



REGIONAL  
DISTRICT  
OF NANAIMO

## UPDATE ON SERVICE STANDARDS RELATING TO RECYCLE BC

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Board receive the Update On Service Standards Relating to Recycle BC report for information.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Solid Waste Management Select Committee (SWMSC) passed the following motion as the March 2, 2021 meeting:

*“It was moved and seconded that staff prepare a memorandum for the Board, updating the Board on the status of the request to the Ministry of Environment and Recycle BC for service standards, in particular those relating to recycling glass, Styrofoam, and plastic.”*

Recycle BC is an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) non-profit organization that is responsible for end of life management of printed paper and packaging in BC. Manufactures and/or sellers of printed paper and packaging provide funds to Recycle BC to recover and recycle the material so that it is not landfilled. Recycle BC carries out these activities under a stewardship plan which is approved by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) under the provincial Recycling Regulation. The objective of the stewardship plan is to maximize material recovery and ensure that all residents have access to a robust recycling system for these items.

Recycle BC has numerous partners across the province, both private collectors and local governments including both drop off depots and single family residential curbside collection. In the case of the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN), there are five Recycle BC depot locations, as shown in Attachment 1. Recycle BC also contracts with both the City of Nanaimo and the RDN for the curbside collection of recyclables. The RDN receives ~\$1,000,000 annually from Recycle BC and these funds are used to reduce the cost of annual the curbside utility fee.

A number of recyclable items, such as glass, film plastic and Styrofoam are not typically compatible with curbside collection. Mixed collection of these materials with other recyclables lowers the overall value of all the recyclables due to material separation challenges and material breakage. Instead, these materials are only collected at depots. Furthermore, multi-family residents<sup>1</sup> in the region that do not have access to curbside collection also rely on these depots for their recycling needs.

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<sup>1</sup> ~10% of Qualicum Beach residents and ~20% of Parksville residents live in multi-family housing.

Parksville Bottle & Recycling Depot and Qualicum Bottle & Recycling Depot were Recycle BC partners, accepting end-of-life residential packaging and printed paper but this partnership ended March 1, 2020. Since that time, there have been no Recycle BC depots in the area.

On September 1, 2020, the RDN sent a letter to both the MoECC and Recycle BC (Attachment 2) stating the importance of providing a recycling service in the Oceanside area. The letter highlighted that the provincial standard to have a depot within a 45-minute one way drive time is not reasonable. The letter also suggested that residents should have access to recycling services within the community where they purchase their goods. Replies to the RDN letter from Recycle BC and MOECC are included in Attachment 3 and 4.

Recycle BC's response on September 17, 2020 stated that they are continuing to work to find a replacement service for residents in Oceanside but they feel that both Parksville and Qualicum Beach residents are well served by the curbside collection program and that the communities have access to existing depots in Nanaimo, Port Alberni and Courtney within the province's standard of 45 minute drive time for rural communities.

MoECC's response stated that they are aware that Recycle BC is continuing to look for a replacement service and also reinforced that currently both Qualicum Beach and Parksville are within the provincial standard for recycling access. They appreciate the convenience of having a depot in one's local community but ask that resident hold on to their material until a trip is warranted.

Following the SWMSC meeting on March 2, 2021, both MoECC and Recycle BC were contacted to ask if there has been any progress on improving access to the depots in the Oceanside area. Recycle BC responded back scheduling a meeting for March 11, 2021. The MoECC provided the following six bullets:

- Thank you for your continued patience regarding the issue of securing a recycling depot in the Parksville/Qualicum Beach area. We understand that these closures present an inconvenience for affected communities.
- Recycle BC has assured us that they are working diligently to find a solution to this problem but have been unsuccessful with entering into an agreement with any service providers. The ministry does not control which service providers are contracted to provide recycling services as the ministry's role is to review and approve EPR plans and monitor industry's performance – including adequate accessibility.
- Several potential locations have been pursued by Recycle BC but have not transpired for reasons unrelated to Recycle BC's program.
- We communicated last fall that there has been no change to the curbside recycling program and that each community has up to six depots within a 20 - 30-minute drive which is within the 45-minute drive time standard for rural communities.
- The accessibility criteria were extensively consulted on in the approved 2019 Recycle BC Stewardship Plan and will be consulted on again during the next planned review in 5 years.
- The ministry will continue to work with Recycle BC to find a solution to this issue.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT**

Environmental Stewardship - Achieve the 90% waste diversion target as per the Solid Waste Management Plan.

Extended Producer Responsibility programs are a key aspect in reaching a 90% waste diversion target. Programs and regulations at the provincial and federal level regarding waste diversion and waste reduction are anticipated to increase regional waste diversion by 5%.

**REVIEWED BY:**

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**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Recycle BC locations in the Regional District of Nanaimo
2. Letter to Ministry of Environment and Climate Change and Recycle BC Re: Recycle BC Depot Collection Coverage
3. Letter from Recycle BC Re: Recycle BC Depot Collection Coverage
4. Letter from Ministry of Environment and Climate Change