

Mayor's message

The past year has challenged us all. We have faced hardship, uncertainty and isolation. But Moreland has come together. To care for each other and help build a stronger community.

On behalf of my fellow councillors, I want to thank all of you for how you have supported each other over the past year. We have worked our hardest to help you. And have been heartened by the many, many ways you have helped each other.

Elections in October 2020 brought a new Council. Five new Councillors joined us and together the 2020-21 year has been one of great focus.

Part of this focus has been on making a path out of the pandemic. We have been working with our community, local businesses and stakeholders to set our priorities for the future. From January to June 2021, we heard what their vision is for our future through our Imagine Moreland engagement program.

Through Imagine Moreland we held pop-up events, workshops and digital engagement to collect your ideas. This was followed by a community panel to develop our community vision and inform our key plans. I am very proud of the work we have done together to create this future vision and look forward to implementing it with you.

Living under Covid-19

Lockdowns and restrictions have dominated the past 12 months. Our community has repeatedly faced not being able to see family or work. But we can see hope with vaccinations rising. Thank you to everyone who has stepped up and been vaccinated.

We kept up a range of Covid-19 relief and recovery actions during 2020-21. We focused on helping our older residents maintain social networks. Our libraries have been a lifeline for many. Plus, we delivered food aid, mental health services and anti-racism measures. We also introduced a Financial Hardship Policy for ratepayers.

Our Thrive Community Grants supported 21 local community groups with grants of up to \$5,000 each. We refunded council fees for cancelled events. And we waived fees for sporting clubs and gave rent relief to tenants in council buildings.

We also helped local businesses. Our specialist hotline, the Love Moreland Buy Local campaign and a grants program were all important supports. We waived food registration renewal fees for hospitality businesses.

Building a better future

This year sees the end of our Council Plan 2017-21. During the past year, and over the term of this plan, we have been working to build a better Moreland for future generations.

A key example has been our work on the Level Crossing Removal Project, led by the State Government. This is Moreland's single largest civic infrastructure project. Our strong and ongoing advocacy achieved better outcomes for this project. Our focus on involving the community saw the creation of new open space equal to 2 MCGs in area. Our community also now has new walking and bike paths, and playgrounds. This is on top of the removal of 4 level crossings and new stations at Coburg, Moreland and Glenroy.

Other recent infrastructure projects for the community include the start of construction of the Glenroy Community Hub. The hub is due to open in early 2022. It will be home to a new library, kindergarten and other vital community infrastructure.

Our Zero Carbon Moreland – Climate Emergency Action Plan has seen key milestones achieved. We signed new contracts to support residents and businesses to get solar panels and energy efficiency

upgrades. We are protecting our city from increasing heat due to climate change with our Urban Heat Island Effect Action Plan.

Our community has embraced our food and green organics collection service. Around 75% of households now access the service (they may be sharing a bin). Together they saved over 13,060 tonnes of food and garden waste from landfill in 2020-21 – a 10% increase.

We continued to encourage active and sustainable travel. With Covid-19 changing how we get around, we started a trial of 3 separated bicycle lanes in Brunswick and Pascoe Vale.

A Moreland for all

Our A Park Close to Home project continued in 2020-21. Our community now has access to 2 new parks after we opened Garrong and Bulleke-bek parks. We also engaged the community on the design of the new park at Frith Street, Brunswick. And we consulted on a draft concept plan for a new park at Cardinal Road, Glenroy.

We also made investments in our leisure facilities during the year. Highlights include:

- an upgrade at the Coburg Leisure Centre
- installation of female-friendly changerooms at Cole Reserve
- works to begin the installation of female-friendly changerooms at Martin Reserve
- conversations with the community about an upgrade to Fawkner Leisure Centre.

With our new Council, we are ready to tackle the challenges ahead and help our residents and businesses fulfil their potential. I hope you will join us in Moreland's recovery. We all need each other more than ever.

Mayor Cr Annalivia Carli Hannan