



**RCBC Strategic Plan
2013-2018**

RCBC Five-Year Strategic Plan 2013 – 2018

Executive Summary

This document sets out a five-year strategic plan for the Recycling Council of British Columbia (RCBC). This plan is built around four priority areas discussed in detail further below in this document. These priorities focus on changes that are emerging in both systems and technologies in waste prevention and management. They also reflect a change in focus at the provincial government from extended producer responsibility to other areas of waste prevention needed for the province to reach the zero-waste objective. These strategic priorities also continue RCBC's strategic positioning as a central hub for education, information, and as the facilitator of change towards strategic policy initiation that moves the province to a zero waste model. This plan addresses those strategic priorities and presents a set of overarching goals on which the organization will focus over the next five years.

Organization Overview

RCBC is Canada's oldest recycling and sustainability-related recycling organization. Formed in 1974 as a marketing consortium for community-based non-profit recycling groups, RCBC is now a multi-sectoral non-profit organization that provides information about Zero Waste, recycling and waste avoidance policies and programs in British Columbia. As well, it raises awareness about the direct linkages between solid waste management and the broader issues of sustainability, such as the environmental responsibility of producers and their customers to manage the full life cycle of consumer products as a principle of Zero Waste. RCBC participates in the development of public policy, providing a forum for members and the public to express opinions on product stewardship, waste management, reuse, and recycling issues to various levels of government.

RCBC's membership, board and executive, and committees are comprised of people from government, businesses, large and small, non-profit organizations, as well as individuals.

Vision Statement

During its strategic planning retreat in June 2012, the RCBC board reviewed and renewed its vision to a simple and succinct, "A world without waste".

Mission Statement

During the 2012 retreat the Board of Directors also refocused the mission to define more clearly that, "RCBC facilitates the exchange of ideas and knowledge that enable efficient solutions to eliminate waste."

Stated as such, RCBC staff are now charged to repurpose their direction to identify and develop opportunities in which the exchange of information will be the engine that drives the province towards effective waste prevention solutions.

Activities, Programs and Services

Primary Public Education Tools

- RCBC Recycling Hotline
- Recyclepedia
- Recyclepedia Phone App

RCBC's primary tools receive more than 180,000 contacts a year. The Hotline is fielded by the team of trained and knowledgeable information officers who staff RCBC's toll-free, province-wide service. With a comprehensive database at their fingertips, operators provide information about recycling, waste avoidance and environmentally sound end-of-life management of virtually every material or product.

This same data base is the central source for the Recyclepedia search engine and as well as that for the Recyclepedia phone app.

Materials Exchange (MEX): MEX is a free-to-use service that finds alternative solutions to disposal by matching surplus household or industrial materials with companies and individuals seeking those material types. Now a web-based service, the MEX, through its multiple sites had 134068 visits during the 2011 calendar year.

Policy Development: Through its Board, Policy Committee and Policy Committee Working Groups, RCBC helps facilitate the development of policy in British Columbia based on the principles of Zero Waste by providing a multi-sectoral forum that brings together government, businesses, environmental non-profit groups and other stakeholder groups in a respectful and cooperative environment.

Annual Conference: RCBC's annual conference brings together governments, businesses, academia, environmental non-profit groups, and individuals, providing exchanges of information that have led to ground-breaking waste reduction and sustainability policy directions and programs in British Columbia.

Special Events: RCBC participates within special events that meet the criteria of its mission either on its own accord or in partnership with other organizations. The 2009 EPR Conference and Workshop in partnership with the BC MoE is an example of such an event.

Contract Services: In order to fund its operations RCBC offers contract services for a fee. These services are related to RCBC's mission objectives and have in the past also fit within its strategic objective. Examples of these services would include the Northern BC & Yukon Metal Recycling Study under contract to Natural Resources Canada and the Electronic Materials Exchange (EMEX) web site which is a service provided to the Electronic Product Recycling Association to in-part fulfill its obligation with its stewardship plan to promote reuse. RCBC has moved to meet more of its budget needs through contract services as a way to move away from grant dependency and develop financial independence and greater control of its financial status.

Partnerships: RCBC works with industry stewards, local and senior governments and other partners by providing public education and information, by collecting data to improve existing programs, and through policy development and initiatives to suggest new programs based or assist the continuous improvement of existing programs.

Waste Reduction Week in Canada: RCBC is an integral part of Canada's National Waste Reduction Week and a founding member of the national steering committee, providing program development and delivery throughout B.C. as well as developing the Waste Reduction Handbook used by Waste Reduction Week participants nation wide.

Publications: RCBC offers a range of scheduled and topical publications in printable electronic formats that support member communications and information, waste reduction program initiatives and policy development. These include the the ReCap E-newsletter, Fact Sheets and discussion papers. RCBC also maintains a comprehensive web site providing information on waste reduction and sustainability issues, education materials, and links to related sites.

Strategic Priorities 2013 – 2018

The RCBC Board of Directors has identified four priority areas on which the organization will focus over the next five years. These are described as follows:

1. *Diversion & recycling strategies for organics and construction + demolition waste.*
2. *Alternative & renewable energy technologies.*
3. *Emerging waste & recycling technologies and practices that increase efficiencies in the 3Rs Hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle)*
4. *Strategies that promote waste prevention.*

Goals and Strategies

For a number of years, RCBC has positioned itself as the strategic hub of recycling and waste reduction activity in BC. Over the next five years our organization will move to reinforce that positioning as it works towards the previously mentioned four priority strategic areas as identified above. Number four is particularly germane as it is aligned with the focus of a new section established in the BC Ministry of Environment that shifts its focus to a certain degree from EPR to waste prevention. To support that initiative, RCBC can now work to connect industry and other related stakeholders and organizations together through education and information-sharing opportunities to develop good practices for waste prevention industry wide. RCBC will act as the mechanism to facilitate the move towards strategic policy initiatives in each of the four priority areas. It will also strive to demonstrate value in membership and increase the membership base to new or underrepresented sectors.

The overarching goals can be identified as:

1. Goal #1: Educate and inform
2. Goal #2: Be the mechanism of facilitation
3. Goal #3: Increase membership

Strategies/Tactics for Overarching Goals

There are a range of strategies and tactics that are consistent with RCBC operations that can be implemented to work towards these goals. Below are a menu of an example of some that are either in place now or others that can be adapted to fit or initiated within operations.

Goal #1: Educate and inform

1. Conferences, workshops, and seminars
2. Webinars and other technologies
3. Expanding the distribution of publications
4. Diversify the types and issues of publications
5. Social media

Goal #2: Facilitate

1. Partnerships with governments, industry and nonprofits.
2. Utilize the “Hub” status on diversion strategies to disseminate information on local, regional or provincial issues.
3. Maintain quality and diversity of information from the traditional hotline to emerging technologies and web-based tools.
4. Extend influence to groups outside the traditional waste reduction community.

Goal #3: Increase membership

1. Expand membership to groups within the priority areas.
2. Expand leadership role beyond traditional recycling community.
3. Review and revise membership program, benefits and fees as warranted.
4. Better articulate and market the benefits of membership.

This plan will be reviewed on an annual basis, as it is meant to be both flexible and organic in order to take advantage of opportunities as they arise or to adjust tactics and/or strategies for greater affect.