



Moreland City Council

Mayor's Speech 2003

Listening To You ...Working For You



2003 Mayor's Speech

Listening To You...Working For You



Councillor
Joe Ficarra
Mayor

delivered the Mayor's Speech at the
Coburg Town Hall on 26 March 2003

Good evening to everyone and welcome to this evening's ceremonial meeting of council. Being elected Mayor of Moreland 2003 is an honour and indeed a privilege and I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow councillors for investing in me their confidence and trust.

Being Mayor of a city as diverse and dynamic as Moreland is a challenge that I welcome and it is a responsibility that I will carry out to the best of my ability.

The Mayor of any city is the leader of its governing body – the Council. In order for Moreland to continue to grow into a city where its citizens feel valued, where the voices of its constituents are welcomed, where our ageing population is assisted and provided for, and where the youth of tomorrow have a sense of a future - the Mayor must work in unison with his fellow councillors. It is a collaborative approach, and I am proud to be part of a council that has so much dedication, talent and determination.

To all previous Moreland Mayors who have each contributed their own unique achievements, I thank you for the legacy you have left our city.

To Joe Caputo, Mayor of Moreland for 2002/3 a fierce campaigner and advocate of the importance of cultural diversity, ethnic acceptance, unity and harmony within our multicultural city, I congratulate you and thank you for your great work and for your tireless effort.

Mayoral Pledge

As Mayor for 2003/4, I pledge my total commitment to this challenging position and will always diligently and conscientiously continue the work and standards set by previous Mayors.

I will be accessible to the citizens of Moreland and as part of my commitment to our theme for 2003 'Listening to You...Working for You' I will be introducing a 'Meet the Mayor program' which will be piloted over the next three months, giving the citizens of Moreland the opportunities to voice their concerns and aspirations directly to the Mayor. The times, dates and locations of these meetings will be published in the local newspaper and in 'Moreland Matters'. An e-discussion forum will be launched on Monday 31st March on the Moreland web site. I will regularly participate in this forum, which will give residents an opportunity to raise issues directly with Council officers and myself.

Together with my fellow councillors, I am committed to implementing the goals and policies that will benefit all citizens of Moreland and continue to support the city to progress and become a role model for other municipalities.



Role of Council

The role of council is multi-faceted. However, its main role is as representative of the community and provider of services for the benefit of all citizens. Council provides health services, recreational activities and facilities, maintains and develops parks, resolves land and building issues, develops and maintains infrastructure, and provides educational services. It makes sure money is spent in the best possible way to maximise the best results for the community. Council also promotes cultural diversity and associated activities.

A responsible and effective council cannot be divorced from its citizens. Councillors cannot function as a sole entity. This council rests on a partnership of communities and democratically elected councillors. We councillors represent the local communities, with the aim of achieving outcomes that are responsible, responsive and beneficial to everyone living and working in Moreland. We are committed to this representation and affirm this commitment by inviting you to become actively involved in your local council.

The voices of the citizens that I hear, want a responsive, effective local government that:

- maintains and values social justice;
- delivers timely services;
- maintains infrastructure;
- assists in the building of the local economy;
- welcomes and respects cultural diversity; and
- provides strong political leadership.

Moreland prides itself on effective consultation with its citizens and we pledge our continued commitment to maintaining open channels of communication with all Moreland residents. This includes consultative decision making practices and opportunities for individuals and community groups to be involved in the issues that affect their lives.

Much of the credit for the dynamic progress of Moreland must go to its citizens. Without your continued engagement, Moreland would not be the thriving and active municipality that it is today.

Local Government and Democracy

Local government plays a vital role and has crucial responsibilities within the framework of the Australian political system. Local government is a democratically elected group of councillors whose role it is to **listen - consult - respond**.

The City of Moreland is proud to be at the forefront of local government in representing its citizens' needs and aspirations to the State and Federal Government.

Local Government is the first tier of Government and plays an important role in people's daily lives. The recognition of Local Government within Victoria's Constitution is a significant step. I applaud the State Government and trust the legislation will be enacted as soon as possible.

We will continue to work with the Victorian Local Governance Association, the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Australian Local Government Association and groups of Councils in northern metropolitan region to make our voice heard.

In the likely event of reforms being made to the Local Government Act, Council will engage in a debate, both internally and with the community, about the most democratic, progressive and appropriate governance for our municipality.

Moreland will continue its strong campaign against cost shifting. This is the practice of moving services to local government and then taking away funding. We will argue for local government to receive the funding and consideration it deserves as a genuine first tier of government.

Through active participation in its local government, the citizens of Moreland are ensuring that the essence of democracy is enhanced. Council is committed to encouraging and continuing a participatory culture in this community and to supporting and sustaining a local democratic philosophy.

Yet, even within this democratic process, there are often those who feel aggrieved and disenchanted by their council. It is during council meetings that all community members are given the opportunity to attend and voice their concerns or aspirations. They can contribute to the decision making process of the municipality.

Local government is not remote. Councillors live, work and raise their families in Moreland. We are just as affected by decisions as the next resident. It is also a highly accessible form of government. Councillors are easy to contact, by phone, fax, mail, email, or at ward meetings. Residents should not hesitate to contact their councillors about any issues or concerns pertaining to their local area or entire municipality.

Commitments

Looking after our Ageing Population

Moreland's population is ageing at a more rapid rate than the rest of Melbourne.

The ageing members of our community deserve respect and assistance. Moreland celebrates the contributions of our elder citizens to the richness, diversity and well being of our society.

Council is committed to providing these valuable members of our community with appropriate aged care services. These services will be accessible to all in need, cater for cultural differences, reduce anxiety and stress for family members and provide facilities that create comfort, satisfaction and security. In short, they enable a life, which is fulfilling, dignified and empowered.

We are fortunate to have many small, community oriented aged care facilities. Regrettably, many of these services are under threat because the Federal Government's current funding formula favours larger institutions. There is a need to act immediately to address funding for residential care. We don't want to see any further residential care beds lost in Moreland.

The Federal Government must find short and longer-term solutions to the crisis facing aged care in our city. We will continue to represent the interests of Moreland residents until suitable solutions can be attained.

Residential Aged Care services are but one part of the continuum and network of services, both formal and informal, which complement each other to support older people in our community.

Council is a major provider of a range of aged services to over 3000 households, providing:

- home care;
- personal care;
- respite care;
- home maintenance;
- assistance with transport;
- social support; and
- recreational opportunities.

For many, access to these services involves waiting for services to become available and many recipients could do with more hours of assistance.

Last year, a major campaign for increased Home and Community Care funding from State and Federal Governments was highly successful with a State government election promise of additional



funds. We also continued progress on a series of administrative reforms being undertaken by State Department of Human Services.

We still need more and will campaign for more. The year 2003 will see a sustained focus on this issue, with goals of increasing the hours for each recipient and decreasing waiting lists.

Apart from the direct Home and Community Care services, there are also many other services and resources in Moreland for elderly people, including community health services, day centres, advice and assistance to carers, support groups, and counselling.

