

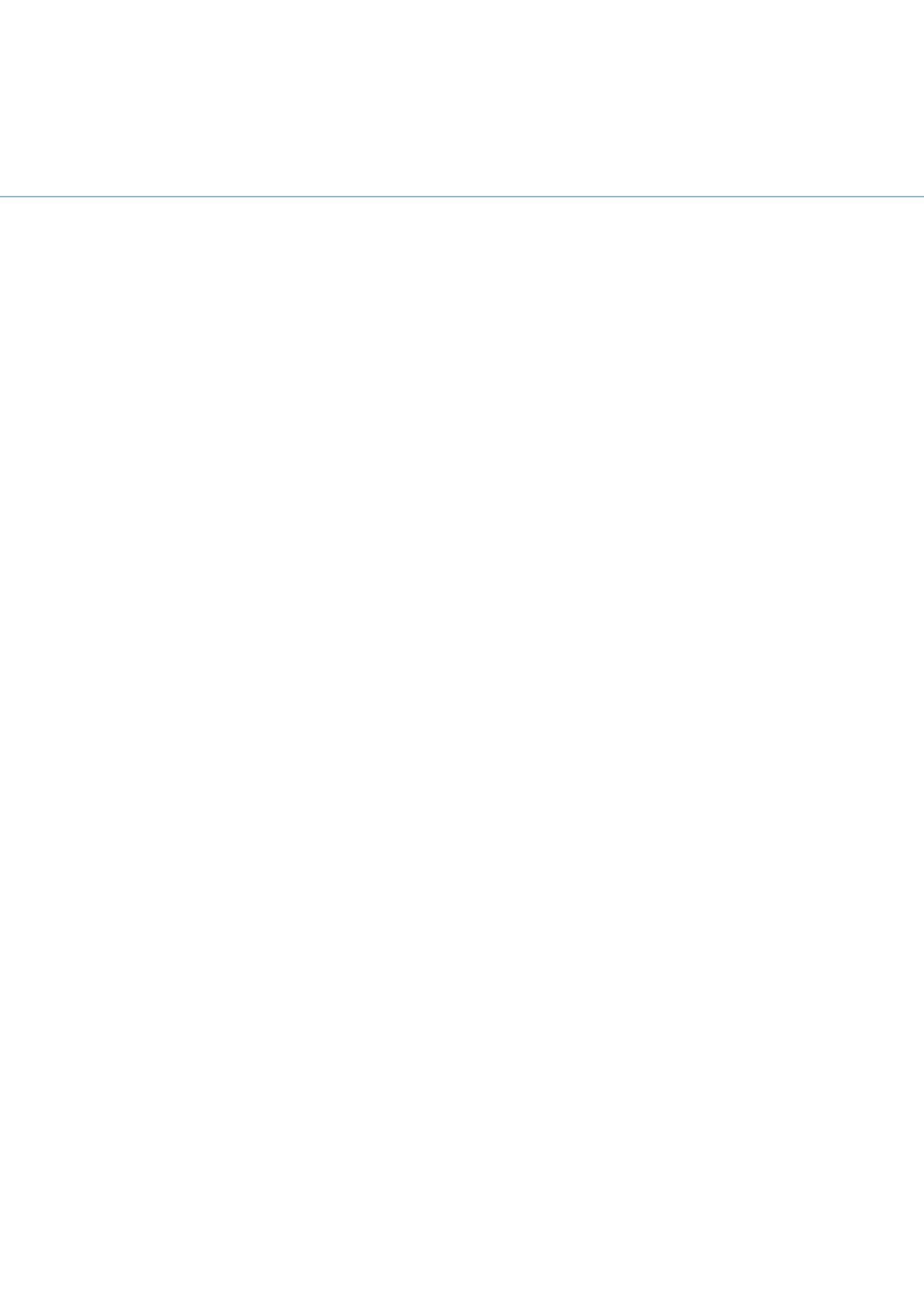
Moreland City Council

2002

Mayor's Speech

Valuing Diversity

improving our community



2002 Mayor's Speech

Valuing Diversity – improving our community



Councillor
Joe Caputo
Mayor

delivered the Mayor's Speech at the
Coburg Town Hall on 3 April 2002

Citizens and friends of Moreland!

I would like to start my speech tonight by paying my respects, on behalf of Council, to the local indigenous people of Moreland in acknowledging that we are on the traditional tribal lands of the Wurundjeri people. I offer my respect to the elders and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

It is truly an honour and a privilege to be chosen as Mayor of this dynamic City of Moreland.

Starting a term as Mayor of Moreland City Council can be quite an overwhelming responsibility. There is an enormous amount of work to be done along with high expectations for the year ahead.

I value this special opportunity I have been given to serve the Moreland community as its Mayor and I commit to carrying out this role to the best of my abilities. May I express my sincere appreciation to my fellow Councillors for placing their trust in me to lead this Council through its first year.

I have the definite advantage of following the exceptionally good Mayors and Councillors that have represented this community since the inception of Moreland. It gives me great confidence in knowing that a solid foundation has been built through their efforts and foresight.

To be sitting in Moreland's third democratically elected Council, together with former Mayors – Cr Helou, Cr Kariofyllidis and Cr Larocca, is also reassuring.

I am certain that the quality and strength of the collective talent provided by all Councillors will hold the City of Moreland in good stead.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the electors of Hoffman for having elected me as their Councillor twice in less than six months.

Democracy and Leadership

The recent Moreland elections reveal a community with a keen desire for leadership that presents a strong vision for our City, a community that supports a solid policy base and candidates who will work alongside Moreland citizens.

I am proud to belong to the Australian Labor Party, a Party that has recently celebrated its 100th anniversary, one that has made many significant contributions to Australian society and specifically to the City of Moreland.

Labor has demonstrated that it has the capacity to harness its historical mission of improving our society for the benefit of all. Labor has demonstrated its capacity to renew itself by developing strong policies, together with the community, to solve problems and respond to emerging issues.

Labor has also shown its ability to reflect, through its composition, our great multicultural and diverse community.

Those that advocate that political parties 'should not have a role in local government' do so from a reactionary point of view and have been soundly rejected by the people of Moreland.

