



Regional Board Report

Request for Decision

Approved for Board Consideration

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Reardon".

Brian Reardon, CAO

To: Regional Board
From: David Komaike, Director of Engineering Services
Date: May 30, 2022
Subject: Curbside Recycling – Recycle BC Agreement

Voting Entitlement: All Directors – Weighted Corporate Vote – Majority (LGA s.210)

Purpose: To seek RDCO Board direction for future curbside recycling services.

Executive Summary:

On April 25th, 2022, the Board directed staff to consult with regional partners on the Recycle BC partnership. Consultation was provided by all Central Okanagan municipal councils from May 2 – May 17, 2022.

The results of the consultations have been categorized and responses to such are detailed within this report. In addition, options relating to the Recycle BC curbside service were reviewed with the Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee (SWTAC) which resulted in the following SWTAC recommendation to the RDCO Board:

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

Based on feedback received from each Central Okanagan municipality, the evidence that co-mingled recycling systems in B.C. have an average of 8% contamination, the current use of waste reduction resources towards contamination management, and assessment of financial risk if the RDCO continues to be contracted by Recycle BC to educate, administer and collect PPP, staff are proposing the following recommendation for the Board's consideration:

Recommendation(s):

THAT the Regional Board advise Recycle BC to undertake direct curbside recycling services within the Regional District of Central Okanagan Electoral Areas commencing April 30, 2026;

AND THAT the Regional Board authorizes the Chair to submit a letter on behalf of the RDCO to acknowledge and agree to the Recycle BC Requirements as outlined within the Recycle BC Direct Service Transition Process document dated June 22, 2018, as attached to the Report of the Director of Engineering Services dated May 30, 2022;

AND FURTHER THAT the Regional Board directs staff to work with Recycle BC to extend the current partnership agreement to align with the commencement of Direct Service through Recycle BC.

Respectfully Submitted:



David Komaike, Director of Engineering Services
Prepared by: Travis Kendel, Manager of Engineering Services

Attachment(s):

- Recycle BC Direct Service Transition Process document dated June 22, 2018
- SWTAC Record of Recommendation
- Summary of Consultation
- Board Presentation – Curbside Recycling Decision

Strategic Plan Alignment:

Priorities: Environment, Sustainable Communities

Values: Regional Perspective, Collaboration

Background:

On April 25th, 2022, the Board directed staff to consult with regional partners on the Recycle BC partnership. Consultation was provided by all Central Okanagan municipal councils from May 2 – May 17, 2022.

The results of the consultations have been categorized and responses to such are detailed within this report. In addition, options relating to the Recycle BC curbside service were reviewed with the Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee (SWTAC).

Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee comments:

The SWTAC is a committee comprised of subject matter experts from the RDCO and all member municipalities that provides operational and technical solid waste advice with an emphasis on regional collaboration and unified systems.

The SWTAC considered community feedback and recommends the following motion for regional consideration. The SWTAC also completed a “Record of Recommendation” document, attached to this report which includes more detail.

SWTAC Recommendation:

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

SWTAC Justification:

- 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 net positive outcomes with direct Recycle BC service.
- uploads responsibility of curbside recycling completely to the provincial established Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program and removes the need for local government subsidization and minimized 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

Other Service Considerations:

A 'Letter of Acknowledgement' 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; and
2. The existing inventory of collection containers will be left in the possession of residents at no cost, at the discretion of Recycle BC; and
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; and
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.
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Considerations:

Organizational/External:

- The SWTAC recommends that all Central Okanagan local governments request Recycle BC to provide service directly. The SWTAC membership is comprised of subject matter experts from the RDCO and all member municipalities.
- Recycle BC currently funds four term positions focused on recycling contamination reduction. If service transitions to Direct Service through Recycle BC these positions will not be required in 2026.

Financial:

- Direct Service through Recycle BC for curbside collection has no direct cost component, no penalties, and no contractual risks once established.
- Service contracts, related costs, and penalties will continue until Recycle BC initiates Direct Service, which would be no earlier than April 30, 2026 with the proposed recommendation.
- If the RDCO chooses to undertake curbside recycling on behalf of Recycle BC and collect incentives, the choices of other local governments will directly impact the economy of scale of future curbside recycling collection contracts. This will likely increase overall service expense in the future for communities without direct service.

Legal/Statutory Authority:

- Each Local Government holds an agreement with Recycle BC and will independently consider this same decision prior to July 1, 2022.

Alternate Recommendation:

- ***THAT*** the Regional Board directs staff to continue to undertake Curbside Recycling collection on behalf of Recycle BC.
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ATTACHMENT: Summary of ConsultationFeedback:**1. It's hard to decide without details on the exact service Recycle BC will provide**

The RDCO confirmed with Recycle BC that the absolute minimum service level would be bi-weekly collection of the same materials collected at curbside now, within two curbside recycling containers.

2. Concern regarding animals and weather, and the use of boxes or carts at curbside

Box and container type service is currently being successfully used throughout British Columbia, including communities subject to significant precipitation and harsh winter conditions.

Recycling materials should pose no more attraction than existing carts. When properly cleaned, recyclables should not attract wildlife. General education recommends that residents stack recycling boxes at curbside to consolidate boxes and reduce potential for windblown litter.

Overall, co-mingled automated carts are more capable (than open boxes) of resisting weather and animal impacts because of the lids included in their design.

3. General desire to collect additional and new materials at curbside, beyond glass.

New materials not currently collected by Recycle BC at curbside throughout British Columbia can be actioned for study and potential services implemented, regardless of the decision made regarding Direct Service through Recycle BC. Choosing either service option does not diminish the relative potential for the collection of new materials at curbside.

