



SEPTEMBER 2026

FINAL REPORT

Grandpa's Garage

REUSE STORE

FEASIBILITY REPORT

Exploring a local reuse store for a stronger, more resilient Vashon



COMMUNITY
DEMAND



MATERIAL
OPPORTUNITIES



VIABLE
OPERATIONS



A MORE RESILIENT
VASHON



VASHON ISLAND, WA

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Project Purpose and Approach.....	2
Community Engagement and Public Input.....	3
Contractor and Industry Outreach.....	5
Core Leadership Team.....	6
Site Selection and Infrastructure Research.....	7
Pilot Reuse Collection Events and Material Quantification.....	8
Transfer Station Waste Stream Characterization.....	9
Additional Material Supply Research.....	9
Business and Operational Feasibility.....	10
Equity and Social Justice Impact.....	11
Overall Feasibility Findings.....	12
Recommendations and Next Steps.....	12
Grant Metrics at-a-Glance.....	13

Executive Summary

Zero Waste Vashon (ZWV) undertook a feasibility assessment to determine whether a community reuse store focused primarily on reusable building materials could be viable on Vashon Island. The work was supported through King County’s RE+ Seed Grant and examined community interest, potential sources and quantities of reusable materials, contractor and industry participation, site options, operational needs, and the basic business model for a reuse facility.

The feasibility process combined community and industry outreach, material-supply research, pilot collection events, site evaluation, and review of comparable reuse businesses. Together, these activities tested both community demand for a reuse store and the availability of materials to support one.

The research found strong community interest in a local option for reusable building materials and selected household goods. It also identified several potential sources of inventory, including residents, contractors and remodelers, property sales and cleanouts,

informal reuse networks, and collection events. Each 5-hour pilot event demonstrated that usable materials can be collected locally: 129 items were collected in September 2025 and more than 60 in April 2026 for a total of 6 tons of material.

Site research resulted in selection of the former Food Bank space at Sunrise Ridge. The approximately 2,000-square-foot facility provides utilities, parking, customer and truck access, reasonable rent, and the potential for future expansion.

During the feasibility period, ZWV also secured a \$170,000 Circular Lumber Grant from King County to support staffing, equipment, and administration through December 2028. This funding creates an opportunity to move beyond feasibility and test the concept through actual operations.

Overall finding: The feasibility work supports moving Grandpa’s Garage forward as a two-year pilot reuse store. The research does not eliminate uncertainty around the consistency of material supply, customer demand, inventory turnover, or long-term financial sustainability. Instead, it provides sufficient evidence and startup support to test those questions through implementation. The pilot should be used to replace feasibility assumptions with actual operating data on material intake, sales, customers, inventory turnover, volunteer participation, contractor involvement, and cost recovery.

Project Purpose and Approach

Vashon Island has several existing thrift, resale, repair, and informal reuse options, but no consistent local outlet focused on reusable building materials such as lumber, cabinets, doors, windows, fixtures, flooring, appliances, and related materials. Off-island reuse businesses provide additional options, but accessing them requires ferry travel and transporting materials on or off island with increased costs and emissions.

The feasibility study was designed to answer several core questions:

- Is there sufficient community interest in a local reuse store?
- Does Vashon generate enough useful material to support a store?
- Is there a sufficient market for these items?
- Are contractors, realtors, and other material generators interested in participating?
- Is there an appropriate and affordable site?
- What operating and financial model could support implementation?
- What uncertainties need to be tested through a pilot?

The RE+ Seed Grant supported eight primary activities: community engagement and public input; contractor and industry outreach; development of a core leadership team; site and

infrastructure research; pilot collection events; transfer-station waste characterization; development of a Business Plan; and preparation of this Final Feasibility Report.

Community Engagement and Public Input

ZWV engaged community members throughout the feasibility process through outreach, a community survey, collection events, social media, conversations with local organizations and businesses, and a September 2, 2026 community meeting.



Figure 1. Community survey responses showing interest in a local used building materials store.

Community Survey

ZWV conducted a community survey to better understand interest in a local reuse store and how residents might use it. The survey was shared through four primary Vashon Facebook groups and a poster campaign in town and received 62 responses.

