



Golden Plains Shire Council

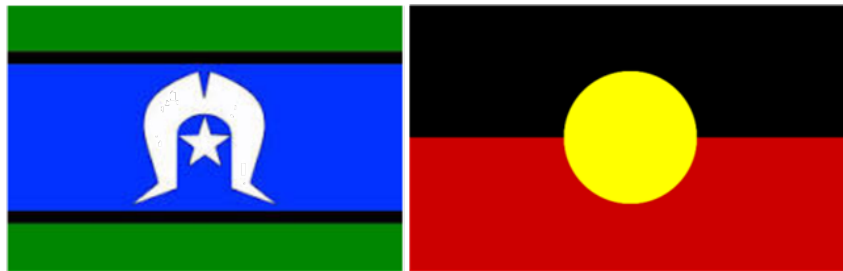
Climate Emergency Plan 2022-2032



Progress Report 2023-2024

Acknowledgement of Country

Golden Plains Shire spans the Traditional lands of the Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar Peoples. Council acknowledges them as the Traditional Owners and Custodians and pays its respects to both Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar Elders past, present and emerging. Council extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of Golden Plains Shire.



Acronyms

Term	Definition
BSWCA	Barwon South-West Climate Alliance
GPS	Golden Plains Shire Council
CEP	Climate Emergency Plan
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
CO ₂ -e	Carbon dioxide equivalent. The universal unit of measurement to indicate the global warming potential (GWP) of each GHG, expressed in terms of the GWP of one unit of carbon dioxide. It is used to evaluate the climate impact of releasing (or avoiding releasing) different GHGs on a common basis.
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
ESD	Environmentally Sustainable Design
EV	Electric Vehicle
FTP	Clean Energy Electric Fleet Transition Plans
FY	Financial Year
GHG	Greenhouse gas
Greenhouse Gas Protocol	The Greenhouse Gas Protocol, developed by World Resources Institute and World Business Council on Sustainable Development, sets the global standard for how to measure, manage, and report Emissions.
GWP	Global Warming Potential. The Global Warming Potential was developed to allow comparisons of the global warming impacts of different gases. Specifically, it is a measure of how much energy the emissions of one tonne of a gas will absorb over a given period of time, relative to the emissions of one tonne of carbon dioxide
IDM	Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM)
IWM	Integrated Water management
PPA	Power Purchase Agreement
tCO ₂ e	Tonnes of CO ₂ equivalent
VECO	Victorian Energy collaboration

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1.Executive summary

The Climate Emergency Plan Progress Report October 2023 to October 2024 is Golden Plains Shire's (the Shire) second annual report since adoption of the Climate Emergency Plan (the Plan) in October 2022. This report is slightly delayed due to the Council Election Period.

The Plan is an ambitious 10-year plan outlining the Shire's response to climate change and includes a broad range of actions, requiring collaboration by the community, the Shire and other levels of government to achieve it.

This progress report also includes a brief internal review of the plan, its targets and actions, which involved surveying across Council departments. The review primarily focused on reviewing:

- Performance against planned actions
- Challenges and enablers to implementation
- Relevance of targets and actions described and ensure the plan remains in line with Council vision and community expectations.
- Recommendations/required amendments to the Plan

A detailed review is required at the five-year stage of implementation, scheduled for 2027.

Being year two, as per the monitoring and evaluation framework, Council has prepared a public summary of achievements against the plan, which accompany this report.

2. Implementation status

2.1 Summary of progress of all actions since adoption (24 months)

Since adoption of the plan, the Shire has been taking steps where possible to embed climate change considerations into planning and activities through various projects, strategies, policies, and decision making.

Targets and actions (48 total) in the plan span across 10 years.

The Shire has made progress in a range of areas since the adoption of the plan. To date, 56% of the total tasks have progressed (Figure 1):

- 6% tasks have been completed
- 50% tasks have commenced (In progress or ongoing¹)
- 44% were delayed not yet started.

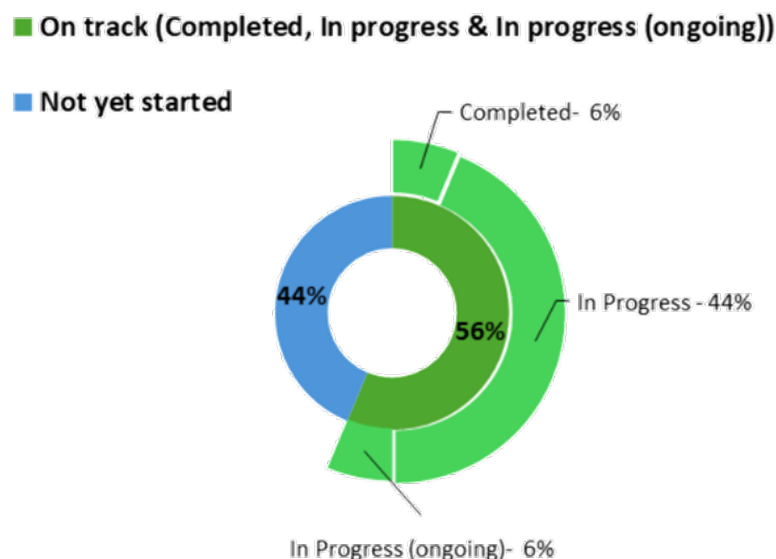


Figure 1. Overview of progress since adoption of the plan.

¹ Some tasks do not have a defined end date and are required to be continually implemented to reach our goal and are therefore considered ongoing.

The 48 actions are divided across 5 main themes:

- 1. Embedding climate action into Council;
- 2. Resilient and adaptative communities;
- 3. Caring for the land;
- 4. Climate responsible development;
- 5. Sustainable transport and travel.

The progress of actions by theme since the adoption of the plan is available below.

Detailed information is available in the appendix.

