





INTRODUCTION.....	1
EVENT DEFINITIONS.....	7
BACKGROUND.....	8
STRATEGIC CONTEXT .....	14
KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES.....	17
1.1 Event attraction.....	17
1.2 Themed events .....	18
1.3 Venue management .....	18
1.4 Funding.....	19
VISION, VALUES AND GOALS.....	21
1.5 Event vision and goals.....	21
1.6 Guiding principles .....	22
1.7 Strategic goals and objectives.....	22

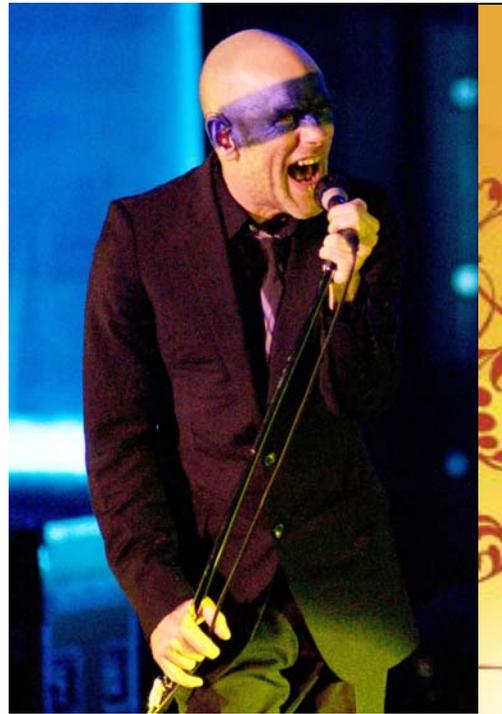


## INTRODUCTION

**New Plymouth District is rapidly gaining a reputation for being a vibrant community in which to live, work, play and visit.**

Nationally, New Plymouth District and Taranaki as a region have continually hit the headlines promoting a series of diverse events ranging from music, to art and sport. In recent times New Plymouth District Council (NPDC or the Council), Sport Taranaki, Taranaki Arts Festival Trust (TAFT), Venture Taranaki Trust (VTT) and other event organisers have invested considerable resource and time to secure international events for the region, as well as retaining treasured, long standing community events.

In November 2005 the Council resolved to adopt key principles for a District Events Strategy which focused only on strategic events. The Council endorsed the updated criteria at its meeting on 27 June 2006. These principles stated that the purpose of the Strategy was to support:



1. Major events which have the impact and profile necessary to change local, national and international perceptions about New Plymouth District, forming part of a coordinated marketing strategy and contributing to a vibrant community.
2. Major events which attract domestic and international visitors in sufficient numbers to support the realisation of the tourism strategy's goals for visitor nights and tourism expenditure, therefore contributing to a prosperous community.



3. Major events which strongly reflect the values of the Taranaki brand "like no other" and become inextricably linked to their location.
4. Major events which utilise the Council's major event venues, helping to ensure their viability and meet their revenue targets.
5. Major events which help to address seasonal gaps in visitor numbers, therefore contributing to a more sustainable tourism industry.



The Major Events Fund is the main form of financial support provided by the Council for major events in New Plymouth District. The funding criterion is based on the District Events Strategy 2005.

The District Events Strategy 2005 sets out the strategic criteria for supporting major events based around:

1. Economic gains (attracting national and international visitor spend);
2. Social and cultural benefits (positively profiling New Plymouth and upholding the attributes of the Taranaki brand);
3. Marketing exposure at a national and international level; and
4. Developing potential return on investment.

In addition to this the key goals of the Major Events Fund are:

1. To retain existing sustainable events
2. To grow new and existing events
3. To attract new major events to Taranaki

Funding decisions are made by Venture Taranaki according to the Business Plan agreed between the Trust and New Plymouth District Council.

The Board of Trustees have supported further investment in the Events Strategy since 2004 through additional revenue from the private sector and other stakeholders.

