



## Response to City of Port Phillip’s Draft Climate Emergency Plan 2023-2028

PECAN is pleased to respond to the City of Port Phillip’s long-awaited draft *Climate Emergency Plan*.

While we recognise there are many positive aspects of the draft Plan, our submission necessarily focuses on areas for improvement with recommendations flowing from that.

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## Comments on the Draft Plan Title and Introductory Pages 1-11

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### ***Title***

This should be changed to ***Climate Emergency Action Plan 2023-2028*** to make it very clear to all readers that the plan is about Council taking action in response to the climate emergency.

### ***Executive summary (p6)***

This section needs strengthening when the final plan is presented. It is not an executive summary of the action plan currently; rather it is a short statement of the problem.

### ***Purpose (p6)***

In this section on purpose, there are some things missing and some areas where we recommend changes:

- **Statement of the Priority areas**

We suggest the following changes.

Priority 1: Enhancing community resilience should be *Educating and mobilising our community and enhancing community resilience*

Priority 5: Planning for buildings and places should be *Planning for sustainable buildings and places*.

- **A statement about the overall purpose of the actions under each priority area and about resourcing issues**

E.g., from Yarra's Plan, p 29:

“Organised around the five strategic priorities, the following sections set out targets, headline actions and present actions in tabular action plans. As appropriate, the action plans include resources required for delivery, such as staff and financial resourcing. In many cases the actions fit into future budget cycles, therefore fully costed project proposals and schedules will be prepared at that time and be subject to future budget approval processes. For many actions, the first year is to be delivered within existing resources or with a modest increase in resources to enable new initiatives to be set up then expanded in subsequent years (for example, the community climate programs). Where expansion of initiatives requires additional resources, this has been indicated in the action plan. Some actions are delivered primarily through complementary Council strategies and plans, for example, strategies related to waste, urban agriculture and nature. The relationship between the Climate Emergency Plan and these other strategies is set out in Appendix A.”

- **A statement about Timeframes, monitoring and review**

E.g., again from Yarra's Plan, p29:

“This plan sets out actions to be delivered over the next four years. We will publicly report on key actions via Council's annual corporate reporting and will communicate achievements through a range of communications channels, such as Yarra's website, Yarra News, digital media, case studies and other forms of recognition to promote and amplify the Yarra community's climate action efforts. The actions within the plan will be reviewed and updated after two years. Council will continue to annually monitor, analyse and report on organisational carbon emissions, including maintaining carbon neutral certification. Emissions from the community will be monitored as electricity and gas data becomes available.”

- **A more detailed statement than that on p7 about how the CEAP relates to other Council strategies and how they are referenced in the Plan.**

- **A guide to reading the Plan.**
- **A glossary of terms.**

***Our role (p7)***

What is missing here is how Council sees its role in partnering with community (residents and business) to mobilise action on climate change. There should be a strong paragraph here to address this important issue.

***What we've done so far (p7)***

This section should refer to Council's very useful *Climate Update* document from Feb 2022.

***Background (p8)***

This section only mentions the declaration of the Climate Emergency in 2019 and not the subsequent decisions to develop this Plan (Nov 2021 and Aug 2022). These details should be added.

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## Comments on the structure of the Draft Plan and on the description and presentation of the five Priorities

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This section of PECAN’s submission focuses on *the structure* of the current draft plan and offers recommendations for revisions. It should be noted that *the structure* of the current draft plan has implications for the *substantive* proposals we make in the other sections of the PECAN submission. Hence changes to the structure will allow a place for the substantive recommendations we propose.

### The issue of time

It is not clear to a reader whether the heading Actions in the draft plan refer to past, present or future actions. Our recommendations are that the time in which actions exist should be clarified. It should be emphasised that the *Climate Emergency Action Plan* is a five-year plan and this needs to be represented in the headings of the plan.

#### Changes to headings

Current headings	Recommended headings for past/current actions	Recommended headings for future actions
Highlights	Highlights of past (and) ongoing achievements	
Actions		Actions 2023-2028
Working with our community and partners		Partnerships 2023-2028
Advocacy positions		Advocacy actions 2023-2028

### Recommendation to tabulate Actions in the Plan

For each Priority area, we recommend the following presentation format:

- General introduction
- What has been achieved to date (action highlights to date, case study as appropriate)
- Table of Actions\* for 2023-2028 with timeframes, resourcing (now and for future budget cycles), areas responsible, related strategies and partners involved, plus indicators and targets (interim and final as appropriate), i.e., tables would have column headings such as:
  - Action
  - Timeframe
  - Resourcing (now and for future budget cycles)
  - Responsible area, related strategies and partners
  - Key Indicators and Targets (to inform monitoring, review and evaluation of actions over the life of the Plan)

\* See other inner city Climate Emergency Action Plans that have used this approach, e.g., Merri-Bek and Yarra

### **The order of information**

In the current draft the tables of Indicators and Targets come before the Actions they refer to. If the Actions are tabulated as recommended above, it would help a reader to see the Actions first and then how those Actions are to be measured (indicators) and the targets to be achieved in the tables. We also recommend that all Actions are listed in order of their priority or significance for achieving the desired outcome in each Priority area.

