

Acknowledgements

ASK Waste Management gratefully acknowledge the cooperation of the City of Greater Geraldton staff that provided information and assistance in the development of this report.

ASK also acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land in which we work and live, and pays respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY III

1 CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY 4

1.1 Waste survey 4

1.2 Survey distribution 5

2 SURVEY OUTCOMES 6

2.1 Respondents 6

2.2 Importance of waste 7

2.3 Service satisfaction 8

 2.3.1 Kerbside collection 9

 2.3.2 Vergeside skip bins 9

 2.3.3 Landfill drop off 10

 2.3.4 Tip Shop 10

 2.3.5 Recycling blue bins 11

 2.3.6 Litter management 12

 2.3.7 Public place bins 12

 2.3.8 Education and engagement 12

2.4 Costs 13

2.5 Recycling 16

2.6 FOGO 18

2.7 Education and engagement 19

2.8 Other comments 21

3 SUMMARY 26

APPENDIX A – SURVEY 28

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1-1: Social media promotion of survey 5

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Community waste survey questions 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Greater Geraldton appointed ASK Waste Management to develop its long term Strategic Waste Management Plan (SWMP) 2020 - 2030. The plan will provide a commitment to achieving a 60% diversion of waste from landfill by 2030 and the continuous improvement in the way the City manages waste generated within the community. To be in the best position to meet this goal, the City must introduce progressive ways to minimise waste to landfill through targeted activities, education and information programs.

To guide the actions and outcomes of the SWMP, a community survey was undertaken to better understand the community's knowledge and views on waste and recycling.

This report summarises the consultation process, feedback received and provides an overview of key themes emerging from the data.

The survey was developed by ASK in collaboration with City officers. It was structured to gain quantitative feedback. Opportunity was also provided for qualitative feedback on the City's services and suggested changes for the future.

The key areas of feedback sought through the survey included importance of waste, service satisfaction, costs of services, preferences for future waste services, FOGO, recycling stream opportunity and awareness, education and engagement, and general waste management issues and opportunities in the City.

The survey was released for a two week period from Thursday 16 July 2020 to Sunday 2 August 2020. The survey was distributed via the City's social media channels and website. Hardcopy surveys were also available at the City Civic Centre, Geraldton Regional Library, QEII Seniors and Community Centre and the Mullewa District Office. The survey received 750 respondents over the two-week period. This represents a response rate of approximately 2% of the City's population.

The overall picture that emerged from the consultation indicates:

- **Waste management is an issue of concern and should be a priority action area for the City**
- **Satisfaction of current services is mixed**
- **The community is willing to pay more for improved recycling**
- **The proposed kerbside FOGO service is strongly supported within the community**
- **The community want and need more waste education and engagement**
- **The provision of recycling options and the accessibility of these services are the most important aspects for waste management services delivered by the City**
- **Support for new policy development for waste reduction initiatives**

The outcomes of the consultation will assist the City to better understand community preferences for the delivery of municipal waste services and inform the direction and outcomes required of the City's Strategic waste management planning process.

1 CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

1.1 WASTE SURVEY

The City's preferred method of engagement was through a community waste survey. ASK worked with the City's waste officers to generate the survey questions. The survey was structured to gain quantitative feedback, with responses restricted to a choice of predetermined options. The final question provided respondents with the opportunity to provide qualitative feedback on the City's services and suggested changes for the future.

The City subsequently created the survey via SurveyMonkey.

The survey questions are contained below in **Table 1.1**. The survey outcomes are discussed in **Section 2** to follow.

Table 1.1: Community waste survey questions

Theme	Question
General Information	1) Name 2) Address 3) Are you a ratepayer, occupier, visitor? 4) Age in years 5) Household size
Importance of waste	6) Is waste management an issue that concerns you? 7) How important do you consider waste recovery and recycling to be? 8) Do you support waste being a priority action area for the City?
Service satisfaction	9) How satisfied are you with the following current waste management services provided by the City? (Kerbside collection, Vergeside skip bin, Dropoff landfill, Tip shop, Recycling blue bins, Litter management, Public place bins, Education and engagement, Skip bin program)
Cost of services	10) How do you feel about the current costs of the following waste management services provided by the City? (Rubbish rate service (kerbside collection - \$388 per year), Vergeside skip bin (free), Landfill drop off (free domestic disposal for mixed waste), Resource recovery (Greenwaste, Scrap Metal, E-waste), Tip shop, Recycling Blue Bin (Free)) 11) How concerned are you that costs of waste management services may rise in the future?
Service preferences	12) What are the three most important points listed below, in terms of your waste being managed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste services are easy to use and access • Cost of waste services are kept to a minimum • Waste recovery and recycling options are available where practical • Minimising environmental impact • Use of best practice and state of the art technology • Green and organic waste is recycled
FOGO	13) All waste in your current waste bin goes straight to landfill. Council will start to provide a new kerbside bin collection from 2020 for separated food and garden organic waste (FOGO) to produce compost. How supportive are you of this service?
Recycling	14) In your opinion, do residents have adequate opportunity to recycle within the City? 15) Please indicate which products you believe can be recycled in the City: (please circle if can be recycled) 16) How much are you willing to pay for improved recycling in the City?
Education and engagement	17) Should more be done to educate the local community about waste/waste issues and ways to minimise waste to landfill? 18) How would you prefer to be engaged with by the local council?
General feedback	19) Please provide any comments about the City's existing waste services and any changes you would like to see in the future

1.2 SURVEY DISTRIBUTION

The survey was released on Thursday 16 July 2020 and ran for approximately two weeks, closing on Sunday 2 August 2020 at midnight.

The link to the survey was distributed via social media channels and the website. The survey was 'bumped' several times on social media to boost the number of participants. The survey was also sent via mail to 170 randomly selected households.

Hardcopy surveys were also available at the City Civic Centre, Geraldton Regional Library, QEII Seniors and Community Centre and the Mullewa District Office.

Figure 1-1: Social media promotion of survey



2 SURVEY OUTCOMES

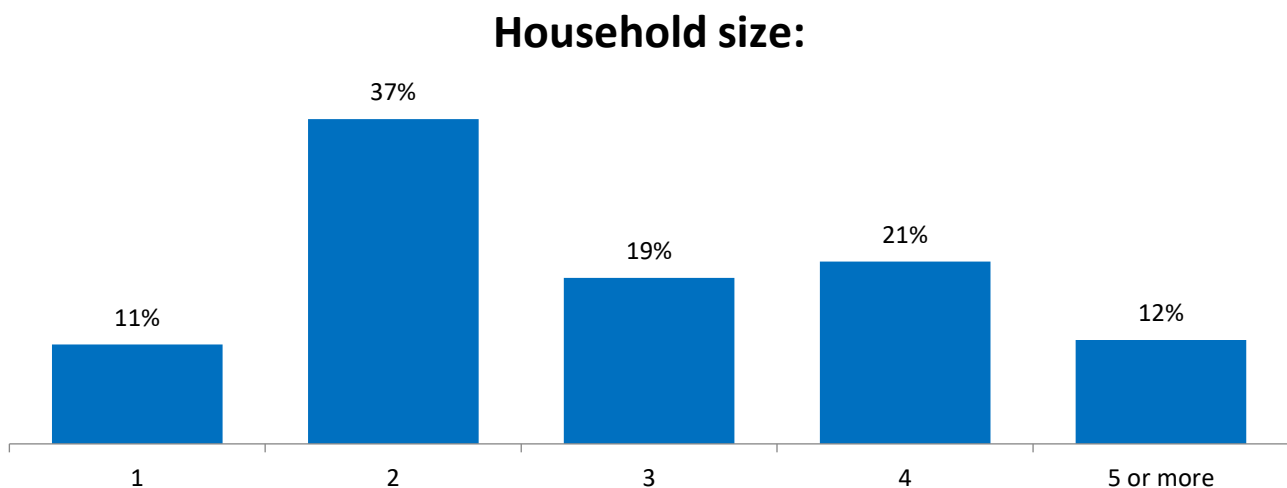
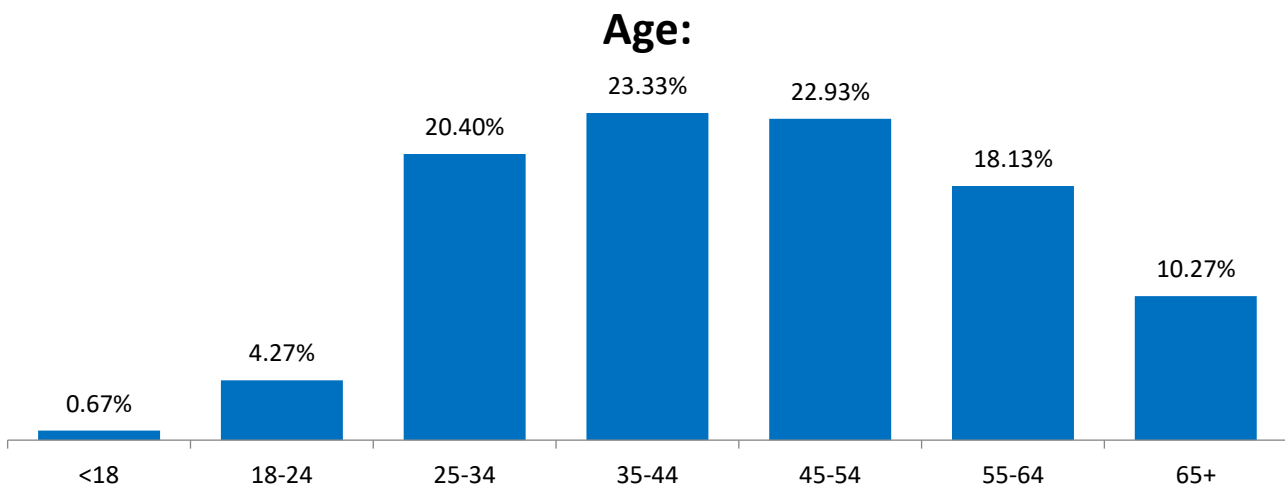
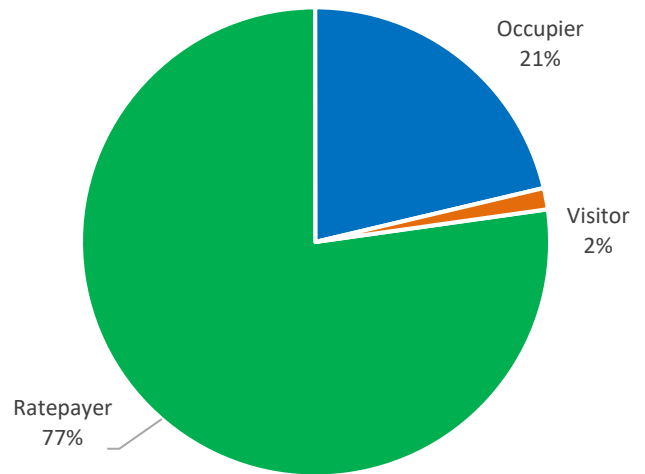
2.1 RESPONDENTS

