



**Moreland** City Council

# **Mayor's Speech**

---

Fostering Democracy  
and Building Community

# Mayor's Speech

## Fostering Democracy and Building Community



Cr Andrew Rowe, Mayor

This evening is a unique celebration of local democracy. The Annual Ceremonial Meetings of the local Government of Moreland have assumed an important civic function. They provide a vital opportunity for the community to come together to reflect on the achievements of their Council and to endorse the directions which Council will pursue in the forthcoming year.

In order to facilitate achieving these objectives Council also elects its Mayor and allocates portfolio and project responsibilities to Councillors.

This evening's ceremonial meeting brings together a newly elected Council – the second democratically elected Council of the local government of Moreland.

So our task in reviewing prior achievements, assessing our challenges and setting out a framework by which these challenges will be addressed takes on a different character.

Prior to doing this there are some important observations which need to be made which provide us with a context in which to place Moreland.

### Leadership

Firstly let me thank my fellow Councillors for investing in me the responsibility to lead Moreland as its Mayor over the next twelve months. I take this responsibility and the trust which you have shown in me very seriously. I am encouraged by your confidence and sobered by the challenge.

However, the Mayor is one of ten Councillors, who share equally in the decision making process and in taking responsibility for the outcomes of the decisions they make. Something that has been true of democratic local governance in Moreland since the outset has been the collective approach that has been exhibited around the Council table.

The corporatist view of government, which has become fashionable at a state and federal level, has no place in Moreland. This is not a board of directors elected by shareholders to deliver the best bottom line.

Democratic governance involves much more, including representing local and wider interests with a view to achieving outcomes that are socially just, environmentally sustainable and economically responsible and are thereby clearly in the public interest.

The example of local governance set by the previous Council in general and its three Mayors in

particular sets an extremely high threshold, which we will endeavour to reach throughout this term.

Having inherited the title of Mayor from three people who exercised the responsibilities of that office with great care let me pay tribute to them.

Moreland benefited greatly from having Mike Hill as its first Mayor. Mike's deep understanding and abiding commitment to local democracy infused the City with a strong sense of the possibilities and strengths of local government. Having decided not to recontest his ward at the last elections Mike's experience, skills and passion for local democracy will not be lost. He continues in his full time role with the Victorian Local Governance Association of which he is Secretary. Having been a strong advocate for local government in the face of a State Government which constantly exhibits its disregard for local communities and their representatives, Mike's ongoing contribution with the VLGA is highly valued by Moreland.

Moreland's second Mayor, Cr Rodney Higgins provided leadership to Council during a year in which his former workplace, the Australian waterfront, and the people who work on it were under direct attack.

With his direct experience of the Federal Government's full frontal attack on the right to organise and to be a union member, Rodney was able to remind Council of the broader political environment in which it was working for social and economic justice. His passionate commitment to social and industrial justice played an important part in ensuring that those values formed an important part of Moreland's elected and administrative culture.

Having made the transition from the waterfront to the court room, working as he does now as a solicitor, Cr Rodney Higgins remains a member of Moreland City Council, and will continue to play an active part in progressive politics in that role.

The Councillor from whom I take over was Moreland's first Mayor from a non-English speaking background. Cr Anthony Helou's term as Mayor was an eloquent testimony to the social and cultural diversity of the Moreland community. During his time as Mayor Anthony gave voice to Moreland's diverse communities in general, and to its third largest non-English speaking background community, Arabic speaking Australians, in particular.

He did so at a time in Australia's political history when there was an unprecedented rise in racism and a disturbing retreat from the principle and practice of multiculturalism.

This speech was delivered at the Coburg Civic Centre on Wednesday 7 April 1999.



He helped shape and continues to play a lead role in implementing Moreland's inclusive approach to cultural diversity.

The contribution of all three Mayors to the City, and beyond, demonstrates the potential in the office of Mayor to vigorously represent and advocate the interests of the local community.

It is a potential which I commit myself to exercising in order to achieve real gains for the City and the diverse communities that make it up.

---

## Local Democratic Governance

Local government is the foundation of democratic practice in Australia. The interface between people's lived reality and the institutions of the state are most intensely experienced at a local level.

The roles and functions of local government reflect the diversity of its obligations to the local community. Local governments seek to represent and meet the interests of their communities by, amongst other things, planning strategically, providing services, building and maintaining infrastructure, providing recreational, cultural and social facilities, and developing and maintaining open space and parkland. They deal with statutory land use issues, they regulate, they promote employment and encourage economic activity, and they facilitate community activity.

This list is far from exhaustive – but fundamentally local governments represent their communities' needs, interest and aspirations and seek to apply the resources at their disposal to meet them.

In a world which is subject more and more to the pressures and influences of global forces there is a growing desire on the part of people to connect with their local community. Local Government provides that capacity. Claiming it as our own is an act of self-determination that flies in the face of those who seek to cost everything and know the value of nothing.

Despite the widespread cynicism about government, it is in fact a force that can be harnessed to effect real change which benefits the community. I have a strong and enduring belief in the value of government; it is a belief that I share with everyone around this table. It is a belief which we are all committed to sharing with the community, by inviting you to play a part in your government, the local government of Moreland.

By actively participating in governance at all levels citizens will enhance the quality of the decisions which their representatives make on their behalf.

---

## Local Democracy

The Moreland Council elections completed just over two weeks ago provide an interesting window through which to view the nature of the democratic process within our City.

Candidates endorsed by the Australian Labor Party were successful in every ward in which they stood. In some wards Labor candidates received substantial swings and two Labor candidates were endorsed unopposed.

Having preselected and endorsed candidates for the Moreland City Council election, Labor also presented a clear and articulate vision for the City, which included detailed policy commitments.

The local community clearly supported candidates from a party with a vision and a plan, candidates who believed in Moreland and were positive about its successes and opportunities, candidates with experience and candidates who demonstrated that they would work co-operatively with other councillors in the community interest. In supporting such candidates the community delivered you this Council.

Labor's preselections and the community's choice of Councillors also delivered a greater number of women to Council.

The success for Labor is important. Federal and State voting patterns do not simply translate to local government. At a local level communities expect sophisticated and responsive governance, which meets their real needs. Labor in local government in Moreland has demonstrated its capacity to govern in this way. Labor in Moreland has also demonstrated that its relations with other spheres of government relate to the Moreland community's interest whichever political party is in power.

The result also demonstrates widespread support for a local government that advocates strongly for its community. Across Victoria there is significant concern with the State Government's constant disregard for local democracy and the preparedness which it shows to ride roughshod over the decisions which local governments make.

The belief on the community's part that local government is a legitimate sphere of government gained strength with the recent Darebin elections, where an ALP council was re-elected after having been earlier dismissed by the State Government.

Of Nillumbik's pro-environment council, also dismissed by the State Government, recent elections in that place resulted in another pro-environment council being elected.

Following the amalgamations of Victoria's previous local government areas, communities now want their local government to exercise their

responsibility for making decisions in the interests of the people they were elected to represent without undue outside influence.

This reflects a growing recognition of local government's responsibilities in Australian political life.

---

## Two new R's for Moreland – two defining political issues

Within local government circles much mirth is made of local governments responsibilities for rates, roads and rubbish. Even the most strident critic of local government would have to recognise that local government's responsibilities go well beyond these three areas.

Two important issues, which Moreland will take a lead on this year, will add two more R's to that ubiquitous list – race and the republic.

Moreland is Victoria's most ethnically and culturally diverse municipality. Nearly half of Moreland's residents were born overseas compared to less than a third in Melbourne's other suburbs.

Moreland values its cultural and ethnic diversity and its links with Australia's indigenous people.

One of the highlights of the previous Council's work was its adoption and implementation of its Multicultural Development and Reconciliation Policies.

Unfortunately Moreland's commitment to multiculturalism and reconciliation is not shared in equal measure by other levels of government.

In fact Australia has witnessed a wholesale assault on the principles underpinning multiculturalism and of the rights and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

In addition to practical actions to achieve improvements in the quality of life of our own City's culturally diverse communities Moreland will continue to advocate vigorously against racism and racist policies such as the Howard Government's Native Title amendments. Moreland will advocate for legislative and policy measure which recognise the value of a culturally diverse nation and the unique place of Australia's indigenous people in it.

