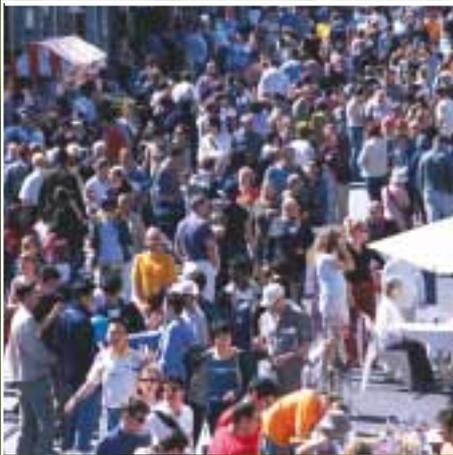




Moreland City Council

Mayor's Speech 2004

Caring Community in a Sustainable City



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Mayor's Speech 2004

Caring Community in a Sustainable City



Councillor
Anthony Helou JP
Mayor

delivered the Mayor's Speech at the
Coburg Town Hall on 24 March 2004

Friends and citizens of Moreland.

I would like to acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri people. I pay my respects to their elders and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

It is a great privilege and an honour to stand before you once again and I would like to especially thank my fellow Councillors for electing me Mayor of Moreland. I give my undertaking that I will focus all my energies and perform my duties to the best of my abilities, together with other Councillors and as a team, to achieve the best outcomes for our city.

I am very appreciative to the former Mayors of this Council, Joe Ficarra and Joe Caputo. Both have done a great job, leaving an important legacy for Moreland and its people.

I would also like to acknowledge my fellow Councillors and staff. In an open and accountable way, you have governed and managed this city with understanding, insight and commitment to the ideals we all share.

Diversity

Melbourne was this year again voted by *The Economist* to be the most liveable city in the world. I think this is true, and we should all take credit for this achievement.

I think that Moreland is one of the most liveable cities in Melbourne. What makes Moreland so beautiful? It is not the roads, not the buildings, not the trees, or the shops, or the mix of restaurants. What makes our city so beautiful? It is the people, the diversity of many different nationalities living in harmony, working and walking together.

I often say that the diversity found here is like an orchestra, with so many different players and instruments. Together we produce harmonies and chords that enrich our lives. The music we make together is an inspiration to our city and the world.

One of the Moreland Councillors Stephen Roach really moved me at a recent Council meeting, when he explained that for many years he and his partner had lived in rural

Australia where there was very little social diversity. When they were considering moving to the city, he worried about how well they would get on with the many people from different countries.

Cr Roach then went on to say that diversity has 'enriched the lives of my family. I only wish that we had found diversity much earlier'.

I think we can all relate to what Councillor Roach said. Diversity isn't always easy, it can sometimes be uncomfortable and challenging, but in the end it enriches us greatly.

Like Cr Roach, I too came to Melbourne with a fear of the unknown.

I came here in 1970 for a maximum of three years. Thirty-four years later, I am still here. Australia is my country. I came to Australia from Lebanon, a nation with a proud history and civilisation. I came without my family and without knowledge of any English. Now my family is here and I am at home.

Here I am today, I am part of the mainstream. I have taken my part in the processes of my new nation, with the City of Moreland.

Our prosperity and freedom is only possible because of the way we work together, different cultures all helping to make Moreland a wonderful city.

To keep our city in harmony, we must constantly renew our commitment to openness and difference, always remembering the value of what we have achieved.

We must work together for the benefit of all people and never forget the value of democracy.

Democracy

For democracy to work, we need to stay engaged with political debates and issues. I encourage everyone to get involved with a political party, or to serve on the local school council or a neighbourhood house committee. Our participation in democracy must be as widespread as possible, to ensure that our society is governed by a broad cross section of the community, and not just a few powerful individuals.



I am proud to be an Australian in Moreland, and I am proud of my background as a Lebanese Australian. I have been here for more than 30 years, and this country has given my family a great community and many opportunities.

I'm proud to see so many Australians from Lebanon and Arabic speaking backgrounds here tonight and I'm proud to see so many Australians from different backgrounds. Anyhow, we're all Australians, regardless of which country we come from.

And let me say, as a symbol of members of the Lebanese community having made Moreland home, Council will this year plant a cedar tree in front of the municipal offices in Bell Street. The cedar tree symbolises 8000 years of Lebanese history and the next chapter of that history, here in Moreland.

This is the final Mayoral term before the municipal election in November. This year, my leadership will focus on finishing the work we promised to the community, and further pursuing the ideals and values that have guided Council since its election.

The Four Pillars

Council has a set of core values that we all share, that have guided our decision making in the last two years.

We believe in social justice. We believe that everyone has a right to all the opportunities Moreland has to offer.

We believe in building an environmentally sustainable city, and that this Council and our community can be world leaders in finding new ways to reduce our impact on the environment.

We believe in a sustainable economy, where workers can secure meaningful and rewarding employment, and businesses can expand and prosper.

We believe in open, accountable and consultative governance. Councillors and the administration should be close to the people, easy to contact, and open to discuss the matters that concern our citizens.

These four main values, our four pillars, have guided the decisions and commitments we have made.

We have not just talked about our four pillars, we have also set the organisation specific tasks to take our priorities further.

Improving Social Conditions

We said that we would improve services and accessibility for all of our diverse communities. We did. We are now trialling a new language aide scheme that takes advantage of the fact that many of our staff speak a language other than English.

