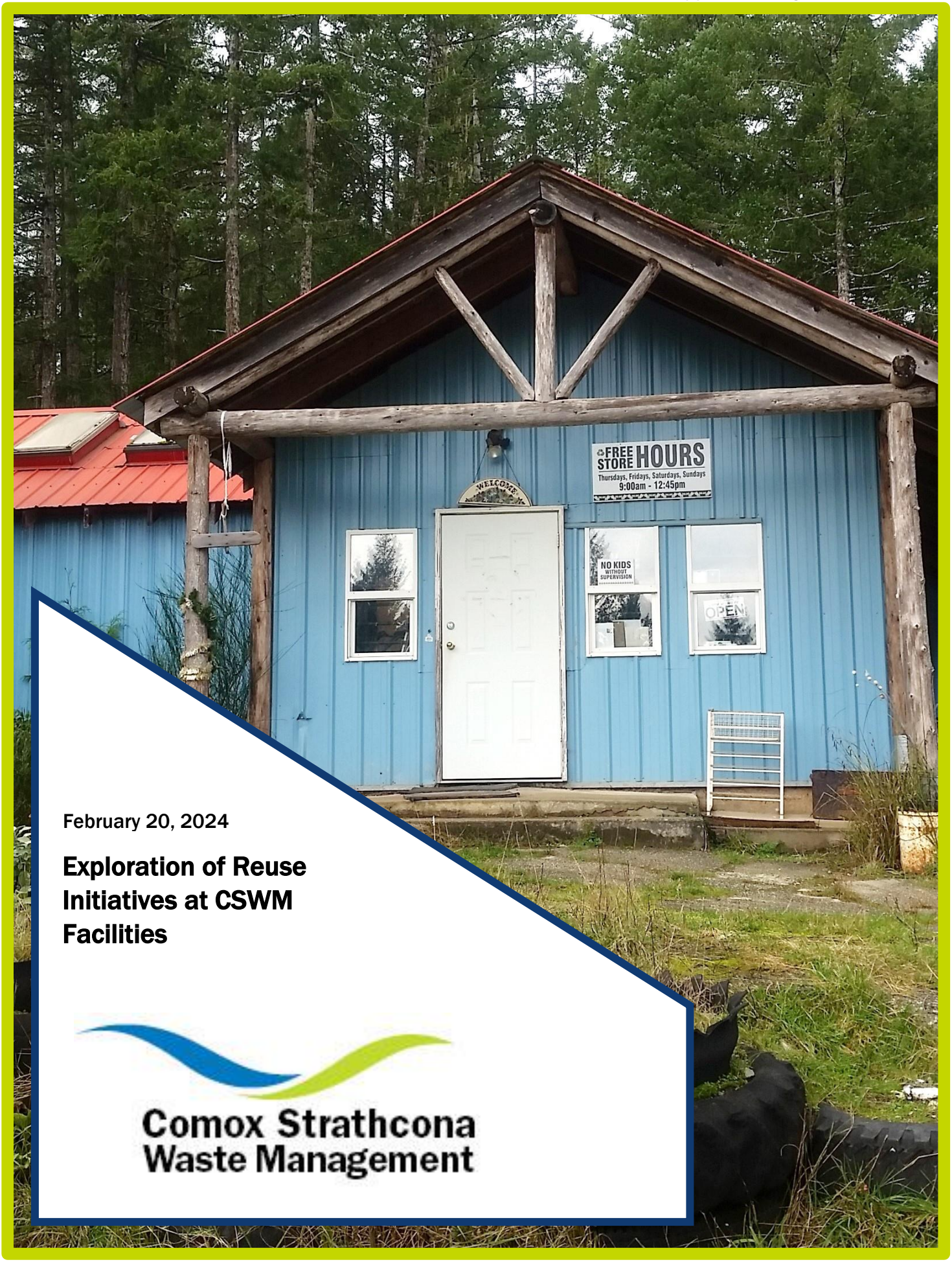


February 20, 2024

Exploration of Reuse Initiatives at CSWM Facilities

Comox Strathcona Waste Management

TO:	Regional Solid Waste Advisory Committee (RSWAC)	TO RSWAC:	February 21, 2024
FROM:	Vivian Schau Senior Manager of CSWM Service	TO BOARD:	March 7, 2024
COMPANY:	N/A	FILE:	5360-30 SWMP

Strategy Description

Applicable Guiding Principles and Goals

- ✓ *Goal #2 – Emphasizing the first 7 R's – Refuse, Rethink, Redesign, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Recycle*

As confirmed during Step 2 of the Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) renewal public consultation process and endorsed by the Board at its May 15, 2023 meeting, Goal #2 - Emphasizing the first 7 R's: Refuse, Rethink, Redesign, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Recycle – highlights the critical importance of enhancing the role of reuse in reducing the regional disposal rate from 518 kg per capita per year to meet the provincial target of 350 kg.

Despite the presence of numerous thrift stores and online options in urban centers within the Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) service area, there is a considerable amount of material of value being landfilled. This technical memo evaluates the potential implementation of reuse initiatives at CSWM facilities, building upon previous assessments and considering alternative approaches to promote reuse and reduce landfill waste. The primary objective is to align with environmental goals and community needs while addressing challenges and lessons learned from various jurisdictions.

CSWM Background

This technical memo builds upon a previous CSWM staff report from 2017 titled, "Implementation of share sheds and free stores at the Comox Valley and Campbell River Waste Management Centres" (link), which explored the feasibility of implementing free stores or share/swap sheds at the Comox Valley Waste Management Centre (CVWMC) and Campbell River Waste Management Centre (CRWMC). At its January 7, 2017 regular board meeting, the CSWM board passed the following resolution:

> *THAT free stores or share sheds not be implemented at the Comox Valley waste management centre and the Campbell River waste management centre.*

While the previous staff report recommended against the establishment of these facilities due to concerns about potential negative impacts on local businesses, operational complexities, financial demands, and legal challenges, this technical memo considers alternate approaches with the primary objective of promoting reuse within the community supported by the necessary resources, thereby reducing the volume of items sent to landfills. This is consistent with Goal #2 of the SWMP – Emphasizing the first 7 Rs – Refuse, Rethink, Redesign, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Recycle.

Additionally, this technical memo discusses the lessons learned from a number of jurisdictions throughout British Columbia, ranging from the Cowichan Valley Regional District's experience and its rationale for closing free stores post-COVID to the successes seen in Metro Vancouver demonstrated through their pilot program, as well as the marked differences.

Urban Areas and Existing Services

Urban areas within the CSWM service area, particularly at CVWMC and CRWMC, lack similar free stores or share sheds. Instead, urban areas offer alternative amenities, mainly through non-profit organizations and thrift stores. As detailed in Appendix A, there are a number of non-profit organizations and thrift stores already operating in urban areas. Therefore, balancing the introduction of free stores at the CRWMC and CVWMC with the impact on existing services is crucial to ensuring a harmonious coexistence of these vital community resources.

In the absence of free stores or share sheds in the urban areas, through our education contractors, CSWM has participated in various events and workshops with the aim of improving diversion, including:

- pop up clothing swap events (in partnership with the Lake Trail Community Education Society);
- repair cafes events throughout the CSWM service area where skilled community members can help repair or fix items brought in by others, reducing waste and promoting the repair culture.
- workshops to educate the community about reducing, reusing, and recycling, to provide tips and resources for sustainable living.