In keeping with Labor's inclusive approach, we are committed to continuing to work with all Councillors of our City.

The elections are over and now it is the job of all ten Councillors to work as a team to improve this great city in which we live.

I look forward to working with all Councillors.

Diversity

Citizens of Moreland, we are very fortunate to be living in such a diverse and multicultural community.

It has been pleasing to see that our community recognises that multiculturalism and diversity enriches our society and makes us more dynamic, vibrant and definitely more interesting.

The benefits of our diverse city have been championed by Moreland before – our ethos ‘One Community Proudly Diverse’ is an example of that.

In years gone by, multiculturalism and migration were seen by some as problematic areas. As our society is maturing, we now appreciate that multiculturalism and diversity provides us with benefits never before imagined.

Historically, Moreland has been at the forefront in providing leadership so that we now recognise that embracing and promoting diversity, multicultural policies and reconciliation is the right thing to do – and this will create the base for prosperity and be a great source of civic pride.

In recent years we have seen Moreland Council establish sound relationships with our diverse communities and this is also reflected in Council’s composition.

It’s interesting to note that three of Moreland’s recent Mayors were Cr Tony Helou, an Australian born in Lebanon and active in our community for the past 30 years, Cr Kariofyllidis, the first woman born in Greece to have become Mayor of a major Australian municipality, and the last Mayor, Cr Robert Larocca whose father migrated here from the Abruzzo region of Italy. I myself was born in the Puglia region of Italy and migrated here via Brazil in the 1960s at 15 years of age.

I strongly believe that we must learn to see differences in a new light. We must promote and further explore the opportunities that our diversity provides us to further improve our community. Ultimately, we must embrace and appreciate diversity in all its forms.

The people of Moreland have demonstrated that we can live and thrive as a community, appreciating and respecting our differences.

Refugees

Our commitment to the cause of asylum seekers is beyond doubt. Moreland City Council has promoted and advocated on behalf of asylum seekers to be treated humanely and will continue to do so. In this effort, we are fortunate to have a number of very progressive community-based agencies that work hand in hand with us on this very important issue.

For example the Moreland Community Health Service has over the years provided medical and other related services to people on Temporary Protection Visas.

On the recent Palm Sunday we demonstrated our solidarity with asylum seekers in marching proudly under the banner of the City of Moreland, protesting at the unjust way the Federal Government continues to treat people that escape from oppression and tyranny.

Moreland City Council will continue to work together with all people of good will to address this unjust and unfair treatment of fellow human beings that seek refuge in our midst.

In the spirit of the theme of tonight’s Mayor’s Speech, ‘Valuing Diversity – improving our community’, we affirm our commitment to the values of respect and understanding. In partnership with our community I look forward to exploring fresh ways of expressing and celebrating our diversity.

Reflecting on Moreland’s second democratically elected Council

Before looking ahead to this Council’s three-year agenda, I would like to take this opportunity to outline some of the many achievements and qualities of the previous Council.

We have been handed an inspiring legacy that demonstrates a strong model of good governance, commitment, advocacy and responsibility to the Moreland community.

May I sincerely thank all Councillors of Moreland’s second local government for their tremendous contribution, their efforts and hard work throughout the last three years.

The range of accomplishments is truly impressive and demonstrates the scope of work carried out by local government.

Aged Care

Council took a leading role in advocating for proper and necessary funding for aged care, including home and community care services, by the State and Federal Governments. This significant issue has now been taken up by the local government peak body, the Municipal Association of Victoria.

Airport Rail Link

Council successfully campaigned against the Broadmeadows route for the proposed Airport Rail Link. Issues raised by Moreland, namely noise, safety and amenity, were acknowledged in the State Government decision.

Arts Precinct

Council gave an enormous boost to the Brunswick Arts Precinct with the opening of its new municipal art gallery, The Counihan Gallery In Brunswick, and the refurbished Mechanics Institute Performing Arts Centre. The first years of operation have established both as quality arts venues.

CityLink

Through Council's sound planning and proactive approach, local streets were largely protected from traffic avoiding tolls on CityLink.

East Timor

Driven by its community, Council established a friendship relationship with the East Timorese district of Aileu. This galvanised a strong response by Moreland to meet the most urgent needs of Aileu as well as a range of community empowerment initiatives.

Economic Development

Business and employment opportunities in Moreland were enhanced with the establishment of the Brunswick Business Incubator and the Moreland Community Enterprise Centre.

Employment and Training

Council was instrumental in leading the establishment of the Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network, a joint initiative with the local governments of Yarra and Darebin. Through its services, the network is enhancing education pathways and job skills matching, with a focus on Moreland's young people.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Council achieved a 20 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emission from 1995/96 to 2000/01. The development of the Moreland Greenhouse Abatement Strategy and the Greenhouse Action Plan will contribute to further reductions by Council and the community.

Infrastructure

Council increased spending on basic infrastructure, improving Moreland's roads and footpaths.

Libraries

Council expanded the book purchasing budget by CPI levels each year and carried out a series of physical improvements to Moreland's libraries.

Moreland Energy Foundation

With Council's commitment of \$5 million, the highly anticipated Moreland Energy Foundation began operating last year. The organisation will provide a range of energy programs to the community and promote initiatives in energy conservation.

Pascoe Vale Pool and Neighbourhood facility

With extensive community consultation, Council created a new neighbourhood facility at the Pascoe Vale Pool. Local residents and groups now have access to a community hall along with upgraded pool facilities.

Recycling and Waste Minimisation

Waste minimisation was further enhanced through the successful introduction of a new recycling and greenwaste service throughout Moreland. This 'easier, smarter and greener' service, along with other initiatives, has led to unprecedented levels of recycling in Moreland.

Road Safety

Council successfully campaigned for a 50 kph speed limit in local streets and established Moreland's first 40 kph school zone, contributing to greater road safety.

Traffic Management

Moreland conducted traffic management plans for seven neighbourhoods and a number of individual streets, helping to protect local streets.

