

Celebrating Community ~ Part 1

Event Planning Guide

A Resource for Community
Associations to help celebrate
Saskatoon's Centennial.



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The Citizens' Centennial Committee and City of Saskatoon would like to acknowledge the Saskatchewan Centennial 2005 Office for permission to use excerpts from their Centennial Event Planning Guide.

Getting Started

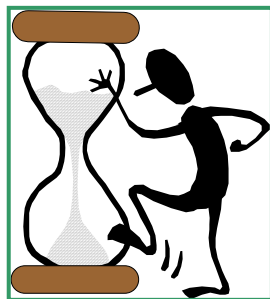
Planning an event, large or small, is detail-oriented work. But there are ways to keep it fun.

Every year, Saskatoon’s 43 community organizations plan dozens of events as a way of enhancing a sense of community and encouraging citizens to celebrate the vibrant diversity of our city and its many neighbourhoods. Here are five things to keep in mind when starting your planning process.

Celebrating Community is available online at www.saskatoon100.ca, where it can be easily downloaded and shared.

5 Things You Must Do

Whatever type of event your community association is planning, there are five fundamental steps you should address right from the start. We call them “musts” because when you do these five things, you will lessen the stress level, avoid eleventh hour surprises and make the whole experience much more fun!



Start early. The key to a successful event is preparation, so begin planning well in advance. You’ll need to recruit volunteers, sign up sponsors, create a budget and so on. The bigger your event, the more lead time you will need. Give yourself 4 to 8 weeks to prepare, longer if organizers and volunteers are pressed for time.

Reach out. Contact other community organizations, service clubs, sport/culture organizations, local business community and media. Create partnerships in the community. Let them know you're planning a community event!

Research existing community events to avoid conflict. One of the reasons for contacting other community organizations is to explore whether your event will conflict with other neighbourhood events. If it does, consider rescheduling or forming a partnership with the other organizing committee. You'll save time and resources, while creating a greater impact for each event.

Get together. Hold a public meeting and brainstorming session to generate ideas and get people enthusiastic and involved.

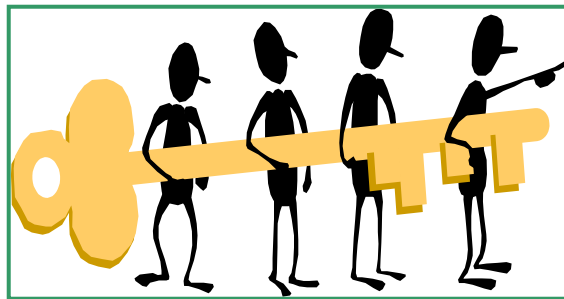
Sketch a plan. Determine the type of event and set a date well in advance. For example, if you decide on June for a community day in the park, you can begin sketching out what needs to be done: volunteer recruitment, sponsors and so on. You can fill in the details later – for now you need to outline the plan.

Volunteers

Enthusiastic volunteers not only share the workload, they add energy and ideas.

When it comes to planning a community event, volunteers are the key to success. You'll need a core group of dedicated individuals to carry the project forward; recruiting additional volunteers to help with specific tasks will share the workload.

Who's on Your Special Events Committee?



Your first step in recruiting volunteers is to strike a Special Events Committee. Ask members of your community association to take on key roles. The committee may include the following positions:

Chairperson or Co-Chair: overall organization

Secretary: minutes, correspondence, office administration

Treasurer: budgeting, accounting, financial controls and procedures

Special Event Co-ordinator: program development and event management including: guest speakers, entertainment and contingency planning

Volunteer Co-ordinator: recruitment, training, volunteer management and recognition

Fundraising Co-ordinator: contacting and recruiting sponsors, exploring opportunities for in kind goods & services

Publicist: media relations, advertising, promotions and public relations

Facilities/Site Co-ordinator: rentals and contractors, decorations, signage, parking, concessions, seating, utilities, supplies, set-up and take-down, clean-up, patron services

Hospitality Co-ordinator: invitations, registration, ticket sales, catering, accommodation, transportation, special needs services, volunteer services

Safety Co-ordinator: security, emergency & first-aid services, event insurance, compliance with municipal, provincial and federal safety standards and regulations (occupational, environmental, fire and health)

Subcommittees: support co-ordinators in their tasks. Clearly define the tasks and goals of each subcommittee before seeking volunteers.

Hold regular committee meetings to keep everyone motivated and on track. And remember to have fun—make your meetings enjoyable occasions.

