

ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY 2019-2027



Strategy Adoption

The Golden Plain Shire Environment Strategy was formally adopted by Council on the 22nd of January, 2019

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Statement of acknowledgement

Golden Plains Shire Council acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the traditional Wadawurrung custodians of the lands on which Council is located and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to Wadawurrung ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging. Golden Plains Shire Council is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique culture and their rich contribution to society.

Cover image

Rokewood Cemetery native grassland. With less than 1% of Victoria's original native grasslands remaining, Golden Plains Shire contains some precious remnants of this once widespread vegetation type.



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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Golden Plains Shire Council Environment Strategy 2019-2027 (The Strategy) sets the strategic direction for environmental sustainability in the Golden Plains Shire over the next eight years.

It is presented to two parts; the Environment Strategy and the Background Report.

The Environment Strategy outlines our strategic direction and sets targets and key mechanisms to support the implementation of these strategic directions.

The Background Report provides detailed information regarding the development of the Strategy, including guiding principles and legislative framework, the Golden Plains environment, key drivers of environmental change, and their challenges and strategy implementation action options.

The Strategy is strongly aligned to the Council Plan 2017-21, reflects feedback from our community and stakeholders and builds on the success of the *Golden Plains Shire Environment Strategy 2011-16*. In order to provide flexibility, the delivery of on-the-ground actions will be captured in a number of Implementation Plans throughout the life of the Strategy.

Our Vision

‘Environmental sustainability underpins life in Golden Plains Shire’

This vision is supported by five Strategic Directions that align with the Council Plan. Due to the breadth of the Strategy each Strategic Direction has been divided into a number of themes. In order to achieve our vision, each theme has an aim and clear targets, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Key Implementation Mechanisms (KIMs).

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Environmental sustainability is the process of maintaining change in a balanced fashion, where our patterns of living meet the needs of the present and provide long term environmental quality for future generations.

RESILIENCE

- Resilience is the capacity of individuals, communities and systems to survive, adapt and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience. It is about being able to ‘bounce forward,’ to turn vulnerabilities into opportunities.

ENVIRONMENT

- Our environment is not only the physical and biological surroundings in which plants, animals and people live and interact, it is also the conditions in which people live and work and the way those conditions influence how people feel.

Introduction

The Golden Plains Shire Council Environment Strategy 2019-2027 (The Strategy) sets the strategic direction for environmental sustainability in the Golden Plains Shire over the next eight years.

The Strategy is both high-level and forward thinking. It offers a framework that clearly identifies the Council's vision and five Strategic Directions for the future. It sets targets and key mechanisms to support the implementation of these Strategic Directions. In order to provide flexibility, the delivery of on the ground actions will be captured in a number of Implementation Plans throughout the life of the Strategy.

The Strategic Directions outlined in the Strategy will help to shape the Golden Plains Shire by: connecting the community to their environment, supporting environmentally sustainable economies, protecting and enhancing thriving ecosystems and providing well-designed built environments. The Strategy also identifies ways Council can provide and support the transformational change required to maintain a healthy environment and liveable Golden Plains Shire through leadership and good governance.

The Strategy builds on the success of the *Golden Plains Shire Council Environment Strategy 2011-16*. It is strongly aligned to the Council Plan 2017-21 and reflects feedback from our community and stakeholders.

About our Environment

Golden Plains Shire (Golden Plains) is located in south-western Victoria and covers an area of 2,702 square kilometres. Golden Plains is a predominantly rural area with its population residing in a number of townships and small villages and communities across the landscape. The majority of residents look to Ballarat and Geelong for schooling, employment and access to goods and services.

Golden Plains is comprised of two distinct environments or bioregions; the Central Victoria Uplands and the Victorian Volcanic Plains. These bioregions support 372 flora species and 191 fauna species. Major threats to flora and fauna communities in Golden Plains include land use change from native pasture to cropping, subdivision for urban growth, illegal clearing, weed invasion and lack of enforcement action, continued removal and fragmentation of habitat, altered fire regimes and ongoing reduction in rainfall.

The three major river systems flowing through Golden Plains include: the Moorabool, Leigh and Woody Yaloak rivers. Major threats to our rivers, streams and wetlands include: over extraction, low flowrates, limited flow regimes, dams and water storage lowering environmental flows, poor quality streamside zones due to weed infestation, contaminated runoff from agriculture and urbanised areas.

Golden Plains provides many opportunities for business, investment, sustainable development and employment and sustains more than 1,700 businesses in farming, retail and home-based businesses.

Golden Plains has a strong agricultural sector with a large portion of rural land used for wool, beef, chicken, pork, lamb, eggs and grain production, as well as viticulture. Development of the Golden Plains Food Production Precinct positions Golden Plains as one of Victoria's premier areas for intensive agriculture.

