

# SM4RT LIVING

YORK REGION'S INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT MASTER PLAN



November 2013

Reuse, Repair and Repurpose Strategy





## **Reuse, Repair and Repurpose Strategy**

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*Reuse, Repair and Repurpose Strategy*

	<p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The overall objective is to develop an understanding of how reuse can play a role in reframing and implementing a more sustainable future for all of us.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Targets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With an implementation date in 2014 the Region aims to achieve approximately 5% annual reduction in waste generation through reuse by 2031.</li> <li>Achievement of the target will result in a reduction of approximately 8,735 tonnes of material per year by 2031 and a savings of approximately \$2.5 million (assumed that material would be otherwise managed as residual waste) between 2013 and 2031.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Benefits:</b></p> <p>Significant reductions in environmental burden associated with material production, transportation, and wasted materials collection and processing</p> <p>Reduction of residual waste quantities requiring processing, which will mitigate the need for additional processing capacity over what is currently required</p> <p>Increased awareness amongst citizens will spill over into other areas; reuse, repair and repurposing actions are educational and residents start to change their mindset about consumerism</p> <p>Community building across York Region and with the local municipalities</p> <p>Avoided cost of \$2.5 million by 2031</p>	

## 1.0 Introduction

Primary objectives of this strategy are to:

- Decrease waste generation and increase waste diversion
- Advocate for reuse, repair and repurpose opportunities in York Region.
- Educate residents on how to reuse and repair goods they would have otherwise discarded.
- Provide an opportunity for residents to swap and share items.

The Reuse, Repair and Repurpose Strategy is one component of York Region's first Integrated Waste Management Master Plan (IWMMP), also known as the SM4RT LIVING Plan. The SM4RT Living Plan establishes the planning framework and strategic direction in York Region for the next 40 years. It builds on the Region's position as a waste management leader, by focusing on driving waste reduction and reuse, while maximizing recycling and energy recovery from the remaining materials.

## 2.0 Background and Trends

York Region, a demonstrated leader in long-term, sustainable waste management, has adopted the principles of a 4R hierarchy – reduce, reuse, recycle and recover.

Increasingly, municipalities have recognized numerous benefits of reuse activities, including:

- More effective use of resources (reduces need for extraction of materials)
- Employment opportunities in the service and repair industries
- Support for charity-based organizations
- Changes attitudes towards disposable products.

Reuse businesses create jobs - for every 10,000 tonnes of reusable items processed, on average 80-280 jobs are created. Computer reuse operations generate the most jobs (296/10,000 tonnes).

Source: Institute for Local Self-Reliance, Wasting and Recycling in the United States. 2000 and Waste to Wealth: Recycling Means Business." 10 December 2008.

Reuse supports the idea of community collaboration and sharing as brought forward by the concept of "Collaborative Consumption". This concept proposes a new business model that reinvents how goods and services are exchanged by emphasizing renting, swapping and sharing of goods and services rather than purchasing them. Communities become more involved in

collaborative activities focusing on repairing, sharing and giving, which, in turn, create a feeling of community togetherness and connection.

For the purposes of developing this strategy, the term “reuse” has been applied as an umbrella term encompassing reuse, repair and repurpose. Each of these terms imply the use of a product more than once, the difference is in the level of effort required to accomplish this objective.

## **2.1 Traditional Approaches to Reuse**

In the past, reuse activities targeting the residential waste stream have tended to focus on large, durable items such as appliances, furniture, clothing and other household goods. Reuse has become a well-established business for non-profit /charitable organizations, repair and refurbish businesses and municipal exchange programs. One of the most common reuse activities in communities occurs when residents place items at the curb with a sign “free” to be picked up by a passerby and given a new home. In some instances, items are removed at curbside without ‘permission’ from residents, a practice referred to as ‘scavenging’ which in many municipalities have banned. Both of these practices are becoming more common place and in some cases, municipal bans are being removed.

The reuse sector has traditionally been dominated by non-profit organizations and charities that accept gently used clothing and goods for resale purposes. The charitable organizations market the reusable goods as a means to raise funds to finance their operations and special projects.

In the case of the Canadian Diabetes Association, it picks up clothing, cloth items, draperies and bedding and other household items for free and sells it to Value Village Stores Inc. Proceeds support the Canadian Diabetes Association to promote the health of Canadians through diabetes research, service, education and advocacy. Goodwill and Salvation Army use the proceeds of sales to support local programs for the homeless and needy. These organizations emphasize that the sale of textiles provides a critical source of revenue to help support programs in the community.