We will make Moreland, and work to make Australia, a place which justly and inclusively accommodates racial, ethnic and cultural difference. We will also work for the widespread acknowledgment of the wrongs done to our nation's indigenous people and seek to have them corrected.

In the lead up to the centenary of Australia's Federation in 2001 the successful

accommodation of Australia's racial diversity will be a vital marker of our nation's success.

The shape and nature of our Constitutional arrangements must display the essential values and principles on which that success will be built.

The changing composition of the Australian community and our growing awareness of our indigenous past have combined to form an evolving sense of our independence and uniqueness as a nation.

That independence and Australia's essential spirit must be reflected in the founding document of our nationhood and our national institutions.

It is for these reasons that Moreland supports the Australians people's aspirations to become a republic. An important aspect of becoming a republic will be ensuring that Australia's head of state is an Australian. However it should also demonstrate a commitment to the principles of equality, justice and democracy, all of which should be reflected in our Constitution's preamble together with recognition of the custodianship of Australia's indigenous people of the land and the contribution of successive waves of migration to the development of contemporary Australia.

Moreland would also like to see the place of local government recognised in our Constitution as a fitting expression of the important role which local government plays in the division of governmental responsibilities.

All of these changes should be reflected in constitutional arrangements at a state level.

The recognition of Australia's racial diversity, together with a commitment to republican values and a strong sense of our national independence, will provide the best framework for all Australians to realise their potential and contribute to our nation.

They are issues that every level of government must play a part in shaping and Moreland is clear about its position in respect to these issues.

Moreland is therefore equally clear that it will play an active part in urging constitutional reform in this year's referendum and will continue to vigorously advocate for a vibrant multicultural Australia which values its racial and ethnic diversity.

## Moreland's First Democratically Elected Local Government in Review

A tradition of the Mayor's Speech in previous years has been to provide a review of the immediate past twelve months. A review of the previous three years at Moreland would take up more space and time than it is possible to occupy this evening. However a series of activities which Council undertook in its first term provide an indication of the strong policy framework and financial directions which this Council inherits.

### Financial Security

In 1997, Council made the historic decision to reinvest the funds derived from the forced sale of the electricity businesses owned by the former Brunswick and Coburg local governments. These funds were used to reinforce the financial security and stability of the municipality and to build services and programs of lasting benefit to the Moreland community. Many of Council's capital works programs reflect this allocation of funds.

### Moreland Leisure Plan and Cultural Infrastructure Developments

Major projects were undertaken and remain under way, aimed at reinvigorating Council's sporting and recreational facilities and developing new centres for the arts, festivals and culture.

### Civics Centres Redevelopment

One of the enduring legacies of Moreland's first democratically elected local government will be its development of major civic infrastructure for Moreland. This takes the form of Council's new Coburg Civic Centre as well as the development of Citizen Liaison Centres across the municipality. These investments in infrastructure will provide Moreland's citizens with more accessible, efficient and effective council services.

### Moreland Energy Foundation

Moreland established the first local government energy conservation fund in Australia with a commitment of \$5.5 million towards the establishment of the Moreland Energy Foundation.

The Foundation will facilitate the development of energy conservation initiatives at a local, state and national level.

### One Community – Proudly Diverse

Moreland took a leadership role in the fight against racism by adopting the theme of 'One Community – Proudly Diverse'. Council's strategy of community education and consultation around the theme included public statements of concern on the rise of racism, public meetings and a public luncheon with Federal MP Cheryl Kerrot.

### CityLink

Council took a strong stance against tolling the Tullamarine Freeway and seeking improvements from the Melbourne CityLink Authority and Transurban regarding their treatment of the Freeway and the revitalisation of the Moonee Ponds Creek.

### Responsible Gambling Strategy

Council's adoption of its responsible gambling strategy represents a strategic response to the disproportionate number and use of electronic gaming machines throughout Moreland.

The Strategy seeks to utilise Council's planning and other controls to effect more responsible use of gaming facilities.

### Waste Minimisation and Recycling

Council developed a detailed waste minimisation and litter strategy which included the introduction of 90 and 120 litre mobile garbage bins for residential and business use, and of a new waste collection service and improved kerb side recycling.

### Moreland Plan

Council completed a comprehensive, city-wide review of its planning framework which resulted in the Moreland Plan being submitted for consideration to an independent panel. The Plan seeks to establish the framework and strategic direction for land use throughout the City.

### Integrated Transport Strategy

Council undertook and completed the development of an Integrated Transport Strategy. The Strategy recognises the various modes of transport used throughout Moreland and seeks to encourage the use of the most effective and efficient transport modes.



## Key Issues in the Year Ahead

In addition to Council's specific commitments, which I will outline shortly, there are a series of key issues which will play a significant part in influencing Council's work in the short to medium term.

### CityLink

The opening of CityLink later this year will test the effectiveness of the new transport system including the effect on Melbourne's northern suburbs through which the toll way extends. The imposition of tolls on the Tullamarine Freeway will also require detailed monitoring.

### Traffic Management

Council has identified that the ongoing task of managing traffic flows throughout the city will be a critical issue that will require sensitive handling in line with the Integrated Transport Strategy.

### Human and Legal Services Reforms

State Government driven reforms to primary health, community support and youth and family services will be trialled this year. Council has expressed grave concerns about the potentially negative effect that these changes in service delivery will have on local community based services.

The State Government's desire for greater efficiencies in the delivery of community services cannot be allowed to undermine the unique nature of local community services.

Similarly proposals for the amalgamation of community legal centres threaten the provision of community legal services including outreach, education and casework in Moreland. In particular the Coburg Brunswick Community Legal Centre's future has been put in doubt by the government's proposals.

From these development it has become clear that the inadequacy of state and federally funded community services throughout Melbourne's northern suburbs will be a critical issue for Council in the next twelve months.

### Rate Justice

Council's participation in the Rate Equity Campaign will continue. The campaign aims to ensure that commercial operators are rated appropriately for privately operated or owned infrastructure. The growth in the privatisation of public infrastructure makes this a crucial issue over which council must secure some capacity to levy commercial operators.

### Pentridge

The Government's process for the selection of a preferred developer for the former Pentridge Prison site will be completed early this year. The redevelopment of this site represents the single largest change in land use in Moreland's history. The successful transition from a prison to other uses represents an unparalleled opportunity for the City.

Ongoing involvement in this process, securing a capacity to zone the site and monitoring State Government decisions regarding the process will be critical issues for Moreland in the forthcoming twelve months.

## Fostering Democracy and Building Community

The immediate past Council's legacy, the local government of Moreland's values, the defining political issues which lie at the heart of contemporary Australian public life, and the critical issues we face as a Municipality, together with pre-election commitments, have been combined to form this address.

In the fine tradition of those that have occupied this role before me, the 1999 Mayor's Speech is an expression of Council's priorities and plans. This speech is the articulated vision of the elected Councillors for the next three years. It has already touched on the values which will drive us and has provided some insight into how we see our role. It has also identified the critical issues which will shape the future of the City.

Council's vision is of a strong community driven local government which delivers:

- Enhanced democracy
- An environmentally sustainable urban environment
- A just and equitable society
- Responsive local government administration and
- Sustainable employment opportunities.

We see that the new initiatives which I am about to announce will play a part in achieving that vision. Other policies which will add to these initiatives can be found in part two of the printed copies of the Mayor's speech which you all have.

What I am about to announce will become Council policy tonight. It is a three-year plan, which I invite you to judge the Council against on the eve of the next Council elections in three years time. The year 2000 and 2001 Mayors Speeches will outline the annual programs for the Council and identify progress in meeting the objectives contained within this statement.

## Fostering Strong Democratic Practice at the First Level of Government

New initiatives in fostering democracy:

Council will establish an alternative dispute resolution/mediation program to assist residents sorting out disputes that Council has no powers to intervene in legally. Issues like overhanging trees and fencing disputes are prime examples.

Council will finalise the reviewed Community Consultation Strategy with the introduction of new approaches to provide greater communication and enhanced opportunities for community and individual input into local decision-making.

Council will develop programs to resource community groups and individuals wishing to participate in major municipal decision making or to protest a major Council determination. An informed consultation may require support for groups to prepare detailed submissions to Council and we will develop ways to facilitate this.

