



## Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

---

### Community Leaders Conference June 6 & 7 2003

#### Keynote Address:

#### Mayor Gail Surkan – Red Deer, Alberta

#### Focus on future of Parks, Recreation & Culture

- Canadian Communities are @ a cross-roads – they are in a transition from rural to new urbanism – but we have not caught up yet – we are too young as cities
- There are basic principles as we move forward:
  - We want to be successful as humans
  - Safe & enriched in our lives
  - We want our children safe & enriched

#### Values Based Planning:

Need to know the values of our community before we can move ahead

- Not far from rural roots
  - Sense of community in a rural environment is what we know
- Moving quickly through transition
  - Pace of growth is causing anxiety
  - American cities moved through transitions earlier

White flight: rapid flight of middle class out of the city to the suburbs

- unsettling suburbs of homogeneous groups not the resources to service those communities – not integrated community
- Lived inside homes – withdrew from social environment – left community to work and do business

#### New Urbanism

Need to look at the planning of those communities and what the pieces are to make communities them successful

- Redesign physically to include a variety of services and community meeting spaces - vibrant
- To mixed, diverse, interactive, communities based on rural values
- Importance of mixed income, pedestrian based, human scale
- Important assumptions about what is needed

#### 1) Vision/Principles

Assumption – socially & economically diverse mix

2) Highly Interactive – Inclusive

- Learn/ grow in your community
- Results in engagement of citizens in community life
- Create a sense of Belonging
- Sense of shared values
- Importance of caring for each other

3) Need preserving

- Create benchmarks
- Clear understanding of the tools it takes
  - 1) Physical Design
    - Will not cause to interact
  - 2) Services to reach people in their neighbourhood
    - Opportunity to structure a process under pinned with values
    - Not building or facilities but about the opportunities they provide for people to interact

How do we begin

- 1) Understand the values
- 2) Design consultative processes based on values of the community & then model those values
- 3) Walk the talk – modeling

**Cornerstone Values**

- 1) Are you thinking socially & economically diverse?
- 2) Are they inclusive & integrative?
- 3) Does it reinforce the sense of share leadership?
- 4) Is it sustainable?

Model from our Community: Red Deer Values

- 1) Value natural environment
- 2) Family & Neighborhood
- 3) Cooperative
- 4) Entrepreneurial - individual responsibility in the community

Examples of Our Values :

**New Leisure Centre: Collicutt Centre**

Aquatics: Wave Pool  
chess set

Field House - drop in activities

Water Park

2 Soccer pitches

Hockey Arena

Dedicated gymnastics

Fitness and wellness studio

Childcare

Retail

Indoor Track – 290m

•Concept & centre is a mall interactive patio style

•Windows – to protect from the harsh environment but  
Appreciate the beauty

• Art Projects -6500 moulded tiles in the walls –art  
from every school Child in the community

Fundraising by community groups to add arena,  
gymnastics

- Concept of village green – interact & feel welcome
- Wide community partnership – user group
- Not only the money but the principle that the community came to play

### **Cultural Masterplan**

- Designated by Heritage Canada one of 5 Heritage Capital  
→ based on our cultural masterplan – 65 groups working together

→ Shared website, newsletter, marketing – reflects that we will work cooperate  
Hard to bring people together

### **Why it is important to understand the values of the community**

- 1) Base on values you will get it right for a long time
- 2) Easy to prioritize to the community
- 3) Values Based Planning is self sustaining

### **Working Environment**

- 1) Work in an environment the creates creative space
  - white space no hierarchy - bring your ideas and solve together
  - ie. com. economy – different interests around the water cooler
  - Will happen around the idea, when working creatively – gather around ideas & tasks not position
- 2) Take risks around good relationships – Turn organizations on its head → understanding the culture

### **True steps of leadership**

- 1) Inspire shared vision – understand values
- 2) Challenge the system
- 3) Enable others to act
- 4) Modelling the way
- 5) Encourage the heart