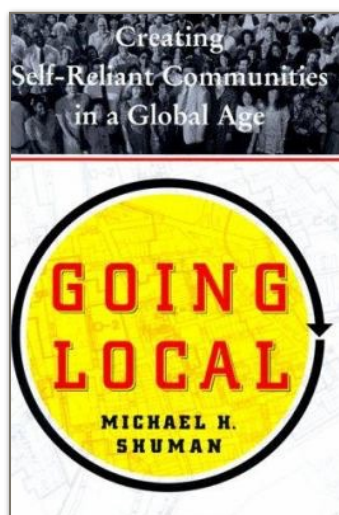


Going Local - Ideas for Northland



The current thinking for increasing the economic wellbeing of Northland tends to focus on increasing exports and tourism and attracting investment from outside of the region.¹ But what if there is a different path to have a vibrant economy with full employment? What if we focussed on cultivating a more internally networked local economy where external trade is a healthy bi-product rather than the central goal?

In his book *Going Local - Creating Self-Reliant Communities in a Global Age*², Michael Shuman³ says:



Going local does not mean walling off the outside world. It means nurturing locally owned businesses which use local resources sustainably, employ local workers at decent wages, and serve primarily local consumers. It means becoming more self-sufficient, and less dependent on imports. Control moves from the boardrooms of distant corporations and back to the community, where it belongs (p6)

He gives evidence and examples from around the world suggesting that higher levels of reliance on the global economy is often a slippery slope into loss of autonomy, community powerlessness and accompanying worse social and economic outcomes. Concentrating on generating a vibrant local economy instead empowers a community to feel as if it is able to address its own problems, and is not at the mercy of distant corporations.

The only way communities can ensure their economic well-being is to stop chasing multinational firms with no community loyalties, and start investing in community corporations. Prosperity follows when ownership, production, and consumption become intimately connected with place. (p7)

Shuman suggests the following approach: develop clear shared values and goals to benefit our region over as wide a consensus as possible, assess our assets and resources, then build those up through minimising leakage and enhancing co-operation between local government, businesses, training institutions and out of that to develop a new “normal”.

He has some great examples of cities and regions abandoned by large industry who have faced social and economic disaster, but instead assessed what was left and found ways to recover a more buoyant local/ regional economy.⁴ His hypothesis is that the costs of courting large-scale overseas investment is too high. The advantages are temporary at best. A long-term, robust economy is founded instead on solid, locally owned sustainable businesses.

¹ For example in the *Tai Tokerau Northland Growth Study (2015)* <http://www.med.govt.nz/sectors-industries/regions-cities/research/regional-growth-programme/Tai%20Tokerau%20Regional%20Growth%20Study.pdf> - virtually all of the Industry Opportunities identified were around attracting wealth from outside the region.

² *“Going Local: Creating Self-Reliant Communities in a Global Age” (Routledge, 2000)*

³ *Michael H. Shuman is an economist, attorney, author, and entrepreneur, and a globally recognized expert on community economics. Shuman is currently Director of Community Portals for Mission Markets and a Fellow at Cutting Edge Capital and Post-Carbon Institute. He’s also a founding board member of the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE). He is also an adjunct instructor in community economic development for Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. <http://michaelshuman.com/>*

⁴ *I see it is important that we treat Northland as an economic entity - so here when use “local” I am referring to the region of Northland/Tai Tokerau - the land North of the direct influence of Auckland.*

The purpose of this paper

The final chapter in Shuman's book addresses steps toward community self-resilience. In this paper I explore how we could adapt these to Northland. **The purpose of this paper is to provide not just information and ideas, but a bridge from discussion and theory into action.** There are many people across Northland I am aware of who are passionate about these subjects - people who are vastly experienced and knowledgeable in all sorts of diverse fields. I want to provide a catalyst for bringing people and ideas together and doing something constructive out of this potent mix.

