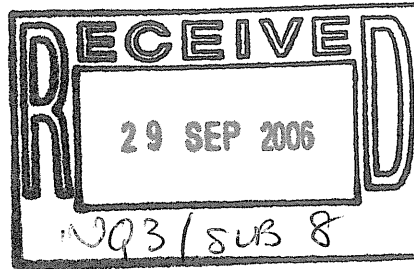
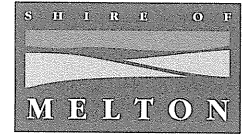


File No 80/30/155  
Our ref: Chris Guthrie



29 September 2006

Mr Sean Coley  
Executive Officer  
Outer Suburban/Interface Services and Development Committee  
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Dear Mr Coley

**Re: Submission relating to Inquiry into Local Economic Development in Outer Suburban Areas**

Please find attached our submission to the Inquiry into the above matter.

We would be pleased to expand further on this submission directly to the Outer Suburban/Interface Services and Development Committee should it so desire. In addition there are a range of strategic documents, which may add value to the Inquiry, which are available on request, some of which are outlined in the submission.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C. Guthrie".

Chris Guthrie  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

# **SUBMISSION TO OUTER SUBURBAN/INTERFACE SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENT**

**By Melton Shire Council's Economic Development Unit**

**September 2006**

## 1. Introduction

The Shire of Melton has a geographical area of approximately 528 square kilometres. It is located on the western fringe of metropolitan Melbourne and contains a mixture of urban and rural uses.

The eastern edge of the Shire of Melton is just 19 kilometres from Melbourne's Central Activities District while the major urban area, the township of Melton, is 35 kilometres from Melbourne. It has excellent access to Melbourne Airport, the Ports of Melbourne and Geelong and the national road and rail networks.

The Shire contains a mixture of urban and rural uses:

- 72% (45,300 ha) is zoned for rural activities
- 13.7% (8,600 ha) is zoned for residential use
- 7.7% (4,800 ha) is zoned for public open space
- 3% (1,900 ha) is zoned for public purposes
- 2% (1,300 ha) is zoned for extractive industries
- 0.9% (580 ha) is zoned for industrial activity
- 0.08% is zoned for commercial activity

The Shire is broken up into two Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) by the ABS, for reference purposes. The growing suburbs of Burnside, Caroline Springs, Taylors Hill and Hillside comprise the Melton East SLA at the eastern edge of the Shire. These suburbs collectively have been planned for a population of over 70,000 (currently 20,000). The Shire's other SLA, (Melton Balance) is planned to grow from a current population of 38,000 people to 80,000 people over the next 20 – 25 years.

## 2. Identified barriers

The main barriers to economic development in Melton Shire traditionally have been transport congestion and distance from CBD (which will be alleviated somewhat by the Deer Park By Pass), lack of professional, entrepreneurial and business skills in the municipality, limited educational choices, lack of public transport (bus and train services) lack of quality strategic planning to identify employment precincts and lack of economies of scope in many industries ie clusters. Also the image of Melton amongst the business community is low and networks have been poorly developed or non existent. Melton is just "not on the radar" is feedback Council has received in the past from the "big end of town".. High levels of disengagement amongst the 15 - 25 years demographic also plays a part in limiting Melton's economic potential.

### 3. Economic Development Unit's response

After adopting an economic Development Plan in November 2003 and Council Plan shortly after the Economic Development Unit developed a Communications and Marketing Plan (attached), to guide its every day activities and to strategically deliver on Council's economic development goals.

Initiatives from the plan currently underway and facilitated by Council and the Economic Development Unit (EDU) in order to address the impediments above, include:

A) Toolern Concept Development Plan - new master planned community to the south of the current township, to cater for improved public transport, community facilities, educational institutions, new hospital, commercial and industrial precincts (including high quality business parks), electrified rail line, quality residential offering to attract business professionals etc. Copies of the concept plan and related DVD are attached to this submission. Council has significant landholding in this master planned new community. The EDU is involved in dealing with enquiry relating to this land.

B) LEAP - Inspiring Success - new business networking group facilitated by the Economic Development Unit

C) Making the Connection - seminar series linking business with students and those at risk of disengagement.

D) Caroline Springs Community Market - joint venture between Council and the Caroline Springs Community Development Association this project launched with 140 stalls and 7500 visitors.

E) Community Bus - linking those without transport to employment opportunities outside the Shire and within the Shire.

F) Training and development workshops in finance, OH & S, business development, networking etc.

G) Business Awards - Council sponsored Shire awards to promote business excellence

H) Promotion of the Melton Shopping and Business District via Special Levy on traders

I) Business facilitation - one on one business planning and assistance

J) SPACE 2 - business lounge and business incubator - supported and facilitated by the EDU

K) Recycled water - close liaison with Western Water (regional water authority) and assistance to support delivery of recycled water to landholders and residential users of A class recycled water.

L) Agribusiness /Equine - promotion of these industries and membership set up of networking, marketing and advisory groups. Business plans developed.

M) Community Leadership - eg Women's leadership forum, master community and town planning

N) Shire promotion - general promotion of business opportunities and an annual marketing campaign is undertaken.

O) Missed business - promotion of access for disabled residents to retail shops in the Shire.

P) Advocacy to state and federal government for support to remove impediments as articulated above.

Q) Development of Shire wide triple bottom line KPIs to measure sustainability and to develop measurable targets.

#### 4. Some conclusions

The above projects target the barriers as identified in the introductory paragraph above. The EDU is charged via its Economic Development Plan and Council Plan to undertake and manage these projects. Council funds the majority of programs but a range of state, federal and private sector grants and sponsorship arrangements are sought to assist where necessary.

The communications and marketing plan is quite well developed and this guides the Economic Development Unit's day to day activities. It lies underneath the Economic Development Plan and Council Plan. All these documents are available for the committee if required.

The extensive consultation process undertaken by the EDU and Council in developing the above plans and projects has been integral to gaining community support for many of the initiatives. As a result, minor funding and sponsorship assistance has been relatively simple to achieve for many of these projects.

However, due to the expected growth in the Shire over the next decade and beyond (see [www.toolern.com](http://www.toolern.com) and population projections from [www.melton.vic.gov.au](http://www.melton.vic.gov.au)) and now further developed with detailed Council planning, significant state and federal government assistance will be required to deliver the infrastructure to support such a rapidly growing community.