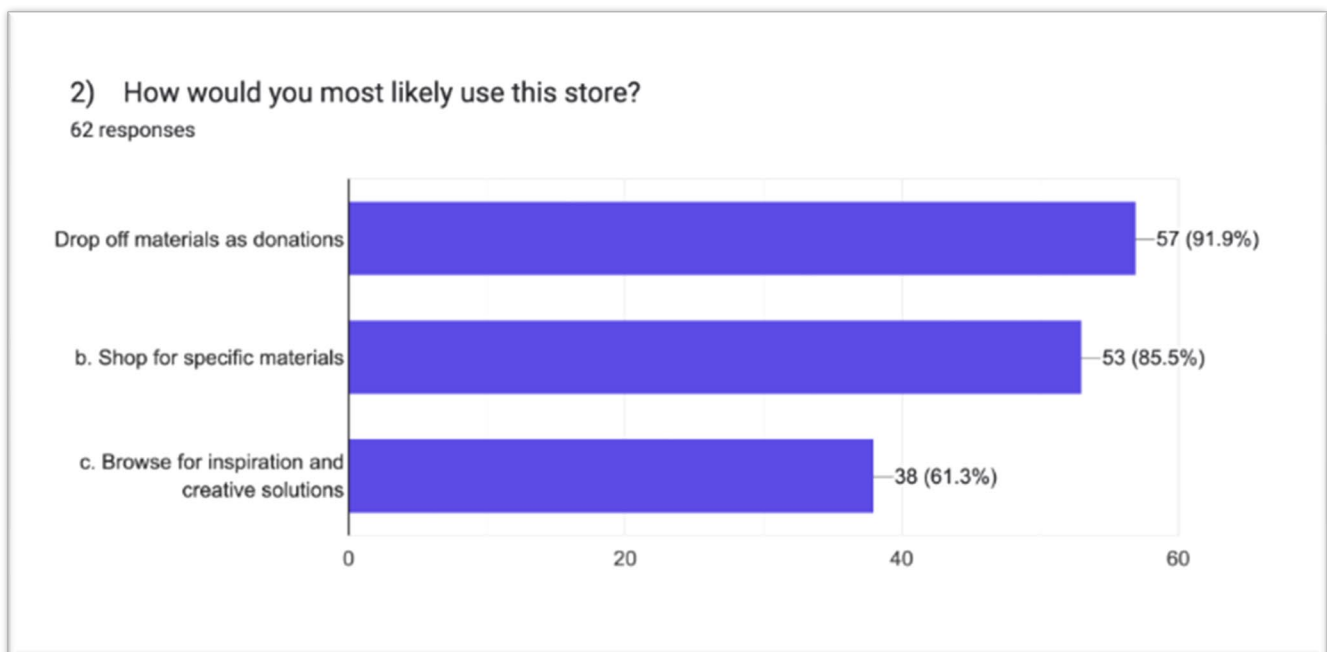


Figure 2. Community survey responses showing how respondents would most likely use a local reuse store.

Results showed strong interest in the concept. 93.5% of respondents said they would use a local used building materials store. When asked how they would use the store, 91.9% said they would donate materials, 85.5% would shop for specific materials, and 61.3% would browse for inspiration or creative solutions.

Respondents also indicated a potential supply of donated materials: 69.4% said they currently had materials they would donate and another 29% said they might. Lumber generated the greatest interest among potential shoppers (91.9%), followed by furniture (56.5%), doors (53.2%), windows and electrical fixtures (51.6% each), and plumbing fixtures (46.8%).

Survey responses suggest that residents see value in the store for both practical and environmental reasons. Reduced environmental impact was important to 91.9% of respondents, while 79% valued avoiding an off-island trip, 75.8% valued finding materials for a specific project, and 64.5% valued finding a bargain.

Because the survey was voluntary and distributed primarily through community social media and local outreach, the results should be viewed as evidence of strong interest among respondents rather than a representative measure of all Vashon residents.

September 2 Community Meeting

ZWV hosted a community meeting on Wednesday, September 2, 2026, from 6-7:30 PM to share the feasibility findings, introduce the project's transition from feasibility to implementation, and gather input to help shape the Grandpa's Garage pilot.

