



## RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

### METROPOLITAN WASTE AND RESOURCE RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2016



# DEVELOPING THE PLAN

The *Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plan 2016* (Metropolitan Implementation Plan) details the strategy to manage Melbourne’s waste over at least the next 10 years. This plan looks out to a 30 year horizon to align with other metropolitan planning strategies and plans. It aims to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill, increase the amount of organic waste recovered, deliver community, environmental and economic benefits and plan for Melbourne’s growing population.

MWRRG engaged community, industry, local government and state government in developing the Metropolitan Implementation Plan through four main phases of engagement:

1. Gathering information and data including the Market Assessment process
2. Pre-draft engagement
3. Public consultation
4. Portfolio consultation and integration.

This document summarises the key themes from the public consultation on the draft plan and how it was used to inform the final Metropolitan Implementation Plan.

The ideas, feedback and comments that MWRRG received from all the stakeholder consultations were invaluable and have helped to make this plan robust, innovative and ambitious. Taking on board the feedback received from community, industry, local government and state government stakeholders, the final Metropolitan Implementation Plan now clarifies the strategic intent of the plan in four strategic objectives. The actions in the plan have been changed and refined to 13; the focus has intensified on significantly increasing resource recovery, including organics; and the approach of not scheduling additional landfill capacity and reviewing the market response to the plan in 2019 has been maintained.

Appendix B of the Metropolitan Implementation Plan provides further details on the engagement and consultation processes used in developing the plan.



# KEY THEMES FROM CONSULTATION

	Significant issues for		
	Community	Local Government	Industry
<p><b>Recycling</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> There was general support for increased recycling (especially organics recycling) and reduced waste to landfill.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The plan outlines the opportunities for boosting recycling to ensure only the absolute minimum of waste is sent to landfill. This is necessary to reduce the pressure on existing landfills and the need for more landfills.</p> <p>Critical actions listed in the plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establishing new infrastructure including alternative waste technology that can recover resources from waste that is currently sent to landfill, including alternative technology facility/s. MWRRG will facilitate and assist local government tenders for facilitated group contracts to manage household residual waste, which will drive investment in these new technologies.</li> <li>• supporting the transfer station and resource recovery centre network to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ expand to meet projected need</li> <li>○ maximise resource recovery in the existing network, focusing on priority materials. This will also reduce the number of truck movements needed to transport waste</li> <li>○ contribute to a 25% diversion from residual MSW through new infrastructure to be achieved through facilitated group contracts for managing household residual waste</li> </ul> </li> <li>• establishing new municipal and commercial food and garden waste processing facilities</li> <li>• optimising the use of existing landfills to meet need and to address community expectations of good amenity and environmental outcomes.</li> </ul> <p>By not scheduling new landfills the plan will also send a clear message that resource recovery is the key priority.</p> <p>It takes time for new infrastructure to be planned, approved, built and to become operational. MWRRG wants to give the resource recovery industry time to respond and to get new recycling infrastructure in place before assessing the need for new landfill.</p> <p>In 2019, MWRRG will review the Metropolitan Implementation Plan to assess the market response and to determine the need for long term landfilling. A landfill will only be scheduled at this time if absolutely necessary.</p>	✓	✓	✓

