

DATE: May 9, 2018

FILE: 5340-05

TO: Chair and Members
Comox Valley Sewage Commission

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

R. Dyson

RE: Review of Potential Synergies between Biosolids and Organics Composting

Purpose

To provide a summary of the evaluation of potential synergies between the Comox Valley Sewer Service biosolids composting facility expansion and the regional composting facility.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

For information purposes only.

Policy Analysis

On June 28, 2016 the Comox Valley Regional District Board approved the following recommendations:

THAT the report dated June 23, 2016 regarding award of a contract to Associated Engineering (BC) Ltd. for engineering and design services for the biosolids compost facility expansion be received.

THAT as a result of a competitive process, the contract for the engineering and design of the biosolids compost facility expansion be awarded to Associated Engineering (BC) Ltd. in the amount of \$360,481, excluding GST;

AND FURTHER THAT the chair and corporate legislative officer be authorized to execute the contract.

The 2018-2022 financial plan includes \$6,482,000 for the completion of the biosolids compost facility expansion.

Executive Summary

The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) owns and operates the biosolids composting facility that processes biosolids from the Comox Valley Water Pollution Control Center (CVWPCC) and turns it into a marketable compost material for lawns and gardens. The facility is at capacity and is requiring an expansion to be able to accommodate present biosolids production and future growth within the service area.

At the same time the Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) Service has received grant funding for the construction of a regional organics composting facility to process household organics into compost.

Both of these projects have high capital cost price tags and an informal review was completed to assess potential efficiencies that could be made between the two projects. Review and consideration of alternatives or synergies between projects is always a beneficial effort, however based on this

review staff decided to proceed with both projects separately. Here are the key points in support of that decision:

- The marketing and selling of SkyRocket, the biosolids compost, is challenging due to public perceptions surrounding the source of the product. Co-mingling of biosolids and organic compost would increase the volume of product associated with biosolids composting that is more challenging to sell. Under the Organic Matter Recycling Regulation at least half of the biosolids compost produced and stored at the facility must be removed annually, and the CVRD is already challenged to meet this requirement.
- Co-locating a regional organics composting facility with a biosolids facility is unlikely to result in significant efficiencies due to the need to keep the waste streams separate. Composting and curing bays would be distinct, and sharing of stationary and mobile equipment would be complicated by the need to clean or disinfect between uses.
- The biosolids composting facility is located on a site that has significant space constraints, purchasing of additional land to accommodate the regional organics facility would be required.
- The grant funding awarded to build the CSWM organics facility was based on a specific concept and location. Shifting location or concept would require a scope change with uncertain chances of success.
- The CSWM board has made the decision to site the organics composting facility in Campbell River.
- The processing of biosolids is not a core activity to the CSWM Service and vice-versa. The processing of organics is not a core activity to the Comox Valley Sewer Service.
- Additional biosolids capacity for the CVSS is urgently required, and the type of delay inherent to re-opening the facilities siting decisions is unacceptable.

The tender for the biosolids composting facility expansion is expected to be released in May 2018, with completion expected in early 2019.

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Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)

None.	✓
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