

Q11 Energy Efficiency and Renewables. Merri-bek has a goal of “Efficient and 100% renewably powered energy”. How can Merri-bek “walk the talk” on renewable energy and meet the community goals set in the Zero Carbon Merri-bek – Climate Emergency Action Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25 (PDF)?

Answered: 20 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Merri-bek already has a high number of households with solar panels (>9000), due to the Solar Saver program. The next challenge is to store this energy and use it during peak periods or outages. I am keen to know more about how Merribek council will work with the Victorian government's household battery initiative to increase the use of renewable energy and reduce reliance on the grid and fossil fuels.	10/1/2024 11:15 PM
2	Council should continue to provide support to low-income residents to install solar and increase energy efficiency and thermal retention in their homes. This cuts emissions and power bills for people on low-incomes. Merri-bek must also stay on top of developing technology, for example in the heavy-vehicle space, so that we can fully transition our fleet to be fully renewably-powered.	9/30/2024 4:40 PM
3	I would support continuing the existing work of Council, with an increased budget allocation to implement the transition to renewable energy. One priority will be to get all of Council's aquatic and leisure centres off gas and onto renewable energy. Greens on Council successfully ensured that the Fawkner Leisure Centre would be gas-free in its recent upgrade, and it will be important to address Council's other aquatic and leisure centres in the next Council term.	9/30/2024 10:59 AM
4	Besides the extra support for cycling, we could also help kickstart the infrastructure around converting existing vehicles to methanol, ammonia or biodiesel. This would involve engine conversion, as well as refuelling facilities. Electric cars have significant embodied emissions and I believe that electric cars are not here to save the planet, they're here to save the car industry. One of the suggestions in the plan is to have a clean tech incubator hub – I would definitely support the creation of coworking spaces in Merri-bek with purified air. It would allow residents a calm space to do their best work, doubling down on the creative and innovative spirit of our community. We are missing out on untapped potential to get our community more involved in the transition to a clean and renewable society.	9/29/2024 8:06 PM
5	1- Getting council facilities off gas and onto renewable energy. 2- Work with state government to submit planning scheme amendments to improve environmentally sustainable design standards for new buildings. 3- Provide targeted support to low-income households through environmental/thermal upgrades. 4- Continue to buy 100% of council's energy from renewable sources. 5- Use initiatives like the community battery installation to help provide financial support/incentives for residents to move to renewable energy.	9/28/2024 4:28 PM
6	This is a good policy which I support, and good steps seem to be being made. A small aspect of this is that in many cases EVs also contribute to less noise, so I'm particularly looking forward to electric garbage trucks and other heavier vehicles. Can we also incentivise electric cranes on large construction sites rather than diesel?	9/23/2024 2:14 PM
7	I will advocate for the use of solar on council buildings. I advocate for more EV infrastructure in the municipality. I will advocate to shift from gas appliances at end of life to electric. And support an increase to green canopy in the area.	9/22/2024 4:57 PM
8	This really would just be continuing the existing work of Council, but with an increased budget allocation. Increasing budget allocation is something that I've consistently fought for on Council as an elected Councillor. The biggest thing here is getting all of Council's aquatic and leisure centres off gas and onto renewable energy. Greens on Council successfully ensured that the Fawkner Leisure Centre would be gas-free in its recent upgrade, but now is the time to address Council's other aquatic and leisure centres.	9/21/2024 10:26 AM
9	Implementing as many of these initiatives as possible, particularly the community education initiatives. Labor in Merri-bek will continue to protect the local environment and taking strong action on climate change including establishing and supporting CERES	9/20/2024 4:30 PM

