

RURAL TRANSFER STATION OPTIMIZATION PROJECT

Introductory Survey Summary

FEBRUARY 2026



1509

RESPONDENTS

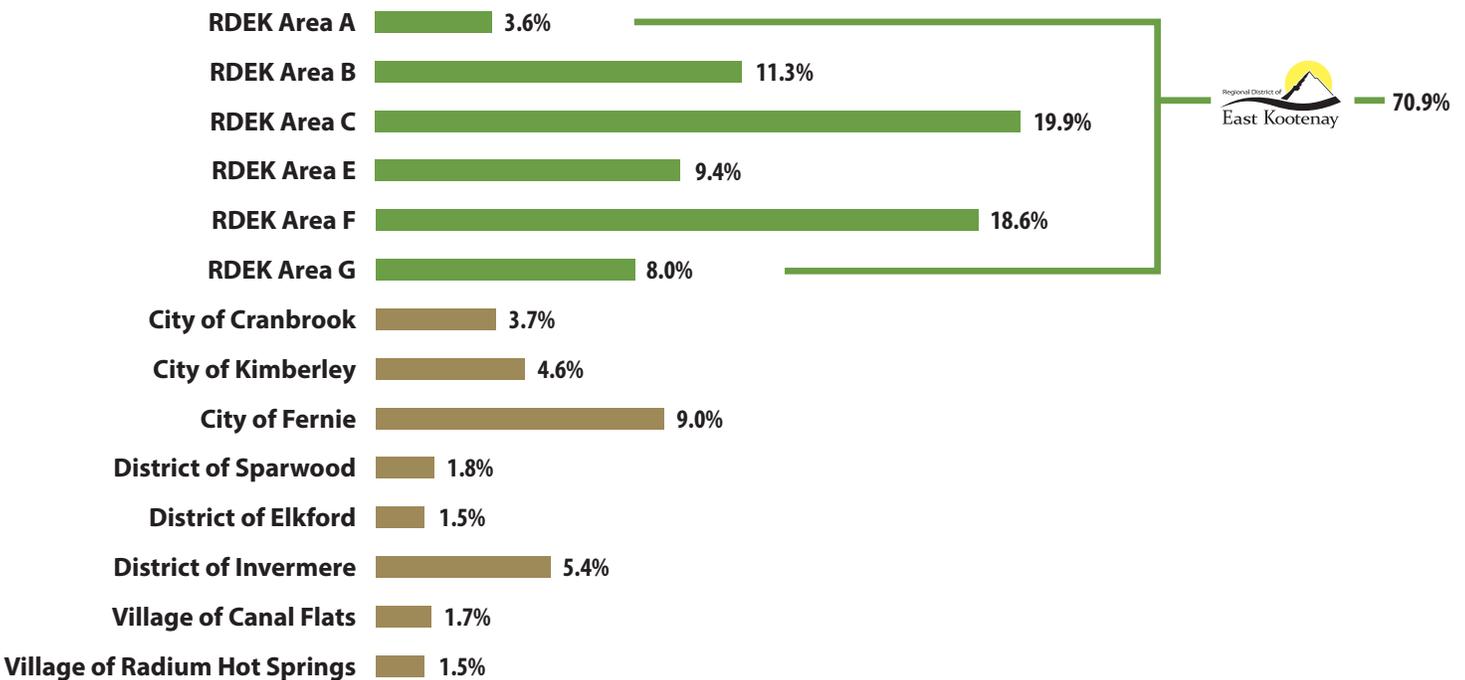
70.9% rural 29.1% municipal

The Regional District of East Kootenay Board of Directors has requested that a report be prepared that presents potential options to optimize and modernize our rural transfer station system. In order to effectively do that, all perspectives need to be considered. This is a brand new review, and no decisions have been made.

This summary highlights the responses we received from the initial public survey that was conducted from January 13, 2026 through February 9, 2026. We had 1509 responses with just under 71% of the respondents coming from the rural areas.

SECTION 1 – SERVICES

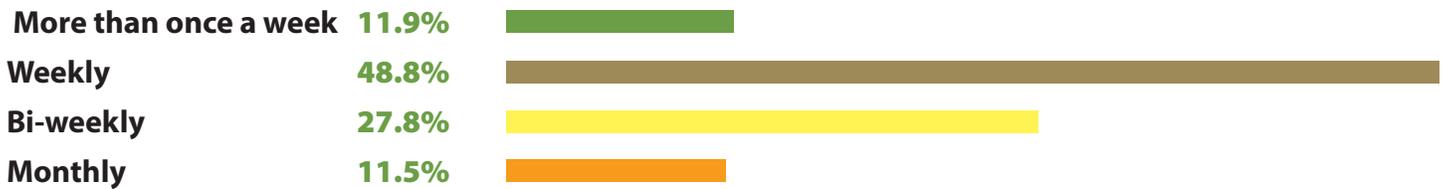
1. Where do you live or own property in the RDEK?



