

Best Practice

Blairmore Civic Recreation Centre

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THE PRACTICE

The City of Saskatoon, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and Saskatoon Public Schools are developing a multi-district recreation centre, park and school site in the Blairmore Suburban Centre. The facility will create a destination centre built on partnerships and community values offering programs, activities and services in a diverse and inclusive setting. The Civic Recreation Facility will provide much needed public infrastructure on the west side of the city increasing the capacity for health, sport, recreation and fitness programs and activities for the community.

THE PROCESS

In 2005, the three partners hired a consulting firm and shared the costs of an integrated co-ordinator to develop a conceptual plan for the site. The concept plan was developed based on public input, research into best practices, as well as site visits to integrated facilities in Calgary, Red Deer, Sylvan Lake and Tisdale. At the completion of this process, the three partners signed a Memorandum of Understanding identifying the concept plan for the site, capital contribution for shared program space, and the principles for providing program and activities that will serve the community in education, health, culture, recreation and sport.

THE RESULTS

An increase in the educational, recreation, sport and fitness infrastructure on the west side of the city will provide health and active living benefits to the community.

The City of Saskatoon has also investigated the application of innovative energy technologies for this building. By using the waste energy of the schools into to heat the pool, we can achieve highly efficient heating of the pool, and nearly free cooling of the schools. The energy efficiency of the facility is expected to be over twice that of a geothermal system, which uses a ground source heat pump. A cost consultant has been hired by the City of Saskatoon to review all design and construction drawings to ensure the project does not exceed the budget allocation.

LESSONS LEARNED

Throughout this process, the City of Saskatoon, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and Saskatoon Public Schools learned that more can be achieved through effective community partnerships. Shared vision for development of the site was articulated as a result of extensive public consultation in the development of the concept plan and schematic design of the facilities.