



MEDIA RELEASE

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LILYDALE'S HEART NEEDS A BYPASS

'Lilydale's heart needs a bypass' will become the catch phrase of a Council run campaign designed to convince the State Government of the urgent need to construct the long awaited Maroondah Highway Bypass.

Announcing the new slogan today Shire of Yarra Ranges Councillors David Hodgett and Ken Smith have called for community support in highlighting to the State Government the urgency of reducing traffic from the heart of Lilydale.

Cr Hodgett said the ever-increasing flow of traffic through the centre of Lilydale was a major safety risk to locals and was holding back plans to improve the town centre.

"The recent tragic death of an elderly pedestrian and the near disaster when a fully laden truck lost its brakes near the Olex Cables factory highlighted the urgent need to reduce the amount of traffic travelling through the middle of Lilydale," he said.

More than 24,000 cars a day travel along Main Street with another 10,700 using John Street – resulting in traffic congestion, air pollution and accidents. Council figures revealed at least 25 serious and 86 minor injuries in the past five years as a result of the heavy traffic.

"Over three million visitors travel through Lilydale each year on their way to various parts of the Shire. Add to that the number of cars and trucks that use the road each day to and from work and you have a recipe for disaster – both environmental and physical."

Cr Hodgett said the success of the bypass depended on convincing the State Government of the need for the project.

He has called on members of the public to assist with a letter, email and phone campaign directed at the Minister for Transport, Peter Batchelor and local Parliamentarians to highlight the level of community support.

Cr Hodgett said the Lilydale Chamber of Commerce would soon begin circulating a petition among local shops.

"The land is there, the need is there and we believe the community support is there," Cr Hodgett said.

Deputy Mayor Ken Smith, who is also a member of the bypass taskforce, said the construction of the bypass would allow work to commence on a much-needed upgrade of the centre of Lilydale.

Early concept plans have been developed in preparation for community consultation. The plans highlight the potential for the heart of Lilydale to become a vibrant and stylish precinct attracting shoppers and visitors alike and creating a true gateway to the Yarra Valley.

Cr Smith said the success of the Benalla bypass, which resulted in a significant decrease in the number of accidents and major improvements for pedestrians, shoppers and shop owners added even greater weight to the need for the project.

Lilydale Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Maria McCarthy said.

For further comments contact: Cr David Hodgett on.....; Cr Ken Smith on; Lilydale Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Maria McCarthy on

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