We acknowledge the Wurundjeri as the traditional owners of what now makes Moreland, and celebrate the history and contemporary creativity of the world’s oldest continuous living culture.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5    Mayor’s Message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7    Moreland Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9    Council as Producer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15   Council as Supporter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19   Council as Cultivator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Art cannot change events. But it can change people. It can affect people so that they are changed... because people are changed by art – enriched, ennobled, encouraged – they then act in a way that may affect the course of events... by the way they vote, they behave, the way they think.

- Leonard Bernstein
The Arts and Culture Strategy will build on Moreland City Council’s significant history and commitment to the arts; it will articulate how Council will continue to support Moreland’s creative sector to thrive and build the Creative Capital of our City.

Creative Capital is a term used in this document to describe the positive contribution a strong creative sector makes to both the social capital of the area as well as its local economy. It recognises that although an Arts and Culture Strategy focuses on the creative sector, the benefits of a thriving cultural sector are not exclusive to artists or those engaged in creative industries – the benefits of a strong creative sector filter through many areas of everyday life.

As the quote on the opposite page articulates, culture can deepen, and strengthen, our understanding of important issues. This greater understanding has been found to result in greater social cohesion, community leadership and the improved liveability of cities. A thriving cultural sector also ensures the unique make up and character of Moreland remains vibrant.

This Strategy shows how Moreland will build its Creative Capital through the three roles it plays:

- As a **Producer** where Council initiates, coordinates and delivers events, festivals, programs and exhibitions
- As a **Supporter** where Council encourages a thriving creative sector through investment, facilitation and advocacy and
- As a **Cultivator** where Council employs various strategies to engage with community and build arts audiences across Moreland’s community

The Strategy focuses on key areas that are either new commitments or major projects over the next five years. It is not intended as a comprehensive outline of the many and varied activities that Council delivers or supports that involve the arts. These can be found on Council’s website.

I would like to thank those people who contributed to the development of the Strategy, in particular: the Moreland Arts Board; representatives from both the arts and general community; fellow Councillors and Council Officers.

**Cr Helen Davidson**  
Mayor Moreland City Council
We are proud of our creative sector. Moreland is home to internationally recognised artists, writers and musicians as well as a growing number of emerging artists. Moreland has the most singer/songwriters in the country, a growing maker movement and an award winning creative sector including, but not limited to, visual artists, musicians, writers, performing artists, makers, designers and architects. Our sector is mostly made up of a strong group of independent artists and small to medium sized arts organisations, and as such, this Strategy focuses on these stakeholders.

Council has had an Arts and Culture Strategy in place since 2001, although its support and advocacy for local artists stretches back over 30 years. This ongoing policy position demonstrates a 16-year commitment to strategically planning for the arts in Moreland. This new Arts and Culture Strategy will once again show leadership by contributing to the Creative Capital in our City.

The Arts and Culture Strategy takes an asset-based approach to strategically planning for Moreland’s creative future. As such, the Strategy acknowledges the strength of the existing creative sector in Moreland and seeks to not only maintain, but further build on, the existing Creative Capital.

**Vision and Scope**

In line with the Council Plan, the vision for this Strategy is to strengthen the significant creative sector in Moreland and to enhance its standing as a destination for the arts. Key aspects of this vision include:

- to enhance the capacity of Moreland’s creative sector to maintain and grow creative practice in the municipality and
- to increase access to, and engagement of, community in Council’s Arts and Culture program as both participants and audiences.

**What is the Creative Sector?**

The creative sector referred to in this Strategy describes arts and cultural activities that span many disciplines including visual arts, music, theatre, performance, literature, public art, design, fashion, filmmaking and craft amongst many. This Strategy is primarily focused on strengthening the capacity of professional practice, however this context includes activities that are both commercially produced and community based.

