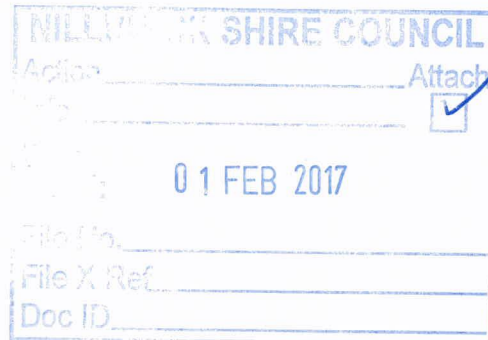


25 January 2017

Cr Peter Clarke  
Mayor  
Nillumbik Shire Council  
Civic Drive  
GREENSBOROUGH VIC 3088



Dear Peter,

As discussed at our meeting with Deputy Mayor Cr Karen Egan, Darko Popovski and Chris Heysen on Tuesday 24 January 2017, I am inviting Nillumbik Shire to join with other Northern Metropolitan Councils in becoming a member of NORTH Link.

The membership fee proposed for 2016-17 is \$7,500 plus GST, a half-rate recognising Nillumbik's small shire status.

NORTH Link appreciates the determination of the new Council to drive economic activity both within the Shire and region-wide in order to create opportunities for local residents and businesses, while preserving the unique lifestyle benefits the Shire offers.

Given its long experience in crafting regional economic development strategies, NORTH Link can assist Nillumbik Shire in aligning with and drawing benefit from regional and State priorities as it revises its own Economic Development Strategy.

The benefits of membership are as follows:

Policy, Advocacy and Research for Economic Outcomes

- Additional influence at a Federal, State and regional level. NORTH Link will be leading a delegation of Northern Councils and other organisations to Canberra on 28-29 March 2017 to discuss with Commonwealth Ministers issues such as Infrastructure, Industry Policy, Telecommunications, Health and Skills, and would like Nillumbik Shire to participate. NORTH Link is also included in State Government economic development machinery in the region, including Metropolitan Partnerships Committees, and has a close relationship with Ministers and central Departments, as well as the local Victorian Government Business Office.
- Nillumbik Shire was a valued contributor to the well-received *Northern Horizons Update 2016* – a *50 Year Infrastructure Strategy for Melbourne's North* research document, which was project-managed by NORTH Link. As priorities contained in the *Northern Horizons* document, such as the North East Link, are "ticked off" by Governments and implemented, a closer relationship between NORTH Link, Nillumbik Shire and other local municipalities is vital to ensure that implementation occurs in line with local needs.

**Postal Address & Street Location**  
NORTH Link  
Technology Enterprise Centre  
Building 1, Suite 4  
La Trobe University  
2 Research Avenue, Bundoora VIC 3086

**Telephone:** 61 3 9479 3339  
**Facsimile:** 61 3 9479 3569  
**Email:** [info@melbournenorth.com.au](mailto:info@melbournenorth.com.au)  
**Websites:** [www.melbournenorth.com.au](http://www.melbournenorth.com.au)  
[www.nbaa.com.au](http://www.nbaa.com.au)

- NORTH Link is currently co-ordinating the production of a Regional Investment Attraction Prospectus, designed to bring investment to Melbourne's North, which currently has a 20 per cent capital stock deficiency compared to the rest of Melbourne, severely limiting the region's ability to create attractive jobs for its residents. This will be important for Nillumbik Shire as it seeks to re-orient its Economic Development Strategy. NORTH Link is looking to attract to the North not only direct commercial and industrial investment but also social and cultural infrastructure, including more hospital and health facilities (much of which is included in the *Northern Horizons* document). We are delighted that you are seeking to leverage the significant cultural and artistic heritage associated with Nillumbik and Banyule in particular to drive the visitor economy, thus enhancing other economic sectors such as retail, and will include this in the scope of the Investment Prospectus and work with you in other ways to make this happen.
- NORTH Link's Food and Beverage Cluster proposal will be of benefit to SME food and beverage businesses in Nillumbik Shire that are seeking to upscale and export. The Cluster will provide: targeted business reviews to improve business performance and capability and identify growth opportunities; commencement of work to establish a Food and Beverage Industry Association that will be self-sustaining within three years; and marketing and event management including local and overseas exhibitions, tradeshow and other activities to generate increased exports, business growth, collaboration and jobs. NORTH Link is co-ordinating a group of Food and Beverage Cluster proposal proponents, including local Councils, tertiary education institutions, private businesses, the Plenty Food Group and others behind an Expression of Interest proposal to the Victorian Government for dollar-for-dollar funding from the Sector Growth program in order to establish the Cluster and association.