In June 2006, the Council requested that Venture Taranaki Trust:

Modify the Major Events Fund from a donation based fund to a venture capital fund and event equity partner, focused on strategic investment in events which strongly support tourism, noting that all applications for funding support for major events will be referred to Venture Taranaki Trust;

Work with the other public funding agencies of the region to investigate support for a collective and cooperative approach to investment in the Council's Events Strategy, with the aim to support those events which best meet the Strategy's goals, pooling available resources to maximise success and grow the fund; and



Adjust the criteria of the Major Events Fund to reflect that the Council's financial support for major events will be through the Major Events Fund. Where appropriate, events which receive support from the fund will be expected over time to return a negotiated percentage of their turnover to the fund, so that it can be sustained with a decreased reliance on public funds.

There was an aspiration that the Major Events Fund would, over time, be able to operate as a venture capital model with events returning a negotiated percentage of their turn over to the fund. In reality this aspiration has not been achieved due to the fact that most events require surpluses to be re-invested in future events if their organisation's viability is to be maintained. Therefore this principle is now reflected in the Strategy as an aspirational goal.



The Major Events Strategy 2010 encompasses both major community and major strategic events and sets out the future vision for events in the District of New Plymouth. The Major Events Strategy 2010 reflects the original principles endorsed by the Council in June 2006.

The Major Events Strategy 2010 provides a framework for the development and creative direction for major events in the future. The District needs to maximise the impact gained from hosting major events. Benefits include, increasing social cohesion, creating vibrancy, maximising the contribution to the economy, attracting new people to live in the District as well as retaining existing residents.

The Major Events Strategy 2010 recognises that there is a need to consider the potential challenges faced by delivering major events, whilst making the most of the opportunities on offer.

These include considering the environmental impacts and social issues which arise when delivering major events in the District and recognising the growing demands placed by these events on the current visitor industry infrastructure.



The Council has taken a lead co-ordination role (as one of the major event organisers and venue owners in the District) in the development of the Major Events Strategy 2010. The Major Events Strategy 2010 was developed in partnership with the District's key major event partners – Sport Taranaki, TAFT and VTT.

The Major Events Strategy 2010 provides an overall framework to guide the development and support of major community and major strategic events in the District of New Plymouth. The purpose of the Major Events Strategy 2010 is to ensure that the District's limited resources are used as efficiently and effectively as possible to generate benefits for the community and those visiting New Plymouth District.



## EVENT DEFINITIONS

Throughout the Major Events Strategy 2010, the following event definitions have been utilised:

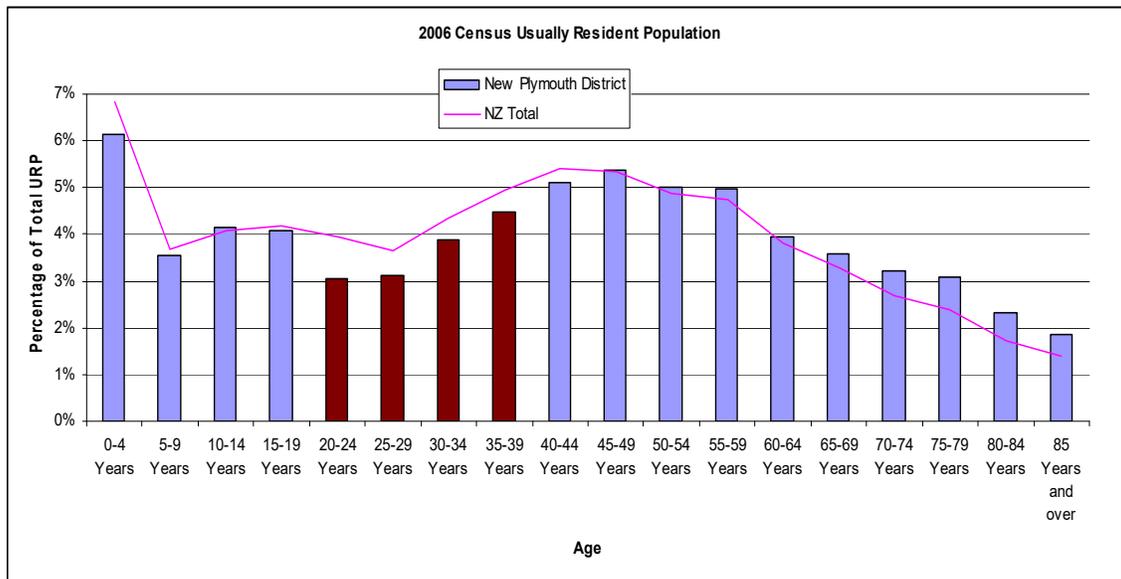
Event	A celebration, activity or display of an educational, commemorative, exhibitive or competitive nature which occurs for a limited time and occurs no more than once a year.
Major Events	Major community and major strategic events.
Major Community Event	An event that is aimed specifically at people living within New Plymouth District and attracts at least 2,000 people to the event.
Major Strategic Event	An event that has the potential to support the regional economy by attracting visitors and positively change the perception of New Plymouth District on a national and/or international stage.
Event Experience	<p><i>Event attendee</i> – The experience for an event attendee starts from when they make the decision to attend and research an event in New Plymouth District and ends when they arrive back home.</p> <p><i>Event organisers</i> - The experience for an event organiser starts from when the decision is made to run an event and includes the ease with which they can research the District's venues to when they leave the District (for out of region organisers) or at the conclusion of the event (for locally based organisers).</p> <p><i>Performers</i> - The experience for performers starts from when they enter the District and ends when they leave the District.</p>



