

Circular Economy Organics Councils Fund

Impact Summaries

Brimbank Council Revitalise Roundabouts



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Sustainability Victoria acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and acknowledges and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

Background

Sustainability Victoria (SV) delivered funding to enhance the market for recycled organics under the Circular Economy Markets Acceleration Program. Impact Summaries outline the great work achieved by recipients of this funding. SV expects these summaries will generate discussion, stimulate ideas, inspire action and ultimately contribute to a more profitable and sustainable organics sector.

Brimbank City Council completed a novel circular economy project transforming household food and garden organics (FOGO) into a valuable resource for revitalising local roundabouts. By collecting kerbside FOGO from residents and partnering with Veolia who processed it into compost and then applying it to 85 roundabouts.

Preliminary soil testing was conducted at representative sites, helping to benchmark improvements in soil health. Then the Parks Team led the application of over 150 tonnes of compost, supported by temporary project staff and careful logistics planning to align work schedules. Meanwhile, community engagement was delivered through design and installation of educational signage at roundabout sites, the development of video, photography, and digital materials showcasing the circular organics story.

This project brought together multiple Council departments including Waste, Parks, Climate Emergency, and Communications, and fostered collaboration across teams to ensure a unified approach. The initiative not only demonstrated how local waste could be converted into a community asset but also highlighted the importance of internal coordination and resident education in supporting sustainable practices. Key activities included:

- Applying over 150 tonnes of compost.
- Revitalising of 85 council-managed roundabouts.
- Establishing strong cross-departmental collaboration between four Council departments.
- Development of a 'Circular FOGO' video published on the council website and social media.



The soil on this roundabout has been treated with compost, mulched and planted with new vegetation

Project drivers

The project was shaped by external and internal drivers, including the opportunity to secure grant funding through SV's Circular Economy Organics Councils Fund and strong alignment with Brimbank's Climate Emergency Plan and circular economy objectives. Poor soil health across many roundabouts created an urgent need for revitalisation, while strong internal support emerged for increasing community participation in kerbside FOGO services. Council was also committed to keeping their FOGO derived compost and benefits local, reinforcing the value of a circular economy.

To support these goals and help the community better understand the FOGO process, the project included the production of a short, engaging video showcasing how Council is closing the loop on household FOGO. The video follows the complete journey of FOGO waste, from residents preparing and placing food scraps into kitchen caddies, through collection by Council trucks, sorting and processing at Veolia's composting facility, to the final application of compost on Brimbank's roundabouts with new plantings taking root. By visually connecting each stage, the video aimed to make the process relatable and transparent for residents, demonstrating how small actions at home contribute to healthier local environments. It also highlights collaborative efforts between Council teams and Veolia, underscoring the project's circular economy principles.

Procuring organics

Securing suitable recycled organics products was central to the success of the project, with careful attention paid to quality, timing, and alignment with Council's sustainability goals. Among several factors, three considerations stood out as most critical to delivering effective outcomes:

- Using locally sourced compost, derived directly from Brimbank's own kerbside FOGO collection through the current Veolia contract, ensuring circularity and reinforcing the connection between residents' waste and community benefit.
- Product suitability for diverse conditions, selecting compost with the right properties to meet the needs of 85 roundabouts featuring different soil types, plant species, and site exposures.
- Coordinating timing and logistics, including aligning compost delivery schedules with Parks team works programs and confirming consistent quality through collaboration with Veolia's product testing processes.

By prioritising these considerations, the project ensured environmental benefits such as improved soil structure, nutrient availability, and long-term plant health while maintaining efficient delivery and a strong local circular economy narrative.

Outcomes

The project delivered strong and measurable outcomes, demonstrating the benefits of applying recycled organics in urban environments and highlighting Brimbank's leadership in circular economy practices. Among the achievements, five outcomes stood out as particularly impactful:

- Revitalising the soil on 85 roundabouts, with over 150 tonnes of compost.
- Demonstrating true circularity, by converting locally collected FOGO into compost and returning it to community spaces.
- Improving soil conditions, with improvements in soil structure and moisture infiltration, resulting in improved plant health across the treated sites.
- Building internal collaboration, strengthening working relationships and communication across council Waste, Parks, Climate Emergency, and Communications teams.
- Enhancing community engagement, raising awareness of the FOGO system and encouraging positive waste behaviours through impactful visual storytelling, signage, and educational materials.

Together, these outcomes not only transformed roundabouts into thriving green spaces but also established a scalable model for applying recycled organics across other council-managed landscapes.

Team and contractor's thoughts

The experiences of the Parks team and contractors using the recycled organics products were positive, reinforcing the value of high-quality compost for urban landscaping. Key feedback included:

- The compost was easy to work with and adaptable to the range of roundabout conditions.
- The compost consistency and spreadability were high.
- Noticeable improvements in plant growth and soil quality within weeks.
- Previous trials with similar compost gave the team confidence in the product's effectiveness and reliability.

Advice to other councils

Using your own community's waste to nurture public spaces provides a compelling narrative that resonates widely. Collaboration is the essential, this project's success was built on a strong, cooperative culture, in short:

- Engage all relevant departments early, from Waste to Parks to Communications.
- Use visual media to tell the story and secure community buy-in.
- Start with clear roles and timelines to reduce friction between project participants.
- Don't underestimate the value of internal collaboration, it can elevate the project's impact.

Future plans

Brimbank Council is exploring more opportunities to expand the use of recycled organics across other public landscapes. This includes integrating compost into broader streetscape plantings, park and reserve maintenance, and upcoming capital works with a soil improvement component. There is also strong interest in trialling compost in community garden settings and supporting community initiatives, thereby helping to demonstrate local circular economy outcomes beyond formal council spaces. The success of the roundabout revitalisation project has provided practical and visual proof of concept that's encouraging further adoption across teams.

Further information

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Brimbank Council – making the most of householder's food scraps!