The meeting drew approximately 45 community members. Participants shared ideas and suggestions about



Approximately 45 community members participated in the September 2, 2026, Grandpa's Garage meeting to learn about the project and provide input on the upcoming pilot.

making the store easy to use, donating and collecting materials, volunteer opportunities, community partnerships, outreach, and other considerations for a successful launch. The input gathered during the meeting will be summarized and incorporated into ZWV's implementation planning.

The turnout and active participation provided additional evidence of community interest in Grandpa's Garage and identified community members interested in helping bring the project to life.

Contractor and Industry Outreach

Contractors, remodelers, builders, realtors, and property-cleanout professionals were identified as important potential sources of reusable materials because they regularly encounter materials that need to be removed during construction, remodeling, property sales, and cleanouts.

Contractor Survey & Outreach

ZWV conducted contractor outreach throughout the feasibility period to better understand the types of reusable materials generated through local construction and remodeling, current disposal practices, and interest in alternatives to disposal. Outreach included a survey distributed to island-based contractors, direct calls with contractors to walk through the survey questions and gather additional input, and informal conversations with contractors throughout the collection period, including at the pilot collection events and through other community interactions.

The survey and conversations explored contractors' current disposal practices, the types of materials they regularly encounter or discard, remodeling activity, customer interest in salvaged materials, and potential interest in deconstruction, pickup, and other material-recovery services. Nine of the largest island-based contractors provided direct input through the survey and follow-up outreach.

The outreach identified strong interest in having a local outlet for reusable building materials. Eight of the nine contractors indicated that they would welcome an alternative to landfilling good, reusable materials. Several contractors already make efforts to salvage materials or transport them off island to Second Use, while others noted that their clients want usable fixtures and materials to find a new home locally.

Contractor input also helped clarify the types of reusable materials commonly generated through island remodeling projects, including cabinets, windows, doors, kitchen and bathroom fixtures, lighting, hardware, flooring, and lumber. Contractors noted that the

ability to recover these materials often depends on practical considerations, such as having clear acceptance criteria and a convenient, well-organized system for drop-off or pickup. For salvaged lumber in particular, piece size and the presence of nails were frequently mentioned as factors affecting reuse.

Interest in additional recovery services varied. Some contractors expressed interest in deconstruction or salvage support, while others were primarily interested in a convenient way to drop off or have reusable materials picked up. These findings suggest an opportunity for Grandpa's Garage to build relationships with local contractors and test different collection approaches during the pilot.

The contractor outreach also reinforced lessons from comparable reuse operations. Eastside Rebuild reported that contractors are a primary source of its higher-value inventory, further supporting the potential importance of developing strong relationships with Vashon contractors as Grandpa's Garage begins operations.

Realtor Outreach

ZWV also contacted three leading island realtors to better understand materials generated through home sales and property cleanouts. Realtors reported that approximately 165–200 homes change hands annually on Vashon-Maury Island and that sellers are often downsizing. In cases where sellers live off island, local contacts may have less than 30 days to clear a property.

These conditions can result in usable building materials, furniture, and other goods needing a new outlet on short notice. Realtor feedback suggested that property sales and cleanouts could provide a significant source of materials if Grandpa's Garage can offer a responsive and convenient collection service.

Contractor and Industry Outreach Finding

The outreach identified both contractors and property turnover as promising sources of reusable materials. The findings suggest that convenient, well-organized collection and clear material acceptance guidelines will be important to converting these potential sources into reliable inventory for Grandpa's Garage.

Core Leadership Team

ZWV established a Reuse Subcommittee made up of board members to guide the Grandpa's Garage feasibility process and prepare the project for implementation. To carry out the work, the Subcommittee organized several focused teams that included both Board and community members. These included a Contractor Team, focused on contractor outreach

and material recovery opportunities; a Volume/Value Team, focused on understanding the quantity, types, and potential value of reusable materials; a Location Team, focused on identifying and evaluating potential sites; and a Business Team, focused on development of the business and operational model.

A separate Subcommittee also worked collectively on communications, community outreach, and events, including the pilot collection events and community engagement activities. This structure allowed volunteers to contribute their experience and capacity to specific areas of the feasibility work while maintaining coordination through the Reuse Subcommittee. This subcommittee also worked with the project teams and a professional ad agency manager to select a brand name for the pilot project – Grandpa's Garage.

