Developing Legitimacy for Action by Connecting Citizens and Government:

Lessons for U.S. Local Government Leaders from a Citizen Engagement Process in Australia

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About the Local Government Research Collaborative:
In early 2013, 21 local governments and three universities joined together with the Alliance for Innovation, the International City/County Management Association, and the Center for Urban Innovation at Arizona State University to establish the Local Government Research Collaborative (LGRC). The LGRC is developing and funding an actionable research agenda that addresses significant issues confronting local governments. For more information on the LGRC email Toni Shope, Strategic Initiatives Director with the Alliance for Innovation at tshope@transformgov.org

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1 Hal Wolman, George Washington University and Principal Investigator for this Project, contributed at every stage of the research process. In addition, he read the report in drafts many times and made many useful comments and suggestions. Rosa (Hyun Kyong) Lee, Ph.D. student in the Public Policy and Administration program at GWU, served as graduate research assistant to the Project and provided a wide range of very useful assistance in that role.
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Executive Summary

The four-year “Geraldton 2029 and Beyond” initiative effectively addressed the entwined challenges of “legitimacy for action on sustainability” and “trust in government” that the City of Greater Geraldton faced in 2009-2010. The 2029 citizen engagement process navigated substantial difficulties. The City government discovered and acted to address a “trust in citizens” problem of its own. As of late 2015, two years beyond the project’s planned duration, the citizen engagement effort continues and aims for additional, longer-term, improved governance on many topics.

This report concludes that the practice that emerges from the Geraldton experience, which is not without risks, can be considered for adaptation by US local governments. The practice is not limited to the “sustainability” focus. Comparison with other localities that used similar approaches suggests that the practice can produce useful results in many kinds of places and on many kinds of topics.

This practice involves: a high stakes problem; a committed City Hall leadership; citizen involvement that aims to be inclusive, deliberative, and influential; and very strong process design and implementation.

This is an approach, not a mechanism or a tool or an event. It can be described as follows:

1. It is to be used in governance situations where the functional issue is significant, complicated, contentious, and stalled, and is entwined with trust-in-government and legitimacy-for-action issues. The goals are thus both to address the functional issue and also to produce systemic, enduring improvement in local governance.
2. It requires a City Hall leadership committed to hard thinking about and a clear grasp of the “problems” to be addressed (including problems internal to the government) and the goals to be sought, as well as a resolve to address difficulties and unpleasant facts as they arise.
3. It conducts governance – in the short-term engagement processes and also aimed at building a better governance for the longer-term – that tries to be more inclusive of ordinary citizens; more deliberative; and, for the citizens’ engagements, more influential.
4. It requires very strong process design, selection and assembly of apt tools and tactics, and adaptive management of the activities as they occur. Careful consideration should be given to how the processes will involve citizens in dealing with budget constraints or other hard choices.

Introduction

How We Got to Here

Late in 2014, the Local Government Research Collaborative (LGRC) solicited proposals for a “Governance” project. In January 2015, LGRC selected our “Learning from Abroad” proposal from George Washington University’s Institute of Public Policy. The purpose of the research is to explore the potential of practices in other countries for adaptation and transfer to US localities. This report is one of the final products of our work.
We suggested that LGRC establish an Advisory Group to the project. In February 2015, we asked the group to identify priority governance areas that the project would research. One of the topics selected was “connecting citizens and local government officials by bringing citizen needs and concerns to the attention of local officials.”

From March through May of 2015, we scanned for examples of relevant practices, mainly but not solely in OECD countries. On June 16, we sent to the Advisory Group the results of that scan and asked for guidance as to which local practices we should research and assess in more detail. From among the practices suggested, the Advisory Group by mid-July almost unanimously selected “Developing Legitimacy for Action,” a four-year initiative in the City of Greater Geraldton, a community of 40,000 in the State of Western Australia.

The Geraldton Initiative
The following overview is from the City’s website, as of December 2015.²

In 2009 the former City of Geraldton-Greenough [now the City of Greater Geraldton] realized it was faced with some real challenges regarding projected population growth, climate change and opportunities related to [proposed investments] and the growing resource industry.

The City recognized the need for an innovative approach to community engagement and collaboration in decision making; otherwise, the opportunities these changes presented would most likely be lost and the future sustainability of the City and region greatly reduced. As a result, in early 2010 the City launched the Sustainable Future City Project. The project name later evolved to ‘2029 and Beyond’ project. The project aimed to fully engage the local community by stimulating their creativity and involving them in planning for a sustainable economic and social future.

These processes rather quickly stimulated significant changes in the connections between citizens and the local government and in the City’s sense of its “legitimacy to act.” A 2011 summary for the Mohn Prize international competition for “Vitalizing Democracy through Participation” (awarded by the Germany-based Bertelsmann Foundation), described the effects of the 2029 project in part:

[Government leaders] had thought the community did not understand the sustainability challenges facing the region and hence were likely to oppose the City’s efforts to create a sustainable population, become carbon neutral, and respond to potential impacts of climate change. The deliberative processes implemented thus far have proved this to be incorrect. The City is now moving along much faster than it thought it had the legitimacy to do previously.

The Geraldton “model” or practice is not a single tactic, event or mechanism. It is not simply the list of specific facilitation and deliberation techniques used. The practice that might be adapted by US local governments could include any or all of those or other techniques. But mainly the practice should be understood as the underlying set of key ideas and approaches that are the

basis for Geraldton’s efforts to attain the desired outcome and impact: developing legitimacy for action. Thus, working through the story of those efforts becomes an important part of the research (See Section II). Section III of this report discusses what seems to me to be that set of key ideas and approaches: these constitute the potentially transferable practice.

These ideas and approaches arise in the context of a considerable range of experimentation with democratic participation in places around the globe, including the United States. The Geraldton practice draws upon the “deliberative and "collaborative" parts of this range and is thus more far-reaching in its aims that more limited exercises. It is not without risks and challenges. Not least of these is that it requires firm and continuing commitment by local leaders and that, if not carried through or done poorly, it can worsen an already bad local situation.

The engagement processes in Geraldton included a wide variety of tools and techniques arrayed on behalf of a strategic vision for democratic governance. These ranged from 36 small “World Cafes” to a large “21st Century Town Hall Meeting” and from rigorous Deliberative Survey Polling to an open, online deliberation platform (See Section II Part D). A strong set of governance arrangements planned, monitored, and adapted the activities (See Section II Part C).

As of late 2015 two years after the planned end of the 2029 project the engagement approach was still continuing and had become a “default” option for working toward a better kind of governance (See Section II Part E).

The Focus of this Report

In 2009 -10, Geraldton faced a combination of two major challenges:

- impending environmental, economic, and demographic changes and difficult policy issues, summarized as “sustainability,” about which there was a sense of importance and urgency and also substantial controversy, and
- a governance challenge, summarized as “legitimacy,” including a lack of “trust” among citizens in their local government and a corresponding uncertainty (or lack of trust) among local government leaders about the community’s and citizens’ capacity and willingness to make and support decisions and to go forward together.

This report focuses on the latter aspect of the situation, the issue of “legitimacy for action.” As noted above, the Report arises from a process of investigation that was and remains focused on the issue of “connecting citizens and local government officials” or “citizen engagement.” Engagement, of course, needs to be about something; so this report also outlines some of the “sustainability” outcomes in City policy and program. The presence of these outcomes measures, in part, the extent to which “legitimacy for action” was achieved; that is, they constitute a key aspect of the “effectiveness” of the process.

The engagement processes and the underlying practice can be seen as relatively independent of the sustainability subject matter. Thus, the practice can be considered as potentially usable for other major issues, whether functional topics or process events (such as setting community
goals or deciding themes for planning reports) around which the question of legitimacy for action presents itself.

The Geraldton practice, then, is not directly relevant for situations where the local government has already decided on a policy or program action and is simply informing citizens or seeking their support. The latter are legitimate and often necessary endeavors, but they are importantly different from the aims of the Geraldton practice under consideration here.

“Connecting citizens and local government officials” covers a wide range of structures and processes. The engagement/participation field usually summarizes this variety along a spectrum based on the nature of public impact intended. Here, for example, are the categories of that spectrum that are suggested by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)3:

| Inform – Consult – Involve – Collaborate - Empower |

Each of these categories carries its own kind of promises that the government implicitly or explicitly makes to citizens about how the results of the engagement will be used. (See Section III). The overall Geraldton 2029 practice lies at the collaborate/empower end of the spectrum. An effort to persuade citizens and elicit their support for a proposal from the local government lies at the opposite end of the spectrum: inform/consult.

The “Legitimacy” Issue

The LGRC Advisory Group’s selection of the Geraldton example for study was rooted in the story of the City’s uncertainty about the citizens’ understanding of and support for City action around sustainability. A process of engagement reportedly cleared that uncertainty away and developed a sense of legitimacy for action.

Taken together, LGRC members’ comments last June, in explaining their selection of the Geraldton example for further research, created the focus for our research and for the analyses presented in this Report. Here are excerpts (all are direct quotes) from those comments:

- We need to consider new approaches in order for representative democracy (and people’s perceptions of representative democracy) to move forward.
- How many times do we assume our communities don’t have the capacity to change in meaningful ways? I want to know more about how the deliberative processes created the transformation in Geraldton.
- [This example] has broad applicability for public understanding of issues, as a channel to disseminate information/potential solutions and their probable impact, building a basis for trust and engagement.

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Exploring innovative techniques in civic deliberation is spot on.

Not focusing on the typical technological solution. How can we better ‘target’ our reach to specific cultural and community groups, populations we have not historically reached? How do we better ‘assemble’ our citizens in conversation without it becoming a free for all and explore a better way to provide opportunities for structured engagement.

Integration of groups, perspectives and marginalized persons into a process can allow better sharing of information and informed status of residents and officials.

Begin to align citizens with policy questions that will be at the forefront of decisions for local government.

The ‘Dialogue and Deliberation’ type of empowerment in decision-making can be more widely understood and utilized in the US.

Scholars and practitioners have devoted much attention to this “legitimacy” or “trust in government” issue and the potential for a different kind of participation to resolve it. A recent book review briskly states the widely shared view of the current situation.

Public trust in government, particularly in the United States and United Kingdom, is at all-time lows, and levels of polarization in the United States and other countries are extremely high. (Bird, 2014, p.891)

Many measures of trust are considerably higher for US local government than for state or national governments. This provides little solace because none of the trust levels is very high. Local government officials and staff, in Australia as well as in the US and elsewhere, experience a frustration and an uncertainty about their government’s relationship with citizens. This frustration and uncertainty can engender a substantial obstacle: the sense of a lack of “legitimacy for action” on issues of substantial significance and, even worse, with regard to the fundamental question of the roles and competence of the government as a whole.

The Geraldton experience seems to speak to these situations. It presents the question: can dramatic and skillful processes for participation and citizen engagement help address the legitimacy problem, improve governance long-term, and enable the government to act on important issues? After reviewing recent efforts to use participation to create legitimacy, one cautious scholar concluded that this is “an ambition rather than a guarantee” (Fung, 2015, p.5). This seems realistic, but there being no guarantees in life anyway, it is perhaps a promising assessment. Many other scholars and advocates are more optimistic, some less so.

Exploration of the Geraldton experience and practice, which has its downsides as well as its successes, offers an opportunity to better understand the participation “ambition” and its potential for positive impact in this city of 40,000 and also in US communities and local governments.

Sources for the Research
The Geraldton practice has been vetted in international competitive venues and received several awards. The award websites provide us some useful background information about the

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4 Places to start to explore these efforts include the Deliberative Democracy Consortium, National Coalition for Dialog and Deliberation, Public Agenda, IAP2, National Center for Civil Discourse and others.
Geraldton experience. The first award was a Finalist status for the Mohn Prize for “Vitalizing Democracy Through Participation,” awarded in 2011 by the Bertelsmann Foundation in Germany. Also in 2011, Geraldton won the Criteria Award for “Community Involvement” from the International Awards for Livable Communities. The City’s process won a Project of the Year award from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). Geraldton was a Global winner in the Smarter Cities Challenge conducted by IBM for the City’s online and electronic tactics for citizen engagement.

We have also drawn upon credible information and assessments from observers and participants. A research/action grant to the City of Greater Geraldton and Curtin University, a 50,000-student, public research university in Perth, also funded close monitoring and evaluation of the engagement activities, the results of which have been reported in several journals. We also have interim and retrospective assessments from the City Director who served as Project Director for the City and by the lead Curtin process designer and her associates. We have communicated with some key participants. We have also examined primary sources such as the City’s Annual Reports, news media, information on the City’s website, etc. We have consulted with citizen engagement experts who were not involved in the Geraldton effort, but we have not found any formal evaluations of the experience by such analysts. As appropriate, this report provides long excerpts from published reports so that the reader gets the full sense of that author’s thoughts. Throughout the Report, we have cited our sources.

A major source of information and analysis about the Geraldton experience is the Curtin University Sustainable Policy Institute (CUSP) in Perth, Western Australia. Dr. Janette Hartz-Karp led the process design and research/monitoring consultant team. She and her CUSP colleagues were deeply involved in carrying out the processes. They have published studies of the Geraldton initiative in several scholarly journals. She has a record of work on and publications about deliberative democracy and citizen engagement processes, and a strong reputation in those fields in Australia and elsewhere.

The prominence of CUSP and Hartz-Karp as sources for what we know about the Geraldton experience has plusses and minuses. On the one hand, they were participants: they bring an intimate knowledge of the actual events. Moreover, they were participant-observers, a respectable category of researchers. They bring knowledge of the field, both scholarly and practitioner, which provides context and intellectual frameworks to our understandings. On the other hand – as noted above – we have not found assessments by other scholars or analysts that could serve as checks against the views of Hartz-Karp and her colleagues. (We have checked main findings with other participants, as noted in the text and footnotes of the Report.) We have no reason to doubt the reliability of the CUSP/Hartz-Karp work; in fact, on balance

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5 The LivCom Awards were launched in 1997 and is the World’s only Awards Competition focusing on International Best Practice regarding the management of the local environment. [It has a] Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Source: LivComawards.com

their writings are straightforward about failures, discreet about personalities, and hedged about claims of success. The occasional lapses into boosterish talk are few and easily noticeable. The real disadvantage is the lack of studies by others. I note all of this in order to alert the reader. If you wish, you can pay attention to the citations about sources and apply whatever discount rate you judge necessary. This report treats the CUSP/Hartz-Karp findings as excellent sources; I only wish there were more sources by other observers. I hope and expect there will be more in the future (See also Section II-part B regarding the contributions of Hartz-Karp and CUSP in the Geraldton 2029 process).

How this Report is Organized
Following this Introduction, Section II describes and analyzes Geraldton’s experience with the “2029 and Beyond” initiative, including context; governance of the process; engagement tools and techniques, costs, and effectiveness. Insights and lessons are drawn along the way.

The experience in Geraldton is complex, extensive and, of course, shaped by contextual factors. Section III advances the analysis by abstracting, from the Geraldton story, the practice that might be adapted for use elsewhere. Some discussion about the potential for adaptation for other communities is offered. This distinction between the “experience” (or, the story) on the one hand, and the “practice” (or, the model) on the other hand, is important to any effort to learn from other cities, especially those outside the U.S. Insights and lessons can be drawn from both the story and the model.

Section IV reports briefly on efforts in some other cities to do something similar to the practice in Geraldton. Such comparisons help further illuminate the practice and its potential for adaptation.

Section V summarizes some major points and then speaks to the question of “What to do next?” (This Section is also reproduced as a separate document: “Synopsis and What to do Next?”).

II. More detailed description of the Greater Geraldton experience

This Section contains several Parts:

| A. The situation in Geraldton, ca. 2009 |
| B. How did Geraldton respond to this situation? (including some factors that shaped the Geraldton 2029 project) |
| C. How citizens and local government connected in the Geraldton 2029 and Beyond process: tools and techniques, costs, events |
| D. Governance and management for the engagement process |
| E. Effectiveness/outcomes/impacts of what they did in Geraldton |

A. The Situation in Geraldton, ca. 2009

By 2009-2010, Geraldton government leaders reportedly felt that the community faced two
major challenges: one regarding governance and the other regarding sustainability and resilience.

In addition, substantial, heated, and on-going local governance controversies about taxes and consolidations with neighboring jurisdictions surrounded and sometimes intersected with Geraldton’s citizen engagement efforts. Nasty episodes in the long-running struggle about taxes became, in 2012-13, the occasion for the City CEO, new to that post in 2009 and a main champion for the engagement processes, to decide not to renew his contract. In the 2013 and 2015 elections, rates increases were the major issue and all but two of the 2012 elected officials were defeated, including the Mayor.

The following excerpt, from a scholarly article co-authored in 2015 by the Curtin University consultant to the Geraldton 2029 process, summarizes the governance situation in 2010.

