

Evaluation Form

2018



2018 Evaluation Form

Program Disclaimer

SPRA staff, volunteer judges and all personnel associated with Communities in Bloom (CiB) will not be held liable for any observations, suggestions, or recommendations made in this Evaluation Document or at any time during the delivery of the CiB program including any resulting activity or events related to participation in the CiB program.

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Community: **Eston**

Province: **Saskatchewan**

Category: **Competitive**

Tidiness	123	/	150.00
Environmental Action	120	/	150.00
Heritage Conservation	123.5	/	150.00
Urban Forestry	122.5	/	175.00
Landscape	160.5	/	200.00
Floral Displays	153	/	175.00
Total	802.5	/	1000.00

Percentage : **80%**

Bloom rating: 4 Blooms

Bloom rating: Up to 55%: 1 bloom. 56% to 63%: 2 blooms. 64% to 72%: 3 blooms 73% to 81%: 4 blooms. >82%: 5 blooms.

National and International Edition, for evaluated communities only.

82 to 83.9%: 5 Blooms. 84 to 86.9%: 5 Blooms (Bronze). 87 to 89.9%: 5 Blooms (Silver). 90% and over: 5 Blooms Gold

Mention: Fortitude of the CiB Committee (stamina, determination, endurance, credibility and passion)

Representative (s) of Community

Name:	<u>Val Mohan</u>	Function:	<u>CiB Committee member</u>
Name:	<u>Al Heron</u>	Function:	<u>Mayor</u>
Name:	<u>Doreen Reaburn</u>	Function:	<u>CiB Committee member</u>

Judges

Name:	<u>Sheila Nordick</u>	Name:	<u>Roger Nordick</u>
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Evaluation

date: July 26, 2018

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IMPORTANT NOTES:

Evaluation is adjusted to the climate and environmental conditions of the community.

Some aspects of the evaluation might not be applicable: scoring will be prorated.

The score will vary from the previous year based on the facts that the evaluation form is subject to modifications each year and that the scores are based on the perception of the current judges.

SECTORS OF EVALUATION

Municipal:

- Municipal properties, parks and green spaces, streets, streetscapes
- Properties owned and run by municipality such as museums, historical sites

Business and Institutions:

Properties owned and managed by

- **Business:** commercial sector, shopping centres, commercial streets, industrial parks, manufacturing plants
- **Institutions:** schools, universities, churches, hospitals, service and community organization buildings (such as YMCA, Legion), private museums, Government and Crown Corporations buildings (such as Canada Post, provincial and federal parks, etc.)
- **Tourism bureaus and Chamber of Commerce offices**
- **Farms:** in rural communities, farms can be considered in this section

Residential:

- Citizens and citizen groups acting within their own properties
- Residential property owners, rate payer groups

Community Involvement:

The principle of community involvement is so fundamental to the program that it is considered in each segment of the evaluation.

- Individuals, community organizations, citizen groups (includes youth programs) – all contributing to various aspects of community improvement, including municipal spaces maintained through the efforts of volunteers and community
- Organized clubs such as horticultural societies, garden clubs, community associations, school groups
- Service clubs such as Rotary, Lions, Optimist
- Participation (financial and/or in-kind or employee participation) by the municipality, businesses and institutions.

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GENERAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Thank-you for being such gracious hosts once again. You're one of the best "bloomin" committee that we have seen over the years. The energy you distribute throughout the community truly appears almost everywhere we looked. The work ethic of your CIB committee is complemented by others in the community such as Mayor Al Heron and Public Works Director Mike Sauser; true role models. Your community is certainly the place we would recommend other communities visit that wish to succeed in the CIB program. We like to say this about your fine community: "Eston, a community giving their all for what they believe".

A new directive this year was that communities no longer require a profile book. We must say that the information we garnered from your Community Profile and other materials accessed gave us a very comprehensive look into the activities of the community since its inception. Well done! We suggest since you have a very completed profile book that you continue to maintain it not just for CIB judges but for anyone visiting your community.

We noticed a couple of unusual things immediately upon entering Eston that surprised us; the railway right-of-way was completely trimmed which is a difficult thing to get done in most communities and that all ditches along the perimeter roads were very neatly trimmed as well. This is great!

We could hear the excitement in some of your voices regarding the upcoming Fall Festival and all that has been planned. Wish we could be there.

The wind-up movie night you have at the end of summer is a nice touch.

Another nice touch was the small, professionally made municipal lot sale signs seen throughout the community.

