Maribyrnong City Council

Climate Emergency Strategy

2020 - 2025

Maribyrnong
CITY COUNCIL

Working with you on the Climate Emergency Strategy

What is this Strategy?

The Climate Emergency Strategy is a guiding document providing the framework for Council to address the climate emergency. It is the first part of Council's three-step response:

Step 1 Climate Emergency Strategy	includes visions and high level goals to set the direction for how Council responds to the climate emergency (this Strategy)
Step 2 Action Plan	includes detailed programs, projects and actions to meet the high-level goals and visions set out in the Climate Emergency Strategy. An Adaptation Framework will be developed in parallel to this.
Step 3 Implementation	puts the programs, projects and actions in place.

What will it do?

This Climate Emergency Strategy is designed to help Council move beyond business as usual, develop a climate emergency culture and work with the community, other partners and other levels of government to address the climate threat.

This Climate Emergency Strategy was written by the Climate Emergency Community Advisory Group, which comprised of members of the Maribyrnong community. This Group met on-line from April till July 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic to develop the Strategy. We'd like to thank the Group for their significant input, work and dedication in writing this Strategy.

This Strategy is also about you.

The climate emergency affects us all, and we all have a role to play in responding to and ending the climate emergency. Council can't do this work alone. It requires a collective, collaborative effort as a local and global community.

We were pleased to see the level of support this Strategy received from our wider community and appreciate your feedback, much of which has strengthened this Strategy. As we move towards the next step of our climate emergency response and developing the Action Plan, we hope you will continue to take the opportunity to be involved. To keep abreast of climate emergency and other Council community consultations register at www.yourcityyourvoice.com.au

Climate Emergency Strategy 2020 - 2025
Approved by Council 8 September 2020
Developed by Maribyrnong City Council's
Climate Emergency Community Advisory Group

Council has acknowledged the climate emergency needs an urgent response. This is our strategy to address it.

Now is the time to act.

1 overarching goal

Restore a safe climate at emergency speed to provide maximum protection for people and species, recognising and acting on the need for coordinated local and global action.

3 key objectives

- Ceasing emissions of greenhouse gases by Council and supporting the Maribyrnong community to transition to zero greenhouse gas emissions
- Drawing down (removing) existing and future greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere
- Empowering and mobilising community action and building community resilience.

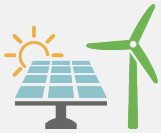
4 main approaches

- Embedding the climate emergency response in Council's planning, operations, infrastructure, strategies and organisational culture
- Supporting and working with our community to understand and take action on the climate emergency
- Developing partnerships and networks with other Councils and organisations to be more effective in climate emergency action
- Advocating to all levels of government for urgent climate emergency responses.

6 key priority areas

The Climate Emergency

Recognise the urgency needed to address the climate emergency, and work with others to educate and move beyond business as usual.



Energy

Transition to renewable forms of energy, increase energy efficiency and move investments from fossil fuel industries.

Efficient Buildings and Infrastructure

Build or retrofit buildings which use less energy to occupy and incorporate green roof and wall options. Use low/zero carbon and recycled materials in construction, renovation and maintenance of buildings, and infrastructure projects.

Transport

Prioritise zero emissions and sustainable transport, support transition to electric vehicles and phase out fossil fuel powered vehicles. Shift Council's fleet to electric and end unnecessary travel.

Consumption and Waste

Prioritise waste avoidance and reduced consumption, encourage food waste recycling and focus procurement and other activities to support a local circular economy.

Land use and Drawdown

Drawdown (remove) excess carbon out of the atmosphere, restore and protect open spaces and undertake greening opportunities.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the lands for which the Climate Emergency Strategy has been written and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation, including those who live within the City of Maribyrnong.

We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging and acknowledge their continued custodianship of Country and that sovereignty was never ceded. We are committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, water and sea and their rich contribution to society.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to the social and economic inequality they experience as a result of colonialism. Climate change is an existing and increasing threat to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, despite their marginal contribution to the warming of the earth.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture as the oldest continuous living culture in the world. Responding to the climate emergency offers the opportunity to embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, science, and knowledge to inform sustainable land use practices and climate change mitigation.