The survey received **750 respondents** over the two-week period. This represents a response rate of approximately 2% of the City's population.

The majority of respondents were ratepayers (77%).

There was a fairly even spread of ages represented with the majority of participants aged between 35 and 54.

A two-person household size (37%) was most common among participants.



2.2 IMPORTANCE OF WASTE

Participants were expected to have a strong level of interest in waste since they were taking the time to complete the survey. The results supported this expectation with almost all (96%) of respondents stating that waste management was an issue that concerned them.

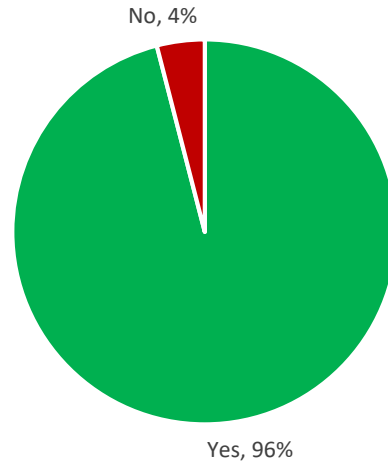
66% said that waste recovery and recycling was extremely important to them.

Therefore, it is not surprising that 93% of participants said that they would support waste being a priority action area for the City.

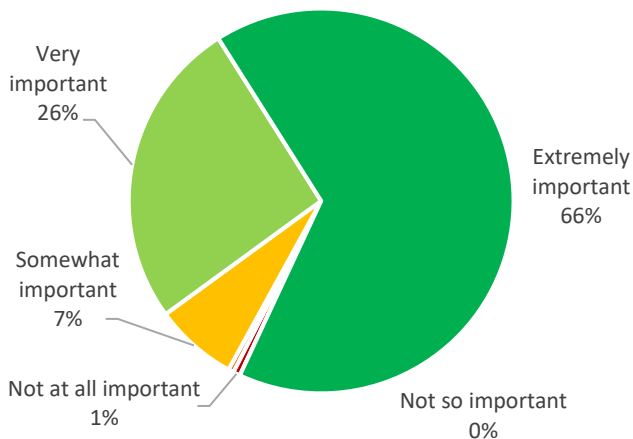
In assessing the community's preferences for services, respondents were asked what they believe to be the most important aspects to waste management. The outcomes were:

1. Waste recovery and recycling options are available where practical (64%)
2. Minimising environmental impact (63%)
3. Waste services are easy to access and use (57%)

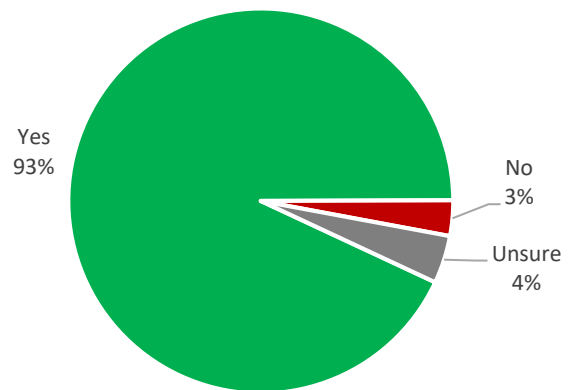
Is waste management an issue that concerns you?



Importance of waste recovery and recycling



Do you support waste being a priority action area for the City?



“Geraldton is a very long way behind and has to do a lot of hard work to change the mindset of the community.”

“As I see it, Geraldton is not a nation leader in anything. I think that it would be beneficial for our city to be a leader in something, so why not recycling?”

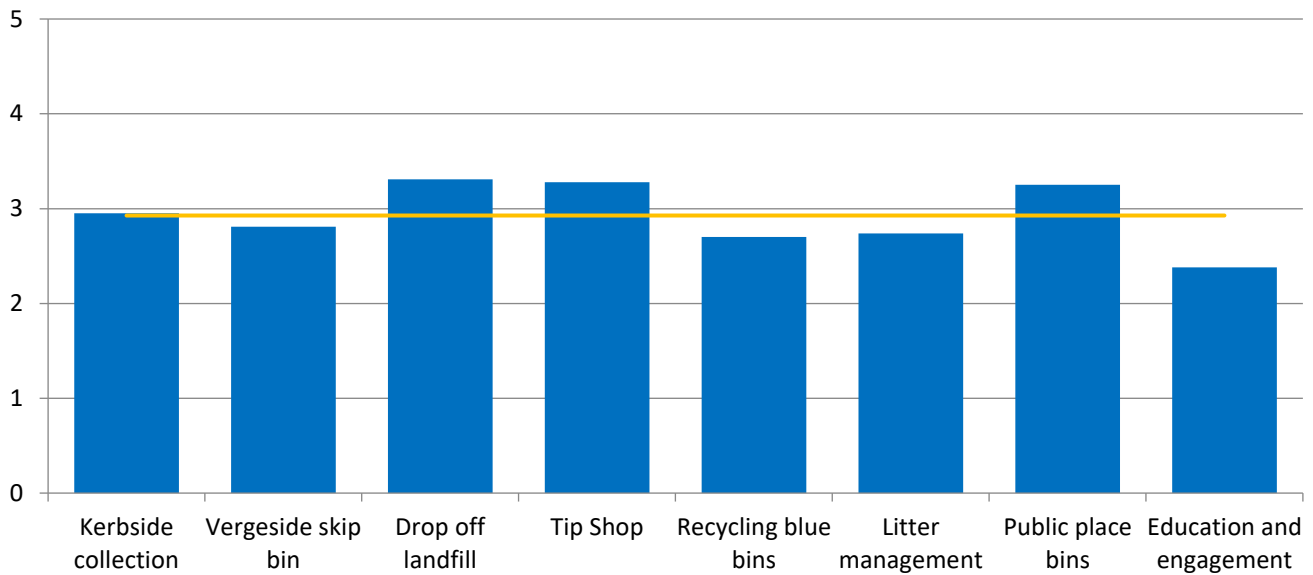
“Geraldton is a large regional City and when other communities can implement waste reduction / recycling, the time has come for Geraldton to embrace this change.”

“It is an absolute priority of mine that we become a sustainable city.”