## BACKGROUND

### *Demographic trends*

According to the 2006 census, New Plymouth District has a usually resident population of approximately 68,900 people, a lower than average proportion of people aged between 20 and 39 years and a higher than average proportion of older people.



The only foreseeable and significant demographic change expected over the next 10 years is that of an aging population. The proportion of the district's population over 65 years of age is expected to increase from 16% to 19% of the total population by 2019. This means that an additional 2,500 people will be in this age group in 10 years time.

## ***Economic trends***

As a District, New Plymouth has been part of the strong regional growth experienced in recent years. Since 2004, Taranaki growth has been regularly higher than national growth levels. This has been driven mainly from the region's core industries of oil and gas and agriculture and secondary sectors e.g. engineering, food processing etc.

Industry projections prepared by Business and Economic Research Limited (BERL) have forecast that the District will continue to face skill shortages in the region's core industries. The District is not expected to be able to meet the forecast shortage from natural growth and will require new residents if it is to realise its potential. The attraction and retention of new and existing residents becomes a key aspect of this strategy.

## ***Community perceptions of events***

The annual resident satisfaction survey undertaken by National Research Bureau (NRB) consistently reports a high level of resident satisfaction with the events and the venues that host these events in the District.

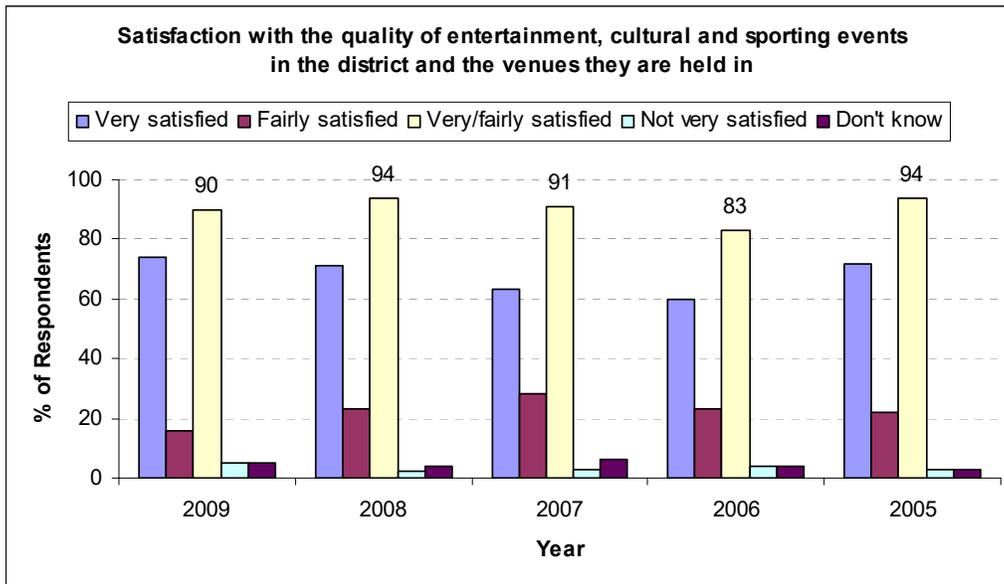
According to the 2009 NRB survey:

90 percent of New Plymouth District residents are satisfied with the quality of entertainment, cultural and sporting events in the District and the venues they are held in (94 percent in 2008).

