

NORTHERN & YORKE LGA **REGIONAL WASTE & RESOURCE RECOVERY STRATEGY**

2026 - 2031



Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy

2026-2031

Our vision is to support the growth of the regional circular economy to provide local social, business and employment opportunities and empower behaviour change in the community to support environmental sustainability, reduce waste generation and increase resource recovery.

Objective 1 | Provide high performing waste and recycling systems

Objective 2 | Implement local and regional solutions

Objective 3 | Increase service efficiency and cost effectiveness

Initiative 1: Explore shared resourcing for region

Initiative 2: Ongoing improvement of kerbside collection services

Initiative 3: Joint procurement of kerbside services

Initiative 4: Develop regional resource recovery infrastructure

Initiative 5: Developing the circular economy

Target: Increase regional kerbside diversion from 47% to 57%

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Front Cover Photo Credit: James Swanborough

Location: Cornish Engine House, Moonta Mines National Heritage Area, South Australia



Background

The Northern and York Local Government Association (NYLGA) is a regional organisation that focuses on the wealth, wellbeing and social cohesion of its communities via sustainable productive landscapes and the natural environments. Its 15 member councils include:

- Adelaide Plains Council
- The Barossa Council
- Barunga West Council
- Clare & Gilbert Valleys Council
- Copper Coast Council
- The Flinders Ranges Council
- Regional Council of Goyder
- Light Regional Council
- Yorke Peninsula Council
- District Council of Mount Remarkable
- Northern Areas Council
- District Council of Orroroo Carrieton
- District Council of Peterborough
- Port Pirie Regional Council
- Wakefield Regional Council

Development of the waste and resource recovery strategy

In 2021 the *Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy 2021 - 2026* was developed. It outlined the goals and actions to assist councils improve how they manage waste and recycling materials and create a consistent approach across the region.

Over this five-year period member councils have contributed to a significant improvement in regional performance.

This updated strategy builds on the previous document and acknowledges the essential role councils play in delivering waste and recycling services to the community and their ability to influence and drive improvements across the region. It has a practical focus on foundational aspects of council waste and recycling services that considers the current context of many councils in the cycle of their services and contracts.






Progress since 2021

A focus on enhancing kerbside collection services has delivered significant performance change in the region. The composition and volume of material managed through the kerbside system has meaningfully changed, including a 10% reduction in material sent to landfill, growth in comingled recycling materials and a significant increase of organics associated with the introduction/changes to services (Table 1).

The increase in total material does not necessarily indicate an increase in waste generation but reflects that more material is now being managed through the kerbside bins (whereas previously it may have been managed informally, e.g. burning of garden waste).

Table 1: Changes in materials managed through the kerbside bin system

	FY 2020/21	FY 2024/25	Difference
 Landfill	28,000 tonnes	25,000 tonnes	-10%
 Comingled recycling	9,000 tonnes	9,500 tonnes	+6%
 Organics recycling	6,000 tonnes	13,500 tonnes	+121%
	43,000 tonnes	48,000 tonnes	+12%

Kerbside diversion

NYLGA member councils have contributed to a 12-percentage point increase in kerbside diversion over the initial strategy period (Table 2). This is an exceptional result and the efforts required to deliver this by council staff, and the community should be acknowledged and celebrated. At a sub-regional level, two of the four have met and exceeded their target.

Table 2: Changes to kerbside diversion and performance against the target over the strategy period

Region/sub-region	FY 2020/21 diversion	Diversion target	FY 2024/25 diversion
NYLGA region	35%	51%	47%
Barossa, Light, Adelaide Plains	42%	55%	46%
Barunga West, Copper Coast & Yorkes	28%	50%	54%
Mid North	34%	48%	49%
Southern Flinders Ranges	18%	35%	19%*

*Only Orroroo Carrieton provided 24/25 data, using 20/21 data for others.

Kerbside service configuration

Many councils have made meaningful changes to their kerbside bin systems in the past five years that have delivered the improved performance. Table 3 summarises the current state of kerbside services across the region.