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Glossary

Term	Definition
20 minute neighbourhood	The 20 minute neighbourhood is based on the principles of 'living locally' so that needs are met and services are available within a 20 minute walk from home, with access to safe cycling and local transport options.
Active transport	Modes of transport that rely on human power to fuel movement, e.g. cycling, walking, skating and running.
Adaptation	Learning to live with, adjusting or making changes to cope with impacts. Adaptation in a climate emergency fails to address the emergency itself but focuses on adjusting to live within the actual or expected climate impacts. This is in contrast to mitigation which is about ending the emergency.
Circular economy	As opposed to a linear economy which focuses on make, use and dispose, a circular economy aims to close the loop and eliminate waste and the continual use of resources by reusing products and materials, which also minimises greenhouse gas emissions.
Climate positive	Going beyond net zero emissions and creating a benefit by removing additional carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. It is the same as net negative emissions.
Community mobilisation	Community mobilisation on the climate emergency can take many forms, but community understanding of the climate crisis and ways in which they can take action is essential. Mobilisation can include political action, peer-to-peer education, community based projects, voting for strong climate candidates, campaigning, individual change or actions, community resilience building, mass actions or many other approaches. Community climate mobilisation is frequently designed to provide a clear driver for Government to act with more urgency to restore a safe climate.
Culturally appropriate species	Species of trees, shrubs, grasses, and herbs which are considered by Traditional Owners to be culturally appropriate have historical presence within the local landscapes. These species may or may not have been used by Traditional Owners.
Drawdown	The active removal of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere, e.g. through the absorption of carbon dioxide by plants which then store it as carbon.
Embodied carbon	The amount of carbon emissions released throughout the whole lifecycle of a material or product, including resource extraction, production, transportation and disposal. Sometimes called embodied energy.
Emissions/ greenhouse gas emissions/carbon emissions	When used in this document, these terms all refer the release of greenhouse gases. Greenhouse gases trap heat in the atmosphere as part of the greenhouse effect and cause global warming and the climate emergency.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Emissions profile	An inventory of the emissions generated by an individual or an entity over a period of time. It includes a breakdown of where these emissions originate, usually broken down into sectors such as energy, transport and waste.
Legacy greenhouse gas emissions	Emissions which have occurred in the past, generally either attributed to an activity, a place (e.g. a landfill) or an organisation.
Maximum protection	The goal of protecting human and non-human life to the maximum extent possible, globally and through time. It provides an **ethical and moral baseline or framework for responding** to the climate emergency. In terms of climate emergency, to provide maximum protection requires creating a global cooling as soon as possible.
Mitigation	In terms of climate emergency, mitigation is focused on ending the emergency by reducing and preventing emissions of greenhouse gases, and draw down of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. This is in contrast to adaptation, which is not about ending the emergency, but is about adjusting to it.
Net zero emissions	Achieving an overall balance between greenhouse gas emissions produced and greenhouse gas emissions taken out of the atmosphere, resulting in a net zero amount.
Offsets	To achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions, many organisations pay for carbon offsets which avoid or remove emissions from the atmosphere. This means that the greenhouse emissions from an activity, are 'cancelled out' by the purchase of an 'offset' where the equivalent amount of emissions are avoided or removed from the atmosphere.
Safe climate	Pre-industrial climate conditions, prior to human induced warming. A safe climate can be restored by rapidly ceasing emissions and sequestering the excess greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere.
Share economy	Mostly community led initiatives focused on sharing resources within the community. This can include sharing goods, reusing or repairing materials.
Solar PV	Photovoltaic solar is the type of rooftop solar installed on homes and businesses, and uses the heat from the sun to generate renewable electricity.
Traditional Owners/Traditional Custodians	Traditional Owners have sovereignty over lands, waterways and seas which they occupied before, and after, colonial invasion. In Maribyrnong the Traditional Owners are the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation. For further information, see the Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of this document.

We are running out of time and require leadership to champion the emergency transition required.

A message from the Climate Emergency Community Advisory Group

In November 2019, Council invited community members who lived, worked, studied, or owned property in the City of Maribyrnong, to nominate to be part of Council's Climate Emergency Community Advisory Group. 64 nominations were received and 15 members were selected to make up the group. These members have a strong understanding of climate change and climate emergency and reflect the diversity of those who nominated.

The Climate Emergency Community Advisory Group has prepared this Climate Emergency Strategy with the expectation that Council will act quickly and at the necessary scale to address the climate emergency, on behalf of the Maribyrnong community.

Responding to the Climate Emergency requires a major cultural shift within the community and the operations of Maribyrnong City Council. It is essential that this Climate Emergency Strategy has an overarching mandate from Council, with Council and the Executive Management Team leading the way.

Council must take immediate steps towards transformational change within the organisation in order to incorporate climate emergency action across all areas - strategy, policy, planning, decision making, resourcing and operations - ensuring it becomes part of core business and that all activity is evaluated against its response to the climate emergency.

