



RECYCLING RESOURCES ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY GRANT FINAL REPORT

I. ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

1. **Organization Name:** Kum & Go, L.C.
2. **Project Title:** Message in a Bottle Recycling Program
3. **Name of Project Coordinator:** Adam Hammes, Manager of Sustainability
4. **Project Coordinator e-mail and phone number:** amh@kumandgo.com (515) 457-6235
5. **Name of person(s) completing this report:** same
6. **E-mail address and phone number of person(s) completing this report:** same



II. WORK PLAN

Deliverable	Completion Date	Comments (if deliverable was not completed, please explain why or what progress has been made)
Finalize contracts with three pilot community center board programs in Glenwood Springs, Craig, and Greeley.		Contract signed with Schaefer Enterprises, with Community Intersections signed 3/26/12. Agreed with RREO to launch 2 communities with time available and progress made during grant period.
Finalize route schedule between 14 Kum & Go stores and other local businesses.	7/1/2011	
Finalize co-branded graphic image.	12/1/2011	
Acquire baler and forklift.	6/23/2012	
Purchase containers for all 14 KG stores.	6/23/2012	
Finalize training manual for staff and customize the business model at each site.	1/27/2012	
Recruit clients with DD at each workshop.	4/20/2012	
Staff complete client training.	6/18/2012	
Develop a site visit checklist and docents.	5/20/2012	
Develop an informational kit for replication.	5/20/2012	
Launch promotion of new service to media and local businesses.	6/23/2012	
Develop a master contact list for community center boards in Colorado.	7/1/2011	



III. PROJECT SUMMARY

1. Executive Summary

Provide a brief summary of the entire project including goals, challenges, successes, results, and environmental/economic benefits.

Kum & Go (KG)'s goal was to leverage its average customer count of 800 people per store per day, and the experience of The Recycling Association of Minnesota (RAM) launching 14 Message in a Bottle™ programs in their state, to directly increase the level of recycling in Colorado.

This was to be accomplished by bringing a viable recycling model to 3 existing community center boards (CCBs) in Colorado that provide vocational training and jobs to local adults with disabilities. The results expected were 90 full-time jobs, 14 Kum & Go sites, and 42 tons of recycling diverted annually.

During the grant period, KG and RAM were able launch 2 CCBs, 0.5 full-time equivalent jobs, 6 Kum & Go sites, and capture little data on volume and weights collected.

Challenges that presented themselves were: (1) time to work through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to connect with local CCBs, (2) changes in legislation re-defining acceptable employment in the industry, (3) lack of financial information to share with CCBs, (4) lack of local program for site visits, and (5) over-estimated weight and employment data from Minnesota.

Most of these challenges were overcome, and we feel there is still potential for significant (yet reduced) diversion and employment in the state of Colorado. The launch of the 2 CCBs came at the very end of the grant period. Therefore, KG and RAM will continue to monitor and support the programs in Greeley and Colorado Springs, while encouraging other CCBs to visit those sites and request program financial data. In this way, other local CCBs in Colorado with the capacity to do so could launch their own community recycling programs modeled on "Message in a Bottle."



2. Project Description & Overview of Work Completed

State your project goals and describe the steps taken to meet those goals. Explain why the project was important for recycling in your community and for Colorado in general.

Project Description

In the Minnesota Message in a Bottle™ program, clients of “sheltered workshop” programs collect, sort, and recycle plastic shrink film, aluminum cans and PET plastic bottles and sell to commodity markets, generating revenue that sustains their program long-term. This accomplishes greater levels of waste diversion from landfill disposal, develops best practices for other community center boards, reaches a large number of residents in the state, and creates meaningful jobs for a highly unemployed population – adults with disabilities. See <http://www.recycleminnesota.org/htm/programs.htm> for more details.