Table 3: Current configuration of kerbside bin systems in the region

	Landfill		Comingled recycling	Organics recycling*		
	Weekly	Fortnightly	Fortnightly	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly
Adelaide Plains		●	●		●	
Barossa	●		●		●	
Light	●		●		●	
Barunga West		●	●		●	
Copper Coast		●	●		●	
Yorke Peninsula	●		●			●
Clare & Gilbert Valleys		●	●		●	
Goyder		●	●		●	
Northern Areas	●		●			●
Port Pirie		●	●	●		
Wakefield		●	●		●	
Flinders Ranges	●		●			
Mount Remarkable	●		●			
Orroroo Carrieton	●		●			
Peterborough	●		●			

** Northern Areas and Yorke Peninsula have a garden organics only, others have a food organics & garden organics service*



Strategy context

The strategy is informed and influenced by a range of factors and principles.

Key principles

The waste management hierarchy identifies the preferential order of waste management options (Figure 1).

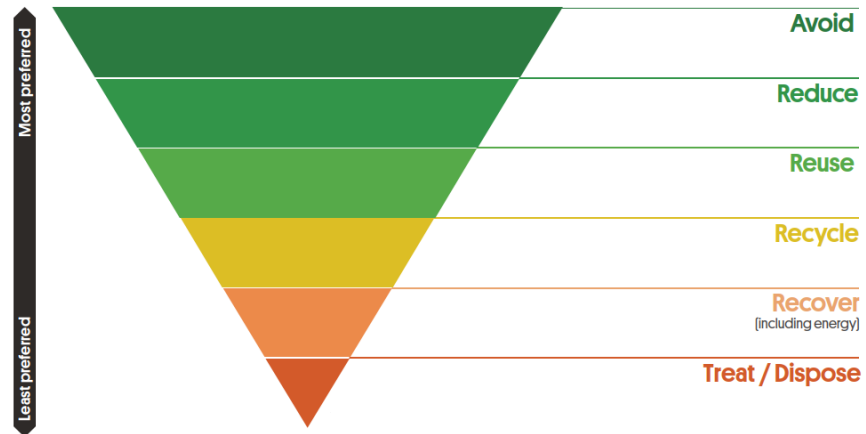


Figure 1: Waste management hierarchy (Image courtesy of Green Industries SA)

The circular economy aims to design out waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use at their highest value and conserve natural resources and regenerate nature (Figure 2).

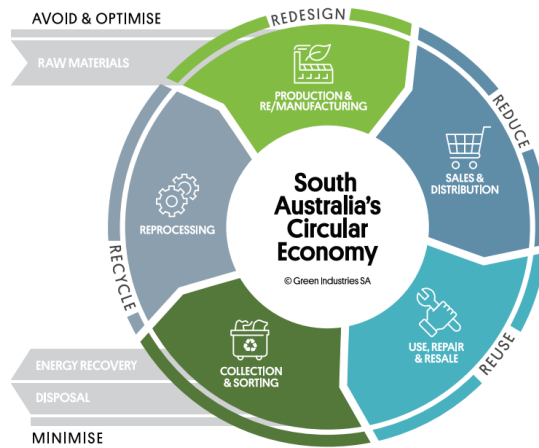


Figure 2: Summary of the circular economy (Image courtesy of Green Industries SA)

National drivers

National Waste Policy Action Plan which includes targets of an 80% resource recovery rate by 2030, a 10% reduction in waste generation per person by 2030 and halving organics sent to landfill by 2030.

Australia's Circular Economy Framework which aims to double Australia's circularity by 2035 and provides a blueprint for Australia's circular economy transition.

State drivers

Accelerating SA's transition to a circular economy: South Australia's waste strategy 2025 – 2030 sets a framework of strategic objectives, targets and priority actions to accelerate SA's transition to a circular economy and deliver a sustainable economy and net zero emissions by 2050.

SA food waste strategy: valuing our food waste identifies food waste as a strategic priority and aligns with the National Food Waste Strategy to halve food waste by 2030.

The SA waste levy continues to be a key driver to incentivise councils to reduce the amount of material they send to landfill by increasing source separation and diverting material to circular economy pathways.

Vision

Our vision is to support the growth of the regional circular economy to provide local social, business and employment opportunities and empower behaviour change in the community to support environmental sustainability, reduce waste generation and increase resource recovery.

Objectives

Our objectives will guide our actions and help measure success.

