

Business Connect

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Winter Edition 2010

Blueprint for Latrobe City and Gippsland

Latrobe City and Gippsland are set to share in the Victorian Government's \$631 million Ready for Tomorrow: A Blueprint for Regional and Rural Victoria.

The Blueprint for Gippsland includes, \$75 million dedicated through the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund to help improve and build new TAFE and university infrastructure such as student accommodation designed to provide a local tertiary education choice for regional students.

Included in the blueprint are more jobs for Moe as part of the Government's commitment to decentralising government jobs to regional Victoria.



A Regional Growth for the Future Strategy which ensures growth in regional centres that will support the development of a comprehensive land use and urban plan for Latrobe City.

The region will also benefit from \$99.4 million towards a new action plan to boost regional industries to help small businesses, create new jobs through investment attraction and support tourism operators.

A copy of the blueprint can be obtained from www.rdv.vic.gov.au/about-us/blueprint

Wellington Shire mayor Cr Scott Rossetti, Jacinta Allan Minister for Regional & Rural Development and Latrobe City mayor Cr Kellie O'Callaghan.

Latrobe City business survey reveals hope for positive sales growth

Latrobe City Council has recently undertaken the 2010 Latrobe City Council Employment and Industry Survey.

The survey aimed to find out about local industry and employment conditions. Surveys were sent to businesses throughout Latrobe City and 565 businesses volunteered to participate in the study.

Latrobe City mayor, Councillor Kellie O'Callaghan said that the survey results highlighted a number of trends and issues impacting on doing business within the municipality.

"Essentially this is good news for the Latrobe economy. Businesses have reported positive expectations for sales growth in 2009/10 across most industries. Capital investment is being planned by local businesses, with 20 per cent reporting

investment intentions within two years, with a planned capital investment of \$85 million," Cr O'Callaghan said.

Latrobe City Council's general manager economic sustainability, Allison Jones, said that survey participants were also asked about the types of information that would assist them in operating their businesses.

"In particular, businesses asked for more information on marketing, government assistance programs, contracts and tendering, staff recruitment and business planning.

We will now use this information to shape the services that we offer to the small business sector," Ms Jones explained.

The survey final report is available on the Latrobe City Council website www.latrobe.vic.gov.au

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The first International Symposium on the Sustainable Use of Low-Rank Coal

The first International Symposium on the Sustainable Use of Low-Rank Coal was held in April, in Melbourne. A major theme of the symposium was how the resource can be used in an efficient and environmentally sensitive manner.

Challenges faced by the energy industry are not unique to the brown coal industry in Victoria, and that was emphasised as firms from more than a dozen countries provided insights into the issues and solutions proposed for use of brown coal.

One of those issues is carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and their impact on climate, and a significant part of the conference focused on options for brown coal and how the emissions can be managed.

Development of alternatives like carbon capture and storage (CCS) are already

under development around the world, and many of the technology, policy and financial barriers to adoption were discussed, along with strategies and options for solutions.

Other areas, such as CO₂ use for algae production, and coal use for chemicals or other products, were also covered.

Technical presentations and panel discussions promoted interactive dialogue, and the format provided a good forum. The insights from the discussions on drying to gain efficiency and decrease emissions and costs of power generation, were especially useful. The unique capability of the Victorian area as a potential storage area for CO₂ and the range of product possibilities, in addition to power, from brown coal also came out strongly.

A number of organisations, including the Electric Power Research Institute, volunteered to continue to support this international symposium, ensuring it is the start of an ongoing international effort to reinforce collaboration, effective knowledge sharing and insight.



Delegates at the first International Symposium

New land becomes available

Land will be released for potential residential development at Newborough following a significant assessment by Clean Coal Victoria (CCV), Energy and Resources Minister Peter Batchelor announced recently.

"Clean Coal Victoria (CCV) was established to help unlock the value of Victoria's coal resource in an environmentally-sustainable way that considers the interests of communities", Mr Batchelor said.

CCV began work in 2009 to assess the Latrobe Valley coal resource to make more informed long-term planning decisions, and ensure houses and other community infrastructure are situated in the right place while protecting areas for coal development.

CCV's first land-use investigation found it was not economically viable to mine and

process the coal at Newborough, west of the Yallourn mine, for power generation now or in the future.

This decision will allow the land to be considered for other uses, such as housing, in the future. Mr Batchelor said CCV drilling at Newborough led to a better understanding of where the coal was.

"By drilling, CCV found there was plenty of coal to the east of the Yallourn mine but to the west, the seam dwindles to nothing," he said.

