

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY TOOLKIT

Version 2.0



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This toolkit will be reviewed frequently to ensure actions maintain appropriate ambition and relevance. I look forward to collaborating with you to ensure this toolkit has the greatest potential to address the climate emergency.



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Acknowledgement of Country

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land. That sovereignty was never ceded and I thank them for caring for the beautiful flora and fauna of this land for over fifty thousand years. I pay my respects to their Elders, past, present and future, and to the Aboriginal Elders of other communities across the world. May we all continue to learn and heal together.

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What is this toolkit?

This toolkit offers practical recommendations for how local governments (also known as city councils and local councils) can take immediate action to address the climate emergency.

It is written as a resource for local government councillors and community members who want to take meaningful climate action in their community. It will also serve as an excellent resource for council officers looking at implementing a climate emergency response or environmental best-practice in their council.

The recommendations outlined in this guide are specific and measurable, with suggested timeframes.

This toolkit features information on:

- A. who the decision-makers are in local government
- B. key documents that can influence change, and
- C. recommendations to take action.

Why local government?

Local governments have significant opportunities and the power to invest in services and infrastructure to combat the climate emergency. In Victoria, local governments manage over \$90 billion of community assets and infrastructure and spend over \$8 billion on services each year.¹

Local governments play a critical role to:

- communicate the current and future impacts of our climate emergency
- demonstrate climate adaptation and mitigation strategies
- pilot and promote new technologies
- lobby other levels of government and neighbouring local councils to act
- work with residents and businesses to lower greenhouse gas emissions, save money and improve the community's health.

Areas where local government can effectively contribute to climate emergency action include:

- energy
- transport
- communication
- advocacy
- circular economy
- industry and built environment
- agriculture and open space
- transparency and accountability.

¹ *Local Government Better Practice Guide*, Local Government Victoria, DELWP 2018

A

Decision-makers in local government

Most decisions in local government can be classified as being about governance (how the organisation is run and regulated) or operations (how money is spent).

Councillors are primarily responsible for governance and overarching approvals on annual budget expenditure. Similarities can be drawn between councillors and that of a board of directors overseeing and advising on the strategic direction of a company.

Council officers (including the Chief Executive Officer, executive management team and all other employees) are responsible for the day-to-day management and operations of the council.

Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the executive team sit at the intersection of governance and management. Good councillors make evidence-based decisions and set strong strategic directions on behalf of their communities. Councillors are aided in decision-making by reports provided to them by council staff, who apply their own expertise as well as information provided by the community.

Here is a brief overview of key decision-makers, their roles and responsibilities, and their spheres of influence.

Councillors

Role

In Australia, local councillors are elected to govern each municipality under powers granted by each state's *Local Government Act*. This Act and the state minister responsible for local government set the municipality boundaries, voting method and a range of expectations for councillors to fulfil.

Victorian council elections occur every four years. You can find details of the next election at the Victorian Electoral Commission website www.vec.vic.gov.au

Councillors are not considered employees of their council and do not receive employment benefits such as a salary and leave entitlements, rather they receive an allowance.

Each Victorian council determines the amount paid to councillors within limits set by the Victorian State Government.

Responsibilities

Councillors are expected to attend planning sessions, briefings and all formal meetings of council.

Meetings of council occur monthly or fortnightly, often with a small break over December and January. Meetings require a quorum (minimum number) of councillors to attend for the meeting to take place.

This is usually half of the elected councillors plus one.

At each meeting of council, councillors are required to make the final decision on a range of key actions, documents and policies prepared by council employees. Each report provides councillors with a list of recommendations to approve. The content of these reports is influenced by the mandate given to the CEO via the Council Plan, previous decisions of council and the annual budgets.

Councillors are responsible for employing just one staff member, the CEO. Councillors also set the CEO's salary and their key performance indicators (KPIs). Councillor interaction with officers within a council is often limited to formal avenues such as briefings or reports only.

Influence

An effective councillor will balance good governance and their community duties. An imbalance of this may lead to tension among the councillors, or within the organisation, which can result in less desirable outcomes for the community.

Decisions in the chambers come down to a vote by the majority. Without majority support, a recommendation will not be adopted. So, though a councillor may be extremely active in community campaigning or on social media, this does not

necessarily mean that they have any greater power in decision-making. For this reason, it is important for community members to use the avenues available to them to be heard by a range of councillors.

Like the other two levels of government, local government is politically charged and driven by the political persuasion of the group majority. All candidates and councillors, regardless of party or independent status, will sit somewhere on the progressive-conservative spectrum and will act in accordance with their core beliefs, or if they are apathetic towards an issue, they will likely vote in line with community concern or pressure.

Chief Executive Officer

Role

The CEO is appointed by councillors to manage the operations of the council.

Responsibilities

The CEO is responsible for all staffing and management within the council, and is expected to implement all decisions of council. An effective CEO manages to work successfully with both councillors and council staff.

