

# Local Government Strategies for Transitioning Communities

**Churchill Fellowship Report – February 2013**  
**Julia Agostino**  
**2012 Churchill Fellow**



**THE WINSTON CHURCHILL MEMORIAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA**

Report by - JULIA AGOSTINO - 2012 Churchill Fellow

*To Study Local Government Strategies for Transitioning Communities*

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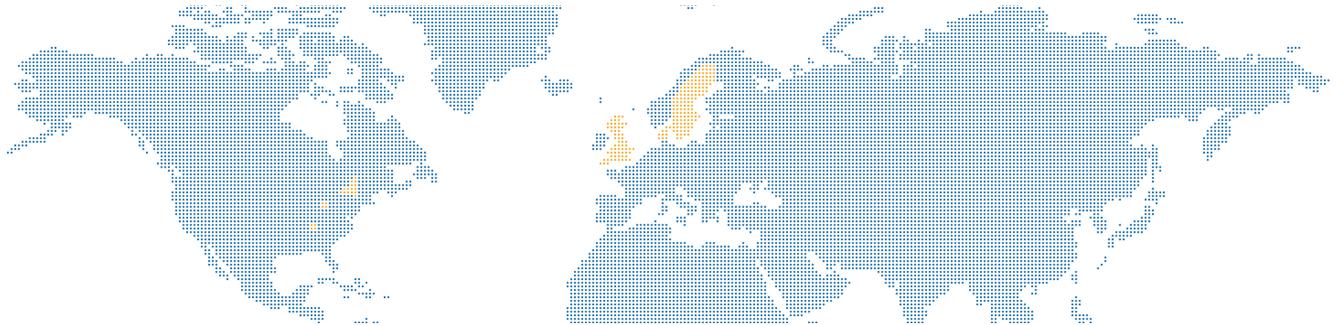
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Signed

Dated



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I cannot say enough to thank everyone overseas who generously gave me their time, knowledge and insights, either by participating in interviews or providing me with information and contacts. I enjoyed meeting every one of you, and am so humbled by your efforts to help me with this project.

Finally, I would like to thank my husband Tim Grainger without whom I could not have travelled. Tim helped me navigate the globe by plane, train and automobile, got me to places on time and waited patiently for me to finish interviews; he made sure I ate and slept, and carried the bags of documents I insisted on carting home – and all with a generous spirit and good humour.

I dedicate this report to Giovanna Faenza.

**Julia Agostino**

February 2013

# Executive summary

## Overview

During a six-week period in late 2012, I visited a number of international communities that have experienced issues associated with economic downturn, including decline in local industries, job loss and urban decay.

These communities are taking innovative steps to transition to a sustainable future.

My ambition was to gain new insight into how we might tackle transition in Australia.

## Highlights

- From New York State to Tennessee, and across England, Wales and Denmark, I was warmly welcomed by people willing to generously and openly share with me their transition knowledge and experiences with me.
- I found that local government was often at the centre of activities to transition and transform communities and I was able to learn not just what they did, but what made them successful.
- Many non-government organisations are essential to transition, including Chambers of Commerce, universities, specialist advice bodies and community groups, and these often fill the gaps in government resourcing.
- I found that partnerships and innovation are essential, that early community consultation is more likely to attract support for a project, and that local context and culture affects how transition is planned and implemented.
- I learned include that transition is an inclusive process, not an exclusive one.
- Successful transition involves innovation, negotiation and respect for the view of others; it involves genuine stakeholder consultation, strong partnerships, the ability to bring people along for the journey, and to share credit for success.

- In Denmark, I learned about how local governments are meeting the challenges of the Danish Government's ambitious carbon emissions reductions goals, through a range of innovative and practical strategies.

In this report, I have provided an overview of the transition communities I visited, touching on relevant issues, activities and strategies that were discussed. Under the three headings of 'Strategies', 'Relationships' and 'Challenges' I have discussed common transition themes and identified learnings.

Finally, I have set out the conclusions I have drawn, followed by a number of recommendations that may be useful for Australian local governments and other organisations in considering transition activities

Through the extensive networks I have established in my role at Latrobe City Council (which include stakeholders at all levels of government, community groups, media, specialist bodies and universities) I will share the knowledge I have gained on this trip, and encourage its practical application in local transition activities.

A program of my travel and stakeholder engagement is included on the following page.

## Contact and Further Information

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# Program of Engagement

## **NEW YORK CITY, USA** **October 1–3 2012**

**Department of Small Business Services**  
Robert W Walsh, Commisisoner  
Rachel C Van Tosh, Senior Policy Advisor

**ACP Visioning and Planning**  
Gianni Longo, Architect & Founding Principal

**HR&A**  
Carl Weisbrod, Partner

## **ALBANY, USA** **October 4–5 2012**

**Capital District Regional Planning Commission**  
Rocco Ferraro, AICP, Executive Director

**University of Albany**  
Miriam Trementozzi, Associate Vice-President for Community Engagement

**Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce**  
Mark N.Eagan, CCE, President and CEO

**City of Albany**  
Gerard Jennings, Mayor

**University at Albany (Department of Geography & Planning)**  
Corianne P.Scalley PhD, Assistant Professor

## **COLUMBUS, USA** **October 8–9 2012**

**Greater Ohio Policy Centre**  
Allison Goebel, Associate Director  
Lavea Brachman, Executive Director & Non Resident Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution

**City of Columbus (Economic Development Department)**  
Bill Webster

## **CHATTANOOGA, USA** **October 11–12 2012**

**Lyndhurst Foundation**  
Bruz Clarke, President and Treasurer

**City of Chattanooga**  
Ron Littlefield, Mayor

**Chattanooga Venture**  
Rick Montague, former President  
Eleanor Cooper, former Taskforce Leader (by email)

## **LONDON, UK** **October 14–19 2012**

**London School of Economics**  
Professor Anne Power

**Cutting the Carbon**  
Alexis Rowell

## **TOTNES, UK** **October 22 2012**

**Totnes Transition Network**  
Ben Brangwyn, Transition Network Co-Founder  
Jo Coish, Office & Finance Manager

## **WALES, UK** **October 23–26 2012**

**Cardiff University (Cardiff Business School)**  
Dr Gillian Bristow

**Cardiff University (School of Planning and Geography)**  
Kevin Morgan, Professor of Governance and Development

**Cardiff University (Sustainable Places Research Centre)**  
Stephen Williams, Honorary Research Fellow

**Welsh Local Government Association**  
Tim Peppin, Director,

**Centre for Alternative Technology**  
Facility visit

## **MANCHESTER, UK** **October 28–30 2012**

**Core Cities Group**  
Chris Murray, Director

**New Economy**  
Paul Evans, Head of European Policy

**City of Manchester (Economic Development Unit)**  
Karin Connell

## **SHEFFIELD, UK** **October 30 2012**

**City of Sheffield**  
Diana Buckley, Economic Policy Officer  
Laurie Brennan, Policy Officer, Policy, Partnerships and Research

## **BIRMINGHAM, UK** **October 31 2012**

**Birmingham University (Department of Management)**  
Dr Caroline Chapain

**Birmingham University (Institute of Local Government Studies)**  
Andrew Coulson

## **COPENHAGEN, DENMARK** **November 5–6 2012**

**City of Copenhagen**  
Eske Kock Pedersen, Executive Climate Officer  
Thoeger Lund-Sorensen, Climate Project Director

## **AARHUS, DENMARK** **November 7 2012**

**City of Aarhus**  
Mette Behrmann, Senior Project Manager, Climate, Nature and Environment

## Albany, New York



### Background

Albany is one of the oldest cities in America, being officially chartered as a city in 1686. Throughout its long history, Albany has undergone many physical, political, social and economic changes.

My interest in Albany stemmed from the parallels that can be drawn between it and Australia's capital city, Canberra. Both have been largely dependent on government, education and health care for a stable economy and population, and they potentially face similar issues when a large public service is downsized when governments need to make savings and find efficiencies.

Albany was designated capital of New York State and was designed to keep government activities separate from New York City business. The main industries in Albany have traditionally been government, education and health services, with about 25 per cent of today's employment in the public service and a boom in health care due to an ageing population.

Albany managed to rebound well from urban decline it experienced in the 1970s and 1980s, but faced further challenges as a result of the USA's most recent economic recession. The flow-on effects have included a forced government-hiring freeze in 2009 and a reduction in endowments to local universities.

The effects of these changes can be seen throughout the city, including in the city's centre where a number of large buildings appear empty and others stand in need of work. These are in stark contrast to the city's magnificent and well preserved historical structures, including the State Capitol Building.

It is not just the city centre that has suffered. Driving through some neighbourhoods I observed buildings and parks that had become run down and derelict, and a new school building that was closed.

Despite these challenging circumstances, the future of Albany is encouraging because the City is working a range of initiatives that address issues such as liveability, education, small business needs, and the need to attract and retain people to live and work in Albany in the long term.

### Issues and initiatives

The picture I gained during my brief stay in Albany is complex. On the one hand, it is a city whose leaders are committed to securing its future through economic and community development. There exists a local pride in Albany, and a firm belief that it will be even stronger in the future. It is clear that many people are working tirelessly to achieve the same outcome – a secure economic and social future for the community as a whole.

On the other hand, I was at times confronted by derelict and decaying buildings, boarded up and unloved, historic facades standing with nothing behind them, neighbourhood parks in decline and a major shopping mall with few customers and a growing number of empty shops.

It would be easy to be depressed by this, and yet having talked to some of Albany's leaders, it is clear that there is widespread faith in the practical efforts being made to transition the community. Many different organisations have taken up the challenge of diversifying Albany's economy, whilst others work at a community level on grass roots type transition activities.

It is all important work that is connected by the common goal of a prosperous and secure future of the community.

### The City of Albany

The City of Albany (the City) has been led for 19 consecutive years by Mayor Gerard Jennings. An ex-school teacher, Mayor Jennings has placed importance on the role of education and the local universities in the future of the City, as well as a range of economic development and community based initiatives designed to improve Albany and to attract investment and people.

The City continues to look for ways to diversify its economy, make business easier and importantly, make Albany a more attractive place for people to live and work, with quality community spaces and urban development.

