

Solid Waste and Recycling Industry Advisory Committee

Key Topic Discussion Feedback Summary – April 8, 2025

At the April 8, 2025, Solid Waste and Recycling Industry Advisory Committee meeting, committee members provided input and feedback on the draft hierarchy, goals, and criteria for the updated solid waste management plan. A summary of feedback received is presented below.

Discussion Questions	Feedback
Draft Hierarchy <i>Is there anything missing?</i> <i>Anything that should be changed or removed?</i> <i>Other feedback?</i>	Industry representation - Concern for businesses that deal in disposal – perception that they are ranked lower in the hierarchy. - Composting and anerobic digestion are not included. Compostable products, where do they fit (recycled as material or recycled as energy?) We know fibre can be composted, recycled as energy with the disposal side of things. - What about cement production which produces energy, which then produces a product. Why should it not count as high priority as recycled as material rather than recycled as energy? - The hierarchy doesn't specifically include metal recycling – why isn't it included? It's a good percentage of what is generated. - Animal rendering – where does that even fit? Definitions and Hierarchy priorities - May be hard for average consumer to understand the applicable meaning of "reduce". - Possibly expand on definitions of what would fall under each classification – definition is important for each of the steps. - Need to define "recycle". - Alternative to "recycle as energy" is "waste-to-industry" or "recycle as energy for industry" because you're driving economic value so put it higher in the hierarchy. - First two items in the hierarchy are manufacturer or consumer driven. Haulers have no ability to reduce, but they will recover materials. - Counter view: Onus on waste collectors to educate customers about waste prevention as well – so industry does have a role. "Recycle for energy" isn't actually recycling – it is displacing fossil fuel but not actually recycling anything. "Reduce" should be up to government; everything below that is more relevant to industry/private sector action.

	• Disagree with not including Waste-to-Energy/landfill outputs in “recycle as energy”; not clear why this would be separated out. • “Recycle as energy”; should be understood as looking for opportunities to replace fossil fuel use with cleaner alternatives – this seems confusing when Waste-to-Energy outputs are not represented in the same way. • “Repurpose” or “use as fuel” makes more sense than “recycle as fuel”. • “Recycle as energy” should also be greyed out (like disposal) or moved to the bottom of the hierarchy with disposal. • Anything to do with fuel should go at the bottom. • Create more definitions and differentiations to describe the two sections of recycle as disposal and recycle as energy – • “Recycle as energy” is confusing. It is ultimately the same thing as Waste-to-Energy so why is it classified differently? Hierarchy Design • Hierarchy doesn’t need to be a triangle; consider other ways to model it visually. • Suggest splitting the bottom disposal triangle to ensure we account for waste-to-energy and landfill separately without indicating one is preferable over the other. • Bottom triangle should be bifurcated and pointing in a different direction all together. • Waste-to-Energy should not be at the very bottom as disposal, because we’re still producing something of value. • Disposal at the landfill can also involve opportunity to extract landfill gas as a beneficial use. So, in both Waste-to-Energy and landfill, you are getting beneficial use as a byproduct of the method of managing waste General Comments and Feedback • New proposed Hierarchy: - <i>Reduce</i> - <i>Reuse</i> - <i>Recycle as new or alternative material - define what this means – materials recycled, break that down</i> - <i>Recycle as energy – define further what this means</i> - <i>WTE</i> - <i>Landfill</i> • Metro Vancouver is a distinct market – focus on that while considering the hierarchy – consider the end markets always while applying the hierarchy
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	• If we have a mandate to divert, there is no incentive to do better. It kills innovation when we say we can convert materials into a fuel for energy. • Materials are more valuable than energy.
Discussion Questions	Feedback
Draft Goals <i>Is there anything missing?</i> <i>Anything that should be changed or removed?</i> <i>Other feedback?</i>	Goal 1 – Prioritize waste prevention • Change to “waste reduction and prevention” • Prioritizing waste prevention seems counter productive to promoting market growth. The need to prevent waste is a good goal, but it needs to be done sustainably so industry can adapt as necessary to changing market dynamics. Goal 2 – Keep materials in use as long as possible • It should more clearly state that that materials and products are kept cycling in their highest and best value/use. Goal 3 – Make is easier to recycle effectively • What does this mean for waste and recycling industry? • Challenged by practical aspects – how is this achieved? • Words like “effectively” and “responsibility” are not well defined or actionable; subjective/ambiguous. • Begins at the consumer level. If there’s no incentive, then the problems begin. Education is core. Goal 4 – Dispose of remaining garbage responsibly • If you’re following the hierarchy – it makes this goal irrelevant. General comments • Affordability is missing in the goals - it was a top priority in the guiding principles • Missing references to collaboration and competition. • Didn’t see anything about technology or innovation – how can we promote innovation in Metro Vancouver? • Should add a goal related to investment in business and industry.
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Draft Criteria <i>Is there anything missing?</i> <i>Anything that should be changed or removed?</i>	• Add in the liability component. • Have separate column that holds themes more broadly applied – like resilience. • Collaboration – move to a general category that applies to all of the themes – not just economic. • Consider adding an operational column – practicality of application of each of the criteria to each theme

<i>Other feedback?</i>	• Remove “general” – change to “operational” • Does the criteria address out of region disposal facilities processing garbage within Metro Vancouver region? • What happens if two criteria are opposing? Is there a hierarchy for how to chose? Are the criteria weighted equally or are some more important?
Discussion Questions	Feedback
Metrics <i>Any questions?</i>	• How to tangibly measure reuse – there’s lots that happens informally – how to quantify that? • Are we tracking from a specific point in time as a baseline? • As the economy changes is there a mechanism built-in to account for changes and maintain integrity of the data?
Additional Comments	
	• General public is frustrated by the constant changes in what counts as recyclable materials; more consistent messaging across municipalities will help. • What about when licensed facilities in Metro Vancouver are sending materials to landfills State-side that local authorities want closed? Will issues like these be addressed within the plan? • Very expensive to remove compost residuals properly in landfill vs. burning it. Need regulations to encourage compliance. • Need to have cost penalties to make consumers feel the same pain as collectors and processors if they don’t recycle properly. • If a customer isn’t ready to pay more to do the right thing, the hauler is then paying or investing in cameras and enforcement methods etc. which is not cost effective. It only works if all companies play by the same rules. • Need incentives for consumers but also end up spending a lot of money policing that.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bryan, Lori, Executive Director, Waste
Management Association of BC (Co-Chair) (via
teleconference)
Craig Hodge, Director, Zero Waste Committee
(Co-Chair)
Agassiz, Sam – West Coast Reduction Ltd.
Crawford, Jeremy – Waste Control Services
Dietrich, Christian – Ecowaste Industries
Furtado, Glen – Cement Association of Canada
Hankins, Grant – Canada Minibins.com Ltd.
Janzen, Tessa – Recycle BC
Johnston, Kurt – CleanStart Property Services
Kaminski, Jamie – HSR Zero Waste
Kheyrandish, Ataollah – Richmond Steel
Recycling

Kiani, Aiden – Lock-Block Ltd.
MacFarlane, Angus – Growing City
MacNeil, Patrick – Wescan Disposal Ltd.
Muir, Wesley – Veolia North America (Canada)
Pantazopoulos, Dimitri – Waste Connections
of Canada
Prasad, Shad – Cascade Recovery +
Skei, Dayton – Evergen Infrastructure Corp.
Skoropada, Lorne – Ridge Meadows Recycling
Society
Vargas, Pinky – Republic Services
Zarbl, Michael – Major Appliance Recycling
Roundtable