



Regional Board Report

Request for Decision

To: Regional Board
From: Associate Director of Development and Engineering Services
Date: November 28, 2024
Subject: Curbside Food Waste Final Engagement and Next Steps

Voting Entitlement: *All Directors - Unweighted Corporate Vote - Simple Majority (LGA s.208)*

Purpose: To provide the Board with the final engagement results on a curbside food waste program and confirm RDCO Board support for implementation of a uniform regional food waste collection program.

Executive Summary:

Phase 1 and 2 of public engagement for a regional Curbside Food Waste Collection Program is now complete. During the most recent phase (Phase 2) of engagement which took place through June 2024, over 4200 residents filled out the survey on the [Yoursay.rdco.com](https://yoursay.rdco.com) page with the following results:

- ❖ 76% are in favour of a food waste collection program
- ❖ 49% are willing to pay at least \$66/year to support a curbside food waste program
- ❖ The top concerns identified include scheduling (every other week garbage collection), wildlife and costs for the program (Note: when presenting to City Councils, 4 Councils raised concerns over scheduling and wildlife, whereas 3 Councils had concern regarding costs)
- ❖ Criteria for siting a transfer station (such as cost, wildlife attraction, odour and dust nuisances, proximity to neighbours)

Survey results regarding cost have identified conflict between willingness to pay, and likely program costs. 49% of respondents are willing to pay at least \$66/year for the program, and staff have calculated the approximate range for the program to be approximately \$66 to \$90/year. Likely, this indicates that program costs will be higher than what most service users would be willing to pay at the lower range (i.e.. \$66/year per household). Minimizing program costs (where feasible) will have a direct correlation to public support.

The Curbside Waste Collection program is currently delivered through each municipal partner independently contracting the service; however, it is administered regionally through the RDCO. In the absence of an established RDCO curbside collection service, a Regional District Food Waste Collection Program will ultimately be considered and implemented through other local governments as a service. Endorsement from each Municipal Council to implement the program will minimize cost uncertainty, improve economies-of-scale, and streamline launch activities.

The current framework of municipalities independently contracting curbside service, and the various degrees of acceptance from Municipal Councils does introduce risks to the proposed regional solid waste model designed to deliver consistency of service across the Central Okanagan. Like many waste-based services, large stable volumes are a critical factor in minimizing costs. More than 70% of regional waste

generation is associated with the City of Kelowna, and their participation in this future program is important to achieving lowest-possible-costs.

Engagement with Municipal Councils received various degrees of support and raised several key concerns that aligned with feedback from the public engagement phase. Key concerns have been analyzed, and corresponding service recommendations to mitigate issues, improve the program, and aid in program adoption are captured in today's presentation.

To maintain regional consistency and ensure all member municipalities have adequate consideration and opportunity to implement a curbside food waste collection service, the recommended action plan for the Food Waste Program implementation includes timelines that are contingent upon the pace of the slowest municipal adopter.

In balance with that, the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan references the implementation of the Food Waste program, and work must progress to deliver within the term of the Strategic Plan. Therefore, staff recommend that best-possible cost estimates be presented to Municipal Councils and confirmation of program participation be received no later than mid-2025.

Recommendation(s):

THAT the Board receives the report for information from the Associate Director of Development and Engineering Services dated November 28, 2024, with respect to the public engagement results from Phase 2 Curbside Food Waste collection initiative;

AND THAT the Board directs staff to continue to advance work on the Curbside Food Waste Program, including but not limited to, program development, transfer station infrastructure and land, and implementation strategies;

AND THAT the Board directs staff to formally request participation in the Curbside Food Waste Program from all municipal councils, seeking confirmation by July 31, 2025 of their support and participation.