### **Use of the word 'we'**

Sometimes action or the need for action refers to the action *Council as an organisation* takes with respect to things it has direct responsibility for, for example council buildings. Sometimes actions refer to actions the community as a whole *undertakes or should* undertake. The use of the word 'we' sometimes refers to 'we the council as an organisation' and sometimes it refers to 'we as a community as a whole'.

Here is an example of where 'we' is used to refer to the council as an organisation:

The year we declared the climate emergency, 2019, was Australia's hottest and driest on record.

Here is an example where 'we' refers to 'everyone':

The science is clear: climate change is already impacting plants, animals and people across the globe, and 'we' have a narrow window to prevent further disastrous impacts on our planet.

Below it is unclear who the very confident 'we' is:

But 'we' know what to do.

In fact, we recommend this statement be removed.

It is good that the council has distinguished between how 'we' the council as an organisation can act on the things for which it is directly responsible, and the things it wants to encourage or facilitate 'we' the community to act on.

In speaking on behalf of the community as a whole, the Council takes itself to be part of that larger community, in fact a leader of that community.

We want to involve and engage everyone in Port Phillip and support our vulnerable community members to prepare for the changed climate.

We strongly support this view of the role of Council. But something very important that flows from this has not been fully taken up in the draft Plan.

### **Council as a leader of autonomous citizens**

As an organisation, Council can take direct actions to reduce climate impacts and ‘prepare for the changed climate’. But as a leader in the community, it does not have the direct power to prepare the community for the changed climate. Needless to say, members of the community are autonomous, and it is only through communication and education that Council can move people to prepare for a changed climate. It can educate, encourage, incentivise, and mobilise community members to take action together and as individuals. This is implicit in the current draft of the plan. Doing so should be made explicit by including educating and mobilising the community as part of Priority 1, currently *Enhancing community Resilience*.

We recommend that this priority should include all the ways that Council currently engages the community.

### ***The role of the Climate Emergency Action Plan***

Our second related recommendation arises from this central role of council vis the community. The climate emergency action plan should be a plan about what Council will do over the next five years. Rather than instructing or advising individuals as to what they should do, the actions Council will undertake to systematically assist ‘community members to prepare for the changed climate’ should be the focus of the final Plan.

Of course, in other documents, on websites, videos, podcasts, info diagrams, signage, etc, Council should be promoting actions that members of the community can take, but in this document the focus should be on what council will do as part of a priority of educating and mobilising the community ‘to prepare for the changed climate’.

Hence, PECAN recommends that instead of the heading, included for each Priority: ‘What you can do’ and a list of actions individuals should take, the heading should be changed to indicate what can Council do to assist members of the community to act.

### **Example of switching from advice to individuals to Council facilitation of action by community members**

Current draft Document	Recommended change
What you can do to reduce community emissions	What can Council do to assist members of the community to reduce community emissions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Set yourself some goals to act, connect with like-minded people and follow our online list of powerful ways to take climate action</li><li>● Become politically active, advocate for change with your local Councillors and members of parliament in</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Promote Councils</b> online list of powerful ways to take climate action e.g. goal setting with like-minded people and follow our</li><li>● <b>Create occasions for residents to</b> become politically active, advocate for change with local Councillors and members of</li></ul>

<p>the Victorian and Australian upper and lower houses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Convert gas appliances – hot water, heating, cooking – with electric substitutes such as heat pumps and induction cooktops</li> <li>● Advocate to your superannuation fund to divest from financial institutions that invest in fossil fuel</li> <li>● Switch your electricity to certified GreenPower or zero emissions electricity using offsets or install solar panels</li> <li>● Grow some food, join a community garden, eat less resource-intensive foods such as red meat and visit your local bulk buy stores and farmers’ markets</li> <li>● Use sustainable and active forms of transport, such as walking, riding or public transport, instead of driving a car</li> <li>● Buy second hand and repair existing items and visit the EcoCentre repair workshops</li> <li>● Where waste can’t be avoided or reused, reduce waste to landfill by maximising recycling options.</li> </ul>	<p>parliament in the Victorian and Australian upper and lower houses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Promote conversion of gas appliances</b> – hot water, heating, cooking – with electric substitutes such as heat pumps and induction cooktops</li> <li>● <b>Provide information on how to divest from and advocate to fossil fuels, superannuation and other financial institutions, advice forums through forums with Market forces, etc</b></li> <li>● <b>Inform and promote switching</b> by residents to certified GreenPower or zero emissions electricity using offsets</li> <li>● <b>Provide independent advice on or installing solar panels</b></li> <li>● <b>Encourage residents to</b> grow some food, join a community garden, eat less resource-intensive foods such as red meat and visit your local bulk buy stores and farmers’ markets</li> <li>● <b>Promote</b> sustainable and active forms of transport, such as walking, riding or public transport, instead of driving a car</li> <li>● <b>Inform residents of existing opportunities to</b> buy second hand and repair existing items and visit the EcoCentre repair workshops</li> <li>● <b>Encourage residents</b> where waste can’t be avoided or reused, to reduce waste to landfill by maximising recycling options.</li> </ul>
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### Overlaps between the Draft Plan’s Priorities

