Community Carbon Emissions Reduction Taskforce
Moonee Valley City Council

Community Carbon Emissions Reduction Taskforce

Recommendations Report

May 2023

Acknowledgement

Moonee Valley City Council respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land - the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, their spirits, ancestors, elders and community members past and present.

Background

On 15 November 2022, Moonee Valley City Council (Council) resolved to establish a Community Carbon Emissions Reduction Taskforce (Taskforce) using a deliberative panel model.

252 people registered their interest in participating in the Taskforce. From these registrations, 40 people were randomly selected to represent a cross section of the Moonee Valley community based on neighbourhoods/Council wards, age, gender, diversity, language usually spoken at home and place of birth.

The key objective of the Taskforce was to provide recommendations to Council on initiatives/projects/programs to reduce Moonee Valley's community carbon emissions.

The Taskforce met and deliberated on three occasions; 22 and 29 April 2023 and 6 May 2023. This report is the recommendations written by the Taskforce.

The Taskforce Remit

Council has a key target in MV2040 to achieve zero net emissions for our community by 2040. How should Council reduce community carbon emissions?

Key Priorities

The Taskforce prioritised the recommendations below. In order from most important:

- To allocate a minimum percentage of annual budget to reducing carbon emissions (22) / Create a new executive leadership position in Council accountable for MV2040 Climate actions and goals (22)
- To support MVCC businesses and landlords and property managers to adopt solar energy (16) / Mandate and resource ESD (Environmentally Sustainable Design) through planning for new builds (16)
- Increase canopy cover and other greening on public and private land (15)
- Assist homeowners and rental providers to convert gas appliances to electric (12)
- To expand and upgrade safe bike infrastructure (12)
- Council to collaborate with State and Federal Governments and other organisations to facilitate apartment solar (10) / Provide an easy way for apartments and businesses to opt in to an effective food and other green organic waste management program (10)
- To improve the safety and accessibility of pedestrian infrastructure (9) / To clearly communicate effective waste management to all residential households using on-going targeted education strategies (9)
- Collaborate with other metropolitan councils to advocate/pressure State Government to improve public transport network and infrastructure across Melbourne (7)
- Provide emissions reduction funding for community group initiatives (7)
- To build community hubs (digital and physical) on reducing CO_2 emissions (6)

City of
Moonee Valley

Title:

Increase canopy cover and other greening on public and private land.

Intent:

- To provide a cooler, more liveable environment by creating shade which will encourage:
  - active transport, e.g., bike/walking; and
  - reduce reliance on artificial cooling.
- To absorb carbon CO^2 from the atmosphere

Why this is important:

1. It will reduce the numbers of large arid (treeless and grassless) areas, i.e., reduce heat island effect.

2. It will reduce energy use and therefore emissions whilst also absorbing and reducing existing emissions.

3. It will significantly reduce local environment temperature.

Considerations:

- Location (siting) of trees
- Type of trees
- No blocking of sun to solar panels.

Title:

Provide an easy way for apartments and businesses to opt in to an effective food and other green organic waste management program.

Intent:

- Businesses and apartments that have independent waste management can opt in
- Clear 'opt in' program that is affordable, logistically support and incentivised (e.g. through sustainability certification

Why this is important:

1. High density living to increase and so will the scale of the problem

2. There are 12,000 businesses in MVCC that do not have easy access, not are actively supported to make sustainable green and organic waste management decisions.

3.

Title:

Create a new executive leadership position in council, accountable for MV2040 climate actions & goals.

Intent:

- Set direction and ensure the actions do not deviate from the plan – review the implementation of the plan annually.
- Ensure consistency, stability and accountability outside of election cycles – long term thinking
- Model effective strategies - i.e. utilising KPIs, SMART Goals

Why this is important:

1. Define deliverables through a climate lens to meet well-define targets to allow for continuous improvement and agility.

2. Facilitate collaboration and advocacy between stakeholders (e.g. local, state, federal governments, businesses and communities).

3. Capture and build on momentum of existing community groups to make more effective use of resources/knowledge towards a shared zero carbon vision.

Title:

To improve the safety and accessibility of our pedestrian infrastructure.

