

Submission to the Climate Change Response Plan

Zero Emissions Noosa Incorporated



Incorporation No: IA57064

ABN: 74862487515

ACNC Registered Charity

Registered Business Name: Zero Emissions Noosa

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1 Zero Emissions Noosa Inc

We welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the Climate Change Response Plan and have provided feedback and recommendations for all major themes in the report. Please contact our President, Anne Kennedy (zeroemissionsnoosa@gmail.com) or Lead Author, Annika Reynolds (annika.reynolds@anu.edu.au) if further information is required.

Zero Emissions Noosa Inc (ZEN) is an incorporated, not-for-profit community group of passionate volunteers with the goal of net zero greenhouse gas emissions for the Noosa Shire by 2026. We support our community by assisting them to ask the right questions of Council and government stakeholders, and when seeking energy solutions for their home or business.

We are committed to taking local action on climate change, principally through reducing our reliance upon electricity generated fossil fuels. We also recognise that 30% of Noosa's primary emissions come from transport and are advocates for transitioning transport to low carbon vehicles. We also aim to raise awareness of actions local members of the Noosa community can take to reduce their carbon footprint, including switching to green energy sources, electric vehicles and decarbonising local businesses. ZEN has two dedicated advocacy groups, the ZEN Electricity Group and the ZEN Transport Action Group. Some of our major initiatives under these groups include the yearly EV Export, our Business Electricity Focus for 2020 and the Noosa Business Solar Case Studies, and our Race to Zero Program in Noosa Schools.

We work in close partnership with the Noosa Council and Tourism Noosa, acting as a grassroots community voice on climate advocacy in Noosa. Noosa Shire has long been a leader in demonstrating the strong link that have occurred between its outstanding environmental values and economic performance – and we continue to support and encourage the Shire to continue its leadership in this space.

To learn more about ZEN, you can visit our website: <https://www.zeroemissionsnoosa.com.au/>

2 Executive Summary

We strongly commend Noosa Council for declaring a Climate Emergency and responding to the grave risks of climate change by developing this draft plan to transition the Noosa Shire community to reach zero emissions by 2026 and to increase our climate resilience.

ZEN supports the eight chosen themes, they cover the range of actions we need to take to address climate change and adapt to a warmer world. The Climate Change Response Plan should operate as an umbrella strategy, under which all other plans sit, including the Transport Plan, Cycling and Walking Strategy, Asset Management Plans and other relevant plans. This ensures that all future policies and developments in Noosa will occur with climate action and adapting to climate change in mind. A summary of our analysis is below:

A Better Future

We support the overall aim of the Climate Change Response Plan to create a better future for all of Noosa and our communities. In particular, as a community grass-roots group, we support the aims to support vulnerable populations and ensure all businesses and industries in Noosa have the opportunity to transition to low emissions and reap the rewards of climate action. As the Noosa Council finalises the Climate Change Response Plan, it is critical that the overall aim of bettering Noosa for our current and future residents remains at the forefront of Council action. We also strongly encourage the Council to specifically involve and consider the voice and needs of the Kabi Kabi Indigenous peoples.

Increasing the Ambition of the Eight Themes

The Noosa Council must go beyond merely counting initiatives or promoting awareness to ensuring real, meaningful change under the eight themes. In particular, Noosa Council needs to lead the way with a genuine commitment to climate action throughout the Council's culture and employee performance. Under 'Strong Leadership and Governance' we make a series of recommendations for the Council to imbed climate action in staff KPIs, budgets and to increase resources for staff to effectively act on Noosa's climate action mandate.

Review Periods

We very Strongly recommend the Plan be reviewed annually, to ensure the Plan remains flexible and adjusted to community conditions.

We are concerned that aspects of this plan are not strong enough for Noosa to achieve its goal of net zero by 2026. For the Noosa Shire to remain a leader on climate action, we recommend it amend the Climate Change Response Plan in the following ways:

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Provide a framework for Kabi Kabi people to have a substantive input into the Climate Change Response Plan, notably for land management and ecosystem resilience.

Recommendation 2

Outline the impacts of increased temperatures and climate change on species and ecosystem viability on Page 17 of the Climate Change Response Plan.

Recommendation 3

Reframe the metrics proposed under Strong Leadership and Governance, to focus on whether meaningful change has been driven by Noosa Council.