It is important to note that there is considerable overlap in the goals of each of the Plan’s priorities. For example, while the explicit goal of Priority 2 is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, Priority 3 on transport, as far as its sits in this *Climate Emergency Action Plan* also has the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. *Priority 4: Creating resilient and liveable public spaces* and *Priority 5: Planning for sustainable buildings and places* also have much

overlap, as they both are concerned with greening and water issues. The significance of these overlaps is that to be properly actioned the final Plan requires a whole of council endeavour. We recommend that Council continue or reinstate the cross-departmental Climate Steering Committee to effectively action the plan.

**The relationship between *Act and Adapt* and the *Climate Emergency Action Plan***

PECAN acknowledges that the *Climate Emergency Action plan* is a synthesis of all the Council's other strategies which centre on climate action, particularly *Act and Adapt*. We also note that the *Climate Emergency Action Plan* is the Council's central community facing document on the Climate Emergency, hence our focus has been upon this plan. We obviously have made recommendations in this submission to the Plan that are new and do not currently exist in *Act and Adapt*. We would like the council to assume that the recommendations we have made in this plan apply to *Act and Adapt* and take them to also apply to the current review of *Act and Adapt*.



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## **Priority 1: Educating and mobilising our community and enhancing community resilience**

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First, what is a ‘resilient community’? What does this mean and what does it look like? How will we know if the community is resilient?

### **Focus only on Council assets misplaced**

PECAN believes that this section needs to be more closely tied to Council’s actual role in enabling the people of Port Phillip to act on climate change and thereby building a resilient community. The introduction states Council is “investing in our assets to ensure they are climate-resilient and changing how we deliver our services”, but the whole section seems to ignore the fact that the most important ‘assets’ for Council are in fact the citizens of Port Phillip. Investing in community resilience should mean Council action to educate, support and facilitate action on climate by individual residents, businesses and local organisations.

For this reason, we recommend expanding the title for this priority to *Educating and mobilising our community and enhancing community resilience*.

Council should have a strong role in mobilising and supporting the community to enable greater uptake of solar panels, battery storage, electrification of households (getting off gas), increased participation in recycling and FOGO programs and increased greening and greater permeability on private land. There should be specific actions identified for each of these issues.

### **Addressing inequity**

Council’s legislated role includes reducing the risk to community from climate change impacts and Council actions need to reflect this role. If this Plan acknowledges issues such as “heatwaves, floods and storms disproportionality impact our vulnerable community members already experiencing social, economic or health inequity”, then there should be specific actions that address this issue of inequity. The draft Plan needs a much stronger focus on equity in its proposed actions. The most vulnerable households in our community are those most affected by climate change (whether effects of heat, energy costs or less access to green, open spaces) and the final Plan should include actions that specifically benefit these households.

### **Council communicating its climate actions as a way of building community involvement**

PECAN recommends adding an action which PECAN has advocated at every opportunity over the past three or so years in submissions to Council. Council is well placed to create a virtuous circle of community action. It is well placed to raise awareness of the climate crisis in the community and assist members of the community to consider how to take action.

One way of doing so is through treating each action that Council undertakes as having two faces: first, the action which will address the climate issue directly, and second, communicating the significance of that action to the community. For example, a direct

action is reducing emissions through introducing LED streetlights; the communicative action is the signage to explain how LED lights reduce greenhouse gas emissions, preferably at the sites where this has been done. Other examples are communicating the existence and value of solar panels on Council building rooftops, as at South Melbourne market and on town hall buildings or where stormwater harvesting has been put in, such as at Alma Park, signage explaining their function is a critical communication and awareness raising strategy. This should be done at these sites.

The opportunities for such communicative action, to educate and mobilise the community are enormous and the department responsible for community engagement should be tasked with this priority in conjunction with departments undertaking the action. The EcoCentre could also be additionally funded to be involved in this communicative role.