Although Greater Geraldton, like most other local governments, had been consulting with its residents, in the main, such efforts were perceived by the public to be “too little too late.” As a result, residents showed signs of being alienated from the institutions of government (e.g. in low local government voting rates), disinterested in the government’s attempts at consultation (rarely participating in any numbers), and frustrated, sometimes angry or even outraged with the decisions of the local government (gleaned through informal discussions with editor Geraldton Guardian during 2010, semi-structured interviews with study participants in 2012-13 and a formal interview with Geraldton CEO in February 2010). Correspondingly, public officials felt dissatisfied with this state of affairs, feeling that their consultations were not worth the effort since the general public was indifferent, ill-informed, or narrowly and unalterably self-interested (as assessed during informal discussions with Geraldton staff and Councilors during 2010) (Weymouth and Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.9).

The following describes the sustainability challenges that the City leadership felt Geraldton faced. The excerpt is from the City’s application in late 2010 for the Mohn Prize for “Vitalizing Democracy through Participation.”

[Greater Geraldton] is in [the State of] Western Australia (WA), which comprises one-third of Australia’s landmass but has a relatively small population of less than 2.5 million. Most people [in the State] live in the capital city, Perth, and the more fertile south-western corner of the State. Away from the coast, most of WA is a huge undeveloped stretch of outback. The Greater Geraldton City-Region is located 424 kilometers north of Perth. Its hub is Geraldton, a port city, known as the capital of the Mid West, and sometimes the lobster capital of the world. The City-Region has a population of around 40,000, out of a total of 53,000 living in the larger Mid-West Region.

Although fishing and agriculture (wheat and wool) were the traditional economic backbone of the region’s economy, with collapsing fish stocks and draught, both these industries have recently been in decline. On the other hand, the mining industry has

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7 Extended excerpt from a “Case Study” about the City of Greater Geraldton. It was submitted in a 2010-11 application for the Mohn Prize for “Vitalizing Democracy through Participation.” (Hartz-Karp & Tillmann, 2011, p.5-6)
been booming. High technology developments and alternative energy opportunities are on the horizon.

As a result, the City-Region is poised to develop significantly, with the prediction of 80,000 - 100,000 residents by 2020 – 2030 and a population capacity estimated at 230,000. However not all residents support such growth and the changes it will bring, preferring to retain the “country feel and lifestyle” and the status quo.

While changes will undoubtedly occur despite the best-made plans, the City-Region has determined it must improve its resilience and become more sustainable, not just for the current population but for future generations. The community is currently at a crossroads as to how to achieve this.

B. How did Geraldton respond to this situation, this “crossroads?”

It seems important to note that some people in Geraldton might not have regarded the situation around 2009 as a “crossroads,” that is, a definitive requirement for a major decision. All of the functional challenges, for example, might have been treated as discrete issues, instead of wrapping them together and declaring them a “crossroads.” Alternative metaphors might have included “muddling through,” “let sleeping dogs lie,” or “just go ahead and act and let the chips fall where they may.” The perception, the choice, by City leaders to see the local situation as requiring significant and immediate decisions was the crucial first step.

The second step was the set of decisions that initiated a major, highly visible effort to engage the community in a way that took on both the governance and the sustainability issues, the four year “Geraldton 2029 and Beyond” process and related activities.

Such choice-making involves a calculation about timing. Good process designers, as good political analysts, emphasize “the importance of engagement occurring early in the life of a policy challenge,” that is, before so many steps have been taken that the options and perhaps even the outcomes seem to be foregone conclusions (Carson, 2013, p.285). Geraldton’s timing in this regard seems to have been appropriate. For our purposes, the relevant finding is the importance of the question of whether the local process of problem definition, policy development, and leadership debate is relatively open to the results and influence of a serious citizen engagement effort. If not, then a quite different strategy and mix of tools would be appropriate, probably moving on the IAP2 spectrum (see Section I) to “inform” and “consult.”

The City launched “Geraldton 2029 and Beyond” on March 10, 2010 at an open town meeting. The aims of the project early on were stated in the Mohn Prize application, submitted late 2010 (The “researching” aims and the word choices about “pioneering” probably reflect some larger ambitions as well as the fact that the initiative was supported by significant grants from Australian social science research institutions).

“The aims of the initiative are diverse and branch out over the following issues:

- Finding ways to foster citizen interest in, understanding of, and willingness to
contribute to resolving the critical, often complex issues that arise in creating a sustainable community.

- Pioneering new ways of collaborative decision-making between ordinary people, government, business/industry and non-government organizations (NGOs); and joint ownership of the agreed action to be taken.
- Researching the most effective ways of in-person and online public participation to resolve complex issues.
- Developing and implementing sustainability plans for the Greater Geraldton City-Region that enhance government accountability and legitimacy.
- Bringing about ongoing attitudinal change and increasing the capacity for collaborative problem solving and decision-making, so that this becomes an expected way of governance.
- Pioneering and researching new ways to achieve democratic renewal. (Hartz-Karp & Tillmann, 2011, p.7-8)

Over the period since 2010, each of these aims has been substantially achieved.

A few factors appear to have substantially influenced the shaping of the project from early on. I do not see any of these items, in the particular form they appear in the Geraldton experience, as definitively unique and necessary such that their absence would preclude adaptation of the Geraldton practice for use elsewhere. On the other hand, these items support generalizable points relating to the potential for adaptation for US communities.

First, a person in an authoritative position championed the initiative.

In a formal 2011 interview, a key City department director observed: “A new CEO arrived in Geraldton with fresh eyes and could see there were opportunities but also the potential for some real challenges (Grant, 2011, p.5).” The CEO, Toni Brun, is listed as the “sponsor” of the 2029 process in early documents. The Mayor throughout the period of the 2029 Project, Ian Carpenter, was supportive of the Project.

The fact that the CEO was new may or may not have made the difference. But the generalizable, necessary element is the need for a champion with authority and power inside the local government.

This leads to a second, related challenge, that the rest of the city hall be on board with the effort or be persuaded that they must be or risk being left behind. Such an effort may entail disruptive change inside the government. In the Geraldton case, the Council was divided but amenable (see Part C below), and the staff also had to be brought along (see Part E, below.) Geraldton seems to have dealt with these challenges adequately but not without pain.

Money Matters

A large research and action grant, along with commitments of substantial City funding and State Government monies and from other sources, put the project on a rather solid financial footing at an early stage. The Geraldton practice was not inexpensive (upwards of $600,000 over the four years; see
below, Section II Part C), though a thoughtfully trimmed down adaptation probably need not be as costly. On the other hand, the cost would be greater in a larger locality. The generalizable necessary element is that funding will be necessary and that early money, especially outside money, is especially beneficial.

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**Geraldton is a small city (40,000) with a distinctive culture.**

The community had a low level of civic organization, except for sporting clubs. Residents are oriented to informality, quality of life and outdoor activities. The place is relatively isolated. While some things might be easier because of the small size, others might be more difficult.

The trust and sustainability challenges are analogous to issues in many much larger places: the practice is not limited to small cities. While the specific assembly of engagement tools was geared to the Geraldton situation, the essential approach is applicable anywhere. The approach involves strong process design that gears the activities to the local situation (See Section III on “the practice.”). Furthermore, larger jurisdictions have successfully undertaken comparably complicated deliberative engagement processes (See Section IV regarding comparisons with other places).

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**State government roles.**

For Australian local governments, state governments matter a lot. Local government is part of and the creature of the State government. A Minister of the State of Western Australia (WA) had undertaken strong support for local governance reform initiatives. Also the Ministry issued mandates for various planning processes and reports, responses to which weave through but do not appear to have altered the Geraldton process. WA State provided some funding and in-kind support for the local effort. Although the Australian intergovernmental system is different from the US, the role of the WA State in the Geraldton experience does not seem to disqualify that experience from consideration for transfer to the US.

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**Media Matters.**

Some media leaders, the editor of the local newspaper (the Geraldton Guardian) and the coordinator of the Indigenous radio station, signed onto the 2029 Project early. They agreed to serve on the Alliance Governance Group, an important initial element of the governance/management structure for the Project. Although the Group eventually disbanded, the engagement resulted in an improvement in the informal trust relationships, among others, between the City and these media outlets for the duration of the Project.

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**Use of consultants.**

An interesting element is the effect of the process design and implementation consultants. Dr. Janette Hartz-Karp and her CUSP colleagues at Curtin University (in Perth) joined with the City to obtain significant research/action funding for the 2029 effort. She and the Center had been involved in other citizen engagement efforts, especially in Western Australia.
Notably, previous research showed that the reason for the large number of successful deliberative democracy initiatives in Western Australia over a five-year period was the unique partnership between a decision-maker (in that instance, a State Minister) and an independent process designer (also involved in the Geraldton project). (Hartz-Karp & Tillmann, 2011, p.9)

Presumably, Hartz-Karp is the “independent process designer” mentioned. The connection between her and the WA Minister was indeed unique and no doubt powerful.

Hartz-Karp and the Curtin team were important to the Geraldton experience. But so were other people including the City CEO and Mayor, various staff people, the newspaper editor, and many citizens. The point here is that selection of a process consultant is very important and is up to City leaders to decide.

For this kind of effort, it is necessary to use an outside person with excellent experience and credentials. By now there are a goodly number of such persons in the US and elsewhere. Something like the Geraldton practice should not be undertaken without a partnership with such a person. (Especially, one should not use a process consultant who is more interested in her/his own branded gimmick than in your city and you.)

The Geraldton process used a number of outside consultants for process planning, facilitation, and conduct of some of the more technical activities and research/evaluations. In a published interview, the City Director (a department head) responsible for coordinating the initiative inside City Hall explained that they did not use consultants “who come in and actually undertake the whole process.” Instead, they “brought people in to provide that little spark of inspiration; to give us a little taste of what’s happening out in the world.” This begins to sound a little defensive as to outsiders’ influence, but her further description is worth quoting for a perspective from inside Geraldton City Hall and also for an apt summary of how to best use consultants:

“Having outsider experts was also about capacity-building because…this is new for us. We’re all learning. The involvement of external consultants has been about capacity-building for our staff, including myself—and about bringing a different view to our community and leaving it with us to then decide how we progress with it, rather than directing or running it for us…” (Grant, 2011, p.9)

Related engagement efforts in Australia. By 2009-2010, a context of citizen engagement efforts in WA and elsewhere in Australia (perhaps most notably, the Citizens’ Parliament of 2009 and a major land use planning process in Perth in 2004-2005) had gained some attention. Associated with these efforts was the emergence of a cadre of advocates, scholars, and process designers/facilitators with experience, enthusiasm and capacity (Hartz-Karp is among these folks and seems to enjoy a positive reputation). So, the Geraldton effort was not a completely strange or radical idea; it was closely related to what the City Director referred to as “what’s happening out in the world.” In most OECD countries including the US, such a context of engagement initiatives and skilled people is now present. It may, nonetheless, be useful for any leader in a US community to publicly highlight practice in other localities in order to promote the idea that such initiatives have been tested and are reasonably normal.
C. The Citizen Engagement Process - Activities, Events, Costs (including tools/ techniques used)

Figure 1 below visualizes the array of tools and techniques used in the first year or so of the Geraldton 2029 and Beyond process. The Figure makes abundantly clear that this was a quite complex process. Like the governance structures (in Part D and Appendix One), this array is broad, complicated and ambitious in scope.

FIGURE ONE – Main tools and events in the Geraldton 2029 and Beyond project

Costs and Revenues
As context for cost data, the City’s operating budgets in these years were about $60-70 million with deficits of up to 10%. The City employed about 325 FTEs in 2013. Details on the cost of some specific activities are provided in Appendix Three, below.

As to total costs, we asked the Geraldton City Director who served as Project Manager for the process:

Question: “Does the City have an overall tally of the cost of the citizen engagement processes over the four-year period, 2010 – 2013, up to the start of the participatory budgeting? We will be aiming to provide numbers that reflect contributions from all sources so that our report gives a roughly accurate price for all the activities described.”

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8 Source – chart from Weymouth and Hartz-Karp’s article p.16 – Figure 1
Journal of Economic and Social Policy, Vol. 17, Iss. 1 [2015], Art. 4
Answer: “Approximately [$590,000 US] prior to the Participatory Budgeting initiative. This was for engagement activities including surveys, workshops, forums or summits but excludes staff time. Staff time would have included the gathering of information for documents shared during the engagement process, time staff spent organizing and facilitating engagement activities and time spent collating the results, sharing the reports with the community and in some cases even holding special briefing meetings to explain how their contributions influenced decision making. The PB initiatives have cost in the vicinity of [$233,000 US].”

The following summarizes revenue sources for the 2029 project as of late 2010. These are early monies and, even better, mainly outside monies.

Geraldton and Curtin University, committed to work together. The project that was designed as a result of this partnership was successful in achieving a prestigious, 3-year Australian Research Council grant, funding the research component; as well as another grant from the WA Lotteries Commission helping to fund the deliberations. The City is providing a significant component of the cash contribution and support for this initiative. In addition, other key WA [State] Government partners are providing support, including the Mid-West Development Corporation, the WA Department of Planning, and the WA Local Government Association (Hartz-Karp & Tillmann, 2011, p.9-12).

Activities and Tools

The array of mechanisms and events used in Geraldton exemplifies an approach of assembling, adapting and combining activities on behalf of a larger strategic process and goals (Carson & Hartz-Karp, 2005). This approach seems appropriate for a large initiative aimed at large goals. It shifts the process design focus from implementation of one or two engagement techniques to a focus on assembling an array of techniques that contribute to an overall process aimed at achieving the goals and strategy. This contrasts with many one/off engagement experiences.

The assembling and combining characteristics of the processes included, for example, varieties of ways for citizens to be involved and learning experiences early on, experiences that allow citizens and City personnel to gain an acquaintance with the style and requirements of “deliberation.” (See also Section III).

In addition, the Project applied what the process design consultants called “adaptive management”:

…. applying a flexible, responsive approach with systematic deliberative learning to continuously improve participation in the resolution of wicked problems. Hence, in response to emergent opportunities and threats, the project creatively deployed a comprehensive range of deliberative democracy techniques - small and large scale, face-to-face and online, incorporating social media and the regular press - in order to broaden and deepen participation in the resolution of emergent wicked problems

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9 Personal communication (E-mail) from Andrea Selvey on September 29, 2015
The City Director assigned to coordinate the process internally explained that “key points were actually defining what this project was. The process itself has unfolded as we’ve worked with it.” (Grant, 2011, p.5-6) “This wasn’t going to be the usual engagement or consultation/engagement process of running a few workshops” (Grant, 2011, p.8).

Appendix Three to this Report provides descriptions of main activities undertaken in the 2029 process with a focus on the 2010-2013 period, but also including more recent activities. A cost estimate is provided for many items (Throughout this Report, we have deleted from the text the Australian dollar amounts for specific activities and inserted instead equivalents in US dollars using the 2010 exchange rate). For some items, the Appendix also indicates initial assessments of effectiveness and “outcomes” from the engagement activity. Part E, below, offers further discussion and more general assessment of the “effectiveness” of the Geraldton 2029 activities.

In 2013, the City of Greater Geraldton (CGG) developed, published and began to implement a follow-up phase of citizen engagement and governance change: “#changesCGG.” The effort includes both an “external” aspect, focused on City/citizens relationships and an “internal” aspect, focused on staff development and management. The former reflects the City leadership’s commitment to continuing the work to create better City/citizen connections and to develop a different (better) governance approach. The plan begins to mesh the policy/program focus of the 2029 process with the budget and financial stability issues that had erupted into the 2012-13 controversy over a rates increase. The internal aspect of #changesCGG reflects the City’s evolving understanding of its own contribution to local governance problems and also a continued effort to address the “high level of dissatisfaction” among staff that was highlighted by a 2011 survey. Thus, the #changesCGG effort, which continues to shape the City’s work – incorporates and builds upon insights and lessons from the 2029 experience, an important result of the Geraldton practice.

D. Governance and Management of the Engagement Project

Planners of the Geraldton 2029 and Beyond initiative undertook a politically ambitious effort to engage relevant actors early on. These actors ranged from the influential editor of the local newspaper to corporate executives to cadres of “ordinary citizens.” City Director Selvey explained that the City established partnerships that crossed boundaries: “we recognized right at the very outset that we needed to involve partners from sectors across the community because developing a strategic direction was not something which the Council could achieve by itself” (Grant, 2011, p.5-6).

These governance structures are described in Appendix One to this Report. Some comments about a few characteristics of the effort are offered here.

First, the array of structures and participants listed in the Appendix is large, even unwieldy. Its scope reflects the planners’ sense of the largeness of the problems to be addressed, the complexity of the process they envisioned, and the breadth of interests affected (In Part C above, the reader found similar scope and complexity in the array of tools and techniques used and the duration of the effort).
The Geraldton experience involves “wicked problems,” not small ones (The size of one’s problems is, of course, a relative and subjective matter. As Jimmy Stewart’s character said in the movie “Harvey”, no one goes into a bar with small problems). The array of structures and participants is made to fit the size and shape of the problems to be addressed. (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.1) So, the Geraldton governance arrangements for the 2029 process cannot be directly adopted by US cities: each locality’s governance arrangements for its deliberative engagements should “fit” the time and the local circumstances.

