

visualize the possibilities

Saskatoon's First Fully Integrated Facilities

THE PARTNERSHIP STORY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: PARTNERSHIP AT A GLANCE

In the past five years, two integrated community facilities have been built in Saskatoon that are designed, constructed and operated by a partnership of public organizations. Outlined below are the benefits and the key factors involved in creating a successful partnership. The full Partnership Story discusses each of the points in more detail.

THE BENEFITS

- The new facilities are world-class destination centres with the potential for hosting large-scale provincial, national and international events.
- The facilities provide the opportunity for new and innovative shared programming.
- The value exceeds the costs and is a wise use of taxpayer dollars as the facilities are used extensively and for extended hours.

KEY INGREDIENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP

Forming a Partnership

- Partners should have complementary mandates and a shared vision for the new facility.
- The partners must have capital – not simply a desire to offer programming. They should have the authority to make decisions.
- The individuals should have the courage, vision and energy to make it happen.
- A facilitator can assist the partners in getting to know each other and in establishing shared values.
- Visit an integrated facility in order to visualize the possibilities.
- Maintain written records to document discussions and decisions: a concept plan, a memorandum of understanding, minutes and financial records.
- One partner needs to take a leadership role in setting up meetings and moving the agenda forward.

Effective Partnerships: The Planning Stage

- Partners must respect each other's mandates and trust each other.
- Focus on the partnership's goals and be flexible.
- Be prepared to dedicate a huge amount of time and work to the project.
- Hold regular meetings with all the people involved. Call everyone back to the table to resolve misunderstandings.
- Hold occasional joint meetings of the elected officials and administrators from all the partners in order to build shared ownership.
- Administrators should keep elected officials informed. Elected officials should provide clear policy directives and support.
- Consult the public in order to be aware of the community's needs and wishes.
- Be prepared to change the rules. Regulations may need to be adjusted in order to be relevant to integrated facilities.
- Start working together as soon as possible.

Effective Partnerships: The Construction Stage

- Respect the complexity of the task and be prepared to dedicate time to the coordination of construction schedules and construction issues that affect all parties.

Effective Partnerships: The Operational Stage

- Provide staff orientation and training in order to ensure that the staff members understand and share the partnership philosophy.
- Share information; consider and be prepared to accommodate each other's needs.
- Establish joint procedures and guidelines.





“Blairmore is fabulous. It’s the type of facility citizens west of Circle Drive have wanted for years. There’s a world-class recreational facility and excellent schools... I’m impressed every time I go out there by the sheer magnitude of the facility. It’s a significant initiative brought about under the principles of benefiting students and citizens. The students say it’s awesome. It’s a beautiful facility – the grounds, the roadways. And it’s huge – 68 acres. It’s a pretty important showpiece for the city. We’re fortunate in this city to be able to work together.”¹

introduction



In the past five years, two integrated community facilities have been built in Saskatoon. These are outstanding new facilities, but what really sets them apart is that they are designed, constructed and operated by a partnership of public organizations.

By working together, the partners have provided the citizens of Saskatoon with two world-class destination centres providing a wide range of services and facilities to students and to the general public. The value far outweighs the cost, and there is tremendous pride in the achievement:

“Blairmore is fabulous. It’s the type of facility citizens west of Circle Drive have wanted for years. There’s a world-class recreational facility and excellent schools. . . . I’m impressed every time I go out there by the sheer magnitude of the facility. It’s a significant initiative brought about under the principles of benefiting students and citizens. The students say it’s awesome. It’s a beautiful facility – the grounds, the roadways. And it’s huge – 68 acres. It’s a pretty important showpiece for the city. We’re fortunate in this city to be able to work together.”¹

¹ The quotations in this report are drawn from comments made by the key stakeholders in the two integrated facilities projects. A list of the individuals interviewed is provided in Appendix C.

As Saskatoon has learned, there are many benefits to forming a partnership in order to build an integrated facility, but it is a complex, time-consuming task and should not be undertaken lightly. In a series of interviews with 21 key stakeholders,² the partners outlined the key factors that are involved in creating a successful partnership as well as the most significant benefits. These are outlined below.

WORLD-CLASS FACILITIES

Saskatoon has gained some spectacular world-class facilities through the two partnership agreements.

Forest Park Facility

The Forest Park facility³ is located in the University Heights neighbourhood in northeast Saskatoon. It includes:

- Centennial Collegiate (Saskatoon Public Schools);
- The SaskTel Sports Centre operated by the Saskatoon Soccer Centre Inc., which includes both indoor and outdoor artificial turf fields;
- The Fitness Circuit and Terry Fox Track operated by the City of Saskatoon.

St. Joseph Catholic High School and the Alice Turner branch library are adjacent to the integrated facility.

The partners on this project are the City of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, Saskatoon Public Schools and the Saskatoon Soccer Centre Inc. with complementary participation by Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools.

Blairmore Facility

The Blairmore facility⁴ is located on the western edge of Saskatoon as the first piece in a new neighbourhood development. It includes:

- Tommy Douglas Collegiate (Saskatoon Public Schools);
- Bethlehem Catholic High School (Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools);
- The Shaw Centre includes competitive and recreational swimming pools as well as a walk/jog three-lane track, fitness room, multi-purpose room, child-minding room and more.

The three facilities will be connected by a pedestrian corridor. A space has been left in the architectural footprint for the possible addition of a branch library. The partners on this project are the City of Saskatoon, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, Saskatchewan Ministry of Education and Saskatoon Public Schools.

SCHOOLS

Centennial Collegiate, Bethlehem Catholic High School and Tommy Douglas Collegiate, the new schools at Forest Park and Blairmore, are state-of-the-art facilities. Some of the outstanding features are:

- Centennial and Tommy Douglas Collegiates feature 450-seat performing arts theatres with sunken orchestra pits. The theatre at Bethlehem Catholic High School seats 300. The theatres at each of the schools feature advanced lighting and sound as well as adjoining band facilities and practice rooms.
- All schools have one large gymnasium and access to a second. At Centennial Collegiate the second, shared gym in the SaskTel Sports Centre is three times larger than the main school gym. There is a glass-enclosed weight room in the mezzanine over Bethlehem's main gym.
- The commons areas at Centennial and Tommy Douglas Collegiates share space with the adjoining recreational facilities, making these areas at least three times larger than those in a stand-alone school.

² A list of the individuals interviewed is provided in Appendix C

³ Appendix A provides an overview of the Forest Park facility

⁴ Appendix B provides an overview of the Blairmore facility

- Bethlehem's commons area is large enough to seat the entire student population and adjoins the school's theatre and servery.
- Each of the schools has smartboards and data projectors in every classroom and wireless technology in many parts of their building.
- Dance studios at Centennial and Tommy Douglas Collegiates have sprung floors, floor-to-ceiling mirrors and ballet bars.
- Centennial and Tommy Douglas feature fully-equipped science labs, computer labs, digital photography labs and woodworking shops.
- The multi-media studio at Bethlehem can broadcast to all the classrooms, and the school's integrated sound system offers several new options for school-wide communication.
- Bethlehem's instructional space for practical and applied arts (home economics and industrial arts) features a flexible, open floor plan that can be adapted for several uses.
- Bethlehem's distinctive circular chapel and the symbolic glass 'star' above the school's commons area highlight its identity as a Catholic school.



St. Joseph Catholic High School, which opened in 1996 before the main development at Forest Park occurred, is an innovatively-designed school featuring a performing arts theatre; a large student commons area with an abundance of natural light, and a centrally-located school chapel.

SASKATOON SOCCER CENTRE INC.

When the Saskatoon Soccer Centre Inc. realized that it was running out of space in its first facility, the Centre formed a committee to study future options. As one soccer representative explained, "We looked to the future and took it upon ourselves to decide where we needed to go in order to get better."¹ The committee looked at other facilities and wrote a memorandum of understanding for the soccer community explaining the type of facility they wanted to build in order for Saskatoon soccer teams to excel both competitively and recreationally.