This year we will go further. We will undertake a project to provide more multilingual information on our Home and Community Care (HACC) services, to ensure all our older citizens know how to access them.

We said that we would advocate for improvements to the situation for refugees and asylum seekers. The participation of former Mayor Joe Caputo in a campaign against deporting East Timorese refugees was successful, and our position on this issue is well known in the community.

This year, we will honour our promises, not in word but in action, by allowing Temporary Protection Visa holders free access to our leisure and aquatic centres.

Council recognises the importance of contributions made by women to the city. We will continue to give opportunities and recognition to those women who seek and hold leadership roles in the community.

Council will continue to provide a full program of activities and to realise the goals set out in the Statement of Commitment to Women.

This Council is committed to working with our local Indigenous community, the Wurundjeri people, to strengthen reconciliation.

We have made fantastic progress. We have employed Indigenous trainees in the Arts and Culture, Open Space, Building and Local Laws, and Citizens Service areas. We have undertaken an Aboriginal Heritage Study to help us find out more about pre-contact places in the municipality. We regularly confer with Indigenous leaders to seek advice on priorities.

This year, we will provide opportunities for the wider community to better understand the issues that matter to the Indigenous community and move to protect Aboriginal heritage places in the municipality.

In 2002, Council recognised the serious problems faced in services for older people.

The reckless neglect by the Commonwealth Government has been regularly and publicly condemned by Council, and we have advocated for greater resourcing from all levels of government.

Council administers and provides Home and Community Care for the elderly members of the community who are living independently. Unfortunately, our services often struggle to match demand and many elderly people must wait to receive the services.

One of the ways we are trying to address this issue is with a better allocation of the existing resources. Council has begun a demand strategy for the allocation of HACC services. We will complete this strategy this year.

We will also trial an Independent Living Project to give more appropriate support and advice to those better able to look after themselves, rather than leaving them on a long waiting list.

This Council will help older people as much as we can. We are also committed to supporting families with young children.

We will help families provide opportunities for children to develop to their fullest potential. This year, Council will improve access to the support structures required by families with young children.

Council provides public buildings and facilities for many public and community uses. It is important that these facilities remain relevant to the community's needs, by being well maintained and kept in a high standard of amenity and safety.

This year, Council will make significant investments in these facilities, including starting work on a new Glenroy Neighbourhood Facility and landscaping at the interim Gowanbrae Community House.



We will also invest in improving a pavilion at JP Fawkner Reserve, and in upgrades to Scout halls. We will upgrade furniture and fittings in senior citizens centres.

Council will increase its spending on library books and other catalogue items to nearly three quarters of a million dollars. We will provide a wide range of reading related activities and a range of improvements in the libraries.

This year, the long awaited stage will be completed in Clifton Park in Brunswick. We will celebrate with a community festival to open the site and new stage.

Clifton Park is one of the sites we have been considering for a skate park in our city. We will finalise a site and build a skate park in the coming months and we have earmarked funds for a second skate park in the future.

Other recreational opportunities will also improve under this Council, as we open up the Brunswick sports hall for community use. We are working with the State Government to refurbish the hall and allow community access as soon as possible.

Improving Built and Natural Environment

We are also improving our open space for all of our residents. Council commits to a number of specific open space improvements in the coming year.

We will undertake 12 community planting days in 2004 and we will establish a park at the Harding Street Reserve in Coburg, adding to the well-loved Bridges Reserve.

At CB Smith Reserve in Fawkner, we will improve landscaping and access for cars.

Council has resolved to convert the whole of the former Kangan Batman site in Coburg to public open space. We will continue to work with the local community to create a quality public parkland that meets their needs and aspirations.

Council is committed to providing safe, clean and attractive public toilets in well-used public spaces. This year, Council will plan how to provide public toilets into the future.

As I said earlier, Council is committed to becoming a more environmentally sustainable city.

Council will continue to pursue our goal of a 40 per cent Council reduction and a 20 per cent community reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2010.

This year will see a particular emphasis on improving Council's vehicle fleet and transport practices. We will increase the proportion of LPG usage to minimise emissions overall.

We will also begin installing new energy efficient technology in our street lighting and evaluating the savings.

Moreland is leading the way in protecting our waterways from pollution.

This year, our stormwater initiatives include an education campaign that aims to reduce the amount of cigarette butt and other litter in our municipality. More litter traps will be installed in our stormwater drains.

We will also work with business to reduce pollution through education, planning controls and stormwater management.

Council is committed to conserving drinking water and will pursue a number of initiatives to reduce consumption by this organisation and within the community.

This year we will allocate \$100,000 to upgrading our sporting oval watering systems to using water more efficiently and effectively.

We must also ensure that development in our city is sustainable, from a social, economic and environmental perspective.

To ensure that development in Moreland is concentrated in appropriate areas, we will continue to reform our planning scheme and ensure the community gets the best outcomes from the State Government's Melbourne 2030 plan.

When it comes to development, Council is committed to public health and safety in our municipality. We will work with developers to ensure that they meet their statutory obligations for environmental safety on development sites.

We are also committed to safety on our roads and footpaths. We will undertake several key road works this year, and further works on our bicycle network.