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Community involvement became obvious as we noticed so many benches located throughout the community along sidewalks in residential, industrial and commercial properties; some in the most surprising locations.

It is very nice to see your committee using CIB Project signs. We haven't seen that elsewhere and found it to be pleasantly conspicuous; clearly defining all your hard work.

We have a few general suggestions:

----consider utilizing door knockers as an inexpensive means of recognizing top achievers and supporters of your CIB initiatives.

----Try using Alpine Current shrubs well-spaced along boundary lines of the campsites instead of the grasses that are not doing well and will require more work in future years. This suggestion is relatively maintenance free if not spaced too close where it would become a hedge.

----Re-instate your volunteer recognition program annually so not to lose the momentum it generates.

----We noticed very good use of the logo "Golden Fields and Harvest Moons" as mentioned in your 2017 evaluation. It's a very appealing logo with outstanding visual presentation. Keep up the good work!

----The Eston Regional Park is a secret little gem that is not widely known for its rustic beauty.

----Should you choose to maintain your profile book it would be nice if a small sticker could be added with the year the entry took place.

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TIDINESS		
<p>Tidiness includes an overall tidiness effort by the municipality, businesses, institutions and the residents throughout the community. Elements for evaluation are parks and green spaces, medians, boulevards, sidewalks, streets; municipal, commercial, institutional and residential properties; ditches, road shoulders, vacant lots, signs and buildings; weed control, litter clean-up (including cigarette butts and gum), graffiti prevention/removal and vandalism deterrent programs.</p>		
	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Overall Impressions Tidiness, order, cleanliness and first impressions	10	8
Anti-litter Community anti-litter awareness programs	10	8.5
Regulations Effective bylaws, programs and policies and enforcement; litter control, unsightly private property maintenance by-laws, graffiti prevention and eradication, graffiti removal kits to residents	10	7
Cleanliness Of public green infrastructure: parks, streetscapes (sidewalks, planters, urban signage and furniture such as benches, litter and recycling containers etc.)	15	13.5
Municipal Properties Appearance Visual appeal and condition of municipal buildings and properties (including city hall grounds),	15	13.5
Business & Institutions		
Overall Impressions Tidiness, order and cleanliness and first impressions	15	12
Site Conditions Condition of buildings (exterior maintenance), grounds, sidewalks and parking lots	15	10
Furniture Appearance Condition of urban furniture: benches, litter and recycling containers	5	5
Residential		
Overall Impressions Tidiness, order and cleanliness	20	15
Property Conditions Condition of buildings, grounds and yards	15	12
Community Involvement		
Public Participation In community, neighbourhood or individual street tidiness, clean-up programs, activities and annual maintenance (including promotion, organization, innovations involving youth and seniors, etc.)	10	9.5
Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions for community clean-up programs	10	9
Tidiness Total	150.00	123.0

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TIDINESS

Observations:

We noticed the entry sign on the East side of Eston was missing; apparently blew down in a recent wind storm and in for repair. It will be relocated further east of its current site.

Vacant lots are not being well kept including those presently on an Adopt-a-lot program.

As mentioned in previous years sidewalks are in rough and/or uneven condition. We suggest a rating system could be used to aid in annually selecting the worst to repair so not to be financially overwhelmed.

Two pocket parks on main street are very appealing areas to relax on a beautiful day. A bench would be a nice addition in the Serenity Park.

The manicured ditches around the community perimeter roads clearly defined the town vs. rural lands.

The slopes surrounding the water reservoir were fenced and mowed purely for aesthetics which adds a pleasant new dimension when one thinks of where their good quality drinking water originates. Nice special touch that shows the sincerity of the Public Works Director.

The sports fields and surrounding landscaping in the east side of the community were very tidy and in pristine condition.

The large farm equipment dealer along the main thoroughfare had his property very well maintained; a nice condition certainly not often seen in rural Saskatchewan.

The cemetery was as neat and tidy as it could possibly be. Very well done!

The small lot marker sale signs certainly present a tidy look vs. using other types of common sale signs.

The new town map has a very appealing, modern look; nice addition to the main thoroughfare.

Recommendations:

-Try to convince the Lorras driver of your efforts to maintain a tidy community which would be better if the large blue bins were strategically located in a neater fashion rather than rough shod down the streets and alleys.

-We suggest relocating two large blue bins serving the RM located just north of the campground be located at the RM of Snipe lake shop in the south part of the community.

