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

Before Construction Begins (Assume that funding and a business plan are in place):

1. Appoint a Construction Committee to Oversee the Project

The Construction Committee meets to ensure that a new building to be constructed or renovated meets the needs of the organization and to oversee the administration of the construction contracts. The Construction Committee may include members of the Board of Directors, the Executive Director, staff members, experts or consultants, and other key stakeholders, if applicable. In Saskatchewan, if there is provincial funding attached to the project, the funder may require a consultant to be on the Construction Committee.

2. Develop a Concept Plan

The Construction Committee, in consultation with experts, will develop a list of needs and requirements for a concept plan. The list would help determine the scope of the project and the type of building required to carry out the mission of the organization.

- What services will be offered?
- 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.

- Operational funding.
- 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.
- Discussions with an Architect or Engineer may give a sense of a budget cost for a new building or renovation to an existing building.

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. The Construction Committee 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.
    - It is advised that the consultant manage the tender process. The consultant would assist the Construction Committee in selecting a suitable contractor and preparing and administering 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 mark the beginning of the project. The organization may also want to celebrate the beginning of the construction process and let people know what services will be provided in the new facility.

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.

3. **Monitor Progress**
   Regular construction meetings are held to monitor the progress of the project and solve any problems that may arise during construction. Payments to the contractor can be certified by the consultant at this time too, and regular progress reports can be made to the Board of Directors and other stakeholders as needed.

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, if applicable.

3. **Final Building Inspection**
   A Building Official 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. The local authority will provide an occupancy permit.

   The organization then arranges for further inspections to meet their specific licensing requirements as needed.

4. Moving In

Once the organization has the occupancy permit from the local authority, deficient free inspection reports from all the inspections, 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.