Mind the Gap - Community Culture Focussed Transformational Change in the Central Goldfields Shire

Presentation to: SEGRA 2011 Conference
Cr Chris Meddows-Taylor
Geelong October, 2011
Central Goldfields Shire – a central location*

*Equal distance (65 kilometres) from Ballarat and Bendigo. 165 kilometres from Melbourne
Maryborough Station by night
Central Goldfields Shire – Key statistics

- Population ~ 13,000 (Maryborough ~ 8,000)
- 1,532 square kilometres
- Operating Budget $23m
- Rates $7.9m
- Capital Expenditure c $5.5m (approx $9m in 2011/12 due to flood recovery works)
- Population growth (lagging) relatively flat – small growth
- Population growth (target aspirational) 2%+ a year - 18,000 by 2020 – aspirational slogan “20 by 25” (20,000 by 2025).
Some real challenges

- Regional manufacturing decline since the 1960ies
- Regional skills shortages favours larger cities
- Flat traditional agriculture predictions
- Community resistance to change – “don’t fix it unless it’s broke”
- Substantial disadvantage gap – close to bottom of SEIFA index
- Financial sustainability and challenges for small councils – funding of new initiatives.
VISION - Central Goldfields Shire Council-
"To add to our proud heritage a prosperous and sustainable future for all"

Where we want to be – an aspirational community of choice
A healthy, well educated, inclusive, strong and productive community that is active, creative, innovative and environmentally sustainable.

Long term place based solutions*

Cultural Change

Change Management

Closing the Gap

Social Distress Economic Disadvantage Significant Health Problems Educational Under-Achievement

Current reality – near the bottom of the pack
Overwhelming disadvantage a barrier to prosperity and sustainability

* > 8-10 years – refer Vinson Report
Six key priorities

- Population growth
- Disadvantage gap closure
- Diversified “new” economy and liveability
- Regional centre positioning
- Financial sustainability for small rural councils
- Community culture change
Key messages- Central Goldfields---

• on the move
• Great liveability and opportunity
• Rich and beautiful natural and built heritage
• Diversified local economy
• Tackling disadvantage head on –and succeeding
• Central locational positioning and connectivity
• A valuing of life long education, creativity, diversity, contribution and change
• Gearing up for substantial population growth
• Recognising cultural change is key to advancing our Community
Managing change is key to our objectives
Planning transformational change

Awakening

Envisioning

Re-architecting

Transformational change—what they say

Awakening
“The urge to unlock the latent power of ideas”

Envisioning
“Even people who have resisted change begin to recognise the need for something new”

Rearchitecting
“The streams of politics, policy and a problem intersect” (Kingdon 1984)

Source: Noel M. Tichy and Stratford Sherman, Control Your Destiny or Someone Else Will, Doubleday, 1993
Central Goldfields transformational agenda

AWAKENING

- Community culture change Strategy
- Gold Prospects Report

ENVISIONING

- Go-for-Gold Strategy

REARCHITECTING

- Go Goldfields place based solution

Source: Noel M. Tichy and Stratford Sherman, Control Your Destiny or Someone Else Will, Doubleday, 1993
We believe cultural change is critical

**Challenge to Local Government**

- Become modern facilitators of sustainable regional economic development
- Develop new public-private partnerships in infrastructure and community service provision
- Build learning and knowledge based communities.
- Move well beyond their traditional roles

**Sustainable Solutions**

**Council**

**Priority**

**Actions to Transform Communities**

**State and Federal Governments**

**Investing in cultural change builds change capability**

- Building change capability accelerates gap closure
- Utilise Government programs on offer
- Results

**Build on Success**

*Source: ALGA- State of the Regions Report 2003*
Community Culture Change - developing an aspirational culture

**Current**
- Resilient
- Conforming
- Take a fixed position
- Relationship driven
- Hands on and can do
- Earn your stripes
- Work within boundaries
- Maintain status quo
- Respond as necessary
- Employer “owns” training
- Accept what’s on offer
- Down-to-earth

