

# DIRECTION

SASKATCHEWAN PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION

## RECREATION

### REVITALIZE

### REPURPOSE

### REUSE



Saskatchewan  
Parks and Recreation  
Association



# DIRECTION

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# CEO'S MESSAGE

## Sustain, Revitalize, Repurpose, Reuse

### What do these terms really mean within a parks and recreation context?

We believe it's about finding new or different ways to engage your community. It's about knowing the people you serve, their needs and their motivations. It's about knowing your assets, and their lifespan. It's about looking for options that maybe don't currently exist, or in places you didn't expect, and it's about finding opportunities to make those possibilities a reality.

This issue of DIRECTION will show you how a few groups and communities across the province are considering these factors, and finding creative ways to make the most of their recreation assets and approaches to marketing and program delivery.

### What difference does it make?

Why do we seek ways to engage our community, create safe environments for participants and staff, and look at our parks, facilities, streets, communities through a different lens? Although fiscal responsibility is always a consideration when it comes to sustainability, ultimately, we continue to believe these actions are about positively impacting the wellbeing of people in Saskatchewan. This is what drives you as recreation providers, and us at SPRA. Our hope is that you find some of the stories within this issue of DIRECTION both informational and inspirational as you continue your own pursuits of meaningful, accessible recreation experiences for yourselves and for those you serve.

**Todd Shafer**  
SPRA CEO





# PARKS FOR ALL...PARKS FOR YOU

From sustainable communities, green spaces to wilderness areas, Parks for All – An Action Plan for Canada's Parks Community is a long-term vision is about healthy nature and healthy people.

Parks for All is based on four themes: Collaborate, Connect, Conserve and Lead. Each theme supports and builds upon the other. The initiative views conservation and connection as symbiotic in the journey towards the vision, rooted in shared goals, mutual respect and collective action-and we are all a part of this journey.

Developed in partnership between the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) and the Canadian Parks Council (CPC), this plan is a unique collaboration from all parks communities – municipal, provincial/territorial, federal and Indigenous.

You know the Framework for Recreation in Canada right? Parks for All aligns with, and complements the five goals of the Framework – with a direct link to Goal 3, Connecting People and Nature.

So how can you be a part of it? The actions outlined in Parks for All are broad and meant to be interpreted from your point of view and position in the parks community. You know best how you can contribute to the shared vision and goals.

But to help, Parks for All is accompanied by an 'Action Planner' to help you explore how you can be a part of this shared vision. It is a simple goal-setting tool that challenges each of us to commit to an action, as it relates to one of the four themes. And, once you have determined your action – you are invited to share your commitment on the Parks for All portal on the CPRA website at [www.cpra.ca/parks-for-all](http://www.cpra.ca/parks-for-all).

Collaboration is central to advancing this vision for the parks community. In Saskatchewan, a number of programs operated by SPRA, such as Communities in Bloom, June is Recreation & Parks Month and the Saskatchewan Parks Worker Course, all support the strategic directions of Parks For All. In addition, many of their Provincial Recreation Associations, such as the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association, the Saskatchewan Trails Association, the Association of Saskatch-



ewan Urban Parks and Conservation Agencies and SaskOutdoors continue to connect people to nature and build healthier communities as result.

Nationally, CPRA is launching a renewed Parks Task Group this fall and this collection of parks experts will provide critical advice on how to best implement Parks for All. We are also a key partner in the planning of a 2019 Canadian Parks Conference in Quebec City that will be anchored around the four Parks for All themes.

To learn more about the Framework for Recreation and Parks for All, visit [www.cpra.ca](http://www.cpra.ca).



**Cathy Jo Noble**  
Canadian Parks and Recreation Association



# REPURPOSING FOR PICKLEBALL

Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the world. Pickleball began about 53 years ago on Bainbridge Island, Washington state, when 3 families banded together to find something to occupy the bored kids. They looked in the garage and found a badminton net, a few ping-pong paddles and a wiffle ball. The popular story is that the name of the game was born when the family dog named "pickles" chased the ball.

In the past 5 years, the growth of pickleball in Canada and in Saskatchewan has been exponential. Communities can not keep up to the demand for space to play pickleball. For example, in Regina and Saskatoon, the registration for this winter's indoor pickleball exceeds the number of courts available. In Southey - a town with a population of 778 - in less than a 1-year period, the number of pickleball players grew to 100 persons. This is not the exception but rather the rule that we find as we travel the province teaching and promoting the game to rural communities.

## COURT SIZE

Having the space for the pickleball court is the single most important factor to promoting the game in your community. If you have not seen a pickleball court, think of a badminton court, which is virtually the same dimensions; or think of a tennis court and you can fit 4 pickleball courts onto 1 tennis court. The actual playing surface is 20 feet by 44 feet. Allow an additional 10 feet on each end for service areas and an additional 4 feet on each side to play the side-line shots. Southey fit 9 pickleball courts on the arena floor. Temporary courts can be created very easily.

