

# Council Policy

## Climate Change



Legislation/local law requirements	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i>
Relevant Delegation	N/A
Related policy procedures and documents	Climate Change Plan 2021-2026 Energy Plan 2023-2026 Environment Strategy 2024-2034

## Introduction

The City of Kwinana recognises that climate change presents significant environmental, social, and economic challenges. As a forward-thinking local government, the City is committed to proactive measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance sustainability, and build resilience against climate-related risks.

## Purpose

To ensure that the City of Kwinana:

- Acknowledges climate change will impact Kwinana and its broader implications in a local, regional and international context,
- Is committed to greenhouse emissions reduction through appropriate mitigation strategies,
- Evaluates the climate-related implications of operational decisions and policy positions,
- Considers and addresses risks associated with climate change on its operations, and
- Builds climate resilience into its operations and supports community climate resilience.

## Objective

To establish a clear framework for the City of Kwinana's response to climate change. This includes integrating climate considerations into governance, operations, and planning processes to minimise risks, reduce emissions, and enhance resilience. The policy aims to ensure that the City takes a leadership role in climate action, supporting both its operations and the broader community in adapting to a changing climate.

## Scope

This policy defines the City of Kwinana's approach towards climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience building.

## Policy Provisions

### Definitions

**Climate change adaptation** – Taking action to adapt to the local impacts of climate change.

**Climate change** – Gradual changes in the average weather patterns that define climates worldwide. It is scientifically accepted that the climate change that has been experienced and is continuing to occur, is predominantly due to human-caused greenhouse gas emissions. Local impacts for Kwinana include:

- Increased average temperature and number of extreme heat events.
- Increased number of dangerous fire weather days and a longer fire season.
- Reductions in annual rainfall and more intense short-duration heavy rainfall events.
- Sea level rise.

**Climate change mitigation** – Reducing the emission of greenhouse gases.

**Climate resilience** – Building the capacity and capability to prepare for, moderate and respond to the local impacts of climate change.

**Greenhouse gas** – A gas that contributes toward climate change through the absorption of infrared radiation from the sun.

**Greenhouse gas emissions** – Any greenhouse gas that is emitted from the Earth's surface. This term is used predominantly to refer to human-caused emissions.

### Policy

#### City of Kwinana acknowledges:

- The science is clear, climate change is occurring and greenhouse gas emissions from human activities are the predominant cause;
- Climate change threatens human societies and the earth's ecosystems worldwide. The impacts of human-induced climate change are already being experienced and these impacts will continue to accelerate as a result of past, present and future emissions;
- Urgent action is required to reduce emissions, and to adapt to the now unavoidable impacts of climate change. Delayed action on climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience building will increase costs and potential liabilities to Local Government in a range of areas, in particular planning, infrastructure, risk and emergency management;
- A failure to adequately address the causes and implications of climate change places an unacceptable burden on future generations; and
- Climate change disproportionately affects disadvantaged and marginalised groups, making equity an essential consideration in our approach.

**City of Kwinana is committed to:**

- Meeting international obligations through Australia’s participation in protocols and agreements established under the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (**‘UNFCCC’**), including but not limited to the Paris Agreement and successive international treaties.
- Addressing climate change locally through a variety of mitigation and adaptation focused strategies and actions.
- Reducing operational greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy use with the following targets (from the baseline year 2020/2021):
  - 80% reduction in corporate emissions by 2030
  - Net zero corporate emissions by 2035.
- Working to reduce emissions associated with the City’s value chain and other sources.
- Supporting the reduction of emissions in the community with a net zero community emissions target of 2050.
- Supporting our local human communities and natural ecosystems to have the resources and other assistance necessary to enable them to adapt to and build resilience against the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

**City of Kwinana is calling for:**

- Strong climate action, leadership and coordination at all levels of government.
- Effective and adequately funded Commonwealth and State Government climate change policies and programs. These must include:
  - Greenhouse mitigation activities and support toward the global journey toward achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
  - Climate change adaptation and resilience for both human communities and natural ecosystems.
  - Proactive emergency management in addition to the focus on emergency response.
  - Disaster relief and recovery that includes measures to improve future resilience.

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Responsible Team	Environment and Health Service	
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