It is of course vital that these valuable resources work together in a coordinated and integrated way and are likewise linked and integrated with residential care options. Council is committed to assisting and enhancing this approach.

Road Safety

Road safety is an issue that affects us all. To have road safety, we need safe roads. Therefore, Council will continue to improve road maintenance. The Moreland Asset Management Strategy contains significant increases in spending to adequately maintain roads. These funds will be identified and directed to our road capital works program.

Despite the Transport Accident Commission's graphic 'Road Safety Campaign', the road toll is still too high. The safety of our streets for all residents is of major concern for Council. Our roads have become chaotic and choked with ever increasing number of vehicles and the modern destructive syndrome of 'road rage' is becoming a concern.

As drivers we are all held accountable for road safety. We cannot attribute the blame for the increasing road toll to a certain sector of the community.

One of the most vulnerable areas in terms of road safety are those near our primary schools.

I am sure that we have all witnessed the chaos and the potential danger that exists before and after school. I have often observed miraculous misses as children run across roads (much to the concern of parents and teaching staff) choosing not to use the safety crossing, considering themselves somewhat invincible. Children seem to have a tendency to believe that they are quicker than motor vehicles. They think they can out race the car that is zooming down the road.

How often do we see impatient parents who feel that their time is the most important and ignore the 'no parking areas' or try to out manoeuvre the 'crossing supervisors' or become irate and verbally abusive when approached to exercise some caution?

The care and safety of all pedestrians, especially our children, is the responsibility of all.

Therefore, Council aims:

- to continue to reduce accidents between cars and pedestrians.
- to work with residents to find the reasons for, and possible solutions to, their local road safety issues through Local Area Traffic Management studies.
- to continue to identify and apply for funding from the State and Federal Government Black Spot programs to improve road safety for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists.
- to review all primary schools drop off and pick up zones to ensure the safety of our children and the school community.
- to work closely with VicRoads to ensure that at least half of our all schools will have 40 kmh zones within 12 months.

World Peace

At present, we are all aware the world is in political turmoil, and world peace seems to be an elusive concept, desired by all, yet impossible to achieve. Many of us here tonight have either directly or indirectly experienced the tragedy and futility of war.

From the beginning of time, peace has been the ultimate goal of many community and world leaders. The word 'peace' does not only imply:

- a world without war,
- OR nuclear weapons,
- OR terrorism,
- OR political upheaval,
- OR dictatorships.

An active member of Veterans for Peace Leo Sandy, said:

'Positive peace is... a pattern of co-operation and integration between major human groups...it is about people interacting in co-operative ways, it is about social organisations of diverse peoples who willingly choose to co-operate for the benefit of all...'

This statement echoes the role and value of communities and local government.

The equitable distribution of resources and privileges is an important step towards peace. In a world that is plagued by negativity, jealousy, resentment, distrust, fear, deception and power struggle, people seek to connect with each other in communities. Within local communities there is a sense of belonging, a sense of unity and comradeship where all residents should feel empowered, respected and valued.

Local government is very much part of the local community, it is the governing body representing the voice of the city. Together, in partnership, the local government and the community work for an equitable, positive and safe environment.

The famed scientist and Noble Laureate Albert Einstein said: 'Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.'

It is this understanding that will nurture a community where justice and acceptance are at the forefront and where diversity does not mean alienation, but enrichment, acceptance and pride.

Council will continue to advocate for the rights and interests of all its constituents. We are further committed to bringing fairness and justice through the allocation and distribution of our resources to all citizens and we affirm our commitment to sustaining and maintaining acceptance and respect for our diverse community.

Leisure

Sport is an integral part of all school curriculums and it also plays a vital role within our community. We acknowledge the positive attributes both in terms of mental and physical well being associated with sport.

It's important that Council continue to increase the number of young people, men and women participating in leisure activities in the municipality.

Council will consider designs and propose locations for a Moreland Skate facility. This will be a great sporting and recreational asset for all to enjoy. We aim to complete the statutory process by the end of 2003.

We will also work towards a community basketball facility by campaigning to retain the community sports hall at the old Brunswick Secondary School site.

Detailed Commitments for 2002 Year in Review

A Diverse Community

The City of Moreland comprises more than 120 nationalities and cultures, all who have contributed positively to the growth and vibrancy of Moreland.

It is this diversity that enriches Moreland with a fiery spirit, a unique history, and gives it a rich culture. Within our own group of councillors, we find a great sample of the ethnic diversity that is Moreland.

Migrants have made a much-valued contribution to the foundation of all aspects of Australian life. Multiculturalism has flourished through the years. We have now come to see the importance of diversity and with it have gained an understanding and appreciation of the many rich and diverse cultures.

I am part of this multicultural element. My family arrived in Australia in 1966 from Vizzini, Italy when I was 10 years old. The blending of my Italian heritage with my Australian culture has provided me with a rich and unique appreciation of two worlds.

Multiculturalism is a vital, essential aspect not only of our local communities, but also of the Australian way of life. Multiculturalism enriches each and every one of us.

Conclusion

In closing, I commit Council and its staff to improving all its processes and services ensuring we meet the ongoing needs and aspirations of our Moreland community.

It will be a challenging year, one that I look forward to with enthusiasm and determination. Together with my fellow councillors, and with all residents of Moreland, we will work together in listening to and working for a safer, healthier, peaceful and stronger community.

This Council will deliver.

Disappointments

Brunswick Sports Hall

During negotiations about the future of the former Brunswick Secondary School site in Victoria Street, the State Government made a commitment that the site would be developed with the gymnasium being retained. This commitment disappeared when the Government realised it would cost more money to retain the gym.

Council wrote to Bronwyn Pike, Justin Madden, and the Department of Human Services protesting about a lack of similar sporting facilities in the area and the Government's commitment to support sport and recreation activities.

There is a severe lack of similar facilities in the area and there is a great deal of demand. We cannot overstate the significance this site would have to sport and recreation infrastructure in the Brunswick area.

Council will continue to lobby the State Government for greater assistance to provide our community with the sporting infrastructure they require.

Food Safety Program

Moreland regulates 900 registered food premises. On 1 January 2003 Food Safety Programs become compulsory for all food premises.

Prior to this deadline, Council assisted 38 local food premises to be compliant through offering subsidised training, information through newsletters and letters were sent to all registered food premises reminding proprietors of the requirements.

Unfortunately only 55 per cent of Moreland premises lodged their program by 1 January 2003. An extension was granted until 28 February 2003. All remaining non-compliant businesses were recorded as 'Priority Premises' with active management strategies pursued to bring them into compliance. Some of these businesses have still not lodged their plan and unfortunately, they may now be subject to enforcement procedures.

Migrant Resource Centre

The Northern Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre was a multicultural community organisation established in 1985. It provided a range of settlement and other services to newly arrived migrants and refugees who live in the Cities of Moreland and Hume. Council was very disappointed with the decision of the Commonwealth Government to close the service.

Moreland has been a traditional home for refugee and migrant communities when they arrive in Melbourne and they need to be able to access services in Moreland to help them with the transition.

