

**SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN
PUBLIC/TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**January 29, 2026
Online/Hybrid Meeting
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm**

MEETING NOTES

The Meeting Notes of the Public/Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC), held online over Zoom and in-person at Metro Vancouver – Head Office. The meeting commenced at 1:00 p.m. Pacific Time on Thursday, January 29, 2026.

Attendees: Director Kirby-Yung (Chair), Director Hodge (Vice-Chair), Adelyn Chan, Amika Watari, Ben Liegey, Bill Chan, Brenda Martens, Cassidy vander Ros, Christoph Schultz, Cody Irwin, Daniel Rotman, Daryl Foster, Doug Schell, Jake Turek, Jamie Kaminski, Jennifer Henry, Louise Schwarz, Marcelle Moreira dos Santos, Raman Johal, Sarah Scanlan, Sean Miles, Sue Maxwell, Tara Immell, William Selten

Absent: Allen Lynch, Gil Yaron, Grant Hankins, Jaye-Jaye Berggren, John Doherty, Kevin Huang, Komal Fatima , Stephanie Voysey, Ulwiana Mehta-Malhotra

Metro Vancouver Staff: Chris Underwood, Karen Storry, Paul Henderson, Stephanie Liu, Terry Fulton, Faith Sabourault, Vanessa Hatten, Samantha Joy

Independent Consultation and Engagement Panel Members: Celena Benndorf

1.	WELCOME The Chair, Director Sarah Kirby-Yung, welcomed PTAC members and introduced Independent Consultation and Engagement Panel member, Celena Benndorf.	Chair
2.	AGENDA The Chair, Director Sarah Kirby-Yung, presented and reviewed the January 29, 2026 meeting agenda.	Chair
3.	PREVIOUS MEETING NOTES Reviewed November 20, 2025 meeting notes and there were no additions made.	Chair



4.	UPDATE ITEMS	Chair
	<p>4.1 Vancouver Landfill Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On January 22, 2026, Metro Vancouver issued a media release announcing that a new agreement with the City of Vancouver and City of Delta has been finalized to extend the life of the Vancouver Landfill until approximately 2050. • Without this agreement, the landfill could have closed as early as 2030. The agreement provides greater long-term certainty for regional waste management planning and supports system stability. • Key benefits include avoided tipping fee increases, continued access to disposal capacity within the region, and avoidance of higher costs associated with alternative disposal options. • There will be no significant additional environmental impacts as a result of extending the life of the landfill, as there is no change to the landfill’s previously agreed height and area 	Paul Henderson
5.	DISCUSSION ITEMS	Chair
	<p>5.1 Solid Waste Management Plan – Review of the Initial Draft Plan – Discussion Terry Fulton, Senior Project Engineer, Solid Waste Services, Metro Vancouver, walked the committee through the initial draft solid waste management plan.</p> <p>The following summarizes comments and questions by members with respect to their review of the initial draft solid waste management plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of confirming the plan’s overarching goals before discussing proposed mechanisms and actions. Concerns were raised that several mechanisms described in the draft do not clearly drive the stated primary goal of waste reduction. • Inconsistency in key definitions, including how “recycling,” “recovery,” and related terms are used and positioned within the waste hierarchy. Members stated that perceived loopholes should be addressed and that definitions should be clarified to reduce ambiguity. • Draft reads more like a high-level strategy than a detailed implementation plan. Concerns were raised about the lack of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ sector-specific targets and near-term milestones (e.g., 5- and 10-year targets); ○ clear timelines sequencing when actions will occur; ○ detail implementation describing how targets will be achieved (including enforcement, standards, and financial drivers); and ○ a budget or cost framework showing estimated costs, funding approach, and allocation across levels of the hierarchy (including future costs, not only current/past costs). • More detail on enforcement and compliance, noting the plan includes many strategic or aspirational goals but provides limited clarity on how 	Terry Fulton

