MELBOURNE EAST MATTERS

Collaboration | *Facilitation* | *Advocacy*

GROWTH AND SECURITY FOR BAYSWATER & BAYSWATER NORTH

The deterioration of the car assembly industry in Victoria is expected to be felt throughout the State.

The Bayswater/Bayswater North precinct in Melbourne's outer east is one region that may be severely impacted when the car assembly industry ceases in 2015/2016.

Businesses in the precinct, covering 730 hectares of land across the municipalities of Maroondah, Knox and the Yarra Ranges, are expected to be substantially impacted by the Ford, Holden and Toyota closures.

And due to a significant decline in demand for land in the precinct over the past 10 years, there is a lack of new businesses and industries to provide employment for those who may be affected.

Realising the importance of revitalising the precinct, Melbourne East RDA is leading the development of an Action Plan which will encourage business and industry growth and maintain job security for workers in the region.

Melbourne East RDA will contribute $30,000 to stage one of a three-year Action Plan from 2014 to 2016. The first step involves a strategic review focusing on industries in the precinct to target for investment, where potential investors can be found, and how best to engage with them. It will also cover what opportunities exist to make the region more attractive to potential investors.

Once developed and implemented the Action Plan aims to revitalise the business precinct and encourage business and industry growth to strengthen job security for people in the region.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Committee Backed Projects Get RDA Funding Boost

The Melbourne East RDA Committee played a key role in shortlisting three projects that all received a funding boost under Round 4 of the Federal Government's Regional Development Australia Fund (RDAF).

"All proposals received were of a very high standard and we are pleased that those selected for funding involve strong community support and collaborative regional partnerships." stated Professor Rod Hill, Acting Chair Melbourne East RDA.

REGION TO BOAST COUNTRY'S BEST AQUATIC FACILITY

Maroondah City Council were awarded $10M through RDAF for the development of Aquanation, a new state-of-the-art regional aquatic and leisure complex sure to be the best wet and dry training and competition facility in the country. Incorporating the State Diving Centre, 10-lane swimming and diving pool, large gymnasium, group fitness rooms, childcare, and café all set to provide a fully accessible community facility. Construction of this world-class facility is well underway, and due to open in Spring 2015.

SUPPORT FOR START UPS

Melbourne East RDA saw the proposed Eastern Innovation Business Centre as an opportunity to provide tangible support to small businesses in the region. With their endorsement of the project, Monash City Council received $4.75M to establish the business incubator, helping start-up, home-based, micro and small businesses in their early years of operation. The Centre will boast 30 'hot desk' facilities and a communal space to facilitate workshops and other events. Located within the Monash Technology Precinct, it will also support over 100 jobs in the development and operation of the Centre.

MOVEMENT AT THE STATION

Yarra Ranges Council was awarded $3.56million to redevelop the historic Yarra Glen Railway Station site into the Yarra Valley Regional Tourist Precinct, providing tourist amenity and activity and an information bureau. The 9 km disused portion of the Healesville to Yarra Glen railway will also be upgraded to connect the two towns, creating connections between the attractions offered.

New Resource For Business Entrepreneurs To Tap Into

The Melbourne East (RDA) Committee is a key supporter of 'The Tap', a unique advanced technology coworking space which opened in Scoresby in January.

With more than half of small businesses failing in the first three years of operation, Professor Rod Hill, Acting Chair of Melbourne East RDA, believes 'The Tap' will become a vital resource for new business entrepreneurs.

Melbourne East RDA Committee contributed $40,000 towards the facility which was established by Small Technologies Cluster (STC) to offer flexible open workspace, networking and support to anyone involved in commercialising advanced technologies.

> **"THE SPACE WAS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF SMALL TEAMS, START-UPS AND CONSULTANTS** working in advanced and emerging technologies such as micro, nano, bio-technology, medical devices and ICT.
>
> **PEOPLE USING THE SPACE CAN CONNECT AND COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS IN LIKE BUSINESSES.** One-on-one consultations with experts in the MedTech Insights help desk series, is just one of the free networking and training opportunities offered as a benefit of joining in on STC's events." Professor Hill said.

