

Western Metropolitan Regional Council



Strategic Community Plan

2013/14 to 2023/24

“A shared vision for waste management in the western suburbs”

Adopted: 4 April 2013



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Our vision for waste management in the western suburbs... 2023/24

*People come from far and wide to admire what we do.
Residents are engaged and satisfied with their waste service.*

In 2023/24 waste management in the western suburbs is a financially robust service, delivering a healthy surplus being invested into new community projects.

Waste collection routes have been optimised to reduce truck movements and achieve economies of scale. In 2017 a region-wide collection contract was awarded and a uniform service is provided across the region for the first time.

Council and commercial waste vehicles deliver waste to the state-of-the-art Waste Transfer Station in Shenton Park. Putrescible waste is loaded into the DiCOM Waste Processing System. DiCOM has been operating for around ten years and is capturing 10,000 tonnes of recyclables, producing 27,000 tonnes of market-quality compost and generating 8,000MWh of renewable energy each year.

The decision to invest in DiCOM and efforts to reduce variable costs at the Waste Transfer Station means the region has some of the lowest waste disposal fees of all local governments in Western Australia. The Transfer Station's close proximity to the CBD and its competitive price also make it attractive to commercial customers which helps subsidise rates.

The 12,000 tonnes of DiCOM residual is loaded into large waste transfer trailers and hauled to a new Waste to Energy facility for further processing. The region has no reliance on landfill.

Residents are provided with a sophisticated at-call (booked) bulk waste collection service. Bulk waste is taken to a reuse centre, which was established in partnership with a local community group. Waste is sorted into over 20 recycling stations, with less than 30% destined for landfill. Residents

can also take their waste direct to the reuse centre which is frequented by people from across Perth in search of a treasure. The reuse centre turns over at least \$500,000 per annum.

Inside the reuse centre is a new Environmental Education Hub focused on sustainability for students and the broader community. The Hub hosts interactive activity stations and runs hands-on workshops and group activities.

The Earth Carers network has grown to over 10,000 people who are spreading the "empty bins, full lives" message through the community and are extremely active through social media. Earth Carers are actively composting/worm-farming at home and living sustainably

The Earth Carers network is actively coordinating sustainability projects and events. The Earth Carers Schools Programme has also expanded considerably, with Earth Carers visiting every primary school in the region in the past year and over five tonne of batteries collected annual through the School Battery Recycling Programme.

COMPREHENSIVE & COST EFFECTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES



AN ENGAGED & KNOWLEDGABLE LOCAL COMMUNITY



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1. Introduction

1.1. About this Plan

This Strategic Community Plan attempts to outline a shared vision on waste management for Perth's western suburbs. The Plan will guide activities to deliver a coordinated and integrated approach to sustainable waste management across the region.

1.2. Integrated Planning Process

Amendments to the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* require all local governments to prepare a Strategic Community Plan and a Corporate Business Plan. The outcomes of Strategic Community Plan are intended to inform the Corporate Business Plan; however WMRC prepared the Corporate Business Plan first to allow member Councils to consider the broader potential for regional waste services through the development of their own Strategic Community Plans.

The Integrated Planning Process was implemented as follows:

1. Preparation of a discussion paper including strategic and operational risk assessments. Staff provided input into the discussion paper.
2. A workshop of member Council CEOs on 14 February 2012 to discuss regional waste management vision.
3. A workshop of WMRC Councillors on 8 March 2012 to discuss regional waste management vision.
4. Adoption of Corporate Business Plan on 7 June 2012.
5. Adoption of draft Strategic Community Plan in February 2013.
6. Eight week public consultation period advertised in Post Newspaper and promoted through various online forums.
7. Strategic Community Plan adopted 6 June 2013.

