For Immediate Release

May 4, 2020

Lake Forest’s Rethink Recycling with Bart the Cart Campaign Fact Sheet

**Program Background & Purpose:**

* Due to significant increases in recycling processing costs, the City of Lake Forest is conducting a two-year campaign called Rethink Recycling to reduce recycling waste from the current 25 percent to 10 percent, thereby reducing the City’s recycling process costs by 25 percent per ton which equates to an annual savings of up to $50,000.
* To achieve this goal, residents are being asked to ***rethink*** how they recycle in order to save significant revenue for the City.
* The focus of the campaign is on what *should* and *should not* be placed in a recycle bin and avoiding common non-recyclable items organized into four basic guidelines: Empty & rinsed, No plastic bags, No styrofoam and No tanglers.
* Rethink Recycling was planned numerous months before the outbreak of coronavirus disease.

**Why it’s Important:**

* Items to be recycled are delivered to a recycling center where they are sorted and separated into different types of materials (by hand or machine). The recycling process is significantly hampered when materials that can’t be recycled are mixed with approved recyclables.
* Improper items such as food contaminated boxes, plastic bags and styrofoam delivered to the recycling center require hand removal thus causing additional labor and significant time delays. This drives up processing costs for the City of Lake Forest.
* Due to the state's Stay at Home order in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, Lake Forest residents are placing significantly more items in their recycle bins.

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**Campaign Spokesperson:**

* Leading the new campaign will be a friendly animated character named Bart the Cart -- a recycling expert designed to connect with and keep involved recyclers of all ages.
* Bart’s recycling direction (including a new video) will be available at [www.bartthecart.com](http://www.bartthecart.com/) and on stickers placed on the underside of residential and commercial recycling bin lids. When the state rescinds its current Stay at Home order, Bart and his recycling tips will be visible throughout the community via events and outdoor promotional posters.

**Campaign Goals & Measurement:**

* The result of the Rethink Recycling campaign will be cleaner recyclable material that doesn’t clog recycling machines, cause additional work for the processors and ultimately drive up costs to the City of Lake Forest.
* The Rethink Recycling campaign is being evaluated on an ongoing basis by the City’s Public Works department. They are measuring the reduction in recycling waste in route to the goal of reducing waste from the current 25 percent down to 10 percent.
* Measurements of recycling contamination will be made in early summer and fall of 2020 and results will be made available to all residents via [BarttheCart.com](http://www.bartthecart.com/).

**Campaign Funding:**

* The Lake Forest Garden Club provided the City of Lake Forest with a community grant totaling $110,000 to fund this two-year campaign.
* The Lake Forest Garden Club, established 1912, is a long-time partner and collaborator with The City of Lake Forest and a leader in advocating for environmental conservation, beautification and educational efforts that benefit residents, visitors and businesses in Lake Forest and beyond.

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