



City of Greater Dandenong

2009-2010

Annual Report





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## Great Place

- Dynamic and diverse city
- Recognised as the capital of the south east
- Victoria's manufacturing heartland
- Home to 9000 businesses
- Variety of bushwalks and talks held on regular basis
- Revitalisation of Central Dandenong underway
- 170 parks and reserves
- Multi-million dollar Drum Theatre
- Land area of 129.5 square kilometres

## Great People

- Over 135,000 residents
- People from 156 nations
- More than half our residents born overseas
- Over 70,000 people employed locally
- Over 400 local community groups and service clubs
- An active and committed volunteer community
- Gabriella Cilmi named Ambassador for Council's Youth Service Centre

## Great Times

- Arts events and Festivals held monthly
- Sandown Racing – cars, horses and greyhounds
- Scenic bike paths stretching from Jells Park to Carrum beach
- 200 active sports clubs
- Largest basketball and volleyball stadium in the southern hemisphere
- Indoor and outdoor swimming pools
- Victoria's largest Lunar New Year festival

## Great Shops

- Redeveloped Dandenong Market
- Little India and Afghan Bazaar cultural precincts
- Modern shopping complexes at Dandenong and Keysborough
- Wide variety of fresh produce, seafood and meat
- Over 50 Asian restaurants and specialty supermarkets
- Extensive range of factory outlets





## Our Vision:

Greater Dandenong is a City of Opportunity with quality buildings, places and facilities, and where people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds can reach their potential to live secure, happy and fulfilling lives for generations to come.

## Our Goals:

### A city planned for the future

- Places and buildings
- Travel and transport
- Activity and economy

### A thriving and creative city

- Employment and education
- Places and facilities
- Activity and economy

### A healthy community and environment

- Places and buildings
- Wellbeing in the community
- The environment

### A city of respect

- Community pride
- Living and working together
- The generations

### A leading Council

- Effective governance
- Excellence in local government
- The best place to work
- Engaging with the community
- Customer focus



# Mayor's Report by Councillor Jim Memeti

This year significant progress was made on a number of key developments throughout the City of Greater Dandenong.

While the last few years have been challenging ones, Council has sought to achieve a balance between enhanced service delivery, infrastructure renewal and increased community support, all while working within the constraints of a challenging economic climate.

Dandenong Market celebrated the opening of its new General Merchandise Hall, transforming it from a construction site to a vibrant shopping experience.

The market redevelopment, when complete, will provide broad economic benefits to the entire city, positioning Greater Dandenong as the regional shopping destination of the south-east and cementing the market's long-term future.

Council's partners VicUrban have made significant inroads into works in central Dandenong, the most noticeable of which involves the \$20 million transformation of Lonsdale St into a pedestrian friendly boulevard. The changes to the streetscape are already clearly visible with new trees, improved lighting and wider footpaths. The next wave of change will see the completion of the George St Bridge and improved road connections throughout Dandenong.

Springvale enjoyed the completion of several key projects including Buckingham Avenue streetscape works and the \$7.7 million Springvale Service for Children.

This integrated early-years project includes a kindergarten, child care, toy library, maternal and child health and community based support services for children and families.

The enhanced program has delivered fantastic opportunities for children and families within the Greater Dandenong community, making it easier for families and the community to engage with a number of different services at one location.

The year also signalled the beginning of the 'number 8' development in Balmoral Ave, which when complete will bring additional car parking to the Springvale business district.

The Budget provided for a total capital works program of \$48.993 million including \$19.728 million for major projects and \$8.426 million in asset renewal works.

Council recognises the community's need for quality facilities and invested significantly in projects that would add to the enjoyment of residents who live, work and play in Greater Dandenong.

Together with the Dandenong Market Redevelopment and the Springvale Service for Children other vital projects were completed including the redevelopment of the Shepley Oval Pavilion and a new state-of-the art pavilion at Springvale Reserve.

Council also confirmed significant improvements to the Noble Park Pool through the "More than Just a Pool" Project.

The \$17.7 million project has received \$10 million from Council, \$7.2 million from the Australian Government and an additional \$500,000 from the Victorian Government.

Works will include a new 50-metre outdoor pool, new water play areas for children and youth, multi-purpose community spaces, new barbecue and picnic areas and shading. This project will not only be an enormous community asset but will also attract visitors from the whole south-east region.

Renowned as a city offering exciting festivals and events, Council was again home to a variety of community festivals, ranging from the Dandenong Show, to the Lunar New Year, Australia Day and Carols by Candlelight.

This year also saw Dandenong showcased as part of the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival. Cultural tours of both Little India and the Afghan Precinct proved a hit, with people coming from across the state to enjoy the culinary delights Greater Dandenong has to offer.