### **The crucial role of the Port Phillip EcoCentre**

A major role for Council is to communicate with, educate and inform the community – to be present, visible and supportive. A longstanding community facing and nurtured partnership with Council is the EcoCentre.

We recommend that the EcoCentre be specifically funded to run programs that support community members to take action on climate change. This could include co-designed programs on getting off gas, going solar, household energy efficiency, maximising recycling and use of FOGO, increasing greening and achieving more permeability on private land, etc. Council should expand and champion the EcoCentre in its operations, its role in education and supporting community to be active in tackling the climate emergency. We also believe that the EcoCentre would be the ideal organisation to host the proposed Sustainability Hub, rather than having it hosted within the Library Service.

### **Need for a Climate Action Community Reference Group**

The City of Port Phillip is fortunate to have a range of engaged and climate-focused community groups eager to partner with Council in addressing the climate emergency. PECAN had hoped that such a partnership would be championed here in the *Climate Emergency Action Plan* and our proposal that Council develop a Community Reference group to guide implementation of the Plan would be taken up.

### **Council procurement and investment**

Community resilience will also be enhanced by Council taking a proactive stance for ethical and sustainable procurement and investment decisions. Council's actions in these areas should showcase a way forward for local business and community organisations.

### **Suggested additions to a revised future actions section, titled: *Actions 2023-2028***

- Establish a Community Reference Group to advise on and guide implementation of the *Climate Emergency Action Plan*.
- Codesign with and fund the EcoCentre to deliver a new community climate action program designed to mobilise the community to, for example:
  - enable greater uptake of energy efficiency measures, solar panels, battery storage, electrification (getting off gas);

- increase participation in recycling and FOGO programs;
- how to reduce contamination in recycling and FOGO efforts;
- increase greening; and
- achieve greater permeability on private land.
- Establish a community grants scheme to support community action on the climate emergency (as other councils have done e.g., City of Yarra).
- Adequately resource a Council communicative function on key actions under the Climate Emergency Action Plan to inform and inspire community awareness and action.
- Update Council’s procurement processes and guidelines to ensure that all tender assessments prioritise ethical purchasing, involving identified good practice in contracting and monitoring supervision of works and adherence to contractual requirements.
- Update Council’s Investment Policy to require 100% ethical investment that excludes investment in fossil fuels, tobacco, gambling and arms.

**Issues and concerns with the current section on *Indicators and Targets, Working with our community and partners* and *Advocacy positions***

**Indicators and Targets**

Current statement	Issues and concerns
% of asset management plans that include details of identified climate risks and measurable actions to increase climate resilience of the asset class.	Include examples of asset management plans so the public can understand what the statement means. This is not accessible language.
By 2028, Council has a fit for purpose risk management, reporting and decision-making framework in place to manage climate-related risk to service delivery, assets, and finances. Target: 100% complete	The Target needs to have a specific output. In 2028, will this be a complete framework? Or will the framework to be fully operational (and what does fully operational mean)?  What would ‘manage climate-related risk to service delivery, assets, and finances’ look like? How do we measure whether this has happened?
Percentage of community members who have sufficient information to make informed decisions about how to protect themselves and respond in the event of extreme weather (heatwaves, storms, flooding)	This should have specific outputs/targets. These should include: a) A Community Reference Group established and working effectively throughout the life of the plan. b) A Community Energy Grants Program introduced in 23/24 and implemented annually. c) Quarterly updates on actions taken and an annual report on progress against the plan to the community.
No advocacy position to be set as this is a <i>lag indicator</i> which will be measured to inform community support and programs.	The community are unlikely to understand what a lag indicator means. How will the public know when Council support for community support and programs is effective?

## Working with our community and partners

Current statement	Issues and concerns
“Supporting Port Phillip EcoCentre to promote environmental sustainability and community action”.	How will this be done? This needs to be more specific. Suggest: Expand the role and support for the EcoCentre in its operations, and education supporting the community to be actively involved in tackling the climate emergency. The EcoCentre is funded to provide workshops to increase people’s knowledge of the climate crisis and provide skills for effective climate advocacy and action.
“Building on current work to develop and collate data to understand climate impacts on the community”.	This needs to be more specific. How will this be done? How will we know? Could state that Council will hold events and campaigns to assist people to make practical changes to cut carbon emissions (for example, electric bicycles and vehicles, divesting from fossil fuels and understanding plant-based diets.
“Supporting the community to build and implement community led plans which include actions to respond to flooding, heatwaves and other climate impacts”.	How will this be done? This needs to be more specific. Could state that Council will partner with advocacy groups and organisations to deliver workshops to help people advocate effectively to governments for meaningful climate action.

