# PECAN’s Key Recommendations

## Climate Emergency Action Plan

Following Port Phillip Council’s declaration of a climate emergency, the next step is to incorporate actions and targets to tackle climate change into CoPP’s overarching mission and direction statements.

PECAN recommends that Council:

* **Complete a climate emergency action plan during 2021-2022.**

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| Budget Impact: Work undertaken by existing council staff. |

## Council and Community Renewable Energy and Emissions

Reducing community and council emissions is a critical step to address the climate emergency. Council can support reductions in community emissions by facilitating Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) ) particularly for the commercial and industrial sector responsible for over 80% of the 2m tonnes of emissions in Port Phillip; bulk solar PV purchases, development of community micro-grids and virtual power plants, community batteries, and assisting apartment residents to access emissions reduction opportunities.

PECAN recommends that Council:

* **Engage with the community through working groups to reduce community emissions.**
* **Complete its first Power Purchase Agreement by 2022.**
* **Set a target of 100% increase in community solar PV installations by 2025.**
* **Set a target of 100% renewable energy for the community by 2030.**
* **Reduce energy use through efficiency upgrades to Council buildings and street lighting.**
* **Decommission all natural gas connections in Council buildings by 2030.**

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| Budget Impact: $220,000-$250,000: One additional FTE Council officer responsible for PPA development and associated energy and legal consultancy costs. |

Most of this work would normally be undertaken by existing staff, but Sustainability appears to be down by three FTE staff, due to contract completions and movement to other Council areas. In addition a new staff member would be required to develop the Power Purchase agreement; this person would be responsible for high level liaison with commercial and industrial companies, together with energy and legal consultancies, electricity distributor and retailers. MREP2 cost the city of Melbourne less than half that of MREP1 and was completed in half the time of the first Agreement. Given Port Phillip’s experience over several years in MREP1, it might be anticipated that a PPREP could be completed in 18 months and require between $220,000 and $250,000 in staffing and other costs, and reduce community emissions very substantially, by between 5 and 10%, depending on membership. These estimates need to be worked through with existing Council staff, which obviously we are not able to do in detail. And we draw attention again to the reduced staff numbers in Sustainability; with an increasing workload across Council’s sustainability responsibilities, it seems essential that staffing capacity is closely assessed as part of the new Council Plan.

## Community Education Initiatives

The Port Phillip EcoCentre plays a role in community education and supporting strong community networks.

PECAN recommends that Council:

* **Co-fund the EcoCentre redevelopment and maintain on-going operational and activities funding for EcoCentre.**

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| Budget Impact: Redevelopment co-funding is already allocated in Council budget. |

## Increase Water Recycling through Local Projects and Adjacent Council Collaboration

The use of recycled water is critical to council achieving its water use and pollution reduction commitments. These activities are also essential to mitigating flood risk in vulnerable areas of Elwood.

PECAN recommends that Council:

* **Engage with the community through working groups to develop overarching blue-green strategies.**
* **Contribute $1m to water retention flood mitigation works in Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve (such as by moving money from the budget into an escrow trust until initiation of agreed works). Elsternwick Park provides the only readily accessible source of stormwater harvesting and contamination reduction to meet targets for Port Phillip, and all necessary steps should be taken to ensure that this opportunity is taken up.**
* **Undertake a feasibility study of a water retention project in the Catani Gardens catchment.**

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| Budget Impact: $1m for Elsternwick Park already included in the budget; an initial Feasibility study for Catani Gardens water retention work to be undertaken by council staff, given the availability of reports previously completed and with relevance to the study; any consultancy requirements to be determined with staff. |

## Ensure Equitable Access to Public Open Space Across Port Phillip

The various suburbs of Port Phillip have differing access to public open space, with some areas having 31% public open space, while the area east of Brighton Rd has only 5% of public open space.

