

Saskatchewan Municipal **Best Practice**

Save Creighton Lodge

CONTACT

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THE PRACTICE

The Sun Country Health District made it known that they no longer had an interest in continuing operation of the Creighton Lodge Level 1 and 2 Senior's Housing Complex. The complex had operated in the community of Estevan for 50 years, offering affordable housing to seniors. With a housing shortage in the community, housing was unaffordable for many seniors.

With the potential for closure, the RM of Estevan decided to intervene. The RM of Estevan sought and received the support of neighboring municipalities including the RMs of Benson, Cymri, Coalfields and Cambria. A management board was established which consisted of the Administrators from each of the 5 municipalities. Once the Sun Country Health District transferred the title of the Lodge to the RM, a business plan and budget were established, and staff were hired. On July 1, 2010, the Lodge held a "New Beginning" Ceremony. At that time, given the previous uncertainty, the vacancy rate was 50%. Today, the Lodge is operating at full capacity.

This project is unique due to the fact that the municipality owns and operates the senior's complex and works in conjunction with the other municipalities.

THE PROCESS

When the Sun Country Health District gave notice that they intended to cease the operation of the Creighton Lodge, the RM of Estevan resolved to obtain the title to the lodge and continue its operation. This process consisted of a number of steps:

- The arrangement of a meeting with the neighboring municipalities to develop a plan to acquire ownership of the lodge.
- Lobbying of the health district to transfer ownership of the Lodge.
- The development of an operation plan for the continued operation of the Lodge.
- The hiring of a management team consisting of the 5 administrators of the participating municipalities
- Conducting stakeholder consultations with the residents of the Lodge to determine what needed to be done to improve the services within the facility.
- The establishment of a trust committee for the purposes of fundraising and capital improvements.
- Recruitment and hiring of lodge management personnel and kitchen, maintenance, cleaning and overnight staff
- Development of a renovation plan
- Preparation of a fund-raising plan to generate revenue for the renovations
- The development of a mission statement
- The development of a rejuvenation plan for the Lodge, including kitchen, common area and suite renovations

THE RESULTS

Before the RM took over the operation of the Creighton Lodge the occupancy rate was approximately 50%. Since this new initiative has taken place, there is 100% occupancy, with a lengthy waiting list. The quality of life of the residents of the Lodge has also increased since the beginning of this project. The successful financial operation of the Lodge and the newly renovated kitchen are also positive outcomes that have occurred as a result of this project.

LESSONS LEARNED

The importance of perseverance, teamwork and inter-municipal co-operation was a key factor in the success of this project. Dedicated management and proper administration have also contributed to the overall success of this project.