Second, the planners anticipated that the governance structure of the initiative “will grow and change as the need arises” (The reader saw, in Part C of this Section, above, a similar posture toward the tools and techniques used). Thus, the list in Appendix One “is not of the initial plans for this initiative, but rather what actually happened in the first year and the last update of what [was] planned for the [second] year (Hartz-Karp & Tillmann, 2011, p.9). The addition, in 2013, of the #changesCGG initiative, which formally extended the engagement effort, may be seen as a further adaptation.

Third, the structure for governance of the project did not have a specified budget. “All members are either volunteering their services or carrying out their paid or in-kind designated roles on the project” (Hartz-Karp & Tillmann, 2011, p.9).

Finally, there is ambiguity in the relationship between the authoritative institutions of the City (Council, CEO, Directors, etc) and these Geraldton 2029 structures. As described below, this ambiguity between the two can lead to some difficulties.

Some such ambiguity is inherent in carrying out many collaborative engagement activities. The design consultant observed that “It is exceedingly difficult for large and formal institutions to be continuously flexible.” Thus, there is an “important role of process design that is outside the normal structures and constraints of government, industry and community organizations” (Hartz-Karp & Tillmann, 2011, p.9).

The interesting list of groups in Appendix One obscures an essential point: the topic here is power. Power was being delegated and rearranged, at least temporarily and perhaps for a longer term. That likely meant some people were going to become excited and others would become upset. Further, the arrangements described here are “outside the normal structures and constraints of government, industry and community organizations.” The City’s internal hierarchical structure of power and the Mayor and Council’s representational model (principal/agent model in academic parlance) vis a vis the citizenry might not apply and might end up being challenged and even altered. This happened in Geraldton. The community seems to have navigated these ambiguities effectively, but not without some difficulties.

The Geraldton experience with these ambiguous governance arrangements offers useful cautions and learning opportunities. Two stories highlight these issues.
First, the Alliance Governance Group was intended to oversee the whole public deliberation process, to prioritize recommendations as needed, and to assist with implementation. In a sense, the Group would stand between the City and the citizens in the process (Prioritization of ideas in 2010, for the Council’s consideration, from World Cafes and other techniques, for example, was done by the Alliance Group and some of the Community Champions).

In the first year or so, this Group helped establish the legitimacy of the engagement process (Not “legitimacy” of the City per se, but of this new 2029 Project). The Group did not, however, have final decision-making authority; that lay with the Council and/or the CEO. “A number of elected members [of the Council] were concerned about the potential displacement of their own role and power, so the Alliance Group existed in tepid waters” (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.10). Our sources do not comment on the attitude of the CEO and staff. This tension “eroded the perceived efficacy of the Alliance Group, causing many of the high profile members to lose interest, and, by mutual agreement, it was disbanded after a few years” (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.10).

In a 2015 retrospective assessment, Hartz-Karp (the Curtin University design consultant) and Robert Weymouth (who had worked for the Western Australia Local Government Association and joined the CUSP staff and became a PhD Candidate at Curtin) reflected upon the situation:

The literature has exposed such dilemmas in other venues, with the strictures of the [WA State Local Government] Act and the attitude of such Councillors clearly reflecting the elite attitudes of the current ‘principal-agent’ model of representative democracy .... The demise of the Alliance Group highlighted the importance of decision-makers agreeing and committing to the influence of any public participation prior to its commencement if the continuing effort and good will of citizens was to be nurtured. For the leadership of the City of Greater Geraldton, this brought to light a system dynamic that was not clear beforehand. If a dedicated and empowered body of non-elected Alliance Group members could not easily coexist with local government, given its cultural and legislative constraints (a wicked governance problem), then a different means of collaborative governance would need to be pioneered (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.11).

The disbanding of this presumably high-powered group could have been disastrous for the 2029 initiative. According to Weymouth and Hartz-Karp, however, there was a “positive, unintended consequence:”

This [disbanding] began an improvement in the trust relationship between [individual] members which further resulted in several industry heads, Indigenous leaders, the editor of the local newspaper, (the Geraldton Guardian), and the coordinator of the Indigenous radio station continuing to work with the City as informal partners in the ongoing project.... This informal relationship, particularly with the editor of the very widely read Guardian, was effective in altering the typically more combative relationship between a local government and the local media for the duration of the project” (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.11).

A second story arising from the tension described above is rather more dramatic and suggests more implications. Taxation had been, for years, a source of on-going, vociferous controversy in
Geraldton politics, as it is in many US communities. Resentments about two jurisdictional mergers, decisively opposed in local referenda but imposed anyway because the number of people voting did not pass the State-required threshold, exacerbated negative attitudes toward the government.

In 2012, the Council decided to significantly raise property taxes and service charges (a reported 28% average rates increase for households over several years). This was done “with minimal community participation” (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.21). These decisions seem to have taken place separate from and parallel to the 2029 Project. The Council advertised to provide information about the rates rise and made formal requests for community feedback, but these procedures “no longer met community expectations of sharing in important decision-making processes” (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.22).

CEO Brun viewed the rate rise in the context of efforts he had initiated to revamp the City’s budgeting process and to grapple with previously unrecognized deficits. Shane Van Steen, a Councillor in 2012 who was re-elected in 2013, was elected Mayor in 2015, and opposed the rates rise in both campaigns, recalled recently that many Councilors and staff “believed they were making a tough but necessary decision that the community would not support.” They also believed, he said, that “the rates rise was a way of delivering the community’s desires as set out in the 2029 [process].”

There’s the nub and the rub. People wanted lots of things but did not want to pay for them, let alone pay for unpaid bills from the past. Another way to say that is: the judgment as to what was “necessary” because of what was “desired” did not involve citizens in deliberations about realistic trade-offs. The 2029 process design (by postponing the participatory budgeting elements to the end of the project) and the Council itself in effect had not trusted the citizens to deal with those hard choices.

The struggle about taxes and revenue-raising in Geraldton was the major cause of the 2012-13 turmoil.

Viewed from the perspective of the Geraldton 2029 process, the turmoil was exacerbated by a violated expectation for citizen involvement.

The largest setback in the trend of increasing community-wide trust occurred during the final year of the ‘2029 and Beyond’ initiative, when the City decided to significantly raise property rates and service charges with minimal community participation. The City had determined that this rate rise was required to address cost shifting from the State Government, looming infrastructure backlogs, and a revaluation of assets (ABCNews, 2012). Simply advertising in the local paper to inform the community of the rate rise, together with a formal request for feedback, no longer met community expectations of sharing in important decision-making processes (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.22).

The ensuing controversy and threatened State intervention resulted in a dramatic outcome that drew upon the by then familiar methods and values of the 2029 process. The 2029 project plan

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10 Personal communication (E-mail) from Shane Van Steen December 21, 2015.
for participatory budgeting was already on the shelf and available as a way to go forward.

... a citizen activist group spontaneously formed (CGGRDC, 2012) and raised a complaint against the City in the judicial forum of the State Administrative Tribunal. During the mediation process, a number of commitments were made to avoid the matter going to hearing, including a commitment by the City to more collaboration and transparency with the community on the following year’s budget (CGG, 2013). The mechanism proposed for this collaboration was Participatory Budgeting (PB). This resulted in the implementation of two deliberative Panel PBs - one PB on the City’s entire operational budget, and another on the long-term capital works program.... [A]n unfortunate situation was turned into a significant opportunity” (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.22).

Weymouth suggests separately that the PB adopted in 2013 “is more comprehensive than would have been envisioned [in the 2010 design] both because of the confidence that had been built in the previous years leading up to it, but also because of the large mistake that had been made in community engagement [in] the previous year’s budget.”

The turmoil in reaction to the rates increase had multiple effects for City leaders. It was the context for the CEO’s decision not to renew his contract in 2013 (In a public comment regretting the CEO’s decision, Mayor Carpenter referred to personal attacks on Brun via social media). All but one of the incumbents running in the 2013 half-Council election were defeated. The winning incumbent, Van Steen, ran against the rates rise. In 2015, he defeated Mayor Carpenter, who served over the period of the 2029 Project, in a campaign again dominated by this rates issue (but not by differences about the 2029 Project). Also, when the rest of the incumbents from the rates rise decision ran for election in 2015, all but one were defeated.

These two stories illustrate the tension between (a) a model in which government officials are authorized by elections and by on-going implicit trust to make decisions on behalf of citizens and (b) a model in which citizens are more directly involved in decision-making (if only because the aforementioned “implicit trust” is not present). The Geraldton 2029 process was a parallel, simultaneous use of the second model with the aim of longer-term development of “new ways of collaborative decision-making.” The events of 2013-15 produced a more tumultuous meshing of the two models.

One important lesson from these stories, for the purposes of this report, might be that City authorities should be clear to themselves and to the public about implied or explicit promises being made about shared decision-making and authority (See further discussion on this point in Section III). Another caution is that, no matter how careful the planners might be in setting up such endeavors, leaders must be prepared to adjust and deal with such differences on behalf of the overall goals of the effort. A third is that effective citizen engagement sets up expectations, expectations held by City authorities and/or by citizens, that may affect aspects of City/citizens relations that have not explicitly been a part of the engagement process.

11 Personal communication (E-mail) from R. Weymouth November 16, 2015.
A fourth is that citizen engagement should not shield the citizens from the difficult choices that governing requires. In this case, the isolation of the 2029 process from the budget process contributed to a large governance problem. Through the 2029 activities during 2010-12, priorities came clear and much learning occurred about how to do public discussion better. The process design called for participatory budgeting to come a bit later, presumably based on a view that PB would best be done after some substantive capacity and behavioral prerequisites had been developed.\textsuperscript{12} This view has considerable substance; but in this case it had to be re-thought in a crisis mode. For US managers considering adapting the Geraldton practice to their community, careful consideration about the relationship to budgeting and other hard decisions would be warranted.

The risks of difficulties, as well as the odds for significant payoffs, probably increase greatly when the engagement process is as broad and ambitious as the Geraldton 2029 initiative. Participants in the Geraldton experience, City leaders as well as citizens and civic leaders, nonetheless, apparently worked their way through these perilous waters. That often doesn’t happen, but the Geraldton experience shows that it can be done and that the payoffs can be substantial (See below Part E on effectiveness and impacts).

\textbf{E. Effectiveness/ Outcomes/ Impacts}

The discussion in this Part provides assessments of effectiveness of the Geraldton experience and practice in several dimensions:

- the City’s “legitimacy to act” on sustainability issues, including City Hall’s “trust” in citizens, which is a part of that legitimacy challenge;
- citizens’ “trust” in local government; and
- performance of the engagement activities themselves as well as governance and management of the process.

Our ultimate question is whether the Geraldton 2029 Project was sufficiently effective and successful in moving toward its goals to warrant consideration by US cities for adaptation. I think the answer must be “yes.” The discussions here explain that assessment and also offer some answers to an additional question: what can we learn about that effectiveness that might help US local government leaders see what adaptations might be needed in order to use the Geraldton practice in their localities?

\textsuperscript{12} See the article on prerequisites of participatory budgeting: “Laying the Groundwork for participatory budgeting—developing a deliberative community and collaborative governance: Greater Geraldton, Western Australia” Journal of Public Deliberation, Vol 8 Issue 2, Dec 30. Personal communication (E-mail) with R. Weymouth on November 16, 2015.
We have not found evidence of any substantial opposition to or public dissatisfaction with the engagement process itself. As of early 2015, City leaders felt sufficiently confident in the public's support for the process to create and post on the City's website a detailed video that celebrates the accomplishments of the process, acknowledges some difficulties, and casts it as an important on-going community effort.¹³

Learning from what did not work, what was perhaps surprising, and what was difficult are also important. Discussions of such elements are included below as well in the previous sections.

The City's Sense of Legitimacy to Act

For purposes of this report, the single most significant question is whether, through the 2029 project, the City established a foundation, with the community, for action around the topic of “sustainability,” i.e., whether they developed legitimacy for action on that topic. Some answers have been alluded to in Parts B, C, and D above. The short summary answer is yes (See also Appendix Two for a list of reported policy/program outcomes).

In addition, the 2029 project also resulted in important changes in behaviors and attitudes inside City Hall and in consultation/participation becoming the “default” option for governance. These changes affect the “legitimacy” issue.

The “Case Study” submitted by the City for the 2011 Mohn Prize competition claims major early results regard sustainability actions. We can expect this document, given its purpose, to be boosterish. Later analyses, the list of policy outcomes, and the core thrust of this Report’s narrative, however, confirm the claim of substantial movement forward and achievements.

The most far-reaching impact thus far [that is, to late 2010] has been from the Deliberative Survey. The findings of the surprisingly high community support for the region becoming carbon neutral and for sustainable population growth, have empowered the decision-makers to take more decisive steps towards sustainability. They have given new confidence to the Region. This in turn has prompted investor confidence in supporting major sustainability infrastructure projects in the Region. These include building Australia’s largest solar photo-voltaic farm in the Geraldton Region; international

¹³ We provide the web-link for the video so that you can watch it. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOOKpnlv43Kk
investment in renewable energy infrastructure; the possibility of the Geraldton Region supplying at least 20% of the WA South West grid through wind energy; and the Region becoming a globally unique, clean energy (low carbon) resources-industry area. The local government’s new confidence has resulted in investment in sustainable transport modeling, critical to becoming carbon neutral; and related decisions such as investigating the most effective municipal waste recycling. The unintended but positive consequences of the deliberative survey process came to the fore at … Council recycling meeting, when a key detractor of recycling told his fellow Councilors that he had been wrong - that what he had learned at the Deliberative Forum had changed him into a strong proponent of recycling” (Hartz-Karp & Tillmann, 2011, p.12-14).

The Community Survey of 2010 and the Deliberative Forum and Survey that followed soon thereafter certainly seem to have had a substantial impact in producing “the local government’s new confidence.” The Community Survey showed overwhelming majorities (70 to 90%) expressing support for “sustainable” scenarios even before the participation processes started.

A report by Curtin University staff based on formal monitoring, evaluations and interviews makes these observations:

Anecdotally, some elected officials and senior City staff have remarked that the result of preferences for protecting natural areas of conservation value over driving economic development was the opposite of what they expected. Their expectation was that the community preference would be based on [the City people’s] aggregated experience of previous consultations and their personal views of community attitudes. Additionally, the decision-makers who were observing at the Forum also expressed surprise at the willingness of people to be engaged in these issues (Weymouth, Hartz-Karp & Armstrong, 2011, p.8).

One might note how out of touch with the citizenry the City personnel evidently had become by 2009 if a survey result about a topic that City leaders thought was highly significant could be such a surprise. The Forum confirmed the surprise and increased the level of support a bit among the participants for sustainability policies. On this analysis, the City staff and officials collectively not only misunderstood the substantive preferences of the citizenry; they also underestimated the citizens’ capacity and willingness to engage on matters of public importance. Reversing the conventional view of the “trust in government” challenge, the City, in effect, had not trusted citizens. The engagement process thus revealed, early on, a significant source of the locality’s governance problem: insularity and wrongheaded “knowledge” in City Hall.

Uncovering, clarifying, and addressing this issue is a significant positive result of the engagement process. It is also a significant finding from our research for LGRC because it calls attention to and enables constructive attention for US governmental leaders to one major cause of the legitimacy problem, an aspect about which local government leaders can do something directly. The engagement process itself, as a means of developing new ways of governance, helps address the issue by shifting the City’s efforts from educating and persuading the public to collaborating with and empowering the public, thus overcoming insularity and broadening the City’s sources of knowledge. Attending to this issue would surely be an important element for
investigation by leaders in any locality who face a governance problem around “legitimacy for action” and “trust in government.”

An important and related aspect is City staff behavior and attitudes. Impressively, the Geraldton City leadership added an internal City staff element to the engagement process to help address these. The Case Study for the Mohn Prize captures some of this early response:

*The project has already [2010] impacted democratic capacities in a number of ways: There have been efforts within the City-Region administration to support deliberativeness, inclusiveness and democratic decision-making, including trialing public deliberation initiatives within the agency; encouraging staff to become Community Champions; supporting the development of agency policy and strategy teams that are more inclusive, particularly of those people not usually heard; and in 2011, the agency will embark on a change management program, supported by research, that will enable the administration to model the democratic practices they are encouraging in the community: Elected Councilors have agreed to collaborate with senior City-Region staff, using facilitated deliberation, to determine budget priorities. Moreover, they have indicated that they are willing to support further empowerment of the people, including examining how the City-Region could implement the radical initiative (in Australia) of Participatory Budgeting (Hartz-Karp & Tillmann, 2011, p.12).*

An internal City Hall survey in 2011, part of the “change management program” referred to above, found considerable staff dissatisfaction. Negative survey results centered around lack of rewards for high performance and inadequate senior leadership. “Disengaged and unmotivated staffs have a dramatic impact upon the overall productivity and efficiency of the City. Unless we bring about strong and positive cultural change within the organization, the community will have to continue to fund the financial overhead associated with a disengaged and unmotivated workforce” (City of Greater Geraldton, 2013d, p.4). An additional set of training and engagement activities were undertaken at a cost of about $115,000 US.

