

Facility Planning in Saskatchewan: What to Expect Before, During, and After Construction

Before Construction Begins:

1. Appoint a Construction Committee to Oversee the Project

The Construction Committee may include members of the Board of Directors, the Executive Director, experts or consultants, and other key stakeholders, if applicable. In Saskatchewan, if there is provincial funding attached to the project, Community Living Service Delivery (CLSD) may require that a project consultant from Saskatchewan Housing Corporation (SHC) be involved in the construction part of the project.

2. Develop the Proposal

The Construction Committee, in consultation with experts, will develop a proposal for the construction project, which could be part of CLSD's Negotiated Request for Proposal (NRFP). Considerations that should be included in the proposal for a construction project may include:

- What services will be offered? This could include housing, community-based programming, or centre-based programming.
- What are the facility requirements you need to consider? These could include:
 - Accessibility needs of the staff and clients.
 - Fire safety requirements.
 - Long-term sustainability of the project.
 - Size of facility required.
 - Location of facility.
 - Durability of materials, and furnishings.
 - Cost effectiveness.
 - Building codes and licensing standards.
- What are some options for obtaining a facility? Some options may include:
 - Purchasing land and constructing a new facility.
 - Purchasing and renovating an existing facility.
 - Renting or leasing a facility.
 - Sharing a facility with another organization.

3. Prepare the Budget

Often the project budget will define the project, so funding commitments for the project will need to be confirmed. The project budget will consist of the construction budget plus other expenses and taxes associated with the project. Funding sources may come from:

- Capital grants from the Ministry of Social Services.

- Operational funding from Ministry of Social Services to cover mortgage payments.
- A mortgage loan from a lending institution.
- Self-generated funds or reserves.
- Donations from the community.
- Grants from community organizations.
- Contributions from another organization if collaborating to share a facility.

4. Purchase Property

Once the proposal is approved by the Board of Directors and funding partners, preparation to purchase land or a building may begin. **Make sure financial commitments have been confirmed before moving forward.**

Whether the organization is purchasing land and building a new facility, renovating an existing facility, renting or leasing a facility, or collaborating on a shared facility, there are a few due diligence requirements to consider. You will need to ensure the property:

- Is in a suitable location.
- Has appropriate zoning and density regulations for your intended purpose, and permission from the local authority.
- Has undergone an independent appraisal.
- Has a satisfactory building inspection if using an existing building.
- Has access to utilities and services (water, sewer, power, etc.).
- Is suitable for your budget.

Once the property has been purchased, pre-construction or renovation planning can begin. The Construction Committee will need to:

- Contract a consultant, either an engineer or architect, who will complete the necessary drawings to obtain a building permit. The drawings will be based on the organization's concept plans, or idea of what they want the facility to look like.
 - The consultant may also manage the tender process. This means developing a tender, assisting the Construction Committee with selecting a suitable bidder, and preparing the construction contract with the contractor.
- Work with the consultant to manage the construction process. Professional support in this area is recommended.
- Follow the funding requirements and stay within the approved budget.

During Construction:

1. Celebrate the Beginning of Construction

If public money is used in the project, the Government may request a 'sod-turning' event to celebrate. The organization may also want to celebrate the beginning of the construction process.

2. Hold an Initial Construction Meeting

A start-up meeting is held with the consultant, contractor, and the Construction Committee. The consultant outlines the roles and responsibilities of each person or group involved, as well as procedures and protocols during construction. For example, the consultant will outline who is responsible for getting building permits, who chooses materials and colours, who will keep track of expenses, and what will happen if the contractor recommends a change to the drawings.

3. Monitor Progress

Regular construction meetings, usually chaired by the consultant, are held to monitor the progress of the project and solve any problems that may arise during construction. Progress payments can be certified by the consultant at this time too, and regular progress reports will be made to the Board of Directors.

After Construction is Complete:

When the project is substantially complete (approximately 97% complete), it's time to wrap up the project and plan for moving into the building. The following is required before occupancy is permitted:

1. Determine date of completion

The consultant certifies when the project is substantially complete which determines the date when the 1-year warranty begins. A timeline for completing the remaining items and deficiencies is also needed.

2. Prepare a Move-in Strategy

The organization prepares a 'move-in strategy' as to how and when the staff and clients will transition to the new facility. This includes arranging for appropriate furnishings, completing staff training, and preparing person-centred transition plans for the clients.

3. Final Building Inspection

A Building Inspector from the local authority (Town, City, Municipality, etc.) will conduct a final inspection to ensure all building codes are met and will issue their final inspection report. Then the local authority will provide an occupancy permit.

The organization then arranges for a Fire, Health, and CLSD inspection as a part of Government licensing requirements for residential services.

4. Moving In

Once the organization has the occupancy permit from the local authority, deficient free inspection reports from Fire and Health officials, and their Government license, then the facility can be occupied.

The organization must ensure there are appropriate furnishings and staffing available before clients move in.

Plan a grand opening event in conjunction with stakeholders to celebrate the new services provided in the community.