

Circular Economic Regional Market Assessment

**CONSTRUCTION, RENOVATION
& DEMOLITION WASTE
MATERIALS**

qathet REGIONAL DISTRICT

April 2026

Prepared by



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1 Introduction

Construction and the broader built environment play a significant role in the qathet Regional District (qRD) economy, where planning and development are shaped by the realities of a remote coastal setting, shifting population needs, and evolving housing and infrastructure demands. This contemporary development context is informed by the qRD's long history in resource-based industries such as forestry, pulp and paper production, and mining.

With support from the B.C. Government's Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP) and PacifiCan, the Synergy Foundation commissioned this Regional Market Assessment to better understand the qathet Regional District's construction, renovation, and demolition sector; identify opportunities to advance circular economy practices; and assess regional gaps that could be addressed through the development of circular hubs.

The qRD includes the City of Powell River, the rural areas designated as Electoral Areas A through E (including Texada and Lasqueti islands), and the Tla'amin Nation (Figure 1¹). In 2021, Powell River's population was estimated at 13,943, and the total regional population was estimated at 22,166.^{2 3} Across the qRD, approximately 8.6% of the population identify as indigenous. Recent BC Stats projections show that immigration, influenced by factors such as more affordable housing, will drive population growth of approximately 20 percent in the region by 2041.⁴ This inflow is helping diversify the region's demographic profile, but Powell River continues to have an older population, with 30 percent of residents aged 65 and over.

¹ Government of British Columbia, [qathet Regional District](#) (2021)

² Statistics Canada (2022), [Profile table, Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population - Powell River, City \(CY\) \[Census subdivision\], British Columbia](#)

³ British Columbia, BC Stats. Population Estimates & projections for British Columbia. [BC Population Estimates & Projections](#)

⁴ qathet Regional District – Electoral Areas A, B, C, & D Population Analysis and Projections 2016 - 2041 <https://www.qathet.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/qathet-Population-Projections-11-August-2019-.pdf>

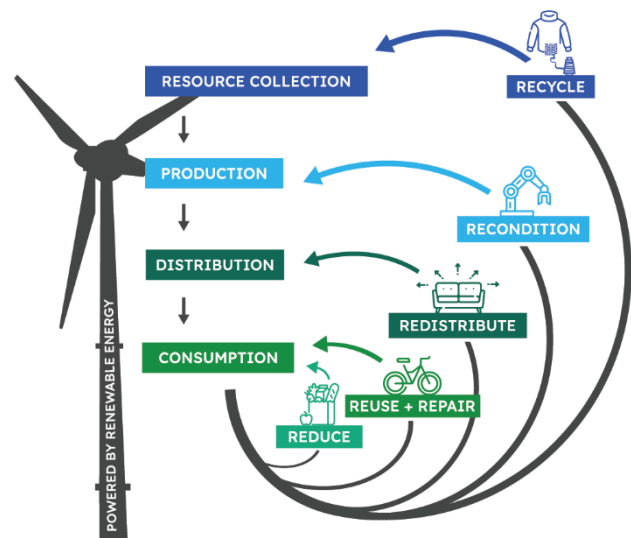
Figure 1: Map of qathet Regional District



Population growth and changes in local housing stock influence construction, renovation, and demolition (CRD) activity, which in turn shapes the volume and types of materials entering the regional waste stream. These activities require substantial material and energy inputs and generate a significant share of the region's waste. Currently, most CRD waste is transported out of the region, with materials shipped approximately 770 km to a landfill in Washington State. This outward flow represents a loss of economic value and a missed opportunity to capture local benefits through reuse, recycling, or value-added processing within the region.

A circular economy emphasizes keeping materials in use for as long as possible through reuse, repair, recycling, and recovery while designing out waste and pollution. In the qRD context, circular economy approaches offer meaningful opportunities to strengthen the local economy, reduce reliance on increasingly expensive virgin materials, and enhance regional resilience. For remote coastal communities such as those within the qRD, circular strategies also support a transition to a green economy and help expand economic development beyond traditional resource-based industries.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY MODEL



This Regional Market Assessment identifies opportunities and provides insights to advance the infrastructure, programs, and partnerships needed to establish a circular economy hub for CRD materials in the qRD. Local government, industry, and community groups each play a role in shaping this hub, and this report offers a shared foundation for moving circularity forward in the region.

1.1 Study Purpose and Objectives

Funded through the BC Government's Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP) and PacifiCan, the primary goal of this Regional Market Assessment Study is to inform the development of a regional circular economy hub in the qRD. A circular economy hub model has the potential to revitalize local economies through the creation of high-quality skilled jobs, value-added production, repurposing of underutilized infrastructure, technical innovation, and stronger local supply chains. It envisions fostering deeper partnerships among construction-related businesses, local governments, Indigenous peoples, social enterprises, artists, entrepreneurs, and educational institutions.



See the [Circular Hub Best Practices Report](#) for supporting research on Circular Economy Hubs and an overview of C&D material recovery strategies.

Local government, industry, and community organizations all have a role to play in shaping a circular hub.

- Policy and infrastructure create the enabling conditions
- Businesses and trades innovate and operationalize solutions
- Community level efforts generate participation and cultural uptake.

This report speaks to these diverse groups, offering a shared foundation for advancing circularity in the qRD.

1.2 Project Scope and Methodology

The scope of this assessment includes examining current and emerging market capacity for the diversion of CRD materials within the qRD. The study is tailored to the region's scale, economic conditions, and existing infrastructure, drawing on insights from a targeted group of informants and offering practical direction for industry, government, and supporting organizations. While current data and informant inputs are not exhaustive, they reflect a broad range of perspectives and underscores the region's potential to enhance collaboration across the formal and informal networks that shape recovered building material markets.

A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining desktop research, primary and secondary data collection, and quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Key sources include:

- Statistics Canada (population, employment, industry trends)
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) (housing starts, renovation activity)
- Regional district solid waste management data, annual reports, waste composition studies and demolition permits
- Provincial policy and regulatory documents relevant to waste management and circular economy initiatives

Study activities included:

- Conducting targeted interviews with local contributors.
- Hosting a community workshop to capture perspectives of local contributors and identify barriers and opportunities.
- Analyzing data on construction trends, existing housing stock, renovations and demolitions.
- Documenting existing material management infrastructure and processing capacity.
- Reviewing existing disposal, reuse, and recycling practices.
- Estimating current volumes and potential impacts of CRD waste, broken down by material type (e.g., wood, concrete, asphalt shingles, drywall) and building sector (residential, industrial, commercial, institutional).
- Estimating the economic value and untapped potential of diverting CRD waste, and potential beneficial uses for each material type.

A key component of the study was engagement with construction, demolition, and manufacturing businesses, along with organizations and community members, to identify priority material streams, infrastructure needs, and partnership opportunities for CRD materials in the region.

This included a Waste to Resource Community Session held in Powell River on October 29, 2025. This workshop brought together 33 local contributors to explore opportunities to reduce CRD waste and advance circular economy initiatives. Participants examined potential hub models, assessed existing community assets and gaps, and identified related economic opportunities. Through facilitated discussions, they shared insights and proposed solutions tailored to the unique needs and conditions of the region.



See [Appendix A-Engagement Summary](#) for an overview of the interviews and workshop.

The study's findings are informed by data of varying quality, age, and completeness, including reliance on some 2021 datasets where more recent or local information was not available. Accordingly, the data is used to illustrate trends and to contextualize regional material flows, rather than to provide precise quantitative estimates. The assumptions underlying this analysis are documented in the relevant sections of the report.

2 Current State Assessment

This section provides an overview of the local economy, workforce, and construction sector, including the building materials used in construction, renovation, and demolition activities. It also describes the region's existing circular economy and waste management infrastructure.

2.1 Sector Profile

The qRD's industrial landscape has shifted in recent years, particularly following the closure of a paper mill that had been in operation for 110 years. At the same time, the region remains home to several active lumber mills and wood-manufacturing operations, including Lois Lumber Ltd. and Powell River Forest Products in Powell River, as well as smaller sawmills and equipment in the region. Collectively, these facilities support the local construction sector by supplying regionally produced lumber and establishing a foundation for localized, circular wood use within the qRD.

