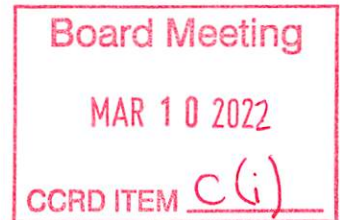




REQUEST FOR DECISION

To: Curtis Slingerland, CAO
CC: CCRD Board of Directors
From: Ken McIlwain, Operations Manager
Meeting Date: March 10, 2022
Subject: Re-opening of Thorsen Creek Free Store / Share Shed



Recommendation:

THAT the Board of Directors of the Central Coast Regional District approve staff to implement the re-opening of the Share-Shed effective March 23, 2022 in advance of Stage 4 of the CCRD COVID-19 Business Continuity and Services Restoration Plan;

AND THAT appropriate signage be installed warning the public that use of the facility is at their own risk;

AND THAT signage in regards to current public health order requirements be installed and updated as needed.

Issue/Background Summary:

In the spring of 2020, the CCRD implemented COVID-19 safety measures at its various facilities through adoption of the CCRD COVID-19 Business Continuity and Services Restoration Plan. Numerous measures were put in place at the Thorsen Creek Waste and Recycling Facility. One of these was the temporary closure of the Share Shed. Specifically, the plan states:

"Temporary service reduction in closing the share shed until Phase 4 to discourage potential virus spread through reused/repurposed household items"

The Plan defines Stage 4 as:

7.4. Stage 4 (Pandemic Ends) Characterized by full restoration of programs and services (return to normal operations).

The Share Shed is not directly supervised by Transfer Station staff. Staff involvement is limited under the Thorsen Creek Operating Contract to:

"The Contractor will maintain the Free Store/Share Shed by cleaning it out on a weekly basis and disposing of stagnant items. The contractor may place a CCRD 4-yard bin beside the Share Shed to assist with disposal of items."

The lack of supervision is noted because there are no staff present to ensure public adherence to public health orders related to the pandemic.

If the CCRD Board of Directors elects to re-open the Share Shed prior to Stage 4 (Pandemic End), it may be advisable to have signage installed advising the public that:

1. Use of the Share-Shed is at their own risk.
2. Signage notifying users of applicable public health orders such as the requirement for use of a mask.

Policy, Bylaw or Legislation:

- *CCRD COVID-19 Business Continuity and Services Restoration Plan*
- *ORDER OF THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH OFFICER (Pursuant to Sections 30, 31, 32, 39 (3), 53, 54 (1) (h), 67 (2) and 69 Public Health Act, S.B.C. 2008) FACE COVERINGS (COVID-19) – December 3, 2021*

The current public health order around face covering currently requires the use of face coverings for indoor public spaces.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Financial/Budgetary Implications:

There are minimal financial implications associated with restoring previous service levels associated with the Share Shed.

Some professional signage would cost approximately \$200.00 to purchase and another \$30.00 to install. Alternatively, some printed laminated signage could be generated by CCRD staff at very minimal cost and would likely achieve a similar outcome.

Time Requirements – Staff and Elected Officials:

If the CCRD Board proceeds with the recommendation, the process for reopening of the Share Shed will require approximately ½ a day of time for the Operations Manager to coordinate with the Landfill Contractor and organize signage.

Complaints about the 'state' of the Share Shed will likely resume once it reopens, and some amount of time will be required by staff and elected officials to respond to complaints. This may be offset by a reduction in complaints about the closure of the facility.

Options to Consider:

1. **Recommended:** Approve staff to implement the re-opening of the Share-Shed for March 23, 2022 in advance of Stage 4 of the CCRD COVID-19 Business Continuity and Services Restoration Plan; and THAT appropriate signage be installed warning the public that use of the facility is at their own risk; and THAT signage in regards to public health order requirements also be installed.

2. Keep the Share-Shed closed until Stage 4 (Pandemic End) as per the CCRD COVID-19 Business Continuity and Services Restoration Plan.
3. Permanently close the Share Shed and work with community groups such as the Thrift Store and Lobelco Community Club to try and divert reusable items to those locations where they can be more effectively marketed. This would improve traffic flow and safety at the Transfer Station, as well as reduce CCRD exposure to risk.

Risk Management – Refer to Policy A-36:

The categories that account for potential risks that may be realized by the district during its regular operations are: financial, asset management, information technology and business continuity. The risk or potential risks associated with the recommended option have been evaluated and assessed as low. (See Option 1)

Option 1 has been evaluated and is determined to have a low-moderate level of risk; probably similar to pre-pandemic risk levels. Most of the risk or potential exposure to liability comes from having items such as bug infested textiles, prescription drugs, hypodermic needles, soiled undergarments or expired safety equipment dropped off and then picked up for re-use by the public. By facilitating this through operation of the Share Shed, the CCRD exposes itself to risk. This can be mitigated to a degree by banning certain items and installing proper signage. There is also potential for an increased risk of COVID-19 spread in this facility because the Share-Shed is unsupervised and there is no way to ensure COVID-19 safety measures are being followed. Also, items are not cleaned or sanitized between drop-off and pick-up.

Option 2 has been evaluated and is determined to a low level of risk. There is potential for a continued level of dissatisfaction from the public due to the reduced service level. This could be mitigated through developing a partnership with local non-profit groups such as the Community Thrift Store to help divert quality used items to these locations.

Option 3 has been evaluated and is determined to have a low level of risk. There is potential for a level of dissatisfaction from the public due to the elimination of this service. Many other Regional Districts have closed Share-Sheds due to the difficulty in managing them, as well as the risks associated with their operation.

Submitted by: 
Ken McIlwain, Operations Manager

Approved by: 
Curtis Slingerland, Chief Administrative Officer