### Some facts about donations:

- Goodwill states that it sells 98.5 per cent of its clothing and textile donations (at its stores or to the overseas market)
- The Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Organization states that charities sell up to 20 per cent of donated items at their storefront locations with the rest being sold to foreign markets and rag dealers
- Of the clothing and textiles that are donated, 45 per cent are used as clothing again, 30 per cent are converted to rags and 20 per cent become stuffing for automotive upholstery, etc.

Over the past decade, the resale of renovated building materials and fixtures (such as used windows, doors, cabinets, flooring, etc.) has become a separate niche pursued by private sector entrepreneurs, complete with its own infrastructure. In general, municipalities and non-profit organizations, such as Goodwill, Salvation Army and Value Village, have tended to avoid the construction and demolition reuse activities, focusing their interests on large residential reuse items instead. Other charitable organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity, have filled in the void by focusing on the sale of reusable building supplies and home furnishings.

The repair industry has provided an important service to residents and businesses to maintain and repair their goods. In the past, a wide range of services including clothing alterations, shoe repair, appliance and electronic repair, and furniture repair and refurbishing have been readily available. Despite the usefulness of the repair industry, it faces extinction as we slowly become a disposable society.

In fact, industry adopted the term “planned obsolescence” in the 1950s, as “a business strategy” in which the obsolescence (the process of becoming obsolete—that is, unfashionable or no longer usable) of a product is planned and built in from its conception. This is done so that in future, the consumer feels a need to purchase new products and services that the manufacturer brings out as replacements for the old ones.”<sup>1</sup>

At Community Environmental Centres, citizens are offered a “one stop” solution to waste diversion with services including household special waste facilities, reuse facilities, construction and renovation recycling depots and depots for other miscellaneous recyclable materials.

York Region, the City of Markham and some other municipalities (including Peel Region, Wellington County, Halton Region, Simcoe County, Region of Waterloo, Durham Region) support reuse at municipally owned facilities by encouraging residents to drop-off reusable items at designated reuse site(s) within municipal waste management facilities (transfer stations, landfills, community environmental/recycling centres) as a way to divert waste from disposal. At some locations, residents can take/purchase a reusable item from the designated reuse site. Examples of reuse activities include bicycle swap sites, reusable paint and household special waste depots, and reusable goods centres.

<sup>1</sup> Planned obsolescence. The Economist Magazine. Mar 23rd 2009

### Donator Beware

Not all used clothing agencies are the same. While organizations such as Goodwill and Salvation Army are truly non-for-profit charitable organizations that accept and sell reusable clothing to use the money for good deeds, other organizations, such as Value Village and Oasis operate as for profit organizations, providing a portion of the profits to charities. Many drop off clothing bins are operated by profitable private businesses that sell the donated clothing for a profit.

Source: Clothing Donation Bins Spark Turf War in Ontario. CBC news, January 26, 2012.

Since 2007, York Region has partnered with Goodwill and Habitat for Humanity to operate a reuse transfer facility at its McCleary Court and Elgin Mills Community Environmental Centres (CEC). These organizations/facilities accept a wide range of new and gently used donations, including clothing, housewares, books, textiles, electronics and small appliances, as well as renovation and household materials such as lumber, cabinetry, windows, doors, hardware and plumbing and lighting fixtures. Reusable items collected at the CECs are distributed for re-sale at Goodwill and Habitat for Humanity retail locations within York Region, however, there is no on-site opportunity for residents to purchase used items. Goodwill estimates that between 2011 and 2012, it diverted approximately 261 tonnes of goods at the the McCleary Court and Elgin Mills Community Environmental Centres. Habitat for Humanity estimates that it diverted 50 tonnes at both CECs during that same period.

In addition, the City of Markham operates four recycling depots which offer a variety of services including used electronics drop off, polystyrene, compact florescent bulb, rechargeable battery recycling, Goodwill bins and a book exchange.

## **2.2 Where the Need Remains**

Textiles remain an important component of the municipal residual waste stream that has not been adequately addressed. Recent Statistics Canada figures indicate that Canadians dispose of approximately 150,000 tonnes of textiles annually in the residential waste stream. Textiles represent up to 5% of the material destined for landfill in Ontario.<sup>2</sup>

Waste composition audits (2012) conducted as part of the SM4RT Living project reported that while York Region residents currently divert some textiles through the non-profit/charitable

<sup>2</sup> Natural Resources Canada. 2006. An Analysis of Resource Recovery Opportunities in Canada and the Projection of Greenhouse Gas Emission Implications. Available online at: <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/sites/www.nrcan.gc.ca/files/mineralsmetals/pdf/mms-smm/busi-indu/rad-rad/pdf/rrd2-eng.pdf>

sector, there is still an estimated 13 kilograms<sup>3</sup> per single family household each year going to disposal.

