

GROWTH OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY IN SMALL REGIONAL CITIES: A CASE STUDY OF BENDIGO

Andrew Bishop and Prof Sun Sheng Han

Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning
University of Melbourne

Context

- Economic restructuring
- Creativity as the basis for competitive advantage
- Government focus on innovation
- Attraction and retention of creative people and businesses

Research Objective and Methods

- Explore how and why a creative economy, may grow and prosper in a small regional city.
 - change over time
 - people climate factors
 - business climate factors
- Case Study
 - Quantitative – Semi-structured Interviews
 - Qualitative – ABS Industry of Employment Data

Creative Industries

- People employed in/ firms whose core business falls within the creative segments of:
 - Advertising and Marketing
 - Architecture, Design and Visual Arts
 - Film, Television and Radio
 - Music and Performing Arts
 - Publishing
 - Software & Interactive Content
- (ARC Centre for Creative Industries & Innovation, 2007)

People Climate and Business Climate

- People Climate

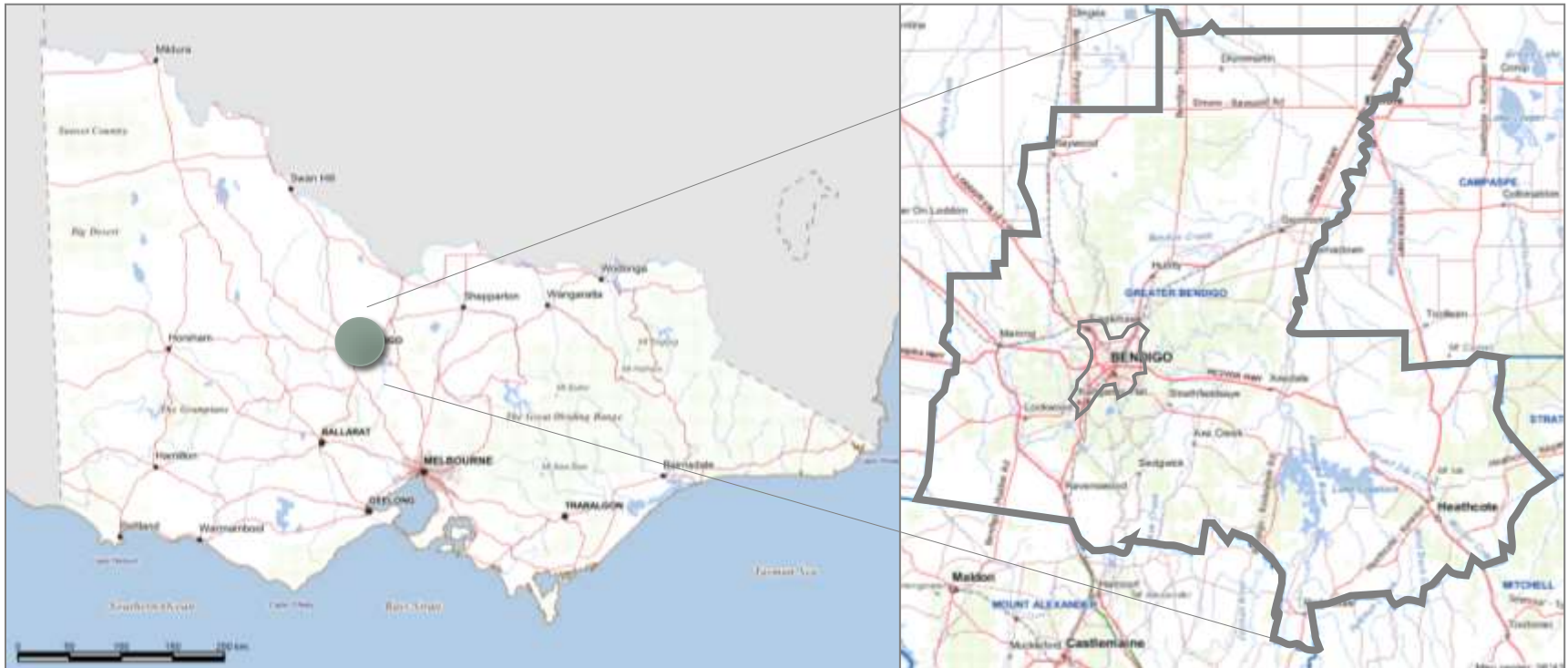
- The specific qualities of places that attract and retain people - such as recreational and leisure amenity, lifestyle and cultural diversity.

