attract workforce or retain young people. Work with broader programs across Victoria being rolled out to address housing shortages.</p>

Product development opportunities

Core to realising Benalla's potential is the stimulation of market interest and opportunities for the market to actively commercially participate in tourism. While visitors enjoy the benefits of free experiences such as trails and public art, they also enjoy spending money on experiences that matter to them.

There is a growing appetite for experiences that are unique – first of, best of, only of. Understanding where Benalla's distinctiveness lies within the region, the state and the world – what is special about the experiences and then building product around it – is central to connecting with and attracting both investment and visitors.

Sometimes the stimulation of investment and innovation requires inspiration. While the opportunities identified above can build a solid visitor economy that enables entrepreneurial investment, attracting that investment requires work.

Throughout the consultation and research process, several tourism product development opportunities arose for Benalla. Although there are a lot of attractions in Benalla Rural City, the lack of bookable or commercial product in places a burden on the local government and makes it harder to attract further private investment. The following products were some of the major opportunities identified through this process:

Benalla Art Gallery redevelopment. A key major attractor of high value visitors for the region, need to fully fund the redevelopment, as well as ongoing management, maintenance and marketing.

Commercial Hotel redevelopment. At the heart of the town and a major element of the urban landscape, this hotel offering lunches and dinners that are locally

connected and aligned to the market's preferences, could present a major opportunity for the city.

Winton Motorsport Museum and Events Precinct. Already housing many vehicles at the Winton Motor Raceway, the Motorsport Museum would offer a further attraction in the region, supplemented by the planned events space and major outdoor event facility.

Brewery/distillery development. Although there are many of these, offering locally brewed or distilled product to be sold at a venue in the city would meet market needs. This could be developed in partnership with the local brewery and wineries open in the Glenrowan region.

Benalla Migrant Camp. As such a significant historical site, the Benalla Migrant Camp needs to be developed as a product and also form an integrated part of the broader aviation precinct.

Winton Wetlands. Building on what is already a major attraction, develop the Winton Wetlands with track and trail infrastructure and interpretation. Examine potential for standing camps or other unique accommodation opportunities.

Bike and e-bike hire. Supporting the development of track and trail infrastructure, a bike and e-bike hire business could activate these and the businesses around them, such as cafes and museums.

Creative hub. Leverage the theme of a Creative City – or to aspire to be a UNESCO Creative City. Becoming a UNESCO Creative City like Ballarat means that the city places creativity and cultural industries at the heart of its development plan at the local level. This would also promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development.

Yorta Yorta, Taungurung & Bpangerang Tours. Surrounded by important places on Country, there are many opportunities to develop storytelling experiences.

A dirt road stretches from the foreground into the distance, flanked by numerous dead, bleached trees. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The overall scene conveys a sense of desolation and a path forward.

Strategy

SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

Benalla Rural City

VISION

To provide a sustainable, thriving and cohesive community where lifestyle, culture, health and wellbeing are supported by strong leadership and community partnership.

COMMUNITY VALUES

Location and environment | Community spirit | Heritage | Community services | Diversity | Arts and culture | Innovation and community leadership | Sport and recreation | Age and life stages

Victoria's High Country

BRAND

Essence: Inspiration on an endless scale
 Product attributes: Cycling | Nature | Food, drink and produce
 Arts, Cultural Heritage and Events | Victorian Alps

Visit Victoria

EXPERIENCE PILLARS

First Peoples-led experiences, Wellness, Arts and Culture, Nature, and Food and Drink

Benalla Tourism

GOAL

Tourism brings to Benalla an enhanced quality of life through building connections with culture and heritage and improving services, infrastructure, economy and employment.

VISION

Benalla is a place that excites and intrigues visitors to stop for an hour, a day or a few days to experience the best mix of culture, nature and rural charm in Victoria.

MISSION

Benalla Rural City works to merge art with life in the region through creating meaningful experiences that connect people with our place.

PRIORITIES



Grow our share



Grow our value



Build our industry

Strategic priorities

Successful tourism growth can play a leading role in contributing to the Rural City's objectives of being a sustainable, thriving and cohesive community. This plan has identified many opportunities to develop tourism in Benalla, but ensuring that resources and efforts are efficiently and effectively deployed is critical.

The **goal** of the priorities in this plan is that:

Tourism brings to Benalla an enhanced quality of life through building connections with culture and heritage and improving services, infrastructure, economy and employment.