Inspiring Teamwork

Proven tips for working successfully with volunteers

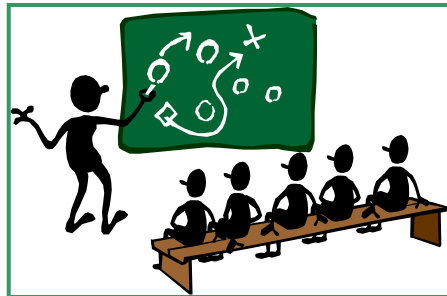
- Identify the required number and skills of volunteers
- Recruit volunteers through advertising and word of mouth
- Develop a training and orientation package for each event
- Explain what is expected of volunteers
- Train volunteers to undertake more than one role
- Make sure your event volunteers are easily identifiable by issuing them a distinctive t-shirt, hat, name tag or button
- Formally acknowledge volunteers at the end of the event
- Keep each volunteer's tasks manageable & match volunteers to tasks according to interests, skills, availability and time commitment
- Ensure volunteer activities are enjoyable and rewarding!

The Plan

Your event plan is like a map: it keeps you on time and on track for your destination.

If there's one piece of advice experienced event planners give out, it's this: have a plan and follow it. Proper planning takes the guesswork out of event organization. It begins at the committee level, where you need to dot the I's and cross the T's to ensure tasks are accomplished on schedule.

Do You Know What You Need to Know?



- What is your event program? activities?
- Who is your target audience?
- Where is it happening?
- What day and time?

- Who are your key speakers, performers or dignitaries, if any?
- Do you have a list of volunteers and resources?
- Is it a paid event? If so, you need to establish admission price, registration and/or methods of payment.
- Are there specific requirements for participants or attendees, such as specific dress (e.g. rain gear) or equipment (lawn chairs)?
- What advertising and promotional activities are planned?

- Is your event linked to other events or activities?
- Identify required program participants such as:
 - master of ceremonies
 - judge
 - guest speakers
 - presenters
 - dignitaries and VIPs
 - talent/entertainment
 - photographer / videographer.

TIP ► Contact your program participants well in advance of the event date to confirm

Tips

Early in your planning process, **estimate the number of people** you expect to attend your event. Why? This figure will determine everything else in your plan—from the choice of venue to budget and patron services.

Create a “play by play” script of what will happen during the event. Update your script as planning evolves, right to the final planning stages. It will help you organize your thoughts and ensure you haven’t missed any details.

Always have a contingency plan. You may need to adapt, reschedule or cancel a program or event.

Financing and Budget

Even with the dedicated efforts of volunteers, it still costs money to stage most community events.

Financing refers to the dollars you will need to stage your event; budget refers to your plan for tracking your expenses and revenues. This section outlines the most common financing options for community-based events, tips for creating a workable budget and a budget worksheet.

Financing your Event



Once you have your plan in place, you can start exploring how you're going to finance your event. There are a number of options to choose from—and you're not limited to just one. Mix and match from the list below according to the size and nature of your event.

- ticket sales
- registration fees
- fundraising activities
- corporate sponsorship

- selling advertising in programs or display space at the event
- community grants
- sale of promotional items and souvenirs
- sale of food and beverage
- program sales
- an agreement for concessions rights
- lottery or prize draw tickets.

Budgeting Basics



1. Determine how much **money you will need** for your event, based on estimated expenses and revenues (see attached worksheet).
2. Determine how much **money you expect** your event to bring in through ticket sales, concessions, etc. (see attached worksheet).
3. Determine whether any items can be donated as **gifts in kind**.
4. Determine whether your event qualifies for available **grants**, such as a Saskatchewan Lotteries Community Grant.
5. Determine **what you want to achieve**, in dollars or in-kind gifts, in sponsorship from local businesses (see sample Sponsorship Letter in next section).

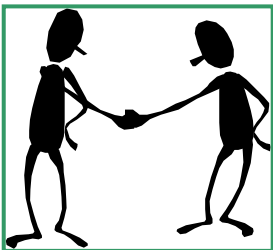
A good rule of thumb:
When estimating the revenue you hope to generate from ticket sales, beer gardens, etc. – underestimate.

Sponsorship

Saskatoon's business community has a long tradition of supporting events in the communities in which they do business.

Sponsors can play an important role in helping your community association cover the cost of staging an event. This chapter offers tips on recruiting sponsors and includes a sample letter to a potential sponsor.

