

GREENEST CITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM
UBC Sustainability Scholars Program, Summer 2018

Project title:

The Financial Viability of Recycling Depots in a City of Rising Costs

Research supports the following policies:

- Greenest City Action Plan
 - Specific goal area: Zero Waste
 - Complimentary goal areas: Green Jobs
- Healthy City Strategy
 - Specific goal area: Environments to Thrive In

Scope of work:

- To evaluate the capital and operating costs to the City of Vancouver to accept, sort, store and manage materials at the Vancouver Zero Waste Centre.
- To complete an activity based cost analysis of the activities on site and determine a methodology for the allocation of costs among materials accepted. Activity based costing (ABC) is a methodology that recognizes the relationship between costs, activities and products, and through this relationship, indirect costs, such as overhead, are more accurately accounted for.
- As a complement to Municipal costs, generate a telephone questionnaire to estimate costs of other recycling facilities in an urban BC setting accessible to residents, using the same ABC methodology developed for the Zero Waste Centre.
- Compare calculated costs to compensation offered by Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs for the management of their materials
- Evaluate if the EPR programs are meeting the requirements of the Recycling Regulation, to pay the costs of collecting and managing their products (Sec. 5(1)(c)(i).

Why this work is of value to the City of Vancouver:

- The City of Vancouver wants its residents to have access to free and convenient recycling opportunities.
- Not all materials are suitable for curbside collection, and require an alternative means of collection, such as a collection event or centralized drop-off facility.
- When residents find proper disposal options daunting or inconvenient, they resort to throwing it out with their garbage or abandoning it in the street.
- The City of Vancouver then has to put staff at risk to manage these hazardous materials through 3-1-1 calls of illegal dumping, cleaning up spills at the Transfer Station or putting out fires at the Vancouver Landfill. These materials can also be damaging to the environment if released into waterways and soil.
- Anecdotally, some EPR programs obligated under the Recycling Regulation to provide free and convenient access to residents are not fairly compensating collection facilities.
- If private and retail recycling facilities supporting green jobs in our City are not paid fairly, they may leave the program resulting in reduced accessibility for our residents.
- From January to December 2017, all 18 collection sites for the BC Used Oil Management Associations EPR program in the City of Vancouver stopped accepting used motor oil.
- The Ministry of the Environment has heard about these issues and is working to evaluate collection costs offered by EPR programs, and if they are fair market rates.

Submit applications here: <http://bit.ly/2DC2jpP>

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- This project will provide the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy with additional financial data to support change within the EPR programs and to help grow green jobs within our City.

How this work is actionable:

The cost evaluation can be used immediately in the negotiation of better financial compensation for the City of Vancouver Zero Waste Centre and Landfill, and also by other collection facilities in Metro Vancouver operating recycling depots. The MOE is actively reviewing this issue and would welcome additional research to inform their decision.

Deliverables

- The scholar will complete a final report containing a summary of their completed work, including:
 - City of Vancouver Costs by material group
 - The activity based cost analysis scope and allocation methodology detailed
 - The questionnaire results collected in confidence, summarized and reported on anonymously
 - Recommendations for EPR programs on how to modify their compensation
- A final presentation to invited guests and key stakeholders
- A public facing final report (or executive summary) for the UBC Sustainability Scholars online project library

Time Commitment

- This project will take 250 hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between April 27 and August 10, 2018
- The scholar is to complete approximately 20 hours per week, on an agreed upon schedule anytime between 7 am and 5 pm (preferably 3pm), Monday to Friday.
- Portions of this work will take place at the Vancouver Landfill, located in Delta. If the scholar does not have access to a vehicle, arrangements to carpool from the Vancouver Transfer Station and Zero Waste Centre (8588 Yukon Street) may be available

Work locations: Transfer Station and Zero Waste Centre, 8588 Yukon Street, Vancouver and Vancouver Landfill, 5400 72nd Street, Delta

Skill set/background required/preferred

- Excellent research and writing skills.
- Demonstrated interest in recycling or solid waste.
- Strong technical writing skills
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Demonstrated time management skills
- Deadline oriented
- Project management and organizational skills
- Familiarity with Microsoft Excel

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- Familiarity with quantitative research methodologies and implementation
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- Experience in an operational environment is an asset

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