LAC LA BICHE COUNTY

Community Program and Event Planning Guide

Lac La Biche County
welcoming by nature.

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WELCOME
BIENVENUE

Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to provide community groups with tools for planning and delivering community or neighbourhood-based programs, events, and/or services. It includes a planning template to assist in developing programs and services that meet the needs of residents or members.

Community or neighbourhood programs and events create opportunities for neighbours to meet, visit, have fun, and work and play together. Programs that are developed by communities to meet specific community needs and build on community/neighbourhood assets, which might be different than those of the wider community or county. If you are considering running a new program or event in Lac La Biche County, this guide will provide resources to help you create successful programs and smaller, community-based events.

What are the benefits of planning programs/events in your community or neighbourhood?

☑ Provides opportunities to build social connections

☑ Creates a sense of belonging and community pride

☑ Promotes safe communities

☑ Opportunity to learn new skills and share gifts and talents

☑ Exploring your community

☑ Health, wellness, and fun
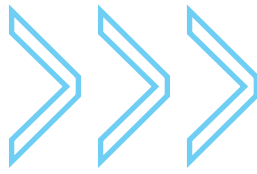
Getting Started

Understand your community needs. Some things that you may want to consider are:

- What are the needs and assets in your community?
- What are potential programs/activities/events/services for meeting community needs?
- What do you want to achieve with this program/activities/events/services?
- What opportunities will this program create for your community?
- What are emerging needs in your area?
- What has been done in the past?
- Are there synergies with similar programs in the county and if so, are there opportunities to partner?
- Is there capacity for your program based on what is currently being offered?

Barriers to participation

Consider the members of your community and what could prevent them from participating in your program. It is important to examine all possible barriers to ensure access to your programs, events or services. Possible barriers may include:

- Cost
- Age demographic
- Accessibility
- Proximity to facilities/community halls etc.
- Time and day of the program
- Transportation
- Lack of awareness/knowledge

Create an organizing committee

Find individuals with talent, time, commitment, and creativity in:

- Finance
- Marketing & communications
- Site/facility set up
- Volunteer and staff recruitment

Resources

Evaluate what resources and assets your community or neighbourhood has that you can access to support the programs, events, or services you wish to provide. These can include but are not limited to:

Facilities or Program Spaces

Consider what type of space is required for the type of program you are planning and what options are available. Appropriate space is essential to a program's success and the satisfaction of the participants. Facility accessibility and creating a welcoming atmosphere are also key factors to take into consideration.

Every facility or hall is unique in its operating procedures. There may be varied expectations and policies for room set-up, take down, and clean up, general housekeeping, emergency procedures etc. Contact the Facility Bookings Representative to obtain clarification on what the facility staff does and what responsibilities there may be for your program organizers on site. Knowing the expectations ahead of time will help avoid any misunderstandings or misconceptions during delivery of your programs.

Partnership

Working with your community partners can help make program planning and delivery easier. Is there an opportunity to share space, equipment, or instructors? Examples of partnerships could include:

- Lac La Biche County Libraries
- Recreation and Culture services
- Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)
- Schools
- Home schooling groups
- Local sports groups
- Local service clubs
- Youth groups
- Seniors groups
- Local businesses
- Cultural and heritage organizations
- Service groups
- Parent groups
- Local community organizations (i.e., Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Boys and Girls club)
- Local health authority
- Portage College

Subject Matter Experts

Working with subject matter experts who have knowledge or experience in the type of program or event you want to offer can give you access to information about how to effectively offer that type of program and may help you find contacts and expand program knowledge/ development. If you need assistance finding someone for a specific program or event, please contact the Recreation and Culture or FCSS Departments and we can try to assist you.