The **vision** we are seeking to achieve is that:

Benalla is a place that excites and intrigues visitors to stop for an hour, a day or a few days to experience the best mix of culture, nature and rural charm in Victoria.

And the **mission** for Benalla Rural City is:

Benalla Rural City works to merge art with life in the region through creating meaningful experiences that connect people with our place.

To achieve these, this plan has identified three main strategic priorities to develop tourism in Benalla: Grow our share, grow our value and build our industry. The following describes the key actions and metrics in delivering these.





Grow our share

The 5 million visitors travelling to Victoria’s High Country each year are within striking distance for Benalla’s tourism industry to grow. The Benalla region currently attracts less than 7 per cent of these visitors. Additionally, many more are passing by on the Hume Freeway with no plans to stop.

Many of these potential visitors are unaware of the depth of experiences available in the Benalla region. To be able to attract them, Benalla needs to ensure that these potential visitors are aware of the experiences available, and that the experiences are compelling enough to draw them in. Some will only want to stay for an hour, some for a day or more, but none will stay if they don’t first know about what is on offer.

Aim: Getting people in the door.

Metric: Increasing the number of visitors coming to Benalla.

Actions: Growing Benalla’s share of the visitors to the region can be done through:

- Developing a strategic marketing strategy
- Improving signage from the Hume
- Improving online presence
- Partnering with operators who service the region.



Grow our value

Currently Benalla attracts an average overnight spend of \$131 per night and \$100 per day trip, compared with \$264 per night and \$154 per day trip in Victoria’s High Country region. This indicates a major opportunity for the Benalla region to grow the value of the visitor economy through increasing spend.

Getting visitors in the door is just the first step in building value for the visitor economy. Once visitors arrive, Benalla needs to capture them with compelling experiences with stories that connect them to the place and specifically the art. Essential to this is the availability of quality local food and beverages, and accommodation that is not just a hotel room but an experience they aspire to.

Aim: Getting people to stay longer and spend more once they arrive.

Metrics: Increasing the visitor dwell time and spend in Benalla.

Actions: Providing opportunities to spend through product and experiences by:

- Improving signage within town for all experiences
- Improving the quality of experiences
- Improving the number of experiences
- Improving visitor servicing, including food and beverage and retail offerings
- Increasing length of stay by increasing the quality and range of accommodation options.



Build our industry

Attracting and retaining visitors is a team sport, and team building in Benalla’s tourism industry is critical. With no tourism association or chamber of commerce, the businesses operating within Benalla’s visitor economy have little advocacy, access to insights, or platform to develop a strategic approach to tourism.

Not everyone is aware that they are operating within the visitor economy. Establishing and building a tourism industry association will require an initial resource and commitment from council, but with a core objective of ultimately achieving a standalone association in years to come.

Aim: Building and equipping the tourism industry to collaborate, develop and strategically plan to grow and build value from the visitor economy.

Metric: Increasing the number of paid tourism products and experiences in the Benalla region.

Actions: Building and supporting the industry through:

- Attracting public and private investment
- Delivering and maintaining infrastructure
- Creating a tourism association
- Developing resources to support the industry, including access to visitor insights, strategic planning and collaboration workshops, brand toolkit, regular events and newsletters.



Action Plan

KAVANAGE
BALLOONS
ESTABLISHED 1978


KAVANAGE
BALLOONS
ESTABLISHED 1978



Prioritised action plan

The limited human and financial resources of Benalla Rural City requires a strategic approach to be able to achieve the goals and priorities of this plan. Within each of the strategic priorities there are key actions that can deliver immediate outcomes, and others that require longer term commitment.

1. What we can do now



The below table identifies key actions from the opportunities identified that can be delivered **in the short term**.


