

## **Ballarat and its region's Development Priorities, 2010**

### ***Stimulating Regional Jobs Growth***

*Rationale:* 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. Job numbers need to grow faster than this to reduce inappropriately high unemployment and catch-up for jobs lost during the global financial crisis. Jobs growth should lead population growth so that new and expanding business and enterprises will have the best suited staff for their future prosperity. Committee for Ballarat's *Ten thousand jobs in ten years* elaborates these issues. Manufacturing is a key sector of our diversified economy and requires urgent assistance through an industry innovation fund. The Ballarat West Link Road will catalyse the Ballarat West Employment Zone (BWEZ) in the airport precinct. BWEZ will trigger an important new wave of business and jobs growth. Establishment of a freight village as an anchor tenant in BWEZ will stimulate a sustainable operating environment for many new or expanding businesses.

#### *Outcomes required:*

- 1 The State commits to funding the construction of the Ballarat Western Link Road. VicRoads and the City of Ballarat will work to ensure completion of stage 1, the Western Freeway to Remembrance Drive, within 3 years;
- 2 The State releases the land for stage 1 of BWEZ. Vic Urban and the City of Ballarat immediately commence development of stage 1.
- 3 The State creates an industry innovation fund for Ballarat's manufacturing sector.
- 4 The State undertakes to release the balance of land for BWEZ within 2 years.
- 5 The City of Ballarat acts to find a development partner for the Freight Village.
- 6 City of Ballarat, Committee for Ballarat and other business partners work collaboratively to populate stage 1 of BWEZ as a high priority.

### ***Supporting Community Leadership Programs***

Every region in Victoria has a pressing need for a Community Leadership program to help secure leadership succession, collaboration across leadership groups, and build regional community capacity. 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. Other regions need a program, or have one that is at risk of decline in the foreseeable future. Graduates from the programs contribute to community organisations at greatly elevated levels and higher quality as a result of their participation. The programs provide a very high return for additional government investment. Additional State government support is needed urgently now.

#### *Outcomes required:*

- 1 The State commits to ongoing funding for community leadership programs across Victoria, based on the delivery of agreed community capacity building achievements. The level of funding is commensurate with agreed need and value, and not greater than the contributions from regional sources.
- 2 Existing community leadership programs undertake to work together under the auspices of Community Leadership Australia to support each other and emerging programs to ensure viability, State-wide coordination and sustainability.

### ***Securing our future water supply and use***

Significant gains have been made in the region for more sustainable water harvesting, use and reuse, including with welcome support from the State and federal governments. The region remains dependent on water supplies from contested out-of-region sources when additional, more sustainable and cost-efficient options remain available locally. Strong evidence exists for longer-term significant reductions in our rainfall and water yields as a result of changes to our climate. The realisation of more sustainable practices is hampered by regulatory complexities and policy impediments. Additional State and federal funding for stage 2 of storm water harvesting for Ballarat, and return of the yields to potable supplies, have been delayed by regulatory complexities. Additional use of recycled water for potable substitution is hampered by disincentives in cost structures and policies. Community debate on, and potential trialling of indirect potable reuse through demonstration plants are inhibited by short-term perceptions of need and policy impediments.

#### ***Outcomes required:***

- 1 The State commits to working urgently with proponents to have positive, coordinated discussion between stakeholders to overcome impediments to additional storm water harvesting for Ballarat, as described in phase 2 of the City of Ballarat & joint proposal.
- 2 The State undertakes to fundamentally review the cost and regulatory structures for potable substitution supplies so as to significantly elevate their use in the near future.
- 3 The State agrees to investigate with Committee for Ballarat ways in which community debates on a localised trial for indirect potable reuse can be facilitated.
- 4 The Committee for Ballarat undertakes to work with the City of Ballarat, and State and federal stakeholders to work urgently to resolve these priorities.

### ***Eureka Recreation/Sports Precinct***

Committee for Ballarat supports the development of a larger integrated sports, recreation and entertainment precinct in Ballarat & north. Its enhancement will provide an opportunity for people across the region to facilitate their wellbeing and achieve enhanced liveability and lifestyle aspirations. Priorities for a larger precinct will include a focus on whole-of-community health and wellbeing, social inclusion, and a positive embracing agenda for youth.

#### ***Outcomes required:***

- 1 The State commits to funding additional developments at the Eureka Stadium and neighbouring precinct for the purposes described.
- 2 Committee for Ballarat commits to working with regional stakeholders to help achieve the outcomes described.

### ***Population Growth for Ballarat and the region***

Committee for Ballarat supports the proposition that rapid imminent population growth is likely, if not inevitable for Ballarat. Our view is that population growth is likely to exceed that projected by Victoria In Future 2008, perhaps by a significant margin. We believe population growth in sustainable ways provides net benefits, yet has some associated obligations related to effective planning and provision of services. Committee for Ballarat is committed to making contributions to the effective planning required.

#### ***Outcomes required:***

- 1 The State commits to supporting the preparation for Ballarat & growth, partly as described above, and additionally through the provision of other integrated services and facilities for Ballarat and the region.
- 2 Committee for Ballarat undertakes to work with the City, regional shires and the State Government in planning for the provision of appropriate services and facilities.