

Liberty Bank relocated in late 2018, donating their former downtown headquarters to a nonprofit organization. The 25,000 square foot facility is comprised of three primary structures:

- Northern building, a 4-level structure constructed in phases from 1931 through the mid-1940's
- Middle building, a 1-level structure constructed in 1988 as an expansion
- Southern building, a 2-level structure constructed in 1934 with a small expansion in the late 1990's.

Prior to the facility's ownership transfer, it was fully vacated. Nearly every object that was not physically attached had been removed. Thus, there was no furniture. Cabinets remained on the walls, though those were minimal.

Plans call for it to be converted from a 100-room banking facility to a children's museum with large open exhibit spaces. The process of gutting the facility will eliminate electrical safety issues, lead-contaminated plumbing, a small amount of mold, damaged asbestos, and elevation accessibility concerns.

As of the New Year 2022, a construction company is taking temporary control of the middle building and the upper three levels of the northern building. They are tasked with gutting much of the interior, thereby providing engineers and architects with access to the sturdy, yet complex, structural elements.

In advance of the construction crews, the lead facilities volunteer coordinated the reuse and recycling of fixtures and material. The goals were to (a) reduce GRCM's demolition costs and (b) undertake the project via "green" methods. The subsequent graphs represent the building fixtures and materials that were distributed. Beyond the expected benefits, GRCM generated \$3,892.33 by selling material, primarily to recycling facilities. This excludes all anticipated revenue after the construction company takes over in New Year 2022.

The project has not been without complications, particularly communication breakdowns and schedule issues.

As of New Year 2022, some of the pending elements were:

- A dumpster full of metal, primarily steel, was hauled away by "Rapid Container" on Thursday 30 December under contract of "BCI Construction". Awaiting to learn of its weight and to receive respective recycling payment. The lead facilities volunteer did have an informal conversation with Midway Iron, which indicated they are typically recipients of such material, which would be weighed upon arrival.

- Another dumpster dedicated to metal was being actively filled. Awaiting to learn of its weight and to receive respective recycling payment.
 - Awaiting electric disconnect to be completed, such that electric wiring can be recycled. Beyond the facility's standard copper wiring, there will be significant weight in the electrical backbone wiring that connects the northern building's eight circuit breaker panels, plus two abandoned "Block Party" panels. Each of these wires is made of either copper or aluminum. Additionally, the abandoned NSP incoming line from 7th Avenue is a pair of heavy gauge copper wires, awaiting disconnect from the distribution panel. Awaiting to learn of these weights, anticipated to be hundreds of pounds and to receive probable 4-figure recycling payment.
 - Basement shelving and a few other elements are claimed, awaiting the demolition crew to gut the first level, thereby creating an open path to haul large objects.
 - The southern building remains occupied. Most of its fixtures have been claimed, as salvagers are simply awaiting authorization to remove their desired objects.
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Update sent by GRCM's Executive Director on 18 January 2022:

"Cody was not able to get the total weight on the recycled materials hauled away by dumpster so we will have to use some estimates based on cubic footage.

"Cody was able to recycle some wire: 173lbs and \$330."