Recommendation 4

Amend the “numbers” based metrics under Strong Leadership and Governance to metrics that track whether Noosa Council has embedded climate change considerations in its activities and policies; and been an effective advocate for climate action in other spheres.

Recommendation 5

Amend Strategic Priority 2.1 to specifically include strata residents in the inclusive transition goal.

Recommendation 6

Include a Strategic Priority under Energy Efficiency focused on promoting renewable energy opportunities and solutions for landlords and tenants.

Recommendation 7

Include a Strategic Priority under Energy Efficiency to address the network hosting capacity limitations for Solar PV in some areas of Noosa.

Recommendation 8

Increase the renewable energy target from 100% to over 100% to provide offsets for transport emissions that are unlikely to fully decarbonise by 2026.

Recommendation 9

Amend Strategic Priority 3.2 under Clean Low Emissions Industries to clarify what business support tools are.

Recommendation 10

Create an additional strategic priority under Clean Low Emissions Industries, where the Council must advocate legislative change for Environmental Upgrade Agreements.

Recommendation 11

- *Add a further additional priority so that Noosa Council embeds the use of clean low emissions industries’ products and services in Council Procurement Policy and use suppliers located in the Noosa Shire if available.*

Recommendation 12

The EcoCheck metric for the Clean Low Emissions Industries theme be amended to reflect a more stringent green certification scheme.

Recommendation 13

The target of EV stations at all major Council facilities by 2026 should be amended to EV stations being installed at all major destinations in Noosa by 2026.

Recommendation 14

Develop a target for Sustainable Transport to gradually reduce diesel car park spaces and increase EV-only spaces, this could be implemented through a parking strategy.

Recommendation 15

The metrics for Sustainable Transport should be amended to include: the number of charging stations for E-bikes as well as EVs, and kilometres of pathway with canopy cover to encourage implementation and integration of Council's Walking and Cycling Strategy.

Recommendation 16

Amend the strategic priorities for Healthy and Resilient Natural Systems to specifically address water and carbon drawdown by private residences.

Recommendation 17

Include a metric under Healthy and Resilient Natural Systems to specifically track the climate resilience of ecosystems and species in Noosa.

Recommendation 18

Include a strategic priority under Sustainable Agriculture that promotes Indigenous land management.

Recommendation 19

Establish more ambitious targets and metrics under Sustainable Agriculture to ensure meaningful emissions reductions in this sector and measurable increases in climate resilience.

Recommendation 20

Amend the metric under Resilient and Adaptive Communities to include an objective standard for the percentage of respondents that are prepared for climate change risks.

Recommendation 21

Amend the metric for Green Building ratings under Resilient and Adaptive Communities to aim for 6 stars instead of 5 stars.

Recommendation 22

Include an additional metric under Resilient and Adaptive Communities for the percentage of Asset Management Plans that respond to climate change impacts.

Recommendation 23

Bring forward the targets to 2025 or earlier to drive community behaviour change.

Recommendation 24

Amend Strategic Priority 8.3 to specifically address household and business waste, not just community waste; and include a strategic priority to address future waste challenges including battery recycling.

Recommendation 25

Bring forward the timeline for the Zero Waste target of all green waste and food waste being diverted from landfill to 2026 at the latest.

Recommendation 26

Amend the review period for the Plan to an annual review instead of every two years.

3 A Better Future

As a Noosa community group, we commend the Noosa Shire Council for declaring a climate emergency and recognising the serious impacts climate change will have on the Noosa region. We also support creation of a Climate Change Response Plan by the Noosa Council and leadership this demonstrates.

We support the Council's aim of building a better future for the Noosa region. In particular, we support the Plan's aim to transition both Noosa Council and the community to net zero emissions, underpinned by 100% renewable energy and a clean transportation sector. We also commend the Council's recognition of the need to bolster resilience within Noosa to the impacts of climate change, including ecosystem health and local food production. It is critical to also recognise that climate action offers opportunities to be at the forefront of innovative economic development.

