## Table of Contents

Overview: Finger Lakes ReUse .................................................................................................................. 4  
Paper Objectives ......................................................................................................................................... 5  
Methods ..................................................................................................................................................... 5  

### GREEN JOB DEVELOPMENT

Role of the Green Economy .................................................................................................................... 5  
Incorporating Finger Lakes ReUse ......................................................................................................... 6  
Current Practices ..................................................................................................................................... 7  
Additional Green Job Development .......................................................................................................... 9  
  Non-profit Initiatives ................................................................................................................................. 9  
  Deconstruction Consulting ....................................................................................................................... 9  
  Vocational Schools and Programs ........................................................................................................... 10  
    Appliance Repair Programs .................................................................................................................. 10  
    Furniture Repair and Carpentry Training Programs ............................................................................. 11  
    A Focus on Soft Skills .......................................................................................................................... 11  
Recommendations for Finger Lakes ReUse ............................................................................................... 12  

### MARKETING AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Reuse Center, Minneapolis ............................................................................................................... 13  
  Background ............................................................................................................................................. 13  
  Current Marketing Practices .................................................................................................................... 13  
  Strategies for Finger Lakes ReUse ......................................................................................................... 14  

### APPENDICES

Appendix A ............................................................................................................................................... 17  
Appendix B ............................................................................................................................................... 17  
Appendix C ............................................................................................................................................... 19  
Appendix D ............................................................................................................................................... 20  
Appendix E ............................................................................................................................................... 22  

### REFERENCES

............................................................................................................................................................. 23
Finger Lakes ReUse: Possibilities for Future Development

The acute exploitation of our planet’s natural reserves has called into question the character of human consumption. Millions of resources are being used in the production of buildings, furnishing and appliances that go into places where people work, eat, shop and live. As the resource sink dwindles and the conditions of the environment deteriorate, material inputs have much more value amidst increasing scarcity. Much of what is built today is either discarded or thrown into landfills before its full utility has been realized. By encouraging people to become cognizant of recycling and learn to reuse what was previously classified as discardable, this vicious cycle of waste can be broken. In nature there is no waste, as everything is reused or in some way re-circulated back through systems from which it came. Outputs become inputs, and every component of an ecosystem participates in the natural mechanisms of re-cycling. Some day it is hoped that people can live with zero waste production and recycle everything. To start in that direction people need to begin to think about how they can do more with resources before they are waste and reuse what has already been made in a creative and lasting way.

We are all familiar with the three R’s (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle). We’ve been taught to throw our soda cans in one container and our newspapers in another. We’ve been told to turn off the lights when we leave a room, and to use less gas by walking and carpooling. But what about instead of throwing all our non-recyclable trash away, we turned it into something functional, something useable? For people who don't know how, or who don't want to bother with the time and effort, reuse centers serve as the mediator--getting items from people and creating new ones to produce for others. It can also be the mediator between demolition and recycling. (Knapp, 2) Goods flow—from the extraction of the raw materials needed to create the good, to the acquisition and use of the good. But after first consumption, the flow is abruptly cut short. Goods enter another flow: that of the waste stream. How can we more efficiently close the loop and use the consumed good as a ‘new’ material for further creation of a new product? This question becomes even more significant when we consider the unprecedented growth of material consumption in the U.S. over the last century. The quantity of materials consumed has increased from 161 million metric tons in 1990 to 2.8 billion metric tons in 1995 (10 metric tons per person per year!) More than half of all the materials consumed during the last century were consumed in the last 25 years. (Matos and Wagner, 107) The problems created by this consumption are endless. Even if we don't consider the unsustainable nature of ever-expanding landfills, there is extreme inefficiency in the amount of energy wasted by discarding - energy that can potentially be utilized elsewhere or by someone else.

This is where a reuse center comes in. Since Finger Lakes Reuse is extremely new it could therefore benefit from analyzing other successful organizations around the nation. Recently, urban reuse centers are growing in popularity as a result for the need for alternatives to traditional waste management practices combined with growing public interest for environmental concerns. There are currently 6,000 reuse centers around the country, ranging from specialized programs for building materials to unneeded school supplies to the Salvation Army. Reuse centers can serve several functions: (1) to collect used items to be sold at discounted rates (2) to collect non-functioning used items and repair them, to be sold at discounted rates (3) to collect used broken items to break down into constituent useful parts, and use parts for other projects or to be sold individually (4) to deconstruct buildings into its constituent
components to be reused in further building projects or sold (5) architectural restoration. Many reuse centers go above and beyond these functions.

Reuse centers also make good economic sense. The industry as a whole can recover materials worth up to $700 a ton (Knapp, 1992), and will reduce the energy content of waste that currently enters landfills, incinerators, or reprocessing plants. By reducing that energy content of waste (i.e., energy that is not utilized for functional purposes) inefficiency is reduced. Reuse centers themselves produce a large amount of outputs for the few inputs required. They require low energy use, produce low pollution and require few public dollars (Knapp, 1992). The value of recovered goods is increasing, particularly from salvage and deconstruction projects (Manuel, 2003), so the potential for reuse centers to make profit exists (despite most reuse centers having not-for-profit status). Reuse centers are also highly localized, and the people participating in its functioning are often invested in their work and communities. Later, we’ll discuss how reuse centers go further than the mere practical reverting of resources from landfills to constructive uses and actually serve to be strong community additions by bolstering the economy and environment alike.

