

INNER WEST

Zero Waste Strategy 2021-36



Inner West Council acknowledges the Gadigal and Wangal peoples of the Eora nation, who are the traditional custodians of the lands in which the Inner West Local Government Area is situated.



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The Inner West Zero Waste Strategy outlines how Council and the community are required to collectively take responsibility for waste and recycling and to work together to ensure resources can be valued as part of a circular economy. A circular economy requires resource-efficiency, avoiding waste creation throughout the product lifecycle and keeping resources in use for as long as possible.

The most effective way of managing waste is to avoid creating it in the first place, which in turn will reduce impacts associated with production, consumption, transportation, processing and disposal. Council and the community need to ensure landfill is a last resort for resources.

This Zero Waste Strategy aligns to the National Waste Policy - Less Waste, More Resources 2018 - and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 12 of responsible consumption and production and community expectation, as well as aligning with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

Under the NSW Local Government Act 1993, councils are required to develop a hierarchy of plans known as the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework. This framework assists councils in delivering their community's vision through long, medium and short-term plans. The purpose of the framework is to formalise strategic and resource planning across NSW Councils and ensure long-term planning is based on community engagement, leading to a more sustainable local government sector.

We may never reach
the zero in 'zero waste'
but that's no reason
to take zero action.

@zerowastechef

Strategic Context

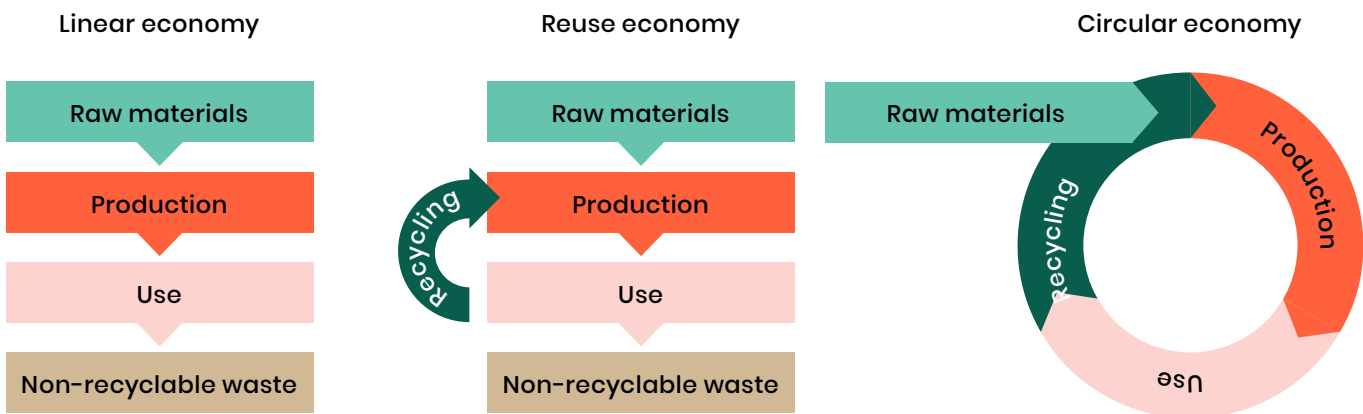
The table below identifies the key strategic drivers for Resource Recovery for IWC:

Inner West Council	Our Inner West 2036 – Community Strategic Plan (CSP)	<p>The CSP identifies the community’s vision for the future, long-term goals, and strategies to get there and outlines how Council will measure progress towards that vision. The CSP identifies five strategic directions that support the goals of the community. The Zero Waste Strategy aligns closely with Strategic Direction 1 – an ecologically sustainable Inner West – and aims to achieve a zero waste community with an active share economy by 2036. Council will aim to achieve this by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting people to avoid waste, and reuse, repair, recycle and share • Providing local reuse and recycling infrastructure • Diverting organic material from landfill • Advocating for comprehensive Extended Producer Responsibility+ <p>Target: Reduce waste per capita to landfill from 199kg pp</p>
	Climate and Renewables Strategy 2019	<p>Community Key Area 5: Zero waste and a thriving share economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping our community address unsustainable consumption e.g. through facilitating and encouraging the share economy. • Eliminating organic waste to landfill.
Regional	SSROC Regional Waste Avoidance & Resource Recovery Strategy 2014–21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Healthy Region – product stewardship and safe management of problem wastes. • Reducing Waste – reduce waste, especially food, encourage and enable reuse and tackle consumption. • Recovering Resources – maximising recovery and recycling through processing and engagement to reduce contamination. • Responsible Citizens – understanding and managing illegal dumping and improving infrastructure and behaviours around disposal and recycling.
State	NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 – Stage 1 2021–27 and NSW Plastics Action Plan	<p>NSW commits to the National Waste Policy targets in addition to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Litter reduction target of 60% by 2030 and plastic litter reduction target of 30% by 2025. • Triple the plastics recycling rate by 2030 • Net zero emissions from organic waste by 2030 • Establish new indicators to track infrastructure investment and the cost of waste services • Develop of emissions performance for waste and materials across materials lifecycles.