## INDOOR FACILITIES - REUSE/REPURPOSE

The people of Saskatchewan have been reusing and repurposing facilities to play indoor pickleball during the winter. North Battleford's NationsWest Fieldhouse is an excellent example of a place to play indoor pickleball. Saskatoon Pickleball Club partnered with the Riverside Badminton and Tennis Club to play indoors on the badminton courts. Many other communities play in school gyms (e.g. Regina, Hazlet) or church halls (e.g. Weyburn). The gyms and halls are not always the perfect size but being adaptable is key.

## OUTDOOR FACILITIES

Outdoor facilities in Saskatchewan are reused, recycled or repurposed facilities used during the summer months. On a few occasions, Main Street (1 lane blocked off and fenced) and vacant parking lots have repurposed as pickleball courts. In Kindersley, an outdoor skating rink is being reused as 4 pick-

leball courts. Add portable nets and Kindersley had 4 summer outdoor courts that are fenced in by the hockey boards.

In most communities where tennis courts exist, they add pickleball court lines onto the tennis courts. In other communities such as Rosetown, pickleball lines are painted onto a multi-use facility that has tennis and basketball court lines. In some communities such as Katepwa and Goodsoil, the pickleball lines are painters tape stuck to the tennis court surface. The tape works, but keep in mind rain storms may wash the tape away.

## DEDICATED PICKLEBALL COURTS

The very best scenario is a 'dedicated pickleball court'. Dedicated pickleball courts are for one purpose only – pickleball (no shared usage). Lac Pelletier Regional Park opened the first dedicated pickleball courts in Saskatchewan (2 courts) in late June 2018. Fort Qu'Appelle (3 courts) now has the second dedicated pickleball courts (opened August 2018). White City has a rough asphalt surface and dedicated pickleball courts and 2 courts shared with tennis.

In Florida, California and Arizona, where pickleball is very big, one community will have more than 100 dedicated pickleball courts in one park. The communities see the courts as an investment that attracts tourism and millions of tourist dollars during national tournaments. The first community in Saskatchewan to build the courts will be in the race to host the Canadian National Tournament.

So now you know what to do: Find a fenced, flat surface that is a minimum of 54 feet by 26 feet, get some portable pickleball nets and the 'games on'. Be warned: pickleball is addictive and may cause good health, laughter and socialization.

Reg Dumont  
Karen Wallace  
[www.pickleballshop-sk.com](http://www.pickleballshop-sk.com)





# LAWN BOWLING - FOR ALL AGES AND EXPERIENCE

Lawn Bowling is a unique sport. Often compared to curling, golf or the old fashioned backyard game of bocce ball, bowls differs from the others. A game that combines the strategic mind of a chess player, a target called a jack and bowls with a bias. The objective being to get your bowls closer to the target than your opponent's to score more points and eventually win the game. The originality of the sport is best noticed when you watch your bowl travel away from center line and eventually roll back to the target. Is this scientifically possible? Come to the Regina Lawn Bowling Club and test your new lab experiment.

**Can Lawn Bowling actually be competitive?** Sure! In May of each year, Regina bowlers participate every weekend in a competitive league - trying to prove their prime excellence. Bowler's egos are put to the test during the provincial play-downs with the hope of winning and representing Saskatchewan at the Nationals. Rowdy lawn bowlers on the greens, I don't think so. You might have to come check it out for yourself. Hopefully, rolling bowls doesn't turn into track and field shotput.

**What if you are not as ruthless as your friends think you are?** What if you don't want to be the bowlers' equivalent of Wayne Gretzky or Tom Brady? No problem. We pride ourselves on the social aspect of our club. From daily draws at 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., to Friday night jitney where a light lunch is served, you can always find a group of bowlers to have a game with.

**Lawn bowling is a sport for the young and the young at heart!** If you have good general health, it can be played from ages 9 to 109. Each year, we host the Meid and Friends Charity Classic with proceeds going to Kidsport. We also welcome corporate and family groups to our facility.

**Your office staff needs team-building?** The Regina Lawn Bowling Club is a great place for that! Come on Mom - why not host your son's 10<sup>th</sup> birthday party rolling on the greens? Check out our website where you can make a group booking inquiry. Don't wait too long - space is limited.

Speaking of kid's birthday parties, what a great Junior program we have. Every Wednesday night, youth bowlers come to the greens for a lesson and a short game. Lots of socializing and true friendships are made. Our Junior windup, the Matt & Jack, is always the highlight of the summer - with a great spectator crowd, some brilliant shots made, good supper (can't go wrong with hotdogs and ice cream) and even an engraved plaque for the winner. This summer, we sent 8 youth bowlers to Junior Nationals hosted in Manitoba. Look out Winnipeg... Saskatchewan pride all the way!

This summer, our club hosted the Canadian National Cham-

pionships. Bowlers from across Canada came to compete. This Event is the highlight of each bowler's summer, as they demonstrate on the greens what they have practiced for all season. If you want to see prime bowling, this is the place to be. This is the equivalent of Fashion Week in New York - only there is more to witness than just clothes you'll never see again. Our four greens are in tip top shape and we even renovated our clubhouse and deck.



