

Darebin and Yarra Ranges Planning Partnership

Yarra Ranges Supplementary Report



Contents

- 1. **BACKGROUND**4
- 2. **FINAL REPORT (YARRA RANGES SUPPLEMENTARY)**5
 - PART A Project and Funding Recipient Details 5
 - PART B Details of Activity Performance 6
 - PART C Other Details.....10

1. Background

In 2006, the City of Darebin and the Shire of Yarra Ranges formed a partnership and made a submission to the Department for Victorian Communities for \$100,000 in funding under the Local Area Planning Support Program.

The application sought funding for the establishment of a partnership between the City of Darebin and the Shire of Yarra Ranges to implement an integrated planning system at the City of Darebin, supported by appropriate computer software and systems. The partnership then aimed to further develop the capacity of the existing system at Yarra Ranges and the new system at Darebin to allow the development of issue-based and place-based strategies and action plans and their integration into organisational business plans.

The objective of these changes was to make it possible for both Councils to provide greater opportunity for their communities to be directly involved in planning for their local area. The intention was that the project be undertaken in a manner whereby its outcomes and learnings will be transferable to other Councils and the local government sector.

The application was successful and in October 2006 a formal funding agreement between the City of Darebin (as the lead local government partner) and the Department for Victorian Communities was signed.

2. Final Report (Yarra Ranges Supplementary)

PART A Project and Funding Recipient Details

Project		Darebin and Yarra Ranges Planning Partnership
Project Manager	Name	Rhys Thomas
	Telephone	(03) 8470 8443
	Mobile	0419 750 516
	Facsimile	(03) 8470 8877
	Email	rthomas@darebin.vic.gov.au
Funding Recipient	Name	City of Darebin
	Address	PO Box 91 PRESTON VIC 3072
	ABN	75 815 980 522
Approved subcontractors		Not applicable

None of the project and funding details have changed.

PART B Details of Activity Performance

Period covered by this supplementary report.

8 February 2008 to 30 March 2008

What milestone does this report relate to?

Supplementary report relating only to the progress of the Shire of Yarra Ranges component of the project.

Provide a description and analysis of the progress of the Activity to date, including detail(s) of the outputs achieved during the period.

Shire of Yarra Ranges

Locality Based Forward Community Planning

The Forward Community Plan has been finalised and identifies the significant planning activities currently proposed for individual townships including:

- Structure plans
- Township improvement plans
- Streetscape improvement works

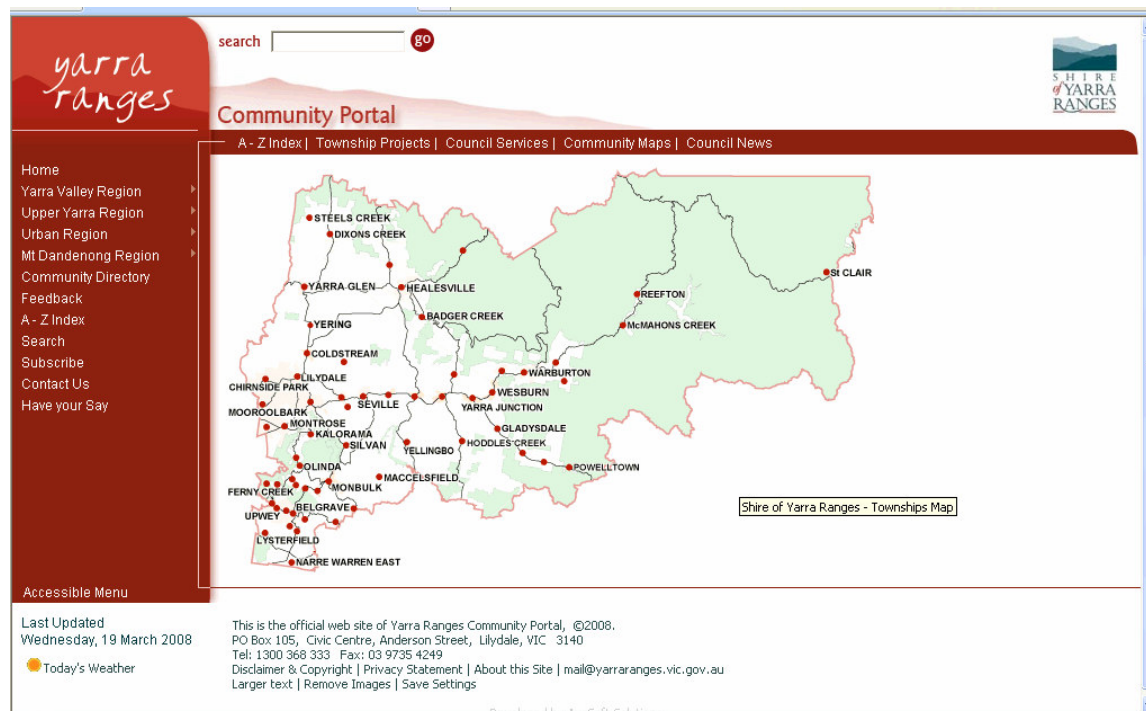
The finalised plan has been discussed in detail with individual Councillors and has undergone a number of reference group checks before it will be presented to Council for final endorsement on 1st April. Once endorsed it will be included in the on-line Yarra Ranges Community Portal to support a 'place-based' approach to planning that will encourage greater cross organisational integration and coordination of planning activities and encourage greater transparency in decision making.

On-line Community Portal for the Yarra Ranges Community

The On-line Yarra Ranges Community Portal has been designed by Aussoft Pty Ltd and is now hosted by Gigabit IT Pty Ltd, who supply a 24/7 monitored service enabling constant information stream for the local and global community. The on-line community portal is in test mode while the web pages continue to be populated with locality based profiles and relevant information links.

