

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN: TOWARDS 2035 SUMMARY DOCUMENT

This document summarises Council's draft Climate Change Action Plan.
To read the draft Plan, visit theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/climateaction
or call 5772 0333 and we'll arrange to have a copy sent to you.



Murrindindi
Shire Council

WHY WE NEED A CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

Climate change is real. It is caused by human activity¹.

Murrindindi Shire is already experiencing a more dangerous climate. Without significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions, our livelihoods, our infrastructure, our environment, and our way of life are at risk.²

Climate change is the single biggest risk Council faces, threatening its core business functions and ability to provide essential services to the community³.

Today's choices and actions determine the world our children live in. And we are not alone - as part of a global movement, we know we can restore a safe climate.

OUR VISION

- Our landscapes are abundant, supporting native species and people alike.
- Our homes, businesses, and vehicles run on clean, cheap, renewable energy.
- Our community is active, caring, connected, and resilient to change.
- We contribute to a circular economy, where objects are repaired and reused again and again.
- Our local economy is diverse, and we take advantage of new industry opportunities in a zero emissions world.
- Visitors come from afar to enjoy our delicious local produce and our wild places.
- Other regions look to our Shire as a climate leader, and an example of a better future.

**We all have a role to play in
acting on climate change**

¹ IPCC (2021), Climate change widespread, rapid and intensifying. From <https://www.ipcc.ch/2021/08/09/ar6-wg1-20210809-pr/>

² IPCC (2022), Climate change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability: Summary for Policymakers.

³ As identified in Murrindindi Shire Council's Organisational Risk Register

FUTURE CONDITIONS

If we keep emitting greenhouse gases, we can expect longer hotter summers and more frequent and intense bushfires, storms, floods, heat waves and droughts, and less rainfall and snow. There are several risks and opportunities associated with climate change our Shire. These include the following:

RISKS



Physical and mental health impacts



Damage and loss of infrastructure, homes and businesses



Depopulation of high-risk areas



Lower agricultural productivity and higher food prices



Loss of tourism income



Degradation of bushland and parkland and the benefits they bring



'Cost squeeze' for Council due to increased need for emergency services and asset repairs

OPPORTUNITIES



Sustainable technologies reduce energy bills and make buildings more resilient to extreme weather



Economic opportunity from renewable energy and carbon offsets industries



A longer tourism season and more time spent outdoors in warmer weather



Wellbeing benefits from climate actions such as eating local, fresh produce, cycling and walking, and working together to drive change



Greater appreciation of our interconnection with the natural environment

OUR CORPORATE PLAN

Our Climate Change Action Plan sets out actions that Council will take to achieve four goals. These goals are:

1. **Foundational - Develop internal knowledge and systems so that climate change is considered in decision making across the organisation.**
2. **Mitigation: Address the crisis at its root by achieving net zero emissions by 2035 and meeting our interim targets.**
3. **Adaptation: Minimise the impacts of climate change on Council's infrastructure and services.**
4. **Mobilisation: Inspire and scale up climate action across the municipality and through other levels of government.**

TARGETS FOR COUNCIL

20%

Lower than 2016/17 levels
by 2025

75%

By 2030

NET
ZERO

Organisational emissions
by 2035

TARGETS FOR COMMUNITY

10%

Of the community participate
in mobilisation initiatives by
2030

NET
ZERO

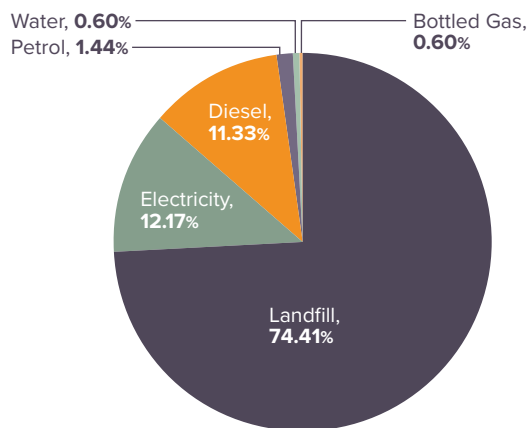
Community emissions
by 2035





Council adopted these targets in 2022 in its Climate Change Policy. For a copy of this Policy visit www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Your-Council/Publications/Policies or call **5772 0333**

This Plan is Council's climate action roadmap. It lays the framework for climate action from now until 2035, and sets out priority actions for the next three years. In 2025/26, a new set of actions will be chosen, based on the latest science and changes to local needs.