The CEO and their executive management team are responsible for providing councillors with the draft Council Plan, budgets, policies and monthly reports for approval at council meetings.

Influence

This key position not only drives organisational effectiveness but also sets the culture within the organisation. Organisations with a strong and positive culture have happier employees and in turn this may mean better outcomes for the community they represent.

The CEO also has an important role in advocating to the State Government and to other councils about the importance of addressing the climate emergency and can be the difference between successful and unsuccessful action within a city.

Council employees

Role

Council staff are employed to carry out the everyday operations of a council. They are also often known as council officers.

Responsibilities

Council officers are expected to implement the decisions of council, provide advice to councillors and deliver services for the community, often within an area of specific expertise. Some staff administer, or are members of, advisory groups in their area of work.

Influence

Council staff have varying levels of autonomy and ability to implement council policies and actions. While some officers may be able to more efficiently support and direct councillors and more senior staff, there are many protocols and layers of approvals within most government organisations that tend to make them slow and reactive.

Local governments are often staffed with an abundance of experienced, knowledgeable and dedicated employees. It is the role of the CEO and executive team to recruit and manage these people who can then offer innovative, best-practice policy suggestions to benefit and drive the community forward.

Community members and leaders

Role

All people who work, live and play within a council area. They may be active as an individual resident, be part of an active neighbourhood or community group, or represent a community-focused organisation.

Responsibilities

Individuals who own a business or reside in a municipality directly elect councillors. They can also communicate with and make submissions to councillors and council staff throughout each term of council.

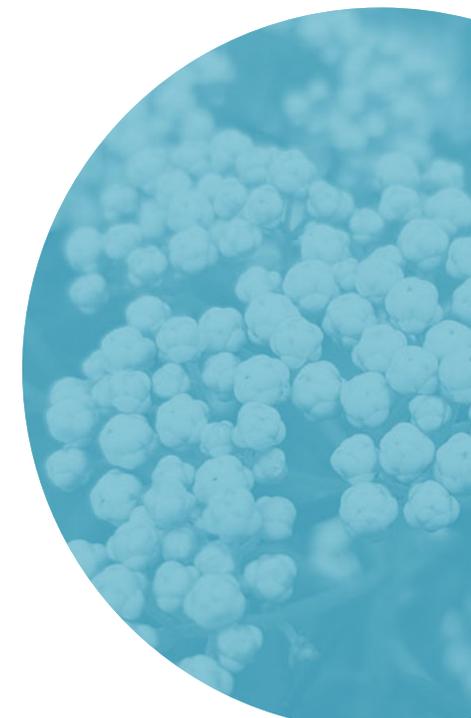
Influence

One significant way to influence a local government decision is to participate in community consultations for the Council Plan, annual budget, and other policies and strategies by making submissions, communicating with officers and talking with your local councillors.

Commenting or debating on social media posts is less effective in driving change at a local government level than participation in consultations and other forms of advocacy. Joining a resident advisory group on a topic of particular interest is another way to influence policy and action. Community members can also request the establishment of advisory groups.

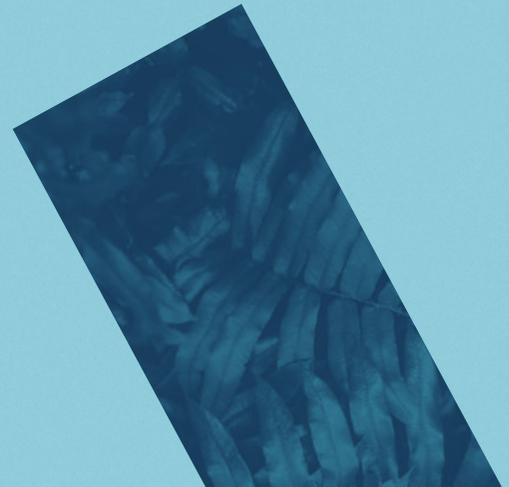
Individuals and community groups can also seek out existing community groups, environmental organisations or officers at other local governments who have successfully implemented climate emergency actions. Many of these actors are willing to assist and have a range of tools available to replicate or build on.

Advocates should seek to collaborate with as many community groups that stand to benefit from a decision or action as possible as it gives the greatest chance of securing a majority vote at councillor meetings.



B

Key council documents that drive action



Council Plan

Reviewed: Every four years and within the first few months of a new council term.

The Council Plan (sometimes called the Corporate Plan) is the most influential document within any local government. In Victoria, this document is drafted and adopted in the first few months following an election. It guides policy development, revenue, expenditure and actions for the entire term of that council. Items not included within a Council Plan are often given lower priority and require greater levels of community campaigning to be acted upon.

It is a priority for climate emergency actions to be embedded into Council Plans. This can be achieved by communicating with new councillors early in their term or by gaining public

commitments from candidates prior to them gaining office.