Together, the Subcommittee and project teams helped ZWV evaluate the feasibility of a reuse store, build relationships with community and industry partners, identify a location, better understand potential material supply, and develop the business model. The team structure also established a foundation of Board and community leadership that can carry forward as Grandpa's Garage moves from feasibility into pilot implementation.

Site Selection and Infrastructure Research

ZWV evaluated six potential locations for Grandpa's Garage. The site review, together with lessons from other reuse stores, helped identify several important considerations for a successful location, including affordable rent, sufficient space, truck and customer access, parking, utilities, retail suitability, room for material intake and storage, and the ability to grow or adapt over time.

Through this process, ZWV selected Sunrise Ridge, using the former Food Bank buildings, as the location for the Grandpa's Garage pilot. The site offers reasonable rent, adequate parking and truck access, room to grow, and a history of supporting community reuse activities.

At approximately 2,000 square feet, the Grandpa's Garage retail space will require careful inventory management. The store will need to prioritize useful, safe, saleable materials rather than maximizing the volume accepted. Clear material acceptance guidelines, coordinated intake, and regular monitoring of inventory turnover will help ZWV make the best use of available space. The pilot period will also help ZWV learn which materials move most consistently and adjust what the store accepts as demand and inventory patterns become clearer. Temporary storage may be needed to buffer inventory. Sunrise Ridge has approved future expansion plans to add 1,000 sq. ft. as demand increases.

Pilot Reuse Collection Events and Material Quantification

ZWV partnered with Second Use on two five-hour pilot collection events to test whether reusable building materials could be captured locally.

- **September 7, 2025:** The first event collected 129 items, including 84 tracked items and 45 lower-value items. Materials included 11 doors and 37 windows, with an estimated total value of approximately \$4,000.



- **April 25, 2026:** The second event collected more than 60 items, including approximately 10 windows, seven doors, eight cabinets, 10 pieces of furniture, five light fixtures, lumber, and other materials. Anticipated sales value was approximately \$4,000–\$4,500.

ZWV collection event with Second Use, providing an opportunity to test local material supply and community participation in reuse.

Approximately 35–45 community members donated materials at each event, with support from three to four Second Use staff and four to six ZWV volunteers. Both events filled approximately two Second Use trucks during the five-hour collection period. Although the trucks were not weighed, ZWV estimates that the two events collectively diverted approximately 12,000 pounds, or six tons, of reusable material.

Collection Event Finding

The collection events provided direct evidence that meaningful quantities of reusable building materials can be collected locally during relatively short, well-publicized collection

periods. They also helped demonstrate the importance of having clear acceptance criteria and an established outlet ready to receive materials.

Transfer Station Waste Stream Characterization

As part of its material-supply research, ZWV conducted two observation sessions at the Vashon Recycling and Transfer Station during spring 2026. The observations were intended to better understand how much potentially reusable material was entering the local waste stream and whether the transfer station could represent an opportunity for identifying or redirecting materials before disposal.

Concurrent with ZWV's work, Cascadia Consulting Group was also conducting a broader waste characterization study that included Vashon. To avoid duplicating that effort, ZWV kept its observations focused on identifying potentially reusable materials and opportunities to capture them before disposal.

On April 25, ZWV contacted 173 vehicles. Nearly all were visiting for recycling rather than landfill disposal. Although no reusable materials were observed arriving with those vehicles at that time, conversations identified residents preparing for remodeling projects and several contractors interested in reuse; some residents subsequently returned home and brought materials to the collection event.

On May 8, ZWV contacted 225 vehicles. Approximately 12 percent were headed to the landfill, and three vehicles contained potentially reusable materials, including a ladder, wire, lumber, wood flooring, and hardware.

While relatively little reusable material was observed at the transfer station itself, the sessions provided useful insight into how and when materials may be available for reuse. Combined with the more comprehensive waste characterization information expected from Cascadia's work, these observations provide one piece of a broader picture of Vashon's material stream. Many contractors rent large dumpsters for on-site collection so this material does not pass through transfer station. ZWV's observations suggest that outreach to residents and contractors and capturing materials before they reach the transfer station may offer the greatest potential for building a consistent supply of reusable materials for Grandpa's Garage.

Additional Material Supply Research

Because no single data source could reliably quantify Vashon's reuse stream, ZWV used several complementary approaches.

