

Council Policy

Council policy title:	Undergrounding of Powerlines Policy 2022
Council policy sponsor:	Director Environment, Recreation and Infrastructure
Adopted by:	Bayside City Council
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([Council Policy](#) is a high level public statement formally resolved by Council, which clearly states Council's requirements, intent or position with regard to a particular matter or issue. It is not intended to be procedural in nature.)

1. Policy intent

The purpose of this policy is to provide a strategic framework relating to the prioritisation of undergrounding powerlines in association with Council projects relating to public open space and the general street network. This policy also aims to provide guidance relating to the funding models and associated criteria relating to the undergrounding of powerlines.

2. Policy purpose

The objectives of this policy are to:

- 2.1 Establish a consistent approach for the prioritisation of undergrounding of powerlines to be considered during design of all Council projects in line with Section 8.1.
- 2.2 Support Council's commitments the Bayside 2050 Community Vision and ensure alignment with Council Plan 2021 – 2025 - Goal 3 – Our Place which is to ensure our open space and foreshore, our facilities and the built environment are highly valued, shared and enhanced to ensure their sustainability, use, liveability, character, and amenity for current and future generations.
- 2.3 Ensure project costs are responsibly managed to ensure adherence to Council plan strategy 4.3.1. Ensure integrated planning and sound financial management while allocating resources to meet community needs.

3. Glossary - Definitions and Abbreviations

[Definitions of special terms and abbreviations within the policy document.]

Term	Meaning
Buildings	Council buildings include administrative offices, town halls, community buildings, libraries, leisure and aquatic centres, depots, residential buildings, sportsground pavilions, child-care, aged care and cultural centres.
Infrastructure	Council owned and/or managed infrastructure including roads, streetscapes, car parks, drainage and open space assets.
Council	means Bayside City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 1989.
Councillors	means the individuals holding the office of a member of Bayside City Council.
Council officer	means the Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.
Four Year Capital Works Forward Plan	Outlines the infrastructure programs and projects planned for delivery over the next four years by Council.

4. SCOPE

- 4.1 This Policy applies to all projects delivered by Council and all projects where Council provide consultation as an affected party relating to all civil infrastructure replacement and renewal projects for significant street upgrades, major car park renewal and major public open space upgrades.
- 4.2 This Policy applies to all project stages including planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and disposal in line with item 4.1.
- 4.3 This Policy applies to all instances brought to Council's attention seeking undergrounding of powerlines where appropriate.

5. POLICY

- 5.1 Council will support the organisation to develop clear and aligned processes to ensure the consideration of undergrounding of powerlines is built into best practice for capital works project scoping and masterplan development.
- 5.2 Maintenance budgets will be reviewed to ensure where underground power assets have been installed, allocations need to be upgraded to reflect true cost to cover ongoing maintenance.
- 5.3 Where scoping has determined it is not feasible for Council to continue with the undergrounding of powerlines within a certain project, the determined costs of the addition of undergrounding powerlines is to be made available to enable a clearer understanding if future funding options become available.

6. Monitoring and reporting

- 6.1 Council will ensure accountability by reporting annually on the prioritisation of undergrounding of powerlines considered in line with this policy for projects managed by Council.

- 6.2 Council will include in applicable capital works projects in line with this policy the findings realised as part of investigations into undergrounding of powerlines, and the reasons for not progressing with these works.
- 6.3 This Policy will be reviewed every four years and/or prior to each four-year capital plan, to ensure it remains effective.

7. Roles and responsibilities

- 7.1 Project Sponsors and Executive Sponsors have accountability to give effect to this policy by evaluating the undergrounding of powerlines in relevant capital works projects and ensuring the costs for both capital operation and ongoing maintenance are considered through the project management framework.
- 7.2 The Executive Project Board and divisional project control groups have responsibility to support the prioritisation of undergrounding of powerlines into the project management framework and ensure projects meet agreed objectives and requirements unless delegation requires Council approval.
- 7.3 The Manager City Assets and Presentation is responsible for the deployment of the policy in the delivery of Council's infrastructure assets, and for the integration of the intent of this policy into Asset Service Level Standards.

8. Funding options

- 8.1 Full cost to be borne by Council through Capital Works funded projects. Project framework to include full scope of undergrounding of powerlines for all civil infrastructure replacement and renewal projects for significant street upgrades, major car park renewal and major public open space upgrades.
- 8.2 Government grants – Currently in the state of Victoria no funding scheme is available to cover the costs associated with undergrounding of powerlines. However, as time progresses the position of Government could evolve, similar to that in South Australia who have placed greater emphasis on undergrounding power by providing a contribution for these works through the Power Line Environment Committee. This policy sets out to prioritise the increased awareness of such schemes as they become available, and for Council to avail themselves to seeking such funding and abide to the guidelines set out for maximum probability of being successful for such schemes.
- 8.3 Special Rate and Special Charge Scheme (SRSC) – If Council receive particular interest in the undergrounding of powerlines from a particular location or residents' group, the option of initiating a SRSC should be made available to the interested parties.
- 8.4 Full cost to be covered by community – In circumstances where residents from a specific location or residents group approach Council seeking to underground powerlines, stating the full cost to be covered by the interested residents, Council will facilitate the interaction between the service provider and the residents. Procedure document to accompany this process.

9. ASSOCIATED COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

This Policy is an integral part of Council's Strategic Planning Framework and aligns with the following documents:

Legislation	Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 2019 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
Policies	Special Rate and Special Charge Procurement Policy 2021 - 2025 Footpath Treatments Within Road Reserve Policy 2019 Street and Park Tree Management Policy 2020 Works on Assets Within the Road Reserve Policy 2018 Wildlife Friendly Lighting Policy 2021
Strategies/Plans	Urban Forest Strategy 2022 - 2040 Electric Line Clearance Management Plan 2022 - 2023 Bayside Road Management Plan Revenue and Rating Plan 2021 - 2025
Procedures/ Processes	Budget Guidelines 2022 - 2023
Other	

Please note: This policy is current as at the date of approval. Refer to Council's website (www.bayside.vic.gov.au) to ensure this is the latest version.