The construction sector is the third largest contributor to the local economy in qathet. As of 2021, it employs 10.2% of the workforce, while manufacturing represents 5.9%.⁵ The construction ecosystem is supported by a network of local contractors, hauling and disposal services, transfer operations, niche manufacturers, and a dedicated out of region wood waste receiver (Salish Soils). Complementary sectors such as forestry and port operations also influence regional material flows.

2.2 Construction, Renovation & Demolition Activity



CREDIT: TECTONICA

New construction, renovation, and demolition activities together generate a steady stream of potentially recoverable materials. Although all three activities create opportunities for recovery, each produces different material types, volumes, and qualities and should therefore be considered separately.

⁵ Statistics Canada (2022), [Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census: \[Powell River, Regional district\]](#).

Construction typically produces post-industrial, higher quality offcuts, while demolition produces post-consumer material, often lower in quality due to age, wear and damage. Renovation projects fall between these two, generating a mix of both.

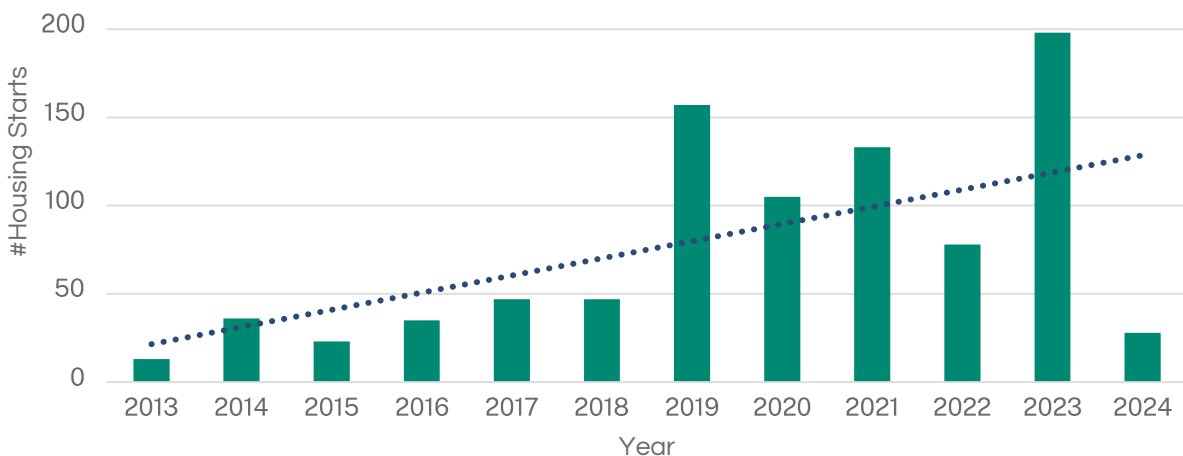
Identifying the sources of CRD waste also supports the development of policies, incentives, and collection and processing strategies that can capture the highest value from these material streams.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

Housing starts (new builds) in the City of Powell River show intermittent surges with notable peaks in 2019, 2021, and 2023, which signals projections of continued demand for construction materials and generation of CRD waste streams.

Figure 2 shows the housing starts from 2013 to 2024 in the City of Powell River. Data does not explicitly note the inclusion of other areas in the region.⁶

Figure 2: Housing Starts in Powell River Census Agglomeration (2013–2024)



Studies estimate that as much as 10 per cent of all materials by weight that are brought on site are wasted during a traditional stick-frame construction project.⁷

⁶ BC Stats, (2013 to 2023) and (2014 to 2024), *British Columbia Housing Starts for Urban Areas and Communities*.

⁷ Department of Trade and Industry. 1998. *Rethinking Construction*. P.15; Bossink & Bouwers. "Construction Waste: Quantification and Source Evaluation". March 1996. *Journal of Construction Engineering and Management*.

Assuming that the average 1,300sq ft home contains 65.4 tonnes of building materials⁸ and that an average of 108 units were started over the last five years, it is conservatively estimated that 706 tonnes of building materials are wasted in construction annually.

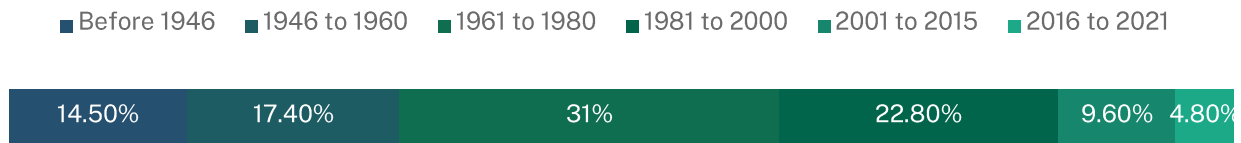
RENOVATIONS

The qRD’s building culture emphasizes preservation and renovation over full demolition. This predicts the generation of steady material flows, but fewer large demolition projects compared to urban centres. Interview insights reinforce that residential renovations are the main driver of CRD in the region, with contractors “rebuilding from older homes” rather than clearing lots.

Approximately 63% of homes in the City of Powell River were built before 1980. Housing condition data also reveals that 27% of houses need minor repairs and 9% are in need of major repairs.⁹

See Figure 3 for a housing age breakdown for Powell River and electoral Areas B and C.

Figure 3: Powell River Housing Age Breakdown (CMHC 2021)



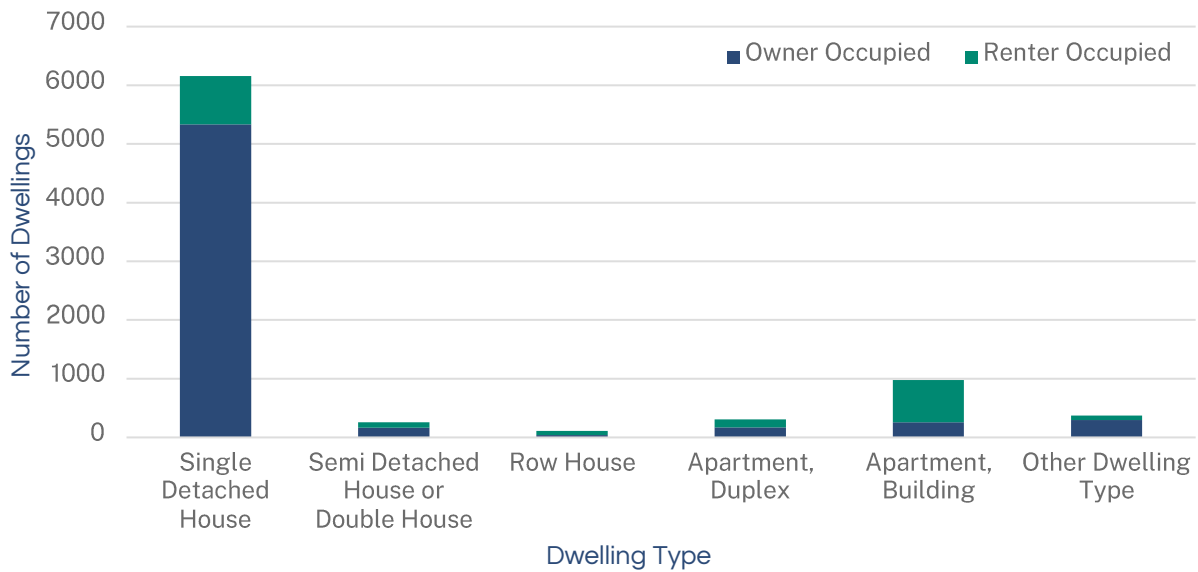
Of the total housing stock in Powell River and Electoral Area B and C, approximately 75% are single-detached dwellings, and 77% of all dwellings are owner occupied (see Figure 4).¹⁰

⁸ Metro Vancouver. [Demolition Waste Generation Rates Calculator](#).

⁹ Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2021. [Adapted from Statistics Canada \(National Household Survey\)](#).

¹⁰ Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2021. [Adapted from Statistics Canada \(National Household Survey\)](#).

Figure 4: Powell River Dwellings by Type: Owner versus Renter Occupied (CMHC 2021)



Although it is difficult to accurately estimate the volume of material wasted during renovations, the high proportion of single detached, owner-occupied dwellings indicates that most renovation activity is driven by individual homeowners. This dynamic can create more opportunities for material salvage, as homeowners have direct control over renovation decisions and may be more willing to separate and retain usable materials. Viewed as a whole, these characteristics point toward sustained renovation activity and smaller scale, incremental deconstruction rather than large, multi-unit demolition cycles.