Initially, Kum & Go (KG) partnered with the Recycling Association of Minnesota’s (RAM) Message in a Bottle™ (MIB) program, the Colorado Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), and the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) with a plan to launch 3 community center board (CCB) programs. The intent was to provide 90 full-time jobs for adults with disabilities, and recycling service that would allow 106 local businesses to recycle which previously did not have the option. The 14 targeted KG stores alone serviced by these 3 sites would reach over 4 million customers and divert approximately 42 tons of recycling every year. Adding other high-volume businesses (e.g. car washes, golf courses, coffee shops, etc.) within a 30 mile radius would greatly increase the potential for diversion, and is necessary for the longevity of the program.

Overview of Work Completed

Launch 3 MIB programs with local CCBs

- Steps taken to meet this goal included site visits and meetings with DDD, DVR, and CCB staff at locations in Greeley (Schaeffer Enterprises), Glenwood Springs (Mountain Valley Developmental Services), Craig (Horizons Specialized Services), and Colorado Springs (Community Intersections). Phone calls were also made by RAM to other CCBs all over the state of Colorado to seek interest and capacity to launch such a program. Planning included research into local partners capable of providing shrink film to recycle, along with the cans and bottles from KG and other bottle-bin locations. It also included a search for indoor facilities for sorting and baling the recycled materials. Each location did their own financial analysis based on shared income statements from Minnesota MIB programs.

Offer Can/Bottle Recycling at 14 KG Stores

- Steps taken to meet this goal included design of the bin graphic wrap, and an initial order for 100 prints placed by RAM on January 11, 2012. The bins were ordered and shipped in groups of at least 10 to each community 2 weeks prior to program launch. Those bins currently not in use are stored in warehouse space at their respective locations. KG is storing some bins for Community Intersections because they lack the space.



Provide 90 Full-Time Jobs for Adults with Disabilities

- Steps taken to meet this goal included our work to launch sites in three communities, and training provided by RAM to the CCBs in the form of phone calls, video-conference lines, and offered site tours to detail the type and difficulty of tasks related to collection, sorting and baling of recyclable materials. DVR and DDD staff attended initial meetings in Colorado to give a policy overview and direction. CCB staff worked with RAM to develop job descriptions and recruit/train clients that met those descriptions.

Divert 42 Tons of Waste Annually

- The program at Schaefer Enterprises in Greeley installed a total of 36 bottle-shaped recycling bins at five Kum & Go stores in the area. Customers were encouraged to place cans and bottles only into the bins through well-designed bins, clear signage on the graphic wrap and bin itself, and placement of one bin next to every trash can at the pump.
- The program at Community Intersections in Colorado Springs installed a total of 8 bottle-shaped recycling bins at one Kum & Go stores in the area. Customers were encouraged to place cans and bottles only into the bins through well-designed bins, clear signage on the graphic wrap and bin itself, placement of one bin next to every trash can at the pump, and a media event held at the store.

3. Summary of Findings & Results

Based on the work completed, what were the results? Include both the technical data and the response from members of the community.

Results of Work Completed

Launch 3 MIB programs with local CCBs

- KG and RAM were able to launch 2 MIB programs with local CCBs during the grant period – one with Schaefer Enterprises in Greeley and one with Community Intersections in Colorado Springs.
- Schaefer Enterprises had access to their own baler and forklift, so funds were used for additional recycling bins to expand their can/bottle recycling program to other local businesses. They chose not to pursue plastic shrink film for concerns related to baling two different materials in their current baler.
- Community Intersections purchased a used baler, used forklift, and certified scale. They chose to pursue both can/bottle recycling as well as plastic shrink film.
- The two CCB programs launched were accompanied by press releases to multiple media affiliates (radio and television), social media messaging, and a “Get Caught Recycling” event at KG store #657 in Colorado Springs with personal invites to political leaders, the Pikes Peak Sustainable Business Network, Clean Cities Coalition, and the family of Community Intersections first hire, Bradley.



