

Swan Hill Incorporated

Strategic Plan 2019-2022





Our Purpose: To market and promote the Swan Hill Region.

Our Vision: To be the relevant organisation supporting business in the marketing and promotion of our region.

Background

Swan Hill Incorporated is responsible for developing a coordinated strategic plan and marketing strategy funded by a Special Marketing Rate which, after extensive consultation with the business community, will apply from 1 July 2019 for a period of seven years. Swan Hill Incorporated also has the ability to raise additional funds to support the achievement of these strategic directions.

During the recent renewal period of the Special Rate, Swan Hill Incorporated representatives made contact with many members. This process was enlightening and we were able to receive valuable feedback from our members in regards to our structure, objectives and how we communicate.

This has led to a renewed focus to ensure that we engage with and advocate on behalf of our members. Our new structure reflects this. We will clearly communicate regularly with our members about issues, projects and information that keeps them informed and assists them in running their business more effectively. We will also establish contact with our members via business visits and/or phone calls over the next twelve months to hear feedback and discuss Swan Hill Incorporated initiatives.

Organisational Structure

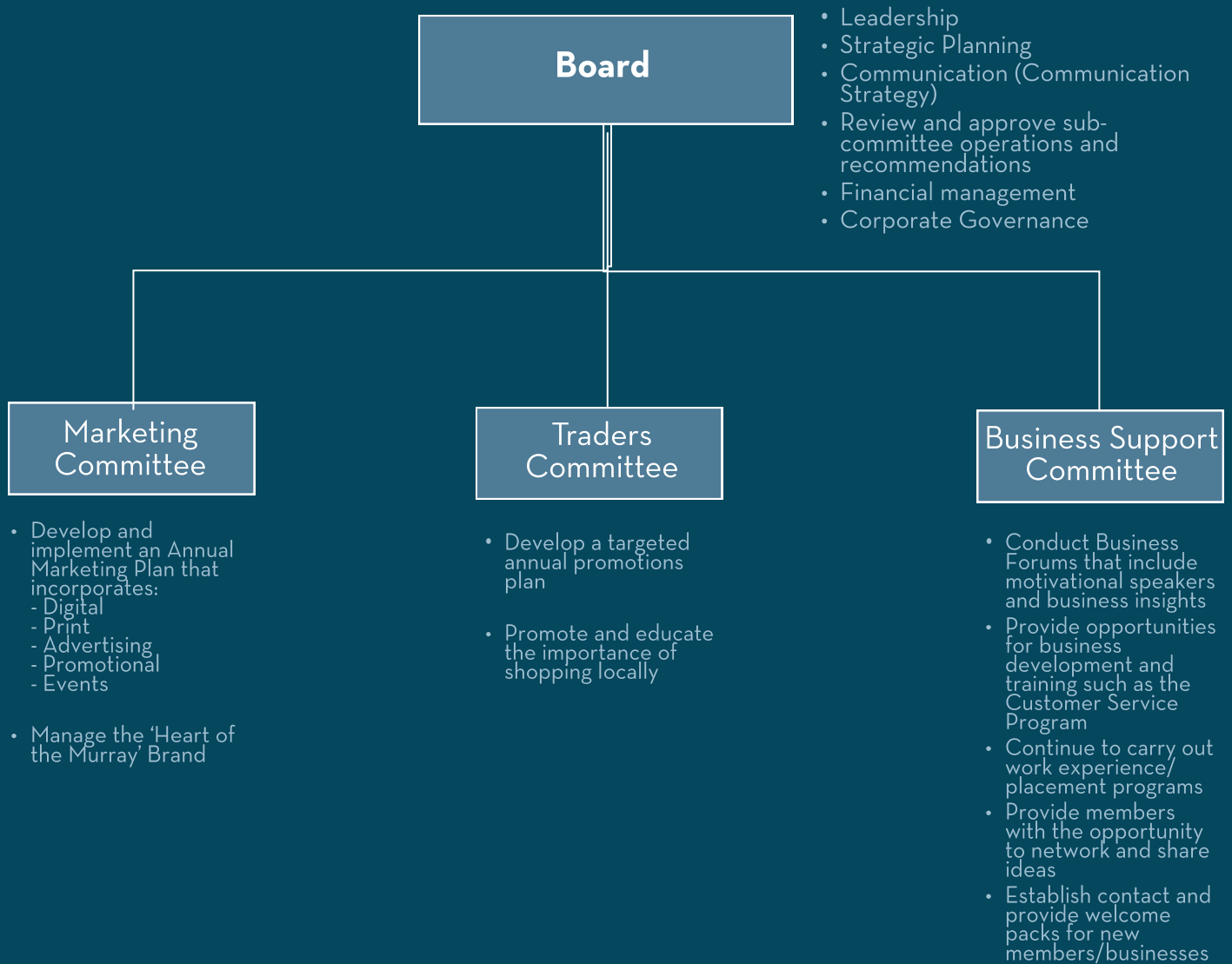
Since the declaration of the Special Rate back in 2002, Swan Hill Incorporated has matured and evolved. A structure has been developed that we believe will allow the organisation to complete its assigned charter and provide value to its members. It will encourage involvement from members in a way that is more convenient to them and will provide our members with further support that includes regular forums, networking and knowledge sharing to help grow our business community.