DEMOLITIONS

In addition to steady renovation activity, the region’s aging housing stock contributes to modest but consistent levels of demolitions. Since 2014, 63 demolition permits were issued in Powell River.¹¹ Although permits do not always lead to demolitions, they still provide a useful indicator of regional demolition activity. To illustrate the waste generation of one single demolition, it is estimated that the average 1,300 sq ft wood-frame, single-family home contains 65.4 tonnes of material (including 16.4 tonnes of concrete associated with the foundation).

¹¹ Powell River. Building Permits Annual Reports. 2026. <https://powellriver.ca/pages/building-and-construction>.

Based on an estimate of 3-5 residential demolitions per year in the qRD, this equates to approximately 196 tonnes – 327 tonnes of material annually.

Shifting from demolition to deconstruction enables the capture of economic, environmental, and social value by turning recovered materials into assets through reuse, resale, or local manufacturing. In a typical residential deconstruction, between 16-25% of materials can be reused and between 30- 70% recycled.¹²¹³ Recoverability during deconstruction is influenced by material quality, construction methods, the condition of the structure, and proximity to buyers and end-markets. Reuse practices are often prioritized over recycling, and some municipal deconstruction bylaws provide higher diversion credits for reuse (e.g., Metro Vancouver).



See [Appendix B-Residential Deconstruction Case Study](#).

2.3 Waste Management Infrastructure

Based on the calculations in Section 2.2, it is conservatively estimated that **more than 1,000 tonnes of building materials are wasted each year in the qRD from residential construction and demolition activities**. This represents approximately 19 percent of the mixed CRD materials received at waste facilities in 2024 (see **Error! Reference source not found.**).

Central to the qRD's solid waste system is the [Resource Recovery Centre](#) (RRC) in Powell River, developed on a remediated former incinerator site. The RRC functions primarily as a transfer and recycling facility that centralizes waste diversion and supports the region's progress toward



¹² Delta Institute. (May 2018). Deconstruction & Building Material reuse: A Tool for Local Governments & Economic Development Practitioners. [Deconstruction-Go-Guide-6-13-18-.pdf](#)

¹³ Drawing on industry interviews regarding current deconstruction practices.

Zero Waste.^{14 15} It accepts residential and small commercial CRD waste, as well as clean wood waste; however, large commercial loads, drywall, and asbestos-containing materials are not accepted. Augusta Recyclers receive most other CRD loads, including rubble, mixed wood waste, and land clearing debris. Because the region has no local landfill, heavy CRD materials are consolidated and shipped by barge to Washington state, meaning transport and haulage costs can be a stronger incentive for diversion than in regions with local disposal capacity.



The operating reality for CRD management in the qRD is a mix of formal and informal practices. Augusta functions as the primary receiver with limited on-site sorting, while [Kindred Rebuild](#) accepts select donations, primarily residential DIY, at their store location and has also launched a pilot project at the RRC site to accept and divert additional CRD materials for reuse. At the same time, contractors commonly establish “free piles” at sites to avoid disposal. Salish Soils, an Indigenous led enterprise in Sechelt, also accepts both clean and contaminated wood for diversion into several applications (see Table 3).

These practices demonstrate underlying supply and demand for reuse that could be catalyzed through investments in infrastructure, space, labour, and the structured systems needed to scale.

2.4 Waste Composition

In practice, source separation on job sites is uncommon due to space constraints, limited awareness, and tight construction timelines. This leads to lower quality mixed loads entering the waste stream and a continued reliance on disposal pathways. Processing capacity for challenging streams (e.g., drywall, engineered wood, painted materials) remains limited, and key contributors consistently point to the need for shared sorting space, improved logistics, and policy support to enable increased diversion.

¹⁴ qathet Regional District outlines decades of solid waste systems <https://www.prpeak.com/local-news/qathet-regional-district-outlines-decades-of-solid-waste-systems-6645221>

¹⁵ qRD Resource Recovery Centre <https://qathet.ca/resource-recovery-centre/>

Based on data provided by [Augusta Recyclers](#), annual reports, and regional comparisons, CRD materials account for a significant share of the regional waste stream. **Approximately 55% of total waste is CRD, with an estimated 5,552 tonnes received in 2024 (see Table 1).**¹⁶ Augusta reports that incoming material volumes have remained stable year over year. Residential and small commercial CRD waste volumes are comparable at 2,023 tonnes and 2,685 tonnes respectively, potentially reflecting the predominance of smaller contractors and DIY-scale projects within the qRD.

The waste volumes presented in Table 1 reflect publicly reported data only. Materials managed by private sector entities (including contractors, haulers, waste management) may be diverted to alternative facilities or regions and are not captured in the reported volumes. Scrap metal, concrete, and asphalt are managed separately and sent for reuse or recycling. Although scrap-metal weights are not tracked, August removes metals from incoming loads for recycling.

Table 1: Reported CRD waste volumes received in the qRD

Material	Total (tonnes)	Percent of Total Waste (%)
CRD Waste	4,709	85
Concrete	424	7
Asphalt (shingles)	47	1
Gypsum	372	7
Total	5,552	100

A 2021 waste composition study provided useful insights into the composition of the region’s waste stream in 2020 (hailed to Augusta).¹⁷



CREDIT: STOCK

The commercial CRD waste stream consisted primarily of wood and wood products, with 31% classified as clean wood suitable for reuse, and 23% identified as clean wood in poorer condition but still suitable for lower-value applications (e.g. chipped and composted).

¹⁶ Volume and operational data provided by Augusta Recycling.

¹⁷ Let’s Talk Trash. December 27, 2021. 2021 Waste Composition Study: Annualized Report. Prepared for the qathet Regional District. <https://www.qathet.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2021-Waste-Composition-Report.pdf>

The self-haul CRD waste stream was also dominated by wood and wood products, along with a mix of general CRD materials including, masonry, new and used drywall, sawdust, vinyl siding, carpet and underlay (see Table 2).

Table 2: Commercial and Self-Haul CRD waste composition (2021 study)

Material	Commercial Percentage (%)	Self-Haul Percentage (%)
Wood and Wood Products Consisted of plywood, particle board, treated and painted wood ¹⁸ , clean wood	73	32
General CRD waste Consisted of masonry, new drywall, grout, sawdust, vinyl, used drywall, carpet and underlay.	9	36
Plastic	5	7
Paper	4	9
Metals	2	2
All other (organics, electronics, textiles, multi-material, glass)	7	14

It is important to note that a waste composition study represents a snapshot of material flows during a specific period, and results may vary by season and source. According to Augusta, day-to-day operations show that most of the waste they receive comes from construction and renovation rather than demolitions. When demolition waste arrives, it frequently contains contaminated or fire-damaged materials, which limits its recovery potential. Roofing materials also make up the largest share by weight, and clean wood is often mixed or contaminated, with very little clean dimensional lumber available. This may be due to limited source separation on CRD sites.

Table 3 outlines the current CRD management practices in the qRD as reported during the workshop and in interviews.

¹⁸ Treated wood includes wood that has been painted, stained, or pressure treated. Also includes wood that contains metal fasteners.

Table 3: Current handling for common CRD materials (as of January 2026)

Material stream	Current handling in the qRD
Clean wood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reusable or donatable materials are separated ad hoc, depending on business or contractor practices and the availability of outlets. For example, Post and Purlin offers wood offcuts and sawdust or planer shavings for use as animal bedding, either free or for a small fee. - Clean wood received at Salish Soils is sent to Howe Sound Pulp and Paper for use as fuel in their energy efficient boiler, while contaminated wood is used as cover material in landfill operations.¹⁹
Metal	Pulled from mixed loads at Augusta and sent to scrap markets. Also collected at a dedicated depot on Texada Island free of charge.
Concrete/asphalt	Recovered and recycled at Augusta when clean for aggregate/road base; mixed loads are largely transferred for disposal. Tipping fee is \$80/tonne.
Gypsum/drywall	Managed as a regulated stream with limited local processing, typically shipped to specialized facilities out of region. Tipping fee is \$395-\$1,000 (pre/post 1990) at Augusta.
Mixed CRD	Most CRD arrives at Augusta mixed and is transferred with limited sorting; controlled public pick through is allowed on site. Tipping fee is \$410/tonne.