As a result, the SaskTel Sports Centre is dramatically different from other soccer centres and has fundamentally changed the direction of indoor soccer in Western Canada. Saskatoon moved to a non-boarded facility, raised the height of the building and introduced artificial turf both indoors and outdoors. The new centre is designed to be used with either full or half fields, but even a half field is double the size of a traditional indoor pitch. At the time of construction, Saskatoon had the distinction of being the largest single synthetic grass installation in North America. Each of these components was ground breaking, and they had never been introduced together before.

In the past, Alberta, because of its larger population base, has been ahead of Saskatchewan soccer. Now, Alberta players are going home and saying that they want a facility like the one in Saskatoon. The City of Winnipeg has already adopted Saskatoon's format, and there has been interest from Edmonton, Calgary and Prince Albert.

AQUATIC CENTRE

The centrepiece of the Shaw Centre is the 50-metre indoor stainless steel modular competitive pool, which is specifically designed to meet or exceed Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA) regulations for hosting national and international competitions for competitive and synchronized swimming, water polo and diving. The competitive pool has the largest metric volume of water (4.83 million litres) in the world for a stainless steel indoor pool. In addition, there will be a six-lane warm-up pool, a leisure pool with a water slide and water toys, spectator seating and wheelchair-accessible hot tubs.

A stainless steel modular pool is considered a fast pool because of the water depth and the adjustable wall and gutter system. The adjustable wall and gutter system allow for precise levelling and alignment of the overflow gutter system. This is important as the overflow gutter system maintains an ideal level of pool surface flowing into the gutter, which reduces water turbulence caused by swimmers' movements (strokes and turns). The water depth and adjustable wall and gutter system reduce swimmers' resistance, resulting in what is known as a 'fast' pool.

THE LOCAL CLIMATE

Saskatoon

Saskatoon is Saskatchewan's largest city with an estimated population of 208,800 (as of June 30, 2008) and growing. The Saskatoon region has one of the most diversified economies in Canada, including mining, energy, agriculture, and research and development. The city is experiencing significant growth with 900 new commercial or home-based businesses getting off the ground in 2007 and a substantial increase in residential and non-residential construction.⁵

The Partners

The Mayor and 10 Councillors, representing the 10 municipal wards,



Photo: Gordon Taylor / Tourism Saskatoon

sit on Saskatoon City Council. The municipality employs approximately 2,800 employees who provide services in five departments: Community Services, Corporate Services, Fire and Protective Services, Infrastructure Services and Utility Services.⁶ The Community Services Department, which is responsible for the integrated facilities, provides programs, services and resources in order to create a community in which people of all ages and cultural backgrounds want to live, work, play and visit.

Saskatchewan has two publicly-funded school systems with both public and separate school divisions. Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools serves approximately 15,000 students in six high schools, 37 elementary schools and two associate schools. The schools are located in Saskatoon, Humboldt, Biggar and Viscount.⁷ Saskatoon Public Schools is one of the two largest school divisions in the province. It operates 43 elementary schools, 10 collegiates and two associate schools with approximately 20,000 students.⁸ The Saskatchewan Ministry of Education funds, on average, 65% of all capital projects in the province.

5 www.saskatoon.ca (Look under 'Quick Facts' on homepage) and www.sreda.com

6 www.saskatoon.ca

7 www.scs.sk.ca/general_information/

8 www.saskatoonpublicschools.ca

The Saskatoon Soccer Centre Inc. was established as a non-profit corporation in 1993 and is made up of equal representation from both adult and youth soccer in Saskatoon. The corporation provides facilities for over 10,000 youth and adult players, who play indoor and outdoor soccer in District Six of Sask Sport Inc. The Soccer Centre is unique among Canadian soccer associations as it does not simply lease facilities but has built, owns and operates two soccer facilities with fixed assets of close to \$22 million in 2005 costs.

IMPETUS FOR DEVELOPING INTEGRATED FACILITIES

Public bodies and organizations in Saskatoon have a long history of working together. The City of Saskatoon works with sports and leisure organizations to meet their needs for facilities. The two school boards and the City have had joint-use agreements for integrated school grounds and public park sites for a number of years. The City provides the school boards with free access, during school hours, to a range of recreational facilities. In return, the school boards provide the neighbourhood community associations with use of the schools during evenings and weekends.

A number of factors prompted the City of Saskatoon, the two school boards and the Saskatoon Soccer Centre Inc. to build on the success of their past relationships and to partner with each other to design, construct and operate integrated facilities.

Integrated Community Centres: Building Blocks for Great Cities

In 2002, a number of Saskatoon's key organizations – City of Saskatoon, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, Saskatoon Health Region and Saskatoon Public Schools – formed a committee to develop a set of principles that would guide the creation of a vision and broad strategic outcomes for integrated community-use sites. Integrated community-use sites would serve as venues to offer broad-based leisure, social,

health and educational programs and services accessible to all in the community.

The committee issued a report in May 2002 entitled *Integrated Community Centres: Building Blocks for Great Cities*. Elected officials from each of the agencies endorsed a common commitment to:

- A vibrant, healthy community
- Enriching the individual and collective lives of all residents
- Providing expanded preventative health care services throughout the community
- Enhancing the quality of life in Saskatoon.⁹

The report recommended that, “each school should become a community school where the community is a resource for learning, while the vitality of the community is integrally linked to the success of the school in developing our youth's interest and commitment to their community.”¹⁰

The report lists eight guiding principles for the development of integrated community centres (Appendix D).

SchoolPLUS

The impetus towards working together on integrated facilities was further strengthened by a provincial government policy directive entitled *SchoolPLUS*. *SchoolPLUS* endorsed a new role for schools mandating them to fill two primary functions: “to educate children and youth – developing the whole child, intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically; and to support service delivery – schools serve as centres at the community level for the delivery of appropriate social, health, recreation, culture, justice and other services for children and their families.”¹¹

⁹ *Integrated Community Centres: Building Blocks for Great Cities*, May 2002

¹⁰ *Integrated Community Centres: Building Blocks for Great Cities*, May 2002

¹¹ *Securing Saskatchewan's Future: Ensuring the Wellbeing and Educational Success of Saskatchewan's Children and Youth: Provincial Response to the Role of the School Task Force Final Report*, February 2002

As one of the partners indicated,

The community school concept through SchoolPLUS has been a real godsend. It identified a real need for our schools to be different from what they had been and to include all the things involved in community schools. In educating children, you're educating the whole child – body, mind and spirit – it's more than just education.¹

Public Pressure

The citizens of Saskatoon also indicated a desire for integrated facilities. When the City met with residents of Forest Park to discuss development of a multi-district park for leisure and recreational use, the public clearly indicated that they wanted more than just a park. Delegates at the Future Park Conference held in April 2002 indicated that they were looking for an “extreme multi-use” (multi-purpose, multi-sector, multi-seasonal) facility that would offer a wide range of sport, leisure and recreation activities. They wanted the City to pursue “aggressive partnerships,” unconventional partnerships among public, private and non-profit agencies and businesses. They recommended “unorthodox financial models” (e.g. low-cost construction designs and condo ownership) that could help finance the facility. And they wanted the City to play a lead role in facility development.¹²

¹² Executive Summary, Future Park Conference Report, April 2002





“The shared facility made the school think differently about programming. We realized that we didn’t have to do things in the same old way. When you’re not an established school, you can do things differently. For example, we’re not planning to have awards at our first graduation ceremonies. We couldn’t have chosen to go that route if there had been a history of student awards.”

the benefits of integrated facilities



DESTINATION CENTRES

Saskatoon's integrated facilities are destination centres for all City residents and visitors. They provide central gathering places that are accessible to all segments of the community. People of all ages and backgrounds, from across the city, can come together under one roof to interact and participate in education, health, culture, recreation and sports programs and activities.

Because of their size and the wide range of services provided, the facilities unite the community. Children swim or participate in child care programs while their parents attend a community meeting or use the fitness centre. The walking track is shared by students, young mothers, adults and active agers.