Young People

Council held two successful youth summits and an inaugural e-summit with young people. The issues and suggestions made by the young people are incorporated into Moreland policy and were forwarded to the Victorian Government as a response to the development of the Victorian Youth Strategy.

A three year agenda for Moreland

This brings me to the core of my speech.

One of the strengths that we bring to Moreland City Council is that we have been working on our platform for many months prior to the Council elections.

Many people have worked and assisted in putting together our agenda for the next three years. The result of the recent election reflects the collective efforts of many talented people who are committed to making our community one of the most liveable and vibrant municipalities in the State of Victoria.

Our agenda is articulated by four key statements:

- we will work to improve Moreland's social conditions;
- we will work to improve Moreland's built and natural environment;
- we will work to create a sustainable employment base; and
- we will do this with open, responsible and accountable governance.

It is now my privilege to highlight the initiatives and direction that will contribute to Council's vision for this City.

Through these initiatives we will build on the solid foundations laid by the two previous democratically elected Councils and we will add value through our planning and deliberations so as to make it possible for future Councils to build on.

Keeping our basic infrastructure in good condition is a priority.

Ageing infrastructure is one of the most significant challenges facing Moreland. Council estimates that over the next 30 years about \$10 million will need to be spent each year just to maintain current infrastructure.

To respond to this challenge, Council will boost its investment in Moreland's infrastructure by continuing to allocate increasing proportions of Council funds to its maintenance, replacement and renewal.

In consultation with the Moreland community, Council will continue to develop its long term Financial Strategy in order to achieve the increased spending required on our roads, footpaths and drains to meet future needs.

Public assets are sacred.

Council will not sell any public assets to fund its operational budget.

Council makes a commitment that any redundant public assets will only be disposed of to fund new or improved public assets and only after consultation with the affected community.

Our public open spaces and waterways are the environmental gems of Moreland and need protection and improvement.

Council will work to ensure that all residents in Moreland live within 500 metres of useable open space. Council will not allow the sale of any piece of open space that it decides is well utilised by the community.

In cooperation with surrounding municipalities, Council will seek funding and other support from the State Government to create and manage a landmark park development in the Merri Creek corridor.

Council will create a 'green recycling and walking tourism trail', from CERES through Lake Reserve to Moomba Park.

Council should be more water wise.

Moreland Council will continue to encourage both Council and the community to be water wise.

As well as promoting a range of water saving techniques, Council will extend computer-controlled sprinkler systems to a range of Moreland parks. Moreland will implement a

program to promote the use of water tanks for non-drinking use across the municipality and will ensure that citizens have access to water tanks at a discount price.

The harm that we do to our environment must continue to be reduced.

Through the implementation of the Moreland Greenhouse Abatement Strategy and the Greenhouse Action Plan, Council will continue to vigorously pursue a 40 per cent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions for Council and a 20 per cent reduction by the community.

Our ageing community presents many challenges that we need to deal with.

Council will continue to condemn the appallingly low provision of nursing home beds in Moreland and the effect this has on health and the cost of other services.

Council will improve the provision of services for older people in Moreland.

We will improve the meeting and function spaces available for Moreland's senior citizens' groups through better use of private facilities, strategic improvement of Council's facilities, or through the building of new facilities where required.

Council shall start a Moreland Community Foundation and commence the Moreland Community Partnerships program.

Council will work with its community and businesses to create a Moreland Community Foundation that will aim to attract funding from government, business and philanthropic groups to improve social justice and the environment of Moreland. Council shall provide seed funding of \$50,000 to start the Foundation.

We will seek to enhance the capacity of sporting clubs to manage their own facilities as well as develop funding partnerships with clubs and other levels of government through the Moreland Community Partnerships programs.

Libraries are key learning centres in the Moreland community.

Libraries are a vital key to providing citizens with access to knowledge and information as well as to breaking down barriers in society. As such, Council will continue to ensure that the funds for the purchase of new books are increased at a minimum of the CPI rate each year.

Reconciliation is a passion of the Moreland community.

Council will continue to work with the local indigenous people, the Wurundjeri, to promote reconciliation in the community. Moreland will implement its Reconciliation Policy and Action Plan, building on Council's previous initiatives.

Council is committed to supporting more public housing.

Council has identified the need for more public housing in Moreland and will work in partnership with the State Government for the provision of more public housing within the City.

Council will continue its \$1.5 million commitment to the establishment of the Moreland Affordable Housing Fund.

Our roads need to be safer – people need more and better transport options.

We will complete the implementation of 40 kph school zones where appropriate around Moreland's primary schools.

We will campaign for the introduction of variable speed signs in Moreland's key shopping centres – Pascoe Vale Road, Sydney Road and Lygon Street. This will enable the speed limits to be reduced to a safer 40 kph at busy times, decreasing risk to pedestrians.

Council will prepare and implement a Pedestrian Safety and Mobility Plan along with a priority program for walking network improvements.

Council agrees with the State Government's public transport target of 20 per cent of all

trips by 2020 and will lobby for key public transport route improvements to help the State achieve that aim.

Our neighbourhoods are changing and these changes should be for the better.

Council will prefer development projects that promote and support community and environmental objectives.

Council is committed to an open and public review of the Moreland Municipal Strategic Statement and Residential Code, making sure this State Government code is more responsive to Moreland's diverse existing and preferred future character areas.

Council will continue to support the Brunswick Business Incubator.

The Brunswick Business Incubator will support emerging local business and create a climate where local people with ideas for establishing or growing their businesses will be trained and supported.

Council will continue its tradition of open and transparent governance.

Council will ensure its meetings, its publications, its statutory obligations, its public processes and its citizen liaison are conducted in a way which provides maximum access and maximum opportunities for participation by the community.

Council Meetings will be rotated throughout Moreland to facilitate maximum access.

A half-hour question time will be maintained at the commencement of each Council Meeting.

Moreland reaffirms its commitment to community consultation to assist its decision-making process. It commits to reviewing and improving its community consultation policy and mechanisms, as well as exploring new approaches to provide yet more opportunities for the community to be involved in the process.

Health services in Moreland need improvement.

Council will campaign to regain the much-needed 24-hour emergency room in a local hospital in Moreland.