Our club is widely known for our elite bowlers. We've had Commonwealth Games Medalists bowl at our club (and still do). We've had elite bowlers attend World Bowls and Asia Pacific's - the crème de la crème of bowls tournaments in the world. These veterans enrich the club by having so much knowledge about the sport and are always willing to share. Well, they do keep some secrets. We have 5 Regina bowlers on the Canadian National Team, 2 of which represented Canada in May in Wales at the 8 Nations Test Match competition. We sure are proud.

So here is the question - **Why not check out this game hidden behind the bushes on Victoria Avenue?** It is kind of like a magical garden that you only see in dreams. If the game doesn't hook you, then the beautiful greenery and friendly people should do the trick. Just because there is no tacky sign saying "Come in, We're Open" doesn't mean that you aren't welcome.

**Jordan Kos**, Regina Lawn Bowling Club



# CONVERSATION CIRCLE

When the community gardens, coordinated by the Saskatoon Open Door Society began, it was a unique way to connect newcomers to Canada, many of whom recently arrived as refugees and were new to English.



Gardens speak one of the universal languages, that of seasons, growth and nourishment. Plants communicate their needs directly by using the leaves, blossoms and produce. When the community gardens, coordinated by the Saskatoon Open Door Society, began, it was a unique way to connect with newcomers to Canada, many of who were recently arrived refugees new to English. Language barriers between gardeners and the coordinators can be overcome with a smile and nod to the garden. When asking how someone is doing, how their family is settling, the response is often a wave of the hand and being drawn into their garden plot to see the answer in abundant bean crops, spotty tomatoes or stolen produce. If they are doing well, they will proudly show their radishes and share it with you - wrapped in squash leaves in lieu of bag.

Communication takes many forms and feeling comfortable with each other draws out more and more English words as the season passes. Gardens and community go hand in hand, and this season we have welcomed Hannah Gass who, as a volunteer and U of S student, has created an 8-week series on gardening focused English practice.

Her themes cover garden planning, care, harvest and winter preparation. Connecting new and established gardeners together, we are trying to make English more commonly used in the garden by building common vocabulary. Each session, they discuss new topics on different stages of gardening based on seasons, which engages the participants. Participants are always encouraged to speak, regardless of the level of their English speaking capabilities in the circles.

Community gardeners have expressed that they simply like to come to the garden and do the garden work itself. One gardener, who is currently unemployed, has mentioned that the garden is his work. Families enjoy the park beside the garden space and often can be found sitting in the shade in the evenings. As more bonds are made between gardeners of different cultural backgrounds, interactions in English grow.

The Gardening Conversation Circle has encouraged the gardeners to be more engaged with their community through participation in activities that build a strong relationship among themselves. The Circles help to overcome the struggles of isolation and mistrust of others due to language barriers. When one person takes the lead to engage English learners in a safe and supportive environment, trust is built and people become more willing to speak up. Developing confidence in English has benefits outside of the garden. Positive social interaction creates safe and welcoming communities. The Gardening Conversation Circle is one new feature in our garden with roots that will keep growing.

**Stephanie Shyluk**  
Saskatoon Open Doors Society



**Saskatoon  
Open Door  
Society**



# SUSTAINABILITY IN MY RECREATION FACILITIES - ARE YOU SERIOUS?

What? Sustainability?  
What does this have to do with my recreation facilities and all the day-to-day responsibilities I have to deal with?  
Understood, but we should have a look and see.

First, we better understand what sustainability is. There are many definitions/concepts for sustainability, two being **environmental sustainability** and **financial sustainability**. Environmental sustainability has to do with repurposing, recycling and reusing our resources and financial sustainability involves having enough resources for an organization, activity, etc. to operate over the long term. Regardless of the two approaches, recreation is impacted. This article will focus on Environmental Sustainability.

From a facility perspective, if your community operates an arena, then you are plodding along with your large carbon foot prints. It is like trying to tiptoe through your Grandmother's prized flower garden without making a mark. You need to be concerned about your indiscriminate consumption of resources. Large capital upgrades will help solve some of your problems - like SMART compressors, new boilers/furnaces, etc. However, small changes can have a big impact too. For example, what is your attitude and the organization's culture on sustainability? Are you seriously engaged? Do you and your team make a point of turning unnecessary lights off, maintaining a proper ice thickness, turning the heat down when not required, trying to reduce water consumption, adding weather stripping around doors, etc.? When your facility components need upgrading, take advantage of this time to install low-flow devices, LED lights, insulated doors, programmable thermostats, etc. Make it part of your capital budgeting and preventative maintenance plans.

Did you know that SaskPower can help you manage those large carbon feet in your arenas? With their energy audit program, you may be able to trim down and go further with less



resources. With this type of energy 'fitness' advice, you will turn into an energy-reducing sprinter. Contact them at 1-888-355-5589 and see how their free programs can keep dollars in your pocket and help the environment at the same time.

Pools can be another resource money-pit. Water turnover is a regulatory requirement so it is difficult to 'throttle back' your pump to save on electricity. However, do you know how many times you are circulating your water each day? Have you talked about the eventual upgrade of the pool pump and whether or not a SMART system is possible or plausible? Perhaps more important, are you trying to reduce the amount of water consumed at the pool?