## Advocacy positions (should be Advocacy actions)

Current statement	Issues and concerns
Commit to urgent action to reduce the impacts of climate change and maintain a safe environment for current and future generations	This could be more specific and include what actions will be called for e.g.: ending subsidies to fossil fuel projects, disallowing new fossil fuel projects and developing and implementing a planned transition away from fossil fuel use and ensure the lower cost of renewable energy is reflected in lower utility bills
Increase support to reduce utility bills and heat stress impacting vulnerable people, including investing public housing and aged care facilities	Add: ‘top rated energy efficient’ public housing and aged care facilities
Increase funding for health and emergency services habitat restoration and infrastructure to respond to heatwaves, droughts, bushfires and floods.	Add: ‘responding to climate impacts’

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## Priority 2: Minimising greenhouse gas emissions

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### Reducing emissions is a key priority, but some issues are apparent

This section acknowledges that reducing greenhouse gas emissions “is one of the most significant challenges we face in Port Phillip” (p14), and states that Council is “committed to real action” (p14) and to “working with partners, residents and businesses to achieve a low emissions future.” (p14)

So, it is surprising that the Actions on p18 seem lacking specificity. And some have already occurred (like co-funding for the new EcoCentre)

For example, although it is stated that: “We will deliver programs focused on increasing the community’s ability to reduce energy consumption and purchase renewable energy over the coming years.” (p14), under Actions we only learn that Council will be “Supporting individuals and businesses to reduce emissions, water and waste.” (p18) This begs the question of what support Council will actually provide.

While Council has in fact achieved much to date in reducing its own emissions (via the Melbourne Renewable Energy Project, for example) and increasing energy efficiency (e.g., LED street lighting program) and some of these actions are described as continuing over the course of the Plan, further actions to reduce emissions that are included in Act and Adapt (initiatives 15-26) are not included in the list of Actions here. We recommend that they be added and that they are made as specific as possible. (E.g., Initiative 26: “Seek partnerships to drive sustainable solutions for apartment buildings, including *supporting* Owners’ Corporations to undertake sustainability retrofits..” – What will that support be?)

On p18, we learn that Council will be:

- Exploring local carbon sequestration opportunities (meaning?);
- Driving the uptake of Environmental Upgrade Agreements for commercial and residential buildings” (but no information on what these agreements do); and
- Delivering a program to support community renewable energy uptake (what kind of program? who will deliver it?)

These must be better explained in the final Plan.

### Insufficient detail on initiatives underway

Further, Council is actively involved with the City of Yarra and the City of Melbourne in investigating and seeking funding for a program of Neighbourhood batteries to be implemented across the three municipalities. Currently, local consultation is occurring in relation to a number of sites for such batteries. Why then is there no specific mention made in the draft Plan of actions to establish neighbourhood batteries as to minimise community emissions? A number of further steps to establish the program will occur over the life of the Plan, so this omission must be rectified in the final Plan.

### **Additions to Figures/Diagrams on pp15-17**

Source references need to be provided for the information presented here and absolute numbers included as well as percentages on the snapshot of Council greenhouse gas emissions on p 16.

### **In addition**

We believe there are two key actions that need to be added to the currently identified actions to minimise greenhouse gas emissions. First, that Council takes more active steps to work with commercial and industrial emitters in Port Phillip to accelerate reduction of emissions in these sectors. And second, that Council take action to support the most vulnerable households in our community to access means for improving energy efficiency, managing the effects of rising temperatures and accessing renewable energy.

### **Additional recommended *Actions 2023-28*:**

- Include emissions reduction initiatives 15-26 from *Act and Adapt*.
- Initiate a program to broker power purchase agreements and similar bulk purchasing projects (micro-grids, virtual power plants, solar farms etc.) for commercial and industrial users in Port Phillip to reduce emissions. A first step would be for a Senior Sustainability Officer to begin pro-active discussions with the Fishermans Bend Business Forum, Council's Business Advisory Committee and local Traders' Associations.
- Investigate and implement a neighbourhood battery program across Port Phillip to store and share renewable energy with a focus on equitable participation of those with and without solar panels, including renters and those living in apartments.
- Partner with aged, social and community care providers to upgrade the homes of at least 30 vulnerable community members in the first year of the Plan, an increasing thereafter – for those experiencing energy/financial hardship, with health conditions, frailty and additional needs – to reduce the stress of high energy costs and improve health outcomes. To include energy retrofits such as insulation, lighting, draft proofing, door and window seals, fans and blinds. (See for example, City of Yarra program, 2.1 p47 of their Climate Emergency Plan.)