The structure will consist of the following:

- Traders Committee
- Marketing Committee
- Business Support Committee

The organisational structure will enable members with specific expertise and skills to be approached to assist with specific projects that they can have input into. We believe this is more aligned to supporting our members in an open and engaging way and has a strong focus towards the purpose of Swan Hill Inc, to market and promote the Swan Hill region.

Organisational Structure & Roles



Key Partners

Swan Hill Rural City Council

Swan Hill Incorporated will work directly and collaboratively with the Swan Hill Rural City Council to ensure the success of the plan.

Business Community

Swan Hill Incorporated will represent the best interests of its members by providing leadership to, and engaging with, the business community through strong communication.

Regional, State and Federal Tourism, Development and Government Organisations

Swan Hill Incorporated will work collaboratively with State and Federal Government and relevant industry organisations including the Murray Regional Tourism Board, Tourism Victoria, Regional Development Victoria,

Destination New South Wales and Regional Development Australia. Each of these agencies will provide Swan Hill Incorporated with a range of opportunities not the least of which will be for additional funding for projects or events.

The Community

Swan Hill Incorporated will engage with the local community to promote the benefits of supporting local businesses and championing their own region.

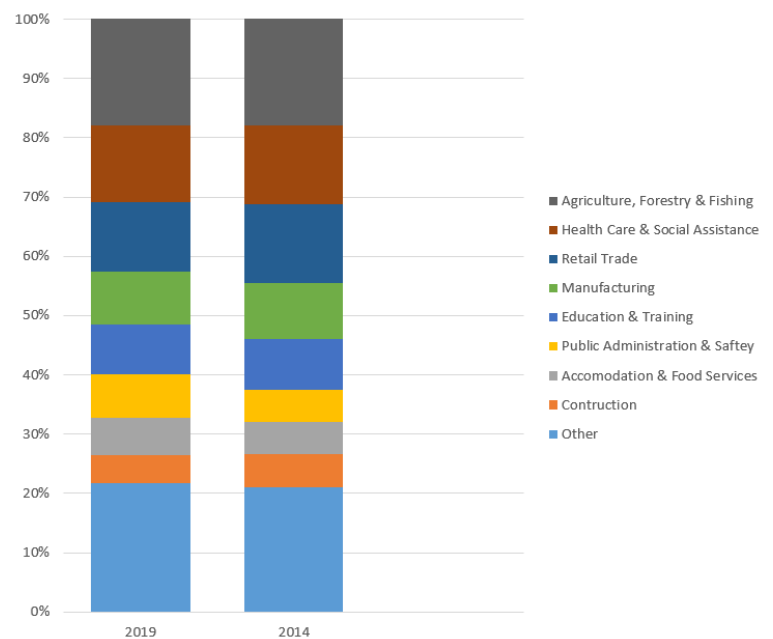
Situation Analysis - A Snapshot of the Swan Hill Region

Employment

The total employment estimate for Swan Hill is approximately 9,126 jobs¹. Agriculture, forestry & fishing continue to be our highest employers with almost 20% of the regions workforce working in these fields.

Although Tourism is incorporated into the balance of 'other', it is important to recognise that the Tourism industry generates around 594 employment opportunities in the Swan Hill region. This equates to 6.5% of jobs¹ in our municipality.

Employment by Industry in the Swan Hill Region¹

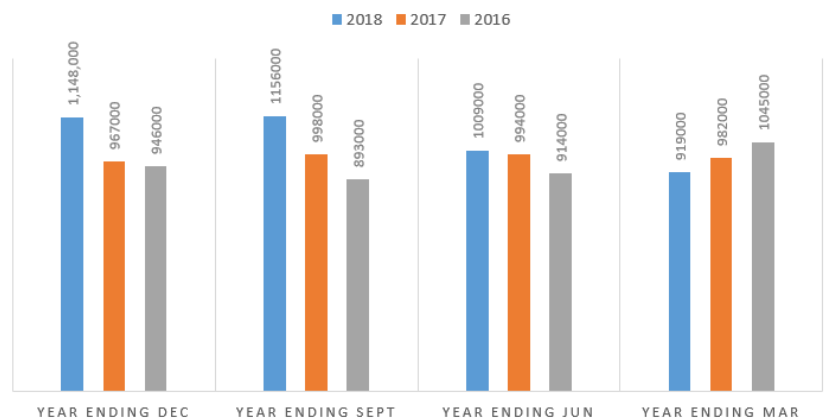


Visitation to our Region

The Swan Hill Region received 375,000 domestic overnight visitors. A total of 1.1 million nights were spent in the region - up by 18.7% on YE Dec 17.