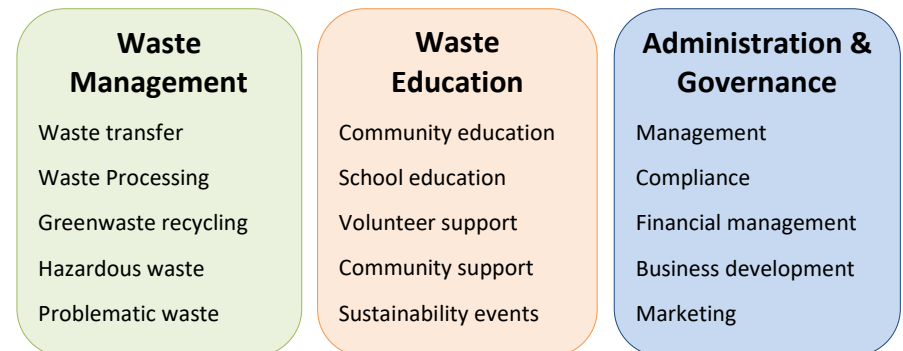
1.3. WMRC

The Western Metropolitan Regional Council (WMRC) exists to deal with waste from Perth's western suburbs and immediate surrounds in an efficient and environmentally sound manner, and to provide guidance on improved waste management practices. WMRC will drive the implementation of this Plan.

The WMRC was established in 1989 by:

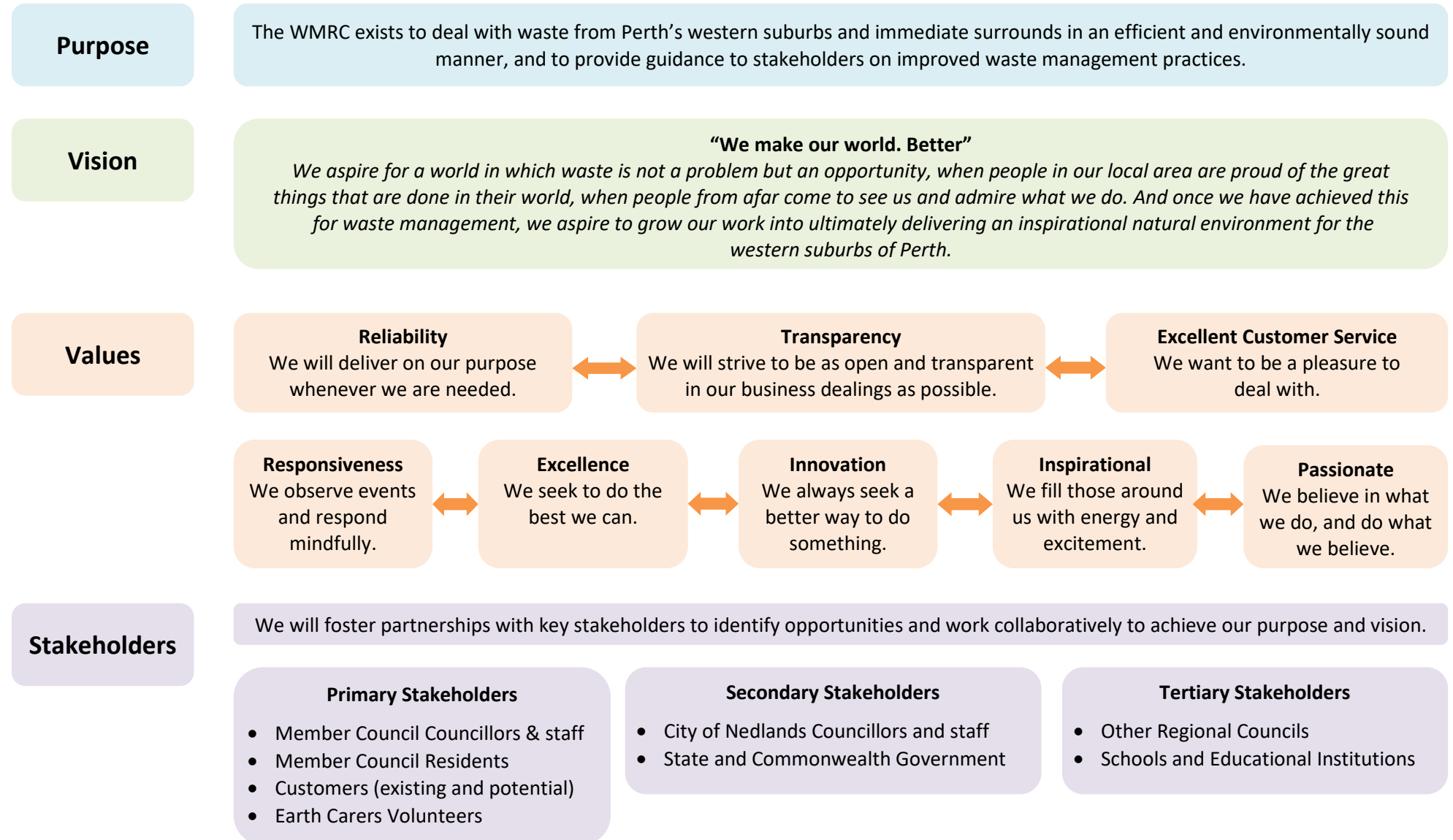
- Town of Claremont
- Town of Cottesloe
- Town of Mosman Park
- Shire of Peppermint Grove
- City of Subiaco

