

Community Engagement Report



Waste Circularity Plan 2023-2030

Project Overview

The Waste Circularity Plan 2023-2030 (the Plan) supports a transition from a linear waste management approach to a more sustainable circular economy.

Stage 1 community and internal engagement on the Plan was conducted in late 2022 and overseen by an independent engagement consultant. This extensive engagement stage informed the Plan's focus areas and actions. In depth consultation on advanced waste processing (AWP) technology solutions was also conducted during this time. Engagement reports on Stage 1 and AWP are published here: engage.frankston.vic.gov.au/waste-circularity-plan.

Following Stage 1 engagement, Officers developed a draft Waste Circularity Plan. The Draft Plan directly responded to community priorities and expectations identified in Stage 1, including by:

- Setting targets, including to divert 80% of waste from landfill, cut total waste generation by 15% per person, and reduce organic material to landfill by 50% by 2030.
- Providing for education on alternative recycling and disposal services.
- Providing for community programs and education to support the reduction in waste generation.
- Including a nappy rebate and composting support.
- Seeking the right balance right between education on recycling, alternative disposal, waste minimisation, reuse and repair, and a more punitive approach to contamination.
- Empowering Council to advocate for mandatory national packaging targets, industry-led product stewardship schemes, and investment in recycling and waste infrastructure.

Quick Engagement Stats

Stage 2 engagement had an estimated total reach of 2,503 across all engagement avenues.

Overall survey respondents were highly supportive of the Draft Plan, targets, priorities, and actions.

Key highlights include:

- 69.1% of participants thought the plan was ambitious enough to deliver on the plan targets.
- 70% agreed that we had got the plan priorities right.
- 90% agreed that we had got the advocacy right.
- 95% supported councils' commitment to explore advanced waste processing opportunities.

More women (65%) than men (35%) participated in the survey. Seaford (33.33%), Frankston (23.81%) and Frankston South (19.05%) were the highest responding sectors of the community. While no responses were received from residents aged under 25 over 76, participation by all other age ranges was received:

- 26 – 35 years (14.29%)
- 36 – 45 years (33.33%)
- 46 – 55 years (19.05%)
- 56 – 65 years (9.52%)
- 66 – 75 years (23.81%)

Following endorsement of the draft plan by Council in May 2023, Stage 2 engagement on the Draft Plan was conducted. The purpose of this engagement was to test the Draft Plan with the community, and whether it was ambitious enough to meet the community's priorities and expectations.

Details of Stage 2, including finding and recommendations are summarized in this report.

Community Consultation Process

A comprehensive engagement approach including a range of methods was delivered during Stage 2 between 23rd May to 20th June 2023. The engagement approach was supported by a communication plan and campaign.

Activity delivered included the following:

- An Engage Frankston platform which showed 155 visits and 22 survey submissions.
- A presentation to the Frankston Environmental Friends Network (10 participants).
- Social media posts with a total reach of 2251.
- Five community engagement drop-in sessions resulting in approximately 65 in-depth community conversations:
 - o Friday 26 May - 1.00pm - 3.00pm at Frankston Resource and Recovery Centre
 - o Monday 29 May – 10.00am - 12.00pm at Frankston Library
 - o Friday 2 June – 10.00am to 12.00pm at Carrum Downs Library
 - o Monday 5 June – 10.00am to 12.00pm at Seaford Library
 - o Friday 16 June– 11.00am to 1.00pm at Frankston South Community Centre)
- Frankston City News, direct email to Frankston Environmental Friends Network, 616 mini-Frankston members, and AWP Community Panel members.

Summary of outcomes

Engagement outcomes in Stage 2 showed that the community generally supports Council's approach to Waste Circularity as identified in the draft Plan.

Online survey responses received in Stage 2 showed 61.9% agreement that the plan is ambitious enough to deliver on Council's 2030 targets. More ambitious targets such as delivering FOGO and glass services to all residents by 2023 and having a greater focus on businesses and compliance were requested by some respondents.

Earlier implementation of glass and FOGO services to all residents is not possible owing to a range of factors:

- Availability of bins within a short timeframe
- Financial considerations
- Foreshadowed kerbside service standards compliance requirements which are yet to be finalised.
- Ongoing cross industry FOGO contamination issues associated with universal services and service collection frequency flips and their impacts on market visibility.

Glass services will however be rolled out to a significant majority of residential households during 2023. Approximately 75% of property already have FOGO bins, and provisions have been included to explore FOGO services for MUDS (2023/24) and commercial property (2025/26) within the initial years of the draft Plan.

Online survey respondents supported the actions and provisions in the Draft plan that related to:

- Importance of hard waste services and alternative recycling options
- Support for FOGO services.
- Importance of service option flexibility and inclusion.
- Support for waste education, minimisation, and contamination management.
- Increased producer responsibility.
- Need for industrywide investment in recycling solutions.

Qualitative insights from drop-in session participants revealed strong support for and alignment with the draft plan. Community sentiment primarily focused on the Plan's existing commitment to provide the '*Frankston City Community with best practice and cost-effective infrastructure and services that support a circular economy*' (53%).

These community conversations also identified the following existing plan priorities as key areas of importance:

- *Continue to improve recycling education and communications (13%).*
- *Continue to provide and improve disposal alternatives for problem waste and recycling services for specialty items (27%).*
- *Ensure residential kerbside infrastructure meets community needs and encourages waste recovery (17%).*

Stage 1 community engagement also identified an opportunity to provide for enhanced provisions for gender equity, diversity, and inclusion in the Plan. These changes have been reflected in the Final being presented to Council.

The community also reflected the importance of Council closing the loop and provide adequate communications on progress and action of delivery of the Plan, which is reflected in the next steps.

Recommendations and Next Steps

Community consultation supports the targets, priorities, principles, and actions. A significant majority of feedback and comments aligned with existing provisions of the plan in its current format. This consultation process identified an ongoing commitment to ensuring best practices and cost-effective infrastructure is of key importance to the community. The current plan provisions deliver a strong commitment on this and meets with community expectation.

Aligning with community sentiment around service flexibility and inclusion, changes are recommended to provide for enhanced provisions for gender equity, diversity, and inclusion within the plan. This will be delivered by elevating gender equity, diversity and inclusion as an overarching plan principle required for all

actions contained within the plan. New monitoring and evaluation requirements will also be added to support ongoing continuous improvement and enable increased community visibility on how progress.

Ensuring that Council close the loop and provide adequate communications on progress and action is fundamental to ensuring that Council effectively deliver on community expectations. Subject to endorsement from Council, Officers will close the loop with residents who participated in the consultation process through targeted communications such as the engage Frankston platform. Corporate communication channels will also be utilised to ensure Council closes the loop with the community more broadly. Ongoing, the plan also includes provisions for an uplift in community education, awareness and communications which will aid in raising communication awareness on progress. Additionally, monitoring and evaluation criteria contained in the plan will support the ability for Council to readily report to the community through corporate communication channels including but not limited to our website, the annual budget process and annual report.

Recommended next steps are to seek endorsement from Council on the draft plan, inclusive of some minor grammatical amendments and strengthening of the gender equity, diversity, and inclusion provisions.