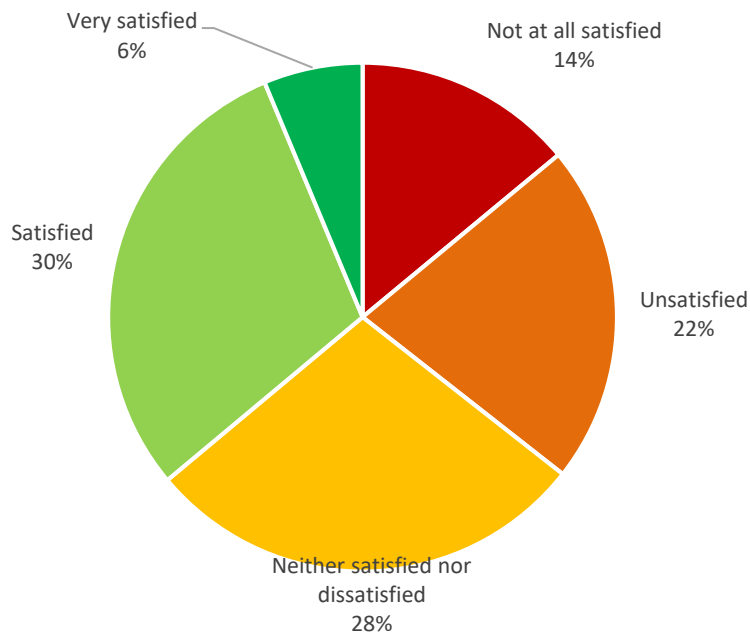
2.3 SERVICE SATISFACTION

Respondents were asked about the level of satisfaction with current waste management services provided by the City. On average, satisfaction was 'neither satisfied nor unsatisfied' for each individual service. When combined, responses leaned towards 'satisfied'.

Satisfaction for individual waste management services currently provided by the City



Overall satisfaction of current services

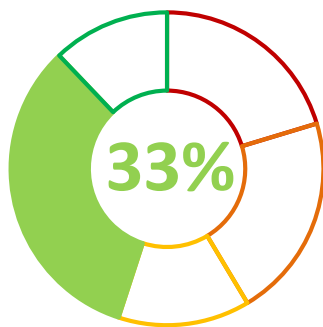


The following breaks down each individual service including related comments. In terms of readability of the charts, a red outline relates to percentage of respondents who indicated 'not at all satisfied', orange – 'unsatisfied', yellow – 'neither satisfied or unsatisfied', green – 'satisfied' and dark green – 'extremely satisfied'. A shaded section indicates the highest percentage of respondents for the given service.

2.3.1 Kerbside collection

Overall, respondents were 'satisfied' (32%) with the current kerbside collection service. 'Not at all satisfied' (20%) and 'unsatisfied' (21%) responses were also relatively high.

Kerbside Collection



“Bin collection service is really good.”

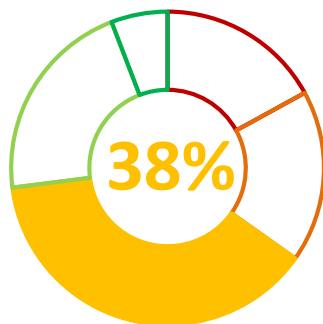
“I would like to see my bin actually get collected. Every 3-4 weeks they tend to miss it. Not to mention, the bins are generally left lying on the side after being left.”

“Current kerbside pickup timely and reliable.”

“Yes we have 1 bin and we can never fit all our rubbish in, it's not enough we need 2 bins.”

2.3.2 Vergeside skip bins

Vergeside Skip Bins



Respondents were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' (38%) with the vergeside skip bin service. This reflects the balance between 'not at all satisfied' (17%), 'unsatisfied' (17%) and 'satisfied' (21%) responses.

In the comments, there was strong support for the return of yearly vergeside collection. Residents felt that skip bins were difficult to obtain and were not shared fairly within the community.

“Vergeside skip bins are a joke. You either never get it, can't book for dates when you work away or have to wait months on end to even get a skip bin. Bring back vergeside pick up. Creates jobs if sourced locally rather than spending thousands and employ outside businesses to Geraldton”

“I'd like to see the yearly vergeside collection make a return!”

“For an older, single person (particularly a woman) without a trailer, it is difficult to dispose of rubbish etc. The kerbside pick-up was great. I would need the skip bin for at least 2 - 3 weeks or more as I am unable to do a lot. The last time I needed a skip, I had to pay ... and they are not cheap, but at least I could have it for a few weeks.”

“The wait time for skip bins is beyond reasonable. We attempted to order one for our intended renovations 2 years in advance and were told one would not be available. I frequently attempt to recycle my plastics only to find bins overflowing.”

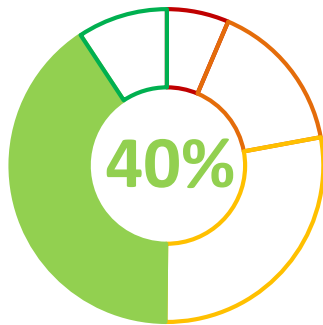
“Please bring traditional vergeside collection back as it reduced waste as it resulted in a lot of recycling by community driving by. Also supports residents with low socioeconomic background.”

“Increase in the number of skip bins available for use, it is a better (and probably cheaper) option than kerbside which sees rubbish scattered across neighbourhood but has too long a wait period to access.”

2.3.3 Landfill drop off

Respondents were overall 'satisfied' (40%) with the drop-off landfill services in the City.

Dropoff Landfill



“Like to have the ability to use a tipping trailer in the shed area as having a disability it is nearly impossible to empty the trailer by oneself. I bought a tipping trailer for the simple idea of tipping of the rubbish but can't.”

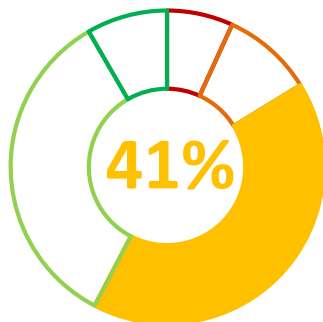
“Roads within the tip are poorly maintained.”

“Something needs to be done about the current land fill facility it is appalling and no long land fill but a mountain of rubbish that blows all over the road.”

2.3.4 Tip Shop

Satisfaction outcomes in regard to the City's tip shop operations revealed that the majority felt 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'. The next highest percentage was 'satisfactory' at 33%.

Tip Shop



“Geraldton does a fantastic job. Please do not get rid of the Tip Shop. It should win an award for Best Shop in town.”

“The tip shop is too restricted in what it supposedly recycles. There should still be a much larger amount of items getting recycled like it used to be. People in Geraldton are very good at repurposing things but now most just gets sent to landfill. Many people have stopped going to the tip shop because of this. Some of the workers have no idea what things are sought after.”

“It would be good if you could post on FB when the cardboard recycling place at the Tip Shop is closed when their machine is broken which is often.”

“It's also upsetting to see cardboard in the landfill , it seems to happen more when the cardboard place is closed or is broken down, why does it have to be closed on Tuesday and Wednesday?”

“Why is the CGG not supporting the tip shop, and why will it be closed down later in the year? Another great service lost.”

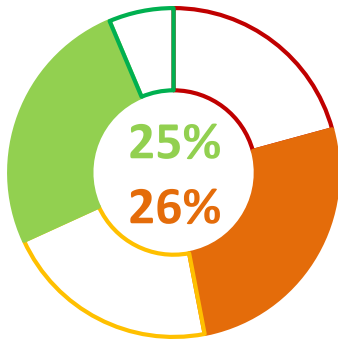
“Recycle shop is not being promoted and far too many reusable materials are being dumped in landfill. Someone should be at the builder's tip to gather recyclable materials. Tip shop needs to be managed so material is in well signed areas eg. Construction timber, PVC materials, furniture, crayfishing materials, steel piping, bricks, tin roof sheeting and off cuts. List is endless.”

“I think the landfill tip is really well maintained and same with the Tip shop/Cardboard and that it is free. The staff do a great job out there. I visit probably every 3 weeks to do recycling.”

“Re: tip shop hours there have been times tip shop has been closed for drop offs when tip has been open please consider a designated area for people to place items for tip shop.”

2.3.5 Recycling blue bins

Recycling Blue Bins

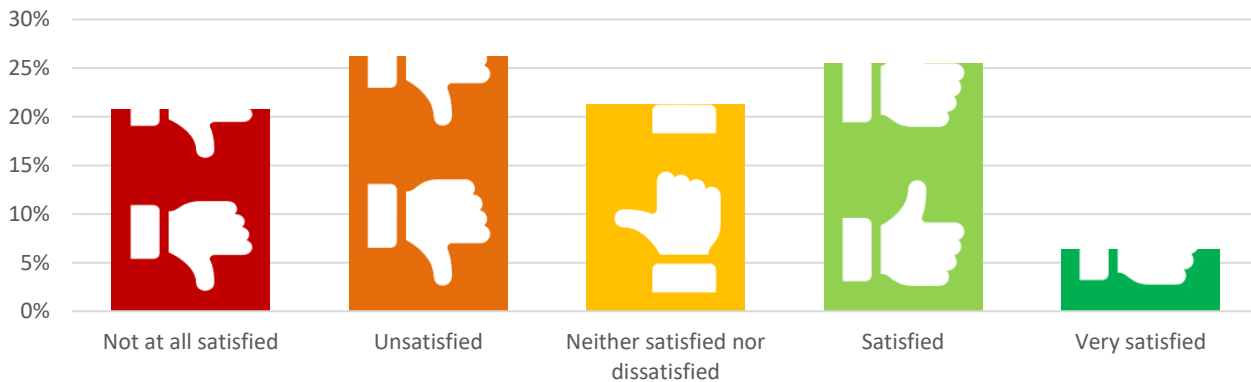


The Recycling Blue Bins service revealed an almost even split between 'satisfied' (25%) and 'unsatisfied' (26%). When looking at the spread of responses, there are mixed reviews of this service. 'Not at all satisfied' was at 20% and 'neither satisfied nor unsatisfied' was at 21%, demonstrating the broad spectrum of opinions about the service.

