

Sustainability Strategy 2016 to 2020

Working towards a clean, green and sustainable community







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Sustainability is everyone's business and interest. When our community, environment and economy are more sustainably managed, Maroondah will be an even better place to live.

The Sustainability Strategy 2016-2020 contributes to the clean, green and sustainable vision embraced by residents, business and visitors in *Maroondah 2040: Our future together*.

In addition, Council has heard our community's wishes to take further leadership in transitioning to more sustainable lifestyles.

Through five focus areas, Council plans to lead the way to greater sustainability by example and through engagement, partnerships and communication with the broader community.

We are proud of the steps already undertaken towards a more sustainable Maroondah and committed to the further work outlined in this Strategy as we strive towards embedding sustainability into our activities.

This Strategy complements the *Maroondah Carbon Neutral Strategy (CNS)* that was adopted by Council in 2015. The CNS outlines energy efficiency actions and targets to reduce Council's greenhouse emissions and achieve cost savings.

We'd like to sincerely thank the Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee for their collaboration with Council in developing this Strategy. The Committee worked tirelessly and volunteered many hours to advance this important work agenda. The Committee consists of three councillors, plus eight members of the Maroondah community who are passionate about and highly experienced in sustainability. These are: Dr Graeme Lorimer, Jane Monk, Liz Sanzaro, Pam Yarra, Ken Whitney, Phil Pomaroff, Dr Fiona Ede and Moya Brown.

We look forward to achieving a more environmentally sustainable Maroondah and we hope you will join us on the journey.



Table of contents

Table of Contents	4
Introduction	5
What is Sustainability?	5
Our Vision	6
Strategy aims	6
Strategy principles	6
Background	7
Council's role in sustainability	7
Maroondah in context	8
Policy context	9
Ongoing Council sustainability activities	11
Community environmental education	12
Our Strategic Response	13
Focus Area 1 - Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Transport	14
Focus Area 2 - Green Assets and Water	16
Focus Area 3 - Engagement, Partnerships and Communication	17
Focus Area 4 - Governance, Evaluation and Improvement	18
Focus Area 5 - Funding, Resourcing and Opportunities	19
The Way Forward	20
Focus Area 1 - Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Transport	20
Focus Area 2 - Green Assets and Water	22
Focus Area 3 - Engagement, Partnerships and Communication	24
Focus Area 4 - Governance, Evaluation and Improvement	26
Focus Area 5 - Funding, Resourcing and Opportunities	28
Implementation and Review	29
Introduction	30
Strategic indicators	30
Glossary	32
Partnerships	34

Introduction

Maroondah City Council is committed to a 'clean, green and sustainable community' as set out in *Maroondah 2040: Our future together*.

Through the implementation of the *Sustainability Strategy 2016 to 2020*, Council will strive to ensure that its decisions are for the long term benefit of Maroondah's current and future communities. The Strategy is intended to inspire action and leadership on sustainability from all parties. It sets out an action agenda for Council's service delivery over the next four years, in partnership with the Maroondah community.

It has been developed through extensive research and engagement activities. This includes community feedback received through development of the Maroondah 2040 Community Vision; feedback received from the community at Council events (for example, Maroondah Festival) and from invaluable advice received from the Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee. A number of case studies are provided to illustrate positive efforts already underway and to inspire further good practice.

What is sustainability?

Sustainability means different things to different people, however this Strategy embraces the following definition:

Sustainability means balancing economic, social and environmental factors. It is concerned with how we can manage resources to ensure future generations have the same opportunities that we enjoy today.

Source: Resilient Melbourne Strategy 2016 (Melbourne's first resilience strategy, involving Melbourne's 32 councils).

In this era of rapid change in our environment and society, it is important to understand that Earth's resources underpin our lifestyles and wellbeing and therefore the liveability of our neighbourhoods. Our lives and economies depend upon clean air, water, energy and many other provisions from nature which we manage for the good or detriment of all.

Sustainability is therefore everyone's business. When our community, environment and economy are more sustainably managed, Maroondah will be an even better place to live.





Our Vision

The Maroondah community's aspirations are expressed in the Maroondah 2040 Community Vision under the 'Clean, Green and Sustainable Community' direction:

In 2040, Maroondah will be a green leafy community with high levels of waste diversion and sustainable approaches to infrastructure development, urban design and management of natural resources. Our community will be resilient and have the knowledge, capacity and resources to make sustainable lifestyle choices.

In order to deliver a more liveable and sustainable environment, Council will continue to work in partnership with the community.

Strategy aims

- Further embed sustainability in Council's service delivery to the community, and continue to lead by example.
- Build on and promote the sustainability efforts of many Maroondah residents and organisations.
- Pursue partnerships to advance sustainability.
- Help the community to lead a more sustainable lifestyle.

Strategy principles

Council will demonstrate its commitment to sustainability by following these principles:

- **Whole of Council approach.** Pursue a 'whole of Council' approach with the root-and-branch adoption of a suitable sustainability framework.
- **Engage with and empower the community and key stakeholders.** Listen and respond to the needs of the community. Empowered and educated communities are required to effect more sustainable societies. Form partnerships where needed for the best outcomes.
- **Inter and Intragenerational equity.** Each generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations. Furthermore, economic, social and environmental (triple bottom line) factors should be integrated.
- **Evidence-based decision making.** Learning from the successes and failures of previous actions and programs increases understanding of best practice. Ongoing monitoring indicates the effectiveness of our decisions and facilitates continual improvement.
- **Deliverable and funded/realistic activities.** Focus on what is achievable within current resources. Concentrate efforts into areas where the most significant change can be effected.

Case study - Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee

The Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee was established to inform and advise Council on environmental and sustainability issues and Council's role in improving the environment in Maroondah. This included the effective implementation and review of the Maroondah Sustainability Strategy 2009 and related strategies and actions. The group comprises eight community members and three Councillors.

