

## Room For A View

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The Committee for Ballarat has just finalised a set of project priorities from issues that have been put forward by its members.

Already there are two clear imperatives – firstly, Ballarat cannot reach its full potential unless we have a secure and sustainable water supply and secondly we must provide an environment that attracts economic activity which is innovative and matched to the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century markets.

The first imperative was reinforced by everyone who attended the Summit in April this year and slowly but surely the people of Ballarat are coming to realise that we cannot rely only on the Goldfields Superpipe to meet our medium to long term water needs.

The combined impact of climate change and population growth will diminish supply and increase demand respectively, so that is why the Committee for Ballarat, in close cooperation with the City of Ballarat has submitted a funding proposal to the Federal government for a stormwater project that if successful will augment Ballarat's water supply significantly. However we cannot rest there.

As climate change bites even deeper into water availability from our river systems, we need to embrace the certainty that in the not too distant future, many cities like Ballarat will need to recycle their waste water in order to have a secure and sustainable water supply.

On the second imperative, the Committee for Ballarat believes that economic prosperity is the key driver behind the health and vibrancy of any city. The turbulent economic times we are in at the moment make it difficult for the population at large to always be positive.

Yet it is exactly at this time that we should be focussing on the once-in-a-lifetime opportunities that have arisen. And Ballarat is ideally placed to make the most of those opportunities. The City of Ballarat shares this optimism and is working closely with the Committee for Ballarat on developing a large part of Ballarat's western area into an economic engine-room that will transform Ballarat forever.

The benefits also will reach widely and deeply across our region, and have positive impacts on the State and nation. Both State and Federal governments are anxious to maintain whatever momentum has been built up with the recent stimulus packages so the timing is perfect to fast-track this major development with the aid of further government finance.

As Melbourne struggles to accommodate its rapidly growing population, a well-planned and executed development in Ballarat West can help to alleviate that stress by providing jobs in new innovative industries which are complemented by sustainable housing development.

It is a project that will set a new benchmark in the way cities can develop. What makes it particularly exciting is the combined will and resources of the Committee for Ballarat is teamed with an energised and enthusiastic City Council to ensure this project has the best chance of success.