Step 1: A Community Bill of Rights

By this Shuman means developing a shared vision of a better future, asking questions like: What do we want to produce? How? Where? What kinds of goods and services are necessities? What should be our standard of worker rights and wages? What should be our stand on preserving our land, water and sea? What kind of ownership structures will best serve our community well-being? He says:

A community bill of rights accomplishes several goals. It enables residents to assert, fundamentally, that ends come before means - that businesses are welcome if they serve the community. It creates a set of public norms about commercial behaviour that protects the public and provides fair notice to corporations. A business's faithfulness to the Rights, while voluntary, carries consequences. Every time a citizen considers making a purchase...he or she will have the list of qualifying companies in mind.

Defining the goals of our community will determine the ends to which we use our assets. If for instance our goal was to maximise short-term wealth into the hands of a few people it would make sense to sell off our capital assets, or to exploit them as quickly as possible, treating our communities, our people and environment as raw materials to be burned up and discarded. Of course very few would see that as desirable, yet often it seems that the need for short-term results in a world demanding ramped-up industrial-scale production for a global market has pushed us towards this kind of thinking. Unfortunately "growth" has often been perceived in these terms and as a result we do not have consensus. A 2010 **Unlocking Potential Report**⁵ for Northland Regional Council observed that:



...we're not convinced that a more active growth agenda would be supported by all communities in Northland. Some people may view aspects of the growth that has occurred in a negative light. Such concerns are valid. We do not assume that any growth is automatically good. (p15)

If our goal on the other hand is the long-term well-being of our place and of our descendants we would do our best to preserve and build up our capital. We would ensure we maintained diversity of skill-sets, diversity of agriculture, horticulture and manufacturing. We would preserve our waterways, seas, ground-water, air and soil. We would ensure our fishing grounds and forests were harvested in a way that increased rather than decreased their long-term viability. We would retain local ownership of our lands and businesses. We would ensure that irreplaceable resources like minerals were used in a way that would enable them to be recycled to get the maximum from them for generations. We would rethink all our processes at an overall systems level so as to eliminate waste.⁶ We would put great care into passing on values, culture and skills to our young people so that they - our greatest assets - would have a future in the place they sprang from.



Both these positions could be described as growth. But only the second describes *healthy, sustainable* growth of the *wellbeing* of our people - *supported* by our economic structures but not *dominated* by them. We must have this discussion in Northland and agreed upon our values or we will continue to have constant conflict.

⁵ *Unlocking Potential Report for Northland Regional Council* - <http://www.nrc.govt.nz/upload/7740/Item%202021%20Attachment%20-%20Growth%20Programme%20-%20Unlocking%20Potential.pdf> 2010

⁶ *for example: Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things* by Michael Braungart and William McDonough (Apr 22, 2002)

The values we adopt must resonate with Maori tikanga. There is a natural fit between principles of localisation and sustainability and Iwi values making way for a strong partnership between Maori and “mainstream” economics around these values. For example:

Uppermost is the sanctity of life because of divine origins. Thus the obligation to uphold the mana and wellbeing of people and the life supporting capacity of Papatuanuku in perpetuity is non-negotiable.⁷

There are some encouraging signs of shared values being developed in Northland. The Far North District Council is currently running a campaign in the Far North called **Tell Us What You Want**⁸. This is a great opportunity to talk about the sort of values that we want to unite around going forward. Values identified so far include:

*He wahi ataahua - a district of outstanding beauty.
Oranga taiao, oranga tangata: nurturing the environment so it nourishes us
Oranga kainga: a thriving, sustainable local economy
Mana i te whenua: the role of tangata whenua is valued and respected
Te ira tangata: rich heritage and identities, respected and celebrated
Whanau: a great place to raise our families
Tangata whai ora: happy, healthy, and productive people
He waka hourua: fit for purpose infrastructure underpinning success
Kokiri tahi: empowered communities, working collaboratively*

These values are not anti-technology, but can be served by appropriate (“fit for purpose”) technology. Our own **Localise Project**⁹ is about developing web-based infrastructure for networking Northland businesses and organisations that support and encourage local ownership, production and trade. Using these tools individuals, businesses and social enterprises may build networks, communicate, identify supply-chain opportunities and support one-another to build powerful collaborative clusters. In addition this will also provide online tools that enable the public to support firms with a values-driven local commitment. **Ifor Ffowcs-Williams**, specialist on cluster development, recently lead a workshop for **Northland Inc** in Whangarei. He says:

