

Perspectives

A REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO PUBLICATION

RDN Makes it Easier to Get Involved

The Regional District of Nanaimo is making it easier for residents to share ideas, access information and participate in a variety of public consultation opportunities with Get Involved, a new public engagement and information tool on the RDN website. This outreach website is helping us connect with the community more effectively by providing a single access point for information about a variety of RDN departments and initiatives.



Previously, visitors to the RDN website needed to visit the webpage for a specific department, such as Emergency Planning, Wastewater Services or Energy and Sustainability, to find information about that department's current programs and upcoming workshops and events.

Get Involved provides all of this information in one easy-to-find place. The site is PC, smartphone and tablet-friendly and uses action-based tiles with topics including Improve Your Home, Attend an Event, Be Heard and Save Money to guide visitors to the right information.

To Get Involved, go directly to www.rdngetinvolved.ca or visit www.rdn.bc.ca and click on the Get Involved logo in the centre of the page. We're looking forward to working together!



Oceanside Place Celebrates 10-Year Anniversary

Oceanside Place Arena celebrated its 10-Year Anniversary on October 19 with free skating on the Pond, a free Everyone Welcome skate, and of course, cake!

Oceanside Place Arena is attached to Wembley Mall, which is located between Parksville and Qualicum Beach on Highway 19A. The Regional District owns and manages



the facility, which is enjoyed by residents and visitors of all ages and has won two provincial awards since it opened in 2003. In 2004, the Recreation Facility Association of British Columbia awarded the arena with the 2004 Outstanding Facility Award and in 2005, Oceanside Place was honoured with the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association Facility Excellence Award.

The facility includes two NHL regulation-size ice sheets named after local ice skating legends Howie Meeker and Victor Kraatz, a Leisure Ice sheet named the Oceanside Pond, multipurpose rooms, a meeting room, a concession, a skate shop and the main offices for the RDN Recreation and Parks Department.

For further information on Oceanside Place Arena, contact the RDN Recreation and Parks Department at (250) 248-3252 or by e-mail at recparks@rdn.bc.ca.



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ElectroRecycle Civic Award

On behalf of the region's residents, the RDN recently accepted an ElectroRecycle Civic Award. The award celebrates residents' accomplishment of achieving the second-highest recycling rate of electronic appliances in the Province for 2012.

The ElectroRecycle stewardship program accepts a wide range of small appliances and power tools such as microwaves, blenders, toasters, vacuums, tabletop fans, air fresheners, heaters, hair dryers, electric toothbrushes, power tools, sewing machines, and exercise equipment.

Congratulations and thanks for keeping your electronic appliances out of the landfill.

Updating the Solid Waste Management Plan

A review of the Regional District of Nanaimo's Solid Waste Management Plan is now underway. The updated plan will provide a long-term vision of how the region will reduce, reuse, recycle, compost and dispose of any remaining waste.

Significant progress has been made by implementing the last SWMP approved by the BC Minister of Environment in 2005. Thanks to participation of residents, businesses, and institutions in programs such as the green bin and commercial food waste diversion, the region-wide disposal rate from all sectors has fallen from 480 kilograms per capita in 2005, to 350 kilograms per capita in 2012. This is one of the lowest per capita disposal rates in Canada.

Existing Systems Report

The first step in the review, an assessment of the current systems, status and impact of implementing the existing plan's Zero Waste programs and policies, is now completed. A Regional Solid Waste Advisory Committee composed of public, local government and technical representatives, has reviewed the draft Existing System Report. The next step will be to present the report to the Regional Board.