Council's recent response to the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated its capacity to mobilise rapidly from business as usual to mitigate and respond to an existential threat. Council responded quickly in emergency mode to address the immediate threat, providing support packages for the community, businesses and those experiencing financial hardship. The same swift and unified response is needed to mobilise and sustain transformational change in the face of the existential threat of the climate emergency.

COVID-19 gives us a rare opportunity to rebuild and transition our local and global economy, based on a zero emissions framework. Council and the community must resist a return to business as usual and work together to ensure we rebuild socially, environmentally and economically sustainable systems.

Following this Climate Emergency Strategy, Council's development of the Climate Emergency Action Plan provides the opportunity for Maribyrnong to be the first climate emergency Council in the world to act in emergency mode in response to the climate emergency. This Strategy outlines the first steps the Climate Emergency Community Advisory Group believe are critical for Council to become real climate leaders, to work with the community and shape a world-leading response by the organisation.

We are now living in the early stages of catastrophic climate change. We must restore a safe climate urgently.

Ending the climate emergency - why mitigation is key

The climate emergency is the most significant threat to life on this planet at this time and it is globally recognised that we must stop further progression of climate change. We are at crisis point. This Strategy supports the critical goal of restoring a safe climate at emergency speed and providing maximum protection of life for all people and species, locally and globally.

To achieve this, we must act strategically and with urgency to prevent the climate emergency worsening. The key objectives underpinning this Strategy align with this - to prevent an increase in climate risk by eliminating and also by drawing down Council and community greenhouse gas emissions. To address the climate emergency strategically, prevention first and foremost is key.

This Climate Emergency Strategy will not exist in a vacuum. It calls for a review of all Council polices, plans and related strategies to ensure they build in a climate emergency response.

It will also be supported by an Action Plan, which will outline detailed actions to meet the Strategy's direction. Parallel to the Action Plan, an Adaptation Framework will be developed to provide further support.

While adaptation does not prevent the climate emergency, it helps us live with climate change. This is important because while we are restoring a safe climate, we need to be able to live with the changed climate we face.

Adaptation planning is already included in many Council policies, plans and related strategies – either through Council-led initiatives, or in response to legislative requirements (such as the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan). While this is a good start, an Adaptation Framework will ensure adaptation actions are incorporated into the review of Council strategies, plans and policies to protect the City of Maribyrnong and our community, as we work to restore a safe planet.

The Climate Emergency

Our Vision

By 2025, Council and the community will be working in partnership to create a climate positive Maribyrnong. Transformational change will be well advanced to cease greenhouse gas emissions and to drawdown legacy emissions.

A culture of climate emergency will become the new standard for business as usual for Council and the community. Council will have followed up the 2019 Climate Emergency Acknowledgement and taken significant steps to becoming one of the first Councils to work in a climate emergency response mode. It will have adopted a climate emergency business as usual approach throughout all its operations - strategies, policies, planning, decision making and projects, and in its work with the community. The Climate Emergency Department will be well established, resourced and respected. Council will be working across the community, with stakeholders, creating partnerships and advocating for urgent, systemic change to end the climate emergency.

What we know

We are currently facing a global climate and ecological emergency. The earth is already too hot, with major impacts affecting the world from the current levels of global warming of 1.1ºC. If we continue with our current business as usual, the impacts will be catastrophic for humanity and much of the worlds remaining ecosystems. Even if all global greenhouse gas emissions cease immediately, the world will still be on track for a 1.5 to 2ºC warming scenario. Ceasing emissions is not enough. We must also actively drawdown carbon from the atmosphere to cool the planet and restore a safe climate.

The climate emergency response must be fair and just. The vulnerable, socially and economically disadvantaged, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and those who have typically made the least contribution to the problem, often have less capacity to respond and are often disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change.

These impacts will be felt by everyone. The Maribyrnong community has already experienced the impacts of climate change - extreme weather events, heat waves, food insecurity, river flooding, changes in mental and physical health, energy poverty, the effects of living in energy inefficient housing, restricted access to open space areas, and impacts to air and water quality.

Across the world, the changing climate risks civil unrest, insecurity of nation states, food and water scarcity, mass migration and climate refugees, significant environmental impacts and ecosystem collapse. We need to provide maximum protection of life for all people and species, locally and globally, and act with this as our benchmark.

We are already being impacted by climate change. We just need the will to act on the climate emergency.

What we can do

Council cannot address the climate emergency alone. A climate emergency response will require Council to advocate, educate and engage with our community and all levels of government in order to enact real and meaningful change. Council should actively collaborate with stakeholders and seek to directly influence the decisions of others in line with the vision and goals contained in this Climate Emergency Strategy. We need everyone on board working towards two common goals - ceasing our emission of greenhouse gases, and removing emissions from our atmosphere to return to a safe level.