Gaming has a negative impact on our community.

Council will oppose further increases in gaming machines in Moreland and seek an increased share of the multi-million dollar Community Support Fund to assist those hurt by gambling in the Moreland community.

Council's respect for the wonderfully diverse community shall continue.

Retention and constant improvement of the acclaimed Language Link communication strategy remains a Council priority.

Council will continue to find new and innovative ways of expressing and celebrating our cultural diversity.

Conclusion

We are fully aware that in order to bring about changes for the better every citizen needs to contribute towards the common good.

Moreland City Council will continue to provide leadership on the major issues that impact on our community as it has done in the past.

We call on the citizens of Moreland to get involved in their community and help us in making our City a model for other Councils to emulate.

Citizens of Moreland! Thank you for putting your trust in our team. We will deliver on our commitments.

These initiatives form part of a comprehensive policy detailed in the next section Moreland Council's Agenda 2002–2005.

Moreland Council's Agenda 2002–2005

Moreland's social conditions will improve

Aged Services

Council will improve the provision of services for older people in Moreland.

We will improve the meeting and function spaces available for Moreland's senior citizens' groups through better use of private facilities, strategic improvement of Council's facilities, or through the building of new facilities where required.

Council will continue its fight for increased appropriate funding from the State and Federal Governments for important home care and help aged services. For many of our older residents, these services are critical to their choice to remain at home. Council has responded to inadequate levels of funding by continuing to increase its rate subsidy to these services. Council cannot afford to continually raise the subsidy as the demand increases exponentially over time.

Council will continue to condemn the appallingly low provision of nursing home beds in Moreland and the effect this has on health and the cost of other services.

Arts and Culture

Council is committed to supporting local visual and performing arts. It will support existing artists and nurture emerging arts and artists. The Arts Precinct in Brunswick, with its core in the Counihan Gallery and the Mechanics Institute Performing Arts Centre, will be maintained and further developed. The gallery will continue to have free entry to all exhibitions and present local artists as a key component of its exhibition program.

Council will encourage and support arts activities throughout the City of Moreland.

The arts strategy developed by Council will be implemented, along with an arts in public places program.

The cultural grants program will continue to assist local artists and further cultural development in Moreland.

We shall continue our support of important community arts festivals, including the Brunswick Music Festival.

Children's and Family Services

Council will seek to develop partnership relationships with the State Government to improve planning of family and children's services throughout the municipality.

Council will play a key role in early childhood education in Moreland. It will maintain a preschool field officer and explore emerging opportunities, through the State Government, regarding the management and administration of preschools.

Community Grants

Council shall maintain the value of its numerous grants programs. The general community grants, sustainability grants and cultural grants programs will continue their critical role for hundreds of groups within the community.

Community Partnerships

Council will develop community partnership programs that promote the community's options for improving community infrastructure. Community partnerships allow Council to promote and support a community's interest in a particular improvement, but one that Council has no budget for in the foreseeable future. These programs will encourage local skills to come to bear for particular community projects. Key organisations such as Rotary, Lions, Scouts, friends groups and CERES shall be among the key partners.

Council will work with its community and businesses to create a Moreland Community Foundation that will aim to attract funding from government, business and philanthropic groups to improve social justice and the environment of Moreland. In particular, the foundation will provide Council with opportunities to develop partnerships with groups and organisations for the construction and improvement of community infrastructure focusing on social justice and the environment. Council shall provide seed funding of \$50,000 to start the Moreland Community Foundation.

Cultural Diversity

We are reminded of the ongoing need to promote our wonderfully diverse community and the underpinning values of respect and understanding. Council will continue to find new and innovative ways of expressing and celebrating our cultural diversity.

Moreland remains passionately committed to challenging ignorance and prejudice with its healthy model of indigenous engagement and multiculturalism. 'One Community Proudly Diverse' will continue to be Council's ethos.

Cultural Exchange

Council recognises the value of Moreland's long-established, special relationship with Xianyang in China and is committed to further strengthening the cultural and economic bonds between our cities.

Disability Access

Council's Disability Access Policy and Action Plan, which articulates Council's commitment to facilitating access for people with disabilities in the municipality, will be reviewed. This will involve consultation with the community and key interest groups.

Drugs and Alcohol

Council believes that drug addiction, along with other addictions, is a health and social issue. Current strategies to deal with the drug problem have proved to be inadequate and Council is committed to implementing strategies, devised with the community and other levels of government, to reduce the harmful impact of drugs and alcohol on our community.

East Timor

Council in conjunction with the community has set up and nurtured a friendship city relationship with Aileu in East Timor. Council will continue to support this relationship which fosters cultural awareness and understanding as well as providing practical assistance for the people of East Timor.

Festivals

Moreland Council will continue to support the Sydney Road Street Party as Council's key festival. This shall be held in conjunction with the acclaimed Brunswick Music Festival.

Council believes that community based festivals, such as the Coburg Festa, Pascoe Vale Festival and Glenroy Festival, are important and will carry on Moreland's supportive role in fostering them.

Council will complete the community festival site at Clifton Park, giving Moreland a dedicated location for the many diverse community festivals that choose Moreland as their home.

Council shall continue to run neighbourhood picnics.

Gambling

Council believes that there are too many gaming machines in Moreland and will continue its campaign for stronger controls over the number of gaming machines in the City.

Council will oppose further increases in gaming machines in Moreland and seek an increased share of the multi-million dollar Community Support Fund to assist those hurt by gambling in the Moreland community.

Leisure

Leisure is a significant key to a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle within Moreland. Leisure services and facilities will be constantly reviewed to ensure we are achieving the best use of resources. New leisure facilities will be developed, including tennis courts on the West Brunswick Bowling Club site, the development of a new skate facility in addition to the one in Coburg, and the completion of the works in Clifton Park.

Informal recreation facilities for youth, and for young women in particular, will be developed as a priority after appropriate consultation.

We will seek to enhance the capacity of sporting clubs to manage their own facilities and we will develop funding partnerships with clubs and other levels of government through Moreland Community Partnerships programs.