3 Policy and Regulatory Review

Effective policy frameworks are essential for advancing circular economy practices in the CRD sector. In the qRD, current regulations provide a foundation for waste management but lack the specificity and enforcement mechanisms needed to drive significant diversion of CRD materials. This section reviews current federal, provincial, and local policies, identifies gaps, and highlights opportunities for improvement.

¹⁹ Salish Soils. Our Process: Wood Waste. [Our Process - Salish Soils](#).

3.1 Federal and Provincial Policies

At the provincial level, British Columbia has implemented Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs for various material streams to stabilize the financial and operational foundations of recycling systems and support processing and market development. However, these programs are typically focused on residential packaging, and do not address CRD waste materials.

Building codes also present barriers to reuse, particularly for structural applications. Salvaged lumber and steel often cannot be reintegrated into new builds because they lack engineering certification, even if they meet basic quality criteria.

Federal policy plays a more indirect role, primarily through funding programs and sustainability targets. While these initiatives encourage innovation, they do not impose mandatory requirements for CRD waste diversion.

3.2 Local Policies

qRD's policy framework for CRD materials is evolving but remains largely advisory rather than regulatory. The Solid Waste Management Plan provides regional direction to reduce disposal and enhance resource recovery, with the Resource Recovery Centre positioned as a centralized hub to consolidate diversion efforts.

At the site level, WorkSafeBC hazardous materials surveys for pre-1990 buildings have improved the identification and safe handling of asbestos and lead containing materials; however, **the qRD does not currently have mandatory deconstruction bylaws in place.** The 2018 tipping fee bylaw has since been replaced by Bylaw No. 602 (2025), which governs solid waste regulation and tipping fees in the qRD. While Schedule D of the bylaw identifies reusable and recyclable materials that must be separated and deposited at designated collection points, it does not materially strengthen CRD diversion requirements. Instead, the bylaw focuses on tipping fees, site rules, accepted materials, and operational safety rather than enforceable construction and demolition diversion mandates or reuse targets.²⁰ Key contributors further noted that limited enforcement capacity allows mixed CRD loads to continue entering the system.

²⁰ Bylaw No. 602, 2025- [BL602-qRD-Solid-Waste-Regulation-and-Tipping-Fee-Bylaw-No.-602-2025.pdf](#)

Interviews and workshop feedback highlight practical constraints that limit policy intent. Liability concerns (e.g., product performance, hazardous materials) restrict what local reuse organizations can accept, and limited space at facilities reinforces on-site salvage activity instead of more formal reuse channels. Participants recommended using tipping fees and targeted incentives to make separation and salvage financially competitive with disposal. Key contributors also pointed to examples from other communities such as the District of North Vancouver, where the success of mandatory clean wood separation coupled with consistent enforcement suggests that clear rules plus verification can shift behaviour.



“In North Van, you had to separate clean wood — it wasn’t optional. It made a difference.” — Key informant interview

The following are examples of local policies from other regions that may be relevant to the qRD:

- **Minimum Reuse Requirements:** This policy approach supports the supply side of the circular economy by requiring a minimum percentage of demolition materials to be salvaged for reuse. For example, Cook County’s (Illinois) [*Demolition Debris Diversion Ordinance*](#) mandates that at least 5% of demolition debris by weight from residential projects be reused, alongside broader recycling requirements.
- **Clean Wood Landfill Ban:** This initiative involves creating pathways to salvage, de-nail, process, and resell reusable wood. The Capital Regional District banned clean wood from landfill in January 2024 and established an on-site processing facility where clean wood is received and processed into refuse derived fuel (RDF). Fees for clean wood at the Hartland Landfill are \$80/tonne.
- **Deconstruction Bylaws:** Many municipalities in BC and across Canada have updated their solid waste bylaws to require building deconstruction. These bylaws vary in scope, including differences in building type, age, and salvage requirements. They typically require contractors to provide a refundable deposit that is returned once proof of meeting the salvage quota is submitted. The City of Victoria requires all single-family homes or duplex built before 1960 to be deconstructed. A \$19,500 refundable deposit is taken with the demolition permit application and returned once the contractor provides evidence that 40 kg of wood has been salvaged (for reuse, sale or donation) per square metre of liveable floor space.

4 Summary of Successful Diversion Programs

Successful diversion programs demonstrate that targeted policies, infrastructure investment, and collaborative partnerships can significantly reduce CRD waste while creating economic and social benefits. This section highlights examples from the qRD and other jurisdictions, illustrating strategies that could inform local implementation.

4.1 Regional Examples and Emerging Practices

Several local initiatives and practices point to pathways for reducing landfilled CRD waste in the qRD. They show how small, practical steps paired with regional coordination can turn informal salvage into reliable diversion and reuse.

- **Social enterprise reuse through Kindred Rebuild.** Kindred Rebuild operates a storefront that sells salvaged materials and furniture and handles pick-ups for items otherwise destined for disposal. The collection trips produce revenue for the organization, but operations are constrained by space, staffing, and acceptance rules. The organization is also pursuing public facing education to build demand and awareness. These activities demonstrate emerging community level diversion with room to grow if storage, acceptance criteria, and business to business coordination improved. Kindred Rebuild recently expanded its operations to the Resource Recovery Centre to pilot new diversion initiatives focused on reuse.
- **Contractor led salvage and informal exchange.** Local contractors describe practical reuse on projects, such as reusing old doors as temporary site doors, free piles at job sites, and occasional sales or giveaways via social channels. This informal system moves some materials locally but is limited by job site space, labour time, and inconsistent demand. It suggests a baseline supply of recoverable materials that could grow if supported by better pickup logistics and simple sorting standards.
- **Facility actions and yard improvements at Augusta Recyclers.** Augusta accepts CRD loads, consistently separates scrap metal, allows controlled salvage by the public, and is redesigning its yard to enable more sorting of recoverable materials. They are also exploring options for clean wood such as grinding with organic waste for land application. Interviewees noted that voluntary separation is unlikely to scale without policy and incentive signals, and that yard-level sorting offers limited benefit unless end markets and acceptance criteria are clearly established.

These examples underscore the importance of pairing technical and policy solutions with community engagement. They also show the value of collaboration among businesses, social enterprises, and local government to align storage, logistics, and market development with everyday construction practices.

4.2 Best Practices from Other Jurisdictions

Case studies from other regions offer additional insights:

- **Washington State Building Code Reform:** Policy changes allow certain reclaimed wood to be “assumed structurally sound” under defined conditions, removing a major barrier to reuse. This approach demonstrates how adaptive codes can unlock material recovery opportunities without compromising safety.
- **Whistler Transfer Station Salvage Program:** A pilot program launched in the summer of 2025 allowed contractors and residents to drop off reusable wood at a reduced rate and pick up materials for free through a designated drop off and pick-up area at the waste transfer station. This program illustrates how low-barrier access to recovered materials can stimulate local reuse markets.²¹ The municipality is continuing its reduced tipping fee for reusable wood, now set at \$135 per tonne below the clean wood rate.²²
- **Regional Wood Reuse Ecosystem:** The ReUse People developed a circular hub at the Malahat Industrial Park in the Cowichan Valley Regional District. The hub pre-processes reclaimed wood through activities such as denailing, trimming, grading, and quality control, standardizing materials for local reuse applications. DL Bins, which operates both hauling services and the wood diversion program at the Hartland Landfill, is now diverting pallets of clean wood to the hub. This hub can also serve as a destination for high-quality wood generated through deconstruction activities (e.g., City of Victoria’s Deconstruction bylaw). This is an example of how municipal policies and contracts; local businesses and non-profit organizations can work together to incentivize and drive wood diversion and upcycling.²³

²¹ McDonald, L. (June 20, 2025). Whistler inches toward zero-waste goals. Pique News Magazine. [Whistler’s landfill waste down, but 2030 zero waste goal questioned - Pique Newsmagazine](#)

²² Whistler Staff Report to Council. Wood Waste (page 3). Solid Waste Amendment By Law (2026 Tipping Fees) No. 2502, 2025. [RMOW Report to Council](#)

²³ Information provided through interviews with key contributors.