Environment Park. I and Labor will support Merri-bek becoming one of the first council's to be carbon neutral. Creeks and Waterways • Labor will protect our local environment and support our creek corridors and ecosystems, investing in water catchment systems to prevent litter from entering our river systems. Small and affordable changes that can have big impacts, effective drain catchers and time and salary support for rubbish collectors to clean up bin spills during collections. • Merri-bek's waterways are a scarce and wonderful resource and their improvement has been instrumental in bringing back native flora and fauna to the area. Labor in Merri-bek will protect our creeks and waterways and create more open space along our creeks and wetlands for native wildlife to return to the creeks. • Labor in Merri-bek will support the consolidation of open space corridors and advocate for all state-owned land along the creek corridors to be gifted to council to be permanently rezoned for open space. • Labor in Merri-bek will complete the Edgars Creek Conservation and development plan and continue to revitalise the Moonee Ponds Creek. • Labor in Merri-bek will continue to work with the Creeks Friends groups, believing that the most effective way of improving the creeks is to involve residents. Merri-bek is known for its pedestrian and cycle-friendly streetscapes • I support services access close to home, in '20-minute neighbourhoods' designed to suit people (rather than cars) • Renewable-powered buses, trams and trains provide a quick, reliable and affordable way to travel • Use of electric 'car/ride share' services complement active travel and public transport options, helping to reduce private vehicle ownership Recognizing though, with all these positive initiatives, ideally reducing car use/ parking needs, and increase on green spaces that people will still need (aged, those with differently abled needs, carers, where it is essential for employment, social connections) and want to own cars but increasingly these will be EV's and thus looking at innovations in charging vehicles for those with 'on street' parking. Along with Labor, I support the Brunswick Design District to evolve as Merri-bek's first 'zero carbon and circular economy' precinct. • Progress next steps of the AEF 'Moreland Power' pilot that is testing the feasibility of using community-owned renewable energy to deliver benefits to investors and households struggling to pay their energy bills. Other concepts requiring further investigation include: • Microgrids and community energy storage – potential pilot sites include CERES and Halpin Street in Brunswick West • Solar + Battery integration and targeted Energy Demand Management (especially in areas with identified grid constraint) • 'Passive House' certification 'Carbon Neutral' certification Purchase renewable energies .. Most of the ideas in this Zero Carbon report I would support

10	The energy market is changing rapidly. Solutions from even 5 years ago may not be relevant now. We are in a situation where renewables are being "thrown away" from the grid in times of excess supply. New strategies are needed.	9/19/2024 10:11 PM
11	I am committed to following the strategy of the Merri-bek climate emergency action plan, and if possible accelerating aspects that are feasible. I would also be keen to see the new Brunswick community battery expanded to help reduce strain on the local grid and expand solar power usage.	9/19/2024 8:13 PM
12	absolutely	9/19/2024 6:15 PM
13	Energy efficiency and renewable technology research is an ever-evolving and dynamic field. Merri-bek Council must continuously adopt the latest technologies and efficiencies to remain at the forefront of energy efficiency and renewable advancements. The council must also ensure it educates residents and brings them along the energy efficiency and renewables journey.	9/18/2024 8:56 PM
14	Community members and the council can make efficient use of renewable energy in their buildings. They can support the community by providing funding for infrastructure and leadership. The council can take the lead by serving as a role model. Community outreach, along with educational programs, can be organised by the council. Merri-bek Council is one of the most diverse councils, which is why it's important to inform communities in their own languages.	9/18/2024 2:56 PM
15	I believe Merri-bek's commitment to energy efficiency and renewable energy is essential in leading by example. To support these goals, I encourage continued focus on expanding the use of renewable energy in council operations, promoting energy-efficient practices, and supporting community programs that make renewables more accessible. I also support exploring opportunities to enhance existing initiatives, ensuring Merri-bek stays on track with its climate action goals while engaging and educating residents about the benefits of renewable energy.	9/17/2024 11:47 PM
16	More community solar projects and batteries; the council can support sports clubs, and community organisations with solar panels, batteries, removal of gas and eventually make this also available to households and businesses via grants.	9/17/2024 10:05 AM
17	Council has all sorts of policies about 100% renewable energy but it still heats its pools at Oak Park, Coburg and Brunswick with gas. The use of gas to heat the swimming pools is	9/16/2024 2:37 PM

the Merri-bek council's biggest source of carbon emissions.

18	I've been involved in the campaign to remove gas as an energy source for public pool heating in Merri-bek, along with Sue Bolton. This is the 'low hanging fruit' of Merri-bek's energy transition. Ensuring that all council facilities are carbon neutral is the next step. Finally, low-income households must be supported to bring about their own transition towards sustainable energy and away from profit-gouging utility providers.	9/15/2024 12:39 PM
19	I believe the community in Merri-bek would be committed to the significant structural changes needed to achieve zero carbon, but they need to be aware, engaged and supported in this and I would seek to assist that wherever possible. These changes really demand a community campaign that can impact wider thinking and be used as leverage to insist on governmental and business changes as well.	9/15/2024 9:38 AM
20	Merri-Bek can always do more to help residents to access pathways to getting off gas or transitioning to clean energy. I think it would be valuable to encourage more sharing of local stories of how people are becoming more efficient in our local communities. Maybe we need to hold some fora like we have done in the past to inspire and educate community members about opportunities to transition. I think there needs to be more carrot and less stick in the conversation. We need to understand what the barriers are rather than expecting people to just DO MORE and shaming people who haven't or haven't been able to take it on for whatever reason. We need to make it more fun to try like what happened with the Green Mile project or war on waste.	9/14/2024 5:15 PM