Offer Can/Bottle Recycling at 14 KG Stores

- KG was able to offer MIB bins at 6 stores during the grant period – five with Schaefer Enterprises in Greeley and one with Community Intersections in Colorado Springs. The store locations are:
 - 910 – 366 71st Avenue, Greeley, CO
 - 914 – 7027 20th Street, Greeley, CO
 - 931 – 2901 37th Street, Evans, CO
 - 933 – 115 Knobcone Drive, Loveland, CO
 - 913 – 13799 Pacific Circle, Longmont, CO
 - 657 – 2190 Vickers Drive, Colorado Springs, CO
- KG opened our first store in Colorado Springs in June of 2012, so Community Intersections has inventory on hand to offer bins at an additional seven stores by year's end, as they open. Schaefer Enterprises substituted additional bins for their shrink film program, and they have bin inventory to expand to 16 non-KG convenience stores (c-stores) in their area. That will bring the total 29 c-stores offering can/bottle recycling, 13 of which will be KG. Of course, this will be after the grant period.

Provide 90 Full-Time Jobs for Adults with Disabilities

- To-date, both programs combined have created the equivalent of 0.5 full-time jobs. That includes 8 hours per week for a Recycling Assistant and Skills Trainer at Schaefer Enterprises, as well as 4 hours per week for a Recycling Assistant at Community Intersections.

Divert 42 Tons of Waste Annually

- The program at Schaefer Enterprises in Greeley installed a total of 36 bottle-shaped recycling bins at five Kum & Go stores in the area. They began collecting in mid-June. Due to initial contamination with paper, anti-freeze, and oil containers they were able to sort and collect 13.77 lbs. of aluminum cans and 7.69 lbs. of #1 plastic.

The program at Community Intersections in Colorado Springs installed a total of 8 bottle-shaped recycling bins at one Kum & Go stores in the area. They began collecting at the end of June, but had not sorted any materials to be weighed by close of the grant period.



4. Summary of Unanticipated Outcomes or Roadblocks

Explain any unanticipated outcomes or roadblocks and how they impacted the project. How did you overcome any roadblocks?

Time to Reach CCBs versus DVR/DDD

- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) that KG initially garnered letters of support from is a high-level government office that sets policies for the industry serving adults with developmental disabilities. To reach directly to the local level, we moved through the chain of command to the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) which supports client placement in communities. Through them, we connected with local agencies that provide the actual workplace programs that employ clients, called community center boards (CCBs). They are independent organizations that offer a variety of services that they must cash flow to be successful. This put us 3 months behind schedule from the onset, but once overcome was not an ongoing issue.
- When Glenwood Springs and Craig decided not to participate in the program in December of 2011, RAM contacted DDD to assist in finding additional CCBs to contact regarding participation in the program and the staff at these facilities could not refer RAM. RAM found additional CCBs in two other focus areas independently of DDD.

DVR Definition of and Requirements Related to “Sheltered Workshops”

- Current DVR regulation changes do not allow for exact replication of the Minnesota program and created uncertainty for the entire industry as they await the exact wording on standards. This made each CCB uncomfortable starting a new program.
- RAM and KG found that each location is striving to make each new program “integrated” in the community vs. “sheltered” – where the clients interact with non-disabled adults from the community vs. exclusively with other clients. This is to ensure that they comply with upcoming regulation changes and retain the federal funding their programs have depended upon in the past. It also provides clients with more interaction in the community, which is important for social and vocational skill-building, and is more enjoyable.
- The portion of the Message in a Bottle (MIB) program that best fits the “integrated” model is the transportation and collection of recyclable material from the community. A staff driver and a few clients interact with local business owners and customers as they arrive, empty, and re-bag the collection containers at the stores then return to the CCB.
- The sorting and baling job functions at the CCB location are often set up to be a “sheltered” workshop. Now, extra effort is being made to locate or co-locate the sorting/baling equipment in a facility where non-client employees will have shared spaces and interactions daily with the clients. Schaeffer Enterprises and Community Intersections both have facilities and jobs that they feel can meet the “integrated” model.