1.3.1. Functions & Current Services



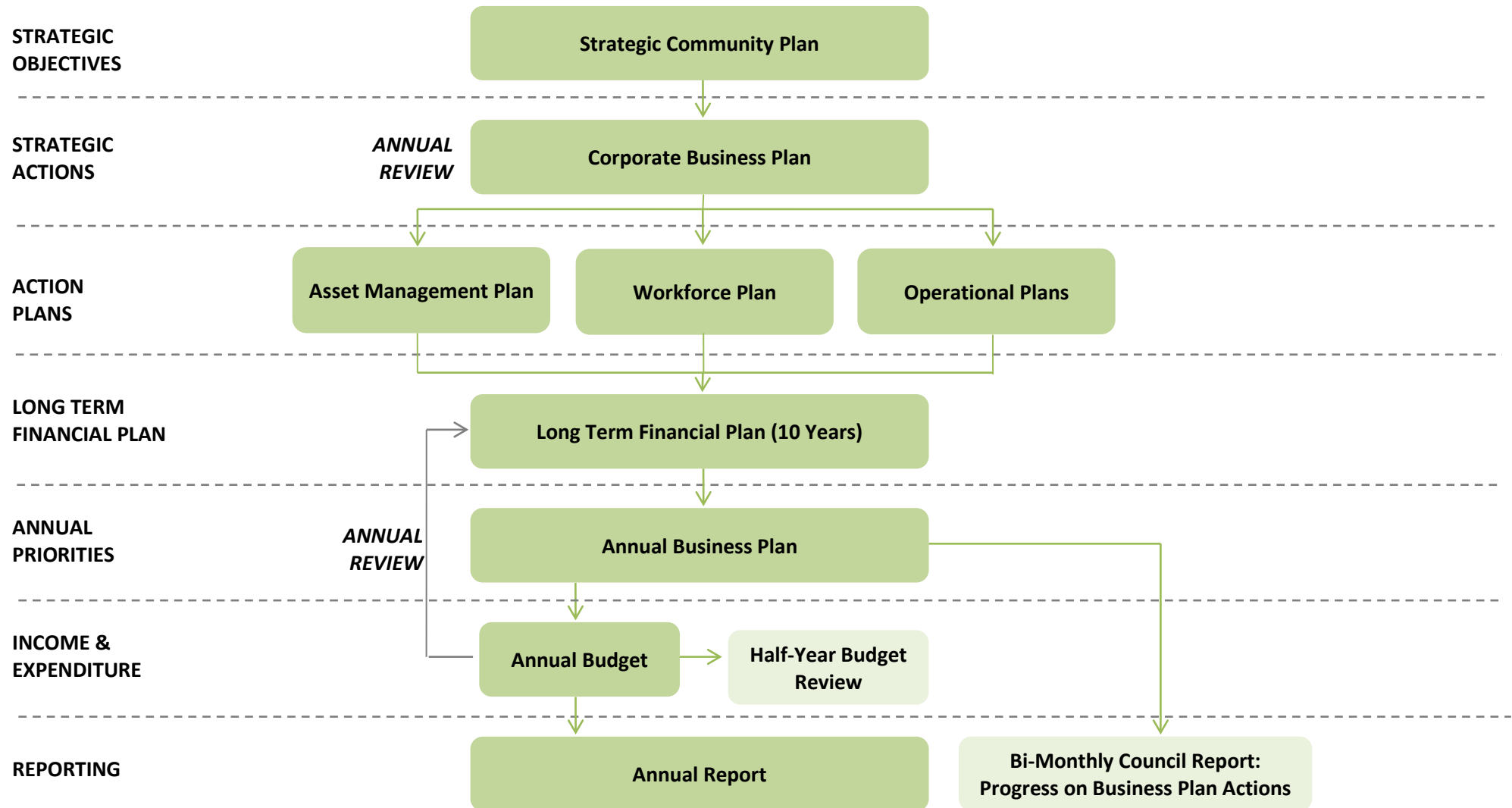
WMRC also provides services to the City of Nedlands, reinforcing its significance as a waste service provider in the western suburbs.