In the comments, it was clear that many residents felt that the blue bins were not being emptied enough and were placed in inconvenient locations.

There were also several comments saying that the resident was unaware of the free blue bins, indicating that more advertising/education is needed around this service.

Recycling Blue Bins



“Have no idea what the free blue bins are that you mentioned”

“What's this about blue Bins?”

“First time I've heard about blue bins and never seen one...”

“Blue bins need to be able to be accessed easier and advertised more and emptied more often.”

“Current blue recycling bin strategy is not enough and unfortunately these bins are frequently contaminated which defeats the purpose”

“Blue bins currently available get full quickly so we often have to store our recyclable waste longer, which is a storage issue.”

“My concern is that the publicly accessible blue bins, cardboard bins etc are abused. So when people such as myself who go to the effort to divide all my waste and recycle properly drop my recycling in the appropriate bins it's pointless as other members of the public contaminate the bins with non-recyclables.”

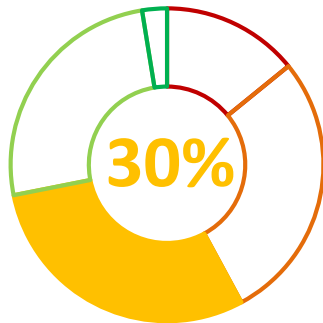
“Greater frequency of emptying blue bins, consistently overflowing, great option for those that are serious about recycling.”

“The blue recycling bins are often full and sometimes full of inappropriate rubbish. Clearly people do not know what to put in them and they aren't emptied often enough.”

2.3.6 Litter management

Respondents were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' (30%) overall with the litter management service in the City. This reflects the fairly even spread between 'satisfied' (25%) and 'dissatisfied' (28%).

Litter Management



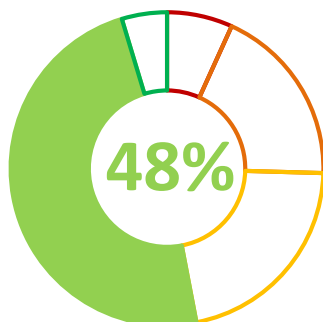
“Better litter management around the city even if it involves people doing community service or prisoners on work duty picking it up.”

“Unsolicited mail causes visible rubbish - the local papers are chucked out of a car and I guess the driver cannot see that they are not collected - up to 15 can be in various stages of disintegration opposite IGA Wonthella! When I walk around the streets I used to pick up straws and cans and bottles - I think take away food outlets must take more care in educating public and providing bins?”

2.3.7 Public place bins

Respondents were overall 'satisfied' (48%) with public place bins. This service received the clearest approval from the City residents.

Public Place Bins



“More public bins at public sporting ovals. This cost should not be put onto the club.”

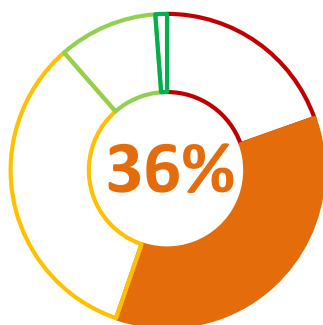
“Outdoor area have two different bins, one for recycling.”

“More street rubbish bins as all the rubbish from Horan Street and Lawley Street Spalding go under the street trees in front of our house. Perhaps this might help a bad situation”

2.3.8 Education and engagement

In contrast to public place bins, respondents were least satisfied overall with the education and engagement services in the City, with 56% of respondents stating they were unsatisfied or not at all satisfied with the education and engagement services provided by the City. Respondent comments also reflected this sentiment.

Education & Engagement



“Separate recycling bin, clearly labelled with what can go in the bin i.e. paper, plastic, cardboard, etc.”

“More information needs to be made available to the public re. the complexity and costs of recycling.”

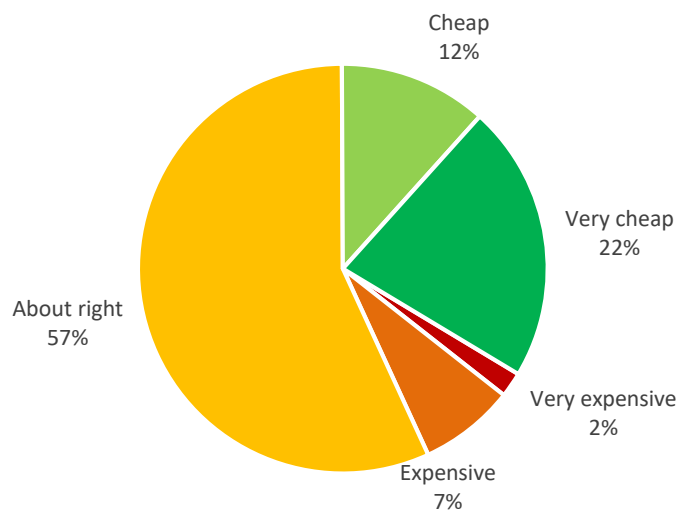
“Confusing as to which rules apply to which blue 1 and 2 plastic bins around town. Some CGG and some NACC /Meedac. Signs say 1 and 2 plastics, but show only drink bottles. Many many more containers have 1 and 2 on them, including solid white. Also, lids or no lids.... education needed on the why Is the lid too small for processing, or is it a different plastic and therefore contamination?”

2.4 COSTS

The waste survey asked respondents their feelings about the cost of current waste services provided in the City. Overall, respondents said they felt that the costs for services mentioned were 'about right' (57%). There was also a number of respondents (22%) who said services were 'very cheap'.

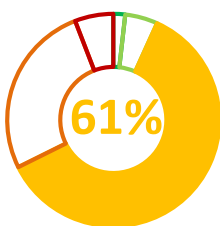
When considering the 'very cheap' responses, it is important to note that vergeside skip bins, landfill drop off and recycling blue bins are all provided to the community for free. It is unclear if respondents considered these free services to be costed 'about right' or 'very cheap'.

Overall feelings about current costs

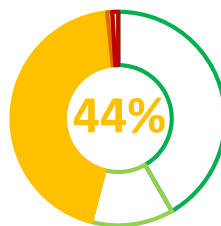


The responses for specific waste services provided by the City are provided to follow.

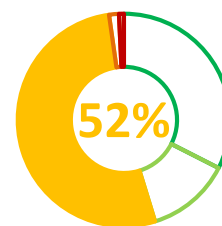
Rubbish Rate Service



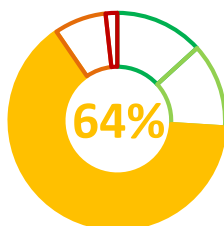
Vergeside Skip Bin



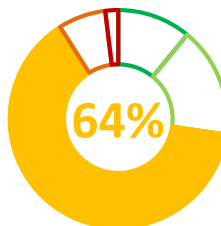
Landfill Drop Off



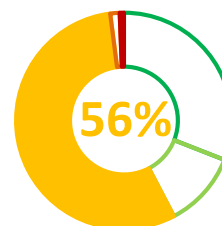
Resource Recovery



Tip Shop



Recycling Blue Bin



In the comments, there was appreciation for the free mulch and delivery service the City offered during lockdown.

“Keep free skip and mulch operations”

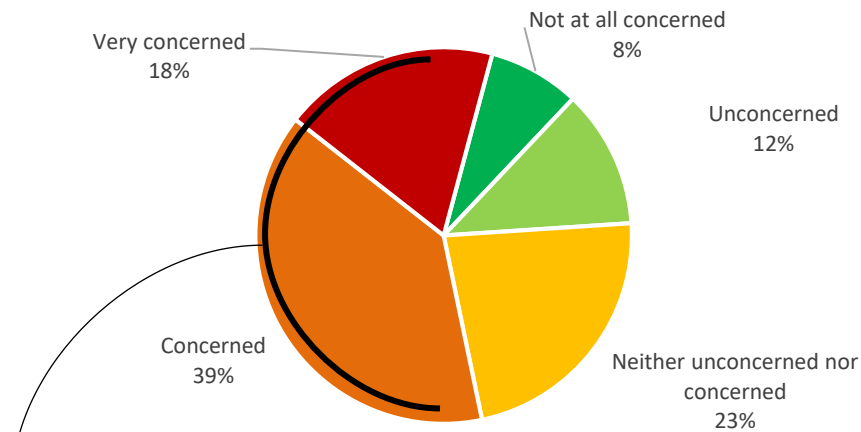
“Free delivery of mulch was excellent and should be available whenever required by ratepayers.”

