

# PECAN Climate Emergency Action Plan

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The Port Phillip Emergency Climate Action Network (PECAN) aims to create and sustain a strong climate action movement in Port Phillip to address the climate crisis. We are politically non-partisan and we encourage an exchange of views and connections between member groups that make up the network, and with other like-minded groups.

PECAN comprises:

- Australian Conservation Foundation Macnamara
- Australian Youth Climate Coalition
- Bayside Climate Crisis Action Group
- Community Alliance of Port Phillip
- Elsternwick Park Association
- Elwood Floods Action Group
- Extinction Rebellion Port Phillip
- Locals Into Victoria's Environment
- Port Phillip Alliance for Sustainability
- Port Phillip EcoCentre
- Stop Adani Macnamara
- unChain St Kilda

PECAN works to enact local policy consistent with the actions science tells us are needed to tackle the climate emergency.

PECAN encourages the City of Port Phillip to take strong immediate action to tackle the climate emergency. This document sets out actions necessary to mitigate our local impact on the environment, and to transition the City of Port Phillip to be an exemplar of local government and community climate emergency action. The document builds on a comparison of best practice Melbourne municipalities, including Port Phillip; and in part, draws upon, extends and synthesizes strategies and practices already present or proposed in Port Phillip Council 2018's 'Act and Adapt' Sustainability Strategy. The full comparison document can be found [here](#).

# PECAN Climate Emergency Action Plan

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## Executive Summary

PECAN recommends that Council take strong action to tackle the climate emergency. The full list of recommendations is on the following pages.

The key actions necessary to tackle the climate emergency are summarised below:

- Declare a climate emergency, commit to tackling the climate emergency, and develop and implement an actionable climate emergency plan
- Advocate for other local, state and federal jurisdictions to act to tackle the climate emergency
- Prioritise Council planning, staff and resourcing to tackle the climate emergency
- Partner, engage, and collaborate with the community to implement the climate emergency action plan
- Educate Council, residents, commerce and industry about Council initiatives
- Regularly report on progress to implement the climate emergency action plan
- Ensure funding for initiatives in the climate emergency action plan
- Source all Council electricity from renewable sources, and increase electricity generation within the municipality
- Facilitate power purchase agreements to allow residential, commercial, and industrial users to source 100% renewable electricity
- Set a target of 100% renewable energy for the community by 2035
- Improve council and community energy efficiency by 20% by 2025
- Upgrade LED lighting for all pedestrian and vehicular street lights by 2023
- Commit to improved access to open space for under-serviced areas across the municipality
- Improve canopy cover across the municipality from 19% to 40% by 2040
- Phase out use of natural gas in council buildings by 2024.
- Amend the planning scheme to prohibit gas connections to new buildings by 2023
- Ensure all Council vehicles are 100% electric by 2025
- Advocate for electrification of community vehicles and provision of electric vehicle infrastructure
- Increase investment in infrastructure for low-impact transport modes
- Accelerate implementation of the State Government's Recycling Victoria action plan
- Reduce waste going to landfill by 75% by 2025
- Ensure all new Council developments incorporate Environmentally Sensitive Design principles
- Engage with other bodies to advocate for changes to the planning scheme to require carbon neutrality and integration of Environmentally Sensitive Design and Water Sensitive Urban Design principles
- Support upgrades to aged, community and social housing to improve efficiency and costs

# PECAN Climate Emergency Action Plan

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- Update the Water Sensitive City policy to enable harvesting and reuse of 80ML of stormwater annually
- Update Council's Investment Policy to require 100% ethical investment by 2022
- Update Council's Procurement Policy to give priority to the purchasing of goods and services from environmentally sustainable companies and suppliers

# PECAN Climate Emergency Action Plan

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## Council Commitment and Leadership

PECAN recommends that Council incorporate actions tackling the climate emergency into its overarching mission and direction statements, including:

- Declare a Climate Emergency
- Develop and implement a climate emergency action plan with milestone targets
- Engage with the community to empower and involve the community (e.g. through deliberative democracy).
- Work, collaborate and advocate with community, local, state, and federal, international bodies (MAV, SECCA, CASBE, Resilient Melbourne, IMAP, Coalition of Bayside Councils, Cities Power Partnerships)
- Commit to emission cuts and responses consistent with limiting temperature rise to 1.5C
- Join with other local government bodies to advocate for greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
- Advocate for Victoria and Australia to achieve emissions reductions (across all sectors):
  - 50% emissions reduction by 2025 (on 2005 levels)
  - 80% emissions reduction by 2030 (on 2005 levels)
  - 100% emissions reduction by 2040 (on 2005 levels)
- Advocate for end to deforestation and native forest logging