Federal	National Waste Policy – Less Waste, More Resources 2018 & Action Plan 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid waste. Prioritise waste avoidance, encourage efficient use, reuse and repair. Design products so waste is minimised, they are made to last and we can more easily recover materials. • Improve resource recovery. Improve collection systems, processes and quality of recycled material. • Increase use of recycled material and build demand and markets for recycled products. • Better manage material flows to benefit human health, the environment and the economy. • Improve information to support innovation, guide investment and enable informed consumer decisions.
	Product Stewardship Act 2011 (Televisions and Computers) Regulations 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the amount of television and computer waste (particularly hazardous waste materials) disposed to landfill and increase recovery of resources from end-of-life television and computer products.
	National Food Waste Strategy 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halve Australia’s food waste by 2030.
UN	United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12, by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources. • Halve per capita global food waste. • Substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.

Circular Economy

Current economic models devalue materials as waste, rather than valuing them as a resource. To avoid waste and maximise resource recovery we need to move away from a linear consumption model of take-make-waste to a circular model where waste is valued as a resource.



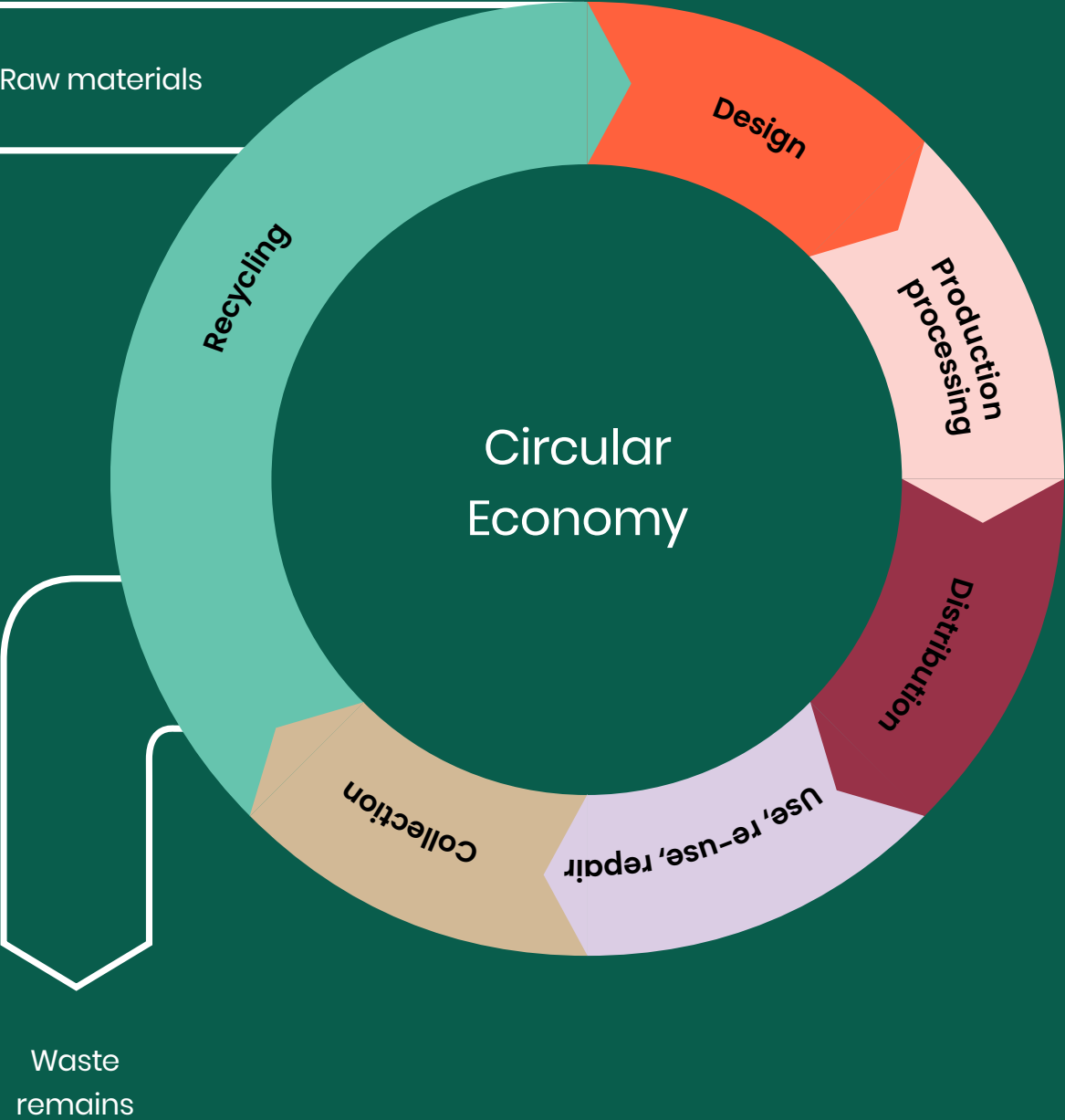
Source: <https://www.government.nl/topics/circular-economy/from-a-linear-to-a-circular-economy>

This requires resource-efficiency, avoiding waste creation throughout the product lifecycle and maximising the lifespan of products through improved design. The most effective way of managing waste is to avoid it in the first place, which in turn will reduce impacts associated with production, consumption, transportation, processing and disposal. Waste is not an end-product to review in isolation and we must consider unintended outcomes of decisions impacting waste and resource recovery.