Benefits and Challenges of Reuse Initiatives at CVWMC and CRWMC

The 2017 staff report highlighted the potential benefits and challenges associated with the introduction of free stores or share sheds at waste management centers. These facilities allow community members to divert reusable items from landfills, contributing to sustainability and cost savings. While rural areas have successfully implemented free stores, Comox Valley and

Campbell River residents benefit from a multitude of non-profit organizations and thrift shops that offer similar services. The following considers staffing, infrastructure, financial, legal, and community impact of alternatives:

1. Existing Alternative Services and Potential Impact on Local Businesses
   Urban areas already have access to non-profit organizations and thrift stores, as well as free and non-free online platforms like Craigslist and Facebook Marketplace that provide similar services to free stores. These establishments enable residents to access items affordably, thus fulfilling the same role as free stores. However, the introduction of free stores could potentially divert donations and sales from existing local non-profits and thrift shops, leading to operational and financial challenges for these businesses.

2. Operational and Staffing Challenges
   Unfortunately, free stores are often used as a dumping ground for unwanted items, a sentiment shared by other jurisdictions (as detailed below), as well as local thrift stores in the development of this report. Free stores require staffing, management, and regular oversight to ensure their proper operation, maintenance, and organization of items. Establishing and maintaining these facilities demands significant financial and human resources.

   There is concern that primarily low-value items would be dropped off at free stores. Higher value items might be disposed of through other channels such as non-profit organizations or online platforms. This highlights the importance of screening items before accepting them at free stores.

   Insights from the Hornby Island Free Store suggests that while working with thrift stores could be beneficial, operating a seven-day a week free store may not be viable.

3. Infrastructure Costs
   Setting up the necessary infrastructure for free stores, including buildings and storage areas, would entail considerable capital costs and ongoing maintenance expenses.

   The decision to pilot the free store initiative solely at the Comox Valley Waste Management Centre (CVWMC) and not include the Campbell River Waste Management Centre (CRWMC) is primarily due to spatial constraints. At the CVWMC, there is ample space available, particularly with the acquisition of newly available lands. This surplus of space provides the necessary room to accommodate the infrastructure and operational requirements of the pilot free store. However, at the CRWMC, there are physical

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limitations that constrain the feasibility of implementing such a project. The lack of available space at the CRWMC presents significant challenges in terms of siting and constructing a free store, making it impractical to include in the initial pilot phase of the initiative. Therefore, focusing solely on the CVWMC allows for a more feasible and effective implementation of the pilot program, leveraging the available space and resources to maximize the potential success of the project.

4. Legal and Liability Concerns
   Making salvaged materials available to the public through free stores may lead to legal liabilities and safety concerns for employees and the public. Preliminary conversation with legal counsel indicate that CSWM could be exposed to some civil liability risk if managing a free store program in the traditional sense. A more comprehensive legal review with a municipal solicitor will be required to confirm:
   - donor-recipient relationships and the role local governments play in facilitating that relationship;
   - waste sector specific guidance to minimize (or eliminate) the potential for legal liability; and
   - protection laws in place that explains the types of civil law that may apply.

Current Free Store Landscape in Rural Areas within CSWM

Currently, there are five operational free stores within the CSWM service area, and notably, all of them are situated in rural communities as detailed in Table 1.

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Table 1: Free Stores within the CSWM Service Area

Location	Ownership	Funding	Insurance	Hours of Operation	Staffing
Denman Island Free Store	Building: rent	Residents of Denman Island through DIRA	Insured by CVRD paid for by DIRA		Volunteers 1 paid staff 1 hr/wk
Hornby Island Free Store	Building: CVRD Property: CVRD hold lease with Province	Residents of Hornby Island through HIRRA	Insured by CVRD paid for by HIRRA	Fri – Sun 9 am – 1 pm Thurs in summer	Volunteers
Cortes Island Free Store	Building: Unknown Property: CVRD hold lease with Province	Residents of Cortes Island	Not insured	Thurs – Sun 9 am – 1 pm	Volunteers
Village of Gold River* CLOSED since 2020	Building: Village of Gold River Property: Village of Gold River	Village of Gold River	Village of Gold River	Previously Wed – Sun 10 am – 2:45 pm	Unstaffed
Village of Tahsis	Building: Village of Tahsis Property: Village of Tahsis	Village of Tahsis	Village of Tahsis	24/7	Staffed by the Village of Tahsis
Village of Sayward	Building: Village of Sayward Property: Village of Sayward	Village of Sayward	Village of Sayward	Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun 10 am – 2 pm	Volunteers

The success and the continued operation of free stores and share/swap sheds in rural communities can be attributed to rural residents' adaptability and relevance in addressing unique challenges faced by rural residents. These stores/sheds offer a localized, sustainable, and community-driven approach to accessing goods, all while fostering a sense of belonging and environmental responsibility.

1. Environmental Awareness
   Rural residents, by nature of their surroundings, tend to have a more profound connection to the environment. Free stores help reduce waste by encouraging the reuse of items, which resonates with the environmental values of rural communities.

2. Community-Centered Approach
   Rural communities often have strong social bonds and a sense of togetherness. Free stores and share/swap sheds align with this community-centered ethos, promoting sharing, cooperation, and a sense of collective responsibility. They become a focal point for community engagement and can contribute to strengthening social ties.

3. Resourcefulness
   Rural living often requires a degree of self-sufficiency and resourcefulness. The need to make do with what's available drives the popularity of free stores and share/swap sheds, which enable residents to repurpose items and find creative solutions to everyday needs.

4. Lack of Access to Goods
   The rural communities identified in Table 1 have limited access to traditional shopping options, including major retail stores, due to geographical isolation, lower population density, and distance from urban centers. Free stores and share/swap sheds address this issue by providing a local source of various goods, helping residents obtain items they might otherwise may have difficulty accessing.

5. Economic Considerations
   Based on the 2021 Census data, the rural communities averaged $34,933 after-tax income compared to $43,260 after-tax income in the urban centers (Campbell River, Comox, Courtenay and Cumberland). Free stores and share/swap shed offer a means for individuals and families to acquire essential items without the financial burden of purchasing them at retail prices.

Jurisdiction Scans

Staff reached out to a number of other jurisdictions to gain insight into the free store landscape beyond CSWM borders; their successes and challenges are detailed below.

1. Cariboo Regional District
   Manage a network of over 20 share sheds, each tailored to serve smaller communities. These facilities vary in their operation, with some being entirely volunteer-managed and highly effective, while others require weekly visits from paid staff to ensure proper functioning. Site-specific challenges include issues related to excessive demand and staffing

reliability. Leveraging volunteers is particularly successful in specific locations, although clothing disposal remains a predominant issue, often leading to floor damage.

Notably, the largest share shed, located in Williams Lake, encountered significant challenges, including incidents of fires, needle disposal, and vandalism. This site did not reopen after the COVID closures, unlike their other locations.

