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The Bigger Picture: how local cultural development fits into an international context

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The Cultural Development Network is a small non-profit organisation that generates new ideas and new connections for governments, communities and individual practitioners around issues of cultural vitality.

CDN works towards a society in which local communities, in all their diversity, have the resources and support they need to make and express their own culture. CDN advocates for a stronger role for local government in nurturing cultural vitality and see the arts (at the heart of culture) as central to this vision. www.culturaldevelopment.net.au

Four Pillars of Sustainability

CDN argues for the inclusion of a cultural dimension in all policy and planning, so that all four 'pillars' of sustainability are considered when decisions are made.

- Economic viability
- Social inclusion
- Environmental responsibility
- Cultural vitality

Jon Hawkes, 2001, The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability available from <http://www.culturaldevelopment.net.au/publications.htm>

Culture: what is culture? Definition

Aesthetic (arts, library, heritage),
eg. opportunities to make and appreciate arts

anthropological (race, religion, nationality, tribe),
eg. How much to put in red envelopes at Chinese wedding

sociological (ie youth, disability, workplace).
eg. value of Facebook in communications and relationships

Value of culture: intrinsic, instrumental, institutional

According to Holden, there are three value systems of Culture, the first being an Intrinsic Value. Intrinsic Culture often eludes quantification and cannot be measured for statistics; it is created in and for itself and therefore has the specter of elitism and consequently alienates the majority of public audiences. The second is Instrumental Value. The "using" of culture for eg to regenerate an area, an economy, and to recover a loss.

The third is Institutional Value. This is culture's interaction with the community at large, such as the day to day operations of libraries, museums, and other public institutions where the public can visit and engage with culture. This is Culture with a capital Mandate, and culture created under this value often loses sight of its own purpose in fulfilling policies. (*Capturing Cultural Value, John Holden, Demos, UK, 2004*)

Agenda 21 for Culture: United Cities and Local Government Commission for Culture

The international movement of adoption of cultural dimension in local government by the international peak body for local government, UCLG.

The first document with worldwide mission that advocates establishing the groundwork of an undertaking by cities and local governments for cultural development. This was agreed by cities and local governments from all over the world to enshrine their commitment to human rights, cultural diversity, sustainability, participatory democracy and creating conditions for peace. Agenda 21 for culture provides an opportunity for every city to create a long term vision of culture as a basic pillar in its development.

General concepts and considerations:

- Central role of culture in public planning and policy
- Cultural rights
- Cultural diversity
- Intercultural dialogue *www.agenda21cultura.net*

Where to from here:

CDN is working to engage councils in Victoria to consider become signatories, though none as yet have signed up. Perhaps an opportunity for Mt Alexander?
We would be pleased to support any moves in this direction.

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