Respectfully submitted by: Cynthia Coates, Supervisor, Solid Waste Services

Report Approved by: Travis Kendel, Associate Director of Development and Engineering Services

Approved for Agenda: Sally Ginter, Chief Administrative Officer

Strategic Plan Alignment:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency preparedness | <input type="checkbox"/> Truth and reconciliation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health and wellness | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environment and climate – Regional priority only |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regional transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth and development – Electoral Area priority only |
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In the Central Okanagan, food waste currently represents about 40% of waste sent to landfill. As food waste decomposes in a landfill environment, it generates a significant amount of greenhouse gases (GHG). The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) estimates that 61% of the gas emitted from food waste in landfills avoids collection by landfill gas collection systems and escapes into the environment. The USEPA also states that an effective method to reduce overall GHG emissions from landfills is to divert food waste from landfills.

The BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy has also encouraged residential organic waste curbside collection programs across the province to support diversion of organic waste from landfills and to reduce GHG emissions

The RDCO, as a signatory to the BC Climate Action Charter has committed to support the CleanBC Roadmap. Aligned with this roadmap, the Provincial government aims to keep 95% of residential food and yard waste out of landfills by 2030. The investigation and implementation of a Food Waste Collection program furthers local, regional and provincial efforts to protect our environment, limit greenhouse gas emissions, and maintain a high quality of life for our communities.

An RDCO residential curbside food waste program is estimated to divert at least 7500 tonnes of food waste annually, reducing GHG emissions by 28,500 tCO₂e over 25 years and extending the landfill's life by two years.

Two years of landfill life is estimated to generate approximately \$85M in economic activity in addition to ongoing revenue at the Glenmore Regional Landfill. Significantly, the 25-year GHG reduction is equivalent to the annual emissions from 8,731 passenger vehicles.

Background & Timeline Summary

Across the Central Okanagan, 64,500 households currently receive curbside collection of garbage, yard waste and recyclables collected by Environmental 360 Solutions (E360s) under contract with each municipality and RDCO. The RDCO administers jurisdictional contracts with E360 on behalf of local governments, but no service is formally established through the RDCO to undertake curbside collection of waste or recycling.

Garbage collected curbside is sent for burial and yard waste is sent for composting at the Glenmore Regional Landfill where it is made into GlenGrow compost. Recycling is diverted through to Recycle BC's post collection contractor. Multi-family apartment and condominium waste services are handled by private haulers and are not managed by local governments or the RDCO. There are some exceptions, such as gated communities, that do receive curbside collection of garbage and recycling and rely on private landscape companies for their yard waste needs.

In addition to administering jurisdictional contracts with E360, the RDCO also monitors, manages, and reports on aspects of the RDCO Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) on behalf of the Central Okanagan. The RDCO SWMP states that the RDCO will: *"Re-evaluate organic waste diversion opportunities while considering the need to maintain landfill gas collection and use at the landfill"*.

Efforts to comply with this requirement were initiated in 2021, after a Waste Characterization Study identified the opportunity for meaningful diversion. A timeline of steps followed is listed in the table below:

Date	Milestone
April 8, 2021	Waste Characterization study data presented to RDCO Governance and Services Committee identifying about half of curbside waste was identified as compostable organics.
February 2, 2023	<p>The findings of the Feasibility study were presented to the Regional Board on February 2, 2023. At that meeting, the Board resolved:</p> <p>AND THAT Staff initiate next steps to implement a regional curbside co-mingled food and yard waste collection program as outlined in the report from the Director of Engineering Services;</p> <p>AND FURTHER THAT the Board be presented with the consultation and engagement strategy for approval prior to engagement with residents and municipal Councils.</p>
April 8, 2021	<p>Consultation and Engagement framework presented to the Board, and at that meeting the Board resolved:</p> <p>AND THAT the Board supports the Food Waste Collection Consultation and Engagement Framework dated April 20, 2023.</p>
August 2023	Regional Board via the 2023-2026 strategic priorities resolved to implement a curbside organics collection program (Food Waste Program)
February 22, 2024	<p>Phase 1 region wide survey results were presented to the Regional Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 73% of residents support a curbside food waste program ❖ 83% would participate if such a program was implemented
Summer 2024	Phase 2 of public engagement, including Council presentations were completed.
November 28, 2024 (TODAY)	Results of engagement provided to Board, along with service recommendations to resolve concerns. Board Direction requested to inform on next steps.

