A city with lower greenhouse gas emissions

We will maintain zero emissions from our operations and work with our community and partners to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Why it matters

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy is critical to tackling the climate emergency.

Responding to the climate emergency is possible. The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) says that urgent climate action can secure a liveable future for all. Feasible and practical options exist to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and minimise human-caused climate change (IPCC Synthesis Report, March 2023).

We are committed to real action and playing our part in keeping global temperature rise to under 1.5 degrees. We are committed to maintaining net zero carbon emissions from our operations. Council produces only 0.6 per cent of the overall emissions in the City of Port Phillip. We will reduce our emissions further by phasing out gas from Council-owned buildings.

We will also help our community to reduce emissions throughout the municipality. Everyone must play their part as we move towards a low carbon future. We are working with partners, residents and businesses to reduce our community's emissions. The Port Phillip community can create an energy smart lifestyle by building or retrofitting houses, apartments and commercial properties with insulation and double glazing, energy efficient lighting and appliances, and accessing renewable energy.

Reducing consumption – buying less stuff – is one of the best ways to reduce emissions, but energy efficient technologies are also part of the puzzle. In the coming years, we will roll out new programs focused on increasing the community's ability to reduce energy consumption and purchase renewable energy.

How we're going

- We reduced our gross carbon emissions by one-quarter between 2016 and 2021.
- We power our operations with 100 per cent renewable energy through the Melbourne Renewable Energy Project (MREP).
- We achieved net zero emissions for Council operations in 2021.
- We installed 359 megawatts of solar panels on Council buildings.
- We switched 11 Council-owned buildings from gas to electricity.
- We purchased 26 electric vehicles for our fleet.
- We implemented the South Melbourne Market Sustainability Strategy, generating 771,672 kWh of solar power since December 2019, avoiding approximately 800 C02-e in carbon emissions
- There were nearly 10,000 participants in our sustainability programs, including school travel programs, in 2020/21.
- We facilitated the Victorian Government's 'Small Business Energy Saver' program with South East Councils Climate Change Alliance to help over 140 small businesses access funding to upgrade equipment to reduce emissions and save money.
- We are partnering with the Victorian Government on the redevelopment of the EcoCentre, so that a world-class building can support the delivery of sustainability programs.

Key partners

- The Community
- Victorian Government (Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action)
- South East Councils Climate Change Alliance
- Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment.
- Inner Metro Melbourne Partnership

Targets

Council indicators				
Indicator	**Baseline 2016/17**	**Progress 2021/22**	**Target 2028**	**Contributing Projects** (see initiatives table below)
Gross greenhouse gas emissions from Council operations (including buildings and streetlight)	10,954 tonnes of CO^2 equivalent	8,142	37% reduction (6,918 tonnes of CO2 equivalent	15- Sustainability data reporting, use and communication 16- Reducing emissions, energ use and increasing electrification in Council buildings and assets 17- South Melbourne Market Sustainability Strategy

				18- Green leases and tenant engagement 19-Electric vehicles 20- Energy efficient lighting upgrade
(Indicator measured to support achievement of gross GHG emissions target) Energy consumption in Council buildings and streetlights	8,900 MWh	6,382 MWh		
Net greenhouse gas emissions from Council operations	6,464 tCO^2-e	Zero	Zero	15- Sustainability data reporting, use and communication 16- Reducing emissions, energ use and increasing electrification in Council buildings and assets 17- South Melbourne Market Sustainability Strategy 18- Green leases and tenant engagement 19-Electric vehicles 20- Energy efficient lighting upgrade 21- Carbon offset policy
Percentage of Council electricity use from renewable sources	293 kWh	100%	100%	15- Sustainability data reporting, use and communication 16- Reducing emissions, energ use and increasing electrification in Council buildings and assets 17- South Melbourne Market Sustainability Strategy 18- Green leases and tenant engagement