Community members are given the opportunity to make submissions to the draft Council Plan. It is important that suggestions are specific and measurable, and have clear and achievable timeframes.

Annual budget

Reviewed: Annually and in line with the financial year.

Councils are required to submit annual budgets each year within the timelines set by the relevant Local Government Act. Annual budgets include expected revenue and expenditure. Large metropolitan councils can have annual budgets of several hundred million dollars while regional councils will often have much smaller budgets.

The budget expenditures will be split between operational expenditure and capital expenditure. This differentiates the funding between spending on staffing expenses (operational or OPEX) and programs and infrastructure (capital or CAPEX).

Councils that focus on a range of revenue-raising options other than only rates will have greater resources to act on our

climate emergency. Actions that seek to significantly cut rates revenue or other revenue streams put the funding for short and long-term climate emergency mitigation efforts at risk and should be discouraged.

Each annual budget is accompanied by a five or ten year rolling plan of capital projects. Council budgets prioritise projects that align with their Council Plan and, for effective action on the climate emergency, it is important that those Council Plans and budgeted projects also align with the recommended actions in Section C, below.

Monthly reports

Reviewed: Each month at meetings of council.

At each formal meeting of council, the CEO and executive team present councillors with monthly reports relating to different areas of council activity. Each report will provide a list of recommendations for councillors to approve.

Councillors can request that a report be written on a particular topic by moving a *notice of motion or general business item* at a council meeting, requiring majority support of councillors to support the delivery of a report to a future meeting.

Monthly reports are often great opportunities to further embed climate emergency actions within a council. Councillors have the power to move alternatives or amend any of the recommendations that have been presented. Some councils have requirements to call for a new report rather than move an amendment to an existing report for any new initiatives that may have a financial or business process impact.

Departmental strategies

Reviewed: Vary.

Most councils have specific strategies and action plans for particular areas, such as an environment strategy, or a sustainable travel action plan. These are informed by the Council Plan but go into much more detail about how and why the council want to carry out actions in a particular area.

Departmental strategies are usually developed by staff with expertise in that area, and sometimes are developed or informed by external consultants.

Most councils will invite the community to participate in either strategic development or consultation. This is another opportunity to influence direction and action, particularly for strategies that have not included environmental considerations.

C

Recommendations for action to address the climate emergency

This toolkit contains areas where local governments can affect climate emergency action. It is important that suggestions and actions including a climate emergency declaration match the level of urgency and ambition that comes with that declaration. Therefore, each of the recommendations below are within the power of local government and are specific and measurable and include timeframes. The recommendations provide who should enact the change within council, via what method and the key documents for embedding the change. All actions are provided with an overarching goal or purpose to provide further context for the reader.

Where applicable, each recommendation will also establish three levels of ambition (one, two and three stars). One star being the recommended minimum level of ambition, through to three stars being best-practice. To achieve 'two stars' both one- and two-star actions must be achieved. To achieve 'three stars' both one-, two- and three-star actions must be achieved.

Legend

-
- ★ Recommended minimum
 - ★★ Moderate
 - ★★★ Best Practice
-

1

Transparent & accountable actions

Council operations and actions should be transparent to ensure accountability to the public. Without clear roles and responsibilities, a clear strategy or realistic goals, climate emergency action may be undermined.



Recommended transparent and accountable actions

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
1.1 2030 target	Set a combined 2030 target for council operations and community emissions. With underlying data, emissions profiles and annual progress made publicly available via frequent reporting and communication channels.	2030 net zero target	2030 net negative target	Councillors	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Target to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees
1.2 Climate emergency response	Commit to fully funding and implementing a whole of council Climate Emergency Action Plan / Climate Emergency Response developed with strong engagement from the community that embeds the climate emergency into all existing and future plans, budgets and strategies.	Ensure each division of council has specific targets and actions which contribute to delivery of the plan	Delivery is included in annual performance and promotion requirements for all staff	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from budget	Council commits to immediately reprioritising budget and delivering actions
1.3 Traditional Owner knowledge	Consultation with Traditional Owner groups must be undertaken throughout development of the emergency plan. Creating opportunities to embed local knowledge, country plans and reconciliation action plans as part of the response.	Plan includes Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owner language throughout	Foreword delivered by local Traditional Owner group/s	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Traditional Owner knowledge of local area embedded into emergency plan
1.4 Climate emergency key performance indicators [CEKPI]	Councillors embed measurable climate emergency key performance indicators [CEKPIs] into the CEO's contract.	Climate emergency KPIs included by the CEO in all executive and senior management contracts	N/A	Councillors, CEO	CEO contract	Seek inclusion via confidential report	KPIs providing further incentive for climate emergency action
1.5 Meeting transparency	Ensure councillor attendance registers, expense policies, agendas and minutes for the previous 5 years are made publicly available on the council website.	Councillor voting history is made easily accessible for residents	N/A	Councillors, supported by CEO, governance and communications staff	Council Plan or monthly report and ultimately council website	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Meeting, agenda and voting history is transparent and accessible to the community