A circular economy values reuse, repair and recycling and devalues disposal and landfill. Our current approach of take-make-waste has economic drivers that value disposal. The Ellen Macarthur Foundation describes the rethinking as, “Transitioning to a circular economy does not only amount to adjustments aimed at reducing the negative impacts of the linear economy. Rather, it represents a systemic shift that builds long-term resilience, generates business and economic opportunities, and provides environmental and societal benefits.”¹

¹<https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/concept>

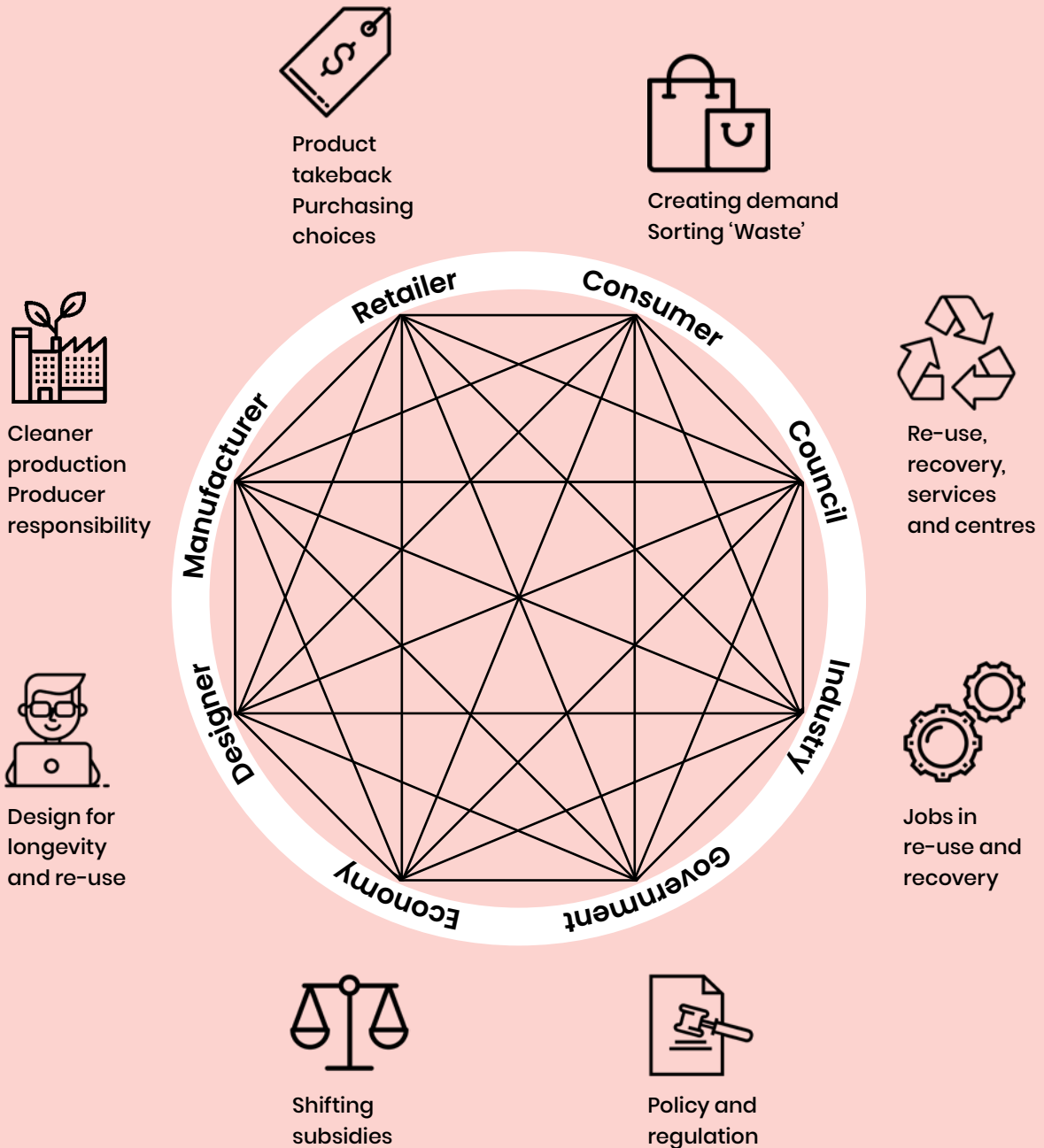
A circular economy values reuse, repair and recycling and devalues disposal and landfill.



Source: <https://srp-circular-economy.eu>

Government, industry and the community all have a role to play in influencing decisions associated with materials to avoid them becoming waste.

Rethinking waste as a resource involves the whole community:



What is the Role of Government?