	Significant issues for		
	Community	Local Government	Industry
<p><b>Landfill closure</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> There were significant industry and community concerns over the closure of landfills in the south east and reliance on landfills in the north and west of Melbourne. Concerns related to the concept of environmental justice (the idea that landfills should be spread across metropolitan Melbourne), amenity issues (such as noise, odour and dust), transport congestion, the potential impact that natural disasters or extreme weather events could have on the remaining landfills, the risk of a few businesses and organisations owning multiple waste and resource recovery infrastructure, and illegal dumping issues.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Metropolitan Implementation Plan identifies that a boost of resource recovery infrastructure capacity across the metropolitan region is needed to manage the closure of landfills in the south east region and to address significant community concern that, should no action be taken, the four remaining landfills in the north, west and south-east will be accepting all of Melbourne’s residual waste in 30 years’ time.</p> <p>The plan seeks to manage the expected growth in waste volumes by significantly increasing resource recovery through new, efficient infrastructure whilst relying on the existing landfills to safely manage those wastes that can’t be viably recovered. While scheduling new landfills was considered, MWRRG concluded that this is not in line with the <i>Statewide Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Plan</i> (State Infrastructure Plan) or community expectations to move away from landfilling.</p> <p>The plan’s proposal to work with councils to establish new, innovative infrastructure that can recover resources from residual waste through re-tendering MWRRG’s landfill contracts will provide a resource recovery alternative. This is consistent with the goals of the State Infrastructure Plan.</p> <p>The Metropolitan Implementation Plan prioritises new, efficient technologies that will treat, consolidate and recycle materials, boosting recycling rates and reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill. Actions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 outlined in the plan specifically relate to this intent.</p> <p>This approach will be reviewed in 2019 to assess if sufficient resource recovery infrastructure is coming online or if new landfill capacity is needed. A new landfill will only be scheduled if absolutely necessary.</p> <p>Action 6 of the plan encourages best practice operations for the resource recovery and waste network and MWRRG will recommend a commitment to best practice and continuous improvement are included in all local government group procurements that MWRRG facilitates.</p> <p>Action 7 seeks to engage community and stakeholders in waste and resource recovery decision making and includes key implementation steps of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recommending effective community engagement be included as a requirement of all MWRRG facilitated procurement contracts</li> <li>• supporting delivery of the <i>Victorian Waste Education Strategy</i>, including the implementation of the Victorian Government’s ‘social licence to operate’ program.</li> </ul> <p>Action 12 seeks to ensure the metropolitan network of landfills has sufficient capacity to accommodate an emergency or unexpected event.</p> <p>We understand that not everyone will be happy with this approach, and that some people may have hoped the plan would recommend closing landfills, or recommend establishing new landfills in the south east to ‘balance out’ the location of landfills across Melbourne. We think the approach put forward in the plan strikes the right balance for planning for the needs of the whole metropolitan region and the environment.</p>	✓	✓	✓

	Significant issues for		
	Community	Local Government	Industry
<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> There was broad support for improved recycling infrastructure (including both new and upgraded) to make waste and recycling more efficient.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Metropolitan Implementation Plan identifies the new and existing waste and resource recovery infrastructure that is required for the metropolitan region (the Infrastructure Schedules). The purpose of scheduling is to holistically plan for the management of waste and, where viable, make infrastructure decisions that prioritise resource recovery over landfilling.</p> <p>The Infrastructure Schedules reflect the Metropolitan Implementation Plan's aims of recycling more; sending less waste to landfill; delivering community, environmental and economic benefits and planning for Melbourne's growth and future sustainability. The goal is to reduce waste to landfill and increase recovery by using new, efficient technologies.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p><b>Energy from waste</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> There was general interest in exploring the potential of energy from waste technology.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Metropolitan Implementation Plan supports and promotes the deployment of new technologies as part of an integrated waste and resource recovery network.</p> <p>The Metropolitan Implementation Plan does not specify, propose or promote any particular type of processing technology over another. The plan notes the deployment of technology types in Melbourne will need to be determined through market processes, as this will ensure the sector puts forward and commissions innovative technology options that can be sustainable in the metropolitan Melbourne context.</p> <p>The plan does identify energy from waste technologies as being part of suite of potential alternative technologies that could be expected to be successfully deployed, and notes that anaerobic digestion is likely to be the first type of technology deployed due to its flexibility in processing a wide range of waste volumes.</p> <p>The plan details in Table 9 the future resource recovery infrastructure category needed, its general location, time frame, the material streams it will need to manage and the annual tonnages needed.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p><b>Analysis</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> New infrastructure and technology should be carefully analysed for costs and benefits including greenhouse gas emissions, amenity issues and by-products.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Metropolitan Implementation Plan emphasises that all new infrastructure needs to meet all environmental and land use planning regulatory requirements. It needs to align with Victorian Government goals and strategic directions and be a viable alternative to landfill that provides the best environmental, community and economic benefit for the metropolitan community.</p>		✓	