OVERVIEW: FINGER LAKES REUSE

Long considered a center of progressive thought and action, the Ithaca area is home to a multitude of organizations committed to reducing consumption and its planetary impact. While several of these programs include a component on reuse, each remains a separate entity with a specialized focus. Until this year, there was no singular establishment through which to connect the ideals, assets, and raw materials for a community-wide reuse effort.

Last month, Diane Cohen and a small group of associates opened Finger Lakes ReUse - a comprehensive operation centered on the salvage and reclamation of reusable goods. The overall vision of Finger Lakes ReUse (FLR) aims to combine the need for affordable, quality merchandise and living-wage jobs with a strong environmental ethic. Not only will FLR provide a centrally located retail and warehouse space, but also education and work facilities in which to teach the principles and skills of reuse. For now, however, Finger Lakes ReUse is channeling most of its energy toward the collection and recirculation of acquired goods. In the short term, this retail-oriented focus will establish a solid source of income and visibility from which to base further development. Future plans include a greater emphasis on outreach and education – providing deconstruction services, job training programs, and classes exploring the artistic side of reuse. In collaboration with existing local programs, FLR hopes to continually expand their practice, becoming more extensive and beneficial to a broader audience. As one of their primary goals involves connecting with the needs of the surrounding community, Finger Lakes ReUse is especially eager for public input on the services offered.
OBJECTIVES

This report serves two purposes: one, to fulfill the final project requirement of the City and Regional Planning course "Green Cities" at Cornell University. Second, to provide a practical document, which Finger Lakes Reuse can use for their further expansion and development. To this end, the authors met with the proprietor and manager of FLR, Diane Cohen, and discussed what research would best serve FLR at this time. In that process, we determined that there were two distinct areas in which we could help FLR expand their efforts: promoting local green jobs and enhancing both marketing and community outreach.

METHOD

We used Internet sources for the majority of our research--academic journals as well as a variety of reuse center websites and periodical publications from public media newsletters, etc. We also conducted several telephone interviews. Among the reuse centers and organizations we contacted were: Reuse Minneapolis and The Loading Dock of Baltimore, MD. We found that considering existing reuse centers and their practices was most helpful. However, many centers also had useful comments on practices they would like to have, but were hindered by one obstacle or another. These comments were revealing because they presented realistic challenges that Finger Lakes Reuse could face if and when it decides to pursue certain goals, such as job training partnerships or outreach campaigns.

We looked into practices relating to marketing and green jobs at reuse centers around the country, mostly via information on websites, but also through a few phone interviews. A list of questions one group came up with for interviews can be found in Appendix A. We aimed to include all ways that reuse centers support local green jobs and have successful marketing practices, both directly and indirectly. Additionally, one group researched how non-reuse center organizations/groups supported green jobs that might be applicable to FLR.

GREEN JOB DEVELOPMENT

ROLE OF THE GREEN ECONOMY

Setting the course towards sustainability will involve a coherence of both biological and social elements. In addition to reducing the strain placed on the biosphere, directing commerce away from emitting harmful pollutants and towards low-impact business practices can simultaneously benefit workers, communities, and society at large. Throughout the country, an increasing number of residents are choosing to purchase goods and services from firms and organizations dedicated to improving environmental quality. Such a mentality shift results in the potential to exchange a workforce that contributes to the major problems of our generation for one that helps to mitigate them. This concept is the driving force behind the idea of developing a green economy – making sustainability a powerful engine for job creation, growth, and innovation. A green economy would have an especially significant
impact on urban areas, where increased efficiency and economic prospects lead to a more equitable and high-quality standard of living. Through the resulting influx of jobs and investment, these areas can be reclaimed for the benefit of local residents.

The movement is already gaining momentum - in 2006, renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies created 8.5 million new jobs, almost $970 billion in revenue, and more than $100 billion in industry profits. The major building blocks for this green economy will be widespread green-collar job opportunities, defined as well-paid, career-oriented work that contributes directly to preserving or enhancing environmental quality. Most green-collar jobs are of a moderate skill level requiring more education than high school, but less than a four-year degree. Such employment is well within reach for unskilled and low-income workers as long as they have access to effective training programs and the appropriate support.

A green economy will also demand workers with original skill sets. Some green-collar jobs - solar energy technicians, for example – will be completely new. However, an even larger contingent will come from the transformation of existing jobs as businesses transition to a clean energy practices. This is where organizations such as Finger Lakes ReUse come into play. The knowledge and labor demand for remodeling some of the goods provided by a reuse center has the potential to generate a host of fresh employment. Deconstruction practices are reshaping building demolition, turning a wasteful and destructive process into one of regeneration. Appliance reclamation and repair has the power to generate like-new products without the use of new resources. Viewing reusable goods from a creative standpoint opens a pathway to endless possibility, pairing the aesthetics of art with the ethics of ecology. In addition, the training provided by these practices can give people qualifying skills and experience for occupations in other related fields.

As brought to light by the environmental justice movement, low-income communities and communities of color have felt the greatest impact from the shortcomings of our current economic system. By advocating for the creation of green-collar jobs, job training, and entrepreneurial opportunities for people of all socioeconomic backgrounds, it then becomes possible to combat both poverty and pollution at the same time.

INCORPORATING FINGER LAKES REUSE

Finger Lakes ReUse officially opened its doors on Wednesday November 12, 2008. As a newly evolving organization, it currently lacks the space and resources to establish the educational and job training programs that it hopes to one day provide to the regional area. However, Finger Lakes ReUse is interested in researching the possibilities for job training in the future so that when space and resources allow, they can implement job training programs.

