THE CITY OF MELBOURNE

Waste Management Strategy



Table of contents

1.	Executive Summary	2
2.	Introduction	6
3.	Waste and the City of Melbourne	7
3.1.	Why is Waste Important?	7
3.2.	Profile of the City of Melbourne's Activities and Waste	7
4.	Strategic Context	9
4.1.	The City of Melbourne Council Plan 2005-2009	9
4.2.	Other Strategic Directions within the City of Melbourne	10
4.3.	Regulatory Framework	10
4.4.	The Victorian State Government	10
5.	The Sustainable Melbourne Experiences	11
5.1.	Broad Initiatives	11
5.2.	Introducing the Sustainable Melbourne Experiences	11
5.3.	The Sustainable Council Experience	11
5.4.	The Sustainable Living Experience	14
5.5.	The Sustainable Working Experience	16
5.6.	The Sustainable Visiting Experience	18
6.	Implementation, Monitoring and Review	21
6.1.	Implementation	21
6.2.	Monitoring	21
6.3.	Review	21

1. Executive Summary

This Waste Management Strategy (the Strategy) is the City of Melbourne's comprehensive long-term vision for sustainable waste management over the next 15 years. It sets out to continue to achieve improvements in recycling.

Beyond this, its major purpose is to empower people working, visiting and living in the City of Melbourne to 'do more with less' – by avoiding the creation of waste in the first place.

The Strategy approaches waste management using the idea of four 'sustainable experiences' – living, working, visitor and Council. These coexisting experiences acknowledge that at any one time each of us may be a city resident, a city worker, a visitor to the City or part of the organisation of the City of Melbourne.

For each of the four sustainable experiences, the *Strategy* establishes a vision, a set of objectives and broad strategies. Areas for action under each sustainable experience are also identified (see Table 1 on page 3).

The four Sustainable Melbourne Experiences are:

The Sustainable Council experience -

Establishes strategies for the City of Melbourne to set an example to the rest of the community in the way it manages waste, conserves resources and embraces sustainable practice.

OBJECTIVES

- 1 To avoid waste and maximise recycling from Council's operations, and the services it provides to local communities, through lifecycle-based approaches;
- 2 To play a leading role in the development and application of product stewardship, planning and other frameworks to support recycling and sustainable resource use; and
- 3 To be recognised as a leader in waste management and sustainable consumption, inspiring the business sector and the community in sustainability.

The Sustainable Living experience –

Establishes strategies that will improve household participation in sustainable consumption and resource recovery.

OBJECTIVES

1 To minimise the amount of residential waste sent to landfill and maximise household recovery of resources for recycling;



- 2 To have convenient, efficient and environmentally sensitive waste and recycling services for the City of Melbourne's diverse and growing residential population;
- 3 To foster sustainable consumption and waste management practices among the community; and
- 4 To reduce littering and dumping of rubbish.

The Sustainable Working experience -

Establishes strategies to enable businesses in the City of Melbourne and their staff to minimise waste, and progress towards sustainable production and consumption.

OBJECTIVES

- 1 To minimise the amount of waste sent by the business sector to landfill and maximise recycling through effective partnerships;
- 2 To make recycling viable and attractive for all businesses, and foster other business practices and attitudes that support sustainable consumption and production;
- 3 To encourage the growth of businesses within the City of Melbourne that supply eco-efficient products and services; and
- 4 To reduce littering and dumping of rubbish.

The Sustainable Visiting experience -

Establishes strategies enabling visitors to Melbourne to minimise waste and understand the importance of environmentally sustainable practice.

OBJECTIVES

- 1 To enhance the City of Melbourne's attractiveness and sustainability through infrastructure, systems and communications that lead visitors to recycle and dispose of waste appropriately;
- 2 To have more sustainable products and services available and preferred by shoppers; and
- 3 To reduce littering and dumping of rubbish.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

A diagrammatic summary of the actions and priorities over the next four years is presented in Table 1 below.

The full list of actions is presented in a separate Implementation Plan 2005-2006 to 2008-2009, aligning with the current term of the City of Melbourne's elected Council. Individual areas of Council will enact these actions through respective business planning and budgeting frameworks.

Progress will be measured against indicators that cover the four Sustainable Melbourne Experiences. This will occur through an annual review, which will track the performance of projects, and also provide an opportunity for updates to the Implementation Plan.

A more detailed review will occur every four years, with the *Strategy* re-issued under each newly elected Council, accompanied by a new Implementation Plan for the following four year period.

Table 1 - Timelines for Implementation of Key Actions 2005-2009

			Implementation Timeframe			
Si	trategy	Initiative	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
0	verarching Initiatives Extend	ing Across all Four Sustainable Ex	xperiences			
		Investigate opportunities to partner with Sustainability Victoria and other bodies in undertaking projects that focus on the sustainable use of resources, in line with the Victorian Government's Towards Zero Waste Strategy.				
		Develop an integrated strategy for the prevention and management of litter, including illegally dumped rubbish.				
		Strengthen the City of Melbourne's identity as a sustainable City by developing a more consistent approach to communications relating to the wide range of environmental initiatives that it leads and offers to the community.				
S	ustainable Council Experienc	e				
1	Involve the community in recycling and sustainable consumption.	Refer to strategy one under the Sustainable Living Experience.				
2	Avoid waste, improve recycling and embrace sustainable consumption across Council's own operations.	Continue to develop and implement strategies for improvement in waste reduction and recycling across Council's operations and affiliated sites.				
		Complete the construction and fit-out of CH2 with extensive use of environmentally preferred materials.				

			Implement	ation Timefra	me	
St	trategy	Initiative	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
S	ustainable Council Experienc	ce				
3	Reduce the environmental impact of Council's purchasing and contracting	Develop a Sustainable Procurement Policy for Goods, Works and Services.				
	activities.	Demonstrate high levels of purchasing of environmentally preferred products, and strengthen the commitment of contractors to environmentally aligned strategies and actions.				
4	Investigate opportunities for long-term gains in waste reduction and recycling through the development and implementation of policy.	Review the effectiveness of the City of Melbourne's Environment and Activities Local Laws.				
S	ustainable Living Experience					
1	Empower the community	Continue to improve recycling				\rightarrow
	to reduce waste, recycle and practice sustainable consumption.	and waste management services, supported by commitment to community engagement programs.				
		Work with local universities and other tertiary campuses, focusing on the development of recycling infrastructure and services, and waste reduction programs.				
		Ensure waste and recycling services across Docklands are successfully integrated into the City of Melbourne's operations after their transfer to the City of Melbourne in July 2007.				
2	Improve the capacity for recycling in residential apartments.	Improve capacity within the City of Melbourne to require infrastructure and space for recycling in high rise apartments as a condition of planning permits.				
		Develop and implement Sustainable			-	
		Living in the City, a community based social marketing program focusing on sustainable living in flats, units and apartments.				
S	ustainable Working Experier	ice				
1	Educate, motivate and support local businesses in reducing waste, recycling and practicing sustainable production and consumption.	Implement the Savings in the City Program, providing support, recognition and advice to city hotels to cut waste, and the use of energy and water; and progressively expand the program into new business sectors.				
		Develop and implement a Commercial Building ESD Refurbishment Program.				

