Media Statement   1 August 2016

Stephen Wall, Chief Executive Officer, Maribyrnong City Council, today made the following statement

"We have received a number of complaints about the mural located on Sunshine Road adjacent to Tottenham Rail Station.

"Maribyrnong City Council strongly supports street art and initiated StreetWORKS! in 2014, an innovative program involving partnerships with property owners, businesses and government utilities to place commissioned artwork on surfaces subject to recurrent illegal tagging and graffiti.

"StreetWORKS! provides opportunities for artists to develop new ways to express and enhance their artistic practice by activating sites in the Maribyrnong neighbourhood. The program creates mutual respect in the community by engaging artists with property owners and businesses, in which street art projects can be appreciated by the wider community in a more positive light.

"We are also committed to gender equity and women's rights to full and equal participation in all aspects of community life, and for their thoughts, ideas and opinions to be heard and respected.

"We believe that this mural is offensive because of the depiction of a near naked woman, not on the basis of disrespect to Hilary Clinton, and it is not in keeping with our stance on gender equity. We contacted Victoria Police to provide their opinion on the matter, and they deemed the mural to be offensive and in contravention of the Graffiti Prevention Act 2007, which Council is responsible for enforcing.

"On Friday morning (29 July), we spoke to the owner of the property and we have since written to them asking them to remove the mural within 10 days.

"Should they not remove the mural within this timeframe, Council can issue a notice as prescribed under the Act and the owners have the right to appeal.

If the matter proceeds to prosecution, it would be through the Magistrate's Court, which will determine any fine and damages to be paid."

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