



# Merri-bek Zero Carbon – 2040 Framework



Council endorsed: 12/09/2018

Revised February 2022 (to reflect 2035 target adopted by Council on 8 December 2021) and October 2022 to reflect renaming to Merri-bek.

## Acknowledgments

During 2017–18 Moreland City Council (Council) engaged Moreland Energy Foundation Limited (MEFL) to collaboratively develop the *Moreland Zero Carbon – 2040 Framework* (the Framework). After receiving input from over 70 members of the Moreland community, the Framework was developed and tested with a “brain trust” of local experts in their field. Thanks to everyone who helped develop the community Vision for 2040 and brought their expertise to this process.

This Framework builds on the original 2014 *Zero Carbon Evolution (ZCE) Strategy* and the *ZCE – Refresh to 2020* which was also developed over 2017–2018 to reset targets and actions for the final two years (to 2020) of the original strategy.

For more information about Zero Carbon Merri-bek, visit:

[zerocarbon.merri-bek.vic.gov.au](http://zerocarbon.merri-bek.vic.gov.au)

## About the 2040 Framework

This Framework outlines our community vision and strategic directions for the transition to zero carbon in Merri-bek. It is Council’s adopted goal for Merri-bek municipality to achieve 75 per cent emissions reduction by 2030 (against baseline year), net zero by 2035 and drawdown ('negative emissions') by 2040. This overarching Framework will inform 5-yearly action plans to drive the transition to zero emissions. An initial Zero Carbon Climate Emergency Action Plan 2020 – 2025 was adopted in November 2019.

**Council acknowledges we are in a state of climate emergency that requires urgent action by all levels of government, including local Councils.**

Council’s target of a zero emissions municipality by 2035 is 15 years ahead of the State Government’s target for reaching zero emissions in Victoria. This requires Council and MEFL to take the lead and provide support and a clear direction for strong collaboration and action from our community.

Achieving the Vision will require embedding zero carbon thinking across all Council services, operations, spheres of influence and decision-making. However, Council cannot deliver our zero carbon aspiration alone; we need high levels of stakeholder and community involvement to hit this target. Council needs to secure ongoing commitment and action from a wide range of collaborators. Developing partnerships, celebrating success and promoting innovation in Merri-bek is crucial.

The Framework reflects our focus on driving emissions reductions across the three key sources of the Merri-bek community’s greenhouse gas emissions: stationary energy, transport and waste. While adaptation – by government, community and business – to the impacts of climate change that are already happening is crucial, climate change adaptation is not the focus of this Framework.

Given our rapidly changing world and city, the Framework aims to be flexible enough to allow for uncertainty and continued change.

### Getting to Zero Carbon

Given the very dynamic social, political and technological context, it is not feasible to define specific initiatives and advocacy priorities for the entire 20 years between 2020 and 2040.

This Merri-bek Zero Carbon – 2040 Framework defines the key priorities for **driving emissions reductions across the three target areas: energy transition, sustainable transport and waste and consumption** over the first five years (2020 – 2025) and beyond. The key priorities for action and advocacy outcomes within the Framework will be reviewed each five years and re-set for the following five-years.

Five-yearly Zero Carbon Action Plans will be developed to set medium-term targets and map out priority projects and programs (including advocacy) to take advantage of the social, political and technological context at the time. These five-yearly action plans will be checked for consistency against the 2040 Vision and Principles.

	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Develop a Zero Carbon Action Plan</b>	Five-yearly
<b>Review / refresh the 2040 Framework</b>	Five-yearly
<b>Progress report to Council</b>	Annual
<b>Complete a Merri-bek community GHG emissions profile</b>	Four-yearly (or otherwise as required)