Council will increase the security for all groups operating from Council-owned facilities and land by developing leases. Council will ensure that the application of leases is not a revenue raising exercise.

Library Services

Council is committed to maintaining independent library services in Moreland to best serve the community. Libraries are a vital key to providing citizens with access to knowledge and information as well as to breaking down barriers in society. As such, Council will continue to ensure that the funds for the purchase of new books are increased at a minimum of the CPI rate each year.

We have a strong commitment to utilising new technology and new media, and using these to improve services in our libraries. Council's commitment to new technologies will not diminish physical access to Moreland's libraries.

Seven day a week operations will continue for the three largest libraries in Coburg, Brunswick and Glenroy. In line with that commitment, we will continue to improve the library buildings around Moreland to ensure that they are warm, user friendly and accessible for study.

The award winning Moreland Reading Program, including the infant reading program, will be continued and enhanced.

Local Laws

The focus for local laws in Moreland shall be compliance, not revenue raising. Having reviewed and refined its local laws, Council will be open to new local laws where appropriate.

Neighbourhood Houses

Moreland regards its neighbourhood houses as valuable community venues for people to meet, learn, gain new skills, and share ideas and experiences.

Council will establish a new neighbourhood house in Glenroy and continue seeking funding from government for improvements to the new Fawkner Neighbourhood House.

Council will continue to improve conditions at other neighbourhood houses in partnership with the community and other levels of government. We will, as a minimum, maintain the current funding levels to Moreland's neighbourhood houses.

Public Health

Local government has a key role in providing various public health services and a critical role in identifying the health needs of our community.

Council will revise and publicise the Moreland Municipal Public Health Plan developed over the last three years, to ensure it remains both relevant and responsive to current issues. This plan provides the framework for protecting and promoting the health of our City in a holistic manner for the whole community.

Council will also campaign to regain the much-needed 24-hour emergency room in a local hospital in Moreland.

Public Housing

Council is committed to supporting more public housing in Moreland and will continue our \$1.5 million commitment to the establishment of the Moreland Affordable Housing Fund.

Council has identified the need for more public housing in Moreland and will work in partnership with the State Government for the provision of more public housing within the City.

Rate Rebate

Unlike any other government benefit, the State Government pensioner rebate for municipal rates has not increased in 20 years.

Council recognises the impact this has on many older people in our community and will pressure the State Government to have it increased.

Council shall also, in conjunction with other local governments, investigate other options for reducing this financial burden on the aged who are on fixed incomes.

Reconciliation

Council will continue to work with the local indigenous people, the Wurundjeri, to promote reconciliation in the community. Moreland will implement its Reconciliation Policy and Action Plan, which builds on Council's previous initiatives.

Aside from the recognition of prior ownership of this land and maintenance of the Aboriginal flag next to the Australian flag, Council shall investigate and implement the appropriate marking of places of aboriginal archeological significance in Moreland.

Women

Moreland shall concentrate on assisting and promoting the involvement of women in community affairs. Council will work with women, including those from non-English speaking backgrounds, in building our community.

The growing network of neighbourhood houses benefits women in particular.

Council will look at a range of ways to celebrate the contribution of women in our community.

Young People

Council will ensure that young people are represented in Council decision-making structures and given the opportunity to participate more fully in the community. Youth Summits, organised and run by young people, will continue to be supported and encouraged.

Council will finalise and adopt the reviewed Youth Strategy.

Council is committed to providing a diverse range of sports and recreation facilities and activities for Moreland's young people.

Moreland's built and natural environment will improve

Better, Greener Design

Council is committed to improving the design qualities of new residential and commercial buildings.

Moreland supports efforts that will ensure new housing and commercial buildings satisfy more stringent environmental criteria such as five star energy efficiency, recycling of building materials, less intrusion of vehicles on sites at the expense of landscaping, and water waste reduction.

Council will promote good local designs by nominating appropriate outstanding new residential, commercial and industrial projects for planning, building and architectural design awards.

Council will investigate the creation of a green credits program that will encourage greater energy efficient design and household appliances as well as the incorporation of alternative energy sources such as solar power. Less intrusion of vehicles onto sites at the expense of landscaping and the use of recycled building materials will be supported. Reduced use of water and the recycling of grey water will also be promoted.

Climate Protection

As one of only eight local governments in Australia, Moreland City Council has now achieved the fifth and final milestone of the Cities for Climate protection program.

Through the implementation of the Moreland Greenhouse Abatement Strategy and Greenhouse Action Plan, Council will continue to vigorously pursue a 40 per cent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions for Council and a 20 per cent reduction by the community.

Energy

Moreland will honour its promise of \$5 million to the Moreland Energy Foundation Limited (MEFL), enabling it to continue the necessary energy efficiency initiatives at a local level.

Through MEFL, Council will continue to work with other local governments to participate in the 'Community Power' group.

Council will maintain its current budget allocations for energy programs, initiatives and education.

Moreland will adopt the electromagnetic radiation (EMR) strategy developed in 1999 and will conduct a survey of redundant EMR-producing infrastructure in the city.

Council will support and help fund the CERES Sustainable Community Centre along with continuing our yearly financial support to this key community organisation.

Greening and Streetscapes

Council will continue its strong emphasis on improving and greening streetscapes and revegetation initiatives, in accordance with the Moreland Street Landscape Strategy, and in consultation with the Greening Moreland Forum.

This will see over 40,000 trees planted in Moreland over three years, community and school planting days, and the annual Autumn Planting Festival.

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

Council shall investigate expanding its indigenous plant nursery to include seed collection, advice and weekend services.

Kerbside Street Numbering

Council will explore options for a standardised system of kerbside street numbering to aid the navigation of streets.

Open Space

Council is committed to improving the quality of urban life within the municipality through public open space.

Council will work to ensure that all residents in Moreland live within 500 metres of useable open space. Council will not allow the sale of any piece of open space that it decides is well utilised by the community.

Council will continue to support and work with the Greening Moreland Forum to implement the 20 year Open Space Strategy for the City.

We will continue to oppose the commercialisation and exclusive use of public parks. However, we will implement a parks partnership policy (Adopt a Park) to direct community-guided improvements in our parks.