Regulations require that makeup water be added based on the number of bathers per day - so your hands are tied to some degree. If you are exceeding this limit, are there some things you can do to reduce the water consumption? Leaky pipes, dripping taps, old toilets and shower heads can all contribute to unnecessary water consumption. Fix these 'small' things as soon as possible and realize the savings now.

Parks are unique in the sense they can, and do, help improve your sustainability on one hand and yet can hurt it on the other. On a positive side, planting some new trees, reducing/eliminating pesticides are two examples of improving your sustainability. Often, a good turf management plan will result in less water required for irrigation and less demand for pesticides.

On the negative side, your parks operation may be having the wrong impact. Are you over-cutting your grass? Is your equipment properly tuned-up and running efficiently? Are your blades sharp? Does your parks team know how to efficiently operate the equipment to save you time, money and downtime? Studies have suggested that 2-stroke trimmers can be a source of pollution, compared to a 4-stroke models. Perhaps consider changing your past practice when you purchase your next trimmer.



As you can see, recreation facilities can have a sizeable impact on sustainability. Sustainability is another responsibility of the recreation practitioner. Successes may be most practical coming from pragmatic changes. A new attitude, for example, can go along way – shutting off lights or having a recycling program. Or incorporate new technologies when replacing lights and light fixtures. If we all do the small things, then the results are big. Think about this the next time you walk by the light switch ... or throw that can in the garbage.

**Tim Hanna**  
SPRA Consultant, Facilities

# EVENTS

## SPRA Conference

**October 17 - 20, 2018 (Maple Creek and Cypress Hills SK)**

If you're a professional or volunteer in recreation, parks, or facilities, this is one event you will not want to miss! You can expect national caliber keynotes and presenters, connecting with colleagues and experts from the field, timely learning about topics that matter most and entertaining social events. Visit [www.spra.sk.ca/conference](http://www.spra.sk.ca/conference).

## SaskFit

**November 2 - 4, 2018 (Saskatoon, SK)**

Join fellow fitness enthusiasts at Saskatchewan's Premier Fitness and Health Conference for an outstanding weekend of workshops, lectures and special events to inspire, educate and motivate! Visit [www.spra.sk.ca/saskfit](http://www.spra.sk.ca/saskfit).

For information on upcoming events, visit  
[www.spra.sk.ca/events](http://www.spra.sk.ca/events).

## REQUEST FOR ARTICLES

### Winter 2018: Hibernation is for the Bears – Get Moving and Stay Moving!

The Winter edition of DIRECTION will encourage readers to venture outdoors and be active in Saskatchewan's winter wonderland! We are looking for articles on innovative winter recreation programs, activities or services, tips to stay active or policies or procedures that support getting people moving and staying moving - regardless of the season! If you are interested, contact Lori Ross, SPRA Consultant – Communications, by email at [lross@spra.sk.ca](mailto:lross@spra.sk.ca), to review your submission to ensure it complements this issue's theme.





# REVITALIZING RECREATION FACILITIES

The townsite of Waskesiu, fondly nicknamed ‘**Saskatchewan’s Playground**’, is the centre for services and recreation in Prince Albert National Park. Since the park opened in 1928, the renewal and repurposing of recreational opportunities is ongoing. In the early years, the Parks Service took responsibility for recreation. More recently, the Waskesiu community has become involved. The Waskesiu Foundation is a volunteer-run, registered charity that has collected and invested more than \$2 million in recreational, social, cultural and environmental activities in the Park since 1999.

One of the Foundation’s early investments in recreation was refurbishing Waskesiu camp kitchens for picnicking. Day users to the Park make camp kitchens their home base for family recreation. The Foundation managed the camp kitchen projects in partnership with Parks Canada, leveraging resources from both organizations to accomplish more than either could alone.



The Foundation has also partnered with the Lobstick Golf Club, replacing the iconic Lobstick tree on the first hole as part of a community celebration and fundraiser in 2013. In 2014, the Lobstick Golf Club and the Foundation again partnered on, ‘Paving the Way’, which completed the paving of all golf cart paths on the course.

The Waskesiu Community Council is an elected body that assists Prince Albert National Park in establishing practices for the operation of Waskesiu. In 2014-2015, the Council consulted with the community and Parks Canada to create the ‘Vision 2020 and Beyond Community Action Plan’. This Vision includes an action plan that provides direction in recreation and other categories.

In 2015, the Waskesiu Foundation partnered with Parks Canada to refurbish the main beach playground, replacing the inadequate playground for children ages 5-12 with equipment from Park N Play, while keeping the vintage swings, teeter totters and toddler/wheelchair accessible equipment. The result was ‘Bears on the Beach’, a hugely popular, nature-themed play area featuring life-sized bears and a massive tree. Sixty community volunteers assembled the 100 pole structure in three days!



The heart of the recreation category in the Vision document is the Waskesiu Recreation Area Renewal. The Waskesiu Recreation Association (WRA) is a community group that manages the recreation grounds, mostly known for its tennis courts and lawn bowling green. The WRA hired Stantec, as a consultant, to develop a Master Plan for the area, which provides direction specific for the WRA to redevelop this property.