Strategy Development

The Strategy was developed through a comprehensive process of community, stakeholder and staff engagement, with a number of stakeholder and community workshops held across the Golden Plains. It also involved the review and analysis of current State, Federal, Regional and Council strategies and plans that influence or guide environmental sustainability, including the *Golden Plains Council Environment Strategy 2011-16*.

A number of guiding principles were used during the development of the Strategy. These, together with the key environmental drivers of change in Victoria, as outlined in the Victorian State Government State of the Environment Report and current local environmental challenges, have all informed the Strategy's development. The guiding principles, key drivers of change and environmental challenges are listed in the table below.

Guiding principles, key drivers of change and environmental challenges

Guiding principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All areas of Council have stewardship of our environmentEnvironmental SustainabilityLevels of Control ApproachCommunity and stakeholder partnershipsLeadership and good governance drive environmental sustainability
Key drivers of change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Population growthOur economy
Key environmental challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Climate change and increased vulnerabilityResource overuseEcosystem healthManaging our agricultural sector for the environmentCommunity wellbeing and connectedness to the environment

Our Shire in Numbers

Bushland, parks and open spaces

Plants and animals

Environment

Rivers and waterways

253 km

of major rivers



Heat

with over 7 days per year exceeding

35°C



>19,000 ha

of National Parks and State Forest

~120 ha

of Council reserves for passive recreation

~100 ha

of sports grounds

1800 km

of road network



372

species of flora



191

species of fauna

Average Australian ecological footprint is 6.87 ha equivalent to 4 planets



Social



More people
22,574

people live in the Golden Plains Shire.
By 2036, this is estimated to increase to

32,450

4,500

people work in the Golden Plains Shire

72.4%

people travel outside of the Shire to work

>1,800

businesses call Golden Plains home



More development

50%

more dwellings to reach

12,690

dwellings by 2036

Economic

Each week Golden Plains Shire produces

4,000,000



eggs

1,000

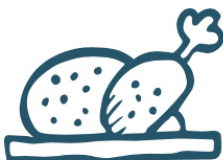


pigs

26%

of the Shire's workforce employed by the agriculture sector and is worth

600,000



meat chickens

28,000 L



goat's milk

\$159 million

in economic output, or 20% of the Shires economy of

\$0.56 billion

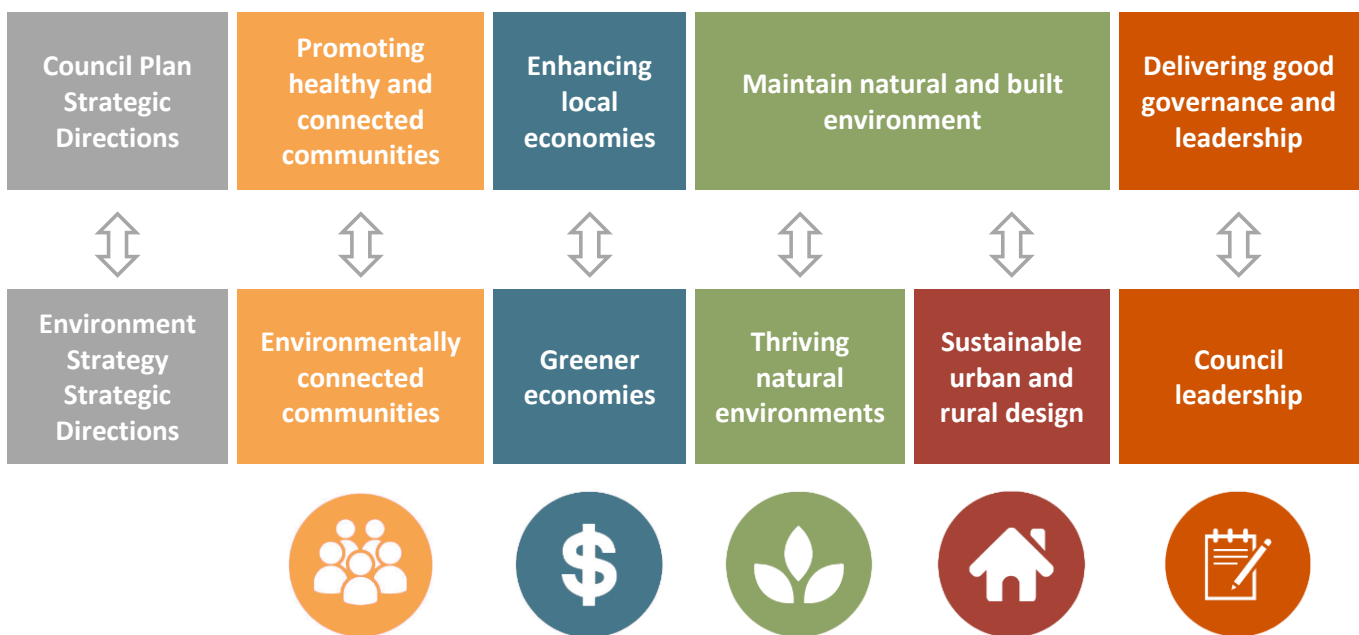
Gross Regional Product

Strategic Direction

Our Vision

Environmental sustainability underpins life in Golden Plains Shire.