	Significant issues for		
	Community	Local Government	Industry
<p><b>Facilitated group procurement</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> There was broad support for MWRRG to facilitate local government procurement for waste processing services, and no support for extending this approach to procuring the collection of the waste from municipal kerbsides.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Metropolitan Implementation Plan commits to working with local governments to facilitate group tendering for processing of residual waste, and for processing of organics (Actions 1, 3, and 5).</p> <p>A Memorandum of Understanding will be initially developed with local governments to clarify expectations, provide further details and to support council decision making.</p> <p>The Metropolitan Implementation Plan does not include facilitated group procurement for collecting residual, commingled recycling and garden waste collections from municipal kerbsides.</p>		✓	✓
<p><b>Targets</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> The plan needs more details, targets, time frames and measures of success.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Metropolitan Implementation Plan details 13 actions to achieve the strategic directions, and details the responsible organisations, key implementation steps and outcomes expected as a result of the action. Measuring performance of the plan is detailed in Chapter 3 including key indicators and targets.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p><b>Landfill operations</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> Significant concerns were raised about environmental, amenity and health issues at landfills from odour, noise, dust, leachate and truck movements. Improving best practice at facilities was seen as crucial.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Metropolitan Implementation Plan, through Action 6 encourages best practice operations for the resource recovery and waste network and MWRRG will recommend best practice and continuous improvement expectations are included in all MWRRG facilitated collective procurement contracts.</p> <p>Additionally, Action 7 seeks to engage community and stakeholders in waste and resource recovery decision making and includes key implementation steps of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recommending that effective community engagement is included as a requirement of all MWRRG facilitated procurement contracts</li> <li>supporting the delivery of the <i>Victorian Waste Education Strategy</i>, including the implementation of the Victorian Government’s social licence program.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	
<p><b>Markets</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> It was raised that the success of recycling efforts depends on market development for end products.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Having strong, confident markets for products that use recycled materials is critical to ensuring viable resource recovery. Sustainability Victoria has developed the <i>Victorian Market Development Strategy for Recovered Resources</i>. This strategy seeks to stimulate markets for the use of recovered materials and considers the barriers and potential solutions to stimulating markets. The Metropolitan Implementation Plan will help achieve the <i>Victorian Market Development Strategy for Recovered Resources</i>.</p>			✓

	Significant issues for		
	Community	Local Government	Industry
<p><b>Landfill levy</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> Increasing the landfill levy is essential to make resource recovery viable.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> One of the key purposes of the landfill levy is to provide additional and ongoing funding to support efforts by government, industry and the community to reduce waste. Landfill levies create an incentive for waste generators to investigate ways to reduce the amount of waste they generate and dispose of to landfill. The landfill levy rate is available from EPA Victoria's website (<a href="http://www.epa.vic.gov.au">www.epa.vic.gov.au</a>).</p> <p>The Sustainability Fund is a perpetual fund that receives money collected from Victorian landfill levies, after funds have been distributed by the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change to key environmental agencies - Environment Protection Authority Victoria, Sustainability Victoria and the seven Victorian Waste and Resource Recovery Groups. Its purpose as defined by the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1970</i> is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• foster environmentally sustainable uses of resources and best practices in waste management to advance the social and economic development of Victoria</li> <li>• and/or foster community action or innovation in relation to the reduction of greenhouse gas substance emissions or adaptation or adjustment to climate change in Victoria.</li> </ul> <p>The Sustainability Fund's Priority Statement sets out Victoria's priorities for investment within the legislated areas of waste, resource recovery and climate change, while their guidelines provide detail on the administrative framework for allocating funds.</p>		✓	✓
<p><b>Funding</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> Community, industry and councils want more funding from state government for infrastructure development and waste programs.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Metropolitan Implementation Plan details the strategic directions for managing waste in the metropolitan region over the next 10 years and beyond. Funding for waste and resource recovery initiatives is provided via the state budget process or via the Sustainability Fund and detailed in operational budgets of relevant organisations including MWRRG, Sustainability Victoria, Environment Protection Authority Victoria and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. Details on how communities, households or businesses can access government support or incentives can also be found on the websites of relevant government organisations.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p><b>Land use planning</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> Effective land use planning is very important to protect infrastructure, especially in setting (and maintaining) good buffers between facilities and other land uses.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Land use planning, transport planning and waste and resource recovery infrastructure planning need to be carried out in an integrated way.</p> <p>The Victorian Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Planning Framework provides the direction for achieving this through the State Infrastructure Plan and the metropolitan and regional implementation plans.</p> <p>In developing the Metropolitan Implementation Plan, MWRRG has considered relevant land use and transport planning legislation, policy and strategies and impacts on the transport network of the waste and resource recovery system.</p> <p>Action 10 of the Metropolitan Implementation Plan seeks to facilitate appropriate land use planning protection of sites of strategic importance for metropolitan Melbourne's waste and resource recovery system. Outcomes of this action by 2026 will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• buffer protection measures are included within the Victoria Planning Provisions</li> <li>• protection measures for key sites are delivered.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	

