

BOLD

and effective

AN INNOVATIVE NEW STRATEGY WILL HELP THE CITY OF NEDLANDS DIVERT 65 PER CENT OF ITS WASTE FROM LANDFILL. MAYOR MAX HIPKINS EXPLAINS HOW THE PLAN WILL INCORPORATE GREATER RESOURCE RECOVERY WHILE STILL REDUCING COSTS.



Perth's City of Nedlands has set itself an ambitious target: By 2020, the Council plans to divert 65 per cent of its waste from landfill, up from 49 per cent in 2016, without redirecting the cost back to ratepayers. To help it get there, it has developed a new Waste Minimisation Strategy that will see it become the first local government to adopt new technologies to recycle compacted verge-hard waste, in addition to increased community education.

Mayor Max Hipkins says recycling group, West Tip Waste Control, has been appointed to the task after

a competitive tendering process. "The [tender] for the bulk collection and disposal services has managed to achieve projected savings of approximately \$65,000* annually," he explains.

At the core of the winning tender is West Tip Waste Control's new Resource Recovery Plant, which will enable the City to recover household furniture, white goods and metal products with minimal contamination. At the plant, he says, all waste brought in from collection vehicles will undergo an initial inspection for non-conforming items, which will be

followed by an extraction of oversized items. Recyclables will then undergo a multi-stage segregation process.

The Mayor expects that with the help of West Tip Waste Control, about 765 tonnes of hard waste will be diverted from landfill and recycled each year, putting the City closer to achieving its target. To make full use of the new Plant, he adds the Council will focus on reducing illegal dumping by offering two bulk verge collection services per year, delivered directly to West Tip Waste Control's site. It also allows commercial and business precincts to receive kerbside waste and



The team behind the City of Nedland's ambitious waste reduction strategy.

recycling collection on request.

Knowing a successful resource recovery strategy must be holistic in nature, Mayor Hipkins says the ongoing risk of contaminated household recycling continues to pose challenges to the community, too – especially with green waste and putrescible (general) bin services, which are part of the City’s three-bin set-up. Under the three-bin system, the City provides weekly putrescible waste collections, as well as green waste and recycling services operating on alternating fortnights.

“The first bin works very well, but there’s a contamination issue with the second, recycling bin,” he explains. “Over 80 per cent of residents are using the small putrescible rubbish

bin, while 21 per cent use the complimentary second recycling bin.”

To raise that ratio, all bins are colour coded and stickers are given out to say what can go in them. Additional education in the field is meant to help the Council reinforce the message.

“I think it’s really tackling the whole of the waste stream. In the past, councils have concentrated on the obvious things,” he says. “We’re trying to raise (the public’s awareness whenever they put things in the bin. If it’s a bigger item, we’re making them think about what happens to it.”

Mayor Hipkins says the City’s new Strategy will build on the highly successful previous one, which led to 49 percent of waste being diverted from landfill with minimal



Did you know...

City of Nedlands at a glance

A community survey is undertaken every two years where residents are asked about a range of topics, including waste management, which is then compared to other councils.

Another strategy helping to reduce waste is the City of Nedlands’ worm café.

Mayor Max Hipkins says the City provides subsidised worm farms to its residents, which have a number of benefits: They reduce rubbish going to landfill and establish new garden beds, which can be used as a super fertiliser for plants and cut down on water usage.



contamination, for example by introducing a separate collection service for e-waste and mattresses, and completing an independent waste audit in 2014.

He adds the City's previous waste strategy reduced its annual residential waste charges by 12 per cent since 2013 – helping its waste service get rated as the 'best performing city service' by residents in a community perception survey. What's more, ratepayers saved through economically sound waste and recycling tenders, which provided increased levels of service at a reduced cost.

The new strategy of working towards 65 per cent waste diversion is in line with the Western Australian Government's Waste Strategy, which aims to reduce the risk of recycling contamination, which is an on-going issue nationwide.

To actively engage with the community, the Mayor says the Council will be posting additional messages on its website, send out regular newsletters and forge a stronger relationship with the local newspaper, "which is a good medium for getting to people."

"We also have a sustainability committee to address waste and other things, initiatives in schools and working with a whole range of people. The Council goes around aged care centres – we go from cradle to grave."

Next to improving bulk verge collection and community engagement, Mayor Hipkins says the Council's new Waste Minimisation Strategy is also aiming to achieve greater resource recovery from construction and demolition waste (C&D).

"C&D is something that's lagging in WA," he explains. "There is a shortage of building materials in the area. The main roads department is the main user of road base, but they have strict requirements for material that can be used. "Meanwhile, we have a constant rebuilding and remodelling of houses, so there is a lot of C&D waste. We are now looking at how we might get

involved and help align supply and demand somehow."

Hipkins says the City of Nedland's Waste Minimisation Strategy 2017-2020 is anticipated to be approved by Council in March or April 2017, with the community education program planned to commence immediately. ■

**excluding GST*