Albany's Department of Development and Planning (DDP) is center to a variety of subsidiaries that assist the City of Albany in economic growth, neighborhood revitalisation, land use development and sustainable living. The DDP provides economic development services, business services, financial assistance, long-range and neighborhood planning, and oversight to all development projects and sustainable initiatives in the City.

Within the DDP is an Economic Development Team focussing on assisting businesses in Albany, as well as an Industrial Development Agency, the Capitalize Albany Corporation, a not-for-profit organisation that helps drive Albany's economic strategy, and provides a range of other resources to help Albany's business sector grow.

Recent City-led transition initiatives include:

1. **Albany 2030:** The City connected with the community to include it in plans for Albany's future. It began with a process to engage all members of the City's community, area stakeholders and regional partners in developing a vision for the future.  
As a result of extensive community engagement and participation, Albany 2030 sets out local priorities to guidelocal (re)development and (re)investment in a manner that meets the needs of residents, businesses and stakeholders while maintaining and elevating the City's character, quality of life, and environmental and fiscal health. The intent is to greatly improve local quality of life for generations to come. Thousands of community members from diverse backgrounds and neighbourhoods came together to build consensus about their local priorities in a collaborative manner. Importantly, Albany 2030 set out to show how to do more with limited resources in changing economic times.
2. **Albany FreeNet:** This is a free, high-speed wireless Internet service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to a growing number of residences, businesses and public spaces in the City. It was made possible through a public-private partnership with Tech Valley Communications, and it is designed to enable better access to opportunities for everyone in Albany.

The City has not just increased access to the web, but has extended the initiative to involve a component where people can purchase low cost computers. It has also increased its own web presence to market the city and its attractions.

3. **Neighbourhood Plans.** The award-winning Arbour Hill Neighbourhood Plan identified four focus areas and assigned guiding principles and actions for to each one. These areas include: Home ownership and Rental Housing Opportunities; Arts, Culture and Heritage; Business and Job Development; and Improved Quality of Life.

Mayor Jennings personally advocates strongly for Albany at a state and federal government level and indicated that a number of strategic partnerships have helped to shape Albany today.

Chief amongst these is Nanotech, a University at Albany (the State University of New York – SUNY) initiative that has grown from a small research facility into a world leading business that attracts investment to the region, and skilled workers to Albany. The contribution made to the community by Nanotech is highly valued, and the City recognises the company's ongoing importance in making Albany an attractive place to work and live.

The success of Nanotech was a gradual process that involved grants and major investment from outside of Albany, including considerable financial commitment by the New York State Government and IBM. The effect of these grants was to grow confidence in the business and build a sense of pride in the community about the SUNY and Nanotech.

Nanotech changed the landscape of Albany and helped to forge a new way of doing business. What was previously a much smaller research university, now works closely with private investors and government on a large scale, and contributes hugely to Albany's economic growth.

The evolution of Nanotech has been described as a turning point in Albany's history. However, while the investment Nanotech attracts is vital to Albany's economy, it has not solved all of the issues faced by this community.

### Other organisations

While Albany has been shielded to some extent from economic valleys, it did not necessarily take advantage of economic peaks. Reasons for this would seem to include a level of complacency and lack of entrepreneurial spirit in the past.

This has changed over time, with the business community becoming part of the social fabric of the broader community.

It has proved very successful for Albany, as companies like Nanotech and others have shown. These companies are desirable to work for, and help address livability issues out of necessity – they need to not just attract skilled people, but retain them.

Another challenge for Albany is the polycentric government structure that involves many layers of executive authority, not all of which work well together. The four main cities in the region compete for funding and other opportunities. There is a growing inclination to look at opportunities where funding might be jointly sought to address issues that affect multiple locations, for example, to address a sewerage overflow issue along the Hudson River.

Some of Albany's challenges have a historical basis. Due to a population drop in Albany since 1950, the city contracted as people moved to the suburbs or moved away from the region altogether. The challenge now is to woo people back, and particularly to attract and retain skilled professionals – a challenge not unique to Albany. Even in New York City, attraction and retention can be problematic.

Liveability – or quality of life as it is called in the USA – is an issue of high priority in all of the communities I visited, particularly when considering strategies to build population and capacity and to attract investors. Private companies now consider what public facilities, housing and schools are available in a city, knowing that people will consider these things when choosing to move to a new place.

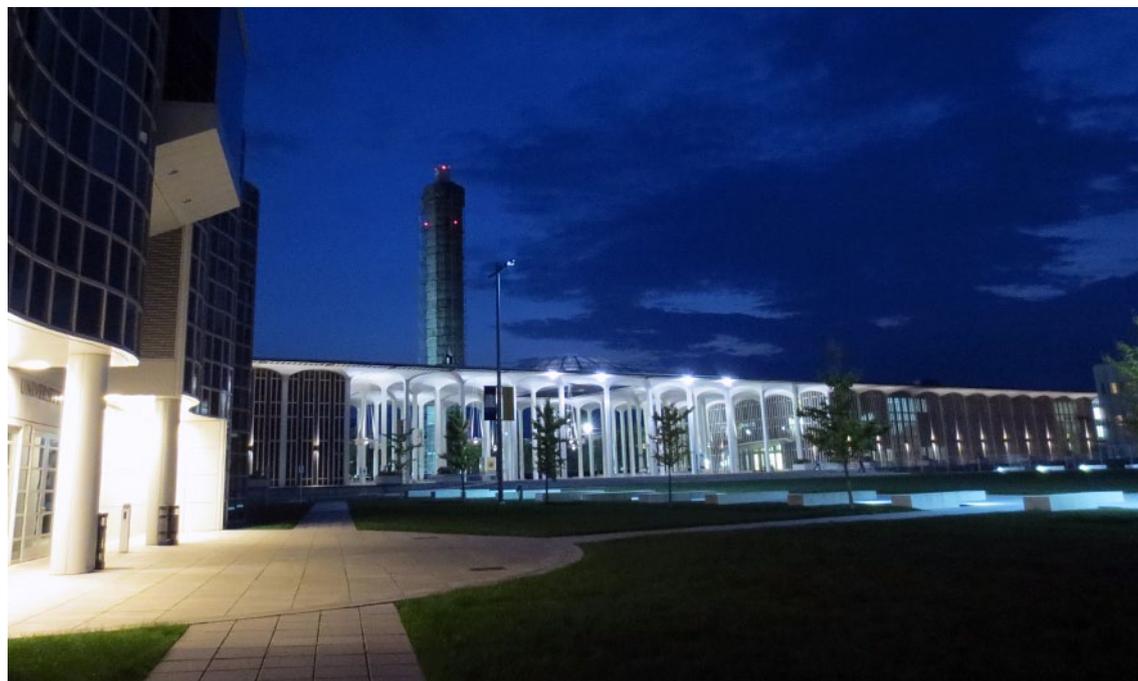
This puts pressure on local government to make liveability a high priority in any strategy to attract investment.

A tension exists because public facilities cost money to build and maintain and may not be considered the highest priority when a community is facing significant job losses and related social and economic problems. An example in Albany is the public swimming pools. Because of the cost to run and maintain pools, there are only two left in Albany, while others have been closed or converted to “spray” parks.

Public spaces such as neighbourhood parks are essential to the wellbeing of any community, and something that people considering a move will potentially consider. Differences are evident as you travel between Albany's neighbourhoods.

For example, I was shown two parks in different neighbourhoods, one of which was more affluent than the other, but only a few kilometres apart. The difference between the two parks was huge – one was green, well maintained and had up to date play equipment. This was in a ‘good’ area of Albany. The other park was little more than a cracked and decaying bitumen yard, with a basketball hoop at one end. I was told that this park was in an area with significant socio-economic problems that had not yet been solved.

**EMBRACING INNOVATION:** New technology is addressing local challenges at State University of New York at Albany.



This sort of inequity in liveability between neighbourhoods is not by design, but appears to occur mainly because of the way local taxes are distributed back into neighbourhoods. In short, if you live in a neighbourhood that pays more taxes, you will have better community facilities.

The problem with this is that the urban areas that most need liveability issues addressed can miss out on local government action. This leaves efforts to improve these facilities up to other organisations.

The Department of Geography and Planning SUNY has developed a program where housing and community development experts work with students in distressed Albany neighbourhoods to address problems.

The university, its students and a number of non-government organisations are working together to fill the gaps in resources and capacity, and address issues where local government is unable to through a lack of resources.

This is an important shift away from the old model where local governments led these sorts of initiatives. It points to a community that is proactively shaping its own destiny and contributing to solutions.

The strong relationship that exists between the SUNY and the community has come about through SUNY's efforts to assist the community with business development, and where the university has found funding for projects. Stronger community power and leadership, as well as trust, constant negotiation and perseverance have also contributed to its success.

Land use and development is also a difficult issue in Albany and has the potential to hamper transition efforts. Finance, politics and red tape all contribute to constricting the push for urban and city revitalisation.

Rehabilitating Albany's old, beautiful and historical buildings can be fraught with difficulties because the costs to rehabilitate tend to be far greater than the cost of building new ones. Many buildings cannot be demolished because of their historical value, so they simply decay over time.

It was suggested that what might encourage developers to invest in improving these buildings is regulatory changes such as an expedited permitting process, subsidies to help revitalisation, and property tax relief for worthy projects.

### Key learnings:

- Collaboration: shared efforts and the pursuit of public private partnerships contribute to economic growth and long-term sustainability
- Innovation and diversification of the economy is essential
- Make it easy to do business: remove regulatory barriers where possible and provide good services to link business to community
- Value universities and support university led initiatives that bring wealth and capacity into the region
- Liveability is vital for the community, and to attract and retain skilled workers.

## Columbus, Ohio



### Background

The US state of Ohio has been hit extremely hard by de-industrialisation and recent recession. Cities like Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton, Toledo, Youngstown and Akron all had large manufacturing sectors, and all experienced severe economic downturn.

During my visit to Columbus, I learned not just about Columbus' efforts to develop and maintain a stronger, more diversified economy, but the efforts being made across Ohio State to transition communities following severe economic downturn.

### Snapshot of Ohio

During the 1980s and 1990s, large manufacturing firms left Ohio to locate overseas and as a result, most of these cities were devastated by enormous job losses. Some had not fully recovered when the most recent recession occurred, and have struggled to gain ground in light of the economic challenges. Most are making efforts to recover.