This vision is supported by five strategic directions that align with the Council Plan.



Our Strategic Directions

1		Environmentally connected communities To create a culture where the Golden Plains Shire community is connected (to their environment), engaged (with Council), and empowered to improve their personal and collective environmental sustainability practices.
2		Greener economies To foster and support environmentally sustainable industries, business, agriculture and tourism, by working in partnership with local business, government and community.
3		Thriving natural environments To protect and enhance the natural environment by reducing environmental impacts and supporting ecosystems to thrive.
4		Sustainable urban and rural design To provide a well-designed built environment that minimises environmental impacts, improves liveability and supports community resilience.
5		Council Leadership To provide good governance and leadership through the integration of environmentally sustainable practices across Council and in the community.

Our Themes



Strategic Direction One: Environmentally connected communities

1.1	Environmentally active and resilient communities	Support the community to improve their environmentally sustainable practices and build their capacity to respond to environmental changes.
1.2	Communities connected to the environment	Increase the Golden Plains Shire community's connection with nature enabling them to draw from the benefits of improved physical and mental wellbeing.



Strategic Direction Two: Greener economies

2.1	Environmentally engaged businesses	Foster a thriving green business economy in the Golden Plains Shire by attracting new sustainable industries and encouraging existing businesses to reduce the environmental impact of their operations.
2.2	Nature-based tourism sector	Promote and support nature-based tourism within the Golden Plains Shire that foster, promote and actively implement environmentally sustainable practices.
2.3	Regenerative agriculture sector	Holistically manage landscape functions to produce Golden Plains Shire's food, fuel and fibre.



Strategic Direction Three: Thriving natural environments

3.1	Biodiversity	Protect, restore and increase the health of our natural ecosystems, biodiversity and natural habitats to ensure they survive and thrive in the Golden Plains Shire.
3.2	Invasive species	Reduce the impact of invasive species on agriculture, natural systems and the community.
3.3	Water security	Protect the ecological health of our waterways and wetlands and facilitate sustainable water use in the GPS community.
3.4	Fire and planned burning	Land management practices by Council, fire agencies and the community minimise the risk of wildfire in the landscape while enhancing ecological health.
3.5	Aboriginal Cultural heritage land management	Preserve and protect Aboriginal heritage values and culture through sensitive land management practices and community education and appreciation.



Strategic Direction Four: Sustainable urban and rural design

4.1	Environmentally responsive infrastructure design	Provide well-designed built environments that minimise environmental impacts, improve liveability and support community resilience.
4.2	Climate adaptation and climate mitigation	Foster a community that understands the impacts of climate change, responds positively to future climatic conditions and actively reduces their greenhouse emissions.
4.3	Parks and green places	Protect, enhance and increase our parks and green spaces to ensure a network of land and water that supports recreation and sport, trails and paths, nature conservation and visual relief from the urban environment.
4.4	Waste management	Reduce waste to landfill through innovative waste management and resource recovery, changed community behaviours and fit for purpose infrastructure.



Strategic Direction Five: Council Leadership

5.1	Governance	Environmentally sustainable practices are integrated into all levels of Council and staff are empowered to deliver them as part of their core business.
5.2	Leadership	Demonstrate leadership in environmental sustainability and empower action with community groups, industry, other agencies and the wider community.

Theme measurables

In order to track performance, each theme has a number of measurables. These include: targets, Key Performance Indicators and Key Implementation Mechanisms.

Targets

Targets provide a measurable way in which to gauge how well the aim is being achieved. Where applicable SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time bound) targets have been set against each theme.

Key Performance Indicators

A Key Performance Indicator (KPI) is a measure that enables monitoring of performance in terms of progress towards a specific, defined objective or target. KPIs identify the measures required throughout the delivery of the Strategy in order to achieve future targets.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

Key Implementation Mechanisms (KIM's) provide overarching desired outcomes and processes for delivery. They are strategic in nature and have been used to provide general/wide-ranging/overall/universal/broad spectrum statements. They identify what the Strategy aims to achieve at a strategic level. Each KIM will generate a group of actions or tasks to be delivered.