The United Kingdom has taken on the challenge of addressing textile waste through its ‘Valuing our Clothing’ campaign. According to a UK WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) report, 30 per cent of clothing hanging in the closet of an average UK household has not been worn in a year and 80 per cent of people own clothing that has never been worn (no longer fits or needs alterations). Clothes purchased by UK households use resources and generate waste as shown in Table 1. By using clothes an extra three months, WRAP estimates that it would lead to a five to 10 per cent reduction in each of the carbon, water and waste footprints.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 1: Annual Carbon, Water and Waste Footprints of Clothing purchased by UK households**

Carbon Footprint	1.5 tonnes of CO2e emissions per year. Equivalent to driving a car 6,000 miles (9,650 kilometres)
Water Footprint	More than 200,000 litres each year. Equivalent to filling more than 1,000 bathtubs to capacity
Waste Footprint	70 kg each year. Equivalent to weight of more than 100 pairs of jeans

Source: Valuing our Clothes. WRAP. 2011

The UK’s WRAP program has assessed the commercial viability of five innovative business models to promote clothing reuse

Results suggest that retailers offering a reuse section in their stores would experience the shortest payback period. In a survey, this approach appealed to consumers, with two thirds of respondents reporting a strong interest in this approach. Respondents were also interested in being able to buy the returned clothing, especially formal wear, designer clothing and evening wear.

During the community engagement process for the SM4RT Living project, a number of concepts emerged including “Changing Habits” as they pertain to conscious consumer and lifestyle choices, which included:

<sup>3</sup> York Region Single Family Waste Audits, 2011/2012.

<sup>4</sup> Valuing our Clothes. WRAP. 2011

- Redesigning the concept of consumerism by dealing with the root of the problem: the consumer culture, the control consumers have on the market, and their demand for 'stuff' and its packaging
- Cultivating good global citizens with a natural mindset of reduce, reuse, repurposing, resale compost, donate and share

The public suggested a number of actions to support a shifts in ideals to foster greater cooperation, collaboration and sharing:

- Cultivate a 5<sup>th</sup> "R" as repair
- Determine what services are required to support repairing products that normally go in garbage
- Create an inventory of resources that would support repair and repurposing activities in the various municipalities
- Instead of throwing things out, find a purpose to give the item / product a second life
- Design parks made of recyclable and repurposed materials
- There should be free boxes where people can place unused items in a box and others will pick out items they like / need – a great way to reduce waste and reduce purchases by reusing
- Promote tool sharing in neighbourhoods, stores, schools, and community organizations
- Encourage the Habitat for Humanity philosophy such as the use of leftover paint, to find reuse options for materials - more community sharing 'centralized garbage'

Marks and Spencer (M&S) of the UK has introduced a new program called Shwopping, a closed-loop system that encourages shoppers to donate old items of clothing (purchased from anywhere) at M&S stores. The apparel (including shoes, handbags, jewellery and clothes) is either donated to Oxfam to be resold or sent to be refurbished into other goods. Participants can enter to win weekly prizes of £100 M&S gift cards every time they shwop. M&S estimates that 5,500 tonnes (10 million items) have been Shwopped so far since the launch of the program in 2008.

Source: Marks & Spencer Shwopp at <http://www.marksandspencer.com/FAQ-Shwop/b/1723541031>

The community engagement process also highlighted a need for York Regional government to step up to the plate and "actively demonstrate the nature of the changes." This means moving beyond advocacy work and implementing demonstrations to encourage learning, testing and changing. It also means York Region must show itself to be taking a leadership role in promoting waste minimization through reuse policies and programs within its own operations.

## 2.3 Innovative Approaches to Reuse

The traditional concept of reuse has gained momentum over the past several years with the introduction of new, innovative approaches to goods sharing, borrowing and exchange. These approaches embrace the concept of community connection and collaboration, a theme running throughout the public engagement process. There are two key examples of community collaboration in York Region; one is a Regional project focusing on three-dimensional printer technology to grow local manufacturing in unique ways. Another focuses on the opportunities presented by new crowdsource funding models such as Kickstarter, which allow individuals to invest in startup companies with new ideas.

Baby Plays is an online toy rental service allowing parents to rent toys for a period of time.

The site offers a wide selection of toys for different age groups, which are couriered to the address. Customers can enjoy the toys up to 90 days before being returned. Parents can choose to buy a membership, entitling them to renting up to four toys a month or they can pay as they go, with toys being priced by the month.

