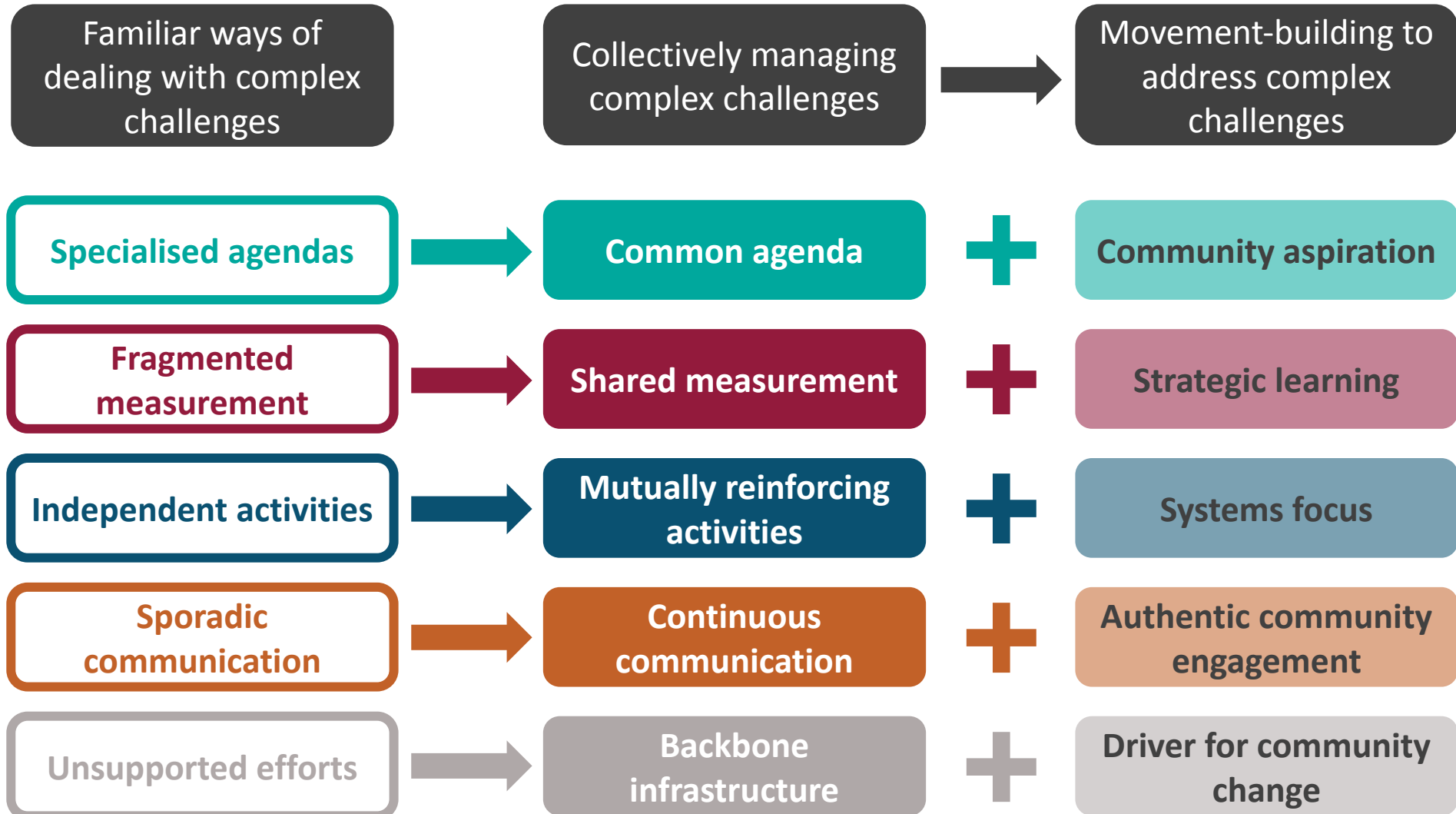


How we can we create a movement for change?

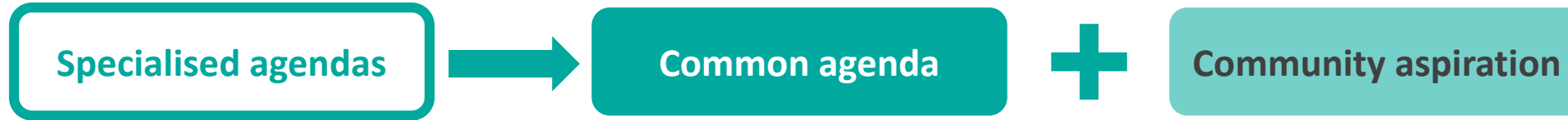
Collective Impact and why it's important



