

What We Heard

Engagement Summary



Solid Waste Management
Plan Step 4
April 2026

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1.0 Executive Summary

Between April 7–24, 2026, the Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) service area completed Step 4 of its Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) engagement process. This final stage shared the complete draft 2026 SWMP with the community, gathering input before submission to the CSWM Board and the Province of British Columbia for approval.

Engagement was conducted through engagecomoxvalley.ca/swmp, supported by print advertising, Facebook ads and video content, a digital marina display, and a media release. Presentations were also delivered to municipal councils and First Nations throughout May 2026.

Key metrics over the 17-day period included:

- 2,468 page views from 1,877 unique visitors to the online engagement hub
- 208 downloads of the draft plan
- 186 views of a new video, with most people watching 83 per cent of the video
- 16 comments on the public online bulletin board

Eight feedback themes emerged:

- Equity & Affordability
- Reuse & Repair
- Illegal Dumping
- Plastics Recycling & Upstream Action
- Access & Infrastructure
- Organics Diversion
- Construction & Demolition Waste
- Climate Urgency, Communication & Timelines

While the draft plan was broadly welcomed, feedback consistently called for bold action, fast timelines, improved services and access, and a strong focus on waste prevention.

The draft plan will go to the Comox Strathcona Waste Management Board in June 2026 for a final review. If approved, the plan will be submitted to the Province for approval.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

The SWMP planning process has four steps. Beginning in 2022, as part of the process’ first steps, the Regional Solid Waste Advisory Committee (RSWAC) was established comprising of technical experts, First Nations, regional district staff and residents.

Through 2022 and 2023, the Committee worked within the provincial targets to create waste management goals and guiding principles specific to the Comox Valley and Strathcona regions. Between 2024 and 2025, the focus shifted to encouraging input on local needs, challenges, and opportunities. RSWAC developed eight strategies, each with accompanying actions, approximate costs, and diversion potential.

At each stage of the process, the community was consulted, feedback gathered and incorporated.

Step 4 is about preparing and adopting the plan and reporting back to the community.

In this step, the draft Solid Waste Management Plan was shared with the community from April 7-24, 2026, before collecting final input.

Throughout May 2026, the draft plan was also presented to municipalities and First Nations within the CSWM service area for a final review, approval and support.

The draft plan will go to the CSWM Board in June 2026 for a final review. If approved, the plan will be submitted to the Province for approval.

The Four-Step Planning Process



2.2 ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The SWMP engagement follows the IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement, with Step 4 of engagement concentrating on the INFORM area of the spectrum.

From April 7-24, 2026, public engagement focused on presenting the community with the draft 2026 Solid Waste Management Plan, with the goal of receiving final feedback and comments before the report is submitted to the Comox Strathcona Waste Management Board, and the Province for approval.

The public was directed to the online engagement website (engagecomoxvalley.ca/swmp), where they were encouraged to learn more about the draft plan, share their final thoughts and feedback and ask questions.

2.3 ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

The engagecomoxvalley.ca/swmp web page functioned as a central engagement hub during the April 7-24 engagement period.

The page included easily accessible documents including the draft plan, a backgrounder, an explanatory video, an overview of goals and targets, previously posted background videos, links to the Regional Solid Waste Advisory Committee, news, a document library, timelines, and text outlining the process.

The Gather tool, or public online bulletin board was key to collecting feedback and comments to the draft plan. Participants could choose to like posts, demonstrating more popular comments and feedback.

ENGAGEMENT PAGE

The screenshot displays the 'Weigh In On Waste' website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Site-Wide Projects', 'English', and 'My profile'. The main header features the title 'Weigh In On Waste' with the subtitle 'Help Us Shape A Better Future For Solid Waste' and a 'Solid Waste Management Plan Step 4' banner. Below this, a 'Follow' button is visible. The main content area is titled 'Step 4: Prepare & Adopt the Plan' and includes a detailed description of the SWMP process, a timeline of steps (Initiate the Process, Set the Plan Direction, Evaluate Options, Prepare and Adopt the Plan), and a list of actions for users to get involved (Read the draft plan, Watch the informational video, Participate by leaving your feedback, Post questions). A 'Draft Solid Waste Management Plan' section offers 'Download Backgrounder' and 'Download Draft Plan' links. On the right, a 'Learn about how we got here' section provides a 'Project Home' link and a list of documents (Solid Waste Management Plan: Step 1, Step 2, Step 3a, Step 3b). A 'SWMP Project Timeline' section shows the 'Step 4 Plan Development (2026)' with sub-tasks: Prepare draft Solid Waste Management Report and consultation summary, Review draft reports with stakeholders for feedback, and Finalize and submit to Ministry for approval.