## 2040 Framework Summary

<b>VISION</b>	<b>Zero Carbon Moreland – 2040 Framework</b> By 2040 Moreland has transitioned to become a zero carbon community.				
<b>PRINCIPLES</b>	Facilitate a just and inclusive transition	Boost resilience and livability	Plan ahead and invest for the future	Build cohesive, healthy and sustainable urban systems	Work collaboratively and learn from others
How we will increase our impact	Leadership and innovation		Mobilising the community	Advocacy	Partnerships
Strategic direction and 2040 goals	<b>Energy Transition:</b> Efficient and 100% renewably powered energy		<b>Sustainable transport:</b> Active or zero emissions transport	<b>Waste and consumption:</b> Circular economy with zero waste	
Key priorities in Moreland	<u><b>2020–2025</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase environmentally sustainable design outcomes for energy efficiency and renewables via planning, enforcement and advocacy</li> <li>Assist low income households and renters to overcome barriers to energy transition (e.g. test financial models and targeted programs)</li> <li>Encourage switch from using gas for cooking and heating to high-efficiency electric alternatives</li> <li>Continue reducing Council's residual emissions: reduce electricity and gas use, only buy 100% renewable generated electricity, and continue installing rooftop solar</li> <li>Test models for brokerage and aggregation of energy services that could be scaled</li> <li>Support and showcase residents and businesses undertaking the energy transition</li> <li>Lead the community conversation to drive local action</li> </ul> <u><b>Longer term</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a clean tech incubator hub</li> <li>Pursue a policy pathway for a Zero Carbon Moreland Planning Scheme</li> <li>Test new ideas for zero carbon buildings with developers</li> <li>Scale up effective models</li> </ul>		<u><b>2020–2025</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transition Council's fleet to low or zero emission vehicles</li> <li>Invest in infrastructure to support active travel and public transport</li> <li>Collaborate to deliver travel behavior change campaigns</li> <li>Amend the Planning Scheme to reduce car parking requirements and enable funding for sustainable transport</li> <li>Increase design standards in Planning Policy to create more walking and cycling friendly developments</li> <li>Support public access to renewably powered electric vehicle charging</li> </ul> <u><b>Longer term</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disincentivise use of private cars</li> <li>Reallocate space used for private vehicle travel and parking to support sustainable transport use and other purposes</li> <li>Advocate to ensure new mobility technologies (e.g. autonomous vehicles) deliver broad environmental and social benefits</li> <li>Explore options for digital delivery of relevant Council services (reducing unnecessary car trips)</li> </ul>	<u><b>2020–2025</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drastically reduce the amount of organics sent to landfill</li> <li>Ensure excellence in municipal waste service contracts</li> <li>Assist Moreland food businesses to avoid and divert food waste from landfill</li> <li>Drive down waste and increase use of recycled content products through Council's procurement policy and practice</li> <li>Foster expansion of local sharing groups</li> <li>Engage and activate the community as conscious consumers</li> <li>Support responsible waste management in new developments via Planning Scheme standards and enforcement</li> </ul> <u><b>Longer term</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote Moreland as a hub for sustainable design and manufacture</li> <li>Support local recycling and reuse-focused businesses</li> <li>Collaborate to encourage adoption of low carbon plant-based diets</li> <li>Facilitate trials of promising emerging technologies</li> </ul>	

## Our rapidly changing world<sup>1</sup>

It is important to recognise the bigger picture we are working within – along with the many challenges and opportunities to Council may face when accelerating the transition to zero carbon. It is important to remember that people within our local community will have different experiences and responses to changes in our environment, our society and our economy. The challenges noted below are far from comprehensive. Responding to these challenges to achieving an equitable, sustainable zero carbon future will require a diversity of responses from across our society.

### Climate change and resource scarcity

Global trend	National and local trend	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in frequency and severity of extreme weather events</li> <li>• Depletion of critical natural resources</li> <li>• Global conflict over natural resources</li> <li>• Sea level rise due to global warming</li> <li>• Biodiversity in decline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More frequent and intense hot days (above 35 degrees)</li> <li>• Harsher bushfire weather and extreme rainfall events</li> <li>• Rising greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions – Australia’s emissions have risen every quarter from March 2015 to September 2017<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acting effectively and urgently to reduce carbon emissions so that we avoid dangerous (or even catastrophic) social, environmental and economic impacts</li> <li>• Reducing risks to public health and outdoor worker productivity due to more frequent and intense heatwaves and hot weather</li> <li>• Managing pressure on existing and new infrastructure to cope with increasingly extreme weather</li> <li>• Rethinking how we can live well together with increasingly limited and unsustainable resources</li> <li>• Minimising social and economic impacts of extreme weather</li> </ul>

### Rapid urbanisation

Global trend	National and local trend	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing urban population – by 2030 around 60% of the population will live in urban areas<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher densities of housing</li> <li>• Increase in congestion on arterial roads, longer commute times, and public transport at capacity during peak times</li> <li>• Loss of tree canopy and open</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing increased demands on infrastructure, services, job creation and resources</li> <li>• Increasing the energy-efficiency performance of residential and commercial buildings to ensure poor performance is not ‘locked in’ for decades</li> <li>• Managing urban growth while creating a socially inclusive,</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Many of the trends in this section were identified in [Our Future World report \(CSIRO Research Publications Repository\)](#) (2017)

<sup>2</sup> [Critical decade 2017: accelerating climate action](#) (2017) Climate Council, Australia

<sup>3</sup> [The world’s cities in 2016 – Data Booklet](#) (2016) United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

	<p>space on private land due to development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the proportion of population renting, with housing unaffordable for many potential 'first home buyers'</li> <li>• Progressive loss of Melbourne's peri-urban farmland due to 'urban sprawl'</li> </ul>	<p>walkable city with clean air and waterways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserving, creating and enhancing green open spaces as the city population grows</li> <li>• Communicating to decision makers that housing affordability is not compromised by more rapid uptake of higher housing-efficiency standards</li> </ul>
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### Energy supply and investment

