

divert: project spotlight

co-operators

LOCATION

Guelph, Ontario
Canada

INDUSTRY

Financial Services



the challenge:

Co-operators, a leading Canadian financial organization, was consolidating five locations into one new and revitalized work hub in Guelph, Ontario, for their employees.

In addition to creating a vibrant workplace, they wanted to show they were 'walking the talk'; in their efforts to fight climate change. Explains Vanessa Iacocca, Senior Manager, Workplace Design & Experience, "The goal of our workplace strategy is to create new work environments that nurture collaboration and productivity while still supporting sustainability and wellbeing. Being a carbon neutral organization since 2020, it was important that we manage our existing furniture assets in a responsible way to minimize its embodied carbon."



Photography: Wilson Costa

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the solution:

Working with Teknion's Divert Team and their dealer partner Holmes + Brakel, Co-operators was able to reuse furniture where possible in addition to finding opportunities to donate to local organizations.

While it would have been easier to buy all new furniture, Co-operators took the opportunity to reuse wherever possible. Over 75% of their Teknion workstations were repurposed in the new location. That didn't mean simply moving it wholesale from one location to the other. Rather, Teknion's dealer partner, Holmes + Brakel, meticulously inventoried all their existing furniture from the old locations to determine exactly what components could be refreshed and reused in the new space. For example, 98 6' workstations were reused along with around 150 5' height-adjustable desk bases that were refurbished and re-engineered to accommodate a larger 6' top to meet their new office standards. Workstation panels were also updated to glass or acoustic panels depending on the need. Additionally, 365 storage pedestals, 410 power cubes and 828 monitor arms were also reused and integrated into the new office location. The refresh was so seamless that when people walked through the new space, they couldn't tell what was old vs new. "Our new headquarters demonstrates it's

possible to create compelling workspaces that attract top talent while honouring our sustainability commitments," adds Shawn Fitzgerald, Vice President, Real Estate and Workplace Services.

As five locations streamlined into a single new headquarters, the Divert program was there to support Co-operators sustainability values. In fact, the Divert program has been partnering with Co-operators since 2021. Decommissioning projects have spanned seven provinces – resulting in the diversion of 583.55 metric tonnes of furniture from landfill in addition to helping 21 local charities. Explains Trevor Schram, Project Manager, Workplace Design & Experience, "We had already completed over 30 decommissioning projects across the country achieving an over 94% diversion rate across all the projects. Knowing that some of recipients of our furniture donations are local to our neighborhoods has also been a nice story to share with our employees." To date, the Divert program has helped Co-operators divert 7,530 assets from landfill, including donating 1,795 of those items to local charities. This diversion from landfill helped to avoid 1,643 metric tonnes of CO2e emissions – the equivalent to removing 360 gas powered passenger vehicles from the road for one year.

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BEFORE



AFTER : Repurposed monitor arms, power cube and height adjustable table base.