Informal Community Reuse

ZWV sampled listings from several Vashon Facebook groups over 11.5 weeks between November 2025 and July 2026. The analysis identified an average of approximately 18 relevant items per week, with materials represented in 14 of 17 categories tracked by the project.

This existing exchange demonstrates that usable materials already circulate within the community. Grandpa's Garage can complement rather than replace these informal systems by providing a more predictable physical outlet.

Comparable Businesses

ZWV also looked to established reuse businesses to better understand how similar models operate and what lessons could inform Grandpa's Garage.

Eastside Rebuild provided a useful small community comparison. During its first six months of 2025 sales, it averaged approximately \$5,005 per month in retail revenue while operating three days per week. Flooring, appliances, doors, furniture, and windows accounted for 61 percent of sales. Its experience also highlighted the importance of contractor relationships as a source of desirable, higher value materials.

Second Use provided a larger regional comparison and direct experience through its partnership with ZWV on the Vashon collection events. This offered practical insight into material acceptance, collection, valuation, and the types of reusable materials available locally.

While these businesses cannot predict Grandpa's Garage sales or material flow directly, their experience helped ZWV identify practices to carry into the pilot, including prioritizing saleable materials, developing strong contractor relationships, managing intake carefully, and using actual sales and inventory data to refine the model over time.

Taken together, these additional sources reinforced that reusable materials are already circulating on Vashon and provided practical lessons for how Grandpa's Garage can capture, manage, and sell those materials through a physical reuse store.

Business and Operational Feasibility

The feasibility process culminated in development of a full Business Plan for Grandpa's Garage. The Business Plan establishes a nonprofit reuse-store model in which donated building materials, fixtures, furniture, salvage, and selected household goods are resold

locally at affordable prices. Retail sales are intended to cover an increasing portion of operating costs, while grant funding provides the runway needed to establish the store and test the model.

The current implementation concept includes a startup period through January 2027, followed by a planned February 2027 retail opening. Startup activities include facility preparation, hiring, volunteer development, inventory collection, accounting and administrative setup, and establishment of retail and material-tracking systems.

The \$170,000 Circular Lumber Grant significantly changes the near-term feasibility of the project by providing resources to hire staff and test the business model over approximately two years rather than requiring immediate self-sufficiency.

Together, the Business Plan, identified site, and startup funding provide a workable framework for moving Grandpa's Garage into pilot operations while testing the assumptions that remain uncertain.

Equity and Social Justice Impact

Grandpa's Garage supports ZWV's equity and social justice goals by reducing barriers to accessing reusable materials and creating opportunities for community participation in reuse. The project's original concept identified access to lower-cost goods as an important social equity benefit.

By making reusable building materials and household goods available locally at prices below comparable new materials, Grandpa's Garage can provide a more affordable option for residents completing home repairs, improvements, garden projects, and other needs. A Vashon-based store also reduces the time, transportation costs, and ferry travel required to access reuse businesses off island.

Reducing barriers to participation was also an important part of the feasibility process. ZWV used a range of outreach and engagement approaches to make it easier for community members to learn about the project, share input, and participate. Community meetings and collection events were free and open to the public, and the contractor survey was made available in Spanish to reach a broader range of local contractors. The Reuse Subcommittee also worked through existing community networks, including Vashon's eight lending libraries and the Community Social Services Network, to share information about the planned reuse facility and connect with residents through organizations already active in the community. Together, these efforts helped broaden awareness and

participation during the feasibility phase while building relationships that can support continued outreach as Grandpa's Garage moves into pilot implementation.

These social and community benefits are closely connected to the project's environmental goals. By providing a practical local alternative to disposal, Grandpa's Garage can extend the useful life of materials, reduce waste, and decrease demand for new materials and the resources required to produce them. As the pilot moves forward, continued partnerships with community-serving organizations, accessible outreach, and opportunities for community feedback can help ZWV identify and address additional barriers to participation.

Overall Feasibility Findings

Taken together, the research supports moving Grandpa's Garage from feasibility into pilot implementation.