Council will continue improvements to, and creation of, parks in Moreland such as Bain Reserve, the Harding Street Park, Bush Reserve and Moomba Park.

Council will continue to support parks' friends groups and will encourage the formation of new friends groups for parks that are not currently supported in this way. Council will seek to develop partnerships with communities to enhance the environmental qualities of our parks and opportunities for environmental education.

In cooperation with surrounding municipalities, Council will seek funding and other support from the State Government to create and manage a landmark park development in the Merri Creek corridor.

Planning

In common with the State Government, Council acknowledges the environmental benefits of urban consolidation.

We will continue to support increased urban density where it is appropriate to the neighbourhood precinct.

Council will give support to development projects that promote and support community and environmental objectives.

Council is committed to an open and public review of the Moreland Municipal Strategic Statement and Residential Code, making sure that this State Government code is more responsive to Moreland's diverse existing and preferred future character areas.

Moreland is committed to flexible planning rather than prescriptive planning.

We will continue with our promise to consult on contentious planning applications, including residents and applicants.

Council will explore options for making planning scheme information available online, including zoning, planning applications and planning decisions.

Council will also act to ensure that new developments include enhanced pedestrian and bike linkages.

Stormwater Management

Council is committed to implementing the Moreland Stormwater Management Plan which was completed through extensive consultation with key agencies and the community. The plan identifies the significant values of our local creeks and waterways, assesses the threats to these values, and contains strategies to protect the quality of stormwater and our waterways.

Transport

We must work with the State and Federal Governments to improve our community's transport options. Conditions must be improved for public transport, bicycles, pedestrians and people using wheelchairs.

We will continue to implement Moreland's Integrated Transport Strategy (MITS) and its recommendations to help reduce the negative impacts of some of our transport choices.

Council will continue to pursue innovative programs, designed to reduce reliance on cars and improve our residential amenity, both locally and through the State and Federal Governments. These programs include street reclaiming (reducing vehicle movements by using streets for local neighbourhood activity); walking buses to schools (collecting children at stops along a designated walking route to school); and individual household transport plans.

Transport – Bicycles

Council will continue the implementation of the Moreland Bicycle Plan and will continue to improve the functionality of the bicycle network in Moreland. This will include further line markings on roads and extensions to the off-road path network.

Transport – Freeways

Transurban's CityLink has had a negative impact on Moreland's road network and residential amenity. We will continue to campaign for improvements to noisewalls and landscaping, along with reductions in the environmental and financial cost of CityLink to our residents. Council will also continue to monitor the effect on our local streets and take action where possible to reduce it.

Council shall continue to oppose the Craigieburn bypass as the solution to the transport issues in Moreland.

Transport – Pedestrians

Council will prepare and implement a Pedestrian Safety and Mobility Plan along with a priority program for walking network improvements. The plan will have the dual aim of improving safety for pedestrians while ensuring that there are functional walking networks in our local neighbourhoods.

Transport – Public Transport

Council agrees with the State Government's public transport target of 20 per cent of all trips by 2020 and will lobby for key public transport route improvements to help the State achieve that aim.

Moreland will lobby for better coordination and strategic improvements to public transport, in line with the Moreland Missing Links Study.

We will continue to work closely with the municipalities of Hume, Whittlesea and Darebin, the Department of Infrastructure and the Metropolitan Transport Forum to achieve public transport improvements in the northern region.

Moreland will maintain its opposition to transport planning decisions that ignore non-vehicular modes of transport, arguing instead for public transport improvements to increase residents' access and mobility.

Council will oppose any service reductions and, in line with the Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy, continue to develop relationships with transport providers in Moreland.

Transport – Road Safety

Council will keep road safety at the top of its priorities. Following Moreland's strong advocacy for, and the subsequent implementation of, the 50 kph speed limits in our local streets, it is necessary to achieve key speed reductions in our local shopping centres and schools.

We will complete the implementation of 40 kph school zones where appropriate around Moreland's primary schools.

We will campaign for the introduction of variable speed signs in Moreland's key shopping centres – Pascoe Vale Road, Sydney Road, and Lygon Street. This will enable the speed limits to be reduced to a safer 40 kph at busy times, decreasing risk to pedestrians.

We will continue to work with local communities to research and implement measures to slow traffic down in their local streets. Through Local Area Traffic Management (LATM), we will see residents directly involved in the planning of any changes necessary to make our local streets safer.

Transport – Sydney Road

Moreland believes that with the agreement of the State Government, public transport providers, traders and shoppers it can make Sydney Road work better. Council has worked for the last three years to that end. Such a plan could see faster trams and wider footpaths for shoppers.

However, we have been disappointed by the State Government's lack of agreement on the plan to improve transport in Sydney Road. Council considers it important that changes are made to Sydney Road to make it function better for public transport, pedestrians, people using wheelchairs, cyclists and as a shopping environment.

Moreland will continue to improve Sydney Road through the Central Coburg Integrated Plan and the development and implementation of the Sydney Road Urban Design Improvements Strategy.

Urban Character

Council is committed to improving the urban character of Moreland.

Council will prefer development projects that promote and support community and environmental objectives. We will ensure that planning assessment places emphasis on community consultation, energy conservation, preferred neighbourhood character, and innovation in design.

In keeping with ResCode, Council will develop a plan to work with residents to establish neighbourhood character standards.

Urban Villages

Urban villages will be places that exemplify our vision of an environmentally sustainable and liveable city where people can live, shop, work and socialise locally, without the need for a car.

Council will continue its commitment to the Urban Villages Project with the creation of structure plans for all remaining sites that do not have one.

Residents in these neighbourhoods will have input into the vision for their precinct and the setting up of local neighbourhood planning policies and provisions for neighbourhoods. This will include defining the preferred neighbourhood character of precincts and identifying the rate of change suitable for these precincts.

Waste

Council shall continue to work with the Moreland community to further reduce the quantity of waste that is sent to landfill. This will require the continuation of the recently improved recycling service, further education and information on recycling opportunities.

Council will also commit to working with communities and employers to reduce litter and industrial run-off.

