Clarence... a brighter place

2022-2032

Sustainability Strategy

We acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal People as the traditional custodians of the land and pay respect to Elders past and present and recognise their continuing spiritual connection to the land.

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Relationship to our strategic plan

Our purpose

- To provide for the health, safety, and welfare of the community
- To represent the interests of the community
- To provide for the peace, order, and good governance of the municipal area

Our mission

To respond to the needs of the community through a commitment to excellence in leadership, advocacy, best practice governance and service delivery

Our vision

Clarence… a vibrant, prosperous, sustainable city

Our goals



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Our strategies

This Sustainability Strategy is one of seven key strategies adopted by council to support achievement of our Strategic Plan 2021-2031.

While each strategy stands alone, many goals and their supporting objectives overlap. To achieve the best outcomes for our community, we will take a whole of council approach to align planning, resources and delivery, particularly where goals and objectives have connections with other key strategies.

This strategy outlines how we will work towards achieving sustainability through balancing social, environmental and economic factors. The strategy establishes six priority areas adopted from the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework.

1. Sustainable cities and communities - make our city inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
2. Responsible consumption and production – support sustainable consumption and production patterns.
3. Climate action – take action to combat climate change and its impacts.
4. Life on land – sustainably manage our environment and minimise biodiversity loss.
5. Clean water and sanitation – ensure access to clean water and sanitation.
6. Industry, innovation and infrastructure – build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industry and foster innovation.

Our role in sustainability

Improving sustainable practices supports and promotes the health, safety and welfare of our communities and is a responsibility that falls to all tiers of government. It also involves many other sectors: private enterprise, not-for-profit organisations, and communities themselves.

The way in which council chooses to do this will depend on the urgency and impact of the issue, the objective it relates to, who else has a key role and available resources. We will work respectfully with others and make sure we don't duplicate efforts.

In implementing sustainability programs council will choose from one or more of the following roles:

Delivering	for the planning and delivery of actions that support a sustainable city.
Partnering	with relevant stakeholders to deliver outcomes that support a sustainable city.
Facilitating	stakeholders to improve attainment of actions that support a sustainable city.
Advocating	for stakeholders to be heard and promoting actions that support a sustainable city.

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Our sustainability vision

Clarence…

Strengthening the integration of sustainability practices into our services and operations

Integrating sustainability

Council has an important role to play in leading, driving and integrating sustainable practices through our operations, service delivery and community engagements, including:

- planning urban areas and transport
- managing stormwater and waste
- adapting to a changing climate
- developing and educating the community
- managing natural areas, and
- demonstrating good corporate citizenship.

Planning urban areas and transport

Council plays a significant role in land use planning; building sustainable communities that make effective use of our existing infrastructure and promoting effective and efficient transport choices.

In planning for sustainability, we seek to ensure that meeting increasing infrastructure demand does not come at the cost of our existing natural resources, including our open spaces, agriculture industry, natural environment and waterways.

Managing stormwater and waste

Urban stormwater management is a key responsibility of council in order to minimise the impacts of stormwater runoff, including environmental and social impacts of flooding and degrading water quality.

Working towards being a sustainable city also requires a focus on managing waste that prioritises prevention, reduction, re-use and recycling. We have the capacity to impact this area through our role as a stakeholder in the landfill at Copping and as a significant purchasing entity within our city.

Adapting to a changing climate

A key aspect of providing for a sustainable future is strengthening our resilience and capacity to adapt to climate-related hazards and natural disasters. The knowledge we have at a local level enables council to identify where we are most vulnerable and influences our ability to address climate risks. Additionally, there are actions we can take at an organisational level to minimise our own contribution to greenhouse gas emissions.

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Developing and educating our community

Balancing environmental, social and economic considerations is important to improve the quality of life for our community. Supporting our community to understand the value of our natural areas and the risks and opportunities presented by a changing climate is critical in mitigating and adapting to these impacts.

Managing natural areas

Council has a responsibility to facilitate sustainable and productive management of our natural resources to minimise and prevent, where possible, land degradation and biodiversity loss. Growing our city in a way that values natural resources and the environment for future generations is key to achieving a sustainable city.

