



Standing Committee Report Electoral Area Services Committee

To: Electoral Area Services Committee
From: Travis Kendel, Associate Director—Development and Engineering Services
Date: June 5, 2025
Subject: Transfer Station Improvements – Financial Implications

Objective: To seek endorsement from the EASC regarding Transfer Station improvements before preparing to incorporate these costs into the Financial Plan for Board consideration.

Discussion:

The RDCO Waste Collection Service operates two transfer stations in rural North Westside (Trader's Cove and North Westside Transfer Station) and provides curbside waste, yard waste, and recycling collection in Ellison, Joe Rich, Brent Road, and Trepanier. The service has a unified fee structure, with all users paying \$167 per household per year.

The RDCO Electoral Area West transfer stations are managed by Environmental 360 Solutions (E360S), which also handles regional curbside collection. E360S conducts regular safety inspections as the Prime Contractor, ensuring compliance with BC's health and safety regulations and RDCO Service Contract. Safety projects identified or confirmed with the onsite contractor, but beyond regular maintenance, are prioritized by RDCO staff to address validated safety concerns efficiently.

Long-term upgrades to these facilities, beyond immediate safety requirements, are planned according to priority, resource availability, and community needs. These upgrades aim to prepare for future growth or improve service levels, and are integrated into workplans through a process of community engagement to ensure alignment of expectations with demand. Operational and capital priorities identified in the 2019 Transfer Station review were paused in 2023 due to a number of factors, the most significant being staff capacity following the 2021 and 2023 wildfires to prioritize recovery and therefore shifted many planned capital projects including Transfer Station Improvements.

The Electoral Area Services Committee (EASC) received delegations from the Wilson's Landing and Communities Society on December 12, 2024, and the North Westside Community Association on January 30, 2025. Both delegations presented site-specific safety concerns and suggested service improvements for the two transfer stations to the EASC. While most of the concerns were already in progress, a few items such as the damaged yard waste chute, had not been previously captured.

Captured safety concerns reinforced by community reporting, are listed in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1 – Transfer station safety concerns

| Concern | Facility | Resolved? |
|-------------------------------|----------|---|
| Replace attendant shelter | TC | Yes – Contractual requirement |
| Yard waste bin access | TC | Yes – Chute replaced |
| Recycling container placement | TC,NWS | Yes – Adjusted TC to minimize foot traffic; replaced wood under containers at NWS |
| Potholes, mud | NWS | In progress – Exploring opportunities & quotes |
| Replace bins | NWS | In progress – New bins on the way |

TC = Trader's Cove, NWS = North Westside

Service improvements requested by delegations for non-safety-related aspects of existing transfer stations have been analyzed, with costs estimated for execution. Corresponding service fee adjustments have been approximated, incorporating provided costing where available and estimating where it was not provided. The improvements requested by the community which are not currently captured in the 5-year RDCO Budget, are:

TABLE 2 – Requested service improvements

| Requested Service Improvement | Facility |
|---|----------|
| Onsite utilities (e.g. electricity, internet) | NWS |
| Wash facilities | NWS |
| Additional opening hours and contracted staff | TC, NWS |
| Expanded site | TC, NWS |
| Paving | NWS |
| Security | TC, NWS |
| RFID access control | TC |

TC = Trader's Cove, NWS = North Westside

Additional annual operating costs for the requested improvements would be approximately \$140,000 per year to fund estimated utility expenses, wages, contracted services, and maintenance. Additional capital expenses are approximately \$650,000 to fund items such as shelter improvements, utility connections, and road improvements.

Rates have not been adjusted since 2016 for the RDCO Waste Management Services within Electoral Area East and Electoral Area West, and are planned for Board review in 2026 to take effect in 2027 which would include inflationary adjustments. Should a rate review occur prior to 2027 implementation, inflationary adjustments are estimated at a \$46 increase which is about a 2.5% increase per year since 2016.

Historically, the RDCO has operated a single service across Electoral Area East and West, providing service at a single cost unified regardless of service type (curbside or transfer station). As follows, Option 1 is an alternative path adopting unified calculation, Option 2 is an alternative path defining a specific funding model, and Option 3 adheres to the status quo of calculating the service .