CCV also found the quality of the coal resource to be low, making the area at least seven times more costly to mine than elsewhere in Latrobe Valley.

The land will need to be rezoned and this process, in consultation with the community and council, will now begin.



Additional drilling to support land-use decisions will be undertaken by CCV in various locations across Latrobe Valley over the next two years.

Moe Rail Precinct Revitalisation Project

Architectural Consultants Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp have been appointed to undertake the design and detailed documentation of the Moe Rail Precinct Revitalisation Project.

The Moe Rail Precinct Revitalisation Project is an exciting project to enhance the Moe central business district through attractive and functional development north and south of the railway line.

It encompasses the area between the Anzac Street and Saviges Road roundabouts, and the Moore Street shared zone to the Albert Street roundabout in Moe.

Latrobe City mayor, Cr Kellie O'Callaghan, said the detailed design stage of the project, which would now be undertaken, would build on the features and functions identified in the masterplan adopted by council in December 2009, and provide the specifications required for project

commencement, subject to funding.

"Detailed plans will be drawn up for the community hub building which will comprise a new Moe library, council services, galleria / lobby, internet café, community meeting rooms and spaces, and a future pedestrian bridge to the station.

Other elements of the design will be a high quality public open space or 'city square' defined by the community hub building to the west and the pavilion to the east; a youth-focussed recreation space, landscaping, car parking, taxi rank and transport interchange.

"The appointment of the architectural consultants to undertake the design and detailed documentation of the Moe Rail Precinct, marks another exciting stage of the revitalisation of towns across the municipality consistent with the principles of Transit Cities," Cr O'Callaghan said.

On completion of the detailed design and tender documentation, tenders will be advertised for the construction of the elements of the master plan, subject to the staging plan and availability of funding.

The detailed design stage of the project will build on the features and functions identified in the masterplan.



Indicative drawing

Chinese journalists tour Latrobe City

Shanghai, China is currently hosting the World Expo, bringing together over 170 nations, with over 40 international organisations participating. The Expo is taking place from 1 May to 31 October 2010. Visitor numbers are expected to exceed 70 million.

The business development unit of Latrobe City Council recently hosted a delegation of Chinese journalists, as they toured Victoria, in previewing what Victoria will be featuring at the Shanghai Expo.

The theme for Australia's pavilion at the Expo will be 'Better City, Better Life,' which will aim to promote Australia's strong and vibrant economy, commitment to sustainable development, technological expertise and innovation.

The five visiting journalists were from the Oriental Morning Post, Shanghai Morning Post, The Bund, Xinhua News Agency and the Xinmin Evening News. Along with Ingrid Sanders, communications manager



Chinese journalists at Latrobe Regional Airport.

- Shanghai Expo from the Department of Innovation, Industry & Regional Development, and the delegation toured the Gippsland Campus of Monash University. They also took a flight over Latrobe City in a locally built GAB Airvan, which provided a bird's eye view of the municipality. The day was completed with a tour of Loy Yang Power mine and power station.

National Foods recently announced its plan to upgrade the Morwell manufacturing operations

Reaffirming Gippsland's competitive advantages, the decision follows an extensive review of the dairy operations following National Foods' acquisition of the Dairy Farmers business in November 2008

The future plans involve a \$55 million investment in upgrading the Morwell yogurt and dairy foods facility site, in order to accommodate additional volume.

National Foods Operations Director, Arthur Murphy said: "the announcement is about ensuring we remain a sustainable and viable operator in the dairy foods market today and in the future."

The Morwell site has been identified as an integral part in the company's future and this announcement reinforces the capability of Latrobe City as a municipality to establish and retain such multinational organisations.



Peoples Choice Awards



Traralgon Vineyard was the location for the inaugural Latrobe City Business Tourism Association's People's Choice Awards 2010 Gala Evening. The awards were held on 30 April, and over 170 people enjoyed the evening.

The finalists and winners were presented with awards on the night.

Winners in each category were:

Best Tourism Attraction

Old Gippsstown Moe

Best Dining Experience

Claudia's Café Morwell

Best Accommodation Experience

Century Inn, Traralgon

Best Small Business or Retail Experience

Churchill Cutting Corner

Best Community Event

Boolarra Folk Festival

Best Experience in the Walhalla Mountain Rivers area

Walhalla Museum

Champion of Champions Latrobe City Business with the most votes

Old Gippsstown

Recognising those businesses in Latrobe City which have been voted by their customers for outstanding service, the awards were sponsored by Regional Development Victoria, School of Business and Economics Monash University - Gippsland, Gippsland Trade Printers, Destination Gippsland, GippsTAFE - Waratah Restaurant, Latrobe City Council, Narkoojee Winery, Traralgon Vineyard, and ACE Radio.