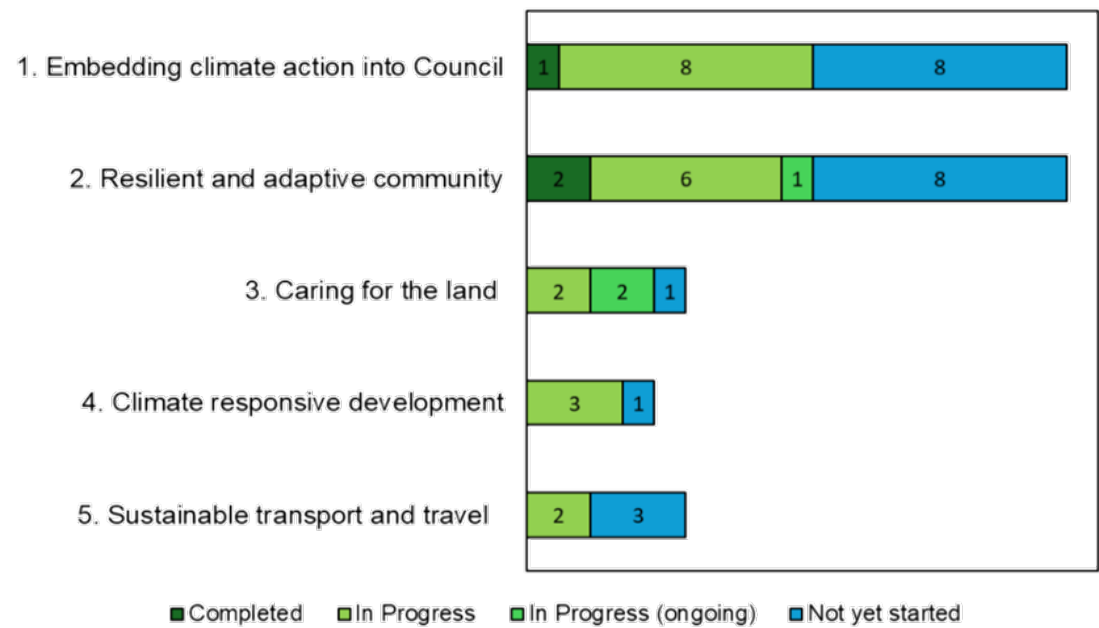


Figure 2: Overview of progress by theme since adoption of the plan.

2.2 Summary of Key Achievements over the last 12 months

- **Climate Risk Assessment:** Council completed a comprehensive climate risk assessment project, establishing a climate risk register covering physical, transition and liability risk.
- **Fleet Transition Plan:** The Fleet Transition Plan, developed through a collaborative procurement project with Colac Otway and Warrnambool Shire Councils, outlines transition scenarios, guiding principles, and recommended actions to help the Council achieve net-zero emissions.
- **Procurement Policy:** The Golden Plains Procurement Policy was revised in early 2024 to incorporate more sustainability-focused content.
- **Decrease the environmental impact of road, footpath and playground materials:** Use of recycled plastic road furniture ie. Bollards in Inverleigh streetscape project.
- **Improve the amenity and usability of bus stops in the Shire:** Two bus stops were upgraded in partnership with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) on Bannockburn-Shelford Road and Teesdale.
- **WaterSmart program:** The Council has partnered with Barwon Water to monitor water use, identify leaks, and find conservation opportunities using data loggers. Installed at 12 sites across the Shire, the program has saved an estimated 795 kL of water since January 1, 2024.
- **Barwon South-West Climate Alliance (BSWCA):** The Council is an active member of the BSWCA and contributed to successfully awarded Resilient Community Assets grant project.
- **Integrated Water Management (IWM):** The draft Bannockburn IWM Plan was presented to the Barwon IWM Forum and endorsed by Council for public consultation. A revised version, following consultation, was adopted by Council in February 2025.
- **Restore biodiversity and repair damaged ecosystems:** Over 5,000 native plants and grasses were planted in revegetation projects at Moorabool River Reserve and Barwon Leigh Junction, supported by the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.
- **Emissions inventory update:** Council's emissions profile for 2023/24 has been updated.
- **Geelong Sustainability Partnership:** Worked in partnership with Geelong Sustainability to support their 'Electric Homes' program by promoting their news, and webinars across Golden Plains Shire through social media.
- **Knowledge Hub Creation:** Content has been developed for a Climate Change Knowledge Hub on the Council's website. It will include information on climate change, the Council's response, tips for improving health and the environment, sustainability advice for businesses and schools, and a progress report on the Climate Emergency Plan. The content will be available by March 2025.

2.3 Summary of what has not progressed over the last 12 months

From 14 actions scheduled for commencing on 2023/2024, the following 4 (29%) actions have not yet started:

- Develop Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Policy.
- Decrease environmental impact of Council events.
- Reduce Council's Scope 3 emissions.
- Improve comfort, reduce energy bills, build climate resilience and improve health outcomes for vulnerable households in the Shire.

2.4 Corporate Emissions Profile update 2023-24

2.4.1 Summary

Council's total emissions for the financial year (FY) period 2023/24 have been calculated as 2,234 tonnes of CO2 equivalent (tCO2e). Transport fuel remains the largest contributor to Council's corporate emissions, accounting for 43% of total emissions (Figure 4). This underscores the importance of transitioning the fleet towards electric vehicles (EVs). Electricity consumption (including buildings, street lighting, open space lighting) represented the second highest emission source accounting for 38% (843 tCO2e) of total emissions (Figure 4).

Figure 4 provides a summary of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions profile by sector, showing emissions before (left side) and after (right side) applying credits from the Council's 100% renewable Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) under the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO). This demonstrates that Council's commitment to purchasing 100% renewable energy through VECO has resulted in significant emissions abatement, reducing overall emissions by approximately 32%.

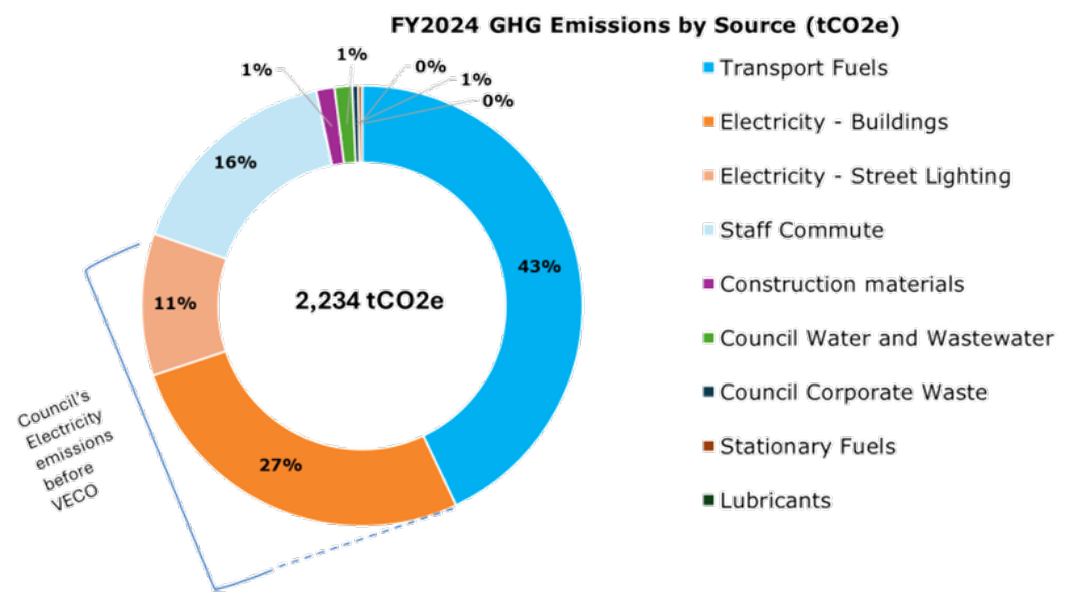


Figure 4.1: FY2023/24 GHG emissions profile summary by sector before Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) credits are applied.

