

Town Square – helping brands earn their place in people's lives

Central Geelong Marketing Review

February 2022

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12/11/2021 First draft report
07/12/2021 Draft summary to CGBRG
15/12/2021 Final draft report
25/02/2022 Final report

Scope of this review

Following an independent report (Peter McNabb & Associates, Nov 2020) and a process of stakeholder engagement, the City has requested an independent review of the historical program and activities delivered by Central Geelong Marketing (CGM), as well as recommendations for innovative solutions to create a marketing, events and activations program for Central Geelong.

This report draws on the existing review of CGM activity, analysing and interpreting stakeholder feedback, to deliver recommendations on the way forward for the marketing of Central Geelong to ensure that Central Geelong is well positioned for recovery from the impacts of COVID-19, and for ongoing future growth.

Critical to the success of Central Geelong will be the City's ability to orchestrate and facilitate initiatives collaboratively, both within the City and with partners and stakeholders. The end goal is for Central Geelong to adopt a reframed proposition that invites maximum participation in every aspect of this place.

The Scope of Works

1. Broadly review the program elements delivered historically by CGM.
2. Map and review the work undertaken by business units within the City to support central Geelong (summary to be provided).
3. Review and address feedback provided by the former Central Geelong Taskforce, newly-formed Central Geelong Business Reference Group and businesses within the previous special rate declared area.
4. Develop clear recommendations for new and innovative solutions to create a dynamic marketing, events and activations program for Central Geelong, addressing:
 - a. outsourcing opportunities;
 - b. alternative funding options including but not limited to user buy in / membership marketing and event program model;
 - c. proposed activities to attract visitation into Central Geelong as well as increase length of stay and spend;
 - d. ongoing program elements to support an increased residential population and reduction of vacancy rates for shopfront tenancies; and
 - e. integration and / coordination of program delivery with existing business units and activities

Executive Summary

Executive summary

After twenty years of effective marketing activity from Central Geelong Marketing there is a broad consensus that a collective program of marketing for Central Geelong should continue.

The marketing strategy should align with the place proposition for Central Geelong (which should itself be aligned with the City's *Clever and Creative* vision and *Our Community Plan 2021-25*).

The marketing for central Geelong should be a highly-focused program with clear boundaries to its scope in terms of:

- Reach – the marketing program should address the people of Greater Geelong – those who live, work, shop, play, study and invest in Greater Geelong – and not seek to reach out beyond the municipality.
- Territory – Central Geelong marketing should focus on promoting the area(s) commonly understood to constitute the centre of City activity rather than a uniform and contiguous area with a hard border defined by the previous Special Rate area. It should be a collection of human-scale precincts that exist today, each well-defined, with a recognisable character and sense of place – and collectively understood to be the heart of the City.
- Function – marketing should deliver promotional activity that generates community engagement with central Geelong, in the form of events, promotional programs and communications that drive participation in Central Geelong life. Marketing should not extend to service delivery (e.g. Park and Ride).

A tighter definition of scope and narrower set of objectives will likely call for a smaller budget than the CGM budget of recent years.

Marketing should be centrally funded for the next three years (FY23-FY25) to better reflect the benefits of a vibrant centre to the whole of the municipality and to recognise that funding from a Special Rate would be a particularly onerous burden for property owners and tenants dealing with the immediate economic impact of a sustained pandemic lockdown.

Over this period, the work previously delivered by Central Geelong Marketing can be delivered by other departments within the City of Central Geelong (CoGG) or outsourced where appropriate.

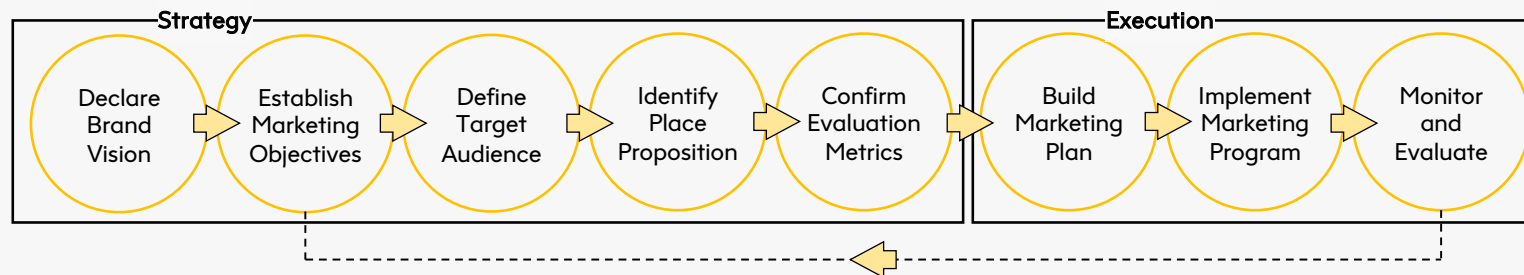
Funding should be allocated with reference to the city-wide synergies that need to exist between investments through the various departments with responsibilities for programs in Central Geelong. Coordination and collaboration across programs and departments ensures that every dollar invested in Central Geelong is spent wisely and contributes to the most effective outcomes.

Strategy first

This review stops short of proposing specific marketing events, activations, campaigns or programs.

Marketing activity should be developed once a clear strategic plan is in place – based on a clear understanding of the audience and the characteristics of Central Geelong that dictate the experience of being here.

A solid strategic platform will ensure marketing activity contributes consistently towards achieving long-term objectives.



Central Geelong Marketing

Twenty years of Central Geelong Marketing

The Central Geelong Marketing Special Rate ran from 2000 to 2020. Well-funded, and with consistent and sustained investment, CGM delivered effective initiatives, with robust governance and healthy return on investment.

Over four consecutive Special Rate periods of five years each, CGM activity delivered a broad range of marketing initiatives to promote Central Geelong. Details of the Special Rate are summarised in the Appendix on page 58.

In recent times, the marketing platform for these initiatives has been ***Love Central Geelong*** – represented by a website for members and for the general public (www.centralgeelong.com.au), an app and social media channels (#lovecentralgeelong).

The activities of CGM in the last Special Rate period (2016–2021) are summarised in ***Central Geelong Marketing – The Story So Far – 2016–2021***, under three broad categories:

- Flagship Events & Activities (e.g. Shopping Festival, May Magic)
- Consolidated Advertising and Digital Marketing (e.g. transit advertising, professional services campaign)
- Business & Support Programs (e.g. Networking Events, Park & Ride)

These activities were conducted within a strategic framework that identified three key focus areas:

- People – ***Growing the number of customers, workers, residents, students and visitors experiencing, and enjoying Central Geelong***

- Business – ***Creating Business Opportunity***
- Support – ***Growing CGM's capability to provide effective leadership through a coordinated approach to robust strategic planning, the delivery of valued programs, effective communication and advocacy.***

An independent assessment (Peter McNabb & Associates, Nov 2020) concluded that "the Central Geelong Marketing Program represents the gold standard for main street centre management, marketing and business development programs in terms of best practice in Australia".

But despite this endorsement, the funding model was increasingly felt to be inequitable by some of the 1,466 rate payers in Central Geelong who shouldered the burden of the Special Rate. And while the impact of the investment in CGM was acknowledged to be positive, over time questions arose regarding the delivery of the same tried and tested programs.

Add COVID to the mix, with the imperative to re-activate central Geelong post-lockdown for a new, COVID-normal world, and the need arose for a fundamental reappraisal of how marketing can best help to create sustained social, cultural and economic benefit to Central Geelong.

Reflecting on CGM activity with hindsight, it is fair to observe that greater potential exists to innovate and take Central Geelong on a forward trajectory. The UNESCO Creative City of Design designation and the Clever and Creative community vision for Greater Geelong can inspire a more progressive marketing agenda for Central Geelong.

CGM activities

CGM undertook activities that fell into four broad categories (if we include data collection and evaluation) which are discussed further in relation to organisational structure on page 20.

Place activation

- Public events and activities: Tastes of Central Geelong, Christmas, School holiday program, Shopping Festival & Sidewalk Sales, May Magic
- Development of partnerships with Central Geelong businesses/ cultural organisations to leverage events and activities
- Provision of in-kind and financial support to externally lead events and activities in Central Geelong
- Support and promote Central Geelong placemaking activities – street entertainment, night time safety initiatives, parking info
- Activate ground floor shopfronts – encouraging landlords to allow usage for Central Geelong marketing, start-ups or NFPs

Marketing

- Digital marketing, social media and communications to support CGM activities and Central Geelong business offerings
- Management of Central Geelong Website and App
- Management and growth of public databases to support CGM activities and Central Geelong business offerings
- Brand awareness initiatives
- Consolidated advertising campaigns – TV commercials, cinemas, signage, transit, static
- Sponsorship of Park & Ride service

Business engagement

- Quarterly networking events, monthly training and professional development program
- In-person engagement – daily contact with Central Geelong business, provision of new business welcome kits, ongoing strategies to directly engage with and support new and existing businesses
- Quarterly printed newsletters and monthly updates to Central Geelong businesses

Data collection and evaluation

- Evaluation activities to capture the economic, social, community and strategic benefits of events and activities
- Lead and manage data collection for Central Geelong – management of business database to capture ongoing tenancy mix/vacancy rates, Placescore and device counting

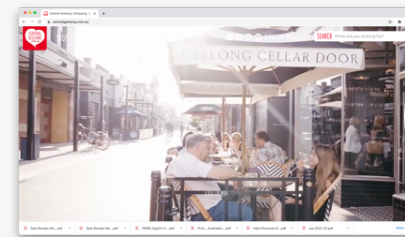
Governance, reporting and Committee administration

The digital dimension

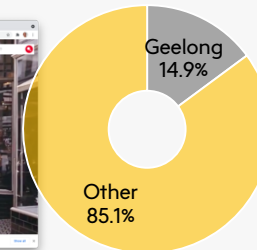
The Central Geelong website perhaps illustrates how the promotion of Central Geelong has experienced a degree of scope creep over time. If the primary purpose of Central Geelong marketing is to create a vibrant city centre for the municipality, then the role of this website in meeting the needs of people outside the municipality should be called into question. With 85.1% of sessions originating outside Greater Geelong, this website appears to serve a similar purpose to CoGG's tourism website.

But even within the municipality, there may be digital duplication in play. In many respects, the user of the Central Geelong website within the municipality could potentially satisfy their needs through the City's website events page. Or through the LoveCentralGeelong social media pages or the LoveCentralGeelong app. In developing a new marketing strategy and plan for Central Geelong, the performance of the digital platforms should be reviewed to identify the utility of each and to clarify how Central Geelong's online presence fits within the CoGG digital ecosystem.

85.1% of website sessions are from outside Geelong (last five years)



www.centralgeelong.com.au/



www.visitgeelongbellarine.com.au/destinations/geelong/

Meets the needs of users considering a visit to Geelong from beyond the municipality.



www.geelongaustralia.com.au/events

Meets the needs of users considering a visit from within the municipality.

Google Analytics - Nov 2016 to Oct 2021

The Special Rate funding model

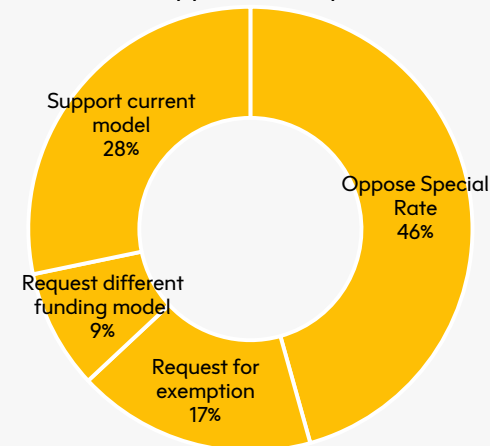
The Special Rate funding model appears to have worked well for twenty years, achieving a sustained period of robust funding for Central Geelong Marketing that delivered an enduring program of value to Central Geelong.

But the notice of intention to declare a Special Rate for a fifth consecutive 5 year period elicited enough opposition for the rate to be withdrawn. The funding model was the primary focus of objections rather than the program itself.

In February 2021 Council gave notice of their intention to declare a Special Rate for Central Geelong for a further five years. A copy of this notice was sent to the 1,466 Special Rate payers within Central Geelong and notifications were placed in local press and on the City of Greater Geelong website.

A total of 46 individual submissions were received to the City's notice to Declare a Special Rate for Central Geelong Marketing, legally representing a combined 110 properties/businesses. Of these submissions:

A lack of support for a Special Rate



Hearing Panel Minutes – Submissions Review Panel – Intention to Declare a Special Rate for Central Geelong Marketing – April 2021

Note: A small number of submissions claimed to represent others. CoGG notes that this is not a valid submission under Section 223 of the Local Government Act unless express written permission is provided by each party approving representation by another party. This information was provided in the Intention to Declare documentation sent to all parties.

Feedback from stakeholders

Geelong CBD Engagement Task Force

August 2020

Scrap the levy. Centralised marketing had merit, but better funded by Council directly or through state government tourism initiatives.

Some felt CBD owners were indirectly funding events that benefitted the entire region – a contribution disproportionate to the benefit they received.

Budget transparency and more engagement with businesses. Desire for program to drive budget and not budget to drive program. **Consider control under business owner group**, independent of Council.

Diverse range of events – to benefit many different CBD businesses. Events should strive to deliver a distinctly Geelong experience. Events could be tailored to the needs of businesses that opt in to a voluntary funding model.

More contemporary promotional strategies. Less traditional, print-based promotional materials and more social media focus.

Central Geelong Business Reference Group

August 2021

Make Central Geelong a magnet that attracts community members intrinsically – without the need for businesses to provide discounts or special deals. Members wanted **shopping in Central Geelong to feel fun – and for that to be the people attractor.**

Also:

Focus on shoulder/off-peak (peak periods less of an issue).

Coordinate/collaborate with external event opportunities (e.g. Kardinia Park football games).

Avoid food trucks that take trade from local businesses.

Artisan produce/farmers markets (local produce), buskers and entertainment.

Promo activity throughout year

Events that benefit more than one industry type (retail and hospitality cross-promotion)

Funding drives focus

Funded by a Special Rate levied on commercial property owners, Central Geelong Marketing has served these commercial property owners for twenty years. But the funding model has inevitably created an environment in which the needs of these rate payers are the primary consideration in developing the marketing program, coming before the needs of the end users who bring Central Geelong to life and on whom many property owners ultimately depend.

The most effective marketing program will put its strategic focus on the needs of the people of Geelong first, as these are the people whose choice to spend time in Central Geelong will determine the long-term fortunes of the area and the businesses that operate within it.

This change in strategic focus is a fundamental step in turning Central Geelong from a Central Business District to a Central **Experience** District – a mixed-use place, where humans actively choose to spend their time.



The role for marketing

Why does Central Geelong matter?

Humans are social animals. We need a gathering place, a forum, a place to exchange information and share ideas, to trade, to express ourselves, learn from each other, entertain and be entertained.