Source: Baby Play at <http://www.babyplays.com>

The Region will capitalize on the information it is gathering through the N6 Business Innovation in Changing Times Conference Series, an interactive workshop series led by the York Small Business Enterprise Centre, targeting local small business leaders exploring the latest trends in collaboration, social innovation and sustainability. Workshops introduce participants to the sharing economy, the concept behind successful businesses such as ZipCar, the car-sharing enterprise.

Lending tools and goods has become another innovative approach which can be set up as a website community exchange network, a neighbourhood exchange, or operated through an organization or facility. The Toronto Tool Library officially launched in 2013 and is run by the Institute for a Resource-Based Economy, a registered non-profit organization in Toronto, Ontario. Their focus and mission is to become the leading educational institution promoting a new economic system connecting the environment and our economy to achieve a sustainable society<sup>5</sup>. A standard annual membership rate is \$50 (\$25 student membership) and tools can be borrowed for a five-day period. Late fees range between \$2-\$3 dollars. The organization receives tool and money donations and provides workshops on how to use hand tools and electrical tools. All donations go towards renovating and preparing the library space,

<sup>5</sup> Toronto Tool Library. <http://torontotoollibrary.com/bricksandmortarcampaign/get-involved/>

purchasing and repairing tools, workshops and general operating expenses and a part-time IRBE Tool Library employee.

Lending has been used for toys, clothing, seeds, bikes, book and tools. One local example is Toys Trunk, an organization run by two mothers from Milton, Ontario who wanted to reuse toys to save money, but also to teach children about recycling. Parents who want to be a part of the program simply sign up with an email and place an order. A delivery is then scheduled where parents pay a fee depending on the toy(s) rented and the length of time they have been rented for. Toys are returned and inspected for damages and then available for rent again<sup>6</sup>.

The New American Dream organization explains how on-line sharing works, “you can share items like tools, outdoor gear, and gardening supplies with friends and neighbors using an online exchange service like *NeighborGoods*. Try *thredup.com* for sharing used kids clothes and toys. For things you don't want anymore, consider organizing a clothing swap or offering them for free (or trade) on *Craigslist* or *Freecycle*.”<sup>7</sup>

### 3.0 Reuse Strategy

In the context of this strategy reuse encompasses a variety of activities including repairing broken items, donating items, sharing goods, purchasing durable and refillable goods and exchanging or purchasing “second-hand” or gently used items.

#### 3.1 New Uses for Old Stuff Campaign

Similar in nature to the Value of Food campaign, York Region, working with its local municipal partners, should launch a reuse campaign focusing on education about reuse, repair, and repurposing. The campaign would feature a dedicated page on York.ca website that would have several themes to it, including<sup>8</sup>:

1. New Uses for Old Stuff
2. Share your stuff
3. Fix it
4. Clothing and Textile Reuse

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<sup>6</sup> Toys Trunk. How it Works. <http://toystrunk.com/>

<sup>7</sup> Collaborative Communities. The Center for the New American Dream at <http://www.newdream.org/programs/collaborative-communities/sharing-resources/share-stuff>

<sup>8</sup> Social media tools such as Pinterest might be a better platform for this kind of information sharing. The region could create its own ‘reuse’ boards with themes and share our own content or repin others. This might grow more readily than a page on our York.ca site.

The City of Markham is already in the process of working closely with charitable organizations to promote clothing and textile reuse.

### 3.1.1 New Uses for Old Stuff

As part of the website, a page would be developed to help users find interesting and creative uses for old stuff. Users would be introduced to crafts and creative uses for old books, jewelry, clothing, as well as how to use and repair existing household items for other purposes, thus avoiding the need to purchase a replacement item.

The dedicated site would have several tabs corresponding to different themes:

**Creative Projects** – A page on the website would be established where users could click on different creative and fun projects for repurposing books, jewelry and clothing. Magazines, such as *Real Simple* and *All You*, provide a variety of creative projects using old household goods. Links to these resources could be provided.

Edmonton's Reuse Centre accepts various items from Edmonton residents free of charge and makes them available to organizations and individuals for reuse. It accepts items that fall under the following categories: Arts & Crafts Supplies, Needle Craft Supplies, Office & school Supplies, Home Décor and Media Supplies.

Organizations and individuals can purchase items at the Reuse Centre for a small fee of \$5 per purchase or \$50 annual membership (non-profit organizations only and limit of 25 trips) and may take as many items as they require.

The reuse centre is operated mostly by volunteers who have logged in more than 12,000 hours since it opened. In 2010, 140 tonnes have been diverted from landfill.