- Business Climate

- Traditional production and location dynamics - such as labour, knowledge resources, capital, infrastructure and physical resources.

Bendigo

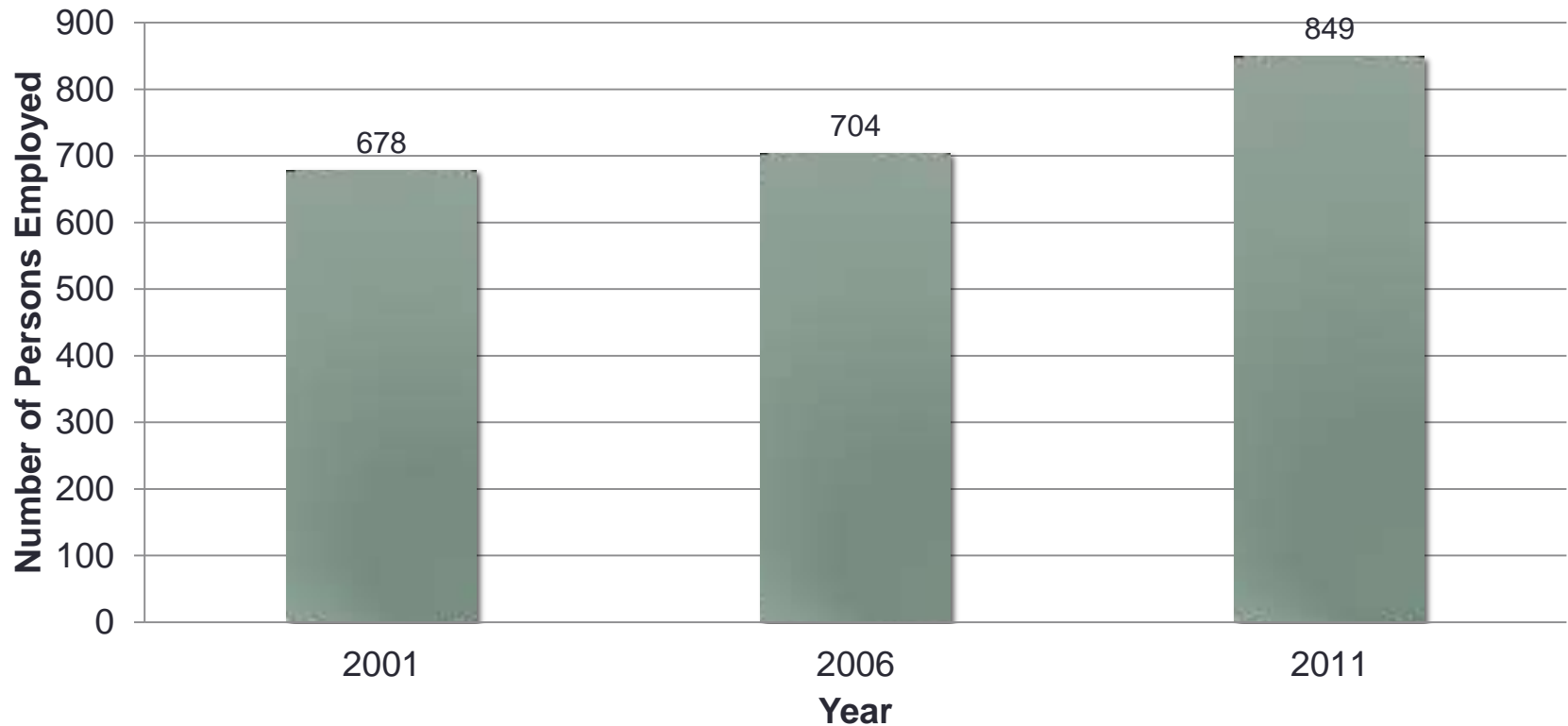
“Victoria’s coolest town” *The Age*, 24/8/12