Global trend	National and local trend	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major uptake in various forms of renewable energy – renewable sources accounted for 55.3% of all the gigawatts of new power generation added in 2016<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• Increase in uptake of high efficiency products e.g. LEDs lights, white goods</li> <li>• Shift in energy use as electric vehicle uptake increases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in renewable energy – this provided 17.3 per cent of Australia's electricity in 2016<sup>5</sup></li> <li>• Increase in decentralised, distributed and flexible electricity supply and networks starting to emerge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring focus on energy efficiency is maintained</li> <li>• Managing electricity demand/supply during summer peaks</li> <li>• Ensuring lower income households aren't left behind in the transition to sustainable energy</li> <li>• Overcoming barriers to shift away from (fossil) gas for space heating and cooking</li> <li>• Changing the current business model for energy buying and selling to enable new forms of distribution and sharing, and new models for community ownership and participation</li> </ul>

### Demographic and social / economic change

Global trend	National and local trend	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing world population – this is projected to rise by more than 1 billion by 2030<sup>6</sup>, bringing it to over eight billion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing local population – Moreland's population is tracking to increase by 33% on 2016 levels by 2036<sup>7</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overcoming cost of living pressures that can be a barrier to adopting sustainable technologies</li> <li>• Shortage in qualified tradespeople to support sustainable housing retrofits and construction</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> [Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment](#) (2017) Frankfurt School – UNEP Collaborating Centre, Germany

<sup>5</sup> [Clean Energy Australia Report](#) (2016) Clean Energy Council, Australia

<sup>6</sup> [World Population Prospects](#) (2017) United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

<sup>7</sup> [ABS 2016 Census data and forecasts](#)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ageing population in OECD countries</li> <li>• Economic power shift towards Global South: 75% of growth to come from emerging economies</li> <li>• Ongoing automation of jobs</li> <li>• Migration due to climate change</li> <li>• Increasing social / financial inequality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rise of the single-person household</li> <li>• Growing number of small businesses</li> <li>• Reduction of blue collar work</li> <li>• More jobs in renewables, efficiency and smart energy management</li> <li>• Increase in overweight and obesity rates and chronic disease</li> <li>• Higher consumption of disposable goods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering targeted sustainability education and behaviour-change programs in an increasingly abundant and competitive media environment</li> <li>• Suburbs within Merri-bek have very divergent levels of socio-economic status, therefore have varying service delivery needs</li> <li>• Understanding cultural differences and developing effective ways to engage and activate our socially and culturally diverse community</li> <li>• Managing demand for new products with the need to reduce resource consumption overall</li> </ul>
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### Technological change

Global trend	National and local trend	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More abundant, cheaper and more modular digital technology than ever before</li> <li>• More people and businesses are accessing services online</li> <li>• Access to open data has empowered consumers and spawned new industries</li> <li>• The next waves of technology – the Internet of Things (IoT), virtual reality, Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotics – are transforming current ways of living</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapidly growing online retail and teleworking in Australia</li> <li>• Growth of new online service and sharing platforms, e.g. Car Next Door, Good Karma Networks, Airbnb</li> <li>• Increasing awareness of issues around data security and privacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordability of innovative and/or energy efficient products and services</li> <li>• Risk of increasing social isolation and waste generation from online deliveries e.g. Uber Eats</li> <li>• Keeping up with the pace of technological change so that it benefits everyone in the community equitably</li> <li>• Creating spaces and opportunities for our local community to encounter each other face-to-face outside their ‘social media bubble’</li> </ul>

## Our Vision for Zero Carbon

*By 2035 Merri-bek has transitioned to become a zero carbon community.*

**Our vision for Energy Transition achieves the goal of *Efficient and 100% renewably powered energy*:**

- The buildings we live and work in are highly energy efficient – well insulated and built or retrofitted for comfort
- Households and businesses generate, store and export renewable electricity locally
- The national grid is powered by 100% renewable energy
- Homes and businesses are powered only by electricity, following a supported phase-out of gas
- Residents and businesses are proactive and engaged energy users and help to manage demand by smart use of electricity and local storage
- Energy is often generated and traded at a community level, so everyone can access local, renewable energy even if they cannot produce it on their home.

**Our vision for Sustainable Transport achieves the goal of *Active and zero emissions transport*:**

- Most people choose to walk or cycle to get around locally because its healthy, free, safe and convenient
- Merri-bek is known for its pedestrian and cycle-friendly streetscapes
- Many residents work, play and access services close to home, in '20 minute neighborhoods' designed to suit people (rather than cars)
- Renewable-powered buses, trams and trains provide a quick, reliable and affordable way to travel
- Use of electric 'car/ride share' services complement active travel and public transport options, helping to reduce private vehicle ownership
- Low rates of private car ownership have seen car parks converted to green and public open spaces
- Clean and quiet freight trucks (fueled by renewable hydrogen or electricity) complement 'last mile' freight delivery by bikes, electric scooters and vans.