Council will take advantage of new technologies that promote increased e-mail access to council and expand the Council documentation that is available online.

Council will further develop service charters for the services Council provides.

Council will also commence work on a Citizens Charter, which will clearly establish the rights and the responsibilities of the citizens of Moreland. The development of the Charter will be used as a major opportunity for Council to discuss with the community its expectations of Council, and the responsibilities that Council has to the community.

In spite of State Government legislative restrictions on Mayor and Councillor remuneration, Moreland will have a full-time Mayor leading the City. Attempts by the State Government to create part time and ceremonial Mayors will be resisted in Moreland.

Council will undertake a review of electoral arrangements, structures and processes in Moreland with a view to enhancing the capacity for representation at a local level in future elections.

Council will provide free childcare to Councillors and members of the community whose caring responsibilities would otherwise prevent them from undertaking duties associated with the administration of the municipality.

Council will review all existing advisory committees to Council to determine their

effectiveness and establish additional advisory committees where required.

Moreland will continue to use local papers, community radio and the Moreland City News to communicate with Moreland residents and businesses.

Council will also renew its effort to obtain improved coverage of Moreland news in the non-English print and electronic media.

---

### Working to Create an Environmentally Sustainable Urban Environment

New initiatives in creating an environmentally sustainable society:

Council will support the Urban Villages Project and development applications that promote and support both community and environmental objectives.

Council will implement the Moreland Heritage Review Study and support development applications based upon non-intrusive rather than imitative design.

Council will vigorously campaign against the imposition of tolls on by CityLink on the Tullamarine Freeway. They are unjust and will force traffic on to Moreland's streets.

Council will continue to campaign for improved noise walls, increased transparencies and improved landscaping on the Tullamarine Freeway.

Council will continue to contribute funds to the revitalisation of the Moonee Ponds Creek.

Council will accelerate the implementation of the Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy.

Council will more than double the current level of annual funding for traffic calming by budgeting a further \$170,000 pa. We will work with communities and neighborhoods to initiate innovative and consultative traffic calming measures to stop local streets becoming 'rat runs'.

Council will commit to making any new facilities both energy efficient and environmentally sustainable.

Council will support and strengthen the role of the Local Agenda 21 Committee to provide additional information around energy and water conservation and the use of herbicides and pesticides.

Council will commence an 'energy education in schools' program.

Council will implement the electromagnetic radiation strategy and adopt the approach of prudent avoidance.

Council will campaign for more frequent public transport and increased staffing and better

coordination of public transport services. This will include working for the return of conductors to trams and staff to train stations.

---

### Building a Just and Equitable Society

New initiatives building a just and equitable society:

Council will establish a Moreland Affordable Housing Foundation which will support initiatives aimed at increasing affordable housing within the municipality. The Foundation will be established with a \$1.5 million grant from Council.

Council will double the community grants budget in order to strengthen community initiatives and support community activity. This will increase a \$130,000 pa commitment to \$260,000 pa.

Council recognises the vital role that community organisations play in delivering services, advocating for issues and representing community interests. In order to assist these organisations deal better with the contemporary challenges that community organisations face, some of this additional funding will be directed towards capacity building and institutional strengthening of voluntary management committees and boards.

Council will provide annual funding for the Arts in Public Places project.

Council will further develop the Cultural Grants program to support emerging groups, activities, artists and projects.

Council will commission works by local and emerging artists and develop an acquisitions policy which focuses on purchasing art works significant to Moreland's history and cultures.

Council will develop a cultural exchange program with a primary focus on Australia's indigenous communities.

Council will establish a Moreland reading program to promote wide reading in our community.

Council will develop new neighborhood facilities in Fawkner, Glenroy and Pascoe Vale, and commence the upgrade of existing Neighborhood Houses.

Council will appoint a community education officer to broaden our commitment to all forms of education, not just schools.

Council will implement the recommendations which arose out of Youth Summit 98, and fund a further Youth Summit in the next local government term.

Council will support the acquisition of new electronic or computer based materials to provide a continually improved and diverse library service, and increase the book-purchasing budget at above-CPI levels.

Council will create a Moreland Arts Board to promote arts and culture in the municipality.

Moreland Council will make arts and cultural expression an integrated component of major capital works projects, such as construction of facilities or development of open space.

Council will advocate and campaign for the retention of community based services under threat from funding cuts from other levels of government. This will include advocating the continuation of state and federally funded services, such as the Coburg Brunswick Community Legal Service, where these services are proposed to be closed or substantially reduced.

---

### Building a Local Government Management Structure to Work in the Interests of the Moreland Community

Moreland Council will put the interests of people and the community before those of cost savings and economies. Moreland opposed the Kennett Government's privatisation agenda. Local Government is a legitimate form of government in its own right and not a corporate structure behaving like a business entity. We will continue to provide sound, humane and responsible economic management on behalf of, and accountable to, the community.

New initiatives in building a community driven management structure:

Council will continue to reject the privatisation of public assets and infrastructure.

Where privatised infrastructure exists, Council will charge rates on it and defend this right at law.

Council will oppose inequitable flat taxes and charges and any attempt, such as the State Deficit Levy, by the State Government to impose a levy on rates.

Council will open up tendering processes to the community and will select successful tenders on a variety of criteria, of which financial cost will be but one.

Council will work with the community to explore possibilities for establishing community banking facilities, or the extension of other facilities such as credit unions, in Moreland.

Council will explore the possibilities of increased Internet access points across the municipality at town halls, community houses, leisure centres, and other community venues.

Council will develop projects to enhance the multilingual/multicultural presence of Moreland on the Internet.



Council will ensure that all Councillors have internet access and are contactable via email.

---

## Building Sustainable Employment in Moreland

Moreland Council will strive to create a stronger, more vibrant and diverse local economy as a key means of building employment opportunities in Moreland.

Council will also make employment and economic development a major focus of the 1999–2002 local government term.

New initiatives in building sustainable employment.

Council will experiment, innovate and research, on its own and in partnership with other spheres of government and local industry, efforts to generate a strong and sustainable local economy.

Council will play a key support role to unemployed people, including the provision of information and practical assistance.

Council will establish a business incubator to support and foster emerging and new local businesses. This will be located at the Brunswick Municipal Offices.

Council will establish a Jobs for Moreland employment policy

Council will create and promote a charter for achieving higher youth employment in Moreland.

---

## Conclusion

These initiatives and commitments are part of an ambitious undertaking. Few local governments have lain out so much of what they intend to achieve and then asked to be judged against it. Councillors are however human, we are not mistake-proof but we do commit to doing the very best we can possibly do to achieve this ambitious program over the next three years.

The task will be made easier by an engaged and committed community that shares our investment in Moreland's success.

I trust that, as a community and as a local government, together we will see this program delivered. Thank you.

These initiatives form part of a comprehensive policy outlined more fully in the next section on the following pages: Detailed Commitments: 1999–2002.

# Detailed Commitments: 1999–2002

## Building Strong Democratic Practice at the First Level of Government

*Moreland will continue to deliver responsive, interactive and accountable democratic governance.*

### Accountability and Transparency

Moreland Council is committed to ensuring that all decision-making processes are open and accessible to the community. Moreland Council will ensure its meetings, its publications, its statutory obligations, its public processes and its citizen liaison are conducted to provide maximum access to the community.

The Action Management System will be continually improved to ensure inquiries and complaints are responded to efficiently and promptly. Councillors will be available to the community and committed to investigating any concerns or complaints brought forward by the community.

Moreland Council is committed to keeping the 'local' in 'local government'. This means that neighborhoods and communities will be listened to and recognised. It also means that interference and manipulation by other spheres of government will not be tolerated.

### Council and Committee Meetings

Moreland Council will maintain a high level of accountability and openness in making Council and Committee Meetings work for the benefit of the community.

An absolute minimum of items will be dealt with in closed sessions of Council. Opportunities for community observation of and input into decision making will be maximised. This will include open and interactive Council and Committee Meetings.

In order to facilitate geographical access to Council's primary decision making forum, Council meetings will be rotated throughout the city and held in Council facilities in Glenroy, Fawkner, Coburg and Brunswick.

A half-hour question time will be maintained at the commencement of each Council meeting. Members of the community will be encouraged to contribute to the debate in Council and Committee Meetings on items of their choice.