80 per cent of surveyed households have attended an entertainment, arts and/or a sporting event at TSB Showplace, TSB Stadium, TSB Bowl of Brooklands and/or

Yarrow Stadium. Of these, 92 percent were satisfied (86 percent in 2008).

Events/concerts/entertainment/festivals were identified as one of the main things residents thought that the Council did well. Residents thought that the Council did a good job promoting and managing events, entertainment, festivals and sporting events.



The main reasons that were identified by residents for not being satisfied related to a desire to have more events in the District or a desire to see the events being funded from non-rate sources. Feedback from other public consultations and stakeholder meetings provide further support for the NRB results.

### ***Event attraction***

Despite the strong competition for events, New Plymouth District has been successful at attracting high profile events because of a number of our points of difference. These are namely:

The Council's ability to reduce the risk profile for commercial event promoters.

The District's proven track record in hosting successful major events.

The District's political support and ability to create strong partnerships (Team Taranaki).

Team Taranaki's ability to mount credible bids within a competitive event environment.

TSB Bowl of Brooklands – Often referred to as the most beautiful natural open air amphitheatre in New Zealand which is located in Pukekura Park – one of the most iconic destinations in New Zealand.

Yarrow Stadium – Rated by NZ Rugby Magazine as the third best rugby stadium in the world (May 2009).

Pukekura Park Cricket Grounds - Named by Wisden in 2007 as one of the six best cricket grounds in the world.

The restricted spectator capacities offered by the District's event venues provide challenges to the Council in delivering economic propositions to entice event organisers to bring their events to New Plymouth District. The Major Event Fund (or more favourable hire terms from the venues) can alleviate the thresholds of total revenue achievable at the District's major event venues and may provide the difference between event organisers placing their events in New Plymouth District as opposed to one of the larger national centres.

### ***Strategic events***

In terms of international music concerts, New Plymouth District competes much better than other regions outside of the main centres Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch and has positioned itself as a front running second tier destination with successful concerts such as Elton John, Jack Johnson, Fleetwood Mac and Westlife.

New Plymouth District also has a number of major events that have become iconic to the region including Yarrow's Mountain Cycle Ride, WOMAD and Americarna.

In recent years, New Plymouth District has also been successful at securing major sporting events such as three of the Rugby World Cup games in 2011, the All Blacks versus Samoa rugby match, Davis Cup Tennis, University Games and the World Triathlon Festival.

## Community events

The District has a number of major community events ranging from 2,000 people attending the Waitangi Day event to 150,000 people attending the Festival of Lights. Other major community events include Community Fireworks, Christmas at the Bowl and Carols by Candlelight. These events are owned and loved by the community, free to attend and eagerly anticipated each year.

The District has a good mix of regularly occurring major events, however these are mainly located in the summer months. The following table provides a snapshot of the major recurring events held in the District as at March 2009.

Event Name	Category	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Multi Ethnic Extravaganza	C												
Yarrows Round the Mountain Cycle Ride	S												
Waitangi Day Celebrations	C												
More FM Winery Concert	ME												
Purple Paddocks	ME												
Beach Carnivals	COM												
Butlers Reef Summer Concerts	ME												
Taranaki Wine and Food Festival	INT												
Christmas at the Bowl	COM												
Carols by Candlelight	COM												
TSB Bank Festival of the Lights	COM												
WOMAD	ME												
Relay for Life	COM												
Sustainable Living Fair	INT												
Taranaki Rhododendron and Garden Festival	INT												
G-Taranaki Guitar Festival	ME												
Community fireworks event	COM												
Davis Cup Tennis	S												
Americarna	INT												
Puanga Kai Rau Maori New Year Celebrations	C												
Youth Fest	COM												
Bikewise Mayoral Challenge	S												
Taranaki International Festival of the Arts	C												
Taranaki Daily News Home and Lifestyle Expo	INT												
Targa Rally	S												
Taranaki Masters Games	S												
Youth Week	COM												
Children's Day	COM												

