

**REPORT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 2021**

SUBJECT **Finalizing the Solid Waste Management Plan**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To present the results of phase two consultation and the final draft Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP), and to recommend next steps for adoption, regulatory approval and implementation.

BACKGROUND

The Capital Regional District (CRD) has completed the second phase of consultation as part of the multi-phase public engagement process to develop a new SWMP. The SWMP seeks to reduce how much material is sent to Hartland Landfill and guide how the region's waste is managed in a safe, secure and sustainable way now and in the future, with a focused planning horizon of 10-years. The SWMP is a "living document" that may be amended to reflect new considerations, technologies and issues as they arise. Development of a SWMP is a regulatory requirement under the Environmental Management Act.

Work on revising the SWMP was substantially initiated in 2011, put on hold in 2014 to investigate integrated resource management alternatives, and re-initiated in 2018. The CRD is now in phase four of the 4-step solid waste management planning process identified by the Province of BC.

Throughout the planning process, the Solid Waste Advisory Committee has provided feedback on the development of the draft SWMP, including the plan goals, targets and strategies which were endorsed by the Environmental Services Committee and CRD Board. Public engagement has been a key part of developing the plan, and staff have coordinated two rounds of public consultation. Results from this engagement have been incorporated into the final draft Plan (Appendix A), proposed plan revisions are summarized in Appendix B. If the final draft SWMP is approved by the CRD Board, it will be forwarded to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy for their review and approval.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Environmental Services Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the final draft Solid Waste Management Plan be approved, that the final draft plan be submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy for regulatory approval, that staff immediately begin implementing the Solid Waste Management Plan, and that the Solid Waste Advisory Committee begins to function as the Plan Monitoring Advisory Committee;
2. That staff work with the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council to implement recommendations from their February 9, 2021 letter, including establishing a W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council/Capital Regional District negotiation table and related meeting schedule, and providing information regarding the Solid Waste Management Plan; and,

3. That staff prepare a package of Hartland area road access mitigation options costing up to \$4 million funded by the Capital Regional District's Environmental Resource Management division, review these options with District of Saanich staff and area residents, and return to the CRD Board for direction on next steps.

Alternative 2

That the final draft Solid Waste Management Plan not be approved and alternate direction be provided.

IMPLICATIONS

Intergovernmental Implications

Staff reached out to electoral areas and municipalities inviting feedback on the draft plan, offering presentations and requesting letters of support. CRD staff provided presentations to Victoria, Central Saanich, Saanich, Oak Bay, Esquimalt, Highlands and Colwood. All municipalities that received presentations formally provided expressions of support for the plan, except for Highlands and Colwood, which provided neither support nor opposition. Municipalities not listed above provided no response.

Specific feedback received, along with copies of letters of response are included in Appendix C. A summary of feedback is as follows:

- There was support for the draft Plan and its focus on the 5R pollution prevention hierarchy;
- Desire was expressed for the CRD to maximize the use of municipal authorities to reduce waste and provide the necessary resources to support municipalities;
- Desire was expressed for the CRD to provide bold leadership and facilitate accelerated regional collaboration on actions that achieve waste disposal targets;
- It was identified that *Zero Waste Victoria* plan is aligned with the SWMP, and a desire to prioritize actions within the SWMP to support implementation of *Zero Waste Victoria*;
- It was requested to add a section to the Plan regarding integrated resource management and gasification;
- It was requested that the Plan reference the additional benefits of a regional organics processing facility associated with the greenhouse gas emissions savings from the reduced transportation of organics outside of the region;
- It was requested that the CRD work with local governments to advocate for flow control to regulate the export of solid waste.
- There was no formal opposition to the plan expressed by any municipality or electrical area;

A summary of all feedback received by municipalities, cross referenced against the draft Plan, along with how this feedback is addressed in the final draft Plan is found in Appendix D.

Staff reached out to all First Nations communities located within the CRD region inviting feedback on the draft plan, offering a presentation and requesting letters of support. CRD staff met with WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council (WLC) and delivered a presentation. WLC expressed desire for the CRD to educate First Nation communities about the Plan and waste reduction principles as well as establish an ongoing WLC/CRD negotiation table and associated meeting schedule regarding impact benefit and partnership agreements. Esquimalt First Nation also received a presentation. Further information about the First Nation engagement process, and copies of the letters of response received are included within Appendix C.

