Shape Monash Update – response to community survey ideas

1. **Provide a larger red bin (free or reduced cost)**

We heard from households that require extra support to adjust to the new bin collection. We have expanded our [Special consideration exemption](https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Waste-Sustainability/Issues-with-your-bins/Request-a-new-or-additional-bin) to include households with two or more children in nappies, along with households that have 6 or more family members with financial hardship, or households that have a medical condition that causes more waste. This allows for a free bin upgrade.

For other households, we are asking for a [change to the way waste is managed.](https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Waste-Sustainability/Recycling-and-Composting/How-to-reduce-rubbish) Once food waste is placed in the green bin, and soft plastics are taken back to the supermarket for recycling, many households find they have very little waste in their red bin.

Waste to landfill is contributing to climate change, and as a community we want to reduce how much waste we send to landfill, to meet our [waste reduction targets](https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/About-Us/Corporate-Strategies-Plans/Plans-and-Strategies/Waste-Management-Strategy) and zero net carbon action targets.

1. **Collect the yellow bin weekly**

We heard that for many households the recycling bin (yellow lid) is full on collection day. Based on this feedback, we have reduced the cost of a [second recycling bin to $65 per year.](https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Waste-Sustainability/Issues-with-your-bins/Request-a-new-or-additional-bin)

Collecting the yellow bin weekly would add significant costs to Council (and rates), and given packaging material doesn’t smell like food as it breaks down, it doesn’t require a more frequent collection.

Excess recycling can be dropped for free at the [Monash Recycling and Waste Centre](https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Waste-Sustainability/Monash-Recycling-Waste-Centre) (7 days). Next year, the State government will introduce a [container deposit scheme](https://www.vic.gov.au/container-deposit-scheme) for bottles and cans (glass, metal and plastic). It will likely be similar to the program in NSW, where reverse vending machines are conveniently located in supermarket car parks, and where these items have reduced by 50% in households recycling bins. Small amounts of excess cardboard can also be placed in the [food and garden (green) bin](https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Waste-Sustainability/Bin-Collection/What-goes-in-your-food-and-garden-waste-bin).

1. **Provide residents with compostable liners**

We heard that around 50% of survey respondents wanted [Australian standard compostable liners](https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Waste-Sustainability/Recycling-and-Composting/Food-Waste-Collection/Lining-your-caddy). We are sending a sample packs of liners, with information of where to purchase, to every house in Monash with a green bin, starting 25 July 2022. Discounted compostable liners can be purchased through [compost community](https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Waste-Sustainability/Recycling-and-Composting/Composting).

1. **Increase education on what can go into bins**

We agree recycling can be confusing and we plan on increasing education about what can go into bins, including:

* A support pack of information posted to every resident in July
* Online and in person recycling information sessions
* Pop up stalls at shopping centres, markets and aquatic centres
* Providing tailored feedback to households on their recycling efforts through our [Recycle Right Feedback Program](https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Waste-Sustainability/Recycling-and-Composting/Recycle-Right-Feedback-Program)
* School and community group education sessions
* Household visits (upon request)
* Collection day prompt stickers for household bins
* Education stickers for the bin bodies (will be placed on the bins)

1. **Increase access to soft plastic recycling**

All of us have a responsibility in the circular economy to ensure we reduce waste, reuse, and recycle goods and packaging. The major supermarkets (Coles and Woolworths) have a free [soft plastics recycling](https://redcycle.net.au/what-to-redcycle/) program in place, and have a role to play in recycling as they selling items in single use plastic. Mixed, single use, post-consumer soft plastic does not have value as a commodity and therefore there are limited end markets that demand this product.

With the introduction of a [container deposit scheme](https://www.vic.gov.au/container-deposit-scheme) in 2023, most likely having reverse vending machines at supermarket car parks, taking soft plastics, containers and reusable bags to the supermarket will become normalised.

As a buyer of products, consumers have influence over how their favourite brands are packaged. Brands respond to consumer feedback and behaviour. Council has been advocating to [Federal](https://apco.org.au/the-phase-out-of-problematic-and-unnecessary-single-use-plastic-packaging) and [State government](https://www.vic.gov.au/single-use-plastics) for a phase out of single use and problematic plastics.