LARGE-SCALE EVENTS

The size and scope of integrated facilities provide Saskatoon with the opportunity to host a wide range of large-scale, provincial, national

and international events. Events can be held in one location, using state-of-the-art facilities, with a wealth of space and parking. In turn, the events provide a positive economic benefit for the city as a whole. In 2007, estimated visitor expenditures for 17 regional, national and international sporting events hosted in Saskatoon totalled approximately \$9.8 million.¹³

Forest Park

The Forest Park facility includes one indoor and two outdoor artificial turf fields, two Sport Court surfaces, 12 dressing rooms, a large commons area, a full-service cafeteria, a licensed pub and concessions, a large meeting room, an upper-level viewing area, 36 classrooms, a fully-equipped theatre, dance studio, fitness circuit and walking track.

In 2006, the SaskTel Sports Centre hosted the Under 14/Under 16 Girls' National All-Star Soccer Championships with estimated visitor expenditures of \$828,195.¹⁴ In 2008, it hosted the Provincial High School Soccer Semi-Finals, followed by the Boys' and Girls' Championships. In 2011, the Centre will host the Under 14/Under 16 Boys' National All-Star Soccer Championships.

This past fall, the mathematics and science teachers from throughout the province held meetings in Centennial Collegiate followed by lunch in the shared gym. A religious group will be using the large indoor field and the PA system in the SaskTel Sports Centre to hold a prayer service for up to 2,000 people.

Blairmore

The Blairmore facility, with a 50-metre indoor competitive pool, springboards and platform tower, spectator seating, 6-lane warm-up pool, zero-depth leisure pool, water slide, fitness room, walking/jogging track, meeting and multi-purpose rooms, server/cafeteria, 60

classrooms, 4 gyms and 2 theatres under one roof, presents even more opportunities. The partners will be able to host provincial drama festivals, fairs and exhibitions, training camps or sports tournaments as well as bid for high-profile aquatic events such as: Synchronized Swimming World Trophy, Diving National Championships, Senior National Swimming Championships, Club Cadet Nationals (Water Polo) and Olympic trials for synchronized swimming and water polo.

SHARED PROGRAMMING OPPORTUNITIES

Designing and constructing a shared-use facility is just a preliminary step on the road to developing an integrated facility. Once the building is operational, the dream of a truly integrated facility is fully realized as the partners work together to provide new and innovative shared programming opportunities for a broad spectrum of Saskatoon's citizens.

The schools benefit from their proximity to sports and recreational facilities. Centennial Collegiate (Forest Park) has a thriving soccer academy, and both Blairmore high schools hope to introduce programs that include swimming and diving at the adjoining pool. Integrated facilities also provide a greater range of year-round fitness activities as students have access to a wider range of indoor recreational facilities.

The Blairmore facility, with its wider range of partners and services promises to provide even more shared programming opportunities. The partners have instituted one shared program already. There is a student drop-in centre after school twice a week (once a week in each school) for students who want to use the gym but aren't part of organized teams. The leisure centre has added in a leadership training component and provides a program facilitator.

¹³ SaskSport, Estimated Visitor Expenditures, Executive Summary, 2007

¹⁴ SaskSport, Estimated Visitor Expenditures, Executive Summary, 2007

The staff at the Shaw Centre is planning programs that will mesh with their partners' needs and hope that chats with students will develop new program ideas. The administrator says that there is currently a shortage of lifeguards in Saskatoon so she's excited about the possibility of establishing a lifeguard training program in collaboration with the high schools. It could be modelled on a similar program in British Columbia where students get school credit for training as a lifeguard.

WISE USE OF RESOURCES

The partners had hoped to spend less money by building an integrated facility. This hasn't turned out to be the case; they spent approximately the same amount as if they had been building stand-alone facilities. However, there was unanimous agreement that the value of the final product is far greater than it would have been if they had built stand-alone facilities. One person estimated that "the capital costs were higher, and it will continue to cost 2-5% more operationally. But the value far exceeds the extra cost. The 30-40% greater benefits outweigh the minor 2-5% additional costs."¹



Integrated facilities provide the partners with superior facilities. By cooperating and building gym facilities that are shared with the community, the schools have much larger gyms that can be used by several teams at a time. A large shared servery at Blairmore was designed to provide ample space for preparation of fresh food on site. The fresh food will be delivered to the satellite serveries in each school. When Saskatoon Soccer held a mini soccer jamboree in conjunction with a National Youth Training Camp at Forest Park a few years ago, they were able to use the high school theatre for the day so that attending national soccer coaches could address the parents while the youth received instruction and played games. The heating and cooling for the schools at Blairmore is partially integrated with the swimming pool's heating system, an innovative use of resources.

Many people commented that integrated facilities are a wise use of taxpayer dollars as the facilities are used extensively and for extended hours because of the focus on sharing resources and encouraging public use of the facilities. For example, during one week in November, Centennial Collegiate shared its space with the local community association (a wide variety of fitness programs), a Latin dance academy, three different basketball groups, a volleyball group and a private business. The associations were taking advantage of the theatre, the library, the dance studio, the community classroom and the gym. The evening use usually extended from 6 pm to after 10 pm, and on the Sunday the gym was occupied from 9 am to 9 pm.

STARTING WITH A CLEAN SLATE

Many of the staff in the Forest Park and Blairmore facilities deliberately applied to work in an integrated facility. In many cases, it was because they were eager to work in a community-focussed facility. They were also excited about working in a brand-new facility.

The school principals and the administrator of the City's leisure centre felt that they had been given an opportunity to take a fresh look at their programming and see what they might want to do differently.

The shared facility made the school think differently about programming. We realized that we didn't have to do things in the same old way. When you're not an established school, you can do things differently. For example, we're not planning to have awards at our first graduation ceremonies. We couldn't have chosen to go that route if there had been a history of student awards.¹

The two public collegiates established academies that couple the students' passion for a particular physical activity (soccer, dance, softball) with an academic education. Bethlehem Catholic High School introduced a social justice program, including a partnership with Kip Keino High School in Kenya.



The Site Administrator for the Shaw Centre has welcomed the opportunity to establish a new leisure centre with no set expectations. She is engaging her full- and part-time staff to plan the direction for the year so that the staff shares a common vision of what they want to achieve in terms of quality of services and getting the community involved. Many of the patrons have not used a leisure centre before, so they don't have expectations based on past experience.





“It comes down to people with courage, vision and energy making it happen. We made it happen because a committee of 30 people believed it needed to happen.”

forming a partnership

Forming a partnership and working together to develop an integrated facility isn't easy. The first step is to bring together the right group of people and to lay a solid foundation so that the partners understand each other's needs and mandates and share a common vision of what they hope to achieve. Written documentation is important as it provides a concrete record that can be referred back to as the project moves forward.

WHO CAN BE A PARTNER?

Partners need to meet certain key criteria, including complementary mandates and an ability to act.

Similar but Different

Partners need to have complementary mandates. For example, they may represent the same clients, the same interests or the same geographical area. On the other hand, the proposed activities and utilization of the facility should be complementary but different in order to maximize usage of the facility. For example, the Soccer Centre holds most of its activities after 5 pm or on weekends. As a result, its indoor and outdoor fields are available to be used by students during school hours.

In addition, the facility must meet community needs and have a shared purpose. It is not sufficient to jumble a variety of different services together under the same roof.

Ability to Act

The partners must have the political and financial ability to participate fully. They must have a real stake in the project; it's not an academic exercise. And the partners cannot be junior players; they must have the authority to make decisions and take action.

The partners must have capital – not simply a desire to offer

programming. They should be a building owner or a landowner who is coming in with significant dollars to build and operate a facility. They must also be prepared to share the partnership costs – hiring a facilitator, developing a concept plan, documenting decisions, etc.