Cincinnati lost several Fortune 500 companies in the 1970s and 1980s. In the last ten years, its local government, education sector and chamber of commerce have made a coordinated effort to raise graduation rates among local residents and to nurture its consumer marketing economy through the establishment of marketing and communications firms.

Cleveland and Youngstown in Ohio's north were the worst hit cities because of their long manufacturing history. These cities are both recovering by diversifying their economies and pursuing twenty-first century manufacturing opportunities. However, because they fell the farthest, they have the farthest to go to recover.

Both cities are deliberately shrinking and reducing services to underpopulated parts of the city, as well as developing innovative land reuse strategies. Historically, the public, private and not-for-profit sectors have not coordinated efforts in these cities, but this is changing out of necessity and a realisation that more can be achieved through shared efforts.

In Youngstown, the steel industry dominated for years and the city was built on its success. With the collapse of the industry, tens of thousands of jobs were lost, and the city's population declined by more than half. It is now left with an oversized urban structure with many abandoned properties and underutilised sites.

The City of Youngstown (the City) realised that it would have to make to recreate itself as a smaller city through a strategic program designed to rationalise and consolidate leftover urban infrastructure in a socially responsible and financially sustainable way.

In partnership with the local university and its community, the City has undertaken *Youngstown 2010* – a comprehensive planning effort aimed at designing a city that is smaller, greener, cleaner, makes efficient use of its available resources, and capitalizes on its many cultural amenities and business advantages.

The four major vision principles as outlined by *Youngstown 2010* include:

1. accepting that Youngstown is a smaller city;
2. defining Youngstown's role in the new regional economy;
3. improving Youngstown's image and enhancing quality of life; and
4. a call to action.

Guided by these principles, Youngstown is looking at ways to downsize its infrastructure, diversify its economy, address image and liveability issues such as urban decay and public safety, and to empower local leaders who have the influence to involve their community in activities.

The City has a clear focus of creating and preserving jobs, aggressively working to attract business, including through collaborative efforts, and to protect neighbourhoods.

Another interesting city is Akron, which produced most of the country's car tyres until the 1970s, when manufacturing plants began to move offshore.

Akron is an excellent example of a community prepared to take proactive steps to mitigate its losses. Akron deliberately retooled its economy to utilise the technical expertise it had amassed in chemical engineering during the heyday of its rubber making industries. Rather than abandon the knowledge and skill-set, it applied it to new bioengineering technologies.

This positive shift to use current resources and skills for new purposes, has been a successful strategy. Compared to similar sized cities in Ohio and the industrial Midwest, Akron consistently outperforms its peers.

Akron's success is at least in part due to the strong relationships and collaborative approach taken by the Mayor, the County Executive, the Chamber of Commerce President and the President of the University of Akron.

In contrast, Columbus has not experienced the sort of dramatic downturn that some of its neighbours have, and has weathered Ohio's economic changes over the last 30 years better than most of the state. Like Albany, it is where Ohio's government is concentrated, and had a concentrated public service population until the 1990s.

Columbus then began to build up its white collar sectors, especially banking, health care and education. Healthcare and education are typically more immune to recession effects, and so Columbus did not suffer as much as the big industrialised cities.

Columbus prides itself on having fostered and maintained strong relationships between private, public and non-profit sectors, and believes in the concept of making business easy, to attract investment and encourage growth.

A number of organisations are involved in dealing with problems created by Ohio's de-industrialisation, including local government. The City of Columbus's (the City) slogan is "all about business" and it has an Economic Development team that works to attract investment and make doing business in Columbus attractive and easy.

The City has also take steps to bolster neighbourhood pride and has worked with a number of business partners to create links between local neighbourhoods and businesses. This focuses economic development into the neighbourhoods and addresses issues of liveability that make a city a good place to live, work and raise a family. It also encourages private investment and the attraction

and retention of skilled workers.

Vacant and abandoned properties have been a big problem in Columbus. Empty and derelict buildings are a hazard to the community for many reasons, but they also help give the impression of a city in distress and can affect perceptions about the city.

Vacant and abandoned buildings is an issue which the City and other organisations are taking steps to address as a priority. The City has launched an initiative that covers enforcement of building regulations, removal of hazardous buildings, and restoration where appropriate. Complimenting this, a land care program that involves neighbourhood groups taking care of vacant land has been developed.

The Greater Ohio Policy Centre (GOPC) is taking significant steps to help bring about fresh thinking and practical approaches to problems across Ohio. As noted on its website:

[the GOPC] is a non-profit, non-partisan organisation that works state-wide to develop and advance policies and practices that value urban cores and metropolitan regions as economic drivers. Through education, research and outreach, GOPC strives to create a political and policy climate receptive to new economic and governmental structures that advance sustainable development and economic growth.

The GOPC is a progressive organisation that works with legislators and other important stakeholders to influence policy. It has worked with local government and the private sector to steer projects and initiatives that will have long-lasting benefits for the broader community.

I wanted to learn more about the work it has done in Columbus and state-wide, including its involvement in dealing with Columbus' growing number of vacant and abandoned buildings. I also wanted to know more about the sorts of relationships that were most beneficial in these efforts, and how these were managed.

The GOPC had early success with its report, 'Restoring Prosperity – Transforming Ohio's Communities for the Next Economy', which it produced in partnership with the Brookings Institution.

The report makes the point that whilst economists consider the recession over, it will be some time before businesses, households and government treasuries across the USA recover from its effects. It asks the question that after recovery, "what will Ohio's economy and landscape look like?" and suggests that outcomes must be considered now and planned for by the leaders.

The report talks about the partnerships necessary to bring prosperity across regions and the state, and between state and federal government. It explores the complementary role of the private and public sector, and recognises the value of philanthropies, universities and other not-for-profit organisations.

The recommendations are based on three areas:

1. Build on assets – this recognises that private investment has flourished in Ohio's metropolitan areas and the need to help this continue;
2. Reform Governance – this relates to collaborative efficiencies between local governments and the management of money, with a focus on schools; and
3. Engage the Federal Government – this recognises that Ohio cannot overcome the impact of the recession on its own, and must be strategic in thinking about federal investments. In clean energy or support for manufacturing

The report was well received and contained a clearly defined and package of ideas with recommendations that are achievable. It is a hopeful report because it suggests that community and business revitalisation is possible, and that proactive solutions are not beyond the reach of local government.

Public-private relationships are essential to transition efforts. In Columbus, a good and amicable relationship appears to exist between the Mayor's office and the business community, as well as other supporting agencies and organisation. Clearly, there is a level of maturity around transition issues and the need to share both the effort and the credit.

Successful change can be incremental and often needs to involve a gradual culture shift. Very rarely is there a silver bullet that will solve all the big issues. Success requires a long term investment and commitment, and the ability to keep people in the game.

The Revitalisation Steering Committee set up by the GOCP is a good example of how a not-for-profit is taking significant steps to help deal with Columbus's problem with abandoned property. From the outset, it was considered vital that the right group of people were involved in responding to the issue.

Participants were invited on the basis of their relevance to the conversation and ability to help solve the problems. They were essentially asked to check their politics at the door and objectively contribute to developing a policy together. The group included the local government, academics, not-for-profits and the banks.

The inclusion of a banking presence is a shift in the way policy is generally developed. A banking presence was considered a particularly important because of the factors that led to the rate of abandoned property in the city. This included lending policies that left people unable to pay their mortgages.

### Key learnings

- Collaboration: it is vital that the right people are involved in planning transition initiatives, regardless of any traditional relationships that might exist.
- Innovation: pursue innovating new ways to solve old problems, including by forming strategic relationships with private sector and universities.
- Engage and negotiate with government to find solutions.
- Value existing assets: it is possible to successfully reshape and reuse existing assets such as a skills base or infrastructure.
- Liveability and building decay should be addressed as a priority, for the benefit of the existing community, and to attract and retain people.

## Chattanooga, Tennessee



### Background

Chattanooga's transition was instantly fascinating to me. Chattanooga has a long and inspiring history of transformative actions that were designed and led by the community. The positive effects of these actions are evident even today.

To understand Chattanooga's transformation, it is necessary to consider its history. Chattanooga is nestled between the Tennessee River and the Appalachian Mountains, bordering Georgia and Alabama.

The region bears the scars of the American Civil War, with memorials dotted across the landscape to remember the Battles for Chattanooga, Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, and a time when Major General Ulysses S Grant fought the Confederate army that was besieging the city.

Chattanooga became a major railroad hub – eventually inspiring the 1941 song, Chattanooga Choo Choo – and a centre for industrial manufacturing. It is also colloquially termed the 'buckle on the bible belt' due to its prevalence of churches and the importance that religion traditionally had in the community.

While Chattanooga experienced prosperity during the 20th Century, it also experienced serious environmental and economic crisis. In the late 1960s, Chattanooga was considered to be the most polluted city in the USA.

The Mayor of Chattanooga was kind enough to show me comparative photographs of downtown Chattanooga then and now. At lunch time on a typical day in the 1960s, car headlights were necessary to see through the smog.

Following the passing of laws that helped to clear the smog, the people of Chattanooga realised that the city faced a number of challenges that needed to be addressed, including problems with urban decline and a lack of social cohesion.

Early on, it was recognised that a successful approach would require a well planned,

well-executed effort, involving strong leadership and community participation.

### Issues and Initiatives

The first efforts to transition Chattanooga began in the 1970s with a project designed to transform Chattanooga's waterfront into an attractive, safe place for recreation.

Gianni Longo, an Italian architect based in New York City, first undertook a visioning process for the Lyndhurst Foundation, then led by Rick Montague. Among the first activities undertaken was a series of concerts down by the river. The idea was that the concerts would bring the community together and help people get to know each other, before they worked together to solve their shared problems.

The concert series involved bringing different types of artists and musical styles to the waterfront, with the aim of appealing to all the different groups in the community.

Some city officials were reportedly sceptical at that time, and even a little afraid of what the outcome of these concerts might be. One predicted that race riots would flare up overnight. Of course this never occurred. In fact, the concert series was so overwhelmingly positive and successful that it served as a springboard for future community collaboration.

This successful relationship-building exercise made it easier to galvanise people into action, starting with a visioning process, and later, an implementation process that had longevity.