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
1.6 Digitise operations	Digitise processes to promote reduction in paper consumption and use only 100% recycled paper across council operations. This should include on demand video recordings of all council meetings to reduce the need for residents to commute and to improve transparency of decision-making.	>80% internal processes digitised	>95% processes digitised	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	No operational emissions and biodiversity loss from paper usage, and community is informed
1.7 Environmental risk management	Ensure the organisation's risk management framework is aligned with Environmental Management System ISO 14001 Standards. This would seek to ensure a broad understanding of environmental aspects and impacts, climate emergency risks and impacts, and Environmental Strategy and Management Plan established. Importantly, involving senior management through responsibility and decision-making.	14001 certified	31000 aligned, 14001 / 9001 certified	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Best-practice international environmental risk management is adopted
1.8 Climate emergency training and education	Deliver climate emergency training and education to all councillors and staff on the climate emergency including climate risk, adaptation and solutions.	Mandatory biennial training and training sessions extended to the community	Included in annual performance and promotion requirements for all staff	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	All decision-makers and stakeholders are informed and incentivised to act
1.9 Climate Emergency Coalition	Establish a Climate Emergency Coalition to serve as forum for discussing climate emergency issues, help develop common language and understanding the strengths and challenges of the issues faced by the community, foster coordination and collaboration between different sectors, evaluate and influence policy, work to mobilise resources and funding, and launch or support programs and services that address local needs.	Coalition members are remunerated for their time	All councillors and executives to attend at least one Climate Emergency Coalition meeting or briefing per annum	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Councils, in partnership with businesses, community organisations and individuals to take coordinated action on the climate emergency

Example of transparent and accountable action

The CEO's key performance indicators (KPIs) are set at the beginning of a new CEO contract and are reviewed annually. Every councillor will have an opportunity to amend the CEO's KPIs at least once in their council term. In a confidential report on the CEO contract, a councillor could add the following wording:

That council:

Insert the following wording into the Chief Executive Officer KPIs within the CEO contract:

Ensures effective advocacy on the climate emergency on behalf of the local community and council to other levels of government, peak bodies and industry.

Ensures the executive and management group have strong alignment in contributing and delivering measurable actions that mitigate the effects of the climate emergency.

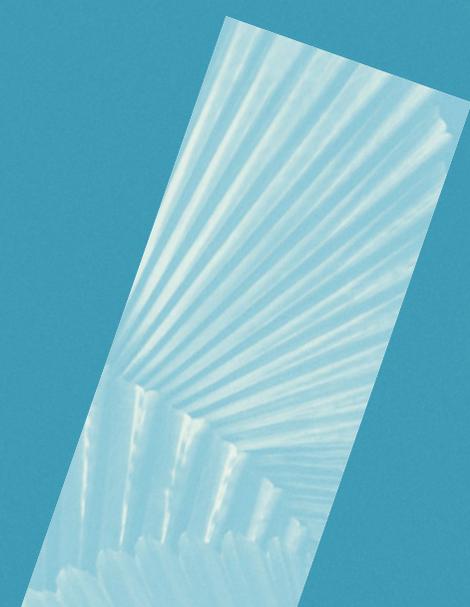
Delivers on key outcomes as highlighted in the Council Plan, including prioritising actions to mitigate the effects of the climate emergency.

Demonstrates a high level of financial acumen including innovative approaches that contribute to delivering on actions that mitigate the climate emergency.

2

Communication actions

Communicating with the community is vital to build trust, public support and community awareness of local issues. As councillors and council officers work together in the community's interest, councils should provide information about the climate emergency and what action the council is taking and what change they are trying to influence.



Recommended communication actions

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
2.1 Public declaration	Publicly declare a climate emergency.	N/A	N/A	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion in Council Plan or monthly report	Acknowledge we are in a state of climate emergency that requires urgent action by all levels of government
2.2 Ease of access to climate emergency information	Information about the climate emergency is prominently displayed on the home page of the council website.	N/A	N/A	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion in Council Plan or monthly report	Demonstrate importance and provide information to the community
2.3 Emergency communications	Use climate emergency language, science and expected future local impacts to inform council communications by articulating the level of urgency and mobilisation required in the community vision, communications plan, health and wellbeing plan, social media posts, quarterly newsletters, planning applications and on the council website.	Advocate to state and federal governments for an urgent climate emergency declaration, funding and action	A dedicated community-wide education and engagement process is developed, funded and implemented	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report, communication plans	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Communicate the level of urgency and mobilisation required to community, business and other levels of government
2.4 Fund and provide resources for community leadership	Fund actions under each area for community participation, leadership and action, including the establishment of community environmental advisory groups, 'friends of' groups, citizen scientist programs, litter clean up groups, school programs and climate-focused business networking.	Dedicated resources allocated, including free meeting spaces	Empower and work with residents on advocacy programs targeted at government and business	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report, annual budget, departmental strategies	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Community to work with councils and lead action

