

# What We Heard

## Engagement Summary Report

### D'Arcy/Devine & Birkenhead Lake Refuse Disposal Services Survey

#### Introduction

The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District invited residents and property owners to provide feedback on proposed changes to the D'Arcy/Devine and Birkenhead Lake Refuse Disposal Services.

A total of 111 survey responses were received. Respondents shared feedback on the current service, proposed funding changes, and potential future service options.

#### Who We Heard From

##### Community Representation

- **Birkenhead Lake Estates:** 41.4% (46 respondents)
- **D'Arcy/Devine:** 36.0% (40 respondents)
- **Other:** 22.5% (25 respondents)

##### Property Ownership

- **Registered property owners:** 96.4% (107 respondents)
- **Non-owners:** 3.6% (4 respondents)

**What we heard:** Survey responses primarily reflect the perspectives of property owners within the service area.

#### Importance of Refuse Services

- **Very important:** 27.9%
- **Somewhat important:** 23.4%
- **Not important:** 48.7%

**What we heard:** Many respondents indicated that the current refuse service is not important to their household.

#### Awareness of Shared Service

- **Aware:** 59.5%
- **Not aware:** 40.5%

**What we heard:** A number of respondents were not aware that D’Arcy/Devine and Birkenhead Lake Estates share the same refuse disposal service.

## Feedback on Funding and Taxation Changes

### Change from Parcel Tax to Property Value Tax

- **Support:** 9.9%
- **Oppose:** 75.7%
- **Not sure:** 14.4%

### Increase Maximum Requisition to \$125,000

- **Support:** 9.9%
- **Oppose:** 68.5%
- **Not sure:** 21.6%

### Add Tax Rate per \$1,000 of Assessed Value

- **Support:** 6.3%
- **Oppose:** 83.8%
- **Not sure:** 9.9%

### Align Residential Tax Rates Between Communities

- **Support:** 15.3%
- **Oppose:** 63.1%
- **Not sure:** 18.0%

**What we heard:** Most respondents indicated they did not support the proposed changes to funding methods or taxation structure. Some respondents expressed interest in alternative approaches.

## What We Heard in Written Comments

A total of 82 respondents provided written comments, offering additional context to the survey results. Several common themes emerged.

### Limited Use of the Service

Many respondents shared that they rarely or never use the refuse facility, particularly seasonal or recreational property owners.

“We take our trash home with us and have never used the garbage depot.”

“As this is a cabin and not our primary we take our trash home with us and have never used the garbage depot.”

**What we heard:** Some respondents indicated that they do not use the service and do not feel it reflects how they manage their waste.

## Location and Accessibility

Respondents frequently noted that the facility location and hours can make it difficult to access.

“Our garbage place is 30 minutes the wrong way.”

“Hours and location is inconvenient for Poole Creek. Easy enough to bring to Pemberton and Whistler.”

**What we heard:** Some respondents find the current location and operating hours inconvenient, and instead use other options for waste disposal.

## Perceptions of Fairness

Some respondents raised concerns that property value may not reflect the amount of waste generated.

“Having a more expensive lot does not translate into more garbage produced – the amount of people on the lot determines how much garbage is produced.”

Additional comments noted differences between:

- Seasonal and full-time residents
- Lower and higher waste-generating households

**What we heard:** Some respondents expressed interest in approaches that more closely reflect actual service use.

## Interest in Alternative Service Options

Some respondents identified interest in different service delivery models, including:

- Curbside collection
- Private service providers operating in the area
- Pay-per-use systems (e.g., per bag)

“If property taxes are going to go up... we should look into residential collections.”

“This is a service I would be happy to pay for with tax dollars rather than sourcing privately.”

“Paying by the bag is much more fair.”

**What we heard:** Some respondents are interested in more flexible or convenient service options.

## Use of Other Disposal Options

Some respondents indicated they already use other disposal methods, such as:

- Taking waste to Pemberton or Whistler

- Managing waste independently

“Easy enough to bring to Pemberton and Whistler.”

**What we heard:** Some households rely on alternative disposal options rather than the current service.

## What Happens Next

The feedback received through this survey will be considered as part of the SLRD’s ongoing review of the D’Arcy/Devine and Birkenhead Lake Refuse Disposal Services. Given that many respondents indicated they rarely or never use the current facility, the SLRD will undertake a follow-up survey focused on users of the D’Arcy/Devine refuse facility. This additional engagement will help provide a clearer understanding of who is using the service, how often it is being used, and what service or funding options may warrant further consideration.

Updates will be shared with the community as the review continues.