“Things have never looked better in Moreland for artists. It is a good place to be”

– Survey Respondent - 2017 Arts and Culture Strategy Survey
COUNCIL AS PRODUCER

Where Council initiates, coordinates and delivers events, festivals, programs and exhibitions

The Arts and Culture program delivered by Moreland is extensive and diverse. There are a number of festivals, projects and exhibitions that are produced, curated or provided by Council. These include:

- **Festivals and Events Program** – annual events such as the Brunswick Music Festival and the Sydney Road Street Party to community festivals such as the Coburg Carnivale, Fawkner Festa, Glenroy Festival, Carols by the Lake and the Coburg Night Market;
- **Public Art Program** – annual public art show MoreArt, along with commissions and various temporary projects.
- **Counihan Gallery In Brunswick** – annual program which stages approximately eight exhibitions annually, a selection of which are curated by the Gallery with accompanying public programs.
- **Council-presented activities**, such as workshops during Reconciliation Week and artist-in-community projects.

Beyond the activities outlined above, which are delivered by the Arts and Culture Unit, cultural projects or activities also feature significantly in various cross-Council programs including:

- the commissioning of a number of important public art works in Brunswick, Coburg and Glenroy activity centres by Place Management.
- an extensive program of author talks, events and forums through the Read More program at Moreland’s libraries.

Council recognises that there are a number of benefits to Council-presented events, exhibitions or projects:

- Council is particularly well placed to ensure there are quality and affordable cultural activities in areas where there is minimal community-led arts activity.
- Within an organisation such as Council, creative projects can leverage a broad spectrum of expertise, connections and resources across other disciplines.
- Council has access to an extensive network of external organisations.
- Council is well placed to engage with, and enter into agreements with, either State or Federal government entities without which programs such as the very successful MoreArt would not be feasible.
- Unlike many arts organisations who are dependent on annual or triennial funding rounds, Council has the financial stability to develop longer term projects with broad community outcomes and to ensure these projects can evolve holistically.
COMMITMENTS:

Brunswick Music Festival
The cultural importance of the Brunswick Music Festival – including its opening and closing events, the Sydney Road Street Party and Music for the People – is a well recognised opportunity to promote Brunswick’s thriving music sector. The Festival is one of Moreland’s most significant cultural tourism opportunities and provides scope for further partnering with local music venues. It is also recognised as a significant opportunity to support musicians. Through Council directly producing the Festival, Council can program in a way that supports emerging artists, or concerts that are not as commercial, alongside internationally renowned ones.

Commitment 1: Continue to present the Brunswick Music Festival and promote Brunswick as a vibrant music destination in Australia

Festivals Program
While objectives and evaluation criteria for the overall Festivals Program have been in place for some time, the scope and variety of Moreland Council’s Festivals Program warrants further consideration of the unique opportunities and target communities of each individual event. As part of the ongoing continuous improvement of the Festivals Program, and in partnership with the Moreland Festivals Reference Group, Council will therefore consult the community and review each event to develop objectives that are relevant to each.

Commitment 2: Review at least two Festivals Program events annually to establish clear objectives and measurable outcomes for each individual event in the program
Expanded Counihan Gallery In Brunswick

The 2014 Brunswick Civic and Cultural Feasibility Study recommended extending the Counihan Gallery to gain shop front presence on Sydney Road. This would both serve to raise the profile and exposure of the Gallery, which was identified as a key priority during the development of the Gallery’s Audience Development Plan, as well as increase exhibition space. As part of this development, it would be important to improve the storage of Moreland’s growing art collection to safeguard this valuable cultural asset. Given that plans for this extension are not anticipated to commence until 2020, opportunities for further exhibitions should also be explored through displays in the Brunswick Civic Centre foyer and potential pop-up exhibitions in the northern suburbs.

Commitment 3: Expand opportunities for exhibitions produced by the Counihan Gallery In Brunswick

Permanent Public Art Commissions

The desire to see Moreland’s creative vibrancy reflected in its streetscapes was also a strong theme during the development of this Strategy. It was also noted that Council’s public art program has focused more on temporary activations such as MoreArt. There has also been an increase in demand for public art commissions. This has ranged from commissions driven by traders’ associations to improve the attractiveness of shopping areas, to community-led initiatives to commemorate important aspects of Moreland’s cultural and historical character.

