

# SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN **DRAFT** - PUBLIC CONSULTATION PLAN

**NORTH COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT**  
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NORTH COAST

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Between 2021 through 2023, the North Coast Regional District (NCRD) is undertaking a review and update of its Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP). The plan will guide the NCRD solid waste management services over the next five to ten years, providing direction on municipal solid waste (MSW) collection, disposal, reduction and recycling and service cost recovery. SWMPs are required for all regional districts in British Columbia under the Environmental Management Act (EMA). NCRDs first and only SWMP was adopted in 1996 under the former Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District and the many initiatives outlined therein have been implemented.

A key part of this planning process is the public engagement and consultation, which is to be initiated during the Draft SWMP creation in accordance with the BC Guidelines for Solid Waste Management Planning. Throughout the SWMP process, the NCRD Public Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC), a group with technical, non-technical, First Nation, public, community interest, and elected official representation, meet to discuss the objectives, strategies, options, and progress of the SWMP. PTAC provides recommendations to the NCRD Board of Directors for consideration. The organizations that form the current PTAC are listed below.



To engage with other stakeholders within the NCRD, including area First Nations, a strategy has been created with the aim of engaging the public early in the process so that their input and feedback can be part of the plan development. This early engagement is critical to the success of our planning efforts. This Consultation Plan presents the proposed initiatives to reach the broadest audience and receive constructive feedback with which to inform the SWMP.

For the NCRD planning process, we envision the most effective means of communication to conduct consultation, includes local media, online social platforms, and the NCRD website. The in-person engagement component will also be essential for stakeholder to better understand the plan objectives and options. Open houses will take place after the Draft SWMP has been submitted to the PTAC for review and comment. In addition, we propose the use of a digital online survey, which will provide the NCRD with extensive data and feedback on solid waste issues and concepts.

Aside from engaging the public early, other objectives of the consultation process are to provide consistent information throughout the project phases and create the opportunity for residents and businesses to comment on the draft plan. Most if not all of the engagement in the consultation periods will allow direct quantification of viewership and engagement with consultation materials. Specifically, with on line viewership, we will be able to tally the following:

- Number of webpage visits
- Number of surveys completed
- Number of different individuals visiting the webpage
- Document downloads
- Facebook page visits and comments.

Best practices in regional solid waste management planning requires that adequate public review and consultation of the SWMP must be completed. In addition, the public consultation process was designed to meet elector approval requirements for any borrowing of funds required to implement the plan once it is approved.

## **1.1 Background and Consultation Objectives**

The NCRD's first solid waste management planning process was initiated prior to the 1995 SWMP, which was approved by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV) and subsequently adopted by the RD Board in 1996. Most of the 1996 plan was implemented by the NCRD and some items will carry forward under the new Plan.

The objectives of public consultation associated with the current planning process are as follows:

- To ensure requirements under the Environmental Management Act (EMA) are met
- To ensure the public consultation considerations outlined in the Guide to Solid Waste Management Planning are addressed
- To engage the PTAC and public early in the process and provide sufficient time to consider the feedback received during the preparation of the plan
- To provide interested parties with open, transparent information throughout the planning process and prior to RD Board recommendations
- To provide opportunities for input and feedback during the process and once the draft Plan is released.

## **2 PLAN INITIATION**

The SWMP review process was identified as a priority project by the NCRD Board. The process was initiated in 2021 with the tendering and selection of a consultant (Sperling Hansen Associates) to guide the process and complete required background data collection and development of Technical Memoranda and presentations to PTAC followed by development and presentation of the draft SWMP.

Following these steps, the public portion of the planning process can be initiated with the finalization and implementation of this Consultation Plan.

## **3 PUBLIC CONSULTATION – THE PLAN**

The public consultation process is to be executed in two phases:

- Phase 1 - Prior to drafting of the SWMP (July 2022 – September 2022)
- Phase 2 - Following completion of the draft SWMP (October – December 2022)

The intent of this survey is to find out how the public is using the current system, gauge their satisfaction and convenience levels, and identify areas they would like to see contemplated through the SWMP review process. It is important to first fully understand the public's priorities prior to developing the SWMP as opposed to presenting them with a plan and then asking what they think about it. As a result, great weight is being put on this early phase of consultation with the intention that the draft plan would consider and reflect this input from the public.

An online survey format has been found to be the most efficient and cost-effective way of conducting regional surveys. Additionally, with the reach of digital media and the internet, online surveys have the ability to connect to a greater audience.

Survey #1 has been developed using previously successful templates provided by Sperling Hansen Associates (SHA). Understanding that the Island and Mainland regions of the NCRD are two very different solid waste systems, questions have been modified to apply to both areas while still requesting the same information. The survey was created using Survey123 and is available at the following link: <https://arcg.is/88T04>.