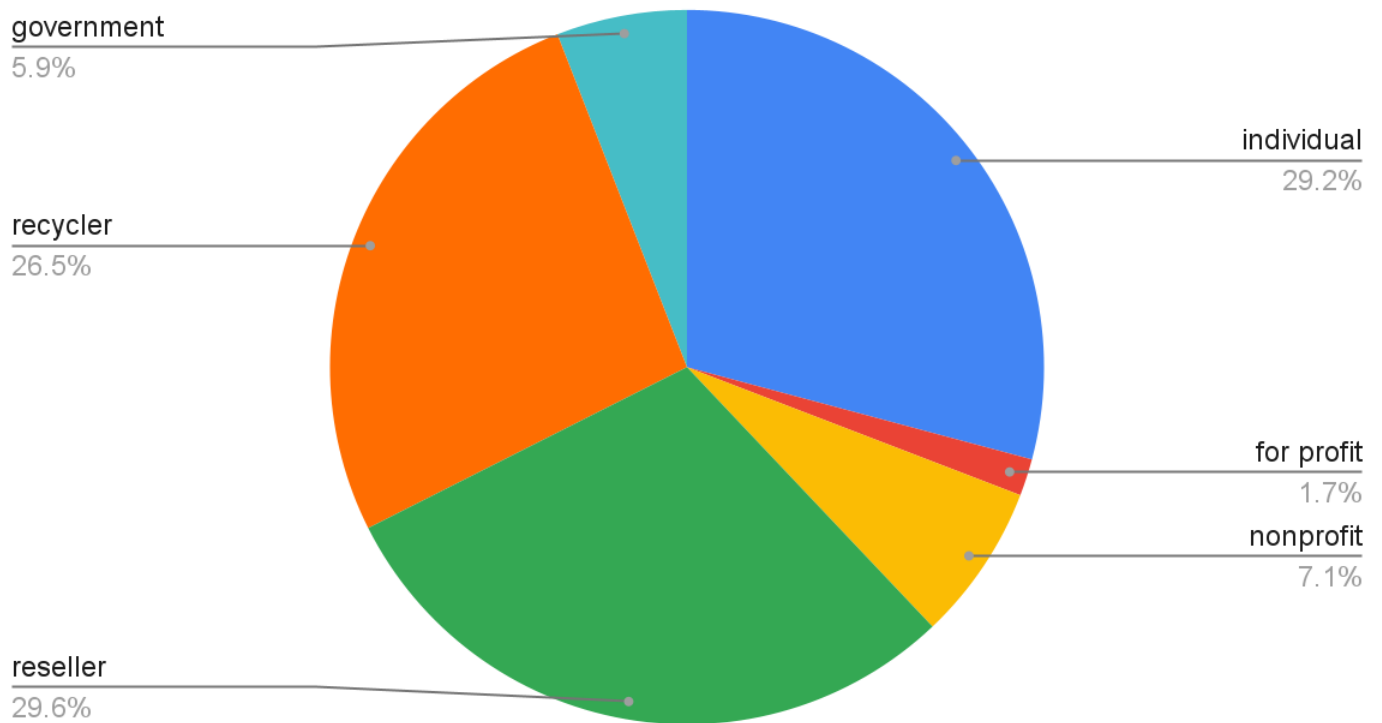
Update sent by GRCM's Executive Director on 25 January 2022, which is a relayed message from BCI's Site Supervisor:

"3.92 tons"

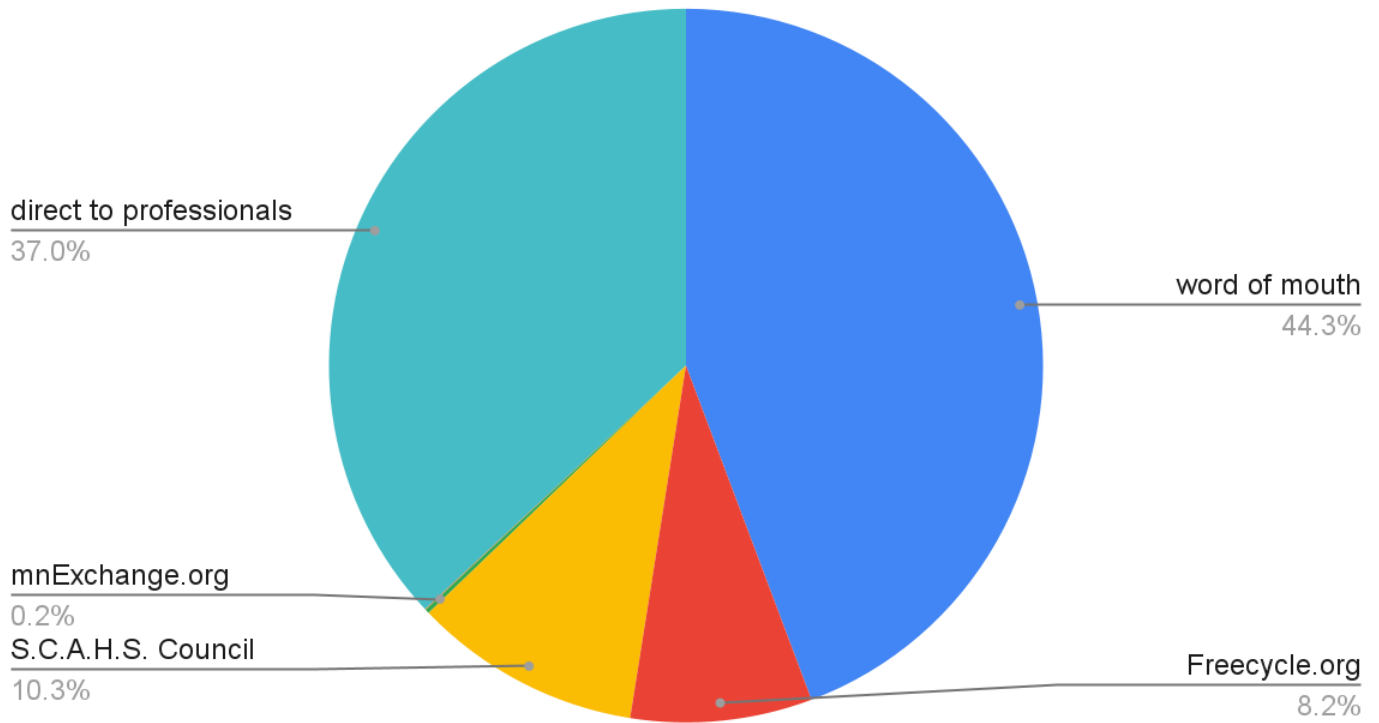
The subsequent charts were updated to reflect these 173 pound and 3.92 tons additions.

