

**NORTH BAY'S BLUE BOX EDUCATION
AND PROMOTION PROJECT**

**20TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY FOR THE
BLUE BOX PROGRAM**

PROJECT NO. 371

NOVEMBER 2011

PREPARED FOR:

THE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT FUND

OVERVIEW

One of the main priorities outlined in North Bay's Communications Plan is to increase participation in the City's Blue Box Program. With greater participation, it is anticipated that increased recyclable tonnages will be realized.

The focus of the promotional campaign which commenced this past spring was to engage the community through two specific advertising mediums. Due to North Bay's geographical location, there are a limited number of radio stations in the area. By focusing our campaign on radio advertising, it was anticipated that a greater number of residents would be exposed to the campaign.

The other form of medium utilized was on a more personal level. Although the City usually endeavors to use all available mediums, none are more influential and satisfying as the ability to communicate face to face with residents.

BACKGROUND

The City of North Bay's Blue Box Program was launched in 1991. At that time, only the five basic blue box materials were collected and processed. Over the past 20 years, the City gradually expanded the recycling program to include other types of materials as markets developed.

In 2010, the City undertook major renovations to the existing recycling facility and also purchased a new horizontal baler. In 2011, the City installed a new container sorting line with the assistance from the Continuous Improvement Fund. This new equipment provided the City with the ability to add more materials to the program.

To help commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the program and showcase this recent investment, the City of North Bay and the City's Waste Resources Liaison Committee undertook a 20th Year Celebration. The City applied for Continuous Improvement Funding to assist in this project.

Project

Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of North Bay's Blue Box Program was a unique opportunity for the City to market the entire recycling program again to its residents.

The City used two main forums of advertising tactics to promote this milestone; radio advertising and word-of-mouth strategies.

A series of radio ads were produced to promote recycling as well as invite the public to a cake cutting ceremony at the newly renovated recycling facility. The event was attended by the Mayor, Councillors, and members of the Waste Resources Liaison Committee, City staff, media and members of the general public.

After the cake cutting ceremony, tours were conducted of the recycling facility to showcase the newly acquired equipment and to communicate to the public that the facility upgrades provided an opportunity for expanding the program to include more materials.

City staff manned various displays around the facility and provided information on the history of the program and new program initiatives. All visitors received a reusable bag to remind them of the importance of recycling. A contest was also held for residents. It involved guessing the number of aluminum cans in a brick. The winner received a backyard composter.

The City also engaged the public at various events through the summer. City staff set-up manned displays at the North Bay Farmer's Market, the Town of Callander's July 1st Celebration (the Town of Callander shares the City of North Bay's landfill and their recyclables are processed at the City's recycling facility) and at North Bay's Annual Music Festival held over the long weekend in August.

Personal interaction between City staff and residents at these events provided a much more sincere approach in promoting the recycling program. The response from the public at this type of setting is immediate, as many residents provide staff with both positive and negative feedback. This type of personal interaction provides staff the opportunity to address any concerns from residents or to validate the public's support for the program.

Evaluation/Conclusion

Although the budget for this project was not large, all the events were well attended and the public feedback was positive. The City will continue to promote the recycling program through newsprint, television, radio, printed brochures and other passive mediums as outlined in the City's Communications Plan. However City staff have decided that outreach programs that have personal interaction with the public may have a much more positive influence on a resident's behavior as opposed to mass advertising mediums and will attend as many public events as possible.



**The Corporation of the
City of North Bay**

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November 9, 2011

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Attn: Andy Campbell, Director of C.I.F.

Re: C.I.F. Project No. 371 – North Bay Blue Box Promotion

Please find attached the City of North Bay's final report on C.I.F. Project No. 371.

The project was quite successful and we appreciate C.I.F.'s financial assistance.

Yours truly,

Al Tomek
Waste Management Coordinator

Attach. 1/ C.I.F. Project No. 371 – Final Report

Wpd/engin/eat/eat3198 – Waste Diversion Ontario C.I.F. Project #371 North Bay Blue Box Promotion