Recruiting Sponsors



1. Create a **list of potential sponsors** by looking at your budget and event plan. Look in your local business community first.
2. Identify **what you need** from sponsors (cash donation, in-kind supplies) and **what you can give to them** (free advertising, signage at event).
3. **Write a letter** outlining who you are, what the event is, what you want from them and what they will receive in return. (see sample letter)
4. **Meet in person** or contact by phone. Personal contact can make a big difference in successfully obtaining your request.
5. **Keep a record** of all donations and sponsorships. Make sure to include a contact name, address and phone number.
6. Send a post event **thank you letter**. Tell them how their sponsorship made a positive impact and include a photo (if available).

Sample Sponsor Recruitment Letter

January 7, 2006

Jim Brocks, Manager
ABC Foods Limited
300 Riverside Drive
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 4W5

Dear Mr. Brocks,

The Riverside Park Community Association is celebrating Saskatoon's Centennial with a **Family Fun Day** on **July 1, 2006**. As an integral part of our community we would like to invite your business to participate by sponsoring the community barbeque portion of the event. Specifically, we are asking ABC Foods to provide hot dogs and hamburgers for the approximate 500 people we are expecting.

We would also like to extend the invitation to you and your staff to volunteer during the event by serving the food the day of the event. This involvement would not only assist the planning committee in finding much needed volunteers, but would also provide you with the opportunity to see and meet your customers.

In return for your sponsorship, we would provide you with an opportunity to display your ABC Foods banner on the day of the event, provide one-month's free advertising in our newsletter distributed to over 2500 residents, and display your logo on all event promotional materials.

We expect this to be a very special day in our neighbourhood and hope you will consider participating in it. I will be in contact with you within in the next week to answer any questions and discuss this proposal in further detail.

Sincerely,

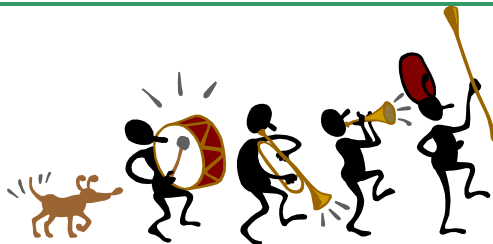
Holly Hobbs
Special Event Coordinator
Riverside Park Community Association

Promotion and Publicity

Spread the word! Let your community know this is one event they don't want to miss.

Promoting your event is an essential part of ensuring community participation. Develop a marketing plan that includes different ways to publicize your event. Be creative in getting the word out. Use the sample public service announcement (PSA) to alert the media to your event. Assign an event spokesperson or contact person for the media, so information is consistent and clear.

Promotional Ideas



Paid advertisements	Public Service Announcements (see attached Sample PSA)
Print advertising	Posters
Guest appearances on local radio & television programs	Letters and invitations
Tickets	Event programs
Bulletins	Website

Free Local Promotions

Non-profit groups such as community associations can take advantage of various free-of-charge promotions offered by Saskatoon media outlets. A few things to keep in mind:

- media coverage cannot be guaranteed
- contact well in advance
- events of interest to the whole community are preferred
- contact hosts at the TV stations directly to book an appearance.



Community-wide events are often of interest to local media. Remember to contact media well in advance.

Media Opportunities

Global

Shortcuts with Colleen Wilson and Skytracker Community News

Shaw

Community news events show

CTV

Noon Show or supper news, Community News on CFQC

Sunday Sun

Community Event Calendar – Deadline before Wednesday at 4:00p.m.

Star Phoenix

Sports Community News

Radio Stations

Some have regular Community News slots reserved for non-profit organizations (e.g. Hot 93 and Magic 98, CJWW – Community News). If asked, they may come out to broadcast live on the day of your event.

PSAs

A Public Service Announcement (PSA) can be a valuable means of engaging the media in promoting your event. PSAs should include the five “Ws”: who, what, where, when and why (see attached sample).

Fax or email to the media outlet. The News Director’s name does not have to be on the PSA, though it may help. Your fax or email will be sent to the News Room and distributed to the appropriate person.

