



David Lefebvre
Recycle BC Director, Public Affairs

September 17, 2020

Ian W. Thorpe
Chair, Regional District of Nanaimo
6300 Hammond Bay Road
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6N2

Subject: Recycle BC Depot Collection Coverage

Dear Mr. Thorpe,

Thank you for taking the time to write and share your concerns. We appreciate your patience as we work to find a solution for the depot-related materials in your communities.

We want you to know that we have prioritized finding a replacement location for the residents of Parksville and Qualicum Beach to drop off their materials. We have been working steadily to find a solution to these challenges, while also trying to ensure the continued collection and responsible management of all of the materials across the province during the COVID-19 pandemic, and while launching a new post-collection network that will ensure better environmental outcomes for all of the materials we collect across the province.

Meanwhile, the residents of Parksville and Qualicum are both well served by curbside recycling collection, where the majority of materials can be placed. For the small number of materials that cannot be placed in curbside, we ask residents to temporarily hold on to those materials until they are planning a trip to a neighbouring community where there are several depots available.

You are correct when you point out that both Parksville and Qualicum are considered rural municipalities. As such, both communities still currently find themselves within a 45-minute drive to a depot. In fact, both communities have six depots within that drive time. The closest for Parksville is approximately 20 minutes away, while the closest for Qualicum Beach is approximately 30 minutes away.

The depots currently available to these communities are:

- Parksville:
 - London Drugs, North Nanaimo (3 of 4 depot materials)
 - Regional Recycling, Nanaimo (Hayes Rd)
 - Alpine/GFL depot, Nanaimo (McGarrigle Rd)
 - Regional Recycling, South Nanaimo (Old Victoria Rd)
 - Port Alberni – re-opening October 1 – (3rd Ave)
 - Alberni Landfill depot (McCoy Lake Rd)



- Qualicum Beach:
 - London Drugs, North Nanaimo (3 of 4 depot materials)
 - Regional Recycling, Nanaimo (Hayes Rd)
 - Comox Valley Waste Management Center, Cumberland (Bevan Rd)
 - Port Alberni – re-opening October 1 – (3rd Ave)
 - Alberni Landfill depot (McCoy Lake Rd)
 - London Drugs, Courtenay (3 of 4 depot materials).

With such a large province, it is not possible to provide depot collection to every community across the province, which is why accessibility standards such as the 45-minute drive time exist. Nonetheless, Recycle BC remains committed to finding a solution for the communities of Parksville and Qualicum Beach for their depot materials.

We have been actively seeking partners to receive our materials as part of our program. We have engaged with no less than seven potential partners, despite significant challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In each case, Recycle BC had to develop a thorough assessment of the site and provide appropriate timelines to allow potential partners to engage in due consideration. Most of the potential partners expressed interest before eventually deciding not to join our program for reasons unrelated to our program itself.

In one case, we had secured an agreement with a party, though they chose to not follow through, again for reasons unrelated to our program. Of the seven locations, three are still undergoing review by both Recycle BC and the potential partners themselves. We remain committed to finding a solution and are currently also exploring other new options as well.

You mentioned the Clean BC Plastics Action Plan. While many communities across Canada are currently limiting the materials they collect, and stockpiling or landfill those they do collect due to a lack of markets, Recycle BC is proud to boast the largest basket of accepted materials in Canada.

Recycle BC recovers more residential plastic than anywhere in Canada, having achieved a 42% recovery rate last year. We are proud to report that 90% of the materials we collected in 2019 were managed by recycling. This performance can be considered a key contribution to BC's Plastics Action Plan, as the majority of the plastic we collect remains here in BC thanks to investments in local plastics recycling infrastructure that our program incented. Further, we are actively pursuing the collection of the most challenging plastic types and working towards finding a recycling solution for this material at scale.

In addition, our new post-collection network will allow us to further localize our markets. Where previously, we shipped the majority of our fibre overseas, we will now be able to market this material here in the Pacific Northwest. The launch of this post-collection network occurred in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and significantly challenged our resources, as did the pandemic itself. Nonetheless, as you can see, we have continued to prioritize finding a solution to the depot service in your communities.



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We thank you for sharing your concerns with us and we want you to know that we share your concerns. We are working hard, despite the tremendous challenges presented by the pandemic, to find a new location for collection.

Sincerely,

David Lefebvre
Director of Public Affairs
Recycle BC

CC:

George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Bob McDonald, Director, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Brendan McShane, Manager of Collection, Recycle BC