Implementation Timeframe					
Strategy	Initiative	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Sustainable Working Experie	nce				
2 Provide leadership to ensure that high quality commercial waste and recycling services operate across the municipality, balancing the needs of residents and the business community. Pursue improvements in waste and recycling services for businesses that align with Council's aims of protecting local amenity, enhancing environmental outcomes, and satisfying the needs of local businesses for efficient services.	Pursue improvements in waste and recycling services for businesses that align with Council's aims of protecting local amenity, enhancing environmental outcomes, and satisfying the needs of local businesses for efficient services				
3 Apply relevant local laws, planning frameworks and permitting processes to ensure that local businesses manage their waste in an environmentally responsible manner.	Develop Construction Management Plan guidelines that must be considered by developers for sites specified under the Activities Local Law. The guidelines will include waste management including reuse and recycling. Ensure new and renovated com-mercial properties have capacity to manage their waste in a responsible way, by requiring adequate space and infrastructure for the storage of waste and recycling bins on the premises as a condition of planning permits.				
Sustainable Visiting Experien					
Build capacity for visitors to practice waste minimisation and recycling.	Work with partners to ensure high standards of public place recycling for the 2006 Commonwealth Games. Continue to expand the network of public place recycling bins across				
	the municipality. Investigate eco-labelling and opportunities for a City of Melbourne incentive program to reward businesses who promote environmentally preferred products and services.				
2 Inspire and support retailers and other businesses in promoting sustainable products and packaging.	Monitor developments on plastic bags and develop communication campaigns and collaborative partnerships to minimise their use.				

2. Introduction



The Waste Management Strategy is Council's comprehensive long-term vision for sustainable waste management. Waste represents one of the first examples of communities taking environmental action on a large scale. Victorians started to embrace household recycling more than a decade ago, well before water consumption and greenhouse emissions captured the community's attention to the extent we see today.

These days, recycling is a firm habit within most households, giving thousands of tonnes of waste a second life and reducing the amount of waste which ends up in landfill.

Households are only one part of the story. Most of the City of Melbourne's waste in fact comes from businesses. Melbourne's business waste comes from many different areas – including cafes, restaurants and hotels, as well as manufacturing, retailers, hospitals, education campuses and offices.

With the progress being made by households and businesses in recycling, one would expect a strong decline in waste to landfill. However, we are not seeing this. The overall amount of waste we produce continues to grow as our society consumes more and more.

The *Strategy* is the City of Melbourne's framework to address this challenge over the next 15 years. As well as continuing to improve resource recovery through recycling, the important task ahead is to 'do more with less' – that is, avoiding the creation of waste in the first place.

With the momentum of growing community expectations, more progressive approaches by industry and governments and advances in technology, the *Strategy* identifies the issues Council will focus on, acknowledging the wide range of activities going on within the municipality.

It presents strategies that focus on the hundreds of thousands of visitors to the City each year, as well as its residents and business communities, to achieve better outcomes in recycling and sustainable consumption.

The *Strategy* has been developed in consultation with people and organisations interested in the City of Melbourne's future direction on waste, following the release of a Draft Strategy for community consultation in May 2005.

3. Waste and the City of Melbourne

3.1. WHY IS WASTE IMPORTANT?

Taking action with recycling

Waste represents one of the first examples of communities taking action with the environment on a large scale. Victorians started to embrace household recycling more than a decade ago, well before water consumption and greenhouse emissions captured the community's attention to the extent we see today.

The most obvious concern about waste is the impact of sending it to landfill. Even though landfills are managed to high environmental standards, they continue to cause environmental harm. This includes the release of greenhouse gases into our atmosphere, and the risk of leaching harmful by-products into the soil.

Sustainable Consumption and Production

A significant shift in thinking is underway towards 'lifecycle approaches,' and 'sustainable consumption and production.' These approaches capture the idea that waste represents a lost opportunity.

Recovering resources for recycling allows embodied energy and natural resources to be recaptured for further use. This is less depleting to the environment than the traditional cycle of sending waste to landfill, and replacing it with products made from freshly harvested resources.

Changes are occurring in government policy and across industry as these factors become more widely recognised. The notion of shared responsibility already shapes some legislation and the way industry approaches its core activities. Integrated systems approaches that start with the design of a product, and reduce waste at the source, are complex to develop. However, in whole they deliver far greater benefits than recycling, which on its own is an 'end-of-pipe' solution.

An Opportunity for the City of Melbourne

A growing consciousness of environmental issues is also leading to stricter standards for managing waste – and higher costs. Some common waste materials may eventually be banned from landfill, adding momentum to the search for better solutions.

The City of Melbourne has an opportunity to harness innovation in the way it manages waste, its approaches to sustainable resource use, and the way it engages with local communities.

3.2. PROFILE OF THE CITY OF MELBOURNE'S ACTIVITIES AND WASTE

The City of Melbourne contains a concentrated mix of residential, commercial and industrial development.

Council has a variety of responsibilities for waste according to its origin. For households, Council provides kerbside waste and recycling services as a core part of its involvement with the community. However, residential waste makes up a small part of the solid waste stream in comparison with the quantity generated by business. (See Table 2 below).

For business, voluntary partnerships and other approaches are the basis of Council's engagement, as opposed to the delivery of waste and recycling services. There are many influences on industry in their approach to waste.

Market factors and State Government policy often have a far greater impact on business directions than do Council initiatives. Council has an important role in dealing with all of these waste streams, but engages with each sector in a different capacity.