[Engagecomoxvalley.ca/swmp](https://engagecomoxvalley.ca/swmp) website with timelines and document links.

[Watch a Video](#)
[Goals & Targets](#)
[Share Your Thoughts](#)
[Questions, & Answers](#)

Solid Waste Management Planning

Weigh in on Waste

[Solid Waste In Our Region](#)
[Document Library](#)

Learn more about how we manage solid waste across the CSWM service area.

Who's Listening

Sarah Willie
 Manager of Solid Waste Planning & Policy Devl.
 Phone: 250-334-6016
 Email: cswm@comoxvalleyrd.ca

Project News

April 7, 2026 / WEIGH IN ON WASTE

Draft Solid Waste Management Plan is Ready to Share

[Learn more >](#)

September 25, 2025 / WEIGH IN ON WASTE

Weigh In On Waste Survey Closes Oct. 16

[Learn more >](#)

[Show more news](#)

Regional Solid Waste Advisory Committee

Information about the committee and its members.

[Start Learning Now](#)

The explanatory video and background videos on the Engage page.

[Watch a Video](#)
[Goals & Targets](#)
[Share Your Thoughts](#)
[Questions, & Answers](#)

Goal 1

To support regional circular economy approaches, and to work towards a goal of zero waste.

Target

- A 10% increase in participation at repair cafés from 2024 levels by 2031.

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Goals and targets were visually displayed for easy understanding.

Do you have feedback on the draft plan?

Thank you for reading the draft plan. Please share your thoughts and feedback.

16 contributions

Comox recycling

Posted by Tfenn

4 days ago

Once upon at time we had two places to recycling in the Comox area. Now we have just bottle recycling and as a senior it is too difficult to use. My neighbour no longer recycles and i see so much of his plastic, toys, electronics and whole dining room set go the landfill. This 2026 and Comox had no recycling depot???

0 Likes

Tearing down houses and sending them to landfill

Posted by Tfenn

4 days ago

I'm very concerned about the number of houses that are demolished and then they go to the landfill. Many of these were built with real wood and old growth. New homes are filled with pressed wood. Citizens forced to use teeny tiny bins while developers throw a whole house in there. Are we protecting our planet or robbing it.

0 Likes

Earth Day thoughts on solid waste management plan

Posted by Willem

5 days ago

As a past member of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee I am disheartened by the lack of feedback on the Draft Plan. Perhaps we have not asked all the right questions and ducked a few uncomfortable conflicts of interest in dealing with our communities waste. For instance I dont see the cost of storing a cubic meter of solid waste in our landfill? 3 categories make up half the stuff going to our landfill: plastics (12%), compostable organics (20%) and construction material (25%) - we need to

A smaller version of this

Posted by BAJ

6 days ago

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-aH_98v_eg

0 Likes

It's not OK to close the drywall bin for many days at a time

Posted by Steve

6 days ago

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Show more news

Regional Solid Waste Advisory Committee

Information about the committee and its members.

Start Learning Now

The online bulletin board, or Gather tool, displayed comments during the engagement period.

2.4. PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

To ensure the community knew the draft report was available for comment, a variety of targeted promotional tools, with a focus on digital-video and social media, were used to reach residents in the Comox Strathcona Waste Management Service Area. Sample materials are posted below.

Key promotional materials included:



MEDIA: A media release was distributed on April 7 to news outlets across the region to announce the engagement opportunity; this release was posted to the CSWM website, engagecomoxvalley.ca/swmp, and emailed to 199 recipients who follow the site.



PRINT ADS: Print ads ran in Comox Valley Record and Campbell River Mirror with the potential to reach more than 44,000 homes and businesses in the two largest centres across the CSWM region.



DIRECT MAIL: 5,611 postcards were mailed to residents and businesses in the Village of Gold River, Village of Tahsis, Village of Zeballos, Village of Sayward and on Hornby Island, Denman Island, Quadra Island, and Cortes Island.



DIGITAL DISPLAY: An outdoor digital ad ran at the Comox Marina during engagement period with the goal to catch a wider range of community members.