Moreland Council will involve to the maximum possible extent all elected Councillors in direction setting and decision making.

### Community Consultation

Moreland Council will finalise its reviewed community consultation policy and mechanisms, and introduce new approaches with the aim of providing yet more opportunities for the community to be involved in decision-making. Quality consultation leads to improved decision-making. Consultation systems suited to both neighborhood and municipality-wide participation will be developed.

Moreland will develop a program to resource community groups and individuals wishing to participate in major municipal decision-making or to protest a major Council determination. At times community groups may require funds to develop well-prepared arguments as part of a consultation process. We will explore ways to resource these processes.

### Communications

Moreland will continue to use local papers, community radio and the Moreland City News to communicate with Moreland residents and businesses. Renewed efforts will be made to obtain improved coverage of Moreland items through the non-English media.

Retention and constant improvement of the acclaimed Language Link communication strategy will be a Council priority. Where practicable, Moreland's main community languages will be used to communicate key messages, at least in part, to the community.

Citizens will be given greater access to Council decision-makers and decision-making processes through improved use of technology. Communication and information services will take advantage of new technologies that promote increased e-mail access to Council and expand Council documentation available 'online'. Appropriate communication technologies will be made available in a timely and integrated manner.

### Citizenship

Local governments offer the most meaningful opportunity for citizens to become involved in the governing processes.

Moreland will further develop Service Charters and begin development of a Citizens Charter, which will clearly establish the rights and responsibilities of the citizens of Moreland.

### Electoral Systems

Moreland has completed its second election under a structure it inherited from commissioners. It is now time for an elected local government to review those structures to ascertain whether the community believes they achieve the desired level of representation. The review should investigate the appropriate number and type of wards, ward boundaries, and the number of Councillors which would provide adequate representation.

Moreland Council will conduct such a review of electoral arrangements, structures and processes in Moreland. At the core of the review will be the VLGA's principles for good governance.

As a result of the review, Moreland Council will work within the Local Government Act 1989 to examine whether a revised set of electoral arrangements, structures and processes for Moreland will enhance the interests of good governance.

### Governance

A first principle of local democracy is that elected Councillors remain accountable to their constituents. Candidates for election should present a platform to the voters as part of the normal democratic electoral process. Voters have a right to expect their elected representatives to implement this platform. Moreland Council will vigorously defend this fundamental democratic principle.

Local governments provide the most important and accessible opportunity for citizens to be involved in shaping their own communities and that good governance is achieved through open leadership and sensitivity to community needs, interests and aspirations.

### Political Leadership

Those elected to local government must provide clear leadership and a sense of direction to the community and the Council administration. The local government administration will be fully accountable to the elected Council for the implementation of Council policy. The Victorian State Government and its officers will be rejected if they intervene inappropriately in this fundamental democratic relationship.

Moreland Council is committed to a full-time Mayor to manage the representative and ceremonial demands of the huge municipality. Unfortunately, recent State Government legislative changes now prevent mayors being paid an amount consistent with the professional responsibilities of the position. However, a Moreland Mayor will provide this full-time service



to the Moreland community. As a result of State Government legislation, local government mayors and councillors are not adequately resourced to do the job of fully representing the community. Councillors are called upon to work with their communities to an extent similar to State and Federal elected representatives but are expected to provide this service in an out of hours capacity.

Council will support elected representatives by ongoing provision of an Executive Officer to the Mayor and Councillors and by provision of appropriate technology for Councillors.

Free childcare will be provided to Councillors and members of the community, when required by parents serving their community through participation in their local government's processes. This will ensure that parents are not prohibited from serving their community.

### **Developing Partnerships of Equality with other Spheres of Government**

Moreland will strive to establish partnership arrangements with other (state and federal) spheres of government that will benefit the Moreland community. It will work cooperatively with other spheres of government regardless of political persuasion. Positive working partnerships will continue to be pursued in economic, social and environmental activity.

Autocratic and contemptuous treatment of local governments by other spheres of government will be exposed and rejected.

### **Local Democratic Structures**

The commitment to using community advisory committees as a means of providing policy advice to the Council will be extended. A review will be undertaken of all existing advisory committees to Council. Additional committees will be established where required. Advisory committees provide a system of important community input into decision making. They enhance the democratic fabric of the community.

Moreland supports democratic management structures for local community groups and agencies, and rejects the State Government's approach to appointing committees to manage community affairs.

Council will establish an alternative dispute resolution/mediation program to assist residents sorting out disputes that Council has no powers to intervene in legally. Issues like overhanging trees and fencing disputes are prime examples.

## **Working to Create an Environmentally Sustainable Urban Environment**

*Moreland will be committed to the creation of an environmentally sustainable society. Council aims to improve the quality of life in Moreland while maintaining respect for our fragile global ecosystem.*

### **Open Space**

Moreland Council will support, and continue to fund and implement the Moreland Open Space Strategy. This strategy has undergone extensive community consultation and enjoys broad community support.

We will ensure that the issue of open space is considered in each new application for medium or high density housing in the municipality. We will improve the quality of the built environment in Moreland by encouraging high quality design and innovation in planning for streetscapes, open space and building development.

We are committed to continuing the purchasing of open space where strategic opportunities arise and to protecting open space from encroachment and alienation.

### **Parklands**

Moreland Council will treat its scarce parkland reserves as a precious community resource. Moreland will support community groups resisting efforts to commercialise, exploit and corporatise parkland or to allocate public parks for exclusive use.

### **Planning and Housing**

Moreland Council is committed to the new Moreland Planning Scheme, which seeks to encourage the retention of employment in Moreland and does not erode the area's industrial and commercial base. We recognise the value of urban consolidation in counteracting urban sprawl with its increasing traffic flows. Consolidation is an essential tool for stemming population loss in the inner city and maximising use of existing infrastructure in the developed areas of Melbourne. We will continue to support medium and high-density development which displays design excellence, is close to public transport, and which respects the values and characteristics of the area.

Moreland Council is committed to measures which maintain some affordability of housing in Moreland at a time when dwelling prices and rental levels threaten to exclude lower income groups from the area.

Moreland Council will continue to advocate more public housing in Moreland, and is committed to

the establishment and substantial funding of a Moreland Affordable Housing Foundation, which will support local initiatives that increase both the availability of affordable housing and the nature and extent of different housing types, to meet the diverse needs of the Moreland community.

We will develop strategies that promote the provision of affordable housing options for people on low incomes.

New housing will need to satisfy more stringent environmental criteria such as greater energy efficiency, recycling of building materials, and less intrusion of vehicles onto sites at the expense of opportunities to develop landscaping.

The Urban Villages Project, which provides special recognition to localities with good public transport and local shopping provision, will be continued. Support will be given to development projects which promote and support community and environmental objectives.

Preliminary on-site community consultation will be used in cases of contentious planning applications. Further measures will be taken to reduce the adversarial nature of the planning approval process and to improve community understanding of planning processes.

Planning assessment of applications for development will place emphasis on community consultation, energy conservation, aesthetic value, neighborhood character, and innovation in design.

### **Urban Design**

Moreland Council is committed to enhancing the aesthetic values and design qualities of the Moreland area, and will consider a range of options to ensure that planning decisions are informed by good quality architectural and design advice.

A great deal of the medium and high density development occurring within Melbourne, and in particular within Moreland, is destructive of the urban character of the area. Moreland Council is committed to consideration of principles of good urban design as part of any application for development within the municipality.

## Heritage

Council will implement the Moreland Heritage Review Study as a means of preserving the rich historical fabric of Moreland.

There is little place in heritage recognition for aping period design. Where new construction is permitted to occur in a designated heritage precinct, the principle of non-intrusive contemporary design rather than imitative design shall prevail.

Council will manage its own assets responsibly and in full sympathy with the original design and scale of the municipality. Acknowledged heritage fabric like bluestone kerb and channelling, and laneways and signage, will be protected and restored.

## Streetscapes

Moreland Council will continue the strong emphasis to improve streetscapes and promote revegetation initiatives. Council reiterates the support from the outgoing Council, which committed \$1m over three years for street landscape improvements.

It is acknowledged that Moreland's diverse streetscapes all require improvement in terms of greening, heritage retention, quality urban design and traffic reduction.

The Moreland Street Landscape Policy will drive Council efforts in this field and the Greening Moreland Forum will be reviewed in terms of membership and charter.