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
2.5 Community climate emergency festival or forum	Commit to and provide funding for an annual climate festival or forum with representatives from all sectors of the local economy encouraged to participate.	OPEX / CAPEX ≥\$50k	OPEX / CAPEX ≥\$100k	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report, communication plans	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Enable local climate leaders to demonstrate how their work contributes to climate emergency action, connect residents and local business, and increase the capacity of the community
2.6 Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communication	A climate emergency fact sheet or information pack is developed and distributed for ≥3 of the most-spoken non-English languages at home within a community.	Emergency Response Action Plan is fully translated	All communications are fully translated	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report, communication plans	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Communicate the level of urgency and mobilisation required to community and business



Example of communication action

Using a notice of motion, a councillor calls for the council to declare a climate emergency and asks for a report with recommendations to feature at a future meeting. Any councillor can move a notice of motion or general business item and seek a report back with options for implementation.

The text below is suggested text:

That council:

1. Acknowledges we are in a state of climate emergency that requires urgent action by all levels of government, including local government.
2. Embeds this climate emergency acknowledgement and declaration and required actions into all future strategies, the next Council Plan and budgetary processes.
3. Seeks a report back to the next meeting, investigating how recommendations as listed in the Local Government Climate Emergency Toolkit can be implemented within council operations.



3

Energy actions

Over half of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions are attributable to stationary energy consumption (such as from buildings and street lighting infrastructure). Local governments have the opportunity to work with communities to take steps to reduce emissions from energy consumption through council's procurement of energy, supporting the community to generate renewable energy, switch fuels and reduce demand from fossil fuel sources, as well as advocate for sustainable energy options more broadly.



Recommended energy actions

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
3.1 Renewable energy operations	Ensure council operates on 100% green electricity through the direct purchase of green electricity and/or a power purchase arrangement. Carbon neutral certification must be provided while fossil fuels, including gas connections, are phased out within 5 years.	Domestic offsets purchased	No offsets required	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	No operational emissions from energy
3.2 Renewable community energy	Commit to lead and facilitate a 100% renewable energy power purchase, microgrid, virtual power plant or similar agreement for at least 1% of residents and businesses within the council area.	>5% and dedicated resource	>10% and dedicated resource	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Provide access to and benefits of renewable energy to the community
3.3 Energy budget	Commit at least 2% of the council budget or \$10 per capita (whichever is higher) to energy efficiency or renewable energy grants, programs and upgrades for sporting clubs and residential and commercial properties. Low-income residents could be targeted in the first instance.	3% / \$10 per capita	5% / \$20 per capita and gas disconnection fee rebate program	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Provide access to and benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy to the community
3.4 Energy efficient assets	Prioritise electrification of all council assets and immediately begin phasing out all gas assets. This includes electrification of all small plant and equipment and heating of pools. This work is to be undertaken while also ensuring the upgrade of old and inefficient electric assets, such as operational and street lighting, to continue to reduce electricity consumption.	≤10-year asset electrification plan	≤5-year asset electrification plan	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Lowers emissions and long-term costs allowing budget to be spent elsewhere once short return on investment is achieved

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
3.5 All-electric community	Develop an ongoing community energy education campaign prioritising electrification and the phase out of gas. Building design, insulation and draft-proofing programs are rolled out as a priority.	Run a heat pump awareness campaign including the benefits of heating with reverse cycle air conditioning	Run a program promoting the benefits from the phase out of home wood fire heaters to electric alternatives	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	No community emissions from energy
3.6 Energy bulk buy	Facilitate a biannual asset bulk buy program for residents and businesses. This will include insulation, draft-proofing, energy generation, energy efficiency and energy storage.	Provide access to staff via staff salary sacrifice programs and executive packages	Join with neighbouring councils or regions for greater economies of scale	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Provide access to and benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy to the community
3.7 Energy storage	Run an energy storage trial at one or a number of community or residential sites.	Commit to also facilitating a business trial	Commit to an annual neighbourhood battery program	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Provide access to and benefits of energy storage to the community



Example of energy action

A councillor adds an amendment to the Council Plan to include a biannual asset bulk buy program for residents and businesses. When moving the draft or final Council Plan, councillors can insert actions for inclusion. This will have financial and operational implications and is most likely to succeed when drafted in conjunction with CEO, executive team and CFO feedback. For best outcomes, councillors should seek to include these in the draft Council Plan and have measures supported by community submissions as part of a robust consultation process.

The text below is suggested text:

Add the additional point to the 20xx draft Council Plan.