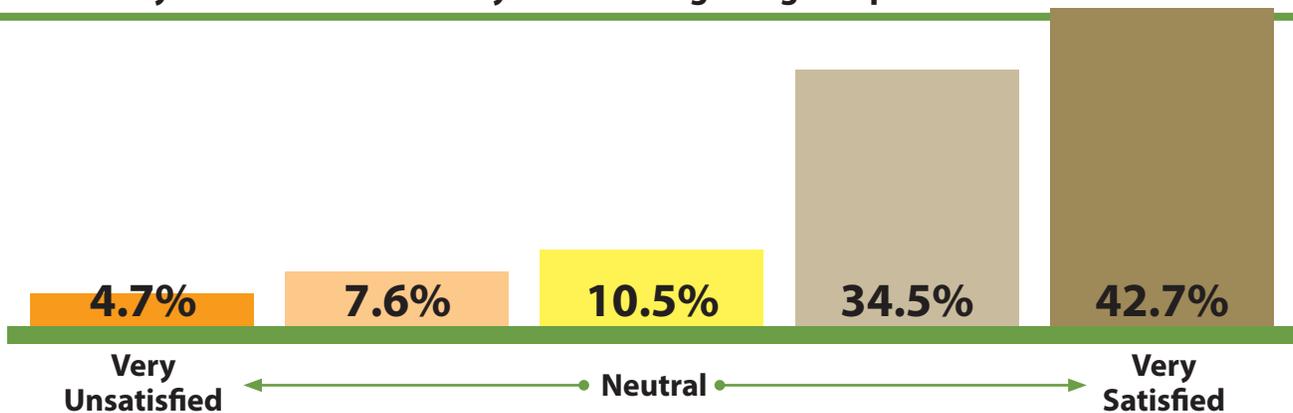
2. How do you currently dispose of garbage? (select all that apply)



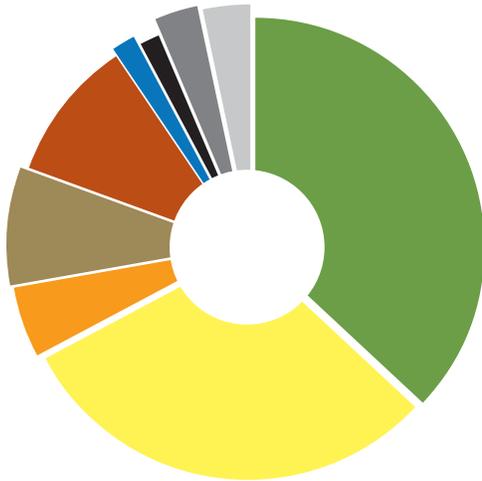
3. How often do you currently dispose of garbage?