Commitment 4: Scope potential to expand public art program through the commissioning of permanent public art commissions

MoreArt

MoreArt is well recognised as a unique public art event in Melbourne – along the length of our municipality along the Upfield rail line and bike path. It has a strong reputation as a public art event that attracts artists from a variety of disciplines and has significant scope for large scale audience engagement. MoreArt demonstrates the ability of artists to transform urban environments into vehicles for contemplation, celebration and imagination. It has also provided instrumental support to a number of artists who have gone on to further develop and exhibit their work both nationally and internationally.

Commitment 5: Continue to produce MoreArt as a unique place-activation initiative and platform for emerging artists

Indigenous Participation

Council’s Human Rights Policy 2016-2026 makes a commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as a priority group. It articulates Council’s vision for reconciliation where Indigenous Australians are recognised as the traditional custodians of the land and whose dispossession is addressed through respectful partnerships, particularly with the Wurundjeri people as traditional owners of the land we now call Moreland. Council will continue to scope opportunities for Aboriginal artists to be supported, respected and appropriately engaged across all aspects of our programs. We will also make a commitment to ensure that programs are delivered in a manner that is culturally aware, that appropriate acknowledgements are integral to all events and that Council continues to develop appropriate ways to collaborate with and engage Traditional Owners.

Commitment 6: Deliver programs annually that engage Aboriginal artists and, where appropriate, are led by these artists

Creative spaces in community centres and hubs

The Council Plan outlines a commitment to developing a number of community hubs which are relevant to the Arts and Culture program, including: Saxon Street, Merlynston Hall, Coburg Square, Wheatsheaf Hub and Fleming Park. These spaces currently host a number of creative organisations who are important stakeholders for the future development of the sites. It will also be important to ensure the creative sector participates in the planning and development of these hubs as they offer a unique perspective on the usability and opportunities for future activation.

Commitment 7: Participate in the planning and development of these spaces to ensure creative needs are considered

Writer in Residence Program

Writers play a vital role in the creative capital of any city and Moreland is privileged to have many diverse writers, from those that are at the early stages of their careers to ones that are award-winning and internationally recognised. Over the next five years Council will engage with writers either through aspects of the existing arts and culture program or through unique Writer in Residence opportunities. This will provide an important opportunity to both promote Moreland’s local writers and also to build a collection of either fiction or non-fiction writing which resonates with Moreland’s contemporary culture.

Commitment 8: Initiate a Writer in Residence program
CREATIVE CAPITAL

COUNCIL AS SUPPORTER
Where Council encourages a thriving creative sector through investment, facilitation and advocacy

The combination of significant urban growth – which has continued to reduce the available spaces for creative development in our city – and an arts funding environment that has become more inaccessible, has created a legitimate concern for the ongoing sustainability of Moreland’s dynamic and emerging creative sector. While Moreland can currently boast a thriving creative sector, its continuity is fragile and there is a genuine need, and an important role, for Council to support its endurance in our municipality.

Support Council currently provides through the Arts and Culture Unit includes:
- The Moreland Art Collection which boasts a number of works by renowned artists such as Jill Orr, Noel Counihan, Lin Onus, Wolfgang Sievers, Graham Drendel and Fiona Foley.
- The Making it in Moreland program which is an increasingly popular series of professional development and networking events.
- Overseeing the management of creative spaces such as the Brunswick Mechanics Institute and through publications such as 4 Walls which offer practical advice on setting up and maintaining creative spaces.
- The Celebrating Place Grants Program which is designed to support local activations and has an extensive capacity building program to support community-led initiatives.

Other areas of Council also deliver programs that support Moreland’s creative sector. These include:
- Economic Development’s support of a number of creative businesses in Moreland through their Moreland Made Program as well as delivering highly successful Creative Moreland networking events annually.
- Youth Services have continued to deliver the Freeza Program which supports the professional development of many young people in the music sector.

In addition to identifying mechanisms to support professional arts practice, this support should also consider capacity-building initiatives that encourage community-driven activity, particularly in areas of the municipality with limited arts activities.