Council will further enhance its highly successful Footprints education initiative which now features waste, energy and stormwater education in Moreland schools.

Water Use Reduction

Moreland Council shall continue to encourage both Council and the community to be water wise.

As well as promoting a range of water saving techniques, Council will extend computer-controlled sprinkler systems to a range of Moreland parks. Council will implement a program to promote the use of water tanks for non-drinking water across the municipality and will ensure that citizens have access to water tanks at a discount price.

Moreland will also continue to promote indigenous gardens that need little water.

Waterways

Moreland's waterways are a scarce and unique resource and their improvement has been instrumental in bringing back flora and fauna that had previously resided in the area.

In addition to the two larger creeks, attention for the regeneration of the Edgar and Merlynston Creeks shall continue.

Moreland will continue to implement its commitment to create wildlife corridors throughout the municipality and implement stormwater management plans to lift the quality of the water in our creeks.

Council will continue to work with creek friends groups, believing that the most effective way to improve our creeks is through action by local residents.

Waterways – Merri Creek

Council is committed to providing resources to the development of the Moomba Park Wetlands and to attracting funding from agencies, including Melbourne Water and Parks Victoria, for this project.

Council will create a 'green recycling and walking tourism trail' from CERES through Lake Reserve to Moomba Park.

Waterways – Moonee Ponds Creek

Council will continue its efforts to revitalise the Moonee Ponds Creek, along with support of the principles in the Moonee Ponds Creek Concept Plan and the resourcing of the Moonee Ponds Creek Coordinating Committee.

Council is committed to putting resources into revitalising the Moonee Ponds Creek and to attracting funding from State and Federal Government agencies and private companies including Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, Melbourne City Link Authority and Transurban.

Weed control

Council shall conduct a review of its weed control programs.

Building Sustainable Employment in Moreland

A Role for Local Government in Boosting Moreland's Employment

Council recognises that local government can be a key agency for shaping the local economy within the community.

While this is the case, cooperative regional approaches can enhance employment opportunities and Council will work cooperatively on a regional basis to achieve this.

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

Council will advocate for policies and funding of employment assistance from State and Federal Governments.

Council will establish a sustainable *Jobs for Moreland* employment policy. This will support the sourcing and creation of new jobs in Moreland and help ensure that residents are provided with opportunities to apply. 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 key industry and employer groups to prepare and gain wide support for a youth employment charter and increased youth employment in Moreland.

Attracting and Keeping Industry in Moreland

Council will work to attract industry, in particular 'green' industry, to Moreland and to keep industry in our City.

Moreland will promote its strategic advantages, such as proximity to airports, the port and the central city, the benefit of having a multilingual workforce, a strong, vibrant and harmonious multicultural community, and the support available from Council and the community.

Traditional Moreland industries like textile, clothing and footwear (TCF), food processing and vehicle components provide a strong industrial base and Council has a responsibility to encourage that restructuring in these industries does not occur at the expense of employment conditions. In particular, Moreland must be prepared to work with unions to prevent exploitative practices that can occur with outsourcing.

Council will also take proactive steps to encourage the transition to new industries in replacement of traditional industries. The completion and implementation of the Industrial Areas Review will be a key to taking these proactive steps.

In order to build Moreland's capacity to negotiate with industry in the interests of the local workforce, Moreland will foster better links between local university researchers and local businesses in order to meet their innovation needs. Support for RMIT, which can help local value-adding industries, is an important role for Council.

Best Value

Council will use the Victorian Government's Best Value model as a tool to improve the activities and services Council offers to the community. Moreland will prefer partners that lead to an improvement in the Moreland economy.

Council is committed to efficiency and improvement but rejects the competitive notion that judges all services only on their cost. Best Value means value for money with a clear focus on the quality delivery of services.

Brunswick Business Incubator

Council will continue to support the Brunswick Business Incubator, created in the former Brunswick Secondary College site, as a model for nurturing strong and sustainable businesses that create ongoing employment in Moreland. The incubator will support emerging local businesses and create a climate where local people with ideas for establishing or growing their 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.

Budgetary Policy

Council reaffirms its commitment 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 Moreland's budget must be justified through clear policy development with 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 achieve the greatest community value. Within legislative constraints, Council will collect revenue in an equitable manner and according to the capacity to pay within the community. 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.

Council will also investigate cost-effective ways to encourage the early payment of rates or at least on-time payments.

Community Banking

Council has played a key role in the campaign for a community bank in Moreland by supporting the communities in Brunswick and Oak Park in their efforts to establish community banking.

Council will continue to facilitate communities who wish to establish a community bank by providing them with administrative support and \$1000 towards a feasibility study. We will also ensure that a proportion of Council's banking business is conducted through a community bank in Moreland.

Education

Council shall defend public education and advocate for it in the community. It shall work with public schools in Moreland to promote public education.

We will continue to strengthen the connection between Council and education and training through the Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network.

Council will also advocate and lobby for educational policies that encourage a sense of community and its well being.

Industrial Relations

Council believes that highest quality services are best achieved through a partnership between direct employees of the Council, unions and the community. This is why Council successfully fought against the negative outcomes of the Liberal Party's CCT policy by training its own employees to successfully compete and capitalise on their skill and knowledge.

Council's style will be non-confrontational, based on trust, openness, consultation, and provision of adequate information and negotiation. This entails the rejection of non-union workplace enterprise agreements and the placement of the general workforce on individual contracts.

Infrastructure Management

Ageing infrastructure is one of the most significant challenges facing Moreland. Council estimates that over the next 30 years about \$10 million will need to be spent each year just to maintain infrastructure.

To respond to this challenge, Council will boost its investment in Moreland's infrastructure by continuing to allocate increasing proportions of Council funds to its maintenance, replacement and renewal.

In consultation with the Moreland community, Council will continue to develop its long-term Financial Strategy in order to achieve the increased spending required on our roads, footpaths and drains to meet future needs.

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

Moreland Community Enterprise Centre

Council will continue to support and grow the Moreland Community Enterprise Centre at the Brunswick Town Hall as a further example of its support for emerging business and other organisations.