These best practices share common elements: enforceable policies, supportive infrastructure, and incentives that make recovery economically viable.

5 Market Analysis

Understanding current and future market dynamics for salvaged and recycled CRD materials is critical to designing effective circular economy strategies. This section examines demand trends, identifies systemic barriers, and quantifies the economic potential of material recovery in the qRD.

5.1 Current Demand for Salvaged and Recycled CRD Materials

Demand for salvaged and recycled CRD materials varies by project and is influenced by what builders can use immediately and what local outlets can accept. Interviews indicate steady interest in quality doors, cabinetry, furniture, and clean dimensional lumber, provided items are in good condition and available in consistent volumes. Contractors also shared that flooring and carpets are salvageable when removal and storage are relatively easy. At the same time, older windows and items with contamination see low demand due to code and performance concerns.

Waste composition data reinforce the role of wood in the qRD's CRD stream, which aligns with interview feedback that clean wood is the most promising local material, either for direct reuse (e.g., doors, fixtures, dimensional lumber) or for value-added applications.

Scrap metal is regularly recovered and moved to market, while other streams (e.g., concrete, asphalt shingles, drywall) are more sporadic because of transport costs and the lack of local processing. Drywall (gypsum) tends to require shipment to specialized facilities outside of the region, increasing cost and limiting demand.

5.2 Future Demand for Salvaged and Recycled CRD Materials

Key contributors in the qRD identified areas of potential growth that match local conditions and volumes:

- **Clean wood pathways:** small-scale fabrication and maker uses; standardized grading to improve buyer confidence; and mobile collection from job sites to aggregate supply.
- **Biomass/biochar:** options for clean wood residues, where feasibility, permitting, and steady feedstock can be established.
- **Glass and plastics:** meeting newer energy efficiency standards often requires replacing older windows (double-pane to triple-pane) which generates CRD glass waste. Participants saw an opportunity to use existing local equipment and skills to process both glass waste and construction plastic.
- **Digital matchmaking:** participants indicated a need for a locally tailored online marketplace or concierge-style tool, comparable to the [Building Materials Exchange](#) (BMEx), to facilitate material matchmaking and provide notifications when reusable materials become available.

Overall, near term demand appears to be strongest for clean, ready to use components and graded wood, with growth tied to improving logistics, clear acceptance criteria, and basic market tools. Transport heavy or specialty streams will likely remain limited until regional processing or coordinated shipment makes them competitive.

5.3 Identification of Gaps and Barriers

Research findings suggest several barriers that limit CRD diversion and secondary material market growth in the qRD. Most of these barriers are tied to operational realities (space, time, labour), limited local processing for certain materials, land availability, and transport costs associated with moving waste out of the region.

Key contributors noted that informal salvage works in pockets, but without better systems and clear outlets it remains inconsistent. Policy signals are also still developing, with some diversion requirements in place through the 2025 bylaw but limited enforcement capacity. These constraints highlight the value of centralized laydown and storage near primary receivers, clear policy incentives that normalize material separation, and a culture that supports reuse and DIY oriented practices.

Gaps and barriers are further described by theme below.

Infrastructure, Logistics & Site Operations

- Limited shared sorting and secure storage, as existing facilities have space and security constraints. Job site constraints lead to more mixed loads.
- Deconstruction labour and time required often exceeds demolition costs, and salvage happens only when it clearly saves money. The absence of formal deconstruction companies in the qRD was identified as a potential skills and service gap limiting wider adoption.
- Local infrastructure and processing gaps for streams like drywall and painted wood.
- Transport costs are high due to geographic isolation, out of waste region disposal and limited local end markets.

Policy & Market Signals

- Tipping fee signals alone are insufficient - key contributors prefer pairing fees with incentives or enforcement.
- No mandatory deconstruction bylaws.
- Limited local options for recovering clean wood.
- Contractors favour practical incentives (refundable deposits, top-ups) and scheduling benefits (faster permits, utility disconnects).

Material Quality & Risk

- Hazardous materials in older homes add cost and complexity to salvage and acceptance.
- Inconsistent quality/quantity (e.g., de-nailing/repair for wood) and low demand for older windows or contaminated items.

Data & Tracking

- Minimal tracking of CRD material flows and inventories limits planning for pickups and market development.

These barriers collectively constrain the development of a robust circular economy for CRD materials in qRD. Addressing them will require coordinated action across policy, infrastructure, and market development.

5.4 Economic Opportunity Quantification

The qRD has the potential to expand CRD material recovery and reuse, supported by a strong local trades and DIY culture and the high costs associated with exporting waste outside the region. Under current disposal practices, much of this value is lost rather than retained within the local economy.

The CRD material volumes reported in 2024 were used to estimate the potential economic impact of waste diversion activities in the qRD. **Diverting 3,450 tonnes of key waste material streams could support more than 4 direct jobs and generate \$391,118 in direct economic contribution** (gross value added), with wood representing the most valuable material.



This is for illustrative purposes; because contamination, processing losses, and downcycling are part of the recovery process, not all collected materials will be fully diverted.



See [Appendix C - Economic Analysis](#) for more detail.

The gross value added covers the collection, sorting, and preparation of CRD materials for reuse or further processing, as well as some associated economic activity. **However, it represents only a portion of the waste value chain; greater social, economic, and environmental value could be achieved through processing and value-added manufacturing.**

In addition, it is important to distinguish direct from indirect jobs. Direct jobs are the positions created within the waste recovery activities themselves, such as workers who collect, transport, process, and remanufacture materials. These roles exist because the recovery activity is happening.

Indirect jobs, which are more difficult to estimate, are created in the industries that support waste recovery, including equipment suppliers, maintenance services, logistics providers, professional services, and entrepreneurship. These roles further amplify economic value and are enabled because recovery activities create demand across the broader economy.

The market analysis underscores that source separated, well graded, and high-quality material streams offer the strongest economic return and should be prioritized for recovery efforts. This is particularly true for wood, where grading and clear pathways that align material quality with appropriate end uses are essential for accessing higher value applications. As larger volumes of clean, consistently separated CRD materials become available, the region can unlock substantial untapped potential in markets that depend on reliable supply. Aggregating these materials through a regional network will further help stabilize supply and build market confidence.

The next section explores opportunities and recommendations for how these measures can transform CRD waste from a cost burden into a source of economic opportunity and environmental benefit for the qRD.

6 Opportunities and Recommendations

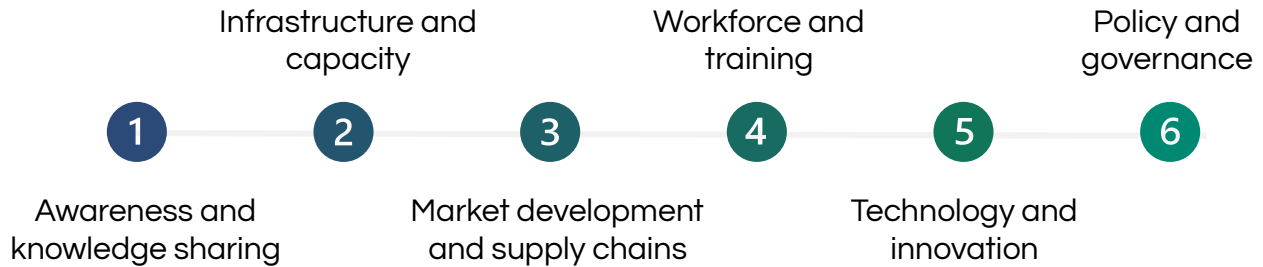
A circular economy is most effective when industry level systems and community level action support and reinforce one another. Community engagement helps build momentum for CRD material recovery by increasing participation, awareness, and local stewardship. At the same time, industry and government provide investment, infrastructure, expertise, and market development needed to scale solutions. Together, this synergy enables communities to capture more material value, advance sustainable practices, and strengthen both the conversation and the practical implementation of circularity.