## Waterways

Moreland's waterways are a scarce and wonderful resource. All waterways will be valued and enhanced, including Westbreen and Edgars Creeks.

## Merri Creek

Moreland's commitment to the Merri Creek will remain very strong, with the Merri Creek Management Committee and the Friends of the Merri being viewed as key advisory bodies to Council. Funding to the Merri Creek Management Committee will continue at at least the current level.

## Moonee Ponds Creek

There are specific measures in place for the Moonee Ponds Creek.

Moreland Council will maintain its commitment to revitalise the Moonee Ponds Creek by acting as an advocate and funder. Council will support the principles of the Moonee Ponds Creek Concept Plan and resource the Moonee Ponds Creek Coordinating Committee.

Moreland Council is committed to putting resources into the Moonee Ponds Creek revitalisation and to attracting funding from state and federal government agencies and private

companies including Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, Melbourne CityLink Authority and Transurban.

## Traffic and Transport

Moreland Council is committed to implementation of the Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy. The MITS will remain the foundation of Councils efforts to reduce the impact of traffic on neighborhood amenity, the health of the community and the general environment. We are committed to comprehensive measures to achieve a modal shift away from vehicle reliance, to public and more benign forms of transportation.

Traffic reduction will involve introducing neighborhood-based traffic calming to make streets more people friendly and prevent local streets being used as alternatives to main roads for through traffic. The annual budget allowance for traffic management in Moreland will be more than doubled.

Moreland will seek local powers to control speed limits, thereby reducing neighborhood speeding. We will also push for reduction of traffic speed along major arterial roads. We will undertake a program of community education around use of vehicles.

Moreland will advocate for nationally reduced speed limits in local streets and will support Melbourne City Council initiatives to achieve a traffic-calmed central city area.

Moreland Council will aim to achieve VicRoads' cooperation to implement Council's Integrated Transport Strategy, with its vision for transport along Moreland's major roads.

Council will develop a campaign in support of walking and cycling. It will support road laws that advantage cyclists and pedestrians. It will complete the preparation of a Moreland Bicycle Strategy.

Moreland Council is committed to ensuring safety for on-road cycling. Moreland will play a major role in completing and maintaining a Melbourne network of safe bike paths. It will complete the Upfield Bikeway and develop on-road cycle routes linking the City.

Moreland will commit to the principle that roads should be designed to balance the needs and interests of cyclists as well as cars. Every street reconstruction in Moreland will involve an analysis of the capacity to include a cycling lane and will include consultation with cyclists and Bicycle Users' Groups (BUGs). To facilitate contact with cyclists, Council will place an advertisement in the local papers with details of how to have input including the dates and location of public meetings.

Council will support the continuation of the acclaimed 'Moreland Bicycle Festival'.

Moreland will continue to support and advocate extensions of public transport services. Improved public transport services reduce the demand for motor travel and provide residents of Moreland with a greater freedom to choose safe, clean, convenient, reliable and economical transport.

Moreland Council supports the Public Transport Users Association in advocating increased public transport frequency, staffing and coordination of services. This advocacy will include campaigns for more responsive and accessible ticketing systems and restoring staffing to public transport to levels that ensure adequate services and safety.

Council will advocate for some strategic extensions to rail and tramlines. This will include light or heavy rail links through the Pentridge development. Moreland will play a lobbying and brokering role to achieve state and federal funding to bring train frequencies and staffing on the Broadmeadows and Upfield lines into parity with those of the eastern and southern suburbs, and to extend the Upfield heavy rail system to Craigieburn. In particular, Moreland will push for assistance from the Federal Government, insisting Canberra meet its obligations under federal environmental law and international agreements to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Moreland Council celebrates the saving and upgrading of the Upfield line but will continue to seek a proper traffic management and landscaping response from the PTC around all closures including Barkly Street, Tinning Street and Shorts Road.

Council will undertake a feasibility study for a comprehensive system of feeder buses to rail and tram services. We support the linking of the Broadmeadows line to Melbourne Airport and the introduction of express rail services, provided environmental and community concerns are adequately addressed.

## Freeways

Moreland is committed to balanced transport development and believes that the Tullamarine Freeway widening demonstrates a missed opportunity for the State Government to address Public Transport infrastructure

It is clear that the Tullamarine widening CityLink project:

- Is an example of poor public and private sector management with under-specified contracts that oblige contractors to do the minimum. The CityLink project has produced a concrete canyon along a creek valley with insensitive design and bogus consultation;
- Has resulted in poor noise wall design that shows no regard to community, amenity or urban design;



- Has failed to provide even the minimum acceptable use of transparent treatments on noise walls, causing considerable loss of amenity, loss of light and loss of views, with a loss of property values;
- Has failed to include the revitalisation of the Moonee Ponds Creek as a specified outcome of the project;
- Has tolled a roadway that for thirty years has been free to use, causing an unfair burden on Moreland motorists and causing potentially huge toll avoidance, clogging local streets and increasing danger for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Will discriminate against and deny access to the freeway to those on low incomes, due to both the \$50 fee to initially use the system, and the bank-inspired monthly account keeping fee for those that choose the 'pay as you go' system; and
- Is unprecedented in Victoria with a public freeway being taxed for private sector profits.

Moreland will continue to oppose the taxing of an existing public freeway for private profit.

It will continue to campaign with and on behalf of its community for improved noise walls, the fitting of substantial transparencies in noise walls, the revitalisation of the Moonee Ponds Creek and the removal of the toll way.

Local streets are for local communities and should not act as access to feeder roads or alternatives to designated major roads. We are committed to innovative and consultative traffic management to avoid local streets becoming 'rat runs' and to keep through traffic escaping from the toll way via Moreland's local streets.

Moreland will demand installation of noise barriers and speed and access controls to ensure freeway noise and pollution does not exceed World Health Organisation Standards. It will work for a shift of long distance freight to rail and the use of the Westgate Freeway and Western Ring Road for Docklands traffic to the Hume Highway.

### Civic Centre Redevelopment

Moreland Council is committed to enhancing Council service facilities in Fawkner, to balance the continued commitment to integrated service centres at Glenroy, Coburg and Brunswick.

Moreland Council is committed to completing a quality Coburg Civic Centre redevelopment to provide improved and more efficient community service and to reduce the down time and dependence upon car travel caused by dispersed administrative centres. The new Civic Centre must highlight the Moreland community's commitment to environmental sustainability, energy efficiency and the arts.

Moreland Council is committed to the Brunswick Municipal Offices being redeveloped, with a community service centre, the Moreland

Municipal Gallery, community meeting rooms, a council chamber and an Economic Development Incubator.

### Waste Management

Moreland Council will continue to support Moreland's highly acclaimed waste minimisation and recycling program. We will focus on new waste minimisation opportunities in food, commercial and industrial waste areas. The highly successful Footprints project of waste minimisation education through schools will be continued. This model of education will be applied to energy education.

### Energy

Energy efficiency initiatives must commence at a local level. Moreland has already won awards for its Cities for Climate Protection initiatives. Moreland will maintain its current budget allocations for energy programs and initiative and education.

We will commence an 'energy education in schools' program to match the Footprints waste education initiative in Moreland schools.

Moreland Council will complete the establishment of the Moreland Energy Foundation, to be funded from a portion of the proceeds of the enforced sale of the Brunswick and Coburg Electricity Supply Departments. The MEF will commence groundbreaking local research and development and education in an effort to establish Moreland as a Sustainable City.

### Local Agenda 21

Moreland will continue to support the global Local Agenda 21 program, and will review and boost the community Local Agenda 21 Committee. This Committee will overview and monitor Council's environment initiatives.

The Local Agenda 21 Committee will oversee a community water conservation project. It will develop a program to minimise the use of herbicides and pesticides and promote alternatives. The Committee will liaise with the Moreland Energy Foundation.

### Electromagnetic radiation

Council will implement the EMR strategy and will implement a community education program on the possible dangers of EMR. Council will take steps to ensure that ambient EMR levels are not increased within Moreland. Council will also identify potential hot spots and develop strategies for their abatement.

### CERES

Moreland has stepped up and regularised its funding support to CERES. This will continue. CERES will play a major role in Moreland's waste minimisation, energy and environment programs, in particular through provision of education to schools and the community.