However, we think Noosa Council's vision for a better future could be strengthened if the Council specifically outlines in its 'better future' section, the following:

- Outlining that net zero emissions are to be achieved **by 2026**, as is affirmed in other sections of the report. It is critical the entire report reflects the fast pace of change needed and more specific and measurable metrics to reach the goal by 2026.
- Stating that the Noosa Council aims to be a regional and State leader for climate action, including a mandate to advocate for net zero emissions policies at a State and Federal level. The Noosa Council represents the people of Noosa and should use our voices to push for legal change where appropriate.
- Ensuring that the Climate Change Response Plan be adopted as the overarching plan with other plans linked to its Themes and Recommendations.
- Addressing the needs and voice of First Nations Kabi Kabi people. ZEN does not speak for the Kabi Kabi people but supports an inclusive vision of climate justice that enables Indigenous peoples' stewardship over their lands and to provide expertise for ecosystem resilience; and

Finally, we support the Council's assessment of Noosa's current climate and how climate change is likely to impact our local area in the future. We suggest the Council include a discussion on how increased temperatures will affect species and ecosystem survival at **Page 17**. It is appropriate to give space to the impacts of climate change, so that all stakeholders understand the critical importance of climate action.

Recommendation 1

Provide a framework for Kabi Kabi people to have a substantive input into the Climate Change Response Plan, notably for land management and ecosystem resilience.

Recommendation 2

Outline the impacts of increased temperatures and climate change on species and ecosystem viability on Page 17 of the Climate Change Response Plan.

4 Strong Leadership and Governance

We strongly support the first theme of the Noosa Council Climate Change Response Plan. ZEN and its members believe it is critical that the Council is a leading example both locally and at higher levels of government a policy advocacy across Australia. In particular, we emphasise that the Council’s aim to embed the consideration of climate change across Council policy, decisions and operations is absolutely fundamental, ensuring that the Climate Change Response Plan be adopted as the overarching plan with other plans linked to its Themes and Recommendations The Council, following on from this Plan, must develop organizational mechanisms to achieve these, including feedback and accountability mechanisms. We provide further analysis and details on this recommendation at **Appendix A**.

We support all strategic priorities under this theme, particularly **Strategic Priority 1.3**, regarding moving Council from business-as-usual operations. We recommend that the Council implement this at an organization level, including linkages to climate change and the Council’s leadership responsibilities in the Corporate Plan and on an operational level, such as the Budget, Operational Plan and staff key performance indicators (KPIs). Whilst we support the inclusion of metrics, we are concerned that the metrics for Strong Leadership and Governance are not outcomes-focused and will not be sufficient to demonstrate whether the strategic priorities have been met. In particular:

- Merely assessing the numbers of activities or partnerships does not link to whether actual climate action has happened;
- The metrics should be reframed to assess whether meaningful change has occurred. For internal Noosa Council matters, a metric that assesses meaningful change could focus on budget submissions from staff and the inclusion of climate action in the Operational Plan. For climate leadership, the metric should focus on whether Noosa Council is able to effectively advocate for legislative change or corporate policy change; and
- The metric for number of staff training and capacity building activities should be amended to focus on KPIs for climate action leadership and whether sufficient resources are allocated to staff to achieve this.

To underpin more meaningful metrics, we encourage Noosa Council to create a web-based Dashboard to track live progress against targets. An example of this is the [Hawaii Aloha Challenge Dashboard](#). We also recommend Noosa Council look to establish [a Climate Oversight Group](#), as has been done by other Shire Councils, to ensure accountability.

Overall, we recommend Noosa Council reframe the metrics for this theme to be outcomes-based and whether meaningful change has been driven by Noosa Council.

Recommendation 3

Reframe the metrics proposed under Strong Leadership and Governance, to focus on whether meaningful change has been driven by Noosa Council.

Recommendation 4

Amend the “numbers” based metrics under Strong Leadership and Governance to metrics that track whether Noosa Council has embedded climate change considerations in its activities and policies; and been an effective advocate for climate action in other spheres.

5 Energy efficiency and Renewable Energy

The second theme of the Climate Change Response plan is also supported by ZEN. We have undertaken significant work in the energy efficiency and renewable energy space to propel the Noosa region to net zero emissions and believe the energy transition is key to achieving the broader goals of the Climate Change Response Plan.

Our feedback on this theme includes some minor suggestions:

- On **Page 28**, the estimation that \$30 million per year leaves the shire to pay for electricity somewhere else, should be amended to approximately \$77 million based on our research; and
- The Council should also indicate in its overview an intention to assess emerging barriers and technological opportunities to achieve 100% renewable energy in Noosa. In particular, Noosa is fast approaching the limit of network hosting capacity for additional Solar PV in areas of the Shire. A strategic priority needs to be developed to tackle this issue.