Good corporate citizenship

Recognising our corporate citizenship responsibilities to our community, we will demonstrate leadership by continuing to integrate social, environmental and economic values, and other sustainable practices in our decision-making processes and operations. Our capacity to integrate sustainable practices must also consider our financial sustainability and economic responsibilities.

By taking a leadership role, engaging with our community and investing in sustainable technology and practices, we aim to support our community in providing for a sustainable future.

The 2014-15 photo below shows the changing shoreline over the period 1958 to 2015



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Consultation and feedback

Further to the community's contribution to the Strategic Plan 2021-2031, direct feedback and contributions from several sources have been considered specifically in the development of this Sustainability Strategy. Workshops were conducted with aldermen and our staff. Representatives from Special Committees of Council were also consulted.

To build on these contributions, recent feedback about this strategy was sought from our community through our "Your Say" internet platform.

Developing sustainable practices in consultation with, and inclusive of, our community builds knowledge within council and our community and encourages successful implementation and the practice of sustainability.

Background

While the focus of this strategy is on what we will do over the next ten years, it is also important to recognise our achievements to date to build a sustainable future. Highlighted below are examples of sustainable practices already in place across council and the city.

Managing natural areas

We have developed and implemented over 20 reserve activity plans. These plans feature a detailed and prioritised program to manage our natural areas to conserve and enhance habitat, conservation, biodiversity and amenity values.

Managing climate change impacts

Our city features more than 191km of coastline. Since 2008 extensive consultative projects have occurred in response to concerns about erosion of beaches and flooding events in coastal areas. Council monitors beach erosion and coastal changes closely and our planning process include consideration of coastal hazards and impacts.

Council plugged into Tasmania's expanding electric highway with the installation of a public charging station for electric vehicles in 2021. This is a great addition to our city and will encourage more people to get on board with new and emerging technologies.



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Facilitating community involvement and education

Building a sustainable future is supported by facilitation and encouragement of community awareness and participation in protection and maintenance of our natural areas.

Our volunteers have a significant impact on achieving our strategic goals and the delivery of a range of services and initiatives, including the significant work of our landcare and coastcare groups in maintaining our natural areas. Group activities include traditional weeding and planting as well as partnering with other organisations to engage the broader community via interpretation and education of natural and cultural values.

In 2019 council participated in Volunteering Tasmania's state-wide project aiming to address the decline in volunteering across Tasmania. The Community Volunteer Sustainability Strategy aims to support us to work to safeguard and embed a sustainable and adaptable culture of volunteering of benefit to the community into the future.



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Where do we want to be in 10 years?

Key outcomes we will work to achieve by 2032

Outlined below are the outcomes council will work to achieve by 2032. The outcomes will result from implementing the objectives outlined under each Priority Area.

Transparent governance

- Identify baseline data to monitor effectiveness and impact of objectives outlined in this strategy

Sustainable cities and communities

- Public open space in urban areas has increased
- The urban tree canopy has increased
- Our renewable energy consumption has increased

Responsible consumption and production

- Prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse has reduced the amount of waste disposed to landfill
- By 2024, embed sustainable criteria into council's procurement and tender processes
- Sustainable procurement practices are actively promoted and encouraged
- Our community is aware of sustainable development and lifestyles

Climate action

- Our resilience to climate-related hazards and natural disasters is improved
- Climate change measures and goals have been integrated into council policies, strategies and planning
- Institutional capacity on mitigating and adapting to a changing climate has improved
- Greenhouse gas emissions have been reduced to complement the net zero emission ambitions of the state and federal governments

Life on land

- The conservation, restoration and sustainable use of land and inland freshwater ecosystems is a clear priority
- Tree canopy has increased
- Degradation of natural habitats and the loss of biodiversity has reduced
- Ecosystem and biodiversity values in local planning and development processes has improved

Clean water and sanitation

- The way we use water in our operations is more efficient
- Water quality has improved by reducing untreated wastewater, improving the quality of stormwater discharge and minimising pollutants into our environment
- Increased safe reuse of water
- Increased safety of recreational water used for primary contact

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Industry, innovation and infrastructure

- Quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure to support economic development and human well-being has been developed, with a focus on affordable and equitable access
- The adoption of clean resource efficient and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes has increased



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Who will we engage with?