By the end of 2011, evaluators reported that “anecdotal evidence seems to suggest strong positive influences of the [citizen engagement activities] on City staff.”

*Conversations with staff members show decreasing levels of skepticism about citizens’ ability to balance planning decisions and an awareness of a responsibility to actualize any outcomes of public deliberation as soon as possible. Staff seemed to be strongly aware of the impetus to definitively link actions by Council to any public deliberation outcomes both through public relations as well as strategic indicators (Weymouth, Hartz-Karp & Armstrong, 2011, p.13).*

Changes in views of the public held by City staff and officials did not evolve smoothly or always in one direction.

(a) Individual elected Councilors “were not unanimously comfortable” with the process. As one remarked, “That’s what I’m here for, to make decisions on behalf of the residents. They don’t want to make the difficult decisions – that’s why they elect me.” Nonetheless, the Curtin consultants reported in 2015, “unsupportive views such as these did not alter
the trajectory of trust in the public that built over time" (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.21).

(b) Another difficulty resulted from the 2011 amalgamation of contiguous jurisdictions into the new City of Greater Geraldton, resulting in significant changes in Council membership. “Interview evidence indicated that all the work done with the prior Councilors including trust and willingness to share power, had to begin anew with the newly elected members” (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.21). The Mayor during this entire period, however, remained supportive of the engagement process.

(c) The blowup over a significant rise in rates was “the largest setback in the trend of increasing community-wide trust” (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.21). The Council’s experience with shared power in the sustainability policy arena evidently did not carry over into the realm of the City budget, even though a “participatory budgeting” (PB) element had been discussed as the culminating activity of the 2029 Project. But the heightened expectations of citizens did carry over, adding fuel to the fire that taxes create everywhere and especially in Geraldton over the previous decade.

That the tax rate controversy ended with an agreement to conduct a radical form of PB (100% of operating budget, plus the ten-year capital budget plan) is impressive and suggests that the evolving deliberative, collaborative approach to governance had developed sufficient prominence and staying power in the community to be an acceptable option. Weymouth (a member of the Curtin process team) observes:

*I don’t think that there was any clear idea [in 2009] of what a PB four years in the future would be like. My opinion is that [the 2013 PB] is more comprehensive than would have been envisaged, both because of the confidence that had been built in the previous years leading up to it, but also because of the large mistake that had been made in community engagement the previous year’s budget.*

Despite anxiety among City leaders, the PB process, furthermore, turned out to be a positive experience – with everyone no doubt on good behavior and the new CEO supporting the citizens’ recommendations and the Council fully adopting them. The IAP2, in its 2014 Award to Geraldton, said “Rather than creating plans and then going public, City has learned new ways to make their budgetary decisions more rigorous and transparent” (International Association for Public Participation Australasia, 2014, p.19).

The PB was conducted mainly under the new CEO, Ken Diehm, who followed Brun in mid-2013. He later described the PB process as a very positive experience, one he had not previously engaged in, in a 2015 presentation to city leaders from elsewhere. His presentation seems to me evidence of the extent to which the 2029 Project and the deliberative engagement approach has begun to be the standard way of doing governance in Geraldton.

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14 Personal communication (E-mail) from R. Weymouth on November 16, 2015
15 The new CEO, Ken Diehm, gave a presentation on “The Future of Local Government” on May 2015, please check the YouTube [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBhzzkFSWeA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBhzzkFSWeA)
Similarly, the new Mayor in late 2015, Van Steen, who says he was not much involved in the 2029 process, provides an interesting reflection of the changes that have occurred in Geraldton. He advanced in office based on his opposition to the 2012 rates rise, a need to focus on “essential services”, and “the perceived disconnect between Council and the community.” He says that “Geraldton had come off such a low base of community satisfaction with consultation” that the 2029 process needed a few years to take effect. The 2029 process “absolutely” raised the bar for Geraldton citizens’ expectations about their involvement in governance. “It has led to a default position of community consultation on many bigger picture items before Council.” He also casts the change in terms of the balance of powers among City leaders: “the Executive are far less likely to exercise their executive powers in matters of service level delivery. These matters are now more likely to go to Council, who will send out for community feedback prior to a decision being made.” Further, the new Mayor, like the new CEO, says that PB “has given Councilors a great decision-making tool.”16

Following the Survey and Deliberative forum in 2010, City leaders initiated policies accordingly. One quick result, for example, was a separate “stakeholder” deliberation about the region’s energy chain, which produced an (ultimately unsuccessful) public/private proposal for national and State government support for an alternative energy project (Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.17). A series of such actions, originated and/or supported by the deliberative engagement processes, continued.

A crucial indicator of effectiveness of the 2029 Project on this “legitimacy for action” dimension, then, is the extent to which the City was indeed willing and able to act on sustainability topics and whether the community supported those actions. In this regard, the 2029 Project is a huge success. Appendix Two provides an account of reported City actions on “sustainability” from 2010 to early 2015.

A second crucial indicator of effectiveness is that the governance system in Geraldton has moved and seems likely to continue to move toward a stronger mode of governance with increased and regular citizen involvement. This is not a one-time achievement. “Success” will require on-going “internal and “external” efforts.

Citizens’ trust in local government

The engagement process brought immediate positive results in citizens’ views about participation in public discourse and toward local government. As noted above, these claims, in the Mohn Prize submission, likely err on the positive side.

In a community of under 40,000 people, over 1,000 have been directly involved [to late 2010] in face-to-face public deliberations. Over 4,000 have been involved online using CivicEvolution online deliberation, on the www.2029andbeyond.com.au website, and on The Guardian (the local newspaper) Facebook site regarding the 2029 initiative. The data on participation so far, has shown that more people from diverse backgrounds are using the varied opportunities offered to become involved in the deliberations.

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16 Personal communication from Mayor Van Steen December 21, 2015
It has been difficult to cross the large divide between the non-Indigenous majority of the population and the local Aboriginal people, who are overwhelmingly disadvantaged socio-economically, are subject to ongoing racism, and are themselves very divided over competing land claims. A better communication bridge has begun, with over 50 Indigenous people involved in serious face-to-face and some online conversations about their community’s future, many participating in public engagement initiatives for the first time. In one extraordinary comment, an Indigenous participant said he felt this was “the first time in the last 200 years, our people have been really given a voice.”

The media partnership has significantly increased the community involvement. Indeed, the local newspaper editor sees it as the role of the paper to continue the deliberations in the community, regardless of whether the current leaders of the project leave or stay. In short, improved deliberation is becoming embedded in everyday practice.

Follow-up qualitative research of those who have participated in the public deliberation initiatives has noted their increased civic mindedness and their hope that this project represents the start of a new way of doing things that enables everyday citizens to be heard (Hartz-Karp & Tillmann, 2011, p.12-14).

Participants reported hopes and concerns about the 2029 engagement process. These notes from an early small group discussion are typical of reported feelings about such activities everywhere (Australian Capital Territory Government, 2011):

Hopes

- Diminishing community apathy
- Identify and retain our “Gero” identity
- Active citizenship and participation
- Decrease expectations that “the Council should fix it”

Concerns

- Risk of “all talk / no action”
- Valuing and weighting opinions
- Undue influence of “power brokers” or “interest group hijacking
- People are time poor
- Risk of slowing down decision-making process/need to ensure timeliness
- Communication process and outcomes
- Maintaining realistic expectations

Before/after surveys of participants in various deliberative engagement activities consistently yielded significantly fewer negative views of the City’s “trustworthiness” in the “after” phase (Hartz-Karp, 2011, p.12-14; Weymouth & Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.26). Such data measures the citizens’ views of the City through the lens of the deliberative activity.

Assembling such increments into a foundation for generalized trust of the local government is a longer, harder, more complicated task. The political manifestation of a lack of public trust during the tax rate controversy showed that citizens’ trust around sustainability did not generalize to the tax rise issue, though the expectation of citizen participation did. But translating the tax protests
into a PB process suggests that such generalization by citizens is now feasible in Geraldton, a considerable development.

Performance of engagement activities, governance of the process, and policy/program outcomes.

Appendix Three and Appendix One describe many of the activities and the governance structures. They also provide some commentary about effectiveness of some of the specific items. Appendix Two provides a description of the policy and program outcomes that Geraldton City leaders have attributed to the engagement activities.

A few points seem worth lifting up. First, social media and online deliberation techniques were a disappointment in serving the ambitious “deliberative” aims of the 2029 Project. They showed “inadequacies to address complex issues” and to create the desired kind of discussion. In other words, these tools did not facilitate focused attention on an issue; they facilitated in-and-out, temporary attention by participants.

The early evaluation of the 2029 online deliberation has shown that it has not yet succeeded in creating deliberative mass, that is, many people deliberating, returning over and over again to contribute in ways that invite thoughtful responses (Hartz-Karp & Tillmann, 2011, p.12-14).

This is a useful observation, but it should not be taken as a wholesale rejection of online tools. The Geraldton online civic community may be less developed than in other localities. Further, the 2029 process used a number of online tools and sought to adjust and improve them. Certainly, there are many advocates for “online democracy.” The online work often does not enable or promote sustained discussion. It can, however, sometimes be made more effective by stronger facilitation. Moreover, it may provide ways for people to feel connected with the more deliberative engagements and may thus importantly enlarge the audience and the realm of participation and support for the process itself and for outcomes.

In contrast, as discussed also in Section III below, the activities that are characterized as “minipublics” did seem to be particularly effective at “creating deliberative mass” in the Geraldton situation. These activities include, for example, the Deliberative Forum, the citizen juries, the 21st Century Town Hall, and the PB Panels. These are characterized by very focused attention to the representativeness of participants, to the deliberative style of the discussions, and to the influence of the recommendations. The Curtin University researchers found that these activities contributed to citizens’, participants and non-participants, sense that the engagement activities were a legitimate form of governance. This result seems crucial to the success of the overall effort. On the other hand, it seems doubtful to me that the minipublics alone would have produced the kind of results that we see in Geraldton. For the large and complex purposes of the 2029 project, the minipublics needed to be part of a strategic assembly of activities.

Third, the City government leadership’s realization that the local government itself contributed to the lack of “legitimacy” for action and their actions to address that issue was difficult but it made a significant positive difference. Furthermore, working to bring the staff along and to address
their problems and complaints was also an important positive contribution to the overall governance situation.

Finally, considerable early effort went into creating the Alliance Group. While (as explained in Section II D) the Group eventually disbanded, its existence at the front end of the process does seem to have brought useful elite endorsement to the 2029 project. And the Project weathered the Group’s demise without disruption.

III. The Practice

The analyses in Section II focused on the experience, the story, in Geraldton. From the available evidence and testimony, I think we can say that the Geraldton 2029 and Beyond effort was effective, its impacts substantial (see Section II E), and it is thus worth exploring as to its adaptation for cities in the US. While several factors uniquely shaped the Geraldton experience (see Section II B), none of these seem to me to preclude US city leaders from drawing usable lessons from it and/or from considering adaptation of the practice in their localities. Comparison with other localities that used similar approaches suggests that the approach can produce useful results in many kinds of places (See Section IV below).

Therefore, the following discussion will abstract a “practice” from the experience, a “model” from the story. Stipulating the essential elements of the Geraldton practice will facilitate comparison with other localities’ experiences (Section IV) and enable further assessment for potential adaptation for US localities.

Given the scope and complexity of the Geraldton initiative and its commitment to flexible plans (“adaptive management”), describing a “practice,” let alone a “model,” (I prefer the former term) is a difficult challenge. I have emphasized above that there are not one or a few engagement activities that constitute the Geraldton approach. Some things worked early (World Cafes, Alliance Governance Group) but not later. Some things (“minipublics”) seemed to have some enduring results. Some things (the community survey and Deliberative Poll) mattered more for City staff’s understanding than for citizens’. With about 20 different kinds of activities over 3-4 years (some used multiple times), when one thing didn’t work, perhaps another picked up the slack. Thus, I do not think that there is a cookbook set of ingredients and steps that describes the Geraldton practice.

There are however a few elements that we can say constitute the basic practice that structured the Geraldton experience. These comprise an agenda for further thinking and planning for US city leaders who think this practice seems potentially useful for their locality.

Participants in planning and conducting the Geraldton 2029 and Beyond process have described the practice in various ways. Each of these is evocative in its own way and may be helpful to US local government leaders.

- The City Director who was Project Director said that “effective community engagement…. is about an informed conversation that is ongoing. It’s an informed and respectful dialogue with the community that’s effective for the community – it’s about an ongoing, deliberative process. Indeed, our focus is deliberative democracy where we
involve ordinary citizens in understanding the issues and finding a common voice, which then influences our plans, policies and decisions (Grant, 2011, p.5).

- The current City of Greater Geraldton website says the Project “aimed to fully engage the local community by stimulating their creativity and involving them in planning for a sustainable economic and social future. The project also aimed to provide a long-term framework for sustainable development to provide all sectors …with a high level of clarity and certainty about a desired future” (Cgg.wa.gov.au, 2015).

- The Curtin University process design consultant gives the process the label of “deliberative collaborative governance… defined as discursive politics to co-decide issues that matter.” She and a co-author reported that the project “deployed a comprehensive range of deliberative democracy techniques – small and large scale, face-to-face and online, incorporating social media and regular press – in order to broaden and deepen participation in the resolution of emergent wicked problems” (Weymouth and Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.1, 9-10).

| The Geraldton practice is an approach, not a mechanism or a tool or an event. It involves four key elements: a high stakes problem; a committed City Hall Leadership; citizen involvement that aims to be inclusive, deliberative, and influential; and very strong process design. |

It is to be used in governance situations where the functional issue is significant, complicated, contentious, and stalled, and is entwined with trust-in-government and legitimacy-for-action issues. The goals are thus to both address the functional issue and also to produce systemic, enduring improvement in local governance.

1. It requires a committed City Hall leadership, including hard thinking about and a clear grasp of the “problems” to be addressed (including problems internal to the government) and the goals to be sought, as well as a resolve to address difficulties and unpleasant facts as they arise.

2. It conducts governance – in the short-term engagement processes and also aimed at building a better governance for the longer-term – that tries to be “more inclusive of ordinary citizens…. more deliberative, and [for the citizens’ engagements] … more influential.”

3. It requires very strong process design, careful selection and implementation of tools and tactics, and adaptive management of the activities as they occur. Careful consideration should be given to how the processes will involve citizens in dealing with budget constraints or other hard choices.

In describing the practice this way, I’m saying that each of these four elements is necessary, and together they are sufficient to reflect the essence of the Geraldton experience. Thus they constitute a practice that can be considered for application elsewhere. There are enough local and generic contingencies that one cannot say that these elements are sufficient for success elsewhere. Taken together, they are sufficient to increase the likelihood of success in other localities.
Each of these four facets is discussed below.

**Elements of The Practice**

1. Determining the Nature of the Problem and Goals

The practice is intended to be useful in a situation where the functional issue is significant, complicated, contentious, and stalled, and where the trust and legitimacy issue is also significantly present. In Geraldton, two problems were seen as large. “Sustainability” meant environmental issues, population change, economic development, and so on. Citizens’ negative views of City performance, their lack of trust in the City, and the City’s lack of trust in citizens’ governance capacities constituted a “legitimacy” problem that was a significant obstacle to forward movement on sustainability (and likely on any other major problem.) The two problems were closely entwined and would require long-term efforts to address.

In Section II, Part B above, I emphasized the choices involved in the initial framing of “problems.” While I needn’t repeat that argument here, it seems appropriate, for purposes of possible adaptation to US communities, to start describing and adapting the “practice” by proposing questions such as these:

1. Is the problem (or opportunity) that we, in our community, are trying to address large and significant?
2. Is lack of connection between citizens and local government – legitimacy and trust – a significant part of the problem?
3. Does the combination of answers to Questions # 1 and 2 require some action now?
4. Does the combination of answers to Questions # 1, 2 and 3 warrant significant and long-term effort to address them?

The answers to these questions are choices, not mere descriptions of “objective” reality. If the answers to such questions are “yes,” then a significant step has been taken in the direction of the Geraldton/legitimacy practice. Perhaps this would be comparable to where Geraldton leaders were in 2009. If the answers are “no,” then perhaps the Geraldton practice can be a source of insights rather than a model to be emulated.

Although we all tend to start by talking about “problems,” it is probably well to also frame the challenge in terms of goal/vision so that it has a positive and constructive core.