Newly arrived migrants are often restricted to using public transport, which makes it even more vital to have accessible services in Moreland. This is particularly so for those in the northern suburbs of Glenroy and the Hume suburb of Broadmeadows.

Programs based at the NMMRC included: the Ethnic Disability Services Program, Moreland Multicultural Social Support Group, Russian Speaking Social Support Group, Arabic Muslim Women's Social Support Group, Hmong Social Support Group, Moreland Elderly Chinese Social Support Group, and Kurdish Social Support Group.

Council will assist the new provider of many of these services, the North-East Migrant Resource Centre, to provide a suitable local service to migrants in Moreland. We will continue to work with other tiers of Government to ensure that the needs of our migrant communities are met.

Refugees

The Commonwealth Government continues with its deplorable policy of imprisoning asylum seeking men, women and children for long periods of time.

As a multicultural and diverse community, Moreland deplores this despicable practice and strongly condemns the Commonwealth's ongoing violation of human rights. We are bitterly disappointed at the Commonwealth's failure to review its brutal, racist policy.

Council made our voice heard in a number of actions throughout last year. We invited refugee campaigner Julian Burnside QC to deliver the Maurice Blackburn Oration and supported the establishment of a Refugee Welcome Centre.

We also sent correspondence the Prime Minister, the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and local members of Parliament opposing the Commonwealth Government's treatment of refugees.

The Mayor visited Canberra to lobby the Minister for Immigration regarding the deportation of East Timorese people.

Council will continue to campaign for justice for asylum seekers, utilising our moral authority as a diverse, safe, prosperous and successful community with a large portion of recent immigrants, particularly from the Middle East.

Business Satisfaction Downturn

An annual survey conducted in January monitors Council's progress in delivering services that meet the needs of the Moreland community.

The general satisfaction of business with Council has fallen over the past year from 78 per cent to 63 per cent. Of particular concern was the very low satisfaction with the progress of matters raised with Council, which fell from 51 per cent to 36 per cent. The business survey results are disappointing and Council needs to refocus on the needs of the business community.

Climate Protection

Whilst the Council shed 116 tonnes of emissions from its buildings and 6 tonnes from its fleet emissions, we increased the emissions from streetlights by 453 tonnes because of a decrease in efficiency from our energy suppliers.

Building Services

Community Perception Survey results show a 10 per cent increase in satisfaction, but it is still far too low at 52 per cent.

Achievements

Home and Community Care Campaign

A major campaign for increased HACC funding from State and Federal Governments was highly successful with State government election promise of additional funds. We also continued progress on a series of administrative reforms being undertaken by the State Department of Human Services.

The campaign was conducted during a vigorously fought federal election campaign and Moreland was successful in getting high level media coverage throughout the election. Moreland received higher funding for HACC services following the campaign.

Immunisation

2002 revealed an upward trend in child immunisation rates with 93 per cent of all 12-15 month old children being fully immunised (target 95 per cent) and 89 per cent of all 24-27 month old children being fully immunised (target 90 per cent). Council has provided a significant service in provision of the new meningococcal vaccine immunisation program providing vaccinations between June and February 2003.

Community Partnerships

Community Building projects were commenced in Fawkner and Glenroy with some assistance from the Commonwealth and State Governments respectively. The Fawkner Project has established a local group - 'Focus on Fawkner'. Both projects have developed local action plans based on significant levels of local consultation and participation.

Reconciliation

Moreland has implemented the Reconciliation Policy and Action Plan 2001-2004 that has included strengthened joint consultation and action with indigenous leaders and community organisations, Reconciliation Week events, and improvements to indigenous land management practice.

Disability Access

The Moreland Disability Steering Committee with community representatives was established in 2002 to provide advice on the Disability Policy and Action Plan.

The year 2002 also saw the inauguration of the annual Disability Access Awards, which recognised excellence in catering for people living with a disability in the community.

Community Safety

The Moreland Community Safety Plan 2001-2004 received three state and national awards for good planning practice. Key actions included development of a joint project with Darebin Council on drug misuse prevention, an extensive range of Council and community programs and training during Community Safety Month 2002.

We have also focused attention on implementation of the new tobacco legislation focusing on smoke free dining, no sales of tobacco to minors and broader education on the risks of tobacco.

Arts, Culture and Festivals

This year Council's events program maintained the Brunswick Music Festival, Sydney Road Street Party and achieved a 97 per cent satisfaction rating with its festival program.

Eleven shows were displayed at the Counihan Gallery in Brunswick involving local and visiting artists. Twenty-two shows were performed at the Mechanics Institute Performing Arts Centre.

Beyond Brunswick, a number of opportunities for creative expression were encouraged. Council was involved in community and traders festivals in the north of the municipality, an orchestral music event in Coburg and public arts initiatives, including the Moreland Sculpture Show in the Coburg Lake area. Cultural Grants were awarded to 22 individuals and groups in 2002/2003.

Achievements continued

Leisure

Several new leisure facilities have been opened for the community this year, including the Lorraine Hill Pavilion, Bain Reserve, Dunstan Reserve and Jones Park. The Gillon Oval tennis facilities have also been completed. More than 2000 square metres of land was improved. We won an award from the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects award for the design of Randazzo Park and our target of one million visits to Moreland Leisure Centres and Outdoor Swimming Pools was met.

Community Facilities

The Fawkner Integrated Community Facility was completed in August 2002. The new multi-use facility features Fawkner Library, Fawkner Neighbourhood Facility, Moreland Community Health, Maternal and Child Health and Fawkner Senior Citizens Centre. We also allocated support grants to five Neighbourhood Houses.

Women

The Young Women's Mentoring project commenced in 2002 with 10 women accepted into the program and matched with mentors. The Inaugural Honouring Women in Moreland Awards were held on 6 March 2003 in celebration of International Women's Day.

East Timor

We further developed our friendship relationship with the town of Aileu in East Timor by sending a shipping crate packed full of goods.

Stormwater

Cleaning up urban stormwater is a priority in Melbourne as stormwater currently carries litter equal to a two-storey high pile of rubbish over the entire MCG playing surface each year.

Building and construction sites are one of the most significant threats to the quality of urban stormwater. In 2002 Council developed an information pack as a practical guide for people to follow to improve building and construction site practices.

Information packs were distributed via information sessions and site visits. This was followed by an enforcement period to ensure

that building and construction companies comply with regulations.

The project was a pilot study involving Councils, HIA, MBA, the Building Control Commission, MAV and Melbourne Water.

Also reducing Moreland's stormwater run-off were four litter traps, which were installed as part of the implementing of our Stormwater Management Plan.

Sustainable Transport

A key achievement over the past year was the design and implementation of the Bus Signage Improvement Project along Route 508. This demonstration project, developed in conjunction with Darebin and Moonee Valley Councils, Department of Infrastructure and Dysons Bus Company, shows best practice in providing bus users with clear and useful information.

The project is expected to enable passengers to clearly see bus route and interchange information and thereby assist in increasing bus patronage.

We also opened the Upfield Bike Path, which is now complete from Reynard St in Coburg, all the way to the Zoo.