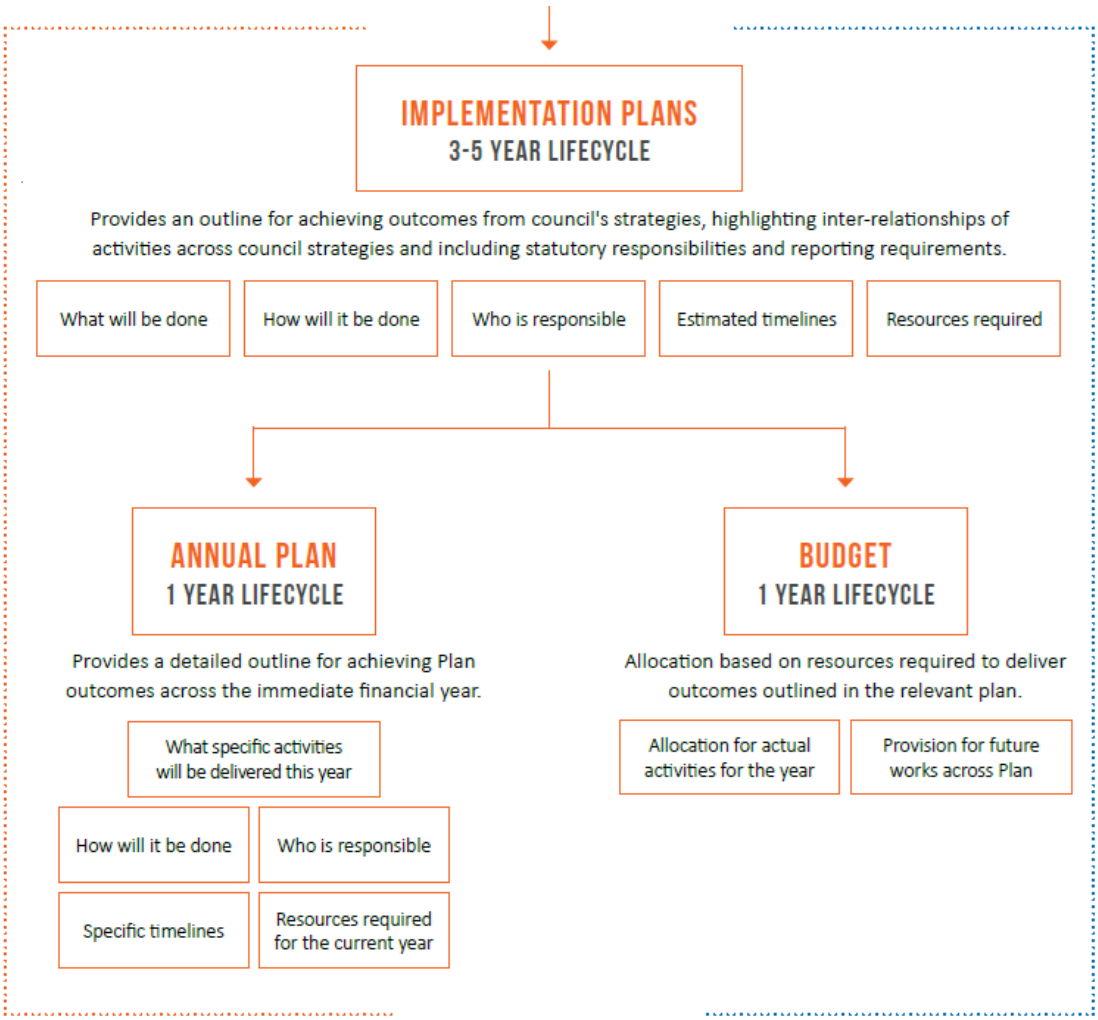
In delivering the objectives outlined in this strategy we will engage with:

- Our community ✓
- Internal stakeholders ✓
- Council special committees ✓
- Local and regional bodies ✓
- State and Federal government ✓

How will we get there

Implementation plans will be developed that outline how and when each objective will be delivered. Relevant activities from existing planning documents and other implementation plans will be mapped against the objectives of this strategy to ensure that our efforts are coordinated, rigorous and do not duplicate effort or resources. Complimentary objectives across council's strategies will be delivered in a collaborative manner.

