

Anchor Module

Helping to Build a Healthy, Vibrant and Active Community in Regina

Introduction

The City of Regina's vision statement, to be "Canada's most vibrant, inclusive, attractive, sustainable community, where people live in harmony and thrive in opportunity" provides a strategic focus for the future and an image of Regina that encompasses community life.

Neighbourhoods are key building blocks to bringing Regina's vision to life. The goal of building strong neighbourhoods in Regina is to assure the health, safety and well-being of individuals and families while promoting liveable, vibrant and inclusive neighbourhoods where residents feel connected to their community.

A Word to Users of the Modules Within the Toolkit

The City of Regina recognizes that the following modules provide much information. We intend this manual to be a resource to community associations, zone boards, and a broad range of cultural, recreation and sport organizations. It is important to recognize that the content provides your organization with best practice models that your colleagues may choose to adopt. There certainly is no "one size fits all" assumption behind the development of this resource. It is also critical to recognize that the tools provided are effective and tested. *However, there is no obligation for your organization to adopt the methodology outlined in this document.* Please see this as a resource that your organization may choose to adopt in whole or in part.

The toolkit arose from extensive community consultation with community associations and zone boards. Conversations with a cross section of City administration in the Sport and Recreation and Cultural Development work units noted the need to make this resource available to a range of community groups.

The Value of Community

Supporting the overall well-being of individuals and families is vital to building strong communities. The communities we belong to can help us to be more effective citizens. They play an important part in our personal well-being. They are the source of many creative ideas and solutions, especially to the problems that arise due to lack of individual access to resources. They can care for or harm the environment we call home.

Communities do not just preserve old links and traditions. They change and grow. In our modern world, one person can belong to many different communities based on where they live, their interests or culture, or the people with whom they share common challenges.

The City of Regina's Official Community Plan, *Design Regina*, is a comprehensive policy framework that guides the physical, environmental, economic, social, and cultural development of the city. As such, it plays a key role in setting the long-term direction for Regina and is essential to managing future growth, development and change in the community.

Through the Design Regina process the City of Regina has identified a number of priorities for supporting the development of community.

These include:

- Developing complete neighbourhoods;
- Embracing built heritage and investing in arts, culture, sport, and recreation;
- Supporting the availability of diverse housing options;
- Creating better, more active ways of getting around;
- Promoting conservation, stewardship, and environmental sustainability;
- Achieving long-term financial viability;
- Fostering economic prosperity; and
- Optimizing regional cooperation.

Basic Principles of Community Engagement

Building a strong community with vital organizations requires an environment where people feel valued and safe, cultural diversity is respected, people participate in social activities, and they can live with dignity.

Some basic principles of building a stronger community include the following:

- The desire to strengthen a neighbourhood or community is strongest in the people who live, work and play there.

- Organizations of neighbourhood residents are best able to implement community-driven solutions and flexible programming to meet the needs of the residents.
- Community-based organizations play a vital role in enhancing the quality of life and sense of belonging and identity for residents in neighbourhoods.
- Establishing, building, and sustaining community relationships, both individually and organizationally, is essential to creating quality engagement.
- Volunteers are vital to the delivery of neighbourhood-based programs and activities that advance social change.
- Strengthening community-based organizations and their volunteers builds capacity within the community to address a broad range of issues, with a direct impact on quality of life.

Volunteering Is at the Heart of Building Community

Volunteers have a real impact on their communities. They lead local boards. They plan events. Volunteers run summer barbeques and oversee neighbourhood safety programs. They work with the government to address key issues in the community. Their local initiatives bring people together to create a common vision for the future. Volunteer organizations deliver a vast array of programs and services that build a vibrant city.

Community-based organizations work at a local level to improve life for residents. They help to build equality across society in many areas – health care, environment, quality of education, sports and recreation, culture, strengthening neighbourhoods, access to spaces, and services for families, to name but a few.

Community-based organizations are typically staffed by local volunteers – community members who experience and understand first-hand the needs within their neighbourhoods, broader communities, or the organizations to which they belong. Occupational skill sets and experience are greatly diverse in community organizations.

The Value of Volunteer Organizations to the Community

Community-based organizations and non-profits are the backbone of civil society and bring incalculable value to the individuals who live there and participate in its programs and services.

This value includes:

- Stronger bonds between neighbours, where friendly relations build trust and a mutual support network and prevent social isolation.
- Stronger bonds between communities, where relationships between diverse groups are strengthened and the risk of social breakdown is minimized.