...from an economic development perspective, the evidence is clear that with strong clusters comes growth in employment, especially high value jobs. Research from OECD and others shows that economies with strong clusters have higher levels of innovation, higher productivity, more entrepreneurship, more new business start-ups, higher export and economic growth, higher wages and better productivity.¹⁰

Questions to consider:

- How do we develop these values and who should do it?
- Is there a better description more in keeping with our culture than “Bill of Rights”?
- How do we ensure widespread involvement and consensus?
- How do we keep these in the public eye, retaining an ongoing focus?



Step 2: The State of the Region Report

This is about taking stock of what our city, town or region is and has. Every community has resources, assets and culture that are capable of being revived and empowered. Sometimes we forget how blessed we are in Northland in terms of climate, resources and history. Shuman recommends recording and publishing this to remind ourselves of who we are and what we have. This not only gives us a starting point for moving forward, but inspires a new sense of collective identity.

⁷ See *He Tangata, He Whenua, Ho Oranga, An Economic Growth Strategy for the Taitokerau Maori Economy* http://www.terarawa.iwi.nz/uploads/7/4/6/3/7463762/growth_strategy_141214_final.pdf, February 2015, p22.

⁸ <http://telluswhatyouwant.co.nz/have-we-got-it-right/>

⁹ <http://www.localise.nz/the-localise-project/>

¹⁰ *Ifor Ffowcs-Williams, Regional Cluster Initiative in the Pacific - Cluster Development and Management Manual.* <http://cdn-asset-lax-1.airsquare.com/clusternavigatorslimited/library/cluster-development-manual-pipso.pdf?201505182349>, November 2014.

Virtually every community... has a gold mine which economists have yet to discover. Along its veins and other deposits may be found unemployed human resources, underused civic institutions, and discarded economic assets.... Many kinds of human assets now lie fallow..... the inventiveness of the young, the forgotten skills of retirees...tally the inanimate objects that have been all but written off: empty buildings, idle machinery, wasted energy. (p184)

Our natural resources include our soil, our waterways and water reserves, our seas, our forests, our plants, birds and animals, our history, our skill-sets, our experience, our culture and the raw materials provided for us to make things that we need. We also have existing infrastructure in terms of power reticulation, roads, harbours, and modes of transport (vehicles, boats, planes, bicycles etc). We also have our people.

So this report would also include our local renewable resources, non-renewables, community organisations, measures of current exports and imports, indebtedness and investment on a region-wide basis and so on. This report is not so much about finding answers, but identifying where we are at - that in many ways we are richly resourced, but just need co-ordination and vision for that to be utilised in a sustainable and empowering way for the whole community.



This requires research and coordination - an essential part of the process. The **Ministry of Economic Development** recently commissioned the **Tai Tokerau Northland Regional Growth Study Opportunities Report**¹¹

collating much data around the Northland economy and environment. While many of the conclusions are framed in terms of a global/industrial narrative rather than a local ownership/local sustainability model, the information provides a great resource for a State of the Region Report. In the summary of findings the authors of the report state:

*While the report recognises that there is no “silver bullet” or industry that will transform the Northland economy, it recognises that the Northland region has significant untapped potential.*¹²



The report stresses that there is no One Big Answer for Northland, but I believe that as a region of great diversity there are many, many small answers that together can bring sustainable well-being.

Questions to consider:

- Who will do this work of developing the current data into report written from a local resilience perspective?
- How do we ensure widespread involvement and consensus?
- How do we keep this in the public eye once it is complete?

