
MEETING TYPE: Regular Council Meeting
MEETING DATE: Wednesday, June 29, 2022
AUTHOR: Sid Smith, Senior Engineering Technician
DEPARTMENT: Engineering and Environmental Services
ITEM TITLE: Recycle BC and Curbside Recycling Services
DESCRIPTION: To determine future direction for curbside recycling services

QUESTION

Whether or not to request that Recycle BC directly undertake curbside recycling services in the District of Lake Country commencing on April 30, 2026.

OPTIONS

- A. **THAT** the District of Lake Country in conjunction with the RDCO and all member municipalities request that Recycle BC directly undertake curbside recycling services in the Central Okanagan.
AND THAT the District of Lake Country in conjunction with the RDCO and all member municipalities request that Recycle BC extend the current Recycle BC contract until April 30, 2026 to align with the existing curbside collection contract.
- B. **THAT** the District of Lake Country **NOT** request that Recycle BC directly undertake curbside recycling services in Lake Country.
AND THAT the District of Lake Country **NOT** request that Recycle BC extend the current Recycle BC contract until April 30, 2026.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee (SWTAC) is recommending to the Regional Board and municipal Councils that Recycle BC be requested to directly undertake curbside recycling collection throughout the Central Okanagan. Having Recycle BC directly manage curbside recycling collection will eliminate financial risk and provide opportunity to direct attention toward overall waste reduction priorities.

KEY INFORMATION

The District currently acts as a contractor to Recycle BC for provision of curbside recycling collection. The RDCO provides education and administration of solid waste collection programs throughout the central Okanagan. Recycle BC funds collection and education.

Under the terms of the contract with Recycle BC, the District could face penalties of up to \$90,000 per year (\$17/household/year).

The Regional SWTAC unanimously recommends that Recycle BC be requested to directly undertake curbside recycling services in the Central Okanagan commencing on April 30, 2026.

DESIRED BENEFIT

Transferring responsibility for curbside recycling collection to Recycle BC will eliminate the risk of financial penalties being applied for contamination and allow the District, the Regional District and member municipalities to refocus

efforts on waste reduction. The transfer of responsibility could result in an overall increased level of service to residents.

STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

The option recommended by the SWTAC supports Council's 2022 Strategic Priority to Preserve, Protect and Enhance our Natural Environment through removal of financial risk allowing the SWTAC, RDCO, District of Lake Country and member municipalities to refocus on regional waste reduction initiatives such as expansion of the organics system and single use plastics.

REQUIREMENTS

The Recycle BC contract requires notice of intent to terminate the contract 18 months prior to the end of the contract. The current contract ends on December 31, 2023. The request for Recycle BC to extend the contract to April 30, 2026 will align the Recycle BC contract end date with the end date for the solid waste collection contracts in the Central Okanagan making a more seamless service transition for residents.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

Recycle BC is an industry led not-for-profit organization which manages residential packaging and paper recycling in British Columbia. Printed paper and packaging (PPP) became an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) under the Recycling Regulation of BC's Environmental Management Act in 2010.

EPR programs make manufacturers and producers responsible for the materials they introduce into the marketplace.

Since 2013, the District of Lake Country along with the Central Okanagan Regional District and member municipalities (City of Kelowna, City of West Kelowna, and District of Peachland) have been under contract with Recycle BC to collect curbside recycling. The municipalities and Regional District each have individual contracts with Recycle BC and receive per-household incentives for providing the collection service. Additionally, the Regional District receives education and service administration incentives from Recycle BC to fund region-wide recycling education, contamination reduction programming and enforcement, and support to member municipalities through the Regional Waste Reduction Office.

Collected materials are sorted and sold by Recycle BC to end-markets for processing into new products.

Historically, the curbside recycling collection program has been successful with a recent resident survey indicating an overall 92% satisfaction with curbside recycling service. The program has diverted recyclables from landfill for over 8 years.

Contamination is defined in the Recycle BC contract as any "Not Accepted Materials", the contract specifies a contamination target rate of no greater than 3%. The contamination rate in Lake Country is 5.4%. Audit results show a total of 15.8% incompatible materials in Lake Country recycling collection carts.

Contamination can reduce the value of the recyclables collected and reduce the ability to meet the quality requirements of local and offshore recycling markets. Contamination in the form of hazardous materials (medical sharps, propane cylinders, flammable materials, and batteries) can be dangerous.

In 2021, Recycle BC required each of the regional governments, including Lake Country to produce a Contamination Remediation Plan. The District in conjunction with the Regional Waste Reduction Office has prepared and submitted a the Plan to Recycle BC. In acknowledgement of the lack of depot locations in Lake Country the plan includes trialing a 'Pop-Up' recycling depot in Lake Country. The depot will be located at the District owned property on the corner of Main Street and Hill Road (3151 Hill Road). The depot will 'Pop-up' on the third Saturday of the month between June and September.

The plan also continues regional efforts to reduce contamination through inspections by RDCO Recycling Ambassadors who inspect and tag carts with contamination notices.