To implement the Plan’s first phase, the community responded with over \$400,000 in donations and in-kind contributions from groups and individuals. An amazing Waskesiu and Park themed mini-golf, named Little AL’s Mini Golf, with equipment from COST of Wisconsin, opened July 1, 2018 on an under-utilized part of the property. Players see life sized bison, elk, bear, a tepee, the Lobstick tree, a sand castle and more on the course. A water feature is in the shape of Lake Waskesiu and a model of Grey Owl’s cabin serves as the starter’s booth.

Other Master Plan improvements to the Recreation Area have also been implemented. In 2016, the tennis courts were resurfaced and pickleball lines were added, thanks to a local family’s donation. In 2018, the Foundation purchased and installed exceptional outdoor fitness equipment from

MoveStrong Functional Fitness. With support from the Howe family during a weekend of well-attended events, it was named the Gordie Howe Memorial Fitness Park, in recognition of Gordie's outstanding fitness and long standing connection with Waskesiu, his favourite place on earth.



The Foundation and the WRA will continue to implement the Master Plan, including installation of a multi-sport court, replacing part of the less-used lawn bowling green, addition of a picnic shelter, improvements to pathways and benches, as well as renovations to the recreation building. The curling rink, which has already been repurposed as a skating rink, will be upgraded for year round use.



Community support is the key to success for Waskesiu recreation. The community provides the vision, the community donates generously and the community volunteers to renew recreation opportunities in Saskatchewan's Playground.

#### Derwin Arnstead

Chair, Waskesiu Foundation

Website: [www.waskesiufoundation.ca](http://www.waskesiufoundation.ca)

Facebook: WaskesiuFoundation

Twitter: WaskesiuFound

# FIXED FOR FISHING

**Buddha's Bait Shop** is a local tackle and bait shop in White Fox, Saskatchewan. Through their **Fixed for Fishing program**, fishermen are encouraged to drop off any gently used fishing gear, to be given away to the fishermen/women of the future...our kids. They refurbish everything that comes through the door and hand it out to kids that otherwise may not get that opportunity. Families can come and sign out fishing equipment for their getaway and return it after they are done, like a library system.

Buddha's Bait Shops has given away around 2 dozen rods and reels and have over 50 more ready to go. They continue to encourage fishing people to donate tackle boxes, lures, fishing line, rod tips and of course, rods and reels for the kids.

Parents need to be involved as well, by being part of the process, and by taking your child fishing, you are helping lay a path for our future fisherkids. Remember parents, **"Don't let your child be the one that got away"**.

For more information, email

[buddhasbaitshopwf@outlook.com](mailto:buddhasbaitshopwf@outlook.com).





# SASKATCHEWAN HOMETOWNS SETTING UP FOR SUSTAINABILITY

For Saskatchewan hometowns big and small, recreational facilities are a cornerstone of the community. Rinks, pools and recreation centres are spaces to compete, learn and gather together.

The importance of recreational facilities is undeniable. But so is the challenge of operating these facilities in an efficient, cost effective and resilient fashion. Councils need to stretch tax dollars and find savings, while ensuring facilities are well run and able to withstand extreme weather.

Sustainability issues are top of mind for urban municipalities. In 2017, hometowns resolved at the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA) Convention to become leaders in adopting strategies to reduce emissions and in 2018, members passed two further resolutions on LED lighting and renewable energy production.

SUMA is the voice of Saskatchewan hometowns. To help its members – Saskatchewan's cities, towns, villages, resort villages and northern municipalities – be leaders in climate change strategies, SUMA adopted a Climate Change Policy that advocates for tools and supports for urban municipalities and highlights hometown climate change initiatives. These initiatives offer inspiration to others developing plans and help with locating funding opportunities.

A good starting point to running efficient ice rinks is the [SaskPower Municipal Ice Rink Program](#). This program provides resources, incentives and tools to cut facility costs and operate efficiently. Resources include a guide entitled, 'Operating Efficient Ice Rinks', which has suggestions that can be applied to any facility, and a case study on how the City of Melville accessed advice and supports.

Canada's federal government is also providing funding through programs such as the [Federal Gas Tax Fund](#). In June 2017, the fund provided \$2.3 million for 42 community energy systems projects in 35 Saskatchewan municipalities. Selected projects included lighting upgrades at the Village of Buchanan's skating rink, rec centre retrofits in the Village of Krydor and the installation of solar panels on the Town of Ponteix rink.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities offers federally funded programs supporting green projects, including the [Green Municipal Fund](#), [Partners for Climate Protection \(PCP\)](#) and the [Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program \(MCIP\)](#).

These programs provide funding, training and resources to help municipalities adapt and reduce emissions. Through PCP, municipalities can get free advice and services from regional climate advisors across Canada.

One recent MCIP-funded project is the Town of Shellbrook's plan to improve energy efficiency and emission reduction at their Affinity Credit Union Recreation Centre. This exciting project involves a comprehensive strategy for clean energy retrofits, including the installation of a new ice plant and refrigeration heat recovery system, improvements to the building envelope and new control system, LED lighting and 100 kW solar power system.