Ian Southall, chair of the Latrobe City Business Tourism Association said "the response from the local community and visitors has been fantastic with in excess of 200 businesses receiving votes from their customers.

Ian commented that "the value of customer service is crucial, and it is important to recognise and reward businesses for their

contribution in this area. Creating positive experiences for locals and visitors is vital to the economic sustainability of business and tourism in the Latrobe Valley."

Guest speaker Tom Smith, Regional Tourism Advisor to Tourism Victoria congratulated the Latrobe City Business Tourism Association on its continued development and encouraged businesses to support its activities.



Latrobe City mayor Kellie O'Callaghan with Champion of Champions winners from Old Gippsstown and Ian Southall from LCBTA (far right)

Events in Latrobe

Latrobe City was the place to be during the long weekend in June with plenty of high profile sporting events taking place such as the Victorian Inline Hockey Championships in Moe, the Victorian Volleyball Country Championships in Newborough, the Victorian Darts Championships in Morwell and the Annual Sauna Sail at Hazelwood pondage.

The Victorian Inline Hockey Championships saw the cream of the crop in Inline Hockey head to Stadium 34 in Moe with over 50 teams from all around Victoria entered the competition and over 300 players participating in the championships in junior, senior and women's divisions to determine the best overall club in the state.

Stadium 34's capacity to successfully host this tournament will see this event here again in 2011. The Victorian Volleyball Country Championships were held in the newly renovated Latrobe Leisure Moe Newborough volleyball courts, with 22 teams entered

from across country Victoria to battle it out for top spot.

The Victorian Darts open competition had some of the best players from Latrobe Valley and all corners of Australia competing at the magnificent Italian Australian Club facility, in Morwell.

In contrast to the sheltered warm environment of the indoor events, 187 boats braved the cold temperatures to compete in the annual Latrobe City Sauna Sail held at Hazelwood Pondage.

This annual sailing regatta is a significant event on the Victorian sailing calendar for 'off beach' classes and has been running since the mid 1960s.

Five races were held over the three days with sailors coming from all over Victoria and interstate to sail in the fog on the warm waters of this unique venue. The event was a great success with sailors already lining up for next years' event. All in all, a fantastic weekend of competition for all competitors and spectators to be involved in. Latrobe

Valley delivered again in the diversity of high level sporting events.

Upcoming event

30 & 31 July 2010

Tour of Gippsland Stage 4 and 5

The Lakes Oil Tour of Gippsland, first held in 2005, is regarded as the 'breeding ground' for future Australian international team members and Tour de France riders. Stage 4 and 5 of the race will be held in Latrobe City.



Business Feature Faeries with Attitude

According to Rhonda Hunt, the creator of Faeries with Attitude, "after attending a polymer clay doll making workshop several years ago, I became hooked on working in this medium."

Experienced in many different crafts, including embroidery, patchwork, felting, quilting, lead-lighting, sewing, scrap booking, decoupage and cloth doll making, Rhonda is now turning her new found love for clay, into her full time work.

After initially just making faeries, her work now includes pirates, elves, Elizabethan ladies, Santa and many more. Having exhibited at many local art fairs, including the Tyers Art show, Rhonda was the recipient of the "Highly Commended" award in both 2007 and 2008.

Her interest lays within the mythical and



mystical aspects that can be portrayed in both the polymer clay creations and the Paverpol sculptures. Successfully completing a Paverpol Accredited Workshop



Instructor training course, Rhonda takes great satisfaction in seeing the wonderful sculptures completed by her students.

After many years in the disability and community services sector, Rhonda decided that it was time for a change and she is pursuing her passion for art and craft.

She says, "I started this business after looking for something to complement the work I was doing with Polymer clay, making

faeries, elves etc, after deciding I needed a change in what I was doing for a while."

Teaching throughout Gippsland at various Neighbourhood Houses, Community Centres and Art galleries and from her studio in Churchill,

Rhonda says that "the challenge of getting your own business up and running has can be a roller-coaster of emotion."

Although, since October last year, she feels that she has turned the corner, and has been recently approached by two galleries to provide them with work on an on-going basis - Studio 41 at Mornington and "B'Zarte - A gallery of fine Things" opening at Jindivick.

For further information visit the website www.faerieswithattitude.com.au



Freight opportunities for Latrobe

The Victorian Freight and Logistics Council's (VFLC) push to learn more about the state of regional Victoria's freight infrastructure requirements and vision, culminated with a sitting of their regional meeting, in Latrobe City in April of this year.