Communications

Our website's target of an average of 2000 hits per day was thoroughly exceeded. Results ranged from 8146 hits per day recorded in June 2002 to 4401 hits in December 2001.

The Moreland Community Portal has developed strongly and receives a great deal of use by the community.

Detailed Commitments for 2003–2004

Moreland Council's Agenda 2003

Improving Social Conditions

World Peace

The conflicts in the Middle East are making many of us feel uneasy about the future. We do not know how it will end or how many civilians may die. We also worry for our own service men and women, some of whom may not return to Australian soil.

Moreland is lucky to have many people of Middle Eastern descent and it would be terrible to see any antagonism or intolerance shown towards them in these uncertain times.

Moreland City Council's opposition to a war in Iraq will continue to be voiced stridently.

Aged Services

According to the 2001 Census figures, 16.5 per cent of Moreland residents are aged 65 and over. This figure will rise to 17 per cent in 10 years. We are lucky to have numerous small, community oriented aged care facilities. Unfortunately, many of these facilities are under threat because the Federal Government's current funding formula favours larger institutions.

The Federal Government must recognise that aged people in our community deserve consideration and respect. There is a need to act immediately to address funding for residential care. We don't want to see any further beds lost in Moreland.

The Federal Government must find short and longer-term solutions to the crisis facing aged care in our city.

We celebrate and are proud of the contributions of our elder citizens to the richness, diversity and well-being of our society. Council is committed to assisting Moreland's citizens to achieve their goals for a life which is fulfilling, dignified and empowered.

Residential Aged Care services are but one part of the continuum and network of services, both formal and informal, which complement each other to support older people to continue living with dignity and quality of life in our community.

While not directly involved in the provision of Residential Aged Care, Council is a major provider of a range of these services to over 3000 households, providing home care, personal care, respite care, home maintenance, assistance with transport, social support and recreational opportunities.

Moreland has approximately three thousand and fifty home and community care recipients who come from 46 countries around the world. We provided them with 34836 hours of home and community care between October and December last year. This may sound like a lot, but it is less than an average of one hour per week for each recipient.

For many, access to these services involves waiting for services to become available and many recipients could do with more hours of assistance.

2003 will see a sustained focus on this issue, with goals of increasing the hours for each recipient, and decreasing waiting lists. By the end of 2003, Moreland will have reduced waiting lists to best practice standards for municipalities comparable with Moreland.

Apart from the direct Home and Community Care services, there are also many other services and resources in Moreland for elderly people, including community health services, day centres, referrals, advice and assistance to carers, support groups and counselling.

It is, of course, vital that these valuable resources work together in a coordinated and integrated way and are likewise linked and integrated with residential care options.

Council is committed to assisting and enhancing this work. One way that Council does this is by convening and resourcing the Moreland Aged and Disability Service Providers' network.

The network now has an ongoing Residential Care Working Party which has consulted widely with service providers and carer representatives in Moreland and advocated to the Commonwealth and aged care providers about Moreland's particular needs.

Moreland will continue to pursue increased standards and availability across the whole range of services for elderly people in our municipality.

Children's and Family Services

The Draft Moreland Community Health Plan 2003-2006 has identified the support and development of health and wellbeing in the 'early years' as a key priority for action.

As part of our commitment to improve these services, our new Early Years Strategy will be completed by August 2003.

New programs this year will include the Safety Care Restraint Program and the Going Home with a Baby program, a project to improve the links between maternity hospitals, doctors, and Council's Maternal and Child Health service in partnership with the Hume Moreland Primary Care Partnership. Council will maintain its successful immunisation program. We will also lobby for improved post-natal depression services locally.

By July 2003, we will have undertaken capital upgrades of 29 Council owned buildings used for preschools and child-care to meet State standards.

Diversity

Moreland's greatest asset is its ethnic, religious, demographic and cultural diversity. We aim to maintain this diversity and increase understanding of – and respect for – different cultures. People from 120 different countries reside in the municipality and the number of new immigrants coming to live here is higher than in most other municipalities in Victoria.

The Moreland Multicultural Policy and Action Plan 2001-2004 provides the basis for action across a wide range of issues including access and equity, cultural celebration and community awareness.

Key initiatives and actions in 2003 include a multicultural awareness staff training program, advocacy and local action on refugee issues, and multicultural components in community festivals and arts programs.



Council will continue to build its extensive collection of books in languages other than English in our libraries. We will aim to make loans of 300,000 Language other than English books in the next year.

Community Partnerships

Moreland has many people, businesses and organisations who are committed to pursuing projects and programs to serve our local area. In partnership with these individuals and groups, Moreland can access more funding for infrastructure and services and support from other tiers of Government.

The establishment of the Community Foundation with seed funding from Council can help utilise the skills and drive of our community. This is currently being pursued and will be established by the end of the financial year.

East Timor

Council will maintain its support of the Friends of Aileu and our friendship relationship with that city.

We will promote cultural awareness and understanding as well as providing practical assistance for the people of East Timor.

Disability Access

Council believes that all citizens should be able to access municipal facilities. Our updated policy, Moreland Disability Policy and Action Plan, will be completed by May 2003.

Community Safety

Council will continue the implementation of the Moreland Community Safety Plan 2001-2004, which provides the basis of a wide range of partnership projects on road safety, injury prevention and drug and alcohol issues.

The Moreland Health, Safety and Wellbeing Leadership Group representing senior representatives of key organisations and government departments will continue to facilitate strong partnership and action on key health and safety issues locally.

We will complete a new Council Smoking Policy, to be adopted by June 2004. This policy will be based on a model for local government, developed by QUIT in partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria.

Leisure

Council is committed to providing high quality leisure facilities which meet the diverse needs of our community. To achieve this, it is particularly important that Council provides leisure facilities for young people and women in our municipality.

Council will consider designs and propose a location of the Coburg Skate facility. We aim to complete the statutory process by the end of this year.

We will also work towards a community basketball and leisure facility by campaigning to retain the community sports hall at the old Brunswick Secondary School site.

To maintain accountability and open lines of communication with the sporting community, we will continue our successful consultative forums with sport and recreation associations. Our leasing framework for Council owned facilities will be completed this year. We must ensure, wherever possible, that contributions from user groups are commensurate with the maintenance costs incurred by Council.

We aim to again attract over one million visits to Moreland Leisure Centres and Outdoor Swimming Pools in the next 12 months.

Council will maintain its commitment to high quality recreational and sporting facilities.

Library Services

Our popular library services are important to many Moreland residents. Council aims to maintain the high level of community usage of our excellent library services.

Our library IT infrastructure will be significantly improved this year.

The Brunswick, Coburg and Glenroy libraries will remain open to the public with access across the whole of the municipality seven days a week.

Neighbourhood Houses

Council aims to continue to support Neighbourhood Houses by providing ongoing assistance to the Moreland Neighbourhood House Network.

We will again allocate support grants to five Neighbourhood Houses.

Community Engagement

Council recognises the invaluable and diverse contribution of volunteers to the community. Council will seek to enhance community input and the social sustainability of volunteer groups by providing resources and in kind support.