Funding

What financial resources are available to you and how do you access them? Who can you contact for more information on funding? Consider researching the following options:

Grants
- Government of Alberta – https://www.alberta.ca/funding-for-non-profits
- Lac La Biche County - https://www.laclabichecounty.com/p/community-grants

  See pg. 8 for more information on these grant programs

Sponsorships or Gifts in Kind
- Local businesses, service clubs, or other organizations

Program/ Event Planning

📅 Date and Time

- Is this a one-day program/workshop or will it run for several weeks?
- Who are the potential participants and what would be the best day of the week and time of day to run the program for them?
- What would an appropriate length for each day of program for each day of the program?

💲 Budget

A budget is a complete list of all expenses and revenues (see attached sample budget form). It is always best to estimate conservatively and secure approval for your budget if required.

Expenses

What are the costs to run this program? Program, event, or service expenses can include:
- Instructor
- Equipment and/or Supplies
- Rental fees
- Insurance, licenses or permits
- Advertising
- Food

Revenue

How will expenses be paid for? Revenues can include:
- Fees (registration, entry, etc.)
- Community group or organization donations, sponsorships, or gifts-in-kind
- Business sponsors
- Grants
- A combination of the above

Managing the Budget

Track expenses and revenues for comparison with proposed budget. Adjust as necessary (e.g., determine if you need to make more money, reduce your expenses, or spend more money to meet budget).

Fee Structure

Once you have determined your goals for your fees you can determine the program cost based on these. It is also a good idea to do a market comparison of similar programs in other communities.

What your goal is for fees:
- Are you needing to break even?
- Is this program, service, or event meant to be a revenue generator or fundraiser for your organization?
- Does your organization or sponsor or grantor want to subsidize the program, event, or service?
- To determine a registration fee, take your total costs and divide by the number of participants.

In-Kind Contributions

Capture any In-kind donations (volunteer time, facility rental fees, advertising, etc.) as revenues with an offsetting expenditure under expenses. This is often helpful when applying for grants to demonstrate financial contribution/support and /or as can be used as matching funds.

📍 Registration

Determine the best method for registration (phone, online, mailed in, in person) and determine how registration fees will be collected.

- Collect participant information including any medical considerations, behavior issues and information on who can pick the participant up if this is a program for children or youth under the age of 18.
- Create a cancellation policy: collect contact information and ensure adequate notice is given to cancel a program.
- Consider whether you need to collect waivers or consent forms from participants to help protect your organization from liability, clarify expectations, and ensure participants are informed about any potential risks.

Events

If you are organizing a community event there are important logistics to consider. You may need permits for food handling (AHS), alcohol, approvals for tents or structures, and insurance coverage. You will also need an emergency plan in case of unexpected situations. If you're hiring outside vendors—like entertainers, food trucks, or equipment providers— contracts help outline responsibilities and avoid confusion. Need help navigating the process? We're here to support you!

Lac La Biche County Support
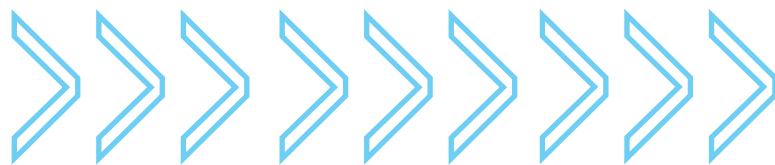
Advertising

Lac La Biche County offers great advertising opportunities to help you spread the word about your community program or event. You can place ads in the seasonal Activity Guide, which reaches households across the region, or showcase your message on the electronic screens at the Bold Centre and along Beaverhill Road. These affordable, high-visibility options are a great way to connect with residents and boost participation. Contact us to learn more about rates, deadlines, and how to get started!

Block Party Program

Knowing your neighbours results in safer, more caring neighbourhoods, and throwing a block party can help with that.

Block parties invite families and friends in a neighbourhood for an evening of food, games, and fun in the great outdoors. Neighbours can meet and greet while bonding during a barbecue, picnic, or pot luck.