2. Strategic Planning Horizon



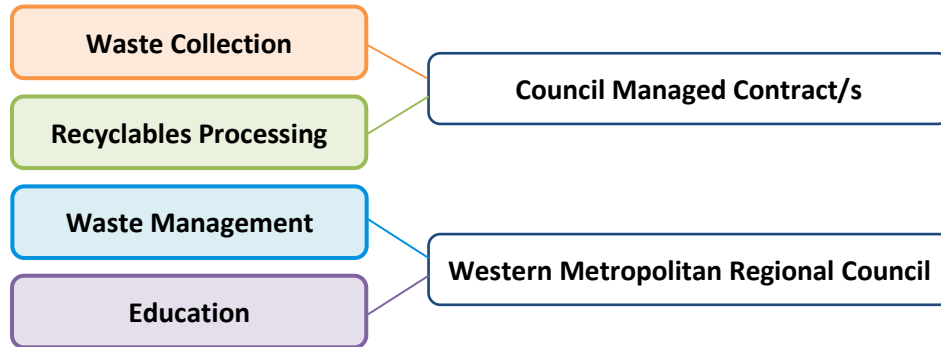
3. Integrated Planning Framework

This Strategic Community Plan guides the development of operational plans to deliver the regional vision.



4.A snapshot of Waste in the Western Suburbs

4.1. Service Providers



4.2. Population Serviced

	2012	2026 Forecast	Change
Claremont	9,900	10,100	2.02%
Cottesloe	8,400	9,000	7.14%
Mosman Park	9,800	11,400	16.33%
Nedlands	22,600	23,000	1.77%
Peppermint Grove	1,800	1,700	-5.56%
Subiaco	19,400	22,600	16.49%
TOTAL	71,900	77,800	8.21%

Extracted from: West Australian Planning Commission (2012) *Western Australia Tomorrow, Population Report No 7, 2006 to 2026, Forecast Summary, Local Government Areas of WA*, pp. 17, 20, 45, 51, 53 & 61

4.3. Collection Services

4.3.1. General Waste

The collection of general waste across the region is consistent. It is collected weekly in mobile garbage bins (MGB) with a dark green lid. General waste is delivered to the WMRC's Shenton Park site for management.

4.3.2. Recyclables

All Councils except the City of Subiaco collect co-mingled recyclables fortnightly in a yellow-lidded MGB. Subiaco provides a weekly collection of cardboard in red bags or red-lidded MGBs and co-mingled recyclables in green bags or yellow-lidded MGBs. Recyclables are delivered to various materials recovery facilities, some as far as 180km away.

The materials accepted for recycling, especially plastics, varies across the region. This makes regional recycling education problematic.

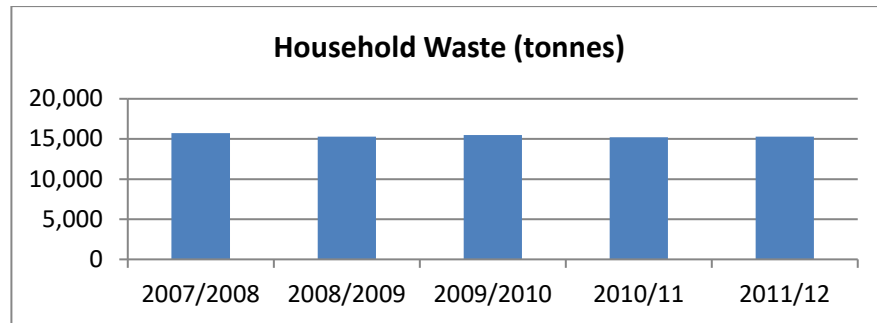
4.3.3. Bulk Waste

All Councils collect bulk waste via routine verge collections (generally two-to-four hard waste and three-to-four greenwaste per annum). The Shire of Peppermint Grove also provides residents with two hard waste and three greenwaste transfer station passes per annum. The City of Subiaco provides residents with unlimited on-demand (booked) bulk greenwaste collections.

