

Saskatchewan Municipal Best Practice

Regional Leadership and Partnerships

CONTACT

Town of Shellbrook

P. 306.747.2177

F. 306.747.3111

E-mail. shellbrook@sasktel.net

Mail. Box 40, Shellbrook SK S0J 2E0

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THE PRACTICE

The Town of Shellbrook has taken a lead role in establishing regional initiatives that have had and will continue to have positive impacts on the region. The town, working through committees, has taken a lead role in establishing a doctor recruitment and retention strategy that successfully attracted doctors to the community. The town has been instrumental in creating a municipal working group of rural and urban municipalities.

THE PROCESS

Doctor Recruitment – A regional committee of representatives from numerous municipalities, chaired by a local resident, was established in 2005 due to increasing concerns regarding the difficulty of attracting and retaining qualified health professionals in the area. The group, consisting of elected and un-elected residents, met regularly and worked with local medical personnel to develop a successful program for attracting and retaining doctors in the community. The program developed includes initial assistance with living accommodations and vehicles for new doctors, as well as assistance with fees associated with licensing for foreign trained doctors.

Municipal Working Group – In the spring of 2008, the town invited municipalities and First Nations to an information meeting about economic development. There were new developments at the provincial level for economic development and the group soon moved from economic development to municipal governance issues instead. As a result, the municipal working group emerged with 10 participating rural and urban municipalities. The working group meets regularly and has been working on resolving a number of common issues. These issues include discussions regarding regional partnerships to increase municipal capacity and cost savings to ratepayers. Due to recent growth in the community, discussions for a regional approach towards land use and infrastructure planning have been the focus of this group. The town has been instrumental in keeping the newly formed group operating and at present the group is chaired by a member of the Shellbrook town council.

THE RESULTS

Doctor Recruitment – To date, the doctor recruitment committee has attracted and retained 3 physicians to the community.

Municipal Working Group – Successes for this group to date include getting price quotes from planning consultants for participating members who wanted to either create or upgrade zoning bylaws and develop official community planning statements. The group is also in the final stages of acquiring approval from participating municipalities that will create a regional development appeals board. Discussions have started and are in progress to develop a community action plan for the region and there is ongoing dialogue with the Ministry of Environment about issues surrounding the operation of municipal landfills, water and sewage treatment processes.

LESSONS LEARNED

The Town of Shellbrook has learned that working together has increased the community's ability to achieve greater goals. With the assistance of surrounding municipalities, the community has been able to identify priorities for the region and follow through on those goals with great success.