Actions

A wide range of actions have been identified for each theme. These have come from a number of sources, including: actions from the existing Environment Strategy 2011-2016, community and stakeholder workshops, internal staff workshops, Project Steering Committee and Technical Reference Group, and examples of best management practice across the world. These actions have driven the development of the Key Implementation Mechanisms and are listed in Part B as actions to be considered in the development of the Strategy's Implementation Plans.

Supporting documents

These are Council documents that support or influence the Strategy. They include: policies, strategies and plans that exist within the Council and elsewhere that influence environmental sustainability.





Strategic Direction One: Environmentally connected communities

Theme 1.1: Environmentally active and resilient communities

Support the community to improve their environmentally sustainable practices and build their capacity to respond to environmental changes.

Targets

T 1.1.1: The Golden Plains Shire community improves their environmentally sustainable practices and awareness of their ecological footprint.

T 1.1.2: Golden Plains Shire community is informed and able to respond to fluctuations in climate.

Key Performance Indicators

- The number of community forums and activities held on environmental sustainability and resilience per year.
- Adaptation and Resilience Policy developed by 2020.
- Climate Resilient Adaptation Plan developed by 2023.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Empower the community to improve their personal and collective environmentally sustainable practices.
2. Build community resilience by strengthening community capacity to effectively respond to current and future challenges related to climate change and the natural environment.
3. Establish and support community partnerships that develop resilience and work towards living sustainably.
4. Educate and empower the community about ways to live more sustainably.

Supporting policies and plans

- Community Engagement Action Plan.
- Community Development Strategy.
- Community Engagement Strategy.



Strategic Direction One: Environmentally connected communities

Theme 1.2: Communities connected to the environment

Increase the Golden Plains Shire community's connection with nature enabling them to draw from the benefits of improved physical and mental wellbeing.

Targets

T 1.2.1: By 2027 the GPS community are better connected to their environment with a 50% increase in visitation to parks and open spaces.

T 1.2.2: By 2027 participation in environmental events and activities has increased by 50 %.

T 1.2.3: By 2027 people using natural places to support their physical health and wellbeing has increased by 50%.

Key Performance Indicators

- Review and implement the Path and Trails Strategy in line with Town Structure Plans by 2023.
- Review and implement the Open Space Strategy in line with Town Structure Plans by 2023.
- By 2023 25% use natural places to support their physical health and wellbeing.
- By 2023 participation in environmental events and activities has increased by 25%.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Support and provide opportunities for community to connect with their environment.
2. Establish and support community partnerships that encourage connection to and advocacy for their environment.
3. Educate and empower the community about ways to connect with their environment.

Supporting policies and plans

- Path and Trails Strategy.
- Open Space Strategy.
- Town Structure Plans.



Strategic Direction Two: Greener Economies

Theme 2.1: Environmentally engaged businesses

Foster a thriving green business economy in the Golden Plains Shire by attracting new sustainable industries and encouraging existing businesses to reduce the environmental impact of their operations.

Targets

T 2.1.1: 25% of existing businesses in GPS are registered to monitor their environmental sustainability through measures of energy, waste & water usage by 2027.

T 2.1.2: 75% of engaged businesses demonstrate an increase in environmental sustainability through measures of energy, waste & water usage by 2027.

T 2.1.3: There is a 25% increase in green industries within the GPS by 2027

Key Performance Indicators

- Establish an environmental scorecard to use with businesses to identify their performance in environmentally sustainable practices by 2020.
- 25% of existing businesses in GPS are sustainable in energy, waste & water usage by 2023.
- The number of new businesses within the environment sector established in GPS per year.
- The number of large-scale renewable energy projects.
- The number of grants received by businesses for sustainability projects per year.
- The number of sustainability projects undertaken by Council per year.
- The number of training/information sessions run by Council with a focus on sustainability for business per year.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Support and encourage new and existing local industries and businesses to implement environmentally sustainable practices.
2. Encourage environmentally sustainable businesses into the Golden Plains Shire.
3. Establish and support partnerships with regional and broader businesses to encourage and promote environmentally sustainable business practices.
4. Educate and empower regional and broader businesses to encourage and promote environmentally sustainable business practices.

Supporting policies and plans

- Economic Development & Tourism Strategy.
- Community First and Business Improvement Strategy.



Strategic Direction Two: Greener Economies

Theme 2.2: Nature-based tourism sector

Promote and support nature-based tourism within the Golden Plains Shire that foster, promote and actively implement environmentally sustainable practices

Targets

T 2.2.1: Educate and promote programs that improve the impacts of tourism on the environment.

Key Performance Indicators

- The number of education programs and events run each year that promote the improvement of impacts of tourism on the environment.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Support and encourage new and existing tourism providers to implement environmentally sustainable practices.
2. Encourage and foster nature-based tourism that preserves the distinct landscape, character and heritage values of the Golden Plains Shire.
3. Establish and support partnerships with regional and broader businesses to encourage and promote environmentally sustainable nature-based tourism.
4. Educate and empower regional and broader businesses to encourage and promote environmentally sustainable nature-based tourism.