2. qathet Regional District

Lasqueti Island operates a free store with paid staff who carefully manage it to prevent misuse. The facility has an outdoor area for item drop-offs, which are subsequently sorted by the staff, which mainly involves sorting out clothing for removal and donation. The free store is conveniently situated alongside a recycling depot, allowing items that are not usable to be recycled.

3. Cowichan Valley Regional District

Operated 3 free stores pre-COVID. The free stores were popular among residents but faced challenges when left unstaffed. Unwanted items were dumped, and there wasn't enough space for desired materials. Loitering and conflicts arose as individuals wanted to retrieve items, leading to break-ins and theft. The store was temporarily closed during COVID. The Board ultimately decided to close all three free stores post-COVID due to increased resource requirements, safety risks, and a focus on regional reuse through collaborations and donation events with organizations like Habitat for Humanity ReStore. The results from these events highlighted the need for dedicated staff to assist customers with reuse and demonstrated the mutual benefits of establishing a long-term collaboration to enhance regional reuse efforts.

4. Capital Regional District

Manages a program dedicated to receiving item donations only. Within this program, customers have the option to deliver items they believe can be reused, overseen by a dedicated staff. These donated items are then gathered by charitable organizations.

5. Regional District of Nanaimo

Supported a local non-profit organization “Nanaimo Recycling Exchange”. However, this facility permanently closed in March 2018. The RDN is not considering any reuse options at their facilities at this time and its preference is to continue to drive traffic to existing non-profits and thrift stores.

6. District of Squamish

Have been hosting a highly successful annual, one-day swap event for over a decade. It's a popular way to meet their environmental and social goals. People plan their garage sales around this event, and it's the sole opportunity in town for residents to share furniture as thrift stores do not accept furniture. It's a chance for residents to exchange their unwanted usable items or discover treasures for free, there is no need to bring something to participate.

7. City of Vancouver

Recently launched a pilot program for Free Swaps in Vancouver, it ran from June to August 2023. These events were integrated with other local activities, including farmers markets and fairs. Their decision to pursue this approach is influenced by the high cost of land in Vancouver.

8. Northern Rockies Regional Municipality

Fort Nelson is the only community in NRRM with essential services and a recycling depot. The council decided to proceed with a pilot and faced a number of challenges including the building's design. The share shed cost $12,000 to build, with an additional $4,300 for management. Items are free to take, with a tipping fee for passing the scale. Staffing was required to manage the operation, as well as to filter through donation to ensure resaleability and to prevent donations from piling up.

9. Metro Vancouver

The Metro Vancouver Board Strategic Plan places a high priority on developing initiatives that boost diversion rates of materials that can be repurposed, reused, or recycled. It recognizes that local reuse and repair efforts have a substantially lower carbon footprint compared to manufacturing new products from virgin materials. To realize this vision, Metro Vancouver actively collaborates with local reuse partners, member jurisdictions, and other stakeholders in the region. Key projects include:

a) Reuse Days Event Pilot at North Shore Recycling and Waste Centre

In 2023, Metro Vancouver conducted a pilot program in collaboration with Urban Repurpose at the North Shore Recycling and Waste Centre. The events took place on the last two Saturdays of each month from May to October. Overall, Urban Repurpose attended on eight Saturdays and collected a total of 9,105 kg of reusable materials. A notable takeaway from Metro Vancouver’s experience is the need for proper staffing to maintain order, to prevent misuse and illegal dumping.

b) Innovative Reuse Programs

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In addition to the reuse day events, Metro Vancouver have initiated programs to collect clothing, books, and bicycles through dedicated donation bins at their North Shore and United Boulevard Recycling and Waste Centers, contributing to their sustainability and waste reduction goals.

c) Research Study to Scale Reuse at Recycling and Waste Centers
To enhance reuse at recycling and waste centers, Metro Vancouver partnered with the Share Reuse Repair Initiative. This project assessed existing reuse opportunities and explored strategies for improvement. It identified potential community partners and convened a workshop on October 10, 2023, to discuss short-term and long-term strategies for enhanced reuse. The Share Reuse Repair Initiative will conclude its work this year, providing valuable recommendations to support Metro Vancouver's environmental sustainability and community welfare goals.

The following is an example of the categories of accepted/ not accepted items at staffed free store facilities:

Accepted	**Not Accepted**
Furniture	Textiles
Art	Carpets
Household items	Non-functioning EPR items
Tools	Hazardous waste
Building materials	Baby items
Functional electronics	

Strategy Options for Implementation

Strategy 1a: Within the entire CSWM service area, continue to advocate and promote donations to existing reuse establishments without investing in events, infrastructure or dedicating operational staff time to set aside and manage items for reuse. Establish a location on the CSWM website, recycling app or through partnership with Recycling Council of British Columbia, a place where residents can access a list or map of drop-off facilities and the materials accepted.

Operational and Staffing Impacts Anticipated

This strategy would not require a significant investment of time from staff or operational resources. If CSWM developed and maintained their own list of establishments to donate to, some staff time would be necessary to maintain the list and ensure accuracy.

Estimate of Diversion Impact

Some data would be made available on the frequency of searching for reuse and repair related businesses that could indicate an increase in diversion. Overall increase to CSWM diversion is anticipated to be low.

Financial Implications

Total estimated cost: $5,000 related to staff costs for updating online tools and or fees associated with subscription to tools.

Regulatory Authority Required

There is no specific service that would need to be established to execute this strategy, nor would local building permits be necessary. The strategy could be executed as a program within the existing CSWM Establishing Bylaw funded by all CSWM residents.

Diversion Potential	**Operational Impacts**	**Capital Investment**
Low	Low	N/A
No figure available.	*Limited staff time to maintain.*	*None required.*

Strategy 1b: Establish a one-year pilot with non-profit(s) at CVWMC to be identified through an Expression of Interest (EOI) with the necessary term staffing to support this new initiative to ensure its success.

Given the ongoing issue of reusable material being landfilled despite the abundance of thrift stores and online options in urban areas, it is prudent to explore innovative solutions to divert this material from waste streams. One avenue is to partner with existing non-profit organizations, leveraging their infrastructure and expertise to divert reusable items effectively.

Rather than establishing additional free stores at the CSWM facilities, which could potentially compete with existing thrift stores and face operational challenges, an alternative approach could involve collaborating with thrift stores to set aside materials specifically designated for non-profits. This collaborative effort would streamline the process of diverting reusable items by establishing a regular flow of suitable materials from the landfill directly to non-profit organizations. This approach not only addresses the issue of landfilling reusable materials but also strengthens the ties between waste management initiatives and community organizations dedicated to social welfare.

While the concept of a 'last chance' for diversion at the waste management centres is important and shared amongst CSWM staff, it must be approached with caution based on lessons learned from other jurisdictions and CSWM's own free store experiences. Success requires proper staffing.

Table 2 below presents the daily average vehicle traffic counts at CVWMC and CRWMC, specifically for disposal activities and excluding depot operations, in comparison to the peak daily traffic counts recorded between 2017 and 2023. This comparison aims to highlight the evolving operational trends over the years and the corresponding challenges posed by the rise in traffic volume.