4. Please rank your satisfaction with your current garbage disposal service

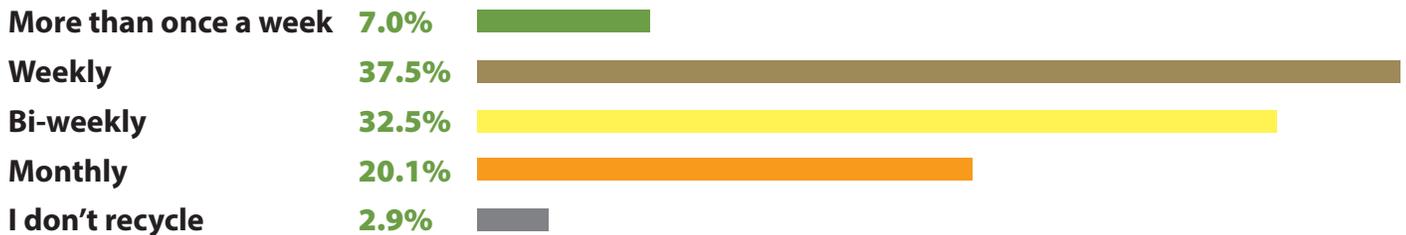


5. How do you currently dispose of household recycling? (select all that apply)

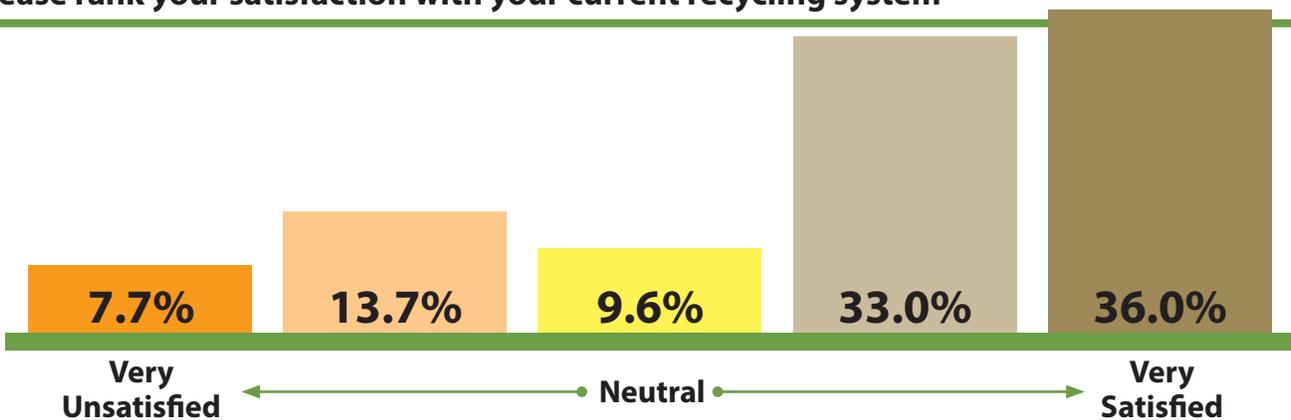


● Take it to a Yellow Bin at a rural transfer station	53.9%
● Take it to a Recycle BC Depot at a staffed transfer station	44.6%
● Take it to the Columbia Valley Landfill	7.2%
● Take it to a Yellow Bin within my community	12.3%
● Municipal curbside collection	14.3%
● Private collection/service provider	2.7%
● Apartment/Strata bins	1.7%
● I don't recycle/I dispose of it in my household garbage	4.8%
● Other	4.5%

6. How often do you currently dispose of recycling?



4. Please rank your satisfaction with your current recycling system

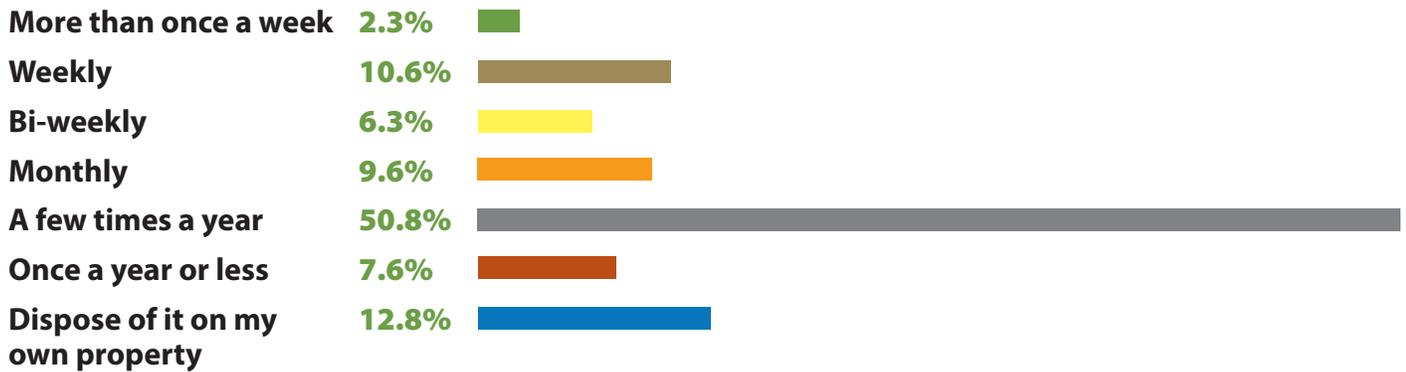


8. How do you currently dispose of your yard waste? (select all that apply)

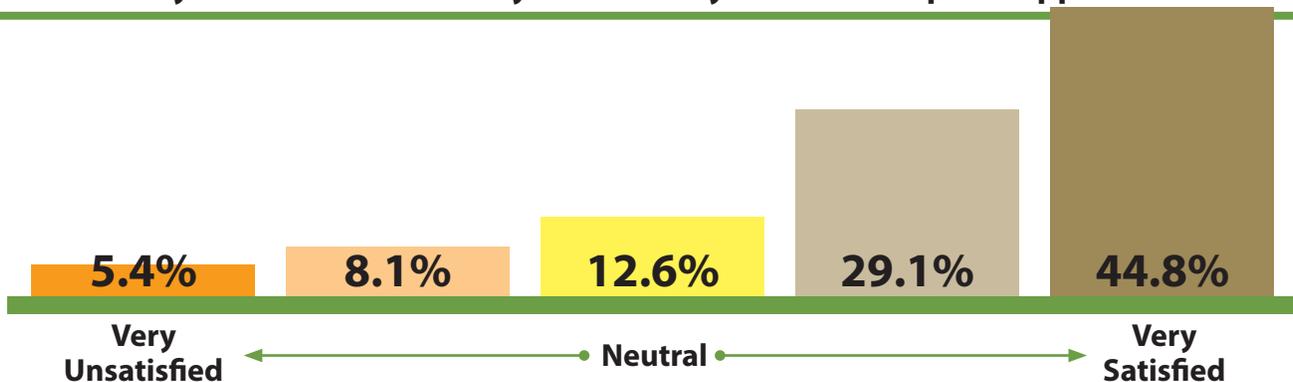


● Take it to a rural transfer station	35.5%
● Take it to a staffed transfer station	22.4%
● Take it to the Columbia Valley Landfill	10.0%
● Dispose of it on my property	30.0%
● Compost at home	30.2%
● Do not separate it from my garbage	2.5%
● Other	10.2%