In trying to harness the goodwill of the community, Council will continue to build upon our work in Community Building projects. The Fawcner Community Building Project Community Action Plan contains 10 community driven initiatives which can be implemented over the next three years. Council will lobby the State Government for access to the Community Support Fund to provide funding to implement the project.

Council will continue its successful Community Building Projects, working within local communities, to identify priority issues and local action plans. Work towards the Glenroy community activity centre will continue and the Glenroy Community Capacity Building will be pursued, with focus on the identified five key community priority areas.



Public Health

Council is committed to increasing the health and quality of life for all of its citizens.

We are currently drafting our Municipal Public Health Plan 2003-6. Progress to date includes discussion papers on health and well-being issues, an extensive data analysis and community and stakeholder consultation process and identification of core elements for attention. Our revision of the Municipal Public Health Plan 2003-6 will be completed by June 2003.

Apart from our statutory obligations, Moreland City Council is committed to promoting the health and well being of our community. To have a healthy community, we must ensure that local food businesses are responsible and accountable in producing safe food. To achieve this objective, further food safety education programs will be organised for 2003.

Reconciliation

Moreland is a community that actively supports reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. Council will continue its implementation of the Reconciliation Policy and Action Plan 2001-2004. We will strengthen joint consultation and action with indigenous leaders and community organisations as well as continue our Reconciliation Week events, plus improvements to indigenous land management practices.

Council employment conditions will continue to be advertised through ATSI employment networks and this year we will employ a number of indigenous trainees.

Opportunities for protection of indigenous cultural heritage through the planning system will be investigated in 2003.

Women

Moreland aims to increase participation of women in community affairs.

We are committed to promoting positive roles for women, especially in traditional areas of low participation.

The evaluation of the the Young Women's Mentoring project will be completed by mid 2003. If results are positive, we will again conduct such an initiative. The successful Honouring Women awards program that recognises significant achievements of women in our community will be continued next year. We will continue to implement our Statement of Commitment to Women, including a program of local activities for International Women's Day 2004.

Young People

Council will work harder to increase participation by young people in community affairs.

The Youth Strategy, which will guide the way Council provides services and programs to young people for the next 3 to 5 years. It will be completed by June 2003.

We will continue facilitation of the Moreland Youth Advisory Committee and we will provide eight drug free music events for young people through the Freeza program.

Art and Culture

Moreland has a vibrant and connected community life. We will work towards greater access to and participation in arts and culture by the citizens of Moreland.

This year we will again help present ten exhibitions in the Counihan Gallery in Brunswick and two hundred performances at the Mechanics Institute Performing Arts Centre.

We will complete two public art works in Fawkner by December 2003 - a sculptural seat and a playground Sculpture.

We will award cultural grants to a minimum of 20 people or community groups or both.

Festivals

Council's array of multicultural and artistic festivals remain amongst the best in Australia. Our biggest events, the Brunswick Music Festival and Sydney Rd St Party retain Council's support into the future, despite challenges we face finding public liability insurance at a reasonable cost.

We will also present the Fawkner Festival, which will be held at CB Smith Reserve, Jukes Road on 6 April 2003.

This year, Council will maintain last year's number of 61 festivals and events in the municipality.

We will also further enhance Moreland's capacity to throw a party with the stage and landscaping of the eastern section of Clifton Park in Brunswick to be completed by June 2003.

We will also ensure that waste and litter reduction are an integral part of festival planning in the minimising future.

Affordable Housing

Council aims to increase the availability of affordable housing in our municipality.

We will work with other levels of government and developers to ensure that Moreland becomes a more equitable place, where people on low incomes and with special needs can enjoy a good quality of life without housing stress.

Moreland will proceed with its second Social Housing Innovations Project partnership project with the State Government by purchasing an appropriate site. We will also identify a number of sites that may be used for the delivery of well designed affordable housing projects in the future, drawing on the Moreland Affordable Housing Fund and the expertise of the Inner City Social Housing Company.

Council will lobby the State Government for the necessary legislative reforms to require a portion of large developments to be reserved for social housing. We will also advocate the timely completion of the Victorian Housing Strategy.



Improving Built and Natural Environment

Community Leader

Council acknowledges its leadership role on sustainability and the importance of the examples that it sets.

Council will also investigate the expansion of a bicycle fleet for use by Council employees while working and audit the bicycle storage areas in all its buildings.

Councils will also review its own vehicle fleet to focus on further opportunities to reduce the overall greenhouse gas emissions, including the use of alternative fuels.

Council will continue to improve the quality of resource management within Council including energy management, water consumption and implementation of Council's existing environmental purchasing policy.

Council should also ensure that all new council's capital works take advantage of best practice environmental design and technology. This will include a policy for public lighting that will assess where lighting is required and energy efficient ways to meet these requirements.

Melbourne 2030

Moreland has welcomed much of Melbourne 2030 but notes that it is only through the implementation phase that its true effects will be known. We will continue to work in partnership with the State Government to ensure that our municipality's best interests remain at the forefront.

Council will lobby the State Government to amend Melbourne 2030 as outlined in Council's submission, in particular to grant greater decision making responsibility to Councils by tightening the appeal mechanisms to VCAT.

Municipal Strategic Statement Review

Moreland's three year statutory review of the Moreland City Plan - Municipal Strategic Statement is due in 2003. Stage 1 of the review is underway and includes an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the current MSS and how effective Moreland's land use policies have been in achieving on the ground results. Stage 1 of the review will result in an identification of potential changes to be made to the MSS to update it, fill in gaps and clarify the interpretation of policy. Stage 2 of the review will include a consultation program to discuss the community's ideas about the MSS and policies for land use.

Central Coburg 2020

Central Coburg is Moreland's prime shopping and activity precinct. It is the location of Moreland's major civic functions, including the head administrative offices of Council and is the largest retail centre in the municipality. It includes the significant Pentridge prison redevelopment and the Coburg railway station which offers opportunities to create a modal transport interchange. The State government has recently nominated Coburg as a Principal Activity Centre under Melbourne 2030.

Over the last two years, Council has been consulting with the community and undertaking background research to develop a structure plan for Central Coburg to crystallise the area's opportunities. The structure plan for Central Coburg 2020 will be finalised this year to provide a detailed vision for the future development of Central Coburg that will guide the activities of Council and other stakeholders in the centre for the next twenty years.

The structure plan will include actions to

- consolidate Coburg's principal activity centre function;
- transform the area into an attractive system of streets and spaces;
- better integrate the centre's different parts including Pentridge;
- increase the residential population particularly in the heart of the centre;
- offer a range of housing choices;
- provide a range of services in one convenient location;

- provide increased local employment opportunities;
- offer good access to public transport; and
- link green spaces, including the regionally significant Merri Creek.

Hoffmans Brickworks Development

Moreland will continue to work with the owners and local communities of interest to achieve a good quality development that appropriately interprets the history of the site. In particular this year we will resolve how to use the \$400,000 put aside by Council to invest in the site for community benefit. These funds were put aside to save and restore Kiln 2.