Key benefits

- Collaborative partnership between Council and key community stakeholders
- To advance the environmental sustainability 'Key Directions' of Maroondah 2040
- To involve others in sustainability initiatives.



Background

Council's role in sustainability

The Local Government Act

The local government sector in Victoria is administered under the *Local Government Act 1989*, which provides a framework for the establishment and operation of councils. The Act sets out the objectives for a Council which include the following:

- (1) The primary objective of a Council is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions.
- (2) In seeking to achieve its primary objective, a Council must have regard to the following facilitating objectives—
 - (a) to promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district;
 - (b) to ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively and services are provided in accordance with the Best Value Principles to best meet the needs of the local community;
 - (c) to improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community;
 - (d) to promote appropriate business and employment opportunities;
 - (e) to ensure that services and facilities provided by the Council are accessible and equitable;
 - (f) to ensure the equitable imposition of rates and charges;
 - (g) to ensure transparency and accountability in Council decision making.

This Maroondah Sustainability Strategy is a key document to help deliver these objectives.





Maroondah in context

The City of Maroondah covers a land area of 61.4 square kilometres in Melbourne's outer east, 22 kilometres from the Melbourne Central Business District. Maroondah has the strategic advantage of being located at the north-eastern junction of the Eastern Freeway – EastLink corridor. There are two train lines and a large number of bus routes linking the City with other regions.



Maroondah is well known for its leafy streets, broad areas of open space, bushland reserves, parks and playgrounds. Sustainable transport links include on-road cycling paths and shared path links to the Mullum Mullum Creek Trail, the EastLink Trail, Taralla Creek Trail and the Dandenong Creek Trail.

The City hosts a regional health precinct including a major public hospital and a large private hospital; educational facilities that cater from early childhood learning to tertiary level; two libraries; arts and cultural centres; an art gallery; and a range of community centres. Maroondah is also home to a range of world class sporting facilities including Aquanation, a regional recreation and leisure facility incorporating the State Diving Centre.

Maroondah's natural environment is highly valued and our green character is treasured by locals. There is a strong desire for our green open spaces and bushland reserves to be enhanced and protected.

Policy context

The Maroondah Sustainability Strategy is an important document that sits beneath the Maroondah 2040 Community Vision and Council Plan as indicated below:



Maroondah 2040

The Maroondah 2040 Community Vision for a clean, green and sustainable community is central to the development of this Sustainability Strategy. Many of its key directions are beyond the five year scope of this Strategy, however the current Council Plan 2013-2017 outlines commitments relevant to its four year time frame. The next Council Plan 2017-2021 will likewise outline commitments to be integrated into revisions of the Sustainability Strategy in 2018 and 2020.



Council Plan 2013-2017

The Council Plan 2013-2017 is Maroondah City Council's key medium term strategic document that sets key directions and priority actions to work towards the long term community vision outlined in *Maroondah 2040: Our future together*.

The Council Plan plays a vital role in shaping Maroondah's future over a four year period. It identifies both challenges and opportunities for our community at local and regional level within the context of the community's long term Maroondah 2040 vision. It also forms the basis for Council to make decisions regarding resources and priorities in response to community needs and aspirations.

The Council Plan is implemented through a service delivery planning process, and outcomes are measured and reported regularly. Achievements are reported back to Council and the community through the Maroondah City Council Annual Report at the end of each financial year.

In addition, there are a wide range of other strategic documents that contribute to the delivery of outcomes and key directions within *Maroondah 2040: Our future together* and the Council Plan. The figure below shows the relationship between the Sustainability Strategy and many of the other strategic documents adopted by Council.



Ongoing Council sustainability activities

Current Actions from Maroondah 2040 and the Council Plan 2013-2017

Both Maroondah 2040 and the Council Plan provide key directions and actions for making a clean, green and sustainable Maroondah. Many are well underway and are referenced in this Strategy. They are:

- The rollout of energy efficient streetlights across Maroondah.
- Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA) membership, hosting and programs.
- Piloting Sustainable Design in the Planning Process (SDAPP) in Ringwood Metropolitan Activities Centre.
- Development of a Sustainable Design buildings policy for Council facilities.
- Implementation of the Carbon Neutral Strategy
- Implementation of the Water Sensitive City Strategy.
- Eastern Alliance for Sustainable Learning (EASL) membership and activities.
- Hosting sustainability awareness events.
- Establishment and co-ordination of the Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee (MEAC).
- Reviewing the planning scheme to protect and enhance habitat corridors.



As part of its ongoing service delivery to the community, Council undertakes a range of day to day activities that incorporate sustainable practices as outlined below:

- Delivering environmental events and forums, often in partnership with other organisations.
- Waste reduction education and internal waste education and composting.
- Operation of a Revolving Energy Fund that applies the savings from energy saving projects into further related projects.
- Staff training (eg water sensitive urban design, wetland maintenance, climate change mitigation and adaptation).
- Assessment of applications for tree and vegetation removals and water sensitive urban design proposals.
- Preparation of indigenous landscaping guidelines.
- Requirements for septic system installation and maintenance.
- Requirements to prevent litter and runoff from buildings sites.
- Extensive re-use and recycling of waste and other materials at Council's depot.
- Using recycled materials in park furniture, signs and playgrounds.
- Extending and upgrading shared use trails (for bikes and pedestrians).
- Mulching and reuse of street tree prunings.
- Management of bushland, wetlands and still water bodies.
- Street sweeping for litter reduction.
- Tree, park and oval planting and maintenance, including use of stormwater and recycled water for irrigation.
- Installation of water sensitive urban design features.
- Solar lighting in public places.
- Acquisition, design and management of open space and associated features.
- Environmentally sensitive building design and the installation and maintenance of water and energy efficient features in Council buildings and facilities. This includes solar photovoltaic panels and rainwater tanks.
- Operation of the Maroondah Festival as a 'Waste Wise' event.
- Plantings through Council's shrub and tree replacement program.