4. A single co-mingled cart is easiest, multi-stream collection seems like a reduction in service.

The same types of material are accepted in both collection systems. The only difference between current and Direct Service, would be the requirement to put paper and cardboard in a different cart, and to put glass at curbside instead of bringing it to a depot.

5. Multi-stream service will lead to contamination reduction.

Multiple-stream boxes are emptied manually by drivers and allow for contaminating material to be left behind at curbside. This reduces contamination and provides direct feedback to residents on what can be recycled.

These same opportunities do not exist with a co-mingled cart, which allows for contaminants to be obscured from view until already collected. Recycle BC has noted that on average, recycling programs with co-mingled carts have 8% contamination, whereas multi-stream programs average 4%.

6. Concern regarding potential for financial penalties and contractual risks under the current recycling collection system.

The potential for financial penalties is significant, and the likelihood of reaching maximum penalties is very low. Contractual risks associated with curbside recycling collection are higher and are forecasted to grow in the future.

Direct service by Recycle BC is the only way to eliminate both contamination and contractual risks for the curbside recycling program.

7. Cost escalation if our curbside provider no longer undertakes recycling as part of the contract.

Curbside recycling makes up approximately 28% of current curbside collection tips per year. This service requires a significant investment and time commitment by curbside service providers to complete collection, manage contamination, report contraventions to the RDCO, and manage curbside recycling carts.

It is assumed that reducing the number of pick-ups by 28% will escalate costs for garbage and yard waste collection as economies of scale are reduced (influence an expense increase). With the complexity surrounding the curbside recycling program and contamination management, the magnitude of escalation is likely to be reduced (influence an expense reduction).

8. The transition towards direct Recycle BC service reduces risk.

After consideration of Board and Council feedback, discussions with other local governments, technical discussions, and technical analysis, Financial and Operational Risk to the RDCO and member municipalities is expected to decrease under a Direct Service model.

Maintaining the current service delivery model with Recycle BC leaves significant financial, operational, and contractual risks with local governments.

Questions:

1. Will there be a change in what we can recycle at curbside?

Regardless of collection method, the same materials that are accepted curbside now, will continue to be collected with direct service. There is a strong likelihood that glass will also be collected curbside with direct service.

2. Does this decision impact recycling depots?

No. This decision strictly impacts curbside recycling.

3. What are other Municipalities saying about the switch to Direct Service? Why are some doing it, why are some not doing it?

RDNO has direct service and RDNO staff speak positively of the service. The RDNO noted that residents reach out directly to Recycle BC's curbside recycling contractor for service inquiries. This has allowed the RDNO to focus on implementing and improving waste reduction initiatives.

There are communities that currently have co-mingled cart service that are considering transitioning to Recycle BC direct service. Those communities reference similar concerns with contamination and financial risks.

Communities where curbside recycling service is provided by municipal staff do not consider Direct Service through Recycle BC to be a favourable option unless other Municipal positions are available for those workers to transition into.

4. What are the Pro’s and Cons of Co-mingled Vs. Multi-stream? What are the actual contamination rates in these different service methods in BC?

	Co-Mingled System	Multi-Stream System
PRO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for a single cart to hold everything. • May take up less space. • Cart has a lid to keep out animals and wind. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contamination is left at the curb. • Immediate feedback/education. • Improved recyclable value/marketability.
CON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large cart that allows for hiding contaminants. • Difficult to gauge contamination prior to pick-up. • Contaminates can impact entire truckloads. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boxes stack to avoid windblown litter. • May require more curb space. • Requires a small amount of pre-sorting.
Cont. Rate (%)	8% contamination on average in BC	4% contamination on average in BC

5. It seems like too many people are satisfied. It seems like too many people are willing to change how they recycle at curbside. Is the survey valid?

The survey is statistically valid for the Central Okanagan. Statistics generated from a sample size of 301 will be accurate within ±5.7%, at the 95% confidence. The same survey noted 82% of residents feel that ‘Local Governments could be doing more to improve recycling and waste reduction in the Central Okanagan.’

This is a call to action to continue the fast-tracked execution of the Solid Waste Management Plan (a community-led and government approved set of Waste Reduction initiatives), including curbside kitchen scraps collection and the evaluation of other potential curbside materials.

6. How does this impact the existing curbside recycling collection contract?

A community can request that Direct Service be undertaken commencing on the last day of the existing curbside recycling collection contract. We would also request that Recycle BC continue in partnership with the RDCO and member municipalities through to April 30, 2026.

If Recycle BC declines to participate in a 16-month partnership with the RDCO to bridge this transitional period, then incentive payments (approximately \$3 million regionally over this period) will not be available.

The risk of this occurring is low.

7. What happens if all Local Governments do not choose the same option?

If a local government chooses to request Direct Service from Recycle BC, they will not bare any financial or operational risks with that decision. Recycle BC will be responsible for all aspects of the service once the transition is made, regardless of what other Local Governments choose to do.

If a local government chooses to undertake curbside recycling on behalf of Recycle BC and collect incentives, the choices of other local governments will directly impact the economy of scale of future curbside recycling collection contracts. If local governments choose different options, this will likely increase overall service expense for those that do not choose Direct Service.

8. What happens to the recycling carts if Recycle BC does not use them?

The RDCO Waste Reduction Office, in collaboration with the SWTAC, plan to collect and reuse the carts to reduce future curbside cart orders within the respective communities that the carts are collected from. Carts in poor condition will be recycled.

9. How does this impact multifamily residential?

This decision has no impact on multifamily as this sector is currently serviced by the private sector in our region. Recycle BC partners directly with private haulers to support multifamily residential.