Council is well placed to advocate for the creative sector given it engages regularly with extensive networks across the public and private sectors. It also engages with other tiers of government. However, this advocacy needs to stem from, and be shaped by, engagement with Moreland’s creative sector.

Council is equally well placed to support either independent or community-led arts activities with regulatory or compliance-related issues. As noted previously, the scope of expertise within an organisation as multifaceted as Council is significant, and therefore Council Officers have access to informed and sound advice on a variety of matters that could be of benefit to the creative sector.
COMMITMENTS:

Needs analysis of Arts hub
The demand for more accessible and affordable spaces for creative development has consistently been identified as a key need in most consultations regarding Council’s arts and culture program. There are a number of initiatives that would be of clear benefit, however a thorough needs analysis will provide an evidence-based plan for Council’s strategic investment to support and grow Moreland’s creative sector. This also links to the Economic Development Strategy themes of 'developing a vibrant eco-system of new enterprises in Moreland'.

Commitment 9: Undertake a scoping study and needs analysis of creative development spaces in Moreland which explores the feasibility of an arts hub. Following this, implement initiatives that arise to both support and grow the level of creative industry in Moreland

Creative Precincts
Moreland’s independent and small arts organisations have often expressed a sense of vulnerability to ongoing development, particularly in areas such as Brunswick where there is an overall perception that creative spaces will soon be displaced. The provisions made in the Moreland Industrial Land Strategy (MILS) mitigate this issue to a significant degree, however they are not widely known. It is therefore important that increased facilitation, information sharing and knowledge building regarding zoning restrictions and compliance requirements is undertaken. There is also an opportunity to investigate the potential for further strengthening this commitment through developing incentivised zoning for creative industries such as those which have been implemented in New York. This opportunity would also show leadership in making firm a commitment to the creative sector in Moreland.

Commitment 10: Ensure clear communication about zoning relevant to the support of creative industries within the municipality – and to further strengthen this zoning
Arts Investment Program
Support for independent arts professionals or small to medium arts organisations based in Moreland is often cited as a high priority in consultations. An Arts Investment Program could not only provide much needed financial support to organisations either established in Moreland, or planning on delivering high quality programming to the municipality, but it could also become a valuable Community of Practice where networks and knowledge is exchanged to enhance activities in the overall municipality.

Commitment 11: Support arts activity that contributes to the social or economic vitality of Moreland through an Arts Investment Program for small or emerging arts organisations

Brunswick Mechanics Institute
The Brunswick Mechanics Institute is an important cultural asset in the heart of what is defined as Moreland’s Civic and Cultural Precinct. The venue has seen increased activation over the past four years and, under the new Service Agreement, is set to expand its support of arts practice for both local artists and beyond. To ensure the Brunswick Mechanics Institute reaches its potential as a dynamic arts hub in Victoria, Council will also scope initiatives to improve the use of its forecourt and to ensure its capital infrastructure remains fit for purpose.

Commitment 12: Support the Brunswick Mechanics Institute to become a dynamic arts venue and incubator dedicated to the professional development of performing artists

Assist navigation of Council requirements
Consistent feedback across many of Council’s arts and culture programs is that artists and community members have difficulty navigating permit processes, or understanding compliance requirements. In order to support community led activity, initiatives that assist with navigating these requirements would be valuable. This support can include improved documentation, forums or workshops, officer assistance and improved information exchange with compliance areas of Council.

Commitment 13: Improve communication, facilitation and assistance around Council processes and compliance requirements

Professional Development and Networking for Artists
Opportunities for professional development continue to be highly sought activities by the creative sector in Moreland. An area of professional development that can be further enhanced is the development of business skills to support professional practice. This aligns both with Council’s Economic Development Strategy and with initiatives through Creative Victoria. This professional development could take the form of workshops, networking events as well as publications. As part of this, it would be worthwhile scoping opportunities to partner with other organisations to deliver valuable opportunities to Moreland-based artists.

Commitment 14: Support the professional development of artists through a variety of activities across the arts and culture program – along with opportunities for artists to connect with each other and their community

Arts Activation Grants (formerly Celebrating Place Grants)
The Arts Activation Grants Program has supported a number of community-led activities over the past four years and through its capacity-building programs has supported building skills and knowledge around planning and delivering community events across the municipality. The grants program was reviewed in 2017 with a view to further strengthen its aim to support community-led place activation, particularly in areas of the municipality with limited arts and community activities.