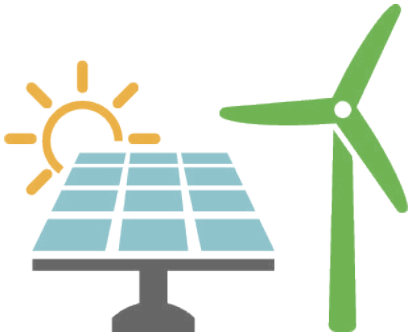
This Climate Emergency Strategy cannot be a stand-alone document. Success relies on everyone playing their part and seeing themselves as part of the solution. To have an impact across the whole of Council and the Maribyrnong community, the following is recommended, that Council:

- ensure all strategic objectives in the Council Plan 2021-2025 and all other Council strategies, policies and key documents integrate climate emergency responses, including both mitigation and adaptation
- build a whole of organisation commitment and understanding to transition to zero greenhouse gas emissions
- dedicate the resources necessary across budget and staffing to enable Council to act in a climate emergency mode
- embed a response to the climate emergency into Council's short, medium, and long term planning and decision making
- ensure Council's Executive Management and leadership teams act with urgency on behalf of Council to deliver a safe climate and respond to the climate emergency
- develop an adaptation framework and programs to build community and Council resilience to climate impacts
- develop and implement advocacy plans to influence all levels of government and other stakeholders responsible for ensuring a safe climate, to accept their climate emergency responsibilities and act with urgency and speed
- ensure the Maribyrnong community understands the climate emergency, the impacts we face, and the solutions available, focused on the best zero greenhouse gas emissions and drawdown options
- empower and mobilise the community to take action on the climate emergency
- engage the Maribyrnong community on Council's response to the climate emergency to ensure it is relevant and meets community needs
- develop partnerships with Traditional Owners for culturally appropriate responses and cross cultural education opportunities regarding the climate emergency
- avoid shortcuts and ensure change is meaningful and lasting
- identify opportunities for local landmark projects that demonstrate Council's commitment to the climate emergency and identify Maribyrnong's role as a world leading climate emergency Council
- partner with and support other climate emergency leaders to ensure the response is urgent and at scale
- support the efforts of others to achieve climate emergency goals
- develop zero emissions and drawdown responses which do not rely on overseas offsets.
- encourage research to find solutions while zero emission and carbon drawdown strategies are enacted.

Upwards	Sideways	Outwards	Inwards
Advocate to state and federal governments to adopt and resource a climate emergency response.	Collaborate with and support other councils to implement a climate emergency response.	Work in partnership with the community and Traditional Owners to initiate local community education, mobilisation, action, mitigation and resilience building.	Ensure Councillors, the Executive Management Team and Council staff understand and act on their roles in a climate emergency response.

*Adapted from Council and Community Action in the Climate Emergency: www.caceonline.org

Energy



Our Vision

By 2025 Council will be using 100% renewable energy for electricity in its own operations, and will have further reduced its energy related emissions by improving energy efficiency across all operations. It will replace gas with renewable energy alternatives by 2025.

In partnership with the community and government, Council will lead the Maribyrnong community towards becoming a municipality powered by 100% renewable energy by 2030. It will actively work to eliminate expenditure on, and investment in, fossil fuel reliant industries and will support the use of alternative technologies and the creation of renewable energy jobs as part of the post COVID-19 economic, environmental and social recovery.

What we know

Energy for residential, commercial and industrial use is the biggest emitter of greenhouse gases around the world, and is increasing. International action on climate change is focused on a transition to renewable energy.

Energy use is the biggest contributor to the emissions profile for the City of Maribyrnong and Council's own corporate emissions. This makes it a key target for action and involves not only reaching the target for 100% renewable energy for electricity, but also phasing out gas.

In Maribyrnong, energy from fossil fuels contributes 76% of the municipality's total greenhouse gas emissions (gas 13.5% and electricity 62.5%). Industry is the biggest contributor to emissions from electricity and gas (35%) and industry and commerce combined account for almost half (47%) of the city's emissions. Gas is responsible for 13.5% of the municipality's total emissions, with more than half of gas emissions generated by households.

After eliminating its own greenhouse gas emissions, a Council focus on electricity used by commerce and industry will have the greatest impact in eliminating greenhouse gas emissions in the municipality. Further gains can be made through advocacy, engagement and use of Council's corporate mechanisms to support households, including renters, to move away from gas and other fossil fuels for energy supply.