The initiative became *Chattanooga Venture*, which can perhaps best be described as a grass roots approach that used community vision, participation and leadership to address Chattanooga's many problems. It was cross cultural, cross racial, and cut across social and other barriers that had traditionally existed in the city. It was a fresh and new approach to collaboratively addressing shared concerns, and it worked without the approval or oversight of the local government.

In short, *Chattanooga Venture* worked by asking the community to engage in discussion with each other rather than government to contribute ideas to a process that was designed to identify priorities and opportunities. It also identified the people who could best lead taskforces to implement the actions.

With strategic leaders in charge of the process, the community was able to plan and shape its future in a way that was fundamentally different to anything it had experienced before. The local government did not get involved immediately, but nor did it do anything to hinder the process.

The first step was a public goal-setting process which asked the community to engage with each other, and to decide for themselves, what their goals were. The process was open to everyone, with no exceptions.

Thousands of community members attended facilitated meetings over several months, resulting in 47 community identified actions. Many of these focussed on quality of life type issues, and included actions that encouraged people to take responsibility for their neighbourhoods. Others focussed on sustainability and business development.

One such goal was to set up a Neighbourhood Network, designed to create links between the different neighbourhood associations and to encourage neighbourhood business. The idea was to connect the previously fragmented community and encourage support of local business.

The second step was to commit to implementing these actions. Task forces were set up for each action, and community members were again invited to get involved. Each task force was led by someone with the experience and drive necessary to get the task done, whilst never losing sight that this was the community's project.

For example, a family violence shelter was one of the first projects completed, with more than half a million dollars raised by the community task force to fund it, and then additional funding raised to support it for five years. Other taskforces raised funds to renovate and restore historic public infrastructure, such as the Walnut Street Bridge – now a central attraction – the Tivoli Theatre, and for construction of the River Walk.

Sometimes partnerships were able to assist with funding for implementation of actions. Some of the actions took a number of years to implement, but all were ultimately implemented within around a decade.

*Chattanooga Venture* later evolved into *Vision 2000* and *ReVision 2000* and records indicate that these were also very successful initiatives.

**TWO-WHEELED SUCCESS:** the Bike Chattanooga Bicycle Transit System allows residents and visitors to easily get around the city.



Vision 2000 resulted in more than 200 projects and programs, created 1,381 jobs, 7,300 temporary construction jobs, served over 1.5 million people, and precipitated a total financial investment of \$793,303,813.

Building on Vision 2000's success and planning for the future, ReVision 2000 was initiated in 1993 where nine meetings drew 2,600 participants and resulted in 3,000 ideas, which in turn produced 27 goals and 122 recommendations

I asked each of the people I spoke with why Chattanooga's transition was so successful, and I found that success could be attributed to seven key elements:

1. Timing was impeccable because the community was ready to change.
2. From the beginning, the move to transition Chattanooga had community support.
3. The process was open to every member of the community. Nobody was excluded from participation. Nobody was forced to participate. Everyone had the opportunity to shape their community's future.
4. Actions reflected what the community believed was important and were not imposed upon the community by the government. This gave the community ownership of its future and credit for its success.
5. Support of the Lyndhurst Foundation from the outset, enabling the process to be well set up
6. Strong and focussed leadership, with the right people in the right roles, each of whom brought unique skills, knowledge and personalities to the table.
7. Commitment to see each task completed through task forces led by people with the right skills and connections to lead them.

## Key learnings

- This was a unique, community-led, community focussed, holistic local transition that encouraged all of the community to participate in setting direction and prioritising tasks.
- Success was based on strong and focussed leadership, funding from a non-government organisation, and an open and transparent process.
- Acknowledging that change was needed was an essential first step.
- Focussed task forces led by people with the right skills and knowledge, enabled each action to be implemented by the community.
- The strategy recognised and empowered the community, and placed expectation back on the community for implementation, allowing it to take credit for the success.

## Transition Town Totnes, England



### Background

The Transition Town movement started in the UK in response to environmental concerns, and a recognition that the UK was heavily reliant on peak oil for energy – a fuel that will run out one day.

Transition Towns are inclusive, community led, grassroots initiatives that work to strengthen the local economy, reduce the cost of living and prepare for the future with a changing climate and less oil.

Transition as a concept, looks at ways to move from energy-hungry ways of living, largely dependent on fossil fuels, to sustainable alternatives. The goal is environmental and economic sustainability within a localised area. To achieve this, typical activities include things like helping people to draught-proof their homes for greater energy efficiency, to creating a local currency to keep wealth within the community.

The first Transition Town was formed in Totnes in 2005. The movement grew quickly and was supported by others who shared a vision of helping the community to proactively respond to changes in the environment and economy, by changing the way people think about themselves and their future.

While the Transition Town movement came about in response to concerns about the UK's reliance on peak oil, it has grown into an initiative that involves local people taking responsibility for their own environmental and economic sustainability in a range of practical ways.

My purpose for visiting Totnes was to compare a successful grassroots effort to local government transitions and to see whether the two sorts of approaches share any common ground.

### Issues and initiatives

Totnes is a small, picturesque and historic town in Devon that has tended to be fairly affluent throughout its thousand-year history.

In 2010 it suffered a significant economic setback with the relocation of the Dartington College of Arts. It recovered well from this, largely because of the Transition Town movement, which has spawned a new and growing tourism industry in the town. Totnes now relies a great deal on tourism for its local economy, and has become a mecca for alternative lifestyles.

The focus of Transition Town Totnes (TTT) is not just to achieve immediate or short-term economic gains, but to prepare for a future that may be very different to the present. TTT is effectively trying to prepare the community to deal with future challenges by taking practical and proactive steps to change behaviours now.

This sort of transition involves looking at how you live, day-to-day within your own household and local environment. It involves developing an awareness about the way you use resources such as electricity, housing, transport, food, public spaces, and so on. It encourages responsibility in using these resources, recognising that they are finite and will be needed by future generations in what may be a very different climate.

There are a range of activities taking place across TTT that link people, places, economy and environment.

TTT is the community-led charity that works to strengthen the local economy, reduce the cost of living and reduce the community's reliance on oil through a range of local activities. Working to complement this activity is the Transition Network (the Network), which helps communities to connect to each other, inspire new ideas and expand transition activities globally.

The two organisations share the same goal – to see a world where local communities become more energy efficient, are equipped to deal with climate-

change and have a strong and sustainable local economy. The Network has a wider reach with links into many communities and resources. Over the years, it has provided advice and support across the community in many different ways.

One important initiative that is synonymous with Transition Town Totnes is the Totnes Pound. While not an original way of keeping wealth within a local community, it remains impressive because it effectively packages economy and environmental concerns by encouraging local spending on locally sourced products and services. This is a core idea of Transition Towns.

The Totnes Pound was launched in 2007, with 300 pounds circulated and 18 businesses accepting the currency. Over 70 businesses now accept the Totnes pound for a range of goods and services, from food and clothes, to bike repairs and taxis. Currency can be bought at issuing points at a 1:1 rate with the GBP. Any business that displays the Totnes Pound logo will accept it.

The Totnes Pound is intended to ensure that local wealth stays within the community, where it will be used in a more conscientious way with lower carbon and ecological impact and will create more resilience within the community.

Local currency has the added benefit of reaching a much bigger local audience than initiatives that people must actively seek out if they wish to participate. It is much harder to avoid the presence of a local currency when a large proportion of local businesses adopt it. It can potentially reach more of the community and get them thinking about their local economy, like where their food comes from, and how are products made.

The future of the Totnes Pound looks positive and its adoption looks destined to grow. Work is underway – in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and another local foundation – to design the next stage of the currency.

Local currency has also been adopted in Lewes, in England's southeast. Lewes is a newer Transition Town, but is gaining ground. Amongst Lewes' initiatives includes providing information designed to get people taking practical steps to make changes in the way they use resources. For example, people are encouraged to car-pool or take public transport, draught-bust their homes, and to think about ways in which to engage in the community to achieve outcomes together.

Another practical transition effort towards local sustainability is Totnes' Gardenshare project. The project matches people who do not have land but who want to grow produce, with people who do have land and are willing to share it. The project has

enabled gardens across the town to be used more productively and is building more food resilience within Totnes by encouraging people to eat seasonally and cutting down on food miles.

The project has been so successful that it inspired the national 'Landshare' project that operates across the UK to connect growers to people willing to share their land. Landshare has attracted international attention and now boasts a community of more than 55,000 growers, sharers and helpers since its launch in 2009.

Totnes is also taking advantage of the "transition pilgrims" who visit to see practical transition in action. So attractive is Totnes to transition pilgrims, that the Network has taken steps to help them make the most of their visit. The Network's website urges people to think about why they really want to visit the town, and whether they need to engage with the Network while they're there.

Perhaps the best measure of the success of the Transition Town movement is that it has spread across the globe, with over 400 transition communities in existence.

### Role of local government in TTT

The role of the local government in Totnes' transition town movement was not entirely clear to me but does appear to be limited. The impression I was left with is that while the local government is not leading the transition movement in Totnes, it is supportive in as much as it has not hindered the process.

### Key learnings

- Community led, grass roots initiatives can work with good organisation, information, support and committed leadership.
- Goals should be achievable and inexpensive and show an immediate benefit.
- People are more likely to change where they are informed and empowered to make practical changes.
- Local focus makes grassroots transition manageable.
- People can approach transition holistically or do only those things that work for them, knowing that it all counts.
- Acknowledge that communities are different, but the need to transition to environmental and economic sustainability is shared.

## Wales, United Kingdom



### Background

Wales has some 22 local governments over a small geographic area, as well as a central Welsh Government heavily committed to targets and measures designed to strengthen the Welsh economy and create sustainable communities.

Wales has experienced its fair share of economic highs and lows during its long history. It has not been immune from the recent global economic downturn and has had to consider how best to use government resources.

The most recent recession has forced Welsh governments to consider strategies to secure a sustainable future, and has spawned a great deal of research into government relationships and responses to such issues.

### Issues and initiatives

Local government was created in Wales in 1996 and has changed considerably since then. The diverse Welsh local governments are represented by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).

Recent devolution of powers and responsibilities from central to local government, and spending cuts by the UK Government, has created challenges at all levels of government. This affected the ability of local government to respond to issues affecting their communities. Tensions have sometimes arisen over what has and has not been devolved, because of concerns about unequal distribution of resources across local government areas.