As of New Year 2022, two of three buildings were turned over to a construction company for the next phase. Thus, this data should continue to grow. This interim report is based upon 50,943.8 pounds of material.

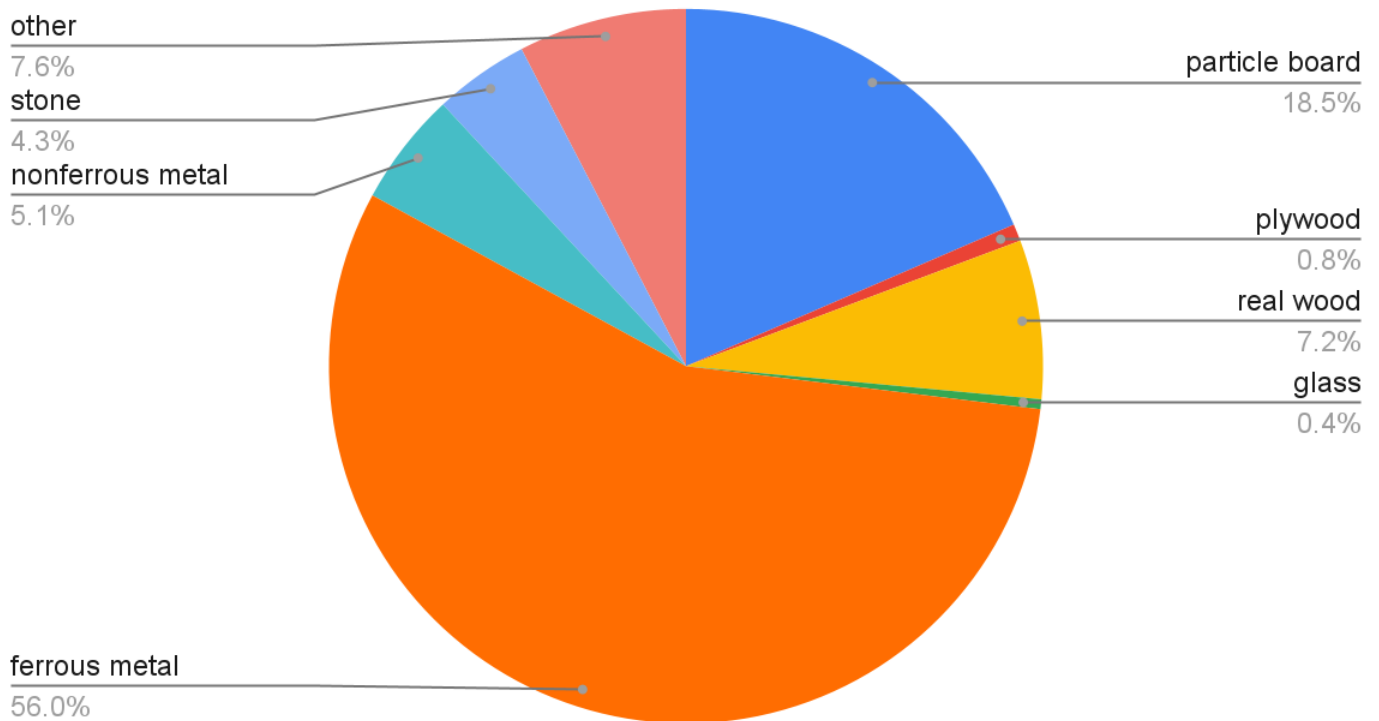
Distribution of Materials (percentage of weight)