The routine scheduling of bulk waste collections and recent changes to consolidate collections into fewer days/weeks can create logistical problems at the Waste Transfer Station.

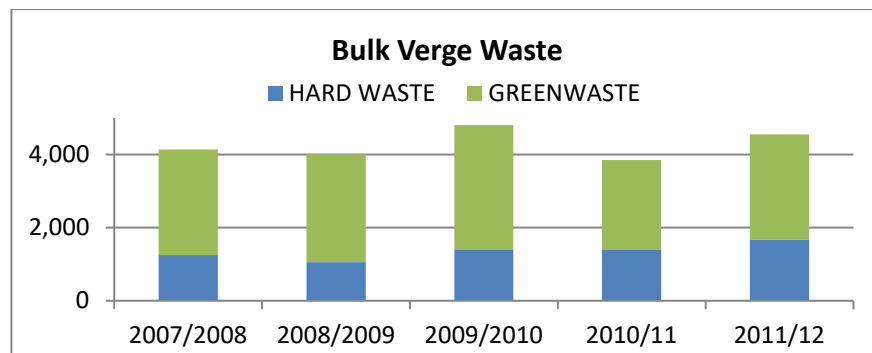
4.4. Waste Generation

4.4.1. Household Waste



Over the past five years there has been minimal change in the generation of household waste among the member Councils. The total tonnes fluctuate by 1-2% each year. WMRC does not receive co-mingled recyclables; however a review of recycling data suggests recycling has decreased over the past five years (actual data unavailable).

4.4.2. Bulk Waste



The generation of bulk waste has steadily increased over the past five years. This is directly correlated to a decrease in the number of transfer station passes redeemed and self-haul customers at the Waste Transfer Station.

4.5. Infrastructure

The primary waste infrastructure in the region is the **Waste Transfer Station** located at the corner of Brockway Road and Lemons Street in Shenton Park. The Waste Transfer Station land is Crown Land vested to the WMRC.

The Waste Transfer Station receives:

- Council and commercial bulk greenwaste.
- Council and commercial putrescible waste.
- Council, self-haul and commercial bulky (non-putrescible) waste.
- Self-haul recyclables and hazardous waste.

4.5.1. Greenwaste Processing

Bulk greenwaste is consolidated at the Waste Transfer Station, loaded into heavy haulage trucks and transported to a local composting facility. The greenwaste is mulched and composted then sold as compost.

4.5.2. Putrescible Waste

Putrescible waste is currently consolidated at the Waste Transfer Station, loaded into heavy haulage trucks and transported to landfill.

In February 2011, construction of the **DiCOM waste processing system** commenced at the Waste Transfer Station. The DiCOM system is being constructed by DiCOM AWT Operations Pty Ltd on an area of land at the Waste Transfer Station leased from the WMRC. DiCOM is expected to be operationally by mid-2013 and will process 55,000 tonnes of waste, recovering recyclables, converting the organic fraction into compost and generating renewable energy.

WMRC does not own or operate the DiCOM System. WMRC provided the land for the DiCOM system to be constructed and is contracted to supply 33,000 tonnes of waste per annum (the remaining 22,000 tonnes will be supplied by the City of Stirling under a separate agreement).

