

**25 June 2015****Tourism and major events help shape prosperous future**

Tourism and major events bring millions of dollars into the Sunshine Coast economy each year and the council's 2015-16 budget focuses on continuing that injection.

Mayor Mark Jamieson said the \$5.17 million raised by the Tourism and Major Events levy – part of Sunshine Coast Council's \$589 million budget - would be divided between Sunshine Coast Destination Limited (\$3.76 million) and major event sponsorship (\$1.41 million).

The levy promotes the region's tourist industry and major events.

"It's estimated every dollar spent on advertising and promotion through the Tourism and Major Events Levy generates \$18 in economic benefit, strengthening our economy," Mayor Jamieson said.

"Council's investment in major event sponsorship alone will generate an estimated \$65.5 million in economic activity in the coming financial year.

"Thanks to a lot of promotion and marketing, time and effort and considerable negotiations, the Sunshine Coast is gaining a reputation for holding successful events in this beautiful part of the world and we are attracting more interest than ever.

"Just recently, Council announced Wanderlust, one of the world's largest lifestyle events, which will showcase Sunshine Coast in October, attracting more than 3000 participants.

"That's a huge coup for our region, beating out many other national and international competitors vying for this event.

"The Australian Surf Life Saving Championships will attract more participants than the Commonwealth Games when 22,000 people descend on the Sunshine Coast in April 2016.

"The World Outrigger Sprint Titles brings the world to the Sunshine Coast next May, with more than 35 countries and some 3000 participants.

"And the Queensland Garden Expo – the state's large garden exhibition - will attract more than 20,000 green thumbs over three days of festivities to our beautiful hinterland.

"These are just some of the many events coming to our region over the next 12 months."

Mayor Jamieson said the Tourism and Major Events Levy had risen by 10% in line with the projected program and would affect just 10% of ratepayers.

"The economic injection from these events flows back to businesses across the region," he said.

"Whether you are a chemist, a mechanic or a newsagent, own a beauty salon or sell clothes or shoes, you have the opportunity to benefit from the major events that Council helps bring to our region.

"We are putting Sunshine Coast on the tourism and events map, creating jobs and promoting the region to a whole new audience resulting in a stronger economy and a more prosperous community."

**Major regional events 2015-16**

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- Wanderlust
- Australian Surf Life Saving Championships
- World Outrigger Sprint Titles
- Queensland Garden Expo
- Real Food Festival
- Australian Motocross Championships
- Mooloolaba Triathlon

The Council-supported Events+ campaign provides an innovative new platform for local businesses to promote offers and specials around major events. Businesses can download the 'app', by visiting the App Store and typing 'Events+ Offers and Rewards' into the search function.

**ENDS**

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