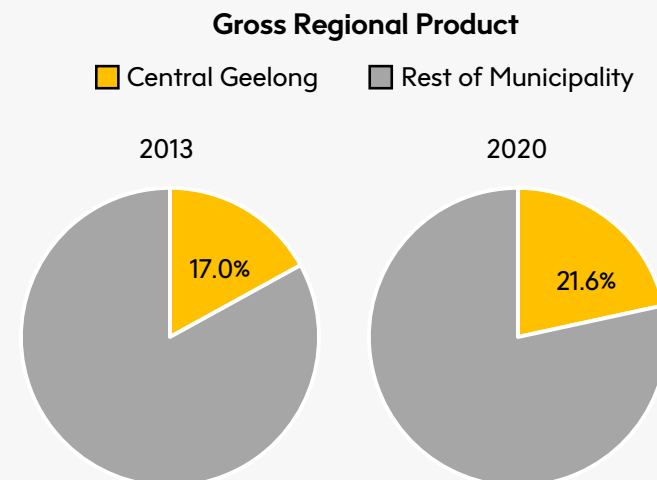
As for any municipality, the City of Greater Geelong needs a heart - a hub that acts as a central focal point for its economic, cultural and social activities. Somewhere that achieves a discernable level of vibrancy, and creates a sense of place. Central Geelong plays this role for everyone in Greater Geelong, by providing the centre of gravity for the various activities that take place in this city and for the flow of foot traffic that delivers human engagement.

But Geelong is not just any municipality. This is Victoria's largest provincial city, playing a critical role in the Victorian economy today, as it has for almost two centuries. Greater Geelong has a healthy economy, a strong sense of identity, a high level of civic pride and a community with heaps of ambition. Central Geelong plays a critical role in this economy, identity, pride and sense of community ambition.

Supporting over 27,000 jobs, Central Geelong generates a growing proportion of the municipality's Gross Regional Product. In 2020 Central Geelong generated over \$3.2billion in annual gross product,

representing 21.6% of gross regional product for the municipality, compared with a contribution of 17% (\$1.7billion) in 2013.

As Victoria recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, people are considering their lifestyle choices more than ever. And as the Victorian Government acknowledges the significance of regional cities in the future growth and development of the State, the case for investment in marketing to stimulate further growth in central Geelong could hardly be more compelling.



Census of Land Use & Employment (CLUE)
2013 - CentralGeelongActionPlan.pdf p7
Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

The role for marketing

There is a broad consensus that a collective marketing program for Central Geelong should be sustained. But it is healthy to ask why.

With a population of over a quarter of a million people and an area of 1,248km², the City of Greater Geelong needs a centre, for the economic, social and cultural benefits it can deliver today and to nurture the future growth of a municipality projected to be home to a population exceeding 360,000 by 2036.

The role for marketing is to cultivate the social, cultural and economic centre of Geelong so that people choose to participate in this growth by living, working, shopping, playing, studying and investing here.

Marketing can provide a lens that brings into focus the positive characteristics, benefits, enhancements and future opportunities that are offered at the heart of a city, acting as a catalyst for economic, social and cultural prosperity.

An implicit belief in this role for marketing is reflected in the Central Geelong Business Reference Group feedback (see below).

But the strategic principles that underpin the marketing program should be clearly articulated before the program can be developed and adopted. And these principles should be developed from a clear understanding of:

- the people who will generate the social cultural and economic growth of Central Geelong – its residents, workers, shoppers, students, business owners and visitors.
- the place itself – the characteristics of Central Geelong that people experience when they spend time here.

A vision was painted of a place where there were thriving businesses, accessible public transport, convenient parking for those that need it and vibrant, active streets.

Central Geelong Business Reference Group
Outcomes Report from Workshop 1, August 2021

Marketing responsibilities

Marketing roles and responsibilities

Many audiences contribute to the prosperity of Central Geelong, both within and beyond the municipality.

It is recommended that the collective program of marketing for Central Geelong should focus exclusively on the population of Greater Geelong as its audience. Other departments within the City of Greater Geelong have the capacity, the expertise and the existing remit to communicate with audiences outside the municipality on behalf of Central Geelong, notably Tourism Greater Geelong & The Bellarine.

Indeed, external parties will also contribute marketing activity that supports Central Geelong. The diagram below illustrates how City marketing should operate within the entire marketing ecosystem for Greater Geelong.



A focus on the G21 audience

Central Geelong marketing should address the people of Greater Geelong and wider G21 community.

The vibrancy of Central Geelong is determined first and foremost by the people of Greater Geelong embracing it as the heart of their community. Visitors will follow.

The economy of Central Geelong is similarly driven primarily by the people of Greater Geelong. For every dollar spent in the suburb of Geelong by visitors to the municipality, the residents of Greater Geelong spend over two dollars (see Appendix, page 71). As Central Geelong acts as the major city for all municipalities in the G21 region (Queenscliffe, Golden Plains, Surf Coast Shire), it is noted that these audiences also have a key role to play in the city's vibrancy and economic success and should be included in a marketing strategy.

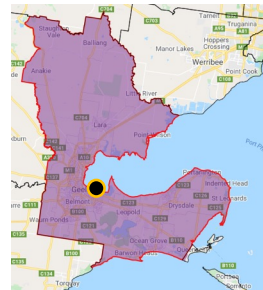
Furthermore, the notion of a discrete Central Geelong has limited relevance to people outside Greater Geelong and the wider G21 community. For these audiences, the concept of Central Geelong is rightly subsumed within a broader definition of Geelong as a whole.

Arguably therefore, marketing for Central Geelong should not be responsible for drawing people into the City from beyond the G21 region. Putting to one side whether a \$50,000 metro TV campaign in Melbourne is an effective investment for any advertiser, we should first of all ask how the objectives of Central Geelong are best addressed by promoting Central Geelong to audiences outside the G21, when it is the G21 community who will collectively determine the vibrancy of Central Geelong – and collectively enjoy the benefits once this is achieved.

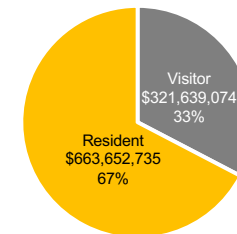
Central Geelong has limited relevance to people outside Greater Geelong and the G21 region



Only in the context of Greater Geelong does Central Geelong have significant meaning



Greater Geelong residents drive the economy of Central Geelong



Spendmapp - 12 months to 30 March 2020

Roles in marketing Central Geelong

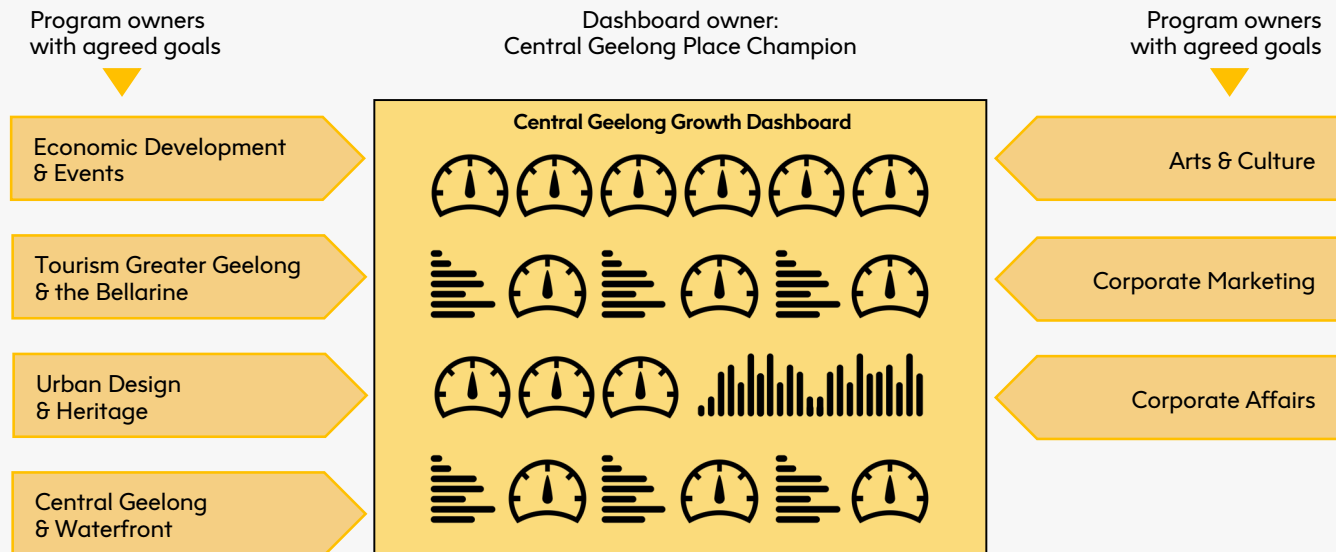
While CMG has taken 'place-based' responsibility for marketing Central Geelong, other departments have functional responsibilities for promoting Central Geelong within their City-wide roles. Consideration should be given to the organisational structure within CoGG that achieves the most effective and efficient delivery of marketing services.

There is potential to deliver these services through CoGG's existing departmental structure, removing the need to resource the various administrative, reporting and governance requirements of the existing Central Geelong marketing structure.

Central Geelong Marketing Structure		Central Geelong Marketing				
	Central Geelong & Waterfront	Place activation	Marketing	Business engagement	Data collection & evaluation	Place management, running activations in Central Geelong and leading the City's role in the Revitalising Central Geelong partnership.
	Tourism Greater Geelong & the Bellarine					Promote Central Geelong as one of the key sub-regions of Greater Geelong & the Bellarine
	Arts & Culture					Support and grow arts and cultural activity in Greater Geelong, including Central Geelong
	Corporate Marketing					Marketing for City services and programs, including Christmas program
	Economic Development & Events					Promote investment opportunities to drive growth. Encourage events offering economic benefit. Implement UNESCO CCOD requirements.
	Corporate Affairs					Manage relationships with other major Central Geelong-based agencies
	Urban Design & Heritage					Built form and public realm design policy and strategy in Central Geelong

Driving functional synergies

The City should consider driving synergies in Central Geelong programs by establishing a collective dashboard to track KPIs for all programs, delivering a single view of performance outcomes across all dimensions of Central Geelong growth. The Central Geelong Place Champion would be a logical owner for this dashboard, which would identify opportunities to drive integration, collaboration and efficiency.



Central Geelong – the people

The people of Central Geelong

Central Geelong residents are disproportionately affluent and progressive

The resident population of Central Geelong is currently very small. For each of its residents, the catchment hosts five workers. And for each of these workers, the area attracts seven shoppers, or 35 shoppers per resident.

While the resident population of Central Geelong is small, analysis of the Helix Personas represented within it (best fit), reveals that this is an important constituency both for its capacity to bring the City's vision to life, and for its inherent spending power.

Over two thirds of residents belong to the Metrotech and Leading Lifestyle communities. Characterised by their affluence and progressive attitudes, these are among the most successful, prosperous and forward-looking members of society. This heavy representation of Metrotechs and Leading Lifestyles reveals the significant role that the resident population can play in driving prosperity and ultimately in realising the clever and creative vision for Central Geelong.

For more detail and a comparison with the population of Greater Geelong, see Appendix page 61-71.

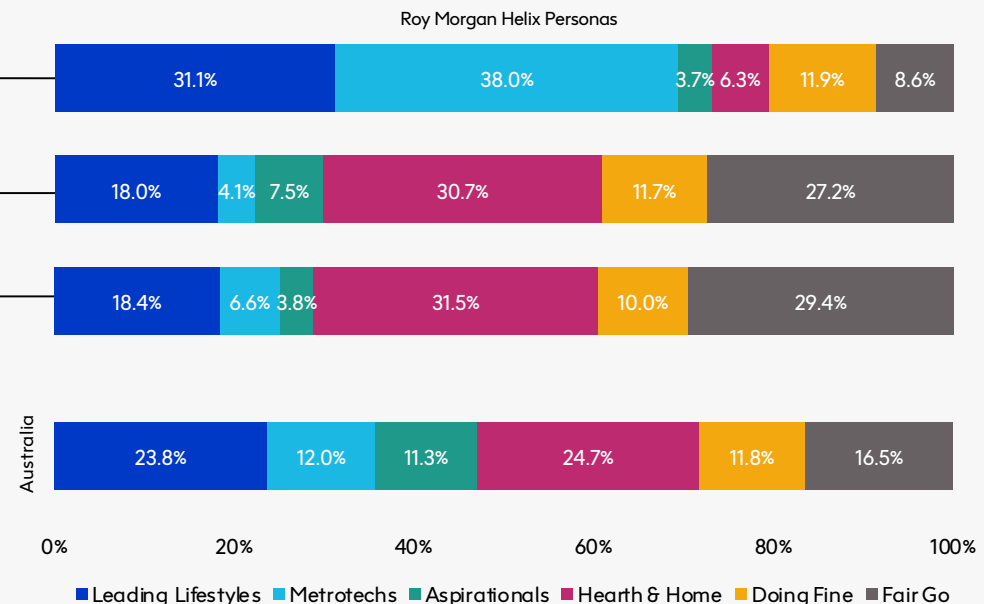
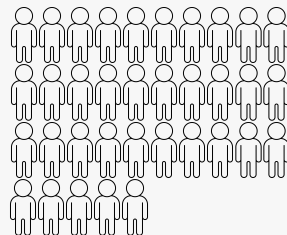
For each of the people who **LIVE** in Central Geelong



...there are 5 people who **WORK** in Central Geelong



...and 35 people who **SHOP** in Central Geelong



Roy Morgan - Population 14+ (excludes '700 - Other')

For details on Roy Morgan Helix Personas, see Appendix page 65-71.

Residents first, then workers and shoppers

This analysis serves to illustrate the importance of encouraging a thriving resident community for Central Geelong. The resident population not only mitigates the retreat to suburbia each evening, contributing all day, every day to the mixed use and overall vibrancy of Central Geelong, it also populates the City with the leaders and early adopters whose habits and choices will have a significant positive influence on others. Their capacity for discretionary spending on goods, services and experiences is also far greater than for other groups, whose significance comes from their volume rather than their individual yield.

These findings indicate that growing the residential population of Central Geelong (currently very low), is a good strategy for achieving social, cultural and economic growth.

Increasing the number of people living in Central Geelong was an objective clearly set out in the Postcode 3220 strategy (Central Geelong Action Plan, 2013), where a target was set for 10,000 people living in Central Geelong by 2028. This strategy serves to better utilise existing social and physical infrastructure and deliver enhanced social cohesion and improved sustainability.

Postcode 3220, which is being delivered through the Revitalising Central Geelong partnership, calls for the promotion of housing investment, better use of government land and reuse of existing buildings, as part of Vision 2's Inhabiting The City project. The City should redouble these efforts.