Step 3: Anchor Corporations

From this State of the Region Report, Shuman says, there will be obvious ripe business opportunities. Unmet needs suggest new markets for local businesses. Under-utilised or poorly utilised resources may then be matched with people with ideas but lacking capital or land - unused buildings or land for instance, discarded goods that may be recycled or up-cycled. Import replacing businesses will begin to emerge based on a joint commitment made at step one. This is where a few companies must step up as champions to point the way forward. He says:

The existence of one or two successful community corporations - using local inputs, producing quality goods, operating in harmony with the environment, selling to local consumers, treating workers well, delivering profit to local shareholders - should inspire others to follow... As they increase the demand for inputs to production, new firms will be motivated to set up shop. (p187-188)

In Northland we have a great example of a Social Enterprise that has led the way in **CBEC**¹³ (Community, Business and Environment Centre). Based in Kaitia, CBEC has ventures throughout Northland. With a

¹¹ *Tai Tokerau Northland Regional Growth Study Opportunities Report. 2015*

¹² *Tai Tokerau Northland Regional Growth Study Report - Questions and Answers* <http://www.med.govt.nz/sectors-industries/regions-cities/research/regional-growth-programme/Q-As.pdf> pg2

¹³ <http://www.cbec.co.nz/>

focus on creating employment and running community services (transport, home insulation, solar power, conservation and recycling) in a sustainable way they have proven the viability of the Social Enterprise model in Northland.

North power¹⁴ is another successful, long-standing community owned enterprise that has proven the feasibility of vibrant and viable local ownership and management. Based in the Whangarei and Kaipara areas Northpower returns profits from its electricity and fibre communications businesses back to the local community.



The **Whangarei Growers Market** is effectively a cluster of local growers who have developed a worldwide reputation, attract visitors to Northland and have a significant impact on the local economy.¹⁵ The **Akina Foundation**¹⁶, while not locally owned, is presently working in the Far North coaching a series of new social enterprises, through the **Far North Thrive Programme**¹⁷. **AKĀU**¹⁸, for example is part of this programme. They are a design and architecture studio in Kaikohe using local materials to make quality furniture and other locally designed products, providing training for local youth in association with **Northtec**¹⁹.

Questions to consider:

- How do we identify more of these type of organisations?
- How do we champion the work of these as models to be emulated?
- How do we network these and other organisations together in clusters for increased effectiveness?

Step 4: Community Friendly Business Schools

Most people who have been employed by large companies all their lives or have been unemployed haven't had the opportunity to learn the skills of business ownership. The availability of coaching and mentoring around the values identified at step one has been rare in the past. Shuman says:

The transformation of business schools and university economics departments is another imperative. Lewis Mumford once observed that industrial society transformed all seven deadly sins except sloth "into a positive virtue. Greed, avarice, envy, gluttony, luxury, and pride [are] the driving forces of the new economy". (p189)

Fortunately we have organisations like **Akina** who are leading the way in ethical Social Enterprise and locally **Northtec** is playing a significant part in sustainable development and training. They have carried out some significant research including an extensive study of the impact of the **Whangarei Growers Market**²⁰.

As Shuman states above traditional business training has often been framed in terms of unsustainable industrial driving forces. There is a great need for new models of collaborative economics and new reporting paradigms that fit with the realisation that this old model is being superseded.

We have connections with **Enspiral**²¹ in Wellington



¹⁴ <https://www.electricitycareers.northpower.com>

¹⁵ <http://www.northtec.ac.nz/news/2014/thriving-growers-market-part-of-whangarei%E2%80%99s-social>

¹⁶ <http://akina.org.nz>

¹⁷ <http://akina.org.nz/events/far-north-thrive-programme>

¹⁸ <http://akina.org.nz/venture/arco>

¹⁹ <http://www.northtec.ac.nz/>

²⁰ <http://www.northtec.ac.nz/news/2014/thriving-growers-market-part-of-whangarei%E2%80%99s-social>

²¹ <http://www.enspiral.com/>

and see their model of collaborative economics for incubating new ventures as a very exciting alternative that could be easily adapted to our context. A series of collaborative work-spaces - **The Orchard**²² - are being developed in Northland with this type of new approach in mind.