3.2.1. RESIDENTIAL PROFILE

Council is directly responsible for providing waste and recycling services to households. For the City of Melbourne,

Table 2 - Melbourne's Total Waste Picture 2003-2004

Waste Sector	Total Tonnes per year – Garbage and recycling combined	Total Tonnes per year – Recycled	Diversion Rate
Residential Services	15 934	3 854	24%
Council Waste from Public Spaces	10 755	-	0%
Commercial and Industrial	102 557	41 000	40%
Construction and Demolition	420 000	294 000	70%
TOTAL TONNES	549 246	338 854	62%

this involves challenges that are very different from those facing other municipalities.

The City of Melbourne's population places it as Victoria's fifth fastest growing municipality, the current number of residents being 60,000. This will increase dramatically over the next 15 years, with another 51,000 residents expected to make City of Melbourne their home. The biggest single influence will be from Docklands joining the municipality in 2007, leading to an increase of 15,000 residents.

More than 80% of the City of Melbourne's residential properties are flats, units or apartments. Council provides waste management services that are specially designed for apartments, but it remains difficult for many of them to manage an effective recycling service. This is because buildings typically aren't designed for recycling in the first place. Garbage shutes make it easy to dispose of waste, but residents may have to manually cart their recyclables to a basement area – leading to very poor levels of participation.

Another factor setting the City of Melbourne apart is its student population. Up to 30% of its residents are overseas and local students. Many student households have a high rate of turnover.

3.2.2. PUBLIC SPACE PROFILE

Melbourne attracts more than 600,000 visitors on an average day, made up of people travelling to and from work, students and tourists. These people purchase and consume products, and generate waste. The number of daily visitors is expected to grow to one million within the next decade.

Every year, Council collects more than 10,000 tonnes of waste from public spaces. This is almost as much as the quantity of garbage collected from residential properties.

The waste Council collects from public spaces comes from different sources, the largest being street sweepings. These are mainly made up of leaves and debris, which is important to remove from streets and gutters to prevent it reaching our waterways through the stormwater system. Council also collects waste from litter bins, litter collected from street cleansing operations and dumped rubbish. Illegal dumping is a significant problem in the City of Melbourne.

The quantities accounted for here do not include public place recycling – that is, material collected either through the City's permanently installed bins or through events that have special services for recycling and waste management.



Visitors at Southgate

3.2.3. COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROFILE

Apart from limited services to commercial properties, Council has little direct involvement in the collection of waste and recycling from businesses across the City of Melbourne.

Excluding Construction and Demolition activity (see item 2.2.4 below), the business sector accounts for 102,000 tonnes of waste and recycling that is collected across the City of Melbourne each year. This is six times the quantity that comes from the City's households. The sources of business waste range from manufacturers, to large office-based businesses in the central business district, and small retailers across the municipality – each with different needs and patterns of waste generation.

The sector as a whole has a higher recycling rate than households in the City of Melbourne – an estimated 40%. However, this encompasses many different levels of waste generation and recycling. Large manufacturing and office-based organisations often recycle large amounts, while many other businesses do not recycle at all.

The sectors with the largest waste generation rates in the City of Melbourne are accommodation, cafes and restaurants, manufacturing, hospitals and community services, and retail.

3.2.4. CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION PROFILE

Construction and demolition activities account for a massive 420,000 tonnes of waste and recycling generated in the City of Melbourne, representing a much higher level of construction activity than other metropolitan areas.

Fortunately, the sector diverts an estimated 70% of this for recycling. Large scale demolition projects such as the MCG, where up to 95% of the waste was recycled, boost the sector's overall diversion result. An important trend is the growing level of interest in 'green' buildings, which through careful design use less resources and energy than conventional buildings, and provide a healthy environment for staff.

4. Strategic Context

The City of Melbourne's commitment to sustainability is the foundation of the Strategy. The strategy will shape Council initiatives relating to waste and sustainable resource use over the next 15 years, and operate within the broad context of State Government policy.

4.1. THE CITY OF MELBOURNE COUNCIL PLAN 2005-2009

This is the key document that guides Council's strategic direction until June 2009. It is closely linked to the City of Melbourne's vision of a thriving and sustainable city as presented in *City Plan 2010*. The *Strategy* supports the Council Plan's Strategic Objective of an Environmentally Responsible City (see Table 3 below).

This strategic objective is supported by strategies to:

- Sustainably manage waste in the City of Melbourne (from Strategy 4.2); and
- Demonstrate and encourage leadership in Sustainability (Strategy 4.4).

The strategies include priorities that are relevant to the *Strategy*:

- Reduce community and Council waste, and increase the proportion of waste diverted to recycling and re-use (Strategy 4.2.05);
- Help the Sustainable Melbourne Fund support sustainable business initiatives (Strategy 4.4.01);
- Encourage ecologically sustainable building construction by researching and promoting what the Council has learned from the Council House 2 (CH2) project (Strategy 4.4.02); and
- Promote the Melbourne Principles for Sustainable Cities (from Strategy 4.4.04).



Lord Mayor, John So launches the Butt-free city campaign

The Melbourne Principles mentioned earlier were formally adopted by the City of Melbourne in 2002 as a guiding framework for making Melbourne a sustainable city. They include the principles:

- Enable communities to minimise their ecological footprint; and
- Promote sustainable production and consumption, through appropriate use of environmentally sound technologies and effective demand management.

The Strategic Objective of an Environmentally Responsible City also outlines strategies to reduce greenhouse emissions and improve water quality, both having relevance to waste. While the decay of organic wastes in landfill contributes to our greenhouse emissions, other technologies are emerging that not only prevent this, but may provide a source of renewable energy. Also, litter is one of the key factors that adversely affect the quality of our stormwater.

Table 3 – Strategic Objectives 2005-2009

	City of Melbourne Cou	ıncil Plan 2005-2009			
	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES - A	SPIRATIONS FOR THE CITY			
A connected and accessible city	An innovative and vital business city	An inclusive and engaging city An environmentally responsible city			
	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES - INTERNAL PERFORMANCE				
A well-managed ar	A well-managed and leading corporation		nsible corporation		

4.2. OTHER STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS WITHIN THE CITY OF MELBOURNE

The City of Melbourne has other frameworks that have links to waste:

- Growing Green Strategy, an Environmental Sustainability Plan for the City of Melbourne's open space and recreational facilities, including commitments to waste minimisation and recycling. This Strategy features in the Council Plan 2005-2009;
- Waste Wise 2002-2005, the plan superseded by the Waste Management Strategy; and
- Zero Net Emissions by 2020 Strategy, a roadmap to guide Council, businesses, industry and residents toward the ultimate goal of zero (net) greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

4.3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

As well as State Government legislation on the environment, led by the *Environment Protection Act 1970*, local laws exist that govern aspects of waste management within the municipality.

