

Media Release



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LeadWest backs zoo theme park proposal

LeadWest, Victoria's leading advocacy group for the Western Suburbs, has thrown its support behind a state strategic proposal to build a major theme park in Werribee.

LeadWest chief executive Mr Anton Mayer said the proposal potentially offered significant benefits for the Western Suburbs and its residents and would attract growth in tourism and & reduce escape expenditure for Tourism services that flow out of our region.

"Whilst I haven't seen a lot of detail there is a lot to like about a proposed \$220 million investment in the West that offers the potential to grow jobs & builds opportunities for our residents?" Mr Mayer said.

"LeadWest believes this is an exciting proposal that if done in a sensitive manner will I'm sure, be embraced by Victorians. It ticks all the boxes in terms of investment, jobs, growth and tourism".

"As long as the proposal addresses relevant issues such as supporting infrastructure, environmental concerns and animal management, then I think this could help market the west as a key tourism destination centre for Victoria."

Mr Mayer made the announcement today at the official signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Western Melbourne Tourism at the Open Range Zoo.

The MoU has been developed to officially consolidate the partnership between the two bodies in a bid to better promote the western region.

"What we want to do is create more jobs, lure more investment and ensure proper infrastructure is delivered to the western suburbs," Mr Mayer said.

“LeadWest will work closely with Western Melbourne Tourism to attract more tourism to the region.

“We already have some of Victoria’s most recognisable tourist drawcards including the Open Range Zoo and historic Mansion in Werribee, as well as some of the State’s best kept secrets.

“We need to capitalise on these places and create new opportunities.

“We need to support our local tourism industry and that includes hotels, motels and bed and breakfast facilities.

“We need to grow this important service sector as more people come to live in the western suburbs and visit the region.

“We need to create employment diversity and provide visitors with a reason not just to come here, but to come back again.”

According to the State Government, 61,000 people are employed in the tourism industry in regional Victoria.

The industry generates nearly \$11 billion a year to Victoria, with \$3.4 billion flowing to regional Victoria. It contributes 5.3 per cent of the state’s GSP and the industry employs nearly 160,000 people, almost 7 per cent of Victoria’s workforce.

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