

# REUSE:

## The Untapped Government Diversion Tool

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# HUMANS INVENTED “WASTE”

(*DISCARDS Are  
Wasted  
RESOURCES*)

POLLUTION IS NOTHING  
BUT THE RESOURCES WE  
ARE NOT HARVESTING. WE  
ALLOW THEM TO DISPERSE  
BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN  
IGNORANT OF THEIR VALUE.

R. Buckminster Fuller

# We Can't Recycle Our Way Out of This!



- Recycling is struggling

- Recycler closures
- Diversion rate plummeting (State rate is 37%)
- More complex, difficult materials to collect, sort & recycle
- Asian market decline and commodities volatility

- Finite resources, infinite demands

- Global natural resource use has tripled in the past 40 years  
*(UN Environmental report 2016)*
- Increased production of “single use” plastic and convenience products

- Increased accountability

- Consumers and society expectations
- Eco-hypocrisy of the Waste Hierarchy
- State mandate requirements!!!!
- Lack of manufacturer Producer Responsibility
- City Zero Waste commitments



WE CANNOT SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS  
WITH THE SAME THINKING  
WE USED WHEN WE  
CREATED THEM

- Albert Einstein



**ReTHINK: Redefining Waste as Resources**

# TRASH IS TREASURE



Facebook Marketplace



THE  
GROWTH OF  
“THRIFT”



# IS DIVERSION!



Municipalities are missing the purest and most realistic option in the [diversion](#) tool chest!

- Warm fuzzies not NIMBY's
- Community asset (public can donate AND receive)
- Receive items to use for operations
- Employee and community sharing networks



# My life as a Dumpster Diva



# Typical Set Discards

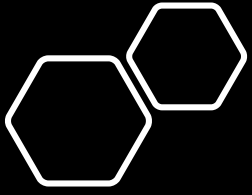






# Come in for free materials-- Leave with inspiration!





# Power to the scavengers!

*"We use round PVC for box porting, to tune each subwoofer box's particular frequency that we build. The port frequency changes with length and width of the tube. We also use it in tests, figuring the best tuning for different vehicles."*

—Whitehorse Customz (car audio specialists)





# “FREECYCLING”

## SHARING OR ILLEGAL DUMPING?

- Could a freecycle program be legalized and created?
- Align with Garage Sale or Bulky Pickup guidelines.





# DON'T RELY ON RECYCLING—GET CREATIVE

## KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL REUSE PROGRAM:

- Time, Information and Access
- Build Strong Community Partnerships
- Create a Virtual Reuse Network
- Always Promote, Network and Ask for Leads
- **Bricks and Mortar for maximum diversion** *(stay with me here...)*



# Reuse Models—Private Sector

## Repurposed Materials: (Not in CA)

- Takes unusual, industrial items
- Bricks and Mortar
- On-line network
- Private business



## Trash 4 Teaching: (Gardena)

- Scrap materials for art teachers and STEM programs
- Bricks and Mortar
- Large quantities of one item
- Non-profit (Two Bit Circus Foundation)







# Reuse Models— Public Sector

- **Materials for the Arts (NYC)**
- Scrap art materials
- Art education and workshop components
- Offer pick up of donations
- Bricks and mortar: 38,000 sf building
- Established in 1978
- NYC Department of Cultural Affairs







# OTHER PUBLIC MODELS

- **Last Chance Mercantile** in Monterey County (est. 1991)
- **HHW Materials Reuse Program** at Thousand Oaks



## WHY CAN'T THE PRIVATE SECTOR HANDLE THIS?

### **Answer: Instability**

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- While thrift store quality items are profitable, scrap materials are not.
- Selling means inventory doesn't churn quickly. Sitting on inventory means more square footage = costs.
- Overhead costs, such as high rent, cuts into the ability to make enough profit to sustain the enterprise.
- Renting is risky and finding a suitable and affordable site is difficult.
- Lack of feasibility keeps reuse a boutique business segment, but not a true diversion factor.



# A CAUTIONARY REUSE TALE



The ReUse People  
of America



# “VIRTUAL” EFFORTS ARE NOT ENOUGH

While a strong online presence is vital, the greatest chance for success is having a physical facility.

Moreover, you can't rely on local thrift stores since much of what they receive through “donations” are actually disposed.

- **AVOID REDUNDANCY:** A municipal reuse program should target the more unsaleable, unloved, worn, broken, and misfit items that have no other place to go other than landfill.
- **TONNAGE CREDIT:** A facility allows for weights and other records to be managed.
- **BRICKS AND MORTAR:** Online will move an item, but a physical space will move a carload
- **FREE GIVEAWAYS:** Moves material quickly so you need less square feet



## SANITATION DEPARTMENT BENEFITS:

- INCREASES DIVERSION and supplements recycling decline
- Eases illegal dumping
- Verifiable tonnage records
- Easier to site and meet regulations
- Justifies rate increase—valuable service
- Work in tandem with Bulky Service

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

### INTRINSIC VALUE:

- Provides positive waste alternatives
- Public benefit to donate and receive materials
- Ease and awareness with a one-stop shop
- Culture change and new view of consumption
- Free materials helps lower income populations
- Encourages business in-kind donations
- Builds a large donation recipient base to expand reuse efforts
- Create opportunities for work training programs
- Storytelling and PR opportunities

# THE VISION:

- **Location:**

- CalTrans overpass land
- Vacant City building/site
- Sub-lease large facility

- **Funding:**

- Reuse grants
- Rate increase for a new benefit
- Offset costs applied (Bulky efficiency)
- Cultural Arts Departments
- Possible membership fees

- **Public/Private partnership with non-profit:**

- Experience with reuse, arts, networking
- Training program

- **Tracking and recording:**

- Non-profit tracks and reports weights
- Haulers and self haul drops off
- Reverse logistics take items released for landfill.
- Weigh only when materials leaves
- Promote reuse stories on social media



# IT'S A DIVERSION REVOLUTION!

## Vive la REUSEtance!



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