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-Some of the alleys are largely rough grassed over while others are not. It would be nice to see those in grass to be over seeded and mowed throughout the summer and those with mostly dirt to be box graded more often. Some work is required by the town staff and in some instances by property owners to remove large trees or branches that have grown into the lanes over many years.

-Some box style curbs have been recently revitalized and some roll style curbs are being presently installed. Many are in rough condition. A long range plan to re-build or remove the dilapidated curbs would be nice; eventually making the community appear tidier.

-Several street sign posts have rusted and appear untidy. This could be a great project for students at some point in time. IE: as noted at Andreas View corner

-We did notice that there are several areas of the community where usage signs should be installed to reduce liability risk to the town of Eston. IE: batting cages, motocross bike track, outdoor ice surface, play grounds, etc.

-There are several buildings in the residential and commercial areas that are far beyond repair posing a risk to anyone entering. A "Minimum Maintenance Bylaw" may provide the authority to get the work done to clean up the property. IE: see Prince Albert or Melville as they have such bylaws.

-Recommend the removal of the 4H sign located in front of the bar and grill on the east side of the community which is 50% missing.

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ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION		
Environmental action pertains to the impact of human activities on the environment and the subsequent efforts and achievements of the community with respect to: policies, by-laws, programs and best practices for waste reduction and landfill diversion, composting sites, landfill sites, hazardous waste collections, water conservation, energy conservation, and environmental stewardship activities under the guiding principles of sustainable development pertaining to green spaces.		
	Max	Actual
Municipal		
<u>Sustainable Development Strategies</u> Policies, programs, guidelines, long-term planning/vision; effective bylaws/policies and their enforcement; and public education programs and activities	20	17.5
<u>Waste Reduction</u> Reduction of waste going to landfill and results (3-R: reduce, reuse and recycle), municipal composting programs, including activities such as composting sites, yard waste collections, mulching of wood debris (Christmas trees, hedge trimmings, etc.) & reclamation of cut trees. Handling of hazardous waste including e-waste collection and reuse of compost material.	20	17
<u>Water Conservation</u> Use-reduction programs such as promotions, efficient irrigation, use of non-potable water, water restriction policies	15	12.5
<u>Energy Conservation</u> Programs such as alternate forms of energy (ex. geothermal, biomass, wind, solar) and initiatives such as: energy-efficient appliances, shielding for night skies, efficient street lighting	15	12
<u>Environmental Initiatives, Innovations and Actions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development and expansion of sustainable mobility and active transportation network such as bike lanes and multi-used pathways; - Horticultural practices such as green roofs, green walls, green lanes, living fences, buffer zones; re-use of sites; engineered wetlands, bio-swales, permeable surfaces and rain water management - Brownfield redevelopment, remediation, land reclamation - Air quality programs such as anti-idling, reduction of greenhouse gas emission (carbon reduction). 	10	7
Business & Institutions		
<u>Participation in The Environmental Effort</u> Waste management (reduce, reuse and recycle), water conservation, energy conservation, brownfield management	10	8
<u>Corporate Environmental Action</u> Innovation/stewardship, initiatives, activities (for example: environmental clean-up activities)	10	8
Residential		
<u>Participation in Environmental Initiatives</u> 3-R (reduce, reuse and recycle), composting	10	8
<u>Water Conservation</u> Practices such as water use reduction, rainwater collection and rain gardens	15	9
Community Involvement		
<u>Public Participation – Civil Action</u> Participation in public forums and policy development on environmental issues	5	3
<u>Public Participation in Activities</u> Community (including children/youth), neighbourhood or individual street environmental activities and programs (including promotion, organization and evidence of taking ownership, etc.)	10	9
<u>Community Support</u> Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions in public environmental activities and programs	10	9
Environmental Action Total	150.00	120.0

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ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Observations:

We noted very tight adherence to provincial rules for burning at landfills. Keep up this good work!

It was nice to note there is a good contingent of trained personnel for operation of the water treatment system and well operations.

Eighteen blocks of sewer were lined this year. This is such an effective means of revitalizing the underground infrastructure without disturbing the streets. Very well done! Best of luck in your 3 year target date for full completion throughout the community.

We wish you the best success as you endeavour to provide abundant, quality water to rural customers in the very near future.

Providing water from the swimming pool at the end of the season was a very creative use for this waste water.

We noted that fences have been added at the landfill site as suggested in your 2016 evaluation. This should be very beneficial especially in some harsh weather conditions.

The dry weather this year has played very well in your favor in terms of lagoon capacity. As your community continues to grow, be sure to assess all cell capacities for any increases you may expect in the foreseeable future.