PECAN recommends that Council:

* **Set targets for proximate access to public open space (based on Fishermans Bend precinct targets).**
* **Sets a target of 10% public open space in the area east of Brighton Rd by 2028.**
* **Indentifies appropriate properties for acquisition funded by the Resort and Recreation Trust.**

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| Budget Impact: Funded from Resort and Recreation Trust, which has $26m balance. |

## Greening Port Phillip

The City of Port Phillip currently has 19% tree canopy cover, but this cover is unevenly distributed and does not factor in senescence planning. Some areas such as Balaclava are significantly lacking canopy cover. Increased tree canopy cover is important to mitigate increasing heat loads and improve public amenity, and canopy deficiencies should be integrated with heat mapping to determine priority precincts. Species selection needs prioritizing for resilience, time to canopy maturity, and appropriate location (eg nature strips, median strips, laneways).

PECAN recommends that Council:

* **Sets targets of 22% tree canopy cover by 2025, 30% by 2030, and 40% by 2040.**

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| Budget Impact: $730,000 this year, as projected in the 2020/21 Budget forward estimates. |

There was agreement last year that funding for tree planting needed a substantial increase, but due to Budget exigencies the pre-existing funding level of $440,000 was maintained.

In our view the Greening Port Phillip review, scheduled for this year, should be required to more accurately assess adequate funding levels for future years.

## Strengthen Planning and Building Regulations.

Council is currently involved in the CASBE review of current Planning and Building regulations.

PECAN recommends that Council continues to advocate for zero carbon planning scheme requirements, including the signing of the CASBE MOU for Councils to support a rapid transition to zero emissions buildings, by the State Government’s introduction of an updated Planning and Environment Act, which will:

* **Require more rigorous ESD and WSUD measures for planning and building approvals by 2023.**
* **Increase open space and tree planting requirements in new developments.**
* **Increase tree canopy cover protection in private properties.**
* **Require only electric hot water and space heating in new developments and planning permits by 2024.**

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| Budget Impact: Work to be undertaken by existing council staff. |

## Improve Access, Amenity, and Walkability Across St Kilda East, Balaclava, and Ripponlea

PECAN has developed a proposal for the Green Line, a linear park which follows the route of the railway corridor from Alma Park to the Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve. The Green Line will enhance walking and cycling accessibility, increase open space and tree canopy cover, and link habitat for biodiversity.

PECAN recommends that Council:

* **Implement the Green Line over three years.**
* **Commence work on the first stage of the Green Line in 2021-2022.**

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| Budget Impact: Initial funding to come from existing green space and transport budgets. |

## Support Zero-Impact Transport Modes and Electrify Council Vehicles

The shift to zero-impact transport modes is a key part of the transition to a sustainable city. This includes separated bike lanes, widening footpaths and encouraging pedestrian mobility, public transport, and ensuring interconnected transport linkages.

PECAN recommends that Council:

* **Support zero-impact transport through bike lanes, walking paths and public transport.**
* **Require all new Council owned, leased or contracted vehicles to be 100% electric by 2022.**
* **Require all Council owned, leased, or contracted vehicles to be 100% electric by 2024 (assuming availability across the range)**

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| Budget Impact: Funded from existing fleet capital and maintenance budgets; this will need review in later years. |

## Procurement and Investment

While Council is working towards sustainability, council procurements and investments may be working against council’s goals and community expectations.

PECAN recommends that Council:

* **Requires Green Accreditation for service providers, prioritizing sustainability (recycling, locally sourced, divested, Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions) by 2021.**
* **Requires application of Green/Blue integration principles across all relevant Council sectors.**
* **Updates Council Investment Policy to require 100% ethical investment by excluding fossil fuels, tobacco, arms, and gambling by 2022.**

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| Budget Impact: Work to be undertaken by existing council staff. |

# Budget and Council Plan Submission Background Material

The follow documents support these key recommendations:

* PECAN 2020-2021 Budget Submission
* PECAN Climate Emergency Action Plan
* PECAN Green Line proposal
* Summary of Council Plan 2021-2031 community consultation, Sat Feb 27
* Planning a Green-Blue City (DELWP) <https://www.water.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0029/89606/Green-blue-Infrastructure-Guidelines-Feb17.pdf>