Table 2. CVWMC and CRWMC Daily and Peak Traffic Count between 2017 to 2023

	CVWMC		CRWMC	
	Median	Peak	Median	Peak
2017	244	352	135	206
2018	251	363	137	214
2019	265	402	158	239
2020	295	408	149	304
2021	322	521	161	369
2022	326	526	169	405
2023	339	564	170	405

It's clear that adding a labor-intensive free store beyond the current staffing capacity is not feasible. Therefore, the introduction of a free store should be accompanied by the necessary staffing and financial resources.

Strategy 1b offers the following key features:

- An EOI will be established for non-profit organizations interested in participating in the pilot, committing to retrieving items set aside by CSWM staff on a weekly basis.
- Incorporating the garbage fee will guarantee the expenses for disposal would be taken care of in case the items left behind are not suitable for reuse by others.
- A dedicated CSWM attendant on both shifts to identify and set aside items of perceived value in a sea container with potential for a second life, meeting criteria specified by the selected non-profit through the EOI.
- The pilot will not be publicly advertised, aiming to direct traffic to existing non-profits and thrift stores in the community, serving as a last resort for diversion.
- Items will not be available for removal by staff or customers on-site.

- Non-profit staff will visit the site weekly to review items, recovering valuable ones, documenting their weight and condition, and taking photographs. If the container fills quickly, they will visit more frequently.
- Items deemed of no value will be photographed and placed in a disposal or recycling bin. Customers have already paid disposal tip fees for these items.

Strategy 1b offers several advantages, including:

- Non-profits can vet materials to recover and resell valuable items.
- Avoids conflicts with labor unions.
- Non-profits assume civil liability for the marketplace goods.
- On-site safety information can be provided during their limited time at the site.
- Non-profits will help assess the initiative's success through photographs and weigh scale data to document the waste diversion value.
- Data will help inform opportunities to further expand the program in the future.

Operational and Staffing Impacts Anticipated

Operational Impacts:

- Requires the establishment of an Expression of Interest (EOI) for interested non-profit organizations.
- CSWM staff will need to identify and set aside items of perceived value.
- Non-profit staff will need to visit the site weekly, review items, and recover valuable ones.
- Disposal or recycling of items deemed of no value will be necessary.
- Space, traffic flow and safety are all considerations that needs to be addressed.

Staffing Impacts:

- Additional CSWM attendant on both shifts to identify and set aside items.
- Non-profit staff visits weekly to review and recover items.
- Potential increase in staffing costs by $134,020 per year for 7-day oversight.

Estimate of Diversion Impact

Some data would be made available on the frequency of searching for reuse and repair related businesses that could indicate an increase in diversion. Overall increase to CSWM diversion is anticipated to be low.

The City of Vancouver landfill is a comparable facility in terms of traffic. Their data for reuse items was 20 tonnes per year, which would equate to 0.03% of the CVWMC total annual buried tonnes amounting to $1,600 worth of airspace savings.

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Financial Implications

Total estimated cost: $154,020 related to staff costs and the purchase of a temporary sea container and associated connection costs.

Regulatory Authority Required

There is no specific service that would need to be established to execute this strategy, nor would local building permits be necessary. The strategy could be executed as a program within the existing CSWM Establishing Bylaw funded by all CSWM residents.

Diversion Potential	Operational Impacts	Capital Investment
Low	Medium	Low
~20 tonnes per year.	*Staff time required to sort, maintain and load.*	*~$155,000 per year.*

Strategy 1c: Establish a pilot pop-up events with local reuse non-profit(s) organizations at CVWMC to be identified through an EOI, overseen by their volunteers/staff (subject to union approval), leveraging temporary events to engage the community and reduce waste sent to landfills.

Strategy 1c provides the following key features:

- Pop-up events are temporary and periodic, providing an opportunity for non-profit organizations to engage with the community directly.
- Local non-profit organizations specializing in reuse will be identified through an EOI process to collaborate with CSWM.
- Pop-up events will be overseen by volunteers or staff from the participating non-profit organizations, subject to union approval, ensuring proper management and organization.
- Pop-up events require minimal infrastructure, possibly utilizing tents, tables, and other temporary setups to display items for reuse.
- Pop-up events will occur on specific dates and times, providing a focused opportunity for community members to participate in reuse activities.
- Pop-up events will need to be scheduled and advertised.

Strategy 1c offers the following advantages:

- Flexibility in terms of scheduling and location, allowing for adaptation to community needs and preferences.
- Provides a platform for direct engagement with the community, raising awareness about reuse and environmental sustainability.
- By utilizing existing resources and infrastructure for temporary events, the operational costs can be minimized compared to establishing permanent free stores.
- Pop-up events foster a sense of community by bringing people together for a common cause, promoting social interaction and cooperation.
- Since pop-up events are temporary in nature, they pose lower risks compared to permanent installations, allowing for experimentation and learning.

It should be noted that pop-up events may pose accessibility challenges for certain demographics, contingent upon the timing and location of the events. Additionally, logistical hurdles such as, coordinating volunteers, managing heightened traffic demands, and managing inventory are inherent in organizing these events. While pop-up events can generate immediate interest and engagement, ensuring long-term sustainability and impact may necessitate further investments in resources and efforts.

Operational and Staffing Impacts Anticipated

Operational Impacts:

- Temporary and periodic pop-up events requiring minimal infrastructure.
- Events overseen by volunteers or staff from participating non-profits.
- Coordination of volunteers and management of inventory needed.
- Operational expenses for pop-up events include transportation, advertising, and event supplies. These costs can vary depending on the frequency and scale of the events.
- Space, traffic flow and safety are all considerations that needs to be addressed.

Staffing Impacts:

- Oversight and organization of events by volunteers or staff from participating non-profits.
- While volunteers or staff from participating non-profit organizations oversee pop-up events, there will still be some labor costs associated with coordination and supervision.
- Potential for union approval for volunteers to participate.

Estimate of Diversion Impact

Comparable events at Metro Vancouver, which has much higher population density to draw upon, resulted in 9 tonnes of materials collected over 8 events, which would equate to 0.01% of the total CVWMC annual buried tonnes amounting to $726 worth of airspace savings.

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Financial Implications

Total estimated cost: $25,000 based on estimated staff time and equipment to support, as well as advertising costs for the four events to generate community awareness.

Regulatory Authority Required

There is no specific service that would need to be established to execute this strategy, nor would local building permits be necessary. The strategy could be executed as a program within the existing CSWM Establishing Bylaw funded by all CSWM residents.

Diversion Potential	Operational Impacts	Capital Investment
Low	Low	N/A
Less than 9 tonnes	*Limited staff involvement*	*None Required*

Strategy 1d: Reuse Hub – a Long-Term Plan for Reuse

As part of the SWMP development, there is an opportunity to give prominence to the concept of reuse and assess the viability of creating a designated reuse centre. In parallel with the SWMP work, there is a forthcoming update to the ten-year master plan for CVWMC. This presents an opportunity to prioritize reuse initiatives and consider establishing a dedicated "Reuse Hub" to accommodate organizations specializing in the repair and reuse of various items such as appliances, furniture, and building materials. Many of these organizations face challenges in securing suitable space, including sufficient land and appropriate zoning for activities like building deconstruction and storage of reusable materials.