Source: City of Edmonton at [http://www.edmonton.ca/for\\_residents/garbage\\_recycling/reuse-centre.aspx](http://www.edmonton.ca/for_residents/garbage_recycling/reuse-centre.aspx)

**Website Links for Reuse Resources** – Website links and social media could be utilized for sharing reuse ideas and for providing links/options for residents on all things Reuse. Also, partnering with organizations to host workshops, seminars etc. to augment the website would be of interest to residents.



**Letting Others Create** –A wide range of individuals transform old stuff into beautiful new crafts and goods; for example, turning old wool sweaters into felt blankets. York Region could post local businesses that create new things from old stuff or sell these goods. It could also post the location of websites that sell repurposed goods and crafts such as etsy.com.

**Social Media Forums** - Social Media forums such as Twitter and Facebook allow residents to share ideas and experiences with one another on a wide range of reuse topics.

### 3.1.2 Share your stuff

York Region could engage in the following activities to promote sharing and reuse of residential goods:

**Share Fairs** – York Region should host an annual Share Fair that would provide a range of services including a swap and sell event (similar to the event held annually in Georgina – see sidebar), fix-it classes, reuse workshops, information booths on reuse opportunities in the Region and booths for local entrepreneurs to sell refurbished and repurposed goods and crafts. This could coincide with a local event such as the Windfall Ecology Festival or a home show.

#### Georgina’s Swap Event

The Town of Georgina holds a “Swap and Sell” event annually where residents are encouraged to reuse old items. In the past the Town has organized to have a local community store (Stretch Thrift Store) collect items people do not want after the event.

**Tool Share Library** – York Region could work with local municipal partners and community partners to establish a tool share library demonstration project at a library or other community service centre. See Section 2.3 for further description of Berkley’s Tool Share Library.

**Take it Back** – Work with local municipal partners to pilot a program similar to Ottawa’s “Take it Back” program, to support use of existing community outlets provided by retailers, non-profits and charities for reusable items. This could include promotion of mattress recycling opportunities through retailers like Sleep County, promotion of furniture diversion opportunities through organizations like Furniture Bank, work with local retailers to take back reusable goods (e.g. dry cleaning bags and hangers, flower pots, etc) and recyclable goods (e.g. grocery bags).

**Where to Donate/Sell Reusable Goods (Bindicator 2.0)** –The Region’s Bindicator tool could be upgraded to provide a search and find for organizations, businesses and charities that accept usable goods within the Region and other opportunities for residents and businesses to donate or sell reusable goods. This would enable organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Goodwill, Value Village, Furniture Bank, Waste to Wonder and the Region (Community Environmental Centres) to identify drop off locations and specify the types of goods they will accept for reuse purposes. On-line exchanges such as Craigslist and Kijiji could be included as links.

**Curbside Swap Events** – King Township and Town of Newmarket organize “Curbside Giveaway Days” in which residents share reusable goods by placing any unwanted items at the curb for other residents to take free of charge. York could work with other municipalities to establish similar curbside giveaway events.

Curbside Giveaway Days (taken from King Township Website)

King Environmental Advisory Committee (KEAC) presents: Curbside Giveaway Days 2012.

The last Saturday of April, May, June, July, August, September and October are the King “Curbside Giveaway Days”.

It’s very simple. Starting at 7 a.m. take any unwanted items to the curb, marked “Free,” for others to pick up and take to a good home. Remove all leftover items by 5 p.m. on that day, to help keep King Township attractive. This is a great way to “recycle” and clean out some of that extra “stuff,” or to get out and find some helpful or wanted items at a bargain price – FREE!

Source: King Township

<http://www.king.ca/GOVERNMENT/DEPARTMENTS/ENGINEERING/RECYCLINGANDWASTECOLLECTION/Pages/CurbsideGiveawayDays.aspx>

### 3.1.3 Fix It

As part of the reuse electronic resources, the Region would provide a section called Fix it, which would have several themes including:

- **Listing local repair services/businesses** – the website would provide a search and find listing of local repair businesses or alternative appropriate links to existing sites such as yellowpages.ca
- **Fix it yourself** – The reuse website could establish a section providing useful advice on how to fix and repair items around the home, such as sewing on a button or replacing a zipper, by directing users to helpful fix it websites
- **Fix it Classes** -repair workshops could be jointly hosted by the Region and local community partners

Fix it programs have been found to be extremely successful (and a good starting point) where the product being “fixed” has potential resale value such as a bicycle.