We could be an education center for our region on what circular economy is...” — Workshop participant (qRD)

The opportunities and recommendations provided below build on the regional context (Section 2), policy insights (Section 3), case studies and best practices (Section 4), and market analysis (Section 5). They are also informed by feedback received from key

contributors during the interviews and workshop. Opportunities and recommendations are grouped into six categories:



For each recommendation, business, government or NGO collaborators are identified as a lead (“L”) or supporter (“S”). Each recommendation is also assessed for ease of implementation from the perspective of the lead contributor, highlighting where easy wins may be achieved and where collaboration or support may be beneficial. In some instances, we have indicated where different or multiple lead contributors are possible. Finally, each recommendation is assessed based on its collective economic, social and environmental impact.

6.1 Awareness & Knowledge Sharing

Context: Community awareness and shared understanding are essential to scaling reuse, repair, and deconstruction. In the qRD, the shifting demographic toward a retirement focused population brings a high concentration of experienced tradespeople and makers who can serve as mentors and knowledge holders. With the RRC and increased public interest in waste diversion, the qRD is well positioned to strengthen knowledge-sharing networks that enable circular practices.

Opportunity: Build a culture of awareness and education by activating qRD’s local expertise, existing community organizations, and emerging reuse infrastructure. Strengthen public knowledge, demystify reuse and deconstruction practices, and foster community led learning that help residents and businesses confidently engage in circular material recovery.

Actions	Effort	Impact	Who		
			Bus	Gov	NGO
<p>6.1.1</p> <p>Local organizations host rotating monthly community workshops, skills upgrading and trainings and 1:1 mentorship for businesses.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Requires coordination among key groups, some logistics and space booking, and volunteer coordination (build on Kindred Rebuild Reuse shed/pop up model).</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Strengthens awareness, skills, and community engagement (drives appetite for more circular initiatives).</p>	S	S	L
<p>6.1.2</p> <p>Clarify acceptance rules and fee signals: Publish simple acceptance lists/condition standards at the RRC and Augusta Recycling (e.g., doors with hardware, clean lumber ≥ set length, functioning fixtures; drywall after a set date).</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Requires coordinated messaging across both facilities with low operational burden.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Ensures consistent expectations for users, improves material quality, and boosts supply for downstream reuse organizations such as Kindred Rebuild.</p>	L	L	S
<p>6.1.3</p> <p>Tool sharing library and workshops for DIY minor repairs such as fixing some leaks and cracks (which prevent rot, mold and structural replacement), basic carpentry upkeep and spot priming (to prevent wood/weather damage).</p>	<p>Low - Medium</p> <p>Leverages existing community energy and NGO leadership. Permanent spaces would require additional logistics and funding. See 6.1.1.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Builds repair literacy and could reduce future CRD disposal (1/3 of housing stock in the qRD need minor repairs).</p>	S	L	L
<p>6.1.4</p> <p>Create online information sharing platform (e.g., Facebook Group) to discuss and amplify circular practices in the region and nearby communities.</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>An evolving and flexible online space for community-based information sharing.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Low-cost method to support exchange of ideas and materials and build community.</p>	L	S	S

<p>6.1.5 Building on existing guides, develop a circular construction toolkit, including sorting best practices, deconstruction checklists, and grading templates.</p>	<p>Medium Modify similar guides to local context.</p>	<p>Medium Provides tool to engage community.</p>	S	S	L
<p>6.1.6 Host Builder Breakfasts and other events designed to mobilize industry around material salvage and reuse.</p>	<p>Low Host morning sessions bringing industry together to learn and share ideas. Potential part of existing morning events hosted by industry associations.</p>	<p>Medium Builds communities and catalyzes initiatives.</p>	S	L	L
<p>6.1.7 Promote local value-added and Indigenous businesses that are manufacturing products from salvaged materials (e.g., decorative tiles, recycled CRD plastic for lumber or benches, engineered wood)</p>	<p>Medium Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development departments leverage local and regional relationships. Involve media.</p>	<p>Medium Builds markets, reputational capital of businesses and interest in circular economics.</p>	S	L	L

6.2 Infrastructure and Capacity

Context: Physical infrastructure for sorting, storage, and processing of CRD materials is limited across the region, and site level constraints and a lack of local processing options restrict recovery and reuse. Source separation on construction and demolition sites is also limited, which further reduces material quality by the time it reaches receiving facilities.

Opportunity: Developing regional infrastructure and regional sorting yards can increase source separation, support small businesses, and enable community reuse initiatives. Augusta’s site may present opportunities to expand sorting capacity, while the RRC’s current configuration and potential access to adjacent city lands could support future expansion of reusable CRD material pathways.

Actions	Effort	Impact	Who		
			Bus	Gov	NGO
<p>6.2.1</p> <p>Designate a small, secure area at or near RRC and Augusta for short-term staging of common reusable items (clean dimensional lumber, doors, cabinetry, fixtures). Unclaimed material could be listed on an online marketplace or go to reuse stores.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Requires some reallocation of on-site space but could be implemented within existing operations, using the current Kindred Rebuild pilot at the RRC site as a starting point.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Improves material quality and recovery by reducing mixed loads and increasing the volume and access of reusable materials.</p>	L	L	S
<p>6.2.2</p> <p>Improve onsite bin design and layout to reduce contamination in C&D loads by clearly separating construction waste from general refuse and incorporating features that discourage illegal disposal of residential waste.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>New bin designs, procurement or manufacturing, and contractor buy in, as well as potential funding support to encourage adoption on construction sites.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Reduces contamination in CRD loads by separating general refuse from construction materials, producing cleaner, higher quality streams that are easier to sort and divert.</p>	L	S	S
<p>6.2.3</p> <p>Material matchmaking between local construction/manufacturing businesses and other businesses (e.g., the Cranberry Group), social enterprises and artists. Legacy equipment could be repurposed by local businesses, and collaboration may help attract businesses to co-locate at old mill sites.</p>	<p>Medium - High</p> <p>Requires coordination between businesses, outreach, assessment of available equipment and site planning.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Key driver for circular economic activity in the region supports local business growth and accelerates industrial revitalization at the mill site.</p>	L	L	S

<p>6.2.4</p> <p>Establish network of locations in key population centres to collect, sort and store CRD materials, (e.g. wood), designed for safe public access, small-business salvage, and contractor staging.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Ideally coordinated through the region's transfer stations using existing operational footprints.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Critical component to facilitate local material exchange. Potential community economic benefit.</p>	L	S	S
<p>6.2.5</p> <p>Establish and expand material-specific processing hubs for CRD wood, glass, and plastics.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Ideally business enterprises supported through government incentives (land, tax incentives) and industry support. See 6.2.3.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Represents clean economy transition opportunity for the region.</p>	L	S	S
<p>6.2.6</p> <p>Facilitate sharing of equipment, provision of micro-grants, and identifying end markets.</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Provide financial incentives to catalyze innovation and economic activity. Support industry in finding buyers for products made from salvage. See 6.2.3/5.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Depends on the incentive. Key is to sustain the support over long-term.</p>	L	S	S
<p>6.2.7</p> <p>Codify procurement preferences for salvaged materials on public projects.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Amend municipal procurement policies to support material reuse.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Provides leadership in stimulating market demand.</p>	N/A	L	S

6.3 Market Development and Supply Chains

Context: Effective circular economy systems rely on connecting recovered materials to end users at scale. Coordinating supply chains, including reverse logistics, ensures materials flow efficiently and opportunities for reuse are maximized.

Opportunity: While informal free piles and social media- exchanges circulate some items, these channels lack predictability and quality assurance, limiting their usefulness for consistent recovery. Mapping material flows and strengthening market pathways can increase efficiencies, reduce transportation impacts, and foster industry collaborations.

Actions	Effort	Impact	Who		
			Bus	Gov	NGO
<p>6.3.1</p> <p>Map supply chains from waste to value, assessing economic viability, identifying key partners and end markets.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Involves detailed mapping. Could engage support of local academia and consultants.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Critical to establishing main sources of materials and economics of reuse.</p>	S	L	S
<p>6.3.2</p> <p>Develop a regional material exchange, similar to BMEx, with local coordination and a concierge-style service to connect suppliers and buyers of CRD materials.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Could begin as a volunteer driven or cohort-based initiative (with funding) and later be integrated into the role of a regional diversion specialist as the program evolves.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Provides direct access to regional markets for excess and salvaged materials, and more structured coordination would improve predictability in both supply and demand.</p>	S	S	L
<p>6.3.3</p> <p>Coordinate material collection between construction businesses and local reuse organizations (e.g., Kindred Rebuild), supported by tax incentives or charitable receipts for donated materials.</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>It can be volunteer driven or coordinated with contractors; tax receipt processes already exist.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Provides cost savings to businesses, increases material recovery for reuse, and strengthens supply for local circular economy organizations.</p>	S	S	L

6.4 Workforce and Training

Context: Powell River and the wider qathet region have a strong base of trades and applied skilled workers, providing a solid foundation for advancing circular economy practices. However, recent mill closures, along with the need to support immigrants and youth entering the workforce, has heightened the demand for retraining and skills development. Contractors report that salvage is most likely to occur when it clearly saves time or money.