MEDIA CONTACT LIST

	News Directors	Phone	Fax
CJWW/Hot 93 FM/Magic 98 Radio 345-4th Ave. S. S7K 5S5 <i>e-mail: cjwwnews@sk.sympatico.ca</i>	Eldon Duchscher	244-1925	665-5501
650CKOM/C95/Rock 102 Radio 715 Saskatchewan Cres. W. S7M 5V7 <i>e-mail: ckomnews@rawlco.com</i>	Kate Peardon	955-6397	938-8329
Global TV 218 Robin Cres. S7L 7C3 <i>e-mail: globalnews.sas@globaltv.ca</i>	Lisa Ford	978-6397	665-0058
CFQC TV 216-1 st Ave. N. S7K 3W3 <i>e-mail: cfqcnews@ctv.ca</i>	Dale Neufeldt	665-9253	664-6403
CBC TV/RADIO 144 – 2 nd Ave. S. S7K 1K5 <i>e-mail: steve_pasqualotto@cbc.ca or // osalie_woloski@cbc.ca</i>	Mariam Martin	956-7430	956-7402
Shaw Cable 2326 Hanselman Ave. S7L 5Z3	Jim Mattern	665-3785	665-3738
Star Phoenix/Sun 204 – 5 th Ave. N. S7K 2P1 <i>e-mail: spnews@sp.canwest.com</i>	Rod Nickel	664-8231	657-6437
Planet S Magazine Suite 308 – 220 3 rd Ave. S. S7K 1M1	Mitch Diamantopoulos	651-3423	651-3428

Sample PSA

PSA

For release June 23, 2006

Greenvale Community Celebrates the Centennial

The Greenvale Community Association is celebrating Saskatoon's Centennial in a unique way. On **Friday June 25**, children who live in the Greenvale neighbourhood will be officially opening their new playground to celebrate Saskatoon's 100th birthday.

The celebration will kick off at **6:00 p.m. in L.S Holmes Park** with the official grand opening of the playground. To commemorate this event the Greenvale Community Association has organized a full evening of events, food and fun for families young and old. There will also be several fun demonstrations such as rocket launches, kite flying and radio remote control cars and aircrafts.

Special Events Coordinator, Annette Bendig says "It is Greenvale's way of celebrating our past and looking forward to our future. Everybody is welcome to come and celebrate our great neighbourhood." What a way to "**LAUNCH**" the new Centennial!

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For more information please contact:
Kathy Johnstone
President, Greenvale Community Association
555-8274

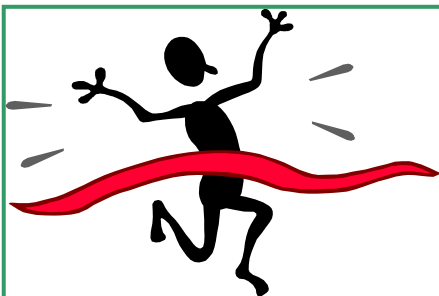
Evaluation and Follow Up

The final piece of the puzzle is the wrap up. Plan ahead to ensure chores go smoothly – and remember to say thank you.

Post Event Tasks

- ✓ Have a **site take down plan**, including a clean-up crew ready to work before, during and after the event.
- ✓ Have a **recognition program** in place for VIPs, sponsors and volunteers.
- ✓ **Evaluate** what went well and what needs to be improved upon, with recommendations for next time.

Say Thank You



- Sponsors
- Volunteers
- Patrons
- Performers, entertainers
- Media
- Local authorities

Checklists

Use the following checklists to help plan your event.

Use this checklist as a general timeline for your planning process. Ensure that once timelines are set, every member of the committee receives a copy.

TIMELINE CHECKLIST		
TASK	DATE TO BE COMPLETED	STATUS
1. FORM A COMMITTEE <input type="checkbox"/> Recruit volunteers <input type="checkbox"/> Assign roles/tasks		
2. DEVELOP YOUR IDEA <input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorm ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Identify goals/objectives <input type="checkbox"/> Identify who the event is geared for (families, adults, former residents, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Chose a theme <input type="checkbox"/> Inform your community consultant <input type="checkbox"/> Determine activities <input type="checkbox"/> Set a date and time <input type="checkbox"/> Select a location		
3. LOGISTICS <input type="checkbox"/> Book the park and/or school <input type="checkbox"/> Consider equipment and supplies <input type="checkbox"/> Confirm services such as washrooms, water and electricity <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain permits <input type="checkbox"/> Confirm tasks, who does what <input type="checkbox"/> Confirm MC and event spokesperson		
4. BUDGET <input type="checkbox"/> Estimate costs & revenues <input type="checkbox"/> Estimate donations & in kind goods/services <input type="checkbox"/> Ask community consultant about funding grants (i.e. Sask. Lotteries Community Grant)		

TIMELINE CHECKLIST

TASK	DATE TO BE COMPLETED	STATUS
<p>5. PROMOTE YOUR EVENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School newsletters <input type="checkbox"/> Association newsletter <input type="checkbox"/> Billboard/signs <input type="checkbox"/> Deliver posters/flyers <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper/TV/Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Websites 		
<p>6. OBTAIN SPONSORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare sponsor information <input type="checkbox"/> List businesses and agencies to be approached <input type="checkbox"/> Arrange to meet sponsor <input type="checkbox"/> Recognize sponsor at event 		
<p>7. EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Event clean up <input type="checkbox"/> Recognize volunteers <input type="checkbox"/> Assess success (what went well, what could be improved, suggestions for next time) 		

Use this checklist to ensure you have addressed key operational issues.