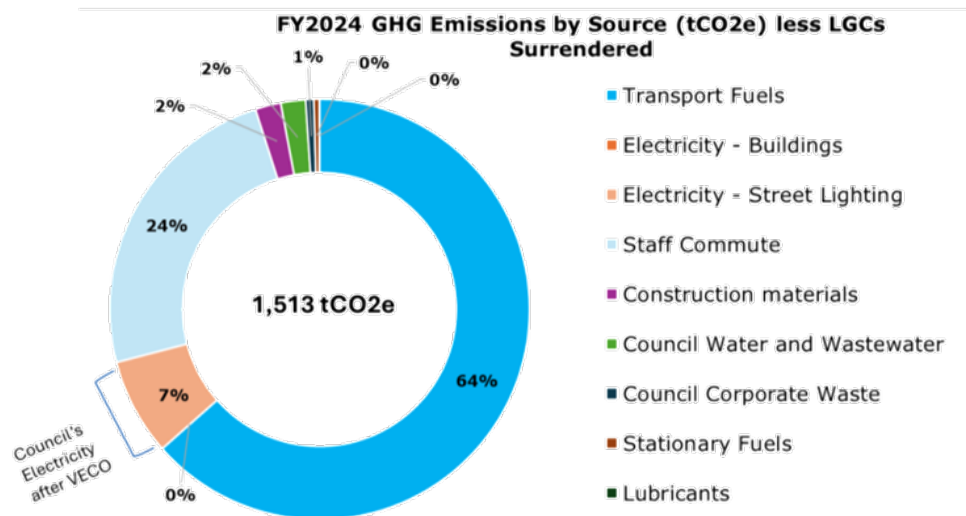


Figure 4.2: FY2023/24 GHG emissions profile summary by sector after Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) credits are applied.

It is important to note that transport fuels have been the largest contributor to the Council's corporate emissions, accounting for 46% of total emissions in FY 2018-19 (Emissions Inventory). With the VECO agreement in place, this has risen to 64% in FY 2023-24, underscoring the need to transition to a lower-emission fleet.

2.4.2 Limitations

The FY 2023/24 inventory reported additional emissions sources compared to FY 2018/19: construction materials, staff commute, and lubricants (oils and greases). While improvements were made, some data, especially for Scope 3 emissions (from assets not managed by the Council), remained incomplete. For instance, construction materials data only covered internal maintenance team purchases, excluding those used by contractors on quoted or tendered projects, highlighting the Council's limited ability to fully capture Scope 3 emissions.

2.4.3 Emissions by Source

According to the FY 2023/24 emissions calculations (Figure 5), total emissions have decreased by 37% compared to FY 2018/19, factoring in abatement from the renewable power agreement. Without this, emissions have increased slightly by 218.365 tCO₂e. However, three additional emissions sources, contractor fuels, staff commuting, and lubricants (oils and greases) were included in the FY 2023/24 inventory, contributing to the rise. Emissions from staff commuting alone account for 365 tCO₂e, largely explaining the increase.

Figure 6 shows details emissions comparison between FY 2018-19 and FY 2023-24 (without applying VECO credits). This showcases that regardless of the abatement from VECO, emissions from electricity consumption from Council buildings have reduced from 736 (tCO₂e) on FY 2018/19 to 601 (tCO₂e) on FY 2023/24 which indicate a reduction on Council's physical electricity consumption. This can likely be

attributed to the installation of solar panels on Council’s facilities (e.g. solar installation in the Civic centre).

While VECO has played a key role in the Council's reduction of electricity emissions, this should not diminish the importance of energy consumption reduction measures. Reducing energy consumption not only lowers demand on the grid but also cuts costs and strengthens financial stability by mitigating exposure to fluctuating energy prices. Therefore, both strategies are essential initiatives for ensuring long-term environmental and financial sustainability.

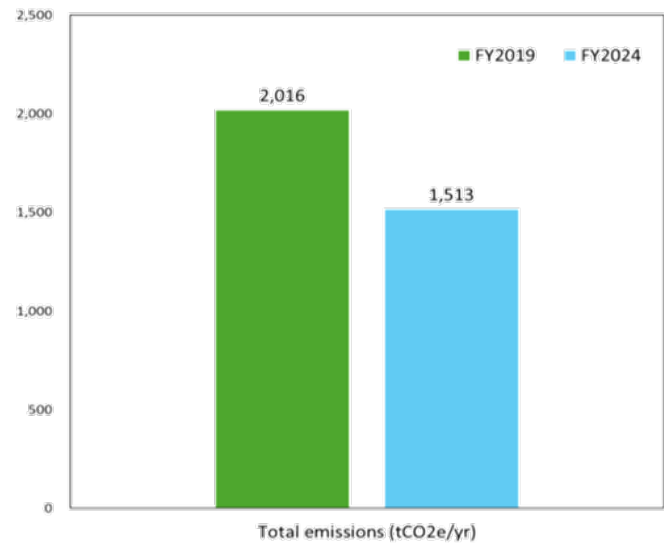


Figure 5: Emissions comparison over 2 financial years (FY 2018-2019 and FY 2023-2024)

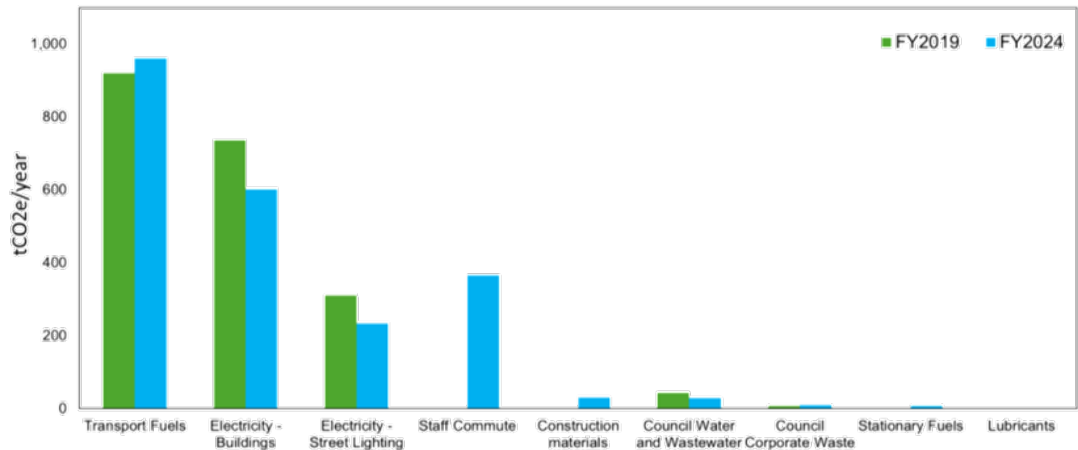


Figure 6: Emissions comparison over 2 financial years by sector (FY 2018-2019 and FY 2023-2024)