Implementation plans will provide for a major review of progress every 3 years, and an annual minor review to inform budget and annual plan discussions and decision-making.



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What will we do to integrate sustainable practices into our services and operations over the next 10 years?

The following pages set out the objectives we will pursue over the next ten years.

The nature and extent of our involvement will depend on the role council chooses to take.



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PRIORITY 1 Sustainable cities and communities

To make our city inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



Why is this important?

Sustainability helps to provide for intergenerational equity in access to resources and assets. Key elements that impact providing for a sustainable city include:

Urban heating and cooling

Urban heat islands occur when the natural environment is replaced with roads, pavements and buildings which absorb and retain heat. This causes temperatures in these areas to be higher than vegetated areas.

Heat impacts our community and natural areas in many ways, including increased cost for cooling our homes and increased heat related stress symptoms. Our green spaces, shady trees and recreational areas mitigate urban heating and help people cool down on hot days.

Sustainable transport

Reducing traffic congestion, demand on parking and reducing carbon and air pollutant emissions are benefits of choosing active and sustainable transport.

Options for sustainable transport include public transport, ride sharing, electric vehicles or other low emissions vehicles and electric scooters and bikes. Walking, cycling and other active transport modes provide many benefits for the health of both our community and the city.

Disaster management

The frequency, duration and intensity of disaster events is increasing in a warming climate. These events can cause significant environmental, economic and social impacts and consequences. Coupled with population growth and urban development, the risks associated with these events is increasing. It is important we work to build community resilience with effective and efficient adaptation and response mechanisms.

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Objectives we will work towards

Urban heating and cooling

- Improve liveability by identifying opportunities to cool the city and protect people and communities from heat stress
- Promoting energy efficient home and landscape designs and that promote efficient use of energy and reduce urban heat soak
- Increase our urban forests and the tree canopy
- Consider opportunities to decrease urban heating in council's design projects

Disaster management

- Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure and communities
- Support our community to build capacity and resilience

Sustainable transport

- Provide infrastructure to support sustainable transport options
- Encourage and support our community to take up sustainable transport options
- Promote the health and well-being benefits of active transport choices
- Encourage the transformation of the transport sector to low or zero carbon emissions transport
- Undertake best practice land use policy development and active participation in regional planning processes to expand opportunities for alternative active transport modes



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PRIORITY 2 Responsible consumption and production

To support sustainable consumption and production patterns



Why is this important?

Minimising waste and recovering resources

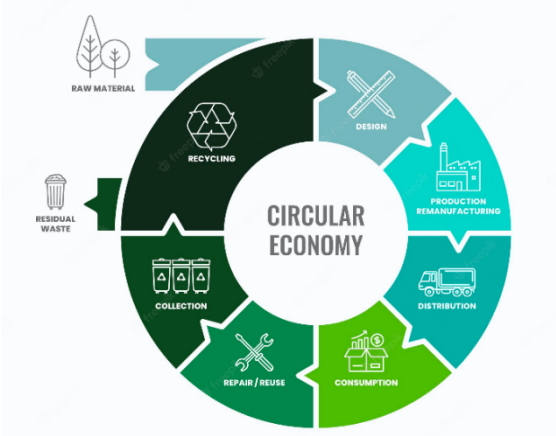
One of our key responsibilities is to deliver waste and recycling services. We provide this service as kerbside recycling and waste collection. Relying on landfill disposal as the primary solution to waste management has significant environmental impact. Council also has a key role to support the State Government's waste strategy which promotes the diversion of waste from landfill to recover and recycle waste streams, wherever possible.

Where appropriate, council will align our corporate waste strategy with the state government's to harness synergies and deliver best outcomes to our community.

Responsible consumption leads to a circular economy and facilitates local recycling and manufacturing industries.