OPERATIONAL CHECKLIST

- Insurance (liability)
 - By-law considerations & permits (see Booklet 2: City of Saskatoon Event Planning Resources)
 - First aid and medical services
 - “Plan B” for outdoor events in case of inclement weather
 - Event day communications – spokesperson, sound system, podium, two-way radios
 - Coordination of required utilities - electrical, power, water, sewage, gas
 - Staff/volunteer briefing or training
 - Finalize arrangements with speakers, MCs, dignitaries, entertainers, media
 - Provide & sign contracts for professional entertainers and anyone being paid for a service
 - Sales – booth/table, tickets, cash floats, cash deposits procedures
 - Equipment and Facility rentals (stage, tents, sound, electricity)
 - Security and Emergency Procedures
 - Parking logistics - including drop-off sites
 - Site plan - who/what is located where
 - Concessions and food services – permits, cleanliness, preparation, handling, storage
 - Sanitation/Refuse (garbage bins ordered)
 - Washroom Accommodations (school access/portable toilets)
 - On-site signage
 - Warehousing and after event storage
 - Volunteer and staff check-in procedures
 - After-event inventory
 - Evaluation
 - Staff/volunteer wrap-up and Thank You
-

Use this checklist to assign a team to ensure the following items have been taken care of.

SITE / FACILITY CHECKLIST – INDOOR EVENT

- Fire exits, fire extinguishers, overhead sprinkler systems
 - Wheelchair accessibility
 - Emergency treatment area
 - Volunteer central space
 - Registration and ticket sales space
 - Information/customer services site; lost and found
 - Electrical and gas outlets; location of light switches and sound controls; lighting
 - Water and sewer; washrooms
 - Heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems
 - Kitchens; food and beverage preparation, refrigeration and service areas
 - Stage (check for obstructed sight lines)
 - Lounge, dressing rooms, rehearsal area, separate washrooms for VIPs and entertainers
 - Coat checks; public telephones
 - Concession and patron service sites
 - Parking (including special needs & reserved); overnight RV parking or camping space
 - Loading/delivery zones
 - Pathways and walks (clear of obstructions such as snow)
 - Secure storage area for all equipment
 - Signage
 - Waste collection/disposal and litter containers
 - Special arrangements and approval, such as liquor permits
-

Use this checklist to assign a team to ensure the following items have been taken care of.

SITE / FACILITY CHECKLIST – OUTDOOR EVENT

- Underground water sprinklers (ensure timers are adjusted to prevent watering during the event)

- Lighting in immediate and adjoining areas such as parkways, parks and streets

- Location of underground waterlines and electrical and gas lines for tents

- Parking availability (proximity, amount of space, accessibility, special needs)

- Waste collection, disposal and litter containers

- Washrooms (and provision of septic service during event) wheelchair accessibility

- Level areas for stage/seating

- Temporary signage and structures such as stages and display backdrops (ability to withstand heavy wind, rain and snow)

- Access by suppliers or food and beverage services before, during and after the event

- Emergency vehicle access to the site during the event

- Availability of an accessible indoor alternative site in case of inclement weather

- Special arrangements and approval, such as liquor permits

Use this checklist to assign a team to co-ordinate delivery of services, equipment, personnel and entertainers.

EQUIPMENT & SERVICES CHECKLIST

- Communications equipment (two-way radios, pagers, cellular phones)
 - Office equipment (computer, fax machines, photocopier)
 - First aid supplies
 - Drinking water
 - Washroom supplies
 - Food and beverage for patrons, volunteers and site personnel
 - Litter containers
 - Sound systems, loud speakers, microphones
 - Light systems
 - Qualified technicians for equipment installation, operation, maintenance and repair
 - Tables, chairs, risers, seating, stage and podium
 - Music services
 - Decorations, banners, posters, signs, props, balloons, displays, exhibits, flowers and flags
 - Message board
 - Information booth or centre with a site map showing locations of washrooms, concessions, stages and stocked with pamphlets or leaflets describing programs and other activities,
 - Services for patrons with special needs (dietary, mobility, access); order services and supplies well in advance of the event date
-