It was so nice to see staff diligently enforce waste being dropped off in three areas while we were on site; specifically in the areas of garbage, used oil and road waste concrete site. Please pass on our compliments to management and staff for caring for our environment. It was nice to see paving waste being recycled in two locations as well. We hope enforcement of illegal dumping is deterred by adequate penalties.

“Imagination Garden” adds an intriguing, multi-coloured, xeriscape facet to an otherwise common street, promotes creativity in youth and provides an opportunity to teach youth the importance of recycling waste in our communities.

Special thanks extended to Mayor Al Heron for planting a number of nursery trees for eventual use throughout the community.

It was reassuring to hear of the backup plans the community has for the provision of potable water.

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Recommendations:

A large grass clipping collection piled adjacent to the Public Works shop was removed and disposed of at the landfill. We were curious as to why this wouldn't be tumbled and turned into compost which could be made available for residents to use.

A large amount of dirt has been brought to the landfill to be used for eventual cover material but needs to be pushed into a large pile. This may be an opportunity for any work crews in the area to train junior operators on heavy duty equipment operations; accomplishing two things at once.

Your community has an enviable recycling program which has been working well for some time. Since Sarcan handles most items for recycling and a private firm handles automobile batteries; it would be nice to see your community go one step further by supporting and encouraging your neighborhood Ace Hardware store to recycle smaller household batteries and compact fluorescent bulbs; a program often managed by hardware stores.

Rain barrel usage was not seen very often as we drove around the community. It would be nice to see Eston offer a "rain barrel rebate" for beneficial use of rain water for gardening.

A "Trails Master Plan" was stated in a document we read in researching your community. Since there does not appear to be one that could be readily located it would be nice to see the document found if there is one and rejuvenated once again. Walking trails are quite often designated the highest ranking desire when community public forum "needs assessments" are held.

We recommend further levelling of the sidewalks in the main downtown business district by utilizing economic grinding techniques to lower high spots that present tripping hazards.

We suggest the installation of a solar controlled light fixture above the checker game board in the ornate arbor at Henry Hamilton Park.

A good project for students would be to cut and form chicken wire around the base of trees at risk of being damaged by wrongful string trimming or rabbits and other rodents/pests.

Continue your initiative to cleanup old abandoned properties that you embarked on for the Centennial year celebrations. Your work in this regard clearly stands out for visitors and residents alike.

The anti-idling initiative is a good move toward maintaining a clean environment for any community. Your town has made an attempt to go in this direction. It would be nice to see other strategic locations added as well.

We recommend researching the value of using corn cobs as an environmentally friendly means for the control of mosquito populations in standing waters.

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION		
<p>Heritage conservation includes efforts to preserve natural and cultural heritage within the community. Preservation of natural heritage pertains to policies, plans and actions concerning all elements of biodiversity including flora and fauna ecosystems and associated geological structures and formations. Cultural conservation refers to the heritage that helps define the community including the legacy of tangible (built/hard assets) elements such as heritage buildings, monuments, memorials, cemeteries, artifacts, museums and intangible elements such as traditions, customs, festivals and celebrations. The participation of groups such as historical societies and conservation groups is considered.</p>		
	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Natural Heritage Strategic Plans Policies, by-laws and their enforcement and effective programs	10	7
Natural Heritage Management Plans Management and preservation initiatives: including eco systems, eco parks, protection of sensitive habitats, species at risk, support for at risk pollinators, grasslands, naturalization, wetlands, urban agriculture/farming, and wildlife	15	12
Natural Heritage Promotion Management and promotion of natural heritage (through communications, information and support programs, economic development/tourism) including activities and programs (year-round) for education and use of natural heritage sites for and by the public	15	12
Cultural Heritage Strategic Plans Policies, by-laws and plans and preservation initiatives for heritage buildings, cemeteries, artefacts, museums, monuments, heritage trees and gardens, including their integration with streetscapes and landscape	15	12
Cultural Heritage Activities Initiatives throughout the year including festivals and celebrations along with preservation of traditions and customs	10	8.5
Business & Institutions		
Natural Heritage Assets Conservation, restoration and integration of natural heritage, including eco parks, conservation areas, heritage gardens, trees and landscapes.	15	13
Cultural Heritage Assets Conservation, restoration and reuse of heritage buildings and artefacts including their integration with the built/hard?, streetscapes and green landscapes	10	8
Residential		
Cultural Heritage Initiatives Conservation/restoration and reuse of heritage buildings, artefacts on residential lands	10	6
Community Involvement		
Natural Heritage Public Participation Participation in community (including children/youth), neighbourhood or individual natural heritage programs including developing policies and plans, site improvements and management, conservation and education initiatives	15	13.5
Natural Heritage – Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions (including environmental groups) in community-initiated natural heritage activities and programs	15	13
Cultural Heritage - Public Participation Participation in community (including children/youth), neighbourhood or individual cultural heritage programs including year-round heritage community events/activities, festivals and celebrations along with preservation of traditions and customs	10	9.5
Cultural Heritage - Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions (including historical societies) in community-initiated cultural heritage activities and programs.	10	9
Heritage Conservation Total	150.00	123.5