The most important of these to waste is the City of Melbourne's *Environment Local Law 1999*, which sets out standards in environmental management for business. It gives Council the capacity to require businesses to limit any negative impact of their operations, and to store bins and other containers on premises.

Another standard set out in the *Environment Local Law* is for businesses to take all necessary steps to ensure that all recyclable material and green waste is separated from other waste materials.

Waste is indirectly affected by other legislation too. One important area is the framework for planning across Victoria. This has implications for the way buildings may be designed to enable recycling services to be provided to households and businesses.

4.4. THE VICTORIAN STATE GOVERNMENT

Towards Zero Waste

The Victorian Government launched the *Towards Zero Waste Strategy* in September 2005. The strategy's objectives over the next 10 years are to generate less waste, increase recycling, and reduce damage to the environment caused by waste.

For the municipal sector, *Towards Zero Waste* sets a non-mandatory target to recover 65% of waste for reuse or recycling by 2014. It establishes priority products and materials as focal points for action. It also signposts the State Government's commitment to approaches such as product stewardship, and engagement and education.



City street cleaning

The Planning Framework for Waste Management

The City of Melbourne is one of nine Councils that are represented in the Western Regional Waste Management Group (RWMG). Apart from their planning role, Victoria's 16 RWMGs assist member Councils with education and engagement programs through their Regional Education Officers.

In September 2005, the Victorian Government announced reforms to the metropolitan framework for waste planning. The four metropolitan RWMGs, including Western RWMG, will amalgamate to form a new Metropolitan Waste Management Group (MWMG).

This organisation will be able to enter contracts for waste and recycling. The reforms are intended to meet the challenges in planning, contracting and delivering enhanced services across Melbourne. The Government is aiming for the new organisation to commence in July 2006.

5. The Sustainable Melbourne Experiences

5.1. BROAD INITIATIVES

Three important directions are at the forefront of the City of Melbourne's commitment to sustainable resource use and waste management through the *Strategy*:

- Through close partnerships with Sustainability
 Victoria and other bodies, pursue opportunities in
 sustainable consumption and resource recovery that
 align with the directions of the Victorian Government's Towards Zero Waste Strategy;
- Develop an integrated strategy for the prevention and management of litter; and
- Enhance the City of Melbourne's identity as a thriving and sustainable City.

5.2. INTRODUCING THE SUSTAINABLE MELBOURNE EXPERIENCES

Reducing waste entails a wide range of challenges for the many communities and businesses represented in the City of Melbourne. In any given day, a person plays several different roles, each with their own demands. For example, different pressures, expectations and opportunities often apply in the workplace compared to those we encounter at home.

Attending a popular event in the City of Melbourne will also present different dynamics from those that apply within households. The *Strategy* acknowledges the different roles people play with strategies framed under four 'sustainable experiences':

- The Sustainable Council experience establishes strategies for the City of Melbourne to set an example to the rest of the community in the way it manages waste, conserves resources and embraces sustainable practice;
- The Sustainable Living experience establishes strategies that will improve household participation in sustainable consumption and resource recovery;
- The Sustainable Working experience establishes strategies to enable businesses in the City of Melbourne and their staff to minimise waste, and progress towards sustainable production and consumption; and
- The Sustainable Visiting experience establishes strategies enabling visitors to Melbourne to minimise waste and understand the importance of environmentally sustainable practice.

Each of the 'sustainable experiences' is the basis for the actions outlined in the Strategy's supporting implementation plan.



Architectural model of CH2 - leading the world in green architecture

5.3. THE SUSTAINABLE COUNCIL EXPERIENCE

5.3.1. **VISION**

By 2020, the City of Melbourne will be recognised for its innovation and leadership in putting triple bottom line thinking into practice. Through advocacy and partnerships with other government bodies and industry, the City will have made a significant contribution to directions in policy that support sustainable outcomes.

There will be a commitment to continuous improvement in recycling and sustainable consumption across the organisation, with staff taking pride in individual actions that make a difference to the City of Melbourne's use of resources.

The City of Melbourne will continue to be proactive in purchasing environmentally friendly products and materials. High standards of waste minimisation and recycling will also apply to works carried out by contractors. These practices will become firmly established within systems across the organisation, allowing Council's 'green supply chain' to be demonstrated with facts and figures. As a major purchaser of goods and services, the City of

Melbourne's actions will influence the environmental practice of many businesses.

The example set by the City of Melbourne will be a foundation for empowering businesses, residents and visitors. Strong connections between Council and the communities it serves will enhance local understanding and involvement in sustainable consumption and recycling.

5.3.2. OBJECTIVES

- 1 To avoid waste and maximise recycling from Council's operations, and the services it provides to local communities, through lifecycle-based approaches;
- 2 To play a leading role in the development and application of product stewardship, planning and other frameworks to support recycling and sustainable resource use; and
- 3 To be recognised as a leader in waste management and sustainable consumption, inspiring the business sector and the community in sustainability.

5.3.3. TRENDS SUPPORTING THE SUSTAINABLE COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

Triple bottom line commitment

The City of Melbourne has already shown environmental leadership through ambitious programs and strategies addressing greenhouse emissions, water and other aspects of sustainability. In 2000, the City was the first council in Victoria to be certified as *Waste Wise*, and was recertified in 2004.

The *Strategy* builds upon the achievements and learnings from Council's earlier framework for waste management, *Waste Wise 2002-2005*. A significant body of expertise has developed within the organisation through such initiatives.

The City of Melbourne's visionary new office building is another example of Council's commitment to sustainability. To be completed in 2006, the CH2 project is the first in Australia to achieve the six Green Star certified rating, and is already making an impact on the way Australia approaches ecologically sustainable design.

Services provided to the community

Through its waste and recycling services, Council can bring better environmental outcomes within the community's reach. The City of Melbourne introduced a more convenient and efficient kerbside system in December 2004, leading to a 50% increase in household recycling.

Drop off facilities also play an important role in household recycling. The Dynon Road Waste and Recycling Centre

provides an avenue for the recycling or safe disposal of items that can not readily be collected through kerbside services. The City of Melbourne and CityWide, who operate the site on the Council's behalf, are committed to the strategic role of the site in providing enhanced recycling services in line with growing community expectations.

