

THE CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2020–22

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DRAFT



The purpose of this action plan is to achieve the goals and targets established in *The City of Greater Geelong Environment Strategy 2020–30*.

The actions in this plan will be reported on, and updated, every two years. This will help our organisation keep pace with the rapid changes that are happening in environmental management.

STRATEGIC GOALS	
GOAL 1	Move towards a zero-emission, climate-ready city and region
GOAL 2	Create greener community spaces
GOAL 3	Contribute to a circular economy by reducing waste
GOAL 4	Protect, enhance and restore our region's biodiversity
GOAL 5	Achieve better integrated water management through planning and design



258,934
2019 ESTIMATED
RESIDENT
POPULATION



2.66%
POPULATION
GROWTH RATE
(2018–19)



6.4 MILLION
VISITORS TO
THE REGION



~18,850
BUSINESSES



1,300 HECTARES
PROTECTED
NATURAL HABITAT



133 KM
OF COASTLINE



23,135
TONNES (CO₂E)
COUNCIL
EMISSIONS

MAYOR'S MESSAGE



The Mayor's message will be prepared for the final draft of this action plan.

CR STEPHANIE ASHER
Mayor, City of Greater Geelong

Council acknowledges Wadawurrung Traditional Owners of this land and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

GOAL 1: MOVE TOWARDS A ZERO-EMISSION, CLIMATE-READY CITY REGION

What we'll keep doing in 2020–22

- Consider climate change impacts and adaptation in decisions and operations, as per the *Sustainability Framework* recommendations.
- Use our financial investments to support accredited, environmentally-sustainable ventures.
- Support and promote community action to reduce climate change impacts.
- Upgrade to energy-efficient lighting, heating and cooling systems in our facilities.
- Install roof-top solar photovoltaic systems in our high-energy consuming facilities.
- Capture and reuse methane gas emissions from municipal landfills to produce energy.
- Source renewable electricity for our operations and public infrastructure.
- Support local sustainability groups to offer events and programs, such as Sustainable House Day, Transition Streets and the Sustainable Living Festival.
- Work with our Future Proofing Geelong partners to support sustainability initiatives.
- Support community efforts to reduce carbon emissions through our Environment and Sustainability Community Grants program.
- Assessing coastal climate change risks and impacts.

New actions proposed for 2020–22

- Develop a climate change response plan to consolidate and renew our existing efforts in climate change adaptation and support the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recommendation to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
- Periodically review and update the planning scheme, and other strategic documents, so local policies achieve industry best-practice in addressing climate change impacts.
- Develop a climate change financial risk disclosure statement.
- Amend our *Sustainable Building Policy* to include strengthened energy-efficiency standards and support carbon-neutral operation of all new City-owned facilities.
- Amend procurement practices to prioritise sustainably-produced, climate-resilient infrastructure and asset purchases.
- Implement *The City of Greater Geelong Northern & Western Geelong Growth Areas Framework Plan*.
- Develop action plans for all new development precincts to support environmentally sustainable design.
- Support the *Victorian Climate Change Framework* target for Victoria to be net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- Improve our understanding of adaptation responses to better protect natural and built environments in coastal areas.



CASE STUDY 1: ZERO CARBON BUILDINGS PROGRAM

Our Zero Carbon Buildings Program started in 2018 to help reduce carbon emissions from our community buildings. The aim of the program was to improve the environmental performance through energy efficiency gains and renewable energy generation initiatives.

We improved energy efficiency through LED lighting upgrades, automated building control systems and upgraded heating and cooling systems at key sites. To generate renewable energy, we installed 986kW of solar photovoltaic (or solar panels) on our buildings – that's enough to power approximately 220 homes annually.

This program has resulted in a reduction in energy use, a reduction in carbon emissions and a reduction in annual energy costs.