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## Priority 3: Enabling more sustainable transport options

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### General comments

Given the opening paragraph states “private vehicles already account for 14 per cent of emissions”, this is a huge area to reduce emissions. The introduction goes on to say

“We will deliver separated bike lanes and paths, plans for bike parking facilities at train and tram hubs and community bike confidence courses to encourage bike riding. Our aim is that everyone has access to convenient public and active transport options. Our targets include significantly increasing the number of daily walking, public transport and bike riding trips in our city”.

However, none of this is reflected in the Actions or the Targets sections.

While the *Move, Connect, Live Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-28* has some specific targets, these do not have a carbon emissions reduction focus. There is some intersection with this strategy, however this *Climate Emergency Action Plan* should draw out issues raised in the strategy and identify actions with a climate emergency lens.

### Recommended additional Actions 2023-2028:

#### Active transport

- Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport through improved infrastructure based on evidence and future predicted transport modelling to reduce car dependency.
- Improve separated bike infrastructure with good interconnectivity across intersecting municipal areas. Work with the Port Phillip Bicycle Users Group.
- Deliver additional safe cycling infrastructure projects, including bike parking corrals, and ongoing maintenance improvements. Specify a target number for each year.
- Use iterative trials for temporary sustainable transport infrastructure, car free zones and curfews and reallocation of car space for sustainable transport modes.
- Investigate parking restrictions to facilitate improved access for sustainable modes of transport through changes to allocation of road space. Have timelines.’
- Reduce on-street parking, where necessary, to enable improvements to sustainable transport infrastructure and the public realm. Specify a target number for each year.
- Raise the sustainable transport standards (i.e., Green Travel Plan requirements) for new residential and commercial developments, working with council and state government partners.

#### EV charging

- Introduce an EV charging program on council land by 2024.
- Work with potential sites and providers to support the roll out of public-use electric vehicle charge points. Specify a target number for each year.
- Incorporate in the planning permit process, requirements for significant new developments to make appropriate provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- Provide permits for car-share to install on-street EV charging. Have specific targets and timelines.

**Zero emissions vehicle transition**

- Accelerate the transition to an EV fleet at Council so that all new council owned, leased or contracted vehicles are 100% electric by 2028.
- Convert Council’s entire fleet to zero emissions by 2028, subject to availability of suitable vehicles and charging infrastructure/capability. Progressively switch to electric or other zero emissions vehicles at the time of renewal where possible, utilising full lifecycle cost budgeting rather than purchase price. Identify number achieved per year.
- Ensure Council’s service delivery contractors transition to zero emissions vehicles as quickly as possible (aim for 2026), including street sweeping and kerbside waste collection vehicles.
- Support, educate and promote the transition to electric vehicles by residents and businesses. Resource the EcoCentre to deliver programs. Aim for specified targets.
- Collaborate with car-sharing businesses to accelerate the transition to electric vehicles.

**Issues with current statements**

<b>Current statement</b>	<b>Issue</b>
Highlights	Change to ‘Highlights of past achievements’
“What you can do”	Change to ‘Council’s role in facilitating residents’ participation choosing more sustainable transport options’
Walk, ride, scoot or carpool for short trips to work, the shops and school	Promote and facilitate walking, riding, scooting or carpooling for short trips to work, the shops and school through raising awareness and providing a communication platform.
Champion bike riding, public and shared transport in your neighbourhood	Council will champion bike riding, public and shared transport in neighbourhoods
Consider a car share membership instead of buying a car	Council will promote and facilitate car-sharing and other alternatives to private car ownership



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## Priority 4: Creating resilient and liveable public spaces

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### Recommended amendments to the introductory section

The introductory section conveys a message that Council is well advanced with measures to maintain resilient and liveable public spaces (p23), but as we have recommended under Priority 1, this needs to be linked to stronger actions around educating and building resilience in the people of Port Phillip.

The statement on tree canopy cover in paragraph 5 on page 23 is misleading as new information in the draft Urban Forest Strategy shows that canopy cover has *decreased* overall in Port Phillip, and there has only been a fractional increase in canopy cover on public space. The sentence here could be modified to “We are committed to minimising the impact of the heat island effect by increasing the number of trees and overall canopy cover in our City”.

The paragraph on rainfall (paragraph 4) mentions a reduction in overall rainfall but omits to say that within that context more intensive rainfall events will occur.

### Current Actions-section: change to presentation and further actions to be added

#### 1. Highlights of past and current actions

In addition to the list of actions already completed or underway on p25, we recommend adding others:

Council has completed its first Stormwater Harvesting Project in Alma Park, and work is underway on two further stormwater projects for Catani Gardens (Fitzroy Street drain) and St Kilda Foreshore (Shakespeare Grove main drain) and these should be highlighted here.

In addition, mention could be made of

- the fact that more permeable surfaces are being created and integrated with more passive irrigation projects; and
- initial Council funding has been allocated for development of the Green Line.