Investment in our bicycle network is a priority for this Council. Bicycle travel is

cheap, healthy and environmentally sustainable. More bicycle travel and less car traffic will make our city more liveable and less polluted. This year, we will complete another extension of the Upfield bicycle path between Bell and O'Hea Streets. We are also pursuing a number of initiatives to encourage people to walk more and to drive less.

Creating a Sustainable Employment Base

Council has promised that we will build a strong economy and a sustainable employment base.

This year, we will increase employment by expanding the opportunities associated with tourism. We have great natural strengths as a tourist destination. Moreland is close to the city and the airport, has good public transport and has a good level of tourist accommodation. Our diversity of cultures, lifestyles and culinary offerings is also a major asset.

To take advantage of these assets, we will create a city-wide tourism network and publish a tourism map identifying attractions for tourists in our city.

Last year, Council convened a meeting with retail traders to discuss ways Council can assist the retail sector. After these discussions, Council committed to rejuvenating the retail sector with improvements to street furniture, plants and trees, rubbish bins, lighting and footpath upgrades and a major upgrade to Merlynston Village

Open, Responsive and Consultative Governance

The fourth pillar of our values in Moreland is open, responsive and consultative governance.

We have stayed close to the people, and governed openly. In the *Moreland Leader* on 9 February, Council was commended for keeping its doors open to the public through 98 per cent of its regular meetings. This is significantly higher than most municipalities.

The administration and Councillors will remain close to the people. We will be easy to contact by telephone and will reply to any correspondence within two weeks.

Since its inception in 1996, Moreland has had some great leaders in the role of Mayor. The considerable experience and knowledge amongst this wide group remains an important resource for Moreland City Council. During 2004, Moreland will convene a committee of previous Mayors who will be invited to discuss important issues in the city and offer their advice on policies and initiatives.

In finishing, allow me to say that we must continue all our efforts to ensure that minority groups enjoy the same standards of living and access to services as the rest of the community. This is one of local government's most important challenges. At Moreland we see ourselves as vibrant leaders, putting our diverse community first.

Here in Moreland we provide the most important and accessible opportunities for citizens to be involved in shaping their own communities.

From what I have said, you can see that there are many challenges ahead.

I am convinced that we have laid strong foundations in this city, for building a productive future for all.

It can be achieved, with a partnership between the community, Council and our dedicated staff.

With your ideas and contributions, we can do more and more.

Moreland is the city I love and the city that cares for its people.

Reflections on the Past Year

Highlights and major achievements from the past year have included the five year financial plan and the depot rationalisation. We have also witnessed the launches of Sparta Place in Brunswick and the Fawkner Community Housing project. We have shown faith in public sector management and service delivery by bringing our green waste service back in-house rather than contracting it out to the private sector. We have also published major new research on our social profile, and hosted a visit from the State Cabinet. Our fantastic response to last year's rain storm was another example of people working together under difficult circumstances.

In partnership with the community and unions, Council was successful in its campaign to save the sports hall on the former Brunswick High School site for community use. After a long campaign, we were delighted by the State Government's understanding of our community's needs.

This year, our connectedness with the world around us deepened as we grew our friendship relationships with other cities. Our connections with Aileu in East Timor strengthened with the visit of Kirsty Sword, the first lady of East Timor, and a visit from Hume and Moreland's East Timor project worker, Vicki Day. Councillor Caputo's trip to East Timor to attend a local government planning conference also increased our understanding of this new state.

Following a campaign lead by Moreland, the Upfield train line's service was expanded during peak hours, helping us to continue our push to get more people out of their cars. Our long campaign for mandatory 40 kmh school zones was also successful when the State Government made school zones law.

Our relationship with Xianyang in China has grown with the hosting of another delegation. We have also made a new friendship relationship with Mansfield Shire. This promises plenty of opportunities for exchanges through tourism, organisational best practice and cultural exchanges.

This year, Peter Brown has been leading the administration towards Council's vision for the city. Peter has re-aligned the organisation and employed two new directors, Roger Collins to City Development and Livia Bonazzi to City Infrastructure. These changes have energised the organisation and begun a process of improvement and advancement.

We hosted a Community Cabinet in Moreland during October and I was very proud of our city, its staff, facilities and people. We gave the Bracks Government a good push to provide for our city's future needs.

In the community, this year, Moreland mourned the passing of Father John Brosnan, one of our community's most significant humanitarians. Father Brosnan was the chaplain at Pentridge Prison for 15 years, and his legacy lives on today. The opening of Brosnan Park in Pentridge was a good way to honour him.



Improving Social Conditions

Detailed Commitments 2004

Everyone Has a Right to All the Opportunities Moreland Has to Offer

Moreland believes that all of our citizens have the right to be equally served by Council. That means that we will do our best to provide buildings, resources and services that are sensitive and appropriate to the cultural, linguistic and physical needs of everyone in our diverse community.

Nearly half of all Moreland residents speak a language other than English at home. Like our community, many of Council's staff speak a language other than English, and we are taking advantage of this with a new language aide scheme that has trained bilingual Council workers to assist citizens with routine inquiries. We will also undertake to improve our links with multicultural organisations and to provide more multilingual information on our HACC services, to ensure all our older citizens know how to access them.

One of the most admirable things about Moreland is that we have achieved a fantastic level of harmony and respect between our different communities. The Moreland Interfaith Gathering has been helping us reach this goal. Council will continue to work in partnership with the Moreland Interfaith Gathering to support their tremendous work with disadvantaged people in direct aid and advocacy.