Intent:

- **to provide safer footpaths and pedestrian road Crossings**
- **to increase the amount of trips walked in our community**
- **to reduce emissions from fossil fuel cars**
- **to improve street lighting**
- **to potentially consider ideas such as: pedestrian overpasses and underpasses, red light cameras, including at pedestrian crossings, car-free areas and malls, and smart lighting**

Why this is important:

1. **Reduces carbon emissions from reliance on fossil fuel cars**
2. **Reinforces current MVCC initiatives such as 'Walk to School' and '20 Minute Neighbourhoods'**
3. **Improves liveability by addressing accessibility and safety concerns to promote active lifestyles.**

Title:

To expand and upgrade safe bike infrastructure.

Intent:

- **to separate drivers, pedestrians and cyclists, especially with dedicated lanes on major roads.**
- **to incentivise more people to cycle, especially those who do not currently feel safe or comfortable (includes including women & children)**
- **to increase the number of destinations that are safely accessible by bike (by expanding our network)**
- **to improve bike parking**

Why this is important:

1. **Increases the accessibility of sustainable transport, which reduces CO_2 emissions**

2. **Shifts away from car-centric neighbourhoods, which produce high CO_2 emissions**

3. **Improves equity, health and quality of life in Moonee Valley**

Title:

For council to collaborate with state and federal governments, and other organisations to facilitate apartment solar.

Intent:

- **Simplify the process and make it easy for installation**
- **Facilitate the grant/funding process for apartment owners (both owner-occupiers and rental providers).**
- **Promote and incentivise solar for the mutual benefit of all apartment owners and residents.**
- **Encourage developers to incorporate sustainable design**

Why this is important:

1. High density living is going to increase.

2. Multi-dwelling buildings need support to coordinate the installation of solar efficiently.

3. Sustainable solutions need to be easy for developers to keep front of mind during the planning process.

4. Large installations are more cost efficient so the impact of implementation will significantly contribute to the reduction of community carbon emissions.

Title:

Assist homeowners and rental providers to convert gas appliances to electric.

Intent:

- *Advocate* to state government to provide rebates for the homeowner/rental providers to convert gas appliances to electric.
- *Educate* community by supporting existing community sustainability groups, and developing central information/resource hubs (e.g., neighbourhood houses): modelling conversion, heat pumps, energy efficiency, access to information re: rebates, service providers, health risks of gas appliances in the home etc. (like CERES).
- *Incentivise* – rate reduction, rebates, bulk buys.

Why this is important:

1. Reduces residential carbon emissions, because 9% of carbon emissions in Moonee Valley comes from residential fossil fuel gas use, which has the added benefit of improving individual and community health.
2. More affordable for homeowners/rental providers due to rebates; more affordable for residents (renters, owner occupiers) due to efficiency gains.
3. Doing so comes at minimal cost to council by using existing neighbourhood houses and utilising the combined resources of community groups and the wider community.

Title:

To allocate a minimum percentage of the annual council budget to reducing community carbon emissions.

Intent:

To have enough funds to reduce emissions every year (to have a guaranteed budget for sustained change).

Why this is important:

1. The Local Government Act 2020 requires that councils consider sustainability and environmental impact in their planning.

2. Ensure the allocated budget reflects the largest emitting sectors (and how they change over time)

3. Ensures equality in spending across the council area.

Title:

Collaborate with other metropolitan councils to advocate/pressure state government to improve public transport network and infrastructure across Melbourne.

Intent:

- Increase public transport frequency and usage by increased connectivity between modes (trams, trains, buses). This will decrease traffic and reduce carbon emissions across the MVCC area and greater Melbourne.
- Have smaller capacity vehicles/buses at times when demand is low, e.g., off peak, allowing increased frequency of services.
- All forms of public transport must be accessible to all in the community, inclusive of people with a disability.
- Increase use of electric buses.

Why this is important:

1. Fewer cars on the road will reduce carbon emissions.
2. Increased services will increase patronage, leading to public transport being more cost effective.
3. More people using public transport will identify where other network improvements can be made to further increase patronage.

Title:

To clearly communicate effective waste management to all residential households using ongoing targeted education strategies.

Intent:

- Improve level of community understanding of 'what goes in which bin', especially as requirements change.
- Ensure a multi-channel approach to education across different demographics.
- Make it easy for people (e.g. pictures on the outside of bins or bus stops).

Why this is important:

1. Information is constantly changing, and there is a large gap in knowledge that needs to be addressed to see significant emissions reduction from community waste.

2. Waste is a shared responsibility, yet not everyone is receiving the right information in the right ways. Residents need to be empowered to make informed decisions for the benefit of their community.

3. Organic waste contributes 3% of total carbon emissions, this is very easily decreased by current initiatives and programs (e.g, FOGO, composting community garden initiatives).