9. How often do you currently dispose of yard waste?



10. Please rank your satisfaction with your current yard waste disposal opportunities



11. How do you currently dispose of scrap wood? (select all that apply)

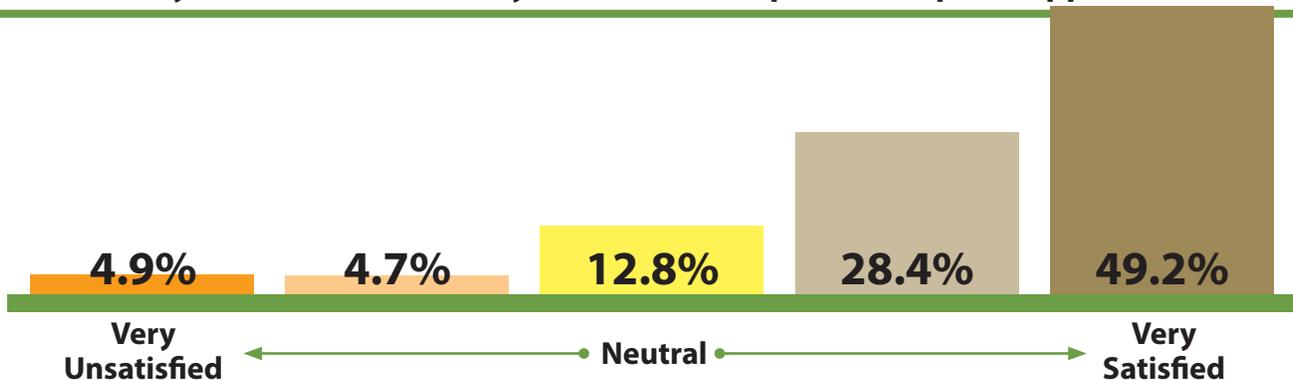


● Take it to a rural transfer station	34.9%
● Take it to a staffed transfer station	27.4%
● Take it to the Columbia Valley Landfill	12.3%
● Dispose of it on my property	31.0%
● Do not separate it from my garbage	2.4%
● Other	9.7%

12. How often do you currently dispose of scrap wood?



13. Please rank your satisfaction with your current scrap wood disposal opportunities



14. How do you currently dispose of scrap metal, including large household appliances?
(select all that apply)

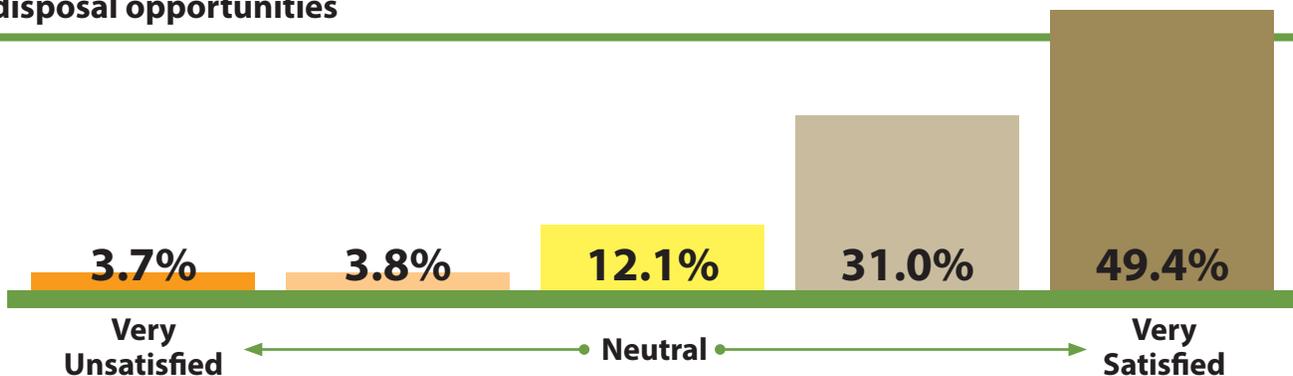


● Take it to a rural transfer station	35.6%
● Take it to a staffed transfer station	40.1%
● Take it to the Columbia Valley Landfill	18.2%
● Take it to Secure Metals in Marysville	5.7%
● Do not separate it from my garbage	2.1%
● Other	6.8%

