

Best Practice

The Red Paper Clip Project

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THE PRACTICE

The Town of Kipling needed to improve the economic climate of Kipling and surrounding area. Our project began when our Community Development Officer heard about an individual named Kyle who had started trading a red paper clip online with the ultimate goal of trading it for a house. The Town of Kipling felt that this was a great opportunity to bring national and international attention to the community.

THE PROCESS

With Council's approval, the Community Development Officer made Kyle an offer that included a house, welcome package, Mayor for a Day, the key to the town and the commitment to build the world's largest red paperclip. Kyle accepted the offer, and in order to welcome our newest residents, the town organized Saskatchewan's Biggest Housewarming Party, to take place on the 2006 September long weekend.

THE RESULTS

The results of Saskatchewan's Biggest Housewarming Party were a huge success. 1,100 people attended the Saturday night dance, more than the entire population of Kipling! \$13,000 was raised for the arena, and a further \$11,000 was raised for our hospital foundation.

The economic benefits from this project have and continue to be very positive for the Town of Kipling. The media coverage and subsequent projects have brought the town an estimated one million dollars in free publicity. Furthermore, there has been a commitment by Hollywood Producer Corbin Bernsen to film two movie projects in Kipling, and we have already had a commercial made in the community by a company from Spain. It is estimated that the Spain commercial brought over \$30,000 into the local economy and the two movies are expected to significantly surpass this total.

LESSONS LEARNED

Through this process, the municipality learned to believe in what you have to offer and do not be afraid to try new things. Trusting in the advice of those hired to provide a service is also essential, and the commitment to follow through on our Community Development Officers idea has resulted in benefits that exceeded everyone's expectations.