Recent electrical generation projects aiming to lower costs and greenhouse gas emissions point towards an exciting future. The Humboldt Aquatic Centre is the site of a combined heat and light system project. This project, a partnership between the City of Humboldt and SaskPower, captures waste heat and recycles it to heat the centre's pool, cutting electricity usage.

Delivering recreational services that are sustainable, efficient, and resilient is not always easy. But doing so helps ensure that hometown recreational facilities remain a cornerstone of the community for years to come.

**Steven Dribnenki**  
Policy and Legal Advisor, SUMA



# IMPROVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND REDUCING GHG EMISSIONS



The Town of Shellbrook received \$75,000 from the Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program (MCIP) grant.

The Town of Shellbrook will install energy reduction measures, in the Affinity Credit Union Recreation Centre, to achieve or exceed a 50 per cent reduction target in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The centre is a hub of regional sport and activity for the town and surrounding villages, hamlets, rural municipalities and First Nations communities. Potential upgrades will improve the functionality and comfort of the facility during the winter months, and a new insulated surface will extend the enjoyment of the arena to the summer months by supporting activities like lacrosse, as well as large functions and trade shows.

The Town of Shellbrook has conducted a detailed energy and building condition assessment, including life cycle cost analysis to identify sustainable options to retrofit the existing Affinity Credit Union Recreation Centre. The proposed option includes the installation of a new ice plant and a refrigeration heat recovery system, improvement to the building envelope, a new control system, a new LED lighting system and a new 100 kW PV system.

## INNOVATIVE ASPECT

The clean energy retrofits, including the installation of a new ice plant, refrigeration heat recovery system, improvement to the building envelope, new control system, new LED lighting system and new 100 kW PV system, will extend the use and sustainability of the centre for years to come.

## ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFIT

Energy reduction measures to the Affinity Credit Union Recreation Center are aimed at achieving or exceeding a 50 per cent reduction target in GHG emissions.

## ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Insulation and upgrades to key components of the building will amount to savings in the cost of heating and maintenance in the long term. Upgrades will extend the use of the Centre, enabling it to host large functions and trade shows in the summer months, which can offer economic benefits to local businesses.

## SOCIAL BENEFITS

Upgrades to the Recreation Centre would improve the functionality and comfort of the facility for the 10,000 inhabitants who rely on the arena and curling rink during the winter months. A new insulated surface will extend enjoyment of the arena to the summer months - to support activities like lacrosse, large functions and trade shows.

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# BRIGHTSAND REGIONAL PARK NEW ECO-FRIENDLY AND BIODEGRADABLE PLAYGROUND

“Tucked away down a country road is a stunning destination park awaiting discovery.” These are the very words used by Saskatchewan Regional Parks to describe the Brightsand Regional Park. Known for its serenity, clear water and sandy beaches, Brightsand has been a popular summer destination for over 50 years.

In the summer of 2018, the community welcomed a new playground - complete with biodegradable equipment and a slide structure reused from the existing playground. The previous play equipment was beginning to see wear and tear and didn't quite meet the current safety standards and guidelines.



*Previous Playground*

The renovated play space includes a mix of Robinia wood structures that blend beautifully into the landscape and offer a myriad of fun and challenging activities. The old lighthouse slide has been reused to help carry forward fun memories of summer at the lake.

From winding woods to playground fun! Robinia wood has a unique shape evocative of the winding tree-growth originally found in nature. The look and feel of the wood help to stimulate children's interest in nature and inspire a connection to living things. By using Robinia wood, we have an opportu-

nity to teach children about the importance of sustainability and minimizing our impact on the planet.



*New Playgroud with Lighthouse (photo by Jeremy Smith)*

Playgrounds made from Robinia wood offer the physical challenges and strength-building activities not often found in natural play spaces. Most natural playgrounds are designed as a combination of boulders, grassy knolls and logs which creates several opportunities for free play, however has limited physically demanding activities. There is a misconception that to be a natural playground, we must eliminate some of our children's favourite activities - like swings and slides.

With Robinia structures, you can build a unique natural play space, using biodegradable materials, and still connect children with nature. Robinia playgrounds offer both the opportunity for free play as well as, the opportunity for the physical challenges and risky play kids need to stay healthy. There is extensive pedagogical research that says children need thrill and they will create their own if they don't have it. Being exposed to risk is how children learn to assess and manage it.

## ROBINIA WOOD PROPERTIES

Robinia wood is categorized as a hardwood that can survive in any outdoor environment for many years. It has a high content of naturally occurring preservatives with a resistance to fungi and insects, thereby eliminating the need for harsh chemical treatments. Robinia wood is biodegradable and consists of a dense composition - making it very resistant to splintering, humidity, rot and water. It is easily disposed of at the end of its life. Robinia's beautiful grain structure, raw de-barked tree trunks and natural appearance underlines the allure of nature.