GOAL 2: CREATE GREENER COMMUNITY SPACES

What we'll keep doing in 2020–22

- Implement the City of Greater Geelong Urban Forest Strategy to increase nature elements in our region's suburbs and townships.
- Maintain our 150,000 existing public space trees.
- Support environment groups, such as Coastcare, Landcare and community park stewardship groups.
- Support community environmental events, including National Tree Day and World Environment Day.
- Plant more than 20,000 indigenous plants every year.
- Undertake pest plant and animal control programs.
- Manage 1,300 hectares of land for conservation purposes.
- Support community involvement in environmental restoration projects using our Environment and Sustainability Community Grants program.

New actions proposed for 2020–22

- Review urban heat and vulnerability assessments periodically to inform priority community space greening projects.
- Implement *The City of Greater Geelong Stormwater Services Strategy 2020–30* to improve stormwater catchments and nature values of public space.
- Develop a waterway management plan that supports stormwater treatment wetlands that will contribute to the health of public spaces and high-value waterways.
- Change local planning policies to establish minimum community space greening and green-blue infrastructure requirements for private sector developments.
- Develop a new biodiversity strategy to guide actions that will protect and improve our region's nature reserves.
- Develop an integrated water management strategy that can guide an integrated and collaborative approach to water planning and management across all parts of the water cycle.
- Update our existing open space strategy to establish goals that will enhance our community reserves.



CASE STUDY 2: THE GREENWAY PROJECT

As part of the Greenway Project, we worked in partnership with community groups to plant 60,000 trees and direct seed 2 hectares of native grasses along the Ted Wilson Trail shared pathway.

Greening this space has created new nature-based recreation opportunities for users of the shared pathway, while also establishing a nature corridor that improves the biodiversity values of our region.

GOAL 3: CONTRIBUTE TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY BY REDUCING WASTE

What we'll keep doing in 2020–22

- Operate gross pollutant traps in the urban stormwater system to capture rubbish and pollutants.
- Maintain residential kerbside waste collection services, including recycling and green waste.
- Install and service public place recycling bins at key locations.
- Provide waste management community education programs.
- Maintain the Geelong and Drysdale Resource Recovery Centres.
- Remove litter from city-managed roadsides.
- Implement innovative recycling projects, such as the PlastiPhalt recycled plastic road material trial, to divert recyclable materials from landfill.
- Continue to implement environmental monitoring and operational plans for Drysdale Landfill.

New actions proposed for 2020–22

- Support the Victorian Government's Recycling Victoria Circular Economy Policy.
- Implement *The City of Greater Geelong Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2020–30* to reduce waste and divert it from landfill.
- Review waste minimisation requirements of:
 - › the Sustainable Design Assessment framework and
 - › the environmental management plans for construction works.
- Establish a waste minimisation and innovation fund through the Environment and Sustainability Grants Program.

- Develop and implement a waste wise plan to divert recyclable resources generated through our operations away from landfill.
- Establish procedures for all City-sponsored public events that will minimise waste and recover resources.
- Implement sustainable procurement practices to prioritise the use of products produced with sustainable and recycled materials.
- Phase out single-use plastics in City-owned and operated buildings.
- Investigate options for a food organics collection and processing service.
- Collaborate with the Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recycling Group, and other waste industry stakeholders, to develop a regional recycling action plan for the Barwon South West region.
- Investigate infrastructure improvements that will capture more litter from stormwater runoff.
- Develop and implement a landscape rehabilitation plan for the Drysdale Landfill site.
- Conduct annual environment audit of Drysdale Landfill and implement recommendations.
- Investigate opportunities to rehabilitate and develop green spaces at closed landfills.
- Work with stakeholders to divert garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins away from landfill.
- Increase the use of sustainable materials in asset construction and renewal projects.



CASE STUDY 3: GARDEN ORGANICS COMPOSTING FACILITY

In 2018, we opened the Anakie Garden Organics Composting Facility. The facility is capable of processing up to 35,000 tonnes of green organics per year.

This facility processes green organics collected from kerbside garden waste bins. Using an open windrow process, it produces compost that meets Australian Standards. The compost is then used to promote soil health and improve water conservation in our parks and gardens, as well as agricultural properties within the region

This example of a circular economy initiative is an exciting model for other resource recovery projects within Greater Geelong, as well as other municipalities.

