

Updating the Cardinia Shire Tourism Strategy

Casey Cardinia Workshop 1: 2 June 2016

Summary notes

Tourism aspirations

- Healthy, sustainable and profitable tourism industry
- Strong leadership
- Community engagement
- Coordinated, collaborative approach
- Attractive, differentiated and accessible experiences
- An effective industry voice to Government
- Great reviews on Trip Advisor
- A clear and marketable identity
- Excellent customer service and products
- A tourism industry that is recognised
- Appropriate communication
- Tourism that is integrated with other activities for mutual benefit.

Strengths

- City fringe location/day trip/accessible transport (point to point)
- Diversity of landscape and green hills
- Natural beauty/nature-based activities/specific natural resources
- Attractions for a range of demographics
- Vibrancy of new growth
- Brand new, quality sporting facilities
- Niche markets - equestrian; cycling, parachuting, sky-diving = soft adventure
- Observatory
- Good retail support
- Country hospitality
- History and heritage - e.g. old cheese factory and other buildings suitable for adaptive re-use
- High levels of food production - e.g. asparagus, herbs, potatoes; small lot farmers; insufficient products/experiences (?)

Challenges

- Public transport within the towns/region
- Lack of cohesive and accessible information re experiences/lack of public and industry knowledge
- Constant improvement of customer service
- Digital connectivity - e.g. free wi-fi/apps/push notifications
- Patchy internet service
- Low profile with Tourism Victoria
- Strong neighbouring competition
- Connectivity between accommodation businesses
- Poor profile and identity (classified as part of the Yarra Valley/Destination Melbourne)
- Council support and funding
- Infrastructure (Hills)
- Membership numbers
- No Regional Tourism Organisation
- Limited accommodation types and facilities (groups and families??)

Opportunities

- New residents - start local
 - Council newsletter goes out to 400,000 residents every quarter
- Improve customer service levels

- Actively build a relationship with Tourism Victoria: Jigsaw approach is over - opportunity to reposition Casey/Cardinia - but Jigsaw campaign still being funded for the next 3 years.
- Need a major regional event to sell to Tourism Victoria - this is their main focus now
- Puffing Billy Discovery Centre
- Multi-generational destination - i.e. broad appeal
- Day-trippers market rather than VFR: VFR is a subset (?) Market is more than that (?)
- Fountain Gate - one of the largest shopping centres in Australia
- Cruise ship market, particularly given new restrictions in Sydney
- Cockatoo - Gembrook walking trail
- Upgrade of multi-use trail between Emerald Lakes Park and Cockatoo
- Gembrook, as the new events hub for Puffing Billy
- Events funding - combine tourism and community (huge flow-on)
- Maximise existing events as well
- Camping: grey nomads, car clubs and other groups etc.
- Leveraging key assets.

Governance

- Key industry players required to drive the industry on the ground – leadership
- Councils need to commit funding resources - currently \$30-40,000 + officers' time. Need \$500,000 from Councils
- Have a peak body + combined business and tourism associations like the Shipwreck Coast model
- Diverse region, so strong representation required from all areas
- Does TAC do itself out of a job?
- Keep the community voice
- Skills-based Board + reps. from local BTAs and evolve to a purely skills-based Board (?) Not mutually exclusive
- Don't limit the vision; industry make look different over the next 3-5-10 years
- Look at other structures
- Need tangible/measurable benefits for members.