



Concept testing and financial modeling for a new Theatre for the City of Casey, Melbourne

> THE CONTEXT

Since the 1980s, the City of Casey has been one of Australia's fastest growing regions, catering for a large proportion of Melbourne's outer urban development. The population has nearly doubled in the last 15 years. By 2010 the City had progressed plans to develop a new civic precinct which is set to be one of the largest projects undertaken by the City, and to include new municipal offices, library, visual arts facilities, performing arts theatre and associated car parking. The one element that remained un-scoped was the performing arts theatre.

> THE BRIEF

There are eight performing arts centres in suburbs surrounding the City of Casey. In light of this, and the nature of the Casey community, Positive Solutions was asked to address a series of key questions and make clear recommendations regarding the configuration of the performing arts facility, the market it would serve and the financial implications for Council.

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> OUR APPROACH

Our consultants reviewed previous studies and strategies and undertook community and stakeholder consultation via interviews and surveys. This included securing input from arts and community organisations, schools, the business community, as well as from Local and State Government contacts.

A competitor analysis was prepared, and benchmarking research was undertaken to provide a snapshot of similar venues. This led to the preparation of a preliminary financial forecast for the first five years of operation of the venue.

> THE RESULT

Positive Solutions concluded from the research that there was a widely-accepted need for the proposed Theatre and precinct (named Bunjil Place), and that the Theatre configuration should include an 800-seat main auditorium. A second space could accommodate functions of around 100 audience members and be used for other activities, including occasional small-scale performances.

City of Casey completed construction of Bunjil Place which, aside from civic offices, houses the Theatre, a studio, regional gallery, regional library, function centre and an outdoor plaza with a large screen.