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Observations:

The community wide initiative to host a “drowning prevention program” was a very admirable one.

The Heritage Garden and vegetable garden at the museum has not been well maintained. Possibly summer student staff are unfamiliar with gardening practices; perhaps a teaching opportunity.

The cemetery has been super-well maintained. In addition, it is nice to see positive steps have been taken in the new section of the cemetery to regulate the style and height of headstones presumably to gain some uniformity in appearance. The Cemetery Bridge and directory are enviable assets that are very well maintained.

Historical signage located in several business establishments in the downtown core was a surprising find in our tour. Very informative and beautiful quality! Continue to develop this further.

The Over 50's Club has been doing a fantastic job of refurbishing a building and grounds for their own use. Acquiring the adjacent lot will bring about more challenges. Keep up the great work. We loved your idea of “edible planters” located at the front of your building.

Wow, the Legion Hall looks fantastic. Considering the Legion as a group was severely faltering in very recent times it appears to have been restored to life especially noted in the floral displays. The Legion Hall is a cornerstone in many rural communities. The challenge is how to keep it alive as their members pass on. One suggestion may be to partner with a local arts and culture group to share the building for combined usage. Such partnerships can often open up more grant opportunities for both parties.

We were very impressed with the show of remembrance when we saw the beautiful red seats complete with embedded name plates located in the arena in memory of local veterans that served Canada.

Recommendations:

It may be revenue beneficial to have the volumes of “Grass to Grains” available in E-reader format although we admit we aren't familiar with what it takes to have this done.

The museum could look a lot better when gardens enhance the grounds. It would be nice to see the gardens revitalized. Maybe consider placing the newly acquired “wishing well” in the center of the garden as a bold garden feature. This well could be plumbed to draw water via pump from the pond behind the museum to be used by those tasked with gardening at the museum thus serving as more than just a static feature.

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URBAN FORESTRY		
Urban forestry includes the efforts of the municipality, businesses, institutions and residents with regards to written policies, by-laws, standards for tree management (selection, planting, and maintenance), long and short-term management plans, tree replacement policies, pollinator-friendly tree selection, tree inventory, and Integrated Pest Management (IPM), heritage, memorial and commemorative trees.		
	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Overall Impression Overall impact, benefit and first impression of the urban forest	10	6.5
Strategic Plans Policies, regulations and tree by-laws, tree protection and planting on public and private lands	15	9
Urban Forestry Plan Plan, design and inventory management including integration with overall green infrastructure landscape plan, and measures to preserve, protect, manage and expand overall tree inventory, including woodlots	20	15
Plan of Action Procurement, species diversity (including native trees), selection of hardy and pollinator habitat tree species, recommended tree list and tree planting standards.	10	9
Integrated Pest Management (IPM) / Plant HealthCare (PHC): plan of action for invasive pest detection and control, information on current infestations and diseases	10	6.5
Public Information Programs Provides information on good planting techniques, best practices and maintenance programs	15	10.5
Maintenance Quality Best practices with demonstrated results	10	5
Qualified Resources Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff and/or qualified experienced contractors) and/or in place training programs	5	2.5
Business & Institutions		
Tree inventory Contribution to expanding overall tree inventory, with consideration of design and diversity including native and hardy species of trees, on properties owned by businesses and institutions.	15	11
Maintenance Quality Programs, best practices with demonstrated results: watering, pruning, IPM	10	7
Residential		
Tree Planting Contribution to expanding overall tree inventory, with consideration of design and diversity including native and hardy species of trees on residential properties	15	10
Maintenance Quality Best practices with demonstrated results	10	7
Community Involvement		
Public Participation Participation (including children/youth) in tree planting and conservation programs such as Green Streets Canada, Arbor Day, Maple Leaf Day, and other tree planting and maintenance programs and activities on public lands (including promotion, organization etc.)	20	15
Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation or promotion by the municipality, businesses and institutions for community tree planting and conservation programs on public lands	10	8.5
Urban Forestry Total	175.00	122.5

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URBAN FORESTRY

Observations:

The first thing we noticed upon driving through the community was the wide diversity of trees, shrubs, and annual and perennial flowers in the community. Unfortunately the next thing we noticed was the overwhelming abundance of gophers. We soon noted them throughout the community, digging in and around almost every recently planted tree. Many of these trees were stressed and many stunted from extraordinary heat this summer, a lack of consistent watering coupled with damage from rodents and weed trimming practices.