From my background as a Chartered Accountant in Northland I see the common disconnect between great people with exciting ideas and the realities of compliance with regulations and reporting requirements. There is a great need for mentoring and assistance with development, birthing and incubation of new ventures. Our company **Audit Assistant**²³ is in the process of creating software tools to assist with compliance and governance for non-profits and micro-enterprise, lowering the barriers to entry into self-employment and social enterprise.

Questions to consider:

- How do we maintain effective open channels with these organisations?
- How do we encourage and develop focussed small-business mentoring and tools?
- How do we fund new incubators and development of new tools?

Step 5: Community Finance

Shuman sees the development of sources of finance as essential for the starting of community organisation. Conventional sources of finance form a point of “leakage” from the local economy, reducing the “multiplier” effect of keeping funds in circulation.

As community corporations expand, so will the need for local investors. A concerted effort must be made to convince your neighbours to transfer their pensions and other assets from global stocks and bonds to local ones, and from mutual funds with no preference for place to local mutual funds targeting local businesses. (p190)

Reducing dependence on debt reduces leakage. An resilient local economy is one where capital is supplied primarily internally. Investment that is sent onto the national or international stock market is leakage. Brokers and companies elsewhere benefit. Similarly borrowing from outside of the region is leakage - overseas owned banks profiting when that could be retained in the local economy. The key thing here is minimisation of leakage. Of course there will be instances where outside borrowing or investments may be necessary or desirable, but this should not be the default as at present.

Rethinking how we scale our businesses - out of the large-scale-high-debt paradigm could see positive spin-offs in many directions. A 2013 **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development** report called **Wake up Before It Is Too Late: Make Agriculture Truly Sustainable Now for Food Security in a Changing Climate**²⁴ put it this way:

The world needs a paradigm shift in agricultural development: from a “green revolution” to an “ecological intensification” approach. This implies a rapid and significant shift from conventional, monoculture-based and high-external-input-dependent industrial production towards mosaics of sustainable, regenerative production systems that also considerably improve the productivity of small-scale farmers. (Introduction)



In dairying, for instance, moving back to more diverse and value-added styles could reduce reliance on the burden of external debt and have significant environmental benefits, plus giving more employment opportunities.

By finding ways to link local investors with local borrowers leakage can be vastly reduced. With the development of local credit co-ops, peer-to-peer lending, local virtual-currencies and time-banks a regional economy can begin to thrive, becoming more centred on local regenerative resources.

There is also the argument that lending locally to new ventures may expose retirement funds or a family inheritance to undue risk. But in light of the 2008 crash are investments in national finance/banking or

²² <http://www.theorchard.co.nz/>

²³ <http://www.auditassistant.com/>

²⁴ http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcted2012d3_en.pdf

the global economy actually that safe anyway? In many ways investing in something “down the road” enables more accountability.

Mechanisms already exist for protecting peer-to-peer lending. Simply using a local solicitor to draw up an agreement is the simplest way if there is already some kind of relationship between the borrower and potential investor. New peer-to-peer lending businesses like **Harmony**²⁵ allow lenders to choose who to invest in. So a local investor could use the Harmony website to choose from a range of local ventures. Plus could we create our own locally owned, financed and managed Co-operative Community Bank? In other parts of NZ there are already local savings pools that lend locally.²⁶ There are already discussions around creating a **Kiwisaver Scheme** based on ethical investment only.²⁷ Why not develop a Kiwisaver Scheme that is ethically and regionally focussed?



There are also others ways to invest locally - for instance investing in land or buildings that are made available for social enterprise or start-ups at an affordable rate as a way of supporting these local job-and-wealth creating ventures. As an example **Letting Space**²⁸ are Community Brokers who match vacant space with arts projects and social-enterprise ideas in Wellington and Christchurch.

Questions to consider:

- Does anybody have experience in this type of organisation?
- How do we change the mindset of the community to see this as valuable?
- Who will do the work of developing this further?

