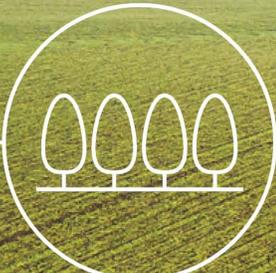


Mount Alexander Shire Council

Roadmap to Carbon Neutrality

2020 - 2025

Progress report June 2022



Emissions reduction plan
for our operations

Roadmap Report Card

Progress in our Roadmap to Carbon Neutrality (2020-2025)

In August 2020 Mount Alexander Shire Council showed great leadership by formally adopting the Roadmap to Carbon Neutrality (2020-2025). This Roadmap was a direct response to a call for climate action from our community. It recommitted Council to reaching zero net emissions by 2025 across Council operations. It also gave guidance on development of Council's overarching Climate Change Strategy, and highlighted opportunities to work with the community to strengthen economic opportunities whilst reducing emissions.

Progress on Roadmap delivery has been strong; big hurdles such as sourcing electricity from renewables and upgrading the bulk of our street lighting have been achieved with support from strategic alliances, external funding and resourcing opportunities.

Almost two years on from adoption of the Roadmap, it is time to celebrate achievements so far and look forward to plan how Council can continue to show leadership by taking on and overcoming the next hurdles.

The following page provides a snapshot of progress against the nine priority areas of the Roadmap. This is followed by detailed descriptions of actions that have been undertaken, then finally an updated implementation timeline which incorporates progress to date.



Roadmap Report Card

1 ●●●●●●●

100% renewable electricity supply by 2022

- VECO 100% renewable electricity contract commenced January 2022
- Small % not transferrable to VECO. Security (watchman) lighting audit required to assess account redundancy.
- Contract commenced January 2022.



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Zero-net emissions buildings by 2025

- Building audit process underway for whole building portfolio (led by Buildings Coordinator).
- Audit of big four emitters to commence soon: Market, Civic, Town Hall and Library/Phee.
- Buildings Emissions Reduction Plan: Aim to develop 23/24FY, staff capacity pending.

3 ●●●●●●●

Zero-net emissions lighting by 2022

- LED upgrade to major road lighting, completed March 2022.
- Remaining street lighting electricity sourced 100% renewable via VECO.



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Zero-net emissions transport by 2025

- Draft EV Fleet Transition Plan underway.
- Civic Centre car park EV charging infrastructure installed June 2022.
- First new electric fleet vehicle purchased June 2022.
- Council exploring e-bikes for use by staff.

5 ●●●●●●●

Zero-net emissions waste for Council operations by 2025 and supporting community-wide waste reduction

- Waste strategy underway, to be delivered by EOFY 22/23.
- Cell capping and associated gas flaring scheduled for completion 22/23 FY.



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Creating a thriving low carbon culture

- Internal Climate Leadership Group formed March 2022.

7 ●●●●●●●

Goods and services

Encourage emissions reductions across goods, services and works

- Revisions made to the procurement policy.
- Briefings to contractors planned for 22/23FY.



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Strategic offsetting

to reach zero-net emissions by 2025

- Scoping work for local offsetting opportunities planned 22/23FY, will inform offsetting strategy development.

9 ●●●●●●●

Monitor and report

upon our progress from 2021

- Baseline emissions (2018) 10,600 tCO₂e.
- 20/21FY emissions 7,264 tCO₂e.
- 21/22FY emissions calculations budgeted for in 22/23FY.



Roadmap Progress and Timing

1: 100% renewable electricity supply

Priority Area Status: On track, 90% achieved. Final completion goal shifted to 23/24FY.

1.1 Local Government Power Purchase Agreement for 100% renewable electricity supply.

Council joined the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) from 1 January 2022. Approximately 98% of Council's operational electricity is now sourced from 100% renewable energy.

1.2 Watchman light audit and removal

A small number of our electricity accounts could not be transferred due to their structure. They cannot be moved to GreenPower either. These accounts represent less than 2% of our electricity demand. This is an issue for all Councils on the VECO contract. Council staff will undertake an audit to assess the need for these accounts by June 2024. Accounts that cannot be closed will need to have their emissions offset. This is a new action – the need for it was identified after the Roadmap was adopted. This action has been added to ensure Council can achieve 100% zero-net emissions electricity.

2: Zero-net emissions buildings

Priority Area Status: On track, 20% achieved. The substantive component of work to commence in 2023.