A long term challenge exists for Council to find a better solution for the garbage stream than landfill. A solution may arise as a result of the tender conducted in 2004 by the Western Regional Waste Management Group (Western RWMG).

The Western RWMG tendered on behalf of its nine member Councils, including the City of Melbourne, for a service to sort and recover resources from the mixed waste, or garbage stream. The facility to achieve this is sometimes referred to as a 'wet Materials Recovery Facility' (wet MRF).

The capacity to influence

As a capital city local government, the City of Melbourne enjoys a high profile, and often engages with other levels of government and industry. The City's involvement with the 2006 Commonwealth Games is an example of Council's active role with major projects and issues.

The City of Melbourne also has considerable influence on commercial suppliers through the scale of its contracts and the purchasing that it carries out.

5.3.4. THE MAJOR ISSUES TO RESOLVE

The need to make 'green purchasing' easier

Environmentally friendly products including those with recycled content are more plentiful today than they ever have been. The City of Melbourne is already making many purchasing decisions based on durability, recycled content and a product's capacity to be recycled.

However, such 'lifecycle thinking' is not easy to apply systematically. There are successful examples of this under major Council contracts, however there is capacity for Council to guide better-informed purchasing decisions across its own and its contractors' activities. This leads to the important step of evaluating Council's purchasing activities for their environmental credentials. It is important that the City of Melbourne develop effective internal systems to measure and report on these outcomes.

Balancing costs and benefits

Environmentally-preferred products sometimes come at a premium to other products. When this happens, it is important for Council to make a balanced decision that takes its financial, social and environmental responsibilities into account. However, environmentally-friendly products can also lead to savings, which are often overlooked. Better durability, and design for disassembly, repair or reuse, provide long-term benefits that must also be considered.



Children learning about worm farms and composting

5.3.5. STRATEGIES

1 Involve the community in recycling and sustainable consumption.

Links between local communities and sustainability will be a key focus as Council makes ongoing improvements to household waste and recycling services. Included will be initiatives resulting from Council partnerships with industry and other government bodies to develop product stewardship solutions. This strategy will be implemented through the 'Sustainable Living Experience' – Strategy 1: Empower the community to reduce waste, recycle and practice sustainable consumption.

2 Avoid waste, improve recycling and embrace sustainable consumption across Council's own operations.

The City of Melbourne will continue to challenge itself to reduce waste and increase recycling across its operations. The Waste Wise framework will remain the basis for Council's commitment to identifying key waste streams, developing plans, putting changes into place and measuring performance. Staff involvement will be a key ingredient. Council will also seek opportunities to extend these approaches to organisations that it is closely affiliated with.

3 Reduce the environmental impact of Council's purchasing and contracting activities.

Through its contracts and purchases, the City of Melbourne will extend its commitment to conducting business in an environmentally responsible way. An early priority is to establish internal systems to guide and measure the purchasing of recycled, greenhouse friendly and environmentally preferred products.

4 Investigate opportunities for long-term gains in waste reduction and recycling through the development and implementation of policy.

The City of Melbourne recognises the importance of integrated approaches to waste reduction and recycling that combine education, infrastructure and enforcement. Council will assess the effectiveness of its local laws and their implementation. Broader policy frameworks will also be considered, including those for planning and building. Where appropriate, the City of Melbourne will work with the state government and industry towards the development of improved frameworks.

Elements of this strategy will be implemented through the 'Sustainable Living Experience' - Strategy 2: Improve the capacity for recycling in residential apartments, and the 'Sustainable Working Experience' - Strategy 3: Apply relevant local laws, planning frameworks and permitting processes to ensure that local businesses manage their waste in an environmentally responsible manner.

5.4. THE SUSTAINABLE LIVING EXPERIENCE

5.4.1. VISION

By 2020, recycling solutions will exist for practically all household packaging and consumables used by the City of Melbourne's growing residential population, thanks to innovation and product stewardship approaches involving brand owners and their supply chains, governments and recyclers. Waste and recycling services will be in place that produce better environmental outcomes – responding to growing community expectations, evolving technologies and Council leadership.

Stronger environmental consciousness among the community, and greater availability of sustainable products, will carve an easy pathway to sustainable purchasing decisions. Comfortable living will be helped along by an abundance of safe, lasting and 'repair-friendly' products – none of which leave a burden for future generations when they reach the end of their life.

Rather than consuming *more*, the City of Melbourne's residents will be consuming *better*.

5.4.2. OBJECTIVES

- 1 To minimise the amount of residential waste sent to landfill and maximise household recovery of resources for recycling;
- 2 To have convenient, efficient and environmentally sensitive waste and recycling services for the City of Melbourne's diverse and growing residential population;
- 3 To foster sustainable consumption and waste management practices among the community; and
- 4 To reduce littering and dumping of rubbish.

5.4.3. TRENDS SUPPORTING THE SUSTAINABLE LIVING OBJECTIVES

Community acceptance of recycling

In the last decade, access to recycling has rapidly expanded, and separating packaging and paper for recycling has become engrained in household behaviour – in effect, the community now regards recycling as a basic entitlement.

Widespread participation in Household Chemical Collections, and in a trial E-Waste Collection in June 2005, further show that many care enough about the impact of hazardous wastes to be willing to travel a distance to a collection point. The challenge now is to build upon this foundation and foster sustainable consumption practices.

Growing support for community-based environmental programs

The popularity of the Waste Wise Schools Program shows

the success that can be achieved through programs that engage local communities. The program is a popular means of educating students about the importance of recycling and waste reduction, in tandem with setting up waste and recycling systems within schools.

Community programs such as *Sustainability Street* are also achieving success in combining waste education with local action. The program works with small local communities to encourage all residents to be involved in a wide range of sustainability issues.

Recycling technologies

Big changes have occurred in the last decade to make recycling more convenient for the community, and more efficient. Many areas have moved from bag-based collection of recyclables, to crates and tied paper bundles, and now to bins where packaging, paper and cardboard can be deposited together – known as a commingled service.

This has become possible thanks to improved sorting technologies. The City of Melbourne's commingled service, introduced in December 2004, has resulted in a 50% increase in recycling – demonstrating the importance of providing a service that is easy to use.

Newer technologies are on the horizon that offer the means to address a far greater challenge – the garbage stream. Through alternative waste technologies, the quantity and toxicity of the waste requiring final disposal can be reduced.