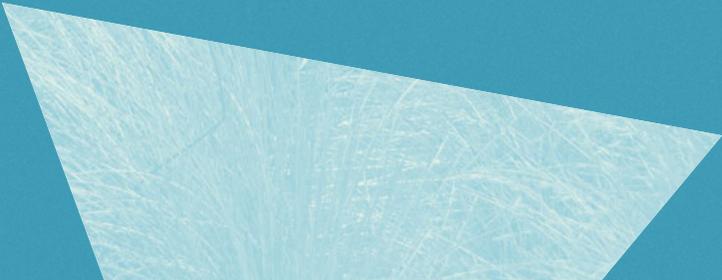
That council:

1. Notes the climate emergency and the urgent need for council to implement a range of measures to mitigate the worst of impacts from occurring.
2. Establishes a biannual asset bulk buy program for residents and businesses. This will include insulation, draft-proofing, energy generation, energy efficiency and energy storage options.

4

Transport actions

Around a fifth of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions are from transport. Local governments influence the safety and design of our roads, footpaths and bike infrastructure to incentivise zero emissions and sustainable transport. The way we move has a critical impact not just on reducing our emissions but the health of our communities.



Recommended transport actions

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
4.1 Transport budget	Commit at least 2% of the Council budget or \$10 per capita (whichever is higher) towards pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in the city.	3% or \$10 per capita	5% or \$20 per capita	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Provide access to and benefits of active transport to the community
4.2 Active transport priority	Reallocate road space to active and public transport users on all local roads within 2km of all activity and neighbourhood centres. This will include speed limit reductions, zebra crossings, separated cycling lanes, traffic calming measures, road space reallocation, and car share and bicycle parking targets.	5km and max 40km/h on all local roads in that area	5km and max 30km/h on all local roads in that area	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Facilitate a mode shift in congested and destination areas to make it easier and safer to participate in active transport
4.3 Transport advocacy	Develop an advocacy plan that prioritises consistent and strong advocacy to the State and Federal Government to improve cycling connections, public transport infrastructure and roll out of a public electric vehicle (EV) charging network across city boundaries and the broader region.	Advocate that all public transport stops and stations are <i>Disability Discrimination Act</i> (DDA) compliant	Dedicated Resource or make a transport funding co-contribution to expedite works	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	All levels of government working together to provide zero emissions transport for communities
4.4 Fleet policy	Introduce a fleet policy that targets a maximum 100g/C02-e average emissions across all fleet vehicles purchased, with an immediate phase out of diesel engines where 'Euro 6 standards' cannot be achieved. Zero emissions and EVs should make up at least 25% of all new vehicles purchased.	80g/C02-e average	50g/C02-e average and all passenger vehicles are zero emissions	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	No operational emissions from fleet

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
4.5 Zero emissions refuelling	Develop a plan for the rollout of electric and hydrogen vehicle charging based on level or urbanisation, tourism and expected total fleet numbers.	Residents have access to council charging locations	Pilot heavy EV or hydrogen refuelling facility	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	No emissions from council fleet or community
4.6 Transport bulk buy	Facilitate a biannual asset bulk buy program for residents and businesses. This will include bicycles, e-bikes, electric vehicles and EV chargers. This may also extend to a trade in program to swap old polluting cars for e-bikes.	Provide access to staff via salary sacrifice programs and executive packages	Join with neighbouring councils or regions for greater economies of scale	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Provide access to and benefits of active and zero emissions transport to the community
4.7 Air travel policy	Publicly report all data associated with air travel including number of flights and emissions while campaigning for fast rail, digital attendance of events and minimising flights where possible. All air travel emissions are to be offset domestically.	>50% of interstate and international conferences are attended digitally or by zero emissions or mass transit transport	100% of interstate and international conferences are attended digitally or by zero emissions or mass transit transport	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	No operational emissions from air travel



Example of transport action

A councillor adds an amendment to the annual budget to commit to per capita expenditure targets for new transport infrastructure. When moving the draft or final annual budgets, councillors can insert actions for inclusion. This will have financial and operational implications and is most likely to succeed when drafted in conjunction with CEO, executive team and CFO feedback. For best outcomes, councillors should seek to include these in the draft annual budget and have measures supported by community submissions as part of a robust consultation process.

The text below is suggested text:

Add the additional point to the 20xx annual budget.

That council:

1. Notes the climate emergency and the urgent need for council to implement a range of measures to mitigate the worst of impacts from occurring.
2. Include funding for at least 2% of the council budget or \$10 per capita (whichever is higher) towards pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in the city as part of the final adoption of the 20xx Annual Council Budget.
3. Notes that the capital works program will be updated to reflect changes in expenditure.

5

Circular economy actions

Through procurement, local governments can support businesses who are supplying zero or low carbon and recycled alternatives, as well as supporting the community with the right tools and services to consume less and recycle more.