FACEBOOK ADS: Two Facebook ads announced the draft plan's availability and directed people to the engagecomoxvalley.ca/swmp page. The ads were displayed 175,280 times (impressions) and 59,822 unique users saw the content (reach) between April 7-24.



FACEBOOK VIDEOS: Three short clips of the new video were shared from the Comox Strathcona Waste Management Facebook account with a total of 52,285 Facebook views. The engagement resulted in 1,529 people clicking (1,441 people), commenting (6 people), or reacting (53 people) to a post. In each case, more than 98.5 per cent of those who viewed the post were not followers of the CSWM account.

SAMPLE PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Weigh In On Waste

The Draft Solid Waste Management Plan is ready to review. **April 7 - 24, 2026.**

To learn more visit cswm.ca/swmp

Comox Marina Digital Ad



Weigh In On Waste

The Draft Solid Waste Management Plan is Ready to Share

Thank you to everyone who already weighed in. The draft plan is ready for you to review. Visit the website to read the plan, watch a video, and share your feedback at: cswm.ca/swmp

Open: April 7 - 24

Review the draft plan, available to download as a PDF. Watch the video to learn about how the solid waste management plan will shape the future of solid waste in our region. Share your feedback using the online tools.

To learn more, visit: cswm.ca/swmp

Campbell River and Comox Valley Print Ads

Comox Strathcona Waste Mana...
Published by Ingrid Sly · April 7 at 1:11 PM ·

Weigh In On Waste: cswm.ca/swmp

CSWM.CA
Comox Strathcona Waste Management

Learn more

19 4 2

Facebook Video Sample

SAMPLE PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS, CONTINUED



Weigh In On Waste

The Draft Solid Waste
Management Plan is ready
for you to review.

April 7-24
cswm.ca/swmp



First Facebook Ad, running April 7-14, 2026



Weigh In On Waste

There is still time to review
the Draft Solid Waste
Management Plan.

Available Now Online
cswm.ca/swmp



Second Facebook Ad, running April 15-24, 2026

SAMPLE PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS, CONTINUED



[About](#)[Facilities & Hours](#)[Garbage](#)[Recycling](#)[Hazardous Waste](#)[Compost & Yard Waste](#)[Forms](#)[Contact Us](#)

Search

About

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Financial Plan

News

Archive

Governance

Board of Directors

Board Structure

Board Meetings

Bylaws & Policies

Projects

Education

Job Opportunities

Tenders & RFPs

Weigh In On Waste: Draft Solid Waste Management Plan is Ready to Share

Published On: April 7, 2026

Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) is renewing its Solid Waste Management Plan (Plan). The Plan will guide how garbage, recycling, yard, and food waste programs are managed for the next decade within the Comox Valley and Strathcona Regional Districts. Following four years of regional collaboration, public engagement and technical analysis, the CSWM is proud to present the draft Solid Waste Management Plan for final public review between April 7 – 24, 2026.

“The draft Solid Waste Management Plan reflects the changing needs of our growing communities and ensures that we are prioritizing responsible use of funds, waste diversion, environmental protection and community education,” said Will Cole-Hamilton, Co-Chair of the CSWM Board, “The goals and targets have clear timelines and are achievable, helping to demonstrate continuous improvement towards Provincial targets.”

The Province recommends that Plans be renewed every 10 years to ensure it reflects best practices and the evolving realities of solid waste. The last Plan was updated in 2012. The Comox Strathcona Waste Management service area population has grown 13% during that time and is forecasted to continue to grow. As communities, regulations, and public needs change, the CSWM must adapt to meet the evolving environment through the delivery of effective, cost efficient and convenient solid waste management services.

On March 5, 2026, the CSWM Board received and approved the draft Plan for final public review, which incorporates four years of consultation with the Regional Solid Waste Advisory Committee, partner municipalities, First Nations, and public engagement. Next steps include presenting the draft Plan to the Board for final approval and submission to the Province, scheduled for summer 2026.

We invite the public to review the draft plan, goals and targets, watch a short informative video and share feedback between April 7 – 24, 2026. Weigh In On Waste: www.cswm.ca/swmp

The Comox Strathcona Waste Management service area is located in the Coast Salish, Kwakwaka'wakw, and Nuuchahnulth territories.

Comox Strathcona Waste Management manages over 100,000 tonnes of waste and recycled material annually and oversees a number of diversion and education programs for the Strathcona and Comox Valley Regional Districts.