Opportunity: Embedding circular economy skills into training can build local capacity and diversify the regional economy. Focused instruction in deconstruction and safe salvage, material appraisal, reuse, and value-added manufacturing—supported by mentorship and cohort-based learning—could accelerate adoption across the sector.

Actions	Effort	Impact	Who		
			Bus	Gov	NGO
<p>6.4.1</p> <p>Develop a volunteer training program for retirees who can then support circular economy activities by mentoring and leading community workshop.</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Opportunity to leverage skills from the community.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Strengthens collaboration and builds community skills through intergenerational knowledge transfer.</p>	S	S	L
<p>6.4.2</p> <p>Adapt existing skills training programs or introduce new modules, certificates, and micro-credentials that embed circular economy principles and hands-on, project-based learning.</p>	<p>Medium - High</p> <p>Engage with local and regional colleges to promote existing circular constructure courses and develop local programs.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Redirects training opportunities toward circular industries and processes. Supports circular economic development.</p>	N/A	S	L

6.4.3	Medium	High	S	S	L
Promote training opportunities through high schools and community employment centres (e.g. waste characterization audits, deconstruction, etc.)	Present at high school job fairs and workshops with employment centres about employment opportunities and circular business ideas.	Builds general awareness about circular economy, as well as skilled labour pool to support local businesses			

6.5 Technology and Innovation

Context: The region’s solid waste sector has not fully leveraged modern technology or standardized material management processes. Enhancing material data quality, grading consistency, and predictability of end use outlets is essential for scaling reuse and strengthening circular economic activity.

Opportunity: Emerging technologies and innovative approaches can improve material tracking, characterization, and processing, enabling higher recovery rates, more efficient circular economy practices across the region and economies of scale. With wood dominating the local CRD stream, even simple technological tools and standardized processes can significantly improve sorting accuracy and enable higher-value applications.

Actions	Effort	Impact	Who		
			Bus	Gov	NGO
6.5.1 Adopt a simple grading template/guideline for clean wood (dimensions, condition, denailing). Define three pathways: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct reuse (makers/contractors) for structural use 2. Non-structural reuse (artisans, landscaping) 3. Residues for land cover and energy (e.g., biochar) 	Low Government typically adopts guidelines after they have been established and tested within industry.	Medium - High Separates clean wood from reusable wood to increase recovery and available volumes and could be strengthened with a differential tipping fee to incentivize better sorting.	L	S	L

<p>6.5.2 Develop inter-regional partnerships to manage complex material streams (e.g., construction plastics, glass, drywall, painted/engineered wood), harmonize standards, and reduce reliance on exporting materials.</p>	<p>Medium Collaborate on engaging with business and regional governments to generate economies of scale.</p>	<p>High Given modest material volumes in rural communities, consolidation is key to making circular strategies economically viable.</p>	L	L	L
<p>6.5.3 In partnership with Vancouver Island University (t̓iwš̓emawtx̓w campus), establish the region as a test centre for new innovations and technologies supporting CRD material extraction, processing and reuse.</p>	<p>Medium Bring faculty and staff from the VIU's Trades and Applied Technology program and local businesses together.</p>	<p>High Innovation between local collaborators is best approach to support local circular solutions. See 6.4.2.</p>	L	S	L

6.6 Policy and Governance

Context: Current policy continues to reflect a linear economic model that prioritizes extractive industries, encourages the use of virgin materials, and subsidizes waste disposal.

Opportunity: Regulatory frameworks and incentives play pivotal roles in encouraging deconstruction, material recovery, and circular economy practices across CRD streams. Strategic policy interventions can stimulate markets for recovered materials to send signals to industry.

Actions	Effort	Impact	Who		
			Bus	Gov	NGO
<p>6.6.1</p> <p>Require waste management plans for all new builds that include material tracking and diversion requirements. Public housing projects can lead by example.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Adopt best practices of other municipalities requiring WMPs for new construction and major renovations.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Provides data source for material use and construction waste generation. Builds industry awareness about their waste impacts and diversion options.</p>	N/A	L	S
<p>6.6.2</p> <p>Pilot a deconstruction bylaw for selected building types, drawing on successful models from other communities, and introduce simple salvage thresholds for defined cases (e.g., pre-1990 structures or voluntary applicants).</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Use precedents from leading municipalities (Victoria, Burnaby).</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Significant material diversion potential given age of housing stock and preservation of embodied carbon.</p>	N/A	L	S
<p>6.6.3</p> <p>Offer financial and tax incentives (e.g., reduced property tax, financial top-ups and subsidies) to incentivize circular practices (e.g. relocating homes, deconstruction, use of salvaged materials in new construction) support material reuse.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Employ proven incentive programs offset by reduced municipal costs. (e.g. Building Reuse Grants).</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Proven catalyst to drive material diversion and commercial innovation.</p>	N/A	L	S

7 Conclusion and Next Steps

This assessment finds that the qRD is in the early stages of transitioning to a circular approach for CRD materials. Population growth, an older housing stock, and CRD activity will continue to generate material flows, but without further action beyond a few promising local initiatives, these streams will continue to be a cost burden and environmental liability. However, with targeted and coordinated action, the findings suggest that they can become a source of economic opportunity and resilience for the region.

The analysis highlights three critical imperatives:

- 1 Small practical CRD waste recovery pilots and coordination across key contributors
- 2 Aggregate material volumes through circular hubs and exchanges to generate sufficient volumes to make it economically viable to reprocess in British Columbia.
- 3 Enable structural reuse and scale diversion by advancing policy reforms, expanding or sharing processing and storage infrastructure, and developing the local workforce.

These priorities align with the broader Circular Hubs Project led by Synergy Foundation which aims to develop regional hubs as catalysts for circular innovation across British Columbia. By connecting businesses, local governments, Indigenous organizations, artists, innovators and social enterprises, hubs can help develop shared infrastructure, material exchanges, and training programs that accelerate the shift from a linear to a circular construction economy.

Next Steps for the qRD

- 1 Validation and Engagement:** Share this report with key contributors and host a follow-up session to confirm priorities and identify early adopters for pilot projects.
- 2 Generate early “quick wins” by leveraging existing events or initiatives.** Identifying low hanging fruit early on can help demonstrate progress and maintain industry and community engagement.
- 3 Pilot implementation:** Deliver targeted C&D waste recovery pilots to test and validate the feasibility of recommended strategies.
- 4 Policy Development:** Implement proven incentives to stimulate material diversion practices and begin developing a circular regulatory framework.
- 5 Funding and Partnerships:** Co-invest and/or secure resources through programs like REDIP and FCM Green Municipal Fund to support infrastructure and workforce initiatives.
- 6 Integration with Circular Hubs Network:** Position the qRD as a leading region within the provincial Circular Hubs initiative for select material streams (e.g., wood reuse and reclamation), leveraging shared learning and scaling opportunities.

By taking these steps, the qRD can turn CRD waste management into an opportunity that supports a stronger local economy and contributes to broader climate goals.

Appendix A-Engagement Summary

The Material Market Assessment Study for qathet Regional District (qRD) involved extensive engagement through a variety of methods. Activities included development of a long list of key contributors in the community and broader region, a series of interviews, and a community session. This engagement took place between June and November of 2025, and results were used to inform the Market Assessment and the broader Synergy Foundation Circular Hubs project.

List of Key Contributors

The list included 32 organizations in the qRD, and 108 in the broader Vancouver Island-Coast Region. Organizations were grouped to ensure a range of perspectives was captured.