## Council Structures and Bodies

PECAN recommends that Council create fit-for-purpose structures and bodies within the organisation to tackle the climate emergency, including:

- Committing the Council to a whole-of-organisation focus on tackling the Climate Emergency
- Ensuring staff and resources for cross-departmental Climate Action/Emergency structures
- Ensuring that Implementation of the Climate Emergency Plan is a priority for other areas of Council (i.e. waste, transport, parks, etc)

## Community Partnering and Engagement

PECAN recommends that Council creates structures including Advisory Committees and working groups with community representatives to enable responsible Departments to consult and collaborate in the development and implementation of policy with the community, by:

- Engaging, informing, resourcing and activating the local community to tackle the Climate Emergency (through advisory and participatory bodies, community

# PECAN Climate Emergency Action Plan

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involvement in planning and implementation, and expanding the role of existing community outreach bodies, such as the EcoCentre)

- Following the mandatory community participation requirements under the Local Government Act 2020, and following the community engagement recommendations in the Auditor General's Victoria Better Practice Guide

## Climate Emergency Education Initiatives

PECAN recommends that Council educates the community on climate change and Council's climate emergency declaration, by:

- Ensuring Council is informed and educated about the climate emergency and how the council and its operations must be transformed to respond to the climate emergency.
- Engaging with the community (residents, commercial and industry sectors) about the reasons for climate emergency declaration and how the community can be assisted in tackling the climate emergency.
- Promoting and publicising Council and community programs designed to address the climate emergency (stormwater harvesting, solar panels on roofs, power purchase agreements, etc).
- Designing programs so residents understand the contribution these programs make in addressing the climate emergency
- Including a community education component in all climate emergency-related community and Council programs, practices, and initiatives.
- Utilising community outreach bodies (e.g. the Port Phillip EcoCentre) and drawing upon the municipality's natural features to expand engagement of children in schools, and adults in community settings, in learning about their environment and the impact of the climate emergency.

## Transparent Sustainability Reporting

PECAN recommends that Council implements a transparent management system in its programs, strategies and plans (KPIs, monitoring, reporting, etc), including:

- Twice yearly reporting of emissions from residential, commercial, and industrial sectors, as well as from council assets (using National Asset Management Systems or equivalent as a reporting standard).
- Reporting must comply with obligations defined in the Local Government Act 2020 and follow the Auditor General of Victoria's Better Practice guide.
- Public release of all consultant's reports and studies.
- Annual public reporting on progress of all activities against measurable goals.

# PECAN Climate Emergency Action Plan

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## **Budget Allocation for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation**

PECAN recommends that Council allocates funding to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change, including:

- Ensuring funding to deliver Climate Emergency commitments.
- Involving the community in a participatory budgeting process through all stages of council's budgeting process.
- Prioritising implementation of the most cost effective and impactful projects.

## **Renewable Electricity - Council**

PECAN recommends that Council reduces emissions from Council facilities and generates its own renewable electricity through solar panel installation, including:

- Sourcing electricity from 100% renewable sources (i.e. MREP, solar)
- Increasing electricity generation within the municipality, e.g. through further solar installation on Council buildings

## **Renewable Electricity - Residential, Commercial, and Industrial**

PECAN recommends that Council launches initiatives that require, promote and underwrite the use of renewable energy for residential, commercial, and industrial properties (i.e. solar panel installations, community microgrids, battery purchases, etc), including:

- Facilitating power purchase agreements (e.g. MREPII) and similar bulk purchasing projects (micro-grids, virtual power plants, etc) for residential, commercial, and industrial users.
- Sourcing community (residential, commercial, and industrial) electricity from 100% renewable sources by 2030.

## **Energy Efficiency - Council**

PECAN recommends that Council improves energy efficiency in council properties, including:

- Auditing Council assets to identify opportunities to reduce emissions through energy efficiency efforts.
- Reducing average Council electricity use by 20% by 2025.

