

# Population to explode

By Melissa Grant

BOOM, boom, boom!

That's what Cardinia's population is going to do in the next two decades, with an estimated population of 143,312 by 2031— that's an extra 77,418.

Officer's population will soar from 1090 to 40,295, while Pakenham's will jump from 26,698 to 57,548.

Most of the growth will happen between 2010 and 2016, when an array of residential developments will pop up in the shire's growth corridor. Cardinia's population will be about 90,318 at the end of that period.

Informed Decisions consultant Glenn Capuano revealed the forecast during a population briefing at the Cardinia Shire's Council chambers

last week. Mr Capuano said population growth was expected in the shire's rural areas, except for its "environmentally sensitive" hills region, which has green wedge provisions.

He said growth in towns such as Nar Nar Goon, Garfield and Bunyip would be substantial from now until 2031, although nowhere near that of Pakenham and Officer.

"A place like Garfield (1444 to 2245) would virtually double its population," he said.

Mr Capuano said migration flows from Casey to Cardinia, which was 5991 people in the five years to 2006, would continue.

"And people will also be moving a lot more within Cardinia by 2031," he

said. Cardinia Shire mayor Bill Pearson said estates such as Lakeside, Cardinia Lakes and Arena were doing extremely well in the face of the economic downturn.

"The housing is affordable," he said.

"They are coming here rather than Craigieburn and Cranbourne because it is a good lifestyle and because of the growth corridor it's close to the rural area—it has a different feel about it."

Cardinia Shire Council communications manager Paul Dunlop said Cardinia was one of Victoria's fastest-growing municipalities, with up to four new families moving into the shire each day.

He said the council was aiming to

help create a job for each employable person in the shire.

The Cardinia Employment Corridor is expected to create up to 50,000 jobs over the next 20 to 30 years.

"The work being done now will ensure these important economic and residential developments are well-connected to public transport, shops, recreational and community facilities," Mr Dunlop said.

Cr Pearson said he was worried that higher levels of government weren't supporting the community, despite rapid growth.

"My biggest concern is that the state and federal governments aren't giving us the infrastructure for these developments, were still waiting on stations (Cardinia Road and Paken-

ham upgrade) and road upgrades such as McGregor Road and Cardinia Road," he said.

"I'm happy that people want to come to our area and that we're restricting the growth to the growth corridor (Pakenham, Officer, Beaconsfield) but we have just got to get infrastructure to support the residents."

Mr Capuano said the population forecasts were "based on understanding of demographics and council planning at the time" they were made.

The increases are based on household growth, which relate to new residential opportunities, mostly in areas experiencing significant residential subdivision.