



# Plan to woo nomads

BY GARY STEVENS

GREY nomads and other travellers would be encouraged to stop in Moe during their journeys around Australia as part of a proposal to make the town more recreational vehicle and caravan friendly.

During community consultations for the gateway project at the western entrance to Moe, one suggestion from the public was to provide travellers with a dump point - a container where wastewater can be emptied free of charge.

The gateway proposal already includes new parking areas at Old Gippsdown for larger vehicles such as RVs and caravans.

While there are public dump points catering for the RV market in Rawson, Rosedale and Heyfield, there are currently none in the Latrobe Valley.

Latrobe City councillor Sharon Gibson believes providing infrastructure such as overnight parking or a public dump point could provide a tourism boost to Moe and surrounding towns.

"There are a lot of grey nomads that go around the countryside, enjoying the countryside, and they don't have a lot of places that they can empty out their tank," she said.

"If we have a place that can be utilised to do that, we can then draw them into our town. Once we get them here, it's like a hidden gem what we have to offer.

"The grey nomads are a growing market, they have a lot of time and they have money to spend, I suggest they could spend it here."

Cr Gibson said such travellers

could also make Moe a base to visit areas further afield such as Mount Baw Baw, Mount St Gwinear, Lake Narracan and Tarra-Bulga and Morwell national parks.

According to the Campervan

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## Nomad plan

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and Motorhome Club of Australia, dump points encourage more self-contained tourism.

"Towns that install dump points benefit from the increased visitation to their communities by RV tourists, while the environment also benefits from responsible waste water disposal," the club's website states.

VicRoads eastern region planning manager Pas Monacella said VicRoads had worked closely with the community on the gateway plan and encouraged local groups to explore opportunities for tourism which may develop as an indirect result of the project.

"VicRoads' plan includes improvements to the highway exit ramp, new signs and landscaping at the entry to town," Mr Monacella said.

"We encourage local groups to continue to work on ways to capture travellers, who may choose

to stop and visit Moe or surrounding areas."



RV travellers have an official dump point in Rosedale but none in the Latrobe Valley.

PHOTOGRAPH BRYAN PETTS-JONES



## RV feedback closing

Feedback will close tomorrow for Moira Shire Council's draft RV-friendly strategy, with people urged to get last minute submissions in.

Moira Shire Mayor Gary Cleveland said the draft RV strategy included more than 10 individual recommendations.

"The draft strategy begins from the basic principle that RVs are largely self-sufficient — they do not need continuous access to toilets, showers, electricity, water or other services that are commonly associated with the more traditional caravan and camping accommodation," Cr Cleveland said.

Yarrawonga, Nathalia, Numurkah and Cobram are four of Victoria's 35 RV-Friendly Towns which means the community welcomes and provides amenities to accommodate the needs of RV tourists, including parking, access to potable water and a free dump point.

"The draft strategy aims to build a shire-wide approach to being RV friendly," Cr Cleveland said.

Among its more than 10 recommendations, the draft strategy proposes council meet basic service needs such as dump and water refill points, long-bay parking in towns and conduct a 12-month trial of free short-term camping at council's showgrounds in Cobram, Nathalia, Numurkah and Yarrawonga.

"The draft strategy expects that RV travellers who choose to stay longer will move into one of Moira's many caravan and camping parks," Cr Cleveland said.

"This draft strategy needs to balance the opportunities to grow local tourism with the interests of existing operators and the potential impact on our infrastructure.

"The draft strategy can also add consistency to what has been an ad hoc approach to RV tourism in recent times."

● **Feedback closes at 5 pm on Thursday, March 3, via the online form in the feedback section at [www.moira.vic.gov.au](http://www.moira.vic.gov.au)**



# RV submissions close tomorrow

PUBLIC submissions for Moira Shire's RV Friendly strategy close tomorrow at 5pm, after more than a year of discussions with its RV working group.

Moira Shire Mayor Gary Cleveland said the draft RV Strategy includes more than 10 individual recommendations.

"The draft strategy begins from the basic principle that RVs are largely self-sufficient," he said.

"They do not need continuous access to toilets, showers, electricity, water or other services that are commonly associated with the more traditional caravan and camping accommodation."

Numurkah, Nathalia, Yarrawonga and Cobram have RV Friendly status, which provides amenities including parking, access to potable water and a free dump point for RV tourists.

"The draft strategy aims to build a shire-wide approach to being RV friendly," said Cr Cleveland.

The draft strategy proposes council meet basic service needs such as dump and water refill points and provide long-bay parking in towns.

It also aims to conduct a 12 month trial of free overnight camping at council's showgrounds in Numurkah, Nathalia, Yarrawonga and Cobram.

"The draft strategy expects that RV travellers who choose to stay longer will move into one of Moira's many caravan and camping parks," said Mayor Cleveland.

"This draft strategy needs to balance the opportunities to grow local tourism with the interests of existing operators and the potential impact on our infrastructure. The draft Strategy can also add consistency to what has been an ad hoc approach to RV tourism in recent times."

The RV strategy has not yet been adopted by council.

"We look forward to hearing feedback from the community, tourism sector and RV community," said Cr Cleveland.

Copies of the draft strategy are available from Moira's website, as well as at the Numurkah Visitor Information Centres and Moira service centres.



## RV stopover wanted

DIVISION 3 candidate Paul Bongioletti has called for an RV-friendly stopover in Gin Gin.

Mr Bongioletti said there were 585,252 registered RVs in Australia at the latest figures, with forecasts of another 160,000 in the next four years with baby boomers coming into the market.

He said the fewer than 3000 caravan parks would never be able to accommodate this growth.

“The latest official research shows an average spend of \$578 per vehicle per

week but unofficial recent figures would appear to indicate that it is now considerably higher than that,” he said.

“It is estimated there are around 100,000 RVs on the road on any given day.”

Towns embracing RV friendly policies were already experiencing the benefits.

Mr Bongioletti said the travelling community had a very powerful grapevine and communities lived or died on their reputation and this was the reason the Bundaberg region must embrace this tourism sector.



**TOURISM DRIVE:** Division 3 candidate Paul Bongioletti (centre), Danni Mears, Greg Collier, Hank Flanagan and Paul Fagan are keen for an RV-friendly stopover in Gin Gin.

PHOTO: MIKE KNOTT BUN010316RV2