Lack of Financial Specifics from Minnesota

- RAM did not have immediate access to Minnesota vocational center financials or existing Colorado contracts for back-end services, initially. This caused hesitation for Colorado CCBs wanting to crunch their own numbers and see that the program was a fit for them. As RAM has been able to connect Colorado CCBs with Minnesota programs of their similar size, we are seeing a willingness to share income data, but not proprietary expense data from individual private programs. RAM has also been able to acquire quotes from local haulers for cans/bottles, copper line, used balers/forklifts, etc. as well as share their pre-existing contracted rate for shrink film. This is all information we can include in the training manual, similar to a franchise package to share with prospective CCB partners in the future.

Lack of Local Site to Tour

- The lack of access to an existing site for the CCB staff to tour in Colorado proved a deterrent. PowerPoint presentations and even a short video were no equivalent for really helping the CCB staff see, touch, understand, and ask questions directly to a program administrator. RAM added the PowerPoint and videos to the training manual package. Also, launching in Greeley with Schaeffer Enterprises and in Colorado Springs with Community Intersections will provide local sites to tour for future CCBs following the grant period.

Colorado Waste Numbers Not Meeting Grant Projections

- Findings from the Greeley waste audit are included attached to this report. Over 4 days, cans and bottles from the MIB program composed 6% of the waste stream by weight (3.1 lbs/day) or (0.125 cubic yards/day). That would be 1,116 pounds (.56 tons) per year or 3.75 cubic yards/month. This is less than hoped for based on Minnesota collection rates provided by RAM.

RAM has adjusted their Minnesota expected diversion per store from 3 tons to 2,000 – 3,000 lbs., or 50% of outside waste stream vs. total waste stream. That removes some of the financial incentive for local businesses, who may not be able to reduce their garbage dumpster size or number of pick-ups per week. However, the program still has the potential to divert a significant amount of waste that is not being collected.

Our waste audit was also a 4-day test that would be best followed up by a 2-3 week survey by our trash hauler. We will continue to ask for this service, and share our results if awarded.



Colorado Job Numbers Not Meeting Grant Projections

- Launching only two sites, and so close to the end of the grant cycle, prevented us from getting a realistic estimate of job potential. Reaching 0.5 FTE was a small success for the three positions created, yet far short of the launch employment results hoped for.

Minnesota programs vary in employment. Our application used an average of 30 FTE employed per site, the largest having over 70. RAM has adjusted their Minnesota expected employment per site numbers from an average of 30 FTE to 17 FTE, or employees at each site working full-time, half-time, and seasonal vs. full-time on recycling related activities. That removes some of the economic incentive from the State of Colorado, who seeks to provide valuable employment to adults with disabilities. However, the program still has the potential to provide a significant amount of skill-based, integrated jobs in each community.

5. **Communication of Project Findings**

How will you communicate the results of your project to your community and to Colorado in general?

Each site will still receive support in educating local businesses about their program and offering their services. Each CCB, Kum & Go, and RAM have all actively communicated the program details to our existing store locations, staff, and dozens of potential shrink film partners in each community all in our efforts to build a robust incoming recyclables stream for each program. The DVR, DDD, and CCB staff has all been included in meetings with detailed notes shared. And this report will be available.

6. **Future Impact of the Project**

How will this project impact future waste diversion in your area and in Colorado? Are there any downstream effects of this project? Is there potential for transferring technology or process knowledge to others?

KG feels that the Greeley program with Schaeffer Enterprises and the Colorado Springs program with Community Intersections are a great foundation off of which to expand. Other Colorado CCBs can now visit and see first-hand how the programs operate. They can also request information from these local programs regarding financials, selling materials, on-site physical space requirements, etc.

KG and RAM will continue to ask for collection and employment data from each site to gauge success, and share with the RREO Grant committee.