Recommended circular economy actions

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
5.1 Divestment policy	Develop a policy for council to divest from institutions that operate or invest in fossil fuel companies and projects. The plan should seek to address both investments and banking with authorised deposit taking institutions.	Divestment of all investments within 12 months	Divestment of all investments and authorised deposit institutions within 12 months	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan or monthly report	Financial services and investments contribute to positive climate action
5.2 Recycling targets	Set a recycling target for 2030 and ensure there is a ban on the incineration of all mixed waste collected. While giving access to at least 3 streams for waste separated recycling (general, comingled and organics) in both public and private areas and residences. Bin colours must be compliant with AS 4123.	Reusable cloth nappy and sanitary product program and develop a biochar program with organic waste collected	≥5 easily accessible waste separation options for residents and 100% recycling target for 2030	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Reduce supply chain emissions and emissions from landfill or incineration processes
5.3 The sharing economy	Promote the sharing and repair economy by providing community grants and assistance to develop and promote toy, tool, seed and traditional libraries, as well as repair cafes and facilities.	1 of each available in the city	3 of each available in the city and ongoing grants program established and actively promoted across social media	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Reduce supply chain emissions and emissions from landfill or incineration processes
5.4 Procurement policy	Amend the procurement policy and council technotes (asset specifications) to individually weigh and evaluate environmental and social benefits. While also mandating a minimum of 10% recycled content in all new capital projects increasing to 20% as a minimum over the term.	15% minimum, increasing to 25%	25% minimum, increasing to 35%, develop low and zero emissions logistics preference policy through tender process	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Create demand and industry for recycled content reducing supply chain emissions

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
5.5 Environmental contract management	All tenders are reported to council and/or notified on the council website publicly declaring the recycled content or other environmental benefits of these projects. Feedback is to be provided to unsuccessful tenderers where their application lacks environmental benefits.	All reports contain 'Climate Emergency' section	Dedicated environmental procurement resource	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Improve innovation and awareness of zero emissions activities across industries
5.6 Best-practice materials	Promote and transition council operations to using low carbon or zero emissions concrete and steel, and council operations to use no timber or paper products sourced from native forest destruction.	Demonstrate zero emissions materials in >20% of projects	Demonstrate zero emissions materials in >50% of projects and >80% construction waste diverted from landfill	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Reduce supply chain emissions

Example of circular economy action

Using a notice of motion, a councillor calls to update the procurement policy and mandate a recycled content percentage target in new capital works projects.

The text below is suggested text.

That council calls for a report that seeks to:

1. Amend the procurement policy and council technotes to individually weigh and evaluate environmental and social benefits at 10% in all future tenders.
2. Mandates a minimum of 15% recycled content in all new capital works projects, increasing to 25% as a minimum over the term.



6

Industry and built environment actions

Local governments can make decisions about the built environment that reduce emissions and the need to extract finite resources. The way the built environment operates is a vital contributor to reducing emissions and saving resources within an economy.



Recommended industry and built environment actions

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
<p>6.1 Environmentally sustainable design (ESD)</p>	<p>Ensure that the council implements a local environmentally sustainable design (ESD) planning policy and/or participation in an ambitious state-wide ESD policy. As a minimum this must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an all-electric home that is at least one Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) star higher than minimum standards • onsite renewable energy generation • adequate space for ≥3 streams of waste separation for recycling • water harvesting and stormwater treatment • green infrastructure and permeable surfaces • onsite electric vehicle charging infrastructure • indigenous gardens, landscaping and canopy trees • high solar reflectance index (SRI) roofing colours. <p>This work can be further supported by the introduction of voluntary scorecards or best-practice guidelines.</p>	<p>Mandatory ESD provisions within scheme and all new council-led developments are passive house or equivalent excellence standard</p>	<p>Lead with additional voluntary tools and excellence scorecards, rate rebate for all-electric homes and moratorium on new gas connections</p>	<p>Councillors, CEO, executive team</p>	<p>Council Plan or monthly report</p>	<p>Seek inclusion in Council Plan adoption or monthly report</p>	<p>Low energy and water consumption, financial gain for residents, no community emissions from energy and emissions from waste and impacts of urban heat island effect reduced</p>
<p>6.2 Water sensitive urban design (WSUD)</p>	<p>Develop a water sensitive urban design (WSUD) policy and that includes flood management planning, rain gardens and water harvesting in all new community and public infrastructure projects.</p>	<p>All projects are to include stormwater treatment to achieve best-practice and set pollution reduction targets</p>	<p>Storm water drains have easy to read anti-pollution labelling informing community members of water destination (also in languages other than English where appropriate)</p>	<p>Councillors, CEO, executive team</p>	<p>Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget</p>	<p>Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget</p>	<p>Protection and preservation of water assets and local biodiversity</p>