Category:  
 Regular occurrence  
 Bi annual

C - Cultural      S - Sport      COM - Community  
 ME - Music/Entertainment      INT - Special Interest

Note: A number of the above events may not re-occur in the future e.g. Youthfest and G-TARanaki and are based on current event timing as at March 2009. Air NZ Cup (NPC Rugby) is played between May and November, games played in New Plymouth vary in timing year on year.

## ***The Council's role in events***

The Council has a number of different roles it fulfills in the area of major events:

Venue owner for TSB Bowl of Brooklands, TSB Stadium, TSB Showplace and Yarrow Stadium;

Manages the TSB Bowl of Brooklands, TSB Stadium and Yarrow Stadium;

Event manager and promoter for large community events such as the Festival of Lights, Community Fireworks and Waitangi Day celebrations;

Assisting with the procurement of new and high profile events (e.g. Elton John concert, Davis Cup Tennis, All Blacks games) and development of new events e.g. G-TARanaki; and

Support/liaison (including communications and promotion) to external event organisers e.g. Americarna, World Triathlon Festival, Davis Cup Tennis.

## ***Major event partners***

The Council works predominately with three key stakeholders to help ensure that there is a dynamic portfolio of events that is attractive to visitors and residents alike. The stakeholders are:

### **Venture Taranaki Trust**

Venture Taranaki Trust (VTT) is the economic development agency and regional tourism organisation for the Taranaki. VTT is a Council Controlled Organisation of New Plymouth District. In addition to its regional role, VTT has the contract for delivering economic development and district marketing services for New Plymouth District and administration of the district's Major Events Fund. VTT also prepares bids for high profile events in the region.

### **Taranaki Arts Festival Trust**

Taranaki Arts Festival Trust (TAFT) was originally established in 1991 to present a biennial Arts Festival. TAFT's primary focus is to provide for the community of Taranaki access to high quality affordable events and festivals. TAFT endeavour to present world class events through a world class organisation in world class venues. In early 2000 TAFT took over the running of the Taranaki Rhododendron and Garden Festival and presented WOMAD in 2003. After three biennial presentations of WOMAD in 2008 it presented WOMAD annually for the first time. TAFT also manages the TSB Showplace on behalf of the Council. TAFT is supported by the Major Events Fund and a range of other sponsors in the delivery of its programmes.

### **Sport Taranaki**

Sport Taranaki is a charitable trust, established in 1989, dedicated to the promotion of sport and physical recreation in Taranaki. Sport Taranaki is a community focused organisation whose role is to identify and respond to the sport and physical activity needs of people of all ages in the Taranaki region.

Sport Taranaki assists in identifying and procuring high profile sporting events to take place in the region. Sport Taranaki supports sport and physical activity events because they help to stimulate interest in and participation of sport and physical activity in the region.