Communication of Materials (percentage of weight)



Type of Material (percentage of weight)



Addendum: Hindsight Perspective As An Industry Outsider

by David Mohs in February 2022

Remodeling a 1930's facility of 25,000 square feet is a project with which I could bring minimal experience to the table. My background in the information technology field certainly defined me as an outsider to the construction industry. My extraordinarily minimal construction experiences:

- I had coordinated structured cabling projects for a previous employer, which involved minimal involvement with the other trades.
- A neighbor has told me the story of his father's deconstruction business, which was apparently devastated when the City of Saint Cloud banned the use of reclaimed construction materials, perhaps in the 1960's.
- I have heard stories from individuals regarding perfectly good materials being ordered to the landfill, despite their personal pleas to purchase them.
- I have watched construction dumpsters being refilled repeatedly with what appears to be good products, such as furniture and whiteboards.
- Our family purchased a dilapidated house in 2012 with the intention of demolishing it. My knowledge of the industry was so minimal that I asked a hardware store what companies offered demolition services. When I toured potential contractors, I was shocked to hear that they would not attempt to salvage anything. In response, friends and I salvaged material.
- More recently, I posed a few questions to a dumpster/container vendor. He explained that their dumpsters are designated for specific purposes such as recycling, construction waste, and general trash. He proceeded to share frustration regarding his customers, primarily construction companies, who regularly mix the various types of debris. He indicated that he and co-workers do their best to hand sort the dumpsters at their shop, but that is an undesired labor expense. Yet, they feel powerless to enforce the separation requirements, as the customers would simply abandon them in favor of another dumpster/container vendor.
- I virtually attended the 2020 ReUSE Minnesota conference.

Salvaging and recycling large quantities from this construction site was not without challenges, as it seemed to deviate significantly from the norm. Paraphrasing one of the construction vendors:

These crews recycle some material, though they are not accustomed to recycling to this degree. A lot of this would have gone to the landfill.

Are people who "go green" and contractors within this industry of different mindsets? I think not. In fact, some of the contractors on this project seemed excited and pleased that salvage and recycling were encouraged. Thus, perhaps the

bandwagon effect prevents persons within this industry from embracing salvage and recycling.

Salvage Process at GRCM

There were no broad invitations to the community to participate in this salvage project. Rather than creating a free-for-all situation, GRCM conducted a gradual salvage project. The interwoven stages:

- The fixtures of the building were thoroughly documented in an online database, including photographs. Though it was not the original plan, this alternative became important when the pandemic limited in-person tours.
- The inventory was shared with GRCM representatives, who could both (a) claim items for GRCM's preservation or (b) claim items for personal use.
- Technicians and volunteers were invited to claim items.
- Nonprofit organizations and government agencies were invited to review the inventory. This was announced via the Saint Cloud Area Human Services Council.
- Select items were marketed on Freecycle and the Minnesota Materials Exchange.
- Eventually, people who had chosen to participate in the salvage project were encouraged to invite their acquaintances.

All materials were available for free, with only a few exceptions. For example, a salvager could not take copper and other valuable metals unless they paid more than the recycling value. Salvagers provided their own labor and tools to reclaim the desired materials. Each was required to sign a liability waiver covering injury, damage, and regulatory responsibility.

Areas to Improve

The professional demolition teams were not synchronized with the volunteer salvage teams. Communication should have been better.

A better scenario would likely include the construction manager coordinating a professional deconstruction team. Yet, no one could name a deconstruction vendor in Central Minnesota. Is there adequate deconstruction education on the concept within the construction industry?

Finding a market for 25 tons of material was a challenge. There seems to be no resellers of building fixtures in Central Minnesota, with the exception of the safes. Thus, GRCM worked directly with the public to rehome fixtures.

Early in the process, I theorized that small construction companies would show the greatest interest in claiming items. Yet, attempts to give away fixtures to these companies were largely futile.