Beyond its small but strategically significant population of residents, Central Geelong has substantially larger populations of workers and shoppers. These two groups share similar patterns of representation across the Helix communities. No individual Personas dominate, reflecting the diverse nature of the populations, but with well over half of these groups belonging to the older and more financially constrained Hearth & Home and Doing Fine communities, we can see that our workers and shoppers are quite different from our smaller resident group. They remain significant audiences for Central Geelong marketing, on the basis of their significant volume.

Central Geelong – the place

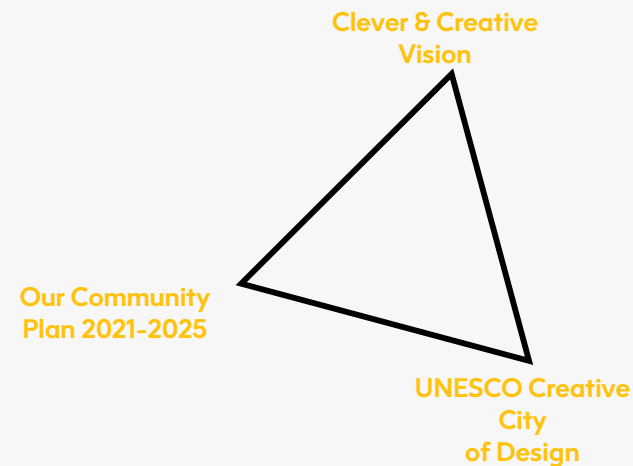
Understanding Central Geelong

An effective destination/place marketing strategy curates and amplifies the intrinsic characteristics of the destination. What is the underlying place proposition for Central Geelong? This is the first question to address, as this should inform the strategy and the executional framework for marketing Central Geelong. Any other approach creates a superficial, inauthentic (and more likely generic) marketing program.

Significant work has been done to develop a 30 year community vision for Greater Geelong. The ***Clever and Creative*** vision is well-established, inspired by the voice of the community. So ***Clever and Creative*** is a very good place to start.

The Vision is substantiated convincingly by Geelong's Creative City of Design designation and a route map for achieving the Vision is embodied in Our Community Plan (see Appendix, pages 73–75)

The role of the place proposition is to articulate the characteristics of Central Geelong to represent the reality of the human experience in a way that draws on the Clever and Creative vision, reflects the Community Plan developed to achieve it and builds on the Creative City of Design designation.



Central Geelong – the territory

For the purposes of Central Geelong Marketing, the area of Central Geelong has been defined by the Special Rate area - the tangible boundary created in order to implement a binary funding framework - in or out.

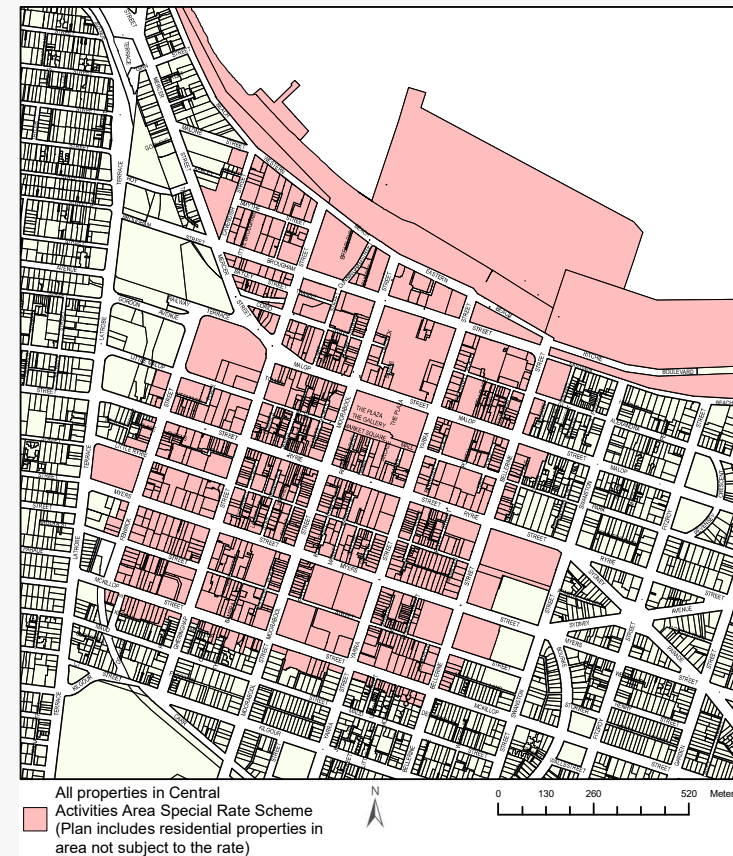
The Special Rate area was established in 2000. The specific criteria used at the time to establish its boundaries are not known to us, but by a process of proposal, consultation and review (the precise boundaries were revised to address stakeholder feedback prior to implementation) the Special Rate was implemented across an area from the Waterfront to McKillop Street, between Fenwick Street and Bellerine Street.

This clear territorial footprint is good because it creates a sense of clarity, focus and definition to Central Geelong as a place and as a marketing territory.

But a definitive territory also creates challenges, because the marketing investment has an impact that doesn't respect this hard boundary. The marketing activity for Central Geelong has benefits for Greater Geelong as a whole, even if these benefits are felt to varying degrees, depending on many factors, including proximity to Central Geelong.

As is often the case with marketing, the cost of a given marketing program is much easier to measure than the benefit (and the source of funds easier to identify than the beneficiary).

Central Geelong Marketing Rate Area Map 2021



Central Geelong – a behavioural definition

Central Geelong as defined by the Special Rate area is not the Central Geelong that exists in the minds of the people of Geelong. It's not readily walkable and arguably it does not align with any social, cultural or economic area. It is, in short, too big – lacking the intensity and the intelligible footprint that vibrant urban centres display.

For Central Geelong to achieve long-term prosperity, it should play to its strengths and focus on driving vibrancy in the real, human-scale precincts that the people of Geelong recognise for themselves.

The true centre of Geelong must be defined by the behaviour of its users. When the Cats won the AFL Premiership in 2007, no one knew where crowds would choose to gather and celebrate – Kardinia Park? The Waterfront? The centre of town? People came together on Moorabool Street, between Malop St and Ryrie St, on the main artery between Kardinia Park and the Waterfront. As for other great cities, where human behaviour has decreed the location of their key pedestrian nodes, perhaps this spontaneous, community-driven congregation in 2007 stands as the most legitimate, defining act for identifying the true heart of the City.

It is the human-scale precincts of Geelong City that truly define Central Geelong.



2007 AFL Premiership celebrations
Junction of Moorabool St and Little Malop St

The precincts of Central Geelong

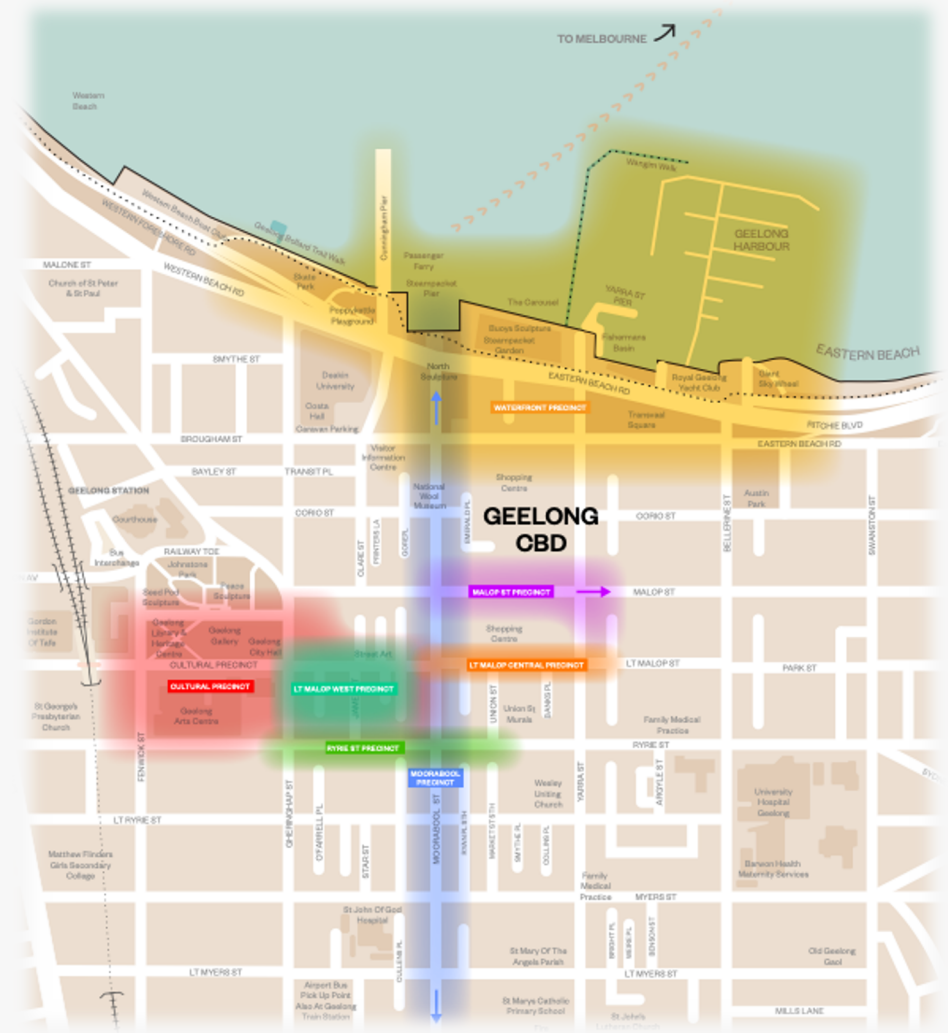
Like any good city centre, Central Geelong has precincts – locations within the bigger location. In effect, precincts (quarters, areas, neighbourhoods) are a much easier way for an end-user to digest a city, which is inherently large and complex. The definition of those precincts is a subjective process – based on a mental picture rather than pre-determined physical boundaries. These cognitive maps explain how people truly experience their city – how they move around, what they like or dislike, what's memorable and attractive to them. To get closer to the end-user's perspective of Central Geelong, we have suggested a series of precincts in response to our own research and lived experience of the city.

Whilst these proposed precincts interact with one another, they are all uniquely different and have their own inherent strengths. This is where the opportunity lies to create an experience-rich place. There is a clear opportunity to develop a marketing strategy for each precinct in conjunction with its traders and end-users. In each case, the precinct strategy should have a lead – e.g. a Waterfront precinct strategy should be City-led, due to its scale, complexity and civic significance, while a Little Malop West precinct strategy could be led by the traders who operate in this precinct.

All of the precincts would ultimately work in concert under the overarching Central Geelong place proposition and place branding strategy. This is not about creating silos but about amplifying the sense of place by taking a fine-grained, hyper-local approach which will strengthen the Central Geelong narrative.

Seven candidate precincts

- **Malop Street and the green spine** – The 'high street' retail hub is also being transformed into an extension of Geelong's Botanic Gardens through the inclusion of an expanded public realm, trees and gardens.
- **The Cultural Quarter** – The civic and cultural heart of Geelong, undergoing significant transformation.
- **The Waterfront** – Where Central Geelong gets her feet wet. This is by far the City's greatest defining feature and hub for major events. Busy throughout the year, the shoreline truly comes alive in summer.
- **The Moorabool Street spine** – Moorabool St is the connecting spine linking all of the precincts together. It also connects the Bay to the Barwon River and is one of Victoria's great streets.
- **Little Malop Central** – A busy pedestrian thoroughfare and gathering place. A place that can inform, inspire and tell a story, this could become one of Geelong's busiest public spaces like Melbourne's City Square.
- **Little Malop West** – A booming laneway precinct, full of fantastic experiences by day and night that point the way for the future of Central Geelong. It's an expression of the undercurrent of bold thinking, creativity and entrepreneurship that will be the secret ingredient for Geelong's bright future.
- **Ryrie Street** – Whilst this is one of the busiest throughroads in Central Geelong, its combination of heritage architecture and main street retail make for a successful precinct. It also feeds off the success of Little Malop West.



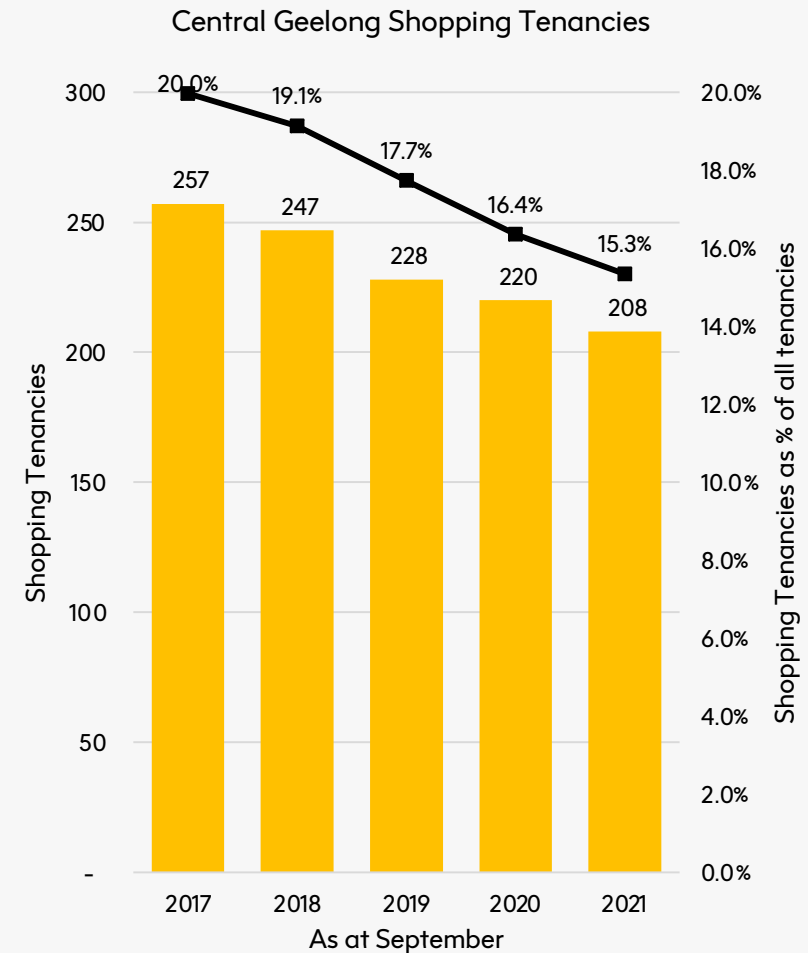
A word on retail

Every prosperous city centre needs a compelling retail proposition to satisfy consumer needs and for the employment capacity it creates. For at least the last five years, retail tenancies have been in decline in Central Geelong. A number of causes may have contributed to this decline, including growth in online shopping, competition from retail parks and more recently the impact of the pandemic lockdown.