In order to maintain FLR’s commitment to the enhancement of community and the economy specifically, FLR plans to employ training programs that allow “low income residents to develop workforce skills.” Beneficial to the social and economic livelihood of the regional community, job
training programs at FLR could serve a diverse group of individuals who are trying to find their place in the workforce. Offering job training programs to those who otherwise would not have the skills to be successful in a certain profession, and paying workers a living wage equitably serves individuals involved in the program. FLR is committed not only to the creation of a job training program that focuses on specific skills associated with repair and deconstruction, but one that also focuses on the social skills associated with the maintenance of a steady job. It is through the institution of a program that incorporates both aspects of training that FLR will be most successful in achieving their mission.

At FLR, maximum reuse of materials is a priority. Currently FLR can only accept materials that are in good working or structural condition. However, with the support of a staff that is trained to make repairs on appliances, furniture, and computers, FLR will be able to maximize the reuse of items in the regional community.

CURRENT PRACTICES

First and foremost, reuse center jobs are often green jobs. Even if they’ve never heard the phrase “Green Jobs”, reuse employees who are paid an area-specific “living wage” with good benefits exemplify what it means to fight poverty and climate change at the same time. For example, Urban Ore pays employees according to Berkeley, California’s calculated living wage. Reuse centers also offer employees the opportunity to learn and practice effective business skills, including: decision-making on the job, constructive interaction with coworkers, commitment, and responsibility. Sometimes reuse centers specifically target underprivileged demographics for hiring, such as The Loading Dock (TLD) using Goodwill’s job training and placement program (including for ex-offenders).

Outside of their own employees, the most direct way that reuse centers can foster green-collar jobs is through providing skills training programs. Existing skill-learning programs include: appliance repair, computer repair, retail management, and office administration. Initially we thought that job training programs at reuse centers would comprise our main target for research. However, only a few reuse centers actually use a job-training framework for their workshops or classes, with Recycle North being the best example - which FLR has already explored extensively. More often, the focus is on people who will be directly using goods from the reuse center, such as homeowners, renters, landlords, and builders. Many of these classes have topics like “lighting installation” or “energy efficiency” (both workshops offered at TLD). Another popular subject is artistic innovation – sometimes geared towards children – such as the creative re-use workshops at SCRAP (Scroungers’ Center for Reusable Art Parts). Also, the East Bay Depot for Creative Reuse runs “Art in the Heart”, bringing artists into public school classrooms and after-school programs on an ongoing basis. Environmental education is a great outreach tool, as Building REsources found by offering programs like “How Much Energy Is In My Shoe?” and “Re-Using Local Materials for the School Garden.” Their “Sticks and Stones and Other Bones, or The Hole That Ate My House.” program bears this description:

What is your house made of? Where did it all come from, and where will it all go when we are done with it? Can you recycle a house? Can we save your house from the hungry giant Hole? Introductions to the materials that make up most of our homes, fill up most of
our landfills, and provide a most eye opening look at the worlds of reuse and green building. There are lots of sample materials and lots of fun in this program which runs approximately thirty minutes.

There are many indirect pathways by which existing reuse centers support local green jobs and cultivate related skills. The main venue for reuse centers to advance and strengthen local green employment opportunities, beyond directly offering programs, is through partnerships with local organizations, companies, and other such groups. Notable categories of these partnerships include: associations among landlords and homeowners, homebuilders, local renovation groups, non-profit housing groups, affordable housing developers, community groups (including those with a religious affiliation), volunteer/aid organizations, the LEED certification/design process, artists and art groups, as well as schools and community centers. The latter two were touched on above. The Loading Dock partners with local homebuilder associations and thus is connected with the National Association of Homebuilders. Two community groups that both work with affordable housing and shop at TLD are the Light Street Housing Corporation (founded by Light Street Presbyterian Church) and Jubilee Housing. Many of these non-profit housing groups have made a commitment to use 30% reused materials in their homes, and form an influential customer base for reuse centers.

Many of the partnerships made with reuse centers concentrate on diverting items from the waste stream. There are many kinds of jobs that can help achieve zero-waste, besides actually being employed by a reuse center. One common example is a vehicle fleet to pick up materials at houses, businesses, construction sites, or coordinated drop-off points. Urban Ore has a Salvage and Recycling Department that works with employees at local dumps, recycling centers, and transfer stations to save reusable items after people have already paid to get rid of them. In addition, they collect non-reusable but recyclable materials to be properly recycled – some of which generate income (nonferrous and ferrous metals and glass). The Loading Dock goes one step further by partnering with local disposal centers to collect leftover paint and have it mixed to produce full, uniform, and usable buckets of paint to sell. Three counties sell TLD reused paint buckets that meet certain specifications, such as that the color must be marked on the lid. One county program uses volunteers to mix the paint, one uses a private contractor, and the third uses prison labor. Reuse centers also can partner with demolition and construction crews for deconstruction efforts, and even help recruit volunteers for specific deconstruction events.

Furthermore, reuse centers can serve as an important asset in the consulting arena. Consulting for businesses can be especially rewarding – in terms of impact and monetarily. Housing and commercial building developers want to save money and become more eco-friendly, and reuse centers can help make their new plans achieve both objectives. For example, as well as a large warehouse, Urban Ore also runs a consulting business to design zero-waste resource-recovery facilities, with past clients located both within the country and abroad. Documents and materials are available to help reuse centers get started with this process – some are free online, but other, more detailed products may cost a small fee.
ADDITIONAL GREEN JOB DEVELOPMENT

Lastly, we looked into green-collar job training programs situated apart from reuse centers. Some are specifically connected to the Green Jobs movement, while others more generally focus on addressing the socioeconomic concerns of environmental advocacy. However, all have the potential to be affiliated with or modeled by reuse centers.