	Significant issues for		
	Community	Local Government	Industry
<p><b>Hubs</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> There is support for the concept of waste and resource recovery hubs and industrial ecology, particularly for new small scale recycling infrastructure and co-location of new infrastructure. There was some confusion about the concept of a hub including how it is defined, who defines it and what the consequences are for a site being (or not being) identified as a hub.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The State Infrastructure Plan defines a waste and resource recovery hub as a facility or group of facilities that manage or recover waste or materials. It identified 14 hubs of state importance within metropolitan Melbourne.</p> <p>MWRRG considers that hubs can provide opportunities to promote innovation, industrial ecology, consolidation of material streams and achieve economies of scale for waste and resource recovery operations. MWRRG acknowledges the challenges of managing the use and development of land in and around hubs for local government, industry and communities.</p> <p>Table 15 in the Metropolitan Implementation Plan describes the 14 hubs of state importance considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the State Infrastructure Plan's description of metropolitan hubs</li> <li>• land use planning and transport constraints and opportunities</li> <li>• waste and resource recovery needs and opportunities for the metropolitan region</li> <li>• the role of co-location with existing facilities, including waste water treatment facilities</li> <li>• feedback from community consultation</li> <li>• principles of environment protection.</li> </ul> <p>Action 9 relates to the concept of hubs and seeks to identify the roles and functions of waste and resource recovery hubs across the metropolitan network.</p>	✓	✓	
<p><b>Education</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> Educating community and industry was raised as crucial to improving the quality and quantity of recycling, and building a better understanding of the waste system.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Sustainability Victoria has developed the <i>Victorian Waste Education Strategy</i> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help Victorians avoid waste production, recover more resources from waste (through increased recycling and reduced contamination) and prevent littering and illegal dumping</li> <li>• help Victorians understand the importance of waste management as an essential service, including to help build the social licence for the waste and resource recovery sector</li> <li>• ensure investments in waste education are based on best practice and evidence.</li> </ul> <p>The Metropolitan Implementation Plan recognises the importance of education to ensure the waste and resource recovery network is effective, efficient, and delivers environmental and economic benefits. In particular, Action 5 highlights the importance of engaging and educating Melburnians in order to build and maximise the productivity of the metropolitan organic recovery and processing network.</p>	✓	✓	✓

	Significant issues for		
	Community	Local Government	Industry
<p><b>Multi-unit developments</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> There was widespread support (especially from inner city councils) for new guidelines and regulations for multi-unit developments due to the difficulty of managing waste and recycling associated with these developments.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Metropolitan Implementation Plan through Action 11 seeks to respond to the difficulties often faced at multi-unit developments and aims for 95% of new multi-unit developments accommodating resource recovery collections by 2026.</p>		✓	
<p><b>Social licence to operate</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> It was noted that ensuring waste and resource recovery facilities establish a 'social licence to operate' is crucial to building trust.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Sustainability Victoria has developed the <i>Victorian Waste Education Strategy</i>. One aim of this strategy is to help Victorians understand the importance of waste management as an essential service and to help build the social licence for the waste and resource recovery sector to operate.</p> <p>The Metropolitan Implementation Plan, through Action 6 encourages best practice operations for the resource recovery and waste network and MWRRG will recommend that best practice and continuous improvement expectations are included as a requirement of all MWRRG facilitated collective procurement contracts.</p> <p>Action 7 seeks to engage community and stakeholders in waste and resource recovery decision making and includes key implementation steps of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recommending that effective community engagement be included as a requirement of all MWRRG facilitated procurement contracts</li> <li>supporting delivery of the <i>Victorian Waste Education Strategy</i>, including the component relating to promoting 'social licence to operate'.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	
<p><b>Litter and illegal dumping</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> The plan should outline ways of tackling litter and illegal dumping, especially for plastics, and analyse how new infrastructure can help solve these problems.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Sustainability Victoria has developed the <i>Victorian Waste Education Strategy</i>. One aim of this strategy is to prevent littering and illegal dumping and ensure investments in waste education are based on best practice and evidence.</p> <p>The Metropolitan Implementation Plan through Action 8 supports the implementation of best practice litter prevention programs.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p><b>Waste minimisation and avoidance</b></p> <p><b>Feedback:</b> The plan should include a focus on waste avoidance and minimisation.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Sustainability Victoria has developed the <i>Victorian Waste Education Strategy</i>. One aim of this strategy is to help Victorians avoid waste production.</p> <p>The Metropolitan Implementation Plan supports waste avoidance and minimisation and this is discussed in Section 5. Waste avoidance and minimisation are approaches that complement the plan's focus on resource recovery.</p>	✓	✓	