“I LOVE the free mulch service thank you. Use it around town in City gardens and place a sign saying where it came from.”

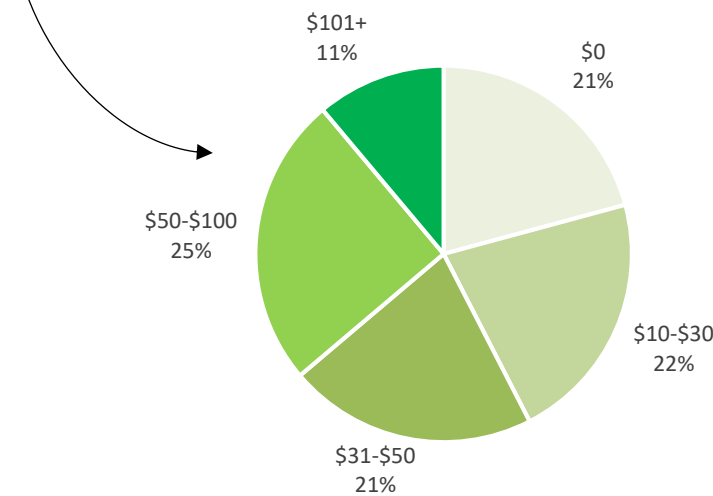
“I really appreciated the free mulch service this year - a great initiative!! Thanks.”

Respondents were also surveyed about their concerns regarding rising costs of waste management services in the future. Despite the large amount of 'concerned' and 'very concerned' responses (total 57%), most 'concerned' respondents were still willing to pay for improved recycling – even into the \$101+ band.

Concern of costs rising

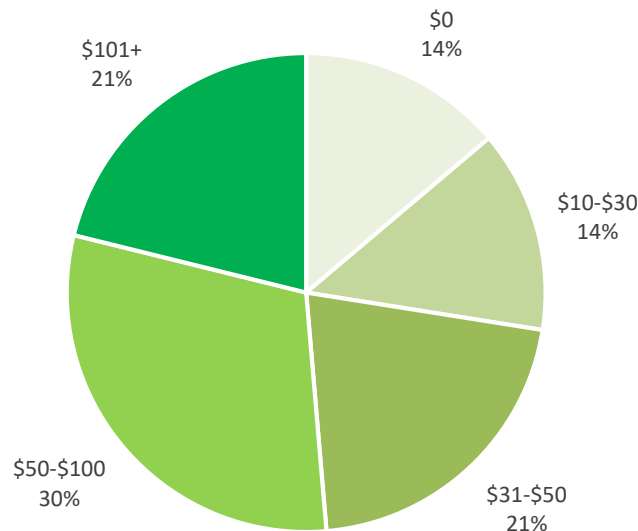


Of those that were concerned...



The survey gauged respondents' willingness to pay for improved recycling. 72% were willing to pay over \$31 for improved recycling. There is however some ambiguity with this outcome as to whether responses refer to paying additional to existing fees or the total amount they wish to pay for recycling in the City.

Total willingness to pay for improved recycling



The following are comments regarding the cost of services in the City.

“As a ratepayer I am prepared to pay more money for services that effectively deliver low environmental impact solutions for management of our waste as the current system is grossly inadequate however I suspect by the structure of this survey that ratepayers costs will continue to rise with little or no real improvements to the current system.”

“There are not enough free skip bins allocated for the size of Geraldton. Rate payers don't even get preference over people renting. I'd like to see verge side pickup returned. We already pay enough high rates that this should be budgeted for, not saving costs where shire can! Not everyone has a Ute or trailer to get stuff to the tip for recycling. People are financially struggling and we already pay extremely high rates. We also shouldn't be forced to pay for the green waste bins if we recycle it already on the garden.”

“We paid a levy previously in our rates to save towards future recycling however nothing appears to be evident from that money. If it's been used for recycling it wasn't advertised adequately for ratepayers to know.”

“I feel that our rates are already quite high and the future budgets should place a higher priority of allocating funds to waste management than parks and playgrounds in areas such as Spalding/Utakarra. I also think hefty fines need to be implemented for individuals that constantly contaminate the current recycling processes as a deterrent.”

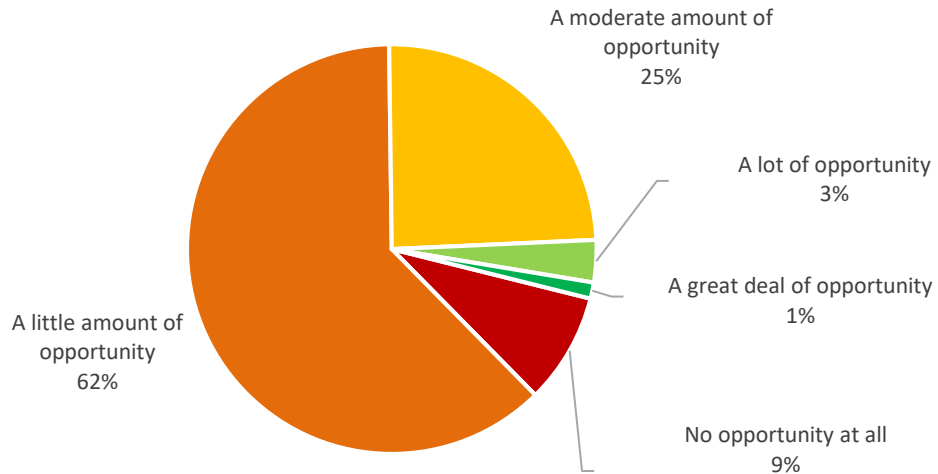
“Council could subsidise compost bins & worm farms. Keep tip fees free otherwise bush dumping will increase.”

“I believe it's disappointing that Geraldton is so far behind and other cities who have a smaller population are onto making more of a commitment I understand that it may be extra cost but if we are truly wanting to make it important money shouldn't be an issue.”

2.5 RECYCLING

Almost three quarters of survey respondents felt that there is little to no opportunity to recycle within the City (71%). This is notable outcome given the City offers considerable recycling services for numerous waste streams at the Meru landfill.

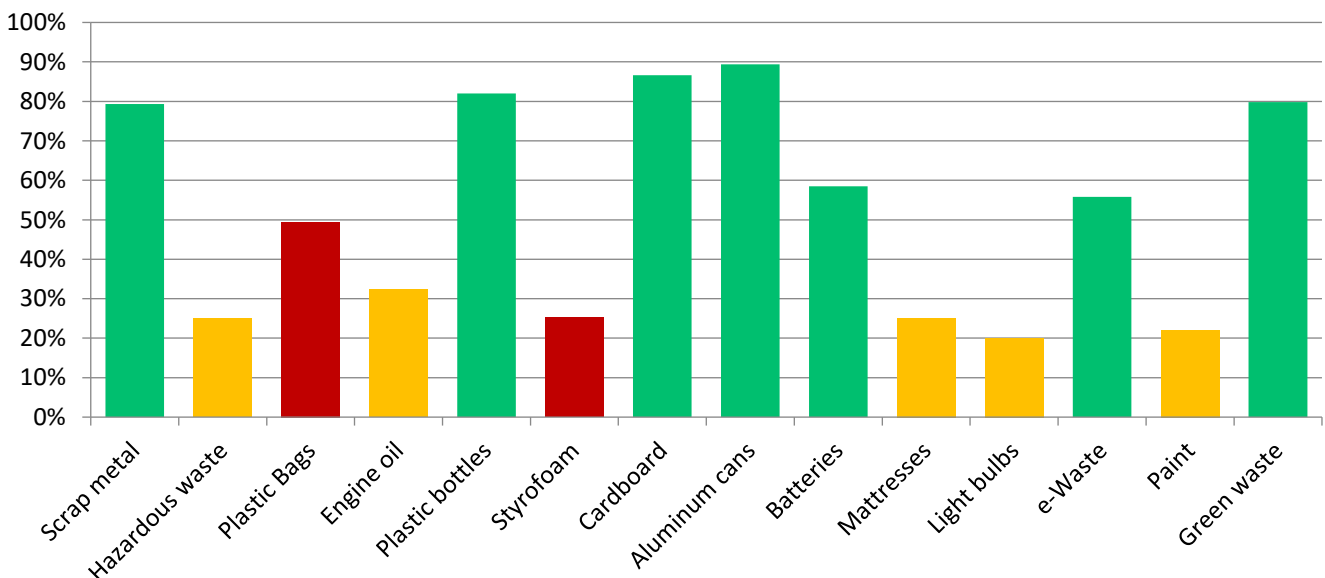
Adequate recycling opportunity



Respondents were asked which products they believed could be recycled in the City. Over 50% of respondents knew that scrap metal, plastic bottles, cardboard, aluminium cans, batteries, e-Waste and green waste was able to be recycled in the City (coloured green in graph).