#### Capability-building for Nillumbik Shire businesses and individuals

- Nillumbik Shire has a preponderance of home-based microbusinesses. These businesses rely heavily on the Internet for local and global connectivity and value higher speeds at a competitive price. The High Speed Broadband Project managed by NORTH Link, which is designed to connect clusters of businesses to existing fibre optic cable ahead of the NBN rollout in many areas, would be of great benefit to many of these businesses. We would like to involve Council in this Project.
- Allied with its strength in the microbusiness space, Nillumbik Shire is a home of innovation. Certain locations in and around Nillumbik Shire have some of the highest numbers of patent applications in Victoria. NORTH Link also has a long experience in business innovation, including establishing and building incubators, such as the Melbourne Innovation Centre and the Brunswick Business Incubator. NORTH Link would like to work with Nillumbik Shire to make the Greensborough Business Incubator at Melbourne Polytechnic a success.
- NORTH Link also manages the region-wide Northern Business Achievement Awards (NBAA), which celebrate business excellence in the region and of which Nillumbik Shire is an integral part. NORTH Link would be delighted to use its experience running the NBAA Awards to assist Nillumbik Shire in the creation of its own set of business awards.
- NORTH Link has significant experience in the workforce upskilling space, successfully managing programs that have built the capability of Melbourne's North as a region. These include: deep member relationships with the four tertiary education institutions across Melbourne's North – La Trobe University, RMIT University, Melbourne Polytechnic and Bendigo Kangan Institute and the successful pilot Food Industry Student Placement Program (FISPP) and Northern Industry Student Placement Program (NISPP), which have placed university/TAFE students into industry as part of their undergraduate courses. These programs can assist Nillumbik-based students and businesses.

- NORTH Link was recently awarded a Jobs Victoria Employment Network (JVEN) contract for the period 2016 to 2019, which is designed to assist retrenched and disadvantaged unemployed persons across the North – a closer working relationship with Council could more effectively ensure this service fully benefits the Nillumbik Shire and its residents. Target categories include retrenched workers, young people (15-24), mature-aged (over 50) and veterans.
- NORTH Link also conducts capability building initiatives such as CSIRO tours and visits to university Research and Development and Innovation facilities that would be of great benefit to innovative Nillumbik businesses.

Benefits of association

- Finally, NORTH Link can also offer the benefit of association, with its senior membership and board consisting of Northern local governments, the four Northern tertiary institutions (La Trobe University, RMIT University, Melbourne Polytechnic and Bendigo Kangan Institute), Melbourne Airport, Melbourne Market Authority, Northern Hospital and Plenty Valley Community Health. NORTH Link also has nearly 5,000 SMEs stakeholders it regular services and sponsor relationships with Telstra, Energy Australia, the Victorian Government and AusIndustry.

Nillumbik Shire's presence among this diverse grouping will not only amplify the local area's voice but also add to the strength of regional advocacy for the North.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

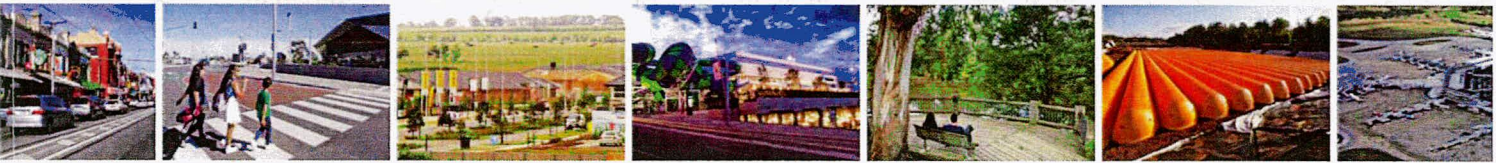
Warm Regards, Chris

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris James". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Chris James**  
Executive Director