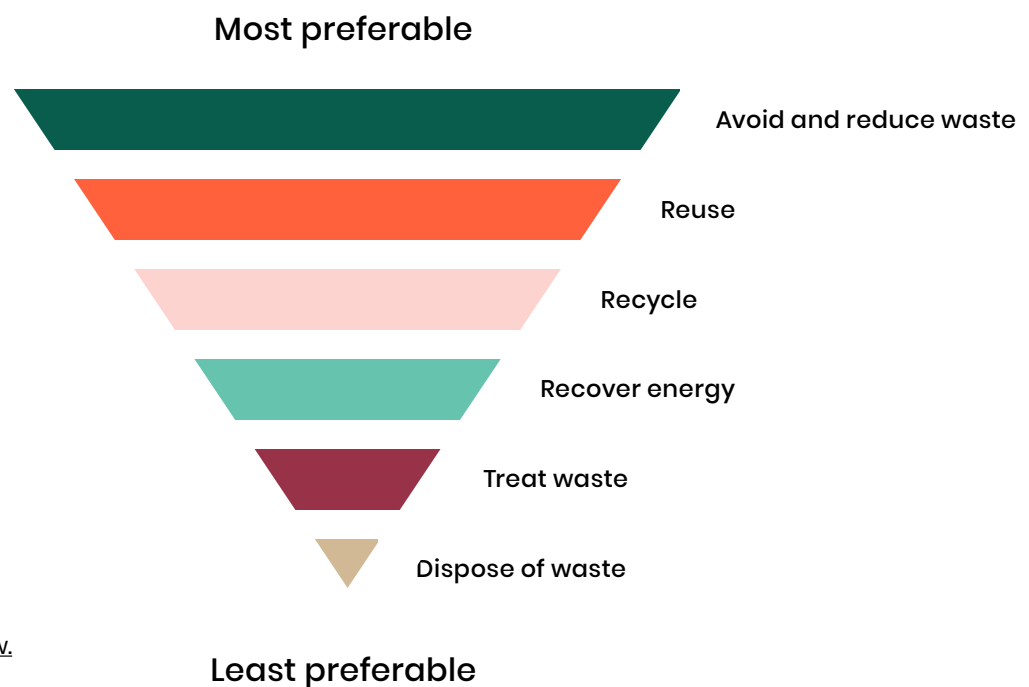
Resource Recovery is a significant part of Council's budget and Australia's economy. Local Governments manage materials at the point of disposal through kerbside collections and services, once a decision has been made to label materials as 'waste'.

The current approach is that of a recycling economy which values processing and disposal over avoidance, reuse and repair.

Councils spend most of their resource recovery budgets at the bottom of the waste hierarchy through disposal of waste.

An increased focus on the top half of the hierarchy will reduce waste generation and the amount of materials requiring collection and processing. It will also build capacity in the local reuse and repair sector, increasing social and sustainability benefits to our community and local economy.

All levels of government can increase market demand for recycled products through procurement, this being a critical step following recent recycling market disruptions (e.g. China Sword) and policy changes (COAG packaging targets).



Source: <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/recycling-and-reuse/warr-strategy/the-waste-hierarchy>

Impact of Waste on Climate

Inner West’s Climate and Renewables Strategy 2019 identified that 9% of greenhouse gas emissions from the residential sector can be attributed to waste collection and disposal in landfill, where in anaerobic conditions waste generates the potent greenhouse gas methane.

Emissions result from the collection and transportation of waste. When the emissions of goods and services consumed by Inner West residents are included in emissions calculations, Sydney University calculates that 76% of an Inner West household’s carbon emissions are caused by consumption.

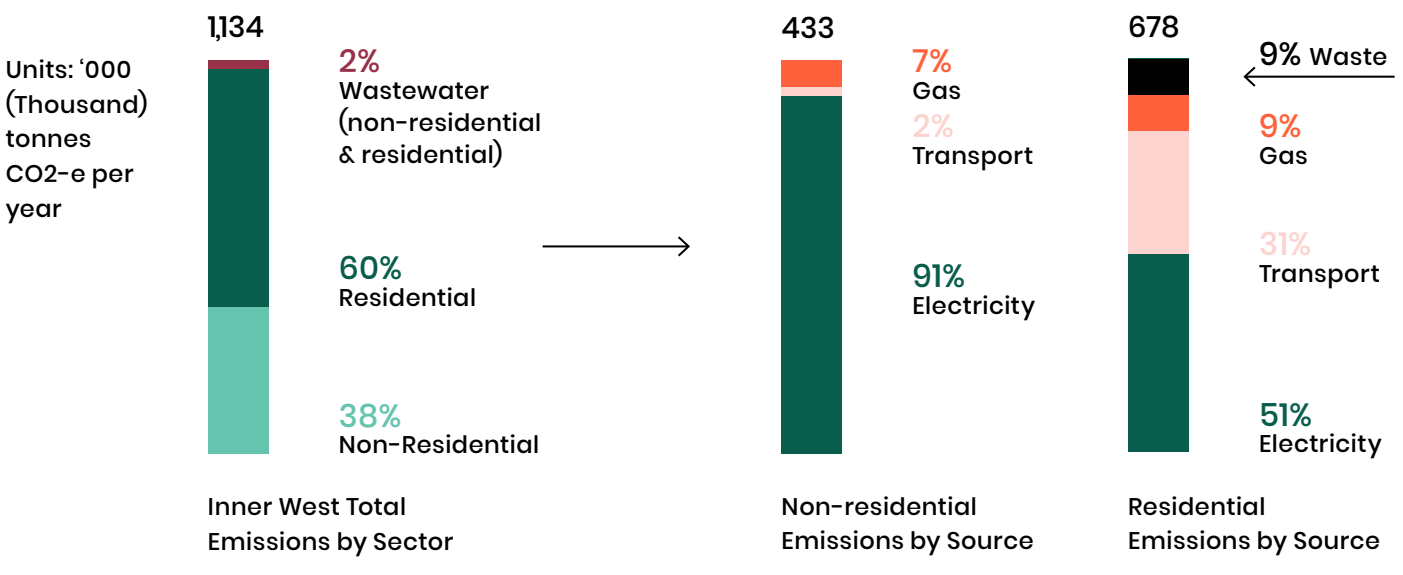
Reducing consumption, waste avoidance and resource recovery are key actions in becoming a zero emissions community.