2.4.4 Golden Plains Shire Municipal Emissions 2022-23

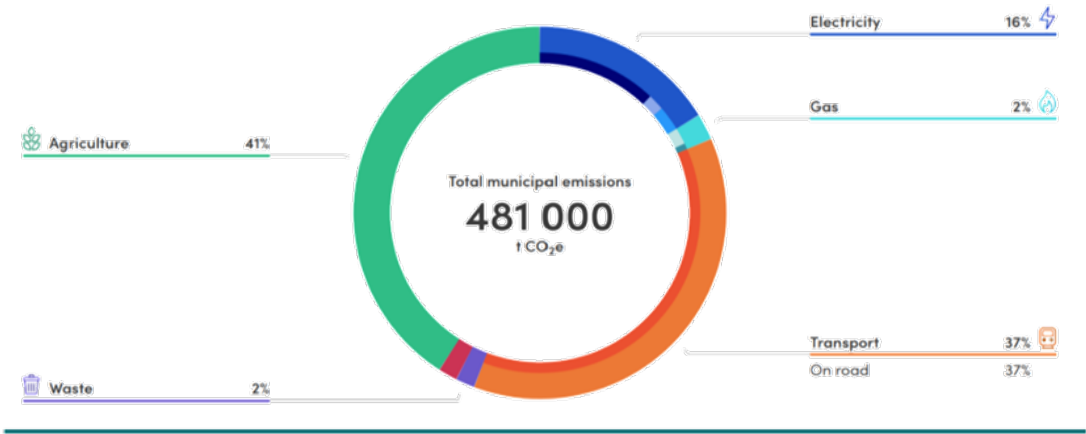


Figure 7: Golden Plains Shire's Municipal wide emissions, source snapshotclimate.com.au

Council's major municipal wide emissions source is agriculture, due to the community's relatively large amount of agricultural activity and low population. The second largest source of emissions is road transportation.

3. Internal Review of Climate Emergency Plan

3.1 Summary of review process

An internal stakeholder engagement tool was created and circulated across council departments to inform the report. The tool was designed to capture challenges, opportunities, and key activities and projects within departments that are directly or indirectly addressing climate adaptation and mitigation priorities.

3.2 What's working well?

Emissions and energy efficiency - Through Council's investments in energy saving initiatives, such as solar installation and its partnership through the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO), evidence shows that Council is progressing with its emission reductions. Overall, the decisions made by Council to source its energy through renewable sources and invest in renewable energy solutions such as solar are making a difference.

Through our VECO partnership alone, since 2021, Council has abated approximately 2,838tCO₂e, with savings of approximately \$47,000.

Improving understanding of climate risks and ownership - In July 2024, GPSC commissioned Nation Partners to support with the development of a climate risk profile for the Shire, including: a systematic review of climate projection data and risk information (including targeted GIS analysis), a series of climate change risk assessment workshops spanning GPSC directorates and teams, and produced a climate risk register based on GPSC's existing enterprise risk management framework. The register covers physical, transition and liability risk.

The core purpose of this project was to provide GPSC with a clearer and more consistent understanding of relevant climate-related risks and opportunities across the Shire, as well as how these may evolve over time. Recommendations from this project are outlined later in this report.

Integrated water management – Action towards improving responsible water use across Council has progressed, with the adoption of the Bannockburn IWM Plan, use of smart water metering, and applying IWM as part of precinct structure planning.

Practical steps toward sustainable procurement - Council has updated its procurement policy to include sustainable principles and is actively working to apply circular economy principles to its waste management services. However, there is more to be done.

3.3 What can be improved?

An evidence-based approach to prioritise investment in adaptation, and mitigation - The CE Plan covers 48 actions, and is set over 10 years. The scope of this report does not seek to provide a detailed evaluation of the plan, however it is observed the plan has a high number of actions to implement each year, and lacks clarity of where investment towards adaptation and mitigation should be prioritised based on risk, urgency and value to Council and community.

Whole of Council approach - The Climate Emergency Plan's (CEP) effective delivery requires ownership of actions by all departments across Council. While the environment team can seek to progress and influence actions, its reliant on working collaboratively across Council departments who acknowledge their role in delivery of the plan.

Climate responsive development and supporting landholders to mitigate and adapt - There is more to be done to ensure climate change considerations are reflected in Council's strategic planning and operations, including key policy, growth/new area developments, and infrastructure and asset planning. An Environmentally Sustainable Design Policy is required. Additionally, more is required to stimulate community driven climate action. Improving community group's access to educational resources, training, and increased awareness to effectively integrate climate change into project planning. These resources must be provided before any changes are made to the current weighting system in the program.

Target largest emissions sources - From Council's recent emissions profile, while we are showing an overall reduction in corporate emissions since 2019, our overall transport fuels consumption has increased.

Municipal wide emissions - Due to resourcing constraints, action towards supporting community uptake of affordable and accessible renewable energy, including regional business/commercial power purchasing partnerships, or support to explore agricultural emissions reduction strategies have not progressed.

Through the survey tool, teams also highlighted the following barriers to implementing specific actions from the plan:

- **Action 2.1: Embed Climate Change into Council Community Grant Processes**

While the inclusion of the Climate Emergency Plan 2022–2032 in the Community Strengthening grant assessment criteria is a step forward, teams identified that community groups need access to educational resources, training, and increased awareness to effectively integrate climate change into project planning. These resources must be provided before any changes are made to the current weighting system in the program.

- **Action 4.2: Decrease the Environmental Impact of New Developments in the Shire**

Teams have noted that progress on this action has been delayed due to the State's adoption of the Housing Statement and the development of the Plan for Victoria, which the Growing Places Strategy must consider. Additionally, the planning

department's lack of input into the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) limits Council's ability to reduce the environmental impact of new developments.

4. Discussion

4.1 Foundational Targets - Net Zero

As outlined in the Plan, Council has committed to achieving net-zero emissions for its operations by 2025. During public consultation for developing the plan, the community was asked if they would support Golden Plains Shire Council in becoming carbon neutral before 2030. However, no distinct target was set for net-zero versus carbon neutral, and these terms seem to be used interchangeably throughout the plan although there are significant differences between them.