As one partner noted,

Many joint venture tables are well received by the general public and in turn the political leaders who represent them. This in turn results in more resources being allocated to these collaborative efforts as the politicians see this as the best use of public dollars and the means by which the most visible results are achieved within the community. Many partners then just follow the dollar and come to the table claiming to want to be a partner, but it soon becomes evident that they are there simply to make sure they get their fair share of the allocated resources for their specific cause.¹

Potential partners drop away when they realize the level of integration that will be required or when they recognize that involvement requires putting up capital and resources, not simply offering a program.

Timing is also critical. Partners need to be flexible and recognize opportunities presented by other organizations as each of them may be on a different timeline for capital projects. The City moved ahead much faster than anticipated on both the Forest Park and Blairmore projects in order to profit from a partnership arrangement.

It is helpful to synchronize timelines. Construction costs less and is easier to coordinate if it is happening simultaneously on the various components of the facility. In addition, bringing all the partners on board at the same time helps to build an effective operational partnership as everyone is on the same footing.

People

The partners in Saskatoon's two integrated facilities believe that the one outstanding feature that makes a partnership work is the people. "It comes down to people with courage, vision and energy making it happen. We made it happen because a committee of 30 people believed it needed to happen."¹ Or, as another person said, "When you bring good people together and are patient with each other, good things are going to happen in the end."¹

Participants also noted that they gained personally from working with people and organizations that they would not normally have run into. As a result, participants learned to look at things in a different way and benefited from different perspectives.

Some individuals were singled out for recognition. One person was particularly impressed by the Soccer Centre representatives and remarked that "It was an honour to rub shoulders with them."¹ He felt that these individuals were under a lot of pressure to promote the interests of soccer, but they went out of their way to work for the greater good of the group. In addition, the soccer representatives were volunteers with full-time jobs. One person pointed out that "This wouldn't have happened without Bob Rohachuk. He works in construction and is the Chair of Youth Soccer. Bob probably put in 30 hours a week on a volunteer basis for one and a half years to get the [soccer] centre built. He was soccer's liaison with all the trades and architects."¹

Another person commented that "it was an honour to work with people like Sandi Schultz, Jim Jutras and Zenon Zuzak: These people are dedicated to their community beyond their job; they're true community leaders."¹

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

It is important to lay a solid foundation at the outset of the partnership process. This is invaluable further on down the road when confronted with a thousand and one different demands and decisions during the construction process.

Facilitator

It can be difficult to bring a diverse group of people together to work towards a common goal. Initially, the process can be "hindered by an underlying discomfort with relinquishing control over the decision-making process and the fear of somehow losing more autonomy and jurisdiction than any benefit to be gained by this new approach."¹

With the initial Forest Park project, the City of Saskatoon brought in a facilitator¹⁵ to assist the partners in getting to know each other and in establishing a common understanding of the project. As one participant noted, "You have to identify the intent of the partners up front – here's what we are, what we have, what we want. This includes mission, objectives and financial limitations. Then the process can proceed."¹

The facilitator also helped the partners to understand how the other organizations operated. This is particularly important when organizations are working together so closely. One participant said, "Initially, it was a mystery how the different city departments operated and the policies and regulations that they followed. This took some getting used to. I found the departmental structure very difficult."¹

The facilitator met with the partners once a month for a full day. He gave them homework assignments to identify why each partner wanted to be involved, to present their values, to indicate what they knew about their partners, and to determine what the partners had in common. The partners spent a full day discussing finances in order to understand

¹⁵ The facilitator was David Roach of Victoria, BC. At the time, he was working for Cannon Johnston Architecture so his skill set was a good match for the partnership project at Forest Park.

each partner's funding structure – ability to borrow, funds available, limits. They talked about trust and about what was non-negotiable for each partner and couldn't be relinquished. They went on to establish common, shared values, articulating the greater community good to be achieved beyond each organization's individual goals.

The facilitator was extremely successful, and all the participants recommended following a similar process:

The outside consultant did a really good job of helping people understand that in order to make things go fast you have to go slow. You get a whole bunch of action-oriented people who want to cut to the chase. Then they arrive at an impasse and don't have the wherewithal to resolve it. The consultant was very good at making sure that everyone understood that what they were trying to achieve was something that was for the greatest good of the community and that the partners couldn't put forward an individual mandate.¹

Common Vision

The Forest Park partners also found it valuable to visit an integrated facility as it helped them to visualize the possibilities. They travelled together to Tisdale, Saskatchewan, to tour the Tisdale Recplex, which incorporates an arena, a theatre, middle and high schools, health facilities, a regional college, a pool, a curling rink and a library. For some partners it was an eye opener to watch a high school student greeting his grandparents in the public library and to see a theatre next door to a curling rink.

The Blairmore partners travelled to Alberta to look at other joint school/community centres. One principal stated that it changed the way he viewed schools.

DOCUMENTATION

Concept Plan

The partners commissioned an architectural firm to develop concept plans for both Forest Park and Blairmore. The studies were intended to “accommodate the activity requirements based on consultation with stakeholders and Community Service Department's administration, within a multi-use, multi-purpose, multi-sector, multi-seasonal integrated facility or facilities.”¹⁶ The consultants met with a wide range of potential stakeholders (e.g. community and recreational sports associations) to identify their needs and interest in participating in a multi-use facility. They then integrated this information into a series of possible designs.

The concept plan is important as it identifies stakeholder needs and interests. It also provides an overall blueprint so that partners can come on board at different times based on their political and financial readiness to undertake construction. The plans for Forest Park were designed to incorporate a municipal leisure centre at a future date, and the Blairmore concept plan was designed to incorporate a branch library.

Memorandum of Understanding

It's important to maintain a written record documenting discussions and decisions.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) must be in place before partners start working together. As one participant explained, “It would be counterproductive to skip that stage. It provides the foundation for how the partners will work together before starting to discuss what you're going to do.”¹ The MOU should include: a common vision; the governance structure; a concept plan for the development of land, buildings and programs; the rights, obligations and limitations of

¹⁶ University Heights Multi-Use Park: Concept Plan and Recommendations for Implementation, Architects Friggstad, Downing, Henry, October 31, 2002

parties; each partners' programming roles and responsibilities; and dispute resolution procedures.

The partners at Forest Park and Blairmore continued to refer back to the MOU and the minutes of their meetings throughout the course of their work. "So many times we had to go back as people no longer agreed or had a different interpretation – they either forgot or they didn't understand it that way." ¹ In addition, the MOU provides continuity as faces change around the table or if a new partner is introduced at a later date, and it is the basis for the operating agreements which follow.

Common Terminology

It's important to define commonly-used terms. Each organizational representative may have different meanings attached to the same word, and there can be misunderstandings because people don't use words in the same way. This will evolve, but it's important to bring it up front and to be sure that people feel free to ask for clarification. For example, what do people mean by the term 'integration'? Are people using the term to imply physical integration or integration at the program level? Does it include operational integration? What about common services?

Financial Records


Accurate financial recordkeeping is necessary in order to track costs and maintain a global cost-share document that captures the true cost of the project. The document must be continually updated. Saskatoon's two partnerships hired a consultant who created and was accountable for keeping the financial record up to date. "It increased comfort as we knew who was paying for what and how much it cost. It also forced decisions about outstanding items; this can be a source of contention so it requires clarity." ¹

LEADERSHIP

A partnership arrangement does not happen on its own. Someone must set up the meetings, take the minutes and document decisions. One partner must be prepared to play a leadership role in order to move the agenda forward.

The City of Saskatoon dedicated staff and resources to this process for both the Forest Park and Blairmore projects. Several people mentioned the important role that Sandi Schultz played in coordinating the two projects: "Sandi was the big sister trying to pull everyone together and to keep meeting deadlines."¹





“A partnership requires give and take and compromise. It’s similar to a marriage but with multiple partners. You can’t go in expecting to get everything you want.”

effective partnerships: the planning stage

Developing and maintaining a partnership is challenging. It requires commitment, flexibility, time, effort, determination, persistence and good communication. It's important to keep the elected officials informed and involved, and to consult the public. It's also necessary to appreciate the complexity of the task and be prepared to change the rules. The sooner partners start working together, the more effective they will be.

