



# Sustainable Environment Action Plan 2024–2026





# 1. Introduction

**The Sustainable Environment Action Plan 2024-2026 (Action Plan) sets out the actions Council will focus on delivering in the third and fourth 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 programs 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
- Green Wedge Management Plan 2022-2032
- Climate Change Plan 2022-2032.

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. The outcomes and how we will monitor progress are detailed in the Sustainable Environment Strategy. The Action plan will be updated 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 meet 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:



Biodiversity



City forest



Climate change



Green Wedge



Waste and recycling



Water

## 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
Continue the land management partnership with Traditional Owners	Facilitator	●	●	●	●		●
Regularly invite Traditional Owners to self-determine involvement and opportunities for collaboration and partnership within all sustainable environment actions	Facilitator	●	●	●	●	●	●











# Key direction 1

## Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
							
<b>Outcome 1.1 Our landscapes, waters and species are protected, improved, and valued.</b>							
Advocate to protect the grassy eucalypt woodlands	Advocate	●	●	●	●		●
Progress the planning scheme amendment to rezone local conservation reserves in Council ownership to zone/s that better reflect the use and values of the land.	Provider	●	●	●			●
Complete the upgrade of Peter Hopper Lake in Mill Park	Provider	●	●	●			●
Progress the planning scheme amendment to better protect waterways, areas with high biodiversity values and/or habitat corridors.	Provider	●	●	●	●		●
Advocate to ensure all conservation areas identified within the Urban Growth Boundary are appropriately protected and managed	Advocate	●	●	●	●		●
Ensure that all Council conservation reserves and conservation roadsides are managed effectively and support rare and threatened species conservation	Provider	●	●	●	●		●
Continue long-term targeted fauna survey program within conservation reserves	Provider	●		●	●		●
Implement findings of review of rural land, water and biodiversity incentives programs to maximise community and environmental benefits	Provider	●	●	●	●		●
Advocate for funding for WSUD asset and waterbody renewal works and programs including reduction of the landfill levy for disposed sediments	Advocate	●	●	●	●	●	●
Integrate the Whittlesea Biodiversity Atlas into spatial systems and develop an ongoing data collection program	Provider	●		●	●		
Complete holistic master planning of waterway corridors to improve water quality, enhance biodiversity, and complimentary informal recreation use	Provider	●	●	●			●



# Key direction 1

## Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
<b>Outcome 1.2 Our land management and land use are sustainable.</b>							
Continue to explore opportunities to generate local carbon sequestration offsets on Council owned and private land	Facilitator	●	●	●	●		●
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	●			●		
Progress the planning scheme amendment to regulate earthworks which involve the receipt, importation, stockpiling or placement of clean fill in the Whittlesea Green Wedge	Provider	●		●	●	●	●
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	●		●		●	●
<b>Outcome 1.3 Our natural environment and biodiversity are resilient to climate change.</b>							
Deliver innovative and engaging community education programs to support the community to act for nature within conservation areas and waterways	Provider	●	●		●		●
Implement recommendations of the carrying capacity of wildlife populations on Council owned and managed land	Provider	●	●		●		
Continue to partner with neighbouring councils and other government agencies to act and advocate for biodiversity and waterway health	Advocate	●	●	●	●		●
Better protect flora and fauna through the Grassy Woodland Threatened Species Restoration Program at Growing Frog Golf Course	Provider	●		●	●		
Continue to support the implementation of the Quarry Hills Regional Park and the marram babba Regional Park Future Directions Plans	Provider	●	●	●	●		●