### 3.1.4 Clothing and Textile Reuse

A report prepared by UK’s WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) identified some key barriers to textile reuse including:

- Concern that an item was not in good enough condition to be used by someone else, which points to the need for clarification about what is considered “acceptable”; Scottish research showed that clothes, which were not seen as ‘good enough’ for charity were often placed in the general waste bin and 30 per cent of people disposed of poor quality clothing in this way
- Lack of time/the effort of arranging to deliver or drop-off textiles
- Space to store textiles ready for donation<sup>9</sup>

In order to overcome these key barriers to textile reuse, York Region should launch a campaign (e.g. Say No to Textile Waste) to educate residents about clothing and textile use and reuse. The campaign would provide information about the amount of clothing and textiles that are wasted and the resources that go into the manufacturing and care of the clothing and textiles. Residents would be encouraged to think about the various reuse and repurposing options before they toss out used clothing and textiles. They would be encouraged to fix and mend clothing with information provided on local clothing alteration and repair businesses, classes and fix it groups.

A dedicated webpage would be established for the ‘Say No to Textile Waste’ campaign which would provide a range of services that could include:

- Hosting a clothing exchange site (which could be part of a larger on-line exchange site – see Section 2.12)
- Posting repair and alteration classes offered throughout the Region and hosting classes at community centres
- Demonstrating different uses and re-fashioning opportunities for old clothing (e.g. making pillows from old denim jeans)

**For example:**

From Earth911 - 10 Ways to Reuse an Old T-Shirt at <http://earth911.com/news/2012/09/06/10-ways-to-reuse-an-old-t-shirt/>

**Market Tote Bag**

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<sup>9</sup> Textile Collection Guide. WRAP. September 2012



The campaign would provide interesting information about how York Region residents manage their clothing, such as:

- The average York Region household throws away 13 kg of textiles per year.
- An estimated 15 per cent of unwanted textile is diverted for recycling and reuse purposes, the remainder is thrown in the garbage
- Of the textiles thrown in the garbage, 95 per cent can be used as second hand clothing or refurbished into other goods

Charities such as Goodwill can give worn out clothes a second life by selling them to recyclers for other purposes such as cleaning rags, stuffing for upholstery or insulation.

Information provided in a brochure developed by the Secondary Materials and Recycled Textile Association (see below) could be adapted to the York Region textile reuse campaign.

## the secret double life of donated textiles

NEARLY **100%** OF DONATED TEXTILES ARE RECYCLED! They are separated into three grades:

<b>45%</b> USABLE CLOTHING	<b>20%</b> FIBER CONVERSION GRADE	<b>30%</b> WIPING CLOTH GRADE
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**CLOSING THE LOOP**

Recycled fiber products **SAVE MONEY and RESOURCES** by using existing materials.

Recycled cloth rags use **LESS WATER, LESS ENERGY** and create a **LOWER CARBON FOOTPRINT** than all other alternatives.

The second hand clothing market provides **AFFORDABLE CLOTHING** to those in need and **ENCOURAGES GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP**.

### SECOND LIFE ...

stained t-shirt	→	wiping cloth
lone sock	→	pillow stuffing
old denim	→	household insulation
teddy bear	→	car seat stuffing
torn bath towel	→	wiping cloth

**SMART** Since 1932  
**SECONDARY MATERIALS™ AND RECYCLED TEXTILES**  
The Association of Wiping Materials, Used Clothing and Fiber Industries

donate recycle don't throw away™

To further promote textile reuse, York Region and its local municipal partners should consider implementing the following demonstration activities:

- 1. Establish monthly or seasonal curbside collection of textiles that are made available to charitable organizations for reuse or repurposing** - York Region would work with a couple of municipalities to pilot a textile curbside collection program for the collection of textiles. Participating residents would be given a specially marked and coloured bag

(marked with textile recycling and date of collection) and instructions. On the day of collection, a cube van would follow the recycling truck to collect the bags, set out beside the recycling bins. The textiles would be given to charitable organizations for reuse, with unwanted textiles given to other businesses that can use the textiles for other uses (e.g. repurposing into cloth wipes, insulation and stuffing). Attention would need to be paid to the legitimacy of the organization(s) receiving the donations to ensure that they were used for appropriate purposes and would not pose ethical or liable concerns for the Region. Markham has identified this activity in their recent Diversion Plan which could provide a good initial partner for a demonstration pilot.

Alternatively, the Region could provide support to those legitimate agencies already providing door-to-door collection services.