Non-profit Initiatives

Bronx Environmental Stewardship Training (B.E.S.T.) is a program of Sustainable South Bronx. Founded in 2003 as one of the nation’s first green jobs training programs, B.E.S.T. has also proven to be one of the most successful. Over its lifetime, 85% of graduates are employed and 10% are pursuing higher degrees. This 10-week skill-learning and job-placement program focuses on urban horticultural infrastructure (green roof installation and maintenance, brownfield remediation, urban forestry design and maintenance, wetland/estuary restoration, and stream bank stabilization). Such improvements not only increase green space, but improve stormwater management, reduce the “heat island” effect, and ultimately fight global climate change. B.E.S.T. helps counter urban poverty at the same time, as most students received some form of public assistance, and many had prison records. The program is currently being expanded to encompass energy solutions like energy audits, efficiency retrofits, and alternative energy installation and maintenance.

The Oakland Green Jobs Corps officially launched on October 20th, 2008 as a program of the Ella Baker Center run though a partnership with Laney College, Cypress Mandela Construction Training Program, and Growth Sector (a workforce intermediary). The Corps targets people considered “hard to employ” such as at-risk-youth, and people who are underemployed, low-income, or formerly-incarcerated. Students are trained in renewable energy and energy efficiency (as well as basic work skills), then connected to jobs in the emerging green economy, such as solar companies and green contractors. The pilot class has 40 students. Van Jones founded both the Ella Baker Center and Green For All, a national green-jobs advocacy group. Consistent with the Green For All message, the Oakland Green Jobs Corps aims to create sustainable infrastructure for a just and healthy planet, as well as fight poverty and pollution at the same time.

Deconstruction Consulting

Firms such as RE-USE Consulting (based out of Bellingham, Washington) promote sustainable alternatives to demolition, and offer practical and educational services to a wide clientele. In keeping with the ideals of a reuse center, this organization views buildings needing removal as “resources to be harvested instead of liabilities to be landfilled” (Bennink, 2008). RE-USE provides actual labor for deconstruction projects, as well as comprehensive on-site training sessions for the existing work crews. They even have experience working with other reuse centers, such as Buffalo ReUse and Build It Green.
NYC. In terms of employment, deconstruction projects run by RE-USE Consulting have created 10-20 times more jobs than mechanical demolition - demonstrating a commitment to the green-collar job initiative. In addition, RE-USE aims to keep the generated building materials both affordable and available to lower-income customers. While they do not run a physical retail store, RE-USE will partner with stores, contractors, and homeowners to assist with the sale of materials.

Vocational Schools and Programs

Vocational training programs have long been a component of public school education, often being considered havens for lower performing students who have not been successful in traditional public school settings (Hernandez 2008). However, vocational programs have long been a standard for preparation of individuals for work in trade occupations. Vocational programs are offered as a part of alternative public high school education and as a part of adult education programs, both public and private. Many existing trade programs offer elements which would be useful in a reuse center job training model.

Appliance Repair Programs

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, on-the-job training is the most common method of training for appliance repair jobs, with employers hiring individuals and then training them on the job. As a result, there is a limited number of job training programs that are available specifically for appliance repair training. However, job training programs for appliance repair/electronics programs do exist on a limited basis in high school vocational programs, post secondary technical schools, and community colleges. Additionally, privately run appliance repair programs also exist. Consideration of the existing programs for appliance repair in the Tompkins-Tioga-Broome County region as examples to model a separate training program after, and/or to send employees to for training would be beneficial to the Finger Lakes Reuse center job training model we propose.

As a result of the limited available of classes tailored specifically to job training in appliance repair, a focus will be placed on existing training programs that (1) portions of the curriculum could be taken from and/or (2) that could serve to give employees a background in skills necessary to do appliance repair.

The only certification that is required for appliance repair has been set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) who has mandated that all individuals who work with refrigerants pass a written examination in order to be certified in their proper handling (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2008). National organizations exist, such as the National Appliance Service Technician Certification (NASTeC), which specializes in measurement of the “knowledge, ability and skills that technicians need daily to do the job right.” Administered by the International Society of Certified Electronics Technicians (ISCET), the NASTeC certification requires individuals to demonstrate their competence and experience in appliance repair. Additional organizations including the Professional Service Organization (PSA) have a certification program which grants those who pass the examination a Certified Appliance Professional (CAP) designation. Although these certifications are not required, it would be beneficial to take into consideration the standing of potential appliance repair educators in
these organizations as the certification serves as a testament to their experience and competence in the field.

Currently, only private courses specifically focusing on appliance repair exist for individuals in the Finger Lakes Region. In the Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES education program, a program focusing specifically on appliance repair does not exist. A two year electrician training program is already established, however. In this program, students learn all aspects of electrical training necessary to enter the field as an entry level electrician, including electrical safety, wiring methods, installation of wiring systems in homes, and construction codes. Although this program does not focus specifically on repair of appliances, certain aspects of this job training program as listed below are applicable to the FLR job training model including repair and replacement of switches and outlets, basic wiring methods, and circuitry.