Priority actions in the Climate and Renewables Strategy include:

- Helping our community address unsustainable consumption e.g. through facilitating and encouraging the share economy
- Eliminating organic waste to landfill – wasted food impacts the environment through resource use in production, manufacturing, packaging, transportation, preparation and disposal, contributing significantly to emissions.

Source: IWC Climate and Renewables Strategy 2019

Emissions in the Inner West by sector (L), and resource type (R).





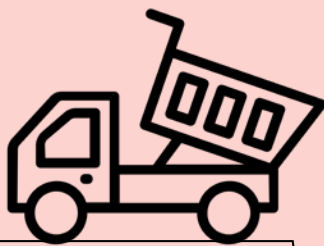
We can extend the useful life of items through reuse and repair, avoiding additional consumption

The Inner West Waste Stream

We know that in our baseline year (2015/2016 amalgamation) Inner West had an overall diversion of residential waste from landfill of 36%. Like most Sydney-Metro councils (and NSW), this falls drastically short of the state target of 75% waste diversion from landfill.

Much of this relates to infrastructure needs for the Sydney-Metro area with limited access to food organics transfer and processing facilities for urban councils.

The diagram on the right outlines the weight of materials collected by Council and how they were processed or disposed of.



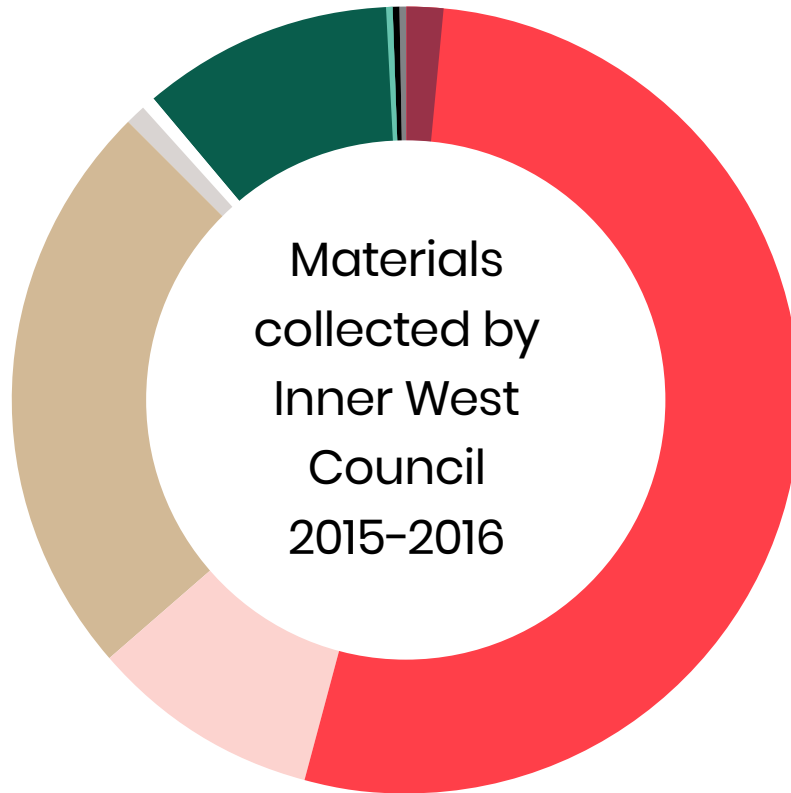
45,138 tonnes of waste goes into landfill each year

15%

6,598 tonnes of waste comes from household clean ups & dumps

85%

38,540 tonnes of waste comes from the kerbside red garbage bin and commercial/trade waste



= 70,913.8 tonnes per year

Approximately 378kg of waste per person per year

Organics

- 7,407 T Kerbside green garden organics
- 103 T Food

Landfill

- 38,540 T Kerbside red garbage bin
- 6,598 T Household clean ups & dumps
- Commercial/trade waste bin (Ashfield and Leichhardt only)

Recycled

- 17,050 T Kerbside yellow recycling bin
- 450 T Mattresses
- 512 T White goods

Drop off

- 132 T E-waste
- 116 T Hazardous chemicals

What Do We target?

Opportunities to avoid and recover more resources were identified through analysis of the kerbside garbage bin through audits:

- 37% is food waste which can be targeted through food waste avoidance, home and local composting and kerbside food organics collection services.
- 27% 'other organics' could be reduced through community avoidance, reuse, recycling and composting.
- 15.5% could be avoided through better use of existing kerbside recycling, garden organics, metals & whitegoods and the chemical and e-waste drop offs.