## **Energy Efficiency - Residential, Commercial, and Industrial**

PECAN recommends that Council mandates, promotes, funds, and underwrites the improvement of energy efficiency in non-Council properties, including:

# PECAN Climate Emergency Action Plan

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- Designing and offering programs that reduce emissions through energy efficiency across residential, commercial, and industrial (e.g. through efficiency programs or rate reduction incentives for properties).
- Reducing average community (residential, commercial, and industrial) electricity use by 20% by 2025.

## Energy Efficiency - Street Lighting

PECAN recommends that Council upgrades street lighting with efficient LED lighting:

- 100% LED street lighting for pedestrian and vehicular lighting by 2023.

## Green Space

PECAN recommends that Council expands access to green space and applies developer contributions to areas of greatest need, as well as:

- Adopting Green Governance principles.
- Providing access to open space (based on Fishermans Bend standards):
  - District (5ha- 15ha within 15 minutes)
  - Precinct (1.2ha - 5ha within 10 minutes) is
  - Neighbourhood (500sqm - 1.2ha within 5 minutes)
  - Pocket Parks (200sqm - 400sqm within 2-5 minutes walk)
  - Linear Parks (200sqm)
- Finalizing Review of Public Space Strategy by 2021

## Canopy Cover

PECAN recommends that Council sets targets that increase the total amount of tree canopy cover across the municipality, including:

- Amending targets to double canopy cover across the municipality from 19% to 40% by 2040 and setting intermediate targets for 2024, 2028 etc.
- Ensuring planting selection guides prioritise climate-change resilience, longevity, biodiversity, canopy coverage at maturity, and are available to the public.
- Identifying those areas requiring increased tree canopy and potential maximum tree coverage across the municipality, using urban heat island hot spots for guidance. Based on this identification use a precinct planning and engagement approach to maximise outcomes.
- Activate community groups to plant and maintain trees in parks and potential nature reserves.
- Use best practice when developing and supporting growing trees including passive watering.
- Encouraging planting on private land.

# PECAN Climate Emergency Action Plan

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- Prioritising canopy cover in all strategic documents including car parking and transport strategies.

## **Natural Gas Phase-Out - Council**

PECAN recommends that Council phases out natural gas and upgrades properties to switch from natural gas to electrical heating/cooking, including:

- Upgrading existing Council buildings from gas to 100% electricity by 2024.
- Ensuring new Council buildings are gas free.

## **Natural Gas Phase Out - Residential, Commercial, and Industrial**

PECAN recommends that Council supports the phase out of natural gas and retrofitting residential, commercial and industrial properties to switch from natural gas to electrical heating/cooking, including:

- All new buildings and planning applications to prohibit gas connections by 2022. This requires amendments to the planning scheme, to be advocated through the CASBE process.
- Advocating for community members to take up State Government funding offers for solar hot water, etc and other gas-free technologies.

## **Vehicle Fleet Electrification - Council**

PECAN recommends that Council electrify its vehicle fleets (cars, buses, rubbish collection, etc), including:

- All new council owned, leased or contracted vehicles 100% electric by 2022.
- Entire council owned, leased or contracted vehicles 100% electric by 2024.

## **Vehicle Fleet Electrification - Residential, Commercial, Industrial**

PECAN recommends that Council supports electrification of private vehicle fleets (cars, buses, waste collection, etc), including:

- Advocating for State and Federal government support for electric vehicles.

## **Electric Vehicle Charging Spaces - Council**

PECAN recommends that Council install or allocate space for electric vehicle charging stations, including:

- Advocating for the provision of electric vehicle infrastructure, ensuring equity, use of renewable electricity for charging, and preserving the public realm.



# PECAN Climate Emergency Action Plan

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## Mobility

PECAN recommends that Council improve mobility including bike paths, walking/pedestrian access, public transport, and ride share/car sharing, by:

- Increasing investment in infrastructure supporting low-impact transport modes (e.g. separated bike lanes, widening footpaths and prioritising bike lanes).
- Ensuring interconnected transport to support low-impact modes (within and outside the municipality).
- Immediate provision of temporary safe, separated bike paths to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Actively seeking state and federal government grant funds to increase low-carbon mobility infrastructure investment.