## CERTIFICATION

For playgrounds, it is recommended that all Robinia wood products come from FSC Certified forests. With FSC Certification, you get the comfort of knowing that when trees are harvested, great care has been taken to ensure no harm has been done to the environment or society. The Robinia structures in Brightsand Regional Park were created by KOMPAN, a Danish playground manufacturer. When KOMPAN designs their Robinia play structures, they carefully select individual trunks from FSC Certified forests and then combine them with organically shaped and environmentally friendly panels and roofs. It is important to ensure all Robinia playground products are IPEMA Certified and meet all playground safety standards.

The Brightsand visitors have christened the new play space and the reviews coming in are very positive.

*"Newly renovated park, a huge beach with clear water. Great place to be in the summer!"* – Jeremy Smith

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# JUNE IS RECREATION & PARKS MONTH SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

What makes a community sustainable? In terms of social sustainability, the formal and informal components that support human activity are critical. Essentially, your community can be considered socially sustainable if a good quality of life is being supported and encouraged.

Saskatchewan has just celebrated another successful June is Recreation & Parks Month (JRPM) with recreational adventures across the entire province that aim to enhance the quality of life within communities. It is incredible to see how different communities and organizations use their creativity to promote their parks and open spaces for recreational activities. While celebrating JRPM, community members are given the opportunity to use the parks and open spaces that exist in their area. JRPM acts as an important reminder of the benefits of participating in recreational activities and the utilization of local parks. Everyone wins when people are outdoors, active and happily socializing.

In Saskatchewan, there were 58 registered JRPM Ambassadors. Each and every Ambassador that participated in this year's program hosted a variety of programs and events across the province. This provided community members an opportunity to enjoy their local parks and open spaces, participate in some recreational fun and to show off some community pride. A multitude of different events and activities were hosted, such as: scavenger hunts, community barbecues, bike rodeos, fun runs and much, much more.

Many of the events that are held throughout the month of June are partially supported through the JRPM Celebration Initiative Grant. The Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA), supported by Saskatchewan Lotteries, has been able to offer funding to JRPM Ambassadors and SPRA Members through the Celebration Initiative Grant since 2011. This allows communities the opportunity to apply for grant funding to aid in hosting an event in their community in the month of June.



Since 2005, community participation in JRPM has showcased the beautiful parks, benefits of recreation and wonderful residents and volunteers that reside in our province. Promoting the benefits of parks and recreation to citizens is crucial in increasing the support and utilization of parks and open spaces. The health benefits involved in recreation, the social benefits of outdoor community events and the love of our park spaces all contribute to the sustainability of our communities.

**"It was so nice getting people from the community together outside to have some good old fashion fun!"**

- Aileen Martin, Sifton Recreation Board

**"All the kids said they had a great time and enjoyed the scavenger hunt in the forest. Parents said they loved spending time outside with their children."**

- Mel Durette, Denare Beach Recreation Board

**Austin Penner**

SPRA Summer Program Development Assistant

# ASSET MANAGEMENT

How do you keep your facilities sustainable and functional as long as possible, with due consideration to public safety, safety awareness and risk management?

Time equates to age and age equates to life expectancy. Life expectancy can be applied to your recreation assets too. Time is not a good thing no matter how you look at it. However, all is not lost. You have to start planning before the definite signs of aging start – always good advice (ask some older celebrities).

Fixed assets, for the most part, have a life expectancy that is often based on a manufacturer's recommendation, industry standards, best practices, etc. The point is everything wears out. The key is to plan for it by knowing when these assets 'wear-out' and reach their 'end-of-life'.

Here is an eye opener. Technical Safety BC (TSBC) released their Report on the arena incident in Fernie, BC. The Report states, "the incident was caused by a decision to operate the leaking curling chiller. Contributing to this decision was a failure to replace the aging chiller after it surpassed its recommended operational life-span." The Report further concludes that "By failing to include safety risk management as an objective in the management of aging infrastructure, important safety and environmental impacts may not have been considered or fully assessed by qualified professionals."

Although some may say "this is an unusual case and isn't common", I would suggest that it is NOT uncommon in our industry. Too often sucking every ounce of use out of our assets, operates them past end-of-life to the point-of-failure. Not the wisest plan given the comments above – especially when safety is not given a high enough priority over financial and political impacts.

How do we break this practice? Careful planning. The key is to scan the horizon and plan a course from there. I would guess that some are doing the basics now. Are you doing a capital budget plan for your facilities? Sure you are. If not, you should get started on a 5-year capital plan. Next, you are likely doing some form of depreciation of municipal assets. Combine your capital plan with your depreciation to give you a lifecycle plan.

At this point you should have an inventory of assets, know when they were purchased, know when they reach the end of their useful life, have carefully looked through your safety lens, have third party professional input, and have allocated funds to replace them. And, most importantly, Council has appreciated your due diligence, thoughtful planning and transparency and are funding your plan.

Now, get your preventative maintenance plan in place to ensure your assets are well cared for in your operating budgets – celebrities would call this miracle anti-aging cream. Having a preventative maintenance plan in place for your assets will help you reach the end-of-life, and perhaps a little further, but you can't push it either.