The feasibility process resulted in several key findings:

- **Community interest:** Survey responses, community engagement, and participation indicate meaningful interest in donating, shopping, volunteering, and supporting a reuse store.
- **Material availability:** Collection events, social-media sampling, realtor interviews, contractor outreach, and transfer-station observations collectively demonstrate that reusable materials exist on Vashon, although the consistency and quality of supply remain to be tested.
- **Site feasibility:** ZWV identified a workable and affordable location at Sunrise Ridge.
- **Partnerships:** ZWV has established relationships with Second Use, King County, Sunrise Ridge, Eastside Rebuild, and local organizations that can support startup and learning.
- **Startup capacity:** The Circular Lumber Grant provides significant resources to hire staff, prepare the facility, establish systems, and operate the concept as a pilot.
- **Long-term sustainability:** Grandpa's Garage will ultimately need to consistently obtain desirable inventory, attract customers, turn inventory over efficiently, mobilize volunteers, and generate sufficient earned and contributed revenue to sustain operations.

Recommendations and Next Steps

Grandpa's Garage should move forward as a learning-oriented pilot, with clear measures established from the beginning. During startup and early operations, ZWV should track:

- quantity, type, source, weight, and estimated/actual value of donated materials;

- contractor versus residential material sources;
- materials declined and reasons for declining them;
- sales and inventory turnover by material category;
- customer traffic and transactions;
- volunteer participation and hours;
- collection and pickup activity;
- operating expenses and proportion covered by earned revenue; and
- community feedback and emerging access needs.

These measures will allow ZWV to test the remaining feasibility assumptions with real-world information and make informed decisions about store hours, material acceptance, staffing, collection methods, partnerships, services, and long-term financial sustainability. The Business Plan provides the framework for this next phase, with the pilot itself serving as the next stage of feasibility testing.

Grant Metrics at-a-Glance

Grant Metric	Result
Community Engagement & Public Input	
Community meeting participants	~45 participants at the September 2 community meeting
Community interest, concerns & potential participation	Strong interest and active participation; community members provided ideas and suggestions related to donations, shopping, volunteers, partnerships, outreach, and launch. 62 community survey responses; 93.5% said they would use a local used-building-materials store.
Contractor Survey & Industry Outreach	
Contractors surveyed/contacted	9 island-based contractors
Contractors interested in diverting reusable materials	8 of 9 welcomed an alternative to landfilling good, reusable materials. Several reported customers open to salvaged materials; well-organized site pickup was welcomed.
Core Leadership Team	
Leadership group formed	Yes. Core teams established for Business, Quantification, Contractor Survey, Location, and Community Engagement/Public Input.
Site Selection & Infrastructure Research	

Grant Metric	Result
Potential sites evaluated	6: Mukai Cannery, O-Space Building, Sheffield Building, storage sheds behind Vashon Boards, K2, and Sunrise Ridge.
Preferred site identified	Yes – Sunrise Ridge , former Food Bank buildings. Key considerations included availability, reasonable rent, room to grow, parking, and truck access.
Reuse Collection Event / Pilot Waste Stream Data	
Items collected	Sept. 7, 2025: 129 items. Apr. 25, 2026: 60+ items.
Materials collected by type	Sept.: 11 doors, 37 windows + other materials. Apr.: 10 windows, 7 doors, 8 cabinets, 10 furniture pieces, 5 lights, lumber + other materials.
Pounds/volume diverted	12,000 lbs. estimated
Event participants/donors	7-10 volunteer participants / 70-80 donors
Transfer Station Waste Stream Characterization	
Observation sessions completed	2 sessions; 398 vehicles contacted/observed.
Diversion potential	Limited reusable material was observed entering the transfer station: 3 of 225 vehicles during the May observation had potentially reusable materials. Findings suggest that capturing materials before they enter the disposal stream may offer greater diversion potential.
Business Plan	
Consultant-developed Business Plan completed	Yes – Complete - Consultant engaged to develop the full Business Plan and Final Feasibility Report.
Final Feasibility Report	
Final findings summarized	Yes – this report. Findings support moving Grandpa’s Garage into pilot implementation while continuing to test material supply, customer demand, inventory turnover, participation, and long-term financial sustainability.
Equity & Social Justice Impact	
Actions demonstrating commitment to equity & social justice	Free, open community events and broad outreach; contractor survey available in Spanish; outreach through local lending libraries and the Community Social Services Network; multiple opportunities for community input and participation; and planned local access to affordable reused materials.

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