## Building a Just and Equitable Society in Moreland

*Moreland Council's actions will be driven by a commitment to social justice and the aim of building a strong Moreland community based upon Moreland's many and diverse cultures.*

### Affordable housing

Council will continue to advocate for more public housing in Moreland and will establish and fund the Moreland Affordable Housing Foundation.

The Foundation will support local initiatives aimed at increasing the availability of low cost housing stock within the City.

### Community development

One of the prime functions of local government is its role to build and strengthen communities. Moreland will place a very high priority on community development. Its approach in dealing with questions of social justice and social needs will be to build up the community's capacity to better manage its own interests.

Quality community development entails a responsibility to educate and provide information to the community and to fund local initiatives.

Moreland Council will provide special support to the more marginalised groups within the community.

### Restructuring of Human Service delivery mechanisms

Moreland Council is concerned about moves by State Government departments which would apparently reduce the role of local governments in human service delivery.

Moreland will monitor these developments closely, maintaining a commitment to a prime role in human service delivery for local government. Council will work through peak bodies to achieve this objective.

### Community grants

Moreland will double the amount of funds available for community grants in order to foster local initiatives and to help build a stronger community. The criteria for community grants will also be overhauled in consultation with the community.

### Leisure

Moreland is committed to opening up access to a wide variety of leisure and recreation opportunities. We will continue to upgrade existing facilities in a timely manner, giving priority to facilities in the most need that also provide the greatest access and variety of opportunity. Council will continue to directly provide recreation

opportunities targeted to meet specific needs not provided in other ways.

Moreland will promote the self-reliance of sporting clubs by funding capital projects that also maximise a club's ability to become increasingly financially secure.

Moreland is committed to the upgrade and provision of neighborhood facilities at the Pascoe Vale Pool and to the upgrade of the Coburg Olympic Pool.

## Arts and Culture

Moreland acknowledges and celebrates the contribution of arts towards communities telling their own stories. Council is committed to arts and culture taking a central part in community life, and will celebrate the diversity of artistic expression, forms and mediums. A Moreland Arts Board will be created to advance arts and culture in the municipality.

We support and applaud the contribution of successful artists in Moreland, and will commit to the encouragement and development of new and emerging artists.

Moreland Council is committed to arts and cultural expression being an integrated component of all capital works projects, such as construction of facilities or development of open space. We are committed to: increasing funding for arts in public places; a cultural grants program to support emerging groups, activities, artists and projects; the commissioning of works by local and emerging artists; and purchasing works of local artists and works of local significance.

The Arts Precinct will be developed in Brunswick. This precinct will include the Moreland Municipal Gallery as a first class municipal gallery and the full development of the Mechanics Institute as a performing arts venue. The Moreland Arts Precinct will continue to host the ongoing Brunswick Music Festival and Sydney Road Street Party.

Moreland is an emerging centre for cultural industries in music, media and the visual and performing arts. This is a key part of a growing local economy. The Music Festival and Street Party and the development of a festival site with appropriate infrastructure will be part of this growth. Council will continue to provide seed funding under its cultural grants program to festivals, cultural events and street parties across Moreland.

Council recognises that an exciting local cultural scene makes Moreland a more attractive site for business development and tourism as well as enhancing the life of local residents.

## Cultural Exchange

Moreland is committed to a cultural exchange program that will focus on community identification with Australia's indigenous

community and develop our ties with world cities with which we have special relationships.

Moreland's diverse multicultural community offers many world contacts for commercial and cultural exchange and growth. Council recognises the value of Moreland's special relationships with world cities such as Xianyang in China and L'Aquila in Italy and is committed to further development of Moreland's cultural and economic ties. Cultural exchanges frequently lead to important economic benefits for our city.

Council recognises that in a world of rapid growth in transportation and communication technologies, cities and regions must be proactive in creating opportunities in trade and commerce irrespective of state or national boundaries. Council will be prepared to resource these opportunities.

## Library Services

Moreland believes that library services play a key role in a community by providing access to material for information, distribution, entertainment and study. Library services will be maintained in full in Moreland.

Moreland Council acknowledges the increasing and expensive pressure on library services to have new and appropriate electronic or computer based materials that take up an increasing proportion of the new materials budget. We will support the acquisition of new electronic or computer based materials to provide a continually improved and diverse library service. We will increase the book-purchasing budget at above CPI levels.

A Moreland reading program, to promote wide reading in our community, will be established.

## Neighborhood Houses

As part of its commitment to achieving greater equity of distribution of recreation spending at a local government level, Council will increase the number and range of neighborhood houses, as key providers of education, leisure and community development opportunities in Moreland.

We are committed to the development of new neighborhood facilities in Fawkner, Glenroy and Pascoe Vale. Council recognises the need to upgrade existing Neighborhood Houses and to provide targeted funding for these services.

## Cultural Diversity

Moreland Council will continue to find new and innovative means of displaying and celebrating the cultural diversity of Moreland. Moreland will confront ignorance and prejudice with a healthy living example of multiculturalism. The banner 'One Community Proudly Diverse' will continue to be held aloft in Moreland.

## Education

Access to education is fundamental to maximising opportunities in life. Moreland Council is committed to provision of full and ongoing educational opportunities for all ages and sections of the community. The commitment will apply across the board from early childhood education to post graduate study and for all people, of differing ages, experiences and capacities.

A greatly enhanced role for Moreland in community education is envisaged and outlined in this policy document. To ensure this stronger education role is adequately resourced, we will appoint a dedicated Community Education Officer.

Local governments have a prime responsibility to educate their communities. The major role for local governments is provision of information. This includes traditional information on availability of services but should also cover information sessions on issues of public concern and interest.

The health of a community can often be judged by the extent and nature of public debate, and Moreland will support regular public meetings and discussion. Council will respond to community requests for public debate and will initiate its own forums. It will underwrite regular and ongoing community education events and activities around major social, environmental, political and cultural issues of concern to the community.

Local governments also have an important role in support for educational institutions. This role can include support, advocacy and defence.

In the light of falling school retention rates, extremely high youth unemployment rates and the closure of many Moreland public schools, Council will conduct an audit of educational provision across Moreland. Council will assist in actively marketing and promoting the educational opportunities available within Moreland.

This marketing and promotion support may include such initiatives as: an Education Expo; free street signage; free space in community bulletins and newspapers put out by Council and; support for schools in times of crisis.

In view of threats to public sector education in Moreland, a community suffering greater than most, Council will assist with the establishment of and will resource a Moreland Defence of Public Education Committee.

## Municipal Public Health Plan

In conjunction with community agencies and groups, Moreland Council will implement the recommendations of the Moreland Municipal Public Health Plan. The Moreland Municipal Public Health Plan Working Party will be reviewed to provide greater opportunity for community as well as agency input.



Moreland City Council

### Young People

Moreland is committed to continue building a community in which young people have opportunities for self-fulfilment and a high quality of life. Council will advocate and develop appropriate strategies to enable all young people in Moreland to have adequate access to:

- Transport;
- Independent housing and adequate income;
- Education and training;
- Leisure, recreation, culture and sport;
- Social support and advocacy.

Moreland is committed to:

- Working to implement recommendations flowing from the Youth Summit 98;
- Improving employment opportunities in Moreland through the inclusion of youth needs in Moreland Economic Development;
- Collaboration with youth support agencies operating in the Moreland district;
- Ensuring that there is another Youth Summit in the 1999–2002 local government term, and that other regular avenues for communication and consultation with young people are opened up;
- Advocacy on behalf of young people for transport, independent housing, adequate income, education and training;
- Developing and implementing leisure, recreation, culture and sport facilities and events in Moreland;
- Developing and implementing youth space areas, such as a resource facility, which take into account location, transport access and use of current facilities.

### Women

In a community with women of diverse backgrounds and needs, a local government has key community development, education and support roles to play. Moreland will implement the recommendations of the Moreland Women's Forum and will conduct a further forum.

We will implement ideas and suggestions that have arisen from meetings of women all over Moreland and are now embodied in Council's Statement of Commitment to Women. Each year Council will celebrate International Women's Day. Council will remain supportive of affirmative action policies.

### Gambling

Council will continue to take a lead interventionist and support role on the issue of gambling. In conjunction with interested community groups, gambling venue operators and support services, it will implement the Responsible Gambling Charter as a top priority.