Supporting policies and plans

- Economic Development & Tourism Strategy.



Strategic Direction Two: Greener Economies

Theme 2.3: Sustainable agriculture

Holistically manage landscape functions to produce Golden Plains Shire's food, fuel and fibre.

Targets

T 2.3.1: By 2027 25% primary producers in the municipality holistically manage landscape function to produce food, fuel and fibre.

Key Performance Indicators

- Each industry is mapped with the specific criteria for sustainable agriculture.
- All industries are benchmarked against environmentally sustainable best management practices with actions plans noting how they can improve.
- The number of primary producers participating in sustainable farming education programs per year.
- The number of new organically certified farms in the municipality per year.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Support and encourage new and existing businesses in the agriculture sector to implement environmentally sustainable practices.
2. Encourage and promote environmentally sustainable agriculture models into the Golden Plains Shire.
3. Establish and support partnerships with other agencies, community groups and education facilities to promote, support and implement environmentally sustainable projects in the agriculture sector.
4. Educate and empower local farming industries and community groups to promote, support and implement environmentally sustainable practices in the agriculture sector.

Supporting policies and plans

- Golden Plains Food Production Precinct Concept Plan.
- Golden Plains Rural Land Use Strategy (2008).



Strategic Direction Three: Thriving natural environments

Theme 3.1: Biodiversity

Protect, restore and increase the health of our natural ecosystems, biodiversity and natural habitats to ensure they survive and thrive in the Golden

Targets

T 3.1.1: Increase the number of properties under an environmental covenant by 50% by 2027 using the 2019 baseline.

T3.1.2: Develop and implement management plans for Council owned and managed reserves.

Key Performance Indicators

- Net gain in native vegetation for Council activities and planning approvals reported annually.
- 100% of major development proposals are referred for review
- The number of management plans written for Council owned and managed reserves.
- Establish and implement monitoring protocols for Council owned and managed reserves.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Preserve and increase biodiversity and native vegetation on Council owned and managed land.
2. Implement the Roadside Environmental Management Plan and Action Plan.
3. Preserve and protect biodiversity and native vegetation through effective land use planning.
4. Protect biodiversity and native vegetation on private land through community engagement and enforcement.
5. Increase biodiversity and native vegetation on private land through community engagement and incentives.
6. Establish and support partnerships with other agencies, community groups and education facilities to preserve and protect biodiversity and native vegetation.
7. Educate and empower the community about biodiversity values and ways to preserve and protect biodiversity and native vegetation.

Supporting policies and plans

- Red Gum Reserve Management Plan
- Teesdale Grassy Woodland Management Plan.
- Roadside Environment Management Plan.
- Golden Plains Biodiversity Strategy 2016
- Central Victorian Bio links.
- Native Vegetation Removal planning referrals.
- Bruce's Creek Management Plan.
- Protecting Victoria's Environment: Biodiversity 2037.
- Old Batesford Cemetery Management Plan



Strategic Direction Three: Thriving natural environments

Theme 3.2: Invasive Species

Reduce the impact of invasive species on agriculture, natural systems and the community.

Targets

T 3.2.1: Reduction in the coverage of declared weeds and environmental weeds on Council owned or managed land by 70% by 2027.

T 3.2.2: Develop and implement an Invasive Species Program by 2027.

Key Performance Indicators

- Invasive Species Program guidelines developed by 2019.
- Invasive Species Program developed by 2020.
- Invasive Species Program implementation 2021-2027.
- % invasive species reduced on crown land.
- % invasive species reduced on roadsides.
- The number of annual educational activities regarding control and eradication of invasive species.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Manage invasive species and their impacts on Council owned and managed land.
2. Reduce invasive species and their impacts on privately owned land through community engagement and enforcement by the responsible agency.
3. Manage invasive species and their impacts through effective land use planning.
4. Establish and support partnerships with other agencies, community groups and education facilities to facilitate cross-boundary invasive species management.
5. Educate and empower the community, community groups and landholders about the impacts of invasive species and ways to manage them.

Supporting policies and plans

- Pest Plant and Animal Management Plan.
- Roadside Weed Management Plan.
- Domestic Animal Management Plan.
- Roadside Environmental Management Plan.



Strategic Direction Three: Thriving natural environments

Theme 3.3: Water security

Protect the ecological health of our waterways and wetlands and facilitate sustainable water use in the GPS community.

Targets

T 3.3.1: Apply appropriate environmental and open space areas in addition to minimum width buffers adjacent to waterways in new developments areas.

T 3.3.2: Stormwater management meets State environment protection policy minimum requirements.

T 3.3.3: Reduce Council's potable water consumption by 20% by 2027 against a 2018 baseline.

