



Celebrating Municipal Excellence
2023 Nomination Form
Deadline: 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 21, 2023

Nominee Contact Information	
Name of municipality/ municipalities being nominated: <small>(please include the names of all partner municipalities)</small>	Town of Assiniboia
Contact Name:	Stephanie VanDeSype
Contact role in project:	
Telephone #:	3066425007
Mailing Address:	131 3rd Avenue West
E-mail Address:	recreation@assiniboia.net
Name of Nominated Practice or Project:	Lights of Love
Date of Project or Practice Initiation:	November 14, 2018
Date of Project or Practice Completion: <small>(If ongoing, please indicate)</small>	Ongoing: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Nominator Contact Information	
Name:	Stephanie VanDeSype
Organization:	Town of Assiniboia
Position:	Recreation & Community Wellness Manager
Mailing Address:	131 3rd Avenue West
Telephone #:	3066425007
E-mail Address:	recreation@assiniboia.net

Please provide as much detail as possible. Winning practices are posted in the Best Practices Library as a reference or resource to others. Nominations that clearly outline the practice and all steps involved have a higher chance of being selected for an award.

The Practice

1. What issue inspired the nominated project or practice?

Community members in the Town of Assiniboia were feeling disconnected, especially during the winter months and holiday season. We have found many ways to celebrate the season, but always felt like part of our Community wasn't engaged. The holiday season can be a time of sorrow and sadness for many people who are grieving their loved ones, and are unable to celebrate with those who have passed. We have a large population of Seniors in Assiniboia, and feel like many of them are alone during this season.

2. What has this project or practice done to address the issue?

We started a new initiative in 2018 called Lights of Love. We collect donations from the public, \$10 in memory of each loved one who have passed. We take all of this money and we decorate trees in Centennial Park for everyone to enjoy. The names we collect are published in the local newspaper. Since 2018 we have collected over \$12,000 to purchase lights, and we have a stunning display in the Park for everyone to enjoy. These lights are turned on at our Ceremony, the first Wednesday following Remembrance day, and stay on until February. This park is a great place to go for a walk, or sit and enjoy the beauty.

The Process

This section should be the longest and most detailed part of your nomination. Include enough information, such as steps, resources accessed, and considerations to support a municipality interested in applying the same project or practice.

3. Indicate who had a direct role in this project or practice:

- Municipal Council
- Municipal Administration
- Other

4. What was the role of the municipal council and/or municipal staff in this project or practice?

As a Committee we collect the donations at various events, choose which trees will be decorated next, purchase the lights and our Public Works department decorates these trees. The Municipal staff orders the lights, collects the money, and makes the purchases. The lights of love committee helps with all of the above, as well as helps to host the lighting event. We have hot chocolate and coffee, we all sing a song or two, say a few beautiful words, then light candles in memory of our loved ones. We take our candles, walk down in to the park, and while we sing Silent Night, the lights are all turned on. This is a beautiful, emotional moment for everyone involved. The lights are truly stunning.

5. Were other groups were involved in developing this project or practice? If so, who were they and what role did they play?

The Recreation & Community Wellness Manager gathered a committee, a call out was sent to the Community and many people stepped up to help.

6. What resources were involved?

Volunteers, donations, lighting, hot beverages

7. How was the project or practice developed?

The Results

8. What effect did this project or practice have on the community?

This project has helped to gather the Community, and is a great way to let those know who are hurting that they are loved and surrounded by so many others. We share hugs, stories, and tears over a cup of hot chocolate at the lighting ceremony. I often hear from people that they walk through the park, look at the lights, take a deep breathe in, and feel comforted by the sight around them. The lights of love are exactly that, lights that are shining love, this is in thanks to the generous donations of the Community, and the hard work by the Town of Assiniboia and Lights of Love Committee. These lights also help to light up a park that is often very dark. This has become a tourist attraction in the winter, and encourages our Community members to spend time in this park, go for a walk, sit on one of the benches in a gazebo, or play in the playground with their children.

9. Was a formal evaluation done after the project or practice was completed? Please explain.

10. Describe any challenges faced.

To date we have had very few challenges, hanging the lights when it's -30 some years isn't ideal! Power has also been a struggle, we have upgraded to add more power sources, and plan to upgrade again. All of the small challenges we face are worth it in the end.

Lessons Learned

11. What lessons were learned and what would you recommend doing differently?

