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TO: Chair and Directors
Comox Strathcona Waste Management Board

FROM: James Warren
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

Supported by James Warren
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Officer

J. Warren

RE: **Final Report – Recycling on Quadra Island**

Purpose

To provide a recommended path forward for the Quadra Island recycling depot, based on the public engagement sessions and feedback from the community to date.

Recommendations from the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer:

1. THAT the Comox Strathcona Waste Management Service relocate and transition the existing unstaffed recycling depot on Quadra Island to a Recycle BC depot on a new property, and undertake the necessary improvements to meet Recycle BC requirements for implementation no later than Fall of 2022.
2. THAT the Comox Strathcona Waste Management Board support an annual Extended Producer Responsibility clean up event starting 2022 for materials not accepted as part of the Quadra Island Recycle BC depot program, which could include batteries, light bulbs, ballasts, small and large appliances, scrap metal, paint, household hazardous waste and electronics.

Executive Summary

The Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) service received authorization from Recycle BC to establish a full Recycle BC depot on Quadra Island in 2022 provided that the CSWM service is able to meet its program requirements, specifically that the site must be secured, staffed and locked during non-operational hours in an effort to:

- safeguard against contamination and illegal dumping; and
- ensure the material collected can be recycled, safely, effectively and meets the stringent recycling market requirements.

To that end, staff laid out a comprehensive engagement strategy for the June 2021 board meeting with the goal of gauging public interest in the proposed Recycle BC depot conversion and an annual Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) clean up event to provide additional waste diversion opportunities. With the exception of two in-person town hall meetings which were cancelled due to COVID-19 gathering concerns, the CSWM service successfully delivered on the board approved engagement plan with Quadra Island residents. The summary of the engagement outcomes are detailed below:

- Based on the large volume of materials collected at the EPR event, survey feedback and in person outreach at the June, July and October clean up events, results demonstrate strong support from the public with 96 per cent of those polled in favour of a Recycle BC depot

conversion on Quadra Island. To date, staff received one official notice of opposition to the depot conversion based only on limited operating hours.

- The two in-person town hall meetings were scheduled for November 2nd and 8th but due to ongoing COVID concerns, both town hall meetings were subsequently cancelled. In light of this cancellation, the CSWM service continued to promote feedback via both online and printed media.
- Staff hosted an EPR clean up event on Quadra Island on October 2nd and 3rd, where a community group initiated a petition in support of the Recycle BC depot conversion.

The proposed Recycle BC depot conversion:

- advances the first two objectives of the 2012 Solid Waste Management Plan
 1. To work towards a goal of zero waste and aim to minimize the amount of waste buried in landfills.
 2. To improve the solid waste management system to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from solid waste management activities.
- is supported by the Quadra Island Official Community Plan, Bylaw No. 3050 which outlines the need for “reduction of solid waste and increased recycling rates [which] have multiple benefits by reducing transportation and services costs, reducing landfill costs”.

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Background/Current Situation

The current CSWM recycling depot on Quadra Island does not accept Recycle BC depot only materials for recycling (glass, foam, film, flexible packaging). In order to recycle these materials, residents need to travel to the Campbell River Return It depot located on Willow Street or the Campbell River Waste Management Center (CRWMC) on Argonaut Road. The two Campbell River facilities are also the only locations residents can recycle EPR materials like electronics, appliances, paint, light bulbs. The CRWMC is the only location in Campbell River that accepts used motor oil, and household hazardous waste. COVID has made dropping off depot only items in Campbell River inconvenient for residents of the Discovery Islands and exasperated the need for better recycling services on Quadra Island.

EPR Clean up Event

The CSWM service hosted an EPR clean up event on October 2nd and 3rd as an opportunity to further engage and educate residents within the Discovery Islands. The EPR clean-up event was well received by the community as evidenced by the volume of materials received, detailed below (each super sack equates to one cubic yard):

- 160 yards of scrap metal
- 40 yards of tires
- 2 super sacks of plastic bags and outer wrap
- 2 super sacks of flex plastic packaging
- 14 super sacks of electronics
- 1 pallet of microwaves
- 8 pallets of televisions
- 1 pallet of batteries (household & car batteries)
- 5 boxes of 4' fluorescent tubes
- 4 boxes of 8' fluorescent tubes

- 30 liters of used oil
- 2 tub skids of flammable liquids
- 10 tub skids of paint
- 6 drums of pesticides, herbicides & aerosols
- 6 super sacks of small appliances & power tools
- 5 boxes of light bulbs
- 1 box of CO2 and smoke alarms
- 41 - 20lb propane tanks
- 46 - 1 lb propane tanks

Given this was the first EPR clean up event on Quadra Island, the level of uptake was unknown. Therefore, in effort to manage logistics, the accepted material list was limited to the hard to recycle items that the Discovery Island residents do not have regular access to (i.e. electronics, paint, flammable liquids and pesticides, lightbulbs, smoke detectors, household appliances, scrap metal, batteries). Foam packaging and glass were excluded due to capacity limitations. While it was unfortunate that staff had to reject the large volume of foam packaging and glass containers brought to the event by residents who were hoping to recycle the materials, it is a clear indication there is a need for a depot that accepts all depot only items.