Key Performance Indicators

- The number of infrastructure placed to manage stormwater and flooding events.
- The number of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) projects initiated.
- The number of Integrated Water Management Guidelines developed per year.
- Council's potable water consumption reduced by 20% by 2023.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Preserve and enhance natural waterways and wetlands on Council owned and managed land to support healthy and diverse aquatic habitats and species.
2. Protect waterways and wetlands through effective land use and planning.
3. Protect waterways and wetlands through the implementation of effective drainage and stormwater infrastructure.
4. Mitigate and manage stormwater and flooding events through integrated water management processes,
6. Minimise Council water use through adoption of sustainable water practices across Council operations.
7. Advocate for environmental flows in waterways across the municipality.
8. Establish and support partnerships with other agencies, community groups and education facilities to protect waterways and wetlands and facilitate sustainable water use
9. Educate and empower the community about sustainable water use and ways to preserve and protect waterways and wetlands.

Supporting policies and plans

- Domestic Waste Water Management Plan.
- Stormwater Management Plan.
- Planning Green Blue City.
- CCMA Waterway Strategy 2014-2022



Strategic Direction Three: Thriving natural environments

Theme 3.4: Fire and planned burning

Land management practices by Council, fire agencies and the community minimise the risk of wildfire in the landscape while enhancing ecological health.

Targets

T 3.4.1: Reduction of 25% of Fire Prevention Notices issued per capita by 2027.

T 3.4.2: Reduction of 10% of second round Fire Prevention Notices issued per capita by 2027

T 3.4.3: Implement a minimum of five burns a year in Council owned and managed land.

T 3.4.4: Increase the length in km of roadside burns on Council roadsides by 10% using the 2018 baseline by 2027.

Key Performance Indicators

- The number of Fire Prevention Notices.
- The number of second round Fire Prevention Notices.
- Five burns implemented per year on crown and managed land.
- Kilometres in length of roadside burns.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Manage Council land to mitigate the risk of wildfire.
2. Promote and enforce management actions that reduce the risk of wildfire on private land.
3. Promote and encourage ecological and fuel reduction burning on roadsides and reserves.
4. Mitigate the rise of wildfire through effective land use planning.
5. Establish and support partnerships with fire management agencies, other land managers and the community to manage and reduce the risk of wildfire and to utilise fire as a way of managing our natural environment.
6. Educate and empower the community, community groups and landholders about fire in the landscape and ways to reduce the risk of wildfire on their properties.

Supporting policies and plans

- Prescribed burning program.
- Municipal Fire Management Plan.



Strategic Direction Three: Thriving natural environments

Theme 3.5: Aboriginal cultural heritage land management

Preserve and protect Aboriginal heritage values and culture through sensitive land management practices and community education and appreciation.

Targets

T 3.5.1: 50% of Council owned and managed reserves incorporate traditional owner naming conventions and cultural interpretations developed in collaboration with Wadawurrung people.

T 3.5.2: In partnership with Wadawurrung and CFA develop a cultural burning program that delivers eight cultural burns by 2027.

Key Performance Indicators

- The number of newly named reserves or their features that incorporate traditional owner names.
- The number of cultural burns delivered in partnership with the Wadawurrung per year.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Manage Council owned and managed land to preserve and protect known Aboriginal heritage values and culture.
2. Promote land management actions on private land that reduce impacts to Aboriginal heritage values and culture.
3. Council leads in promoting appreciation of Aboriginal heritage values and culture.
4. Establish and support partnerships with the Wathaurung Regional Aboriginal Party (RAP), trading as Wadawurrung to protect Aboriginal heritage values and culture.
5. Support education of the community about Aboriginal heritage values and culture and build awareness of ways to celebrate and participate in its protection.

Supporting policies and plans

- Council Plan 2017-2021.



Strategic Direction Four: Sustainable urban and rural design

Theme 4.1: Environmentally responsive infrastructure design

Provide well-designed built environments that minimise environmental impacts, improve liveability and support community resilience.

Targets

T 4.1.1: Increase awareness and understanding of environmentally sustainable design for homeowners and developers.

T 4.1.2: Council development and construction designs are reviewed to reflect Environmentally Sustainable Design principles and energy star ratings of 6 or above, by 2023.

T 4.1.3: Existing Council buildings are audited for environmental impacts and these impacts are reduced by 50% by 2027.

T 4.1.4: Council construction designs and Procurement to support the use of recycled materials where clear benefit is demonstrated by 2023.