The CRD reached out by letter to neighbouring regional districts inviting feedback and requesting letters of support. The Regional District of Cowichan Valley provided formal written support of the Plan. Regional District of Nanaimo reciprocated the CRD's invitation with a presentation of their own SWMP. Further information on neighbouring regional district responses is included in Appendix C.

Social Implications

Phase two consultation occurred between November 18, 2020 and February 15, 2021, and adhered to the Provincial guidance provided in the *Guide to Solid Waste Management Planning*. A high-level summary of what was heard through the phase two consultation process is provided in the 'implications' sections, below. An in depth report documenting the consultation approach, summary results, along with verbatim results of consultation are included as Appendix C.

At its April 9, 2021 meeting, the Solid Waste Advisory Committee reviewed this staff report and provided comments in support of the finalized Solid Waste Management Plan, and expressed their desire to move forward with the plan as drafted. The Solid Waste Advisory Committee passed two motions (Appendix F) supporting ongoing plan management through active implementation and monitoring of the Solid Waste Management Plan. The Solid Waste Advisory Committee Chair, thanked the Committee members for their commitment and participation in advising the CRD during the development of this plan.

Feedback was solicited from the general public through a variety of media including a media release, social medial (paid and earned), print media, emails to a resident database and an online public information session. Feedback sentiment was a mix of supportive, critical and neutral. Similar reoccurring themes emerged. The three most commonly occurring 'supportive' themes included:

- That the plan reflects ambitious reduction goals;
- That the plan is based on rational analysis;
- That the plan reflects a well thought out multi-pronged approach.

'Critical' feedback focused on four key issues of concern:

- Strong opposition to removal of trees (this was the most frequently heard comment);
- Desire for more aggressive waste reduction initiatives rather than landfill expansion (zero-waste);
- Negative impact the plan will have on park/mountain bike trails;
- Feeling that the plan is not in alignment with addressing the climate emergency.

Other reoccurring feedback themes included:

- Desire for the exploration of gasification and incineration options as a means to eliminate expansion requirements; also desire to avoid thermally combusting waste and opposition to gasification and incineration;
- Looking for additional incentives or penalties to encourage/enforce reduction of waste.

Much of the phase two public consultation was conducted with community associations in proximity to Hartland Landfill including the Prospect Lake Community Association, Willis Point Community Association and Highlands Community Association. Consultation activities included small-group site tours, focused community input meetings, direct neighborhood outreach and through receipt of and staff responses to letters and emails.

While vocal opposition was expressed to elements of the draft Plan, conversations were productive with both concerns and mitigation opportunities raised. Key areas of concern include:

- Strong opposition to any full build-out of the Hartland property and strong support for more aggressive waste reduction targets;
- Strong opposition to tree removal and destruction of natural habitat;
- Concerns around illegal dumping;
- Concerns around loss of peaceful parkland and impact on bike trails;
- Concern that a reliance on tipping fees to fund Hartland operations is counter-intuitive to zero-waste.

Proposed mitigation suggestions include:

- Postpone a final decision on the full build-out of the Hartland property until after waste diversion rates are known;
- Provide unmet funding to secure the 49-acre Mountain Road Forest as parkland to offset the future impact of using forested areas of the Hartland property for landfilling;
- Continue to build and enhance the mountain biking trails on Mount Work, specifically ensuring a sustainable multi-use trail network through the entire park;
- Increase bylaw enforcement for dumping, illegal truck traffic and unsecured loads;
- Develop of transfer station serving the Westshore community;
- Invest in the playground at Hamsterly Beach.

To meet operational requirements, the CRD will need to shift the commercial Hartland Landfill vehicle access to Willis Point Road in 2023. While this topic is out of scope of the SWMP, it was identified by the community as a primary area of concern. A traffic study was commissioned and placed on the CRD rethink waste website for reference and comment, and focused community input meetings were held to gather input. Primary feedback included strong concerns around traffic and traffic safety, including vehicle, cycling and pedestrian safety at key intersections; concern that slow-moving commercial traffic will impede the traffic flow on Willis Point Road; and concern that moving the Hartland Access to Willis Point Road will reduce property values on the road. Conversely, other residents expressed strong support for moving the commercial traffic access, and the view that this shift will improve overall traffic safety in the area.