What we can do

Eliminate greenhouse gas emissions in Council operations and services:

- prioritise electric options and energy efficiency when purchasing or replacing Council plant and equipment, and embed this as a priority in Council's procurement policy and guideline documents
- introduce a fossil fuel divestment plan and withdraw support from financial institutions and companies that support the fossil fuel industry
- build a whole of organisation commitment to transition to zero greenhouse gas emissions and 100% renewable energy, with no gas supply
- develop Council training programs for staff on energy use, energy efficiency and renewable energy
- actively encourage and adopt new and emerging technologies where this will improve energy efficiency

Support the community to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions and improve energy efficiency:

- provide and evaluate the success of education programs for the community, small business and industry, to encourage the transition to renewable energy and energy efficiency
- assist households, including renters and vulnerable residents, businesses and industry to source solar PV and/or renewable energy in the transition from fossil fueled gas and electricity
- provide support for community initiated renewables programs or projects

Advocate to all levels of government to quickly transition to 100% renewable energy and to:

- develop and implement climate emergency responsive policy and regulatory frameworks for the transition to 100% renewable stationary energy by 2030
- fast track and increase investment in grid infrastructure (upload, storage, transmission and distribution) to facilitate achievement of 100% renewable energy
- support investment in alternative technologies and renewable energy industries and jobs, including community renewables projects
- provide a safety net and comprehensive plan for transitioning workers, vulnerable individuals and communities to a renewable energy society and economy.

Efficient Buildings and Infrastructure

Our Vision

By 2025, Council will be recognised as a leader in energy efficient building, and retrofitting community facilities, exceeding best practice Environmentally Sustainable Design principles where possible. Council's operations, administration and community buildings will be highly energy efficient and powered by 100% renewable energy for electricity.

Council will build energy efficient infrastructure using low carbon materials. Council will also work with the Maribyrnong community to develop their capacity and empower them to build and operate their homes, businesses and facilities to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

What we know

Buildings, through their construction, materials and ongoing use, account for 39% of global carbon emissions. In Maribyrnong, buildings contribute 75% to total greenhouse emissions. Many materials commonly used in construction of buildings and infrastructure have high embedded carbon emissions. With low/zero carbon emissions materials, emissions reduction design technology and expertise readily available, they provide a major opportunity for emissions reduction across the municipality.

Building standards in Australia are poor compared to many other countries. Despite current energy standards and Planning Scheme provisions, most existing Victorian housing performs to very low energy standards. This means a lot of energy and carbon is used in the construction of our buildings, and when they are in use, the buildings waste energy through inefficient heating/cooling, lighting and appliances, and our most vulnerable residents, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, can experience energy poverty. Minimising inefficiency from building operations ensures they are comfortable, liveable and affordable and reduces emissions.

Council is responsible for implementing the Victorian Planning Provisions at the local level and prepares and adopts the Municipal Strategic Statement. It can seek to amend Planning controls to ensure new buildings meet higher minimum standards to meet community expectations for energy efficiency and renewable energy and can provide permits for green roofs or walls if needed.

Given the number of buildings that Council owns, manages, leases and approves, there is enormous opportunity to lead by example, create and advocate for change, and influence others. Council also has the opportunity to influence owners, occupiers, landlords, building users, government, and industry stakeholders to dramatically improve the standards and ensure consistent standards across all building types and across the community.

Council also controls the materials that are used in buildings and plays a major role in the creation and materials decision for significant local infrastructure, eg. roads, kerb and channel, footpaths, facilities, street furniture, drains, bollards and other assets. There are many opportunities to use low carbon and recycled content materials or products to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions. The impacts of the changed climate should also be considered to ensure the longevity of the infrastructure and protection of the City of Maribyrnong.

What we can do

Eliminate greenhouse gas emissions in Council buildings, facilities and infrastructure:

- incorporate mandatory energy efficient design into new developments, retrofits and renovations of corporate buildings, community facilities and Council infrastructure
- commit Council operations to using low/zero carbon and recycled materials in construction, infrastructure, renovation and maintenance
- reduce energy consumption through provision of efficient appliances and programs
- ensure adequate staff resources to ensure compliance with energy efficient building design required by Council policies and Planning Scheme
- ensure the retrofitting of buildings to improve energy efficiency
- ensure Council's strategies and adaptation framework consider the impacts of climate change to protect buildings, facilities and infrastructure.

Support and encourage energy efficient buildings and infrastructure:

- develop or deliver targeted programs for the community, developers, builders and local businesses that promote and encourage energy efficient concepts and design, zero emissions building materials, and green roofs and walls
- deliver or support programs that promote and enhance energy efficiency in the operation of existing and new buildings for residents, businesses and industry, including renters, and those in energy-poverty
- support and promote local buildings or infrastructure which showcase low/zero carbon materials use, energy efficient design and innovative sustainable lifestyles, such as tiny housing.