New ways of thinking and behaving

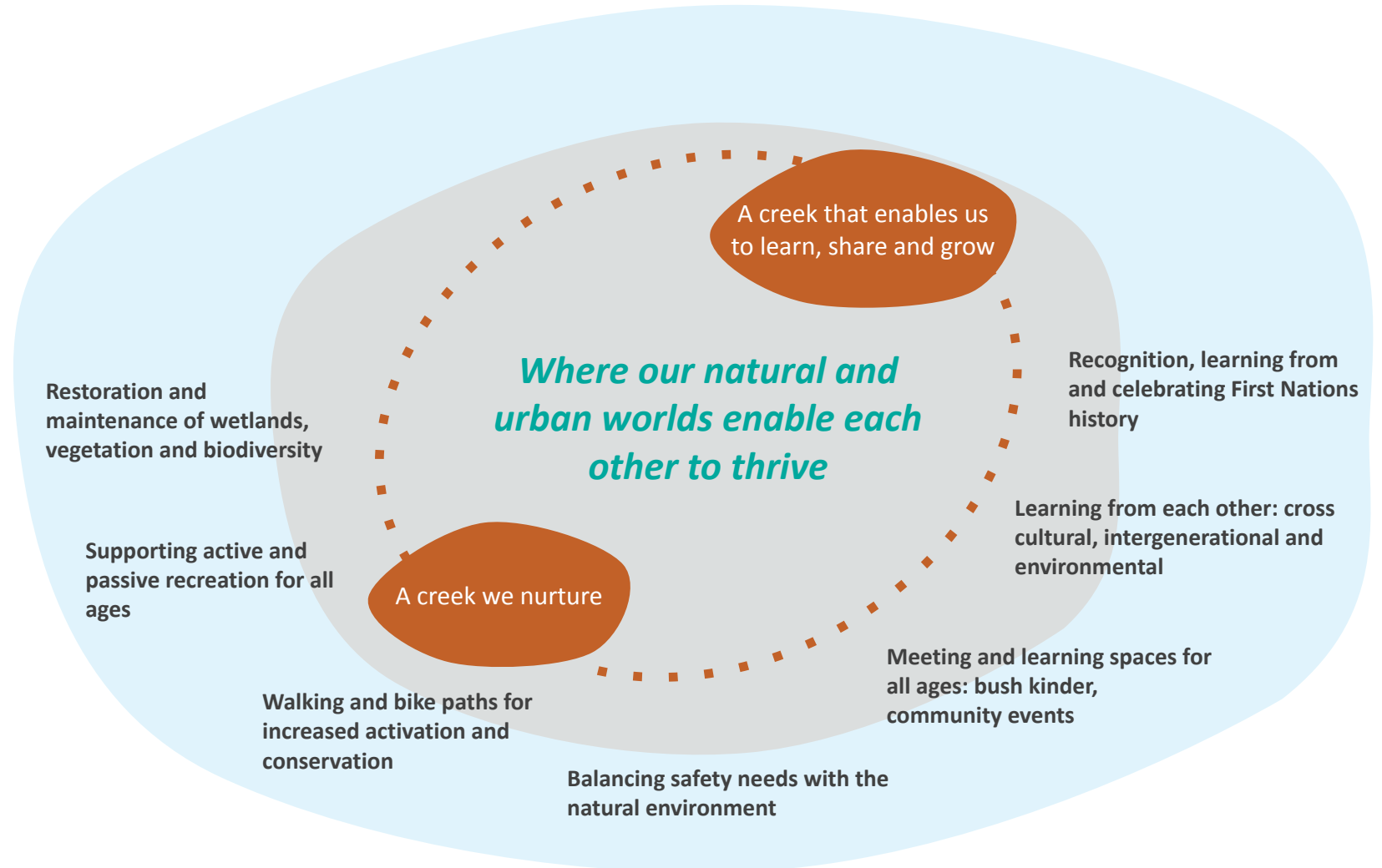


What does this mean for Merri Merri Wayi?



Towards a shared vision for the Merri Creek and surrounds

A living place for all to come together to safely nurture, learn, share and grow.



Where to now?



The big questions:

How would we know Merri Merri is improving from an environmental values perspective?

How would we know Merri Merri is improving from an social and cultural values perspective?

Some food for thought

Environmental values

Healthy, living stream¹

Natural features²

Biodiversity^{1,2}

Water quality^{1,2}

Appropriate and productive use¹

Social and Cultural values

Community valuing
understanding and celebrating¹

Valuing Aboriginal heritage and
continuing contribution^{1,2}

Peaceful, passive space²

Share pedestrian and cycle use²

Recreational use²

Group 1: How would we know Merri Merri is improving from an ENVIRONMENTAL values perspective?