**Our vision for Waste and Consumption achieves the goal of a *Circular economy with zero waste*:**

- Households and food businesses avoid generating food waste (and save money!)
- A 'conscious consumer' mindset is the norm where waste is seen as a resource. Consumption is reduced as the community reduces what it purchases, then re-uses, repurposes, recycles, and buys recycled
- People enjoy low-carbon diets
- Local reuse, exchange, share and recycling groups and services are thriving
- Local businesses prosper by creating or providing sustainable goods and services
- Many products are made from recycled materials and are easy to recycle in Australia
- All organic waste is composted or processed to create other useful products (such as mulch, compost, biogas, biochar)
- Waste collection and processing is powered by renewable energy



- Merri-bek’s contribution to landfill gas emissions are minimal, and residual emissions are captured to generate electricity
- Melbourne Water’s wastewater management generates zero net emissions.

## Our Principles

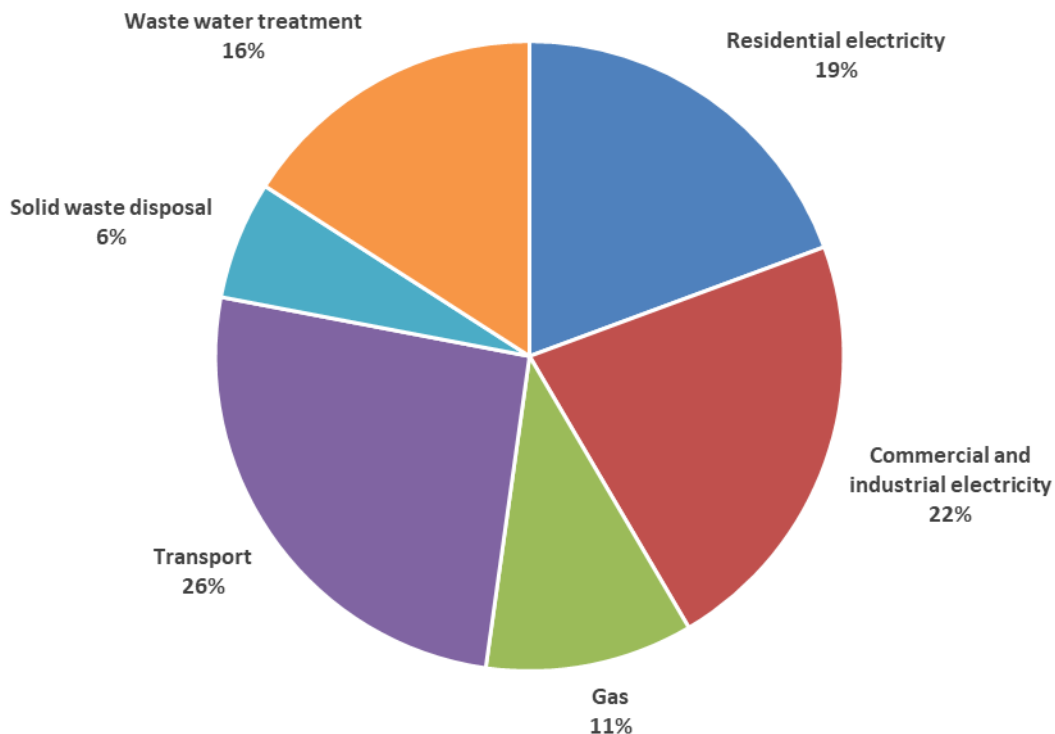
Action over the next twenty years to achieve our Vision for a zero carbon Merri-bek will be underpinned by five principles used to guide decision-making by Council. Applying these principles will help ensure that we achieve our goals in a way that minimises unintended or undesirable outcomes on our pathway to zero carbon.

<p><b>Facilitate a just and inclusive transition</b></p>	<p><b>Boost resilience and liveability</b></p>	<p><b>Plan ahead and invest for the future</b></p>	<p><b>Build cohesive, healthy and sustainable urban systems</b></p>	<p><b>Work collaboratively &amp; learn from others</b></p>
<p>The pathway must be socially equitable and not only accessible to privileged individuals or social groups. It must ensure everyone in Moreland can benefit from a zero carbon future</p>	<p>The pathway must build resilience in the broader community and have a positive effect on the general amenity and liveability of Moreland</p>	<p>The pathway must acknowledge that decisions made now can create long-term positive or negative impacts. Take advantage of the latest technologies in order to avoid 'locking in' high emissions from long-lived assets for years to come</p>	<p>The homes and buildings we live and work in, and the way we move about our city are crucial to our wellbeing. The pathway should provide an opportunity to re-create our city as a place to sustain us into the future</p>	<p>Council cannot do this alone: all levels of government, business, community groups and individuals need to work together and contribute in different ways to the shared goal of a zero carbon future</p>

## Our Strategic Directions for Zero Carbon

At least every four years, Council develops a community emissions profile using the Global Protocol for Community-Based Emissions (GPC)<sup>8</sup>, an international standard for measuring greenhouse gas emissions at the local level.