#### 2. Additional recommended *Actions 2023-2028*

##### Tree canopy cover

Information provided by consultants to the Urban Forest Strategy indicates that most new planting has been made in Port Melbourne, Elwood and South Melbourne (Tree Ledger, p8). Given that canopy cover has not increased since 2018, new plantings need to be carefully reviewed.

We recommend clear action additions to address these issues here:

- Areas with low levels of open space and canopy cover need to be identified and overlaid with heat mapping data to enable the development of priority precincts for

new plantings; for the first time Council will have accurate data to enable such a process to be effectively carried out.

- And to be successful, new plantings must be assessed in terms of soil preparation, formative pruning, and *proactive monitoring and promotion of progress* (Background and Benchmarking Report, p59).

### **The Green Line**

The Green Line is an important project for Council, given its significance as both a walking and biodiversity corridor. We would like to see next steps for the Green Line added under Actions within this Priority, outlining how progress will occur to realise the Green Line over the life of the Plan.

### **Heat mapping**

Another inclusion in Actions here should relate to open spaces identified as hotspots by heat mapping. We recommend that the Action read “Open Spaces identified as hot locations by heat mapping should be assessed for new tree plantings and depending on size and function, as priority precincts”.

The Adaptation measures against heatwaves and flooding shown in pp 38-39 in *Act and Adapt* should also be incorporated as Actions here.

### **Recommended additional Actions 2023-2028**

#### **Greening**

- Use advanced data and analytics on heat mapping and tree canopy measurement to urgently increase tree canopy cover and understorey planting.
- Prioritise updating urban heat island effect information in a readily accessible form and available on the Council website. This will require finalising thermal heat mapping/vulnerability mapping/ canopy cover mapping and changes in canopy cover mapping, consistent with information provided by DEECA.
- Utilise a selection of climate resilient tree species/ encourage biodiversity/ canopy size and time to canopy maturity as information base for the revised Greening Port Phillip.
- Prioritise tree and understorey planting in public spaces of greatest need.
- Undertake significant action to increase permeability in public and private spaces and report annually on progress.
- Prioritise the purchase of land to create public spaces in areas of greatest need.
- Accelerate action to create the Green Line.
- Progressively transition road and footpaths to permeable materials.

#### **Water**

- Update the Water Sensitive City policy to include a catchment-based water management plan by 2023 (harvest, divert, reuse and forestall stormwater to reduce run-off, contamination, water use, and flood risk across the municipality).
- Accelerate action on stormwater harvesting to Fitzroy Street and Shakespeare St Drain projects.

- Adopt and take actions on recommendations from the Coastal Hazard Assessment 2022 to reduce impacts of sea level rise and integrate actions with the flood mitigation work proposed by Melbourne Water.
- Ensure water recycling from Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve meets foreshore watering needs from Elwood to St Kilda.
- Ensure all open spaces maximise use of stormwater catchments to meet public spaces water demand.

### **Indicators and Targets**

On completion of the Urban Forest Strategy, a comprehensive set of Indicators and Targets should be incorporated into this Priority, with a clear statement in the final *Climate Emergency Action Plan* that this update will occur. In the meantime, the following indicators and targets should be used in relation to open space broadly, and Council's Integrated Water Management Strategy:

- Those shown on p24 should be retained with targets and outcomes shown with accurate and consistent percentages.
- Two new stormwater harvesting systems completed by 2028.
- Completed installation of 30 new raingardens /passive watering systems in conjunction with priority precinct plantings by 2025
- Annual reporting on de-paving/permeability projects, showing both the number of projects, locations and size in square metres.

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## Priority 5: Planning for *sustainable* buildings and places

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### General comments

The Introduction to this section starts with the phrase

“Designing our public spaces and new buildings to withstand future climate impacts will greatly improve our community’s future.

It continues to state

“We also help the municipality change to become climate-resilient, such as more walkable communities relying less on fossil fuels, and places less vulnerable to flooding, extreme weather events and the urban heat island effect.”

However, the discussion which follows concentrates almost solely on building design and ESD measures, apart from some mentions of flood management and sea level rise, together with Fishermans Bend.

### Buildings

The material provided for buildings is quite detailed, focused particularly on ESD measures, and contained in the section on Actions. Much of that material could be reworked to form the Indicators and Targets section. The three measures currently provided for Indicators and Targets belong more properly in Priority 2, Minimising GHGs: Council’s use of renewable electricity, households with solar power, and number of privately owned EVs. This raises questions about how much duplication of measures between Priorities is acceptable? And that raises further questions about how discrete the five Priorities Council has chosen can be in practice?

