



## STAFF REPORT

To: Regional and Corporate Services Committee

Date: 2026-04-09

From: Ashley Zhu, Environmental Services Technician  
Lance Lilley, Manager of Environmental Services

Subject: Car Seat Recycling Program Contract Amendment

Reviewed by: David Urban, Deputy Director of Regional Services  
Stacey Barker, Director of Regional Services/Deputy CAO  
Beth Klein, Controller/Deputy Financial Officer  
Jennifer Kinneman, Chief Administrative Officer

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### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT** the Fraser Valley Regional District Board support a contract amendment with Reclaim Plastics to expand the current two-year pilot program by \$80,000 to allow for the collection and recycling of additional child and infant car seats.

### BACKGROUND

Child and infant car seats are not currently part of a provincially regulated recycling program and used car seats cannot typically be re-sold due to liability concerns and expiration dates. This results in most car seats being taken to a landfill for disposal, even though most of their content is recyclable. Estimates put the total number of car seats disposed of in BC at 85,000 – 100,000 per year<sup>1</sup>, which represents a significant portion of landfill space that can potentially be preserved if this material is able to be diverted and recycled.

The Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) initiated a two-year pilot program with Reclaim Plastic in 2025 for the collection and recycling of used car seats from the region (July 2025-July 2027). Goals of the pilot program include reducing waste going to landfills, increasing diversion of recyclable materials, and generating data to use for advocating for a new provincial Extended Producer Responsibility program for child car seats.

Collection locations were established in Abbotsford at the Abbotsford-Mission Recycling Depot, in Mission at the Mission Recycling Depot, and in Chilliwack at the Bailey Landfill (Figures 1-3). Residents drop off car seats at these locations **into “super sacks”**. When full, Reclaim Plastics collects them and manually disassembles the car seats into their main components (plastic, metal, Styrofoam, and textiles)

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<sup>1</sup> BC Automobile Association (BCAA) Website: <https://www.bcaa.com/community/community-programs/child-passenger-safety/>.

for recycling. Based on initial estimates, the contract with Reclaim Plastic was for the collection and recycling of up to 500 car seats per year.



Figure 1. Project signage at the Abbotsford-Mission Recycling Depot.



Figure 2. Car seats collected as part of the pilot program that were taken for recycling.



Figure 3. Super sacks filled with car seats at the Bailey Landfill.

## DISCUSSION

Collections of car seats started in early July 2025 from all three sites. Within a few months of the project launch, response to the car seat recycling pilot exceeded expectations. The original budget estimate allowed for the collection of up to 1,000 car seats over the two-year period. This volume was nearly achieved within the first six months of collections.

As of February 2026, more than 1,500 car seats have already been collected and processed as part of this program (Table 1), demonstrating strong community support. The average car seat contains five to seven kilograms of recyclable material. Therefore, the pilot program has already diverted eight to ten tonnes of waste from landfills since the program started in July 2025 and has created the equivalent amount of recycled material to be turned into new products.

Table 1. Numbers of car seats collected for recycling in the first 8 months of the pilot program. The program has averaged approximately 200 car seats collected per month.

Collection Site Location	Car Seats Collected July 2025 - February 2026
Abbotsford	415
Chilliwack	708
Mission	394
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,517</b>

The originally estimated cost of the pilot program was \$23,520 to allow for the collection of 1,000 car seats over two years. The cost associated with transporting, disassembling, recycling, and reporting is \$280 per super sack, or about \$20 per car seat (based on each super sack being able to hold 14 car seats). Given the early popularity of the program, these estimations have been exceeded.

The FVRD could end the pilot program early as collection targets have already been met. Given the success of the pilot program thus far however, staff recommend expanding the program to account for the greater demand. This requires amending the contract with Reclaim Plastic to allow for continuation of the pilot program until July 2027.

Based on the current rate of collection and community demand, staff recommend expanding the agreement with Reclaim Plastic to allow for up to 4,000 additional car seats to be collected and recycled as part of the pilot program. **Waste diversion remains a top priority within the FVRD's Solid Waste Management Plan** and continuing this program will work towards meeting goals established in that Plan. Evaluation of the pilot program will be conducted at the conclusion at the anticipated completion of the two-year project in July 2027.

## COST

Expanding the current child car seat collection and recycling pilot program to accommodate a further 4,000 car seats will require a contract amendment with Reclaim Plastic of \$80,000. \$40,000 has been allocated in each of 2026 and 2027 within the regional solid waste budget (402) for this purpose. The

full amount might not be needed as demand is still being assessed and is one of the purposes of the pilot project. No taxation is collected for the 402 budget; revenue is primarily generated from a tonnage levy on waste disposal.

## **CONCLUSION**

The FVRD initiated a two-year pilot project starting in July 2025 to collect and recycle used child and infant car seats from the region. The early success of this pilot program demonstrates high demand and suggests the program can potentially collect 4,000 additional car seats. A contract amendment with Reclaim Plastic, who collects and recycles the used car seats, will allow the pilot program to continue to July 2027 as originally conceived.