- 2. Provide designated textile collection boxes for use in multi-residential buildings with the contents made available to charitable organizations for reuse or repurposing –** York Region would work with a couple of municipalities to pilot a textile collection program in high rise buildings. A designated container (marked for textile recycling) would be placed in a convenient location within the building. Notices (with instructions) and specially marked and coloured bags would be given to residents. The collected textiles would be given to charitable organizations for reuse, with unwanted textiles given to other businesses that can use the textiles for other uses (e.g. repurposing into cloth wipes, insulation and stuffing). The City of Markham is already working with the Salvation Army to implement a similar program for reusable clothing textiles.
- 3. Community exchanges and events –** York Region would work with municipalities to demonstrate community swap events and/or host a Share Fair featuring a clothing swap event (see Section 2.1.2 for more detail).

It is important to note that these programs would need to clearly define the two types of textiles: “gently used” clothing that is suitable for reuse and waste textiles that can be repurposed such as rags.

### **3.2 Regional Policies and Programs**

The Region should review its procurement and discard policies to ensure that they highlight reuse, where possible, and to share these achievements with the local municipal partners as well as municipal facilities, such as daycares and long-term care facilities. Reuse can be built into procurement and discard policies and contracts in a number of ways, such as:

- Ensuring goods, such as office supplies, are delivered in reusable transport packaging
- Preference given to goods that last longer and are repairable (this may involve establishing a price preference policy for these goods)
- Ensuring contracts require suppliers to take back end of life equipment and refurbish or reuse the equipment for other purposes, where appropriate
- All goods and equipment evaluated for repair and reuse before being replaced

- An internal exchange to enable employees to share equipment and goods no longer needed

The City of Burlington procurement by-law 93-2011 addresses reuse in the following manner:

*The City of Burlington will endeavour to acquire goods and services that minimize impacts on the environment, and perform efficiently and effectively. While evaluating goods and services for purchase (including all aspects related to the production, transportation, use or operation, and replacement or disposal of goods), the following environmental factors will be considered in addition to the specific requirements of the good or service.*

- Durable, and reusable, as opposed to single use or disposable items
- Non-toxic or least toxic option, preferably compostable or biodegradable
- Reduce greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions
- ENERGY STAR<sup>®</sup> rated if available or most energy efficient option
- Recyclable, but if not recyclable, may be disposed of safely, or, vendor will take back product at its end of life
- Made from recycle materials
- If made from raw materials, they have been obtained and manufactured in an environmentally sound, sustainable manner
- Results in minimal or no environmental damage during normal use or maintenance
- Minimum packaging (consistent with the care of the product), preferably made of reusable recycled or recyclable materials
- The lifecycle cost of the product through the acquisition, operation, and end of product life, including environmental impacts (a cradle to grave approach)
- Reusable shipping packaging

Furthermore, York Region should work within the York Purchasing Co-operative to implement reuse policies into procurement activities. The York Purchasing Co-operative is a collective purchasing agency, enabling members to experience lower costs during procurement of goods and services through economies of scale and improving efficiencies, as well as promoting sustainable environmental decision-making.

## 4.0 Implementation

The following provides an overview of the approach to implementation of this strategy.

## 4.1 Partnerships

A variety of opportunities exist for York Region and its local municipal partners to explore reuse initiatives, which would help to increase reuse and repair in all sectors in the community. Section 2 addresses the potential partnerships that York Region could pursue with local municipal partners to develop and implement reuse demonstration and pilot projects. Many of the demonstration and pilot projects will need to be implemented at the municipal level; for example at local libraries and community centres; therefore, the local municipal partners play an integral role in the success of the reuse strategy.

At the same time, the multitude of non-profit organizations operating within York Region could have a role to play in promoting reuse activities. York Region could explore opportunities to work with York Region Environmental Alliance to develop and host the Share Fair in different locations throughout the Region. The York Region Environmental Alliance has launched its SHOP LIKE THE PLANET IS WATCHING campaign, which works to inform York Region residents on how to incorporate ecological and sustainable concepts into their shopping activities. A reuse campaign would be a natural extension to this campaign. Workshops and seminars already offered on ecological shopping could be expanded to explore reuse concepts and opportunities for purchased goods.

Within York Region there are six community environmental advisory committees (King, East Gwillimbury, Markham, Aurora, Newmarket and Georgina) that could provide input into reuse strategies and suggest local community groups that might be willing to host workshops on different repair and share topics.

York Region could work with Goodwill (or another non-profit partner) to determine a potential location for an Art Reuse Centre that could be located as part of an existing Goodwill retail outlet (or another non-profit partner) or in an adjacent building. The Art Reuse Centre could be managed by Goodwill (or another non-profit partner) and funded by York Region using community funding programs such as TD Friends of the Environmental Fund, Ontario Trillium Fund, or the Green Community Fund.

## 4.2 Resources, Timeline and Targets

The following provides an outline of the performance targets and monitoring.