Can we actually swim in the creek or ever drink the water?

Step progress:

Safe for dogs to drink

Kids to swim

Ultimately safe to drink

What's the future for carp in the creek – remove? Adapt?

Should we put cages in the water to protect native fingerlings etc?

New public campaign to say what's going to be done.

Reduced people rubbish - this is the most visible thing affecting perceptions of environmental value – integrate with govt policy: ie Plastic Free Moreland

Increase in native species populations: platypus, birds, small marsupials, reptiles and amphibians, kangaroos

Reduce impact of introduced pests: rats, carp, mynahs

One side of creek for people and other side for animals and plants is a great design

Introduce more swamp or flood plain areas reduce the impact of high flows? Speed of water is the issues.

Porous surfaces in suburbs?

Out in water traps to slow stormwater runoff

Group 1: How would we know Merri Merri is improving from a SOCIAL AND CULTURAL values perspective?

More gatherings of people along the creek

Different opportunities to gather for different people

Something along whole length of creek

Seeing more people who don't currently use the creek - eg women at night older people

Have different access opportunities – designated universal access paths

Better use of available public spaces – eg public use of Northcote Golf Course

Bocce court, cafes / pop-ups along creek – also assist in managing rubbish

Max bike speed (or bikes at jogging speed) esp in the school areas of creek

General use of Woi-wurrung language –knowing names of local plants and stories

Using QR codes along the river at different points to provide audio information about significant points along the creek

More sanctioned or official kid areas (make swimming holes deep and safe?) or make a creek water play area intended for kids?

Possibly bad tech idea where there are AR experiences along creek (phone puts graphics over video in the phone).

Group 2: How would we know Merri Merri is improving from an ENVIRONMENTAL values perspective?

A water quality monitoring program exists

Citizens science initiatives exist

Appreciation by cyclists and walkers

Weeds

Litter (esp after storms)

Oil slicks

Wildlife in creek (not just carp)

Vegetation – indigenous v exotic

Increased appropriate indigenous planting of plants which attract other insects/birds

People appreciation the environment

People learning about ecology

This our most regular point of contact with nature

We could swim in the creek

We could catch and eat yabbies from the creek

Platypus

Birds

Insects

Fish

Vegetation

Group 2: How would we know Merri Merri is improving from a SOCIAL AND CULTURAL values perspective?

More story signage

Better dog management by owners

Events

More celebrations of women who are significant to the creek

Collaborations flourishing up and down the creek

Joined up efforts

Return of community festivals and celebrations

Indigenous element – understanding – stories – placemaking (Seems stronger on Darebin side?)

Respectful, inclusive activation

Inclusivity, comfort

Increased perceived and actual safety

Role of lighting (balancing act)

DDA compliance

Community groups working together

Adapting to climate change impacts

Meeting places v borders..

Cross-cultural learning

Foraging

Don't try to meet everyone's needs in one place. Creek is not homogenous

People value creek in different ways

We feel it is a space for "us" (whoever us is...)

Different places for different needs

Group 3: How would we know Merri Merri is improving from an ENVIRONMENTAL values perspective?

Water, air testing for water quality – improvement

Amount of rubbish

Consider scale issues and relationship to catchment, eg water flows, pollution, litter, etc. but also positive elements of habitat corridors and connectivity

Air quality

Walking by the creek, seeing healthy Indigenous plants, birds around

Increased numbers of birds, fish, eels, etc

Continued work weekly on the environment.

Reduction of bikes and people and increased native animals

Stakeholder and community surveys of :

1. People
2. flora and fauna (Birds, waterbugs)

Community participation in activities and events as community values are a critical part of the process

More people engaged with helping the environment every week for hours, planting, cleaning, clearing

Opportunities for Smart technology (that is publicly available, collected and engaging)

- Online website feedback and reviews
- Citizen science activities
- Water, air, temp & noise quality monitoring (ie: waterwatch data)
- Litter
- Monitoring, usage & communication of results; pollution reports
- Ground truthing
- Sharing & analysing data

Better education and understanding of connections

Group 3: How would we know Merri Merri is improving from a SOCIAL AND CULTURAL values perspective?

Acknowledge that social, cultural and environmental are inter connected and co-dependent

Greater reflection of Indigenous values, knowledge and ways of interacting with environment

Build on incredible women's safety survey by:

- * increasing positive stories about the creek
- * increasing community engagement & environmental activities

*

Reduced incidence of litter, dumped rubbish, complaints of threatening and anti social behaviour with increasing usage and duration of stays

Community use and understanding of the creek and its Wurundjeri Heritage.