Carbon neutrality can be achieved through carbon offsets, where emissions that cannot be eliminated are balanced by purchasing carbon credits from projects that reduce or capture Greenhouse Gases (GHG). While operational emissions reduction is part of this process, most standards for carbon neutrality do not specify how much must be reduced versus offset, only that the final balance is zero.

In contrast, the term "net-zero emissions" refers to achieving a balance between GHG emissions produced and those removed from the atmosphere. It involves a comprehensive approach that includes measuring emissions regularly, reducing them as much as possible, and compensating for any residual emissions. Net-zero targets align with the Paris Agreement, which aims to "achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of GHG in the second half of the century."

4.2 Emissions tracking

There is a three-year gap between emissions inventory captured for Council. Delivering a climate emergency plan without the ability to regularly track emissions presents several significant challenges, particularly when emissions reduction targets are in place. Without emissions tracking, it becomes difficult to measure progress or assess whether the net zero targets are being met, leaving the effectiveness of actions uncertain. Additionally, without an accurate and up to date emissions profile, identifying priorities for planning, and allocating resources become challenging.

4.3 Resourcing

The successful implementation of both adaptation and mitigation priorities in the Climate Emergency Plan (CEP) depends on sufficient financial and human resources.

However, it is widely acknowledged across Victorian Councils, that local governments, particularly rural Councils are constrained in their ability to deliver against the ambitious mitigation and adaptation targets. It is clear to meet current and future challenges, Federal and State Government need to explicitly recognise and support the role that local government plays in driving place-based adaptation and its contribution to building climate resilient infrastructure, assets and communities.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Council has made good initial progress towards implementing both practical adaptation actions and its emissions reductions journey but requires strategic adjustments to meet long-term climate goals. However, resource constraints and challenges are acknowledged, and with the 2025 net-zero target no longer feasible, a revised Corporate Net Zero Emissions target of 2032 is recommended. This aligns with broader industry and state goals while ensuring a realistic and achievable approach. Further investment in resources to help support Council's broader climate action, particularly regarding stimulating community led action, supporting landholders to adapt, and focusing on vulnerable and at-risk populations is also recommended.

Key Recommendations:

Revised Corporate Net-Zero Emissions Target (2032)

- Acknowledge residual emissions (primarily from transport fuels) and adjust the target accordingly.
- Align with broader industry trends and other Australian councils' net-zero goals.
- Apply a net-zero target rather than carbon neutrality to meet evolving climate disclosure requirements.

Climate Risk-Based Planning

- Strengthen governance and ownership of climate change priorities by integrating climate risk into decision-making.
- Develop adaptation strategies addressing interconnected risks (infrastructure, health, environment).
- Ensure climate and community health priorities and responsibility is clear.
- Improve understanding of bushfire, flood risks, and long-term adaptation costs.
- Build organisational capacity through behavioural change models and cross-Council collaboration.

Review of priority actions

- Recommend the Environment team update the CE Plan implementation table and apply a prioritisation layer based on Council's climate risk register, urgency and value to Council and community.

Keep progressing sustainable procurement and climate responsive development

- Continue to focus on sustainable procurement.
- Ensure an ESD policy is prioritised
- Focus on knowledge tools and resources for community with sufficient resource allocated in supporting landholders to mitigate and adapt

Emissions Offsets Procurement Policy

- Develop a clear policy for procuring and managing carbon offsets to address residual emissions.

Data-Informed Decision-Making

- Establish a clear emissions reporting and accountability framework with automation support.

Fleet Transition Plan

- Establish a fleet committee and update policies to incorporate EVs and set emissions caps.
- Optimize fleet size and prioritise investment in EVs and hybrids.
- Develop a revolving sustainability fund to finance sustainability initiatives.
- Install initial EV charging infrastructure while planning for full fleet electrification.
- Transition to hybrid vehicles as an interim step toward full electrification.

By implementing these recommendations, Council can take a structured and effective approach to achieving its long-term climate commitments while maintaining leadership in its sustainability and emissions reduction journey.

Appendix A - Reporting Tables

1. Embedding climate action in Council

ID	Action	Mitigation/ Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Timeframe	What did we do?
1.2	Embed climate change into Council project delivery processes. 1. Include climate change considerations as a component of Council's project management framework	Mitigation	All	Completed	Climate change included in project management framework	2022	Complete. Action no longer considered relevant and is achieved through other actions.

ID	Action	Mitigation/ Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Timeframe	What did we do?
1.13	Reduce emissions generated by Council fleet 1. Commission development of feasibility study to convert Council vehicles to electric 2. Develop transition plan based on feasibility study 3. Replace fleet based on transition plan	Mitigation	Corporate Services - Fleet, Environment and Open Spaces	In progress	Feasibility study completed. Transition plan completed At least 50% of fleet is converted by 2032	2022	A fleet transition plan (internal planning resource) was completed for the Shire as part of a collaborative procurement project involving Colac Otway, Warrnambool and Golden Plains Shires. The transition plan sets out transition scenarios, with guiding principles and considerations with a set of recommended actions for Council to progress to achieve net zero emissions reductions within realistic and achievable timeframes.
1.3	Ensure climate change mitigation and adaptation measures are taken into account in new Council building projects. 1. Develop an Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Policy 2. Implement and promote Policy	Both	Environment and Open Spaces	Not started	ESD Policy is developed	2023	

ID	Action	Mitigation/ Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Timeframe	What did we do?
1.4	Embed climate change into Council grant processes 1. Revise weighting for assessment of Berrybank Windfarm grant applications to include climate change as a consideration	Both	Community Development and Grants/ Economic Development	Not started	Grant criteria updated.	2023	Council Officers during the review process of all community grants programs administered by Council identified that we could not incorporate weighting into the assessment process for Berrybank Community Grants program or the Community Strengthening Grants program.
1.5	Increase the energy efficiency of Council assets 1. Upgrade street lighting in the Shire to LED	Mitigation	Asset services	In progress	All street lighting is upgraded	2023	Environment and assets team working on progressing LED street lighting upgrades, decision to defer MV lamp conversions noting Powercore are required to covert to LED by 2026-27.