### Roles and Responsibilities

The proposed arrangement for the implementation of this strategy is as follows:

**York Region:** Lead, Supporter, and/or Participant

**Local Municipalities:** Lead, Supporter, and/or Participant

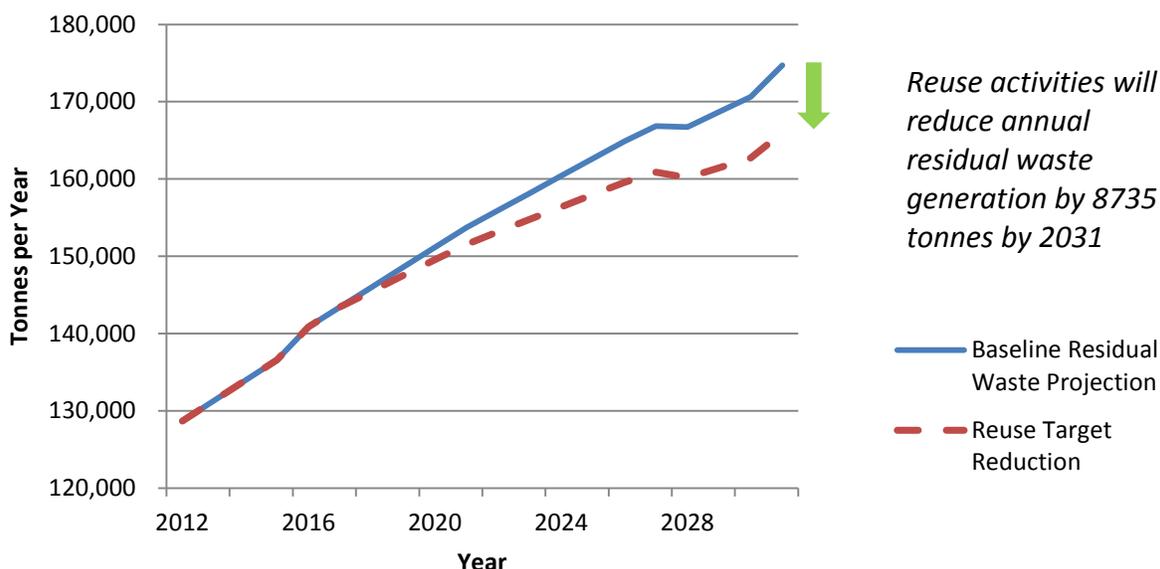
**Community Partners:** Lead, Supporter, and/or Participant

### 4.2.1 Targets

This Strategy sets realistic targets that help York Region encourage reuse through sharing and refurbishing. With an implementation date in 2014 the Region will aim to achieve five per cent reduction in waste generation through reuse by 2031.

Assuming the achievement of this target, the following figure presents the potential impact of the implementation of this initiative.

**Figure 1: Potential Reduction in Residual Waste based on Increased Reuse**



Achievement of the above target should result in a reduction of approximately 8,735 tonnes of material by 2031 and a savings of approximately \$2,492,500 (assumed that material would be otherwise managed as residual waste) between 2013 and 2031.

### 4.2.2 Performance Measurement

Specific performance measurements have been identified for each new initiative. In addition, overall program metrics will be used to measure performance of the Reuse, Repair and Repurpose Strategy as a whole, including:

- Decrease in per capita waste disposal by Regional residents
- Decrease in textiles (or other targeted waste streams) in residual waste stream
- Overall decrease in per capita waste generation by Regional residents
- Number of visits to online resources, average time spent on site, location of users, etc.
- Measure increase in reuse and repair through market research
- Monitoring changes in bulky waste disposed by conducting waste audits at the transfer station

- Number of annual share fairs and similar events
- Number of participants in share fairs and events (self-reported, anecdotal or otherwise identified)
- Decrease in per employee waste generation from Regional Facilities
- Annual survey to determine change in green procurement and reuse activities at municipal facilities which could include quantitative metrics such as tonnes of reusable material, virgin material displacement, etc.
- Number of annual participants in the tool share library

## **5.0 Key Benefits of this Strategy**

The following provides a summary of the key benefits of this strategy:

- Significant reductions in environmental burden associated with material production, transportation, and wasted materials collection and processing
- Reduction of residual waste quantities requiring processing, which will mitigate the need for additional processing capacity over what is currently required
- Increased awareness amongst citizens will spill over into other areas; reuse, repair and repurposing actions like those mentioned here are educational and residents start to change their mindset about consumerism
- Community building across York Region and with the local municipalities
- Avoided cost of \$2.5 million by 2031