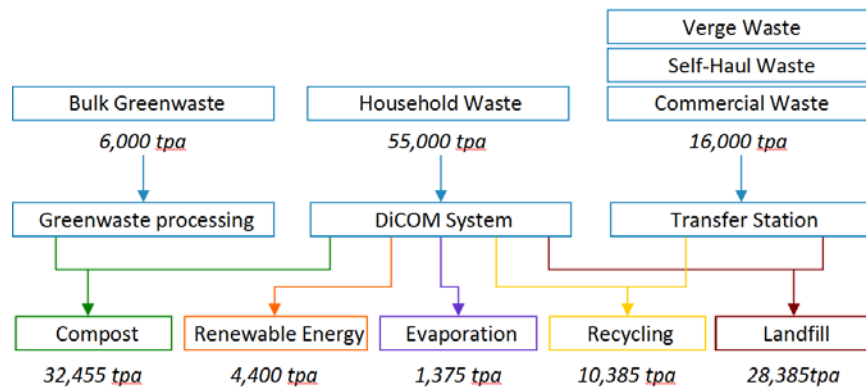
4.5.3. Non-Putrescible Bulky Waste

Bulky waste is consolidated at the Waste Transfer Station, loaded into high volume bins once valuable recyclables have been recovered, and transported to landfill.

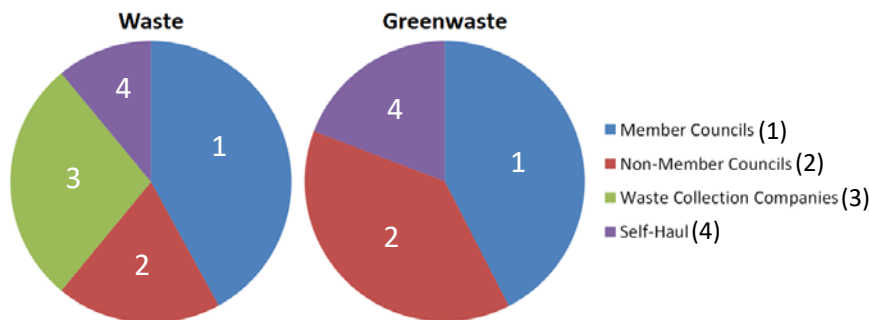
4.5.4. Self Haul Recyclables & Hazardous Waste

A number of free drop-off services are provided at the Waste Transfer Station for residents. This includes cardboard, electronic waste (televisions and computers) hazardous waste and general recyclables.

Inputs and Outputs at Waste Transfer Station



4.6. Sources of the Region's Waste



The Waste Transfer Station receives waste from:

- Member Councils (contracted to deliver ~15,000 tonnes of waste per annum until 2015/16).
- Non-member Councils (including City of Nedlands for waste).
- Waste collection companies.
- Self-haul customers (residents and small businesses).

4.7. Waste Education (Earth Carers)

In 2003 the Earth Carers programme commenced and has become the region's primary vehicle for community engagement on waste management. The Earth Carers programme is built upon the concept of "social diffusion" – the notion of dispersing messages to the masses through social networks (family, friends and colleagues) rather than traditional non-personal communications.



Earth Carers:

- Deliver free community waste education courses and events.
- Provide a schools waste education programme to local schools.
- Attend community event to spread reduce, reuse and recycling messages.
- Run educational awareness campaigns via social media.

The City of Nedlands also participates in the WMRC's Earth Carers Programme.

The Earth Carers network consists of over 900 people.

5. Areas of Control

5.1. Post-Collection Waste Management

The WMRC's core business is post-collection waste management. The WMRC is directly responsible for providing the systems and infrastructure required to manage waste after residents have recycled all they can.

In its post-collection waste management role and in order to ensure the member Councils meet the 'Western Australian Waste Strategy: Creating the Right Environment' target of 65% recovery of MSW by 2020, WMRC will:

- Continue to challenge the traditional approach of dumping waste in landfill.
- Provide and maintain sufficient systems and infrastructure to recover value from waste received at the Waste Transfer Station.
- Deliver programmes that deal with problematic waste, including hazardous materials, electronics, asbestos and tyres.

The commencement of the DiCOM waste processing system will allow WMRC to process 55,000 tonnes of waste on-site each year. It is anticipated that 75% of this waste will be recovered, with 25% still destined for landfill. A key challenge for WMRC will be to implement sustainable solutions for the DiCOM residual and non-putrescible waste (i.e. bulk hard waste).

5.2. Problematic Waste Disposal

WMRC provides or supports programmes that target the collection of problematic, but low volume, waste. Removing problematic waste makes it easier to recover resources from other waste. WMRC provides free disposal services for electronic waste and hazardous waste and low cost disposal for asbestos and tyres.