ID	Action	Mitigation/ Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Timeframe	What did we do?
1.14	Embed climate change into Council procurement procedures 1. Update procurement policy to include sustainability targets 2. Update tender applications to include sustainability criteria tailored to the type of suppliers	Mitigation	Finance	In progress	Procurement policy and tender applications are updated	2023	1. The procurement policy was reviewed in April 2024 to incorporate additional sustainability considerations. 2. Further efforts are needed to develop comprehensive guidance and criteria for tender applications.
1.6	Decrease environmental impact of Council events. 1. Identify emissions generated from Council events 2. Develop policy to require all events run by Council or in collaboration with Council to be carbon neutral	Mitigation	All	Not started	Emissions identified	2024	

ID	Action	Mitigation/ Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Timeframe	What did we do?
1.7	Future proof Council facilities 1. Audit all Council facilities to identify and prioritise upgrading and implementing mitigation and adaptation features by 2027. Consider which facilities can be considered climate refuges. 2. Invest in upgrading facilities on an ongoing basis 3. Promote upgraded facilities including those that are suitable climate refuges.	Both	Recreation & Community Infrastructure	In progress	All facilities are audited. At least 15% of Council facilities are upgraded by 2032.	2024	Energy resilience solar installation projects completed (supported by DEECA) at two Golden Plains Shire Emergency Relief and Recovery Sites, The Well and Sago Hill, Haddon.
1.15	Reduce Council's scope 3 emissions 1. Commission a report on Council divesting from fossil fuel investments. 2. Implement report	Mitigation	Environment and Open Spaces	Not started	Divestment report completed	2024	

ID	Action	Mitigation/ Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Timeframe	What did we do?
1.1	Ensure Council climate risks are recorded and addressed. 1. Review risks listed in Council risk register to ensure climate risks are listed along with appropriate mitigation strategies	Both	Environment and Open Spaces	In progress	Climate risks are listed in risk register along with appropriate mitigation strategies.	2024	Council completed a comprehensive climate risk assessment project for Council, establishing a climate risk register that identifies high and medium concern risks (across physical, transitional and legal risks to Council and its service delivery to community over 2030, 2050 and 2070 time scales).
1.8	Decrease water usage at Council facilities 1. Identify baseline water usage at Council facilities 2. Explore opportunities for reducing water usage by at least 20% 3. Implement measures to decrease water usage	Both	Recreation & Community Infrastructure	In progress	Baseline water usage determined Water usage is decreased or planned to be decreased by 20% by 2032.	2025	GPSC became part of the WaterSmart Program in collaboration with Barwon water. The program incorporates water use monitoring via data loggers and provides organisations with real-time data on their water use via an online portal, which can help identify leaks and other areas where water can be saved. Data Loggers were installed at 11 sites in early December 2023. Similar project has been discussed with Central highlands water to install data loggers at three sites: Haddon Lions Woady

ID	Action	Mitigation/ Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Timeframe	What did we do?
							Yaloak Centenary Park, Linton recreation reserve, Smythesdale Gardens
1.9	Identify, eliminate and reduce Council emissions wherever possible. Where eliminating or reducing emissions isn't possible, purchase carbon offsets. 1. Seek and work with partners to create and promote local and regional offset opportunities. 2 -Carbon Offset Procurement Policy/Strategy	Mitigation	Finance, Environment and Open Spaces, Corporate Services	In progress	At least 75% of offsets are local from purchase date	2025	Corporate Emissions inventory for 2023-24 initiated with Ironbark.

ID	Action	Mitigation/ Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Timeframe	What did we do?
1.16	Decrease the environmental impact of road, footpath and playground materials. 1. Identify research institutions exploring use of low carbon and/or high recycled content concrete and asphalt/emulsion options. 2. Undertake benchmarking research to understand what is being done by other Councils. 3. Plan transition from current materials to new materials. 4. Implement use of new materials.	Both	Asset services and Recreation & Community Infrastructure	In progress	Between 5 - 20% of roads, footpaths and playground materials are upgraded or built with low carbon or high recycled content by 2032.	2025	New product used in unsealed road stabilisation at Bakers Lane, Teesdale. Use of recycled plastic road furniture ie. Bollards in Inverleigh streetscape project. Installed infiltration parking areas near central median in Inverleigh to protect tree root zone.
1.12	Decrease emissions generated by single-vehicle travel 1. Investigate a carpooling system for Council staff 2. Promote and launch system	Mitigation	Corporate Services - Fleet	Not started	At least 5% of staff are carpooling to the office	2027	
1.10.	Embed climate change into Council induction practices 1. Develop an information pack with key facts 2. Host a quarterly session to ensure new employees are educated about Council's climate change efforts during their induction period. 3. Require all employees to attend a session.	Both	People & Performance	Not started	Information pack developed Employees report higher levels of knowledge about climate change in Council practices	2029	

ID	Action	Mitigation/ Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Timeframe	What did we do?
1.11	Increase Council staff knowledge about the climate emergency 1. Develop a climate emergency course to put up on Council's staff learning platform 2. Offer and promote the course	Both	People & Performance, Environment and Open Spaces	Not started	Course developed At least 25% of Council staff undertake Course by 2032.	2030	
1.17	Advocate to the Victorian and Australian government to declare a climate emergency and to act in accordance with climate science	Both	Environment and Open Spaces	Not started	At least two advocacy actions are completed each year	Ongoing	

2. Resilient and adaptive communities

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
2.1	Embed climate change into Council community grant processes 1. Update assessment criteria for Community Strengthening grant applications to require climate change as a consideration	Both	Community development	Completed	Climate change included in grant assessment criteria	2022	Strategic objectives of the Golden Plains Shire Council's Climate Emergency Plan 2022 - 2032 included in the focus areas under the Environment & Sustainability stream (but not changing assessment weighting)

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
2.12	Increase business understanding of climate change and increase their capacity to reduce their emissions and adapt 1. Develop and disseminate a survey for businesses to understand their current sustainability efforts and where support is needed. 2. Analyse results from business survey to identify what support to provide. 3. Develop and deliver programs to support businesses	Both	Economic development	In progress	Businesses report an increased understanding of climate change. Business emissions are reduced by 15% from the baseline	2022	Website page to include sustainable business content is currently in development
2.2	Increase the community's knowledge about climate change through art. 1. Identify community-led climate focussed art projects (e.g. working with GPArts Inc.) 2. Collaborate with the community to deliver art projects	Adaptation	Environment and Open Spaces	In progress	At least three events are held by 2032. Event attendees report increased knowledge about climate change	2023	PhotoSynthesis workshop was arranged for residents to capture the environmental significance of the local flora and fauna of Golden Plains.