We support the strategic priorities outlined for this theme. However, we recommend **Strategic Priority 2.1** be amended to include strata residents, who are the slowest renewable energy uptake group in Noosa. We also recommend that the Noosa Council implement a separate strategic priority to engage landlords and tenants on renewable energy uptake, taking into account social equity and the fact that the median rent in Noosa is \$60-\$150 per fortnight higher than the State average. This particular sector is slow on renewable energy uptake and the conflicting needs of tenants and landlords need to be managed proactively.

We support the desired target of 100% renewable energy for Noosa Council and the region by 2026. However, we recommend the renewable target be increased as a means of offsetting transport emissions that are likely to still exist in Noosa in 2026, given the slow uptake of electric vehicles. This will enable Noosa to meet its overall net zero target.

Recommendation 5

Amend Strategic Priority 2.1 to specifically include strata residents in the inclusive transition goal.

Recommendation 6

Include a Strategic Priority under Energy Efficiency focused on promoting renewable energy opportunities and solutions for landlords and tenants.

Recommendation 7

Include a Strategic Priority under Energy Efficiency to address the network hosting capacity limitations for Solar PV in some areas of Noosa.

Recommendation 8

Increase the renewable energy target from 100% to over 100% to provide offsets for transport emissions that are unlikely to fully decarbonise by 2026.

6 Clean Low Emissions Industries

As a first step for developing an effective clean low emissions industries strategy, we recommend that Noosa Council clarify what it means by ‘clean low emissions industries’. In the Climate Change Response Plan there appears to be some confusion between clean green industry and environmental industries. We recommend Noosa Council focus on supporting the decarbonization of ‘clean green industries’ as the bulk of Noosa’s emissions come from these sectors. Thus naming more specifically highlights this aim rather than using the term environmental industries.

We also encourage Noosa Council to be more ambitious and far-reaching under this theme and to engage more extensively with local businesses. In particular, Noosa Council has the opportunity to promote local businesses to be sustainable through choosing to switch to renewable energy not just energy efficiency choices. Additionally, Noosa Council should be aiming to exploring opportunities to decarbonize all industries not just the environmental industries sector as stated on **Page 30** of the Plan.

ZEN is also concerned that Noosa Council has indicated it will ‘continue’ to collaborate with local businesses to decarbonize. To date, we have seen little evidence of Council working with local businesses. We strongly encourage Noosa Council to ambitiously pursue this element of the Clean Low Emissions Industries theme and enact substantive changes that encourage decarbonization. For example, we recommend Noosa Council explore imposing conditions on the tourism levy to encourage accommodation, cafes, restaurants and other businesses in the tourism industry to transition to low emissions operations. We also recommend Noosa Council ensure the Economic and Tourism levy is reinvested directly back into the businesses that pay it to support decarbonisation initiatives.

In regards to the strategic priorities, we make the following major recommendations:

- **Strategic Priority 3.2**, needs to be clearer in its scope and focus. We are unsure of what ‘business support tools’ the Council is referencing; and
- Create an additional strategic priority for the Council to advocate for legislative change to facilitate Environmental Upgrade Agreements, which are pivotal to achieving the broader aims of the Clean Low Emissions Industries theme.
- Add a further additional priority so that Noosa Council embeds the use of clean low emissions industries’ products and services in Council Procurement Policy and uses suppliers located in the Noosa Shire if available.

We also recommend Noosa Council focus on an alternative metric other than the EcoCheck Certification. In our opinion, the EcoCheck system is insufficient to promote and ensure clean low emissions industries grow in Noosa.

Recommendation 9

Amend Strategic Priority 3.2 under Clean Low Emissions Industries to clarify what business support tools are.

Recommendation 10

Create an additional strategic priority under Clean Low Emissions Industries, where the Council must advocate legislative change for Environmental Upgrade Agreements.

Recommendation 11

Add a further additional priority so that Noosa Council embeds the use of clean low emissions industries' products and services in Council Procurement Policy and uses suppliers located in the Noosa Shire if available.