But Central Geelong's retail proposition has distinctive advantages over alternative retail propositions and these should be addressed within the marketing strategy for Central Geelong.

The advantage for Central Geelong retail lies in the fact that shopping is not a purely transactional activity. The experience involved in shopping is a distinct advantage of bricks-and-mortar retailers over their online competitors. Likewise, the experience of shopping in a city centre can be richer and more rewarding than in a purpose-built shopping centre (as long as the infrastructure is in place to deliver access and convenience) and comes with a much stronger sense of place. The authentic, 'lifestyle-led' city centre has advantages for shoppers, traders, workers and residents – where shopping ceases to be a one-dimensional, transactional experience and the complex interplay between people and place comes to life.

Central Geelong has a stunning waterfront location, heritage fabric, friendly locals, characterful precincts and an inherent walkability that combine with its many other cultural, social and commercial activities to make it a great place to shop.



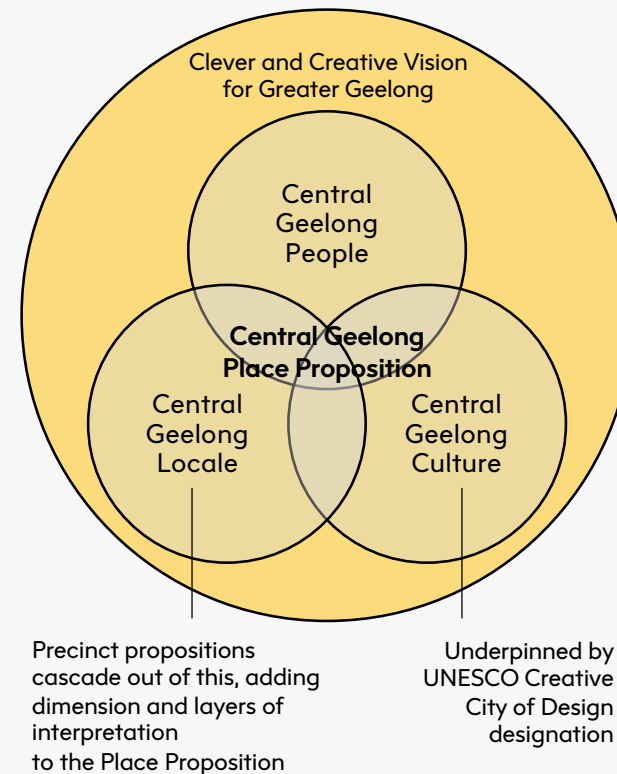
A place proposition

A Place Proposition, as distinct from a Vision Statement or Strategic Planning Framework, seeks to describe the desired nature, atmosphere and feel of a precinct or location. A Place Proposition would typically be a part of a Place Plan or Placemaking Strategy. It's a result of a deep understanding of the physical, social, cultural and environmental fabric of a place and sets the direction for ongoing evolution.

A place-led marketing approach establishes a Place Proposition as the centrepiece of the 'brand' and its marketing strategy.

The goal is to create cities with an incredible 'sense of place' - cities that are memorable and 'sticky', that we love and want to spend time in and visit again and again. The sense of place is the feeling derived from the people, the locale and the culture of a place. It is the amalgam of these three elements (see diagram).

A Place Proposition is a statement that describes the end-user experience that results when these three elements are in harmony.



A place proposition

Creation of a great place hinges on a Place Proposition focused on the desired experience for the end user, not just the physical fabric of the place. It's a performance-based intention.

Current State

Geelong has great 'bones' and the right ingredients within its core, but surprisingly, there doesn't seem to be a defining singular place proposition or place vision for Central Geelong. Whilst a number of strategic plans, frameworks, guidelines and action plans have been created for Central Geelong, there isn't a cohesive Place Plan or Place Proposition – a 'go to' statement about the nature of the place today and into the future. The focus has been, for good reasons, on capacity for employment and residential growth and the infrastructure to support that growth. The Clever and Creative vision for Greater Geelong has yet to be translated into a compelling proposition for Central Geelong.

However we do see street-based placemaking and place activation occurring in pockets such as Little Malop West, Little Malop Central, Malop Street and the Foreshore. And we can see that a number of Central Geelong precincts have emerged that include: Retail Core, Waterfront, York, Knowledge & Enterprise, Station Precinct, Cultural Precinct, West Village Precinct, Health Precinct (Draft Central Geelong Planning Framework).

How might a clear Place Proposition reframe Central Geelong and the City's approach to marketing? Currently the focus is on implementing the Central Geelong Revitalisation Plan through the Central Geelong Action plan with several key focus areas including growth in the resident, worker, student and visitor population of Central Geelong.

Future State

The challenge for Central Geelong is to become a bigger, busier city centre and at the same time be a loveable, clever, creative, 'fine-grained', vibrant and inviting place. New development even with the best intentions will always struggle to recreate the qualities of the best places that have evolved over time. With over 1.2 million square metres of additional floor space to be injected into Central Geelong, the place we know today will be transformed in coming decades. This will support around 12,000 residents (Draft Central Geelong Planning Framework).

A clear, concise Place Proposition will inform the objectives of any growth strategy and articulate the reasons for Central Geelong's attractiveness as a public realm and a place to live, work and play. How might Central Geelong become a clever and creative place? How might future projects and investment be leveraged to enable delivery of a clever and creative place and a rich experience for the people who spend time here?

The Place Proposition ideas for Central Geelong shared in this report are thought-starters only. The development of a Proposition must ultimately become part of a wider Place Planning journey and should evolve further through a multi-layered collaboration with stakeholders including traders, residents, workers, youth, children and visitors.

Towards a place proposition

The development of any Place Proposition is a collaborative process involving its end users. Rather than impose a Place Proposition for Central Geelong, we are mindful of the need to re-engage traders, workers, students and visitors in the process, particularly in light of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on habits and lifestyles.

The diagram below illustrates the process for developing a Place Proposition for central Geelong and for a series of sub-precincts (refer diagram and previous sub-precinct diagram).

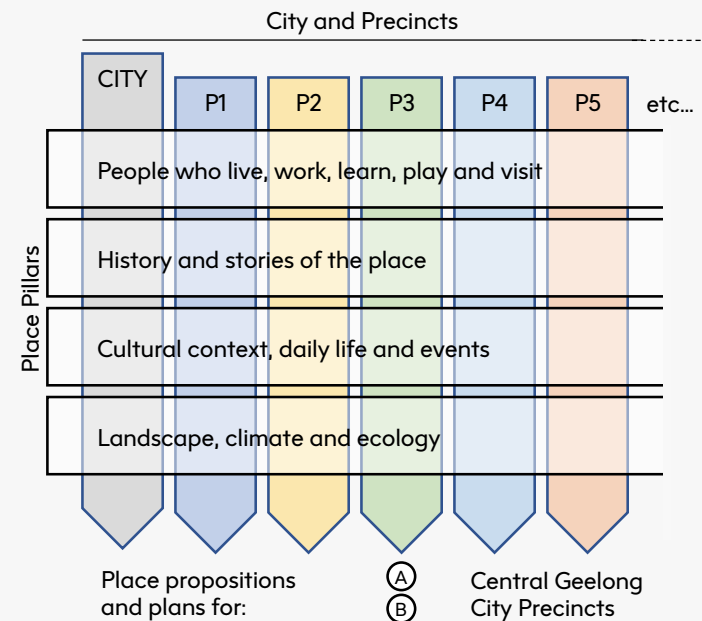
The diagram identifies four Place Pillars which inform the development of place propositions at both a City and Precinct scale.

Country, climate, landscape and ecology – This is about exposing our living indigenous culture in a bold and distinctive way and responding to Central Geelong's topography – the city is nestled in a natural amphitheatre sloping gently from the south down to the waterfront to the north. It is about embracing and cultivating the bay views and cooling summer breezes and how the north/south running streets reach the waterfront to reveal long distance views over the bay.

Historical stories of the place – Building experience around the interplay between the old and the new.

People who live, visit, work and learn – Ensuring end-users are central to the development of the overarching and precinct place propositions.

Cultural context, daily life and events – An experience-dense place that's memorable and 'sticky', a delight to move in and around a rich tapestry of human-centred, pedestrian 'things to do and inspire'. A fun vibrant nightlife and daytime scene. A place to be *in the sun and out of the wind* – enriching reasons to be out and about in the cooler months.



Place proposition themes

Themes	Directions/Opportunities	Recommendations
Place Planning	- A human-centred, experience-rich place that hums throughout the year - A nuanced multi-location placemaking and activations approach that meets the needs of different audiences in each sub-precinct. Avoid generic, predictable marketing and place activation initiatives.	Whilst there is a vision for the urban form of Central Geelong, it lacks a cohesive Place Vision & Plan that's human centred and experience rich. A single 'source of truth' for all stakeholders. For instance, this will enable individual traders to better understand their role in the centre and how they can support activation of their patch. It will set direction for decades to come.
Human wayfinding and movement	- Central Geelong is car dominant. Place people at the top of the Movement Hierarchy instead of vehicles. - Make walking the most desirable form of movement throughout the year - To do this requires a rethinking of the public realm, the distance between 'things to do or inspire' needs to shrink.	- Clear, user-friendly wayfinding tools, traffic management and a focus on an interconnected yet diversified public realm. - Cleverly & creatively present the story of the city, its connection to Country, its bayside setting and amphitheatre landscape using a plethora of multi-sensory tools and tactics. - Increase the density and proximity of 'things to do or inspire' down to every 100m or less along key pedestrian routes and in key precincts.
Sub precincts	- Central Geelong isn't a singular experience but rather is many experiences. - For any place to be successful, those experiences must become sticky and memorable to prompt both the decision to 'stay a while' and the decision to 'come back again and again'	Identify the precincts that define the character and user experience of Central Geelong. CoGG will need to confirm/validate the identity of these precincts, but our recommendation based on the information available to us is to create the following seven precincts (see map below): ▪ Waterfront ▪ Cultural Precinct ▪ Malop Street ▪ Ryrie Street ▪ Moorabool Precinct ▪ Little Malop St West ▪ Little Malop Central Precinct marketing should be either City-led or Trader-led, depending on the character of the precinct. Traders within each precinct should be encouraged to 'own/lead' the marketing initiatives that promote their precinct.

Place proposition themes – cont'd

Themes	Directions/Opportunities	Recommendations
Re-engage to activate	- The secret ingredient to 'Place Led' activation is trader and community engagement in a place. - As Central Geelong emerges from COVID Council must re-engage traders and the community. Start asking questions, building a dialogue around the core themes and the future state experience (hint – this isn't a conversation about parking – it must be a conversation about the foundations for an incredible, memorable experience of place.	- Re-engage traders and community in the creation of a Central Geelong Place Plan. The Plan must both outline and implement a state-of-the-art Human Centred Design approach that centralises the end-user's needs (in the full sense of the word) at the heart of the Place Planning Process and the implementation of it. - Re-Engage the traders and community at the precinct level to ensure a richness and complexity of inputs to the plan and to establish the strategic 'Place Proposition' for each sub-precinct as well as an overarching Proposition for the whole.
Liveability of Central Geelong	- Transform Central Geelong into a thriving residential neighbourhood that brings with it the advantages of greater pedestrian movement and increased activation through the week, day and night. - Mitigate the retreat to suburbia each evening. More people in Central Geelong just 'being' rather than a functional focus on 'doing'. - Rather than outward urban expansion, the city should come back in on itself, building around existing transport infrastructure – and existing social and physical infrastructure. Better social cohesion. Better sustainability.	- The Place Proposition should seek to build a narrative around Central Geelong as a residential address. Much like postcode 3000 has achieved for Melbourne. - Incentivise developers to cross-market with the city in an effort to fast-track demand for Central Geelong living.

Towards a marketing strategy

Towards a marketing strategy

A marketing strategy can only be developed once objectives have been clearly set, but the following observations may play a role in guiding the development of the marketing strategy.

Focus on the Greater Geelong audience

Promote Central Geelong to the G21 community first. Priority should be given to growing the resident population. Audiences outside the municipality are not Central Geelong's focus.

Celebrating the precincts people love

Allow Central Geelong to express itself through the human-scale precincts that drive the character and experience of the place.

Traders and City in partnership

Collaboration between the City and its traders will deliver the most compelling marketing proposition to the people of the G21. Audiences outside these municipalities will be targeted through Tourism Greater Geelong & the Bellarine.

A Central Geelong that is Always On

Activations that ensure Central Geelong delivers an engaging experience consistently – through the seasons, across the week and from daybreak to late night each day. Events are important (major and minor), but Central Geelong should deliver an underlying vibrancy without having to rely on the temporary uplift generated by events.

A people-first strategy

An approach that encourages Central Geelong to thrive for the benefit of all, with a comprehensive showcase of experiences large and small, accessible to the people. Mixed-use. A business-centric approach is unlikely to be embraced in the same way by the people who live, work, shop and play here.

A whole of Central Geelong approach

Marketing should embrace and promote all dimensions of Central Geelong's appeal to the people of Greater Geelong, not just those funded or facilitated from within this marketing program. Audiences outside the municipality will be targeted through Tourism Greater Geelong & the Bellarine.

Clever and Creative, at all times

A marketing program that brings the Clever and Creative vision to life meaningfully for the people of Greater Geelong (and for visitors). Clever and Creative should be a consistent theme, expressed and re-interpreted afresh at every turn, so that Central Geelong comes to know itself better and celebrate its distinctive appeal more instinctively all the time.

Towards a marketing strategy

Vision

Central Geelong is the heart of a clever and creative city-region that is forward- looking, enterprising and adaptive, and cares for its people and environment.

Objectives

Foster the vibrancy and prosperity of Central Geelong. Promote Central Geelong as the engine room that drives social, cultural and economic growth for the whole of Greater Geelong.

Target Audience

The G21 community.

A diverse and growing community of people who together determine the vibrancy of their city.

Proposition

The centre of Geelong is a series of engaging human precincts in a landscape with inspiring urban character, where a proud community comes together to live, work, play, study and shop.

What does clever and creative marketing look like?

The marketing strategy should focus on Clever and Creative as its guiding vision and central proposition.

A clever and creative marketing plan should include inspiring initiatives that no one has seen before. It will also include some familiar, tried-and-tested programs (we can predict that Christmas and school holidays will always be represented in the calendar) – but all aspects of the marketing plan should strive to embody the Clever and Creative vision for Geelong at all times.

The marketing plan should be built on a framework that encourages cleverness and creativity in the design and execution of all activities.

A clever and creative marketing plan will inspire and delight, eschewing the predictable and avoiding the routine. If a marketing plan delivers a calendar of tried-and-tested events and programs, these should be constantly re-examined to identify opportunities to inject new interpretations and fresh ideas that draw people towards Central Geelong.

Inspiring a clever and creative approach

In different ways, these three initiatives illustrate clever and creative ways to bring a place marketing program to life.