With the required implementation of the Contamination Reduction Plans there is increased concern among the regional representatives on the SWTAC that the emphasis being placed on contamination reduction will require an increased level of effort toward contamination and may result in penalties being applied. Lake Country could face penalties of up to \$90,000.00 per year (approximately \$17 per household). The increased focus on contamination reduction and education also diverts waste reduction efforts away from other programs such as organics and plastics.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Following presentations to the Regional District Board and member Councils the SWTAC met on May 18 to review community considerations and the feedback obtained. The SWTAC prepared the attached Record of Recommendation summarized here.

The option recommended by the SWTAC is based on the following justifications (strengths) including, the removal of all financial risk allowing the SWTAC, RDCO, and member municipalities to refocus on regional waste reduction initiatives such as expansion of the organics system and single use plastics. The recommended option will likely improve services through the inclusion of curbside glass collection at no cost to residents. The option will not conflict with future initiatives or programs to include materials not currently accepted at curbside, expand multifamily residential recycling or, to minimize wildlife interactions.

This option will place responsibility for curbside recycling completely with the provincially established Extend Producer Responsibility (EPR) program and removes the need for local government subsidization and risk.

The alternative option considered and not recommended by the SWTAC would allow for continuation of the status quo, which satisfies requirements for base recycling services. The alternative option would continue to reduce the need for residents to sort paper and cardboard separately from other recyclables. As with the recommended option, the alternative option would not conflict with future initiatives or programs to include materials not currently accepted at curbside, expand multifamily residential recycling or, to minimize wildlife interactions.

The alternative option would persist for a minimum 7 years through 2029 (current agreement expires in 2024 plus the term of a renewed 5-year contract).

UNINTENDED OUTCOMES

The SWTAC considered several challenges (weaknesses) to the recommended option including the potential for short-term contractual risks if Recycle BC refuses to extend the current contract.

Should one or more local governments not choose direct service, it would likely result in cost escalation for future curbside services if the regional decision is not unanimous.

The recommended option may result in additional litter or animal attraction if curbside containers are poorly managed.

The recommended option could result in changes to collection routes or days.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Under the terms of the contract with Recycle BC, the written request to transfer service to Recycle BC must be accompanied by a 'Letter of Acknowledgement' which acknowledges and agrees to the following terms:

1. Recycle BC will, at its own sole discretion, determine applicable packaging and paper curbside service details as outlined within the Recycle BC Direct Service Transition Process document dated June 22, 2018;
2. The existing inventory of collection containers will be left in the possession of residents at no cost, at the discretion of Recycle BC;
3. Recycle BC will be provided with all reasonable assistance and cooperation during the transition period as outlined within the Recycle BC Direct Service Transition Process document dated June 22, 2018;
4. After the transition period, Recycle BC will be provided with quarterly updates on households added or removed in the local government's jurisdiction, including but not limited to households added or removed from the local government's curbside garbage service, new occupancy permits and demolitions; and
5. Reasonable notice will be provided to Recycle BC on changes to the local government's curbside garbage service and all reasonable efforts will be made to collaborate with Recycle BC on the joint establishment of collection schedules and routes.

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

Solid Waste Regulation Bylaw 708

Regulates solid waste and recycling management and collection in Lake Country.

Environmental Management Act Recycling Regulation

The Recycling Regulation, under authority of the Environmental Management Act, sets out the requirements for B.C.'s Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). Regulated packaging and products are defined in the Recycling Regulation.

IMPACT ON INFRASTRUCTURE OR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

There will be a one-time cost to recover and repurpose the recycling carts currently in use throughout the District. Placing the repurposed carts in inventory will delay the need to purchase new carts, in part offsetting the cost of recovery and repurposing.

IMPACT ON STAFF CAPACITY AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Regular staff time has been used to prepare this report. If Council chooses the SWTAC recommended option, staff time and resources can be reallocated from recycling contamination toward other solid waste reduction efforts such as organics management and single use plastics.

COMMENTS FROM EXTERNAL AGENCIES, COMMITTEES AND STAKEHOLDERS

The SWTAC record of recommendation is attached to this report.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

At the May 3, 2022 Council meeting the Regional District Manager of Engineering and chair of the SWTAC presented Council with an overview of the Recycle BC partnership and service delivery options. The same presentation was made to the Regional Board and Councils of Central Okanagan member municipalities. On May 18, the SWTAC met to discuss community considerations and the feedback obtained from these presentations.

This report has been prepared in consultation with the SWTAC.

ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- A. If Council approves this option, the financial risks related to contamination of curbside recycling will be eliminated and a consistent level of service delivery will be maintained throughout the Central Okanagan. This option is recommended by the SWTAC.
- B. If Council approves this option, the current level of service delivery would be maintained throughout the Central Okanagan for at least the term of the next Recycle BC agreement through 2028. This option was considered but not recommended by the SWTAC.
- C. If Council approves this option, it could result in the District having a different level of service delivery from the other Central Okanagan municipalities.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sid Smith, Senior Engineering Technician

This report has been prepared in collaboration with: *(author to list names and titles of collaborators)*

This report has been prepared in consultation with the following:

(author to request inclusion of initials to show concurrence)

Tanya Garost, Chief Administrative Officer	TG
Matthew Salmon, Director of Engineering and Environmental Services	MS

Attachments

A.	Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee (SWTAC) Record of Recommendation
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Record of Recommendation

TO: Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee (SWTAC)
FROM: Travis Kendel, SWTAC Chair
DATE: May 18, 2021
SUBJECT: Recycle BC Partnership

Executive Summary:

On May 18, 2022 the SWTAC met to discuss community considerations and feedback solicited from the RDCO Board and Municipal Councils regarding the Recycle BC Partnership decision.