An example of a comparable project is in Eskilstuna, Sweden, where the municipality of 67,000 invested in the creation of a mall dedicated to repair and upcycling. Residents sort materials they are discarding into containers at the mall, and then drop off reusable toys, furniture, clothes, decorative items, and electronic devices in the mall's depot, called "Returen". In the depot, staff from AMA (Eskilstuna Municipality's resource unit for activity, motivation and work) perform an initial culling of what is usable and what is not. The items are then distributed to the recycling shops in the mall. The shop staff then perform a second culling, where they choose what they want to repair, fix up, convert, refine – and ultimately sell. A significant portion of the received material is either recycled or disposed of. During a one-week observation, the shops

took in 33% of the furniture that was received. In 2018, ReTuna Återbruksgalleria had $1.5 million (CAD) in sales for recycled products, and employed 50 people. The estimated cost of construction in 2015 was $3.3 million CAD in 2024 dollars.

It is imperative to consider the aforementioned initiatives holistically rather than implementing piecemeal solutions. A comprehensive approach should encompass the integration and financial support of these programs to ensure the success of these important initiatives.

Operational and Staffing Impacts Anticipated

Operational Impacts:

- Establishment of a designated reuse centre accommodating various organizations specializing in repair and reuse.
- Requires prioritization of reuse initiatives and assessment of viability for creating a Reuse Hub.
- Integration of various reuse programs and financial support for their success.

Staffing Impacts:

- Increased staffing needs for managing and overseeing the operations of the Reuse Hub.
- Potential for hiring specialized staff for activities such as building deconstruction and storage of reusable materials.

Estimate of Diversion Impact

The impact of this investment could be significant in creating a conversation about the circular economy and reuse, however experience from Sweden shows that there is still a limitation to the actual amount of materials that can be reused, repurposed, repaired and resold, and that some materials received are still directed to disposal. There were no available estimates of tonnage diverted found, but the sales indicate a significant contribution to the local economy and create significant efficiencies in supporting redesign, reuse, and repair.

Financial Implications

Total estimated cost: Unknown at this time

Establishing a Reuse Hub would involve significant infrastructure costs, including building facilities for sorting, storing, and redistributing reusable materials. These costs can vary depending on the scale and scope of the hub. Operating a Reuse Hub would require staffing for various tasks such as material sorting, customer service, maintenance, and administrative duties. The staffing needs would depend on the size of the hub and the volume of materials processed. Beyond staffing, operational expenses would include utilities, maintenance, transportation, insurance, and other overhead costs associated with running the hub. These ongoing expenses would need to be budgeted for in the long term.

Regulatory Authority Required

Development of the land and establishment of a business operation supporting reuse would require local government approvals as well as recognition of the solid waste facility within the SWMP as a sorting and transfer site of waste. Funding of the facility could require long-term borrowing to be approved through the SWMP.

Diversion Potential	Operational Impacts	Capital Investment
Medium	High	High
None available	*Assuming CSWM operation of the facility*	*Assuming CSWM and not a private sector partner*

Strategy 1e: Support share sheds in rural areas where established volunteer or municipal support is willing to construct, operate and staff share sheds associated with CSWM recycling and waste management facilities.

Funding would be directed to a volunteer group that:

- has insurance for the protection of their volunteers, and liability insurance that meets the requirements of the CVRD Insurance for Volunteers Board Policy. If staffed by a local government, funding would be directed to them as a priority; and
- has a formal agreement with the CSWM that details the legal relationship between the share shed and CSWM and the Service (only applicable for share sheds that are situated on CVRD leased or owned lands).

Propose to fund at a rate of the greater of a minimum of $1,500, or one dollar per permanent resident (as per Statistics Canada) of the community for the following communities:

- Zeballos wasteshed, including the resident population of Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Chek'tles7et'h' First Nations, Ehattesaht/Chinehkint First Nation, Nuchatlaht First Nation and the Village of Zeballos;
- The Village of Tahsis;
- Gold River wasteshed, including the resident population of the Village of Gold River and Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation;
- Sayward Valley and Village of Sayward, using the population of SRD Electoral Area A;
- SRD Electoral Area B Cortes Island;
- SRD Electoral Area C Quadra and Discovery Islands;
- Hornby Island; and

- Denman Island.

Should additional CSWM staffed depots be established in rural areas of the CSWM where a willing and qualified volunteer group steps forward, expansion of the eligible communities could expand with approval from the Board. This funding rate is not intended to incorporate the population of the Cities of Campbell River or Courtenay, the Town of Comox or the Village of Cumberland.

To promote the cleanliness and to understand the use of the facilities, reporting from the funding receivers on the quantity of goods reused, as well as garbage deposited would be required weekly, as well as photos of the site.

CSWM would limit their liability by not providing capital investment into the share sheds, or directly employing the staff or managing the volunteers.

Operational and Staffing Impacts Anticipated

- Overflow from co-located facilities could require assistance to maintain a clean and tidy site, and to respond to resident inquiries regarding the share shed.
- Limited impact on staff to oversee distribution of funding and receive reports on volumes.

Estimate of Diversion Impact

Due to the low population served the total impact to the CSWM diversion targets will be low, but the benefits to the local community and their contribution to a circular economy will be high.

Financial Implications

Total estimated cost: $10,000-$15,000 based on 2021 population estimates and potential expansion of the current free stores in community.

Regulatory Authority Required

There is no specific service that would need to be established to execute this strategy if it is funded as a program through the CSWM Establishing Bylaw by all CSWM residents.

Diversion Potential	**Operational Impacts**	**Capital Investment**
Low	Low	N/A
None available	*Assuming volunteers or local government run*	*No assets owned by CSWM*

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Greenhouse Gas Impact

The quantity, volume and types of materials diverted will be the driving factor in the determination of GHG reductions for these strategies. Transportation emissions for rural residents travelling to acquire new goods in lieu of finding a used item locally would also be a benefit, but are very difficult to estimate due to the lack of data on materials diverted through these unsupervised facilities.

The forthcoming GHG Emission Inventory considers the avoided emissions from the reuse and repair sector, and will provide additional insight into the benefits of these strategies.

Note on Estimate of Diversion Impact

The estimates of diversion impact rely on multiple factors such as the quantity and variety of items diverted from waste streams, the efficiency of the program in encouraging reuse, and community involvement. Due to the absence of data, the estimates offered are just that, estimates. Continuous monitoring and assessment will be crucial for evaluating the real impact of diversion and optimizing strategies for effectiveness. This ongoing evaluation will also inform decisions regarding the cost-effectiveness of implementing these strategies long-term, beyond the pilot phase.

Summary of Strategic Actions

Table 2 Strategy Summary Table

Strategy	Diversion Potential	Ops. & Staffing	Capital Cost
1a. Continue advocacy and promote donations to reuse establishments	Low	Low	N/A
1b. One-year pilot with local non-profit(s) at CVWMC	Low	Medium	Low
1c. Pop-up events local non-profits 4x a year at CVWMC	Low	Low	N/A
1d. Reuse Hub	Medium	High	High
1e. Rural Share Shed Support	Low	Low	N/A

Based on the RSWAC feedback provided, the committee seems to lean towards an incremental and pilot approach, particularly favoring event-based initiatives and partnerships with existing non-profit organizations. The committee expressed concerns about the potential competition with existing non-profits and reuse organizations already operating in the region. They noted that setting up standalone free stores might put them in direct competition with the numerous thrift stores and online platforms like Facebook Marketplace and Craigslist. This competition

could pose challenges in terms of diverting material effectively and efficiently. The RSWAC highlighted the importance of avoiding duplication of efforts and ensuring that any new initiatives complement, rather than compete with, the existing efforts of non-profits and reuse organizations.