Temporary Protection Visa holders are some of the most disadvantaged members of our community. Moreland will allow them free access to our leisure and aquatic centres and will provide them with other assistance wherever possible.

Council recognises the importance of contributions made by women to the city. We will continue to give opportunities and recognition to those women who seek and hold leadership roles in the community. Council will continue to provide our program of activities and to realise the goals set out in the Statement of Commitment to Women.

Council is committed to improving the access of its public buildings for people of all abilities. This year, Council will undertake a number of specific works and initiatives to move towards this goal.

Our works will include an access ramp at the Fawkner Tennis club. We will make library services more accessible to people with a disability by upgrading adaptive technology and we will work with a new Disability Advisory Group and panel to provide advice and feedback on access issues within Moreland.

Reconciliation

The Moreland community is passionate about reconciliation. Council is taking several actions towards reconciliation. An Indigenous cultural awareness program will help our staff better respond to the needs of Indigenous people. We have also employed Indigenous trainees in the Arts and Culture, Open Space, Building and Local Laws, and Citizens Services units.

Following the completion of our Aboriginal Heritage Study, Council will amend the Planning Scheme to provide a mechanism for protecting places of pre-contact Aboriginal heritage significance. This will mean that significant Aboriginal places will be protected from inappropriate development.

Council recommits itself to the reconciliation process, with a focus on all Indigenous people achieving economic independence, overcoming disadvantage and promoting reconciliation and Indigenous rights.

We regularly confer with Indigenous leaders to seek advice on Council priorities. We will also provide opportunities for the wider community to better understand the issues that matter to the Indigenous community. We will promote broad involvement of programs to improve the health, safety and well-being of the Indigenous community in Moreland.

Ageing Community

Council recognises the serious problems faced in aged care services. The reckless neglect by the Commonwealth Government will continue to be condemned by Council, and we will advocate for greater resourcing from all levels of government.

Council will support the relocation of the Dorothy Impey Home to a new building in our municipality and we will look at every means within our power to assist the various aged care providers in our city.

Demand for Council's Home and Community Care services continues to rise. To improve our management and allocation of services, this year Council will complete our demand strategy for the allocation of HACC services.

Council will trial an independent living project to give more appropriate support and advice to people assessed as having a low priority for home care, rather than leaving them on a long waiting list.

Families

Council acknowledges that many developmental learning and behavioural problems that emerge later in life have their origins in early childhood. Council is committed to supporting families to provide an environment where children may develop to their fullest potential. This year, Council will complete its Early Years Strategy, which will position Council to improve access to the support systems required by families with young children. We will also be reviewing the location of buildings for early years services and will explore options for co-location and redevelopment.

Community and Neighbourhood Facilities

Council provides public buildings to serve as Neighbourhood Houses, community centres, leisure centres, senior citizens, and child care centres, kindergartens, sporting clubs and many other uses. It is important that these buildings remain relevant to the community's needs and are maintained to an acceptable standard of amenity and safety.

Improving Social Conditions continued

Council has committed to commencing building works on the Glenroy Neighbourhood Facility in 2004/2005 once funding partnerships have been secured. The new building will be located adjacent to the Glenroy Community Hall and Glenroy Senior Citizens Centre in Cromwell Street, Glenroy. It will house a range of services, including the Glenroy Neighbourhood Learning Centre and the Glenroy Maternal and Child Health service.

Building improvements and extensions to pavilion one at JP Fawkner Reserve will commence this year to enable more equitable access to public toilets, provide change rooms for both male and female umpires as well as for visiting teams.

Council has purchased a house and land for the interim Gowanbrae Community House. This year, we will undertake works to improve the property for community use, including building and landscaping in the rear yard.

This year, Council will also allocate funds to upgrade and replace furniture and fittings in its public buildings, giving special priority to senior citizens centres.

Council will spend \$20,000 to upgrade Scout halls in the municipality.

Council will continue to develop a Building Asset Management Strategy to ensure amenity and safety of all our buildings and an asbestos audit of all Council buildings will be complete by 1 June 2004. As part of this process, an audit of Council land used by child care centres and kindergartens will be done to ensure that outside areas are free from asbestos.

Community Building

The Focus on Fawkner Community Action Plan has been successful in gaining a \$269,000 State Government grant over three years. Council will implement the action plan in partnership with the Fawkner community. The first year of the action plan includes Fawkner sporting club collaborations, the development of a Fawkner Economic and Employment Strategy, the establishment of a Youth Leadership Group, the development of a children's services study, holding a Fawkner Gardening Festival as well as organising the annual Fawkner Festival.

Health and Well-being

Council takes a holistic approach to health matters. We believe that each of our citizens should be able to live healthy and fulfilling lifestyles and we are committed to providing an urban environment where this is possible. We are also committed to providing information and health services to our citizens where appropriate.

Council will continue to implement the Moreland Municipal Public Health Plan: Health, Safety and Well-being in Moreland. This will involve taking a whole of Council approach to improving health and well-being in the city.

Modern governments at all tiers place a great deal of emphasis on growing the economy and providing opportunities for citizens to increase their income. There is increasing evidence that this emphasis on wealth and income is coming at the cost of others areas of physical, cultural and spiritual well-being. Council is leading the way in building new structures for the measurement and progress of non-economic well-being. Moreland will publish this year our 'Well-being Indicators' that will be used by policy makers to measure and improve the health, community engagement and quality of life in our city. We will also place the indicators online on our website, along with indicative health data for different parts of the municipality.