Climate Protection

Council has reaffirmed its commitment to reduce Moreland's contribution to non-natural climate change at an organisational and community level.

We will continue to work towards a forty percent Council reduction and a twenty percent community reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2010. We will do this within a national climate where the aim is to merely reduce the amount at which emissions increase. In order to achieve these aims we will continue to support innovative local initiative such as MEFL, the Moreland Sustainability Grants Program, CERES and Sustainability Street.

Moreland's new advisory committee, the Sustainable Moreland Advisory Group will commence meeting and assisting in the achievement of a more sustainable City.

We will move towards these goals in 2003 with a review of the way Council uses power in its street lighting, a continuation of converting our car fleet to natural gas, and implementation of our the energy efficiency program for Council buildings. To enable Council to take advantage of financial savings made available by improving the energy efficiency of its operations, Moreland has established the Sustainable Moreland Energy Reserve Fund which reinvests these savings in works that further improve efficiency of Council's operations. Council will provide a further instalment to the fund based on the



three-year commitment previously approved by Council.

Council has committed to an agreement with its electricity supplier to provide 100 per cent of its electricity from renewable resources (being from wind and hydro-electricity). We continue to assist Moreland Energy Foundation Limited with promotion, accommodation, and the proceeds of the \$5 million Moreland Energy Trust.

In the community, our Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy, land use policies, and planned improved energy rating of new developments will ensure a reduction in emissions.

Better, Greener Design

Council will introduce a sustainable residential assessment tool and performance standards to improve the standards of energy efficient design, water conservation, stormwater quality, landscapes, fixed appliances and the embodied energy of developments.

Our Sustainable Residential Building Policy will be completed by 2003.

Streetscapes

Council aims to improve the street landscapes in Moreland. In listening to the community, we have heard that footpath maintenance, street trees and streetscape amenity is a high priority.

Our Street Landscape Strategy Review is currently underway. This year, Council will re-consider the priorities and strategic direction of our streetscapes and street trees.

We will aim to:

- improve street landscapes and the image of the municipality;
- increase habitat and amenity value in the street network;
- provide shade and shelter for street users;
- establish ecologically sustainable design principles; and
- enhance local character and identity.

Council will continue its successful Area Integrated Maintenance (AIM) approach to streetscape maintenance, which will focus on maintenance within a particular area until it meets high standards of amenity.

Footpaths and Walking

This year, Council will develop, implement and monitor the progress of the pedestrian focused actions in the Pedestrian and Walking Strategy Plan. Implementing the strategy will examine ways to improve infrastructure to make walking easier and safer and provide more short cut links in key locations. Council will also be working with the community to encourage more people to walk to school, the shops and other local trips which will benefit both the health of our community and the environment.

Council is committed to reducing the increasing number of public liability claims and complaints received resulting from the ageing of our footpaths. We will increase funding for footpath maintenance to achieve this goal.

Open Space

Council will work towards providing quality, accessible open space within safe walking distance of all of its residents, in accordance with the Moreland Open Space Strategy.

We are currently reviewing our open space strategy. 2003 will see Council re-setting the strategic direction and priorities for planning, allocation, development and management of open space in the municipality.

Council will continue to support and work with the Greening Moreland Forum on open space policy, planning, development and management issues.

Planning and Building Services

Council acknowledges that we have a real need for improvement in this important area. We have been challenged by the ongoing high rate of applications, major projects and the introduction of new planning requirements.

The restructure of Council Departments and Branches will see a greater level of commitment to addressing these issues, and a greater capacity to reduce the environmental impact and damage to Council assets caused by development and building activities in our municipality.

We will give support to development projects that promote and support community and environmental objectives. Council will continue to promote and encourage shop top housing

as a less onerous and contentious form of urban consolidation.

We will continue with our commitment to consultation for contentious planning applications. These consultations will include residents and applicants.

Council will produce service charters for Building Services and Planning Services in 2003. These will indicate service standards on responding to enquiries, timelines for dealing with applications and planning scheme amendments and processes for public consultation on planning decisions.

Heritage

Moreland will continue our commitment to the protection and enhancement of Moreland's heritage. This will include completion of the review of heritage sites not currently protected by the planning scheme and further work in developing guidelines for development that affects heritage sites.

Pentridge

Council will work to ensure that the heritage of Pentridge is appropriately protected and interpreted. While doing so, it will work with the owners to assist the orderly development of this new precinct of Coburg. Council will take an ongoing role in the interpretation of the history in partnership with the owners now and into the future.

Urban Renewal of Redundant Industrial Sites

Last year we completed the Moreland Industrial Land Use Strategy. The strategy involved a review of the supply of industrial land in the municipality and an assessment of new employment generating businesses interested in locating in Moreland. The review identified a number of sites no longer viable for traditional industrial activities. These sites have been identified as suitable for renewal for other uses, including mixed use developments.

Council has designated these sites as appropriate for a greater intensity of development in order to meet our obligations for urban consolidation, subject to meeting stringent design and environmental outcomes. Renewal of these sites will contribute to local employment opportunities for residents,

greater diversity in housing choices and an improvement in neighbourhood amenity, improved streetscapes and public spaces. These redevelopments are required to provide higher than average environmental outcomes, including 5 star energy ratings and water conservation measures.

Stormwater and Water Conservation

Council aims to maintain a safe, reliable, and environmentally responsible stormwater system.

We will continue to implement the Stormwater Management Plan and provide subsidised rainwater tanks to Moreland residents.

The Best Practice Stormwater Management for Planning Project aims to develop permit conditions, measurement tools and standards to reduce negative impacts of stormwater run off from urban development. This project is underway and will be completed during 2003.

Having signed onto the International Cities for Climate Protection Campaign Water Program we will make rapid progress through the steps to improve our use and quality of water. This will enable Council to reduce its own water consumption and develop priorities to support the Moreland Community to reduce its water consumption.

Council will seek to reduce stormwater run off in the municipality by increasing unpaved areas. Council will also examine the feasibility of harvesting stormwater run off and other water collection, treatment and reuse opportunities particularly to irrigate Council's open space. This will be achieved in concert with Council's participation in the ICLEI Water program and other partners including Yarra Valley Water and Melbourne Water to reduce the water consumption and improve the quality of our waterways.

We will continue to implement the Moreland Litter Trap Plan by pursuing external funding options to increase the current level of 30 tonnes per annum being collected before entering our waterways.

Sustainable Transport

Moreland agrees with the State Government target of 20 per cent of all trips to public transport by 2020 and will lobby for key public transport route improvements to help the State achieve that aim. We will continue to work with the municipalities of Hume, Whittlesea and Darebin to achieve public transport improvements in the Northern region.

Council will continue to campaign for better services in particular better bus services and an expanded service on the Upfield line and will pursue the implementation of the Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy to improve the integration of – and access to – public and private transport.

Building Asset Maintenance Strategy

Council aims to maintain its municipal and community buildings at a high standard of amenity and safety. To achieve this, we will continue to develop the Building and Asset Management Strategy in 2003 and will complete it in 2004.

Transport – Road Safety

Council aims for a continued reduction of accidents between car and pedestrian.