Focus Area 1: Comprehensive and cost effective waste management services

Strategic Objective 1: Achieve a comprehensive, cost effective waste management service across the region.

Strategic Objective 2: Increase the number of Councils, businesses and people using our services.

Strategic Objective 3: Reduce waste to landfill.

Strategic Objective 6: Develop a strong organisation

Proposed initiatives:

- Upgrade the Waste Transfer Station haulage system to increase waste receipt capacity and improve resource recovery.
- Establish a reuse centre in the region in partnership with a local community group.
- Sort bulky waste received at the Waste Transfer Station to recover recyclable materials.
- Secure non-member waste under contract.
- Improve site access at the Waste Transfer Station for customers.
- Expand recycling services available at the Waste Transfer Station.
- Develop partnerships to find a waste to energy solution for DiCOM residual.
- Install recycling stations for problematic waste in public places.

6.Areas of Influence

6.1. Household Behaviour Change

Local government does not have direct control over what people buy and throw away, but it can **influence the community to eliminate unnecessary waste**. The waste hierarchy has been adopted as the core principal of environmental education – making the reduction/minimisation of waste the primary educational message. The Earth Carers Programme will continue to develop and implement programmes that prevent waste generation and encourage sustainable living.

6.2.Collection Systems

Individual Councils control the region's collection systems. WMRC will encourage and support Councils to provide a collection network where:

- High value, source separated material can be recycled.
- Garden organics can be converted into market-quality compost.
- Resources can be recovered from materials not recovered at source.

An opportunity exists for a regional waste collection contract to be awarded in 2017 (when existing contracts expire). This would allow truck routes to be optimised, reducing truck movements. Additionally a uniform service across the region would improve regional waste education opportunities.

6.3.Education

WMRC will support Council marketing and education programmes that help people understand and use the waste systems available to them. WMRC will:

- Provide and maintain sufficient systems and infrastructure to recover value from waste received at the Waste Transfer Station.
- Deliver programmes that deal with problematic waste, including hazardous materials, electronics, asbestos and tyres.

Focus Area 2: An engaged and knowledgeable community

Strategic Objective 4: Increase the knowledge and engage the local community to improve waste management.

Proposed initiatives:

- Establish a western suburbs waste and sustainability hub.
- Provide waste management training and education for member Council staff.
- Provide waste education services to small-to-medium businesses in the region.
- Implement regional waste collection contract/s for kerbside and bulky waste.
- Work to incorporate waste aspects into the curriculum of local schools.
- Conduct regular tours of local waste facilities.
- Deliver community sustainability skills workshops and courses through the region.
- Implement a regional waste and recycling calendar.

7. Areas of Concern

7.1. Advancement of Waste Industry

Advancement of the waste industry and the people who work within it will be essential to ensuring the sector identifies and implements opportunities for improved waste management. WMRC will continue to use its expertise and draw on its experience to provide valuable input and support to all levels of government as well as the private sector.

7.2. Government Advocacy

There are a wide-range of external dynamics that will shape the delivery of waste management systems, infrastructure and services. To help meet the region's waste management vision, the WMRC will **advocate** for:

- Government action and support for initiatives aimed at reducing waste disposal to landfill.
- Targeted support programmes for the management of problematic waste.
- Extended producer responsibility schemes.

Focus Area 3: Strong regional support

Strategic Objective 5: Become a recognised catalyst implementing innovative practices in waste management.

Proposed initiatives:

- Conduct collaborative research projects with universities.
- Host work experience students.
- Create and implement a system to trial innovative projects.
- Present papers at waste conferences.
- Develop a secondment programme between WMRC and member Councils.
- Participate in waste industry peak bodies.
- Respond to waste policy discussion papers.