The SWTAC also discussed operational challenges pertaining to all Recycle BC Partnership options; and prepared a joint recommendation and accompanying justification regarding the Recycle BC Partnership for consideration by Central Okanagan communities.

The unanimous recommendation is:

That Recycle BC be requested to directly undertake curbside recycling services in the Central Okanagan commencing on April 30, 2026.



Travis Kendel
SWTAC Chair

Summary of Recommendation, Justification, Challenges:

Recommendation:

That Recycle BC be requested to directly undertake curbside recycling services in the Central Okanagan commencing on April 30, 2026.

Alternative option considered and not recommended:

That the Central Okanagan continue to undertake curbside recycling services on behalf of Recycle BC.

Justification (Strengths):

The recommendation:

- removes all financial risk and allows the SWTAC, RDCO, and member municipalities to refocus on regional waste reduction.
- will likely improve services through the inclusion of curbside glass collection at no cost to residents.
- does not conflict with future initiatives or programs to expand curbside diversion activities to include materials currently not accepted at curbside.
- does not conflict with future initiatives or programs to expand recycling within multifamily residences.
- does not conflict with future initiatives or programs to minimize waste and wildlife interactions.
- will likely reduce landfill bound waste through contamination reduction.
- will result, as a minimum, in the collection of the same material, at the same frequency as is collected now.
- aligns with feedback from other municipalities, which suggests with overall net positive outcomes with direct Recycle BC service.
- uploads responsibility of curbside recycling completely to the provincial established EPR program and removes the need for local government subsidization and risk.
- enables current recycling carts to be repurposed and reused to support other curbside collection programs.
- will educate residents on the role of Recycle BC in the management of paper and packaging.

The alternative option (not recommended):

- allows for continuation of the status quo, which satisfies requirements for base recycling services.
- reduces the need for residents to sort paper and cardboard separately from other recyclables.
- is consistent with existing educational resources and marketing materials.
- does not conflict with future initiatives or programs to expand curbside diversion activities to include materials currently not accepted at curbside.
- does not conflict with future initiatives or programs to expand recycling within multifamily residences.
- does not conflict with future initiatives or programs to minimize waste and wildlife interactions.
- uses a curbside cart, which has a lid to reduce potential for weather and animal interactions with recyclables.
- continues to make best use of infrastructure already purchased and deployed (carts).
- does not require a substantial shift in a major municipal service.
- allows the RDCO and member municipalities to continue to support residents best through resolution of service concerns and inquiries.

Challenges (Weaknesses):

The recommendation:

- will likely will result in local governments receiving customer complaints/inquiries for a period following service transition.
- will transfer complaint resolution to Recycle BC, and away from local governments.
- has potential for short-term contractual risks if Recycle BC refuses to extend the current contract.
- will likely result in additional one-time expense to collect and repurpose existing recycling carts.
- will require continued efforts to minimize contamination until the contract concludes.
- will result in a loss of economies of scale for local governments that do not choose direct service, likely resulting in cost escalation for future curbside services.
- may result in additional litter or animal attraction if curbside containers are poorly managed by residents.

The alternative option (not recommended):

- maintains financial, operational, and contractual risks.
- allows for glass to be included, but only at a cost premium to ratepayers.
- will likely not result in future improved waste reduction and diversion.
- does not align with the direction or feedback obtained from other local governments in British Columbia.
- requires substantial resources from the RDCO and member municipalities, and reduces overall waste reduction progress.

Other Considerations:

In addition to the discussion surrounding topics raised by the consultation process, the justification of recommendation, and the consideration of challenges, the SWTAC also felt it was important to include further clarification around the 'Letter of Acknowledgement' which must accompany a request from a local government for Direct Service by Recycle BC.

Specifically, Recycle BC requires that the following be agreed to, in writing when requesting Direct Service:

1. Recycle BC will, at its own sole discretion, determine applicable packaging and paper curbside service details as outlined within the Recycle BC Direct Service Transition Process document dated June 22, 2018.
2. The existing inventory of collection containers will be left in the possession of residents at no cost, at the discretion of Recycle BC;
3. Recycle BC will be provided with all reasonable assistance and cooperation during the transition period as outlined within the Recycle BC Direct Service Transition Process document dated June 22, 2018.
4. After the transition period, Recycle BC will be provided with quarterly updates on households added or removed in the local government's jurisdiction, including but not limited to households added or removed from the local government's curbside garbage service, new occupancy permits and demolitions; and
5. Reasonable notice will be provided to Recycle BC on changes to the local government's curbside garbage service and all reasonable efforts will be made to collaborate with Recycle BC on the joint establishment of collection schedules and routes.

- END OF RECORD OF RECOMMENDATION -