<p>Metro Vancouver would ensure compliance during implementation, including minimum standards, inspection capacity, and enforcement tools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expressed concern with respect to the continued role of the Waste-to-Energy Facility, particularly considering the extension of Vancouver Landfill disposal capacity. Some members indicated the Waste-to-Energy Facility is no longer needed and noted concerns regarding long-term liabilities. Members also expressed concern that the draft language could be interpreted as allowing for additional waste-to-energy capacity in the future.• Raised concerns that the targets are not ambitious enough, particularly on prevention and reduction and noted the Regional District of Nanaimo’s solid waste management plan as an example with concrete and ambitious goals and targets• Some targets extend beyond the plan’s actionable timeframe and recommended establishing interim targets comparable to (or stronger than) the previous plan.• The term “zero waste” was not referenced in the plan.• The draft includes goals related to recovery and disposal that should be minimized, and that recovery pathways involving fuel production or combustion should be treated as disposal, as they reflect upstream system failures.• Food waste was identified as an area requiring strengthening. Members requested:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ clearer definitions of preventable vs. non-preventable food waste;○ clearer alignment with broader food waste frameworks (including reference to sustainable development goals, where applicable); and○ stronger articulation of actions across the food lifecycle.• Requested a clearer definition of “carbon neutral” in the context of the plan, including scope and boundaries, and how it relates to waste sector emissions.• Supported the establishment of a plan monitoring/advisory committee and emphasized that progress reporting should be public, transparent, and disaggregated (e.g., reported separately for sectors such as commercial/institutional, construction & demolition, and residential), rather than consolidated in a way that obscures performance in specific areas.• Raised implementation questions about hauler licensing and disposal ban enforcement, including the need for clearer requirements and specificity regarding:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ load inspection processes and capacity○ use of clear bags to improve visibility of materials entering disposal facilities○ clarity on how surcharges would be applied or reduced, and under what criteria	
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- Effective past system changes (e.g., disposal ban programs and collection system shifts) indicate that regulatory tools can be among the most effective levers and asked whether the draft plan includes sufficient regulatory actions, including mandatory source separation and access to recycling.
- Percentage-based targets be converted to metric tonnes to improve clarity and interpretability.

Metro Vancouver Staff Response:

- The plan is intended to establish goals and targets, with budgeting to be integrated through Metro Vancouver’s broader budgeting processes as implementation proceeds. Staff noted that estimating costs at a detailed activity level in advance can be challenging and indicated they would consider requests for additional costing detail.
- The regulatory strategy is structured to identify priorities, with specific regulatory actions requiring additional development and engagement during plan implementation due to their complexity and scale.
- Feedback from other advisory bodies indicated some targets were viewed as overly aggressive, and that the intent is to include actions that are achievable. Staff indicated that while the draft includes long-term targets (2040/2050), shorter-term targets would be interpolated from those long-term targets following plan approval.
- In response to the request to convert percentages to metric tonnes, staff confirmed that tonnage figures are included in the draft plan.
- Disposal options and associated cost considerations will depend in part on findings that emerge during implementation.

Additional Member Comments and Staff Responses:

- The plan should contain indicative costing, suggesting the use of historical costs from similar initiatives over the past decade to provide ballpark estimates. Members noted that approximate costs — even with a margin of error — would support assessment of feasibility, comparison of action effectiveness, and prioritization.
- Concerns about whether provincial guidance requires inclusion of costing and whether the current draft would meet provincial expectations.
- Additional review time and proposed a structured approach for the next meeting, including:
 - PTAC members submitting one-page written feedback in advance
 - a round-robin format to ensure all members are heard
 - consolidating PTAC input into a document representing committee feedback.