COMMITMENT AND ACCOMMODATION

Over and over again, the partners interviewed emphasized that a partnership arrangement is like a marriage requiring commitment and accommodation: "A partnership requires give and take and compromise. It's similar to a marriage but with multiple partners. You can't go in expecting to get everything you want."¹

Accommodating Different Mandates

There must be trust and respect between the partners. No one should impose their will on the others, and they must respect each other's mandates:

Partnership is more or less consensus-building and trying to be very respectful of each other. The organizations have some common mandates, but each organization has its own individual mandate and certain areas that it won't compromise. For example, we didn't want anyone to miss that this is a Catholic school so we made it visible in the star and in the images in the brickwork. The organizations discussed having common signage, but Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools felt a need to be free to add religious messages. People have respected our individual needs, and it hasn't interfered – people have worked with it.¹

The partners may not all desire the same level of integration, and their



wishes must be respected. The public school representatives who were interviewed emphasized the importance of providing students with inter-generational opportunities and of integrating the student population with a wider community population. As a result, the public collegiates chose to share an entrance and a commons area with the adjoining recreational facilities. On the other hand, Bethlehem Catholic High School identified a need to strengthen their internal community as well as building connections with the external community, and they chose to construct a separate commons area: "We wanted to create a safe space for our children where they would know who was there. This is central to building community within – we can seat the whole student body in the commons area. It's a central gathering space."¹

It's important to emphasize shared decision-making and to try and reach consensus, particularly when a contract or other legally binding document will affect all partners. For example, if the partners agree to pursue joint agreements with outside suppliers in order to benefit the partnership as a whole, it is important to designate checkpoints during the negotiation process in order to confirm the continued support of all

parties as a potential agreement develops.

Focus on the Big Picture

There should be “a sincere willingness to compromise the ‘how to’ aspects of getting the job done without losing sight of the ‘big picture’ and underlying goals and principles.”¹

The interest-based approach recommended by the facilitator who laid the groundwork for the Forest Park project was very helpful as it encouraged partners to identify their needs, listen to each other and be flexible. As one partner explained:

A position-based approach is very concrete and detailed (e.g. the City needs a gym for community use that is 100'x 50'). An interest-based approach is less specific on details and focuses on what you want to achieve (e.g. a facility that accommodates the City's leisure programming). With the interest-based approach, you listen creatively to each other and come up with something that isn't necessarily what you had in mind originally but meets all your needs.

When you start with positions, you don't have anywhere to go. There's no flexibility. The interest-based approach gives you a starting point for listening to each partner's story. You work really hard, and you have to listen. You can't just talk. You need to put the brakes on and not jump to solutions.¹

TIME AND WORK

A partnership arrangement requires a huge amount of time and work. The Saskatoon partners met bi-weekly for an extended period of time, and it took considerable effort and determination to arrive at a Memorandum of Understanding. The operational committees continue

to meet on a monthly basis, and there is frequent communication between meetings as well. As one partner stated, “You've got to put the time in to get the right product at the end; there are no shortcuts.”¹

The allotment of time also changes in a partnership. The time spent on developing a partnership and a concept plan crept into the time the Catholic school board had set aside for developing Bethlehem Catholic High School's architectural plan: “I would have liked to spend less time on the partnership, but I'm not sure it's possible with three political bodies and three administrations.”¹

COMMUNICATION

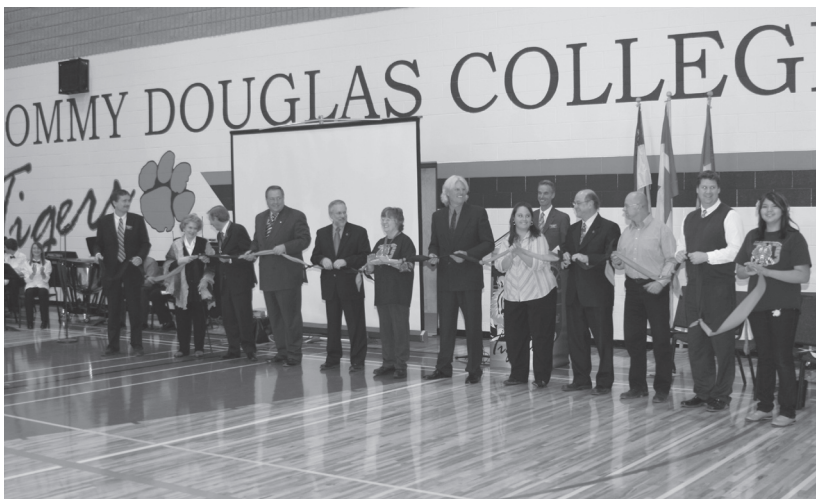
Nothing is more important than communication in developing and maintaining a partnership. It is a critical tool for developing relationships, the building block of partnerships:

We're building a template for relationships. The designs will change, and partners will change. What's fundamental is developing and maintaining relationships and translating that for future partnerships. You learn how to work differently with different partners. You have to adjust and use that knowledge to move forward. It's not one size fits all. The same principles may apply, but the mechanics will differ, and you need to be aware of that when you bring in new partners.¹

Meetings provide an invaluable opportunity for everyone to sit down together and share information:

Another highlight was to see the City with its engineers and planners and the schools with theirs co-planning cooperatively. It was true cooperation to be sitting at the same table discussing what's possible, what isn't, traffic flow, land purchase.

The bi-weekly meetings worked because the people in charge of specifics – the planners and architects – were all there together and discussing the project together. It was a real collaborative effort as issues can arise when there's more than one architect. For example, they had to work together to resolve the problem of drainage on wet land.¹



When there was a misunderstanding, the partnerships would call everyone back to the table to resolve it. Face-to-face meetings provided the partners with an opportunity to explain their understanding of the situation and to work together to find a solution that worked for everyone.

It is difficult to substitute in new people who have not participated in the foundational work of understanding each other's needs and interests and of establishing a common vision for the partnership. A re-education and orientation process is necessary. The process will go more smoothly if all the partners are represented during the initial stage of establishing the partnership and if there is as little turnover as possible.

ROLE OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

It is important to keep the elected officials of the partner organizations informed and current on partnership developments. Day-to-day responsibility rests with staff, but overall endorsement and support for the projects must come from the elected officials.

Joint Meetings

Joint meetings with the elected officials and administration from all the partners are an effective way to build shared ownership for the project. One partner singled out a meeting at the library with both school boards and City Council as being a personal highlight during the Blairmore partnership. As he explained:

It's a new way of doing things and a courageous act from the board's perspective to be in an integrated facility. The big meeting was pivotal. It was key to getting all the elected officials on board. They are the only ones who can make that decision. You needed to bring together the three boards and the three administrations.¹

Sharing Information

Design and construction are operational staff responsibilities. However, both Forest Park and Blairmore were expensive projects, which generated a considerable amount of public and media attention, and the elected officials were under tremendous public scrutiny. They needed information in order to answer questions.

Elected officials will also have more concerns and need more information if they have not been involved in a similar project in the past. Building a high school at Forest Park was a new experience for the Saskatoon public school board, and they experienced more anxiety and had more questions than they did a couple of years later when they repeated the experience in building Tommy Douglas Collegiate at Blairmore.

In addition to formal reports, elected officials recommend keeping the lines of communication open so that they can ask questions as things progress and not just when there is a problem. This encourages informal rather than formal resolution for any problems that may arise.