- Active neighbourhoods, communities and organizations, where local people come together to participate and contribute to a vibrant community life.
- Self-help, where people take more responsibility for themselves and for each other and for finding their own solutions to local concerns.
- Robust democracy, where local people practice democratic engagement through local organizations and wider political engagement is fostered and nurtured.
- Community identity, where local people have a sense of belonging and pride in their neighbourhood.

Building the Capacity of Community Organizations

Capacity includes capabilities, knowledge, and resources that a non-profit needs in order to fulfill its mission through a blend of sound management, strong governance, and a persistent rededication to achieving results.

Capacity-building refers to activities that strengthen a non-profit organization and help it better fulfill its mission. These activities include, among others, strategic planning, technology upgrades, operational improvements, and board development.

Organizational capacity is multifaceted and continually changing. Connolly and Lukas's model –shown in the figure below – depicts six interdependent factors that contribute to the health and performance of a non-profit organization.

Core Elements for Effective Community Organizations

There are a number of core elements that successful, sustainable community organizations require in order to build capacity, effectively govern and manage their operations, and meet the needs of the community.

These include the following core elements:

- A strategic plan for the association and a process for ongoing future/organizational planning;
- Processes to identify and address community needs and interests;
- Access to sufficient funding to operate and deliver programs and services;
- A structure with sub-groups, project committees, or task groups that provide opportunities for community residents to volunteer and contribute;
- Ability to recruit, manage, retain, and reward sufficient volunteers;
- Effective financial practices, and processes in place to manage funds and report appropriately to the board and the membership;
- Access to facilities, including schools and City-owned facilities, for delivery of programs and the operation of the organization;
- Processes to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and services delivered;

Strengthening the Community Through Building Capacity of Community Organizations

Communities evolve over time. Sometimes economic and social pressures threaten to break the links between people. But people also come together in new ways, undertake new activities, and create new, more diverse communities, releasing energy and resources.

In the end, it is what communities can do for themselves that matters, but there usually needs to be something in the background – some person or organization to help get things started, or to which people can turn for advice or support, or to build up the right skills.

Community groups can be either formal or informal in structure; and people often get involved in community action to try to change their own circumstances, as well as volunteering to help others. Working to build capacity in community organizations aids in their sustainability and contributes to an environment where people can thrive and build upon their own skills and abilities.

Volunteers are vital to the delivery of neighbourhood-based programs and activities that advance social change. Strengthening community-based organizations and their

volunteers builds capacity within the community to address a broad range of issues, with a direct impact on the quality of life for all residents. Healthy, active, and vibrant community-based organizations require an ongoing investment by the municipality to build and sustain strong leadership.

Need More Help?

Non-Profit Capacity Building Toolkit:

<http://www.authenticityconsulting.com/pubs/kit.htm>

Strategic Planning Toolkit: <http://www.ifrcmedia.org/assets/pages/toolkit/toolkit-en/resources/pdfs/Planning-toolkit-en.pdf>

Funding available to secure a facilitator to assist in developing a strategic plan:

Cultural Groups

Municipal Cultural Planning and Engagement Fund

SaskCulture

Community Outreach Coordinator

(306) 780-9265

1-866-476-6830

dgarreck@saskculture.sk.ca

Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Leadership Grant

The Municipal Cultural Engagement and Planning Grant (MCEP) aims to support Saskatchewan municipalities and First Nations Bands wanting to explore and plan for the creative and cultural potential of their community through cultural engagement and planning initiatives.

First Nations and Métis Coordinator

(306) 780-9251

1-866-476-6830

dbheit@saskculture.sk.ca

Social Development Groups

Explore various foundations that include many with criteria including strategic planning support and staff development/volunteer capacity development:

South Saskatchewan Community Foundation

<http://sscf.ca/receive-support/sscf-application-guidelines>

Muttart Foundation

<http://www.muttart.org/>

Guide to Innovation: (small business development focus)

<http://concierge.portal.gc.ca/>

Charity Village: large roster of foundations across Canada with many that include Saskatchewan groups as eligible applicants

<https://charityvillage.com/directories/funders/canadian-foundations.aspx>

- Developing specific recommendations pertaining to diversity in such areas as community involvement, policy and development, personnel practices, communication, training, and methods of service and program delivery;
- Developing diversity guidelines for the overall direction for the organization;
- Obtaining support for the plan from the board or general membership.

Phase 4: Implementation

Organizational activities in this phase include:

- Taking responsibility for action and having a group or key members as your “leaders for diversity” that is made up of board members, staff, volunteers, and community members;
- Identifying and allocating resources; and
- Providing training and orientation to staff and board members about diversity and cultural competency issues.