Community environmental education

In recent years there has been a shift in community attitudes to sustainability. This was reflected during the Maroondah 2040 community engagement process during which the natural environment and sustainability featured very prominently. A list of existing Council environmental education activities is found below:

- Ride to Work Day - once a year Council promotes, educates and provides incentives for people to ride their bikes to and from work.
- Walk to School Day - as for Ride to Work Day, however Council engages with schools to encourage students to walk to and from school.
- Project Wild Thing - a free film night, screening 'Project Wild Thing', designed to motivate parents and children to re-connect with nature to save our wild spaces and our health.
- Earth Hour - Council employees are educated and encouraged to ensure all non-essential electrical devices in Council buildings are switched off over Earth Hour weekend. An event is also offered to residents to celebrate the annual Earth Hour theme.
- Recycling tours - Maroondah residents are offered regular bus tours to recycling facilities used by Council to dispose of their kerbside recyclables.
- Clean Up Australia Day - an annual event where community groups collect litter from public sites.
- National Tree Day - an annual indigenous tree and vegetation planting day for community and Council staff.
- Litter reduction - educating recreational users along Mullum Creek and Dorset Recreation Reserve about preventing dog (and other) litter.



Case study - Engaging youth and protecting wildlife

Students from the Croydon Community School are supporting wildlife conservation efforts in Maroondah. In collaboration with the Croydon Men's Shed, the Croydon Conservation Society and Council's Bushland Management team, the students constructed 16 wooden nesting boxes that are home to wildlife across a number of parks and reserves in Maroondah.

Key benefits

- Designed with a special focus on encouraging the sugar glider possum to take up residence, the boxes prevent invasion by the introduced honey bee.
- The project has helped to re-engage students in the education process by developing personal and technical skills, making community connections and providing pathways for opportunities for employment, apprenticeships and further education and training

Our Strategic Response

The following Focus Areas form the basis of this Strategy. They have been informed by extensive research, detailed community feedback and advice from the Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee.

Focus Area 1

Climate change, energy efficiency and transport

Lead by example in addressing Council's operational impacts in areas including more sustainable transport, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and resilience to climate change.

Focus Area 2

Green assets and water

Lead by example in protecting and enhancing the natural systems, features and water resources that are vital to the sustainability of our local environment.

Focus Area 3

Engagement, partnerships and communication

Encourage community participation and partnerships with key stakeholders for greater involvement in sustainability issues and promote the adoption of more sustainable lifestyles.

Focus Area 4

Governance, evaluation and improvement

Establish key indicators and monitoring processes to raise staff awareness of their roles in, and benefits of, sustainability. Strategically promote performance of greater sustainability within Council and the community through sustainable design in the built environment.

Focus Area 5

Funding, resourcing and opportunities

Optimise available resources for sustainability projects and seek external opportunities to complement Council resources.



Focus Area 1

Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Transport

Background

At a global scale the UN Climate Change Conference held in Paris in 2015, established a landmark international agreement on climate change, aiming to keep global warming levels to below 2 degrees celsius.

In addition, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fifth Assessment Synthesis Report (2015) found that “human influence on the climate system is clear, and recent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases are the highest in history. Recent climate changes have had widespread impacts on human and natural systems.”

The State Government has committed to reinvigorating climate change action within Victoria and is developing a Climate Change Framework. This provides an opportunity for partnership-working to mitigate risks, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change impacts. Councils are encouraged to advocate for better collaboration between state and local government on climate change action via the existing Greenhouse Alliance networks.

In order to minimise climatic changes, action needs to be taken now to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases i.e. mitigation. Emissions from buildings, electricity generation, transport and waste contribute to climate change and there are numerous opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within Council and the community.

Some additional warming is already locked into the climate system due to past human activities, therefore adaptation actions are needed to enable our community to live well within changed climatic conditions. Climate change tends to compound or increase already existing risks such as flooding or the heat island effect. The effects of climate change, if unaddressed, have severe implications for health, infrastructure, water and food security and transport.

Local context

CSIRO research (2013) on the effects of climate change in Melbourne’s eastern region found evidence of higher temperatures and a drier climate. Furthermore, it found that the fire season will start earlier and end later, extreme fire days will increase by 12-38% in 2020 and by 20-135% in 2050. There will be a decrease in average rainfall and an increase in duration and severity of droughts. Extremes of temperature will increase with more hot days and increased frequency of hot nights. There will be more extreme rainfall events, fewer but more intense floods and changes in flood patterns.

Climate change impacts such as extreme weather events (e.g. drought, storm, rain events and bushfires) are becoming increasingly common. A number of areas across Maroondah have experienced significant flood events in recent years. There is uncertainty in the extent, timeframes and severity of climate change impacts.

The 2015 Maroondah Carbon Neutral Strategy is guiding Council to 2020 and 2025 reduction targets. This is being achieved through energy reductions and offsetting growth in greenhouse gas emissions to create a future where Council operations and services are delivered with a reduced carbon impact. The areas targeted by the Carbon Neutral Strategy are buildings, streetlights, fleet and plant, waste and paper.

More sustainable food provision was raised during community consultation. Greenhouse gas emissions generated by agriculture, food production transport and processing contribute to our organisational and community emissions profile and ecological footprint. Opportunities for local food production, sustainable food choices, education, community gardens and food related partnerships will build resilience within the community and will be more formally considered in a review of the Sustainability Strategy. A food waste and potentially other organics collection is being considered by councils in the eastern region and would address methane emissions from this source.

Further community feedback supported efforts around climate change mitigation via reduced energy use, renewable energy and reduced consumption and waste. There was also support for Council leadership on sustainability in its own buildings and through planning controls and community environmental education.