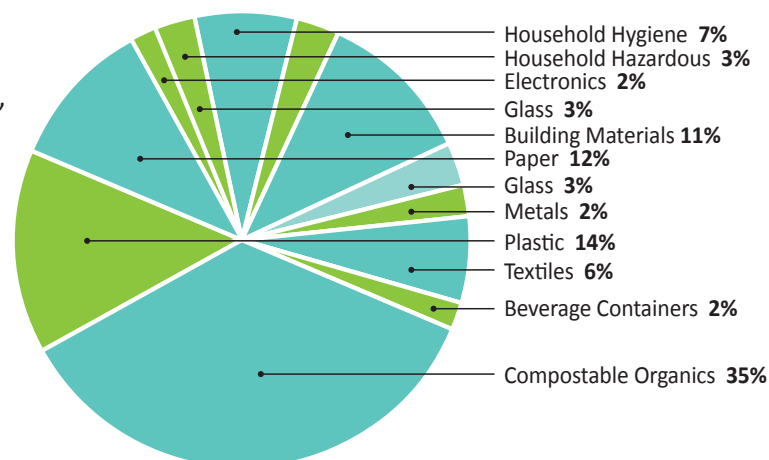
Waste Composition Study

A key tool in updating the SWMP is a waste composition study completed last fall. It analyzed the types of waste sent to landfill by the residential, commercial and institutional sectors and concluded that up to 35 per cent of waste that goes to the landfill could be composted and 20 per cent could be recycled.

Compostable organics (food waste and soiled paper products) sent to the landfill have decreased by 31 per cent compared with 2004 levels. Here are some areas we could improve through existing waste diversion programs:

- **Research has shown recycling rates for multi-family dwellings are lower than single family homes.** This could be improved with more education on the recycling opportunities for multi-family residents.
- **Food and organic waste remains the largest source of commercial/institutional garbage.** Greater participation from this sector could divert more of this waste to local composting facilities.
- **Single family homes now divert more than 60 per cent of their garbage from the landfill through curbside food waste and recycling collection.** Food waste and recyclable materials are the largest component of waste disposed and more can be diverted through curbside programs. **Residents could also divert more by using Product Stewardship depots for material such as used electronics and refundable beverage containers. For a complete list of what is accepted through product stewardship programs and where items can be recycled, visit www.bcstewards.com.**

Composition of Overall Waste Disposed in 2012



RDN Transit Welcomes CNG Buses

In March 2014, Regional District of Nanaimo Transit and BC Transit will introduce 25 new Compressed Natural Gas buses to the RDN fleet. BC Transit will soon begin construction on a new CNG fuelling facility for the buses, to be located at the RDN Transit yard.

A CNG fuelling facility represents a significant step towards implementation of the RDN Board's Strategic Plan. Most directly, the Board's strategic goals and actions for Transportation Services acknowledge that the transportation sector produces the largest share of emissions in the region, and emphasize the need to ensure the use of alternative fuels for vehicles.

CNG is a cheaper and cleaner fuel which will help reduce one of the major costs associated with providing the transit service and ensure our operations remain sustainable.

Within the RDN, innovators in the renewable energy sector are exploring opportunities to develop renewable compressed natural gas at the Regional Landfill. Although this goal is yet to be realized, if this project is successful, regional transit buses could eventually be fueled by waste generated in the region. More immediately, natural gas is an abundant resource in British Columbia, and using this resource to meet RDN transportation needs reduces reliance on international sources of diesel fuel. Investing in natural gas for transportation offers the opportunity to develop local expertise in alternative fuel vehicle servicing, conversion and related industries. It is anticipated that this investment by the RDN can serve as a catalyst to spur growth in an emerging industry.

Original Research on Rural Development Wins Award

The RDN has been recognized by the Planning Institute of BC for a project that provides practical options for rural residential development that will have less of an impact on the rural landscape and the natural environment.

The Alternative Forms of Rural Development project, overseen by the RDN's Long Range Planning staff, recently won an Award of Excellence for Research from PIBC, the professional association of community planners.

The need for this project originated during the 2008-2011 review of the Regional Growth Strategy.

Until recently the Regional Growth Strategy focused on not allowing more development in rural areas than what was already permitted under current Official Community Plan policies by not allowing a decrease in minimum parcel size.

The RDN has now created a new policy to allow more flexibility in development, based on density rather than minimum parcel size.

The intent is that alternate forms of rural development will result in less rural sprawl, reduced fragmentation of ecological systems, and more

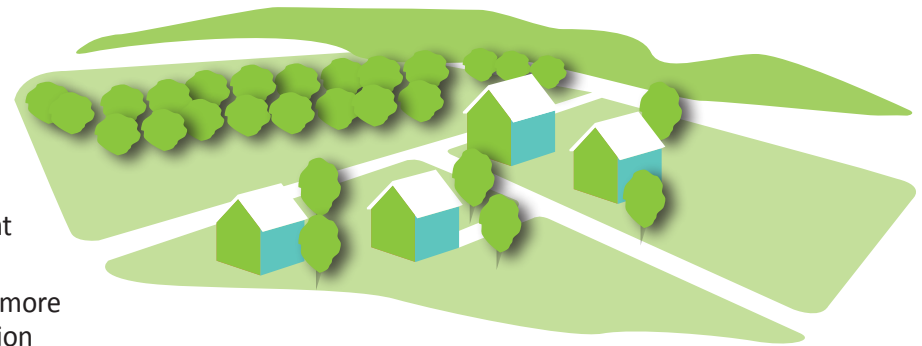
sustainable forms of rural residential subdivisions while at the same time not increasing the overall amount of development permitted in rural areas.

