

**MEDIA RELEASE: 13 June 2013**



## **Committee Backs Major Infrastructure Projects**

Committee for Ballarat representatives visited Canberra last week to meet with key Government Ministers, Advisors and Shadow Ministers; seeking Federal funding to back four major projects that will drive sustainable business growth, employment opportunities and economic stimulus into our region.

Funding commitments sought as part of Committees advocacy and lobbying included:

- \$25m for completion of stage 1 of the Major Events & Sports precinct (stage 1 est. circa \$50m).
- \$9.13m (announced in May for 2014 Federal Budget) to enable infrastructure head-works to be completed to deliver the \$17.7m Ballarat Intermodal Freight Hub (BWEZ Precinct)
- \$18.7m in the form of a direct grant to the City of Ballarat to develop a Bio-Energy Co-generation plant to convert organic waste to energy (BWEZ Precinct)
- \$10m in the form of a direct grant to the City of Ballarat to develop and manage an emerging Bio-Technology Innovation centre with the Victorian Centre of Advanced Manufacturing Materials (VCAMM)

"We received an excellent hearing from all sides of politics in the lead up to the Federal election in September", stated Committee Chair, Judy Verlin. "The Ballarat West Employment Zone remains a key focus for our work and our objective is to advocate for a manufacturing and transport hub for Regional Victoria that provides unrivalled transport access (road, rail, & air) embracing innovative technologies that will deliver sustainable employment and long-term growth", said Verlin.

Committee CEO, John Kilgour, stated "the Major Events & Sports Precinct is being positioned as an iconic project for Ballarat and the greater region. Whilst the City of Ballarat has this project in scope for Master Planning in its 2013/17 strategic plan, Committee is advocating earlier funding, activation and development of the precinct. Major exhibitions, cultural and sporting events can attract up to \$2m of economic stimulus per event and support our growing hospitality, arts, education, sports and tourism sectors" Kilgour said.

The Committee for Ballarat acknowledged the role all tiers of Government (Federal, State & Local) plays in delivering funding for key infrastructure projects. Whilst supportive of Council's objective to implement a \$230m futures fund, Kilgour added, "the City of Ballarat needs to be cognisant the impact its proposed rate changes to service this fund will have on local businesses in the short term and consider implementing an appropriate review mechanism. It is critical that we have a pro-active business environment for industry to invest, develop and grow; creating sustainable jobs into the future".

**ENDS:**

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*The Committee for Ballarat is a visionary membership body that provides progressive and innovative leadership, enabling long-term social and economic benefits for an improved quality of life throughout Ballarat and the greater region.*

For further information refer: [http://www.committeeforballarat.com/news/election\\_strategy](http://www.committeeforballarat.com/news/election_strategy)