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
6.3 Plastic Wise	Each community centre, club, park and playground must provide easy access to free drinking water. This may be combined with reusable cutlery and crockery, washing facilities and Plastic Wise strategies to reduce dependence on fossil fuel products.	All facilities have accessible and free drinking water	All facilities have accessible and free drinking water and washing facilities	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Usage of single use plastic is vastly reduced. Reducing emissions from supply chain and waste generation
6.4 Climate emergency businesses	Support commercial businesses to retrofit operations to align with climate emergency actions.	Commercial grants program	Commercial grants program and dedicated resource	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Reduced emissions generated within the business sector



Example of industry and built environment action

A councillor chooses to amend the recommendations of a report already on the agenda by moving an amendment to seek inclusion of water sensitive urban design (WSUD).

The text below is suggested text.

Add the additional point to the report.

That council:

1. Develops a water sensitive urban design (WSUD) policy including inclusion of rain gardens and water harvesting in all new community and public infrastructure projects.

7

Open space and agriculture actions

Green, open space and connection to our natural environment not only help protect biodiversity but is vital for our physical and mental health. Local governments can ensure we not only have access to open space and local produce but have a greater awareness and understanding of the entire system in which it operates.



Recommended open space and agriculture actions

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
7.1 Pest animal and weed management	Commit to a pest animal and weed management plan to mitigate the fire risk of invasive species and strengthen biodiversity ability to adapt to the climate emergency. Where appropriate this work should include seeking expertise and employment of local First Nations people in management of native vegetation and identified cultural landscapes.	Partner with local groups and nurseries to provide free or discounted indigenous plants and grasses to residents	Net m2 gain of indigenous species per annum	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Vastly strengthen biodiversity and community to adapt to climate emergency and reduce fire risk
7.2 Urban heat	Ensure the council has developed and provides ongoing funded positions to maintain and harmonise an urban forest and urban heat island mitigation strategies.	OPEX / CAPEX ≥\$200k and 30% public realm canopy target by 2030	OPEX / CAPEX ≥\$400k and 30% public and private realm canopy target by 2030	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Improved local health and biodiversity outcomes as urban heat island effect reduced
7.3 Sustainable food system strategy	Ensure the council has developed and provides ongoing funded positions for council officers to maintain and harmonise a food systems strategy.	OPEX / CAPEX ≥\$100k	OPEX / CAPEX ≥\$200k and net gain of community gardening m2 each year	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Reduced threat of food insecurity from the impacts of the climate emergency for the benefit of the community
7.4 Operational catering	Commit to promoting and engaging only vegetarian or vegan catering at meetings and events. This may start with one event or all events on one day of the week. All produce and catering should be as locally sourced and as low emissions as possible.	≥1 day per week	All days per week and >10% of all meals vegan only	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Reduction in supply chain emissions and biodiversity loss from animal agriculture

Objective	★ Action	★★ Action	★★★ Action	Who	Key Document	Method	Outcome
7.5 Open space local laws	Ensure local laws are updated with provisions to protect significant or mature indigenous trees and that nature strip (verge) planting for biodiversity gain and canopy coverage is permitted and encouraged.	No artificial grass is to be permitted on nature strips due to micro plastic and urban heat threat	Protections also built within planning scheme and develop significant tree register	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Laws strengthened to promote and protect biodiversity
7.6 Local biodiversity	Commit to rewilding on both public and private land including participation and promotion of gardens for wildlife, wildflower planting, Landcare programs, indigenous species planting programs, erosion management and a fully funded local biodiversity strategy.	OPEX / CAPEX ≥\$100k, net gain of biodiversity each year and implement best-practice pet management local laws	OPEX / CAPEX ≥200k and landholders who create biodiversity corridors, protect and manage land receive a rate rebate	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report or annual budget	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report, and funding to be sought from the budget	Vastly strengthen biodiversity to adapt to climate emergency in council area
7.7 Access to green open space	In urban areas, ensure all residents have access to green open space within 500m of their property. In rural areas, implement best-practice land management including, where relevant, initiating a drawdown project to support the zero carbon target objective and enhance agricultural practices, regenerative agriculture and Traditional Owner practices.	All residents have access to green open space within 400m of their property	400m and net gain of open space each year	Councillors, CEO, executive team	Council Plan or monthly report	Seek inclusion via Council Plan adoption or monthly report	Green space and land management vastly improved in council area

Example of open space and agriculture action

Using a notice of motion, a councillor calls to establish a program of works to develop and provide ongoing resources to food systems, biodiversity, urban forest and urban heat island mitigation strategies.

The text below is suggested text.

That council calls for a report that seeks to:

1. Ensure that council has developed and provides ongoing funded positions to maintain and harmonise a food systems strategy, biodiversity strategy, urban forest and urban heat island mitigation strategies.
2. Provides options to ensure each program has funding in excess of \$100,000 per annum.