RAM has provided a set of training materials to share this information with other CCBs. Among its contents are: videos, a site checklist, a PowerPoint, best practices fact sheets, a sample income spreadsheet, and media kit. These will help CCBs properly assess the potential for their own program.



RAM informed KG that, although they are committed to supporting their existing contracts, they are not planning on expanding in Colorado for 2013. In that regard, KG is willing to partner with the local Colorado Association for Recycling if they are interested in providing support services to this type of endeavor. The training materials produced as a result of this RREO Grant provide a great foundation from which to begin.

7. Financial Summary

Using the Grant Budget Table, indicate how funds were spent during the project, including a breakdown of actual in-kind/matching funds. Be sure the Grant Budget Table is complete.

ITEMIZED BUDGET	Grant Application Amount	Matching/In Kind Amount (if any)	Total Amount
Personnel Salaries & Wages – Subtotal	\$ -	\$ 13,875.00	\$ 13,875.00
Adam Hammes – Manager of Sustainability		\$ 8,167.00	\$ 8,167.00
Jeff Smart – Corporate Facilities Manager		\$ 2,708.00	\$ 2,708.00
Mike Templeton – Social Media Manager		\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Meredith Connor – Graphic Designer		\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Travel Costs - Subtotal	\$ -	\$ 9,552.00	\$ 9,552.00
Flights		\$ 7,200.00	\$ 7,200.00
Food		\$ 1,152.00	\$ 1,152.00
Car Rentals		\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
Materials/Supplies Equipment - Subtotal	\$ 10,329.63	\$ -	\$ 10,329.63
Recycling Containers	\$ 10,329.63		\$ 10,329.63
Equipment Purchases - Subtotal	\$ 13,375.74	\$ -	\$ 13,375.74
Used Vertical Balers	\$ 6,099.89		\$ 6,099.89
Used Forklifts (Other - approved)	\$ 7,275.85		\$ 7,275.85
Consultants	\$ 20,000.00	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00
Recycling Association of Minnesota	\$ 20,000.00		\$ 20,000.00
Marketing/Advertising	\$ 4,289.97	\$ -	\$ 4,289.97
Graphic Wrap	\$ 1,795.00		\$ 1,795.00
Promotional Press Kit	\$ 2,494.97		\$ 2,494.97
Project Cost	\$ 47,995.34	\$ 23,427.00	\$ 71,422.34
Indirect Cost: (Not to exceed 20%)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Project Cost:	\$ 47,995.34	\$ 23,427.00	\$ 71,422.34



The major budgetary changes that occurred to affect the budget were as follows:

- Two sites were launched instead of three
- Schaefer did not need any additional equipment, and Community Intersections chose to purchase their used forklift instead of spending time fundraising
- Our graphic designer was asked to spend time re-designing the graphic wrap that would go around the bottle-shaped recycling bins

8. Conclusion

Include any final thoughts on the project and on the RREO grant program.

Most of the challenges were overcome, and we feel there is still potential for significant (yet reduced) diversion and employment in the state of Colorado. The launch of the 2 CCBs came at the very end of the grant period. Therefore, KG and RAM will continue to monitor and support the programs in Greeley and Colorado Springs, while encouraging other CCBs to visit those sites and request program financial data. In this way, other local CCBs in Colorado with the capacity to do so could launch their own community recycling programs modeled on “Message in a Bottle.”

9. Appendix

- a. Grant Metrics Table
 - i. Grant Metrics Table is complete and attached. See Excel spreadsheet.
- b. Community Leader Contact Information
 - i. Valorie Randall, Executive Director, Schaefer Enterprises
(970) 353-0662, valorie.randall@comcast.net
 - ii. Joe Vaccaro, Director of Resource Development, Community Intersections
(719) 574-6101 x16, joe.v@i-dynamics.org
 - iii. Ken Brickman, Program Manager, Pikes Peak Sustainable Business Network
(719) 471.0910 x101, ken@catamountinstitute.org



- c. Manuals, Brochures, Print Advertisements, Pictures, Educational Materials, etc.
 - i. It is preferred that these items be attached to the report electronically. If this is not possible, you may send hard copies to the mailing address listed above.