The vibrancy and diversity of celebrations in Greater Dandenong is one of our key strengths and we look forward to expanding this program and growing the community spirit already alive and well in our city.



Please take the time to read over the many highlights of 2009-2010 throughout this report. These are the results of the combined efforts of councillors, the executive team, staff, residents and our strategic partners, who I thank and congratulate.

This year has not only proved an exciting one for our city but an incredibly rewarding one for me on a personal note.

It has truly been an honour to be Mayor of this city, during what undoubtedly we will look back on as one of the most significant in Greater Dandenong's history.

I have such enormous pride in our city and I look forward to seeing it flourish and develop as we embark on this exciting era of change.

**Cr Jim Memeti**  
Mayor

# Chief Executive Officer's Report By John Bennie

2009-2010 has seen the continuation of the exciting, yet challenging journey that Council has now been on for a number of years.

The excitement of 'revitalising' our city's prominent places, facilities and activity centres is balanced by the ongoing challenges associated with enhanced 'delivery' partnerships with other spheres of government; increased support to meet the reasonable needs of a diverse community; and, greater flexibility in service delivery.

Consistently however, Council is stimulated by the opportunities to grow and enhance the city and stands ready for the challenges it faces. The Greater Dandenong City Council remains a sector leader in the way it responds to each and every one of these matters.

Central Dandenong has changed significantly in the period of this overview – the Dandenong Market is no longer a construction site but once again, the vibrant shopping experience for which it has always been known; Council's 'partners' VicUrban are transforming Lonsdale Street into one of Melbourne's great boulevards; 'Arkana' has re-opened as a signature accommodation, office and dining option; and, prominent cranes highlight the work underway on the new Government Services building.

Council's established partnership with VicUrban and the Department of Planning and Community Development continues to yield exciting results for the city. The next wave of change will emerge shortly with the opening of the George Street Bridge and the finalisation of road connections throughout the activity centre.

Springvale has seen the finalisation of major street upgrades in Buckingham Avenue and, the commencement (and near completion in the same period) of the long awaited decked car park at 'number 8' Balmoral Avenue.

Noble Park celebrated its centenary as a township – a wonderful community based, organised and delivered festivity - and welcomed the announcement of significant improvements to the Noble Park Pool supported by the allocation of \$7.27 million from the Federal Government.

Residential development on Council's 'Metro 3175' is about to move to its next stage with planned, higher density developments along and adjacent to Cheltenham Road.

The community's needs for quality facilities and modern, flexible spaces was epitomised by the completion of the Springvale Integrated Children's Services Centre; the Springvale Sports Ground pavilion; and, Shepley Oval pavilion. In addition, further improvements have been made to the very popular Tattersall Park and long awaited plans were finalised for the construction in 2010-2011 of a new multi-purpose pavilion at Warner Reserve.

'Advocacy' remains very high on Council's agenda – advocating for grade separation of the rail line and Springvale Road; advocating for State funds to accelerate an 'indoor pool' stage of the Noble Park Pool project; advocating for a community health assessment in Dandenong South; and, advocating for a balanced outcome in the delivery of the Dingley Bypass being just some of the major initiatives on which traction has been gained, or success achieved.

Council remains financially sound but is always mindful of the challenges which lie ahead. It is critical that Council remains vigilant in the management of activity and expenses to ensure we continue to successfully meet the growing demands of our community.

An underlying operational surplus of \$2.577 million was achieved in 2009-2010. After considering non-operating income and expenditure, the surplus was \$48.423 million against a budget of \$22.638 million.

It is important to note that these surpluses are 'accounting surpluses' which include a range of non-cash items such as depreciation on Council assets, assets written off, assets gifted to Council by Developers (eg. roads, footpaths) and exclude cash costs such as capital expenditure.

Council spent \$33.495 million on capital improvements during the year, \$29.007 million of which was on renewal and upgrades to existing infrastructure assets and \$4.488 million on major projects.

The funding of basic infrastructure – roads, paths and drains – remains a challenge but it is pleasing to report that in addition to the \$2.451 million spent on municipal wide road renewal works in 2008-2009, a further \$5.118 million was spent on this essential area in 2009-2010. This significant investment continues to underpin the importance of Council's maintenance and protection of current assets.





The 2009-2010 stage of this ongoing journey of re-discovery of our city has now passed and we immediately focus on 2010-2011 and beyond. Whatever we might have achieved becomes a new benchmark as we strive to exceed the community's expectations and consolidate this city's emerging position as a prominent city in an increasingly sustainable region.

I thank Council for its leadership and the many wonderful staff of the City of Greater Dandenong who remain committed to local government service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Bennie'.

**John Bennie**  
*Chief Executive Officer*