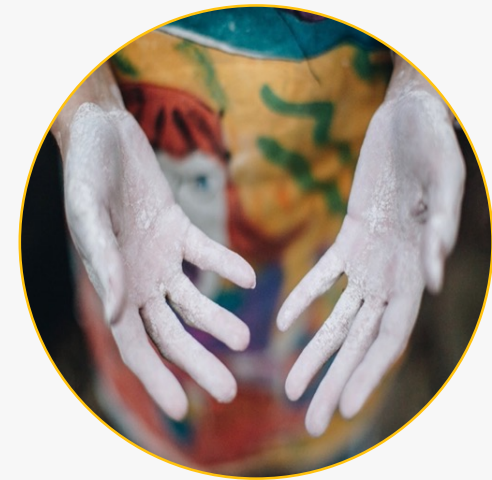
San Diego
Just Say No To Winter

Embrace the fact that cities compete not just for visitors, but for talent. A social media campaign from San Diego designed to get people (from Boston, New York and Chicago) not just to visit, but to stay and build a career.



Wyoming
That's WY

Showcase breathtaking landscapes when you have them, but capture a deeper 'epic intimacy' too, by tapping into the mindset of those seeking to unleash their uninhibited spirit of adventure.



Ballarat
Made of Ballarat

Celebrate the alchemy that occurs when a place puts its natural resources in the hands of its restless talent. Mumbrella Travel Advertising Campaign of the Year.

Marketing evaluation

In developing the marketing strategy for Central Geelong, a critical early step is to determine how the objectives will be measured and to establish specific metrics that will be used to evaluate the program.

The best metrics can often be found by asking the question ***What does success look like?*** If we can describe the future in which Central Geelong marketing has achieved its objectives, metrics can be identified to track progress on the various dimensions that contribute to that future state.

So, what does success look like?

- We will know that Central Geelong marketing has been effective when:
- We see a thriving, vibrant and prosperous heart to the municipality
- Pedestrian flow creates an enduring energy around the city
- Traders report sustained positive trading performance
- The population of residents, workers and shoppers grows – along with its diversity
- Members of the community report that time spent in central Geelong is a stimulating and engaging experience
- Visitation from intrastate, interstate and international markets grows and yield from the visitor economy grows around Central Geelong and the municipality as a whole.

These are just a few examples of what success might look like. A broader exploration of this question may be a valuable subject for community consultation.

The table below begins to identify some candidate indicators which might contribute to an evaluation scorecard for Central Geelong marketing but at the same time, it should be acknowledged that not all desirable outcomes are easily measurable. Serious consideration should be given to the evaluation of intangible goals related to the clever and creative vision as these will be hard to measure, though no less important for it.

Candidate Indicators	Sample Metrics
Qualitative	
Greater Geelong community feedback	Survey feedback / Social media sentiment
Central Geelong community feedback (traders/tenants/business owners)	Submissions
External recognition of Clever & Creative credentials	Anecdotal
Quantitative	
Growth in resident population	Census
Growth in pedestrian flow	Foot count, parking /public transport, WiFi, metrics
Growth in Geelong suburb expenditure	SpendMapp
Growth in Central Geelong jobs	CLUE
Economic uplift	Property valuations
City revenue	Rates, licences, fines, etc
Development pipeline	Planning applications

Marketing principles

1. The audience for marketing activities should be limited to those from within the G21 who live, work, study, play and invest in Central Geelong. Broader audiences, beyond the municipality should be addressed from within departments with a City-wide remit.
2. Marketing should be planned and implemented through a framework that reflects the authentic place proposition for Central Geelong.
3. Marketing activity should reflect the Clever and Creative vision for the City.
4. Marketing programs should promote the activities and benefits of Central Geelong. They should not extend beyond this activity to fund core services.
5. The marketing program should respond to a clearly defined set of objectives and desired outcomes, which should in turn drive budget planning.
6. The marketing program should be established with long-term objectives in mind and with sustained funding to achieve them. Key Performance Indicators should be set for the marketing program but the temptation to scrutinise short term metrics to assess long-term performance should be avoided. Few meaningful outcomes can be measured within the timeframe of a single budget cycle.

How to fund marketing for Central Geelong

Budget setting

While it is not within the scope of this review to determine the annual budget for marketing in Central Geelong, if the scope of the marketing objectives is defined more narrowly than it was for CMG's 2016–2021 Special Rate period, then it is fair to expect that the funding requirement will be lower too.

The budget for Central Geelong marketing should be set on the basis of the following considerations:

- a marketing plan costed from the ground up to meet an agreed set of objectives
- historical CGM scope and expenditure – taking account of a newly-established, tighter definition of scope
- funding context for programs undertaken by other departments within CoGG
- administrative efficiencies achieved through organisational re-alignment
- equivalent programs in other municipalities

A sustained program of investment is required if long-term growth is to be achieved, but budgets should remain task-related to meet a forward plan, and not simply driven by precedent.

Given the proposal for a reduced scope of activities, we anticipate that the appropriate budget for Central Geelong marketing is likely to fall closer to the 2021 transitional budget of \$700,000 than the 2020 CGM budget of \$1.13 million.

Central Geelong – who benefits?

While the whole of Greater Geelong should invest in the vibrancy of its centre, it is the businesses and the people who occupy the centre of Geelong who enjoy its tangible benefits the most. There will be people in the municipality who visit Central Geelong rarely, if ever, and feel only the loosest attachment to it. There will be businesses elsewhere in the municipality that see businesses in Central Geelong as their competition.

If the Special Rate was discontinued in part for the growing sense that a burden on the ratepayers of Central Geelong alone lacked fairness, neither will a central funding model pass a fairness test if people elsewhere in Greater Geelong feel they are subsidising benefits enjoyed disproportionately by the people who operate in Central Geelong every day.

The fairness of the Special Rate funding model has been questioned from within the Special Rate area, too. A Special Rate levied at a flat percentage of capital improved value, while appealing in its simplicity, is not particularly effective at reflecting the greater value of a more vibrant streetscape to some businesses more than others.

There is merit to the idea that the people who benefit from the investment should contribute to it – so in the long-term, it may be of value to re-introduce a collective contribution from rate payers.

Alternatively, a 'buy-in' model for Central Geelong businesses has its attractions for aligning the investment with the interests of those who choose to contribute. However this model can tend to focus on justifying costs to participants and delivering direct commercial outcomes, relegating the interests of the community which should always be the first priority. There is also the potential for collateral benefits to be felt by those who have opted out, which can undermine the collaborative stakeholder climate that a city should strive to achieve.

The fairest funding model will reflect the fact that a more vibrant Central Geelong is of benefit to the whole of Greater Geelong, but of greatest benefit to those in the centre, and that improved pedestrian flow is likely to benefit some precincts more than others, and a street level tenancy more than an upper level tenancy – a convenience store more than an accountancy practice, perhaps.

On balance, this report recommends the City move to a centrally-funded model for a three-year period.

Funding principles – FY23-25

Why move to a central funding model?

The centre of Geelong belongs to all of Greater Geelong

The centre of Geelong plays a critical role as a focus of the municipality's civic pride, cultural vibrancy and social cohesion. It is Geelong's centre in the same way that the Barwon is Geelong's river and Kardinia Park is Geelong's stadium.

All of Greater Geelong benefits from the prosperity of its centre

A thriving centre is a positive asset for any municipality. A successful marketing program will drive positive commercial outcomes for the City of Greater Geelong, through the various revenue streams that contribute to City income, and for the benefit of the whole municipality.

A coordinated approach to investment is best driven from the centre

The best outcomes will only come if appropriate synergies are achieved through a coordinated approach across all capital projects and operational programs. Central funding is most likely to facilitate the achievement of a joined-up plan for investment in Central Geelong across the Whole of City.

COVID economic recovery

A Special Rate is a particularly onerous burden for property owners/tenants dealing with the immediate economic impact of a sustained pandemic lockdown. Businesses that deliver the services that bring Central Geelong to life should be granted a period of relief from a Special Rate.

Simplified accountability

Answerable to those who pay, a Special Rate funded program will tend to invest in demonstrating its efficacy and value to its stakeholders – to justify future funding. Effective evaluation must ensure good governance, but a period of central funding removes the temptation to invest in marketing the marketing program.

Establishing an appropriate scope

The scope of Central Geelong marketing should be more tightly defined in reach and in territory than under the Special Rate. A centrally-funded implementation period may be appropriate to establish and embed this newly-defined scope.

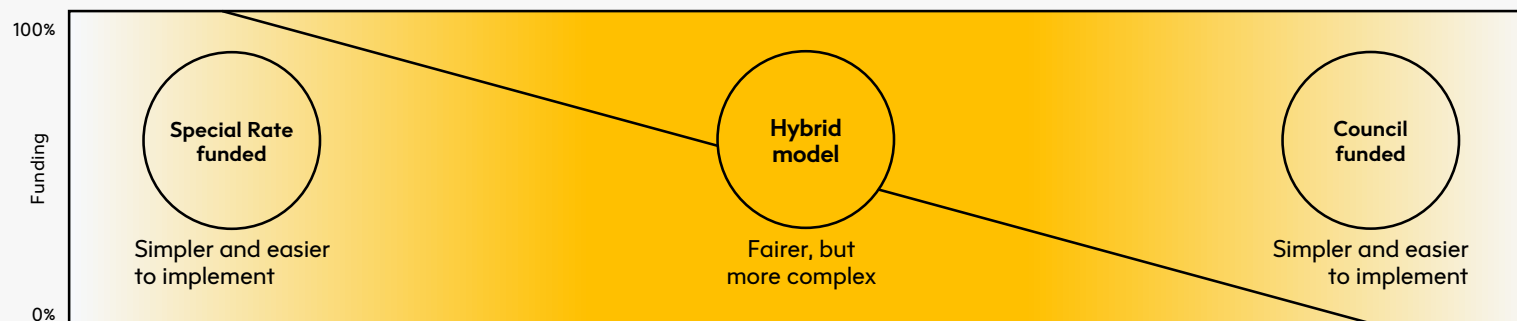
Achieving fair funding

The challenge for the City of Greater Geelong is that fairness in funding drives complexity in implementation. A carefully conceived funding model that allocates the cost burden in a manner that is agreeable to all is likely to be too complex and elaborate to implement effectively.

Ultimately, the long-term funding model must lie somewhere on the continuum between being (a) fully-funded by a Special Rate levied directly on property owners in Central Geelong and (b) fully-funded from existing CoGG budgets.

A hybrid funding model occupying a position somewhere in the middle of this continuum is likely to achieve a fairer allocation of cost but should only be pursued if it can achieve the robust simplicity of the Special Rate. This simplicity may be accessible by adopting a matched funding approach or a levy that is set on a precinct-by-precinct basis.

Opportunities to introduce additional funding contributions for Central Geelong marketing should also be explored, whether this be in the form of a user-pays initiative such as a congestion charge or parking levy, or an investment contribution from developers as a condition of planning approval to better reflect the positive impact of a vibrant precinct on the value of the property they will sell. Each of these opportunities should be given careful considerations to avoid any unintended consequences.



Summary of funding options (not exhaustive)

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
Core Funding		
City Funding	Simple to implement. Facilitates central control, efficiency and city-wide synergies.	Fails to draw contribution from Central Geelong rate payers who benefit most.
Special Rate Funding (can be managed by City or 'arms-length' Committee)	Simple to implement. Facilitates independent, 'arms length' operational model.	Exclusive burden on Central Geelong rate payers. Fails to reflect universal benefit for Whole of City. Resource requirement for cost/benefit justification to rate payers.
50:50 City/Special Rate	Establishes collaborative framework.	-
Hybrid (funding from various core and contributory sources)	Potential to 'fine tune' funding to reflect benefit derived. 'Mixed' funding may have more long-term security.	Potential complexity.
Contributory Funding		
Precinct-based Special Rates	Allows contributions to be set relative to 'fine-grained' economic climate of specific precincts. Builds precinct-level trader community. Opportunity to be self-managed by precinct representatives.	Potentially operating at a scale that does not justify cost of implementation.
Buy-In	Promotes active stakeholder engagement.	Creates 'us and them' culture of opt-in/opt-out stakeholders.
User-pays e.g. parking levy, congestion charge, etc.	Pay-as-you-go end-user contributions inherently fair.	Cost disincentive for engaging with Central Geelong.
Developer Planning Approval Levy	Sets precedent for development as active participant in Central Geelong growth. One-off contribution.	-

A forward plan

A three year period of City funding for FY22-FY25 allows for a new marketing program to be planned, implemented and evaluated. After this period, the marketing program should be reviewed to assess its effectiveness and to determine whether a long-term funding model can be established for FY26 and beyond that strikes a balance between fairness and simplicity.

The model should ideally reflect the fact that those who benefit most from the vibrancy of Central Geelong should contribute the most, at the same time as it respects that the municipality as whole should support Central Geelong.

Further consideration should be given to the value of the funds raised by a given model relative to the effort required to raise them. Regardless of the principles involved, a practical issue arises if the burden of raising the funds from appropriate stakeholders is simply too onerous to justify the funds raised.

Long-term, it may be appropriate to investigate a hybrid model in which the City provides core funding, with a series of precinct-level Special Rates levied for supplementary funding, to be controlled by a representative group of rate payers within each precinct.

An example of an independently-managed, precinct-level scheme can be found in the case study opposite.

Case Study

Sydney Road Brunswick Association (SRBA)



An initiative of local business operators to support the growth and development of a thriving shopping strip which is of benefit to the whole community.

SRBA contracted through Moreland City Council. Funded through special levy via Council rates on 500 businesses on Sydney Rd (retail, hospitality, professional services).

Emphasis on an authentic, multicultural, quintessentially Melbourne experience (languages, atmospheres and flavours) within a 2.4km retail strip. 'A go-to destination for locals and visitors alike'.

SRBA business plan sets out promotional and marketing program with strong emphasis on nurturing an eclectic destination.

Committee of Management drawn from volunteer traders.

Activities facilitated by SRBA Manager.

Funding principles

1. Overall, the funding model must strive to be (a) fair and (b) simple. The Special Rate fell on (a).
2. The centre of Geelong belongs to the whole of Geelong. Everyone in Greater Geelong benefits (to a greater or lesser degree). Contributions should not be born exclusively by property owners in a Special Rate area.
3. Those who benefit the most, should pay the most.
4. Keep it simple – anything too elaborate will fall over. A simple, robust funding model beats an elaborate, delicately-balanced funding model.
5. Ensure the funding model has staying power – a lasting impact requires sustained/enduring, multi-year investment.

Summary of recommendations

Summary of recommendations

1. Reach

Focus on generating vibrancy in Central Geelong from within the G21 community.

2. Territory

Redefine Central Geelong to play to its strengths – its human precincts, rather than a uniform and contiguous area with a hard border defined by the previous Special Rate area.