## Waste and the Circular Economy

PECAN recommends that Council improve sustainability of waste disposal, reuse and recycling, including:

- Accelerating implementation of the State Government's Recycling Victoria action plan and undertaking education programs alongside rollout.
- Reducing waste going to landfill by 75% by 2025.
- Implementing a green waste composting program for reuse within the municipality by 2024.
- Incorporating lessons from centralised waste recycling and FOGO collection pilots in Middle Park and South Melbourne into Recycling Victoria action plan rollout.
- Applying for state government grants to implement services that reduce waste.
- Working with commercial entities and premises to reduce waste.
- Advocating for and - where possible - requiring (e.g. South Melbourne Market) the use of biodegradable packaging and bags.
- Advocating for accelerated roll-out of the Victorian government's Recycling Victoria 10-year waste and recycling action plan.

## Planning and Building Approval

PECAN recommends that Council change the planning and building approvals processes to mandate Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD), Environmentally Sensitive Design (ESD) planning, energy efficiency and phase-out of gas for new buildings and extensions, by:

- Ensuring all new Council developments incorporate ESD principles.
- Amending the planning scheme to require carbon neutrality, including ESD and blue-green infrastructure principles, by 2023 in line with CASBE recommendations.
- Requiring ESD consideration including deep soils in new developments to support canopy coverage and other greening initiatives.

# PECAN Climate Emergency Action Plan

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- Engaging with MAV, CASBE, and other local government bodies to advocate for changes to the planning scheme to require carbon neutrality, ESD and WSUD in new developments (i.e. 8-star ratings, prohibit gas connections, third pipe installation).
- Requiring disclosure and essential upgrades on the sale of premises or on re-leasing of private and State managed properties.
- Considering the significance of sea-level rise in planning.

## **Climate Control for Public, Vulnerable and Social Housing - Council**

PECAN recommends that Council mitigates climate change impacts for vulnerable residents, by:

- Partnering with aged, social and community care providers to upgrade the homes of at least 100 vulnerable community members each year (those experiencing energy hardship, with health conditions, frailty and additional needs). Customised energy retrofits may include insulation, lighting, draft proofing, door and window seals, fans and blinds, to improve thermal comfort, reduce bill stress and improve health outcomes.
- Extending Council's Aged Care and Home Support Services programs to progressively improve household energy efficiency and comfort.

## **Water Management and Flood Mitigation**

PECAN recommends that Council improves water recycling, stormwater harvesting, installation of rainwater water gardens, rainwater tanks, depaving, and increasing water permeability, including:

- Updating the Water Sensitive City policy to include a catchment-based water management plan by 2021 (harvest, divert, reuse and forestall stormwater to reduce run-off, contamination, water use, and flood risk across the municipality)
- Ensuring all open spaces maximise use of stormwater catchments to meet public spaces water demand.
- Progressive increases in permeability across the municipality, with annual targets to be set
- 70% reduction in council's mains water use by 2030 compared to 2000 (e.g. through water harvesting in Elsternwick Park and Alma Park, etc).
- 50% reduction in nitrogen runoff into waterways by 2030 .
- Harvesting and reuse of 80ML of stormwater annually (e.g. Alma Park, Elsternwick Park).

# PECAN Climate Emergency Action Plan

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## Fossil Fuel Divestment

PECAN recommends that Council divests from fossil fuel companies, including staff superannuation funds, and banks that are financing fossil fuel projects:

- Updating Council's Investment Policy to require 100% ethical investment by excluding investment in fossil-fuels, tobacco, gambling, arms, etc.
- 100% divestment from fossil fuels by 2021.
- 100% divestment from other non-ethical investments by 2022.
- Creating community awareness about divestment and related campaigns.
- Full reporting on council investments, including proportions of fossil-fuel and non-ethical companies, and threshold of fossil-fuel and non-ethical activities that defines a company as 'ethical'.
- Advocating to the Commonwealth government to plan for a decarbonised future based on renewable energy sources both for domestic and export purposes.

## Council Green Procurement

PECAN recommends that Council adopt a policy for Green Accreditation of its service providers, including:

- Update procurement process and guidelines to ensure that all tender assessments prioritise:
  - Sustainability (e.g. use of recycled materials, environmental impact, etc)
  - Local suppliers and use of locally-sourced materials
  - Divested suppliers (e.g. suppliers who have divested from and do not work with companies in fossil-fuel and non-ethical industries)
  - Sustainable suppliers (e.g. supplier's own sustainability processes, scope 1, 2, 3 emissions)