# Key direction 2 Climate ready



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
<b>Outcome 2.1 Our city's green cover is enhanced to reduce the risk of extreme heat.</b>							
Develop and implement a Seedlings for Schools and Kinders program	Provider	●	●	●			
Utilise technology to reduce the risk of illegal native vegetation removal	Provider	●	●	●	●		●
Deliver the annual tree planting programs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Main Roads and High Profile Streetscapes Planting Program</li> <li>- Parks Tree and Major Facilities Planting Program</li> <li>- Conservation Reserves Tree Planting Program</li> <li>- Residential Street Tree Renewal Planting Program</li> </ul>	Provider	●	●	●	●		●
Participate in 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	●	●	●	●		
Continue to improve management of publicly owned River Red Gums and other significant trees across the municipality to ensure their ongoing health in the landscape	Provider	●	●	●	●		●
Maintain a comprehensive Ten-Year Planting Program which addresses canopy equity across the urban areas	Provider	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ensure all canopy cover targets are met in council led projects and planning processes	Provider	●	●	●	●	●	●
Continue to educate the community on the benefits of trees and canopy cover	Provider		●	●	●		●

# Key direction 2 Climate ready



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
<b>Outcome 2.2 Our communities and businesses are supported to become climate ready.</b>							
Deliver innovative, engaging and accessible education programs about climate risk and adaptation to communities and businesses	Provider			●			●
Implement projects 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	Provider			●			
<b>Outcome 2.3 Our built environment and infrastructure are built to support safe and healthy communities in a changing climate.</b>							
Ensure that all developments are assessed using the Sustainable Subdivision Framework	Provider	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ensure that all Council design manuals address Environmentally Sustainable Design, Integrated Water Management and Climate Change	Provider	●	●	●	●	●	●
Update Council's Project Management Framework to consider sustainability and climate change at all stages of a projects lifecycle	Provider	●	●	●	●	●	●





# Key direction 3

## Leaders in clean, sustainable living



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
<b>Outcome 3.1 Our city becomes a net zero emissions municipality.</b>							
Improve the energy efficiency and climate resilience of Council buildings and facilities including solar and lighting upgrades	Provider			●		●	●
Continue to replace our public lights and street lights with energy efficiency lighting	Provider			●			
Advocate to the state government to support community renewable energy initiatives	Advocate			●			
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 to support retrofitting existing homes and buildings for a zero emissions and climate resilient future	Advocate			●			
Support implementation of the community wide Electric Vehicle Transition Plan	Facilitator			●			
Implement programs and projects and support community-led project to utilise active transport options including walking, cycling and e-mobility	Facilitator			●			
Partner with local schools to promote active transport programs such as Walk2School and Rise2School	Facilitator			●			
Transition all remaining Council electricity usage to 100% renewable electricity	Provider	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ensure that the Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) standards for Council capital work projects and assets and facility maintenance are achieved	Provider	●	●	●	●	●	●
Implement the plan to eliminate gas use in Council facilities	Provider			●			
Certify Council's carbon emission inventory with Climate Active by 2026	Provider			●			



# Key direction 3 Leaders in clean, sustainable living



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
<b>Outcome 3.2 Our water resources are managed in an integrated way.</b>							
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			●			●
Collaborate with Melbourne Water to implement stormwater harvesting schemes at strategically relevant sites	Facilitator	●	●	●			●

# Key direction 3 Leaders in clean, sustainable living



Actions	Council's Role	Links to Focus Areas					
<b>Outcome 3.3 Our city is low waste and transitions to a circular economy.</b>							
Enhance the hard waste collection service including to trial a home collection service for whitegoods, e-waste, clothing and small household items	Provider			●		●	
Implement the Rethinking Waste Plan to support our community to become a leader in sustainable living	Provider			●		●	
Support the local reuse economy through supporting tip shops, charity shops, second hand stores and repair café	Facilitator			●		●	
Investigate extending the food and garden waste service to all households	Provider			●		●	
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			●		●	●
Provide greater transparency to the community on waste generation rates	Provider			●		●	
Investigate options for extending recycling services to local businesses	Provider			●		●	
Continue to standardise kerbside bin lid colours in line with the Recycling Victoria Policy	Provider					●	
Implement a community pride campaign to reduce litter through education, infrastructure and enforcement	Provider			●		●	●
Establish the Sustainable Technology Assessment Panel to facilitate trials of circular economy materials in Council asset maintenance and renewal	Provider			●		●	





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