ORGANISATIONAL EMISSIONS

Council emits around 7000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions each year, or 2% of the Shire's emissions. Most of this comes from organic waste such as food scraps in our landfill. Below are some of the key actions in our plan that will reduce emissions.



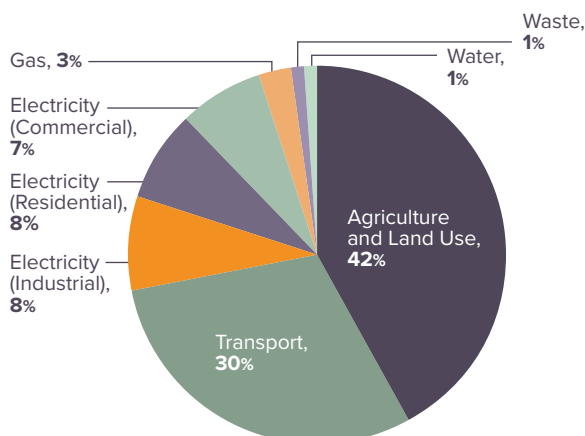
-  Extreme weather resilient, low emissions, and efficient Council infrastructure
-  Renewable energy for Council operations
-  Zero emissions fleet transition, starting with electric passenger vehicles
-  Introduce food and organic waste collection and explore new technologies to reduce landfill emissions and shift to a circular economy

Organisational Emissions from July 2019 - June 2020 (most recent available data). Source: internal data





COMMUNITY EMISSIONS

Our Shire as a whole emits 360,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions each year. To reach net zero emissions by 2035, emissions must be reduced by at least 7% each year.

Council is committed to supporting our community to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Key actions in the Climate Change Action Plan include:



Community Emissions from July 2019 - June 2020 (most recent available data). Source: snapshotclimate.com.au

-  Reviewing our planning scheme and zoning to reflect future conditions and opportunities
-  Managing bushland to reduce bushfire risk
-  Planting more trees in urban areas and enforcing vegetation removal laws
-  Educating the community about climate change, and supporting climate action through our healthcare network, suppliers, and facility user groups
-  Bringing together community stakeholders to plan and coordinate shire-wide climate action

ACTIONS FOR **VOTING**

In addition, Council will provide support for community-led climate action. The actions below were gathered from community consultation, scientific research, and reports of what has worked well for other councils.

You are invited to vote on the top three actions you would find most useful. Council will seek funding to implement the most popular priorities.



ACTION A

Incorporate a climate change stream into Council's existing grant programs for community and business



ACTION B

Continue to support the public transition to electric vehicles by installing chargers at Council facilities and working with regional stakeholders to support a shire-wide transition



ACTION C

Support community groups who lease Council assets to install renewable energy and boost energy and water efficiency



ACTION D

Support investment attraction and economic diversification into new markets (e.g. renewable energy, carbon trading, new tourist markets)



ACTION E

Investigate options for a free community information service for home sustainability including energy information and advice. Investigate how Council can encourage sustainable home builds and retrofits



ACTION F

Support community efforts to increase the amount of renewable energy in the region, including solar and wind installations, along with battery technology, to improve energy reliability, especially during emergencies



ACTION G

Distribute scientific research on the impacts of climate change on natural environments, the climate solutions nature provides, and how we can support ecosystem health

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Council plays a key role in responding to extreme weather emergencies. We have committed to training more staff in emergency response roles, making infrastructure more resilient, and advocating to other government agencies for support. You can do your bit by having your emergency plans in place, and joining your local SES or CFA.



ACTION H

Expand Council's support for community nature restoration efforts



ACTION I

Investigate options for Council support for conservation and restoration on private land



ACTION J

Work with stakeholders on an initiative to employ an agricultural field officer to provide tailored support to farmers on reducing emissions and adapting to climate change



ACTION K

Run a leadership or mentorship program to empower the community to lead climate action projects in their networks



ACTION L

Facilitate a bulk buy program for residents and businesses to purchase cheaper solar/batteries, and other climate-safe technologies



ACTION M

Support businesses to develop Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) waste management systems



ACTION N

Facilitate the establishment of carbon offset demonstration sites on private or public land



ACTION O

Establish a Climate Action Roundtable to discuss local issues, coordinate and collaborate between different sectors, inform government policy, mobilise resources, and launch or support programs and services that address local needs



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