To showcase what alternative and more sustainable forms of rural subdivision

might look like, the RDN commissioned Island Planning Services to put together a variety of options. IPS began by gathering and adapting ideas for clustering development, transferring density, and improving development performance through incentives or regulations to achieve more sustainable rural development.

The purpose of preparing the set of options is to stimulate dialogue and new thinking as to how development in rural areas can be done differently to better protect

the values and landscapes that people living in rural areas hold dearly. This will provide an understanding about how, through design, rural character can be preserved, networks of connected open space can be created, and 'green infrastructure' can be protected, while still permitting the existing development potential of the landscape.



Development, if not undertaken with more thought given to design and protection of rural values, has the potential to destroy the cultural, economic or environmental values that attract people to live in rural areas in the first place.

To learn more about the Alternative Forms of Rural Development project and to see the report by IPS please visit www.rdn.bc.ca.



Alternate forms of rural development will result in less rural sprawl, reduced fragmentation of ecological systems, and more sustainable forms of rural residential subdivisions

Secondary Suites Project

Following a Board resolution to proceed with public consultation on secondary suites, RDN staff members have spent the summer and fall months attending public events, meeting with community groups, and hosting information sessions. The purpose of the secondary suites consultation is to gauge the level of community support for secondary suites in the RDN Electoral Areas A, C, E, F, G, and H and to gain an understanding of the opportunities and concerns relating to secondary suites as a form of affordable housing in the region. Community input has been focused around an online survey geared towards both homeowners and renters in the applicable Electoral Areas.

Preliminary results indicate strong support to allow both attached and detached secondary suites throughout the region. Housing affordability, the ability to age in place and/or care for a family member, and housing choice were some of the reasons for supporting secondary suites. Many survey respondents want to ensure that the impacts of secondary suites are minimized by ensuring issues like parking and servicing are addressed. In general, many survey respondents support the idea of recognizing existing secondary suites.

Staff are in the process of reviewing and analyzing the public input and will draft a report and recommendations for the Board's consideration early in the new year.

For more information on the RDN Secondary Suites Project, please contact Greg Keller, Senior Planner at (250) 390-6510 or (250) 954-3798, or email planning@rdn.bc.ca.



Water Budget Project

The RDN has commissioned a series of studies which examine the relationships between surface and groundwater and the balance between water supply and demand across our seven water regions. Data collection for the project began in 2011 and is ongoing. The project comprises three phases and will continue well into the next quarter of the Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Program. Results from the first phase – Phase One Water Budget Study – are now available.

Phase One examined 56 sub-water regions within our seven water regions, through the development of conceptual models based on the characteristics of each area. The conceptual models were then used to interpret surface water and groundwater flow. Estimates of agricultural, commercial and residential water demand were produced and cross-checked with estimates of

groundwater and surface water availability. Relative stress rankings were assigned to the individual aquifers, surface water bodies and water sub-regions based on the outcome of the water supply and demand estimates.

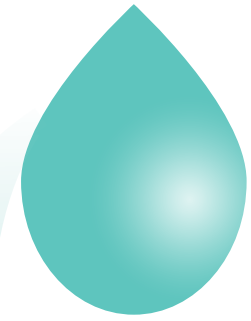
An overall report for the six RDN water regions on Vancouver Island is now completed, and a separate report is also available for the seventh water region, which covers the Gulf Island portion of the RDN. The results provide insight into groundwater and surface water processes across the region and highlight the need for increased monitoring and data collection.



**DRINKING WATER
WATERSHED
PROTECTION**

Further investigation and data collection will improve current estimates of water supply and demand which will enable the development of hydrological models from which land and water management planning will be developed. The reports can be viewed or downloaded online at rdnwaterbudget.ca.

www.rdn.bc.ca



Rainfall



Agricultural



Commercial



Residential