Option 1 – Full Implementation, Unified Model

This option would see service rates increase for all Electoral East and West users from \$167/HH to an estimated \$261/hh (+56%), to support requested improvements (Table 2) within the North Westside and Trader's Cove transfer stations.

Option 2 – Assign Rates by Type

This option would see service rates associated with service improvements (Table 2) increase for only North Westside and Trader's Cove transfer station users from \$167/HH to an estimated \$330/HH (+98%),

Under Option 2, curbside collection inflationary factors alone will drive the rate from \$167/HH to an estimated \$213/HH (+27%) to account for inflation occurring between 2016 and 2025.

Estimated rate adjustments to support inflationary costs and service improvements for Option 2 are included in the table below.

| User Group | 2016 - 2025 Rate | Inflation | Service Imp. | New Rate | % Diff |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Transfer Station Service | \$167 / yr / HH | \$46 / yr / HH | \$117 / yr / HH | \$330 / yr / HH | +98% |
| Curbside Collection Service | \$167 / yr / HH | \$46 / yr / HH | nil | \$213 / yr / HH | +27% |

Option 3 – Status Quo

Under this option, rates for all users would be adjusted according to inflation, increasing from \$167/HH to an estimated \$213/HH (+27%) during a future rate review planned to take effect in 2027. This would maintain a unified rate, and the proposed improvements would only occur if grants or other discretionary funds were successfully obtained.

Important Consideration - Citizen Survey Results

On January 30, 2025 the RDCO Committee of the Whole received the RDCO 2024 Citizen Survey Results. The results indicated that:

- All residents outside of the Electoral Areas prefer tax increases over service cuts.
- More residents in Electoral Areas prefer the RDCO cut services instead of increasing taxes.
- Residents in Electoral Area West are the least likely to opt for an increase in taxes (34%)
- In Both Electoral Area West and East, only 13% and 14% of residents respectively supported increasing taxes to improve services.

The 2024 Citizen Survey Results demonstrate a divergence from the service enhancement requests made by community associations. Before the RDCO allocates resources to these proposed improvements, it is essential for staff to seek endorsement from the EASC regarding the acceptability of the associated impacts and costs.

Next Steps:

Pending on advisement from the EASC and subsequent Board direction, the following actions would be considered:

- Seek endorsement from the EASC for the estimated user costs for the requested improvements at the Trader's Cove and North Westside transfer station.
- Amend bylaws where necessary, to modify utility rates and present to the Regional Board for approval.
- Complete preliminary or planning work in 2025.
- Incorporate associated changes into the 2026-2030 Financial Plan.

Recommendation(s):

Option 1:

THAT the Electoral Area Services Committee endorses and recommends that the Regional Board endorse Option 1, which includes an increase in user fees for all Electoral Area West and Electoral Area East service users, and requests staff to undertake next steps, as outlined in the report from the Associate Director of Engineering Services regarding the Transfer Station Improvements – Financial Implications, dated June 5, 2025.

Or

Option 2:

THAT the Electoral Area Services Committee endorses and recommends that the Regional Board endorse Option 2 and the necessary increase in user fees for all Electoral Area Transfer Station users, and requests staff to undertake next steps as outlined within the report from the Associate Director of Engineering Services regarding the Transfer Station Improvements – Financial Implications, dated June 5, 2025.

Or

Option 3:

THAT the Electoral Area Services Committee endorses and recommends that the Regional Board endorse Option 3 and requests staff to not proceed with the delegation requested service improvements unless grants or other funds are obtained, as outlined within the report from the Associate Director of Engineering Services regarding the Transfer Station Improvements – Financial Implications, dated June 5, 2025.

Respectfully submitted by: Travis Kendel, Associate Director of Engineering Services

Report Approved by: Danielle Noble-Brandt, Director of Development and Engineering Services

Approved for Agenda: Sally Ginter, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment(s): 1. Transfer Station Improvements June 5 Presentation.pptx
 2. Trader's Cove Review – WLCS Dec 2024.pdf
 3. North Westside TS Presentation to EASC Jan 2025.pdf
