Transport Policy in Moreland for the Climate Emergency

All levels of government must lift their game and invest more in public transport and active transport infrastructure.

Climate Emergency
The Paris Climate Agreement aspirational target limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees is starting to look unachievable. Even meeting the hard target of 2 degrees, which will still result in huge damage (e.g. probable loss of the Great Barrier Reef), will require governments everywhere to lift their game.

We are pleased to hear that Moreland Council acknowledged we are in a state of climate emergency at the September Council meeting. We note Moreland Council’s ambitious community emissions reduction policies and targets for 2020 and 2040.

Greenhouse Emissions from Transport
Transport is one of the largest sources of greenhouse emissions, amounting to 19 per cent Australia wide, and 25.8 per cent of emissions in Moreland in 2013-14. Here too, governments at all levels need to lift their game.

Major Change in Priorities for Transport Infrastructure
At the state level we think a major shift is needed in Transport infrastructure funding. In 2018 Roads funding was 69.1 per cent, Public Transport 30.5 per cent and Active Transport just 0.36 per cent. There needs to be a major priority change in this area to meet climate targets.

What should happen in Moreland and the northern region to address the climate emergency?
More needs to be allocated to public transport, walking and cycling to address a systemic imbalance over many previous budgets, which has resulted in increasing car dependency, congestion and reducing citywide liveability and sustainability.

Climate Action Moreland advocates:

The Federal Government should:
- invest more in public transport infrastructure, including shifting freight to rail, instead of funding more roads
- limit emissions from aviation
- build fast trains between state capitals to reduce need for air travel

The State Government should:
- drop Westgate Tunnel and NorthEast Link road projects.
- massively boost public transport including building the suburban orbital rail loop much earlier than 2050
- immediately start the Melbourne Metro 2 project
- power an expanded urban and regional train network from renewables
- boost funding for bicycle and walking infrastructure to complete the Principal Bicycle Network.
The State Government in Moreland and the northern region should:

- upgrade the Upfield line by duplicating the track from Gowrie to Upfield and implement a 10 minute peak hour service like other lines
- extend Upfield Line through Roxburgh Park and Craigieburn to Wallan.
- extend the Number 19 tram to Fawkner and Campbellfield
- extend the Number 58 tram to Hadfield and Glenroy
- greatly increase bus frequency to enable practical east-west travel
- better integrate bus and train timetables
- revitalise Sydney Road as a destination with prioritisation of trams, super stops, expansion of pedestrian and dedicated cycling infrastructure, add tree canopy for cooling the local environment and mitigating the local urban heat island effect
- extend the Upfield Bike Path, as an arterial cycling route, to Upfield within Hume Municipality. Continue this path further north when the Upfield rail line is extended

Level Crossing Removal Authority should:

- upgrade the Upfield bike path with either underpasses or an elevated commuter veloway when level crossings are removed on the Upfield line to enhance cycling traffic flow and reduce pedestrian/cyclist conflict zones.
- incorporate bus service interchanges into new station design
- incorporate walking, cycling, and disability access as part of design
- Incorporate urban heat island effect mitigation as part of design

Moreland Council should:

- budget a massive increase in bicycle funding to enable it to meet its commitments in the Moreland Bicycle Strategy 2011-21 and set better targets for later years
- bring all footpaths up to standard (if necessary, creating them) and maintain them, so that everywhere in Moreland is easily walkable
- assess and reduce roundabouts, which are dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists.
- vigorously pursue traffic calming measures, and local street closures to stop rat running

We note that some of these actions are already embedded in the Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy presently being developed after the community consultation process.

A lot needs to change to provide sustainable transport in Moreland for the climate emergency. The above lists would be a good start.

More Information

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*Climate Action Moreland* is a grassroots climate action group that was started in 2008, with a strong local focus addressing climate issues in Moreland, and advocacy at local, state and federal levels for strong and rapid climate action.

Email: climateactionmoreland@gmail.com

Facebook Group: climateactionmoreland