Moreland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions by sector 2013/14



The GPC-compliant community emissions profile clearly identifies the three major sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Moreland which clarified these as our Strategic Directions for the transition to zero carbon:

- **Stationary energy**  
This includes emissions from electricity generated within and outside the municipal boundaries, fuels consumed within the municipal area in the manufacturing, construction and commercial sectors, and domestic heating and cooking with natural gas.
- **Transport**  
This includes emissions associated with transport including passenger and commercial vehicles and buses. It does not include air travel as there is no airport within the municipality, nor tram and train travel because these services start and end outside the municipal boundaries. This methodology

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.iclei.org/activities/agendas/low-carbon-city/gpc.html>

avoids ‘double counting’ of emissions that would be included in the emissions profiles of other municipalities.

- **Waste**

This includes methane emissions from the breakdown of solid waste sent to landfill and from the decomposition of organic matter in sewage during disposal of domestic, commercial and industrial wastewater. Management of emissions from wastewater is under the full control of Melbourne Water, which plans to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Beyond the direct emissions reflected in our municipal emissions profile, we acknowledge the emissions associated with our consumption of goods and services will often be reflected in the emissions profile of other countries and other council areas. For example, most of the food, clothing and appliances we buy are produced elsewhere and transported to us, and reducing these ‘consumption-based emissions’ is considered within Strategic Direction 3: Waste and consumption.

This section outlines the Framework’s three Strategic Directions and the related 2040 goal; touching on why each is important, the tensions within each goal, and key priorities for 2020 – 2025 and beyond.

## Strategic Direction 1: Energy Transition

**Goal:** Efficient and 100% renewably powered energy

**Why is this important?**

Electricity and gas use make up over 50% of the emissions in the municipality. Switching electricity supply from fossil fuels to renewable energy will have the most significant impact on carbon emissions. This includes phasing out gas.

**Tensions within the goal**

Ensuring an ongoing focus on both energy efficiency and local and statewide **renewables generation** is key. Energy efficiency reduces the investment required for electricity generation, and so combining the two pathways is wiser than simply relying on a transition to a 100% renewable energy grid.

**Key priorities**

*2020 to 2025*

- Show leadership through continuing to reduce energy use in Council’s own facilities and operations and maintaining Carbon Neutral status
- Seek to raise Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) standards within the local Planning Scheme and ensure compliance, while advocating for ESD standards to be made permanent in either local or State Planning Policy
- Facilitate the transition to energy efficiency and renewable energy by advocating for and testing financial models and programs to assist adoption by low income household, landlords, renters etc.
- Test out models of brokerage and aggregation of energy services for the community that can be scaled, in order to stimulate the market and get more cost effective and low carbon energy

options

- Encourage the switch from using gas for cooking and heating to high-efficiency electric alternatives
- Recognise and promote local households and businesses undertaking energy transition
- Lead the community conversation and increase energy literacy through MEFL and consumer organisations, taking neighbourhood-level approaches.

*Long term*

- Develop a clean tech incubator hub/service in Merri-bek to support and encourage new technology and the businesses that develop them
- Develop and progress a policy pathway for low/zero carbon buildings in the Planning Scheme
- Partner with property developers to test new ideas for zero carbon buildings
- Scale up delivery/program models that are found to be most effective.

## Strategic Direction 2: Sustainable transport

**Goal:** Active and zero emissions transport

**Why is this important?**

Transport emissions makes up over a quarter of the emissions in Merri-bek. 60% of journeys under five kilometers are made by car<sup>9</sup>, so the opportunity for switching to active modes of transport (walking and cycling) is significant.

**Tensions within the goal**

- Too much focus on switching to 100% renewable vehicles rather than also increasing sustainable travel modes risks many households owning one or more (electric/autonomous) cars and missing out on the benefits of transitioning to low rates of private car ownership; being reduced congestion, better health and converting car parks to new public open space.
- As we increase density to create “20-minute neighbourhoods” (where most of people’s everyday needs are within a 20-minute walk, cycle or local public transport trip of their home) we need to carefully plan and deliver community infrastructure, while protecting and enhancing overall amenity and access to green space.