A circular economy aims to retain the value of materials for as long as possible; recycling, redesigning and reusing materials to minimise the depletion of our natural resources.

In working towards a circular economy, new industry and manufacturing processes can be established that support the use of recycled materials and innovations in product development. This also provides local employment opportunities and less transport emissions generated in moving materials for processing.



Sustainable procurement

Another aspect of consumption and production is sustainable procurement. Sustainable procurement integrates economic, environmental and social considerations into the specifications and evaluation criteria in the procurement process.

Sustainable procurement aims to reduce the adverse impacts on human health and the natural environment; minimising resource consumption and waste where possible.

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Objectives we will work towards

Minimising waste and recovering resources

- Review our waste management strategy to align with objectives and principles of this strategy and reflect key elements of the State Government's waste strategy
- Continue to deliver efficient waste and recycling to our residential and business community
- Reduce the generation of waste in our operations and maximise opportunities for resource recovery
- Work with other groups and stakeholders to improve market development and assist emerging resource recovery markets
- Expand community engagement to improve waste avoidance, recovery and reuse practices

Sustainable procurement

- Embed sustainability as a criteria in tender and procurement processes to promote use of sustainable materials and practices in the city generally, and within council's operations specifically



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PRIORITY 3 Climate action

To take action to combat climate change and its impacts



Why is this important?

Energy and carbon reduction

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a key climate action to minimise global heating. The Paris Agreement[1], which Australia is party to, came into force in 2016 and aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by:

- holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and
- pursuing efforts to limit temperature increase to 1.5°C.

[1] Paris Agreement, United Nations 2015 https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

Tasmania's electricity primarily comes from renewable hydro power which has low emissions. Our state also has extensive forests that absorb greenhouse gas emissions.

These natural advantages, along with government and community climate actions, have led to our state achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions most years since 2013.

Tasmania is leading Australia's transition to a low emissions economy. While our forests are a key factor in this achievement, we cannot rely solely on our 'green state' to absorb emissions due to risk of fire and resource harvesting.

Taking action to reduce emissions in all carbon producing sectors will allow transition to a low carbon future that meets national and local needs while managing costs and risks.

We will ensure that we implement actions to reduce our emissions to support state, national and international commitments. In doing so it will be important to identify reliable data to establish emission performance statistics and to set emission reduction targets that complement the net zero emission ambitions of the state and federal governments.

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Adapting to a warming climate

As our climate heats up, so too will the frequency, duration and intensity of disaster events. These events have significant environmental, economic and social impacts including damage to homes, personal injury, higher insurance premiums, loss of livelihoods and increased pressure on emergency resources.

Coupled with population growth and urban development, the risks associated with climate change events will increase, therefore it is important that we work to increase community resilience with effective and efficient adaptation and response mechanisms in place.

There is also the opportunity for council to invest in low carbon infrastructure such as electric vehicles and charging infrastructure and buildings with high levels of energy efficiency.

Climate risk management

Our warming climate is a significant issue for local government as we are already realising increased legal, social, economic and environmental impacts.

We are building infrastructure and environments for our future and the impact of our decisions about energy, infrastructure, buildings, transport and waste will span generations.

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Objectives we will work towards

Energy and carbon reduction

- Continue to monitor council's and our community's greenhouse gas emissions
- Expand community and organisational engagement to encourage energy conservation and sustainable use of resources
- We will set a carbon target for the organisation that will quantify the greenhouse gas emission reductions we are aiming for
- We will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to complement the net zero emission ambitions of the state and federal governments

Adapting to a warming climate

- Continue to identify and implement climate change adaption methods to address impacts on our coastline resulting from sea level rise

Climate risk management

- Enhance our risk assessment processes in relation to the warming climate
- Quantify climate risks outlined in council's corporate risk register and risk management framework



Erosion of dunes damaging council infrastructure Roches Beach ©Bruce Gibbs

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PRIORITY 4 Life on land

To sustainably manage our environment and minimise biodiversity loss



Why is this important

Natural environment

Our natural environment is diverse and provides habitat for a wide range of native flora and fauna, including threatened species. This environment, including our waterways, provides ecosystem services such as clean air and water, amenity and regulation of air temperature.