### Places: greening, cooling and equity issues

With virtually no discussion of climate change’s impacts on both public and private open spaces, a section needs to be added. The critical role of greening and cooling the city’s public and private open spaces cannot be overstated in the context of the rapid acceleration in heating visible in the 2023 northern hemisphere summer. Council’s principal strategy for open spaces is *Places for People: Public Place Strategy 2022 -2032*. Volume 2 of the Strategy has a section on impacts of climate change on Council’s Open Spaces, and Volume 3 provides a section called Measuring our Success, with a useful table specifying Measures, Indicators, Inputs, Reporting Timeframes and Reporting Locations.

The strategy identifies East St Kilda and Balaclava as the areas in most need of additional open space, and states that the neighbourhood east of Brighton Rd

“has a diverse community, with a higher proportion of young children and young workers and a lower proportion of older people and people living on their own, compared to the rest of the City. We need new open spaces in this neighbourhood, and the existing spaces should provide the opportunity for children’s play, as well as a mix of uses for young families and young adults.”

But there are no actions in the Strategy which respond to the need for additional greening and cooling across the city; instead, new open space is to be provided most rapidly in areas where there is already a plentiful supply, and later, mainly 2030-32, for the undersupplied neighbourhoods described above. And there is no focus on increasing greening and cooling in existing public spaces. In other words, the *Public Space Strategy* is unfit as an instrument to enable appropriate responses to climate change in areas where they are most needed.

The other strategy which is relevant here is the *Urban Forest Strategy*, currently under development and due for completion in April 2024. The current process is unusual in that a number of external consultants have been contracted, and their reports are all available to community members. The Background and Benchmarking report has been prepared by St Jack and Co. and provides a wealth of material which can be incorporated into a detailed set of Indicators and Targets which could significantly increase resilience capacity across the municipality, in time for the 2024/25 Budget.

Canopy cover in Port Phillip has remained relatively steady since 2018 at 17.17%, with small net gains on roads and public land being outweighed by canopy loss on private land. A separate report, *Protecting Vegetation in the Private Realm*, has been prepared by planning consultants Hansen Partnership. It examines the fall in canopy cover on private properties in the context of the planning instruments being utilised by the Council:

*“To summarise the state and regional context, there are overarching strategic directions at a state and Metropolitan level to enhance urban forest, particularly canopy tree and vegetation cover in Metropolitan Melbourne to combat urban heat island increase as a result of climate change through urban greening/cooling as well as contribute to enhanced biodiversity through supporting bio-links, indigenous planting and climate resilient planting. Key strategies in this respect are Plan Melbourne 2017 - 2050 and the Living Melbourne strategy (2019). Also relevant are other State level documents such as the Built Environment Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan (DELWP, 2021).”*

### **Planning controls**

At present Council relies on Heritage overlays predominantly applied across most of the city’s residential areas. There are a number of additional planning controls which Council could adopt to obtain increased capacity to preserve vegetation on private land. The *Victorian Planning Provisions (VPPs)* have not been used by Council to date but they have particular significance for Port Phillip. Amendment VC216 from June 2022 updates provisions of State policy to promote ESD outcomes, embeds climate response into State policy and updates the overarching intent of State planning schemes to respond to climate change impacts. The amendment also includes energy efficiency and waste management, and inserts biodiversity, integrated water management and cooling and greening principles into State level policy.

Clauses 54, 55 and 58 within the VPPs are further mechanisms which can be used at permit stage, requiring landscape assessments including tree removal, protection and planting for residential applications; in addition, these requirements can be varied by way of schedules to residential zoning.

Other metropolitan Councils are using a wider range of planning instruments, and the report provides more detailed identification of additional planning provisions which could also be used by Port Phillip to produce better results. Attention to Hansen’s recommendations would enable the Council to achieve much better outcomes from private sector developments.

### ***Recommended Additional Actions 2023-2028***

- Apply expanded planning controls available to Council to address climate change impacts, including under Clauses 54, 55 and 58 and Amendment VC216 in the Victorian Planning Provisions and implement the relevant recommendations from the Hansen Partnership Report.
- Incorporate relevant key actions, measures, indicators and reporting timeframes from the *Public Places Strategy* that are key actions in response to climate change.
- Include specific actions to address the additional climate impact needs of undersupplied neighbourhoods and vulnerable populations.
- Increase greening and cooling efforts in existing public spaces.

### **Indicators and Targets**

- The indicators and targets listed here in the draft Plan apply in fact to Priority 2 and should be listed there.
- Develop and include relevant ESD Indicators and Targets
- Incorporate into the final Climate Emergency Action Plan the relevant Indicators and Targets to be developed for the Urban Forest Strategy when these are completed based on material presented in the *Background and Benchmarking* report prepared by St Jack and Co.
- Develop and incorporate Indicators and Targets relevant to application of expanded planning controls.