

Media Release

October 21, 2010

City's priorities put to leaders

Jobs, water security, leadership, community wellbeing and population growth have been listed as essential development priorities for Ballarat in a document circulated to key State and Commonwealth politicians.

The Committee for Ballarat is circulating the document in light of the coming State Election and the formation of a new Federal Government with regional development as a high priority.

Those to whom the document has been circulated include Premier John Brumby and State Opposition Leader Ted Baillieu, local State and Federal politicians; Gillard Government ministers Anthony Albanese (Infrastructure), Simon Crean (Regional Development), Tony Burke (Water) and their counterparts in the Coalition Greg Hunt, Senator Barnaby Joyce and Warren Truss.

Committee for Ballarat CEO Doug Lloyd said there could never be enough reinforcement in the minds of relevant political leaders of the pressing priorities facing Ballarat and the region.

“At the State level there are already indications of commitments in a number of these areas and the Committee welcomes that. The document we have circulated serves to reinforce the need for those commitments and expand on them.”

The document states:

- Ballarat's population will increase rapidly over coming decades. Attracting new jobs and businesses to Ballarat in numbers matching the increase is important for retaining liveability and economic wellbeing in the Ballarat region;
- There is compelling evidence that some existing community leadership programs are in serious decline for want of additional State support to match local community commitments in establishing and running programs;
- The region remains dependent on water supplies from contested out-of-region sources when additional, more sustainable and cost-efficient options remain available locally;
- Committee for Ballarat supports the development of a larger integrated sports, recreation and entertainment precinct in Ballarat's north to contribute to the wellbeing of regional community members;

- We believe population growth in sustainable ways provides net benefits, yet has some associated obligations related to effective planning and provision of services.

Dr Lloyd said the document contained details of outcomes the Committee believed could be achieved and measures which could be taken, including those to which the Committee would commit.

“We as a Committee would be remiss in our responsibility if we did not continually push our political leaders in this way,” Dr Lloyd said.

“This is the right time in the context of the national and State political environments and there are already signs that political leaders are responding.”

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