Professor Hill said 'The Tap' aligned well with Melbourne East RDA's role to facilitate partnerships between government, business and the community to ensure that within the next decade, Melbourne's East will be a significant hub for Asia Pacific's education, innovation and knowledge industries; and Australia's best connected region.

STC offices in Scoresby

Looking Forward ▶▶

BUSINESSES GIVEN THE BOOST THEY NEED IN A DIGITAL ECONOMY

To compete in a rapidly expanding digital economy, the Melbourne East RDA recognises that businesses in the east will need to enhance their capabilities with information technology.

A project providing small to medium businesses with the opportunity to upskill their use of digital technology is being supported by Melbourne East RDA through a series of workshops and mentoring sessions in collaboration with their counterparts in the North, South and West.

Melbourne business owners were surveyed to assess their current IT capabilities. Issues highlighted in this research have been the driving factors for programming the seven workshops offered, covering topics such as:

• Mobile devices, apps and management • IP telephony, wireless, CCTV and video conferencing • Cloud demystified • Managed services • How to get the most out of IT • Trends in the digital age • Web analytics, SEO and Social Media.

Following the workshops, participants will be invited to take part in a free, private and confidential mentoring session made available by the Digital Enterprise Program.

The scale of the digital economy has the potential to impact every part of business. This program aims to see businesses across Melbourne take advantage of technology, become more efficient and reach new markets.

Workshops are being planned for May, June & July. Registrations available from April at: www.freeictworkshops.com.au.

ONE VOICE FOR THE EAST

Ensuring the needs and interests of the East's primary industries are heard is a priority for the Melbourne East RDA Committee.

With more than 55% of the local workforce employed in education and training; health care; professional services; retail; and manufacturing; a broader perspective and longer-term outlook could combat the negative impact that significant economic changes could have on the East in the future.

With the concept of a regional network in mind, the Melbourne East RDA Committee will bring representatives from key industries together in May this year to gauge interest in a collaborative approach and explore the role that a Regional Industry Network could perform as an independent, non-governmental advocacy group for the East.

To express an interest in being involved in the Regional Industry Forum contact Gaby Nimé at gaby.nime@dsdbi.vic.gov.au.

DEVELOPING SPORT AND RECREATION IN THE EASTERN REGION

Melbourne East RDA is working with key stakeholders to grow and develop sustainable sport and recreation infrastructure for the region.

The strategic framework will guide future planning, provision and development of regional sport and recreation facilities throughout Melbourne's East.

Melbourne East RDA will work with the seven Councils in the region who are collectively contributing $50,000 towards this project. The committee also helped to secure a further $50,000 grant from Sport and Recreation Victoria towards the project.

THE STRATEGY AIMS TO:

• *Increase participation in sport and recreation*
• *Provide access to a wider range of facilities*
• *Avoid the duplication of services*
• *Improve opportunities to host regional, state and national events*
• *Identify potential gaps for new and evolving sport and recreation opportunities*
• *Identify funding and partnership opportunities.*

Work on the strategy has commenced and will be completed in August 2015.

ATTRACTING INVESTMENT IN THE EAST

Melbourne East RDA plans to invest $20,000 in the development of a Regional Investment Attraction Strategy that will proactively identify opportunities that make the region more attractive to potential investors. Investment Attraction is a major priority for both government and industry, and in the East, organisations have different approaches to attracting investment to the region.

The Strategy will review the competitive advantage of each local government area and the region as a whole, and will help to define how the region should be promoted to attract investment, the information needs of potential investors and the infrastructure needs that potential investors are wanting in the region.

The strategy will result in increased investment opportunities for Melbourne's East.