Furniture Repair and Carpentry Training Programs

Preparation for the repair of furniture or the deconstruction of homes in the reuse center setting can also be supplemented by the existing BOCES carpentry program. The BOCES carpentry program includes training that would be beneficial to those specializing in furniture repair including in the use of basic hand tools, portable power tools, the identification, choice, and use of building materials, and interior finish. Useful components of the employability profile used for individuals in the BOCES carpentry program has been included in Appendix D. The curriculum used for this portion of the carpentry education program could be integrated into a job training program specifically tailored to furniture repair. Similar to appliance repair professionals, most furniture repair professionals are trained through apprenticeship programs or on the job training programs.

A Focus on Soft Skills

Educational and vocational programs have paid increasing attention to the soft skills associated with preparing students for success in the employment world (Mass. Dept of Elementary and Secondary Education 2008). The Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES program has also maintained a focus on job skills necessary to possess for any work environment. An emphasis on effective communication, responsibility, taking the initiative, attitude, and safety are all components integrated into the BOCES teaching model. Students in these vocational programs are evaluated every semester on their progress in each respective area. The “Employability Progress Report” used by T-S-T BOCES to evaluate the progress of students in terms of soft-skills is listed in Appendix D.

Vocational programs focusing specifically on the development of good work habits are also beneficial to the proliferation of the green jobs concept through reuse centers. Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) offers customized training and programs for business, industry, government, and not-for-profit agencies. TC3.biz offers workshops for professional development, with training programs capable of addressing workplace interactions including communication, teamwork, problem solving and decision making, emotional intelligence, computer literacy, service excellence, leadership and management, and results orientation. In particular, the service excellence program focuses on the ability of employees to deal with customer situations, develop professional telephone skills,
communicate effectively in the business place, and develop effective listening skills for improved communication.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FINGER LAKES REUSE

(1) We think that a partnership with T-S-T BOCES carpentry and electrician programs would benefit both the graduates of the program and FLR. How? The graduates of BOCES’ programs could be informed about potential employment opportunities or future seasonal/temporary work with FLR (manning deconstruction crews when demand exists, teaching/assisting in repair classes for the community, general repair of donated items to be sold by FLR). FLR could even go so far as to provide an externship in which current students of the BOCES classes get hands on experience in a workplace. This collaboration would have the potential to strengthen the student’s employability skills (Appendix D).

(2) An organization such as RE-USE Consulting could be hired by FLR to work in association with them and conduct a hands-on deconstruction training program in the Ithaca area. A large-scale project such as that would not only educate more people which would direct future endeavors, but also give FLR greater visibility within the community.

(3) Existing systems can be used to the advantage of FLR. For example, within the LEED certification and design system points are granted for the use of reclaimed and local materials. FLR could act as a supplier of these materials, helping local contractors, developers, and architects attain LEED standards.

(4) FLR can connect with local opportunity organizations, such as the United Way of Tompkins County or the Human Services Coalition, which can serve to bring together employment seekers with potential employers (Appendix C).

(5) FLR should serve as a community resource by integrating public education classes taught by both trained staff of FLR and outside volunteers.

(6) FLR can collaborate with local affordable housing groups such as Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services (INHS) and Community Building Works! to provide reclaimed building materials for use in affordable housing construction. This would further emphasize the social aspect of FLR’s mission.
MARKETING AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A prominent challenge for Finger Lakes ReUse will be the development of innovative and promising product distribution channels, as well as strategic partnerships with the construction industry for accessing a higher volume and quality of materials. Additionally, another challenge is how to make reusable goods a feasible option for people of all income levels. The Reuse Center in Minneapolis has been a successful program in these particular areas. Using their example, we can examine how the marketing process and criteria are working out in practice, advantages and of their system, and the relevance to our situation here.

The Reuse Center, Minneapolis

Background

The Reuse Center in Minneapolis is a non-profit organization that began its operation in October 1995 and is has grown to include a combined 24,000 square feet in retail space. Annually, more than 75,000 customers from around the state come to the center to receive a 75% discount on salvaged building items and green building product lines. Throughout its operation, the reuse center has saved customers and donors over $30 million in addition to the 35,000 tons of construction material they have kept from entering the landfill.

Current Marketing Practices

In 1997, the Reuse Center organization identified some key procurement goals to increase the turnover rate of their inventory. The strategies listed below generated an 87% jump in sales from 1997 to 1998.

1. A deconstruction service was initiated in October 1997 as a way for the Reuse Center to more proactively secure inventory of quality used materials. The Center’s deconstruction service began with a trained four person crew and within a year they trained three additional crews. As this initiative evolved, about 60 percent of the salvaged materials were sold from deconstruction work sites or from the program's warehouse.

2. As another part of their procurement efforts, the Reuse Center expanded their pick-up service to three times a week.

3. “Guidelines for handling the inventory have been streamlined to get items to the sales floor and out the door more quickly. Pricing strategies were also adjusted to move items and increase inventory turnover rates” (In Business, 1999). Furthermore, the organization established a strong web-based marketing strategy by establishing a photo e-list where people are able to post pictures of materials they are looking to get rid of or post a listing of what they are looking for.
4. The Reuse Center expanded their store hours to include more evening and weekend hours.

5. In order to attract more people to the store, the Reuse Center set up programs in basic home repairs and consumer education. Additionally, they held classes on environmental topics to educate people on the importance of reuse and other procedures that can help protect the environment. These programs attract about 500 people to the store each year.