50 Year Infrastructure Strategy for Melbourne's North

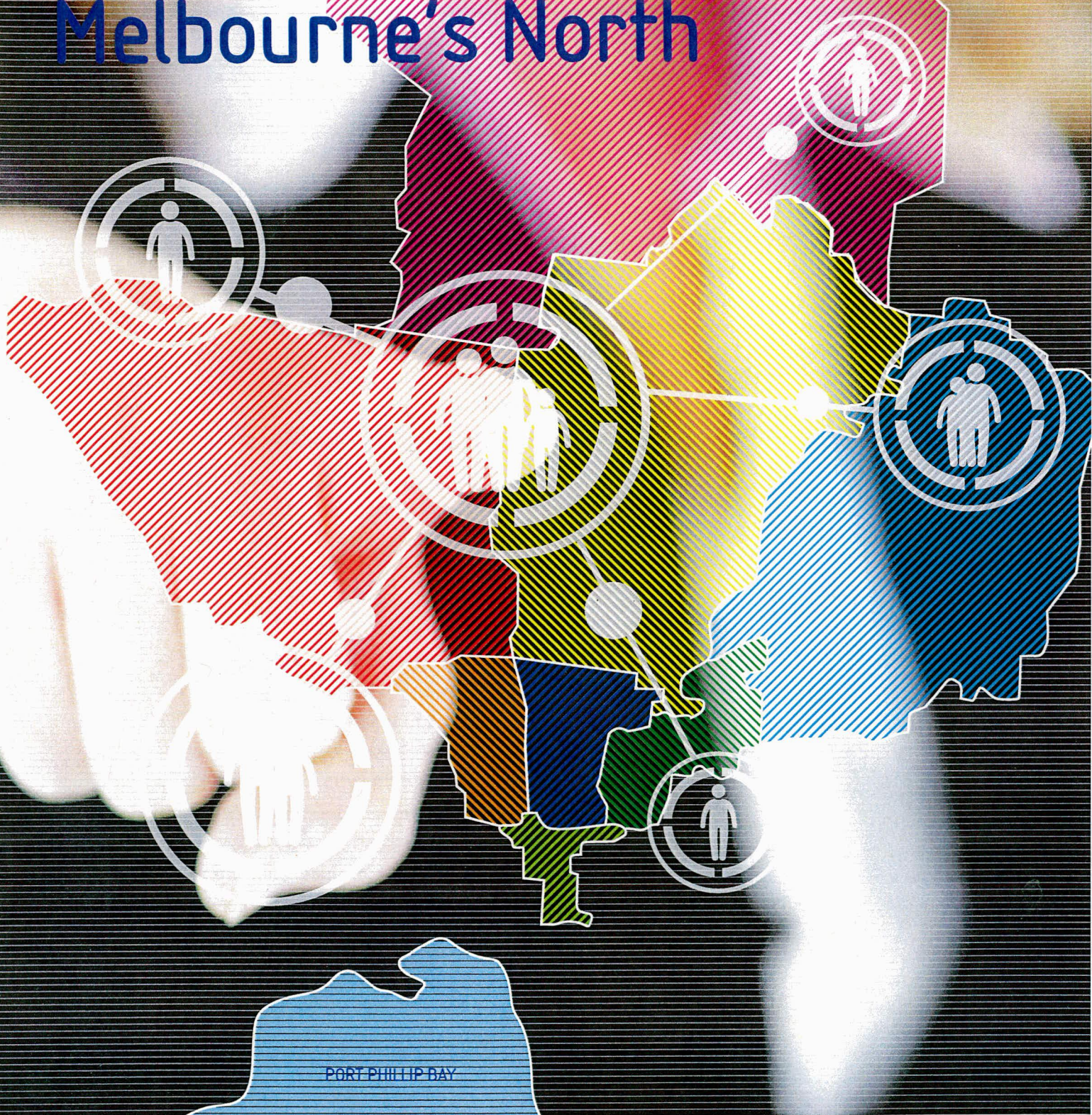
# NORTHERN HORIZONS



Delivery through Partnerships  
UPDATE 2016



# The Future Workforce: Melbourne's North



PORT PHILIP BAY