Libraries

This year Council will increase spending on library books and other catalogue items to nearly three quarters of a million dollars.

Council will complete the refurbishment of the Coburg Library with the replacement of the outmoded circulation desk and installation of a 'chute to shelf' book returns system. We will also improve the overall amenity of libraries by replacing equipment and fittings, and improving lighting in the Brunswick Library.

Council will continue to provide the Moreland Reading Project with its program of reading related activities for people of all ages, including story times, book clubs, 'new book' mornings, author talks and competitions, as well as special one-off events.

Arts and Culture

Council believes that the arts have the capacity to educate, challenge and engage our citizens. Art beautifies our city and makes it a more vibrant and interesting place to live. We will continue to support the arts in our city through a range of initiatives.

Expanding the breadth and appeal of our programs is an ongoing project and this year we will work to increase participation in the annual Moreland Sculpture Show. We will also develop a new plan for the Mechanics Institute Performing Arts Centre to expand community participation.

We will award cultural grants to at least 20 people or community groups and continue to support the nationally recognised Brunswick Music Festival.

Cultural and community festivals are a great platform for the arts. There is a large and growing demand for large festival spaces in our city. This year Council will commence an audit of potential festival sites across the municipality and develop guidelines for the use of available sites in order to improve its support of community festivals.

A new stage to be completed this year at Clifton Park in Brunswick will make it the premier large festival site in Moreland. Council will hold a community festival to celebrate the opening of the site and to launch the new stage.

Young People

Council wants young people in Moreland to have a central place in the life of our community. We will ensure that Moreland is an environment that respects young people and provides for the development of their life skills and well-being. Council will this year finalise our new primary policy for young people, the Youth Strategy 2004-2009.

Improving Built and Natural Environment

Detailed Commitments 2004

Council will also continue to support and organise events that young people need. We will continue to provide recreation-based programs for 11 to 16 year-olds. We will continue study groups in the local libraries, Freeza gigs and lunchtime activities programs at Moreland City College.

The Moreland Youth Summit is coming up on April 1 and 2. We have given our undertaking that the recommendations made over the two-day summit will directly feed into the development of programs and services for young people around Moreland.

We will build a skate park in the coming months and have earmarked funds for a second skate park this year.

Council has successfully secured community use of the sports hall on the former Brunswick Secondary College site on Dawson Street, Brunswick. Council's priority is to work with the Department of Human Services to refurbish the sports hall and to ensure that management and operational arrangements are in place for the community to gain access at the earliest possible time.

Housing

Moreland has identified housing stress as an increasing problem in the municipality. Moreland has been one of the more active cities involved in the State Government's Social Housing Innovations Program and we will continue to fund projects of that nature. We are currently working with Melbourne Affordable Housing on feasibility studies for the next round of community housing opportunities. Council will also continue to explore the provision of social and low income housing through planning parameters to guide development. For instance, large developments like Pentridge should in the future have a portion of affordable housing. We will also continue to provide information, advocacy, project partnership and research on housing issues.

An Environmentally Sustainable City

Council has a comprehensive range of leading policies guiding us towards becoming an environmentally sustainable city. In order for these policies to operate more effectively across the whole of the organisation, Council will create an overarching policy framework which ties in and coordinates our different environmental policies.

This year, Council will begin work on a Sustainability Strategy which will unify our different policies and practices. The strategy will guide the way Council manages its open space, greenhouse abatement, water use, planning scheme, transport, drainage and other relevant areas of Council operations.

Council believes that schools should be actively supported to provide relevant and up-to-date education on sustainability and environmental issues. As part of Council's continuing effort to support schools in this endeavour, Council will reinstate the Footprints schools program. This is a program that supports schools and students by providing guidance on researching sustainability issues, as well as advice on improving the sustainability of school practices. Priorities for the Footprints program in 2004 will include Council assisting schools to showcase their sustainability research projects at school cluster conferences. Council will also continue to encourage education and innovation in schools and community groups through the Sustainable Moreland Environment Grants program.

The Centre for Education and Research in Environment Strategies is a community-focused educational institution with a cutting edge approach to environmental issues. Council will support the proposal for the new community centre at CERES and we will continue to assist the CERES community wherever we can.

Council will continue to pursue our goal of a 40 per cent Council reduction and a 20 per cent community reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2010. A key partner in that work will be the Moreland Energy Foundation.

The Moreland Energy Foundation was established to help the community reduce greenhouse emissions, and we have undertaken work to ensure that Moreland's civic assets are as energy efficient as possible.

Council purchases 100 per cent of its electricity through a renewable power scheme, but we have also been working towards reducing our overall energy consumption.

We have undertaken significant energy saving works at the Moreland Civic Centre, Brunswick Town Hall and the Brunswick and Fawkner Leisure Centres. The changes have delivered energy cost savings of \$74,176 each year and will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 110 tonnes annually. The works will have paid for themselves after only 2.4 years and will achieve a 15 per cent saving in energy expenditure over the four buildings. Council will continue its commitment to fund energy improvements.