2. Leadership Commitment

A significant task for busy government officials would be keeping a firm grip on and exhibiting a willingness and capacity to alter in the face of new information: the formulation of problems, opportunities, and purposes as the complicated and likely contentious process goes forward.

Lying behind this claim is the need for firm commitment and clear understandings from City leaders who champion and support the engagement process from beginning to end. Considerable imaginative power and sheer fortitude are required to balance a perspective from
inside City Hall with often uncomfortable perspectives from outside. Leaving the implementation to consultants will not work.

The engagement process may likely affect City elected and appointed officials and staff as well as citizens. Attention should be given to the education, training, support, and reflection needs of the City Hall people and to the potential for needed changes in City Hall structure, process, and/or attitudes.

3. Criteria for the Kind of Governance that is Sought

People involved in planning and conducting the Geraldton 2029 project recurrently list three attributes of “what we are trying to do differently.” The City Director who was Project Director, for example, summarized the purposes of their effort as trying to “be more inclusive of ordinary citizens…. to be more deliberative and [for the citizens’ engagements] to be more influential” (Grant, 2011, p.15).

Inclusive, deliberative, influential: taken together, these are criteria for the kind of governance that is to be used in the engagement process and is being sought for the long term. These three attributes comprise an essential aspect of the Geraldton/legitimacy practice and, indeed, of the deliberative democracy field, (which is an important part of the larger field of “participation.”) These three are “what we are trying to do differently,” that is better. Thus, they are goals for the whole endeavor regarding “developing legitimacy.” They are not merely steps in a procedure. And they are relative: things that the community is trying to get better at; they are not absolutes. The Geraldton/legitimacy practice aims to conduct citizen engagement activities that reflect these characteristics. Importantly, the practice also aims to build toward establishing this kind of governance system-wide over time.

I’d emphasize that being clear about these three criteria, stating them publicly and repeatedly, and using them rigorously to shape the process would be crucial to the potential for success of any such intervention. Also, these three come as an interacting package. Not every activity needs to meet all three of the criteria. Careful thought and explicit explanation, however, would be appropriate before taking the package apart.

Representative/Inclusive

The aim is that everyone can see themselves and/or people like themselves as included in each engagement activity as well as in the overall initiative.

This is a rather different emphasis than the usual practice of politics in the US and elsewhere, which tends to focus on groups, particularly organized groups with interests and concerns, as the key players in democratic decision-making. There is a long tradition in political science, although certainly a contested one, of starting with groups not only as the basic unit of political analysis, but also as the building blocks for (pluralist) democracy. This difference should not (in my view) be seen as an either/or choice between groups and individuals taken collectively. The

17 See also Carson & Hartz-Karp, 2005, p.122; Archon Fung uses the same triad of criteria/goals in his influential article: “Varieties of Participation in Complex Government” (Fung, 2006, p. 66)
point of the approach that underlies the Geraldton 2029 project, which also has a long tradition might be thought of as an effort to address the legitimacy and trust problems created by an over-emphasis (both in practice and in research) on self-interest and pluralism and to create a better balance. The Geraldton process design, which allows space for organized groups ("stakeholders") in some of the events, reflects such a both/and rather than either/or approach, apparently without jeopardizing perceptions about this criterion.

Several elements can be highlighted here.

- In order to ensure representativeness, random sampling, invitation, and recruitment of participants become regular parts of many engagement activities. Adjustments to the pure “randomness” of selection are made for various reasons, but those reasons need to be clear and justifiable (The Geraldton planners, for example, found ways to include the voices of organized groups - “interests” or “stakeholders”).
- Purposeful outreach is required in order to bring into the engagement process people who – because of disadvantage, discrimination, or related matters – have not been represented in public discourse. (In Geraldton, these are, especially, the Indigenous People.)
- Negative, disruptive voices, whose regular appearance at public convenings can be difficult for public officials, should not be per se excluded.
- More generally, deliberative democracy theories and practices are sometimes criticized for a “consensual bias”: that is, they can tend to squelch expressions of dissenting views in the name of the group agreement. This emphasis on “representativeness” pushes against this tendency, and the burden of this pushback also then rests on the facilitators.

Deliberative

This term is widely used and it is used to mean various things; its utility has thus been somewhat diminished. But the idea remains crucial to the topic of citizen engagement and indeed to the whole topic of how government and governance can be conducted better. Some of the common ways that the term is used include: that public discussion is central to democratic practice; that participants in public discussion behave civilly and make the effort to become informed on the topic; that everyone is enabled to express their opinions and to explain their interests; that they listen to the views of others as well as articulate their own; that some sense of public or common interest as well as the interests of others are allowed to balance individual's interests; and that the process of public discussion tries to move toward consensus but that “dialogue” or differences are not suppressed.

These are, of course, all desirable ways of conducting public discussion. They are, again “of course” most often lacking and are difficult to achieve. Thus, varying degrees of skepticism and constrained expectations about their feasibility are appropriate. An important aspect of the Geraldton practice nonetheless is that it did not allow healthy skepticism or low expectations to become hostility or insuperable obstacles to action.

Not every public discussion needs to be “deliberative.” It is important to accept, however, that when large issues and legitimacy for action are on the line, discussions of the sorts described above become very important: that is, they increase the likelihood of success. A recent textbook on public participation asserts that “deliberation is useful, and sometimes essential, for high stakes issues.” As discussed above, the Geraldton practice is premised upon the
presenting challenge of a set of “high stakes issues” and thus deliberation is “essential” for this practice18 (Nabatchi & Leighninger, 2015, p.249).

Creating a specific definition of “deliberative” seems to me less important than (a) understanding and embracing the loose nexus of meaning among these ideas; (b) recognizing and resolving to live with the fact that citizens and government people alike will bring either a lack of understanding or a variety of understandings of “deliberation” to the table; (c) acknowledging that actual behavior will often or even mostly fall short of the “deliberative” criterion, but also (d) accepting the importance of creating and establishing public perception that governance and engagement processes are committed to and endeavoring to meet that criterion. Such attitudes are crucial to developing trust and legitimacy for action.

How can deliberative public discussion be created? Good process design, engagement tools and facilitation techniques are constructed and conducted to both teach and to enable/encourage/even require that deliberation norms be followed. This is a learning process and time is required for new habits to take root. Successful rules and facilitation can be gauged by the degree to which participants, rather than sponsors or consultants, eventually begin to enforce the norms among themselves.

**Influential**

There must be some impacts, some results, of the citizen engagement activities. If not, why would people bother? Even worse, if people are led to expect that their deliberations will have an impact and there is none, then the whole effort is undermined and the “legitimacy” situation becomes even worse than before.

Those expectations about impacts will vary, depending on the “promises” made to or negotiated with the public by authorities. Figure 1 suggests the kinds of “promises” that authorities should be prepared to make and keep, depending on the nature of the engagement. As noted in the Introduction (Section I), much of the Geraldton practice was at the “Collaborate/empower” end of the engagement spectrum and thus it involved considerable promises. The nature of the popular influence from specific engagement activities, however, ranged across the entire spectrum. Pulling off this mixture requires good process design and also ability to adapt as expectations arise.

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4. The Process Design and Assembly of Engagement Activities

- The scope and duration of the initiative should fit the challenge. By comparison with most “citizen engagement” efforts in the United States, the scope and duration of the Geraldton experience were quite extensive. The problems in Geraldton, however, also seem to have been quite large; perhaps a smaller intervention would not have been as useful. On the other hand, it does seem to me likely that some substantial outcomes could be achieved in another city, whose legitimacy problem is less dire, with less activity, but with a similar concentration on other aspects of the practice such as firm goals and lots of process design. Moreover, a steady flow of engagement activities over the whole process and clear statements that the specific process is intended to lead to different and better ways of governance over a long-term are probably important for building attention, establishing habits, and creating a new sense of what people expect about governance.

19 Chart - Nabatchi & Leighninger’s book “Public Participation for 21st century democracy” (p.251)
• My suggestion that the engagement processes should not shield citizens from dealing with budget constraints and other hard choices is an adaptation that derives from the Geraldton experience with its taxes controversy. This does not mean that the process should go directly to comprehensive participatory budgeting. (Geraldton planners postponed that and their decision makes substantial good sense.) Most PB exercises, for example, treat only a narrow piece of the overall budget. Many engagement processes are explicitly set up as “visioning” or other goal-related functions. Perhaps when the problem to be addressed is a large as “legitimacy for action”, some sense of responsible decision-making about hard choices should probably be a part of the process even in the early stages and should become increasingly tighter over time.

• In terms of strategy, the Geraldton practice combines and balances attention to the functional problem and to the legitimacy issue. It aims for engagement and outcomes on both. A potential pitfall for policy-minded, “practical” people would be to be satisfied with some useful policy outcomes and to downgrade or abandon the legitimacy/trust goal in later stages of the process.

• A quite important element of the Geraldton experience is the careful and extensive process design in which tools and activities were combined, adapted, and assembled appropriately for the situation/the problem and the resources available. The practice requires excellent process design persons with a perspective that is not the dominant internal City viewpoint and also excellent City persons who can work with that outsider perspective.
  
  o One important element is “a comprehensive range of deliberative democracy techniques - small and large scale, face-to-face and online, incorporating social media and the regular press” (Weymouth and Hartz-Karp, 2015).
  
  o Another notable facet is the phasing in and phasing up and down chronology – a rhythm that creates a sense of movement forward without overwhelming people. A regular flow of activities keeps the engagement process in front of people and creates expectations and attention.
  
  o The Geraldton process “was built on progressively more difficult projects of more consequence based on the confidence accrued from previous projects.”20 This rule of thumb would be modified depending on context.

• As noted above, the process design and the skilful facilitation and enforcement of “rules” for each engagement activity are the technical means for enabling achievement of the three governance criteria.

• “Adaptive management” in the Geraldton practice included regular monitoring and systematic evaluation, adaptation of tools to fit situations, and flexible responses to difficulties and opportunities. The long duration of the 2029 Project required changes to

20 Personal communication (E-mail) from R. Weymouth on November 16, 2015
original plans. Even over the first year of the process, changes were being made. Such constant adaptation also required a firm grasp, among leaders and planners, on the strategy and goals of the Project so that alterations and problems and attractive diversions did not derail movement toward the goals.

- **As to specific tactics**, from among the many they used in Geraldton, several comments might be highlighted.

  - For a problem or goal that is less significant than Geraldton’s (i.e., a problem where the issue is not “legitimacy” a less encompassing set of activities might be more apt).
  - The initial community survey results were dramatic and apparently a surprise to City leaders and staff. The high degree of citizens’ agreement about sustainability scenarios in the survey results cannot be expected to occur in other cities. The survey creates a baseline framework within which the initiative proceeds. Repeating the survey later measures change.
  - The “minipublics” facilitated activities of various sizes in which the participants are assembled such that they are and are seen to be representative and inclusive of all voices in the community – seem to have had the most impact on both of the problems being addressed in the Geraldton situation. “Decisions made by minipublics in particular appeared to hold greater legitimacy and thus were more easily implemented” (Weymouth and Hartz-Karp, 2015, p.28). It seems doubtful, however, that a series of minipublic tools can stand alone as the sole means for implementing the practice described here. There also need to be various and interacting ways that many citizens can connect with the overall process and various ways for the City to collect information about citizens’ views. Moreover, the effectiveness of any particular tool or tactic will depend, in part, on context.
  - Early wins that demonstrate the influence of the engagement matter. The hundreds of ideas generated by the early World Cafes, for example, required attention. The 2029 process responded well the ideas were prioritized by the Alliance Governance Group and some Community Champions and then, most importantly, the Council acted on the proposals.

### IV. Comparisons with Other Communities’ Experience

Other places have undertaken practices similar to Geraldton’s. Some have achieved considerable positive results. Others have been less successful.

To examine the Geraldton practice in a comparative framework, we looked at background information for the other winners of awards that were given to the Geraldton practice: The Mohn Prize from the Bertelsmann Foundation; the IAP2 Core Values Awards; and the IBM Smarter Cities’ Citizen Engagement Awards. The Mohn Prize finalists proved to be the best group for comparisons because the competition was fully global, the focus was broad (as distinct, for
example, from the Smarter Cities’ focus on digital solutions), and the Foundation obtained and makes available sufficient documentation to support comparison of the sort that is needed.

While we also learned from other cities’ experiences, our main focus here is on the six Mohn Prize finalists, which include21:

- **Recife, Brazil** (population 1,500,000) – Participatory Budgeting: “a new generation of municipal budget experiences” in which participation extends from decision-making through to implementation.

- **Belo Horizonte, Brazil** (1,500,000) – “Co-Governance”: Since 1993, the city has institutionalized various participation formats, especially “public policy management councils, municipal conferences, and participatory budgeting.”

- **La Plata, Argentina** (700,000) – Multi-Channel Participatory Budgeting: “The municipality’s unique participatory design -- combining face-to-face deliberation with remote voting -- has produced outstanding results, with over 45,000 participants in 2010.”

- **Portsmouth NH, USA** (21,400) – “Portsmouth Listens”: a three-phase Study Circles process, run by a neutral steering committee composed of community and City members, has been used regularly since 2003 to address major issues.

- **Hampton VA, USA** (137,000) – Deliberative Governance: Responding to “downward trends in many social indicators, especially for youth,” beginning in 1990 and on-going, the City created various participatory venues for governance of a very wide array of youth-related institutions and programs, from schools to recreation, etc.

- **British Columbia, Canada** (4,600,000) – Citizens’ Assembly: The Provincial governing body delegated deliberation and decision-making about electoral system reform to a body of randomly selected citizens. The delegates went through a 12 month, three phase process that included learning and discussion, listening to citizens, and deciding on recommendations, which went to referendum.

These six collectively resemble the Geraldton practice in that their processes mostly shared these characteristics, regardless of size and geographic location:

- framed substantial “problems” to be addressed and included democratic participation as a goal;
- championed by authoritative city leaders;
- combined multiple engagement tools and techniques so that the assembled process design was as important or even more important than the individual activities;
- emphasized deliberative values and behaviors, including education and skill development for citizens;
- aimed to make the results of the interventions influential on City policies;

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21 December 2, 2015 memorandum by Rosa Lee, “Assessment of other Mohn finalists.” To see the original documents for the Reinhard Mohn Prize winner and finalists, click the following link: Winner: Recife Participatory Budget (Hyperlink embedded); Co-Governance in Belo Horizonte, Brazil; La Plata Multi-Channel Participatory Budgeting; Portsmouth Listens; Hampton, VA deliberative governance; British Columbia Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform.
• undertook substantial effort to ensure representativeness and to include disadvantaged and under-represented populations;
• created process designs that phased and patterned the activities toward goals;
• extended over multiple years; and
• achieved successful outcomes relative to their goals.

The six collectively did not resemble Geraldton in that they:

• addressed different functional problems, opportunities or challenges;
• used different arrays of engagement tools and techniques;
• larger places tended to orient their processes to new, relatively formal institutions in addition to or rather than the informal and flexible Geraldton practice; and
• costs varied widely.

One highlight from these comparisons is that population size and location do not preclude or guarantee success. But size and location (national context) should be taken into account in the process design. Further, we can conclude that the general approach that is the essence of the Geraldton practice is usable for many problems or topics.

A key commonality among these initiatives is that they combine, as does the Geraldton example, a functional problem and a governance problem (i.e., connecting citizens and government).

In each of the six comparison cases, as in the Geraldton practice, there was an emphasis upon developing skills and information among ordinary citizens so they could participate effectively. This must be done carefully: what an “expert” thinks must be learned can crowd out or undercut precisely the practical knowledge of “ordinary” people that is part of the value of participatory processes.

Finally, several of the comparison cities’ efforts focused directly on local government budgeting. The 2009-2010 Geraldton scheme focused first on the policy/program dimension of the “legitimacy to act” on sustainability challenge; it postponed “participatory budgeting” to the latter years of the 2029 effort. The 2012-13 rates controversy resulted in bringing the two challenges together. Dealing with the goals and the resources together seems sensible, but doing that from the beginning has some problems as well. This is a matter to be reckoned with in adapting the Geraldton practice to each different locality and in the process design for each place.
V. Conclusion: Synopsis and What to do next?22

Synopsis

The Problem: Local government officials and staff experience frustration and uncertainty about their government’s relationship with citizens. This can engender a substantial obstacle to action: the sense of a lack of “legitimacy for action” on issues of substantial significance and even on fundamental questions about the roles and competence of the government itself.

Practitioners and scholars have devoted much attention to the issue of “legitimacy” or “trust in government” and to the potential for a different kind of participation to resolve it. The focus is most often on the lack of “trust” among citizens in their local government. Some also acknowledge a corresponding uncertainty (or lack of trust) by local government about citizens’ capacity and willingness to make and support decisions and to go forward together.

Many measures of citizens’ trust are higher for US local government than for state or national governments. Levels in some other OECD nations are also low. The comparisons provide little solace because none of the trust levels is very high.