8. External Dynamics

This Plan cannot be considered in isolation of key external dynamics that can, and will shape the delivery of the plan's strategies:

8.1. Government Actions & Decisions

- The 'WA Waste Strategy: Creating the Right Environment' has set recovery targets (waste recovered compared to that generated) for municipal solid waste in the Perth metropolitan of 65% by 2020. These targets will guide **State Government policy decisions**.
- The **Metropolitan Local Government Review** (in progress) findings released in October 2012 propose regional councils be dissolved; and a metropolitan-wide approach be adopted to waste disposal and treatment, potentially shifting this function to State Government.
- **Legislative changes** may ban waste types to landfill, provide funding for product specific disposal or introduce taxes on waste activities.
- The **landfill levy** is payable on every tonne of waste disposed to landfill in WA. The timing and size of future increases are unknown.
- The **carbon price** payable at landfill once the open-market trading scheme commences in 2015/16 is unknown. Additionally the future of the carbon price is unknown in the lead up to the next Federal election (to be held before 30 November 2013).
- WMRC relies on **grants and financial** assistance to fund some diversion programmes. Any restriction/loss of funding will affect WMRC's ability to divert some wastes from landfill.

8.2. Disposal Facilities

- If **DiCOM** does not process at capacity or achieve expected diversion within the expected timeframe, WMRC will continue to rely on landfill.
- WMRC relies on other organisations to access landfill. This provides uncertainty over future landfill disposal costs.

- **Commercial customers** are price sensitive and WMRC must set its fees accordingly to attract sufficient commercial waste.

8.3. Council Actions and Decisions

- **Independent Council decisions** that change collection systems or changes to in-house waste management/education services may affect WMRC's ability to deliver projects identified in this plan.
- Any decision by the **City of Nedlands** to divert its waste to another facility will require surplus waste to be sourced for DiCOM and a thorough review of the Earth Carers funding arrangements.
- There is **regular scrutiny of the Earth Carers Programme** as many of its deliverables are intangible. Reducing the programme scope is often considered an easy option to cut costs.

8.4. Economy

- As **transport costs increase** the Waste Transfer Station will become an attractive disposal option for waste generated in the inner city.
- **Strong competition** is expected to come from commercial landfills being constructed on the metropolitan fringe. This may drive down waste disposal prices, widening the gap between landfill and waste processing (DiCOM).
- **Recycling revenue** is vulnerable to fluctuating commodity prices. If commodity prices drop significantly, recyclers may cease accepting materials or it may be more cost effective to landfill them
- A strong resources sector has **inflated employee costs**. This is expected to increase and may make it difficult to retain / attract staff, particularly to operational positions.

9. Strategic Action Plan

Key Strategies		
<p>1 Achieve a comprehensive, cost effective waste management service across the region</p> <p>ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a comprehensive, cost effective waste transfer service. • Achieve a harmonised waste collection service across the region that encourages source separation. • Define and communicate best practice in waste management. 	<p>2 Increase the number of Councils, businesses and people using our services</p> <p>ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of Councils and businesses using WMRC services. • Increase customers at the Transfer Station. • Increase the number of residents using WMRC services. • Build a strong identity. 	<p>3 Reduce waste to landfill</p> <p>ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the DiCOM facility on a commercially viable basis. • Remove non-specification waste from the waste stream. • Sort and divert waste. • Recover value from residual material before landfill.
<p>4 Increase the knowledge and engage the local community to improve waste management</p> <p>ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop waste education infrastructure in the region. • Develop waste education programmes in schools. • Change behaviour in the household to minimise waste and foster sustainable living. • Collaborate with Councils across region. • Provide opportunities for community input into WMRC operations. 	<p>5 Become a recognised catalyst implementing innovative practices in waste management</p> <p>ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish research partnerships. • Contribute to the development of innovation in waste management. • Participate in waste industry peak bodies. • Advocate for improved waste management. • Foster innovative regional cooperation in waste management. 	<p>6 Develop a strong and capable organisation</p> <p>ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide exceptional service. • Develop a capable team. • Provide a safe work environment. • Deliver responsible financial management.

10. Key Performance Indicators

	2013/14	2017/18	2023/24
Number of tonnes received at Waste Transfer Station	60,000	70,000	95,000
Putrescible waste received at Transfer Station that is diverted from landfill	45%	55%	70%
Bulky waste diverted from landfill	10%	50%	80%
Earth Carers network members	1,200	5,000	10,000

Adopted / Modified

This Strategic Community Plan will be reviewed at least once every four years or as required in the event of legislative change or significant organisational change.

	Date	Resolution #
Council Adoption of Draft Plan	07/02/2013	Item 9.9
Public Consultation Period	19/02/2013-20/03/2013	
Council Adoption	04/04/2013	Item 9.6