   Finger Lakes ReUse would benefit from following a similar marketing strategy to that of the Reuse Center in Minneapolis. Already, FLR is starting to develop a deconstruction service that will help them to gain significant inventory. A unique local condition that FLR could connect with is the decline of agriculture in Upstate New York. Essentially, this gradual shift has left hundreds of abandoned barns throughout Tompkins County. In Dryden alone, there are over 280 barns that have the potential to be deconstructed for their materials - some of them containing highly valuable historic wood (Catalano, 2008). In the past year, Tompkins County (through Historic Ithaca) has been surveying barns in the area to determine if any of them are worthy of preservation. Finger Lakes ReUse could establish a partnership with the Tompkins County Barn Project, so that any barn not being preserved could be subject to deconstruction and the salvage of any usable materials. For more information, FLR can contact Jessica Evans with Historic Ithaca.

   A nearby example of this is Levanna Restoration Lumber in Auburn, NY. Established in May 2002 as a for-profit organization, Doug Holland began to deconstruct abandoned barns in Upstate New York for materials that he would then use to create beautiful new projects or other home renovation. Holland does the labor for removing the material from barns in exchange for the material. He runs his business from a 1,500 square foot warehouse but is currently looking to expand his space. Currently, the operation is sustaining itself, but the materials do not move as fast as mass-produced flooring simply because he conducts a very labor-intensive process. Therefore, his services become more expensive. Most of the wood that Holland recovers is exceedingly old, from old-growth forests, and unique in character. Such products could add a distinct element to the FLR inventory, and increase variety from materials recovered within a typical house.

   **Strategies for Finger Lakes ReUse**

   FLR opened its doors less than a month ago and has only just begun to explore community outreach. For the most part, the population of Ithaca knows little about FLR or what it hopes to become. Finger Lakes ReUse needs to increase visibility in the community in order for the operation to expand beyond just retail.

   Collaboration with other local programs can be extremely beneficial to achieving the ultimate vision of Finger Lakes ReUse. Creating a comprehensive network for people to utilize can only strengthen the movement towards reuse and the sustainable lifestyle. Educational opportunities can provide another cornerstone to outreach efforts. Learning promotes both awareness and the desire for change, giving incentives to buy from FLR and incorporate their ideals into daily actions.

   A simple and effective strategy would be to increase advertising - through the radio, newspapers and information pamphlets. There are a number of papers in Ithaca, including the Ithaca Journal and
Cornell Daily Sun, which could advertise for FLR. Especially having just recently opened, this might be a good way to put FLR on the map.

As FLR is a non-profit organization and also wants to reduce the wasteful use of paper, they may wish to pursue some alternative sources of advertising. One way to accomplish this would be through local sponsorship - promotion in exchange for reuse services. If a business in Ithaca needs some type of repair work done, disposal of materials, or even wants to run an educational course about reuse, FLR could provide that service to the business in exchange for the business supporting and posting advertisements for the ReUse center.

Building a diverse network of partnerships is one objective that Finger Lakes ReUse has already begun. FLR hopes to collaborate with groups like Tompkins County Solid Waste, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, and Ithaca FreeCycle. All of these programs are working on promoting greener ways of life through recycling and reuse. FLR has a list of local programs on its website, but this referencing does not seem to be reciprocated by the other groups. The services that FLR hopes to provide would be better known if pre-established organizations helped to promote FLR in its development. With the support of other groups, FLR will have a better chance of connecting different members of the community and providing a more complete range of green services.

Finger Lakes ReUse also needs to attract people of all backgrounds to take advantage of their retail goods and educational opportunities. With two large campuses in Ithaca, there are a myriad of opportunities to facilitate reuse. Dump and Run is the current program being used by Cornell to recycle and reuse student’s un-wanted items. This program effectively collects goods in the dorms but does little to service the large numbers of off campus students who often discard or throw away viable objects. With the constant flow of students in and out of the multitude of rented houses, FLR could gather tons of reusable material. Additionally, one of the successes at the Minneapolis reuse center was more frequent pick-up times. Offering an increased number of these pick-up services at the end of each semester would greatly help FLR to expand their inventory. From there, re-circulating the old goods to new students would complete the cycle. Students could also become a huge part of the volunteer work force for deconstruction and maybe even refurbishing projects. Many student organizations are seeking volunteer work, and FLR could facilitate programs for student volunteer groups that would not only teach the students new skills, but help Ithaca progress into a more sustainable city.

This past November, the 2008 Great Lakes Building ReUse Conference was held in Buffalo, New York. As stated on the website, “This will be the first regional conference on developing and implementing building deconstruction and other creative solutions to address problems and solutions surrounding vacant and abandoned structures.” FLR has a strong focus in deconstruction and perhaps they could host a Finger Lakes Building ReUse Conference. This would help FLR establish itself in the Finger Lakes region and would be a great opportunity to get a very large community beyond Ithaca involved in reuse.

Web based advertising will probably be the best source of visibility for FLR. The current website for Finger Lakes ReUse is quite minimal, and could be thoroughly enhanced. In Minneapolis, for example, all available goods were advertised on an E-list. A section for advertising what is in at the store,
what people would like to sell from their homes, or goods people are looking for could all function in a Craig’s List type browser directly on the FLR website.

The site could also provide a database for recycling and reuse programs around Ithaca. With more descriptions on the website, it would help direct people to the services they need. One example would be for Tompkins County Solid Waste. Their website has a function which allows people to figure out how different materials should be recycled. If the FLR website could link people directly to that online resource, it would be a great way to connect the two programs while making information more accessible to the community. The website could also serve as a great database for repair services. Objects break all the time and it would be great to have an electronic resource to search right on the FLR website for a place to fix your refrigerator or toaster.