Council is a member of the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action, a collective of seven eastern Melbourne Councils working together to respond to the challenges of climate change. The group delivers programs which aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions throughout the region and provide support for regional adaptation to climate change impacts. It has prepared a Climate Change Adaptation Road Map for Melbourne's East which outlines 10 key projects that the region will strive to complete as funding becomes available.

There was strong community support for improved sustainable transport options such as cycling and walking. Council and the State Government are co-operating to further improve shared walking and cycling paths to continue a shift to more active and sustainable transport options which produce far fewer greenhouse gas emissions than private vehicles. Council is aided in this work by the Eastern Transport Coalition.

The development of a staff EcoDriver Program (see case study below) is an example of embedding the required culture change resulting in multiple benefits.

Case study - Eco Driver Program

EcoDriver is a three year initiative of the Southern Eastern Councils Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA) and the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA), of which Maroondah City Council is a member. The aim of the EcoDriver program is to achieve long term reductions in fuel consumption by coaching drivers of fleet vehicles in efficient driving habits. At the program's conclusion in 2016, 120 drivers were trained. EcoDriver has since been extended until 2019.



Key benefits

- A 2% drop in participating vehicle fleet consumption. This equates to saving 30,047 litres of fuel and a forecast saving in fuel expenditure of \$46,573.
- An approximate saving of 8700kg CO₂e.

Evidence of a long term commitment to practising eco-driving by participants has been substantiated through a participant survey completed in February 2016. The findings are encouraging:

- Eco driving has been embraced by participants with 96% of survey respondents and those interviewed continuing to practice it.
- Eco driving principles have been understood and taken to heart with 85% of the respondents committed to reducing fuel consumption.
- Participants are often applying two or more eco driving techniques.
- Many participants are sharing their eco driving knowledge with others.
- This peer to peer mutual enrichment has the potential to extend the benefits of the training beyond direct participants.



Focus Area 2

Green Assets and Water

Background

Melbourne as a whole continues to grow. Maroondah is forecast to grow by an additional 14,970 new dwellings between 2011 and 2041. This anticipated growth requires careful management with reference to required infrastructure and services as well as impacts on Maroondah's natural environment. The 2016 Maroondah Housing Strategy sets out a framework for future land use and development and has a strong emphasis on preserving Maroondah's natural environment.

To ensure that the liveability of Maroondah is maintained, this future growth must be planned and managed for improved sustainability. Green infrastructure planning is an emerging response to help deal with the challenges of population growth, resource constraints and community wellbeing needs. In this approach, urban vegetation is not just used for beautification but also for its ability to reduce damage from stormwater flows, conserve energy in nearby buildings, improve air quality, increase biodiversity and minimise the urban heat island effect.

Additional evidence about the social and economic benefits of urban vegetation is also being incorporated into policy development. The State Government's Biodiversity Strategy recognises that personal and economic wellbeing are dependent on the health of the natural environment and has set the following goals:

- To encourage more Victorians to value nature. Victorians understand that their personal wellbeing and the economic wellbeing of Victoria are dependent on the health of the natural environment.
- To ensure that Victoria's natural environment is healthy. Victoria has flourishing plant and animal populations, improved habitats and functioning resilient ecosystems.

The Maroondah 2040 Community Vision also asserts a strong desire for a clean, green and sustainable Maroondah. Many people live in Maroondah because they enjoy its green and leafy character, waterways, bushland reserves and open space. Local bushland reserves, in particular, are highly valued and supported by Council. That said, more data on the state of Maroondah's green assets would be useful. The State Government's Biodiversity Strategy also recognises that collaboration in monitoring and management is a key to success.

Water is central to our lives and the protection of local waterways is important to the Maroondah community. Council's 2015 Water Sensitive City Strategy adopts an integrated water management approach to deal with the many issues which affect water and waterways in Maroondah.

The two issues central to the Water Sensitive City Strategy are:

- diversifying our water supply to reduce increasing pressures on our high-value drinking water
- reducing flooding and damage to waterways created by significant volumes and velocities of stormwater running off our highly impervious urban environment.

As part of a package of measures, green infrastructure, including water sensitive urban design has a role in mitigating these issues. Using more tanks for water storage is an example of a useful response measure. The community wants Council to take the lead in buildings and infrastructure, and this work is ongoing.



Focus Area 3

Engagement, Partnerships and Communication

Background

The custodians of land within Maroondah are the Wurundjeri people. Land is central to Indigenous Australian culture and spirituality. This deep appreciation for the natural environment is also reflected in the large number of committed friends of parks groups and bushland volunteers and other active groups such as the Croydon Conservation Society and Maroondah Bushlinks.

Some examples of good partnerships for sustainability between Council, community and other levels of government and utility organisations are:

- The Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee (see case study).
- The Water Sensitive City Group, comprising representatives from across Council, State Government and water corporations.
- The Bushland Team and CRISP Nursery.
- Transition Towns Maroondah.
- The Croydon Conservation Society helping the community to identify trees of significance.

Nurturing and enhancing existing and new partnerships will assist in building capacity for sustainability and liveability throughout our community.

Maroondah is also home to over 9,000 businesses ranging from manufacturing to retail and service industries. An increased focus on savings and more sustainable practices will attract greater support for sustainability within the business community. Sustainable practices can provide the opportunity for innovation, adaptation and enhanced organisational reputation. Small changes can make significant differences. Ride to Work Day, for example, encourages employees to ride to work and this can create flow-on improvements in riders' lives and that of others in the community.

Community feedback suggested the need for a more empowered and active community, including businesses and individuals, to take action on sustainability. Some people stressed the need for solutions to be practical and sustainable.

During the preparation of this Strategy, it was evident that there is a need for updated legislation to apply stronger requirements for public/private infrastructure developments. This should consider offering incentives to developers.

The Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee stressed to Council the importance of providing residents with information about climate change, energy savings and attracting local fauna to the area.

There is also scope to improve the way that Council engages with the community on sustainability matters via events, website, email, social media and potentially citizen science.





Focus Area 4

Governance, Evaluation and Improvement

Background

Incomplete data makes it harder to monitor and track progress and this can result in lack of solid justification or evidence base for action. Accordingly Council will work towards establishing improved indicators and monitoring systems during the lifetime of this Strategy. Additionally, new sustainable technologies and methods have had little 'real world' testing, so data about their application is also needed to encourage their use where proven. There is also a need for realistic aspirations, targets and goals to support the likelihood of changes for greater sustainability. The 'Implementation and Review' section of this Strategy explains how Council will monitor this Strategy.

Council will build mechanisms that integrate sustainability principles throughout Council and the community to drive the action agenda in this Strategy. This will be done by:

- Investigating a sustainability framework such as the *One Planet Living* Framework.
- Advancing the work of the Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee in terms of its community outreach.
- Establishing Sustainable Design guidelines for Council buildings and facilities. Council has trialled more sustainable features in its own buildings and is in a position to formalise and extend its approach by adopting Sustainable Design guidelines.
- Investigating how Sustainable Design Assessment in the Planning Process (SDAPP) could be established across Maroondah. Sustainable design is a key priority in the development of today's built environment. Sustainable design protects our environment, secures today's living standards and future-proofs our community against rising energy, water and waste disposal costs.

The *One Planet Living* Framework considers a community's ecological footprint and provides a framework for monitoring and evaluating progress, and to explain complex concepts in accessible and understandable way. Its aim is to enable everyone to enjoy a high quality of life within a fair share of the earth's resources. The Framework acknowledges that sustainability is not an add on, or magic bullet, but a process of continued improvement. It will provide a pathway towards innovative thinking, responsible decision making and future proofing actions, which will help Council and the community to act in a more socially, environmentally, and economically responsible manner. Council will consider adopting a framework such as *One Planet Living*.



10 principles of the *One Planet Living* Framework

Focus Area 5

Funding, Resourcing and Opportunities

Background

At times, sustainability has been considered a secondary element of decision making in Australia. However, this mindset is changing. Valuing, and where possible quantifying, assets which traditionally have been taken for granted or which are qualitatively beneficial and hence difficult to cost, is an important but often difficult first step to embedding sustainability.

For example, the value of tree assets in the City of Maroondah is currently being strategically audited by Council. Developing a cost-benefit which incorporates the less tangible benefits of street and park trees will facilitate greater protection for, and planting of, these assets. Trees and other vegetation often provide multiple benefits which contribute indirectly to long term financial savings for the community as a whole. However their cost can be disproportionately borne by one stakeholder and this can be a major stumbling block to recognition of their full value by others.

Opportunities to secure resources for sustainability include exploring this list of approaches with the following organisations:

Council

- pooling resources
- optimising budget cycles
- embedding sustainability into strategy and policy development
- preparing business cases backed by a strong evidence base (eg financial incentives, reduced energy consumption)
- use of the Revolving Energy Fund
- triple-bottom-line purchasing.

Partner organisations

- grant applications
- philanthropic opportunities including leveraging funds from corporate social responsibility sources
- sponsorship
- social enterprises
- local businesses.





The Way Forward

This section details the key directions and priority actions included in the Strategy under the relevant Focus Area.

Focus Area 1

Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Transport

This Focus Area is centred on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to the impacts of climate change by building resilience and supporting sustainable transport.

Vision

Maroondah is a carbon neutral organisation which is building resilience to the effects of climate change.

Key Directions

- Strive to become a carbon neutral Council by implementing energy efficient initiatives and embracing clean energy solutions.
- Mitigate and adapt to the effects and impacts of climate change.
- Advocate for increased stormwater harvesting and greywater reuse by households and businesses.
- Support, educate and build the capacity of our community to make more environmentally sustainable lifestyle choices.
- Work in partnership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support the community in adapting to a post peak oil environment.
- Be responsive and adaptive to new environmental opportunities and threats as they occur, building resilience and capacity within the community.
- Work in partnership to provide a safe and efficient integrated transport network that enhances liveability, encourages a shift in travel modes and promotes Maroondah as a 20-minute city.
- Advocate for and encourage the use of sustainable transport by enhancing local access to public transport nodes, supporting behaviour change initiatives and enhancing the pedestrian and cycling network, including the provision of on-road bicycle lanes.

Priority Actions

- Continue Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action membership.
- Implement the Carbon Neutral Strategy.
- Complete a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.
- Continue to rollout the installation of energy efficient street lights across Maroondah.
- Participate in a joint regional procurement process to establish a long term contract for processing of garden organics..
- Continue Eastern Transport Coalition membership.
- Accelerate the footpath construction improvement program.
- Encourage the use of sustainable transport through events, activities and programs.
- Continue to construct walking and cycling connections that connect community facilities such as schools, shops, parks and transport hubs.

Related Council policy and strategy

- Carbon Neutral Strategy 2014/15-2020/21
- Integrated Transport Strategy 2006
- Maroondah Bicycle Strategy 2004.

Target

- Reduce Council's greenhouse gas emissions by 20% below 2010/11 levels by 2020/21 (excluding Aquanation).
- 2.5 kilometres of new, sealed footpaths created.

Strategic Indicators

- Council's greenhouse gas emissions
- Kilometres of new, sealed footpaths created

Partners and community leaders

- Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA)
- Transition Towns Maroondah (TTM)
- Eastern Transport Coalition (ETC)
- VicHealth
- Bicycle Network.



Case study - Energy efficient street light bulk change

During the 2015/2016 financial year, 1862 mercury vapour lights (approximately 30% of lights on residential streets) were changed to Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs). The LEDs use 77% less energy than the mercury vapour lights they are replacing.