They also offer the potential to recover resources from the residual waste stream, including organics and energy. There is even discussion as to whether these systems could eventually lead to the recovery of resources from a single bin containing the entire household waste stream. However, this remains contentious and would only eventuate if the cost and effectiveness of such systems could be clearly demonstrated.

Government policy

The Commonwealth and State Governments are setting out to improve waste management standards through voluntary and regulatory actions. The State Government has released a *Towards Zero Waste Strategy* in September 2005. The strategy issues a challenge to reduce waste and increase recycling through a set of statewide targets to increase recycling and limit waste generation.

Towards Zero Waste also establishes product stewardship as a priority for consumer packaging, electronics and other materials. This recognises the need to share responsibility for waste across the supply chain.

Higher environmental standards of landfill management are also signalled by the State Government. This is

expected to lead to higher costs of landfill disposal, and potentially to the banning of certain materials from landfill.

5.4.4. THE MAJOR ISSUES TO RESOLVE

The need for product stewardship

Local Government has a very limited capacity to influence the type of materials that end up as household waste. Product stewardship solutions are vital to 'closing the loop' through commitment by brand owners and other elements of the supply chain to reduce waste and make products more recyclable.

Space for recycling in apartments

Many new high-rise apartments have been built without recycling in mind. There are often shutes for garbage, but no such convenient system for recycling.

Finding new ways to provide recycling services to our growing population of apartment dwellers is a major challenge to the City of Melbourne and other inner city Local Governments. This calls for a strategic response through frameworks for planning and building by State and Local Governments.

The need to engage with student communities

A significant proportion of the City of Melbourne's population are local and overseas tertiary students. It is important to consider the behaviours and needs of students in developing education programs. Cultural and language differences are one of the challenges to address with care. Also, turnover of rental properties tends to be high, with many tenancies spanning a year or less.

A society consuming more and more

The world is consuming more and more. This generalisation is demonstrated locally by national and statewide data. While there has been tremendous progress in household recycling, the greater challenge now is to engender sustainable consumption – by doing 'more with less,' and choosing safe and lasting products.

Managing organics in the waste stream

Food scraps and garden clippings can make up a large amount of household waste. If disposed to landfill, these materials contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and the risk of leachate polluting local waterways. Home composting is a popular solution for some. Many outer suburban areas also provide a separate bin to allow green waste to be recycled.

However, these systems are costly, and more difficult to justify in inner city areas that have less space for bins and smaller gardens. It is important for the City of Melbourne to consider practical ways to address organics



Household recycling

in the waste stream through long-term approaches. Processing the residual waste stream for resource recovery and/or to stabilise and reduce the waste stream are important issues to consider.

5.4.5. STRATEGIES

1 Empower the community to reduce waste, recycle and practice sustainable consumption.

The City of Melbourne will improve household recycling outcomes through existing kerbside services, and by pursuing opportunities to expand the range of recyclable materials that can be collected or dropped off at designated sites. An important part of this will entail working with other levels of government and industry towards product stewardship solutions that deliver benefits to our local community.

This will be supported by initiatives to encourage the community to think and behave differently with the products they consume, as well as reinforcing household recycling. Council's approaches will reflect the needs of particular groups, including students and communities in high-rise apartments.

The City of Melbourne also has a long term commitment to seeking a better solution for the garbage stream than landfill. Council will pursue these improvements in consultation with the community.

2 Improve the capacity for recycling in residential apartments

The City of Melbourne will ensure new apartments provide sufficient space and infrastructure for recycling through the implementation of appropriate state planning guidelines and the Melbourne Planning Scheme. This direction will take account of other planning frameworks and resources available from the State Government and industry. The City of Melbourne will also work to improve levels of recycling within existing apartments.

5.5. THE SUSTAINABLE WORKING EXPERIENCE

5.5.1. **VISION**

By 2020 Melbourne City will be regarded as one of the world's most sustainable working cities.

Retailers and other businesses will encourage customers to choose sustainable options in packaging, products and services. Within the workplace, business managers and workers will continue to take on the challenge of improving practices to reduce waste and use resources more wisely.

Recycling will be standard practice for all businesses, and less waste will be produced in the first place. Alongside a growing population, innovative and efficient waste collection services will operate in the City's thriving central business district, and other inner city areas. The challenges of waste storage and collection will be met with solutions that are positive for the City's attractiveness as a business and visitor destination.

These outcomes will be supported by improved systems for re-use and recycling, a widespread commitment to sustainability, and an appropriate framework of enforcement.

5.5.2. OBJECTIVES

- 1 To minimise the amount of waste sent by the business sector to landfill and maximise recycling through effective partnerships;
- 2 To make recycling viable and attractive for all businesses, and foster other business practices and attitudes that support sustainable consumption and production;
- 3 To encourage the growth of businesses within the City of Melbourne that supply eco-efficient products and services; and
- 4 To reduce littering and dumping of rubbish.

5.5.3. TRENDS SUPPORTING THE SUSTAINABLE WORKING OBJECTIVES

A growing workplace focus on recycling and sustainability

Businesses are steadily focusing more on opportunities to reduce impacts on the environment. Paper recycling is one example that has been introduced to many workplaces in recent years, especially large corporations. High-level organisational commitments and programs are increasingly driving initiatives to reduce waste, often leading to business savings.

Environmentally-friendly systems and solutions

It has not always been easy for businesses and other consumers to make green choices, even if they want to do so. More environmentally-friendly products are now available, as is support from industry and government.

Tools are emerging to help evaluate different options. For example, the Green Building Council of Australia's Green Star program evaluates office design based on a number of environmental criteria including energy and water efficiency, indoor environment quality, waste avoidance and resource conservation.

Government policy

State and federal governments have a commitment to product stewardship approaches, and other initiatives to reduce the burden of waste on the environment. The State Government's *Towards Zero Waste Strategy* sets a statewide target to improve industry resource recovery from below 60% to 80% by 2014.

Landfill bans for certain waste streams are expected to be considered within the next decade.

5.5.4. THE MAJOR ISSUES TO RESOLVE

Coordination of waste management services

Household waste and recycling services are provided by the City of Melbourne. By contrast, businesses have specific waste management needs and nearly always arrange services through private waste collectors. Many recycling and waste collectors operate across Melbourne.

With the growing popularity of the central business district for businesses and as a place to live, there is increasing pressure on waste collectors to provide services efficiently, and without disturbing local populations. Council sometimes becomes involved in commercial waste management activities through its role of enforcing the *Environmental Local Law* and other regulations.



