



Office of Planning and Development

Office of the Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands



Responsiveness Summary for Public Outreach Activities Related to the development of the CNMI Comprehensive Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan (CNMI CISWMP)—

Public hearing conducted in Tinian on November 15, 2023

This responsiveness summary was prepared in accordance with [40 CFR 256.60\(a\)\(3\)](#) and [40 CFR 25.8](#).

Summary of Public Participation Activity Conducted:

This event was a one-hour public hearing at the Tinian Public Library to inform the community of what is proposed for Tinian within the CNMI Comprehensive Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan (CISWMP) and to collect questions, comments, and concerns from the attendees regarding the CISWMP. The questions, comments, and concerns that were received during the public hearing will be captured here in this Responsiveness Summary and incorporated into the CISWMP.

Summary of Matters on Which the Public was Consulted:

Attendees of the public hearing were presented and consulted on:

- The results of a waste characterization study conducted on Tinian on March 2023
- Details of the proposed new facilities, programs, and activities for Tinian that are incorporated into the CISWMP

Summary of Public Outlook on the Matters Presented and Summary of Comments Received:

Public hearing attendees mostly sought clarification on various aspects of the CISWMP dealing with Tinian. Questions were raised regarding what will go into developing, permitting, and managing Tinian's new landfill once it is completed; the proposed one-time derelict vehicle cleanup; the new heavy equipment that will soon be procured for and delivered to Tinian; education and outreach; household hazardous waste and oils handling and management; and the feasibility of electric heavy equipment for Tinian.

Comments, Criticisms, Suggestions, Etc. Received:

Comments, criticisms, suggestions, questions received during Q-and-A portion of the public hearing:

- **Question:** Is there any thought being put into the private operations of the Tinian landfill once it is developed and permitted?
 - o **Response:** Yes. Private operations of the future Tinian landfill is an option.



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- Question/ comment: A followup question was asked regarding the timeline for the closing of a portion of Tinian's current open dump and the development of a permitted and compliant landfill at Puntan Diablo. A comment was given on the need to have future conversations among Tinian leadership regarding the possibility of private operations at the landfill.
 - o Response: Securing a permit for the current open dump at Puntan Diablo will take ~2-3 years. The question of whether or not the Tinian landfill will be privately operated is duly noted, and will be acknowledged and incorporated into the CISWMP. Tinian's recyclables being processed and managed by private operators is an option as well.

- Question: Will there be a tipping fee at the Tinian landfill?
 - o Response: This will be something for Tinian leadership to look into further and consider once Tinian's landfill is permitted and developed. Currently, there is no tipping fee at Tinian's open dump. Fundraising systems for solid waste management systems in the CNMI exist (ex. Environmental Beautification Tax), and the Marpi Landfill on Saipan charges a tipping fee. This discussion on the need for a tipping fee at the future Tinian landfill is duly noted and will be incorporated into the CISWMP.

- Question: Once Tinian's landfill is opened, will federal funding be distributed? How much?
 - o Response: Having a completed and approved solid waste plan (the CNMI CISWMP) will open the CNMI up to more federal funding opportunities, and notably will allow the CNMI to make full use of \$56 million in funding appropriated for the CNMI through the Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act (ASADRA), 2019 and other funding sources. Furthermore, federal contractors and federal projects will be able to use Tinian's landfill once it is developed and permitted.

- Question: (In regards to a proposed one-time derelict vehicle cleanup for Tinian that is found within the CISWMP) What area will be part of this cleanup, and is it possible to expand this cleanup effort to collect and process other metals, such as derelict shipping containers?
 - o Response: For the one-time cleanup, equipment will be placed at the site where the majority of Tinian's derelict vehicles are, which at this juncture is a land lot full of cars managed by the Department of Public Works (DPW). In the long-term, there will need to be a system to take derelict vehicles from other parts of the island and transport them to the location where the machinery will be placed for further processing. Through a portion of ~\$614,000 in grant funding from the EPA through its Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant Program, Tinian will



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soon be getting new equipment that will allow DPW to perform metals processing and recycling. Once this equipment is on-island, other metals could be processed.

- Question: How long will this one-time derelict vehicle cleanup go on for?
 - o Response: Approximately \$2 million was estimated for this activity. Taking into account all costs associated with transporting equipment to and operating on Tinian, it may take ~6-8 months to fully expend this ~\$2 million.
- Comment: A public hearing attendee expressed the need for a long-term solution and possible funding source for processing derelict cars and metal recyclables on Tinian.
 - o Response: Through a portion of ~\$614,000 in grant funding from the EPA through its Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant Program, Tinian will soon be getting a shear attachment for an excavator that will allow DPW to perform metals processing and recycling. Along with equipment purchases for Tinian, a portion of this ~\$614,000 will be used for personnel to operate this new equipment. This concern is duly noted, and long-term considerations for metals processing and recycling on Tinian will be incorporated into the CISMWP.
- Question: What will go into closing current Tinian's open dump and turning it into a permitted, compliant landfill?
 - o After a project period dedicated to the assessment and design of a landfill on Tinian, a portion of Tinian's open dump will be closed, leveled, and covered with ~2-3 feet of dirt. Whoever will undertake this future project will have to develop a system to build the landfill on top of the existing dump.
- Question: Is it feasible to get electric heavy equipment for Tinian?
 - o Response: Electric heavy equipment for Tinian is an option— this is currently being looked further into on Saipan at the Marpi Landfill through a backup power feasibility study. In the future, the results and findings from this study could be scaled and applied to Tinian and Rota. Looking into the feasibility of electric heavy equipment for Tinian is duly noted, and will be incorporated into the CISWMP.
- Question: Will the one-time derelict vehicle cleanup include the collection and disposal of oil and car batteries?
 - o Response: Yes. In the long-term, doing this on Tinian requires staff to be trained on how to prepare vehicles for dismantling.



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- Question: Will the requests for proposals (RFPs) and contracts to procure heavy equipment for Tinian account for the costs surrounding maintaining and repairing this equipment?
 - o Response: Yes— the Inter-Island Solid Waste Management Taskforce (ISWMT) accounts for this in its work plans and RFPs by including details on the costs of “Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants” (POL).
- Question: What education and outreach activities will be part of the CISWMP?
 - o Response: Education and outreach will be crucial as these programs, activities, and solid waste infrastructure investments are rolled out. The education and outreach portion of the CISWMP will need to be fleshed out further.
- Questions: Are there regulations for vegetable oils/ other types of oils that end up going to landfill?
 - o Response: Vegetable oils at the CNMI’s landfill and dumps are a growing concern. This will be looked into further, and recommendations on the handling and disposal of vegetable oils will be incorporated into the CISWMP. One priority within the CISWMP is to get personnel trained up on household hazardous waste management, which includes many other hazardous materials and other types of oils such as motor oil.

Comments received through post-outreach evaluation forms:

- “Emphasizing the outreach activities on importance of the “3 Rs” and “Repurpose”, Circular Economy, timeframe identified to make decisions as the evolution moves forward”
- “None. Great presentation!”
- “Continue to push out community involvement.”
- “None.”
- “Thank you for having this public forum.”