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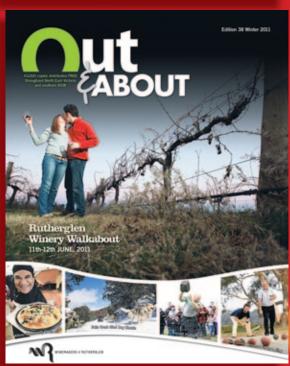




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Budget to cater for growth



OLUNTEER CELEBATIONS: Wodonga celebrated the contribution of volunteers to the community at a special breakfast in Woodland Grove as part of Mational Volunteer Week, (Back or well for sight) Will Vanderpo, Damien smith, Neville Rossey, Cr Inspela Collins, Cr Chris Ferguson, Cr Ed Foulston, Cr Mark Sputt, (front row) Cr Rodney Wangman, Marg Potter, Wendy Cooksey and Cr Anna Speedie were among the many who browdet the chilly conditions. Full story and more photosypash on page 2 WODONGA Mayor Cr Mark Byatt has indicated that the 2011-2012 Wodonga Draft Budget will assist in supporting the

increase of 7 per cent, which the council had outlined in the Strategic Resource Plan adopted last year. Cr Byatt said the budget has been

Cr Byatt said the budget has been developed while striving to keep a balance between providing services for our community, planning for the ongoing growth of Wodonga and managing the finances.

"We are in the middle of a challenging time as we have two major capital projects - the aquatic centre and arts, community and entertainment centre - which we need to deliver "he said

"These projects have a significant impact on the overall budget for 2011-2012, as well as future and past budget this council has delivered.

"Our operating budget continues to be lean and we need to ensure our costs are always closely monitored and we are financially prudent"

Cr Byatt said while new borrowings would be needed in 2011-2012 for the two projects, debt minimisation remains a key

priority.
"Wodonga continues to enjoy strong growth levels with record development applications achieved in recent times and while this increases our rate base, it also increases the size of the city, placing

also increases the size of the city, placing pressure on infrastructure, parks and gardens and other service costs," he said. "We also face arguably the biggest change in the city's history with a new

following the removal of the railway line.
"In these exciting times which will benefit our city, this council believes that this is a budget that is both prudent and realistic and I would urge residents to carefully review the budget and take the opportunity to discuss their issues and

a budget information kit, are available for viewing at the council offices, the Baranduda, Felltimber and Belgrade community centres, the Wodonga Library and Wodonga Visitor Information Centre or from the council's website. Copies of all documents are available of

CD by request.

More budget coverage on pages 2

and 3.

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