# CONSULTATION PROCESS

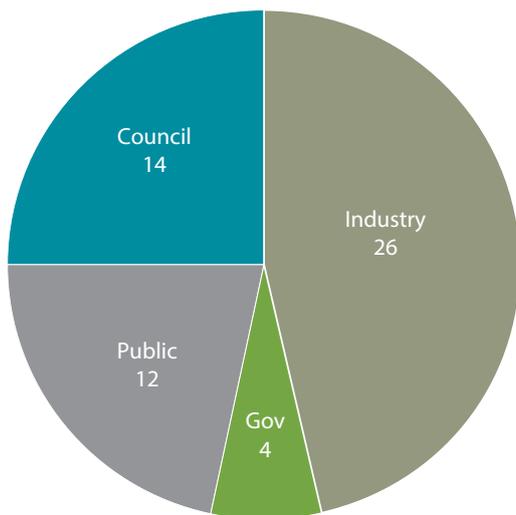
The draft Metropolitan Implementation Plan was released for public consultation in November 2015 for five weeks (16 November – 18 December 2015). MWRRG undertook a range of engagement activities with industry, local government, state government and the community. Activities included:

- ▶ four targeted workshops with industry, councils, state government and members of the community
- ▶ four drop-in sessions in communities that host significant waste and resource recovery facilities (Bulla, Caroline Springs, Clayton and Werribee)
- ▶ four pop-up stalls to engage with the general public in communities across the metropolitan Melbourne region that MWRRG had not previously engaged during this consultation (Rosebud, Craigieburn, Berwick/Hallam and Manningham)

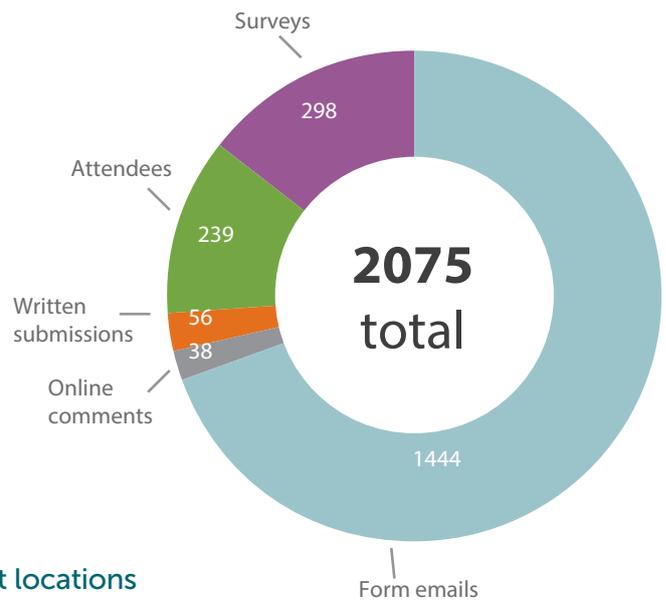
- ▶ online portal hosting information and multiple ways to provide feedback – a quick survey, short comment or formal submission
- ▶ sponsored Facebook posts inviting people to take part in the online survey and feedback. Posts specifically targeted 18-35 year olds following feedback from landfill community reference group members that this age group is often not well represented via other consultation activities.

Throughout the consultation period we sought general feedback on the plan with a focus on the 10 Priority Actions and the landfill and infrastructure schedules. The consultation was generally successful, with a high level of involvement from local government, industry and community groups.

Written submissions



Public consultation feedback received



Consultation event locations