Council will continue its leading role in energy saving and reduction in greenhouse emissions. This year will see a particular emphasis on improving Council's vehicle fleet and transport practices. We will develop a fleet policy to increase the proportion of LPG usage and minimise emissions overall. We have already converted many of our vehicles to gas and are purchasing smaller and more efficient vehicles for Council operations. As part of the TravelSMART program, in 2004 Council will implement our Green Travel Plan which aims to reduce the demand for car travel and support greater use and choice of alternative modes of transport for Council operations. We will also begin testing new energy efficient technology in our street lighting.

Water

Moreland is leading the way in protecting our waterways from pollution with initiatives derived from our Stormwater Management Plan.

This year our stormwater initiatives will include an education campaign aimed at reducing the amount of cigarette butt and other litter in our municipality. More litter traps will be installed in our stormwater drains. We will also work with developers to reduce pollution through education and planning controls.

Improving Built and Natural Environment continued



Council will develop guidelines for improving stormwater management by targeted industries. The project is fully funded by an external grant and Council and its partners will produce materials to raise awareness.

The increasing occurrence of flooding has highlighted the inadequacy of Melbourne Water's stormwater drains, which continue to compromise our community's safety. We will raise the issue of Melbourne Water's undersized pipes, and make sure that protecting the community from flooding is given a high priority.

Council is committed to conserving drinking water and will pursue several of initiatives to reduce consumption internally and within the community. This year we will allocate \$100,000 to upgrading our sports oval watering systems to use water more efficiently and effectively. We will also continue to promote domestic rainwater tanks through a discount program.

Open Space

Council is committed to working with the community to provide quality and accessible open space to all of our residents.

How Council provides parkland and open space is governed by our Moreland Open Space Strategy (MOSS). This year we will complete our review of MOSS with indicative costing. The MOSS review will consider the potential impact of changing residential development pressures on the provision of public open space. We will also complete the review of herbicides used in our public spaces.

Council is committed to the following open space improvements in the coming year. We will undertake 12 Community Planting Days in 2004. The Harding Street Reserve (adjoining Gilgunya Village, the Coburg Football Club and the Coburg Senior Citizens Centre) currently needs upgrading. Council will improve Harding Street Reserve and make it more accessible and usable for the local community. Council will continue to implement works associated with the CB Smith Reserve masterplan, including better signs, landscaping and better access for pedestrians and cars.

Council has resolved to convert the whole former Kangan Batman TAFE site in Coburg to public open space. We will continue to work with those who participated in the Kangan Site Working Group and members of the local community to create a quality public parkland that meets their needs and aspirations.

Clifton Park will undergo extensive landscaping works comprising paths, irrigation, signs, seats and picnic settings, bins, bike racks and a basketball tower.

We will also complete works at Bain Reserve in Merlynston, including a streetscape redevelopment of Merlyn Street and links to our recently installed decking.

Public Toilets

Council is committed to providing safe, clean and attractive public toilets in well-used open and public spaces. This year, Council will adopt a public toilet strategy that plans to provide public toilets into the future across the whole of the municipality, with a particular priority on improving amenities at Shore Reserve and the Merlynston village.

Planning

Council aims to create an environmentally sustainable and liveable city, where people can work, shop and socialise locally. To achieve this we will undertake major changes to the planning scheme this year, progressing the incorporation of the Industrial Land Review, Neighbourhood Character Policy, Buildings over Three Stories Policy and the urban villages review. We will also incorporate the State Government's new designation of activity centres. These changes shall allow us to better control development in the city by aiming for the best environmental and design outcomes, protecting existing residents' amenity and indicating where we, the community, want significant change to be concentrated.

There should be ongoing improvements to open space throughout the city as the city continues to develop. To achieve this, we will continue to implement our policy whereby all residents should be within 500 metres of useable open space. The future conversion of the former Kangan Batman site and Bush Reserve to parkland are key examples of that commitment.

We believe that new development should contribute more than it currently does to all parts of the city infrastructure and we will continue to work for a useable system of development contributions.

In working to incorporate the necessary changes to implement the State Government's Melbourne 2030 strategy we shall ensure the outcomes improve Moreland.

Council will publish its Sustainability Tools for Environmental Performance (STEP), a benchmarking system for residential developments. This program will help developers in Moreland be more efficient and environmentally friendly in the use of their water, energy, materials, waste, transport and landscaping. As part of the implementation of the STEP tools, we will publish draft amendments to the planning scheme for public consultation this year.

Council will prepare a masterplan for the public land outside the Pentridge redevelopment site and including the land between Pentridge and the municipal precinct in Urquhart Street. This will include street furniture and planting, footpaths and other public amenities.



Transport

Council aims to provide safe and well-maintained roads, footpaths and cycling paths, by implementing its Road Management Plan. We also aim to change the way people use roads through increased cycling, walking and the use of public transport.

To do this we will continue to implement our Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy, Moreland Road Safety Strategy and Moreland Road Asset Management Strategy to guide our investments in transport infrastructure. In particular, we will consult the community on our pedestrian and walking strategy with a view to adopting its ideas and actions to increase the amount of walking in Moreland.

We will develop a discussion paper on the issues around parking to commence debate in the community on how best to manage all types of parking.

This year Council will undertake works in the Parker Street area and Hamilton Street. We will also complete the design for improvements to O'Hea Street.

The Upfield bicycle path will have another section linked between Bell Street and O'Hea Street and we will enter into discussions with the relevant authorities about the route for the Upfield bicycle path extension between Boundary Road and the Box Forest Road. We will continue to pursue the long term goal of a complete path from the Western Ring Road in the north to Park Street in the south.

