

## Wagga Wagga + Surrounds to host state destination conference in 2024

Wagga Wagga City Council and neighbouring shires of Coolamon and Junee have been successful in their application to host the Local Government NSW Destination and Visitor Economy Conference in 2024.

The announcement of the 2024 host council was made by emcee Matt Baseley at the 2023 Destination and Visitor Economy Conference, held in Northern Beaches this week.

The state significant conference brings together local government staff and councillors, key industry stakeholders and local operators to discuss insights and the ever-changing world facing future visitors.

Mayor of the City of Wagga Wagga Councillor Dallas Tout said he was thrilled the Wagga Wagga + Surrounds region has been selected as host for this significant conference which is expected to attract around 250 delegates across the three days in May next year.

“Having this conference held in the city is a great opportunity for our region and wider NSW to come together to share innovative and new ideas, deep dive into contemporary challenges and showcase our successes as a leading regional tourism destination,” Cr Tout said.

“Not only will our city be the main host of the event, but we are also working with our neighbours Junee and Coolamon shires to showcase a selection of what our wider region has to offer and demonstrate how successful partnerships can be created.

“These partnerships are incredibly important for tourism, especially in regional areas, where collaboration offers more for visitors to experience.

“Our vibrant and thriving region offers beautiful natural landscapes, trails and waterways, arts and culture, incredible locally grown and made produce, as well a diverse calendar of events to keep visitors coming back year-round.”

The joint conference bid with Coolamon Shire and Junee Shire is an extension of Wagga Wagga City Council’s work through the Wagga Wagga Tourism Partner Program which includes partners from seven neighbouring shires.

Wagga Wagga is a leading region tourism destination in NSW, attracting more than 1.3 million visits annually, who on average stay three nights in our city to use as a base and head out on day trips to the surrounding region.

Coolamon Shire Mayor David McCann OAM said his Council was excited to work with the City of Wagga Wagga and Junee Shire for next year’s Destination and Visitor Economy Conference.

“We look forward to promoting our region and welcoming conference participants to the Coolamon Shire,” Cr McCann said.

“This is a fantastic announcement that will grow awareness of our wonderful region. It gives us an opportunity to highlight our local attractions, experiences, and operators.”

Those sentiments were echoed by Junee Shire Council’s General Manager James Davis, who said the Junee community was thrilled the Wagga Wagga + Surrounds region had been selected as host for the 2024 conference.

“We are looking forward to welcoming our Local Government colleagues and representatives from across the state to gather here on Wiradjuri Country, and we welcome everyone to come and experience Junee,” Mr Davies said.

The conference will be held from Tuesday 28 May to Thursday 30 May 2024.

An exciting agenda for the multi-day experience is already under development, including nature, food and drink and culture-based experiences.

Each experience will be unique to the Wagga Wagga + Surrounds region to give delegates a real taste of what this region has to offer and how it is contributing to the state’s tourism industry.

The annual Destination and Visitor Economy Conference is organised and delivered by Local Government NSW.

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## About Wagga Wagga City Council

Wagga Wagga City Council serves more than 68,000 residents across an area of 4825 square kilometres with an overall budget of more than \$236M.

The organisation manages more than \$2.48 billion in assets, including a 2300km road network, Wagga Wagga Airport, Livestock Marketing Centre and the Oasis Aquatic Centre.

Council also provides important community facilities such as Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, Wagga Wagga City Library, Museum of the Riverina and Civic Theatre, as well as maintaining countless parks, playgrounds and sporting facilities to ensure Wagga maintains its reputation as ‘the City of Good Sports’.

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