The Welsh government has applied pressure on local governments to collaborate in regional groupings, to find solutions for issues such as housing and planning, and to share limited resources. In October 2012, the Welsh Government promised local governments an increase in the next budget, taking into account new local government responsibilities and functions. However, the promise came with a warning that the coming years are likely to be even more difficult, and strong advice for local governments to put themselves in the best position

to face future challenges by investing in regional collaboration now.

It also flagged broader challenges stemming from reductions in the capital budget from the UK Government. This indicates that increased funding in future is unlikely, and that Welsh local governments may have to do more with less.

Welsh local governments have typically been good at collaborating on initiatives with other public centric organisations. Strategic partnerships often include those with local health and education bodies, and those organisations dealing with planning and housing.

The global economic downturn of recent years has highlighted a growing need to share the work and to plan ahead for things like budget cuts that may affect services. It has forced central and local governments to consider strategies for healthy and sustainable communities where local government resources are even more constrained, while the need for services grows. It has also forced a consideration of how very different governments can work together to make transition possible.

In 2011, the Welsh government commissioned a report to review local authority service delivery. Rather than focusing on reorganising or amalgamating local authorities, the report considered how to achieve more efficient service delivery at the most appropriate level – local, regional or national.

The good reception it received was partly because the WLGA played an integral role in representing its local government members to central government during the process and negotiating on their behalf. Part of the WLGA's success is because of its solid understanding of how local governments work and what is important to them, including the desire to preserve local identity. At the same time, the WLGA considers where useful partnerships between local governments might work to share resources and services for a greater benefit.

Local governments can be fiercely independent and resentful of external efforts to try and influence or change the way they do things. Strong traditions of community activity and involvement exist across Wales, with a corresponding strong sense of local independence. This attitude has a historical and cultural basis and can make any sort of change very difficult.

Evidence based policies can be inconsistent with local values so that any organisation trying to impose something on a local community and culture is less likely to be successful. This notion is consistent with what I found elsewhere – that initiatives are unlikely to work where a community does not support them.

Transition initiatives must work within the context of the community if they are to have a good chance of success. There is a great deal of dialogue between the different levels of government, and good advocacy for local communities, with a recognition that communities need to be involved, and inter-governmental relationships must exist.

Good decisions are ones where you get people on board and involved. They are more likely to happen at the local government or community organisation level with leaders from within the community. Such decisions sit alongside the big-picture policy and projects typically rolled out by central government, and need not clash.

The Welsh Government has a range of macro-policy and funding available, and there is an expectation that local governments will support broad efforts to strengthen the economy and enhance

environmental sustainability. One such program is the Welsh 'Green Deal' which encourages household and business energy savings in an effort to reduce Wales' carbon emissions and assist people through an economic downturn.

The Green Deal allows people to carry out a range of energy efficiency improvements to their homes and businesses, without having to pay the upfront costs. These costs are paid by a charge on their electricity bills. The 'Golden Rule' is that the amount paid will not exceed the amount saved.

The practical way of getting people to participate in the Green Deal is to offer free assessments of homes and businesses, to identify energy efficiencies and save costs in the long term

The Welsh Government has also adopted an overarching waste strategy for Wales, and its municipal sector – *Towards Zero Waste* (the Strategy). The Strategy sets out the key sustainable development outcomes and underlying principle of the governments approach to waste management. It outlines the actions that all Welsh communities must take if Wales is to reach its goal of becoming a high recycling nation by 2025 and a zero waste one planet nation by 2050.

The Strategy recognises that Wales cannot continue to dump waste the way it has been doing to date. It sets ambitious targets for waste reduction and recycling. Recycling targets set for each local government are over 50%. The idea is that people not only recycle more, but that they start thinking about how they use resources, leading to more responsibility and less waste.

**BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY:** The Centre for Alternative Technology in Machynlleth, Wales.



The Welsh Government now requires by law that local authorities make arrangements to continuously improve how they exercise their waste removal functions and, in doing so, have regard to sustainability.

Towards Zero Waste contains a number of key factors for determining a sustainable environment, including resource consumption as measured by ecological footprint.

The Welsh Government's transition plans are holistic and includes factors for determining a prosperous society, such as the creation of green jobs, skills and training focus, a resilient economy that manages resources efficiently and ensures resource security. It seeks to promote a sense of community, social cohesion and wellbeing, by giving people the opportunity to participate and contribute to their economy and society.

Most recently, the Welsh Government acknowledged that Wales' employment figures continue to demonstrate how challenging the current economic situation in Wales is. Economic prospects continue to be uncertain in light of the poor performance of the global economy, along with UK Government spending cuts that do not support growth or jobs.

By introducing ambitious goals, such as for waste reduction that are supported by policy and regulations demanding local government action, the Welsh Government has set parameters within which local governments must work to transition their communities to be more economically and environmentally sustainable. This recognises that change is inevitable.

## Key learnings

- Regulation is sometimes necessary to make important changes happen.
- Linking environment and economy to build sustainability is the new reality.
- Strong inter-governmental relationships and strategic partnerships are essential to achieve change, particularly in a budget-constrained environment.
- Drive change while respecting local culture, history and views.
- Make it easy to change by providing enough information and support.

## Sheffield, England



### Background

During its heyday, Sheffield was an industrial mecca with an international reputation for steel production.

In the 1970s and 1980s, international competition caused a decline in traditional local industries, coinciding with the collapse of the mining industry. In the early 1980s, Sheffield's steel industry was decimated, and the city was desperate.

Sheffield was unprepared for this, and much of the decision making that followed was neither strategic nor did it have positive long term benefits.

Since then, the City of Sheffield (the City) has approached its economic challenges. During the recent global economic crisis, the City has looked at transitioning its community as a strategic exercise that involves planning, partnerships and good decisions.

### Issues and initiatives

#### The Past

Sheffield provides a classic example of sharp industrial decline followed by a long period of transition that has seen the city ultimately flourish.

Between 1971 and 2008, 120,000 jobs were lost in the manufacturing sector alone. Sheffield was recovering, but in 2008 the global recession created a new set of challenges for Sheffield.

Like many other big industrial cities, the industrial economy of Sheffield became highly specialised and very successful, and was dominated by a few large businesses. When the international energy crisis and recession of the 1970s hit, these industries were particularly vulnerable. Globalisation exposed them to new markets, foreign competition and cheap imports. Exposure was necessary to reduce costs and to allow the introduction of new ideas and methods, but it also led to the collapse of the main industries in every major industrial European city, including Sheffield.

What was perhaps most shocking was the speed of Sheffield's decline. It took just two years for Sheffield to become broke, desperate, and gripped by a miner's strike. Nobody was prepared, and the reaction was shock, fear and political blame.

Decision-making was borne out of sheer desperation, rather than any strategic approach. The City's leaders grasped at any perceived opportunity, rather than thinking strategically about what it would mean for long-term jobs creation and economic growth. For example, an out-of-town shopping centre called Meadowhall was approved as a quick way to create jobs. However, it virtually wiped out city centre retail.

#### The Present

The City has reacted differently to the recent global economic crisis because the two crisis were very different in nature, and therefore required different tools of response. The 'State of Sheffield 2012' report has been prepared at a time when the City continues to face challenges of economic uncertainty, but is better equipped to do so.

Under the four themes of *Living in Sheffield*, *Working in Sheffield*, *Wellbeing in the City*, and *Looking to the Future*, the report sets out the main indicators of Sheffield's current financial and social wellbeing.

There are a number of positive indicators for Sheffield that show how resilient the city has become. At a glance, these include significant population growth between 2001 and 2010, improvements to livability and public safety, growing diversity, a strong tertiary education sector and SME sector, and a lack of social tensions that occur in many of England's other major cities.

Much of this resilience and positive growth is due to the work done by the City over many years, and which continues today. One of the key factors in the success of Sheffield's responses today, is the growing involvement of the private sector in addressing issues. The City has done a great deal to encourage involvement, and work with the private sector whenever appropriate.

Taking the lead from Sheffield's democratically elected representatives and strong City Executive, the private sector has taken on new responsibilities in engaging with government, and in helping to lobby and advocate for the community.

This approach has developed in response to shared community goals of economic and social stability, the desire for jobs creation, a safe and attractive city that people want to live in, skills attraction and retention and the ability to better negotiate with the UK Government. It has made Sheffield a more cohesive and conscious city where different sectors are now sharing the responsibility for transition.

In recent years the City's relationships with the private sector has grown and strengthened. SMEs account for about 9.5 per cent of the City's economy and they have important skills, knowledge and resources that can help with achieving shared goals. The City clearly believes in empowering the private sector to help drive growth.

The City and business community has demonstrated an excellent ability to work together by jointly lobbying the UK Government for resources.

Joint lobbying and advocacy activities work better because they add strength to the argument, with businesses often able to speak frank and fearlessly where City officers may not be able. It is far more difficult to argue with facts presented by people who know first hand what the needs of the business community are.

A good example of where the City successfully harnessed local private sector support was related to the Regional Growth Fund (RGF), a UK Government initiative designed to provide funding to businesses for jobs creation by matching private investment with public funding. The RGF was a positive initiative, but the application process was complicated and lengthy. The City argued that this process was not business friendly, especially when firms were ready to invest now.

Another inherent problem with the fund was the threshold of £1 million. This was far too high for many SMEs who would otherwise qualify. Many SMEs could significant amounts, but would fall short of the threshold.

Rather than let this opportunity pass it by, the City decided to be proactive. It approached the UK Government with a comprehensive and strategic plan that would allow it to process applications, with agreed governance arrangements, and within a shorter timeframe.

In essence, the proposal involved the City acting as the local business bank that would assess SME's with less than the threshold investment amount. It was anticipated that this would result in an immediate increase in uptake of funding

This proposal had the benefits of devolving a time and resource intensive task to local government, to people who have the local knowledge and context, and would ensure the funding reached more businesses, sooner. This would achieve both the UK Government and the City's goals in helping SME's to create jobs. Somewhat surprisingly, the proposal was declined.

By the third round of this initiative, the City had come up with an alternative to ensure that its SMEs got a share of the RDF. It approached companies directly, and got them to sign up with real projects and money, and then packaged these together. In all, the City packaged 27 companies together, with 14 more in the pipeline.

