

BECKER COUNTY

WASTE DIVERSION STUDY

2020-2021

Why this Project ?

- Each year, Becker County residents and businesses throw away tons of material, some of which still have a useful life remaining
- To measure and identify waste that could be diverted
- To better manage more of our solid waste in a preferred way.
- Diverting reusable materials at the Solid Waste Campus, the County will:
 - ▶ Returning usable products to the community for a second life.
 - ▶ Reduce disposal costs for County
 - ▶ May create new jobs
 - ▶ Reducing the release of harmful emissions

Timeline

- Discussions began in early 2020 between Becker County and Better Futures Minnesota (BFM) to begin a pilot study on waste diversion of the waste stream.
- BFM hired staff through the State correctional system
- Due to the pandemic, the project begin September 2020.



Project Partner

Better Futures Minnesota, part of the solution!

- ▶ Better Futures Minnesota (BFM) has an integrated care and social enterprise model that offers primarily African American men an opportunity for a better life by addressing two most basic needs are safe, affordable housing and a job.
- ▶ Their model's four fundamentals are - housing, jobs, health and wellness, and coaching. The enterprise has engaged more than 1100 at-risk, mostly African American men, and employed 830 of these men since 2008.
- ▶ This project with Becker County is BFM's first opportunity in Greater Minnesota to test on-site diversion techniques and assess the demand for used products and materials.
- ▶ They are interested in partnering with additional Greater MN Solid Waste Departments to see if this waste diversion program would work with your program.
- ▶ Deconstruction services is an additional program that compliments waste diversion goals for local governments. BFM presently does deconstruction in the Twin Cities and is offering those services in Greater MN.

Natural Resources Research Institute

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DULUTH
Driven to Discover

- Institute at the University of Minnesota – Duluth, with funding from LCCMR, are demonstrating the significant, multiple benefits of diverting household goods and building materials from the landfill.





Opportunities for Residents and Businesses

Residents and contractors can support this effort by:

Helping staff identify and set aside reusable products and materials:

- ▶ at the Transfer Station
- ▶ at drop off sites around the Solid Waste Campus
- ▶ purchase items at sales events

Program Considerations

- ▶ **Staffing**
- ▶ **Receiving/intake/collection**
 - ▶ What, when, Where, How
- ▶ **Storage- before, during, after sale**
- ▶ **Collection parameters**
 - ▶ What do you take?
 - ▶ Acceptable items
 - ▶ Unacceptable items
 - ▶ Is there a cost at disposal time?
- ▶ **Sales/advertising**
 - ▶ Social media
- ▶ **What are the financial ramifications**
 - ▶ Tax paid at sale time by customer
 - ▶ Disposal fee
 - ▶ Regular disposal fee
 - ▶ Reduced rate

Who collects items?

Becker County Staff- Pre-disposal

- As loads are inspected, possible reuse items are pulled out and set aside for reuse.
- BC Staff notify BFM staff of items who collect items and put in storage for sale at future date.
- 2020-2021 - GreenCorps Member



Where Do The Items Come From?

BFM Staff - Post disposal

- Makes several daily trips for items from:
 - Transfer Station
 - MRF
 - Metal storage
 - Demolition sites
- Log items in daily





Temporary Storage

- ▶ TWO SHIPPING CONTAINERS ARE BEING RENTED BY BFM AND
- ▶ LOCATED AT THE HAZARDOUS WASTE FACILITY

SALES



'EVENT'

- ▶ Selection & pricing is done by BFM Staff
- ▶ Sales benefit BFM
- ▶ Three sales to date- 1 ½ day sales
 - ▶ 2nd day geared to local reuse stores at discounted pricing
 - ▶ March sale - 1 day with last hour ½ price
- ▶ Held at the HHW Facility
- ▶ Items not sold- held for next sale
- ▶ Staffing of sale:
 - ▶ 1 BC staff
 - ▶ 3 BFM staff (2 from Mpls)

ONLINE

- ▶ Larger items are listed on Craigs list through Better Futures
- ▶ Pro:
 - ▶ Wider audience
- ▶ Con:
 - ▶ Staff time to monitor/interact with buyers ongoing

Advertising of Sales

- Sales events and full-time staff presence at the Transfer Station has developed momentum and visibility for this waste diversion and reuse pilot study.
 - ▶ People are asking when the next sale is
 - ▶ People are asking staff to keep an eye out for certain items
 - ▶ We have a list serve to notify folks
 - ▶ People are looking to 'donate' to the sale (during this pilot study we are not)
- Active use of social media and radio/TV shows to inform the public and build interest has yielded excellent results.
 - ▶ Local radio talk in show- Hodge Podge
 - ▶ Regional TV show- Talkin' Trash
 - ▶ Facebook-
 - ▶ Becker County main Facebook page garnering several thousand views each time
 - ▶ Regional Facebook 'swap/sale' sites (reach larger audience looking for sales)



- Sale 1: October 28 & 29 –
 - ▶ Generated \$1,109 in revenue from the sale of 121 items
 - ▶ Diverted 1.65 tons
- Sale 2: December 3 & 4
 - ▶ Generated \$1,606 in revenue from the sale of 194 items
 - ▶ Diverted 1.45 tons of material
- Sale 3: February 4 & 5-
 - ▶ Generated \$ 681.97 in revenue from the sale of 119 items
 - ▶ Diverted .75 tons of material
 - ▶ *(below zero, gale-force winds=Bad weather!)*
- Next sale: March

All sales are subject to sales tax

As per LCCMR requirements, all revenue was reinvested into the operation of this pilot.



Results

- ▶ Timing - summer
- ▶ Sales are seasonal- i.e. bricks & bikes don't sell in Dec.
- ▶ Staffing= labor
 - ▶ Intake
 - ▶ Processing
 - ▶ Sales



- ▶ Receiving/intake/collection
 - ▶ Where, What, When, Where, How
- ▶ Storage- before, during, after sale
- ▶ Collection parameters
 - ▶ What do you take?
 - ▶ How do you take it?
 - ▶ What won't you take?
 - ▶ Is there a cost at disposal time?
 - ▶
- ▶ Sales/advertising
 - ▶ Social media
- ▶ What are the financial ramifications
 - ▶ Taxes paid at sale time
 - ▶ Disposal fee- reduced rate?

Future Plans

- ▶ Becker County residents appreciate:
 - ▶ Building supplies- lumber, doors, bricks, etc.
 - ▶ Knick-knacks are big sellers
 - ▶ Support local business owners
- ▶ Program future:
 - ▶ How to continue?
 - ▶ How do we pay for the program?
 - ▶ How do we house the program?
 - ▶ How do we staff the program?
 - Public
 - Private/non-profit



A New Outlook...
Thinking beyond the
landfill!

THURSDAY
February
4, 2021
8-4:30

Debit or Credit
Card only!

TRASH

TREASURE
SALE

Location: 24455 County Rd 144, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501* 218-846-7310

Debit or
Credit Card
only!

Brought to you by: BECKER COUNTY * BETTER FUTURES MN * ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOUC E TRUST FUND