Key benefits

- Reduced corporate greenhouse gas emissions (each light changed will reduce emissions by almost 450kg per year).
- Reduced electricity and maintenance costs.
- A longer lasting lamp.
- A better quality light.



Focus Area 2

Green Assets and Water

This Focus Area aims to improve governance, planning and monitoring for the protection of Maroondah's green assets and water resources.

Vision

Waterways and green assets such as trees, biodiversity and open space are protected through measures embraced by the Maroondah community.

Key Directions

- Enhance Maroondah's parklands, bushlands, gardens and open spaces.
- Protect and restore biodiversity and native habitat for local plants and animals on public and private land.
- Preserve and enhance Maroondah's canopy vegetation.
- Create and foster a culture within our community that is committed to protecting the unique features of Maroondah's landscape, including our ridgelines, waterways, canopy vegetation, green open spaces and bushland reserves.
- Work in partnership with local communities to encourage thriving community gardens and promote sustainably grown local produce.
- Encourage increased green spaces within activity centres that link the built environment to the natural landscape.
- Continue conservation activities in key bushland sites in the municipality.
- Establish improved monitoring and evaluation of biodiversity in the municipality.
- Create a "water sensitive city" of Maroondah where water is appreciated in all its forms.

Priority Actions

- Commence a municipal wide vegetation review
- Develop a Green Infrastructure approach which implements objectives from:
 - The Water Sensitive City Strategy.
 - The Maroondah Housing Strategy.
 - The Open Space Strategy.
 - The State Government's Strategy, Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2036.

Related Council policy and strategy

- *Water Sensitive City Strategy 2015*
- *Sites of Biological Significance 1997*
- *Habitat Corridors Strategy 2005*
- *Maroondah Housing Strategy 2016*
- *Maroondah Open Space Strategy 2016*
- Bushland Management Plans (various)
- Park Master Plans (various).

Targets

- Maintain the average area of natural or semi-natural area.
- Reduce Council's annual use of potable water by 5% by 2025 (from 2015 data).

Strategic Indicators

- Average area of natural or semi-natural area (metres squared, c.f 2011)
- Council's annual use of potable water.

Partners and community leaders

- Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority (including Living Links)
- Friends of Bushland Reserves Groups and Reserve Special Committees of Council
- LGPro Biodiversity Planners Network
- Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action
- Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee
- Council's Water Sensitive City Group
- Community gardens and community nurseries
- Melbourne Water
- Yarra Valley Water.

Case study – Rare Plant Propagation Program

Maroondah's bushland and wetland teams are responsible for the reserves that contain approximately 460 indigenous plant species found within Maroondah. The Bushland Team established a rare plant propagation program in 2011 to boost declining populations in bushland reserves. It has been identified that the only means to re-establishing plant populations is through a targeted planting program.

Species that can be cultivated in a nursery environment were targeted. These plants are being grown by CRISP and Candlebark Community nurseries from seed collected across Maroondah's reserves to retain local genetic diversity.

Key benefits

- Over the past three years Council's Bushland crew and local friends groups have planted 4000 to 5000 rare plants annually within bushland reserves.
- These plantings boost declining wild plant populations.





Focus Area 3

Engagement, Partnerships and Communication

This Focus Area involves empowering the community so that is actively engaged in Council decision making through processes that ensure that community voices are heard and considered. It also involves Council providing strong and responsive leadership, transparent processes and working with the community to advocate and champion their needs.

Vision

The Maroondah community has access to good quality information on sustainability issues and has the opportunity to engage at a variety of levels to meet their varying needs.

Key Directions

- Embed community engagement principles into sustainability activities.
- Improve and enhance online communication.
- Embrace existing partnerships more effectively and identify new partnerships that advance sustainability within Maroondah.

Priority Actions

- Continue to work with the Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee.
- Continue support for regional sustainability partnerships such as EAGA and EASL.
- Apply Council's Community Engagement Policy.
- Investigate opportunities to work with community volunteers, social enterprises and businesses on sustainability initiatives.

Related Council policy and strategy

- Maroondah Vision 2040.
- Maroondah Council Plan.
- Community Engagement Policy 2015.

Target

- Improve community satisfaction with Council's performance in relation to consultation and engagement.

Strategic indicators

- Community satisfaction with Council's performance in relation to consultation and engagement.

Partners and community leaders

- Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee (MEAC)
- Transition Towns Maroondah
- Croydon Conservation Society
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Maroondah Bushlinks.



Case study – Cafe Consult, Maroondah Festival

At the 2014 Maroondah Festival Cafe Consult hub, Council asked participants how they would prefer to engage with it on sustainability matters.

This was done in a fun and accessible manner using different coloured buttons to identify age groups which were used to vote for preferences, using jars to collect ‘votes’.

The majority of people preferred engaging with Council at events or via the website, email and social media.

Key benefits

- This appealing approach attracted many ‘voters’ which gave Council more reliable statistics from which to develop further engagement strategies.



Focus Area 4

Governance, Evaluation and Improvement

This Focus Area is about providing enhanced governance that is transparent, accessible, inclusive and accountable. It stresses the need to ensure responsible and sustainable management of Maroondah's resources, infrastructure and natural environment.

Vision

Good governance ensures that activities are accountable, responsive, and effective. Continuous improvement includes pursuing evaluation practices that ensure that lessons from past activities and experiences are leveraged to deliver better outcomes in future.

Key Directions

- Establish robust reporting parameters for sustainability, building a strong evidence base.
- Enhance approaches to sustainability data collection, monitoring and methods.
- Further develop sustainability knowledge and skills within Council.

