

Best Practice

Moosomin Nutrien Sportplex Complex

CONTACT

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THE PRACTICE

What was the issue?

6 years ago our community did a needs assessment through a professional firm. The Needs assessment covered all segments of our municipality including our Recreation Department. The contracted firm used many means to stimulate our community to get responses on what they thought were possible shortfalls in our recreation department. We are proud of the recreation department and the department is viewed in a very high standard by our community. So this undertaking was neither meant or took as a “complaint” platform but rather an honest and sincere undertaking to identify what our residents thoughts could be improved on in ever changing times.

The community needs assessment identified the following areas to be improved on:

- The community needed a dedicated park space for community gatherings and formal community events.
- The community needed non-traditional recreation activities
- The community needed winter leisure opportunities for a growing and aging population
- The community required more diversified recreation opportunities for individuals of all ages and backgrounds

With the needs assessment complete partnerships on multiple levels and financial contributions were needed. We knew we needed the corporate community to strongly believe in this project. We came up with the concept for the Nutrien Sportsplex. This multifunctional facility would meet all the wants and needs addressed in the community needs assessment. The cost of the project was \$1.5 million of which \$1.3 million would have to come from corporate sponsors.

We identified an acre of unused land and developed a plan for the Nutrien Sportsplex. When completed this project would include:

- Bowling Alley
- Billiards
- 4 Sport Simulators
 - E6 Golf (100 worldwide courses, practice modes, swing tracking picture system)
 - Visual football
 - Visual Hockey

- Baseball- Home Run Derby
- Football- Quarterback Challenge
- Visual Rugby
- Wild Game Shooting
- Visual Soccer
- Shooters
- Zombie Dodgeball
- Visual Basketball
- Visual Bocce
- Visual Cricket
- Indoor Walking Track
- 2 Indoor Pickleball Courts
- Large Raised Decking (½ covered and ½ open with glass railings)
- Large Outdoor Performing Stage
- Ground level Rubber Decking
- Flag Garden with incorporated Camping sites
- Flower Displays
- Park Area
- Golf Driving Nets
- Batting Cage
- T Ball Backstops

This project answered the community needs assessment in the following ways:

- The community needed a dedicated park space for community gatherings and formal community events.
 - The construction of the Outdoor Eventplex fully addresses this issue. We now have a 25,000 square foot park area complete with an Outdoor Event stage, ground level rubber decking with seating as well as tree's and irrigated grassy area complete with multiple recreation/ leisure opportunities.
- The community needed non-traditional recreation activities
 - We now have multiple new outlets including pickleball, billiards, as well as games on the simulators. In addition, we have our areas first indoor walking track. We run multiple programs such as the *Trans Canada Challenge* and the *Pacific Plunge* in which over 100 patrons have succeeded in walking the distance from Moosomin to the Pacific Ocean. We run a ton of winter programs at the facility including Golf Nights, Bowling leagues, learn to clinics and on and on.
- The community needed winter leisure opportunities for a growing and aging population
 - Many of the programs at this facility are geared at Adults to Seniors which was an area, as identified in the needs assessment, that was lacking. The walking track is used predominantly by 50 plus age group, winter pickleball is all Senior Age. The Golf nights, fun nights, and billiards are predominantly 50+ as well as Sr Bowling leagues. We run winter programs for adults, in total we have 4 separate programs including one dedicated to our 50+ crowd. In addition, we have not forgotten about the kids. We have a huge 50 ft by 30 ft high inflatable screen used for kids' programs from exercise classes to party (wii console) games
- The community required more diversified recreation opportunities for individuals of all ages and backgrounds

- Imagine a winter playground in rural Saskatchewan where you play golf, pickleball, cricket, lawn bowling, and hunting. As well as the walking track, bowling and billiards. This facility has over 300 members and is an absolute bee hive of winter activities with patrons both young and older alike. We call our winter 50+ patrons “northern nesters” our take on Southern Snow birders. With that in mind we have a ton of 50+ winter patrons and a ton of programs.

THE PROCESS

We are fortunate in Moosomin as our Municipal Council along with our Municipal Administration and our Recreation Department are a very tight knit group. As such all three levels were represented in the planning, development, and implementation/design of this amazing facility.

Needs assessment

Joint Committee- Community wide needs assessment from all departments, this project was the key response to community needs outlined for the Parks and Recreation Department

Forming a Committee

Joint Committee- Our committee included the three members of council including the mayor and Parks and Recreation Chairperson. It included our Administrator and our Director of Parks and Recreation.

