

### **CIF Project # 411 – Improving Recycling Performance in the Multi-Residential Sector**

#### **Background**

For many years there has been little change in the recovery rates for Ottawa's Blue Box Program. Part of the problem was the fluctuating markets for recyclables, which directly impact public support and made public awareness campaigns a challenge. Some years ago, the City was forced to embark on a massive education campaign to explain to the public why they had to take tubs and lids back out of their Blue Boxes. With the recent expansion of the City's Blue Box program to include all food and household plastic containers, it was time to roll out an aggressive communications program that would 'promote the 'new' 'simple' Blue Box program. A year-long 'blast' of messages that would clarify the Blue Box process was proposed to enable the City to move more quickly toward its 60 per cent diversion target.

#### **Summary of Results**

The City of Ottawa is committed to improving waste diversion in the multi-residential sector. The development of up to date promotion and education material and provision of a reusable bag to each unit are key tools to facilitate increasing waste diversion. It is recommended that the impact of these initiatives be monitored over time to assess effectiveness. It is also recommended that the results of the recent waste audits be compared to the 2015 waste diversion targets for multi-residential buildings to determine overall recycling program performance and to continue to provide insight into how the program is performing.

As a result of delays in the project implementation and political concerns with launching a major campaign at the time, Ottawa elected to scale back the project dramatically to a limited amount of general promotion about allowable plastics in their Blue Box program. The project was closed out and the work continued under CIF project #929 Multi-Residential Recycling FEL Container wrap Pilot.

#### **Financials**

The total project was scoped at a cost of \$402,000. CIF agreed to fund 50% of the project budget that was submitted, up to the amount of \$201,000 inclusive of all taxes. The budget was later revised to a total of \$10,200 and CIF paid a total of \$5,100

## **Learnings**

Council priorities can frequently and quite legitimately change with time. Delays in the implementation of a project can, on occasion, result in the project no longer being aligned with current priorities and can even jeopardize their implementation as was the case with this project. It is recommended that CIF prioritize funding 'shovel ready' projects and closely monitor projects to ensure their timely implementation to minimize such occurrences.