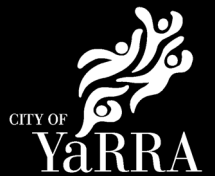
A large, leafy tree with a thick trunk and dense green foliage dominates the left side of the image. In the background, a residential street is visible with parked cars, a cyclist riding away, and a 40 km/h speed limit sign. The scene is set in a suburban neighborhood with houses and more trees lining the street.

Draft Climate Emergency Plan 2020-2024

Summary



Draft Yarra Climate Emergency Plan 2020–2024

Summary

Yarra City Council recognises that the climate emergency presents an unprecedented challenge – both globally and locally. Our planet’s climate is changing, with dangerous heatwaves, droughts, storms and flooding becoming more intense and destructive. The magnitude of the climate emergency means that incremental change or a business-as-usual response is no longer adequate.

Transformational change is needed across our society and economy to rapidly reduce carbon emissions and remove excess emissions from the atmosphere in order to restore a safe climate. It will require changing our resource intensive ways of life, as well as adapting to living on a hotter planet. The major transition we face needs to occur in a fair and socially equitable way. The most vulnerable people have typically made the least contribution to the problem and often have far less capacity to respond and cope with the impacts.

Within our own operations, we will accelerate emission reductions, ensure our infrastructure, assets and community are resilient to climate impacts, and embed climate emergency considerations across Yarra Council’s strategies, policies and decision-making processes.

Around Melbourne in future we can expect ¹:



Temperatures to continue to increase year round



Harsher fire weather and long fire seasons



More frequent and intense downpours



Less rainfall in autumn, winter and spring



More hot days, warm spells and fewer frosts



Rising sea level

¹ Adapted from ‘Climate Change Adaptation Snapshot Greater Melbourne’, The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

Yarra's climate emergency response

Focusing on areas of greatest opportunity

Our first Climate Emergency Plan sets longer term objectives for our response to the climate emergency and identifies strategic priorities and actions to focus our work over the next four years. We will take an adaptive approach to implementation, to learn as we take action and be flexible to respond to new opportunities and changes over the period.

Climate emergency response objectives

Through our climate emergency response, we aim to:

- Achieve zero-net emissions across the entire Yarra community as soon as possible, and accelerate the removal of excess carbon emissions
- Ensure our community is engaged, healthy and resilient — especially those most vulnerable to severe climate impacts
- Create a city that is adapted to a changing climate and ecologically healthy for all species
- Lead by example with a best-practice climate emergency response that inspires other local governments, businesses and communities to take strong climate action



Where our emissions come from

In 2017/2018, the Yarra community's total carbon (or greenhouse gas) emissions were approximately 1,900kt CO₂e. Most of these emissions came from electricity use, with gas (14 per cent), transport (15 per cent) and waste (2 per cent) making up the remainder of emissions.