However, only a small amount (coloured yellow in graph) knew that hazardous waste (25%), engine oil (32%), mattresses (25%), light bulbs (20%) and paint (22%) could also be recycled in the City. Almost 50% of respondents said that plastic bags can be recycled via supermarkets (red in graph). Styrofoam cannot currently be recycled in the City, however 25% of respondents thought it could (red in graph).

Which products do you believe can be recycled in the City?



Some respondents who commented were keen recyclers but generally felt that their efforts were made more difficult by the current configuration of recycling available in the City.

“I said my kerb side bin was expensive because we only put in one small bag of rubbish a week as we recycle all the rest. Our chooks get our food scraps, I collect cans, plastics 1&2 and paper and cardboard and put them in CGG blue bins and recycling deposit spots (near Glenfield IGA). Thank you. The rest including all other plastic, cans and glass I used to take to Stow St and was disappointed that he wasn't supported better by GCC. The city missed an opportunity there to support a very enthusiastic recycling business. I now keep my other recycling and take it to Perth when I go there. That's how much I want to recycle! Oh and I also take all my soft plastic to Woolies including soft plastic from work. I also pick up rubbish off the beach and recycle that. Let's get it happening in Geraldton please!”

“Currently recycling, while available, is piecemeal and scattered around the City. It relies on dedicated residents who are willing (and able) to drive to a variety of different places to recycle different substances. For the items our household recycles I have to drive to the Aquarena (newspapers), Mahomets Surf Lifesaving (cardboard and type 1 and 2 plastic), funeral parlour (coffee pods), work (batteries). This is too much time and effort for a lot of residents (such as my parents-in-law). I did try to recycle soft plastics but the supermarkets made that a bit hard. I strongly wish I could also recycle glass and other types of plastics. It would be great if I could take all my recycling to one central place. Alternatively more cardboard recycling bins around town would be great.”

“Recycling is an effort. We recycle what we can but the fact that we don't have a recycling bin (kerb collection) means extra trips to recycling drop off points. We also hold onto our glass bottles, type 3,4,5 plastics and tins and then take them to Perth and use a relative's recycling bin. Frankly, it's just ridiculous that a town the size of Geraldton doesn't have a recycling centre. We have previously lived in Albany (a slightly smaller city) and had 3 bins (rubbish, recycling and FOGO). That's what I would like to see in Geraldton.”

“This town desperately needs to make recycling a massive part of its operation. Geraldton is so far behind any other town/city in the state, it's embarrassing. This is a beautiful town and it would only make it better if we all made recycling a big part of our lives. The council has to put recycling forward and do as much as we possibly can with it.”

“Our household currently recycles as much as we can - soft plastics, hard plastics, cardboard, newspapers, aluminium cans, and we have our own compost. Whilst we do recycle, we have to be dedicated to do so as many of the different materials have to be dropped off at various locations throughout the city. I understand why a lot of people aren't bothered to do it. A household pick up service or one main drop off central location would make it easier.”

“Recycling is hard! Having to make multiple trips to different locations to recycle all my waste. Sometimes I have to take my recycling to Perth! I'd love a more streamlined service.”

“Our environment is what draws people to Geraldton - we need to protect that by decreasing our environmental impact by reducing, reusing and recycling. Currently almost no one recycles in Geraldton due to the difficulty of it (separate collection, needing to go to another location to drop it off, not all things - such as glass and most plastics being accepted) which is simply not acceptable in 2020. Also there is very little effort to decrease waste at city run or sponsored events - this would be great if it could be explicitly encouraged to reduce waste.”

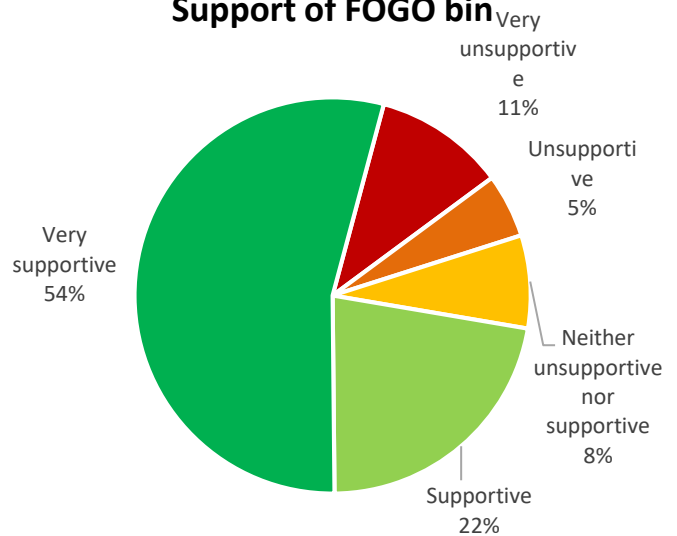
2.6 FOGO

FOGO trials are currently being conducted in the City. Over three quarters of respondents viewed the introduction of this service positively stating they were either very supportive (54%) or supportive (22%) of the service.

However, 15% of respondents were unsupportive of the introduction of a household FOGO bin. This is evident in comments some of the respondents gave. Many commented that a kerbside recycling bin was higher in priority than a kerbside FOGO bin.

Some of the respondents currently involved in the FOGO trial provided comments describing their experience. These are contained to follow.

Support of FOGO bin



Unsupportive comments

“We wouldn't support FOGO as we have compost bins already at home which we rely on for our garden.”

“I am not supportive of household green waste recycling as this is something every house can do FREE currently and this is what our house currently does. Educating or providing discounted compost bins or worm farms allows people to recycle all their green/good waste (aside from large trees).”

“We already recycle our green waste - to our chickens, but I'd like to see FOGO introduced for most people but a home recycling bin to me is more important. Rather than having to drive around to find somewhere to drop everything off.”

“I don't think the city should be worrying about another bin for green waste or food scraps. These are easy enough for people to recycle themselves within their own gardens. A recycle bin for cardboard, bottles, plastics etc should be more of a priority.”

“The current direct that FOGO is going in a mistake. The City is buying a system that will put rates up. FOGO could be implemented far more cheaply by providing it to CBD food premises.”

Comments from those in FOGO trial

“I have a FOGO bin, I am not happy with it as it is limited in what you can recycle. It is also unhygienic that the normal bin is emptied only once a fortnight.”

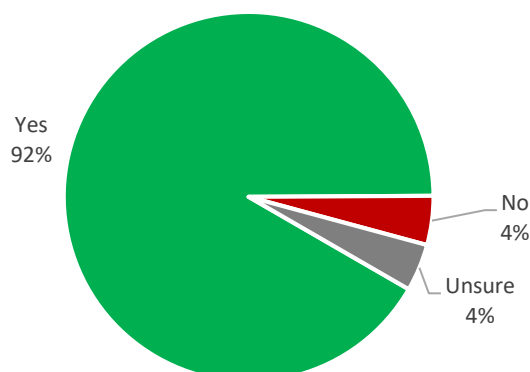
“I am one of the 500 participating in the FOGO trial in Geraldton, one issue that I and many others have found is that the green waste doesn't contribute to that much waste, so it doesn't really save much space in our bin, and having the general waste only done fortnightly means our bin is overflowing or we have had to empty it ourselves at the tip.”

“I am one of the houses with the new green waste bins and they are great, but I still have a full regular bin each week. If I could separate cardboard would be so much better.”

2.7 EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The survey results indicated significant support for community education about waste issues and minimisation with 92% of respondents indicated more should be done.

Should there be more education about waste issues and minimisation?



Other survey results that support more education and engagement were responses to service satisfaction with 56% of respondents stating they were unsatisfied or not at all satisfied with the education and engagement services provided by the City.

The low level of awareness in the community in regard to recycling options currently available within the City as addressed in **Section 3.3** indicates there is considerable ability to impact on improved resource recovery rates for the City through better promotion and education of the community.

“A designated schools waste officer. Much greater advertising via schools/communities. Incentives targeted at chn and community members.”

“Education on ways to minimise waste. Have a waste management officer visit local schools.”

“I would love to see the City's community events become 'plastic-free', including but not limited to avoiding plastic cutlery and food items at stalls, and no balloon handouts or releases.”

“I think a campaign educating and addressing the issue of cigarette butt littering would also be highly beneficial.”