Action 2.1 Deliver and implement a Buildings Emissions Reduction Plan

Development of a Buildings Emissions Reduction Plan has been reprioritised from the 21/22FY to begin in the 23/24FY, allowing for the Building Asset Management Plan (currently being prepared) to inform the emissions reduction plan. This delay will have a minor impact regarding the timeframe to allow for retrofitting buildings to minimise future carbon offset requirements, and potentially a minor increase to the funding required to offset carbon emissions between 2026-2030.

Council officers are currently developing guidelines for environmental sustainability in new builds which will also feed into this action.

Action 2.2 Reduce energy consumption to National Australian Built Environment Rating System 5 rating and transition from gas.

This action has been reprioritised from the 21/22FY to the 23/24FY due to staff and funding capacity. This delay will negatively impact the timeframe to transition from gas energy sources and potentially result in a minor increase to the funding required to offset carbon emissions between 2026 and 2030 from our buildings. In the interim, staff across the Climate and Buildings teams are working together to identify opportunities to transition away from gas cost-effectively.

Gas emissions will need to be offset from 2025, as it is not anticipated Council will be able to eliminate all use of gas across council buildings within this timeframe.

3: Zero-net emissions lighting.

Priority Area Status: Complete.

Action 3.1 Transition balance of lighting assets to reduce energy use

Council received Local Roads and Community Infrastructure - Round 2 funding to upgrade 277 street lights on major roads within the Shire to Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs). This work was completed in May 2022, ahead of the timing proposed by the Roadmap (June 2023). This Roadmap action is complete.

This upgrade has reduced electricity usage by an estimated 55 megawatt hours per annum. Reductions in electricity usage and maintenance fees are generating savings to Council of approximately \$9,000 per annum.

4: Zero-net emissions transport

Priority Area Status: On track, 20% achieved. Ongoing.

Action 4.1 Transition Council fleet to electric vehicles and deploy the necessary supporting infrastructure.

Council's Electric Vehicle Fleet Transition Plan is in development, with the first draft to be completed in the coming months. Council installed initial charging infrastructure in the Civic Centre car park and purchased its first electric fleet vehicle in June 2022.

The Transition Plan will inform which vehicles can realistically be replaced by electric vehicles by 2025. Due to the practical requirements of Council operations, there are currently no suitable options for some of our heavy fleet. There are also market limitations on suitable vehicles for our light fleet. As such a portion of fleet emissions will need to be offset from 2025.

5: Zero-net emissions waste

Priority Area Status: On track, 40% achieved. Planned completion 2023.

Action 5.1 Reduce landfill emissions through gas capture, monitor emissions and future proof new infrastructure.

The Landfill is by far the biggest greenhouse gas emitter within Council's operations and will emit an estimated 5,130 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) in 2022.

Cell capping and the installation of associated gas flaring infrastructure is scheduled for completion in 22/23FY. The successful completion of this project will ensure that residual emissions are controlled from now and into the future.

This will significantly reduce offsetting from 2025 onwards, as the capping and gas flaring infrastructure planned is anticipated to reduce the landfill's legacy emissions by 60-80%.

Action 5.2 Waste Strategy to drive future waste reduction activities.

Work has commenced on Council's Waste Strategy and is expected to be completed in 2022. The Strategy will have a strong focus on diverting waste from landfill, reusing and recycling.

6: Create a thriving low carbon culture

Priority Area Status: On track, 20% achieved. Planned completion 2024.

6.1 Integration of climate change action implementation and sustainability across Council.

Council's Climate Change Leadership team held its inaugural meeting in March 2022. This is a working group of Managers and Coordinators from across Council and Chaired by the Director of Infrastructure and Development. The group's purpose is to provide leadership and ensure the responsibility of responding to and preparing for climate change is shared across the organisation.

Council staff expect the bulk of work identified under this priority area to be delivered by 2024, two years later than proposed in the Roadmap. This will allow for a more considered approach than could have been achieved in the original timeframe. The broader work of planning for and responding to climate change will, of course, be ongoing.

7: Goods and services

Priority Area Status: On track, 40% achieved. Planned completion 2022/23FY.

7.1 Align procurement and contractor service providers with Council's ambition for zero-net emissions.

Revisions have been made to Council's Procurement Policy. From May 2020, a minimum weighting of 5% for environmental considerations was implemented for purchases over \$60,000 (previously no minimum was set). The description of Environmental Sustainability was improved to help guide decision making, and now includes Council's commitment to zero net emissions by 2025. The policy clearly gives preference to suppliers who have set similar procurement policy environmental goals. The minimum weighting of 5% for environmental sustainability was adjusted to apply to purchases over \$50,000 from November 2021.