Visitors to Swan Hill spent \$178 million in the region which equates to an average of \$155 per night. 'Eating out, dine at a restaurant or café' was listed as one of the most popular activities undertaken by visitors to the region.²

Total Nights Spent in the Swan Hill Region²



¹REMPLAN – Economic Modelling and Analysis Software 2016 updated in March 2019

²Travel to the Murray Region year ended December 2018- Murray Regional Tourism

Source of visitation

The priority domestic source markets are Melbourne, Regional Victoria, Regional New South Wales and South Australia³. For the year ended to December 2018 this was represented as shown in the chart below.

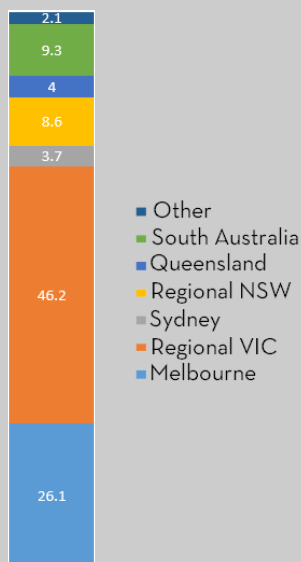
Target Markets

Most visitors to the region do so for holiday/leisure purposes representing 48.7% of all visitors. Visiting Friends and Relatives are the next biggest market at 27.8% then the Business market which represents 19.4%³.

65 years and over represent the most visitors to our region (30.7%)³, this

demographic has taken over from older visitors between 55-64 years at (18.0%)³. Years 15-24 to second place for visitation to the area at 18.1%.

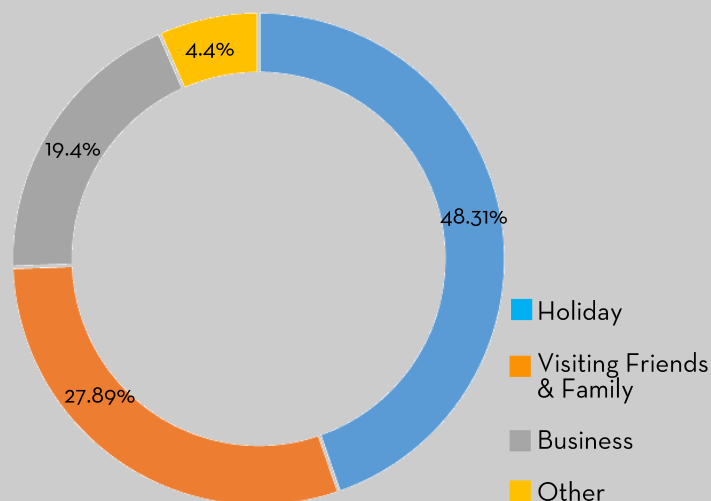
Domestic Overnight Travel to Swan Hill - Origin³



Year Ending December 2018

Visitation by Type³

Year ended December 2018



SWOT Analysis:

A recent workshop with the Swan Hill Incorporated Board identified the following key strengths, weaknesses,

STRENGTHS

- Climate
- Murray river Location
- Family focus/Lifestyle
- Pioneer Settlement
- Heritage and History
- Café and Dining
- Strong agriculture industry sector
- Positive outlooks and viewed growth potential
- Strong redevelopment (CBD, Race track Chisholm Reserve & Pioneer Settlement)
- Championship golf course
- Harness and Horse racing
- Food and Wine Festival
- Night Product
- Lake Boga Flying boat museum
- Fishing
- Water sports

WEAKNESSES

- Distance from Melbourne & other regional centres
- Lack of Developed product
- Skills shortage
- Ageing infrastructure (Buildings, river precinct, bridge, lack of natural gas)
- Our ability to service the visitor 7 days a week
- Lack of secondary industries.
- A La Carte Dining

OPPORTUNITIES

- Industry development/emerging products
- Event development
- Development of river precinct
- Harness innovative business people, enthusiasm & can-do attitudes
- Strong redevelopment (CBD, Chisholm reserve & Pioneer Settlement)
- Bird Watching
- Motor Sports
- Influences

THREATS

- Business disruption due to natural disaster
- Fragmentation - lack of industry support
- Uncontrollable external economic impacts
- Threat to retail from the development of global online presence

³Travel to the Murray Region year ended December 2018- Murray Region Tourism

Strategy One - Visitation to the Region

Increase visitation by specifically marketing the Swan Hill region as a place to visit and enjoy.