Quantitative Results

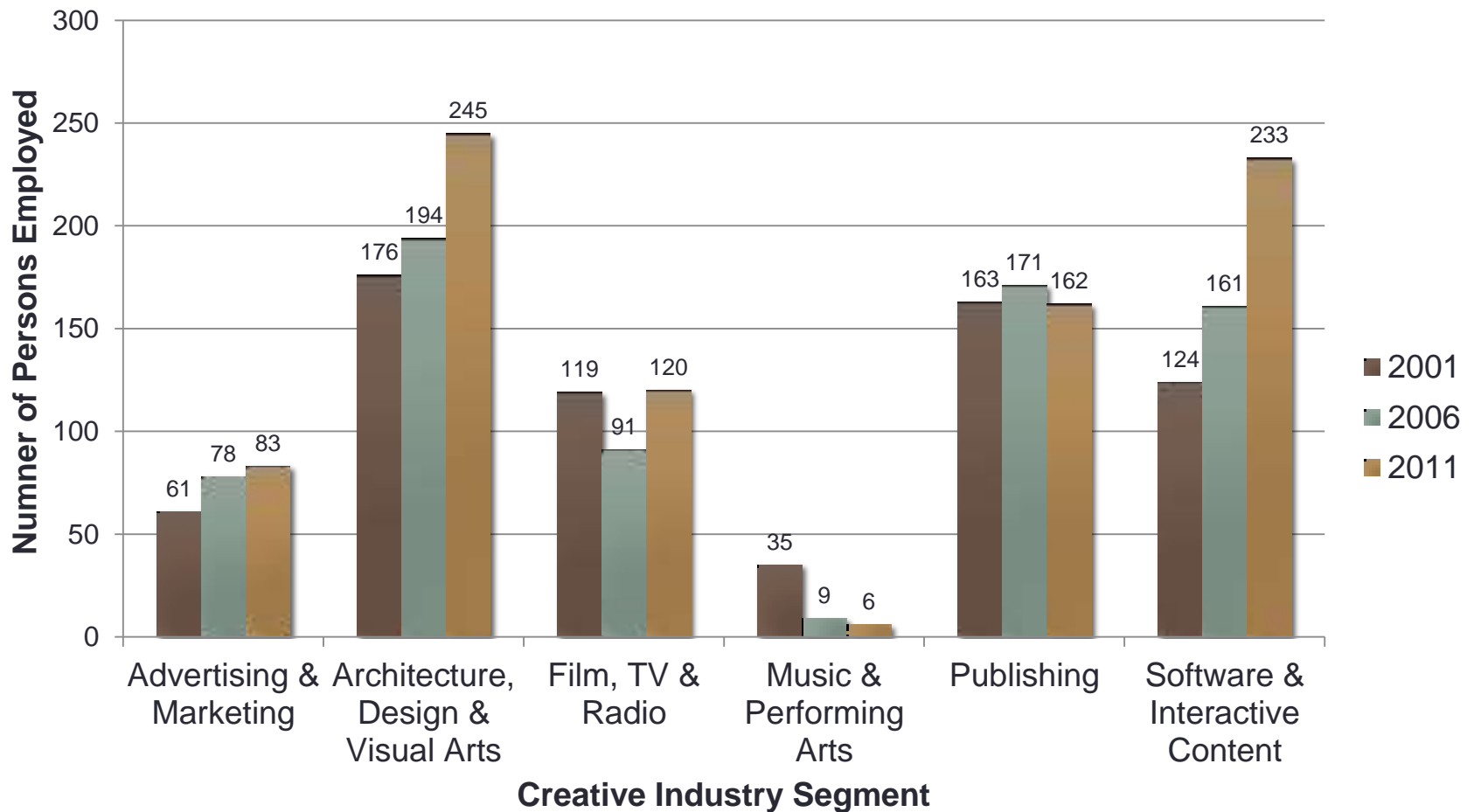
Growth in Creative Economy

**Number of Usual Residents of Greater Bendigo LGA
Employed in Creative Industries**



Aggregated from ABS Industry of Employment data (ANSIC06 and ANSIC93 four digit) for Persons with Place of Usual Residence as Greater Bendigo LGA