### Drug and Alcohol

Moreland will take a proactive role in drug and alcohol forums. It will continue to advocate for law and treatment reform and to work in collaboration with other local governments.

Moreland will introduce further measures to achieve relief from passive tobacco smoke. All Council properties are smoke free and Council will commence an education program to minimise the impact of passive tobacco smoke on its population, particularly upon children. New efforts will be made to support smoke free restaurants and public eating-places.

### Other Human Service Issues

Moreland Council will continue to ensure quality human services in other areas that continue to deliver to the Moreland community according to clear social justice principles. Services to the aged, to families and to ethnic communities will continue to be based on principles of access and equity. Moreland's disability access policy will be systematically implemented.

Some of the principles that will guide Council's role in human services include:

- Council is a key provider of community services throughout the municipality;
- Council has the primary role for planning and coordination of community services in the municipality;
- Council has a key role in ensuring the delivery of effective services including coordination of non-Council service providers;
- Community services must be delivered in a culturally relevant manner to people of non-English speaking backgrounds;
- Adequate research and evaluation should inform the range of community services offered throughout the municipality across the ranges of age, culture and lifestyle;
- 'Citizen information referral services, based strategically throughout the municipality, can act as a one-stop shop for advice and information on Council and non-Council services;
- Equitable distribution of resources; and
- Equal access for women to services, facilities, activities and to equal opportunity in decision-making.

## Building a Local Government Management Structure to Work in the Interests of the Moreland Community

*Moreland Council will put the interests of the people and communities before those of cost savings and economies. Moreland will oppose the Kennett Government's privatisation agenda. Council believes Local Government is a legitimate form of government in its own right and not a corporate structure behaving like a business entity. Council will continue to provide sound, humane, and responsible economic management on behalf of and accountable to the community.*

### Privatisation, Asset Sales and Corporatisation

Moreland rejects the privatisation of public assets and infrastructure. Council is committed to the principle that assets of public benefit are best owned by the public sector.

Moreland Council will not sell any public assets to fund its operational budget and any redundant public assets will only be disposed of to fund new or improved public assets.

Council rejects the corporatisation of areas of Council activity. Functions of Council will remain accountable to the community through their elected representatives.

### Budgetary Policy

Moreland is committed to prudent and responsible financial management. Council recognises that public services and assets are best protected and enhanced by careful financial management and responsible use of resources in the community interest.

Council is committed to balanced budgets and to not borrowing to fund the operational budget. Projects funded through a Moreland Budget must be justified through clear policy development and clearly articulated commitments that benefit the Moreland community.

Council acknowledges that in any year there are more demands on a budget than available resources so spending will be prioritised to represent the greatest community value. Within legislative constraints Council will collect revenue in an equitable manner and according to the community capacity to pay. Likewise, allocation of funding will be undertaken in accord with these principles. Where user charges are necessary, they will be set within a range that reflects the social, cultural and economic make-up of Moreland.

# 1999 Mayor's Speech

Council will be opposed to inequitable flat taxes and charges such as the State Deficit Levy, and will resist any future attempt by a state or national government to force local governments to collect taxes or levies.

## Infrastructure Management

Council recognises that the aging infrastructure of much of Moreland can only be addressed by the allocation of increasing proportions of Council funds or increased funding from other spheres of government to the maintenance and replacement of infrastructure.

Council recognises the balance between maintaining and enhancing community programs and the maintenance and rebuilding of infrastructure. Moreland will be committed to achieving a balanced response to this dilemma in consultation with its community.

## Compulsory Competitive Tendering

Local governments traditionally tender functions for which they have no in-house staff. CCT requires 50% of a Council's budget to be exposed to market testing. Moreland Council is opposed to the compulsory tendering of the services, programs and functions of Council.

CCT is undemocratic. It removes democratic control of service delivery. Services must be measured in more than mere economic terms. Council will remain a key provider of cost effective services that provide quality and real community value.

Tendering processes will be open and transparent to the citizens of Moreland. Tender specifications will be developed in consultation with stakeholders. Draft specifications will be made available for comment by in house teams, the private sector and community stakeholders.

Moreland Council rejects the awarding of tenders on cost alone and will award according to best community value taking into account quality, experience and ability to perform the job. The total cost to Council must be considered in the awarding of tenders, including the impact on local economic development and employment. Notions of commercial confidentiality will not hide difficulties with contractors.

Adequate training and resourcing will be provided to in-house teams. As far as legislation and regulation allow, in-house bids will be preferred where they are cost effective and deliver high quality services.

Moreland recognises the need for use of consultants but it will be vigilant in ensuring that consultants are not overused and that, when used, they are adequately project managed. The administration will be encouraged to take every opportunity to undertake consultancy work through in-house teams. This approach builds up organisational skills and ownership of projects

and positions and it is likely to lead to enhanced ownership of the outcomes.

## National Competition Policy

Moreland objects to application of NCP to the activities of local governments. The Hilmer Report never intended to involve the activities of local governments. Competition policy and economic rationalism go hand in hand and have been responsible for much damage to the community of Moreland.

## Industrial Relations

Moreland Council believes that services of the highest quality are best achieved by direct employees of the Council with a commitment to the good local governance of their community.

Moreland is committed to:

- Promoting and encouraging employees to become members of the appropriate union;
- Equal opportunity and affirmative action;
- A healthy and safe work place;
- Well developed human resource policies and procedures;
- Fair, open and equitable selection processes;
- Staff training and development programs;
- A skilled, innovative and resourceful work force;
- Appropriate security for staff; and
- The maintenance of an award system that provides for equitable and relevant wages and conditions of employees.

Moreland will totally repudiate the 'balalaivas and guard dog' approach to industrial relations. Moreland's style will be non-confrontational, based on trust, openness, consultation, and provision of adequate information and negotiation. This entails the rejection of both non-union enterprise agreements and the placing of workers on individual contracts.

## Local Laws

Moreland City Council has reviewed its local laws and rejected outdated laws. We have developed a range of local legislation that provides for order and good governance in Moreland. These laws, which were developed through a strenuous, proactive consultation process, will be retained as the base for progressive local legislation.

By comparison, the Moreland community notes with disappointment the constant ad hoc introduction of legislation by the State Government without even a token effort at consultation with relevant parties.

## Community Banking

At a time when Australia's banking institutions are deserting their traditional communities, Moreland will work with its community to explore possibilities for establishing community banking facilities or extended credit unions in Moreland.

Council recognises the potential role of local governments in facilitating or brokering the establishment of community banks, rather than actually running banks.

## Information Society

Access to information and information technology is critical for a just society and Moreland will continue to expand the strategies already in place.

Citizens' free access to information in our community will be extended. Municipal information services (such as libraries) will be kept free of charge and readily accessible to the public. An integrated approach to communication and information will be adopted. This will include broadcasting, telecommunications, libraries, and Moreland's information technology resources.

Moreland Council will continue to oppose the tendering of public libraries. We will seek to increase computer terminals in Council Libraries in order to extend access to contemporary computer and information technology to our citizens.

Council will encourage and promote the development of a Moreland civic network will facilitate the online presence of Moreland community groups, business and individuals. This support will be based on the desire to see that the Internet incorporates venues that reflect the values, information and social interaction that constitute our local community.

Projects will be developed that will enhance the multilingual/multicultural presence of Moreland on the Internet. Special programs will be developed to encourage easy access to the Internet by people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Systems will be developed to improve Councillors' electronic communication systems, including email and Internet access.



## Building Sustainable Employment in Moreland

*Moreland Council will make employment and economic development a major focus of the 1999–2002 local government term.*

*Moreland will strive to create a stronger more vibrant and diverse local economy as a key means of building employment opportunities in Moreland.*

### **A Role for Local Government in Boosting Moreland's Employment**

Moreland has a particularly vulnerable workforce, with many young people, older people and people from non-English speaking backgrounds finding access to employment is becoming difficult.

Local government approaches to this undesirable state of affairs must include a strong economic development program, an education and awareness program, lobbying and advocacy, identification and promotion of strengths and intrinsic advantages in the Moreland workforce, and achieving the cooperation of local employers to provide opportunities to young people.