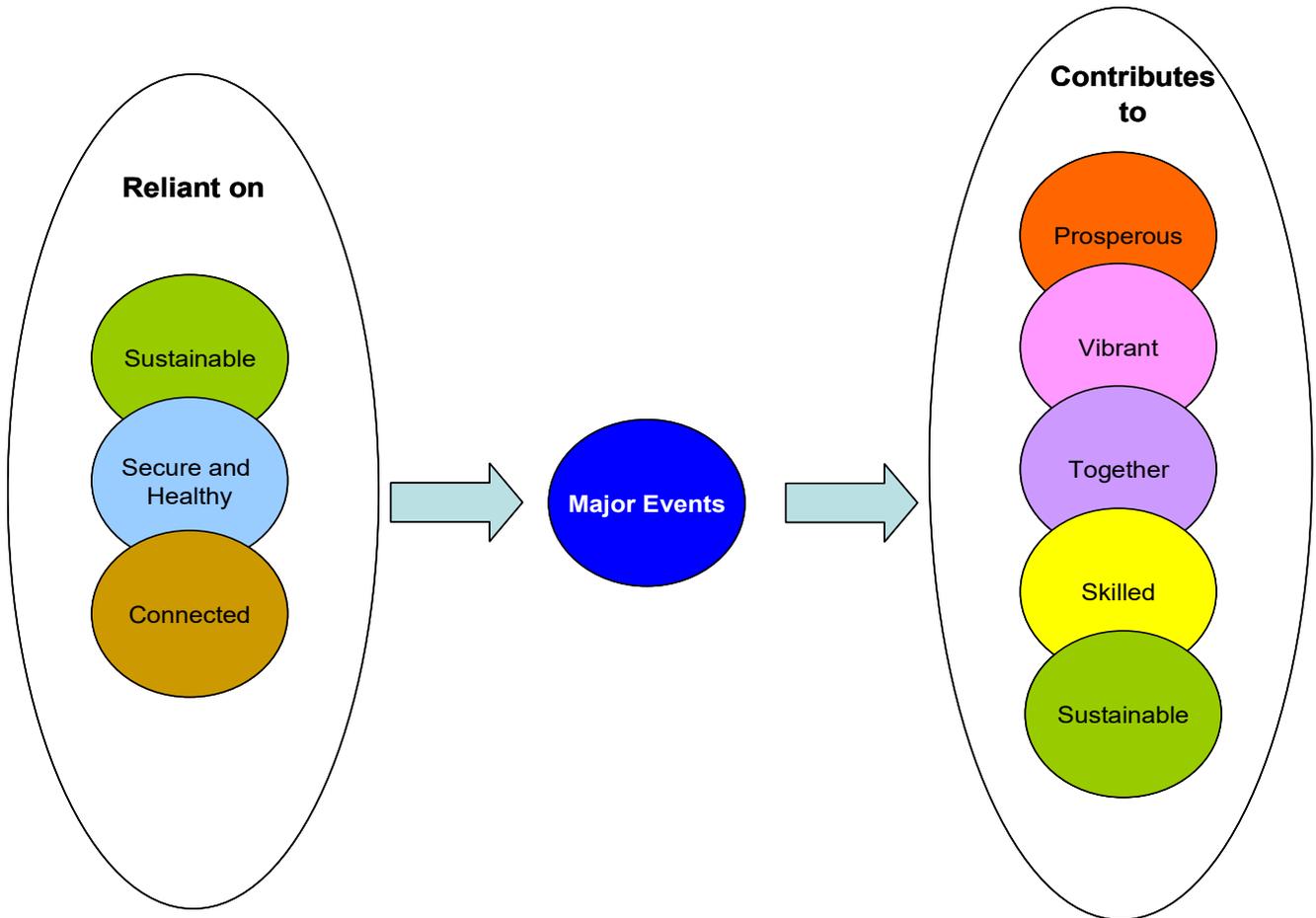
## **STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

Major events have the potential to create positive local, national and international perceptions about New Plymouth District. These events form part of a co-ordinated marketing strategy which contributes to a vibrant, cohesive and prosperous community.

Major events contribute to the achievement of the District's Community Outcomes. Major events support the local economy by creating income from running the event as well attracting visitors who spend in the District. Major events also help to promote New Plymouth District as a great place to live, work and visit to people who reside inside and outside of the District. The District is required to attract 21,700 Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) by 2026 to meet the growth aspirations of industry and commerce. Delivering major events can help to position New Plymouth District as the foremost location choice in a national and globally competitive environment.

Major events add to the quality of life for people living in the District and build social cohesion and cultural vibrancy. These events provide opportunities for wider social interaction, and increased understanding of diversity within our community. Major community events also provide opportunities for communities to celebrate success and achievements together.

The following diagram shows the Community Outcomes that major events directly contribute to and also the Community Outcomes that they are reliant on.



*Major Events – Contribution to and reliance on Community Outcomes*

## **KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The Events Research Paper provides a snapshot of the major events sector in the District including national and international trends. The Research Paper shows that there are many positive and exciting things happening in New Plymouth District from an events perspective - to the extent that the District has been described as "the events capital of NZ". It also highlights the opportunities and challenges that face the District in the future if it is to continue to market itself as a destination of choice. A copy of the research paper is attached as an appendix.