Step 6: Community Currency

Community currency is a proven way to stimulate and support a local economy. As well as reducing leakage for multinational banks and credit card companies, it provides resilience in times of natural disaster, economic or political crisis. Shuman says that local currency systems:

...demonstrate that designing, managing and recruiting participants for community currency is a terrific organising project. It raises awareness about who lives in the community which citizens are committed to self-reliance, and what and where goods are locally available. It strengthens relationships between local business and consumers. It heightens public appreciation that every purchase is a civic act. (p192)

Laurence Boomert,²⁹ a NZ expert on alternative currencies did a great presentation on **Complimentary Currencies**³⁰ at the **Resilient Economies Conference**³¹ in Kaitia in 2014, sponsored by the Far North District Council.

There is currently a **Time Bank** operating in Kaitia.³² **Community Exchange Services**³³ (CES) have been set up in the past in Kaiwaka, Warkworth and Kaeo. As well as the CES model there are sophisticated



²⁵ <https://www.harmony.com/>

²⁶ e.g. <http://www.projectwairarapa.org.nz/savings-pools>

²⁷ <http://sustainable.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Sustainable-investment.pdf>

²⁸ <http://www.lettingspace.org.nz/about-letting-space/>

²⁹ <http://laurenceboomert.weebly.com/>

³⁰ https://youtu.be/h1_Xwn3vwAs

³¹ <http://refn.org.nz/#home>

³² <http://www.kaitia.timebanks.org/>

³³ <https://www.community-exchange.org/>

tools to enable virtual local currencies available (such as **Cyclos**³⁴) and once some of the other steps are more progressed this would be natural extension.

Questions to consider:

- Does anyone have experience with successful models for community currency?
- How do we identify and network with organisations or regions that are doing this?
- Do we do this using external software, develop our own or do it some other way (non-software)
- Who will do this work?

Step 7: Community-Friendly Local Councils

While all the above can be achieved without local government support, if the local councils are able to support the initiatives, there are massive advantages. Shuman says:

It can make sure that the only beneficiaries of local investment, contracts, purchases and bond finance are community corporations. It can help to match local-input supplier and workers with local producers. It can set up scholarship funds... If your mayor or local city-council members refuse to start making the kinds of economic stands that make difference, consider standing against them. (p193)

There are some encouraging signs for Northland in this arena. **The Far North District Council** hosted the **Resilient Economies Conference** in Kaitia in 2014.³⁵ They are supporting the **Akina** social enterprise work in the Far North. **The Whangarei District Council** seem open to ideas around sustainability.

Northland Inc recently hosted a Cluster workshop with **Ifor Ffowcs-Williams**.³⁶ This provided an extremely useful template for local cluster development - a collaborative local resilience model, which, while still focussed on a global model, has great application for building clusters around local needs.

As mentioned **Far North District Council** is currently running a campaign in the Far North called **Tell Us What You Want**³⁷, engaging the public in the process of imagining the future in a creative and participative way - an attempt at bottom-up rather than top-down planning.



Zaid Hassan, in his book *The Social Labs Revolution*, stresses the importance of as wide a possible spread of engagement in solving large-scale social problems. He emphasises this with a quote:

*The world is plagued by complex problems like poverty, global warming, and political violence. These problems can only be addressed when people from diverse sectors like business, government and non-governmental agencies (NGO's) work together.*³⁸



Questions to consider:

- How do we network more effectively with the local councils?
- Do we know people in the councils who are already on board with this thinking?
- Is a social lab approach something that we could effectively initiate here?

³⁴ <http://www.cyclos.org/>

³⁵ see <http://refn.org.nz/#home> for videos

³⁶ <http://www.clusternavigators.com/>

³⁷ <http://telluswhatyouwant.co.nz/have-we-got-it-right/>

³⁸ **Zaid Hassan**, *The Social Labs Revolution: a new approach to solving our most complex challenges*, Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco, 2014. p113.