There are also social and cultural connections to our land, such as recreational opportunities and recognising significant cultural practices.

As the climate heats up, our flora and fauna will need to adapt. Areas that were once habitable may not be in the long term and there may be a need for intervention to ensure the survival of habitat.

It is the responsibility of council to balance competing human needs and conservation, to preserve our natural resources and cultural landscapes for generations to come.

Agriculture resilience

Within city growth we must consider agricultural resilience given our significant reliance on this industry. The industry is increasingly impacted by the effects of climate change, both as a key source of carbon emissions and the impact of climate change on land and crop yields.

Agriculture resilience is also important to maintain productive farmland to enable local food production to meet growing demand and contribute to a sustainable food system.

Agriculture can also contribute to decarbonising our economy by storing carbon in the soil, growing tree crops and reducing methane emissions from livestock.

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Objectives we will work towards

Natural environment

- Continue to develop and maintain a quality open space network
- Identify and protecting important natural values within our city
- Protecting natural assets such as reserves, coasts and saltmarshes within council-managed land
- Continue to provide opportunities for community involvement in the care of the environment

Agricultural resilience

- Work collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to support the sustainable use of our agricultural land and advocate for investment in climate resilient practices

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PRIORITY 5 Clean water and sanitation

To ensure access to safe water sources and sanitation



Why is this important

Responsible consumption of water

Water is crucial to the health and well-being of our people.

The management of our local environment, infrastructure and operations significantly impacts water consumption. Key uses include water for irrigation in our parks and green spaces as well as servicing community facilities such as swimming pools and council owned buildings. Increased use of these facilities will put additional pressure on our water supply to maintain assets at optimal levels.

Efficient water capture and consumption methods and use of alternative water sources will reduce the pressure on supply, particularly when it is hot and dry.

Sanitation

An important role of council is to support provision of safe and healthy water and sanitation services and requires management and monitoring of our natural resources and built systems.

This includes monitoring and reporting across water quality, water security, water pollution, hygiene, and sanitation.



Objectives we will work towards

- Provide infrastructure that allows stormwater to reach the sea efficiently and without causing flood damage
- Investigate design options and opportunities that minimise hard surfaces that promote concentrated stormwater run-off
- Use water efficiently and effectively within our operations
- Provide for the safe, environmentally responsible, efficient and sustainable provision of stormwater services that has capacity to meet current and future community needs
- Continue development of a proactive monitoring and reporting program to inform and support public safety

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PRIORITY 6 **Industry, innovation and infrastructure**

To build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industry and foster innovation



Why is this important

Innovation leads to the development of sustainable and resilient practices and infrastructure to support economic development and our well-being. Innovation also supports job and industry growth through leveraging demand for change. Electric vehicles, carbon farming and mining minerals needed for renewable energy infrastructure are examples of industries taking advantage of our changing environment.

Council has capacity to support our community and industries, through advocacy and economic development to be more efficient with the resources they use, while reducing operating costs.

Objectives we will work towards

- Encourage sustainable expansion of industries through association, e.g. agriculture and agritourism
- Within scope of council's capacity to impact, work with industry to encourage design that reduces waste at the source
- Ensure our operations and projects design for the future, including consideration of energy and carbon, water and waste
- Identify current and emerging technologies that enable increased efficiencies and reduce pressure on existing resources within our operations
- Promote inclusive and sustainable industry and commerce
- Integrate sustainability information into our governance reporting
- Leverage emerging technology to improve the efficiency of city infrastructure and services



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Explanation of terms

This strategy identifies various documents to be developed, revised, and implemented. Terms used seek to convey the strategic and/or operational objective of the content

Strategy

Outlines the key issues in the strategic plan and identifies the key objectives and what needs to be done at a high level.

Framework

Provides guidance around strategies without being prescriptive. Allows for some flexibility in delivery to adapt to changing conditions.

Plan

A detailed outline for achieving outcomes from a strategy or framework. Identifies specific actions, what, who when and how.

Policy

Formal statement of principles. Primarily seeks to ensure compliance with legislation, standards, and community expectations

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