Armed with this package of projects, the City approached the UK Government and was able to access £27 million. The City also took the strategic step of employing people to work with the businesses directly to ensure a better chance of succeeding with an application.

The City's proactive approach has been successful in finding solutions to problems that often arise when high-level policy made by central government does not meet the needs of a local community. In this case, a process to help SMEs create jobs did not work for the bulk of businesses because it lacked local perspective and flexibility.

The City is also very committed to consultation with its community and boasts an excellent record of consulting with businesses at the start of a policy development process. Initial consultation is followed by feedback on draft policy, which is used to help shape documents.

This approach has helped to build relationships, by showing trust and respect for the input and ideas of others. It makes sense to consult with those who are experts in the area, rather than imposing policy and undertaking decision making in silos.

Good faith and genuine consultation at the start, encourages buy-in from stakeholders. It can to policy with longevity because it actually reflects the priorities of the people it seeks to affect, and is therefore relevant to them.

Universities have been recognised as a key economic asset for innovation and technical development. Sheffield's two universities have done well in engaging with SMEs and by creating their own businesses.

The universities' commercial income is expected to grow as they realise their commercial potential and get better at creating valuable partnerships the private sector.

### Linking transition issues

The City has linked things together in a way that makes economic sense. It has done this partly out of a financial necessity because the budget can no longer be split along traditional lines.

The City is finding links between all sorts of fundamentally important issues, including health, employment, education and income, and cycles of deprivation and disadvantage. It makes sense to deal with these things together, and not separate them economically.

For example, the employment strategy is about helping vulnerable people get back to work through skills training, but you cannot do that separately from an economy that has no jobs for them to take up.

It is far easier to see links at a local level, but this approach is in stark contrast to a traditional federal one where policy making occurs in silos, and programs are tied up in such inflexible governance that they can fail to deliver the benefits to those who most need it.

City Deals are a unique bespoke solution for devolving power and resources from the central government in a way that allows cities like Sheffield to control both responses and funds.

At the front end of the negotiation process, cities were asked what was working, what was not, and what they needed. As a result, each of the eight Core Cities in England has a different City Deal that reflects their priorities and goals for the future. These deals place much greater responsibility on a local government as well as greater risk, but they also allow more local control over how federal funding is used to help the community.

An essential element to the success of a City Deal is robust governance at a local government level. By demonstrating its governance was strong, Sheffield was in a stronger position to negotiate its City Deal. Although still in the early days, the City considers its City Deal a positive step forward and a good way of managing its ongoing economic transition.

### City Revitalisation

Sheffield is known for the huge investment it made to revitalise its city's physical attributes. A great deal of work has been done to lift the city's appearance, and inspire pride and a sense of connection within the community.

Revitalisation was made possible through an independent, Council sponsored urban regeneration company – *Sheffield One* – that coordinated the plan to regenerate Sheffield's city centre.

*Sheffield One's* masterplan for restoration of the city centre includes high-quality offices which were previously lacking, the city's first four-star hotel, and a new retail quarter to help fill the gaps left in the city by the Meadowhall development. Total investment has been over £250 million.

The result is a vibrant, energetic city centre, with a mix of modern and historical buildings, bustling with activity and green spaces. In fact, Sheffield has been named the Greenest city in the UK.

### Key learnings

- Successful transition is more likely where there is a proactive, well planned strategy at the outset
- Relationships and partnerships can support local government transition activity, and help fill the resource and knowledge gaps.
- Local governments should advocate strongly and consistently for the community at a federal level, and private sector involvement in lobbying activities can be very beneficial.
- Innovation and fresh thinking to solve problems must be encouraged.
- It is essential to consulting stakeholders early in any policy or program development process to ensure support.
- Make use of existing assets, including infrastructure, knowledge, universities and the surrounding environment.

## Denmark



### Background

With overarching federal policy demanding changes across Denmark, many Danish local governments are taking a range of proactive measures to put their communities in a better position for the future. These measures focus on economic stability and environmental responsibility, with lowering of carbon emissions a central pillar of for policy.

What intrigued me most about Denmark is the ambitious goals that local governments have set to reduce carbon emissions.

What is equally fascinating is that there appears to be broad community support for these measures, some of which create an impost on individuals, businesses and the community as a whole.

Two cities taking on the challenge of lowering carbon emissions are the industrial city of Aarhus, and Copenhagen, the nation's capital.

### Issues and initiatives

Denmark is leading the way in proactively tackling carbon emissions and embracing more environmentally friendly way of doing things, whilst remaining economically competitive and maintaining a high quality of life.

The Danish Government has set ambitious targets for national carbon reduction. The Danish Energy Agency sits within the Department of Climate, Energy and Buildings and is responsible for a range of tasks linked to the production, transportation and utilisation of energy, and the impact on climate. Its core task is to ensure the legal and political framework for reliable, affordable and clean supply of energy in Denmark.

Through this agency flows a range of regulation, policy and initiatives that sets the Danish standard for lowering carbon emissions.

Denmark has set a long-term goal for its entire energy supply to be covered by renewable energy by 2050 and for a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 by 20 per cent, relative to 2005.

In 2012, Denmark developed an Energy Agreement, containing initiatives to achieve a number of targets. It involves making huge investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy and the energy system. By 2020 Denmark expects approximately 50 per cent of electricity to be supplied by wind power, and over 35 per cent of all energy to be supplied from renewable energy sources.

Denmark is also growing its 'green business' sector – that is, businesses involved in the production of green products, goods and services. In 2010, the green business sector accounted for 10.4 per cent of Danish exports. The Danish government is committed to improving its energy technology, whilst maintaining a strong economy, and supports these efforts in a number of practical ways, including:

- Through funding schemes for research and development in new energy technologies
- Through the development of public-private partnerships in technology areas; and
- By supporting Danish companies, research institutions and universities in international co-operation regarding energy research and development.

## Aarhus, Denmark



### Background

Aarhus is an industrial city in the north of Denmark, about three hours away from Copenhagen by train. Its harbour is one of the largest in the world, with modern facilities that can handle many millions of tonnes of cargo each year. Main imports include coal and iron, and exports include agricultural produce. It is also a centre for IT, heavy industry and is a world leader in the wind-powered energy technology industry.

The City of Aarhus (the City) has chosen to focus on challenges of sustainable energy, health, food and productivity, and boasts a collaborative approach to taking on these challenges.

My interest was in Aarhus' goal to be carbon neutral by 2030 – impressive in itself, but more so because of the industrial nature of the city. I wanted to know how the City was making this happen and how it was engaging with its business and broader community to encourage acceptance and support.

### Issues and initiatives

The City has adopted an ambitious program of change and improvement across its community, with a goal to become carbon neutral by 2030, (including achieving 100 per cent carbon neutral heating by 2015), achieve security of energy supply and still experience growth.

Its approach is guided by its policy – *Aarhus CO2 neutral in 2030 – tackling climate change in EcoCity Aarhus* – which organises efforts into themes of public solutions, private participation, cooperating with business, and climate adaptation.

The City has proactively pursued ways to achieve these goals for some time. It acknowledged the need for a holistic approach, involving innovation and cooperation, and which will require participation and commitment from every citizen and business community. It has taken a strategic approach to getting its community on board to encourage participation and change. Importantly, it has sought to make it easy for people to participate

and contribute to achieving goals, by approaching the community at a household level.

By providing information and inspiration, the City is helping the community to adopt climate friendly habits, by helping to renovate housing in an energy efficient way. The City is committed to providing up to date information to the community about how it can become more energy efficient, and why this will save people money.

An important initiative made possible with the Danish Department of Climate and Energy and Buildings, is to help households identify the best way to renovate their homes to make them more energy efficient. Subsidies are available for such renovations. Other actions include smart metering and tests to measure heat loss.

It is not just about making changes, but ensuring the right changes are made to assist households, businesses and the community achieve goals for reducing carbon emissions.

The City is not able to tackle everything by itself, and where possible, it partners with companies that can provide green services or products. The City is committed to green growth and through partnerships and joint action with private companies, it hopes to find solutions together.

The City supports the development of green technology will have far-reaching and long-term benefits, both economic and environmental. It will also strengthen Aarhus' reputation as a centre for green knowledge and industry.

Two successful partnership approaches are with green energy companies DONG energy and NRGi. DONG energy supplies wind power technology in Denmark, and is now exporting technology to China. Besides the economic benefits of these companies, they are considered key climate partners that will greatly assist Aarhus achieve its carbon neutral goals, through initiatives such as converting traditional power plant facilities into biomass generated power facilities, and providing public stations for charging electric cars.

The City is also supporting the push for a multi-disciplinary centre for innovation in energy and energy technology. This centre will harness the knowledge and expertise of people from across different sectors – industry, education, research and development and public authorities.

Although the City has striven to make change easy for people, it also faces the challenge of keeping people motivated and on track, and the challenge of budget limitations. Through visible hard work and significant financial investment, it is keeping people interested. The Mayor and Vice-Mayor take an active and high profile role in pursuing green solutions.

### Key learnings

- The ability to strategically partner with green industry for mutual benefit, has been important in increasing the city's capacity and reputation as a green technology centre.
- Linking environment to economy is essential in convincing individuals to change the way they approach resources, energy and the environment.
- Help make change easy for the community, so that it will adopt new practices and transition to a low carbon emissions future.

**CULTURAL SPECTRUM:** Alongside green technology, Aarhus is placing an emphasis on increasing its profile as a cultural centre, with the RoS Aarhus Kunstmuseumn, pictured below, a primary attraction in the city.



## Copenhagen



### Background

Copenhagen is one of the world's most beautiful and historical capital cities. It is prosperous and known for its high quality of life, low crime and for being one of the most expensive places in Europe.

The City of Copenhagen (the City) has set an extremely ambitious goal of becoming the world's first carbon neutral capital city by 2025. It aims to do this whilst growing its population and economy.

It is a thriving major center for business, science, media and culture, as well as IT, shipping and research and development and is the economic and financial hub of Denmark. Interestingly, this was not always the case and in the 1980s, Copenhagen's economy looked far bleaker. The City has worked since then to transition its community that is more environmentally and economically sustainable.

### Issues and initiatives

Copenhagen is also known as being one of the most environmentally friendly cities in the world. The push towards environmental responsibility is reflected in everything from private housing to public buildings and transport, to hotels and schools, and has been driven by the Copenhagen City Council.