15. How often do you currently dispose of scrap metal, including large household appliances?



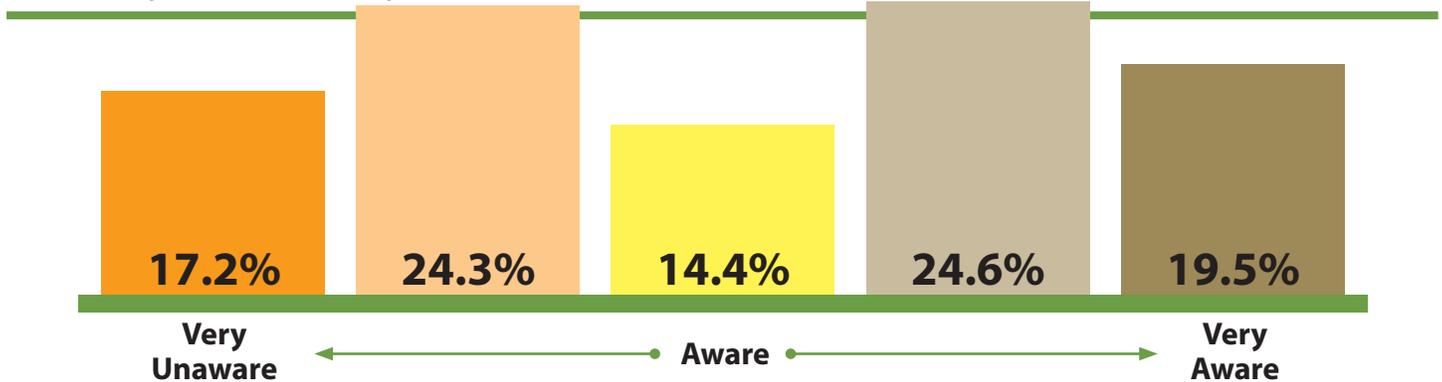
16. Please rank your satisfaction with your current large household appliances or scrap metal disposal opportunities



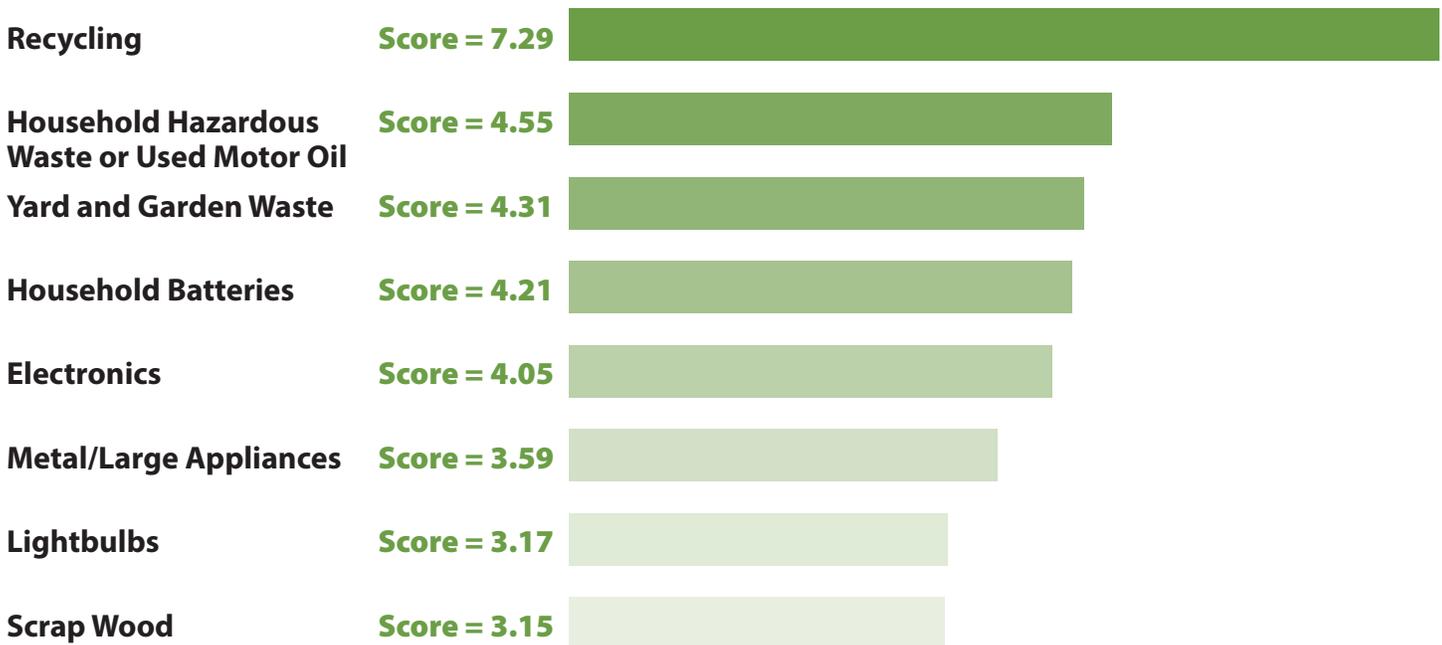
SECTION 2 – EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

Extended Producer Responsibility is an environmental policy approach that holds producers accountable for their products’ entire lifecycle, including take-back, recycling, and disposal.

17. Please rate your awareness of Extended Producer Responsibility programs in your area for materials such as bottles, tires, light bulbs, batteries, electronics, household hazardous waste, used motor oil, etc.