Key Performance Indicators

- Results of annual environmental impact audits of Council facilities.
- Energy star ratings and number of environmentally sustainable design features in new Council buildings and developments.
- Number of education programs and products delivered per year.
- Audit of construction and designs to report on the use of recycled materials and demonstrated benefits.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Develop a built environment that supports environmentally sustainable design (ESD) and carbon draw down initiatives.
2. Promote environmentally sustainable design (ESD) in residential and commercial buildings.
3. Establish and support partnerships with other agencies, community groups and industry that encourage environmentally responsive infrastructure design.
4. Educate the community, developers and businesses about environmentally responsive infrastructure design and ways to implement it.

Supporting policies and plans

- Community Solar Program.
- Urban forest diversity guidelines.
- Urban design frameworks/Town Structure Plans.



Strategic Direction Four: Sustainable urban and rural design

Theme 4.2: Climate change adaptation and mitigation

Foster a community that understands the impacts of climate change, responds positively to future climatic conditions and actively reduces their greenhouse emissions.

Targets

T 4.2.1: Council is a zero-net emissions organisation and the community is low carbon by 2040.

T 4.2.2: Develop and implement the Climate Change Action Plan.

T 4.2.3: A reduction of 50% in Council emissions by 2023.

Key Performance Indicators

- Climate Change Action Plan developed and implemented by 2020.
- Carbon emissions reduced by 25% by 2021.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Identify and implement actions that support Council carbon draw down to address climate change and reduce Council's carbon footprint.
2. Strengthen community capacity to effectively respond to current and future challenges related to climate change.
3. Establish and support partnerships with other agencies, community groups and education facilities to improve understanding and action on climate adaptation.
4. Educate and empower the community, community groups and landholders about the impacts of climate change and actions on climate adaptation.

Supporting policies and plans

- Climate Adaptation Plan.
- Municipal Emergency Management Plan.
- Victoria's Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017-2020.



Strategic Direction Four: Sustainable urban and rural design

Theme 4.3: Parks and green places

Protect, enhance and increase our parks and green spaces to ensure a network of land and water that supports recreation and sport, trails and paths, nature conservation and visual relief from the urban environment.

Targets

T 4.3.1: Increase the canopy cover in built areas to 40% by 2040.

T 4.3.2: Review and implement the Open Space Strategy

T 4.3.3: Increase community participation in land use planning processes that involve securing land assets for future public open space.

Key Performance Indicators

- Review and implement the Open Space Strategy by 2023.
- Increase in canopy cover in built areas by 20% by 2030.
- Review and implement the Paths and Trails Strategy by 2025.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Protect and expand a diverse and green network of open spaces and parks under Council management.
2. Identify, establish and protect public open space that meets environment, community and Council needs through effective land use planning.
3. Provide urban landscapes that promote community connection to the environment and nature and encourages the use of green network of open spaces and parks.
4. Establish and support community partnerships that encourage the protection, enhancement and utilisation of parks and green spaces.
5. Educate and empower the community about the benefits of parks and green spaces and ways to utilise them.

Supporting policies and plans

- Open Space Strategy.
- Paths & Trails Strategy.
- Recreation Strategy.
- The 2020 Vision Plan.
- Health and Wellbeing Plan



Strategic Direction Four: Sustainable urban and rural design

Theme 4.4: Waste management

Reduce waste to landfill through innovative waste management and resource recovery, changed community behaviours and fit for purpose infrastructure.

Targets

T 4.4.1: Develop a Waste Management Strategy by 2019

T 4.4.2: Greenwaste removed from the community waste stream (Targets to be defined in Waste Management Strategy 2019).

T 4.4.3: 100% Organic waste removed from waste stream of Council facilities by 2040.

T 4.4.4: 25% reduction of existing roadside stockpiles removed and remediated by 2027.

T 4.4.5: 50% reduction in reported incidents of litter dumping on Council owned and managed land by 2027.

Key Performance Indicators

- Waste Management Strategy written and adopted Council by 2019.
- Council waste, recycling and greenwaste audited and reduced by 50% by 2030.
- 10% reduction of existing roadside stockpiles removed and remediated by 2023.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Provide resource recovery and waste management and minimisation practices that are innovative, effective and reflect best practice.
2. Empower the community to understand and take responsibility for their own waste creation and act to minimise it.
3. Establish and support partnerships with other agencies, our community and industry to further reduce the volume of waste going to landfill and explore innovative waste management and resource recovery mechanism.
4. Educate the community, community groups, businesses and landholders about ways to reduce the volume of waste going to landfill.

Supporting policies and plans

- Waste Management Strategy (Currently being revised).



Strategic Direction Five: Council Leadership

Theme 5.1: Governance

Environmentally sustainable practices are integrated into all levels of Council and staff are empowered to deliver them as part of their core business.

Targets

T 5.1.1: Measure and reduce Council's ecological footprint by 25% by 2027.

T 5.1.2: Develop and implement an Environmentally Sustainable Governance Action Plan by 2019.

