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THE HILLIER VIEW

Kevin Hillier says it's time to take a hard look at the future

What does the City of Wyndham want to be when it grows up? Like almost everything about this city, that question has been left until almost too late to answer and act upon.

While driving through Geelong last weekend, it struck me that one of the most appealing aspects of Geelong is that it is not Melbourne. It has tried for many years to be the second city of the state and only recently seems to have given up that quest and embarked on a "Gee-change", pointing out all the things Geelong has that you won't find in a major city.

Maybe we should do the same. What do we want Wyndham to be? We already surpass Geelong in population – so what?

We have been banging on about our growth but never really planned for it. Wyndham continues to be like the family who is ready for the arrival of a baby and everything is fine, until it is discovered it is triplets. We have been like that for 30 years.

It seems inevitable that Wyndham will be a quasi city in the 'burbs with all the downsides of city life (traffic, crowded public transport and its parking nightmare, not enough schools, inadequate health facilities, etc).

The council catchphrase of "city, coast, country" does nothing to define who we are, or where we are headed. The country is almost evaporated, coast a work in progress, and city an unmade road or 20.

The East Werribee precinct probably holds the key to the future as far as employment, business growth and important infrastructure is concerned.

Avalon Airport's appeal and growth as an international terminal and destination will also have a very big bearing on Wyndham's future.

Our council will have to present itself in a much more professional manner.

The age demographic of the city will change dramatically once there is sustained local employment and older residents such as myself will be contemplating a "Me change". ■

If you have any news or events, let me know at kevin@howdypartnersmedia.com.au



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Briefs

Crop house found

Police seized more than 180 cannabis plants from a crop house in Point Cook last Tuesday. Police were alerted to the house, on Sanctuary Lakes South Boulevard, just before 10pm the day before, after the owner found the plants. Police would like to speak to anyone who has noticed any unusual activity around the house during the past several months. Crime Stoppers, 1800 333 000.

Community grant

The state government has announced \$575,000 in funding for the Werribee Islamic Centre in Tarneit to build a community centre. The facility will provide cultural, recreational and educational opportunities to residents.

Drug raids

Federal Police have charged five men after an investigation into trafficking crystal methamphetamine and heroin. Police carried out 11 search warrants in Melbourne last month, in suburbs including Delahey, St Albans, Footscray, Sunshine North, Truganina and Yarraville. A 33-year-old Truganina man has been charged with dealing in the proceeds of crime, money or property valued at \$1 million or more, and dealing in monies reasonably suspected to be proceeds of crime.

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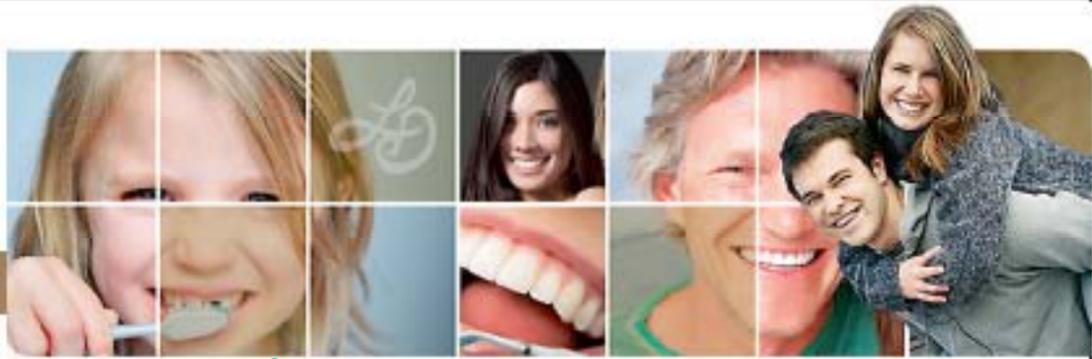
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