Recycling in the workplace

The challenge of engaging with the business sector

The business sector generates six times as much waste than households within the City of Melbourne – this excludes an even greater quantity of waste arising from construction and demolition activity.

Opportunities for the City of Melbourne to influence businesses are different from Council's role with the community, due to the waste and recycling services provided to households. The introduction of a commingled recycling service in December 2004 has led to a 50% increase in household recycling, because it is convenient to use.

Different approaches are necessary with businesses, given their role in managing their own waste collection.

Despite a growing environmental consciousness, good recycling practices at home often aren't translated to the workplace – typically because good systems and habits are not yet established. For managers, waste often isn't given a high priority. Demands of day-to-day business may often lead to a reluctance to accept any operational changes and additional costs required for recycling, especially among small businesses.

The difficulties facing different business sectors vary a great deal. Recovering paper and cardboard tends to be the first recycling priority for Melbourne's growing office sector. Many office-based businesses already do this successfully, however others fail to reach reasonable recycling levels, even when a service is available.

Small businesses, on the other hand, face many competing demands, and even finding enough floorspace for recycling can be a challenge.

Guiding business choices

Bringing about a shift towards more environmentallyinformed purchasing and business decisions is a further challenge. The City of Melbourne can play a role through its services to the business sector, by the example it sets through its own operations, and through partnerships with relevant industry and government bodies.

The need for product stewardship

Retailers sell products to customers in packaging that ends up as waste. From dealing with drink cups to plastic bags, there is a need for shared responsibility to reduce packaging, and to ensure the means to recycle. The National Packaging Covenant is an example of a product stewardship mechanism, however further work is necessary to address problematic waste streams.

Managing organics in the waste stream

Some businesses produce large quantities of food waste that is disposed to landfill, leading to greenhouse emissions and other environmental impacts. Services to recover food waste from businesses exist, however uptake is limited. Storage constraints, managing contamination and cost are among the obstacles.

5.5.5. STRATEGIES

1 Educate, motivate and support local businesses in reducing waste, recycling and practising sustainable production and consumption.

The City of Melbourne will pursue opportunities to work with specific business sectors to reduce waste and use resources more wisely. Projects will arise where opportunities align with Council's role and existing relationships with industry. The level of partnership support from industry and other levels of government will guide the selection of projects.

The City of Melbourne will also pursue opportunities to support the local growth of an eco-efficient business sector. As well as pursuing these approaches through new programs, Council will seek to involve businesses through existing Council networks.

2 Provide leadership to ensure that high quality commercial waste and recycling services operate across the municipality, balancing the needs of residents and the business community.

The City of Melbourne will play a strategic role in monitoring commercial waste and recycling services across the municipality, especially in light of its growing residential population and increasing levels of business activity. Council will provide support, advice and direction to the waste management industry to address local commercial waste management challenges.

3 Apply relevant local laws, planning frameworks and permitting processes to ensure that local businesses manage their waste in an environmentally responsible manner.

The City of Melbourne will use enforcement to underpin important standards relating to waste management. Council will develop stronger levels of awareness among businesses of their responsibilities under the *Environment Local Law*. These responsibilities include managing waste responsibly, and keeping the City's footpaths and lane-ways clean.

Waste management will increasingly be considered in the assessment of planning permit applications - both in



A plastic bag-free shopping experience

the management of waste during building and demolition activity, and in designing sufficient capacity for the onsite storage of waste and recycling bins once building is complete.

5.6. THE SUSTAINABLE VISITING EXPERIENCE

5.6.1. **VISION**

By 2020, Melbourne City will be Australia's premier sustainable tourism and visitor destination, with numerous signs of this evident as visitors make their way around the City.

Shoppers, tourists and other visitors will have a wide range of environmentally-friendly products to choose from. Eco-efficient packaging will be the norm, with shoppers scarcely encountering plastic bags.

Retailers will be at the forefront of promoting these options. Product labelling will highlight environmental credentials, making sustainable choices easy and attractive. Less visible to the visitor will be the thriving network of green supply chains that support retailers in making these products available.



Providing services with minimal waste will be a core part of conducting business activities that attract visitors – including conferences, events and other visitor attractions. Low-waste and recyclable packaging will be a basic requirement of event organisers in the consumables they offer to the public. Recycling and waste management will be integrated into event plans as a key element of performance that is measured and continuously improved.

Visitors will be attracted to Melbourne to enjoy the sustainable experiences it offers through events that are sensitive to the environment, and shopping that is renowned for having sustainability as one of its appeals. In addition, green building design will have become an enduring drawcard for the City of Melbourne.

5.6.2. OBJECTIVES

- 1 To enhance the City of Melbourne's attractiveness and sustainability through infrastructure, systems and communications that lead visitors to recycle and dispose of waste appropriately;
- 2 To have more sustainable products and services available and preferred by shoppers; and
- 3 To reduce littering and dumping of rubbish.

5.6.3. TRENDS SUPPORTING THE SUSTAINABLE VISITING OBJECTIVES

Shared responsibility through the National Packaging Covenant

After extensive review, the National Packaging Covenant has been revised and strengthened as a framework of shared responsibility to address the environmental impacts of packaging. Released in July 2005, the revised covenant confronts the challenges of discarded packaging by committing signatories to a national recycling target of 65%, and no further increases in packaging waste disposed to landfill by the end of 2010.

A reduction in plastic bag use

The Victorian community has made big strides in addressing plastic bag use, with reusable bags becoming increasingly popular, and plastic bag consumption now on the decline. There are now several plastic bag free towns across Victoria and other states thanks largely to the commitment of local communities and businesses.

The Australian Retailers Association agreed on a Plastic Bag Code with the Commonwealth Government in 2003. The Code has a target of reducing plastic bag use by 50 percent by the end of 2005. Several State Governments have expressed support for a levy if current measures to curb plastic bag use aren't effective.

Greater focus on recycling away from home

95% of households across Victoria now have access to kerbside services. The next challenge many councils are focusing on is public place recycling. The City of Melbourne already has more than 160 public place recycling bins permanently installed in the municipality, and a program to continue their expansion. Council also provides temporary recycling bins for major events such as Moomba.

