

## E&E Project Evaluation Form

\*\*\*\*Please be advised that completed evaluations are made available publicly and are posted on Stewardship Ontario's E&E Fund web site\*\*\*\*

**Project Name/Number/Priority area:** Elliot Lake Multi-Residential Service/#241/Multi-family recycling

**Lead Sponsor/competed by/date:** City of Elliot Lake/Rob deBortoli/Summer 2008

**Project Duration:** 1.5 years

**Total project value:** Initial Estimate – \$63,000 Actual Cost – \$37,073

**E&E funding amount:** \$16,000

### **Section 1 –To be completed by Project Applicant**

**1) What were the Project Goals and Objectives (as per the E&E Application and/or Contract)?**

Goal – to increase waste diversion

Objective – to achieve the goal of increased waste diversion through an enhanced recycling program that will now offer residents of multi-dwelling units recycling collection on site as opposed to having to bring material to the depot.

**2) Were the goals and objectives met? (and if not why not?)**

Yes.

As indicated in the Total Project Value section above, the project came under budget. The reason for this is that original estimates with regard to the depots were based on the assumption that 8 yard bins would be used for all the material being collected. The contractor suggested that these bins may be excessive for some of the products and thus adjustments were made accordingly to use the smaller bins for certain products at the depot. This in turn reduced the cost of the project.

**3) Summary of Project Accomplishments (i.e. what did the project do/achieve?):**

The project provided recycling service to multi-dwelling residences within the community. Initially depots were established at three of the largest multi-dwelling complexes, Washington Apartments (352 units), Warsaw Apartments (258 units) and the apartment complex located at 27 Mississauga Avenue (94 units). Later in the year a fourth depot was established at the Pine Road Apartments (81 units). This eliminated the need for residents to make a trip to the depot which in some cases is a distance of 5km.

The project is contributing to an increased diversion rate of waste materials from the landfill. This is confirmed by the 67 tonnes of recyclable material collected from multi-res units over the past year. The initial estimate was that the project would contribute between 50-75 tonnes of material.

The depot continues to show signs of increased volume despite the provision of multi-residential recycling. Based on depot totals to the end of July 2008, it is anticipated that the depot will have produced a total of 261 tonnes of material compared to a 2007 total of 235 tonnes.

In terms of the project's performance, the City of Elliot Lake unfortunately does not have the resources to conduct audits of the waste stream to assess the amount of recyclable material finding its way into the waste stream. Judging by the numbers to date, the program continues to gain strength within the community. Finally, the contractor reports little contamination at the multi-residential depots.

**4) Summary of Project Limitations** (*e.g. is there anything that should have been done differently?*)

Based on the available resources, it is the writer's opinion that the project was managed appropriately to obtain the desired outcome.

**5) What do you consider to have been the key "lessons learned" from this project? Does your project/activity represent a "best practice"?**

Communication is paramount – I believe that the success of the project in part was due to the fact that a public session was held at each of the complexes prior to its introduction. This provided the residents an opportunity to understand how the system was to work and assisted in clarifying any confusion as to what material the program would be dealing with. I believe that when future participants are included in the process there is a greater chance that they will participate in the program. I believe that this project does represent a best practice as it is an essential way in which any municipality that has multi-unit dwellings can improve their diversion rates.

**6) What specifically are municipal staff doing with the experiences and data from this project? Do you have plans to apply these lessons in your program? Please explain how.**

We are monitoring the data to evaluate the expected contribution rates we may expect from other multi-res units that currently are not participating in the program. Yes we will apply the method of approach in all cases (where practical) in the future.

**7) Has your municipal council been informed about the project and its results?**

Council will be supplied with the report for their review and comment in October.

**8) Do you think there are opportunities to share/replicate the successful elements of this project with other Ontario programs? If yes, how and where?**

Yes, with other communities that are similar in size or at the same stage in the delivery of a recycling program. I believe that through networking opportunities with peers, or via reference from Stewardship Ontario other communities can approach us to find out how we implemented multi-res recycling services.

**9) Did this project result in either reduced costs per tonne of Blue Box waste recycled and/or increased Blue Box tonnes diverted? (Please explain)**

It reduced the cost per tonne. The cost per tonne is now \$88.85 compared to \$110.43 a year ago. The waste diversion rate has increased since the implementation of the multi-res depots, increasing the diversion of waste by 67 tonnes.

**Section 2 –To be completed by Stewardship Ontario (and reviewed by applicant)**

**9) Did this project do what it set out to do? If not, what were the reasons/ barriers?**

Before initiating this project, the City of Elliot Lake did not have a curbside pick up program for its multi-family buildings. Multi-family residents wishing to recycle their Blue Box materials were required to travel up to 5 km to the nearest depot.

The objective of this project was to initiate the on-site collection of recyclables at a few targeted multi-family buildings, thereby driving the recovery of BB materials and the City's diversion rate.

**10) What are the key learnings from this project? Are there any next steps? What is being done to share the results?**

- Collection depots were installed at three multi-residential sites; a fourth site was added midway through the project
- Prior to the first recycling collection, information sessions were held at each multi-residential site; following this, information packages and in-unit collection bags were delivered to each unit
- Over the course of the one year period, a total of 67 tonnes was diverted through the multi-residential recycling program.
- In the near future, by the time this report is shared, two more depots will have been established at other multi-residential facilities, each approximately 100 units. These two units will be added to the weekly collection schedule at a cost of \$160/month/location.

**11) Was the project good value for the money (e.g. were there measureable program or system cost reduction benefits, cost effective tonnage increases, etc?)**

As stated by the proponent in the previous section, the addition of the four multi-residential sites increased the overall cost of the city's collection contract by \$5,760.00/year. With the additional capital cost for bins and promotion/education, the total annual cost is \$8,229.08. However, the increased tonnage has led to a decline in total per tonne cost for the city's overall recycling program to \$88.85 for 2008, down from \$110.43 in 2007 and \$138.96 in 2006.

**12) Does this project represent "best practices"? If yes, explain.**

This project addresses perhaps the most important of multi-family recycling best practices – namely, increasing the level of access to recycling by providing collection at each of the building complexes. This is a significant step forward over the former requirement for residents to use

the community depot if they wanted to recycle. In doing so the level of service for those in apartments was made comparable to those in single family dwellings.

A commonly accepted Best Practice in the multi-family recycling area is that bins or carts should be stored in a location that is convenient for the residents to use (ideally inside or sheltered from rain and snow). Initially, some building residents expressed concern that the location of the recycling bins (outside, across a potentially icy parking area) might limit their participation in the winter months. They were advised not to put their health at risk should this situation arise. The project proponents report that to date there have been no complaints received about the bins being outside.

Furthermore, the location of the recycling bins outside reflects a system choice made by the city in opting to go with front end bins, which generally must be located outside to be accessible to collection vehicles. The alternative would have been smaller recycling carts which, although they can be located inside if space permits, must be moved outside for collection. This ease of use for residents would have therefore been achieved at a cost to overall system efficiency. Front end bins typically offer greater capacity (a factor that E&E project number 301 indicates correlates to better capture). Multi-res programs elsewhere in Ontario that started with recycling carts (e.g., Peel, Ottawa, Richmond Hill) have switched or are in the process of moving to front-end bins. Elliot Lake has therefore incorporated this lesson learned and eliminated the cart step.