

Best Practice

Special Projects Co-ordinator Position

CONTACT

Town of Carlyle
P. 306.453.2363
F. 306.453.6380
E-mail. towncarlyle@sasktel.net
Mail. Box 10, Carlyle, SK, S0C 0R0
Project Date: September 2007 (ongoing)

THE PRACTICE

The motivation for creating the Special Projects Co-ordinator position was that the Town of Carlyle had lost funding opportunities and missed grant application deadlines for programs and services that would be of benefit to the community. Council was often approached by individual groups and organizations with requests for funds for various projects which were often denied because council had no knowledge of existing grants or funds were not available. This position seeks out, applies for and reviews grant and funding opportunities on behalf of the Town of Carlyle and various community organizations.

THE PROCESS

In August 2007, the Town of Carlyle decided to enter into a contract with an individual to provide Special Projects Co-ordinator services to the town. The municipality did not consult with residents prior to putting this contract in place, but did provide information to various community groups to outline the procedure to be used for application of funds. The first project was a "pilot" airport runway upgrade project. This project was so successful that the municipality decided to pursue the possibility of expanding this position to include more projects. Resources required to implement this program included finances to pay the contract (\$36,000 per year, plus 1% of all grants received).

THE RESULTS

The municipality evaluates this project on a monthly basis. To date, the benefits of creating this position are approximately \$200,000 in grant funding, much of which would not have been applied for without the assistance of the Special Projects Co-ordinator. Community organizations no longer approach council for funding and there is a formal application process which has been created to ensure applications are sustainable.

The main challenge in creating this position was to get all members of council on board. There were initial concerns that council would end up spending money on projects that were not planned or needed just to get grant funding that was available. This challenge was addressed by ensuring that the Special Projects Co-ordinator is in frequent and regular contact with the administrator to find out what projects council wants to work on.

LESSONS LEARNED

The Town of Carlyle has learned that it is sometimes appropriate to seek outside expertise to increase service and program delivery. Council can provide leadership and direction that enables employees and contractors to obtain the desired results. The municipality learned that there are many more grants available than we knew existed, and by having someone familiar with these programs, the municipality can benefit without incurring additional costs.