



## STAFF REPORT

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**DATE:** April 3, 2023 **FILE:** EASC

**TO:** Chair and Directors,  
Electoral Areas Services Committee

**FROM:** Dave Leitch  
Chief Administrative Officer

**RE:** CORTES ISLAND CURBSIDE RECYCLING PICKUP REMEDIATION PLAN

### **PURPOSE/PROBLEM**

To consider a letter from Recycle BC requiring the Regional District to develop a collection yield remediation plan for Cortes Island.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On January 25, 2023 staff met with Recycling BC representatives to discuss the recycling volumes being collected through the curbside program on Cortes Island. The volume of recycling being collected is far below the volumes stipulated in the Statement of Work in the contract with Recycle BC and is the lowest volume per household of any curbside program in the Province.

On February 22, 2023 Recycle BC issued a formal letter requiring the SRD to develop a plan by April 15 2023, to increase the volume collected in the curbside program within 90 days. Failure to increase collection yield may result in a decrease to the funding the SRD receives from Recycle BC to subsidize the collection program. A reduction in the subsidy may require an increase in the Cortes Island Solid Waste service user fees.

Following receipt of the letter staff met with representatives from the Comox Strathcona Solid Waste service to better understand the recycling volumes being taken directly to the depot. While significantly more recycling is being taken directly to the depot, to achieve the target collection rate of 45,000kg or 67kg/household, virtually 100% of the eligible materials taken to the depot would need to be collected curbside. Not everyone who takes recycling to the depot is eligible for curbside collection, including commercial properties, material from the outer islands brought to Cortes depot, the Klahoose First Nation, tourists, and live-aboard boat residents. This indicates that we may not be able to achieve the desired volumes stipulated by Recycle BC.

The reasons for not meeting the minimum volume requirements set by Recycle BC for Cortes Island may be significantly correlated to local culture and custom. If the Regional District is unsuccessful in negotiating an agreement with Recycle BC based on achievable goals it is likely that increased tipping and/or collection may need to be considered.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the report from the Chief Administrative Officer be received.

Respectfully:



A large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dave Leitch', is written over a horizontal line.

Dave Leitch  
Chief Administrative Officer

**Prepared by:** *S. Fisher, Engineering Services Coordinator*

Attachments: Recycle BC's February 22 2023 letter



# Request to Submit: Collection Yield Remediation Plan

February 22, 2023

Attention:

Sheena Fisher  
Engineering Services Coordinator  
990 Cedar St.  
Campbell River, BC V9W 7Z8

**Re: Requirement to develop a Collection Yield Remediation Plan**

Dear Sheena,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with Brendan and I on January 25, 2023 to discuss the Strathcona Regional District's (SRD) curbside collection program on Cortes Island.

As per our discussion, Recycle BC has concerns regarding the increasing household count and low kilogram per household capture rate observed with Cortes Island's curbside recycling program. As discussed, the SRD's Cortes Island curbside program brings in the lowest volume of material for any curbside program in our network. This is also a unique scenario where the local depot (Cortes Island Depot) receives more volume by weight than the corresponding curbside program.

As discussed in our meeting, section 4 of attachment 5 to schedule 2.1(a) of the Statement of Work outlines a required collection yield of 135 kilograms per household and states that Recycle BC may request a remediation plan be drafted and implemented if the average annual amount of In-Scope PPP collected per Curbside Household by Contractor, in any 12 month period (based on the Curbside Household Baseline) falls below this.

The below table shows annual tonnage in kilograms received from the curbside program on Cortes Island:

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Weight (kg)	3,133	6,290	10,158	6,549	4,745	9,300	4,785	8,712	11,246
Household Count	569	569	569	569	569	569	569	570	603
Kg/Household	5.51	11.05	17.85	11.51	8.34	16.34	8.41	15.28	18.65

\*\* Please note that the first record I have on file of a household count is from April 2019 so this was used to estimate the annual kg/household for years preceding 2019.

For your reference, in comparison to other like size communities in the province, the average capture rate per household averages four times that collected on Cortes Island. As such, Recycle BC is requiring the Strathcona Regional District to develop and submit a Collection Yield Remediation Plan for the curbside collection program by May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, outlining actions and procedures to be implemented (with associate timeframes for each action) for the purpose of increasing the capture rate per household, or in scope, curbside materials to meet program requirements.

The requirement of this plan will be to increase the kg/household rate of material collected on Cortes Island to align with like sized communities throughout the province. Utilizing the most recent household count of 673 homes, this equates to an increased, total annual capture rate of in scope, residential material of 45,000 kgs, or 67 kg/household.

**Primary points of concern:**

- 1) The household count on the SRD's Cortes Island continues to increase, and the annual tonnage received does not mimic this increase in population;
- 2) The Cortes Island Depot seems to be the favoured material management method on Cortes Island, as demonstrated by the volume of material collected at the depot versus in the curbside program;
- 3) Collection of depot only materials at the curb, such as flexible plastics and foam packaging as part of the SRD's curbside collection offering is in breach of Recycle BC program requirements. These materials are required to be brought to the depot by individual residents;
- 4) Segregated glass can be collected curbside as per your current SOW, pending it is collected and managed separate from other materials. There has not been reported volume for this material since January 2020.

**Key Dates and Required Deliverables:**

- 1) Submission of a thorough and complete curbside Collection Yield Remediation Plan with a summarized list of all proposed actions/activities to implement and time frames for each action, along with specifics for the planned promotion and education campaign and monitoring strategy by April 15th, 2023;
- 2) April 15<sup>th</sup> - May 15<sup>th</sup> will provide an opportunity for review and implementation of revisions. Final plan will be submitted by May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023;
- 3) Initiation of the Collection Yield Remediation Plan no later than May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023;
- 4) The SRD will provide quarterly updates to Recycle BC starting August 15, 2023, detailing the progress and outcomes of the remediation plan;
- 5) If material volume increase is not observed within 90 days (August 15, 2023, comparing year over year averages) of beginning to execute the plan, the SRD will work with Recycle BC to establish additional changes to address the low capture rate. A meeting will be scheduled to go over the plan implementation and results to date.

Please note that at Recycle BC's discretion, failure to increase collection yield may result in an equitable downward change in the Fees paid to the SRD to reflect the reduces value of the amount of material collected.

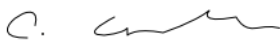
As much detail as possible should be provided in this plan, inclusive of timelines for measuring results.

Thank you for your attention and immediate actions to these concerns.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Sincerely,



Christine Combe  
Field Services Specialist  
Recycle BC  
Phone: 604-908-8913  
Email: [combe@recyclebc.ca](mailto:combe@recyclebc.ca)

CC: Wolfgang Parada, Senior Manager, Engineering Services, Strathcona Regional District; Brendan McShane, Director Collection, Recycle BC