In nearly unanimously selecting this topic for assessment, the city and county managers on the Project’s Advisory Group offered reasons such as:

- “We need to consider new approaches in order for representative democracy (and people’s perceptions of representative democracy) to move forward.”
- “How many times do we assume our communities don’t have the capacity to change in meaningful ways?”
- “Exploring innovative techniques in civic deliberation is spot on.”
- “How do we better ‘assemble’ our citizens in conversation without it becoming a free for all?”

A Possible Solution: In 2009 - 2010, the City of Greater Geraldton, a city of 40,000 on the coast of Western Australia, faced a major challenge of legitimacy as it approached a difficult set of sustainability issues (See Section II A).

In response, City leaders initiated the four-year Geraldton “2029 and Beyond” Project, an effort to engage citizens in new ways. The effort was broadly and substantially successful in achieving (a) action on sustainability and (b) more trust in government and legitimacy. As of late 2015, the effort continued, moving the City to a governance mode in which deliberative participation is the “default” option (See Section II E). The process was complex and involved considerable difficulty at several points (See Section II, Parts B, C, and D).

While some factors that shaped the Geraldton story are unique, none of them preclude adaptation of the practice by US local governments (See Section II B). Comparison with such practices in other localities worldwide, including some in the US, suggests that the utility of the approach is not limited to places of, for example, a certain size, national or geographic location,

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22 For convenience of users, this Section is also reproduced as a separate document, with the same title.
or political context. (See Section IV.) The approach, however, must be adapted to accommodate such factors.

The Geraldton practice or “model” involves a few key elements:

- a high stakes problem that is entwined with a trust-in-government challenge;
- a committed City Hall leadership;
- citizen involvement that aims to be inclusive, deliberative, and influential; and
- very strong process design.

This is an approach, not a single mechanism or tool or event. About twenty distinct engagement techniques were used, some of them multiple times over the four years. The process thus continuously involved the City and the citizens. The practice emphasized *assembling and combining* such tools in support of an *overall strategy* and *adapting* plans to meet changing circumstances (See Section III).

Thus, to “transfer” the Geraldton practice is probably not a useful way to think about the challenge for US managers. Making use of the practice will require adaptation for each locality. The presenting questions for local government managers, then, are: does the approach make sense for your community’s situation? If so, what are the adaptations and what is the process design (the mix and assembly of mechanisms, tools and events) that will work best?

The leaders of Geraldton City government came to realize that the local government itself contributed to the lack of “legitimacy for action.” The City in many ways did not “trust” the citizens. This was a difficult surprise. Their actions to address that issue made a significant positive difference.

The “2029 and Beyond” process was not without risks and difficulties. Some tools did not work as expected. Staff morale problems had to be addressed. A committee of community leaders was formed early on to oversee and help give credibility to the whole effort. Its roles, however, were circumscribed by City Councilors’ concerns about intrusions upon their decision-making authority, and the committee disbanded. On the other hand, we found no substantial opposition among citizens to the process itself.

The 2029 process could not be isolated from other aspects of local governance; it created new expectations about City and citizens’ roles in governance. In line with more than a decade of angry debates over taxes and the City’s financial condition, the CEO and the 2012 City Council decided, without the kind of public education and deliberation that was at the heart of the 2029 process, to very substantially raise taxes. A fierce controversy ensued. The outcome was a citizen engagement solution: a radical “participatory budgeting” (PB) process.
The tax controversy resulted in an almost complete turnover of the Council and departure of two City leaders of the 2029 effort: The City CEO declined to renew his contract and the Mayor lost his 2015 re-election bid in a campaign dominated by the tax issue. Their successors have embraced the citizen engagement mode of governance. The new CEO conducted the radical PB and endorsed the procedure. The new Mayor says that the 2029 process “absolutely” raised the bar for citizens’ expectations about their governance roles and that “community consultation” is now the “default” option in Geraldton (See Section II, C and D).

The Geraldton experience and practice arose in the context of a broad spectrum of “deliberative democracy” efforts to engage citizens by governments in Australia, the US, and around the globe. The spectrum can be characterized in terms of the intended relationship with citizens:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inform</th>
<th>Consult</th>
<th>Involve</th>
<th>Collaborate</th>
<th>Empower</th>
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The Geraldton practices lies at the “collaborate/empower” end of the spectrum (The practice would not be appropriate to situations at the “inform” end of the spectrum). The Geraldton practice is also more substantial than most participation interventions in scope, ambition, duration, and complexity.

What to do next?

(If I were a local government manager, I’d now likely be saying to myself, “Well, I’m very busy.” Then, a pause. Followed, I hope, by: “On the other hand, my local government management colleagues on the LGRC Advisory Group picked this “legitimacy/trust” and “deliberative democracy” topic; apparently it’s something that is nagging at them. It has nagged at me a bit, though I’m rather leery of it. But my head is now into it a little, so here’s an opportunity to figure out whether this is something I should get further into.”)

On the assumption that you are not ready to undertake the whole Geraldton practice immediately in your locality, perhaps the following short-term actions would be useful next steps. Doing these items will still leave you with a possible future decision as to whether to undertake something like the Geraldton practice.

1. **Assess Your Local Governance Situation**

Does your community face entwined challenges of “legitimacy for action” on important matters and insufficient “trust in government”? This is the wicked combination that the City of Greater Geraldton faced in 2009-10.

- Decide what the local governance “problem” is or describe the goal that is desired but not yet achieved. (Is the problem “legitimacy” and “trust?” Or is it, for example “I can’t get what I think is
best for the community” Or is it a real disagreement about substance that might have to be negotiated? Or is it “some people are really rude and nasty?” Is the legitimacy issue about the role of the local government generally or about local government action in a specific area? Or….?)

- Describe ways that your local government contributes to the local “legitimacy” and “trust” problem.
- Describe the recent and current situation in your jurisdiction regarding ways that the government engages with citizens. Try also doing this from the viewpoint of various types of citizens, and note the differences among the descriptions.
- Assess the “readiness” of the citizenry and interest groups to engage in the kinds of participatory processes that Geraldton carried out. This approach may be thought of as a SWOT exercise (strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats): providing an analysis of the community as regards increased and enhanced participation.) Most communities, however, would likely be found “not ready”, and this conclusion can too easily become the reason for not pursuing the matter any further. Perhaps a caution would be that the “less ready” situations are the “more appropriate” for intervention. Readiness is not a single, stationary state. It comes in degrees, and, what's more, can be affected by efforts to make the community "more ready" or ready enough.
- Is the local process of problem definition, policy development, and leadership debate on the problem(s) you’ve identified at a point where what you want to do is to inform and consult with citizens? Is your government really open to the influence of a serious citizen engagement effort on the topic? If not, then the Geraldton practice likely would not be useful.
- Decide whether you want to and are willing to address the problem (or goal) you have identified.

2. Improve your (and your team’s) understanding of the topic of “connecting citizens and government.”

This includes “deliberation,” “legitimacy,” “collaboration,” and related ideas and practices. No matter where you are on these matters, refreshing and increasing your grasp of what you are dealing with could be useful.

- Discuss where you stand regarding these ideas. Are you “on board,” willing to try, skeptical, hostile?
- Discuss whether you would be willing to use, in your city, the three governance criteria used in Geraldton: representative of the population (including under-engaged groups); deliberative (thoughtful public discussion aimed at solving problems); influential (citizens’ engagement has impacts).
- Are some of your government’s staff or elected officials particularly strong on these topics? How can their strengths be used?
3. When speaking to thought leaders in your government and in the community include talk about the LGRC process around “legitimacy for action” and trust.

- Use such talk, while keeping the topic at arm’s length, in order to: set the context of practice in other cities and the interest in this topic among managers in other places in the US; to elicit interest and resistance; and to begin to assess where such ideas stand with them.
- Privately show a few people this report, or just selected parts of this report. Do they think something like this is needed in your community? Would it be useful? What would not work? And so on.
- Talk with elected officials of your local government about all these topics.

4. Talk with Some Deliberative Democracy Process Design Persons

Talk with some deliberative democracy process design persons informally about how to address legitimacy for action and trust issues. The aim would be mainly to learn and also to get an idea of the kind of consultant with whom you can work.

- Ask LGRC, the Alliance or some other organization you trust to set up a discussion session with several design consultants and some local government managers.
- Find out who’s who in this field in your local area.
- Ask process designers whether they know about the Geraldton experience or similar efforts. Privately show a few of them this Report, or just parts of this report, and ask for their views.

5. Try a Deliberative Democracy Intervention that is Useful but Limited

Try a deliberative democracy intervention that is useful but limited in issue focus, intensity, duration, geography. Treat it as a learning experience.

- Perhaps use the assessment from Item # 1 above to identify where to focus this.
- Set the intervention up so that you and your staff can learn and draw lessons from the planning process as well as from the intervention itself.
- Compare insights and lessons with other managers.

6. Sketch a first draft of a plan to adapt and use the Geraldton practice in your community.

- Decide whether the Geraldton practice (or some variation) is really appropriate for the governance problems in your community.
- How would you propose to relate the engagement process you envision to the authoritative/legal decision processes currently in use in your government?
- Ask some of the people you have engaged with in the tasks above what they think of your outline.
Appendix One:
Governance Structures for Geraldton 2029 and Beyond Project

The main sources for this Appendix 1 is Hartz-Karp, Janette and Tillmann, Christina “Geraldton, Australia: Geraldton 2029 and beyond – Case Study (Draft)” Vitalizing Democracy through participation, Reinhard Mohn Prize 2011. p.8-9

“There are a number of interdependent teams in this project. The aim is for each group to be as autonomous and self-managing as possible. It is crucial to ensure the project does not rise or fall as a result of just one or a few key people. Instead, the objective is to seed and where needed support a number of groups with different roles, without imposing the usual hierarchical structures and technocratic silos. The key to the success of such a structure is to make certain all have the same end in mind, and operate according to the principle: “be the change you want to see in the world” (or “practice what you preach”) by operating within deliberative democratic principles.

The City Lead Team consists of the Mayor, Councillor Ian Carpenter as the Chairman of the Alliance Governance Team, the CEO Mr. Tony Brun as the Project Sponsor, Director Ms. Andrea Selvey as the Project Director, and the City Executive leadership group of directors as technical and operational support, with each director also leading at least one prioritized Implementation Team. The full Lead Team meets as required; the key leaders, Mayor, CEO and Project Director, meet weekly or more if needed.

The Design and Research Team is a partnership between Curtin University and the City. It consists of Prof Janette Hartz-Karp from CUSP, together with researchers Prof Mark Balnaves, Prof Dora Marinova, Prof Peter Newman (the lead author of the transport chapter of the new IPCC Report) and Dr. Rachel Armstrong, who work in partnership with the City Lead Team, in particular Tony Brun and Andrea Selvey. Key members connect almost daily via internet and meet face-to-face approximately once a month.

The Alliance Governance Group is an innovative governance team of key government, industry and NGO regional decision-makers, as well as randomly selected interested local people. Its task is to provide strategic direction and accountability to the project and help determine and implement prioritized proposals. Government, industry and NGO members were elicited through invitation from the Mayor. Community members responded to advertisements in the local newspaper, and were then randomly selected through a ballot at a public Council meeting. It meets quarterly.

Close Working Associations have been established with Indigenous groups: Bundiyarra (Indigenous NGO); Radio Mama (Indigenous radio); Yamaji News (Indigenous newspaper) and multicultural groups. Members of the Lead Team liaised with these groups and formed working relationships. They connect as required.

A Special Media Alliance has been created with the very widely read local newspaper, particularly the editor Alex McKinnon, with the important task of enhancing the community’s interest in and understanding of complex issues, and improving the effectiveness of public discourse. Design and Research Team members liaised with the editor and the working relationship has developed into a close alliance.
The Community Champions are a group of around 40 community people who responded to advertisements in the local newspaper, volunteering to be trained in deliberative techniques and then to organize and facilitate opportunities for public deliberation. Their task is to hold public deliberations using different techniques, facilitating serious discussion among ordinary community members about issues concerning the future of the region, and then directing the consolidated community input back to the project team for broader dissemination and consideration by the Alliance Governance Group. The group of Community Champions is regularly being renewed. They meet for training prior to each public deliberation initiative and then for a debrief following it. In addition, they network regularly online.

The Implementation Teams consist of government, industry and community members, chaired and supported by a City Director or Manager. When proposals developed through community deliberation have been prioritized for action by the Alliance Governance Group, City Directors are charged with the responsibility to support at least one Team, gathering the various government agencies involved in that issue, business and interested community members, to work together on how to implement it. These Teams meet face-to-face and online as need requires.

The Online Deliberation/Social Media Team consists of key City IT staff, Curtin researchers and the Director of the online deliberation platform, CivicEvolution, Brian Sullivan. This Team has the task of finding innovative ways to foster and support digital deliberative democracy. The key is to integrate these efforts so they complement the face-to-face deliberation and have a clear „promise“ of influence, „bargain“ in terms of what each of the parties will gain from participation, and „process“ to maximize deliberation. Innovative opportunities for social media complement this process. This team meets primarily online.

University and Industry Alliances. A number of university and research groups were operating independently in the region, and are now cooperating to find synergies, sharing research and findings. Similarly, industries pioneering sustainability initiatives in the region, including Parsons Brinckerhoff and Kinesis, are now collaborating with this initiative. Associates meet online and periodically, have joint workshops.
Appendix Two: Reported Outcomes

Appendix Two lists tangible outcomes that the City of Greater Geraldton reported based on their citizen engagement practices. These outcomes were identified by searching relevant reports and publicly available city documents on the web; thus, it is not exhaustive. We tried to connect the citizen engagement processes and the relevant outcomes, such as “sustainability” policy and program outcomes that are attributable to it. Unless otherwise noted, the list includes adopted the policy or acted on measures.

The time frame of these outcomes is from late 2010 to 2014 (We were unable to locate the City's annual report for the fiscal year 2012-2013). The outcomes from more recent citizen engagement practices, especially related to the participatory budgeting process, are not included. The text comes from the various sources that we found credible. The main sources for this Appendix Two are the following:

- 2029 and Beyond preliminary reports, City of Greater Geraldton
- The 2029 and Beyond Community Charter, City of Greater Geraldton
- Designing our City Final Report, 21st Century Deliberation and Enquiry by Design
- City of Geraldton-Greenough Climate of Opportunity, Greater Geraldton City Region, Result of Public Deliberation (2029 and beyond)
- City of Greater Geraldton Annual Report 2011-2012
- City of Greater Geraldton Annual Report 2013-2014
- Hartz-Karp, Janette and Tillmann, Christina “Geraldton, Australia: Geraldton 2029 and beyond – Case Study (Draft)” Vitalizing Democracy through participation, Reinhard Mohn Prize 2011.
- Bertelsmann Stiftung “2029 and Beyond – Preliminary Reports” A vision by and for the community of Greater Geraldton City Region, 14th August 2010

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Q. Measures for Carbon Neutral Region

A. Million Trees Project

- **From which citizen engagement practices:**
  World Café priorities as determined by the champions and alliance governance group.
  The idea of one million trees planted in 2010 was suggested.
- **Description of the outcome:**
  The One Million Trees project aims to plant one million trees by 2015. Throughout public deliberation process, City Council was told that the city needed more trees to green City region. The city initiated the "Make your tree count" online form so that they can count how many trees or shrubs citizens have been planted privately by registering them. The city website also offers “Million Trees Soil Map” and “Top Ten Trees.” For this project, Million Trees Facebook was created.
- **Other information:**
  - Facebook [https://www.facebook.com/milliontreesgeraldton?ref=hl](https://www.facebook.com/milliontreesgeraldton?ref=hl)

B. Bike-friendly Measures

- **From which citizen engagement practices:**
  World Café priorities as determined by the champions and alliance governance group – “bike capital” ambition; incentives for bike use; bike-friendly paths/tunnels (Source: 2029 and Beyond World Café preliminary report)
- **Description of the outcome:**
  - An increase in bicycle parking
  - Shared pathways and pathway renewal and plans

  The City of Greater Geraldton advocates sustainable transport and travel alternatives. In the year 2011-2012, the city increased bicycle parking, shared pathways and pathway renewal. Plans for a further two bicycle parking facilities in Marine Terrace have been approved for installation 2012-2013.

C. Aboriginal-related Measures

- **From which citizen engagement practices:**
  World Café priorities as determined by the champions and alliance governance group -
Community Aboriginal Education precinct has been built (Source: 2029 and Beyond World Café preliminary report)

- **Description of the outcome:**
  - Securing of $50,000 in funding for Midwest Aboriginal Environmental Health Forum project including Food Accessibility Pilot, Community Cold-room, Hospitality Training Centre Project, Waste Water re-use system, training DVD’s, and Community Clean Ups.
  - Facilitation of an Indigenous Environmental Health Worker Program with Bundiyarra Aboriginal Community Aboriginal Corporation Inc.
  - The City has continued to work towards some significant achievements in the area of environmental health.