Moreland will continue to implement the Moreland Road Safety Strategy and the Local Area Traffic Management plans. We will conduct further studies in areas where road safety is an issue.

Moreland will work with residents to find the reasons for, and possible solutions to, their local road safety issues.

Four of our forty-eight primary schools currently have 40kmh zones. The State Government has committed to providing every school with 40kmh zones, or other suitable traffic management strategies, to all schools in Victoria. We will work closely with VicRoads to ensure that 50 per cent of our highest priority schools have 40kmh zones within the coming 12 months.

Moreland will also continue to identify and apply for funding from the State and Federal Government Black Spot programs and improve road safety for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists.

Three Local Area Traffic Management studies will be presented by June 2004.

Council acknowledges its responsibility to maintain and improve road infrastructure. The Moreland Asset Management Strategy shows significant increases in expenditure are required to adequately maintain roads. These funds will be identified and directed to our road capital works program.

Urban Improvement to Sydney Road

Council remains committed to the Sydney Road Transport Improvement project, which aims to make our major transport spine work better for public transport, motor vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and traders.

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

Council will complete its design framework for Sydney Road and that will guide how we work to see the streetscape shopfronts and public amenities of Sydney Road improved.

Urban Villages and Activity Centres

Moreland will move toward a more sustainable city by strengthening local activity centres in Moreland based on the Urban Villages policy. Urban Villages will be places where you can live, work and play without the need for a car.

Structure plans will be completed by mid 2003 for the urban villages around Glenroy station, Jewell station, the intersection of Lygon and Albert streets and Coburg Station. Further structure plans will continue to be developed for other urban village locations. The number and location of the villages will be reviewed to better meet our current communities expectations and to be aligned with the provisions of Melbourne 2030.

This year we will also finalise guidelines for building developments over three storeys.

Council will impose more stringent environmentally sustainable design principles to developments in urban villages, within 400m of fixed public transport and all conversions of industrial land to residential use.

Such developments will be required to install solar hot water and, on large sites, incorporate stormwater retention and greywater recycling systems. Council will also investigate the application of energy efficiency ratings greater than 5 stars to these sites.

This will form part of Council's articulation of planning policies for urban villages and developments within 400m of fixed public transport where resident parking is under the greatest strain.

Weed Control

Council shall conduct a review of its weed control programs with a view to reducing its reliance on broad-spectrum herbicides.

Recycling and Waste Collection

Council will pursue its commitment to reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill. By the year 2008, our aim is to double diversion of waste to landfill to 80 per cent. Quantities to landfill have remained static for past 3 years. More resources will be introduced to address this issue. We aim to maintain our current very high rate of bins being collected on time.

Council will continue to improve the green waste collection service. Due to the potentially hazardous nature of collecting green waste and because of our commitment to high occupational health and safety standards, we will introduce a green waste bin for our residents.

We will work with other municipalities and the Northern Regional Waste Management Group to find common solutions to hard-rubbish management. In light of likely changes by WorkSafe to waste collection practices, Council will investigate the option of maintaining a modified hard rubbish collection for the purposes of goods exchange and removing dumped goods.

Animal Control

Council must introduce a new fee structure for pet registration, in line with changes in State Government policy.

Municipal Cleanliness

Council will continue its commitment to improve the cleanliness of our municipality. Street Cleansing programs will be reviewed and

further initiatives undertaken with residents to improve access to streets for sweeping operations.

Further reviews of litter-bin collections will be undertaken to ensure bins are placed in optimum locations. Appropriate and targeted enforcement programs will be implemented to reduce the incidence of litter and dumped rubbish.

Parking

The diverse parking needs of our community must be met.

Council acknowledges that the increase in car traffic is a highly undesirable effect of urban consolidation. To address this problem, our parking strategy will be developed and completed this year. It will be scoped to provide more equitable distribution of parking throughout the municipality. Within the plan, Council will review parking permits with the intention of protecting the on-street parking amenity of established residences.

CERES

CERES is a valuable asset to the Moreland community, hosting a wide range of environmental, cultural, education and social events. This year CERES marks its 21st year of operation. Brunswick and now Moreland City Council has an unbroken partnership with CERES during this time and Council will continue this partnership during 2003.

Creating a Sustainable Employment Base

Boosting Moreland's Employment

Council will continue to work towards increased employment and higher job readiness rates.

A review of the Economic Development activities of Council will result in greater productivity and a higher satisfaction with Council in our business community. We will complete the sustainable jobs for Moreland Employment policy by June 2004.

Attracting and Keeping Industry in Moreland

Moreland aims to increase transition to new industries in our municipality. Implementing of the completed Moreland Industrial Land Use Strategy into the planning scheme will be finalised by end of 2003.

Council will promote the outcomes it is seeking from its new Industrial Land Use Policy to encourage the retaining of existing employers and to attract new businesses.

Council will ensure prompt attention is given to planning applications for business – related activities in retail and industrial areas.

Supporting Local Businesses

Wherever practicable, Council will favour the use of local trades people and professionals in the awarding of contracts for own works and services.

Brunswick Business Incubator

Council will continue to support the Brunswick Business Incubator 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.

Education

Moreland Council recognises the vital importance of education and training to the ongoing prosperity and wellbeing of its citizens. Moreland will defend public education and advocate on its behalf in the community.

Council's vision is of an education system in Moreland that provides young people of all abilities with an environment in which they can complete their education to the highest possible level and where adults have an opportunity for further education and training for sustainable employment.

Council also recognises the key role that schools play in developing a sense of community and a sense of being connected to that community. Council will continue to provide networking and resource skills to educational institutions within the municipality. In particular, Council will assist secondary



Open, Responsive and Consultative Governance

A Responsive Organisation

Moreland is committed to providing citizens with prompt responses to all communications. We will continue to conduct our affairs openly and transparently.

An independent survey conducted quarterly by Customer Service Bench Marking Australia consistently ranks Moreland City Council in the top bracket of local governments. We will continue and strive to improve this standard in 2003.

Council will require that all communications are responded to and answered within a month of receipt. Where matters are simple a response can be expected with 10 working days. For more complex issues citizens will be informed of the progress of their matter up until the issue is resolved. This standard shall apply to all forms of communication, be it written correspondence, e-mail, intranet, fax or phone call.

Community Consultation

We will continue to improve our consultation with the Moreland community.

This year will see the development of a community engagement strategy, to be completed by June 2003. We will also aim for development of community indicators for participation by June 2005.

Moreland will undertake three community capacity building training programs, which will assist groups in advocating their position. These will be completed by June 2004.

Communications

Moreland will pursue the greater use of a more varied range of communication options. We will provide an online question time at two Council meetings by June 2004.

Eight more Moreland Matters newsletters will be produced by June 2004.

schools to promote the benefits and achievements of the public system within the municipality.

Council believes, along with parents, students and teachers, that there are challenging issues such as retention, relevance and education outcomes facing schools in Moreland and other areas of the north and north west of Melbourne.