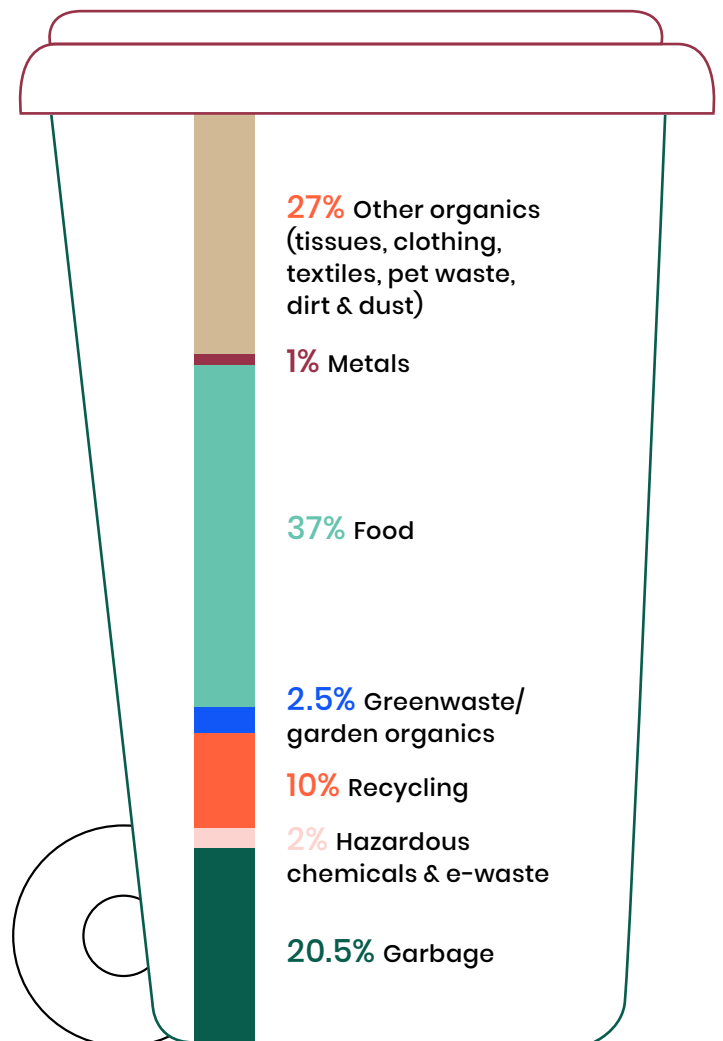
79.5%

can be recovered

There is potential to recover this right now with changes to behaviour and the way we manage materials

20.5%

is actual garbage



Community Research

During 2019, Inner West Council undertook a community survey and series of focus groups to test community knowledge, attitudes and behaviour towards resource recovery and receptivity to rethinking waste as a resource.

Over six hundred residents participated in the telephone survey and over thirty residents in the focus groups, which probed further into information emerging from the survey responses. Participants were randomly sampled and representative of the Inner West community by gender, age, language spoken at home, household size, dwelling type, ownership and geographical location.

What did we learn?

Our community was most concerned about the amount of waste our community produced; those with the greatest level of concern were the most knowledgeable about waste.

Food waste was a concern for most of our community, with many not sure how they could reduce food waste or compost at home.



The community identified key opportunities:

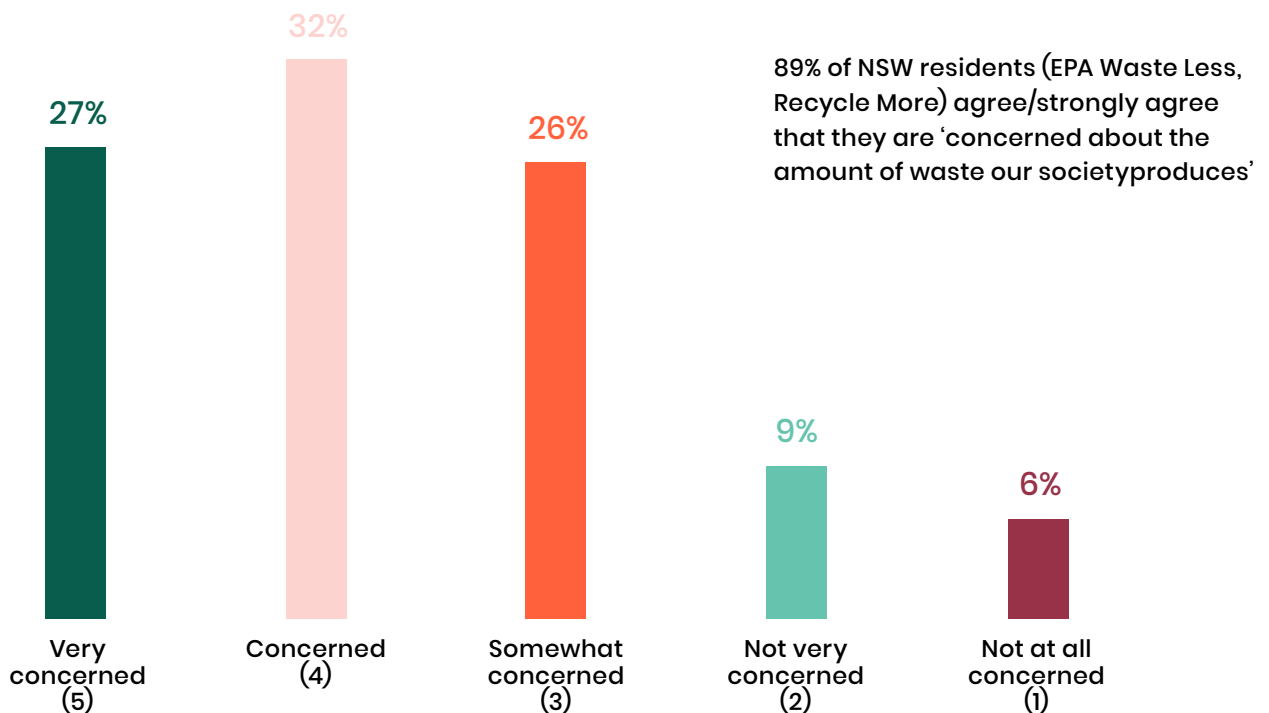
- Improved and targeted waste and recycling information (to improve recycling and use services)
- Food waste avoidance, reuse and recycling initiatives (38% already composted at home)
- Community Recycling/Drop off Centres for hard to recycle items, reuse and safe disposal.