Advocate to state and federal government for improved energy efficient building standards including:

- improved energy efficiency design standards and disclosure at the point of sale or rent
- state funding for Indigenous led energy efficiency programs for Indigenous households
- improved standards and energy efficiency upgrades in state-owned public housing to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions and reduce energy poverty
- greater regulation of industries and mandatory building inspections for energy efficiency
- higher energy performance standards in national construction and building codes
- improved energy efficient building standards and planning controls for new developments, through mandatory design requirements and greenhouse gas emissions caps within the Planning Scheme.

Transport

Our Vision

By 2025 the City of Maribyrnong will have prioritised zero carbon transport across all of its operations. It will have a clear and resourced plan to cease transport generated greenhouse gas emissions, reduce car use and provide infrastructure to support zero carbon transport. It will have responded to the pandemic and beyond, with increased working from home and decreased car travel.

By 2030 the City of Maribyrnong's entire vehicle fleet, operations and equipment will be powered by renewable energy. Council will work in partnership with local, state and federal governments to lead the community transition to a zero carbon transport municipality. The City will have significant cycling and walking infrastructure to support this transition.

What we know

Transport is Australia's second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. In 2017 emissions from transport accounted for nearly 20% of all greenhouse gas emissions within the municipality. Cars and trucks are major contributors, producing over 60% of Australia's transport greenhouse gas emissions. Our public transport system also has carbon intensive fuel sources, with four out of every five buses on Australian roads powered by diesel.

Australians rely heavily on cars for daily transport. Private vehicles account for 87% of all trips to work, school and university, and we drive longer distances compared to other countries. Australia's lack of mandatory vehicle emission standards means Australian vehicles emit 46% more greenhouse gas per kilometre than vehicles in Europe. Because our transport system is so car reliant, it presents an enormous opportunity to reduce transport generated emissions. By changing the way we think about and choose to travel, we can minimise car use and switch to sustainable, active modes of transport like walking and cycling.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in people re-thinking how they choose to travel. With many people working from home, car use and air travel has decreased. More people have chosen to cycle and walk - not only reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, but also re-prioritising how people work, communicate and meet. With new active transport modes being adopted, Council has clear opportunities to support sustainable transport into the post-COVID-19 recovery period and beyond.

Council plays a significant role in planning local transport networks, affecting the transport choices made by the community each day. Supporting zero emissions transport as part of a climate emergency response requires investment in infrastructure that will allow the community to make climate friendly transport choices. Encouraging the uptake of electric vehicles is a good first step, however integrating land use planning, urban design and urban greening that support active transport options are key to creating a zero carbon local transport network.

Neighbourhoods can be designed to ensure close and accessible local services - such as the 20 minute neighbourhood model - which support active transport use. Council's climate emergency response needs a local transport network that gets people out of their cars, with streetscapes and infrastructure that support safe walking and cycling.

What we can do

Prioritise sustainable transport and reduce the need to travel:

- embed zero greenhouse gas emissions transport priorities in infrastructure design, construction and maintenance activities
- work with residents and business owners on ways to reduce the need to travel, including working from home and shopping locally
- require new developments to provide infrastructure to support zero greenhouse gas emissions transport including bikes, to discourage car dependency and private car use
- consider Plan Melbourne principles in urban planning and projects to transition existing neighbourhoods to '20 minute neighbourhoods' which support sustainable, active transport options
- improve cycling infrastructure and pedestrian pathways, including safety and connectivity, to provide the community with alternatives to private car use and fossil fuelled public transport
- review Council's Integrated Transport Strategy, Bicycle Strategy, Walking Strategy, and other relevant Council Strategies, and ensure their implementation, to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from transport.

Support the transition to zero emissions vehicles:

- advocate to state and federal governments to power public transport with 100% renewable energy
- facilitate and support electric vehicle charge points in new developments and across the municipality
- advocate to the state and federal governments to introduce mandatory vehicle emissions standards and low emission zones for trucks and other heavy vehicles.

Eliminate Council's transport generated emissions:

- transition all Maribyrnong fleet vehicles, contracted vehicles and operations to be powered by renewable energy by 2030 with total car fleet transition to electric vehicles well advanced by 2025
- promote and encourage zero greenhouse gas emissions travel behaviour by Council staff for travel to and from work and for work related travel, particularly active transport options
- learn from the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic and institute ongoing options for working from home, remote meetings and conferences, and delivery of services online to reduce the need for work related travel
- install necessary infrastructure to support the transition of Council's fleet to electric vehicles
- prioritise zero greenhouse gas emissions purchasing criteria, for the full range of Council vehicles, operations and equipment
- ensure Council infrastructure and maintenance programs (such as re-sheeting or footpath upgrades) use low/zero carbon emissions materials.