STRATEGIC PRIORITY	ACTION	DETAILS
 Build our industry	1.1. Develop and deliver a Priority Projects Prospectus to attract government funding	<p>Create a government funding prospectus with priority projects for the region that is supported and endorsed by key visitor economy partners, such as Tourism North East. This needs to be collaboratively developed across business and operators in the region and stretches well beyond the visitor economy. Ownership of this document across industry and partners is critical.</p> <p>Key inclusions in the priority projects should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benalla Art Gallery redevelopment full funding and climate control system update so it can attract major touring exhibitions - Aviation Precinct Masterplan including Benalla Migrant Camp - Winton Motor Raceway proposal for the motor racing museum, corporate function centre, expanding outdoor events and camping facilities, etc. - Winton Wetlands next stage of master planning, including riding/walking connectivity - CBD precinct development - Planned \$15m indoor sports redevelopment, which presents the opportunity to attract sporting camps, training and competitions.
	1.2. Develop and deliver private investment prospectuses for targeted areas of development	<p>Create a series of simple enterprise investment prospectuses, communicating a red carpet, not red tape approach with business concierge and planning assistance for key areas that require development, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food and beverage, specifically a brew pub/distillery experience in Benalla open during the evenings, pop-up food vans and/or trucks, dining experiences with connections to local produce.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	ACTION	DETAILS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accommodation, specifically 4.5 star and unique accommodation including glamping/cabin/tiny home options, destination caravan park. - Tours and experiences, specifically bike and e-bike hire, tours, indigenous storytelling and experiences. <p>Work with clubs and operators to develop an understanding of the needs of special interest and sports visitors, such as Motor Raceway participants, golf visitors, gliding club, racing club and others to inform the investment prospectuses.</p>
	<p>1.3. Establish a tourism association</p>	<p>Develop and facilitate a local tourism industry association with regular industry catchups, including guest speakers from the RTO and state government, providing insight and information on the Benalla and High Country brand, the nature of visitors, trends, and opportunities, as well as showcasing new and developing product in the region. Establish a governance framework as an incorporated association with a board consisting of local operators, council representatives and Tourism North East representative as a start. This could be part of the Benalla Business Network.</p>
 <p>Grow our share</p>	<p>1.4. Write a simple, actionable tourism marketing strategy</p>	<p>Develop a simple, clear and prioritised tourism marketing strategy that leverages small investment to maximum impact – such as engaging strategically with influencers, media, famils, advocacy and programs with Tourism North East and Visit Victoria.</p>
	<p>1.5. Build Hume Freeway presence</p>	<p>Harness Benalla’s art credentials to build a highway installation (potentially as part of the Benalla Street Art Festival) to draw people in to Benalla and show what it has to offer. Brand aligned signage on the Hume Freeway to indicate the brand and start the journey of brand recognition.</p>
 <p>Grow our value</p>	<p>1.6. Conduct a signage and wayfinding audit and develop strategy</p>	<p>Conduct a signage audit and develop a strategy to coordinate the visitor experience and engage more people from the Hume Highway and into major attractions. Key objectives should be to extend the connective brand aligned signage from the Hume Freeway into the town and into main experience areas with a storytelling theme to support the Benalla brand to connect the attractions together.</p>
	<p>1.7. Maximise the investment in the Visitor Information Centre (VIC)</p>	<p>Prioritise attracting a food and beverage tenant to the VIC with strict conditions on opening hours, using local produce and brand alignment.</p> <p>Expand the Benalla VIC Business Plan to include connecting with Benalla Art Gallery retail, curating art displays/murals, shopfitting to a high standard, maximising the theatre space, tours and events hub and bike/e-bike hire.</p>

2. What we can do next




The below table identifies key actions from the opportunities identified that can be delivered **once the initial actions have been delivered**.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	ACTION	DETAILS
 Build our industry	2.1. Support the tourism association with regular events and workshops	<p>Develop and facilitate a local tourism industry association with regular industry catchups, including guest speakers from the RTO and state government, providing insight and information on the Benalla and High Country brand, the nature of visitors, trends, and opportunities, as well as showcasing new and developing product in the region. Build business cases and educating operators on the benefits of hours that suit visitors.</p> <p>Harness the power of the Benalla brand by ensuring it is fully rolled out across the region through developing a simple brand use toolkit and guideline. Continually educate and communicate on the brand through the tourism association.</p>
 Grow our share	2.2. Build the core Benalla visitor experience	<p>Build out a rail/ride/art/eat product for people to have a full experience from Melbourne where they can catch the train and hire an e-bike to visit key areas of interest. Fully packaged, could also include accommodation. Attract investment in/development of e-bike, e-scooter and bike hire business.</p>
	2.3. Clean up online presence	<p>Negotiate the rationalisation of VisitBenalla.com.au to support Enjoybenalla.com.au, align with brand and build consistent message.</p> <p>Further develop the events calendar on EnjoyBenalla.com.au with regular social posts and updates, as well as profiles on operators and products coming online.</p>
	2.4. Attract events	<p>Create an events prospectus/web page extension for Benalla that highlights the existing events spaces (capacity, flexibility, facilities, etc), catering opportunities, group activities, access and accommodation options with an arts and culture overlay. Once complete, work with Business Events and Events Victoria, professional conference and events organisers to identify key information required for decision making, and assist with on-ground planning.</p>