Open For Business

An Industry Open Day series, to be held at Swinburne University of Technology and funded by Melbourne East RDA and the university, will encourage collaboration between research and education institutions and local business, to advance the vision that Melbourne's East is the centre of Australia's innovation and knowledge industries.

Businesses across a broad range of industry sectors will be invited to participate in the series where new and practical ideas to optimise current business practices, solve current business challenges, and build for the future, will be presented.

The East is home to many of Australia's foremost research and education institutions including Monash, Swinburne and RMIT universities, and Holmesglen, Box Hill and Chisholm TAFE colleges.

The Industry Open Day series align with Swinburne's 2020 vision to be the partner of choice for the industries and communities they serve and, as an open door to wide-ranging partnership opportunities that can strategically benefit businesses and industry. The series will offer attendees an opportunity to participate, learn and network, and offer a fresh perspective of universities as useful business partners. The event will also highlight the important role institutions can play in using their combined research and education resources to assist the competetiveness of local industry.

The Industry Open Days will be run in June and September at alternative Swinburne campuses. To find out more, please email the Swinburne engagement team at: engage@swinburne.edu.au

Upcoming Events

WHITEHORSE BUSINESS LEADERSHIP BREAKFAST
Fri 28 March, 7am-9am. Bookings essential.
Visit www.whitehorsebusinessgroup.com.au

MANNINGHAM 500 PROJECT:
Unleash the Power of Your Profit Drivers
Tue 15 April, 7am-10am
www.manninghambusiness.com.au or 9840 9338

2014 KNOX BUSINESS CONFERENCE
Sat 24 May, 9:00am – 6:00pm
http://www.knoxbusinessdirect.com.au/event/pub/Event-DetailA.asp?lngEventID=729

MAROONDAH : 'WOMEN ON THE GO'
Wed 18 June, Expo: 8:15-9am
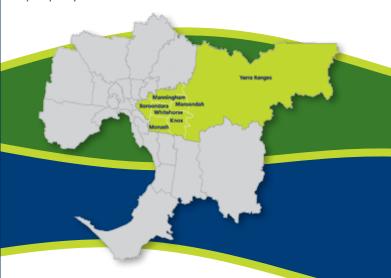Forum & Morning Tea: 9-11:30am
http://www.bizmaroondah.com.au

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http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/regional-development-australia/committees/eastern-melbourne

Spotlight On 'Melbourne East'

Enveloped in a rich natural setting, Melbourne East is a premier urban region, renowned for its high amenity and liveability. Residents and businesses gain significant economic advantage from key strategic assets located in the region. Opportunities exist for improvement. Harvesting these will ensure the region's prosperity into the future.

Melbourne's East can be characterised by:

• A population of 1,044,000 people or 24.5 per cent of Melbourne's total population (2013)

• A growing number of residents aged over 55.

• Diversity in income, where the average weekly income in Boroondara and Manningham are well above the Melbourne average; and Maroondah and Yarra Ranges are below the Melbourne Average. All other municipalities in the Melbourne East region are on par with the state average.

• Melbourne East has a significantly higher proportion of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher qualification, compared to the Melbourne average.

• A predominantly English speaking population (70% speaking English at home). Other significant language groups in Melbourne East include: Mandarin, Cantonese, Greek and Italian. The proportion of Mandarin and Cantonese speaking people have been increasing over time, while those speaking Greek and Italian at home are in decline, reflecting historic migration trends.

• A balance of rural, peri-urban, dense urban and natural environment, which contains burgeoning infill development at strategic centres.

• Over 55% of Melbourne East's employed population is working in Health Care and Social Assistance; Retail; Professional, Scientific and Technical Services; Manufacturing; and Education and Training

• The importance of these industries to Melbourne's East is further put into perspective when you consider they contribute to over 48% (or $19.6 million) of Gross Regional Product.

Melbourne's East includes the LGAs of Boroondara, Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges.