

Agenda

Scheduled Council Meeting
Monday 5 September 2022 at 4:00 pm

You are advised that a Meeting of Council has been called by the Chief Executive Officer on Monday 5 September 2022 at 4:00 pm for the transaction of the following business.

This meeting will be held online remotely and will be [livestreamed via Council's website](#).

C Lloyd
Chief Executive Officer

Administrators

Lydia Wilson Chair of Council

Peita Duncan Administrator

Chris Eddy Administrator

On 19 June 2020 the Acting Minister for Local Government appointed the Panel of Administrators for the City of Whittlesea and appointed Ms Lydia Wilson as Chair of the Panel. The Panel of Administrators comprises of Ms Lydia Wilson, Ms Peita Duncan and Mr Chris Eddy who will undertake the duties of the Council of the City of Whittlesea until the October 2024 Local Government Election.

Senior Officers

Craig Lloyd Chief Executive Officer

Kate McCaughey Director Community Wellbeing

Justin O'Meara Director Planning & Development

Sarah Renner Director Customer & Corporate Services

Debbie Wood Director Infrastructure & Environment

Frank Joyce Executive Manager Governance & Strategy

Janine Morgan Executive Manager Public Affairs

Order of Business

The Chief Executive Officer submits the following business:

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Note:

At the Chair of Council’s discretion, the meeting may be closed to the public in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The provision which is likely to be relied upon to enable closure is set out in each item. These reports are not available for public distribution.

1 Opening

1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson will open the meeting and introduce the Administrators and Chief Executive Officer:

Administrator, Ms Peita Duncan;
Administrator, Mr Chris Eddy; and
Chief Executive Officer, Mr Craig Lloyd.

The Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd will introduce members of the Executive Leadership Team:

Director Community Wellbeing, Ms Kate McCaughey;
Director Planning and Development, Mr Justin O'Meara;
Director Corporate & Customer Services, Ms Sarah Renner;
Director Infrastructure and Environment, Ms Debbie Wood;
Executive Manager Governance and Strategy, Mr Frank Joyce; and
Executive Manager Public Affairs, Ms Janine Morgan.

Following the Introductions, the Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd will then read the following prayer:

“Almighty God, we ask for your blessing upon this council to make informed and good decisions to benefit the people of the City of Whittlesea.

Our father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen”

1.2 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson will read the following statement:

“On behalf of the City of Whittlesea I recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the Traditional Owners of this place. I would also like to personally acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging.”

1.3 Attendance

2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

3 Officers' Reports

3.1 Connected Communities

Nil reports

3.2 Liveable Neighborhoods

Nil reports

3.3 Strong Local Economy

Nil reports

3.4 Sustainable Environment

3.4.1 Draft Sustainable Environment Strategy suite

Responsible Officer	Director Infrastructure & Environment
Author	Danelle Ayres, Acting Unit Manager Sustainable Organisation
In Attendance	Amanda Dodd, Manager Sustainable Environment Danelle Ayres, Acting Unit Manager Sustainable Organisation

Attachments

1. Sustainable Environment Strategy v 7 [3.4.1.1 - 19 pages]
2. Climate Change Plan AS V 5 [3.4.1.2 - 25 pages]
3. COW Sustainable Environment Action Plan 2022-24 V 8 [3.4.1.3 - 11 pages]
4. 20220830 C& E Plan Climate Change SES [3.4.1.4 - 13 pages]

Purpose

This report's purpose is to:

1. Endorse the draft Sustainable Environment Strategy (2022-2032) and associated two-year Sustainable Environment Action Plan (2022-2024), and the Climate Change Plan (2022-2032) for the purposes of commencing community consultation
2. Acknowledge and endorse the consultation and engagement plan for the final stage of community consultation prior to adoption

Brief Overview

Following extensive research and engagement since 2020, the City of Whittlesea's Sustainable Environment Strategy Suite is now ready for Council's review and feedback prior to the final stage of community consultation. The Sustainable Environment Strategy Suite includes three documents:

- The draft Sustainable Environment Strategy (2022-2032)
- The draft Sustainable Environment Action Plan (2022-2024)
- The draft Climate Change Plan (2022-2032)

The draft Sustainable Environment Strategy (2022-2032) and Sustainable Environment Action Plan (2022-2024) have been developed under Council's new Integrated Planning Framework as Level 2 documents.

The Sustainable Environment Strategy (SES) has synthesised Council's endorsed positions from the Rethinking Waste Plan (2021-2030), Greening Whittlesea - City Forest Strategy (2020-2040), Whittlesea Water For All – Our Water Strategy (2020-2030), and the Biodiversity Strategy (2019-2029), and incorporates the emerging work on the draft Climate Change Plan (2022-2032) and the draft Green Wedge Management Plan (2022-2032). Likewise, previously committed actions and emerging actions from these Plans have been synthesised into the Sustainable Environment Action Plan (SEAP).

The Climate Change Plan (CCP) (2022-2032) is a subordinate plan (Level 3 document) to the SES and SEAP. The CCP will guide Council's work and partnerships with community to transition our city to a net zero emissions and climate resilient future.

The SES, SEAP, and CCP will be released for community consultation during the period between 6th September and 4th October. Once endorsed alongside the draft Green Wedge Management Plan, the Sustainable Environment Strategy Suite of strategic documents will be complete.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Review and provide feedback on the draft Sustainable Environment Strategy (2022-2032), the associated Sustainable Environment Action Plan (2022-2024), and the Climate Change Plan (2022-2032)**
- 2. Acknowledge and endorse the consultation and engagement plan for the final stage of community consultation on the draft Sustainable Environment Strategy (2022-2032), the Sustainable Environment Action Plan (2022-2024), and the Climate Change Plan (2022-2032)**
- 3. Endorse the draft Sustainable Environment Strategy (2022-2032), the Sustainable Environment Action Plan (2022-2024), and the Climate Change Plan (2022-2032) for the purpose of community consultation**

Key Information

The SES outlines the City of Whittlesea's contribution toward securing a sustainable, net zero emissions, and climate resilient future for all. It aligns to key directions for enabling Whittlesea's Sustainable Environment as envisioned by *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all*. Nine outcomes are arranged under the key directions on page 8 of the Strategy. These include:

1. Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity
 - Our landscapes, waters, and species are protected, improved, and valued
 - Our land management and land use are sustainable
 - Our natural environment and biodiversity are resilient to climate change
2. Climate ready
 - Our city's green cover is enhanced to reduce the risk of extreme heat
 - Our communities and businesses are supported to become climate ready
 - Our built environment and infrastructure are built to support safe and healthy communities in a changing climate
3. Leaders in clean, sustainable living
 - Our city becomes a net zero emissions municipality
 - Our water resources are managed in an integrated way
 - Our city is low waste and transitions to a circular economy

The key focus areas (pp 14-27) represent the endorsed positions and actions of the six subordinate Plans (Level 3 documents) i.e. biodiversity, city forest, climate change, green wedge, waste and recycling, and water. Community empowerment is embedded across each of the key focus areas and actions.

The draft SEAP details short term actions which will be delivered between 2022 and 2024. These have been prioritised and arranged under three key directions and nine outcomes, providing a clear pathway which steps us toward achieving "The sustainable environment we want" (page 8, SES). The draft SEAP considered staff feedback from the internal consultation phase in June 2022 and sought ways to achieve significant consolidation by applying an integrated lens to each action and indicating a sponsor rather than a lead for each action. Therefore, the number of actions in the draft SEAP has reduced from 268 in the previous version, to 94 in the current version. Each action works toward at least one but often multiple key focus areas, illustrating the need for a truly integrated approach to be successful.

The SEAP primarily references previously committed actions from the Community Plan and Level 3 documents. The majority of new actions (31 of 34 new actions) relates to climate change and are reflective of the need for urgent action to achieve the net zero emissions targets for Council and the entire municipality. Three categories of actions are indicated with three colour shades: internal focused business-as-usual programs and improvements are shaded light green, internal actions that are more aligned to the High Performing Organisation Goal actions are shaded grey and will be transferred to the High Performing Action Plan once developed, and the rest are strategic or new actions, which are shaded in white. Actions which are internally focused, may be subject to internal reporting processes rather than public reporting processes.

The draft Climate Change Plan (CCP) 2022-2032 provides a roadmap that guides the Whittlesea community and Council to take integrated climate change action to achieve its overarching vision:

By 2036, the City of Whittlesea is a net zero emissions municipality, and our communities, businesses, and environments are resilient to the changing climate. Our transition to net zero and climate resilience is collaborative, inclusive, and equitable.

To realise this vision, seven priority areas for action have been developed. These include:

- Renewable energy and energy efficiency
- Sustainable and active transport
- Sustainable farming practice and carbon sequestration
- Low waste and circular economy
- Climate resilient communities and businesses
- Climate resilient built environment and infrastructure
- Climate resilient natural environment and biodiversity

There are three guiding principles which will shape the way Council will act and implement the CCP. These principles overlay each priority area for action and are crucial to its success. They include:

- All level leadership
- Fairness and equity
- Aboriginal empowerment

Building upon the substantial body of work on Council's corporate emissions reduction and climate resilience initiatives to date, the new draft CCP strives to further improve Council's performance and advance the goal for community climate change action. By bringing together the existing suite of climate change related strategic planning documents, the new CCP aligned to the SES and SEAP, will form a comprehensive plan for Council's approach to climate change action and provide it the same status as the existing Level 3 plans.

Our built and natural environments and climate are changing rapidly. The tools to address these challenges such as new innovations in technologies, methods and materials are also changing. Therefore, while remaining true to the course of our vision toward a Sustainable Environment for all, the SEAP is just two years, and committed actions through Council's Level 3 Plans will be reviewed and revised as we create the new action plan every two-years. The Climate Change Plan will also undergo a mid-term review at the five-year mark, to ensure our long-term plan for action is responsive to the needs of the changing climate and community.

The intended target date for Council adoption of the Sustainable Environment Strategy (2022-2032), Sustainable Environment Action Plan (2022-2024) and the Climate Change Plan (2022-2032) is 21 November 2022.

Community Consultation and Engagement

The SES and SEAP are a synthesis of the past four years of Council's environmental work. Each key focus area represents extensive research and community consultation and engagement which has been undertaken to develop the emerging and endorsed suite of environment Plans (Level 3 documents). Each Plan's development has included numerous pop-up events; focus groups for community, institutional stakeholders, business, and youth; a community reference panel for water; online surveys; online engagement e.g. social pinpoint activities; as well as consultation activities embedded into key community events such as Super Kids Sunday and the Bugged Out Festival in 2019.

Consultation and engagement for the CCP development occurred between March and September 2021. As per the 7 December 2020 Council briefing outcome, the CCP's consultation and engagement was aligned to the Community Plan consultation and engagement process. Overall, more than 800 people contributed to the development of the CCP.

During the 2021 Community Plan consultation efforts, the broad community was consulted on the Sustainable Environment goal and climate change, directly informing the development of the SES, while reflecting and reaffirming current community sentiments.

Community quotes have been included throughout the SES document which illustrate the genuine community sentiment to create a sustainable environment for all. These have been collected from variety of community consultation processes which have informed Council's environmental work.

Staff consultation was also undertaken on the Sustainable Environment Discussion Paper, and the draft SES, SEAP, and CCP, respectively in February and June 2022.

In this final phase of community consultation, community will be asked to reconfirm the synthesised approach, and provide feedback on the three documents in full. The consultation phase will occur across four weeks, from 6th September to 4th October.

A detailed draft communications and engagement plan for this final stage of consultation has been attached to this report. Council will be invited to suitable community consultation opportunities. Key activities will include opportunities for engagement via:

- A Hive page dedicated to the SES, SEAP and CCP
- Pop-up events across the municipality, aligned with other Council-wide engagement such as the Glass Recycling engagement efforts
- Invitations to participants of focus groups (community, business, and youth) and institutional stakeholder workshops, closing the feedback loop
- Invitations to interested audiences, such as environmental and Landcare groups, community gardening groups, Nature Stewards and Gardening Together Again program participants, and local schools
- Attendance at appropriate youth and Wurundjeri meetings
- Community and business networks and newsletters e.g., Living Green, Local Scoop, Hume-Whittlesea Teachers Environment Network, Whittlesea Business Network, and Local Area Network correspondence etc.

Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

Sustainable environment

We prioritise our environment and take action to reduce waste, preserve local biodiversity, protect waterways and green space and address climate change

The draft SES and SEAP are being developed within the Integrated Planning Framework (Level 2 documents) which consolidate Council's strategic directions in alignment with Whittlesea 2040 goals. The draft CCP completes the suite of the Level 3 documents sitting under the SES and SEAP.

The Sustainable Environment Strategy Suite is linked to the following Council policies, plans and strategies, and State and Federal Legislation.

City of Whittlesea:

- Whittlesea 2040: A Place for All
- Community Plan 2021-2025
- Strong Local Economy Strategy 2022-2026
- Rethinking Waste Plan 2021-2030
- Greening Whittlesea City Forest Strategy 2020-2040
- Whittlesea Water for All – Our Water Strategy 2020-2030
- Biodiversity Strategy 2019-2029
- Zero Net Emissions Plan 2022
- Light Vehicle Policy 2022
- Climate Ready Whittlesea 2017
- Open Space Strategy 2016
- Corporate Strategic Risk Register
- Walking and Cycling Plan 2022-2027 (under development)
- Climate Change Risk Assessment (under development)
- Climate Change Plan 2022-2032 (under development)
- Green Wedge Management Plan 2022-2032 (under development)
- Environment Sustainability Strategy 2012-2022 (closing out)

Regional:

- Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA). Most relevant policies include NAGA's Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and Towards Zero Net Emissions for the NAGA Region 2009
- Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE). Current collaborative projects include the Elevating Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Planning Policy Amendment project and the Sustainable Subdivisions Framework trail (2020-2022)
- Greater Melbourne Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2021

State:**Biodiversity**

- Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037 (2017)
- The Melbourne Strategic Assessment and the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Melbourne's Growth Corridors 2013
- Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988

City forest

- Living Melbourne: Our Metropolitan Urban Forest 2019
- Trees for Cooler and Greener Streetscapes – Guidelines for Streetscape Planning and Design 2019

Green Wedge

- Planning and Environment Act 1987 (legislative requirements on the Urban Growth Boundary)

Water

- The Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018
- The Integrated Water Management Framework for Victoria 2017
- Water for Victoria 2016
- Water Act 1989

Climate Change

- Victoria's Gas Substitution Roadmap 2022
- Victoria's Climate Change Adaptation Action Plans 2022 for seven systems (the natural environment, the built environment, the water cycle, primary production, transport, health and human services, education, and training)
- Victoria's Climate Change Strategy 2021
- Victoria's Renewable Energy Action Plan 2017
- Victoria's Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017-2020
- Climate Change Act 2017
- Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Act 2017
- Victoria's Climate Change Framework 2016

Waste and recycling

- Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Bill 2021
- The Victorian Plastic Bag Ban 2019
- The Recycling Victoria Policy 2020
- The Victorian Container Deposit Scheme 2023
- The Single-use Plastics Ban 2023

General and other

- Open Space Strategy for Metropolitan Melbourne – Open Space for Everyone 2021
- Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Landscapes Strategy 2021
- Local Government Act 2020
- Pupangarli Marnmarnepu 'Owning Our Future' Aboriginal Self-Determination reform Strategy 2020-2025

- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023
- Victoria Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023
- Environment Protection Act 2017
- Plan Melbourne 2017-2050
- Planning and Environment Act 1987

Federal:

- Climate Change Bill 2022
- The National Soil Strategy 2021
- Powering Australia 2021
- National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy 2021-2025
- Australia's Long-term Emissions Reduction Plan 2021 (published under the previous Australian Government)
- Future Fuels and Vehicles Strategy 2021 (published under the previous Australian Government)
- The Recycling and Waste Reduction Bill 2020
- Technology Investment Roadmap: First Low Emissions Technology Statement 2020
- Australia's Strategy for Nature 2019-2030
- National Hydrogen Strategy 2019
- National Energy Productivity Plan 2015-2030
- National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007 and the Safeguard Mechanism
- The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- The National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development 1992
- The National Water Initiative

Considerations

Environmental

The draft SES synthesises and streamlines Council's endorsed positions from the Rethinking Waste Plan, Greening Whittlesea - City Forest Strategy, Whittlesea Water for All – Our Water Strategy, Biodiversity Strategy, and emerging work of the draft Green Wedge Management and Climate Change Plans. It aligns and contributes to the Sustainable Environment key directions as outlined in Council's vision *Whittlesea 2040: A Place for All*, including: Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity; Climate ready; and Leaders in clean, sustainable living. The draft SEAP sets out Council's commitments to deliver on the SES for the next two years. The draft CCP maps out Council's plan to transition our city to a net zero emissions and climate resilient place for all, which also contributes to the global climate active to avoid catastrophic climate change. The Sustainable Environment Strategy Suite will provide an integrated effective approach to drive council wide sustainability and climate action outcomes across all services and operations.

Social, Cultural and Health

The draft SES recognises the importance of our environment for community, and the impacts of climate change on human health and wellbeing. It aims to deliver not only environmental outcomes, but also social, cultural and health benefits for our community by protecting our environment and the ecosystem services it provides. Particular attention has been taken to improving access to canopy cover for vulnerable communities and supporting them to mitigate heat risk. It also features a focus area for community empowerment, which is committed to supporting residents, businesses, and communities to take sustainable action, building environmental skills for people of all ages and stages in life, and improving Traditional Owner engagement. The draft CCP acknowledges the significant health impacts of climate change, and emphasises our responses to climate risk, which will enhance community resilience and promote human health and wellbeing.

Economic

The draft Sustainable Environment Strategy Suite and associated actions are envisioned to protect and enhance our environment and respond to the climate change challenge. Its implementation will contribute to:

- 1) managing and enhancing Council's tree assets with an amenity value in excess of \$600 million;
- 2) reducing potential climate change risks such as loss and damage of properties and infrastructure, increased maintenance and repair costs, and loss of human life;
- 3) supporting local economy and providing local employment opportunities such as promotion of circular economy and creation of local green jobs.

Financial Implications

The draft SEAP includes actions that Council has already committed to for the delivery of Council's endorsed long-term plans. These include:

- Biodiversity Strategy 2019-2029
- Greening Whittlesea - City Forest Strategy 2020-2040
- Whittlesea Water For All – Our Water Strategy 2021-2030
- Rethinking Waste Plan 2021-2030

Most of the new actions to support the emerging draft Green Wedge Management Plan 2022-2032 and draft Climate Change Plan 2022-2032, can be managed within existing staff salary budgets by realigning priorities. However, some actions will require new funding.

The financial implications of the action items for the next two fiscal years are indicated in the draft SEAP (as a column only for internal reference).

A summary of the fiscal impact of new actions is below. Endorsement of financial request for 2023/24 will be subject to its associated new initiative request or capital works line item. Where an action is proposed to be delivered alongside a larger capital works project – the environmental contribution to this will be calculated as part of that project brief. A separate briefing on the outcome of the Water Service Review is scheduled for ELT in the coming months. This review was authorised as part of the Sustainable Environment Department Phase 3 process, which identified cross-department and systematic issues with Water Service Delivery at City of Whittlesea.

	Ongoing OPEX	One-off Project Funding	Capital Works	New or re-deployed positions
Funding request from 2023-24 (subject to opex, new initiative and capital works approval)	\$300,000	\$380,000	\$1,950,000	\$350,000
Total Impact	\$2,980,000			

Please note this table does not include already committed actions relating to the waste service that have been included in the Long-Term Financial Plan

To align with our previous Net Zero Organisational Commitment, there may be a need to increase our carbon offset budget to align with the industry standard of Climate Active Certification. This will be subject to a separate briefing once the roadmap to Certification is complete.

As the threats from extreme weather events increase in the changing climate, not addressing climate mitigation and adaptation as an organisation and community is likely to increase financial risks for our assets and community.

Link to Strategic Risk

Strategic Risk *Financial Sustainability - Inability to meet current and future expenditure*

Increased climate risk facing Council and our community have significant financial implications. A net-zero pathway that the draft Sustainable Environment Strategy Suite takes can reduce multiple climate change risks and bring down long term mitigation costs and economic losses.

Strategic Risk *Climate Change - Failure to mitigate or adapt to the risks of climate change*

Council has important climate change adaptation responsibilities through its duty of care under Victoria legislation, including the Climate Change Act 2017, Local Government Act 2020, and Planning and Environment Act 1987. Our actions in the next decade will shape what a 2040 future will look like for our community.

Strategic Risk *Service Delivery - Inability to plan for and provide critical community services and infrastructure impacting on community wellbeing*

The development of the draft Sustainable Environment Strategy Suite is a committed activity within the Integrated Planning Framework, which actions Whittlesea 2040 goals and guides the delivery of a wide range of Council assets, services, and operations essential for community wellbeing.

Implementation Strategy

Communication

Ongoing communication with both internal and external stakeholders have continued to inform the development of the draft Sustainable Environment Strategy Suite.

A community communications and engagement plan has been developed in collaboration with the Engagement Team which details the approach to the four-week community consultation process intended to commence on the 6 September, and close on the 4 October.

As part of Council's requirements under State Government legislation, a Gender Impact Assessment has also been undertaken with the assistance of the Equity and Inclusion team. This Assessment has aimed to ensure the SES, SEAP and CCP consider the varied impacts these commitments will have on different genders, and other groups, including under-represented target groups, and consider these impacts in the implementation phase.

Following adoption of the plans a formal launch event will occur with the community.

Critical Dates

- Community consultation period: 6 September to 4 October 2022
- Council Meeting for adoption: 21 November 2022

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Rule 47 of the Governance Rules 2021, officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

Conclusion

The draft Sustainable Environment Strategy 2022-2032, Sustainable Environment Action Plan 2022-2024, and Climate Change Plan 2022-2032 have been informed by extensive research and consultation with community, business, internal and external institutional partners.

A full Sustainable Environment Strategy suite has been prepared for Council feedback in preparation for the final phase of community consultation prior to adoption.



Sustainable Environment Strategy Draft 2022-2032

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Whittlesea recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the Traditional Owners of this place.

For about 50,000 years before colonisation, a diversity of Wurundjeri people, families and communities managed the land that the City of Whittlesea now occupies.

Throughout this time the Plenty River and other local natural features provided an abundance of flora and fauna as both a source of food and shelter.

The pre-colonial legacy of the Wurundjeri people can still be seen today as the Whittlesea area is home to a number of protected and sacred 'scarred' trees. These trees were used for making bark canoes or as boundary markers for distinct tribal groups.

Today the scarred river-red gum trees serve as a reminder that Aboriginal people have always been, and will always be, central to the social, economic and cultural prosperity of the City of Whittlesea.



Photo: Wurundjeri Djirri Djirri dancers, celebrating connection to country

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Sustainable Environment Strategy Draft 2022 / 3

About this document

The Sustainable Environment Strategy 2022-2032 (the Strategy) outlines the City of Whittlesea's contribution toward securing a sustainable, net zero emissions, and climate resilient future for all.

Informed by the analysis of trends impacting our environment and engagement with communities, local businesses, institutional stakeholders, and partner organisations, the Strategy:

- Sets out the environment we want and outlines how this will positively impact our community
- Provides an overview of the City of Whittlesea's existing environment
- Identifies the challenges and opportunities facing our local environment – including the recent impact and ongoing effects of COVID-19
- Defines Councils' priority areas for action and what we will do to contribute to protecting and enhancing our local environment between 2022-2032
- Outlines how we will monitor our environment to ensure our actions respond to what our community needs
- Aligns and contributes to the following Sustainable Environment 'key directions' as outlined in Council's vision 'Whittlesea 2040: A place for all':
 1. Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity,
 2. Climate ready, and
 3. Leaders in clean, sustainable living.

The Strategy builds on and has been prepared to support the national, state and regional priorities for sustainable practices as set out in the Federal Plan for Net Zero Emissions by 2050 and the Powering Australia plan, Strategy for Nature 2019-2030, Water for Victoria 2016, Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037, Plan Melbourne 2017-2050, Recycling Victoria Policy 2020, Victoria's Climate Change Strategy 2021, and Victoria's Adaptation Action Plans 2022.

It also synthesises and streamlines Council's endorsed positions from the Biodiversity, Whittlesea Water for All, Greening Whittlesea City Forest, Rethinking Waste, Climate Change and Green Wedge Management Plans.

This Strategy is provided in three parts:

- *The Sustainable Environment Strategy 2022-2032* (this document) – outlines Council's overall strategic direction toward securing a sustainable, net zero emissions, and climate resilient future.
- *The Sustainable Environment Action Plan 2022-2024* – A two-year Action Plan which sets out Council's commitments to deliver on the Strategy. The Action Plan will be reviewed bi-annually.
- Long term thematic plans for Biodiversity, city forest (greening), climate change, Green Wedge, waste and recycling, and water. These plans provide detailed supporting evidence including consultation outcomes and in-depth analyses of the trends, challenges and opportunities explored in the Strategy.

How we engaged

- **Thematic sustainability engagement:** Direct stakeholder and community engagement on strategy specific topics: Biodiversity, Water, City Forest, Waste, Green Wedge, and Climate Change.
- **Community Plan 2021-25:** Let's Talk: Shaping the Community Plan 2021-25 consultation program which included community surveys, online and face to face events, popup stalls and targeted focus groups.
- **Targeted local business discussions:** Online business breakfast and targeted engagement to understand local vulnerability and aspirations for climate action.
- **Climate change workshops:** Institutional stakeholder workshops and small focus groups.



980+ contributions were received directly related to sustainable environment in the Let's Talk Program



390+ completed surveys on the Whittlesea 2040 Sustainable Environment Goal in the Let's Talk Program



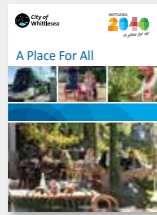
Photo: Community consultation at the Mill Park All Abilities Play Space

Sustainable Environment Strategy Draft 2022 / 5

How we plan – an integrated people focused approach

Level 1: Vision

Councils overarching vision



Whittlesea 2040



Community Plan

The Sustainable Environment Strategy is one of seven strategies that outlines Council’s commitments, the outcomes we strive for and the actions we will deliver for our community.

The seven strategies are known as Council’s Integrated Planning Framework. Each strategy expands on our long-term 20-year community vision, Whittlesea 2040: A place for all and our Community Plan 2021–2025, to provide our community with more information on Council’s priorities and our overall strategic direction.

Using this plan

The City of Whittlesea’s approach to creating a sustainable environment is provided in three parts:

Sustainable Environment Strategy 2022-2032 – Outlines Council’s overall strategic direction across six areas related to environmental sustainability: biodiversity, city forest (greening), climate change, Green Wedge, waste and recycling and water.

Sustainable Environment Action Plan 2022-2024 – A two-year Action Plan which sets out Council’s commitments to delivery on the Sustainable Environment Strategy 2022-2032. The Action Plan will be periodically reviewed.

Climate Change Plan 2022-2032 – Detailed supporting evidence including consultation outcomes and an in-depth analysis of the trends, challenges and opportunities for climate change action explored in the Sustainable Environment Strategy 2022-2032.

Level 2: Strategy

Strategic direction and action plan



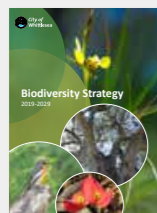
Sustainable Environment Strategy



Sustainable Environment Action Plan

Level 3: Approach

Long term plans, detailed analysis and detailed rationale



Biodiversity



Water For All



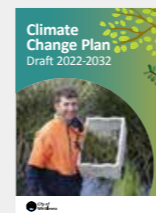
City Forest



Rethinking Waste



Green Wedge



Climate Change

Level 4: Operations

Operational programs, guidelines and technical documents



Processes



Systems



Professional Development Plans



Environmentally Sustainable Design Guidelines

Sustainable Environment links in other strategies



The Sustainable Environment we want

‘In 2040 the City of Whittlesea’s superb landscapes and natural environment are an enduring source of pride. Our iconic River Red Gums, local biodiversity and precious natural assets are protected for future generations. Locals and visitors enjoy spending time in our natural environments and our leafy suburbs. Together, we are working to reduce our impact on the environment and adapt to the changing climate.’ Whittlesea 2040: A place for all



Key direction 1: Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity

- Our landscapes, waters, and species are protected, improved, and valued
- Our land management and land use are sustainable
- Our natural environment and biodiversity are resilient to climate change

Community benefits:

- 1 Increased access to natural reserves and parks
- 2 Clean and healthy waterways
- 3 Protected landscapes and biodiversity
- 4 Recognition of Traditional Owners
- 5 Rural land health and productivity



Key direction 2: Climate ready

- Our city’s green cover is enhanced to reduce the risk of extreme heat
- Our communities and businesses are supported to become climate ready
- Our built environment and infrastructure are built to support safe and healthy communities in a changing climate

Community benefits:

- 6 Increased access to green cover and shade
- 7 Reduced exposure and vulnerability to climate risk
- 8 More adaptive and resilient communities and businesses
- 9 Improved ecosystem services
- 10 Access to climate resilient infrastructure



Key direction 3: Leaders in clean, sustainable living

- Our city becomes a net zero emissions municipality
- Our water resources are managed in an integrated way
- Our city is low waste and transitions to a circular economy

Community benefits:

- 11 Cost savings in energy and water consumption
- 12 Access to clean and renewable energy
- 13 Better access to sustainable modes of transport
- 14 Clean city
- 15 Human health and wellbeing

Community benefits of a Sustainable Environment



Sustainable Environment Strategy Draft 2022 / 9

The City of Whittlesea environment

The City of Whittlesea is located in Melbourne’s northern suburbs, about 20 kilometres from the Melbourne Central Business District.

It is one of Melbourne’s largest and fastest growing municipalities, covering a land area of 489 square kilometres. The population is diverse with more than 41.8 per cent of residents born overseas and the second largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island population in metropolitan Melbourne. It is projected to continue to grow with more than 150,000 new residents to 2040, making it the third most populous local government area in Victoria.

The City of Whittlesea has established urban areas across Bundoora, Epping, Lalor, Mill Park, South Morang, and Thomastown; rapidly growing precincts in Donnybrook, Doreen, Epping North, Mernda and Wollert and rural areas which are characterised by farming, water catchments, extractive industry, conservation alongside rural living in Beveridge, Eden Park, Humevale, Kinglake West, Whittlesea Township, Woodstock, and Yan Yean.

The City of Whittlesea features a wide range of:

- Landforms including the Western Basalt Plains, the Plenty Valley and the Plenty Ranges which support ecological vegetation communities with high habitat value for native species
- Native species including River Red Gums, Growling Grass Frog, Golden Sun Moth, Matted Flax-lily, and Striped Legless Lizard
- Waterways and catchments such as the Plenty River, Merri Creek and Darebin Creek
- Manmade waterbodies such as Yan Yean Reservoir, Toorourrong Reservoir, stormwater wetlands, and farm dams.

City of Whittlesea environmental and sustainable living profile



521
hectares of
Council managed
conservation land



60%
of the City
as protected
Green Wedge



20%
total canopy
cover for our City



52
threatened
flora and fauna



151
litres of water used
by our residents
each day



12
tonnes of annual
carbon emissions
per capita



994kg
of annual waste
generation
per capita



90%
of participants
in Council’s
environmental
programs learnt
something new

Place overview



Challenges facing our environment



Population growth
More people will be contributing to our energy and water usage, greenhouse gas emissions, waste generation, and demand for transport and infrastructure.



Urbanisation and land use change
Increased conversion of rural land to housing is resulting in loss of green space, canopy cover and soil degradation. Urbanisation also causes changes in land's hydrology, e.g. more stormwater runoff due to more hard surfaces introduced.



Covid-19
The pandemic has increased demand for access to nature and open spaces but limited opportunities for programs, events and collective environmental action.



Biodiversity loss
Flora and fauna species are under pressure due to urban expansion, habitat fragmentation, poor land management practice, lack of investment, pests, natural disasters, and climate change.



Climate action
Immediate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and action carbon removal solutions is required to meet the 1.5°C Paris agreement temperature goal.



Increased risk of extreme weather events
Extreme weather events (e.g. heatwaves, bushfires, grassfires, floods, storms) are expected to increase in a changing climate.



Environmental inequality
Vulnerable populations, such as those with inadequate health care, poor quality housing, and unstable employment, are likely to be more impacted by environmental change.



Limited community environmental stewardship
Volunteer fatigue and limited access to opportunities are impacting ability to conduct environmental activities community plantings, litter clean ups, water quality monitoring, and bird surveys.



Financial impacts
Disaster preparedness and climate change mitigation initiatives (such as new technologies) come with economic impacts which need to be well understood. However, the economic impacts of compounding climate events on an unprepared community far outweigh the upfront costs to prepare and mitigate.

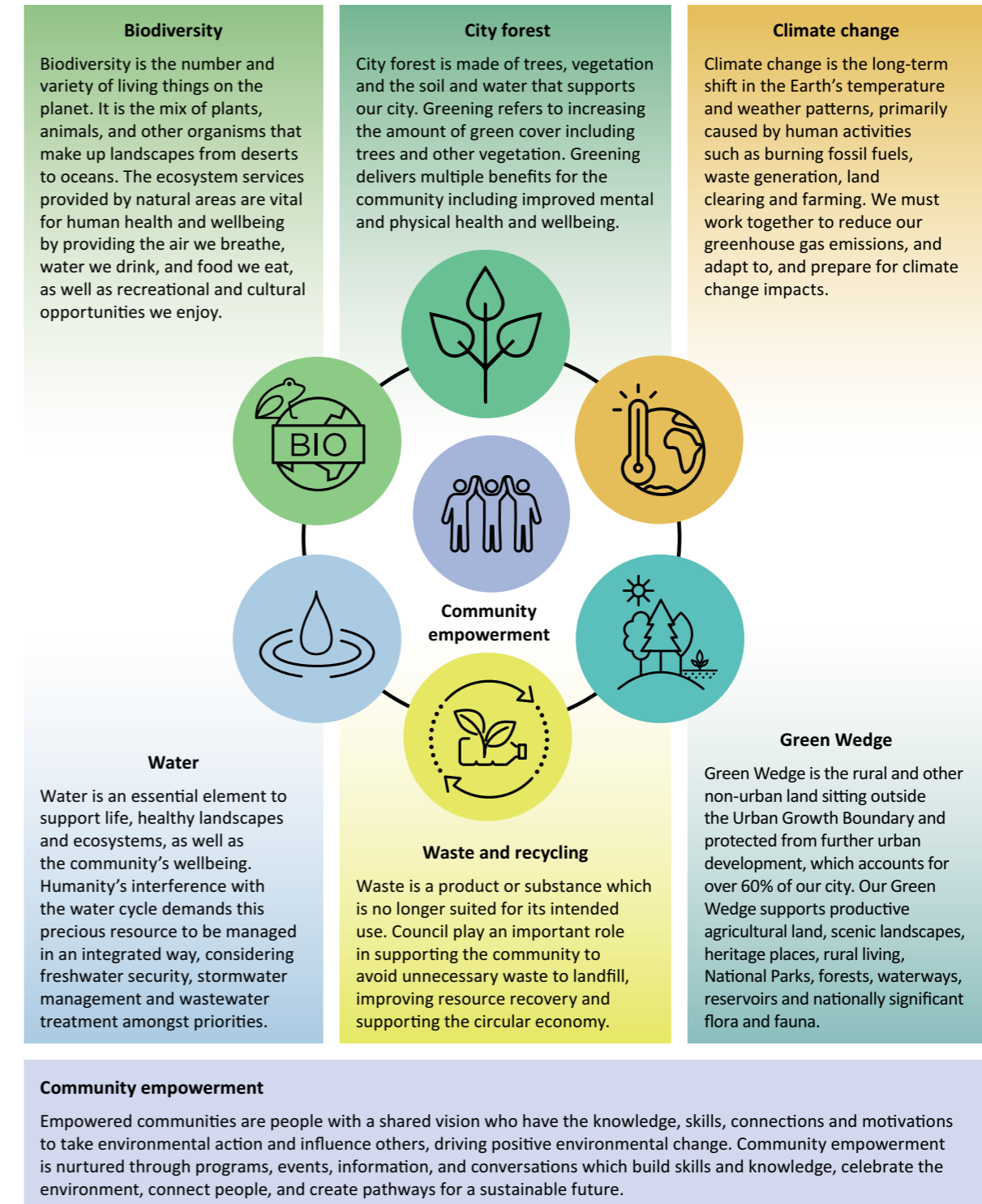


Limited awareness
There is a need to support awareness of local environmental issues with our diverse community, including how they can take action locally.



Key focus areas

Our environment is a complex system comprising of dynamic and interacting natural, built, and human elements. This Strategy covers seven key focus areas related to environmental sustainability.



Biodiversity



‘Two species of blue banded bees (*Amegilla asserta*, *A. chlorocyanea*) would visit daily during the summer months. They are incredible creatures and brought immense joy to my life, bringing me out of one of my darkest periods... We are so lucky to have them in our area...’

- Quote from community consultation for the Biodiversity Plan, 2018



Why is biodiversity important?

- Contributes to nutrient cycling, air and water purification, soil stabilisation, flood control and climate regulation
- Provides us with essential resources such as air, water, and food, contributes to overall wellbeing, as well as recreational opportunities and a strong cultural connection to place
- Provides vital habitat and food resources for native wildlife
- Approximately 47 per cent of our City ranked as areas of biological significance
- Over last 30 years, 52 threatened species have been found to call this City home
- Home to many assets of environmental significance such as River Red Gums, Golden Sun Moth, Matted Flax-lily, and Striped Legless Lizard
- Faces a range of threats including land clearing, weed invasion, loss of habitat, introduced predators, feral animals, change to hydrological regimes, soil degradation, and climate change
- Needs updated information as the last comprehensive data collection effort in the region was for the North East Regional Organisation of Councils (NEROC) completed in 1997
- Needs community contribution as a large portion of the City of Whittlesea is contained in privately owned rural property with considerable biodiversity assets.

What have we done so far?



Protected 521 hectares of conservation areas on public and private land



Provided support to over 150 rural landowners through the Sustainable Land Management Rebate Scheme and the Environmental Works Grants Program



Created additional jobs to prioritise safeguarding the diverse values of our Green Wedge



Managed rural roadsides for conservation values and weed threats



Strengthened Council's policies to support biodiversity and enhance the protection habitat corridors and the green wedge through fauna surveys, and biodiversity asset mapping



Secured 1,100 ha of public open space for conservation and biodiversity improvement through a plan for the Quarry Hills Regional Park



Our priorities for the future

Knowledge and research

It is vital that we have baseline data on what already exists so that we understand what we are trying to protect and how to best protect into the future. The more that is understood about current conditions, the better we can navigate and manage changes to local biodiversity. Council will improve data and knowledge to better understand, maintain and protect local biodiversity.

Land use planning

As the planning and responsible authority for the Whittlesea Planning Scheme, Council has a degree of influence over how biodiversity is protected at both a landscape scale and at a lot level. Well thought-out strategic and land use planning will enable local species to move throughout the landscape and mitigate the impacts associated with urbanisation, land use change and climate change. Council will continue to strengthen the Planning Scheme and Council's commitment to protecting biodiversity, to mitigate the impacts associated with urbanisation, land use change and climate change.

Community support

A large portion of the City of Whittlesea is contained in privately owned rural property. This means that there are considerable biodiversity assets on private land in rural areas. Council will support the community and rural landowners in particular, to protect, manage, and improve biodiversity assets, such as remnant vegetation, landscaping, and steppingstones, on private land.

Awareness and capacity

There are numerous co-benefits to a biodiversity rich urban environment including improved waterway health, improved health and wellbeing outcomes for people, and a reduction in the urban heat island effects. Council will encourage awareness and build community capacity to increase community participation in urban biodiversity, soil health and improvement.

Management of Council land

Council managed reserves provide vital habitat and food resources for native wildlife and important opportunities for residents to observe and appreciate the natural environment. Council will continue to improve Council land management practices to reduce biodiversity threats, increase habitat quality, connectivity, and promote the natural environment, and increase the involvement of the community.

Partnerships, collaboration and advocacy

Several other agencies are responsible for managing significant sites of biodiversity value both within and adjacent to the City of Whittlesea. Council will continue to advocate, collaborate with other land management agencies and neighbouring Councils to circulate new ideas, problem solve, maximise the benefits of individual efforts, and manage complex issues that cross different jurisdictions (such as waterways and kangaroo management).



City forest (greening)



‘Wouldn’t it be cool for our kids to grow up with trees around that they planted?’

- Quote from community consultation for the Greening Whittlesea Plan, 2019



Why is city forest (greening) important?

- Provides improved mental and physical health and wellbeing, increased property values, and reduced heating and cooling costs
- Reduces air pollution, stores carbon, slows and filters storm water run-off, and provides habitat for wildlife
- Our canopy cover represents 19.72 per cent of our city, including 17.78 per cent falling on non-council land (private, other Government Agencies, and Crown Land)
- Approximately 47 per cent of our City ranked as areas of biological significance
- Council currently manages tree assets with an amenity value in excess of \$600 million
- Both urban expansion and infill growth are driving an increase in the housing and population density of our city, which place increasing stress on our existing green cover and impacts the availability of plantable areas
- There is an opportunity to increase canopy cover by working with developers.

What have we done so far?



Developed the Greening Whittlesea Plan

to set out plans for the protection, growth and management of the city’s trees and green cover



Planted more than 20,000 canopy trees and shrubs

at Quarry Hills Regional Park (in collaboration with Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning)



Increased trees in low-income suburbs

through adopting an equity focussed approach to tree planting



Planted over 50,000 indigenous trees and shrubs

within local conservation reserves



Our priorities for the future

Protection from building and subdivision activity

This priority aims to identify gaps, strengthen, and develop processes and systems that promote tree retention and protect our City Forest from building and subdivision activity. Projects may include reviews of local laws pertaining to trees and vegetation and their enforcement; vegetation protection appeals and processes; existing vegetation planning controls; and vegetation related bonds, fines, and fees.

City forest management

This priority looks to plan and manage our City forest using up to date data and industry best practice to improve the health and longevity of Council trees and green cover throughout the municipality. Projects include auditing, reviewing and updating Council tree planting lists to increase the resilience of our City forest, working with fire ecology experts on fire management practices that help protect trees from severe bushfire impacts, and the development of planting frameworks and precinct plans for our planting programs.

City forest planting

This priority aims to enhance our City forest by increasing plantable space, the number of trees, and the percentage of tree canopy and vegetation cover within the municipality. Projects include advocacy for an evidence-based review of setback requirements of service providers that limit canopy and vegetation planting, provision of additional information and guidance to developers as part of the landscape assessment approval process that helps identify additional opportunities for tree and vegetation planting, investigating opportunities for requiring offset planting associated with vegetation removal, and the implementation of tree planting programs throughout the municipality.

City forest stewardship

This priority aims to empower the community and partners to lead city forest improvement initiatives. Projects include the development of a communications plan aimed at increasing education, awareness and support for trees and greening; continued programs and partnerships with our residents, community groups, Traditional Owners, neighbouring councils, major public and private landholders; and Council participation in broader-scaled regional initiatives to deliver greening outcomes.

Canopy justice

This priority aims to continue to identify and address tree canopy inequalities throughout the municipality to maximise community health benefits. Projects include the development and integration of equity measures for planting programs, maximising the health co-benefits of the Greening Whittlesea Strategy, the creation of cool routes and cool public spaces, and targeted consultation and engagement with groups identified as being at higher risk to the impacts of the Urban Heat Island Effect.



Climate change



‘(A climate-ready neighbourhood is) a neighbourhood that can cope with a worsening climate that results in more heat stress, more dangerous fires, damaging storms and flooding rain.’

- Quote from community consultation for the Climate Change Plan, 2021



Why is climate change important?

- Our city is exposed to a range of climate risks, including extreme heat, fire, and changes in rainfall patterns and storms leading to floods and droughts. Extreme weather events can also lead to food shortages as a result of interruptions in supply chain
- Climate risk facing our city is increasing. By mid-century, we could see the number of extreme heat days (above 30°C) in our city almost double compared to the 1990s
- The impacts of climate change affect vulnerable populations disproportionately. Statistics show that 21.5 per cent of our city’s total households are considered low income, significantly higher than 12.8 per cent of Greater Melbourne
- In the 2018-19 financial year, our entire municipality’s community emissions have been 2,422 kt CO₂-e. Our per capita emissions are 2.4 times higher than the global average
- To align with the 1.5°C Paris agreement temperature goal, our city will need to achieve net zero emissions by 2036.



What have we done so far?

- Saved 560 megawatt hour of electricity per year through upgrades to Council buildings
- 60 per cent of Council’s streetlights (16,000) were converted to energy efficient T5 Fluorescent, Compact Fluorescent (CFL), and Light Emitting Diode (LED) lamps
- 100 per cent renewable electricity is now used to power Council facilities, service and streetlights, reducing 66.5 per cent of Council’s annual organisational emissions
- Approximately 16 per cent of Council’s organisational emissions have been offset annually on average since 2011/12
- Developed and implemented Climate Ready Whittlesea, Council’s first adaptation plan including completion of a heat vulnerability mapping to understand the municipality’s vulnerability to heat risk.



2.3°C
temperature increase by 2050s

1.2°C
temperature already increased since 1910

What we can expect:



Double the number of heatwave days



Longer fire season. More high fire danger days.



More intense downpours. Less cool season rainfall.



Our priorities for the future

Renewable energy and energy efficiency

Electricity and gas consumption is our City’s largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 81 per cent of our total municipal emissions. Reducing this stationary energy use and switching to renewable energy sources are our biggest emissions reduction opportunities. The City of Whittlesea will focus on eliminating stationary energy emissions in Council operations, support the community to reduce energy consumption, improve energy efficiency, and adopt renewable energy, and promote zero emissions buildings through advocacy and partnership.

Sustainable and active transport

On-road transport is 15 per cent of our total municipal emissions, making it our city’s second biggest source of emissions. Great opportunities exist to reduce emissions and promote health and wellbeing benefits for our community through sustainable and active transport. Council will work on transitioning Council’s fleet and plant to zero emissions vehicles, supporting the community to adopt sustainable and active modes of transport, and promoting sustainable and active transport through advocacy and partnership.

Sustainable farming practice and carbon sequestration

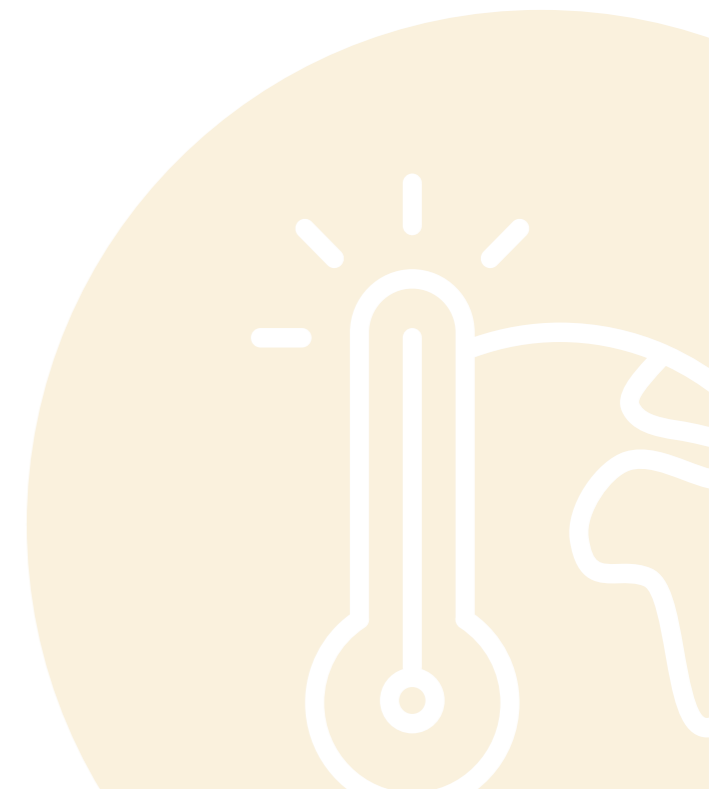
As an interface local government area with 60 per cent of its land being the Green Wedge, our city has great potential to capitalise on carbon sequestration options in the agriculture, forestry and other land use (AFOLU) sector, which can also deliver co-benefits for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation. Council will explore carbon sequestration potential of our public land, and also support landowners and local farmers to contribute through sustainable farming practice and vegetation cover enhancement.

Low waste and circular economy

The waste sector is a major source of methane emissions, a greenhouse gas far more potent than carbon dioxide. A circular economy approach has great potential to reduce our dependence on new raw materials, minimise waste, and maximise the use of existing assets. We will contribute to creating a circular economy in our city by implementing our Rethinking Waste Plan, and supporting businesses to adopt circular economy principles and practices through technology innovation and investment.

Climate resilient environments and communities

The changing climate has significant impacts on human health, public safety, infrastructure, primary production, settlements, the natural environment, and biodiversity, which are all being felt across the society. We will advance Council’s understanding and planning for climate risks so that we can continue to effectively service our community in a changing climate, enhance our city’s green cover to reduce heat risk and protect biodiversity, and support communities and businesses to better understand and prepare for climate risk and build resilience.



Green Wedge



‘Responsible interaction with the environment to avoid depletion or degradation of natural resources and allow for long-term environmental quality and increased community interactions, improved living standards and manageable growth.’

- Quote from community consultation for the Green Wedge Management Plan, 2021



Why is Green Wedge important?

- Over 60 per cent of the City of Whittlesea is rural or non-urban land currently protected as the Green Wedge
- Green Wedge is part of a connected ecosystem where biodiversity, natural assets and resources are enhanced and protected from urban encroachment
- Provides for rural uses, and supports economic opportunities in sustainable agricultural and the visitor economy. Greater Melbourne’s Green Wedge and peri urban area contributes to over \$2.45 billion worth of economic value annually
- Home to a diverse range of native plants and animals, including native grassland of National and State significance, River Red Gum Grassy Woodland, and forested areas such as Kinglake National Park and Mount Disappointment State Forest
- Supports the upper and middle catchment areas of the Plenty River, Darebin Creek and Merri Creek, and is home to the Toorourrong and Yan Yean water storage reservoirs
- The Wurundjeri Willum clan and Taungurung people are the Traditional Owners of the land that now forms our Green Wedge, which protects and promotes its rich Aboriginal and post contact heritage.

What have we done so far?



Supported agribusiness
Implementation of the increased differential farm rate of 40 per cent to better support agribusiness from 2017



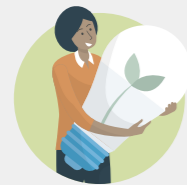
Created additional jobs
to prioritise safeguarding the diverse values of our Green Wedge



Delivered the Northern Regional Trails Strategy
Worked with partners to deliver the Northern Regional Trails Strategy



Implemented a pest plant local law
education and compliance program to support local communities



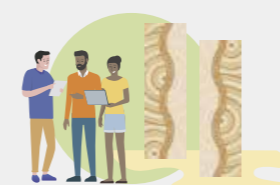
Partnered with Deakin University
to investigate the potential of regenerative agriculture in enhancing climate resilience in the peri-urban space



Supported the Wollert Community Farm and Food Collective
which aims to grow food, use recycled water, incorporate sustainable land management practices and circular economy systems and provide training and employment opportunities in agriculture, horticulture, conservation and revegetation



Potential development of a Food Hub
Successfully advocated for State Government commitment to a business case on the potential development of the Melbourne Food and Innovation Export Hub



Commenced an Aboriginal Heritage Study
in partnership with the Wurundjeri and Taungurung Registered Aboriginal Parties to identify Aboriginal cultural values for the lands and waters of the municipality



Our priorities for the future

Partner with landowners and other government agencies to improve soil health

Healthy and stable soil is the foundation of sustainable environment and managing soil health is an emerging issue of national significance. The City of Whittlesea has long recognised the environmental importance of soil conservation and has been actively working with landowners to enhance soil quality via a framework of sustainable land management. It is crucial that Council continue to partner with landowners, community groups, and various levels of government to manage risk and improve overall soil health.

Protect non-urban breaks and enhance landscape amenity and rural character

There is need to strengthen the planning controls as they relate to landscape amenity, rural character and to preserve the non-urban breaks for conservation, cultural and recreational purposes. The type of development and land use occurring in the rural areas of the municipality should respect the visual sensitivity of the land scape.

Protect Green Wedge from further urban encroachment and improve management of the urban and rural interface

It is important for Council to work with the State Government to safeguard the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), support landowners in sustainable land management and, where possible, create public green space and conservation areas as permanent and enduring buffers on the urban side of the UGB. It is also crucial to implement the Whittlesea Township Plan to limit intrusion into the Green Wedge, protect desired township character and further support the township’s role in being the social and economic centre of rural communities in the municipality.

Improve understanding of the value of agriculture in the Green Wedge to provide for appropriate use and development

Agriculture in the Green Wedge is under threat from pressure to convert land to other uses including housing and smaller non-agricultural uses, leading to land use compatibility issues. Council needs to raise the profile of agriculture in the Green Wedge and continues working with the State Government to communicate the purpose of the Green Wedge and the importance of protecting land for existing and future agriculture opportunities.

Support local agribusinesses and the visitor economy to grow, be sustainable and prepared for climate change

Council will work with farmers, businesses, institutions, other Green Wedge Councils and government agencies to support sustainable agribusiness and the visitor economy via knowledge sharing, incentive, partnership, advocacy and policy direction.

Partner with Traditional Owners in various practices that care for Country, and engage and empower community members on various aspects of caring and managing for the Green Wedge

The future of our Green Wedge relies on a strong community of dedicated individuals and groups who have already been actively looking after our Green Wedge land. Council will continue to partner with community members and groups, support community-led initiatives, explore ways to further remove the barrier for our rural community to access Council information and participate in conversations that will shape the future of our Green Wedge.



Waste and recycling



‘It would be good to see this council be a leader in this field and act as a role model for other council.’

- Quote from community consultation for the Rethinking Waste Plan, 2020



Why is waste and recycling important?

- Waste management is rated as one of the most important services that Council provides and is a major component of Council’s annual budget. The total cost of managing Whittlesea’s municipal waste now exceeds \$13 million a year
- Council collected 45,000 tonnes of garbage, 18,000 tonnes of recycling, and 17,000 tonnes of garden waste, 1,900 tonnes of hard waste, 4,780 tonnes of bundled branches, and 1,240 tonnes of e-waste in 2019/20
- There were 83,000 properties as part of the City of Whittlesea’s bin collection services in 2020, which are projected to increase to 129,551 properties in 2040
- Projections show that the preceding decade will see an average annual growth rate of 2.4 per cent for waste to landfill, and a 3.3 per cent increase in material recycled, aligned with projected annual population growth.

What have we done so far?



Establishment of the City’s first Repair Café
located at Mernda Community House



Provision of the pop up recycling station
as a mobile solution to recycling and disposal of items normally associated with moving into a new home



Introduced the user pays service for food and garden waste
in which 49,000 households have opted-in since mid 2020, diverting 399 tonnes of food and garden waste per week from landfill



Trialed using reusable plates, cups and cutlery at four major community events in 2018-19
Wash stations were manned by Council staff and community volunteers. This initiative saved over 2,600 pieces of food packaging from being manufactured and disposed of



Ran an anti-littering education campaign along Council’s waterways
Winners of the 2015 Keep Australia Beautiful Victorian Sustainable Cities award for the Raspberry Pi Program



Used recycled and sustainable materials for civil infrastructure projects
such as the trial of an asphalt product in Yale Drive, Epping, that contained 95 per cent recycled materials from kerbside recycling, crushed concrete and crushed rock



Our priorities for the future

Avoid waste generation

The City of Whittlesea will work with the community to avoid waste generation in the first place. To do so, Council will implement a variety of household educational programs, behaviour change campaigns and low waste initiatives. Council will also show leadership and innovation by becoming a waste free organisation that supports local community leadership and community led solutions.

Value waste by recovering and recycling and encouraging repair and reuse

The City of Whittlesea considers waste a valuable resource and will commit to increasing the volume of waste diverted from landfill by enhancing resource recovery systems. Recovery is the process of recovering resources from waste for reuse or reprocessing. This includes the introduction of the residential glass recycling service and the extension of the food and garden organics recycling services. Council will also trial a home collection service for e-waste, clothing, and small household items.

Protect the health and safety of our community and the environment from the impacts of waste

It is our responsibility to protect our environment and health from the impact of waste. Litter, illegal dumping and inappropriate waste management practices not only cost the community money, but also causes environmental, public health and safety risks. Council will adopt best practice waste management principles and advocate for great environmental protection of local land and waterways. Council will introduce a litter enforcement team to protect the environment from litter and dumped rubbish, encourage sustainable procurement and select products that generate economic, social and environmental benefits.

Support businesses to move towards a circular economy

Partnering with our businesses, community groups and social enterprises, Council will support local businesses to minimise waste, use recycled materials in manufacturing and encourage local partnerships. Through assisting with grant applications and local collaboration, Council will help our community move towards a localised circular economy.



Water



‘Waterways in Doreen are beautiful with the birdlife and paths. Please keep them clean.’

- Quote from Community Plan consultation, 2021



Why is water important?

- Water is essential to our wellbeing and is imperative to the healthy functioning of our communities and our environment
- The overall need for water in our municipality will increase substantially as our population grows, from 15.2 GL/yr currently to 19.6GL/yr in 2040
- Our water supply is likely to decline as the climate changes due to decrease in annual rainfall. Increase in water use also means there will be more wastewater created
- The amount of stormwater will increase significantly as more homes are built in our municipality, from 71.2GL/yr currently to 81.8GL/yr in 2040, that needs to be managed to reduce pollution and flooding
- Our rainfall patterns have changed as a result of climate change, which lead to longer dry spells and flashier rain events which increase the risk of flooding during summer months.

What have we done so far?



Endorsed the Integrated Water Management (IWM) Strategy ‘Whittlesea Water For All’

which marks a major milestone in the municipality’s commitment in water management practices



Created multiple resources in the Water Management discipline

including an IWM specialist and a grant funded role in Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) education and compliance



Established alternative water supplies for some portion of the irrigated public open space

in the municipality, using a mix of recycled water and reclaimed stormwater



Worked in partnership with Melbourne Water to understand flood risks across the municipality

and to identify areas at risk of being affected by flooding events. Flood modelling was completed for the Plenty River, Darebin Creek, Edgars Creek, and Mernda and Laurimar Catchments



Secured federal grants and constructed the Melbourne Markets Stormwater Harvesting Scheme

which was designed to save more than 48 million litres of drinking water every year to supply our sporting grounds in Mosaic Recreation Reserve, Whittlesea Public Gardens and the RGC Cook Recreation Reserve



Our priorities for the future

Cleaner – Our local waterways are healthy and clean

The City of Whittlesea will improve on its asset management practices to secure the long-term restoration and maintenance of the municipality’s stormwater treatment infrastructure such as wetlands, ponds and raingardens. Council will further pave the way to adopt new and innovative approaches to stormwater management in our growth areas, as well as enhance our protection measures for our creeks from harmful construction activities in these zones.

Greener – Our priority urban and rural landscapes are green and healthy

Council will seek opportunities to utilize stormwater and recycled water as an alternative resource to potable water for the greening of our urban zones. The municipality will see an increase in tree canopy established with runoff water from roads, car parks and roofs. Sports field irrigation, as one of council’s largest water consumption, will also see an increase in stormwater use where the space for the infrastructure and suitable quality of water can be identified.

Smarter – Our community uses potable water for drinking and alternative water is available for all other purposes

The City of Whittlesea will invest in smart technologies, education programs and incentives schemes to support and empower the community’s uptake and self-sufficiency in water cycle management. In the public realm Council is committed to join and adopt the trends of integrated water management by planning and constructing multi-benefit blue-green infrastructure.

Prepared – Our city is prepared for droughts and floods

Leaning on smarter technologies and practices in water cycle management and empowering our community to practice the principles of sustainable water use, our municipality will increase its resilience in drought and flood scenarios which are a real threat to human safety and wellbeing. The City of Whittlesea will identify opportunities to mitigate the causes of flooding in mapped hotspots, and endeavour to have the necessary water resource available and fit for purpose when prolonged dry periods create strains on the region’s supplies.

United – Our community and partners value water and work together to improve water planning, use and management

Whittlesea will strengthen existing partnerships and establish new synergies with other government authorities, community groups, businesses, and Traditional Owners to achieve Council’s overall aspiration to become a water sensitive city. We will identify the opportunities and initiate the engagement in our activities where we identify the opportunity to ‘team up’ and deliver actions in partnership.



Community empowerment



'Whittlesea should focus more on what they do with the community to teach and practice sustainability...the real change happens when you act.'

- Quote from Let's talk about our City's environment survey, 2017



Why is community empowerment important?

- Represents a cross-cutting element that enables us to deliver the outcomes identified for each of the previous six focus areas
- An empowered community is made up of people with a shared vision, with the skills, experience, motivation and voice to make and influence positive environmental change
- Increasing time spent in nature improves human health, happiness and wellbeing
- Creating a sustainable environment is a shared responsibility. Every single person can make positive changes, like walking or cycling instead of driving, planting trees or a vegetable garden, joining a Friends' group to look after a piece of nature, choosing sustainable investments, composting, avoiding single use plastics (e.g. BYO containers), install a solar system, or influencing policy and procedures at work or school etc
- Communities play a vital role in the health and resilience of Whittlesea's natural environment and people, particularly through environmental stewardship activities like water quality monitoring, litter clean-ups and community plantings
- Council strives to hear community needs and aspirations and strengthen and support communities to take positive environmental action through its programs, projects, initiatives.

What have we done so far?



Annual celebration events

Celebrations such as National Recycling Week, National Tree Day, Children's Week Pop-up Nature Play, and World Environment Day



Engagement with schools, students and young children

Learning programs such as Hume Whittlesea Teachers' Environment Network, waterway and waste education programs, early years educator sustainability training, and nature play for children



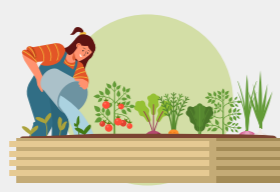
Sustainability Outreach Whittlesea (2012-2019)

Short tailored environmental education programs engaging more than 23 local community organisations and over 2000 residents



Whittlesea Waste Busters Program (2019-2021)

Supported 35 households to reduce their waste at home through workshops, tools and tailored advice



Community nature/gardening programs

Nature Stewards (commenced 2021) – 10-week program introducing residents to Whittlesea's natural places, fostering connection and building environmental skills. Gardening Together Again (2022) – Supported community gardens to establish and thrive through practical workshops, tools and resources, networking and celebrations



Caring for Climate community art (2021-2022)

Artworks with personal commitments of environmental action by 330 residents. Exhibited as 17 murals, 800 road foil stickers and banners



Our priorities for the future

Empower climate action

Support residents, businesses and community to take sustainable action through practical training or re-skilling (e.g. bike repair, preserving and growing food and foraging workshops) and education programs and resources (e.g. solar and battery storage, energy, waste and water minimisation).

Amplify environmental stewardship

Build environmental skills for people of all ages and stages in life, including children and young persons. Strengthen partnerships with key organisations who do this important work, particularly Darebin and Merri Creek Management Committees. Foster community connection to local natural places, celebrate aboriginal culture and caring for country practice.

Improve biodiversity and greening in urban areas

Deliver programs which enhance native wildlife habitat in urban areas, and support growing food and indigenous gardens at home and in public open spaces e.g. community gardens.

Improve Traditional Owner engagement

Celebrate Wurundjeri peoples culture through programming and seek opportunities to strengthen relationships with Traditional Owners.



Making it happen

The Strategy will be delivered through implementation of a Sustainable Environment Action Plan, which will be developed every two years.

The Action Plan clearly outlines the actions Council is committed to delivering and how we will track our performance over time. The Action Plan will also help to facilitate and strengthen our partnerships and collaborations with key stakeholders.

Service description:

Climate Change

Council provides services to support the community's adaptation and mitigate climate change risks. We work to reduce the urban heat island effect and support urban greening, deliver walking and cycling paths supporting active travel for the community. Council shows leadership by avoiding, minimising and offsetting our greenhouse gas emissions within its operations and developments it builds and maintains. Council improves its infrastructure, and helps the community prepare for the unavoidable impacts of our changing climate, including increases in extreme weather events. Council educates and empowers the community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Integrated Water Management

Council works alongside state government agencies and utility providers to develop and deliver integrated water management services for our community, protecting and restoring our natural waterways. Council manages its water assets to ensure that they are planned, delivered, and maintained effectively. We are committed to ensuring water is used efficiently throughout our city. We support the community to understand and appreciate the water cycle and use water wisely.

Biodiversity, Land Management, Sustainable Planning and Design

Through its role as a statutory authority, Council plays a crucial role in delivering an environmentally sustainable city. Council facilitates sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation on public and private land across urban and rural areas. Council educates and empowers the community to undertake biodiversity conservation activities and sustainable land management.

Resource Recovery and Waste Management

Council provides sustainable solutions for the collection, disposal and recovery of waste materials generated within the community and through our own operations. We develop strategic policy, education programs and operational maintenance activities to avoid, minimise and recover waste and keep our city clean, healthy and safe. We undertake compliance and enforcement for illegal waste dumping in our municipality. We support and empower the community transition to a circular economy.

Monitoring progress

Council has prepared an evaluation framework to monitor the trends and performance of our work in sustainable environment.

The Strategy will be reviewed in 2027 and 2032 at which time the sustainability needs and aspirations for the City of Whittlesea will be re-assessed for appropriate action.

The priority indicators below will help us to track the health of our environment and progress towards the outcomes identified in this Strategy. They have been nominated with consideration of access to regular, accurate data.

Council will continue to monitor these indicators and will work with other levels of government as well as partners in the private and non-for-profit sectors and our broader community to influence these indicators for the better.



Key direction 1: Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity

- Improved biodiversity protection and management (public and private land)
- Improved rural land management practices
- Increase in water quality in local waterways and wetlands
- Increased riparian vegetation
- Increased opportunities for community to act for nature
- Improved connection between traditional owners and Country
- Improved collaboration and partnership



Key direction 2: Climate ready

- Improved health and lifespan of Council trees
- Increased tree canopy cover
- Reduced areas of heat risk hotspots
- Decreased property impacts with floods
- Increased community resilience to climate change
- Increased Council operations and services that consider climate change risks
- Increase in the number of sustainable developments
- Improved collaboration and partnership



Key direction 3: Leaders in clean, sustainable living

- Reduced Greenhouse Gas Emissions (both Council and Community)
- Reduced energy consumption (both Council and community)
- Increase in uptake of renewable energy (both Council and community)
- Increase in sustainable transport use
- Reduction in potable water consumption
- Reduced waste and litter generation
- Increase sustainable procurement
- Improved collaboration and partnership



Glossary

Aboriginal – Throughout this document, the term ‘Aboriginal’ is taken to include people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. ‘Aboriginal’ is used in preference to ‘Indigenous’, ‘First Nations’, and ‘Koori’.

Agribusiness – The inputs in agriculture, such as agronomists, chemical suppliers, machinery companies and transport; primary production, or farming, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries; manufacturing activities that process the primary products such as abattoirs; wholesaling the primary or processed products such as grain storage; and agri-tourism with rural landscapes, wineries/vineyards, harvest trails and small-scale food producers who contribute to our visitor economy.

Alternative water – Any source of water other than potable water that is deemed to be of sufficient quality to serve the application purpose.

Biodiversity – The number and variety of living things on the planet. It is the mix of plants, animals, and other organisms that make up landscapes from deserts to oceans.

Bioregion – Geographic areas defined by natural boundaries rather than political or governmental boundaries.

Blue-green infrastructure – Natural landscape elements which are harnessed by humanity as infrastructure and use water as a resource to sustain itself and flourish.

Carbon sequestration – The removal of carbon from the atmosphere by capturing or storing it through biological, chemical and physical processes.

Caring for Country – a term used to describe the different sustainable land management practices and initiatives that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people undertake, and the key role these practices play in continuing culture.

Circular economy – A model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible.

City forest – All the trees and other vegetation and the soil and water that support them. Urban forest is an alternative term. It incorporates vegetation in streets, parks, gardens, plazas, campuses, river and creek embankment, wetlands, railway corridors, community gardens, green walls, balconies, and roofs.

Climate change – Long term change in global or regional climate patterns attributed largely to the increased levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, particularly carbon dioxide, produced by the use of fossil fuels.

Ecosystems – A geographic area where plants, animals, and other organisms, as well as weather and landscapes, work together to form a network of life.

Ecosystem services – the benefits provided to humans through the transformations of resources (or environmental assets, including land, water, vegetation and atmosphere) into a flow of essential goods and services such as clean air, water, and food.

Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) – Design that seeks to improve building performance, reduce environmental impact, resource use and waste, and create healthy environments for occupants and users.

Greenhouse gases (GHG) – Gases such as carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and others that cause the greenhouse effect by increasing the amount of solar radiation absorbed in the atmosphere, leading to global temperature rise.

Green Wedge – Non-urban land that is described in a metropolitan fringe planning scheme as being outside an urban growth boundary.

Green Wedge Management Plan – A Council adopted strategy that identified a vision, objectives and actions for the sustainable management and development of each Green Wedge area.

Integrated Water Management – A collaborative approach to the management of all elements of the water cycle to contribute to water security, public and environmental health, as well as urban amenity.

Land use – The primary purpose for which the land is used or may be developed.

Net zero emissions – A state where greenhouse gas emissions are produced but balanced out with equivalent offsets. Net zero carbon dioxide emissions is interchangeably used with carbon neutral or carbon neutrality.

Portable water – Drinking water, or process water which meets quality standards for human consumption.

Stormwater (runoff) – Surface water runoff during and following a rain or storm event. Distinguishable from Rainwater which is runoff generated by building roofs (elevated surfaces).

Tree canopy cover – The proportion of the municipality covered by the uppermost trees or branches of trees in a forest, forming an almost continuous layer of foliage. The topmost layer of bioactivity in a forest setting.

Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) – A line drawn around a metropolitan area, defining the limits to urban growth.

Urban heat island effect – The phenomenon of dense urban areas having significantly warmer air and land surface temperatures than surrounding rural areas.

Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) – An approach to planning and design of urban areas to make use of stormwater as a resource and reduce the harm it causes to our natural environment.

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Connect with us in your
preferred language:

Free telephone interpreter service
 131 450

Climate Change Plan Draft 2022-2032





Photo: Wurundjeri Djiirri dancers, celebrating connection to Country.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Whittlesea recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the Traditional Owners of this place. About 50,000 years before colonisation, a diversity of Wurundjeri people, families and communities managed the land that the City of Whittlesea now occupies.

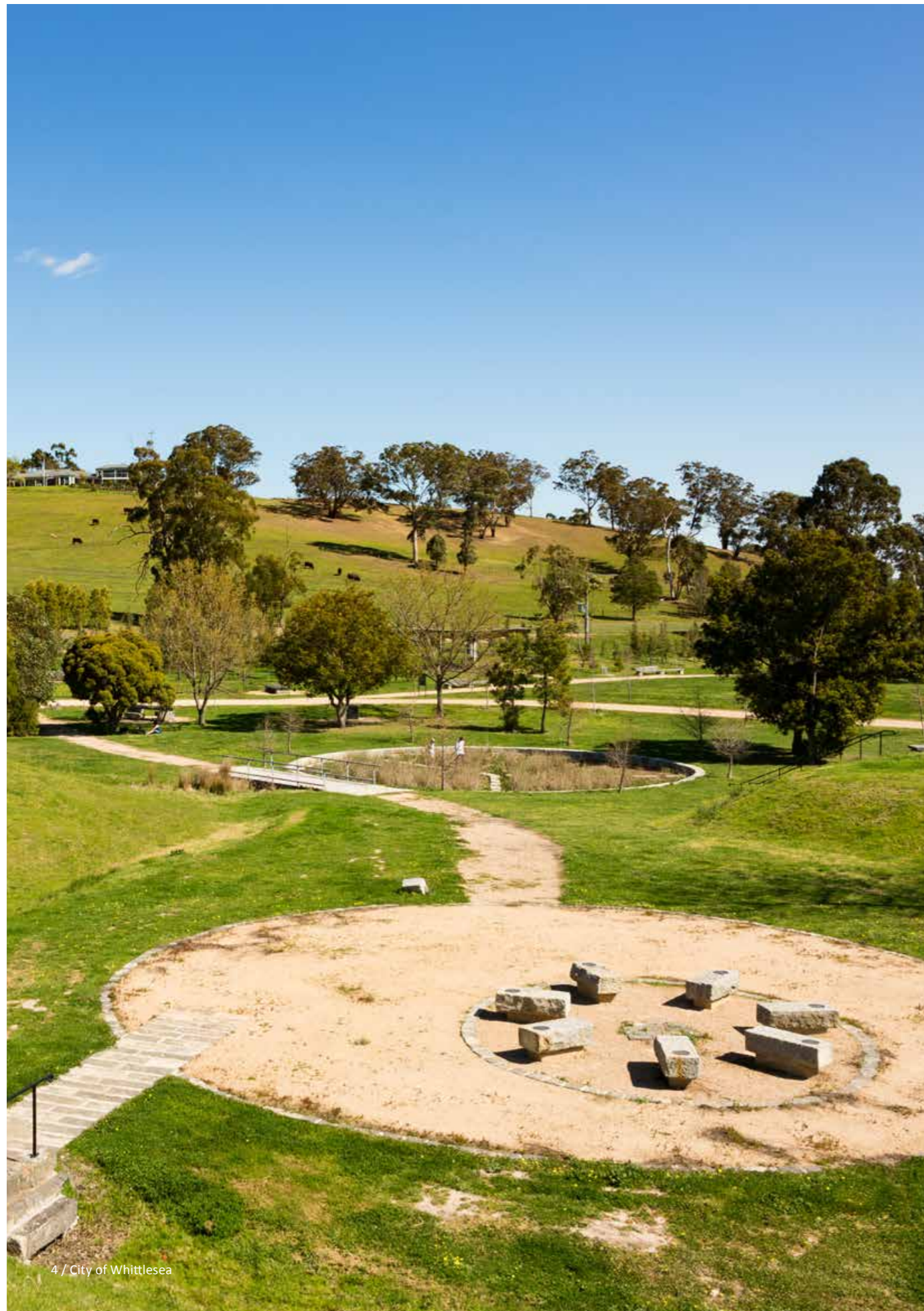
Throughout this time the Plenty River and other local natural features provided an abundance of flora and fauna as both a source of food and shelter.

The pre-colonial legacy of the Wurundjeri people can still be seen today as the Whittlesea area is home to a number of protected and sacred ‘scarred’ trees. These trees were used for making bark canoes or as boundary markers for distinct tribal groups. Today the scarred river-red gum trees serve as a reminder that Aboriginal people have always been, and will always be, central to the social, economic and cultural prosperity of the City of Whittlesea.

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Front cover photo:
Local residents are encouraged to come along to community planting days.



4 / City of Whittlesea



About this document

Responding to climate change: a shared responsibility

Climate change presents an unprecedented challenge, both globally and locally. The frequency and severity of extreme weather events such as bushfires, floods, storms and droughts are on the rise. As greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from human activities such as burning fossil fuels for generating electricity, transport, and manufacturing, are the dominant cause of climate change, urgent climate action is required to stabilise the changing climate.

Council and community must work together to reduce overall emissions, create a climate resilient future and help limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius as outlined in the 2015 Paris Agreement and strengthened in the 2021 Glasgow Climate Pact.

This plan outlines Council's role in minimising its own emissions, and supporting the community to take climate action to mitigate and adapt to climate change to 2032. It presents an analysis of trends impacting our climate and environment, is informed by feedback from our institutional stakeholders and wider community, and contributes to the following Whittlesea 2040 'key directions' for the Sustainable Environment Goal:

1. Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity
2. Climate ready
3. Leaders in clean, sustainable living

Key Terms

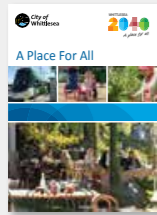
Climate change – long term change in global or regional climate patterns attributed largely to the increased levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, particularly carbon dioxide, produced by the use of fossil fuels. Every corner of the planet is already being affected by climate change, through rising temperatures, sea level rise, and changes in rainfall patterns.

Mitigation – A human intervention to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. It is what we do to stop climate change from getting worse.

Adaptation – Adjustments that are made in response to the impacts of climate change. It is the changes that we make to live with the impacts of climate change.

Level 1: Vision

Councils overarching vision



Whittlesea 2040



Community Plan

Level 2: Strategy

Strategic direction and action plan



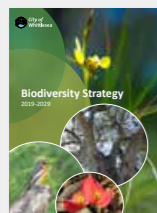
Sustainable Environment Strategy



Sustainable Environment Action Plan

Level 3: Approach

Long term plans, detailed analysis and detailed rationale



Biodiversity



Water For All



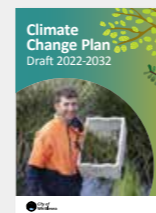
City Forest



Rethinking Waste



Green Wedge



Climate Change

Level 4: Operations

Operational programs, guidelines and technical documents



Processes



Systems



Professional Development Plans



Environmentally Sustainable Design Guidelines

Using this plan

The City of Whittlesea’s approach to creating a sustainable environment is provided in three parts:

Sustainable Environment Strategy 2022-2032 – Outlines Council’s overall strategic direction across six areas related to environmental sustainability: biodiversity, city forest (greening), climate change, Green Wedge, waste and recycling and water.

Sustainable Environment Action Plan 2022-2024 – A two-year Action Plan which sets out Council’s commitments to delivery on the Sustainable Environment Strategy 2022-2032. The Action Plan will be periodically reviewed.

Climate Change Plan 2022-2032 (this document) – Detailed supporting evidence including consultation outcomes and an in-depth analysis of the trends, challenges and opportunities for climate change action explored in the Sustainable Environment Strategy 2022-2032.

Strategic context

This Plan is one of the six long-term plans that underpin the Sustainable Environment Strategy 2022-2032. Developed under Council’s new Integrated Planning Framework, the Sustainable Environment Strategy outlines Council’s strategic directions across six areas related to environmental sustainability: biodiversity, city forest (greening), climate change, Green Wedge, waste and recycling, and water. Community empowerment is a key part of all six plans, contributing to their success.



Overview

One overarching vision

By 2036, the City of Whittlesea is a net zero emissions municipality, and our communities, businesses, and environments are resilient to the changing climate. Our transition to net zero and climate resilience is collaborative, inclusive, and equitable.

Two pillars

- Net zero:**







Council is a net zero emissions organisation and supports the community to transition to net zero emissions by 2036.

- Climate resilience:**

Our communities, businesses, and environments are resilient to the changing climate.



7 priority areas

-  1. Renewable energy and energy efficiency
-  2. Sustainable and active transport
-  3. Sustainable farming practice and carbon sequestration
-  4. Low waste and circular economy
-  5. Climate resilient communities and businesses
-  6. Climate resilient built environment and infrastructure
-  7. Climate resilient natural environment and biodiversity

3 principles

-  1. All level leadership
-  2. Fairness and equity
-  3. Aboriginal empowerment

How this plan was developed

The climate planning process

This Plan was developed through five steps, with community and stakeholder input essential throughout.

Community and stakeholder engagement and consultation



Engagement

To develop the Plan, community and stakeholder consultation took place between March and September 2021, which involved a range of engagement activities.

More than 800 contributions from our community members and businesses provided us a strong understanding of the community’s concerns and priorities regarding climate action.

This page Pop-up event at the 2021 Council Meeting at the Whittlesea Community Activity Centre.
Next page Top: Chatting with residents about climate change action at the Mill Park All Abilities Play Space.
Bottom: Voting on climate change priorities at pop-up events.



A snapshot of community and stakeholder consultation



390

Participated in the Community Plan survey for the Sustainable Environment Goal



81

Responded to the climate change survey questions



13

Attended the online Climate Change Community Focus Group



93

Participated in the place-based community popup events*



11

Participated in the online Youth Forum



176

Participated in the Community Plan targeted focus groups



210+

Visited the online engagement webpage



33

Made online contributions through climate change map and Post-it-notes



15

Participated in the online Climate Change Business Breakfast



55

Participated in the first institutional workshop



48

Participated in the second institutional workshop



61

Participated in the Climate Change Risk Assessment workshops

*The number of popup event participants were calculated based on the responses to the two activities offered at six popup events across the municipality.

The big picture: why climate matters



Get ready for our climate future

Unprecedented bushfires, heatwaves, droughts, and floods. Australia and many other places around the world have been experiencing more frequent and severe extreme weather events in recent years. Climate change is the major driver. The latest climate science tells us that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from human activities are responsible for approximately 1.2°C of warming since the industrial revolution. Averaged over the next 20 years, global temperature is expected to reach or exceed 1.5°C of warming.ⁱ These changes are being observed globally across every region and the entire climate system.

Climate change is affecting human health

The changing climate has significant impacts on human health, public safety, infrastructure, primary production, settlements, the natural environment, and biodiversity.

The World Health Organisation regards climate change as 'the greatest threat to global health in the 21st Century'.

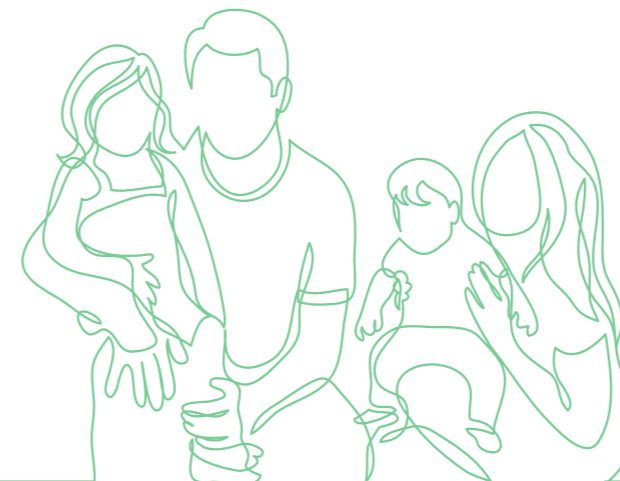
Heatwaves are already Australia's deadliest natural hazard, which is being further exacerbated by climate change. Research shows that, since 1900, extreme heat events have killed more people than the sum of all other natural hazards.ⁱⁱ As temperature continues to rise, we will have to face more heat extremes. Unless action is taken, heatwaves are estimated to cause an additional 402 deaths annually in Victoria by 2050.ⁱⁱⁱ Such loss, according to a climate model by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), translates to an additional \$218 million loss per year.^{iv}

Climate change is also affecting people's **mental health** both directly and indirectly. Children and young people are particularly affected as research shows that climate change is causing distress, anger, and other negative emotions among young people.

A survey on climate anxiety among children and young people aged 16-25 years revealed that climate anxiety among Australian youth is widespread, with 94 per cent respondents expressing some level of worry about climate change, including 28 per cent very worried, 25 per cent extremely worried, and 32 per cent experiencing impact on functioning.^v

Citizens, strongly led by young people, are increasingly demanding governments to take real actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change. People are concerned about the impacts of climate change on future generations, the state of the planet, and their health and quality of life.

It is imperative that we work together to prepare for, and adapt to, the current and future impacts of climate change.



All levels of government need to support efforts to adapt to climate change

The Australian Government has developed a new National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy (2021-2025), which sets out a plan to support all levels of government, business and the community, to better anticipate, manage and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Victoria's Adaptation Action Plans 2022 have been prepared across seven systems to ensure Victoria's climate resilience, now and in the future. These seven systems include the natural environment, the built environment, the water cycle, primary production, transport, health and human services, education and training. Each plan sets out the challenges of climate change for each system, the extensive work already underway, and the key State Government priorities for the next five years.

Local government has important climate change adaptation responsibilities through duty of care under Victorian legislation, including

- Climate Change Act 2017
- Local Government Act 2020
- Planning and Environment Act 1987

Under Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2020, local government must give effect to a number of overarching governance principles in the performance of its role, including 'the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted'.

Keep 1.5°C alive

The 2020s is our remaining window of opportunity to bring down global warming to just below 1.5°C by the end of the 21st century.

To avoid the dangerous impacts of a warming climate, together we need to limit global warming to 1.5°C. The only way we can do this is to reduce emissions and remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.

The 2015 Paris Agreement^{vi} on climate change has set a long-term temperature goal, which is to keep the rise in mean global temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and preferably limit the increase to 1.5°C. Before the 2021 Glasgow Climate Pact, countries were urged to limit global warming to 2°C.^{vii} Following updated research, the 2021 Pact noted that there is no safe limit for global warming, and called for strengthened climate action to limit global warming to 1.5°C, instead of the Paris text of well below 2°C.

The 1.5°C temperature goal is now the new normal for climate action ambitions. It can only be achieved by halving global emissions by 2030 and reaching net zero emissions by 2050.

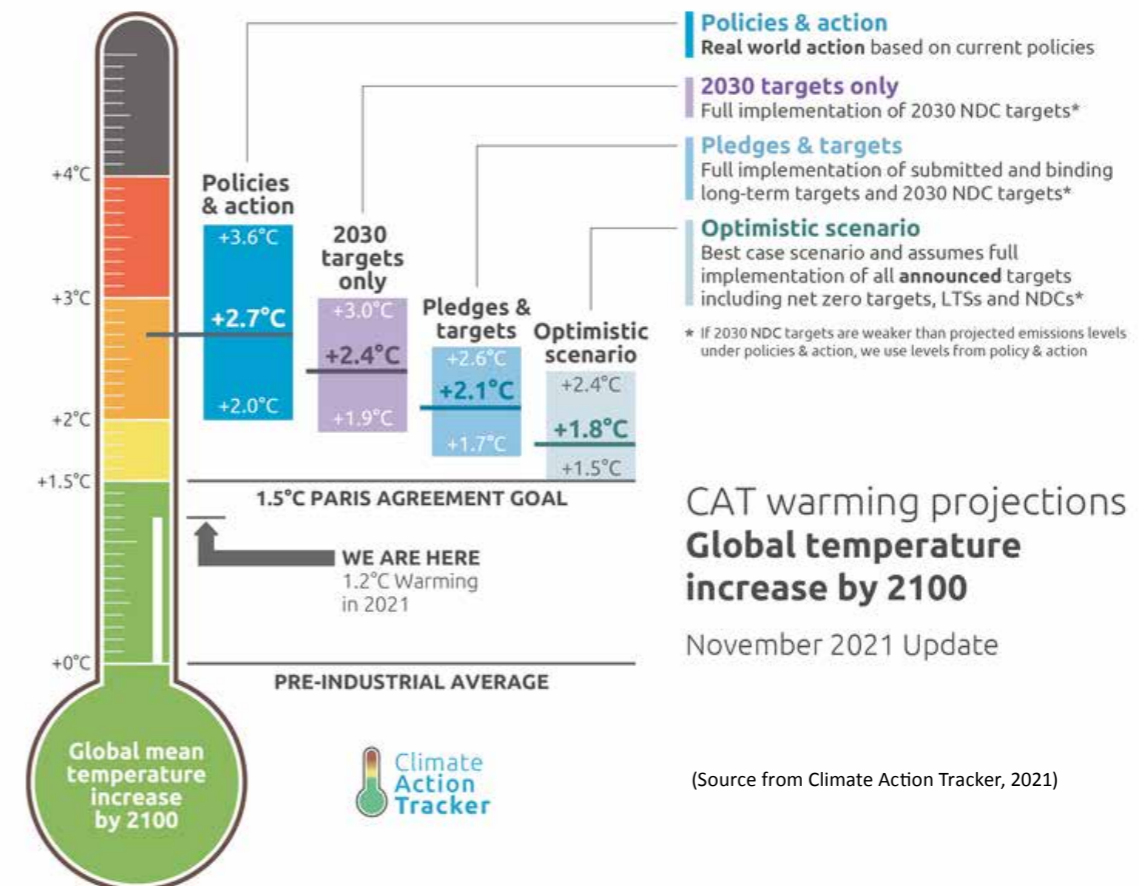


Unfortunately, in 2022 there is a major gap between the emissions levels needed to limit global warming and the emissions projected to result from current pledges and policies.^{viii} The current 2030 target commitments made by individual countries will only limit global warming to about 2.4°C, according to the Climate Action Tracker, an independent scientific analysis that tracks government climate action and measures it against the Paris agreement temperature goal.

Just before the Glasgow Climate Summit, the Australian Government released its Net Zero Emissions Plan, committing to net zero emissions in 2050, with a 2030 target of 26 to 28 per cent reduction compared to the 2005 levels. In June 2022, the Australian Government updated its 2030 commitment, which will be to reduce emissions by 43 per cent by 2030. The Australian Government's new 43 per cent emissions reduction target has been written in its Climate Change Bill 2022, which passed the House of Representatives on 4th August 2022.

Victoria's Climate Change Strategy 2021 provides a roadmap to net-zero emissions and a climate resilient Victoria by 2050. It includes targets to reduce the state's greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels by 28-33 per cent by 2025 and 45-50 per cent by 2030.

Immediate, rapid and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are required to limit warming to 1.5°C or even 2°C. Our actions in the next decade will shape what a 2040 future will look like for our community. A net-zero pathway to avoid even temporary temperature 'overshoot' can reduce multiple climate change risks and bring down long term mitigation costs and economic losses.^{ix}

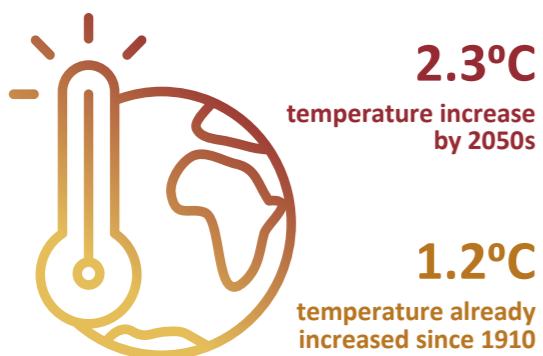




Our local context

Our changing climate

In recent decades, the City of Whittlesea has become hotter and drier. While efforts have been made to reduce emissions, this trend is expected to continue. If global greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase, in the 2050s, our city's climate future may look like:



By mid-century, we could see the number of extreme heat days (above 30°C) in the City of Whittlesea almost double compared to the 1990s.^x

The interactions between climate and our city are multiple, dynamic, and complex. Our city is exposed to multiple climate-related hazards which can occur simultaneously e.g. droughts, fires, and heatwaves. These are likely to occur while our community is experiencing other non-climatic risks, such as the Covid-19 Pandemic that started in 2020 and continued to affect our society in 2022. These compounding and cascading risks are more difficult to manage, highlighting the critical need to further adapt and increase our resilience as a community.

Our climate risk

The City of Whittlesea has its own unique climate risk. To better understand our city's climate risk, we undertook an integrated vulnerability assessment.

Climate risk is a result of the interaction of hazard, exposure, and vulnerability. The vulnerability assessment explores 'who may be vulnerable to what, and why?', which allows us to understand the three dimensions of climate risk: hazard, exposure, and vulnerability.

The integrated vulnerability assessment reveals that our city is exposed and vulnerable to the effects of climate change due to variety of hazards, multiple exposed elements of our city, and the presence of different vulnerabilities.

What we can expect:

- Double the number of heatwave days
- Longer fire season. More high fire danger days
- More intense downpours. Less cool season rainfall



Exposure and sensitivity • Increase risk and vulnerability				
Our weaknesses	High exposure to bushfire and heat risk	Concentration of vulnerable groups in high exposure areas	Major economic sectors with high exposure	Major environmental values with high exposure
Pressures of rapid urban development	Negative changes in land use	Socio-economically disadvantaged population	Higher than average unemployment	Lack of community awareness and preparedness on climate risk
Resilience and adaptiveness • Reduce risk and vulnerability				
Our strengths	Rich natural assets and big Green Wedge	Growing suite of policies addressing climate change	Active contribution to collaboration mechanisms	
Functioning emergency response systems		Timely support for emergency recovery	Strong awareness of Council on climate risk	Increasing level of Council preparedness

We need to identify adaptation strategies to address these factors that contribute to our city's climate risk.

Climate risk can be reduced through adaptation, which plays a key role in reducing our exposure and vulnerability to climate change. Adaptation is often organised around **resilience** as bouncing back and returning to a previous state after a disturbance.

Resilience 'describes not just the ability to maintain essential function, identity and structure, but also the capacity for transformation.'^{xii}

“ A climate ready neighbourhood is... 'A neighbourhood that can cope with a worsening climate that results in more heat stress, more dangerous fires, damaging storms and flooding rain. ”

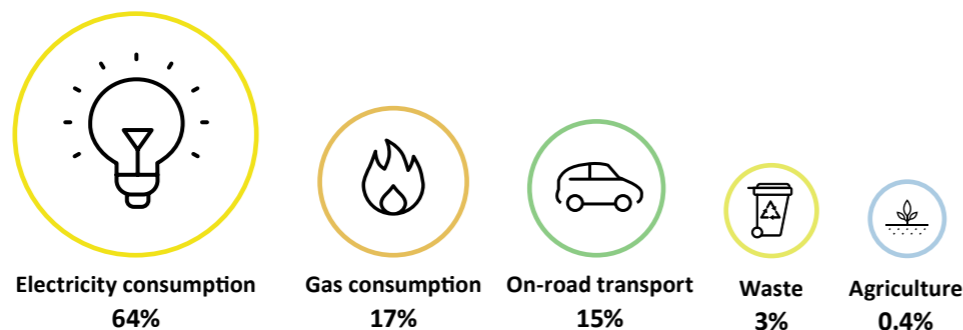
Quote from the Community Plan survey

Our community-wide emissions

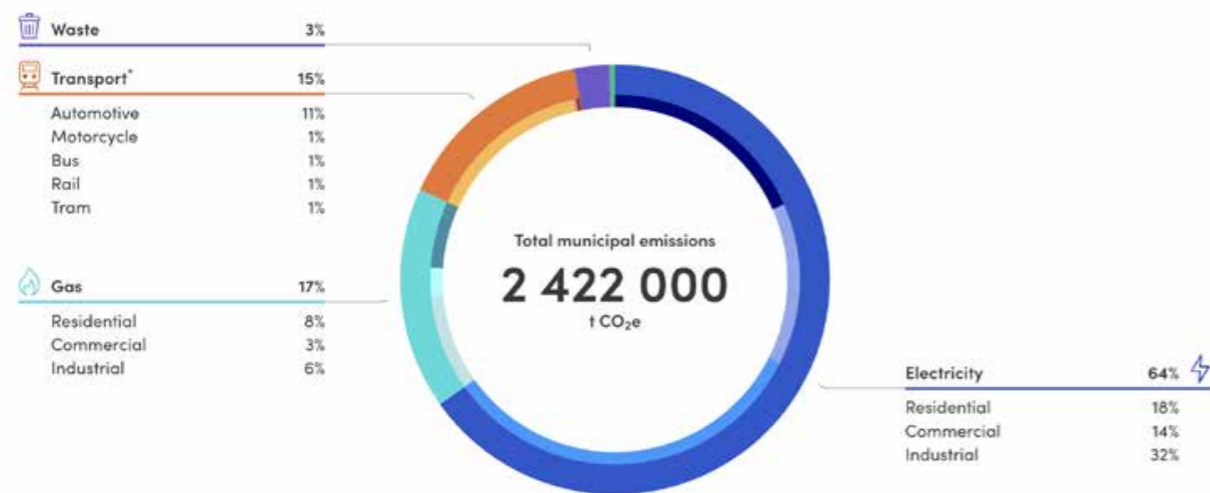
A community emissions profile is an important step for climate planning. By breaking down the sectors contributing to our city's emissions, it allows us to understand the scale of the impact of our municipality, and identify key opportunities for emissions reduction.

In the financial year of 2018-19, Whittlesea's community emissions were calculated as 2.422 million tonnes of CO₂-e.^{xiii}

The major emissions source for our municipality is electricity consumption, largely from industrial electricity consumption (32%).



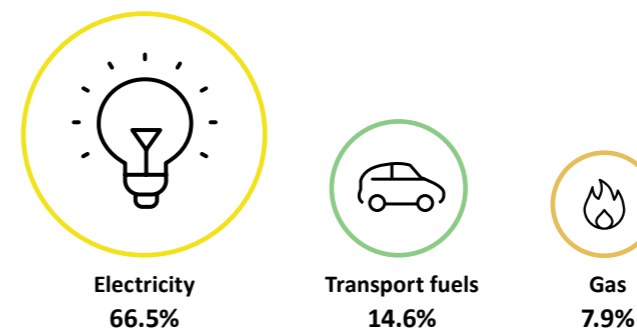
Whittlesea Community Emissions Profile



Council's corporate emissions

Council as an organisation also contributes to our municipal emissions. In the 2018-19 financial year, Council's corporate emissions were calculated 25,141 tonnes of CO₂-e, accounting for approximately one per cent of our total municipal emissions.

The main sources responsible for Council's corporate emissions were electricity consumption by streetlights and buildings (66.5%).



Council's Corporate Emissions Profile





20 / City of Whittlesea

Building on our current climate action

In the City of Whittlesea, businesses, organisations, households, and Council have already been taking steps to reduce emissions and prepare for the changing climate. We have a strong foundation to build on and scale up our collective action to respond to the climate change challenge.

Our community's climate action

Businesses and residents in our municipality have already been showing leadership in our climate action journey.

The city's largest solar system

The Melbourne Market in Epping is Victoria's wholesale fruit, vegetable and cut flower trading centre, one of six of its kind in Australia. Melbourne Market Authority set a target of 80 per cent of the market's electricity supply generated by renewable energy sources by 2025. The Authority was recently successful in applying for a 10 megawatt solar system on its 2.2 hectares of car park canopy, which will be the municipality's largest solar system.

Australia's first carbon neutral tradie

Eco-Green Garden Care is a sole trader landscape gardening company based in Epping. Eco-Green Garden Care was certified as carbon neutral in March 2021 under the Climate Active initiative, as Australia's first carbon neutral certified non-office based small business.

Schools leading sustainability and climate change initiatives

Harvest Home Primary School: part of the ResourceSmart Schools Program run by Sustainability Victoria.

St Monica's College: ran a Youth Leading the World Environmental Leadership Program in partnership with OzGREEN and Darebin Creek Management Committee.

The Lakes South Morang College: an accredited Water Efficient School.

Youth Power

Whittlesea's young citizens are leading the way in raising awareness about climate change and advocating for climate action. Local student, Rudra Sekhri from South Morang, has written a book called *The Earth Needs You: What We Can Do To Stop Climate Change*, published at Amazon.

This page

Top: Australia's first carbon neutral tradie, Stuart Griffiths from Eco-Green Garden Centre in Epping.

Bottom: Rudra Sekhri, local secondary school student and author of *The Earth Needs You: What We Can Do To Stop Climate Change*.



Climate Change Plan Draft 2022-2032 / 21



This page Over 60 per cent of Council’s streetlights have been converted to energy efficient lamps.
Previous page Top: The Melbourne Market’s 10MW solar system will be our City’s largest system.
 Bottom: Environmental leaders from St Monica’s College pick-up litter and improve the health of their local reserve.

Council’s climate action

Over the last decade, Council has achieved a suite of emissions reduction and climate resilience initiatives, which focus on Council’s own operations, services, and assets.

How has Council reduced its corporate emissions?

Since 2011, Council has been reducing its emissions and working toward carbon neutrality by 2022 through its Zero Net Emissions Plan. Major highlights include:

Energy reduction

- Audited and upgraded existing Council buildings, saving 560 megawatt hour of electricity per year
- More than 16,000 streetlights were converted to energy efficient T5 Fluorescent, Compact Fluorescent (CFL), and Light Emitting Diode (LED) lamps. This represents approximately 60 per cent of Council’s streetlights

Energy substitution

- From 1 July 2021 100 per cent renewable electricity is used to power Council facilities, services and streetlights, reducing 66.5 per cent of Council’s annual emissions. This is achieved through a joint commitment from 46 Victorian councils to purchase renewable energy over the next 10 years through the Victorian Energy Collaboration Power Purchase Agreement – the largest ever emissions reduction program undertaken by local government in Australia.
- Installed 1.83 megawatt of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems across 74 Council owned buildings, and 483 kilowatt hour of battery storage at 20 facilities

Emissions offsetting

- Offset on average approximately 16 per cent of corporate emissions annually since the baseline year of 2011/12

What has Council done on adaptation?

- Climate Ready Whittlesea (2017) – Council’s first climate adaptation plan for Council services and assets.
- Cool It Project (2018) – Heat mapping to understand the City of Whittlesea’s vulnerability to heat risk
- How Well Are We Adapting project – A tool to monitor, evaluate and report on Council adaptation. Participated in development phase (2018-2020)
- Greening Whittlesea (2020-2040) – Council’s 20-year urban forest plan. Actions include updating Council’s tree planting lists to increase species diversity, increase fire resistance, incorporate native wildlife requirements and incorporate climate change resilience and adaptability
- Climate Change Risk Assessment and Risk Register (2022) – An assessment which identifies the economic, environmental and social impacts of changing climatic conditions on Council assets, operations and services, resulting in a new Climate Change Risk Register. The register will manage climate risk on Council’s assets, operations, and services
- Climate change adaptation pathways (2022) – Pilots of the climate adaptation pathways approach on a Council asset (Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Center) and a Council service (reactive tree maintenance).



This page

The City's first Repair Cafe, located at Mernda Community House, opened in 2022.

What new directions has Council taken in climate action?

- Purchased offsets – Council’s buildings and vehicle fleets use natural gas, diesel, and petrol, which do not have readily available renewable alternatives. The emissions resulting from the use of these fossil fuels, currently accounting for 33 per cent of Council’s total emissions, will be offset to reach the corporate net zero target from the 2022-23 financial year
- Commitment to a no gas future:
 - Council has committed to building only all-electric (no gas) new buildings, starting with the McLeans Rd and Spring St Kindergartens
 - Council will produce a 10-year plan to transition its existing buildings off gas to become all-electric
- Zero emissions fleet – Council is transitioning to zero emissions vehicle fleets with its newly developed Light Fleet Policy and a regional collaboration via the Northern Council Alliance
- Commitment to increasing canopy cover across the City to address heat risk
- Commitment to enhancing climate resilience of Council’s assets, operations and services.

Partnership is key

While there have been many achievements in climate action, there is still more to do, improve and scale up over the coming decade. For the whole municipality to achieve net zero emissions and climate resilience, it will require everyone to work together.

Council is committed to taking a lead role in climate action. Council will:

- Continue to reduce organisational emissions and become certified as carbon neutral under the Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard
- Build resilience of community assets and services
- Support and empower residents, businesses, and industries to contribute to the collective climate action efforts
- Continue to work with our partners, including neighbouring councils via regional networks such as Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA), Greening the North and Living Melbourne groups, as well as utility providers such as Melbourne Water and Yarra Valley Water.

By working together, we can achieve big things.

Repair Cafe

The City of Whittlesea partnered with Whittlesea Community Connections to launch the City’s first repair café at Mernda Community House. The café is run by skilled volunteers who use their craftsmanship to repair a range of personal items, including jewellery, bikes, electricals, furniture, clothing, and guitars. The café operates monthly, and residents can book in a free repair session online.

Collectively Caring for Climate

A total of 330 local residents participated in the City of Whittlesea *Collectively Caring for Climate Project*, including people of all ages and from diverse cultural background. Individuals, schools, artists, community groups and organisations across the municipality made their climate pledge through artworks, reflecting a change they could make to their everyday lives to help the environment.

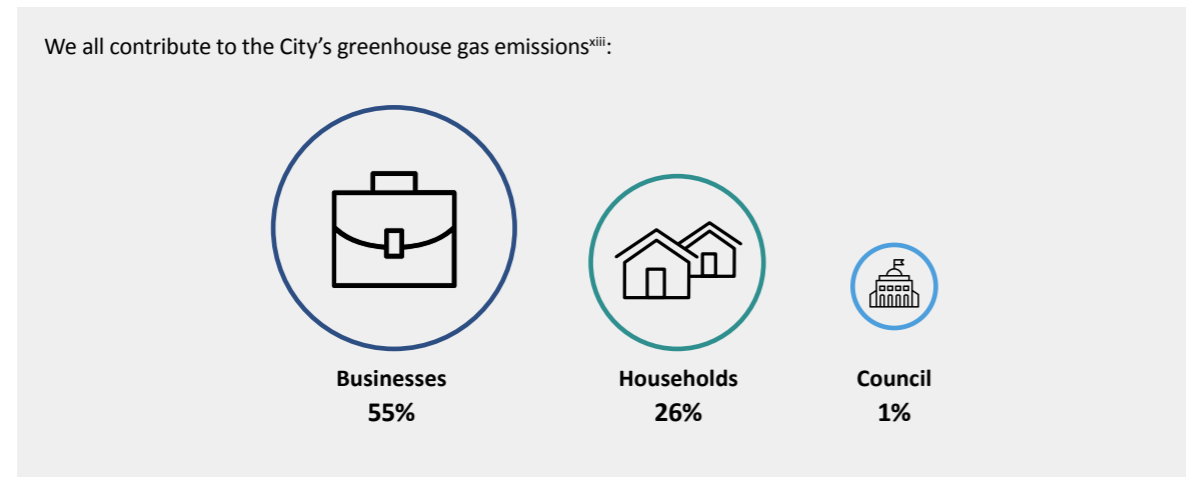
Positive Charge – Australian Energy Foundation

From 2016 to 2019, City of Whittlesea residents, schools and businesses had free access to reliable, independent energy advice and support, and quotes from vetted solar suppliers ensuring quality systems at competitive prices. A total of 63 solar systems were installed over the 2016-19 period through this partnership with the Australian Energy Foundation.

Sustainable Subdivision Framework

Thirty-one councils including the City of Whittlesea, are currently involved in a trial of a new framework that seeks to provide a basis for measuring and achieving stronger sustainability outcomes in residential subdivisions via the planning process.

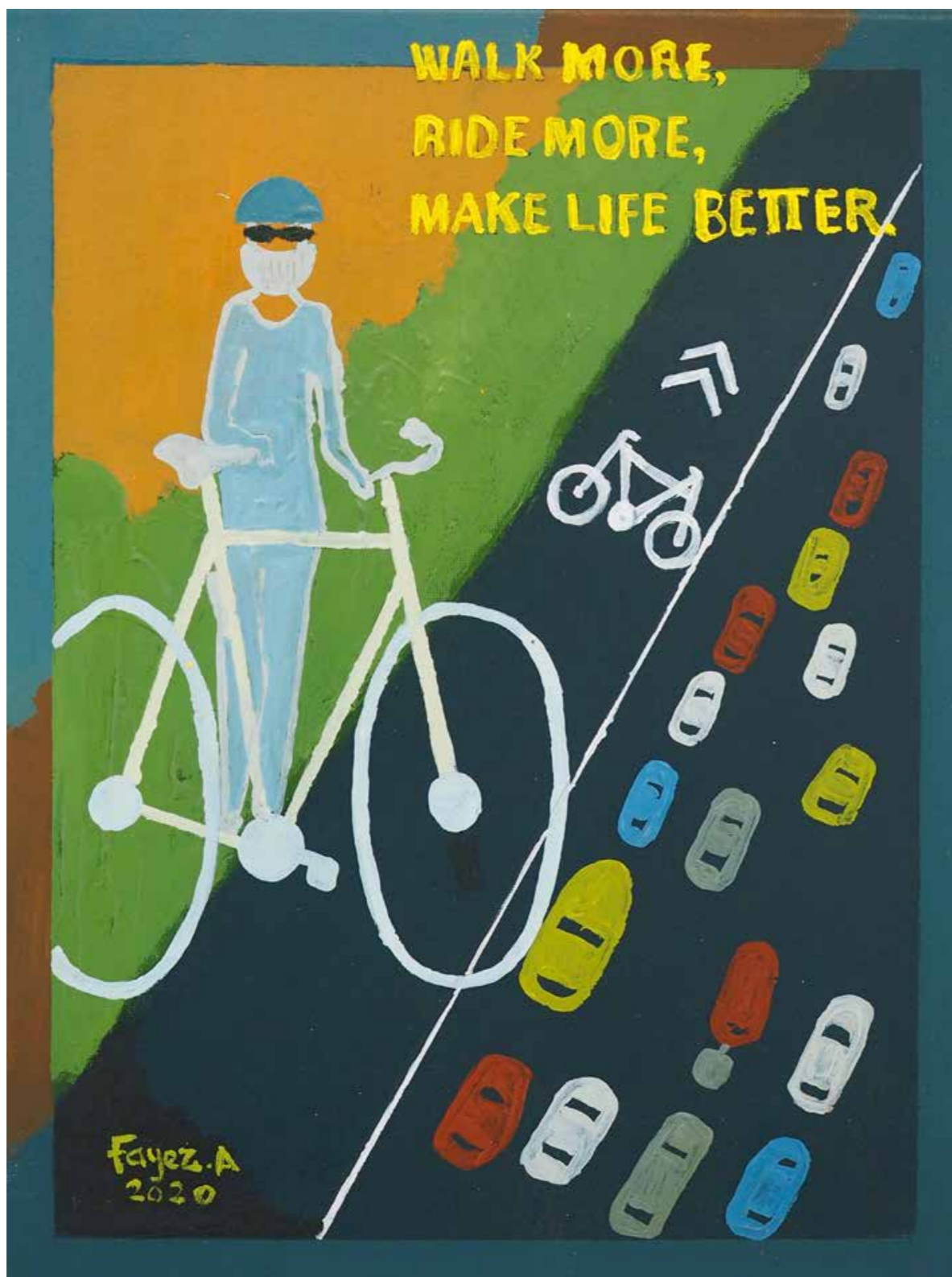
The trial is supporting councils to work collaboratively with the development industry to deliver long lasting sustainable communities.



“We’ve got to take everyone on the journey, that’s what it comes down to.”

Quote from the Climate Change Business Breakfast





Credit: Faye Assaf, City of Whittlesea's 'Collectively Caring for Climate' Project, 2020.

The net zero and climate resilient future we want

Our overarching vision

By 2036, the City of Whittlesea is a net zero emissions municipality, and our communities, businesses, and environments are resilient to the changing climate. Our transition to net zero and climate resilience is collaborative, inclusive, and equitable.

A whole-of-municipal approach is required to achieve this vision. Council will lead these efforts through:

1. Corporate climate action
2. Supporting and empowering community action, and
3. Advocating to all levels of government for broad systemic change.

The dual pillars below will enable Council to prioritise, resource, communicate, and evaluate our responses to climate change.

Pillar 1: Net Zero Emissions

Council is a net zero emissions organisation and supports the community to transition to net zero emissions by 2036.

Net Zero Council

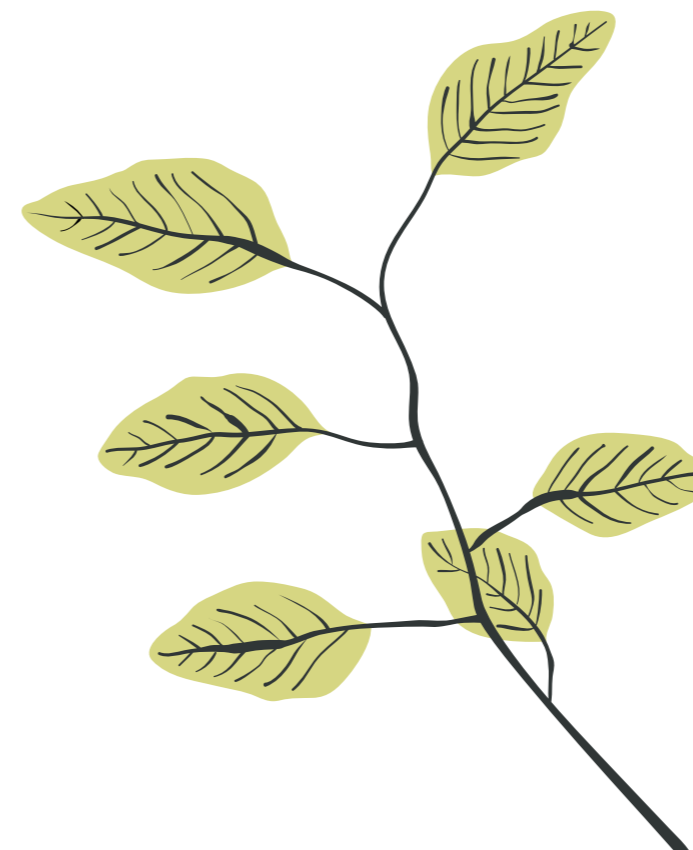
Council has already committed to becoming a net zero emissions organisation by 2022 through its Zero Net Emissions Plan. Council will pave the way for strong climate action across the community, as it achieves its corporate emissions reduction goal 14 years ahead of the community-wide 2036 target.

Council will not stop here, with more ambitious plans to pursue further reductions in its corporate emissions beyond the 2022 net zero emissions target year. In recognition of the importance to keep 1.5°C alive, Council will ramp up its action by:

- Employing best practice emissions accounting and reporting approaches
- Identifying opportunities to further reduce corporate emissions from sources previously excluded from reporting boundaries
- Complying Council's emissions inventory with Climate ActiveSM by 2026
- Reducing reliance on offsetting by continuing to reduce Council's residual emissions
- Creating local opportunities for accredited carbon offsetting and draw-down on public land
- Using Council's influence in procurement processes to drive down emissions of our delivery partners.

“Climate change action is Council's responsibility too. To ignore climate change is plain negligent.”

Quote from online consultation



This page

The City of Whittlesea's first electric vehicle charging station was installed in Whittlesea township in 2021.

Net Zero Municipality

The 'carbon budget' concept is what climate science has determined is necessary to avoid catastrophic climate change. A calculation of our city's science-based emissions reduction target has revealed that our city would need to reduce its emissions by 5.38 per cent each year to stay within 'budget' and achieve net zero emissions by 2036.^{xv} This target is aligned with the 1.5°C Paris temperature goal, reflective of the latest climate science and the most recent climate commitment momentum to keep 1.5°C alive.

The 2036 net zero target is reflective of the true scale and speed of emissions reduction required to avoid catastrophic climate change.

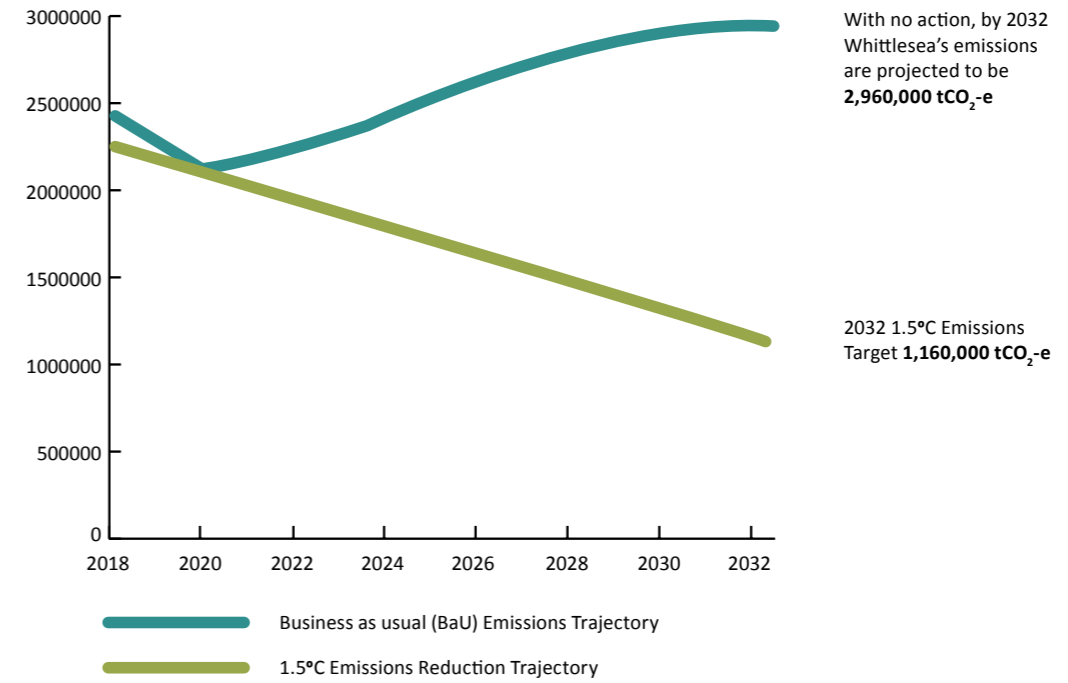
Transition to net zero emissions is a shared responsibility. Different levels of government, business and the community all have a role to play. As a community leader, Council is committed to driving collective action and whole-of-municipality efforts through leveraging our roles as the enabler, facilitator, and advocate to support community emissions reduction.

Where our corporate emissions target comes in. 1% Council Direct Control. Council's main role is as Enabler, Facilitator, and Advocate.



Our emissions reduction pathway to 2032

City of Whittlesea Emissions Reduction Pathway to 2032





Our priority areas for action

Priority 1: Renewable energy and energy efficiency

Why is this important?

Electricity and gas consumption is our city's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 81 per cent of our total municipal emissions (electricity 64 per cent and gas 17 per cent). Reducing this stationary energy use and switching to renewable energy sources are our biggest emissions reduction opportunities.

Residential, industrial, and commercial sectors all contribute to this stationary energy emission, with most coming from the industrial sector (47 per cent of our emissions from stationary energy across electricity and gas). With almost half (46 per cent) of our city's emissions being electricity use by industry and commerce, there is great potential for local businesses to make big impacts by increasing renewable energy use, improving energy efficiency, and phasing out gas. Households account for more than half of total emissions for gas.

In July 2022, the Victorian Government released its *Gas Substitution Roadmap*, which details regulatory and policy reform to shift away from fossil gas and towards renewable energy alternatives. Households and businesses in Victoria will have more choice to cut energy bills and emissions through a range of initiatives that aim to remove barriers to all-electric homes and new developments, as well as incentives for energy upgrades and electrification.

Priorities for action

Eliminate stationary energy emissions in Council operations

- Continue participating in the Victorian Energy Collaboration Power Purchase Agreement for 100 per cent renewable electricity
- Continue delivering the Solar Scale Up, energy efficiency, and streetlight bulk replacement programs
- Phase out gas in Council's existing buildings
- Ensure all future assets are energy efficient and energy needs are sourced from renewable fuel types

Support the community to adopt renewable energy and improve energy efficiency

- Raise community awareness and develop community leadership on energy transition and energy efficiency
- Assist businesses and residents to adopt renewable energy and improve energy efficiency through programs, such as the Environmental Upgrade Agreements
- Increase community and business implementation of zero emissions and climate resilient developments through the planning scheme
- Support businesses and not-for-profit organisations to access renewable energy Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs)

Promote zero emissions buildings through advocacy and partnership

- Advocate for increased standards to achieve zero emissions and climate resilient developments
- Support retrofitting programs to improve existing housing stock, particularly for the most disadvantaged people in the community
- Work with developers to implement zero emissions buildings
- Work with developers to promote electric-only suburbs
- Advocate to other levels of government for retrofitting existing buildings for a net zero emissions and climate resilient future.

Pillar 2: Climate Resilience

Our communities, businesses, and environments are resilient to the changing climate.

Climate resilient communities and businesses

Our climate is already changing as we face increased risks of bushfire, extreme heat, storm, drought, and flood. Urban heat island effects are exacerbated, posing serious health risks to our community. It is imperative to support our communities and businesses and help them build resilience and adaptive capacity. We will enhance our city's tree canopy cover to reduce the risk of extreme heat and make our open space cooler and safer during periods of extended heat. We will help communities and businesses to better understand and prepare for climate change impacts. We will also advance Council's understanding and planning for climate risks so that we can continue to effectively service our community in a changing climate.

Climate resilient built environment and infrastructure

Climate change threatens the resilience of the built environment, the integrity of its assets, and ability to provide reliable services. We will ensure that our built environment and infrastructure are designed, constructed, and maintained to support safe and healthy communities in a changing climate. We will collaborate with relevant partners to promote climate resilience of new precincts, growth areas and suburbs, and retrofitting of existing infrastructure and buildings. We will also discourage new settlement in areas prone to extreme natural hazards in the Green Wedge.

Climate resilient natural environment and biodiversity

As a leading cause of the biodiversity crisis, climate change presents as a major threat to our city's natural environment and ecosystems. Increasing climate resilience of our local natural environment and biodiversity also helps maintain clean air and water, and improves physical and mental wellbeing. We will continue to deliver our tree, shrub and understory planting programs for better conservation and biodiversity outcomes. We will improve our understanding and knowledge of local impacts of climate change and deliver management actions to improve our local natural environment and biodiversity, and also support the community to contribute.

“ I think the biodiversity in wetlands are decreasing because of climate change and human intervention. ”

Quote from the Community Plan survey

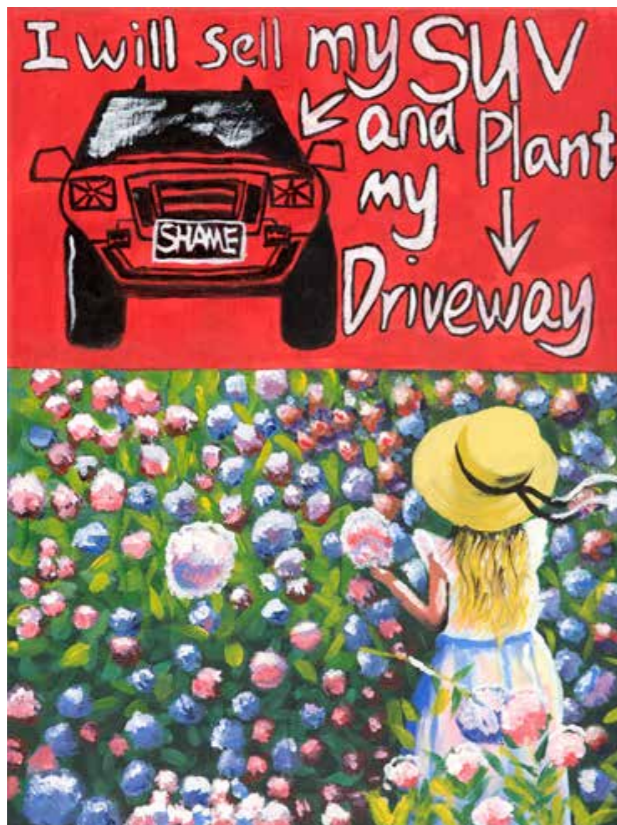




Priority 2: Sustainable and active transport

Why is this important?

On-road transport is 15 per cent of our total municipal emissions, making it our city's second biggest source of greenhouse emissions. Reliance on cars is high with many local residents needing to travel elsewhere for work.^{xvi} Therefore, there are great opportunities to reduce transport emissions through sustainable and active transport initiatives. In 2020-2021, the Covid-19 pandemic led to a temporary decline in transportation emissions because of lockdown and work-from-home, and more people walking and cycling. Great opportunities exist to take advantage of these everyday changes in routine for the longer lasting benefits to reduce emissions and create healthier, more active communities.



Credit: Yuhan Shi, City of Whittlesea's 'Collectively Caring for Climate' Project, 2020.



Priorities for action

Reduce Council's emissions from transport

- Transition Council fleet and plant to zero emissions
- Encourage Council staff to use active travel modes and/or public transport for work commute.

Provide opportunities for the community to adopt sustainable and active modes of transport

- Seek opportunities for planning and delivery of active transport infrastructure to enable greater use of sustainable and active transport by the community, including through early incorporation of blue-green infrastructure
- Provide assistance and streamlining of electric vehicle (EV) charge point installation
- Encourage community uptake of EVs through education, planning mechanisms, bulk buys, preferential parking
- Explore on-demand ride share solutions to reduce car usage and facilitate installation of carshare infrastructure
- Provide incentives, training, education, and support for active transport including walking, bike riding, E-bikes, and E-scooters
- Ensure new developments offer early access to sustainable forms of transportation.

Promote sustainable and active transport through advocacy and partnership

- Advocate to the state government to provide all residents access to accessible, affordable and convenient forms of public transport options throughout the City
- Undertake behaviour change campaigns to encourage more people to use public transport in the municipality
- Partner with businesses and organisations to support community shuttle buses
- Partner with other Northern Region councils to develop a community wide EV transition plan to guide and support the changing fuel source of vehicles
- Support initiatives to create 20-minute neighbourhoods by collaborating with relevant partners.



Priority 3: Sustainable farming practice and carbon sequestration

Why is this important?

Carbon removal technologies will be essential to remain within the 1.5°C threshold, according to the most recent Climate Change Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). To achieve net zero emissions, carbon removal is crucial to counterbalance hard-to-abate residual emissions.^{xvii} Put simply, we need to absorb or remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, while reducing emissions. Sustainable implementation of mitigation options in the AFOLU sector (agriculture, forestry and other land use) can deliver large-scale emissions reductions and enhanced removals. AFOLU carbon sequestration options, if done properly, can also deliver co-benefits for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, food and water security, livelihoods and land use rights of Aboriginal peoples and local communities. As an interface local government area with 60 per cent of its land being Green Wedge, the City of Whittlesea has great potential to capitalise on carbon sequestration opportunities through sustainable farming practice and vegetation cover enhancement.



Priorities for action

- Support mass revegetation opportunities within the city through current and emerging offset programs
- Establish better understanding of carbon sequestration potential of our city by undertaking study on carbon storage potential of our blue-green infrastructure
- Support landowners and local farmers in adopting sustainable farming practice, exploring carbon sequestration potentials, and seeking external funding opportunities
- Demonstrate and highlight sustainable agricultural best practice land management and use them as an education tool
- Partner with landowners and other government agencies to improve soil health
- Avoid and minimise the removal of established trees, native vegetation and important habitats.





Priority 4: Low waste and circular economy

Why is this important?

While only representing a minor source of our city’s municipal emissions (3 per cent of the total municipal emissions), the waste sector is a major contributor to methane emissions. Methane is a greenhouse gas far more potent than carbon dioxide as its global warming potential is more than 28 times higher than carbon dioxide when averaged over 100 years.^{xviii} Methane stays in the atmosphere for about nine years, which means that any action taken to reduce methane emissions today would bring rapid and significant results. Victoria recently passed new laws aimed at facilitating a circular economy, transitioning away from a linear model of production and consumption. The new *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021* provides the foundation for transition to a circular economy, and strengthened regulation of the waste and recycling sector. The circular economy approach has great mitigation potential by maximising the use of existing assets while reducing dependence on new raw materials and minimising waste.



Credit: Lillian Ormandy, City of Whittlesea’s ‘Collectively Caring for Climate’ Project, 2020



Priorities for action

- Continue implementing the *Rethinking Waste Plan*
- Support the development of circular economy in the municipality
- Attract suitable business types for the circular economy
- Advocate and partner with other organisations to drive broader shift to the low waste and circular economy
- Continue sustainable procurement of goods and services by Council and encourage sustainable procurement for businesses and community
- Continue using recycled and sustainable materials for Council projects and services where available.



Priority 5: Climate resilient communities and businesses

Why is this important?

In a changing climate, our communities and businesses are increasingly faced with extreme weather events including extreme heat, bushfire, grassfire, storm, flood, and drought. Preparing for these risks is the best way to protect our community.

Climate change impacts disproportionately affect vulnerable communities. People on low incomes for example, are more likely to be trapped in energy debt, deprived of basic energy needs or at risk of service disconnection, making them particularly vulnerable to extreme heat. Women are also at greater risk both during and after a climatic disaster as the climate risk is multiplied by women’s economic vulnerability. Family violence against women also increases during and after extreme climatic events such as heatwaves and bushfires due to high household tension, stress and trauma experienced by perpetrators, and women being forced to spend more time with perpetrators. Statistics show that 21.5 per cent of our city’s total households are considered low income (earning less than \$500 per week), significantly higher than 12.8 per cent of Greater Melbourne. Climate change also affects business productivity with supply chain disruption, asset and equipment damage and increased production costs. Our major economic sectors, such as health and social services, manufacturing, construction, and agriculture are expected to be most affected. It is critical that our communities and businesses are supported to enhance their resilience to climate change.



Priorities for action

- Continue implementing actions from the *Greening Whittlesea Plan* to help the community adapt to a changing climate
- Continue to support and improve community access to sustainable green open spaces
- Manage and mitigate identified climate risks for Council assets, services, and operations to ensure continuous delivery of service to our community
- Complete flood mapping for the entire municipality
- Assist the community to reduce heat risk through prioritisation of equitable tree planting and green cover enhancement
- Support communities and businesses to better understand and prepare for localised climate change impacts and to implement potential solutions through education, technical and financial assistance
- Support local food security, local agribusinesses, and the visitor economy.





Priority 6: Climate resilient built environment and infrastructure

Why is this important?

Our homes and buildings, neighbourhoods and suburbs, and the supporting infrastructure and services form our built environment. In the face of increased climate risk, climate resilient built environment and infrastructure can save lives, reduce trauma, and minimise economic damage from disasters and the associated recovery costs. Our city is one of Melbourne's largest and fastest growing municipalities, expected to home more than 150,000 new residents between 2020 and 2040. While the rapid population growth and urbanisation present major environmental challenges, our city has a unique opportunity to embed sustainability principles right throughout the strategic master planning process and into every aspect of the way new precincts operate, creating new, zero emissions, and climate resilient residential communities as well as future proof infrastructure.



Priorities for action

- Continue to implement the local environmentally sustainable design policies within the Whittlesea Planning Scheme and the development approval process
- Continue to embed sustainable and zero emission design into Council open spaces and leisure facilities
- Embed climate resilience across Council policies, strategies, plans, initiatives, design guidelines and technical specifications
- Continue to implement the Sustainable Subdivision Framework
- Partner with relevant bodies to establish and showcase climate resilient neighbourhoods
- Retrofit existing buildings and infrastructure to increase climate resilience
- Ensure our built environment is designed, built, and/or retrofitted to support blue-green infrastructure in the long term
- Support the community with information, education, resources, and/or funding for climate resilient home design and retrofit
- Advocate for updated building standards to improve energy efficiency and reduce exposure to climate risks
- Discourage new settlements in areas prone to extreme natural hazards
- Encourage the development of climate resilient built environment and infrastructure
- Improve drought resilience for public open spaces by providing access to alternative water supplies and construction materials.



Priority 7: Climate resilient natural environment and biodiversity

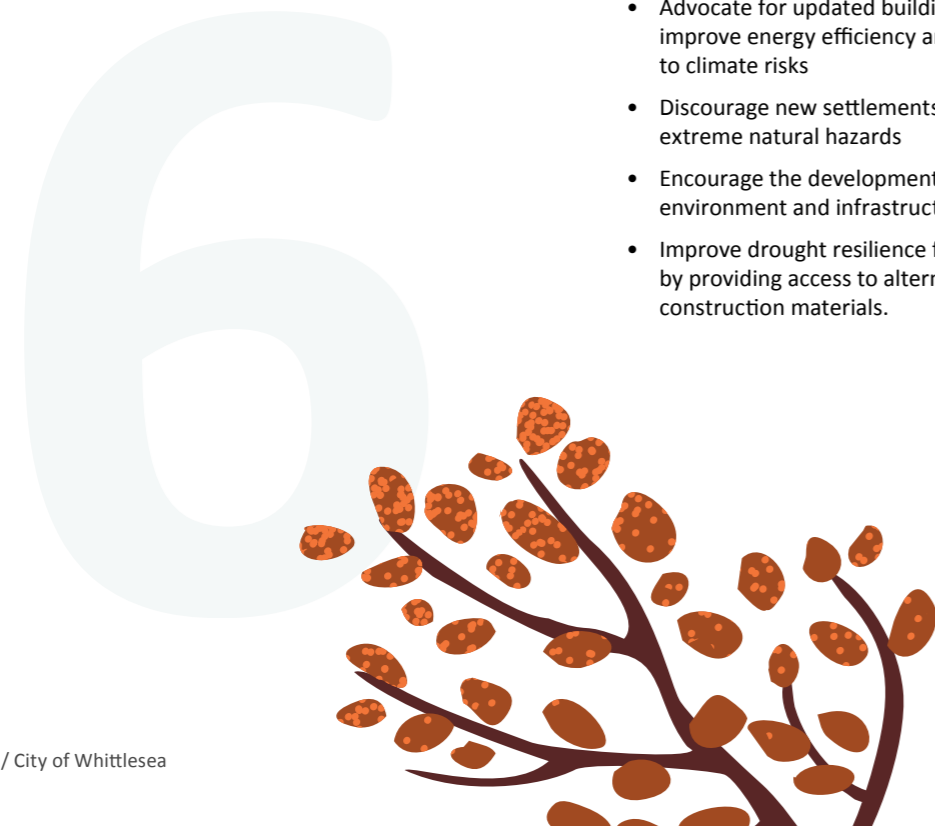
Why is this important?

Fundamental to human health and wellbeing, our city's precious natural environment is home to unique species and cultural heritage. It provides some of our most basic needs including clean air and water, productive soil, pollination, and flood mitigation. Our natural environment also has great potential for initiatives which remove carbon from the atmosphere, such as carbon sequestration. Climate change is predicted to be one of the greatest long-term threats to this natural environment, with potential irreversible damage to ecosystems and biodiversity. There will be a wide range of impacts from climate change such as higher temperatures and droughts, increased fire frequency and intensity, changes in soil moisture and hydrology, food supply, and flowering and interactions between species. To help species and ecosystems cope with climate change, we also need to address the broad threats facing our natural environment. Climate resilience is part of environmental/ecological resilience of our environment, for which keeping a balance between ecosystem and human services is a significant parameter that Council continues to focus on. Achieving climate resilience for our natural environment requires major contributions from our community as the natural environment system spans public and private land. Council only manages 13.34 per cent of our city's land, which means other public and private landowners will need to play a major role in caring for and restoring our biodiversity.



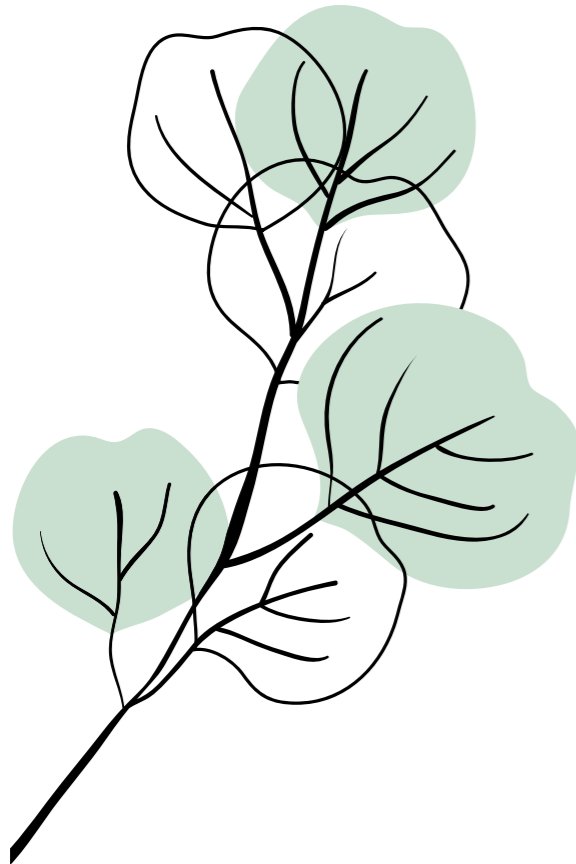
Priorities for action

- Continue managing and enhancing our tree canopy and green cover by improving retention, improving health and lifespan of Council trees and green cover and increasing community stewardship
- Increase climate resilience, usability and adaptability of open space network
- Increase resilience of Council's city forest portfolio through selection of species to withstand storm events, drought and increased temperatures
- Better understand impacts of climate change on our local species, including identifying the role of complementary ecological land uses in biodiversity and climate resilience of our local species
- Identify and undertake management works to protect and improve the outlook of our local species against climate change across land tenures
- Reduce and eliminate existing threats to biodiversity to improve resilience to a changing climate
- Increase climate resilience and adaptability of our conservation areas through selection of species and genotypes
- Encourage community contribution to building climate resilience of our local natural environment, trees and biodiversity through education and collaboration
- Partner with landowners and other government agencies to improve soil health.



Our principles

Our community and stakeholders told us that our transition to sustainable, net zero, and climate resilient future needs to be collaborative, inclusive, and equitable with a focus on at risk areas, groups and industries. These principles set the foundation necessary for such a transition.



All level leadership

Everyone plays a role in climate action, and Council's is to lead, support and facilitate municipal wide collaboration.

Everyone shares the responsibility for environmental sustainability and responding to climate change. While committed to lead by example, Council recognises the significance of community and business leadership. Council will take the lead and develop leadership at all levels in the following ways:

- Further reduce Council's corporate emissions and seek opportunities to strengthen Council's adaptive capacity in addressing climate risks
- Establish a corporate Environmental Sustainability Committee to support sustainable environment initiatives and embed climate change responses into Council decision making
- Progress opportunities for carbon sequestration and carbon-positive developments – which draw down historical emissions or emissions from sectors which currently have limited technology available to switch to low carbon emissions
- Incorporate climate change responses, risks and costs into decision making and financial planning, and advocate for such incorporation to the state government
- Embed environmental principles across the organisation, and provide more internal training and staff updates to ensure different departments contribute to delivering sustainability outcomes through their areas
- Provide capacity building and networking opportunities to foster knowledge sharing and collaboration with landowners, businesses, industries, and other organisations
- Continue to partner with NAGA to create a zero carbon society and provide maximum protection against climate change impacts across municipal boundaries
- Encourage sustainable procurement across Council, selecting products that generate economic, social and environmental benefits whenever it is practicable and achieves value for money.

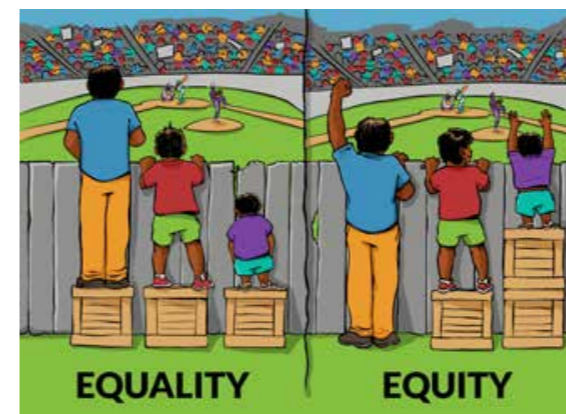


Fairness and equity

We apply an equity lens across the municipality and population groups in development and implementation of climate change initiatives.

The City of Whittlesea is a large municipality with a diversity of demographics and geography. A place-based approach will enable Council planning, service and infrastructure delivery to be responsive to the distinct needs and aspirations of local communities. It is important to be respectful of different views of the community, as well as making sure the way we communicate about climate change issues with our community is accessible. Everyone is impacted by climate change, water quality/availability issues, lack of access to nature, habitat and species declines, however in different ways and to different extents. It is important to recognise that specific needs and priorities for action may vary across the municipality and our population. We will ensure an equitable transition to a net zero and climate resilient future through:

- Effective community programs that are accessible for all sections of the community
- Application of place-based and equity approaches across all our work, so the different needs of our communities are considered
- Prioritisation of adaptation actions for the most vulnerable people in areas more exposed to climate risk
- Enabling and supporting local environmental leadership, for example citizen advocacy bodies, scholarship, grants and Climate and Environmental awards programs.



Credit: Interaction Institute for Social Change
Artist: Angus Maguire.



Aboriginal empowerment

We empower Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to create self-determined actions to support the natural and built environment. We learn from Aboriginal communities, integrate Aboriginal knowledge into our responses to climate change and provide opportunities for meaningful partnership.

Aboriginal communities' traditional ecological knowledge about the natural world can play a key role in our natural resource management and responses to climate change. There is much to learn from Aboriginal communities who have cared for Country for thousands of years. Aboriginal people practiced integrated land stewardship, meeting cultural objectives such as supporting the growth of culturally important plants and animals, improving and securing water supplies, and providing shelter for communities. It is important to enable Aboriginal self-determination through genuine, meaningful partnerships with Traditional Owners. We will work together with Aboriginal communities and incorporate their knowledge and world view in the fight against biodiversity decline and the climate crisis by:

- Engaging with the Traditional Owners and registered Aboriginal Parties about the land, water and sky of our city, with the aim of deepening our understanding of the ways in which Aboriginal cultural values and knowledge are linked to ecology and the environment
- Coordinating climate actions and land management priorities to align with Wurundjeri and Taungurung Country Plans and other position statements
- Working with Aboriginal communities to increase broad community's awareness of traditional land management and climate resilience practices through education and engagement programs
- Exploring mechanisms to establish ongoing relationships with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal owned and controlled organisations for long term and coordinated collaboration and partnership.

Implementation and monitoring

Implementation summary

Implementation Category	Anticipated Timeframe	Delivery Responsibility	Key Partners for Success			Links to Priority Areas for Action							Links to Principles		
			Other levels of government	Business and industry	Community										
Pillar One: Net Zero Council															
100% renewable electricity	O	Council				●						●		●	
Energy efficiency in Council buildings and public lighting	S	Council				●						●		●	
Climate Active Certification	M	Council				●	●	●	●					●	
Zero emissions Council fleet and plant	M	Council	✓				●							●	
Electrification of Council buildings	L	Council	✓			●						●		●	
Pillar One: Net Zero Community															
Switch to renewable energy and improved energy efficiency	M	Council	✓	✓	✓	●					●	●			●
Zero emissions buildings and developments	M	Council	✓	✓	✓	●					●	●			●
Electric vehicle ready infrastructure and developments	M	Council	✓	✓			●				●				●
Zero emissions and active transport	M	Council	✓	✓	✓		●				●				●
Generation of local offsets	M	Council	✓	✓	✓			●					●	●	●
Transition to a circular economy	L	Council	✓	✓	✓				●				●		●
Pillar Two: Climate Resilience															
Mitigation and management of Council's climate risk	S	Council									●	●	●	●	●
Climate resilient communities and businesses	L	Council	✓	✓	✓	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Climate resilient built environment and infrastructure	L	Council	✓	✓	✓	●	●		●	●	●			●	●
Climate resilient natural environment and biodiversity	L	Council	✓	✓	✓			●			●		●	●	●

Notes:
 Anticipated Timeframe: O: Ongoing; S: Short term (1-2 years); M: Medium term (3-5 years); L: Long terms (6-10 years).
 Priority Areas for Action: Priority 1: Renewable energy and energy efficiency; Priority 2: Sustainable and active transport;
 Priority 3: Sustainable farming practice and carbon sequestration; Priority 4: Low waste and circular economy;
 Priority 5: Climate resilient communities and businesses; Priority 6: Climate resilient built environment and infrastructure;
 Priority 7: Climate resilient natural environment and biodiversity.
 Principles: Principle 1: All level leadership; Principle 2: Fairness and equity; Principle 3: Aboriginal empowerment.



Monitoring progress

To ensure that our strategic directions and focus areas remain relevant for delivering impactful outcomes, this Climate Change Plan will be reviewed in 2027 and 2032, in line with the latest climate science, emissions profile and inventory updates, as well as new mitigation and adaptation technologies that become available.

The priorities for action outlined in this Climate Change Plan for the 2022-2024 period will be incorporated into the integrated Sustainable Environment Action Plan. The integrated Sustainable Environment Action Plan outlines the actions that Council is committed to delivering across the six themes, and how we will track our performance over time. Climate change is one of the six themes.

The Sustainable Environment Action Plan is a two-year plan, and will be renewed bi-annually in line with Council’s Community Plan and budget processes. The Climate Change Plan is a longer-term 10-year plan, therefore its actions will be reviewed and incorporated into the renewed Sustainable Environment Action Plan every two years.

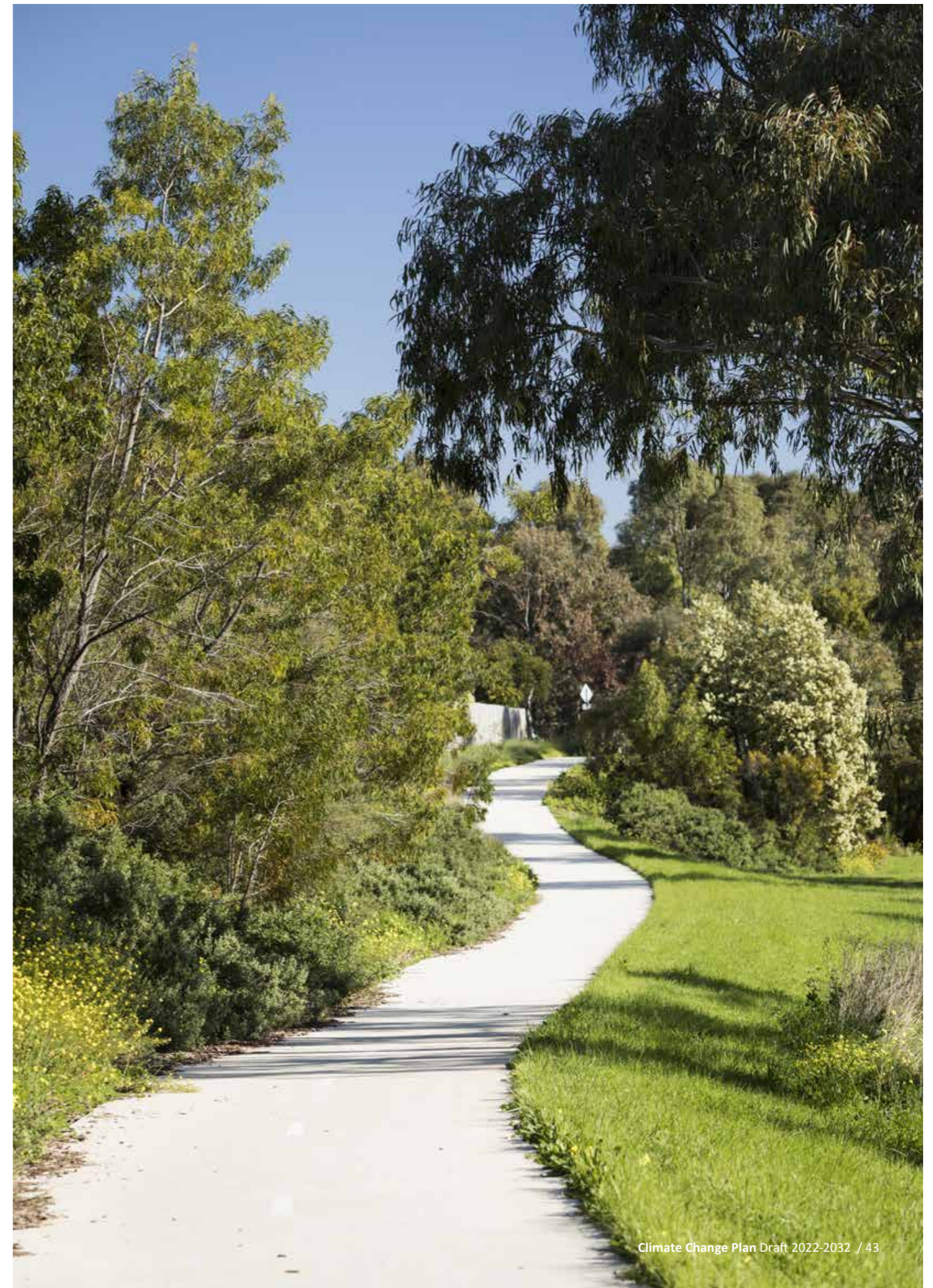
Indicators are identified to track the progress towards the outcomes identified in the Sustainable Environment Strategy, which include those related to climate change, as highlighted below.

Pillar One: Net Zero

- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Reduced energy consumption
- Increase in uptake of renewable energy
- Increase in sustainable transport use
- Reduced waste and litter generation
- Increased sustainable procurement
- Improved collaboration and partnership

Pillar Two: Climate Resilience

- Increased Council operations and services considering climate risk
- Increased tree canopy cover
- Improved biodiversity protection and management
- Reduced areas of heat risk hotspots
- Decreased properties affected by floods
- Improved connection between Traditional Owners and Country
- Increase in the number of sustainable developments



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Glossary

Aboriginal – Throughout this document, the term ‘Aboriginal’ is taken to include people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. ‘Aboriginal’ is used in preference to ‘Indigenous’, ‘First Nations’, and ‘Koori’.

Active transport – Modes of transport that involves walking, cycling, scooting or other active ways of getting to and from a location as an alternative to motorised transport.

Adaptation – A process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects in order to moderate harm or take advantage of beneficial opportunities. It is changes that we make to live with the impacts of climate change.

Biodiversity – The number and variety of living things on the planet. It is the mix of plants, animals, and other organisms that make up landscapes from deserts to oceans.

Blue-green infrastructure – Natural landscape elements which are harnessed by humanity as infrastructure and use water as a resource to sustain itself and flourish.

Built environment – The places and structures built or developed for human occupation, use and enjoyment.

Carbon budget – The estimated cumulative amount of carbon dioxide emissions to limit temperature rise to a given level, and the distribution of this amount to the municipal level based on considerations of fair share and equity.

Carbon dioxide equivalent – A metric measure used to compare the emissions from various greenhouse gases on the basis of their global warming potential, by converting amounts of other gases to the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide with the same global warming potential.

Carbon offset – Compensation for emissions at one source by either avoiding and/or reducing emissions elsewhere, or removing carbon from the atmosphere.

Carbon sequestration – The removal of carbon from the atmosphere by capturing or storing it through biological, chemical and physical processes.

Circular economy – A model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible.

Climate anxiety – Negative emotions that people experience in relation to climate change and government responses to climate change.

Climate change – Long term change in global or regional climate patterns attributed largely to the increased levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, particularly carbon dioxide, produced by the use of fossil fuels.

Climate resilience – The ability to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, absorb, recover from disruptive effects of climate change, and make transformative changes if necessary.

Climate risk – A result of the interaction of hazard, exposure, and vulnerability. Hazard refers to the potential occurrence of a natural or human-induced physical events or trend that may cause loss and damage. Exposure refers to the presence of people, livelihoods, species, ecosystems, services and resources, infrastructure, and assets in places and settings that could be adversely affected. Vulnerability refers to the propensity or predisposition to be adversely affected, which is determined by sensitivity or susceptibility to harm and lack of capacity to cope and adapt.

Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) – Design that seeks to improve building performance, reduce environmental impact, resource use and waste, and create healthy environments for occupants and users.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) – Gases such as carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and others that cause the greenhouse effect by increasing the amount of solar radiation absorbed in the atmosphere, leading to global temperature rise.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – The United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change. It provides regular assessment of the scientific basis of climate change, its impacts of future risks, and options for adaptation and mitigation.

Mitigation – A human intervention to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. It is what we do to stop climate change from getting worse.

Natural environment – Ecosystems including animals and plants, and the interactions they have with each other and their physical environment.

Net Zero (emissions) – A state where greenhouse gas emissions are produced but balanced out with equivalent offsets. Net zero carbon dioxide emissions is interchangeably used with carbon neutral or carbon neutrality.

Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) – An agreement between an electricity provider and a buyer for the sale of energy, used to secure a large amount of renewable energy at an agreed price over an extended period.

Renewable energy – Energy generated from renewable sources such as solar, wind, geothermal, and hydropower, in contrast to the energy from fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas, or oil.

Stationary energy – Combustion of fuels used in electricity generation, in the manufacturing, construction and commercial sectors, and in other sources like domestic heating.

Tree canopy cover – The proportion of the municipality covered by the uppermost trees or branches of trees in a forest, forming an almost continuous layer of foliage. The topmost layer of bioactivity in a forest setting.

Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) – An approach to planning and design of urban areas to make use of stormwater as a resource and reduce the harm it causes to our natural environment.

Zero emissions vehicles – Vehicles which do not use petroleum fuels, and therefore do not emit greenhouse gas emissions while operating, such as battery electric vehicles with no tailpipe, and hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles.

20-minute neighbourhood – A concept about ‘living locally’, which gives people the ability to meet most of their daily needs within a 20-minute return walk from home, with access to safe cycling and local transport options.



Endnotes

- ⁱ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). (2021). *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis – Summary for Policy Makers*, Working Group 1 Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the IPCC.
- ⁱⁱ Coates, L. et al. (2014). Exploring 167 years of vulnerability: An examination of extreme heat events in Australia 1844-2010, *Environmental Science & Policy*, 42, pp33-44.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Steffen, W., Hughes, L., and Perkins, S. (2014). Heatwaves: Hotter, Longer, More Often, Climate Council, available online at: [9901f6614a2cac7b2b888f55b4dff9cc.pdf](https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/9901f6614a2cac7b2b888f55b4dff9cc.pdf) ([climatecouncil.org.au](https://www.climatecouncil.org.au))
- ^{iv} Ibid.
- ^v Hickman, C., et al. (2021). Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: a global survey, *Lancet Planet Health*, 5: e863-73. This large-scale global investigation of climate anxiety, first of its kind, surveyed 10,000 children and young people aged 16-25 years in ten countries (1,000 respondents in each country) including Australia.
- ^{vi} The Paris Agreement was negotiated at COP21 in 2015, the 21st Conference of the Parties for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). As a legally binding international treaty on climate change, it was adopted by 196 Parties.
- ^{vii} The Glasgow Climate Pact was negotiated at COP26 in 2021.
- ^{viii} Climate Action Tracker. (2021). Glasgow's 2030 credibility gap: net zero's lip service to climate action. Available online at: climateactiontracker.org/publications/glasgows-2030-credibility-gap-net-zeros-lip-service-to-climate-action/
- ^{ix} Tandon, A. (2021). Avoiding Temperature 'Overshoot' Reduced Multiple Climate Change Risks, Say Scientists, *CarbonBrief*.
- ^x City of Whittlesea. (2021). Climate Change Projections and Scenarios Report.
- ^{xi} IPCC. (2022). *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability: Summary for Policymakers*, Working Group 2 Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the IPCC.
- ^{xii} The community emissions profile for the City of Whittlesea is based on the 'Snapshot Community Climate Tool' developed by Ironbark Sustainability and Beyond Zero Emissions, which provides a national database of community emissions for all local governments in Australia. [Whittlesea, VIC :: Snapshot \(snapshotclimate.com.au\)](https://www.snapshotclimate.com.au)
- ^{xiii} The shares across businesses and households in our municipal emissions are based on the consumption of electricity and natural gas. Emissions from waste and transport are not broken down into sectors.
- ^{xiv} Climate Active is best practice in greenhouse gas reporting in Australia. We choose to align with the standard rather than complying with it because we believe that the costs of achieving the certification can be used in other climate change initiatives that may make bigger impacts.
- ^{xv} City of Whittlesea. (2021). *1.5°C Science-Derived Target for Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, prepared by Ironbark Sustainability.
- ^{xvi} City of Whittlesea. (2022). *Strong Local Economy Strategy*.
- ^{xvii} IPCC. (2022). *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change: Summary for Policymakers*, Working Group 3 Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the IPCC.
- ^{xviii} Canadell, P. et al. (2020). Emissions of methane – a greenhouse gas far more potent than carbon dioxide – are rising dangerously, *the Conversation*, [Emissions of methane – a greenhouse gas far more potent than carbon dioxide – are rising dangerously \(theconversation.com\)](https://www.theconversation.com/emissions-of-methane-a-greenhouse-gas-far-more-potent-than-carbon-dioxide-are-rising-dangerously)

Inside back cover photo:
One of Whittlesea's iconic River Redgums.



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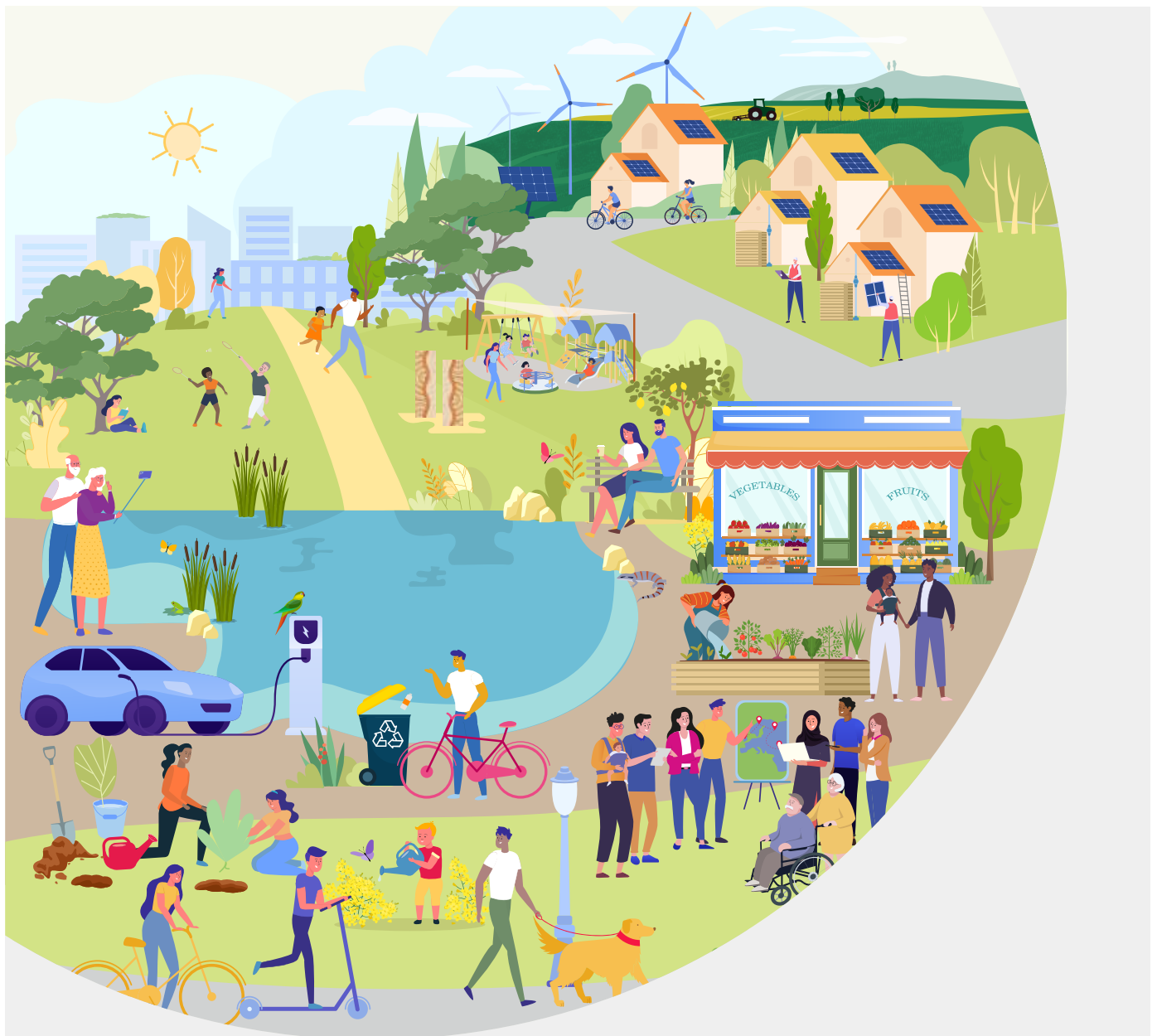
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Sustainable Environment Action Plan Draft 2022–2024



1. Introduction

The Sustainable Environment Action Plan 2022-2024 (Action Plan) sets out the actions Council will focus on delivering in the first two years of the Sustainable Environment Strategy 2022-2032 (Strategy).

This includes both the ongoing services that support the delivery of the Goal 4 outcomes and new actions that support specific program and initiatives.

It is made up of the key actions from the six long-term thematic plans that underpin the Sustainable Environment Strategy. These six long-term plans cover the key focus areas related to environmental sustainability, namely, biodiversity, city forest (greening), climate change, Green Wedge, waste and recycling and water.

Community empowerment represents a cross-cutting element that enables us to deliver the outcomes identified for each of these six focus areas by delivering education and engagement programs for our community.

Majority of the actions listed in this Action Plan include actions that Council has already committed to for the delivery of Council's endorsed long-term plans as follows:

- Biodiversity Strategy 2019-2029
- Whittlesea Water For All 2020-2030
- Greening Whittlesea City Forest Strategy 2020-2040
- Rethinking Waste Plan 2021-2030

The Action Plan also includes proposed actions from the emerging Green Wedge Management Plan 2022-2032 and Climate Change Plan 2022-2032. (Notes: The Draft Green Wedge Management Plan was out for community consultation between 23 May and 3 July 2022, and is currently being finalised).

Actions are set out under each of the three key directions, the outcomes they are contributing to, and Council's role in delivering on each action. Outcomes are detailed further in the Sustainable Environment Strategy. An Action plan for every two years will be developed in line with Council's Community Plan and annual budget process. Actions listed in this document are subject to consideration in Council's annual budget process.

2. Council services

Council delivers important services that help achieve a sustainable environment.

Ensuring that council delivers these services in an effective and efficient manner is critical to achieving the outcomes listed within the Sustainable Environment Strategy for the whole community.

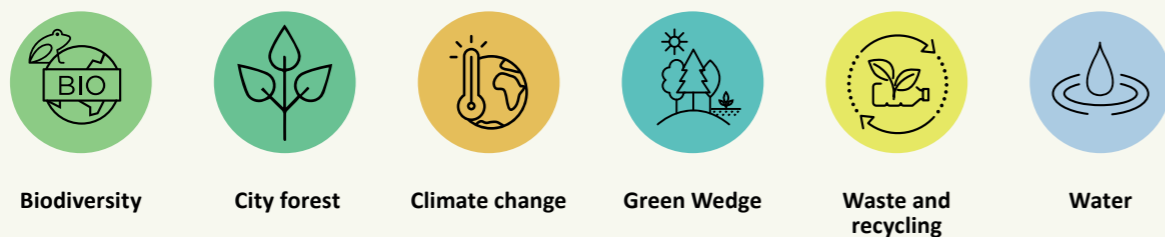
Council will work to continuously improve these services to ensure they met legislative requirements and community expectations.

Across all council services consideration and incorporation of corporate Environmental Sustainability must be considered.

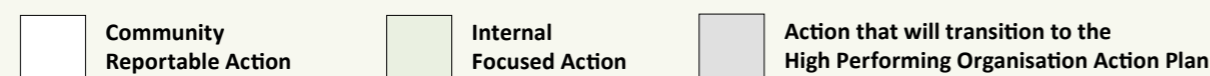
3. Council's role

Role	Aim	What Council may do?
Provider	To implement projects, programs and campaigns for use by residents and businesses for a sustainable environment.	Initiate campaigns, incentives and education programs.
Facilitator	To establish partnerships and collaborate with stakeholders, to foster collective action to contribute to environmental sustainability.	Partner with key stakeholders and provide contributions (funding, knowledge and expertise, networking opportunities) to roll out programs.
Advocate	To support broad systemic changes required for a sustainable future through promotion and influencing decision-making, rather than direct involvement.	Educate key stakeholders including other levels of government to address provision gaps, influence policy and decision making.

Focus Area key:



Priorities key:



4. Action Plan

Invitation for Partnership with Traditional Owners

Council recognises the rich history of environmental protection and custodianship of Traditional Owners of this land, waters and sky of the City of Whittlesea.

Council acknowledges that Traditional Owners have a different way of recognising Country. Western approaches to planning, land management and environmental protection can create fragments and divisions that are not reflective of Traditional Owner understandings.

Council acknowledges the recently released Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Landscapes Strategy and the integrated approach to empower Traditional Owners to lead planning and activate cultural knowledge and practices to manage Country.

Council acknowledges that supporting Traditional Owners to manage Country as a cultural landscape benefits people and benefits Country. Creating pathways for collaboration with Traditional Owners is critical for the success of all key directions and outcome areas within this action plan.

Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
		Biodiversity	City forest	Climate change	Green Wedge	Waste and recycling	Water
Partner with Traditional Owners to develop land management partnerships	Facilitator	●	●	●	●		●
Invite Traditional Owners to self-determine involvement and opportunities for collaboration and partnership within all sustainable environment actions	Facilitator	●	●	●	●	●	●
Coordinate environment, resource recovery, greening, water and climate actions to align with Wurundjeri and Taungurung Country Plans and self-determination	Facilitator	●	●	●	●	●	●
Work with Traditional Owners to understand traditional climate resilience practices and when appropriate facilitate opportunities for this to be shared with the local Aboriginal community and broader community	Facilitator	●	●	●	●		●
Partner with Traditional Owners to support the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage, improve land and water management and other Caring for Country practices in the Green Wedge	Facilitator	●	●	●	●		●



6 / City of Whittlesea

Key direction 1 Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
Outcome 1.1 Our landscapes, waters and species are protected, improved, and valued.							
Continue to manage population of Matted Flax-lily relocated from the Mernda Rail site	Provider	●	●	●	●		
Help our community learn and connect with the environment through the Nature Stewards Program	Provider	●	●	●	●		●
Advocate to protect the grassy eucalypt woodlands	Advocate	●	●	●	●		
Better protect conservation reserves through rezoning	Provider	●	●	●	●		
Map our biodiversity assets to help protect and enhance them throughout the planning process	Provider	●	●	●	●		
Renew and upgrade Peter Hopper Lake in Mill Park	Provider	●		●			●
Implement a Planning Scheme Amendment to better protect biodiversity, waterways and landscapes using appropriate zones and overlays	Provider	●	●	●	●		●
Advocate to ensure all conservation areas identified within the Urban Growth Boundary are appropriately protected and managed	Advocate	●	●	●			●
Develop a Biodiversity Planning Policy to ensure all new conservation reserves are handed over in an appropriate condition	Advocate	●	●	●			
Review all Council owned land for biodiversity and waterway values and ensure management and lease arrangements are appropriate	Provider	●	●	●	●		●

Key direction 1 Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
Outcome 1.1 Our landscapes, waters and species are protected, improved, and valued. (cont.)							
Ensure that all Council conservation reserves are managed effectively and support rare and threatened species conservation	Provider	●	●	●			
Continue long-term targeted fauna survey program within conservation reserves	Provider	●	●	●			●
Enhance and improve the management of conservation and tree assets on rural roadsides to manage native vegetation, remove priority weeds, improve habitat connectivity, and reduce fire risk	Provider	●	●	●	●		
Undertake a review of rural land, water and biodiversity incentives programs to maximise community and environmental benefits	Provider	●	●	●	●		
Undertake a review and develop a business case into urban biodiversity and greening to encourage residents, schools, community groups and early years services to maximise community and environmental benefits	Provider	●	●	●			●
Undertake a review of the water education program to ensure investment to maximise community and environmental benefits	Provider	●	●	●	●	●	●

Key direction 1 Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
Outcome 1.2 Our land management and land use are sustainable.							
Work with Traditional Owners to obtain Aboriginal cultural heritage permits for land management works in conservation reserves	Facilitator	●	●	●	●		●
Explore opportunities to generate local carbon sequestration offsets on Council owned and private land	Provider	●	●	●	●		●
Continue to lead the Local Government sector in utilising Smart Sensors and citizen science to monitor waterway and ecological health of our city	Provider	●	●	●	●		●
Advocate for effective regional kangaroo management across land tenures and diverse stakeholders	Advocate	●	●	●	●		
Continue to provide specialist support and advice to rural land managers that maximises environmental and community benefit and highlights the value of sustainable land management and improves soil health	Provider	●	●	●	●		●
Support opportunities for the Aboriginal community and broader community to learn from Traditional Owner practice and Care for Country	Facilitator	●	●	●	●		●
Outcome 1.3 Our natural environment and biodiversity are resilient to climate change.							
Model habitat connectivity to better understand impacts of fragmentation, urban growth and climate change on our biodiversity, and to inform our incentive programs, land management and planning scheme for better biodiversity outcomes	Provider	●	●	●	●		
Undertake study to understand the current and future carrying capacity of wildlife populations on Council owned and managed land	Provider	●	●	●	●		
Continue to partner with neighbouring councils to act and advocate for biodiversity and waterway health including but not limited to via the Merri Creek Management Committee, Darebin Creek Management Committee, Melbourne Strategic Assessment Local Government Liaison Group, Biodiversity Planning Network and Bushland Managers Network.	Facilitator	●	●	●			●



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Key direction 2 Climate ready



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
Outcome 2.1 Our city's green cover is enhanced to reduce the risk of extreme heat.							
Deliver the annual tree planting programs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main Roads and High Profile Streetscapes Planting Program - Parks Tree and Major Facilities Planting Program - Conservation Reserves Tree Planting Program - Residential Street Tree Renewal Planting Program 	Provider	●	●	●			●
Participate in Greening the North to develop regional initiatives to deliver greening and urban heat mitigation outcomes and advocate for the protection of existing and future canopy	Advocate	●	●	●	●		
Review planning controls and local laws and their enforcement to identify where tree and vegetation protection measures can be strengthened at all development stages. Implement findings of review	Provider	●	●				●
Advocate for an evidence-based review of setback requirements of service providers (e.g. AusNet Services) that limit canopy and vegetation planting	Advocate	●	●	●			
Undertake a review on the protection and management of publicly owned River Red Gums across the municipality to ensure their ongoing health in the landscape	Provider	●	●	●	●		
Develop 'shovel-ready' concepts and supporting business cases to anticipate funding and grant opportunities for greening initiatives across public and private land	Provider	●	●	●	●		
Develop a comprehensive Ten-Year Planting Program which addresses the recommendations from the equity focused health impact assessment.	Provider	●	●	●			
Develop a place-based guideline and approach to landscape planting programs across the city	Provider	●	●	●			●
Develop a green infrastructure policy to ensure canopy loss is compensated for within the city.	Provider	●	●	●			●

Key direction 2 Climate ready



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
Outcome 2.1 Our city's green cover is enhanced to reduce the risk of extreme heat. (cont.)							
Ensure all canopy cover targets are met in all Urban Design Frameworks, Integrated Community Facilities Planning, Public Space Planning and New Works Public Space projects	Provider	●	●	●			
Carry out an assessment of community behaviours, perceptions, and barriers regarding tree and green cover planting on private land, and review the effectiveness of previous incentive schemes given the findings	Provider	●	●	●	●		
Outcome 2.2 Our communities and businesses are supported to become climate resilient.							
Enhance understanding and knowledge about localised impacts of climate change and potential solutions including impacts on local food security and vulnerable groups	Provider			●	●		●
Deliver innovative, engaging and accessible education programs about climate risk and adaptation to communities and businesses	Provider		●	●			●
Develop a program to support vulnerable residents and communities to improve the sustainability, thermal comfort and efficiency of their homes	Provider			●			
Continue to partner with the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA) to achieve broad climate action across municipal boundaries	Facilitator	●	●	●			
Advocate to the state government for incorporation of climate change responses, risks and costs into decision making and financial planning	Advocate			●			
Develop and demonstrate environmental leadership in our community through a community environmental scholarship program and/or an awards program to recognise community achievements in environmental and climate action	Provider	●	●	●	●	●	●

Key direction 2 Climate ready



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
Outcome 2.3 Our built environment and infrastructure are built to support safe and healthy communities in a changing climate.							
Ensure that all developments are assessed using the Sustainable Subdivision Framework	Provider	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ensure the Planning Scheme discourages new settlements in areas prone to extreme natural hazards	Facilitator	●	●	●	●		●
Work with State Government to provide for future infrastructure and energy needs within the Green Wedge	Advocate		●	●	●		●
Evaluate emergency relief centres and other community facilities to make sure they are climate resilient	Provider			●			
Ensure that all Council design manuals address Environmentally Sustainable Design and climate change	Provider	●	●	●	●		●



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Key direction 3 Leaders in clean, sustainable living



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
Outcome 3.1 Our city becomes a net zero emissions municipality.							
Support our business community to improve the sustainability of their facilities using Environmental Upgrade Agreements	Facilitator			●			
Improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings and facilities including solar and lighting upgrades	Provider			●			
Continue to replace our streetlights with energy efficiency bulbs	Provider			●			
Support community renewable energy initiatives such as solar farms, micro-grids, and battery storages	Facilitator			●	●		
Advocate for access to renewable energy Power Purchase Agreements for businesses and non-for-profit organisations	Advocate			●			
Continue to partner with the Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) to advocate for increased standards to achieve zero emissions and climate resilient developments	Facilitator	●	●	●			●
Advocate to other levels of government for retrofitting existing buildings for a zero emissions and climate resilient future	Advocate	●	●	●			●
Ensure Council capital programs integrate active transport supporting 20-minute neighbourhoods	Provider			●			
Complete and commence implement the Walking and Cycling Plan to enable more use of sustainable and active transport by the community including increasing tree planting along connected open space and pathways	Provider		●	●			
Complete community wide EV Transition Plan and commence implementation	Provider			●			

Key direction 3 Leaders in clean, sustainable living



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
Outcome 3.1 Our city becomes a net zero emissions municipality. (cont.)							
Develop and implement a behaviour change campaign for the community to move towards more active and sustainable transport options, including investigating if incentives would assist in this transition and the use of community shuttle buses	Provider			●			
Work with local schools and education institutions to develop Green Travel Plans	Facilitator			●			
Advocate to the state government for more investment in more public transport options for the city	Advocate			●			
Continue participating in the Victorian Energy Collaboration Power Purchase Agreement for 100% renewable electricity	Provider			●			
Update and implement ESD standards for Council assets and facilities (i.e. Council ESD Guidelines for Council works)	Provider	●	●	●		●	●
Develop and implement a plan to eliminate gas use in Council facilities	Provider			●			
Work with Council services owners to analyse and implement service improvement that address climate risk, zero net emissions and environmental sustainability	Facilitator	●	●	●	●		●
Complete and commence implementation of a Council fleet and plant Net Zero Emissions transition plan	Provider			●			
Develop a program to encourage Council staff to use active travel modes and/or public transport for work commute	Provider			●			
Develop a roadmap to comply with Council corporate emissions inventory with Climate Active and implement roadmap to ensure compliance	Provider			●			

Key direction 3 Leaders in clean, sustainable living



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
Outcome 3.2 Our water resources are managed in an integrated way.							
Construct Wilton Vale Wetland Boardwalk in South Morang	Provider	●	●	●			●
Refurbish Janefield Wetland Boardwalk in Bundoora	Provider						●
Trial and demonstrate Integrated Water Management (IWM) initiatives in new Council buildings, facilities, and public realm projects	Provider	●	●	●			●
Develop a program to implement appropriate IWM responses and capital works actions in areas of flooding hotspots	Provider			●			●
Continue to participate in the Yarra IWM Plan and the Upper Merri Sub-catchment Plan and contribute to action delivery	Facilitator	●		●	●		●
Complete and implement the water service plan to ensure that Council is resourced appropriately to manage the water service	Provider	●					●
Ensure the Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) asset register is established in the Assetic system and is maintained and responds to the MUSIA project	Provider	●		●			●
Collaborate with Melbourne Water to undertake functional design of stormwater harvesting schemes at strategically relevant sites	Facilitator	●		●			●
Update of Council's WSUD/IWM guidelines and standards, to introduce and promote emerging trends in water management as well as improve on Council's future asset operations. Neighbourhood design manual/Engineering Design and Construction Manual	Provider	●		●			●
Ensure that the Council projects meet the Health Waterways Strategy Integrated Water Management Targets	Provider						●

Key direction 3 Leaders in clean, sustainable living



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
Outcome 3.3 Our city is low waste and transitions to a circular economy.							
Implement the Rethinking Waste Plan to support our community to become a leader in sustainable living	Provider			●		●	
Introduce a rebate program for reusable nappies, reusable sanitary products and composting tools	Provider			●		●	
Implement a glass recycling bin services as a fourth kerbside collection bin for residents, to further decrease waste to landfill and improve resource recovery	Provider			●		●	
Introduce an integrated waste policy that supports the community to understand how the waste charge is used, addresses organisational waste management approaches and ensures best practice waste service delivery	Provider			●		●	
Undertake a feasibility study on providing alternative residential bin sizes and changing the collection frequency	Provider			●		●	
Extend the food and garden waste service municipal wide	Provider			●		●	
Advocate to support our community and businesses to Rethink Waste and for investment in the circular economy	Advocate			●		●	

Key direction 3 Leaders in clean, sustainable living



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
Outcome 3.3 Our city is low waste and transitions to a circular economy. (cont.)							
Deliver innovative, engaging and accessible waste minimisation and resource recovery education programs to the community addressing contamination, service use and the container deposit scheme	Provider			●		●	
Advocate for the introduction of Right to Repair legislation to avoid generation of unnecessary waste and reduce embodied carbon in goods	Advocate			●		●	
Implement an annual contamination management plan to encourage the correct separation of waste	Provider			●		●	
Enhance the hard waste collection service	Provider			●		●	
Continue to encourage sustainable procurement across Council, selecting products that generate economic, social and environmental benefits whenever it is practical and achieves value for money	Facilitator			●		●	

Council Offices

25 Ferres Boulevard
South Morang VIC 3752

Email: info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

Website whittlesea.vic.gov.au

Postal address

City of Whittlesea Locked Bag
Bundoora MDC VIC 3083

Phone: 9217 2170

National Relay Service: 133 677
(ask for 9217 2170)

Connect with us in your
preferred language:

Free telephone interpreter service
 **131 450**

Sustainable Environment Strategy, Sustainable Environment Action Plan and Climate Change Action Plan

Communications & Engagement Plan



About the project			
Executive sponsor	Amanda Dodd		
Delivery team/department	Sustainable Environment/ Sustainable Organisation and Community		
Project contact	Min Jiang		
Communications Business Partner	Natalie Corbett		
Engagement Business Partner	George Tsetinis		
Project Cost			
Engagement budget (to cover pop-ups and activity materials)	\$1,000-1,500 (Note: the \$1,000 budget was planned for in the previous Climate Change Action Plan project for the 21/22 FY. As the C&E activities will take place in the 22/23 FY, there may be flexibility to go up to \$1,500 to accommodate new activities that were not factored in in the previous budget, but we were given advice to undertake, such as the Aboriginal consultation)		
GL Code			
Place precinct	Municipal wide		
Key deliverables and timings	Directors Approval 4 August ELT 16 August Council briefing 29 August Council Meeting 5 September Consultation period 6 September to 4 October 2022		
Whittlesea 2040 goal alignment	Sustainable environment High Performing Organisation		
Relationship to other projects/policies	There are seven strategies to be developed under the Integrated Planning Framework as Level 2 documents including the Sustainable Environment Strategy and Action Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Strong Local Economy Strategy and Action Plan (endorsed 2022) · Sustainable Environment Strategy and Action Plan (in development) · Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy and Action Plan (to be developed) · Connected Community Strategy and Action Plan (to be developed) · High Performing Organisation Strategy and Action Plan (to be developed) · Reconciliation Plan (to be developed) · Community Infrastructure Plan (to be developed) 		
Do ELT/Administrators need to review engagement plan?	Yes		
Plan approvals Project Manager: Department Manager/ Director:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Approved by: Min Jiang Amanda Dodd/ Debbie Wood</td> <td>Date approved:</td> </tr> </table>	Approved by: Min Jiang Amanda Dodd/ Debbie Wood	Date approved:
Approved by: Min Jiang Amanda Dodd/ Debbie Wood	Date approved:		

Sustainable Environment Strategy, Sustainable Environment Action Plan and Climate Change Action Plan
Communications & Engagement Plan



Engagement Coordinator: Unit Manager Public Affairs: Director: Executive Manager PA (if req'd)	Kirsten Richmond Sarah Oldman Janine Morgan	3.08.2022 4.08.2022 11.08.22
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Purpose of this plan

This plan outlines the communications and engagement activities to support development from draft to finalisation of the Sustainable Environment Strategy, Sustainable Environment Action Plan and Climate Change Plan.

Communications & Engagement Objectives

We seek to:

- Inform the local community of the project and its background and encourage them to share their feedback.
- Deliver consultation activities that are accessible to all members of the community

Our communications and engagement approach will draw on a range of channels, including:

- Direct mail
- Community pop-ups
- Key briefings with Advisory Groups, local businesses and community groups.
- Digital engagement
- Targeted social posts
- Local newspapers

Project summary

The Sustainable Environment Strategy is one of seven strategies to be developed under Council's Integrated Planning Framework (IPF). As a Level 2 document according to the IPF document hierarchy, the 10-year Sustainable Environment Strategy synthesises and streamlines Council's endorsed positions from its Biodiversity, Greening Whittlesea City Forest, Whittlesea Water for All, and Rethinking Waste, as well as the emerging Green Wedge Management and Climate Change Plans (Level 3 documents).

The 2-year Sustainable Environment Action Plan sets out the actions Council will focus on delivering in the first two years of the Sustainable Environment Strategy (also as a Level 2 document).

The Climate Change Plan is Council's 10-year roadmap for climate action, which outlines Council's role in minimising its own emissions, and supporting the community to take action to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Climate Change Plan is one of the six long-term plans underpinning the 10-year Sustainable Environment Strategy.

After a series of consultations in March and July of 2021, feedback received informed the drafting of the Sustainable Environment Strategy, Sustainable Environment Action Plan and Climate Change Plan. We are now seeking further feedback on the draft plans from previously engaged stakeholders and the broader community to inform the finalisation of the plans. The feedback will focus on the strategic visions of the Climate Change Plan, the options considered to better support community climate, the opportunities to enable collective climate action and the approaches to implement a better gender equality outcome.

Engagement negotiables and non-negotiable aspects of the project

Negotiables	Non-negotiables
Strategic vision for the Climate Change Plan except the science-based emissions reduction targets	Council endorsed positions in the long-term plans including Biodiversity, City Forest, Rethinking Waste, and Water
Action options that should be considered to better support community climate action	Council committed actions through the draft plans
Opportunities for collaboration and partnership to enable collective climate action	The science-based emissions reduction targets for Council as an organisation and the municipality in the Draft Climate Change Plan
Approaches to implement the Sustainable Environment Strategy, Sustainable Environment Action Plan and Climate Change Plan for better gender equality outcomes	Content related to the focus area of Green Wedge as the engagement for the Draft Green Wedge Management Plan is separate from this process
	Final selection and prioritisation of Council interventions that support community climate action

Issues/Risks

Issue/Risk	Likelihood of Risk L/M/H	Potential Impact (i.e.: Reputational, Lack of trust, project outcome)	Risk Mitigation Measure
Community engagement fatigue.	L	Reputational Project Outcome Disengaged community	To limit the number of different engagements being held at the same time, this project has been incorporated into the Community Priorities consultation being held in August and any relevant feedback captured will be utilised. Community pop-ups will also be co-located with glass recycling pop-ups already scheduled by the Sustainability team where possible.
Climate change can be a sensitive and contentious issue in the community and there may be a very small	L	Reputational Project outcome	The engagement and related communications will be carefully planned to emphasise the human health

portion of our community holding climate denial/scepticism views.			and wellbeing aspect to mitigate potentially negative perspectives associated with the climate change issue. The language used in communication will be guided by relevant research (i.e.: from the Monash University’s Climate Communication Research Hub).
Some people, particularly young people, might feel strong negative emotions talking about climate change and government responses to it, such as distress, anger, frustration.	L	Reputational Project outcome	We will engage this segment of our community by listening to their concerns, providing information about what Council has already been doing in response to climate change, and showing our genuine interest to work with them in achieving a sustainable, zero emissions, and climate resilient future.
Information about climate science can be highly technical and difficult for the general public to understand.	L	Project outcome	Clear messaging will be developed that will follow the guidelines provided by the Climate Council and DELWP for best practices in communicating climate science and impacts

Targeted stakeholders

A number of key stakeholders were consulted during previous stages of this project. These stakeholders will again be targeted through project communications and engagement. A full list of these stakeholders can be found in Appendix C.

In summary, the stakeholders being targeted through this consultation include:

Group	Stakeholder	Interest
Young People 5 -25	Whittlesea Youth Advisory Committee Youth Environment Action Group (run by Hans Gregory at Youth Services) Local Primary Schools Local High Schools	H

Aboriginal communities	Consultation with Wurundjeri Council (through Donna Wright as Aboriginal Liaison)	H
Industry and business	Local businesses that were engaged in the first round of consultation through a virtual Business Breakfast A group of institutional partners (both internal and external) were also consulted through two virtual institutional stakeholder workshops.	H
Community Focus Group	A group of very passionate residents was engaged in the first round of consultation through a virtual Community Focus Group.	H
Advisory Groups and Networks	Whittlesea Reconciliation Group Whittlesea Disability Network Community Leadership Program participants Youth Advisory Committee Whittlesea Community Futures Business Advisory Group	H
Local area networks and groups	Community Activation Team and their groups and networks Registered Cultural groups Environmental groups such as 'Friends of' groups, Landcare groups, community garden groups including participants of environmental programs such as the Nature Stewards and Gardening Together Again programs	H

Key messages

The media spokesperson for this project is Chair Administrator Lydia Wilson.

Engagement Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have your say on our draft Sustainable Environment Strategy and Action Plan and the draft Climate Change Plan
Primary project messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City of Whittlesea has developed 3 key documents that will guide us towards becoming a sustainable and 'net zero and climate resilient place for all. The 10-year draft Sustainable Environment Strategy and Climate Change Plan outline Council's priority areas for action and long-term goals The draft Sustainable Environment Action Plan focuses on the actions Council will deliver over the next two years.
Secondary project messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategy highlights Council's priorities for future action to protect and enhance our local environment.

- The Climate Change Plan outlines our roadmap for climate action, including Council's role in minimising its own emissions, and supporting the community to take action to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Engagement Approach

This plan focusses on phase 3 of the engagement for the development of the Sustainable Environment Strategy, Sustainable Environment Action Plan and Climate Change Plans.

Council will share the draft plans with the key stakeholders who participated in phase 2 of engagement as well as the wider City of Whittlesea community. Feedback will be sought on strategic visions of the Climate Change Plan, the options considered to better support community climate, the opportunities to enable collective climate action and the approaches to implement a better gender equality outcome.

The project team will brief the Whittlesea Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) and Youth Environment Action Group (YEAG) and the Wurundjeri Council. By attending the groups' regular meeting, the project team will be able to update them on the progress of the project, present the draft plan and encourage feedback.

A project page will feature on the Engage Whittlesea platform that will utilise a feedback capture tool. The community will be directed to this page where they can learn more about the project, view the draft plans, as well as share their feedback. A QR code as well as a URL will be included on all project communications collateral directing the community to this page.

The project page and survey on the Engage Whittlesea platform has a built-in translation tool that automatically translates the content into the top ten language used within the municipality, which will assist in ensuring that the information can be understood by the bulk of the community.

An email with a project update and link to the project Engage page will be sent to all stakeholders that were engaged in previous stages of the project.

The project will be shared with the community and feedback sought at an array of community pop-ups that will be held in high foot-traffic locations within the municipality. Visitors to the community pop-ups will be able to share their feedback using one of the supplied iPad's, on their own smartphone or by taking a flyer and accessing the project Engage page later.

Council will reach out to advisory groups and networks (i.e.: Whittlesea Reconciliation Group, Whittlesea Disability Network, Community Leadership Program participants, Youth Advisory Committee, Whittlesea Community Futures and Business Advisory Group to encourage participation on our digital engagement project page and at community pop-ups. If necessary, council will present at Advisory Group meetings to capture feedback.

To ensure that the wider community is not over engaged, the project team will tap into already planned community pop-ups that are being run for the Glass Recycling rollout and the Whittlesea Park Masterplan consultation.

The project team will also take into consideration any feedback received in relation to sustainability from the Community Priorities engagement project scheduled in August 2022, a project that hears from the community what their priorities in their local neighbourhoods are.

Administrators will be invited to attend appropriate community engagement and consultation activities.

Key activities (highlight in blue those that Administrators can play a role in)

Project Activity	Description	Timing	Owner	Status
Project planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of C&E plan for approval Internal approval of C&E plan 	w/c 25 July 2022 4 August 2022	Engagement Comms Project team	
Approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project presented at ELT Council briefing Project presented for endorsement at special Council Meeting 	16 August 2022 29 August 2022 5 September 2022	Project team	
Project FAQs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of community friendly FAQs for use on digital engagement platform 	4 September 2022	Comms Project team	
Preparation of comms collateral and translation of relevant materials into top 10 languages spoken within the municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of flyers/ posters Distribution throughout the consultation period Media release Print advertising PVFM Messages on hold E-news (Living Green) Internal comms 	By early Sept	Comms	
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social posts throughout the consultation period 	During consultation period	Comms	
Briefings to advisory groups	Attend meetings and or contact groups via email	5 September 2022 TBC	Hans and Alberto	

Project Activity	Description	Timing	Owner	Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YAC meeting • YEAG meeting • Business advisory Panel • Whittlesea Disability Network • Whittlesea Reconciliation Group, • Community Leadership Program participant • Whittlesea Community Futures and Business Advisory Group 		Project team	
Digital engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of project page and feedback capture tool on the Engage Whittlesea platform • Generation of QR link to page for inclusion in communications materials. • Consultation active 	<p>5 September 2022</p> <p>5 September 2022</p> <p>6 September to 4 October 2022</p>	Engagement	
Direct email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A direct email to the CD team and Cultural Diversity Officer to forward onto their registered cultural groups and Local Area Network emails • A direct email to the Youth Officers to forward onto key contacts at local schools • A direct email with a link to the engage Whittlesea project 	6 September 2022	Project team Comms CD Team Cultural Diversity Officer	

Project Activity	Description	Timing	Owner	Status
	page will be sent to all previously engage stakeholder group as noted in Paper No 8 Summary of Community Engagement revised new.pdf			
Community Pop Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine and prepare resourcing for pop-ups. Run community pop-ups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 31, 2022 Lalor Library 7 Sep 10.30am - 12.30pm with glass recycling Mill Park Library 11am – 1pm Sep 13 with glass recycling stall Olivine, Donnybrook check community space activities week of 26 Sep Farmers market 17 Sep 9.00am - 12.00pm Epping Pacific Shopping Centre with glass recycling stand Sep 22 10.30am - 2.30pm Whittlesea Monday Market co locate with Whittlesea Park Master Plan 26 Sep 8.00am – 12.00pm 	Project team Engagement Glass Recycling team Hans from Youth Services	
Briefing to the Wurundjeri Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a project update and advise of the upcoming engagement at the monthly meetings scheduled with the 	Contact Wurundjeri Council w/c 6 September 2022	Donna Wright Denise Turner Project team	

Project Activity	Description	Timing	Owner	Status
	Wurundjeri Council. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an update of the upcoming engagement with Taungurung Clan. 		Engagement	
Close the loop communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project page on Engage Whittlesea platform updated to thank the community for their input and advise on next steps Key stakeholders thanked for their contribution and advised of next steps via direct mail 	Post 4 Oct		

Monitoring and Evaluation

Measure	Success criteria	Data collection point	Achievement against objective (identify gaps & achievements) / Lessons Learned
Outcome 1: Inform the local community of the project and its background and encourage them to share their feedback.			
There is participation from across the demographic population	Participation from diverse populations including those from CALD backgrounds.	Engage Whittlesea platform respondents Key stakeholder feedback at briefings/meetings Visitors to community pop-ups	
There is substantial participation in community engagement activities	At least 50 people participate and contribute to engagement activities.	Engage Whittlesea platform respondents Key stakeholder feedback at briefings/meetings Visitors to community pop-ups	

Outcome 2: Deliver consultation activities that are accessible to all members of the community			
Engagement activities are designed in a way that is suitable for the different demographics within the municipality	Activities are designed to be accessible for all to participate, including from diverse populations (CALD) Project engage page has automatic translation into the top 10 languages spoken within the municipality. Project materials translated into top 10 languages.	Engage Whittlesea platform respondents Feedback collected at key stakeholder briefings/meetings and placed based pop-ups	
Community pop-ups are physically accessible by all	Physical location of community pop-ups are accessible by foot and wheelchair as well as near to public transport	Community pop-ups	

Appendix A: Stakeholder mapping

	High impact Low influence	High impact High influence
IMPACT (low – high)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young People Industry and Business Focus Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Whittlesea community
	Low impact Low influence	Low impact High influence
INFLUENCE (low – high)		

Appendix B: Attachments

Paper No.8 Summary of Community Engagement

We are informing the stakeholder group who previously provided feedback as noted in [Paper No 8 Summary of Community Engagement revised new.pdf](#)

Appendix C: Detailed list of targeted stakeholders

The list of business breakfast participants can be found here:

[https://whittlesea.sharepoint.com/:x:/r/sites/teams_dept_pks/Shared%20Documents/Unit%20-%20Sustainability%20Policy%20Programs/POLICIES%20%26%20STRATEGIES/CCSAP/Engagement%20%26%20Consultation/Business%20breakfast%20attendee-report-\(exported-2021-06-18@09.03.19\).csv?d=wda6a0ea95a824e5ba519b3f21d722092&csf=1&web=1&e=1UMin6](https://whittlesea.sharepoint.com/:x:/r/sites/teams_dept_pks/Shared%20Documents/Unit%20-%20Sustainability%20Policy%20Programs/POLICIES%20%26%20STRATEGIES/CCSAP/Engagement%20%26%20Consultation/Business%20breakfast%20attendee-report-(exported-2021-06-18@09.03.19).csv?d=wda6a0ea95a824e5ba519b3f21d722092&csf=1&web=1&e=1UMin6)

The list of Institutional Stakeholder Workshop 1 participants can be found here:

https://whittlesea.sharepoint.com/:x:/r/sites/teams_dept_pks/Shared%20Documents/Unit%20-%20Sustainability%20Policy%20Programs/POLICIES%20%26%20STRATEGIES/CCSAP/Engagement%20%26%20Consultation/Inst.%20Workshop%201/meetingAttendanceList.csv?d=w52837c9fd724c78ba605959ca2e418b&csf=1&web=1&e=ngosFi

The list of Institutional Stakeholder Workshop 2 participants can be found here:

https://whittlesea.sharepoint.com/:x:/r/sites/teams_dept_pks/Shared%20Documents/Unit%20-%20Sustainability%20Policy%20Programs/POLICIES%20%26%20STRATEGIES/CCSAP/Engagement%20%26%20Consultation/Inst.%20Workshop%202/AttendanceReport%20CCAP-%20Inst%20Workshop%202.csv?d=w9fe7dbbb4f8c453ea25275e1a5c92837&csf=1&web=1&e=vFqYw

The list of community focus group participants can be found here:

https://whittlesea.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/teams_dept_pks/Shared%20Documents/Unit%20-%20Sustainability%20Policy%20Programs/POLICIES%20%26%20STRATEGIES/CCSAP/Engagement%20%26%20Consultation/CCSAP%20Focus%20Group%20attendees%20address%20details.docx?d=wc1e661292d5f4b0d9a6728d693037821&csf=1&web=1&e=naoxyj

3.5 High Performing Organisation

3.5.1 Council Meeting Schedule Update

Responsible Officer	Executive Manager Governance & Strategy
Author	Bineet Gujral, Governance Officer
In Attendance	Frank Joyce, Executive Manager Governance & Strategy
Attachments	No Attachments

Purpose

For Council to confirm a change of location for the upcoming Scheduled Council Meeting on 19 September 2022.

Brief Overview

The upcoming Council meeting is scheduled for 19 September 2022 at 6.30pm to be held remotely online.

As the number of COVID cases has reduced, it is proposed that the meeting location be changed to be held in person in the Council Chamber. This will enable increased community participation. Hand sanitiser and masks will be made available for any attendees to reduce risk in accordance with Council's Covidsafe plan.

Recommendation

That Council confirms the next Scheduled Council Meeting be held in-person in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang on 19 September 2022 at 6.30pm.

Key Information

Current State Government advice is for employers to consider working from home if they can. However, as a result of reduced numbers of COVID cases within our municipality it is recommended that the next Scheduled Council meeting on 19 September 2022 be conducted in-person. This will enable local residents to attend and participate in the Council meeting as part of public question time. Hand sanitiser and masks will be made available for any attendees to reduce risk in accordance with Council's Covidsafe plan.

Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

High performing organisation

We engage effectively with the community, to deliver efficient and effective services and initiatives, and to make decisions in the best interest of our community and deliver value to our community.

The Council Meeting being held in-person provides the community with more opportunity to participate in the Council Meeting by attending in person to observe the proceedings of the Council Meeting and the opportunity to ask questions at the meeting during public question time.

Considerations

Environmental

No implications

Social, Cultural and Health

No implications

Economic

No implications

Financial Implications

The cost is included in the current operating budget.

Link to Strategic Risk

Strategic Risk Not linked to strategic risks in the risk register.

Implementation Strategy

Communication

Notices will be placed on Council's website to inform the community that the Council Meeting will now be held in-person in the Council Chamber and that community members are welcomed to attend in person.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the Local Government Act 2020 and Rule 47 of the Governance Rules 2021, officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

Conclusion

Enabling the Scheduled Council Meeting on 19 September 2022 to be held in-person will increase community participation and is deemed appropriate with covid cases reducing. Precautions will be provided to ensure masks and hand sanitiser are available for use by all attendees.

4 Confidential Business

Under section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* a meeting considering confidential information may be closed to the public. Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Recommendation

THAT the Chair of Council recommends that the meeting be closed to the public for the purpose of considering details relating to the following confidential matters in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as detailed.

4.1 Confidential Connected Communities

4.1.1 Interim Activation for Mernda Town Centre

Responsible Officer	Director Community Wellbeing
Author	Nicole Wisemen, Coordinator Community Planning
In Attendance	Agata Chmielewski, Manager Strategic Projects
Attachments	No Attachments

This report has been designated as confidential by the Director Community Wellbeing, under delegation from the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with Rule 53 of the Governance Rules 2021 and sections 66(5) and 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* on the grounds that it contains Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released. In particular the report contains information regarding financial data that could impact property lease and Section 173 negotiations.

4.2 Confidential Liveable Neighbourhoods

Nil Reports

4.3 Confidential Strong Local Economy

Nil Reports

4.4 Confidential Sustainable Environment

Nil Reports

4.5 Confidential High Performing Organisation

Nil Reports

5 Closure