Some areas of good pruning were evident within the community making those areas quite attractive.

Recommendations:

We concluded there are way too many gophers for your Gopher Derby and therefore many should be trapped and removed from your community. The damage that is being caused to the root systems on your newly planted trees is significant.

It is of utmost importance that string trimming be done with expertise. By damaging the bark of any tree with a string trimmer, the ability of that tree to transport nutrients from its roots to its leaves is reduced or eliminated. The damage bark effectively girdles the tree. Training on best practices for string trimming and lessons on its importance should be ongoing coupled with periodic inspection and supervision. String trimming training should be part of all grounds staff orientation. It was so superb to see the damage we witnessed being immediately attended to by the CIB committee in an effort to reduce the risk of losing those trees. Thanks for acting so quickly and best wishes on your efforts!

It appears more pruning is required throughout the town on municipal, commercial and residential lands. It would be nice to see a pruning course hosted by the Town encouraging all citizens to attend. Tree branches could be stockpiled for chipping by the contracted Sawyer Trees with materials stockpiled for CIB use. See SPRA for further information about tree related courses and proper mulching practices.

We suggest purchasing some water bags for slow release around newly planted trees and those showing signs of distress; having said that this exercise will be fruitless if the gopher population still exist.

A quality professional timer could be purchased to provide the proper water volumes you require without the extra work of personal monitoring. There is also several sharp pointed push in style drip nozzles available very inexpensively at most hardware store that can be added to an existing line very easily and precisely at the location of every tree not currently being covered the existing system.

Keep in mind the importance of removing trees promptly which are dead or beyond recovery to reduce infestation of disease and insects.

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Consider using Alpine Current as a stand-alone shrub or possibly a hedge. This plant can easily be reproduced by cutting off a branch of a mature shrub, sticking it in the ground and watering it daily for a week.

Check out these websites if not already done so; maybe put them in your weekly newspaper "Tips" column: "prairietrees.ca" or Plant Snap app" Be sure to check with local greenhouses to see if they can supply the tree choices you may make after researching websites.

We recommend limiting or banning the planting of all Ash trees except for Mountain Ash in the community due to the inevitable influx of Emerald Ash Borer. Ensure to educate the community on this pending concern. It is very important to diversify species in our tree canopy as pests become more prevalent. This invasive, introduced pest is not in Saskatchewan yet; however, it has been found in Manitoba and results in the death of all Ash (*Fraxinus spp.*) trees except for Mountain Ash (*Sorbus spp.*) which is actually a different species. For more information visit:

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/agriculture-natural-resources-and-industry/forestry/forest-health/emerald-ash-borer>

We suggest trying a sample area of dry powder laundry soap to see if that will remove the gopher occupancy without setting out traps or poisons as we discussed. It may become an inexpensive alternative to share with others. It does certainly work to get rid of Voles that damage lawns during winter months. Be cautious as side effects of using the soap on the soil could exist. Test areas for this practice would be important.