- Local Government
- First Nation
- Business
- Industry Association
- NGO / Social Enterprise
- Artists / Entrepreneurs

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with five organizations within the qRD, and four organizations serving the broader region. Whenever possible, questions were shared in advance and consent was acquired before recording. Interview notes and transcripts were analyzed and summarized as input into the research effort.

Interview questions were structured into the following themes:

- General Information
- Existing Practices
- Material Supply
- Infrastructure / Processing Capacity
- Material Demand
- Policy
- Gaps & Barriers
- Conclusion / Next Steps

Community Session

A Waste-to-Resource Community Session was held in Powell River on October 29, 2025, in the Cedar Room of the Powell River Recreation Complex. The purpose of the session was to explore opportunities for reducing CRD waste and advance circular economy initiatives locally. The session focused on identifying suitable hub models, community assets and gaps, and potential economic opportunities. Participants engaged in facilitated discussions, shared insights, and proposed innovative solutions tailored to the region's unique needs.

Of the 45 people registered, 33 people attended representing the following groups:

- Other (other includes (retirees, associations, and employment services) - 7
- Policy/Government/First Nations - 10
- Waste Hauler/Recycler - 3
- Artist/Furniture maker - 1
- Contractor/Builder - 5
- Reuse/Salvage - 4
- Forestry/Lumber - 3

All registrants and attendees of the workshop were asked to complete a short post-workshop survey to help inform future policy. Next steps from the sessions include the following:

- Host a validation session to share key insights from the community session, identify specific training opportunities, and establish material matchmaking connections in the community.
- Explore pilot projects and feasibility studies.
- Continue to build networks and material matchmaking opportunities.
- Ongoing community engagement.
- Provide training, BC Green Business and Green Trades certification and 1:1 support to businesses.
- Explore available grants for businesses and infrastructure.

Appendix B-Residential Deconstruction Case Study

Features

Year Built: 1929

Location: 3961 W 13th Ave. Vancouver, BC

Building Area: 3,037 sq ft.

Activity	Cost/ Savings (\$)
Project Cost	61,000
Charitable Tax Receipts	-20,000
Net Cost	41,000

[VEMA Deconstruction](#), based in Vancouver, recovers valuable materials that would otherwise be discarded, reducing landfill waste while providing affordable resources to the community. Their commitment extends beyond environmental responsibility, they create job opportunities and support local economies by donating salvaged items, such as appliances, cabinets, and furniture, to local organizations.

Material Composition

Material	Tonnes	%
Concrete/Plaster	52.2	43.9
Clean Wood (Recycled)	17.52	14.7
Clean Wood (Reused)	14.44	12.1
Brick/Tile	11.9	10
Garbage	11.3	9.5
Architectural Salvage*	5	4.2
Drywall	3.64	3.1
Asphalt Roof Shingles	1.7	1.4
Metal	1.3	1.1
Total	119	100

*Architectural salvage includes lumber, doors, windows, and cabinets.



90.5% Recoverable material

Deconstruction Timeline

1

Pre-Deconstruction

In Vancouver, a Recycling & Reuse Plan for Green Demolition & Wood Salvage is submitted with a demolition permit application if recycling/reuse minimums apply (houses built before 1950).



2

Interior Deconstruction

Interior finishes and fixtures are carefully removed first, allowing materials such as cabinetry, doors, flooring, and lumber to be salvaged for reuse or recycling.



3

Exterior Deconstruction

Exterior assemblies are methodically dismantled to protect salvageable materials and ensure proper separation of recyclable and reusable components.



4

Material Diversion

Deconstructed materials are sent to recycling and reuse facilities. A Recycling & Reuse Compliance Report was submitted to the City of Vancouver to verify diversion. Salvaged materials for reuse (like the pictured lumber) are eligible for a higher diversion credit.



Appendix C - Economic Analysis

The economic potential of CRD material recovery and reuse in the qRD could be significant. Current disposal practices represent lost value that could be captured through improved diversion systems. The economic impact highlighted in Section 5.4 was calculated using the below methodology.

Economic Impact Methodology

The economic value of salvaged materials was estimated by applying the following formula:

*(tonnes of recoverable material) * (economic multipliers) = impact to economy (GVA) and employment (jobs)*

Economic multipliers were adapted from provincial and national CRD waste diversion studies. Each community has unique characteristics that influence the specific impacts of CRD waste diversion, including the following factors:

- Quality and quantity of available materials
- Access to infrastructure, markets, and complementary industries
- Policies encouraging and mandating waste diversion

Table C1 summarizes secondary market values and tipping fees for common CRD material streams.

Table C1: Secondary market value by CRD material type

Material	Secondary Market Value per Tonne (CAD)	Primary Virgin Retail Value per Tonne	Tipping Fees in qRD (March, 2026)	Tipping Fee Range on Vancouver Island per Tonne ²⁴
Wood	\$80–\$155	\$412–\$508	\$320 (clean)	\$80–\$265
		(SPF lumber price)	\$410 (treated)	
Metal	\$350–\$550	\$2,500 (steel bar, retail)	\$0	\$0–\$60
Concrete / Rubble	\$9–\$54 (recycled aggregate, concrete / brick)	\$150–\$180	\$80	N/A–\$60
Asphalt / Shingles	\$110–\$195 (recycled shingles)	\$245–\$333 (fresh asphalt)	N/A	\$110–\$155
Mixed CRD	\$185–\$365 (commingled /construction debris)	N/A (no direct retail comparator, treated as waste stream)	\$410	\$110–\$205

Table C2 provides economic multipliers associated with employment gains and gross value added (GVA) for primary material streams.²⁵ This includes collecting, sorting, and preparing CRD materials for reuse or further processing, as well as some indirect economic activity ties to these actions.²⁶ This economic model reflects only a limited

²⁴ Tipping fees from Comox Strathcona Waste Management, Capital Regional District (Hartland landfill) and Regional District of Nanaimo.

²⁵ Data sources for Table C1 include: qathet, Arnts, Capital Regional District, Bings Creek depot, CBM, Comox Valley Regional District, Cowichan Valley Regional District, Ecowaste, Government of BC, Groupe Bellemare, Hartland, Madison, Meade Creek depot, MetroVan, Okon, Peerless Road Recycling Centre, RDN, Scrap Metal Trade, StatCan, Statista.

²⁶ Multipliers are adapted from the report: Economic & Environmental Assessment of Waste Diversion in Canada’s Construction & Demolition Sector Study <https://delphi.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/CD-Waste-Diversion-in-Canada-Exec-Summary-Report-Sep-2024.pdf>

segment of the waste value chain. Additional opportunities exist to generate greater social, economic, and environmental benefits through value-added manufacturing.

For example, glass waste can be transformed into high value products such as agricultural and landscaping aggregates, cement substitutes, abrasives or design grade materials, often commanding higher market value than the original glass because of their specialized end uses.

Table C2: Economic multipliers by material type

Material	Employment per 1000 tonnes (Jobs)	Gross Value Added per tonne (CAD)
Wood	1.5	134
Concrete	0	5.3
Drywall	1.3	106
Metal	1.8	249

Applying economic multipliers to the qRD’s 2024 waste volumes illustrates the potential benefits of diversion.²⁷ Table C3 provides a baseline estimate for the economic output and GVA of waste diversion by material type.²⁸ The economic output reflects the midpoint of secondary market value for each material stream.

Table C3: Potential economic impact of current CRD waste diversion in the qRD

Material	2024 Reported Volumes (tonnes)	Economic Output (CAD)	Employment (Jobs)	Gross Value Added (CAD)
Wood	2607.62	306,322	3.9	349,421
Concrete	423.74	13,348	0	2,246
Asphalt	47.08	7,180	-	-
Drywall	372.18	-	0.5	39,451

²⁷ BC Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation. 2022. BC Circular Economy & Construction Waste Study. Provided by Ministry Staff.

²⁸ Note that the economic impact estimates assume that each material stream is successfully diverted from landfill to reuse, recycling, or value-added manufacturing pathways.

The figures presented in these tables represent a conservative baseline, reflecting only the public data available. For example, the economic impact from asphalt diversion is currently a data gap. Comingled/mixed CRD materials, which accounted for 85% of the waste stream (Table 1), likely contain significant volumes of recoverable materials if they were source separated.