Consumption and Waste

Our Vision

By 2025 Maribyrnong will be a community that is conscious about its consumption habits and actively avoids and reduces consumption and waste. The community will see consumption as based on need and waste as a resource. The direct link between consumption, waste and greenhouse gas emissions will be recognised, understood and minimised, moving to zero waste and zero greenhouse gas emissions.

Consumption and management of waste and resources will be guided by the waste hierarchy and the circular economy. Council will initially target its management actions at waste materials that contribute the most to our greenhouse emissions profile, such as food waste currently going to landfill.

What we know

As our consumption spirals out of control, the generation of waste continues to climb alongside it. Our increasing use of disposable items and our treatment of once durable items as if they are disposable, is leading to mountains of waste. Much of this waste will end up in landfill and/or our environment. Our rejection of once popular practices of reuse and repair, despite support in some parts of our community, has added to the consumption habit and generation of waste.

There is a greenhouse impact across the whole consumption and waste cycle regardless of where our items end up. Extraction of resources, manufacturing and production, transport, packaging, recycling, composting, disposal to landfill or waste to energy, all contribute to our communal greenhouse gas emissions profile and debt. We can only reduce our consumption and waste related greenhouse gas emissions if we reduce our level of consumption. Moving towards a circular economy and reusing resources also assists in limiting these greenhouse gases. We need to preference reuse and repair of items over new items, and consciously avoid items that will end up as waste at the end of their useful life.

Despite measures by Council to decrease waste to landfill, it still contributes over 4% of total greenhouse gas emissions within the municipality. With a growing population and increasing high density living, the ability to reduce and manage waste at the household level and across the community is becoming more critical.

Legacy greenhouse gas emissions from waste sent to landfill in years past are not accounted for in contemporary waste emissions calculations, which only consider new emissions. Legacy emissions will be included in Council's efforts to drawdown emissions.

To help the community to limit consumption and waste, we need local systems and options to reuse, repair, re-purpose products at the end of their life. Engaging with and supporting the community to build a culture of limited consumption is key to minimising greenhouse gas emissions from consumption and waste.

What we can do

Support the transition to a low consumption, zero waste community and circular economy:

- expand the range of items that can be recycled by the community via kerbside collections
- encourage community-initiated and local business initiatives that avoid greenhouse gas emissions from waste, and support a circular economy
- develop or deliver community programs to encourage low consumption and waste avoidance
- promote community participation in share economy programs and activities
- introduce kerbside food waste collection to all detached residential dwellings by December 2021
- develop options for food waste recycling in multi-unit dwellings and businesses receiving Council services, commencing in 2023 or earlier, in line with the State's Recycling Policy
- explore pay-as-you-throw schemes to limit consumption of disposable items and encourage a low consumption culture
- investigate programs for businesses, industry and construction to improve waste avoidance and disposal and contribute to a circular economy
- encourage the community to consider the impact of their food purchasing choices to minimise food waste and support a low carbon and low food miles diet.

Advocate to state and federal governments:

- to introduce and resource waste management systems that prioritise zero greenhouse gas emissions in the waste sector
- to expand product stewardship schemes
- to place a future ban on food waste to landfill and ensure the required infrastructure and recycling is available locally and that local markets are supported
- to ensure the recycling industry receives adequate support to create a robust, local circular economy and restore community confidence in recycling.

Transition to zero greenhouse gas emissions from waste arising from Council's operations and services:

- ensure Council's purchasing processes, contracts and tenders prioritise waste avoidance, recycled content and recyclability and reuse
- ensure Council construction and infrastructure projects specify use of low/zero carbon materials, recycled content and reuse of waste products
- avoid consumption, minimise waste and waste related greenhouse gas emissions at all Council meetings, events and activities (e.g. food, materials etc).

Ceasing emissions is not enough. We must also actively drawdown carbon from the atmosphere.

Land use and Drawdown

Our Vision

By 2025, Maribyrnong will be a city that takes responsibility for past, current and future greenhouse emissions created by Council and the community. It will have vastly reduced its greenhouse gas emissions and be pursuing drawdown opportunities without using offsets. Council will prioritise the enhancement, protection and restoration of ecosystems and available land in the open space network to drawdown greenhouse gas emissions and address the biodiversity crisis. Land use planning and Zoning will also prioritise current and potential future climate impacts.

By 2030, Council will be working in partnership with other communities and Traditional Owners to provide large scale drawdown opportunities that improve climate emergency outcomes.