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LANDSCAPE		
Landscape includes planning, design, construction and maintenance of parks and green spaces suitable for the intended use and location on a year-round basis. Elements for evaluation include: native and introduced materials; balance of plants, materials and constructed elements; appropriate integration of hard surfaces and art elements, use of turf and groundcovers. Landscape design should harmonize the interests of all sectors of the community. Standards of execution and maintenance should demonstrate best practices, including quality of naturalization, use of groundcovers and wildflowers along with turf management.		
	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Gateway Impressions First impressions of the community including gateway/entrance treatments	10	8.5
Sustainable Designs – Soft Landscape Sustainable designs (seasonally adjusted year round): energy efficient, use of green materials, naturalization, xeriscaping, suitable plant varieties (including pollinator friendly) , traffic calming, bank stabilisation	10	9
Sustainable Designs - Hard Landscape Urban and civic design standards for streetscape and public places: flags, banners, public art, fountains, site furnishings, signage, seasonal design and décor, walkways and paving materials	10	8
Landscape Plan Integrated and implemented throughout the municipality	10	9
Turf Management Programs Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Plant Health Care (PHC), alternative solutions to diseases and infestations when appropriate, increased naturalization and adapted maintenance programs	10	8
Landscape Maintenance Policies, Standards, Best Practices and Programs	10	9
Landscape Quality Landscape maintained to appropriate standards, specs and best practices.	5	5
Qualified Resources Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and/or in place training programs and/or qualified experienced contractors	10	7
Year-round use Demonstrated year-round opportunities and programs for education and use of parks and green spaces (urban agriculture, community gardens, parks and recreation programs)	10	9
Business & Institutions		
Sustainable Designs (Seasonally adjusted year-round): energy efficient, use of green materials, naturalization, xeriscaping, alternate groundcovers, urban agriculture	10	7.5
Integrated Plan Contribution to urban & civic design and public green spaces above requirements: such as public art, streetscape, site furniture, fountains & innovation in concept & design	15	12
Maintenance Quality Adequate ongoing life cycle management (ongoing maintenance, ground & asset management, rehabilitation & replacement) of all landscape elements	10	8
Residential		
Streetscape Appeal Of landscapes (year-round, seasonal, themed)	15	12
Maintenance Quality Lawn care, trees and shrub maintenance (with demonstrated results)	15	11
Plant Selection Selection of plant material (native, local, innovative, edible & pollinator friendly plants)	10	8
Community Involvement		
Public Participation in community programs (including children/youth) such as: urban agriculture, community gardens, "yard of the week", volunteer park maintenance, holiday illumination & decoration (promotion, organization, etc.)	20	15.5
Volunteer Recognition Recognition (by municipality and/or volunteer groups) of volunteer efforts in all aspects of the Communities in Bloom program including activities in all evaluated criteria	20	14
Landscape Total	200.00	160.5

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LANDSCAPE

Observations:

The Gopher planting area looks much better than at our previous visit but still appears to be lacking color as mentioned in your last evaluation.

The entry signs are very nice but the planters around them would benefit from bright colors to draw attention to the area.

The 50's Club has given a great presentation of landscaping to what otherwise would be a drab parking lot.

Special thanks to the CIB committee for cleaning up the property south of the town office and continuing to maintain it.

"Centennial Park" pocket park is the best such park we've seen in our travels. "Imagine Garden" is the most creative display we've seen in our travels.

The raised garden at the school is in PHASE ONE; a great teaching initiative for youth. We look forward to someday seeing it to fruition.

The improvements made to Reaburn Field and Mosquito baseball diamonds in preparation for the recent provincial ball tournament has made these facility top notch; an enviable asset for sure.

Your "Fairy Garden" is a unique and modest example of creativity. We're certain it has brought about many smiles on passing faces. Keep this sort of thing going wherever you can. It can be a great way to improve the looks of properties without adding the expense of removing tree stumps.

Whatever you have done to get the rail right-of-way mowed you should bottle it. There is surely a large market for that type of product. Good Job!

Recommendations:

An inexpensive option to commercial planters is the use of farm Mineral Tubs which come in green, blue and orange or may be painted.

Trending now: Giant street games such as giant Jenga, Hop Scotch, Crokinole boards or street & sidewalk murals.

It would be nice to see some murals in your community other than the one in the arena. A great project would be to initiate a "tile mural". This sort of mural can be a terrific fund raiser and may involve

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community groups such as seniors and/or youth of all ages; each painting one tile which eventually becomes one master mural.

Suggest adding a bench to the Serenity Park pocket park on Main Street.

Banners are very bright and in good condition. As a suggestion for the next time you look to replace these that you purchase bulk banner material and utilize youth to create artwork as display banners.

We witnessed very high levels of CIB support from commercial establishments in Eston but very little in the Industrial sector. A suggestion to involve the Industrial group would be to have the CIB committee get together in a late evening, maybe a weekend, when the owner is away come by and clean and tidy the property while also adding a couple of nicely arranged planters at the main entry along with an instruction card for maintaining the planters and a short personal note to the owner. The note could be hung on the door stating something like this: "We'd be thrilled if your plant gifts could flourish and bloom throughout the summer and wish the same for your business", signed "your community Garden Magic Gnomes, please enjoy!" Balance this approach with trespassing laws and your local knowledge of the business owners' personalities.

