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PRESS RELEASE

Committee for Ballarat Spreads it's Wings

The Committee for Ballarat is pleased to welcome it's newest local government member, Ararat Rural City Council. The Committee now boasts a formidable region encompassing the City of Ballarat, Moorabool Shire Council, Golden Plains Shire, Pyrenees Shire and Hepburn Shire. The Committee for Ballarat, Chair, Mr Noel Coxall said that "the Committee for Ballarat is committed to strengthening the entire region and have been delighted with the response from the regions councils who have shown an interest in two of the Committee's leading projects - the efforts in lobbying government for a commitment to the Deer Park By-Pass and also Leadership – Ballarat and Western Region program that is due to commence in 2006."

Chief Executive Officer of the Ararat Rural City Council Mr Bill Braithwaite said that "Council sees a very strong linkage to the Central Highlands Region and Ballarat, and it is logical that we work together on projects of common interest."

"Each of the shires and the City of Ballarat will gain economically out of the commitment and completion of the Deer Park By-Pass." Mr Coxall said. Significant lobbying by the Committee for Ballarat over the past two months in relation to the Deer Park By-Pass has proved to be rewarding. The Committee has been able to secure guarantees from both the Premier of Victoria, Steve Bracks and also Leader of the Opposition, Robert Doyle, that the Deer Park By-Pass is both parties No 1 National Road Infrastructure Priority in Victoria. Further, the Committee was able to secure an assurance from the Premier that he would bring forward his government's 20% funding commitment to help fast track the project.

The Committee for Ballarat are currently focusing on leveraging a full commitment from the Federal government and has sought an urgent meeting with the Federal Treasurer, the Hon Peter Costello, to strongly put the case for the Federal Government to fully commit to the project and bring the completion timeframe forward.

Another project that will benefit the economic and community development of the entire region is the Leadership – Ballarat and Western Region program. The Committee for Ballarat is determined to launch the LBWR program for emerging leaders in the Ballarat and Western region in 2006. The Project has endorsement and financial support of the region's six Local Government areas - Ararat, Ballarat, Golden Plains, Hepburn, Pyrenees and Moorabool. Offers of funding support and contra services have also been received from the Ballarat Courier, the Hugh Williamson Foundation Trust, Telstra, Victorian Securities, BEST Community Development, BRACE and Parks Victoria.

Funding applications have been made by the Committee to the Victorian and Federal Governments to help secure three year underpinning funding support for the project. To enable a 2006 start, the Committee has proceeded to advertise the position of Executive Officer of LBWR with an appointment likely in early mid October.



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- Further Information -

Committee for Ballarat

The Committee for Ballarat has been adapted from the best of the Committee for Melbourne & the Committee for Geelong in its structure. However the Committee for Ballarat has a unique Ballarat blend of Project Specific Objectives (PSO)

The Committee for Ballarat aims to transform the city in a positive, strategic and consultative way that is beneficial for the entire community, and where appropriate drawing on the Ballarat 2030 Blue Print document.

The Committee for Ballarat will focus on the big picture, challenge traditional and restrictive thinking, and champion issues to make Ballarat more successful.

Project Specific Objectives

Are major projects to be undertaken that are tangible, definable, measurable and achievable that will benefit Ballarat and region. Already there has been a number of PSOs suggested as possible projects for the Committee for Ballarat to consider. Once decided these will be driven by the Executive Director, and supported by a task force group.

Membership

The Committee for Ballarat requires a broad and active membership base to support its functionality and initiatives.

We have received a tremendous response with all sectors of the community embracing the model, clearly seeing the big picture issues that need to be addressed to make Ballarat and the surrounding region even more prosperous. Members realise that their commitment to Committee for Ballarat is not just good for their business but a contribution and investment in Ballarat's future.

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