Concern with the Amount of Waste Going to Landfill Across the LGA

	Overall	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer
Mean	3.66	3.43	3.88▲	3.39	3.58	3.78	3.80	3.54	3.71	3.57
Base	590	284	306	62	147	180	119	82	387	203

	Speak a language other than English	Do not speak a language other than English	Single dwelling	Multi-unit dwelling	Number of people living in the home				Leichhardt Service Area	Marrickville Service Area	Ashfield Service Area
Mean	3.43▼	3.77	3.73	3.61	3.44	3.61	3.87	3.65	3.76	3.79▲	3.38▼
Base	187	403	240	351	75	196	132	187	119	299	172

Q1a. How concerned, if at all, are you about the amount of household waste from across the Inner West Council area that goes to landfill?



Scale: 1 = not at all concerned, 5 = very concerned. ▲▼ = A significantly higher/lower level of concern (by group)

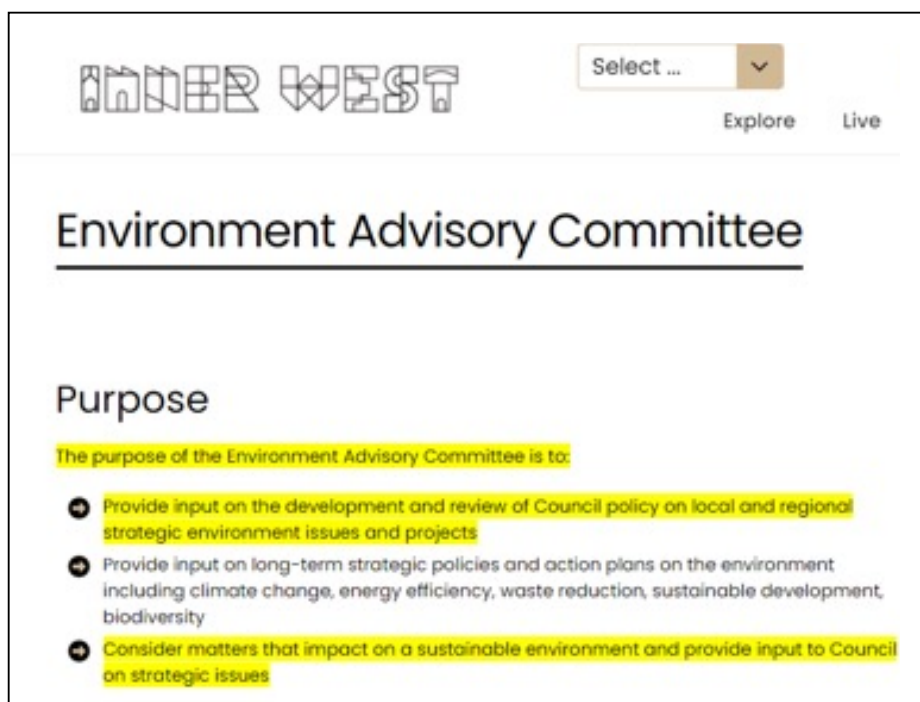
Inner West Environmental Advisory Committee – Review

The Draft IWC Zero Waste Strategy and service transition plan were presented to Inner West’s Community Environmental Advisory Committee in March 2020 for peer review.

The committee’s feedback recommended greater emphasis on:

- Circular economy principles
- Stronger targets/shorter timeframes
- Organics (services and home composting)
- Reuse and repair opportunities, including clean-up
- Access to problem waste drop-offs
- Advocacy for product stewardship

The feedback was incorporated into this Draft Strategy:



Zero Waste Priorities

In transitioning to a zero-waste community and circular economy, the Inner West must focus on the following priorities:

Priorities	Targets	Actions	Timeframes
Avoid Waste Generation Prioritise waste avoidance (consumption), encourage efficient use, reuse and repair through opportunities and influencing individual behaviour.	<i>Reduce waste landfilled per capita by 50% by 2036</i>	1. Maximise waste avoidance (consumption).	Ongoing 2021-2036
		2. Support and improve reuse, repair, sharing and recycling opportunities and access to services and facilities.	Ongoing 2021-2036
		3. Avoid generation of waste from Council operations and events, including single-use plastics.	2021-2025
Reduce Organic Waste Reduce the weight of organics presented for collection and processing and manage organic streams efficiently to avoid resource loss.	<i>Reduce food and garden organic waste disposed in landfill by 60% by 2030</i>	4. Minimise food organics presented through food waste avoidance initiatives.	2021-2036
		5. Support home composting to reuse food as a resource and minimise impacts of collection and processing.	2021-2025 then ongoing
		6. Maximise garden organics and food waste recovery through kerbside organics services.	2021-2025
		7. Maximise reuse and recovery of food and garden organics within Council operations and facilities.	Ongoing 2022-2036
Recycle and Buy Recycled Prioritise recycling and procurement of materials with recycled content to support demand for recycling processing.	<i>Divert 60% of recyclables from the garbage bin by 2036</i>	8. Improve recycling collection systems and education to maximise recovery and reduce contamination.	2023-2027
		9. Use Council's purchasing power to help create a market for recycled products, increasing recycled content, and identify strategic procurement opportunities.	Ongoing 2021-2036
		10. Maximise the quality and quantity of recycling from Council operations and facilities.	Ongoing 2021-2036

