



**August 8, 2008**

## **Hundreds of Regional District Residents Talk Trash**

Close to 1000 people shared their thoughts with the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George about recycling and solid waste management in the region. Over the past few weeks, the Regional District sought public input on its draft Regional Solid Waste Management Plan through a series of public meetings and an online survey.

The Regional Solid Waste Management Plan is the plan that determines how we will recycle, compost and dispose of our garbage for the next 5 – 10 years. Earlier this year, the Regional District surveyed the community to get an idea of what was important in regards to handling solid waste for the future. The Regional District took the input from the initial survey and along with other stakeholder consultation, developed a first draft of a new Regional Solid Waste Management Plan.

Highlights from the draft plan include:

- Curbside collection of recyclables for households in Prince George receiving curbside garbage collection.
- Seasonal curbside collection of yard waste will be offered twice in the spring and twice in the fall for residents in the District of Mackenzie.
- The number of transfer stations will be reduced but the remaining transfer stations will become full-service waste management facilities offering a range of garbage disposal, recycling and composting opportunities. All sites will be staffed to ensure a high level of service.
- There will be one regional landfill (Foothills Boulevard Regional Landfill) that will be a modern, sanitary landfill servicing the disposal needs of the whole Regional District. All other landfills receiving municipal solid waste (garbage) have been closed or will be closed in the near future.
- Mackenzie Landfill will continue to be used for the composting of yard waste and, along with Legrand Select Waste Landfill, will be used for disposal of inert waste such as construction waste (wood, concrete, soil, etc.)

From July 18 – August 3, the Regional District hosted an online survey and conducted public meetings and council presentations to seek public feedback on the draft plan.

“We were overwhelmed by the response,” says Petra Wildauer, General Manager of Environmental Services with the Regional District. “We were pleased to see that the majority of those who responded are in favour of the measures discussed in the plan,” says Wildauer who adds that a total of 834 responses were received during the on line survey process, with more than an additional hundred people passing their comments on through the open houses, council meetings and other methods.

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Initial results from the on line survey indicate that

- 79.2 % of respondents very strongly support curbside recycling for Prince George, compared to a total of 3.3% that were either opposed or not in support of the concept.
- 86.8% of respondents support enforcing a ban on the disposal of recyclables once curbside recycling is introduced. 4.3% opposed or did not support a ban.
- 78.9% of respondents support the concept of curbside organic waste collection. 6.9% opposed or did not support curbside organic waste collection.
- 59.8% of respondents support the development of Foothills Boulevard Regional Landfill as the regional disposal facility in the region. 19.4% are somewhat supportive of the concept, while 6.8% opposed that proposal.

The Regional District will now review and incorporate the feedback it has received into a final draft of the plan for the Board's consideration. The Regional Solid Waste Management Plan is a regulatory requirement of the provincial Environmental Management Act and upon acceptance by the Regional District Board, it will require approval by the Minister of Environment.

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