Current Status - Phase 2 Engagement Summary

A second phase of engagement was conducted to comprehensively understand program concerns raised in phase 1. This involved online and in person surveys, meeting residents at pop up events as well as meeting with community councils for feedback. Over 4200 residents filled out the survey on the Yoursay.rdco.com page with the following results (as summarized in Attachment 2):

- 76% of respondents support a food waste collection program
- 49% of residents are willing to pay at least \$66/year to support a curbside food waste program
- Top concern identified both by residents and some members of council include scheduling (every other week garbage collection), wildlife and costs for the program
- Criteria for siting a transfer station (Cost, Wildlife, Nuisance, Proximity to Neighbours)

Key Concerns

In response to the key concerns raised above, Staff have proposed the recommendations as listed below. Attachment 1 in this Board report is a Key Concerns Analysis and Recommendations report providing further information and rationale for recommendations.

Key Concern	Heard from	Service Recommendation
Biweekly (every other week) Garbage Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District of Lake Country City of Kelowna City of West Kelowna District of Peachland Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In advance of a food waste collection program, increase public awareness of the cart upsize process. With the launch of a food waste collection program, reduce garbage collection to once every two weeks and deploy an extensive communications and education program.
Wildlife (Bears, Rodents, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District of Lake Country City of Kelowna City of West Kelowna District of Peachland Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Wildsafe BC program and explore a year-round coordinator. Expand on attractant management education programming RDCO to provide bear resistant devices for existing and new curbside carts, available for purchase.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District of Lake Country City of Kelowna City of West Kelowna Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report back to the Board with financial implications prior to purchasing land or initiating new service contract relating to food waste collection transfer stations or composting.
Countertop Kitchen Appliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District of Lake Country City of Kelowna City of West Kelowna Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to monitor the results of other communities Countertop Kitchen Appliance pilots and consider learnings to support multi-family food waste management within the RDCO.
In-Region Composting Preference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District of Lake Country Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 'Greenhouse Gas Emissions Related to Hauling'
Multi-family Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Kelowna City of West Kelowna Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All homes on curbside collection without yard waste carts will be identified and offered an organics cart prior to any changes to waste collection scheduling.
Impacts on GlenGrow and access to finished compost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District of Lake Country City of Kelowna Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentivize future food waste processor to maintain a quantity of finished compost for sale/use within existing markets.
Impacts on Landfill Gas Collection (Process & Revenue)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Kelowna Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to encourage diversion of food waste away from the landfill to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions. Gas collection system continues to be managed and expanded by the City of Kelowna to collect and treat landfill gas from historically placed organic material and new organic material that is not divertible
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Related to Hauling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District of Lake Country Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore alternative fuels, such as RNG and Electricity, for vehicles hauling food waste.

Willingness to Pay

Engagement results regarding program costs have identified conflict between willingness to pay, and likely program costs. 49% of respondents are willing to pay at least \$66/year for the program, and staff have calculated the approximate range for the program to be approximately \$66 to \$90/year. Likely, this indicates that program costs will be higher than what most service users would be willing to pay at the lower range (i.e., \$66/year per household). Minimizing program costs (where feasible) will have a direct correlation to public support.