National Competition Policy

Council rejects the misapplication of the National Competition Policy to local government activities. Moreland Council will defend its right to provide subsidies to community-based groups and organisations.

Payments to Council

Moreland will continue to make it easier to deal with Council by expanding the options for the payment of rates and other charges. In particular, Council will introduce the payment of rates online and via credit cards at citizens service centres.

Privatisation, Asset Sales and Corporatisation

Council 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.

Council will not sell any public assets to fund its operational budget.

Council makes a commitment that 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 and/or responsibility. Functions of Council will remain accountable to the community through its elected representatives.

Support for the Unemployed and Underemployed

Council will play a continuing role in providing information and assistance to unemployed people including those from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Council is committed to promoting and fostering innovative initiatives to provide greater support to those in need. Council must be prepared to advocate strenuously for the unemployed within the Moreland community.

Traders Associations

Retail industries are a significant source of local employment in Moreland.

Moreland will continue its strong support for the many strip and local shopping centres in the municipality.

Moreland is committed to working with the established trader groups in Glenroy, Coburg and Brunswick. Council will continue to support special charge schemes for these areas and provide ongoing encouragement for these groups in their role in shopping strip promotion.

Moreland will have open, responsive and consultative governance

Accountability

Council is committed to maintaining open and accessible processes. Council will ensure its meetings, its publications, its statutory obligations, its public processes and its citizen liaison are conducted in a way which provides maximum access and maximum opportunities for participation by the community.

Council reiterates its commitment to the Code of Good Governance.

Council will ensure that all inquiries and complaints are dealt with promptly and thoroughly.

Councillors will be available to the community and committed to investigating any concerns or complaints brought forward by the community.

Council will investigate and provide assistance to ensure that Councillors are able to improve their accountability to the community.

Communicating with Council

Council will require that all communications to Council are responded to and answered within a month of receipt. Where matters are simple this will be the timeframe for the substantive reply, otherwise citizens will be informed of the progress of their matter in this timeframe. This standard shall apply to all forms of communication, be it mail, e-mail, fax or phone call.

Communications

Council will continue to use local papers, non-English language press, community radio, the Moreland City News and the Internet to communicate with Moreland residents and businesses.

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

Council will continue to expand the online opportunities for citizens to interact with Council and its staff. This will include online meetings, an online newsletter facility, more information on the Council homepage, and more online question times.

Community Consultation

Council reaffirms its commitment to community consultation to assist its decision-making process. It commits to reviewing and improving its community consultation policy and mechanisms, as well as exploring new approaches to provide yet more opportunities for the community to be involved in the process.

Council will ensure that community groups and people wanting to participate in decision-making processes that affect them, whether it be with a Council or another authority, have their voice heard.

Council and Committee Meetings

Council's commitment to maintaining a high level of accountability and openness in local government in Moreland includes making Council and Committee Meetings work for the benefit of the community.

Council recommitments that 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.

Council Meetings will be rotated throughout Moreland to facilitate maximum access.

A half-hour question time will be maintained at the commencement of each Council Meeting.

Electoral Systems

Council will, as soon as the Local Government Act Update is finalised, review and investigate the appropriate number and type of wards, ward boundaries and the number of Councillors to provide adequate representation.

This review will require the maximum community participation.

At the core of the review will be the principles for good governance set out in the Victorian Local Governance Association/Municipal Association of Victoria Code of Good Governance.

As a result of the review, Council will work to have the new electoral structures in place for the following 2005 Municipal Elections.

Governance

A first principle of local democracy is that elected Councillors remain accountable to their constituents. Candidates for election will 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. 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.

Council will continue to campaign for the constitutional recognition of local government.

Inclusive Democratic Practice

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

Local Democratic Structures

The commitment to using community advisory committees as a means of providing policy advice to Council will be extended. A review will be undertaken of all existing advisory committees to Council. In the short term this shall be a review of membership and purpose. In the longer term it shall be a review of the actual overall structure. Additional committees will be established where required.

Council supports democratic management structures for local community groups and agencies and rejects any approach to appoint committees to manage community affairs.

Political Leadership

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.

Council is committed to a full-time Mayor.

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. 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 continue to be provided to Councillors and members of the community participating in local government committees and other activities, where deemed appropriate by Council.

Council is committed to a system of Portfolios and Project Responsibilities for the elected Councillors. This ensures that political leadership is maintained across all areas of Council activity.

Service Charters

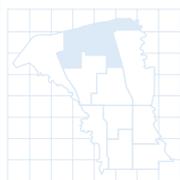
Local governments offer the most meaningful opportunity for citizens to become involved in the governing processes.

Council will continue to develop Service Charters that will clearly establish the expectations citizens can have with regard to the level of performance of Council activities and services.

Councillors – Elected March 2002 for three years



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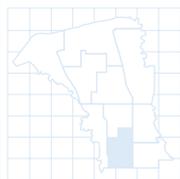


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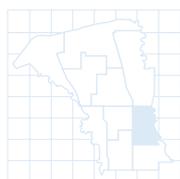


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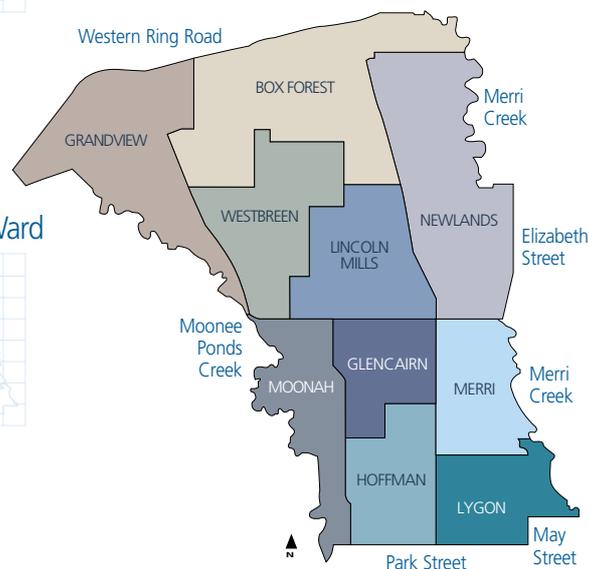


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