Objective 1 | Provide high performing waste and recycling systems

Deliver systems that increase landfill diversion, capture valuable resources for the circular economy and reduce the region's carbon footprint. Performance indicators include:

- Achieving our landfill diversion targets (summarised below).
- Reducing contamination in comingled recycling and organics recycling bins.
- Consistent waste and recycling education across the region.

Objective 2 | Implement local and regional solutions

Explore partnerships between councils to deliver greater outcomes for the region.

Performance indicators include:

- Completing an investigation into shared resourcing.
- Considering joint procurement opportunities.
- Exploring infrastructure improvements that underpin and support the region and sub-regions.

Objective 3 | Increase service efficiency and cost effectiveness

Increasing the efficiency of waste and recycling services so councils can reinvest and expand services to the community. Performance indicators include:

- Completing procurement processes for kerbside services.
- Leveraging the procurement process to deliver better data collection and reporting.

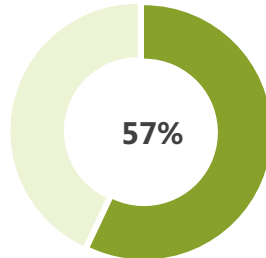
Our objectives inform our targets and initiatives and will support us to divert more waste from landfill into the circular economy and maximise our resources by working together across the region to deliver improved services and invest into our communities.

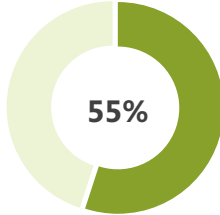
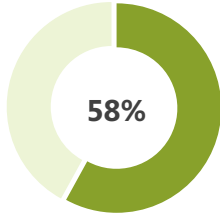
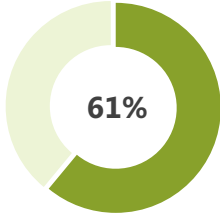
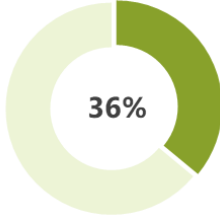


Kerbside landfill diversion targets

Kerbside diversion for the NYLGA region in FY 2024/25 was 49%. Each council has a new diversion target that will contribute to sub-regional and the whole regional target, calculated using a weighted average based on population.

Regional kerbside diversion target



	Sub-regional target	Council target	
Barossa, Light, Adelaide Plains		Adelaide Plains	55%
		Barossa	55%
		Light	55%
Barunga West, Copper Coast & Yorke Peninsula		Barunga West	60%
		Copper Coast	60%
		Yorke Peninsula	55%
Mid North		Clare & Gilbert Valleys	60%
		Goyder	55%
		Northern Areas	45%
		Port Pirie	68%
		Wakefield	60%
Southern Flinders Ranges		Flinders Ranges	35%
		Mount Remarkable	35%
		Orroroo Carrieton	40%
		Peterborough	35%



Initiatives

Initiative 1: Explore shared resourcing for the region

Internal council staff resourcing to oversee waste and recycling services is a challenge across the region. It can also impact the opportunity for regional collaboration.

A priority will be investigating opportunities to establish formal structures to deliver and manage shared services. This will include potential:

- administrative structure (e.g. waste authority)
- scale and participants (e.g. sub-regional approach)
- services that could be included (e.g. administration, contract management, facility management, provide collection services).

Delivering waste and recycling services in regional areas with low population density can be challenging. Increasing collaboration can be a pathway to delivering effective and efficient services for the community.

Initiative 2: Ongoing improvement of kerbside collection services

Alternative kerbside services

High performing kerbside systems have been introduced by seven NYLGA councils with outstanding results. Councils yet to transition can learn from these councils to explore and plan their own pathway to:

- increasing diversion of food waste from landfill
- reducing greenhouse gas emissions from food waste in landfill
- managing ongoing costs and exposure to the SA solid waste levy.

The suggested pathway for:

- Northern Areas, Flinders Ranges, Orroroo Carrieton, Mt Remarkable, Peterborough, Yorke Peninsula is to explore a fortnightly 3-bin system through a tender process.
- Barossa and Light is to explore direct negotiations with their contractor. Weekly FOGO, fortnightly landfill is recommended considering their current services and there is an opportunity to deliver a trial before a broader rollout.
- Adelaide Plains is to consider and explore expanding its FOGO services to higher density areas through direct negotiation with the contractor.

