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A good step towards sustainable water systems

Committee for Ballarat Chair, Tony Chew has welcomed the pledge from the Coalition for a \$1m feasibility study for Ballarat to establish an Integrated Water Cycle Management framework across the City, as a first for regional Victoria.

This is an important small step towards gaining agreements on how we can use storm water and waste water, initially for a series of potable water substitutions throughout Ballarat+ Mr Chew, said. This complements the work that Committee for Ballarat has been doing for some years to future-proof water the capture, use and re-use of water in Ballarat and the region through its Secure, Sustainable Water project+

Committee has previously lobbied strongly for the Ballarat leg of the Goldfields Superpipe. It was, at the time, the only realistic way of averting a major crisis in the summer of 2008-9 when Ballarat would otherwise run out of water.

Committee for Ballarat has more recently initiated, and subsequently partnered with the City of Ballarat in a successful storm water harvesting project. This was funded by the City, State and Federal Governments to a total of \$4.8m.

Storm water harvesting infrastructure funded through this joint Committee and City project is being progressively rolled out across Ballarat, and the water harvested is being used to restore water levels in Lake Wendouree. It is then available for a series of community uses, including recreation and watering the city's botanic gardens.

We hope that this will quickly lead to a wider recognition of the value of water for our residential business, recreational and environmental systems+ Mr Chew said. We expect it will eventually lead to an understanding and acceptance that we will soon need to undertake equivalent feasibility studies and community consultation of safe ways to return recycled water to potable supplies.

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