

Operations Manager Annual Report for 2024 – Presented at 2025 AGM

2024 was the first complete year spent in the newly expanded depot. The time and energy saved being in a permanent structure not only increased our efficiency but also improved conditions for our staff and community members. Time previously spent monitoring two collection areas and maintaining an imperfect temporary outdoor cover is now spent managing a growing number of recycling programs.

The foundation of our services continues to be the collection of Packaging and Paper Product (PPP) for the Recycle BC program. In 2024 we processed and hauled 67.99 Metric Tonnes (MT) of recyclable materials from households on Galiano. From our Industrial Commercial Institutional (ICI) partners, we removed 13.15 MT, for a total of 81.14 MT being nearly on par with our 2023 packaging totals.

With respect to the dollar value attached to the PPP collected from island households, Recycle BC paid \$27,477 to the CRD. As this amount is woefully inadequate to operate a depot, GIRR has long held a service agreement through the CRD to support basic operations. As noted in last year's annual report, a 43% increase to said agreement's payment schedule equated to a new rate of \$149,229 for 2024. The additional money goes towards our labour costs as GIRR is proudly a living wage employer since 2023.

ICI recycling is one of GIRR's largest recycling programs, here to provide service to Galiano's small businesses while increasing landfill diversion. As stated above, in 2024 GIRR removed 13.15 MT of ICI packaging from Galiano. This is an increase of 32% from 2023. As ICI materials are not included in Recycle BC's mandate nor our CRD service agreement, we are obligated to charge for this service. This is by no means an income stream for GIRR; we strive to break even at the end of each year. However, due to rising costs in recycling fees, transport and labour costs, in recent years we have fallen short. Facing a short fall of more than \$4K at the end of 2024, we were able to access \$3K in funding through the CRD's Rethink Waste Community Grant, leaving us \$1K shy. As with our losses in prior years, the deficit was covered by non-CRD revenue streams. (Note that in 2025, the grant has been increased to \$5K which I anticipate will leave us with a nil balance.)

While the CRD service agreement is our top income source, we have several other revenue streams.

Separate from PPP and ICI packaging tonnage, in 2024 we handled 8.47 MT of electronics and small appliances for recycling. GIRR was paid \$2,129 by Encorp Pacific (Canada) for collections through their end of life electronics 'EOLE' program; small appliances 'CESA' brought in \$3,257 from Product Care. After courier expenses are paid, the net income from these two programs amounts to \$3,706.

The Bottle Depot paid us \$37,021 for the nearly 373,000 refundable beverage containers we handled in 2024. Supporting can-drives at the depot for three Galiano community groups, \$5,558 went back into our community leaving GIRR with a total of \$31,462 added to our income. While still a welcome infusion of money to our budget, this is a 28% drop from 2023.

In 2024, GIRR received \$21,420 from GFL Environmental for costs involved with hauling PPP from Galiano to Cascades Recovery+ in Victoria.

There are some other small recycling programs that we offer at GIRR. We may pay out or be paid a small amount for these programs, but ultimately, they are provided as a service to the community.

To summarize, in 2024 we continued to accept paint, smoke alarms and lightbulbs (Product Care), dry-cell batteries (Call2Recycle), medical masks, and specific rigid plastics (Phoenix Plastics). Having joined Product Care's Paint Share program in 2024, allowing folks to take usable paint home from the depot, the volume of paint shipping out for recycling was reduced. This resulted in our annual Product Care pickup being pushed into 2025 leaving us without stats for this report. Those will show up next year.

Similarly, in 2024 we shifted from a per-box shipping method for Call2Recycle, to a bulk shipping system. This will entitle us to be paid for our dry-cell battery collection services, but for now while we are in the process of accumulating our first (annual) load, there are no stats to report on.

In the way of new programs, in January 2024 we were happy to have scrap metal collections return to the fold (19.71 MT of scrap metal was hauled in 2024), and lead-acid (vehicle) batteries were added too. In summer, we began accepting single-use propane cylinders thanks to Paul Kryzewski volunteering his time to ensure that every cylinder is empty before it gets added to the scrap metal bin.

Moving away from the depot, the ReDirectory is yet another arm of the recycling centre that is here for the benefit of our community while keeping useful items in circulation (supporting landfill diversion). A long-established and well-loved home of resharing on Galiano, the store is only possible because of the generosity of time and donations from our community members and volunteers. Between our bi-weekly silent auctions, a special tool auction fundraiser, and general sales from the store, in 2024 the ReDirectory brought in about \$16K, sufficient to cover the costs of maintaining the store.

GIRR's Repair Series continues to thrive. Homing in on the most popular themes from past years, in 2024 we held 8 events. In particular, the textiles (swap, repair and as of 2024: upcycling), tool sharpening and bicycle repair events draw solid crowds and contribute to keeping items in active use. They also serve as an introduction between repairers and community members, furthering its efficacy.

Public acknowledgment and thanks are owed to the CRD's Rethink Waste Community Grant program for funding three of our programs: scrap metal, ICI recycling, and GIRR's Repair Series. The grant program is designed to fund projects that aide in landfill diversion, aligning well with our efforts.

2024 was a big learning curve for Phoenix Plastics, our onsite post-consumer recycling project. Systems development, equipment troubleshooting, and general plastics processing were our focus in 2024. Aided by board director Avi Bryant, GIRR secured \$86,905 in funding through BC's Clean BC Plastics Action Fund. Thank you Alacrity Foundation! The funding covers 67% of a spending budget for July 2024 to March 2026, with GIRR paying the balance. Included in the budget are infrastructure costs: a new washing shed and a septic system; labour costs; and equipment, i.e., plastics scanner and assorted tools. Due to challenges with the original program equipment (purchased in 2023) and waiting until mid-summer for the new funding, 2024 was a year about laying groundwork and learning the basics of pressing plastic sheets. This set us up well to focus our 2025 efforts on product design and development.

Finally, let it be said that GIRR is here to serve our community by operating its recycling centre, through which we support residents of Galiano to make sustainable choices. This is done for and by our community members. In 2024 \$5,645 came in through memberships and another \$13,734 in donations to our society. Deepest thanks go out to GIRR's supporters, volunteers, staff, and board of directors. Thank you for all that you do care for this island and those who live and work here.