- Requested clarification on the review and decision timeline, including opportunities to comment on revised drafts and how to engage with the Zero Waste Committee.
 - Staff response: Staff outlined that the initial draft is open for comment until February 20, with an updated draft to be prepared for the Zero Waste Committee on March 5, followed by Board consideration later in March. Staff advised there would be an additional comment period on the revised draft in April/May, with submission to the Minister targeted for June.
 - Staff also noted that a blacklined version would be provided for March, and that there is an opportunity for members of the public to delegate to the Zero Waste Committee meeting. Staff indicated they would notify PTAC members when the agenda is published and provide information on the delegation process.

5.2 2024 Solid Waste and Recycling Statistics

For information and Q&A – Designated speaker: Terry Fulton, Senior Project Engineer, Solid Waste Services

Member Comments and Questions and Staff responses:

- Requested information on relative timelines for data collection. Staff explained that scale data is the quickest to collect, while extended producer responsibility program product-level reports take the longest, as they are typically not finalized until summer or early fall. Once received, the data is modeled and compiled for reporting.
- Asked how reporting would be structured once the Solid Waste Management Plan is approved.
 - Staff response: Staff noted that approval of the previous plan resulted in additional reporting requirements and encouraged members to provide feedback on any gaps or areas where greater specificity in reporting would be beneficial.
- Asked whether the statistics presented indicate that the region has achieved the objectives of the current plan, noting that the region is nearing the end of the existing planning period.
- Asked about factors contributing to the recent leveling off in recycling rates, and which actions over the past 10-year plan were most effective in increasing diversion.
 - Staff response: Staff identified the organics disposal ban introduced in 2015 as one of the most impactful actions. In addition, municipal collection program changes — particularly for single-family homes — resulted in reduced garbage disposal and increased organics diversion.
 - Staff noted that organics diversion has since plateaued, and that several external factors are influencing recycling rates.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A follow-up question was raised regarding whether similarly impactful actions are reflected in the current draft plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff response: Staff highlighted proposed actions focused on encouraging waste generators and collectors, noting that while the organics ban remains in place, there are opportunities to enhance inspection and enforcement at disposal facilities. • Requested that staff provide a summary of historically effective actions for the committee’s reference. • Asked whether regulatory approaches would be included in the current plan and whether greater emphasis on regulation would be appropriate, given its demonstrated effectiveness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff response: Staff clarified that the disposal ban program remains part of the existing regulatory framework and invited members to submit specific regulatory suggestions for consideration. • Asked whether Metro Vancouver has tonnage-based metrics for flexible plastics following the introduction of new collection bins. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff response: Staff advised that Metro Vancouver does currently track flexible plastic tonnage in the garbage but does not currently have data on flexible plastics in the recycling stream. We aren’t sure what data for flexible plastics will be reported by Recycle BC in this area. • Commented that weight-based metrics may not fully capture issues related to soft plastics and asked whether volume-based metrics could be considered. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff response: Staff noted that weight-based measurement is the standard approach used for waste and recycling statistics but has created challenges over time with the changes to composition and characteristics of waste and recyclables. 	
6.	INFORMATION ITEMS	Chair
	<p>6.1 Zero Waste Committee <i>For information</i> <i>Designated Speaker: Paul Henderson, General Manager, Solid Waste Services</i></p> <p>6.2 Public Presentations to Independent Consultation and Engagement Panel – Options Analysis <i>For information</i> <i>Designated Speaker: Stephanie Liu, Program Manager, Community Engagement, Solid Waste Services</i></p> <p>Reminder about the opportunity for public to present to the Independent Consultation and Engagement Panel on 11, 2026.</p>	
7	ACTION/STANDING ITEMS	

	7.1 Action Tracker (Attachment 3)	
8.	ADDITIONAL ITEMS 8.1 Updated Performance Metrics Report – Stantec Link (Attachment 2) 8.2 Detailed Calculation of Targets and Metrics for the Solid Waste Management Plan Update Link 8.3 Residuals Waste Management Options Report Link 8.4 Public/Technical Advisory Committee Updated 2026 Work Plan (Attachment 3) 8.5 Regional Waste Flows December 2025 (Attachment 4)	
9.	NEXT STEPS	