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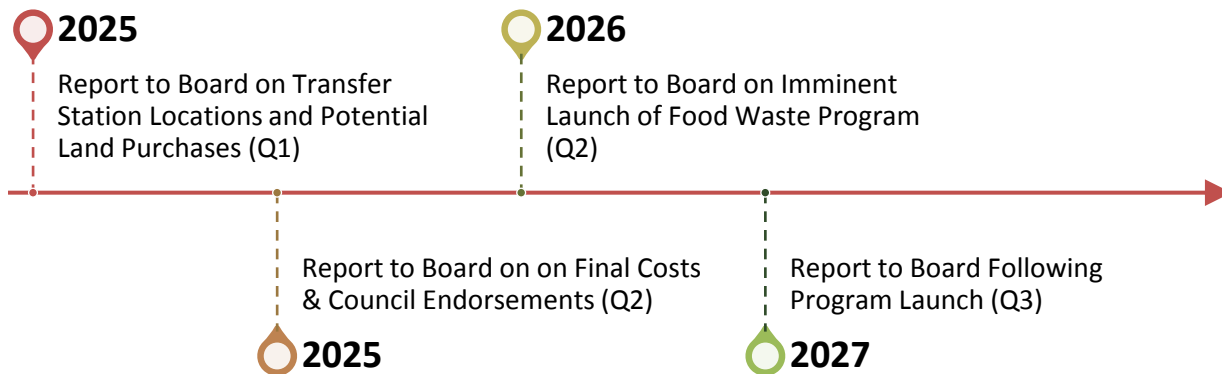
Timeline Implementation

Following the engagement with Regional Councils, there are various degrees of acceptance and readiness for a curbside Food Waste Collection Service. Of note, there was sentiment of concern about the 'unknowns', and a general desire to have individual Council consideration prior to implementation.

Historically, the RDCO and Municipal Members have made significant effort to ensure consistency of Solid Waste services and bylaws across the Central Okanagan. This includes mirroring solid waste management bylaws, shared accountability to achieve the goals and objectives of the Regional Solid Waste Management Plan and holding mirror contracts with companies to deliver community solid waste services.

The Curbside Waste Collection program is currently contracted independently through each municipal partner and administered regionally through the RDCO. This model, and the distributed control creates challenges when exploring and implementing a new service that is reliant upon the other. There is no formal curbside collection service to build upon, and the Regional District is in the process of developing a regionally consistent service that will ultimately be considered and implemented through other local governments.

To maintain regional consistency and ensure all member municipalities have adequate consideration and opportunity to implement a curbside food waste collection service, the recommend action plan for Food Waste implementation (Attachment 3) includes timelines that are contingent upon future milestones, and that will be aligned and shifted with the pace of the slowest adopter.



Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee (SWTAC): Endorsement

The SWTAC endorses and recommends that project timelines be contingent on milestones, such that all member municipalities can fully consider the impacts of their participation in the program and ensure regional consistency.

Next Steps

- Continue to implement a Curbside Food Waste Collection Service that:
 - Combines Food and Yard Waste into a single Curbside Container for collection weekly, year-round.
 - Reduce the collection of Curbside Garbage Containers to once every two weeks.
- Following through on the Action Plan (as attached):
 - Return to the Board with financial impacts and costs once Transfer Station locations are confirmed.
 - Present to Municipal Councils and confirmation of program participation be requested no later than mid-2025

In summary, while acknowledging the municipal council's caution regarding concerns raised during public engagement, it is important to emphasize that the benefits of implementing a food waste collection program are achievable while addressing public concerns. The program will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by diverting organic waste from landfill, and conserve resources by converting waste into valuable compost, and extend landfill lifespan through effective waste diversion. These advantages collectively underscore the program's substantial contribution to environmental stewardship and our regional commitment to CleanBC's objectives.

Considerations:

Environmental:

Removing food waste from the regions landfill results in an extension of the life of the landfill by at least 2 years and an overall reduction in GHG.

Legal/Statutory Authority:

The Regional District has not established a curbside waste service, or a Food Waste Collection service. The RDCO is responsible and accountable for Regional Solid Waste Management, and individual jurisdiction curbside waste collection contracts are administered by the Regional District through agreement with Municipal Partners.

Organizational/External:

Implementation of a curbside food waste program will deliver on the Boards 2023-2026 strategic priority

Financial:

Final financial impacts will be determined and presented to the Board once transfer station locations are finalized.

Attachment(s):

- Attachment 1: Key Concerns Analysis and Recommendations
 - Attachment 2: Food Waste Infographic
 - Attachment 3: Curbside Food Waste Action Plan
 - Attachment 4: Food Waste Presentation
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