(See the **Strategic Planning** Module in this toolkit for helpful steps in developing an action plan)

Phase 5: Evaluation / Outcome Measurement

The following activities help determine whether the organization has achieved its goals for diversity:

- Ensuring that indicators of success are reinforced and accepted by the board of directors; and
- Building support to assist the organization in implementing diversity.

Need More Help?

Diversity Resource List

Persons with Disabilities

Saskatchewan Disability Strategy

http://www.saskatchewan.ca/disabilitystrategy#utm_campaign=q2_2015&utm_medium=short&utm_source=%2Fdisabilitystrategy

Disability Etiquette and Communication Guide

<http://www.senseability.ca/docs/default-source/articles/articles-en/disability-etiquette-communication-guide-branded-rev.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

Accessibility Ontario

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility#!/>

Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Volunteer Recruitment

Volunteer Connections: Creating an Accessible and Inclusive Environment

<http://volunteer.ca/content/volunteer-connections-creating-accessible-and-inclusive-environment>

Diversifying Volunteer Boards

Diversity in Governance: A Toolkit for Non-profit Boards

<http://diversecitytoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/Diversity-on-Non-Profit-Boards-Toolkit.pdf>

Cultural Diversity/Newcomers

Diversity at Work

<http://www.hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/diversity-foundation.cfm>

Increasing Ethnic Diversity in the Non-profit Sector's Workforce

<http://www.hrcouncil.ca/projects/diversity.cfm>

Cultural Competency

Cultural Competency: A Self-Assessment Guide for Human Service Organizations

http://www.calgary.ca/csps/cns/documents/fcss/cultural_competency_self_assessment_guide.pdf?noredirect=1

Multicultural Inclusiveness Strategy

<http://www.saskculture.ca/programs/organizational-support/multicultural-inclusiveness-strategy>

Pillar Voluntary Sector Network;

Recruiting New Canadian Volunteers to Your Organization

http://atwork.settlement.org/downloads/atwork/Recruiting_New_Canadian_Volunteers.pdf

Building Blocks for Engaging Newcomer Volunteers: A Guide for Organizations

<http://volunteer.ca/content/building-blocks-engaging-newcomer-volunteers>

Volunteer Alberta:

- Intersections

- Immigrants and Change

- Additional Resources

<http://volunteeralberta.ab.ca/intersections>

Capturing the Talents of Newcomer Volunteers: A Guide to Developing Effective, Culturally Inclusive Volunteer Programs. BC Ministry of Multiculturalism and Immigration, Community Liaison Division

<http://www.mosaicbc.com/sites/all/files/24/M5%20A%20Guide%20to%20Developing%20Effective%20Culturally%20Inclusive%20Volunteer%20ProgramsTextbook%20080506%20with%20Cover%20LR%200.pdf>

Organizational Resources: Volunteerism

<http://www.saskculture.ca/programs/organizational-support/organizational-resources>

First Nations and Metis Nation

Guidelines for the Recruitment and Retention of Aboriginal Women Volunteers Handbook

http://sectorsource.ca/sites/default/files/resources/files/iaaw_guidelines_recruitment_handbook.pdf

Lessons Learned: Recruiting, Training, and Retaining Aboriginal Volunteers at Sports Events

<http://www.sasksport.sk.ca/pdf/LessonsLearned.pdf>

Native Women's Association of Canada

<http://www.nwac.ca/sites/default/files/imce/volunteerism/Lit%20review%20Jan%20%2026%202012%20Final%20TE.doc>

United Way Saskatoon & Area:

- Engagement of Aboriginal people
- Policy Statement
- Authentic Engagement of Aboriginal People

<http://www.unitedwaysaskatoon.ca/our-work/aboriginal-engagement/>

Engagement in Volunteerism

<http://www.nwac.ca/sites/default/files/imce/volunteerism/Lit%20review%20Jan%20%2026%202012%20Final%20TE.doc>

Older Adults

Volunteer Connections: New Strategies for Involving Older Adults

<http://volunteer.ca/content/volunteer-connections-new-strategies-involving-older-adults>

Service to Older Adults: A Plan for Halifax Public Libraries

2007-2008 – www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca/assets/files/.../service_to_older_adults.pdf

Youth

Volunteer Connections: New Strategies for Involving Youth

<http://volunteer.ca/content/volunteer-connections-new-strategies-involving-youth>

A Guide to Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Students in Your School

<https://www.glsen.org/download/file/MzE3MA>

Reducing Barriers Making services relevant to LGBT clients
<http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/visions/lgbt-vol6/reducing-barriers>