Priority Actions

- Adopt Sustainable Design guidelines for Council buildings and facilities.
- Strengthen the sustainable design assessment within the planning process by providing ecological sustainable design and sustainability assessment tools and training, and investigate membership of the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE).
- Investigate the use of the Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard (BESS) to improve sustainability outcomes in future residential development.
- Work with the State Government to prepare a planning scheme amendment to introduce an environmentally sustainable development (ESD) policy into the Maroondah Planning Scheme.

Related Council policy and strategy

- Maroondah 2040: A Community Vision.
- Maroondah Housing Strategy.
- Council Plan.

Target

- Increase the community's perception of Council's performance in relation to environmental sustainability.

Strategic indicator

- Council's performance in relation to environmental sustainability.

Partners and community leaders

- Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee (MEAC)
- Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE)
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).



Case study – Living Links

This case study is an example of how good governance can improve the culture and outcomes for environmental sustainability.

Living Links is an ambitious, large scale program to retain and protect the natural values of Melbourne's south-east region in the face of continuing development and population growth, and to make this area a world-class urban ecosystem.

Members of the Living Links Coordination Committee are appointed by the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority (PPWCMA). The current Living Links Coordination Committee consists of representatives from the following partner organisations:

- Bayside City Council
- City of Casey
- Frankston City Council
- City of Greater Dandenong
- City of Kingston
- Knox City Council
- Maroondah City Council
- Monash City Council
- City of Whitehorse
- Yarra Ranges Council
- Port Phillip & Westernport CMA
- Melbourne Water
- Parks Victoria
- South East Water
- First Friends of Dandenong Creek
- Wurundjeri Tribe Land Cultural Heritage Council Inc
- Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.

Key benefits

- Living Links helps Councils, Government agencies and community groups work together to achieve bigger and better outcomes than if they worked alone. Many organisations are active partners in Living Links. They have representation on the Living Links Coordination Committee, contribute funds to the Living Links effort, undertake on-ground projects, conduct community events and/or undertake monitoring activities. The partners include local governments, State organisations, and community and interest groups along the Dandenong Creek Catchment.
- Hundreds of projects contributing to the Living Links vision are underway or have been completed.





Focus Area 5

Funding, Resourcing and Opportunities

The purpose of this Focus Area is to encourage a strategic approach to the way that sustainability initiatives are resourced. This involves being smarter with existing resources and exploring partnerships with other organisations to pursue the sustainability agenda.

Vision

Funding flows from a variety of sources and the profile of activities ensure the continued sustainability of the city.

Key Directions

- Secure resources to implement priority sustainability actions and projects.
- Demonstrate tangible sustainability benefits and communicate the value of sustainability to Council and the community.

Priority Actions

- Continue to support EAGA projects that broker partnerships to achieve economies of scale
- Continue to support the Carbon Neutral Revolving Energy Fund.
- Continue to pursue external funding opportunities for sustainability projects.
- Develop triple-bottom-line criteria for a Council pilot project.
- Continue to use Council's procurement policy to pursue sustainability opportunities.

Related Council policy and strategy

- Annual Budget
- Long Term Financial Strategy
- Procurement Policy 2015
- Grants Policy.

Targets

- Increase the proportion of funding from non-recurrent sources to support sustainability initiatives.
- Increase the variety of means by which projects are resourced.

Strategic indicators

- The proportion of funding from non-recurrent sources supporting sustainability initiatives.
- The variety of means by which projects are resourced.

Partners and community leaders

- Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee (MEAC)
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
- Melbourne Water.

Case study - Carbon Neutral Revolving Energy Fund

In 2015/16 a Revolving Energy Fund was established as part of Council's Carbon Neutral Strategy. The fund has reinvested electricity and maintenance savings from phase 1 of the street light energy efficiency project into other carbon reduction projects. Over the next two years these savings will be used to help fund phase 2 of the street light project, and the feasibility study for the Energy Efficiency Contract (EPC) – a project to reduce energy use of Council buildings.

Key benefits

- Tracks cost savings from projects that reduce energy use.
- Highlights maintenance savings.
- Provides an alternative funding source for carbon reduction projects.
- The establishment of the Carbon Neutral Revolving Energy Fund Working Group (CNREFWG) for the fund models a good governance structure for transparency, accountability and potential replicability.

Implementation and Review





Introduction

The Maroondah Sustainability Strategy forms part of Council's response to delivering on *Maroondah 2040: Our future together*. It will be implemented with a whole-of-Council approach to sustainability and will involve regular review.

The Strategy outlines key priority actions to be undertaken to deliver on the focus areas which support the overall vision for sustainability in Maroondah. Additional priority actions and projects that support this vision and adapt to the changing needs of the Maroondah community may be identified and resourced over time.

An Implementation Plan has been developed that accompanies this Strategy. It establishes responsibilities, timeframes and whether additional resources are required to deliver the actions in the Strategy. Actions take into account Council policy, cost effectiveness and the ability to deliver within timeframes.

The Plan addresses each of the focus areas and provides details regarding how and when Council will deliver on each of the priority actions. The Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee will also assist with the review of the Strategy.

Strategic indicators

As well as monitoring progress in the delivery of specific actions through the Implementation Plan, Council will report on a number of environmental indicators to alert it to changes in Maroondah's environment.

These indicators and their associated targets have been identified in the Focus Areas of this Strategy and are summarised on the following page. Further development and refinement of indicators is needed over time and various sources of indicator data require verification and collation. For example, Council will monitor progress on the development of indicators of urban liveability by the State Government and Melbourne University for potential use by Council.

It is anticipated that a State of the Maroondah Environment report will complement Council's State of Maroondah report. This report will help to establish a single source of baseline data and to determine the success of Council's actions, and those of its partners and other stakeholders, towards establishing Maroondah as a clean, green and sustainable community.

Council will also investigate indicators aligned with any sustainability framework (such as *One Planet Living*) it may adopt in 2020.