**Key priorities**

*2020 to 2025*

- Transitioning Council’s vehicle fleet to low or ‘zero emissions’ (e.g. renewable electric and hydrogen)
- Strategic investment in transport infrastructure and streetscape renewal to create walking- and cycling-friendly neighbourhoods and activity centres, which also foster public transport use
- Collaborate with others (e.g. health organisations, Bicycle Network, bicycle retailers, schools) to deliver effective behavior change and advocacy campaigns
- Amend the Planning Scheme to reduce requirements for car parking, and investigate (and

<sup>9</sup> [Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy Background Report](#) (2018) Technical appendix

implement if feasible) a new mechanism for developers to financially contribute to sustainable transport initiatives

- Support access to electric vehicle (EV) charging stations (powered by renewable energy) to keep pace with rates of EV adoption

*Long term*

- Implement fair measures to progressively disincentivise use of private (petrol/diesel) cars while continuing to enhance walking, cycling and public transport options
- Progressively reallocate space used for private vehicle travel and parking to support sustainable transport use and other livability benefits (e.g. new open space)
- Advocate for and act (together with others) to achieve policy and regulatory frameworks that ensure emerging ‘disruptive’ mobility technologies (e.g. digital platforms, autonomous vehicles) deliver public and environmental benefits
- Explore opportunities for Council service delivery using virtual solutions, reducing the need for customer or Council travel.

### Strategic Direction 3: Waste and consumption

**Goal:** Circular economy with zero waste

***Why is this important***

Emissions from landfill make up six percent of Moreland’s carbon emissions, with around 52% of this being food waste and 4.5% being garden organics<sup>10</sup> that could be composted and reused. There is a significant opportunity to ‘rethink waste’ as a ‘resource’ that can be incorporated into new products as part of a circular economy. Reducing the use of new materials also reduces the embodied energy involved in creating them. This rethinking requires a huge shift in our consumer culture and its prioritization of convenience.

***Tensions within the goal***

We need to avoid prioritising ‘waste to energy’ technologies that may inadvertently create a demand for waste material, when our core aim is to avoid waste generation in the first place. We also have a responsibility to reduce the ‘embedded carbon’ in the goods and services we buy that have been produced outside the municipality, even though such positive choices won’t be fully reflected in our future municipal emissions profiles.

***Key priorities***

*2020 to 2025*

- Dramatically reduce the amount of food and other organic waste sent to landfill
- Ensure excellence in municipal waste service contracts including performance targets for emissions capture, monitoring and reporting
- Assist local food businesses to adopt cost-effective waste avoidance and reprocessing options
- Review Council’s procurement policy, processes and assessment criteria to progressively drive down waste and carbon emissions across supply chains, and increase use of products made

<sup>10</sup> 2015– Moreland Domestic Kerbside Garbage Audit

from recycled material

- Foster expansion of local sharing groups and grassroots initiatives (e.g. tool libraries, repair cafes, food swaps, community gardens, Good Karma Networks, clothing exchange meetups)
- Engage and educate the city's diverse communities to act as 'conscious consumers' and to minimise the waste they generate and send to landfill
- Seek to raise Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) standards within the Planning Scheme, ensure compliance and advocate for these ESD standards to be made permanent in either local or State Planning Policy.

*Long term*

- Support the municipality's development as a hub for sustainable product design and manufacture
- Support establishment or expansion of local recycling and reuse-focused businesses and social enterprises
- Collaborate with the health sector and others to encourage adoption of low carbon plant-based diets
- Assess feasibility of emerging technologies for local application and, where promising, facilitate trials.

## Council's role

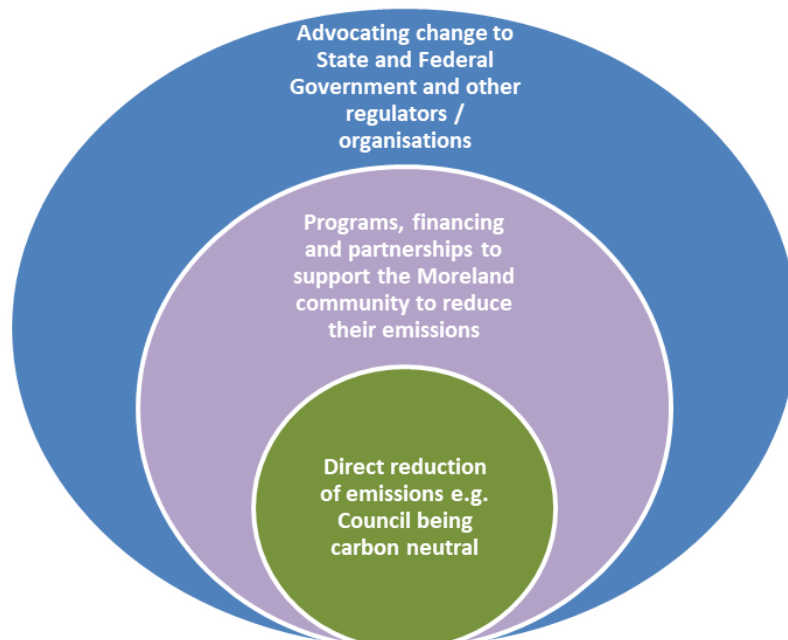
Like other Councils, Merri-bek Council has a high level of control when it comes to reducing its own operational (corporate) emissions. In December 2021, Council endorsed a highly ambitious ZCM 'target range' for Council (corporate/operational) emissions of between 80 – 100% reduction by 2030 (precluding offsets, against 2011/12 baseline). Council has taken significant actions to reduce its operational emissions by 70 per cent from the 2011/12 baseline and has also been certified as 'carbon neutral' (or 'net zero') since 2012 under the Climate Active scheme, whereby Council annually purchases carbon offsets for all its remaining emissions.