GOAL 4: PROTECT, ENHANCE AND RESTORE OUR REGION'S BIODIVERSITY



What we'll keep doing in 2020–22

- Identify and prioritise strategic land acquisition opportunities that complement our existing nature reserves.
- Maintain and enhance reserves to improve habitat values and nature corridors on a landscape level.
- Increase the urban tree canopy cover in our region by implementing the *City of Greater Geelong Urban Forest Strategy*.
- Deliver pest and weed management programs to protect native flora and fauna populations.
- Manage 1,300 hectares of land for conservation purposes.
- Survey and map our region's biodiversity sites.
- Maintain our 150,000 existing public space trees.
- Support environment groups such as Coastcare, Landcare and community park stewardship groups.
- Support community environmental events, including National Tree Day and World Environment Day.
- Plant over 20,000 new indigenous plants each year.
- Undertake pest plant and animal control programs.
- Host events related to the Nagoya Wetland Partnership Program, as well as others.
- Support community-led environmental projects, through our Environment and Sustainability Community Grants program.
- Support and promote community action that supports the natural environment.

CASE STUDY 4: SPARROVALE WETLANDS

In 2019, we acquired 500 hectares of former agricultural land between the Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area, the Barwon River and the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve. This site is being developed as an integrated wetland and waterway treatment site.

This conservation reserve will support nationally significant flora and fauna in the region and improve habitat for internationally-protected bird species visiting the Port Phillip (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar areas.

New actions proposed for 2020–22

- Review and update our biodiversity strategy.
- Review and update the planning scheme, and other strategic documents, to make sure local policies, land use and development controls provide strong protection for biodiversity.
- Complete environmental assessments and use planning control processes to:
 - › identify, protect and manage existing biodiversity values and
 - › identify new opportunities for nature reserves.
- Periodically review corporate strategies and plans to check they're supporting this goal.

GOAL 5: BETTER INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT THROUGH PLANNING AND DESIGN



What we'll keep doing in 2020–22

- Use the local planning scheme and Environmentally Sustainable Design local planning policy to make integrated water management compulsory in new urban developments.
- Operate gross pollutant traps in the urban stormwater system to capture rubbish and pollutants.
- Manage 300 stormwater catchments, as well as drainage and stormwater assets.
- Plan drainage and stormwater infrastructure in areas of new urban development.

New actions proposed for 2020–22

- Adopt *The City of Greater Geelong Stormwater Services Strategy 2020–30* to set standards and priorities for managing water resources in natural and built environments.
- Develop a waterway management plan to improve environmental outcomes in waterways and wetlands on public land.
- Develop master plans for priority waterways to review the social, environmental and economic values of council-managed urban waterways and recommend options that will maximise their value and amenity.
- Develop an integrated water management plan for the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Area.
- Develop an integrated water management plan for Geelong.
- Review and update our sustainable water use plan.
- Review existing stormwater reuse schemes and investigate new opportunities for stormwater harvesting, such as public open space irrigation.

CASE STUDY 5: EASTERN PARK STORMWATER HARVESTING SYSTEM

Water run-off from the East Geelong drainage system is now captured and stored in the Eastern Park dam. Water from this stormwater harvesting dam is treated and used for irrigation in the Botanic Gardens, as well as tree watering around Greater Geelong.

Using recycled water to irrigate reduces pressure on drinking water supplies. This stormwater harvesting system supplies between 50 and 70 per cent of water used for irrigation in the Botanic Gardens, saving up to 15 million litres of drinking water each year.

- Prepare long-term programs for stormwater system upgrades and renewals that are consistent with best practice.
- Monitor and investigate stormwater system performance to inform how we invest in the network.
- Develop a healthy waterways program and secure funding to improve these areas by establishing active travel paths and completing revegetation works.
- Periodically review corporate strategies and plans to check they're supporting this goal.



HAVE YOUR SAY

For more information about where and when you can share your views about this action plan, visit www.geelongaustralia.com.au/yoursay

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8.00am – 5.00pm

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