Commitment 15: Continue to support community-led activities through the Arts Activation Grants Program and its associated capacity-building initiatives
COUNCIL AS CULTIVATOR

Where Council employs various strategies to engage with community and build arts audiences across Moreland’s community

All Moreland residents should be able to access the cultural life of their city and shape it to some degree. A focus on audience development ensures that arts programs across the municipality are designed to broaden their appeal and engagement with diverse audiences. This can be achieved by a combination of working with the local community to better understand their interests and needs, designing arts activities that are accessible to the community and by ensuring they are aware of the various cultural activities that are available through improved promotion.

Participation in cultural activities has been proven to be effective in improving wellbeing, social cohesion and community resilience. From a population health perspective, cultural programs play an important role in minimising social isolation, improving connectedness and are strongly related to mental health outcomes. Building greater participation in cultural activities is important for these outcomes, but also, building arts audiences enriches the lives of our residents, something that cannot be underestimated. In order to build this social and economic capital, ongoing consideration of the demographic makeup of Moreland is critical. This can be achieved through Moreland’s own arts and culture program as well as supporting Moreland-based artists and arts organisations to develop new audiences and engage with existing community groups.

1 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2014), Closing the Gap: Supporting healthy communities through arts programs

Bloomtown by Tanja Beer, Gisela Beer and Ashlee Hughes, as part of the ClimARTe show in 2017.
COMMITMENTS:

Inclusion and accessibility
Inclusion and accessibility are key pillars that span all Council programs and are strongly embedded in Council policies, namely Moreland’s Human Rights Policy. The social impact of engaging with arts programs is significant, and all community members should have access to, and the right to participate in, and experience all forms of the arts. Despite this inherent commitment, there remain barriers to participation for a number of different groups that are important to address. In order to ensure both high levels of inclusion and accessibility to arts and culture programs, there is a need to carefully consider the existing barriers to participation and to develop initiatives that will address some of these.

**Commitment 16: Partner with Council’s Social Policy and Community Development unit to better understand our community and collaboratively develop initiatives to encourage greater inclusion and accessibility**

Improved marketing
Whether they are part of Council’s arts and culture program or independently provided, Moreland boasts some of the country’s most exceptional artists and arts activities. However these activities are not always known within the broader community. Community consultations consistently note that there is a need to better promote local activities and Council can play an important role in this promotion. Any future initiatives will also need to ensure that they are accessible to, and can compete with, what audiences have grown to expect from arts marketing.

**Commitment 17: Invest in improved marketing of both Moreland’s arts programs and scope how Council can best promote broader arts activities in our City**

Strengthen community engagement in the north
Community engagement with Council’s arts program in the north of the municipality is currently delivered primarily through its festivals program. While festivals such as Fawkner Festa and Glenroy Festival continue to grow and attract more community involvement, stronger relationships which are developed in a more sustained way beyond Festival-based engagement would be valuable. This type of engagement would allow Council to connect with a broader range of community members who are perhaps interested in how the arts can inform issues of importance beyond a community event. This requires long-term engagement that is based on a strong foundation of community consultation.

**Commitment 18: Develop an appropriate community engagement plan to effectively consult and develop strategies that support community needs or respond to community aspirations**

Arts Moreland Placement Program
As with many professions, industry experience is critical to providing career pathways for those wanting to work in the creative sector. This industry experience can be particularly difficult to achieve for young people, individuals from culturally diverse or refugee backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. As such, Council will initiate placements through the Arts Moreland program for these specific target groups. It is expected that these will be delivered in partnership with the Community Development and Social Policy area of Council as well as with organisations such as Multicultural Arts Victoria, Oxygen Youth Space or tertiary institutions in Moreland.

**Commitment 19: Develop an Arts Moreland Placement Program and offer one placement annually**
Carols by the Lake 2016, photo by Theresa Harrison.