The On-line Community Portal features include :

- an interactive navigation map system enabling easy visual access to 60 townships in the Yarra Ranges Shire and including an alternative written location list divided into four key regions to comply with W3C accessibility



Linked to the 60 localities on the map are 39 pages of locality based information relating to the selected township and its surrounding communities.

Each locality page contains information and links to the following services:

- Summary Locality Profile (including a link to a detailed Community Profile as per sample below)
- Link to localised demographic profiles
- Link to a locality based Interactive Mapping system – Public Intramaps)
- Link to the Forward Community Plan
- Link to locality based Community Directory
- Link to locality based Business Directory
- Link to locality based Community Events
- Link to locality based public transport
- Link to local township group
- Latest Council News
- Page Feedback
- eSubscription to page updates

Community Profiles

The site will be populated with 39 detailed community profiles covering all 60 townships, suburbs and small communities in the Yarra Range Shire.

The objective of developing the community profiles for all distinct localities within the municipality is to create an agreed, consistent and widely accessible reference point for all dealings with that community, including shire driven engagement and planning processes.

The profiles are based on factual information largely held by the organisation about each community and will provide information for policy makers, including Council and the community with information that can inform decision making and future direction of Shire efforts.



Integrated Community Planning

Once adopted by Council the site will also includes the Forward Community Plan listing key projects which will be undertaken over the next 10 years.

Are all the timeframes and milestones for the Activity being met?

Yes. The software for the Yarra Ranges Community portal has been installed and training has commenced in-line with proposed timelines. The site continues to be populated and tested to ensure accurate community data is available for all 60 localities across the Shire.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

How has the project made a difference and changed the way council does business?

The locality based forward community plans and on-line portal enable Council to undertake integrated planning and engagement activities centred around the needs of specific communities and localities. This presents a new approach to place-based planning at the Shire.

How has the project made a difference to the community and other stakeholders?

This project has allowed Council to better plan and coordinate work being undertaken in specific places, bringing benefits to our local communities. The project also provides a means through which community members can access information about their local areas, as well as projects being undertaken by Council in their local communities.

What recommendations do you have for other Councils who may be undertaking similar projects?

The development of forward community plans and an online portal has been a significant cross-organisational process, requiring considerable time and input from many departments across Council. This process has proven challenging, requiring skills in bringing departments together, the introduction of a new way of thinking about how the organisation plans, and the capacity to facilitate the development of agreement about the content of the final plan.

How could the project have a sector wide implementation?

Placed-based planning is increasingly presenting opportunities for local governments to develop better integrated plans that respond to the needs and aspirations of local communities. The use of web-based applications to bring this information together and provide a link between council and communities could be easily introduced by other councils.

How are State Departments involved in the project?

There has been no State Government involvement in the project.

Is the Activity proceeding within the initial agreed Budget?

No. The amount of time and resources needed to develop the 'Forward Community Plan and detailed community profiles for 60 townships was under estimated.

Are there any other issues relating to your performance of the Activity that We should be aware of?

No.

PART C Other Details

Acknowledgement and Publicity

As the Yarra Ranges Community Portal has not been fully tested, no publicity has been undertaken to date. It is anticipated that once the system is launched, a media release will be circulated that outlines the benefits for the community and appropriately acknowledges the Department for Planning and Community Development.

Marketing and Promotion will include:

- media releases and newspaper articles in the Yarra Ranges fortnightly column and included in the Community Directory circulated to 55,000 homes.
- acknowledgement of the support from the DPCD and their logo (as requested) would be displayed on the home page of the website and then be located on the footer of every page within the website.
- an on-line feature eSubscription for staff and the community which enables an automated update of any new information on the website to be emailed to any interested person.

Case Study -

Shire of Yarra Ranges

Over the past eight years, the Shire of Yarra Ranges has developed and implemented an integrated planning framework that aligns the planning, monitoring and reporting of its activities to the strategic direction of the organisation and the community. The need to further develop our models of community engagement was identified and a broad Community Planning Framework developed to guide how the Shire will engage with communities, support community planning activities and support community strengthening measures – in addition to a number of internal process changes.

The framework comprises two key elements namely:

- the development and implementation of a locality based forward community planning program; and
- the development and implementation of an on-line community portal that acts as a conduit between Council processes and our community.

The core purpose of the Locality Based Forward Community Plan is to introduce a place-based approach to planning. This has been achieved through:

- cross-organisational workshops that identified and documented future community planning activities by locality and a developed suite of criteria to inform planning processes and assist in the prioritisation of activities.
- the compilation of a Locality Based Forward Community Plan reviewed by internal key stakeholders and presented to Council for consideration. This plan will be reviewed by Council on an annual basis and feed into the organisation's business planning and capital works processes.

The On-line Community Portal is being developed to provide the community with information about 'their place', in particular the future significant planning activities that have been identified in the Locality Based Forward Community Plan.

The portal:

- comprises 38 community profiles encompassing 59 localities across the municipality.
- Has been customised and designed an on-line software system to ensure easy access for all; and
- establishes an eSubscription to enable updates of information to be sent to interested community members.

It is envisaged that the portal will provide the central access point for interactive e-democracy projects in the future.

Both initiatives serve to better ensure a 'whole of organisation' response to community needs and to improve overall community engagement.

Have you have any decision or order of any court or tribunal made against you of involving you during the reporting period?

No.

Completed Final Report to be sent to:

Dr Elsie Alcordo
Senior Policy Officer
Local Government Victoria
Department for Victorian Communities
GPO Box 2392
Melbourne Vic 3001

Telephone: (03) 9208 3622

Fax: (03) 9208 3577

E-mail: Elsie.Alcordo@dpcd.vic.gov.au