*Copenhagen: Solutions for Sustainable Cities* sets out a range of measures taken by the city to encourage changes in the way people manage their energy and other resources. This policy recognises that reducing emissions is only one part of being a sustainable city, and that true sustainability involves expanding the economy and improving the quality of life for residents. The City has learnt that when you invest in sustainability, the returns are measured in more than just environmental terms.

Following a period of downturn in the 1980s, Copenhagen looked at issues within its urban environment, such as those to do with property and with keeping families in the city. Families need adequate housing and everyone needs heating.

One of the most successful programs in Copenhagen that is addressing the need for heat, whilst contributing towards the carbon neutral goal, is district heating. In the simplest terms, district heating takes the heat generated from power generation and uses it to heat the city. It is one of the most efficient ways to heat a city like Copenhagen and cuts cost, emissions and waste.

District heating has a long history in the city, first appearing in the 1920s and being expanded in the 1970s to reduce the city's reliance on fossil fuels by maximising energy generated from waste, biomass and other fuel sources.

Including the ability to distribute heat more equitably and efficiently, district heating has economic and environmental benefits. It costs around 45 per cent less than oil heating and over 55 per cent less than natural gas. It is considered on the whole to be the most cost-effective heat supply, taking into account environmental costs of CO<sub>2</sub> and other emissions.

The next step in the process will be to decarbonize district heating, by incorporating technologies like combined heat and power to capture and reuse heat energy that is otherwise lost. The City's short-term goal is to convert all remaining coal-fired combined heat and power to biomass. Because this system does not necessarily require an overhaul of existing energy systems, it can be implemented in the shorter term. However, it is generally costly to convert from coal to biomass.

The success of this initiative can be measured by considering that 98 per cent of Copenhagen's households are now connected to district heating. The City has achieved this largely by strictly regulating its integration into new development, making it virtually mandatory to connect to the system when building new houses.

This top down approach that removes choice about changing, has ensured that Copenhagen has been able to properly heat its city, while contributing to the carbon neutral goal, and ensuring that the technology is a growing industry.

There has been a growth in the industry supporting district heating and a corresponding growth in jobs and export of the technology. Clean technology companies are growing and adding significantly to Copenhagen's economy.

Another of the City's practical efforts is a program of retrofitting Copenhagen's older publicly owned buildings. Coupled with this is the tightening of the building code so that new buildings are becoming progressively more efficient.

Copenhagen is leading city transformation with its iconic bicycle commuter system. The system has been prioritised so that around 35 per cent of commuters now cycle, rather than take private cars or public transport. To get it right, the City first undertook analysis of bicycle use in the same way as it would analyse traffic.

Safety was found to be the greatest barrier to people using bicycles as their primary commute mode. With this in mind, the City installed carefully planned infrastructure that separates bicycles from other traffic. It introduced road rules to guide vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians, and patrols these vigilantly.

Another factor in convincing people to convert to bicycle use is the cost of cars, car taxes and fuel. These have been raised significantly so that for many people, owning a car in Copenhagen is not an option.

The success of this initiative cannot be underestimated. Copenhagen now has an efficient traffic system that integrates bicycles safely and efficiently, and a city center that is far less congested by traffic. The city is reducing its carbon emissions

at a greater rate as more people convert to bicycle use, and the community has become more healthy for undertaking this physical activity.

Partnerships and good relationships have also been vital to the success of Copenhagen's efforts to reach its carbon neutral goals, which align with those of the Danish Government. The City strives to have good working relationships with the Danish government and with private energy and other companies that are contributing to the economy and the City's environmental goals.

The City acknowledges that it shares mutual interests with the private sector in working for a greener growth, and encourages partnerships that will enable both to reach their goals. In particular, the City encourages the sorts of public private partnerships that will help develop technology and attract new investment into the city.

### Key learnings

- Setting ambitious transition goals requires strategic planning to ensure supporting initiatives are achieved and goals ultimately met.
- Regulation, partnerships and community participation all have an important role to play in achieving change that will have long-term economic and environmental benefits
- Good planning and linking economy to environment will help people to accept that they need to change.

**NEW AND OLD:** Traditional architecture frames new building technology in Copenhagen's CBD.



## Strategies – key learnings

### Local Government

Local government approaches to transition often occur as a response to crisis rather than as a proactive effort to reduce the risk of economic downturn in future. In this context, local governments face challenges to not only repair their economies, but to revitalise their communities.

The core focus of most local government economic development teams is creating jobs and attracting investment. This typically involves working with local businesses to provide information and support and finding ways to make business easier.

Relationships are essential because local governments are not generally equipped with the knowledge or resources to deal with every problem in their communities. Collaborative efforts can vastly improve the odds of initiatives succeeding through shared specialist knowledge, resources, skills and risk.

Local governments tend also to make significant effort to build relationships with potential investors and may offer enticements such a reduction in red tape or rent, where there is a real possibility of jobs creation.

Liveability projects feature heavily in most local government transition strategies. Besides the jobs they can create, liveability project are vitally important to improving the community appearance and outlook. Enhanced public spaces, libraries, swimming pools, roads and streetscapes create pride in communities, and help attract investment.

The liveability of a community is extremely important in attracting and retaining people because people want more than a job. Good quality public facilities, attractive surroundings, libraries, parks, playgrounds, sports facilities, and good schools are all important when considering moving to a new place.

Some local governments adopt a holistic approach to transition. This is often after a period of crisis management where issues are triaged and only the most pressing receive immediate attention. For example, revitalising a local park may be considered less urgent than creating jobs for displaced workers.

The biggest challenge to local governments in transitioning their community tends to be lack of resources. This occurs across the globe, regardless of the size of the local government or its community, and is a key reason why partnerships and collaborations between local government and private sector are becoming more prevalent.

### Community driven transition

Sometimes a community will decide for itself that change needs to occur, and will take steps to make this happen outside of any government structure. This strategy can be highly successful because the community has been involved in a process of planning its future, creating support from the outset, and ownership for implementation.

Community led transition can occur in response to gaps in local government approaches, brought about by limitations of politics, governance and resources. Communities accept that they may have to fix some problems themselves, and will respond to community leaders driving positive change.

Local governments welcome a proactive community approach when it compliments their own activities and reduces pressure on their limited resources. Ultimately, if the end result is a benefit to the community, a local government will not hinder activities, and may even support them.

Community led transition may also come about because the local government has taken no action to address issues that are important to the community (including because of resource limitations), and the community is looking for leadership.

Challenges of a community led approach include a lack of finances, but this can be addressed through non-government funding.

Community groups leading specific projects are often able to access grants that larger organisations and local governments cannot apply for.

Another challenge can be keeping the community motivated and maintaining momentum throughout the life of the project. However, with ownership often comes a greater sense of responsibility and pride that drives people to finish what they have started.

### Grassroots

Grassroots transition is a holistic, community led and locally focused approach, designed to achieve economic and environmental sustainability. It relies on individuals, households and local businesses changing the way they live and operate.

The idea is that if each person in a community changes the way they value and use essential resources, the community can become more environmentally and economically sustainable in the long term.

Key to its success is providing information that helps people to think differently about resources such as energy and food, and use them in a more efficient way. Often, well organised grass roots movements are very good at providing information and encouragement to help people make positive changes to the way they use resources. They will often do so without the help of local government, thus filling a gap in local government activities.

Grassroots transition approaches encourage people to make a collection of small efforts that will fundamentally change the way they live.

If everyone in a community takes similar steps - for example to use heating more efficiently - the overall result is a community that is far more energy efficient, saves money on heating and is contributing far less to global climate change because it creates less emissions.

It follows that if grassroots actions spread nationally and then globally with everyone doing their bit, the world can transition to a more sustainable place with a more secure future.

Grassroots movements can exist harmoniously alongside local government transition initiatives and are often encouraged.

### Collaborative

Transition initiatives involve a high level of commitment, and can be an enormous undertaking that requires time, funding and other resources.

Initiatives are more likely to be successful when the load is shared with genuine working partners striving for the same goals.

Local government relationships with key stakeholders are therefore essential to ensuring a successful transition.

At both political and officer level, local governments acknowledge that they are limited in their authority, but also in their ability to undertake a full range of transition activities, quite simply, because of a lack of resources.

In forming relationships with stakeholders, local governments can effectively divide the work, share contacts and expertise, and achieve outcomes that have the support and ownership of others. This approach involves sharing information and often means sharing the credit for a job well done.

The most common local government relationships were:

- intergovernmental;
- private sector, philanthropic and specialist groups; and
- universities.

## Intergovernmental relationships

Every local government depends on state or federal levels of government for some ongoing funding. Additional resources are sometimes available.

Relationships with other levels of government are therefore important, but the effort put into to developing those relationships at an officer level should be realistic, keeping in mind the parameters around what each department can actually achieve.

At an officer level, local governments tended to place less importance on the need to actively pursue close relationships with other levels of government because they have a good understanding of the limitations of what departmental staff can actually do, and they adjust expectations accordingly.

While intergovernmental officers work well together when necessary, they do not tend to focus a great deal on fostering those relationships outside of specific projects. Instead, lobbying on particular issues was more common, and may be supported by the private sector and at a political level.

Politicians tended to view intergovernmental relationships differently and placed higher importance on their own relationships with their counterparts at a state or federal level.

## Public private partnerships

Public-private partnerships (PPP) can be vital to the success of any transition activity. A PPP can offer both short term benefits such as funding outside stringent government programs, and long term benefits like attracting skilled workers to a community. PPPs are part of the economic development landscape and more local governments are engaging with the private sector to achieve common goals.

Local governments are generally supportive of private sector activities that benefit the community and they see the inherent value of having a partner with money, expertise, and with whom to share the risk. PPPs can bring specialist knowledge and contacts to the table, provide advice and data where local government may not otherwise have expertise or budget to do the work.

A key benefit of PPPs is private sector funding that is available outside of stringent public funding programs. This allows a level of flexibility and creativity when designing initiatives.

PPPs most commonly occur with the private sector where a local business or industry has achieved success and may decide to support local government or community initiatives through funding, resources or in principle support of a project.

Alternatively, where there is a mutual need for a facility or jobs, the private sector may partner with local governments to make this happen.