FLR has set fantastic goals for what it hopes to accomplish in Tompkins County. But first, they really need to become firmly rooted in Ithaca and get people involved. Right now, FLR is focused mainly on bringing in goods and deconstruction. Hopefully, they can rise beyond this quickly and become a mass facilitator of reuse and green ideas. Education will be a critical part of that, especially in such a strong academic community. Once established in Ithaca, FLR could reach out to the whole Finger Lakes region - providing green education and ideas for a greater network of localities.
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Proposed Interview Questions
1. How many classes do you currently offer? (some of this info is on their website, but it may not be updated. How are they categorized?
2. Do you support local green jobs in other ways besides direct training programs?
3. Who do you target for your classes? (Is there a demographic that you have in mind when you design certain classes?)
4. What other community organizations do you partner with in job skills training? Do you partner with a vocational school or other educational institution?
5. Costs of starting and running/maintaining training programs?
6. Roadblocks to start up (of classes, not of the reuse center)? What were the challenges you faced in starting training programs?
7. What is your employee base--where did your employees come from?
8. How do your students end up in your classes?
9. Resources used/needed for your classes? (e.g. space, instructors, etc.)
10. How do your efforts support local green jobs in other ways (including indirectly or through partnerships)?

APPENDIX B

Full Interview Notes from The Loading Dock
26.11.2008

Customer base: contractors, landlords (2\textsuperscript{nd} most active), non-profits, artists, homeowners (1\textsuperscript{st} most active)

Partnered with Terralogos to do a workshop on green building (awareness of term) and green home improvements (energy efficiency, installation of storm doors, insulation, heating systems, etc...) – unusual partnership, but worked well and want to repeat in future

Workshops mostly advertised through weekly emails (to members and others who sign up to receive them), on websites, and at local events in Spring/Fall. Held in warehouse – in a truck bay or a marked off area – so that they're visible to clients as they walk around the warehouse.

Workshop costs: time, little materials (less than $100); free to participants, who mostly sign up online; this helps to get accurate info about participants, including name spelling.

“If you teach people how to use the stuff you sell, it helps them talk to contractors or do it themselves.”

TLD tries to be self-supporting, pay decent wages; reach out to Goodwill’s job training programs.
20 staff – 8 people in warehouse, 3 in trucks, 4 cashiers; all process materials, work with clients, plan days; those 15 partially screened through Goodwill, meaning TLD pays Goodwill, and Goodwill pays the employees, whom they had previously trained and placed in a job with TLD. Using Goodwill to hire new employees saves admin time and having to reinvent the job training wheel; Goodwill does processing, drug testing, background checks, workers comp issues. 6 of the 15 are now full-time staff of TLD, the rest are still through Goodwill.

Incoming materials:

partner with local landfills – specific drop off locations; some landfill staff are now ambassadors; landfills are government agencies; connections are largely personality-driven; reuse is lumped into “recycling” category;

remixed paint – paint is expensive to dump; mixes similar paint colors and styles; TLD specifications: no baby-poop brown, keep as much white as possible, and mark top with a paint swatch; 3 counties sell mixed reused paint to TLD; some work paint into hazardous waste pickup days; transfer stations take it; 1 county buys recycled buckets, 1 buys new buckets; 1 county uses prison labor, 1 has a private contractor, and the other uses volunteers (that one sells large amounts at once);

National Association of Homebuilders – contractors, builders, and sometimes suppliers; sometimes easier to throw away extra lumber than to separate it; TLD can be adopted by local homebuilders associations

Outgoing materials:

Architects – like alternate uses, unusual projects

Housing associations

Artist groups – like to use reused materials, unique as well as environmentally friendly (especially lumber)

Some non-profit housing groups committed to use 30% reused materials in their houses

reach out to end user

awareness of how these materials fit into the green building movement – much more interest recently in the green aspect of reuse

TLD is a self-sustaining org and wants to help others be self-sustaining (whether using materials or finding other homes for them).
Refinishing kitchen cabinets (and also how to install it) – people's reaction tends to be “wow, under the horrible paint or stain is beautiful wood”

landlords fixing up new properties, etc...; easy energy efficiency improvements, e.g. cut holes in ceiling to get installation up there; new drywall

ReDo – virtual network for reuse groups popping up to talk to each other

APPENDIX C
Notes/Summary from Interview with The Reuse Center of Minneapolis
1 December 2008 2:00pm

--Interviewer states the purpose for calling. Interviewee (Brenda) is excited to tell me a little bit about how the Reuse Center got started. Minneapolis wanted to build a large transfer station on the property where they are now. So they all started researching what else could be done with that space?? 13, 14 yrs ago they found that over half of what was put into the transfer stations could be reused. The Reuse Center was established, and the transfer station (now MUCH smaller) is across the street.

--12 or 13 years ago, Reuse Minneapolis offered evening classes. However, they found that a lot of the classes they offered (examples: how to build a closet, how to winterize your home, how to weatherproof your doors, etc.) were being duplicated in the local community education institute. This institute, through the Minneapolis school system, provides classes based on need and demand. It asks the community what kinds of classes they want, and offers day-long, week-long, or month-long educational series on those topics. It is not a formal certification of any kind. Since this community institute taught classes that were the same as those that Reuse Minneapolis was providing, Reuse Minneapolis decided that it would discontinue its classes.