The Events Research Paper came out with a number of opportunities which have been considered as part of the development of this Strategy. These are presented under four sections, mirroring the sections within that research paper.

### **1.1 Event attraction**

Event organisers will generally only allow their major events to play in prestigious venues to guaranteed audiences. Generally this means established venues in large population bases with a proven track record of attendance. NZ event organisers are increasingly required to provide detailed financial projections for each proposed event. Initiatives that will improve event organisers' perceptions of New Plymouth District as a successful place to hold high profile events should be a priority if it is to continue to be seen as a vibrant and exciting option.

The conference sector has been identified at a regional and national level as an opportunity that could help build the profile of New Plymouth District outside the summer months. This sector is considered within the VT MICE Strategy.

The NZ Major Events Development Fund was established by central government to help build, grow and attract events to New Zealand. To date the only Taranaki events to have received financial support from this Fund are WOMAD in 2008 and the World Cup Triathlon in 2005/06.

## **1.2 Themed events**

The economic environment is forecast to be tough over the next 2-3 years. This will have an impact on communities' expectations of the Council's role in events. These will need to be weighed against the longer term outcomes and needs of New Plymouth District.

The Major Events Strategy will need to consider the constraints and opportunities that come with hosting the Rugby World Cup in New Zealand.

There are many groups in the District who are involved in the delivery of major events. Greater co-ordination is required to minimise clashes and reduce the risk of duplicating effort and resources.

## **1.3 Venue management**

There are limited wet weather venues in the District for large events. This could pose a risk to developing the perception of New Plymouth District as a vibrant destination all year round. The Strategy needs to consider how this risk can be managed.

There will need to be continued investment in the District's major event venues to ensure that they continue to meet event organisers and performers' expectations of world class venues.

There is an opportunity for Pukekura Park to host more first class domestic, international, and touring cricket matches if it can meet the venue requirements set by the International Cricket Council. NZ is co-hosting the Cricket World Cup competition in 2015 and there is an opportunity for New Plymouth District to get involved if its venue meets the required standards.

## **1.4 Funding**

Venture Taranaki Trust is responsible for the management of the Major Events Fund.

External funding (grants and sponsorship) will be less readily available and more highly contested over the next 2-3 years as the impact of the global recession is felt. Event organisers will need to create alternative or more creative ways of generating additional revenue and reducing costs. Event organisers will need to get better at communicating the value of events to potential partners and funders. Event partners and supporters will also need to think more creatively about how they can support events in tougher economic conditions.

There is need to develop the data available on major events and develop a consistency in the approach for collecting this data.

Since the preparation of the research paper, the Office of the Auditor General completed its review of how the Auckland Regional Council managed the exhibition match between LA Galaxy and the Oceania All Stars soccer team. The review found the Council had not put in place an appropriate governance structure for the Mount Smart Stadium business and exhibition match event. The review highlights the importance of having strong governance and an experienced team of professionals to operate event venues and major events.

## VISION, VALUES AND GOALS

Major events are a fiercely competitive area as every region in New Zealand is actively trying to attract and retain residents and investment in their respective regions. New Plymouth District needs to be able to differentiate itself from the rest of the competition as the destination of choice to live, do business and visit – nationally and internationally. This must be undertaken in a way that is sustainable and provides the greatest benefits for the District. The following vision, values and goals sets out a framework to enable this to be achieved from an events perspective.

### 1.5 Event vision and goals

The vision for the Major Events Strategy 2010 is to create, develop and support:

**“Event experiences that get people talking and excited about New Plymouth District as a place to live, work and visit”**

The above statement encapsulates an event vision where:

Visitors and residents alike are amazed at the major events that are hosted in New Plymouth District;

The community are proud of the quality, status and professionalism of the major events in the District; and

Visitors, performers and event organisers enjoy great experiences that entice them to return.

The following goals underpin the major event vision:

1. Ensure New Plymouth District embraces the opportunities created from hosting great major events;

2. Ensure event attendees, performers and event organisers become ambassadors for, and repeat visitors to, the region; and
3. Develop a co-ordinated planning approach for events in New Plymouth District.