Commitment from businesses to reduce waste

Many major hotels are supporting the City of Melbourne's Savings in the City program introduced in 2005. The

program provides support, recognition and advice to city hotels in cutting waste, and the use of energy and water. The strong level of interest shows that businesses are recognising the importance of reducing their impact on the environment. This is an encouraging example of Melbourne City's capacity to deliver a 'sustainable visiting experience.'

5.6.4. THE MAJOR ISSUES TO RESOLVE

Influencing consumer behaviour

Most people agree on the need to protect the environment, yet it is not always easy to translate attitudes into action. Kerbside recycling is a success because our systems make it easy for households to participate. However, it is more challenging to build sustainability into purchasing decisions. The notion of sustainability often falls behind more compelling influences on purchasing – such as product quality, aesthetic appeal, brand and price.

Apart from this, it can be difficult for consumers to know whether one product is kinder to the environment than another. Labelling that simplifies important messages in a consistent way can be a powerful influence, as the "Australian Made" logo and campaign shows. Similar systems for environmental products have not yet gained popular recognition in Australia.

It is also important to consider the diverse backgrounds and needs of visitors to the City of Melbourne, ranging from local shoppers to tourists from around the world.

The challenge of curbing packaging waste

Despite the National Packaging Covenant, a great deal of consumer packaging exists that is neither recyclable, nor follows the principle of minimisation. Packaging is an important marketing tool, with the environment often regarded as a lower priority.

Local governments have minimal direct influence on brand owners, yet shoulder the cost of managing the continuing stream of waste packaging that is discarded by visitors and household consumers.

Minimising the environmental impact of events

Melbourne City is a premier location for events. With a vast number of patrons attending events, it is important that strategies are in place to minimise their impact on the environment. The City of Melbourne's role varies significantly from one of directly leading major events such as the Moomba Waterfest, to instances where Council has less involvement.

Managing waste at events running over a short period of time carries special demands - including choice of bin infrastructure and services, anticipating crowd behaviour



and managing vendor practices. It can be difficult for event organisers to integrate these challenges into a well co-ordinated system for waste and recycling.

5.6.5. STRATEGIES

1 Build capacity for visitors to practice waste minimisation and recycling.

The City of Melbourne will continue to extend its network of public place recycling bins, applying intuitive design and consistent signage to encourage their correct use.

Council will also work with cultural institutions and tourist destinations to ensure visitors have access to recycling. Council will continue to stage its major events with the commitment to minimise waste and maximise resource recovery.

Greater levels of support and encouragement will be provided to event organisers to integrate effective recycling and waste minimisation systems into their operations. The City of Melbourne will also promote these messages to visitors through campaigns and other activities.

2 Inspire and support retailers and other businesses in promoting sustainable products and packaging.

The City of Melbourne will work with retailers and shoppers to encourage the selection of environmentally preferred products and services. Environmental labelling systems and other marketing tools will be investigated as a means of promoting recycled, greenhouse friendly and environmentally preferred products.

In delivering a 'sustainable visiting experience,' the City of Melbourne will also engage with shoppers and retailers to reduce plastic bag use. Council's approaches may include a recognition program for businesses who embrace these directions.

6. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

6.1. IMPLEMENTATION

The objectives of the *Strategy* will be achieved through actions outlined in a separately developed Implementation Plan. Implementation Plans will align with the terms of City of Melbourne's elected Council, with the first Plan covering the period from 2005-2006 to 2008-2009.

Individual areas of Council will enact the Implementation Plan actions through Council's business planning and budgeting frameworks.

6.2. MONITORING

Each area will be responsible for monitoring individual and branch accountabilities and for reporting on the outcome of projects. Progress will be measured through performance against a range of indicators (see Table 4 below).

In addition, the *Strategy* supports the statewide municipal target established in the Victorian Government's *Towards*

Zero Waste Strategy.

 A 65% recovery rate of municipal solid waste for reuse and recycling by 2014.

Opportunities to develop better measures of sustainable production and consumption will be investigated over the period of the strategy as Victoria's focus continues to progress beyond waste and recycling to sustainability.

6.3. REVIEW

The Engineering Services Group will coordinate an annual review that assesses performance against the above indicators. It will be an opportunity to monitor the City of Melbourne's achievements to date, and adjust programs and activities. The appropriateness of indicators will also be assessed, and in some areas new ones may be introduced.

The full framework for reviewing and reporting on the *Strategy* is outlined in the Table 5 overleaf.

Table 4 - Indicators

Indicator Sustainable Council experience	Measure	Monitoring frequency
Waste to landfill from Council's activities	Waste per employee to landfill from Council offices	Bi-annual
Council spending on recycled, greenhouse friendly and environmentally preferred products	Indicator, methodology and baseline	edata to be developed by June 2007
Sustainable Living Experience		
Residential waste to be landfill	Waste per household per year to landfill	Annual
Residential recycling	Percentage of household waste to be diverted to recycling	Annual
Sustainable Working Experience		
Business participation in waste reduction and recycling programs	Number of Waste Wise certified businesses within the City of Melbourne	Annual
Business waste to landfill and recycling	Indicator, methodology and baseline	data to be developed by June 2008
Sustainable Visiting Experience		
Public place recycling	Indicator, methodology and baseline da	ata to be developed by December 2006

Denotes indictors where Council has direct control over outcomes.

Denotes indictors where Council has significant capacity to influence outcomes.

Denotes indictors where Council has limited capacity to influence outcomes.



Table 5 – Reporting and Review Framework

Process	Purpose
Quarterly Review	An internal process to review progress in implementing projects and other actions. To occur through a Steering Committee, co-ordinated by the City of Melbourne's Engineering Services Group, with representation from the Environmentally Sustainable Development and Continuous Improvement Branches. Where appropriate, the committee will also draw upon other relevant sections of Council to guide implementation.
Annual Review	A review coordinated by the Engineering Services Group, also involving the Environmentally Sustainable Development and Continuous Improvement Branches, in consultation with other parts of the organisation and external stakeholders as required. The review will:
	 report on performance in relation to indicators; report on performance in implementing projects; assess the appropriateness of indicators; and make adjustments to programs and activities where appropriate. The review will be presented to Council.
Renewal of Implementation Plan every four years	The Strategy will be re-issued to coincide with successive Councils and will be accompanied by a new Implementation Plan for the following four year period. The Engineering Services Group will lead this process.

NOTES

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Do you have a question for the Melbourne City Council? Call and speak to us.

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Hotline (03) 9658 9658 TTY (03) 9658 9461 enquiries@melbourne.vic.gov.au www.melbourne.vic.gov.au

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