Community indicators				
Indicator	**Baseline 2016/17**	**Progress 2021/22**	**2028 Aspiration**	**Contributing Projects** (see initiatives table below)
Greenhouse gas emissions in the municipality	1,700,000 tCO^2-e	1,279,000 tCO^2-e	**Zero by 2045** (75-80% reduction by 2035) *Aligned with state government target, awaiting legislation.	22- EcoCentre redevelopment and EcoCentre programs 23- Community emissions reductions 24- Industry and business emissions reductions 25- Environmental Upgrade Agreements 26- Sustainable solutions for apartment buildings and low-income and rental households. 27- Environmentally sustainable design (ESD) in planning and development 28- Neighbourhood batteries (solar energy storage) 29- Library Sustainability Hub 30- Electric vehicle uptake 31- Sustainable transport initiatives
Electricity use from renewable sources in the municipality	5,100 kWh	16758 kWh (10.7%)	N/A	23- Community emissions reductions 24- Industry and business emissions reductions 25- Environmental Upgrade Agreements 26- Sustainable solutions for apartment buildings and low-income and rental households.

				27- Environmentally sustainable design (ESD) in planning and development 28- Neighbourhood batteries (solar energy storage)
Percentage of households with solar power*	11 % (2021/22 baseline)	N/A	N/A	23- Community emissions reductions 24- Industry and business emissions reductions 26- Sustainable solutions for apartment buildings and low-income and rental households. 27- Environmentally sustainable design (ESD) in planning and development 28- Neighbourhood batteries (solar energy storage)
Number and percentage of private vehicles that are electric*	0.14% (20,095 cars) (2021/22 baseline)	N/A	N/A	30- Electric vehicle uptake 31- Sustainable transport initiatives

Initiatives

Initiative		What's involved
15	Sustainability data reporting, use and communication	• Introduce a system and process to collect, store and use sustainability data to ensure informed decision making. • Review Council services to understand supply chain emissions (including measuring our scope 3 emissions). • Identify opportunities to reduce supply chain emissions and incorporate changes.
16	Reducing emissions, energy use and increasing electrification in Council buildings and assets	• Undertake an environmental performance audit and reduce energy use in key Council buildings by investing in renewable energy, energy efficiency and water efficiency initiatives and changing our behaviour in a targeted way. • Progressively electrify existing Council buildings where feasible. • New assets are to be built with no gas connections (with minimal exceptions where needed for commercial cooking) • Introduce minimum sustainability performance standards for key asset classes, such as drains, footpaths, buildings and open space. • Measure and make efforts to reduce embodied carbon in our buildings and assets.
17	South Melbourne Market Sustainability Strategy	∉ Implement the South Melbourne Market Sustainability Strategy, focusing on reducing waste, transitioning towards zero-carbon operations and reducing water use and impact on waterways.
18	Green leases and tenant engagement	• Enhance green lease provisions and tenant engagement to drive and report on emissions reduction and improved waste management. Focus on large commercial leaseholders.
19	Accelerated transition to a lower emissions fleet	∉ Undertake a review of the fleet with specialist advice to identify cost effective options to accelerate emissions reductions which could include electrification, transition away from diesel, and extending the life of existing vehicles. ∉ Transition to a zero emissions fleet by 2033 subject to appropriate alternatives for heavy fleet becoming available.
20	Energy efficient lighting upgrade	∉ Continue to deliver existing commitment to an energy efficient street lighting upgrade of 1500 lights for major roads. ∉ Develop a business case to identify and prioritise additional street lighting upgrade opportunities.