Briefings to contractors are planned for the 22/23FY. This is one year later than the Roadmap proposed. The delay will have a positive impact as it will provide time for the Climate Leadership Group to help to generate a stronger understanding among staff on how to communicate emissions requirements to contractor service providers.

8: Offsetting, insetting and sequestration

Priority Area Status: On-track, 20% achieved.

8.1 Develop a working group and an Offset/Inset Sequestering Carbon Strategy

Council is part of an offsetting working group with surrounding Councils and the North Central Catchment Management Authority. This group is looking into feasibility of local offsetting projects via tree planting on private land.

This is one option out of many. This aspect of the Roadmap provides a great opportunity to directly connect and strengthen the relationship between Council and the community. To continue these investigations and secure local offsetting projects by 2025, work needs to begin now. This work will require extra resourcing, and Council staff are actively looking for relevant grant opportunities.

8.2 Offset annually from 2025, the emissions that are remaining.

In order to reach carbon neutral status in 2025, offsets will need to be purchased equal to the balance of emissions remaining after all efforts at reduction in previous years are made. The more we can reduce emissions now, the less we will have to pay in offsets.

9. Tracking progress and reporting on results

Priority Area Status: On track. 20% complete. Ongoing.

9.1 Annual tracking on progress and reporting on results

Greenhouse emissions data has been collated for the 20/21 FY, calculating Council's Operational Emissions to total 7,264 tonnes of greenhouse gasses (tCO₂e). This is a reduction of over 30% of greenhouse emissions from 2018, which formed the baseline emissions data of the Roadmap. This reduction in emissions is due to the closure of the Castlemaine Landfill. Waste is now shipped out of the Shire. Although community waste emissions are not within the scope of this Roadmap, Council recognises the importance of working with the community to reduce these emissions. This will inform the upcoming Waste Strategy and Climate Change Strategy.

Emissions reductions from Council's purchase of renewable electricity will impact 21/22 data and beyond.

9.2 Establish data collation for efficient internal monitoring and reporting.

Council has budget for external monitoring of operational greenhouse gas emissions produced up to June 2022. Fortunately, we will be in a better position to be able to monitor emissions internally in the future due to the consolidation of electricity bills under the VECO contract, and improved monitoring at the landfill once the cell is capped.

Updated Implementation Plan

Timing updated March 2022 (original timing p32 of Roadmap)

1		100% Renewable electricity					
Action	Work area	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
1.1	Local Government Power Purchase Agreement (LGPPA) for 100% renewable electricity supply	Completed January 2022					
1.2	Extra action: Watchman light audit & removal.	Property Portfolio Coordinator, Climate			→		

2		Zero-net emissions buildings					
Action	Work area	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
2.1	Deliver and implement a Buildings Emissions Reduction Plan	Buildings, Climate Change			→		
2.2	Reduce energy consumption to NABERS 5 rating	Buildings, Climate Change				→	

3		Zero-net emissions lighting					
Action	Work area	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
3.1	Transition balance of street lighting assets to reduce energy use.	Completed May 2022					

4		Zero-net emissions transport					
Action	Work area	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
4.1	Deliver a fleet transition study to transition Council fleet to electric vehicles and deploy the necessary supporting infrastructure (then roll this out)	Procurement, Climate	→				

5		Zero-net emissions waste					
Action	Work area	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
5.1	Reduce landfill emissions through gas capture, monitor emissions and future-proof new infrastructure	Infrastructure Climate Change	→				
5.2	Waste Strategy to deliver future waste reduction activities	Infrastructure Climate Change		→			

6		Low carbon culture					
Action	Work area	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
6.1	Integration of climate change action implementation and sustainability across Council	CEO, Climate Change, Climate Leadership Team					

7		Goods and services					
Action	Work area	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
7.1	Align procurement and contractor service providers with Council ambition	Procurement, Climate Change					

8		Offsetting, sequestration and green infrastructure					
Action	Work area	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
8.1	Develop a working group and an offset/inset strategy	Climate Change, Natural Environment					
8.2	Offset annually from 2025, the emissions that are remaining	Climate Change					

9		Tracking progress and reporting on results					
Action	Work area	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
9.1	Annual tracking of progress and reporting on results	Climate Change					
9.2	Establish data collation for efficient internal monitoring and reporting	Climate Change					



Mountain biking at La Larr Ba Gauwa in Harcourt.