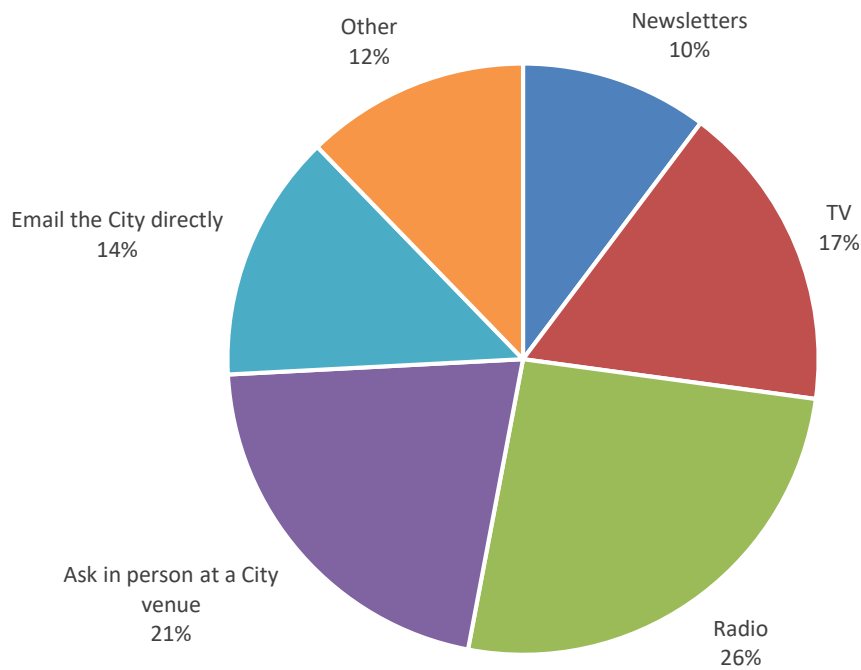
“More education needs to be done on reducing waste in the first place. People need to be more accountable for their own waste and not complain about the City not doing anything. Our household waste is very minimal and only contains items that cannot be reused, recycled or composted.”

“I don't believe that is known well enough around town and the places that recycling can be done. I get very annoyed that we have to pay to drop off cardboard at the tip, all recycling should be free as we are trying to help the environment etc.”

“I would like to see more opportunities & education on diversion, re-use and re purpose. I would like help so my community gardens can be a place where things are recycled - fixed, composted, and people in my neighbourhood can be educated on these possibilities!”

In terms of the preferred methods for further engagement the community were asked to indicate where they generally find information on City programs or available services. Results indicate that internet sources were the highest overall source of information at 76% which includes social media (80%) and the City's website (44%) respectively. Of the other means of finding information about the City's waste activities, participants said they found information via the radio (26%), asking in person at a City venue (21%), TV (17%), emailing the City directly (14%) and through newsletters (10%). Participants also noted that they received information through word of mouth, calling the City directly and via mail.

Info Sources (excl. internet)



2.8 OTHER COMMENTS

Of the 750 survey respondents, 412 chose to leave a comment.

Other than the themes already discussed above, there were several other themes that arose in the comments. These included the desire for:

- A kerbside recycling bin
- Centralised recycling drop off (particularly if kerbside recycling is not viable)
- Community recycling bins to be emptied more frequently
- Glass recycling
- Support for local waste/recycling businesses (particularly Stow St and Midwest recycling)
- Encouragement of environmentally friendly events (e.g. ban single use plastics).

The following section provides further detail on each of these themes, including examples of comments submitted, as well as unique comments which may be of interest to the City.

Desire for a kerbside recycling bin

Approximately 113 comments were related to the desire of having a household recycling bin. Of the respondents who gave more detail, many of them were motivated by what they had seen or experienced in other locations that had either a two or three bin system. Others were motivated by the perceived difficulty of the current recycling system in the City (i.e. having to drop materials at different stations around town).

“We need kerbside recycling, I don't understand why MOST other towns even ones smaller than our own have this.”

“I want a recycling bin! I don't have time for hunting down where the recycling bins are and then take all my recycling for a family of 6 to said bin!”

“Yes a yellow bin like every other council.”

“I would like to see each household have a recycling bin for weekly or fortnightly collection. Recycling at the moment requires driving all over town to drop items at different venues.”

“I would like to see kerbside recycling. It is embarrassing the so called “City of Greater Geraldton” doesn't have kerb side pickup for recycling whereas towns as tiny as Broomehill do.”

“A recycling bin for each household. Too much effort to drive around and drop off your recycling.”

“Introduce recycling yellow household bins. This should have been done 25 years ago.”

“I can't understand why we can't have recycling bins that are collected it's extremely difficult to take different things to lots of places and nowhere for hard plastics and glass anymore that I can find.”

“As a person that likes to recycle where possible I think that there is not enough places to recycle around town. I would like to see in the future that Geraldton get recycling bins (yellow lids) like Perth does. My normal bin would go from being full to the yellow bin being full. I hope that we can continue to improve on the little recycling options we have in town so that I can teach my children to recycle as well.”

“Yellow recycling bins. I find it astonishing that Geraldton does not have recycling bins like many other regional towns do! I am aware there is a recycling facility (I am unsure what they do) but not many people are prepared to collect their recycling and find a time to sort it at the facility.”

“One mixed recycling bin per household so we don't have to drive all over town to already overflowing recycling bins of cardboard, plastic, and aluminium.”

The support for a kerbside recycling bin is likely to be linked to the desire for a more convenient system. This is exemplified by the following comment:

“More recycling options for residents with residential access (green bins and plastic bins). Unfortunately, majority of people will not recycle unless it is accessible from their house, as it's seen as an inconvenience to the wider community. Solve the issue by providing private residential bins to eliminate the lazy attitude.”

Desire for centralised recycling drop-off

As an alternative to, or in opposition of, kerbside recycling bins, many commenters were in favour of a centralised drop off area for recycling materials. This would make recycling more convenient in the City but would require a committed educational campaign.

“Multiple bins at home doesn't encourage good recycling, the drop off points do get better quality recycling. This area needs more investment to make it easier and increase uptake.”

“Perhaps invest in 3 recycling drop off facilities in town much like you see in places like Denham if the cost is introducing the 3 bin roadside system is too expensive. Maybe have a shed facility with the different clearly marked bins for each kind of recycled goods say in a northern suburb, a southern suburb and a central suburb. It could be a drive through facility like some Queensland shires have introduced.”

“Be ideal to have kerbside recycling collection but if that's not possible would be great just to have a centralised depot where we can take all forms of recycling to the one location rather than driving all around town a multiple locations.”

“Having a central drop off location maybe on Lester avenue or even at the old abandoned motel would be great.”

“If there cannot be kerbside recycling using bin, it would be good if you could drive all your recycling to one place and drop it off rather than having to go to different places for each thing.”

“Centralised collection point for all recycling, where we can do our own drop off saving the council money on kerbside pick up”

“There are many places to drop off waste for recycling however it is a bit of a challenge to go and find them all. Stow St has started to but seems to be overloaded with stock. One stop shop would be awesome”

“If we can't have kerbside recycling, which is preferred, a one-stop location for all recycling to be done in one place. It is so frustrating to try and do the right thing and collect recyclables but then have to cart them all around the city to drop them off at all the different places to be recycled. Most importantly, this takes time! So we need to have access on weekends, not only on Monday-Friday business hours when most of us are at work!”

“Took my recycling during the week and had to go to 4 venues to drop it off. Would like a central place. Often bins are very full which is another problem.”

“It's great that we can take some items to bins around town to recycle them (plastic bottles, cans, etc), but it can be a pain to have to separate everything and drive to different spots - there's not just 1 spot where everything can go. It would nice to be able to recycle glass and paper in town in the future.”

Desire for glass recycling

In general, commenters wanted improved recycling services. Numerous comments were also received regarding the desire to recycle glass waste. This may be partly resolved by the upcoming introduction of the Container Deposit Scheme allowing the community to recycle glass beverage containers.

“On the top of my list- I would love to see glass recycling opportunities in Geraldton, preferably somewhere that processes locally rather than having to go to Perth.”

“I would like to see glass recycling in Geraldton. This is a significant Proportion of my waste both at home and at work.”

“There is no recycling of glass how about collecting glass and then stock piling it at the Meru site down the track it will be worthwhile.”

“Glass is the biggie. If we can develop a processing and recycling plant here (not just crushing but re-use) in Geraldton it would generate a whole industry and reduce landfill significantly. Glass recycling is a huge need. Obviously it needs big business buy in but could service the whole of north regional WA as a depot.”

“As far as I know, Mike Barker's E-waste was the only place recycling glass. Since my household (and most households) buy a lot of glass every week, this is an item that needs to be able to be recycled in bulk. Thirty years ago in Germany there were separate glass recycling bins for white, green and brown glass. This is URGENT!!!”

Desire for support for waste/recycling local businesses (particularly Stow St and Midwest recycling)

As evidenced in the comments requesting better glass recycling, there was a strong support for the City to support local businesses in minimising waste and improving recycling. Mike Barker at Stow St received several mentions in the comments. There was also a desire for the City to support new businesses and current businesses, especially food business, in improving their recycling/reuse/reduce knowledge and services.