If you'd like to plan a block party in your area, check out our kit with planning ideas, and be sure to fill out our registration form. Once you've filled the form and returned it to FCSS, you'll be eligible for a $100 gift card to use for food and supplies.

https://www.laclabichecounty.com/p/community-programming-and-services

Community Access Bus

The Community Access Bus Service is a transportation service that can support local programs and events, subject to availability. Please contact FCSS for more information: (780) 623-6754.

Equipment Rentals

From sport equipment to the Ultimate Challenge inflatable, Lac La Biche County has a variety of equipment available for rental to support your events or programs. Contact the Bold Centre for more information or to book equipment: 780-623-3829.

Facilitation

Our staff can support you in helping you develop program plans, connect with instructors, identify potential grants and give you grant writing advice.

Community Movie Sponsorship Program

Through the Community Movie Sponsorship Program, Lac La Biche County will sponsor the cost of licensing fees for eligible movie screenings for community associations and agricultural societies.

For an application form and more information, visit laclabichecounty.com/p/recreation-and-culture.

Funding

Lac La Biche County believes in supporting groups and initiatives that enhance and strengthen our community. The County offers a wide range of grants and funding opportunities every year including the Event Sponsorship and Donations (County Policy FIN-71-023) and the Event Grant Program (County Policy FIN-71-024). Please visit our website for more information. The County also offers a Community Movie Sponsorship programs for community associations.

https://www.laclabichecounty.com/p/community-grants

The FCSS department also has a funding program to support groups in enhansing the social well being of individuals, families, and the community. Contact the FCSS department for more information.

Park & Play Fun Van

Appearing at events throughout the community, the Park & Play Fun Van provides free activities and programming at special events and functions in every corner of Lac La Biche County.

You can book the Park & Play Fun Van for your community events. For more information about booking the Fun Van, please call (780) 623-5012.

Other Resources

Funding

Government of Alberta Community Initiatives Program (CIP)

The Community Initiatives Program (CIP) provides funding for organizations that create opportunities for Albertans to engage with and help develop their communities. This programs aim is to strengthen leadership and organizational capacity of community organizations and support community-driven goals that have a public benefit. This program has three funding streams: project-based, operating, major cultural and sport events. For more information, visit https://www.alberta.ca/funding-for-non-profits.

Detailed Event Planning Guide

Government of Alberta A Working Guide to Planning an Event

For more information about how to plan a special event, view A Working Guide to Planning an Event by the Government of Alberta:

https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/adb2a951-4aa0-4d1c-822e-58a8595f9ea4/resource/082eb26d-0224-4d95-9687-bec784f1c791/download/2012-1933-31-1.pdf

Appendix

Community Program Plan

Name of the program/event/service: _____

Brief description:

_____

_____

What community need(s) does this program address:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Who is your target audience (e.g. teens, seniors, families, etc.): _____

Program dates: _____

Program times: _____

Program location: _____

Resources needed: _____

Promotion (How and to who will you advertise your program or event to?)
Target Group(s):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Marketing Plan (What advertising tactics will you use to reach your target groups?)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Community Program Budget

Identify all possible costs for the program/event/service. List any revenue (donations, etc.) and determine if a registration fee is required.

Estimated Program Budget			
Revenues:	**Details**	**Budgeted($)**	**Actual ($)**
Grants			
Fees/Admissions			
Fundraising			
Sponsorships			
Other			
In Kind:			
Volunteer time			
Donated services			
Other			
Total Revenue			
Expences:	**Details**	**Budgeted ($)**	**Actual ($)**
Facility Rental			
Equipment			
Supplies			
Contractor fees			
Advertising			
Administration			
Food			
Other			
Total Expences			
Balance (Revenue - Expences)			

LAC LA BICHE COUNTY

Need support?
Contact us.

Lac La Biche County

Recreation and Culture Department
Bold Centre
8702 91 Avenue
recreation@laclabichecounty.com
780.623.3829

FCSS Department
Bold Centre
8702 91 Avenue
fcss@laclabichecounty.com
780.623.6745

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