Merlyn Street will be upgraded to provide safer and more convenient parking and pedestrian amenity in conjunction with the Merlynston Village precinct upgrade.

In 2004, Council will review six primary schools' drop off and pick up zones to ensure the safety of the children and the school community.

We will continue to work with the State Government to implement improvements to transport on Sydney Road. We will continue to support the removal of the clearway on the east side of Sydney Road in the afternoon peak time and will explore measures to speed up the trams during busy times. We support improvement for pedestrian safety and variable speed limits on Sydney Road.

We recognise the importance of street numbering in navigating the municipality, and this year Council will develop and implement a street numbering policy.

It is important that our street landscapes reflect well on the image of the municipality, provide shade and shelter for street users and increase habitat and amenity value of the street network. This year, Council will allocate additional funds to plant more street trees. We will choose species and streetscape designs that establish local character and identity, ensure pedestrian ease and safety and are ecologically sustainable, particularly in these times of water restrictions.

Council has a number of Local Area Traffic Management plans in action, and we will work towards implementing measures that arise from the Fawkner, Brunswick West, Brunswick East and Coburg West plans.

Waste

Council will continue to work with our residents to increase the rate of diversion from landfill through recycling, composting and waste reduction.

Depot Rationalisation

This year, Council will rationalise the depot sites and cease activities at the Albert Street depot. This project promises to achieve greater operational efficiencies and will free the Albert Street site for other use.

Building Maintenance

Council will continue to develop a Building Asset Management Strategy to maintain municipal and community buildings at a high standard of amenity and safety.

Creating a Sustainable Employment Base

Detailed Commitments 2004

A Model Employer

Council is committed to remaining a model employer. Many of our staff enjoy a 35 hour week and we will continue to provide opportunities for our employees to find a sustainable work/family balance. This year we will increase our Occupation Health and Safety training budget and focus on achieving a reduced rate of work related injuries and WorkCover premium costs.

Council will establish better structures to enable students and trainees to gain experience at Council workplaces. It is envisaged that this will include work experience placements for secondary school students, school based apprentices and a work placement plan with schools undertaking the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning.

INLLEN and Apprenticeships Plus

In association with Darebin and Yarra, Council will retain our membership of the Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network and continue to assist the development of post-compulsory education and employment opportunities within the region. Also in partnership with Darebin and Yarra, Council will continue its involvement with Apprenticeships Plus, a local training company providing apprenticeship opportunities.

Employment Strategy

Moreland faces a range of challenges in achieving better levels of employment. Along with higher than average unemployment rates and skill shortages in some areas, the city needs to adapt to the changing nature of employment in the area.

Council's Employment Strategy will detail how Council can respond to these issues, define the role that local government can play in assisting with employment generation in Moreland and in supporting Moreland jobseekers.

The Employment Strategy will present a meaningful framework for action targeting a range of jobseekers, including young people yet to enter the workforce, and outline Council's integration with other levels of government and partners.

Tourism Strategy

Moreland has a number of natural strengths as a tourist destination. Moreland is close to the city and the airport, has good public transport and has over a dozen tourist accommodation facilities. Our diversity of cultures, lifestyles and culinary offerings is also a major asset. This year Council will complete a tourist strategy, which will guide our municipality towards taking better advantage of these strengths. Activities will include the development of a city-wide network of tourism operators and related businesses, and the publication of a tourism map which will identify attractions for tourists in our city.

Brunswick Business Incubator

Council will continue to support the Brunswick Business Incubator as a means of nurturing emerging local businesses to grow and become ongoing employers in Moreland. Stage 2 will see a further 15 businesses take tenancy as the centre moves towards financial independence.

Northlink

Along with Hume, Whittlesea and Darebin, Moreland is a member of Northlink, a regional economic development organisation. We will continue our active membership of Northlink and cooperate in regional economic development initiatives in northern Melbourne.

Micro and Small Business Support

Council will continue its support programs for small and micro-business, including continuing its successful MoreBiz concept for improving skills and training for this sector. The State Government has recently announced a new round of funding for small business development through its StreetLife Program and a new program focus on industrial areas. Council will apply for funding under both programs

Special Relationships

Council will continue to deepen our connectedness with the world around us through our friendship relationships with other cities in Aileu in East Timor, Xianyang in China and Mansfield in north-east Victoria. Each of these relationships provide unique cultural and economic opportunities which can benefit local business, education and the arts.

Industrial Land Use Strategy

Council will implement the Industrial Land Use Strategy into the planning scheme. This strategy will keep much of Council's existing industrial land for employment generating uses. It will provide Council with the basis of industrial precincts and the footing to encourage new and existing employers to generate employment within the city.

Retail Centres

Retail area improvements will be implemented this year including a major redevelopment of the Merlynston Village and a number of minor works to other precincts including street furniture, street trees, rubbish bins, lighting and footpath upgrades.

In 2003, Council completed stage one of the Merlynston Village upgrade which featured an innovative pedestrian deck in Bain Reserve. Stage Two of the upgrade will now continue and will include the streetscape redevelopment of Merlyn Street to improve the pedestrian amenity with a wider, safer footpath, street trees, pedestrian lighting, safer car and bus parking and a stronger link from the shops to the Bain Reserve deck. Later in the year a new public toilet will be installed in the village to serve shoppers and park users.