Greeley



Colorado Springs





Media Event #657, Colorado Springs







Grant Metrics

Date project fully operational:

June-12

(Based on deliverables- month that impact of grant would have changed volumes/job creation/participants)

Diversion Rates:

(Choose one material per box. Only list those collected over the grant cycle. Must be listed as "tons". See tab labeled "Conversion Tables" if needed.)

Material Diverted #1	Aluminum / Steel cans
Tons Diverted	
July-11	
August-11	
September-11	
October-11	
November-11	
December-11	
January-12	
February-12	
March-12	
April-12	
May-12	
June-12	0.006885
Total	0.006885

Other div. material:

Material Diverted #2	Plastics (#1-7)
Tons Diverted	
July-11	
August-11	
September-11	
October-11	
November-11	
December-11	
January-12	
February-12	
March-12	
April-12	
May-12	
June-12	0.003845
Total	0.003845

Other div. material:

Material Diverted #3	Other (pls describe below)
Tons Diverted	
July-11	
August-11	
September-11	
October-11	
November-11	
December-11	
January-12	
February-12	
March-12	
April-12	
May-12	
June-12	
Total	0

Other div. material:

Shrink film plastic

Material Diverted #4	
Tons Diverted	
July-11	
August-11	
September-11	
October-11	
November-11	
December-11	
January-12	
February-12	
March-12	
April-12	
May-12	
June-12	
Total	0

Other div. material:

Material Diverted #5	
Tons Diverted	
July-11	
August-11	
September-11	
October-11	
November-11	
December-11	
January-12	
February-12	
March-12	
April-12	
May-12	
June-12	
Total	0

Other div. material:

Material Diverted #6	
Tons Diverted	
July-11	
August-11	
September-11	
October-11	
November-11	
December-11	
January-12	
February-12	
March-12	
April-12	
May-12	
June-12	
Total	0

Other div. material:

Material Diverted #7	
Tons Diverted	
July-11	
August-11	
September-11	
October-11	
November-11	
December-11	
January-12	
February-12	
March-12	
April-12	
May-12	
June-12	
Total	0

Other div. material:

Material Diverted #8	
Tons Diverted	
July-11	
August-11	
September-11	
October-11	
November-11	
December-11	
January-12	
February-12	
March-12	
April-12	
May-12	
June-12	
Total	0

Other div. material:

End use of diverted materials:

(Describe where materials are going [e.g., MRF, new products, reuse])

The beverage container materials (aluminum and plastics) are being baled and sold to Waste Management who will pick up the baled material to be taken to their Denver, Colorado materials recovery facility (MRF) for recycling. The "Other Material" (shrink film plastic) will be baled and picked up in truckload and partial truckload quantities by TREX. TREX is a company that makes composite decking materials from recycled content.

Number of Permanent Jobs Created:

Include full-time & part time paid positions. 1 FTE = 40 Hours Per Week

0.5

Type of Permanent Job(s) Created:

(Provide titles of jobs created)

Recycling Assistant (2) - currently 8 hours per week and 4 hours per week. Skills Trainer (1) - currently 8 hours per week.

Average Salaries of Jobs Created:

(Average of all jobs created)

\$15,001 - \$30,000

Average Monthly Customers for FY 2011:

(July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011)

58,000

* Total Kum & Go customers who purchased fuel at MIB locations

Average Monthly Customers for FY 2012:

(Estimate or customer lists)

Avg. Monthly Amount	
July-11	66262
August-11	67228
September-11	63146
October-11	62605
November-11	56789
December-11	54874
January-12	53092
February-12	52152
March-12	58877
April-12	62011
May-12	67446
June-12	71788
Ave. / FY 12	61355.83333