

Good morning, thank you for joining me.

It has been 17 years since I entered the doors of Melbourne Town Hall as a Councillor.

Those years have been a period of transformation; of new beginnings for Council and the city it represents.

Melbourne has become the city the world and Australia talks about - a place where people from all nations and all backgrounds are invited to contribute.

In environmental management, urban planning and cultural expression we have become a model for capital cities once considered our superior.

We set ourselves a goal of becoming one of the world's most liveable cities – we succeeded three times in under a decade.

This year we set ourselves a goal of becoming one of the world's most sustainable cities – just four weeks ago, we were recognised as being in the top ten sustainable cities globally.

Growth of the city's businesses and residents has brought life back to the city centre.

Melbourne is forecast to be Australia's largest city within 20 years.

These are achievements that define a city and build a sense of pride among citizens.

They are achievements that require courage of conviction and a steady approach to leadership.

The Melbourne Living team has brought stability back to capital city governance.

We've maintained the focus on achieving outcomes for the community and business in Melbourne.

We've regained the trust of governments and voters.

One of my personal goals has been recognition of the vital role capital cities play in securing quality of life for the majority of Australians.

The City of Melbourne now enjoys strong partnerships not only with the State but Canberra as well.

Effective policy is something my team has never lost sight of.

We have achieved the vision and most of our policy commitments made at every election.

Among them are some of history's defining moments:

- The Commonwealth Games will be remembered as one of the greatest and most seamless events ever staged in this city;
- Integration of Docklands has created one of the world's most exciting waterfront domains;
- And multi-million dollar investment in services and infrastructure has made the city of Melbourne a fantastic place to live, work and enjoy.

While busy achieving the vision we set ourselves, we've kept focus on the horizon.

The City has completed the most ambitious community consultation project ever undertaken in its history - Future Melbourne, which was endorsed by the Council last night.

Drawing on the collective intelligence and ambitions of 15,000 individuals, businesses and organisations, we now have a vision 'for the people by the people'.

That vision is backed by a Government in such good financial shape it has a AAA credit rating, is debt free and has strong cash reserves.

After integrating Docklands into the city, building CH2, Australia's first 6-star green office building, contributing \$43 million to the Convention Centre precinct, and staging the Commonwealth Games – all while delivering the lowest rate increases in Victoria in the past 8 years – we have a balance sheet that is the envy of governments Australia-wide.

I have called you here today to make this announcement.

After deep consideration, I have decided not to stand for re-election.

This decision has been one of the most difficult I have ever made.

I've given almost a quarter of my life to public service and, in return, it has given me many of the most rewarding experiences of my life.

You cannot work at 110% forever, and that's what this job requires.

I am confident this is the right decision – it's time to pass the baton. The future Council inherits a solid foundation to drive the city forward.

And I still have keen interests I wish to pursue.

This city has a lot to gain from the connections it holds with the region.

I'm looking forward to the new possibilities presented by Australia's increasing international engagement.

There are many people I must thank for the opportunities afforded me.

I wish to thank my Deputy, Gary Singer, former Deputy Lord Mayor Susan Riley and the Councillors on my team who have given so much to the city they represent.

Together, we ensured the people of Melbourne have always come first.

I want to thank City of Melbourne management and staff, particularly my Chief of Staff Kevin Louey.

To my supportive family, my children Nat, Alex, Eva and John, and my wife Wendy, what can I say? I love you all.

Finally, I want to thank the people of this great city.

Thank you for the faith, trust and encouragement you have given me.

Thank you for the privilege and opportunity.

Thank you Melbourne.