Through this discussion, the community suggested a variety of road access mitigation and community benefit options including:

- addition of a new parking lot near the Hartland North Entrance and Durrance Lake/Mount Work;
- trailhead improvements at Interurban Trail terminus;
- addition of uphill passing lane or uphill vehicle pull outs;
- intersection improvements at the Willis Point/Wallace Road intersection and the Wallace Road/West Saanich Road intersection;
- addition of bike lanes on Willis Point Road;
- electronic signaling to control commercial vehicle flow on Willis Point Road; and
- changing the name of Willis Point Road between West Saanich Road and Durrance Lake.

Further information on road access mitigation and community benefit options is included in Appendix E. While the CRD's jurisdiction over these activities is limited (other than the addition of the parking lot), the CRD could provide funding in support of a package of road access improvements. Staff have initiated preliminary conversations with District of Saanich staff (jurisdictional authority) which has indicated initial support for intersection improvements, and

identified that further engineering analysis is required to determine if improvements would result in increased safety.

Two advocacy organizations provided feedback to the plan: Zero Waste BC, and the Mount-Work Coalition. Specific feedback received are included in Appendix C. A review of this feedback cross referenced against the draft Plan, along with how this feedback is addressed in the final draft Plan is found in Appendix D.

Financial Implications

The strategies and actions outlined in the final draft SWMP are intended to decrease community waste generation from 380kg per capita down to 250kg per capita over the 10 year planning horizon. The CRD currently spends approximately \$5.8 million per year on diversion activities, net of the revenues received from extended producer responsibility, sale of recyclables, tip fees at the organics processing transfer station and recycling fees. The annual incremental cost to deliver the new strategies and actions in the final draft SWMP is \$320,000 to \$345,000. This is an increase of approximately 1% per year, and will fund activities including sustained and enhanced education programs, waste prevention, increasing residential and multi-family, industrial commercial and institutional and construction, renovation and demolition diversion, and enhancing public space waste management.

The 10-year operating and capital projections for the CRD's solid waste services, including the proposed SWMP investments, road access mitigation funding and resulting tonnage reductions, can be funded by tipping fees (\$110/tonne), program revenues, reserve balances and other projected revenues (including renewable natural gas), without the need for tax requisition or external debt. Schedule D of the final draft Plan shows the estimated financial impact of the projected expenditures and decreasing per capita disposal including proposed spending of up to \$4 million on a package of Hartland area road access mitigation alternatives.

Environmental & Climate Implications

In 2019, the CRD Board identified Climate Action & Environmental Stewardship as a priority for the region and approved a motion to declare a climate emergency. The goals and guiding principles of this plan build upon the 5R pollution prevention hierarchy, focusing first on strategies that promote zero waste and support a circular economy to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with producing materials that eventually become waste. This plan also considers strategies to beneficially use waste as a resource and to manage the residual waste stream to minimize fugitive emissions.

Service Delivery Implications

The final draft SWMP includes an Implementation Schedule as Schedule C to the document. The schedule identifies actions that will be implemented in the short term (3- years) and medium term (5-years) timeframe. Once the final draft Plan is approved, staff will immediately begin implementation, and return to the Environmental Services Committee with an implementation update that considers the requests for prioritization of certain actions made by municipalities.

CONCLUSION

The CRD is now in phase four of the 4-step solid waste management planning process identified by the Province of BC. Throughout of planning process, the Solid Waste Advisory Committee has provided feedback on the development of the draft SWMP, including the plan goals, targets and

strategies which were endorsed by the Environmental Services Committee and CRD Board. Public engagement has been a key part of developing the plan, and staff have coordinated two rounds of public consultation. Results from this engagement have been incorporated into the final draft Plan. If the final draft SWMP is approved by the CRD Board, it will be forwarded to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy for their review and approval, and staff will begin implementation.

RECOMMENDATION

The Environmental Services Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the final draft Solid Waste Management Plan be approved, that the final draft plan be submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy for regulatory approval, that staff immediately begin implementing the Solid Waste Management Plan, and that the Solid Waste Advisory Committee begins to function as the Plan Monitoring Advisory Committee;
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3. That staff prepare a package of Hartland area road access mitigation options costing up to \$4 million funded by the Capital Regional District's Environmental Resource Management division, review these options with District of Saanich staff and area residents, and return to the CRD Board for direction on next steps.

Submitted by:	Russ Smith, Senior Manager, Environmental Resource Management
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P. Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Final Draft Solid Waste Management Plan
Appendix B: Proposed Plan Revisions
Appendix C: Phase Two Engagement Summary
Appendix D: Consultation Summary Table
Appendix E: Hartland Access Consultation
Appendix F: Solid Waste Advisory Committee April 9, 2021 Motions