The role of the VFLC is to provide advice to governments on the development, planning, regulation and operation of freight and logistics transport, infrastructure and services in Victoria within the context of the overall national and federal scene.

VFLC Chairman Mr John Begley, said "the opportunity to hold the regional meeting in Latrobe City, has enabled our members to

hear first hand, the vision for the municipality and Gippsland, in terms of freight infrastructure needs and direction."

Overviews of the proposed Gippsland Logistics Precinct earmarked for Morwell and the Gippsland Freight Action Plan, were provided by Latrobe City Council and the Department of Transport.

Local business representatives with a strong focus on the transport of freight, were invited to join the members of the VFLC for a networking session, which provided an excellent opportunity for the respective stakeholders to discuss their grass roots freight and logistics issues.

Consuls General tour Latrobe City

In March, Latrobe City Council hosted a tour of career Consuls General (CG) organised by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Countries represented included China, Oman, Malta, Turkey, Germany, Indonesia, Chile, Croatia, Lebanon, Egypt, El Salvador and Greece.

The State Director, Mr Fisher, of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said "the purpose of the visit was to give the CG's a better knowledge of Latrobe City, which is a significant contributor to the national economy."

The delegation visited HRL's pilot plant, Loy Yang Power, Australian Paper and GippsAero. In addition to the site visits, the group also attended a dinner hosted by the mayor, and had a fly-over of the municipality in a GippsAero GA8 aircraft.

Latrobe City Council mayor, Councillor Kellie O'Callaghan said "It was an honour to have such a prestigious group visit Latrobe City."

Sage Technology signs Joint Venture agreement with Viatek

Latrobe based firm Sage Technology has recently signed a Joint Venture (JV) agreement with Viatek, a leading managed print services and managed telecommunications firm with a presence in regional Victoria and New South Wales.

The deal will enable Sage to market their technical support and managed services offerings beyond Gippsland and into New South Wales.

Sage Technology Managing Director, Lynda Bertoli, said "The creation of Viatek Sage IT

Services will enable us to manage the IT infrastructure for new clients, in new regions. In addition, the joint venture will enable Sage to deliver a broader service offering to existing customers".

The joint venture matches the technical expertise of Sage, with the sales and marketing ability of Viatek, and is part of a growth strategy for Sage Technology, who have offered IT managed services and software development services to the Gippsland region for 20 years.



Sage Technology will continue as a software development company with a strong focus on the ongoing development of its range of safe working software systems.

Ms Bertoli will be Managing Director of both businesses, Viatek Sage IT Services and Sage Technology, which will operate from Sage's current head office in Morwell.

For further information visit www.sagetechnology.com.au

You are invited to ICN's



Major Projects Forum 2010

Do you want to find out how you can become involved in Victoria's major projects?

Register now to attend ICN's Major Projects Forum 2010 - a full day event focusing on business opportunities with Victoria's largest projects to be held on Tuesday, 3 August.

The full day event will provide you with the opportunity to learn about Victoria's current and upcoming major public and private projects and how your business can access the opportunities they present.

Presentations will be followed by a three - course sit down lunch and an afternoon networking with key project representatives and industry colleagues.

Date: Tuesday 3, August 2010

Time: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
(register from 7:45 am)

Location: Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

Cost: \$150 per head plus GST, includes morning tea and a three course lunch.

RSVP: Register your attendance at www.lcnvic.org.au

For more information or to register your attendance visit www.lcnvic.org.au or call (03) 8689 2500

Mobile Business Centre coming to Morwell

The newly established Mobile Business Centre will be visiting and stopping in Morwell on Thursday 26 August 2010. Announcing the itinerary for the Mobile Business Centre, Small Business Minister Joe Helper encouraged businesses to take advantage of what the centre had to offer.

"There are 150,000 small businesses located in regional and rural Victoria, many of which don't have easy access to one of

the Government's eight Victorian Business Centres," Mr Helper said.

"So we are taking action to bring the Victorian Business Centre to them in the form of a Mobile Business Centre. "On board the Mobile Business Centre are experienced business mentors with diverse backgrounds in accounting, banking, marketing, sales, finance, manufacturing, retailing, franchising, tourism, PR, exporting and more.

"Small business mentors are selected for their business experience, people skills and passion for helping small businesses succeed. "They will listen to small businesses, provide clarity on issues and share information based on first-hand experience."

In addition to small business Mentors, the Mobile Business Centre will also offer access to the Big Help for Small Business guide, as well as Business Victoria Online and other information and resources needed by businesses.