Recommendation 12

The EcoCheck metric for the Clean Low Emissions Industries theme be amended to reflect a more stringent green certification scheme.

7 Sustainable Transport

ZEN strongly supports the inclusion of sustainable transport in the Climate Change Response Plan. Transport emissions make up 33% of Noosa’s emissions, and based on Noosa-wide and National trajectories, it is likely Noosa transport will continue to contribute greenhouse gas emissions for another two decades. Therefore, government support and coordination will be critical to addressing transport emissions.

We support that the Plan is underpinned by the Noosa Shire Transport Strategy and the Noosa Cycling and Walking Strategy. However, we are concerned that the current Strategies have no real commitments or action plans and instead focus on investigations. Such investigations are important, but should not prevent meaningful change to drive emissions reductions.

We also recommend the focus of the Sustainable Transport theme shift to reducing reliance on car travel in Noosa. This could be done by reducing car parking spaces, gradually increasing EV-only car spaces and allocating funds for more sustainable travel options including more permanent use of parking nodes with accompanying “people mover” options to key destinations, in addition to improving pathway networks.

We do not support the Council’s decision to target electric vehicle stations at all major Council facilities. A more effective target would be to ensure charging stations are installed at key destinations in Noosa. We recommend the Council develop targets similar to the [Gold Coast Council’s electric vehicle charging plan](#), where 10 new stations are being installed at major destinations and within 75kms of each other to ensure reliability. Additionally, electric vehicle rollout would be encouraged if the Council also looked at developing car parks and reserved car spaces specifically for electric vehicles and E-scooters.

Finally, we recommend Noosa Council expand its metrics in two ways:

- The number of EV charging stations in Noosa should be expanded to include charging for E-bikes and other alternative low emissions transports that require charging; and
- A new metric should be established for kilometres of pathway with canopy cover, to increase the feasibility of using these pathways during hot weather and light rain.

Recommendation 13

The target of EV stations at all major Council facilities by 2024 should be amended to EV stations being installed at all major Noosa destinations by 2024 to encourage behaviour change.

Recommendation 14

Develop a target for Sustainable Transport to gradually reduce diesel car park spaces and increase EV-only spaces, in addition to permanent use of parking nodes and accompanying “people movers” to key destinations. this could be implemented through a parking strategy.

Recommendation 15

The metrics for Sustainable Transport should be amended to include: the number of charging stations for E-bikes as well as EVs, and kilometres of pathway with canopy cover.

8 Healthy and Resilient Natural Systems and Carbon Drawdown

We support this theme of the Climate Change Response Plan. We support the inclusion of climate mitigation and adaptation in Noosa's environment in the Plan, recognising that emissions reduction is only one part of climate action. We particularly support the Noosa Council's recognition of the importance of carbon sequestration by our natural environment and the focus on protecting Noosa's water environments.

We recommend Noosa Council seek to expand this theme by consulting Indigenous leaders in Noosa to ensure a Kabi Kabi voice informs Noosa Council's advocacy and actions on ecosystem resilience. We believe this aligns closely with the desired target of ensuring half of all Noosa Shire land is managed for its environmental values by 2030.

The strategic priorities reflect the high importance of Noosa's natural environment. We recommend the strategic priorities be amended, or a new one implemented, to specifically address the need to regulate use of water by domestic residence and carbon drawdown on protected estates.

We support the proposed metrics for assessing healthy and resilient natural systems and carbon drawdown. However, we believe they could be strengthened by:

- Including a metric specifically for increased ecosystem resilience in key ecosystems and for threatened species in the Noosa Region. Although increased tree cover is important, it is also critical to ensure that tree cover and increased vegetation is resilient to increased climate impacts. This could be measured by using the [climate change resilience framework proposed by the UNEP](#), which assesses ecosystem resilience through: naturalness, state of degradation, fragmentation and biodiversity; and Amend the number of Land for Wildlife Properties and Voluntary Conservation Agreements to a percentage increase, to ensure there is a larger portion of land being protected under these agreements.

Recommendation 16

Amend the strategic priorities for Healthy and Resilient Natural Systems to specifically address water and carbon drawdown by private residences.

Recommendation 17

Include a metric under Healthy and Resilient Natural Systems to specifically track the climate resilience of ecosystems and species in Noosa.