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	ACTION	DETAILS
 Grow our value	2.5. Ensure Benalla’s arts and culture credentials are underpinned by adequate funding	Allocate dedicated and secure funding streams for ongoing operation, marketing and promotion of the Benalla Art Gallery and Benalla Street Art Festival.
	2.6. Attract targeted accommodation investment	<p>Negotiate to attract a 4.5 star hotel, such as Quest or Mantra to Benalla. Work to provide a business case and planning advice to engender confidence in the investment. Develop an investment prospectus to attract investment in unique accommodation in the region.</p> <p>Facilitate opportunities for collaboration of existing accommodation and experiences to be packaged in rail/ride or weekend getaway packages. Champion these and market them.</p>
	2.7. Pop-up food and drink park development	<p>Work to attract food trucks and vans to support times of high traffic and low servicing.</p> <p>Develop pop-up initiatives with local charity groups for fundraising at strategic times to attract passing traffic – such as Friday afternoon woodfired pizzas delivered by the local Rotary club and advertise directly to traffic passing to go skilling in winter, or to coincide with major Winton Motor Raceway or other events.</p>
	2.8. Support business investment for future development of the Commercial Hotel and CBD	<p>The CBD, Fawckner Drive and the Commercial Hotel precinct present a major event delivery opportunity for the centre of Benalla. Pedestrianising Fawckner drive and developing event infrastructure adjacent to the Commercial Hotel.</p> <p>The CBD is a major asset for Benalla. If the CBD Masterplan is realised, it could develop and facilitate a number of small operators providing a range of eating/drinking/brewing/distilling products.</p>
	2.9. Winton Wetlands Visitor experience plan	<p>Masterplan that maps and builds the visitor experience right to the heart of Benalla rather than being a finite experience. Improve signage and wayfinding to encourage more engagement from visitors, with storytelling and connective pathways with water stations and stops from Benalla.</p>
	2.10. Cycling and e-bike connectivity plan connecting Benalla to Winton Wetlands	<p>Develop path and track networks to connect the region with bike paths from the centre to key points of interest – including the Winton Wetlands and Silo Art. Integrate coordinated signage with interpretation and a storytelling theme throughout the network for legibility.</p>

3. What we can do in the longer term

The below table identifies key actions from the opportunities identified that can be delivered once the initial actions have been delivered, **with an aim to deliver by the end of the life of this plan.**

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	ACTION	DETAILS
 Build our industry	3.1. Build collaborative tourism products and packages aimed at Benalla's target markets	Through the tourism association, build out partnerships within and across the regions for marketing and packaging.
	3.2. Support the industry by attracting innovative workforce training delivery	Facilitate innovative education and training for workers to gain qualifications in hospitality and tourism management could attract workforce or retain young people.
 Grow our share	3.3. Build social media presence	Ensure seamless connection with social media and harness the power of influencers to organically build audience, especially through events.
 Grow our value	3.4. Maximise commercial opportunities from Benalla Art Gallery visitors	<p>After upgrades are completed, work to attract blockbuster exhibitions to build the reputation of Benalla Art Gallery and collection. Build relationships with local quality local food and beverage producers and Indigenous storytellers to provide full cultural experience.</p> <p>In collaboration with peer regional galleries in the region, build a 'cultural road trip' product and collaboratively market it.</p> <p>Explore new commercial opportunities for Benalla Art Gallery and Benalla Street Art Festival, such as pop up installations connecting with other key attractions such as Winton Wetland & Winton Motor Racing Precinct, growing masterpiece collections and offering online shops for creative pieces.</p>
	3.5. Maximise commercial opportunities from special interest sports and niche visitors	Building on insights gained from developing the investment prospectuses, develop a targeted niche tourism development strategy to develop collaborations with local providers and accommodation packages to maximise benefit of sports and niche visitors.
	3.6. Scope new event opportunities that align with Benalla's offering	Explore new event opportunities, including local markets and food events. Also consider whether the Rose Garden and Benalla's historical Rose City status could be the basis of the development of a 'Rose Floriade' type of event in Benalla.