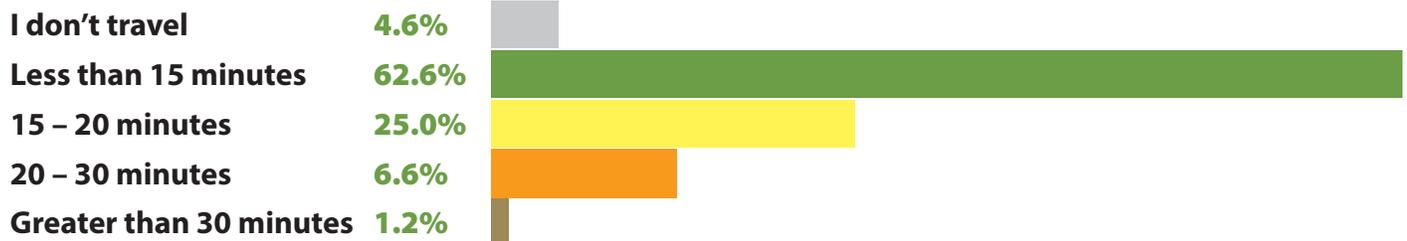
18. Please rank, in order of importance, accessibility to the following diversion services.



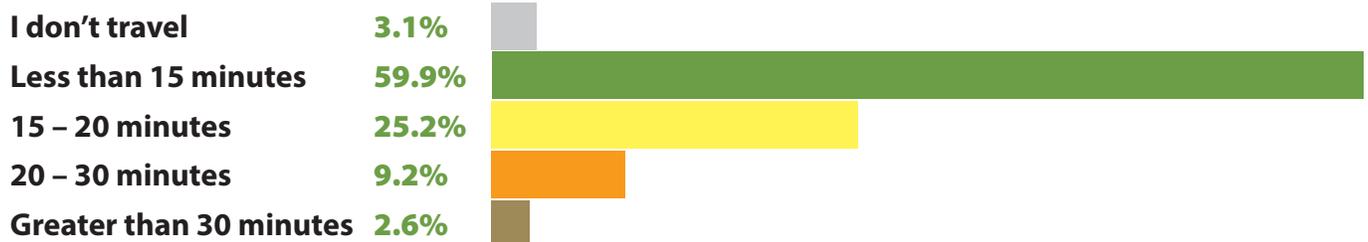
SECTION 3 – TRAVEL DISTANCE

As we consider optimization of sites, we want to prioritize what services people want most at facilities. Please consider the frequency of how often you dispose of different materials and how far you are willing to travel.

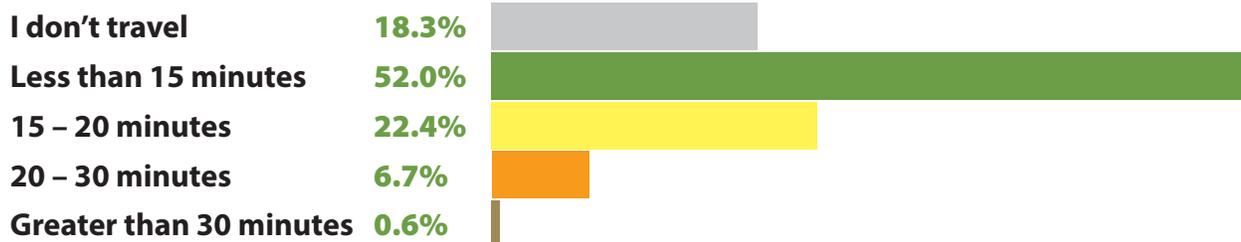
19. How far are you willing to travel to dispose of garbage?



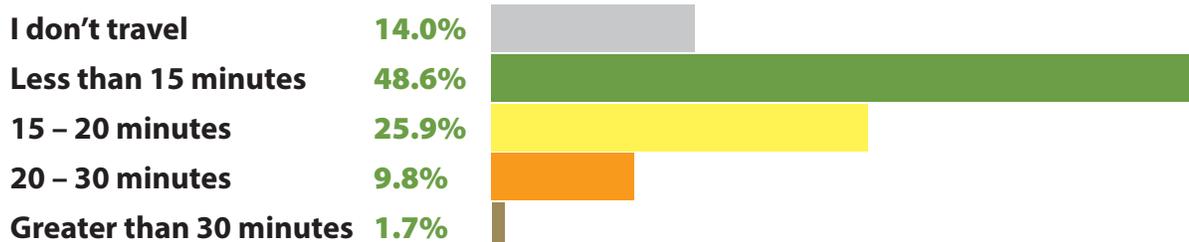
20. How far are you willing to travel to dispose of recycling?



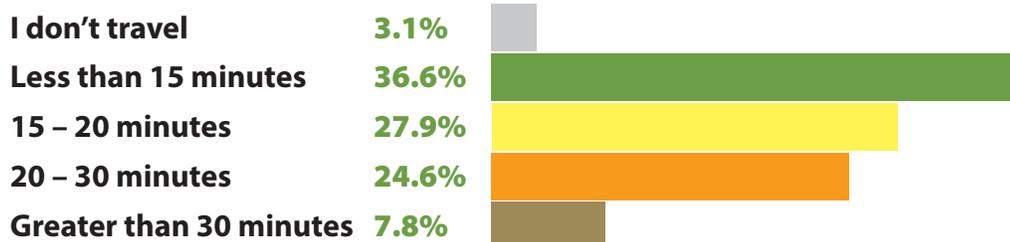
21. How far are you willing to travel to dispose of yard waste?