The committee also expressed concerns about the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of establishing stand-alone free stores, instead suggesting options like quarterly events or online platforms to facilitate material exchange. Additionally, they highlight the importance of considering the diverse needs and characteristics of different communities, indicating a preference for tailored solutions rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

All of the feedback and comments received can be found within Appendix B to this memo.

Attachments: Appendix A – Existing Non-Profits and Thrift Stores

Appendix B – Summary of Comments

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Appendix A – Existing Non-Profit Organizations and Thrift Stores in Comox Valley and Campbell River

Business	Contact Information	Hours of Operation	Details
Too Good to Be Threw Thrift Shop (Part of the Comox Valley Transition Society)	367-6th Street, Courtenay 250-338-0601 tgtbt@cvts.ca ww.cvts.ca	Donations accepted Monday to Saturday 10am–4pm at the back of building *Please ring the bell & wait for service Store Hours: Mon–Sat 9:30am–5pm	Accepts the following: GENERALLY ANYTHING THAT IS: clean, free from stains, pet hair, rips/tears, chips/, breakage, & odors as well as items that are complete and NOT missing pieces. Electronics/appliances/books that are relatively up to date & compatible. The goals of the thrift shop are: •To generate funds to support current and future programs. •To provide clothing and household goods at no cost to women and children in need. Also provide a pickup service.
Value Village	350 Old Island Highway Courtenay, BC V9N 3P3 (250) 334-3085	Mon-Sat 9am-9pm Sun 10am-8pm	Accepts the following: Clothing & Shoes, Men's, Women's, Children's, Hats, Mittens, Scarves, Ties, Nylons, Socks, Underwear, Hardback and Paperback Books, Magazines, Records, Tapes, CDs, Videos, DVDs, Computer Software, Pots, Pans, Utensils, China Cups, Vases, Dishes, Cutlery, Glassware, Silverware, Stemware, Small Electrical Toasters, Radio, Power Tools, Irons, Blenders, Mixers, Stereos, CD Players, Speakers. Last year alone, Value Village repurposed over 650 million pounds of goods.

Business	Contact Information	Hours of Operation	Details
Salvation Army	2966 Kilpatrick Ave, Courtenay (250) 338-8151 1671 Ryan Rd E, Courtenay (250) 941-7715 100-1100 Homewood Rd, Campbell River (250) 286-3010	Generally 9am-5 pm (Check for individual store hours) Dropoff Hours: 9am–4:30	Accepts the following: Clothing, housewares, furniture, electronics, toys, media & books, accessories, antiques & collectibles, computer. The goals of the Salvation Army are: National Recycling Operations' (NRO) role, within the context of The Salvation Army, is both to generate funds to help The Salvation Army achieve its mission, and to influence positively the communities in which we operate. A total diversion in one year of 68,841,186 lbs. Also provide a pickup service.

Business	Contact Information	Hours of Operation	Details
Habitat for Humanity	Habitat for Humanity Vancouver Island North Affiliate Office: 877 5th Street Courtenay, BC V9N 1K8 250-334-3777 Email: info@habitnorthisland.com Courtenay Restore 1755 13th Street Courtenay, BC V9N 7B6 250-334-3784 Campbell River Restore 1725B Willow St. Campbell River V9W 3M8 250-830-1493	Free local pick-ups. Rural pick-up at reduced rates. Campbell River and area (250) 830-1493 Comox Valley and area (250) 334-3784	Accepts the following: Furniture, home décor / housewares, TV / Audio, seasonal, home & garden, sporting/athletic, gym, fishing equipment, musical equipment, land, planes, trains, automobiles, RV, ATV's, metal of any kind, appliances – working or not, bathroom fixtures, bathtubs, shower enclosures, bathroom vanities, blinds, cabinets, carpet – new or gently used - minimum 8' x 10', ceiling fans, doors, drywall – must be ½ to full sheets, electrical supplies, flooring materials, ceramic tile, vinyl, furniture hardware for doors, cabinets, etc., insulation, lighting products, chandeliers, lamps, fixtures, lumber, plywood, trim, roofing materials, shingles, - in bundles only, sinks, faucets, disposals, gutters, toilets, plumbing, tools, hand tools, bench tools, power tools, windows, construction materials.
Blue Toque Sport Swap	120B 5th St., Courtenay, BC V9N 1J4 250-871-0302	Open 7 days/week 9:30am-5:30pm	Accepts the following: Sporting Goods

Business	Contact Information	Hours of Operation	Details
Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Vancouver Island	877 5th St, Courtenay, BC V9N 1K8 (250) 338-7141	Mon-Fri 9am-5pm	Accepts the following: Changes based on current needs. Examples are: toys, board games and books (refer to website regarding current needs). "The Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Vancouver Island provides experiential learning environments that inspire children, youth and families of diverse abilities to acquire and develop the critical cognitive, emotional, and social skills needed to become resilient and contributing members of society."
Comox Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC)	Location: 19 Wing Fitness and Community Centre 1575 Military Row Lazo, BC V0R 2K0 250-339-8290 1-888-246-0222 Email: info@comoxmfrc.ca	Contact for details.	Accepts the following: Specific information not found. However, it appears that they accept donations based on current needs and / or initiatives (i.e. Halloween costume drop - off). "The Comox Military Family Resource Centre (Comox MFRC) is a registered non-profit society that works to support serving members and their families in the 19 Wing geographical area. A wide variety of programs and services are provided to the community by a multi-disciplinary team of core staff, trained volunteers, and partners in the local community."

Business	Contact Information	Hours of Operation	Details
Community Thrift Store	971 Cumberland Rd, Cumberland (250) 334-2478	Sun-Sat 11am-3pm	Accepts the following: Specific information not found. However, it appears they accept clothing, household goods, electronics, etc.
Comox Valley Therapeutic Riding Society	4839 Headquarters Road, Courtenay, BC V9J 1P2 (250) 338-1968	Contact for details.	Accepts the following: Our most immediate needs are :A pony sized breast plate, New tires for our Gator, Pony sized bitless bridle, Poly-pad saddle pads, Wood and building supplies to help build an extension off of our mounting ramp, A small trailer to pull our Gator to and from the service shop, Our on-going needs are: Hay, Alfalfa, All-Phase lite horse grain, Halters and lead ropes, Fly masks, Fly spray, Horse first aid equipment like SWAT, vet-wrap, thermometers, ice packs, polysporin eye, iodine, animal-intex pads, Manure fork heads, Wheelbarrows, Bit connectors for the bridles, Gloves for our riders and volunteers, adult and child size. "The Comox Valley Therapeutic Riding Society began in 1986, servicing just 3 children. Today it has grown to one of the largest therapeutic riding centers in BC, with up to 100 clients and 150 volunteers each week."
Island Traders	107-364 8th St., Courtenay, BC V9N 1N3 (250) 338-2942	Mon-Sat 9:30am-5:30pm Sun 11am-4pm	Accepts the following: Various