Council also directly influences Merri-bek's overall carbon emissions by implementing local planning policy, providing municipal waste collection services and investing in community infrastructure (such as shared paths, bike lanes and Electric Vehicles charging stations). Achieving low carbon outcomes through land use and infrastructure planning is critical to the success of the 2040 Vision due to the enduring nature of planning decisions. Integrated land use and transport planning is key to creating an environment that promotes walking, cycling and public transport use. Effective strategies include increased density, ensuring mixed-use neighbourhoods, and reduced car parking requirements.

Long-term planning that prioritises emissions reduction and community outcomes is required. It is important to acknowledge that planning policy (such as Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) standards for new buildings) is set or requires the approval of State Government. Strong advocacy on behalf of our community plays an important part in realising our objectives.

Being bold in what is asked of developers is also key – although Council cannot mandate standards that are not in the State or Local Planning Scheme without risk of challenge, we can encourage developers to take opportunities for better quality builds.

Council's potential influence and control can be broken down in three ways:



## Council's evolving role

The role of Local Government has been changing. Progressive Councils across Australia are becoming more involved in the energy market, testing new financial mechanisms to support householders to install rooftop solar; addressing their supply chain emissions; and filling the gap in climate action left by other levels of government. We will need to keep evolving our role and increasing our level of influence to accelerate the transition to zero emissions. We also stand with others in demanding effective and stable policy, legislation and investment by other levels of government. We will need to be flexible, committed, and responsive, and inspire our community to help drive this zero carbon evolution.

## How we will increase our impact

Over the life of this Framework, getting to zero carbon will need more than Council and MEFL direct action. Council and MEFL will need to leverage influence through different means.

## Leadership and innovation

Council actions can demonstrate leadership and encourage others to be bold in taking action. Not only will Council lead by example, but we will encourage others by offering **Merri-bek as an innovation zone** – open for business, experimentation, and action research. The message for investors and innovators should be strong: it is less risky to invest here as there is appetite for change and Council will support you. The transition will bring new types of jobs, new business and new economic activity.

## Mobilising the community

Merri-bek has many active, engaged community members with a long history of being early adopters of more sustainable ways of living, and promoting and sharing this with others. The communication assets of Council will be used to showcase and celebrate achievements to inspire others. Action by others can include activities that aren't directly driven by this Framework, nor by Council policies, but still contribute towards emissions reduction in Merri-bek.

Identifying and rethinking how we use Council's communication channels and points of contact with our community to foster action to reduce emissions will be crucial in reaching different sections of the community. The challenge is to reach beyond 'engaged audiences' to those who would not usually seek out information from Council or proactively act to reduce their emissions. The diversity of Merri-bek's community means that people will have varying levels of commitment and capacity to act. Our aim is to support more people to participate and feel ownership of the Vision and make it easy for everyone to get involved.

Framing the messaging and language of actions so that they are simple, tangible and applicable to diverse audiences will be crucial to the success of reaching a zero carbon community. Engaging with different views, values and priorities to understand the right framing is key, as well as delivering the message from a trusted messenger.



## Advocacy

To achieve the vision, there is a strong need for complementary regulation and policies at all levels of government. Council's role in advocacy is to work with other organisations and councils to respond to government consultations, as well as proactively advocate on issues we have identified as crucial to the vision.

This will include assisting local community groups whose activities contribute towards carbon reduction in Merri-bek and amplifying the voice of local campaign organisations pushing for change. It is important to have a consistent message coming from all groups advocating for change to increase the impact of the advocacy.

Supporting the community to use their consumer power to influence areas beyond government is also important e.g. encouraging home buyers and renters to ask for sustainable features in their homes.

## Partnerships

The key to a successful partnership involves aligning with the work of others in a way that balances time and resource investment with benefit at the right scale. Partnerships are also a good way to leverage further funding, particularly State Government funding.

Existing partnerships with community and advocacy groups such as MEFL, CERES, the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA) and Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) will continue to be important. The opportunity to collaborate with research organisations may also attract other funding.