Council will continue strategic planning works on the Brunswick Major Activity Centre and the Coburg Principal Activity Centre. This work will provide a framework for the ongoing visibility and vitality of Sydney Road as the municipality's key retail strip, and the emerging retail centres in Lygon Street and Melville/Grantham Streets.

Council will continue its long-standing support for local special charge schemes which provide funds for collective, co-operative marketing for our retail centres.

Commonwealth Games

The Commonwealth Games promises great opportunities for our city in many areas. Council will work with the Melbourne 2006 Organising Committee and the State Government to ensure our city makes the most of these opportunities.

Open, Responsive and Consultative Governance

Detailed Commitments 2004

Service Commitments

Through the Best Value reviews, each Council service will clearly state the level of performance the community can expect.

Prepared for any Situation

It is important that as an organisation, we are prepared for any situation. In recent years we have tested the Municipal Emergency Management Plan in partnership with the emergency services and other agencies. This year, Council will invest in disaster recovery measures for our electronic information storage.

Up-to-date Information About Community Groups

There are over 1000 different clubs, organisations and services listed in Moreland's Community Database. This information is available through the Moreland Community Portal online. Council will continue to provide this service and maintain an accuracy rate of 80 per cent of listings.

Five Year Financial Plan

Council is committed to the continuing financial health of the organisation. Our ability to meet the needs of our community for services and facilities depends upon it. Council in 2003 went to the community with options for future rate increases. Out of this came our commitment to five annual increases of 6.5 per cent in rate income. This remains our commitment. Council will continue to work toward a financially sustainable city so that our community facilities and services are well funded and cared for.

Electoral Review

The electoral system will be reviewed in 2004. Council encourages our community to engage in the public debate and the Victorian Electoral Commission review process underway until May.

In November, the people of Moreland will vote for a new Council. Council encourages our community to engage in the public debate about Council's direction and to become involved in the politics of our city.

Former Mayors' Committee

Since its return to democratically elected government in 1996, Moreland has had some great leaders in the role of Mayor. The considerable experience and knowledge within this wide group remains an important resource for Moreland City Council. During 2004, Moreland will convene a committee of previous Mayors, who will be invited to discuss important issues in the city and offer their advice on policies and initiatives.

This concludes the Mayor's Speech 2004.

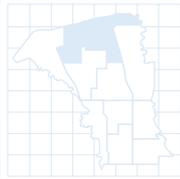


Councillors

Elected March 2002 until November 2004



Box Forest Ward

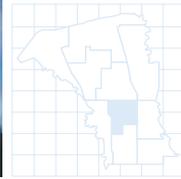


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Grandview Ward

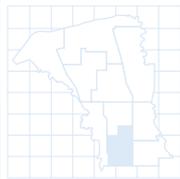


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Hoffman Ward

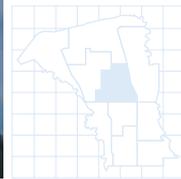


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Lincoln Mills Ward

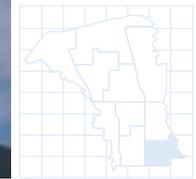


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Lygon Ward

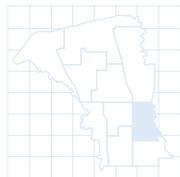


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Merri Ward



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Newlands Ward

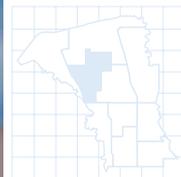


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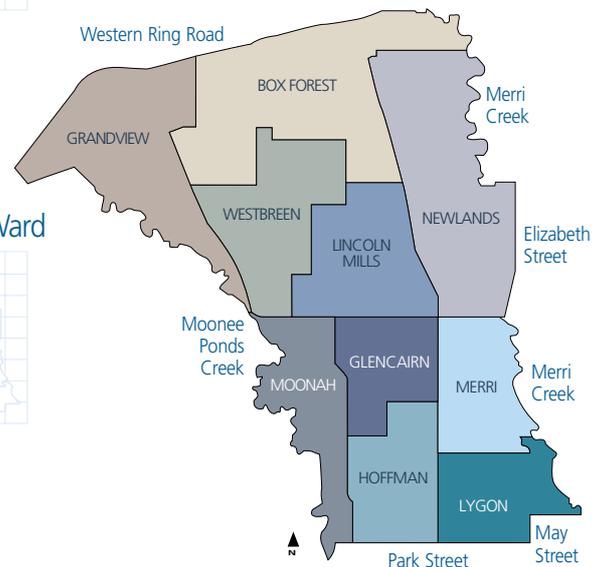


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Mayor's Speech 2004 please contact**

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March 2004



Moreland City Council

Language Link

<u>中文</u>	<u>9280 1910</u>	<u>Hrvatski</u>	<u>9280 1917</u>
<u>Italiano</u>	<u>9280 1911</u>	<u>Polski</u>	<u>9280 1918</u>
<u>Ελληνικά</u>	<u>9280 1912</u>	All other languages	
<u>العربية</u>	<u>9280 1913</u>	including ئه‌هۆنگێ , 廣東話,	
<u>Türkçe</u>	<u>9280 1914</u>	فارسی, Kurdi, Malti,	
<u>Việt Ngữ</u>	<u>9280 1915</u>	Македонски, Српски,	
<u>Español</u>	<u>9280 1916</u>	<u>Somali, Tetum</u>	<u>9280 1919</u>

