

MEDIA ALERT & RELEASE: Tuesday, 11th March 2014

EMBARGO UNTIL THURSDAY, 13th MARCH 2014



**ADVANCING BALLARAT & WESTERN REGION
“Preparing for Growth”**

The Committee for Ballarat is advocating for State Government funding covering key projects that will stimulate the local economy and grow jobs in the lead-up to the State election.

Committee launched its' Strategic Action Plan last September, to provide a key focus for their work over the next 5 year period. Committee Chair, Judy Verlin, stated, “the Ballarat West Employment Zone (BWEZ) is the priority project. It is up to Government to act today and show strength in leadership to deliver major infrastructure investment that will *future proof* our city and region from projected population growth by providing long term sustainable employment”. The BWEZ precinct will deliver up to 9,200 jobs and \$5bn of economic output each year when fully activated. “We must grow jobs and the legacy we leave for future generations is in our hands by the actions and decisions we make today”, Verlin said.

\$15.9m of State funding is being sought to support activation of the BWEZ precinct through completion of headworks, including major roads within in the initial stages of the planned BWEZ development. This investment will support the attraction of business to the BWEZ precinct and enable further funding commitments to be made towards the establishment of a Bio-Technology Innovation Centre, a Waste to Energy facility, freight and logistics hub and an Emergency Services hub at Ballarat Airport”. Verlin further added, “all these projects within the BWEZ precinct will require a mix of local, state and private funding and it is critical that we position these now with both sides of politics”.

Committee for Ballarat CEO, John Kilgour, stated, “revitalising the CBD area through redevelopment of the Ballarat Railway Station precinct, attracting the relocation of a State Government Department to Ballarat, improving our road and rail connectivity within the region, supporting the development of our health and education precincts, developing emerging leaders within our growing community, and creating a world class major sports and entertainment precinct at Eureka, continues to remain a key focus for our work in the lead up to the State election”.

ENDS:

For further information, please contact: John Kilgour, CEO, Committee for Ballarat, ph: 5332 1240 / mobile 0421 342 398, or view specific projects at www.committeeforballarat.com (refer attached document)