**D. Safety-related Measures**

- **From which citizen engagement practices:**
  World Café priorities as determined by the champions and alliance governance group – The idea of making safe events that everyone will feel safe and enjoy together were proposed.

- **Description of the outcome:**
  The Annual Report 2011-2012 stated that the Rangers have paid increased attention to the areas of off-road vehicles and illegal camping. This effort was combined with attention to litter, animal control, fire prevention, crime prevention and emergency management. Service responses in 2010/2011 were 1,849, and it was increased to 2,428 in 2011/2012. To ensure the Rangers have the capacity to serve the community, training has been provided in First Aid, the use of quad bikes, the use of firearms, emergency management, fire control, four-wheel driving, etc.
  - Increase in Rangers service provision from 2010/11 to 2011/12
  - CCTV installation at the Geraldton Regional Library and Breakers Car Park (Western Australian State Government funded this installation.)
  - Upgrade of street lighting in Fitzgerald Street (Western Australian State Government funded this installation.)
  - Introduction of the Graffiti recording and reporting device initiative
  - Successful submission for CCTV installation in Mullewa
  - Development of the educational DVD - Operation Runway
  - Business crime prevention workshops
  - Development of a new community safety crime prevention plan
  - Updated and maintained emergency arrangements
  - Business plans and annual reports
  - Waggrakine fire prevention workshop
  - First City of Greater Geraldton Community Safety Day (This Safety Day was held concurrently with the Sunshine Festival and this event showcased local agencies and organizations involved in community safety in the Greater Geraldton area).
E. Sustainability-related Measures I

- From which citizen engagement practices:
  World Café priorities as determined by the champions and alliance governance group: 1) Establish more wind, solar and tidal power sources, 2) Everything is recycled, storm water, waste, glass, paper, plastics, etc. (Source: 2029 and Beyond World Café preliminary report).

- Description of the outcome:
  The City had completed numerous sustainability initiatives.
  - Provided energy audits to local businesses, assisting ten small to medium businesses save up to 40% in energy costs
  - Conducted real-time energy meter monitoring at City facilities including Art Galleries, Airport, Family Day Care Centers and QEII Community and Seniors Centre
  - Supported the Geraldton Community Nursery to propagate over 17,000 local provenance seedlings
  - Assisted in the completion of a Concept Plan with the Men of the Trees community group to propagate 30,000 seedlings
  - Installed 10,000-litre capacity water harvesting facilities at the QEII Seniors and Community Centre
  - Installed a 76 panel solar PV system at the QEII Seniors and Community Centre which generates 70% of the center’s energy demand

F. Art-related Measures I

- From which citizen engagement practices:
  World Café priorities as determined by the champions and alliance governance group: 1) more public art; particularly by local artists, local Aboriginal art, art celebrating aboriginal history and culture, 2) more festivals or regular concerts in the part

- Description of the outcome:
  - The Mid-West Art Prize, presented by the Art gallery of WA and sponsored by the City, was launched in March 2011
  - The Queens Park Theatre, owned and operated by the City, reopened its amphitheater and launched the Moonlite Cinema Series and Sunset Music Series
  - In 2012, Queens Park Theatre launched the QPT Street Festival, and the Festival supports artistic development in the Greater Geraldton community through the provision of year-round instructional and mentoring sessions for emerging artists
  - City partnered with the Mid West Development Commission to develop a Schematic Master Plan for redeveloping the Geraldton Regional Art Gallery
G. Measures for Community Support

- From which citizen engagement practices:
  World Café priorities as determined by the champions and alliance governance group - Bridge the gap between council and community
- Description of the outcome:
  - The City of Greater Geraldton has committed to providing 1% of the value of rates to the community as Community Grants
  - During the 2011-2012, 86 Community Grant applications were received with a total of $244,460.00 being distributed for community projects valued at $2,896,916. During Round 6 held in March 2010, a total of $120,030.00 was distributed to 40 applicants with a combined total project value of $1,349,437. Round 7 held in September 2010 resulted in a total of $38,600 of funds distributed to 17 applicants with a combined total project value of $223,425. During Round 8 held in March 2011, a total of $80,830.00 was distributed to 24 applicants with a combined total project value of $1,307,754 (Source: City of Greater Geraldton Annual Report 2011-2012 (p.21))
  - In 2013-14, the City provided the following level of financial support to local and community-based groups: 23 applicants continued to receive recurrent funding support totaling $381,000, 46 applicants received "one off" funding support totaling $354,185. These "one-off" grants supported projects valued in total at around $1 million
  - In 2013-2014, the grant program funded community events including GFEST and the Sunshine Festival.

H. Youth-related Measures

- From which citizen engagement practices:
  World Café priorities as determined by the champions and alliance governance group: Youth Centre: Somewhere to hang out after school, and on weekends. A place to get advice on EVERYTHING. A place that runs programs to help young people get a job / keep out of trouble.
- Description of the outcome:
  - KidSport: According to the Annual Report 2011-2012 (p.22), the City began the administration of this program in April 2012 and approved 223 applications equating to over $25,000 in funding. This funding was used to facilitate the participation of young people between the ages of 5 and 18 in a range of organized sports.
  - Youth'n'Motion & Youth'n'Motion Bus (Mobile Youth Centre "Wall of Pride"): According to the Annual Report 2011-2012 (p.23), this program aimed to provide quality services to meet the needs of young people in Greater Geraldton and progress a Council Youth Policy and Strategic Plan. An estimated 7,000 participants between the ages of 12 and 25 (20% of the Greater Geraldton
population) were involved in the Youth'n'Motion program. Youth'n'Motion Bus program is provided at popular "hangouts" on Thursday evenings.

- Midnight Basketball: According to the Annual Report 2011-2012 (p.24), two-midnight basketball tournaments were held with State Basketball League player Michael Lay undertaking the role of manager. The program is a national social inclusion program to assist youth in identifying and embracing positive opportunities. In addition to City funding, supplementary funding had secured from the Midnight Basketball National Program, Department of Sport and Recreation and the Attorney General’s office.

  - In 2013-14, the City has continued to deliver Midnight Basketball program. This has attracted over $25,000 via in-kind support from the community and $20,000 grant from Midnight Basketball Australia. During the two successful tournaments, the participants were provided with a nutritious meal and transport home. Each tournament had over 100 participants with more than 40 volunteers assisting in a variety of roles. The tournament was awarded the “Community Excellence Award for Not for Profit Organization in 2013.”

- Youth Resource Centre Feasibility Study: The feasibility study is for a youth resource center in the central business district. Supplementary funding came from the Midwest Development Commission.

  - The Mullewa Youth Centre was open for 49 weeks during 2013-14 and recorded over 2,200 individual attendances in that time. The Youth Centre receives annual funding from the Department of Child Protection.

I. Heritage-related Measures

- From which citizen engagement practices:
  The 2029 and Beyond Community Charter (captured during an extensive community engagement process including World Cafes, Conversation Cafes, the Deliberative Survey, the “Geraldton Feel” Campaign, Designing our City Forum, the Deliberative Forum, IBM Digital Survey, Community Trustees) – Our heritage

  - Recognition, protection, and restoration of heritage sites and buildings
  - Recognition, protection and integrated use of city and region icons
  - Recognition of the Yamaji People as the occupants of this land and celebration of their languages and culture
  - Promotion of Aboriginal history and its important role in helping shape our community

- Description of the outcome:

  - The Recreation Reserve Grandstand was officially opened on 16 June 2014 after refurbishment work done.
  - The State Heritage Awards: The City of Greater Geraldton was awarded first place in the category for "Outstanding heritage practices by a local government."
  - The City’s Heritages Services Team mostly implemented the above measures.
Implementation of actions (including an audit of existing heritage and interpretation signage, a survey of the City’s heritage assets, the development of maintenance plans for each asset, an establishment of "At Risk" register for public and private heritage, etc.) from the City's Heritage Strategy commenced.

Newly launched program in the Midwest Heritages Series (Geraldton’s Story, the “I Remember When” project, etc.)

J. Arts-related Measure II
- From which citizen engagement practices:
  The 2029 and Beyond Community Charter (captured during an extensive community engagement process including World Cafes, Conversation Cafes, the Deliberative Survey, the “Geraldton Feel” Campaign, Designing our City Forum, the Deliberative Forum, IBM Digital Survey, Community Trustees) – The Arts
    - Fostering and facilitation of public and street art
    - Facilitation and promotion of Aboriginal art and their stories
    - Fostering and facilitation of community arts and cultural events
- Description of the outcome:
  - These programs provide opportunities for local and touring artists to contribute to the creative enrichment of the Geraldton community
  - City implemented three community art programs based on the Creative Community Plan
    1) The Central Greenough Artist in Residence Program in partnership with the National Trust of Australia (WA);
    2) The CGG Artist Opportunities Program;
    3) The CGG Marine Terrace Performance Program

K. Revegetation - Rehabilitation - Preservation
- From which citizen engagement practices:
  - World Café priorities as determined by the champions and alliance governance group – Many communities (permaculture) gardens can be found
  - The 2029 and Beyond Community Charter (captured during an extensive community engagement process including World Cafes, Conversation Cafes, the Deliberative Survey, the “Geraldton Feel” Campaign, Designing our City Forum, the Deliberative Forum, IBM Digital Survey, Community Trustees)
  - Promotion of new environmental groups and working with existing groups
  - Protection, rehabilitation and enhancement of natural flora and fauna corridors
  - Protection and management of the coastal environment
- Description of the outcome:
  - The Beresford Foreshore Coastal Protection and Enhancement Project had entered into its detailed design phase.
Aquarena Asset Management Plan was implemented, and Aquarena Operational Procedures and plans were reviewed.

The Aquarena installed a 30kw solar system, and variable speed drive pumps to lower operational costs: The new installation of the solar system and drive pumps has resulted in a reduction of over 76,000 electrical units or a 7.9% decrease from the previous year.

Aquarena Geo Thermal Project

Coordination of 300 community volunteers planting 4,000 seedlings and 2,000 sandbags to revegetate and control erosion of 3.5 hectares in the Chapman River Wildlife Corridor

Implementation of Chapman River Wildlife Corridor regeneration and trails projects

Approximately 2km fencing was installed to protect natural areas and control access (Tom Muir Arboretum, Bootenal Springs, and Chapman River)

L. Sustainability-Related Measures II

- From which citizen engagement practices:
The 2029 and Beyond Community Charter (captured during an extensive community engagement process including World Cafes, Conversation Cafes, the Deliberative Survey, the “Geraldton Feel” Campaign, Designing our City Forum, the Deliberative Forum, IBM Digital Survey, Community Trustees)

  - Research, promotion, and provision of sustainable services, utilities and renewable energy schemes
  - Promotion of a sustainable lifestyle that enables low-impact living and sustainable urban development
  - Action towards a cultural change leading to more environmentally sustainable consumption, sustainable farming
  - Initiatives to support the development of a local food industry to provide the community with fresh and healthy produce

- Description of the outcome:

  - Coordination of One Planet Living principles, evaluation of the City’s carbon footprint and future carbon reduction strategies: Free One Planet Living Community Training involves 1) presentations from local experts, 2) practical hands-on demonstrations, 3) thought-provoking discussions, 4) weekly prizes and giveaways, 5) site field trips during 7 week course (Source: https://www.facebook.com/everythinggeraldton/posts/773116912706075)

  - Goodness Festival in 2013: During the Festival, over 1,100 community members attended 20 different events. 56 nominations in 9 categories for Goodness Awards plus 23 vendors showcased sustainable and innovative goods, services and projects at the Goodness Exhibition.
Support to Community Nursery propagating over 13,000 local provenance seedlings.
New infrastructure (water tank, shade structures, irrigation, office and storage, utilities) established for capacity to propagate up to 200,000 seedlings per annum.
Delivery of training course/presentations to 220 community members and school children on Climate Change and One Planet Living Principles
A two volume ‘Climate Adaptation Manual for Local Government’ was produced in partnership with councils around Australia
Council adoption of Water Planning and Management Strategies
Other ongoing activities include Renewable, and Energy Efficiency projects to install energy generation systems on City-owned assets and improve energy efficiency in facilities; biodiversity conservation and natural resource management; partnering community groups and agencies to support coastal and biodiversity programs; community and corporate tree planting, etc.

Other information:
One Planet Living Website http://oneplanetliving.org.au/

M. Recreation and Sport-related Measures
From which citizen engagement practices:
The 2029 and Beyond Community Charter (captured during an extensive community engagement process including World Cafes, Conversation Cafes, the Deliberative Survey, the “Geraldton Feel” Campaign, Designing our City Forum, the Deliberative Forum, IBM Digital Survey, Community Trustees). For recreation and sport
Initiatives to underpin the strong sporting culture that has shaped Greater Geraldton’s identity and lifestyle
Encourage informal recreation through well planned and developed public open spaces, cycle/walk paths, and green streetscapes

Description of the outcome:
Our Club Rules! Club Makeover Program was launched in November 2013. The Club Makeover Program has helped to build the capacity of clubs in Geraldton through the development of partnerships with up to 6 selected community clubs (three sporting and three non-sporting) during the first year of a three-year program. Participating clubs have received expert advice and resources.
Events & ground bookings: Australia Day; Australasian Safari; City to Surf; Luminous Dreams; Mother’s Day Out; Mullewa Muster and Rodeo; Reconciliation Week; the Sunset Street Series (street market, etc.); Anzac Day and HMAS Sydney II commemorative service, etc.
A variety of community events within the Mullewa District
N. Supporting Family, Children, and Seniors

- **From which citizen engagement practices:**
  The 2029 and Beyond Community Charter (captured during an extensive community engagement process including World Cafes, Conversation Cafes, the Deliberative Survey, the “Geraldton Feel” Campaign, Designing our City Forum, the Deliberative Forum, IBM Digital Survey, Community Trustees). For seniors,
  - Creation of a city and region that honors and integrates seniors of all cultural backgrounds into neighborhood communities
  - Improved services for an aging population including Aboriginal aged care facilities

- **Description of the outcome:**
  - A new parenting session, combining book sharing sessions, Better Beginning presentations was initiated at the Library: As part of the Better Beginnings Early Childhood Literacy program, over 380 Book Packs were presented to kindergarten and pre-primary students.
  - Connecting the Dots Conference (2nd & 3rd November 2013): The Conference aimed to develop the knowledge, skills and networks of those who care for and educate children in the Midwest region. Bright Stars Family Day Care (BSFDC), in partnership with the Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre, secured funding through the Department of Local Government and Communities (Regional Community Child Care Development Fund).
  - A Sustainability Audit was carried out on the BSFDC facility to look at opportunities to improve practices and efficiencies.
  - Queen Elizabeth II (QEII) Seniors & Community Centre hosted upward of 50 community events and delivered a variety of daily programs.

O. Community Health and Safety-related Measure

- **From which citizen engagement practices:**
  - World Café priorities as determined by the champions and alliance governance group – Many communities (permaculture) gardens can be found
  - The discussion around the Community Action Plan included a focus on both the ‘low hanging fruit’ as well as ‘big and bold ideas.’ Community gardens were suggested as ‘low hanging fruit.’ Also, opening a garden scheme for sustainable landscapes were suggested as ‘101 small steps towards a better place.’
  - The 2029 and Beyond Community Charter – community health and safety
    - Initiatives to promote and facilitate healthy lifestyles
    - Initiatives to create safer communities in which all groups get along
    - Initiatives to increase volunteering to more sustainable levels
    - Initiatives that address and discourage antisocial behavior
• Description of the outcome:
  o Establishment of the Mid-West Gascoyne Local Government Emergency Management Network: The City, in partnership with other local governments in the Mid-West Gascoyne, established the Emergency Management Network. Part of this grant-funded project was the 1st Mid-West Emergency Management Conference on the 20 June 2014.
  o The City has a dedicated group of Bush Fire Brigade volunteers. The Bush Fire Brigade volunteers: There was approximately 95 recorded callouts attended to by the City’s Bushfire Brigades.
  o Fruit and Vegetable Chemical Sampling Program
  o Food stallholders training, Online I’m Alert Food 1365 users up 625 from 740 users in 2013
  o Indigenous Environmental Health Worker Program – support to remote community services through Bundiyarra Aboriginal Community Aboriginal Corporation Inc.
  o Completion of Healthy Communities Initiative “Go Gero Getting Active and Eating Well Made Easy Project”, including establishment of six community gardens and various community sponsorships
  o The City has installed CCTV on the Esplanade and in Mullewa

P. Transportation-related Measures
• From which citizen engagement practices:
The 2029 and Beyond Community Charter (captured during an extensive community engagement process including World Cafes, Conversation Cafes, the Deliberative Survey, the “Geraldton Feel” Campaign, Designing our City Forum, the Deliberative Forum, IBM Digital Survey, Community Trustees). For transportation,
  o Development of more efficient transport options that are secure and safe to sustain our lifestyle including a CAT bus in the CBD, bike pathways, and parking
  o Integration of multimodal transport options into all future planning to reduce demand on light vehicles

• Description of the outcome:
  o Pathways featured high on the list of priority works in the 2013/14 financial year. The pathways renewal & expansion include Chapman Road, Augustus Street, Shenton Street, Durlacher Street, Sanford Street, Maitland St, Ainsworth Street, Waterfront Circle, Reef Boulevard, Birdwood Street in Mullewa
  o Geraldton Airport: the introduction of long and short-term paid parking commenced 7 April 2014

Q. Measures for Carbon Neutral Region
• From which citizen engagement practices:
Deliberative survey process has provided the City with data clearly shows that citizens want the City/Region to pursue options to become carbon neutral. The data from the deliberative survey enabled the City to pursue a smart, sustainable and creative economy and community.