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
2.3	Embed climate change into Council programming 1. Present about Council's Climate Emergency Plan during each Community Leadership Program 2. Include tackling climate change and its impact on health as a criteria in the Community Leadership program project development process	Both	Community Wellbeing	In progress	Program attendees report they considered climate change in the development of their community project	2023	1 presentation was organised in 2023. A climate change co-benefits tool for internal use is underway, focusing on climate change and impacts on health in alignment with Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Climate Emergency Plan.
2.11	Increase student engagement with the natural environment. 1. Develop planting fund for all primary schools to plant annually on school or public land. 2. Promote funding opportunity to schools. 3. Follow up with schools to monitor progress via survey, photos and conversations with teachers	Mitigation	Environment and open spaces	In progress	At least 25% of schools use funding annually. Survey results and photos indicate tree growth	2023	Capture details from dale regarding tree planting at schools
2.13	Improve comfort, reduce energy bills, build climate resilience and improve health outcomes for vulnerable households in the Shire. 1. Explore opportunities for building upgrades for vulnerable households including those of older people and people on low incomes. 2. Support implementation of upgrades	Mitigation	Environment and open spaces, community wellbeing	In progress	At least 5% of vulnerable households are upgraded by 2032.	2024	Partnership with geelong sustainability

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
2.4	Identify opportunities for improving Farmers Market practices. 1. Assist in audit process to identify improvements to sustainable practices. 2. Develop sustainability guidelines for stallholders at Council run markets. 3. Incorporate findings from audit into future planning processes, disseminate guidelines to stallholders and provide ongoing support	Both	Environment and open spaces	Not started	Audit of Farmers Markets completed. Stallholders report increased knowledge about sustainable practices. Council reports improved Farmers Market practices	2025	
2.5	Increase the number of mitigation and adaptation focussed projects undertaken by community in the Shire. 1. Plan resourcing and application guidelines for establishment of Golden Plains Community Strengthening Grants climate emergency stream 2. Establish the new grant stream	Both	Community Development	Not started	New grant stream is developed	2025	Strategic objectives of the Golden Plains Shire Council's Climate Emergency Plan 2022 - 2032 included in the focus areas under the Environment & Sustainability stream

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
2.14	Increase agricultural business capacity to reduce their emissions and adapt. 1. Investigate how Council can best support agricultural businesses to respond to the climate emergency. 2. Develop plan to support agricultural businesses. 3. Deliver plan	Both	Environment and open spaces	Not started	Agricultural businesses emissions are reduced by 10% from the baseline by 2032	2025	
2.6	Assists schools to embed sustainability into their practices. 1. Promote and support schools to sign up to become a Resource Smart school through Sustainability Victoria	Both	Environment and open spaces	Completed	At least three schools become Resource Smart schools by 2032.	2026	Three schools enrolled in the program. Promotion of resource smart school program on website is under development
2.7	Increase the community's ability and knowledge to grow their own food. 1. Identify areas for new or expanded community gardens. 2. Expand community gardens and educate residents about growing food	Both	Recreation & Community Infrastructure, Community wellbeing	In progress	At least one new community garden is developed by 2032. Residents report increased knowledge of growing their own food	2026	Edible Gardens Webinar

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
2.15	Increase students' knowledge of local food and their ability to grow their own food. 1. Investigate options for students to grow their own food (e.g. through the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation). 2. Secure partnership and select schools to participate 3. Oversee delivery of program	Both	Recreation & Community Infrastructure	Not started	Schools report increased student knowledge in growing their own food	2026	
2.8	Decrease the environmental footprint of community facilities. 1. Offer free sustainability audits for community facilities not falling within Council remit. 2. Support implementation of upgrades (e.g. support applying for grants, exploring bulk buy opportunities, fund matching)	Both	Recreation & Community Infrastructure	Not started	At least 50% of community facilities receive a free sustainability audit by 2030. At least 20% of community facilities undertake upgrades by 2032	2027	
2.9	Embed climate change into community project processes. 1. Update the assessment criteria for community seed funding applications to require climate change as a	Both	Community development	Not started	Assessment criteria updated. Toolkit updated. Community Coordinators	2027	

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
	consideration. 2. Review and update the Community Coordinator toolkit to embed climate change information. 3. Provide education to Community Coordinators about how climate change may impact their community. 4. Offer community education and capacity building initiatives				report higher levels of knowledge about climate change and its impact on their community. Community Coordinators report their community is more knowledgeable about climate change		
2.16	Explore implementation of community driven renewable energy in the Golden Plains Shire to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. 1. Undertake research to better understand steps, costs and other resources required	Mitigation	Environment and open spaces	Not started	Report developed detailing findings	2027	

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
2.17	Explore ways to promote efficient resource use in the Shire. 1. Investigate feasibility and locations for expanding repair cafes and other spaces that are designed for shared use of resources such as toys, garden tools etc.	Mitigation	Environment and open spaces	Not started	Report produced indicating feasibility and locations	2029	
2.10.	Increase the community's knowledge about solar and battery storage. 1. Facilitate access to expert advice on solar and battery storage for Golden Plains Shire businesses and residents	Mitigation	Environment and open spaces	In progress - ongoing	Residents indicate increased knowledge about solar and battery storage. Residents indicate a willingness to purchase solar or battery storage for their home	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working in partnership with Geelong Sustainability to support their 'Electric Homes' program by promoting their news, and webinars across Golden Plains Shire through social media.

3. Caring for the land

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
3.1	Restore biodiversity and repair damaged ecosystems. 1. Consult with Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar for natural resource management advice and opportunities where possible. 2. Develop a revegetation plan for Council reserves 3. Plant a tree for every resident in the Shire	Both	Environment and open spaces	In progress	Revegetation plan is developed. By 2028, a tree is planted for every person in the Shire	2025	Significant revegetation projects completed at Moorabool River Reserve and Barwon Leigh Junction.
3.2	Support native flora regeneration and reduce fire risk in key locations. 1. Develop a planned burn strategy, incorporating ecological and cultural burning practices requirements and that burns be led by Wadawurrung Traditional Owners where possible 2. Implement strategy	Adaptation	Environment and open spaces	In progress	Strategy developed	2027	Planned burn strategy is being drafted. Cultural burning initiatives have progressed between WTOAC and GPS in 2023-24.

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
3.3	Improve outcomes for the natural environment. 1. Deliver against the Regional Catchment Strategy and partner with the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority on land and water management projects including both broad scale management projects and community projects	Adaptation	Environment and open spaces	Not started	Deliver or partner on three projects by 2032.	Ongoing	
3.4	Ensure a healthy and resilient natural environment. 1. Continue working with Traditional Owners to embed traditional knowledge and practices into Council's land management practices	Both	Environment and open spaces	In progress-ongoing	At least two meetings occur per year related to Council land management	Ongoing	Met with WTOAC on development of Moorabool RR Plan and IWM plan.
3.5	Build working relationships with Traditional Owner natural resource management resources for on-ground works, revegetation, fire management and other climate change initiatives.	Both	Environment and open spaces	In progress-ongoing	Traditional Owners report a good working relationship with Council	Ongoing	

4. Climate Responsive Development

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
4.1	Address impacts of climate change, urbanisation and other water challenges at the regional and local level. 1. Identify at least three opportunities for implementing integrated water management projects across the Shire. 2. Implement projects 3. Support Traditional Owners' "water is life" roadmap.	Adaptation	Environment and Open Space	In progress	At least three projects have been implemented by 2032.	2024	The draft Bannockburn Integrated Water Management Plan was presented to Barwon IWM Forum and endorsed by Council to progress to public consultation. The final plan was adopted in February 2025.