--When they WERE offering classes, they determined need and demand simply by talking informally with their clientele.

--The interviewee made it a point to tell me that their building has a rooftop garden, active solar, and several other features that make it even more eco-friendly.

--As far as people they hire, they always look for people who have an interest in what Reuse Minneapolis is doing; no extensive background is necessary for the job, and they provide a lot of on-site training. The skills people need for the job are learned on the floor, and depending on which department of the center you work in, you might learn renovation or construction skills that can widen the scope of an individual’s skills/experience for further employment.

--They have several partnerships with local employment opportunity groups. Some of them direct people to the Reuse center, where they need to be taught very basic skills, such as how to get to work on time, “people” skills, etc. Through these groups, they also get people who might have difficulty finding jobs elsewhere—displaced homemaker women, formerly incarcerated people, etc.

--They state that they ‘prefer’ those with a background in construction, renovation, architecture, interior design, sales of used materials, environmental studies, or community organizing. However, many of these skills and others are taught as part of the initial training—categorizing hardware, how to work the register, separating supplies, etc.

At this point, the phone is passed to Gary M., the head of the deconstruction crew.
--People who come to the job with specialized skills are usually former construction workers. Gary himself has worked in auto repair, construction, and went to school for carpentry for a year. The people in his deconstruction crew learn a LOT of skills on the job, through informal apprenticeship. In fact, many people go on to BECOME construction workers or obtain other employment related to the skills they learned or honed at the reuse center.

APPENDIX D

Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES Carpentry Program

The following contains excerpts from the complete employability profile which would be beneficial to a reuse center furniture repair job training program. Please note that portions of the BOCES Carpentry Employability Profile that were not applicable to furniture repair training programs have been edited out.
Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES Employability Progress Report

The following is the evaluation form that is used in T-S-T BOCES classes to assess readiness for employment based on general job skills and social interaction skills.

**EMPLOYABILITY PROGRESS REPORT**

It is the mission of the Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES Career Technical Center to prepare students to meet the needs and challenges of a rapidly changing world by teaching general and technical job skills in a realistic work environment. To accomplish this mission we will focus on five performance outcomes every person needs to be successful at work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>2005-2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Name</td>
<td>TRADE ELECTRICITY II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Bruce Caward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ratings:**
1. Performance Unsatisfactory at this time.
2. Demonstrates this performance outcome with assistance.
3. Demonstrates this performance outcome.
4. Exceeds at demonstrating this performance outcome.

Blank: Indicates that this performance outcome is not being evaluated at this time.

**PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES**

- **Adaptable Worker** (Semesters)
  - Uses resources
  - Transfers skills
  - Tries new things
  - Accepts constructive feedback

- **Skilled Worker** (Semesters)
  - Demonstrates technical skills
  - Follows appropriate procedures
  - Follows safety procedures
  - Maintains equipment and materials
  - Solves problems effectively

- **Effective Communicator** (Semesters)
  - Listens to other points of view
  - Writes ideas & thoughts on paper
  - Uses complete sentences & appropriate language to express ideas
  - Discusses work-related problems
  - Reads manuals, directions, labels, instructions, textbooks, etc.
  - Makes eye contact
  - Answers phone appropriately
  - Develops job seeking skills: resume, job application, interview

- **Self-Directed Worker** (Semesters)
  - Takes initiative
  - Works independently and stays on task
  - Sets priorities
  - Sets goals: short term & long term
  - Completes tasks in a timely manner
  - Takes pride in work
  - Looks for ways to help

- **Responsible Worker** (Semesters)
  - Checks and corrects own work
  - Respects self & others
  - Follows rules, guidelines, & laws
  - Starts on time
  - Demonstrates a positive attitude
  - Attends regularly
  - Participates as a team player
  - Dresses appropriately for work setting
  - Maintains personal cleanliness

**BOCES**

- An Educational Plus

Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga Career Technical Center
655 Warren Road
Ithaca, New York 14850
(607) 297-1551
APPENDIX E

Reuse Centers - Alphabetical

Building REsources - http://www.buildingresources.org/
  Environmental Education Courses - http://www.buildingresources.org/edcourses
Buffalo ReUse - http://www.buffaloreuse.org
  Job Training and Community Development - http://www.buffaloreuse.org/Main/OurVision
The East Bay Depot for Creative Reuse - http://www.creativereuse.org/
  Art in the Heart - http://www.creativereuse.org/artheart.html
The Loading Dock - http://www.loadingdock.org/
  National Reuse Centers Map - http://www.loadingdock.org/about/NationalReuse/index.html
Recycling North - http://www.recyclenorth.org
The ReUse People of America - http://thereusepeople.org/
SCRAP (Scroungers’ Center for Reusable Art Parts) - http://scrap-sf.org/
Urban Ore - http://urbanore.ypguides.net/

Job Training Programs (other than reuse centers)

B.E.S.T. (Bronx Environmental Stewardship Training) - http://www.ssbx.org/best.html
Goodwill - http://www.goodwill.org/page/guest/jobseekers/trainingprograms
RE-USE Consulting - http://reuseconsulting.com
Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES
  Vocational school training - http://www.tstboces.org/
Tompkins Cortland Community College
  Customized training and programs - http://www.tc3.biz/training.asp?id=T008087855

Other

http://sfenvironment.org/
REFERENCES


Manuel, John S. "Unbuilding for the Environment." Environmental Health Perspectives. 111.16 (December 2003) 881-887


"Recycling and Waste Diversion" www.in.gov/indot/6733.htm