Environmental & social values are more widely known and through sharing of stories, events/activities/ceremonies

Strengthen capacity and activities of CERES and Joe's Garden as learning centres

Planning controls are resulting in development outcomes adjoining the creek

Growth of local community groups with connection & custodians of sections of the waterway who are working with relevant stakeholder (Councils, MW, etc.). Ensure they are strong and vibrant as they are amazing advocates for the creek and catchment

Group 4: How would we know Merri Merri is improving from an ENVIRONMENTAL values perspective?

Friends of Merri Creek bird monitoring- assessing changes in distribution and abundance of our native species over time

Waterwatch and water quality monitoring – MCMC.

Air quality – monitoring change over time - tapping into EPA data?

A strong relationship between our cultural community, Wurundjeri and environmental agencies that increases awareness and develops successful programs centred around our local environment and biodiversity

Consultation with indigenous communities, Narrap and management authorities to consider fire safety, weed control, revegetation and understanding water safety.

It will be led by Caring for Country – spiritual healing

Increased community awareness about environmental risk (snakes, long grasses, dogs off lead)

Group 4: How would we know Merri Merri is improving from a SOCIAL AND CULTURAL values perspective?

Stronger community involvement in existing Ceres programs (e.g. Kingfisher festival, Midsummer event)

Community is valuing art installations along the creek (less vandalism, this reach extends to more communities)

Increased harmony between different Merri Merri users

Caring for Country at the forefront – storytelling through temporary arts installation, led by Wurundjeri.

Permission through land council.

Reduction in large-scale, unplanned events (determination of appropriate event space, ensuring sacred sites are protected)

Artists remind us of our privilege and obligations so that the community takes increased ownership.

Artists in residence along the creek in an increased exchange of social and cultural awareness.

Increased community awareness that negates the need for increased signage.

Increased connection between social, cultural and environmental agencies.

Group 5: How would we know Merri Merri is improving from an ENVIRONMENTAL values perspective?

A diversity of wildlife is present and thriving. Frogs and insects thriving, platypus are present.

Diverse vegetation structure-biodiversity

Increased vegetation coverage – climate change mitigation and adaptation – thriving in the future

Reduced weeds – thriving biodiversity, thriving native and indigenous plants.

Naturalised flow regimes – resilience to increased urbanisation and climate change in the future

Habitat features, logs, leaf litter, hollows – functioning and connected ecosystems

Water health – clean – able to have children paddle in the creek

Less litter and less pollution– clean natural environment

Group 5: How would we know Merri Merri is improving from a SOCIAL AND CULTURAL values perspective?

Woi-wurrung is used to understand and communicate about the Merri Merri.

Behaviour change that reduces litter and stormwater pollution.

People don't litter or pick up litter.

We can see formal and informal education connections up, down and around the creek e.g wayfinding in visual and multilingual languages including Woi-wurrung language

People from different ages, cultures and backgrounds spending time and contributing – inclusive and passing on knowledge, learning from each other, sharing stories

People identify with the creek and interact with it

People volunteer to actively care for the Merri Merri

People spend time in the space not just to get from A-B.

Group 6: How would we know Merri Merri is improving from an ENVIRONMENTAL values perspective?

The Merri Merri environment is not polluted.

Increase # of people who are contributing to the Friends of Merri & the Merri Creek Management Committee activities

Comparing photos from years ago to now (point in time) - perhaps visually less erosion, less garbage

Creative engagement with flooding as part of the dynamics of the creek environment.

Evident thriving of biodiversity.

Evident community respect for the ecology and human roles within it.

I feel connected to nature

Waterwatch monitors – water testers – water quality is better (whatever the numbers are!) - making the data more visible to the wider community

Understanding of the interconnected nature of different parts of the creek – the creek is not an island

Group 6: How would we know Merri Merri is improving from a SOCIAL AND CULTURAL values perspective?

Active programs supporting community care of the environment.

Increase in quality education up and down the creek; mapping of informal and formal education current projects.

Increase in creative engagement e.g artist-led walk, schools visualising the creek ie: rewilding, revistillisation.

Increased youth and culturally diverse (e.g. migrants) engagement (volunteering, in management of the creek, leadership of Indigenous youth)

Festivals and cultural celebrations.

Active speaking of Woi-Wurrung language and use of Woi -wurrung place names and plant and animal names.

Woi-wurrung language classes for community; use six Woi-wurrung seasons; but be mindful of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung capacity and speed at which this can happen.

Who's not using the creek?

Kiosks and cafes

Separate cycles and pedestrians

QR interpretive signage





QUESTIONS?

Ross Wyatt

ross@thinkimpact.com.au

[@think_impact](#) [#thinkimpact](#)

thinkimpact.com.au

Thank you