Key potential partners include:

- Energy retailers (e.g. Powershop) and local distribution businesses (e.g. Jemena and CitiPower)
- State government departments and authorities (e.g. Melbourne Water)
- Other local governments and local government bodies (e.g. Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Metro Waste and Resource Recovery Group)
- Local business and traders' associations
- Schools, kindergartens, child care centres
- Not for profit organisations (e.g. Environment Victoria, Neighborhood Houses, Bicycle Network)
- Community groups (e.g. CALD groups, interfaith groups)
- Universities, technical and further education institutions (TAFEs) (e.g. RMIT, University of Melbourne)
- Product suppliers and manufacturers
- Property developers
- Industry bodies
- Health organisations
- Transport companies (e.g. Moreland Bus Company)

## Beyond Merri-bek – our advocacy priorities

Some of the biggest impacts and opportunities for carbon emissions reduction in Merri-bek come from State and Federal Government legislation. Council will partner with other local governments, advocacy organisations and the community to push for changes to reduce Australia’s emissions.

Key advocacy priorities that Council will work with others to see achieved over the short- and longer-term are outlined below. Other advocacy priorities may emerge over time as the political and policy context changes.

	<b>Energy transition</b>	<b>Sustainable transport</b>	<b>Waste and consumption</b>
<b>The Federal Government needs to:</b>	<p>Set a strong, long term, stable energy policy that accelerates the transition to renewables and provides certainty to the energy industry</p> <p>Adopt an ambitious pathway for zero carbon buildings through the National Construction Code</p> <p>Establish a clear commitment and pathway to a zero emissions electricity sector by 2040</p> <p>Develop a national strategy to support the orderly transition away from coal- and gas-fired power</p>	<p>Introduce stringent minimum vehicle emissions standards</p> <p>Provide tax incentives for lowest emissions vehicles and remove tax incentives that encourage unnecessary driving and vehicle purchase</p> <p>Prioritise and commit funding to significant public transport infrastructure over road infrastructure spending</p> <p>Develop an electric and autonomous vehicle strategy</p>	<p>Coordinate a national response to the crisis in the Australian recycling industry, prioritizing ‘circular economy’ opportunities</p> <p>Expand the product stewardship scheme to include more products, e.g. packaging</p> <p>Ensure labelling of carbon emissions on products</p>
<b>The State Government needs to:</b>	<p>Deliver a strong ESD policy within the State Planning Policy Framework</p> <p>Mandate minimum standards for energy performance of residential properties at point of sale</p>	<p>Increase funding for active transport projects through Active Transport Victoria</p> <p>Develop a statewide policy on speed limits in urban areas</p> <p>Introduce planning</p>	<p>Return landfill levy funds to councils and regional waste management groups for investment in waste management outcomes</p> <p>Build statewide facilities</p>

	<p>or lease</p> <p>Ensure the 40% renewable energy target for 2025 for Victoria is met</p> <p>Expand Victorian Energy Upgrade (VEU) activities to include more products</p> <p>Regulate disclosure of aggregated real time data from distribution businesses</p>	<p>standards for maximum car parking levels</p>	<p>and processes for high-capacity recycling and organics processing</p> <p>Implement the rest of the <i>Victorian Market Development Strategy for Recovered Resources</i></p> <p>Integrate use of recycled products in purchasing policies</p> <p>Maintain or accelerate Melbourne Water's goal of zero carbon by 2030</p>
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## Making It Happen

### Embedding zero carbon across Council

Accelerating the transition to a zero carbon Merri-bek requires this overarching goal to be embedded across Council's strategic planning framework. New and existing Council strategies are considering and helping drive progress towards the 2040 zero carbon Vision.



Engagement across teams and departments within Council will enable the zero carbon Vision to be shared and further embedded within Council's operations. Key Council strategies that will support realization of the zero carbon Vision are summarized above.

### **Implementation and Monitoring**

The Framework Vision, Principles and priorities will be implemented via five-yearly Zero Carbon Action Plans that will set tangible medium-term targets and map out priority projects and programs (including advocacy) which will take advantage of the social, political and technological context at the time. The first of these Zero Carbon Action Plans for 2020 – 2025 will be developed with input from our ZCE Brains Trust during the later months of 2018. Community feedback on the draft Action Plan 2020 - 2015 will be sought in the first half of 2019.

Effectively monitoring our progress towards the zero carbon Vision is critical. We need to understand how effectively our programs are contributing towards emissions reduction in order to continually improve these programs and / or design new initiatives. While our GPC emissions profile shows where our municipal emissions are coming from, it does not clearly track what is causing emissions to change. Emissions trends may be impacted by Council actions and influence, state and federal policies, technology uptake or shifting social norms. Where appropriate, Council will continue to pursue new ways to track and measure progress and evaluate program effectiveness against our Vision and Principles.

Council will monitor and report annually on implementation of the Zero Carbon Action Plans to provide a clear understanding of our progress over time.