Recommendation 2 of the TSBC Report states "Maintenance programs should be developed with professionals that have training and qualifications associated with maintenance life-cycle strategies and condition assessment." Often, we rely on our contractors to provide that 'professional/qualified' opinion. The TSBC Report and background documents comment on this. TSBC touches upon the need to seek additional advice from other qualified third parties, as required, and we shouldn't rely solely upon our contractor/supplier/etc.. Want an example? When is the last time you had your brine tested? Your refrigeration contractor should be strongly encouraging this be done on a regular basis. If not, then what does this tell you? If you don't know why brine testing is vitally important, read the Report to find out why. Brine testing should be one step in your preventative maintenance plan – a no-brainer, so to speak.

So where does this leave us? Long term sustainability of our recreation facility is the shared goal for Councils (owners), operators, users, contractors, communities, etc. However, sustainability does not mean operating assets to the point-of-failure and then dealing with the potential problems. This can lead to poor facelifts and other noticeable scars. It can turn beautiful to ugly.

Through good lifecycle and financial planning you can be prepared for the inevitable and keep your facilities open and operating without disregard for everyone's safety. Your community may not notice the subtle changes, but they will notice how young your facility looks for its age. Hey, what every celebrity wants...

SPRA's new Facility Management Module 3 course covers Capital Planning and Asset Management to help communities get started. Courses will be offered this fall and winter. For more information, contact us by phone at 306-780-9324 or by email at [thanna@spra.sk.ca](mailto:thanna@spra.sk.ca) for more information.

**Tim Hanna**  
SPRA Consultant - Facilities



# EXPANDING OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Plans are underway in the community of Unity to repurpose the site of their Centennial Pool into a new outdoor recreation facility!



The Town of Unity's Centennial Swimming Pool was opened in 1967 in recognition of Canada's Centennial. In 2009, a group of residents approached the Town of Unity with interest in working towards the construction of a new swimming pool. A fundraising committee was organized and a needs assessment survey was developed and results collected. A major sponsor, Unity Credit Union, committed \$250,000 towards the Project in 2011. Funds for the pool were also received from Canada's Community Infrastructure Improvement Fund. The new Unity Credit Union Aquatic Centre, neighbouring the Unity Centennial Swimming Pool site, was officially opened in June of 2015.

There was much discussion amongst the Town of Unity management as to what to do with the former swimming pool site - with demolition and remediation of the area estimated at \$50,000. It was determined that a majority of the infrastructure at the former swimming pool site, including large outdoor lights on poles, concrete decking and the change house, were all in relatively good condition. As a result, it was decided to work towards repurposing opposed to demolishing the site.

In the summer of 2015, KC Rescue, a local feline rescue, were provided notice and required to vacate their building. Following discussion and the signing of a lease with the Town of Unity, KC Rescue took possession of 2/3s of the former swimming pool change/filter house and have since completed extensive renovations to the interior.

Soon after, residents of the community approached the Town of Unity regarding recreational facility gaps - citing skateboarding areas, an outdoor ice rink, basketball, tennis and pickle ball. In 2016 the stockpiled clay from the new Unity Credit Aquatic Centre was packed into the former Centennial Swimming Pool site and research commenced on repurposing the outdoor area.

In 2017, conceptual drawings and tender-ready construction plans were developed by local drafting firm, Veritas Designs. All capital improvements and equipment purchases to complete the repurposing of the exterior portion of the former swimming pool area were estimated to be \$200,000. **This old swimming pool site would be repurposed into a multi-use, ball, hockey, basketball and skateboard site.**

A small steering committee was developed and met in early 2018 to review the plans and to develop a sponsorship program. The steering committee met with various major businesses in the Unity region to solicit sponsorship. Unity Town Council agreed to provide a \$100,000 capital budget for the Project with the condition that funds would only be released when matched by local donations. In May 2018, Richardson Pioneer agreed to provide \$50,000 though their Foundation with the understanding that the former swimming pool area would be named Richardson Outdoor Recreation Park. Other sponsors and donors to the Project have included the Tralapa Music & Sports Festival, Unity Credit Union, Unity Interagency Committee and Unity Lions Club.

The Project was tendered, and the main component, the concrete sports slab, was constructed throughout July and August 2018 at a cost of just over \$100,000. Fundraising continues with the goal of funding additional improvements including developing a skateboard bowl in the former toddler pool, installation of basketball and tennis nets and the addition of hockey boards.

## Carey Baker

Director of Economic Development, Town of Unity

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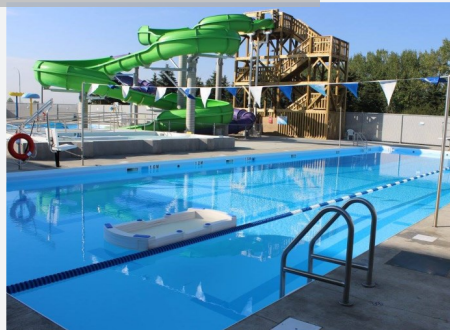


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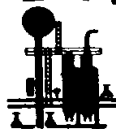
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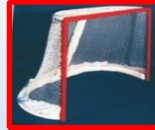


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