While local governments have limited capacity to make significant changes to unemployment figures, they can play a key role to support the development of a sound local economy. In fact, active local governments can become the key agency in a community for shaping the local economy. Cooperative regional approaches can enhance employment opportunities.

Partnerships will be formed with organisations such as trade unions, local and regional economic development bodies and local trading companies. The aims will be: to support new growth industries; to maintain existing industries where feasible and; to ensure that there are adequate education, training and retraining programs and structural adjustment procedures to cushion workers and the community against the negative aspects of economic change.

Moreland will advocate effective policies of industry and employment assistance to State and Federal Governments. In this process Moreland can offer local knowledge and information and ongoing support.

### **Attracting and Keeping Industry in Moreland**

Local governments have a role in attracting new industry to the City. In Moreland's case, strategic advantages can be identified as a selling point. These include Moreland's proximity to airports, the port and the central city. Moreland will identify other strategic advantages to employers, such as the advantage of having a multilingual workforce, of working within a strong, vibrant, harmonious multicultural community, and the support available from Council and the community. Special efforts will be made to attract green industry to Moreland.

Traditional Moreland industries like textile, clothing and footwear (TCF), food processing and vehicle components provide a strong industrial base. Efforts must be made to support gradual and strong restructuring of these industries to enable them to manage in increasingly competitive environments. These industries can be encouraged to develop specialty lines, work to corner boutique or niche sections of the market and to engage in export drives. However, a progressive local government has a responsibility to ensure that the restructuring does not always occur at the expense of employment conditions. In particular, Moreland must be prepared to work with unions to prevent exploitative practices that frequently occur with outsourcing.

In order to build up Moreland's capacity to negotiate with industry in the interests of the local workforce, Moreland will foster better links between the research conducted in local universities and the needs of local businesses. Support for Melbourne Institute of Textiles, which provides such stimulus to local value adding industry, is an important role for Council.

### **Support for the Un (or Under) Employed**

Council will play a role in getting information and assistance to unemployed people including those from non-English speaking backgrounds. Other support will include community development with unemployed and low-income residents. Support and self-help groups will be established. This activity can include the establishment of sharing, swapping and self-help schemes such as community gardens and local economic trading schemes (LETS). It may also include community initiatives to establish local savings and loans schemes for the assistance of low-income earners. Council is committed to promoting and fostering innovative initiatives to provide greater support to those bearing the brunt of a struggling local economy. Council must be prepared to advocate strenuously for the unemployed within the Moreland community.

Retail industries are a significant source of local employment in Moreland. Local governments can have a significant impact on local commercial and retail activity. Moreland will continue its strong support for the many strip and local shopping centres in the municipality, assisting local traders' organisations. Council will be prepared to consider special rates and other schemes supported by traders to boost the performance of a local shopping centre.

# 1999 Mayor's Speech

---

## Special Schemes – Innovation and Support

Moreland Council will establish a business incubator in the former Brunswick Municipal Offices. The incubator will support emerging local businesses and create a climate where local people with ideas for establishing new businesses will be trained and supported. The incubator will be encouraged to investigate ways of supporting employment growth through home-based self-employment and business throughout Moreland.

Council will establish a Jobs for Moreland employment policy to complement its involvement in the Just Jobs Campaign. This will source and create new jobs in Moreland and ensure that residents are given every opportunity to fill those jobs. In its own employment practices and in its letting of contracts, Council will support engagement of Moreland residents where all other factors are equal.

Council will enlist the support of key industry and employer groups, to prepare and gain wide support for a charter for achieving higher youth employment in Moreland.

Moreland Council will explore schemes of support for local infrastructure development and businesses. One such scheme is called Rates Incentive Financing (RIF). Local governments have the capacity to use their revenue raising function to support business development. They can and should also constantly monitor their other regulatory functions (planning powers and local legislation) to see that they facilitate local business and certainly do not impede it.

## For more information or copies of the Mayor's Speech please contact

The Mayor's Office  
Moreland City Council  
90 Bell Street  
Coburg  
Tel: (03) 9240 1194  
Fax: (03) 9240 1179

## Council Offices

Office hours:  
8.30am to 5.00pm  
Moreland City Council  
Coburg Offices  
90 Bell Street  
Coburg  
Brunswick Office  
233 Sydney Road  
Brunswick  
Glenroy Office  
796N Pascoe Vale Road  
Glenroy

**General enquiries**  
**Telephone: 9240 1111**

**April 1999**

# Councillors – Elected March 1999 for three years



**Rosemary Kerr**

## Grandview Ward

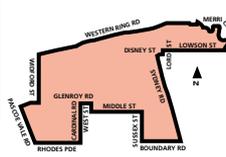


mobile 0419 514 587  
home 9306 5920  
email  
rkerr@moreland.vic.gov.au



**Ken Blair**

## Box Forest Ward

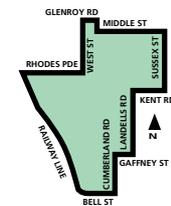


mobile 0418 576 627  
home 9300 1775  
email  
kblair@moreland.vic.gov.au



**Melanie Jane Raymond**

## Westbreen Ward

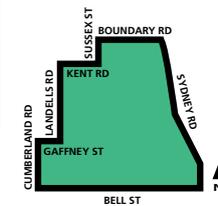


mobile 0408 376 388  
home 9387 7448  
email  
mraymond@moreland.vic.gov.au



**Rod Higgins**

## Lincoln Mills Ward

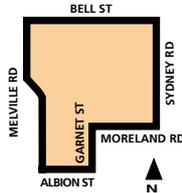


mobile 0419 513 085  
home 9354 1144  
email  
rhiggins@moreland.vic.gov.au



**Robert Larocca**

## Glencairn Ward

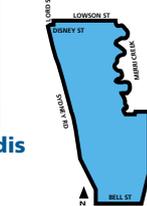


mobile 0409 189 644  
home 9384 1025  
email  
rlarocca@moreland.vic.gov.au



**Stella Kariofyllidis**

## Newlands Ward

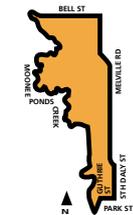


mobile 0419 517 986  
home 9386 5216  
email  
skariofyllidis@moreland.vic.gov.au



**Andrew Rowe  
Mayor**

## Moonah Ward

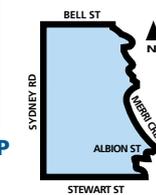


mobile 0419 513 994  
home 9386 4025  
email  
arowe@moreland.vic.gov.au



**Anthony Helou JP**

## Merri Ward

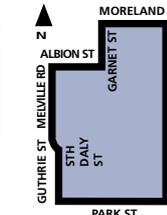


mobile 0419 515 593  
home 9384 0176  
email  
ahelou@moreland.vic.gov.au



**Andy Ingham**

## Hoffman Ward

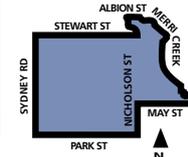


mobile 0418 354 735  
home 9384 1694  
email  
aingham@moreland.vic.gov.au

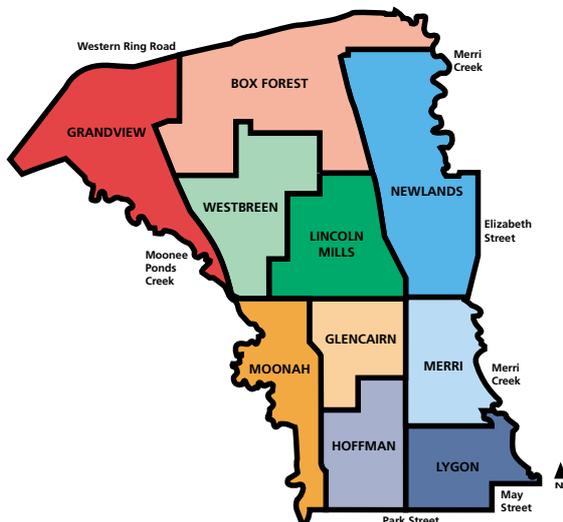


**Leigh Snelling**

## Lygon Ward



mobile 0407 504 113  
home 9380 2853  
email  
lsnelling@moreland.vic.gov.au



**Joseph O'Reilly Executive Officer – Mayor and Councillors**

Tel 9240 1222  
Fax 9240 1179  
email joreilly@moreland.vic.gov.au