Step 8: Political Reform

Shuman says that this is where it can start to get messy:

A community that begins the transformation to self-reliance will soon encounter powerful enemies. Multinational firms that find themselves losing local markets and special government privileges can be expected to retaliate... and continue to use trade treaties and friendly courtrooms, wherever possible, to circumvent the inconveniences of democracy... But their most likely - and dangerous - reaction will be to tighten their grip on local governments. (p193)

Once we make a stand to take our power back in our local community and economy there may be some opposition. Restrictive trade deals that favour multinational corporations are a threat to a thriving local economy. Unfortunately money talks and small businesses are no match for the might of corporations bent on gaining dominance and eliminating pesky competition and interference with their plans. Hopefully by taking a collaborative community-wide approach and the positive results are evident we will have a solid bloc of support (including local government) against corporations moving in to exploit our resources and take us down paths which are detrimental to the wellbeing of our whole community and culture.

The remoteness and size of Northland relative to our population, while having its problems, in some ways enables us to experiment some innovative and alternative models without coming into conflict so much. Our lack of resources has always inspired Northlanders to be innovative and collaborative. Our production is fairly insignificant in national terms, so hopefully this presents us with an opportunity to come up with creative solutions in a way that is celebrated without being perceived as being too much of a threat to anyone.



Questions to consider:

- Who do we know at a central government political level who we can encourage down this track?
- What resources can we develop to give to these people?
- Who will do this work?

Step 9: A Lobby for Localism

Once a local economy starts gaining momentum Shuman suggests lobbying for policies at a national level that devolve power back to local communities and local councils.

Local elected officials have to steer the devolution revolution so that they are given real powers over the local economy, and not just more responsibilities without the revenue-raising capacity to pay for them. They need to push the national government to reorient the nation's trade policies away from the centralised autocracy... (p195)

New Zealand is one of the most centralised countries in the OECD. Local government has much responsibility but little real power and less resources than in most other countries. A 2014 study called **Community Economic Development: Understanding the New Zealand Context**³⁹ (commissioned by the New Zealand Community Economic Development Trust) stated:

A growing localism agenda is emerging that involves devolution of power and resources to communities. Civic participation in traditional political structures and processes is decreasing - but citizen participation at a local level is growing in many communities. There is increasing evidence that there are better health and wellbeing outcomes when people have more control and local access to services. (p6)



The hope is that once we have a working models of increasingly resilient local economies that are effectively addressing long-standing social problems in creative and compassionate ways and are reclaiming a truly local identity then we should have a better case for more empowered and resourced local government.

³⁹ http://www.ced.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/CED-Research-2014_online-v3.pdf

Questions to consider:

- Who do we know at a local and central government political level who we can encourage down this track?
- What resources can we develop to give to these people?
- Who is willing to pitch this and how?

Step 10: Inter-localism

Finally Shuman suggests a better way of forming global connections than simply through trade and competition:

A more responsible course for a globally minded community is to move toward local self-reliance, and to help other communities worldwide do likewise. How? By transferring innovations in technology and policy that foster self-reliance, especially to the poorest communities in the world that desperately need a new approach to sustainable development. (p196)

In fact it is in many of the poorer and more isolated countries where social enterprise and local resilience is happening - out of necessity - and we can learn from them. There is in Greece for instance:

...[a] movement of well over 400 citizen-run groups - food solidarity centres, social kitchens, cooperatives, "without middlemen" distribution networks for fresh produce, legal aid hubs, education classes - that has emerged in response to the near-collapse of Greece's welfare state, and has more than doubled in size in the past three years.⁴⁰

We are currently in serious trouble economically and socially in Northland. Commodity prices are falling, farmers are defaulting on debt, crime and violence is growing along with drug addiction and an overloaded and failing welfare and health systems. We are increasingly seeing third-world diseases emerging and beggars on our streets. These things are not disconnected.⁴¹

Our current economic policies have no real answers - only the spectre of our own brand of austerity and growing inequality. We cannot put all our hopes in trade in a world economy that is increasingly dysfunctional. However there are sound reasons to believe that if we do what is needed to get our own house in order - care for our own people - then perhaps we will also have learned some skills to help other communities.

However at our stage we can learn from those who have pioneered the recovery of community resilience, while coming up with our own uniquely Northland-style solutions. The resources are there through initiatives like **Transition Network**⁴², **Resilience.Org**⁴³, **Cooperative Futures**⁴⁴, **Local Futures**⁴⁵, Shuman's own **Cutting Edge Capital**⁴⁶, **BALLE**⁴⁷ and many more.