Title:

Provide emissions reduction funding for community group initiatives.

Intent:

- To enable and support community networks (i.e. environmental volunteer groups, sports clubs, youth groups etc.) to create and implement emission reduction behaviours and initiatives

Why this is important:

1. Utilises existing resources and networks

2. Supports equitable community participation in climate action.

3. Create and strengthen collaboration between the community and MV Council in order to achieve the shared MV 2040 goals

Title:

To support MVCC businesses and Landlords and property managers to adopt Solar energy.

Intent:

- **Simply and cost effectively reduce emissions from MVCC businesses landlords and property managers.**
- **Strategically buying (bulk buying, low interest rates, group Power Purchase Agreement etc.) to reduce costs.**
- **Education on benefits, access to the right providers etc., through engaging with independent not - for – profit organizations. (Yarra Energy Foundation).**
- **Partnerships with high quality suppliers and installers.**

Why this is important:

1. 49% of all emissions in 2020 were from commercial uses – great impact.
2. Lack of resources, time and knowledge to facilitate the transition on their own.
3. It helps improve the public profile of the business.
4. Load profile of businesses generally matches the generation profile of solar.

Title:

Mandate and resource ESD (Environmentally Sustainable Design) through planning for new builds.

Intent:

- To reduce carbon emissions from new buildings (houses, townhouses, apartments) by including initiatives such as Green Design, Electrification, Solar Panels etc.
- To ensure implementation is adequately resourced
- To work with higher-levels of government where necessary.

Why this is important:

1. Raises accountability for builders and developers to create environmentally sustainable builds moving forward

2. Adequately resourcing within council increases compliance to better standards

3. By not relying on higher-levels of government we're being proactive and addressing the urgency of the climate emergency by setting regulations for new building development.

Title:

To Build Community Information Hubs (digital + physical) on reducing community. CO_2 emissions

Intent:

- **For community members to learn about energy efficient alternatives + subsidies/grants available**
- **The physical hubs to model best practice experiments. (Utilise woodland Park, libraries etc)**
- **Digital hubs to allow access to information /comparisons/ lists of suppliers (that promote accessibility through audio, visual and demographically diverse content)**

Why this is important:

1. **empowers the community to make informed choices and to plan for the changes they can Make.**
2. **provides a trusted source of information + ·Suppliers**
3. **Also provides a forum for people to discuss and know about initiatives and educate themselves.**
4. **applies to individuals/households/business/community groups**

Minority Recommendations

These recommendations did not receive 80% support from the Taskforce and represent a minority view.

Title: To demonstrate to the community how MV2040 policies can be implemented
Intent: To model ideal behaviour as a form of guidance / leadership for the community. This will provide demonstrations of efficient and obtainable emissions reduction actions.
Why this is important: 1. It provides business and individuals with real-world examples of emission reduction action and policy, for businesses and individuals to learn from and replicate. 2. MVCC is doing the work and this is a way of showing leadership in their climate action. 3. Community is made aware of the integrity and usability of the MV2040 plan

Title:

To increase EV charging stations in accessible and safe locations.

Intent:

- To encourage behaviour change with residents modelling EV use as a viable option
- To have council lobby to higher-government powers to make EV charging stations more affordable, based on increased resident interest
- Reduce potential road incidents where people run out of battery and can't access a recharge station
- Accessible: High public-use areas i.e. shopping centres, sports clubs, kerbside etc

Why this is important:

1. Will reduce emissions from internal combustion vehicles, which also has a community health benefit

2. To advocate for increased affordability and accessibility of EV stations to increase EV uptake.

3. To have multiple environmentally conscious transport options.

Title:

Discourage use of carbon offsets in order to maximise local emission reduction

Intent:

1. Council to lead by example by reducing its use of carbon credits
2. Incentivise direct reduction of emissions
3. Aim for zero local emissions

Why this is important:

1. Health of the planet starts locally- offsets can be an unreliable approach.

2. Actual local actions sets a visible example to the community as a whole

3. Improving local health outcomes by lowering pollution.

Title:

Collaborate with other metropolitan councils to advocate/pressure state government to review public transport fares.

Intent:

Increase public transport usage, decrease traffic and reduce carbon emissions.

Why this is important:

1. Fewer cars on the road will reduce carbon emissions.

2. Reduced fares may make public transport more cost effective than driving.

3. Will make public transport more viable for low-income earners.