Key Initiatives

- Implement a Marketing Committee with a minimum of two members with Marketing qualifications and/or experience.
- Manage the Swan Hill Region Brand.
- Establish a strong research base for all activities.
- Develop a targeted Annual Marketing Plan.
- Develop strategic alliances with key tourism industry organisations.
- Improve our digital presence.
- Develop a strategy to assist in the dispersal of visitors to the smaller towns in the region.
- Develop targeted advertising campaigns designed to encourage operator buy in.
- Encourage and support the development and linking of regional festivals and events.

Priority Actions

- Develop and implement a targeted Annual Marketing Plan that incorporates digital, print, advertising, promotional and events strategies and projects.
- Conduct a review of the Swan Hill Region brand to ensure it is relevant to the visitor and to our members.
- Develop and implement a monthly reporting system for the Board and Committees that includes visitation to the region, website hits and activity, downloads of the app and campaign performance/research where applicable.
- Develop and implement a monthly report for members that provides data on visitation to the region including length of stay and visitor nights.
- Implement a new website that provides the user with an interactive, easy-to-use resource and enables operators to be represented.

Key Performance Indicators

1. Implementation of Marketing Plan
2. Management of website and digital assets

3. Monitoring of visitor numbers to the region
4. Reporting on campaign evaluations

Strategy Two – Shopping in the Region

Promote the Swan Hill region as a place to shop.

Key Initiatives

- Recruit additional Retailers and Traders to the committee.
- Promote and educate the importance of shopping locally.
- Develop a targeted annual calendar of promotions.
- Establish a strong research base for all activities.
- Support and participate in the 'Strengthening Swan Hill Region's Retail Industry' project.

Priority Actions

- Develop a targeted annual calendar of promotions that provides traders with the opportunity to leverage off key seasons, holidays and events.
- Create an educational and promotional campaign targeting locals which highlights the economic benefits of shopping locally supported by statistical data.
- Develop and implement a 'Made in the Swan Hill Region' campaign that identifies products that are produced in our region.
- Appoint 1-2 members to a steering committee of Swan Hill Rural City Council's 'Strengthening Swan Hill Region's Retail Industry' project .

Key Performance Indicators

1. Implementation of the annual calendar of promotions
2. Reporting on research collected for all promotional activities

3. Participation in the 'Strengthening Swan Hill Region's Retail Industry' project

Strategy Three – Advocacy & Communication

Engage with and advocate on behalf of members.

Key Initiatives

- Develop a Communications Plan to outlining how to communicate with the business community and the members.
- Establish and maintain a leadership role by engaging with local businesses.
- Develop a strong and mutually supportive relationship with Council.
- Engage with government agencies and relevant organisations to advocate on behalf of members and the region.
- Provide opportunities for members to raise issues, interact with other members and Swan Hill Inc via two business forums each year.

Priority Actions

- Develop and implement a Communication Plan that ensures regular, effective communication with members and stakeholders.
- Implement a Business Visits program to ensure we engage with members regularly on a one on one basis.
- Conduct three reviews annually with Councillors to provide updates on key achievements aligned with the Annual Marketing Plan.
- Continue to hold monthly briefings with Council CEO and senior staff to raise issues and share information.
- Establish a monthly column in The Guardian newspaper to communicate to the local community on our achievements and initiatives.
- Schedule two business forums for the year providing members with the opportunity to attend, raise issues and network with other members.

Key Performance Indicators

1. Strong relationship with Council
2. Implementation of Communications Plan
3. Two Business Forums held each year

4. Communication with members and key partners via monthly email and The Guardian
5. Implementation of the Business Visits Program

Strategy Four – Business Support

Provide support and direction to members and encourage the provision of quality service.

Key Initiatives

- Implement a Business Advocacy Support Committee.
- Recruit specialists from industrial, professional, trade, agriculture and manufacturing trades.
- Advocate to Council on behalf of committee and members.
- Identify and target 5 main issues/topics for the betterment of our region to be advocated to Council.
- Provide members with opportunities to grow their business through educational and motivational events.
- Promote careers in local industries to youth in the region.

Priority Actions

- Develop an annual Business Forum schedule including motivational speakers and education events designed to appeal to members.
- Develop an annual Networking Events schedule which provides members with the opportunity to network with other members, Swan Hill Inc and other key community members in a relaxed and comfortable environment.
- One member of committee to attend monthly meetings with Council.
- Conduct the annual Accounting Work Experience Program.

Key Performance Indicators

1. Conduct educational and motivational events for members
2. Provide members with the opportunity to network with other members

3. Ensure the annual Accounting Work Experience program continues
4. Provide assistance package to new businesses



SWAN HILL

Region HEART OF THE MURRAY

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