22. How far are you willing to travel to dispose of scrap wood?



23. How far are you willing to travel to dispose of scrap metal including large household appliances?



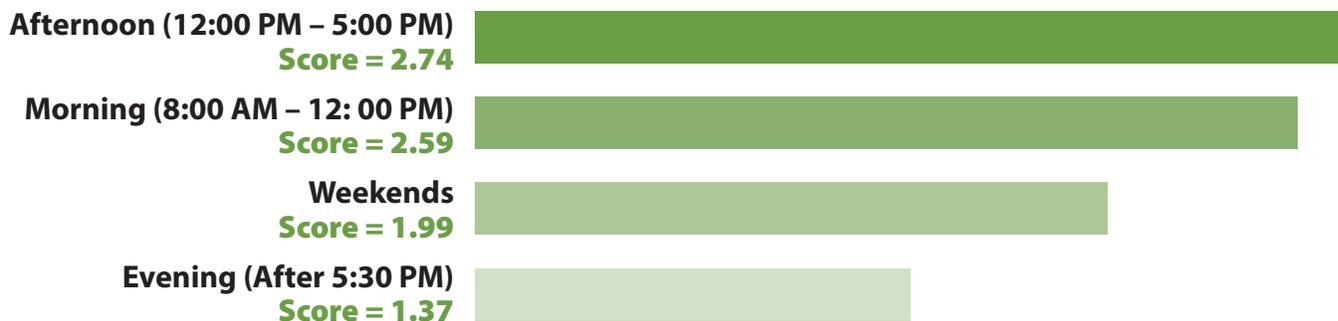
SECTION 4 – ACCESS

The following questions will help to determine the hours of operation if any sites become staffed.

24. When do you most often access your preferred transfer station site?
(please rank in order of preference)



25. What time during the day do you prefer to access your preferred transfer station site?
(please rank in order of preference)



26. Hours of operation are one of the primary cost drivers for operating staffed transfer stations. If rural sites were staffed, limiting hours of operation could help to offset cost increases. (please rank in order of preference)

Limited Days a Week

(Example: Open 2 – 4 days a week)

Score = 2.21

Limited Hours a Day

(Example: Open 4 hours a day most days)

Score = 2.12

Seasonal Hours

(Example: Sites open from May to September)

Score = 1.14

SECTION 5 – PRIORITIES

The goal of this survey is to determine people's priorities for rural transfer stations. This includes considerations such as:

- What services should be offered?
- How far are people willing to travel for services?
- If sites are staffed, what hours of access are reasonable?
- How much are people willing to pay?

If the priority is **access to waste diversion** services, this could mean:

- More waste diversion services at sites (recycling, yard waste, wood, scrap metal, etc.)
- Sites will need to be staffed or gated
- Increased costs
- Improved waste diversion
- Potentially fewer sites to minimize cost increases
- Potentially fewer hours of operation to minimize cost increases

If the priority is **minimizing distance traveled**, this could mean:

- Keeping more sites
- Increased costs to offer access to waste diversion services (recycling, yard waste, wood, scrap metal, etc.), or offering fewer waste diversion services at sites.
- Potentially fewer hours of operation to minimize cost increases

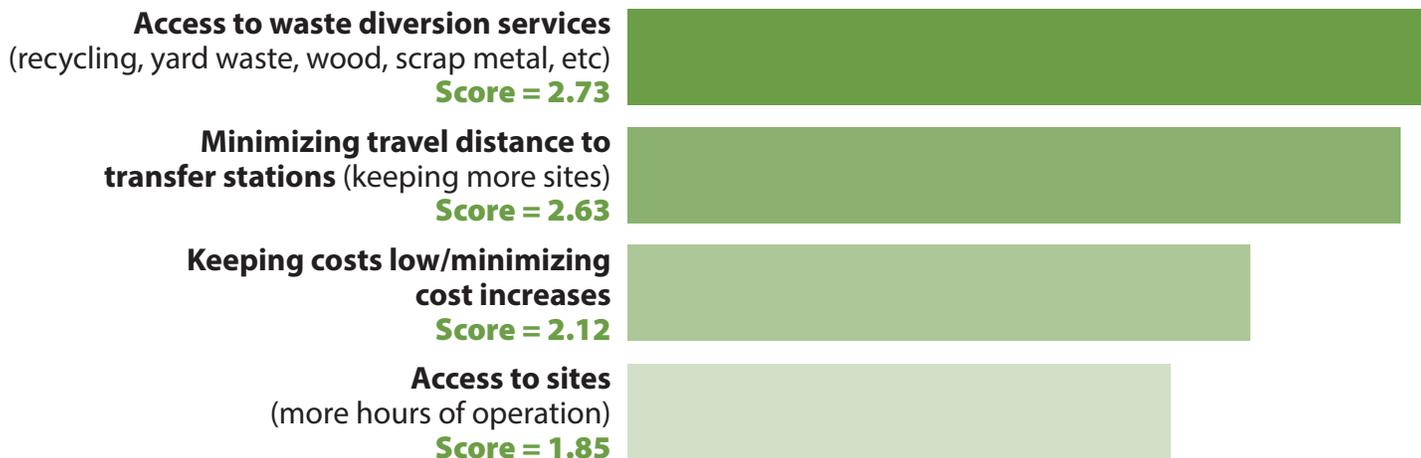
If the priority is **access to sites**, this could mean:

- Sites have more hours of operation
- Increased costs
- Potentially fewer sites to minimize cost increases (longer travel distances)
- Potentially offering fewer waste diversion services (recycling, yard waste, wood, scrap metal, etc.) to minimize cost increases

If the priority is **keeping costs low**, this could mean:

- Limited to no options for waste diversion services (yard waste, wood, scrap metal, etc.) at rural sites
- Reduced access to recycling services at some rural sites
- Fewer sites (longer travel distances)
- Fewer operating hours

27. In looking at the RURAL transfer station system's future, what do you feel should be the top priorities to consider? (rate in order of importance)



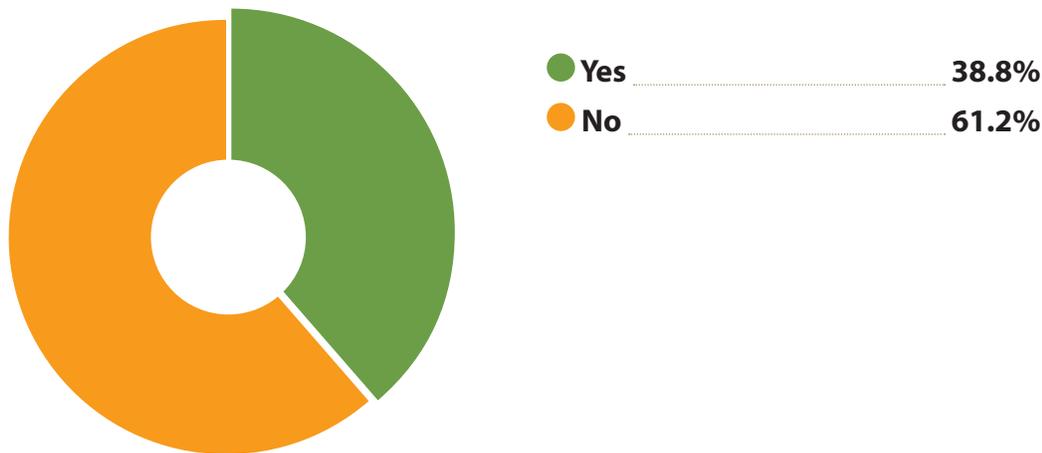
SECTION 6 – COST

The solid waste, recycling, and diversion services are subregional services – meaning everyone in the subregion contributes to the costs.

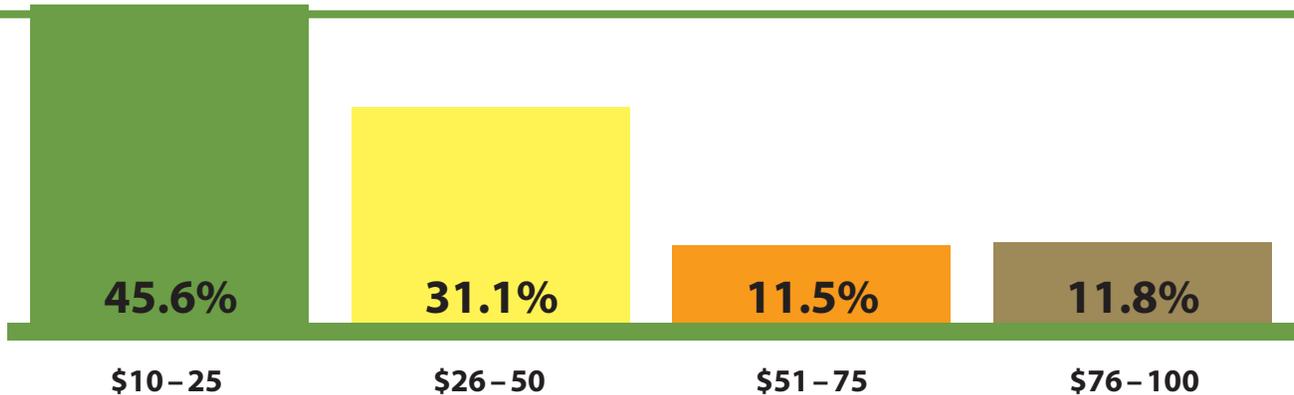
In 2025, for the average residential property assessed at \$596,000, solid waste and recycling services cost the following for the three RDEK subregions:

- **Central** (Cranbrook, Kimberley, Areas B, C and E): \$170/year (\$14/month)
- **Columbia Valley** (Canal Flats, Invermere, Radium, Areas F and G): \$188/year (\$16/month)
- **Elk Valley** (Fernie, Sparwood, Elkford, Area A): \$181/year (\$15/month)

28. Are you willing to pay more for enhanced solid waste, recycling, and diversion services?



29. If YES, how much more on average would you be willing to spend per year for enhanced services?



30. Do you have anything else that you would like to add regarding rural transfer stations?

Below are some of the recurring themes that came up in the open ended question.