- **Description of outcome:**
  The concept of a Carbon Neutral Region is based on the area encompassing Eneabba (east to Perenjori) and up to Kalbarri, and facilitating several provision within a $100 million budget. A key outcome will be a contained and measurable energy grid from which to determine as set as a model for smart grid technology, applying renewable energy developments and energy source into the mix. A critical element to achieving these major renewable projects is the funding for the *Mid-West Energy* Project, which consists of a 330 kV transmission line from Perth to Geraldton. *(Note: These items were proposed during the 2029 and beyond project and expected outcome.)*
  - Smart meters in all households and business premises in that area
  - Smart switches on the entire power network
  - Mix of solar panel, micro-gas generators or micro-wind on at least a quarter of all households

  Also, provision of the opportunity for a higher level of larger scale renewable such as
  - Solar thermal (a proposal by *Mid-West Energy* for a 400 MW station at Perenjori)
  - Solar PV (a proposal for a ten – 50 MW plant in Geraldton which would be Australia’s largest and a separate concept for an additional 50 MW plant)
  - The wind (proposals have received Council Planning Approval for a 500 MW to be generated)
  - Wave (proposal for a wave generation plant as part of the Oakajee Deepwater Port project)
  - Geothermal (various large scale exploration tenements have been granted by the WA Government)
  - Clean coal (carbon sequestration and coal seam gasification)
Appendix Three (to Section II Part C): Tools for Citizen Engagement used in Geraldton 2029

Appendix Three describes tools adopted for citizen engagement in the City of Greater Geraldton over the past five years or so. Various tools, from initial community engagement to current participatory budgeting, were used to pursue deliberative democracy. From various sources, we identified tools along with the description that various experts wrote, and then organized it in chronological order using a table format. For some events, we were not able to identify exact dates; in those cases, we left the “time” cell blank.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Tools</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project Launch (Critical Community Issues Forum)</td>
<td>March 4th, 2010</td>
<td>The initial forum was the launch of the 2029 and Beyond Project and led by a panel of local and international experts. Over 300 community members attended this forum.</td>
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</table>
|                                          |                    | • *Cost: approximately U.S. $ 9,197 (2010 exchange rate)*  
• *Outcomes: A closer alliance with the media; and a list of community members volunteering to assist with the community engagement*                                                                                           |
| Community Champions                      | Before May, 2010   | Champions are ordinary community people who have volunteered to be trained and then run a variety of public deliberations, including World Cafés. Community Champions played an important role in ensuring broad community participation in guiding all elements of planning and implementation. Advertisements were put in the local paper for the 40 Community Champions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| World Cafés                              | May-June, 2010     | The World Cafe is built on the assumption that people already have within them the wisdom and creativity to confront the challenges. Participants are invited to come (not randomly selected) and explore important questions. Four or more people sit around small tables as in a café, with each person moving progressively from table to table through several rounds of conversation. A host remains at each table, helping incoming people to have deeper conversations and link ideas to create a whole-group dialogue. Main points from discussion are written down at each table by participants and become the record of the meeting. After training, the Community Champions facilitated a series of World Cafés. In total, 36 World Cafes were held from May – June 2010, with a total of around 400 participants  
• *Cost: approximately US $1,839*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |


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<td><strong>Outcome:</strong> An independent researcher compiled a list of potential “quick wins” that were prioritized by the Community Champions and the Alliance Governance Group for immediate response by the Council.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conversation Cafés or Community Cafés (Small-scale deliberations)</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>A Conversation Cafés is a small, hosted, lively, drop-in conversation among diverse people about their views and feelings about issues of importance. They were held in real cafes or other public places to enhance the sense of inclusivity and creativity. The aim is to foster inquiry rather than debate about issues that matter. Five conversation cafes were hosted by Community Champions to further explore issues raised during the various engagement initiatives. Members discussed identity, city size, carbon neutrality, heritage, culture, community security, youth, housing, transport, life-long learning, leadership and participation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scenario planning</td>
<td>September-October, 2010</td>
<td>Experts and ordinary people co-create several potential future scenarios for the future of the region.</td>
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| The Deliberative Survey/Poll & Forum | August, 2010 | The Deliberative survey seeks to examine what the public would think about important social and public policy issues given the opportunity to be informed and to deliberate with their peers. A random sample of the population is invited to participate in a baseline survey. A survey was sent to a random sample of 3,000 residents along with an invitation to attend a one-day Forum held on the 14th August 2010. This initial survey provided information about the top-of-the-mind community views. At the outset of the Forum, another analysis of the survey repeated. Participants take part in small group deliberation, followed by large plenary discussions where they ask questions of experts and hear competing arguments from all sides. Finally, post-Forum survey was conducted to show the extent to which information and deliberation changed community views.  
- **Cost:** approximately U.S. $18,393  
- **Outcome:** Analysis of the survey showed that Forum participants were representative of the larger population’s views. The results were surprising to decision-makers, being far more supportive of local action to create a sustainable region than expected. |
<p>| Online deliberation platform (Civic Evolution) | August, 2010 | Community members were encouraged through advertisements in the local newspaper, as well as outreach to activist groups, to post good ideas regarding sustainability. Participants can work online with interested others to develop them into proposals. The website URL is the following: <a href="http://2029.civicevolution.org/">http://2029.civicevolution.org/</a> |
| Big Sky, Big Ideas Festival | September 17-18, 2010 | The Big Ideas Festival aimed to provide inspiration, education and capacity building to professionals and the general community. The Big Ideas Summit was held as part of the festival and facilitated discussion with internationally renowned and local experts. The key target group for the Summit was professionals, but general community members were encouraged to attend. |
| Open your Eyes project | 2011 | The Big Ideas Festival 2011 Art Conference provided means of engaging the community and encouraged people to participate in individual projects. |</p>
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<tr>
<td>Designing our City Forum (The Deliberative Forum)</td>
<td>August 13-15, 2011</td>
<td>A deliberative planning process held over three days. A multi-disciplinary team worked collaboratively with over 200 residents of CGG to develop potential plans and design options for how the broader region and City will look in the future. Around 110 participants attended all three public deliberation sessions.</td>
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<td>… 21st century town hall meeting (The 21st Century Dialogue)</td>
<td>13-Aug-11</td>
<td>The 21st Century Dialogue enabled a large community/stakeholder group (around 250 participants) to deliberate about what they valued most, the desired built and natural form. Participants included 1) randomly selected members of the CGG community, 2) community members who responded to advertisements, and 3) specifically invited representatives of diverse regional stakeholder groups. Participants engage in informed deliberation in small groups, connected through networked computers, with the goal of finding common ground and priorities on broad and complex issues. The key themes, specific examples and forum priorities are projected back to the forum virtually in ‘real time’. It provided participants with the results of their input for further deliberation and facilitated the production of preliminary report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… Enquiry by Design (A structured planning process involving the public and experts)</td>
<td>August 14 &amp;15, 2011</td>
<td>An Enquiry-By-Design is an interactive process held over several days that seeks solutions for urban planning/design/renewal. It incorporates the values and feedback of the community into evolving plans and designs created by a multidisciplinary team of technical experts. The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) worked all day preparing 6 scenarios of 1) a linear city, 2) contained growth, 3) a city of towns, 4) managed expansion, 5) environment first, 6) transport first. The inclusion of random sampled participants ensures that community members without specific interests are represented. The Team used the feedback to develop a preferred/consolidated planning scenario for Greater Geraldton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… Open Space Technology</td>
<td>August 15, 2011</td>
<td>Participants moved freely between tables set up by each of the design teams and were able to discuss issues and opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The &quot;Geraldton Feel&quot; Campaign</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Community described the &quot;Gero Feel&quot; as a combination of the sunny warm climate, beaches, sunsets, sports, friendly community, relaxed lifestyle and small town feel. In order to determine what the 'Gero Feel' is, the CGG</td>
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<td>Engagement Tools</td>
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<td>ran a competition calling for entries to describe what the 'Gero Feel' means to local residents. The community was asked to submit stories, poems, drawings/paintings and photographs that depict the Geraldton feel. The City used the information to develop a series of postcards and bookmarks that capture the images and words used by local residents to promote the 'Gero Feel'.</td>
<td></td>
<td>IBM Digital Survey 2012 A large random sample survey (acquired through the WA Electoral Commission) sent to the residents of Greater Geraldton. Around 3,000 surveys were sent out and around 300 responded with completed survey. A survey disseminated to all years 10-12 high school students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Trustees (Citizen Jury/ Citizen Panel) 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Citizen's Jury process provides the opportunity for randomly selected citizens (15-25) to deliberate thoroughly on an issue. Jurors are assisted by expert witnesses and a professional facilitator. Thirteen randomly sampled Greater Geraldton residents volunteered to be on the Community Trustees group, joined by three high school student volunteers. The Community Trustees worked on a plan to help the implementation of the IBM Smarter Cities Challenge proposals. The Community Trustees process was akin to a random sample &quot;Citizens' Jury&quot; wherein decision and policy makers have the opportunity to hear an authentic voice from the community that is representative, thoroughly informed and has the opportunity to deliberate. There was no inducement offered for participation other than the opportunity to help the community develop the digital future they wanted.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small-scale public deliberation for precinct or neighborhood planning 2012-2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>The precinct/neighborhood planning involved a variety of public deliberation techniques, ensuring opportunities for people to be involved in the plans for their immediate neighborhood. The first of these was purposefully started in the lowest socio-economic precinct, incorporating a large proportion of Indigenous residents and most of the public housing, a precinct that has been under-funded. The Rangeway-Utakarra-Karloo (RUK) precinct was one such area, and the engagement process revolved around a series of community engagement workshops held at three different venues within the RUK area during October and November 2012. The precinct planning for the Sunset Beach precinct was undertaken</td>
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## Engagement Tools

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<th><strong>Engagement Tools</strong></th>
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</table>
| Launch of Website and social media and social networking engagement avenues | Since 2010 | To reach a wider audience and provide opportunity for online engagement on project activities and results. Using Facebook account, the City created 9 different pages (City of Greater Geraldton; Australia Day Geraldton; Bright Stars Family Day Care; Geraldton Regional Art Gallery; Geraldton Regional Library; Geraldton Visitor Centre; Million Trees Geraldton; Queens Park Theatre; Youth n Motion). The City used a centralized Twitter account ([https://twitter.com/CityofGG](https://twitter.com/CityofGG)) and other social media accounts. Also, the Linked In account was created. ([https://www.linkedin.com/grps/Greater-Geraldton-City-Region-2029-2718371-2718371](https://www.linkedin.com/grps/Greater-Geraldton-City-Region-2029-2718371-2718371))

- **Cost:** approximately U.S. $18,393
- **Outcome:** Access to a website that will increasingly encourage the community to repeatedly visit. |

## Participatory Budgeting Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Community Panel Deliberations (#change CGG Community)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Time</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description</strong></th>
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| 28 randomly selected members (randomly sampled participants representative of the demographics of the population) of the community participated in the community panel deliberations, over four weekly full day workshops. The main role of the panel was to review the City's capital works plan and prioritize them according to the Community Capital Works Assessment Criteria and Framework. The task of this panel was to recommend to Council the desired range, level and priority of services to achieve minimal rate increases or reduction within the budget limitations set by Council's adopted Long Term Financial Plan. The final report of the community panel deliberations was adopted by Council on the 25 February 2014. | November, 2013 | }
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Engagement Tools</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cost: approximately U.S. $ 210,896 in total</strong>&lt;sup&gt;23&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Community Panel Fees: $ 48,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultant &amp; Facilitator: $ 67,700</td>
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<td>OEP Model: $ 38,700</td>
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<td>Initial Influencer Training: $ 19,360</td>
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<td>Marketing: $ 17,400</td>
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<td>Catering: $ 10,636</td>
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<td>Sundries: $ 8,700</td>
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| Community Summit | Part I: 4 March 2015 (3.5 hour session) & Part II: 22 March 2015 (A full day deliberations with each other) | Cutting back on services requires Council to make difficult decisions about non-mandatory services which must be discontinued or reduced. The Community Summit was to provide members of community with an opportunity to deliberate with other participants about the relative importance of those services and develop a priority list of non-mandatory services. The City invites participation from four groups of people via a targeted recruitment process. (Participants were sent a welcome pack soon after registering, and received an agenda pack one week prior to Part One.) Summit participants were responsible for reviewing 98 non-mandatory services ($8,509,061). Participants were given $6 million to spend, forcing prioritization. They were asked to make preliminary selections by March 12. |

| .... Particibudget software | 2015 | Particibudget provided an opportunity for participants to make comments about each service. Comments (including questions, statements, suggestions and general feedback) were provided to participants and are also considered by the City. Particibudget calculate budgets, kept track spending for each participant and automated the collation of all participants' service selections. Participants in the Community Summit were advised that the software would remain open for them more time to consider their selection. They have been formally recorded and can be supplied on request. |

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<sup>23</sup> Source: Geraldton #changesCGG: A Change Leadership & Transition Management Strategy to Improve Engagement, Productivity, Efficiency, and Align Corporate Outcomes with Community Expectations, September, 24th, 2013. City of Greater Geraldton. The 2013 average exchange rate is applied for this number.
**Engagement Tools** | **Time** | **Description**
--- | --- | ---
Citizen's Choicework |  | Citizen Choicework creates opportunities for citizens from different backgrounds and with diverse views to think deeply about an issue together. A Choicework Guide presents different choices with pros and cons in such a way as to disentangle key elements of a complex problem. Consensus is not the goal; the aim is effective deliberation, for citizens from across the political spectrum. With this process, participants can gain a deeper understanding of areas of common ground and important disagreements and identify critical questions and concerns.

Community Grants for Participatory Budgeting | 2007-present | The aim of the City’s Community Grants Program is to provide assistance to local community groups and organizations that make positive contributions to the quality of life within the Greater Geraldton region. This program commenced in 2007, and currently in round 17 (as of October 2015). For its round 15 program, a total of $175,000 had been distributed to local groups. On August 2015, Council updated the Community Funding Policy, indicating the cap for each project at $30,000. This community grant will be offered once a year for one-off events, activities or programs.

Participatory Budgeting Community Panels | 2014-15 | The first panel (35 stratified, randomly sampled participants) met over four weeks to determine the priorities for the 10 Year Capital Works Plan and develop a framework for evaluating new projects. The second panel reviewed the level of services and made recommendations to Council on increasing, decreasing or maintaining the current level of service.

The various sources for the text in Appendix Three are the following:
  - “Rangeway Utakarra Karloo Precinct Plan” (May 2013) Prepared by Mackay UrbanDesign and Curtin University
  - “City of Greater Geraldton 2013-2023 Strategic Community Plan” (2013)
- Developing Civic Deliberation and Collaborative Governance in Regional Western Australia to Co-create a Sustainable Future: Key Roles, Timeline, Deliberative Process and Techniques (Retrieved from the Bertelsmann Website [http://www.vitalizing-](http://www.vitalizing-).)
Hartz-Karp, Janette “Geraldton, Australia: Geraldton 2029 and beyond – Case Study (Draft)” Vitalizing democracy through participation, Reinhard Mohn Prize 2011. Bertelsmann Stiftung “2029 and Beyond – Preliminary Reports” A vision by and for the community of Greater Geraldton City Region, 14th August 2010
  o Note: The estimated cost and outcome information is retrieved from Hartz-Karp’s paper, and translated into US dollar amount using 2010 exchange rate. The cost and outcome is italicized under the description in the table.


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International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Australasia. (2014). *Showcase of 2014 Core Values Awards*.


Government Report


City of Greater Geraldton, (n.d., a). 2029 and Beyond preliminary reports.

City of Geraldton-Greenough. *Climate of Opportunity, Greater Geraldton City Region, Result of Public Deliberation (2029 and beyond).*

**Website**


**Personal communication**

E-mail from Andrea Selvey on September 29, 2015

E-mail from R. Weymouth on November 16, 2015

E-mail from Mayor Shane Van Steen December 21, 2015