What we know

The way in which we use land is one of the leading contributors to the climate emergency, representing almost one quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Historically, much of the City of Maribyrnong was native grassland and wetlands, and acted as a natural reservoir that absorbed more carbon than it released. The landscape has undergone significant change since colonisation, with its current urban form becoming a source of greenhouse gas emissions. Legacy greenhouse gas emissions from the past still linger, continuing to contribute to the climate emergency we are facing. We now need to draw down (remove) these excess greenhouse gas emissions to limit climate emergency impacts from global warming.

Council shares responsibility for land use across the City and has the opportunity to influence drawdown activities. It can lead local initiatives that remove legacy emissions from the atmosphere through City greening and support for community greening programs, including replanting culturally appropriate trees.

Council can also engage, educate and support the community about the importance of vegetation and land use to drawdown emissions.

Maribyrnong has relatively little green open space compared to other local government areas in metropolitan Melbourne. Council is working to increase tree cover on public land at the same time as we experience a decrease on private land. The need to house a growing population has put pressure on the amount of private land devoted to green space and tree cover.

Working beyond Maribyrnong's borders to drawdown legacy emissions, provides the opportunity to improve land use and increase tree and vegetation cover while achieving emissions drawdown, environmental and wellbeing outcomes. It may also provide opportunities to work with Traditional Owners. Council can also pursue other drawdown opportunities such as biochar and enhanced soil carbon.

What we can do

Ensure existing Council strategies, policies and plans improve land use, drawdown greenhouse gas emissions and respond to the climate emergency:

- review the Open Space Strategy, Urban Forest Strategy, Nature Strip Policy and other relevant policies or strategies to reflect drawdown opportunities and potential to respond to the climate emergency
- re-assess Council's planting palette to prioritise drawdown potential of tree species and consider culturally appropriate trees
- review Council's Significant Tree Register to incorporate criteria based on carbon capture and storage, for drawdown of emissions
- set increasing targets for tree cover and drawdown actions through revegetation and understory planting
- explore options to increase targets for tree cover, green space and a low carbon opportunities in the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme
- ensure an Adaptation Framework assesses and addresses climate risks in land use planning and zoning
- avoid or reduce the use of offsets to reach zero carbon, and focus on local drawdown opportunities
- assess land use greenhouse gas emissions and quantify drawdown potential in emissions assessments for Council operations and community.

Drawdown carbon emissions through improved land use across the municipality:

- provide more green spaces and green space networks to future-proof the City's growing population, support biodiversity and address climate emergency impacts
- ensure protection and investigate expansion of existing open spaces and wetland ecosystems to support emissions drawdown opportunities
- pursue restoration, remediation and increased planting on degraded Council land and within industrial areas, where appropriate and safe
- work with residents, Traditional Owners, industry and businesses to actively seek opportunities for drawdown, improved tree cover and understorey planting within the City, both on public and private land
- build community capacity to improve their gardens and private land to create green spaces that increase drawdown
- investigate potential land acquisition to support opportunities for intensive local drawdown projects
- investigate opportunities to partner with Traditional Owners to plan and conduct land management works, and consider potential drawdown opportunities through Caring for Country and Indigenous cultural knowledge practices
- Work with Melbourne Water to improve vegetation along waterways, remove concrete channels where possible and to work with Traditional Owners to actively protect cultural heritage, ecologies and values.

Work in partnership with the community and government:

- identify regional partnership opportunities within or beyond the municipality to support drawdown that provides local benefits
- advocate to the state and federal governments to improve land use practices to increase drawdown opportunities city-wide, state-wide and nation-wide
- work in partnership with other local governments to advocate for mandatory tree planting in new developments
- collaborate with all levels of government to implement large scale drawdown projects and put an end to old growth forest logging
- facilitate conversations with local Traditional Owners about pre-colonisation and current land management practices, and the links to climate change mitigation.

Next steps

This Climate Emergency Strategy will not exist in a vacuum. It is the first part of Council's three-step response to the climate emergency. This will be the guiding, strategic document for Council to address the climate emergency, and will feed into all Council's strategies, plans and policies, from the Council Plan down.

The Climate Emergency Strategy will be supported by an Action Plan which will outline detailed programs, projects and actions to meet the high-level goals and visions set out in this Strategy. An Adaptation Framework will be developed in parallel to this, to ensure that adaptation actions are also incorporated to protect the City of Maribyrnong and our community as we work to restore a safe planet.

This Strategy was developed by the Climate Emergency Community Advisory Group and includes input from the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and Boon Wurrung Foundation. Feedback from community consultation conducted in July/ August 2020 has also been incorporated.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who contributed in this process.

The Climate Emergency Strategy will be reviewed in 2025.

Maribyrnong
CITY COUNCIL

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