9 Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems

This theme under the Climate Change Response Plan is key to not only mitigating Noosa's climate impacts in the long-term, but also to build up resilient food systems and climate adapted agriculture. Agriculture and other industries under the Land Use, Land-Use Change Forestry sector are a key contributor to climate change and, unlike the energy transition, we are still developing technologies to address agricultural emissions.

We support the strategic priorities under this theme, especially **Strategic Priority 6.1** and **Strategic Priority 6.3** to support the shift to low emissions and sustainable practices in the agricultural and land use sectors. We would support the inclusion of Indigenous land management or input under a strategic priority in this section.

However, we are concerned that the desired target under this theme is insufficient to promote meaningful and long-term change in these sectors. The target is too narrow, focusing only on grazing land, and the aim of promoting best practice management for agriculture is also too weak.

Instead, we recommend Noosa Council develop targets and metrics based on promoting climate resilient and sustainable agriculture. This could be done by drawing on the framework of the [Committee on Sustainable Development](#). In particular we recommend Noosa Council develop more targeted metrics under the following goals:

- Supporting farmers and the land use sector to reduce emissions in a measurable and accountable manner;
- Assist farmers to implement sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices – measuring this through improved soil health, carbon storage, water quality, water efficiency and increased biodiversity; and

To support farmers to limit clearing, restore native vegetation and protect natural habitat corridors and riparian vegetation.

Recommendation 18

Include a strategic priority under Sustainable Agriculture that promotes Indigenous land management.

Recommendation 19

Establish more ambitious targets and metrics under Sustainable Agriculture to ensure meaningful emissions reductions in this sector and measurable increases in climate resilience.

10 Resilient and Adaptive Communities and Built Environments

The natural disasters of the last two years have demonstrated to the people of Noosa that climate change is already impacting us and our built environments. We strongly support the inclusion of resilient and adaptive communities in the Climate Change Response Plan and the Council's emphasis on the need to engage in climate adaptation alongside mitigation.

We strongly encourage Noosa Council to be more ambitious in its desired outcomes under this theme and recommend that the Council go beyond community awareness to directly targeting the incorporation of planning for climate change impacts in Asset Management Plans. This includes parks, sports grounds, stormwater infrastructure and underground infrastructure. Noosa's community assets are critical for community-wide resilience and to limit the cumulative damage or hazards that are generated from natural disasters. For example, poorly planned and managed stormwater infrastructure will increase the harms and hazards from flooding for all Noosa residents.

Noosa Shire could draw on the resilience targets by other Shire Councils to refine our strategic priorities, for example establishing [a strategic priority on reducing the annual average damage from natural disasters](#).

We also recommend Noosa Council amend the metrics under this theme in the following ways:

- Include in the metric for percentage of respondents that are prepared for the risk of climate change and natural hazards an objective measure for preparation, to ensure that residents are genuinely prepared and as safe as possible, rather than just tracking the subjective understanding of residents;
- The metric for the Green Building Council of Australia rating scheme should be for **6 stars** as has been outlined in previous Council documents on this issue; and
- An additional metric should be included for the percentage of Asset Management Plans that respond to climate change impacts, as we outline above.

Recommendation 20

Amend the metric under Resilient and Adaptive Communities to include an objective standard for the percentage of respondents that are prepared for climate change risks.

Recommendation 21

Amend the metric for Green Building ratings under Resilient and Adaptive Communities to aim for 6 stars instead of 5 stars.

Recommendation 22

Include an additional metric under Resilient and Adaptive Communities for the percentage of Asset Management Plans that respond to climate change impacts.

Recommendation 23

Bring forward the targets to 2025 or earlier to drive community behaviour change.

11 Zero Waste and Circular Economy

Finally, we support the holistic nature of the Climate Change Response Plan and the inclusion of a theme on zero waste and circular economy. ZEN supports action to create a circular economy, especially to better manage the decomposition of organic matter and to minimise the release of methane.

We also encourage the Noosa Council to build on the zero waste and circular economy theme to address future waste challenges, including the recycling of large-scale batteries which will become more common in Noosa as we shift to renewable energy. Currently, [only 2%](#) of Australia's annual lithium-ion battery waste is recycled and the waste from these batteries is growing. We encourage Noosa Council to raise awareness on these issues and to fund, where appropriate, initiatives and studies to reduce waste from batteries and other emerging technologies.