3. Function

Build an authentic place proposition and draw from the community vision as foundations for a distinctive marketing strategy – to include activations, promotional programs and communications. Marketing should not extend to service delivery (e.g. Park and Ride).

The strategy should support the City's efforts to fast-track the Postcode 3220 project to increase residents in Central Geelong.

4. Funding

- a) Establish a City budget of approx. \$700,000 per annum to fund a Central Geelong marketing program for the next three years. This better reflects the benefits of a vibrant centre to the whole of the municipality and grants a period of relief from a special rate for businesses significantly impacted by COVID.
- b) Prior to the end of this period, the marketing program and funding model should be reviewed.

5. Collaboration

- a) Build a long-term Central Geelong marketing model that embraces and empowers precinct stakeholders as partners.
- b) Review existing City structures and functions to clarify roles and responsibility and create stronger functional alignment and coordination across the organisation.

Thank you

APPENDIX

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The Special Rate

The Special Rate was established and approved over four consecutive five year periods, as detailed in the table below.

Council once again resolved to give notice of its intention to declare the Central Geelong Marketing Special Rate in February 2021. A review of submissions in response to this notice concluded that a collective marketing program has broad support from owners in the Special Rate area, but the funding model for the program lacked support.

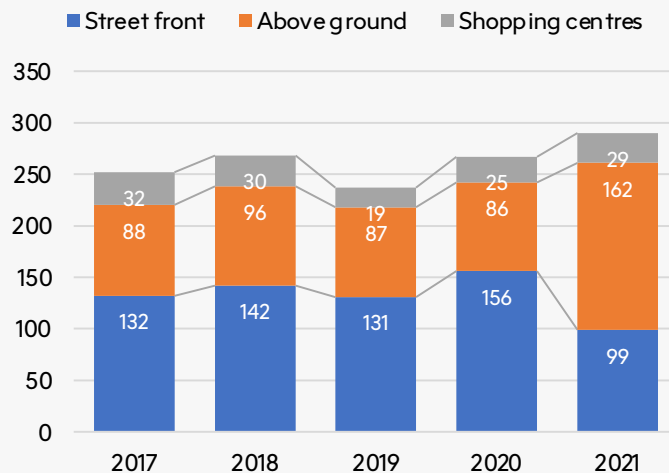
	CGM lifespan				
	FY2000–2004	FY2005–2009	FY2010–2015	FY2016–2020	FY2021
Model	CGM / Special Rate	CGM / Special Rate	CGM / Special Rate	CGM / Special Rate	Transitional
Annual Funding	\$295,000 (01-02)	\$490,000 (+ annual CPI)	\$602,000 (+ annual CPI) + 4x additional \$50,000 in years 2-4	\$1,045,122 (+ annual CPI) + 4x additional \$50,000 in years 2-5	\$700,000
Properties	1,149	1,249	1,421	1,507	n/a
Opposing submissions	77	11	5	17/3	n/a

Central Geelong tenancies

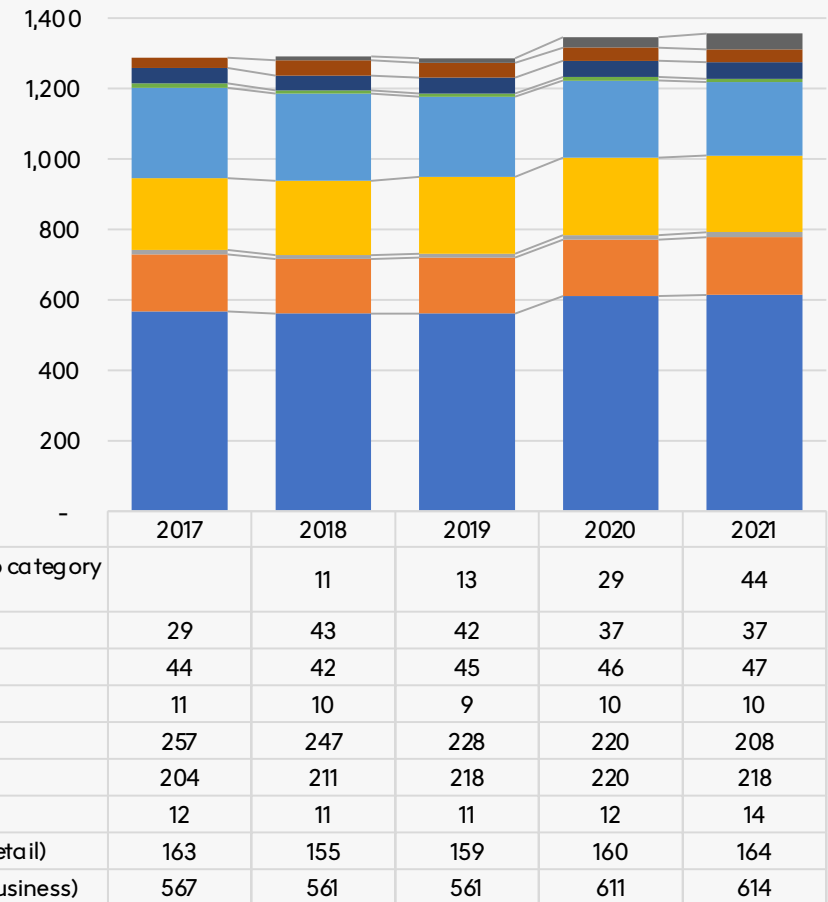
Over the five years to September 2021, there has been a 5.4% net uplift in tenancies in Central Geelong. Most tenant categories have shown modest growth, with the exception of Shopping, with a loss of 49 tenancies (-19.1%) and Professional Services (Business) which gained 47 tenancies (+8.3%).

Growth in vacancies over the past five years is driven significantly by above ground tenancies, masking a decline in street front vacancies.

Central Geelong Vacant Tenancies (September)



Central Geelong Tenancies (September)



The rate payers

The businesses that occupy Central Geelong come in all shapes and sizes. Broadly a third of commercial tenancies are non-retail professional services, another third are shopping/eating and retail professional services, with the balance being accommodation, parking, entertainment, attractions and vacancies.

As in any local economy, the businesses in Central Geelong will experience varied fortunes, with each individual entity achieving commercial results determined by its own performance. The COVID-19 pandemic will have had a devastating impact on some while others experienced little impact at all. Some others may even have experienced positive commercial outcomes from the trading environment created by the pandemic.

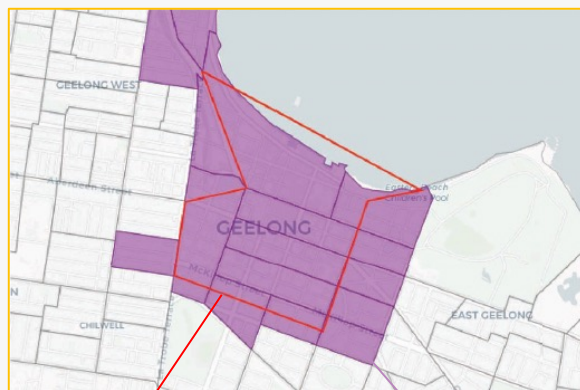
Businesses in different industrial sectors will experience the impact of a marketing program for Central Geelong in different ways – some more directly and measurably than other. A marketing campaign for Central Geelong will likely have a significantly greater impact on the fortunes of a hospitality business than a professional services business and on a street-front tenancy than on a tenancy above ground floor.

Commercial rates are paid by a diverse business community. In some cases, the property owner will pay rates. In others, rates are charged on to the tenant of the property. There are examples of some rate payers owning multiple properties in Central Geelong and considering whether this collective holding might justify its own dedicated marketing effort.

But what these rate payers have in common is a broad agreement that a collective marketing program for Central Geelong is of value to Central Geelong as a whole, even if some rate payers perceive there to be no measurable benefit to their own business.

The people of Central Geelong

Using a best fit map of Statistical Area 1 overlay areas, we can generate data from Roy Morgan Research to quantify the populations that live, work and shop in a catchment roughly equivalent to the Special Rate area. This allows us to analyse the psychographic consumer segments represented in these populations to better understand the people of Central Geelong.



Approximate boundary
of Special Rate Area

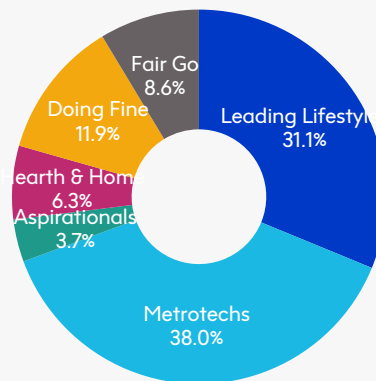
Best fit SA1
catchment overlay

The residents of Central Geelong

While the resident population of Central Geelong is small, analysis of the Helix Personas* represented within it, reveals that this is an important constituency both for its capacity to bring the City's vision to life, and for its inherent spending power.

Over two thirds of the residents of Central Geelong belong to the Metrotech and Leading Lifestyle communities. These two communities account for 35.8% of Australians. Characterised by their affluence and their progressive attitudes, these are among the most successful, prosperous and forward-looking members of society.

Central Geelong residents are disproportionately affluent and progressive

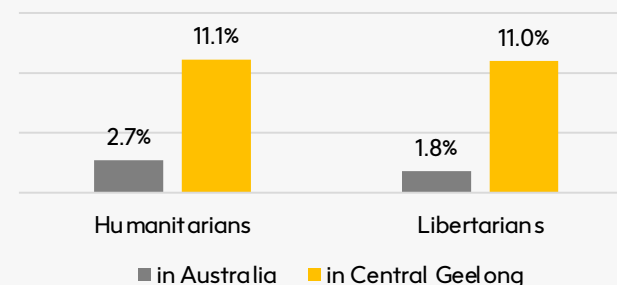


Roy Morgan (excludes '700 - Other')

This heavy representation of Metrotechs and Leading Lifestyles reveals the significant potential that the resident population can play in driving prosperity and realising the clever and creative vision for Central Geelong.

More specifically, within these communities we can identify two personas that are particularly over-represented within the resident population of Central Geelong. Of the 54 personas across the Australian population, only these two personas, known as (109) Humanitarians and (205) Libertarians, each account for more than 10% of the resident population of Greater Geelong, despite being only 4.5% of the Australian population in combination.

Central Geelong's most common resident personas



The characteristics of these Personas are discussed in more detail on page 63.

The residents of Central Geelong

Of the 54 Personas within the Australian population, central Geelong's two most common resident Personas have psychographic profiles that are highly appropriate for a city with a clever and creative vision.

Humanitarians

These high income professionals are often employed in the public service or self-employed. They are early adopters of technology, highly educated and cultured, embracing the best of city living but, with a solid social conscience.

The majority are Australian-born, living in metro areas, mostly in separate houses with the rest mainly in townhouse and semis. Many are mid-life householders, along with young parents and young singles.

Highly educated, progressive and very socially aware, they care passionately about the world and the big issues that affect people's lives. Health and wellbeing are also high on their priority list. They are optimistic, consider themselves to be intellectuals, and are stimulated by new ideas. They love new experiences and are committed to making a difference in life.

They're big spenders and prioritise spending on experiences rather than material wealth. They are highly social and love culture. On the weekend, you'll find them packing out cafes in between catching the latest theatre and art shows, movies and public lectures, or hosting dinner at home with friends, with a nice bottle of wine.

Libertarians

This are highly intellectual, focused on success and believe in taking risks to make their dreams comes true.

Most are Australian born, along with a significant proportion of those born in Asia, the UK and New Zealand. A significant proportion work in the public service.

They are highly educated and many are young singles. Close to a quarter are still studying. You'll find most of these inner city semi-detached terrace and townhouse occupiers renting in Melbourne, along with smaller clusters in Sydney, Brisbane and Perth.

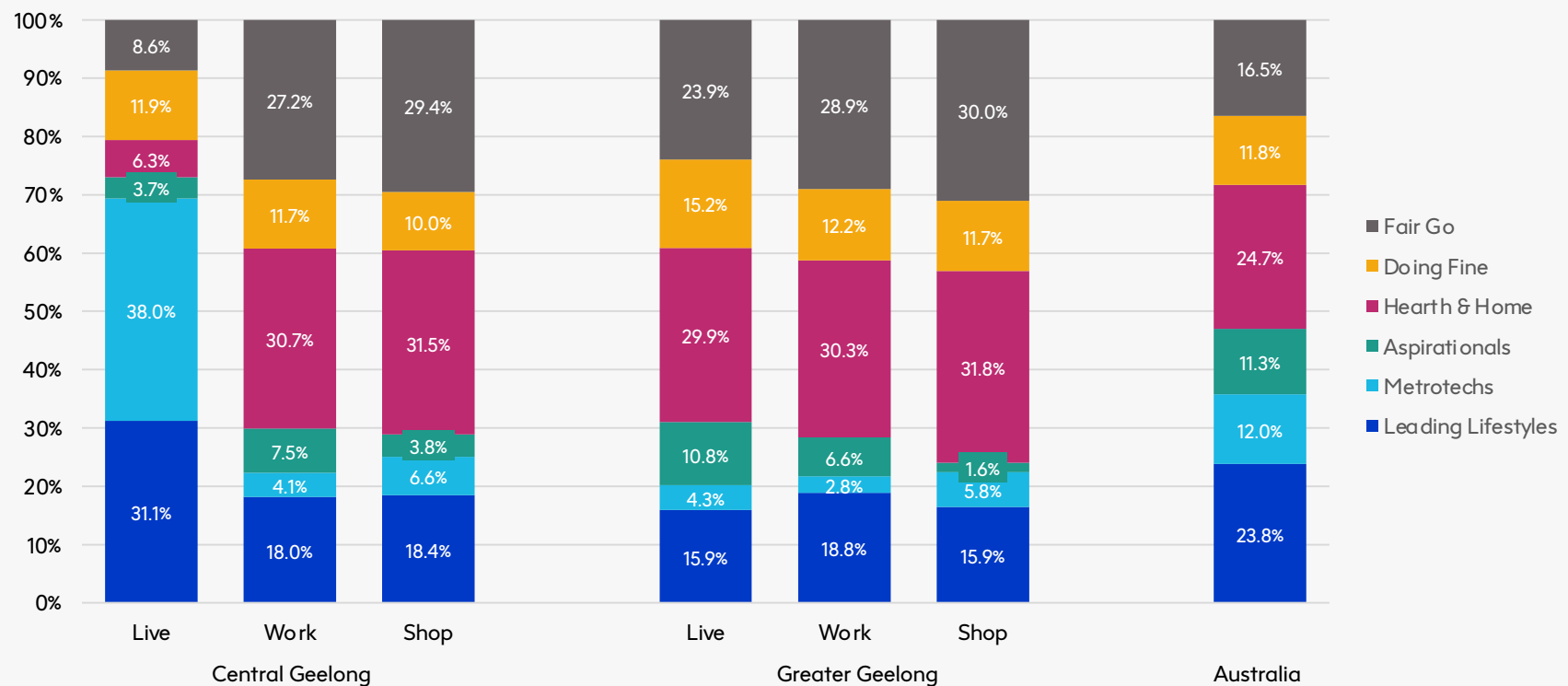
They are highly social and spend much of their time out and about or in the air – travelling for work and leisure both domestically and overseas. Home is little more than a place to sleep – meals are either eaten out in restaurants and cafes or home delivered, enjoyed with a premium beer or glass of wine.

