

MEDIA RELEASE

Solid Waste Management & Resource Recovery Plan

November 6, 2018 - qathet Regional District (qRD) is pleased to announce provincial approval of the Solid Waste Management Plan (*Plan*). Regional Districts are required to develop these *Plans* under the provincial Environmental Management Act. This *Plan*, an update of the one prepared in 2013, provides a long term vision of how qRD would like to manage its solid wastes and will serve to guide the solid waste management related activities and policy development in the qRD for the next 10 years.

The long-term vision for the qRD is to have zero waste requiring disposal. The path to *Zero Waste* will be incremental. It is a long term goal that will not be achieved during the timeline of this *Plan*, and perhaps not the next one. However, it is the intention of the qRD to continually reduce the amount of waste sent to disposal. *Zero Waste* is both a goal and a process. For this *Plan*, the issues to be addressed were:

1. Determining how best to continue moving towards *Zero Waste*, including:
 - a) How to increase participation in available residential recycling services
 - b) How best to collect and divert the organic portion of the waste stream
 - c) How to increase participation in diversion by the Industrial Commercial and Institutional (ICI) and residential sectors.
2. Determining how best to manage residual solid waste (the waste requiring disposal), and what should the role of the qRD be.
3. Determining how to pay for historic and future solid waste management services and infrastructure.

The *Plan* provides strategies, actions and a budget to address these issues.

Upon full implementation, it is estimated that the qRD can reach the *Plan's* target of 325 kg of residual waste destined for landfill per person or less.

In 2016, the qRD, with the support of the City of Powell River (City) and Tla'amin Nation, submitted an application for a grant to clean up and close the Marine Avenue site and to use the materials remaining on the site (ash, glass, asphalt) to develop a Resource Recovery Centre (RRC). The proposed waste management facility would provide the community with opportunities to reuse, upcycle, and recycle the majority of their waste, while providing an option to dispose of those portions of the waste stream that could not be diverted.

The grant application was successful and the Regional District was awarded a \$6 million grant for clean-up and closure of the site but did require the RRC to be built. Essentially accessing the funding tied the site clean-up and the centre together.

The old incinerator site, located on Marine Avenue in the City, was where the garbage was burned in an incinerator operated by the City from 1971 to 1994. In 1994, the Ministry of Environment (MOE) ordered the City to close the incinerator air emissions. Following the closure a decision was made to transfer all solid waste out of the region and a transfer site was set up at the Marine Avenue site and operated by the City until 2004. The waste transfer station did not meet provincial guidelines for a transfer station and consequently, in 2004 the MOE ordered the City to cease operations at the Marine Avenue transfer site to allow for the closure and remediation of the old incinerator and associated ash landfill.

The RRC will include a commercial waste transfer station and is expected to use less than half of the land available on this property. The remainder of the land, approximately 3 hectares could then be used as a community amenity identified in the closure plan as; overflow parking, trails and botanical garden.

An advisory committee that combined public, technical and political interests was established for the planning process. This approach was selected to ensure that the process to develop recommendations was collaborative and reflected the broader community interests and needs.

The *Plan* development included in depth public engagement to meet the requirements in Section 27 of the Environmental Management Act. Public engagement was executed through the various steps of the planning process. In addition to the advisory committee meetings, a community survey was undertaken to gain insights into the community's likes and dislikes regarding the current system and what they would like to see in the future, and a detailed community engagement program was enacted to obtain input on the *Plan*.

The program associated with the *Plan* consisted of:

- Open house at the Marine Avenue site to facilitate site tours and information boards
- Community open houses in Electoral Area A, B, C and D, the City of Powell River, and Tla'amin Nation
- Presentations to community organizations
- Presentations to City Council and Tla'amin Nation
- Newsletter mailed to all homes
- A [video](#) that explained the proposed clean-up and RRC
- Online and hard copy survey with a draw prize offered as an incentive
- qRD website updates with links on the City and Tla'amin sites
- Information Boards at Blackberry Festival, Fall Fair and Sunshine Musical Festival, Health & Wellness Fair, and Tla'amin Land Management Open House

For Further Information:

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