

# *Saskatchewan Municipal* **Best Practice**

## **Recreation Centre Regional Partnership Practice**

### **CONTACT**

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### **THE PRACTICE**

Representatives from Little Red River Band, the Rural Municipality of Buckland No. 491 and the community at large came together to incorporate as the Northern Regional Recreation Center Inc. to build a partnership for social, sport and recreation enhancement.

### **THE PROCESS**

In 2007, Ray Mackenzie – Little Red River Band Administrator and Wes Stubbs, Reeve of the Rural Municipality of Buckland No. 491, envisioned a concept for coordinating resources to re-vive a deteriorating recreation facility located in the R.M. of Buckland. Both leaders recognized the need for a facility to serve the growing population in the R.M. of Buckland and the young Aboriginal population of the region.

A funding agreement ensued, and a lease entered with the R.M. of Buckland for the lease and operation of the recreation facility. The partnership is unique between first nations and municipal government in recognizing the strength from collaboration for regional benefit. The unique relationship has expanded, with Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation recognizing the benefits of the partnership and adding to the partnership. This is the first known partnership venture in this area for the creation of joint recreation facilities between aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples.

### **THE RESULTS**

6,900 children have benefitted from this facility and physical exercise during school programs over the winter season. After school – Free Skating- averaged 25 children per session over 20 weeks.

The partnership has created economic growth for the region. Besides the contracts for electrical, roofing, painting, carpentry and catering – positions of coordinator, manager and caretakers have been created.

The relationship between first nations and municipal government has strengthened. The partnership has fostered skating skill and development and provided opportunities for the aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities to work and play together. The communities of this region have joined together – both at the board room table and on the ice rink!

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

The partnership and results have been positive for all partners. It is important to recognize diversity and value one another. This practice could easily be adapted by any other jurisdiction with the desire to collaborate. The three communities now have a recreation centre for the youth of the region, and each play an important role in reviving the deteriorating facility.