They shun traditional media, particularly commercial TV, instead relying on mobile for entertainment and information to organise their busy work, study and social lives.

The psychographics of Central Geelong

When the people of Central Geelong are compared with the broader population of Greater Geelong, and then of Australia as a whole, it is clear that the workers and shoppers of Central Geelong have similar psychographic characteristics as those for Greater Geelong. The older and more financially constrained Hearth & Home and Doing Fine communities are heavily represented, while the

affluent and progressive Metrotechs and Lifestyle Leaders come in limited numbers, relative to the Australian population as a whole. Central Geelong's resident population is however quite different. Here we can see how significantly the Metrotechs and Lifestyle Leaders communities are over-represented, relative to the rest of Greater Geelong and to Australia as a whole.



Roy Morgan (excludes '700 - Other')

Roy Morgan Helix Personas

Helix Personas is a Roy Morgan classification system for each type of Australian consumer, and the communities of which they are a part. It provides a view of Australians that reaches beyond geo-demographic modelling to incorporate attitudes, values and behavioural aspects and provide psychographic modelling on a grand scale.

Helix Personas divides the Australian population into 54 individual segments – Personas – that are then grouped into 6 Helix Communities using a combination of data and existing segmentation models from Roy Morgan Single Source, the ABS Census and third party data.

Helix Personas uses deep psychographic insights, far beyond simple demographics, to segment consumers into targetable groups. The tool incorporates values, beliefs and attitudes which are the best predictors of consumer behaviour, so you can reach your customers most effectively with messages that resonate.

 100 Leading Lifestyles High income, highly educated, progressive and success and career focused, people in the Leading Lifestyles Community enjoy cultured city living to the max. Browse 101 Bluechip 102 Smart Money 103 Social Progressives 104 Having It All 105 Visible Success 106 Self-made Lifestylers 107 Domestic Bliss 108 Career Achievers 109 Humanitarians 110 Worldly and Wise 111 Success Matters 112 Savvy Self-starters 113 Cultured Epicureans	 200 Metrotechs Highly educated, socially aware, hard-working, ambitious and culturally diverse young singles typically renting apartments in the inner city and inner suburbs Browse 201 Young and Platinum 202 Healthy, Wealthy and Wise 203 Culture Leaders 204 High Life 205 Libertarians 206 Fit and Fab 207 Seasoned Lifestylers 208 Future Focus 209 Sociable Trendsetters 210 Academic Optimists	 300 Aspirational Ambitious, up-and-coming, culturally diverse young families, young singles and couples committed to creating a successful future. Browse 301 Savvy Shoppers 302 Getting Ahead 303 Prosperous Future 304 Lifestyle Seekers 305 Trend Hunters 306 Fad-tastic 307 Experience Seekers	 400 Hearth and Home Closest to the average Australian, life revolves around the home for these contented families and empty nesters, who see their homes as an expression of status and achievements. Browse 401 Home Improvers 402 Working Hard 403 Rustic Heartland 404 Traditional Values 405 Safe and Secure 406 Building Security 407 House Proud 408 Cautious Conservatives 409 Relaxed Living	 500 Doing Fine A mix of household types and ages including many young migrants and some older Australians, happily making their way through life on modest incomes across Australia. Browse 501 Making Ends Meet 502 Tech Life 503 Fun First 504 Home Entertainment 505 Faith and Wellbeing 506 Making the Rent 507 Active Social 508 Frugal Living	 600 Fair Go A mix of ages and household types, including those living alone and single parents, Fair Go are low income Australians looking for a better deal in life. Browse 601 Simple Living 602 Tough Times 603 Quiet Home Life 604 Budget Living 605 Filling Time 606 Basic Lifestyle 607 Raw Deal
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Helix Personas – Leading Lifestyles

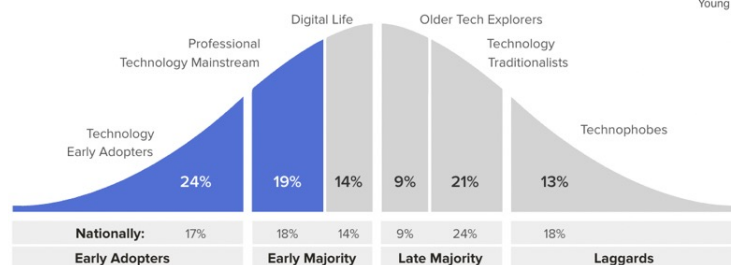
High income, highly educated, progressive and career/success focused, people in the Leading Lifestyles Community enjoy sophisticated city living to the max. From eating out and soaking up the cultural life of their city to indulging in their passion for international travel, Leading Lifestylers are truly living the good life. They've worked hard for their success and place value on demonstrating their status and achievements to the world. However, they also care passionately about the big issues that affect society at large and those less fortunate than them.



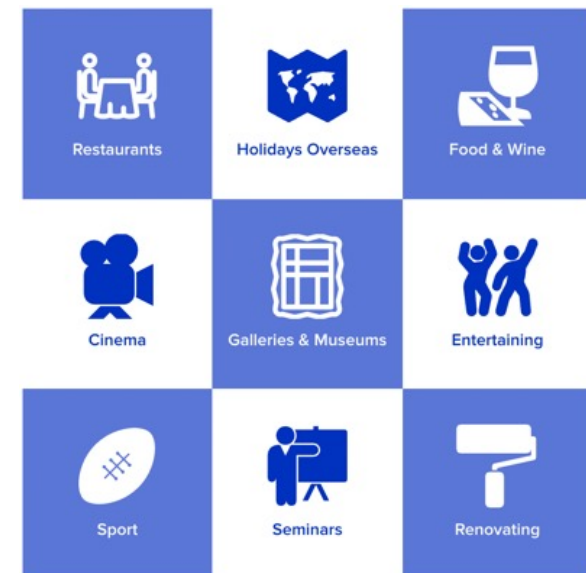
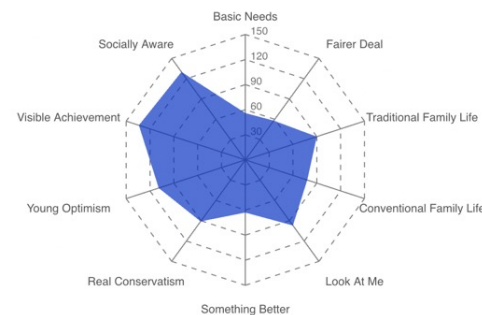
DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population: **5935k**
- Population Percentage: **23.7%**
- Average Household Income: **\$134k**

TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION SEGMENTS

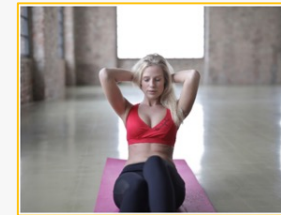


VALUES SEGMENTS*



Helix Personas – Metrotechs

Socially aware, successful, career focused and culturally diverse, Metrotechs are trend and tech focused. They are committed experience seekers, willing to spend big on the best of city life and thrive on being out and about in the world.



DEMOGRAPHICS



Population: **2995k**

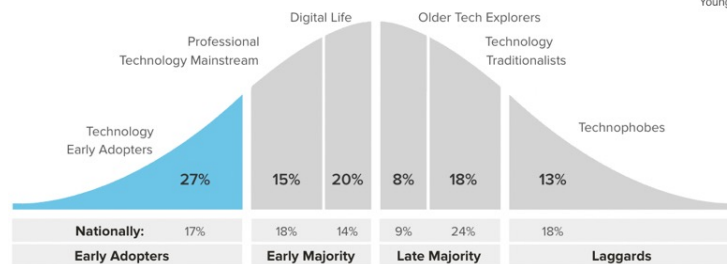


Population Percentage: **11.9%**

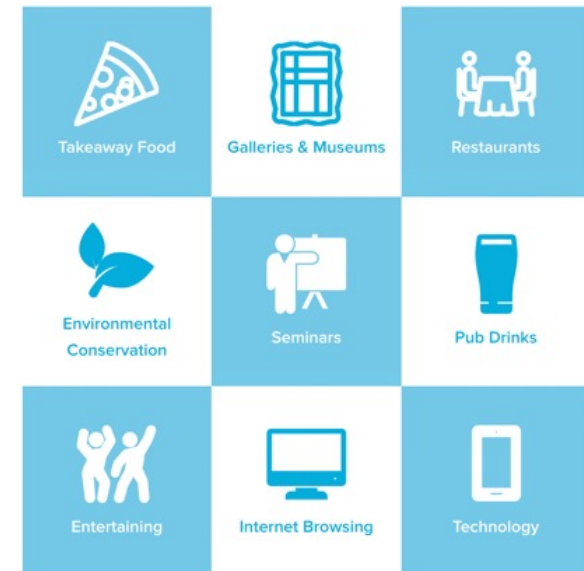
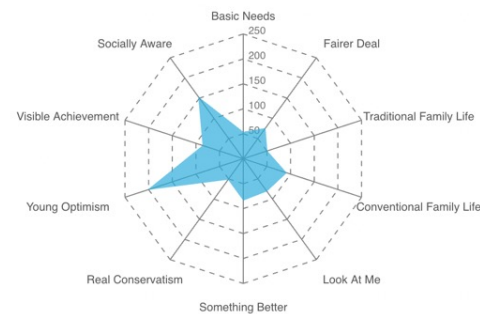


Average Household Income: **\$97k**

TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION SEGMENTS

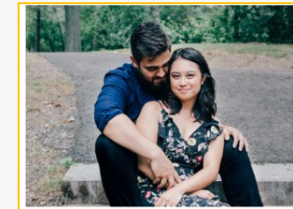


VALUES SEGMENTS*



Helix Personas – Aspirational

Driven by dreams of a big future, Aspirationals are highly ambitious and culturally diverse up-and-comers. Careful spenders, they're working hard today to create a more successful tomorrow.



DEMOGRAPHICS



Population: **2815k**

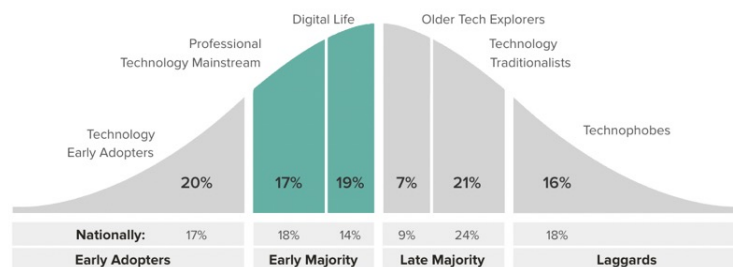


Population Percentage: **11.2%**

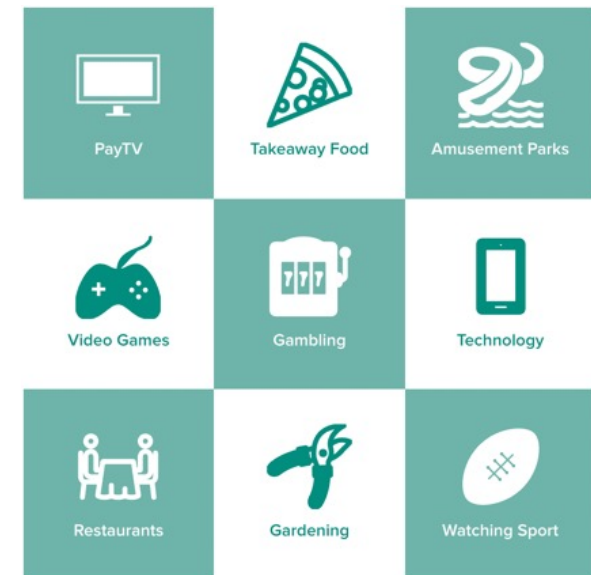


Average Household Income: **\$100k**

TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION SEGMENTS



VALUES SEGMENTS



Helix Personas – Hearth & Home

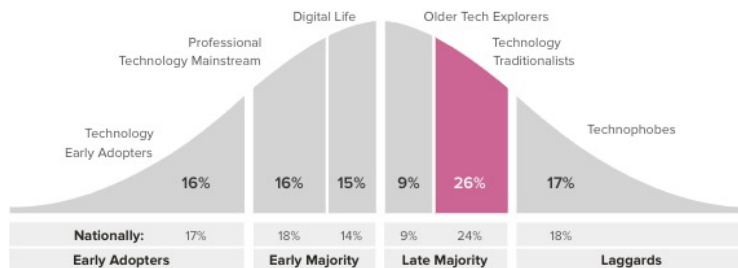
Closest to the average Australian, life revolves around the home for these contented families and empty nesters. They are heavily invested in their homes, financially and emotionally, seeing them as an expression of their status and achievements. Perennial 'tinkerers' and home improvers, they also love nature and the outdoors.



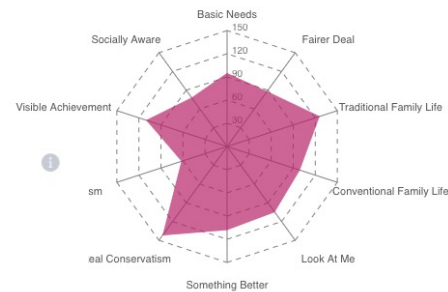
DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population: **6159k**
- Population Percentage: **24.6%**
- Average Household Income: **\$85k**

TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION SEGMENTS



VALUES SEGMENTS



Helix Personas – Doing Fine

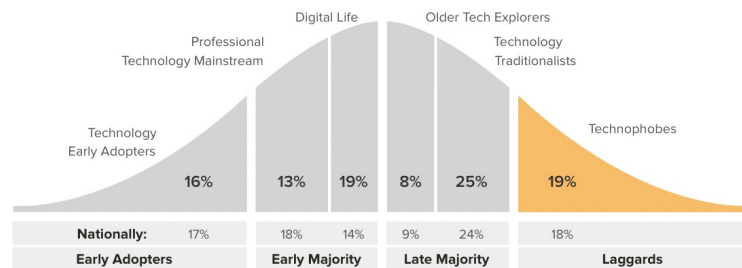
Content with their place in life, Doing Fine is comprised of a mix of household types and ages, including many young migrants and some older Australians, happily making their way through life on modest incomes across Australia in a mix of metro, outer urban and rural areas.