		⊄ Reduce greenhouse emissions by replacing old streetlights with more efficient LEDs (Light Emitting Diodes) as identified in the business case.
21	Carbon offset policy	• Develop a carbon offset policy to guide Council's purchase of offsets to achieve carbon neutrality, including exploring regional opportunities for carbon offsets.
22	EcoCentre redevelopment and EcoCentre programs	• Lead the Port Phillip EcoCentre redevelopment and invest in EcoCentre programs that support an environmentally aware community. • Promote the redeveloped EcoCentre as a hub for community-led action, empowering youth, schools, residents and visitors to address climate change impacts by connecting with the local environment.
23	Community emissions reductions	• Expanded delivery of sustainability programs for community benefit. • Understand community needs and barriers to renewable energy uptake and deliver a program to support community renewable energy uptake. • Target communications and resources to help key audiences reduce their carbon emissions and prepare and adapt to the impacts of climate change. • Provide support to the community to enhance transition away from the use of fossil fuels such as gas.
24	Industry and business emissions reductions	• Support top commercial and industrial greenhouse gas emitters in their emission reduction initiatives and small-to-medium-sized businesses to reduce their emissions with access to programs, rebates and incentives.
25	Environmental Upgrade Agreements	• Work with partners to drive the uptake of Environmental Upgrade Agreements for commercial and residential buildings (legislation pending).
26	Sustainable solutions for apartment buildings and low-income and rental households	• Seek partnerships to drive sustainable solutions for apartment buildings, including supporting Owners Corporations to undertake sustainability retrofits and giving residents access to renewable electricity and energy-sharing platforms. • Provide support to the community to enhance transition to move away from the use of fossil fuels such as gas. • Advocate to the Victorian and Australian Governments for funding and support mechanisms that support residents on low incomes and rental households to invest in solar and sustainability retrofits through alternative financing arrangements.
27	Environmentally sustainable design (ESD) in planning and development	• Encourage and enforce sustainable, climate-resilient buildings by applying ESD planning policy guidelines and providing clear, accessible information to the community. • Advocate to developers to achieve climate positive buildings, properties and precincts, which are fossil fuel free, highly efficient, powered by renewables and built with lower upfront emissions. • Update our Sustainable Design Strategy to highlight the minimum standards for new buildings and tenants in rented buildings. • Advocate to the Fishermans Bend Taskforce and Victorian Government for planning policy regulation to support their commitment to a certified Green Star community in Fishermans Bend.

28	Neighbourhood batteries (solar energy storage)	• Work with partners to identify feasible locations for neighbourhood batteries and engage and empower local communities to benefit from alternate energy storage.
29	Library Sustainability Hub	∉ Build and maintain a library sustainability hub which provides community with books, interactive displays, lending of sustainability and gardening tools and devices and a seed library.
30	Electric vehicle uptake	• Support the uptake of electric vehicles in the community by facilitating the installation of public charging stations, private charging infrastructure and removing barriers to charging infrastructure in new developments and existing buildings.
31	Sustainable transport initiatives	• Implement initiatives in Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-28 to support sustainable transport, including walking, cycling, public transport, car-share and new alternative forms of transportation.

[Breakout box] Sustainable Building Case Study- EcoCentre

City of Port Phillip has a long history of incorporating Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) into Council buildings. One key example includes the Port Phillip EcoCentre redevelopment.

The Port Phillip EcoCentre in the St Kilda Botanic Gardens is a hub for community-led action to address climate change. The EcoCentre educates and empowers students, residents and visitors to care for land, water, wildlife and wellbeing. City of Port Phillip is proud of our long-term funding partnership with the EcoCentre to promote environmental sustainability and community action.

The EcoCentre is being redeveloped into a new, world-class facility. Designed to operate with net zero energy and low water usage, the EcoCentre will achieve a 6 Star Green Star Design and As Built certification. The EcoCentre will join an exclusive club of only 500 buildings worldwide that produce more clean energy than it consumes, offsetting all carbon used during construction.

We successfully advocated for a 50 per cent funding contribution from the Victorian Government to redevelop the EcoCentre. The $6.7 million project will see scientists, educators and volunteers together under one roof.

The existing building will be dismantled with all materials re-used or recycled where possible, in accordance with the high sustainability standards. The new EcoCentre will open in late 2024.

Other examples include undertaking de-gassing projects in 13 Council buildings, efficiency upgrades on our HVAC systems (Heating, Ventilation and Cooling Systems) in 7 of our biggest buildings and lighting upgrades in 19 buildings.