Final questions to consider:

- Who do we know in other communities in other parts of the world doing similar things?
- How can we more effectively network with these people?
- Can we host speakers from other parts of the world to help us develop along these lines?

⁴⁰ http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/23/greece-solidarity-movement-cooperatives-syriza?CMP=share_btn_fb

⁴¹ see for example Bruce K. Alexander, *The Globalisation Of Addiction: A Study In Poverty Of The Spirit*. (Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁴² <https://www.transitionnetwork.org/>

⁴³ <http://www.resilience.org/>

⁴⁴ <http://www.futures.coop/>

⁴⁵ <http://www.localfutures.org/>

⁴⁶ <http://www.cuttingedgecapital.com/>

⁴⁷ <https://bealocalist.org/>

- Who will do this work?
- Can we work together across a broad spectrum of stakeholders in a social-lab type setting to seriously make some progress in real working solutions?

Suggested reading:

Studies:

Hoffmann, Ulrich (ed). *Wake up Before It Is Too Late: Make Agriculture Truly Sustainable Now for Food Security in a Changing Climate* http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcted2012d3_en.pdf (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2013).

Jennings, Di. *Community Economic Development: Understanding the New Zealand Context*. http://www.ced.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/CED-Research-2014_online-v3.pdf (New Zealand Community Economic Development Trust, 2014).

Knuckey, S. Schoefisch, U. Leung-Wai, J. Hall, M. Sakalia, P. *Tai Tokerau Northland Regional Growth Study Opportunities Report*. <http://www.med.govt.nz/sectors-industries/regions-cities/research/regional-growth-studies/Tai%20Tokerau%20Regional%20Growth%20Study.pdf> (Ministry for Primary Industries, 2015)

Morrison, Malcolm (Approving Director). *Unlocking Potential: What does the Northland region need to improve its well-being?* <http://www.nrc.govt.nz/upload/7740/Item%2021%20Attachment%20-%20Growth%20Programme%20-%20Unlocking%20Potential.pdf> (Morrison Lowe - Report Commissioned by Northland Regional Council, 2010)

Price, Rangimarie. *He Tangata, He Whenua, Ho Oranga, An Economic Growth Strategy for the Taitokerau Maori Economy* http://www.terarawa.iwi.nz/uploads/7/4/6/3/7463762/growth_strategy_141214_final.pdf (Te Puna Kokiri, 2015)

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Alexander, Bruce K. *The Globalisation Of Addiction: A Study In Poverty Of The Spirit*. (Oxford University Press, 2008).

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Gleeson-White, Jane. *Six Capitals: The Revolution Capitalism Has to Have - or Can Accountants Save the Planet?* (Allan & Unwin, Australia, 2015).

Hassan, Zaid. *The Social Labs Revolution: a new approach to solving our most complex challenges*. (San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler, 2014).

Hopkins, Rob. *The Transition Handbook: From Oil Dependency to Local Resilience*. (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2008).

Shuman, Michael. *Going Local: Creating Self-Reliant Communities in a Global Age* (Routledge, 2000).

Shuman, Michael. *Local Dollars, Local Sense: How to Shift Your Money from Wall Street to Main Street and Achieve Real Prosperity*. (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2012)

Shuman, Michael. *The Local Economy Solution - How Innovative, Self-Financing "Pollinator" Enterprises Can Grow Jobs and Prosperity* (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2015)

From here:

To take this discussion further, please contact us through our website: localise.nz, our Facebook page www.facebook.com/localiseNZ or email me at clive@auditassistant.com

This is a discussion document, subject to your review. It is not copyright - feel free to pass on to those who may offer constructive input. We welcome diverse participation - the wider the discussion the more hope we have of coming up with sustainable consensus. I do not own this discussion on any way, but offer this as (I hope) a useful contribution to coming up with ideas for a positive future of our beloved Northland/ Tai Tokerau.