Focus Area	2018 Target (unless otherwise indicated)	Indicator/s
Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Transport	- Reduce Council's greenhouse gas emissions by 20% below 2010/11 levels by 2020/21 (excluding Aquanation). 2.5 km of new sealed footpaths constructed by Council.	- Council's greenhouse gas emissions. - Kilometres of new, sealed footpaths.
Green Assets and Water	- Reduce Council's annual use of potable water by 5% by 2025 (from 2015 data). - Maintain the average area of natural or semi-natural area across the City of Maroondah (metres squared – c.f 2011).	- Council's annual use of potable water. - The average area of natural or semi-natural area across the City of Maroondah. (Source: Community Services Victoria)
Engagement, Partnerships and Communication	Improve the community's satisfaction with Council's performance in relation to consultation and engagement.	Community satisfaction with Council's performance in relation to consultation and engagement. (Source: Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey)
Governance, Evaluation and Improvement	Increase in community perception of Council's performance in relation to environmental sustainability. (65% in 2015; 65% in 2014).	Community perception of Council's performance in relation to environmental sustainability. (Source: Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey)
Funding, Resourcing and Opportunities	- Increase the proportion of funding from non-recurrent sources to support sustainability initiatives. - Increase the variety of means by which projects are resourced.	- The proportion of funding from non-recurrent sources supporting sustainability initiatives - The variety of means by which projects are resourced.



Glossary

20-minute neighbourhood

The neighbourhood that meets your every day (non-work) needs locally; primarily within a 20-minute walk.

Best practice

A method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means, and that is used as a benchmark.

Biodiversity

The term given to the variety of life on Earth. It is the variety within and between all species of plants, animals and micro-organisms and the ecosystems within which they live and interact.

Carbon neutral

Carbon neutrality refers to a situation where the net emissions associated with an organisation's activities, product, services or events are equal to zero because the organisation has reduced its emissions, and acquired and cancelled carbon offsets for its remaining emissions.

Carbon Neutral Revolving Energy Fund

The Carbon Neutral Revolving Energy Fund is an alternative funding source established by Council. It reinvests savings from energy efficiency projects into additional projects that will also reduce energy and greenhouse gas emissions.

Citizen science

The collection and analysis of data relating to the natural world by members of the general public, typically as part of a collaborative project with professional scientists.

Climate change

Climate change is a large-scale, long term shift in the planet's weather patterns or average temperatures.

CO₂e

Carbon dioxide equivalent. To make measuring of greenhouse gases consistent, greenhouse gas emissions are all converted to a carbon dioxide equivalent.

DELWP

Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

Ecological footprint

The impact of a person or community on the environment, expressed as the amount of land required to sustain their use of natural resources.

EAGA

The Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action is a formal collaboration of seven Councils in Melbourne's east, working together on regional programs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and facilitate regional adaptation.

ESD

Environmentally Sustainable Development. Using, conserving and enhancing the community's resources so that ecological processes on which life depends are maintained, and the total quality of life, now and in the future, can be increased.

ETC

The Eastern Transport Coalition consists of Melbourne's seven eastern metropolitan councils. It works with Australian and State governments to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Melbourne's outer east by advocating for sustainable and integrated transport services that reduce car dependency.

Greenhouse gas emissions

The seven major greenhouse gases emitted from burning fossil fuels such as coal and natural gas are water vapour; carbon dioxide (CO₂); methane (CH₄); nitrous oxide (N₂O); hydro fluorocarbons (HFCs); per fluorocarbons (PFCs); and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆).

Green infrastructure

The European Union defines green infrastructure as a 'strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services'. This is in contrast to traditional single functional 'grey' infrastructure such as stormwater drains.

LEDs

Light emitting diodes are a type of highly efficient lighting.

Livability (or liveability)

Livability is a sum of the factors that add up to a community's quality of life; including the built and natural environments; economic prosperity; social stability and equity; educational opportunity; and cultural, entertainment and recreational possibilities.

MEAC

The Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee has been established to inform and advise Council on environmental and sustainability issues and Council's role in improving the environment in Maroondah. It comprises community representatives and councillors.

One Planet Living

The One Planet Living Framework is an international, comprehensive and creditable model that supports liveability, whilst respecting the limits of the planet. It provides an all-encompassing response to the sustainability challenges we face.

The framework and program address all major aspects of environmental, social and economic sustainability. They can be summarised by 10 principles including transport, waste, equity, health, and happiness.

PPWCMA

The Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority. It provides leadership to a range of stakeholder groups and works to deliver integrated catchment management and sustainability of the region's catchment assets by building cooperation, coordination and partnerships amongst these groups.

Resilience

Resilience is the capacity of a system to deal with change and continue to develop. Melbourne is made up of hundreds of interdependent systems that support our critical services (e.g. transport, healthcare, energy, local support networks). An interruption to one of these systems can have cascading impacts across Melbourne.

Sustainability

Sustainability encompasses the simple principle of taking from the earth only what it can provide indefinitely, therefore leaving future generations with no less than we have access to ourselves.

Sustainable Development

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable Design

The sustainable design of buildings seeks to provide a framework to include sustainability in the whole of the building process including planning, design, construction, occupancy and decommissioning. The aim is to create comfortable and healthy indoor environments while reducing resource use (including energy and water consumption), waste, and operating costs.

TTM

Transition Towns Maroondah Inc. is a community group raising awareness about climate change, resource depletion, and economic contraction. It also initiates and supports projects that create resilient and sustainable communities as a positive response to these challenges.



Partnerships

Council is working with publicly-funded regional and state organisations to help deliver key environmental sustainability projects for Maroondah. These organisations include:



Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning





To contact Council

- phone 1300 88 22 33 or (03) 9298 4598
- visit our website at www.maroondah.vic.gov.au
- email maroondah@maroondah.vic.gov.au

Translating and Interpreter Service

13 14 50

National Relay Service (NRS)

13 36 77

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