We also encourage Noosa Council to be more ambitious in its zero waste efforts and to go beyond promoting programs such as Plastic Free Noosa to working directly with households and businesses to reduce waste and increase recycling. Noosa Council should be inspired by other Shire Councils that have implemented [targets](#) such as:

- By 2030 cutting total waste from households and business by 20%, including plastic waste; and
- Implementing a recycling goal in tonnes of waste.

The strategic priorities under this theme are good starting point for creating a zero waste society in Noosa. We recommend Noosa Council increase the ambition of these strategic priorities, especially by amending **Strategic Priority 8.3** to go beyond minimising community waste to directly address household and business waste. We would also support an additional strategic priority that addressed future waste challenges. One key strategy to ensure household and business waste is addressed is to create a fourth bin for organic/food matter for households and a mandatory strategy for restaurants and cafes.

We also stress to Noosa Council that a timeline to 2030 for all green waste and food waste being diverted from landfill is a very relaxed timeline, and means that the methane emissions from organic decomposition will still be adding to Noosa's emissions when we are aiming for net zero emissions by 2026. We recommend the Noosa Council alter the timeline for the zero waste target to 2026 at the latest

Recommendation 24

Amend Strategic Priority 8.3 to specifically address household and business waste, not just community waste; and include a strategic priority to address future waste challenges including battery recycling.

Recommendation 25

Bring forward the timeline for the Zero Waste target of all green waste and food waste being diverted from landfill progressively to reach target by 2026.

12 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

We strongly recommend an annual review of this plan to ensure monitoring and review of implementation, is undertaken to ensure effective changes are occurring on track to reach the goal of zero emissions by 2026.

Recommendation 26

Amend the review period for the Plan to an annual review instead of every two years.

Appendix A: Statutory Requirements under the *Queensland Local Government Act and Regulations*

The Local Government Act sets out important criteria regarding the relationship between the Corporate Plan, the annual Operational Plan and the Budget. Section 104(5) of the Act states (emphasis has been added where relevant):

- (5) The system of financial management established by a local government must include—
 - (a) the following financial planning documents prepared for the local government—
 - (i) a corporate plan that incorporates community engagement;**
 - (ii) a long-term asset management plan;
 - (iii) a long-term financial forecast;
 - (iv) an annual budget including revenue statement;
 - (v) an annual operational plan;** and
 - (b) the following financial accountability documents prepared for the local government—
 - (iv) a report on the results of an annual review of the implementation of the annual operational plan;**

In addition, Section 168(8) of the Local Government Regulation states:

- (8) The budget must be consistent with the following documents of the local government—**
 - (a) its 5-year corporate plan;**
 - (b) its annual operational plan.**

We recommend that the Council development a clear pathway leading from the 5-year corporation plan, through to each annual Operation Plan, via delivery of the actions identified in Council’s adopted Strategies. The Operational Plan should contain actions which are specific and measurable, as it is the means by which Mayor and Councillors assesses performance of staff in delivering the actions, and by which the community has accountability and transparency for the expectations they hold given the community consultation which underpinned the adopted Strategies. This then enables meaningful oversight of delivery of the Operational Plan at both quarterly and annual reviews by Councillors on behalf of their community. It also enables budgetary consistency as required by the Local Government Regulation.

Previous Operational Plans of Noosa Council have lacked in detail. Failing to go beyond broad goals, rather to specific action deliverables, particularly as regards adopted Strategies. As a result, the community is unable to assess whether and how Council is delivering against the adopted strategies. The 2021-2022 Operational Plan must remedy this shortcoming, and contain specific actions linked to adopted Strategies, with measurable KPI’s. Only then can the

council be seen to be genuinely practising transparency and accountability. Those strategies include:

- a) The 2015 Social Strategy;
- b) The 2015 Local Economic Plan;
- c) The 2018 Sport and Active Recreation Plan;
- d) Noosa Council Transport Strategy 2017-2027 (although further specific actions and targets would increase the impact of this Strategy);
- e) Noosa Environment Strategy 2019;
- f) Noosa Climate Change Response Plan 2021 (in consultation); and
- g) Active Cycling and Walking Strategy (in consultation).

In this Submission, we propose that the Climate Change Response Plan be adopted as the overarching plan with other plans linked to its Themes and Recommendations.