Changes by Creative Industry Segment



Aggregated from ABS Industry of Employment data (ANSIC06 and ANSIC93 four digit) for Persons with Place of Usual Residence as Greater Bendigo LGA

Qualitative Results

Key Informants

Sector

General Business Community	3
Creative Industries	7
Local Government - City of Greater Bendigo	6
State Government - Regional Development Victoria	1
University - La Trobe, Bendigo	2
	19

Location of Employment

Bendigo	16
Castlemaine	2
Melbourne	1
	19

Creative Industry

Film, Television and Radio	1
Software & Interactive Content	2
Music & Performing Arts	2
Architecture, Design and Visual Arts	2
	7

Focus of Interviews

- Changes noticed in local Creative Economy
- People Climate:
 - Attractors for creative people to live in Bendigo
 - How Bendigo has changed as a place
- Business Climate:
 - Attractors for creative businesses to Bendigo
 - Resources available to creative businesses

PEOPLE CLIMATE
Housing Costs

“They can buy a home up here for probably half or two thirds the cost in Melbourne.”

Bendigo



\$301,000

Melbourne



\$530,000

Median House Price, September Quarter, 2012

PEOPLE CLIMATE Amenity

“everything you would want and need in a city to be challenged, to be happy, to be satisfied”



PEOPLE CLIMATE Lifestyle

“... people have more time, it’s a more relaxed lifestyle, it’s a healthier lifestyle: less pollution, less noise, less traffic, less congestion: it’s just a GOOD lifestyle”



PEOPLE CLIMATE
Place identity

“...it’s naff to say, but it’s a renaissance that Bendigo’s having”



“cosmopolitan outlook”

“strong urban identity”



“country charm”

BUSINESS CLIMATE
Human Capital

“We've got a fantastic regional university - La Trobe University - which has just hit 5,000 students: for a regional centre that is massive.”



BUSINESS CLIMATE

Local Jobs

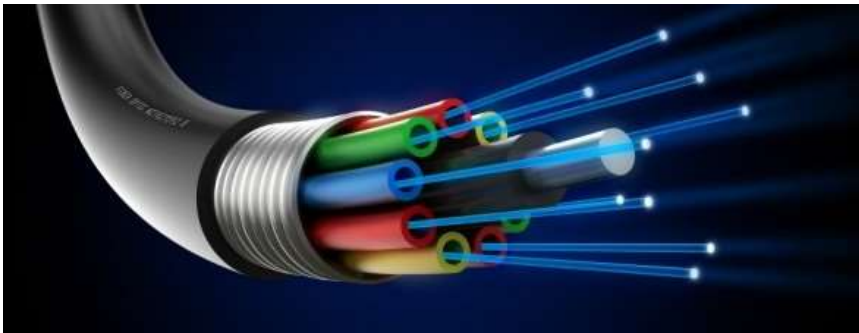
“...it’s going to generate so much work for us. New people coming to town bring not only a need for housing, but also new businesses.”



BUSINESS CLIMATE

Access to External Markets

“[It] means that there is no metro and region. It’s a global thing now.”



BUSINESS CLIMATE

Supportive Business Community

“...we have very large organisations... ..tremendous leadership and heads of those organisations, which are all interested in building relationships and capacity across our community.”



“Things start here – it’s a city that allows things to start and supports them...”

Conclusions

Overarching Themes

- Growth in creative economy

Main Factors:

- Affordability and liveability

Sub factors

- Scale of city
- Proximity to metropolitan city
- Strong identity
- Transport, technology and telecommunications
- Strong education system
- Sizeable community-minded professional services sector

Recommendations

Recommendations for City of Greater Bendigo

- Housing strategy will be crucial to preserving affordability and livability
- Consider the needs across life stages, i.e. young adults without families

• Recommendations for Researchers

- More case studies of small regional cities
- Consider different factors attracting different age groups/ life stages

• Recommendations for Practitioners

- A holistic approach that considers both people climate and business climate
- Integrated as part of a diversified approach to economic and social development

Questions?



Andrew Bishop

andrew.bishop@unimelb.edu.au