TURAKINA
REPORT

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1. SUMMARY

Creative Communities International (CCI) was engaged by Rangitikei District Council to conduct an Exploring Possibilities Workshop in Turakina over two evenings – on Wednesday, 3 and Thursday 11, February, 2016.

David Engwicht shared the basic principles of place making with participants before leading the participants on an exploratory walk of the town centre.

On this walk, David identified two major opportunities for Turakina.

THE PHOTO TRAIL

Turakina typifies a classic New Zealand rural town, that even to an Australian, is quaint and intriguing. However, local residents are not aware of how much character their little town contains because they have lived with it for so long. And driving through the town, a visitor has no idea that, hiding just below the surface, is an incredibly photogenic town.

This suggests a three part strategy:

1. Enhance the Coach House (located at the cross-roads) into the star photo opportunity.

2. Create a "Picture Opportunity Trail" map and display in the Coach House Notice Board

3. Run a yearly or bi-yearly photo competition and use the resultant pictures to promote Turakina as "the photogenic town".

THE KIDS TRAIL

Turakina has some fantastic spaces for kids to stretch their legs and let off some steam. This is complemented by some easy off-highway parking. These kid-friendly spaces could be combined into a kid's adventure trail that would complement the photo trail.

Turakina... the photogenic town

2. PHOTO TRAIL & COMPETITION

1: Enhance Coach House

Enhance the Coach House (located at the cross-roads) into the star photo opportunity. This can be easily done as a weekend project by:

- Placing a couple of classic park benches in front of the house that people can sit on when they are having their photo taken.

- Putting a Coach House sign on the bracket extending from the front wall.

2: Picture Opportunity Trail

- Identify the key locations where there is a picture opportunity. The pictures in this report gives a clue as to where these locations might be.

- Create a stylized map of the town with the key photo opportunities identified. Perhaps include inspiring thumb-nail photos depicting the opportunity at each point. (You can use the photos from this report, existing photos, or the photos from your first photo competition.) Request that people respect the privacey of locals.

- Display the map on the front of the Coach House in the ready-made notice board area.

3: Photo Competition

- Run a yearly or bi-yearly photo competition, drawing participants from across New Zealand

- Create a "gallery" in an existing business, church, or empty shop window.

- Publish the results on line or as a book for purchase.

3. KIDS TRAIL

1: Enhance Parking

- Work with NZTA and the carpark owner to put a new entry into car-park so it can be entered from both sides

2: Signage

- Put up signage inviting children to stretch their legs at the outskirts of town and at the entry to the car-park.

- Put up a map of the walking trail and key attractions at the car-park and the noticeboard at the Coach House. (Ths can be done as a combined map with photo opportunity trail.)

- Create wayfinding signage that tells you how far it is to walk to the key attractions. Alternatively, create a series of markers with the character featured on the *Stretch Your Legs* sign.

3: Enhance trail

- Add discovery points along the trail, such as a troll under the bridge or a funky picnic table at one of the points where kids can stretch their legs.

STRETCH YOUR LEGS

100M →

You are on
Park St

Albert Park Lake 6 min →

Southern Cross Train Station 19 min ←

Albert Park Lake 6 min

Example of good wayfinding sign. Notice that it gives the time it takes to walk rather than the actual distance.