Public Input

Joint Committee- Once our basic plan was in place we re-visited the community for their input. Some very important recommendations came from those meetings including a revision to our outdoor deck, a change to our walking track, an addition of two indoor pickleball courts, as well as some general building revisions.

Design- Physical & Program

Joint Committee- From that point we carried on with the general design and layout of the building in addition we proceeded to layout the exact areas for the various programming plans. I.e. where the simulator rooms go, the configuration of the walking track, billiards area etc.

Fundraising

Recreation Department- The 1.5 million dollar project included 1.3 million of private, corporate, service clubs and granting opportunities. The Parks and Rec department spent a considerable amount of time working on all the below mentioned area. In the end the funding was as flows:

- Private Donors 250,000.00
- Corporate Donors 700,000.00
- Service Clubs 150,000.00
- Public Grant opportunities 200,000.00

Project Manager

Joint Committee- Once we had sufficient funding in place, we proceeded to acquire a Project Manager. A local individual stepped up to do this on a volunteer basis for the project.

Contractor / Construction/ regular Evaluations/ Grand Opening/ Ongoing Additions

Joint Committee and Project Manager- The Grand Opening was Oct 31st, 2016. We continue to build on the facility. Our Eventplex Stage, campground service and flag garden are all examples of additions planned from the onset but not in place for the original opening on October 2016. More plans are in the works as more corporate donors come forward.

THE RESULTS

This project has an amazing effect in a multitude of ways on the community

- 1) We have been able to meet the needs assessment result/ recommendation
 - a) As discussed earlier this project has been able to produce the outcome solutions to the shortfalls which were highlighted in our community needs assessment... fantastic result for our department and our community.
- 2) We have a tremendous amount of new programming targeted at demographics which were badly represented in past years
 - a) Our department did a great job of running the traditional Saskatchewan programs. Our rink, ball diamonds, swimming pool, gymnasium etc. The programs are geared to 90% youth, however. There was a shortfall for adult and senior programming. This facility now affords us the opportunity to provide a ton of new programming ideas and we are now able to offer something for virtually everyone who would like to take part in a program.
- 3) There has been a significant economic spin off to our community
 - a) Being such a unique facility, we have had an unbelievable amount of out of town business. In 2017, we had over 100 Christmas parties booked at the facility. We estimate 10,000 out of town users in our winter season. In talking to corporate members of the community they tell us they now plan their winter staffing around the schedule at this facility.
- 4) There has been fantastic economic return for our Parks and Recreation Department
 - a) During our first year of operation we took in over \$100,000 of revenue and produced an operations surplus of over \$20,000. In our second year, it appears that this year will provide an even higher surplus.
- 5) Strong Sense of Community Pride
 - a) There has been tremendous community pride in our new facility. Our patrons helping with the flowers, cleaning up around the park. Several members of the Saskatchewan Roughriders have praised the Sportsplex on various media platforms.
- 6) Without question there has been a tremendous impact on citizen health
 - a) We have over 100 patrons signed up to do our walking challenges. Over 3 dozen have completed either the Trans-Canada Challenge (distance from Moosomin to Alberta) or the Pacific Challenge (Moosomin to the Pacific Ocean)
- 7) Jobs in the community
 - a) We are proud to have created multiple jobs in the community. We have a programmer, manager cleaner and half a dozen part time jobs.
- 8) Public Green Space
 - a) We are proud of what we have presented to the community for park space that is part of the bigger complex. Over 25000 square feet with a ton of accompanying leisure pursuits.
- 9) Outdoor Venue

- a) We have a large hard covered outdoor stage complete with power, something we have never had. In year one the stage hosted cabarets, Philippine multi culture weekend, school events, weddings, Canada 150 Celebrations, Western Canada Fastball social and many more.
- 10) Community Beautification
 - a) Truly breathtaking in summer. We have the flag garden to go along with some fantastic flower displays including the unique flower trees.
- 11) Winter Activity & Physical Health
 - a) As mentioned, we have so many patrons in the winter. They may walk, pickleball, billiards, bowling, lawn bowling, and much more. Whatever it is is irrelevant but what we take pride in is knowing without this complex this group of individuals would have nowhere to go in the winter to keep active and alive.
- 12) Winter Activity & Social Health
 - a) Physically keeping healthy is wonderful but social health is just as important in our opinion. So many people come to the sportsplex to visit, laugh, joke and tell stories.

We have evaluated the success of the sportsplex on:

- Patron Numbers
- Revenue Numbers
- Social Media Questionnaires
- In House Questionnaires
- Staff Questionnaires

LESSONS LEARNED

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