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Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Grand Opening of Summerland Organics Processing Facility

SUMMERLAND—The District of Summerland celebrated the opening of a new organics processing facility site at the Summerland Landfill this afternoon, Friday, September 29, 2023. The site will process all of Summerland’s yard and wood waste, agricultural organics, wastewater treatment sludge and residential food waste.

The federal-provincial Organics Infrastructure Program (OIP) – Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund contributed two-thirds of the cost of the project (to a maximum of \$1,581,000), with one-third coming from the Government of British Columbia and one-third from the Government of Canada. The District of Summerland was responsible for the remaining third, equating to approximately \$800,000. The OIP has provided \$30 million for projects across British Columbia that supported increased organic waste processing capacity and the reduction of organic waste going to landfills.

“By working with communities across Canada such as the District of Summerland, we are reducing greenhouse gas emissions, building more resilient communities, and creating jobs. Investments like the new compost facility allow for better waste management by diverting organic waste from landfills and turning it into clean and useful compost. The new organic processing facility is an example of the leadership from the Summerland community, and how local climate action gets us closer to reaching our national emissions reduction goal of net-zero emissions by 2050,” states the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

“People want and deserve solutions that help address our changing climate. With our investment in new compost facilities across the province, communities like Summerland can turn their food waste into beneficial compost. This will keep organic waste out of their landfill and reduce greenhouse gas pollution to build a healthier, more resilient future,” said George Heyman, B.C.’s Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy.

The Project:

The District of Summerland has operated a composting program at the Summerland Landfill for decades for wastewater treatment plant sludge and yard waste. Over time, changes in provincial regulations required the district to upgrade their composting system. As well, newer technologies allowed for the safe composting of materials such as residential food waste.

By working with the governments of B.C. and Canada, the district constructed a split compost site. The site allows for the separate composting of residential food waste with yard waste on one side and wastewater sludge on the other. This innovative design allows the district to create two separate compost types at the same facility. Agriculturists are often restricted in using compost containing wastewater sludge. Now, the district can better provide a local source of food waste compost.

“These improvements support the environment and our bottom line,” explains Mayor Doug Holmes. “Diverting organic waste from the landfill extends the life of our landfill for many years, and at the same time it reduces methane production at the landfill which is a greenhouse gas even more problematic than carbon dioxide. Instead, we end up with certifiable compost which can be sold, reused, and supports local food production right where we live.”

The program will also allow the district to start collecting food waste from residential homes in the spring of 2024. Food waste collection from homes has the potential to divert over 500 tonnes of materials from being landfilled per year. More information on when residential food waste collection will start will be provided later this year.

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Photo Enclosures

Left to Right:

1. Jake McAstocker (Manager of Engineering & GIS Services), Dan Ashton (MLA), Doug Holmes (Mayor), Janet Peake (Councillor), Matt Evans (Sanitary Landfill Operator), Brad Hanley (Sanitary Landfill Operator), Joe Mitchell (Director of Works & Infrastructure).
2. Joe Mitchell (Director of Works & Infrastructure), Janet Peake (Councillor), Doug Holmes (Mayor)