Ready-made play area next to car-park
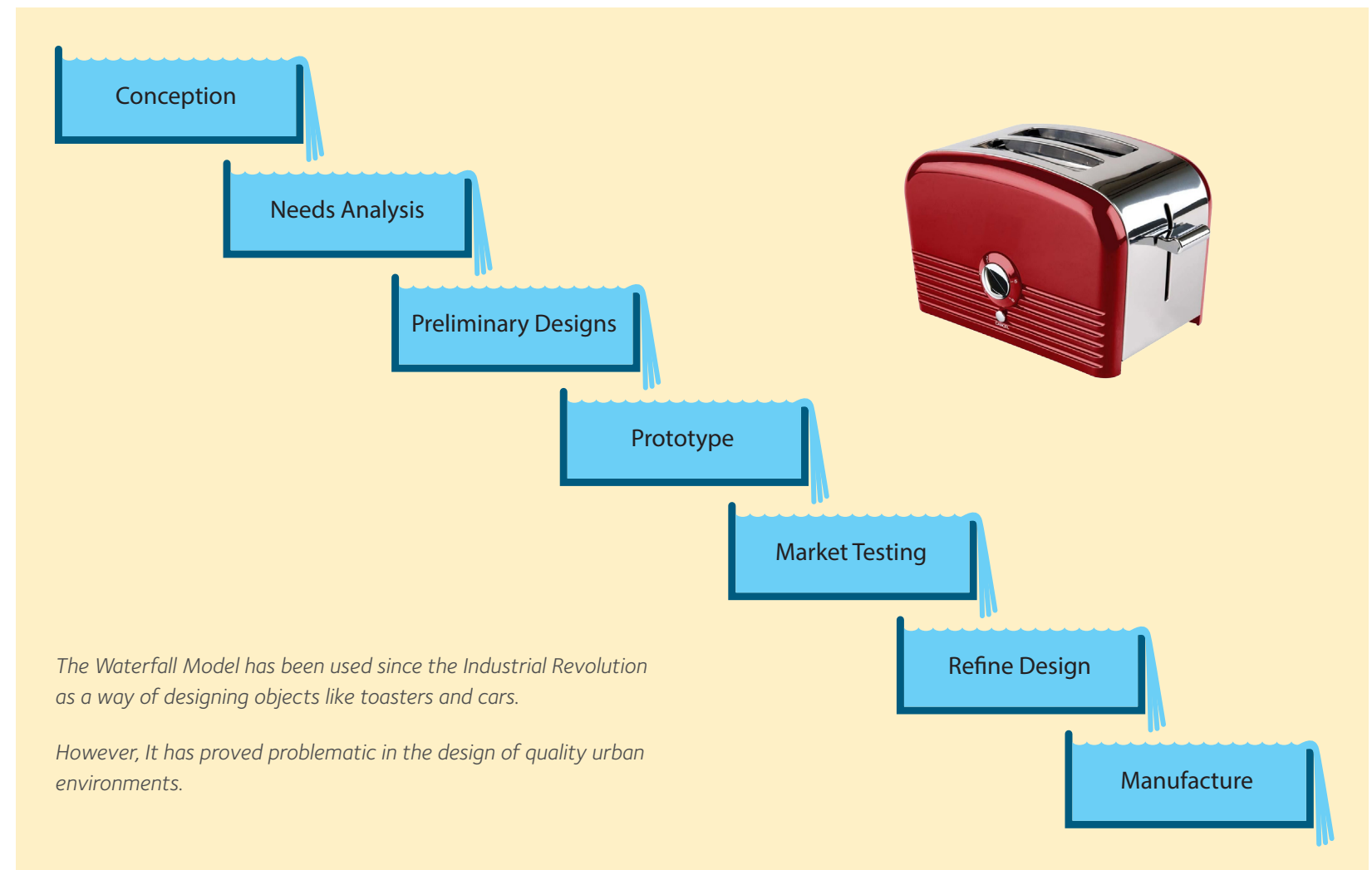

Opportunity– troll under bridge

4. AGILE PLANNING PROCESS

There is a revolution happening in the way great public spaces are being created around the world. Some call it *Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper* while others call it *Tactical Urbanism*. We call it *Agile Planning*.

We borrowed the term *Agile Planning* from the software development world, because this is where the revolution began. Traditionally, software development (like urban planning) used a design process called the waterfall model (see diagram below). This design process, inherited from the Industrial Revolution, goes through a series of logical, non-reversible one way steps – from scoping of desirable features through to full-scale production. When computers first made their debut, software developers unconsciously adopted this same waterfall model used in industrial design.

However, the waterfall model has proved very problematic in dynamic, fast-changing environments, like the world of technology, or planning our cities and towns. Here are the fatal flaws for software – you make the connection to the way we try to create better public places (OK we will give you some hints).

- Software takes several years to develop, by which time the computer world has changed dramatically and the software is outdated – so a lot of very expensive software ends up sitting on a shelf gathering dust. (Think of all the grand plans for great public spaces sitting on Council shelves gathering dust – or the studies already done on your makeover area.)

- Small mistakes made at the start of the development process become entrenched and built into the software, making it difficult and expensive to remove these bugs at the end of the development process. (Think of very expensive makeovers that don't work because the designers got some small details wrong.)

- The clients only know about 20% of what they really want from the software at the start of the process. They discover the other 80% during the development process. Because the analysis-of-requirements phase is at the start of the process, and has long passed, the resultant software is only 20% as effective as it could have been. (Think of the very expensive makeovers that seem to have delivered only 20% of their potential.)

Conception → Needs Analysis → Preliminary Designs → Prototype → Market Testing → Refine Design → Manufacture

The Waterfall Model has been used since the Industrial Revolution as a way of designing objects like toasters and cars.

However, It has proved problematic in the design of quality urban environments.

The agile alternative

Many software companies have moved to the agile model. Instead of the linear, unidirectional flow of the waterfall model, the agile model moves in small, incremental steps – in a series of sprints lasting two weeks.

Here is an overview of the agile framework. **You will notice that the Exploring Possibilities Workshop covered the first four steps in this process.**

1. **Aspirational vision:** Ask, "What do we think the client wants". The agile model does include master-planning, but it does not try to construct an all-encompassing picture of the "end product". The picture is tentative and aspirational, recognising the picture will become clearer as the process unfolds.

2. **Brainstorm deliverables:** What are some small deliverables that would move the client closer to what we *think* they want?

3. **Choose deliverable:** Which of these small deliverables would potentially benefit our client the most?

4. **Plan the sprint:** How do we work together as a company to deliver this in a sprint? Agile teams are not compartmentalised. Tasks are allocated to whoever has the capacity to deliver. The focus is on delivering the deliverable, not on work positions.

5. **Sprint:** The deliverable is delivered in the shortest time frame possible

6. **Retrospective:** After implementing each sprint the team asks: What did we learn? How do we need to adjust our plans for the product? What features should we drop? What new features should we add? Does the aspirational vision need adjusting?

A warning

Councils and communities have been using the waterfall method of planning for so long, it is an ingrained habit. Even when we give a clear outline of the alternative approach, people revert back to the old model of endless committee meetings, over-planning and over-thinking. Projects loose their spontaneity – and all the action-oriented people bail out. Sometimes the projects get closed down by the town nay-sayers.

Do not think too far ahead. Trust the process. If you find yourself having lots of meetings, you are off track.

Agile Planning involves a series of sprints