Business	Contact Information	Hours of Operation	Details
Lush Valley Food Action Society	2342 Rosewall Crescent, Courtenay, BC, V9N 8R9 250-331 0152	Contact for details.	Accepts the following: "Donations of funds, materials, expertise and equipment are gratefully accepted and acknowledged". "LUSH Valley is a non-profit organization focusing on food security in the Comox Valley. We believe our food and food systems play a powerful role in promoting health, building strong and diverse communities, protecting the environment and strengthening the economy. Together, with our partners, we support food-related projects that educate and empower people on issues such as hunger, nutrition, food safety, self-sufficiency, food waste, the local food economy, and more."
Nearly New Books	1761-B Comox Ave Comox, BC V9M 3M2 (250) 339-1278	Tue-Sat 10am–4pm	Accepts and sells nearly new books of all types.
Podlings	6-420 Fitzgerald, Courtenay, BC V9N 7N2 (250) 334-3483	Mon-Fri 9:30am-5pm Sat 10am-5pm	Accepts the following: Childrens and maternity clothing
Second Page Used Books	5546 Duncan Ave, Courtenay, BC V9N 2M7 (250) 338-1144	Mon-Sat 9:30am-5pm Book Dropoff Tue-Sat	Accepts second hand books in good condition for store credit or cash and then resells to the public.

Business	Contact Information	Hours of Operation	Details
St. Joseph's General Hospital Cottage Thrift Store	2137 Comox Ave, Comox, BC V9M 1P2 (250) 339-8655	Donation Drop Off / Store Hours Wed–Sat 10am-4pm	Accepts the following: Clothing, jewelry, collectibles, dishes, frames/pictures, shoes, kitchen items, CDs/DVDs, small appliances, bedding, sewing and craft supplies, material, household items, etc. All proceeds from donations go to St. Joseph's Hospital to support various programs or purchases of much needed equipment.
Sweet Salvage Consignment	17B-215 Port Augusta St Comox, BC V9M 3M9 (250) 650-6896	Mon 11am-3pm Tue-Sat 10am-5pm	Womens Clothing Store taken on Consignment Basis
VV Boutique	478A 5th St Courtenay, BC V9N 1J8 (250)	Tue–Sat 10am – 5pm Book an appointment for consignment dropoff	Accepts higher end clothing for men, women and children size 10 and up
West and Co	2720 Dunsmuir Ave., Cumberland. BC V0R 1S0 westandcobc@gmail.com	Tues-Sun 10am-5pm	Accepts the following: High End Street Fashions

Business	Contact Information	Hours of Operation	Details
YANA Fund Society	2456 Rosewall Crescent #102, Courtenay, BC V9N 8R9 250-871-0343	Contact for details regarding drop-off	Accepts the following: "You can bring your gently used ladies and/or children's clothing and accessories in to any of the following consignment stores, where accounts have been set up for proceeds to go to YANA: West & Co. (formerly Polka Dot Pants), Planet Kids and Podlings. We recommend calling first for drop off times and details. YANA is a community organization offering help to Comox Valley families who need to travel to access medical treatment for their children.
Campbell River Hospital Thrift Shop	851-2nd Ave., Campbell River BC, V9W 3V1 250-287-4643	Mon - Sat 10am-2pm Deliveries to Back Door before 1:30 pm	Accepts the following: Specific information not found. However, it appears they accept clothing, household good, small electronics, etc.
Campbell River & North Island Transition Society	830 13th Avenue Campbell River, BC V9W 4H2 (250) 914-3666	Tues-Sat 10am-4pm	Accepts good quality clean items. Small furniture, clothing, household items, kitchen items, linens, tools, electronics and sporting equipment are all accepted items. We do not take car seats or large items such as windows, doors, carpeting, etc.
Classy Katz Consignment	80E Westgate Rd, Campbell River, BC V9W 1R2	Not specified	Accepts the following for Consignment: Women's wear, purses, footwear, jewellery, vintage.
Coho Books	990A Shoppers Row, Campbell River, BC V9W 2C5	Mon – Sat 10am - 5pm	Accepts the following: Used book consignment.

Business	Contact Information	Hours of Operation	Details
New 2 U Consignment	C-191 Dogwood St, Campbell River, BC V9W 6B9 (250) 286-1906	Mon-Fri 10am-4pm	Accepts the following: Thrift shop. No other details specified.
Kuddles Children's Consignment	D-191 Dogwood Street Campbell River Call (250) 286-1090	Mon-Fri 11am-4pm	Accepts the following: Second hand clothing consignment.
Pier St Trading Post	201-938 Island Hwy Campbell River, BC V9W 2C3 (250) 830-7118	Sun-Sat 10:30am-5:30pm	Sells preowned vinyl records, furniture, housewares, collectibles
Needful Things	1121 Ironwood St Campbell River, BC V9W 5L6 (250) 287-2202 Furniturecampbellriver.com	Tue-Fri 10am-5pm Sat 11am-4pm	Sells pre-owed treasures. Sale items include some antiques, fine furniture and home décor.

Business	Contact Information	Hours of Operation	Details
Second to None Thrift Store (Campbell River Hospice Society Affiliation 7	4-582 South Dogwood Street Campbell River, BC V9W 6R4 (250) 914-1413	Mon-Sat 10am-4 pm	Accepts the following: Specific information not found. However, it appears they accept clothing, household goods, electronics, etc. Second to None is a non - for profit establishment created to provide funding support for the Campbell River Hospice. "We are looking forward to revenue's being created by our "Second to None" Thrift store., which will help us with operational costs when our new Hospice House has been built. We are looking forward to bringing on more programs and workshops to better serve our community members."
Willow Point Old and New	2250 Island Hwy S Campbell River, BC V9W 1C3 (250) 923-5777	Mon-Fri 9am-3pm	Sells a collection of furniture and housewares from 1900-1970

Appendix B – Exploration of Reuse Initiatives at CSWM Facilities – Comments from RSWAC

Stakeholder	Comment	Response
RSWAC Member Public	I really want to love this idea, however I feel it is too expensive to startup and maintain. Especially with all the other options available such as thrift stores and facebook marketplace and zero waste groups. I feel there is some value in the convenience of being able to drop potentially useful items at the same time as doing a dump run. But I think it would be more worthwhile to dedicate resources towards repair cafes, community garage sales/swaps, and a pickup service to help people dispose of larger items.	Revision made to reflect comments: • Concerns about the potential costs associated with starting and maintaining the proposed initiative, considering the availability of alternative options such as thrift stores, online marketplaces, and zero waste groups. • Value of convenience. • Prioritize resources towards supporting repair cafes, community garage sales/swaps, and pickup services for larger items disposal.
RSWAC Member Technical	The memo sounds like free stores are most successful in rural communities, but solutions seem tailored to more urban implementation. All identified non-profit thrift stores are in the Comox Valley or Campbell River – poor representation and access for SRD Electoral Areas.	Revision made to reflect comments: • Strategy 1e has been incorporated to acknowledge the importance of ensuring that CSWM initiatives are accessible and beneficial to all areas within the SRD Electoral Areas, not just urban centers.

