



Yarra Climate Action Now
42 Spensley St, Clifton Hill 3068
info@ycan.org.au www.ycan.org.au

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Dear Mayor and Councillors,

When Councillors read our submission with regard to the Draft Waste Minimisation Strategy, they will see that YCAN is on the whole happy with it. The only issues we have with the strategy are budget related ie there are some actions that are not funded.

Firstly, the replacement of out-dated stickers on residential recycling bins (Action 1.6) has not been funded. Getting information to every household in the municipality is always a difficult and expensive task. Here is an opportunity to bring information about current waste systems to the attention of all households in Yarra. Out-dated information has the potential to confuse and turn off those who might already be disinclined to recycle efficiently.

Other unfunded items in the waste minimisation strategy are: (Action 1.3) education and engagement campaigns; (Action 3.6) a review of disposal of cooking fats and oils into stormwater drains; and (Action 4.7) establishment of a policy to support a circular economy in council's own operations through purchasing products made of recyclable (and recycled) materials, and not purchasing single-use products such as bottled water, plastic cutlery and disposable cups. (We've added a few details there that didn't appear in the strategy!); and,

Of most interest to YCAN is (Action 5.10) the Proudly Plastic Free campaign. It is YCAN's view that members of the public have never been more aware of the importance of waste minimisation than they are at this point in time. There is a desire to do the right thing, reinforced by other bodies with much greater reach than Council (eg the ABC with its ongoing War on Waste programs; Woolworths with the recent decision not to stock plastic straws). And we believe that people are willing to make behavior changes to reduce plastic waste and have conversations with food outlets about joining the campaign. We therefore urge council to fund the Proudly Plastic Free campaign to take advantage of this moment in time, and not to let the idea languish for four years.

We are aware of budget restrictions that may tempt councillors to oppose endorsing the extra cost of the unfunded items in the strategy. However, we note that (excluding the replacement of the bin stickers) the total cost of these other unfunded items is only \$43,000.

YCAN takes this opportunity to remind Council that, if funded, programs that reduce the amount of waste going to landfill continue to pay dividends well beyond the coming financial year. Failing to take action is never cost neutral where waste minimisation is concerned. There will be a cost. Not only in financial terms for next year and years to follow, but also in terms of damage to the environment and our atmosphere.

We urge council to commence funding these unfunded actions of the Waste Minimisation Strategy 2018–2022 in this coming financial year, so that these essential actions can begin their important work as soon as possible.

Carole Wilkinson
On behalf of YCAN