Council will therefore continue to work directly with schools, with regional bodies such as the Local Learning and Employment Network and the State Government to address the range of local education issues, partner them in programs and advocate for greater investment in education.

Moreland will continue to employ a dedicated Education Officer to strengthen the connection between the Council and education and training through the Local Learning and Employment Network. Council will also advocate and lobby for educational policies that encourage a sense of community and its wellbeing.

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

Support for the Unemployed and Under-employed

Council will pursue ongoing advocacy in response to the Federal Government's changes to the welfare system.

Detailed advocacy to the State Government on gambling policy will also continue, with a particular focus on the negative impact of pay-day lending schemes in 2003.

We are currently developing an Employment and Training Strategy as a component of our Youth Strategy. This will be completed in 2003.

Moreland Community Enterprise Centre

Council is committed to assisting economic and community activity across Moreland and the Moreland Community Enterprise Centre (MCEC) represents a successful program supporting this goal.

Currently the Moreland Community Enterprise Centre has 19 organisations operating from its facilities. There are 11 small businesses and 8 community groups.

Council will continue to support the MCEC and its contribution to local employment and amenity by providing small-scale, affordable office space for a balanced mix of small start-up and growing businesses and community organisations in a supportive environment.

Relationship with Xianyang

Moreland will maintain its special relationship with the Chinese city of Xianyang, with its mutually beneficial cultural and economic exchange. We will also create opportunities to use this relationship for the benefit of local business, education and the arts.

MOREBIZ

MoreBiz is a Council initiative under the State Government's StreetLife program. It is successfully providing over 30 Moreland small businesses with a custom designed program to help them improve their marketing skills and performance. The program commenced in November 2002 and is scheduled to conclude at the end of May 2003. The feedback from participants has been very positive and beneficial to the development of their enterprises.

MoreBiz benefits the local community by visibly fostering the small business sector of the local economy and is a valuable initiative to help an often neglected, but integral component, of the broader business and civic community.

Retail

Council recognises the importance of retail businesses in the city as providers of services to citizens and of employment opportunities.

We will continue to support trader groups, including strong support for retail marketing special charge schemes where appropriate, partnership with trader groups in events and festivals and provision of advice and assistance in organisational development, marketing and business advice.



Improved Language Communications

Moreland has lead the way in communications with its culturally and linguistically diverse community, but will continue to strive for improvements.

We will maintain the Language Link translation service across the organisation and on every external publication. We will continue implementation of the Moreland Multicultural Policy and Action Plan.

We will also continue our partnerships with the Multicultural Services Network, action on refugee issues, and a multicultural training program for Council staff.

We are working on a proposal that includes a database of interpreters across Moreland. An action plan is being developed for staff to be accredited as interpreters and it is being linked to this year's Enterprise Agreement and as such to provide a suitable payment for such services from our staff.

Electoral Systems

In the likely event of reforms being made to the Local Government Act, Council will engage in a debate, internally and with the community, about the most democratic, progressive and appropriate governance arrangements for our municipality.

Pending the legislation being adopted by the State Government, Council will have the community's preferred electoral structures in place for the next Municipal Election.

Relationship with State and Federal Governments

Council will continue to advocate on behalf of citizens to State and Federal Governments. Continuing our strong campaigns against cost shifting, aged care and argue for local government to receive the funding and consideration it deserves as a genuine first tier of government.

Council eagerly awaits the proposed legislation of the Victorian State Government which grants constitutional recognition to local government.

We will continue to work closely with the Victorian Local Governance Association, the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Australian Local Government Association and with other

Councils to ensure that our voices are heard and a range of viewpoints and information is available to us.

Citizen Service

Council will continue to make it easier to deal with Council by expanding the options for the payment of rates and other charges.

Council will expand the availability of B-Pay and Internet payment for Council fees and services.

Five Year Financial Plan

Moreland is committed to responsible financial management that ensures a strong organisation into the future.

Council will seek community input in the development of a five-year financial plan. Our plan will ensure Council finances are secure while improving investment in physical and social infrastructure and giving the community confidence in where their rate dollar is being invested.

Providing Core Services

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.

Council will undertake an analysis of all core services with the view to developing a policy to guide where and how of in-house tenders should be submitted.

Asset Management

Council will undertake an analysis of underutilised Council land. This will assist Council in the development guidelines for the future use of such land including strategic sale and development as open space or social housing.

Council will develop a program for an audit of contamination of all council land.

Council will investigate the capital asset value of trees and landscapes within the municipality.

Triple Bottom Line Reporting

Council will continue to develop its procedures and systems for organisational reporting based on Triple Bottom Line principles. This will be supported by the development and reporting of an agreed set of integrated indicators based on

the state of the environment, Council's performance and community selected values for social, environmental and economic criteria.

Systems will also be developed and adopted that incorporate Triple Bottom Line reporting and will be used in decision making including the establishment of Council work plans, annual operational and capital budgeting, reports to Council and Council's annual reporting.

Ethical Investment

Council will develop an Ethical Investment Strategy for cash flow surpluses and reserves and funds held on trust.

Rate Justice

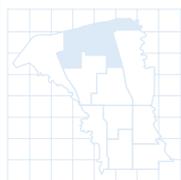
Council will lobby the State Government to change the rating system so as to provide some level of rate assessment on an income basis. Council will also revisit its own policy on differential rates to commercial properties.

Council will, in conjunction with other local governments, investigate other options for reducing this financial burden of rates on the aged and those who are on fixed incomes.

Councillors – Elected March 2002 for three years



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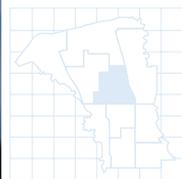


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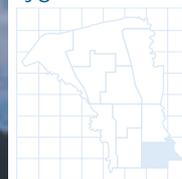


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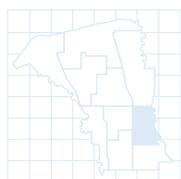


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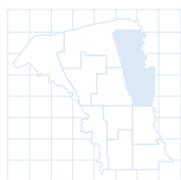
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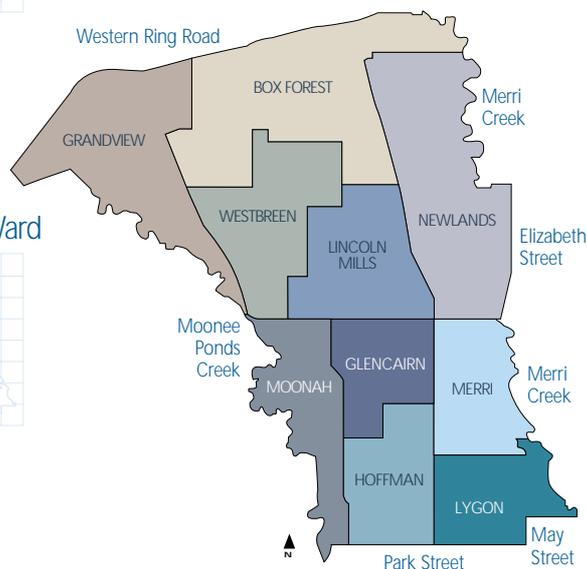


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March 2003