Town Hall Meetings

Per the engagement plan, the last two in-person town hall meetings were scheduled for November 2nd and 8th at the community center on Quadra Island. Unfortunately, due to ongoing COVID concerns, these meetings were cancelled. In light of the cancellation, the CSWM service continued to promote feedback through its online and printed media channels.

Based on the large volume of materials collected at the EPR event, survey feedback and in person outreach at the June, July and October clean up events, results demonstrate strong support from the public with 96 per cent of those polled in favour of a Recycle BC depot conversion on Quadra Island. To date, staff received one official notice of opposition to the depot conversion based only on limited operating hours. Staff are confident the transition to a Recycle BC depot is a much needed improvement to overall recycling services in the Discovery Island area.

Next Steps

If the board provides direction to proceed, staff will aim to implement a Recycle BC depot on Quadra Island no later than Fall of 2022 by:

1. finalizing property siting and undertaking the necessary improvements to meet Recycle BC requirements for a secured, staffed and locked facility during non-operational hours, with consideration for easy access to the ferry for material transport and suitable zoning; and
2. executing the Recycle BC, operational and property lease contracts.

Policy Analysis

The proposed activities support the first two objectives of the 2012 Solid Waste Management Plan:

1. To work towards a goal of zero waste and aim to minimize the amount of waste buried in landfills.
2. To improve the solid waste management system to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from solid waste management activities.

These initiatives will improve access to recycling, and reduce individual trips to Campbell River by residents to divert EPR materials, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The transition to a full service Recycle BC depot provides the opportunity to host annual EPR events and collect additional EPR material streams such as batteries, used motor oil and some household hazardous wastes.

The expansion of recycling services on Quadra is further supported by the [Quadra Island Official Community Plan](#) (OCP) Bylaw No. 3050, as described in the following sections:

- 2.3.2.1 *Solid Waste*, that the current model of recycling on Quadra is “unsustainable and expensive” and that “...reduction of solid waste and increased recycling rates have multiple benefits by reducing transportation and services costs, reducing landfill costs”.
- 2.3.2.1 (a)(i) encourages that “solid waste production in Quathiaski Cove is at or below "best example" levels, meeting or exceeding provincial and regional solid waste reduction targets”. However, it must be noted that in order to achieve the objectives in the OCP, better and more expansive recycling options must be provided.
- 2.3.2.1 (a)(iv) notes consideration for the relocation of the recyclables collection point in Quathiaski Cove.
- 2.3.2.1 (a)(v) outlines a need for proper management of hazardous wastes, which the annual EPR collection events would provide.

Options

The board has two options:

1. Direct staff to proceed with the relocation and the transition of the existing depot to a full Recycle BC depot.
2. Do not proceed with the depot conversion and provide alternative direction.

Staff are confident the depot conversion on Quadra Island is the best approach to improving recycling services on Quadra. The outpouring of positive responses from the EPR clean-up in October and the sheer volume of materials dropped off by residents indicates there is a need for improved service and annual EPR clean up events, which can only be made possible with proper infrastructure, including a building for drop off and sorting and a concrete pad area to move material with a pallet jack. On the basis of the above, only Option 1 is recommended.

Financial Factors

Currently, the CSWM service pays for the transportation and processing of recyclable materials collected at the existing depot on Quadra Island. Based on current service levels and the island population, residents generate an estimated 94 tonnes of material annually. Under a Recycle BC depot model, the CSWM service would receive financial incentives for the material collected. Over time, through increased community participation and the potential for expanded service offering through the Recycle BC program, the CSWM service can expect the volume of recyclables to proportionally increase. Based on the financial incentives from other similar CSWM communities, staff estimate incentives from a Recycle BC depot on Quadra Island to be between \$10,000 - \$18,000. There is a one-time capital expenditure of \$150,000 (included in the proposed 2022 – 2026 CSWM Financial Plan for board consideration) to carry out the necessary infrastructure upgrades to the property to support the operation.

The current budget for the existing CSWM depot on Quadra Island and cost comparison for a Recycle BC depot (not including capital infrastructure), is provided in Table 1 below. It is estimated that the cost to operate a Recycle BC depot will be approximately 13 per cent less compared to the existing unstaffed recycling depot, with improved services for Discovery Island residents.

Table 1: Budget Comparison for Current Quadra Island CSWM Depot vs. Proposed Recycle BC Depot

Annual Budget Item	CSWM Depot	Recycle BC Depot
Transportation	\$21,102	\$0
Recycling Tipping fees	\$17,077	\$0
Recycling Revenues	\$0	(\$10,000-\$18,000)
Staffing	\$10,000	\$40,000
Lease/Rent of Facility, Utilities, Misc.	\$0	\$15,000
Illegally dumped garbage removal	\$8,500	Similar or less
Total	\$56,679	\$49,500

Citizen/Public Relations

Considering the volume of residents in support of the Recycle BC conversion to date in relation to the one official notice of objection based only on the limited operating hours, staff are confident that the residents of the Discovery Islands have been informed and consulted on the proposed depot conversion and are prepared to proceed.