**Future**
- Adaptable
- Exploring
- Take a step forward
- Opportunity driven
- Discuss new possibilities
- Welcome new inputs
- Work across boundaries
- Improve whenever possible
- Capture opportunities
- Individual employability
- Only the best will do
- Go for gold

**Shift in emphasis**
Investment in the early years is critical

“The most economically efficient way to remediate the disadvantage caused by adverse family environments is to invest in children when they are young”. (Heckman, 2000)
Go Goldfields – a $2.5m place based investment

**GO GOLDFIELDS**
- DIRECTION, ADMINISTRATION, FACILITATION & PROGRAM EVALUATION
- YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
  - YOUTH MENTORING AND GUIDANCE SERVICES
- RECONNECTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO LEARNING & TRAINING
- HOME-BASED PARENTING & DAILY LIVING SKILLS PROGRAM WITH RESpite CARE

**PARTICIPATE, ENGAGE & LEARN THROUGH COMMUNITY ARTS**
- DELIVERING EARLY LEARNING IS FUN (ELF) PROGRAM
- ENSURING CHILDREN DEVELOP AMPLE SPEECH & COMMUNICATION SKILLS

**REVIEW OF MOTHER GOOSE LITERACY PROGRAM**
- CHILDREN’S DEVELOPMENT FAMILY GROUP PARENTING PROGRAM
- ENHANCED LIBRARY SERVICE FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

**FAMILY VIOLENCE STRATEGY**
- POLICE REFERRAL SYSTEM
- PROVIDING CHILDREN WITH QUALITY LIBRARY BOOKS & OTHER MEDIA RESOURCES

**ENSUING CHILDREN DEVELOP AMPLE SPEECH & COMMUNICATION SKILLS**
The importance of the Fourth Pillar of Sustainability

- Innovative and productive community

- Social
- Economic
- Environmental
- Culture

Culture Development Network
Australia Council for the Arts
United Nations Sustainable Cities
Thinking about culture more broadly

“Culture encompasses-- our values and aspirations”

“All acts of public intervention (plans, policy, services, whatever) are fundamentally informed by sets of values”

Jon Hawkes “The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability
–Culture’s essential role in public planning
Cultural Development Network (Vic)
Culture - levers of opportunity

- Education and training
- Communications and public affairs
- The constructed environment and public facilities
- Arts
- History and heritage
- Recreation and leisure
- Sport (and although not suggested by Hawkes we could add)
- Tourism and events

Jon Hawkes “The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability – Culture’s essential role in public planning
Cultural Development Network (Vic)
## Transformational change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FROM</th>
<th>TO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economy</strong></td>
<td>Diversified “new” economy</td>
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<td>Flat manufacturing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>and agriculture</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
<td>Tackling disadvantage head on</td>
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<tr>
<td>Significant disadvantage</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Maryborough</strong></td>
<td>Major regional centre</td>
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<td>District town</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Population</strong></td>
<td>Target major growth</td>
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<td>Relatively flat</td>
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<td><strong>Jobs</strong></td>
<td>Sustainable wealth creation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total numbers</td>
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<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td>Leveraging regional opportunity</td>
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<td>Internally focussed</td>
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<td><strong>Government</strong></td>
<td>Place based solutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>What’s on offer</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Heritage</strong></td>
<td>Opportunity</td>
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<td>Challenge</td>
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## Transformational change

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<th>FROM</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attraction</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Council</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Leadership style</strong></td>
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<td>Functional/silo</td>
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<td><strong>Community Culture</strong></td>
<td>Resilient</td>
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<td><strong>Great liveability</strong></td>
<td>Strategic conversations</td>
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<td><strong>Value creation</strong></td>
<td>Change leadership</td>
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<td><strong>Visionary</strong></td>
<td>Achieving together</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aspirational</strong></td>
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Key messages

• Good communities are aspirational communities – and we all want our communities to be communities of choice.

• Closing the gap between current reality and this objective is a critical task for local government.

• As local government practitioners we need to manage change more strategically and recognise the opportunity that cultural change offers us in that context.

• Culture is a key strategy to close gaps and understanding this offers us new strategic levers or the opportunity to use existing levers in innovative and more productive ways.

• We should all learn from and share our experiences in this journey.