Stakeholder	Comment	Response
RSWAC Member Technical	The options presented do not appear to allow for free exchange. All goods will be filtered and sold through not-for-profits. • This may deter residents who may have poor access to Thrift stores, do not have funds to shop at thrift stores, or who value the community interaction and swapping of materials as much as access to discounted materials. The preamble speaks to these values (points 2-5, but the solutions do not meet those desires and behaviors.	Thank you for the comment. • Strategy 1d provides an avenue to address the free exchange. • Processing waste is the core function of the CSWM but we also recognize the value of exploring partnerships with non-profits to address community needs. Strategies 1b and 1c speaks to the collaboration with non-profits to facilitate the exchange of goods, rather than taking on the day-to-day operation of such exchanges ourselves. This approach allows us to leverage existing resources and expertise within the community while fulfilling our goal of promoting waste diversion.
RSWAC Member Technical	Was the option of becoming more involved in the Cortes Free Store considered? • What about a share shed in the new Quadra depot? These may provide more specific learnings to better serve rural communities and help better understand the costs, opportunities, and challenges.	Revision made to reflect comments: • Strategy 1e has been incorporated a funding option for rural communities.
RSWAC Member Technical	Community-organized swap meets sound like a successful option that could be scaled and modified to fit almost any community. The not-for-profit role could be that they get to keep suitable items that are not wanted by other members of the community.	Thank you for your comment. • CSWM currently and will continue to partake and promote swaps and repair cafes.

Stakeholder	Comment	Response
RSWAC Member Public	Free stores/sheds that accept and offer recycle-reuse-repurpose items are proven waste diversion facilities. From small community beginnings to widely accepted rural facilities, they are welcome and beneficial. The Hornby facility has matured into an advertised and much sought out icon of "don't throw that out/let's go see what we can find for free!" Hugely popular in the summer season. There is no doubt that other new free stores could be successful if construction costs and staffing can be overcome. I'll note here that paid free store staffing on Hornby would be a tax burden, is unwanted and it is thought that the unionized depot staff costs are an issue needing reeling in. Hornby has difficulty keeping volunteers at the free store. My time on HIRRA voting on paid unionized staff negotiations and increases showed a divided and stressed exec. Currently about 15 total volunteers, no paid staff, 2-4 volunteers per day. Hours reduced to 10-12, Friday, Saturday and Sunday due to limited volunteers, allowing set up and clear out time from the 9-1 depot hours Experience from the past has closed the open access after hours due to security and safety issues. Road gate lock up after hours and observed drop off has been required to stop waste dumping. Security cameras required.	Thank you for your comments. • We recognize the importance of prioritizing efforts that yield the greatest impact on waste reduction, which considering fiscal responsibility. • The report has been revised to provide diversion potential, cost and operational/staffing implications to each strategy to present a more fulsome assessment of each strategy for consideration. • A variation of Strategy 1c to pilot a drop-off managed site along with community-led events is a valuable consideration that aligns with our goals of promoting waste reduction and community engagement.

Stakeholder	Comment	Response
RSWAC Member Public (continued)	Given the board 2017 decision: "THAT free stores or share sheds not be implemented at the Comox Valley waste management centre and the Campbell River waste management centre." The idea of a mix of trying a pilot of a drop off managed site/community orgs removing wanted items along with summer in town events may help determine the best future choice of what works best and is fiscally responsible.	
RSWAC Member Technical	The free store report is for the purpose of considering this type of service at the Cumberland landfill? In Tahsis, our staff tidy, clean and haul trash from the free store. It is unstaffed and open 24/7/365 otherwise. We find that by keeping it clean and tidy deters people from using it as a dump site.	Thank you for your comment. • Appreciate insight regarding the operation of the free store in Tahsis and the measures taken to maintain its cleanliness and prevent misuse, highlights importance of proper management and maintenance protocols to ensure that free stores serve their intended purpose.
RSWAC Member Public	It looks like there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to Free Stores across rural, urban communities, and that there are several distinct concerns re staffing, space, liability, and more. So, an experimental, incremental approach does seem to make sense. For the urban cases, following Metro Vancouver + North Shore's experiences, I favour trying an event-based approach with at least quarterly events. That seems less committing than starting with a facility that is open regular hours for the long term. However, given the scheduling and accessibility concerns, maybe multi-day events spring and fall would be better than single day. After trying that out with events, if demand is sufficient and the events have gone well, perhaps a next step is a dedicated facility.	Thank you for your comment. • Alignment with Strategy 1c; by starting with these events, we can evaluate the level of demand and adjust our strategy accordingly.

Stakeholder	Comment	Response
RSWAC Member Public	I struggle with the CSWM getting involved in any type of Free Store in Campbell River or Comox for many of the reasons listed in the memo. I see the value, but can't see the feasibility of these concepts. Currently I see low value items being received, and a lot of effort by both staff and volunteers going into this diversion. That effort likely can have more benefit going into different initiatives to reduce waste generation.	Thank you for your comments. • We recognize the importance of prioritizing efforts that yield the greatest impact on waste reduction. • The report has been revised to provide diversion potential, cost and operational/staffing implications to each strategy to present a more fulsome assessment of each strategy for consideration.
RSWAC Member Public	Could that level of effort and cost go into adding a section into the website that assisted people to know what organizations and charities could take their unwanted but re-useable items so they can be donated directly, rather than transported to the waste management centre. The charities could control what they are able to take, and if none of them want it, it would then be taken to the landfill. The information would need to be maintained and updated, but may be a lower cost and effort than other options presented. Sort of an online Charity Hub, for lack of a better term.	Revision made to reflect comments: • Inclusion of staff time to update the Recollect app which could serve as a centralized platform to provide valuable information to community members seeking to donate items and help streamline the process of connecting donors with organizations in need.
RSWAC Member Technical	Even with 50+ thrift stores/existing options in the region, combined with online options like Facebook Marketplace, there is still an egregious amount of reusable material landfilled daily in the region. Opportunities should definitely be explored to partner with thrift stores to divert material that otherwise would have been thrown away at the landfill, but it's not realistic to expect them to staff it. Material should be delivered to them on a regular basis from landfill-based free stores, assuming they want it. If they don't, then it wasn't taking material from them in the first place.	Thank you for your comments. • Strategies 1b and 1c reflects your comments and aligns with the RSWAC's goal of maximizing waste diversion efforts while respecting the operational capacities of thrift stores. By facilitating the transfer of materials to thrift stores, we aim to minimize waste and promote reuse within the community.

Stakeholder	Comment	Response
RSWAC Member Public	There is also to some degree competition with free and non-free online services (e.g. Craigslist and Facebook Marketplace). However, if the end goal is to increase re-use, it's all good as long as there is enough good stuff to go around.	Thank you for your comment.
RSWAC Member Public	Setting these up as free-standing options would put them in direct competition with the many thrift stores operating in Cumberland, Courtenay, Comox and Campbell River. An option could be to set aside items and provide to not-for-profits.	Revision made to reflect comment: • Stressed the importance of ensuring our efforts complement existing services rather than creating competition.
RSWAC Member Public	There are some parallels between free stores and pet shelters.	Thank you for your comment.