Ongoing improvement

Councils that have already transitioned to alternative kerbside services can explore ways to refine their kerbside system to optimise performance.

- **Managing contamination**

The SA Waste Strategy outlines specific targets for contamination, less than 10% in comingled recycling and less than 2% in organics recycling.

Implementing and resourcing systems to manage and track contamination at collection, communicate with residents and council policies/by-laws to manage ongoing issues will be important.

This can help to reduce risks from events like vehicle fires from incorrect disposal of lithium-ion batteries and reduce the potential of contamination pricing in recycling processing contracts.

- **Optimising services**

Multiple councils currently have collection schedules where residents present bins for collection on multiple days of the week.

Working with collection contractors to review and consolidate collection schedules can improve the resident experience, reduce confusion and improve performance.

Initiative 3: Joint procurement of kerbside services

Within this strategy period the kerbside collection and processing/disposal contracts of 14 councils within N&YLGA will end or be close to ending.

Kerbside services are one of the biggest costs for councils and a well-structured procurement process is important to deliver quality and cost-effective services. It does require significant resourcing and adequate timeframes (minimum 18 months prior to contract expiry) to be able to complete a thorough and equitable process.

NYLGA councils are well placed to explore joint procurement of kerbside services to:

- Achieve administrative efficiencies in the tender process and costs (e.g. technical/legal support) and avoiding each individual council need to run a separate procurement process.
- Leverage operational efficiencies and service cost benefits for councils that are located geographically close together (e.g. shared spare vehicles, efficiency in collection routes).
- Have similar contract, service, reporting and payment structures, whilst maintaining a direct contract between individual councils and the service provider.

Joint procurement does not require councils to be geographically located together or have the exact same service requirements or contract end dates. There will be a range of council groupings that could feasibly work together, and this will be explored further.



Initiative 4: Develop regional resource recovery infrastructure

Local waste and resource recovery infrastructure are important assets for regional councils. They are critical for service delivery and are a key interaction the community has with council.

We will explore:

- Upgrades to the resource recovery centres at Wallaroo and Port Pirie to become circular economy hubs that can accept additional material streams, incorporate re-use and repair and host circular economy businesses.
- The opportunity to establish hazardous waste depots in strategic locations.
- New or upgrades to current transfer stations in Adelaide Plains, Barossa and Light to align population growth in these areas.
- The future of Willowie transfer station, considering the implications for kerbside service delivery for the Southern Flinders Ranges councils.
- The feasibility of a FOGO processing facility for the region to locally transform organics into high quality compost.

Initiative 5: Developing the circular economy

Councils have an important role in developing a local circular economy that will create social and economic benefits for our communities.

Circular procurement

Incorporating circular procurement principles and processes into the procurement process.

This could include:

- **Products as a service**
Exploring opportunities for products as a service, where a product function or outcome is purchased instead of a physical product and the manufacturer/provider maintains the asset.
- **Procuring products and materials containing recycled content.**
Recycling only happens when materials are remanufactured into new products that are then purchased. Councils can contribute significantly to developing the local circular economy and remanufacturing by specifying products and materials that contain high levels of recycled content in operations and capital works procurement processes.

Developing regional partnerships and supporting community initiatives

Building partnerships across the region with industry groups, businesses and communities will help develop a local circular economy. Priority opportunities are re-use, repair, re-sale, re-processing and re-manufacture.



Action Plan

The Action Plan provides high-level guidance of what is required, who is involved and indicative timelines for each of the initiatives.

<p>Initiative 1: Explore shared resourcing for the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial investigations will be required and then additional time to establish structures.
<p>Initiative 2: Ongoing improvement of kerbside collection services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Min. 12 months needed for planning and delivering transition. Allow time for tender process/negotiations with contractor if required.
<p>Initiative 3: Joint procurement of kerbside services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow enough time for tender process, evaluation and negotiations (e.g. 12 months) Award contract a minimum of 12 months prior to current expiry date.
<p>Initiative 4: Develop regional resource recovery infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timelines will be project specific and depend on scale.
<p>Initiative 5: Developing the circular economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporating circular procurement/recycled content specifications into procurement processes. Ongoing development of partnerships.