Word of mouth was the most successful method of finding desiring consumers. GRCM avoided a broad announcement to the general public out of fear that the building would be flooded with inexperienced or halfhearted salvagers. Even with this limited publicity, the project attracted a few people who claimed items, but neglected to retrieve them. An online marketplace for building fixtures would be helpful. Freecycle attracted just a few salvagers. The Minnesota Materials Exchange has potential for commercial-grade products, though seems to lack popularity.

Profiles of the Salvagers

The serious salvagers typically fell into one or more of these categories: (a) persons employed in facilities management, (b) nonprofits/governments with a dedicated facilities staff, or (c) people with farming backgrounds.

Salvagers who claimed 100 or more pounds:

- A technology guru in his 40's claimed over 600 pounds for a home modeling project. That included ceiling tiles and some doors.
- A facilities manager in his 50's claimed nearly 300 pounds for his home and garage. He felt the check-signing counter could be used as a workbench in his garage and double as a conversation piece.
- A security specialist in his 40's claimed over 200 pounds. All of it was plywood.
- A local business claimed nearly 200 pounds. Most of it was building materials for shelving units.
- A school claimed over 800 pounds. They claimed shelving, some building materials for a theatrical set, and sheets of glass so that art students could practice cutting it.
- A church claimed a 100-pound security gate.
- A construction person in his 30's claimed 300 pounds of lumber.
- A church claimed over 600 pounds, primarily wall paneling and shelving.
- An educator in his 20's claimed over 400 pounds. It was primarily oak wood.
- A retired facilities manager with a farming background in his 60's claimed over 1,800 pounds. He sought material to improve the workshop within his garage.
- A plumber in his 60's claimed over 9,000 pounds. These safes are to be resold.
- An educator claimed 2,000 pounds. The crushed granite will be used on his rural property.
- A photographer claimed nearly 200 pounds. The shelving has been reconstructed in his garage.

- An HVAC technician in his 60's claimed over 4,500 pounds. Approaching retirement, he was seeking fixtures and materials to upgrade the interior of some family farm buildings, finish a basement, and build a cabin.
- A construction person claimed over 100 pounds. It included shelving and a ceiling fan.
- A guest attending a museum preview event claimed nearly 200 pounds of shelving.
- A safe/vault vendor claimed approximately 6,000 pounds of merchandise.
- A local government agency claimed over 1,600 pounds. The ceiling tiles, diffusers, and more will replace worn components in their low-income housing.
- A farm family claimed nearly 3,000 pounds. The material, mostly lumber and ceiling tiles, will be utilized to remodel a barn and a house
- A professional driver claimed over 600 pounds. The lumber, ceiling tiles, and more will be used in his home and more.
- A school claimed over 200 pounds, including an undercounter cabinet and HVAC filters.
- A nonprofit serving persons with disabilities claimed over 1,700 pounds. The shelving, sills, grab bars, door knobs, and filing cabinets will be used for various improvements.
- A government entity claimed 1,400 pounds. The cabinets and counters will be used directly by their aging services guests.
- Smaller quantities were claimed by approximately 25 individuals, nonprofit organizations, or government entities.

Data That Generated The Graphs

Distribution of Materials (by weight):

- Individuals: 15,024.7 pounds
- For profits: 862.5 pounds
- Nonprofits: 3,658.6 pounds
- Resellers: 13,665.5 pounds
- Governments: 3,047.5 pounds

Communication of Materials:

- Word of mouth: 22,795.8 pounds
- Freecycle: 4,231.6 pounds
- Saint Cloud Area Human Service Council: 5,307.9 pounds
- Minnesota Materials Exchange: 100 pounds
- WJON Trading Post: 16 pounds
- Direct to professionals: 19,027.5 pounds

Type of Material:

- Particle board: 9,522 pounds
- Plywood: 397.3 pounds
- Real wood: 3,700.2 pounds
- Glass: 227.4 pounds
- Ferrous metal: 28,808.1 pounds
- Nonferrous metal: 2,647 pounds
- Stone: 2,210 pounds
- Other: 3,920.4 pounds

End Results

Salvagers are just beginning to share the end results from the project. At least two salvagers have reconnected with GRCM to provide monetary gifts.



A shelving unit has been constructed in someone's garage.



A bench with storage below has been constructed in someone's home.