

# **Best Practice**

## **Population Growth Program**

### **CONTACT**

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### **THE PRACTICE**

The Population Growth Program was designed to increase residential lot sales, encourage young families to move to town and to keep the school and recreational facilities open. The program offers a tax credit of \$1,000 for the construction of a new housing unit and \$500 per child under 18 years of age (to a maximum credit of \$2,000 per family).

### **THE PROCESS**

The Town of Allan reviewed programs in other communities that were selling lots for one dollar to facilitate growth. Council determined that they wanted to do something different and innovative. The idea of offering tax credits for housing construction or to have kids was developed by the Economic Development Committee and brought forward to council for discussion and ratification.

Council informed the community of the proposal and it was agreed that this was the direction the town wanted to take. The largest cost of the program is the loss of taxes paid to the municipality. However, council anticipates that the benefits of an increased population will result in benefits in the future.

### **THE RESULTS**

Benefits from implementing this practice include a much younger community. Since the program was implemented in 2000, thirteen new families have moved to Allan. In 2001, a new grocery store was constructed in the community and in 2008, a plumbing business opened in town. Five previously abandoned 4-plex units have been purchased and are currently under renovation.

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

The most important lesson learned by the Town of Allan is to explore all possible courses of action before determining what is best for your community. Council was not favourable to implementing practices that other communities in the region were doing and felt that we needed to be innovative and creative.