Dual Responsibility

Liaising with the organization's elected officials can be difficult. The administrators at the partnership table are working with the project every day but trying to present it to a board that may only meet once a month. Tension can develop as partners try to fairly represent their partners with whom they have developed a sense of oneness and common vision. As one partner explains:

Everyone enters with their own organization's interests at heart, and everyone has a turmoil about what they take back to their boards – what you've agreed to in a spirit of cooperation isn't necessarily what your board would have wanted. It was difficult as sometimes your board wouldn't support something so you'd have to go back to the partners' meeting and start again.¹

One elected official says he believes in giving his administration lots of space and trust: "Let them go and do their work; just keep me informed."¹ He wants staff to feel relaxed and confident talking about what's going on and what results they can expect and sums it up by saying, "If you don't have the political will, it won't succeed. But it's the administrators who are in the trenches. They have to believe their leadership is going to back them up."¹

Another partner said it was important for the administrators to meet regularly to ensure that they had a common front and a similar approach for what they'd take forward to their boards. It's also important for administrators to keep touching base with the board and

checking things out in order to ensure that what they are saying at the partnership table will be approved by the board. The elected officials can assist their staff by providing clear policy directives.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Extensive public consultation is critical in order to ensure public support and an understanding of what the community is looking for. Although it is not always possible to do everything that the public would like, it is valuable to be aware of the community's needs.

One person emphasized that "public consultation needs to be in areas where you are prepared to respond and act on their input."¹ It also has to be financially feasible. For example, both school boards were prepared to invest additional money in school theatres: "The public really stressed the fine arts; they wanted a theatre. The school board listened to stakeholders and put the extra money in to build a theatre. It's very important to get that community input on what the final product will look like."¹

One elected official summed it up as follows:

We learned, and our board has said for a long time, that community consultation is really important. If you let people have their voice and be heard, you can work through a lot of things. You can get a disparate group of people together around the table, and you quickly come to some common conclusions. You very quickly move to common ground.

Participation is far more important than people realize in today's age. People expect to have a say in a public facility, and the governing bodies need to be open to listening. The public knows more about its community's needs than those of us sitting in

an office ever can.

We had some people on the board with an intimate knowledge of the community, but we needed to reach out to all the different groups – taxpayers with no kids, businesses.¹

The City of Saskatoon, because of its experience and capacity, took the lead in organizing public consultations in the neighbourhoods where the new facilities were to be built. The consultations were extensive and included one-day conferences and public meetings, newsletters and flyers, surveys (by mail and by phone), website pages and reports. Information was also available at the Blairmore work site. The consultations covered a broad range of topics, including roadways and street crossings as well as facilities and programming. The public responded positively, and there was a good turnout at public meetings.

Partners were pleased that they were fully involved in the consultations. All the partners were recognized with their logos on advertising and signage.

BE PREPARED TO CHANGE THE RULES

In some cases, the rules and regulations that are in place and are normally effective just don't work when applied to integrated facilities. For example, there is a property line running right down the middle of the commons area at Forest Park. Normally that wouldn't be allowed. The City of Saskatoon had to amend its zoning bylaw in order to provide sufficient flexibility for integrated facilities in terms of density limits, parking standards and building setbacks.

Similarly, the provincial Ministry of Education has policies around how schools are built with space determined by projected student

enrolment and traditional school use. As Ministry officials explained, these policies had to be adapted for the Blairmore facility:

We had to think outside the box because of the joint use. For example, we were prepared to expand the size of the gym based on community use and the way in which the cost was shared. The corridor was a groundbreaking idea. The Ministry felt there was a strong enough case put forward that we would fund space outside the regular school building.¹

START WORKING TOGETHER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Involvement at the Concept Stage

It is very useful to start working together as soon as possible. The partners at Forest Park were constrained by the size and shape of the land that the City had earlier set aside. This affected the design of the building as well as the size of the outdoor fields.

Once partners have established a relationship by working together on a project, it is easier to start collaborating at an earlier stage on later projects. Ministry of Education officials were pleased when they were asked to become involved at the concept stage in discussing the land that the City is setting aside for parks and elementary schools in new neighbourhoods south of the highway. In the original plans, the City had set aside an adequate amount of land, but the shape of the space wasn't conducive to building schools. Ministry officials expressed their concern and were invited to sit down and discuss site layout with the City's planners. The plan has been changed so that it will work better for schools. The Ministry of Education is happier, and it doesn't negatively affect the City, so it's a win-win situation.

Involve the Administrators

Both school divisions brought their school-based administrators on

board during the planning and construction phase. Similarly, the Site Administrator at the Shaw Centre started working while the leisure facility was still under construction. This was a wonderful opportunity for the senior administrators and was much appreciated.

The principals attended the site meetings and gained a greater understanding for what is possible and what isn't. There were some frustrations as sometimes they would have liked to recommend changes based on the knowledge they had gained from actually working in a school, but it was too late and would have been too costly to make changes.

One principal was the only woman in a group of men, and she had no background in construction. She felt she would have benefited from having a clearer understanding of the lines of command and of how to do things, for example, 'How do you put in a change order, and how much will it cost? How do you read blueprints?'

Some of the administrators would have appreciated earlier participation so they could be more involved in choosing the most appropriate supplies and equipment. The Site Administrator for the Shaw Centre was not hired and brought on board until a few months prior to the opening of Phase I and, therefore, was not involved in the planning and design stages of the integrated facility. This created some challenges for her as she did not have the background information on why certain decisions were made regarding the design and operations of the integrated facility.





“ You can’t plan for that – you build a footprint for the future.¹ ”

effective partnerships: the construction stage



Construction projects are always complex, and constructing an integrated facility is even more complex due to the size and scope of the project. Partners should avoid moving too fast or trying to do too much. And they must accept the fact that they are working towards a long-term goal and may not be able to accomplish everything immediately.

SPEED AND WEATHER

The Blairmore project was particularly challenging because of the nature of the site, the tight timeframe and the weather. Because the community had been waiting so long for new schools in the western part of the city, there was considerable political pressure to have them built quickly. The two school boards set an ambitious date for opening the schools, and the City moved its timeline ahead so that it could participate.

However, the site which had been selected was bald prairie, with a highway running through it. In addition, it was unserviced: there were no roads, no lights – nothing. However, the City backed up its support for the partnership arrangement and agreed to make it happen despite the additional cost: “It was unbelievably difficult to install services while the school divisions were constructing buildings. It cost the City a lot of money because we had to put in temporary roads and then take them out and put in permanent ones.”¹

In addition, the weather was terrible. Saskatoon had its worst blizzard in 50 years on January 10, 2007, and it was a very wet spring.

In hindsight, the partners agree that the timeline was too ambitious; they should have ensured that the site was serviced before starting construction.

There are, however, advantages to moving quickly as a number of people pointed out: “Deadlines can be good. They create a real momentum that allows you to move forward. You can talk until you’re blue in the face; it’s so easy to put off a decision. So there is a silver lining to a tight schedule.”¹

BUILDING A FOOTPRINT FOR THE FUTURE


One of the greatest challenges to building an integrated facility is synchronizing the construction schedule and funding timelines of the various partners. Although the concept plan can outline the overall site design and accommodate some partners building later than others, it does add to the project’s complexity and sometimes cost. There may be lingering concerns that the site is being laid out to accommodate a future partner (e.g. a branch library at Blairmore) who, in the long run, may not choose or be able to participate after all.

Other considerations that add to the complexity of construction are emerging code issues, such as exiting, fire alarms, integrated design, single tenancy and assembly occupancy, as well as the inclusion of common building systems for security, cameras, direct digital controls and temperature control.

Partners will often need to hold problem-solving meetings at the site to coordinate construction schedules and construction issues that affect all parties.

There may also be additional costs until the entire project is up and running. For example, the Soccer Centre designed the food services portion of the Forest Park facility to accommodate the needs of a civic leisure centre and a collegiate with a full complement of students. In the end, the City postponed construction of the leisure centre, and the school’s enrolment went up gradually as it added one extra grade each year so the food services were not fully utilized at first. Soccer representatives were comfortable absorbing that cost: “You can’t plan for that – you build a footprint for the future.”¹





“Joint facilities are unique. You have to balance the wants and needs of the partners. The end goal is the same – successful integrated facilities – but you are coming at it from different perspectives. There is more hesitation when making decisions as you have to consider your partners.”¹

effective partnerships: the operational stage

WELCOME TO SHAW CENTRE



Once the partnership has been established, the plans developed and construction completed, the partners move on to the next stage in their partnership – working side by side in an integrated facility. Opening the doors and going live brings a new set of challenges for the partners.