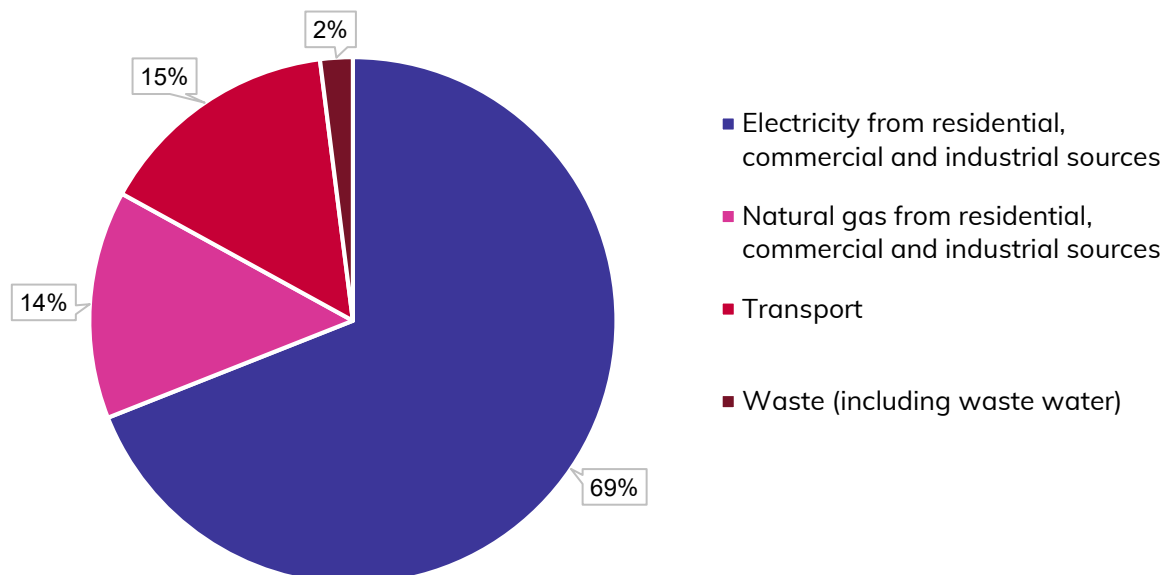


Figure 1. Yarra community carbon emissions profile 2017/18

Since January 2019, the electricity Council uses as an organisation has been 100 per cent renewable electricity, generated from rooftop solar across 38 sites with the remainder from wind power supplied by the Melbourne Renewable Energy Project. This transition has seen Council's organisational emissions reduce from 16,194 tCO₂e in 2008/09 to a projected 4,500 tCO₂e for the 2019 calendar year¹⁰. The remainder of Council's carbon emissions come primarily from natural gas use (45 per cent) and transport (42 per cent).

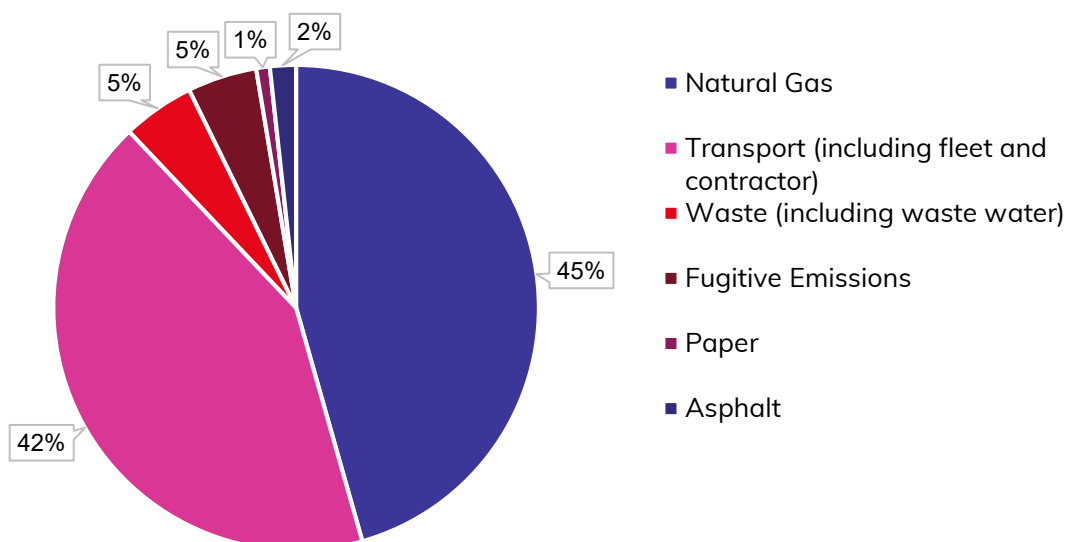


Figure 2. Yarra Council's carbon emissions profile 2019

Strategic priorities and key actions

We have identified five strategic priorities to take action in response to the climate emergency:

1. Mobilise and engage the community to respond to the climate emergency

Vision: The Yarra community and Yarra Council are engaged and taking local action as part of a global climate movement.

The scale and complexity of the climate emergency challenge requires that we work together — the actions of individuals, institutions or sectors cannot solve it alone. There is an urgent need to increase people's understanding of the climate emergency, and support the community to lead effective, sustained and collective climate action and advocacy.

Key actions:

- Deliver a significantly expanded and comprehensive suite of community mobilisation and engagement programs to enable widespread community-led climate action
- Enable and support key sectors, including businesses, households, neighbourhood houses, community groups, schools and young people to take effective, sustained and collective climate action
- Dedicate a substantial pool of community grant funds to accelerate community-led climate action
- Provide additional support to the most vulnerable in our community to prepare and cope with climate related impacts
- Collaborate with others in the climate emergency movement, including other local governments, to advocate for urgent climate action at other levels of government



2. Accelerate renewable energy, zero carbon buildings and efficient operations

Vision: Yarra homes, businesses, and community buildings are of the highest energy efficiency standard and powered by renewable energy.

Energy use, from electricity and gas used in buildings, is the largest source of carbon emissions (83 per cent) in the municipality. To achieve our net-zero emissions, our homes, business, schools and other community buildings need to use less energy, be powered by 100 per cent renewable energy and shift away from gas.