“Yes - you should support M.Barker at Geraldton and Mid West E waste and let him continue his great work that he has been doing in recycling waste, by supporting and working with him.”

“I would like to see better support for local businesses who are interested in finding innovative ways to create new products from local waste”

“Promoting businesses that reduce waste like Triskele Body Crafts, who have products that can be decanted into your own containers. Encouraging cafes to use reusable containers, offering them bins to put their organic waste into that the council collects.”

“There's a waste business at Stow street that is very knowledgeable and works with very little funding. They should definitely be involved in planning the waste strategy.”

“I think Mike Barker's E-Waste on Stow St was doing an excellent job of recycling all plastics and glass to make paving stones and should have had less CGG intimidation and much more CGG support.”

“I would like the city to assist businesses that are trying to recycle items that the city doesn't. For example Midwest E waste Stow St, Webberton.”

“To actively support small businesses in developing viable economic ventures to recycle and on sell products locally. For the City to purchase and use recycled products eg outside furniture as much as possible. To encourage and support small neighbourhoods to network and be proactive with reducing use of plastic.”

Desire for encouragement of environmentally friendly events (e.g. ban single use plastics)

As well as supporting businesses, commenters were looking for the City to support banning harmful single use plastic items (including helium balloons), particularly for community events. There was also concern about the foreshore and beach areas in the City and the perceived lack of sensitivity to rubbish which could easily end up in the ocean.

“I would love to see the City's community events become 'plastic-free', including but not limited to avoiding plastic cutlery and food items at stalls, and no balloon handouts or releases.”

“Any waste management strategy has to look at waste reduction. The city needs to seriously consider incentives (or mandates) for plastic-free events and markets. This should also include reducing the cost and red tape of small food businesses wanting to offer their food in BYO containers. Other Shires do this, so it's not pie-in-the-sky stuff. Also, I know a lot of LGAs now offer big discounts, or rebates, to families to purchase modern cloth nappies. Considering that a pack of 20 cloth nappies can replace more than 5000 disposable nappies, this could make a big difference at minimal cost. There are so many ideas that have been proven to be successful and cost-effective - do us proud and be bold and forward-thinking.”

“Add to CGG event applications a clause to BAN single use Plastic (caterers) and helium balloons at events, specifically outside.”

“No new food ventures should be approved unless they have a waste management plan. No venues should have plastic straws, no venue should have takeaway only options, especially right on the foreshore!”

“Let's start with banning single use plastic bottles, helium filled balloons and plastic bags to begin with.”

Notable unique comments

The following are unique comments which may be of interest to the City.

One respondent had a specific complaint about a hotel performing poor waste management and causing an environmental hazard.

“African Reef Hotel are using part of the land as it's own landfill, throwing rubbish into the land and not the bins. Now producing a horrendous smell around the street.”

There were several commenters who were concerned about the cardboard machine at the tip breaking down often.

“The cardboard machine keeps breaking at the tip shop. Feel terrible about taking the cardboard to the tip. Geraldton is so far behind in recycling. It's embarrassing!”

One respondent was concerned about the disposal of asbestos at the landfill.

“Waste management of asbestos. We pay a small fortune to have it removed by someone who is licenced to do so. Wrapped in black plastic, then we pay for, pay about \$115 per ton, then see it put into ordinary landfill and crushed so the black plastic tears and spills the contents. Many people know this is the case.”

One respondent specifically called for charging a fee for taking rubbish to the tip in order to deter people from unnecessarily sending waste to landfill.

“Waste management is a huge issue globally as well as locally. I would like to see the city take a more proactive approach to recycling and reducing waste. Banning single use plastic and charging a fee taking rubbish to the tip would be a good place to start. Deterring people from making so much rubbish in the first place would be good and providing more education and easy access to recycling. Waste management is everyone’s responsibility if we want to leave a beautiful planet for the future”

One respondent stated their concern about the lack of dog poo bins in a public area and the desire for a water bottle refill stations in public areas.

“More of an environmental issue but there is a lack of dog poo bins along the Chapman River corridor in the Strathalbyn/Woorree area which discourages people from cleaning up. As many recycling options are unsustainable for Geraldton from a cost point of view look at other alternatives - e.g. reduce the need for plastic bottle recycling by providing water bottle refill stations in public areas like the foreshore.”

One respondent was concerned about the practices for fridge/freezer recycling at the tip.

“I really would like see fridge / freezer recycling, worldwide it is a extreme priority to capture the highly harmful greenhouse gases from the coolant system. At CGG, the caterpillar is running over the fridge while processing scrap metal. That is 3rd world practice and for sure not according regulations.”

One respondent was concerned about waste and recycling in Mullewa.

“I live in Mullewa and feel there is little done to recycle rubbish. I would like to see more opportunities to recycle in Mullewa. The tip is kept clean and in good order which I appreciate.”

There were some comments which showed a level of distrust in the council's commitment to waste and recycling.

“The Mayor constant attacks on Mike Baker’s Geraldton E-waste on social media were both sad and pathetic.”

“Start supporting local recyclers and stop doing dodgy deals with companies from outside Geraldton.”

“Until you show us proof of you committing to the cause. Then I do not believe you truly care about "better recycling for Geraldton””

“Our rates are high enough. Lets constructively use them instead for recycling. We don't need more "New Marina/Foreshore" development/beautification. Let's make this world a better place FOR ALL OF US not just a selected few”

“It would appear that the mayor in particular has a negative attitude towards current recycling ventures in the city, and the notion that recycling plastics and glass, for example, is practical, doable and necessary. With this closed attitude from leadership there will never be any positive change in this city.”

3 SUMMARY

The outcomes of the consultation provide both qualitative and quantitative data for consideration in informing the future design and delivery of the City's municipal waste services.

The overall picture that emerged from the data indicates:

Waste management is an issue of concern and should be a priority action area for the City

Almost all respondents were concerned about waste management and there was near universal support for waste being a priority action area for the City.

Satisfaction of current services is mixed

The general satisfaction with services was 'neither satisfied nor unsatisfied', leaning towards 'satisfied' when ratings were combined. Respondents were most satisfied with the drop-off landfill services in the City and least satisfied with the education and engagement services. This outcome may reflect a low level of usage of some services provided therefore an inability to determine satisfaction levels, or a general lack of engagement and awareness about the services provided by the City.

The community is willing to pay more for improved recycling

Whilst outcomes indicate the community feel costs for waste services provided by the City are 'about right', there is a general concern regarding future rises in the costs of waste management services.

Conversely, there is strong support for paying for improved recycling with a significant portion of respondents (76%) willing to pay over \$31 per year. Interestingly, concerned respondents in regard to future rises in waste management services were still willing to pay for improved recycling.

This outcome presents some ambiguity which may be attributed to recycling not being considered as part of the broader waste management services provided by the City. Due to the wording of the question there is also uncertainty as to whether responses refer to paying more on top of existing fees (i.e. kerbside rates) or the total amount they wish to pay for recycling in the City.

A kerbside FOGO service is strongly supported within the community

The survey revealed there is strong support for a FOGO service. General comments received by those involved in the FOGO trial indicate some concern in regard to the frequency of collection of the waste bin. This provides good feedback for review in terms of bin configuration and collection frequencies for future roll out of the two bin service.

The community want and need more waste education and engagement

There is near universal support by respondents for increased waste education and engagement with the community. There was also a desire for the City to support the business community in improving their recycling/reuse/reduce knowledge and services.

The low level of awareness in the community regarding current recycling options available within City as shown by the outcomes provided in **Section 2.5** indicates there is considerable ability to impact on improved resource recovery rates for the City, and community satisfaction, through better promotion of services and education of the community.

Waste generators play a significant role in determining the actual resource recovery rates achieved by the City. This will be influenced through both the participation rates of services provided and the amount of contamination within recycling streams. Education, engagement and positive promotion of services will play a key role in influencing the City's performance.

The provision of recycling options and the accessibility of these services are the most important aspects for waste management services delivered by the City

There is a strong desire for increased accessibility and convenience of recycling options in the City.

The introduction of a kerbside recycling bin featured highly in comments however there was equal support for a centralised drop off area or location/s (outside of the landfill) for numerous waste streams which is easily accessible by the community for recycling materials.

There was also a large contingent of commenters who were concerned about the often overflowing and contaminated nature of the available recycling bins in the City. Many respondents left comments calling for these recycling facilities to be better serviced.

There were also many respondents who wanted to recycle glass waste. Increasing promotion and support of the container deposit scheme should resolve this issue.

Support for new policy for waste reduction initiatives

There is support for the City's community events becoming 'plastic-free', including but not limited to plastic cutlery and food items at stalls and balloons.

APPENDIX A – SURVEY