## 1.6 Guiding principles

The following guiding principles provide further structure to the Major Events Strategy 2010 and will assist with its implementation:

1. We will focus on the quality (rather than the number) of our events – this includes developing and maintaining the quality of our events, event management, venues and venue management.
2. We will partner and collaborate to maximise the full benefit of events – working with businesses, residents, visitors and event organisers.
3. We will place equal importance on strategic and community events.
4. We will maintain and support a dynamic and diverse portfolio of major events.

## 1.7 Strategic goals and objectives

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 1: THE DISTRICT OF NEW PLYMOUTH EMBRACES THE OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED FROM HOSTING UNIQUE MAJOR EVENTS**

From a strategic perspective, major events have the potential to positively change the perception and attitudes people have about New Plymouth District as a destination. The District's geographic distance from the more densely populated metropolitan areas (Auckland, Wellington, Hamilton) coupled with the highly competitive nature of events means that events need to be attractive enough to entice people to travel. Events also need to be unique enough to warrant positive media attention both nationally and internationally to achieve the outcome of changed perceptions. Major events contribute to the prosperity of the District by attracting visitors and helping to support present and future economic objectives. A report to the Council in December 2005 noted that the investment of \$1.2 million in events in 2004/05 returned up to \$23.16 million in additional revenue to the region.

Major community events need to reflect the unique characteristics and preferences of the community if they are to be well supported. Well supported community events have high profiles because of the positive word of mouth, high attendance and participation levels. Local media coverage is often attracted by events that have high levels of local support and interest. Community events help to build a form of tangible community pride that can be shared with family and friends.

Underpinning this strategic goal are the following objectives:

- 1.1 Host, nurture or grow a diverse range of major events including ones that are unique to the District.
- 1.2 Foster/develop a creative community.
- 1.3 Promote the District as an attractive event option for event organisers.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 2: EVENT ATTENDEES, PERFORMERS AND EVENT ORGANISERS BECOME AMBASSADORS FOR, AND REPEAT VISITORS TO, THE REGION**

This second goal focuses on creating positive event experiences for event attendees, performers and event organisers which they then share with people in their networks.

The positive experiences of residents will help boost community spirit and add to community “buy in” to future events.

This goal is reliant on many stakeholders and the ability of these stakeholders to work collaboratively. The objectives supporting this goal focus on the practicality of the District’s major event venues to host a diverse range of events and the organisers’ commitment in the creation of a memorable event experience.

- 2.1 The District’s major event venues aspire to become the preferred choice for event organisers.
- 2.2 The District’s major sports venues aspire to meet or exceed the venue standards set by the international governing body for the major sports serviced at the venues.
- 2.3 To partner and collaborate with stakeholders to create a positive experience from start to finish.
- 2.4 To achieve a high level of satisfaction with the quality of events for all.
- 2.5 New Plymouth District benefits from the vibrant and social impact of major events.

**STRATEGIC GOAL 3: A CO-ORDINATED PLANNING APPROACH FOR EVENTS IN NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT EXISTS**

This third goal reflects the need to develop a co-ordinated approach in the use of the District’s resources to deliver major events. This includes improved communications to assist stakeholders (such as businesses, police and community groups) to plan for and contribute to major events. Improved co-ordination will help to reduce the potential for duplication in the sector. The goal focuses on creating practical processes and tools to enable all stakeholders to benefit from major events bearing in mind the factors that are able to be controlled.

The objectives that underpin this goal are:

- 3.1 A co-ordinated and dynamic portfolio of major events.

- 3.2 Improved communications and co-ordination between stakeholders.
- 3.3 Improved collection and sharing of statistical data to inform decision making and monitoring of the contribution of major events to the District.

The Strategic Goals outlined in the Major Events Strategy 2010 will be achieved in collaboratively with our partners. An Action Plan and associated measures will be developed collaboratively (based on the Major Events Strategy 2010) with our partners. This will enable us to track our collective progress against the vision and goals of the Major Events Strategy 2010.



NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT COUNCIL  

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[newplymouthnz.com](http://newplymouthnz.com)

**TARANAKI**  
like no other