The initial survey will be sent to emails subscribed to the NCRD newsletter. In addition, it will be posted to the NCRD SWMP page, the NCRD Facebook page, and several other Facebook groups that contain membership in NCRD communities. These include:

- District of Port Edward (Facebook page with 721 followers)
- Prince Rupert (private Facebook group of 3,200 members)
- Haida Gwaii Communities (private Facebook group of 1,900 members)
- Haida Gwaii Observer (Facebook page with 5,049 followers)

The survey will also be distributed to local media via a news release. Newspaper outlets include:

- The Haida Gwaii Observer (online only)
- Prince Rupert Northern View.

Webpages to be contacted about displaying the survey on their platform include:

- Council of the Haida Nation <https://www.haidanation.ca/news/>
- Lax Kw'alaams Band <https://laxkwalaams.ca/>
- Metlakatla First Nation <http://www.metlakatla.ca/>
- Gitga'at Nation <http://gitgaatnation.ca/>
- Gitxaala Nation <https://www.gitxaalanation.com/>
- Kitselas Nation <https://kitselas.com/>
- Skidegate Band Council <http://www.skidegate.ca/>
- Old Masset Village Council <https://oldmassetvillagecouncil.com/>
- Kitsumkalum Band <https://kitsumkalum.com/>
- District of Port Edward <https://www.portedward.ca/>
- City of Prince Rupert <https://www.princerupert.ca/>
- Village of Port Clements <https://portclements.ca/>
- Village of Masset <http://massetbc.com/>
- Village of Daajing Giids <https://www.daajinggiids.ca/> .

The number of households recorded for the Island area is 2,128, and 5,361 for the Mainland. At a response rate of 30%, which is considered typical for regional online surveys, the target number of household responses is 638 and 1,608 respectively.

It is envisioned that the survey will remain open for two (2) months, after which time the submitted responses will be compiled and the data analyzed and presented to the PTAC.

From this survey round, there will be several key findings:

- Geographic location of survey respondents (i.e., electoral area, First Nation, city, district, or village)
- Percentage of respondent's satisfaction and level of convenience with the current garbage, recycling, and organics management programs
- Percentage of respondent's desire for composting options
- Degree to which residents travel to reach solid waste facilities and how far they are willing to travel to get these services – Level of convenience
- Percentage of respondents that support a user-pay system for waste disposal
- Education and awareness level regarding collection/return to retail provided by the private sector and Extended Producer Responsibility Programs (EPR, regulated end of life management programs) in the NCRD
- Priorities for future waste management programs (i.e., cost, environmental protection, convenience, job creation, etc.)
- Support for new programs and initiatives.

The results of Survey #1 will be shared with the PTAC, compiled in a Survey Summary, and widely shared with the public. Based on the Survey #1 responses, Survey #2 will build on areas of concern and further gauge support for potential initiatives presented during public consultation.

### **Phase 2 - Follow-Up Survey: Draft Solid Waste Management Plan “What do you think?” (Survey #2)**

To collect feedback from the public, a second survey will be drafted and reviewed by the PTAC prior to distribution and after the draft SWMP has been made available to the public. This second survey will be distributed in the same way and to the same outlets as Survey #1. Results from the second survey will be shared, and its conclusions incorporated into the finalized version of the SWMP.

## **4 PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Now that the COVID-19 Pandemic requirements have changed for public gatherings, SHA recommends that three open houses and/or pop-up booths be implemented: one open house each in Masset, Daajing Giids and Prince Rupert at the end of September 2021 (19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>) and pop-up booths within the same week in all municipalities if possible.

The difference between a pre-arranged and advertised open house and a spontaneous pop-up booth is the open house is usually inside, advertisements are distributed, and story boards can be set up around the room attended by staff and consultants to receive and record input. The Masset Library, Daajing Giids Community Club and Prince Rupert

Library Multi-Purpose Room are spaces that might be useful for this type of two-to-four-hour evening event.

A pop-up booth would be spontaneous and at locations where residents frequent on a regular basis such as a grocery store over a four-to-six-hour period. The booth attendees would speak to residents as they passed by with the hope of providing information about the draft SWMP and gaining feedback and support for the initiatives portrayed on posters at the booth. This one-on-one engagement can often be just as good as a public meeting in a room of a few attendees.

SHA will prepare the story boards and announcements for public distribution, attend all events and record input. A record of the public meetings will be kept and consolidated into the final Public Consultation Report.

If or when in person public engagement is not approved, SHA will arrange two virtual public meetings and distribute the announcement and Power Point Presentation through the NCRD website and local social and regular media.

## **5 STRATEGY DECISIONS AND LEVEL OF PUBLIC SUPPORT**

It is envisioned that the results of surveys and public meetings will help solidify the direction of the SWMP strategies and initiatives. The feedback from the public will be used to help inform the level of potential change to the solid waste management services that will be implemented as a result over the next 10 years.

Following the Final SWMP development, a Public Consultation Report will be completed outlining the steps taken to ensure adequate and effective consultation. This report will accompany the SWMP for final submission to ENV.

## **6 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

After the plan is approved by the Minister, it is recommended that a Plan Monitoring Advisory Committee (PMAC) monitor the implementation of the plan and make regular recommendations to the RD Board to increase Plan effectiveness.