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
4.2	Decrease the environmental impact of new developments in the Shire. 1. Investigate options to update the Planning Scheme and Infrastructure Design Manual to include climate change related minimum standards. 2. Engage with Council and community around potential updates 3. Develop Plan to include relevant changes	Both	Planning Environment and Open Space	In progress	Policy is developed	2024	Council is developing the Growing Places Strategy which includes a consideration of climate change and environmental protection and a commitment to further strategic work will be required to identify Targeted Strategic Biodiversity areas and corridors. The strategy development includes community consultation The Teesdale Flood Study modelling used RCP8.5 2100 AEP to generate effected areas
4.3	Support landholders in the Shire to mitigate and adapt to climate change. 1. Connect landholders to information and opportunities to implement climate friendly features on their property (e.g. renewable energy, regenerative agriculture, grey water tanks, biodiversity protection, sustainable heating or cooling). 2. Investigate incentive opportunities (e.g. reduced rates)	Both	Economic Development	In progress	Landholders report that they have implemented one or more climate friendly features on their property	Ongoing	Website updated

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council Department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
	for having climate friendly features on a property						
4.4	Advocate for stronger sustainability requirements in legislation 1. Collaborate with the Barwon Southwest Climate Alliance to advocate to the Victorian Government to strengthen its response to climate change by strengthening environmentally sustainable design requirements in the Victorian Planning Scheme to include measures such as zero carbon building standards, green infrastructure, tree protection and ecological connectivity, sustainable transport, electric vehicle charging infrastructure	Both	Environment and Open Space	Not started	At least one advocacy action is undertaken each year	Ongoing	

5. Sustainable Transport

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
5.1	Provide education to residents about low carbon travel. 1. Research organisations to partner with and collate information. 2. Secure partnership 3. Host demos and connect interested residents with information about EVs, electric scooters and electric bikes	Mitigation	Environment and Open spaces, Community wellbeing	Not started	Residents indicate increased knowledge about low carbon travel. Residents indicate a willingness to purchase an EV or electric bike	2026	
5.2	Improve the amenity and usability of bus stops in the Shire 1. Audit Council bus stops across the Shire to understand where upgrades are needed 2. Plan and prioritise upgrades to bus stops across the Shire 3. Upgrade bus stops	Mitigation	Asset Services	In progress	At least 25% of bus stops are upgraded by 2032.	2027	2 bus stops upgraded in conjunction with DTP on Bannockburn-Shelford Road, Teesdale. More stops being upgraded by DTP with Council input to ensure connectivity to path network

ID	Action	Mitigation/Adaptation	Council department	Delivery status	Success measure	Commencement year	What did we do?
5.3	Increase active transport in the Shire 1. Estimate baseline number of residents engaging in active transport in the Shire 2. Develop an action plan for increasing active transport in the Shire 3. Deliver the action plan	Mitigation	Community wellbeing	Not started	At least 10 per cent more residents are engaging in active transport by 2032.	2028	
5.4	Improve public transportation options for Golden Plains Shire residents 1. Advocate for implementation of the Regional Transport strategy developed by the G21	Mitigation	Environment and Open spaces	Not started	Undertake at least two advocacy actions per year	2025	
5.5	Decrease use of internal combustion engine vehicle use in the Shire 1. Actively seek grants for funding to install the use of EV chargers in high density areas in the Shire	Mitigation	Fleet, Environment and Open spaces	In progress	At least three EV chargers are installed in the Shire by 2032.	Ongoing	

Progress summary 2022-2024



CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN 2022-2032

GPSC Climate Emergency Plan is an ambitious 10-year plan outlining the Shire's response to climate change and includes a broad range of actions, requiring collaboration by the community, the Shire and other levels of government to achieve it.

This progress summary highlights the key achievements that have been made in the past 2 years that have contributed to reaching our goals.

Key Achievements



Installed Solar (supported by DEECA) at two Golden Plains Shire Emergency Relief and Recovery Sites, The Well and Sago Hill, Haddon.



Developed a Fleet transition plan & started procurement of Hybrids for the fleet.



Supported the installation of electronic vehicle charging stations in Bannockburn and Meredith.

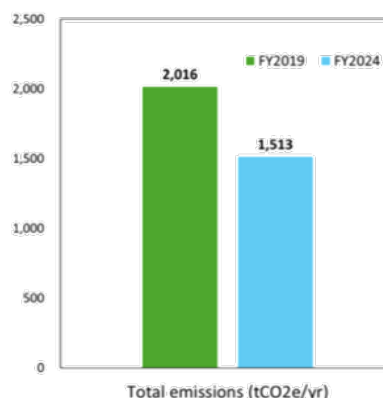


Became part of the WaterSmart program which will help identify leaks and other areas where water can be saved.

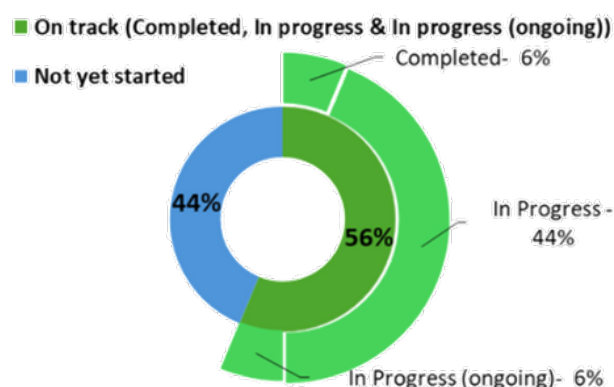


Council signed the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO), Australia's largest local government emissions reduction project.

Emissions reduction



Progress of actions



Progress summary 2022-2024



Key Achievements



Completed a comprehensive climate risk assessment project for Council, establishing a climate risk register covering physical, transition and liability risks.



Significant revegetation projects were completed at both Moorabool River Reserve and Barwon Leigh Junction with over 5000 native plants and grasses planted across the two sites.



Decrease the environmental impact of road, footpath and playground materials by using of recycled plastic road furniture i.e. Bollards in Inverleigh streetscape project.



Advanced the development of the Bannockburn Integrated Water Management Plan, with adoption anticipated in February 2025.



Became an active member of Barwon South-West Climate Alliance.



Working in partnership with Geelong Sustainability to support their 'Electric Homes' program by promoting it across Golden Plains Shire through social media.



Supported to increasing community's ability and knowledge to grow their own food by running series of Edible Gardens workshops.



Developed and disseminated planting fund for primary schools.



Climate Change Risk and Resilience Report
Golden Plains Shire Council