Priorities	Targets	Actions	Timeframes
Problem Wastes Problem wastes are usually toxic or hazardous and safe management is essential for our health and environment.	<i>Increase recycling of televisions and computers by 80% by 2036</i>	11. Provide infrastructure and encourage safe management and recycling of problem wastes (chemicals).	2021-2023 then ongoing
	<i>Reduce the amount of hazardous waste presented in the garbage to 50% by 2036</i>	12. Ban televisions and computers from landfill (Recycling via product stewardship scheme).	2025 onwards
	<i>Reduce illegal dumping by 50% by 2030</i>	13. Reduce illegal dumping and encourage reuse and use of clean-up services.	Ongoing 2021-2036
Collaboration and Advocacy	<i>To provide access to mandatory product stewardship schemes through kerbside services or drop-offs for residential wastes for our community by 2030.</i>	14. Build community trust around resource recovery through transparency around materials flows and what happens to waste and recycling collected through Council services.	Ongoing 2021-2036
Resource Recovery inputs and outputs go beyond the inner west boundary and control, requiring a collective approach to effective solutions.	<i>To provide information for our community on Inner West Waste flows for each material stream within three months of a new contract.</i>	15. Collaborate to improve resource recovery by sharing knowledge, working together with all levels of government, local councils and other stakeholders on a shared journey towards a circular economy.	Ongoing 2021-2036
		16. Maximise opportunities and access to product stewardship schemes for the Inner West community and advocate for increased producer responsibility to cover other product types with limited or costly solutions for recycling or safe management.	Ongoing 2021-2036
Reduce Litter Reduce the amount of litter entering our environment.	<i>Reduce litter by 60% by 2030. Reduce plastic litter by 30% by 2025.</i>	17. Provide infrastructure in the right locations with appropriate service to avoid litter.	Ongoing – 2036
		18. Prevent litter entering our local environment.	Ongoing – 2036
		19. Build community capacity and leadership to prevent litter.	Ongoing – 2036
		20. Deliver two new Return and Earn machines for plastic containers within the Inner West.	Ongoing – 2036

*Targets against 2015/16 baseline

Current projects

Avoid Waste Generation

- We are designing a reuse hub with local organisations and deliver repair workshops to maximise reuse of household items.
- Aligning the household **bulky clean-up service** for households to an on-request booked collection. This provides collections when they are most convenient for households and by separating materials (bulky, metals, garden, and mattresses) we can maximise recovery and recycling.

Source: <https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/live/waste-and-recycling/less-waste>



Reduce Organic Waste

- **Food recycling service** for all apartments across the Inner West. The food recycling service became available to all apartments from March 2021 and collects over 500 tonnes annually (increasing with more apartments using the service), reducing organics sent to landfill.
- **Home composting workshops and subsidies.** About 700 composting systems subsidised by council are purchased annually by Inner West residents.

Source: <https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/live/waste-and-recycling/household-waste/your-bins-and-services/food-waste>

Recycle and Buy Recycled

- **Recycling right** through monitoring and education to maximise the quality and quantity of recycling. About 10% of what goes into the garbage bin should be in the recycling bin - We're working to increase our recycling rates and avoid contamination.
- Council is aiming to align recycling by providing **yellow-lidded fortnightly commingled recycling** for all households.

Source: <https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/live/waste-and-recycling/household-waste/recycling-at-home>

Problem Waste

- **Two Community Recycling Centres (CRCs)** open on weekends for dropping off problem waste including paint, oil, batteries, gas bottles, fluorescent globes, smoke detectors, fire alarms and e-waste. Around 80 tonnes of chemicals were dropped off in 2019-20 & 20 tonnes of e-waste for recycling through the CRCs and drop offs.

Source: <https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/live/waste-and-recycling/tricky-waste-items>

Collaboration and Advocacy

Inner West has been working collaboratively with councils in the Southern Sydney Region (SSROC) on strategic resource recovery projects, tenders and submissions on state and federal policies and strategies.

We've been promoting recycling opportunities available through product stewardship schemes.

Source: <https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/live/waste-and-recycling/zero-waste/extended-producer-responsibility>



Zero Waste Strategy Implementation

Implementation of the Zero Waste Strategy will be embedded in Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework and timelines to ensure that priorities are included in the long-term planning and short-term delivery of Council's projects and programs. Longer term outcomes will be in the high-level Delivery Program, which is a four-year document that aligns with the term of the elected Council. Each year Zero Waste Priorities will be detailed in Council's one-year Operational Plan and these will be reported to Council and the community through the Quarterly Reporting process. In addition to these actions, Council will also create efficient and effective measures and targets that will be used to demonstrate Council's progress against service delivery and will ascertain whether Council is moving towards or away from the community's priorities as outlined in the Community Strategic Plan – Our Inner West 2036.



The most effective way of managing waste is to avoid creating it in the first place, which in turn will reduce impacts associated with production, consumption, transportation, processing and disposal. Council and the community need to ensure landfill is a last resort for resources.