For bookings, visits www.business.vic.gov.au

Small Business Minister Joe Helper in front of the Mobile Business Centre, which will be coming to Morwell.



New bushfire rebuilding project

A special project to rebuild environmental and community infrastructure destroyed or damaged in the 2009 bushfires is about to start, as part of a Community Jobs Project in the Latrobe Valley.

A steering committee for the Latrobe Bushfire Recovery Community Jobs Project has just met for the first time, with workforce management positions now appointed and in place.

The project is being run by GippsTAFE, with the aim to undertake renewal works on areas at Yinnar, Boolarra, Callignee and Traralgon South that were impacted by the bushfires. More than 30 people will work on the project, including 14 trainees in various disciplines, while some upskilling will also be provided to other members of the workforce as required.

GippsTAFE's Morwell Campus Manager, John Cargill, who is convenor of the project, said it had been made possible after GippsTAFE obtained funding through the Australian Government's Jobs Fund Program.

"There is still a lot of work that needs to be done to address the environmental and infrastructure damage suffered during

the Black Saturday fires and the fires in late January 2009," Mr Cargill said. "This project, as well as providing the necessary resources to tackle these works, provide an excellent opportunity for individuals to undertake a traineeship in a number of different areas and help build our local skill base."

GippsTAFE have so far appointed a project manager, three works supervisors, a training coordinator and administration officer.

Applications closed for other positions on the 7 June 2010.

The steering committee includes representatives from GippsTAFE, Latrobe City Council, Department of Sustainability of Environment, Berry Street Inc, and the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority.

"Because it is part of the Bushfire Recovery effort, we have also received excellent support from various groups, such as ProRent, which has supplied the equipment we need at a discounted rate as a community contribution," Mr Cargill added.

The overall project runs until the end of June 2011.



Photo Caption: The Latrobe Bushfire Recovery steering committee comes together to discuss the Community Jobs Project. Back (from left) Rachael Quinlan, David Henderson, Deb Brown, John Cargill, Phil Thompson; front (from left) Larrisa Walker, Cath Peterson, Debbie Shaw.

Building industry green guide



Victoria's construction and building industry will be encouraged to take practical steps to recycle and reduce waste.

Industrial Relations Minister Martin Pakula said the "Practical Guide to Reducing Waste on Building and Construction Sites" was a useful tool for the building industry with detailed tips and case studies designed to assist industry players.

Based on research commissioned by the Building Industry Consultative Council, undertaken by consultants Business Outlook & Evaluation, the research found about 80 per cent of waste was being recycled on larger building sites, but great potential existed on smaller sites to promote the benefits of diverting often saleable waste such as concrete from landfill.

"Diverting waste from landfill can also reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the breakdown of wood, paper and organic material," Mr Pakula said.

The guide's key catchphrase to all builders and sub-contractors is: remember the 3 R's – Reduce; Re-use; Recycle, and the key message is: waste minimisation and recycling pays.

A copy of the guide can be obtained from www.business.vic.gov.au

Employment figures



The latest figures from the Small Area Labour Markets, March quarter, reveals that the unemployment rate for Latrobe City is sitting at 6.6%

This compares to the average for regional Victoria, Victoria and Australia, which are all currently at 5.6% This is a slight rise from the previous December 2009 quarter, which showed that the unemployment rate for Latrobe City was 6.2%

Building stat's



Figures for the July 2009 to April 2010 period in terms of domestic building works within Latrobe City have reached \$133.5 million.

With one month left in the reporting calendar, these figures are already 25% up on the 2008/2009 period (\$106.9 million).

Residential Building Sector's contribution to Latrobe City



A report generated by REMPLAN Economic Modelling and Planning System software tool, which is used extensively by the business development unit at Latrobe City Council, reinforces the fact that the residential building sector within Latrobe City is a major employer and contributor to the economy.

The report highlights that the total output estimate for the residential building sector is \$263 million, i.e. the gross revenue generated by the businesses and organisations within the sector. The estimate for total wages and salaries for the residential building sector in Latrobe is \$17.8 million.

Latrobe City business contacts

For any further information the Economic Sustainability Division can be contacted on the following business numbers:

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Latrobe Regional Airport

Neil Cooper
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Local Business group contacts

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Invest Moe

Pres: Brad Law
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Committee for Moe

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0417 148 068

Moe Traders Association

Pres: Craig McIver
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Newborough Village Traders Association

Pres: Richard Walsh
(03) 5127 3347

Traralgon Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Pres: Lorraine Paulette
(03) 5174 3186

Latrobe City Business Tourism Association

Chair: Ian Southall
(03) 5135 3415

VECCI

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