T 5.1.3: 50% of goods and services utilised by Council are from sustainable sources.

Key Performance Indicators

- GPS Environmentally Sustainable Governance Action Plan developed by 2019 and implemented by 2020.
- GPS Environmental Footprint measured by 2020.
- GPS Environmental Footprint reduced by 10% by 2023.
- The number of goods & services that are from sustainable sources.

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Develop and implement governance processes that support and facilitate environmentally sustainable practices within the Council.
2. Establish and support internal partnerships within the organisation that facilitate knowledge exchange and understanding regarding environmentally sustainable practices.
3. Educate and empower staff about environmentally sustainable practices in the workplace to facilitate practice change across the organisation.

Supporting policies and plans

- Procurement Strategy.
- Events, Marketing & communication Strategy.
- Customer Service Strategy.
- Organisation Development Strategy.



Strategic Direction Five: Council Leadership

Theme 5.1: Governance

Governance targets from other themes

3.1 Biodiversity	Develop and implement management plans for Council owned and managed conservation reserves.
3.2 Invasive species	Reduction in the coverage of declared weeds and environmental weeds on Council owned or managed land by 70% by 2027. Develop and implement an Invasive Species Program by 2027.
3.3 Water security	Reduce Council's potable water consumption by 20% by 2027 against a 2018 baseline.
3.4 Fire and planned burning	Implement a minimum of five burns a year in Council owned and managed land. Increase the length in km of roadside burns on Council roadsides by 10% using the 2018 baseline by 2027.
3.5 Aboriginal cultural heritage land management	50% of Council owned and managed reserves incorporate traditional owner naming conventions and cultural interpretations developed in collaboration with Wadawurrung people. In partnership with Wadawurrung and CFA develop a cultural burning program that delivers eight cultural burns by 2027.
4.1 Environmentally responsive infrastructure design	All new Council developments are designed within Environmentally Sustainable Design principles and are verified as achieving an energy star rating of 6 or above, by 2023. Existing Council buildings are audited for environmental impacts and these impacts are reduced by 50% by 2027.
4.2 Climate change adaptation and mitigation	Council is a zero-net emissions organisation and the community is low carbon by 2040. Develop and implement the Climate Change Action Plan. A reduction of 50% in Council emissions by 2023.
4.3 Parks and green places	Review and implement the Open Space Strategy.

4.4 Waste Management

Develop a Waste Management Strategy by 2019.

100% Organic waste removed from waste stream of Council facilities by 2040.

0% reduction in reported incidents of litter dumping on Council owned and managed land by 2027.

5.2 Leadership

Council participates in five environmental partnership projects annually.

Council leads in the delivery of three environmental sustainability programs by 2027.



Strategic Direction Five: Council Leadership

Theme 5.2: Leadership

Demonstrate leadership in environmental sustainability and empower action with community groups, industry, other agencies and the wider community.

Targets

T 5.2.1: Increase the community satisfaction rating for overall performance in environmental sustainability (Annual Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey) - Meet or exceed Victorian Council average - 2014

T 5.2.2: Council participates in five environmental partnership projects annually

T 5.2.3: Council leads in the delivery of three environmental sustainability programs by 2027.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of environmental partnership projects participated in per year.
- Satisfaction rating for environmental sustainability.
- Number of environmental sustainability programs delivered by Council by 2027.
- Facilitates GPSC Environment Advisory Committee

Key Implementation Mechanisms

1. Demonstrate leadership in the community by facilitating engagement in environmental issues and solutions.
2. Empower community action through advocacy and support of environmental groups, activities and programs.
3. Undertake advocacy on behalf of the community to State and Federal levels of government in support of environmental issues and solutions.
4. Establish and lead partnerships with other agencies, surrounding shires, community groups, industry and the wider community that encourage environmentally sustainable practices in the community.
5. Educate the community, community groups, businesses and industry about Council-led environmentally sustainable programs and the ways they can be involved.

Supporting policies and plans

- Council Plan 2017- 2021

Strategy implementation

Our Strategic Directions will be achieved through the delivery of an Environment Strategy Implementation Plan (the Implementation Plan). The Implementation Plan will be developed in consultation with key stakeholders and will be reviewed every two years. The Implementation Plan will identify:

- actions that align to the Strategic Directions, Themes and Key Implementation Mechanisms outlined in this Strategy
- timelines for delivery of each action
- Council's business units responsible for delivery of these actions and
- Council's progress against any actions identified in the previous two- year Implementation Plan.

This approach ensures the Strategy is a living document that offers flexibility through a cycle of planning and implementation. The plan will remain relevant by responding to influences such as:

- key drivers of change in the environmental sector
- community expectations
- Council's annual budget processes
- changes in Council's priorities and programs and
- changes in Federal and State policies and programs and those from other key stakeholders.