A suggestion for adding color to the downtown core would be to plant live spruce trees in the municipal placed planters before freeze-up which can be decorated with Xmas décor and used as a contest or just for seasonal aesthetics. Trees may be used for in-fill plants in the spring if properly cared for until they can be planted. This can only be done in larger planters that contain enough soil to protect the root system.

Stepping stones at the school have been removed but we heard they were very well received and a fun project at one time. Maybe consider revitalizing this program and expand it to allow for placement in other areas such as downtown parks, seniors centers, etc.

Host a volunteer BBQ or day in recognition of all volunteers in the community. Possibly give one ticket for each organization one participates in which can be placed into draw drums for various prizes. The more you participate the more your chances are to win. Support from Mayor Al Heron and his Council in recognition of the value volunteers (and their betterment of the community) would really help encourage everyone at this event and thank them for their efforts throughout the year.

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FLORAL DISPLAYS		
<p>Floral displays evaluates efforts of the municipality, businesses, institutions and residents to design, plan, execute, and maintain floral displays of high quality standards. Evaluation includes the design and arrangements of flowers and plants (annuals, perennials, bulbs, ornamental grasses, edible plants, water efficient and pollinator friendly plants) in the context of originality, distribution, location, diversity and balance, colour, and harmony This pertains to flowerbeds, carpet bedding, containers, baskets and window boxes.</p>		
	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Floral Display Plan of Action Integration into overall landscape plan and distribution through community. Concept and design including sustainable design	15	14.5
Diversity of Displays Flowerbeds, raised beds, planters, hanging baskets, window boxes, carpet bedding, mosaics	20	17.5
Diversity of Plants Annuals, perennials, bulbs, grasses, woody plants, natural flora, pollinator friendly plants	10	9
Maintenance Quality Maintenance to appropriate specifications and standards, best practices: watering, weeding, edging, dead heading, etc.	20	19
Qualified Resources Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and/or in place training programs and/or qualified experienced contractors	10	9
Business & Institutions		
Design Concept and design (including arrangement, diversity, colour of display and plants) on grounds	15	12
Overall Plan Contribution to, and integration with, overall community floral program	10	7.5
Maintenance Quality Of planting and maintenance: watering, weeding, edging, dead heading, etc. with demonstrated results.	10	8.5
Residential		
Concept and Design (including arrangement, diversity, colour of display and plants) on residential properties including Pollinator gardens and/or inclusion of pollinator plants in gardens	20	15
Maintenance Quality Of planting and maintenance with demonstrated results.	15	13
Community Involvement		
Public Participation In community projects, volunteer initiatives (including children/youth), and outreach programs in floral displays (including promotion, organization, etc.)	15	14
Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions for community floral displays activities	15	14
Floral Displays Total	175.00	153.0

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FLORAL DISPLAYS

Observations:

It became quickly obvious floral displays in your community surpass pretty much every place we've visited or evaluated in Saskatchewan. This asset could be further enhanced by adding a couple of floral arrangements to the R.M and P.W shops on the south side of the community. It's always easier to lead by example as is often stated.

The Coop appears to not have bought into the CIB objective at all. A carefully orchestrated letter to the President praising them on general high standards of excellence in cooperative facilities while also welcoming them into the community with a new store may entice them to buy in. Maybe slip in the high number of businesses leading the way in support of your goals.

Recommendations:

Our suggestion to add color to "Gopher" is to place a ribbon planter all the way across the back of the raised rock area immediately behind the gopher and use it to plant bright colored wildflowers that will reseed themselves yet provide the color background to make the gopher appear in its natural fauna.

May we suggest that you energetic committee of CIB host a "Trade your Perennials" day in the spring of each year.

Door knocker cards are easily made and/or inexpensive to purchase. They are colorful, allow for CIB educational opportunities, personal notes and beautiful photos of your community. They can be used as invitations as well; all on one card. They can be secretly passed out by the CIB committee to worthy homeowners or businesses for doing something special to enhance the CIB program or community c/w a special note written by the committee member for their special effort. They have been amazingly well received in other communities and quickly become the talk of the town and a prized possession by those lucky enough to acquire one (through their own hard work).

Consider looking into the value of adding Mason bees to the community since they pose no harm and tend to do a good job of pollination within a limited range from their homes.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR INVOLVEMENT

"Within the context of climate change and environmental concerns, communities involved in the Communities in Bloom program can be proud of their efforts, which provide real and meaningful environmental solutions and benefit all of society."

COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM IS MADE POSSIBLE BY

The commitment of local, provincial and national volunteers

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