Key actions:

- Assist Yarra residents, businesses and community organisations to transition to renewable energy, moving the municipality towards 100% renewable electricity by 2030
- Use planning processes to transition towards zero-carbon buildings and precincts
- Facilitate energy efficient home upgrades for vulnerable community members
- Transition all Yarra Council buildings away from gas
- Accelerate the conversion of public lighting to the most energy efficient technology

3. Creating a climate adapted city

Vision: Yarra's natural and built environments are healthy and resilient in a climate impacted world.

As the climate changes, our city's infrastructure and assets (both natural and built forms), will be placed under increasing pressure due to rising urban heat, storm and flood risks and water insecurity. Our city's green spaces, parks and reserves also provide considerable physical and mental health benefits that need to be preserved as people cope with the impacts of a changing climate. To address these challenges, we need to adapt the way we design, build and manage our infrastructure and assets –our parks and reserves, buildings, roads, streetscapes and drainage network.

Key actions:

- Accelerate street tree planting and enhance our urban forest to increase canopy cover, diversity and climate resilience
- Plan and design streetscapes, open spaces and precincts considering increasing climate vulnerability, such as urban heat, flood risk and vulnerable communities
- Adapt land management practices to ensure our parks, reserves and green spaces are climate resilient and ecologically healthy, and provide food growing spaces
- Improve the resilience of Council's assets, such as buildings, roads and drainage, to climate related impacts
- Develop an Integrated Water Management Plan to manage water as a valuable resource, support healthy green spaces and waterways, and mitigate drought, heat and flood
- Embed climate resilience into Council's strategies, policies and decision-making processes

4. Transition to zero emissions transport

Vision: Sustainable transport is the most attractive, safe and convenient way to travel in and through Yarra.

Emissions from transport make up 15 percent of the Yarra community's carbon emissions profile, with the majority being a result of car travel. There is considerable opportunity to reduce transport emissions and realise a range of co-benefits including reduced congestion, improved air quality, health, amenity and overall liveability of the city. Reducing Yarra's transport emissions largely depends upon reducing car dependency, increasing the portion of trips taken by public transport, walking and cycling, and rapidly transitioning to electric (or other zero emissions) vehicles.

Key actions:

- Develop an Integrated Transport Plan to prioritise evidence-based actions that facilitate greater sustainable transport use and reduce car use
- Deliver additional sustainable transport infrastructure, including safe cycling infrastructure, traffic calming solutions, reduced speed zones and additional green areas
- Trial infrastructure improvements, including reallocation of car spaces, car free zones and curfews
- Develop a Parking Management Plan to reduce parking as necessary, and enable improvements to sustainable transport infrastructure and public spaces
- Transition Yarra Council's fleet pool and non-commuter vehicles to zero emissions by 2030
- Facilitate and support electric vehicle charge points in new developments and across the municipality



5. Move towards zero waste and conscious consumption

Vision: The Yarra community are conscious consumers who actively avoid and reduce waste, preserving resources for current and future generations.

What and how people consume has a profound impact on our planet. In Australia as a whole, we are over consuming; depleting the Earth's natural resources, generating harmful carbon emissions and creating unnecessary waste. To accelerate reductions in carbon emissions and curb the overuse of resources, we need to more consciously consume resources with an understanding of the environmental and social implications of our lifestyles.

Key actions:

- Promote and support alternative consumption models through a range of high profile, engaging campaigns
- Seek to implement a municipal-wide food and organic waste collection service, informed by the results of the Waste Revolution trial
- Work with other councils and state government to enhance waste management systems and infrastructure
- Engage the community to practice food waste avoidance and improve recycling behaviours

Our pathway forward

The next decade is considered critical in the transition to zero emissions and restoration of a safe climate. The scale and immediacy of the climate emergency means that governments, businesses, institutions and individuals must work together to deliver unprecedented changes.

The full draft Climate Emergency Plan lays out a comprehensive suite of actions and signals Yarra Council's commitment to working alongside a growing number of leading Australian and international jurisdictions undertaking climate emergency action. We hope that the plan provides an inspiring way forward for Yarra Council and the community to continue to work together to take bold and meaningful climate action.

National Relay Service

TTY 133 677 then (03) 9205 5055

Languages

中文	9280 1937	Italiano	9280 1931	Tiếng Việt	9280 1939
العربية	9280 1930	Ελληνικά	9280 1934	Español	9280 1935
				Other	9280 1940

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