Philanthropic organisations also play an important role as they fill a resource gap and are generally not bound by the same governance as government. This can allow flexibility with initiatives, and can create confidence that will encourage other contributions. In some cases, transition initiatives and improvements to the community would have been impossible without the support of a philanthropic organisation at the outset.

Similarly, specialist organisations such as Chambers of Commerce, peak bodies, policy and development agencies have a unique role to play. They often bring essential resources to the table such as expert knowledge, data, experience and connections, that a local government may not have.

## Universities

Universities occupy a unique place in a local economy and can help a community achieve a successful transition. Communities that view universities as more than an educational institution, and provide appropriate support, generally benefit more from having that university locally.

Universities are no longer seen just as a place for education, but increasingly as having the potential to partner with industry to become a central part of a community's economic base. Universities provide immediate benefits in a community, by creating jobs on campus, and aiding growth in areas that service the university, its staff and students. They help to attract and retain talented specialist staff and promote a local area.

More often, universities are filling gaps in research and community development projects, and partnering with the private sector or local government to fund important projects. More universities are contributing to the local economy on a much bigger scale by establishing links with business and industry and to partner in initiatives wherever possible.

Universities like SUNY and Ohio State have made it a priority to form partnerships and to help develop business and industry in the region. Both have attracted multi-million dollar investments that have greatly benefited the local economy. Linking university assets to industry needs can lead to new products, improved processes and expanded services.

Universities are also often much more comfortable with innovative new approaches, and have the experience and expertise to back these up. Importantly, a local university can help promote a city or region as a smart, thriving place with yet untapped opportunity.

## Challenges – key learnings

### Budget and other resources

The most common challenge for any local government are lack of budget and other resources. Local governments provide a range of every-day services to their community. In the current economic climate, local governments are stretched to the limit in providing these, and have to do more with less.

Most local governments understand essential community needs – housing, child care, schools, etc – and strive to provide these while addressing other issues created by economic downturn.

The challenge for local governments that have made transition activities a priority, is allocating funding. Some funds may be allocated within a recurring budget, but often, local government must seek funding from elsewhere.

### A holistic transition

Few local government officers talked about driving a holistic transition. More often, local government officers must focus on implementing programs that are identified as priorities, although these may contribute to overall transition. An understanding of how a whole of organisation approach might be possible did often exist, but was prevented by resource barriers.

### Lack of government support

Governments everywhere at every level, are experiencing resource constraints at a time when community needs have grown due to the recent global economic downturn.

Where devolution of responsibility from central government has occurred, commensurate funding is not always made available.

In practical terms, many local governments are simply not receiving the financial support from state and federal levels of government that they need to undertake a full range of transition activities. They are forced to make tough decisions to prioritise programs, and are finding other ways to make things happen.

### Competing interests

These include:

- Competition for resources across all local government programs and activities
- Competition from within the community for different priorities to be met
- Competition due to geographic divisions within a community, such as where a city has been divided by infrastructure, or because it is made up of numerous towns;
- Political interests within a local government, its elected representatives and at other levels of government.

The challenge for local governments is to manage these competing interests and to continue to provide all their normal services, as well as transition activities.

### Politics

Political challenges exist at every level of government, and affect local government transition activities through of changes in direction, agenda and funding opportunities. Support for local government initiatives may be dependent on individual political views or agendas, and a change in government can be disruptive as priorities and goals of new elected representatives can also change.

### Lack of community support

Securing community support is important for local governments because the community holds a lot of information and potential, and can be helpful in moving projects forward. Many community leaders have significant drive and influence within their communities, and a community driven approach can take pressure off local governments where resources are stretched.

Local government can struggle to get broad community support for transition activities. Pursuit of support can involve large resources for a small benefit. Early consultation of stakeholders is essential, as is providing information on how policy development and projects are progressing.

Large portions of a community may choose not to engage. People who are already engaged on specific issues tend to be easier to engage with if they feel they can make a difference by cooperating with a local government.

## Conclusions

The most successful local government transition strategies are those that involve careful and strategic planning that properly and clearly identifies issues to be addressed and goals sought. These plans identify what can reasonably be achieved, and where expert assistance is needed. To achieve this, strong leadership is vital as well as a thorough understanding of the community.

Successful, sustainable change must come from within a community. Local governments that appreciate local context and culture, and understand local drivers, have a better chance of developing a transition strategy that will actually work.

Stakeholder engagement is essential at an early stage of any policy, program or strategy development. It is far harder to achieve support from stakeholders – including the community - when they have been excluded in the formative stages of a policy, program or strategy. Stakeholders bring experience and knowledge to the table. Not involving them early on opens local government up to the risk of producing work that does not achieve outcomes because it is not supported or misses important information.

Ensuring the right people are involved in activities is essential. It is important to identify the right people for the right task, and to recognise the difference between power and influence.

For a relationship to work and outcomes to be achieved, relationships must have benefits that flow both ways. This might mean that it is necessary to stop dealing with a party when the benefit only flows one-way.

Local governments are often constrained by resources, and in the current economic climate, traditional means of supplementing ongoing budget may not be available. This means that local governments need to look elsewhere for funding, including considering strategic public private partnerships that will fill the gap.

Transition should be seen as a living organism, growing and changing to adapt as needed over

time, so long as there remains an understanding of what the community is trying to achieve. This means that from time to time, it might be necessary to re-set goals to reflect changes.

The ability to work with a range of people and bring them along on the transition journey is vital to its success. Success looks different to different people, but it is important to respect those differences and to share credit.

Grass roots transition activities are part of the community's broader economic development process, and can complement local government initiatives.

Linking environment and economy when planning initiatives can help to garner support as people realise the economic benefit of making sustainable environmental choices.

There are many organisations that have the potential to play a significant role in a community's transition, either by leading initiatives, or by supporting them through partnerships and collaboration.

Many successful transition initiatives have involved recognising existing assets and making the best use of them. This includes recognising universities as economic assets that have the potential to form beneficial partnerships.

## Recommendations

1. Local governments should consider taking a proactive approach in developing policy, programs or strategies to ensure that their community has a prosperous and sustainable economic and environmental future. In doing so, it may be possible to identify triggers for particular responses, and avoid the worst effects of a crisis.
2. In developing a new program, policy or strategy, key stakeholders should be engaged from the outset. This includes the broader community. Consultation should be well-planned and include a commitment to provide updates and seek feedback on draft documents, as they progress. Consultation may be best managed by an independent facilitator to ensure independence and transparency.
3. Local governments must engage the right people to be part of any initiative or partnership. This includes in the formation of committees, working groups and taskforces to tackle particular issues or develop ideas. Officers should not feel obliged to involve the same stakeholders in every initiative or discussion, but should be encouraged to consider whose involvement would be most valuable under the circumstances.

This approach may involve challenging traditional relationships, but it has the potential for great benefit that flows from new relationships, ideas, knowledge, connections and because the community will value a fresh approach.
4. Partnerships, including those with other levels of government, must have a mutual benefit and local government resources should not be poured into a relationship that is not beneficial. This involves an objective assessment of relationships, and acknowledging limitations of each level of government.
5. A bold approach should be encouraged and innovation embraced in addressing challenges. This can include new approaches to lobbying and advocating for the community, supporting innovative initiatives and new ideas, and involving different people in the process.
6. Greater focus should be placed on developing public private partnerships, including those with industry, business and philanthropic organisations. State and federal government funding is limited and tightly regulated. Other organisations can provide opportunities for more flexible funding for projects.
7. Local governments should consider what existing assets can be regeared and reused to enable transition. This can include redirecting existing expertise into new technology or industry, or using infrastructure in new way.
8. Local governments should consider what links exist between different issues and challenges that will help find a path forward. For example, by linking environmental sustainability to economic benefits, it can be easier to convince people to change behaviours or support a project.
9. Support for local universities should be encouraged and opportunities to partner or help link local universities with private sector investment should be pursued. Universities should also seek links into the community to help identify issues and opportunities to provide specialist research and project management.

## Resources

### **Albany 2030**

<http://albany2030.org>

### **Albany FreeNet**

<http://site.albanyfreenet.net/>

### **Best Manufacturing Practices, Centre of Excellence**

[http://www.bmpcoe.org/bestpractices/internal/chat/chat\\_8.html](http://www.bmpcoe.org/bestpractices/internal/chat/chat_8.html)

### **Centre for Alternative Technology, Wales**

<http://www.cat.org.uk/>

### **City of Aarhus:** <http://www.aarhus.dk/omkommunen/english.aspx>

### **City of Albany**

<http://albanyny.gov/home.aspx>

### **City of Chattanooga**

<http://www.chattanooga.gov/>

### **City of Columbus**

<http://www.cityofcolumbus.org/>

### **City of Copenhagen**

<http://subsite.kk.dk/sitecore/content/Subsites/CityOfCopenhagen/SubsiteFrontpage.aspx>

### **City of NY Economic Development Corporation**

<http://www.nycedc.com/>

### **City of Youngstown**

<http://www.cityofyoungstownoh.org/>

### **Core Cities**

[www.corecities.com](http://www.corecities.com)

### **Danish Energy Agency**

<http://www.ens.dk/en-US/Sider/forside.aspx>

### **Energy Saving Trust**

<http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/>

### **Greater London Authority**

<http://www.london.gov.uk/>

### **Greater Ohio Policy Centre**

<http://www.greaterohio.org/>

### **Landshare**

<http://www.landshare.net/>

### **Manchester City Council**

<http://www.manchester.gov.uk/>

### **One Wales: One Planet**

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/sustainabledevelopment/publications/onewalesoneplanet/?lang=en>

### **Regional Economic Development Councils**

<http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/>

### **Sheffield City Council**

<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/>

### **Sheffield First Partnership**

<https://www.sheffieldfirst.com/>

### **Transition Network**

<http://www.transitionnetwork.org/>

### **Transition Town Totnes**

<http://www.transitiontowntotnes.org/>

### **The Green Deal Wales.Com**

<http://www.thegreendealwales.com/>

### **The Tale of 7 Cities Report (LSE Report)**

<http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/33118/1/Tale%20of%20%20cities.pdf>

### **Welsh Local Government Association**

<http://www.wlga.gov.uk/>

### **UK Government**

<https://www.gov.uk/>

### **University at Albany, State University of New York:**

<http://www.albany.edu/>