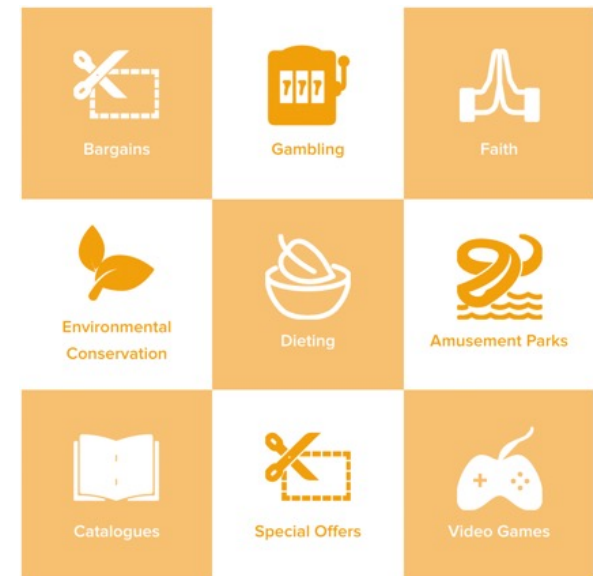
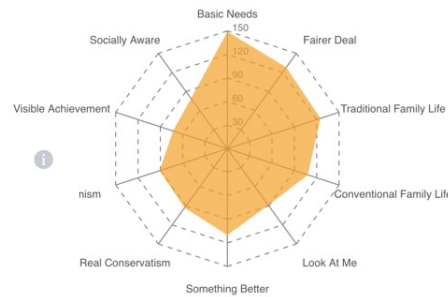
DEMOGRAPHICS

-  Population: **2970k**
-  Population Percentage: **11.8%**
-  Average Household Income: **\$65k**

TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION SEGMENTS



VALUES SEGMENTS*



Helix Personas – Fair Go

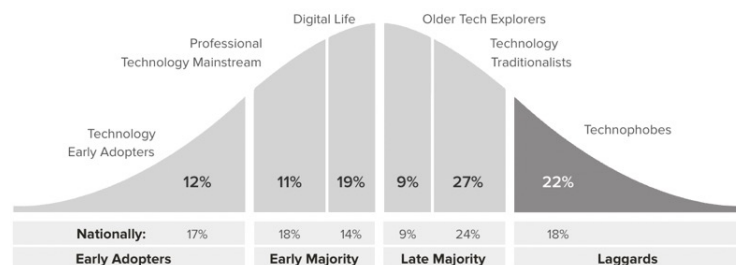
Struggling to make ends meet, looking for a better deal in life, making the best of things or simply pessimistic, cynical and likely to feel they get a raw deal out of life; the Fair Go community are lower income Australians.



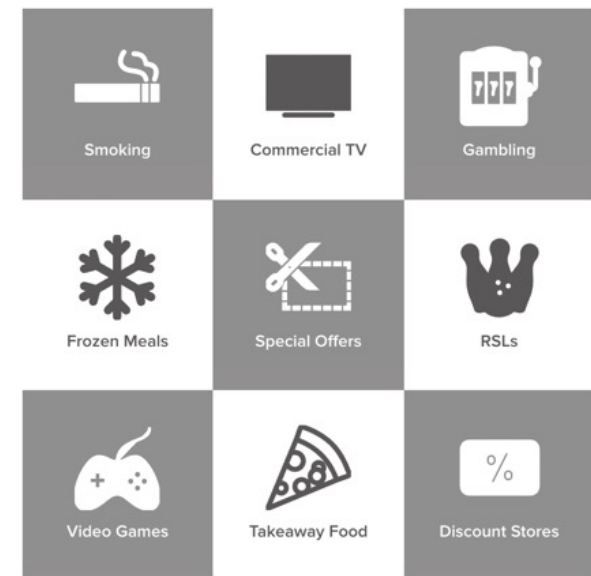
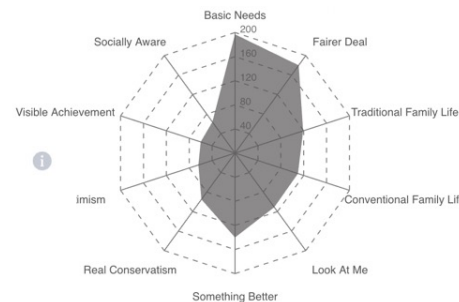
DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population: **4112k**
- Population Percentage: **16.4%**
- Average Household Income: **\$57k**

TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION SEGMENTS



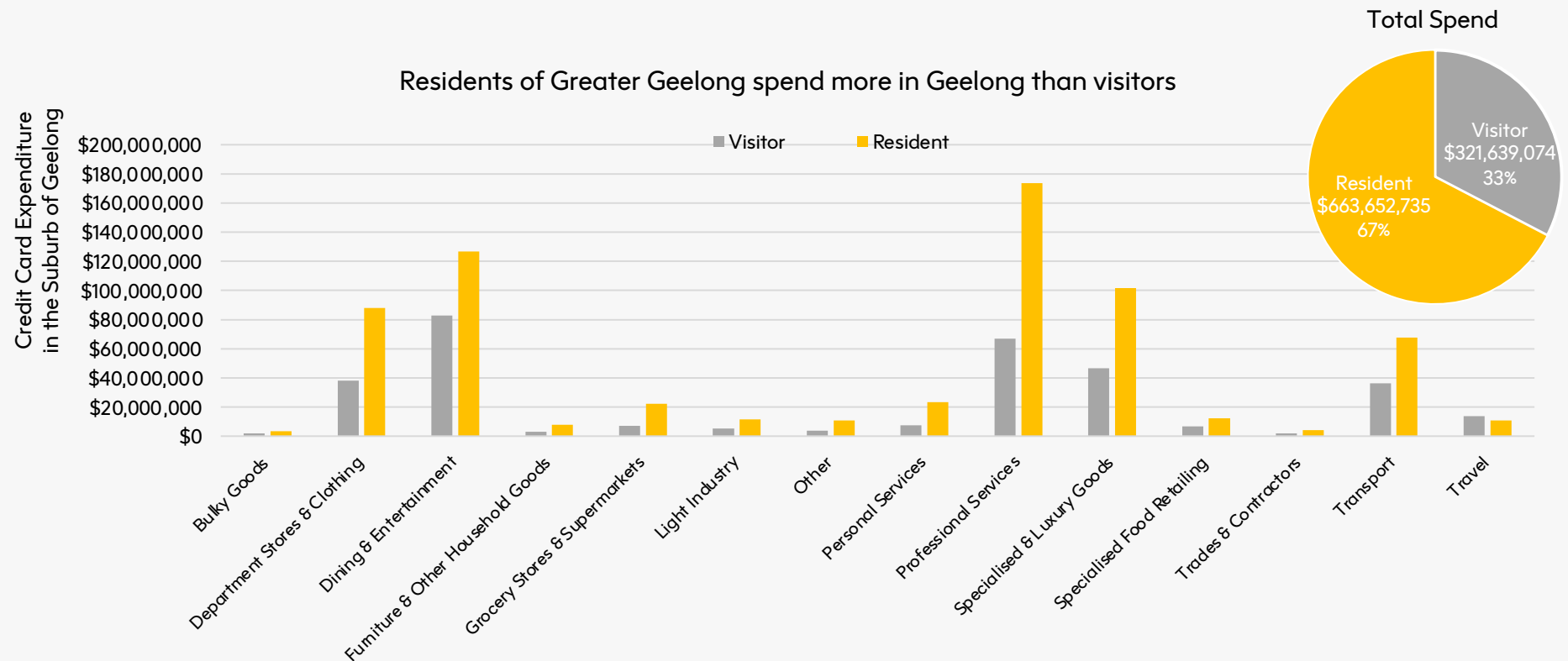
VALUES SEGMENTS*



Spend local

In the twelve months prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, bank transaction data reveals that over \$985 million was spent in the suburb of Geelong (postcode 3220). Two thirds of this expenditure came from residents of Greater Geelong, who outspent visitors to the municipality in almost every category of expenditure.

Clearly, it is the local economy that drives prosperity in Geelong, with the visitor economy providing valuable supplementary expenditure.



Spendmapp – 12 months to 30 March 2020

Aligning to the vision

Representing the voices of over 16,000 residents and stakeholders the Clever and Creative vision is a community-led blueprint for transforming the people of Geelong's aspirations into reality.

The diversity of the people involved and their commitment and passion for Greater Geelong makes the vision a strong and durable platform for future decision-making.

With this level of endorsement and its inherently progressive posture, the Clever and Creative vision should be reflected in the place proposition for Central Geelong, providing a clear mandate for social, cultural and economic growth.

Our community's 30-year clever and creative vision

By 2047, Greater Geelong will be internationally recognised as a clever and creative city-region that is forward looking, enterprising and adaptive, and cares for its people and environment.

Greater Geelong, A Clever and Creative Future – City of Greater Geelong – December 2017



Our community plan

Greater Geelong is committed to becoming the clever and creative city-region the community described when asked to form a long-term vision for the region in 2017.

The Community Plan outlines the steps to be taken over the next four years to move closer to that goal, with four strategic directions chosen to guide the steps.

Strategic Direction

Links to
Clever & Creative Vision

1.
Healthy, caring and inclusive
community

- An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community
- People feel safe wherever they are
- Creativity drives culture

2.
Sustainable growth and
environment

- Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment
- Development and implementation of sustainable solutions
- A fast, reliable and connected transport network
- Creativity drives culture
- People feel safe wherever they are

3.
Strong local economy

- A prosperous economy that supports jobs and education opportunities
- A leader in developing and adopting technology
- Creativity drives culture
- A destination that attracts local and international visitors

4.
High-performing Council and
organisation

Our Community Plan 2021-2025

Creative City of Design designation

Geelong's creative credentials are significantly burnished by its designation as UNESCO City of Design - one of only 40 cities worldwide to receive this designation.

The designation aligns well with the Clever and Creative vision in its goals, its values and its guiding principles.

Together, the vision and the UNESCO designation provide a solid cornerstone to Geelong's place proposition.



GCOD_GuidingPrinciples_DRAFT5

Our Goals

As a Creative City of Design, we will strive for Geelong to be:

- A city of possibility where creativity flourishes;
- A place where design drives an exceptional quality of life for our community;
- A place that embraces transformative thinking, ideas and activities; and
- An essential and renowned engine room for Victoria's creative economy.

Our Values

As a Creative City of Design, we value:

- Wadawurrung People, Traditional Owners of this land, and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and their beliefs;
- Our distinctive heritage, diverse communities and contemporary culture;
- New ways of thinking and doing;
- Creative risk taking, being clever, agile and bold;
- Collaboration and exchanging ideas;
- Inclusion, equity and accessibility; and
- Reflection, learning and growth.

Our Guiding Principles

Three principles guide our goals focus areas, live our values and drive creative outcomes for our region.

- 1. Embrace a design mindset**
- 2. Nurture creative talent**
- 3. Foster our design culture**

Place management case studies - international

	Springfield, Mass USA	Granollers, Catalonia Spain	Toyama City, Tomaya Prefecture, Japan	Darwen, Lancashire UK
Scheme	Springfield Business Improvement District (BID)	Gran Centre Granollers	Inter-departmental Partnership	Darwen Town Centre Partnership
Population	153,060 (US Census, 2010). Fourth largest city in New England	52,000	400,000	32,000 (2001 Census)
Issues	Lack of investment, poor aesthetics, declining footfall, significant rise in violent crime	Traditional market town 25km from Barcelona, struggling with competition from new retail alternatives.	Lack of pedestrian access. High car-dependency. High maintenance cost of public facilities. Less active and attractive town centre. Ageing and declining population.	Adverse changes in consumer behaviour, business community apathy, local cynicism. Physical and commercial decline of town centre.
Approach	A coalition of property owners (235), tenants, City officials and other groups with a stake in Springfield's success, and includes an 11-member Board of Directors.	Informal, fee-based, free-standing association of 300 independent retailers/SMEs.	Town Centre partnership to coordinate activity across local authority departments to tackle town centre revitalisation. Funded by local authority and State Town Centre Revitalisation programs.	Community-inspired town centre strategy. Core funding from Council. External grant funding from national and regional sources. Broad local consultation with representatives of multiple interest groups on steering group.
Activities	Street cleaning, aesthetics, security, marketing downtown, concerts, fireworks, festive lighting.	Customer loyalty credit card (3 months interest free, discounts, free parking).	Town centre revitalisation. Promotion of public transport system. Network building between the town centre and district centres. Offering an attractive central area. Promotion of town centre living. Access to public transport and development close to public transport.	Town Centre masterplan (every household consulted) giving rise to Townscape Heritage Initiative, new leisure and health centres. New college.
Outcomes	Between 1999 and 2006, assessed values climbed +54%	15,000 users. Positive contribution to trade. Helps fund social and cultural events in pedestrian centre, restoration of historic buildings and support for local homeless refuge.	Not reported	Town Centre Management scheme positively received in street and business surveys, performing well on KPIs vs comparable centres.

Place Management : An International Review - Institute of Place Management - Manchester Metropolitan University - 2011

Place management case studies - Victoria

	Swan Hill, Victoria	Camberwell Shopping Precinct, Victoria	Werribee City Centre, Victoria	Brunswick, Victoria
Scheme	Swan Hill, Inc.	Camberwell Centre Association	Werribee Business & Tourism Association	Sydney Road Brunswick Association
Population	20,000	Not disclosed	Not disclosed	Not disclosed
Issues	Lack of investment in public realm. 'Hollowing out' of key retail hub. Transition from goods to services.	Competition from nearby precincts and from Chadstone.	Keeping pace with rapidly expanding municipal population to serve as a significant regional centre. Transition from goods to services.	Protecting status of Sydney Rd as a cultural and social community backbone, rather than just a thoroughfare/commercial centre.
Approach	Collaborative marketing and trader support program. 339 operators in Special Rate scheme – of which 110 opt in to membership of Swan Hill Inc.	Levy on 772 traders raises \$550,000. Only 30 members opt in to running the Association.	Limited membership fees from approx. 90 members, plus Council grants. Council's Vibrant City Centres team collaborates with traders on events.	SRBA contracted through Moreland City Council. Funded through special levy via Council rates on 500 businesses <u>only</u> on Sydney Rd (retail, hospitality, professional services).
Activities	Operation of market days, EOFY sale, events and Christmas decorations. The voice of business, with a significant role in tourism promotion alongside Council.	Primary focus on marketing and promotional investment, including website – and newspaper delivered to 25,000 households 3 x per year.	Networking, training and information programs. Promotional programs (limited to social media).	Emphasis on an authentic, multicultural, quintessentially Melbourne experience (languages, atmospheres and flavours) within a 2.4km retail strip. 'A go-to destination for locals and visitors alike'.
Outcomes	Vacancy rates remain acceptable despite COVID.	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported

The Value of Victoria's Main Streets, Geografia, July 2021

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- The Value of Victoria's Main Streets - Geografia - July 2021

Graph by Marek Polakovic
Person by Valeria Lamm
Speedometer by Johan H. W. Basberg
from the Noun Project

TOWN SQUARE