STAFF ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Working in an integrated facility is very different from working in a stand-alone facility, and Saskatoon's partners identified a need for more extensive orientation and training for all staff members.

You have to make sure there's some way that the principles established at the governance table get absorbed by the operational folks. They need a full explanation of the intention and philosophy. You can't just throw people in at the deep end and leave them clinging to previously-established principles and ways of work. You need to help them establish new systems rather than holding on to old

baggage. We expected that to happen on its own, but it didn't. It requires give and take, compromise and a new structure.

There needs to be explicit recognition of the new structure, and you have to provide orientation. You need a mechanism to imbue the philosophy in programming and operations.¹

The first step is to hold an orientation session so that everyone understands the philosophy behind a shared facility and has a chance to get to know each other.

The operating agreement seemed to make perfect sense. It's once you're in the building that the agreement seems vague, and no one is sure what it means. When we moved in, we realized that we didn't all have the same understanding. We should have had a workshop to visit and talk about our visions for the facility as sometimes we didn't have the same vision.¹

Once partners share a common vision, they are able to establish clear guidelines around disciplining students or universally-agreed upon safety procedures. In the end, "It all comes down to personal relationships – that civic workers trust school employees to deal with their concerns. Then everything becomes much easier."¹

Depending on the timing and the nature of the facility, staff may need additional training in specialized areas such as construction procedures or purchasing equipment.

SHARE INFORMATION

Communication is again the key to an effective partnership. One administrator explains it this way:

Joint facilities are unique. You have to balance the wants and needs of the partners. The end goal is the same – successful integrated facilities – but you are coming at it from different perspectives. There is more hesitation when making decisions as you have to consider your partners.¹

The Memoranda of Understanding for both Forest Park and Blairmore specify that an operations committee, with representation from all the partners, will meet on a monthly basis. These monthly meetings have proven invaluable as they provide a forum to share information and to iron out any differences.

The partners share their schedules with each other so that they are aware of any large-scale events that one of the partners is planning (e.g. a soccer tournament or a school dance). In this way, they can accommodate each other's needs for extra parking or additional cleaning services.

There is a lot of give and take, which is facilitated by being aware of each other's needs and activities. At Forest Park, field rentals are a revenue maker for the Soccer Centre so the school doesn't use the second shared gym if there is a public event going on in the large indoor field. Similarly, the Soccer Centre tries not to play music or do maintenance when the school is using the second gym. The partners also help each other out. For example, Centennial Collegiate (Forest Park) used the Soccer Centre's boardroom for a full day this past fall for school photographs.

The monthly meetings also provide the partners with an opportunity to share their different perspectives on a situation. For example, one organization may want to put coat racks in a hallway before a dance, but their partner may see the coat racks as a fire hazard because

they're blocking a public access hallway.

Each partner may have different ways of work, and they'll need to develop a common, shared approach. The City and the school boards have spreadsheets outlining the most efficient cleaning methods and the time each task should take to be done. The Soccer Centre wasn't used to that approach, but, through discussion, the partners were able to establish procedures that worked for everyone.

In addition to the monthly meetings, the partners keep in touch through regular emails and don't hesitate to sit down together if there is something that needs to be discussed.

The partners at the two integrated facilities in Saskatoon get along really well. There's trust and respect and friendship. But it requires good communication and a willingness to accommodate each other's needs: "You have to plan to deal with the unexpected. You've got to be prepared to not always do things your way. You sit down, say this is how I see it, and then work it out."¹

ESTABLISH JOINT PROCEDURES

In a joint-use facility, it's important to establish common procedures and protocols. Student safety is paramount, and this doesn't change when the schools are part of an integrated facility. But it does alter some of the processes that are put in place to safeguard the students.

Planning for safety begins at the design and construction stage. The Blairmore facility has video monitoring and common telephone and alarm systems so that they can communicate throughout the building. The schools have placed their offices directly adjacent to the commons areas so that they are central to the whole facility, making supervision easier. Roundabouts were installed in the roadway at Forest Park to

slow down traffic and make it a more people-oriented place.

Partners also need to establish common procedures. Tommy Douglas Collegiate and the Shaw Centre (Blairmore) have developed joint lock-down procedures even though the City does not have lock-down procedures for its stand-alone leisure centres. They have developed shared guidelines for fire drills and have worked out procedures for shared areas such as the Fitness Centre. And the City is picking up new best practices from its partners: "The school's office window can be closed off immediately with a roll-down metal window, but the leisure facility offices are wide open. Another time we would do some of these things differently."¹

The partners learn to respect each other's needs. For example, the Shaw Centre has instituted a dress code in its fitness centre: "We have to consider our partners. This site is unique for having a dress code because the weight room is adjacent to a school. And we have developed common facility rental guidelines that take into account each partner's mandate."¹









“ *It's a true cultural shift. The culture in the organizations has changed – it's no longer us and them; it's we. We've removed the barriers that artificially stopped people from doing things.* ”¹

conclusion

Partnerships are now the reality for public organizations in Saskatoon. This is a huge step: “It’s a true cultural shift. The culture in the organizations has changed – it’s no longer **us** and **them**; it’s **we**. We’ve removed the barriers that artificially stopped people from doing things.”¹

ADDITIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The partners in Saskatoon’s first two integrated, joint-use facilities continue to be involved in a wide variety of partnership arrangements. Here are just a few examples:

Mount Royal Collegiate is a large school with lots of technical facilities which lost some students to Tommy Douglas Collegiate. Saskatoon Public Schools has partnered with the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIASST), the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT) and the Gabriel Dumont Institute to put some of the space to new use. In the future, the south wing of the school will be a traditional high school while the north wing will be the Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centre. The partners consulted with the construction trades before starting the program to find out about their most immediate needs for workers and any recommendations for revising the apprenticeship process. The Centre will include a day care run by students taking the day care course.

St. Mary Community School, in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatoon Health Region, now includes a Wellness and Education Centre. There is a nursing residency program with fourth-year Nursing students spending 3 to 6 weeks at the school, a pediatrics clinic (staffed by two pediatricians from the University’s Department of Pediatrics and a receptionist paid for by the Saskatoon Tribal Council) and an early learning centre. In addition, students participate in a high-performance agility program under the tutelage of two kinesiologists. There is also a

community classroom in partnership with the City of Saskatoon.

When the City needed to build an overpass to connect to the shopping centre being planned in the new Stonebridge neighbourhood, they initiated a novel partnership arrangement with the developer. As the shopping centre would increase traffic, they asked Smart Centres to help finance the overpass. It’s still a public road, with no tolls, but the City didn’t have to bear the full cost.

NEW WAY OF DOING BUSINESS

The policies and guidelines currently being developed by the Ministry of Education and the City of Saskatoon recognize that partnerships are standard operating procedure for public organizations in Saskatoon.

J Designation for Schools

Ministry of Education officials believe there is a benefit to building joint-use facilities and support them without reservation. They believe that integrated facilities accommodate the shared services provision outlined in SchoolPLUS and that there is a cost savings. If a joint project, with a J designation, is seen as valuable, it will move to the top of the Ministry’s capital request list faster than a single-use facility.

The Ministry is currently rewriting its guidelines for the J designation. At the moment, a project either has a joint-use designation or it doesn’t. The Ministry recognizes that some partners contribute more or less educational value, and they want to recognize this in their model. They think there will be three categories of J designation in future. A partnership with the City or the Soccer Centre or through a naming opportunity would be seen as a collaboration – an entry-level joint-use facility. At the second-level would be a partnership with a public library attached to the school’s resource room. This is seen as imparting greater educational value than a gym. The third and highest level of

the J designation would apply when two school boards came forward with a proposal for a truly joint-use building that is integrated in every way (i.e. no fire doors separating one from the other).