Initiative 1: Explore shared resourcing for region

- NYLGA and councils to facilitate investigations to consider structure, scale/participants and services that may be included.
- Lead council(s) will be required to drive outcome with support from NYLGA.

Pending the findings of the investigation phase there could be concurrent processes running across the region to establish sub-regional structures.

1. Confirm interested councils and establish working group.	4-6 months
2. Conduct investigation/business case into options for administrative structure (e.g. waste authority), scale and participants (e.g. sub-regional approach) and services that could be included	Min. 6 months
3. Review and actions based on outcome of investigation/business case.	



Initiative 2: Ongoing improvement of kerbside collection services

Alternative kerbside services

Councils with an upcoming tender process

- Councils can include current and alternative kerbside collection models in the tender documents to receive pricing that can inform the business case to assess the opportunity.

Councils with existing contracts

- Councils can directly negotiate with the current collection contractor to receive pricing to then inform the business case to appropriately assess the opportunity.
- Councils can consider a trial of the system in a targeted area/collection day to allow for community feedback.

A summary of actions and timelines are outlined below. Some steps may be completed concurrently.

1. Tender process/direct negotiations with contractor (<i>as required</i>)	
2. Kerbside audits to establish baseline and build case for change	3-4 months (<i>optional</i>)
3. System design and detailed business case	Min. 6 months
4. Transition preparation, including communication and engagement plan (<i>develop information, education, signage</i>)	Min. 3 months
5. Procure bins, kitchen caddies and compostable bags	3-6 months
6. Trial of new services (<i>optional</i>)	6-12 months
7. Implementation and ongoing education	

Ongoing improvements

Contamination

- Councils to explore and design systems to manage and track contamination, communications and council policies/by-laws.

Optimising services

- Councils to engage with current collection contractor(s) to explore opportunities to deliver services more efficiently.

A summary of actions and timelines are outlined below, which could be delivered in partnerships between councils.

1. Establish baseline contamination rate (kerbside audit, collection vehicle records).	3-4 months
2. Design management system, establish resourcing and prepare policy/by-law requirements.	6-12 months
3. Implementation, community communications and ongoing management.	
4. Data review process	



Initiative 3: Joint procurement of kerbside services

NYLGA

- Help facilitate consultation and cooperation between councils.
- Maintain details of Council's kerbside contract dates.

Councils

- Explore opportunities to collaborate.
- Prepare tender documents and execute tender process.

The procurement process and signing of the contract should be completed a minimum of 12 months before the current contract expiry. A summary of timelines is outlined below.

1. Confirm participating councils and prepare tender documents <i>(includes evaluation plan, probity plan, legal review)</i>	6 months
2. Release tender documents to market	Allow 8 weeks for responses
3. Complete tender evaluation and contract negotiations	6-12 months
4. Award of contract	Min. 12 months prior current expiry
5. Implementation and ongoing contract management	

Initiative 4: Develop regional resource recovery infrastructure

Councils

- Determine facility and community needs and complete detailed business case.

NYLGA

- Provide support with consultation for shared infrastructure opportunities.
- Support for preparing grant funding applications.

The timelines for an infrastructure project will depend on the type and scale of the infrastructure and whether it is a new site or expansion of an existing.

1. Identify operational and community requirements and complete detailed business case	6 months
2. Explore/apply for funding opportunities	3 months
3. Confirm commitment and design and procurement process	6-12 months
4. Approvals process to establish or expand site	Min. 12 months
5. Site works and build	Depends on scale
6. Facility commissioning and ongoing operations	1-3 months



Initiative 5: Developing the circular economy

Councils

- Identify target areas to incorporate circular procurement/recycled content (e.g. roads, tyre re-treading).
- Update procurement documents and processes to incorporate circular procurement principles, assessment and outcomes.

NYLGA

- Provide support to share common procurement resources and learnings and outcomes.

1. Identify target areas and upcoming tender processes	Timelines will depend on target areas and scale
2. Engage with potential providers to understand that capability of the market.	
3. Incorporate circular procurement/recycled content considerations into procurement processes and documents.	
4. Complete procurement process, evaluation and negotiations	
5. Implement, assess and evaluate the performance of the process and products/services.	