News Release, distributed April 7, 2026

3.0 Engagement Results

Step 4 of the Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) engagement shared the draft plan with the community with the goal of providing the public an opportunity to read the draft plan, ask questions and provide comment before it is submitted to the CSWM Board and the Province for approval.

3.1 OVERVIEW

Feedback tools were available at the engagecomoxvalley.ca/swmp website for 17 days in April 2026. The results presented in this section summarize feedback collected throughout the engagement.

3.2 BY THE NUMBERS

Key engagement included:



WEBPAGE VIEWS: The engagecomoxvalley.ca/swmp page recorded 2,468 views over the engagement period with 2,114 visits from 1,877 unique visitors. About 83 per cent of the visits to the page were from first-time visitors to the page.



DOCUMENT DOWNLOADS: The draft plan was downloaded 208 times, with the backgrounder being downloaded 58 times, highlighting that many more members of the community downloaded the plan than provided formal feedback.



EXPLANATORY VIDEO: A new video was created for Step 4 of engagement, with clips shared on social media and added to the engagement site. The 2:38 minute video received 186 views, with most people watching to within 20 seconds of the video’s end, or almost 83 per cent of the video. In addition, informational videos from previous rounds of engagement were available on the site.



ONLINE BULLETIN BOARD: To gather feedback and comments, a public bulletin board was key to recording feedback. Sixteen comments from 13 contributors were pinned to the board between April 7-24 in response to the question “Do you have any feedback on the draft plan?” Participants were able to like posts, demonstrating more popular feedback



COUNCIL PRESENTATIONS: Presentations and meetings outlining the draft plan were also offered separately to First Nations and municipal councils within the CSWM service area.

3.3 FEEDBACK THEMES

Participants were asked to provide comments online, on a bulletin-board style comment board that is open to the public. In response to the question “Do you have any feedback on the draft plan?”, 16 comments were received with some comments containing multiple topics. In addition, six comments were received on Facebook video posts.

The following eight themes emerged from all feedback:

FEEDBACK THEMES

1. Equity & Affordability

- Cost of mandatory collection programs is a concern
- Some residents feel they should be able to opt out
- Gap in garbage and recycling coverage, especially for aging rural residents who self-transport

2. Reuse & Repair

- Strong community appetite for expansion of repair cafés, reuse hubs, and restore-style salvage operations at the landfill
- Plan underemphasizes "Refuse" and "Rethink" stages of the waste hierarchy

3. Illegal Dumping

- Should be a standalone priority, not a side effect of other goals
- Consistency matters: service reductions, holiday closures and fee increases seen as direct causes of dumping in natural areas

4. Plastics & Upstream Action

- Skepticism about the value of plastic recycling
- Request for bans on non-essential single-use plastics and production reduction at the source
- Revive agricultural plastic recycling

5. Access & Infrastructure

- Depot closures – specifically in Comox - are reducing recycling participation
- Residents want convenient, full-service local facilities
- Expedited multi-unit building options given recent growth
- Safer drop-off conditions at the Comox Waste Management Centre needed

6. Organics Diversion

- Green bin uptake is low and uneven
- Island and rural communities lack access to organics drop-off or curbside pickup, leaving organic waste with nowhere to go
- Call for mandatory sorting and producers to remove practical barriers

7. Construction & Demolition Waste

- Material accounts for ~25% of landfill inputs yet the issue is under-addressed in the plan
- Households held to higher standards than the construction industry
- Complex hazardous waste (asbestos/drywall) disposal rules could be driving illegal dumping

8. Climate Urgency, Communication & Timelines

- Implementation seen as too slow
- Frame waste as a public health issue was recommended to broaden engagement

4.0 Conclusion

Step 4 engagement successfully shared the draft 2026 Solid Waste Management Plan with the community, providing an opportunity for substantive final input. The feedback received reflected the priorities and concerns of engaged residents across eight distinct themes.

Overall, there is strong community support for reuse, repair, and circular economy approaches. Residents also value accessible, convenient services, with reduction in service linked to decreased participation. Respondents urged faster implementation timelines and recommended reframing waste management as a public health issue to broaden engagement. Concerns around equity and affordability, particularly regarding mandatory rural collection, remain.

Community input has been instrumental in shaping a plan that reflects the values and priorities of the Comox Valley and Strathcona regions for the future of waste management. With public engagement on all four steps of the Solid Waste Management Plan now complete, the draft plan is now ready to go to the CSWM Board and Province for approval.