City Planning

As demographics change, so do urban design concepts for new neighbourhoods. Saskatoon's Development Plan requires neighbourhoods to contain enough dwellings to support an elementary school. Due to the declining birth rate, new neighbourhoods are, therefore, much larger than older neighbourhoods. As a result, there is an increased need for a school or community centre to anchor the community.

In the past, City planners have set aside an area for parkland and two separate school locations. This is no longer the case. The City is now setting aside land for one integrated school site and a neighbourhood park. In addition, the City now applies a levy on the sale of lots in new neighbourhoods to support the development of community facilities at a neighbourhood level as part of the integrated school site.

Saskatoon Public Schools, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and the City of Saskatoon have partnered to develop an integrated elementary school and community centre in the Willowgrove neighbourhood. This is the first school to benefit from the new levy, and it has received J designation priority from the Ministry of Education.

A STRONGER COMMUNITY

Architects and planners face an ever-evolving challenge to design communities and buildings that meet contemporary needs. They try to take into consideration many different factors, including cost, sustainability, population density, transit and a balance of commercial

and residential facilities. Integrated facilities are one way of addressing some of these planning issues:

We have proven that integrated facilities can be a benefit to the community. Society is quite segmented with different organizational mandates. With an integrated facility, you start thinking about the community as a whole rather than just the segment you serve. You have one-stop shopping for a whole range of civic or academic opportunities, and you end up with a stronger community.¹

FOREST PARK OVERVIEW

Site Plan



Facilities

Fitness Circuit and Terry Fox Track

(City of Saskatoon – www.saskatoon.ca – Look under 'F' for Fitness Circuit and Terry Fox Track)

Centennial Collegiate

(Saskatoon Public Schools – www.saskatoonpublicschools.ca)

SaskTel Sports Centre

(Saskatoon Soccer Centre Inc. – www.saskatoonsoccer.com/ssn/ – Click on Saskatoon Soccer Centre)

Chronology of Key Events

October, 2002	Presentation of Concept Plan
March, 2004	Signing of Memorandum of Understanding
August 25, 2004	Sod Turning Ceremony for SaskTel Sports Centre
June 1, 2005	Sod Turning Ceremony for Centennial Collegiate
January, 2006	Opening of SaskTel Sports Centre
August 25, 2006	First Day of Classes for Centennial Collegiate
September, 2006	Opening of Terry Fox Walking Track
March, 2009	Opening of the City of Saskatoon Fitness Circuit

Partners in Planning

Organization	Name	Position
City of Saskatoon	Paul Gauthier	General Manager, Community Services Department
	Sandi Schultz	Integrated Project Manager
	Lynne Lacroix	Facility Supervisor
Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools	Donald Lloyd	Superintendent, Administrative Services
	Rick Rowley	Principal, St. Joseph High School
	Randy Warick	(retired) Superintendent of Education
Saskatoon Public Schools	Jim Jutras	(retired) Director of Education
	Stan Laba	Superintendent of Facilities
	Barry MacDougall	Former Principal (Evan Hardy Collegiate); Superintendent of Education
Saskatoon Soccer Centre Inc.	John Riggs	President, Saskatoon Soccer Centre Inc.; Member, Proposed Joint Soccer Park Committee
	Bob Rohachuk	Chair, Proposed Joint Soccer Park Committee; President, Saskatoon Youth Soccer Inc.; Member, Saskatoon Soccer Centre Inc.

BLAIRMORE OVERVIEW

Site Plan



Facilities

Bethlehem Catholic High School
(Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools – www.scs.sk.ca)

Shaw Centre – a municipal leisure centre including competitive and recreational swimming pools as well as a walk/jog three-lane track, fitness room, multi-purpose room, child-minding room and more (City of Saskatoon – www.saskatoon.ca – *Look under 'S' for Shaw Centre*)

Tommy Douglas Collegiate
(Saskatoon Public Schools – www.saskatoonpublicschools.ca)

Chronology of Key Events

April, 2005	Presentation of Concept Plan
October, 2005	Signing of Memorandum of Understanding
May 24, 2006	Joint Sod Turning Ceremony for Blairmore Multi-District Park/School Sites
August 29, 2007	First day of Classes for Tommy Douglas Collegiate & Bethlehem Catholic High School
January 14, 2008	Opening of Phase I of the Shaw Centre
July 10, 2009	Hamm Walking Track opens to public
September 1, 2009	Shaw Centre Phase II fully opens to public
September 24, 2009	Shaw Centre Grand Opening Commemorative Ceremony
September 26, 2009	Community Open House

Partners in Planning

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>
City of Saskatoon	Paul Gauthier	General Manager, Community Services Department
	Sandi Schultz	Integrated Project Manager
Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools	Donald Lloyd	Superintendent, Administrative Services
	John McAuliffe	Superintendent of Education
Saskatchewan Ministry of Education	Crandel Hrynkiw	Regional IV Director
Saskatoon Public Schools	Stan Laba	Superintendent of Facilities
	Barry MacDougall	Former Principal (Evan Hardy Collegiate); Superintendent of Education
	George Rathwell	Director of Education

INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED REGARDING THE FOREST PARK AND BLAIRMORE INTEGRATED FACILITIES

Saskatchewan Ministry of Education

1. Crandel Hrynkiw, Regional IV Director
2. Daryl Richter, Manager, Capital Projects

City of Saskatoon

3. His Worship Donald Atchison, Mayor
4. Paul Gauthier, General Manager, Community Services Department
5. Sandi Schultz, Integrated Project Manager
6. Dianne Wright, Shaw Centre Site Administrator

Saskatoon Soccer Centre Inc.

7. John Riggs, President, Saskatoon Soccer Centre Inc.; Member, Proposed Joint Soccer Park Committee
8. Bob Rohachuk, Chair, Proposed Joint Soccer Park Committee; President, Saskatoon Youth Soccer Inc.; Member, Saskatoon
9. Jodi Blackwell, Executive Director

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools

10. Donald Lloyd, Superintendent, Administrative Services
11. John McAuliffe, Superintendent of Education
12. Jim Carriere, Chair, Board of Education
13. Scott Gay, Principal, Bethlehem Catholic High School
14. Randy Warick, (retired) Superintendent of Education
15. Rick Rowley, Principal, St. Joseph Catholic High School

Saskatoon Public Schools

16. Dr. Jim Jutras, (retired) Director of Education
17. Ray Morrison, Chairperson, Board of Education
18. George Rathwell, Director of Education (Deputy Director from 2004-2008)
19. Barry MacDougall, Superintendent of Education
20. Stan Laba, Superintendent of Facilities
21. Bob Bevan, Principal, Tommy Douglas Collegiate
22. Shammi Rathwell, Principal, Centennial Collegiate

EIGHT PRINCIPLES FOR DESIGNING INTEGRATED COMMUNITY CENTRES¹⁷

1. The local geographic unit of community and the neighbourhood/ community should be a basic building block of our city.
2. Each community is believed to be best served by having a community centre, consisting of facilities that provide key services and a place for the citizens of the neighbourhood to interact.
3. Community facilities must be designed so that each participating organization can meet its own unique mandate and still reflect its core objectives and maintain its identity.
4. Integrated community centres, to be of maximum benefit, must be designed:
 - To ensure space is accessible to all groups in the community
 - To create the maximum degree of interaction by the members of the community
 - To be used the majority of the time
 - With sufficient flexibility to change over time, ensuring long-term sustainable future use.
5. The design of a community centre is contingent on an ongoing evaluation of the demographic, social and economic needs of the community. Community participation is imperative in this process.
6. The partners remain fiscally responsible for their respective roles.
7. The adoption of a design for one neighbourhood community should not necessarily set a precedent for future community centre design.
8. The integrated approach is intended to apply to both new and existing neighbourhoods.

¹⁷ Integrated Community Centres: Building Blocks for Great Cities, May 2002

Centennial Collegiate

Main Floor Plan

Soccer Centre

